

T. NAGAR

Saidapet » West Mambalam » Vadapalani » Porur » Kattupakkam » Irungattukottai » Nungambakkam » Manapakkam » Ashok Nagar » Valasaravakkam
Gerugambakkam » Mangadu » Choolaimedu » Egmore » K K Nagar » Kodambakkam » Virugambakkam » Somangalam » Poonamalee » Chetpet

READERS WRITE



Pedestrians need help on Uttamar Gandhi Salai

N. RAVIKKUMAR

Haddows Road-Uttamar Gandhi Salai junction in Nungambakkam is not easy to cross by foot. Haddows Road, permanently one way, has fast-moving traffic. Uttamar Gandhi Salai, made temporarily one-way a year ago except for a small stretch of it, is narrow around this junction due to Metro rail work.

At this junction, a traffic police personnel or a marshal of Chennai Metro Rail Limited is present only during rush hour. In recent times, they are not to be seen even during rush hour. This junction witnesses heavy traffic even during lean hours.

Two other junctions on Uttamar Gandhi Salai where pedestrians need help – Kodambakkam High Road-Uttamar Gandhi Salai junction near Gemini flyover (one traffic police personnel is parked here but it needs two



or three) and Thirumurthy Nagar Main Road-Uttamar Gandhi Salai junction near ICAI campus.

N. Ravikkumar is a resident of Nungambakkam



The junctions near Kodambakkam High Road; Thirumurthy Nagar Main Road and Haddows Road.
PHOTOS: VELANKANNI RAJ B

'Additional washrooms needed at Nungambakkam cremation ground'



S. KASTURI RANGAN

A second gasifier crematorium is being constructed at Greater Chennai Corporation's cremation ground on Nelson Manickam Road. This was a long-time request of the residents, the need being acutely felt at the height of the pandemic. GCC is expected to develop a park at the crematorium. Dumping of waste around the facility has been stopped, which is also commendable. A request to GCC is that it construct additional washrooms.

S. Kasturi Rangan, secretary, Choolaimedu Exnora Innovator's Club, Choolaimedu



PHOTOS: B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

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A GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION SHARED BY CMDA & PHOTO: VELANKANNI RAJ B

CMDA restores temple pond in Kovur



Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority is restoring the pond of Thiru Sundareswarar Temple in Kovur, a village situated on Porur-Kundrathur Road. It is a temple under the Hindu Religious & Charitable Endowments Department.

According to CMDA, the project is being carried out at a cost of ₹4.9 crore.

As part of the project, the pond

would be fenced and a sewage treatment plant would be set up. Further, lights and fountains would ornament the pond. The project aims to develop the pond as an environment-friendly place of leisure.

Residents welcome this restoration work. They pointed out the staircase leading to the pond was dilapidated and unsafe and there was no boundary wall. They hope this project would address these.

Hardly a red carpet welcome to pedestrians



While sections of Pantheon Road in Egmore are receiving new footpaths, the section near Cooptex and Fountain Plaza are making do with rundown footpaths. Footpath work in other sections are moving at a snail's pace; given the heavy traffic on this stretch during peak hours, the work should be completed at the earliest, say pedestrians. These images were taken on July 10. PHOTO: SRINATH M

READERS WRITE

'Give this street in West Jhaffer Khanpet a nameboard'

Ganga Nagar Fourth Street in West Jhaffer Khanpet lacks a nameboard, which comes across as hugely odd when one factors in the rapid development sweeping through the neighbourhood in recent years. Two multi-storey housing complexes – Aradhana and PGP Oaks, the former built by Tamil Nadu Housing Board – have come up in the last two years.

In the absence of a nameboard, residents find directing visitors to their address a tortuous process.

P. Sudhakar, secretary, Federation of Residential Welfare Associations, West Jhaffer Khanpet



Have 'challan posts' dwindled on social media?

Some users on X say Greater Chennai Traffic Police is no longer providing status updates about complaints raised through posts

LIFFY THOMAS

Has Greater Chennai Traffic Police stopped issuing challans based on complaints on X? Browse through the official handle of GCTP @chennaitraffic and one would find no challan-related posts in the recent weeks. Challan is issued to levy a fine on a motorist after verifying the complaint posted by a user. This exercise builds trust among social media users about the traffic police taking action on their complaints, and also keeps the department informed about new concerns and issues

faced by people.

Shenoy Nagar resident Chinni Krishnan, who regularly posts complaints on X, says the handle @chennaitraffic has not posted any challan for close to 50 days now.

"They used to investigate and then issue challans. They acknowledge the tweet but then it goes all dark," says Chinni.

The resident has posted multiple complaints about vehicles abandoned at the junction of 3rd Cross Street East and Pulla Avenue that pose a safety risk to both pedestrians and motorists. He says his complaints have not

been acted upon.

The social media team of the traffic police say they post challans based on what they get from the traffic and planning wing of the department.

A senior official from the planning section says issuing challans is a continuous process and they will resume it soon. Once a user posts a complaint, their team has to investigate whether it is a violation or an action done unintentionally. They have to review it and then take action, says the official.

In June, GCTP had issued an advisory on fraudulent What-



Screenshot of a traffic challan issued by Greater Chennai Traffic Police on April 23, 2025

sApp messages circulating using the GCTP logo as a display picture and sharing links that mimic traffic challan payments. It asked users not to click unless one is sure

it is from an official source. Social media users wonder if the traffic police has been going slow on challans based on the fraudulent messages.

25 years of an initiative

Octogenarian N. Subramanian persists with his charity work despite advancing age

Following his retirement from the railways in 2001, N. Subramanian got a charity on track. Every year, he would mark out a portion of his pension and spend the money towards supporting grassroots education, as he puts it. A resident of Chinmaya Nagar in Chennai, he made this reach-out programme as focussed as precision bombing, ensuring it avoided more areas than it targeted. From the word go, he wanted the be-

nefits of this exercise to reach only students of government schools and they should be located in backwaters of development, largely rural areas.

With the earmarked sum – anywhere between ₹ 75,000 and ₹1,00,000 – every year, Subramanian would distribute a set of supporting study materials to students of primary sections in these schools.

The gift kit would include “a book of Thirukural, a dictionary, an atlas, a Tamil moral poem book and other learning aids besides meeting the needs of the hour such as playthings, maps and charts.”

Subramanian has not given this charity a break, despite advancing age. He has however reduced travel on

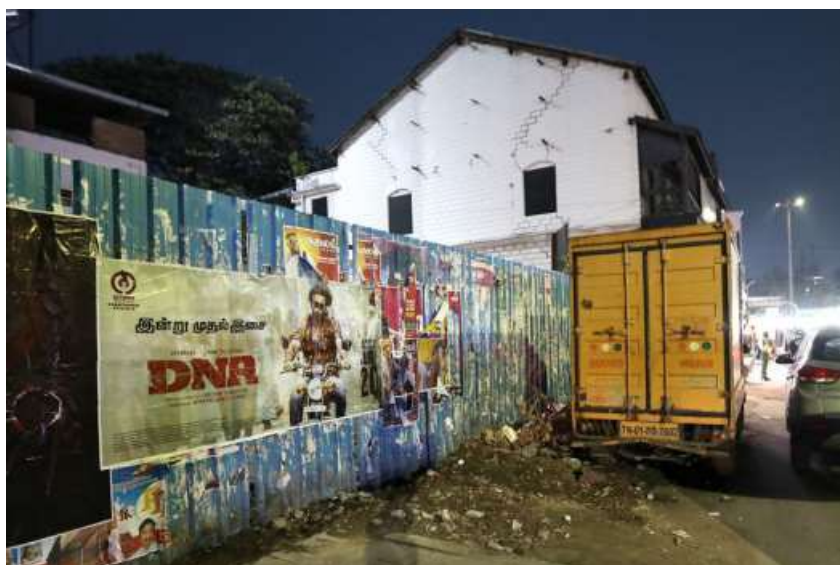
account of his age. He is currently focussed on reaching government schools in Chennai, particularly Chennai Corporation-run schools.

He says education charts and pre-school books costing anywhere from ₹6000 to ₹8,000 are being distributed every month to one Chennai Corporation School. Thus, the total expenditure falls within the spending limit of ₹1,00,000/- per annum. This year is the ongoing 25th anniversary year of the initiative and the schools he has reached include Adi-Dravidar Welfare Department's School at Virugambakkam, Chennai Primary School at Koyambedu and Chennai Primary School in Nesapakkam.



N. Subramanian is a resident of Virugambakkam

This spot on Anna Salai needs attention



On Mount Road, this is public knowledge. A patch near the Lawrence & Mayo showroom and the pathway leading to the Musee Musicals shop serves as an open urination point. This section is dingy at night and added to that, a van is parked most of the time, providing the concealment that is required for open urination in a busy section. A habitue noted that this space is a spot for al fresco urination for as long as one can remember. It does not matter that this road is under highways' watch, but as the city manager Greater Chennai Corporation would do well to identify such spots on this arterial road and take special measures to prevent the scourge of open urination. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK



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Kauvery Hospital, Vadapalani, Chennai.

Grace Sheela teaches compassion and empathy to her students by taking care of injured animals



Principal's *love for animals*, a lesson for children

LIFFY THOMAS

Kindergarten students at Madras Christian College Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Chetpet have someone dropping in on them, mid-class, at least once in a day. They look forward to this interruption. This visitor is a rescued myna living on the campus.

Principal and correspondent Grace Sheela, known as a saviour of injured birds and animals, got the myna from her friend Sabeena Varghese on July 4. She ensures the "patient" is under her direct care; so much so that the bird "joins" her when she goes on school rounds.

"It was lifeless and shaken when Sabeena brought it in. It had a fall from the third floor of a building

where it had built a nest near the AC unit," says Grace.

Grace took the bird under her wing, doing everything it takes for the bird to adapt to its new environment.

"The moment she sees me she needs food and I need to keep feeding her," says the principal sitting in her chamber with the myna next to her.

The myna is also the latest friend of students and staff at MCC School. In the past, injured pigeons, young parakeets and tender hare had been rehabilitated on the campus.

"When they are severely injured I take them to the veterinary hospital for treatment, take care of them till they can be on their own," says the principal who has had stints with Vidyodaya Girls Higher Sec-

ondary School in T.Nagar and Union Christian Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Chetpet.

The English teacher's love for nature began while teaching nature-related topics and it reached a new height during a visit to Parambikulam Tiger Reserve as part of a school project.

"Exnora Naturalist Club started a nature club at Vidyodaya School as part of which I took 76 girls to the Parambikulam forest," she says.

She associates with groups working on conservation programmes and ensures the children are taught conservation issues in an engaging manner.

She had organised a visit for the students to Supraja Dharini's Tree Foundation to have a ringside view of rescued turtles.



Grace Sheela with the dog Whitey and her students; (below) the rescued myna with kindergarten children; woodpeckers and snakes are often spotted on the campus. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

take up green initiatives.

"When a bird is rescued I take it to the classes so children develop love, empathy and connection with these creatures," she says.

The principal has her home on the campus, which has enabled her to spend considerable time with her rescues.

The story of Whitey, a mongrel with a fluffy tail, is known even to visitors to the campus.

The puppy set paws in the campus during the time of the Board examinations in 2019 along with a constable who was deputed to the school.

"A hostel staff was taking care of it when I joined the school, but once he left I entered the picture and today she is an integral member of my home and school," she says.

The vaccinated dog roams on the campus as if she owns the place.

She impress everyone but cannot stand another furry animal coming to the campus. "Many a time she has fought with them and they in turn have bitten her. At least four times she got injured this way and once her ear was torn and we had to rush her to the hospital," says the principal.

Most children make sure they get their turn to play with "ma'am's dog".

The principal, who has a busy schedule as she has registered for a PhD programme in environment literature, says how good or bad Earth turns out depends on how well we take care of it. "I tell my children that every single creature matters. When I see a small caterpillar on the floor, I move it to a plant so that vehicles do not crush it," she says, adding that every small action counts.



At MCC School, as part of an initiative by non-profit School Health Annual Report Programme 'Conserve my planet' programme is conducted where 100 students take part in a month-long programme where they go about creating awareness about conservation. Under the 'Green Ambassador Award' students are nudged to



School children sprint to catch a bus near Chintadripet MRTS Railway Station. FILE PHOTO: R. RAGU

Schools say **'no'** to motorised vehicles

To encourage the safety of children, many educational institutions in Chennai discourage them from driving to school

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Last month, a higher secondary class student in South Chennai was stopped at the school gates.

He was on two electric wheels, but what powered the vehicle, a battery-assisted motor or an internal combustion engine was not the sticking point.

As a policy, the private school would not want its students to ride any powered vehicle (electric or otherwise) to school. So, when the boy put forth his argument that it was a

low-powered e-scooter, and he was in the age bracket to ride that machine, he did so weakly, knowing that it would not cut ice with the management.

Before proceeding further, a peek into the rule book. According to the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), those aged between 16 and 18 can get a special driving licence for an e-scooter with a maximum power of 4 kilowatts and a maximum restricted speed of 70 km per hour.

Electric vehicles might be in the limelight, and the law might even favour even 16-year-olds to ride low-powered e-vehicles. But many educational institutions in Chennai are not open to the idea.

Chettinad Vidyashram sends reminders every academic year asking parents not to let their children operate two or four-wheelers to school. Staff from the PET department stand

outside the school to keep an eye on students breaking the rule.

Teachers of many other schools *The Hindu Downtown* spoke to note that although schools discourage students from riding any two-wheeler, many students park them on streets outside the schools or ride them to tuition classes or for last mile connectivity.

Meenakshi Kukreja, director, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers, says in India the process of according licences is not stringent, and the question of whether a 16-year-old is adequately equipped to meet the challenges of the road cannot be answered satisfactorily. Many do not take their two-wheeler classes seriously is her contention.

"We discourage students from driving two-wheelers before the age of 18. A few of our member companies like Hero and Honda have been providing training to young drivers and that covers the dangers on road," says Meenakshi.

The rule book states that no person under the age of 18 years shall drive a motor vehicle in any public place. And as stated above, someone aged 16 or 17 could ride a low-powered e-bike with clearly spelt out power specifications. In terms of bikes with an internal combustion engine, a similar law exists, but has become obsolete. It states that a motor vehicle with engine capacity not exceeding 50 cc might be driven in public places after someone attains the age of 16 years with a valid learner's licence.

As manufacturers do not produce vehicles of this specification anymore, this provision is null and void for all practical purposes.

Monsoon session: RSN wants spotlight on children's safety

The Road Safety Network (RSN), a collective of civil society organisations working to reduce road crash fatalities, wants policymakers to address four critical gaps in road safety when the Monsoon Session of the Parliament begins on July 21. They are child safety, speed management, stronger State Road Safety Action Plans and targeted amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act (MV Act).

According to a report by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), children made up nearly 10% of fatalities in 2022. Between 2011 and 2022, road accidents claimed the lives of 1.98 lakh children. Informal modes of school transport – such as vans and auto-rickshaws – play a major role in student mobility yet they are often found operating outside existing regulatory frameworks. RSN is urging the government to amend Section 2(11) of the MV Act to explicitly include informal school transport – such as vans and auto-rickshaws – and ensure their registration and safety oversight. The coalition also recommends coordinated local action through mandated safe school zones, especially as 60% of Indian children walk to school, says a press release.

RSN is advocating for a scientific approach to speed zoning, tailored to local environments such as school areas, markets and residential lanes. States such as West Bengal have introduced zone-wise speed guidelines, which RSN recommends as a national model.

RSN also called for states to implement robust State Road Safety Action Plans, especially for urban areas often excluded from standardised design practices. Though the 2019 MV Act brought uniformity to highway design, urban road planning must also align with Indian Roads Congress safety standards, ensuring safer infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, added the release.

Members of RSN include Parisar, SaveLIFE Foundation (SLF), Consumer Voice (CV), Citizen Consumer and Civic Action Group (CAG), Synergie, Centre for Environment Education (CEE), and CUTS International.

Starting this week, in the spirit of Aadi Pattam, a tradition celebrating the sowing season, stretching from mid-July to mid-August, *The Hindu Downtown* will feature volunteering groups that promote greening exercises. The spotlight this week is on Team Green which began in Mogappair East and now has a pan-Chennai presence due to consistent efforts by its volunteers



A short tour of Team Green's greening activities

Green provides saplings for free, except when they do not have the saplings of a specific tree species that has been sought. In such an event, they help procure it from a nursery, with the cost being borne by the one making the request.

Vidiyal: an offshoot

Deepa Lakshmi is part of a force driving an initiative called Vidiyal, which splices women's empowerment with environment action. Vidiyal is designed in a manner that gets groups of three to four women from an underprivileged background to gather every day at a designated school to nurture saplings. They are provided with soil, seeds and used milk packets, these materials having been collected and supplied by Team Green volunteers. The women work from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., nurturing saplings and starting new ones with the soil and seeds. In case you are wondering what the milk packets are for: they serve as coverings for the saplings. Currently, around 15 to 20 women are engaged in this work on a full-time basis.

The project operates on a community-supported model where volunteers contribute financially to pay the women for their efforts. For instance, a donation of ₹900 is enough to pay three women ₹300 each for a day's work. Those who wish to support just one person can contribute ₹300. Deepa mentions that they never have to actively seek sponsors, as there is always a steady flow of generous volunteers who come forward to pitch in and help sustain the project.

Deepa notes that Team Green is not an NGO, only a scattered but tightly-knit group of individual volunteers. The volunteering group functions on its own except for collaborations with Exnora from time to time. Deepa finds the most supportive volunteer in her hearth: her husband Mohanasundaram who has handed over the reins of his earthmoving business to his team, distancing himself from its day-to-day activities and thereby freeing up time for Team Green's activities.

For details about Team Green and its activities, call 9042594891 / 6379072259

Branching out to other neighbourhoods

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

The pandemic had two contrasting effects on newly sprouted initiatives. Some went into a tailspin and never recovered from it. And there were others that got their tail up, the pandemic years, strangely, providing them with a conducive environment for growth.

Deepa Lakshmi and her husband K. Mohanasundaram had barely started a hyperlocal greening exercise around their moorings in Mogappair East when the pandemic struck. Deepa Lakshmi is an English teacher at Chennai Higher Secondary School on Subbrayan Street in Shenoy Nagar, and in addition to her teaching role, serves as in-charge headmistress of the school. While latching the doors of the school (and taking the classes online), the pandemic threw wide open the door to environment action. Deepa Lakshmi seized that opportunity. "It all started during COVID. There was so much free time," re-



calls Deepa Lakshmi, co-founder of a volunteering force called Team Green. "We used to water the few plants we had, and then one day, we just planted some saplings. Neighbours noticed, and slowly people started joining us."

The streets in the neighbourhood saw more green; and then the streets beyond the neighbourhood did. What began as a simple act became a habit not just for this duo and their neighbours in Mogappair East, but also for many eco-conscious people elsewhere in Chennai.

Team Green – as this group of

sapling-toting volunteers are called – has expanded to Perungudi, Keelkattalai, Madipakkam, Gated Communities in OMR, Perumbakkam, Tiruvottiyur and Thirumullaivoyal.

Team Green provides saplings of native trees for free to residents and individuals upon request – a huge volume of such requests being honoured on special days such as Environment Day – but not before extracting a promise from them.

The recipient has to take a vow to never abandon the saplings. They would be put through a



wringer of questions, much like someone adopting a puppy would be before taking the bundle of fur home.

A quick run-through of the posers high up on the questionnaire: who will be responsible for the care of the saplings? Has proper soil preparation been done? The interviewee will find themselves being edified about plant care. Team Green does not leave anything to chance. A volunteer would one day invite themselves to the recipient's stomping ground to see how the saplings are coming along. This stringent process weeds out diletantes, and brings on board only those extremely keen on greening their neighbourhoods and personal spaces.

Residents interested in greening their patches constitute much of the demand. Colleges (through their outreach wings such as NSS units) also seek saplings for their environmental initiatives. Team

Annual Day celebrated

Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan recently conducted its annual day, 'Aakriti 2025'.

The two-day event began on a spiritual note with an invocation to the divine. Following this, the annual report was presented, showcasing the school's academic milestones, co-curricular achievements, and community contributions over the past year.

D. K. Hari and D. K. Hema Hari, founders of Bharath Gyan, were the chief guests.

The organisation has been instrumental in helping today's youth reconnect with their roots, says a press release.

Their address centered on the concept of Dharma, defined as one's true nature, and emphasized that living in harmony with this nature is the highest form of integrity.

The cultural segment brought



the theme to life, with students delivering enthralling performances that blended Indian tradition with modern expression.

From classical dances to theatri-

cal storytelling and plays, the essence of Dharma and the value of knowledge resonated through every act, according to the press release.



Ayurveda doctor honoured

Dr. K.S. Ajal Kumar, director of Ayurshetra Ayurveda Hospital, Chennai, has been honored with the 'International Excellence Award in Ayurveda 2025' by Master Vision International Events.

The Ayurveda doctor has made significant contributions, showcasing the discipline's

potential beyond joint pain and arthritis, says a press release.

Ayurshetra offers a comprehensive range of treatments under one roof, the release says.

The hospital is located on Panjali Amman Koil Street, Arumbakkam. Phone Number: 9381026016.

A field trip to a lake



Over 100 students of class X from Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan in Nungambakkam visited Chitlapakkam Lake to learn about water bodies. Volunteers of Chitlapakkam Rising took the students around the lake and answered their questions. The students have assured the volunteers that they will volunteer for lake activities in the coming months, said a release.

A new silk textile showroom in K K Nagar



With over three decades of experience in the textile industry, Priyadarshini has opened a new showroom, Priyadarshini Silks, on PV Rajamannar Road in K.K. Nagar.

S. N. Jayamurugan, chairman of the SNJ Group of Companies, opened the showroom.

To celebrate the showroom's

opening, various exciting offers are being made available. Gold is offered as complimentary with the purchase of silk saris. Buyers of other garments are offered free silver. These offers are valid for a limited time only, while stocks last, says a press release.

Additionally, silk saris can be purchased for just ₹1, with the balance payable through easy installments. Every customer receives a guaranteed gift with every purchase.

Priyadarshini Silks showroom offers a wide variety of authentic Kanchipuram silk saris and other silk varieties.

Vedic talent competition

The 17th annual 'Vedic Talent Vista' of students studying Vedas and Sastras will be organised by Om Charitable Trust on July 19 and 20 at Sri Krishnaswamy Kalyana Mandapam, T.Nagar.

Successful vedic scholars from across India will be honoured at the event.

Cash prizes and memento for the best team will be presented to schools with the highest average marks in each Veda.

Justice G. R. Swaminathan will inaugurate the Vaidika Vignana Vignana Vikasini Sabha on July 19 at 8.30 a.m.

This will be followed by display of vedic skill by scholars.



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Free pain management therapy in Arumbakkam

Parivarthan for Parkinson's Foundation, a Chennai-based organisation dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with Parkinson's, is introducing free pain management therapy at its centre in Arumbakkam. This non-invasive physical therapy targets a range of chronic pain areas, including the shoulders, neck, knees, lower back, ankles, and muscles. Each session lasts 45 minutes and is customised to the individual's needs, with an emphasis on regular intervention for long-term relief.

Led by trained professionals, Parivarthan ensures care is delivered in a safe, supportive environment, said a release. The sessions are completely free, but a prior appointment is required as slots are limited.

To register or book a session, call 96000 52531.

Workshop on entrepreneurial opportunities in solar energy sector



PHOTO USED FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, Department of MSME, is conducting a training programme on installation of solar power system from July 21 to 23 at its premises in SIDCO Industrial Estate, EDII Office Road, Guindy. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

According to a press release, the following concepts will be covered: introduction to solar energy, entrepreneurial opportunities in solar energy sector, business models in this sector, relevant computer software, financial planning, regulations and subsidy schemes.

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

For details, call 8668102600 / 8072914694.



Skill training courses

Admissions are on at Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya for vocational skill courses. According to a press release, the courses include: tailoring, carpentry, electrical, servicing of air-conditioners and refrigerators and a few more. Those who have completed class eight can apply. For details, call 9176624283. Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya is at No: 58, Venkatanarayana Road, T. Nagar.



Session on baking

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, Department of MSME, is conducting a workshop on baking from July 21 to 24 at its premises on EDII Office Road, SIDCO Industrial Estate, Guindy. Time: From 9.30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

According to a press release, the session will focus on cookies, cakes, and breads made from millets. Also labelling and marketing aspects of bakery products will be taught.

Those above 18 years of age with a minimum educational qualification of class 10 may apply. Prior registration is required. For details, call 8668102600 / 701014302.

Workshop on making incense sticks

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a workshop on making camphor and incense sticks on July 17. Also, a culinary workshop on preparing flavour powders made from spices and herbs will be held on July 18. Both the sessions will be held at the centre's premises at Agro Tech Green Park, Frist Floor, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy. For details, call 044 - 29530048



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Rally on ill effects of plastic products



Annai Velankanni's College of Arts & Science, Saidapet, in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board and the Greater Chennai Corporation, organised a rally to spread awareness on plastic pollution and hazards of non-biodegradable waste.

According to a press release, students took out the rally in the main streets of Saidapet and educated the public about the necessity to reduce the use of plastic products and insisted on responsible disposal of waste. Participants took an oath to protect the environment. Close to 500 students participated in the event, adds the release.

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