

## MYLAPORE

Mandaveli » R A Puram » Royapettah » Chindatripet » Royapuram » Korukkupet » Ennore » Luz » Alwarpet » Triplicane » Central

Washermenpet » Tondiarpet » Manali » M.R.C.Nagar » Teynampet » Mount Road » Broadway » Kondithope » Tiruvotiyur

# Thiruvengadam Street: trouble on the bend

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

When vehicular traffic shifts left from RK Mutt Road into Thiruvengadam Street, and rolls down a one-way stretch, it is usually a smooth run. Things get “interesting” when this traffic enters a two-way stretch of Thiruvengadam Street.

During rush hour, when buses do this switch from the one-way to the two-way leg, at the bend, vehicles moving in the other direction are often blindsided and dragged to the edge, as this autorickshaw has been. If the bus takes a sharp turn, this scenario invariably plays out.

Another problem stems from the fact that some motorists do the forbidden. They drive in the opposite direction (moving from the two-way section into the one-way) by taking a left they are warned against taking, and clogging the bend.

And at the bend, right under the board forbidding a left turn, a manhole, in fact two manholes



are out of whack are covered with wooden boards that have clearly seen better days.

As the Metro rail work-related traffic diversion on Thiruvengadam Street seems set to continue for a long time, should a traffic signal be installed on the bend to weed out these problems?



The troublesome bend at Thiruvengadam Street on May 2, 2025. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK



## Time to take a dip

SDAT's swimming camp at Anna Swimming Pool during summer is usually a big draw

SRINATH M

There cannot be a better time than summer to learn swimming. Besides learning a skill that is going to stand you in good stead through a lifetime, you also address an immediate concern: the scorching summer heat.

Sports Development Authority

of Tamil Nadu has started a swimming camp, one lasting from April to June, at Anna Swimming Pool. The first batch took its lessons from April 1 to 13. The current batch, which started having its classes on April 29 will complete the learning programme on May 11.

The next batch has its classes from May 13 to 25; and the last

At Anna Swimming Pool on May 1.  
PHOTO: SRINATH M

batch would attend classes from May 27 to June 6.

Every session lasts an hour and the timings of the sessions during the day are: session one – 6 am to 7 am; session two – 7.15 am to 8.15 am; session three – 8.30am to 9.30 am; and evening sessions (also one hour each) start from 3 pm and end at 6.30 pm.

Eligibility criteria: children aged above 7 years with a height of 129 cm or more.

The course fee is ₹ 2360/ for 13 days. The contact numbers are 044-25390119/ 8660229506

Swimming Coach Tamilvanan says during summer vacation many children join the camp and those who excel in the classes invariably take up competitive swimming.

The Anna Swimming Pool is open through the week, except for Monday, which is set aside for maintenance of the pool as Sunday registers a great footfall, says Tamilvanan, adding that as the pool is well-maintained, even international swimmers come here for practice.

## MTC rennumbers bus services

MTC has renumbered seven bus routes. Route Numbers: 121F (Madhavaram to Tambaram) will ply as 170A, 121H (Kaviyarasu Kannadasan Nagar - Tambaram) as 170T, 11G Extension (Iyyappathangal - Broadway) as 11M, 18A Extension (Broadway - Kilambakkam) as 18A, 91K (Thiruvannamiyur - Kilambakkam) as 91, and 121H Extension (Kaviyarasu Kannadasan Nagar - Kilambakkam) as 170TX.

**Admissions Open**

**Best Summer Offer**

**Women's Swimming Training Centre**

**Exclusive for Women & Children**

**Learn Swimming with YMCA Certified PGDSC Coaches**

**Membership also available**

**T.NAGAR**  
91762 24225  
99413 13710

**VALASARAVAKKAM / NANDAMBAKKAM**  
99413 13710  
91768 73397





The awardees along with the core team members

## RWAs join hands with NGO for Earth Week celebrations

The event attracted attendees from resident welfare associations across Mylapore and Adyar, as well as local self-help groups. It fostered collaboration and inspired sustainable living practices

GANGA SRIDHAR

**E**coConnectors, a non-profit based in Mylapore, partnered with Munnnetram Trust and RK Nagarra (a residents group) to mark Earth Week with a series of impactful activities at RK Nagar OSR Park, Mandaveli on April 27, 2025.

The aim was to elevate environmental awareness and encourage practical eco-friendly practices, bringing people from diverse communities together. The event was enriched by collaboration with Residents' Welfare Associations, self-help groups and corporate CSR.

As a prelude to the April 27 event, exactly a week earlier (on April 20), an online workshop on bioenzyme making was conducted. The workshop taught the participants, more than 30 of them, to make bio-enzymes by upcycling fruit, vegetable and flower waste. The importance of bio enzymes as natural herbal cleansers and pest repellents was emphasised.

The in-person Earth Week event was marked by, one, upcycling workshops. Led by Malathi of Munnnetram Trust, the workshops taught attendees techniques to



create bio-enzymes, sambrani cones, and perfume sachets from household waste.

Two, interactive sessions: Aarthi from Bisleri CSR conducted an engaging game to educate attendees on waste segregation, awareness about different kinds of plastic and recycling.

Sathya Priya, Animator of Ward 171 spoke about effective waste segregation and waste reduction practices.

Councillor of Ward 171 Geetha Murali planted a Magizham poo sa-

pling at the venue and emphasised waste management and environmental stewardship.

EcoConnectors launched sustainability projects that can generate entrepreneurship opportunities for small entrepreneurs.

Nirmalyam Project: focused on upcycling worship flowers into products such as soaps, shampoos, sambrani, potpourri, and more.

Marumuyarchi Thrift Stall: Encouraged reuse of unused household items, providing access to affordable resources for those in



need. It encouraged people to declutter by giving away unused belongings to those who could use them better.

The EcoConnectors team, comprising Bala, Sumithra, Ganga, and Ashok, played a pivotal role in advocating for entrepreneurship and empowering women's SHGs in environment friendly business opportunities. They encouraged attendees to undergo training in upcycling techniques and explore these projects as potential business ventures, emphasising self-reliance and sustainability.

Eco friendly stalls were put up at the event:

HelpHER Stall by EcoConnectors showcased trendy bags and purses made from repurposed curtain and upholstery materials.

Munnnetram Trust displayed herbal products, bio enzymes, upcycled soaps, shampoos and other products of the Nirmalyam project.

V-Excel displayed herbal products and crafts by specially-abled adults, inspiring thoughtful consumption.

The event attracted attendees from RWAs across Mylapore and Adyar, as well as local self-help groups. It fostered collaboration and inspired sustainable living practices.

Sumithra Srikanth launched her book "Bug Off," a practical flash-card book on organic pest control solutions for gardens and farms. The book was inaugurated by Dr. Chandrasekaran of RAPRA, the book highlights easy DIY remedies.

The grand finale of the event was the Awards Ceremony. Three award categories celebrated eco-friendly efforts:

EK HelpHER Energizers: Recognizing individuals supporting sustainable initiatives by supporting EcoConnectors directly in various ways.

Eco Warriors: honouring individuals such as K. Viswanathan (MRWA), R. Chandrasekaran (RAPRA), Uma and Shiv Kumar (Karam Korpom), Munnnetram Trust and others for their remarkable contribution to eco-consciousness. Inspiring women such as Manjula and differently-abled tailoring teacher K. Mala were appreciated and awarded for their outstanding contribution to women's empowerment. They are known to encourage members of their SHGs to embrace self-reliance and explore entrepreneurship opportunities. By fostering collaboration and skill development, they have inspired countless women to achieve independence and confidence. EcoConnectors appreciated and awarded them both for their contribution.

Eco Green Community: RWAs such as RAPRA, Ceebros Greyscott Apartment, Bishop garden, Ashiana Apartment, Venus Colony, and Hamsadhwani Block of Ragamalika RK Nagar received awards for their environment friendly and waste management initiatives.

Award certificates were upcycled from wallpaper samples, while gifts included saplings in paper bags and Nirmalyam products such as perfume pouches, sambrani and soaps packed in HelpHER poti bags. The event continued to spread the importance of healthy sustainable living by distributing Sundal in dhonnais with buttermilk as a refreshing drink.

In short, Earth Week 2025 proved to be a meaningful celebration of environmental consciousness and community collaboration.

**Ganga Sridhar** is a member of Mandaveli Raja Street Residents Welfare Association and Co-founder of EcoConnectors Trust

## Run celebrates 70 years of Vidya Mandir

The first edition of Miles of Smiles run by Vidya Mandir School in Mylapore took place recently. The joyous run was conceived to kick off the 70th year celebrations of the school.

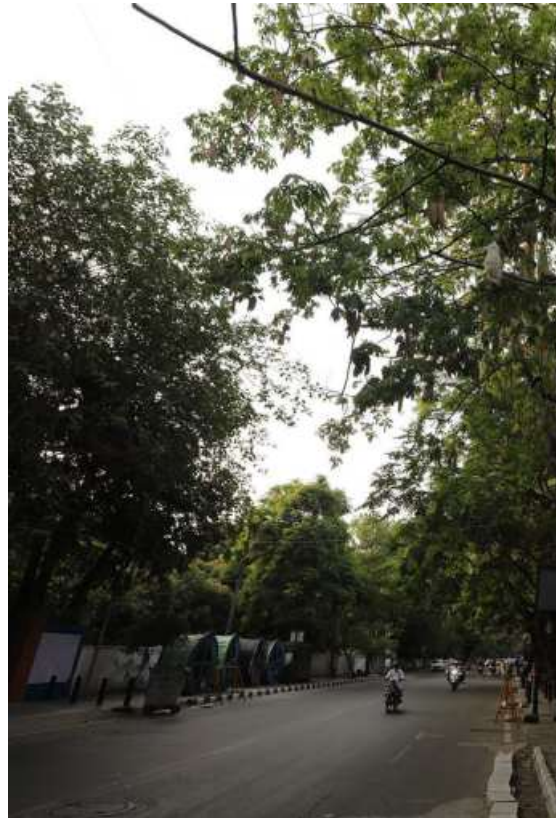
The spirit of unity and celebrations filled the air as over 1,100 participated in the 2-km and 5-km

run. Children as young as three years of age to seniors in their 70s, students, teachers, parents and grandparents made this run a memorable and inclusive one. The event was flagged off by the school's secretary Srikanth. "The success of the event was made possible by the collective effort of

the dedicated VM staff, VMPTA (Parents Teachers Association) and VM Alumni. It was truly a morning to cherish the spirit of togetherness and shared joy. It was the perfect way to commence the school's 70 year celebrations," said principal Kanchanamala in a press release.







Silk cotton (*Ceiba pentandra*) trees with seed pods at Besant Avenue Road and Anderson Road.  
PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

## A silken touch to the landscape

It is the time of year when silk cotton trees draw attention with their seed pods. Recalling how these trees furthered a sustainability goal, tree conservationist T.D. Babu points out that their presence in Chennai is dwindling

PRINCE FREDERICK

**S**ilk cotton (*Ceiba pentandra*) trees are having a productive spell now in Chennai, and they better make the most of it, as they would soon slip into obscurity and that would be their lot when they are not sporting the eye-catching seed pods.

From lining avenues in Chennai, they have been reduced to scattered insignificance. On Anderson Road, one will come across a stand of three silk cotton trees, pointing to their preferred status in the past as avenue trees.

Now, they live unseen and are usually ignored except when they

put out their seed pods. The seed pods, elongated and oval-shaped, are green in the flush of youth, and turn brownish and open up exposing bright-white, extremely fibres when mature. Silk cotton trees can now be seen giving up their fibres, the brown-coloured pods breaking open. There are some trees that have a mix of mature and immature pods; and some, such as the one at a gated community on Santhome High Road, displays a profusion of still-young seed pods (they did on April 25, 2025). But they could have matured since the last time they were seen, the natural process being accelerated naturally.

T.D. Babu, tree conservationist



and a member of the Chennai District Green Council, notes an unfounded argument placed against the tree led to its unpopularity.

“Word spread without any basis

that the fluffy fibres would aggravate respiratory problems,” says Babu, suggesting that it was a case of giving a dog a bad name and hanging him.

And some *Ceiba pentandra* trees have been lost on account of infrastructure work.

“We lost five trees along Royapettah High Road, near the Luz Church Road-Kutchery Road junction, due to Metro rail project,” says Babu.

He says the loss of *Ceiba pentandra* is not just loss of green cover, but a loss to sustainability. Silk cotton trees (also known as kapok trees) were intricately and inextricably tied to a mundane, everyday of life – sleep and rest.

Before the proliferation of foam-based mattresses and pillows, those made with *ilavam panju* (silk cotton) were ubiquitous.

“We are living in times when we hear of how mattresses, foam-based mattresses are among the major pollutants of marine waters, and we cannot help thinking of how easy the silk cotton mattresses were on the environment. A silk cotton mattress would never leave a home. When the silk cotton in a mattress has grown old, lost its suppleness and therefore its cushioning effect, it would be removed and dried and it would then go into making pillows. The mattress would be filled with fresh silk cotton. When a mattress has become irredeemable, the cloth would be stitched into pillow covers. Nothing ever left a home,” recalls Babu.

On Besant Avenue Road, at Rajaji Bhavan, maintained by Central Public Works Department and housing government offices, one finds tall *Ceiba pentandra* trees. The trees are reportedly around from the time the facility was established, which was in the late 1990s. According to someone who has seen these trees grow, they give up their branches in cyclone-induced gusty conditions. And he believes that this quality makes them an unfavourable choice as avenue trees.

## Teen from Triplicane paddles his way to fame

K. KEERTHIVASAN

**A**n out-and-out Triplicane boy, Vishruth Ramakrishnan loves going to temples especially the Parthasarathy Swami Temple, which is close to his home. Not just that, he loves playing cricket and football on the bylanes of Triplicane with his friends and neighbours. But the 14-year-old is not your boy next door. He is a champion paddler. Recently, Vishruth won three titles in the South Asian youth table tennis championships in Kathmandu (Nepal). In a stellar show, he clinched the U-15 singles, doubles with Atharva Nawarange



Vishruth Ramakrishnan

and team titles in the regional tournament. The teenager picked the singles triumph over Pakistan's Ahmad Muhammad



Khan in the u-15 summit clash as quite special. His 11-9, 11-5, 11-4 triumph showcased the Indian's single-mindedness and

perseverance.

“Beating the Pakistan boy in the final was great as I played a good tactical game. Playing in the tournament and bagging three titles is definitely a stepping stone in my career,” said Vishruth.

Moreover, he won all his matches, remaining unbeaten. In fact, winning at the International level is not new for Vishruth as he had already won one in Tunisia in 2021 when he triumphed in the WTT Youth Contender in the U-11 section. Vishruth is exceptionally hard working as he trains five days a week in the mornings and evenings. “I do multiball training both in the morning and evening. I do breathing exercises in the

morning. I play pickleball at the TNCA Club and swimming at the Gymkhana Club, which helps me in my endurance,” said the the class X student of Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School in Mylapore.

He was featured in our pages as a four-year-old in the Sportstar-Mylapore Club non-ranking inter-school table tennis tournament. He received an award for ‘the youngest player of the tournament’. Coached by the Rao brothers, Srinivasa and Muralidhara and Meenakshi Ganesh at the Mylapore Sports Trust, Vishruth is now looking at doing well in the new domestic season beginning in June. “Having completed my U-15, I want to do well in U-17 category and win the National championships,” he said.



**S. Ravi:  
a bond that got  
stronger**

Even after scraping the bottom of his savings, S. Ravi found himself distressingly short of what it took to keep his grandson in college. The college fees had to be arranged; and it was, in the nick of time, with help pouring in from expected quarters. Residents of Mandaveli Raja Street stepped in with financial support towards payment of the grandson's fees.

Why would these residents be so generous in their offer of support to Ravi?

Let us set the clock back by 11 months, and replay a scene from Mandaveli Raja Street.

A late breakfast following an early shift has the desirability of an oasis discovered after a long trudge through a desert. S. Ravi, was settling in for that kind of a breakfast, when his hand was "stayed" mid-air between the plate and the palate. Homemakers from a nearby household had searched high and low for a five-sovereign gold chain in vain, and as a last resort, were now turning to the only place they had not brought under their dragnet – the garbage bin – and the only man who can turn hope into reality. Without a second thought, Ravi put his meal aside. Calmly and carefully, he began sorting through the waste pile he had just collected.

Bit by bit, layer by layer, he shifted through the mess – until a soft glint of gold shone from beneath the rubbish. He handed it to the family, their relief and gratitude knowing no bounds.

Moved by Ravi's honesty and effort, residents of Mandaveli Raja Street passed the hat around, collecting ₹8,000 to give away to Ravi as a token of appreciation.

"It is not just about the money," Ravi says. "When people care, you feel like you belong. That is what matters. If I ever go hungry or need anything, I know they would be there for me."

**Bomma Devi:  
'adopted' by a  
neighbourhood**

The day dawned in drab, customary colours for this conservancy worker, but ended with a lustre that has not dimmed to this day. Bomma Devi, posted at Srinivasapuram in Foreshore Estate, found herself face-to-face with a resident – a differently-abled woman beside herself with anxiety as only someone who has lost a one-sovereign gold chain can be. The resident surmised the chain got inadvertently swept into the garbage.

"We had just started our work," recalls Devi, "but I promised her I would keep an eye out for the chain." Devi went beyond the promise: she sorted out the garbage thoroughly, and found the valuable piece of yellow metal. When Devi took the one-sovereign gold chain to the resident, the latter was overwhelmed with gratitude and she could not stop proclaiming Devi's honesty to anyone with ears that crossed her path. As the day ended, Devi had a sense of being accepted by the residents as their own; she felt belonged. Displays of gratitude and admiration have not ceased: many a morning, after sweeping the streets near the beach, she would be greeted not with an empty hand, but one holding a warm cup of tea or a refreshing glass of juice. These gestures, though small, speak volumes of the bond she has forged with the community.

**Antony Samy:  
being of help to  
someone brings joy**

One morning in September 2024, while Antony Samy was at his stomping ground in KK Nagar, he found himself having to accommodate a special, unusual request in his workaday duties. A security guard from Windsor Park Apartments brought him news of a lost diamond necklace, worth ₹5 lakh, mistakenly thrown away with the trash. The owner, distraught, had turned to the guard for help, who in turn sought Antony's assistance.

With permission from his supervisor, Antony sifted through the discarded rubbish. And after a few minutes, his efforts fructified – there was the unmistakable glint of diamonds in the refuse. Antony says the act of retrieving the diamond necklace and giving it to the resident filled him with immense joy.

Antony, a BOV operator and on Urbaser Sumeet's payrolls for the last five years, notes that the episode remains one of his cherished memories.

**Brand ambassadors:  
unappointed but unrivalled****Valuables:  
RETRIEVED AND RETURNED**

Cash & cheques:

**₹1,40,500**

Gold items:

**₹19,63,802.40**

Mobile phones:

**₹5,73,000**

Bags:

**₹70,600**

Wallets:

**₹1,200**

Other electronics:

**₹8,000**

**TOTAL**

**₹27,56,102.40**

Urbaser Sumeet, employed by Greater Chennai Corporation to handle solid waste management operations in seven of its zones, has a list to flaunt: one that reels off the names of conservancy workers whose acts of honesty upended what seemed "loss", in some cases a huge loss, to residents.

The list spanning the period from October 2020 to now includes diamond necklaces, gold chains, smartphones, wallets filled with cash and so on that were lost in the garbage pile by residents, and then retrieved and returned by conservancy workers.

As these workers earn far less than the value of what they return, these acts are a reminder that honesty can grow in the harshest of soils. Such commendable acts by individuals has won respect for the entire community of conservancy workers. Urbaser Sumeet views these conservancy workers as brand ambassadors, unappointed to that role but equal to what it demands.

Hari Balaji, head - information, education and communication, Urbaser Sumeet notes that these acts have brought residents and conservancy workers closer in many neighbourhoods. There is many an instance of how residents – particularly, in areas such as Adyar and T. Nagar – offer tea and refreshments to these workers, allow them to use their restrooms and even invite them to dine at restaurants such as Adyar Anand Bhavan and Geetham with their families.

In Adyar, the residents' association invited a conservancy worker to hoist the national flag on Independence Day. "When RWAs do that - that is a revolution," says C. Namachivayam, a resident of Adyar.

Urbaser Sumeet runs internal recognition programmes such as "Everyday Heroes (honouring two workers per zone monthly with a dinner at a resort in ECR) and "Emerging Leaders" (identifies and places mid-level staff in management pipelines). It also bolsters the educational aspirations of workers' children.

"Many workers' children drop out after Class 12 due to financial constraints" says Hari Balaji, adding that the organisation steps in with counselling, admission support and help in exam preparation. Their annual talent show, judged by panels from Vijay TV and Adithya TV, showcases performances by conservancy workers' children.

**Thinking out of the box**

A reel shared on Urbaser Sumeet's official Instagram page discusses how the conservancy staff attached to Urbaser Sumeet's Zone 11 (Valasaravakkam) operations thought out of box while planning this year's Labour Day celebration. The team comprising BOV (Battery-Operated Vehicle) operators deflected attention from themselves and made a cause the central theme of Labour Day. They donated a 43-inch Android television to the Adyar Cancer Hospital. Over time, the workers had been setting aside money earned from selling recyclable scrap they collected during their daily rounds.

When the idea first came up, the team approached their Zonal Manager, Mohanakrishnan Ethiraj, who offered guidance and support. With his help, the workers coordinated the purchase and planned the donation as a Labour Day contribution.

Around ten staff members visited the hospital in person to hand over the television.

A local scrap dealer, hearing about the initiative, offered his support too, donating two 240-litre and two 120-litre waste bins to the hospital.

**A street that adds invisible  
homes to its address book**

Charity begins at home. And charity has an added, glittering ring of meaning to it when it is practised in the extended home, rewarding those one might be excused for not recognising, let alone rewarding. Acting on this thinking, Mandaveli Raja Street has ended up with more homes than are registered with a door number. These are the homes of the foot soldiers – the workers and their families – that keep residents' lives running smoothly like a well-oiled machine. These homes might be physically scattered, located across the metro, but have a soulful connection with Mandaveli Raja Street. Every Labour Day, says Ganga Sridhar (a committee member of Mandaveli Raja Street Residents Welfare Association), a gratitude that residents feel through the year is expressed in the full glare of public attention. This year, the association invited 50 workers – including conservancy staff, auto drivers, vendors, and household helpers – for a special Labour Day lunch. Buttermilk was served to anyone who dropped in at the event, even passersby.

"It is not just about conservancy workers," Ganga adds. "It is about every person who makes this community work – be it the Istri Kadai lady, the post-woman, or the street's regular auto driv-



er. These are the people who make our lives tension-free." Over the years, the Association has built meaningful relationships with many of these workers. When Ravi, their door-to-door waste collector, returned a resident's lost gold chain, he was honoured during their Independence Day celebration. Later, when his grandson needed financial help for his education, the residents helped with the fees. And during a cyclone, when the Istri Kadai woman's shop was damaged, the community rebuilt her shop, buying her a new ironing machine, and offering support through the Lions Club.

"Our efforts go beyond Labour Day," says Ganga. "We try to help whenever there is a need. We even conduct a free Women's Day health check-up in collaboration with Spectrum Clinic, where our conservancy workers receive full blood tests and consultations with a gynaecologist."

**Kendriya Vidyalaya  
schools to take students  
on a road safety trip**

From the coming academic year, an audio-visual programme will teach students how to be safe on the road



File photo used for representational purpose only

**LIFFY THOMAS**

Dressed up as a superhero, the road safety mascot SIAM (read as Safe I am) greets children of junior sections in schools in a video. It goes on to promise them that it would take them on an adventure about road safety. With jingles and animation stories, children listen to conversations between Chiku and Muski on pedestrian safety, the learn importance of wearing a helmet, the need to walk on the footpath and following rules while waiting for the bus.

The module gets more advanced for middle schoolers and high school students showing them traffic signs, cycling safety and safe driving practices. The rights of pedestrians and data on road safety are also in focus.

During the coming academic year, students of Kendriya Vidyalaya schools will have an online road safety programme in their curriculum that will nudge them towards following road rules. The programme was launched recently by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), in association with Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), under the guidance of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and the Ministry of Education, Government of India.

There are 1,253 Kendriya Vidyalayas, and the programme will offer six interactive, curriculum-integrated digital modules for

foundational, middle and senior secondary classes.

After teachers play the videos in the classroom, the programme requires students to take an online assessment to test their understanding. "It is an online quiz where those scoring more than 80% will get a certificate. Those who do not make that cut can repeat the test till they get that score," says Meenakshi Kukreja, director, SIAM.

The web-based Learning Management System (LMS) developed by SIAM has been integrated into KVS academic activities.

Depending on the age group, the interactive activities are aimed at helping students sharpen their decision-making skills and identify if a shown action is right or wrong.

Meenakshi says the MoU with KVS was signed two years ago and a lot of thought has gone into making the content engaging so as to inspire children to be responsible road users.

"India is among countries that are on the top of the table in terms of road-related fatalities. Education is one pillar of road safety. Through LMS system we will be awarding schools that have completed the six modules together with the assessment tests in the shortest time or got maximum number of students enrolled," says Meenakshi.

Twenty five assistant commissioners have been trained on how to run this programme in their respective States.





G.K.M. Kabbir has donated blood 35 times so far, and he has drawn up an uncompromising blood-donation schedule for his canine pets too

## Like owner, like dog

LIFFY THOMAS

**E**very blood donor is a hero and that includes the one with four legs. In G.K.M. Kabbir's home, there are currently four donors who move about on four legs – these are his canine pets, Rowdy, Cocoa, Racket (belonging to Kanni breed) and Rusty Kutti (Chippiparai).

Kabbir has drawn up an uncompromising blood-donation schedule for them – they experience the gentle piercing of a retractable needle every three months.

"All my dogs are donors," says Kabbir, a retired process audit consultant who lives in Chintadripet.

"I have had more than 30 dogs over the years with eight dogs at my home in one time," says Kabbir.

He began to get his dogs to support blood donation drives ten



G.K.M. Kabbir with his pets; and (below) Rusty with the medal received at an awards function organised by TANUVAS.

years ago.

A friend's dog had met with an accident and Kabbir received a frantic call seeking blood. The dog was in the emergency and Kabbir rushed with Rusty to the Department of Clinics at Madras Veterinary Hospital in Vepery.

Rusty, a Chippiparai breed had been adopted by Kabbir and his family and lived with them for 14 years until its death.

"I still remember the scene at the hospital ward. Family members were in tears as their dog was really serious. It was a miracle to see the dog being saved and a memorable one for me too," says Kabbir, who has himself donated blood (obviously, for human patients) 35 times.

Over the years, Rusty has been a champion donor, donating blood for more than 10 times. For World Blood Donors Day in 2019, Rusty received the Best Blood Donor award from TANUVAS.

"Rusty's blood group is rare; he was a universal donor so it was much sought-after," says the proud owner.

Once a pet parent flew down from Mumbai to get Rusty's blood from Tamil Nadu Veterinary and

Animal Sciences (TANUVAS) University's Animal Blood Bank at Madras Veterinary Hospital.

Most of Kabbir's dogs are healthy so he makes it a point to get them into this habit after they turn one-and-a-half years old.

The only criterion Kabbir insists upon is that the doctor is well-trained in the job. "It pains me to see the dog getting multiple pricks to get the vein, so I am selective about the hospital," says Kabbir.

In most cases, donors arrange an auto or they come in their vehicle.

After every life-saving act, the pets are treated with food supplement or a medicine is given to help them recover quickly. Kabbir has made many friends over the years by volunteering for canine blood donation.

Says Kabbir: "One has become a close friend after one of my dogs saved theirs, so when I was abroad they took care of my dog for five days."

## Donate blood, get incentives

"We need more pet owners to volunteer to get their dogs to donate blood and we are happy to give them a red carpet treatment for their gesture," says G. Bharanidharan of Chennai Small Animal Veterinarians Association (CSAVA).

Launched in 2022, the blood donors club brings together dog owners and veterinarians for medical assistance.

"Donors will be given annual vaccination and deworming coupons and other freebies from any of our 120 private clinics in Chennai that are registered with us. If a person from Ambattur needs blood for his pet, we will connect them to a clinic in the neighbourhood," says Dr Bharanidharan.

To sign up, call 73050 73050

## A database of canine donors

If you are a pet parent and want your dog to become a blood donor to save their canine friends then register for this initiative by Hope for Critters.

The Chennai-based animal welfare organisation is running the "canine blood donor programme" to establish a registry of canine blood donors to address critical needs within the community.

Kirthana Raamsukaesh, founder, Hope for Critters, says they receive at least one call a day from a

pet parent. "The number of donors registered with us does not match the number of calls we get, so we invite pet parents to register with us even if they are not in need now," says Kirthana, a resident of R.A. Puram.

Like humans, dogs encounter severe injuries, need surgeries, and face other critical conditions that often require lifesaving blood transfusions. Currently, the availability of emergency blood for dogs is limited. "We cannot store blood

for more than 24 hours, so when there is an emergency need, we call interested volunteers from our database," says Kirthana.

As with humans, there must be a gap between every two blood donations. Canines have two major blood groups: DEA negative and DEA positive, the former is rare to find. "Of late, most of the requests that we have been getting are for DEA negative," says Kirthana.

A series of tests are done to

check if the dog is fit to donate blood. "Depending on the recipient's weight, the blood is collected. Around 350 ml is what is generally needed," says Kirthana. There is one requirement that this animal welfare organisation has for pet owners. "Please know your pet's blood group. We have saved many pets that were in a critical condition by just connecting with the right donor," she adds. Hope for Critters runs an animal shelter at Kannathur and a pet food bank in Thiruvannamiyur.

Visit the Instagram page @hopeforcritters to fill the google form.







## Probus Club gets a **new team**

The Probus Club of Chennai has elected a new team for the term 2025-2027. The team of 19 members were installed as the new office bearers at a ceremony held at the Russian Centre for Science and Culture on April 26.

Annadhurai.M was installed as the 18th president of the Probus Club of Chennai, with Ramaraj serving as the new secretary. The installation ceremony was graced by distinguished guests, including Rama Rao V, president of FOSCATAN; Edwin Babu, state

head of HelpAge India, Tamil Nadu; Kalaimamani Ervadi Rathakrishnan S, editor of Kavithai Uraavu; and Kalaimamani Kizhambur Sankara Subramanian, editor of Kalaimagal.

Other notable guests who attended the ceremony included Dr. V. Chockalingam, Cardiologist; Punniakoti P, president of Cheyyar Probus Club; Badri C, president of Probus Club of Madras South; and Nagarajan TV, chairman of the Senior Citizens Bureau.

The Probus Club of Chennai is a senior citizens' association of retired professionals, businessmen, and government officials, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Madras. Founded in 1992, the club has completed 33 years of service, and its activities include awarding scholarships to deserving poor students, providing medical benefits to needy senior citizens and fostering fellowship among members through monthly breakfast meetings, tours, and cultural events, said a release.

## PLAN YOUR WEEK

### Chennai Super Mom contest on May 11

Iris Events, in association with Mom Junction, presents the 12th edition of Chennai Super Mom 2025 on May 11 at Ampa SkyOne Mall, Aminjikarai; 2 p.m. onwards. The event celebrates the beautiful bond between mothers and their little ones.

The contest is open to mothers with babies of two years and less and ex-

pecting moms. Mom and Me fashion show, cookery contest, debate on parenting and Instagram reel challenges are some highlights of the event, said a release.

Participants also get exciting awards and prizes, added the release.

For registration, call 9884783510/ 9841206506

### Listen to duets of Lata Mangeshkar

Satrangi's next presentation 'Memorable duets of Lata Mangeshkar' will be held on May 4 from 5:45 p.m. at Teach Auditorium, Taramani.

This programme will feature 26 duets of the Nightingale of India with Mohd Rafi, Kishore Kumar, Mukesh, Udit Narayan, Mahendra Kapoor, Shailendra Singh, Suresh Wadkar to name a few.

Promod, Smriti, Abhishek and Ramya will be presenting the programme on pre recorded tracks.

Tickets for this event are priced at ₹500 and ₹300 and will be home delivered on calling 9884778073.

### Bandhni mela till May 10

Saanskritie's "Bandhni mela" is a wonderful celebration of Indian craftsmanship, showcasing the traditional tie-dye technique of Bandhni. One can shop for a wide range of blouses, skirts, saris and dress materials, all featuring this ancient art form till May 10.

The exhibition is on at No.77/10, Corporation Complex, C.P Ramasamy Road, Alwarpet

### Introduction to star gazing

The Science and Nature Club of Periyar Nagar is organising a naked eye astronomy event on May 4 at 6.30 p.m. After a brief theoretical introduction to the aspects of stargazing by Duraiswamy Nava-neetham, participants will be guided to locate Mars, Jupiter, stars and stellar constellations.

Entry is free. Those interested may contact 9962565743 for details. Details of the venue will be shared through WhatsApp. For registration: <https://shorturl.at/d17Dp>

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## Colleagues and neighbours

Here is why the Little stint and the Kentish plover stick together: right now, they are sharing space at a saltern in Thaiyur

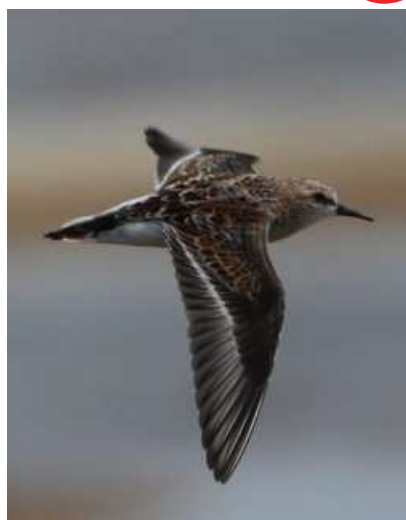
PRINCE FREDERICK

**T**ake in this familiar scenario; and that might make it easier to figure out why the Little stints and Kentish plovers hang out together. Two colleagues are in the same department, and they have taken residence in the quarters provided by their office (a situation usually playing out in government jobs in India). They head out for work and hit the trail back home around the same hours, and therefore end up taking the same route both ways, and become travel companions.

Now shift the focus to a saltern in Thaiyur near Kelambakkam. The wintering season is in its fag end, and during the end of April and early part of May in 2025, one has been greeted by sights of Little stints sharing space with Kentish plovers.

Similarity in their dining habits and shared routes to the wintering grounds and back to the breeding grounds make them compatible and they are at home in each other's company.

Whoever said familiarity breeds contempt has never been introduced to the Little stint and the Kentish plover.



These images of Little stints and Kentish plovers were taken during the end of April and early part of May in 2025 at a saltern in Thaiyur, near Kelambakkam. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

## Vocational excellence award presented

Rotary Club of Madras Chenna Patna under Rotary International District 3234 conferred Vocational Excellence Awards on three individuals for their outstanding contribution to society through their professions.

The chief traffic warden of Tamilnadu Azeem Ahmed was conferred with "Service above self" award, while Mandolin maestro, U.Nagamani was conferred the "Cultural Ambassador" award and Social entrepreneur-inventor J. Chandrasekaran was conferred the "Trendsetter" award.

R. Nataraj, former DGP of Tamil Nadu Police was the chief guest, and Rotarian Sujatha Panju was the guest of honour.

Rotarian Karthikeyan S., president of the Club, secretary Rotarian Pares P. Khatri and Director Vocational Service Rotarian Gourishankar spoke. Rotarian Rajasirraam coordinated the event.

Over a hundred invited guests and club members were present at the event which was held on April 26, 2025 at Savera Hotel in Mylapore.

## Basketball court inaugurated in Egmore

What was once an unkempt land overrun with wild vegetation and sporting dilapidated structures has not become a state-of-the-art basketball court.

Under the government's Namakku Naame Thittam, Sainath Sports Development Foundation has helped construct a basketball court at Veeraswami Street in Egmore, says a press release. It was officially opened on April 27, 2025 by Sekar Babu, Minister for Religious Endowments, and Kalandhi Veeraswamy, Member of Parliament, North Chennai, the press release adds.

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