

Government schemes should deliver benefits to the people: PM Modi

CHENNAI: Do you know how much the salary of Central Government employees will increase following the 3% hike in Dearness Allowance (DA)? Let's examine whether this move—which will benefit 4.854 million (48.54 lakh) employees—is truly a 'Diwali gift' for government staff. A 3% increase in the Dearness Allowance for Central Government employees has been announced. This is an addition to the existing 60% (DA/DR) currently applied to basic pay and pensions. The Dearness Allowance and Dearness Relief (DR) are effective retrospectively from July 1st.

Dearness Allowance for Central Government employees increased by 3%

The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Modi, approved this decision yesterday.

The Cabinet has sanctioned an additional installment of Dearness Allowance for employees and Dearness Relief for pensioners. This hike is intended to offset the impact of rising prices (inflation). It is estimated that this increase will result in an additional annual expenditure of Rs 10,016.10 crore for the Central Government. In total, 4.854 million (48.54

lakh) Central Government employees and 6.871 million (68.71 lakh) pensioners will benefit from this measure. The Central Government has stated that this increase is in line with the recommendations of the 7th Central Pay Commission. Dearness Allowance is calculated based on an employee's basic salary. We will take a detailed look at the additional monthly amount an employee will receive—based on their basic salary—following this 3% hike, as well as the new



total Dearness Allowance amount. Please note that these figures are estimates. For an employee with a basic salary of approximately ₹25,000, a 3% increase in the Dearness Allowance (DA) will result

in an additional ₹750 per month. Previously, at a 60% DA rate, the amount received was ₹15,000; with the new 63% rate, this will become ₹15,750. Consequently, the total amount—comprising the basic salary and the Dearness Allowance—will rise from ₹40,000 to ₹40,750. For those earning a salary of around ₹50,000 (with a corresponding basic salary), a 3% increase will provide an additional monthly income of ₹1,500. The Dearness Allowance, which was previously

₹30,000 (at 60%), will now increase to ₹31,500 (at 63%). As a result, the combined total of the basic salary and the Dearness Allowance will increase from ₹80,000 to ₹81,500 per month. For employees earning a salary of ₹75,000, the 3% DA hike will lead to an additional ₹2,250 per month. The Dearness Allowance, which stood at ₹45,000 (at 60%), will now rise to ₹47,250 (at 63%), bringing the total (basic salary plus DA) to ₹1,22,250, up from ₹1,20,000. For those

earning a monthly salary of ₹1,00,000, this 3% increase in the Dearness Allowance will result in an additional ₹3,000 per month. With the Dearness Allowance (DA) increasing from 60% to 63%, the amount—previously ₹60,000—will now become ₹63,000. Consequently, the combined total of the basic salary and the Dearness Allowance will rise from ₹1,60,000 to ₹1,63,000. It should be noted that this does not represent the employee's total gross salary; it is an ap-

proximate calculation based solely on the basic salary and the Dearness Allowance. Other allowances—such as House Rent Allowance (HRA) and travel allowances—as well as deductions like Provident Fund (PF) and taxes, will vary depending on the employee's specific position and place of work. Since this DA hike is effective retrospectively from July, the arrears for four months will be disbursed along with the November salary. Furthermore, as this coincides with the receipt of a Diwali bonus, the government's decision is being viewed as a Diwali gift.



Ministers must act in accordance with the needs of the people: CM Vijay's directive

CHENNAI: A cabinet meeting was held today at the Secretariat in Chennai, chaired by Chief Minister Vijay.

According to reports, the meeting included discussions on several key matters, such as granting approvals for new industrial ventures in Tamil Nadu and the expansion of existing enterprises.

Furthermore, the agenda covered various topics, including the promotion of battery energy storage systems—a crucial step given the significant issue of power outages—as well as the implementation of government schemes, the fulfillment of election promises, and the setting of department-specific targets. Discussions also

touched upon the law and order situation, the issuance of land title deeds (*patta*) to the underprivileged by the Revenue Department, and a social justice survey. In this context, Chief Minister Vijay issued three key directives during the cabinet meeting. He emphasized that ministers must prioritize the

actual needs of the public and ensure that all their actions are guided by an understanding of what the people require. He specifically instructed that priority be given to addressing the fundamental needs of the citizens, such as resolving issues related to drinking water supply and improving road infrastructure.

Special meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

Invitation extended to Pakistan

NEW DELHI: The Central Government has extended invitations to 10 member nations of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)—including Pakistan, which currently holds the organization's chairmanship—to participate in the inaugural seminar on civilizational heritage. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which comprises 10 member states including India, China, and Russia, works toward fostering regional harmony and enhancing cooperation among its member nations.

During the SCO leaders' summit held in Tianjin, China, in 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed the

creation of a forum dedicated to culture and civilizational heritage—a proposal that the organization subsequently approved.



Pakistan has held the chairmanship of the SCO since September 1. In this context, a three-day seminar on civilizational heritage is scheduled to take place from November 20 to 22 at the 16th-century

Purana Qila (Old Fort) in Delhi. Representatives from over 25 countries are expected to attend, and Prime Minister Modi will inaugurate the event.

The forum will focus on discussions regarding civilizational linkages, cultural relations, and collaborative efforts concerning traditional knowledge systems among the member nations.

The event is being organized by the Union Ministry of Culture in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs. Invitations have been extended to the Culture Ministers of all 10 SCO member states.

These include ministers from Russia, China, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Belarus, as well as Pakistan's Minister for Culture, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi. Most recently, in 2023, the then Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Bilawal Bhutto, participated in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Foreign Ministers' meeting held in Goa.

US Mayors Awestruck by India's Ancient Heritage, Hospitality

WASHINGTON: Adelegation of mayors from Washington State, USA, recently concluded a captivating visit to India, expressing profound appreciation for the nation's rich history, diverse culture, and inherent hospitality.

Their journey, spanning New Delhi, Bhubaneswar, and Mumbai from October 11 to 18, aimed to forge stronger ties and foster meaningful exchanges.

Washington State Senator Tina Orwall, part of the delegation, described the trip as a 'lifetime experience.' She highlighted India's thousands of years of innovation and technological advancements, all rooted in a core philosophy of compassion and helping humanity. "It always really co-



ming to the core of helping the people of India and the world, and it comes from a place of compassion," Orwall stated, echoing sentiments shared by the Indian consulate in Seattle. Kent Mayor Dana Ralph was particularly struck by the coexistence of ancient tradi-

tions and modern progress. She marvelled at India's historical inventions and the vibrant cultural tapestry, from villages preserving unwritten languages to cutting-edge technological hubs. Tukwila Mayor Thomas McLeod admitted to a newfound appreciation for India,

stating he now sees the world 'through Indian glasses' after experiencing the Akshardham Temple and witnessing India's contributions to humanity.

Issaquah Mayor Mark Mullet noted the significant Indian-born population in his city, making them the largest foreign-born group. He was deeply moved by the warmth and welcoming nature of the people he met. Mukilteo Mayor Joseph Marine and DuPont Mayor Ronald J. Fredrick also emphasized India's ancient civilization, contrasting it with the relatively young towns in the US. This visit underscores ample opportunities for both countries to strengthen people-to-people connections, business partnerships, and overall bilateral relations.

Pope Leo XIV: 'Only Peace is Holy', Urges Dialogue Amid Rising Global Tensions



ROME: Pope Leo XIV has firmly declared that "there is no such thing as a holy war; only peace is holy," urging global leaders and communities to prioritize rebuilding peace over preparing for further conflicts.

His message comes as renewed tensions cast a shadow over West Asia and Eastern Europe. Speaking at the 'Unarmed and Disarming Peace' international meeting, the Pontiff emphasized, "We must rebuild peace everywhere, not prepare for more wars. War can never be waged in the name of God. For us believers, 'to fight in the name of religion means attacking religion itself'."

The Pope recalled the World Day of Prayer for Peace, initiated by Saint John Paul II in 1986, which highlighted the deep connection between genuine religious faith and a strong commitment to peace. This reminder is particularly poignant as geopolitical uncertainties persist.

Amidst these calls for peace, reports suggest ongoing military maneuvers. Despite a reported ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine taking effect, fresh Ukrainian

drone strikes were reported near Moscow.

Similarly, speculation surrounds potential US strikes on Iran, with US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth reportedly making changes within the Pentagon's top planning officers. Lieutenant General Brett Sylvia, a key figure in US international strategy, has reportedly left his position. Pope Leo XIV stressed the

power of prayer as a humble strength for believers and a school of dialogue.

"The world needs dialogue," he stated, encouraging religious leaders to foster a climate of understanding, allowing the "language of arrogance" to yield to "the language of peace, negotiation and understanding," thus guiding humanity away from cycles of violence.



In celebration of Halloween, the world-renowned 'Pairi Daiza' wildlife park in Belgium hosted a unique treat for its animals: their favorite food was hidden inside pumpkins. The animals thoroughly enjoyed this special offering, tucking into the treats with great enthusiasm.

Today horoscope



Ego-related issues will be resolved, fostering greater harmony between spouses. You will be able to recover money lent to others. Vehicle repairs will be completed. You will make new acquaintances. Business will be brisk. It is advisable to avoid arguments at the workplace.



Disagreements may arise among family members; try to be accommodating toward one another. You may attempt to sell ancestral property, such as a house, a plot of land, or agricultural land. Avoid making new investments in your business. You might experience tension at the workplace.



You may exchange old gold or other items for new ones. You will benefit through your spouse's siblings. At the workplace, refrain from interfering in matters that do not concern you. In business, your stock will sell well. Money that you had given up on receiving will finally arrive.



Auspicious events will be organized within the family. Any underlying friction between spouses will dissipate. You will make significant decisions regarding the future. Money that was due to you will come into your hands. You will under take business-related travel. There will be advancement in your professional career.



Meeting certain prominent individuals may bring about changes in your life. Your interest in spirituality will grow. In business, your employees will be helpful. At the workplace, avoid complaining to the management about others.



Tasks that could not be completed as planned will be finished today. Any underlying tension with your father will dissipate. In business, you will attract customers by employing new strategies and successfully clear your stock. At the office, you will receive support from your superiors.



You will listen to the wishes of your family members and fulfill them. Buying or selling a house or land will prove profitable. Students will find their focus shifting back to their studies. You will see progress in both your business and your career.



You may face a lot of running around to complete the tasks you have planned. Misunderstandings could arise with relatives or friends; it is best to avoid arguments. In business, you can expect a moderate level of profit. The important document you were looking for in the office will turn up.



Your children will act responsibly. Expensive items will arrive at your home. Confusion will dissipate, giving way to self-confidence. You may sell ancestral homes or plots of land. Your standing at the workplace will improve. In business, customers will seek you out.



Relatives and kin will visit you at home. You will achieve success in legal matters concerning ancestral property. A date will be set for a previously delayed wedding. You will fulfill vows made to your family deity. Outstanding payments in business will be recovered. Your professional career will flourish.



You will gain benefits through influential people. You will impress those around you with your tactful speech. The health of your spouse and children will improve. You may be recommended for a new position at your workplace. You will expand your business and receive support from your partners.



With an increase in income, you will replace old household items. Differences of opinion between you and your spouse will be resolved. You will employ new strategies in business.

Munir Hoda, former IAS officer and the first Managing Director of 'Chennai Metro', passes away



CHENNAI: Former IAS officer and the first Managing Director of Chennai Metro Rail Limited, Munir Hoda, has passed away. He was 76. Born in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, Munir Hoda completed his MBA at Banaras Hindu University and joined the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) in 1976.

He held various key positions within the Government of Tamil Nadu. For over four years, he had been suffering from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). He had been undergoing continuous treatment for the condition and passed away yesterday at a private hospital in Chennai.

He is survived by his wife, Parveen, his son, Sameer, and his daughter, Tabassum. DMK leader M.K. Stalin visited Munir Hoda's residence in Chennai to pay his respects and offer condolences to the bereaved family. In a condolence message issued regarding this, Stalin stated:

He served in the government for a long time, holding various key positions, including Home Secretary of Tamil Nadu, Controller of Examinations at the TNPSC, and State Election Commissioner.

He also served as the Principal Secretary to Karunanidhi. His contribution as the first Managing Director of Chennai Metro Rail Limited was immense. He possessed many years of experience in the field of administration.

I express my deepest condolences and sympathies to his grieving family, relatives, friends, and all those affected by his passing. This was stated by Stalin. Munir Hoda.

Thevar Guru Puja Commemorations Begin in Pasumpon; Vice President to Visit Tomorrow



RAMANATHAPURAM: The Guru Puja commemorations for Muthuramalinga Thevar have commenced in Pasumpon with *Yagasalai* rituals. Tomorrow, the Vice President of India, along with other prominent leaders, is expected to participate and pay floral tributes. In Pasumpon, located near Kamuthi in the Ramanathapuram district, the 119th birth anniversary and 64th *Guru Puja* (death anniversary) of Muthuramalinga Thevar are traditionally observed from October 28th to 30th.

This year, the spiritual segment of the commemorations began yesterday with *Yagasalai* rituals. Today (October 29th) marks the political segment of the event, while tomorrow (October 30th)—the *Guru Puja* day itself—will be observed as an official state-level commemoration.

On October 30, the 'Guru Puja' (commemoration ceremony) will take place, with Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Tamil Nadu state ministers, DMK leader M.K. Stalin, AIADMK Ge-

neral Secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami, AMMK General Secretary T.T.V. Dhinakaran, and leaders from various political parties—including the BJP, Congress, MDMK, DMDK, Naam Tamilar Katchi, and PMK—along with community leaders and thousands of members of the public, expected to participate and pay their respects. The proceedings, organized by the management of the Thevar Memorial, began yesterday at 7:00 AM with spiritual rituals, including 'mangalaisai' (auspicious music), 'Ganapathi Homam', the chanting of Vedic mantras by Shivacharyars, and 'Laksharchana'.

The event was attended by the memorial's administrator, Gandhi Meenal Natarajan, along with other management officials—Thangavel and Palani—and members

of the public.

The day's schedule included the distribution of 'prasadam' at 11:00 AM and a 'Thiru Vilakku Puja' (lamp worship ceremony) at 6:00 PM. Under the supervision of Southern Zone Inspector General of Police (IGP) Vijayendra Bidari, more than 10,000 police personnel have been deployed across the Ramanathapuram district to ensure security.

Yesterday, in Pasumpon, Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) for Law and Order, Anbu, inspected the security arrangements. Ramanathapuram District Superintendent of Police G. Sandheesh and other officials were present during the inspection. For the event, political parties and various social organizations are setting up stalls to provide food (annadhanam) to the public.

Best Performance in the Southern Region



CHENNAI: The Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation (TAMCO), an organization under the Government of Tamil Nadu, has been awarded the first prize for its outstanding performance in the southern region.

Minister for Minorities Welfare, Shahjahan, has extended his congratulations

First Prize for the Tamil Nadu Government's 'TAMCO'

on this achievement. TAMCO operates with the objective of improving the economic status of minority communities residing in Tamil Nadu, including Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis, and Jains. The corporation provides low-interest loans to support self-employment and income-generating activities for individuals from these minority communities.

A review meeting for state agencies in the southern

region—which act as intermediaries for the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC)—was held on the 9th of this month in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. At this meeting, the Tamil Nadu government's 'TAMCO' was honored with the first prize, receiving both a certificate of appreciation and a shield for its exemplary performance in the southern region for the 2025 & 26 financial year.

The Chairman and Managing Director of the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation presented this award to the Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation. Minister for Minorities Welfare, Shahjahan, has extended his congratulations to the Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation (TAMCO) for achieving the first prize at the southern regional level.

80 Pakistani military personnel killed in 'Operation Almas': Baloch Liberation Front



ISLAMABAD: The Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) has claimed that more than 80 personnel from the Pakistani military and intelligence agencies were killed during 'Operation Almas,' carried

out in Gwadar and its surrounding areas.

Regarding this, Major Guhram, a spokesperson for the Baloch Liberation Front—a separatist organization operating in Pakistan's Baloch

istan province—stated that over 80 Pakistani soldiers and intelligence operatives were killed in the operation, dubbed 'Operation Almas,' in and around Gwadar. The operation began on October 22.

Attacks were launched targeting Pakistani military camps, intelligence offices, and security checkpoints. During these operations, 12 armored vehicles and trucks transporting supplies were destroyed. Two surveillance drones were shot down, and two police stations were seized.

Our forces launched attacks on the main camp of the Frontier Works Organization in Gwadar, as well as on military positions in the Gabd and Rimdan areas.

During this operation, the main military camp remained under our control for over 20 hours. The statement further noted that attacks on Pakistani military camps and economic projects will continue. However, the number of casualties and details regarding damaged vehicles have not been confirmed.

68 dead in high-speed train collision in Spain Hundreds hospitalized

MADRID: 68 people have died following a horrific collision between two high-speed passenger trains in Spain. More than 179 individuals have been admitted to hospitals; with some in critical condition, there are fears that the death toll could rise further.

In the province of Toledo, located in central Spain, two high-speed trains—o-

perated by different entities, Renfe and Iryo—were traveling in the same direction on the same track between the areas of Urda and Los Yébenes. The Renfe train, which was behind, struck the rear of the Iryo train—which had stopped at a signal—at high speed. In this incident, two carriages derailed and slid into a ravine. Preliminary



Workers at the Bandhumaita tea estate in Coonoor are gripped by fear due to the movement of a leopard.



inary reports suggest that the accident was caused by human error—specifically, a failure by an employee working on the signaling system to issue a necessary warning.

At the time of the incident, there were 397 passengers on the Renfe train and 147 passengers on the Iryo train. So far, more than 68 people have lost their lives, and over 179 have sustained injuries.

Many of those hospitalized remain in critical condition.

Following the accident, high-speed intercity rail services have been suspended. Expressing his condolences, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez stated, "The train accident in the province of Toledo is shocking. I extend my deepest sympathies to the families of those who lost their lives in this tragedy."

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Childhood Obesity: A Silent Epidemic Threatening India's Future!



India is facing a growing public health crisis that demands immediate national attention. Childhood obesity, once considered largely an urban problem, is increasingly becoming a serious concern across the country. The rising number of overweight and obese children is a warning that cannot be ignored. If timely action is not taken, India risks raising a generation vulnerable to diabetes, heart disease and other lifestyle-related illnesses.

The World Health Organization has repeatedly highlighted the dangers associated with childhood obesity. Poor dietary habits, excessive consumption of processed foods, sugary beverages, insufficient physical activity and prolonged screen time are among the major contributing factors. Rapid urbanisation and changing lifestyles have further aggravated the situation.

The tragedy is that India now faces a double burden of malnutrition. While millions of children continue to suffer from inadequate nutrition, an increasing number are consuming calorie-rich but nutritionally poor foods. This contradiction exposes serious weaknesses in our food environment and public health awareness. Schools must become the first line of defence. Physical education should be compulsory and meaningful, not merely a formality. Nutritious meals, regular sports activities and restrictions on unhealthy food sales around educational institutions deserve serious consideration.

Parents, too, have a crucial responsibility. Mobile phones and television screens must not replace playgrounds. Home-cooked meals, balanced diets, adequate sleep and regular exercise should become part of every child's daily routine. However, responsibility cannot rest with families alone. The Central and State Governments must strengthen nutrition education, regulate misleading food advertisements targeting children and improve access to affordable, healthy food. Regular health assessments in schools can help identify potential risks early, without stigmatising children because of their weight.

Childhood obesity is not merely a medical issue. It is an economic, educational and national development challenge. An unhealthy younger generation could place enormous pressure on India's healthcare system and affect future productivity.

India cannot afford to remain a silent spectator while preventable health problems threaten its children. Prevention must begin today, through coordinated action involving governments, schools, healthcare professionals, parents and communities.

A nation that dreams of becoming a global superpower must first ensure that its children grow up healthy and strong. Let playgrounds replace excessive screen time, nutritious food replace unhealthy eating habits, and prevention replace neglect.

Healthy Children Today – A Stronger India Tomorrow!

— EDITOR NEW INDIA FLASH



A massive fire broke out suddenly this morning at a warehouse selling vehicle spare parts in Pudukkottai, Chennai. As flames engulfed the entire warehouse, the sky over the area was blanketed in thick, black smoke.

“Raids to produce ‘Reels’ won’t make DMK cadre tremble”: Former TN CM MK Stalin takes sharp swipe at CM Vijay

CHENNAI: Launching a scathing attack on the state government, former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) president M.K. Stalin on Thursday asserted that enforcement raids orchestrated to generate social media “Reels” ahead of the Tiruchirappalli East by-election will not make even the “toenail” of a DMK cadre tremble.

In a post on X, Stalin accused the Chief Minister, C Joseph Vijay, of turning Tamil Nadu into an unsafe state for vulnerable sections and using targeted enforcement actions as a political spectacle ahead of upcoming electoral battles. “The Chief Minister, who has turned Tamil Nadu into a state where women, children, and the elderly are no longer safe, is now contemplating whether to conduct a ‘Roadshow’ or a ‘Raidshow’ to divert the attention of the people and the media’s ‘Breaking News,’” Stalin said.

Terming the ruling party a “TN Branch Washing Machine,” the DMK chief alleged that the administration was inducting corrupt elements while selectively harassing opposition leaders. “TVK, a ‘TN Branch Washing Machine’ that is turning all the corrupt vermin into ‘bargaining horses’ and inducting them into its party, is pursuing a plan of ‘Vetri Vendetta Politics’ by targeting only the former ministers of the DMK regime. As always, this will fail before the law and hang its head in shame before the public!” he stated.

Linking the sudden wave of raids to the upcoming by-election, Stalin remarked that the moves were designed merely for theatrical effect and social media publicity. “These raids, conducted to produce ‘Reels’ for the Tiruchirappalli East by-election and to allow the Chief Minister to scream on stage in various modulations under the guise of ‘punch dialogues,’ will not



make even the toenail of the lowermost DMK cadre tremble!” the DMK patriarch asserted. Stalin further hit out at the government over price rise and governance issues, stating that the public mood across the country was turning critical of the administration. “The entire nation, not just Tamil Nadu, is mocking this TVK government, which is plaguing the people with lawlessness, a rusted administration, and scorching price hikes. You think you can silence the DMK to hide all of this. From now on, we will expose the true colours of the TVK government even faster and bring it all to light!” Stalin concluded. Earlier, officials of the Directorate

of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC) questioned former Tamil Nadu minister and DMK Principal Secretary KN Nehru for over an hour at his Thillai Nagar residence in Tiruchirappalli.

The DVAC team includes Deputy Superintendent of Police Hema Chithra and police inspectors Sakthivel and Prasanna Venkatesh. Officials have been asking Nehru various questions as part of their inquiry. Meanwhile, more than 200 DMK cadres gathered outside Nehru’s residence while the search and questioning continue. The questioning is linked to allegations of a ₹634 crore bribe in the recruitment of junior engineers in the Municipal Administration Department during the previous government. The investigation follows information reportedly provided by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

A case was registered by the DVAC against Nehru

and others over alleged irregularities in the Municipal Administration and Water Supply (MAWS) Department. The allegations relate to corruption in recruitment, contract allocation and transfers during Nehru’s tenure as the minister in charge of the department. The FIR was registered after the Madras High Court directed the DVAC to initiate a probe into allegations raised in connection with the department. The agency named Nehru, his relatives and several officials in the case. DVAC conducted searches at his residence and premises in Thillai Nagar earlier on September 5 also.

The ED had earlier shared details of the alleged irregularities with the state authorities, following which the matter came under scrutiny. However, the Madras High Court later granted an interim stay on further vigilance action and proceedings against the accused, while legal proceedings in the matter continue.



PM chairs 54th PRAGATI Meeting at Seva Teerth, in New Delhi.

Great Opportunities for Startups and MSMEs

MADURAI: Through the Madurai Agri&Business Incubation Forum (MABIF)—an initiative supported by NABARD and located on the premises of the Agricultural College in Madurai—400 individuals have successfully launched startups and MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise) ventures. The center provides comprehensive support for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Its ‘Product Promotion Center’ is equipped with a wide range of machinery, including 16 types of tools for milk value addition, ‘retort packaging’ equipment (which preserves cooked food for up to a year), and machinery for producing noodles (including millet-based varieties), flattened rice (*aval*), confectionery (such as peanut candy), and animal feed.

Entrepreneurs who plan to start a business but lack the space or infrastructure to install their own machinery can bring their raw materials to the center, process them into value-added products, package them, and take them to market. A nominal fee is charged for these services. Shaktibalan, Assistant General Manager at NABARD, stated: “In the Madurai district, 1.50 lakh individuals are operating businesses under the MSME sector, having obtained ‘Udyam’ registration.

For the current year’s credit plan, we have already achieved

60% of the lending target set for MSME enterprises. MABIF has provided guidance to over 400 micro, small, and medium enterprises, as well as startups. Furthermore, the center houses a national-level laboratory—accredited by the NABL (National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories)—where food products can undergo rigorous physical, chemical, and biological testing.” There are ample opportunities in sectors such as agro-based food industries, jasmine cultivation, pulses, millets, engineering, rubber, textiles, and tourism. Aspiring entrepreneurs should take advantage of these prospects, he said.



‘Hope’ sets a new record, crossing Rs. 1,500 crore in global box office collections

Directed by Na Hong-jin, the film ‘Hope’ has garnered significant attention by grossing over Rs. 1,500 crore worldwide.

The story revolves around a mysterious creature that enters a village, causing destruction, and the efforts of the police to protect the villagers from this entity. Packed with fast-paced, gripping sequences, the film has been well-received by audiences. The film, directed by Na Hong-jin, features a cast that includes Hwang Jung-min, Jo In-sung, Ho Yeon, Michael Fassbender, Alicia Vikander, and Taylor Russell. It has been reported that the film’s global box office earnings have surpassed Rs. 1,500 crore. Additionally, the movie was screened at the Cannes Film Festival. ‘Hope’ has also gained recognition as one of the highest-grossing international films released in the United States. Given the positive reception, fans are now speculating about the possibility of a sequel.

Negligence in Judge’s Son’s Car Accident Case

Kochi Police Commissioner Transferred



KOCHI: In the early hours of the 24th, a Mercedes-Benz car struck a scooter in Cheralalloor, Kochi, Kerala. The rider of the scooter, Jayabalakrishnan (55), lost his life in the accident. It was revealed that the car involved belonged to an Additional District and Sessions Judge in Ernakulam.

Following this, a case was registered against the judge and his 17-year-old son, who was driving the vehicle at the time of the accident. Allegations of negligence by the police in handling the case emerged, and demands grew for action to be taken against the responsible officials.

The case has garnered significant attention, particularly after the family of the deceased alleged that the teenager’s influential father was attempting to weaken the case. In light of these developments, Kochi Police Commissioner Kaliraj Mahesh Kumar has been transferred from his post. He is succeeded by R. Nishanthini has been appointed. In connection with this incident, four police officers were suspended from duty yesterday.

Rs 10,000 Crore for Container Manufacturing Union Cabinet Gives Approval

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet has approved a promotional scheme for container manufacturing to create a world-class ecosystem for container production in India. In a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Modi, an outlay of Rs 10,000 crore was sanctioned for this scheme, which will be implemented up to the 2039-40 financial year. Under this scheme, Rs 859 crore will be provided as an interest subsidy, and Rs 8,891 crore will be allocated

as operational cost support. Additionally, the scheme includes provisions for testing and certification assistance, as well as support for land leasing. It will facilitate the establishment of new manufacturing plants and the expansion of existing ones. The initiative aims to increase annual production capacity to 7.5 lakh TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units).

The scheme is expected



to generate 3,000 direct jobs and over 50,000 indirect employment opportunities. According to an official government statement, this initiative—announced in the Union Budget for 2026-27—will pave the way for transforming India into a global hub for container exports.

Cricket Australia faces a revenue loss of Rs 134 crore

It has been reported that Cricket Australia suffered a revenue loss of approximately Rs 134 crore because the Perth and Melbourne Test matches between England and Australia—part of the 2025-26 Ashes series—concluded in just two days. Since these Test matches, which are typically scheduled for five days, ended prematurely, the board lost out on ticket revenue for the remaining days, as well as income from television broadcasting and advertisements. Specifically, because the matches concluded so quickly, broadcasters were unable to air the planned number of advertisements. Furthermore, the situation



necessitated the refunding of ticket costs. The conclusion of Test cricket matches in just two days can pose a significant financial challenge for cricket governing bodies.

Prices of Cancer Drugs Reduced by Up to 93% Following Supreme Court Criticism

NEW DELHI: Following sharp criticism from the Supreme Court, the Central Government has reduced the prices of cancer drugs by up to 93%.

A case had been filed in the Supreme Court highlighting that cancer drugs, which are supplied to retailers for ₹2,700, were being sold to patients at prices ten times higher. The judges expressed strong

condemnation regarding the massive price gap between the cost of the drugs and the amount charged to patients. In response, as a measure to regulate the prices of cancer drugs, the Central Government decided to cap the trade margin at 30 percent.

Consequently, the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has revised the Maximum Retail Price

(MRP) for 543 cancer drugs, with the prices of some drugs being reduced by as much as 93%. According to the revised list, the price of ‘Palbociclib’—a drug used to treat certain types of breast cancer—has been reduced from ₹40,421 to ₹2,720. The price of the chemotherapy drug ‘Thiotepa’ has decreased from approximately ₹80,072 per vial to ₹7,150.

The prices of several other drugs used in the treatment of various cancers—namely ‘Dasatinib’, ‘Lenvatinib’, ‘Abiraterone’, and ‘Olaparib’—have also been significantly reduced. However, the price of ‘Keytruda’—which contains the active ingredient ‘Pembrolizumab’ and is prescribed for over 21 types of cancer—remains unchanged at ₹2,16,500. Similarly, the price of ‘Ribociclib’ (Kisqali), used in the treatment of breast cancer, remains unchanged at ₹24,435.



Farmers expect that the waste, vegetation, and overgrowth accumulated in the Nilaiyur canal be cleared before water from the Vaigai Dam is released into the irrigation tanks (kanmais) in the Thiruparankundram area.

The Minister of State for Science & Technology (Independent Charge), Earth Sciences (Independent Charge), Prime Minister’s Office, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh at the launch of the book named Timeless India: Protection and Revival of Indian Cultural Identity under the Leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in New Delhi

Rs. 618 Crore Revenue from Freight Transport Chennai Railway Division Achieves Milestone

CHENNAI: The Chennai Railway Division has generated a revenue of Rs. 618.51 crore from freight transport over the six-month period from April to September 2026. Approximately 5.413 million tonnes of essential commodities, materials for power generation, and heavy industrial goods have been successfully transported across the country.

The transportation of 3.517 million tonnes of coal—required as fuel for thermal power plants—contributed the largest share of revenue, amounting to Rs. 346.42 crore, which accounts for 56 percent

of the total freight revenue. Additionally, the transport of motor vehicles and industrial equipment from major companies such as Hyundai, Renault & Nissan, Ola, and TVS—carried via 370 freight trains—generated a revenue of Rs. 122.64 crore. (Of this, Rs. 90.62 crore was generated solely from the transport of vehicles. Revenue of Rs. 76.76 crore was earned from domestic and



import & export containers, while Rs. 37.03 crore came from petroleum products, Rs. 22.90 crore from fertilizers, and Rs. 6.32 crore from food grains. Officials stated that the Chennai Division is committed to providing reliable freight transport services, with the aim of fostering regional economic growth.

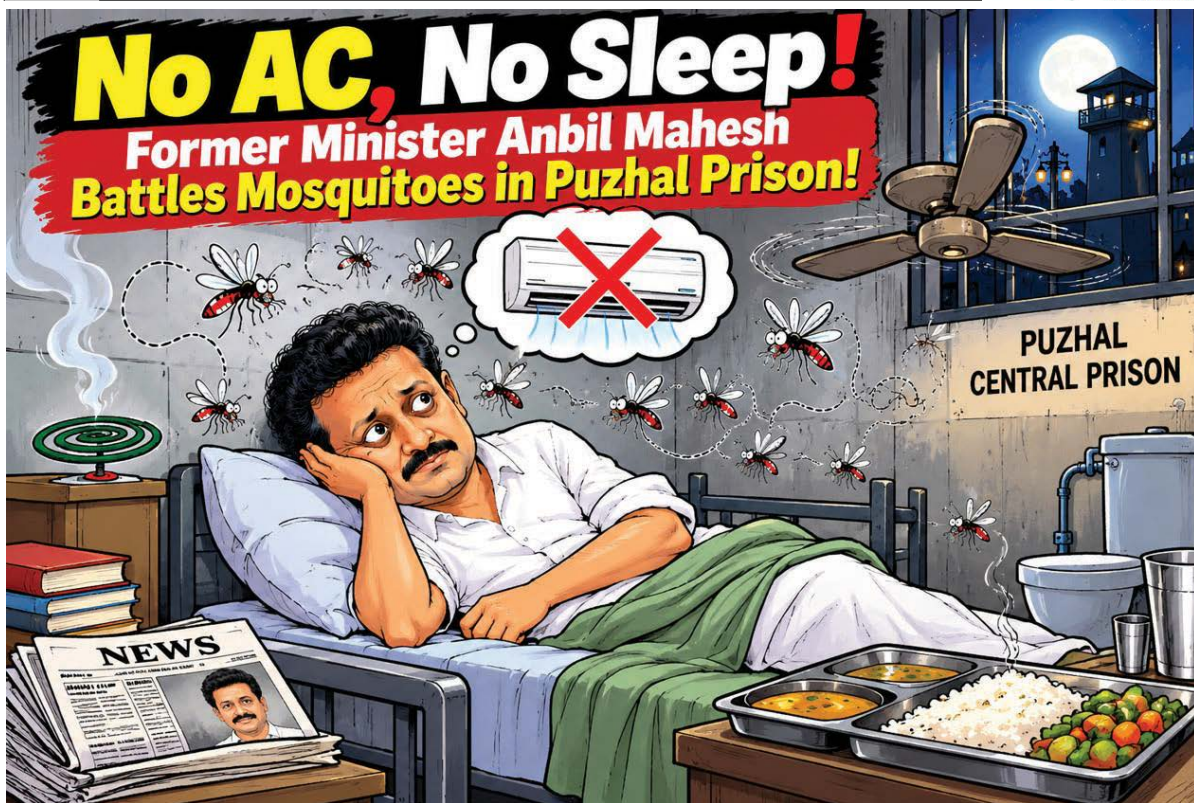
Rs. 400 Crore Bribery Case: Former MLA Muthukumar Surrenders in Court

CHENNAI: Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi, a former Minister for School Education and a member of the DMK, has been arrested and lodged in Puzhal Central Prison in connection with a Rs. 400 crore corruption case. Another DMK figure, Arasakumar, was also arrested in the same case and is currently out on bail. The police had been searching for former MLA Muthukumar, identifying him as a key accused in the matter.



Meanwhile, former MLA Muthukumar had filed an appeal in the Supreme Court seeking anticipatory bail. A bench comprising Justices Dipankar Datta and Sheel Nagu heard the petition yesterday. After hearing arguments from both sides, the Supreme Court dismissed his plea for anticipatory bail. Following the dismissal, the police initiated

swift action to apprehend him. In this situation, former MLA Muthukumar—who had been in hiding—surrendered today before Judge Sathiyamurthy at the Chennai Anti-Corruption Court in connection with the case, which involves the receipt of bribes in exchange for granting recognition to private schools. The police now plan to interrogate Muthukumar with the court’s permission. They anticipate that such an interrogation could yield startling evidence regarding the corruption case.



Rajnath Singh Proposes 'India-ASEAN Youth Bridge' for Stronger Ties, Digital Growth



NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, addressing the 13th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Cebu, Philippines, highlighted a significant initiative: the 'India-ASEAN Youth Bridge'. This project aims to strengthen people-to-people connections, foster digital innovation, and build capacity across India and ASEAN member nations.

Singh emphasized the shared advantage of a young demographic in both India and ASEAN countries, stating, "India believes that our greatest strength lies in their energy, dynamism, and aspirations. Both India and the ASEAN nations possess a relatively young demographic. This commonality provides us with a distinct advantage and interlinks our futures." He pointed out that nations like Vietnam, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and the Philippines benefit from this youth dividend, allowing them to compete globally.

The Defence Minister called for collaborative efforts with ASEAN members to promote peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. He reiterated India's firm stance against state-sponsored terrorism, drawing on India's extensive experience in counter-terrorism operations.

Singh referenced 'Operation Sindoor' as an example of India's proactive approach in dismantling terrorist infrastructure. He also extended India's condolences to the Philippines for the tragic aircraft crash on October 23rd, expressing solidarity with the Philippine Armed Forces and the bereaved families.

North Korea Fires Ballistic Missile, Japan and South Korea on High Alert

JAPAN: North Korea launched a suspected ballistic missile, prompting immediate concern from Japan. The Japanese Prime Minister's Office confirmed the launch, stating that the object, believed to be a ballistic missile, has already fallen.

While no damage has been reported, authorities are diligently gathering information and analyzing the situation to ensure public safety. Instructions were issued to confirm the safety of aircraft and ships and to prepare for any unforeseen circumstances. This incident follows reports from South Korea's Yonhap news agency, citing the South Korean military, that North Korea fired approximately a dozen short-range ballistic missiles towards the East Sea on Thursday around 12:30 PM local time. The South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) is actively analyzing the flight distances and other specifications of these missiles. The JCS has heightened surveillance and remains vigilant against potential further launches, maintaining a robust defense posture through close information sharing with the United States and Japan.



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Mercury Transformed into Gold Claims Team of Pokhran-II Scientists

JAIPUR: Scientist Lal Bahadur, who was involved in India's Pokhran-II nuclear tests, has claimed to have successfully transformed mercury into gold. A team led by Lal Bahadur conducted an experiment using 0.240 grams of mercury at the physics laboratory of Kanoria College in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The research team reported that the surface of the processed sample was found to consist of 99.04% gold (with a purity of 23.77 karats), 0.48% silver, and 0.48% copper. Lal Bahadur, a graduate of BITS Pilani, stated that this achievement is the result of years of research based on ancient texts by Acharya Nagarjuna, specifically focusing on 'Rasa Shastra' (ancient alchemy), 'Dhatu Parivartana' (the art of metallic transmutation), and 'Parada Samskara' (the process of purifying mercury). The full extent and validity of this claim will only be determined following further testing.



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Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption raids the residence of former DMK Minister K.N. Nehru



CHENNAI: Officials from the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC) began conducting fresh raids today (Oct 29) at locations linked to former DMK Minister K.N. Nehru. A team of 15 DVAC officials, arriving in three vehicles, is currently searching K.N. Nehru's residence in Thillai Nagar, Trichy. DMK supporters have gathered outside his home in response to the development. Beyond this location, DVAC officials are conducting raids at more than 20 other sites across Chennai and the rest of Tamil Nadu. Searches are also underway at the residence and office of Nehru's brother, Ravichandran, located in R.A. Puram, Chennai. Previously, on September 5, the DVAC had conducted raids at locations associated with Nehru.

At that time, the Legislative Assembly session was in progress; the fact that such a high-profile raid was carried out against K.N. Nehru—who serves as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—caused a significant stir in Tamil Nadu politics. It is noteworthy that these raids are being conducted once again today. With the wedding of Nehru's brother Ravichandran's son scheduled for November 16, these raids have caused a commotion not only within political circles but also among his family members. Earlier, former DMK Minister Anbil Mahesh was arrested yesterday in connection with a case involving an alleged fraud of up to ₹400 crore, purportedly committed by promising to secure official recognition for private schools. Today, another former DMK Minister's residence is being subjected to a raid.

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ED attaches 'Mohammad Ali Jauhar University' of SP leader Azam Khan in money laundering case

UTTARA PRADESH: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached land and buildings belonging to the Mohammad Ali Jauhar University in Rampur, promoted by Samajwadi Party leader and former Uttar Pradesh Cabinet Minister Azam Khan, with a current market value of approximately ₹1,170 crore.

The action, taken under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, is part of a money laundering investigation against the Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar Trust, Azam Khan, and others. While the properties are registered at ₹426.46 crore as proceeds of crime, officials pegged their present market value at about ₹1,170 crore. According to the ED, the probe was initiated based on 26 FIRs registered at Azeem Nagar police station in Rampur, which say that agricultural land belonging to farmers was forcibly taken over for the university.

A district administration inquiry also found that 45 plots of "enemy property" spanning about 34 acres in Singhankhera village were illegally occupied by Azam Khan for the university, even after the Custodian of Enemy Property had cancelled the lease to the trust. The ED further said that funds meant for public works were diverted to the university, government works were executed on its private campus, and contractors awarded state contracts routed funds back to the trust as donations.

Specifically, the ED claimed that the managing director of a firm with Public Works Department contracts worth nearly ₹186 crore admitted that 30% and 40% of the contract value was used to buy construction material for the university. Another firm donated ₹40 lakh to the trust. The probe also found that cleaning machinery purchased for the Rampur Nagar Palika was diverted to the university campus.

The ED also flagged the use of ₹6.60 crore from MLA and MLCA local area development schemes for works inside the university through Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam, and noted that the UP government had sanctioned ₹23.41 crore for a pandal, OBC boys' hostel, and hospital block on the campus. The Income Tax Department had earlier cancelled the trust's registration under the Income Tax Act.

According to OpIndia's ground report, there was a flyover built in 2013 at a cost of around Rs. 150 Cr. that interestingly starts from Azam Khan's ancestral home and goes to Jauhar University. Unlike Rampur's other busy roads, the flyover is mostly empty. A local man said that the flyover is used mainly by students going to and from Jauhar University, while most people in Rampur gain little to no practical benefit from it.

After visiting the flyover, OpIndia team talked to the locals. One woman named Kamlesh said that her four big land was forcibly taken. "Our valuable land was taken for a very small amount. We did not want to give it, but we



are poor people. What could we do?" she said.

A man named Bhagwan Das also said that his land was forcibly taken. People feared that if they refused to sell the land, they could be jailed. According to him, the flyover has not helped villagers in any way. He believes that if a normal road had been built instead of an elevated flyover, the area could have developed. Shops, houses and small businesses could have come up, benefiting local people. Instead, he said, the project mainly served Azam Khan's own purpose. Some villagers also claimed off-camera that the flyover was built so Azam Khan could travel directly from his home to Jauhar University without getting stuck in city traffic.

At Kishanpur village, which is located below the flyover, people talked to OpIndia. Dinesh, a resident of the village, said that the village has received no benefit from the flyover. Instead, people had hoped a road would be built underneath it, but that never happened. According to Ummed Singh, part of his land was also acquired forcefully for the flyover. Kaanungo and Tehsildar forced him to complete the registration.

He also said that the RTO has taken money from drivers and that 40% of it went to Jauhar University. He blamed Azam Khan and the Samajwadi government for harassing the people of Rampur. He added that action being taken under the Yogi Adityanath government is the result of those past actions.

The university campus at Jauhar Nagar, Village Singhankhera, Rampur, is managed by the Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar Trust, which was founded and is controlled by Azam Khan. He also serves as the university's honorary chancellor. The Lucknow-based headquartered trust lists Khan as its main trustee, along with family members and associates, and runs the Mohammad Ali Jauhar University.

The ED had earlier raided multiple locations linked to the trust and the university in August 2026 and questioned Khan, who is currently lodged in Rampur jail, for nearly eight hours. The agency shared its findings with Uttar Pradesh Police under Section 66(2) of the PMLA, leading to a fresh FIR against Khan and the trust on 13 October 2026 under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Kanda Sashti Festival at Tiruchendur Decision to Set Up Tents at 16 Locations for Devotees Observing Fasts

TIRUCHENDUR: The Kanda Sashti festival at the Tiruchendur Subramania Swamy Temple is scheduled to take place from the 10th to the 21st of next month (November). More than 1.5 million (15 lakh) devotees are expected to participate in the festival's pinnacle event—on November 15th. In preparation for this, a consultative meeting regarding the provision of basic amenities for visiting devotees was held yesterday at the temple's auditorium. The meeting was presided over by the Tamil Nadu Minister for Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare, Anitha R. Radhakrishnan. District Collector Vishu Mahajan, District Superintendent of Police Sivaprasad, Temple Board of Trustees Chairman Arulmurugan, and Joint Commissioner Arunachalam were also present. During the meeting, it was announced that to meet the drinking water requirements of the devotees, 500,000 liters of water will be supplied daily by the Municipality and the Water Supply and Drainage Board across 30 locations within the municipal area and the temple premises.

A total of 919 personnel—comprising 130 municipal sanitation workers, 339 temple sanitation staff, and 450 additional special staff—will be deployed to ensure cleanliness, with a focus on the prompt removal of waste throughout the festival. The Health Department will carry out mosquito-control spraying, and medical teams will be stationed at three locations within the temple complex. Additionally, ambulances will be kept on standby at six locations, and four fire tenders will be stationed across the town and temple area.



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To ensure the safety of the devotees, the premises will be monitored via CCTV cameras installed at 493 locations. For devotees observing the Kanda Sashti fast, permanent accommodation facilities are available at five locations within the temple premises. Additionally, temporary tents will be set up at 11 other spots. Similarly, there are 325 permanent toilets, and 300 temporary toilets will be provided as well. Several decisions were also made to ensure an uninterrupted power supply throughout the festival days.

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The 17 prisoners who escaped in Theni were apprehended following a 36-hour manhunt. Steps are now underway to transfer them to various other prisons across the state. As a first phase, three of them have been moved to the Palayamkottai prison.