

ANNA NAGAR

Purasawalkam » Villivakkam » Kolathur » Nazarathpettai » Pattabiram » Maduravoyal » Koyambedu » Tiruverkadu » Puzhal » Kilpauk » Perambur » Mogappair
Avadi » Ayyapakkam » Tiruninravur » Nerkundram » Moolakadai » Ayanavaram » Retteri » Padi » Ambattur » Tirumullaivoyal » Aminjikarai » Vysarpadi » Red Hills



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‘These trees should have been transplanted’



Decades-old trees at Kovilpadagai in Avadi have become a casualty of urban development. Felled to accommodate the construction of stormwater drains, we residents are saddened by their fate.

Over these years, these tall trees had mitigated floods and nurtured the environment. They cooled our

summers, soaked up rainwater, and stood firm during storms. Why could not have the drains been constructed around them when there was space?

We question the rationale behind the decision to remove these trees. Were alternative designs considered?

A viable alternative to prevent



▼ The stretch of road at Kovilpadagai in Avadi

such losses in the future is by transplanting mature trees to safer locations, where uprooted trees could thrive and continue to benefit the environment. Using advanced machinery and expert arborists, trees can be relocated

without extensive damage to their root systems. Transplanted trees would create instant urban forests, offering shade, improving air quality and fostering biodiversity.

B. Rachel,
Avadi

‘Install speed breakers on Stephenson Road’

We the residents of North Town Apartments are concerned about the escalating safety risks on Stephenson Road. The absence of traffic regulations and speed control measures on this road poses a significant threat to the safety of our residents.

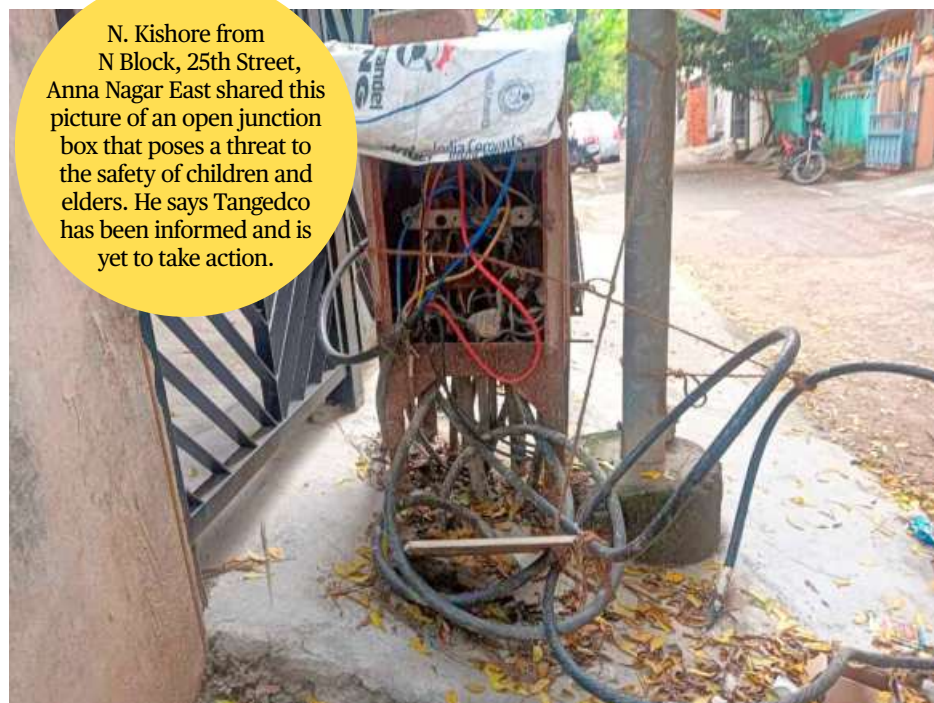
In the last one year, there have been many near-fatal accidents, including one major incident involving a two-wheeler and a car a few days ago. With an increase in the number of residents at these apartment complexes, the traffic volume on Stephenson Road is expected to rise further. We urge the authorities to install speed breakers on both sides of Stephenson Road including near the exit gate of our apartment complex.

Kalpesh P. Surana,
Stephenson Road

Watch out for these dangers on these road



Narayanasami Dhandapani shared this picture of a missing manhole lid near Asiatic Road, Rohini Park on 100 Feet Road.



N. Kishore from N Block, 25th Street, Anna Nagar East shared this picture of an open junction box that poses a threat to the safety of children and elders. He says Tangedco has been informed and is yet to take action.

You can be our volunteer-writer

Dear readers, you can be our volunteer-writer by writing to us about issues and events in your neighbourhood. You should send the write-ups to downtownfeedback@thehindu.co.in. Letters must carry the postal address and contact number



Refurbished Ambattur OT bus terminus flooded

Following the recent rains, the Ambattur OT bus terminus on CTH Road was flooded. It should be noted that the Public Works Department refurbished the terminus at a cost of ₹40 lakh (allocated under Ambattur MLA Constituency Local Area Development Scheme) this July. Regular commuters point out necessary provisions are not in place for water to recede.

“It is a small terminus and the narrow platforms have to accommodate seats and time keeper’s booth. So there is not much moving space on the platforms. So commuters wait on the bus bays as well. During the recent rains, the bays were flooded and commuters were put to a lot of inconvenience. Motorists misusing the bus bays as thoroughfares also added to the problem,” says T. Sadagopan, a regular commuter.



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TNHB Colony in Avadi flooded

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Residents of TNHB Colony in Avadi shudder to think how their winters would turn out if the Kannigapuram canal was not in the picture during the NE monsoon. That is not to say its presence keeps flood waters entirely from their doors. When it rains heavily, this canal is out of its depth. Even with the canal quaffing rainwater, they are up against inundation lasting a day, as was the case following the recent spell of rains. Of course, without the canal, the picture would be direr. Residents want the canal's holding capacity increased, probably through a deepening exercise.

The plinth area at the

ground floor level in the older units being low, rainwater enters these houses, says Jothi Kumar, a resident of TNHB Colony for around 30 years. Living in one of the older units, Jothi Kumar does not have to stir from home to check the level of inundation; he encounters it in his living room.

The rainwater is mixed with sewage, he remarks.

Jothi Kumar continues: "As it runs along the main road, the Kannigapuram canal is wide, and it gets narrow in the interior areas including TNHB Colony. The canal's holding capacity should be improved. Flooding of the colony is a recurrent issue, one that has not been addressed over the years – it is an irony that the Avadi Corporation's main office is located near the TNHB Colony."



'Allot shops at TNHB complex in Ambattur Industrial Estate'



Anna Nagar Western Extension B Sector Association and Anna Nagar Senior Citizens Welfare Association organised a meeting on December 8 to protest against Greater Chennai Corporation's move to have Park Road as a vending zone.

According to a press release, a good number of residents took part in the protest.

"There are schools and places of worship in the vicinity. With time, more vendors may occupy the road and the entire footpath will be encroached upon. Hence, we request GCC to allot them shops at the TNHB shopping complex at Ambattur Industrial Estate Road," says A. Chockalingam, president, Anna Nagar Western Extension B Sector Association.

Junctions in Pudhur become chaotic during rush hour



▼ The junction of Pudhur Main Road and Ambattur Red Hills Road. PHOTO: VEDHAN M

Traffic signals and a zebra-crossing are badly needed at the junction of Pudhur Main Road and Ambattur Red Hills Road.

Commonly known as "Meen market junction," this spot is a school zone with three institutions and a fish market in the vicinity. Hence, it witnesses heavy traffic during rush hour. Due to the absence of traffic signals, the junction turns chaotic. It should be noted that Ambattur Red Hills Road is a bus route road with frequent movement of buses.

Regulars at the junction say minor accidents occur

here frequently. In some cases, motorists have sustained serious injuries.

"Traffic police regulate this junction rarely, mostly personnel from the schools man the junction," says a resident. The same goes for the next junction where Kamraj Street and Ambattur Redhills Road intersect. But it is not as chaotic and congested as the Pudhur Main Road junction. This spot is just a few metres away from the junction of Pudhur Main Road and Ambattur Redhills Road.

Regulars want appropriate safety measures in place to ensure order and

discipline at both the junctions. Some suggest closing one of these two junctions as they are located close to each other, which encourages wrong side driving.

Signboards indicating that this is a school zone and CCTVs should be in place.

"Here, motorists and pillion riders, especially children can be found without helmets. Besides, there is a liquor shop in the vicinity. People drive in an inebriated condition. Hence, stringent measures should be taken against such unsafe driving," says a resident.

(Text by L. Kanthimathi)

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Shards of hope

Chennai-based entities representing a reasonable cross-section of the waste recycling community explain why broken glass and even fully intact glass bottles have a difficult journey to make before they can enjoy a new life and purpose

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

Shards bring luck. The efficacy of that Germanic superstition is restricted to porcelain. It takes a beating when the shards are of glass. Take a poll among local kabadiwalas: they will vote broken glass out in a brutal landslide verdict. Many a reputed recycler from the organised sector would also turn down broken glass in polite but unambiguous terms.

In Chennai's circular economy, Spreco Recycling Pvt Ltd is a recognised name. Its director Krishnapriya A. weighs in with her company's stand on broken glass: "While we recycle almost all types of waste (including glass bottles), we avoid broken glass entirely. It is hazardous for our manpower, who handle waste directly, and transporting it is a logistical nightmare."

Even when it is in one piece, glass – which includes glass bottles – is made to feel unwelcome at the hyperlocal level, with many kabadiwalas operating around the street corner spurning it for the challenges that go with just accumulating it, not to mention the low returns that hardly justify the efforts.

P.S. Jayaraman, a resident of SSM Nagar, a 2500-unit gated community in New Perungalathur, spearheads a recycling initiative involving residents of the massive enclave. Jayaraman repeats the sentiments about fully-intact glass bottles, expressed by K. Gopal, a local kabadiwala operating in SSM Nagar. "The local kabadiwala mentioned that he no longer collects glass bottles unless they are accumulated in large quantities for recycling, which poses a space constraint for him. He stated that transparent glass bottles fetch anywhere between ₹3000 and ₹4000

This section spotlights initiatives undertaken by residents of Chennai to minimise the waste that reaches landfills

per tonne, while brown bottles are valued lower. Bottles of other colours have no resale value and are typically broken down before being sent for recycling."

Gopal reportedly operates on a measly 300 sq.ft which comes at a rent of ₹9,000 per month, and if he were to foray into glass bottle accumulation, he would need a minimum of 10,000 sq.ft.

These realities trace a picture of disappointment. Glass lends itself to closed-loop recycling, capable of being recycled 'n' number of times without registering a drop in its quality. But glass is only rarely allowed to go on this journey, as it is up against obstacles and its amazing potential is trapped in the shards and cracks of a broken recycling system. It is a pity that as most recyclables, ranging from plastic to paper, receive a second bite at the cherry, glass remains a fragile and dejected outsider.

Given these systemic hurdles, even glass aggregators are likely to be thin on the ground. Let us track the typical day lived by one of those aggregators: Antony Arul Xavier. Operating out of his modest facility, Seeman Bottles in Chitlapakkam, and focussing exclusively on glass, broken and intact in a variety of forms, Xavier is

taking a road seldom taken, and he knows it.

He collects glass bottles from various locations across Medavakkam, Perumbakkam, Guindy and Alandur. His work is methodical – broken bottles are sent to JBA Group in Pondicherry for recycling, while unbroken bottles return to manufacturers like SNJ, Karlsberg and Elite, beginning a new cycle of use.

Xavier's operation is beset with nicks and sometimes gashes. His team of 15 works on a rotational basis, but despite their care, the risks remain. "Despite being careful, we still end up with cuts," Xavier admits, underscoring the ever-present threat of glass shards in collection bags.

The transportation process adds another layer of complexity: Xavier makes the delivery of bottles to manufacturers and recyclers.

With these difficulties checking in and out unfailingly every work day, Xavier's venture remains a small boat that is hardly on an even keel.

The break-up of his earnings as reported by him – 50 paise per bottle after deduction of operational expenses – seems hardly anything to wire home about. Yet, as Xavier himself puts it, he finds satisfaction in doing something many others have overlooked. "The profit is minimal, but I feel satisfied doing something most people would not even consider," he shares.

Despite its undeniable environmental benefits – such as conserving raw materials, reducing energy consumption and minimising waste generation – the process of glass recycling remains as incomplete as a book with missing pages. From collection to transportation, from sorting to processing, the challenges of glass recycling are numerous and varied, and need to be addressed.

At the basic level, lack of enthusiasm among local kabadiwalas (who set the recycling process in motion) for glass products increases the chances of glass slipping into landfills, together with other waste.

And therefore, any conversation surrounding glass recycling should include a pointed look at our consumption patterns. The change can happen in households. Reuse glass bottles. Accumulate used glass bottles and even broken glass carefully, over a period, and hand them over to an aggregator.

Does this work as a new year resolution? It well could, if you realise every time you take a sip from a bottled beverage, that it is in your power to get that glass bottle to live on. And that your small action could tip the scale toward sustainability.

Any conversation surrounding glass recycling should include a pointed look at our consumption patterns

AI IMAGE
GENERATION:
M. ARIVARASU

The power of *learning and sharing*

As the year 2024 draws to a close, *The Hindu Downtown* features two initiatives, one related to waste management and the other to fitness, that have gone beyond the communities they originated in

LIFFY THOMAS

Multiplier effect in Thalambur

Gated communities in this locality come together to create a robust waste management ecosystem

Every Saturday, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., a tempo trundles down the streets of Thalambur, stopping by gated communities and by the end of this tour, it carries a heavy load of dry waste on its back. The dry waste largely consists of plastics of various thickness, shapes and colours.

These are carefully segregated plastic waste by environment-conscious residents of these societies. With each community influencing another to engage with the vendor, Spreco Recycling Pvt. Ltd., the initiative has covered considerable ground.

What started with one community seven months ago has now expanded to cover at least six other villa and gated communities in the region, so much so that recently, the tempo started visiting these communities twice a week.

Each of these communities has brought something of a pioneering spirit to the table. While Casa Grande Elan took the lead in ensuring dry waste was sent to an authorised recycler, Casa Grande Pavi-



AI IMAGE GENERATION:
M ARIVARASU

lion was early in setting up community composting of biodegradable waste. Arihant Heirloom Apartments took the first step in finding a reliable recycler for e-waste and followed it up with regular drives in the community before passing on the contact to their neighbours in the region.

“In the ewaste and plastic waste initiatives, there was an incentive given by the vendors for the segre-

gated items which was an advantage for the management community members to bring them on board,” says P. Navaneethan, an active resident of Arihant Heirloom.

While many of these gentle nudges are through WhatsApp messages and calls, in some situations, residents also visit each of their neighbours to be more forceful influencers.

“Our community has launched

a pilot programme in composting wet waste with four composters, so we visited Casa Grande Pavilion to take lessons from them,” says Navaneethan.

As per reports, Thalambur village panchayat has 7,358 households of which 3,813 are apartments. If each of them installs bulk community composters then this panchayat could be a model for many other areas to follow.

From the past

*When it travelled quite a distance in its green journey, Aashiana Apartments in Alwarpet initiated ‘Swachh Venus’ to keep the neighbourhood surrounding the apartment clean. Led by a group of residents, they covered Venus Colony 2nd Street, 1st Street and Sriram Srinivasa Road going from house to house talking about the importance of source segregation.

* They first lined their streets with potted plants, painted the walls and then went bin-less. The transformation of Thiruveedhi Amman Kovil Street in Mandaveli with the efforts of Thiruveedhi Amman Kovil Street Residents’ Association led to expanding the green initiatives to other streets in the region that later came to be called RK Nagarra.

* Sabari Terrace, an apartment complex in OMR, has served as one of the best examples for a city where any water conservation solution is welcome. When residents of the community showed the success of rainwater harvesting methods through data, neighbouring apartments in the OMR belt started to implement it as well.

* Apartment complexes around Model School Road in Shollinganallur are a heavy weight when it comes to managing waste and conserving water. With Central Park East seeing the rewards in investing in solar technology, some of their neighbours are discussing the pros and cons of adopting it.

Pedal power

On January 4, when the Thiruverkadu chapter of WCCG will celebrate its first anniversary, it will have a remarkable campaign to look back on

When two childhood friends residing at a 400-unit gated community in Thiruverkadu decided to bond with others in the society, they took the cycling route.

“Thiruverkadu is cut off from the city with not much entertainment options and it was difficult to pull out people for any activity,” says Arun Kumar S. who along with Vinoth M. started VGN Cycling Group in January

2023.

With a small group of cycling enthusiasts from the community, the group explored new cycling routes and also enjoyed the rewards of doing it together. After a satisfying year they were invited to join We Are Chennai Cycling Group (WCCG).

As one of the youngest chapters of WCCG, this group from Thiruverkadu has its own ways of draw people for fun and fitness.

“We are flexible with people, but we follow certain rules before including a new cyclist,” says Arun, a software professional who moved from Ayyapakkam to Thiruverkadu for his children’s schooling. Interested cyclists are part of a trial group for three days, after which they are felicitated and added to the main group.

He used to ride sometimes with the Porur or Ambattur

chapter but both were far for him and so he started riding alone.

Currently, the Thiruverkadu chapter has 30 active riders, a majority of them residing two to three kilometres from VGN Temple Town where it all started.

Arun says associating with the WCCG brand played a big role in getting more members, and some of them were looking for such platforms but did not know how to get connected.

“We are a motley group of cyclists with chartered accountants, defence persons and a college student as well,” he says.

Besides the temple town that this neighbourhood is famous for, the group happy to just pedal 5 to 10 km to take in the scenery dominated by paddy fields.

On January 4, the chapter will celebrate one year of bringing a neighbourhood together for fun and fitness.

Mogappair RWA seeks bus shelter



Following a request from JAMBA United Welfare Association, a residents forum of Mogappair West, the Metropolitan Transport Corporation has set up a bus stop at the Mogappair West section of (near Jashwanth Nagar) of Perungalathur - Puzhal Chennai Bypass.

"MTC buses to Tambaram and Kilambaram are operated via Perungalathur - Puzhal Chennai By-

pass. But there was no stop near the Mogappair section of the bypass. Hence, commuters of this neighbourhood had to go to the bus terminus at Ambattur Industrial Estate or to Porur toll gate on the bypass. This was quite inconvenient. We gave a representation to the Metropolitan Transport Corporation this June and this stop was set up in October. We are happy



The bus stop without a shelter and (right) the one with a shelter on Perungalathur-Puzhal Chennai Bypass. PHOTOS: VEDHAN M

about it. There is a shelter at the stop meant for buses going toward Porur but not for the opposite stop (near Decathlon) meant for buses

coming from Porur," say S. Swaminathan, the association's president. The association also requests the authorities concerned to halt

SETC buses which are proceeding to Thiruvannamalai, Tiruchi, and Chenglepet.

Text: L. Kanthimathi

New Grand Master of Grand Lodge of India installed

Gutha Krishnan Selvarajan is the 19th Grand Master who will serve for a period of three years

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A new pair of freemason hands has taken over the reins of the Grand Lodge of India (GLI). Freemasons from dozens and dozens of lodges across the country descended upon Chennai Trade Centre on December 7 to witness and celebrate the installation of Gutha Krishnan Selvarajan as GLI's 19th Grand Master for a tenure running from 2024 to 2027. And he is taking the baton from Anish Kumar Sharma.

He is GKS to both freemasons and the wider world outside freemasonry's perimeter.

According to a press release shared with *The Hindu*, GKS is as multi-faceted a personality inside the freemason movement as he is widely known to be in the larger world.

He has had various calling cards, as lawyer (particularly in the area of arbitration), as a bold entrepreneur not shying away from new challenges. The release notes that he has forayed into



The Grand Master of GLI, Gutha Krishnan Selvarajan; and (right) he is seen with T.N. Manoharan, Regional Grand Master of Southern India.

real estate business and has many notable projects to his credit.

His association with freemasonry spans 42 years and he has held significant positions in both regional as well as the Grand Lodge, where he is now donning the biggest role possible.

GKS is an admirable ritualist with the rare ability to reproduce verbatim, pages and pages of rituals fluently without a flaw, says the release.

GKS was also instrumental in restor-

ing the free masons hall at Ethiraj Salai way back in 2000. In recognition of his efforts in building freemasonry, he has had a lodge named after him, says the press release.

According to a note on GLI's website, "The Grand Lodge of India, with the approval of the Grand Board of General Purposes, consecrated a Craft Lodge in the name of 'Lodge G.K.SELVARAJAN No.365' at Chennai on July 11, 2009."

During his tenure as Regional Grand Master of Southern India (from January 2005 to March 2008), GKS "introduced the innovative concept of Area Meetings for each Area under the ARGMs, to enable the Lodges to perform better and to strengthen the bond of brotherhood. This concept was followed not only by his successor Regional Grand Masters, but also by the RGMs in other Regions as well. He introduced the office of "Officer-in-Charge" for the superior degrees to streamline the administration, says the note on the website."

GKS has also had a long association with the Rotary movement.



Sir M.Ct.M school students reunite after 50 years



Twenty students comprising three batchmates of 1968-69, 1970-71 and 1971-72 had a wonderful gathering of reunion at the premises of Sir. M.Ct.M Higher Secondary School in Pura-sawalkam on December 7, 2024.

When these batches studied, the institution was a high school, and began to offer up to higher secondary education subsequently.

The occasion was

graced by .Nandini Valli Muthiah, great granddaughter of late Sir M.Ct.Muthiah Chettiar and granddaughter of late M.Ct.M.Chidambaram Chettiar.

Speaking on the occasion, Nandini said she was immensely pleased about her participation with the students who gathered in the school premises where they had their high school education more than half a century ago, says a press re-

lease.

"To know that all of you have done well in life, it makes me and the institution very proud and for the people who helped to achieve it," she said. Elangovan, head master, welcomed the 'alumni' and introduced them to other teachers. A specially designed memento with the pictures of the school emblem, school building, students at prayer hall and that of Sir M.Ct.Muthiah Chettiar was presented by them to Nandini on behalf of the three batchmates, the release adds.



Students from schools in the region excel at arithmetic genius contest

More than 3,000 children from 220 schools across Tamil Nadu took part in the 9th Edition of the SIP Arithmetic Genius Contest. The State-round championship is open to students of classes I to V.

The SIP Arithmetic Genius Contest is an annual competition designed to inspire a love for arithmetic among young learners. The first, second and third prize winners from each class in the State Round Finals have qualified for the national round finals, scheduled to be held in January 2025, said a release.

Suthan Naresh S. S., class IV student of Velammal Vidyalaya Annexure, Mel Aynampakkam and Tamilini S., Class I student of SBOA School and Junior College, Anna Nagar won the championship. Other winners include Pranesharjun, class III student, Maharishi School of Excellence, Thiruverkadu and G. Kavyadarshni, SRM Public School, Guduvanchery. Priyanka Y, class I student from RMK Senior Secondary School, Thiruverkadu was declared winner one at the SIP Arithmetic Genius Contest



A 19-day celebration of Carnatic music

The magic of Mylapore is being recreated in Valasaravakkam through a 19-day Carnatic music extravaganza, beginning on December 18 and concluding on January 5, 2025.

The event, to be held at Jyothi Indira Thirumana Mandapam in Valasaravakkam, promises to showcase young emerging talent in the sphere of Carnatic music.

On each of these days, the concerts would take place between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.

The carefully curated lineup features a diverse and inclusive range of Carnatic music, with artists from the United States and across Tamil

Nadu, says a press release, adding that the platform is being offered to these talented musicians, free of charge.

Traditional cuisine

To complement the soulful music, the organisers have partnered with a leading caterer for supply of traditional food for lunch and dinner.

Entry is open to all. Date: December 18th, 2024 - January 5th, 2025

Time: 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Location: Jyothi Indira Thirumana Mandapam, Valasaravakkam

For details, call 9884997667

Alumni meet on December 21

The Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda College (RKMVC), Mylapore, shift - II, started in 1974 with 140 students, has completed its golden jubilee this year.

More than 2,500 students from 10 degree courses have passed out of the institution.

To commemorate this miles-

tone, the college is conducting an 'All Alumni Meet' for both shifts on the campus on December 21 between 3.30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Interested alumni can register for this reunion on the college website rkmvc.ac.in.

Listen to songs from 'Romantic 80s'

Satragi's next concert 'Romantic 80s' will be held on December 15 from 5:45 p.m. at Chinmaya Heritage Centre, Chetpet.

This programme will feature songs from movies like Ek Duuje Ke Liye, Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak, Masoom, Parinda, Qurbani, Love Story, Silsila, Sanam Teri Kasam,

Umrao Jaan and Mr India.

Promod, Smriti, Sai Krithika and Abhishek will be supported by a live orchestra.

Tickets for this event are priced at ₹800/₹500/₹300 and will be home-delivered on calling 9884778073.



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A captivating performance



▼ The Centre for Women's Studies, Women's Christian College, in association with R. Chudamani Memorial Trust, organised an English play titled "Chudamani2" - a set of stories written by renowned writer R.Chudamani, which was staged at the college on December 13. Directed by veteran theatre actor P.C. Ramakrishna and enacted by the Madras Players, the series of short plays showcased strong female characters animating emotions and dilemmas of independence, career, motherhood, identity, helplessness, societal norms, compassion, forgiveness, humanism and acceptance.

Winners of 'Wings to Fly' to travel to Singapore



The finals of Wings to Fly, a programme initiated by the Rotary Club of Madras East in collaboration with the Greater Chennai Corporation for 211 Corporation Schools, was held recently at Vani Mahal in T. Nagar.

This is the 10th edition of the programme where eight finalists are taken on a fully funded educational tour to Singapore in May 2025.

Entrepreneurial skills for teens "Teenpreneurship" was the theme this year.

The competition began with around 25,000 students at the school level and after a progressive selection process across rounds, a set of 32 students reached the final.

A three-day workshop was conducted in September first week to impart knowledge on the topic. After assessments, 32 students from Class VIII and IX and 32 students from Class IX were shortlisted, said a release.

The 64 semifinalists were taken on a field trip to two industries. Later they presented their business idea before a panel of judges.

The winners are: R. Yogasree, CHSS Subbarayan Street; Kirathi Maya Sree G., CGHSS M H Road; D. Yashika, CGHSS Nungambakkam; P. Oviya, CHSS T H Road; S. Shazia Banu, CGHSS Buddha Street; Sameera Fathima J., CHSS Thiruvannamiyur; Gnanaraj M., CHSS MGR Nagar; and Anushri E., CGHSS Nungambakkam

College pledges to be a tobacco-free institution

M.O.P. Vaishnav College for Women has declared itself a 'tobacco-free institution,' committing to advocacy efforts among students and strict enforcement of a tobacco-free zone in and around the campus.

UGC had issued a circular on September 11, urging educational institutions to effectively implement the Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions guidelines, which was first issued in 2019. Citing the Global Adult Tobacco

Survey, the circular observed that 55 percent of lifelong tobacco users begin before the age of 20, leading to significant health risks over a lifetime of use.

The UGC guidelines require prominent signage declaring the zone 'tobacco-free'; designated student and staff tobacco monitors; prohibition of the sale of tobacco products including e-cigarettes within 100 yards of the premises; action against violators; and awareness efforts on the initiative, said a release.

At the event held to kick off the new regime of proactive tobacco prohibition, students and staff took a pledge to uphold the initiative. In the days to come, the health and wellness student

Bhavan's Rajaji Vidyashram wins quiz contest

Twenty-seven teams took part in the state-level quiz conducted by SBIOA Educational Trust

Bhavan's Rajaji Vidyashram bagged the top prize in the state-level inter-school quiz competition, organised by the SBIOA Educational Trust recently. Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan (PSBB) and Chennai Public School finished second and third respectively. The competition was conducted by noted quiz master Siddhartha Basu and saw the participation of 27 schools from across the state. Six teams qualified for the final after a written preliminary round. Basu and Anbarasu, correspondent of the SBIOA Model Matriculation School, Chennai, handed over the prizes.



▼ The winning team

M.O.P. Vaishnav helps set up computer lab at Assumption School



As part of its social responsibility initiative, M.O.P. Vaishnav College for Women helped Assumption School in Nungambakkam set up a computer lab with 19 computers along with computer tables and chairs on December 11, 2024.

Assumption School now has a fully equipped computer lab, says a press release. Archana Prasad, principal of M.O.P. Vaishnav College, expressed gratification at being able to create new opportunities for the bright, young minds at Assumption School, as she inaugurated the lab on Wednesday. The correspondent and headmaster of the school, and the vice-principal and head of administration of M.O.P. Vaishnav College were present at the inauguration, the release adds. Besides the 19 computers, tables and chairs, a few steel cupboards, staff tables, and chairs were also given to the school. In addition, the college undertook the complete infrastructure conversion of a classroom into the computer lab, including the installation of electric sockets, data sockets, new flooring and painting.

This social initiative, one of several that the college undertakes to empower its neighbourhood, fits perfectly into M.O.P.'s community service plan for the year, themed 'Gyaan' or 'knowledge', says the release. The various programmes have been carrying out service projects in accordance with this theme.

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