

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



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Date:
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January 2025

Time:
08:30 a.m. to
10:30 a.m.

Venue:
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Chairman

Shri. AJIT KUMAR CHORDIA
Trustee

Shri. BHARAT KUMAR CHORDIA
Trustee

More shelters needed at Chromepet station

In 2022, when platform 1A, a double-discharge, at the Chromepet railway station was opened there was no shelter. After months, a few roofs were facilitated. But that is not enough for the number of commuters using the station. Extra benches with shelters are required.

Commuters take refuge under hoardings and trees at the entrance to platform 1A or along the ATM on the platform. Some wait on the FOB steps.

Southern Railway should look into this concern of passengers at the earliest.

S. Vasudevan
Chromepet



'Mend the battered patches on Nanganallur Second Main Road

Nanganallur Second Main Road is a vital link road facilitating connectivity to the Southern Sector Inner Ring Road and Medavakkam Main Road, which come under Nanganallur - Adambakkam region.

In view of metro rail work on Medavakkam Main Road, the traffic is diverted through the main road, in Vanuvampet region.

After the rains in December, the road surface has worn out considerably, giving motorists an uncomfortable experience.

The Alandur Zone of Greater Chennai Corporation should relay the stretch till Thillai Ganga Nagar 23rd Street. Along 28th Street, even



the speed breaker is battered, and the milled and scraped surface is visible.

R. Anand Ramanujam
Nanganallur

'Resume repair work at Thillai Ganga Nagar underpass'

Recently, the State Highway Department undertook a project at Thillai Ganga Nagar underpass in Nanganallur to study the cause of water leaking at the facility.

Some repair work was taken along the medians but no work

was carried out on the subway.

Even today, water oozes from the rainwater network and the carriageway, posing a risk to the safety of motorcyclists.

The water stagnates at the downward portion on the lanes

towards Alandur and Adambakkam and at the turning area (towards Adambakkam), increasing the risk of accidents.

On the lane towards Vanuvampet, water oozes from two areas of the carriageway.

The pedestrian pathway connecting Fourth Street and First Main Road is shaky, and there are gaps between the slabs. All these issues must be addressed.

S. Lalitha Seshadri
Nanganallur

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 postal address and contact number.

CMDA launches mobile app for KCBT

Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority has launched a mobile app to enhance the travel experience of commuters from Kalaignar Centenary Bus Terminus (KCBT) in Kilambakkam.

Available in Tamil and English, it can be downloaded free on Android and iOS platforms.

In the app journey planner section, a commuter can reach the terminus using the map, check the availability of buses and find city public transport buses from KCBT to regions across the city (Chennai Bus app)

In the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation / State Express Transport Corporation bus details section, the app highlights the buses' destinations and from which platforms.

The KCBT features include services, amenities, and cab booking subsections, where commuters and passengers can check for SETC and TNSC ticket counters, dormitories, cloakroom, Aavin parlor, prepaid auto booking center, ATM, drinking water facilities, lactation room, vehicular parking spaces for two and four-wheelers, pharmacy, medical center, cloth bag vending machine, and booking cabs through apps. The app has sections for grievances, feedback, helpline numbers, notice boards, and frequently asked questions.

The app helpline number is 78457 00557.



Chromepet's deteriorating streets

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

In Chromepet (East), many streets are nothing more than potholes, a series of potholes deteriorating by the day.

Stretches of Anjaneyar Kovil Street, Nehru Nagar, Bashyam Nagar First Street, Bhuvaneshwari Nagar Second Street, and Pachiappan Nagar Road fall in this sad category.

G. Arunachalam, a resident of Nehru Nagar, says, "Long ago, Tambaram City Municipal

Corporation carried out patchwork at points, but it did not cover all the damaged portions on the stretch. Even the patchwork is battered now."

At Kovil Street, along Sarangan Street, motorists can travel without a bumpy ride, as the patchwork is levelled with sand and stones. A similar situation is found at the intersection of BBR (Bashyam Nagar, Bhuvaneshwari Nagar and Raghava Nagar) Nagar Main Road and Bashyam Nagar Third Main Road.

Meenakshi Nagar Second Street and Bashyam Nagar First Street need attention. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



On Bashyam Nagar First Street, a portion of the carriageway towards Varatharajan Street has been sliced off. Motorists heading towards Meenakshi Nagar jump lanes to avoid the stoned section.

The same situation prevails on Bhuvaneshwari Nagar Se-

cond Street and Pachiappan Nagar Road.

"We have raised the issue with the civic body many times, but our pleas have fallen on deaf ears," says S. Meenakshi Sundaram, a resident of Nehru Nagar.

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MLA urges railway to donate additional land for subway

Pallavaram MLA E. Karunanidhi has requested Southern Railway to donate additional land to expedite the work on Radha Nagar subway in Chromepet.

The MLA met the Southern Railway Divisional Manager recently and submitted a petition.

The MLA pointed out that the exit path to GST Road from Radha Nagar Main Road needs to be widened and there is no

space on GST Road (on the lane towards MIT flyover) to widen the path. Southern Railway should donate an area of the land that should be 3 feet wide and 30 meters long.

“The railway should grant permission to the State Highways Department to widen the exit path on its land so that the public can use the subway in the future,” said V. Santhanam, a civic activist.

Currently, to reach GST Road, residents from localities in Chromepet (East) have to either go through Level Crossing 26, Shrimathi Devkunvar Nanalal Bhatt Vaishnav College For Women railway gate, 27, Radha Nagar Gate, or via MIT flyover.

Southern Railway officials have promised that they will do what is needed.

Text: T.S. Atul Swaminathan

An ‘uphill’ task for motorists



Drains run below turf scuffed by tyres and shoes. The drains need to be neatly concealed. If the “concealer” can be seen from a mile away, the work needs to be revisited. On Tambaram Velachery Main Road in Selaiyur, a “mound” has risen on account of such a work, slowing down traffic as road users, not only motorcyclists but also operators of vehicles with more than two wheels baulking at “treading” this mound. For the sake of locating it, it is found on the section where KK Hospital is situated, but on the other side of the carriageway (where traffic moves towards Camp Road junction). The image was taken on January 24, 2025. PHOTOS: PRINCE FREDERICK



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A brand story

Micro enterprise Kamarkattu Ecostore has harnessed the power of authentic storytelling; its Insta reels might be a bit jagged around the edges but they inspire trust for their simplicity and unvarnished presentation

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

Kamarkattu Ecostore is putting its digital foot impressively forward. Swipe through its Instagram page (@kamarkattu.ecostore) to see how. The micro enterprise puts out visual stories that revel not only in its finished products, but also in the mundane processes that bring those creations to a sustainability shelf.

Before anything else, an outline of this Velachery-based enterprise's place under a green sun. It fits the classic mould of a micro business. If you counted its workforce on your fingers, three fingers would remain unfolded: a seven-member, all-women production team. It offers skin-care and homeware essentials with the circumflex accent placed firmly on top of sustainable alternatives. It notes it sources toxin-free, natural native ingredients.

Back to its Insta page, check out these posts. Titled "Plastic free & proud", a reel with visuals of orders being tucked into eco-friendly packaging presents this line: "Every time we get your orders ready, we smile with pride on how much plastic we avoided." And in a series of posts, it wove a visual story around the Yule season in December 2024, "embossing" recognisably Christmas motifs in its sustainable "soaplets" (as it calls its small-sized soaps). So, there sat these eco-friendly soaps shaped like Santa, a Christmas tree and a train. This Insta story titled "Soapy's Christmas Story" was accompanied by catchy Yule music. A note that went with it read: "Our



girls got so excited with all these cute Christmas soaps and made a little story out of it... we will post the story one pic every day". And they went on to do just that in the days that followed, creating two characters Bubbles and Soapy made out of their soaplets who would take the narrative forward.

Thendral Manimozhi, founder and prime mover behind Kamarkat-

tu Ecostore laughs at the recent memory: the idea for "Soapy's Christmas Story" came from someone interning with us, she reveals. The reels carry an endearingly personal touch which actually enables the viewer to gloss over the raggedness around the edges that they carry. The reels seem to have been created off the cuff with the staff themselves featuring in them with hurriedly



During lighter moments at Kamarkattu Ecostore.

readied scripts. But it is difficult to question their effectiveness, their dilettante quality being their strength as it inspires trust. This micro business' strong digital moorings makes sense when you check its date of origin. It was born in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. A civil engineer with 10 years of experience in sales and marketing, Thendral crankstarted it following an a-ha moment. It was a moment of truth one that led her to question the effects of using regular toothpaste and soaps. Within the framework of that questioning, she discovered the motivation to create toxin-free products, promote conscious consumerism and also make it an affordable proposition.

The brand set off on its business journey at a leisurely trot, restricting itself to a few products such as bath powder, virgin coconut oils,

natural kajal and shampoo bars – the pandemic was looming large after all – and has expanded to deal in around 200 products now. Its product line would have expanded hugely, but in its core, it remains unchanged. Sustainability drives the business, with all the processes, ranging from sourcing to shipping being completely plastic-free. The packaging uses black and white paper, along with reusable or compostable cartons and newspapers as fillers. Even the packaging tape is plastic-free. Thendral underlines the fact that the brand avoids flashy packaging, opting for simple designs, which sometimes affects customer appeal but aligns with its vision of waste-free living.

The micro enterprise does not operate from a showroom, and is essentially a mail-order business and geography is out of the equation. Kamarkattu's production team consists of eight women with a five to six hour daily work schedule to enable them to attend to personal responsibilities without any great difficulty.

For its products, native raw materials are sourced from states such as Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Delhi. Popular products by the brand include shampoo bars, dishwash bars, "takeout dishwash powder", laundry powder and a face scrub made with 30 herbs and flowers in powder form. The brand also resells coir, neem and bamboo products from a cooperative society in Kanyakumari.

Thendral notes that they educate customers on sustainability by continuously reiterating the basics. She emphasises the brand's focus on long-lasting products, holding up as illustration a shaving bar used by a customer for over 1.5 years. The name "Kamarkattu" reflects this philosophy, inspired by the lingering sweetness of the candy and the concept of "naked" products, free of toxins and preservatives.

Thendral remarks that despite challenges such as higher production costs accruing from sustainable practices and reduced margins, the brand maintains affordability. Thendral observes that small sustainable brands often close down due to consumer scrutiny over cost and authenticity, while large brands engaging in greenwashing face less questioning. Despite the challenges, Kamarkattu continues to promote its values of sustainability and conscious consumerism, adds Thendral.

Thendral is among sustainability champions that believe that when you have gone green, you have to shun silo thinking. You have to join the movement. She participates in a WhatsApp group, which includes sustainability heavyweights such as India Wasted 360, to exchange ideas and tackle challenges relating to sustainable businesses and living, and she connects offline annually with these like-minded individuals through a meetup.



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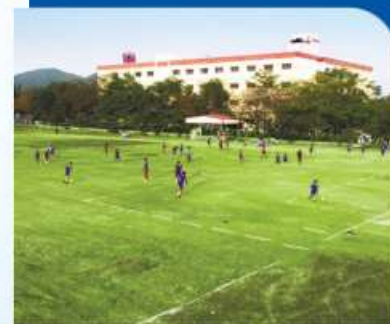
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Transforming hearts through arts



A winning team from the previous edition; (below) teams from Chennai Public School and NSN Memorial School. Photos: Special Arrangement

LIFFY THOMAS

On February 2, more than 200 children from various schools will attend the awards ceremony of 'Art to Connect 2.0' at Kalakshetra Foundation in Thiruvananthapuram.

The event marks the culmination of an initiative to connect children from mainstream schools with children who have special needs. In the run-up to this event, both have showcased their skills in music, dance, painting and singing.

More than 100 schools and 300 specially-abled peers, referred to as "buddies", across major cities participated in the second edition. Four teams (each comprising an able-bodied child and a buddy) were selected as the national winners of 'Art to Connect 2.0'. Besides, awards will be presented in other categories such as "Harmony and Diversity", "Transformative Connect" and "Inclusive Creativity".

Winning is not the ultimate aim of this initiative started by Nirmala Krishnan, who has worn various hats including as principal of Mahindra World School and Country Head Education for the Jindal Group.

The event meets one of the criteria of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 10.3 of reducing inequalities and offering equal opportunities to all. The collaboration is also aimed at fostering empathy, promoting art and culture and encouraging children to develop an emotional connection with society.

Shruti Malaar, a Class XI student

'Art to Connect' unites children from mainstream schools with children who have special needs in a special bond that is crowned by creative pursuits. In its second edition now, the initiative is bringing more schools on board



of Chennai Public School, took this initiative forward to get nine students to enrol for the event. With the help of two teacher coordinators their task was to figure out how to bond with the buddies and co-create a piece of art together.

Shruti was assigned the role of videographer-cum-editor where she had to shoot the work of teams to get the best out of them.

"I volunteered for this event as I wanted to overcome my fears of interacting with children with special needs and this role got me to experience nine stories," says Shruti. Wielding a Nikon camera, she captured a variety of emotions as her schoolmates engaged with buddies from Apple Valley Special School.

Neha, for instance, was paired with a student on the spectrum to work on a piece of art. But when the buddy saw other teams dancing he too wanted to dance. Harshini's buddy did not want to communicate in a certain way and she had to mellow down her conversational style to ensure she felt safe.

"I got to converse and cap-

The process

Schools are required to register with Art to Connect and agree with a set of rules and regulations for the event. There is no entry fee, and every participating team is required to send a one-minute video of their interaction and another one-minute video of their art.

Entries must also be uploaded with a 600-word write-up about their journey. For details, visit linkthedots.online or email linkthedots13@gmail.com

ture so many emotions of excitement, comfort, adaptation during this exercise," says the 17-year-old.

It took some doing for Varnika A., a Class XI student of NSN Memorial School, to teach the dance steps to her buddy Hemanya, who is dyslexic, but the end result was a beautiful bond. "I first made her comfortable asking about her likes and dislikes before we started to practise some steps. What I liked was she was open to learning and I just had to be patient till she got them right," says Varnika.

NSN Group of Schools had 15 students taking part in the event, where the school joined hands with Vatsalya Open Schooling. "We brought students from the Centre

to our campus. While the rapport was built on the same day, a few required more time and a different approach," says Shyamala V., coordinator for this event from the school.

Other noteworthy entries include a national winner from a school at Kamathipura, a neighbourhood with social fractures in Mumbai. "Some schools have told me that their students had an emotional transformation by bonding with a peer," says Nirmala.

There is also an international winner from Tajikistan, Zuhra, who danced with Amir, a boy with speech impairment.

Growing strong

The first edition of 'Art to Connect' was held in 2020 with 20 schools qualifying for the finals. This time, it has grown to more than double the number. Last year, Pune registered the maximum number of participants. This time, Tamil Nadu tops the list.

Nirmala says this is an event for mainstream schools and she expects them to do the ground work of locating a buddy.

"In Delhi, many schools have children with special needs across classes but that is not the case in the South," she says.

Nirmala says the larger goal of Art to Connect is to strengthen the bond and show children the need to cultivate patience, compassion, empathy and gratitude. The jury looks at the effort made by a participant to bond.

As part of the competition, participants also take a pledge that when they grow up and attain positions of power they will try to bring in policies that are inclusive.

"Transformation is what I am looking for and this is just the beginning," says Nirmala, who comes from the pharmaceutical industry and has authored books on education.



Vandalur residents organise grand Pongal celebration

A clutch of neighbourhoods in Vandalur – Venkatesapuram, Lakshmi Nagar and Singara Thottam among them – came together to honour the harvest festival in true Tamil tradition.

The event, hosted by Dr. Abdul Kalam Youth Welfare Association and Annai Theresa Welfare Association, showcased the rich cultural fabric of the suburb. Families arrived in colourful attire, and the venue buzzed with excitement as the celebrations unfolded, says a press release.

Competitions brought out the

best in children and elders alike. Children raced to the finish line in running and sack races, played musical chairs with boundless energy, and lit up the event with their enthusiasm. Artistic talents were showcased brightly as children sang soulful devotional songs, performed Carnatic music, displayed rhythmic mastery on the mridangam, demonstrated silambam skills, and recited Thirukural verses with poise. Every child walked away with a gift, ensuring that no one left without a smile.

Two retirement community projects launched



The GT Bharathi Urban Developers Private Limited has launched two retirement community projects – ‘Elements Sattva’ in Porur and ‘Elements Kamalam.’

The Sattva project allows senior citizens to reside within the city. The other project has introduced an ‘Independent Seniors’ Leasing (ISL) scheme, which allows seniors

to lease their homes at 50 percent of the purchase cost, offering investors good rental returns, said a release. To offer seniors and their families a first-hand experience of retirement homes, the real estate housing firm is conducting an expo at Ethiraja Kalyana Mandapam, TTK Road in Alwarpet that ends on January 26.

Nanganallur RWA honours conservancy workers



As part of its silver jubilee celebrations, the Hindu Colony Welfare Association in Nanganallur conducted Pongal Vizha at The Hindu Colony Chellammal Vidyalaya Senior Secondary School.

Tamil actor Arun Vijay was the special guest, along with chefs Deena, Mallika Badrinath and Divya.

The association members honoured the Colony’s conservancy staff who work tirelessly to keep the locality clean.

The school students entertained the audience with various events such as Villupattu, Kummi, Kolattam, Karakattam, and Silambam. N. Durga Devi Natarajan, Councilor, Ward 167, Zone 12 (Alandur Zone) took part in the event.

ROKA’s 10th waste collection drive on February 1 and 2

Residents of Kasturbanagar Association (ROKA) has inked in its 10th waste collection drive – based on the theme “Together We Can” – for February 1 and 2, 2025 (from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on both days). The drive is spread across five centres.

(ROKA) has been in the solid waste management and environment work since 2018 and has so far, through just its collection drives, diverted close to 60 MT of waste into effective processing, says a press release.

The items that are being handed over can be in any condition but should be clean and dry. Items that are soiled and dirty would be rejected, the press release adds.

The following categories of items can be brought to the collection points – clothes; footwear; bags; e-waste; tablet strips; ballpoint pens; mattresses/ pillows (accepted only at the collection point in Adyar); X ray films; glass bottles; hard and soft plastics and newspaper and books

The recycling partners are: Recycle Mart, SPRECO Recycling Pvt. Ltd., and Wasted 360.

For more details, call 86674 99135.

The collection centres: KNRA Hall in Adyar; On Axis, Velachery; RMSM aastn - The Public Gym, Sivakamipuram Second Cross in Thiruvanniyur; Spreco recycling facility in West Tambaram; and Singaravelan Oceanside Welfare Association (SOWA) in Chinna Neelankarai

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Health camp at New Perungalathur

Deepam Hospitals Group is organising a free health camp on January 26 at its newly inaugurated Deepam Health Center on Kamarajar High Road, Balaji Nagar, New Perungalathur.

The health camp will offer free general health, eye, and diabetes screenings. The health centre has 24-hour emergency care, pharmacy, lab, and X-ray services. Physiotherapists and home care services are also available.

For details, call Udaya Kumar at 99406 37802.



During the inauguration of the classrooms

Resident donates fund for construction of three classrooms at Chromepet school

Three classrooms, funded through a generous donation by K. Radhakrishnan to Ayyaswamy High School, a government-aided institution in Chromepet, were inaugurated recently. Previously, Radhakrishnan had also contributed to the construction of the school's Biology, Physics, and Chemistry laboratories. Pallavaram MLA Karunanidhi, S. Balachander, Commissioner of Tambaram Corporation, A.T. Ravichandran, Lions Governor, and

other dignitaries attended the event. Radhakrishnan is deeply committed to improving school infrastructure, taking initiatives that range from providing benches and tables for students to constructing classrooms. He actively visits schools to identify underprivileged students and helps them continue their education by covering their fees. His contributions extend beyond Ayyaswamy High School, including providing

infrastructure like tables and benches for CES Middle School, Chromepet.

A builder by profession, Radhakrishnan dedicates a portion of his earnings to social causes, such as dredging lakes and removing weeds to improve the community environment. Reflecting on his inspiration, he says: "My parents, Smt. Rajamma and Sri Kalladikrishnan, instilled in me a strong sense of community welfare right from my childhood."

Special buses for Thai Ammavasai

In view of 'Thai Ammavasai' (January 29), the Tamil Nadu State Express Transport Corporation will be operating additional special buses to Rameshwaram from Chennai city and other cities on January 28.

Buses will be operated from Kalaigair Centenary Bus Terminus (KCBT) in Kilambakkam.

On January 28, buses will operate to the pilgrimage town from Coimbatore, Salem and Bengaluru. On Janu-

ary 29, additional special buses will operate from Rameshwaram to Chennai (KCBT), Coimbatore, Salem, and Bengaluru.

The public can book the tickets through www.tnsrc.in and the official TNSTC app.

Expo ends today

On Mudichur Road, West Tambaram, near Natarasan Kottai Restaurant, an exhibition featuring various stalls showcasing unique products, delicious food and thrilling entertainment activities such as a Ferris wheel, a pirate ride, and water games, ends today.

Workshop on heritage conservation

Hepzibah Institute of Heritage Conservation is conducting a workshop on conservation and restoration of antiquities of a church from February 3 to 8. Time: From 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. For ve-

nue details, call 9381008253. According to a press release, no fee will be charged.

Hepzibah Institute of Heritage Conservation is at 21, VOC Street, MGR Nagar.

A new route number between Guindy and Kotturpuram



▼
The route number S30K.
PHOTO:
SPECIAL
ARRANGEMENT

The Metropolitan Transport Corporation has introduced a bus route number between Guindy and Kotturpuram.

Route number S30K (Guindy - Thiru Vi Ka Industrial Estate - Kotturpuram MRTS railway station) will ply through the Estate to stop at Guindy State Multi-Speciality Hospital,

Alandur Road and Bazaar Road in Saidapet, Saidapet Metro Station and Kotturpuram railway station.

From the Estate, the buses would leave at 7.10 a.m., 8.40 a.m., 10.05 a.m., and 11.25 a.m., and 12.40 p.m., 2.05 p.m., 3.20 p.m., and 4.40 p.m., said a release.

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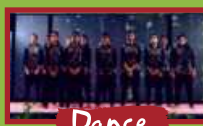
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