

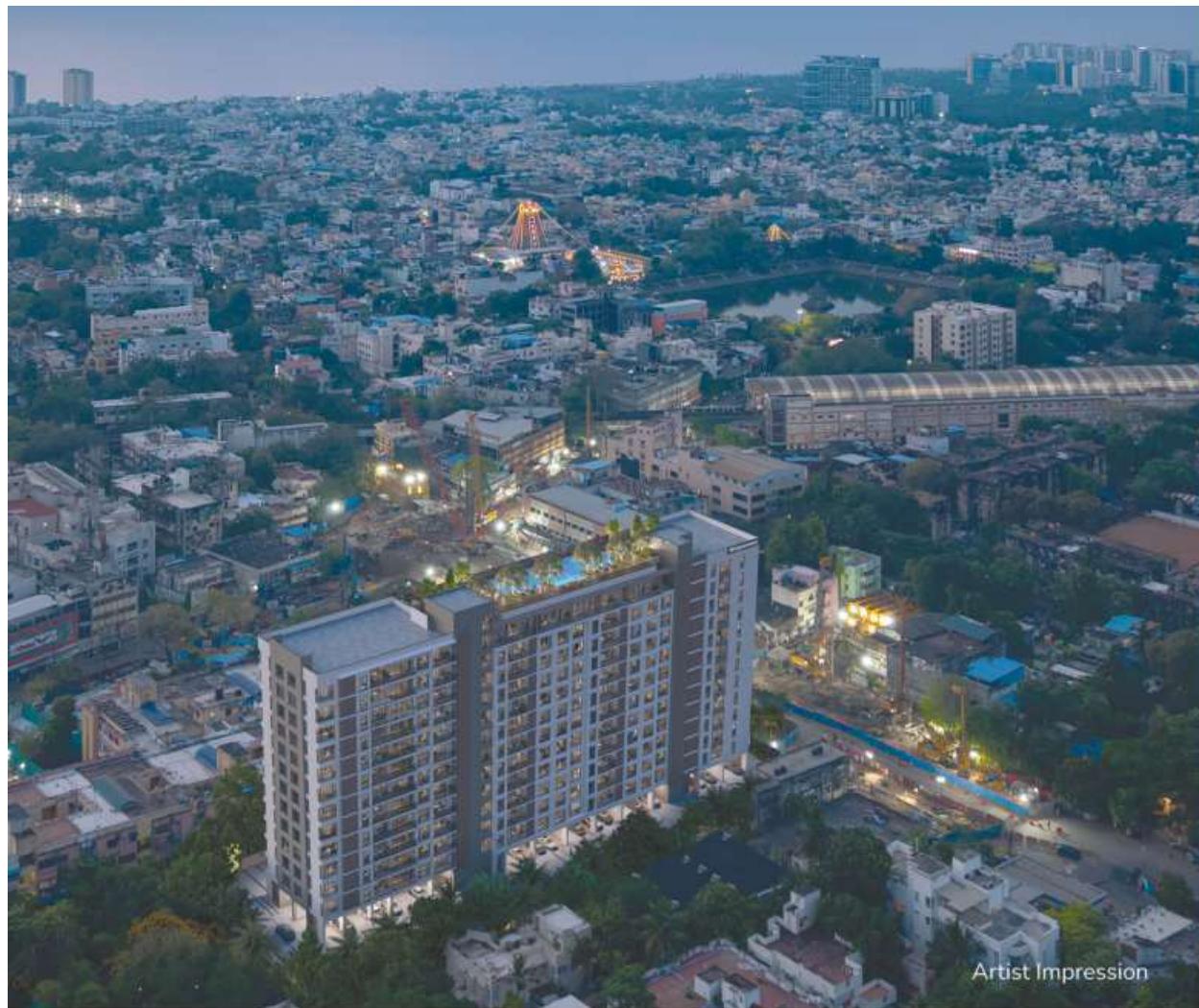
DOWNTOWN

Sunday
January 25, 2026

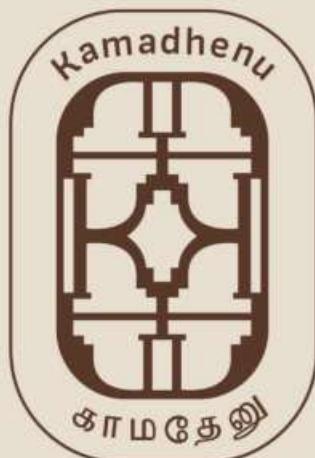
THE HINDU

ANNA NAGAR

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'Unwanted greenery proliferates; antisocials use it as cover'

D. NEELAKANNAN

The park standing cheek by jowl with the Ayapakkam lake is in an unmistakable state of squalor. Unruly weeds proliferate across the park, including the children's play area. Weeds tower over benches. Abandoned by residents due to poor maintenance, the park is misused for alcohol consumption and illegal activities. Further, littering is heavy on the footpath outside the park; one can find a hodgepodge of discards, ranging from domestic items that have outlived their use (rundown sofas) to construction debris and plastic covers, some of them holding putrefying food items.

D. Neelakannan is the president of Tamil Nadu Alliance of Residents Welfare Associations

Park at Ayapakkam lake.

PHOTOS: UMESH KUMAR . V



The park on East Main Road (near Asiad Colony) in Thirumangalam.

PHOTOS: UMESH KUMAR.V

'Poor lighting facility at park in Thirumangalam'

NARAYANASAMI DHANDAPANI

The Greater Chennai Corporation park on East Main Road (near Asiad Colony) in Thirumangalam

needs to be repaired. Further, the walkway is broken. The park is prone to waterlogging in case of rain. It is mainly because a heap of

debris lying near the compound wall blocks outlet for rainwater. Yet another issue is that the park is poorly lit. There are lamp posts but only a few are functioning. Complaints to Greater Chennai Corporation were to no avail.

Narayanasami Dhandapani
is a resident of Anna Nagar West Extension

'Speed breakers needed on Nelson Manickam Road near Loyola College'



VANITHA RAJARAM

Inappropriate 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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'24/7 prepaid taxi counter at Chennai Central locked at night'

BALU N.

I am a senior citizen and a frequent user of Indian Railways, regularly travelling to and from Chennai Central Railway Station. Over the last one month, on two occasions when I returned to Chennai by night trains, after 9 p.m., I faced serious inconvenience due to the non-functioning prepaid taxi and auto counter at the station.

When app-based taxis or autos are unavailable, prepaid services are the safest and most reliable option for passengers, especially senior citizens. However, I found that



The prepaid taxi counter at Chennai Central. Photo: Balu N.

the prepaid counter was locked and unattended, even though it is supposed to operate 24/7. While several autos and taxis were lined up outside, drivers directly approached passengers and quoted unreasonably high and arbitrary fares. When questioned about the absence of staff at the prepaid counter, the drivers casually stated that the officials had "gone out." Despite waiting for some time, no police personnel or station staff were available to provide clarification or assistance.

I wish to highlight that in other major cities across India, prepaid taxi and auto counters function ef-

ficiently and provide protection against such exploitation. Unfortunately, this situation at Chennai Central not only causes hardship to passengers but also creates a very poor impression of the city.

I request the authorities concerned to kindly intervene and ensure proper round-the-clock functioning of the prepaid taxi and auto counter, with adequate monitoring and staff accountability. This will greatly help senior citizens, women, and outstation passengers and prevent exploitation.

(Balu N. is a resident of Thoraiyakkam and is a frequent long-distance train traveller, boarding trains at Chennai Central and Egmore stations)

'Unnecessary additional bus shelters on New Avadi Road'



M. SENTHIL

In addition to two existing bus shelters, Greater Chennai Corporation recently installed a third one on RTO bus stop (meant for buses toward Kilpauk) on New Avadi Road.

It is called "3D shelter" which is known for various modern features related to safety and comfort.

Likewise, another 3D shelter has been installed on Gangai Amman Kovil stop, also known as Water Tank stop, (meant for buses toward Villivakkam, where there is another one in existence).

Yet another stop that has been provided with 3D shelter is Ganapathy Colony



RTO bus stop and Gangai Amman Kovil bus stop on New Avadi Road.
PHOTOS: UMESH KUMAR. V

(meant for buses toward Villivakkam). Here again, there is another shelter in existence.

In all three cases, the existing shelters are in good condition and there is no need for a third one. Instead, GCC could have installed the new 3D shelters on stops that lack a shelter and com-

muters are exposed to the elements. Nathumuni bus stop near the junction of MTH Road and New Avadi Road lacks a shelter. This stop witnesses a good number of commuters. The 3D shelter could have been installed here.

M. Senthil is a resident of Villivakkam

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'New fans waiting to be set in operation'



Ambattur OT bus terminus on January 22, 2026.

PHOTO: UMESH KUMAR . V

S. SURESH

Eight fans were installed at Ambattur OT bus terminus on CTH Road around six months ago. It may be noted the fans that were in existence earlier were out of order for many years. United Welfare Associations of Ambattur pursued this issue with Metropolitan Transport Corporation for the past two years. As a result, the new fans were installed. However, they have not been set in operation to this day.

S. Suresh, president, United Welfare Associations of Ambattur

'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



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'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



Walking on air

Students of three schools in Purasawalkam, Avadi and Ayanavaram are provided with a flight experience

In a move to redefine youth leadership training, the Rotary Club of Guindy successfully executed "RYLA ON AIR" on January 22.

The experiential programme provided 30 students from Class IX to X11 standard – drawn from ELM Fabricius Higher Secondary School in Purasawalkam, Government Girls Higher Secondary School in Avadi, and Kannada Sangha Higher Secondary School Ayanavaram, with their inaugural flight experience, transforming a distant dream into a tangible reality.

The initiative commenced in the early hours of January 22 as these students gathered at Chennai International Airport. For these young delegates, the journey to Coimbatore represented more than just a trip; it was a lesson in breaking social and psychological barriers, says a press release.

Upon arrival in Coimbatore, the Rotary Club of Guindy (RI District 3233) collaborated with the Rotary Club of Coimbatore East (RI District 3206) and the Rotaract Club of PSGR Krishnammal College for Women. The local partners facilitated a comprehensive educational itinerary, beginning with a visit to the renowned G.D. Naidu Car Museum in Coimbatore. There, students were exposed to the principles of industrial innovation and creative problem-solving,

the release adds.

"Traditionally, RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Awards) programmes are confined to auditoriums or school halls. With 'RYLA ON AIR' we broke convention. By combining leadership education with the powerful experience of air travel, we are instilling a sense of belief and aspiration that these children will carry for a lifetime," stated Rtn. Radha Krish, president of the Rotary Club of Guindy.

Dignitaries in attendance included chief guests District Governor Rtn. D. Devendran (RI District 3233) and District Secretary Rtn. R. Raghavendran (RI District 3206), both of whom commended the clubs for the initiative's transformational impact.



Gated community in Anna Nagar celebrates Margazhi Vizha



Margazhi Vizha was celebrated with devotion, traditional sanctity and enthusiasm at Metrozone, a gated community in Anna Nagar. The inaugural event, 'Veedhi Bhajan', on January 4 saw devotees take the sacred procession through the lanes of Metrozone, resonating with the melodious chanting of

Thiruppavai, Thiruvempavai and Namaavalis.

The second day of the celebrations, held on January 11 at the banquet hall, unfolded as a harmonious confluence of spiritual discourse and cultural expression. The programme featured captivating performances by children, who delighted the audience

with a fancy dress presentation portraying revered divine figures such as Radha, Krishna and Andal, said a release. Select participants rendered Thiruppavai and Thiruvempavai pasurams with devotion, while young dancers enthralled the gathering with their graceful classical dance recitals.

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

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, participants will learn about setting up an online store. They will be introduced to types of e com-

merce 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 management 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.

Session on 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, Burkitt Road, T. Nagar. Time: From 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. For details, call 98949 37906 / 9841158018.

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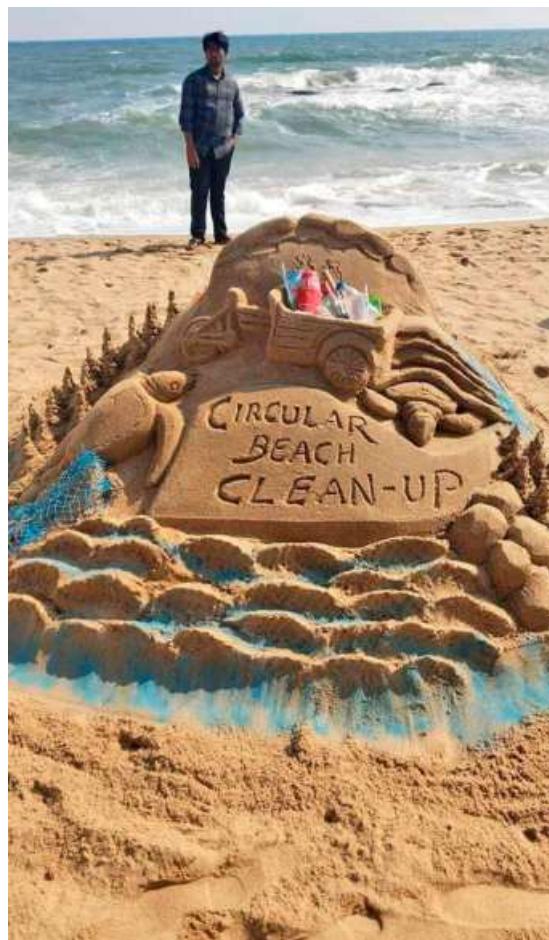


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A Circular Coastal Clean-up conducted at Kovalam beach on January 22. The event featured a pop up scrap shop by bringing a local scrap dealer into the picture.

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 cleanup and 20 to 30% of the collected material will not go to Pallikaranai and Kodungaiyur. They can go back into the recycling ecosystem."



During the event. PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Anthology by Chennai Poets' Circle released

The latest edition features verses of 143 poets, spanning a wide age band, from a nine-year-old student to veterans aged 80 and above

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.

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. Thirumani, 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 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 poe-

try 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 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 chennaipoetcircle@gmail.com.

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SATHIYAMORTHY
70927 03458

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, Harrakatha artistes and Villupattu artistes can sign up for the event.

Kalarangam seeks to offer a platform to encourage cam-

raderie, 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.

A celebration of Chettinad cuisine

Milagu Restaurant, located in Anna Nagar, has been serving Chettinad cuisine, with a menu featuring a wide range of traditional dishes. Highlights include the spicy Nagercoil kochi porippu, aromatic special nalli biryani, and regional specialities like Kovai kozhi perattal and Palipalayam chicken.

Vegetarian options are equally appreciated, featuring classics like idicha milagu paneer peratal and mushroom 65, ensuring a



The outlet is in Anna Nagar

delightful experience for all tastes, said a release.

The restaurant's ambiance is crafted with elegant touches of traditional decor. It provides the ideal setting for a casual family dinner, a special celebration or a memorable dining experience, added the release.

For details, call 90471 23456.

Culinary workshop on January 29

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 focuses 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.



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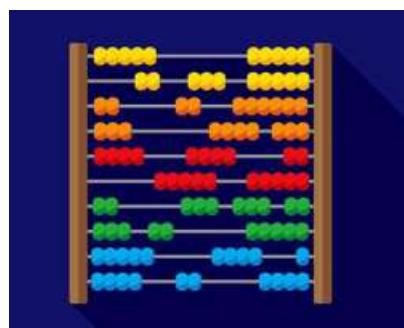
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Abacus competition

Abacus and Mental Arithmetic Teacher Association (AMATA), an ISO 9001:2018 certified body, is conducting an 'open to all' International level Abacus competition from January 24 to 26 at Seethalakshmi Hall, Poonamallee High Road, Maduravoyal.

The competition is open to all Abacus students from any centre.



Model question papers will be provided in advance, and participants may select their level of entry based on the syllabus.

Applications can be submitted via WhatsApp or email to the respective centre coordinators.

For further details, visit www.abacuscompetition.com or contact the organisers via WhatsApp at 8144443777/9841023115/ 044-42071815

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Stories of people living with multiple sclerosis

Multiple Sclerosis Society of India - Chennai chapter will be observing India MS Day on February 1; 3 p.m. at YMCA of Madras, Poonamallee High Road, opp Egmore Metro Station. Come to listen to video stories shared by people living with multiple sclerosis, their stories of courage, change and strength.

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