

DOWNTOWN

Sunday
April 20, 2025

THE HINDU

ANNA NAGAR

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Additional space created at libraries

A 500 sq.ft. enclosure was inaugurated on April 11 at the State Government-run libraries at Pulla Avenue in Shenoy Nagar, N Block in Anna Nagar East, MMDA Colony in Arumbakkam, MKB Nagar, 11 the Avenue at Ashok Nagar, and at Brindavan Nagar in Aadambakkam.

According to a library official, the additional space was created for the benefit of those aspiring to clear competitive exams.

▼
The library at N Block in Anna Nagar East.
PHOTOS: VEDHAN. M



READERS WRITE



'CMWSSB cuts road relaid six months ago'

A concrete road was laid at 42nd Street in GKM Colony, Kolathur six months ago. However, Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply & Sewerage Board has cut the road to carry out its work recently. This shows lack of coordination among the government departments.

S. Venugopal,
Kolathur

Power transformer installed

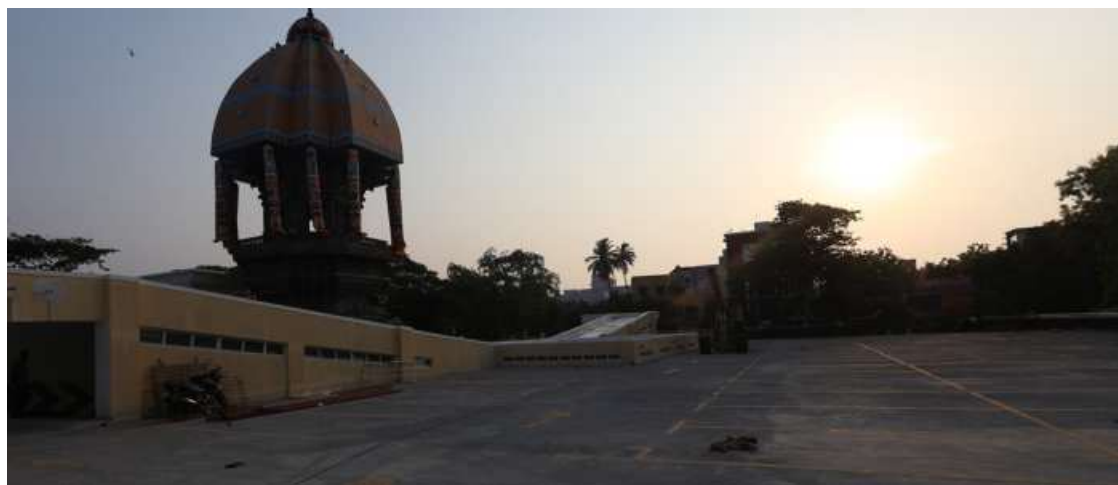
The Tamil Nadu Generation & Distribution Corporation Limited (TANGEDCO) has installed a transformer at GNG Colony First Street in Ambattur behind the Ulavar Sandhai (farmers' market). This facility was badly needed as voltage fluctuation was common on this street. We thank Tangedco for providing this facility.

T. Gunaseelan,
Ambattur



Valluvar Kottam renovation: the final touches

Completion of embellishments on the arches at the three entrances is said to be around a week away; with that, the renovation would be complete, say PWD sources



A glimpse into the renovation work on April 18, 2025. Photos: PRINCE FREDERICK

PRINCE FREDERICK

The wraps may not be off the Valluvar Kottam renovation yet, but the work has attained a level where the wraps cannot be kept clasped tight anymore.

The unveiling is not too far from the horizon; at the time of this writeup going to press, the work

seemed set to be almost wrapped up, the finishing touches being rendered to it.

On April 18, 2025, painting of the compound wall, the one lining Valluvar Kottam High Road, was under way. And work on an entrance being on, a part of the renovation was exposed for the public gaze.

With backlighting, there was atmosphere to the scene. From Vallu-

var Kottam High Road, one gains a glimpse into what appears to be an expansive parking area, neatly concreted and marked. The car parking area is said to be able to accommodate 168 cars.

According to PWD sources connected with the work, an elaborate assignment to embellish the three entrances to Valluvar Kottam – on the eastern, western and southern sides – is on the last leg. Stapati

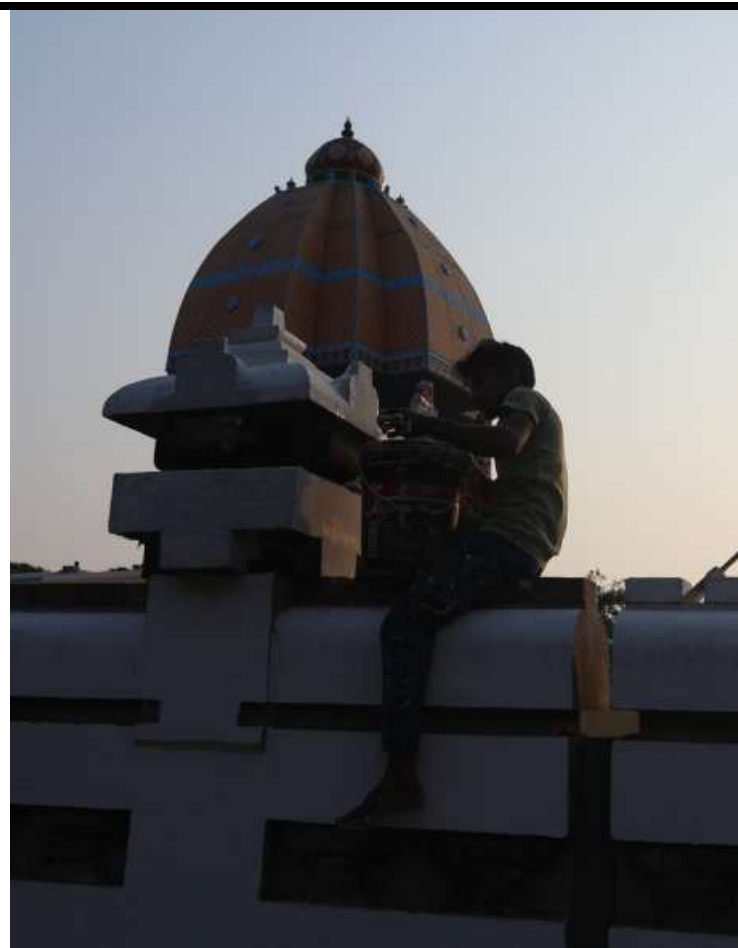
works to beautify the three arches at the entrances are nearing completion. They should finish running the course in a week's time, say PWD sources.

On the inauguration of the renovated monument, sources note that the date is yet to be marked, and PWD is in touch with the Chief Minister's Office on this matter.

The public can expect some days to elapse before they can take

in the features of the renovation. Until then, they can probably hope for sneak peeks, from Valluvar Kottam High Road.

Here is an observation based on a glimpse from this road: the look of the compound wall has gone up several notches, particularly since Michaug when part of it had crashed along with the steel fencing that cordoned off the garden lining it.



ANNA NAGAR

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PUTTING C&D WASTE IN ITS PLACE

Greater Chennai Corporation's new guidelines for managing construction and demolition waste comes into effect on April 21. Here are the salient features **P4**



'Travel' on these mini trains

To celebrate World Heritage Day, Chennai Rail Museum in Villivakkam will play host to collectors and designers of scale-model trains and railroads from April 25 to 27 **P2**

It is 'hop, skip and walk' out here



Pedestrians find cables underfoot on this pavement on Poonamalle High Road near Egmore metro station. PHOTO: RAGU R

A renewed call for pedestrian subways in Avadi, Pattabiram



The narrow street leading to Avadi railway station. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Following Chennai Metro Rail Limited's (CMRL) submission of a "Detailed Project Report" on the proposed metro rail service from Koyambedu to Pattabiram to the Additional Chief Secretary in February, Tamil Nadu Progressive Consumer Centre, an Avadi-based citizens group, has renewed its demand for a pedestrian subway

connecting the MTC bus terminus on CTH Road and Avadi sub-urban railway station.

"CMDA proposed a subway connecting the railway station and the bus terminus in 2014, but the proposal fell through. Given the footfall in the railway station, such a subway is essential. With a metro rail service likely to come up in this section, a subway becomes even more essential. The path to the station from the bus terminus is narrow and congested with shops; and during rains, it suffers in-undation," says T. Sadagopan, the forum's president.

The citizens forum has also sought a pedestrian subway connecting the platforms on Market Road entrance and CTH Road entrance at Pattabiram railway station; and at Hindu College railway station, a subway connecting Gopalapuram entrance and CTH Road entrance where metro rail stations are planned.

Sadagopan explains: "These pedestrian subways are long overdue. With an IT Park being inaugurated in Pattabiram a few months ago, the Pattabiram station receives considerably more footfall now, necessitating a subway."

Text by L. Kanthimathi

Citizens group to meet on April 27

The Chennai Metropolitan House/ Flat Owners' Welfare Association is conducting its 20th annual general body meeting on April 27 at No: 986, Dr. Lakshmanasamy Salai, K.K.Nagar. Time: 3 p.m.

"This is a 20-year-old association which takes up civic issues across the 200 Wards of Greater Chennai Corporation. It has got 950 members," says P. Muthukrishnan, the association's general secretary. For details, call 9444208121

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'Travel' on these mini trains

To celebrate World Heritage Day, Chennai Rail Museum in Villivakkam will play host to collectors and designers of scale-model trains and railroads from April 25 to 27. On all three days, the event will be open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. *The Hindu Downtown* spoke to some of the participants about this niche hobby

LIFFY THOMAS

An expensive hobby

For the first time, 72-year-old Sundaram Parthasarathi will be showcasing a running model of the Vande Bharat Express done to scale. An enthusiastic collector of train models, Sundaram is into this hobby for 35 years. Last year, he showcased the Chennai Metro Rail. A few years ago, Sterling Resorts commissioned a project, which he was on board; he partnered with another expert to design the Nilgiri Mountain Railway for one of their properties.

His railway exhibits are handmade. "I do not buy accessories such as signals and station buildings. I make them



myself," he says, adding that a few of the tracks are computerised.

His 20x10 feet, U-shaped room at his house in Abhira-

mapuram is his lab where he experiments with train scale models for hours.

During Navarathri, his train models are a showstopper. At

other times of the year, he welcomes schools to take a look at the railway exhibits.

A mechanical engineer by profession, Sundaram warmed up to the hobby during a visit to The United Kingdom.

"The company sent me to the U.K. in 1986 and that is when I seriously started collecting train models. During weekends, I used to buy second hand items," says Sundaram, who retired as special director from Ashok Leyland in 2013.

He agrees this is an "expensive hobby" but it is a special joy when you are in the company of 60 others (referring to the WhatsApp group with members spread across India and from a few other countries) exchanging notes on the finer aspects of this pursuit.

A lifetime pursuit



"Technical but interesting". That is how K.R.S. Ganesan describes the model that he will be showcasing while takes this reporter on a virtual tour of his Ashok Nagar house to show what he is currently working on. The hall has been converted into a work station. The control system is in another room. Many other enabling items required to complete the exhibit are parked in other rooms.

The fully automated layout on a HO scale is being designed using Train-Controller software. "It is a totally hands free operation with automatic control. All scheduling and stops are set," says Ganesan, a civil engineer. He explains visitors will be shown how a slow train is stopped at a loop line and then a fast train overtakes it.

Due to limited space, the train enthusiast will be arranging his exhibit in a 24x8 space at the venue.

Although fascinated with trains from a young age, it was just before retirement that he got started with the hobby. "I had eight engines and 200 feet track in 2013," says Ganesan, who retired as senior deputy general manager from L&T. Rolling stock like goods wagons and passenger coaches together added to more than 30 over the years.

"I am keen on designing operational layouts to show signals and time of start/stop functions and schedules using Train Controller software," he says.

In 2018, he completed a large layout in a hall of 40 x 15 incorporating several operational features using this software. Model railroading is an activity of constant improvement and learning. "A hobby that can last a lifetime," he adds.

On the right track

Seventy-year-old C.B. Malhotra, known as Shyam in this hobby circle, is undecided what he will be showcasing in the upcoming exhibition.

Last year was the first time Shyam took part in the Heritage Train Model Exhibition, though he is into this hobby for two decades.

"That sparkle in the eyes of children when they see our trains running is more satisfying than collecting models or running them," says the resident of George Town.

Shyam's love for train models started during his childhood. His father had the habit of getting him a gift after the final examination. "I would ask for a train," says Shyam.

Later, he saw a working model and the bug bit him. Shyam started the hobby in 1999 when he was in his 40s.

"When I got started on the hobby, I would go to second hand markets and that is where I came

across a few people and that bond grew," he says the hobby is addictive, often leading to spend continuous hours on it.

For parents trying to wean their children from gadgets, he offers wise counsel: "Make sure you provide your children with exposure to as many hobbies as possible," says the businessman, adding that a childhood hobby could be good company and a small source of income as well.

Full steam ahead



The shrill whistle, the fuming boilers and the billowing plumes of steam. Never mind if you and your generation have not seen steam locomotive engines, Mahendra Kumar (who is from a generation that has) can recreate them for you.

"My dad used to take me to railway stations just for me to watch the engines and during one such outing, I got to see a steam engine," recalls Mahendra, a HR manager.

His fascination for trains was further fuelled during annual visits to the Island Grounds where the trade fair was organised and Integral Coach Factory had a

stall where they would showcase running train models.

Many years later in 2018, a trip to Darjeeling reignited this fascination. Since then, Mahendra has been collecting scale models. Today "HO" "Double O" and "G" scale models top his collection followed by a small number of "N" scale models.

At the exhibition, the Anna Nagar resident will be showcasing his collection of steam-based locomotives and train buses.

A member of HO Scale Collectors Group, the HR professional, who also has a collection of automobile models, says invitation to the group is only through reference.





Local connections *matter in* sustainability

Greater Chennai Corporation's micro composting centre in Pudupet maintains a "cordial" relationship with its neighbours



BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The micro composting centre at Veerabadrin Street in Pudupet is on "amicable" terms with its neighbours and that is what keeps it going.

From the horse stables at the Mounted Police facility on nearby Adithanar Salai (also known as Harris Road), it receives horse dung, on an average, 200 kg every day. And its immediate neighbour, the Greater Chennai Corporation's cow shed (one meant for keeping impounded stray cattle) provides it with cow dung.

This Greater Chennai Corporation micro composting centre, run by the voluntary organisation Namma Ooru Foundation and reportedly established with CSR funding from IOCL Southern Pipes Region, successfully looks around its immediate surroundings for material to feed the machines ahead of the composting process.

P. Natarajan, founder of Namma Ooru Foundation, remarks that there is a profusion of tea shops, fresh fruit shops and fast food joints in this area, and the relevant refuse from these shops are taken in for composting.

"From 12 tea shops, we source tea powder waste. We get egg shells from the fast food shops and fruit waste from the fruit shops, coconut waste and sugarcane waste from vendors selling tender coconut and sugarcane juice — all from Harris Road and nearby areas."

With its thriving second-hand automobile spares market, this road bustles with movement of people and these shops thrive by catering to the floating population.

That is hardly an exhaustive list — there are other neighbours, only a



little removed in terms of geographical coordinates.

Natarajan notes that brown matter (garden waste) was being collected from WCC and DPI for two to three months; and as they are relatively further in distance, the switch was made to collecting the same from police quarters and police museum.

Green matter (vegetable waste) comes from a bunch of markets nearby: Pudupet market, Chinthathripet market, Zam bazaar market, Avai Shanmugam Salai market, Triplicane market and Fresh today supermarket.

Besides, apartments that want to manage their waste responsibly send their organic matter.

Natarajan says compost derived from various sources of organic matter is bound to have high nutrition.

He adds: "IIT Madras tests the compost produced at this micro composting centre and provides a report on the carbon nitrogen ratio and other nu-

tritions in the compost. The compost is being sold to various districts of Tamil Nadu, including Thanjavur, Dindugal, Madurai, Kanchipuram and Thiruvallur."

A tour of the processes at the micro composting centre in Pudupet.

PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

Greater Chennai Corporation's new guidelines for managing construction and demolition waste comes into effect on April 21. Here are the salient features



C&D waste collection centres in GCC limits

- Zone 1** - Buckingham Canal Road, Sathangadu, Thiruvottiyur (Adjacent to lorry station, Zone-1)
- Zone 2** - Kamaraj Salai (Near zonal office)
- Zone 3** -CMDA Truck Terminal near Night Shelter (Behind Madhavaram Bus Terminus)
- Zone 4** -Kodungaiyur Dumping ground, Tondiarpet High Road (3rd gate)\
- Zone 5 and 6** -Part of old Cattle depot, Avadhanam Pappier Road, Choolai (opposite Corporation School)
- Zone 7** -Vanagaram Road, Athipet dumping yard
- Zone 8** -1st Main Road, Shenoy Nagar (Near Gajalakshmi Colony)
- Zone 9** -Lloyds Colony (Near Corporation ITI Institute)
- Zone 10** -Gurusiva Street, S.M Block, Jafferkanpet, Kodambakkam (near R-10 MGR Nagar Police Station)
- Zone 11** -Nolambur Phase II, 2nd main road (near Madhuravoyal Taluk office)
- Zone 12** -Nandambakkam TPF near Adyar river bund in Division 158
- Zone 13** -Arulampatti 2nd street (near SIDCO Electronics commercial complex)
- Zone 14** -200 Ft Radial Road, Perungudi Dumping Ground
- Zone 15** -Gangaiamman Kovil Street Extension, Karapakkam (near Tamil Nadu Teacher Education University)

Putting C&D waste in its place

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

From April 21, Greater Chennai Corporation will levy a fine of ₹ 5000 if one is found dumping construction and demolition waste on streets, pavements, drains, public spaces, vacant sites or any other unauthorised location.

Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste includes debris and rubble resulting from construction, re-modeling, repair and demolition operations. Steel, aluminium, wood and other components cur-

rently being salvaged for reuse or recycling are not included in this category.

GCC in its revised guidelines insists that "occupiers" generating small quantities of C&D waste during repair or minor renovation shall keep the waste within their own premises until collection by their own means or by GCC-authorised C&D waste transporters or empanelled vendors or lorry owners authorised by GCC to collect waste from door steps.

The occupiers can contact GCC's website for hiring services of

the C&D waste transporters or empanelled vendors or the authorised concessionaires and pay necessary collection and transportation charges to transporters and pay for processing fee, says the note.

What kind of a generator are you and where should you dump C&D waste?

Anyone generating less than 1 MT of waste generate from minor house repairs comes under the category of "micro generators". This waste can be disposed of in earmarked dumping sites or one can call GCC's toll free number 1913 for

a pick-up.

Those generating C&D waste during building renovation, remodelling or repairing where the total weight is more than 1 MT and less than 20 MT per day comes under "Small Generators". The two processing centres that will be taking such waste are at the dumpyards at Perungudi and Kodinguyur.

A receipt has to be obtained for disposal from the transport service provider or the gate office of the disposal site where C&D waste is disposed of by the micro generators.

Spotting an opportunity in the debris

LIFFY THOMAS

What becomes of the construction and demolition (C&D) waste dumped at the dumpyards in Perungudi and Kodungaiyur? They make a major source for C&D recycling companies, even for non-profits that are into constructing affordable houses.

In February 2024, Habitat for Humanity, a global non-profit organisation with an office at IIT-M Research Park, constructed a multi-purpose hall at a village school in Kancheepuram using C&D waste.

"We followed benchmarks and standards set by Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council of India. We used M-sand

along with C&D waste to make the concrete mix. The sand was first tested to make blocks out of it. Both the blocks and the concrete went into the construction of a multi-purpose hall within the school," says Deepak Visvanathan, senior technical advisor, Habitat for Humanity.

The company builds affordable homes and works with start-ups to see how this engineering technology can be promoted to construct resource and energy-efficient buildings.

C&D waste for the hall was sourced from the Perungudi dumpyard. "We have partnered with Greater Chennai Corporation to explore other products that can be made with such waste," says Visvanathan adding that they have also been conduct-

ing round tables to educate people about recycling C&D waste.

In various cities, experimental projects to rebuild homes for the underprivileged using construction debris and used materials have been taken up.

Surender Singh, associate professor, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Madras, says they have been working with government bodies to encourage use of different C&D waste fractions in road construction, especially for the upper pavement layers.

"Three to five layers are applied while constructing concrete roads in highways. In most cases, the contractor uses C&D waste for the lower layer, which we call non-structural application," says the professor.

Earlier, the Bureau of Indian

Standards allowed the usage of C&D waste in construction by up to 25%.

"Our studies at IIT Madras show that even 100% recycled aggregates from waste concrete chunks could be used for constructing concrete roads without affecting their performance in a significant manner. Subsequently, they proposed to increase their usage limit to at least 50%; and roads constructed with such materials are sustainable," he says.

Researchers from IIT-Madras (professors Manu Santhanam, Ravindra Gettu, and Surender Singh) are currently working on an international project sponsored by the Indo-German Science and Technology Centre to show how C&D waste can be

used in making roads on expressways and national highways. "The pilot study of this project will be implemented in Chennai and Ladakh. In Chennai, we plan to take up a test-section that is exposed to a lot of wear and tear due to the movement of vehicles," says the professor.

Despite such initiatives contributing to a circular economy, recycling C&D waste is still not seen as a viable business opportunity.

Surender Singh says the cost of procuring construction waste is high. Deepak Visvanathan feels governments must offer more incentives to encourage private companies to find opportunities in this sector. "There must be some motivation for a real estate company to buy this waste," says Visvanathan.

Chennai doctor in 'The Ophthalmologist Power List 2025'

Dr. Soosan Jacob, director and chief of Dr. Agarwal's Refractive and Cornea Foundation, has again earned a spot in 'The Ophthalmologist Power List 2025'.

She is one of the three Indians to find a spot in the list, an annual ranking that celebrates pioneers in the field of ophthalmology. The list represents excellence, dedication, and innovation in ophthalmology, said a release.

Published by The Ophthalmologist, one of the leading and respected international journals in the field, the list honors experts who have made a significant impact on the field and earned recognition from peers worldwide.

She was included in the list in the years 2021, 2022, and 2024.

Dr. Soosan Jacob has over 25 years of experience, specialising in refractive surgery, cutting-edge keratoconus management, advanced corneal transplantations, glaucoma, and complex cataracts, added the release.

Summer camp in Mogappair

The Little Star Nursery and Primary School in Mogappair is conducting its summer camp from April 15 till May 9 on the school campus.

At the camp, students can learn a variety of fun and educational activities, including art and crafts, drawing, colouring, handwriting, and basic phonics. Students from kindergarten to class VIII can enrol in the camp.

For registration, contact 81225 99256.

Inviting applications for 'Art for Hope'

Hyundai Motor India Foundation (HMIF), the CSR arm of Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL), has announced the fifth season of its flagship art initiative - 'Hyundai art for hope'. The programme has become a transformative platform for emerging artists, enabling creative expression and fostering inclusive cultural growth, said a release.

In this season, HMIF will support 50 talented artists and art collectives from across India with financial grants, professional mentorship, and a national stage to showcase their work. A total of 40 grants of ₹1 lakh each for individuals and teams, including persons with disabili-

ties, will be given. Another 10 grants of ₹2 lakh each for art collectives and institutions, said the release.

Over the past four seasons, 'Art for Hope' has directly benefited over 150 artists with ₹1.65 crore in grants, and supported over 25,000 artists through workshops, exhibitions, and skill-building opportunities, said a release.

Artists can apply on hyundaiartforhope.com and submit their project nominations. Key details about the initiative can also be viewed on the website. Artists can reach out to contactus@hyundaiartforhope.com for further information about this initiative.



Four-km run at Korattur Lake

In commemoration of World Water Day (March 22), Korattur Eeri Paathukappu Makkal Iyakkam organised a four-kilometre running event near Korattur lake recently.

According to a press release, the event sought to spread awareness about the importance of conserving waterbodies.

Officials from Greater Chennai Police, Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply & Sewerage Department, and Forest Department presided over the event.

Workshop on restoring stained glass windows

A workshop on conservation and restoration of stained glass windows will be conducted by Hepzibah Institute of Heritage Conservation and Research Academy from May 1 to 15 at St. George's Cathedral Church, Cathedral Road.

The workshop will comprise theory and practical lessons connected with stained glass windows. Subjects such as design and pattern creation, creating patterns, material selection and glass cutting techniques will be taught. Only 20 participants will be admitted for this free workshop, and selection will be on first come first serve basis; some preference will be given to those with a knowledge of heritage conservation. For details, WhatsApp 9381008253

Inviting nominations for Nursing Excellence Award

Ahead of International Nurses Day, observed on May 12 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, TwinTech Healthcare Academy invites nominations for the Nursing Excellence Award 2025.

This award seeks to recognise the dedication, compassion, and service of nursing professionals across government and private hospitals in Tamil Nadu who are at the forefront of patient care, said a release. To participate one should not have received this award in any of the previous editions, should have a minimum of 10 years of continuous experience in direct patient care and must be currently employed in a hospital (government or private) in Tamil Nadu.

Nomination forms and other details can be downloaded from www.chennaitwintech.com. Alternatively, to receive the nomination link, send a WhatsApp message to: +91 97104 85295

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Health camp
on April 26 in
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Annanagar Sri Ayyappa Charitable Trust will conduct a health checkup and blood screening camp at subsidised rate of ₹699 on April 26 at Sri Ayyappa Seva Samajam premises Mogappair East. Fasting Blood Sugar, Lipid Profile, Hba1C, Blood Grouping, Kidney function, Liver function, Thyroid (TSH), Blood pressure, and Urine, (Routine) tests will be done.

For patients requiring diabetes test alone, a special package is being offered.

For registration, call 9361186633/9360386453.



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