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FREE

## Order to close shops in Ranganathan Street



By Our Staff Reporter

Corporation officials on May 30, asked the shop owners of Ranganathan Street in T. Nagar to shut their shops until further notice.

"We decided to shut down the shops because we didn't want the place turning into a COVID-19 hotspot like the Koyambedu market. It's a preventive measure," said a Corporation official.

Officials alleged that many shops on the street failed to ensure social distancing norms among customers.

Standalone shops were allowed to function after a set of relaxations on the lockdown was announced on May 11.

The officials have so far not sealed any shops.

## State reports over 1000 cases for 7<sup>th</sup> straight day

By Our Staff Reporter

For the 7<sup>th</sup> straight day since May 30, Tamilnadu recorded over 1000 cases of COVID-19 on June 5.

For 2 consecutive days on June 4 and 5, the state recorded the highest single day spike of 1,384 and 1,438 cases respectively.

The state's Covid-19 tally reached 28,694 cases and death toll rose to 232.

There are currently 12,697 active cases.

A total of 15,762 patients have been discharged or cured, including 861 on June 5.

On June 3, the state recorded the death of its youngest patient, a 17-year-old girl. She died owing to breathing complications within 4 hours of admission in Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital.

Of the 2,822 cases on June 4 and 5, 2,188 cases were from Chennai.

The highest daily spikes pushed the total number of cases in the city to 19,826 and deaths to 172.

## Mother, son found dead in flat in Mambalam

By Our Staff Reporter

45-year-old Vikranth, an IT employee, and his 80-year-old mother Rajeshwari were found dead in their flat in West Mambalam on May 28.

After a foul smell started emanating from their flat, the neighbours alerted the police, and the bodies were sent to a government hospital for post-mortem. The woman had been ill and bedridden.

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## தமாஷா வரிகள்

ஜே.எஸ். ராகவன்

கொர்...ர்...ரோனா!

(கொரோனாவுக்கு பயந்து வெளியே தலைகாட்டாமல் உச்சியிலிருந்து பாதங்கள் வரை போர்த்திக் கொண்டு சீனு தூங்குகிறான். சாயா காராசேவுடன் வருகிறாள்.)

சாயா: கோயம்பேடு மார்க்கெட்டிலே அசாஸ்ட்டா தள்ளிய தஞ்சாவூர் வாழை இலை லோடு மாதிரிக் கிடக்கிறானே! காரா சேவுனா இவனுக்கு உயிர் ஆச்சே என்ன பன்றது? ஐடியா! ஜிம்மிக்குக் கேட்ச் பிராக்டீஸ் கொடுக்கப் போறேன். ஜிம்மி! ஜிம்மி இங்கே வாடி என் பட்டுச் செல்லம். கமான் கேட்ச்... கேட்ச்...

சீனு: (பதறி எழுந்து) கிராதிக்! ஸ்டாப். ஜிம்மிக்குப் போட்டு டாதே. ஒவ்வொரு கார்பசாவ் மேலேயும்... கரெக்ஷன்... காரா சேவ் மேலேயும் அது யார் வயத்துக்குள் போகப் போறதுன்னு கடவுள் எழுதியிருப்பார். பூதக் கண்ணாடி வைச்சுப் பார்த்தா சீனுவோட பேர் இருக்கும். ஜிம்மியின் பேர் இருக்காது. இங்கே கொண்டா அதை.

சாயா: அப்படிங்கறே? அப்போ நீ சாப்பிடு. அதென்ன விளக் கேத்தற வேளையிலே போத்திண்டு தூக்கம்? குடும்பத்துக்கு ஆகாதுன்னு என் அத்தை சொல்லுவா.

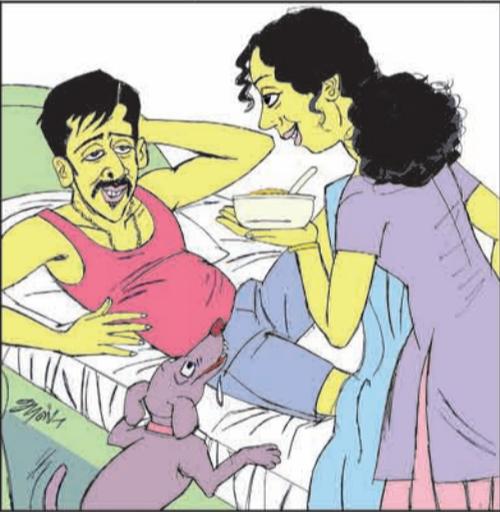
சீனு: ஹலிம்? உன்னுடைய அத்தைதான் குடும்பத்துக்கு ஆகாதவ. சுங்கிடி கட்டின சகுனி, மடிசார் கட்டின மந்தரை. தூக்கம் எங்க குடும்ப சொத்து. சஹாரா, கோபி, தார் பாலைவனத்திலே தூங்கினாலும் முழுக்கப் போத்திண்டுதான் தூங்குவோம். தூக்கத்தைப் பத்தி உனக்கு என்ன தெரியும்? 'உறங்குவது போல சாக்காடு'னு வள்ளுவரும், 'தூங்குவது தியானத்துக்கு சமம்'னு தலாய் லாமாவும், 'இறப்பின் போலியே தூக்கம்'னு ஷேக்ஸ்பியரும் சொல்லியிருக்காங்க. எங்கப்பா எப்பவும் ராகத்தோடு கொட்டாவி விட்டுண்டுதான் 'மோழொழா'ன்னு ஏதோ பேசுவார். புரிஞ்சிக்கிறதுக்கு சிறப்புப் பயிற்சி வேணும். என்னுடைய கவின்கார்த்தி ஒரு பெரிய கம்பெனியிலே இண்டர்வியூக்குப் போனவனை விசிட்டர்ஸ் ரூமில் வெயிட் பண்ணச் சொன்னாங்களாம். யாரும் கூப்பிடாததினாலே அம்சமா இருந்த சோபாவிலே சாய்ஞ்சு உட்கார்ந்தவன் முரசுக் கட்டிலின் மேல் தூங்கின புலவர் ஓசிகிரனாராகத் தூங்கிட்டானாம்.

சாயா: ஐயா! அவர் ஓசிகிரனார் இல்லே மோசிகிரனார்.

சீனு: ஏதோ ஒரு கிரனார். கார்த்தி திடீர்னு கண் முழிச்சு மணியைப் பார்த்தா சாயந்தரம் ஆகியிருந்ததாம். என்ன ஆச்சு தெரியுமா?

சாயா: 'போ டா தூங்குமுஞ்சி' னு துரத்திட்டாங்களா?

சீனு: அவன் சாய்ஞ்சு தூங்கின சோபா எர்கோனாமிக்ஸுக்குத் தலைவணங்கித் தயாரிக்கப்பட்டுப் புதுசா மார்க்கெட் பண்ண வேண்டிய ஹை-எண்டு பிராட்டாம். அவன் அதில் குட்டிப் பாப்பாவா ஆழ்ந்து தூங்கறதை சேல்ஸ்



மேனேஜர் பூரிப்புடன் எம்.டிக்குக் காட்டி 'இண்டர்வியூ'ன்னா எல்லாரும் அலர்ட்டா இருப்பாங்க. ஆனால் இவன் அதையும் மீறித் தூங்கறானா அது நம்ம சோபாவின் மகிமை'னு சொல்லி லான்சுக்காக, சிக்கனமா ஆடை அணிந்த ஒரு ஜோடி அழகிகளை கார்த்திக் பக்கத்திலே சோஷியல் டிஸ்டன்ஸிங் இல்லாமல் நிக்க வெச்சு, பல ஆங்கிலில் ஃபோட்டோ எடுத்தாங்களாம். கார்த்தியின் மேல் மாடி பாயிர் பீடபூமி மாதிரி காலியாகத்தான் இருக்கும். ஆனாலும் ஆள் பார்க்க இந்து சீரியல் ஹீரோ கணக்கா பனபன்னு லாமினேட் செஞ்சு மாதிரி இருப்பான். இப்போ கம்பெனியின் ராசியான மாடல் ஆகிட்டான். கோழித் தூக்கம் போடற சாதனை எங்க குடும்பத்தின் பிரத்யேக சொத்து. தூக்கத்திலே லேடி மேக்ஸெட் மாதிரி நடக்கிற சோம்னாம்பு லிஸ்ட்டுகள்கூட இருக்காங்க. என் சித்தப்பா கிள்ளி எடுக்க சதையே இல்லாமல் ரெண்டு மெரைன் பிளைவுட்டுகளை சேத்து பெவிகோல் போட்டு ஒட்டின மாதிரி ட்ரிம்மா இருக்கிறதே அவர் அடிக்கடி தூக்கத்திலே நீண்ட வாக் போறதினாலே தாங்கிற குடும்ப ஜோக் ஒண்ணு உண்டு. வயசு ஆனதினாலே தூக்கத்திலே ஜொள்ளு ரொம்பவிட்டு தலைகாணியை நனைக்கிறார்னு மாமி போட்ட அதிரடி உத்தரவாலே கோவிட்-19 மாஸ்க் போட்டுண்டு தூங்கறார்.

சாயா: நல்லவேளை! எங்க குடும்பம் வேற லெவல். நடுநிசி வரை படிச்சுண்டு இருந்துட்டு நாலு மணிக்கே எழுந்து காபிக்கு ரெடியாகிடும் அறிவு ஜீவிகள் இருக்கிற குடும்பம்.

சீனு: சாயா, உங்கிட்டே ஒரு உண்மையை சொல்லியாகணும். சுகமா ஒரு ஞாயிற்றுக்கிழமை பகல் தூக்கத்தில் இருந்த என்னை எழுப்பி விட்டுக்கு வந்த உண்மைக் காட்டி இவதாண்டா நாங்க பார்த்து இருக்கிற பெண். பிடிச்சிருக்கானு கேட்டபோது நீ மாஸ்க் போட்டுண்டு வந்திருந்தாலும், ருமரும கண்ணோடு சரின்னு தலையை ஆட்டிட்டேன். சரியா முழிச்சுண்டு இருந்தேன்னா மார்வாடி கல்யாணத்திலே, கூங்கட் உட்டானானு சொல்லி மாதிரி மாஸ்க் உட்டானானு கமண்டு கொடுத்து வேண்டாமனு சொல்லியிருப்பேன்.

சாயா: (உஷ்ணத்துடன்) என்னது? அப்போ சரியா பார்க்காம தலையை ஆட்டினியா? மிஸ்டர் சீனு நாளைக்கே உங்களுக்கு 'அண்டர் இன்ஸ்டிரக்ஷன் ஃப்ரம் அவர் கிளைன்ட் மிஸஸ் சாயா சீனுவாசன்'னு ஆரம்பிக்கிற வக்கீல் நோட்டீஸ் வரும். கபர்தார்! சீனு: வெய்ட்! என்னை முழுக்கப் பேசுவிடு. நான் சொல்ல வந்தது என்னன்னா அந்த நேரத்திலே உன் அழகுக்கும் படிப்புக்கும் நான் ஏத்தவன் இல்லை. சாரம் கட்டி ஏறினாலும் எட்டாதுன்னு கறாரா சொல்லியிருப்பேன். சாயா, என்னை நம்பு. இது கொடுரன் கொரானா மேல் சத்தியம்! jsraghavan@yahoo.com

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### MTC introduces cashless ticketing system

By Our Staff Reporter

On June 1, Metropolitan Transport Corporation introduced cashless ticketing system on two of its routes to Secretariat, one from T. Nagar and the other from Saidapet.

Under this new system, a passenger can purchase tickets using any mobile payment apps including Paytm, Google pay or Amazon pay, by scanning the QR code fixed in a few places in the buses.

An MTC official said that the cashless system would be extended to more routes once all the bus services get operational post the lockdown.

### No Aadhaar, no haircut

By Our Staff Reporter

On June 2, the Tamilnadu government made it mandatory for customers visiting spas, beauty parlours and saloons to carry their Aadhaar cards.

The government has introduced this measure to ease contract tracing.

Customer details such as name, address, phone number and Aadhaar number should be mandatorily noted by owners of spas, beauty parlours and saloons.

According to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), hair-stylists should wear masks and gloves.

To avoid crowding, services should only be by appointment, while the SOP also instructs saloons and spas to ensure that only 50% of seats are occupied at a time by customers.

### Train ticket refund at reservation counters

By Our Staff Reporter

Railways will issue refund for tickets in trains cancelled from March 22 to June 30 on account of COVID-19.

Passengers can get the refund at reservation counters in Chennai Central, Chennai Egmore, Chennai Beach, Thirumailai, Mambalam, St. Thomas Mount, Tambaram, Chengalpet, Tindivanam, Perambur, Avadi, Tiruvallur, Arakkonam, Katpadi, Wallajah Road, Ambur, Gudiyatham, Vaniyambadi and Jolarpettai from 10 a.m to 5 p.m.

In a bid to avoid crowding at the counters, refunds are being issued in a staggered manner.

It started with refunds for trains till March 31 from June 5.

The refunds for trains from April 1 to 14 will begin from June 12; for trains from April 15 to 30 from June 19; for trains from May 1 to 15 from June 26; for trains from May 16 to 31 from July 3 and for trains from June 1 to 30 from July 10.

The full refund will be available for 180 days from the date of journey.

### TTD loses Rs. 3 crores during lockdown

By Our Staff Reporter

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam Temple (Venkatanarayana Road, T. Nagar) lost Rs. 1.2 crore a month in collection and Rs 7.5 lakhs from sale of laddus per week.

"We used to get not less than Rs 1.20 crore every month in the hundials and every week we used to sell 15,000 laddus at Rs. 50 each. The loss from sale of laddus alone is Rs. 90 lakhs," said a TTD board member.

### Woman dies after being set on fire by husband

By Our Staff Reporter

Senthil Velmurugan (38) (a resident of Anbanandam 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, MGR Nagar) was arrested by K. K. Nagar police on the charge of murdering his wife Lakshmi on June 3 by setting her on fire while she was sleeping in her paramour K. Govindasamy's house.

According to the police, Lakshmi had left her husband and 13-year-old daughter a month back to go and live with Govindasamy (a security guard) living in the same area.

Infuriated over this, Senthil went to Govindasamy's house with a can of petrol around 5.30 a.m.

Since the door was open, he poured the petrol on Lakshmi who was asleep and threw a match before locking the room. Hearing Lakshmi's cries, neighbours broke open the door and rescued the couple.

Govindasamy also suffered severe burn injuries in trying to save Lakshmi.

They were taken to K. K. Nagar Peripheral hospital and then shifted to Kilpauk Medical College Hospital.

Lakshmi, with over 90 percent burns, died without responding to treatment and Govindasamy is battling for life with 55 percent burns.

### Vandikaran Street declared containment zone

By Our Staff Reporter

A portion of Vandikaran Street (West Mambalam) was declared a containment zone last week due to the detection of coronavirus positive cases and barricaded.

The residents are not allowed to leave the street. Containment activities including disinfection, daily door-to-door survey and testing of all residents are underway.

Police personnel have been deployed to monitor activities in the containment area.



## Wall being built along canal



By Our Staff Reporter

Corporation workers are constructing a wall along Mambalam Canal passing under Venkatanarayana Road in T. Nagar. They have provided a gate to facilitate desilting work.

## Special camera donated to Gurupriya Vision Foundation



Dr. Vasumathy Vedantham and Dr. Praveen Krishna with Prof. Raghavan

By Our Staff Reporter

Prof. V. Raghavan (an emeritus professor from IIT and resident of T. Nagar) has donated the latest state of the art vision saving equipment, the Topcon Fundus camera (imported from Japan) capable of imaging the retina, to Gurupriya Vision Research Foundation, the public charitable trust of Radhatri Nethralaya (12, Hindi

Prachara Sabha Street, T. Nagar, Ph: 2433 2229, 2431 1550, 94454 38681).

Dr. Vasumathy Vedantham (Medical Director, Radhatri Nethralaya) said that the camera would help to accurately pinpoint the cause and site of loss of vision.

Dr. Praveen Krishna (Medical Director, Radhatri Nethralaya) was present at the function.

## Temple tank dries up



By Our Staff Reporter

The tank of Arulmigu Kothandaramar Temple (Ellaiamman Koil Street, West Mambalam, behind Kittu Park) has dried up due to the hot weather and bushes have sprung up along the edges.

## Closure of crèches/playschools affects working women

By Our Staff Reporter

The closure of crèches and playschools owing to the lockdown has created a child care crisis, forcing parents, especially women, to choose between going back to their jobs and looking after their children at home.

Several parents, especially those working in corporate firms, IT fields, and single parents would usually leave their children in private crèches or daycare centers while at work. But these centers too had to close due to the lockdown. And most plan on staying shut till the end of the year due to safety

concerns and the heavy losses they have incurred.

In the meantime, parents are exploring other ways to ensure that their children are not left alone at home. This includes taking paid leave, negotiating with employers to give them a few hours off to enable them to check on their children at home, or reaching out to distant relatives and friends who can stay home with the children.

Many women have been forced to quit their jobs as their work profile does not suit the 'Work from home' concept.

## Saidapet resident gets govt. recognition for COVID-19 relief work

By Our Staff Reporter

From being an independent social activist to government-appointed volunteer-coordinator for COVID-19, Hari Krishnan (27), an entrepreneur and skill trainer from Saidapet, is completely involved in relief work.

He leads a team of 47 volunteers and is in charge of 15 zones in the city.

Since 2016, he has been participating in awareness walks and clean-up campaigns and has done extensive ground-level research to stand up for the deprived.

"I come from lower economic strata and studied in a government school," he said.

The COVID-19 pandemic gave him an opportunity to help the needy.

He prepared a list of orphanages and started helping them with relief materials bought from his savings.

He has also identified and is helping around 200 visually-impaired persons who are in need and living in rural areas.

He has been distributing relief kits costing Rs. 1,000 each with 5 kg. of rice, one kg. of sugar, one kg. of salt, basic vegetables and spices.

He said that funds have poured in from a number of his Facebook friends after he shared photos of the plight of the underprivileged.

Taking note of this relief work, on April 16, he was called to meet Sukumar Chitti Babu (Revenue Officer).

He was given a government order appointing him the head of volunteer coordinators for COVID-19 relief materials (exclusively for migrant relief) for five zones in the city.

In the next five days, he was made in-charge of all 15 zones



in the city with 47 volunteers working under him.

"By May, I had only Rs. 2,000 in my savings. I had exhausted Rs. 2 lakhs from my marriage savings in a month for social service. I handle branding and marketing for a few companies in the city and also conduct skill training for freshers and entrepreneurs on the side. There was no business during lockdown and I had to manage with my other savings. As volunteers, we had other financial challenges such as travel expenses as most of us lost our jobs during this pandemic. We tried and helped each other with financial support to keep the mission going. In the second week of May, volunteers split into two groups. One group was involved in on-field distribution activities and the other group was responsible for rescuing migrants from the shelters, quarantining them and sending them to their respective hometowns by Shramik Special trains," he said.

Alongside this, every volunteer has taken up an individual cause and is contributing his share in smaller ways. If we find people stranded or starving for food on the road or in slum settlements then we pool resources and get them what is necessary, he added.

## Facelift for Venkatanarayana Road



By Our Staff Reporter

Corporation contractors are installing new lamp posts on the pavement of Venkatanarayana Road in T. Nagar and beautifying the road under the Smart City project.

## 100 face masks distributed

By Our Staff Reporter

Pariveshayati Trust recently distributed 100 face masks among pavement dwellers, shopkeepers and policemen in West Mambalam.

Grocery kits were also given to poor temple priests and 25 poor families.

The Trust has distributed hundreds of food packets among poor and needy persons in West Mambalam.

Anyone in need of assistance may contact the Trust in 96770 61413.

## Elderly in COVID-19-prone areas to be quarantined

By Our Staff Reporter

Corporation Commissioner G. Prakash on June 1 listed measures taken by the civic body to protect the vulnerable population as COVID-19 numbers rise in the city.

Among the steps taken, is the removal of elderly persons and people with co-morbidities from areas with a large number of cases and shifting them to quarantine centers temporarily to avoid infection.

"We have created several quarantine centers in the Corporation schools and community halls have been kept ready with basic facilities like beds and toilets. In areas where the case load is heavy, we will shift vulnerable people from there," he said.

"We want to do this because the infection affects old people and those with co-morbidities. So, wherever there are cases like this, we shift vulnerable people temporarily and give them nutritious food, vitamins, keep them for 1 week to 10 days and then send them back. This is to break the chain of the disease," he explained.

"Streets with heavy case loads are identified and there will be outer perimeter control introduced. The outer boundary will be tightened and vulnerable people inside will be brought to quarantine centers as a strict measure," he said. "This is to stop the spread of infection," he added.

He further stated that these activities have already begun in a number of wards and that these are scientific measures to control the spread of the virus.

## OBITUARY

KAMALA

Kamala (resident of Rama Apartments, 37, Naickammar Street, West Mambalam) passed away on May 31.

She was 89 and had been a resident of West Mambalam for 67 years. She hailed from Srirangam. She was the wife of late K. Venkatraman.

She is survived by her sons Kannan, Parthasarathy, Raghu Raman (Ph. 98403 25768, 94449 41697) and Rangarajan, and daughters Prema and Kanaga Latha.



S. RANGASWAMI

S. Rangaswami (resident of 32, 3rd Street, Postal Colony, West Mambalam) passed away on March 24.

He was 95, and had been a resident of West Mambalam for more than 7 decade.

He was involved in the development of Postal Colony and was a past President of Postal Colony Welfare Society.

He initiated the donation of the Welfare Society's premises to the Postal Department for a postoffice.

He is survived by his wife, daughters, son, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

His family can be contacted in 2489 0037.



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## Overhead telecom cables crisscross busy junction



By Our Staff Reporter

A number of overhead telecom cables tethered to lamps posts and traffic signal posts are crisscrossing over Venkatanarayana Road-Burkit Road-Thanicachalam Road junction in T. Nagar.

Photo shows workers tying more cables on a post using a ladder which is resting on a post.

## Drain work apace following report in Mambalam Times



Before



After

By Our Staff Reporter

Following the report 'Water in trench for storm water drain' published in *Mambalam Times* last week, work on the drain at the junction of North Boag Road and G. N. Chetty Road in T. Nagar has been speeded up.

## Fire Department launches mobile sanitiser units

By Our Staff Reporter

To intensify the battle against COVID-19 in the state, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami on June 3 flagged off 25 sanitiser bikes attached to Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Department.

"The bikes will help to sanitise narrow streets in the city to prevent the spread of COVID-19," said a fire department official.

The bikes, which cost Rs. 25,000 each, are fitted with pressurised sanitiser sprayers which can spray 1,620 liters per hour.

Initially, these vehicles will be deployed in all the containment zones in the city.

After successful containment of COVID-19, these vehicles will be refitted to douse fires in narrow streets.

## Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya seeks sanitiser dispensers

By Our Staff Reporter

Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya (Venkatanarayana Road, T. Nagar) has appealed for donation of various items for ITI and the school to handle COVID-19 threat.

The requirements include infrared thermometers (12), handsfree manual sanitiser dispensers (10), automatic contactless sanitiser dispensers (3), disinfectant sprayers (3), disinfectant solution (100 liters), face masks and hand cleansers for use by about 300 persons.

Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya ITI started working on June 1 with standard operating procedure for work resumption laid down by the Directorate General of Training, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India.

More details may be had from P. Maruthi (91766 24283) or email: [tnhss32@gmail.com](mailto:tnhss32@gmail.com)

## 1,400-bed COVID-19 care center in Pulianthope

By Our Staff Reporter

Tamilnadu Health Minister C. Vijaya Baskar on May 30 inaugurated a 1,400-bed COVID-19 center readied in the unoccupied Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) tenement in Kesava Perumal Park of Pulianthope.

The center has CCTV monitoring, special medical teams for each floor and separate lift facilities for patients and doctors.

Patients with mild symptoms, who do not have co-morbid conditions and young patients will be kept in this facility.

The government is also effectively providing service through the 140 urban healthcare centers with outpatient wards to treat patients with fever.

## BJP workers distribute essentials to the needy



By Our Staff Reporter

BJP party workers recently distributed rice and groceries among 100 poor families including those of Corporation conservancy workers collecting garbage in Maduraiveeran Street, T. Nagar.

The workers were also given Rs. 500 each which was deposited in their bank accounts.

L. Murugan (State Organization President), Sadai Chandru (South Chennai District President), D. Balasubramaniam (Zone President) and Ganesh Balasubramaniam (Zone Vice President) were present.

## Some pavement shops open



By Our Staff Reporter

A few pavement shops under the Usman Road flyover in T. Nagar opened last week but saw very few customers leaving other shopkeepers undecided about opening their shops. There are hundreds of pavement shops in the area.

## EB bill deadline extended till July

By Our Staff Reporter

With the lockdown extended till June 30, Tamilnadu Electricity Board has extended the deadline for paying electricity bills for the lockdown period till July 5 for domestic customers in Chennai, Tiruvallur, Chengalpattu and Kancheepuram districts.

HT consumers can make payment up to June 15 to avoid disconnection and payment of reconnection fees.

## Perimeter control for wards with high incidence of cases

By Our Staff Reporter

Chennai Corporation has announced a new containment strategy for COVID-19 hotspots in the city, especially in Tondiarpet and Royapuram zones.

Wards in these zones which have a high incidence of cases will now have perimeter control, akin to the earlier containment street model.

## Groceries given to villagers



By Our Staff Reporter

Members of Lalitha Sahasranamam Mandali Prodosha Vazipadu Friends (K. K. Nagar) distributed groceries among 100 needy families in Kazhambu village in Thiruvanamalai district on June 2.

Seethalakshmi (Social worker and co-ordinator) said that the beneficiaries included purohiths, conservancy workers, autorickshaw drivers and watchmen.

## Pocket-size panchangam available free



By Our Staff Reporter

Gurusamy Agri Kannan (resident of 3, Q Block, Prem Nagar Colony, South Boag Road, T. Nagar) has compiled a pocket-size 'Sharvari Varusham Panchangam' for Tamil New Year for the 33rd consecutive year and started free distribution of copies.

The panchangam contains all the information found in the normal sized one and he has printed more than 28,000 copies.

Anyone wanting a free copy of the pocket almanac may contact him in 98403 05141 or 97898 25596,

# OBITUARY

S. MURUGAN ADITYAN

S. Murugan Adityan (resident of 23, KoSuMani Street, Padmanabha Nagar, Choolaimedu, Chennai 94) passed away on June 2.



He was 78, and was the Managing Director of Powerfull Printers Private Limited (Kannappan Street, Aminjikarai) where Anna Nagar Times and its subsidiary publication Mambalam Times are

being printed since their inception.

He was born in Kayamozhi village (Thoothukudi District).

He started his career as Accountant in Sun Paper Mills (Cheranmahadevi) and later became a Manager there.

He then joined Dinakaran Publications as Manager in Chennai and rose to become its General Manager.

During his tenure with Dinakaran, he was instrumental in launching the publication's daily editions in Madurai, Trichy, Coimbatore and other towns in Tamilnadu.

He was also part of the team that was involved in technology

upgrades over the years.

His experience in Dinakaran helped him to start Powerfull Printers in 1990.

The press is registered with Tamilnadu Education Department for printing school textbooks. It also prints books for distance education courses conducted by 6 universities in Tamilnadu.

He is survived by wife Sarguna Devi, sons Ramesh Adityan (Ph: 73582 82978) and Kannan Adityan (Ph: 97109 42456), daughter Kavitha, daughters-in-law Amudha Devi and Sreedevi, son-in-law Rangarajan and 6 grandchildren.

## Change of norms leads to drop in containment zones

By Our Staff Reporter

Over the past few days, Chennai has been consistently reporting over 1000 new cases of COVID-19 everyday.

However, from a peak of 1150 containment zones earlier, the Corporation gradually began removing a large number of areas from its list.

On May 31, the total number of containment zones under Corporation limits was reduced to just 201.

This huge reduction in the number of containment zones in the city even as coronavirus cases continues to rise has raised several questions including how the Corporation was demarcating the zones.

Containment zones are areas from where positive cases of COVID-19 have been reported in a district. These areas are generally barricaded by the police and the entry and exit of people in these spots are restricted and monitored by the local body workers.

Redefining containment zones Initially, Chennai Corporation had designated a five-km radius around the house of those who tested positive for the virus. In addition to this, it also applied restriction on a buffer zone of three km radius beyond the containment zone. Even if a single positive case was reported from a street, the entire street was barricaded as per protocol and restrictions on the entry and exit of people were enforced.

However, on May 18, the state government issued an order which redefined the criteria for designating an area as a containment zone.

According to the order, "Containment zone is formed for areas where a cluster of cases or clusters of cases emerge. A cluster is defined as an area where more than five cases are reported or five families and more are affected by COVID-19". This essentially meant that for an area to be marked as a containment zone, at least five persons must test positive for novel coronavirus in the area.

This change in definition brought down the number of zones to 201 by May 31.

Why was the definition revised?

According to a senior health official, when total lockdown was in place, it was easier to have such strict norms. But post relaxation of norms, when businesses started to open up, there was no point in creating inconvenience of mobility for the persons living in a particular area because one person got COVID-19. Hence it was decided to expand the definition to include a larger number," he said.

As per the new norms, an area is removed from the list of containment zones if there have been no fresh cases of COVID-19 for 14 consecutive days as against 28 days during total lockdown period.

## Cap on treatment cost for COVID-19 in private hospitals

By Our Staff Reporter

The State Health Department is planning to cap inpatient treatment cost for COVID-19 patients at Rs. 7,500 to Rs 22,500 a day by invoking provisions of the Epidemic Diseases Act.

Hospitals found overcharging patients will face action including closure, health minister C. Vijayabaskar said.

At a meeting chaired by the minister on June 3 in which senior officials including health secretary Beela Rajesh took part, it was decided that Rs. 7,500 will be the maximum charge for a day for treatment in general wards of private hospitals that offer tertiary care, Rs. 15,000 for ICU care in such hospitals and Rs. 22,500 in cases where life-saving equipment such as ventilators are used.

"We are planning to make this an all-inclusive (rate). Hospitals can fix any rate below this amount," the minister said.

"If patients, however, want to get themselves admitted to deluxe rooms or suites, the charges will be separate," he said.

According to officials, if patients require expensive drugs for treatment of comorbidities and other complications, hospitals may charge them.

In the meantime, the Madras High Court on June 4 dismissed a plea moved by the Tamil Nadu Muslim Munnetra Kazhagam (TMMK) Trust seeking a direction to the State to cap the cost of treatment for COVID-19 charged by private hospitals, besides setting a minimum standard of treatment in all hospitals and clinical centers as required under law.

The first bench, comprising Chief Justice A. P. Sahi and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy, dismissed the plea on the basis that the Supreme Court was already hearing pleas in this regard.

## Low lying branches axed



By Our Staff Reporter

Corporation workers axed low lying branches of avenue trees at the junction of G. N. Chetty Road and Raghaviah Road (T. Nagar) last week as they were obstructing the way for motorists on the road margin.

## K. K. Salai barricaded



K. K. Salai in MGR Nagar was barricaded at both ends after multiple cases of coronavirus were reported on June 2.

## Police enforce mask rule, fine violators

By Our Staff Reporter

Despite repeated requests and warnings by police and other authorities for more than two months, many is the city still seem to be shying away from wearing masks to fight COVID-19.

According to data released by the police, as on June 1, it had booked nearly 34,000 persons for not wearing masks when they stepped out of their houses, and collected Rs. 1.69 crore as fine from the violators. 33,986 persons were booked in just 12 days and fined Rs. 500 each.

Mask norm violators on wheels were asked to leave their vehicles with police and buy masks to get their vehicle back after paying the fine of Rs 500.

Police had initially started an awareness drive and free distribution of masks in certain areas but after Corporation officials reiterated that people should wear masks when in public places, police started to implement the rule in a strict manner catching thousands for violation of the order.

## A terrace wedding



By Our Staff Reporter

The lockdown caused by the pandemic has forced hundreds of would-be couples to postpone their big event to next year.

At the same time, a significant new trend has also emerged during the crisis — lockdown weddings.

Given the uncertainty over when things will be back to normal, many refused to suspend their plans indefinitely and went ahead and took the plunge, although with a downsized wedding that was practically possible and that satisfied social distancing requirements and other norms.

In late January, when her marriage date was finalized for May 29, Prathibha (name changed) never thought that

her wedding to Prabhu would take place on the terrace of her building. Traditions were tweaked, but not altered. Around 20 friends and relatives attended in person, as hundreds connected over a Zoom call.

Decorated with coconut and plantain leaves, the terrace became the venue.

Only food cooked at home was served for breakfast and lunch.

To avoid the extreme heat, the wedding function and lunch were completed before 11 a.m.

"We even designed a temporary temple on the terrace.

We avoided outsourced services like photographers and caterers except the purohitis to conduct the wedding", said Prathiba.

## 'Best Social Worker' award for Dr. Republica Sridhar



By Our Staff Reporter

Tamilnadu Brahmin Association (T. Nagar) and Jaimaa Charitable Trust (Vadapalani) jointly presented 'Best Social Worker' award to Dr. Republica Sridhar (Founder, RMD Pain and Palliative Care Trust, T. Nagar) for her service to the needy and persons suffering from terminal ailments.

The award was presented by Lakshmi Raghukumar (President, Thambrass).

Dr. Republica has been pro-

viding free medical assistance since lockdown for the residents of Amarambedu Village (Sriperumbudur District).

She has also distributed essentials among slum dwellers and underprivileged families with the support of various NGOs. Her Trust runs hospice care centers in Chennai and Madurai for terminally ill and cancer patients.

Her contact number is 93810 16588.

## COVID-19 patients warned against moving out

By Our Staff Reporter

Chennai Corporation Commissioner G. Prakash on June 4 said COVID-19 patients and their contacts, who are in home quarantine, will be shifted to government COVID-19 care or institutional quarantine centers if they are found roaming on the road.

Stating that a few such persons were identified, he said, "We will take the help of the local police to observe their behaviour. Such people will be tracked, and cases will be registered against them."

## 22 Secretariat staff test positive

By Our Staff Reporter

COVID-19 is now paralysing work in Fort St. George, the hot seat of the Tamilnadu government.

Till date, 22 staff members have tested positive for the virus.

Since June 4, two IAS Officers and an Assistant Section Officer have tested positive.

The whole industries department in the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of the building has been shut for fumigation, and will reopen on June 8.

Cases have also been reported from departments like information, environment and forests, school education, public works, differently-abled, social welfare, legislative assembly, pay and accounts and cooperative, food and consumer protection.

Their colleagues have been home quarantined.

"Thermal screening is ineffective as many cases are asymptomatic," said an official.

The centralised air-conditioning has been switched off in the secretariat building due to the pandemic.

## Anbazhagan on ventilator support

By Our Staff Reporter

DMK MLA J. Anbazhagan (61) continues to be on ventilator support, a day after he tested positive for COVID-19 on June 2.

He has been admitted to Dr. Reela Institute & Medical Centre, Chrompet and has been relying on 80 percent of oxygen through the ventilator.

He was actively involved in DMK's 'Ondrinaivom Vaa' initiative to provide relief materials for people in distress due to the pandemic.

Anbazhagan was unwell for the past few days and later isolated himself in his house before getting tested for COVID-19.

Anbazhagan is the first legislator in the state to have contracted the coronavirus.

## Central team to study mortality rate in Tamilnadu

By Our Staff Reporter

A central team has arrived in the city to understand the best practices of Tamilnadu, which has the lowest mortality rate in the country.

The team will be in the city for three days and will visit Chengalpet, Kancheepuram, Tiruvallur, Ariyalur, Villupuram and Cuddalore.

According to Rajendra Ratnoo (Nodal Officer) though it is too early to conclude, early detection and more tests could be the reason for the lower mortality rate.

Ratnoo is coordinating COVID-19 measures between the Centre and the state government.

## Consumers hit by accumulated power bills

By Our Staff Reporter

Many Tangedco consumers are feeling the heat of power bills accumulated for four months.

With Tangedco employees starting to take meter readings after a gap of two months, many consumers are complaining that the power bills have shot up beyond expectations and demanding relief in the form of deferred payment option.

Tangedco, meanwhile, has fixed June 15 as the deadline for payment of bills for domestic consumers.

While many consumers complained that the Tangedco has totalled four months' consumption (February to May) into one billing cycle, thereby billing the consumers at much higher slabs, TNEB chairman Vikram Kapur clarified, "The calculation of each and every bill is done based on the TNERC regulations.

We divide four months into two billing cycles. Domestic consumers are given 100 free units for each billing cycle.

## COVID-19 discharges zoom in May

By Our Staff Reporter

Though the number of cases in Tamilnadu, especially Chennai, has been increasing, the number of patients being discharged daily has also been going up since May 8.

The discharge rate has increased from 20% as on May 1 to 51.6% on May 31.

This even as its coronavirus cases continues to climb.

There were only about 45% active cases in Tamilnadu as of June 2.

The reason for the increasing discharge has also got compounded due to a policy change by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).

As per the revised policy, mild and moderate cases are no longer required to be tested prior to discharge.

These two categories of COVID-19 patients can be discharged after 10 days of the onset of their symptoms, provided they are asymptomatic.

Prior to May 8, all COVID-19 patients had to test negative twice within a period of 24 hours, in order to be discharged.

In Chennai, till May 15, the

There is no error in calculation".

Consumers who had their billing cycles ending in the first week of February, April and June are the ones who have raised complaints now.

Many have approached Tangedco's offices for clarification. Officials have been explaining the workings to every consumer, said a senior Tangedco official.

Some have taken to social media seeking response from Tangedco. Some have complained that the assessors have not entered the meter readings in their EB cards. Assessors just enter meter readings in Tangedco website and send SMS to the consumer, said a consumer.

Since lockdown was imposed in the peak of summer, people have been using ACs indiscreetly. With all family members stuck in homes, they have no alternative too. The worst affected are those who have faced salary cuts and have lost jobs during the lockdown.

average discharge rate was at around 14%.

But by May 29, it had climbed to 51.6% as nearly 446 were discharged daily between May 23 and 29.

There is no doubt that the revised policy helped reduce the strain on hospital resources with multiple reports emerging from Chennai of hospital beds fast filling up. However, the data for the month of May shows no clear pattern in discharges before or after the revised policy.

An increase in new COVID-19 patients was not necessarily followed by a spike in discharges.

But concerns have been raised from several quarters as to whether discharged patients could still be infectious and transmit the virus to others.

Though the revised policy mandates that mild and moderate patients should undergo home quarantine for a further seven days following discharge, there is no monitoring done to ensure this.

## India 7<sup>th</sup> worst hit by COVID-19

India witnessed its biggest jump in the number of coronavirus cases with 9,851 testing positive on June 4, taking the total number of cases to 2,26,770.

273 COVID-19-related deaths were also reported, the highest in a day so far.

Though the number has crossed 2.25 lakhs, the recovery rate among the patients was reported at 48.27 per cent.

India stood seventh among the nations worst hit by the COVID-19 pandemic after the US, Brazil, Russia, the UK, Spain and Italy.

In terms of fatalities, India is ranked 12th at present, while it is placed at eighth place in terms of recoveries.

However, India figures among the top-five countries in terms of active cases.

## T. Nagar shops open amid lockdown, but few customers



By Our Staff Reporter

T. Nagar shopping areas present a deserted look though most standalone shops have opened after the relaxation of the lockdown.

Though a number of multistoried showrooms were asked to shut down indefinitely including all the shops on Ranganathan Street due to violation of the social distancing norms, most other shops on Usman Road and Pandy Bazaar are open.

A number of big shops are found open on Usman Road and in other areas in T. Nagar but footfalls are far fewer than prior to the lockdown with marriages and other big functions being postponed indefinitely.

"There is no impulsive buying, only compulsive buying," said a shopkeeper.

After the closure of the big showrooms, the Traders' Association has instructed all shop owners to follow the norms like checking the temperature of customers and sanitising the shops every few hours, and wearing masks all the time.

Non-running of suburban trains and buses has also impacted the arrival of customers from other parts of the city.

Though many restaurants have opened and are currently only offering takeaways, there are few customers. Dine-in under strict norms will be allowed from June 7.



With lockdown norms in force, shoppers can be seen awaiting their turn to enter a shop

Some major restaurant chains have not opened citing high operational costs and lack of workforce.

Many workers have now switched to selling tea, vegetables or masks.

Similarly, jewellery and textile shops have also taken a big hit as functions like marriages have been postponed due to the pandemic.

"This is the season good business but we have been hit badly," said a jewellery shop owner.

"This is the holiday season and we normally also get a number of outstation customers. All that is completely lost now," lamented a garment shop manager.

T. Nagar is also a major hub of shops that sell school uni-

forms, and these shops have also taken a big hit.

Many shop owners are struggling to even pay the rent and are negotiating hard with the building owners with the intervention of the Traders' Association," said Balaji, a restaurant owner.

A member of Ranganathan Street Workers' Association said that most of the shop owners have not paid staff salaries for two months.

The association has instructed all shops to strictly adhere to the guidelines and anyone who violates them will not be allowed to operate.

Misery haunts more than 500 tailors in the shopping hub due to lack of business. Some have started to stitch masks which they sell to agents.

## Restaurants struggle due to exodus of workers

By Our Staff Reporter

Due to the mass exodus of workers, most of them natives of North Eastern states, restaurants in the city are struggling to reopen even as the government has relaxed restrictions.

The owner of a popular restaurant in T. Nagar is a worried man.

"I had 33 workers from the Northern States. As I could not pay them during the lockdown, 27 of them went

back to their hometown. Now, with relaxation in place and restaurants allowed dine-in from June 8, I don't have enough workers to open," he said.

However, several eateries, which are heavily dependent on migrant workers, are now left scrambling to gather their workforce.

Eateries in the city-owned by people from neighbouring Kerala and Andhra Pradesh

are equally hit as their cooks, including those from the State, have gone home.

"We thought of hiring locals at least until normalcy returns. We had to abandon the move as they demanded high wages," said R. Varadan, who runs a pizza outlet in Pandy Bazaar.

He said that local hands demand Rs. 700 to 1,000 per day as against those from the North Eastern states who settle for under Rs. 500.

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T. NAGAR, 36/12, MV Koil Street, Near South Boag Road middle, 2 bedrooms, hall, kitchen, 900 sq.ft, 1st floor, no lift, 2-wheeler parking, rent Rs. 15000, for small Brahmin family only. Ph: 7418697157.

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**Industrial sewage returns to pollute water bodies**

By Our Staff Reporter

Rivers and canals passing through Chennai are back to being carriers of harmful pollutants. Industries, which were closed during the lockdown, have opened after some norms were relaxed and raw sewage is being indiscriminately discharged into water bodies again.

The first indication of pollution is the spread of water hyacinth. The invasive weed, which breeds mosquitoes, has now occupied a large stretch of the Adyar river from near the Saidapet bridge to the Guindy bridge. Other water bodies too are not spared.

The reappearance of the weed is primarily due to the increase in the release of untreated sewage into the river, as nutrients from the sewage help the water hyacinth proliferate.

A senior Metrowater official said that stagnation of water in the river was another reason for spread of the weed. A copious flow in a river or canal helps dilute the constituents of the sewage and takes them towards the sea, he said.

But, currently, water in the rivers and canals is virtually stagnant and the invasive weed, fed by the nutrients in the raw sewage, has covered vast swathes of the water bodies.

**Udavum Karangal appeals for donations to help the needy**

By Our Staff Reporter

Udavum Karangal (41, Kannadasan Street, T. Nagar), an NGO providing care for destitutes in is home in Thiruverkadu, has undertaken relief measures since the lockdown started on March 24.

According to its Founder Vidyaakar, its volunteers have identified 500 families of daily wage workers living in abject poverty in the slum areas in Thiruverkadu.

"With the lockdown extended to June 30, the maximum suffering is being endured by daily wage workers and migrant labourers, who have lost their livelihood after March 24," he said.

"We will be providing rehabilitation kits consisting of a month's food essentials to these families," he added.

The cost of each kit, consisting of 10 kg. rice, pulses, vegetables and medical accessories like masks and sanitizers, comes to Rs.1,700.

He has appealed to the readers of *Mambalam Times* to donate for the above cause.

He said that since the lockdown began on March 24, the NGO has distributed 50,000 lunch packets among poor families and rehabilitation kits among 1,700 families of daily wage workers.

Donors may contact 99401 88011 / 2621 6321.

For more details, visit the website <https://www.myhelpinghands.org/>

**Madras Crocodile Bank appeals for help**

By Our Staff Reporter

The Madras Crocodile Bank is home to more than 17 species of reptiles including crocodiles, snakes, lizards, turtles and a komodo dragon.

It now faces a new challenge due to COVID-19.

It usually sees around 1.25 lakh visitors during the summer months, bringing in revenue of around Rs. 80 lakhs.

But, since the closure of the Crocodile Bank in March, there has been no revenue from visitors. Donations from local and foreign donors have also fallen short due to the effect of the pandemic.

It employs close to 50 persons to take care of the 2000+ reptilian residents.

The Crocodile Bank also expects an increase in running cost when it is allowed to reopen due to new social distancing and hygiene measures to be put in place such as supply of masks and sanitisers to all visitors to ensure the safety of all.

To make up for the shortfall and shore up its finances, it is raising funds from the public.

One can contribute by adopting a crocodile, sponsoring feed for the animals, contributing towards wages for the staff or research conducted by the Crocodile Bank.

For more details, visit the website "[http://madrascrocodilebank.org/web/make\\_a\\_donation](http://madrascrocodilebank.org/web/make_a_donation)".

**Enjoy virtual drives with this music app**

By Our Staff Reporter

Considering how this lockdown has put travel plans on hold, siblings Hitansh Shah and Khushil Shah have developed an app called 'MusicalDrive' which gives a virtual drive experience through different Indian and international cities.

"After lockdown 2.0, we realised that the lockdown is not going to end soon in many places. Our father Vyomesh suggested we create something virtually. While talking to our friends, they were reminiscing about their trips to the UK, the US, and even many places in India. So, we decided to create an app that will give people the experience of riding around various major Indian and international cities while listening to music sitting in the comfort of homes," said Hitansh.

The web-app is user-friendly and can be downloaded on any device.

"The user can select any city of his/her choice. You can listen to various genres of music including the old 70s, A.R. Rahman hits, English rap and hip-hop. If you are missing the street noise then you can also turn that on, while listening to music and enjoying the car ride," said Khushil.

According to the duo, they have received good response for the app since its launch from both India and

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