

IT CORRIDOR

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'PRIORITY BASIC NEEDS'

As Southern Railway announces a plan to have a sports facility established at Velachery MRTS station premises, Annai Indira Nagar residents reiterate an old demand. **P3**



PRINCIPAL'S LOVE FOR ANIMALS, A LESSON FOR CHILDREN

Grace Sheela teaches compassion and empathy to her students by taking care of injured animals **P6**

New gasifier crematorium in Perumbakkam



▼
Perumbakkam has got a new gasifier crematorium that can be used by people from across the city. On July 12, Sholinganallur MLA S. Aravind Ramesh along with Perumbakkam panchayat officials inaugurated the gasifier crematorium, which is maintained by Tamilnadu Employees Housing and Welfare Trust. Open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., the gasifier crematorium is among the handful of them being operated in the city. What makes it special is the Trust charges a nominal fee (₹ 1275) for cremation. Six to seven cremations can be performed a day.

TEXT AND PHOTOS: R. RAVINDRAN

Listen to songs from a bygone era in Taramani

Satangi's next presentation '1975' will be held on July 20 from 5:45 p.m. at TEACH Auditorium, Taramani. This programme will feature memorable songs from movies released exactly 50 years back like *Aandhi*, *Sholay*, *Julie*, *Chhoti Si Baat*, *Khushboo*, *Geet Gaata Chal*, *Dharam Karam* and *Dharmatma*.

The programme will be presented by Pramod, Smriti, Abhishek & Ramya on pre-recorded tracks.

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



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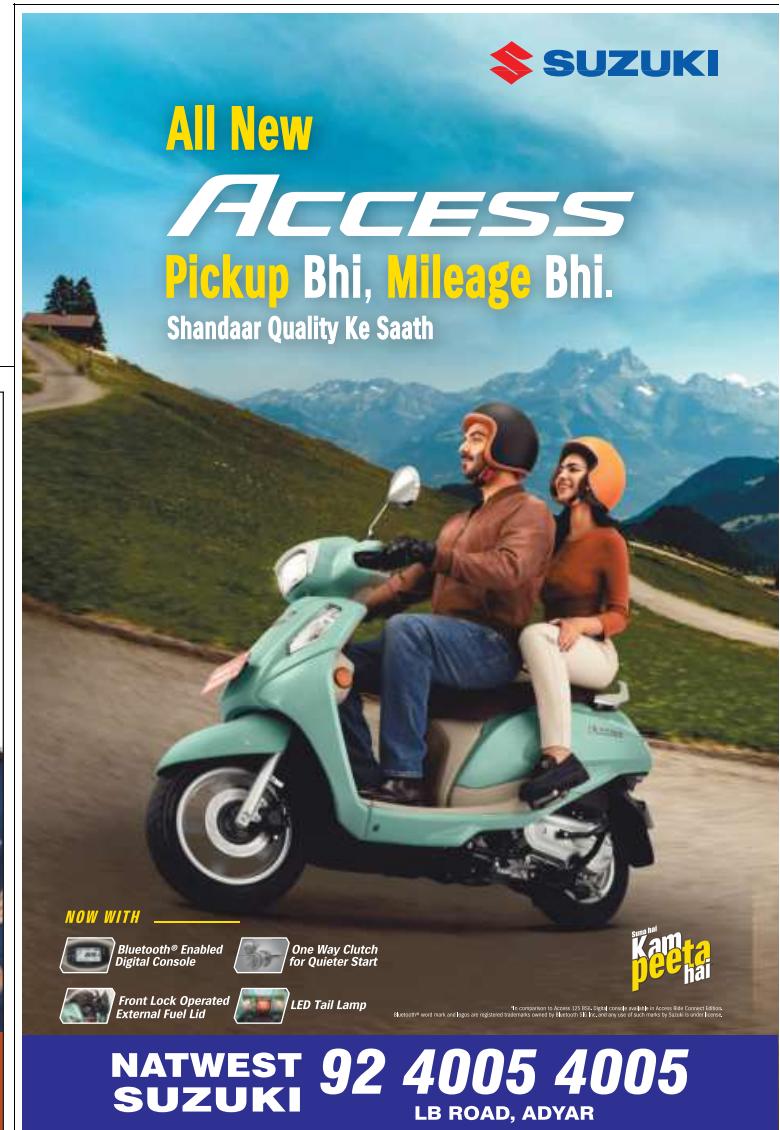
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Water hyacinth returns with a vengeance at Buckingham Canal in Sholinganallur

The imagery of Sisyphus rolling the accursed boulder up a hill ad infinitum is worn around the edges, yellow and crinkly from age and overuse. High time the never-ending task of boulder-rolling was substituted with something more modern and more relatable. If one were in Chennai, water hyacinth removal would come close to being a suitable substitute. The context for this suggestion is what happened in recent days at the Buckingham Canal running under the bridge in ECR Link Road in Sholinganallur. Water Resources Department has commissioned a water hyacinth removal work, and only a few days ago, two amphibian vehicles seemed to have picked this section of the waterway clean of water hyacinth. But with a deluge of water hyacinth floating in suddenly, it is back to square one. And the task is now considerably more challenging than when it was first initiated. The image was taken on July 11, 2025.

PHOTO: PRINCE FREDERICK

'Fire at material recovery facility a wakeup call'

RWA representatives point out that the mishap at this facility in R.A. Puram did not surprise them



Fire at the GCC facility on Kamaraj Salai in R.A. Puram; and the evening after the fire.

PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT AND PRINCE FREDERICK

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

It would have been a good seven hours after the fire fighters had mauled the fire to the ground and arm-twisted it into submission. But it was still present, not as leaping flames, but in a more insidious form – as toxic compounds released into the air.

The Material Recovery Facility (MRF) functioning at Greater Chennai Corporation's local ward office on Kamaraj Salai in RA Puram had caught fire in the morning of July 2, 2025. A range of materials parked at

the MRF (which is attached to Ward 171; earlier, before the realignment of GCC wards, it was under 173) were nothing more than charred remains. In the evening, while setting foot in the MRF, one could sense off-gassing, as the smell of volatile organic compounds released by the fire was hanging heavy in the air. One can imagine the unnecessary toxic air those living and working around the patch would have been exposed to. Two members of two major residents welfare groups the region – K.L. Balasubramanian of RK Nagar community and Ganga

Sridhar of Mandaveli Raja Street Residents Welfare Association – note that the fire did not raise any eyebrows, at least those of residents. Balasubramanian says this was expected. There had been a fire earlier, and nothing significant was done to prevent the recurrence of a similar event, he says

Balasubramanian notes that a significant number of discarded mattresses had been dumped at the MRF; and they had been accumulating for days. Among the materials that caught fire were these mattresses. If they had been cleared period-

ically, the fire probably could not have happened. The MRF also has many old, discarded furniture.

Ganga Sridhar recalls how a poorly managed MRF on Sringeri Mutt Road, along the Buckingham Canal would frequently catch fire and was eventually closed down. A material recovery facility would hoard a variety of materials, including synthetic materials, and pollution resulting from a fire in an MRF has serious implications for environment and human health. From a video of the fire that had been shot and shared on social media, one

could see conservancy workers stepping in to clear some of the materials, thereby minimising the damage. But given the diversity and nature of materials lodged in an MRF, even a moderate fire can let out highly toxic VOCs into the environment.

Both Balasubramanian and Ganga Sridhar hope that learning from this mishap, those managing this MRF on Kamaraj Salai would take effective measures, including regular clearance of collected material, and prevent recurrence of such events.

STATUS REPORT

'Prioritise basic needs'

As Southern Railway announces a plan to have a sports facility established at the Velachery MRTS station premises, Annai Indira Nagar residents reiterate an old demand



S KUMARARAJA

Annai Indira Nagar Residents Welfare Association - Velachery is disappointed with the Southern Railway over its move inviting bids from private entities to establish a sports facility at Velachery MRTS

railway station. In our eyes, this move dashes our hope of seeing the MTC bus terminus (now functioning at Vijayanagar junction) being shifted to the MRTS station premises.

This is a long-standing request of Velachery residents' associations to Southern Railway and elected representatives.

A year and a half ago, a part of the station land was handed over to a private entity to establish a food court. And with this latest development, we wonder if there would be any land left on the station premises for a bus terminus. The Vijayanagar junction in Velachery is known for traffic congestion;

integrating the railway station and bus terminus would benefit the people at large.

Revenue generation is important; so is public's comfort in navigating everyday life.

S.Kumararaja, president, Annai Indira Nagar Residents Welfare Association, Velachery



Velachery railway station and Vijayanagar junction. PHOTOS: R. RAVINDRAN.

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 contact number.

Mental health and cultural identity fest at Anna Library

Adaiyalam 2025, a two-day mental health and cultural identity festival held recently at the Anna Centenary Library, brought together over 20 mental health organisations under one roof. It was organised by House of Hibiscus, which is a collective of three mental health organisations, namely Hibiscus Foundation for Social Welfare, Hibiscus Counselling, and Hibiscus Connect.

Day one featured a series of impactful sessions including Movement Therapy, Expressive Arts, Puppetry and Storytelling and Sound Healing. These were co-hosted by Chennai-based creative wellness organisations RASOHAM founded by Laasya Narasimhachari and The Open House. The day also hosted a Mental Health Networking Meet that brought together professionals, students and mental health advocates to foster

At the event



new connections and collaborations. The documentation and media outreach were supported by Youth for Mental Health Foundation, one of the country's leading youth-led mental health collectives, says a press release. A key highlight was the launch of the Mental Health Timeline of Tamil Nadu, which traced emotional and psychological narratives from the Sangam era to the present day – from literary insights in classical Tamil poetry to colonial-era asylums, to the evolution of community-based mental health care. The exhibit also spotlighted Tamil cul-

tural elements such as kolams, beetle leaves, and traditional objects as a way of acknowledging mental health through a local, lived, and culturally resonant lens.

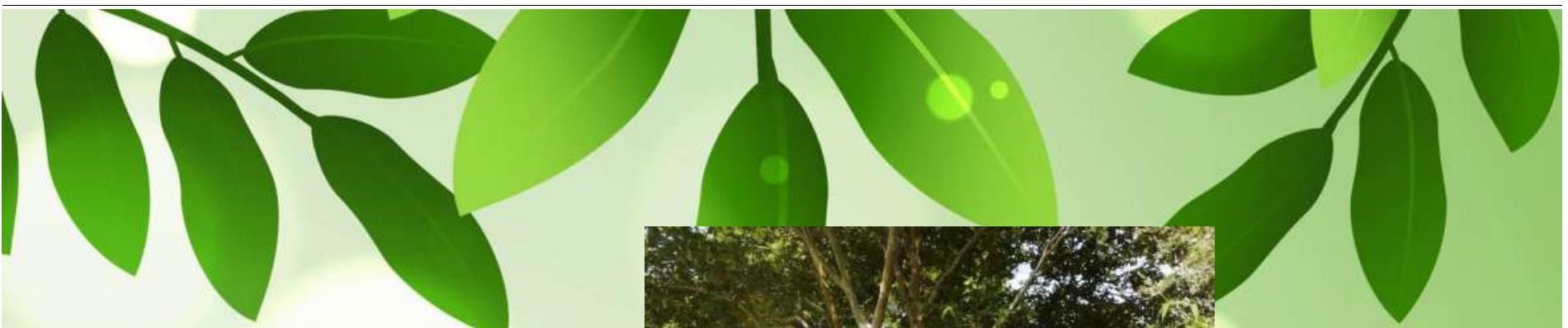
The fest also saw the release of *Adaiyalam*, a book authored by Aksheyaa Akilan, founder of House of Hibiscus. Rooted in Tamil history, the book weaves personal narrative, cultural memory and socio-political critique, inviting readers to rethink identity and mental health through a decolonial lens. Day two was open to walk-in visitors and featured an expansive mental health exhibition with

stalls hosted by 22 partner organisations including the pioneer Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF - I) and The Banyan.

These stalls offered therapeutic tools, games, accessible mental health resources, student-focused content, and culturally rooted wellness practices, the release adds.

Importantly, the festival embraced intersectionality in its programming – going beyond age-specific needs to address broader systemic and social issues. Partner organisations worked on mental health at the intersections of caste, displacement, disability, and community healing. This included groups focused on refugee well-being, mental health of those affected by caste-based violence, and arts-based approaches to therapy, ensuring the space reflected the diversity of experiences across Tamil Nadu, says the press release.

Over the course of two days, more than 500 people visited the fest. Participants ranged from students and therapists to caregivers, elders, and those exploring mental health for the first time. With its inclusive tone and culturally grounded programming, Adaiyalam 2025 carved out a new kind of space – one that was equal parts celebratory and reflective, says the press release.



Starting this week, in the spirit of Aadi Pattam, a tradition celebrating the sowing season, stretching from mid-July to mid-August, *The Hindu Downtown* will feature volunteering groups that promote greening exercises. The spotlight this week is on Team Green which began in Mogappair East and now has a pan-Chennai presence due to consistent efforts by its volunteers



A short tour of Team Green's greening activities

Green provides saplings for free, except when they do not have the saplings of a specific tree species that has been sought. In such an event, they help procure it from a nursery, with the cost being borne by the one making the request.

Vidiyal: an offshoot

Deepa Lakshmi is part of a force driving an initiative called Vidiyal, which splices women's empowerment with environment action. Vidiyal is designed in a manner that gets groups of three to four women from an underprivileged background to gather every day at a designated school to nurture saplings. They are provided with soil, seeds and used milk packets, these materials having been collected and supplied by Team Green volunteers. The women work from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., nurturing saplings and starting new ones with the soil and seeds. In case you are wondering what the milk packets are for: they serve as coverings for the saplings. Currently, around 15 to 20 women are engaged in this work on a full-time basis.

The project operates on a community-supported model where volunteers contribute financially to pay the women for their efforts. For instance, a donation of ₹900 is enough to pay three women ₹300 each for a day's work. Those who wish to support just one person can contribute ₹300. Deepa mentions that they never have to actively seek sponsors, as there is always a steady flow of generous volunteers who come forward to pitch in and help sustain the project.

Deepa notes that Team Green is not an NGO, only a scattered but tightly-knit group of individual volunteers. The volunteering group functions on its own except for collaborations with Exnora from time to time. Deepa finds the most supportive volunteer in her hearth: her husband Mohanasundaram who has handed over the reins of his earthmoving business to his team, distancing himself from its day-to-day activities and thereby freeing up time for Team Green's activities.

For details about Team Green and its activities, call 9042594891 / 6379072259

Branching out to other neighbourhoods

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

The pandemic had two contrasting effects on newly sprouted initiatives. Some went into a tailspin and never recovered from it. And there were others that got their tail up, the pandemic years, strangely, providing them with a conducive environment for growth.

Deepa Lakshmi and her husband K. Mohanasundaram had barely started a hyperlocal greening exercise around their moorings in Mogappair East when the pandemic struck. Deepa Lakshmi is an English teacher at Chennai Higher Secondary School on Subrayan Street in Shenoy Nagar, and in addition to her teaching role, serves as in-charge headmistress of the school. While latching the doors of the school (and taking the classes online), the pandemic threw wide open the door to environment action. Deepa Lakshmi seized that opportunity.

"It all started during COVID. There was so much free time," re-



calls Deepa Lakshmi, co-founder of a volunteering force called Team Green. "We used to water the few plants we had, and then one day, we just planted some saplings. Neighbours noticed, and slowly people started joining us."

The streets in the neighbourhood saw more green; and then the streets beyond the neighbourhood did. What began as a simple act became a habit not just for this duo and their neighbours in Mogappair East, but also for many eco-conscious people elsewhere in Chennai.

Team Green – as this group of

sapling-toting volunteers are called – has expanded to Perungudi, Keelkattalai, Madipakkam, Gated Communities in OMR, Perumbakkam, Tiruvottiyur and Thirumullaivoyal.

Team Green provides saplings of native trees for free to residents and individuals upon request – a huge volume of such requests being honoured on special days such as Environment Day – but not before extracting a promise from them.

The recipient has to take a vow to never abandon the saplings. They would be put through a



wrenger of questions, much like someone adopting a puppy would be before taking the bundle of fur home.

A quick run-through of the posers high up on the questionnaire: who will be responsible for the care of the saplings? Has proper soil preparation been done? The interviewee will find themselves being edified about plant care. Team Green does not leave anything to chance. A volunteer would one day invite themselves to the recipient's stomping ground to see how the saplings are coming along. This stringent process weeds out dilettantes, and brings on board only those extremely keen on greening their neighbourhoods and personal spaces.

Residents interested in greening their patches constitute much of the demand. Colleges (through their outreach wings such as NSS units) also seek saplings for their environmental initiatives. Team

TRANSPORT



School children sprint to catch a bus near Chintadripet MRTS Railway Station. FILE PHOTO: R. RAGU

Schools say 'no' to motorised vehicles

To encourage the safety of children, many educational institutions in Chennai discourage them from driving to school

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Last month, a higher secondary class student in South Chennai was stopped at the school gates.

He was on two electric wheels, but what powered the vehicle, a battery-assisted motor or an internal combustion engine was not the sticking point.

As a policy, the private school would not want its students to ride any powered vehicle (electric or otherwise) to school. So, when the boy put forth his argument that it was a

low-powered e-scooter, and he was in the age bracket to ride that machine, he did so weakly, knowing that it would not cut ice with the management.

Before proceeding further, a peek into the rule book. According to the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), those aged between 16 and 18 can get a special driving licence for an e-scooter with a maximum power of 4 kilowatts and a maximum restricted speed of 70 km per hour.

Electric vehicles might be in the limelight, and the law might even favour even 16-year-olds to ride low-powered e-vehicles. But many educational institutions in Chennai are not open to the idea.

Chettinad Vidyashram sends reminders every academic year asking parents not to let their children operate two or four-wheelers to school. Staff from the PET department stand

outside the school to keep an eye on students breaking the rule.

Teachers of many other schools *The Hindu Downtown* spoke to note that although schools discourage students from riding any two-wheeler, many students park them on streets outside the schools or ride them to tuition classes or for last mile connectivity.

Meenakshi Kukreja, director, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers, says in India the process of acceding licences is not stringent, and the question of whether a 16-year-old is adequately equipped to meet the challenges of the road cannot be answered satisfactorily. Many do not take their two-wheeler classes seriously is her contention.

"We discourage students from driving two-wheelers before the age of 18. A few of our member companies like Hero and Honda have been providing training to young drivers and that covers the dangers on road," says Meenakshi.

The rule book states that no person under the age of 18 years shall drive a motor vehicle in any public place. And as stated above, someone aged 16 or 17 could ride a low-powered e-bike with clearly spelt out power specifications. In terms of bikes with an internal combustion engine, a similar law exists, but has become obsolete. It states that a motor vehicle with engine capacity not exceeding 50 cc might be driven in public places after someone attains the age of 16 years with a valid learner's licence.

As manufacturers do not produce vehicles of this specification anymore, this provision is null and void for all practical purposes.

Monsoon session: RSN wants spotlight on children's safety

The Road Safety Network (RSN), a collective of civil society organisations working to reduce road crash fatalities, wants policymakers to address four critical gaps in road safety when the Monsoon Session of the Parliament begins on July 21. They are child safety, speed management, stronger State Road Safety Action Plans and targeted amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act (MV Act).

According to a report by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), children made up nearly 10% of fatalities in 2022. Between 2011 and 2022, road accidents claimed the lives of 1.98 lakh children. Informal modes of school transport – such as vans and auto-rickshaws – play a major role in student mobility yet they are often found operating outside existing regulatory frameworks. RSN is urging the government to amend Section 2(1) of the MV Act to explicitly include informal school transport – such as vans and auto-rickshaws – and ensure their registration and safety oversight. The coalition also recommends coordinated local action through mandated safe school zones, especially as 60% of Indian children walk to school, says a press release.

RSN is advocating for a scientific approach to speed zoning, tailored to local environments such as school areas, markets and residential lanes. States such as West Bengal have introduced zone-wise speed guidelines, which RSN recommends as a national model.

RSN also called for states to implement robust State Road Safety Action Plans, especially for urban areas often excluded from standardised design practices. Though the 2019 MV Act brought uniformity to highway design, urban road planning must also align with Indian Roads Congress safety standards, ensuring safer infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, added the release.

Members of RSN include Parisar, SaveLIFE Foundation (SLF), Consumer Voice (CV), Citizen Consumer and Civic Action Group (CAG), Synergie, Centre for Environment Education (CEE), and CUTS International.

Grace Sheela teaches compassion and empathy to her students by taking care of injured animals



Principal's love for animals, a lesson for children

LIFFY THOMAS

Kindergarten students at Madras Christian College Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Chetpet have someone dropping in on them, mid-class, at least once in a day. They look forward to this interruption. This visitor is a rescued myna living on the campus.

Principal and correspondent Grace Sheela, known as a saviour of injured birds and animals, got the myna from her friend Sabeena Varghese on July 4. She ensures the "patient" is under her direct care; so much so that the bird "joins" her when she goes on school rounds.

"It was lifeless and shaken when Sabeena brought it in. It had a fall from the third floor of a building

where it had built a nest near the AC unit," says Grace.

Grace took the bird under her wing, doing everything it takes for the bird to adapt to its new environment.

"The moment she sees me she needs food and I need to keep feeding her," says the principal sitting in her chamber with the myna next to her.

The myna is also the latest friend of students and staff at MCC School. In the past, injured pigeons, young parakeets and tender hare had been rehabilitated on the campus.

"When they are severely injured I take them to the veterinary hospital for treatment, take care of them till they can be on their own," says the principal who has had stints with Vidyodaya Girls Higher Secon-

dary School in T.Nagar and Union Christian Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Chetpet.

The English teacher's love for nature began while teaching nature-related topics and it reached a new height during a visit to Parambikulam Tiger Reserve as part of a school project.

"Exnora Naturalist Club started a nature club at Vidyodaya School as part of which I took 76 girls to the Parambikulam forest," she says.

She associates with groups working on conservation programmes and ensures the children are taught conservation issues in an engaging manner.

She had organised a visit for the students to Supraja Dharini's Tree Foundation to have a ringside view of rescued turtles.



At MCC School, as part of an initiative by non-profit School Health Annual Report Programme 'Conserve my planet' programme is conducted where 100 students take part in a month-long programme where they go about creating awareness about conservation. Under the 'Green Ambassador Award' students are nudged to

Grace Sheela with the dog Whitey and her students; (below) the rescued myna with kindergarten children; woodpeckers and snakes are often spotted on the campus.
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

take up green initiatives.

"When a bird is rescued I take it to the classes so children develop love, empathy and connection with these creatures," she says.

The principal has her home on the campus, which has enabled her to spend considerable time with her rescues.

The story of Whitey, a mongrel with a fluffy tail, is known even to visitors to the campus.

The puppy set paws in the campus during the time of the Board examinations in 2019 along with a constable who was deputed to the school.

"A hostel staff was taking care of it when I joined the school, but once he left I entered the picture and today she is an integral member of my home and school," she says.

The vaccinated dog roams on the campus as if she owns the place.

She impresses everyone but cannot stand another furry animal coming to the campus. "Many a time she has fought with them and they in turn have bitten her. At least four times she got injured this way and once her ear was torn and we had to rush her to the hospital," says the principal.

Most children make sure they get their turn to play with "ma'am's dog".

The principal, who has a busy schedule as she has registered for a PhD programme in environment literature, says how good or bad Earth turns out depends on how well we take care of it. "I tell my children that every single creature matters. When I see a small caterpillar on the floor, I move it to a plant so that vehicles do not crush it," she says, adding that every small action counts.

STATUS REPORT

Have 'challan posts' dwindled on social media?

Some users on X say Greater Chennai Traffic Police is no longer providing status updates about complaints raised through posts

LIFFY THOMAS

Has Greater Chennai Traffic Police stopped issuing challans based on complaints on X? Browse through the official handle of GCTP @chennaitraffic and one would find no challan-related posts in the recent weeks. Challan is issued to levy a fine on a motorist after verifying the complaint posted by a user. This exercise builds trust among social media users about the traffic police taking action on their complaints, and also keeps the department informed about new concerns and issues

faced by people.

Shenoy Nagar resident Chinni Krishnan, who regularly posts complaints on X, says the handle @chennaitraffic has not posted any challan for close to 50 days now.

"They used to investigate and then issue challans. They acknowledge the tweet but then it goes all dark," says Chinni.

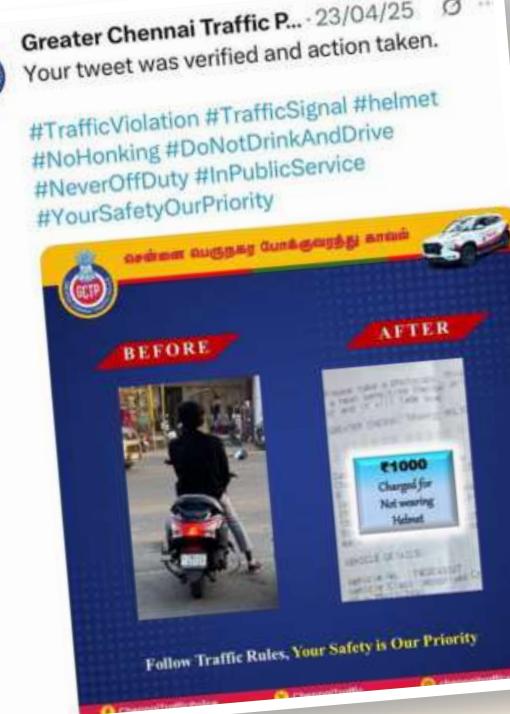
The resident has posted multiple complaints about vehicles abandoned at the junction of 3rd Cross Street East and Pulla Avenue that pose a safety risk to both pedestrians and motorists. He says his complaints have not

been acted upon.

The social media team of the traffic police say they post challans based on what they get from the traffic and planning wing of the department.

A senior official from the planning section says issuing challans is a continuous process and they will resume it soon. Once a user posts a complaint, their team has to investigate whether it is a violation or an action done unintentionally. They have to review it and then take action, says the official.

In June, GCTP had issued an advisory on fraudulent What-



Screenshot of a traffic challan issued by Greater Chennai Traffic Police on April 23, 2025

App messages circulating using the GCTP logo as a display picture and sharing links that mimic traffic challan payments. It asked users not to click unless one is sure

it is from an official source. Social media users wonder if the traffic police has been going slow on challans based on the fraudulent messages.



Residents at the protest on July 6.

Residents raise a voice to save Puthur lake

TONY GOMEZ

At 7 a.m. on July 6, a crowd gathered at SSM Nagar on Tambaran Eastern Bypass Road, which links New Perungalathur - Nerkundram Road and Mappedu junction. People across age groups assembled as morning walkers gave curious looks. Close to 50 people including me had gathered at the junction of Mahatma Gandhi Road that leads to various housing colonies.

It was a protest gathering to draw authorities' attention Puthur lake, seeking that it be saved from further contamination and also to create awareness about it among residents. Many held placards with slogans such as 'Stop Your Filth', 'Your Waste, the Pond's Death', 'Let Lakes Live' and 'No Water, No Life'.

As we stood, a horrendous stench emanated from a drain on the east side of the junction. The discharge of sewage from various housing colonies in this area into the newly-built rainwater drainage canal along the southern side of the bypass road was the reason.



Citizens from the Puthur Welfare Association were present to protest against the illegal discharge of sewage, which pollutes the freshwater at Puthur.

The Association had brought this serious transgression to the attention of the authorities on several occasions, but no action has been taken. We hope the State Government takes some action.

Tony Gomez is a resident of Puthur



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Session on baking

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, Department of MSME, is conducting a workshop on baking from July 21 to 24 at its premises on EDII Office Road, SIDCO Industrial Estate, Guindy. Time: From 9.30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

According to a press release, the session will focus on cookies, cakes, and breads made from millets. Also labelling and marketing aspects of bakery products will be taught.

Those above 18 years of age with a minimum educational qualification of class 10 may apply. Prior registration is required. For details, call 8668102600 / 701014302.



Skill training courses



Admissions are open at Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya for vocational skill courses. According to a press release, the courses include: tailoring, carpentry, electrical, servicing of air-conditioners and refrigerators and a few more. Those who have completed class eight can apply. For details, call 9176624283. Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya is at No: 58, Venkatanarayana Road, T. Nagar.

Free pain management therapy in Arumbakkam

Parivarthan for Parkinson's Foundation, a Chennai-based organisation dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with Parkinson's, is introducing free pain management therapy at its centre in Arumbakkam. This non-invasive physical therapy targets a range of chronic pain areas, including the shoulders, neck, knees, lower back, ankles, and muscles. Each session lasts 45 minutes and is customised

to the individual's needs, with an emphasis on regular intervention for long-term relief.

Led by trained professionals, Parivarthan ensures care is delivered in a safe, supportive environment, said a release. The sessions are completely free, but a prior appointment is required as slots are limited.

To register or book a session, call 96000 52531.

Workshop on entrepreneurial opportunities in solar energy sector

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, Department of MSME, is conducting a training programme on installation of solar power system from July 21 to 23 at its premises in SIDCO Industrial Estate, EDII Office Road, Guindy. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

According to a press release, the following concepts will be covered: introduction to solar energy, entrepreneurial opportunities in solar energy sector, business models in this sector, relevant computer software, financial planning, regulations and subsidy schemes.

Those aged above 18 and who have completed class 10 can take part. The institute offers hostel facility for the participants on first come, first serve basis.

For details, call 8668102600 / 8072914694.



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Mangrove plantation drive on July 26

Students of SRM Institute of Science and Technology to plant 1000 saplings

A mangrove sapling plantation drive will be held on July 26 at Kovalam coastal region to mark World Mangrove Day. Organised by the Department of Civil Engineering, SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), Kattankulathur, in collaboration with the Ocean Society of India (OSI), the Mangrove Foundation of India and the Forest Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, the initiative aims to raise public awareness about the ecological and climate-related importance of

mangrove forests.

Known for their role in protecting coastlines from erosion, supporting biodiversity, and serving as natural buffers against extreme weather, mangroves are vital to the sustainability of coastal ecosystems, says R. Nagalakshmi, associate professor, SRMIST who is organising the event.

As part of the drive, 1,000 mangrove saplings will be planted along the Kovalam shore, with the help of students and environment enthusiasts.

Workshop on how to make incense sticks

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a workshop on making camphor and incense sticks on July 17. Also, a culinary workshop on preparing flavour powders made from spices and herbs will be held on July 18. Both the sessions will be held at the centre's premises at Agro Tech Green Park, First Floor, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy. For details, call 044 - 29530048

Blood donation camp held at Muttukadu

National Institute For Empowerment Of Persons With Multiple Disabilities, Department of Empowerment of Persons With Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, organised a blood donation camp at its premises in Muttukadu. According to a press release, the drive was held with the support of The Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University, Guindy.

Around 150 donors, including students and their parents and staff took part in it. Donors were provided with certificates of appreciation and refreshments post-donation, adds the release.



Rally on ill effects of plastic products

Annai Veilankanni's College of Arts & Science, Saidapet, in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board and the Greater Chennai Corporation, organised a rally to spread awareness on plastic pollution and hazards of non-biodegradable waste.

According to a press release, students took out the rally in the main streets of Saidapet and educated the public about the necessity to reduce the use of plastic products and insisted on responsible disposal of waste. Participants took an oath to protect the environment. Close to 500 students participated in the event, adds the release.



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