

TAMBARAM

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



FOLLOWING URBAN RAPTORS

Project Raptor Watch 2.0 by Madras Naturalists' Society in the Chennai Metropolitan Area has spread its wings and achieved elevation **P4&5**



KEEP IT SIMPLE

Here is why those who have saved a road accident victim could think twice before applying for the Good Samaritan award despite a five-fold increase in its reward money **P6**

The long wait for an e-seva centre in Perumbakkam

The building meant to be used for this purpose is under lock and key for more than a year



The e-seva building in Perumbakkam.
PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

Perumbakkam residents have requested the Perumbakkam Village Panchayat to open an e-seva centre on the sprawling panchayat office premises.

N. K. Raja, president of Nesamani Nagar Residents' Welfare Association, says: "More than a year ago, a building was constructed to house the centre, but it is under lock and key."

He says close to 1.5 lakh people reside in the region and are dependent on the e-seva centres in the Sholinganallur and Pallikaranai regions.

The public can apply for community certificates, widow pensions, old age pensions, encumbrance certificates, electoral voter identity cards, and changes to details provided by Aadhaar at the e-seva centres. They can also apply for government documents online.

"The Sholinganallur E-seva facility witnesses a good crowd, so some people go to the centre in Pallikaranai. It takes half a day to apply for the documents, and after a few days one has to again go to collect the documents," says Raja.

Residents have sent many petitions to the CM's Cell to open the centre in Perumbakkam.

A Chengalpattu District Collectorate official said, "We have written to the State government to open an e-seva centre in the region. The village panchayat authorities and St. Thomas Mount Panchayat Union have also written to the government in this regard. But the approval is yet to come. The one-year-old building is used by Tamil Nadu Fibrenet Corporation Limited to provide internet services to households in the region."

Additional buses for those returning to the city



To help people returning from their native places to Chennai, Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) will operate an additional 150 buses on January 19 from Kalaingar Centenary Bus Terminus in Kilambakkam. On January 20, MTC will operate an additional 500 buses, starting early in the morning to help people reach their home. This image was taken on January 11 at Kilambakkam. PHOTO: B. VELANKANNI RAJ

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Ravishankar conducts workshops for corporates and colleges on Indian sign language



BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The display picture in Ravishankar Y's WhatsApp says people face different problems every day but if one knew non-verbal communication then it will come to their aid when they least expect it to.

"This is 100% true," says the hearing impaired communication professional who uses aids to converse with people he meets on a daily basis.

The trainer with more than 10 years of experience is working to make nonverbal communication popular among persons with disabilities and the able-bodied.

A diploma holder in electron-

Saying it without words

ics and communication, 35-year-old Ravishankar works with a special school and during free hours conducts workshops for NGOs, corporates and educational institutions.

This type of communication includes sign language, eye contact, Morse code, Avaz devices, facial expression and blind writing.

He explains that body language and sign language comprise 45%; eye contact 30%; facial expressions 15%; and touch 10%.



Research also says that when nonverbal signals match with words that one is saying there is increased trust, clarity and rapport.

Tamparam resident Ravishankar Y promotes non-verbal communication as part of an inclusion agenda

The six months programme covers the basics for 21 types of disabilities and the certificate course is 30 percent theory and 70 percent practical.

"I support more people with disabilities as the main barrier for people with disabilities is communication," says this Tamparam re-

sident. I have not formally studied or earned a certificate in nonverbal communication, but I have gained knowledge through my experiences, he says.

He has conducted workshops for students of Psychology Department of Madras School of Social Work; for English and Social Work Department of Stella Maris Women's College on how to interact with people with hearing impairment; and B.Ed. special educators of Dr. M.G.R. Janaki College of Arts on how to handle children with disabilities.

Ravishankar is increasingly focusing on conducting workshops for women and children as he thinks they need to be empowered. For a Greater Chennai Corporation run shelter for women with disabilities, his session covered ways to communicate with the outside world using tactile sign language.

Regarding his daily challenges, he says, at public places some find it difficult to understand his communication as they are not aware of his disability. "They frequently ask me to repeat myself, shout, or ignore the need for proper communication. I explain that I am hearing-impaired and want people to communicate with me face-to-face and speak slowly so that I can understand them clearly," he requests.

WhatsApp Ravishankar on 9344645776 or email ravi99.babu@gmail.com.

Chitlapakkam Rising gets award from Raj Bhavan

Chitlapakkam Rising has won the Tamil Nadu Governor's Award for Environmental Protection for 2024. A cash prize of ₹ 5 lakhs and a citation will be presented to the volunteers on Republic Day at Raj Bhavan during the 'At Home' reception, said a release.

The citizens' group played a key role in restoring the sprawling Chitlapakkam Eri. The volunteer group continues to work to rejuvenate waterbodies, improving green cover and waste management.

U. Udaya Utthandi, one of the founding volunteers of Chitlapakkam Rising, says, "We dedicate this award to all our volunteers who strove hard to make a difference, big and small, for more than a decade. I feel this prestigious award will help volunteers keep pace with the many initiatives we all work together for."

Pongal celebrated by community



TVS Green Acres Apartment Association in Kolappakkam near Vandalur celebrated Pongal with Rangoli, pongal making, slow cycling race, mind memory game, tug of war, uriyadi for both kids and elders.

'School Olympics' is a big draw

Over 1,400 young athletes from 70 schools competed in a series of events at the first edition of the 'School Olympics' by Casagrand International School.

Dorothy Thomas, correspondent of Casagrand International School, declared the event open.

Students participated in a wide range of events, including 100m, 600m and 1500m races, long jumps, shot puts and relays.

The sports fest featured individual championships and an overall school trophy. Winners were rewarded for their outstanding performances, with the champion receiving a cash prize of ₹20,000 and the runner-up taking home ₹10,000, along with medals, trophies, and certificates of achievement, said a release.



A road or a dirt track?

It is several months since the construction of the underground drainage network in the Anakaputhur region was completed. However, a few streets in the area are yet to be mended. They are Saint Anthony First Street, Sri Vinayagar Nagar First Main Road and Thiruvalluvar Cross Street in Kamarajapuram.

While Saint Anthony First Street is slushy and turns slippery, Sri Vinayagar Nagar First Main Road and Thiruvalluvar Cross Street in Kamarajapuram.

V. Mohan, a resident, says, "Many motorcyclists have fallen off their vehicles while negotiating the long stretch. The surface became so bad that potholes developed during the rains."

The same situation prevails at Thiruvalluvar Cross Street, along Thiruvalluvar Street and Saint Thomas Street, where concrete pavement stones were removed to facilitate the work.

S. Edward, a resident, says: "A culvert at Thiruvalluvar Cross Street and Saint Thomas Street must be constructed. Under the culvert, the stormwater drain network must be widened, which is incomplete at the intersection. The water from the network on Thomas Street flows into the Cross Street. The stretch also lacks an illumination facility, which should be provided soon."

Text: T.S. Atul Swaminathan



Saint Anthony First Street in Anakaputhur
PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

READERS WRITE

'Remove banners on RP Road'

The Tambaram City Municipal Corporation should remove banners on Periyar Salai, Anna Nagar in Chitlapakkam and Gandhi Street in Karunanidhi Nagar, Chromepet.

The banners have been placed on the walkway, forcing pedestrians to walk on the carriageway.

On Rajendra Prasad Road, Bashyam Nagar, there are three venues. When weddings and functions take place, banners are erected outside the halls, obstructing the walkway. The pedestrians walk on the carriageway. The stretch lacks speed-breakers. The sharp metal rods inserted behind the circle flex banners pose a risk to pedestrians.

The Highways Department should stop this and also remove junction boxes from the pavements.

R. Ramachandran
Chromepet.



'Operate adequate electric trains during rush hour'

Hundreds of electric train commuters on the Chennai Beach-Chengalpattu line complain of overcrowding between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m.; and between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Thousands of working professionals and students depend on the electrical multiple units every day, but the service frequency remains insufficient, leading to extreme inconvenience.

The opening of the Kalaingar Cen-

tenary Bus Terminus in Kilambakkam has further exacerbated the problem, increasing the number of commuters on this section.

Southern Railway authorities must look into this pressing issue and take action to operate cut services from Guduvanchery to Guindy and Guindy to Guduvanchery during rush hour, except on holidays.

Sadhana S.
Chengalpattu

Six woolly necked storks put in an appearance at Nemmeli



A Woolly necked stork at Nemmeli on January 5, 2025.
PHOTO: E. ARUN KUMAR

PRINCE FREDERICK

The human species revels in having things in its own image; this obsession sometimes manifests as a desire to name parts of the outside world in a manner that bring them closer to its reality. So, you have birds going around, bearing curious name badges. A species sporting such a badge (more on its binominal name later) showed up recently in a space considered to be lying outside its known range – a glimpse

of the woolly necked stork at the Great Salt Lake at Nemmeli off OMR. There are scattered records of the woolly necked stork (*Ciconia episcopus*) in Chennai's outskirts – considerably few and infrequent. In Tamil Nadu, the woolly necked stork, a resident species, is associated more with southern parts, being found around agricultural tracts. Its propensity for local movements would have whisked them to Nemmeli. Past the salterns on the road from Nemmeli (East Coast Road) to Thiruporur

(Old Mahabalipuram Road), the scenery shifts to an expanse of green, stretches of paddy fields – probably an incentive for these birds to hit these parts.

On the field, the woolly necked stork stands out for a neck that seems to have been rolled up in a fabric of wool. The black patch on the its head (offset by its woolly white neck) resembling the skull cap – zucchetto – worn by Catholic clergymen is the reason. The bird is also loosely called episcopus. And a flock of six episcopi ushered in a still-new New Year during a solemn worship of nature that E. Arun Kumar, an OMR-based birder, participated in. The sighting of six woolly necked storks, in the words of Arun Kumar himself: "In the late evening of January 4, I sighted six woolly necked storks in the waters at the Nemelli section of the Great Salt Lake. It was not long before they took off for a pylon where all of them settled down. I went back the next day to check on them in better lighting and found the same flock of six birds. The great salt lake had very good activity of ducks with hundreds of Northern Pintail, Eurasian Wigeons and Northern shovelers among the congregation of birds. There was also a hundred plus flock of rosy starlings. When admiring them I chanced upon the woolly necked storks."

The woolly necked stork is a near threatened species.

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Principal Mrs.S.Kannigaparameswari, Teachers & Students participated. And also Rangoli Competition conducted for Girls.

A female and a male Peregrine falcon at MRC Nagar; and a Black kite around the Perungudi landfill.
PHOTOS: BHARATH RAVIKUMAR AND PRINCE FREDERICK

A view from the window

On January 16, a tinkle in a WhatsApp group of Madras Naturalists' Society (MNS) made Gnanaskandan Kesavabharathi jump out of his seat. A tidbit of information that arrived with that tinkle demanded an immediate response and GK (as he is known in naturalist circles) was on to it, promptly keying in an instruction that elbowed two young MNS members on to the road to MRC Nagar.

The info that cranked up the series of actions – “not one but two Peregrine falcons lord it over a rash of buildings at MRC Nagar”. It was a tipoff from Ambika C., a resident of MRC Nagar with an MNS membership.

The two MNS members landed at the spot lickety-split to ascertain the snappy report's veracity. One of the questions to get out of the way: is the new entrant really a Peregrine falcon or a “lookalike”, some other falcon being mistaken for a Peregrine? As sure as eggs are eggs, there were two Peregrine falcons, a male and a female, greeting the two naturalists, while being perched on a tall building.

Project Raptor Watch (PRW), spearheaded by GK, has been studying this patch for at least three winters, if not more, as a Peregrine falcon had helped itself to it, making it its winter stay, choosing its perch among three tall buildings. The patch is now a divided territory with another Peregrine falcon wading into the space.

Bharath Ravikumar, one of the two MNS members to study two Peregrine falcons at MRC Nagar, observes: “It was 3.30 p.m. Both of them were perched far apart. There was no hint of any unrest or an inclination to ‘ward off’ the other; they were both calmly minding their own business. Around 4.30 p.m., the male took to the air and disappeared and half an hour later, he showed up and was perched on the same ledge as the female, but on the opposite end. This seemed to have disturbed her; and she started walking towards him and pushed him off the ledge.”

If observations elsewhere are anything to go by, they will tolerate each other and might even come to hunt together, as is the case at House of Hiranandani Upscale where two Peregrine falcons – a male and a female – are at ease with each other, sometimes launch-

ing what clearly appears to be a joint hunting expedition. These observations have been made by E. Arun Kumar, an MNS member residing at Upscale.

“Of course, as this is the wintering ground, they would not pair off, but they could likely form a bond strong enough to hunt together,” says GK about the two falcons at MRC Nagar. “Based on observations, the possibility of tolerance towards each other is higher if it is a male and a female. Territorial instinct would kick in stronger if both Peregrine falcons were of the same sex.”

Regular visits

Continual monitoring of the patches in its focus is the hallmark of PRW, in fact PRW 2.0. GK notes that as a matter of routine, members of PRW 2.0 go on a raptor survey once a week. And when a freak occurrence needs to be investigated, they lose no time in doing so.

On the scope and focus of the project, GK says, “It is a longterm raptor monitoring programme of Madras Naturalists' Society which seeks to document, study and monitor the abundance, local movements, nesting and breeding activity of the raptors found in Kancheepuram, Thiruvallur, Chennai and Chengalpattu (KTCC) districts – defining it a tad differently, the Chennai Metropolitan Area.”

The study area extends to Pulicat in the north and Nayapakkam in the west. Thiruporur and beyond, Tiger Lily Lake being defining, brings up the southernmost point.

GK continues: “PRW 1.0 started in 2015 aimed at documenting the different raptor species seen in KTCC. PRW took a new shape in 2020 as PRW 2.0 giving birth to species-specific projects such as Black kite population monitoring at Perungudi dump site, Peregrine falcon abundance survey for KTCC and nest monitoring of resident raptor species such as the Red necked falcon and the White bellied sea eagle. The project is carried out by a dedicated group of 45 volunteers. The volunteers survey 15 different clusters covering 45 hot-pots. Historically, 32 raptor species have been recorded in this region and PRW has documented seven more for the region over the last

Project Raptor Watch 2.0 by Madras Naturalists' Society in the Chennai Metropolitan Area has spread its wings and achieved elevation. Among the exercises that have taken substantial shape are: the data-driven study of Peregrine falcons in markedly urban sites and a close look at the fluctuating Black kite population around the Perungudi landfill and the breeding patterns of the Red necked falcon

Following urban raptors

PRINCE FREDERICK

one decade taking the current tally to 39 raptor species.”

Black kite monitoring

For this project nestled within the larger PRW 2.0, binoculars were trained on the Perungudi dump site where one can see swarms of black kites at certain times of the year.

“There are Black kites that are resident in

Chennai. And there are Black kites that head to Chennai from elsewhere during the south west monsoon. A majority of the Black kites that migrate to the city during this period likely fly in from the west – Kerala and Karnataka – where the south west monsoon is the primary monsoon. When south west monsoon recedes, they go back to where they came from. At the height of the South west monsoon, the number of Black kites at the Perungudi dump site swelled to around 1,300 and now, it is hardly 20,” GK begins.

Peregrine falcon survey

Another exercise under PRW 2.0, this survey is being conducted only in parts of KTCC where the Pere-

grine falcon is known to be present as also where it could be found.

Here is a break-up of the wintering Peregrine falcon population in apartments across Chennai.

Two at TVH Oranya Bay in Padur, Old Mahabalipuram Road; two at House of Hiranandani in Egattur; One at Bashyam OMR; one at Appaswamy OMR; one at DLF Garden City in Semmancherry; two at MRC Nagar; one at Trellis South in Vadapalani and one at Taisha in Saligramam. In

urban sites with a Peregrine falcon presence, those residing there help with data about the bird. “Through regular monitoring, we know the everyday movements and patterns of most of the Peregrine falcons,” he notes. “Now, we are on to the next stage of the Peregrine falcon survey – we are doing a pre-NE monsoon survey, the NE monsoon survey and post-NE monsoon survey to understand where the numbers differ. When the monsoonal rains subside, the Peregrine falcons return to their regular haunts. We do synchronised surveys to ensure the same Peregrine falcon is not counted again. When this study reaches the third year, we ex-

pect to have in-and-out data of around 30 Peregrine falcons.”

The parameters

GK continues: “As we undertake a scientific study in these projects, certain parameters come into play – namely, weather, external disturbances, wind and rain. Through these parameters we see patterns. When JCB dredges up the dump site, the Black kite numbers will shoot up – this we would put down to external disturbance even as we ascertain the extent of the increase in numbers. When wind and rain cease, the Black kite numbers will go up. During rains, peregrine falcons will go into “hiding”.”

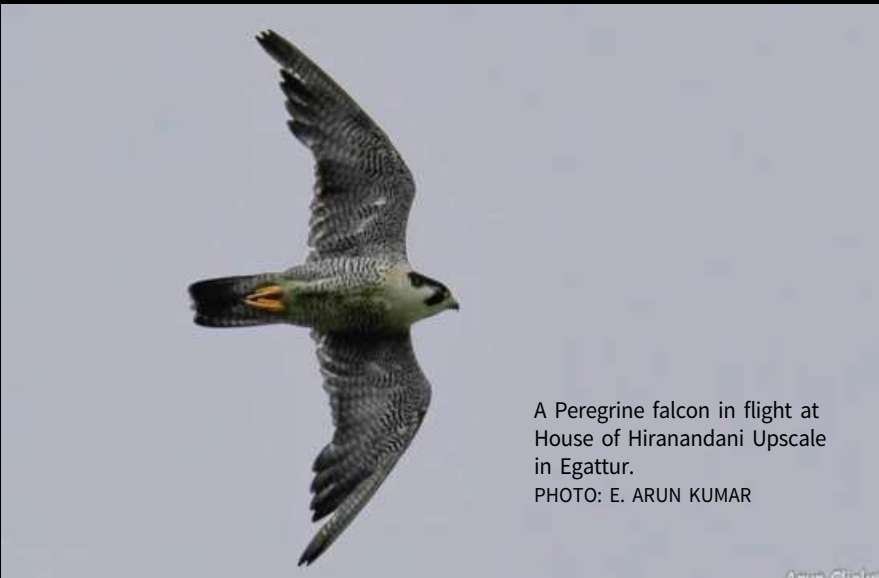
Putting the air channel to good use

Peregrine falcons feel snug in declivitous landscapes – as much at ease in those crafted with human hands as with those occurring naturally.

When they shack up for the winter at House of Hiranandani Upscale in Egattur, the two Peregrine falcons would hardly miss the rock faces they are accustomed to back in their breeding grounds. The tall towers serve them well, probably far too well for them to long wistfully for them when they have made the return trip.

Upscale resident and MNS member E. Arun Kumar, who tracks the movements of these two Peregrine falcons – named Rana and Nandini – has studied how these towers are an incredible aid in these raptors' hunting expeditions.

Arun explains the science behind it. An air channel inevitably forms between the towers facing. Depending upon the direction in which they



A Peregrine falcon in flight at House of Hiranandani Upscale in Egattur.
PHOTO: E. ARUN KUMAR

are flying, the pigeons find their flight aided or impeded by the air channel. When the air is blowing against the pigeons and slamming the brakes on

them, the Peregrine falcon that has soared high above the towers (where the air flows freely) takes advantage of the situation.

And then Arun goes on to discuss the artistry and the subterfuge that complement the science –narrating a hunt underpinned by this principle that he witnessed on a windy day just ahead of a massive wet rag of a day.

Arun narrates that given the weather, he was hoping, even expecting a pelagic bird to be buffeted about and finally fly his way. But he was instead treated to “a midair hunt by the fast and furious peregrine falcon”. And he is not complaining. With the aerial show put up by the Peregrine falcon, the disappointment disappeared into thin air.

The Peregrine falcon was slowly hovering around the apartment blocks and seemed view the pigeons' presence dispassionately. But the Peregrine falcon's presence unsettled some of the pigeons, he says, there was a frenzied scampering among them.

After surveying the scene stationed on a window parapet for a few minutes, the Peregrine falcon swept away “towards the open space in the midst of different towers”, its

flight marked by palpable intensity.

When the falcon was gaining elevation, for a fleeting moment Arun got the impression it was leaving the vicinity.

The elevation was being achieved to launch an aerial attack. There was speed, suddenness and flawless execution. Before Arun could realise it, the hunt had been brought to a successful completion. The falcon was in front of him, a pigeon in its talons, before it faded away.

Gnanaskandan Kesavabharathi (GK), who helms Madras Naturalists Society's Project Raptor Watch 2.0, underlines the Peregrine falcon's ability to turn its regular hunting strategy on its head and still pull off an attempt in style.

GK notes that knowing the Peregrine falcon's ability to gain elevation and swoop down on its prey stunning it with speed, some birds would push themselves up and try to soar much higher than the falcon.

In such a scenario, the Peregrine falcon might choose to strike from below, dipping and taking a U-turn upwards and pursue the prey.

Hunting in tandem



Whatever the vexations that sear the rufous crown of a red necked falcon, an absentee spouse is certainly not one of them. The male and female of this species are co-workers. Truth be told, that description is not spot-on, hardly setting the species apart from most others. To varying degrees, the male and the female in almost every avian species divide the drudge work that goes with raising the young. What makes the red necked falcon a touch better than most other species in this matter is that both the male and the female have teamwork and partnership developed to the nth degree.

The male and female Red necked falcon hunt in tandem with a level of coordination that would make any doubles pair in a racquet sport proud.

Bharath Ravikumar lives in a place wedged between ECR and OMR and is characterised by transmission towers, and also marsh-like patch.

He gets to see a red necked falcon pair up close.

Listen to Bharath: “A Red necked falcon pair have a hunting technique down to art, and it requires simultaneous participation from the male and the female. Sometimes, the female will launch the attack by flushing the birds parked on the ground and directing them to go in a particular direction. The male red necked falcon would be flying parallelly but at a higher elevation, and when these flushed birds have been guided in a particular direction, the male would go for the kill.” There would also be reversal of roles, with the male doing the flushing and the female completing the hunt by going for the kill.

E. Arun Kumar, a resident of House of Hiranandani Upscale in Egattur, OMR who has witnessed this teamwork by a Red necked falcon pair being orchestrated to perfection at Kaveripakkam, notes that this behaviour is well-entrenched in this species.

A Red necked falcon pair in the outskirts; and another pair in the ECR-OMR region. PHOTOS: E. ARUN KUMAR AND BHARATH RAVIKUMAR



Here is why those who have saved a road accident victim could think twice before applying for the Good Samaritan award despite a five-fold increase in its reward money

LIFFY THOMAS

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari recently announced five-fold increase in the reward amount for the “Good Samaritan” scheme.

Launched in 2021, this award is extended to anyone who has saved the life of the road accident victim by administering immediate assistance and rushing the person to a hospital or trauma care centre within the Golden Hour. Currently, an award amount of ₹5,000 is given to the Good Samaritan, which the Minister said would be increased to ₹25,000.

As per reports, the Good Samaritan Award money was given to 80 people until December 2022 according to government data tabled in the Parliament.

The Hindu Downtown spoke to a cross-section of NGOs working in the area of road safety and found out the scheme is not popular among most citizens.

The RTO or the traffic police in the jurisdiction where the accident occurred is required to certify the individual as a Good Samaritan and share their details to the Transport Commissioner.

“During our workshops I ask volunteers if they had ever wanted to nominate themselves for the Good Samaritan Award and the response I got was we hand over the accident victim to the ambulance driver and leave the place,” says Karthik Venkatesan, manager - training and public affairs, Alert.

He has not come across any person who has applied or won this recognition since it was started.

Most of the workshops that train

people on giving support during the Golden Hour also covers the Good Samaritan Law. “We encourage participants to come forward to be recognised as a Good Samaritan but there are gaps in the system that put off people. One is required to provide contact details to the doctor, introduce oneself as the one who handed over the victim to the hospital but how many of us have the time to stay till the end,” says Karthik.

Thozhan, another NGO that regularly runs road safety programmes, says none of its volunteers has been nominated for the Good Samaritan Scheme because the reporting format is hugely complicated.

“In a typical case, a first responder would either leave once the ambulance arrives or wait in the hospital till a family member attends to the victim. The Scheme requires verification from a police personnel which puts off many people,” says M. Radhakrishnan, founder of Thozhan.

The Road Transport and High-

NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH

Keep it simple

ways Ministry announced this scheme so that taking a road crash victim to a hospital is not just hassle-free but there is also the incentive of a reward and recognition.

The Ministry’s website has instructions for filling road accident cases and reporting form including particulars such as certification by the police department and by the hospital.

The nomination for the Award is sent by the Transport Department of the State to the Ministry.

Thozhan has many volunteers who have helped accident victims but none of them is keen on applying for this Award. “Award is secondary especially when you know there are too many processes to be followed,” says Radhakrishnan, adding that they honour those who have helped accident victims every year during its annual day.

Many NGOs have been working with the government to empower private hospitals to attend to an accident case during the Golden Hour.

“Private hospitals do not take accident victims. In many cases, the nearest government hospital is far away which is the reason for increasing fatality rates, so this rule must be relaxed,” says Radhakrishnan.

He says the process to submit the application for the Good Samaritan scheme must be simplified. “A majority of accident victims are taken through 108 Ambulance, so why not empower them to verify a first responder?” asks Radhakrishnan.

NGOs also want the Government to publish names of Good Samaritans on its platforms.

Other awards

* Every year, in the month of December, ALERT, a non-profit organisation that empowers people to act effectively during a crisis and save lives, invites nominations for its annual “Alert Being Awards”.

Individuals and organisations that have created an impact through life-saving acts or initiatives can send their nominations to www.aba.alert.ngo

* The Cheistha Kochhar Good Samaritan Award is being instituted by Centre for Digital Economy Policy Research (C-DEP.org) in memory of Cheistha Kochhar. The award is being instituted at the behest of Sujit Bhattacharya, a young scholar who wants to use the nudge theory that Cheistha used to work on, to bring about change in society, says a note on the website.

The award will be given annually to those who have contributed to the betterment of society and who have consistently helped fellow humans in need. Deserving candidates may be nominated through C-DEP.org for consideration.

The hindrance to offering help

According to a study titled “Exploring the obstacles preventing good samaritans’ attending to the road crash victims: A case of a developing nation”, legal harassment, the bystander effect, fear of bloodshed, lack of altruism, and knowledge deficits are among obstacles hindering Good Samaritan behaviour.

The authors - Aditya Saxena from Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay and Binayak Choudhury from School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal - surveyed 551 respondents to bring out the study published on Sciencedirect.

According to the World Health Organisation, during a road crash, bystanders can save lives in situations where established emergency medical services are not available. They can administer first-aid to the injured and even rush them to the nearest hospital.

The report also notes that there is no study in India that looks into the role of Good Samaritans in road crash incidents.

The study points out that there is a pressing need for public awareness campaigns to educate people about their legal rights and protections as Good Samaritans. Besides, efforts should be directed towards enhancing education and training programmes, particularly targeting individuals with lower levels of education and income.





Rap battle showcases literary innovation

As part of *The Hindu* Lit for Life, a dynamic rap battle finale was hosted on January 12 at Brigade Xanadu, featuring finalists selected from over 100 entries.

Rappers performed in Tamil and English, delivering impressive lyrical skill and energy that captivated the audience. The event offered a vibrant platform for emerging artistes to showcase their talent, celebrating the evolving art form of rap within the literary space.

Judges: Jords, a British singer and rapper for English; Senthuzhan, rapper for Tamil

The rap battle contest was curated by Catalyst 28. The rap beats by Gurumarx from Catalyst 28.

▼ The prize distribution ceremony.

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'Salute to Mother' programme to be held on January 23

Through this initiative by Sri Krishna Sweets, more than 100 mothers have been honoured so far

Sri Krishna Sweets is organising the 14th edition of Salute to Mothers programme in which mothers of celebrities are honoured. Salute to Mothers programme will be held at Narada Gana Sabha (from 5.45 p.m. onwards) on January 23.

Justice R. Hemalatha, judge, High Court of Madras, S. Sivasankari, writer and Major General M. Indrabalan will be the chief guests.

Mathru Pooja Recital will be performed by Isaikavi Ramanan. Students of Viswasamasthan School of Bharathanatyam will perform at the event. The students are trained by S.Vijayalakshmi.

K.V.Subha, advocate, Chennai, will be the Master of Ceremonies.



This year, the organisers are also honouring a family - Geetha Varadarajan, R.Varadarajan, parents of Major Mukund Varadarajan who dedicated his life during a counter-terrorism operation.

The following mothers will be honoured during this year's Salute to Mothers programme :

S.Annapoorni, mother of S.Balasundaram, Head of Payments, Financial Services, Walmart; Bakkiyalakshmi Devi Shanmugam, M/O Desa Mangaiyarkarasi, Tamil literary personality and singer; M.Balasaraswathy, M/O Sri Murugesu Lankalingam, CMD, Lanson Group of Companies; Harani Ek-

haambarresh, M/O Sri Sai Abhyankkar, music composer, producer and singer; Indira Seshadri, M/O T.K. Bhaskar, Advocate, Partner - H&B Partners, Chennai; Jamuna Chandrayya, M/O Dr. Geetha Haripriya, Chairperson and Medical Director, Prashanth Fertility Centre and Prashanth Hospitals; Kamala Narasimhan, M/O Sreekanth Narasimhan, Joint Secretary, Meenakshi College for Women; Mangala Nandagopal, M/O Senthil Kumar Nandagopal, Vice Chairman, India Operations, REVATURE; Padmini Srinivasan, M/O Gayathri Girish, Carnatic vocalist; Pushpavalli Chinna-samy, M/O Umamahes-

wari Yuvaraj, Director, Ananya's Nana Nani Homes, Ananya Shelters, Coimbatore; Usha Sukumar, M/O Divya Abhishek, Youngest Chairperson of Southern India Regional Council of the Institute of Cost Accountants of India; Vasanthi Rajendren, M/O G.R. Ananthapadmanabhan, G.R. Radhakrishnan, Managing Directors, GRT Group; and Vijayalakshmi Srinivasan, M/O Preethi Srinivasan, co-founder, Soulfree.

More than 100 celebrity mothers have been honoured so far. In this programme celebrities will speak about their mothers.

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TIMESNOW.in Academic Excellence Awards 2025 Tamil Nadu

TN Schools, Pre Schools and Education Institutions Survey 2025

The TIMESNOW.in Academic Excellence Awards 2025 event was held on January 10, 2025, at Chennai. This prestigious occasion celebrated the outstanding achievements of schools, preschools, and educational institutions for their exceptional efforts during the 2024-25 academic year. The event was proudly presented by Shrimathi Devkunvar Nanalal Bhatt Vaishnav College For Women, Chennai with the awards ceremony graced by the esteemed Chief Guest, Mary Kom, who felicitated the winners.



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NOTE : The current rating is included in the Timesnow.in Education Survey published on 12th January 2025, which also provides a comprehensive methodology. For a deeper understanding, please refer to the full survey report.



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