

MYLAPORE

Mandaveli » R A Puram » Royapettah » Chindatripet » Royapuram » Korukkupet » Ennore » Luz » Alwarpet » Triplicane » Central

Washermenpet » Tondiarpet » Manali » M.R.C.Nagar » Teynampet » Mount Road » Broadway » Kondithope » Tiruvotiyur

Spare a thought for Bazaar Road

Ever since Metro Rail work took over Kutcheri Road, this unassuming road is in the spotlight. Overworked, the road is worn to a frazzle. It needs to be given a new bitumen-topped surface to ensure motorcyclists' safety



SRINATH M

Every day is manic Monday at Bazaar Road ever since Kutcheri Road was "salted away" for Metro Rail work and made unavailable for vehicular traffic. The regular traffic on Kutcheri Road being offloaded on to it, Bazaar Road does not have a quiet

moment any more, a fact mirrored in its surface. The road has craters, which can inflict great harm on motorcyclists during rains. This photojournalist was witness to what was a close shave for a family of three travelling by a two-wheeler. Near a bike mechanic shop, their motorcycle skid as it hit a crater. The man manoeuvring the mo-

Bazaar Road during a recent downpour; and Devadi Street.
PHOTOS: SRINATH M



torcycle being quick to react to the situation, a fall was averted. It was a lucky escape for the family. Before any untoward incident happens on account of any of the craters, Greater Chennai Corporation should relay Bazaar Road, as also two other roads – namely, Nattu Subburayan Street and Devadi Street -- that are on a continuum along with Bazaar Road. These three roads are bearing the burden that was eased off Kutcheri Road. The least that can be done for them is giving them a motorable, neatly bitumen-topped surface.

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Thiruvallikeni station scores low on cleanliness and accessibility



LAKSHMI PRIYA

Regular commuters face considerable inconvenience accessing Thiruvallikeni MRTS station and Government Estate metro station primarily due to unclean and poorly maintained approach roads. The roads leading to Thiruvallikeni station are in a deplorable condition, littered with garbage and lacking proper lighting. This not only makes access difficult but also unsafe, especially during early morning and late evening hours.

The lifts and escalators are non-functional at Thiruvallikeni station, causing immense hardship to the elderly, persons with disabilities, and passengers carrying luggage.

The same goes for the Chepauk station which has one entry/exit point opposite the cricket stadium. The road connecting the stadium and the station is poorly lit. The only time the lights are fully functional are during IPL and international cricket matches.



There are no frequent feeder buses connecting the stations to interior areas. This gap in last-mile connectivity makes it difficult for commuters, especially the elderly and working women to access public transport conveniently and safely.

Given the growing commuter footfall and the increasing emphasis on inclusive urban mobility and last mile connectivity, remedial action must be taken.

Lakshmi Priya is a resident of Triplicane



Banyan trees on Santhome High Road hinder pedestrians' movement

J. FRANCIS

Banyan trees planted some years ago on the pavement along Santhome High Road have grown in size to a point that

they come across as an obstruction to pedestrians. Over a distance of 800 metres, this road accommodates half-a-dozen schools and many children and parents use the pavement. Banyan trees are not

suitable for narrow sidewalks. These trees should be removed to enable pedestrians to have full use of the pavement.

J. Francis is a resident of Santhome High Road

'Give us a new SWD system'

D. BHUVENESH

Constructed 25 years ago, the stormwater drainage system at Branson Garden Street in Kilpauk is now noticeably damaged and of little use. A mild downpour is sufficient for the street to be inundated and it takes hours for the rainwater to recede putting road users especially school children to discomfort and hardship.

On March 4, 2024, a petition

was sent to the CM's Cell with a copy of it marked for the GCC Mayor narrating the civic issues battled by the residents of this ill-fated street. Since then no action has been taken.

The reply I received from the CM's Cell is that funds are yet to be allocated and with the allocation, work will commence. When the government spends crores of tax payers' money on construction of libraries and parks why is it hesi-

tant in addressing people's basic needs?

This issue is pending for more than a year. Unless it is addressed immediately I am sure this monsoon would be a nightmare for all of us here.

Vehicles are using the platform for parking damaging storm water chambers underneath. The SWD manhole lids are broken or open making them a death trap forcing pedestrians to walk in the middle of the road.

(D. Bhuvanesh is a resident of Branson Garden Street in Kilpauk)

A celebrity on three wheels

With a humble cycle rickshaw, 'MGR Shankar' has ridden his way into the hearts of Mylapore and Mandaveli residents

BASKAR SESHADRI

In Mylapore and Mandaveli, he is known as "Cycle rickshaw Shankar" to many; and as "MGR Shankar" to almost everyone.

Shankar has been operating a cycle rickshaw for nearly 30 years. With cycle rickshaws having receded from the streets of Mylapore, he comes across as an icon of the past. He has his regular customers in Mylapore and Mandaveli. For families that find the auto

fares high, Shankar is a welcome sight. For a fare ranging from ₹ 40 to ₹ 50, he ferries people in and around the Mylapore-Mandaveli region. His humble rickshaw is non-motorised, and therefore puts in great effort to make a living.

The 62-year-old is a diehard MGR fan and he loves listening to his icon's film songs. His cycle rickshaw is adorned with images of the actor-politician, hence the title "MGR Shankar" for this cycle rickshaw operator. Shankar starts his

savaari at 8.30 a.m. near the Aavin booth in Chittrakulam and continues to be on the road till one in the afternoon. After a break, he resumes his work at 4 p.m. and ends the day by 8 p.m.

If you want to engage Shankar for a local trip in his cycle rickshaw, call him at 89 39 29 97 76. He will be only too glad to pedal down localities sharing the memories of old Mylapore.

Baskar Seshadri is a resident of Mylapore





Art installation to emerge from waste

CPCL conducts a cleanup drive at Thalankuppam beach

As part of Government of India's Swachhata Pakhwada campaign, Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited (CPCL) organised a beach cleanup drive at Thalankuppam Beach in Ennore on July 5. The event witnessed active participation from over 100 students of CPCL Polytechnic College along with volunteers from the environmental group Walk for Plastic.

During the cleanup, the team successfully collected more than 100 kilograms of plastic waste and other debris from the shoreline. The initiative seeks to address the



growing concern of marine pollution and promote public awareness about sustainable environmental practices.

Taking a creative step forward, the collected waste will be transformed into an artistic installation to visually emphasise the impor-

ance of cleanliness, recycling, and environmental conservation.

CPCL officials reiterated the organisation's continued commitment to community engagement and environmental stewardship, in line with the national mission of Swachh Bharat.

CMWSSB's depot 58 gets a new address

Royapuram depot 58 of the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply & Sewerage Board which was functioning from No: 1, Whannels Road in Egmore has been shifted to a new address: No: 75A, E.V.K. Sampath Salai, Vepery.

According to a press release, the

depot is functioning from the new address since July 2. This depot attends to complaints relating to water supply, sewage, and remittance of water tax, and water charges.

The depot can be reached at 8144930214 / 8144930058 / 7824890058.

Local body councils: applications sought from the differently-abled

Applications are invited for the nomination of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) as members of the Councils of Town Panchayats, Municipalities, and Municipal Corporations in Tamil Nadu.

The Tamil Nadu Assembly recently amended the Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Act, 1998, to allow PwDs to be nominated as members of these Councils. Nominations will be made by the Director of Municipal Administration, the Director of Town Panchayats, or the Director of Municipal Corporations, as the case may be. In cases where a Municipal Corporation does not have a Director, the nomination will be made by the State Government.

As per the eligibility criteria laid down in the Act, an applicant must be a resident of the respective Town Panchayat, Municipality, or Municipal Corporation, and must

hold a valid disability certificate issued by authorities designated under the Tamil Nadu Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2018.

Application forms for nomination to the Greater Chennai Corporation Council are available at chennaicorporation.gov.in. Forms for other Municipalities and Corporations can be downloaded from tnurbantree.tn.gov.in/what-snew. Forms for Town Panchayat Councils are available at either tn.gov.in/dtp or dtp.tn.gov.in.

Those seeking nomination to a Municipality Council must apply to the Municipal Commissioner, and those applying for nomination to a Corporation Council must submit their application to the Corporation Commissioner.

Applications may be submitted either in person or by post, and must reach the concerned authority by 3 p.m. on July 17, 2025.

PLAN YOUR WEEK

Theatre fest at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is hosting 'Summer Stages 2025', its annual theatre fest at its main auditorium in Mylapore for five days from July 8 to July 12, 6.30 p.m. The Fest will feature five Tamil plays, each a lineup of inspired theatrical productions.

On July 8, PMG Mayurapriya's production Ennadi Penne will be staged; July 9 Komal Theatre's Thaneer Thaneer; July 10 KN Theatres' Leela Vinodham; July 11, Threenertains presents Paayum Oli; and July 12 Fab's Theatre will showcase Un Kannil Neer Vazhindhaal

The prestigious "Iyakkunar Sigaram K. Balachander Memorial Award 2025", instituted by T. Krishnan will be presented to T. V. Varadarajan in recognition of his remarkable contributions to the world of theatre. The award will be conferred on July 9 which coincides with K Balachander's 96th birthday celebrations.

Bhavan's Summer Stages Theatre Fest'25 is open to all. Admission free.

Competitions for Krishna Jayanthi



Ahead of Krishna Jayanthi, Shree Geeta Bhavan Trust is conducting

a number of competitions for school students in fancy dress, Gita recitation, drawing, devotional songs and bhajans.

The competitions will be held on July 26 and July 27 at Avvai Shanmugam Salai in Gopalapuram. The last date to register is July 15.

Participants can dress up in any character from Ramayana or Mahabharata for fancy dress event. They should also speak on the character in Tamil, Hindi or Sanskrit. Drawing event is open for students till class X on any sequence from Ramayana or Mahabharata.

For group bhajans, a maximum of six students are allowed.

For further details contact P. Maruthi at 9176624283

Session on understanding tenders

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute of Department of MSME is conducting a training programme on understanding tender procedure. The session will be held on July 11 at the institute's pre-

mises in Guindy.

Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Hostel facility is available at a nominal rate, adds the release.

For details, call 9543773337 / 9360221280

Craft workshop

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a craft workshop on making fabric ornaments on July 10. Another workshop on preparation of incense sticks will be held

on July 11. Both the workshops will be held at Agro Tech Green Park, First Floor, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy. Prior registration is required. For details, call 044 - 2953 0048.

Films spotlighting disability

AbilityFEST 2025 will feature a bold and diverse lineup of films spotlighting disability in all its forms at PVR-INOX Sathyam Cinemas from July 7 to July 10.

All screenings are free with four shows every day. Registration is mandatory at <https://forms.gle/2fTfNm3LUrnSCAWa9>. Seating is on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Films that will be screened include Upside Down (Italy), Ab, Bad, Khak, Nan and Abrash (Iran), Zo-

mervacht (Netherlands), Ania z Piekelnika (Poland), Dancer (Mongolia), Working Differently (UK), and Daruma, Thunder Roles! The World of Blind Baseball and Luki and the Lights.

Ahaan (2019), the first Hindi film to cast a lead actor with Down Syndrome, will be screened on ---.

The festival will come to a close with a special screening of Sitaare Zameen Par, featuring a live discussion with director R.S. Prasanna and writer Divy Nidhi Sharma.

Homam at Sri Vedantha Desikar Temple

Shri Sudarshana maha homam will be held on July 12 at Sri Vedantha Desikar Temple in Mylapore.

The homam starts at 10 a.m. fol-

lowed by poornahati and prasadam distribution. All are welcome. For details, contact the temple at 044-24953799 / 044-43863747.

As single-use plastics abound despite laws to check their manufacture, sale and use, one need not look far for an excuse to persist with them. Look sideways at the next shop or the next door, and there it is, the excuse plonked in a hideous plastic cover. Flower seller Jagadeesh, caterer Sasikala and a resident of Chromepet Radhika Premkumar avoided taking that convenient sideward glance. They instead looked straight at what ought to be done

Three mascots for Plastic Free July

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

In a world where every personal plan and public policy clicked neatly into its intended place, Plastic Free July would be a superfluity. But with laws to eliminate single-use plastics having the biting force of the Etruscan pygmy shrew with its almost-invisible teeth, this awareness month is a necessity in our world. It challenges people to avoid banned plastics and minimise the use of legal and unavoidable plastics, to start with, for a month. These three individuals did not need the prodding of a Plastic Free July to free themselves from the entanglements of single-use plastics. They simply emerged as tiny pockets of resistance in a vast landscape of capitulation. Here are their stories.

Flowers wrapped in a cause

In Adambakkam, Jagadeesh plies his trade near Sri Subramaniya Swamy Temple on Brindavan Nagar Main Road. From a shop that can be slipped into a vest-pocket, he sells flowers, making a quiet but firm statement – no plastic covers, only paper wrapping and paper bags. For the past 2.5 years, the 56-year-old has wrapped every garland and bunch of flowers in newspapers, refusing to use plastic covers. He stands his ground when a customer would wince at the sight of flowers being wrapped in paper. “I will give only paper. If you do not like it, no problem, you can leave” – that is Jagadeesh’s response to any complaint from a customer.



Jagadeesh at work in his shop in Adambakkam.

He developed a distaste for plastic covers during the monsoon three years ago. Following a cloudburst, plastic covers had clogged the drains, resulting in a flooded street. Jagadeesh stepped out and cleared the plastic waste himself. “People laughed at me, but I knew I had to do something,” he says.

Since then, plastic covers have been an anathema: he made them unwelcome where he could without anybody’s permission – that is, in his shop. Unlike many others who choose to use old newspapers, Jagadeesh buys 40-50 fresh papers every week from a nearby shop to make clean paper bags. “Flowers are meant for puja. They should be

clean. How can I give something sacred in a dirty paper?” he asks.

For customers buying a bunch of garlands, he neatly packs them in white gunny bags.

Jagadeesh’s daily sales is in the range of ₹900-1000, with flowers priced modestly between ₹20-30. He does not seem to attach an undue value to profits. Other things matter just as much, if not more. “One out of every 100 customers would get irritated, but most people appreciate it. Some bring their own jute bags now, and I am happy about that,” he says.

Jagadeesh also gently explains to customers the harm plastic causes. He notes: “It is not just about business. We all have to take responsibility at some point in our lives.”

‘No plastic zone’ in a residential pocket

Radhika Premkumar from Khivraj Mansarovar Second Street in Chromepet lets her life be steered by a sustainability philosophy. Trained in commerce through collegiate education, Radhika once had a corporate career. And the nine-to-five rigour allowed little time for mindfulness to the minutiae of everyday living. In December 2015, during the Chennai floods, she found herself facing a fork in the road, pointing her in a new direction. Struck by illness and unable to reach a doctor as the floods had disrupted life, she realised that healing should be built into daily living, various aspects of it being defined by health-promoting choices. Besides turning to natural remedies, including acupressure, Radhika rung in changes that turned her hearth upside down, in a positive way. Her family being on the same page, she could implement these changes without any resistance. In 2016, she switched to biogas cooking. “By 2018, I began making bio-enzymes,” she says. Passion led her to wear a new professional identity as seller of bio-enzymes. Post-pandemic, she co-founded Arani Biotech with Kannabiran and Kumaran; the company manufactures bio-enzymes.

Of course, the plastic presence in her home did not escape Radhika’s introspective look. Wherever possible, she has replaced plastic items with eco-friendly alternatives and single-use plastics do not have a toehold in her household.

Here are some of the replacements. Bamboo brushes instead of plastic brushes. Steel straws instead of plastic straws. Vetter body brush instead of plastic loofah. Steel water bottles instead of plastic water



Radhika Premkumar from Chromepet ensures that the plastic bottles that sneak into her house are recycled; Radhika during a bio-enzyme making session at a college.



bottles. Provisions are carried in cloth bags or steel vessels, and she never leaves home without her trusty water bottle. “Plastic sneaks in sometimes, such as through online food deliveries, but we can always

make sure it does not pile up on the planet,” she says. She ensures plastic items that come home uninvited, but unavoidably (examples being plastic juice bottles and milk covers) are dispatched to the recycler or the local scrap dealer. She avoids polyester and steers clear of products with harmful chemicals.

Medical waste such as band-aids, adult diapers and needles is packed carefully before disposal. Nothing is tossed out mindlessly.

Through awareness sessions in schools via the Rotary Club, Radhika plants ideas of change in young minds. “My neighbours tell me they think of me when they carry water bottles or switch to cloth pads. That feels like a small win,” she smiles.

Her advice is simple: conscious buying, gradual change, and less waste. She says: “We have to read labels, know the ingredients to know what we’re buying. Every habit takes time, but the key is to start.”

Catering for the planet’s needs

In a world hooked on fast food and faster packaging, Sasikala from Velachery “slows” things down on both fronts. Her homegrown venture, Safe Food Focus offers traditional dishes, neatly packed in butter sheets, cotton boxes or even banana leaves – never plastic. For courier orders, she uses ziplock paper covers. When she cooks for orphanages or parties, she delivers the food in steel vessels. Transportation of steel containers demands the hire of a bigger vehicle adding to the logistics, but Sasikala has learnt to take this challenge in her stride.

In her cooking classes and through awareness drives, Sasikala urges people to carry their own plates, spoons, and bottles while travelling.

Sasikala prides herself on ensuring personal and planet health. Her first big order in 2023, feeding 100 children, sowed the



Sasikala from Velachery and a glimpse into her sustainability-driven catering service.

seeds of Nallaram, an initiative to provide nutritious kanji mixes to children with anaemia. Two years later, the impact is visible by the smiles on those children’s faces, notes Sasikala.

Like a dress with two colour combinations that can be worn inside out, her kanji mixes – blends of two or three traditional rice varieties – can be turned into kichadi, upma, or even payasam.



From a previous event.

A novel recycling exercise coming soon to Chennai

Next Sunday in Mylapore, an event to dust old and unused religious items and give them away to those who might need it will be organised

performed.

“The crux of this process is that through puja we remove the divinity and merge it with the panchaboothas. This has been appreciated by many people as it gives a lot of solace to those wanting to give away sacred objects,” says Vasudha Sundar, founding member, Shri Kamakshi Aarsha Samskriti Trust.

Unlike regular collection drives, the organisers point out that such events are labour-intensive.

“Typically, a frame will have the image, glass in front, nails and MDF board. All these have to be sorted,” says Sowmya Raghavan, community services director, Rotary Club of Bangalore, RT Nagar.

The service charge is levied to meet various expenses including transportation, cost of labour, *dakshina* for the priest and rent for the venue.

Both Vasudha and Sowmya say finding material recovery facilities has been their biggest challenge while trying to expand the initiative to other cities. They welcome interested groups to carry forward the initiative in Chennai.

In Bengaluru, all the drives have taken place in temples. The drives also see a fair share of swapping of items happen, as there are people who would like to pick up something. A resale vendor is also on board to pick up gently used items that can be sold.

The organisers can be contacted through email on cpp.hebbal@gmail.com and skast.trust@gmail.com

The drive

When: July 13; 8.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.

Where: TVR Subbi Chetty Vasantha Mandapam in Mylapore

What to bring: Old photos, idols of deities, puja articles, calendars

What not to bring: Haldi, kum kum, threads

LIFFY THOMAS

Every time 20-year-old Ahil Adithyaa drives from Mahindra World City in Chengalpattu where he lives, he has to pay up at Paranur toll plaza. The reluctance with which Ahil hands out the cash is understandable.

“Residents staying within a five-kilometre radius are eligible for exemption from toll fee payment and I live within a two-kilometre radius from the plaza,” says Ahil, a student of a college in Potheri.

The youngster has also heard that the lease period of the toll plaza has run its course. Keen on getting the details about this, Ahil, who recently attended a Right to Information (RTI) workshop conducted by Tambaram Makkal Kuzhu, made a postal application with the Chengalpattu taluk office.

Though the digital native would have preferred to make the application online, the traditional snail mail is being used for various reasons including the lack of a mechanism at various government departments at the state and district level.

Although any digital submission is supposed to make things easier and faster, the State Government’s RTI site would leave any user frustrated.

The home page of rtionline.tn.gov.in constantly “alerts” users with a message that reads: “Petitions and First Appeals addressed to the departments of Secretariat may be entered here. Action is being taken to extend this facility to the Heads of Departments, District Offices and the offices down below, in a phased manner.”

It further adds, “RTI petitions relating to the offices where the facility has been implemented can be sent through this portal and the petitions and appeals relating to the offices wherein this facility has not yet been implemented may be sent manually to those offices at present and not

to file those petitions in this web portal.”

Slow digital adoption

B. Savadamuthu, who conducts free online RTI workshops for Chennai-based Nallore Vattam every Monday, says digital plat-

form for RTI applications in Tamil Nadu has a long way to go.

“On July 4, 2024 based on many representations I made, the Commissioner of Revenue Administration communicated to all districts collectors to accept online applications and create ‘cre-

dentials’ for the public information officer (PIO) handling the department,” says Savadamuthu, who retired as an executive from a public sector bank and also served as PIO and appellate authority for RTI.

In the last one year, Savadamuthu has filed many RTIs to find the number of applications that were answered online and only four districts responded.

While no department will refuse to accept applications online, this process is complete only when a credential is also created for the PIO. “A government office may have at least 10 departments and for every PIO they need to create a user name and password so that a petitioner can address him/her directly. This ensures faster response,” he says. Besides reduction in cost and time, the chances of digital submissions going missing are low. “We encourage citizens to opt for digital submission, but many departments are yet to make the process easy for citizens,” he says.



ILLUSTRATION :
SATHEESH VELLINEZHI

The challenges of filing RTI petitions online

Experts on how to draft a compelling plea

Saroja Sundaram, executive director of the Citizen Consumer and Civic Action Group (CAG), says among what ought to be kept in mind while drafting an RTI application are specificity and conciseness.

“Questions should be targeted. One question could be broken into multiple ones to avoid ambiguity and make it easy for the department to respond. If you are asking information about an infrastructure try to give as many details as possible otherwise the answer would be yes/no. You can also give a table and list the details you need as some departments give information in the format that we ask for,” says Saroja adding that CAG had conducted awareness workshops in the past.

V. Santhanam, who has filed close to 2000 RTI applications, says one must know the functions of the department before filing a petition. “If residents in a street want to get answers to an infrastructure work I ask a group of people from the area to file the RTI, so the department is forced to give answers,” says Santhanam. Youngsters need to come forward to file RTIs and they could start with small issues concerning their neighbourhood.

“For instance, the ration shop in your neighbourhood is not stocking various items. One can file an RTI to understand how the system works, where the questions could range from the population the ration shop covers to how many kilos of certain items a household is entitled to,” adds Saroja.

They conduct free RTI workshops

Tambaram Makkal Kuzhu (Tambaram People’s Forum), a civic organisation, conducted its first RTI workshop in June and plans to conduct them periodically. Two RTI activists addressed the participants on how to draft RTI questions. C.R. Bharathi Kannan of the Forum says a majority of the participants for the first workshop were students. He says they also plan to conduct follow-up meetings to help people with any nagging questions they might have.

The next workshop will be held on a weekend at Thagai Community Centre in Tambaram. Those keen on being part of the workshop can call 9498488645/ 9986316106.

For close to a year now, Nalloorvattam has been conducting online sessions on RTI every Monday at 7.30 p.m. An average of 15-20 people attend these sessions conducted in Tamil and English for people from across Tamil Nadu. The main focus at these workshops is to train participants on submitting an application digitally. Interested participants are required to share details such as name, email ID and residential address to get the link to the meetings. Depending on requests, these workshops are sometimes conducted offline as well. For details, call 89034 32714.

Over the last three years, Arappor Iyakkam has conducted at least 100 workshops to educate people on how to file an RTI. The workshops cover aspects such as how to frame RTI questions, ways to address the authorities and how to go on an appeal. An extension of this initiative is the ‘My vote Is Not For Sale’ campaign; the pilot programme has spread to various districts in Tamil Nadu. Currently, in Chennai its workshops are held once in three months. Interested persons can either write to contact@arappor.org or call 7200020099 to know about the upcoming sessions.

Chitlapakkam Rising conducts these awareness sessions periodically. The citizens group is planning one in September. In 2022, during one such workshop, they brought active RTI champions from Chennai to speak to the participants. They included social activist from Chromepet V. Santhanam; banker Perulli Viswanathan; activist Kasi Mayan; civil engineers R. Pandiraja and Dayanand Krishnan.

Social activist and Chromepet resident V. Santhanam is invited by many institutions to conduct awareness workshops where he shares his experiences and the various battles won by filing an RTI. He also conducts them for small groups of two to five. Those who are interested may call 9444254850

English grammar book released

A book release was the highlight of the 279th meeting of Shakespeare Millennium Club conducted recently. Essential English Grammar for Graduate Level Students, as the book is called, was released by the Honourable Justice M. Sundar of the Madras High Court in the presence of a distinguished gathering that included V. Selvaraj, K. Sundareswaran, Kalyani Anbuchelvan, Ramesh Venketachalapathy, Jana-

kan Paul and the members of the Bar Council, academicians and the authors G.K. Chithra and JKS.

Justice M. Sundar noted that the book's USP was its lucid and simple style, adding that it was an essential resource for every student especially those entering the law course, because for lawyers, language is not just for communication but is the very tool of their profession.

Factory staff donate blood at camp

The Rotary Club of Chennai Coastal marked the beginning of the 2025 -2026 Rotary year with an event dedicated to community service and health. The Club organised a mega health and blood donation camp at Modern Age Metal Processors on Manali Express Highway Road, Ernavoor.

The event was attended by the local community and industrial skilled workers. Health checkup was conducted for 130 workers and 17 people donated blood.

Navin Gupta, president of Rotary Club of Chennai Coastal, thanked Hindu Mission Hospital and Rajasthan Cosmo Club for their support.

Ravi Sundaresan from Rotary International District 3234 also graced the occasion.

In recognition of Doctors' Day, the Club presented certificates of appreciation to Dr. Manju Shree, Dr. Vannila, Dr. Ashwin Balaji and Pavalam from Hindu Mission Hospital.

Inter-school debate title goes to PSBB

Fifteen schools from across Chennai took part in the ninth edition of Amper-sand, an inter-school debating competition organised by Chettinad Vidyashram.

Amper-sand 2025 featured five core events - 1. Parliamentary Debate; Stance Drafting - tested participants' ability to construct positions under time constraints. 3. Split Personality - required speakers to simultaneously advocate and oppose a stance. 4. Press Journalism - where budding reporters captured the spirit of the event in real time. 5. Photo-Journalism - where visuals met storytelling to document the debate's vibrant energy.

Each event gave students the chance to express themselves clearly, think quickly, and listen to different points of view.

PSBB K.K. Nagar won the finals, and Soumith from Chettinad Vidyashram was awarded best speaker for his clear and convincing arguments, said a release.

The event began with an inaugural ceremony led by principal Amudha Lakshmi, who spoke



about how debates help young people become clear, confident thinkers with strong opinions.

Surendran from Success Gyan

was the chief guest for day one. The senior parliamentary debate finals was judged by Jayashree from Freshworks.

Foreshore Estate beach spruced up



More than 500 students of Queen Mary's College, Rotarians and volunteers participated in a beach cleanup on International Plastic Bag Free Day.

The initiative by Rotary International District 3234 was held at the Vinayagar statue immersion point

at Foreshore Estate.

In a press release, Vinod Sarangi, District Governor, RI District 3234, said it was encouraging to see young people showing such a keen interest in environmental protection.

The event was attended by Nan-

dakumar, Inspector of Police, Foreshore Estate, who praised the environmental initiative.

Upon completion of the event, participants collected over 500 kilograms of waste, significantly improving the condition of the beach, added the release.

Training session on how to be a gold appraiser

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute of Department of MSME is conducting a training session on how to be a gold appraiser. It will be held from July 10 to 14 at its premises in SIDCO Industrial Estate, Guindy. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

According to a press release, the programme covers essential topics in metallurgy, focusing on gold and silver, difference between karat and carat, calculating gold purity, and jewel

loan assessment. The session will also focus on Hallmarking procedures, assaying methods, and touchstone testing practices. Also, participants will learn about jewellery making techniques like casting, filigree, and stone setting (both open and closed). Further, there will be a session on establishing a gem and jewellery business. Prior registration is required.

For details, call 9543773337 / 9360221280

For spiritual needs

Divine Mantra, founded by priest San-kara Narayanan Iyer, provides spiritual services designed to bring peace and prosperity, says a press release. Ganapathy, Navagraha, Sudarshana, Ayusha, Lakshmi Narayana, Rudra Homams, Upanayanam, Gruhapra-vesham, Bhoomi Pooja and Tithi services are also conducted, the release says.

For details, call 97910 91911.

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A ceremonial welcome



Freshers Day was celebrated at Presidency College on June 30 with students presenting performances relating to various folk dance forms as a ceremonial welcome. PHOTO: RAGU R

Horticulture department to supply seed kits

Department of Horticulture & Plantation Crops will be supplying seeds under a State Government's programme called "Uttachathu Velanmai Iyakkam" (Nutritional Agricultural Mission).

According to a senior official, a ₹60 worth kit containing seeds of tomato, brinjal, chillies, cluster bean, lady's finger, and greens will be given for free from

next week.

"This is an annual drive timed around the Tamil month, Aadi, as it is regarded as the best period for sowing seeds. This year 30,000 kits have been allocated for Chennai. The drive aims to encourage kitchen gardening among the city dwellers," says the official.

The kits are available at the following outlets of the depart-

ment: Semmozhi Poonga, Cathedral Road, Teynampet (PH: 6379700718); Senkanthal Poonga, Avvai Shanmugham Salai, Gopalapuram (PH: 9790042148); Madhavaram Botanical Garden, Milk Colony, Madhavaram (PH: 9597418342); Thiru Veedhi Amman Kovil Street, Thiruvannamiyur (PH: 9444805265); and at Anna Nagar (PH: 9790042148).

Globalart celebrates a milestone



From a modest beginning to a global legacy of creativity, Globalart India celebrated its 20-year journey on July 2. The art programme for children started in 2005 under the umbrella of SIP Academy to touch the lives of over 95,000 children across 145 centres in seven Indian

states, said a release. With its global roots in Malaysia since 1999, Globalart has expanded internationally to more than 650 centres across 23 countries.

The 20th anniversary celebration brought together a host of dignitaries, franchisees, instructors, alumni, and well-wishers. The

event highlighted Globalart's two-decade journey of nurturing creativity and building confidence in children through its structured, research-backed art curriculum.

Sarala Kulasekaran, director of finance, operations, and human resources at SIP Academy, opened

the event.

In a release, Dinesh Victor, managing director of SIP Academy, said: "The Globalart method is not only enjoyable but helps children grow in confidence, explore career opportunities in art, and excel in school and life."

The celebration also fea-

tured special congratulatory video messages from eminent personalities, including filmmaker Suhasini Mani Ratnam, artist Thejo Menon, actor Janaki Satesh, founder Amit Krishn Gulati, and Maisha Studio founder Aishwarya Manivannan.

Globalart founder Mahair Goh from Malaysia said that India remains one of our strongest bases of growth, and this 20-year milestone is extraordinary.

Yadesh Babu bags gold in 50m breaststroke



Tamil Nadu's M. S. Yadesh Babu bagged the gold medal in the 50m breaststroke in a time of 28.35s in the 78th Senior National aquatic championships held at Bhubaneswar (Odisha) recently. He was declared the fastest in breast stroke in the country. Yadesh trains at the SDAT-Dolphin Academy in Mogappair.

Rotary's tribute to doctors

The Community Service Health Team of Rotary International District 3233 under the governorship of Rtn. D. Devendran, organised Healers Harmony - Rotary's Tribute to Doctors on the occasion of National Doctor's Day on July 1 in Egmore.

The programme recognised Rotarian doctors of RID 3233, says a press release. The following eight eminent doctors were given various awards.

Prof. Mohammed Rela, chairman and managing director, Dr. Rela Institute of Medical Center and Dr. Ravi Kannan, director, Cachar Cancer Hospital and Research Center, Silchar, Assam were given For the Sake of Honour Award.

Rtn. Dr. R. Sriram, emergency medicine consultant, RC Madras

West, Rtn. Dr. Mohan Rajan, senior consultant ophthalmologist, RC Madras T. Nagar and Dr. T. S. Selvaivanayagam, director of public health, Government of Tamilnadu were given Lifetime Achievement Award. Rtn. Dr. R. Prem Sekar, paediatric interventional cardiologist, RC Madras Temple City and Rtn. Dr. Vasumathy Vedantham, senior consultant ophthalmologist, RC Chennai Towers were given Distinguished Medical Service Award.

Dr. Karthik Balaji, founder, Zoriox Innovation Labs, Chennai was given Young Achiever Award.

On the same day, CSH Team's website <https://dhanvanthri3233.org> and "Rotarian's Privilege Health Card" (for the benefit of Rotarians and their families) were launched.

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