

INBRIEF



Water level in Papanasam dam stands at 96.80 feet

The water level in Papanasam Dam on Monday stood at 96.80 feet (maximum level 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 97.74 cusecs and a discharge of 1,504.75 cusecs. The level in Manimuthar Dam stood at 105.56 feet (maximum level 118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 70 cusecs and a discharge of 475 cusecs.

New bridge will be built near Mothiramalai, says Minister

Minister for Dairy Development T. Mano Thangaraj inaugurated the construction of a new bridge on the road connecting Mothiramalai and Kuttriyar near Petchipaarai dam on Monday. Mr. Mano Thangaraj said the road from Petchipaarai Dam Zero Point and Mookkaraikkal would be re-laid at a cost of ₹3.30 crore as the stretch remained badly damaged after the heavy downpour in December last. Moreover, a 49.80-metre-long bridge would be built on an outlay of ₹5 crore to connect Mothiramalai and Kuttriyar. “The relaying of the road and the construction of the bridge will be completed early to benefit the tribal population living in the Western Ghats,” said Mr. Mano Thangaraj. Collector P. N. Sridhar, District Forest Officer (In-Charge) Ilaiyaraja and others were present.

2 workers from Chhattisgarh killed in road accident

Two construction workers from Chhattisgarh were killed in a hit-and-run case on the flyover on Inner Ring Road at Sivaganga junction in the wee hours of Monday. The deceased were identified by the police as K. Anil Kumar, 25, and R. Ram Baran, 32. The workers from Chhattisgarh were working in a ready-mix concrete plant in Valayankulam. While Ram Baran was riding a bike, Anil Kumar was the pillion rider. Even as they were riding on the wrong lane on the grade-separator while going from Thoothukudi Road towards Tiruchi Road, some unidentified vehicle fatally knocked them down at around 1 a.m. The bodies were taken to Government Rajaji Hospital. Traffic Investigation Wing are investigating the case.

82-year-old man gets jail for sexual assault of girl

The POCSO Special Court in Thoothukudi has convicted and sentenced an 82-year-old man to undergo 20 years imprisonment after finding him guilty of sexually assaulting a seven-year-old girl. According to prosecution, P. Shanmugavel, 82, sexually assaulted the girl in 2021. Based on a complaint from her parents, Inspector of Srivaikundam All Women Police Lakshmi Prabha arrested Shanmugavel under the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act. POCSO Special Court judge Swaminathan awarded 20 years imprisonment to Shanmugavel and slapped a fine of ₹10,000 on him on Monday. Thoothukudi Superintendent of Police L. Balaji Saravanan honoured the police team including Ms. Lakshmi Prabha and head-constable Hephzi.

NLC donates medical equipment to hospital

NLC Tamil Nadu Power Limited, Tuticorin, has donated CR-X-ray machine and ultra sound scanning machine to Virudhunagar Government Medical College Hospital. Inaugurating the new machines, Virudhunagar Collector V. P. Jayaseelan said that the Department of Radiology gets some 3,000 patients, including pregnant women, children, elderly persons and differently-abled persons every month for taking ultra sound scan. The additional scanning machine will benefit the patients, he said. Similarly, the Radiology Department is involved in taking 9,000 computed radiography x-rays every month. The portable machine will help to take x-rays for the in-patients admitted to various wards. An x-ray machine was also given to the Paediatric and Neo-natal care ward of the hospital.

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (March 04, Monday), the following explainers are available:

- What purposes do university rankings serve? bit.ly/unirankingsexp
 - In snake genes, study finds they evolved 3x faster than other reptiles bit.ly/snakegenes
- You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access this article. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access the article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

Sanitation workers submit petition seeking ‘patta’ for their housing plots

Over 100 families of Arunthathiyars, all sanitation workers, have been residing in the area for the past 56 years and paying taxes promptly, they say

The Hindu Bureau
TIRUNELVELI

A group of Arunthathiyar families from Pettai in Tirunelveli on Monday submitted a petition to Collector K.P. Karthikeyan seeking ‘patta’ for plots on which they had built their houses.

The petitioners from Thangamman Temple Street in Pettai at Ward 18 of Tirunelveli Corporation said over 100 families of Arunthathiyars, all sanitary workers, were residing in the area for the past 56 years and were paying promptly the taxes payable

to the local body since 1972. Hence, they were given electricity and drinking water connections even though no ‘patta’ was given for the plots on which they built houses.

Two years ago, officials attached to the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board surveyed the land (survey number 146) where 30 houses had been built and informed the families that they would be given houses on an alternative site as they had reportedly built their houses on “poramboke and neervazhi poramboke lands”.

“We are sanitary workers, who are illiterate.

Hence, we do not know how to apply for patta. Since the land was barren and situated away from other residential areas 56 years ago, we built our houses. However, the officials say that 30 families would have to be relocated to other areas as the houses have been on ‘poramboke’ and ‘neervazhi poramboke’ land. Hence, we appeal to the Collector to give patta for the land,” said S. Sappaani, who led the petitioners.

The petitioners attached copies of their property tax receipts, power connection, ration card and Aadhaar card with the

petition.

Seeking a compensation of ₹5 lakh to a woman sanitary worker who suffered multiple fractures on both legs in a road accident, a petition was submitted to the Collector. The petitioners said a speeding car hit Vasanthi, a sanitary worker with Panagudi town pan-chayat, on February 28 last in which she suffered multiple fractures in both legs. After being admitted to Kanniyakumari District Government Medical College Hospital at Aasaaripalam, she was shifted to Tirunelveli Medical College Hospital.

“Since the woman is

from below poverty line family and her daughter is in Class 8, the government should give compensation of ₹5 lakh to her family. Moreover, the government should take care of her treatment,” the petitioners said.

A group of gypsies from Pettai, led by Jaiganesh, submitted a petition seeking free house sites. “Since we live in tents, there is no safety for our children in the night. We suffer a lot during rain or shine. Hence, the Collector should give us free house sites,” Mr. Jaiganesh said.

A frail-looking old woman, Avvaiyar, who is re-

portedly 100 years sold, came to the Collectorate seeking old age pension of ₹1,000 that was stopped three months ago.

A domestic worker, M. Ananthi of Thirumal Nagar, submitted a petition seeking free allotment of a house built by Tamil Nadu Housing Board in nearby Reddiyarpatti as she was the lone breadwinner of the family. “Since I’m living in a small rented house with my differently abled husband, four children and aged mother-in-law, the Collector should allot a free house in the TNHB apartment,” she said.

Cinnamon holds immense potential as remunerative intercrop, say experts

The Hindu Bureau
KODAIKANAL

India imports 30,000 tonnes of cassia and 1,200 tonnes of true cinnamon (Cinnamoum verum), a medicinally important tree species of subtropic regions, annually costing a foreign exchange of 850-1,000 crore rupees.

With a view to tap the potential of true cinnamon cultivation as an intercrop in coffee plantations of lower Palani hills and coconut gardens on the foothills of western ghats, a one-day conference was organised at Horticultural Research Station, Thadiyankudisai on the Kodaikanal hill range, in Dindigul district under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) scheme on February 29.

J. Rajangam, Dean, Horticultural College and Research Institute, Periyakulam, who inaugurated the conference, said India produced only 57 tonnes of cinnamon against 3.7 lakh tonnes of global production.

Cinnamon can be raised as one of the remunerative companion crops of coffee



A conference on raising cinnamon under way at Horticultural Research Station, Thadiyankudisai, on the Kodaikanal hills.

One-day conference was held recently at Horticultural Research Station, Thadiyankudisai, on Kodaikanal hill range, in Dindigul district under MIDH scheme

to yield additional income for farmers. Advanced cultivars suitable for coconut and coffee growing tracts.

He also pointed that, timely adoption of improved techniques for bumper cropping and scope for export.

S.Senthil Kumaran, As-

sistant Director, Spices Board, Bodinayakkanur, said that though India exported cinnamon valued at ₹67.40 crore during 2022-23, the imports were valued at ₹72.16 crore.

Further, Mr. Senthil Kumaran highlighted the scope of cinnamon cultivation and export promotional activities offered by the Spices Board of India.

Multi-tier cropping

M. Jayakumar, Deputy Director of Regional Coffee Research Station, Thandikudi, spoke on the importance of cinnamon in profitable coffee farming under multi-tier cropping system.

‘Give us compensation for goat, sheep killed in floods last year’

The Hindu Bureau
THOOTHUKUDI

Seeking compensation for their cattle washed away in mid-December floods last year, a group of dairy farmers submitted petition to Collector G. Lakshmiopathy on Monday.

The petitioners from Thaappaathi near Ettaiyapuram, led by Karisalbhoomi Vivasayyigal Sangam president Varadharajan, said the cattle-rearers of Thaappaathi suffered huge loss as the animals were washed away in the floods triggered by the heavy downpour on December 17 and 18. Even though the government had announced ₹4,000 for each goat or sheep killed in the flood, no compensation was given to Thaappaathi farmers.

“Even though we submitted the veterinarian’s autopsy reports of the cattle killed in the flood to our VAO, no compensation has been given to us. Hence, the Collector should take immediate steps for compensating the loss we have suffered,” they said.

Seeking the upgrading of Sivanthakulam Corporation Middle School into high school, members of the school management

committee submitted a petition. They said the 1,000-odd students of Sivanthakulam Corporation Middle School had to go to St. Va. Government Higher Secondary School, which was situated far away. Hence, the government should upgrade Sivanthakulam Corporation Middle School into high school from 2024 - 2025.

Seeking the relocation of a liquor shop situated near Gandhi Statue in Eral, S. Jayabalan submitted a petition to the Collector.

Villagers from A. Kumarreddiyarpuram, Therkku Veerapandiapuram and Kumaragiri submitted petitions to the Collector seeking uniform compensation for land acquired for SIPCOT.

Even though the lands in these villages were acquired the same day through a notification, ₹80,000 per acre was given in 2008 and the amount rose to ₹6.50 lakh in 2010. Again, the compensation disbursed in 2015 was increased to ₹15.35 lakh and ₹18.55 lakh per acre was given in 2018. “Hence, the government should give uniform compensation for the lands acquired,” the petitioners said.

‘Revenue staff will boycott poll work if demands are not met’

The Hindu Bureau
MADURAI

Members of Tamil Nadu Revenue Officers Associations (TNROA) have announced that they will boycott the Lok Sabha election-related works if their demands were not met within the stipulated time.

TNROA members in Madurai, who organised a protest for the seventh consecutive day said they had submitted a detailed 10-point charter of demands to the government last year.

“Not one demand among them has been fulfilled. Despite assurance from the Revenue Minister and senior officials in the ministry, there has been no relief till date,” said TNROA State president M. P. Murugaiyan.

Vacancies at various levels in the revenue and disaster management department have not been filled over the last three years. Likewise, there were anomalies in the pay structure of the officers in different ranks. Also, the newly formed districts were not given the required staff strength. he added.

CAMPUS CONNECT

Annual Day

Annual Day was celebrated at Rojavanam International School, Puthugramam, Nagercoil, recently. Arul Kannan, Chairman of Rojavanam group of Educational Institutions, Arul Jothi, the Vice Chairman, and Binumon, the Senior Principal, were present. Sreemath Saithanyaji Maharaj Swamigal of Vivekananda Ashram, Vellimalai, inaugurated the function. Kamarajini, the Principal, read the annual report. Arunachalam, Retd. Dean, Asaripallam Government Medical College, and Kumaraswamy, Retd Headmaster, D.V.D. Higher Secondary School, offered felicitations. The special invitee was Rajaraman, debate speaker.

AI and its impact

The PG and Research Department of English of Holy Cross College, Nagercoil, organised a conference on February 29. Alby Grace, the HoD, welcomed the gathering. Principal Sr. Sahayaselvi was present. In the first

session, Rev. Francis M. Peter, former Professor XLRI School of Business, Jamshedpur, delved into innovative ways literature and language emerge and converge with AI in reshaping the future of the people. In the second session, U. Peter Sahaya Raj, MD, INDYDENOUS FASHIONS, Chennai., spoke on ‘digital war’ that hacks websites, steals data and sells it for billions of dollars, without bloodshed. In the third session, M.T. Saju, a journalist from Thiruvananthapuram, examined the importance of new media such as social networks, interactive communication and the engagement of a massive group of audience.

On aeronautics

A symposium ‘Vyomatantra’24’ was conducted by the Department of Aeronautical Engineering of PSN College of Engineering and Technology, Tirunelveli, on February 28. B. Lebonah, Deputy Division Head, ISRO Propulsion



A symposium in progress at PSN College of Engineering and Technology, Tirunelveli



R.D. Santhosam, former district Judge, presents awards to meritorious students at Rojavanam International School, Nagercoil.

Complex, Mahendragiri, delivered the keynote address. She spoke on booming research areas such as hypersonic flight, AI techniques in aircraft, additive manufacturing

techniques and zero emission aircraft, etc.

Conference on bioprospecting

The Department of Botany of St. Mary’s College, Thoothukudi organised a

two-day conference on ‘Microalgae: Biodiversity and Bioprospecting’ on February 20 and 21. The event was inaugurated by N. Thajuddin, Pro-Vice Chancellor of BSA Crescent Institute of Science & Technology, Chennai. Mr. Thajuddin, Lewis Oscar from Houston Methodist Hospital, S. Nagaraj from Centre for Advanced Studies in Botany, University of Madras, Chennai, M. Muthukumaran of Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda College, Chennai, Praveen Kumar Ramasamy of Danish Technological Institute, Taastруп, Denmark, and P. Hanumantha Rao of Madras Christian College were the resource persons. The college also hosted a seminar on ‘Role of Women in Enculturation Trajectories’ on February 23. Parvathy Menon from All Saints College, Thiruvananthapuram, Arvinder Kaur Pabla from SGT University, Gurgaon and Venkatraman, Former Principal of Rajapalayam Rajus College, spoke on various topics.

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