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Last leg of decluttering exercise

Today is the last day of a three-day waste collection drive that targets residents of MRC Nagar and surrounding areas



On January 11, a three-day waste collection involving apartment complexes in MRC Nagar will conclude. According to a press release, among communities taking part in this drive are Jains Sagarika, Rani Meiyammai Towers, 174 Ceebros, Ficus Grove, Padmalaya and Raheja Karpagam Avenue. The exercise targets apartments for the number of households they concentrate in a single address, but is not out of bounds for residents of individual houses. They are also encouraged to bring their recyclable waste to the drive; the same holds good

for residents of neighbouring areas, those outside MRC Nagar.

The drive was initiated by MRC Nagar resident Priya Ramkumar. She got representatives of apartment complexes to promote the drive in their communities.

Representatives informed residents through WhatsApp groups and in-house posters were circulated inhouse, the release says.

Residents are asked to drop used clothes, toys, e-waste and other items that must not end in a landfill. NGO Saahas will be picking up the collected waste from designated points.

EVENTS ON SUNDAY

Blood donation drive in Triplicane

A blood donation camp is being organised on the occasion of Swami Vivekanandar's 163rd Jayanthi and to celebrate 150 years of Vande Mataram on January 11 at SYMA Medical Center; from 9.00 am to 2.00 pm.

Government IOG Hospital and Blood Bank, Egmore are associating with this drive. To register, call 94448 48880/ 86674 07877.

North Mada Street to display kolams

Today is the last day of the Sundaram Finance Mylapore Festival.

The kolam and rangoli competition will be conducted on North Mada Street from 3 p.m. onwards. A pot painting workshop for children and a chess contest are other highlights of the day. Besides, concerts are taking place at Kapali temple in Mylapore.

For details, visit mylaporefestival.in



'Chennai needs more low-floor buses'

Various recommendations have been presented in a report by commerce students of The New College on the State Government's free bus ride scheme

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A survey by students of The New College in Royapettah to study the impact of the State Government's flagship scheme to provide free bus ride to women has received a thumbs-up, but with suggestions for improvement.

The seed grant research project on 'Impact of the Magalir Vilidyal Payanam' scheme on women's mobility and empowerment in Tamil Nadu reached out to 300 women and 135 routes.

Twenty-five postgraduate and



undergraduate students from the Department of Commerce fanned out to various locations in the city to take up this study, which was spread across three months. Women from various socio-economic backgrounds were interviewed.

Recommendations include introduction of more low-floor buses on busy routes where there is good patronage by elderly and the differently-abled, increasing the frequency of buses on underserved routes, ensuring regular servicing of buses, aligning schedules with peak travel hours, displaying real-time route and tim-

ing information inside buses and at bus stops, and construction of covered waiting areas with seating.

Introduced in 2021, the free bus travel scheme has helped reduce travel-related financial burdens, particularly for students, workers, and low-income families. For many, it has also supported access to education and employment.

The analysis of problems experienced while using the scheme shows that the most common difficulty faced by commuters is the limited number of buses in certain routes, reported by 116 out of



Students fanned out to various areas for the survey.

300 respondents, says the report. This was followed by issues related to poor bus condition (62 respondents) and overcrowding (60 respondents), reflecting concerns about comfort and the need for an expanded and well-maintained fleet. A considerable number of respondents (48) highlighted inconvenient timings,

suggesting that current schedules may not align well with commuter needs, particularly during peak hours. Although relatively fewer respondents (14) raised safety concerns, the issue is still significant, as even a small proportion indicates the need for measures to ensure secure travel, especially for vulnerable groups.

J. Sulaiman, principal investigator for the project, says they have submitted the report to the Centre for Multidisciplinary Research and Innovation of the college. "We will next be submitting it to the government. Our findings say that people want the scheme to continue," says the assistant professor and research supervisor, PG and Research Department of Commerce.

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PONGAL CHEER ARRIVES AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

In an event at YMCA Grounds in Royapettah, KIND offers gifts to over 2,000 differently abled children **P4**



NAVIGATING LIFE TACTILELY

Chennai resident S. Vanaja, a visually impaired car rally navigator, proves the continuing relevance of Braille in more ways than one **P6**



Patchwork on RK Mutt Road

The section on RK Mutt Road that caved in on account of a sewage pipeline damage nearly two weeks ago underwent patchwork on January 9. The closing of this patch was carried out allowing a week for curing and settling down of the mended section. If one tracked the civic history of RK Mutt Road, they would come upon many cave-ins, almost all of them having been triggered by a malfunctioning sewage pipeline under the earth.

TEXT & PHOTO: CR BALAJI

Free bus services at Chennai Book Fair



Free bus services are being operated for visitors to Chennai Book Fair organised by BAPASI. Four small buses do round trips from Nandanam Metro to the venue of the book fair (which is YMCA Nandanam) and back. The book fair is on till January 21. Photos: Prince Frederick

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Pongal cheer arrives ahead of schedule

In an event at YMCA Grounds in Royapettah, KIND offers gifts to over 2,000 differently abled children

TARUN SHAstry

Karuna Institute for Nobility and Development (KIND), a registered non-governmental organisation dedicated to serving underprivileged sections of society, hosted a Pongal celebration for over 2,000 differently abled children at the YMCA Grounds, Royapettah on January 10.

Children with physical, intellectual, speech, hearing and visual impairments, accompanied by their parents, participated in the programme, which forms part of KIND's annual endeavour to commemorate major national and religious festivals with marginalised communities. The event witnessed the presence of nearly 4,000 attendees, including parents, distinguished guests, volun-



From the event

teers and supporters.

Gift hampers valued at ₹1,500 each were presented to the children. The hampers comprised essential grocery items and new clothing. The overall expenditure for the event amounted to approximately ₹50 lakh and was underw-



ritten by patrons of KIND.

The programme was organised under the stewardship of KIND Founder Trustee and President, Vimalchand Dharival, and was presided over by Nemichand Chopda, former President of the All India Jain Conference. Among the dignitaries in attendance were Prabhakaran, Supreme Court advocate and prominent disability rights campaigner; Ignatius Xavier, UN awardee and Ahimsa artist; C.N. Ramesh, social activist; and Rajib Hota, IRS, former Income Tax Commissioner.

Actor and politician R. Sarath Kumar graced the occasion as Chief Guest and distributed clothing and gift hampers to the children. The celebrations featured a series of cultural performances showcasing Tamil heritage, including karakattam, poikkal kudhirai aattam, nadaswaram, school band presentations and Bharatanatyam. A light music programme was also arranged for the children's enjoyment. According to the organisers, the initiative exemplifies KIND's sustained commitment to fostering inclusive celebrations and promoting meaningful community engagement for children with special needs.



A platform for music learners

Tharaka Manthiram Varanamalika Trust (TMV) conducted Varna Samellanam at the Mini Hall in Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mylapore last Sunday.

TMV Trust has been conducting music events since 2011. Rukmani Sivakumar supports budding music learners by providing opportunities to

showcase their talent during the Margazhi season, says a press release.

She encourages all music learners to master varnams, as they form the grammar of Carnatic music. Learning more varnams strengthens the foundation of Carnatic music, helps in mastering ragas, and brings perfection in swarams, the release adds.

The Varna Samellanam Award ceremony was preceded by speeches from prominent guests. The chief guests were "Kalai Mudumani, Kala Saagar Rathina" Maestro B. Ramoorthy Rao; "Villisai Mani" vocalist Ramya Suresh; and N.S. Parameswaran, government member – Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, CEDC/South/TNEB.

Workshop on how to make

value-added products from coconut

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute is conducting a training programme on making value-added products from coconut. The session will be held from January 21 to 23 from the institute's premises at EDII Office Road, SIDCO Industrial Estate, Guindy. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

According to a press release, participants will learn to make the following products from coconut: different types oil meant for various purposes such as cooking, hair care, and rheumatism-related ailments.

Next, the use of coconuts in making moisturizers for body care and over-the-counter balms for pain relief from headaches and colds.

Further, the session will focus on use of coconuts in food items



such as cookies, syrup, flavour powders, and desiccated coconut.

Those above 18 years of age with a minimum educational qualification of class 10 may apply. Hostel facility is available on first come, first serve basis.

Prior registration is mandatory. To register, visit website www.editn.in

For details, call 8668102600.

Two-day course on graphic design using AI

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute is conducting a training programme on "graphic design using AI with Canva" on January 19 and 20 at Shri Krishnaswamy College for Women, Anna Nagar.

According to a press release, participants will learn about graphic designing for advertisement, branding, and marketing. Fee is ₹1,500. Prior registration is mandatory. For details, call 99625 96111.

ENVIRONMENT

Sun shines 'dim' over Chennai

For the metro to have a significant slice of the solar energy pie, it needs to have greater skill training imparted to entrepreneurs and technicians in the field

LIFFY THOMAS

Geyam Kalyan Residents Association at Thiruvengadam Street in RA Puram had invested in a solar rooftop unit, but were not benefitting optimally from it until last year. A workshop conducted by Citizen Consumer and Civic Action Group last year opened their eyes to where they were going wrong. The solar panels in their apartment provided by the developer/ vendor had been connected to 'net feed-in' instead of 'net metering'. Only when they made the switch did their decision to go solar stand fully vindicated. The electricity bill "slimmed".

Knowledge gap among vendors of solar units can leave adopters of solar energy disillusioned as members of this RWA were till they attended that workshop. Those in the industry say Tamil Nadu needs more skilled solar entrepreneurs and technicians. There is an urgency to this need as Tamil Nadu Combined Development and Building Rules 2019 mandates that one third of the total terrace area in multi-storeyed buildings be reserved for erecting solar photovoltaic panels.

Suryamitra Skill Development Programme, initiated in 2015 by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and implemented by the National Institute of Solar Energy to meet skilling demand and employment in the solar sector, does not paint a rosy picture.

According to suryamitra.nic.res.in, since 2015 Tamil Nadu has placed 1946 candidates from the 3911 trained under the programme. There are 14 institutes listed under Tamil Nadu as empanelled training centres for Suryamitra Skill Development Programme for financial year 2023-24; the list includes none from Chennai.

Sundaresan Ranganathan, director, Tamilnadu Advanced Technical Training Institute (TATTI), a registered organisation with the Tamil Nadu government conducting rooftop solar systems-related training, says the number of centres offering training in Chennai to enter the sector for various roles are so low that they can be counted on the fingers.

Many seek entrepreneurial



green pastures in the renewable energy sector thanks to funding by state and central government and the Prime Minister Surya Ghar Scheme, but a great number of them lack the wherewithal to support customers on a long-term basis.

"This is an evolving field. So many technological changes are taking place. It is not just enough having an accredited certification to run the business; they must upskill periodically," says Sundaresan.

TATTI, a knowledge partner of NIEBUD, conducts a nine-day residential programme to train entrepreneurs to start a

business in solar rooftop technology. "But you cannot become an entrepreneur overnight. One must work in an industry for three to six months at least to understand how they buy stock, interact with customers and handle other nitty-gritty of the business. We ask our students to look for an internship with a company to learn the ropes of the business," he says.

Sundaresan says some of the common complaints coming from residents include faulty installation, poor documentation and not adopting colour-coded installation.

"There is a difference between estimated solar supply and actual power supply in in-



The city to host Solar Premier League

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The sixth edition of Solar Premier League will unspool from April 22 to 24, 2026 at Chennai Trade Centre. The event's title might resonate with cricket, but has nothing to do with it. It brings together professionals from the solar sector to showcase their expertise as solar photovoltaic installers. Best practices and safety standards promoted by them would also be on display.

Organised by Solar is My Passion and powered by RenewX, the contest is supported by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India and will see at least 16 teams showcasing their installation skills.

The contest requires participating teams (companies in the solar sector) to install a 2 kW grid connected rooftop system in a given time. This is followed by a written and oral test to gauge their knowledge. The best installation will be selected on the basis of various criteria including time in commissioning, tools used, dress, the way knowledge is shared and viewers' choice. The system and its components will be provided by the organiser.

Ajit Bahadur, founder, Solar is My Passion, says the event is an opportunity to showcase talent and encourage more professionals to follow best practices participating companies have put in place. "Last year, we had 16 teams in the fray and each had something new to offer, so SPL is a win-win for all, especially helping create a new breed of technicians and entrepreneurs," says Ajit, who has been in the industry for over two decades.

This year, we have a new addition, a workshop on micro inverter or hybrid inverter, these are new technologies in the field of solar power generation, says Ajit.

The first edition of Solar Premier League was held in Pune; three teams participated in it. Since then the number of companies has increased and the event has been conducted in cities such as Hyderabad, Noida and Chennai.

The event is open for all installation teams, Suryamitra training institute and solar training institute.

For details, visit <https://solaripl.com/>

From a previous edition of Solar Premier League. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

stallation, which many vendors are not able to analyse resulting in a negative impact," says Sundaresan who conducts solar rooftop classes for Entrepreneurship Development and Innovation Institute.

Industry collaboration

Rajaganesan G, founder and director, VATIO Energy India, says to create the right skill force more advanced training should be offered at training centres in keeping with industry requirements. The renewable energy industry must be able to draw people from various professional backgrounds including those skilled in AI, he says.

"We need course modules that will cater to EPC (engineering, procurement and construction)," says Rajaganesan. Once a training partner with Suryamitra Skill Development Programme, today the company has opted out of it as it found the partnership being regulated in a manner that was stifling. "Skills in solar are technical and best offered hands-on, so the Skill Council must have greater collaboration with the industry to study the exact problem and find solutions," he says.

Certified technicians

A word of caution to those engaging with solar entrepreneurs. Only certified persons should install a solar rooftop system. "Right now there is no such mandate from the Government including when a certificate has to be renewed or a mechanism to check if the certificate is valid," says Rajaganesan.

Navigating life tactiley

On January 4 (World Braille Day), braille literary crisis was a dominant topic. Chennai resident S. Vanaja, a visually impaired car rally navigator, proves the continuing relevance of this reading system in more ways than one

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

Associated with the Brailles on Wheels rally in Chennai for decades, S. Vanaja navigates not only roads with a Braille map, but also metaphorical roads in almost every aspect of her life. At a time when educators serving visually impaired youngsters are racking their brains over how to combat the "Braille literary crisis" as they call it, this Aminjikarai resident would be a great ally to them, as she is a textbook example of why Braille works still and has retained its relevance. And that Braille literacy makes a compelling call amidst the clamour of assistive technologies. Here is her Braille worldview in sprinkles of insight.

"Braille is indispensable in mastering language-heavy disciplines."

"Technology can fail when there is no power or no battery. But Braille will always be with you."

Learning braille

Vanaja's introduction to Braille began as early as her first standard at the Palayamkottai Blind School, where Braille was not an aid but the primary language of learning. Tamil Braille was taught first, followed by English Braille in second standard. The Braille textbooks used during her school years were printed and supplied by the Government Regional Braille Press in Poonamallee, which catered to government-aided blind schools across Tamil Nadu. Both Tamil and English books reached her school regularly, ensuring continuity in learning. Up to Eighth Standard, every subject she studied was available in Braille, making tactile reading central to her academic life. "Till eighth standard, everything was in Braille – textbooks, notes and lessons," says Vanaja. In the blind school, Braille was deeply embedded into everyday classroom practice. Teachers themselves were fluent in Braille, and learning happened at a pace that allowed students to internalise spelling, sentence structure, and comprehension through touch. This environment, Vanaja believes, played a crucial role in building her confidence and literacy, especially in languages such as Tamil and English.

Shared study system

After completing Eighth Standard, Vanaja had to transition to a regu-



lar school in Palayamkottai as her blind school did not offer higher classes. This shift marked a major change in how she accessed learning materials. Braille textbooks were no longer readily available, and visually impaired students had to rely on collective effort and ingenuity to keep up with the curriculum. Along with three to four other visually impaired girls, Vanaja developed a shared study system. Each student took responsibility for one subject—Tamil, Science, English, or another and prepared Braille notes by transcribing content that was read aloud. These notes were then shared among the group, ensuring that everyone had access to essential study material. "We divided subjects among ourselves and wrote everything in Braille," she explains.

Braille in college

At A.P.C. Mahalaxmi College for Women in Thoothukudi, where

she pursued English Literature, Braille continued to be her primary tool for learning. She and her peers relied on libraries, readers, and peer assistance to access texts, which were then converted into Braille notes. Poetry, prose, and critical material were all studied through tactile reading, reinforcing her belief that Braille was indispensable for language-heavy disciplines.

At work

Vanaja has been living in Chennai for 35 years, work bringing here. Entering the banking sector, she later joined the Central Bank of India, beginning her career as a telephone operator at the Mount Road branch. In this role, Braille became essential for managing phone numbers, extensions, and daily call records. She would note all information in Braille before executing her tasks. As she progressed in her career and worked at the Regional Office, Vanaja was responsible

Going places

S. Vanaja has been part of the Brailles on Wheels rally, a regular on the Chennai calendar. The rally which teams up a visually impaired navigator with a driver who has normal vision, has rolled through 34 editions. National Association for the Blind (NAB), The Savera and Madras Motor Sports Club (MMSC) are prominent among the entities holding this initiative aloft over the years.

She first participated in the rally in 1996, at the age of thirty, and has returned to the event again and again—sometimes after pauses, sometimes year after year.

ble for collecting data from nearly ninety branches across the region. She would call each branch, gather the required figures, and record the data meticulously in Braille. After compiling this information, she would type it into the computer and upload it to the bank's internal systems. This process often took several hours each day.

While preparing for promotion-based exams such as Scale I and Scale II (Assistant Manager), Vanaja learned to use computers alongside Braille. She sees the two not as competing systems but as complementary. "Braille helps us think clearly; the computer helps us work faster," she says, highlighting how tactile literacy supports digital efficiency.

Audio-based learning

Vanaja acknowledges that audio tools are convenient and widely available today. However, she believes they cannot replace Braille, especially for language learning. "When you listen, the spelling does not stay. When you read in Braille, the word stays with you," she explains, stressing that tactile engagement strengthens memory.

Her take on the current educational practices She expresses concern that many visually impaired students today are not taught Braille rigorously. According to her, some schools rely heavily on audio tools and fail to insist on Braille literacy. A shortage of trained Braille teachers worsens the situation. "In our time, Braille was compulsory. Now, it is optional," she says.

Braille in daily life

Outside work and education, Braille drives Vanaja's everyday routine. She carries a small Braille slate and stylus in her handbag and uses it to write grocery and provision lists. These lists help her place accurate orders over the phone, allowing her to remain independent in daily decision-making. While some visually impaired individuals label appliances with Braille stickers, Vanaja prefers not to. She relies on the tactile layout of buttons and muscle memory to operate appliances such as washing machines and microwaves. Vanaja maintains a small but meaningful collection of Braille books at home, including Thirukkural, Bhagavad Gita, and Bharathiya Kavithaigal.

A milestone event for Chennai Poets' Circle

The Chennai Poets' Circle, a non-registered literary group, has been launching an anthology of poems, *Efflorescence*, every year.

The group originated in 1997 and their 25th anniversary issue is being launched on January 18, 2026, at the TAG Auditorium in Rama krishna Mission Matriculation Higher Secondary School (South), Burkitt Road, Chennai, says a press release.

Former Associate Professor and Head, Department of English, Ma-

dras Christian College, K. Ganesh will be the chief guest.

The release notes that every year, the launch of the anthology will be accompanied by a seminar. The seminar to go with this year's launch is on the topic: 'Current Trends in English Poetry in India'.

The special part of the event is that on the day, the poets get to read their poems that have been compiled in the anthology.

The poets include doctors, engineers, auditors, professors, jour-

nalists and homemakers, apart from children who have become part of the circle with the introduction of a section called 'Young Poets Corner'.

Contributions to the anthology are strictly through invitation from the organisation.

The founding fathers of CPC are still actively engaged with it. They include M. Thirumani (chairman) and S. Kannan (president), and office-bearers Hema Ravi (secretary) and Ravi Ranganathan (treasurer).

A display of kickboxing talent



The HammerPro Kickboxing recently organised the Tamilnadu Kickboxing Championship 2025 for amateur and pro kickboxers in the city.

In the 55 kilogram weight category, Alam Azad and Abhijith from Kerala emerged as the winner and the runner-

up respectively. In the 60 kg, Dhaya (Tamil Nadu) and Rahees (Kerala); in the 70 kg, Hayagriv (Tamil Nadu) and Ziyan (Kerala); and in the 75 kg categories, Kavin and Karthik from Tamil Nadu, the press release stated.

The winners were awarded a cash prize and a title belt.



During a distribution drive

A safety blanket

This winter drive by Rotary Club of Chennai Coastal covered various pockets of city

Members of Rotary Club of Chennai Coastal recently took a walk through the city's streets. They were not preparing for a walkathon, but to help those who would need help in dealing with the prevailing chilly nights. They distributed blankets and bedspreads to people sleeping on the roadsides and others in and around Kilpauk, Purasawalkam, Kellys, Anna Nagar, Ambattur, around Chennai Egmore and Chennai Central railway stations, and on Poonamalle High Road. Navin Gupta, the club president, says the members provided blankets to those sleeping rough and shivering in the cold, while those in deep sleep were covered. "The children, women, and elderly people were shivering and fighting mosquitoes. The initiative is part of our 19th year celebrations, and as of January 9

close to 700 blankets and bed sheets have been distributed. In the coming days, we will give it to more people. We have been distributing blankets and bed-sheets every winter for the past 15 years." says Navin. For details, contact Navin Gupta at 9841018111.

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'Cosmetic Gynecology World Congress' held in Chennai



CGCON 2025, the second Cosmetic Gynecology World Congress, was held in Chennai in December at GRT Grand in T. Nagar, with participation from national and international experts.

The event marked the launch of the Cosmetic Gynecology Society of India (CGSI) by Dr. Ezhilan Naganathan, MLA and Member, State Planning Commission, Tamil Nadu.

Training programme on creation of YouTube channel

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, a Department of MSME - Tamil Nadu is conducting a workshop on creation of a YouTube channel.

The programme will be held from January 21 to 23 at the institute's premises at No: 1, EDII Road, SIDCO Industrial Estate, Ekkattuthangal, Guindy. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The session will focus on website designing and social media marketing through YouTube channel.

Those aged 18 and above with a minimum qualification of class 10 and basic computer knowledge are required to take part in the session. Prior registration is mandatory.

To register visit: www.editn.in
For details, call 9360221280 / 8668100181



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FESTIVITY

Special long-distance buses and trains for Pongal

The State Transport Department is plying special long-distance buses for Pongal from four bus terminuses in the city till January 14.

The buses are operated from Kalaignar Centenary Bus Terminus (KCBT) in Kilambakkam (Mofussil and the Metropolitan Transport Corporation bus terminus), Chennai Mofussil Bus Terminus in Koyambedu and Madhavaram New Bus Terminus.

From KCBT, Mofussil buses towards Puducherry, Cuddalore, Chidambaram, Trichy, Madurai, Tuticorin, Sengottai, Thirunelveli, Salem, Coimbatore, Kumbakonam and Thanjavur.

From KCBT's MTC bus terminus, buses to Vandavasi, Polur, Thiruvannamalai, CMBT, Koyambedu, East Coast Road, Kancheepuram, Vellore, Bengaluru, and Thiruttani will be operated.

From Madhavaram New Bus Terminus, buses via Ponneri and Uthukottai to Andhra Pradesh, and Tirchy, Salem, Kumbakonam, and Thiruvannamalai, said a release issued by the State Transport Department.

People travelling through private modes of transport have been requested to drive through Rajiv Gandhi Salai Thiruporur, Kelambakkam, Chengalpattu and Vandalur Outer Ring Road to avoid creating traffic congestion on GST Road in Tambaram and Perungalathur regions.

Around 11 ticket reservation counters have been set up at the bus terminuses in Kilambakkam and Koyambedu, functioning till 9 p.m. on January 14.

A control room has been set up on the premises of the Kilambakkam bus terminus, which will operate around the clock.

Southern Railway

The Railway is operating special trains to clear the passenger rush during the harvest festival.

Train number 06011 Tambaram - Kanniyakumari Superfast Special will leave Tambaram at 15.30 hrs on January 12 and 19 and reach Kanniyakumari at 03.30 hrs the next day.

Train number 06033 Chennai Central - Coimbatore Express Special will leave Central at 23.25 hrs on January 12 and 19, and reach Coimbatore at 09 hrs.

Train number 06057 Tambaram - Tirunelveli Superfast Special will leave Tambaram at 15 hrs on January 13 and 20 and reach Tirunelveli at 02 hrs.

Train number 06151 Chennai Central - Tuticorin Weekly Express Special will leave Central at 23.50 hrs on January 12 and 19 and reach Tuticorin at 12.15 hrs.

CMRL travel cards

The Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has advised its commuters to keep their CMRL travel card and Singara Chennai National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) safely. The cards are used for travel and paying parking payments.

If a commuter loses any one of the cards or both, the balance amount if any in the lost cards will not be transferable or refundable under any circumstances, says a release from the CMRL.

The funds in the offline wallet cannot be blocked if a card is lost; they are at risk of misuse by the card's finder, the release adds.

Ready reckoner

For info on bus routes: 94450 94450 14436 (24X7).

To register complaints against fleecing Omni bus operators: 1800 425 6151 (Toll Free) 044-24749002, 044-26280445, 044-26281611

Book tickets on the TNSTC official website, www.tnstc.in, the TNSTC official app, or via WhatsApp at 9444018898.

For info on trains, visit <https://sr.indianrailways.gov.in/>

In the spirit of the festival



▼ Students of Sri Kanyaka Parameswari Arts and Science College for Women in George Town celebrated Samathuva Pongal with great enthusiasm and cultural fervour, reflecting the spirit of gratitude, unity and togetherness associated with the harvest festival. The highlight of the event was the Pongal making ceremony, symbolising thanksgiving to nature, farmers, and the Sun god. The programme also included traditional folk dances such as Karagattam, Kolattam, Mayilattam, Kavadiattam and Silambattam dance performances.

When parks and playgrounds come alive

Chennai Sangamam Namma Ooru Thiruvizha will be held from January 14 to 17 at various venues in the city

The annual cultural festival organised in parks, playgrounds and public spaces during Pongal will be held from January 14 to 17; 6 p.m. onwards. Chennai Sangamam Namma Ooru Thiruvizha, organised by Tamilnadu De-

partment of Art and Culture this year offers a slice of other states such as Kerala and West Bengal.

On January 15, at a playground in Kolathur, Kerala Kolakali performance will be on from 6.30 p.m.

Elliots Beach in Besant Nagar will have the famous Baul music from West Bengal entertaining beach goers.

According to www.chennaisangamam.in, both Tambaram and Avadi Corporation are also hosting a series of events, in the later the Ordnance Clothing Factory is the venue.

Other parks and playgrounds that will be coming alive these days include Corporation Playground in Saidapet,

Natesan Park in T. Nagar, Sivan Park in K.K. Nagar, Corporation Sports Ground in Ashok Nagar.

Thiruvanmiyur beach, Kattiparra junction in Guindy, Semmozhi Poonga, Music College, Egmore Raja Rathinam Stadium, Valluvar Kottam, Museum Complex, Marina Beach are some venues one must drop in during these days.

Various traditional folk performances from the state such as Naiyyandi Melam, Thappattam, Karagattam, Kaavadiattam, Thevarattam, Sevaiattam, Kolattam, Oyilattam, Silambattam, Paraiyattam, Maanattam and Mayilattam will be performed by artistes.

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