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‘No temporary fixes; permanent solution needed’

MANOJ KUMAR VENKATARAMANAN

TVS Avenue Main Road in West Anna Nagar is much-hoofed due to the connectivity it provides to an impressive array of civic and social infrastructure in the neighbourhoods surrounding it. One needs to hit this road to access three popular schools, including Chennai Public School. There are Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) parks around this road and also a GCC playground. A bus stand enjoying huge patronage is in the picture too. And the area also boasts an impressive number of hospitals and clinics. Reasons for driving or walking down this road abound. And there is one reason that sticks out like a sore thumb. People hit this road for dumping garbage. A spot outside Old Crema-



The garbage spot on two contrasting days.

PHOTOS: MANOJ KUMAR VENKATARAMANAN

tion Ground on this road attracts garbage of all kinds – domestic garbage and waste from party halls and debris. Waste arrives from near and far. The situation worsens on days when nearby party halls have brisk business and greater garbage to offload.

Garbage is not discarded at this

spot under cover of darkness, but in broad daylight. Anyone tempted to blame it all on the lack of civic sense among residents and the larger citizenry would do well to try to understand what is at the root of this malaise.

Greater Chennai Corporation insists on garbage clearance entirely



by door-to-door collection, but the visits of conservancy workers are patchy. And there are no garbage bins in this road and the ones near-

by. As a result, people dump waste in this spot. Usually, the waste accumulates for a while before being cleared by the workers employed by GCC.

This issue has been reported multiple times over the months on X, tagging the Greater Chennai Corporation handle. Sometimes, this action leads to prompt clearance. But without fail, the situation regresses, returning to the old state of neglect.

Clearing garbage promptly on the basis of a complaint just manages the symptoms; the systemic issue remains untouched. A lasting solution would involve regular collection of garbage by conservancy workers, placing bins, penalising the party halls and the public for dumping garbage and transforming this place with plants and a footpath.



Small bus service S49 restored

This October, Metropolitan Transport Corporation restored small bus service S49, which connects Avadi bus terminus and Prakash Nagar North in Thirunindravur.

According to MTC sources, the service was suspended four years ago on account of flyover construction at Pattabiram on CTH Road. Commuters from Thirunindravur sought restoration of the service ever since the flyover was inaugurated in September 2024. This service largely benefits the students of Jaya Engineering College in Prakash Nagar.

Residents of Thirunindravur seek another small bus service from Thirunindravur to KG Nagar via Thirunindravur railway station.

“A service covering Gomathipuram, Thiruvankada Nagar, Shivan temple, Bhakthavathsalaperumal temple, Lakshmipuram and railway station should be introduced. All these are interior neighbourhoods situated off CTH Road. Residents of these localities have to come to CTH Road to access bus services. Hence, small buses are necessary. A regular bus service covering these interior areas was terminated 15 years ago,” says S. Murugaiyyan, a long-time resident.

It is 12 trips (to-and-fro) per day. The first service and last service from Avadi terminus is at 5.45 a.m. and 10.05 p.m. respectively.

S. VAIRAMUTHU

VR Mall bus stop on Jawaharlal Nehru Main Road meant for buses toward Padi needs to be situated at a better spot, not in its current location. The road being narrow on this section, shelters cannot be installed in the bus stop, and commuters’ safety is compromised.

This bus stop needs to be merged with the KV School bus stop, which is also near the mall, but stands in a section of Jawaharlal Nehru Main Road that is wider.

KV School bus stop is equipped with shelters, seats and tablets listing the services halting at the stop, but is not being put to optimum use.

Only buses to Ambattur Industrial Estate and Avadi via Vaavin halt at KV School stop; the other buses that go to Rette-ri, Red Hills, Manali, Thiru Vi Ka Nagar and Avadi via Padi by taking the Thirumangalam flyover do not.

The reason MTC crew cites is that they have to take the Thirumangalam flyover which is near the KV School bus stop and it is difficult to change the lane after halting at the stop.

Being a regular user of this road, I’m of the view If those buses are made to halt a few metres away from the flyover it should not be difficult to



change the lane and take the flyover. This will benefit students of KV School. These commuters have to walk up to the

next bus stop near Royal Mahal which is close to a kilometre.

In case of VR Mall stop also, not all buses halt. Only, those

VR Mall bus stop and (below) KV School bus stop.
PHOTOS: UMESH KUMAR. V

buses going to Red Hills terminus stop but only rarely. A commuter has to wave and signal to the driver requesting to halt the bus. Some drivers heed to the request and others not. All other services do not stop here.

So in both these stops which are located one after the other, a good number of bus services do not halt. This is quite inconvenient. MTC is requested to do the needful.

S. Vairamuthu is a resident of Surapet

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'Long queues at reservation centre in Avadi station'

BALA RUBAN

Of the six counters at the passenger reservation centre at Avadi railway station, only one is operational during regular hours; and two during Tatkal hours. Until a year ago, three were operational during Tatkal hours.

Due to this, passengers have to wait for long time. It is sad that senior citizens and the differently-abled also have to ensure this ordeal as no preferential treatment is extended to them.

Bala Ruban is a resident of Kannigapuram



The reservation counter at Avadi railway station on December 18, 2025. PHOTO: UMESH KUMAR. V

Hyperlocal History, as written by residents



Three years shy of three decades: that is a long time. Over this period, *The Hindu Downtown* has been at its post, relaying residents' civic concerns to the powers that can address them. On this anniversary, besides renewing this commitment, the supplement refreshes the various initiatives it has launched. One of them is to spotlight climate change in a manner that is accessible to residents: what they can do in their corner of their world to combat it.

Besides, in the new year, *The Hindu Downtown* will be rolling out what it calls "Hyperlocal History". It is history as written by residents, not just residents of neighbourhoods with known heritage value, but also obscure ones whose stories are waiting to be told. In the first edition of 2026, the focus of this project, and how residents can contribute to it will be made known. So, be tuned in.

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Chennai-based non-profit Road Guru Trust is close to completing the distribution of 15,000 helmets provided by an insurance company to students and their parents in the city

LIFFY THOMAS

Recently, 48 students of Kesari Higher Secondary School in T. Nagar and their parents received free helmets. When this initiative kickstarted at the beginning of the academic year, 15,000 helmets had to be given away. The stock has dwindled hugely, which is commendable; every helmet cleared off the shelf is a safety measure in place for an individual.

Road Guru Trust, a non-profit committed to improving road safety in Chennai is distributing these helmets provided by ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company as part of its corporate social responsibility.

K.P. Sendil Kumar, who runs Road Guru Trust, explains: "In June, I attended this national summit 'Dialogue to Action: VRU's and Road Safety' organised by NGO TRAX S. Society and Central Road Research Institute in New Delhi. Under the CSR programme 'Ride to Safety', the company has been giving away helmets for the last seven years, focusing on one metropolitan city every year. Chennai was their focus for 2025 and I happened to be the only person from the state at the summit, so I volunteered to drive the distribution." Sendil, 58 years old IT professional who retired from a multinational company.

The campaign resonated with Sendil for many reasons including the fact that his Trust promoted road safety through education and awareness programmes.

The highlight of this initiative is the equal focus on distributing junior helmets. It therefore serves as a silent but effective advocacy for children's helmets, largely ignored because many parents are unaware of their availability.

"Most children dropped at schools by their parents in a two-wheeler do not wear a helmet. In fact, many do not buy one for their children. So this campaign was unique as it targeted both parents and children, each nudging the other to wear an ISI helmet while driving," says Sendil.

The Trust received close to 15,000 helmets for distribution. Since June, Sendil has been reaching out to government and less-privileged institutions asking school heads to identify students who would need them the most.

This turned out to be the most challenging task for the Trust. "We reached out to 170 schools in Chen-



A head start in road safety



Volunteer for road safety

K.P. Sendil Kumar's longstanding desire was to wear the police uniform and he fulfilled that by becoming a member of Tamil Nadu Police Traffic Warden Organisation in 2011. "Various statistics on road accidents was the trigger for me to do something more on road safety," says Sendil Kumar.

In 2015, Road Guru Trust was registered and works on a lean team mainly volunteers from Rotaract clubs. "We conduct awareness campaigns at schools, colleges and apartment complexes," says Sendil, adding that they invite volunteers to join them in efforts to make city roads safe.



nai and only 65 got back to us with a list of names," says Sendil.

The next task for the Trust was conducting a session at the schools for students and parents about road safety and the importance of wearing a proper headgear, before giving them a helmet.

"My sessions are made interactive and engaging with stories and live examples," he says.

The Trust has 15 more schools to cover. The number of helmets distributed in a school ranges between 48 and 540, and they are only given to students from classes IV to VIII, given the size of the junior helmets.

Sendil is grateful to a few school heads who helped spread the word. The headmaster of Chennai Public School in Thiru-Vi-Ka Nagar contacted other GCC schools. Likewise, Natanasabapathy, principal of Anjugam Higher Secondary School in West Mambalam collected details of 15 educational institutions and got a list ready. T. Nagar traffic SI Manjunath and traffic warden Mala have also been great support.

MTC to issue tokens from December 21

Metropolitan Transport Corporation will start issuing tokens from December 21 for senior citizens for travel on its fleet of buses. The half-yearly tokens will be valid for the January-June period (till June 30). Elderly citizens can travel on the bus 10 times a month and they receive around 60 tokens for the period. The tokens will be issued from 8 a.m. to 7.30 p.m. until January 31 at more than 40 bus depots, halting points and terminuses across the city. In addition to renewing, beneficiaries can also apply for new identity cards and first-time applicants can get new cards. The tokens will be issued at T. Nagar, Saidapet, Central Railway Station, Broadway, Guindy Estate, Iyappathangal, Vadapalani, K. K. Nagar, Adambakkam, Vela-

chery, Anna Nagar, Koyambedu, Ambattur Industrial Estate, Ambattur Old Terminus, Avadi, Ayanavaram, Integral Coach Factory, Tondiarpet -1, Toll Gate, Ennore, Vyasarpadi, MKB Nagar, Madhavaram, Padiyanallur, Red Hills, Perambur railway station, Vallar Nagar,

chery, Anna Nagar, Koyambedu, Ambattur Industrial Estate, Ambattur Old Terminus, Avadi, Ayanavaram, Integral Coach Factory, Tondiarpet -1, Toll Gate, Ennore, Vyasarpadi, MKB Nagar, Madhavaram, Padiyanallur, Red Hills, Perambur railway station, Vallar Nagar,

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Mogappair Margazhi Utsav gets bigger

The four-day celebration is an attempt to give residents in this part of the world a slice of Mylapore

The Magic of Mylapore comes to Mogappair - that's how this Margazhi fest is positioned. And the organiser (DAV Kala Kendram - The Creative Arts Academy of DAV Group Chennai) promises to bring every colour and sound from the sabhas in Mylapore to the Margazhi celebrations here.

The second edition of Mogappair Margazhi Utsav will be held from December 24 to December 27 at DAV Boys Senior Secondary School in Mogappair.

The four-day celebration will feature classical music and dance performances, lecture demonstrations, traditional art and craft stalls, workshops, food and community gatherings. With upcoming and professional artistes from in and around the neighbourhood, the Utsav is an attempt to showcase local talent. Various dance schools from the locality will also be part of the Utsav.

Besides a long line of professional artistes performing, students from the DAV Group of Schools and students from other schools would get a launchpad. "To shortlist aspiring musicians, the criteria included five years of training in an art and a couple of stage performances, followed by a performance video and this was further shortlisted by a jury," says Arti N., head - Kala Kendram, DAV Group Chennai.

The morning sessions are allotted for budding artistes.

Arti says the event has grown in its second year. The number of performers have almost doubled from last year; so has the duration of the programmes each day. An art competition is an addition.

"Last year, the programmes were held between 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. This year, based on the response and number of participants, we start the event at 10 a.m. and would go on till 8 p.m.," says Arti.

The events are free and open to all.

For updates, visit www.instagram.com/dav_kalakenndram/

The carol tradition hits a fresh note

CSI Redeemer Church Annanagar's Carols is a much-awaited Yuletide event. As in the previous years, this year's carol concert (on December 14) met expectations. Gloria by Antonio Vivaldi set the tone for the concert titled 'Star of God', and right from the first note to the last, it was an evening to remember, says a press release.

There was a beautiful mix of songs of different genres. A taste of classics from Messiah, Vivaldi, Mendelssohn and Gounod and also the melodious Angels' Carol by John Rutter besides many other contemporary pieces and hymns gave the variety that kept the audience guessing what's next.

The Junior choir of the church also presented 'Mary Sing Alleluia' and 'Go tell it on the Mountain' and this



gave a fresh wave of energy for the evening. The choir had a fine tone and was very expressive in their singing. The choir has been singing together for a long time and it was evident from their coordination. Majority of the choir were youth and the young voices sang with

excellent control. In the middle of the programme was a very apt Christmas message for the present times by the pastor Rev. I. Samuel Prabhakar.

The 'Genesis Chamber Orchestra' ably backed up the choir, and the strings, wind instruments, piano and voice

were in perfect harmony. Altogether it was an evening to remember and cherish as each and every one in the packed church had something to take away.

The choir was conducted and led by Emmanuel Ponraj. He was supported by Hannah Jane on the piano



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Maths talent exam on Feb. 8

Tamil Nadu Science & Technology Centre is conducting a talent examination in mathematics on February 8, 2026 at Periyar Science & Technology Centre. Time: At 11 a.m. It is a 90-minute test.

Students from class five to eight can take part. The nature of the test is pattern recognition in numbers, says a press release.

Those interested, need to register on or before January 27, 2026. For details, call 044 - 2441 0025.

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Pothys opens showroom in Padi



Pothys and Pothys Swarna Mahal opened an 'integrated' showroom on December 14 in Padi. Spread across 5,00,000 square feet, the showroom is designed as a one-stop destination offering textiles, jewellery, home essentials, lifestyle products and

groceries.

The seven-floor showroom has dedicated each floor to a category such as ground floor for jewellery and sixth floor for groceries, vegetables and fruits.

As part of the opening offer, a 10 percent discount is given on

textile products till December 21.

At the Swarna Mahal, ₹ 2,000 discount can be availed per sovereign on gold jewellery and a ₹10,000 per carat discount on diamond jewellery till December 31, said a release.

Three-day training session on **baking**

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, a Department of MSME -Tamil Nadu, is conducting a workshop on baking from December 29 to 31 at its premises at SIDCO Industrial Estate, Guindy. Time: From: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

According to a press release, the

workshop will focus on preparation of bakery products such as cookies, biscuits, and cakes made from millets and wheat. Those above 18 years of age with a minimum educational qualification of class eight can apply. For details, call 8668102600 / 9943685468.

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Hospital celebrates founder's day with **blood donation drive**



As part of the founders' day celebration, Be Well Hospitals organised a series of events to support those in need. Dr. C.J. Vetriavel is the founder of the hospital.

The hospitals organised a blood donation camp with Chennai Blood Centre, where the public and hospitals employees donated blood.

This was followed by free lunch for the residents of Charu Old Age Home and distribution of household essentials, including dhootis to underprivileged families in T. Nagar, said a release issued by the hospitals.

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Tamil theatre festival from December 25 in Kilpauk

Bhavan's Margazhi Mahotsav is conducting a nine-day Tamil Theatre Festival at the TAG Auditorium, Kilpauk. Featuring performances by leading theatre groups and eminent playwrights of the city, the festival seeks to present discerning audiences with high-quality Tamil dramas of artistic merit. Entry to all performances is free. Canteen facilities will be available at the venue.

Athithi, Ardhanari, Kaanal Neero, Payanam and Kapidhwaja, all by Drummies Drama, will be staged on December 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29 respectively. Other plays that will be staged from December 30 to January 2 are Surukku Pai, Lee-la Vinodham, Kalavu Neekiya Padalam and LKG Aasai.

All plays begin at 7 p.m.

Group chanting from December 21

Sri Sai Darsha Trust – Sai Nagar Alamathi, Red Hills will be performing sahasra chandi homam and group chanting for Devi Mahathmyam for 1008 times for seven days. The event begins on December 21 and concludes on January 1.

Daily Baba aarthi will be at 5.15 a.m., noon, 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Anna dhanam will be served daily between 12.30 p.m. and 2 p.m.

Health camp in Anna Nagar

Sri Ayyappa Charitable Trust, a public charitable trust, will conduct a health check-up / blood screening tests at concessional rate on December 28 from 7.30 a.m. to noon at Ayyappan Temple in Anna Nagar.

Blood screening tests will include complete blood count, fasting blood sugar, post prandial, HbA1C, Lipid Profile, Kidney function, Liver function, Thyroid(TSH), Urine Routine,

Blood grouping. All the above tests can be done at a concessional rate of ₹699. Those requiring only their diabetic profile consisting of fasting sugar, post prandial, HbA1C, can avail the special facility at ₹199.

For registration, contact 7200469351 / 9360386453.

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TOTAL SCHOLARSHIP WORTH 5 CRORES

DATE
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JANUARY 2026

TIME
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TO
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