

IT CORRIDOR

Adyar » Kanathur » Kelambakkam » Navalur » Semmencherry » Thoraipakkam » Velachery » IIT Madras » Kandanchavadi » Kottivakkam

Neelankarai » Sholinganallur » Thiruvannamiyur » Vijaya Nagar » Indira Nagar » Karapakkam » Kotturpuram » Padur » Thalambur » Pallikaralai

CMRL expands parking facility at Alandur station



The Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has expanded the parking facility at the Alandur metro terminal.

A newly-renovated parking area on the other side of the terminal (behind the statue of M. G. Ramachandran) has been upgraded with paver blocks to accommodate 300 two-wheelers.

The existing parking facility

along the terminal bus halt over has space to support over 1,000 two-wheelers and 180 four-wheelers.

A release from CMRL stated that introducing this additional space would offer greater convenience to commuters and encourage more people to use metro services with ease and efficiency.

Rajesh Chaturvedi, director (systems and operations), CMRL, inaugurated the parking area. T. Archunan, director (projects), Gopinath Mallya, chief advisor, operation and maintenance; and S. Sathesh Prabhu, assistant general manager, rolling stock and operations, and officials of CMRL were present at the inauguration.

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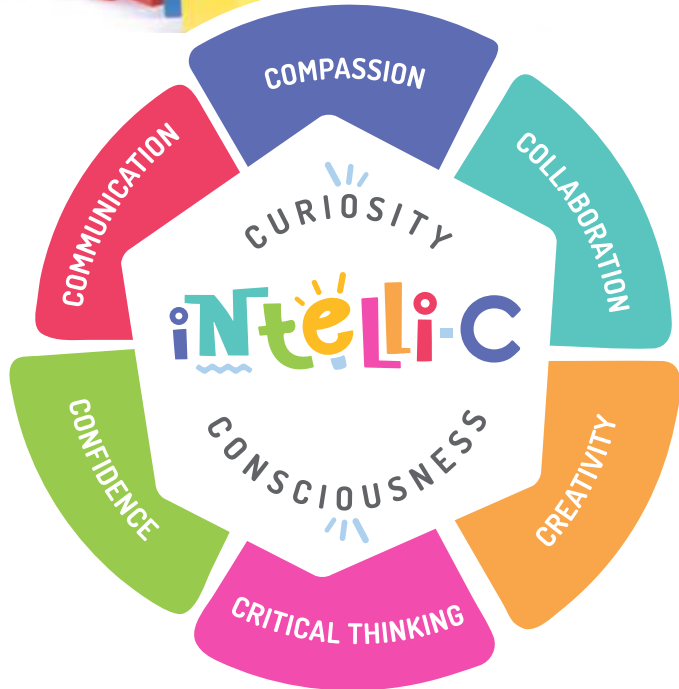
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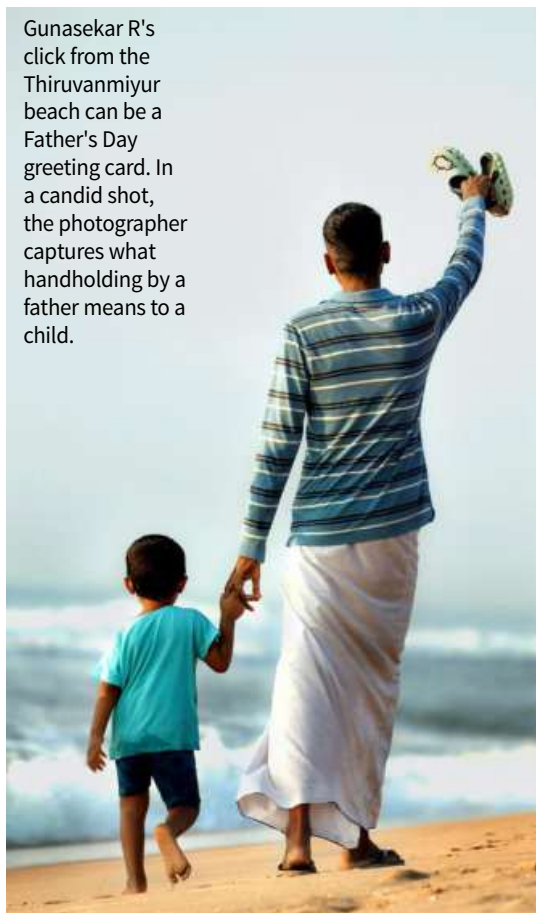
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In flattering light

The Hindu's Made Of Chennai campaign conducted a photo contest on the theme, "Life in a Day of Chennai". By keeping the theme broad-based, the contest was providing considerable creative legroom for the participants. Out of hundreds of photos that entered the fray, a handful of them – actually, quite a few handfuls – proceeded to the "wall of honour". Here is a clutch of photos that presented snapshots of spots and people from areas covered by the Adyar and IT Corridor edition of Downtown.

Gunasekar R's click from the Thiruvannamiyur beach can be a Father's Day greeting card. In a candid shot, the photographer captures what handholding by a father means to a child.



**Made Of
Chennai**
THE HINDU

Padmavathy Rathinakumar's click from Muttukadu presents the image of a fisherman putting in late hours at work with the golden hour slipping away on the horizon. The setting sun brings just enough drama to the scene.

Distance lends enchantment to the view. Lakshminarayanan L's aerial shot of the Adyar estuary with the broken bridge displayed to perfection is breathtakingly beautiful.



With a large and probing depth of field, Muralidharan Dhandapani manages an arresting view of the murals on the MRTS buildings on Old Mahabalipuram Road.

Ragupathi Murugan captures a sidelight at a temple festival in Covelong. A play is being staged, and Ragupathi's viewfinder left the stage and targetted an artiste, fully decked and dabbed in performance dress and make-up, emerging from behind a sidescreen.

Painting workshop held



A painting workshop was held at the State government-run library at Gandhi Nagar in Adyar. According to a press release, 35 children in the five-to-10 age group took part in the workshop.

Good show by NIEPMD children



Children with Cerebral Palsy of NIEPMD (National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities) took part in the State Level Cerebral Athletic Championship 2024 organised by Cerebral Palsy Sports Association Tamil Nadu.

According to a press release, one gold and six silver medals were bagged NIEPMD children. The events included running, shot-put throw, and discus throw.

Workshop on farming

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a workshop on organic farming on October 3. According to a press release, the session will focus on chemical-free methods of pest management and soil nourishment. Also a culinary session will be held on October 4. The session will demonstrate preparation of various cuisines with heirloom rice variety. The sessions will be held at the centre's premises at Thiru Vi Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy. For details, call 044-29530048

Humour club meets in Thiruvamiyur

Besant Nagar Humour Club is organising its meet on October 6 at Sea view Apartments' (HB) Owners' Welfare Association Hall, First Seaward Road, Thiruvamiyur. Time: At 5 p.m.

According to a press release, a drama troupe called Sarvam Nataka Priyas will be staging a Tamil play titled "Exchange Offer." For details, call 9444755430.



Events at Kotturpuram temple

Alarmelumanga Nayika Sametha Prasanna Venkatesa Perumal Temple in Kotturpuram will organise music, dance and discourses as part of Navarathri festival. The events will be held from October 3 to 11, says a press release.

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Extending the banquet hall

On International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, *The Hindu Downtown* takes a look at two groups in Chennai united by a calling to fill empty plates with recovered surplus food but are going about this mission in contrasting styles

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

In the streets of Chennai, where grand celebrations often leave behind plates piled high with untouched food, this man saw what most others did not – the need to extend the banquet hall and let the uninvited poor in.

And this man, R. Arun Kumar made common cause with a major surplus food distribution movement No Food Waste that originated in Coimbatore, and through that association, saw the rise of “No Food Waste – Chennai”. Over the years, the Chennai chapter has formed a rock-solid core team and a sizeable body of volunteers willing to go the extra mile.

In existence for the past six years, the Chennai chapter of No Food Waste has been finding fresh plates for surplus food not just in Chennai district, but also the surrounding Kanchipuram and Tiruvallur districts.

The NGO steps in to collect food that overshoots calculated plates at weddings, restaurants, college canteens and hotel buffets, ensuring it meets safety standards before being delivered straight to the hungry.

Ever since he transitioned from a corporate career (as an employee in a variety of startups, the telecom sector and as a freelancer) to community service (as regional director



During a session by No Food Waste; and (below) volunteers of Robin Hood Army during a distribution drive. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

of No Food Waste in Chennai region), Arun's plate has been full. For, the hungry is always with us; and people invariably leave a chunk of any gastronomic fare untouched.

In the wider Chennai Metropolitan Area, this movement has provided meals to over 25 lakh individuals – and that has obviously entailed considerable work for Arun and his team.

Between food rescue and delivery, there are unavoidable stages. Arun explains that “No Food Waste” ensures that untouched excess food is collected, verified, and donated to the needy in compliance with strict FSSAI guidelines. To enhance transparency, donors receive photographic evidence and acknowledgement once their contributions reach those in need. Food is distributed to daily wage workers, slum areas and homes. Arun emphasises, “Every time we collect food, it is a step towards a zero-waste future.” In response to

the COVID-19 pandemic, when food insecurity soared, Arun and his team launched their own kitchen to prepare fresh meals, reaching some of the city's most vulnerable populations. This shift highlights their commitment and ability to adapt and serve those in need during challenging times.

An essential component of No Food Waste's operations is their active involvement in people's celebrations, made possible by their kitchen. Residents across Chennai are encouraged to celebrate milestones – such as birthdays and anniversaries – by ordering food through the organisation, which is then donated to those in need. As Arun puts it, “The joy of feeding someone who truly needs it is unmatched. It is time we rethink how we celebrate and make sure no one is left behind.”

To further their mission, No Food Waste collaborates with businesses and events to spread aware-

ness about food wastage. By partnering with well-known restaurants such as Saravana Bhavan and institutions and organisations such as IIT Madras and Zoho, No Food Waste has created a network of food donors who contribute regularly. Notably, hotels such as Savera notify the NGO when excess food is available after large events, ensuring no meal goes to waste.

As food waste contributes to methane emissions, he has strong words for it. “Food waste is a crime against society, and reducing it is crucial for both the environment and humanity,” says Arun.

To further raise awareness, the organisation's “Foodathon” initiative encourages participation in community runs, with every participating individual indirectly ensuring donation of five food packets. At the time this article begins to be read from the pages of *The Hindu Downtown* (on September 29), a Foodathon would be under way at Besant Nagar.

If you have extra food after an event or at home, you can call the helpline (9962790877) or reach out via social media. Those interested in sponsoring or donating may contact “No Food Waste” at nofood-wastechennai@gmail.com. No Food Waste has over one hundred volunteers, but can do with many more, says Arun, inviting residents to volunteer with this group.

A legend lives on

A spot known as “Gypsy” at Marina Beach for Sherwood Forest. A band of volunteering surplus food cartons-lugging women and men for the merry men. The legend of Robin Hood flourishes in Chennai, motifs from the English folklore overwritten by local examples.

Welcome to the Chennai Chapter of Robin Hood Army (RHA), a group engaged in surplus food rescue and distribution. The Marina Beach – specifically a spot called Gypsy not far from the Swimming Pool – serves as a major launching pad for its outreach programmes. RHA Chennai however has a foot – and a ladle, if you like – in every hunger hotspot in Chennai. The “registry” includes bus stops and railway stations, even a patch near the bridge on posh TTK Road. There is no place impermeable to hunger and so, RHA volunteers in Chennai who work tirelessly, packing and distributing meals, are indispensable.



A global phenomenon present in many countries, this modern-day legend called Robin Hood Army touched empty plates and hungry stomachs in India because two individuals, Neel Ghose and Aarushi Batra from Delhi, cared. It now spans across India. Its beginnings in Chennai were small, the most notable intervention in the early days happening at Winner's Bakery in Adyar and from there, it has grown into a community of around 350 volunteers dedicated to serving those in hunger. RHA Chennai operates largely through the reach of an ubiquitous messenger, WhatsApp. The digital tool connects volunteers, facilitates quick coordination, and mobilises support across Chennai. Set in the mould of surplus food rescue groups, RHA thrives on donations of excess food by events, weddings and individuals seeking to make a difference. Each meal collected represents not just food but a sigh of relief for someone struggling to make ends meet.

When the pandemic struck, RHA Chennai had its mission rewritten and extended. It launched vaccination drives and delivered groceries to families facing food insecurity, says Mohammed Farhaan, Chennai city representative of RHA.

Through collaborations with organisations such as Hindustan Unilever, it reached over 750 families, ensuring no one was left behind. The efforts even extended to remote areas along the Andhra Pradesh-Tamil Nadu border, including Ponneri, where many residents lacked access to basic healthcare and identification, he adds.

When the world began to recover from the pandemic, RHA Chennai found out that the crisis had even altered the charity ecosystem. The support systems having dwindled, the group found its cherished weekly food drives, especially at Marina Beach, coming to a halt. It continues to rely on the goodwill of volunteers and local partnerships, including PMR Logistics, which provides transportation support free of charge, ensuring that supplies reach those who need them the most. RHA stands out as a zero-funds organisation (as its website clearly says) deriving strength from a tested volunteer-driven operational model. Eschewing financial transactions, they rely on in-kind donations, proving that compassion can thrive without monetary exchanges.

The Chennai chapter of RHA is totally dependent on volunteers and does not have any full-time staff; not even a registered office, says Farhaan. “Helping others does not always mean giving money,” he emphasises. “Even the smallest actions can create significant impacts.” RHA Chennai invites individuals to join its volunteer force. Those interested in joining this Army can connect through its Facebook page or register on its official website.

Tech symposium held



The Department of Information Technology at Dr. M.G.R Educational and Research Institute in association with the Association of Information Technovanza (AITZa) recently hosted Sparkle'24, a national-level technical symposium.

The event brought together over 400 participants from various colleges and universities across the country, offering a platform for innovation, learning, and knowledge sharing through a series of technical and non-technical events, says a press release.

The event was graced by distinguished guests, including founder chancellor A.C. Shanmugam; president A.C.S. Arun Kumar, vice chancellor S. Geethalakshmi, rector D. Viswanathan, registrar C.B. Palanivelu, Sr. addl. registrar P. Kalidoss, along with chief guest S. Vincent, member secretary of the Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology (TNSCST). Udaya Sankar, national head of NASSCOM (Government Relations & Skills Initiatives) and co-founder & trustee of Maatram Foundation; N. Ethiraj, dean of engineering & technology; and N. Kanya, additional dean, engineering & technology head of the department of information technology, graced the occasion, according to the release. During the event, founder chancellor A.C. Shanmugam, president A.C.S. Arun Kumar released the symposium souvenir which was subsequently received by Prof. S. Vincent, the chief guest, the release adds.

Sharadotsav from October 9

The South Madras Cultural Association (SMCA) will present the 46th annual autumn festival, 'Sharadotsav,' from October 9 to 13 at Kailash Resort, East Coast Road, Injambakkam.

The festival aims to bring people from all walks of life, cultures, communities, and states into a bond of friendship and goodwill, instilling in them the spirit of harmony and humanity, said a release.

R. N. Ravi, Governor of Tamil Nadu, will inaugurate the festival, which will be

followed by a song recital by Ankita, a Sa Re Ga Ma champion.

On October 12, 'Dandiya Night' will be held, and 'Bhog' (prasada) will be distributed to the public on October 10, 11 and 12.

Apart from competitions for all age groups, a food carnival will be held on all days.

For details, call 9176335555, 8013380181, 9884081102.

Drawing contest

Rotary Club of Chennai Prestige and Shri Shankarlal Sundarbai Shasun Jain College are conducting a drawing and painting contest for school and college students on October 2. Students from LKG till graduation can participate for the event that starts at 9.30 a.m. There is no entry fee, but prior registration is required. Participants can WhatsApp their details to the numbers below, mentioning their name, age, school/college, class and contact number. The venue is Shri Shankarlal Sundarbai Shasun Jain College, T. Nagar.

For details, call 9841590399, 7667756677 or M. Babu at 9841475566.

Course on Montessori teacher training

The Indian Montessori Training Courses (IMTC), Chennai, will commence their 53rd Montessori teacher training course from October 18.



The one-year course would be held in the afternoons (online) on Fridays and in the classrooms (in person) on Saturdays.

The successful candidates would be awarded a diploma by the Indian Montessori Centre, Bangalore. IMTC-Chennai has completed 26 years of teacher training in Chennai, and over 1600 students have successfully completed the diploma courses, said a release.

For details, call 9444936263, 04424614301. Email : admissions.imtcc@gmail.com



Navarathri music festival

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is conducting Saroja Parasaran Memorial Endowment "Navaratri Music Festival" from October 3 to 13. The festival will feature vocal, instrumental and dance drama. Two programmes are scheduled every day at 5 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. at Bhavan's main auditorium in Mylapore and these events are open to all.

October 3 -S.R.G.S. Mohandass & Party (Nadaswaram); and Gayathri Girish (Vocal)

October 4 - Lalitha Mohan (Vocal); and Sikil Mala Chandrasekhar (Flute)

October 5- Nithaysree (Veena); Dr. Suryaprakash (Vocal)

October 6- Abhilash Venkitachalam (Vocal); and Sankari Krishnan (Vocal)

October 7- Malladi Sivanand Yasasvi (Vocal); Chinmaya Sisters (Vocal)

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