

Book Park now open at Central Metro station

THE public and commuters can now take a break amid their busy schedule at the Rs 1.85 crore 'Book park' launched at the Chennai Central Metro station a few days ago. The 5,000 sq ft facility features a cafeteria, a small event hall and thousands of books to upgrade the experience at the station, which witnesses one of the highest footfalls in the city.

The book park will host books in Tamil, English and other languages, as well as school and competitive exam textbooks and titles on literary translation and children's literature. According to an official the facility will operate from 9 a.m to 9 p.m on all days and include amenities like WiFi. 10% discount is given on books to attract new readers.





Aadhaar authentication must for Tatkal booking

From July 1, only users who have authenticated their IRCTC account with Aadhaar will be able to book Tatkal tickets through its website and app. To make the process more fool-proof, the use of OTP for Aadhaar authentication will be introduced from July 15, says a press release from the Railways. The new norms have been notified to check malpractices by agents and ensure that only genuine passengers benefit from the Tatkal scheme. The ministry has urged people to ensure Aadhaar linkage with their IRCTC user profiles to avoid inconvenience. Even to buy paper tickets at the railway counters from July 15, passengers or their representatives will have to provide a mobile number on which an OTP will be sent for verification purposes. Provisions have also been made to ensure that by using other software no one can book tickets faster than genuine users. Authorised ticketing agents will not be permitted to book opening-day Tatkal tickets during the first 30 minutes of the booking window. For AC classes, this restriction will apply from 10a.m to 10.30a.m, and for non AC classes, from 11a.m to 11:30a.m.



World Environment Day 2025 was observed at CSI Ewart Matric Hr. Sec. School, Anna Nagar West Extn on June 5. The theme "Beat plastic pollution" was brought out effectively by students of all classes taking the oath. They also participated in a drawing and painting competition. Students were taken out on a rally on the streets around the school as they carried banners and placards to emphasize the theme.

Mogappair gets official debris dumping yard

By N Rathi Chithra

N a step toward managing construction and demolition waste more effectively, the Greater Chennai Corporation has earmarked an official debris dumping yard on Kavimani Salai in Mogappair. A blue board at the site marks it clearly as a designated space for disposing of construction material and rubble — part of the city's efforts to streamline waste management in growing neighbourhoods.

However, despite this move, residents say that illegal dumping continues unabated on the banks of the Cooum near Nolambur and the Rail Nagar stretch, raising concerns over environmental damage and



civic neglect.

The site on Kavimani Salai is located on a vacant plot, with a prominent signboard installed by Zone 7 of the Corporation. Yet, garbage and palm fronds are scattered around the area, indicating that unsegregated waste is also being thrown here. "At least this is a step in the right direction," said Sekar, a building contractor in the area. "We used to struggle with where to dispose of construction waste. Now there is a dedicated spot, which reduces conflicts with residents," he said.

However, civic activists caution that simply designating a space is not enough. "There has to be strict enforcement and regular clearing," said Shobhana Muthuramalingam, a member of a residents' forum in Mogappair West. "Otherwise, even this place will become an unregulated dump," she ap-

prehended.

More troubling is the continued dumping on ecologically sensitive areas. Residents of Nolambur say the Cooum banks, already struggling with plastic waste, are now seeing mounds of concrete debris and tiles being dumped overnight. "We see lorries offloading materials on the riverbank at odd hours," claimed Gokulan, a cyclist and morning walker in the Rail Nagar area. "It's heartbreaking — the river is dying slowly, and this only adds to its misery."

While the Corporation has warned of fines for illegal dumping, enforcement remains weak. "Unless there's CCTV surveillance or surprise inspections, people will continue to dump wherever it's convenient for them," said a junior official in the Solid Waste Management department, requesting anonymity.

The official yard on Kavimani Salai is expected to be part of a larger plan by the Corporation to identify legal dumping points across Chennai, as construction booms in suburbs and new housing layouts.

Urban planners suggest that mobile debris collection units or a door-to-door service might help curb the problem. "You can't expect everyone to bring rubble to one fixed point unless you make it easy," said Chandran, an architect based in Anna Nagar. "There has to be both infrastructure and incentive," he added.



Kevin shines

Kevin Alexis (class XII) from Velammal Vidyalaya West won gold in the 400m and bronze in the 200m (under-16 boys) at the 1st Tamil Nadu Zone 2 Athletic Championship held at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.



l Cure Eye Care வழங்கும் அப்போலோ டயக்னோஸ்டிக் சென்டர் இணைந்து இலவச கண் பரிசோதனை முகாம் மாமன்ற உறுப்பினர் கே வி திலகர் அலுவலகத்தில் நடைபெற்று வருகிறது. 92வது வார்டு காதாரத்துறைக்கு கொசு மருந்து அடிக்கும் இயந்திரம் மாமன்ற உறுப்பினர் KV திலகர் அவர்களின் செலவில் வாங்கிக் கொடுக்கப்பட்டது.



Velammal's Sruthi finishes second runner-up in SS

ARA SRUTHI, a talented and vibrant student of Velammal Matriculation School, has brought immense pride to the institution by clinching the title of second runner-up in a highly acclaimed national television singing competition.

With her soulful voice and captivating stage presence, Sara Sruthi mesmerized audiences and judges alike, standing out among thousands of contestants from across the country. Her consistent performances and musi-



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cal brilliance throughout the show earned her a place in the top three, showcasing not only her dedication and hard work but also the musical grooming and encouragement received from her school.

The management, staff, and students of Velammal Matric School expressed their heartfelt congratulations and pride. "Sara has set a shining example for her peers. Her success is a testament to the school's commitment to nurturing talent beyond academics," said the Principal.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR



CALL TO REMOVE DEAD TREE

A huge dead tree on phase I, 1st Main road of Nolambur is precariously placed. Being a busy road with vehicles and pedestrians on the move, a disaster is likely to happen anytime. I had already raised a complaint with the Greater Chennai Corporation (1913) and no action has been taken so far. With the north east monsoon fast approaching, there is every possibility of the heavy branch landing on someone. It's high time the authorities concerned take action before the inevitable happens.

-Ramamoorthy, Nolambur The Greater Chennai Corporation knocked down and sealed a few shops opposite to the Mogappair west bus terminus due to violation and deviation of plan. The same will continue till the building is restored as per planning permission / removal of unauthorised portions or till the order is revoked.



Velammal Academy, Nolambur was honoured with the Versatile Singer of the Year- 2025 award at the Work for Freedom – Special Awareness Walk held on May 25. This recognition was awarded in appreciation of her mellifluous voice and inspiring musical contribution to an event dedicated to a noble cause.

GCC vending zone on Park Road raises hopes and concerns

By N Rathi Chithra

vending zone has been set up by the Greater Chennai Corporation along Park Road in Anna Nagar Western Extension, bringing a mix of relief and concern to residents and road users. Marked as an official 60-metre vending stretch, the zone houses a few makeshift tea stalls and food vendors — but notably, the kiosks are located directly on the pedestrian pavement.

While the Corporation's move is being appreciated for regulating informal vending and creating designated spaces, several citizens have raised questions about the location, which forces pedestrians onto the road.

"This is an important tea point for us," said Murugan, an autorickshaw driver sipping tea with colleagues at one of the stalls. "We now have a permanent spot and don't have to worry about getting chased away. It gives us dignity." But not everyone shares his enthusiasm. Rajalakshmi, a 58-year-old resident of the area who walks daily along this stretch, expressed her frustration: "The sign says it's a vending zone, but it's still on the footpath! I now have to walk on the road with vehicles rushing past. This is not safe, especially for children and seniors."

A green board installed by the Corporation clearly marks the spot as a vending zone and states its 60-metre extent. The food carts and makeshift stalls have been set up using basic materials like tarpaulin and iron rods. The stalls draw a steady stream of customers including gig workers, cyclists, and office-goers. particularly during morning and evening hours. Karthik, a delivery partner for a food aggregator, said the vending zone was helpful. "We ride around all day and need quick, affordable food options. These stalls are convenient and quick."

However, social activ-

caution that placing such zones on footpaths can be counterproductive. "If the vending zone encroaches on pedestrian space, it defeats the purpose of inclusive urban planning," said Revathi Seshadri, an urban researcher. "We need to find ways vendors and walkers without pitting one against the other." The Corporation has recently launched initiatives across Chennai to identify and regularise informal vendors. Many of these efforts, including the Anna Nagar vending zone, are intended to provide economic stability to smallscale sellers while maintaining civic order.

ists and urban planners

Still, a long-term solution may involve redesigning streetscapes. "A vending bay along the side of the road, with a buffer for pedestrians, would be ideal," suggested local civic volunteer Varun Chandran. "Otherwise, we will just keep shifting the problem."



Arun Pandian's *Akkenam* to hit screens on July 4

The makers of director Uday K's Akkenam, featuring actor-producer Arun Pandian and his daughter Keerthi Pandiyan in the lead, announced that the film will release on July 4. Taking to social media, Keerthi added that the trailer and audio will be unveiled on June 14. Akkenam, which is being produced by Arun Pandian himself along with Saravana Kumar and AK Sekar, will feature a host of stars including Adithya Shivpink, Ramesh Thilak and GM Sundar.





June 15 - 21, 2025



Lot of options make Alcaraz a special player

By R Srinivasa Raghavan

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OGER Federer brought joy to the tennis court with his sizzling strokes for two decades. In a somewhat similar way, the emergence of Carlos Alcaraz Garifa on the ATP Tour in 2020 has been refreshing. The Spaniard clawed back from a hopeless position (three match points down in fourth set) to outlast Jannik Sinner and win his second French Open title in Paris. It was an epic battle lasting five hours and 29 minutes. The Roland Garros crowd enjoyed the pulsating five-set match to a T. It was the best Slam final in recent times. Tennis experts were flabbergasted the way Alcaraz turned the match in his favour after being one point away from losing the

match.

Alcaraz got into tennis at a young age (four), thanks to his father Carlos Alcaraz Gonzalez, who himself was a tennis coach. After winning a lot of Challenger titles, the Spaniard made his ATP Tour debut at the Rio Open in 2020, winning his first round match before bowing out in the next round.

Alcaraz's big breakthrough came in 2021, when he won his first Tour title in Croatia. He followed it up by pulling off an upset victory over world No.3 Stefanos Tsitsipas in the third round of the US Open. He ended the year on a high note, triumphing in the Next Gen ATP Finals. After making tremendous progress in 2021, Alcaraz bagged his maiden Grand Slam title in 2022,



winning the US Open, which included a marathon five-set win over Sinner in their last-eight match. Importantly, he showed enormous mental strength, winning three straight five-set matches in New York. This victory propelled him to become the youngest-ever world No.1 on the Tour (19 years and 214 days).

The retirement of Federer and Nadal, besides Novak Djokovic not getting any younger (at 38) created a doubt whether the younger generation can continue their rich legacy. Filling the big three shoes' (66 Slam titles) is a difficult task without a doubt. However, Alcaraz (five Slam titles) and Sinner (three Slam titles) have raised the level of tennis with their big serves, booming groundstrokes and incredible fighting spirit. Alcaraz-Sinner rivalry promises a riveting spectacle, besides keeping the game alive.

Winning his first Wimbledon title in 2023, beating back the challenge of seven-time Wimbledon champion Djokovic in a nerve-racking final, was one of the memorable moments in his career.

Alcaraz has had his low moments, going down to Botic van de Zandschulp in the second round of 2024 US Open. Like all great champions, Alcaraz learns his lesson and bounces back strongly.

The best quality about Alcaraz's game is his ability to bring joy to the game. His exhilarating strokes brings crowd to the sport. Being one of the best movers on the court, the 22-year-old hits winners from defensive positions, which leaves even the tennis experts in awe! He is made the drop shot trendy even if it's doesn't work in his favour always. Having a lot of options in his arsenal is what makes him a special player. If Alcaraz stavs injury-free. he will win Slams in double digits.

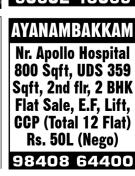
(The writer of this article is a senior sports correspondent)



Tejas, Kollam Express to start from Tambaram

TO facilitate platform upgrading works at Chennai Egmore as part of the railway station redevelopment plan, Southern Railway on Thursday announced that Chennai Egmore -Madurai Tejas Express, Kollam Express and a few other trains will depart/ terminate from Tambaram. The Charminar Express bound to Hyderabad will run from Chennai Beach instead of Tambaram. The revised terminal points for these trains will be in force from June 20 to August 18.

An official note said Chennai Egmore - Kollam Express, Chennai Egmore - Madurai Tejas Express, Chennai Egmore - Mannargudi Mannai Express, Chennai Egmore - Tiruchendur Express and Chennai Egmore - Guruvayur Express will originate and terminate at Tambaram. Similarly, Tambaram - Hyderabad Charminar daily Express will originate and terminate from Chennai Beach between June 20 and August 18, says a press release.



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Anna Nagar gets India's first AC lounge for gig workers

By Our Correspondent

N a pioneering move to support the city's gig workforce, the Greater Chennai Corporation has unveiled India's first air-conditioned lounge exclusively for gig workers in Anna Nagar. This landmark initiative, inaugurated via video conferencing by Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister Udhavanidhi Stalin, marks a significant step in safeguarding those working under extreme weather conditions. Earlier the Mogappair Mail had reported that Anna Nagar was among the chosen locations for setting up the innovative project.

The facility is a modern, climate-controlled rest centre with amenities including CCTV surveillance, toilets, drinking water, mobile charging points, and round-the-clock security. Developed by the Greater Chennai Corporation, the lounge is designed to offer much-needed relief to platform-based workers such as food delivery agents,

who often endure scorching sun and long hours outdoors.

The lounge is strategically located near busy zones in Anna Nagar, a hub for delivery and commuting services. It has quickly drawn appreciation from gig workers who see the facility as a muchneeded oasis in their grueling day.

"I start work by 7 am and don't return home until late at night. There are no proper places for us to rest or even use a clean toilet," said R. Shankar, a 26-year-old food delivery agent. "Today, I sat in a clean, air-conditioned room for ten minutes and felt human again. This is a big change.'

The initiative is part of the broader urban welfare programs spearheaded by the government, especially in Chennai, which has been experiencing extreme temperatures in recent years. Public health experts and labour rights activists have long advocated such interventions. citing the physical toll of



heat on gig workers.

"This lounge represents both dignity and foresight," said a Greater Chennai Corporation official. "Gig workers are the backbone of modern urban life. They deserve not just our appreciation, but infrastructure that supports their health and well-being."

The Tamil Nadu government has announced plans to extend such cooling centres to other parts of the city and to include construction labourers under similar welfare measures. If the Anna Nagar model proves successful, it could well become a national template for urban labour-friendly infrastructure.





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