

# 'Clean up Chitlapakkam lake before monsoon'

## Residents Complain Of Skin Allergies

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**Chennai:** The upcoming monsoon may not bring joy to residents near Chitlapakkam lake as the 50-acre water body has turned into a cesspool due to sewage and garbage dumping. Residents are demanding that authorities act immediately and desilt the lake to ensure inflow during rainfall recharges groundwater in the area.

When citizen group volunteers of the Arappor Iyakkam conducted an audit of the lake, they found that it is the local administration which is responsible for the

systematic pollution of the water body.

Two storm water drain channels from residential areas in Chitlapakkam and Tambaram empty into the lake. Both inlets, meant to carry rainwater, bring sewage from homes.

In an effort to prevent the flow of contaminants into the lake, the Chitlapakkam town panchayat constructed a series of bio-pits. These pits were meant to retain solid particles present in the sewage flowing into the lake.

However, the project failed miserably. Local group Chitlapakkam Rising volunteer Udaya said, "So far, at least a dozen bio-pits have fallen into the pit and died when they went grazing near the inlet." The public works department had asked the local body to close down the pit, which is yet to happen.

According to government

records, the lake spread over 92 acres in the 1980s but has shrunk due to encroachment and garbage dumping to 50 acres today. However, more than 30 acres of the lake is infested with overgrown water hyacinth, which cuts off oxygen supply to the water body.

A marriage hall and two illegal temples built on the water channel have narrowed the waterway.

Residents said authorities have failed to act on the encroachments despite several complaints. The canal which conveys excess water from Chitlapakkam lake to the Sembakkam lake has narrowed to 2-10 feet, the Arappor Iyakkam audit found.

A dumpyard spread over 2 acres on the northern end of the lake has been encroaching the lake bed for several years. The dumpyard is used by the Chitlapakkam town panchayat. Mounds of garbage



**SMELLY AFFAIR:** A dumpyard spread over 2 acres on the northern end of the lake has been encroaching the lake bed for several years. The dumpyard is used by the Chitlapakkam town panchayat

act as a barrier preventing entry into the lake. The dumpyard has forced authorities of a government school next door to keep their backdoor shut at all times.

The illegal flow of sewage has polluted groundwater, complained residents.

Resident of Periyar Nagar, Narayanan said, "All the water you see in the lake is on-

ly sewage brought by the inlets, thanks to inaction by the government to crack down on residents who use the storm water drains for dumping sewage."

Another resident Srinivasan said, "As a result of consuming contaminated groundwater, my family and neighbours have contracted skin allergies."

Srinivasan and other residents assured Arappor Iyakkam volunteers and any other citizen group that they would assist them in restoring the lake even if it meant entering the polluted water body with spades.

A public interest litigation filed by the Chitlapakkam Rising Trust almost a year ago is yet to reach a conclusion in the high court.

The trust had demanded local and state authorities remove encroachments and restore the lake.

## NEWS DIGEST



**CLOSE SHAVE:** A ten-wheeler tanker lorry carrying drinking water overturned on the Kathipara flyover late on Sunday. Traffic police said the lorry was turning into an arm of the flyover that connects Guindy with Ekkatuthangal at high speed. Traffic moving towards Vadapalani from Guindy was affected. The driver suffered minor injuries and was taken to a nearby hospital

## Prince of Arcot greets Vice-Prez

Prince of Arcot, Nawab Mohammed Abdul Ali, wished the newly-elected 13th vice president of India, M Venkaiah Naidu in a congratulatory message. In his statement, Ali said, "...with your rich experience in dealing with men and matters, the nation will progress and develop in many aspects," before wishing Naidu a "successful tenure" in office. Ali expressed hope that Naidu would uphold and protect the basic fabric of the Constitution and, in particular, promote communal harmony and national unity.

**MSSRF to hold international conference:** The MS Swaminathan Research Foundation will host an international conference on the topic 'Farming system for nutrition' between August 7 and August 9 at the institute's campus in Taramani. The inaugural pro-

gramme on Monday will coincide with the birthday of the institute's founder and eminent scientist M S Swaminathan, a release said. Karnataka's agricultural minister Krishna Byre Gowda will inaugurate the event and Maria Andrade, winner of the world food prize for 2016, will serve as chief guest.

**NGO conducts awareness campaign:** NGO Thozhan conducted an awareness campaign on the subject 'Golden hour response and Good Samaritan Law' in the city on Sunday. K Periaiah, additional commissioner of police-traffic and I Easwaran, deputy commissioner of police-traffic served as chief guests.

**Clarification:** In the report 'Two south-bound trains to originate from Tambaram' published on August 6, 2017, the headline should have indicated that the trains are Guwahati and Dibrugarh-bound.

# Met predicts more rain for Monday afternoon

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** The city temperature fell by 10° on Sunday afternoon thanks to the cloud cover that was immediately followed by showers lasting about 20 minutes. Only central and some northern parts of the city recorded rainfall, while southern parts including Adyar and Kodambakkam remained dry. For Monday the meteorological centre predicted that rain or thundershowers could occur in the afternoon or evening.

Around 2pm on Sunday, the temperature dropped from 36° Celsius to 26° due to the sudden downpour. By evening, the temperature rose, reaching 30° Celsius at 6.30pm. The rainfall was caused by a trough of low at sea level which extended from north coastal Andhra to the southern tip of the peninsula.

Since June, Nungambakkam has recorded nearly 23cm rainfall (30% above normal), while Meenambakkam recorded 31cm (88% above normal)



**SUDDEN SHOWERS**

rain. This month, Nungambakkam has recorded nearly 8cm rainfall in the first week while Meenambakkam recorded only 2.4cm. The maximum and minimum temperature on Sunday

was 36.6° Celsius and 26.7° Celsius. As per the met forecast, the city is likely to witness a maximum and minimum temperature of 37 degrees Celsius and 27 degrees Celsius.

# Residents demand stops for express trains at Tiruvallur

**Chennai:** The demand to allot stops for express trains at Tiruvallur has strengthened with local political parties joining hands with residents and commuter associations. RTI responses show that the station generates the required revenue to qualify for allotting stops for long distance trains. Residents said railways was focusing on the southern line and had been ignoring Tiru-

vallur. Railways feel that the stop will slow down trains out of Central. Now, local party leaders have stepped in to push for stops at the district headquarters. During DMK MP A Krishnasamy's tenure, railways allotted stoppage for three trains after which stops haven't been allotted for any train though the station's revenue has touched ₹12 crore per year.

K Baskar, a resident, said

nearly 60 pairs of express trains pass through Tiruvallur but only 10 have stops. "We are requesting an additional 10 trains stoppage to fulfil the need of residents. At Chengalpattu, all special trains are stopping. All special trains stoppage is to be considered at Tiruvallur. This will not only reduce crowd at Chennai Central but also increase revenue to the railways." **TNN**

# Loyola prof devises 'innovative' test for English

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**Chennai:** Shifting away from the standardized paper and pen testing, a faculty member of Loyola College has come up with 'innovative testing methods' of English language skills for students.

This method, having been successfully implemented in the department of English at



**MOVING AWAY FROM PAPER-PENCIL TESTS**

Loyola College, employs documentaries, newsletters, and

comic strips to assess the chief skills of English and its sub-skills. The research was carried out by D.Christina Sagaya Mary, assistant professor of English, under the supervision of K.S Antony, associate professor of English. Mary has also obtained a patent number for the methodology.

"While the core skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are tested through the regular method of testing, it is

very easy for children to learn certain answers or memorise passages. This is not possible when it comes to employing creative methods. The pen and paper style certainly has its benefits but we feel these additional methods of testing should be incorporated as part of the testing process," she said.

Often understanding does not take place unless students are placed in a situation where they have to interact with

others rather than reading text content and filling in grammar workbooks, Mary said. The focus is on testing students on their narrating technique, dialoguing, coherence and vocabulary and the concept of continuity. "The system of learning needs to be decentralised. It is very individualistic and eliminates rote learning. Here the learner becomes the centre of the testing system," she said.

# TTV headed for collision with EPS group

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The T T V Dhinakaran and Edappadi K Palaniswamy factions of AIADMK appeared to head towards a full blown confrontation on Sunday after the war of words between supporters of the two reached a crescendo.

State finance minister D Jayakumar stated "traitors" will not be pardoned by former chief minister J Jayalalithaa's soul without naming anyone, though party insiders admit that it was an apparent reference to Dhinakaran and his supporters. "Those betraying the party will not be pardoned by the people," he told reporters in Chennai.

Jayakumar, a vocal critic of Dhinakaran, also ques-



Sources said Dhinakaran never wanted to nurture a separate faction publicly, but preferred to use his supporters to pressurize Edappadi Palaniswamy indirectly

tioned the authority of the deputy general secretary in announcing a new set of office-bearers. "There is a complaint pending before the Election Commission of India challenging the validity of the appointment of VK Sa-

sikala as party general secretary. When the posting of general secretary is under question, the deputy general secretary's post should be considered null and void," he said.

Fuelling the feud, Dhinakaran's supporter P Vetrivel, in an interview to a private television channel, asked all AIADMK ministers to "wear a saree" for sidelining Dhinakaran after Sasikala's imprisonment. The fresh bout of confrontation comes after Dhinakaran announced a new set of office-bearers on Friday, giving party posts to his supporters.

Sources said Dhinakaran never wanted to nurture a separate faction publicly, but preferred to use his supporters to pressurize Edappadi Palaniswamy indirectly and win back the support of all

AIADMK ministers. "But Edappadi refusing to budge and standing his ground provoked Dhinakaran to rethink his strategy," said a party source.

Edappadi chose to assert himself once again, making it clear he would brook no interference from Sasikala family. "Edappadi knows that Dhinakaran will not attempt to bring down the government. Hence he is not ready to budge," said a former minister.

Perundurai MLA and Dhinakaran supporter Thoppu Venkatachalam said Dhinakaran was not interested in nurturing a separate faction. "It is wrong to say Dhinakaran wants to nurture a separate faction by giving party posts to his supporters. New office-bearers have been appointed to revive the party

and infuse fresh blood," said venkatachalam, who has been appointed as party organizing secretary.

"What Jayakumar said was his personal view. One must note that EPS has not said a word against Dhinakaran," said Venkatachalam.

But few of his own supporters refusing to accept the new posts and Edappadi's tough stand has once again made Dhinakaran rethink his move to enter the party office. "Dhinakaran will not go to party office immediately. He had decided to complete at least three of his public meetings beginning August 14 and then decide about visiting the headquarters," said a party functionary close to Dhinakaran.

The O Panneerselvam faction meanwhile, is playing wait and watch.

# Factionalism to the fore in Cuddalore AIADMK

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Cuddalore:** Factionalism within the Cuddalore district unit of the AIADMK came to the fore on Sunday after two MPs and four MLAs of the ruling party boycotted a government function presided over by four ministers.

Ministers K A Senkottaiyan, P Thangamani, Dindigul Sreenivasan, and M C Sampath flagged off a marathon organized by the government as a part of the centenary celebrations of the AIADMK founder and late chief minister M G Ramachandran. Two MPs - M Chandrakasi and A Arumozhidevan and four MLAs - P Sathya (Panruti), V T Kalaiselvan (Vridhachalam), K A Pandian (Chidambaram) and N Murugamaran (Kattumannarkoil) boycotted the government function to register their strong protest against Sampath, who is also the Cuddalore district secretary of the party.

# OPS denies links with tainted businessman Sekhar Reddy

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Madurai:** "I am ready to face any inquiry about my alleged connections with businessman Sekhar Reddy, because I have no fear," said former chief minister O Panneerselvam while addressing the executive committee meeting of the AIADMK Puratchi Thalavi Amma held at Thiruthangal, Sivakasi in Virudhunagar on Sunday.

Addressing a large gathering, he said that their outfit had broken the rule that executive committee meetings were held only within four walls. It was being conducted like a large public conference because they had the people's full support. "I and Sekhar Reddy have no connections at all. I went to Tirupati to tonsure my head to redeem my vow in connection with Amma's case, and Reddy was a member of the administrative board. He came out when I came out and a photograph was clicked. There is nothing more to it," he said.

"This is a government that is in power due to an accident. I know the struggles Amma faced to bring this party back to power because I was with her," he said. "I was the person who was cho-



O Panneerselvam addresses a public meeting in Sivakasi on Sunday

sen by Amma to be the chief minister, twice in a gap of 13 years. I know that Amma would not entrust anybody with a responsibility if he or she had performed lesser than her expectations," he said.

Panneerselvam said that it was funny that DMK leader Duraimurugan was getting angry when he (Panneerselvam) made allegations against chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami. "Why is he getting angry instead of Edappadi?" he asked.

Tamil Nadu's current political situation was being ridiculed by many. Never in history had the ruling party and opposition got into such a shameful coalition with opposition failing in its duty in

the assembly and just agreeing with everything that the ruling party did, he said.

It has been proven that Sasikala's appointment as the general secretary of the AIADMK and all her appointments are invalid since the Election Commission itself has acknowledged there was a dispute on that. Only E Madhusoodhanan has the qualification to be the general secretary of the party. "Everybody is well aware of the drama that TTV Dhinakaran is performing," he said. "Their 'dharma yudham' will continue till all their demands are met and the party is freed from the clutches of family rule. Former ministers K Pandiarajan and Natham Viswanathan among others were present.

# Man heading towards OPS with knife held in Trichy

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Trichy:** Tension prevailed at the international airport here as CISF personnel caught a man who was allegedly seen approaching former chief minister O Panneerselvam with a knife on Sunday. The 50-year-old AIADMK cadre was handed over to airport police.

The man has been identified as Solairajan, 50, of TVS Tollgate area in Trichy. A labourer, he carries goods on tricycle and has been an AIADMK member for the last 30 years. After the rift in the party, he had switched over to OPS faction, according to police.

Panneerselvam arrived at Trichy from Chennai on a flight around 11.30 am. The AIADMK (Puratchi Thalavi Amma) leader was on his way to Virudhunagar to attend a party meeting. When the former chief minister came out of the airport through the VIP exit, his supporters who had been waiting started to run towards him. CISF personnel tried to control the crowd and Solairajan was among them.

# Members of Hindu outfit attack SDPI activists, arrested

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Coimbatore:** Two workers of the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) were injured when activists of Hindu outfits attacked them in the city on Sunday. The SDPI activists were canvassing at Jothipuram near Periyanaickenpalayam to enrol new members when Hindu Munnani and BJP workers opposed the campaign and assaulted the two. The rural police arrested six people.

The arrested persons were identified as G Murugan, 40, a caterer of Poonga Nagar at No 4 Veerapandi, K Mathi alias Mathiyazhagan, 28, a realtor from Sri Ram Nagar at No 4 Veerapandi near Periyanaickenpalayam, B Vijayakumar, 47, a realtor from Annai Nagar at Periyanaickenpalayam, Maniyan from Periyanaickenpalayam, J Prakash, 27 from Sivakathi Colony and K Krishnaraj, 31, from LML Colony at Amman Kulam. Police said Vijayakumar was a member of the BJP and others were members of the Hindu Munnani.

Police said M Ameer Abbas, 38, of Nehru Street at Thudiyalur, who owned a fancy shop and S Ahmed Shihabuddin, 21, from Nehru Street in Thudiyalur, who worked in a courier firm at Peelamedu, suffered severe injuries on the head and face. Ameer Abbas is the president of the SDPI for the Kavundampalayam assembly constituency and Ahmed is a member of the SDPI.

On Saturday night, Yasser Arafat, a functionary of the SDPI and three other members of the outfit were conducting a campaign at Arivozhi Nagar to enrol new members for their party. The members of the Hindu outfits asked them to leave the area. Residents of Arivozhi Nagar intervened and settled the issue. Immediately, Ameer Abbas was informed about the incident and he asked the party members to leave the place.

Ameer Abbas and Ahmed went to Jothipuram near Periyanaickenpalayam where they met Yasser Arafat and other SDPI workers. The Hindu outfit members followed them to Jothipuram and assaulted Ameer and Ahmed with wooden logs and sickles.

# Ancient burial site dating back to Sangam age unearthed

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Coimbatore:** An ancient burial yard was unearthed on Sunday when workers were desilting a lake near Vedapatti in Coimbatore.

Many city-based NGOs have been carrying out desilting work at the lake that had dried up this year. At 5-feet depth below the actual lake's bed, bones that were in a transition stage of becoming a fossil were found. Historians said that the land must have been a burial site which was later made into a lake by the Chola kings.

Heritage enthusiasts Vijaykumar and Anandkumar were told by locals that some pieces of pots and some bones were found at the lake site. "When we went there, we found lots of bone fragments and some pot pieces. When we looked closely, we realized that



A piece of pottery found at the ancient burial site in Coimbatore

these were burial yard dating back more than 2,000 years during the Sangam age. We looked up books and various records and found that Coimbatore was also one among such sites," said Vijaykumar.

Heritage enthusiasts who visited the spot said that generally graveyards in that age had several compartments. Apart from the body, the deceased person's personal belongings like clothes, plates and pots were placed in the grave. The boundary would be made of stones. "Even in this site, there was a stone compartment and we saw many plates and pots. Near the bund we found a pot that was not damaged. It had some carvings on it and caricatures made in white paint," said Vijay.