

TAMBARAM

Chromepet » Pallavaram » Tambaram West » Rajakilpakkam » Mannivakkam » Guindy » Keelkattalai » Nanganallur » Guduvanchery » Hasthinapuram » Pammal » Tambaram East

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



ASIAN PIED STARLING ADDS ONE MORE WATERBODY TO ITS CHENNAI ADDRESS LIST

By the side of the Perumbakkam lake, on Medavakkam-Mambakkam Main Road, there is nesting activity by the species **P2**



CHENNAI SKYLINE SET FOR AN OVERHAUL

Taking effect on March 6 this year, the Tamil Nadu Apartment Ownership Act 2022 has generated considerable interest in redevelopment projects among builders and apartment associations. They are waiting for greater clarity about its provisions **P6**

Repair Cafe in Adambakkam



At its workshop on June 30, participants can try their hand at fixing a variety of broken things

Want a broken item at home mended? Would you like to try your hand at fixing a broken toy?

Or, gain skills in repairing without worrying about failing to get it right?

Be part of the Repair Cafe Chennai in Adambakkam on June 30.

Repairing is a dying skill and it is very much part of our society, but due to consumerism we have developed a throwaway mentality, says a note on the Facebook pages of Repair Cafe Bangalore.

The workshop with repair mentors/enthusiasts will work on electrical toys, small wooden items, bicycles and clothes.

This is a first-of-its-kind work-

shop in Chennai, organised in collaboration with Repair Cafe Collective India to promote a green society that preserves the natural resources for present and future generations, says a note.

This initiative has been made possible thanks to the efforts of several concerned citizens and NGOs, including Badrinath, Mee-na and Arun Kumar, in collaboration with Repair Cafe Bengaluru Team and Home Schooling Group, adds the note.

This environmental effort is a part of the Open Repair Alliance, a global coalition of organisations seeking to make consumer goods more robust and simple to repair.

For details, WhatsApp: 9880712792/9739686665

READERS WRITE

'A stretch of GST Road near airport plunged in darkness'



The stretch of GST Road near the airport on June 21. PHOTO: VELANKANNI RAJ B

A section of GST Road from domestic airport to Pallavaram flyover is plunged in darkness due to non-functional street lights. In addition to danger arising from anti-socials taking advantage of the

darkness and engaging in chain-snatching and other forms of crime, the lack of lighting can cause accidents. From DRDO Office to the flyover, motorists take a right turn. The airport is undergoing a facelift and various other

projects are being carried out across the city under Singara Chennai Scheme but this safety issue near airport is not being addressed.

R.V. Baskaran
Selaiyur

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Asian pied starling adds one more waterbody to its Chennai address list

By the side of the Perumbakkam lake, on Medavakkam-Mambakkam Main Road, there is nesting activity by the species

PRINCE FREDERICK

Like a hernia, Perumbakkam lake pushes through an expanse of land and shows up on Medavakkam-Mambakkam Main Road.

Through the grilled compound that serves as boundary between the road and the lake, a brown tree can be seen. Drained of its sap and lifeless, it supports life, in fact ushers in new life. On this tree, two pairs of “settlers” are raising their young. Asian pied starling pairs have built nests with trademark features – composed of dry grass and twigs, the nests are big and almost rounded. The nervous excitement with which the adult pied starlings enter the nests indicates the presence of chicks, not eggs. During a couple of visits after the rains, one nest appeared abandoned. The other is active, as the image from June 21, 2024 illustrates.

By registering its presence near this waterbody, the Asian pied starling is adding one more page to its expansion story. Ever since it started treating Chennai and its surroundings as home, the species has been adding waterbodies and wetlands and even temporary swamps in the region as its addresses.



▼ Near the lake at Medavakkam-Mambakkam lake.
PHOTO: PRINCE FREDERICK

In 2018, at what was called Ram Nagar swamps in Madipakkam, birder A.M. Aravind sighted the Asian pied starling. A feature of his morning walks, these birds would illus-

trate to him that they were as much of a resident of Madipakkam as he was. Aravind would witness a pair build nests and raise their young at the Ram Nagar swamps. “Eviction”

of the pied starlings from the Ram Nagar swamps – with construction activity, the swamps disappeared – only opened up the city for them. Subsequently, there were sight-

The nervous excitement with which the adult pied starlings enter the nests indicates the presence of chicks

ings of the Asian pied starling in Pallikaranai, as first recorded by birder and Pallikaranai resident Sundarav Palanivel.

“The pair at the Ram Nagar swamps relocated to the Pallikaranai marsh,” says Aravind. There were other pairs that were sighted around the Marsh.

Other notable places of pied-startling sighting include Korratur lake (reported by K.V.R.K Thirunaranan and his team from The Nature Trust) and Nanmangallam lake (reported by birders in the region particularly Jithesh Babu).

“Even in Karapakkam, there had been sightings of the Asian pied starling but without nesting activity,” remarks Aravind.

Unlike the common myna, the Asian pied starling is selective about where it would nest, usually around a waterbody. And the common myna is a hole-nesting species, making it even more dissimilar to the Asian pied starling in terms of nesting philosophy.



▼ The images taken on June 22 show Asian openbill storks, one of them holding a snail, at the Perumbakkam wetland; and a dead catfish at the same patch on June 20. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The patch of Perumbakkam wetland that “lit up” around four weeks ago, is turning verdant, the recent rains assisting the process of transformation in no small measure.

In more ways than one, this patch is providing a microcosmic view of unceasing regeneration that pervades the natural order. In the days following the fire, this patch became the stomping ground of black-winged kites. These birds were feasting on snails burnt to a crisp. The cooked flesh under the

Tracing the circle of life

In a span of four weeks, the burnt patch at Perumbakkam wetland dramatically illustrates the process of death and regeneration inherent in the natural order

shell seemed palatable to them.

The recent rains have brought snails – breathing living snails. With that, Asian openbill storks have increased these presence on this patch. Even when the kites were raiding the patch, the openbill storks were present, but had

retreated into the patches that were not touched by the fire. In contrast, the openbill storks have a taste for snails that are alive; and probably appreciate the adrenaline rush of a successful hunt preceding a breakfast. The species’ bill structure seems designed to

hold snails with poise. During rains, snails proliferate. The fresh water flowing into the Perumbakkam wetland during rains provides the right environment for some snails, particularly the freshwater pila globosa (apple snail) to thrive and fill the land.

Catfish in the picture

Last week’s showers also brought catfish into this patch that is going through a process of renewal. From a distance, one could see them squirming. From an environmental point of view, there is a ready banner against the catfish, an invasive species. From a gastronomical standpoint, there are not many takers for it as it lacks what most taste-buds crave. Daily wage earners reportedly took some to their kitchen. Towards the end of the week, a noticeable number of catfish were found lying dead in the patch.

‘Keep area around garbage transfer station clean’

Six bins are currently positioned outside Independence Day Park at 45th Street in Nanganallur.

While the bins are regularly emptied, the surrounding area is neglected, leading to the proliferation of flies and mosquitoes. Zone 12 (Alandur) of the Greater Chennai Corporation must ensure the garbage transfer station is kept clean.

People urinate behind the bins. Due to the bins and trash around, pedestrians are forced to walk on the road.

Outside the park, trash is dumped on the pavement on 43rd Street and along the intersection of 43rd and 45th Street. Tiles are missing and the area along the pavement is used to park vehicles.

V. Rajesh
Nanganallur



▼ Trash dumped on the pavement outside Independence Day Park.
PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

‘SWD at AGS Colony Fourth Main Road in a derelict state’

The stormwater drain in the image is in disrepair and that is putting it mildly. It is completely damaged and has continued in this state of utter non-functionality for a long time. And it is not situated in a spot away from the glare of public attention, but near the bus stop at AGS Colony Fourth Main Road. As commuters board and alight from buses, they find this broken-down SWD to be in the way. It hinders movement of pedestrians too. One can imagine the serious medical consequences that would follow if a senior loses their footing on account of this SWD and suffers a fall.

It is baffling that the SWD is being stubbornly ignored by those who are responsible for its



maintenance. With intermittent rains lashing the city, Greater Chennai Corporation should have this SWD repaired without further delay.

Venugopalan KV,
AGS Colony, Velachery

‘Decongest stretch near Tambaram terminus’

It is increasingly difficult to take the stretch near Tambaram bus terminus and railway station. Buses and autorickshaws are parked haphazardly. Double parking along with heavy traffic flow makes it difficult for motorists heading to southern pockets of the city.

The State Highways department should explore possibilities of a “carriageway” inside the railway premises at Tambaram to help free flow of vehicles.

R. Arulraj
Church Colony

‘Deploy traffic police personnel on section of GST Road in Alandur’



▼ Motorists negotiating a U-turn area on a section of GST Road at Alandur want traffic police personnel to be deployed there. The U-turn has been facilitated for motorists from Meenambakkam to go to Pazhavanthangal, Nanganallur, Tirusulam and Pallavaram.

V. R. Raman, a motorist, says: “Motorists can take a U-turn when vehicles from Southern Sector Inner Ring Road (SSIRR) and Cement Road enter GST Road towards St. Thomas Mount. However, motorists lack patience and make their way into the traffic flow towards Meenambakkam, increasing the risk of accidents.”

Text by T.S. Atul Swaminathan

New bus route from Kilambakkam

The Metropolitan Transport Corporation has introduced a new route 297 between Kilambakkam - Thiruvallur bus terminuses.

The route number will ply through Thirumudivakkam Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation Limited, Poonamallee bus terminus, Thirumazhisai, and Manavalan Nagar in Thiruvallur.

From Kilambakkam Centenary Bus Terminus, the buses will depart for satellite town at 5 a.m., 7 a.m., 9 a.m., and 11 a.m., 13, 15, 17 and 19 p.m. (hours).

Thiruvallur, 06.45. 09 and 11.05 a.m., 13, 15, 16.55, 19.05 and 21 p.m. (hours).

Workshop on pickle-making

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a culinary workshop on preparation of pickles and pastes on June 27. Another workshop on honey beekeeping will be held on June 28. The sessions will be held at the centre’s premises at Agro Tech Green Park, First Floor, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy. For details, call 044 - 29530048.



Photo used for representational purpose only.

Skill-training courses

Hakkar Bapa Vidyalaya Skill Training Centre is offering courses for widows. Also, admission is on for those who have completed class eight and 10. The courses include electrical, carpentry, wiring, tailoring, mechanical a few more. Spoken English is also part of the course. Breakfast will be provided for the students. According to a press release, the centre also invites unemployed persons who have passed ITI and Diploma courses to register with the centre’s placement cell.

The centre is at No: 58, Venkatanarayana Road, T.Nagar. For details, call 9176624283/ 89397 71592 / 99529 52686.

Yoga classes from June 26



Photo used for representational purpose only.

Satyananda Yoga Centre will conduct a four week Yoga programme from June 26 at Thiruveethi Amman temple, Thiru Veethi Amman Kovil Street, Velachery.

The centre is also conducting a four week Yoga programme from June 27 at Shri Sudarshan Hall terrace, B-2, Lakshmi Nagar Main Road, Nanganallur.

Classes will be held from 5.30 a.m. to 7 a.m. (Monday to Saturday). According to a press release, no fee will be charged. The centre follows the curriculum of Bihar School of Yoga. Sessions on moral values and food habits are also part of the programme.

The centre can be contacted at 8754499334 / 9445051015 / 9841227709.



Goodwill gestures amidst the mess

You know something is amiss, when a helping hand has to reach out far too often. And when a helping hand does reach out often, you know that the milk of human kindness has not run dry. On Global Hospital Road in Perumbakkam, it is needed by the gallons.

On a casual trip, one can encounter people being helped to navigate the parody of a road.

Recently, in a span of a few minutes, this photojournalist encountered two humanitarian acts, necessary to cope with the “pitfalls” waiting on the road.

First Good-Samaritan act: when a woman on a motorcycle with her school-going child in the pillion seat, found the wheels of the vehicle trapped in a slushy pothole, a CMRL traffic marshal rushed to her help.

He was seen pulling the vehicle out to solid ground. In another incident, a traffic policeman was seen placing stones and piking a red flag into the earth to warn motorists of a deep pothole.

Should anything more be said than that this road needs urgent attention?

Text and photos: R. Ravindran



Waiting for a roof



Commuters boarding buses from Nanganallur Second Main Road have requested that the CMRL facilitate a shelter at the haltover. There is enough space to facilitate a shelter with a seating facility. Currently, commuters stand in the open. TEXT: T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

Citizens' group submits petition to Highways seeking removal of encroachments

Members of People's Awareness Association members have made a representation to the State Highways Department to remove encroachments on footpaths at Rajendra Prasad Road in Chromepet-Hasthinapuram,

V. Santhanam, president of the association, says that small businesses and shops have taken over the pavements.

The shops have displayed boards and facilitated vehicular parking on the pavements.

A State Highways Department official said, “The encroachments have been marked. We have asked for police ‘Bandobust’ during the removal drive. Once we are granted permission, the encroachments will be removed soon.”

Text by T.S. Atul Swaminathan



At Rajendra Prasad Road in Chromepet. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Key road in Chitlapakkam remains battered



Chitlapakkam First Main Road. PHOTOS: VELANKANNI RAJ B

T.S ATUL SWAMINATHAN

Chitlapakkam First Main Road is being stubbornly neglected and forced to continue serving motorists with

uneven surfaces and dents. Chitlapakkam resident V. Udaya Utthandi complains that even patchwork has not been carried out.

Wrong-way driving adds to the risk of motoring on this stretch,

which is used to head to East Tambaram, Tambaram Sanatorium, Chromepet, Hasthinapuram, Chitlapakkam, and Sembakkam regions. R. Ram Kumar, a longtime resident of Chitlapakkam,

says, “The rains have worsened the situation.” The intersection of Chitlapakkam First Main Road and Second Main Road along the lake area needs to be widened, adds Utthandi.

MTC issues travel tokens for senior citizens

The Metropolitan Transport Corporation Chennai has started issuing free travel tokens to senior citizens for the period July to December 2024.

Under a scheme introduced in February 2016, those aged 60 and above are eligible for free travel on MTC buses ten times a month.

To apply for tokens and issuance of new identity cards, citizens should submit photocopies of any address proof—ration card, Aadhaar card, driving license, educational certificates and elector’s photo identity card and two colour passport-size photographs.

The tokens will be issued from 8 a.m. to 7.30 p.m. till July 31 in more than 40 bus depots /terminuses across the city.

After July 31, the tokens will be issued in the offices of the depots during working hours.

Is Anna Nagar the ‘study room’ of Chennai?

Study halls are not the sole preserve of this locality, but it does have a lion’s share of them. A horde of civil services coaching centres being located in the same geography is a contributory factor

SANDHYA V

When you take a book to read, invariably the doorbell rings. Or a parent sends you on an errand. Plus the umpteen distractions. Precisely why Civil Services aspirant Siva Sankara Prakash joined a study hall in Anna Nagar near his house. At a monthly fee of around ₹2,000, he got a permanent seat allotted at the centre.

“It is difficult to focus at home. I prefer to study here,” says Prakash, who spends most part of the day at the Prayag Study Hall in Anna Nagar. The ambience at the halls is a major motivating factor. “When everyone around you is studying, guilt kicks in,” says another UPSC aspirant.

Study halls offer the much-needed quiet corner for candidates writing various competitive exams, including Civil Services, TNPSC, NEET and CA. These facilities might exist across Chennai, but they are nowhere as entrenched as in Anna Nagar. A Google search for study halls in Chennai would convince you of that. As the hub of civil services coaching, Anna Nagar provides a fertile ground for entrepreneurship centred around study halls. From a student’s viewpoint, the odds of



A peek into the study halls. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

studying and comparing notes with someone preparing for the same competitive exam are higher at study halls in Anna Nagar than elsewhere. Nivedhitha P., a UPSC aspirant hailing from Karur and presently staying in a hostel, prefers a study hall in Anna Nagar, since it is close to her coaching centre.

‘Fixated on Anna Nagar’

A Perambur resident, who opened a study hall in her area and shut it

owing to lack of patronage, feels students are “fixated” on Anna Nagar. “I offered a study space with a newspaper, magazine and books for a monthly fee of ₹700, but very few turned up.”

Study halls evoke a mixed response among entrepreneurs.

“Business-wise, it is not a sound model,” feels Anand Kumar who too shut his study hall during the pandemic. “We have to invest in cubicles, books and other facilities. A steady flow of mem-

bers is crucial to recovering our investment,” he says.

Deepak Surana, who owns Republic Study Hall in Anna Nagar West, has no such complaints. Suc-

They offer locker facility, WiFi and air-conditioning, charge varying fees for five-hour and eight-hour slots, with members often doubling as staff



cessful candidates often come back to study “in the same lucky seat” for further examinations, he says.

A mixed group

Students apart, interior designers, working professionals and government employees appearing for departmental exams also visit the halls. Martin Amirthraj, in-charge of Republic Study Hall, remembers a member who was never fond of studying. “He used to watch videos and observe people. I asked him what exam he was preparing for,” says Amirthraj. He was a film scriptwriter.

Irrespective of the constituencies making use of them, study halls share certain features. They offer locker facility, WiFi and air-conditioning, charge varying fees for five-hour and eight-hour slots, with members often doubling as staff. A few of the centres have tied up with caterers to provide meals. Some are open at night as well.

Chennai skyline set for an overhaul

Taking effect on March 6 this year, the Tamil Nadu Apartment Ownership Act 2022 has generated considerable interest in redevelopment projects among builders and apartment associations. They are waiting for greater clarity about its provisions



Representational image only. PHOTO: PRINCE FREDERICK

LIFY THOMAS

An old apartment refreshed can solve a multitude of problems. Drabness should give way to colour. Latest construction technologies being on tap, the quality and utility of the structure should improve exponentially. Spaces that seemed constricted might now appear expansive.

The Tamil Nadu Apartment Ownership Act 2022 took effect on March 6, 2024, but builders and apartment associations are still waiting for greater light to be shed

on how it would impact ground realities, particularly redevelopment of apartments.

The Housing and Urban Development Department is yet to spell out the specific rules/ guidelines under the Act.

Among what is clear is that the Act permits redevelopment of apartments that are structurally weak and more than 30 years old, based on consent of two-thirds of owners. Until the Act arrived, concurrence of all the owners was a prerequisite for redevelopment.

"Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India

(CREDAI) members have been part of various stakeholder meetings organised by the Housing Secretary. We have given our suggestions," says S. Sridharan, vice-president south, CREDAI National.

Added amenities

Kruthivas P, executive committee member, CREDAI, says the Tamil Nadu Ownership Act is inspired by the Maharashtra Apartment Ownership Act.

He believes associations of Tamil Nadu Housing Board quarters/flats would likely be the first to take advantage of this Act. In Adyar, Thi-

ruvanmiyur, Besant Nagar, Anna Nagar and Ashok Nagar, associations of TNHB apartments are also in discussions with builders about redevelopment.

For a developer, the attraction in a redevelopment project is the free additional floor space index (FSI) they get, which can be sold to new buyers.

Getting all owners on board is the biggest challenge in redevelopment, and the challenge obviously being high for apartments with a high number of units.

Paperwork-intensive

Vikram Chandiramani, director, Rams Builders, says redevelopment is paperwork-intensive. "Redevelopment gets complicated when each owner wants a different plan. In an apartment on MG Road in Adyar, for instance, each of the

20 owners wanted a different plan and that required readjustments in the design," says Vikram, adding that owners have signed on a redevelopment hoping to get additional space and amenities, and therefore their enthusiasm is justified.

"Redevelopment takes time but it is still lucrative and worth the time for a developer as you are working on prime property in the heart of the city," says Kruthivas of Pushkar Properties, who has redevelopment projects under way in Adyar and Anna Nagar.

Vikram says his company prioritises redevelopment projects involving old customers for the comfort factor the engagement provides.

He elaborates: "In such projects, the documents would be ready, the legal work done, and the homework completed."

Structural assessment

IIT-Madras and College of Engineering Guindy, Anna University offers services to check structural stability of buildings.

"We get quite a lot of requests seeking vetting of structural design and conditional assessment of buildings. Some of these are taken up by individual faculty members and some are referred to the Centre for Urbanisation, Buildings & Environment (CUBE)," says Benny Raphael, professor and head department of Civil Engineering, IIT Madras.

Raised by IIT Madras and Go-

vernment of Tamil Nadu, CUBE functions with Building & Construction, Environment & Sustainability, Smart Cities and Urban Planning & Transportation as four areas of its consultancy services. Says Benny: "The normal life of an apartment/ building is around 50 years. From a sustainability point of view, it is better to extend the life of a building through repairs and retrofitting, and avoid demolition. If structural assessment is carried out when the building shows signs of deterioration, appropriate repair and retrofit actions could be determined."

Building again from the ground up

Getting a buy-in from every owner is the most challenging part of a redevelopment project; here is how two apartment associations went about tackling that challenge

At this 20-unit apartment at Vannandurai in Besant Nagar, five owners initiated the process of getting buy-in from the other owners for a redevelopment plan.

One of the five, Tharak K. says every owner's inputs were taken into account and the committee ensured everybody signed on the joint venture worked out with Rams

Builders.

Though only two decades old, that apartment had developed cracks, was lower than the road level, and its electricity wiring system and sewage had to be overhauled.

Before the demolition began in April 2023, the owners had considerable homework to do.

An expert was called to inspect the building for stability.

"Right from the initial days, we had engaged a lawyer who had experience in joint ventures and helped us through the process which includes drafting the legal provisions and spelling out the rental agreement that each of the owners is paid till the project is completed," says Tharak, adding that the entire process took them less than two years. Another criteria the owners were particular about was that the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) rules were followed. "We waited for approval from RERA before demolition work began. To be doubly sure, we would check on the RERA website

to see if the project details were updated," says Tharak.

The actual JV agreement went through multiple rounds of discussion and negotiation, he says, adding that the RERA format given on its website came in handy.

"I have not received the keys to my house, which is expected to be ready by the end of this quarter. We are however happy with the progress. The director of the company being approachable is a matter of great reassurance for the owners," says Tharak.

Financial stability

When two groups had opposing

views about the choice of the entity to entrust the redevelopment project with, residents decided to work on it separately.

"This was possible as it was two independent blocks of 18 flats each developed by the Tamil Nadu Housing Development in Anna Nagar more than 30 years ago," says S. Muthusami, who is happy that his new home has additional rooms.

He says apart from doing the homework about the developer, studying the financial stability of the venture is necessary.

While work on one of the blocks took three years to be completed, the other took 10 years.

SWD work brings inosculation to light

Self-grafted, a banyan tree and two Indian ash trees stand as one and look upon State Highways' infrastructural work



BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

When the unusual is in plain sight, it usually escapes notice. It often takes unusual circumstances for it to become obvious. It took a massive stormwater drain work on East Coast Road to underline the extent of connectedness shared by three trees pressed together and in time,

not only growing together but growing into one another.

These trees are united in a manner that they share a part of their being with one another. It is a case of inosculation of two Indian ash trees and a banyan tree. Inosculation is natural grafting that occurs when two or more young trees are pressed against one another and continue to grow in that state. The



▼ The self-grafted trees at Injambakkam on ECR.
PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

abrasion of bark that results from this pressing together leads to grafting, actually self-grafting as human hands are far from the scene.

This example of inosculation on ECR had remained hidden from sight until recently when the State Highways Department's stormwater drain work on the arterial road removed the veil over it while knocking down a part of a compound wall.

In the space that serves as parking for vehicles carrying visitors to VGP, largely buses, this inosculation has happened. The trio is "clamped" on both sides of the compound wall. Obviously, the aerial root system of the banyan would have engineered this straddling effect, but the Indian ash trees being intertwined with the banyan and united morphologically, they seem to have orchestrated it together. When entities become a team, individual attributes are distributed among them. The trio is said to be safe as the stormwater drain work would only brush against it. However, the danger of the compound wall being knocked down persists. If the wall is brought down, this trio would come down with it. At the time of this article going to press, this trio was safe.

Graduation ceremony at NIEPMD



The National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD) celebrated its graduation ceremony recently. According to a press release, Justice S. Baskaran, retired Judge, The High Court of Madras, and form-

er Chairperson, State Human Rights Commission, Tamil Nadu was the chief guest. Inspector General Donny Michael, Commander of the Coast Guard Region (East), was the guest of honour and P. Ganesan, Controller of Examinations, Tamil Nadu Teacher Education University was a special guest. They inaugurated the ceremony in the presence of Nachiketa Rout, Director, NIEPMD and other officials.

In his address, the chief guest emphasized the vital role of inclusive education.

About 340 students from Department of Allied Health Sciences and Special Education received their graduation certificates, adds the release.

Socks for diabetic patients

Hogar Diabetic Socks offers various features which are "aimed at foot health with seamless comfort". According to a press release, with "N9 pure silver treatment," Hogar socks will be odour-free and the "mesh construction" keeps the feet dry. The "specialised padded underfoot construction" provides cushioning effect and support, adds the release.

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Super Over clash spices up cricket tourney at OMR360

Title in U14 category goes to Pacifica Aurum; Jains Pebble Brook is winner in the women's category. At 40- points, Hiranandani Upscale tops the table in the overall rankings

VANAJAKKSHI N

FOMRRA's OMR360 has been steadily gaining momentum, and last week, the event reached new heights with cricket coming in to the picture.

Two cricket tournaments were held at the Smash N Kick turf in PBEL City, Kelambakkam: one for women over 15 and another for children under 14. The soft green ball tournament culminated in thrilling finales that kept spectators on the edge of their seats.

U14 cricket tourney

The U14 category had a unique blend of players with four boys and two girls competing from each participating team. Overall, 11 teams' communities participated in this category.

The Ocean Breeze team batted first and were struggling from the beginning by losing quick wickets and could not score much in the stipulated five overs. They were restricted for just 17 runs, which is slightly over a fifty percent run rate. This led to the audience speculating that Pacifica Aurum would lift the trophy at ease. But, the game did not give the credits to the speculating audience. The Ocean Breeze team was supported by a very strong bowling alley leading to the Pacifica Aurum team losing wickets as fast as their opponents.

The game diverted to a stage of Pacifica Aurum having to score 3 runs off the last over. Ocean Breeze was leading with one run during the last ball that gave them a great opportunity to win the game. Yet, they succumbed to pressure and misfielded, which played to the advantage of the Pacifica Aurum



The winning teams and the points table. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

team, enabling them to run across the crease to level the scores. This led to the teams playing to a super over to declare the winning team.

The strong players from each team were in the battle field. This time again, the Ocean Breeze team batted first, but scored just 2 runs, backed by a superb catch by the Pacifica Aurum wicket keeper. Pacifica Aurum team batted next and surpassed the super over score

with ease, emerging as the winner of the event.

Women's cricket

From the very first match, the tournament was a whirlwind of excitement. Star players from five teams participated in this category.

The final match was particularly intense. Hiranandani was the strongest team in the lot and the team dominated every single

TOP 10		
1	HIRANANDANI UPSCALE	40
2	JAIN'S PEBBLE BROOK	37
3	PRESTIGE COURTYARDS	35
4	OCEAN BREEZE	20
5	MANTRI SYNERGY	18
6	GEM GROVE	17
7	PACIFICA AURUM	16
8	VAIKUND SUNDARAM	15
9	INCOR PBEL CITY	8
10	TVH TAUS	5

match that they played before reaching the finals. They were backed by strong support from fellow residents from their community. The second finalist, Jains Pebble Brook started low on energy, as unlike other participating teams they did not have their neighbours to cheer them on. But they took one match at a time, motivating themselves, eventually ensuring that their berth in the finals was reserved.

Teams battled fiercely, strategising every ball, every run, and every wicket. The fielding was top-notch, and the bowlers delivered some of the most memorable spells. The match ended with Jains Pebble Brook lifting the trophy followed by a strong chase from Hiranandani Upscale.

On the cards: chess

Over 200 players have shown in-

terest in chess tournament, organised by Star Chess Academy in partnership with OMR360. The tournament will use the Swiss system format, allowing for a large field of participants to compete in a balanced, multi-round experience. Players will follow FIDE rules. There is no age limit. Registrations close on June 27, 2024. Check out @OMR360event on all major social media channels for details. The tournament is hosted at Appaswamy Splendour, Semmanchery from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on June 29.

Throwball tourney

Throwball tournament for women would be held on June 30 at Jain's Pebble Brook in Thoraipakkam. Each team consists of 6 players (plus 3 substitutes).

Registrations

To register for chess and throwball and other events scheduled next week and beyond, login to www.omr360.in/registration. Visit @omr360event page on Instagram and other social media channels for details.

OMR 360 is made possible by sponsorship from Dr. Kamakshi Memorial Hospital and in partnership with Decathlon, City Celebration Partner - The Hindu, Marina Mall, WasteWinn, KYN - The Hyperlocal App, Big FM and others.

Gymnastics challenge today

As part of Wellness Weekend, OMR360 offers "Gymnastics Challenge" as well as free yoga sessions at Fionis Crossfit in Navalur (near Navalur toll gate). On June 23, a free yoga session will be held between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. and the gymnastics challenge in U10 and U12 categories between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m., both at the same venue.

OMR360's invitation to storytellers

OMR360's short story contest is for seasoned writers and those new to the craft – in short, it is open to all, for anyone who would love to tell a story in the written format and also present the written story before an audience. Original short stories should be submitted, and not any that has been previously published in any form. And the story can be in any genre – from fantasy to mystery to romance to anything else. Only that the story (based on any of the four themes given below) should be set primarily in and around OMR gated communities. OMR must be mentioned at least once in your script. It is optional to mention the society's name. The participant can use fictitious

names for the characters, society and landmarks. Here are the four themes participants can choose to write on.

1. You are the oldest tree in your gated community. Write a story based on your sights of a bonding between two characters over a while.

2. The smell wafting from a neighbour's kitchen is making your mouth water. You had an ugly face-off with that neighbour quite recently. Write a story based on an incident that helped you both patch up.

3. Your main character is typically a grumbler who finds issues in everything within the gated community and is always at loggerheads with the Management Com-

mittee. Write a story set in the times of the pandemic and how the gated community made him change his outlook in those difficult times.

4. The management committee of a housing society has a "No bachelor's" rule while letting out flats for rent. However, one of the owners, a non-resident, allows his son to occupy their flat with a couple of other college mates. Write a story about how these three youngsters, with their exuberance, made the gated community vibrant, and the MC abolished this rule.

Entries should be emailed to story@omr360.in
Maximum Words: 1000 (+/-10)
Language: English
Age group: No restrictions

Submission Guidelines: Participants may submit one story per topic; however, each submission must be registered separately.

Register on www.omr360.in/registration
Last date of submission: 30 June, 2024

The overall scores for both the written submission and the presentation will determine the winner.

The top five writers shall present the story on stage to the judges on July 6, 2024. According to the OMR360 organising committee, OMR reserves the right to use the winning and selected entries for promotional and marketing purposes, including publishing or featuring the stories in print or digital formats. The rule book for the short story contest carries a disclaimer: The writer is fully responsible for the incident around

which the story is set, which may be based on actual incidents. The organisers shall not be responsible for any fallout or controversies between individuals or with any associations. This event is purely intended to promote writing hobbies as part of the OMR 360 initiative

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