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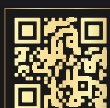
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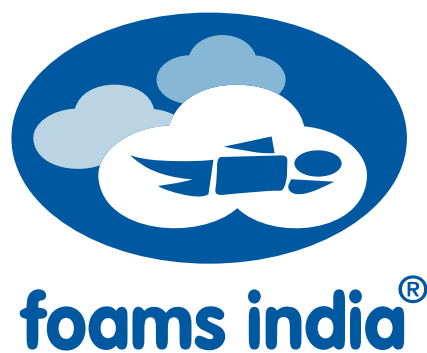


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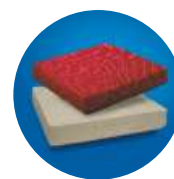
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## Spotlight on safety at RAPRA's meeting with police

**O**n September 8, members of R A Puram Residents Association (RAPRA) held a meeting with Assistant Commissioner Of Police (Traffic) A. Julius Christopher and E4 police station traffic inspector Balakrishna Pillai.

Various traffic-related issues that have been cropping up in the neighbourhood on account of the diversion due to metro rail construction was discussed.

Dr. R. Chandrasekaran, president of RAPRA, listed out the traffic-related issues plaguing the area and submitted a formal petition with a request for early redressal of the issues.

The junction of Fourth Main Road with Third Cross Road has been particularly accident-prone after the diversion was clamped in place. Residents have sought blinkers, zebra crossing, posting of marshalls and fixing 'no parking boards' at this junction.

Residents also wanted parking on all roads to be allowed only on



RK Mutt Road. FILE PHOTO: M. SRINATH

one side and 'no parking boards' fixed on the opposite side. Two bus shelters next to each other on Se-

cond Main Road are a cause for regular traffic jams at Billroth Hospital signal, which the assistant commis-

sioner agreed to look into, said a release.

Speed breakers are required on

roads that are used by motorists in huge numbers to avoid bus route roads. The Assistant Commissioner advised the residents to petition GCC with a copy to them to enable them to take necessary action.

The Assistant Commissioner also promised us that cameras would be fixed at vantage points to nab traffic violators. He also said squads would visit trouble spots mentioned by the residents to issue challans, added the release.

He also said patrol vehicles would remove mobile eateries that causing hindrance to the free flow of traffic, especially in front of Elite Tasmac on Second Main Road.

Some issues involving Greater Chennai Corporation have to be jointly addressed. A resident requested that old signages fixed prior to diversion of traffic be removed as it created confusion. The Assistant commissioner thanked the residents for arranging this session and said they would see visible improvement on the ground in about three weeks' time.

## A new bus shelter in Mandaveli



Bus commuters would be seen standing at the junction of Thiruvengadam Street and Venkatakrishna Road waiting for their buses. A makeshift bus shelter at the end of Thiruvengadam Street has made sure that some of them can now wait seated; and there would be no bunching of people at the junction. PHOTO: PRINCE FREDERICK

## Community to take care of lake in Thiruvottiyur

Recently, the Ernavor Lake in Thiruvottiyur was officially handed over to the community by NGO Hand in Hand.

ITC Mission Sunehra Kal partnered with Hand in Hand India to implement various flood mitigation measures on water bodies in the region. As part of the project, eight lakes in Zone I were selected for renovation. Currently, renovation work is underway on five of these lakes, with a total of 89,160 cubic meters of earth excavation complet-

ed, increasing their capacity to hold up to 8,916,000 litres of water, said a release.

The project aims to improve social infrastructure by rejuvenating water bodies.

Zonal Officers of Greater Chennai Corporation, Indumathi M. Nambi from IIT Madras were among those present. Additionally, as part of the project's awareness creation initiative, an audio CD was released to promote awareness about solid waste management.

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## Walkway near upcoming Beach metro station is **slippery**



The walkway near the proposed Marina Beach metro station, from Gandhi Statue to Lighthouse, is not user-friendly. A temporary path has been provided between the metro barricades and the sand for walkers, but when it rains, it gets flooded and slippery, posing a threat to the safety of pedestrians, especially senior citizens. Many are forced to walk on the sand. The authorities must take necessary action immediately.

**Sanjeevi**  
**Raghunathan**  
president, SYMA



## Signal near Vepery police station defunct

▼ The traffic signalling system near Vepery police station is not working for some days now. As this is an accident-prone zone, motorists are facing difficulty on account of this. Suresh Kumar K. S. shared this picture.



## You can be our **volunteer-writer**

Dear readers, you can be our volunteer-writer by writing to us about issues and events in your neighbourhood. You should send the write-ups to downtown [feedback@thehindu.co.in](mailto:feedback@thehindu.co.in). Letters must carry the postal address and contact number.

## ‘He cleans up the mess; **support him**’

Meet Narasimma Rao Iyya, aged 70 and eking out a living as a professional toilet cleaner in the Mylapore-Mandaveli area. He is industrious; and admirably reasonable in what he seeks as wages.

He can be reached at St. Mary's Road, at the pavement near the mosque or nearby spaces. He is also known to station himself at times at Srinivasan Street.

In his youth and middle years, he worked as a lorry driver. Long retired for that work, he has been working as a toilet cleaner and sustaining himself.

The owner of the house has to buy the cleaning materials and he seeks compensation only for his labour.

There are days when he goes without work. Support him by offering him toilet cleaning work in your home.

**Baskar Seshadri,**  
Mandaveli



## Dust and slush



▼ Luz Avenue First Street including the junction it forms with Luz Avenue has become a challenge to motorists at all times. When it rains, it becomes a slippery slop, as the images from September 4, 2024 illustrate. When the sun beats down fiercely on it and it is dry as a bone, it becomes a dust bowl, as this image from September 14, 2024 shows. PHOTOS: M SRINATH AND PRINCE FREDERICK





# The affordability factor

A year after the State Government established hostels for working women, *The Hindu Downtown* does a status check on these facilities

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**T**he Thozhi hostels run by Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostels Corporation gets a thumbs-up for the sophisticated features it offers users; but it does not score significantly on the affordability count.

Currently, three such facilities are being run in Chennai – one in Adyar and the others in Guduvancherry and Tambaram Sanatorium.

For a stay numbering less than 15 days, the fare ranges from ₹600 to ₹1,200 a day (price varies on the basis of the number of occupants) as per details mentioned on <https://www.tnwwhcl.in>.

This fare does not include food and can be a burden for someone coming from the districts in search of employment in the city or for one working as a grey collar worker.

Some months ago, author and



A Government hostel for working women at Tambaram. PHOTO: VELANKANNI RAJ B

activist Shalin Maria Lawrence put out a post on X noting that the rates are exorbitant “considering the fact that the State Government gets subsidy from the Central Government for this scheme”. The post also had a circular that gives the break-up in terms of the support from the two tiers of the government.

Those running private hostels also feel the fee being charged is higher than the rate fixed by them.

“A majority of the private hostels charge ₹400 a day, so for a government set-up, this is high,” says

G. Jaganathan, member of South Chennai Hostel Owners Association. He says many women have to support their families back home, so they want an accommodation with food that can be within ₹6,000.

However, the staff managing these facilities say the services offered at these hostels are good, and price is not a concern for many women and students. Some of these hostels have as its patrons, students preparing for various government examinations.

The Adyar facility currently has

no room available for the next few weeks. A staff who attended the call says one has to make the online booking at least 15 days in advance.

From free WiFi, space for parking two-wheelers to its strategic location, these hostels offer a host of amenities.

A staff say they get close to 200 bookings a month (across its locations in Tamil Nadu) with Chennai accounting for a major chunk of them.

A new hostel is coming up at St Thomas Mount and many more are in the proposal stage.

## Association creates awareness

If you are a student or a working professional staying in a hostel make sure your owner is not collecting extra fee under the pretext of Goods and Service Tax (GST). Hostels where rent levied is less than ₹20,000 are exempt from GST as per an announcement made by the Finance Minister at the 53rd GST Council Meeting.

In Chennai, some hostel owners associations have been creating awareness among its members to pass on the GST relief to its residents.

Tamil Nadu IT Hostel and Owners Welfare Association, which has 5,000 hostel owners as members, has had a poster circulated to raise awareness about this.

“Previously, a resident had to pay 18 percent towards GST charge, which was certainly high for students coming from economically disadvantaged backgrounds,” says G.

Karthick, treasurer, Tamil Nadu IT Hostel and Owners Welfare Association.



# Helping women join the workforce

Affordability and accessibility are the two main factors driving the popularity of the Working Women's Hostel run by the Women's India Association at Greenways Road

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**O**n Greenways Road, near the MRTS station, a clutter of name boards greets visitors to the office of Women's India Association, a 107-year-old organisation started by a group of eminent women including Annie Besant, Margaret Cousins and Dorothy Jinrajadasa.

For nearly five decades, a working women's hostel run by the Association on the premises has been catering silently to the needs of hundreds of women who come to Chennai in search of employment (the campus also offers training for women in tailoring and computers).

As a vacant place was available on the campus of WIA, the members of the executive committee availed financial assistance from the Central Government and State's Social Welfare Department for construction of the hostel building that started in 1974, says a note written in the souvenir released during the centenary year celebration of WIA.

Later, members donated various utility items to make the hostel more user-friendly.

Affordability and its prime location are two main factors driving the popularity of this hostel among young women. Students from Ambedkar Law College, those preparing for civil service examinations and working women in search of a new job were among those who pa-



tronised the hostel.

An office staff who has been associated with WIA for 19 years says rent those days was low. Even today they charge only a nominal fee from residents.

Currently, the WIA charges ₹1,250 a month for a single room accommodation excluding the

food and a refundable caution deposit.

Unlike present-day hostels that offers a raft of sophisticated features, this one has a library it is proud of. A one-time library fee of ₹50 is collected at the time of admission to encourage its residents to browse its small collection of

books. Letika Saran, former director general of police, was once a resident of the hostel, says the note. A majority of the residents are admitted through reference.

Currently, the hostel has more than 40 residents and manages to stay afloat amidst all the competition from private players in the city.



# A swashbuckling opener

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**T**he Perumbakkam wetland has not offered the greater flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) a visitor's pass with the visiting hours — months, to be specific — screaming in bold print. But this ballerina of a bird acts as if it had been handed one.

As eBird data would show, the greater flamingo puts in an appearance at the Perumbakkam wetland at various times of the wintering season. (From being a “borrowed” monsoon, the south-west monsoon is in recent years giving Chennai enough reasons to call it, its own. As a result, the wintering season looks stretched.)

Avoiding digression, the greater flamingo's presence is strikingly noticeable at the Perumbakkam wetland when the wintering season is just beginning to be felt. And also when it is beginning to fade out. These are times when the bird finds more shallow than deep waters. At other points of time in the season (mid-season, quarter-season and so on), when the greater flamingo shows up, it heads



straight to the parts where they can scuff the “flooring” with ease.

But the overpowering impression this local migrant gives around this wetland is that it loves to be at the extremes of the occurrence spectrum. Evoking a cricketing scenario, it plays the swashbuckling opener and the surprisingly productive tail-ender to the hilt.

It “cuts the ribbon” when the wetland is just filling up — usually August and September. And its presence increases again when the water level decreases, which happens at the fag end.

At the wetland, the flamingos are now playing the role of an opener, showing up in good numbers

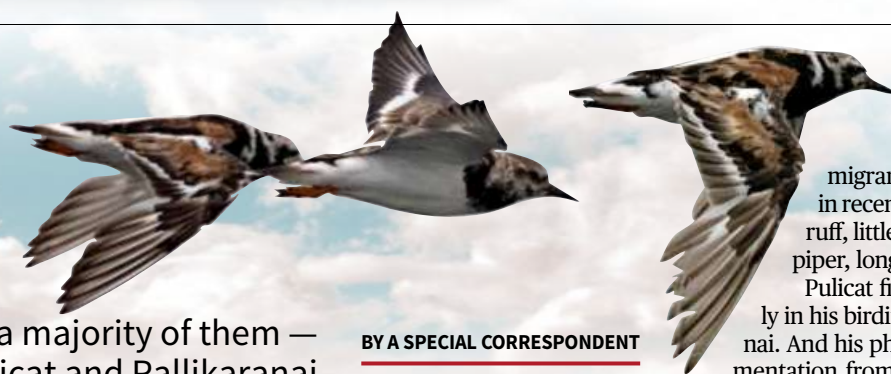
Greater flamingos at Perumbakkam wetland on September 13, 2024.

PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK



## An early start to the season

Birders report that all the migrants — at least, a majority of them — have answered the roll call in Pulicat and Pallikaranoi



migrants at Pallikaranoi in recent weeks includes, ruff, little stint, terek sandpiper, long-toed stint.

Pulicat figures prominently in his birding range in Chennai. And his photographic documentation from Pulicat includes sanderling, ruddy turnstone and great knot.

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**B**irder Sundarvel Palanivel travels far to catch a glimpse of migrant feathers. And he also enjoys a vantage point — one that allows him to just lean over his compound wall and have the same experience.

A resident of Kamakoti Nagar in Pallikaranoi, he lives at the door of the Pallikaranoi marsh, and enjoys first-day first-show sighting of migrants every wintering season.

He says all the migrants have already answered the roll call. His photographic documentation of



(Clockwise from left) Sanderlings, Ruddy turnstones and Great knot at Pulicat in August, 2024. PHOTOS: SUNDARAVEL PALANIVEL





## The Hindu food and music festival today at Island Grounds

**E**ight running enthusiasts received prizes at *The Hindu* Made of Chennai Run held on September 8. Over 3,000 participants took part in the event held in two categories (five-km and 10-km) from Swami Sivananda Salai to the Island Grounds.

The winners: Murugan R. and Siva Sanjay won the 10K run in the men's category, and Jayashree Pitchai and Sugana Selvakumar in the women's category.

In the 5K run (men and women), Baskar P, Gopinath Chinraj, Suganthi B. and Deeksha Aishani were declared winners. The run

was flagged off by Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma. Subramanian. *The Hindu* Made of Chennai Run was powered by Chennai Runners, in partnership with GCC, GCTP, TTDC and Namma Marina. Realty partner: G Square; associate partner: Acko, AkshayaKalpa, Organic Tattava, and Ortho One; water

partner: Seeragam; health partner: Kauvery Hospital; sports partner: Decathlon; and radio partner: Big FM.

### Food festival

As part of the 40-day celebration of Chennai's 385th birthday, *The Hindu* Made of Chennai campaign is

hosting a two-day food and music festival at Island Grounds on September 14 and 15. The event starts at 4 p.m.

Some of the performers include band Gowwli, Paul Jacob Folk agenda, High Octane Industrial Rock featuring Jhanu, Arivu and The Ambassa band, Haricharan and D Kumaran Collective featuring Si-reesha Bhagavatula.

Over 40 stalls will be showcasing a range of items, at the event.

Entry is free but people have to register at [madeofchennai.thehindu.com](http://madeofchennai.thehindu.com) or scan the QR code.

*The Hindu* Made of Chennai food and music festival is conducted in association with ACKO, Beepkart. In partnership with: GCC, GCTP, TTDC and Namma Marina. Associate Partner: Ather, AkshayaKalpa, Expert Partner: Social Bee, Artist Partner: ACTC, Radio Partner: BIG FM, Happiness partner: On the streets of Chennai and Event partner: Torque



## Eye health quiz conducted

Rajan Eye care, in association with Rotary Rajan Eye bank and Chennai-based quizzing firm X Quiz It, organised an eye-health quiz as part of the "For Your Eyes Only" edition on September 5 in T Nagar.

The quiz saw enthusiastic participation from students across Chennai, from classes 6 to 12. Over 200 students registered for the preliminary round, with the top 25 advancing to the semi-

finals, and six finalists competing in the grand finale.

Quiz Master Arvind Rajeevsarathy quizzed participants with questions on topics indirectly linked to eye health, such as the impact of obesity and diabetes on vision, significant medical inventions, global suppliers of contact lenses, and cutting-edge innovations.

Anirudh B, a class 7 student of

The winners of the quiz contest.

PSBB Millennium School, Gerugambakkam, secured the first place. Sreenithihasan.K, a class 9 student from Velammal Bodhi Campus, Kolapakkam and Advaita, a class 10 student from PSBB KK.Nagar were runners-up.

Dr Mohan Rajan, Chairman of Rajan Eye Care, emphasised the importance of corneal transplants and their critical role in addressing eye health challenges in India. The event's chief guest, Narendar SriSimal, president of Rotary Club

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# Little Radhas and Krishnas make a splash

Nearly 800 children take part in *The Hindu Downtown's* Maya Kannan – Janmashtami contest



S. Vidhuna

**S**ixty-six winners were felicitated on September 8 at *The Hindu Downtown's* Maya Kannan – Janmashtami contest 2024.

Participants in the age group of three to eight years came dressed up as Krishna or Radha and performed a dance or sang a song or recited a slokas. Close to 800 children from across the city came to the venue to put their best feet forward and the enthusiasm was evident throughout the event.

Parents and sponsors appreciated *The Hindu* group for organising such an event that instils values in children.

The title partner for the event was Gopuram Turmeric Powder and Kumkum, and the event was co-presented by Mangaldeep Premium Quality Incense. Food partner was Madras Coffee House, the venue



The complete group of winners; and winners from Mylapore region

partner was Saraswathi Vidyalaya Senior Secondary School, Vadapalani. The water partner for the event was Repute Water. The sponsors for the

gifts were Aachi Masala, Ark Eventz, Brooks Musicals, Medimix, P.S. Tamarind, RAS Chekku Oil, Amman Sarees and Vivekanandha Sarees.



Mohitha Sree



Nethraa Sri



## PLAN YOUR WEEK

### Reunion meet at JBAS College

JBAS College for Women is organising an alumnae reunion on September 21 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The theme of the meet is "Bridging Generations - A Legacy of Excellence." Distinguished alumnae and sports achievers of the college will be the guest speakers.

Traditional games will be organised to promote Bharatiya Khel as well as women's health and fitness.

The Newsletter 2024 will be released by the chairman of the college Badar Sayeed. The college takes pride in the accomplishments of its alumnae and invites all to join this event, said a release.

### Auditions for Mrs Face of Chennai

Iris Events presents the 13th edition of "Iris Face of Chennai 2024". The personality contest aims to discover individuals who embody poise, confidence, communication, style, fitness and talent. With three levels of rigorous selection, the contest promises to showcase the finest of Chennai's diverse talent pool, said a release. Auditions will be conducted on September 15 from 11 a.m. onwards at Aerohub Mall, near Meenambakkam Airport.

The contest is open married women up to 50 years.



For more information and registration, contact 9884783510 or 9841206506.

One of the most commendable aspects of this event is its commitment to social welfare, the release added. The event is also coinciding with the 25th anniversary of IRIS Events.

### Festival sale at Thughil

Thughil, a store for handlooms, is having a festive sale of curated handloom cotton sarees, dress material and eco-friendly gifts and accessories. The range includes natural-dyed, khadhi, ajrakh, kalamkari and ikats from Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. The festival sale is on from September 19 to 21 at C.P. Art Centre, Alwarpet.



### New apartment

ATH Crown, a premium residential real estate project is coming up in Chromepet. According to a press release, there is a limited time offer wherein a customer can save up to ₹ 3 lakh for spot booking. The event is held at ATH Crown on September 15. Time: From 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. For details, call 9444456087



Festival sale from the 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of September

Thughil, a store for handlooms is having a festive sale of curated handloom cotton-sarees, dress material and eco-friendly gifts and accessories. The range includes natural-dyed, Khadhi, Ajrakh, kalamkari, sarees, dress-material and ikats from Andhra and Orissa.

The sale is from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> September at C.P.Arts Centre, Mini hall 2, Alwarpet  
Contact no: 7395972701  
Timings 10.30am to 7pm.

