

ANNA NAGAR

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HELMET TALK

A BIS standard specifically for bicycle helmets is in place now. Cyclists on what needs to be done next **P4**



THE BATTLE AGAINST CANINE DISTEMPER

This deadly viral disease thrives due to a lack of awareness about it, as also the prohibitive costs of vaccines and immunoglobulin injections needed to combat it. A visit to an unusual ward at BMAD treating infected dogs **P5**

READERS WRITE

A double whammy

V.M. CHINNI KRISHNAN

Due to irregular garbage clearance, the garbage bins near Gremaltes Hospital at Gajapathi Street in Shenoy Nagar are often filled to the brim and, in addition, a profusion of garbage cakes the space around it. Stray cattle wade into the scene and feast on the garbage strewn all around.

Multiple complaints raised on Namma Chennai App have not helped remedy the situation. Here are the complaints raised in 2024 according to their registration numbers: 2024-793HQM ; 2024-156ELL and 2024-766LBI.

A complaint raised recently on X platform

on May 20, 2025 shows that the unacceptable situation persists. Garbage pile-up and stray cattle on the loose cause serious hygiene issues, especially in the immediate vicinity of the Gremaltes Hospital.

Besides, stray cattle pose a danger to residents walking on the road.

We want GCC to impound the stray cattle and move them to the cattle pound; clear the garbage frequently and ensure that the area is kept clean; work with the residents of the neighbourhood and ensure garbage is collected from door to door.

(V.M. Chinni Krishnan is a member of the East Shenoy Nagar Residents Association and a resident of 3rd Cross Street East, Shenoy Nagar)



Stray cattle poking around in the garbage lying around the bins at Gajapathi Street in Shenoy Nagar.

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6 Surprising Benefits of OWNING A CAT

1. A cat may make you healthier...

People who share their lives with cats have been shown to have better cardiovascular health than those who don't. Having a pet can also reduce blood pressure. In short, don't stop exercising, but your cat may give your health a boost.

2. and happier!

Research suggests that having a cat can reduce loneliness and stress. Just petting a cat for 10 minutes has been shown to lower cortisol levels in students. Even watching cats seems to make people feel more cheerful and energetic. Cats are entertaining and often hilarious, but also there's nothing like the calming, soothing presence of a purring or sleeping kitty.

3. You'll rarely be bored.

Watching a cat explore is like living in a nature documentary. Watching a cat can let you become "more observant of changes in a cat's behavior in relation to what is happening in their environment,".

4. Cats are clever communicators.

"My cat may slow-blink at me to show affection and acknowledgment, but if they then look away or do not lean into my hand, this tells me they don't want to be touched right now, and I respect



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that., Cats have a remarkable talent for shaping us to be responsive."

5. Cats are excellent companions.

No matter what is going on in your life, your cat will be there. Cats can also make us kinder - taking care of another living thing tends to have that effect! To get to know your cat's needs and personality, study them closely. "We learn what a cat is feeling by paying attention to their body language,". You'll start to understand what is normal and what isn't. These are the first steps to building a trusting relationship.

6. Cats love to play.

A cat's energy may add pep to your own step.

When playing with your cat, try to find ways to prioritize what species-specific needs,

meaning you should provide your cat with opportunities to watch, stalk, pounce, catch and use their teeth and claws. Offering your cat appropriate places to climb and scratch also reduces the likelihood that they will pursue those activities using your favorite furniture.



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The bollards, broken and discarded; and (right top) when they had been installed. The images were taken on March 27, 2025, and May 23, 2025. PHOTOS: VEDHAN. M & B.JOTHI RAMALINGAM

‘Bollards fall apart a day after installation’



Measures taken by Greater Chennai Police - Traffic (North) to prevent entry of four-wheelers on lanes earmarked for two-wheelers and pedestrians on the three-lane subway under the Muralimaran flyover in Perambur have gone futile.

Only the middle lane is meant for four-wheelers and the other two are for pedestrians and two-wheelers. But as the lane rules were rarely followed, often resulting in accidents, the police installed

bollards on March 26. But a day later the bollards fell apart.

While appreciating the police department for this quick-fix initiative, Perambur Neighbourhood Development Forum notes installation of bollards is the job of the Greater Chennai Corporation, suggesting if GCC had done it, the work would have turned out better.

“The bollards fell apart as they were not installed properly. On closer look, one can see scooter tyres filled with cement had been used to hold these bollards. Tyres are made of rubber and rubber does not bond well with cement concrete and it is bound to collapse. Hence, they collapsed easily when hit by speeding vehicles. Likewise, the police department installed reflectors at four locations at median openings on Perambur High Road - North following an accident occurred two months ago. This is not their job. We request the police department to get GCC to do such work,” says Raghukumar Choodamani.

Text by L. Kanthimathi



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A BIS standard specifically for bicycle helmets is in place now. Cyclists on what needs to be done next

Helmet talk

LIFFY THOMAS

Enjoy riding bicycles? Did you know the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has come up with a specific standard for helmets for cyclists, skate boarders and roller skaters – for the first time, and it is coded “IS 18808”. The move by BIS to nudge all stakeholders to promote ISI-marked helmet is crucial for a country where helmet use for non-powered vehicles is only voluntary (bicycles do not come under Motor Vehicles Act).

G. Bhavani, senior director and head of Chennai branch of Bureau of Indian Standards, says BIS has brought this standard in 2025 exclusively for bicycle riders, skateboarders and roller skaters. In April, the Bureau conducted its first awareness workshop in Chennai and continues to reach stakeholders including cycling groups such as WCCG - Chennai Cyclists, Cycling Yogis and Chennai Runners.

“Through Manak Manthan, a monthly initiative of BIS, we take up a standard that was recently revised or formulated or is under development. We reach out to all stakeholders including consumers, manufactures, regulators and laboratories for suggestions. Manufacturers of this product can apply for BIS certification for this new Indian Standard, for which BIS is in the process of reaching out to the relevant associations for raising awareness,” says Bhavani.

BIS certification gives an assurance of quality of the product to the consumer.

“We certify after the manufacturers meet certain criteria. Later, the



company is allowed to manufacture and market the helmet with an ISI mark,” says Bhavani.

In Chennai, most cycling and running groups promote use of helmets.

“In all our group rides and events, one thing is clear – “no helmet, no ride”, says Sudarsana Rao of Vibrant Velachery.

Rao notes that if there is a rule by the government then use of helmets and its standards will also improve.

“Unlike the helmets worn by motorcyclists, not everybody sells cycle helmets. They are only available in specialised shops and are different from the ones used by motorcyclists,” says Rao, adding that Clubs such as theirs can do a lot to promote helmet use.

Most bicycle helmets are made using PVC, polystyrene and allied material. They are durable, lightweight yet robust and promise reliable performance.

Bicycle retail outlets note a majority of helmets sold by them are im-

ported and come with good safety standards, with prices from ₹3,500 onwards. “Manufacturing helmets for cyclists is a niche market and unless there is good volume there may not be many takers,” says Ashwin G., partner, 5AM Bicycle Studio.

Helmet manufacturing companies point out there will be a market in India as many cities are creating cycling infrastructure and there is greater awareness about the benefits of this eco-friendly mode of transport.

“Today, we are largely dependent on the foreign market for helmet design, which must change,” says Bijoy Bharathan, general manager, Turtle Helmet. The Government must also reduce the GST on safety gears such as helmets so as to encourage more people to buy one, says Bharathan.

Lessons from other parts of the globe

Quality helmets reduce the risk of death by over six times, and reduces the risk of brain injury by up to 74%, says a report by World Health Organisation.

However, availability of affordable helmets is a barrier for some people. In its toolkit on promoting cycling and walking, WHO notes that ensuring effective helmet use requires measures such as developing and passing helmet-use legislation, public education, and active law enforcement.

Many countries have introduced mandatory helmet laws for cyclists, including children. For example, Australia was among the first to introduce nationwide helmet regulations in the early 1990s. Canada and Argentina enforce helmet use for cyclists in certain regions and the Netherlands requires helmet use only for e-bikes that exceed the speed limit of 25 km. These policies are typically part of broader road safety strategies aimed at reducing traffic-related injuries.



A group of cyclists on OMR.
FILE PHOTO

The battle against canine distemper

This deadly viral disease thrives due to a lack of awareness about it, as also the prohibitive costs of vaccines and immunoglobulin injections needed to combat it. A visit to an unusual ward at BMAD treating infected dogs



Two dogs being treated for canine distemper at Besant Memorial Animal Dispensary (BMAD).
PHOTO: PRINCE FREDERICK

PRINCE FREDERICK

Besant Memorial Animal Dispensary (BMAD) runs an isolation ward, alfresco – right outside its premises in Besant Nagar. A blue colour-coated corrugated roofing sheet is fastened on to a metal structure that sits on the compound wall snugly with the support of what approximates to sturdy C clamps. IV fluid packets dangle from hooks that hang from a supporting metal rod in the makeshift roofing. Fluids are being administered to Scar and Rama (canine residents of MRC Nagar and Avadi respectively) that are curled up on a table, their human-relatives standing by their side and watching them attentively.

At first sight, the uninitiated would equate the open-air ward with stepmotherly treatment to these canines. A closer look brings a board into view; and with that, a message which includes imperatives barked out in bold letters.

The message having been read, a clearer picture emerges. Here is the text: “Canine Distemper (CD) is a contagious disease. It spreads among unvaccinated dogs through contact among unvaccinated dogs through contact and air. DO NOT touch other dogs. DO NOT let your dog loiter around this premises.”

Scar and Rama are being treated for canine distemper, and given the contagious nature of the disease, the other dogs visiting BMAD for a consultation need to be kept at a safe distance from them – hence, the alfresco, removed ward.

Canine distemper treatment costs on the higher side due to the prohibitive price of the injections that ought to be administered to infected and at-risk dogs. These dogs are given immunoglobulins through Canglob D injections.

Canglob has a post-exposure dose. It also has a prophylactic dose for dogs feared to have been exposed to this viral disease, says Dr. Josika Navukkarasu, chief vete-

rinarian at BMAD.

“A typical case would be a household with two dogs, one showing signs of canine distemper and the other not showing the signs. The one without signs of CD can be started on the prophylactic dose (in other words, pre-exposure dose),” Dr. Josika explains.

“The thing with canine distemper is that even after you give immunoglobulin, there is a high chance that the dog will not make it,” she notes, elaborating that it is a pan-tropic virus as it affects every system in the body. “My advice is that going for vaccine is the best way to deal with CD. One vaccine will not do: in puppyhood, they would need close to three doses of distemper vaccine.”

Dr. Josika reveals that vaccination and treatment for distemper provided at BMAD are chargeable, but offered at a nominal cost. She adds that the economically disadvantaged can pay whatever they can, “but the vaccine cost itself is so high that unless we have people

or companies sponsoring vaccines it is difficult to do everything for free.”

CD works on the basis of outbreaks: it is highly infectious and contagious, she says and illustrates it: “In one road, if there are 20 dogs, and one of them contracts CD, definitely another five or six will also contract the disease.”

How can the community support the treatment of dogs with CD?

“If donors donate towards Canglob, we can give Canglob at a further subsidised rate, even free for people who cannot afford it,” says Dr. Josika. “If they want to donate specifically towards Canglob, they can make a general donation, and mention through our Instagram page or WhatsApp number that they have donated so much and want it to go towards Canglob.”

BMAD’s Instagram handle is @besantmemorialanimaldispensary and its email ID is bmadts@gmail.com

A matter of *heart and art*

A son pays a tribute to his departed artist-parents by showcasing their artworks at an exhibition at Lalit Kala Akademi

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

From May 28, Lalit Kala Akademi features an art exhibition titled 'Together in love and in art', showcasing the works of artist couple A. Anjaneyulu and A.B. Geetha Anjaneyulu. Art teachers (Anjaneyulu retired from Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School in Mylapore, and Geetha from Vidyodaya Higher Secondary School in Nungambakkam), they inspired students to produce works of art beyond the regular school work.

The event is a son's tribute to the body of work left behind by his parents. Both passed away in their early 60s.

"Mom was one year junior to dad at Government College of Fine Arts in Egmore where they first met and discovered a shared love for teaching art," recalls A. Venkatakrishnan, also an alumnus of the college.

Both came from humble backgrounds to make a career in art in the late 50s. Anjaneyulu left his village with ₹100 to pursue a course at the College of Fine Arts. He shared an accommodation by paying ₹10 a month and also supported himself by working part-time as an artist for local magazines.

"Dad was a workaholic, he used to visit homes to conduct art classes after his school hours and pursue his creative interests. He was an active member of the Cholamandal Artists Village," says Venka-



A. Anjaneyulu and A.B. Geetha Anjaneyulu; a Batik work; and a photo taken at Geetha's farewell at Vidyodaya Higher Secondary School. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

takrishnan, who is into digital film restoration.

Geetha was influenced by her father, who served as the chief editor of *Municipal Gazette* to pursue art. "There were only three female students in my mom's batch then," he says adding that Geetha specialised in Tanjore paintings.

Close to 40 artworks will be on display at the venue, all showcasing different aspects of art and nuggets of information from the artist couple's life. Anjaneyulu specialised in Batik, a traditional dyeing technique that uses wax-resist patterns on fabric. "So elaborate and time-consuming is this process, one carried out with heated wax brush, that my parents would book a night



show at Pilot Theatre and return to complete one more stage," says Venkatakrishnan.

Meena Muthiah, the Kumara Rani of Chettinad, used to conduct workshops that Anjaneyulu would be a part of. "At one event, dad drew an instant sketch of M.F. Husain who was also present at the event, which will also be showcased," he says. With contemporaries such as Aadhimoolam, Selvaraj and other senior artists, Anjaneyulu has been part of group exhibitions across India. "This is their first solo exhibition, and many students have different memories of them which I want them to relive by looking at their works," says Venkatakrishnan. He says all artists love their works to be displayed at Lalit Kala Akademi and this is a fitting tribute to them.

The event will be inaugurated on May 28 at 5.30 p.m. by artist and actor Sivakumar, who was Geetha's batchmate, and Trotsky Marudu, art director and VFX creative director.

The exhibition will be on view from May 29 to June 3 (11 a.m. to 7 p.m.) at Lalit Kala Akademi on Grems Road.

Awareness through music at Anna Nagar Tower Park

As part of Multiple Sclerosis Day, MSSSI - Chennai chapter is organising an event titled "Speak, Sing, Support" on May 30 at Anna Nagar Tower Park.

The MS Day event is aimed at creating awareness and will include a joyful music session to celebrate resilience.

The events will begin at 5.30 p.m. at the Tower Park on 3rd Main Road, Anna Nagar



Workshop on beekeeping

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a workshop on beekeeping and mushroom cultivation on May 29 and 30 respectively. Both the workshops will be held at Agro Tech Green Park, First Floor, Thiruv. Vi. Ka. Industrial Estate, Guindy. For details, call 044 - 2953 0048.



T20 championship for 'dads'



Vinayaka Missions Research Foundation is conducting "Super Dads Cricket T20 Championship", an exclusive cricket tournament for men aged 35 years and above (born on or before May 1, 1990) from May 26.

The tournament will follow a league-cum-knockout format and will be played with a white ball.

Attractive cash prizes and trophies will be presented. For registrations, call 72000 60626

Chess tournament conducted at Velammal



Velammal Bodhi Campus, in collaboration with Ology Tech School and Playu, hosted the International FIDE-rated classical open chess tournament at Velammal International School in Ponneri.

With more than 200 players from across the globe taking part in it, the tournament proved to be a grand confluence of chess excellence, international camaraderie and academic prestige.

The chess tournament followed the classical format, employing a 90-minute time control with a 30-second increment per move. This ensured that every game

was not just a test of speed but of endurance, foresight and cognitive depth, said a release. Players demonstrated exceptional sportsmanship, critical thinking and composure. The participants ranged from under-12 to experienced players with formidable ratings.

The total prize pool stood at ₹4,00,000. The first prize was ₹40,000, followed by the second prize of ₹30,000 and the third prize of ₹20,000. Additional cash prizes were awarded to players ranked up to the 25th position, with the top five winners receiving prestigious trophies, added the release.

Montessori teacher training programme

The Indian Montessori Training Courses, Chennai, will be starting its 54th regular batch in Montessori teacher training.

The training will commence on July 9 and lasts for 10 months. It will be held from Monday to Thursday, 9.30 a.m. to 2.15 p.m., and Friday - 9.30 a.m. to

12.45 p.m., with online classes on Monday and Friday.

Successful candidates will be awarded a diploma by the Indian Montessori Centre, Bangalore, said a press release.

The course is a unique career opportunity to learn, understand and make a difference in a child's life, the release adds.

For details, call 9444936263, 04424614301. Email: admissions.imtcc@gmail.com

CMDA to renovate Iyyappanthangal bus terminus



A bus exiting the terminus in Iyyappanthangal on Mount Poonamallee Road. PHOTO: VELANKANNI RAJ B

Metropolitan Transport Corporation's bus terminus in Iyyappanthangal on Mount Poonamallee High Road will sport a new look soon.

According to an MTC official, Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority will carry out the work at a cost of ₹18.93 crore.

"The terminus will be completely revamped. Bhumi Puja was performed on March 22," said the official.

Regular commuters welcomed this project and said a facelift was badly needed. They wanted the problem of water-logging during rains to be addressed.

Confederation of Iyyappanthangal Residents Welfare Associations suggested

closing of the entrance at Ramachandran Nagar Main Road considering the inconvenience the bus drivers experience.

"The terminus is located at the junction of Mount Poonamallee High Road and Ramachandran Nagar Main Road which is narrow. It has got two entrances, one on each of these roads. The one on Mount Poonamallee High Road is used for entry of buses and the other for exit. There is no problem with the entry point. But the exit entrance poses a lot of inconvenience to the bus drivers. Because it lies at the junction of the roads. This should be moved to a convenient location," says the confederation's coordinator, P. Senthil Kumar.



Ice apple seller's summer script

For 20 years now, Kanjaan, an ice apple seller at Thirumangalam, has been following a summer script that seems set in stone. A native of Ranipettai district, he collects his stock of ice apples at a village near his own, before dawn. Following that, he embarks on a long commute from Ranipettai district, by bus and auto, to Chennai, specifically Thirumangalam, where he carries out his trade. He heads back home late in the evening, and repeats the routine the next day. Noticeably old, he sticks to this difficult summer schedule, being his family's sole bread winner. Outside of the ice apple season, he is a farm labourer at a sugarcane field back home. PHOTO: S.HARINI

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Chaos reigns at Oragadam junction

Oragadam junction on Ambattur - Puzhal Road during lean hours on May 22, 2025. PHOTOS: VEDHAN M



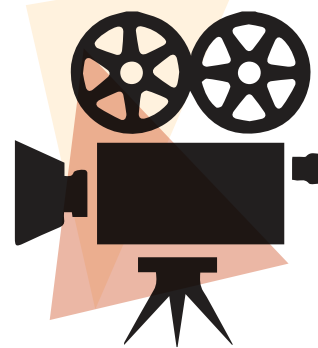
In the absence of a traffic signal, Oragadam junction on Ambattur - Puzhal Road is risky to cross. Here, vehicles from three lanes – Sengalvarayan Street, Mani Street, Gandhi High Road – intersect at Ambattur Puzhal Road. Autorickshaw drivers and vendors in the vicinity say close calls are a common sight here. “There is only a reflector here. But that is not enough. A traffic signal and a pedestrian signal are essential here. During peak hours, it is very difficult to cross this junction,” says an autorickshaw driver.

Text by L. Kanthimathi



One-minute film competition on disability

Ability Foundation is inviting nominations for the one-minute film competition on disability, “60 Seconds to Fame!”. The theme is “Through Your Lens: A Celebration of Disability Inclusion.” An esteemed jury of filmmakers will review the entries, and the best three films will be awarded. The shortlisted films will also be showcased during the AbilityFEST: India International Disability Film Festival, which is to take place at Chennai from July 7 to 10, 2025. For details, visit www.abilityfoundation.org or call 9840055848.



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