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Leaders pay floral tributes to Birsa Munda's statue in Delhi

Tribal Pride Day celebrated November 15

NEW DELHI: 'Tribal Pride Day' (Janjatiya Gaurav Divas) is celebrated across the country every year on November 15, the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda.

In the Parliament complex in Delhi, President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid floral tributes to his statue. In a post on social media marking the occasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated: "On the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda, I offer my tributes to him on behalf of the entire nation.

I extend my best wishes to everyone on this significant day, 'Tribal Pride Day'. The courage, struggle, and sacrifice of Birsa Munda continue to inspire every generation in this country to uphold self&respect, freedom, and the protection of rights." "Drawing inspiration from him, our government is working tirelessly to ensure the dignity and prosperity of our tribal brothers and sisters.

Let us all come together to honor the invaluable contribution made by the tribal community toward nation&building," the Prime Minister added.

Tributes!

At his residence in Delhi, Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan paid floral tributes to a portrait of Birsa Munda on the occasion of his birth anniversary.

In a post, he noted, "Birsa Munda fought for the rights, dignity, and identity of tribal people. I also honor the invaluable contributions made by the tribal community to India's freedom struggle and the building of the nation."





CM Vijay to visit Delhi tomorrow; to attend the launch of Sonia Gandhi's book

CHENNAI: Reports indicate that Chief Minister Vijay will travel to Delhi tomorrow (Nov 16) to attend the launch event of Sonia Gandhi's autobiography.



The life experiences of senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi have been compiled into an autobiography titled 'Belonging: A Journey of Love'. The book was released for sale across India on November 10. The launch event is scheduled to take place tomorrow (Nov 16) at a hotel in Delhi. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, along with senior leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, are expected to attend. It is reported that Chief Minister Vijay will also be present at the event and is set to travel to Delhi tomorrow for this purpose. It is understood that he is attending at the invitation of Rahul Gandhi.

Furthermore, sources from the Secretariat suggest that the Chief Minister also plans to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the same day to discuss the Mekedatu dam issue. During this meeting, Chief Minister Vijay is expected to urge the Prime Minister to intervene to stop Karnataka's efforts to construct a dam at Mekedatu and to ensure that the Central government does not grant approval for the project.

Devotees Observe 'Thandu Viratham' at Palani Murugan Temple Ahead of Soorasamharam

'Thirukalyanam' to Take Place Tomorrow

DINDIGUL: A key event of the Kanda Sashti festival, the 'Soorasamharam' (the ritual slaying of the demon Soorapadman) is set to take place this evening at the Palani Murugan Temple.

In preparation for this, a large number of devotees observed a 'Thandu Viratham' (a specific form of fasting and ritual offering). The Kanda Sashti festival at the Palani Dhandayuthapani Swamy Temple, located in the Dindigul district, commenced on November 10th with the 'Kaappu Kattuthal' (tying of the sacred thread) ceremony.

The highlight of the festival, the Soorasamharam, will be held this evening (Sunday, November 15th) across the four 'Giri Veedhis' (circumambulation paths around the hill). In observance of this, the temple doors were opened at 4:00 AM today for 'Viswaroopa Dharisanam,' followed by 'Vila Pooja' and the offering of 'Naivedyam' (sacred food offerings) at 4:30 AM. Due to the Soorasamharam, devotees will only be permitted to ascend the hill temple until 11:00 AM today. Devotees who have been observing the Kanda Sashti fast gathered at the Thiruavinankudi Temple this morning to perform the 'Thandu Viratham.' As part of this ritual, they prepared offerings—consisting of banana stems, ginger, various fruits (such as apples, oranges, and grapes), and curd—to present to the deity, thereby concluding their fast.



With the Soorasamharam coinciding with the weekend, devotees from other districts and states continue to arrive in Palani. At 3:00 PM today, at the hill temple, the deity Chinna Kumara Swamy will receive the 'Vel' (sacred spear) from the goddess Malaikozhundu Amman, a ritual that precedes the slaying of the demon Soorapadman. Following this, all the temple sanctums will be closed.

After the *Vel* (spear) of Goddess Parasakthi is taken to the Murugan Temple at Thiruaavinankudi for *pooja* (worship rituals), Lord Chinnakumara Swamy will proceed to vanquish the *asuras* (demons): Tharagasuran on the northern *giri veethi* (circumambulation path), Bhanugopan on the eastern path, Singamugasuran on the southern path, and Surapadman on the western path—all taking place after 6:00 PM. Once the *Soorasamharam* (the slaying of the *asuras*) concludes, a victory celebration (*vetri vizha*) will be held at the Ariyar Mandapam after 9:00 PM. Subsequently, upon the deity's return to the hilltop temple, *samprokshanam* (consecration rituals) and *arthajama pooja* (the final nightly worship ritual) will be performed. Tomorrow (November 16), after 9:30 AM, the *Thirukalyanam* (divine wedding) for Lord Shanmukha—accompanied by Valli and Devasena—will take place at the hilltop temple; meanwhile, at the Periyanayaki Amman Temple, the *Thirukalyanam* for Muthukumara Swamy—also with Valli and Devasena—will be conducted after 7:00 PM.

"CM VIJAY must raise the issue of D.K. Shivakumar's remarks with the Congress leadership" – Palaniswami

CHENNAI: AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami has urged Chief Minister M.K. Stalin—who leads a government supported by the Congress—to take up a critical matter with the top leadership of the All India Congress Committee (Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, and Mallikarjun Kharge) during his upcoming visit to Delhi. Palaniswami has requested that the Chief Minister highlight the public statements made by the Karnataka Congress leader (D.K. Shivakumar) that are detrimental to Tamil Nadu's interests.

He further urged the Chief Minister to press the leadership to ensure compliance with the Supreme Court's verdict and the directives issued by the Cauvery Water Management Authority regarding the release of water into the Cauvery River. In a post shared on his X (formerly Twitter) account, Palaniswami noted that Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar had stated, "No one's permission is required to construct a dam at Mekedatu."

"It is Karnataka's right"—this is what he continues to state at government functions and in the public sphere. It is highly condemnable for a Chief Minister to make such remarks, which serve only to sow discord between the people of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. During the AIADMK's tenures, the Tamil Nadu government waged several legal battles in the Supreme Court to uphold the state's rights over the Cauvery River. Following a thorough hearing of all parties, the Supreme Court delivered its final verdict on the Cauvery dispute. Consequently, the Cauvery Water Management Authority and the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee were established, and the specific monthly quantum of water to be released by the Karnataka government to Tamil Nadu was mandated.

• The Supreme Court's observation from November 1991—that "inter&state rivers are national assets, and no single state can claim exclusive rights over them"—has been reaffirmed in this verdict.

• After fully considering the arguments presented by all the states, the Supreme Court issued a clear ruling: upstream states must not undertake any construction projects without the consent of the downstream states. The Congress&led government in Karnataka neither respects the Supreme Court's verdict nor implements the directives of the Cauvery Water Management Authority, which has repeatedly ordered the release of Tamil Nadu's rightful share of water over the past six months. Yet, the Chief Minister of Karnataka has recently been speaking in public—posing as someone who respects the law—by claiming that a dam at Mekedatu is "necessary" to facilitate the release of water to Tamil Nadu in accordance with the Supreme Court's orders. At present, the water reaching the Mettur Dam consists solely of surplus floodwater—which flows down only after Karnataka's own reservoirs are completely filled—and rainwater that falls beyond the catchment areas of Karnataka's dams, in the region between the two states.



The Karnataka government does not release the mandated monthly share of water from its reservoirs to Tamil Nadu as per the Supreme Court's directive. Furthermore, the rainwater and floodwater currently reaching the Mettur Dam... The Chief Minister of Karnataka—who belongs to the Congress party—has been consistently advocating for the construction of a dam across the Cauvery at Mekedatu, ostensibly to "retain surplus water." The Cauvery River is vital for the agricultural activities of farmers in the Delta districts and serves as a primary source of drinking water for 20 other districts.

Since the current government (led by the DMK&Congress alliance) assumed power, it has failed to effectively secure Tamil Nadu's rightful share of Cauvery water; consequently, both the *Kuruvai* (short&term) and *Samba* (long&term) cultivation seasons have been severely impacted this year. If a dam is constructed at Mekedatu, the Delta districts risk turning into a desert, and the drinking water supply for 20 districts will be placed in serious jeopardy.

Edappadi K. Palaniswami has urged that the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu—who leads the DMK&Congress coalition government—should, during his visit to Delhi tomorrow, raise the issue with senior All&India Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, and Mallikarjun Kharge. He has called for them to address the Karnataka Chief Minister's public statements made against Tamil Nadu, and to exert pressure to ensure compliance with the Supreme Court's verdict as well as the directives issued periodically by the Cauvery Water Management Authority regarding the release of water.

Canada Pledges CAD 560 Million for Brazil led Forest Conservation at ASEAN Summi

MANILA: Manila, Philippines: Canada has announced an initial contribution of up to CAD 560 million over four years to the Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF), a significant step towards global environmental protection. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney made the pledge during a bilateral meeting with Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva on the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit in Manila.



The TFFF, co&led by Brazil and Norway, aims to raise USD 35 billion from sponsoring governments and organizations. This funding is expected to leverage up to USD 140 billion in private investment, with net returns directly supporting performance&based conservation payments across more than 70 countries. The initiative seeks to protect over one billion hectares of tropical forest annually, with at least 20 percent of conservation payments specifically allocated to Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

This Canadian commitment is part of a broader plan to provide over USD 13 billion in climate&related support to developing nations by 2031. President Lula da Silva, reflecting on his participation at the ASEAN Summit, emphasized the need for strengthening cooperation and adopting multilateralism to navigate a future of sustainable development and reduced inequalities. He highlighted shared convictions between ASEAN and Brazil for a multipolar world conducive to peace and prosperity, especially as citizens of the Global South face challenges from unfair tariffs, rising energy costs, and climate change.

Today horoscope

You will fulfill the wishes of your family members. There will be an inflow of money. You will take pride in your children. You may attempt to renovate or expand your ancestral home. You will undertake business-related travel to other towns.

A lively atmosphere will prevail at home. You will find joy through your children. You will reconnect with old friends by attending functions at their homes. A compromise may be reached regarding property-related disputes. Outstanding payments in your business will be recovered.

As 'Chandrashtama' (a period when the Moon transits the eighth house from your sign) is in effect, try to be accommodating and flexible with your family members. You may experience physical fatigue or mental stress. Your vehicle might require repairs.

Long-cherished dreams will come true. You will find happiness through your children and gain benefits from your relatives. You may purchase expensive electronic or electrical appliances. Business will be stable and peaceful. By employing clever strategies, you will be able to attract former clients back.

The situation where you were sidelined or ignored by relatives will change; they will now seek you out to talk. You will fulfill your prayers and obligations to your family deity. In business, outstanding dues will be recovered. It is advisable to consider and act upon the suggestions of your business partners.

You will receive enough funds to settle long-standing debts that you were previously unable to pay off. You will fulfill your spouse's wishes. Be careful not to fall out with relatives or friends. In business, you will recover pending pay ments, and your partners will offer their support.

The underlying tension between you and your spouse will dissipate. You will make significant decisions regarding the future. Expected payments will arrive. In terms of business, you will have the opportunity to meet prominent individuals. Travels will prove to be profitable.

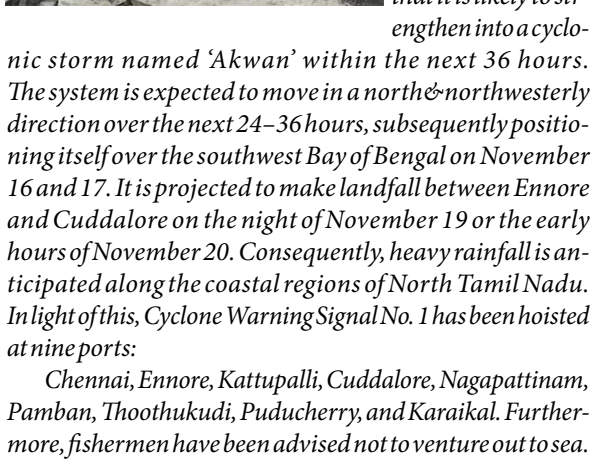
You will find joy in reminiscing about pleasant past experiences. Ego clashes will be resolved, leading to greater closeness between you and your spouse. You may incur expenses related to the maintenance of your home or vehicle. It is wise to give importance to the opinions of your business partners.

Auspicious events that have been delayed for a long time will now come to fruition. Your children will open up and speak their minds to you.. In business, you will receive support from your employees; however, avoid falling out with your business partners. You may also attain a position of honor.

Tasks that have been pending for a long time will be completed today. Differences of opinion with your father will be resolved. You may experience an increase in well-intentioned but perhaps intrusive attention from neighbors. You might plan a visit to sacred places with your family.

You will attempt to resolve certain problems through fresh, innovative thinking. You will take the lead in organizing functions or events at the homes of your friends. In business, you might consider relocating your shop or establishment. Outstanding old dues or payments will be recovered.

The confusion or discord that existed within the family will dissipate. You will receive support from your siblings. All your expectations will be met, and your reputation in your social circle will rise. Those involved in joint ventures or partnerships will see good profits.



The President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu pays floral tributes at the statue of Bhagwan Birsa Munda on his birth anniversary at Parliament House, in New Delhi

Cyclone Warning Signal No. 1 Hoisted at 9 Ports

CHENNAI: A deep depression over the Bay of Bengal has intensified into a depression. Meteorologist Hemachandar has stated that it is likely to strengthen into a cyclonic storm named 'Akwan' within the next 36 hours. The system is expected to move in a north&northwesterly direction over the next 24–36 hours, subsequently positioning itself over the southwest Bay of Bengal on November 16 and 17. It is projected to make landfall between Ennore and Cuddalore on the night of November 19 or the early hours of November 20. Consequently, heavy rainfall is anticipated along the coastal regions of North Tamil Nadu. In light of this, Cyclone Warning Signal No. 1 has been hoisted at nine ports:

Chennai, Ennore, Kattupalli, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Pamban, Thoothukudi, Puducherry, and Karaikal. Furthermore, fishermen have been advised not to venture out to sea.

US Rejects 'Quad Faltering' Claims, Confirms Leaders' Summit in Manila



USA: The US State Department has strongly refuted a recent media report suggesting the Quad alliance (US, India, Australia, Japan) is weakening under President Donald Trump's administration.

Assistant Secretary of State Dylan Johnson called the report 'ridiculous,' highlighting five meetings between Secretary Rubio and Quad foreign ministers in two years, with three in the last six months alone.

Johnson also confirmed ongoing efforts to formalize a Quad Leaders Summit at the upcoming ASEAN meetings in Manila.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to attend the ASEAN and East Asia Summit in Manila from November 16&18. While officials have not confirmed a bilateral meeting between PM Modi and President Trump, nor a dedicated Quad leaders' gathering, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio previously stated that Quad nations had agreed to hold a summit in Manila to deliver 'concrete actions.'

This potential meeting would mark the first interaction between PM Modi and President Trump since the US midterm elections and amidst ongoing discussions for an India&US trade deal. The Manila summit will host at least 19 leaders, including Chinese Premier Li Qiang and UN Secretary&General António Guterres.

India's diplomatic focus at ASEAN also includes reviewing the ASEAN&India Trade in Goods Agreement and upholding international maritime law in the South China Sea. The Philippines, a key partner, recently acquired BrahMos missiles from India and is looking to expand its defence procurement.

Study to be conducted by private firms to streamline 'darshan' processes in major temples across TN: Minister Ramesh

THOOTHUKUDI: Minister for Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments, P.K. Sekar Babu (referred to here as Minister Ramesh), announced that private firms will be engaged to conduct a study aimed at streamlining the 'darshan' queues in major temples.

Speaking to reporters after reviewing the arrangements for the 'Kanda Sashti' festival at the Tiruchendur Murugan Temple, the Minister stated that the temple witnesses a high footfall of devotees even on ordinary days, with the number reaching into the hundreds of thousands during festival periods.

He noted that nine 'poojas' (rituals) are performed daily at the temple, and for each ritual, the sanctum sanctorum is closed (by drawing a curtain) for 15 to 20 minutes, which leads to long waiting times for devotees.

He added that instructions have been issued to waive the Rs. 100 entry fee during the Kanda Sashti festival, a measure intended to help move the 'darshan' queues more efficiently.



The Minister further stated that discussions are underway to engage private firms to conduct a study on how to better organize and expedite the 'darshan' queues in major temples throughout Tamil Nadu.

In this process, an assessment will be conducted to determine the appropriate queues and the estimated time required for various categories of devotees—including those opting for general or paid darshan, as well as persons with disabilities, children, the elderly, and pregnant women.

Once the report from this assessment is received, a structured queuing system will be implemented. This will help prevent devotees in the general darshan line from having to wait for long periods. He stated this.

Success rate of government school students securing MBBS seats in their first attempt drops to 5%

Anbumani urges a review of the NEET examination

CHENNAI: PMK leader Anbumani has stated that the success rate of government school students in Tamil Nadu securing MBBS seats in their first attempt has fallen to 5 percent. In a statement released regarding this, it is noted: "For the 2025–26 academic year in Tamil Nadu, out of 650 students from government schools who sought admission to medical courses under the 7.5% reservation quota, only 33 (5%) succeeded on their first attempt.



Among the remaining 617 students, 235 succeeded on their second attempt, 283 on their third, 91 on their fourth, and others succeeded after even more attempts. The success rate for government school students on their first attempt—which stood at over 50% five years ago—has now plummeted to 5%. Similarly, among the 8,053 students admitted under the general government quota, only 20% (1,613 students) succeeded on their first attempt; likewise, only 30% (768 students) of the 2,570 students admitted under the private college management quota succeeded on their first attempt.

As students are effectively compelled to take the NEET examination an average of three times, those who should have entered medical college at the age of 17 are instead gaining admission only between the ages of 20 and 22." ...concludes. Meanwhile, deemed universities have increased their annual fees to as much as Rs. 29 lakh, with the total cost reaching Rs. 1.58 crore.

Therefore, to make medical education accessible to everyone, the central and state governments must work together to study the impact of the NEET examination—with the aim of abolishing it—and take steps to reduce medical education fees so that they are affordable for the poor and middle class. This is what he has urged.

Lorry Accident in Dindigul: 25,000 Liters of Hydrochloric Acid Spills onto the Road

DINDIGUL: A major incident occurred in Dindigul when a lorry transporting hydrochloric acid met with an accident, resulting in a spill of 25,000 liters of the chemical onto the road.

The lorry, carrying the hazardous chemical hydrochloric acid, was involved in an unexpected accident. Approximately 25,000 liters of the acid leaked from the vehicle onto the roadway, causing significant alarm in the area. Due to the toxic nature of hydrochloric acid, exposure can lead to symptoms such as a scratchy or raspy throat, eye irritation, and skin irritation. Consequently, safety precautions were implemented in the vicinity. Upon receiving the information, the Dindigul Fire and Rescue Services team arrived promptly at the scene. They worked to neutralize the acid by dousing it



with large quantities of water and took measures to prevent it from spreading further. Meanwhile, the damaged lorry has been secured and kept at the site as a precautionary measure. Efforts to contain the acid spill and ensure safety in the area are currently underway.

Attack on CRPF Camp: Over 500 Questioned

KULGAM: A CRPF checkpoint, manned by the 46th Battalion, is located in Kulgam, Jammu and Kashmir.

On November 11, militants opened fire on this post, leaving three CRPF personnel injured. They are currently undergoing intensive medical treatment.

Meanwhile, security officials are conducting a rigorous investigation into the militant attack.

The probe is focused on the Lashkar&e&Taiba (LeT) outfit, led by a local individual named Abdul Latief and two Pakistani militants. Investigators believe the attack was not a spontaneous act; the militants had scouted the area beforehand.

Reports also suggest that local residents provided shelter to the attackers and assisted in their escape. Consequently, in an effort to uncover the local support network, security forces have questioned more than 500 people over the past two days.

While most have been released following questioning, 20 individuals remain in custody for further, in&-depth interrogation.

November 15 EDITORIAL – NEW INDIA FLASH *2026*

Humanity Must Guide Online Criticism



Social media has given people an unprecedented opportunity to express opinions, question claims and demand accountability. Yet the way these platforms are used raises a troubling question: are we exercising that freedom with responsibility and humanity? Disagreeing with an argument and humiliating the person who makes it are very different acts.

The reported death of Harish, a young creator who shared financial content online, is deeply saddening. It would be irresponsible to draw conclusions about the circumstances of his death without verified information. Personal tragedy must never become material for speculation. It should, however, prompt a serious discussion about online harassment and the responsibilities of those who participate in public debate.

People who offer advice publicly must expect scrutiny. This is particularly important when their statements may influence how others spend or invest their savings. Qualifications, reliable evidence and clear explanations of risk matter. Misleading claims must be challenged, errors corrected and suspected wrongdoing reported to the appropriate authorities.

None of these obligations justifies abuse. Insults, threats and attacks on family members do little to establish facts or protect the public. They can instead turn a legitimate demand for answers into a campaign of humiliation. Responsible criticism identifies the disputed claim, presents evidence and gives the person concerned an opportunity to respond.

We must also reconsider the importance we attach to online popularity. Follower counts and applause reveal little about a person's private circumstances. Someone who appears confident on screen may be dealing with uncertainty, exhaustion or personal difficulties. The expectation that public figures must always appear successful leaves little room for ordinary human vulnerability.

Families, schools and workplaces have a role in changing this culture. People facing distress should be able to speak without fearing ridicule or blame. Listening patiently, offering practical support and encouraging access to qualified professional help can make it easier for someone to seek assistance. Asking for help deserves respect. Social media companies must accept their share of responsibility. Reporting systems should be easy to use, and complaints involving threats, exposure of private information and coordinated harassment should receive prompt attention. Clear rules are meaningful only when they are enforced consistently and transparently. Public accountability and compassion belong together. We can question advice firmly, investigate wrongdoing thoroughly and insist on corrections while respecting human dignity. Indeed, a debate grounded in evidence is stronger when personal abuse is kept out of it.

Before posting a comment or joining a wave of condemnation, each of us should consider what our words contribute. Do they clarify an issue, challenge a falsehood or seek an explanation? Every screen connects us to another human being. That awareness should guide the words we choose.

Editor Madurai Mani



A total of 78 tonnes of waste was removed during an intensive cleaning drive carried out by the municipal corporation yesterday in the Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board (TNUHDB) housing settlements in Chennai.



Hockey Final Match Between Medical College Students

MADURAI: State-level team sports competitions for medical college students were held in Trichy. In the hockey final, the team from Madurai Government Medical College defeated the team from the Pondicherry Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) with a score of 3–1. Subash, Raveen, and Vishal scored the goals.

Assistant Professor Thangadurai was named the best player. In the volleyball tournament, which featured 25 teams, the Madurai Government Medical College team defeated the Dharmapuri Government Medical College team 2–0 in the quarter-finals. They went on to beat Raja Muthiah Medical College (Cuddalore) 2–0 in the semi-finals and Pudukkottai Government Medical College 2–0 in the final to clinch the trophy.

Kabilan was named the best player. Dean Arul Sundaresh Kumar and Vice-Principal Mallika congratulated the team.

Kanda Sashti Festival: 'Soorasamharam' to take place today at the Tiruchendur Murugan Temple

TIRUCHENTUR: The 'Soorasamharam'—the ritual enactment of Lord Murugan defeating the demon Soorapadman—will take place today (Sunday) as part of the Kanda Sashti festival at the Tiruchendur Subramania Swamy Temple. Due to the large influx of devotees, heavy police security has been deployed in the area.

Among the six sacred abodes (*Arupadai Veedu*) of Lord Murugan, the Tiruchendur Subramania Swamy Temple holds the Kanda Sashti festival as one of its most significant annual events. This year, the festival commenced on the 10th with *Yagasalai* rituals.

A large number of devotees have been staying within the temple premises, observing a fast (*vratham*) throughout the festival period. Each day, the temple doors opened in the early hours, followed by various *poojas* and special *abhishekams* (consecration rituals). In the evenings, Lord Jayanthinathar, accompanied by his consorts Valli and Deivanai, was taken in a procession around the temple corridors (*giri prakaram*) on an ornate golden chariot to bless the devotees. The highlight of the festival, the *Soorasamharam*, takes place today (Sunday).



In preparation for this, the temple doors opened at 1:00 AM, followed by *Viswaroopa Deeparadhana* at 1:30 AM, *Udaya Marthanda Abhishekam* at 2:00 AM, *Uchikala Abhishekam* at 9:00 AM, and *Sayaratchai Deeparadhana* at 1:00 PM. At 4:00 PM, Lord Jayanthinathar will set out for the *Soorasamharam*. Subsequently, on the seashore, the ritual enactment of Lord Jayanthinathar vanquishing the demon Soorapadman will take place. Following this, the deities will be adorned, and a *Deeparadhana* (offering of lamps) will be performed in the *Santhosha Mandapam*.

Following this, Lord Jayanthinathar, accompanied by Valli and Deivanai, proceeds in a procession along the *giri&prakaram* (circumambulatory path) before returning to the temple, where a *chaya&abhishekam* (a ritual offering) is performed. Devotees from both the local area and distant places have gathered at the temple for the festival.

Many are staying in temporary shelters set up within the temple premises, observing fasts, singing devotional songs, and worshipping Lord Murugan. Some devotees have also arrived dressed in the guises of various deities.

The entire temple complex has been decorated with colorful lights and flowers, creating a vibrant, festive atmosphere. To ensure the safety of the devotees arriving to witness the *Soorasamharam* (the slaying of the demon Soorapadman), barricades have been installed along the seashore.

Additionally, surveillance towers have been set up, from which police personnel are monitoring the area.

For the festival, approximately 4,100 police officers, under the leadership of District Superintendent of Police Sivaprasad, have been deployed for security. Tight security arrangements are in place throughout the temple complex and along the beach.

Floating barriers have also been positioned to prevent devotees from venturing into the deeper parts of the sea.

On the seventh day of the festival—tomorrow, Monday—at 11:00 PM, the *Thirukalyanam* (divine wedding) of Lord Kumaravidanga Peruman and Goddess Deivanai will take place.

The festival arrangements are being overseen by the Temple Board of Trustees Chairman Arul Murugan, Joint Commissioner Arunachalam, along with the other trustees and temple staff.

Australia, Philippines Boost Defence Ties with New Pact at ASEAN Summit

AUSTRALIA: Australia and the Philippines have formalized a significant Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) on the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit in Manila, aiming to strengthen their strategic alignment and enhance regional security.



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese highlighted the pact's importance, emphasizing stronger ties with neighbors for Australia's safety.

The agreement, signed by Philippine Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. and Australian Ambassador Marc Innes&Brown, focuses on streamlining military coordination, improving interoperability, and accelerating humanitarian responses during natural disasters. Secretary Teodoro noted that the DCA will cut through bureaucratic red tape, allowing Australian forces to provide rapid assistance without traditional procedural delays.

This means a single process for clearances, replacing multiple permits, ensuring immediate response during emergencies.

Beyond disaster relief, the comprehensive arrangement will expand bilateral collaboration in national defence, military equipment procurement, and joint exercises involving naval, air, and ground units from both nations.

This high&profile signing, witnessed by Prime Minister Albanese during his visit, underscores a shared commitment by Manila and Canberra to deepen defence ties and ensure enduring regional stability amidst evolving geopolitical dynamics.

After Cancer Recovery, Kate Middleton Joins Prince William on India Visit; Earthshot Prize in Mumbai

MUMBAI: Princess Kate Middleton, after successfully recovering from cancer, is set to embark on her first joint overseas trip with Prince William since 2022.

The royal couple will visit Mumbai for the 2026 Earthshot Prize awards ceremony and other engagements, marking a significant return to international duties for the Princess.

Kensington Palace confirmed the visit, highlighting the Earthshot Prize ceremony on November 17, 2026, which aims to celebrate environmental innovation. This trip is particularly meaningful as it's Princess Kate's first major international engagement following her cancer diagnosis in January 2024 and subsequent chemotherapy.



She announced her remission in early 2025 and has gradually resumed royal responsibilities.

The visit will also be their first official overseas trip together since 2022 and their second to India, nearly a decade after their 2016 tour which included Mumbai, New Delhi, and the Taj Mahal. The 2026 Earthshot Prize in Mumbai is expected to be the largest edition yet, drawing approximately 5,000 attendees, including global leaders and innovators. India was chosen for its technological prowess, rich biodiversity, and young population.

While environmental solutions will be central, the couple will also focus on strengthening the India&UK relationship. This visit underscores Princess Kate's growing return to public life, having previously undertaken a solo trip to Italy and hosted state visits. Royal commentators emphasize her importance to the monarchy, noting her 'star quality' and 'impeccable force for good' as she resumes a more active role.



Tens of thousands of devotees have gathered at the Arulmigu Andavar Temple in Vadapalani, Chennai, for 'Soorasamharam'—the pinnacle event of the Kanda Sashti festival. Since early this morning (November 15), devotees have been waiting in long queues to offer their prayers to Lord Murugan.

SpaceX achieves milestone by successfully landing Starship spacecraft back on Earth

WASHINGTON: SpaceX has achieved a significant milestone by successfully landing its Starship spacecraft back on Earth. SpaceX, a private American aerospace company owned by the world's wealthiest individual, Elon Musk, regularly launches various satellites into space.



The company is also actively testing reusable rockets and spacecraft. On the 14th, the Starship 15 spacecraft was launched from SpaceX's 'Starbase' facility in Texas. Propelled by a 'Super Heavy' booster rocket, the spacecraft carried 26 next&generation Starlink V3 satellites. After deploying the spacecraft into Earth's orbit, SpaceX attempted to land the Super Heavy booster back on Earth; however, that attempt was unsuccessful. Meanwhile, the satellites on board were successfully deployed into their intended Earth orbits. Following this, the Starship 15 spacecraft orbited the Earth 14 times over a period of approximately 22 hours. Subsequently, a mission plan was executed to bring the Starship 15 spacecraft back to Earth, leading to its successful return.

At the Starbase facility in Texas, SpaceX successfully executed an attempt to land a spacecraft using the 'chopstick' mechanical arms of the launch tower. The Starship spacecraft, returning from Earth's orbit, was caught and landed successfully by the mechanical arms on the launch tower. This marks the first time a spacecraft that traveled into Earth's orbit has returned and landed successfully in this manner. This achievement is seen as a major milestone in SpaceX's efforts to develop reusable spacecraft.



Near Dindigul, 17 goats died after being attacked by 5 stray dogs that entered a goat shed—an incident that has caused shock in the area. More than 5 other goats have also sustained injuries.

Jewelry Store Robbery Case: Arrested Individuals Remanded in Judicial Custody Until the 29th; Lodged in Madurai Central Prison

MADURAI: In the case involving the robbery of a jewelry store in Madurai, the arrested individuals—Instagram personality Meenakshi and Suresh—have been remanded in judicial custody until November 29. A new showroom for Tanishq Jewellery was recently opened in the Nehru Nagar area, located along the Palanganatham&Kalavasal bypass road in Madurai.

The store spans three floors, with the gold jewelry section operating on the first floor, while the other floors were undergoing preparations for diamond and silver jewelry displays. On the early morning of the 12th, a man broke into the store and stole approximately 15 kilograms of gold and diamond jewelry, an incident that caused a major stir. Police have estimated the value of the stolen items to be around ₹21 crore.

The perpetrator, who was entirely covered in black fabric and wore a mask and gloves, gained access by climbing up scaffolding at the rear of the building. He then descended through the elevator shaft—using a rope intended for the elevator installation—to carry out the theft, eventually escaping by breaking through an iron&grilled window. These actions were captured on surveillance (CCTV) cameras. After exiting the store, the individual fled on a scooter via Madakulam Road.

It was also discovered that the same person had entered the store around midnight on the 5th, effectively conducting a "rehearsal" for the robbery. Furthermore, on three separate occasions since the store's opening, he had visited the premises—each time wearing different clothing, a hat, and a face mask—to scout the location, though he never purchased any items. Following this, suspicion fell upon a young man. He was identified as 25&year&old Nishanth—a resident of Arutperumjothi Street in Palanganatham, Madurai—who had gained popularity by posting 'Reels' on Instagram. His father, Suresh (50), works as an auto&rickshaw driver.

The day before yesterday, over 100 police officers conducted a surprise, intensive search of their home, leaving no stone unturned. Upon learning of the police arrival, Nishanth switched off his mobile phone. The fact that he had left town after the robbery and had not returned home further deepened the police's suspicions.

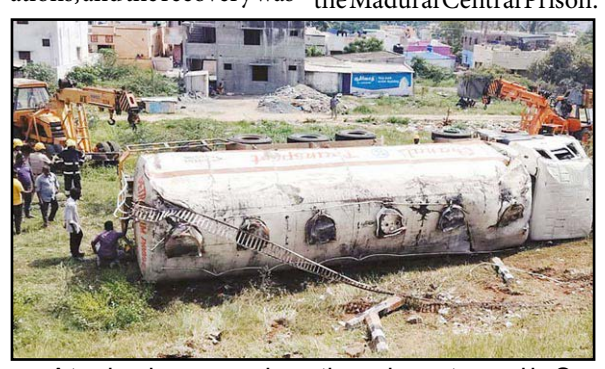
Efforts to locate him by tracking his mobile phone signals proved unsuccessful. Consequently, special police teams were dispatched to locations including Pollachi, Tiruppur, and Chennai. Having confirmed that Nishanth was indeed the one who had committed the jewelry robbery, the police launched a series of decisive operations yesterday morning. They investigated whom Nishanth had spoken to on the phone on the day of the robbery; it was discovered that he had communicated several times with Meenakshi (23), another Instagram personality from Madurai. The police subsequently conducted a discreet inquiry into her. It was revealed that Nishanth and Meenakshi had been in a relationship for several years and had even posted numerous 'Reels' videos together. It was also learned that his father, Suresh, works as an auto&rickshaw driver—the family owns three such vehicles.



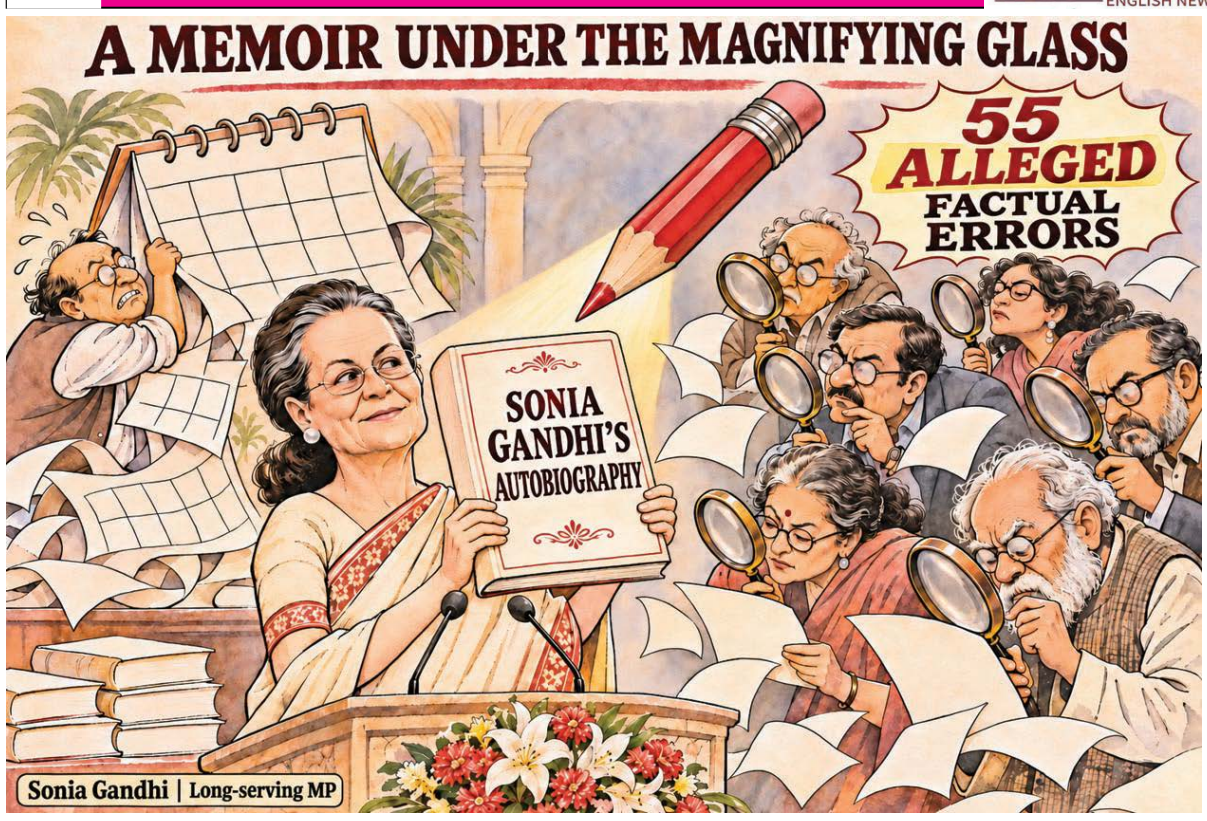
Furthermore, the police uncovered that Suresh was fully aware that his son had committed the robbery, and he was subsequently taken to the police station. By yesterday evening, the police had also begun questioning Meenakshi. A shocking revelation emerged: Nishanth had visited the house on the day of the robbery and disclosed that he had stashed 6 kilograms of gold and diamond jewelry—partly at the house and partly at a location near a local irrigation tank (*kanmai*). Acting on this information, the police conducted a swift search and recovered the 6 kilograms of jewelry. Meenakshi was taken to these locations, and the recovery was carried out in her presence. Meenakshi was arrested on charges including failing to inform the police despite being fully aware of the major robbery, and for colluding to assist in the crime.

Nishanth's father, Suresh, was also arrested. The police stated that they are closing in on Nishanth—who is currently absconding—and expect to apprehend him soon and recover the remaining jewelry. Following the investigation, Nishanth's girlfriend, Meenakshi, and his father, Suresh, were taken to the Madurai Government Hospital for medical examinations.

Last night, they were produced before the Madurai Third Magistrate Court Judge, Sangeetha, who ordered them to be remanded in judicial custody until the 29th. Subsequently, Meenakshi and Suresh were lodged in the Madurai Central Prison.



A tanker lorry carrying ethanol overturned in Salem. The incident caused a stir as 40,000 litres of the substance began spilling onto the ground.



Am I diverting investments meant for Tamil Nadu to Andhra Pradesh? Chandrababu Naidu responds

CHENNAI: At the 31st CII Partnership Summit held over two days in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, 109 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed, attracting investments worth over Rs. 9 lakh crore. It is estimated that these will create more than 2 lakh job opportunities.

During the summit, a reporter posed a question to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu. The reporter noted that, over the past two weeks, there have been reports suggesting that major automotive and technology companies based in Tamil Nadu are looking to Andhra Pradesh for their expansion plans.

The reporter asked, "Do you believe that political leadership and political commitment play a crucial role in retaining industries and investments within a state? Furthermore, why is Andhra Pradesh performing better than Tamil Nadu in attracting the expansion plans of these industrial firms?"



In response, Chandrababu Naidu said: "You always look for sensational topics, whereas I focus on results.

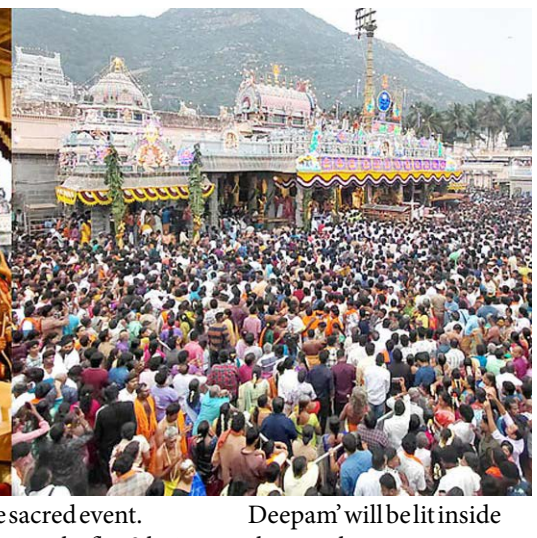
There is a certain dynamic here—all states compete with one another, but investors have their own individual preferences. As for me, I know how to attract investments. Out of the 31 CII Partnership Summits held to date, I have hosted eight. Back in 1995, people were apprehensive about collaborating with industrial corporations; they feared being labeled as 'pro&rich.

'You are all discussing the criticism surrounding the decision to provide land in Visakhapatnam at a rate of one rupee per acre."

However, if you do not offer that incentive, the business enterprise will not come here at all. Initially, we provide significant incentives, but subsequently, we gradually reduce them—this is because, once an industrial ecosystem has been established...

Tiruvannamalai Deepam Festival Begins with Flag- Hoisting; 'Maha Deepam' to be Lit on Nov 24





TIRUVANAMALAI: The Karthigai Deepam festival at the Annamalaiyar Temple in Tiruvannamalai commenced early this morning with the ceremonial flag&hoisting. The 'Maha Deepam' (the great sacred lamp) is scheduled to be lit on November 24.

The 10&day Karthigai Deepam festival at the world&renowned Annamalaiyar Temple is highly celebrated. In keeping with tradition, this year's festival began today with the flag&hoisting ceremony.

Ahead of this, the temple doors were opened early yesterday morning, and special *abhishekams* (ritual baths) and *aradhanas* (prayers) were performed for the deities, Annamalaiyar and Unnamulaiamman. Subsequently, the *Pancha Murthis* (the five principal deities)—Vinayakar (Ganesha), Murugar (with Valli and Deivanai), Annamalaiyar (with Unnamulaiamman), Parasakthi Amman, and Chandikeswarar—were adorned beautifully and brought to the golden flagstaff (*kodimaram*) near the sanctum of Annamalaiyar, accompanied by the sounds of traditional temple music.

At 6:45 AM, amidst the chanting of Vedic mantras by the *Shivacharyas* (temple priests), the flag was hoisted atop the 63&foot&tall golden mast. Thousands of devotees gathered within the temple complex, chanting "Annamalaiyarukku Arohara!" as they witnessed the sacred event.

Following the flag&hoisting, the *Pancha Murthis* were taken in procession around the temple streets (*mada veedhis*) on silver *vimanams* (palanquins/chariots) yesterday morning, bestowing their blessings upon the devotees. In the evening, the deities are set to be mounted on various *vahanas* (divine vehicles)—including the *mushikam* (mouse), *mayil* (peacock), *adhikara nandi*, *hamsam* (swan), and *simham* (lion)—for a grand procession through the temple streets. As part of the ten&day Deepam festival, the 6th day—falling on the 20th—will feature a procession of the 63 Nayanmars (saints), followed by a silver chariot procession that night.

On the 7th day, the 21st, the grand chariot (Maha Ratham) procession will take place. The highlight of the festival, the Deepam itself, will occur on November 24th: the 'Bharani Deepam' will be lit inside the temple sanctum at 4:00 AM, and in the evening at 6:00 PM, the 'Maha Deepam' will be ignited atop the 2,668&foot&high hill located behind the temple.

It is expected that approximately 5 million (50 lakh) devotees from across the country will participate in the Deepam festival this year.

In preparation, the district administration has made comprehensive arrangements. More than 500 police personnel were deployed for security during the flag&hoisting ceremony. The flag&hoisting event was attended by several dignitaries, including District Collector Vandana Garg, District Superintendent of Police R. Udhayakumar, former Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Ku. Pichandi, Polur MLA R. Abhishek, Temple Trustee (Thakkar) U. Meenakshisundaram, and Temple Joint Commissioner Bharanidharan.



Jewelry and cash worth Rs. 7.60 crore have been seized during a surprise raid conducted at the residence of Sanjeev Kumar, an Assistant Director in the Forest Department who serves at the Satpura Tiger Reserve in the Pachmarhi region of Madhya Pradesh.

Infiltration by 'Bawaria' Gang Near Mettur: Police Issue Warning to the Public

METTUR: The police have issued an alert regarding the infiltration of a 'Bawaria' gang—a group from North India—into the Kolathur area near Mettur.

The gang is believed to have entered the region with the intent to commit criminal acts and poach wildlife in the forest areas. More than 76,000 people reside across 14 village panchayats in the Kolathur union, near Mettur in Salem district. The Mettur forest range, which includes areas like Balamalai and Pacha Balamalai, is home to various wildlife, including leopards, deer, monkeys, and elephants.

This region also shares a border with the state of Karnataka. Police have received information that a 'Bawaria' gang from North India has infiltrated the area, intending to engage in criminal activities and the poaching of wildlife. Consequently, the public is urged to remain highly vigilant.

Residents are requested to immediately report the presence or movement of any individuals from North India—or any other unfamiliar persons—in their villages, farmhouses, or areas adjacent to the forest. If any suspicious individuals are seen roaming the forest areas—potentially with the intent to poach wildlife such as tigers or leopards—the police must be informed immediately.

Those who rent out homes or farm properties should not allow outsiders to stay without first verifying their identity documents, such as their Aadhaar cards.

There is no need for the public to panic. However, it is essential to remain cautious.

Do not attempt to approach any suspicious individuals yourself; instead, report them immediately by calling the numbers provided below. The Kolathur police have stated that for assistance, one may contact Kolathur Police Inspector Manjunathan at 99767&11161, the Kolathur Police Station at 94981&00997, or police officer Manikandan (Special Branch) at 90805&82107; for emergency help, please dial 100 or 112.



In New Orleans, USA, a tanker ship collided with a luxury vessel that was docked on the Mississippi River. The vessel capsized and sank; fortunately, everyone on board survived.

Army Chief General Dhiraj Seth Visits Czech Republic to Boost Defence Ties

NEW DELHI: Indian Army Chief General Dhiraj Seth embarked on a significant visit to the Czech Republic from November 16 to 19, aiming to strengthen bilateral defence cooperation and explore new avenues in defence technology. This visit underscores India's commitment to enhancing military&to&military engagement with European partners.

During his trip, General Seth held crucial discussions with senior Czech military leaders, including Lieutenant General Petr Čepelka, the First Deputy Chief of the General Staff, at the General Staff Headquarters in Prague. These meetings focused on vital aspects like military cooperation, training, modernization efforts, and addressing emerging security challenges. A solemn wreath&laying ceremony was also conducted to honor fallen soldiers.



Further enriching the visit, General Seth toured the Defence University in Brno and the NATO Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Defence Centre of Excellence. These visits provided valuable insights into the specialized training and operational readiness of the Czech Armed Forces, highlighting potential areas for collaborative learning and development.

The Army Chief also engaged with representatives from the Inter&governmental Defence Cooperation Agency (AMOS) and leading defence manufacturers.

These interactions were geared towards identifying opportunities for joint ventures and technological partnerships, aligning with India's 'Make&in&India' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives in the defence sector.

This visit follows a productive meeting in October between India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Czech Deputy Prime Minister Karel Havlíček, where both nations reviewed and agreed to expand defence industrial cooperation.

General Seth's visit solidifies these commitments, paving the way for deeper strategic ties and mutual growth in defence capabilities.



a political confrontation erupted at the historic Jauljibi Fair in Pithoragarh district. A Congress MLA, Harish Dhami , threw a microphone, vandalised the stage and assaulted a man with the chair.

Custodial Death in Chekkanurani: Magistrate Conducts Inquiry into 3 Police Officers

NAGAMALAI PUDUKOTTAI: The suicide of a lorry driver by hanging himself inside a police station has caused a major stir. A magistrate has conducted an on&site inquiry into the incident. Balakrishnan (42), son of Rangappan, hailed from Alagarnayakanpatti village near Uthamapalayam in Theni district.

He is survived by his wife, Sudha, a son in his first year of college, and a daughter currently in the 12th grade. As a lorry driver, Balakrishnan frequently traveled to Madurai to transport goods. On the 3rd of this month, he was driving toward Madurai, carrying sacks of cardamom loaded from Devaram in Theni district. While traveling along the Theni road, near the Valanthoor irrigation tank (kanmai) in Madurai district, the lorry suddenly caught fire, and the flames spread rapidly. Balakrishnan alerted the Usilampatti fire station, and fire personnel arrived at the scene to extinguish the blaze. Both the lorry and the sacks of cardamom it carried were damaged.

Following a complaint filed by Balakrishnan, the police registered a case. An investigation into the cause of the fire was underway. At the request of the police, who asked him to appear for further questioning, Balakrishnan went to the Chekkanurani police station the day before yesterday.



It is reported that he was accompanied by others, including lawyers.

After questioning him, the police asked Balakrishnan to remain at the station, stating that they needed to review surveillance camera footage the following morning. The lawyers who had accompanied him left for the night. Balakrishnan was reportedly held in the police inspector's office throughout the night. At around 6:00 AM yesterday, he asked the police for permission to use the restroom, which was granted. After entering the restroom at the police station, Balakrishnan did not emerge for a long time. When the police called out to him, there was no response; the door was locked from the inside. Growing suspicious, the police broke open the door and were met with a shocking sight: Balakrishnan was found hanging, having used his own shirt to commit the act.

He was unresponsive, and the police immediately rushed him to the Government Rajaji Hospital in Madurai. However, upon examination, doctors declared that he was already dead. The incident—a man dying by suicide while at the police station for questioning—has caused a major stir.

Upon learning of the event, Madurai District Superintendent of Police Devanathan arrived at the scene to conduct an inspection and inquiry. A forensic team also arrived to collect evidence. Anantharaj, the Magistrate of the Peraiyur Criminal Court, visited the Chekkanurani police station yesterday. He spent over an hour there, questioning the police personnel on duty and reviewing surveillance camera footage.

He subsequently traveled to the Government Rajaji Hospital in Madurai to examine Balakrishnan's body and consult with the medical staff. Earlier yesterday morning, a large crowd from Chekkanurani gathered outside the police station, demanding justice for the death of the man who had been brought in for questioning. They engaged in a heated argument with the police. The case has been referred to the CB&CID. Superintendent of Police Devanathan has stated that the matter has been referred for a police investigation.

Furthermore, as an initial disciplinary measure, Inspector Muthu of the Chekkanurani police station, along with police personnel Pazhanivelrajan and Kalaiselvi, have been placed under immediate suspension following allegations of negligence and violation of official protocols.

In connection with the death of lorry driver Balakrishnan at the Chekkanurani police station, the CB&CID police have issued summons today to the three suspended officers. Balakrishnan's body has been placed in the mortuary at the Madurai Government Hospital for a post&mortem examination. His relatives have gathered near the mortuary.

Alleging that there are suspicious circumstances surrounding his death, the family and relatives staged a road blockade on the main thoroughfare, protesting against the post&mortem procedure. Meanwhile, Magistrate Anand Raja conducted an inquiry today regarding the death of the driver at the Chekkanurani police station.

It is reported that the Magistrate is questioning the Inspector, the head constable, and the female police officer involved in the case.

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