

IT CORRIDOR

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KNOW YOUR PARK



A tour of a park at Narayanaswamy Nagar Main Road in Sholinganallur. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

An inviting green space

Kandan, the gardener, keeps this park of modest dimensions on Narayanaswamy Nagar in Sholinganallur tidy, and ensures the containers meant for composting garden waste are kept busy

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The tendency to periodically measure the success of any exercise, even one that has barely begun, is a differentia that sets homo sapiens apart from the other members of the taxonomic kingdom *animalia*. It is particularly true of a human engaging in physical exercise for the first time. Fifteen minutes into a walking regimen undertaken for the first time ever, one might pinch the midriff flab to see if it has vanished. It is not enough for us to walk, but to know how much we have walked. Ten

thousand steps if you are perambulating. Five miles if you are cycling. Markers of progress are essential for humans to stay on course. A quaint little park on Narayanaswamy Nagar Main Road in Sholinganallur meets this need.

Of modest dimensions, this park established in 2015 could not have found a better location. A ration shop is its next-door neighbour: it is convenient for residents to shop for essentials at the ration outlet and give their body another essential – a burst of brisk walking at this park. This park is just a sniffing distance away from the point where

this road meets the busy Nedunchezian Salai, a part of which is lined by the compound wall of the Infosys office.

Its location clearly encourages patronage. Besides, intrinsic factors that draw people to the park are its tidiness, thanks to the gardener and caretaker Kandan's diligence. Besides keeping the park well-swept, he ensures the concrete ring-containers are occupied, regularly scooping green waste into it. Other highlights of the park are the neatly placed benches.

A banyan tree in the front serves as a facade. This banyan tree is not



far from two other banyans, humongous and wide-reaching – one stands bang on the junction of Nedunchezian Salai and Kumaraswa-

my Nagar Main Road, and the other is found on the premises of a temple nearby. The images were taken on April 15, 2025.

Citizens group to meet on April 27

The Chennai Metropolitan House/Flat Owners' Welfare Association is conducting its 20th annual general body meeting April 27 at No: 986, Dr. Lakshmanasamy Salai, K.K.Nagar. Time: 3 p.m. "This is a 20-year-old association which takes up civic issues across the 200 Wards of the Greater Chennai Corporation. It has got 950 members," says P. Muthukrishnan, the association's general secretary.

For details, call 9444208121

Inviting applications for 'Art for Hope'

Hyundai Motor India Foundation (HMIF), the CSR arm of Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL), has announced the fifth season of its flagship art initiative - 'Hyundai art for hope'. The programme has become a transformative platform for emerging artists, enabling creative expression and fostering inclusive cultural growth, said a release.

In this season, HMIF will support 50 talented artists and art collectives from across India with financial grants, professional mentorship, and a national stage to showcase their work. A total of 40 grants of ₹ 1 lakh each for individuals and teams, including persons

with disabilities, will be given. Another 10 grants of ₹ 2 lakh each for art collectives and institutions, said a release.

Over the past four seasons, 'Art for Hope' has directly benefited over 150 artistes with ₹ 1.65 crore in grants, and supported over 25,000 artists through workshops, exhibitions, and skill-building opportunities, said a release.

Artists can apply on hyundaiartforhope.com and submit their project nominations. Key details about the initiative can also be viewed on the website. Artists can reach out to contactus@hyundaiartforhope.com for further information about this initiative.

When the stints find the spotlight



When the wintering season kicks in, the stints would be as inconspicuous as stars on a night sky pregnant with rain clouds. They would look toned-down and in wetlands such as the one at Perumbakkam and Kelambakkam, they would be shoved further into obscurity on account of their immediate company, having been outsized by other waders. At the tail-end of the season, when the attendance of migratory birds at these wetlands thins, they find their spotlight. Without the distractions, they are now more easily noticed. Besides, the washed-out look at the start of the season disappears in parts -- particularly on the mantle that takes on a russet hue. The picture shows a Temminck's stint at the Kelambakkam backwaters at a low-tide hour on April 18, 2025. PHOTO: PRINCE FREDERICK

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Speed breakers sought in U-turn area

Weeks ago, a traffic change was effected at the Madhya Kailash junction to facilitate the construction of an overpass on Sardar Patel Road in Adyar.

Motorists from Adyar, proceeding towards Guindy and Little Mount, have to enter Rajiv Gandhi Salai and take a U-turn near Central Polytechnic College. As many motorists plough into the U-turn area with reckless speed, the risk of collisions is high. H. Sabari Hariharan, a motorist, says, "Speed-breakers should be laid near the U-turn area; it would affect the traffic flow, but also reduce the risk of accidents. Besides, TNRDC should level the U-turn area. The Guindy lane is at a lower level than the Taramani lane. When motorists take a U-turn speedily, they can lose control and cause accidents."

Text by T.S. Atul Swaminathan



Due to unruly movement of vehicles, an accident is often just an acceleration away in this U-turn area on Rajiv Gandhi Salai. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Greening effort on Padur bypass road



For a considerable part of the Padur to Kelambakkam Bypass Road, one would be greeted with wilting plants encased in tree guards. There is a sudden change in the scenery now when one hits the section of the road where Poonthangal lake is located. There is sign of a fresh greening exercise, as this image from April 18, 2025 shows. One hopes the row of saplings found on each side, is well-tended. PHOTO: PRINCE FREDERICK

A work in progress: Red Line taking shape

On CMRL's Red Line duty, two metal arms are at work on Perumbakkam Main Road, focussed on the creation of a concrete arm. One metal arm is that of personnel forklift; the other, the longer one, conveys concrete mix through its "cephalic vein" to the "beneficiary", a platform arm atop a Red Line pillar. The image was taken in the twilight hour on April 14, 2025. PHOTO: PRINCE FREDERICK



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Greater Chennai Corporation's new guidelines for managing construction and demolition waste comes into effect on April 21. Here are the salient features



C&D waste collection centres in GCC limits

- Zone 1** - Buckingham Canal Road, Sathangadu, Thiruvottiyur (Adjacent to lorry station, Zone-1)
- Zone 2** - Kamaraj Salai (Near zonal office)
- Zone 3** -CMDA Truck Terminal near Night Shelter (Behind Madhavaram Bus Terminus)
- Zone 4** -Kodungaiyur Dumping ground, Tondiarpet High Road (3rd gate)\
- Zone 5 and 6** -Part of old Cattle depot, Avadhanam Pappier Road, Choolai (opposite Corporation School)
- Zone 7** -Vanagaram Road, Athipet dumping yard
- Zone 8** -1st Main Road, Shenoy Nagar (Near Gajalakshmi Colony)
- Zone 9** -Lloyds Colony (Near Corporation ITI Institute)
- Zone 10** -Gurusiva Street, S.M Block, Jafferkanpet, Kodambakkam (near R-10 MGR Nagar Police Station)
- Zone 11** -Nolambur Phase II, 2nd main road (near Madhuravoyal Taluk office)
- Zone 12** -Nandambakkam TPF near Adyar river bund in Division 158
- Zone 13** -Arulampatti 2nd street (near SIDCO Electronics commercial complex)
- Zone 14** -200 Ft Radial Road, Perungudi Dumping Ground
- Zone 15** -Gangaiamman Kovil Street Extension, Karapakkam (near Tamil Nadu Teacher Education University)

Putting C&D waste in its place

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

From April 21, Greater Chennai Corporation will levy a fine of ₹ 5000 if one is found dumping construction and demolition waste on streets, pavements, drains, public spaces, vacant sites or any other unauthorised location.

Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste includes debris and rubble resulting from construction, re-modeling, repair and demolition operations. Steel, aluminium, wood and other components cur-

rently being salvaged for reuse or recycling are not included in this category.

GCC in its revised guidelines insists that "occupiers" generating small quantities of C&D waste during repair or minor renovation shall keep the waste within their own premises until collection by their own means or by GCC-authorised C&D waste transporters or empanelled vendors or lorry owners authorised by GCC to collect waste from door steps.

The occupiers can contact GCC's website for hiring services of

the C&D waste transporters or empanelled vendors or the authorised concessionaires and pay necessary collection and transportation charges to transporters and pay for processing fee, says the note.

What kind of a generator are you and where should you dump C&D waste?

Anyone generating less than 1 MT of waste generate from minor house repairs comes under the category of "micro generators". This waste can be disposed of in earmarked dumping sites or one can call GCC's toll free number 1913 for

a pick-up.

Those generating C&D waste during building renovation, remodelling or repairing where the total weight is more than 1 MT and less than 20 MT per day comes under "Small Generators". The two processing centres that will be taking such waste are at the dumpyards at Perungudi and Kodinguyur.

A receipt has to be obtained for disposal from the transport service provider or the gate office of the disposal site where C&D waste is disposed of by the micro generators.

Spotting an opportunity in the debris

LIFFY THOMAS

What becomes of the construction and demolition (C&D) waste dumped at the dumpyards in Perungudi and Kodungaiyur? They make a major source for C&D recycling companies, even for non-profits that are into constructing affordable houses.

In February 2024, Habitat for Humanity, a global non-profit organisation with an office at IIT-M Research Park, constructed a multi-purpose hall at a village school in Kancheepuram using C&D waste.

"We followed benchmarks and standards set by Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council of India. We used M-sand

along with C&D waste to make the concrete mix. The sand was first tested to make blocks out of it. Both the blocks and the concrete went into the construction of a multi-purpose hall within the school," says Deepak Visvanathan, senior technical advisor, Habitat for Humanity.

The company builds affordable homes and works with start-ups to see how this engineering technology can be promoted to construct resource and energy-efficient buildings.

C&D waste for the hall was sourced from the Perungudi dumpyard. "We have partnered with Greater Chennai Corporation to explore other products that can be made with such waste," says Visvanathan adding that they have also been conduct-

ing round tables to educate people about recycling C&D waste.

In various cities, experimental projects to rebuild homes for the underprivileged using construction debris and used materials have been taken up.

Surender Singh, associate professor, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Madras, says they have been working with government bodies to encourage use of different C&D waste fractions in road construction, especially for the upper pavement layers.

"Three to five layers are applied while constructing concrete roads in highways. In most cases, the contractor uses C&D waste for the lower layer, which we call non-structural application," says the professor.

Earlier, the Bureau of Indian

Standards allowed the usage of C&D waste in construction by up to 25%.

"Our studies at IIT Madras show that even 100% recycled aggregates from waste concrete chunks could be used for constructing concrete roads without affecting their performance in a significant manner. Subsequently, they proposed to increase their usage limit to at least 50%; and roads constructed with such materials are sustainable," he says.

Researchers from IIT-Madras (professors Manu Santhanam, Ravindra Gettu, and Surender Singh) are currently working on an international project sponsored by the Indo-German Science and Technology Centre to show how C&D waste can be

used in making roads on expressways and national highways. "The pilot study of this project will be implemented in Chennai and Ladakh. In Chennai, we plan to take up a test-section that is exposed to a lot of wear and tear due to the movement of vehicles," says the professor.

Despite such initiatives contributing to a circular economy, recycling C&D waste is still not seen as a viable business opportunity.

Surender Singh says the cost of procuring construction waste is high. Deepak Visvanathan feels governments must offer more incentives to encourage private companies to find opportunities in this sector. "There must be some motivation for a real estate company to buy this waste," says Visvanathan.



Local connections *matter in* sustainability

Greater Chennai Corporation's micro composting centre in Pudupet maintains a "cordial" relationship with its neighbours



BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The micro composting centre at Veerabadran Street in Pudupet is on "amicable" terms with its neighbours and that is what keeps it going.

From the horse stables at the Mounted Police facility on nearby Adithanar Salai (also known as Harris Road), it receives horse dung, on an average, 200 kg every day. And its immediate neighbour, the Greater Chennai Corporation's cow shed (one meant for keeping impounded stray cattle) provides it with cow dung.

This Greater Chennai Corporation micro composting centre, run by the voluntary organisation Namma Ooru Foundation and reportedly established with CSR funding from IOCL Southern Pipes Region, successfully looks around its immediate surroundings for material to feed the machines ahead of the composting process.

P. Natarajan, founder of Namma Ooru Foundation, remarks that there is a profusion of tea shops, fresh fruit shops and fast food joints in this area, and the relevant refuse from these shops are taken in for composting.

"From 12 tea shops, we source tea powder waste. We get egg shells from the fast food shops and fruit waste from the fruit shops, coconut waste and sugarcane waste from vendors selling tender coconut and sugarcane juice – all from Harris Road and nearby areas."

With its thriving second-hand automobile spares market, this road bustles with movement of people and these shops thrive by catering to the floating population.

That is hardly an exhaustive list – there are other neighbours, only a



little removed in terms of geographical coordinates.

Natarajan notes that brown matter (garden waste) was being collected from WCC and DPI for two to three months; and as they are relatively further in distance, the switch was made to collecting the same from police quarters and police museum.

Green matter (vegetable waste) comes from a bunch of markets nearby: Pudupet market, Chinthathripet market, Zam bazaar market, Avai Shanmugam Salai market, Triplicane market and Fresh today supermarket.

Besides, apartments that want to manage their waste responsibly send their organic matter.

Natarajan says compost derived from various sources of organic matter is bound to have high nutrition.

He adds: "IIT Madras tests the compost produced at this micro composting centre and provides a report on the carbon nitrogen ratio and other nu-

tritions in the compost. The compost is being sold to various districts of Tamil Nadu, including Thanjavur, Dindugal, Madurai, Kanchipuram and Thiruvallur."

A tour of the processes at the micro composting centre in Pudupet.

PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

'Travel' on these mini trains

To celebrate World Heritage Day, Chennai Rail Museum in Villivakkam will play host to collectors and designers of scale-model trains and railroads from April 25 to 27. On all three days, the event will be open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. *The Hindu Downtown* spoke to some of the participants about this niche hobby

LIFFY THOMAS

An expensive hobby

For the first time, 72-year-old Sundaram Parthasarathi will be showcasing a running model of the Vande Bharat Express done to scale. An enthusiastic collector of train models, Sundaram is into this hobby for 35 years. Last year, he showcased the Chennai Metro Rail. A few years ago, Sterling Resorts commissioned a project, which he was on board; he partnered with another expert to design the Nilgiri Mountain Railway for one of their properties.

His railway exhibits are handmade. "I do not buy accessories such as signals and station buildings. I make them



myself," he says, adding that a few of the tracks are computerised.

His 20x10 feet, U-shaped room at his house in Abhira-

mapuram is his lab where he experiments with train scale models for hours.

During Navarathri, his train models are a showstopper. At

other times of the year, he welcomes schools to take a look at the railway exhibits.

A mechanical engineer by profession, Sundaram warmed up to the hobby during a visit to The United Kingdom.

"The company sent me to the U.K. in 1986 and that is when I seriously started collecting train models. During weekends, I used to buy second hand items," says Sundaram, who retired as special director from Ashok Leyland in 2013.

He agrees this is an "expensive hobby" but it is a special joy when you are in the company of 60 others (referring to the WhatsApp group with members spread across India and from a few other countries) exchanging notes on the finer aspects of this pursuit.

A lifetime pursuit



"Technical but interesting". That is how K.R.S. Ganesan describes the model that he will be showcasing while takes this reporter on a virtual tour of his Ashok Nagar house to show what he is currently working on. The hall has been converted into a work station. The control system is in another room. Many other enabling items required to complete the exhibit are parked in other rooms.

The fully automated layout on a HO scale is being designed using Train-Controller software. "It is a totally hands free operation with automatic control. All scheduling and stops are set," says Ganesan, a civil engineer. He explains visitors will be shown how a slow train is stopped at a loop line and then a fast train overtakes it.

Due to limited space, the train enthusiast will be arranging his exhibit in a 24x8 space at the venue.

Although fascinated with trains from a young age, it was just before retirement that he got started with the hobby. "I had eight engines and 200 feet track in 2013," says Ganesan, who retired as senior deputy general manager from L&T. Rolling stock like goods wagons and passenger coaches together added to more than 30 over the years.

"I am keen on designing operational layouts to show signals and time of start/stop functions and schedules using Train Controller software," he says.

In 2018, he completed a large layout in a hall of 40 x 15 incorporating several operational features using this software. Model railroading is an activity of constant improvement and learning. "A hobby that can last a lifetime," he adds.

On the right track

Seventy-year-old C.B. Malhotra, known as Shyam in this hobby circle, is undecided what he will be showcasing in the upcoming exhibition.

Last year was the first time Shyam took part in the Heritage Train Model Exhibition, though he is into this hobby for two decades.

"That sparkle in the eyes of children when they see our trains running is more satisfying than collecting models or running them," says the resident of George Town.

Shyam's love for train models started during his childhood. His father had the habit of getting him a gift after the final examination. "I would ask for a train," says Shyam.

Later, he saw a working model and the bug bit him. Shyam started the hobby in 1999 when he was in his 40s.

"When I got started on the hobby, I would go to second hand markets and that is where I came

across a few people and that bond grew," he says the hobby is addictive, often leading to spend continuous hours on it.

For parents trying to wean their children from gadgets, he offers wise counsel: "Make sure you provide your children with exposure to as many hobbies as possible," says the businessman, adding that a childhood hobby could be good company and a small source of income as well.

Full steam ahead



The shrill whistle, the fuming boilers and the billowing plumes of steam. Never mind if you and your generation have not seen steam locomotive engines, Mahendra Kumar (who is from a generation that has) can recreate them for you.

"My dad used to take me to railway stations just for me to watch the engines and during one such outing, I got to see a steam engine," recalls Mahendra, a HR manager.

His fascination for trains was further fuelled during annual visits to the Island Grounds where the trade fair was organised and Integral Coach Factory had a

stall where they would showcase running train models.

Many years later in 2018, a trip to Darjeeling reignited this fascination. Since then, Mahendra has been collecting scale models. Today "HO" "Double O" and "G" scale models top his collection followed by a small number of "N" scale models.

At the exhibition, the Anna Nagar resident will be showcasing his collection of steam-based locomotives and train buses.

A member of HO Scale Collectors Group, the HR professional, who also has a collection of automobile models, says invitation to the group is only through reference.



Medical equipment donated to hospital in Taramani



Rotary Club of Madras T. Nagar donated medical equipment worth ₹1.27 crore to Voluntary Health Services, Taramani.

According to press release, the instruments include anaesthesia workstation and patient monitor for the neurosurgery department;

cell counter and blood transfusion support for children with Thalassemia to Thalassemia Transfusion Centre Department and microscope with binocular optics and digital imaging system to the ophthalmology department.

Workshop on restoring stained glass windows

A workshop on conservation and restoration of stained glass windows will be conducted by Hepzibah Institute of Heritage Conservation and Research Academy from May 1 to 15 at St. George's Cathedral Church, Cathedral Road.

The workshop will comprise

theory and practical lessons connected with stained glass windows. Subjects such as design and pattern creation, creating patterns, material selection and glass cutting techniques will be taught. Only 20 participants will be admitted for this free workshop, and selection will be on first come first serve basis; some preference will be given to those with a knowledge of heritage conservation. For details, WhatsApp 9381008253

Culinary workshop

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University is conducting a culinary workshop on making sun-dried ready-to-fry snacks on April 24. According to a press release, the items will be made from chillies, potatoes, berries, and a few more. Another workshop on making soaps will be held on April 25. The session will focus on soaps made from extracts of herbs and fruits. Both the sessions will be held at Agro Tech Green Park, First Floor, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy. For details, call 044 - 29530048

Inviting nominations for Nursing Excellence Award

Ahead of International Nurses Day, observed on May 12 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, TwinTech Healthcare Academy invites nominations for the Nursing Excellence Award 2025.

This award seeks to recognise the dedication, compassion, and

service of nursing professionals across government and private hospitals in Tamil Nadu who are at the forefront of patient care, said a release. To participate one should not have received this award in any of the previous editions, should have a minimum of 10 years of continuous experience in direct pa-

tient care and must be currently employed in a hospital (government or private) in Tamil Nadu.

Nomination forms and other details can be downloaded from www.chennaitwintech.com Alternatively, to receive the nomination link, send a WhatsApp message to: +91 97104 85295



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‘Say No to Plastic Bags’ drive launched in RA Puram

Vendors outside the temple are provided with paper bags; devotees are urged to bring cloth bags

GANGA SRIDHAR

EcoKconnectors Trust together with Raja Annamalaipuram Residents Association (RAPRA) launched the “Say No To Plastic” campaign at the Sidhhi Buddhi Vinayakar temple in RA Puram recently.

Dr. Chandrashekhar and Ravi Kumar of RAPRA started the campaign by meeting the devotees outside the temple and requesting them to avoid accepting plastic bags for *archanai* and to bring their cloth bags.

The team from EcoKconnectors trust KL Bala Balasubramanian, Sumithra and Ganga Sridhar met the vendors outside the temple and created the awareness.

At the launch of the campaign, paper bags made by students of V-excel sponsored by RAPRA were distributed to the vendors to use instead of plastic bags with a humble request to devotees to bring their own bags when coming to the temple henceforth.

EcoKconnectors also requests the temple management to wholeheartedly support this eco-friendly initiative by helping spread the message through posters and an advisory to the devotees visiting the temple.

All are requested to join the campaign and spread the message to a wider audience and motivate people to bring their own bags when visiting their regular place of worship.

The ideal solution to this would be strong enforcement from Greater Chennai Corporation to stop the use of thin plastic bags by the vendors and stopping the manufacture of thin plastic



products.

Meanwhile, public awareness is to be raised by such community initiatives so that they can avoid the use of plastic bags out of their own will.

Each plastic bag avoided is one step towards a safer and cleaner Earth.

(Ganga Sridhar is a member of Mandaveli Raja Street Welfare Association)



During the campaign. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Earth Day fete next Sunday in Mandaveli

RK Nagarra and EcoKconnectors are celebrating International Earth Week on 27 April at OSR park, RK Nagar in Mandaveli (behind Raga Malika Apartment). The programme will unspool from 4.30 p.m. onwards. The bill of fare includes two workshops, one by Munnetram Trust on ‘Bio-enzyme, Perfume Sachet and Sambrani making’ and the other by Bisleri CSR on ‘Plastic Recycling’.

A Greening Activity will be organised for participants.

The programme would conclude with an awards presentation programme. Awards will be given on three categories: EK - Driving Forces, EK - HelpHER Energisers and Eco Warriors.

JCE celebrates graduation day

More than 600 graduates from various disciplines received their degrees during Jerusalem College of Engineering’s 25th and 26th Graduation Day ceremony, which was recently held.

The college also recognised 53 academic rank holders for their consistent dedication and exemplary performance throughout their studies.

Ramesh S., Principal of JCE, presented a comprehensive report highlighting the institution’s achievements over the year.

Professor T.G. Sitharam, Chairman of the All India Council for



Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi, was the chief guest.

In his address, he congratulated the graduates, especially the achievements of women graduates, emphasising that the occasion marked not just an end but the beginning of a new chapter filled with opportunities.

He spoke about the responsibility and innovative spirit that

should define every engineering graduate, urging them to do whatever they do with passion and to pursue their dreams with dedication and integrity.

He stressed the need for students to continuously upskill, especially in rapid technological advancements, including the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools and digital transformation.

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