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MATCHING STRIDES

Walk Along 3.0 by Young Indians Chennai will have the able-bodied walking alongside the differently abled at Elliots Beach on August 10 **P2**



MALAYALAM LITERARY FESTIVAL IN CHENNAI ON AUGUST 10

To be held at Vivekananda House Campus, the event will feature a day-long lecture series and four micro plays **P4**



Foot overbridge 'posted' to a new area

The metal FOB that stood ignored on ECR Link Road has been reinstalled near Sholinganallur junction on Rajiv Gandhi Salai where a facility of this kind has been badly needed ever since Metro Rail work got under way



PRINCE FREDERICK

Sometimes, a new skill is absolutely unnecessary to shore up a career. All it takes is dusting off an almost-atrophied old skill and realigning it with new and emerging demands. Extrapolating that career insight to a physical environment, one involving a busy junction and pedestrians crossing it, sometimes all it takes is rooting out an old, metal FOB from the space where it lacked patronage and pegging it where it would attract just that by the dozens.

A relocation of this kind just happened on Old Mahabalipuram Road. A foot overbridge on

The FOB that has been shifted from ECR Link Road to the section of Rajiv Gandhi Salai near the Sholinganallur junction; (below) when the finer elements of the reinstallation process were being addressed. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

ECR Link Road (between Sholinganallur and Akkarai) that failed to make an impact ever since it was installed, being persistently given an ice-cold shoulder by pedestrians, has been assigned a whole new key result area.

It has been tasked with serving pedestrians around the hugely busy Sholinganallur junction that has been unrecognisably rejigged for Metro Rail work. On July 30, 2025, L&T workers engaged in Metro Rail work were attending to the finer elements of the FOB installation such as light fitting

near the Sholinganallur junction. "Onboarded" without any delay, it got started immediately on the job, as the image illustrates.

With this facility in place, the erstwhile road-level pedestrian crossing has been closed with CMRL boards.

Harsha Koda, co-founder of Federation of OMR Residents Association (FOMRRA), recalls that FOMRRA sought the relocation of the FOB on ECR Link Road to the Sholinganallur junction around nine years ago, something that was highlighted by *The Hindu*.

Drama festival from August 9

Madras South Lions Charitable Trust, a unit of Lions Club of South Madras, is organising its 13th drama festival from August 9 to August 17 at Bapal Bhavan, Valmiki Nagar, Thiruvannamiyur.

The line-up of the plays: Satya Sai Creations's Mapillai Ganesh in 'Killadi Mapple' by Ezhichur Aravindhan (August 9); Ponnaiyan Selvan and Friends's divine documentary 'Aranganayakam' by Bombay Kannan (August 10); Stage Creations's Kathadi Ramamurthy in 'Pillaiyar Pidikka' by SL Naanu (Aug 11); PMG Mayurapriya's 'Ennadi

penne' by P.Muthukumaran (August 12); Fab's theatre's Fathima Babu in 'Un Kannil Neer Vazhindhal' by T. V. Radhakrishnan (August 13); Koothapiran Navabharath Theatres's 'Leela Vinodham' by R.Vignesh (August 14); Dummies Drama's 'Kaanal Neero' by Sridhar Ramaswami (August 15); SRMG Creations's Saneeswaran pugazh Gopalakrishnan in 'Irandu Kannal Pesum Mozhiyal' (Aug 16th); and Dummies Drama's 'Kapidhwaja' by Sreevathson V (Aug 17th).

The inaugural function is scheduled on August 9 at 6.15 p.m.

Admission is free and all plays are scheduled at 6.30 p.m.

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SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

Inclusion can arrive in an air of condescension. It is the idea of the able-bodied “including” the differently abled in “their world”. It is true that the differently abled need to be included in this monstrous world that shut them out in the first place, but it has to be done in a manner that upholds their dignity.

By choosing one preposition over another, Walk Along 3.0 has silently condemned this unconscious, nevertheless odious conceitedness, and asserted the place in the world the differently abled should enjoy as a right, not as a dole. Young Indians (Yi) Chennai’s annual flagship accessibility event, Walk Along 3.0 does not term itself a walk for persons with disabilities (PwDs), but a walk with them. The walk has one able-bodied person matching strides with one differently abled person. “It is about presence, not performance,” say organisers. “You do not walk ahead or behind. You walk together.”

And the event having walked the talk, it has done three editions on the trot, growing in stature from edition to edition.

In normal circumstances, the past is the best predictor of the future. Hence a peek into the first two editions to know what to expect of the third, whose approaching footsteps can be heard. Walk Along 3.0 would arrive on August 10, 2025 at Elliotts Beach in Besant Nagar.

In 2023, the first edition of Walk Along played out in a closed space at Olympia Tech Park, Guindy, bringing key disability organisations and the public in a structured, accessible environment. Yi partnered with institutions that have been working in the accessibility space for decades, aiming to

Matching Strides

Walk Along 3.0 by Young Indians Chennai will have the able-bodied walking alongside the differently abled at Elliotts Beach on August 10. On the sidelines, stalls will showcase a world accessible at multiple levels that persons with disabilities should be able to claim as a right



design a walk that was not performative, but made space for genuine conversations and connectedness. Walk Along 1.0 featured experiential stalls, including a demo zone for assistive technology by the National Centre for Assistive Health Technology (NCAHT), backed by ICMR. Visitors could try out Indian-made wheelchairs with



stair-climbing capability and upright support. Inclusive cafés such as Winners Bakery, run by individuals with Down syndrome and acid attack survivors, brought warmth and flavour to the event. Able Aura brought adaptive sports to the table. Yi’s Yuva student chapters put up awareness stalls.

In 2024, the event – Walk Along

Glimpses of the first two editions of Walk Along.
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

and new partners – including folk artists and a Kolam artist working with neurodivergent children.

The event is expected to be graced by Ma. Subramanian, Minister for Health and Family Welfare, as the chief guest.

Among the general public attending the event, there would be around 150 members of Young Indians; and also representatives from CII member companies.

Registrations will close by August 5 or 6, or upon reaching the cap of 1,000 participants. Each individual, including caregivers, must register separately. Institutional entries are capped to ensure diversity.

“Walk Along 3.0 is not just an event. It is a reflection of the values we stand for at Yi Chennai,” says Varan Mittal, Chair, Yi Chennai. “As



2.0 – moved into a public space, being conducted at a Greater Chennai Corporation park in Adyar maintained by Bharat Matrimony under Namma Chennai 2.0. With increased visibility and participation from over 25 institutions, the event welcomed more than 800 people. Walk Along 2.0 repeated the features of the first edition, and enhanced it with additions such as art circles; tailoring stalls by Vidya Sagar; and accessible products made by trainees. Participants received framed certificates. “Our planning focused on ensuring dignity, visibility and a joyful experience for every participant,” says Tobin Jose, Co-chair, Yi Chennai. “The execution is a result of incredible collaboration – from schools and NGOs to government bodies and our own young volunteers.”

we walk together – individuals of all abilities, backgrounds and stories – we are reminded of the power of empathy and unity in building an inclusive society while celebrating the city we love the most, Chennai.” And yes, the event, always organised around this time of year, has celebratory undertone, one acknowledging the long continuing history of the city, as Madras and Chennai. “We hope this walk not only sensitises people, but also sparks a ripple effect – where conversations turn into actions, and actions into long-term impact,” adds Varan. “Our dream is to see a Chennai where inclusion is instinctive, not optional.” To participate in Walk Along 3.0, one can scan the QR code and register, or do so on Google Forms – <https://forms.gle/xqQ5UurKKQcRgPp7>

The upcoming edition

For Walk Along 3.0, at Elliotts Beach Road on August 10, 2025, a 500-700 metre stretch will be closed to traffic, made fully accessible with ramps, and lined with stalls, performances, and sensory-friendly games. Eleven colleges will volunteer this year, with both returning



Tree conservation organisation Nizhal has installed a board next to an old Strychnine tree in Injambakkam that was spared the axe during ECR widening work, having been declared rare by Chennai District Green Committee. Issuing a warning to the public, the board ensures the tree would not fall a victim to any act of carelessness and possible vandalism. This board will remain till the time the Forest Department installs a plaque emphasising the tree's heritage status

PRINCE FREDERICK

Where people cannot look beyond the commonplace, the unusual will not be recognised, let alone valued. In this milieu, those rubbing shoulders with the unusual might need to speak up for it. Tree conservation organisation Nizhal has taken that step, putting up a board that utters a strident word of warning to protect an old and rare Strychnine tree.

In Tamil, the wording follows the tone of the programming lan-

A strident warning



guage Prolog, being declarative (this is not an exact translation, but the communication proceeds somewhat along the lines of "if you bring harm to this tree, you will come to harm") and not just plain imperative (which would have been "do not harm this tree"). There is official weight behind the move, the board carrying the logos of Greater Chennai Corporation

and Tamil Nadu Government in addition to Nizhal's.

Even if they were to live for an eon, a majority of people in Chennai would not recognise a Strychnine tree (Etimaram in Tamil) in the manner they would a neem. Going by documentation, Strychnos nux-vomica (the biological name for strychnine trees) has taken up a remarkably limited sur-



The Strychnine tree in Injambakkam.

PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

face area in Chennai. A venerable, hugely aged Strychnine tree is found at Ponni Amman Koil in Injambakkam on East Coast Road. The only other known Strychnine tree is at ICF, a Gen Z in comparison to its older relative in Injambakkam.

In the light of the species' rare presence, the old Strychnine tree in Injambakkam found a hedge of protection – a figurative hedge – being laid around it. The hedge held up when that section of East Coast Road was being widened. At the behest of T.D. Babu, part of Chennai District Green Committee and a key member of Nizhal, the State Highways Department took an extraordinary effort to ensure this tree continued to stand tall when most other things in its line were levelled to the ground to facilitate road-widening work. A storm-water drain skirted around the tree.

As proven time and again, a thing that survived a sledgehammer might find its end with a fly-watter. This idea took root in Babu's mind when he noticed a JCB

parked near the tree while he was driving past one day. He stopped and found out that power-cable laying work was being carried out close to the tree. Though he knew there was no plan to lift even a little finger against the tree, he felt impelled to tell the workers what this tree was all about. Babu says he also left his number with a roadside vendor nearby seeking that he be informed if any activity that was not in the interests of the tree was noticed.

Babu says he made sure that a board was installed to tell people about the tree's significance and issue a warning to anyone who might think of bringing harm to it.

Babu observes that Nizhal has given the Forest Department a list of trees in and around Chennai that have heritage value and therefore, ought to be protected at any cost. The Forest Department is preparing plaques for all these trees, explaining their significance and their "protected" status.

Until that plaque arrives, this board would do the job for this old Strychnine tree.

CMRL to enforce cleanliness norms strictly

Taking into account the increasing public complaints regarding the use of chewable tobacco products and the resulting spitting and littering on Metro trains and premises, the Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) is stepping up enforcement measures to maintain cleanliness and hygiene.

CMRL will intensify patrols during non-peak hours and implement random physical checks at all metro stations, as chewable tobacco products cannot be detected through metal detectors, a release stated.

Platform security personnel will closely monitor commuters' activity. Commuters found violating cleanliness norms will be fined under the Metro Railways (Operation and Maintenance) Act, 2002, and Metro Railways Carriage and Ticket Rules, 2014.

The CMRL urges commuters to cooperate in ensuring a clean, safe and pleasant travel, added the release.

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Bookworms meet again



SHIVANI DHULIA

The Bookworms Club held its fourth meeting at The Central Park South in Sholinganallur this past Sunday, continuing its mission to foster a love for literature and community engagement. The event brought together book lovers from across OMR for an afternoon of literary exchange, author insights and thoughtful discussion.

What makes the Bookworms Club truly special is its diversity – a rich blend of generations, cultures and professions, all united by one common passion, their love for books.

The book swap

The event kicked off with the ever-popular Book Swap, a signature tradition of the club. About 200 books changed hands, allowing attendees to share their favourite books and discover new ones. This

exchange was smoothly coordinated by Purnima, and the band of amazing volunteers from TCPS, who ensured the process was seamless and inclusive.

Focus on local talent

The event celebrated local literary voices with two engaging author conversations.

Ranjit Narayanan, co-host of the online writing forum ArtoonsInn, led a candid and inspiring discussion with Meera Rajagopalan, author of the fiction novel *Control the Shift*. The conversation explored Meera's journey from journalism to fiction writing, the time and dedication it took to shape her book, and the message she hopes to share with aspiring writers. The book contains many references to OMR landmarks, making it a "totally local" book.

This was followed by a spotlight-on-the-author session in which I, Shivani Dhuliya, was in conversation with Sripriya Srinivasan, author

of *The Pallava Empire: A Gentle Introduction*. Sripriya spoke with heartfelt passion about her inspiration for the book, the challenges of conducting in-depth research while doing her MA in Sanskrit, and the balance she maintained between academic pursuits and raising three children.

She also offered glimpses into her earlier works, including translations and other literary contributions that have enriched the field of Indian heritage and classical literature. Adding a visual dimension to the discussion was V. K. Srinivasan, the book's photographer and a techie known for his deep interest in heritage photography. His insights brought alive the visual storytelling behind the book and revealed fascinating facts about the Pallava era's architectural marvels.

A deep dive

The most awaited segment of the day – the Book Breakdown – was perfectly hosted by Rohini Subramaniam. The group delved into Jeffrey Archer's *Kane and Abel*, discussing favourite as well as least-liked characters, pivotal "what if" moments, and the historical depth of the novel. The conversation was lively, insightful, and reflective of the group's growing literary camaraderie.

The next Bookworms Club meeting will feature *The Namesake* by Indian-American author Jhumpa Lahiri.

Join the FOMRRA Book Club and stay updated on future events: join.fomrra.org.

(Shivani Dhuliya is a resident of OMR and a volunteer for the Bookworms Club)



Urban forest in Taramani poorer by 7 illupai trees

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

An urban forest managed by Nizhal on PWD land along Buckingham Canal opposite NIFT in Rajiv Gandhi Salai is now poorer by seven *illupai* trees and one Siamese cassia tree.

These trees have come under the juggernaut of development, a development exercise that could have treaded a bit lightly with some planning, according to T.D. Babu, a member of the Chennai District Green Committee and a Nizhal associate. Babu notes that the trees were mowed down without getting approval from the green committee, to execute Greater Chennai Corporation's stormwater drain work.

"This urban forest has been created and nurtured by Nizhal through a proper MoU signed with PWD," says Babu, adding that such



The trees that were mowed down

a cavalier attitude towards trees "have become regular despite GCC Commissioner J. Kumaragurubaran, who is the Chairman of Chennai District Green Committee, had given standing instruction, in his very first meeting as chairman of the district green committee, to not cut trees without permission and to work on conserving the existing trees."

Babu further notes that "Nizhal has taken up this issue with RDC South, GCC."

Malayalam literary festival in Chennai on August 10

To be held at Vivekananda House Campus, the event will feature a day-long lecture series and four micro plays. The highlight will be the conferring of the literary award for 2025 on Karivellur Murali

Aasrayam, which has an active cultural presence among Malayalees in Chennai, is holding the Kavalam Narayana Panicker Literary Festival on August 10, 2025, at Vivekananda House Campus, opposite Marina Beach.

The highlight of the literary festival will be the conferring of the annual literary award for 2025 on renowned playwright and poet Karivellur Murali. Actress and theatre activist Rohini will present the award to the playwright-poet at the inaugural ceremony of the literary festival, says a press release.

The literary festival will fea-



Karivellur Murali will receive the literary award for 2025 at the festival

ture a day-long lecture series focusing on the literary legacy of Kavalam Narayana Panicker. Topics include "Malayalam

Theatre Movement and Kavalam Narayana Panicker" and "Malayalam Drama: Changing Imageries", with talks by Raja Warriar (theatre practitioner) and V. Hikmathulla (faculty, Unity Women's College, Manjeri). Other speakers and participants include P.M. Girish, Shyamala Jayaprakash, Dr. C.G. Rajendrababu, and A.V. Anoop.

The event will also feature four micro plays presented by Chennai-based theatre groups led by Abhilash Parameswaran, Jophin Manimala, Gireesh Karamael, and Sreeranjini.

Additional attractions include a photo exhibition, a musical

tribute (Gaananjali) with select songs of Kavalam, Nattilekkoru Vandi youth group will present an anti-drug awareness programme promoting the message "Say No to Drugs, Say Yes to Knowledge".

A massive contribution

With over fifty plays to his credit, the award recognises his lifelong contribution to Malayalam theatre. A multifaceted personality – actor, playwright, director, lyricist and public speaker – he currently serves as the Secretary of Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Academy. His acclaimed plays include *Che*

Guevara, Abubakkarinte Umma Parayunnu, Kuruthippadam, and Agrayaanam, among over 60 notable works. He is a recipient of several prestigious awards, including the Kerala Sahitya Academy Award, says the press release.

A jury consisting of literary critic and orator P.K. Rajasekharan, former Doordarshan Director Baiju Chandran, Bindu Venugopal, K.D. Santhosh Kumar, P.A. Suresh Kumar, and P.K. Ramachandran selected him for the award. The award includes a cash prize of ₹25,000, a sculpture designed by Joshi Perambra, and a citation.

Listen to monsoon ragas

The 24th edition of Barkha Ritu will be presented today at Narada Gana Sabha

Banyan Tree Events, a premier cultural organisation, presents the Chennai edition of its iconic music festival Barkha Ritu on August 3 at Narada Gana Sabha (from 5.30 p.m. onwards).

In its 24th year now, Barkha Ritu is the country's longest-running thematic music festival celebrating the spirit of the monsoons through classical music, said a press release. This year's Chennai concert promises a rich and immersive experience of monsoon ragas – deeply evocative compositions that capture the moods, emotions, and essence of the rainy season. The evening's line-up features two enthralling performances: Pt. Rahul Shivkumar Sharma (Santoor); and Sandeep Narayan and Pt. Jayateerth Mevundi (Carnatic and Hindustani vocal duet)

These renowned artistes will present a unique musical con-



fluence that bridges Hindustani and Carnatic traditions, offering audiences an unforgettable evening steeped in melody, heritage and atmosphere.

Tickets for the event are available on BookMyShow.

Pickle making workshop

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a workshop on making pickles and pastes on August 7 at its premises at Agro Tech Green Park, First Floor, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy. Prior registration is required. For details, call 044 - 2953 0048.

Cancer screening camp



The ARC Gut Clinic at Kottivakkam on Rajiv Gandhi Salai is conducting a colorectal cancer-screening camp on August 10 at its premises.

The camp will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer, and India has observed a steady rise in cases in the last 20 years, said a press release from the clinic.

Apart from colorectal consultation, a Fit test kit is available at ₹ 999.

The clinic is located at 27, Srinivasa Nagar, Kottivakkam.

Phone: 90428 82750,
website: www.thearcgut.clinic

Two-day workshop on App development using AI

Entrepreneurship Development Innovation Institute, a Department of MSME, is conducting a workshop on App development using AI on August 5 and 6 at its premises at SIDCO Industrial Estate, EDII Office Road, Guindy. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Those above 18 years of age can apply.

According to a press release, prior knowledge of coding is not

required. The session will focus on AI tools used by leading start-ups, real-time prototyping using popular platforms like: ChatGPT, Gemini Pro, and NotebookLM.

The centre is also conducting another workshop on Chat GPT on August 9.

Prior registration is required. For details, call 9543773337 / 9360221280.

Contest to celebrate Madras Day

It is an invitation to share heartfelt stories that capture the spirit of Chennai, by August 15

Super Chennai, a citizens-powered urban initiative, has launched 'Namma Stories', a short film contest inviting citizens to capture the lives, streets, memories and everyday magic that define the city. Launched as a prelude to Madras Day, the contest seeks to honour Chennai through the lens of its people – celebrating its unscripted soul, the beauty, the chaos, the charm and the ever-evolving change that makes the city timeless, said a press release.

Namma Stories invites film makers, students, professionals,

residents and everyday storytellers to showcase the beauty of Chennai. There is no age limits, no technical barriers – just a powerful story that brings the city to life.

Entries are open till August 15, and the winner will be announced on August 22 on the occasion of Madras Day. The makers of one standout short film will take home a cash prize of ₹1,00,000. This is more than a contest – it is an open invitation to tell Chennai's story, in your voice, to the world, the release said. Each short film can be of a duration of up to 5 minutes, and must spotlight Chennai in a meaningful way – whether through a personal memory, a powerful social message, a fictional narrative set in the city, or a documentary-style portrayal of its neighbourhoods.

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 August 11 to 13 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 above 18 years of age and who have completed class 10 can take part. The institute offers hostel facility for the participants on first come, first serve basis.

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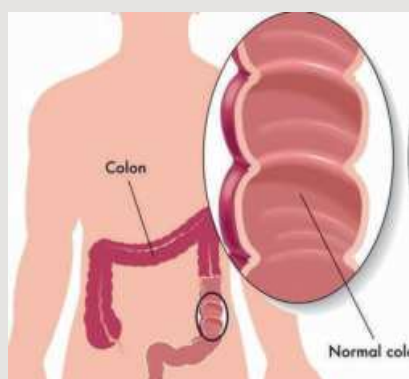
— Anus, Rectum & Colon Superspeciality Clinic —



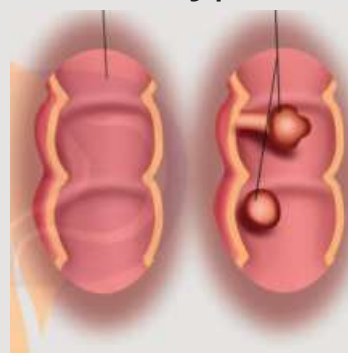
Colorectal Cancer is a pain in the  ss

- India has observed steady rise in Colorectal Cancer in last 20 years
- Colorectal cancer has skyrocketed in young adults in all countries

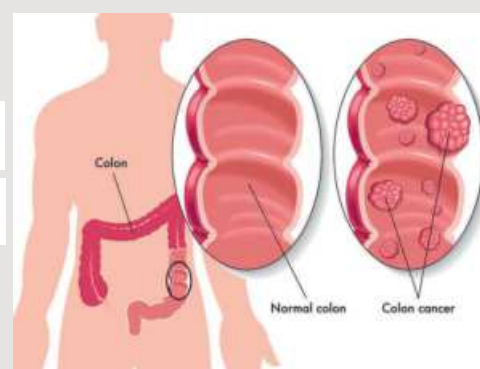
Normal Colon



Polyp



Cancer



Colorectal Cancer is preventable by identifying and removing polyps

Colorectal Cancer is treatable and beatable if detected early

**Cancer doesn't wait
Why should you?**



Get yourself screened if

- You are over 45 years age
- You have family history of bowel cancer
- You saw blood in stools
- Your bowel habits changed recently

**Colorectal Cancer Mega Screening Camp
@ARC Gut Clinic on Sunday 10 Aug 2025 10am-2pm**

Expert Colorectal Consultation+FIT test kit @ Rs.999

“FIT is a simple stool test that can detect cancer”

ARC Gut Clinic
27, Srinivasa Nagar
OMR Kottivakkam
Chennai 600041

Book your slot
Call or WhatsApp 90428 82750
www.thearcgut.clinic