

## 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



### STAGGERED 'WORK HOURS' AT MUTTUKADU

When a mudflat emerges from the waters during low tide, the response is never uniform. When this happens, pelagic birds — the gulls and terns — see the advent of the weekend: a time to laze away **P6**



### IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO STITCH UP A NEW CAREER

Two retired special educators brush up on their crocheting and tatting skills and kickstart an enterprise **P5**

## Thiruneermalai residents seek a permanent PDS outlet



The existing PDS outlet

### T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

**R**esidents of Thiruneermalai want the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation to open a new Public Distribution System (PDS) outlet in the region.

At present, the PDS outlet for the region functions from an old rented building on Kumarasamy Street in Lakshmiapuram. There are 1,800 card holders attached to this outlet and they are from areas such as Ranga Nagar, Saraswathipuram, Saraswathipuram Extension, Temple Town, Subburayan Nagar, NSK Street, Parvathipuram, Sripuram, Soundraammal Street and Jain Housing.

Residents say the neighbourhood's population has grown and will continue to grow at an exponential rate, and there is a need to open a new outlet. Currently, the PDS outlet is located in a cramped little space.

B. Saravanan, a resident and a social activist, says: "The cardholders have no option but to stand in the open."

During the recent rains, the provisions stocked in the outlet got wet due to water seepage through the walls and could not be used.

Residents suggest that an Open Space Reservation (OSR) land in any of these areas (Saraswathipuram, Temple Town and Subburayan Nagar) can be used for the construction of a PDS outlet.

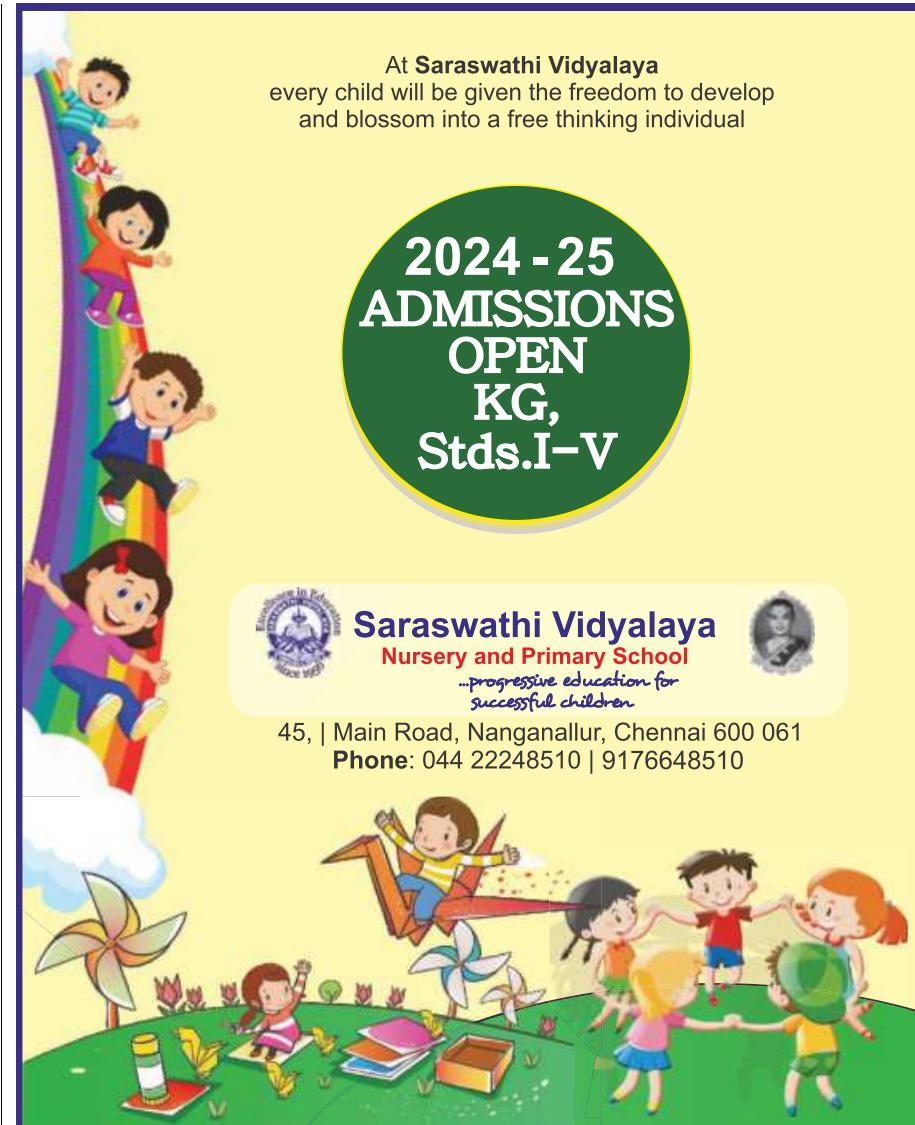
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DEEPAM EYE HOSPITALS: URAPAKKAM | AVADI | THIRUVALLUR

## Rajakilpakkam residents shift allegiance to a new park

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

**G**. Lakshmi Narayanan has stopped going to the park at Saraswathi Nagar in Rajakilpakkam. A favourite hangout for many senior citizens like him for years, they have shifted their loyalty to another green space, Ayyan Thiruvalluvar Park in VGP Srinivasa Nagar.

A section of senior citizens note the parks in Rajakilpakkam could be maintained better.

With uncleared garbage, the Saraswathi Nagar park is noticeably in a state of neglect. The walking space and the play equipment area are littered and overrun with plants. Residents say the park becomes an open bar after sunset thanks to the fact that lights are not working. The benches are either slanting or have developed cracks.

V. Seetharaman, secretary of the Federation of Rajakilpakkam Residents' Welfare Association, says, "The park does not have a caretaker (security guard) and drinking water facility."

The park at VGP Srinivasa Nagar could be maintained better, say residents. Residents cleaned the park in December 2023, but due to lack of consistent cleaning, it is not looking its best now, says Lakshmi Narayanan.



▼ The remains of a tree felled by Tambaram Corporation at Ayyan Thiruvalluvar Park; broken play equipment; and a view of the park at Saraswathi Nagar.



### No authorised parking contractor at Tambaram Sanatorium

**T**ambaram Sanatorium (West) railway station parking lot operates without a contractor. It was only in September 2023 that Southern Railway had identified a person to oversee the parking area, which draws hundreds of vehicles from nearby areas.

According to residents, for more than a week, there is no parking attendant on the spot and as a result of this, vehicles are at risk for theft.

The eastern section of the parking area is full, with vehicles parked on the pavement of Chitlapakkam Second Main Road.

Many commuters have time and again complained that the parking

area has poor amenities. They want vegetation to be cleared and trash removed.

P. Aravindhan, secretary of Sundaram Colony Residents' Welfare Association, Tambaram Sanatorium (West), says, "The contractor should be appointed at the earliest or commuters will start parking the vehicles on Station Border Road and First Street."

There is a hospital at Sri Ram Colony, Tambaram Sanatorium. During an emergency, the ambulance drivers will find it difficult to negotiate Station Border Road if vehicles are parked there.

*Text: T.S. Atul Swaminathan*



### On the wrong side of safety



▼ One will see vehicles moving in all directions at this junction of Vembuliamman Kovil Street, Velachery Main Road and Guruswamy Nagar Main Road in Gowrivakkam.

Motorists drive on the wrong lane towards Sembakkam to avoid a U-turn near Guruswamy Nagar Main Road and to enter the lane towards Santoshpuram and Vengaivasal Main Road.

M. Padma Muthuraman, a college student, says, "The section lacks pavement and pedestrians are at risk as motorists drive on the wrong side." The junction has an educational institution, and students walk towards Gowrivakkam and Santoshpuram halting points. The junction needs a pedestrian signal. *Photos & text by T.S. Atul Swaminathan*

### You can be our volunteer-writer

Dear readers, you can be our volunteer-writer by writing to us about issues and events in your neighbourhood.

You should send the write-ups to downtown feedback@ thehindu.co.in. Letters must carry the postal address and contact number.

# STATUS REPORT



A tour of major roads after the January 7-8 showers



(clockwise from top) A battered road in Perumbakkam; the Tambaram section of GST Road; and Velachery Road in Tambaram East on January 8. PHOTOS: SRINATH M

## Evoking the pastoral air of Pongal at a gated community

Ceebros Culture Club at Ceebros Boulevard, a gated community in Thoraipakkam, organised a host of events to usher in the Pongal spirit.

The celebrations kicked off with a traditional *kolam* competition based on Pongal themes. The contest was followed by traditional open-air Pongal making, bullock cart rides, *uri addi*, tug of war; and a *kummi* dance by women.

The highlight of the day was a splendid folk dance performance by a renowned artiste. She performed the dance juggling the hula loop with fire ends, and that was followed by a peacock dance. The tapping of the dancers' feet was in time to beats of Thara Thappattai.





The junction on Mambakkam-Medavakkam Main Road on January 8. Photos: Prince Frederick

## No more patchworks on this patch

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**A** junction at Mambakkam - Medavakkam Road presents an earthy analogue of lunar craters caused by impact. Management of these “craters” being marked by *ad-hocism*, the ensuing relief has always been short-lived.

This junction on Mambakkam-Medavakkam Main Road includes Babu Nagar Third Main Road and Annai Kasturba Gandhi Street. Increased volume of vehicles and their continual movement have turned this junction into something of a moonscape.

The half measures taken to fill the holes, fractures and depressions are just that: half measures that go only half the way towards addressing the issue.

Ever since vehicular traffic (including MTC buses) on

Perumbakkam Main Road (headed towards Tambaram Velachery Main Road) had to follow a diversion to Mambakkam Medavakkam Main Road via Radha Nagar Fourth Main Road and then Sowmya Nagar First Street, this junction’s misery began.

The ceaseless thud of vehicles opens up this patch, and when that happens it is filled with what has always appeared to be cement-gravel. And this patch begins to unravel the moment it is bound up in this manner. When there is persistent downpour, the “protective cover” is noticeably blown off – and that is what happened on January 7 and 8.

This patch requires throughgoing relaying and no more patchworks – there has been quite a number of patchworks to illustrate the futility of repeating that strategy on this patch.

## ‘Mend battered road around the new U-turns’

Residents’ group seeks dismantling of tollgate and a section of the median on Radial Road in Thoraipakkam to create more space for vehicular traffic



L. KANTHIMATHI

Greater Chennai Traffic Police recently created two U turns near the tollgate in Thoraipakkam on Pallavaram-Thoraipakkam 200 Feet Radial Road – one for heavy vehicles and the other for light vehicles – to ease waiting time at the junction of the 200-Feet Radial Road and Old Mahabalipuram Road where Metro Rail work is under way.

(According to a traffic police personnel, this arrangement allows light vehicles from both directions of Radial Road to take a U turn; and

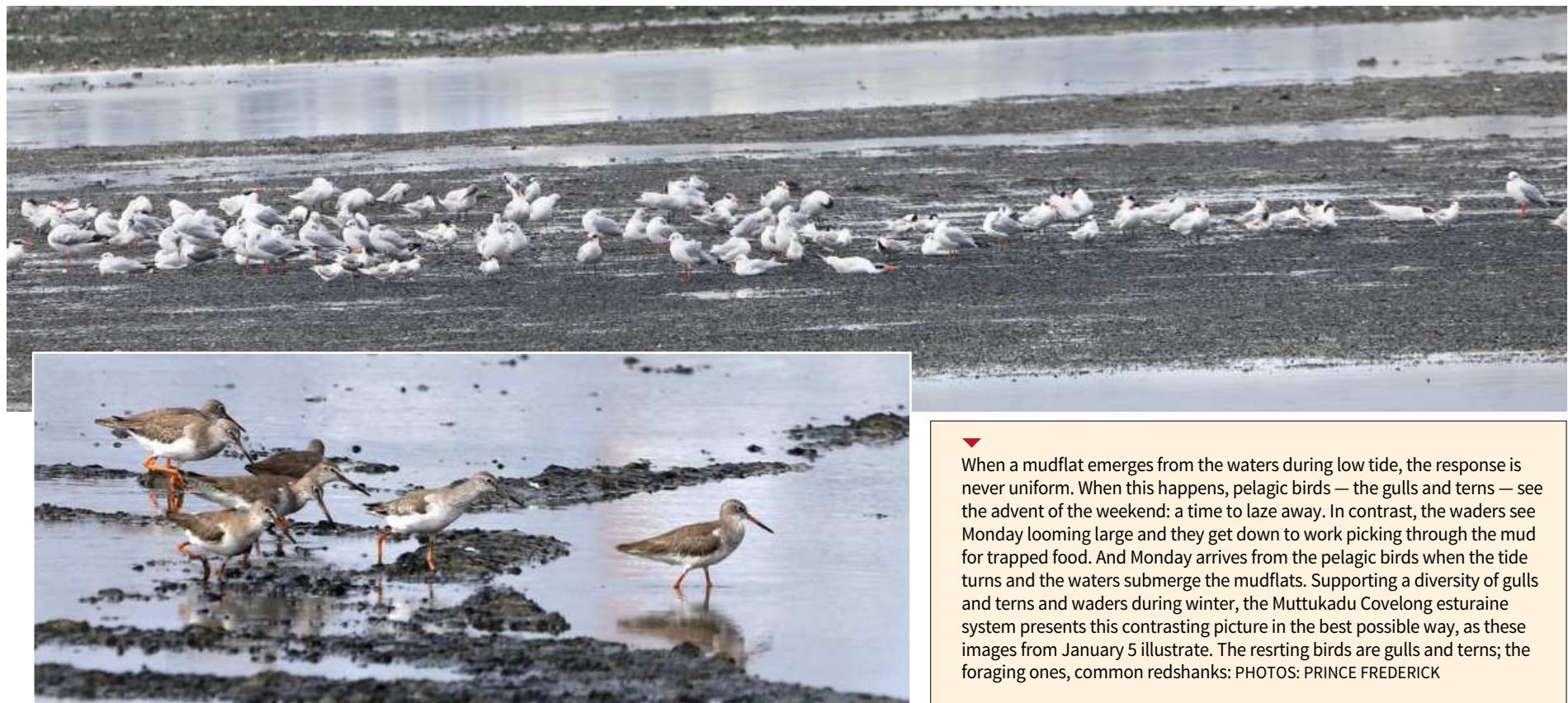


The battered section of Pallavaram-Thoraipakkam 200 Feet Radial Road in Thoraipakkam.  
PHOTOS: KARUNAKARAN M

Association notes the battered carriageway around the tollgate reduces the benefit derived from it. “The Thoraipakkam section of the radial road, especially from Sai Nagar junction to the junction of OMR and Radial Road (near BSR mall), is marked by potholes. CMRL has to mend this battered section as navigating it adds to driving time,” says S Saminathan, the Confederation’s secretary. The Federation has also sought the dismantling of the tollgate (discontinued in August 2021) as well as the median near the U turns to create more space for vehicular traffic.

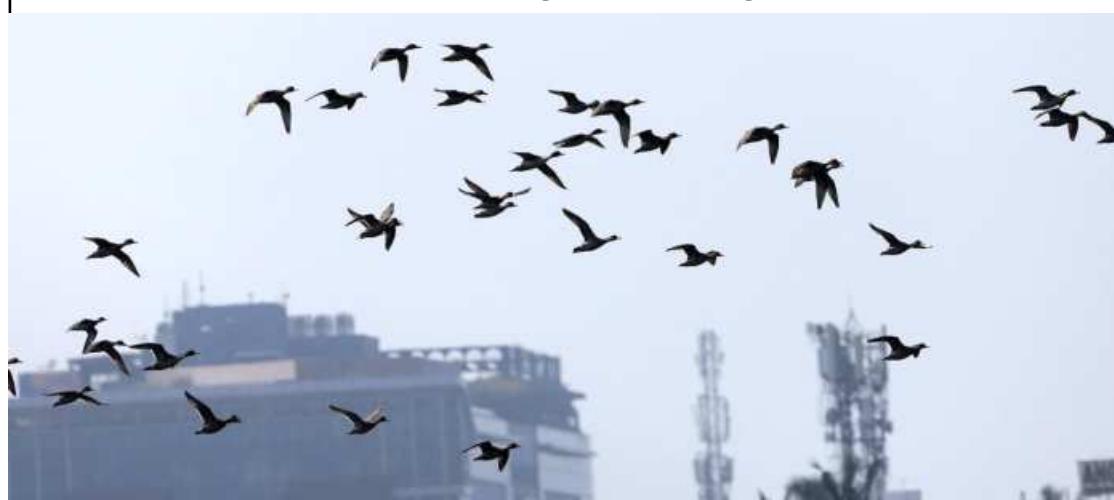


# Staggered 'work hours' at Muttukadu



When a mudflat emerges from the waters during low tide, the response is never uniform. When this happens, pelagic birds — the gulls and terns — see the advent of the weekend: a time to laze away. In contrast, the waders see Monday looming large and they get down to work picking through the mud for trapped food. And Monday arrives from the pelagic birds when the tide turns and the waters submerge the mudflats. Supporting a diversity of gulls and terns and waders during winter, the Muttukadu Covelong estuarine system presents this contrasting picture in the best possible way, as these images from January 5 illustrate. The resting birds are gulls and terns; the foraging ones, common redshanks: PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

They can pull up stakes again and again



Erratic and unseasonal rainfall can seem to unsettle wintering birds, particularly the dabbling ducks. These events do unsettle the birds but not to the extent humans think they do. When a wetland suddenly fills up to the point that the waders are not at ease sweeping through the waters for prey, and the dabbling ducks that upend themselves and take food are out of their depth, these birds look for alternative spots that meet the specifications for a favourable habitat. In the southern parts of Chennai, one can notice this pattern. When the Perumbakkam wetland bloats up, the avian attendance at a nearby patch, one in Akkarai, increases. Viewed from an anthropomorphic lens, the continual shifting might appear painful. Ornithologist V. Shantaram says birds that depend on ephemeral or seasonal habitats have the flexibility to move about in this manner, and do not have a strong inner compulsion to stick to one patch. The images show dabbling ducks flitting across the OMR skyline and finding what is probably just a pit stop at Akkarai. Photos: Prince Frederick



Rain gatecrashes and disrupts party



With the Perumbakkam wetland slowly squeezing out the "excess weight" gained from Cyclone Michaung, birds were hunkering down to a routine, as the images from January 4 and 5 illustrate. The downpour of January 7-8 then upset the well-etched plan and the birds had to evacuate from the wetland (as the picture from January 8 shows) for a pit stop on more favourable ground, much like their human neighbours did during Michaung.

Wetland dynamics being what they are, things do not snap back to the old routine quickly. Following the January 7-8 disruption, the dispersed birds are returning to the wetland only in short waves. Photos: Prince Frederick



# It is never too late to stitch up a new career

Two retired special educators brush up on their crocheting and tatting skills and kickstart an enterprise

LIFFY THOMAS

**A** skill picked up many summers ago is standing two siblings in good stead in their post-retirement life.

Both spinsters, Dipti Karnad and Anita Karnad retired from Clarke School for the Deaf at Dr Radhakrishnan Salai and thanks to their familiarity with crocheting and tatting, their day is packed with schedules as before.

"I was five when my mother introduced me to the hook pencil and yarn as she was good at crocheting, a skill passed on through the generations in our family," says Dipti.

For a brief period Dipti learnt crocheting at school and rediscovered it in early 2000 while working at the Sadhana Unit for Deaf Blind, a unit of Clarke School.

As part of the school project, children had to showcase their skills and Dipti had some of her works on display.

"I tried introducing crochet as a vocational programme in the school but the effort was met with a lukewarm response as children were more comfortable in cross stitch



and macrame art," says Dipti, who retired as principal of the special school in 2022 after serving it for 46 years.

Also a special educator in hearing impairment, her sister Anita, 66, served the institution for more than three decades.

A book on crochet given to them by their aunt helped the two siblings brush up on their crocheting skills. While Dipti launched into potli bag-making, Anita focussed on tatting, a skill her grand aunt had helped her with.

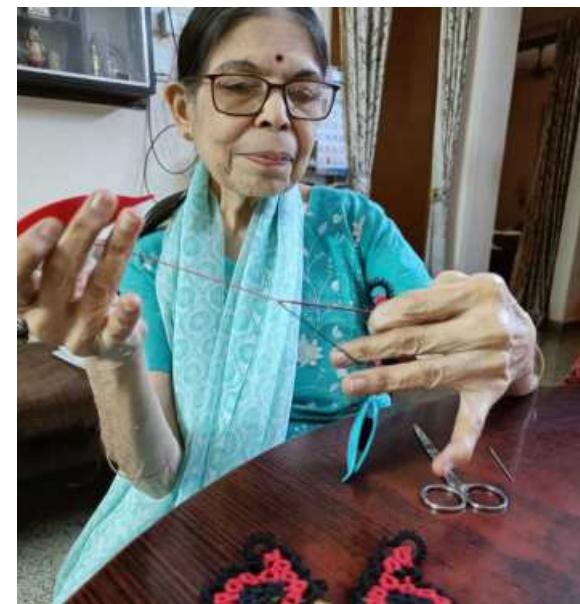
They made a humble start by creating a Facebook page one they called Dipanita Creations.

"We are not at all tech savvy and have not been aggressive about selling our products," says 71-year-old Dipti, who suffers from a bilateral knee problem that restricts her mobility.

The turning point came during the pandemic when Dipti was planning to give away her crochet tools and works and discussed it with a friend during a workshop. "Sheela Sinha from Mumbai instilled hope in me by placing her first order – a beige women's clutch," says Dipti, a teacher-trainer.

Marketing was a big challenge during the lockdown but social media and friends were of help. A teacher-trainer from Manipur who attended a workshop by Dipti found the sisters on Facebook and placed orders for shawls. Another friend helped sell many of her works executed during pandemic in her circle.

Granny square bags, coin purses, sling bags, baby blankets, shawls, purses and earrings are among



Dipti and Anita; and some of their creations.

PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

their creations.

Dipti says once the crochet part is completed, these products are sent to Mumbai where the finishing touch is given by a tailor. Besides bringing finesse to the products, this exercise ensures they are made durable.

In October 2023, the sisters started crochet classes, offered both online and offline at their residence at a gated community in Velachery.

They had four students in the first batch and are planning another soon. Among the many benefits crochet brings is good sleep, especially if one crochets 15 minutes before bedtime, the sisters note.

The sisters can be reached at 98403 78771



**Both spinsters, Dipti Karnad (71) and Anita Karnad (66) retired from Clarke School for the Deaf at Dr Radhakrishnan Salai and thanks to their familiarity with crocheting and tatting, their day is packed with schedules as before**



## A 'Blind Date' with the art of quilting

More than 50 works will be showcased at an exhibition in Alwarpet from January 19

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**F**or almost 10 years, The Square Inch, a showroom-cum-studio in Thiruvanmiyur, has been bringing quilters together so that they can share notes about the art.

The Square Inch, as the store is called, turns 10 this month. Over the years, it has been hosting what it calls "Blind Date" every two months. Quilters of different



From one of the meetups at the studio

stripes attend this event bringing their works and stories to it. And also their culinary preparations.

The stories are shared ov-

er a potluck lunch.

Patchwork experts and quilters form the majority of participants, but the event rolls out the red carpet to

crocheting, embroidery and knitting enthusiasts as well.

"It is called Blind Date as nobody really knows who else is attending it and we do

a potluck. Therefore, we do not know what quilt and other works we are going to see; nor do we know what food we are going to eat," says Tina Katwal, founder, The Square Inch.

'Show-and-tell' is the highlight of the meetup where quilting enthusiasts are asked to present two or three of their works.

"Information is exchanged, new techniques are learnt and doubts clarified," says Tina.

There is also fun fabric-based games or an exchange of gifts.

If the Blind Date happens at the studio, a demo is conducted showcasing a small project or a new technique.

An average of 20 to 40 people attend the Blind Date that has also been held at the homes of

enthusiasts.

"In December, Blind Date was hosted at a quilter's house and the programme followed the Christmas theme," says Tina, who is among those who initiated the India International Quilt Festival. On January 19, it is opening a four-day exhibition at Sankara Hall in Alwarpet, where more than 50 quilts will be showcased.

"As we will be meeting you can call this our next Blind Date," she says. The participants are those who have signed up for The Square Inch Challenge, where a 20 x 20 inch fabric is provided to participants to work on, based on a theme.

"This is the second year of the challenge and we have participants from outside Chennai as well," says Tina, adding that 'Abundance' is the theme.

## Books and more books

If you are a book lover then you are spoilt for choice this month.

Two book fairs are happening in the city. And then, a mobile library would visit your locality. The book fair by Book Sellers and Publishers Association of India (BAPASI) is under way at Nandambakkam grounds till January 21.

The other one, Chennai International Book Fair 2024 organised by Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation and Educational Services, will run from January 16 to Janu-

ary 18 at Chennai Trade Center, Nandambakkam.

The theme for CIBF is "Writing: from Pots to Bots", emphasising how writing has evolved from pot shreds to Artificial Intelligence.

As a prelude to *The Hindu* Lit Fest 2024, 'Lit Fest Mobile Library' is visiting various localities.

People may read, borrow and donate books when the vehicle is stationed at specific hours at various destinations till January 25. The van would be stationed for one to two hours at each location.

Cultural fest to sweep across Chennai from today



Bommalattam from the 2023 edition. PHOTO : B.JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Catch all the fun and excitement happening in your neighbourhood parks, as also at the beaches, the next four days. Chennai Sangamam - Namma Ooru Thiruvizha opens on January 14. Chennaisangamamofficial.com presents the schedule of events in four sections of the city – South Chennai, North Chennai, Chennai

Central and Chennai West.

Nageswararao Park in Mylapore; Semmozhi Park; Elliots Beach in Besant Nagar and Thiruvanmiyur are the four venues listed under South Chennai. Thappattam, puppet show, Bambaiyaattam and many other folk music and cultural events will be performed at 15 venues in the city.

## Conference on Carnatic music and fine arts held



### Jewellery store inaugurated



Challani Jewellery Mart has opened a showroom for silver jewellery at 100D, Velachery Main Road, Selaiyur, Sembakkam. According to a press release, the exclusive showroom is called Fedha By Challani. Its light and heavy ornaments are made of 92.5 sterling silver and hallmark with Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), adds the release.

Film actor Aishwarya Rajesh inaugurated the store. For details, call 044 - 4271 9916 / 7374000072.

B ridge Academy College of Media and Fine Arts organised a three-day international conference on Carnatic Music, Bharatanatyam and Fine Arts recently at IIT Campus. The event was supported by Ministry of Culture and IIT – Music Club Madras. A good number of experts including A.A. Nakkiran, Kavitha Ra-

mu, T.K. Murthy and Roja Kannan took part in the conference.

More than 60 legends exchanged their knowledge through workshops, discussions and article presentation. The conference also attracted participants from other countries, said a press release.

The Carnatic Music and Bharathanatyam workshops for teach-

ers and students offered participants an opportunity to learn from accomplished gurus, interact with fellow learners, and gain a deeper understanding of the nuances of Indian art forms, the release said.

'Arudra Anjali' was a Carnatic music performance by more than 120 teachers and students.



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## Signature campaign seeks removal of encroachments from Velachery lake

Tansi Nagar Welfare Association invites residents of neighbouring localities to take part in a meeting scheduled for January 21

**O**n January 7, Tansi Nagar Welfare Association in Velachery started a signature campaign seeking removal of encroachments in and around Velachery lake.

The move follows a meeting that discussed the causes of flooding in the neighbourhood.

M. Balakrishnan, the Association's general secretary, says "Tansi Nagar was severely inundated following the rains on December 4 and boats had to be pressed into service for rescue operations. We understand encroachments around Velachery lake contribute greatly to inundation. The macro drain along Taramani Velachery Link Road is meant to carry surplus water from Velachery lake and also from Gandhi Road, Dhadeeswaram Nagar, and Seethapathy Nagar to the Buckingham Canal. But water overflows from the drain and causes flooding in Tansi Nagar which is low-lying. So the water-load in the drain needs to be reduced. This can be done only if the encroachments in Velachery lake are removed. Measures should be also taken to stop discharge of sew-

age into the lake, as sewage sours the growth of water hyacinth."

The Association will be submitting the petition signed by the residents to the Commissioner of the Greater Chennai Corporation, Chennai District Collector and the State's Chief Secretary.

The Association is convening another meeting which is again on flood mitigation measures. It will be held on January 21 at St Antony School in 14th Street at Tansi Nagar. Time: At 4 p.m.

The association requests residents of the neighbouring localities of Tansi Nagar such as Bharathi Nagar, Dhadeeswaram Nagar, Seethapathy Nagar, Annai Inidra Nagar, Baby Nagar and Balakrishna Nagar to take part in the meet. M. Balakrishnan can be reached at 91766 01710.

Text by L. Kanthimathi



Tansi Nagar in Velachery on December 5 following the heavy rains on December 4.

PHOTO: VELANKANNI RAJ B



## Residents' forum wants Pallikaranai landfill closed

**I**n the wake of the December 4 floods, Federation of Sholinganallur Constituency Residents Welfare Associations has made a representation to the Mayor of Greater Chennai Corporation seeking revival of Pallikaranai marshland.

It has identified various factors that contributed to the inundation of neighbourhoods in Thoraipakkam, Perungudi, Pallikaranai, Kovilambakkam, Madipakkam and Velachery and seeks remedial measures.

The forum seeks the revival of the marshland, which would mean an end to its partial role as a landfill.

"Time and again, we have raised this issue with the authorities concerned,

but to no avail. This landfill also stands in the way of water. This landfill should be laid to rest. The unhelpful

vegetation in the marshland should be cleared regularly," adds Parthiban.

Yet another obstruction

identified by the association is encroachments in a water channel in Karapakkam West and Karapakkam East.



Sai Nagar in Thoraipakkam on December 4, 2023.



### ADVERTISEMENT New Year Celebration

**TAGORE MATRIC HR SEC SCHOOL,  
Nanmangalam, Ch-129.**

Celebrated New Year by Cutting Cake.  
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Guests **Mrs.Padmaja Priyadharshini & Mr.Anand** Participated.

Mrs.Padmaja Priyadharshini gave Motivational Speech to School Students. In her speech she explained them how to increase their memory power. They can improve memory by asking When, Where, How etc related to the topic they want to memorize. She asked to come out of their comfort zone so that they would be able to achieve their goal easily by breaking out their fear. Students of the school participated enthusiastically in the game conducted by her Correspondent Mr.J.Nemidoss, Principal, Mrs.S.Kannigaparameswari & Vice Principal Mrs.D.Baripoorana Revathi Participated in it.