

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



NEW 'FRONTISPIECE' FOR GATED COMMUNITY IN PADUR ON OMR

State highways department ensured that a peepal tree in front of Hindustan College was transplanted to a spot before The Gem Grove **P5**



A WAVE OF VOLUNTEERS

June 8 is observed as World Oceans Day to raise awareness about the importance of keeping marine systems free of pollution. How two groups have been drumming up support for this cause **P6**

Culvert on GST Road being desilted

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

The State Highway Department has begun desilting a culvert on GST Road. This comes as a big relief to residents as the work will ensure rainwater from Pachaimalai, a hillock at Tambaram Sanatorium, reaches Chitlapakkam Lake and then flows into the Pallikaranai marshland.

According to P. Viswanathan, convener of the Chitlapakkam Residents Associations Co-ordination Committee, due to poor engineering works undertaken by departments, this natural flow of rainwater from the hills to the lake was obstructed.

"Recently, the State Highway Department dug a lane (towards Chromepet) to desilt the culvert and remove the blocks," says Viswanathan.

A State Highway Department official said: "The culvert has not been de-silted for years and is strewn with trash. Due to sewage discharge, huge mounds of silt have been formed. As pipes are crossing the culvert, the work must be carried out carefully."

Following the completion of work on this lane, the other lane (towards Tambaram) will be taken up in coordination with the Water Resources Department.

"We plan to finish the work before the onset of the NE monsoon," adds the official.

At the end of Judge Colony, Tambaram Sanatorium, construction debris and trash have to be cleared for the rainwater to flow into the network and the lake.

The network runs along the locality and Chitlapakkam Second Main Road before flowing into the lake culvert on the Main Road.

There are three inlet points to the lake. Two are from East Tambaram, and one is from Pachaimalai. The inlet points are closed during dry days to prevent sewage from entering the lake.

However, the officials added that the civic body must construct an underground drainage system and arrest sewage discharge through stormwater drains.

The canal along GST Road (on the lane towards Tambaram) in Tambaram Sanatorium.

PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Chitlapakkam RWA convenes executive meet

The Chitlapakkam Muthulakshmi Nagar Welfare Association recently held its executive committee meeting.

Members discussed about waste management, in particular removal of household trash and green waste on stretches in the locality at periodic intervals. The members urged the office bearers to take up the issue of desilting and removal of debris from stormwater drain networks with the Tambaram City Municipal Corporation.

The meeting also addressed issues such as urgent need for speedy culvert construction at the Ashtalakshmi Street - Viswamitra Street and Maruthi Street - Viswamitra Street intersections.

Further, it was decided that the 34th annual sports day would be celebrated in July. V. Yoganand and J. Prasanna, joint secretaries, were appointed as sports committee chairman and deputy chairman, respectively and a few EC members were nominated to the committee. The meeting was presided over by its president L. Sundararaman, in the presence of vice-presidents, V. Ramajeyam and S. Sekar. Secretary D. R. Shrivakumar highlighted the association's activities.

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READERS WRITE

MTC should 'work on' bus bays at Chromepet stop



Some years ago, MTC facilitated bus bays for route numbers E18, G18, G70, 91, 91G, M52 and 66 passing through the Chromepet railway station halting point.

These bus bays provided a convenient waiting area for commuters, eliminating the need for them to stand scattered and ensuring a more relaxed boarding experience.

The bays are now a thing of the past, with commuters left to stand in disarray, except for those looking for M52, for which the bay is located along the GST Road. When around four to five buses come, the drivers halt the buses at GST Road and at the area (leading to the service lane) along the haltover, forcing the commuters to run.

A section of the commuters sit and wait along the M52 bus bay area. The commuters have to run through the waiting crowd.

V. Santhanam
Chromepet

'Facilitate a parking lot at the terminal'

Southern Railway should facilitate a parking lot at the eastern side of the Tambaram railway station, which would be especially helpful for long-distance train passengers.

Currently, vehicles are parked in a no-parking zone along the pick-up and drop-off area, which causes considerable hardship to those taking the stretch that leads to the area.

Due to the parking issues, taking a U-turn is a big struggle, and passengers are often forced to disembark before their intended drop-off point.

The Railway Protection Force and the Southern Railway should ensure vehicles aren't parked in the no-parking zone and create a parking lot on the eastern side of the sprawling station premises.

K. Dayanand Krishnan
Chitlapakkam

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 downtownfeedback@thehindu.co.in. Letters must carry the contact number.

'Restore the waterbody before establishing the water treatment plant'

Tambaram City Municipal Corporation proposes to establish a mini-sewage treatment plant along the Veeraraghavan Eri, Chromepet-Tambaram Sanatorium. It is awaiting the approval of the Directorate of Municipal Administration and Water Supply.

Before facilitating the plant, the department should focus on restoring the waterbody.

The water hyacinth need to be weeded out and the waterbody desilted and deepened.

For years, these crucial maintenance tasks have been neglected, turning the waterbody into a sewage cesspool.

The move to install the plant along the bund area is not prudent. The treated water will reach Putheri (the excess water from Veeraraghavan Eri flows into Putheri) unless the network (carrying excess rain and lake water) and the waterbody is desilted and illegal sewer inlets are plugged.

The civic body should identify the illegal sewer inlets in the Veeraraghavan Eri and facilitate plants to treat the water.

If the Eri is not rejuvenated, we risk losing this vital waterbody.

It serves as a source of groundwater for the residents of Chromepet and Tambaram



Sewage overflows through a weir at Veeraraghavan Eri. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Sanatorium and the adjoining National Institute of Siddha, Government Hospital for Thoracic Medicine and Government Hospital, Tambaram - Tambaram Taluk (Chromepet GH).

Today, the waterbody pre-

sents a picture of neglect, with residents of Chromepet and Tambaram Sanatorium discharging raw sewage into it. The waterbody is engulfed by water hyacinth and houses have come up on it.

Trees, plants, and vegeta-

tion have grown on the bunds, lake area, water holding area, and network area. On the weir and network area, people discharge raw sewage from their homes.

S. Srimathy
Chromepet



On uneven ground

A battered section of MKN Road in Alandur on June 3. PHOTO: VELANKANNI RAJ B

Garbage pile-up



Waste pile-ups can be seen at the junction of Samayapuram Main Road and Pallavaram-Kundrathur Road. This location is a boundary of Irandamkattalai Panchayat and Kundrathur Panchayat. Hence, both the local bodies fix the responsibility on each other and the issue remains unaddressed. It should be noted that this junction witnesses heavy traffic for the past few months as a bridge is under construction at Sadananthapuram. Hence, people are using this junction as an alternative route.

A.J.D. Thangaraj,
Samayapuram,

No bus shelter: lorry provides relief to commuters



On Velachery Main Road in Medavakkam, near Quaid-e-Milleth College, a bus stop operates — actually, an apology of a bus stop — as “stand-in” for the one that was located on Medavakkam Main Road until Metro Rail work entered the scene. In its new spot, the relocated bus stop provides commuters with little comfort.

When the sun is potent enough to give commuters a migraine, they are painfully aware of the inadequacy of the stopover. It lacks a shelter and there is hardly greenery nearby for commuters to take shelter under. And they turn to an unlikely source of comfort: the shadow of a heavy vehicle parked around the stopover. This is one time road-users do not frown upon unauthorised parking.

TEXT & PHOTO: SRINATH M

Have the black kites found a new hangout?



Shells of snails; and black kites on stone poles at burnt patch of Perumbakkam wetland. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK

Seasoned birders would assign an “avian binomial name” to almost every stone-marker pole at the western end of the Perumbakkam wetland. They would do so based on which wintering raptor patronised a pole, holding on to it with an air of territoriality. This reporter actually remembers a long-time birder engage in this “friendly, inoffensive name-calling exercise” with another birder, one with a sprinkle

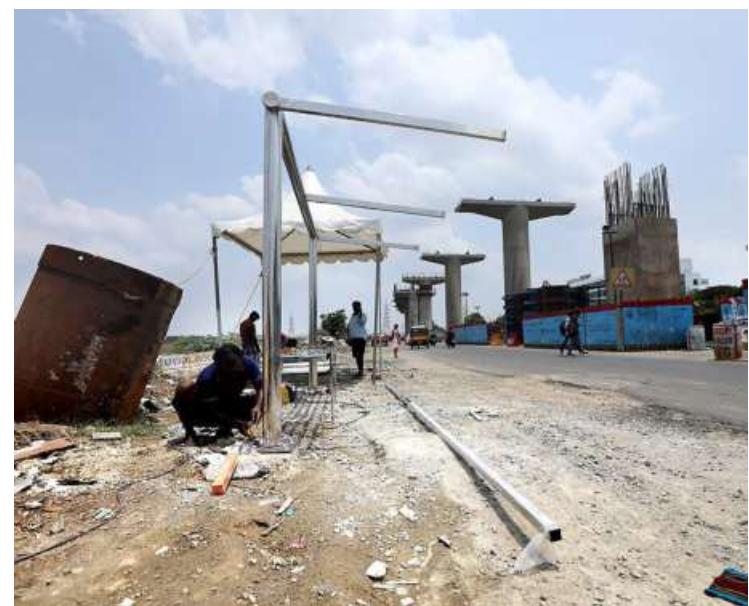
of gray hair, nodding in agreement.

The winter is gone with the wind along with the wintering raptors. But the poles are not desolate. They enjoy local-raptor occupancy. Black kites haunt this patch with

the poles ever since a fire swept through it.

Black kites are drawn to offal, earning them the title, pseudo-raptors. Following the unexpected and still-unexplained fire on this patch

A bus shelter at last on a stark landscape



A bus shelter at the stopover opposite the Sholinganallur IT Special Economic Zone on Perumbakkam Main Road was in the works on June 4, and up and running the next day. Installed by CMRL, this bus shelter is largely in the mould of a regular bus shelter. It stands next to a tent, reportedly a carryover from an event but now serves commuters. Conventional or unconventional, a roof over commuters helps in these times of showers, often unexpected and in large volume, from a secondary monsoon. And between showers, Chennai is always a cauldron. CMRL should prioritise the construction of bus shelters in land-



scapes where commuters do not have any buildings nearby to shelter from shower and shine. This bus stop with the Perumbakkam wetland forming the backdrop is set in such a landscape, and the absence of a shelter was deeply felt by commuters for a long time. Photos: Prince Frederick

of place. The June 2, 2024 edition of *The Hindu Downtown* in fact carried a brief account of these sorties. It was believed to be a transient presence. But it could turn out to be less of a transient phenomenon than believed. The black kites continue to haunt the burnt patch, showing up in impressive numbers at certain hours, as reported by people frequenting Classic Farms Main Road which lines this section of the wetland.

As is evident now, there had been a preponderance of snails. Snail shells, burnt and empty, are found in impressive numbers on this patch. Burnt to a crisp, the snails within their shells seem to have been a food source to the black kites. The black kites had been scooping out whatever is left in the burnt shells. One wonders if the black kites would continue around this patch till “supply” lasts. Obviously, this patch is not as inviting to the black kites as the Perungudi landfill with the perennial promise of offal.

Or, have they discovered this patch of Perumbakkam wetland as a hangout? Only time will tell.

New 'frontispiece' for gated community in Padur on OMR

State highways department ensured that a peepal tree in front of Hindustan College was transplanted to a spot before The Gem Grove

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Gem Grove, a gated community in OMR, could not have asked for a better frontispiece – a peepal tree, all grown up and glowing with gratitude over having received a second chance at life. This is how it happened. The State highways department is carry-

ing out stormwater drain work on this section of OMR, and a peepal tree in front of Hindustan College was in the way of the progressing work. The State highways officials connected with the work ensured the transplantation of the peepal tree to another spot on OMR: in front of The Gem Grove, around 200 metres away. Reportedly, when Neela Chandran, a resident of Thalambur, asked them about the plan for a row of palm trees in another part of OMR, in Vaniyamchavadi, Siruseri, the State highways officials informed her that there, as in neighbouring parts of OMR, only stormwater drain work has been carried out, and the alignments pertaining to road expansion are far from settled. And that when the work reaches that stage, utmost effort would be taken to protect as many trees as possible. *Photo: Prince Frederick*



Gentle showers sufficient to drill holes in battered Nookampalayam Main Road



With educational institutions reopening this week, many parents are dreading taking this stretch of Nookampalayam Main Road in Perumbakkam. So are the other habitues of the stretch. Almost a kilometre of the road is waiting to be relaid for the last two years. Dozens of water lorries making trips to a filling point in interior Nookampalayam contribute in no small measure to the battering of this road. Regular commuters say 500 metres of the road, starting from Advent Church, is the worst as it riddled with potholes across the length and breadth. There is some exercise under way towards re-laying the road but the recent rains have thrown the spanner in the works. The scrapped portion has become more motorist-unfriendly than before. On another section, blue metal chips make the ride riskier for those on two-wheelers.

PHOTOS AND TEXT: R. RAVINDRAN

A wave of volunteers

June 8 is observed as World Oceans Day to raise awareness about the importance of keeping marine systems free of pollution.

Liffy Thomas in conversation with two groups that have been drumming up support for this cause



Fishermen in a small boat off the East Coast. PHOTO : B.JOTHI RAMALINGAM

'New-age volunteering is about making every beach visit exciting and an opportunity for learning'



As beach clean-ups happen in the mornings, we would ask any group engaged in a clean-up to invite their own chief guest, who could be a bureaucrat, a photographer, a politician or a YouTuber. That would be a reason for the volunteers to be on time and bring their friends as well for the clean-up.

We associate with On the Streets (OTS), a music community that is prepared to sing

anywhere for the joy of it. They need not be professionals but they elevate the mood of volunteers during these clean-ups. To engage children, we have people dressed as clowns walking on the sands. While many are involved in cleaning the beach, there are some who are involved in sand sculpting or writing poetry on the sands with a message.

All may not be interested in picking trash from the sands but by inviting them to showcase

their talent, we are providing them with an incentive to join the movement.

Many of the beach clean-ups are made competitive with groups given weighing machines to see how much of litter they collect.

We have volunteers spending two hours on the beach but engaged in only 45 minutes of cleaning exercise, which is acceptable. New-age volunteering is about making every outing to the beach exciting, interesting, and an opportunity for learning.

We want them to come back for such initiatives and in larger numbers, bringing along friends and family members. These meetings should also encourage them to organise one on their own.

We clean beach stretches where machines cannot reach, so *kuppams* are a spot we usually select.

Hafiz Khan
CommuniTree

'It is the motivation we give that gets them started'

Environmentalist Foundation of India (EFI) has been involved in beach clean-ups for over a decade, maintaining an impressive strike rate – close to one clean-up every weekend.

Bringing school and college students is our strength. We carry out a documentary screening exercise before inviting them to the sands of the beach to make them understand why it is important to conserve our ecological hotspots. Students want to volunteer but do not know where to start. It is the motivation we give that gets them started.

J.S. Global in Sholinganallur, for instance, has been associated with us for the last three years for clean-ups where we have more than 30 "hydro-warriors" from Classes VI to XII helping clean Ashtalakshmi beach and the

neighbouring beach in Besant Nagar. We have spiced up clean-ups by engaging volunteers in fun games. Sometimes they are asked to collect only a certain type of waste or make junk art with the collected waste or play treasure hunt on the sands as they pick up trash.

Sri Sankara Schools in Adyar and Thiruvanmiyur; and Bala Vidya Mandir are among the other institutions that send student-volunteers. This month, we have 300 students from SRM University signing up to participate in our clean-up events lined up through the month. For college students, these programmes are offered as internship.

To volunteer, visit Indiavolunteer.org
Shri Krishna
EFI

Draft policy document on marine litter released

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Recently, M. Ravichandran, secretary, Ministry of Environment Sciences, released the draft policy document on marine litter at an event at National Centre for Coastal Research in Chennai.

India does not have a marine litter policy and this is an important step towards managing and controlling the litter entering marine systems.

The National Centre for Coastal Research under the Ministry of Earth Sciences was made a nodal agency to prepare a roadmap for the formulation of a National Marine Litter Policy based on scientific data.

The primary goal of this project was to understand the "spatiotemporal variability of litter and plastics in coastal waters, sediments and biota, map their distribution patterns and pathways from source to sink."

Two hundred sets of data for 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023 from beaches across India during the coastal clean-up activities were collected to identify the source of litter, especially plastic waste, that enters the waters.

The project focussed on assessment and monitoring; research and development; awareness and education; and policy and regulation.

The Clean Coastal Index (CCI) is a vital part of the

programme.

"By classifying beaches on their cleanliness level, the CCI helps prioritise actions, allocate resources effectively and track progress over time," said Ravichandran in a note shared on the draft policy.

Once the draft guidelines are ratified and gazetted, it will give more strength to organisations and groups working to keep the coasts free of plastics.

"Once the policy is finalised, the Ministry of Environment and Forests, which is the implementing agency, will have to share the gazetted guidelines to every state government and spell out its role," says Pravakar Mishra, retired scientist, NCCR.

COMMUNITY

OMR360: the games have begun

VANAJAKKSHI N

OMR360's first sports event, a volleyball tournament conducted last week at Jain's Pebble Brook in Thoraipakkam, witnessed the participation of eight teams. The participating teams were from Jains Pebble Brook (two teams, A and B), Prestige Courtyards (two teams, A and B), Vaikund Sundaram, Incor PBEL City, Akshaya January and The Gem Grove. Held on June 2, the tournament was an engaging display of skill, strategy, and determination, culminating in a final match that kept spectators on the edge of their seats.

The tournament followed a knockout format, with teams facing off in a series of elimination matches leading up to the semi-finals and the final. Each team brought its unique style and strategy to the court, making every match a distinct spectacle. With more than 200 resident supporters from the participating communities filling the stands, the atmosphere was electrifying.

In the round of eight, Prestige Courtyards-A defeated Akshaya January in straight sets, showcasing their dominance with powerful spikes from their star players. Vaikund Sundaram edged out Jains Pebble Brook-A in a hard-fought battle, with the players leading their team with stellar defence and strategic plays. Incor PBEL City overcame The Gem Grove with a combination of solid blocking and precise serving, while Prestige

Courtyards-B triumphed over Jains Pebble Brook-B, thanks to their balanced team play and effective communication.

In the semi-finals, Incor PBEL City took the first set comfortably, but Prestige Courtyards-A fought back in the second set with impressive defensive manoeuvres. The third was a nail-biter with Incor PBEL City advancing to the final.

In the other semi-final, Prestige Courtyards-B took an early lead with aggressive attacks and solid blocking. However, Vaikund Sundaram rallied in the second and third sets, utilising their strategic serves and quick transitions to catch their opponent off guard. The match started with low hopes for Vaikund Sundaram, but they turned around the game in the subsequent two sets earning their place in the final.

The final match between Vaikund Sundaram led by Nageshwaran and Incor PBEL City led by Natraj R was a fitting climax to the tournament. Both sets of the finals were highly competitive, with both teams displaying remarkable resilience and tactical acumen. Nageshwaran & team managed to edge out Natraj's team winning them 2-0.

Vaikund Sundaram team's triumph in the tournament was celebrated with exuberance, as they were crowned champions for winning over last year's champions, Natraj's Incor PBEL City, who earned immense respect for their effort. The third place was secured by Prestige Courtyard-B.



Winners and (below) the runners-up of the volleyball tourney.

PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Nageshwaran V was crowned the player of the tournament for his exceptional defence strikes and blocks.

With this event, the communities have opened up their fair share of leader-board tally with Vaikund Sundaram on top with 10 points, followed by Incor PBEL City with 8.

The event has left participating apartments leaving fans eagerly anticipating the next event. To continue showcasing sportsmanship and camaraderie among the

teams, OMR 360 will next host Football matches this weekend at FC Marina in Thazhambur. The inter-community Turf Cricket for Women, Boys & Girls U15 on 15th and 16th June at Smash N Kick, PBEL City, Kelambakkam.

Beyond fun and games FOMRRA commemorated the World Environment Day through various social activities and awareness sessions for OMR residents. This event had sessions on upcycling used fabrics, setting up Miya-

waki forests, seedball making to promote tree restoration in localities and thought-provoking sessions on waste management, restoration of lakes at Chitlapakkam and the Muttukadu backwaters. Events continue today as well, with weather enthusiast Srikanth of Chennaiyil Oru Malai Kalam fame as one of the speakers.

FOMRRA will also be collecting used toys and clothes along with AID India, which will be distributed to rural schoolchildren. Waste-Winn, in association with FOMRRA will be collecting e-waste during the events to ensure the e-waste does not end up in landfills. All citizens willing to donate and ensure a clean earth are requested to visit the event at TVH Taus, Navalur.

(Vanajakkshi N is a member of Federation of OMR Residents Associations)

The schedule

The details of this weekend's events:

Football Tourney

Date: June 09 - Sunday

Timing: 9 am to 3 pm

Venue: FC Marina - Thalam-

bur

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/NCANWAQSkhhGZPJ87>

Environment Weekend

Date: June 09 - Sunday

Timing: 3:30 pm to 6 pm

Venue: TVH Taus, Navalur

<https://g.co/lgs/UuF8EWF>

Note: Food, Fashion and

Game stalls will continue upto 10 p.m.

Details in link below:

<https://www.instagram.com/omr360event>

A new support group for stroke patients

Parivarthan for Parkinson's Foundation, known for its efforts in improving the quality of life of people affected with Parkinson's Disorder, is broadening its scope to assist stroke survivors. The non-profit is organising its first support group meeting for stroke patients and their caregivers on June 15 at the foundation's Supportive Care Centre in Arumbakkam. Support group meetings are safe and non-judgemental spaces to connect stroke patients and their caregivers to share experiences and gain insights from one another, says a release. Stroke is a life-threatening condition that occurs when blood flow to the brain is blocked, damaging the brain tissue. Its leading causes include high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, obesity and diabetes. It may occur at any age and requires immediate medical care. Survivors of stroke require regular supportive care, including physiotherapy, speech therapy and even occupational therapy. Parivarthan for Parkinson's has over 350 members. The organisation currently provides its members with free physiotherapy, yoga therapy, and counselling at its Supportive Care Centre. It also conducts online sessions on art, singing and dance. It aims to expand all these services to stroke survivors and increase awareness about the condition.

For details, call 96000 52531

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Students can travel using old ID cards, says MTC

With schools and government arts and science colleges reopening on June 9 and delay in providing identity cards for free travel, the Metropolitan Transport Corporation has requested students to travel with the old identity cards issued for the year 2023-24. However, the students should be wearing uniforms or carry the photo identity cards provided by the schools.

The same applies to students studying in state government arts and science colleges, polytechnic colleges, and the Department of Employment and Training.

According to a release, the transport corporation is working with the School Education Department to provide identity cards before the end of the month. MTC has appointed officers to oversee operation of buses. These officers will ensure a smooth journey for students, said the release.

MTC has requested that the crew help the students board and alight from the buses safely.

MTC has completed the installation of doors on more than 400 buses to prevent students from travelling on the footboards.

Pillars at airport get a fresh look



Students of Government College of Fine Art, Egmore, painting the pillars at the airport on June 3. PHOTO: VELANKANNI RAJ B

Saplings planted in Velachery



In commemoration of World Environment Day, a voluntary group called Green Velachery planted saplings in Valachery. Students of a government school also took part in this drive.

The saplings were planted along the link road connecting the following MRTS stations: Taramani, Perungudi and Velachery.

"It was a three-hour drive from seven in the morning. We carry out regular tree planting drives on this road for the past few years. Our aim is to enhance the green cover and thereby make the stretch beautiful," says S. Kumararaja, a member of the organisation.

Food was provided to all the volunteers on the occasion, says a press release.

Workshop on mushroom cultivation

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a workshop on mushroom cultivation on June 13. Another session on ready-to-cook food items made from millets will be held on June 14. They include flours meant to make kozhukattai, vadai, pakkoda, adai, bisibelebath, cakes and soups. 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.

Admission on for Montessori teacher training course

Admissions are open for "Primary Montessori Teacher Training Course" at the Indian Montessori Training Courses - Chennai.

According to a press

release, classes for the 10-month diploma course will begin from July 10.

It will be held from Monday to Thursday. The curriculum includes theory and practical work.

The course completion

certificate will be issued by the Indian Montessori Centre - Bangalore, the apex-body for Montessori teacher training in India, adds the release. For details, call 94449 36263 / 044 - 24614301

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