

## 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



### SHOULD CHENNAI TAKE THIS LESSON FROM INDORE SCHOOLS?

This city started sensitising students much before Swachh Bharat Mission introduced this behavioural intervention as a parameter **P5**



### EARLY SCREENING MATTERS; DO NOT MISS THE BUS

Around World Cancer Day, a look at two mobile cancer screening units based in Chennai **P6**

## An obstacle course

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN

**P**edestrians using the Chromepet footbridge have requested the regional traffic police to keep the area along the bridge free of vehicles. As the image shows, vehicles are parked in such a way that they hinder pedestrian movement.

M. Meenakshi, who frequents this section, says the walking space gets reduced further when four-wheelers are parked on the way to the bridge to unload the goods for a row of commercial establishments.

Earlier, poles were installed to prevent vehicular traffic. The poles have been removed, pedestrians complained.

Along the other side of the bridge, near CLC Works' Road, the same situation prevails with vehicles parked on both sides.

Motorcyclists ride through the pathway, disrupting pedestrian traffic.

There is no dearth of pedestrian traffic; there is steady movement of pedestrians from CLC Works Road and GST Road to the

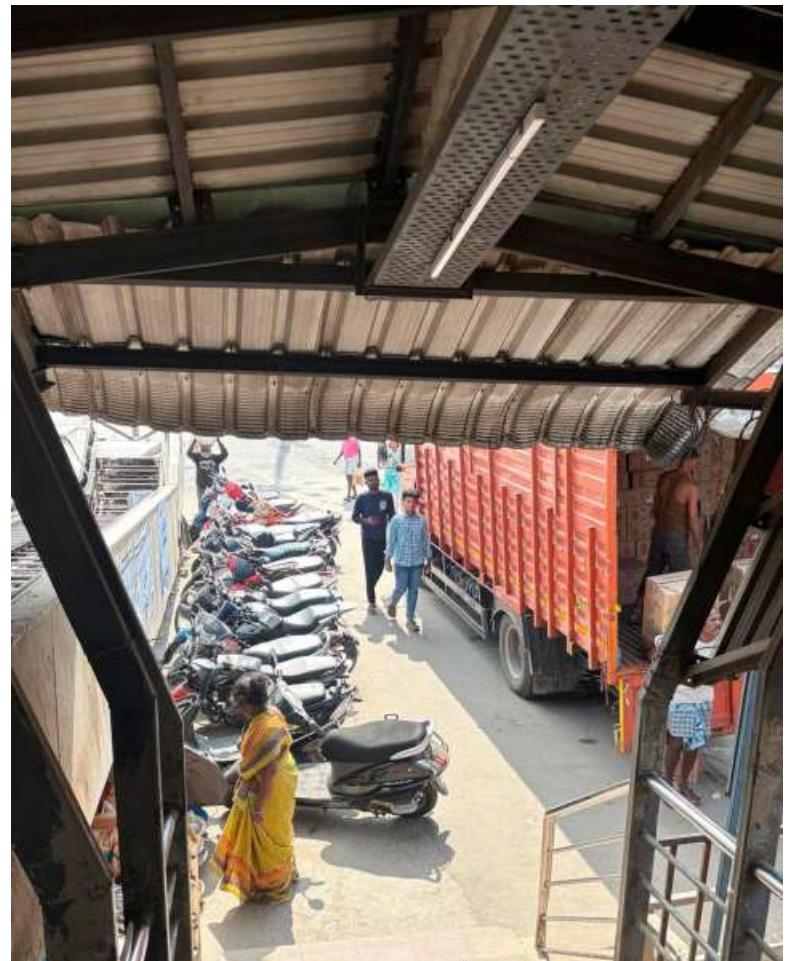


regional railway station and halting points nearby.

The vehicles can be parked along the bridge on GST Road. Even the autos at the entry and exit points of the walkway should be allowed to halt on GST Road to take passengers travelling to Pal-

lavaram-Thoraipakkam 200-Feet Radial Road, pedestrians added.

Pedestrians want State Highways Department to take action to prevent tipplers from consuming alcohol and falling asleep on the footbridge staircases along GST Road.



▼  
A common sight around the Chrompet FOB.

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# 'Additional water supply needed in Chitlapakkam'

P. VISWANATHAN

**R**ecently, the Palar drinking water supply pipe along Thirumurugan Salai and Pamban Swamigal Salai in Chitlapakkam ruptured, disrupting water supply for more than a week.

Each time water distribution pipes break or leak, the number of hours and quantity of water available are reduced because the supply must be distributed to all houses. Additionally, it covers all areas and the water supplies a weak force.

The region requires additional water storage tanks and a supply source from the Chembarambakkam Lake to augment the water

supply.

Currently, water is supplied once a week, and most residents are forced to rely on cans and reverse osmosis groundwater.

The Tambaram City Municipal Corporation and the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board (TWAD Board) should construct an overhead tank on a parcel of land adjacent to a fair price shop along Thirumurugan Salai.

The TWAD Board must supply 30-40 lakh litres of Palar water per day to ensure water is supplied every two days.

In the event of a power outage, a high-quality generator must be used. Although steps have been taken to fix the broken pipe, it must

be barricaded.

At present, stones have been placed along the pipes to prevent vehicles from driving on them, but it can fall.

The pipe should be installed underground and kept away from the stormwater network, as it is contaminated and carries sewage.

During periods of high water flow, especially during the rains, the water can damage pipes and contaminate the water.

*P. Viswanathan is a social activist and a resident of Chitlapakkam*

The repaired pipeline in Chitlapakkam.



## Create a haltover at Lakshmi Nagar



V. RAJAN.

Metropolitan Transport Corporation should create an additional haltover along 100-Feet Bypass Road in Velachery. At present, there are haltovers at Vijaya Nagar, Gangai Nagar, near Sasi Nagar and Phoenix Mall.

The haltover at Vijaya Nagar is useful for commuters from Officers' Colony and Devi Karumariamman Nagar Extension, Gangai Nagar, Gangai Nagar and Sakthi Vijayalakshmi Nagar, Sasi Nagar, and Tamil Nadu Police Housing Co-

lony; and the Phoenix Mall haltover for Indira Gandhi Nagar and Sankaran Avenue.

Commuters from Venkateshwara Nagar (residential apartments), Venkateshwara Nagar First and Second Main Road, Lakshmi Nagar (residential apartments) and Lakshmi Nagar First Main Road must use the newly created haltover at Gangai Nagar.

Commuters must walk a long distance. It would be better to establish bus stops along these areas.

*J. Rajan is a resident of Velachery*

## 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](mailto:downtownfeedback@thehindu.co.in). Letters must carry the contact number

## Remove hoardings and banners

B. NALLATHAMBI

The Madras High Court has directed the State government to remove hoardings, banners and flex boards from public roads and pedestrian walkways. However, the directive remains on paper.

In areas coming under the Tambaram City Municipal Corporation limits, there seems to be a heavy competition to erect banners on the road.

Motorists and pedestrians lose attention and sight of the traffic. The banners obstruct vehicle users' visibility.

When taking a left turn to enter a stretch (on the road), the motorists narrowly miss hitting the banners and suddenly swerve to the right, posing a risk to their counterparts.

The road surface is damaged due to the installation of poles to



fix the banners. The round banners (metal rods) installed by political parties can injure pedestrians.

The civic body should take the necessary action at the earliest.  
*B. Nallathambi is a resident of Tambaram*

## Address stray dog issue in Chitlapakkam

S. SACHIDANAND

On Gandhi Street, opposite Chitlapakkam Lake, Raghavendra Salai and Kannammal Street, there is a problem of street dog. The Tambaram City Municipal Corporation has not taken this issue seriously.

The area along these streets is surrounded by temples, clinics, schools and a park. More than a dozen dogs occupy these stretches. It is very frightening for people to move around.

I hope the authorities concerned at the Corporation take action.

*S. Sachidanand is a resident of Chitlapakkam*

## Stray cattle in Nanganallur

GANESH SEKAR

Stray cattle in Nanganallur, specifically on Second Main Road near Anjaneyar Temple, has become a safety and sanitation issue. While feeding animals is a compassionate act rooted in our culture, the current practice has created a logistical nightmare. Devotees frequently offer *prasadam* or leave food in baskets along the pavement. Consequently, large herds of cows gather at these specific spots, effectively seizing control of the road.



# Nesamani Nagar's new heroes

Meet three citizens who were felicitated at the 18th annual general body meeting of Nesamani Nagar Residents' Welfare Association in Perumbakkam held on February 1

T.S. ATUL SWAMINATHAN



T. K. Dinesh Kumar honoured by R. Rangarajan, president of Perumbakkam Village Panchayat.

## Art director promotes themes on social subjects

Planning an awareness campaign in your area? Then, do seek the help of Dinesh Kumar. The art director and resident of Perumbakkam, whose short film 'Awareness on Drug Addiction' got a Certificate of Appreciation from the Enforcement Bureau, Crime Investigation Department and The Tamil Nadu Police Department, was felicitated.

Dinesh was part of director B. Lenin's team, which made 'Statues of Sculptors' that won the Best Educational Film award at the 69th National Film Awards for the year 2021. *Andha 7 Natkal, Tik Tik Tik, Coolie, Kaala and Kabali* are some other films he has worked as art director.

He has created pictures and

drawings for the State government on various topics including anti-drugs, child abuse and violence against women. He loves to engage with children and has worked with students of Government school near Vengadamangalam to create awareness about child abuse and role played by freedom fighters.

"I am part of the Our Shoulders Foundation, a non-profit that helps children in a reformatory school learn to make cakes and create social messages for them," says Dinesh, an art director for the last 15 years.

Last year, when the residents association, along with Voluntary Health Services Multi-Speciality Hospital and Research Institute, conducted a free eye check-up and performed cataract surgeries free of cost, Dinesh helped by arranging transportation from their homes, distributing food and assisting with donations of spectacles.

## Nesamani Nagar's dedicated electrician

Every year, the Association honours a dedicated and hard working panchayat staff and this time it was panchayat electrician, T. Nagalingam. He received the best public servant award and a cash prize of ₹ 2000. Nagalingam was awarded for his prompt and efficient work, says N. K. Raja, president, NNRWA.

"I hail from this region and I have been working as an electrician in Perumbakkam Village Panchayat for more than 25 years. My daily routine includes conducting rounds to verify street lights are in working condition, installing and maintaining street lights, and addressing complaints," says Nagalingam, who moves about in a two-wheeler. During the rains, especially in the event of a heavy downpour, his job is challenging. The Perumbakkam Village Panchayat has provided safety gear,



T. Nagalingam is awarded a certificate of appreciation by C. N. Venkatesan, member, Ward 7, Perumbakkam Village Panchayat.

shoes and gloves, and the equipment needed to carry out the work.

"I am a daily wage earner and have not studied, but through my dedication and hard work, I have ensured that my children received good education. Today I am happy that they are well-settled and in good jobs," he says.



B. Saravanan.

## IT professional as well as a civic activist

B. Saravanan, a social activist and resident of Thiruneermalai, was felicitated for his civic initiatives covering traffic, water bodies and transport in Thiruneermalai and surrounding areas.

This IT professional's journey as a civic activist began when he first moved to Saraswathipuram Extension. There were no basic amenities including waste management and drinking water. The Thiruneermalai Periya Eri was contaminated and stray dog issue was rampant.

"The 2015 floods changed me, and I moved from Singapore to Chennai and wanted to do something. I began interacting with residents, gathering information on issues, and deciding what needs to be prioritised. Since 2017, I am into civic activism full-time," says Saravanan, who is in his early 40s.

He believes in continuously submitting petitions on issues (by the residents) till the problem is solved. He wants residents to make use of the Right to Information Act to find out the status of projects in their neighbourhood.

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## Patchy stretches in Madipakkam



Medavakkam Main Road in Madipakkam and Ullagaram.

Starting from Vanuvampet junction, the Medavakkam Main Road is patchy up to Keezhkattalai, forcing drivers to be extra cautious.

Motorists traversing the stretch have requested the Chennai Metro Rail Limited and the State Highways Department to take up mending exercise at the earliest.

V. Mukundan, a motorist, says, "Vehicle users are at risk of crashing into the median and the worksite when swerving right to avoid the potholes."

Even the carriageway boundaries are battered, and along Balamal Nagar Main Road in Ullagaram, motorists must take a slow left



turn, increasing the risk of tyre-sticking.

In Puzhuthivakkam and Madipakkam, even the patchwork can unravelled. S. Sugumar, a motorist, wants the road to be scrapped and then blacktopped.

*Text by T.S. Atul Swaminathan*

## Third edition of para table tennis tournament conducted

More than 200 players from across India took part in the Third National Para Table Tennis Tournament organised by Rotary Club of Madras Chenna Patna, in association with IIT-Madras, Table Tennis Federation of India and Tamil Nadu Table Tennis Association for physically challenged and wheelchair-bound players.

The two-day event was conducted with all India ranking standards, said a press release. Rotary Club of

Madras Chenna Patna, an affiliate of Rotary District 3234, provided accommodation with transport facilities. The winners were provided with medals and certificates. The tournament provides a national level opportunity for the physically challenged players to prove themselves at the National level.

Wheelchairs were given to seven deserving players at a cost of ₹5 lakhs as a token of gesture, the press release added.

## Teen roller skating champion

Class XII student of Kendriya Vidyalaya, Pazhavanthalangal recently had a podium finish

**I**. Sudharshan, a class XII student of Kendriya Vidyalaya, DGQA, Pazhavanthalangal, has brought pride to his school by delivering an outstanding performance in national-level roller skating competitions, earning multiple medals across prestigious tournaments.

Sudharshan began his remarkable journey by winning two gold medals at the school regional-level skating competition, which earned him selection for the national level. Continuing his winning streak, he secured two more gold medals at the national school level, leading to his selection for the School Games Federation of India (SGFI) – the highest



platform in school sports in India.

At the SGFI national meet held in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, Sudharshan showcased exceptional endurance and speed by winning a silver medal in the 3000-metre road race event, further cementing his position among India's top school skaters.

Apart from school competitions, Sudharshan also made his

mark in events organised by the Roller Skating Federation of India (RSFI). He won gold medals at both district and state levels, which qualified him for the national championships.

At the RSFI Nationals held in Visakhapatnam, he clinched a gold medal in the one-lap road race and a silver medal in the 3000-metre road race.

## MBA student strikes gold at inter-university athletics meet

S. Akschida, a first year MBA student of St. Joseph's College of Engineering, represented Anna University and won gold medal in the 100m hurdles with a time of 13.14 secs at the 85th All-India inter-university athletics meet held at Moodbidri, Karnataka recently.

B. Babu Manoharan, chairman of St. Joseph's Group of Institutions, felicitated Akschida, a resident of Padi, with a cash prize of ₹10,000. Last year, Akschida



brought laurels to the College and the State with a number of medals including silver in the National

U-23 meet, silver in Chief Minister's Trophy and gold in the inter-zonal meet.

## Rallying for our lakes



Close to 200 people took part in the rally organised to save Nanmangalam and Sembakkam lakes and other waterbodies. The three-km walk passed through Nanmangalam Lake and culminated at a park in Sri Sarvamangala Nagar, Chitlapakkam, near Sembakkam Lake. People requested the State Government, Water Resources Department and the Tambaram City Municipal Corporation to save lakes in the Chengalpattu district by constructing an Underground Drainage System. Furthermore, they asked residents not to discharge sewage into the lakes. Photos: Special Arrangement

## Co-create a people's manifesto for Chennai

Super Chennai has launched a citywide public participation initiative inviting residents to share ideas that can help shape Chennai's future. Citizens can participate by scanning the QR code featured in the campaign creatives or by visiting [www.manifesto.superchennai.com](http://www.manifesto.superchennai.com) to submit their ideas.

The initiative seeks to crowdsource insights, suggestions, and aspirations from people across age groups, professions and neighbourhoods. The collective inputs will be consolidated into the Super Chennai Manifesto – a structured vision document that reflects what citizens want Chennai to become in the years ahead, said a press release.

## 417 Chennai schools impart cleanliness coaching to students

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The 10th edition of Swachh Survekshan, the annual cleanliness and sanitation survey conducted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, has a new criterion: assessing cleanliness-related behavioural change programmes in schools.

Greater Chennai Corporation is gearing up for this aspect of the survey with the support of the swachh management committees it has formed in 417 schools under its jurisdiction.

A five-member committee in each school comprising a nodal teacher, supported by two educators and two students will be driv-

ing various initiatives to ring home the message on cleanliness and hygiene. The programme is aimed at bringing behavioural change in students of Classes VI, VII and VIII and will start with an orientation programme for all the nodal teachers from these schools.

A staff working on this initiative points out that a booklet guiding

teachers on how to take classes on solid waste management will be officially launched soon. The nodal teachers will go back and train the teams from their schools including class teachers.

'People Movement for Clean City', another initiative launched three years ago, will also be guiding the swachh management com-

mittees. Every third Wednesday, the last period on the timetable, will focus on cleanliness, waste segregation and the role children can play in keeping the premises around them spic and span. There is also a proposal to pass a GO so that lessons on solid waste management are part of the timetable, adds the staff.

This city in Madhya Pradesh began sensitising students towards the need to keep their environments clean much before Swachh Bharat Mission introduced this behavioural intervention as a parameter in its Swachh Survekshan survey

LIFFY THOMAS

Indore Municipal Corporation's official Facebook page, SwachhIndore, is crowded with display of activities geared towards Swachh Survekshan. With the annual exercise nigh at hand, posts involving school children take centre stage. Street cricket carries the message on cleanliness. Republic Day celebration goes zero waste. RRR (Reduce Reuse Recycle) corner comes up on campuses. Catchy jingles repeat the message that citizens take ownership of city's cleanliness initiatives. All of these together signal a concerted push towards shaping behaviour early.

The 10th edition of Swachh Survekshan has a new indicator that looks at behavioural change programmes in schools, and the way Indore has been preparing its young citizens suggests that the city has already been laying the groundwork for this, may be even before the metrics were formally introduced.

Having won India's cleanest city tag for eight consecutive years, the enthusiasm to maintain this status is evident. Information, Education and Communication teams fan out to various zones and wards and approach each school for a round of open discussion with the management. The expectations are clearly outlined; and suggestions are also invited from institutions. The team engages in pep talks through activities and games on waste segregation, make students take mass pledge.

Activities often use visual cues



From the toolkit

- Marks for cleanliness within school premises - 100
- Validation for this indicator will be carried out by visiting the schools (public/ private/ Government/Municipal Schools) within the Urban Local Body's jurisdiction. Photographs and videos will be captured at the sampled locations.
- ULB needs to update list of schools on swachhatam portal and at least 80% government schools to be assessed under this

## Should Chennai take this lesson from Indore schools?



such as a snake and ladder game to understand segregation of waste. Even competitions are conducted among wards to foster long-term behavioural changes.

"A plogging activity outside the school, within 50 to 100 metres from the school area, involving children is conducted. We expect school managements to adopt the areas outside their school campuses and ensure they are kept clean," says Captain Sunpreet Singh, founder of Human Matrix Securite,

waste management service company working with the Indore Municipal Corporation.

He says the School Education Department sends our circular mapping private and government schools in the city and has set up mandates depending on the locality.

"From government schools with big numbers to small private schools, awareness programmes were conducted even in the previous edition. With assessing beha-



viour change being introduced as a new criterion, I am sure Indore Municipal Corporation will refine this further and make it more interactive," says Captain Sunpreet.

The impact of these campaigns is that schools also take the onus of driving home the message in their own ways. For instance, schools make sustainability a theme during annual day. "Since last year, we started inviting schools to our waste processing sites for them to understand how the city's waste is processed," he says. Indore's consistent performance and engagement has

Activities at schools in Indore to drive home the message about waste segregation and cleanliness. PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

only pushed the bar for citizens. "These campaigns are on not just because of Swachh Survekshan but they gain increased momentum a few months before February and March. For instance, in Government schools infrastructure-related issues such as non-functional lights in toilets are taken up by the municipal corporation. For the IEC team, it is compulsory to conduct at least one school event a month, so by the end of the year we are able to cover most schools in a ward/ zone," says Captain Sunpreet, whose company works with the municipal corporations in Pune, Jaipur, Patna and Nagpur.

A good cleanliness campaign is one that is designed to motivate and nudge citizens towards action, and should tap into emotions such as pride, gratitude, compassion, curiosity and empathy.

Pulkit Khanna, Dean and Professor (Psychology), Jindal Institute of Behavioural Sciences, O.P. Jindal Global University, says involving school students as ambassadors of positive change can go a long way in promoting a sense of greater civic engagement, environmental consciousness as well as collective responsibility among young people.

She says schools play a critical role in socialising children, and behavioural change programmes in the format of embedded-curricular or extra-curricular activities can prove to be very useful. These students could further champion the cause in their own homes and neighbourhoods, thereby bringing about a cascading effect of community sensitisation.

As a behavioural scientist, she recommends consistent implementation of programmes, taking up initiatives involving multiple stakeholders including school teachers and administrators, proper training of programme facilitators such that it is not a 'one size fits all' approach.

As the Swachh Bharat Mission framework puts it: "Knowledge regarding a city's performance could act as a positive nudge for citizens to adopt new behaviours to help their city win laurels nationally and rank higher in the next Survekshan."



From cancer screening camps by Pennalam and Thenmozhi Memorial Trust.



**Around World**  
Cancer Day  
(February 4), a look at two mobile cancer screening units based in Chennai that are taking preventive healthcare into the everyday lives of women who might otherwise put it off for "later"

SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

**P**ennalam, a women-focussed cancer screening initiative operating under the Sri Dhanvantri Trust, has had its mobile screening buses traversing the city since 2013, offering breast and cervical cancer screening through a decentralised, community-oriented model.

Pennalam traces its origins to 2009, when its founder, Radhika Santhanakrishnan, was diagnosed with breast cancer. Her experience during treatment exposed a persistent barrier that extended beyond infrastructure. "I realised that fear and lack of information were preventing women from even considering screening," she says.

Early efforts centred on a clinic in Mandaveli and a series of awareness programmes. Participation, however, remained limited. The recalibration was decisive. "Instead of waiting for people to come to us, we decided to go to the people," Radhika explains.

That shift materialised in 2013 with the launch of Pennalam's first mobile screening bus, developed after months of coordination with Ashok Leyland, which provided the chassis, and with funding support from ONGC. Subsequent expansion was enabled through partnerships with Rotary Clubs, while the Australian Consulate also ex-

## Early screening matters; *do not miss the bus*



tended support.

The buses are equipped to conduct mammograms and Pap smear tests, enabling screening for two cancers with high incidence among women. Mammograms are offered to women aged 40 and above, while Pap smears are conducted for women above 22 years who are married or have been in a relationship. The programme deliberately reframes screening as wellness. The slogan printed on the bus reads, "Thozhi, test edu... arogyathai kondaadu."

Camps are organised in colleges, corporate campuses, RWAs, and social organisations. To organise a camp, the Pennalam team first identifies a local point of contact within the community, who coordinates communication, mobilises participants, and facilitates the awareness session preceding screening. A minimum of 50 women is required for a camp to be scheduled. Each camp follows a three-stage protocol: an awareness session, on-site screening, and a return visit to deliver reports and explain next steps.

Participants submit Aadhaar identification and medical histories prior to screening. Reports are evaluated by trained radiologists and gynaecologists, digitised at a



base station, and conveyed back to participants. After screening camps, women who require further investigation are referred to the nearest Primary Health Centre or a government hospital.

While many camps are conducted with sponsor support, enabling free screening, others operate with a small participation fee to sustain operations.

Pennalam can be contacted at 9843124842

**Heading to peri-urban areas**  
Working within a similar frame-

work of decentralised outreach, Chennai-based Thenmozhi Memorial Trust has been conducting mobile breast cancer screening camps since 2015, targeting women in rural and peri-urban regions where diagnostic access remains limited. The Trust does not operate a dedicated mobile unit; instead, screening buses are hired from external providers including the Shantha Breast Cancer Foundation and VS Medical Trust based on logistical feasibility.

The operational model is narrowly defined. Screening is limited to mammograms, offered primarily to women above 40 years of age, with marriage listed as an eligibility criterion. "Every scan is funded by the Trust. There is no cost to the participant," says Arun Kumar M., founder of Thenmozhi Memorial Trust.

Each camp is overseen by a doctor, and participation is preceded by the completion of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire records menstrual history, menopause status, and related clinical indicators, which are used to assess whether additional investigation is required. Women between 35 and 40 years are also evaluated when symptoms or medical history warrant further attention. "The questionnaire helps us identify risk and decide the next steps," Arun Kumar says.

Site selection prioritises rural locations, often facilitated through collaborations with organisations already embedded in local communities. Reaching these sites presents persistent challenges. Mobile mammography equipment requires a 230-volt power supply, which is typically arranged through temporary connections from the village electricity line, coordinated by local leadership. Transport is organised within the village, and public announcements

are used to inform residents ahead of the camp.

Cultural hesitation continues to affect participation. "Cancer screening carries fear and stigma," Arun Kumar notes. Women are often reluctant due to the nature of the procedure and the presence of unfamiliar volunteers. To address this, the team engages village heads in advance and relies largely on female volunteers to explain the process in detail, including the requirement to remove clothing and the functioning of the equipment.

Camps have been conducted in locations such as Nemalur, Chinna Bommajikulam, Mathur and Karanai. In Chinna Bommajikulam, approximately 80 kilometres from Chennai, the Trust reached a tribal settlement without proper roads or electricity with support from nuns running a geriatric centre. Questionnaire responses in one village revealed that a significant number of women had undergone hysterectomies, underscoring gaps in reproductive health awareness.

Attendance is a determining factor in whether camps are viable. A minimum of 40 participants is required. To improve attendance, the Trust has occasionally tied up with local sponsors. In one instance, women who came for screening received one kilogram of rice and sugar each. Word-of-mouth played a role in increasing participation.

Approximately 2,000 women have been screened to date. Results are delivered to villages within a week, and cases requiring further evaluation are referred to partner hospitals, with the Trust facilitating follow-up. "Our focus is not frequency," Arun Kumar says. "It is whether the intervention is meaningful."

While awareness levels are relatively higher in urban areas, the Trust also conducts camps in cities when requests are received from residents' welfare associations, workplaces, or community groups. These requests are assessed based on feasibility and the expected number of participants.

Thenmozhi Memorial Trust can be contacted at 9994561398.

## Sports facility opened at Velachery railway station

The Commercial Branch of the Chennai Division of Southern Railway has opened a outdoor sports centre at Velachery railway station. According to a press release, dated February 6, 2026, the project will generate an annual non-fare revenue of ₹12.07 lakh, with a total contract value of ₹64.09 lakh.

The facilities at the sports centre include a box cricket turf, pickle ball court, and skating rink. A space has been dedicated for the martial art Silambam also. The facility was inaugurated by Tej Partap Singh, Additional Divisional Railway Manager, Chennai Division, in the presence of M. Bharat Kumar, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, and other officials.



The new facility

## 'Make a positive impact on society'

More than 100 students were awarded degree certificates at the graduation ceremony of Sree Balaji Dental College and Hospital



The graduation ceremony for the 32nd batch of Sree Balaji Dental College and Hospital (SBDCH) in Pallikaranai was held recently.

More than 100 students, including 84 BDS and 26 MDS students, were awarded degree certificates.

Rahul Hegde, executive committee

member, Dental Council of India, was the chief guest.

J. Srinisha, chairperson; Sundararajan, vice chancellor; and S. Bhuminathan, registrar, Bharath Institute of Higher Education and Research, took part. Srinisha said the institution has made steady, significant progress, achieving a major milestone by securing the fifth rank in Tamil Nadu and the 27th rank nationwide among nearly 340 dental colleges.

"The students should make a positive impact on society by using their knowledge and skills to build a brighter future for themselves and for generations to come," said Srinisha.

She expressed confidence that equipped with the strong academic foundation and hands-on training provided by the college, the graduates would make significant contributions to dentistry and oral healthcare.

## MoU signed at annual day event



The seventh annual day of Sujay Public School in Medavakkam was held on February 6. M. Boominathan, founder and director of Kingmakers IAS Academy, was the chief guest. M. Vijayakumar and S. Manju, chairman and principal, graced the occasion.

Boominathan praised the school's commitment to aca-

demic excellence and holistic development. On the occasion, the school signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the academy for the 'Junior IAS' programme. Students showcased their talents with a series of captivating performances, and meritorious students were felicitated for their academic excellence.

## A community fest



TVS Emerald Green Acres All Owners' Association in Kolapakkam recently celebrated Pongal with enthusiastic participation from residents. The traditional 'Uriyadi' game was followed by a good number of engaging events, including tug of war, musical chairs for adults and children, couple games, and mind games for children.

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# Download your dry waste calendar

Thooimai Mission seeks to make segregation a daily routine for residents by introducing a calendar that earmarks every Saturday for collection of a particular category of recyclable waste



SHARON JESSICA MICHAEL

**W**hat would pop up first in a head that tries to wrap itself around the notion of "habit formation"? That is a no-brainer; obviously "daily routine". Would "calendar" show up next, and would the two be tied together in a blood bond? In its head, Thooimai Mission (launched by Tamil Nadu Government in March 2025 and kitted out with the Clean Tamilnadu Company Limited as its executive arm) went through this sequence in a case of serious vertical thinking while trying to make sense of the poor response to its early dry waste collection drives. These early drives had seen limited response, not because people were unaware of them, but because careless dumping had long become a habit. The bad habit needed to be replaced with a good one, which should be reinforced by a special calendar.

The Mission has designed a year-long, material-specific waste collection calendar aimed at making segregation more of a routine than a one-off activity (in response to a collection drive). "People are not used to this kind of habit," explains Hariharan B., C Cube Manager at Thooimai Mission CTCL. "So instead of making it a one-time collection, we decided to make it continuous."

Based on household waste patterns, the calendar schedules weekly and date-specific collection drives for different waste streams



Snapshots of special collection drives; the calendar.

such as plastics, paper, glass, e waste, textiles, thermocol, footwear, and expired medicines. "People's questions are always material specific," says Hariharan. "What do I do with plastic? What do I do with old slippers? Going-material specific helps people develop the habit of depositing instead of dumping." Going by where the shades have landed on the calendar, different shades for different forms of dry waste, one might assume the routine in question is weekly by nature, but it is not. Segregation is a daily routine and every Saturday is earmarked for the collection of particular category

dry waste. "Every Saturday, people are reminded that they need to deposit their waste," Hariharan says. The system is supported by the Circular Collective, a network of NGOs, RWAs, government officials, self-help groups, and conservancy staff driving decentralised collection at the ward level. The calendar also functions alongside a growing network of permanent collection centres. While ward level drop off points remain primary, zonal centres act as secondary hubs. Bringing these centres closer to neighbourhoods lowers effort and makes regular depositing more practical.

Primarily circulated in digital format to avoid paper waste, the calendar (downloadable from @thooimaimission on Instagram) has been shared with local bodies

across the city through BOV announcements and social media reminders.

Residents who organise dry waste collection drives regularly in their corner of the planet welcome this calendar, but are worried about one factor that might override its effectiveness.

Sherin Joseph of Zero Waste Initiatives, who coordinates ward-level collection efforts, names this factor as "wilful indifference".

"Many people understand the problem," she says, "but they insist segregation is the job of conservancy staff or argue that they pay taxes for it. That logic obviously misses the point. Taxes are for infrastructure. Waste is generated in our homes, and segregation has to be handled by the person who creates it." Giving a thumbs-up to this initiative by Thooimai Mission, Sherin says, "A well-planned event calendar with collection drives for specific waste categories every Saturday, can truly help rewire our habits."

Clean Tamil Nadu Company Limited																				
Waste Collection Calendar - 2026																				
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