

TAMBARAM

Chromepet » Pallavaram » Tambaram West » Rajakilpakkam » Mannivakkam » Guindy » Keelkattalai » Nanganallur » Guduvanchery » Hasthinapuram » Pammal » Tambaram East

Medavakkam » Srinivasa Nagar » Kathipara Junction » Kovilambakkam » Sadasivam Nagar » Potheri » Selaiyur » Sembakkam » St.Thomas Mount » Madipakkam » Urappakkam » Paranur

'Check *use* of additional headlights'

S R GODWIN SHADRACH

In recent times, there has been a growing problem of unauthorised high-intensity headlights being additionally installed in many vehicles.

The bright, white and yellow lights cause severe glare and distraction for incoming vehicle users, significantly increasing the risk of accidents, which could lead to fatal mishaps.

The excessive brightness of such lights temporarily blinds drivers coming in the opposite direction, compromising road safety. As per the Supreme Court's guidelines, light-



ing modifications to vehicles are strictly prohibited.

The Tambaram City Police - Traffic should take appropriate action to prevent the use of unauthorised headlights by vehicle operators. Additionally, measures should be implemented against auto accessory shops that sell and install such lighting equipment.

S. R. Godwin Shadrach is a resident of Tambaram (East)

A vehicle fitted with unauthorised yellow lights.
PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



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Lakes overflow, so does the cup of woes

Surplus water from a cluster of lakes could not flow into Agaramthen Lake, resulting in stagnation in several parts of Puthur

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

Residents of Sri Sai Avenue and SP Avenue in Puthur fear the rains. During the recent rains on December 2 and 3, their streets, as in the previous year, were flooded to a depth of two to three feet. Unplanned residential development and water runoffs from a cluster of lakes were the reasons.

“The surplus water from Aya-pakkam Lake, Kolapakkam Lake, Nedungundram Lake, Otteri Lake, Vengambakkam Lake, Vengambakkam Thangal and Puthur Thangal should flow into Agaramthen Lake, but as it cannot, this resulted in flooding in both localities (Sri Sai Avenue and SP Avenue),” says K. Dayanand Krishnan, a Geographic Information System (GIS) consultant.

More than 1,000 cusecs of water were released from the waterbodies.

Residents have purchased plots and constructed houses approved by the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority, but the officials have not constructed a flood macro drainage network or studied the topography of the lakes, says Dayanand.

What residents want

●The culverts on Sri Sai Avenue First Main Road and Mappedu - Vengambakkam Main Road should be 60 feet and 90 feet wide respectively.

●Two additional small surplus channel bridges are required on Ruby Villa Main Road.

●The waterbodies should be interlinked through a cut-and-cover drain network. Flood regulators and surplus weir arrangements are needed at Nedungundram Lake, Vengambakkam Thangal and Puthur Thangal.

●Create a buffer waterbody at survey no. 568 with a flood regulator, surplus weir, and channel arrangements to Agaramthen Lake.

During Cyclone Michaung, the flooding was so severe that all major access roads (in the four other residential localities in Puthur and Nedungundram) became unnavigable.

After the floods, Semban Babu, the environment secretary of Puthur Welfare Association, approached Dayanand to conduct a GIS study of the flooding.

“I examined the revenue maps of Nedungundram, Puthur, Kas-

papuram and Agaramthen villages. The Puthur area is sandwiched between flood surplus disposal of Nedungundram and Vengambakkam lakes and Vengambakkam Thangal, and Puthur Thangal, with a combined flood discharge of around 1,300 cusecs, a significant reason behind the inundation,” says Dayanand.

The major bottleneck identified for inundation is that there are no appropriately sized road cross-culverts to dispose of the surplus water into channels on Mappedu - Vengambakkam Main Road, Ruby Villa Main Road, and on Sri Sai Avenue First Main Road, connecting the Agaramthen lake flood surplus channel and missing links between the lakes, he says.

A detailed project report on a cut and cover facility has been submitted to the Chengalpattu District Collectorate and Water Resources Department, but a funding approval is required by the District Collectorate, adds Dayanand.

Semban Babu says, “Though the rains were not on the higher side (on December 2 and 3), stagnation happened as a result of blockages in the waterway. The waterway should be retrieved, and a surplus channel created.”



A section of Puthur. The image was taken on December 03, 2025, around 11 a.m..
PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Roads that went from bad to worse



At Nagalkeni section of Thiruneermalai Road ; and (right) a battered section of St Thomas Mount on December 2 at 4.30 p.m.

PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Sections of St. Thomas Mount, Pallavaram, Chromepet and Vandalur, and between Peerkankaranai and Irumbuliyur along Old GST Road, are all pockmarked with potholes after the recent rains.

The road is marked with

potholes in the Saint Thomas Mount, Pallavaram, and Chromepet regions, affecting traffic flow and causing damage to vehicles, said S. Manikandan, a motorist.

B. Shyamala, another motorist, said the stretch between Peerkankaranai and Irumbuliyur

was worse after sunset with poor lighting and huge potholes.

Thiruneermalai

Due to non-desilting of the storm-water drain network, this year too, Thiruneermalai Road in Nagalkeni was flooded.

The openings beneath the pavement that drain water into the network are clogged with sand and trash, preventing water from entering the network, says B. Saravanan, a resident of Thiruneermalai.

Even the stormwater drain network was clogged with trash and sand, and water

could be seen gushing out through the manhole lids, adds Saravanan.

“Apart, along Thiruneermalai Road, there are many establishments selling bricks and sand. The sand is spread out on the road. During the rains, the sand gets wet, flows into the drains, and clogs them.

Pedestrians want liquor outlet near FOB relocated

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

Pedestrians using the Madras Export Processing Zone footbridge in Tambaram Sanatorium want the State Government to relocate a liquor outlet located along the bridge.

The bridge witnesses a steady stream of pedestrian traffic, including those working in companies in

the Zone and commuters going to the Tambaram Sanatorium railway station and the bus stops.

R. Kala Ravichandran, a pedestrian, says, "The tipplers sleep and smoke on the walkway and occupy the staircases, disrupting pedestrian movement."

At the FOB near Madras Institute of Technology, a staff with the outlet has been deployed on the steps



The outlet in Tambaram Sanatorium.
Photo: Special Arrangement

of the bridge to prevent tipplers from causing a nuisance to pedestrians and from occupying the staircases and walkway.

The same should be done at the FOB near MEPZ, say pedestrians.

If corrective action is not taken, pedestrians might walk across GST Road at the MEPZ junction, risking their lives.

An outlet exists on Railway Station Road, along Station Border Road, which is also a nuisance to the public, where the tipplers drink and relieve themselves in the open, causing embarrassment, the pedestrians added.

Plea to retrieve a pond in Guindy



Metal scrap shops have encroached on the pond area.
PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

A section of residents of Guindy have submitted a petition to the Commissionerate of Land Administration to retrieve a pond they claim was next to Sri Veera Anjaneyar Thirukovil, near Muthukumaraswamy Naicker Road in Guindy.

Once upon a time, the pond was used by residents to draw water and perform rites and rituals. Today, it is out of bound to the public. Metal scrap dealers have encroached on the pond, says A. Sub-

ramanian, a resident. "Before the metal scrap shops came up, the pond ensured the water table in Guindy and the surrounding areas was always maintained," he says.

P. Sathyanarayan, a social activist and a long-time resident of Guindy, recalls devotees coming in big numbers during Aadi. "During the Aadi month, devotees would take a dip in the pond and then complete the rituals for firewalking and carrying the firepot."

Saplings planted on bunds of Thattaan Kazhani Lake

As part of Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, SRM Institute of Science and Technology in Kattankulathur, in collaboration with SRM Green Club, organised a plantation drive on the banks of Thattaan Kazhani Lake in Thirukachur village.

The drive, initiated by V. Thirumurugan, associate director of campus life at SRM Institute of Science and Technology, was organised in collaboration with the Directorate of Sports, Government of India, and the Maraimalai Nagar Municipality.

Volunteers sowed 1,000 palm seeds and planted 100 other saplings to increase green cover, promote biodiversity, and strengthen the ecological resilience of the lake area.



It is 'raining craters' in Pallikaranai



A damaged section Velachery Main Road in Pallikaranai. This image was taken on December 5.
PHOTO: R. RAVINDRAN.

Gold appraisal training

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute is organising a workshop on gold appraisal from December 15 to 19 at its premises at SIDCO Industrial Estate in Guindy. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

According to a press release, the session covers the following: concepts in metallurgy with focus on gold and silver, difference between karat and carat, methods for calculating gold purity, and jewel loan assessment procedures.

Hands-on training in jewellery making is also part of the programme. Hallmarking procedures and standards will be covered.

The programme aims to prepare the participants to set up an enterprise in gem and jewellery sector. Further, they will find part-time job opportunities in banks as gold assayer, adds the press release.

Those aged 18 years and above with a minimum qualification of class 10 can apply. Hostel facility is available at first-come, first-served basis. Prior registration is mandatory.

For details, call 9360221280 / 98401 14680.

Around the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3), tracking the workaday trajectory of three organisations in Chennai, two of which foster artistic creativity among children and young adults with special needs. And the third one brings saleability to their artworks



The making of neurodivergent artists

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

The drip paint mug can walk straight into any upscale showroom that sells art-based utilitarian items, and plonk itself in the display. It would not be stopped at the door. It would make a great corporate gift. The design of paint frozen in an act of dripping underlines such meticulous calculation and skill that it can be the subject of a design lecture at a fine arts college. This artist had designed this mug exclusively for The Indian Twist which makes a variety of items that solemnise a marriage between artistic and utilitarian value. And there is a factor adding greater value to it. The artist is Rupak Munje. A name readily recognised, Rupak is a poster boy for art by the neurodivergent, art that can share display space with art of the highest water from the neurotypical. While in the business of making and selling these products, The Indian Twist is simultaneously in the process of making Rupaks. It supports art by the neurodivergent.

The Chennai-based company (@theindiantwist) sells online thereby surmounting the geographical barrier to commerce. Here is a quick run of their product line – a variety of bags, cushion covers, coffee mugs, beer mugs, coasters, notebooks, artisanal fabric gift envelopes, calendars, mini photo albums, aprons, fridge magnets, paper weights, wine bags and so on. There is a quirkiness to how these everyday things are designed.

The design team at The Indian Twist works on the spontaneous artworks by children and young adults from A Brush With Art (@abwa_chennai) and The CanBridge Academy (@thecanbridgeacademy), works them into its product line, thereby transforms these artworks into a state of saleability. The CanBridge Academy provides life skill training to young adults with autism. And ABWA promotes “ex-



pression of natural art in children with special needs”.

At The Indian Twist, the production process also supports women in shelter homes who stitch bags, earning income and gaining confidence. The residents of The Banyan (India) have a hand in some of the products designed by The Indian Twist.

Shuba Kuila, founder of The Indian Twist, notes that the final product does not obfuscate the artist's authentic expression. For Shuba, a part of this creative work is the creation of joy. The fulfilment derives partly from the children's delight that is evident when they spot their creations on display at events, pressing them to their chests with pride.

Shuba observes that The Indian Twist's approach emphasises merit over charity, ensuring that neurodivergent artists are valued for their creativity and aesthetic con-



tribution, not their circumstances.

Here is a peek into how these artists are made at the organisations associated with The Indian twist.



A drip paint mug, a calendar and a bag made by The Indian Twist with the help of neurodivergent artists; from the 'drawing board' at A Brush With Art and The CanBridge Academy.



cesses the world. Over months, she observes measurable changes. Sitting tolerance expands from ten minutes to over forty. Colour choices shift from impulsive to deliberate. Compositions gain structure. Impulsivity reduces. Confidence becomes observable rather than assumed.

At The CanBridge Academy, co-founder Kavitha Krishnamoorthy has worked with many neurodivergent individuals across ages. Patterns, she says, are often their preferred language. Visual patterns, musical rhythms, repetitive motions are not signs of monotony but anchors for regulation.

“Even finger painting becomes movement,” she explains. “Sweeps, arcs, repetitions. Their body leads the art, not the other way around.”

She cautions against reading emotions through colour choices, an interpretation common in neurotypical frameworks but inaccurate here. Emotional communication is frequently physical rather than symbolic. A child who arrives distressed may pound clay until his system stabilises. A young adult plays a xylophone with rapid beats when excited and slow, spaced notes when low. Emotion is expressed through speed, pressure, repetition, and bodily rhythm.

Contrary to stereotypes, attention is rarely the concern. What disrupts focus is not the child but the instruction. “They focus intensely,” she says. “The problem begins only when adults impose structure or when the task becomes monotonous.”

Across weeks and months, the changes are consistent. Restlessness diminishes. Emotional regulation improves. Trust widens. Independence builds. Over time, a recognisable artistic identity emerges, not shaped by imitation but by sensory accuracy.



Mala Chinnappa, mother of a neurodivergent adult and a long time facilitator at A Brush With Art, begins “When a child first comes in, we begin with dry mediums like crayons. Fluid mediums can over-stimulate. We simply watch them. They realise this is not a class. They are free to do what they want.”

The art sessions are structured around agency. One child draws buses with architectural precision but omits the driver every time. “Human beings disrupt his grid,” she explains. “So he edits them out.” Another covers sheets with a single colour until the page becomes an uninterrupted field. Some cut paper with near mathematical accuracy. Others tear it rhythmically, almost as a form of sensory release. These are data points about how each child pro-

The monsoon brings life to our gardens, but can also leave compost bins waterlogged and messy.
Residents on how not to compost during the monsoon

Rainy season demands smarter composting

LIFFY THOMAS

‘Do not give any chance for water to enter the bins’

The adoption of waste management initiatives in a community depends on how they are implemented, perceived and sustained. That is lesson from The Summit, a 30-flat apartment complex at 1st Avenue in Sastri Nagar, Adyar.

In 2019, Latha Mahalingam spearheaded an initiative to ensure no wet waste leaves the gates of the apartment by persuading the association to invest in *in-situ* composting.

“It was around the same time that Greater Chennai Corporation was insisting that communities (those that came under the bulk waste generator category) take care of the waste they generated, so that gave a huge impetus to my campaign,” says Latha, secretary of The Summit Apartment Owners Association.

After carrying out a study of apartments in Adyar where composting was adopted, two 800-litre My Green Bins were bought to the community. From flyers to messages on the WhatsApp group, segregation of waste was emphasised strongly. The housekeeping team was trained on steps they needed to take once waste was collected.

The community has been religiously composting waste; even during pandemic and heavy rains they never gave the bins a rest.

The apartment is at a higher level than the road, so even during floods they never faced an issue. The bins on wheels are kept at a height, ensuring no water enters them.

Latha says regular maintenance and follow-up are reasons the initiative is still going strong. The compost bins are cleaned after every cycle.

During monsoon, The Summit’s housekeeping team ensures the harvested compost is used. “Earlier we used to take it to the terrace and dry it. Now, we empty it directly on the ground or give it to the plants,” she says.

Another golden rule they follow is ensuring the lid is closed tight and giving no scope for water to enter. The bins do not even have a roof over their head.

“Now I have relinquished my position from this and the facility manager, Chenniagiri K takes care of everything. It about setting every in place for the right culture to set in,” she says.

‘Used mud pots can do wonders’



For Deephika S. and her extended family residing in Perambur, composting during monsoon does not pose any additional challenge due to various strategies they have adopted over the years.

Besides the kitchen waste that is generated from the independent house, the family composts dog poop from its two pets and vegetable waste received from two pushcart vendors who conduct business in the area.

A 4x2 feet pit dug on the ground and closed with a wooden plank serves as the bigger compost pit, but this is only put to use when the mud flower pots, six to seven of them, that are used as compost ‘bin’ are full.

“During rains, we ensure there is no soil erosion from the pots so an extra layer of soil is added,” says Deephika, a Chartered Accountant by profession.

The family’s experience from their own backyard shows that composting is quicker during monsoon as long as there is no water stagnation. “Moisture is a friend of compost-

ing, so the process happens as in other seasons; only that we need to ensure the right balance,” she says. On slightly sunny days, remove the cover to let the compost breathe. Proper aeration prevents the compost from becoming soggy and supports effective decomposition. The family members also ensure the drainage holes in the compost bin are clear to let excess water escape. This prevents the compost from becoming soggy. The pots are under a shade and layered with cocoa peat and kept for breakdown. “We did not find much success with readymade bins sold in the market, which sometimes leaves behind a smell. I find the red pot the best bet for composting as it has a lot of moisture content and air circulation is also good,” says Deephika adding that they grow a variety of greens, brinjal, tomatoes and lemon. The ‘black gold’ generated after a month goes back to their own plants. “We noticed the quality of compost being good when it is made with fruits and vegetable waste alone,” she says.

‘We make sure water does not stagnate in compost pits’

Water does not generally enter the compost pits kept in Greater Chennai Parks mainly because how they are placed.

In rare instances, water from these pits are diverted to sponge parks or outside.

We should monitor and prevent water stagnation in the compost pits, as it affects the composting process and may lead to anaerobic conditions, making for a foul smell.

N. Nireshkumar
Superintendent of Park, GCC

‘Maintain the right ratio’

One key factor to keep in mind while composting this time of the year is to ensure carbon and nitrogen ratio is 30:1. Most of the waste that

we generate at home contains more of carbon, so add nitrogen supplement either through cow dung slurry or urea (depending on the kind of composting you are following). If your site is in an open space, ensure it is covered but do leave it open at times when it is slightly sunny. Smell is a challenge most people complain during monsoon, so make sure there is no water stagnation as leachate leaves a foul smell.

Having a compost heap of one metre height is ideal to kill pathogens and it helps in the decomposing process.

E. Parameswari
professor in
Environmental Science,
Tamil Nadu Agriculture
University



Madras Naturalists Society members and school-going children from Chennai, Amoggh Vjay Chatty and Aaditya S Rajesh spot and photograph a Plaintive cuckoo, which is a vagrant in south India



A Plaintive cuckoo in the shrubs near Odiyur lake on November 30.
PHOTOS: AMOGGH VJAY CHATTY & AADITYA S RAJESH

Two boys document rare bird

PRINCE FREDERICK

No rap on the knuckles probably for Amoggh Vjay Chatty if caught talking with his classmates while seated at his flip-top desk and the teacher is scrawling on the board. After all, he was born “Chatty”. The human world might be forgiving if Amoggh uttered a word where silence is demanded, his unmissable surname coming to his rescue, making light of the situation, but the wild would not. The Grade 10 student of PSBB Millennium school in Semmancherry obviously has to shush himself while in the bush looking for birds, which he does in his leisure with two other Chattys – parents Sriram Chatty and Radhika Chatty.

On November 30, the three Chattys were looking for birds far from their hearth. The destination was the sprawling Odiyur lake on East Coast Road (near Paramankeni) on the way to Puducherry. The birding group was actually larger

with a non-Chatty in it. And the day ended up belonging to one of the Chattys – Amoggh – and the non-Chatty, Aaditya S Rajesh. The senior Chattys had their wheels all to themselves. Being peers Amoggh (15) and Aaditya (16) had flocked together in another set of wheels, a car driven by Aaditya’s uncle. Aaditya wears uniform different from Amoggh’s to school, studying in Grade 11 at Maharishi Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary school in Chetpet. During weekends, the boys have a common uniform, birding camouflage fatigues. Both Aaditya are members of Madras Naturalists Society and introduced early to birding by their families.

The purpose of the visit to Odiyur lake was to watch pelagic birds. Amid the repeating patterns of life are plans re-scripting themselves, throwing up highlights diametrically opposite to what was foreseen. And one needs to be thankful for that. Amoggh and Aaditya are. There were sightings of pelagics, but what dominated the boys’ excited chatter on the way back to Chennai was a land-lubber of

a bird – a Plaintive cuckoo, which had no business poking around Odiyur lake, in fact, in any part of South India. In India, this bird is meant to be seen in its north-eastern parts, until a “Jonathan Livingstone Seagull” among them shows up in an unexpected patch.

It was a joint sighting with both boys documenting the female Plaintive cuckoo with their cameras. The bird was first seen through the window of a moving car. It was perched on a shrub by the Odiyur lake. With the car stopped and parked, the duo started clicking away, capturing it even as it shifted perches in the shrubs.

The feathers were unlike anything else they had seen before; and they did not have a name for it. Amoggh says it was ID-ed as Plaintive cuckoo through a couple of online birding groups. “The experts consulted are Sunil Kumar Unni from Chennai; Adesh Shivkar from Mumbai; and Ashwin V. from Bengaluru,” Amoggh notes. The record is up on eBird.

Umesh Mani, a seasoned birder and a member of Madras Naturalists Society, on

the rarity of Plaintive cuckoo in these parts: “Plaintive cuckoo is a bird of the North-east, and rarely seen down South – the books show only occasional records. I have seen it just once earlier in Chennai, some 10-12 years back. It is definitely rare here, although I think that could partly be due to the fact that it may be easily confused with the hepatic morph of the Grey-bellied cuckoo (which is quite often seen here), especially if the underparts are not seen clearly.” There was a time when the Grey-bellied cuckoo was considered a Plaintive cuckoo’s “cousin”, being viewed as a subspecies. It is a long time since the Grey-bellied cuckoo was jettisoned from the Plaintive cuckoo family, and accorded separate family status.

In their identification notes, the experts pointedly discussed features differentiating this female Plaintive cuckoo from a female Grey-bellied cuckoo.

Ashwin observed: “The main thing is the barred tail. And generally stronger barring throughout, including on the throat and breast. Also more rufous on the throat and breast than Grey-bellied.”

Amoggh shares the observations made by Sunil and Adesh: “The tail has dark barrings and underparts less white, that points to a female (rufous) Plaintive Cuckoo. Grey-bellied has a cleaner tail and more white underparts. Also, grey bellied does not have the rufous wash on throat (above breast), whereas this bird does.”

Workshop on opportunities in solar energy sector

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, a Department of MSME, is conducting a training programme on installation of solar power system from December 9 to 11 at its premises on EDII Office Roa, SIDCO Industrial Estate, 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, government 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. For details, call 8668102600.



Photo used for representational purpose only.

A delicate brain surgery

The neurosurgical team at Dr. Kamakshi Memorial Hospitals recently carried out a complex emergency brain surgery on a young man.

The man arrived at the hospital with a screwdriver embedded deep inside his skull, which injury experts describe as “extremely rare and often fatal without immediate intervention.” A CT scan showed that the screwdriver had punctured a vital motor control area responsible for moving the left side of his body. It was also dangerously close to major blood vessels that, if damaged, could have caused severe



bleeding, a release said. This was a race against time. Even a slight delay could have caused permanent paralysis or devastating vascular damage, said Dr. Rahul Srinivasan, a neurosurgeon who performed the surgery. The patient was immediately transferred to the hospital’s advanced neurosurgical operating room.

Doctors and nurses with the young man on whom the brain surgery was performed. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Dr. Srinivasan carefully removed the screwdriver and nearby bone fragments without harming vital structures. After surgery, the patient was kept on ventilator support for two days to manage brain swelling and

stabilise vital functions. Initially, the patient experienced weakness on the left side of the face, arm and leg. Intensive physiotherapy and neuro-rehabilitation helped him steadily regain strength, the release adds.

Agni college signs pact for an AI center

Agni College of Technology in Thalambur has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with MiPhi Semiconductors Private Limited to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Artificial Intelligence and Semiconductor Technologies on its campus.

The collaboration includes the development of a 30-seat MiPhi Operations Center and a cutting-edge AI Laboratory, providing students and faculty with opportunities for advanced research, long-term internships, placements, and exposure to industry-focused projects, said a release.

Prasad Balakrishnan, chief executive officer of MiPhi Semiconductor Private Limited, stated that this partnership provides a strong talent pipeline and supports the development of highly skilled engineers trained in real-world AI and semiconductor applications, which are critical to India’s growing technological ecosystem.

“The CoE will strive to attract students, research collaborators, and the community by enhancing our dedication to forward-looking engineering education and emerging technology sectors.”

The initiative aims to enhance students’ technical competencies, strengthen faculty development, and open new avenues for collaborative research and innovation, the release added.

Luxury boutique hotel on ECR ready for the festive season



The Palomar by Crossway, a luxury boutique hotel at Akkarai - Sholinganallur on East Coast Road, is designed for every kind of traveller.

Combined with stay, diverse dining, and a collection of spaces, the hotel offers rooms in superior, deluxe and twin categories.

Guests can enjoy a variety of amenities, including a swimming pool, fitness centre, atrium, rooftop and well-equipped meeting and conference facilities, said a release.

Cappella, its international cuisine restaurant, offers flavours from around the world. The ‘Spotted Deer’ is famous for its

musical evenings, offering a space for both new and familiar artists. For events, Zol Garden provides an intimate venue that easily accommodates weddings, receptions, baby showers and pop-up markets.

This festive season, The Palomar Cappella will host Christmas eve dinner and brunch, and New Year’s eve dinner, and brunch. The hotel will ring in 2026 at Spotted Deer with a night of live music and Palomar’s exclusive stay packages combine a dinner with a luxurious room experience, added the release.

For reservations and enquiries, call 89258 48868.

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PHOTOS: R. RAVINDRAN



Doddering down

OMR

A tour of the cyclone-battered road shows a mending exercise that does not inspire confidence

R. RAVINDRAN

The best-laid plans of men and mice often go awry. Not long ago, from various sections of OMR, notably the one where the Sholinganallur junction is located, sluggishness was removed by having them relaid. But whatever was done has been undone in a matter of two days and two nights. These sections have unravelled, leaving road surfaces uneven, and sluggish vehicular movement is back – back with a vengeance.

And going by how the problem is being addressed, one can expect the situation to persist. This photo-journalist was witness to the best demonstration of a response grossly



unequal to the problem. On December 6, 2025, at the Sholinganallur junction, uneven surfaces were being made level by finding “fillers” from nearby, surprisingly for another section of the road, where

loose bitumen was found. This is level playing field of a different kind. Even debris from elsewhere being poured into the pits would not be an injudicious move, and this action is even more ill-advised.



In certain sections, old, festering issues have assumed greater sting. At Karapakkam, near Chettinad Hospital, the service lane has been continuing in a state of brokenness for a long time. There is no barrier between the service lane and the carriageway and no distinction exists any more. The lane is used as if it were an extension of the carriageway. The “wound” on the lane having been opened wider by Ditwah, this section has graduated from being an annoyance to an accident-prone spot. A watchman of a private enterprise out there notes that every day at least five accidents take place at this spot.

All the Ditwah-inflicted wounds should be tended to; and it has to be done fast.

Semmozhi Salai battered



Ditwah has changed the face of Semmozhi Salai. If one has a fertile mind where metaphors grow and spread like bamboo shoots, they would now see cast-iron puffed rice-cake pans – Kuzhi Panniyara thattu in the vernacular – on the road. There are pits (kuzhi) across the

surface of the road. There ends the metaphor; these pits have nothing appetising to offer. Due to the reduced roadwidth on account of Metro Rail work, motorists already struggle through this road during rush hour, and if these newly sprung depressions are not mended properly (right mixture of the

right materials going into the patchwork) and just filled with debris, the problem will persist and would get aggravated, the pits expanding. What one witnesses on Semmozhi Salai is just a trailer, the entire stretch of Rajiv Gandhi Salai has broken down, requiring urgent repairs. Related story on Page 2

A view of the battered Semmozhi Salai near the Sholinganallur junction. PHOTO: R. RAVINDRAN.

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