

DOWNTOWN

Sunday
January 25, 2026

THE HINDU

T. NAGAR

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‘Footpath near Valluvarkottam is unkempt’

N RAVIKKUMAR

Valluvarkottam, one of the major landmarks in Chennai city, was reopened six months ago following a renovation carried out by Public Works Department at a cost of ₹80 crore. It wears a new look. A new park at its entrance is an added feature.

However, the footpath near Valluvarkottam that is behind the bus stop (the one meant for buses toward Broadway and Anna Nagar) is unkempt. The place is heavily littered with alcohol bottles, plastic bottles, clothes and food leftovers. All these undo the renovation of Valluvarkottam.

Further, the bus stop located on this footpath is an important one.



PHOTOS: UMESH KUMAR .V

Here buses toward Broadway, Ambattur, Avadi and Perambur halt. Also, it witnesses patronage by a good number of commuters. But the place is untidy and unhygienic.

N Ravikkumar is a resident of Nungambakkam



‘Subway staircase is unsafe’

P.K. RAMESH

The staircase of the subway on Harrington Road is broken in many parts. Tipplers misuse the subway to consume alcohol. Further, the lights at the subway are dim. Therefore, the public finds the subway unsafe especially after dusk.

P.K. Ramesh is a resident of Kodambakkam



The subway in Harrington Road.
PHOTOS: UMESH KUMAR .V

‘Street in Seneerkuppam marked by potholes’

RAGHUPATHY RADHAKRISHNAN

VGN Enclave is one of the main streets at Seneerkuppam in Poonamallee. It is just 100 metres in length but marked with potholes. The condition gets worse during rains. Hence, I request the officials concerned to relay the road at the earliest.

Raghupathy Radhakrishnan is a resident of Poonamallee.

VGN Enclave in Seneerkuppam.
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



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

‘Speed breakers needed on Nelson Manickam Road near Loyola College’

VANITHA RAJARAM

Appropriate pedestrian safety measures are needed on the stretch of Nelson Manickam Road near the exit gate of Loyola College in Nungambakkam. Movement of vehicles on both directions of the road is continuous. Here, traffic flows towards Sterling Road and subway near the college and motorists do not slow down and give way for pedestrians. Hence safety measures such as speed breakers or barricades are necessary at this spot.

Vanitha Rajaram is a resident of Saligramam



The stretch of Nelson Manickam Road near Loyola College in Nungambakkam. PHOTOS: UMESH KUMAR .V

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Adding value to crafts

T. Nagar-based Sanju Women's Welfare Association organised an event at Queen Mary's College to showcase products made by underprivileged women under its new label



LIFFY THOMAS

The next time you are planning to support products made by women entrepreneurs, do look for the label 'SWWA Artivaa'.

Launched recently, that label belongs to Sanju Women's Welfare Association (SWWA), a 26-year-old non-profit headquartered in T. Nagar and affiliated to Women's India Association.

Registered under the MSME Development Act, 2006, the Association is confident having a label will help take its products far.

In the last two decades, SWWA has taken up a number of projects



to empower youth, senior citizens, women and children. Under its women livelihood project, raw materials and accessories are given as



part of the training to encourage participants to start their own venture. They also support women entrepreneurs and vocational trainees in tailoring, seaweed basket weaving, jewellery making and other crafts.

Recently, to observe National

Participants of a fashion show; and students shop at the stalls.
PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Youth Day, Women's Indian Association along with SWWA set up stalls at Queen Mary's College to showcase a range of products including palm leaf lunch boxes, coin pouches, hand bags and products with paper machie, all marketed under SWWA's new label.

A sustainable fashion ramp walk showcased eco-friendly fabrics such as those made with aloe vera, bamboo, linen, banana silk, and jute silk, promoting responsible lifestyle choices.

Leema Rajavarman, youth coordinator of SWWA as well as Next Gen. Torch bearers of WIA, says the youth wing began in 2025 and the launch of the label is an attempt to give the products marketed by them an identity as well as build trust among customers. More than 12 entrepreneurs are currently enrolled with SWWA.

"Many a time, we see an aspiring student entrepreneur keen on finding a platform to market her products, which we are happy to do," says Leema.

A majority of the products marketed are those of single women or those from remote villages including from the gypsy community, so showcasing their works at new venues helps us find new customers, says Leema.

Shanthi Socrates, founder, SWWA, says they are looking at exporting some of the products made by women from rural areas. They are happy to get invited to colleges and communities.



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SCAN TO REACH US



Interdisciplinary education project held at PSBB

The education project uses subject-based exhibits to link science, sustainability, mental health and sports with real-world contexts, using classical text Gita as reference

BY OUR STAFF REPORTER

Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Senior Secondary School, T. Nagar, hosted its quadriennial interdisciplinary education project, 'Gitamrutam Mahath - Gita: The Elix-

ir of Life', using the Bhagavad Gita as a reference framework to examine contemporary academic themes across disciplines.

Held over two days -January 23 and 24, 2026, inaugurated by Madhusudhanan Kalaichelvan, architect and founder of RATHAM Herit-

age, and the valedictory function presided over by Archana Raghuram, speaker and content creator. The project involved students from KG to Class VIII, with subject-wise exhibits integrating science, mathematics, environmental studies, physical education and mental

At the event. PHOTO: SRINATH .M

health. Students from various schools across the city visited the campus and interacted with student explainers.

In the Science section, exhibits focused on environmental sustainability and systems-based learning. Working models demonstrated aquaponics, food chains, rainwater harvesting and renewable energy, explaining ecological balance through measurable processes.

"Aquaponics works as a closed-loop system. Fish waste supplies nutrients for the plants, and the plants filter the water before it goes back to the fish tank," said Vihaan K., a Class VIII student, explaining his model. "If one component fails, the entire system is affected."

Students connected this to responsible resource use, presenting it as a behavioural principle rather than a belief. "The idea we drew from the Gita is about doing your role properly. When each part functions correctly, balance is maintained," Vihaan added.

Mathematics exhibits explored balance, patterns and consistency through sequences, ratios and geometric models. Students demonstrated how structured approaches and logical reasoning help in problem-solving and decision-making.

A separate section addressed mental health and emotional regu-

lation, focusing on stress, anxiety and performance pressure among students. "We discussed common stressors like exams and expectations, and how recognising stress early and seeking help can prevent burnout," said a student volunteer, referring to counselling and coping strategies included in the display. The reference to Arjuna's conflict was used to introduce acknowledgement of distress, aligned with established psychological approaches.

The Physical Education section, titled Kurukshetra to Kreedakshetra, examined sports psychology. Displays highlighted discipline, focus, recovery and resilience in competitive environments. "In sports, results cannot be controlled, but effort and preparation can," explained a student, linking training methods to process-oriented performance.

Cultural presentations supported the academic exhibits through short performances in respective stalls. Speaking at the event, Durga Chandrasekhar, senior vice-principal of PSBB, said the project aimed to integrate curriculum with real-world relevance. "The focus is on applying classroom learning to sustainability, mental health and decision-making. The text serves as a reference point," she said. The project demonstrated how interdisciplinary learning can contextualise classical texts within modern education.



READERS WRITE

Steel almirahs donated to 25 schools

Octogenarian recalls how a mega project celebrating the silver jubilee of his sustained effort to help students of government schools came to a satisfying close

N. SUBRAMANIAN

Finally, on January 23, 2026, the silver jubilee project came to a satisfactory and fulfilling end with the handing over of the steel almirah keys to the

heads of 25 schools. as a "return gift" to society, I have been spending money to the tune of Rs. 75,000 to Rs.1,00,000 per annum by providing supporting study materials to all the children joining afresh in certain known Govern-



Almirahs donated to some of the schools. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ment Primary Schools at villages of Tamil Nadu. I began this service since my retirement from the Railway Service in 2001. And, to make a record worthy of the silver jubilee year of this service, this year, I increased the expenditure to the tune of ₹2 lakh and offered mega-

sized education charts and books to twenty-five schools. Whenever the media publishes news about this, I would get innumerable calls from many unknown persons, either wishing to support me or wanting support from me. Without hurting their good hearts, I reject both,

very politely, as my passion and concentration are forever with the children studying in the Government Schools, in the Primary Classes in general and in First Standard in particular, at the grass-roots level of education.

On July 21, 2025, I got a call from P. Dhayanithi, manager-CSR of Aptus Value Housing Finance India Limited in Kilpauk stating that his company's founder, M. Anandan, came to know about me through a newspaper article and wanted to extend his support to me, but I did not accept it. However, on coming to know of their CSR contributions at a mega level towards the education sector too, after very long thought and hesitation for nearly two months, I responded to them, suggesting whether they would be able to consider offering steel cupboards to all twenty-five schools we attended this year. As luck would have it, the owner of this company, with great generosity, came forward to donate 25 steel cupboards at a total cost of around ₹3 lakh, and they arranged for the same to be delivered to all the schools. These 25 schools are spread over five districts, viz. Chennai, Tiruvalur, Ranipet, Vellore and Tiruvannamalai.

(N. Subramanian, aged 82, is a retired office superintendent from Southern Railway; and is a resident of Kumaran Nagar in Virugambakkam)

Meet inspiring entrepreneurs

On January 30, Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda College in Mylapore will host its first alumni entrepreneurs meet

“Why do you purchase matchsticks from Japan and sell them in India thereby pumping out money from India? Instead, if you start a match factory in India, you can have the profit and some of our countrymen would earn their livelihood. The country's money will remain in the country. All technology has two components: one is the science and the other is manufacturing technology. India needs both to succeed.”

These are words spoken by Swami Vivekananda in 1893, on hearing from Jamsetji Tata about the purpose of his visit to Japan.

The founding of Ramakrishna Mission in 1897 and envisioning its multifaceted activities by Swami Vivekananda in the bleak years of colonial India speaks volumes about his profound entrepreneurial foresight and spirit for national building. As India marks a decade of the #StartupIndia initiative on the occasion of National Startup Day

The event

When: January 30; 2.15 p.m. to 6 p.m.
For details, call 9444956264

2026, Swamiji's immortal ideas resonate with renewed relevance and urgency, says a press note.

The Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda College, which has produced a number of entrepreneurs in its eight-decade journey, is commemorating this occasion by organising its First Alumni Entrepre-



neurs' Meet on January 30, 2026.

Illustrious alumni-entrepreneurs of the college – K. V. Ramani, Founder of Future Software, Founder-Chancellor of Sai University, and Co-Founder; Former- Chairman of National Association of Software and Service Companies

(NASSCOM); Kalidas Muralidharan, a leading voice in financial strategy and investment from Intequant Advisors' and Ashok G, Founder of NEXLEAP- a Scaleup Accelerator in Retail and Sustainability for India Scaleup will enlighten the budding alumni-entrepreneurs and aspiring

entrepreneurs of the college.

The event, themed “Inspiring Entrepreneurship on the Campus,” will feature alumni startup journeys, investor interactions, and business plan reviews. It will be held from 2:15 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the college campus in Mylapore.



From last year's reunion. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Old Bedeans Association is 101 years old. Along with the reunion for students across batches on January 26 at St. Bede's Anglo-Indian Higher Secondary School in Santhome, the event will witness elections to have new team in the saddle as well as annual general body meeting.

The alumni association invites all old Bedeans, teaching staff (past and present) to be part of this reunion. Registration starts at 10 a.m. followed by annual the

general body meeting and elections from 11 a.m. onwards.

Last year being the centenary year of the Association, close to 800 old students took part in the

event.

The invitation notes that parking will not be allowed in the school campus. One can become a member by paying ₹1,000 at the

registration counter. The registration fee for the event is ₹ 200.

Register by sending a WhatsApp to 9444051163/9840028773.

Old Bedeans to meet for nostalgia and serious business

Many educational institutions have planned their alumni meets on January 26

Other meets

Holy Angels' Anglo Indian School, T. Nagar, stepping into its 91st year, will have its 26th alumni meet on January 26, from 3 p.m. on the school campus.

Entry is free for all alumnae and teachers. It will be a fun-filled event with food, shopping, games, lucky draws and entertainment.

Vidyodaya Schools reunion is also happening on Republic Day at the school auditorium in T.Nagar from 3 p.m. onwards.



▼ A Circular Coastal Clean-up conducted at Kovalam beach on January 22. The event featured a pop up scrap shop by bringing a local scrap dealer into the picture.

Invite *local scrap dealers* to beach clean-ups

Pop up scrap shops at recyclables collection drives at apartments are becoming common. The extended application of this concept is now being tested at Chennai's beaches with encouraging results

PRINCE FREDERICK

Pop up scrap shops at apartments must be dew-fresh in the memory of Mylapore, Mandaveli and R.A. Puram residents.

"We have done quite a number of pop up scrap shops in the Mylapore region; we have done almost over 100 pop-up collection events with neighbourhood associations. We have associated with Ganga Sridhar (a resident of Mandaveli Raja Street) in many of these events," says Siddharth Hande, founder and CEO of Kabadiwalla Connect. "Basically the idea here is that on a Saturday morning, we get the scrap shop to come to an apartment and set up shop there, temporary shop. Over those two hours, people from the apartment, but now also more and more from that neighbourhood go and sell their recyclables to the scrap shop."

Recently, on January 22, Kabadiwalla Connect was trying out the "amphibian" capabilities of the pop up scrap shop model by pairing it to a coastal clean-up at Kovalam beach. Even at a distance from the scene of activity, anyone with only a slightly perceptive mind would have sensed that something more than a regular coastal clean-up was unfolding.

At the centre of the congregating space was a sand artwork fea-



turing a heap of undulating sand, simulating waves; turtles waddling around; and a tricycle with discarded, small-sized real recyclables lodged in its sandy carrier body. The work of art was titled "Circular Coastal Clean-Up", the words indented into the sandy artwork. A pop up scrap shop with shamiana for roof stood near by. Siddharth says Circular Coastal Clean-ups are the need of the hour because of the proportion of these clean-ups. He estimates that "on an average 200,000 beach-ups happen every year on the Indian coast".

"The idea is whenever somebody has a beach clean-up anywhere in the city, we can help find them

the local scrap shop and ensure the scrap shop is a vendor or a partner of the clean-up. And that is what we call the circular clean-up," says Siddharth. It generates instant value for a beach clean-up and an incentive to organise it more often.

Siddharth observes that they had actually tested the efficacy of the Circular Coastal Clean Up model much ahead of the event at Kovalam, which Kabadiwalla Connect organised in collaboration with Residents of Kasturbanagar Association (ROKA) and United Beings Foundation.

"Before we did this work in Kovalam, we tested the model with the National Centre for Coastal Re-



A vital link

Siddharth Hande, founder and CEO of Kabadiwalla Connect, on the all-mighty scrap shop across the corner:

"In 2017, we mapped all the Kailan Kadais (local scrap shops) in Chennai. We discovered that there were about 2,000 Kailan Kadais across the city. These guys are very interesting because they are not just buying from waste pickers; they are also buying from the com-

munity. In fact, these 2,000 scrap shops were collecting something like 130,000 tonnes of waste every year. So that is about 24% of what the city generates on terms of recyclable waste. They are a key supplier in recycling. The community engagement idea that we had was what if you created simpler connection loops to these Kailan Kadais. And one of the things is we have a smartphone app that people can look up and find their closest scrap shop."

search (NCCR). During their International Coastal Clean-up Day last year, we did a pilot with them for Chennai, working at five beach clean-ups simultaneously in the city, bringing five different colleges on board."

A key finding. "On an average, about 20 to 30% of the materials that get collected can be recycled into the local recycling supply

chain if you do a pop-up activity with the scrap shop for a clean-up."

A word of advocacy. "What we are trying to advocate is: partner with your local scrap shop, ensure that the guy comes for your clean-up and 20 to 30% of the collected material will not go to Pallikaranai and Kodungaiyur. They can go back into the recycling ecosystem."

A music initiative for persons with special needs

Kalarangam 2025, a music-based initiative for persons with special needs, invites those with a flair for music to send in their works. Organised by The Vocational Training Unit, a joint undertaking of V-Excel Educational Trust and ESVI Sarada Foundation, the event invites young and gifted musicians who are specially abled to showcase their talent. Instrumentalists, vocalists, Harikatha artistes and Villu-paattu artistes can sign up for the

event. Kalarangam seeks to offer a platform to encourage camaraderie, coordination and collaboration within the neurodivergent community, says a press note. The last date for receipt of applications is January 31.

Selected artistes will be contacted and supported with training.

WhatsApp 9360087484 with details such as school name, name of participant and name of music pursued.

Music and art contest

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is conducting music and arts competition aimed at promoting young talent in Indian classical music, art and culture. The competition will be held on January 25 from 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, T. Nagar Centre, Dorairaj Sadan, No. 12, Thanikachalam Road, T. Nagar for the following categories: Carnatic Vocal, Keyboard, Veena, Sloka Chanting and Drawing (participants must bring their materials). Competitions will be conducted for three age groups: 5 to 10, 11 to 15 and 16 years and above. There is no registration fee and spot registrations are also accepted. Prizes will be awarded to the winners and participation certificates issued to all.

For registration, call 98843 66700 | 98843 64700 | 98843 35700

Culinary workshop

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information & Training Centre is conducting a workshop on preparation of ready-to-cook food items on January 29. According to a press release, the food items include: *rava idli*, *payasam*, *adai*, and *vadai*. The session also focus-

es on preparation of flavour powders from spices which could be used for non-vegetarian gravies. Another workshop on mushroom cultivation will be held on January 30. Both 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 - 2953 0048.

Telugu classes from February 7

World Telugu Federation is conducting Telugu language classes from February 7. Time: From 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

According to a press release, no fee will be charged. Classes will be held at the federation's premises at Ankur Plaza, Second Floor, South Wing, No. 113, G. N. Road, T. Nagar.

For details, call 7305557322 / 9566288325.

Two-day art show ends today

The two-day art show called Heritage Hues which is being held at C.P. Art Centre in Alwarpet will end on January 25. According to a press release, artist Priya Natrajan, founder of the drawing and painting centres – Lil Studio and Blank Canvas – is organising the show. Around 100 works of 50 students from both the centres will be on display.

The works will be based on the theme Indian heritage – culture, festivals, traditions, textiles, food, and day-to-day life – expressed through multiple mediums including acrylics, water colours, and pencil, adds the release.

Workshop on making organic soaps

Jothi Madhar Sangam, a women's club is conducting a workshop on making chemical-free soaps and shampoos January 31 at Sukalayam, No. 70/44, Burkit Road, T. Nagar. Time: From 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. For details, call 98949 37906 / 9841158018.



During the event. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the press release.

In an erudite keynote address, K. Ganesh framed the concept of *Efflorescence* as the literal "act of flowering". He traced the literary trajectory from the seasoned perspectives of pre-90s poets to the evolving sensibilities of the millennial generation. He highlighted that poetry celebrates "unity in diversity" and suggested that by engaging with translations, writers can learn to write more "unselfconsciously", free from the pressure to conform to rigid Western standards.

The event also featured the launch of *In a Cage and Beyond*, a poetry collection by eminent Nagpur-based writer Ratnakar D. Bhelkar.

A poetry-reading session, seamlessly anchored by secretary Hema Ravi, offered joyous, poignant and introspective moments as the audience listened to diverse voices, including award-winning poets. Additionally, a research paper presented by Debdoot Mukherjee from Kolkata was chaired by Sridevi Selvaraj, a renowned bilingual writer and academic, the press release adds.

The seminar concluded with a vote of thanks by treasurer Ravi Ranganathan, followed by a delicious lunch. The day left participants energised for the next chapter of CPC's journey.

Poets interested in the activities of the Chennai Poets' Circle may contact Hema Ravi at chennaipoet-scircle@gmail.com.

Anthology by Chennai Poets' Circle released

Non-profit and non-sectarian literary group Chennai Poets' Circle (CPC) recently marked its 25th annual seminar at TAG Auditorium, Ramakrishna Mission Higher Secondary School in T. Nagar, Chennai.

The focal point of the seminar was the launch of *Efflorescence* 2025, the group's 25th anniversary anthology. This milestone publication features the verses of 143 poets, spanning a wide age band, from a nine-year-old student to veterans aged 80 and above. The anthology was officially released by chief guest K. Ganesh, former associate professor and head of the department of English at Madras Christian College, according to a press release.

The seminar drew approximately 60 poets from across India, including representatives from Maharashtra, Telangana, West Bengal, Kerala and Karnataka. Notably, over a dozen budding poets featured in the collection participated in the session, accompanied by supportive parents and teachers.

In his welcome address, M. Thirumeni, chairman and a founding father of CPC, emphasised how writing in English served as a bridge, connecting a community of writers across geographical borders. S. Kannan, president and co-founder, addressed the relevance of 'poetic consciousness' in the age of AI, while paying tribute to the stalwarts of CPC who paved the way for Indian English writing, says

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<https://kolangalaayiram.in>

Workshop on GST e-way billing

Entrepreneurship Development and Innovation Institute, a Department of MSME, is conducting a workshop on GST e-way billing and income tax returns submission from January 28 to 30 at its premises at EDII Office Road, SIDCO Industrial Estate in Ekkattuthangal. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

According to a press release, the following concepts will be covered in the programme: introduction to GST, GST structure and components, GST registration process, GST invoicing and billing, input tax credit GST audits and assessments, GST compliance and penalties.

The session will also focus

on income tax its structure, types and slabs, introduction to ITR forms, deductions and exemptions, TDS (tax deducted at source), process for filing income tax returns, advance tax and self assessment tax, income tax notices and scrutiny, income tax refund process and tax planning strategies.

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 www.editn.in

For details, call 8668102600

Planetarium to remain closed tomorrow

The Periyar Science & Technology Centre and B.M. Birla Planetarium on Gandhi Mandapam Road in Kotturpuram will remain closed for the public on January 26 on account of Republic Day. The centre can be reached at 044-24410025.

Workshop on e-commerce

Entrepreneurship Development & Innovation Institute, a Department of MSME - Tamil Nadu is conducting a training programme on e-commerce from January 28 to 30 at its premises at No: 1, EDII Road, SIDCO Industrial Estate, Ekkattuthangal, Guindy. Time: From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

According to a press release, par-

ticipants will learn about setting up an online store. They will be introduced to types of e-commerce models, designing a store, product management and inventory, setting up payment gateways, social media marketing, pay-per-click advertising, logistics management (shipping and delivery), and financial manage-

ment in e-commerce.

Those aged 18 years and above with a minimum qualification of class 10 can apply. Basic computer knowledge is required, adds the press release.

Hostel facility is available on first-come, first-served basis.

Prior registration is mandatory.

Phone: 9360221280 / 8668100181.

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