

TAMBARAM

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



HOW TO HOST A COLLECTION DRIVE

Meet volunteers in Chennai who have thrown open their homes for NGO Goonj to take up relief work for families affected by Cyclone Fengal **P5**



THE PONGAL RUSH: SPECIAL BUSES, HELP DESKS, HELPLINE NUMBERS

The State Transport Department is plying special long-distance buses on January 12 and 13 from three bus terminuses in the city **P8**

'Offroading' on a stretch of Thiruneermalai Main Road



Driving on this stretch of Thiruneermalai Main Road between Pammal and Anakaputhur regions can be more challenging than offroading. After work on underground drainage pipes were laid, the road was not repaired. In some areas, the road has sunk by a few inches.

PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

88 universities compete in karate tournament at Vandalur



B.S. Abdur Rahman Crescent Institute of Science and Technology hosted this meet.

More than 400 players representing 88 universities took part in the All India South-West Zone Inter-University Karate Women Tournament hosted by B.S. Abdur Rahman Crescent Institute of Science and Technology recently.

Baljit Singh Sekhon, Joint Secretary (YA & Sports), Association of Indian Universities, New Delhi hoisted the National Flag. T. Murugesan, Vice Chancellor, and N. Raja Hussain, Registrar of the Institute, hoisted the University and sports flags respec-

tively. The inauguration commenced with the recitation of the Quirath by A. Abdul Hai Hasani Nadwi, Dean Arabic and Islamic Studies followed by the Tamil Thai Vazhthu. S. Selvakumar, organising secretary, Director and Head of the Department of Sports, provided an overview of the tournament, including its significance. Here are the winners in some categories.

Individual Kata: Amritha Vijayan, Jain University; Farshana P.P., University of Calicut; and Mathini Sri H, SRM University & Chaitra Shree N, Visvesvaraya

University

Team Kata: University of Calicut won the first place; University of Kerala the second place; Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam and Jiwaji University, Gwalior bagged the third place.

The University of Calicut in Kerala was awarded the overall championship trophy, while the runner-up trophy was presented to Jain University in Karnataka. University of Kerala and B.S. Abdur Rahman Crescent Institute of Science and Technology secured third and fourth places respectively, said a release.



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ஜனவரி-10 முதல்

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நேரம்: தினமும் மாலை 4.30 மணி முதல் இரவு 10.00 மணி வரை



‘Clear this vacant plot of wild vegetation’



For the past few years, a vacant plot on Annai Theresa Street, LIC Colony Extension in Pammal, resembles a jungle. The plot is overrun with vegetation and is used as a dumping ground.

Sometimes, snakes enter the adjoining homes, striking fear among residents. The locality has become a home

to the strays. The Pammal Zone of the Tambaram City Municipal Corporation should make arrangements to sterilise and vaccinate the dogs. At the entrance of Srinivasan Street, cylinders kept in the open should be removed.

J. Arockiyasamy
Pammal



‘Recently relaid road in Madambakkam in a bad shape’

Many stretches of the two-kilometre-long Madambakkam Main Road are battered and marked with potholes following the monsoon. It should be noted that this road was relaid less than a year ago. Tambaram Corporation dumped debris to fill the potholes which has only aggravated the problem.

R V Baskaran
Selaiyur

Chromepet residents meet Tambaram Commissioner, highlight issues

Residents of Chromepet recently met K. Balachander, Commissioner of Tambaram City Municipal Corporation, and urged him to ensure protection of Veeraraghavan Eri. They wanted sewage discharge into an underground drainage network in The New Colony area to be arrested.

Members of Nagappa Nagar Residents' Welfare Association; The Arkeeswarar Colony Residents' Welfare Association and The Greater New Colony Residents' Welfare Association were part of the group led by social activist V. Santhanam.

Other issues presented include retrieving the Open Space Reservation (OSR) land from an establishment, facilitating a park for The New Colony residents and removal of civic body buildings for free traffic flow at the entrance of Station Border Road in Chromepet.

Escalators lie in disrepair on GST Road

The escalators at the footbridges in Chromepet and Tambaram Sanatorium regions have been in disrepair for months, testing patience of pedestrians.

The public is suffering and forced to climb a flight of stairs. Below the footbridge in the Chromepet region, there is a liquor outlet. After con-



suming liquor, tipplers sit on the steps, causing discomfort for pedestrians.

When I raised the issue with the authorities concerned in the Department un-

der the Right to Information Act, they replied that they had sent a proposal to the State government to replace certain escalator parts and are awaiting approval. Once approved, tenders will be floated, and the required work will be completed.

The procedures are likely to take months to complete. I appeal to the Highways Department to expedite the work without further delay.

V. Santhanam
Chromepet

‘Sub PHC in Perumbakkam closed most of the time’

The Sub Primary Health Centre equipped with pharmacy that functions on the premises of the office of the Perumbakkam Village Panchayat on Semmozhi Salai in Perumbakkam is witnessing good patronage.

In compliance with guidelines, it is being manned by a nurse who is authorised to conduct basic health tests (blood pressure, sugar and a few more).

The nurse is authorised to issue medicines

prescribed by doctors.

But in the last six months, we find the nurse is being deployed to other health centres and due to this, the centre remains closed. Besides, regular patients find shortage of medicines at the centre. The authorities are requested to attend to this issue.

N.K.Raja
president, Nesamani Nagar Residents' Welfare Association, Perumbakkam

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Sustainable fashion brand bows out in style

Oh Scrap! Madras, which has carved a niche for itself by upcycling fabric scraps to make clothes, jewellery, home decor, toys and a variety of other fabric-related creations is officially shutting down on January 15

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

The inexorable clock has quickened its feet, rushing through a final countdown for Oh Scrap! Madras. On January 15, the Chennai-based upcycling enterprise would have officially retreated from the sustainability stage, one it filled admirably for five years. Until the *coup de grace* is delivered to it that day, Oh Scrap! Madras would be kept on “life support”, its website (www.ohscrapmadras.com) open for a clearance sale with prices marked down by 50 to 60 per cent on all products.

While it lasted, Oh Scrap! Madras enunciated the shibboleths of sustainability flawlessly. The finery and artsy trinkets and home decor and utilitarian bags and a spectrum of other fabric-related creations it shipped from a well-appointed but unpretentious 2BHK flat Thiruvanniyur were born of upcycled fabric scraps. Women constituted more than ninety per cent of its workforce. On top of that, both co-founders were women. Designer Priyanjoli Basu and demographer-epidemiologist Dominique Lopez, the co-founders, made sure the fabric scraps came from local addresses, drawn from the godowns of textile factories, local fashion brands and the wardrobes of individual donors. The employees got to work from home not as an occasional perk, but by default. A tailoring machine was parked at home.

Oh Scrap! Madras’ work processes could have gone into a primer on United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, painting an illustrative picture of them – not all the 17 goals, but some of them certainly.

Beyond the gravitas of meeting SDGs, Oh Scrap! Madras brought a levity to its business. The name carried a chant-



A glimpse of the product line.
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

like appeal and even a winsome reverence. As Priyanjoli puts it, “I just wanted something fun and something that would stay with people in their mind.” And it did, becoming a synonym for sustainable fashion in Chennai.

The enterprise gave both its co-founders a huge and uplifting sense of purpose. But paradoxically, the things that fill us with purpose also deplete us. Over the last five years, Priyanjoli and Dominique had been lurching from one product to another, one sale to another. It was in fact baptism by fire for Oh Scrap! Madras. Established in August 2019, the fledgling enterprise would soon find itself catering to a closed world. The pandemic had shut down avenues of growth even before they were fully open to this enterprise. During this period, it put much of its fashion line on hold, and was largely making masks.

Sustainable fashion is usually a hard sell. As the duo puts it, each in different phraseology and accent, Oh Scrap! Madras would have taken what was considered dead and imbued it with new life, but the magic was never in the discarded and upcycled fabric, it was in the act of transformation. But the buying public was largely fixat-



This section spotlights initiatives undertaken by residents of Chennai to minimise the waste that reaches landfills

The numbers bear this out. In a post titled “5 years recap” they put out on Instagram, they note that more than 850 garments were made available in their thrift store; and Oh Scrap! Madras “has successfully upcycled, recycled, thrifted or donated 5.5 tons of fabric scraps since 2019”.

Furthermore, as Dominique says: “We also used to have upcycling services for clients where they could send their old fabric and we could revamp it. We ran a

The magic was never in the discarded and upcycled fabric, it was in the act of transformation

operation, not innovation. The market for sustainable fashion remains niche. If Oh Scrap! Madras with 100 products on its catalogue now and a product shipping history covering four major metros in India (Mumbai, Bangalore and Delhi; besides, of course Chennai) even parts of the United States should decide to throw in the towel, surely, there is still considerable work on perception engineering to be done.

As Oh Scrap! Madras bows out of the scene, its co-founders strike a positive note. There is something comforting about this ending.

“Ending something is not the same as giving up,” Dominique notes. “It is about knowing when the work you set out to do has been completed.”

The journey would have ended, but it was on track when it lasted.

Co-founders Dominique Lopez and Priyanjoli Basu.



donation service where people could donate their old clothes. We conducted upcycling workshops, both offline and online, regularly; and we organised talks about sustainability.” In a generous final act, Priyanjoli and Dominique donated piles of fabric scraps to up-and-coming designers who had been following Oh Scrap! Madras for years.

Back to the recap note, it says “we were a wonderful team of 12 out of which 11 are women and seven are local women artisans.”

“The women we empowered are no longer just part of the brand – they are the brand,” Priyanjoli says with quiet pride. These women, once bound by societal constraints, now hold the tools to write their own stories. Priyanjoli continues: “What we were creating was not just art from scraps. We were giving women a voice, an identity and a chance to reclaim their own story.”

“What we have done,” Dominique reflects, “is not just upcycle fabric, but upcycle lives.”

Some of the women were house helps, and what they earned from Oh Scrap! Madras was a big boost to the family income – in fact, during the pandemic it was a lifeline, says Priyanjoli.

Would Priyanjoli and Dominique want to recreate the magic, but in a different form?

To answer that, Dominique goes to the very beginning of this initiative.

Through a chance encounter, the duo had met – Priyanjoli back in Chennai after her studies in fashion design in London; and French national Dominique who had settled down in Chennai with her family – and discovered they were on the same page about how to put sustainability ideals into practice. And Oh Scrap! Madras was born in 2019. They want to recreate the magic, but individually, each taking a different road to purpose, one paved with sustainability-driven goals.

How to host a collection drive

Meet volunteers in Chennai who have thrown open their homes for NGO Goonj to take up relief work for families affected by Cyclone Fengal

LIFFY THOMAS

Just before Christmas when homes were getting decked up with colourful lights and cribs, Mangala Chandran’s home at Sri-ram Nagar West Street in Alwarpet was getting ready to accommodate old but useful stuff.

She was receiving cartons and bags of gently used clothes, dry ration, stationery and other usable items – the entrance of her house could have been mistaken for a go-down.

This drive for NGO Goonj that Mangala initiated racked up a decent collection. This old stuff could have ended up in landfill, but now they are being diverted them to families that lost much due to Cyclone Fengal.

“Mangala is regular in conducting such collection drives, sometimes it is held once in three to four months, opening up her house for people to drop in items that could touch somebody else’s lives,” says her neighbour L. Hariharan, who has been actively volunteering for Goonj for more than 11 years now.

Until a year ago, his home was the drop-off point for people in and around Alwarpet to donate reusable items. The donated items would then be transported to Goonj’s main centre in Kovilambakkam.

During the Christmas week last year, at Karpagam Avenue in RA Puram, The Little Caterpillar, a play school, also assumed the responsibility of conducting a collection drive for people affected by the cyclone. The school also played host to the Goonj team who interacted with visitors at the centre and had a stall selling upcycled items.

While many residents have been throwing open a section of their house to stock items for those affected by Cyclone Fengal and other natural calamities, NGOs working on the ground say they still need more helping hands.

“Since Cyclone Fengal made landfall on December 1, we have had nearly 10 collection drives, a majority of them in the central parts of the city,” says Anisha Baura, team member, Goonj.

Our plan is to reach out to



Items kept in front of a house in Alwarpet; and (below) the Goonj stall at The Little Caterpillar. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

15,000 families but we have so far only reached out to 3,000 families, she says.

Individuals and institutions planning to conduct such drives are required to reach out to Goonj at least five days in advance to receive the help they would need. They are also required to take responsibility of the logistics of stocking the items and transporting them to a central collection point.

“For many people, space is a constraint but we expect one to host it for not more than two days. Some hesitate as the cost of trans-

Since Cyclone Fengal made landfall on December 1, we have had nearly 10 collection drives, a majority of them in the central parts of the city

portation has to be borne by them,” says Anisha.

Hariharan, who helps people set up camps, says many volunteers sign up through conversations on WhatsApp groups. “With one’s network it is possible to find interested people,” says Hariharan, who has helped collect more than 20,000 garments so far and is secretary of Sri Ram Nagar Association.

Nikita Viswanath, founder, The Little Caterpillar, believes creating a buzz around some drives is of paramount importance or people would otherwise be unaware of them. “We are planning another soon with some interesting take-away workshops for visitors,” says Nikita. They also invite volunteers to participate in its other activities which includes packing of items, creative writing to promote a drive and designing posters for the same.

Unleash your creativity at the lit fest

The Hindu Lit for Life will host six workshops for different age groups. Ranging from creative writing to traditional games, these sessions take you on a journey of discovery and learning. To register, visit <https://newsth.live/LFLWSYW> or scan the QR Code



The partners

The Hindu Lit for Life event is presented by KIA India and is in association with Christ University.

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Crack the Calm Code

“Crack the Calm Code: Learning to Regulate Your Nervous System” would help participants discover how to manage stress through functional medicine and Ayurveda. Deepa Kannan, allied functional medicine practitioner and author, will guide participants through techniques to calm an overstimulated nervous system.

Facilitator: Deepa Kannan Date & Time: January 18, 10:00 - 11:30 AM
Participants: 30 | Age Group: 18+ Venue: The Annexe, inside Lady Andal School premises Registration fee: ₹799

Just play

Those enrolling for “Just Play: Life Lessons from Traditional Games” will get to experience the wisdom of India’s traditional games with Vinita Siddhartha. They will also learn strategies, synergy, and survival tactics derived from age-old pastimes.

Facilitator: Vinita Siddhartha
Date & Time: December 19, 3:00 - 5:30 PM Participants: 40 | Age Group: 14+ Venue: The Annexe, inside Lady Andal School premises Registration fee: ₹799



How to read a Mughal painting

“How to Read a Mughal Painting: Understanding the Mughals through Their Art” would take participants into the vibrant world of Mughal miniatures and decode their secrets with Ashwitha Jayakumar, author of *The Book of Emperors: An illustrated history of Mughals*.

Facilitator: Ashwitha Jayakumar Date & Time: January 18, 12:00 - 2:00 PM Participants: 30 | Age Group: 14+ Venue: The Annexe, inside Lady Andal School premises Registration fee: ₹799

The mischief of math

“The Mischief of Math: Paradoxes, Patterns, and Life’s Little Logic Tricks” will have participants exploring the playful side of maths through hands-on activities and quirky tutorials. They will discover how numbers intersect with narratives along with mathematicians Nivedita Ganesh and Inavamsi Enaganti.

Facilitators: Nivedita Ganesh & Inavamsi Enaganti Date & Time: January 19, 10:00 - 11:30 AM Participants: 30 | Age Group: 15-25 Venue: The Annexe, inside Lady Andal School premises Registration fee: ₹799

Tree of confidence

“Tree of Confidence” is a workshop where participants will join Shobha Tharoor Srinivasan in a creative exploration of confidence-building through stories, reflections and activities inspired by Nature

Facilitator: Shobha Tharoor Srinivasan Date & Time: January 19, 12:00 - 1:30 PM Participants: 25 | Age Group: 8-11 Venue: The Annexe, inside Lady Andal School premises Cost: ₹799



From Fact to Fiction

“From Fact to Fiction: A Creative Writing Workshop” would transform real-world events into compelling stories and blend fact with imagination in a session with award-winning author Vibha Batra.

Facilitator: Vibha Batra Date & Time: January 18, 3:00 - 5:00 PM Participants: 30 | Age Group: 13-17 Venue: The Annexe, inside Lady Andal School premises Registration fee: ₹799



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23rd Graduation Day of Rajalakshmi Engineering College held

India's second highest test wicket taker and former Indian international cricketer Ravichandran Ashwin on January 9 appealed to students to pursue excellence and continue to learn even after completing their formal education.

Speaking at the 23rd Graduation Day of Rajalakshmi Engineering College, Ashwin said school and college years were the best time of everyone's life, and young women and men should hold on to a larger cause after their higher education, "Whatever lies ahead of you, be it your career, financial liberation, or anything else, you should hold on to a good cause. Only then you will be strong with a steely resolve with the ability to fight your battles that come your way," he remarked.

"There will be only a handful of people to support you, but you will come across plenty of people in your life who will try to run you down and say 'you are not capable.' Ignore all those who demotiv-



ate you, they are irrelevant. Stay focussed and pursue excellence and always remember to keep on learning forever," Mr. Ashwin said.

Recalling his days as an engineering student himself, the legendary off spinner said that he found it very hard to balance his education as well as his game and that a proper time management helped him. "It was not easy, but looking back, I think what I learnt there and the tough times that I endured has made me what I am today," he added.

According to a press release, Ashwin handed over degree certificates and medals to meritorious

students who had excelled in their respective specialisation, in the presence of chief guest Prabu David, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Rochester Institute of Technology, New York, U.S.A., Thangam Meganathan, Chairperson, Rajalakshmi Institutions and Mr. Abhay Meganathan, Vice Chairman, Rajalakshmi Institutions

1,601 graduates received their degrees on the occasion. They include 1,434 Under Graduates, 149 Post Graduates, and 18 Ph.Ds. Over 20 students received Gold Medals for securing top ranks, the press release adds.

The Pongal rush: special buses, help desks, helpline numbers

The State Transport Department is plying special long-distance buses on January 12 and 13 from three bus terminuses in the city. On these two days, more than 7,000 buses will be operated.

The buses are operated from Kalaingar Centenary Bus Terminal (KCBT), Mofussil Bus Terminal, and Metropolitan Transport Corporation Bus Terminus in Kilambakkam, Madhavaram New Bus Terminus, and Chennai Mofussil Bus Terminus (CMBT) in Koyambedu. From KCBT, buses to Vandavasi, Polur, Puducherry, Cuddalore, Chidambaram, Tiruchi, Madhavaram terminus, Andhra Pradesh, Salem, Kumbakonam and Tiruvannamalai, and CMBT, East Coast Road, Kancheepuram, Vellore, Bengaluru and Thiruttani. People travelling by private transport have

been requested to drive through the Thiruporur - Chengalpattu route or the Vandalur - Outer Ring Road route to avoid traffic congestion on Grand Southern Trunk Road, Tambaram and Perungalathur regions, said a release.

Reservation counters

To help passengers book their tickets, nine reservation counters have been set up on the premises of KCBT and CMBT till January 13. The counters will function from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Public can also book the tickets online through www.tnsc.in and on the official app of Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation.

The numbers

To know about bus routes and register service complaints, the

public can contact the number 94450 14436 (24X7).

To register complaints against fleeing Omni bus operators, public can call 044 24749002, 044 26280445, 044 - 26281611, and a toll-free number 1800 425 6151.

For the passengers' safety, a control room has been set up on the premises of the Kilambakkam bus terminus, which will function round the clock. Besides, 'May I Help You' booths (buses and routes) have been set up in the terminuses.

The public must use the reservation counters and app, and online facilities for safe and hassle-free travel.

Metropolitan Transport Corporation will operate connecting buses from the Koyambedu bus terminus round the clock to reach the other two bus terminuses.



Students and parents graced the occasion. Sweet Pongal was prepared and distributed to all the students. The Pongal programme culminated with a vote of thanks by Roshini .F, Grade 8, the release adds.

Pongal celebration

Vidhya Sagar Global School organised a Pongal celebration on January 9 on its campus. The programme began with a prayer song.

According to a press release, Vikas Surana, correspondent, VSI and V. C. Govindarajan, principal, VSGS, were present. Diya .S, from Grade 9 presented a welcome note.

The students of classes III to XI performed a variety of traditional dances including Puliyattam, Kavadiattam, Vattakkal, Kolattam Mayilattam, Oiyilattam, Silambattam, Karagattam, Thappattam and Jallikkattu depicting the culture of Tamilnadu. "Hitting the Uri" was the highlight of the programme, says the press release.

Reliance launches electrolyte drink

Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) has launched a beverage product under the brand called RasKik Gluco Energy, an energy boosting and rehydrating drink. According to a press release, it is packed with electrolytes, glucose and lemon juice and is priced of ₹10 per single-serve SKU. The other flavours include:

mango, apple, mixed fruit, and coconut water. This marks RCPL's entry into rehydration segment, adds the release.

"RasKik Gluco Energy represents our understanding of the Indian consumer's needs and our commitment to be an integral part of their daily lives," says Ketan Mody, Chief Operating Officer, RCPL.

CMRL's recruitment drive

To increase women's representation in the technical domain, Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has initiated a recruitment opportunity for the assistant manager (Civil) position for qualified and experienced women engineers.

The candidate should have experience of two years and the maximum age is 30 (with a relaxation of age for deserving candidates). The selected candidate will be paid a consolidated pay of ₹62,000 per month. The detailed employment notification has been published on the CMRL website, chennaiemrtrorail.org/job-notifications/.

The last date for receipt of the application is February 10.

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12/15, Jaya Apts, Jayaram Avenue, Shastry Nagar, Adyar, Chennai-20.
Email: ssramee@gmail.com / Web: www.rameesmartinvest.com

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Invites you for the
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Disciple of
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In the Presence of
Natya Mayuri
Dr. Sri Sarashwathy. G
(Founder & Director of Saraswathi Kalanikethan, Institute of Culture)
On, 19th January 2025, Sunday at 10am
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