

Kerala Minister Ramesh Chennithala meets CM Vijay Tamil Nadu fully supports 'Operation Toofan' project



Chennai

K e r a l a Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala met Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay yesterday. Afterwards, he told reporters: We discussed with the Chief Minister the ongoing drug abuse in all South Indian states. I have requested the Chief Minister to take up this matter and help us. The Kerala government has already launched a campaign called Operation Toofan to crack down on drugs. We have been implementing this

program for the past 43 days. Drug abuse is a huge problem not only in one state but in all parts of the country. We have come here seeking the support of the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister to help us in all aspects. Last week, a meeting of all state DGPs was held. In this, we discussed and formulated a plan on how to wage war against the drug mafia. We discussed it with the Chief Minister. He has given full support to Operation Toofan Titta. 'All the Tamil Nadu-Ker-

ala divisions will be completely monitored and sealed.' Chief Minister Vijay said that the police forces of both states will work hand in hand to catch those trying to buy or sell drugs. Following this, Vijay was invited to Kerala to jointly conduct awareness campaigns between the two states. Vijay agreed to that too. Vijay will participate in a big event in Kerala along with Mohanlal, the awareness ambassador of Kerala state. Last week, I met Karnataka Chief Minister

D.K. Shivakumar. He also assured the Kerala government of all the help it could get in Karnataka. Therefore, a concerted effort by all the South Indian states will definitely improve this situation. Especially the youth, School and college students are being targeted by this mafia. All parties should come forward to stop drug trafficking. This is a big problem, it is against the country. We should fight against drugs. We will formulate a plan for this. He said.



A review meeting regarding the schemes and activities of the Department of Youth Welfare and Sports Development was held at the Secretariat, presided over by the Honorable Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Thiru S. Joseph Vijay.



The Honorable Minister for Food and Civil Supplies, Thiru P. Venkataraman, distributed new electronic family cards to 300 beneficiaries in the Perambur area.

Shock as secret documents from Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant are leaked on the dark web

New Delhi

It has been reported that very important documents related to the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant have been leaked on the 'Dark Web', the so-called dark part of the internet. The ransomware hacker group 'World Leaks' has posted on its website that the documents, which contain drawings of some parts of the nuclear power plant and details of suppliers, were stolen from the Reliance Group of famous in-



dustrialist Anil Ambani. The Koodankulam Nuclear Power Plant plays a key role in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious plans to expand India's nuclear power capacity. Reliance Infrastructure was awarded the contract in 2018 to design and build the

infrastructure for its new units, Unit 3 and Unit 4. The two units, which are scheduled to be operational by 2027, are expected to generate 2,000 megawatts of electricity. In this context, the theft of these documents from Reliance's data storage has caused a stir. In

a statement to Reuters, Reliance Group said, "We acknowledge that a portion of our data stored on the servers of Yota, a third-party data center service provider in India, was leaked. The central government has been duly informed about this." Serious investigation However, Reliance did not disclose the details of the leaked documents. The Computer Emergency Response Team of India (CERT-In) is reportedly investigating the data leak.

Ammonia leak issue: Green Tribunal issues notice to central and state governments

New Delhi

A private company called 'St. Peter and Paul Seafood', which processes seafood products, including shrimp, and exports them to foreign countries, was operating in Kannikai, next to Periyapalayam in Thiruvallur district. A bench headed by Justice Prakash Srivastava, the chairman of the National Green Tribunal, heard a suo motu case registered on the basis of an article published in the daily newspaper 'The Hindu' regarding the incident of



ammonia gas leakage at this plant, which resulted in the death of workers. In this regard, in the issued order, officials stated that there were various violations in this plant, including industrial safety rules, the

absence of a warning system, and fire prevention equipment. The Central and State Pollution Control Boards, the Regional Officer of the Integrated Regional Office of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,

and the Thiruvallur District Magistrate have been asked to respond to this request within a week before the next hearing date. The next hearing in this case will be held on August 31 at the Southern District Court in Chennai.



A consultation meeting was held at the Secretariat with officials and representatives from various departments and divisions to finalize the Tamil Nadu Government's budget for the year 2026-2027. The meeting took place in the presence of the Hon'ble Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Dr. K.G. Arunraj; the Hon'ble Minister for Labour Welfare and Skill Development, Thiru J. Mohamed Parvez; the Hon'ble Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Thiru P. Madhan Raja; the Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Planning and Development, Thiru N. Maria Wilson; the Hon'ble Minister for Artificial Intelligence, Information Technology and Digital Services, Thiru R. Kumar; the Hon'ble Minister for Forests, Thiru R.V. Ranjithkumar; and the Hon'ble Minister for Commercial Taxes and Registration, Thiru T. Lokesh Tamilselvan.



With the blessings of the Honorable Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Thiru S. Joseph Vijay, the Honorable Minister for Animal Husbandry, Tmt. S. Kamali, inaugurated newly constructed women's hostel buildings for the Veterinary College and Research Institute, Tirunelveli, and the Veterinary College and Research Institute, Orathanadu, at the Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS) campus in Madhavaram, Chennai.

AIADMK Celebrates Kamarajar's 124th Birth Anniversary in Thoothukudi

The 124th birth anniversary of former Chief Minister 'Perunthalaivar' Kamarajar was celebrated across Tamil Nadu yesterday. In accordance with the directive of AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami, the party's Organizational Secretary, Thoothukudi District Secretary, and former Minister S.P. Shanmuganathan led the celebrations in Thoothukudi. Tributes were paid by garlanding and showering flowers on the statue of Perunthalaivar Kamarajar near the V.O.C. Market and on his decorated portrait near the Theradi (chariot stand) of the Sivan Temple; additionally, sarees, dhotis, and sweets were distributed to the public to mark the occasion. The event



was attended by State Joint Secretary of the Unorganized Drivers' Wing Perumalsamy; former MLA Mohan; International MGR Forum Deputy Secretary R. Henry; Area Secretaries Jaiganesh and Murugan; District Wing Secretaries M. Perumal, Natarajan, Dhanaraj, 'Take' Raja, 'Billa' Vignesh, K.J. Prabhakar, and Ayyanadaippu Rajendran; functionaries including former Mayor Anthony Gracey, Mudiman Ramasamy, Kalvikumar, Sathyalakshmanan, and Navshad; Head-

quarters Speakers Muruganantham, Muthukkani, M.D. Raja, and Thoothukudi Manikandan; Trade Wing members Sugumar, Chokkalingam, K.K.P. Vijayan, A.P.R. Kaviarasu, Mullakkadu Sriram, Ganesan, Asokan, Michael, Xavier Raj, Kanagavel; Ward Secretaries Kom-baiya, Manivannan, Jaikumar, Shankar, Duraising, and Rajkumar; Women's Wing functionaries Majila, Shanthi, Tamilarasi, Indira, and Annabhakkiyam; as well as members of the public.

Kamarajar's 124th Birth Anniversary Celebration in Ramanathapuram

Ramanathapuram, July 16

The 124th birth anniversary celebration of the great leader Kamarajar was held in Ramanathapuram, organized by the Annal Pandianar Nadar Sangam. Association Treasurer Mohan presided over the event, with President Murugesan in attendance. Secretary Gnanasekaran delivered the welcome address. MLA Kader Batcha Muthuramalingam paid floral tributes to Kamarajar's portrait. Actors Imman Annachi and Elangovan addressed the gathering. Educational scholarships were awarded to several students: Srishanth (High Ilakku School), who secured the first rank in the Ramanatha-



puram district in the previous academic year's 10th-grade public examination; Jayashree, Kanishkar, and Abi (Chermathai Vasan High School, Arasaradi Vandal Nadar Mahajana Sangam), who secured the top three positions in their school; Dharanishree, Kanishrisha-ree, and Subash (Medalodai Nadar Mahajana Sangam High School); and Dharanika, who secured the third rank at the state level in the CBSE examination. Appreciation was also extended to Ra-

makrishnan (Oyilattam teacher at the Government Music School) and Dhanalakshmi (of the Muthamizh Women's Oyilattam Troupe) for their Oyilattam performances depicting Kamarajar's life history. Municipal Chairpersons Karmegam (Ramanathapuram) and Shehanas Abitha (Keelakara), along with Vice-Chairpersons Praveen Thangam (Ramanathapuram) and Sheik Sultan (Keelakarai), were among the many who participated in the event.

Love Until the End Husband Follows Wife in Death Three Hours Later

Vathalagundu

A tragic incident occurred near Vathalagundu where a husband passed away just three hours after his wife, leaving the local community deeply saddened. Ponnaiah (82) and Mayakkal (78) were a couple from Nagaiya Goundanpatti village in the Viruveedu area, near Vathalagundu in Dindigul district. The couple, who relied on agriculture for their livelihood, had two sons, two daughters, and sev-



eral grandchildren. Ponnaiah had been bedridden at home for two months due to old age. When his health deteriorated yesterday, their children and relatives gathered at the house to see him. Amidst this, Mayakkal, who was conversing with her children and grand-

children, unexpectedly collapsed and passed away. Just three hours later, Ponnaiah, who had been battling for his life, also breathed his last. Relatives and local residents paid tearful tributes to the couple, who remained united even in death.

Sudden Fire at Mattress-Making Cottage Industry Near Rajapalayam; Cotton Worth ₹30,000 Destroyed

Rajapalayam "Sakthi Traders," a cottage industry unit manufacturing mattresses and pillows owned by Suresh (son of Paramasivam), operates in the Alagapuri area near Rajapalayam in Virudhunagar district. A fire suddenly broke out at the unit today. As the material involved was cotton, the fire spread rapidly; the Rajapalayam Fire Department was immediately alerted. Firefighters rushed to the scene and success-



fully extinguished the blaze, preventing it from spreading further. However, cotton stock worth approximately ₹30,000, intended for mattress production, was de-

stroyed in the fire. The Rajapalayam North Police have registered a case regarding the incident and are conducting a thorough investigation into the cause of the fire.

Installation Ceremony of Courtallam Rotary Club Office Bearers

Tenkasi, July 15

The installation ceremony for the office bearers of the Courtallam Rotary Club for its 71st year was held at the Courtallam Rotary Service Centre. Past President Cyrus presided over the event and delivered the welcome address. M.R. Azhagar Raja recited the invocation, while A.K.S. Kalyanakumar read the 'Four-Way Test'. Secretary P. Prakash presented the annual report. R.V. Sankara Narayanan introduced the President for the 2027-28 term, 'Nallaasiriyar' (Award-winning Teacher) Kai. Ganesamoorthy. In the presence of Rotary Governor Ebenezer Bentham, Guest of Honour Shanmuga Rajeswaran, Past Governor K. Rajagopalan, and Assistant Governor Anitha Anand, Past President Cyrus administered the oath of office to the new President, Kai. Ganesamoorthy. Rotary members Kannan and Kai. Murugan introduced the special guests. Past President Sankaran introduced the new members—Ponraj, Ram Prasanna, Shenbagannu, T. Murugaiah, and Subramanian—and Assistant Governor Anitha Anand inducted them into the Rotary Club. The new office bearers of the Courtallam Rotary Club assumed their roles: K. Ganesamoorthy (Past President and 'Best Teacher' awardee) as President; T.S. Chandran (Past President) as Vice-President; Thiruvilanji Kumaran (Past President)



as Secretary; N. Ramaswamy as Joint Secretary; K. Murugan (Past President) as Treasurer; K. Rajagopalan (Past Rotary Governor) as Club Trainer; and V. Bhaskaran (Past Rotary Governor), Sriraman (Past President), and Azhagar Raja (Past Assistant Governor) as Advisors. Additionally, Ramakrishnan (Past President), A. Sankaran, A.K.S. Kalyana Kumar, and Arunachalam (alias Nandu) assumed office as Directors. Other appointees included Rotary members Y. Balakrishnan, K. Radhakrishnan, and V.K. Narayana Raja; Sankara Narayanan (Past President) as Editor of the 'Aruvi' magazine; K. Kannan as Sergeant-at-Arms; and Cyrus as Immediate Past President. Ebenezer Bentham, the District Governor for the 2027-28 term, served as the special guest; he delivered a special address and presented awards to individuals rendering exemplary social service in Tenkasi and Courtallam. Recipients included T.S. Chandran; Sanitary Inspectors Saravanan, Ganesan, and Marimuthu; sanitation workers Isakkimuthu and Chandran; Headmaster Srinivasan (recognized for his integrity); Village Administrative Offi-

cer Muhammad Abdul Ali; and Courtallam Electrical Line Inspector Murugan. Guest of Honour Shanmuga Rajeswaran and Past Governor Rajagopalan offered felicitations. Representatives from the following Rotary Clubs participated in the meeting: Courtallam Saaral, Courtallam Central, Metro, Elite Courtallam, Sadhana, Sengottai, Sengottai Galaxy, Puliyangudi, Tirunelveli, Tirunelveli Main, Rajapalayam King City, Ramanathapuram, Nagercoil Supreme Pratapchandr, Nagercoil Main, Kadayannallur, and Kadayannallur Central. Also in attendance were District Treasurer Rathinavel, Special Assistant Governor Sivakumar, District Secretary Nandu (alias) Arunachalam, P. Prakash, and members from the ROA Associations of Tenkasi, Sivagiri, Surandai, and Sengottai. Additionally, Mariyammal (Assistant Director of the District Industries Centre), Ramalingam (Public Image Chairman), Rotary members, and members of the Tenkasi Senior Citizens' Forum took part. At the conclusion of the event, Rotary Secretary Thiruvilanji Kumaran proposed the vote of thanks.

Illegal Night-Time Sand Mining Alleged in Palar River Vaniyambadi

Vaniyambadi, July 17

Members of the public and social activists have alleged that illegal sand mining is taking place at night in the Palar River, near the Girisamuthiram area of Vaniyambadi in Tirupathur district. It is reported that pits up to 15 feet deep are being dug in the riverbed, and the extracted sand is being smuggled away in plastic bags. Although the

government has implemented various measures to curb sand smuggling, local residents express distress that the illegal activity continues due to the negligence or complicity of certain officials. The excessive digging of pits poses a risk of accidents, with the danger of passersby accidentally falling into them. Furthermore, there are fears that water

accumulating in these pits during the rainy season could lead to untoward incidents, including loss of life. Consequently, the public and social activists have urged the district administration and higher authorities to immediately halt the illegal sand smuggling, investigate the individuals and officials abetting these activities, and take strict action against those involved.



A photograph taken while Dindigul District Revenue Inspector R. Jayabharathi was inspecting files at the Ottanchatram Village Administrative Officer's office as part of the "Seeking You in Your Town" initiative; the Ottanchatram Village Administrative Officer, the Revenue Inspector, and the Village Assistant were also present.



District Collector Mr. K. Ravikumar, I.A.S., distributed government welfare assistance worth ₹65.86 lakh to 121 beneficiaries on behalf of various departments today (15.07.2026) at a public outreach camp held in a private wedding hall in Kandili village, Tirupathur Taluk, Tirupathur District. He was accompanied by District Panchayat Council President Mr. N.K.R. Suriyakumar, Kandili Union Council President Mrs. Thirumurugan, Special Deputy Collector (Social Security Schemes) Mr. Sathishkumar, Revenue Divisional Officer Mr. Varadharajan, local body representatives, and government officials.

TODAY'S HOROSCOPE

→

16.07.2026 - THURSDAY

←

ARIES

: You will be energetic and confident today. New opportunities for progress are likely.

TAURUS

: Financial gains are indicated. You will achieve success in your efforts.

GEMINI

: You will receive support from friends. Family life will be pleasant.

CANCER

: You may spend on home and vehicles. Peace of mind will prevail.

LEO

: You will gain respect and recognition. Your leadership qualities will shine.

VIRGO

: You will complete pending tasks. New sources of income may open.

LIBRA

: You will be successful in your plans. Happiness will increase in your family.

SCORPIO

: You may face minor challenges. Stay calm and handle things wisely.

SAGITTARIUS

: Good time for learning and research. You will achieve positive results.

CAPRICORN

: You will get support from seniors. Promotion and growth are likely.

AQUARIUS

: Your health will be good. You will succeed in your work.

PISCES

: You will be in a cheerful mood. Spiritual thoughts will increase.



District Collector Mr. K. Ravikumar, IAS, flagged off an awareness rally by college students and an awareness chariot today (15.07.2026) at the Tirupathur District Collectorate conference hall. The event was organized by the Department of Medical and Family Welfare and the Integrated Vellore District Family Welfare Bureau to mark World Population Day. Also present were District Revenue Officer Mr. J. Narayanan, Joint Director of Medical and Rural Health Services Dr. T. Gnameenakshi, Deputy Director of the Integrated Vellore District Family Welfare Bureau Dr. K. Manimegalai, District Health Officer Dr. N. Kalusivalingam, the District Maternal and Child Health Officer, as well as doctors, health workers, and officials from the concerned departments.

Call for Crop Insurance in Yercaud

Shireen, the Assistant Director of Agriculture for the Yercaud block in Salem district, has issued an announcement regarding the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Crop Insurance Scheme for highlights that obtaining this crop insurance enables farmers to claim compensation for yield losses caused by rain, drought, or floods. The announcement is for the 2026 Kharif season. Accordingly, farmers in the Puthur, Vellakkadai, and Yercaud *Firkas* are urged to insure their crops by paying the required premiums: ₹773 per acre for paddy by July 31, ₹200 per acre for *Samai* (Little Millet) by August 17, and ₹253 per acre for Ragi (Finger Millet) by August 31. The announcement highlights that obtaining this crop insurance enables farmers to claim compensation for yield losses caused by rain, drought, or floods.

Kayal Abbas, Strongly Condemns the Death of Prisoner Sabarivarman

Kayalpatnam, July 15

Kayal Abbas, leader of the Makkal Ezhuchi Democratic Party, has expressed strong condemnation regarding the death of prisoner Sabarivarman. In a statement issued on the matter, he said the following: The Makkal Ezhuchi Democratic Party strongly condemns the incident in which Sabarivarman, who was held as an undertrial prisoner in Nagercoil Prison, lost his life. Reports indicate that he died after sustaining injuries in 19 places on his body while inside the prison. We condemn the brutal actions of the prison guards—who are supposed to protect inmates—for savagely assaulting and killing Sabarivarman, disregarding the fact that he was physically



disabled. We offer our deepest condolences and sympathies to Sabarivarman's grieving family. Furthermore, on behalf of the Makkal Ezhuchi Democratic Party, we urge the Tamil Nadu government to provide a government job and ₹50 lakh in compensation to a member of his family. It is welcome that the three prison guards responsible for Sabarivarman's death have been arrested under the orders of District Superintendent of Police Stalin. However, the fact that police personnel involved in the deaths of P. Jeyaraj and Bennix

(Sathankulam) and Ajith Kumar (Thiruppuvanam) remain in custody seems to have been ignored; the police have once again committed such a brutal act, which can only be viewed as an act of lawlessness. Therefore, a speedy investigation must be conducted to identify those responsible for Sabarivarman's death. On behalf of the Makkal Ezhuchi Democratic Party, we urge Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Joseph Vijay to take firm measures to prevent such custodial deaths in the future. This was stated by Kayal Abbas.

Kamarajar's Birthday Celebration at Ambalur Panchayat Union Primary School Panchayat President Distributes Uniforms

Vaniyambadi, July 17

A celebration marking the 124th birth anniversary of 'Perunthalaivar' Kamarajar was held at the Ambalur Panchayat Union Primary School, located near Vaniyambadi in Tirupathur district. A.P. Murugesan, the Ambalur Panchayat President, presided over the event; he paid tribute by garlanding and showing flowers on the portrait of Kamara-



jar displayed within the school premises. Subsequently, he distributed colorful uniforms—donated by A.T. Manoharan Gurusamy—to all the students attending the school. Vice President Narmada Nandagopal, Headmaster N. Gopi-

nathan, A.M. Moorthy, A.K. Thandapani, K. Dayalamoorthy, A.C. Shivaji, A.M. Kannan, Ward Member Parvathi Periyasamy, along with teachers, students, and members of the public, participated in the event and paid their respects to Kamarajar.

Three arrested for burglarizing five homes in Vaniyambadi and Jolarpet gang caught during vehicle check

Vaniyambadi, July 17

Vaniyambadi Town Police have arrested three individuals from the Gudiyatham area for burglarizing five unoccupied houses—including locations in Periyapettai, Vaniyambadi—and have seized gold, silver items, cash, and a two-wheeler from them. While conducting a vehicle check at the Perumalpettai junction in Vaniyambadi, the police stopped three men arriving on a two-wheeler for questioning. Suspicious due to their inconsistent answers, the police took them to the station for intensive interrogation. The investigation re-



vealed the suspects to be Karthik (33), Arun Kumar (33), and Delhi Babu (30) from Mariamman Street, Gudiyatham. It was discovered that they had committed burglaries at five locations—two houses in Jolarpet, one in Chinna Veppampattu (near Vaniyambadi), one in Chettiyappanur, and the home of Premnath (a finance business operator) in Periyapettai—by monitoring the houses for times when the oc-

cupants were away. Subsequently, the police seized 10 grams of gold jewelry, 134 grams of silver items, ₹50,000 in cash, and the two-wheeler from the trio. The Vaniyambadi Town Police registered a case against the three men, produced them before the court, and remanded them to prison. The apprehension of the burglary gang during a routine police vehicle check has caused a stir in the area.

DMK Leader V.S. Gnanavelan Provides ₹2.70 Lakh Educational Aid to Students

Vaniyambadi, July 16

An event to distribute educational assistance was held at the 'Thalapathi Arivalayam' in Madhanancheri, within the Alangayam West Union of Tirupathur district, under the leadership of Alan-gayam West Union DMK Secretary

V.S. Gnanavelan. During the event, a total of ₹2.70 lakh was distributed as educational assistance—₹15,000 each—to 18 college students. Speaking on the occasion, V.S. Gnanavelan urged students to excel in their studies and build a prosperous

future, emphasizing that education is the most powerful tool for social progress. It is noteworthy that he has been consistently providing educational assistance to students for the past 15 years. Many students, parents, and party functionaries participated in the event

Youth arrested for stealing 15 sovereigns of gold jewelry confesses to the theft to clear debt

Ambur, July 17

A special police team has arrested a young man and recovered stolen jewelry after he broke into an unoccupied house near Ambur and stole 15 sovereigns of gold jewelry along with ₹7,000 in cash. Usma Bathool, wife of Mohammed Thowsif from Library Street in Umarabad (near Ambur), had gone with her family on July 3rd to attend a function at a relative's house in Kadambur. Upon returning home the next day (July 4th), she found the lock broken and discovered that 15 sovereigns of gold jewelry and ₹7,000 in cash had been stolen from the wardrobe. Based on a complaint



filed at the Umarabad police station, the police registered a case, formed a special team, and launched an intensive investigation. Acting on evidence gathered at the scene, the police detained Samiullah from Church Street, Kailasagiri, on suspicion and interrogated him. During questioning, Samiullah confessed to the theft. He revealed that he used to run a fancy store

near Usma Bathool's house in Umarabad but was forced to close it a month ago due to business losses. He admitted to the police that he committed the theft to cope with his debt burden. Subsequently, the police recovered the stolen 15 sovereigns of jewelry from him. Samiullah was then produced before the court and remanded to prison. This incident has caused a stir in the Ambur area.

Farmers Receive Practical Training on Panchagavya Preparation Near Surandai

A practical training session on the preparation of 'Panchagavya' was conducted for farmers at Pandiyapuram, near Surandai. Students from the Department of Agriculture at Karunya Institute of Technology and Sciences, Coimbatore, organized this training as part of the Rural Agricultural Work Experience (RAWE) program. The session was guided by Sukumar (Officer, RVS Krishi Vigyan Kendra) and Varshini (Agricultural Officer), with farmer Kalyani pre-



siding over the event. A team of students—comprising Abisha, Babitha, Subraja, Akshitha, Abisha Hemathi, Mithra, Sherly, Jennifer, Dharshana, and Jayashree—conducted the practical demonstration. They provided direct explanations and engaged

in discussions with the farmers regarding the raw materials, preparation method, dosage, and benefits of Panchagavya in organic farming, while also addressing the farmers' queries. Approximately 100 farmers participated in the event.

Sit-In Protest Held to Save 200-Year-Old Banyan Tree

Determined to destroy and remove the 200-year-old banyan tree on the Salem road, anti-social elements have repeatedly used chainsaws to cut down five fully grown branches in stages, including the latest ones cut today. On behalf of the Rasipuram People's Welfare Committee, we have been continuously fighting to save this tree. It is worth noting that anti-social elements in the area have also cut down more than 20 palm trees surrounding this banyan tree. This morning, under the pretext of clearing small branches near power lines—a task usually handled by the Electricity Board—a Highway Department Road Inspector, col-



luding with anti-so-cial elements and timber traders, cut down five massive branches (each 50 feet long) and carted them away in an auto-rickshaw. Upon receiving information from local residents, we rushed to the site, alerted the Rasipuram Police, Highway Department, Electricity Board, and Revenue Department, and launched a sit-in protest demanding action against the individuals involved. The Village Administrative Officer and the Electricity Department Executive Engineer immediately ar-

rived at the scene and conducted an on-site inspection. Following their report, the Police Inspector and the Highway Department Assistant Executive Engineer visited the banyan tree and held talks with Nalvinai Selvan (Secretary) and KA Murugan (Treasurer) of the Rasipuram People's Welfare Committee, who were leading the sit-in protest. The sit-in protest was called off only after the Assistant Executive Engineer of the Highways Department, Mounika Devi, pro-

vided a copy of the CSR (Community Service Register) receipt regarding the police complaint filed against the anti-social elements who cut down the tree, and gave an assurance that appropriate action would be taken. It is worth recalling the past: during the COVID-19 pandemic, when there was an attempt to fell this tree, members of the Rasipuram People's Welfare Committee fought to save it by physically embracing it. At that time, the then District Revenue Officer, Ms. Durga Moorthy, visited the site in person, alerted various officials, and ordered the tree's preservation. The following morning, the Namak-

kal District Collector personally inspected the site. In stark contrast, regarding the recent felling of the banyan tree, the Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) of Rasipuram, Vijayakumar, did not visit the site for an inspection; instead, he contacted the protest group via mobile phone and spoke dismissively, demanding an immediate end to the sit-in protest—a reminder that "while the administration has changed, the scenario remains the same." It is disheartening to see how many struggles we must undertake just to save this 200-year-old, lush, living banyan tree—a true symbol of Rasipuram that provides shade to all.

to the general public as well as to destitute individuals living on the streets. Perambalur Union President Suriya Sekar and Bal-amurugan presided over the event. Key figures in attendance included District President Alaguvél, State Policy Publicity Secretary L. Ravikumar, District Youth Wing President S. Vinoth, Veppanthattai Union

Secretary Arul Selvan, Perambalur Union Farmers' Wing President Pichapillai, and Town Trade Wing Secretary K. Muthusamy. Party functionaries and office bearers participated in distributing the food to the public. The event was conducted successfully, with a large number of people attending and receiving the donated food.

TODAY'S
GOLD, PETROL & DIESEL PRICE

16.07.2026

GOLD
(24K, 10 GRAMS)

₹ 77,250

PETROL
(1 LITRE)

₹ 102.58

DIESEL
(1 LITRE)

₹ 94.27

* Prices may vary slightly from place to place.

STAY INFORMED. STAY AHEAD.

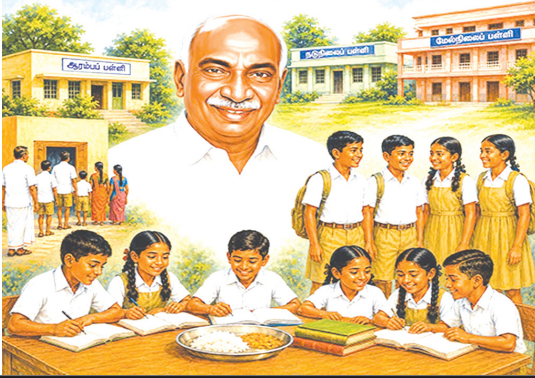


A review meeting was held today under my chairmanship regarding the precautionary measures being undertaken by the Greater Chennai Corporation in preparation for the Northeast Monsoon.



We inaugurated the work of laying a tar road in Ward 19 (Mount Road, stretching from Moorthy Medical to Kushal Tea Company)—represented by Councillor Sameena Abdul Khader—alongside Town Party Secretary M. Ramasamy, District Youth Wing Deputy Organizer M. Padmanabhan (Ex-Councillor), Councillors Zaheer Hussain, Syed Mansoor, and Vasanthi, Branch Party Secretary Abdul Khader, party functionaries Gayathri and Eeswaran, and local residents.

Kamaraj’s Birthday: Why is it Educational Development Day?



Kamaraj’s birthday is celebrated today as ‘Educational Development Day’. At a time when people were asking, “If everyone is educated, where will they go to work?”, Kamaraj was the one who brought about the educational revolution. During Kamaraj’s nine-year



tenure as Chief Minister from 1954 to 1963, he paid special attention to the education sector in Tamil Nadu. During Kamaraj’s rule, a middle

school was opened three miles away and a high school was opened five miles away. The number of primary schools, which was 14,000 in 1954, increased to 15,800 in 1957. There were only 637 high schools in 1951. That number increased to 1,995 in 1962. The number of students



children were provided with free and compulsory education, formed a committee to provide free and compulsory education and implemented the recommendations of the committee. He not only looked after government schools but also encouraged private schools. He facilitated the acquisition of necessary materials for schools under the name of ‘School Development Scheme’. Kamaraj, who introduced the ‘Free Mid-Day Meal Scheme’, ensured that poor children went to school. Kamaraj focused on primary and higher education and also established art colleges. He also inaugurated polytechnics and engineering colleges in various parts of Tamil Nadu. Kamaraj, who brought many revo-

lutionary schemes for rule, the mid-day education, declared meal scheme, free ed-

The food scheme implemented by Perunthalaivar Kamaraj with the power of the people

This is the 70th anniversary of Kamaraj’s Mid-Day Meal Scheme, a mega movement that revolutionized education and nutrition. In fact, it is a century-old scheme. Since hunger was a major obstacle to the attendance of children from the Poor List, M.C. Raja, the country’s first List Member of Parliament, urged the Legislative Council in 1922 to implement the mid-day meal scheme in all government primary schools.

Is finance an obstacle to justice?

The mid-day meal scheme was first introduced in the Corporation School in the Thousand Lights area of Chennai during the Justice Party rule. Following this, in 1924, Singaravelar and L.C. Gurusamy jointly implemented the mid-day meal scheme in the schools under their wards in Chennai. Kamaraj’s role in transforming the project that opened the doors of education to a few hundred children into a reality for millions of children from the lower strata of society was immense. Kamaraj transformed the mid-day meal scheme not only as a government scheme but also as a people’s movement. Because various parties, including government officials, tried to stop the scheme citing financial burden. The Finance Ministry and top officials expressed strong opposition, saying, “The government does not have enough funds for all this, and this project will lead to the bankruptcy of the government.” The then central government also refused to provide additional funding for the project. But Kamaraj was not afraid of the financial crisis. At a primary school teachers’ conference held in 1955, he said, “We cannot ignore the hunger of children by saying there is no money.” “If the government doesn’t have money, I will put aside all other work and go from village to village begging to feed the poor children of my country,” he said with emotion. **From the locals to America**

Kamaraj proposed the best solution to fulfill his bold decision. The government provided 6 paise for a meal on that date. He made it a rule that the remaining amount would be donated by the local people, landowners, and merchants. The necessary infrastructure facilities were set up with the participation of the people to cook and serve midday meals to the students. He held ‘School Renovation Conferences’ to create awareness and guidance among the people regarding this. To overcome the next financial crisis, he arranged to obtain food items such as milk powder and wheat from the American charity CARE and distribute them to the students. This led to a significant increase in student enrollment in government schools. Within a few years of the program’s inception, mid-day meals were provided to lakhs of poor children studying in 29,017 schools across the state. This mid-day meal scheme, created by Kamaraj, has today become the ‘National Mid-Day Meal Scheme’ across India. As the scheme emerged as a unique identity for Tamil Nadu, successive rulers made developments in it. In 1982, MGR established a separate department called ‘Nutrition Scheme’, in 1989, Karunanidhi added eggs to the scheme, Jayalalithaa introduced differently cooked eggs and mixed rice, and M.K. Stalin laid a new milestone of breakfast food.

his birthday, July 15, 2006, as ‘Education Development Day’. This is the 20th year. During Kamaraj’s

educational institutions operate were important. All these were the results of his educational reforms. Day is to remember As a result, the num-

Tamil Nadu excels in education!

- * In the 1950s, literacy was 12 percent in the country and about 20 percent in the Madras state. The reason why literacy doubled in the next fifteen years was because the then Chief Minister Kamaraj acted with the vision that ‘educational development is the basis for social development’!
 - * After Kamaraj became the Chief Minister, he expanded the ‘midday meal scheme’ across the state. At a time when the poor were reluctant to send their children to school, this was a revolution. During the MGR regime, it was expanded into a nutritious meal scheme.
 - The content and quality of food expanded under the rulers who came after that. Today, many states including Karnataka and West Bengal are following these schemes, which speaks volumes about the benefits Tamil Nadu has reaped from them.
 - * It was during Kamaraja’s reign that the number of primary schools, middle schools, and higher secondary schools was greatly increased. Reservations were implemented to ensure that disadvantaged people could receive education. Uniforms were introduced to ensure that everyone was equal in terms of learning.
 - * The Equal Education Scheme, introduced during Karunanidhi’s tenure as Chief Minister during the 2006-2011 academic years, brought about significant changes, including free textbooks for all, bus passes, etc. The abolition of the common entrance exam for admission to higher education, including engineering and medicine, made rural students and parents happy.
 - * Educational changes that took place during Jayalalithaa’s rule included 69% reservation, laptops for school students, training in specialized disciplines, and foreign study and travel by students and teachers.
 - * The increase in educational opportunities for students by successive rulers, and the socio-economic upliftment achieved by subsequent generations, will tell us what Tamil Nadu’s current state is.
- Even as the global trend towards education has continued to rise in the last seventy years, the heights that Tamil Nadu has reached in the field of education are astonishing. Kamaraj was one of the foremost among those who sowed the seeds for this.

Free projects that will bring light to Tamil Nadu government schools

The Tamil Nadu government is implementing various schemes for the educational development of government school students. These schemes are instrumental in preventing student dropout and ensuring a non-discriminatory and equal environment in schools.

Free uniform - textbooks - shoes

The scheme to provide free uniforms and textbooks to all students studying in government schools from class one to eight and benefiting from the mid-day meal scheme was started in 1985. These were provided on the basis of merit to those studying in government-aided schools. Free textbooks were provided to all students studying in grades one to five in 1998. A scheme to provide free shoes to students studying in grades one to eight was introduced from the 1987-1988 academic year. Currently, all students studying in grades one to twelve are provided with textbooks. Students in grades one to ten are provided with free notebooks, shoes, and socks.

Free bicycle

The scheme of providing free bicycles to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students studying in class XI was started in the academic year 2001-02. In the academic year 2005-06, this scheme was extended to all government and government-aided school students. In 2012, ITI students were also provided with free bicycles.

Free glasses

A scheme to conduct eye examinations for students studying in middle, high and secondary schools and provide free eyeglasses to those with vision impairments through the Rural Health Mission was introduced in 2010. This scheme is currently being implemented under the name ‘Kannoli Kaapomm’.

Sanitary napkin

The scheme of providing free sanitary napkins to government school girls aged 10-19 under the Menstrual Hygiene Scheme has been implemented since 2011.

Laptop

To improve the learning ability of students, free laptops were provided to all students studying in 11th and 12th standard in government schools. Laptops have not been provided for the last four years.

Educational tools

Students studying in grades one to twelve are given free book bags, students studying in grades six to ten are given geometry boxes, and students studying in grades one to five are given colored pencils.

Free bus travel

All students from class one to class twelve have free bus travel. Apart from these, numerous financial aid and scholarship schemes including Naan Multhavan, Pudumaipen, Tamil Puthuvan, and Annal Ambedkar Ayalakka Higher Education Scholarship Scheme are also implemented for the benefit of government school students.

3 people including Indian-origin athlete Anil Menon travel to space

Moscow

Russia officially sent Indian-origin NASA astronaut Anil Menon to the International Space Station yesterday. The United States, Russia, the European Union, Japan, and Canada jointly built the International Space Station. The station is served by the Dragon spacecraft of the American company SpaceX and the Soyuz spacecraft of Russia. Currently, there are 7 astronauts stationed

Russia successfully launches Soyuz MS-29 spacecraft



at the International Space Station. They are usually changed once every 6 months. Accordingly, Anil Menon from the NASA Space Center in America, and Russian cosmonauts Pyotr Dubrov and Anna Kikina left

for the International Space Station last night on the Soyuz MS-29 spacecraft. Their spacecraft lifted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan at 7.47 pm (8.17 pm IST) on Sunday. This will be the first

space flight for Indian-origin astronaut Anil Menon. Before the launch, Anil Menon shared his excitement on the X-Plane. He wrote in his post, “I am thrilled to launch from Kazakhstan aboard the Soyuz MS-29 spacecraft and begin my 8-month mission in support of NASA and Expedition 74/75. My gratitude to NASA, friends, family, and loved ones. I look forward to tomorrow’s dawn.”



Madurai District Collector Mr. Nishant Krishna, IAS, inspected the basic amenities at the bus stand of the Peraiyur First-Grade Town Panchayat in Madurai district today. During the inspection, he instructed the concerned officials to ensure that the restrooms are maintained in a clean and hygienic condition at all times and that quality basic services are provided to the public without any inconvenience. Usilampatti Sub-Collector Mr. Utkarsh Kumar, IAS, accompanied him.



Today, Madurai District Collector Mr. Nishant Krishna, I.A.S., inspected the Resource Recovery Park—situated on a 1.15-acre site in the Peraiyur Selection Grade Town Panchayat—under the “Ungalai Thedi Ungal Ooril” (Reaching You in Your Town) scheme. During the inspection, he reviewed the processes involved in segregating waste collected from households, commercial establishments, and industries, as well as the production of compost and vermicompost. He also inspected the operations of the compost sieve, compost pulverizer, plastic shredder, plastic packaging machine, and sanitary napkin incinerator.