

MYLAPORE

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



A SILENT PROTEST AT 5TH TRUST CROSS STREET

Road in Mandavelipakkam renamed S.V. Venkataraman Street **P3**



RETIRED KOLU DOLLS MAKE A COMEBACK

An artist, Renu Sabanayagam does not buy kolu dolls in mint condition, but gets those broken in body and restores their look and purpose **P5**

Makeover of Nageshwara Rao Park begins



Recently, a grand ceremony was held to kickstart the improvement works at Nageshwara Rao Park in Mylapore. The four-acre park is set to see a major revamp with features such as fountains and food court. Regular visitors say the improvement work has not affected them as they continue to use the park. PHOTOS: SRINATH M



CMRL opens Lost and Found office at Chennai Central



Lost something during your trip on the metro rail? No need to panic. The Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has facilitated a lost and found office at the Chennai Central Metro Station. Commuters can approach a single dedicated facility to retrieve their lost belongings during travel. For queries regarding lost and found items, commuters

may email: LFO@cmrl.in Website: <https://chennaimetrorail.org/lost-and-found-enquiry>, said a release from the CMRL.

CMRL will not be responsible for any lost items. However, belongings lost during travel can be retrieved at the respective station or the centralised Lost and Found Office, the release added.

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Blood donation drive on October 2

Geeta Bhavan Trust, in association with Government Hospital for Women and Children in Egmore and Arogyabharathi TN, is conducting a blood donation camp on October 2 at Avvai Shanmugam Salai, Gopalapuram. Time: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

This camp is being organised to collect blood for the acute needy including mothers who lose blood during a Cesarean operation. For details, call 9445198100

Pay tax by Sept. 30: CMWSSB

Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board has requested that consumers pay the half-yearly and any pending 'Water and Sewerage Tax' by September 30.

On September 28, the collection centers will operate in the area offices and at the headquarters from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for consumers to pay their taxes.

The consumers can pay their taxes online through the website <https://bnc.chennaimetrowater.in/#/public/cus-login>, using credit and debit cards, net banking, e-seva centres, UPI, QR code, and iPoS at the collection centres.

Consumers are requested to pay tax by the deadline to avoid a surcharge, said a release from the Board.

Renovation of RBI subway under way



▼ The subway near Reserve Bank of India is undergoing essential maintenance, repairs and renewal ahead of the monsoon season to ensure safe and uninterrupted passage for commuters. Photo : Raghunathan S.R.

Navarathri celebrated with pomp at institute in Royapuram

The fourth Navarathri celebration of NVMM Institute of Job Skills in Royapuram got off to a splendid start. On the theme 'Arulmigu Goddess Meenakshi Amman Madurai', the temple has been depicted in its true architectural form among the kolu collection, says a press release.

The Institute has been on a mission to create awareness about the importance of instilling education and cultural values in the youth in Royapuram, and every year, Navarathri is celebrated with cultural programmes to inculcate the spirits among the neighbouring youth.

Students from 10 dance schools including Annai Natyalaya, Kris Dance

Studio, Nritya Manjari Natyalayam, Divya Natyalaya, Aarudhra Natyalaya, Kcsnhss, NVMM IOJS, Pria Natyakshetra, Kalavirutsham, Little Hearts, Saptham - Anna University, Sai Vadivudaiamman Natyalaya, Bolly Bharatham Beats, Kalpavishnan, Eswari and Yoshini took part in the event. In the first two days, dance schools in Royapuram gave song and dance performances, said a release. Team Saptham sought to honour the divine feminine while bringing alive the spiritual grandeur of Madurai Meenakshi. NVMM Institute of Job Skills is led by K.Narashiman, retired professor from Anna University and his wife N.Vijayee, who retired as chief engineer from TNEB.



Music event at temple on October 4

A Carnatic musical concert will be held on October 4 at Alarmelma Nayika Sametha Prasanna Venkatesa Perumal Temple (HRCE) at Perumal Koil Street in Kottur. According to a press release, various cultural events will be held at the temple as part of Navarathri festival.



Durgotsav begins today

The South Madras Cultural Association (SMCA) and SMCA Charitable Trust are presenting a rural Bengal-themed 'Durgotsav' this year.

Titled 'Sharodotsav', the 47th year celebration will take place from September 28 to October 2 at Mantra Garden, First Main Road, Nandanam.

There are exciting competitions, cultural programs, Bhog (food offerings to the deity), and carnival immersion.

For details, contact 9940524459

Classical dance fest at Rasika Ranjani Sabha from October 2

Eighteen specially curated classical dance programmes will be offered as part of Nrtyoutsava 2025 at Rasika Ranjani Sabha, Sundareswaran Street in Mylapore from October 2 to October 10. The event is open to all.

For details, call 86103 57987 / rasikaranjanisabha1929@gmail.com

READERS WRITE

'Illuminate this stretch'



This space is marked by pitch darkness for the last two weeks, posing problems for pedestrians who cross this point. Cattle sheltered under MRTS are let off in the dark; they stand in the pathway obstructing the movement of pedestrians.

Exact location: behind Presidency College, under MRTS, coovum culvert

This image was taken on September 24 at 7 p.m.

C. R. Sainathan, Tiruvallikeni

'Shoddy work at Thiruvengadam Street'

A few weeks ago, I had written about the condition of Thiruvengadam Street in Mandaveli. Since then, some action



seems to have been taken, but unfortunately it has only added to the residents' woes. The road work was hastily and poorly done. The so-called cementing is substandard, and the road remains extremely uneven.

Thiruvengadam Street is no longer a quiet, interior lane. With road closures and diversions due to ongoing Metro Rail work, this street now handles high volumes of traffic, including MTC buses. The shoddy patchwork done on the road is simply not sufficient to handle such heavy movement.

I urge the local MLA and authorities to visit Thiruvengadam Street and witness the daily struggle of motorcyclists.

Kalyani Muralidharan
Thiruvengadam Street

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.

'Isn't this a violation?'



▼ This picture from Canal Bank Road near Sai Baba temple (opposite Nandalala Cultural Centre) shows a private entity has placed barricades and tied ropes to ensure others are denied access to this space. This is a violation. Text and Photo: Baskar Seshadri from Mylapore

'Twin trouble in George Town'



Ahead of the North East monsoon, residents of VOC Nagar in George Town are anxious about waterlogging and potholes. Even during intermittent showers that the city is experiencing we hardly find these issues being addressed. Most of the streets do not have stormwater drains or any channel for rain water to flow which results in water stagnation for hours. Uneven road surface with potholes and garbage dumping makes the slushy road difficult to navigate. Even newly laid roads lack stormwater drains due to which stagnant water damages the road very soon.

Ilyas Haidari, George Town

A silent protest at 5th Trust Cross Street

Road in Mandavelipakkam renamed S.V. Venkataraman Street

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

With banners placed at various parts of the neighbourhood, residents held a silent protest on September 26 against the move to rename 5th Trust Cross Street in Mandavelipakkam to S.V. Venkataraman Street. The name change function was held on September 26, and residents are unhappy that the State Government has not reconsidered its decision to rename the street despite their disapproval being made known through multiple platforms.



Cross! Besides a written representation to the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and South Chennai Member of Parliament, the resident group also started a petition on Change.org to mobilise more support

from citizens.

Besides the numbering system that speaks about the role of the City Improvement Trust in developing Mandavelipakkam, the citizen group, close to 50 of them, are concerned about the difficulties they are to face in the future with the name change affecting their communication address.

"This is not just about 5th Trust Cross Street. If unchecked, similar unilateral changes could affect other streets in our neighbourhood too," says the petition.



Retired kolu dolls make a comeback



An artist, Renu Sabanayagam does not buy kolu dolls in mint condition, but gets those broken in body and restores their look and purpose

PRINCE FREDERICK

Renu Sabanayagam calls erstwhile kolu dolls out of retirement, rehabilitates them and puts them back on the Navarathri beat.

Each doll in her kolu collection now can share an account of how wholesomeness was restored to it. When Renu picked them up, these dolls were lying in dingy cubbyholes and dusty antique stores, broken in body. Missing body parts had to be reconstructed and glued on to their frames, which were usually hugely lacklustre, requiring deft dabs of an enamel paint-carrying brush. Renu has made them whole again in an ongoing do-it-yourself project (est. 2018). In her own words, this project (entirely a hobby to her) has so far notched up a tally somewhere between 200 and 300 dolls, each of them restored variously.

The artist in Renu encourages her to seek those dolls that need to check into a workstation before ascending the kolu stage. Quoting Renu: "I am able to do this work only because I know how to draw and paint." Though "Renu the artist" is germane to the topic, let us save that for the last.

The Kolu display stands out for its diversity, the dolls differing noticeably in stature and dimension.

Renu, a resident of Kesavaperumalpuram in R.A. Puram, explains: "Nothing I got, I got as a set. That is why the dolls are in disparate sizes. I think in those days they used to make the Ramayana set and all that. But nothing has been handed down to me from those days. This is not from my in-



Sections of Renu Sabanayagam's kolu; some of the dolls she has restored; her artwork based on Gond tribal art; and a pair of white shoes she embellished with painting for her granddaughter. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



laws, this is not from my parents. This is what I have collected myself in antique shops. So, sometimes you get big dolls, sometimes small dolls."

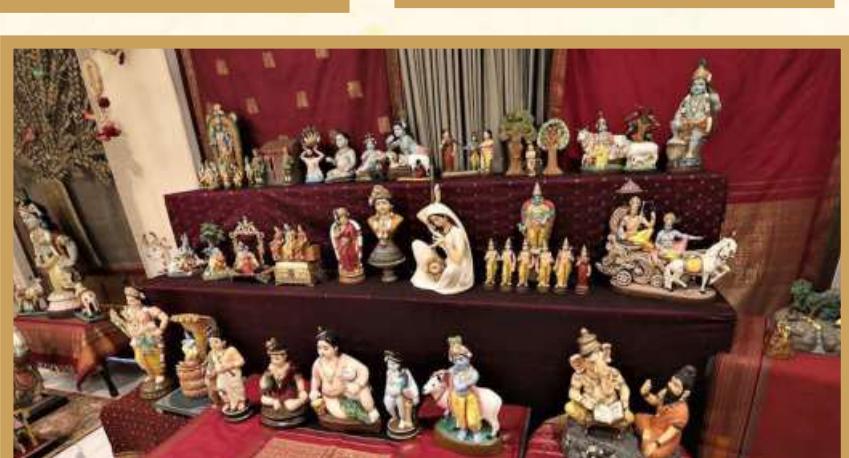
A walkaround

In traditional kolu displays, the dolls sit squat on stands with multiple steps (*kolu padi*), resembling school students in a bleachers-style seating arrangement, every strand of hair slicked into place for

a group photograph. This tiered arrangement works best when the author of the display is faced with restrictive spatial bandwidth. Renu need not skimp on space, but that is only half the reason for dispensing with the traditional display format. The other half, the more compelling one, is that her kolu tableaux accommodates multiple themes, and demands (and warrants) a walkaround. The result: a "banquet" dis-

tinguished by "themed counters", each representing a purana.

How she put together a collection with its various themes provides a microcosmic view of the human situation, giving a peek into the weighty philosophical question of determinism versus free will. Renu's collection seems to prove one has agency to craft their personal stories up to a point, and beyond that, those stories develop a mind of their own and unapologetically rewrite themselves, striking out entire paragraphs with the red-end of a two-coloured editor's pencil. Putting it



plainly, the drift of her kolu stories is predicated on the dolls that show up in those old antique stores, some cobwebbed.

Renu notes: "When I find this doll, then that doll, I say, okay let me have this story." Which ancient story, and which aspect of it is thrown into relief, depends on the dolls she has gathered as well as the dolls she is willing to wait for.

An illustration from Renu: "I found these two beautiful dolls, which were Sita and Lakshmana. And for a long time, I searched for a Rama doll to match this. But no Rama doll I found came equal to the beauty of these two dolls. I could not match it. I told myself 'Why not try something new?' And so, I did the Lakshman Rekha part of the story." She placed a decorative tape to signify the Lakshman Rekha with the Sita and Lakshmana dolls in the picture.

Now, let us have a glimpse of the rehabilitation process. Renu works with clay and enamel paint to restore these dolls. Dexterity is an invisible ingredient. Terracotta dolls make a massive majority, coming close to constituting the entire collection. And sandblasting an old, vintage car, 10 feet long and abandoned for a hundred years is an undemanding exercise when compared with cleaning a terracotta doll that fits in between the thumb and the index finger. Porous, terracotta dolls accumulate considerable



dirt. Brittle, they can give way under slightly sustained pressure. One can be certain she was breathing easy while working on a handful of wooden dolls, also on display at the kolu.

Renu has been collecting and restoring kolu dolls since 2018, adopting the hobby to fill a void created by an empty nest, the children leaving home in pursuit of their own destinies. Renu notes in all these years only around a couple of dolls came painted in natural pigment colours; the rest arrived with enamel paint in various stages of flaking. In many cases, she has had to recreate entire features with the paint brush, and restore the doll's essential patina. Renu the artist is intrinsic to this collection. She observes that when she saw two dolls, both based on Ravi Varma's paintings, she knew the creative source.

The artist

Renu calls herself "a largely self-taught artist" and "an amateur artist" (which comes across as a modest self-assessment when one gets acquainted with her work) who "works with different art forms". One senses a particular liking for Gond tribal art. She does not always work with paper and canvas, occasionally with white shoes too – "shoes" here is not an auto-correct error.

Her husband Rajendran Sabanayagam (who was with McKinsey & Company in New York and on return to India founded Sumangala Steel) explains: "Her artistic abilities were developed under the informal tutelage of my mother, Savithri Sabanayagam, and while travelling with me both in India and abroad. The artworks are of professional quality, everyone who sees them says that, but she does not want to leave her comfort zone and keeps her art within the family." Which means giving her artworks to relatives, and also adding artistic value to white shoes bought for children in the family (she has three grandchildren) as well as those in the extended family.

Says Rajendran: "She gets shoes, white shoes. And she paints on the white shoes for all the children. I have given her one of my white shoes and I have asked her to paint it for me."

That would likely be the immediate project following this kolu season – Rajendran hopes it is.



Art challenge driven by AI celebrates Durga Puja

SMCA Charitable Trust in association with HashHackCode is conducting the competition on October 1 for children



for technological exploration-offering children a glimpse of the future while honouring cherished traditions.

SMCA Charitable Trust is a community organisation in Chennai dedicated to promoting art, culture and social welfare. Through year-round activities including music, dance, educational initiatives and charitable outreach – SMCA fosters community engagement and preserves cultural heritage while embracing modern, inclusive ideas.

The event

When: October 1
Time: 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM
Venue: Mantra Gardens, Nandanam Extension, Chennai – 600035

Who can join:
Children aged 8–16; no prior experience required

Registration link:
<http://bit.ly/HHCSMCA>
Contact: 9176894576 | 9886693027

A major operation to rescue blind dog

The stray had fallen into a manhole on Avvai Shanmugam Salai

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A blind dog that had fallen into an open manhole on Avvai Shanmugam Salai in Gopalapuram was rescued in a two-hour-long operation with the help of animal volunteers and the Fire and Rescue Services Department personnel.

Tense moments prevailed at the spot (around 7.40 p.m. on September 25) when a crowd gathered to witness the rescue operation.

According to Kirthana Raamsuкаsh, a resident of RA Puram who runs non-profit Hope for Critters, she was informed by a dog feeder from the locality that an adult dog

had fallen through the open manhole. The pavement on this road is undergoing an improvement work and has more than four manholes that are connected to a stormwater drain network.

"The particular spot had two open manholes, and a partially open manhole on the opposite side," says Kirthana. She along with L. Praveen from Mylapore alerted Greater Chennai Corporation officials, Fire Department and the local councillor.

They first called 108 and launched a complaint based on which two Corporation staff came to the spot. The team from Teynampet fire station came but were contemplating whether to get



The spot at Avvai Shanmugam Salai and the dog being taken in an ambulance. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

down. "The fire and rescue team helped with opening the covers and seeing if the dog could be spotted from above through the manhole covers and assisted from above," says Kirthana, adding that a few other animal lovers also joined the rescue team.

The rescue operation became a challenge as the dog after being brought out fell into another manhole. "What should have ended in 10 minutes went on to become a two-hour operation. We had to open all the manholes to block the dog from going to the other side as it was a long drain," says Kirthana. She said before leaving the spot they ensured the manholes were closed with covers.

The dog is now under medical care and is looking for a home. With both DAV School and National Public School on the same stretch



and many using the pavement, the animal feeders want GCC to ensure all manhole covers are kept closed for safety of all – people and animals.

WORLD RABIES DAY: SEPTEMBER 28

A safe shot

Animal welfare groups have intensified efforts to vaccinate dogs, both strays and pets, against rabies across Chennai. Residents can promote the drive and also benefit from it

LIFFY THOMAS

When was the last time you took your dog to the vet? Pets require an annual checkup. The vaccination schedule cannot be compromised.

September 28 is World Rabies Day and the theme this year, for the first time in 19 years, does not include the word "rabies", says the World Health Organisation. The theme this time - "Act now: you, me, communities". It calls on everyone to be more responsible, work together with others and drive real change.

With recent disturbing instances



GCC's pet clinics

Greater Chennai Corporations run six pet clinics in the city at Thiru-Vi-Ka Nagar, Nungambakkam, Meenambakkam, Pulianthope, Llyods Road and Kannamapet. Visit <https://chennaincorporation.gov.in/gcc/veterinary/contact/petclinic/> for exact location and contact numbers.



From a recent vaccination drive conducted by Blue Cross of India

of rabies-related death and Supreme Court's latest order on street dogs, animal welfare organisations have intensified vaccination across Chennai.

Staff and volunteers of Blue Cross of India will be revisiting Kannagi Nagar on September 28 to conduct a camp for strays. They had vaccinated the strays there

against rabies last year. The NGO has been focusing on localities outside Greater Chennai Corporation limits, Avadi being a key focus this year (a two-day camp was conducted on September 20 and 21).

The team from People for Cattle in India (PFCI) have set a target of administering 100 vaccines on World Rabies Day – 60 dogs and

munity, vaccination drives must be done once a year. "Last year, we vaccinated 5,000 dogs and this year we plan to increase the count to 8,500 dogs, thanks to HCL Foundation that is supporting us in a big way," says Vinod.

Besides dedicated locations where owners can come with their pets, Blue Cross team fans out to various neighbourhoods to vaccinate strays.

Unlike sterilisation where the dogs are notched on their ears, in vaccination dogs are marked with a vegetable dye that helps them being identified as vaccinated.

The economics of it and poor awareness are reasons why people in the outskirts are ignorant about vaccination. Vaccination protects animals from the deadly disease, and by extension, humans. Vaccinated pets further prevent the spread of rabies in humans.

Dr Arun Pari, a veterinary consultant, says if one is bitten by a stray dog, they must go and take a rabies vaccine as well as a multi-antigen shot. Getting the first dose of the rabies vaccine as soon as possible after rabies exposure is advised. "The first rabies shot should be done within 24 hours of being bitten; this is something people ignore," says Dr Arun.

Animal welfare groups say cost of vaccine and manpower are among challenges they face in vaccinating as many strays as possible.

"If you have community dogs in your street, the best gift to give them is ensuring they are vaccinated either at free camps happening in the city or pool in money and take them to the hospital," says Vinod.

A systematic approach to introducing chess in schools

Fourteen teachers clear chess course to get accredited as School Instructors of Chess in Education Commission



Fourteen participants completed the Preparation of Teachers Course conducted by the Emmanuel Chess Centre at Anita Methodist School in Veppery.

They were formally accredited as School Instructors of Chess in Education (CIE) Commission, FIDE (world chessbody).

The course featured online lectures by WIM Rita Atkins, EDU Secretary, FIDE Chess in Education Commission, along with lectures conducted on the premises by Ebenezer Joseph, Candidate Master and Lead School Instructor of FIDE CIE.

The programme was structured in two phases: in the first phase, 42 candidates participated, including 22 teachers from the Tamil Nadu Tribal

Welfare Department. Out of these, 14 were shortlisted for Phase II and have now been accredited.

The comprehensive curriculum covered topics such as The Chess Classroom, Classroom Management, Safeguarding, Lesson Plan Preparation, 21st Century Skills, Life Skills, and Progressive Rules.

The workshop was inaugurated by Lily Priya, principal of Anita Methodist Matriculation Higher Secondary School, and the occasion was felicitated by Suneera Abraham, General Manager of Emmanuel Chess Centre.

The valedictory session was honoured by the presence of Dev A. Patel, Secretary of the All India Chess Federation (AICF). WIM Rita Atkins expressed her pleasure in engaging with the participants throughout the programme, while David Chandran, Director - Research & Development, Emmanuel Chess Centre, addressed the gathering and offered his words of encouragement. Ebenezer Joseph said that this marks the beginning of a larger effort to systematically introduce chess in schools, with many more such initiatives to follow.

World Heart Day: quiz for school students

As part of its education awareness initiative, Dr. Kamakshi Memorial Hospitals has launched a quiz programme, "Heart Wise" for students in classes V to IX.

Organised as part of World Heart Day 2025 (September 29), the event is aimed to inspire students to take an interest in their health and understand the importance of heart care.

The quiz will cover topics such as the basics of the human heart, nutrition, exercise, lifestyle choices, and preventive healthcare.

On October 6, the preliminary round will be held online. The shortlisted students will compete in the semi-finals and finale, scheduled to take place on October 12 at the hospital auditorium in Pallikaranai at 2 p.m.

Students can register at <https://bit.ly/heartwisequiz25>, and schools can call 98840 89340.

For further details, email your queries to quiztime@zigmaads.com

TNEB honours its athletes



(from left) Dhanalakshmi, Joshna Chinappa, J. Radhakrishnan, Ayush Mani Tiwari, Subha Venkatesan and K. R. Sivakumar

Tamil Nadu Electricity Board Limited recently honoured its athletes who have performed well at national and international levels.

S. Dhanalakshmi, national champion in 100m and 200m; Joshna Chinappa, Asian Games and Commonwealth Games medallist in squash; and athlete Subha Venkate-

san, an Olympian, were honoured. Joshna said, "I have been a part of TNEB since 2017. It has been a huge support to my career. TN Government and Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu have done so much through their schemes and extensive financial support to its athletes."

Saving plan for diamond jewellery

Sri Palsani Jewels, specialising in diamond jewellery, offers flexible savings plans with attractive bonuses of up to 2 months worth of contributions, ensuring real value for people's investment, said a release. For those looking to buy now and pay over time, the store provides convenient EMI options, the release added.



Admissions open at Montessori centre

Rosedays Montessori Resource Center in Mylapore is accepting admissions for Vijayadasmi and the new academic year. The center offers "Casa and elementary programmes" for children in the age group of 2.5 years to 12 years.

This inclusive space supports parents, caregivers and teachers through guidance, training and resources, said a release.

Collaborations with healthcare professionals further enhance the support provided to children with diverse learning and developmental needs.

After-school sessions are also available. Rosedays Montessori Resource Centre is located at 256/123, First Floor, R K Mutt Road, R A Puram. Phone: 9629888075. Website: rosedaysmontessori.com

YMIA observes Annie Besant's 92nd death anniversary at TS

Young Men's Indian Association (YMIA), founded by Dr. Annie Besant in 1914, remembered its founder on her 92nd death anniversary day through an event at "Garden Of Remembrance" in Theosophical Society, Adyar.

According to a press release, R. Ramachandran, president, P.G. Sadgurudas, vice-president, A.Sekar, honorary secretary, Shobana Ramesh, honorary joint secretary and members of the governing body, R.Nataraj, N.Madhanchandar, life members, administrative officer, gym members along with Jai Kumar, general manager, Theosophical Society, participated in the event, laying a wreath and paying their respects.

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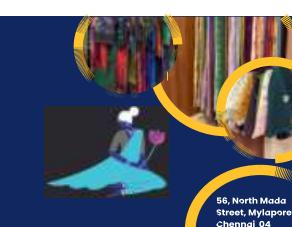
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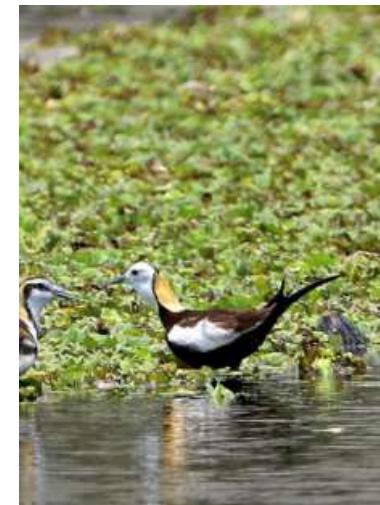
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Raising more families

The Pheasant-tailed jacana which depends on the monsoons and availability of water to breed can now be seen wearing its breeding plumage more frequently, sometimes as early as mid-April and that should not raise eyebrows



Pheasant-tailed jacanas in breeding plumage at various times of this year: September-end, July-end and even mid-April. The images are from water-filled patches in Perumbakkam and Semmancherry. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

PRINCE FREDERICK

The LinkedIn profile might be up-to-date, but not the profile picture. The jawline might not be as well-defined in reality as in the display picture. Usually, the difference between reality and representation goes unnoticed unless the person has developed a bald pate overnight. But if one belonged

to the Aves class of Kingdom Animalia, the date of the "display picture" would matter, some birds shedding their "look" as often as clouds change their shapes. Some species are known for "makeovers" as dramatically different as those assumed by a Kamal Haasan and in the western film world, a Daniel Day-Lewis.

The frequency of makeovers depends on a bird species' breeding cycles. Waterbirds and birds that

"There is nothing deliberate about it," says ornithologist V. Santharam, "they are programmed to breed when the ideal conditions are present, their gonadal morphology changing in response to the availability of resources. Birds are opportunistic not by choice, but their biology. And South West Monsoon being more fruitful in terms of rains in Chennai, many waterbirds must be making the most of that situation."



Prince Group honours professors with awards

The Prince Group of Institutions recently hosted the 'Prince Perasiriyar Virudhu' ceremony to recognise professors for their contributions to research and education innovations. The ceremony took place at Prince Shri Venkateshwara Padmavathy Engineering College in Ponmar.

V. Narayanan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), presented awards and certificates to the professors. Narayanan emphasised the vital role of teachers in shaping a nation.

Professors from various institutions were honoured. They include: N. Pappa from Anna University, Pandiarajan from Agni College, R. Narayanaamoorthi from SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Haider Lenin A from Saveetha Engineering College, A. R. Aravind from Prince Shri Venkateshwara Padmavathy Engineering College, P. Rameshkumar from PSN Engineering College, Dr. S. Baskar from Vels Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies, and V. J. Kishor Sonti from Sathyabama Institute of Science & Technology.

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synchronise their breeding cycles with rains could wear their breeding plumage more often if the showers get oftener.

"There is nothing deliberate about it," says ornithologist V. Santharam, "they are programmed to breed when the ideal conditions are present, their gonadal morphology changing in response to the availability of resources. Birds are opportunistic not by choice, but their biology. And South West Monsoon being more fruitful in terms of rains in Chennai, many waterbirds must be making the most of that situation."

Conversely, when the ideal conditions are absent at a time they are expected, that would be mirrored by gonadal morphology, it being underdeveloped. Birds could skip a breeding cycle on account of an unhelpful environment.

In Chennai, waterbirds and birds whose breeding cycles depend on rains are likely to be making more "babies" now, as in recent years, the South West monsoon has been more productive than before.

Even outside of the monsoons, there have been showers – one noticed it in April (when a thunderstorm happened) and May this year in Chennai. On account of frequent showers, waterbirds would be raising more clutches. One can get a sense of that from certain species that put on dramatically different plumage when they are breeding, by how often they are togged up in these feathers.

The Pheasant-tailed jacana can particularly be seen slipping into breeding plumage more frequently.

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