



May 2017
Rs. 20/-

Vol. : 48 Issue : 11

Tamilarasu

Publication of Information & Public Relations Department



Tamilarasu

Publication of Information &
Public Relations Department
Thiruvalluvar Year - 2048

May 2017

Vol: 48 Rs.20/- Issue: 11

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Compassion is the hallmark of a great Nation and the manner in which it cares for its poorest and most vulnerable is what would make India truly great. Hence, elimination of poverty and providing a social safety net for the vulnerable that is second to none in the world should be what we strive for.

Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami

- Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

- Chief Minister greets workers..... 4
- Chief Minister reiterates demands on NEET exemption, Cauvery issue at NITI Aayog meet 5
- Chief Minister launches issue of Smart ration cards, swears by Amma welfare schemes ... 18
- Rs.10 crore allotted for new hostel block for students 26
- 'Huge budgetary allocation shows primacy given to education' 32
- 'Expedite Neet exemption to ensure quality health care for the needy in rural areas' 41
- Chief Minister assures farmers on dharna- I have apprised PM of your demands. 45

First Wrapper

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami distributed Tamil Thai Award, Kapilar Award, U.Ve.Sa. Award, Kambar Award, Sollin Selvar Award, G.U.Pope Award, Umaru Pulavar Award, Ilango Adigal Award, Amma Ilakkiya Award, and Best Translator Award for the year 2016 and Chief Minister's Computer Tamil Award and Tamil Chemmal Award for the year 2015. Each Award consists of a Cheque for Rs. 1 lakh, one sovereign gold medallion, a shawl and a citation.



Chief Minister greets workers

**May Day Greetings of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of
Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami
on 01.05.2017 (English Translation)**

“I am happy to convey my heartfelt greetings to workers who are celebrating the festival of the working class on this day (May Day) throughout the world.

To stress the dictum that the world is for workers and workers are for the world, the workers throughout the world began to fight for their rights on this May Day which is being recognized as Workers' Day throughout the world.

The day proclaims to the world the greatness of the working class. Though the roots of the labour tree are bitter its fruits are sweet. If the workers work hard with confidence by keeping in mind the dictum of the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma that if you shed laziness and work hard, you can come up in life.

On this happy day I once again extend my cordial greetings to the workers. Let wealth and health swell in the lives of workers who work tirelessly for the growth of the Nation”. ●

Chief Minister reiterates demands on NEET exemption, Cauvery issue at NITI Aayog meet



***Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu at the
Third Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog
on 23.04.2017, New Delhi***

Hon'ble Prime Minister,
Hon'ble Union Ministers,
Hon'ble Chief Ministers and Lieutenant
Governors,

Vice Chairman and Members of NITI Aayog,
Senior Officials!
Vanakkam!

It is my proud privilege to address the Third Meeting of the Governing Council of the NITI Aayog on behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu, as the State continues to embark on the ambitious growth path charted out by our late Hon'ble Chief Minister, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

2. While the Meeting will review the work done by NITI Aayog over the past two years, the main issue to be discussed in this meeting is the contours of the Vision, Strategy and Action Documents, which would replace the Five Year Plans from the current financial year onwards. The work already done by NITI Aayog and the reports prepared will no doubt inform the drafting of the Vision, Strategy and Action Documents.

3. Tamil Nadu was one of the States that had called for removing the artificial distinction between Plan and Non-Plan expenditure and we support the move of the Government of India to do away with Five Year Plans. However, even at the time of the formation of the NITI Aayog, we had highlighted that given the challenges of economic development in India, there still is a strong case for preparing a blue print for action with clearly laid down goals and objectives to be achieved within a given time frame, addressing the critical issues that confront the economy and how to resolve them, and securing the consensus of both the Centre and the States. Both a longer term strategic view and a medium term perspective are required.

4. In Tamil Nadu, our late Hon'ble Chief Minister, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, immediately on assumption of office in May

2011, commenced the process of drafting the Vision Tamil Nadu 2023 document which was launched on 24.03.2012. This document is an excellent model of a perspective plan.

5. The goals and themes of the Vision Tamil Nadu 2023 have been carefully determined as perceivable outcomes which will impact the lives of the common people in the most direct manner possible including substantial increases in income through generation of fruitful employment; improvement in the quality of life through provision of high quality infrastructure and services; focused growth of sectors where the State has a competitive advantage; and above all peace, prosperity and protection of the vulnerable.

6. Ambitious stretch targets were deliberately set to challenge and to inspire and to ensure that the legitimate aspirations of the people of Tamil Nadu are appropriately recognized. Growth and development have to be achieved in the most inclusive manner possible.

7. At the heart of Tamil Nadu Vision 2023, is the provision of world class infrastructure to all the residents of Tamil Nadu. The emphasis on infrastructure is necessitated on two counts – first, infrastructure development is investment intensive and generates significant employment opportunities and economic growth in its own right; second and more importantly, infrastructure development creates huge positive externalities in the economy by providing a fillip to economic and social development across all sectors.

8. Noting that innovation is key to achieving such ambitious growth rates, the Vision

also envisions Tamil Nadu becoming the “Knowledge Capital” and “Innovation Hub” of the Country. This requires the creation and nurturing of an appropriate environment that aids innovation and sustenance of knowledge.

9. I would encourage the NITI Aayog to study the Vision Tamil Nadu 2023 Parts I and II while preparing the Vision 2030 document for the Country. The fundamental tenets put forth to connect Vision to Strategy are clearly articulated and are easily replicable at the National level.

10. The Vision we have for India is strongly aligned with the Vision we have for Tamil Nadu. By 2030, we would like to see India become the world’s largest economy rid of poverty and deprivation. The Country should reach the status of an upper middle income economy, with the fruits of growth and economic success well distributed across all regions and socio-economic groups and in particular, to the hitherto most deprived. A per capita income of Rs. 10,00,000/- (USD 15,000/-) (at today’s prices) should be the benchmark we should strive for by 2030. To achieve this goal, we must elevate our growth rates to double digits and sustain this growth trajectory over the next 15 years- a goal which I believe is very much attainable.

11. I envision an India that would become the global hub for knowledge and skilled human resources and an India that would have resumed its rightful position in the world as the fountainhead of innovation and enterprise. I see India emerging as a global leader, steering the geo-political and economic dialogue not just to

ensure security, but also the wellbeing of not only its own citizens, but of the entire humanity.

12. While proposing this ambitious Vision, I am fully cognizant of the challenges we face. However, I am confident that this is achievable when all stakeholders are aligned and engaged. The Government of India should work closely with the State Governments in providing an enabling ecosystem for the growth strategies the States may have charted for themselves. The Government of India must not pursue a ‘one size fits all’ model, but instead allow States to plan and manage priorities falling under their jurisdiction. The Perspective, Strategy and Action Documents should provide sufficient elbow room for States to develop their own long and medium range plans. Tamil Nadu intends to adhere to the Vision Tamil Nadu 2023.

13. In the Strategy Document, there has to be an emphasis on how policy co-ordination is to be achieved, resources are to be garnered and implementation mechanisms created to work towards the longer-term goals. Hence, the plans must not merely focus on outlays, but also on the policy measures required for private sector participants in economic development to contribute their mite in achieving the sectoral goals.

14. This exercise of the NITI Aayog would also need to fit in with the United Nations initiative to establish a set of “Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030 replacing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which were set for achievement by 2015. It is gratifying that India’s performance has been satisfying, and in particular,

Tamil Nadu's performance under the MDGs has been quite commendable. Hence, I welcome the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) based framework for tracking and measuring progress for the longer term Vision.

15. Tamil Nadu has already set in motion the process of mapping the 17 goals and 169 targets under the SDG based framework with reference to ongoing programmes and initiatives. Many of the targets suggested by this framework find mention and emphasis in the Tamil Nadu Vision 2023. My Government is committed to the realization of these goals for the State well before the timelines suggested by the United Nations. I strongly urge that NITI Aayog and the Government of India must finance the programmes required to fill the gaps identified in achieving the SDGs.

16. NITI Aayog and the Government of India must also put in place an integrated data management system to collect, compile, analyze and present SDG linked data for the whole Country in a periodic manner. Specific indicators also need to be developed for this purpose at the earliest and communicated to the States.

17. As part of preparing the Vision, Strategy and Action Documents, I would urge the NITI Aayog to create sector wise Strategic Vision documents which would provide a longer term perspective of where the Nation aspires to be in that particular sector. Given the enormity of the task to be achieved, focus should be limited to a few crucial sectors to begin with including Education, Health, Agriculture, Infrastructure and Mechanisms of Inclusive Growth.

18. The Agenda papers state that NITI Aayog has engaged in extensive consultation with States on the preparation of Vision, Strategy and Action Documents. While Tamil Nadu has provided its views with regard to the overall approach to the Vision exercise, sector wise consultation has been limited only to some sectors.

19. India's agriculture sector continues to remain very critical, since no other Country can grow the food which is required to feed the Country which would have the largest population in the world. Improving farmer's income should be at the core of the Country's economic strategy. Retraining agricultural workers, encouraging usage of advanced agricultural technology, supporting diversified agriculture and improving irrigation infrastructure are some measures to help address this challenge.

20. The agenda for this meeting rightly emphasizes Agriculture with two specific items – the Report of the Task Force on Agriculture Development and the paper on "Doubling of Farmers' Income". Tamil Nadu is suffering from one of the worst droughts in several decades, with a severe shortfall of 62 per cent in precipitation in the North-East Monsoon season of 2016. Farmers in the State are in considerable distress and their representatives have voiced their grievances even in New Delhi. It is important that the legitimate grievances of the farmers receive sympathetic consideration from the Government of India.

21. Tamil Nadu is dependent on inter-State rivers, in particular, the Cauvery for meeting

its water needs both for irrigation and drinking water supply.

I strongly reiterate the demand for the immediate establishment of the Cauvery Management Board and the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee for the implementation of the Final Order of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal.

22. The long-term solution to ensure optimal and equitable sharing of the water resources in the Country is the inter-linking of rivers. Under the Peninsular Rivers Development Component, our revered leader, the late Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma has repeatedly urged the Government of India to implement the inter linking of the Mahanadhi-Godavari-Krishna-Pennar-Palar-Cauvery-Vaigai Rivers and further with the Gundar River and also to divert the surplus waters of the west flowing Pamba and Achankovil Rivers to Vaippar in Tamil Nadu. Based on the Supreme Court Order dated 27.02.2012, and our persistent requests, the Government of India constituted the Special Committee for Inter-linking of Rivers which is yet to make significant headway.

I reiterate the legitimate demand of our Revered Leader the late Puratchi Thalaivi Amma to nationalise all inter-State Rivers, so that water resources of the Country can be optimally utilized.

23. The goal of doubling farmers' incomes has to be achieved by a combination of measures to increase incomes from crop cultivation and

from allied activities including horticulture, animal husbandry and fisheries. The allocation of funds by the Government of India for agriculture and allied sectors, in particular for animal husbandry and fisheries, has come down considerably. The State Government has undertaken a number of measures to promote animal husbandry including through the free distribution of milch cattle, sheep and goats, and fisheries to supplement farm incomes. A special focus has been given in the last 6 years to boost Animal Husbandry infrastructure. A dry land agriculture mission has been launched to stabilise income of the farmers in arid lands. Diversification in crop cultivation through support for horticulture crops has been emphasized. Supply chain management, market integration and support to Farmers Producers Groups as building blocks for Farmers Producers' Organizations have been prioritized. The Government of India should revive the scheme for promoting agro-processing clusters and units. All these measures will increase farmers income and sustain farm activities in long run.

24. In a distress year, the emphasis needs to be on at least ensuring that the farmers' current income level is protected, for which agriculture insurance must come to rescue of the farmers. With the special efforts of Government of Tamil Nadu to promote the Pradhan Mantri Fasal BimaYojana (PMFBY), 15 lakh farmers have been enrolled in the Rabi season under PMFBY, covering a total extent of over 30 lakh acres. The State Government is co-ordinating with all the stakeholders for speedy settlement of insurance claims to the affected

farmers to enable them to take up sowing in the forthcoming Kharif 2017 season. In order to instill faith amongst farmers in the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, it is very important that the insurance claims for the year 2016-2017 have to be settled by the insurance companies, within three weeks from the receipt of yield data based on crop cutting experiments in accordance with the Guidelines. All the requisite information has been provided, hence the insurance companies must be directed to ensure that the insurance compensation claims for the Rabi season 2016-2017 are released to farmers in Tamil Nadu before the end of April, 2017.

25. A key vulnerable group in Tamil Nadu at present are the marine fishermen along the Palk Bay whose livelihood of fishing in their traditional waters has been repeatedly threatened by the aggressive actions of the Sri Lankan Navy. I urge that the traditional fishing rights of the Indian fishermen in the Palk Bay must be protected and their safety and security ensured. The non-release of apprehended fishing boats for long periods, deprives fisherfolk of livelihood and causes irretrievable damage to their most important asset. I strongly urge the Government of India to secure the immediate release of the 133 boats in Sri Lankan custody in a refurbished condition. The long term solution to the problem lies in the retrieval of Katchatheevu Island. I also reiterate the request for the early sanction of the Comprehensive Special Package for Diversification of Fisheries which includes conversion of bottom trawlers to deep sea tuna long liners to ease the pressure on the Palk Bay.

26. Increasing the share of manufacturing in the economic output is the only time-tested strategy to create good jobs in large numbers. The Government of India should work closely with trading partners to build integrated global and regional value chains for various products and thereby make India a natural destination for manufacturing for domestic and international markets.

27. Infrastructure creation and sustenance is critical for economic advancement, with the Government at the Centre focusing on investing in pan-national infrastructure projects in Railways, Roads, Airports, Ports, Waterways and Power which would provide the right fillip for projects being implemented by the States and the private sector. States in turn should strive to provide world class infrastructure for their residents both in rural and urban areas.

28. India's biggest comparative advantage lies in its people. In the area of health and education, our people are entitled to the best quality of services that are available anywhere in the world and it is the duty of the Government of India and the State Governments to enable the provision of such services.

29. In the Health Sector, inputs of the State Government were sought on the draft Vision for the sector. While the overall objective of providing Universal Health Care is very laudable, there are some problematic issues in the draft Vision that require to be highlighted. Simplistic assumptions have been made that the overlapping roles of Central and State Governments in the Health sector have caused the less than optimal health care systems in the

Country. In fact, it is the federal nature of the health sector which has provided autonomy to some States like Tamil Nadu to prioritize the sector and establish more robust public health systems. The approach appears to be towards increasing the role of the State as a regulator and strategic purchaser of health care, through insurance mechanisms, while the provider role would be fulfilled by the private sector and the public sector, competing on equal terms. While publicly financed health insurance schemes, like Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme, have been successful mainly for secondary and tertiary inpatient care, the existence of the public systems have ensured that cost levels are kept down and the most deprived are not denied services. Primary health care and outpatient care, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas has been provided almost totally by the public sector and should continue to remain so. We strongly feel that the vision of providing universal health care, particularly in Tamil Nadu, can best be achieved by strengthening the existing public health system and contracting in from the private system, only to fill in the gaps.

30. In the area of Education, the Government of Tamil Nadu strongly believes that its existing policy framework which is based on the principles of inclusiveness, equity, universalization and safeguarding the interests of regional language and culture and of the vulnerable, needs to be preserved. In this context, the introduction of NEET is a direct infringement on the rights of the State and would cause grave injustice to the students of Tamil Nadu who are already covered by a fair and transparent admission policy

laid down by the Government of Tamil Nadu, which has been working well. The Government of Tamil Nadu has taken a number of steps, starting from 2005, towards systematizing the admission process to professional courses including medical colleges, and after careful consideration, abolished entrance examinations for professional undergraduate courses in the State, by enacting the Tamil Nadu Admission in Professional Educational Institutions Act, 2006 which received the assent of the President under Article 254(2) of the Constitution and has survived legal challenges upto the Supreme Court. Tamil Nadu's admission system protects the interests of students, particularly from the weaker sections and rural areas, as such students cannot compete with urban elite students in Common Entrance Examinations.

A large number of socially and economically backward meritorious rural students have benefited by the Government of Tamil Nadu's decision to abolish the Common Entrance Examinations. For admission to Postgraduate courses, the Government of Tamil Nadu gives preference to those who have served in rural areas, with special weightage for those working in hilly and tribal areas. The introduction of NEET would nullify such policy initiatives intended to further the socio-economic objectives of the State. The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly has recently unanimously passed two Bills for protecting the existing admission policy for undergraduate and post-graduate admissions in Government Medical and Dental colleges and Government quota seats which require the assent of the President of India under Article 254(2) of the

Constitution of India. I reiterate the request for immediate approval of these two Bills to enable the State to continue its existing fair and transparent system of admission to Government Medical Colleges and Dental Colleges and Government quota seats in the State. I also urge the Government of India to not mandate common entrance examinations for other professional courses including Engineering and Veterinary Sciences, without considering the specific circumstances of each State.

31. There is an urgent need to improve productivity of our human resources and create good jobs for millions of job seekers who are migrating from the primary sector or newly entering the workforce. The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu was one of the members of the sub-group on Skill Development. It is gratifying that a number of key suggestions made by Tamil Nadu have been taken on board by the Sub-Group. One key suggestion of Tamil Nadu in the Sub Group was the need for role clarity in field level implementation of skill development programmes to reduce the overlap between Central Government and State Government initiatives. Organizations like the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) are directly engaging and funding training providers. State agencies are in parallel performing a similar function. This leads to duplication of efforts, poor oversight and creates arbitrage opportunities due to parallel operations. Tamil Nadu suggested that Central Government agencies including NSDC should confine themselves to National level standardization, accreditation and certification functions, provision of financing and establishing policy

and legislative frameworks. Actual training delivery should be routed through State Government agencies which are better placed to mobilize candidates for training. Government of India should speedily move over to a model where the entire training delivery under the Pradhan Mantri KaushalVikasYojana is handled by State Government agencies. Similarly, under the SANKALP scheme, adequate funding should be provided for strengthening the skill building institutional framework including for faculty development.

32. A significant step undertaken based on the report of a Sub-Group of Chief Ministers was the rationalization of Centrally Sponsored Schemes. This process of rationalization has a number of positive features including a higher proportion of flexible funds, retention of the existing fund sharing pattern for six “core of the core” schemes and ensuring that the Centre’s share of funding never falls below 50 per cent. However, a number of issues remain.

33. The key issue is that the share of State funds was increased for all the “core” schemes to 40 per cent uniformly. The main argument for this was that the 14th Finance Commission mandated an increase in the devolution to States to 42 per cent of the net Central Tax revenue. Tamil Nadu is one State that has been badly affected by the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission as the horizontal share of the State declined by almost 20 per cent, effectively nullifying the impact of the increase in the vertical share in devolution. The situation has been exacerbated by the increasing tendency of the Government of India to levy cesses and surcharges on various Central taxes

which keeps such receipts out of the devolution pool. Hence, meeting the increased State share of 40 per cent for Centrally Sponsored Schemes is a challenge for Tamil Nadu.

34. What has been even more challenging has been the underfunding in the Union Budget for certain crucial schemes which has resulted in non-release of the Centre's share of committed funding for the scheme. I would like to draw specific attention in this regard to the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Castes, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and the Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan.

35. In the case of the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Castes, the Government of Tamil Nadu has submitted the utilization certificates for the funds released by the Government of India up to the year 2015-2016 and submitted claims for Rs.1,882.04 crore for the year 2016-2017 including the arrears of Rs.669.47 crore for the period up to the year 2015-2016, and this very large amount is yet to be released by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. While the Ministry has admitted Tamil Nadu's claims, funds have not been released due to insufficient budgetary allocations. Given the sensitivity of the issue,

I request that adequate budgetary allocations should be made for this scheme and the funds released to the States without any further delay. It also very important to ensure that the current absolute level of Central support for the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme should at least be maintained in the period beyond the end of the Twelfth Plan period on 31.03.2017.

36. In the case of the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan, the Ministry of Human Resource Development has been unable to meet its committed share of funding for the Annual Action Plans approved by the Ministry due to reduced allocation of funds in the Union Budget. Tamil Nadu has a total pending release of Rs.1,862.34 crore under the two schemes for the period upto 31.03.2017. This is very unfortunate considering that the Government of India levies Education Cess on various taxes specifically to fund the schemes. The non-release of the committed Central Share of funding not only adversely affects the fiscal health of the State, but also disrupts the effective implementation of schemes in very important social sectors. A significant portion of the revenue deficit problem now confronting many States stems from this pernicious practice.

37. There are Centrally Sponsored Schemes to cover priority areas like Agriculture, Rural Drinking Water Supply and Poverty Reduction. Unfortunately, the allocation of funds for schemes in these sectors is too meagre to give substance to the priority being accorded to the sector. Hence, the Government of India must ensure that the budgetary allocations are made for Centrally Sponsored Schemes in priority areas are stepped up substantially to ensure impact.

38. One of the consequences of the reorganization of a number of smaller schemes under broader umbrella schemes is that many are continued as sub-schemes with insignificant allocations which will not have any meaningful impact at the National level. In such cases, either the allocations should be increased to

meaningful levels or the sub-schemes should be discontinued.

39. Compassion is the hallmark of a great Nation and the manner in which it cares for its poorest and most vulnerable is what would make India truly great. Hence, elimination of poverty and providing a social safety net for the vulnerable that is second to none in the world should be what we strive for. At present at the National Level, the Rural and Urban Livelihood Missions only cover some selected blocks and selected large cities. Further, the scale of funding for the Village Poverty Reduction Committees also varies substantially. In Tamil Nadu, we are supplementing both the coverage and financing through State funds and multi lateral financing. However, it is important that the coverage of both the National Rural and Urban Livelihood Missions is extended to the entire Country and the financing substantially stepped up so that poverty reduction is accelerated.

40. A historic reform of indirect taxes in India has been achieved with the passage of the Central GST, Integrated GST and GST Compensation Acts in the Parliament. The Tamil Nadu GST Bill will be placed before the State Legislative Assembly shortly. Tamil Nadu has been consistently raising its concerns about the impact of the proposed GST on the fiscal autonomy of States and the huge permanent revenue loss it is likely to cause to a manufacturing and net exporting State like Tamil Nadu. In the aftermath of the 101st Amendment of the Constitution, Tamil Nadu has been taking an active part in the deliberations of the GST Council so as to ensure that the rights

of the States are protected. We are happy that the deliberations in the GST Council are taking place in a spirit of consensus and significant suggestions made by Tamil Nadu have been accepted.

I urge that the deliberations on the remaining issues should proceed in the same spirit of mutual give and take.

41. I would also like to strike a note of caution that the loss of revenue from implementation of GST could affect both the States and the Centre. In addition to the mandated compensation for loss of revenue due to implementation of GST, the States also get other transfers of funds from the Centre, both as devolution based on Finance Commission recommendations, and as the Central share of funds for Centrally Sponsored Schemes. Even within the GST framework, the quantum of funds required for compensating the States could be much higher than what was originally contemplated. In this context, I strongly emphasize that the Centre is obligated to ensure that other transfers of resources from the Centre to the States are not affected while compensating the States for GST implementation, as any cut-back in the overall transfer of funds would greatly impact the development expenditure of States.

42. Tamil Nadu has taken several steps to ensure that digital technology is fully harnessed for governance and for ensuring peoples' welfare. More than 99 per cent of all adults in the State have been issued Aadhaar numbers. The process of biometric enumeration of students and children in the age group of 0 – 5 years is currently under way and is expected

to be completed shortly. Aadhaar seeded Ration Cards are currently being distributed. Several other population databases have also been seeded with Aadhaar numbers including beneficiaries under Old Age Pension, Labour Welfare, Land Records and Scholarships.

43. Tamil Nadu was an early adopter of cash based Direct Benefits Transfer to bank accounts including under the old age pension, scholarship, maternity benefit, wage payment under MNREGA and relief payments for those affected by natural calamities. However, the last mile disbursements to the beneficiaries after bank transfers is still an issue as the banks' network of banking correspondents is inadequate causing inconvenience and difficulty for common people in rural areas to access their money in bank accounts. Further, Tamil Nadu is not in favour of monetizing and transferring as cash the subsidy element on food, fertilizer and fuel, as in such cases, more than the quantum of benefit, physical availability of the commodity is an issue.

44. The Government of Tamil Nadu has also entered into an MoU with Government of India for covering all the Panchayats under the Bharat Net Scheme of Government of India. The process of establishing the network has started.

45. As regards digital payments, Point-of-Sale (PoS) machines are being installed in around 10,000 e-Sevai centres in the State, so that payments can be made digitally. The integration of Aadhar with the beneficiaries database is helping to roll out the Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AEPS) as well.

More than 140 services of the Government are provided online through e-Sevai centres and additionally 300 services will be provided within 2 months. More than 3 crore transactions have taken place online through the e-Sevai centres established by the Government over the past 3 years.

46. When the NITI Aayog was formed, Tamil Nadu had urged that there should be a systematic mechanism in the new institution to take on board the views of the States at different levels in the hierarchy of the organization to enable federally empowered functioning and active participation of the States. NITI Aayog has played this role quite effectively. Views of State Governments have been pro-actively sought and taken on board, as reflected in the Sub-Group Reports and other Papers that have been prepared and placed before us. However, one concern has been that NITI Aayog has not had sufficient clout with the Government of India Ministries to ensure that the views of the States are taken on board adequately in scheme and policy formulation falling within the domain of the Ministries. It would be much more useful if for all interactions which the NITI Aayog has with State Governments, there is effective participation by the Ministries dealing with the issue in Government of India.

47. We need to be careful to ensure that the meetings of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog do not become ritualistic exercises similar to the National Development Council. This should be a forum where the States are called to discuss, debate and evolve mutually beneficial policies and programmes

instead of a mere ceremonial meeting where opinions are sought but no action is taken. The Chief Ministers' views should be heard and given due weightage.

48. We in Tamil Nadu, under the leadership of Perarinar Anna, Puratchi Thalaivar MGR and Puratchi Thalaivi Amma have always strongly pleaded for an increased role for the States in the development and Nation building process and for greater fiscal autonomy for States. It is our belief that a Strong Union can emerge only out of Strong States and India's

governance structure has to reflect more and more federal features.

49. I have placed before this august gathering the views of the Government of Tamil Nadu. I do hope that our views would be given due weightage and States will now find themselves full partners in the development process and together we are able to work to place the Nation on a high growth trajectory.

Nandri

Vanakkam.

NEWS IN PICTURE



The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami dedicated INS Chennai Warship to the Chennai Corporation on behalf of the Indian Navy at a function at Chennai Port Trust on 17.04.2017. In this connection, the Hon'ble Chief Minister declared open a culvert.

Four per cent DA hike for Government Staff



Statement of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami
on 26.04.2017 (*English Translation*)

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma always took interest in the welfare of the people and conceived many schemes for their benefit. As Government servants and teachers play a major role in taking welfare schemes to the people, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma announced many concessions to them. As I am treading the path laid down by Hon'ble Amma, I issued orders for increase in the Dearness Allowance of Government employees and teachers with effect from 01.01.2017.

The Central Government announced that the Dearness Allowance of its employees who are not getting revised income on 01.01.2016, would be increased by 4 per cent from 01.01.2017. Based on the announcement, I am happy to announce a similar 4 per cent increase in the Dearness Allowance of the Tamil Nadu Government employees, teachers, pensioners and family pensioners from 01.01.2017.

This DA raise will be applicable to employees of the local bodies, staff and teachers of the Government aided-educational institutions, Village Assistants working under Revenue Department, Anganwadi and Noon Meal workers, Panchayat workers, employees, who are regularly getting the DA, and Pensioners and family pensioners. The employees will get an increase ranging from Rs. 244/- to Rs. 3,080/- and the pensioners and family pensioners between Rs. 122/- and Rs. 1,540/- a month.

This additional DA from January 2017 to April 2017 will be paid along with salary of May 2017. About 18 lakh Government employees, pensioners and family pensioners will be benefited and it will cost the Exchequer Rs. 986.77 crore per annum. ●

Chief Minister launches issue of Smart ration cards, swears by Amma welfare schemes



Speech delivered by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami on 01.04.2017 at the Government function held at
Korattur, Tiruvallur District while distributing smart ration cards to
family ration card holders under the public distribution system (*English Translation*)

I salute the deity, Hon'ble Idhaya Deivam
Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and express my
greetings to.

Hon'ble Ministers who have graced this
pleasant function,

Members of Parliament and Members of
Legislature,

Chief Secretary of the Tamil Nadu Government,

Food, Co-operation and Consumer Protection Department Principal Secretary who delivered the welcome address,

Commissioner of Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Department who is to give the vote of thanks,

Tamil Nadu Government officials, Press and Media friends,

Respectable ladies and gentlemen.

Hon'ble Amma ordered the supply of free rice to family ration card holders, an excellent scheme in force in no other State in India. It was Hon'ble Amma who announced the implementation of Universal Public Distribution System without any exclusion based on income criteria as above poverty line or below poverty line and not only rid the Tamil Nadu people of the scourge of hunger but also ensured food security. That is the reason why this Government following in the footsteps of Hon'ble Amma will implement the Universal Public Distribution System.

I am extremely happy to have inaugurated the scheme of distributing Smart cards to 1.89 crore family ration card holders, and to have launched through video conferencing the Distribution of essential commodities.

Bharatiyar gave poetic voice to every individual's right for food, through the lines, 'Thaniyuru Manidhanukku Unavillai Yenil, Jagathinai Azhithiduvom' (We will take the world to task even if a single individual is denied food).

Puratchi Thalaivar MGR and Puratchi Thalaivi Amma held that for the poor to be happy, first their hunger must be satisfied. Their conviction was that schemes to ensure food for

the poor were more important for the country than any other schemes. During their regimes, they constantly implemented schemes for the happiness of the common folk in the lower strata of society, labourers who earn their daily wages and farmers and farm workers.

To the amazement of people in other States as well foreign countries, Puratchi Thalaivar MGR implemented the noon meal scheme to satisfy the hunger of poor kids and Puratchi Thalaivi Amma opened Amma canteens to provide food at low prices for poor people. The Tamil saying goes that Annadaanam (offering food as charity) is the greatest way of giving. I am reminded of a story in the Mahabharatha on the greatness of giving away food.

When we think of charity and munificence, the first name that comes to our mind is that of Karnan. When Karnan was in heaven after his passing, he experienced extreme hunger one day. He went to Narada and asked why he alone was experiencing hunger, a sensation unknown to anyone in heaven.

Narada explained, "In your earthly life you gave away all things out of your generosity. But there was one exception. You did not do Annadaanam, offering of food to those in need. One day a wayfarer sought from you the location of a choultry providing free food. You pointed to that choultry with your index finger. Though you have not done Annadaanam yourself, you have pointed out the place where Annadaanam was being done. Your index finger which you used to do that is therefore blessed with the merit of having done Annadaanam. If you put your index finger in your mouth now, your hunger will be satisfied".

One should understand from this that if such merit is acquired even by pointing to a

place where Annadaanam was being done, the benefits of actually doing Annadaanam are incalculable.

Our Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma acquired this merit immensely by satisfying the hunger of the poor by providing free rice to every home, free rice for Ramzan gruel and for the Annadaanam scheme in temples. I assure you that this Government which follows Amma's way will implement the Annadaanam schemes by streamlining them further.

Even rice surplus States like Andhra Pradesh, Chattishgarh, Punjab and West Bengal are distributing rice to family ration card holders only for a cost. It is only in our Tamil Nadu that the scheme to supply ration card holders with rice free of cost is being implemented from 01.06.2011. At this juncture, I am proud to say that Tamil Nadu is the only State which is implementing many such schemes by allocating a whopping Rs. 5,500 crore for the Food Department.

All the awards given by the Central Government in 2013 and 2014 for the creation of food storage infrastructure were won by Tamil Nadu. Record food grain production, provision of cash incentives to farmers for paddy production, organizing camps for redressal of grievances of consumers on the very day of their being brought up are some of the singular achievements of Hon'ble Amma who really was a Doyenne of Achievements.

Hon'ble Amma was an Achiever not only because she envisaged and implemented such schemes, but also because she had the unfailing faculty of ensuring that the fruits of such schemes reached the common folk at the farthest reaches of society. That is why she enforced the seamless delivery of essential commodities to

ration card holders by computerization of all the activities of the Public Distribution System which was of great use to the common Public, and also through Aadhar linking of the ration cards.

At present, about 1 crore 89 lakh ration cards are in use in Tamil Nadu. Through the 34,840 fair price shops run by co-operative societies and the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation essential commodities like rice, wheat, sugar, kerosene are supplied to ration card holders. Under the Special Public Distribution System, toor dhal, urad dhal and fortified palmolein oil are distributed to family card holders at subsidized prices.

Ration cards printed on paper have been in use for people to draw essential commodities. They were issued in 2005 and since then have been extended to date. It was considered that there must be overall surveillance to ensure that needed quantities of essential commodities were kept available in the shops, bogus ration cards weeded out and bogus listing averted. It has been planned to go in for complete computerisation of Public Distribution System, to network all the shops and offices concerned through computers, and to ensure surveillance of all their activities. Also, the grievances of consumers will be gathered through website, email, SMS and phone with a view to addressing them by establishing digital links.

Keeping all this in view, Hon'ble Idhaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, announced under Rule 110 in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly in the year 2013, that the Public Distribution System would be computerized so that the transportation of essential commodities from Food Corporation of India and the godowns of Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies



Corporation of India to Fair Price Shops could be kept under surveillance.

Also, during the demand for grants of the Food and Civil Supplies Department in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, it was announced that Smart cards would be issued on the basis of National Population Register. Consequent on this, in 2015, a Rs. 330 crore scheme for end-to-end computerization of the Public Distribution System was envisaged, with a System Integrator being selected through tender process and also entrusted with the task of maintaining the System for a period of five years after State-wide implementation.

Based on this, in 2015, point of sale devices were installed in the fair price shops in the Districts of Perambalur and Ariyalur and through web based tracking all the activities of the Public Distribution System were kept under surveillance. Subsequent to this, in

September 2016 this scheme was extended to all the Districts of Tamil Nadu.

To facilitate the issue of Smart cards in place of ration cards, the point of sale devices help collect Aadhar-linked data for a valid and updated New Data Base of PDS beneficiaries all over Tamil Nadu.

Out of the 6.90 crore members in ration cards dealt with in this manner, the Aadhar details of 5.85 crore members have been collected thus far. According to this, the full Aadhar details have been obtained for 1.17 crore ration cards out of 1.89 crore ration cards. In 70 lakh ration cards, the Aadhar details of at least one member have been collected. Aadhar details of at least one member have been collected for 99 per cent of the total number of ration cards. On the basis of the Aadhar details thus gathered, Smart cards have been prepared and are being distributed. The Tamil Nadu Government is itself bearing the cost of these Smart cards and distributing them free of cost.

The details of the essential commodities supplied through the ration cards are being sent by SMS to the card holders so that they can know the details of the commodities. Till now, the mobile phone numbers of 1.67 crore card holders have been collected. Through this method of sending the details of the essential commodities drawn through the ration cards by SMS to the card holders, the practice of creating bogus lists will be averted.

Moreover, as the duplication of a person's name in more than one ration card is averted in addition to the elimination of bogus ration cards and bogus listing of issue of essential commodities, the supply of essential commodities to deserving beneficiaries is ensured. Toll free numbers '1967' and '1800 425 5901' have been established so that ration card holders can register their complaints regarding the Public Distribution System.

As the Public Distribution System has been completely computerized, the Public can send their petitions for new ration cards as well as those for addition or deletion of names and change of address, online. The Department officials concerned would then be able to look into their petitions and take action in case of eligibility so that ration card holders can swiftly access the PDS services that they are entitled to. The Public can also access such services through e-service centres.

It has been decided that the Distribution of smart ration cards which has started today at Korattur in Tiruvallur District, will be completed all over the State in two months, that is before the end of the months of April and May. The Public can use the old ration card and get all the essential commodities till they

get the Smart ration card. Family card holders can go to the fair price shops in person and get their Smart ration cards after they are informed through SMS about it.

The scheme that has been launched today through this function serves to reiterate the fact that this Government will continue to implement the welfare programmes left to us by Hon'ble Amma.

As the true meaning of democracy is that the maximum benefits should go to the largest number of people, the Smart card Distribution which will benefit the maximum number of people has been launched by Hon'ble Amma's democratic Government.

Food plays a sublime part in a mother's expression of love. When partaking of food, some people say that 'this reminds me of my mother's cooking'. The reason for this is that the food cooked by a mother is suffused with her love and affection. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma shone as goddess Annapoorani for the entire State and implemented many schemes through which poor people and poor kids were properly fed. Now and forever, Hon'ble Amma is one with the people and is their mother. On the part of this Government that follows Amma's way, there will be no shortage of love and affection, as well as of food. The foremost goal of Amma's Government is to fashion a State where there are no poor people. Giving the assurance that we who received our training from Hon'ble Amma will work towards that goal with full involvement, I express my heartfelt gratitude to the good hearted ones who made the arrangement for this historic function.

Chithirai new year awards conferred on Tamil savants



The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami distributed Tamil Thai Award, Kapilar Award, U.Ve.Sa. Award, Kambar Award, Sollin Selvar Award, G.U.Pope Award, Umaru Pulavar Award, Ilango Adigal Award, Amma Ilakkiya Award and Best Translator Award for the year 2016 and Chief Minister's Computer Tamil Award and Tamil Chemmal Award for the year 2015 totalling 52 awards at the Secretariat on 25.04.2017.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, with a view to honour Tamil Scholars issued orders for

distribution of Chithirai New Year Awards and distributed the Awards every year during the Chithirai New year. Under this, G.U.Pope Award is being given to the best author for translating Tamil literature into foreign language. With a view to honour Umaru Pulavar, who had done great service to Tamil language, Umaru Pulavar Award is being given to those who are doing great service to Tamil language and its literature. Tamil Chemmal Award is being given to 32 Tamil Scholars, one each for one District, who have brought fame to the Tamil Language. To encourage those who develop Tamil software

for computers, the Chief Minister's Computer Tamil Award is being given every year. Similarly every year an Award is being given in the name of Ilango Adigal, who has given the great Tamil epic Silapathikaram. Amma Ilakkiya Award for the best the best woman Tamil writer and Best Translator Award to 10 Tamil authors who had translated best books in other languages into Tamil language are also given. In addition to these awards, 55 Tamil Scholars are chosen every year for the Tamil Scholar award for their yeoman service to the Tamil language.

This Government, which is treading the path laid down by the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has selected Manavar Mandram Tamil Amaippu for the Tamil Thai Award for 2016 and handed over a cheque for Rs. 5 lakh, a shield, a citation and a ponnadai to the office-bears of the Mandram.

The following are the award winners: Kapilar Award to Dr.L.K. Agniputran, U.Ve.Sa Award to Dr.M.A. Venkatakkrishnan, Sollin Selvar Award to Thiru. B.Manikandan, G.U.Pope Award to Thiru. Arumugam on behalf of Tmt. Vaidehi Hebert, Umaru Pulavar Award to Prof. Dr.T.M.Abdul Kader, Ilango Adigal Award to Thiru. N.Nanjundan, Amma Literary Award to Tmt.. Hamsa Dhanagopal. Each Award consists of a Cheque for Rs. 1 lakh, one sovereign gold medallion, a shawl and a citation.

The best Translator Awards for the year 2016 was given to Tmt. Nagalakshmi Shanmugam, Thiru. A.Zakir Hussain, Thiru. Alla Pitchai, alias Mohammed Parista, Tmt. Uma Balu, Dr. K.Chellapan, Selvi V.Chaitanya, Thiru. C.Murugesan, Thiru. K.Balasubramanian, Thiru. S.Arumugam Pillai and Dr.K.S.Subramanian. The Award consists of a cheque for Rs. 1 Lakh, a citation and a shawl.



The Chief Minister's best Computer Tamil Award for the year 2015 is given to Thiru. S.Murali alias Selva Murali and the award consists of a cheque for a cash of Rs. one lakh, one sovereign gold medallion, citation and a shawl.

The Tamil Chemmal Awards for the Year 2015 are given to Thiru. Vembattur (M) Krishnan (Chennai District), Dr.M.K.Ramanan (Tiruvallur District), Thiru. K.M.Durai alias Kavignar Kuram Durai (Kancheepuram), Thiru. V.Padmanabhan Pulavar K.Padhumanar (Vellore District), Thiru. N.Nagarajan (Krishnagiri), Thiru.Paa. Indirarasan(Tiruvannamalai District), Kavignar P.Aaraamudan (Villupuram District), Dr.Aranga Pari (Cuddalore District), Thiru. S.Sundaram alias Venbavur S.Sundaram (Perambalur District), Dr.M.S.Victor (Ariyalur District), Kavignar P.Velusami (Salem District), Thiru. Thakadur Vanapriyanaar alias K.Ramachandran (Dharmapuri District), Pulavar M.Chinnu (Namakkal District), Dr.S.Chandrakumari (Erode District), Thiru. S.Varadasigamani (Karur District), Dr.Chinthanai Kavignar Kavidasan (Coimbatore District), Thiru. A.Muruganathan(Tiruppur District), Tmt. Mani Arjunana (Nilgiris District), Prof.T.V.Rajendran (Tiruchirappalli District), Thiru. Gnanalalaya B.Krishnamurthi (Pudukottai District),

Thiru. T.Anadaraman (Sivagangai District), Pulavar Thangarasu (Thanjavur District), Thiru. V.Ramamurthi (Tiruvarur District), Thiru. S.Sayyad Mohammed Kaliba Sahib, (Nagapattinam District), Thiru. Jagada (Ramanathapuram District), Dr.Anuradha Ganesh on behalf of her father Late Tirukkural Semmal N. Manimozhian (Madurai District), Thiru. M.Periasami alias Tamil Periasami, (Dindigul District), Shanmugarajan on behalf of his father late Tamil teacher Thiru. P.Pandiyarajan (Theni District), Dr.K.Ramachandran (Virudhunagar District), Dr.Captain Thiru. P.Velammal (Tirunelveli District), Thiru. K.Allikannan (Thoothukudi District) and Dr.Siva Padmanabhan (Kanniyakumari District).

The Hon'ble Chief Minister handed over the cheque for Rs. 25,000/-, a shawl and a citation each to the Tamil Scholars.

Hon'ble Minister for Information and Publicity Thiru. Kadambur Raju, Hon'ble Minister for HR and CE Thiru. Sevoor S.Ramachandran, Chief Secretary Dr.Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Tamil Development and Information Department Secretary (In charge) Thiru. R.Venkatesan I.A.S., Director of Tamil Development (In charge) Dr. G.Vijayaraghavan and high Government officials participated. ●



Chief Minister grows nostalgic at Presidency College function

Rs.10 crore allotted for new hostel block for students

Speech delivered by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami on the 175th anniversary, College Day and Sports Day functions of the Presidency College in Chennai on 18.04.2017 (*English Translation*).

I bow in the direction of the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, who is the personification of love, who is a repository of talent, and who lives in the hearts of students and the people;

Hon'ble Minister for Fisheries, Finance, Personnel and Administrative Reforms Thiru. D. Jayakumar, Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education Thiru. K.P.Anbalagan, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, South Chennai, Thiru. S.R.Vijayakumar, Principal Secretary, Higher Education Department Thiru. Sunil Paliwal I.A.S., Director of College Education

Dr. J . Manjula, Dr. T. Pramananda Perumal, Principal of the College, who welcomed the gathering, High Government officials, Higher Education Department officials, Dr. Tarabai Dachayini, who is going to propose a vote of thanks, press and media friends, students and friends I offer my respects to all of you.

I am really proud to participate in the historic function of the College and to lay the foundation for the commemorative arch to mark the 175th Anniversary of the College.



I thank the Professors and Students of the College who have given me this opportunity.

Presidency College has the proud distinction of being the first Government College in South India which was started during British Rule and was in existence even during the formation of the Madras University.

Every classroom in the College has produced scholars and scientists not only for the University but for the Country. Time is not sufficient now to list the names of scholars who were students of the College. But I would like to list a few of them.

The College has produced scholars like Dr. Sir C.V. Raman, who discovered the Raman Effect and won the Nobel Prize for

Physics, Dr.S.Chandrasekar, who did research on Asteroids and won the Nobel Prize for Physics, Thiru. S.R.Srinivasa Varadan, winner of Abel Prize, equivalent to Nobel Prize, late C.Subramaniam, who was responsible for the Country to attain self-sufficiency in food, Chinthanai Chirpi Thiru. Singaravelar, besides a host of excellent I.A.S. and I.P.S. officers and Industrialists.

Thiru. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer, who gave a boost to Tamil literature by retrieving the old Tamil manuscripts from every nook and corner of Tamil Nadu was among the teaching faculty of the College.

The College is also waiting to produce many achievers in the coming years. Many people



among the audience are likely to become scholars and leaders in future. That is why I am happy to participate in the College function and meet you all at this juncture.

It is said that a country's future is shaped in its classrooms. Formal education alone cannot decide the future of a student. Only social education can develop him into a complete man. We study more but act less. This attitude should change. In this computer age, every educational institution should provide education that nurses talents to face challenges and sharpen the mind of students. Education is not for examinations alone but is a guidance for life. As this College is providing such a type of education, it is able to find a place in history.

When we think of scholars and leaders produced by the College we should also think of the teachers at this juncture who were responsible for their achievements and respect the teachers also. They are all like roots of a big tree which are not visible outside. That is why the teaching profession is called a noble profession.

At this juncture I am reminded of a historical event. Greek King Philip sent his son Alexander to his teacher Aristotle for education. Once Aristotle was taking Alexander to a hill side. On the way there was heavy flood. Alexander, who was till then coming behind informed the teacher as the floods were rising menacingly that he would go ahead and requested Aristotle



to follow him. But Aristotle advised Alexander not to go before him as the flood was very heavy and he might drown in the floods. But Alexander replied that Aristotle could produce thousands of Alexanders but thousands of Alexanders could not produce a single Aristotle. So he said that he would go in the front.

This story shows how important teachers are. Every teacher, like Aristotle should produce scholars who would bring fame to the country. Similarly, every student like Alexander should respect his teacher.

At this time the students should also think of their parent's hopes and their feelings. Parents send their wards with dreams. The students should fulfill the parent's aspirations. Students should not allow their thoughts and actions to distract them. You should always concentrate on studies to come up in life. Then only you can fulfill the aspirations and dreams of your parents.

Every student needs leverage for his advancement. Teachers provide the necessary leverage for the students to take on life. You enter into schools as students and come out as men from Colleges. Schools teach you education but higher education provides you the foundation for your life.

Higher Education also plays a pivotal role in developing the country and the advancement of humanity. With this as the sole motive, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalavi Amma had implemented

many schemes to provide higher education for poor students. I would like to bring to your notice some of those schemes.

With the aim of providing higher education at lesser cost, especially to students in villages, between 2011 and March 2017, the State Government opened 4 Government Engineering Colleges, 44 Government and University constituent Arts and Science Colleges, 16 Government Polytechnics, National Law College and Information Technological College. In all Engineering Colleges in Tamil Nadu, the first generation students, who are admitted in the first year and laterally in the second year through single window counselling are given Rs. 722 crore as education grant. Taking into consideration the increase in enrollment of students in Government Colleges, 959 new courses have been started between 2011 and March 2017. About 6 lakh students studying in Government and Government-aided Colleges are given laptops at no cost. Free bus passes have been given to 8,51,542 students. For the first time in the country, 74 students of the Government and Government-Aided Colleges were sent abroad for one session to study in Colleges abroad and 15 teachers were sent to England to update their knowledge. A total of 117 engineering and polytechnic students belonging to poor strata of society were given Rs. 25,000/- each for continuing their education. Under the free education scheme in the last five years 4,63,063 under graduate students and 30,0403



post graduate students of Government and Government-aided arts and science Colleges benefited. To create job opportunities for higher education students, university – industry linkage centres were created to link the students with industries. Soft skill centres were created in 62 Government arts and science Colleges in the State to enable students get job opportunities. In Government and Government-aided Colleges students who want to pursue full-time research in various faculties, Rs. 36,000/- is being given as assistance. So far, 514 students benefited.

To encourage students to appear in Union Public Service Examinations, free coaching classes are being conducted in Queen Mary's College, Chennai and in Arulmigu Sri Meenakshi Government College for Women in Madurai. Special coaching classes are being conducted for slow-learning Government College students belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribe and Most Backward Class. Last year 10,598 students benefited. Apart from the above, many educational schemes are being implemented and only the Hon'ble Amma Government is implementing these schemes.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had created a revolution and renaissance in education through various schemes and that is the reason the percentage of enrollment in higher education in Tamil Nadu is 44.39 per cent compared to the all-India average of 24.5 per cent.

Due to various schemes of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the State was able to create various records in higher education. That is why every year youth are able to create more records in higher education compared to previous years.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in 2015 conducted International Investors' conference, which attracted Rs. 2,42,160 crore investment through 98 Memorandum of Understandings and new industries were started. International investors' conference is to be conducted again in the current year-end which may result in more industries and more employment for educated youth.

I am proud to lay the foundation stone for the 175th memorial arch for the College to be set up at a cost of Rs. 40 lakh. The Victoria Hostel of the College is 117 years old. The College Principal and Professors appealed to me to provide a new hostel for the students. Taking into consideration the demand of students, I have issued orders for allotment of Rs. 10 crore for constructing a new hostel for students. The work on the new hostel will be started this year itself. The College Principal has also put forward some more demands which will be taken into consideration by the Government.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalavi Amma has said that if a State to develop economically, then human resource development, especially knowledge based Human Resource Development is

necessary and education plays major role in knowledge based HRD. I appeal to Professors and Students to extend their full co-operation to the State Government so that the State is able to provide such education.

The students of the College are really gifted. It is a matter of pride to be a student of this College. There were no such facilities when the Hon'ble Higher Education Minister and I were students. When I was studying in Sri Vasavi College in Erode, there was no transport facility but still we studied and came up in life. It is hard work which is responsible for our growth. Where there is hard work, there will definitely be growth. We were born in villages and the Hon'ble Fisheries Minister belonged to poor strata of society. We owed our

growth to our teachers, as we acted as per their advice. Consider the situation in which a person born in a village has become the Chief Minister of the State. How is it possible? It is nothing but sheer hard work. Similarly, students too should work hard and try to achieve a great position. That alone will bring prosperity to your life and glory to your parents.

I wish the College does more and more service in the field of education and produces scholars and brings laurels to the State. I also congratulate students who won prizes and thank all those who are responsible for the success of the function.

Nandri, vanakkam. ■

NEWS IN PICTURE



Two school girl students belonging to Kancheepuram District won the gold and silver medals in the WUSHU (Self defence) competitions held at Osmania University from 19.04.2017 to 23.04.2017. Gold medallist Selvi R.A.Kayalvizhi and Silver medallist Selvi V. Harini met the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat in Chennai on 26.04.2017 and showed him the medals. The Hon'ble Chief Minister congratulated the winners for their achievement. Hon'ble Minister for School Education, Sports and Youth Welfare Thiru. K.A.Sengottaiyan, Thiru. I.S.Inbadurai MLA and Tamil Nadu Wushu Association members were present.



‘Huge budgetary allocation shows primacy given to education’

Speech of the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** on 01.04.2017, at SRM Higher Secondary School, Ambattur, Tiruvallur District, while distributing appointment orders for Lecturers and prizes to winners in the competition to create awareness on disaster management, and inaugurating various school education schemes on 01.04.2017 (English Translation).

I bow in the direction of Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the embodiment of loving tenderness and the fountainhead of power who is lodged in the hearts of students and people forever, and salute her.

Hon’ble Ministers who are attending this pleasant function, the Chief Secretary, Members of Parliament, the School Education Secretary who delivered the welcome address, high officials of the Tamil Nadu Government, Director of the State Council of Educational Research and Training who is to deliver the vote of thanks, officials of the Education

Department, friends of the Press and media. I warmly greet all of you.

I am immensely pleased to meet all of you while taking part in this function for the distribution of appointment orders for the post of Lecturers in the Directorate of Teacher Education Research and Training, District Institutes of Education and Training and Government Teacher Training Institutes, which are all functioning with the blessings of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma whose personality was marked by high thinking and noble purpose. This function is also being held for giving away



prizes to winners in State-level competitions held to create awareness of disaster management and to inaugurate various School Education Schemes.

It is education that opens the eye of intelligence in students and gives them the mettle to face challenges in life. It is with the aim that all people should have recourse to education without any difficulty and to lessen the burden of the cost of education on the poor, that Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma introduced manifold welfare schemes for students. These include free bus pass, uniforms at no cost, free textbooks, crayons, colour pencils, geometry box, Atlas, school bag, footwear, bicycle and laptop. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma also introduced 16 nutritious varieties in midday meals for school children, special incentives to stop dropping out, woollen sweaters to school children in hilly regions, free notebooks, and financial assistance to students who lose the earning member of the family. This Government which is following in the footsteps of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is also implementing various such welfare schemes diligently.

Our Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma knew that the growth of a Nation and its economic

development are dependent on the educational status of its people. She therefore concentrated on making every child a valuable resource through education.

A country's destiny is moulded in its classrooms. Parents might have given birth to a child. But it is the teachers who serve as the windows through which students make sense of the world and as the ladder through which they rise in life.

In our tradition, the guru is given a place after mother and father. That is why our forefathers set the order of respect and reverence as Maatha, Pitha, Guru, Deivam.

The teacher's work is like the work of a sculptor. Yours is the sacred job of transforming students into divine deities through the use of the chisel of intelligence. It is to encourage this blessed service that the TamilNadu Government honours model teachers by conferring the Dr. Radhakrishnan award on them.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma has elevated the education sector into a sector that enriches human resources. She allocated more resources to the education sector than to any other. She formulated various schemes and

implemented them with the aim of making Tamil Nadu a State with cent per cent literacy.

Net enrolment rate in Primary Schools went up to 99.85 per cent in 2015-2016 and net High School enrolment to 99.11 per cent because of the various welfare schemes implemented by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's Government so that all children of school-going age have easy access to Secondary and Higher Secondary education. These schemes include starting of new schools, upgrading Primary Schools into Middle Schools, starting new residential schools, and giving students transport and escort facilities in habitations where this is no possibility to open a school. In the period 2011-2012 to 2016-2017, 226 new Primary Schools have been started and 115 Primary Schools been upgraded into Upper Primary Schools.

On the orders of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma trimester system was brought into force from Class 1 to Class 8. Through this trimester system, apart from lessening the book load of students it has been ensured that students give more attention to learning. One can say that this scheme is a milestone in the annals of education in Tamil Nadu.

The Tamil Nadu Government is ensuring that under the Right to Education Act, 25 per cent of seats in private schools are reserved for economically and socially disadvantaged students. Because of enforcing this reservation, the number of students joining private schools in this manner from the aforesaid sections of society has been rising in the last three years. In 2013-2014, 49,864 such students joined private schools. In 2016-2017, the number almost doubled to 97,506.

Due to the various schemes implemented by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the academic performance of students in the class X and class XII Public Examinations has been improving significantly. In the academic year 2015-2016, the pass percentage in class X public exams rose to 93.6 per cent, and in class XII it rose to 91.4 per cent. Here, I also feel pride in mentioning the fact that in the class X Public Examination, 1,467 Government Higher Secondary schools and High Schools, and in the class XII Public Examination 266 Government High Schools secured cent per cent results.

In the School Education Department, 74,316 teachers have been appointed by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's Government in the past five years because of the concern that the learning process of students should not be affected due to lack of teachers.

The whopping allocation in the 2017-2018 budget of 26,932 crore rupees for school education is testimony to the fact that education is getting prime priority in the scheme of things of this Government that treads in the path of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

To improve the quality of education in the Government Schools and Government Aided Schools, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma upgraded the Directorate of Teacher Education Research and Training (DTERT) into the State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT).

This upgraded State Council for Educational Research and Training not only ensures that the teachers instruct more effectively and the students learn better, but works to transform Tamil Nadu into India's knowledge capital and a model of socio-economic growth in tune

with Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's Vision 2023 document.

Nine new sections have been newly formed in the State Council for Educational Research and Training and 36 educationist posts newly created. For the State Council for Educational Research and Training and the institutions functioning under it like the District Institutes of Educational Training and Government Teacher Training Institutes, posts of 11 Senior Lecturers, 80 Lecturers, 18 Junior Lecturers have been filled through Teachers Recruitment Board. Yesterday (31.03.2017), counselling was held for the 109 persons selected for the above posts and appointment orders are being given today by me, functioning with the blessings of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

At this joyful juncture, I am duty-bound to mention the various activities that the State Council for Educational Research and Training is engaged in to foster the growth of education.

- ★ When students in some Districts including Chennai were all at sea after they lost their belongings including textbooks as a result of the flooding of 2015, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma went to their rescue and ordered that study material be prepared and distributed to students of Class 10 and 12. TNSCERT rose to the occasion swiftly and prepared the study materials and Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma herself released the study materials. It is praiseworthy that the students who faced the examination without fear due to this step, showed greater proficiency in their subjects and also raised the pass percentage of the Districts concerned.
- ★ Tamil Nadu has become a model State in virtual education by establishing virtual

classrooms in 770 schools and 11 District Institutes of Education and Training.

- ★ In tune with the digital era in which we live, digitization of textbooks and preparation of 950 videos has been achieved and textbooks have been distributed to students.
- ★ To make the learning process delightful, a video of songs figuring in Tamil Textbooks from Class 1 to 5 has been produced with the participation of students and teachers of Government schools. The compact disc of these songs titled 'Thaayenappaduvadhu Tamizh' was released by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and has become very popular.

May the activities of SCERT which is engaged in such commendable work in manifold ways, flourish!

At this juncture, I reiterate that this Government which is following in the footsteps of Amma, will continue to implement schemes promoting education in ways that fulfill Amma's ideas in this respect.

In sum, I would like to put forward one thing to the Lecturers who have received their appointment orders today. The power of transforming students into the makers of our country by moulding them in tune with our times is solely in your hands. I have the confidence that you will do this task in the right way. I am reminded of a story in this regard.

There was a sage who lived in an ashram in the forest. He taught all students, whether rich or poor, alike. The king of a domain also sent his son to be educated in this ashram. Years rolled by. One day, the king went to the ashram himself to find out what his son had learnt. When he saw his son chopping wood



and sweeping the floor in the ashram, the king was shocked and questioned him about it. The prince said that he was only carrying out the orders of his gurudeva. “There is no difference between king and commoner in this ashram. It is our duty to carry out the bidding of our guru”, the prince said.

The sage too came to the scene. He said, “King, your son has passed all the tests I set for him. The greatest quality is to listen to the words of elders. Your son has acquired this virtue and will be able to complete any task you give him. This quality, along with wisdom will give your son great strength of mind. He will understand the problems of your subjects and will attain great fame ruling your kingdom aright”. With such words of blessing, the sage sent the prince along with the king.

Teachers like you all should be like the sage in the story. You must train your students to be like the prince in the story. Teachers like you have the responsibility of grooming students into good citizens. Along with educating them in their subjects of study, you must instill into students, who are the future wealth of our

country, qualities like high thinking, good conduct and acquiescence in the advice of elders. If you function with this understanding, there is no doubt that our Nation will emerge as a super power.

Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma affectionately bid us to help her realize the dream of making Tamil Nadu the pre-eminent State in India. “Every Government employee and teacher should help me in realizing the mission of making Tamil Nadu the number one State in India”, she said. I request all of you who are Government employees and teachers to accept Amma’s bidding and give your fullest co-operation for the growth of education in Tamil Nadu.

I reiterate my good wishes to you educationists who are going to create teachers who will lay a great foundation for the future of students, and to all the students who have won prizes in competitions. I also express my heartfelt thanks to all the good people who made excellent arrangements for this function.

Tapping Neera to take coconut farmers to greater heights



A review meeting was conducted at the Secretariat in Chennai under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami on 18.04.2017 to consider the long-term pending demand of coconut farmers to tap 'Neera' from coconut trees, process Neera and sell it in the market.

At present 8 crore coconut trees are planted in 10.74 lakh acres of land in Tamil Nadu. The State stands first in coconut production as well as in productivity. For the benefit of coconut farmers, and for a second green revolution, the Former Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had implemented various schemes and also taken steps to improve the income of coconut farmers.

Neera is a drink tapped from inflorescence of coconut tree and it is a natural nutritional drink. Neera contains vitamins A, B, C and also has minerals for body growth. Coconut Development Board has formulated anti-fermentation liquid (AFL) which can keep Neera in its natural form for a long period by preventing fermentation. From a coconut tree a farmer normally gets Rs. 1,000/- per annum by harvesting coconuts. But through the production and sale of Neera and its by-products the farmer can earn up to Rs. 15,000/- per tree. At the meeting, the following decisions were taken:

The Government has decided to give permission to Coconut farmers' associations approved by the Coconut Development Board and the Tamil Nadu Government, Co-operative

societies and Coconut Producers societies to tap Neera using anti-fermentation liquid.

The Government will take steps to give licence to Coconut Producers' societies, Coconut farmers' associations recognized by the Coconut Development Board and the Tamil Nadu Government to produce neera and value-added products from Neera by using anti-fermentation liquid and other modern techniques.

For the benefit of coconut farmers associations, co-operative associations and societies, subsidy will be provided to set up Neera processing and modern packaging centres with the co-operation of Coconut Development Board.

Training will be given to coconut farmers for manufacturing Neera, and value added products through the Agriculture Department.

Due to the efforts of the Tamil Nadu Government, people will get a natural nutritional drink, Neera, which will upgrade the lives of 1.50 lakh coconut farmers. Using Neera it is possible to produce Neera Sugar, Neera Jaggery, Neera Honey, Neera Laddu, and Neera Cake. These products are sugar-free and are useful for diabetic patients. It is hoped that through Neera production about 2.40 lakh job opportunities could be created.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister appealed to people to support the coconut farmers by supporting Neera and its value added products.

The meeting was attended by the Hon'ble Minister for Forests Thiru. Dindigul



Sreenivasan, Hon'ble Minister for School Education, Sports and Youth Welfare Thiru. K.A. Sengottaiyan, Hon'ble Minister for Electricity, Prohibition and Excise Thiru. P.Thangamani, Hon'ble Minister for Municipal Administration and Rural Development and Special Programme implementation Thiru. S.P.Velumani, Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education Thiru. K.P.Anbalagan, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture Thiru. R.Doraikkannu, Chief Secretary Dr.Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Finance Department Additional Chief Secretary Thiru. K. Shanmugam I.A.S., Home, Prohibition and Excise Department Additional Chief Secretary Dr. Niranjani Mardi I.A.S., Co-operation, Food and Consumer Protection Department Principal Secretary Thiru. Pradeep Yadav I.A.S., Agriculture Department Principal Secretary Thiru. Gangandeep Singh Bedi I.A.S., TASMACH Managing Director Thiru. R. Kirlosh Kumar I.A.S., Agriculture Department Director Thiru. R. Dakshinamoorthy I.A.S., Coconut Development Board Chennai Region Deputy Director Tmt. Balasudha Hari and other high officials participated in the function. ●

MoU signed with Centre for implementing Bharat Net Scheme in Tamil Nadu



Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma announced in the State Legislature on 14.09.2015 under Rule 110 that the Central Government had announced a scheme known as Bharat Net under which all Village Panchayats in the country would be linked through internet to enable people learn about Government schemes and utilize them. The Central Government has permitted the Tamil Nadu Government to implement the scheme through the State Government itself as insisted by Hon'ble Amma.

Hon'ble Amma said that she was happy to announce that under the scheme 12,524 Village Panchayats in Tamil Nadu would be linked through optical fibre enabling the people in every nook and corner of the State to utilize various services of the State Government

through internet. The Tamil Nadu Government itself would implement the scheme at a cost of Rs. 3,000 crore with the participation of the Central Government. For this purpose a separate corporation, Hon'ble Amma said, would be formed known as Tamil Nadu Fibre Net Corporation.

As per Hon'ble Amma's announcement, steps were taken for the formation of the Tamil Nadu Fibre Net Corporation and a Government order was issued in 2016 for this purpose. The State Government also allotted Rs. 50 lakh as its share for the formation of the Corporation and took necessary measures for the registration of the Corporation.

For implementing the scheme, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed

between the State Government and the Centre (MoU) at the Secretariat on 25.04.2017 in the presence of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami.

The Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation is preparing a detailed scheme report for implementing Bharat Net in Tamil Nadu. Through this scheme, all the 12,524 Village Panchayats in the State will be linked through Optical Fibre which will enable people to utilize various services of the Government from their village itself. Through this, Hon'ble Amma's dream scheme of "Internet in all houses" can be implemented successfully.

Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology Dr.M.Manikandan, Chief Secretary Dr. Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S, Additional Secretary of Tele-communications of the Central Government Thiru. N.Sivasailam I.A.S, Principal Secretary of Information Technology Thiru. T.K.Ramachandran I.A.S, Director of the Bharat Broadband Network Ltd Thiru. P.K.Mittal, ITS, Managing Director of Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation Thiru. J.Kumaragurubaran I.A.S., and other high Government officials were present at the MoU signing programme.

NEWS IN PICTURE



The 166th birth anniversary of Sir Pitti Thyagarayar was celebrated on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Government. The Hon'ble Minister for School Education, Sports and Youth Welfare Thiru. K.A.Senkottaiyan, Hon'ble Minister for Municipal Administration, Rural Development and Special Programme Implementation Thiru. S.P.Velumani, Hon'ble Minister for Fisheries, Finance, Personnel and Revenue Reforms Thiru. D. Jayakumar, Hon'ble Minister for Information and Publicity Thiru. Kadambur Raju, Hon'ble Minister for Rural Industries Thiru. B.Benjamin, Thiru. S.R. Vijayakumar MP, Thiru. N. Balaganga ex-MP, Secretary (in-charge) of Tamil Development and Information Thiru. R.Venkatesan, I.A.S, Commissioner of Chennai Corporation Dr.D. Karthikeyan, I.A.S, and Director of Information and Public Relations Thiru. J. Kumaragurubaran I.A.S offered flowers to the portrait of Sir Pitti Thyagarayar placed near his statue in Chennai Corporation complex on 27.04.2017.

‘Expedite NEET exemption to ensure quality health care for the needy in rural areas’

D.O. letter dated 25.04.2017 addressed by **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami**, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon’ble Prime Minister of India

“You would recall that I had written to you on 20.04.2017, bringing to your urgent attention the impasse which has arisen in the admission process to the State quota Government seats in the Post Graduate Medical and Dental colleges for the year 2017-2018. In Tamil Nadu, the time tested policy for admission to Post Graduate degree courses is based on a common entrance examination with provision of 50 per cent reservation for candidates from Tamil Nadu. Within the State quota, a reservation of 50 per cent is provided for MBBS graduates who are in Government service to incentivize experience and service in Government Hospitals, with special incentives for the Doctor’s service in rural, hilly and difficult areas. This incentive is limited to a weightage of ten percent, with 90 per cent weightage to the marks in the entrance examination.

For the academic year 2017-2018, the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly had passed two separate Bills to enable continuance of State Policy for Under Graduate / Post Graduate

admission which is still awaiting President Assent.

The Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare in his D.O. letter addressed to the late Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu dated 08.09.2016 had given an assurance that States may impose conditions, as they deem fit, on State quota seats at UG/PG level, stating:

“As far as the issue of National Eligibility-Cum-Entrance Test (NEET) is concerned, I would like to inform that NEET would not interfere with the reservation policy of individual States. It is open to the State Government to provide preferential marks to students who come from rural/hilly/tribal areas as is done in case of admission to PG courses. States may impose conditions, as they may deem fit, on State quota seats at the UG/PG level”.

Accordingly, in the NEET-PG prospectus issued by Government of India this year, it was clearly indicated that the admission process is to be undertaken and completed by the States/ designated authorities/ University using NEET-

PG marks as per applicable regulations and/or their eligible criteria, reservation policy, benefit for in-service candidates, rural posting etc.

Based on the above assurances, **Tamil Nadu issued its prospectus for the Post Graduate Medical and Dental courses, following NEET-PG as the Entrance Examination and continuing the existing policy of reserving 50 per cent of State quota of Government seats for the candidates in Government service with the preferential marking system followed in earlier years.** Under this preferential marking system, the marks awarded for the Entrance Examination (NEET-PG 2017) are computed to a maximum 90 marks. Experience marks for all candidates (both service and non-service) are limited to a maximum of 10.

i) One mark per year for experience after Compulsory Rotatory Residential Internship (CRR) (All candidates)

ii) Marks for service candidates served in rural, hilly and remote / difficult areas:

- a) Rural area – 1 mark per year
- b) Hills area – 2 marks per year
- c) Remote/difficult area – 2 marks per year

d) Two marks per year of service candidates who have worked in any Government Hospitals, Primary Health Centres and Government Medical College Hospital of Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam and Ramanathapuram Districts.

However, as indicated in my earlier letter dated 20.04.2017, the Medical Council of India's

Post Graduate Medical Education Regulations, 2000, failed to incorporate the assurances and commitments given by the Hon'ble Minister for Health and Family Welfare. Regulation 9 of the Post Graduate Medical Education Regulations, 2000, prescribes the procedures for selection of candidates for Post Graduate courses. Clause IV of Regulation 9 reads as follows:

“The reservation of seats in medical colleges/institution for respective categories shall be as per applicable laws prevailing in States/Union Territories. An all India merit list as well as State-wise merit list of the eligible candidates shall be prepared on the basis of the marks obtained in National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test and candidates shall be admitted to Post Graduate courses from the said merit lists only”.

A Proviso was added to Clause IV by Noti. No.MCI.181/2010-ed/62052, dated: 15.02.2012 w.e.f. 27.02.2012 which reads as follows:-

“Provided that in determining the merit of candidates who are in service of Government/public authority, weightage in the marks may be given by the Government/Competent Authority as an incentive at the rate of 10% of the marks obtained for each year of service in remote and/or difficult areas upto the maximum of 30% of the marks obtained in National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test. The remote and difficult areas shall be as defined by State Government/Competent Authority from time to time”.

I understand that the clause 9(IV) providing incentives for service candidates has not been implemented for the All India Quota seats.

Further, even though the amendments to the Regulations were made in February 2012, they have not been insisted upon till now and the State's admission policy has not been affected.

A piquant issue has now arisen as the High Court of Madras on 17.04.2017 in W.P.No.6031 of 2017 and W.M.P.No.6455 of 2017 has directed the Government of Tamil Nadu to follow Regulation 9(IV) of the Post Graduate Medical Education Regulations, 2000 by adding 30% marks on the marks secured by the petitioner in the NEET examination while preparing the rank list for admission to the Post Graduate Courses for the academic year 2017-2018 holding that Regulation 9 as the only effective and permissible basis for granting admission to in-service candidates. If this procedure is followed, out of the 556 Post Graduate Government seats available under the State quota in Tamil Nadu, only 206 seats would go to in-service quota candidates. **Thus the direction to follow the MCI Post Graduate Regulations, 2000 which have not been amended to reflect the assurances given by the Government of India, is preventing the State Government from implementing its admission policy for State Quota seats in the Post Graduate courses based on NEET-PG. This is bound to have consequences on the provision of quality health care to needy people in rural and remote areas.**

While the Madras High Court's latest order has been taken on appeal, both by the State Government and by the Government Doctors' Association, an amendment to the MCI Post

Graduate Medical Education Regulations, 2000 to enable States to follow their respective reservation policies in admission to Post Graduate courses reflecting the assurance given by the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare could resolve this issue.

However, the permanent solution to ensure continuance of the present system of admission to post graduate courses in medicine and dentistry with statutory backing, is to obtain the Presidential Assent at the earliest to the two Bills unanimously passed by the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.

This would also ensure that in admission for Under Graduate courses, the students of Tamil Nadu who appear in the State Board examinations, who constitute 98 per cent of the total number of eligible students would not be placed at a tremendous disadvantage in NEET because they lack the resources to enroll in training institutions and access materials available to urban students.

I understand that there is an apprehension that as the amendments in the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 and Dentists Act, 1948, introducing NEET have been made to give effect to the Supreme Court Judgement on the NEET issue, Presidential Assent to Tamil Nadu's two Bills on the issue would go contrary to the Supreme Court judgment on the issue. Further, there is an interpretation that introduction of NEET is purely within the legislative competence of the Union, as it is covered by Entry 66 of List I (Union List)

“Co-ordination and determination of standards in Institutions for Higher Education or Research and Scientific and Technical Institutions”. However, Government of Tamil Nadu has already obtained a detailed legal opinion citing various Supreme Court judgements’ including the judgement of the Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court in the Modern Dental College and Research Centre vs the State of Madhya Pradesh (2016) 7 SCC 353, wherein it has been specifically mentioned that Entry 66 in List. I would not include conduct of examinations and admission. In fact, Hon’ble Ms. Justice R.Banumathi delivering a separate concurring order as a part of the Five bench categorically stated “In fact, the State Government should be the sole entity to lay down the procedure for admission and fee etc., governing the institutions running in that particular State except the centrally funded institutions like IIT, NIT etc. because no one can be a better judge of the requirements and inequalities-in-opportunity of the people of a particular State than the State itself. Only the State legislation can create equal level playing field for the students who are coming out from the State Board and other streams”.

This judgment and several other judgments have upheld the legislative competence of the State to enact legislation under Entry 25 of List III (Concurrent list) which covers “Education, including Technical Education, Medical Education and Universities”. Hence, the Government of Tamil Nadu is well within its legislative competence to enact a legislation to exempt Tamil Nadu from the application of NEET. Such legislation requires the assent of the President under Article 254(2). Such assent was granted to the Tamil Nadu Admission in Professional Educational Institutions Act, 2006. Therefore, I once again request you to expedite the Presidential assent for the two pending State Bills namely the Tamil Nadu Admissions to Post Graduate Courses in Medicine and Dentistry Bill, 2017 and the Tamil Nadu Admissions to MBBS and BDS Courses Bill, 2017”.



Chief Minister assures farmers on dharna - I have apprised PM of your demands

Text of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** remarks at a press conference in New Delhi after meeting farmers who were in dharna

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma during the 2011 Tamil Nadu Assembly Elections assured voters on behalf of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam that if voted to power the party would waive all loans availed by the farmers in the State. The first signature of Hon'ble Amma after assuming charge was for waiving of loans of farmers in the State.

Due to failure of both the South-West and North-East Monsoons, the State has been witnessing drought unprecedented in the last 140 years. To provide relief to the farmers affected by the drought, the State Government had sent a memorandum to the Central Government demanding relief for the farmers. The Chief Minister said that he himself met the Hon'ble Prime Minister personally and handed over a memorandum demanding Rs.39,565 crore for drought relief.

The Central Government allotted Rs. 2,247 crore as relief to the farmers and the

amount is being credited in the bank accounts of the farmers. Besides, the Tamil Nadu Government is extending crop loans to farmers who have taken up cultivation. To conserve water in the water bodies, Kudimaramathu Scheme has been launched and the State Government has allotted Rs. 100 crore for the scheme. This Government treading the path of the Puratchi Thalaivi Amma has been implementing various measures to protect farmers from drought.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu said that he had met the farmers' representatives and their leader Thiru. Ayyakannu and assured them that he would take up their demands with the Hon'ble Prime Minister.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also appealed to the agitating farmers to give up their agitation and fast and return to Tamil Nadu.

Nandri Vanakkam !

'Amma's Government stands by Police force, gives freedom to punish wrongdoers'



Speech delivered by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami on 31.03.2017, at the passing out parade marking the completion of training of Sub-Inspectors at Tamil Nadu Police Academy, Oonamancheri, Kancheepuram District (English Translation).

Hon'ble Ministers who are gracing this pleasant function,

Chief Secretary to the Tamil Nadu Government,

Members of Parliament,

Principal Secretary to the Home Department who gave the welcome address,

Director General of Police,

Director General, Training, Tamil Nadu Police who is to give the vote of thanks,

High officials of the Tamil Nadu Government,

Police officials,

Sub-Inspectors of Police who are completing training today,

Ladies and gentlemen taking part in this function, friends of the Press and media,

Bowing to the deity Hon'ble Idhya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, I convey my greetings to all of you.

It is Thiruvalluvar's dictum that perseverance will pay the wages of one's efforts (Muyarchi than meivarutha kooli tharum). I can say that training will pay the wages of one's efforts (Payirchi than mei varutha kooli tharum) is a dictum that is appropriate for the Police Department.

The significance is that those who don't spare any effort in persevering in their training will surely gain the benefits that come from their exertions. It is said that effort and training transform an ordinary man into an achiever. This one-year training that you have undergone is the first step towards making achievers of you.

This training and parade have been carried so that all your thoughts and actions are integrated towards achieving a single objective. The sole aim of your training is to ensure law and order in Tamil Nadu. I appreciate and commend all of you for completing a year's training.

The excellent passing out parade reflects your capacity, your high aim, your physical and mental strength. By following in your duties, Perarignar Anna's triple motto of duty, decency and discipline (kadamai, kanniyam, kattupaadu) as well as the pledge you have undertaken today, all of you must diligently endeavour to further elevate the capabilities of the Tamil Nadu Police which already excels at the world level.

I experience great happiness that 1,028 Sub-Inspectors 1,027 Taluk Sub-Inspectors and one Armed Reserve Sub-Inspector who started their one-year training on 26.02.2016 in this world class Tamil Nadu Police Training Academy are completing their training today.

All of you know that Hon'ble Amma had great affection and concern for the third gender. It gives much satisfaction that this Government which follows in Amma's footsteps has taken a pioneering step in the whole of India by having

a transgender successfully complete training as a Sub-Inspector.

Also, 254 Women Sub-Inspectors are completing their training today. It is doubly satisfying that in consonance with Bharati's assertion that women are in no way inferior to men (Aanukku Penn Ilaippillai Kaan), women have also undergone this rigorous training to make themselves fit for Police duty.

In 1650, Fort St. George which now houses the Secretariat had a thorny fence. To prevent any illegal entry, guards were posted all around the fence. These guards are considered to be the first armed force in India! It was this force which evolved into the Police force. Every Tamilian can take pride of this history.

The Tamil Nadu Police force has evolved gradually during various regimes. As a consummation of this process of growth, after Hon'ble Idhaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's took over the reins of Government, the Tamil Nadu Police force experienced a new resurgence and renewal.

When Hon'ble Idhaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma came to power in 1991, she implemented a pioneering scheme, a first in India, of modernising the Police force.

In Tamil Nadu, women generally would fear to even approach a Police Station. With the objective that women in Tamil Nadu should go to Police Stations, present their grievances and seek redressal, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma did women proud by inaugurating in 1992 the first All-Women Police Station in the Thousand Lights area. Hon'ble Amma also

launched in 2002 the first Women Commando force with 21 Police Women. It is because of the farsighted vision of Hon'ble Amma that women who protect our homes also safeguard our country. It is because of such actions the women worship Hon'ble Amma as their family deity.

Peace, prosperity and growth were the mantras of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. Only if there is peace in the country, will there be prosperity and growth. Only the Police force has the capacity to ensure this peace. Hon'ble Amma had your peace-ensuring activity in mind when she put peace at the vanguard of her mantra for progress.

It is only peace that is the reason for the economic growth of a country and the individual advancement of its citizens. And the Police force plays an important part in enforcing peace in society. That is why Hon'ble Idhaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma implemented multifarious schemes, during her regimes giving great importance to the Police force.

- ★ With the view that Police officials who work tirelessly day and night with great idealism should enjoy a peaceful retired life, 4,644 houses were built and handed over under 'Own Your House' scheme.
- ★ With the aim that Tamil Nadu Police Personnel as well as Fire Service and Rescue Staff should secure household groceries and articles they need at low prices, 47 special Police canteens are functioning.
- ★ Medical service centres have been established for Police Personnel in the

armed Police centres in 26 Districts and Tamil Nadu Special Police battalion centres in 10 places.

- ★ Facilities have been provided for free annual total body check up for Personnel of the Police force and the fire and rescue services above 40 years of age. In 2016-2017, 81 per cent of above Personnel benefited from the check up.
- ★ Thirteen Police hospitals are functioning efficiently to provide medical service to Police Personnel and the members of their families.
- ★ Prize money for Police Personnel who win medals in various competitions has been increased manifold to encourage them.
- ★ Encouraged and contented because of the innumerable schemes implemented by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the Police force is exerting itself in maintaining law and order in an exemplary manner.
- ★ Additionally, to even better the work of the Tamil Nadu Police force and with a view to its modernization, Provision of more and more patrolling vehicles to ensure that Policemen watch over all parts of Chennai metropolis ceaselessly;
- ★ Implementation of Crime and Criminal Tracking Network System (CCTNS) to crack crimes and criminals
- ★ Microwave communication has been established in Tamil Nadu Police Academy
- ★ Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (drones) have been purchased and put into use, to take



appropriate security measures at Tiruvizhas which people throng and at functions attended by prominent leaders. UAVs are also used to gather evidence of crimes as well as to co-ordinate and hasten rescue and relief activities during disasters.

- ★ To prevent crimes and to facilitate collection of evidence at crime scenes, 1,42,229 surveillance cameras have been fixed in public places
- ★ From May 2011 to this day, 14,227 Police quarters have been built at a cost of Rs.1,219.48 crore, 416 Police Stations have been built at a cost of Rs.197.24 crore and 229 buildings for the Police Department have been built at a cost of Rs.304.72 crore.

In this way, Hon'ble Amma implemented various schemes for the Police. Hon'ble Amma created the right atmosphere for Police Personnel to do their duty of maintaining law and order without any fear or interference and with honesty, proficiency, perfection, true dedication and in accordance with the law.

This Government which treads the path of Hon'ble Amma has the sole aim of maintaining law and order. Apart from paying special attention to the welfare of Police Personnel, it does not interfere in the action that the Police takes against wrongdoers. It rather gives the Police full freedom to act against them. I am proud to say at this juncture that this is the reason why Tamil Nadu remains a haven of

peace, a state where people go on with their lives happily, whether during Hon'ble Amma's rule or in the rule of this Government that follows her in every way.

One has to create the right atmosphere for Police Personnel to function and also ensure the right training for them. It is practice that makes a man perfect. Whatever be the field of activity, only if a person gets proper training he or she can complete tasks with efficiency and perfection. With this realization, it was the dream of Hon'ble Idhaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma to establish a world class Police Training Academy in Tamil Nadu. It was Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma who laid the stone for this Tamil Nadu Police Academy with her golden hands in 2004.

Nestling in scenic natural surroundings and having excellent infrastructure facilities, this Academy has expert instructors who give training using innovative methods. Training is given here in tackling various offences from crimes against the young to crimes in the cyber world. I think that through the training here you would have gained experience of field work, leadership qualities, investigative ability and computer skills.

You have been trained in various ways and become adept in handling weapons, shooting on target, gathering intelligence, understanding the sentiments of people and maintaining etiquette in your behavior. Through the training you received here you would have known how to maintain law and order and how to conduct yourself amidst people.

According to Thiruvalluvar, character is more precious than life. And character is very much vital for Policemen. Only if Police Personnel have character, they can perform their duties without taking sides, without favouring one and acting against another. People will give wholehearted praise only if the Police Personnel conduct themselves impartially.

The law is considered to be a weapon of the Police. You must first understand that laws have been formed for the service of the people. Through the training here, you would have learnt to approach cases with humanity and compassion. You should all work with duty consciousness and dedication.

You Police Personnel are valued as a precious human resource of the country because like a mother who keeps awake all night and protects her children so that they can sleep peacefully, and like a friend who wins one's heart with his affection and concern, you work for the people day and night.

Hon'ble Idhaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma said, "The Police should be a good friend of those who value and honour the law. It should be a fearful foe for those who break the law and infringe upon the rights of others. A Policeman is therefore like the coin which has two sides. Law abiding citizens should see the Policeman as a friend. Law breakers should be able to see only the adversarial dimension of the Policeman". Through her remarks, Hon'ble Amma has indicated how the Police force should conduct itself.

All of us know that solving a problem by dealing with it intelligently is always better than



using brute force. That is why the Police force must be in a position not only to use physical force but also to use intelligent judgement depending on the cases at hand. In these days, even educated people misuse their knowledge and employ sophisticated methods to do crimes. These are called white collar crimes. It becomes vital for the Police Personnel to be technologically savvy to be able to detect such crimes and bring the wrongdoers to book. I therefore want to reiterate that you must all be thorough in your knowledge of computers and the internet and frequently update yourself with the latest trends in the technology.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma used to highlight the contribution of the Police force saying that just as the tree protects the soil (Mannukku Maram Kaaval), leaves protect the tree (Marathukku Ilai Kaaval), the fence protects

the crop (Payirukku Veli Kaaval), eyelids protect the eyes (Kannukku Imai Kaaval), the shores stand guard to the sea (Kadalukku Karai Kaaval), the Police force protects the people.

In the event of a Police Personnel dying in harness, or dying due to an illness, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma ordered that apart from the family welfare grant, Rs. 3 lakh grant should be given from the Chief Minister's Public Welfare Fund and implemented it. From this, you can understand that Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma considered the Police force as being very close to her heart. This Amma Government which is following in Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's footsteps is implementing the order without fail.

Hon'ble Amma's Government is implementing many schemes for the welfare

of the Police force. I take great pleasure in inaugurating schemes of the Tamil Nadu Police which is acclaimed to be as good as Scotland Yard.

Video conferencing facility created at a cost of Rs.6.10 crore was launched today. Through this facility, all the Police Commissioners, Zonal Police Chiefs, Circle Deputy Chiefs and District Police Superintendents can individually or collectively exchange information and discuss strategies.

The scheme to install CCTV surveillance cameras throughout Salem City, in the Rameswaram Temple, Yerwadi Dargah and in Karaikudi Town is being launched today. The cost for the Salem City scheme is Rs. 3.51 crore, and that of Rameswaram Temple, Yerwadi Dargah and Karaikudi Town Rs.3.12 crore. By keeping an eye on the scene through these surveillance cameras, Police officials can solve law and order problems, prevent crimes against women, the mentally challenged and children, make for smooth flow of traffic by preventing traffic jams and prevent infringement of traffic regulations by taking swift action.

Through this scheme, in 56 junctions in Salem City, 192 cameras with web access, eight Pan-Tilt- Zoom cameras (PTZ), all connected to nine control rooms have been installed. Fifteen cameras with web access in the Yerwadi Dargah, 29 cameras in Karaikudi Town, and 70 cameras in Rameswaram Temple have been installed. As recordings of 30 days can be stored in these devices, this scheme may come in handy during investigations in the future.

Today, the scheme of installing CCTV in 248 Police Stations has been inaugurated. To

create goodwill about the Police in the minds of the people and in the interests of transparency, 6 cameras with web access, a recording camera, device to store 30 days of recording, monitor and devices to ensure prolonged power supply have been installed in Police Stations. Through this, the activities in Police Stations will be recorded and used as and when needed.

I am happy to say that schemes totally costing Rs. 18.68 crore have been launched today.

The Police force has as much importance as the army in protecting the country. The Police force faces the great challenge of identifying the enemies of the Nation and the criminals who are hidden in the general mass of humanity and act as if they too are innocent, law-abiding citizens. To separate these from the masses, the Police need intelligence. It has been proved times without number that the Tamil Nadu Police has the intelligence as well and the discernment of identifying the criminal from the commoner. I request you to even further enhance the achievement and acclaim that the Tamil Nadu Police has earned down the years.

Aspirations and goals give a direction to our lives. They are the starting point of victory. You yourself must set the goals that you should achieve. Live with a set objective. Make getting a good name as an excellent Police officer the purpose of your life.

I warmly applaud all the officials and workers of this Academy who have helped you come out of this training with flying colours. I also extend my heartfelt good wishes to you for a great future.

Chief Minister comes to the rescue of fishermen

**They might have lost their boats,
but they haven't lost their friends**



It has become a regular feature for the Sri Lankan Navy to arrest fishermen belonging to Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Pudukkottai and Ramanathapuram Districts when they are fishing in their traditional waters in the Palk Straits. The arrested fishermen are later lodged in Sri Lankan Jails and their boats

are also apprehended. The impounded boats are kept in Sri Lankan custody for a long time.

During such occasions the late Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Selvi J Jayalalithaa took various steps for the release of the arrested fishermen and the retrieval of their boats. All fishermen who were arrested on different occasions were released and brought back to Tamil Nadu.

However, during the year 2014, 80 boats belonging to Tamil Nadu fishermen alone were not released and were detained in Sri Lanka.

The former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu late Selvi J Jayalalithaa had brought this to the notice of the Hon'ble Prime Minister through various letters. The Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma also brought to the notice of the Hon'ble Prime Minister that the Sri Lankan Government's action of not releasing the detained boats, had crippled the livelihood of the fishermen. She wanted the Prime Minister to personally intervene in this matter and take steps to secure the release of the boats of the Tamil fishermen.

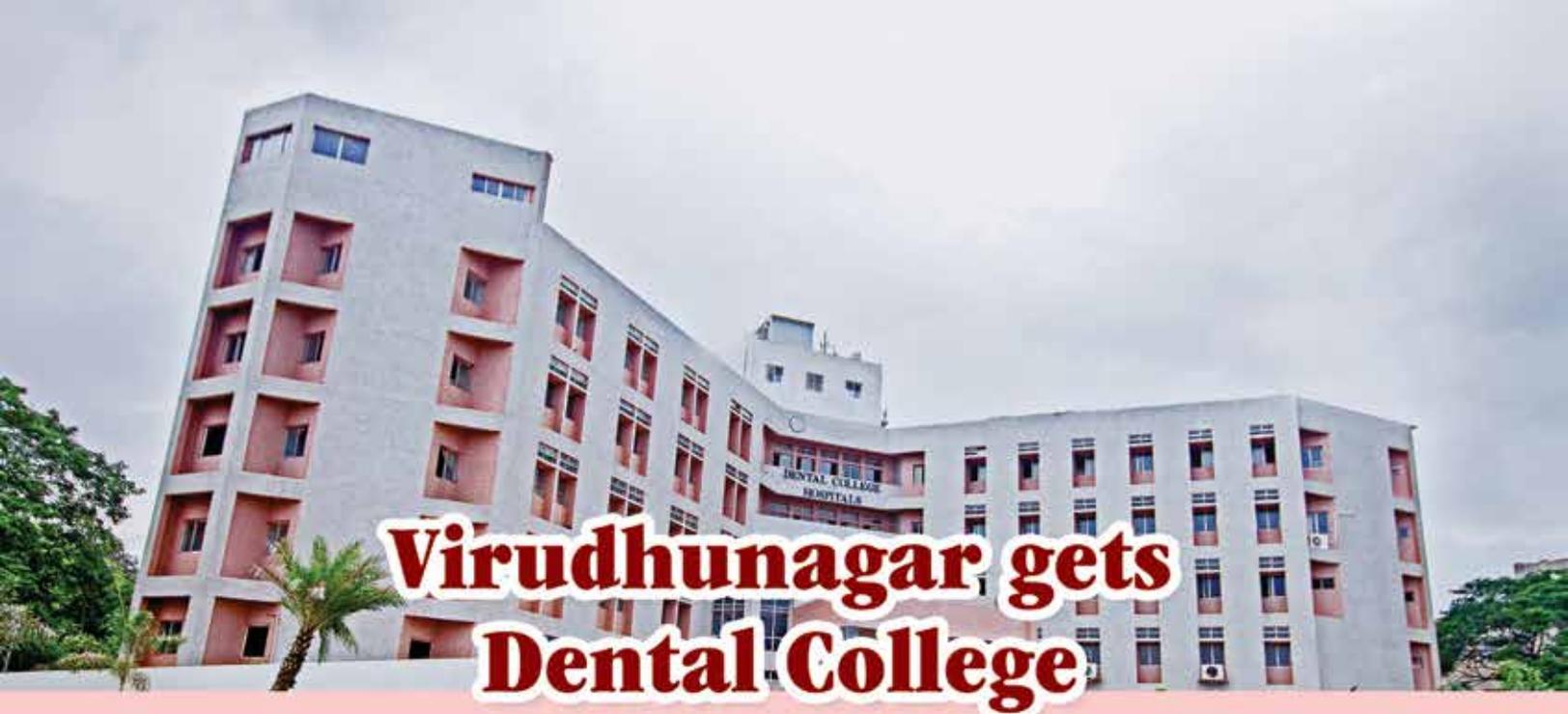
Thanks to the persistent efforts taken by the Tamil Nadu Government, the detained boats were released. Of the 80 boats released, those with minimum damages were repaired and brought back to Tamil Nadu. For this, the State Government had sent boats for repairing the detained boats and supplied oil for them. It also bore the entire travel expenses of fishermen who were sent to repair the boats, their food and repair expenses. But 18 boats, which were in Kankesanthurai and Talaimannar were

completely damaged and sank in Sri Lankan waters.

To relieve the sufferings of 18 fishermen belonging to Ramanathapuram District who had lost their boats, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami handed over cheque of Rs. 5 lakh each to them from the Chief Minister's General Relief Fund, at the Secretariat on 19.04.2017.

The families of the fishermen profusely thanked the Hon'ble Chief Minister after receiving the relief amount from the Hon'ble Chief Minister.

On the occasion, the Hon'ble Minister for Fisheries, Finance and Revenue Administration Thiru. D.Jayakumar, Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology Dr.M.Manikandan, Thiru. Anwar Raja, MP, Chief Secretary Dr. Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Principal Secretary for Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries (Additional Charge) Thiru. Gagandeep Singh Bedi I.A.S., Commissioner of Fisheries Tmt. Beela Rajesh I.A.S. and high Government officials were also present.



Virudhunagar gets Dental College

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami has issued orders for starting a Dental College with an intake of 100 students in Virudhunagar.

The present Government which is treading the path laid down by Hon'ble Amma has been taking various measures to improve the health of the people. To enable people in rural areas also to get treatment equivalent to that in urban areas, the Government has been taking many steps like upgrading the standard of the Primary Health Centres by procuring new medical equipment and constructing new buildings and opening new medical centres.

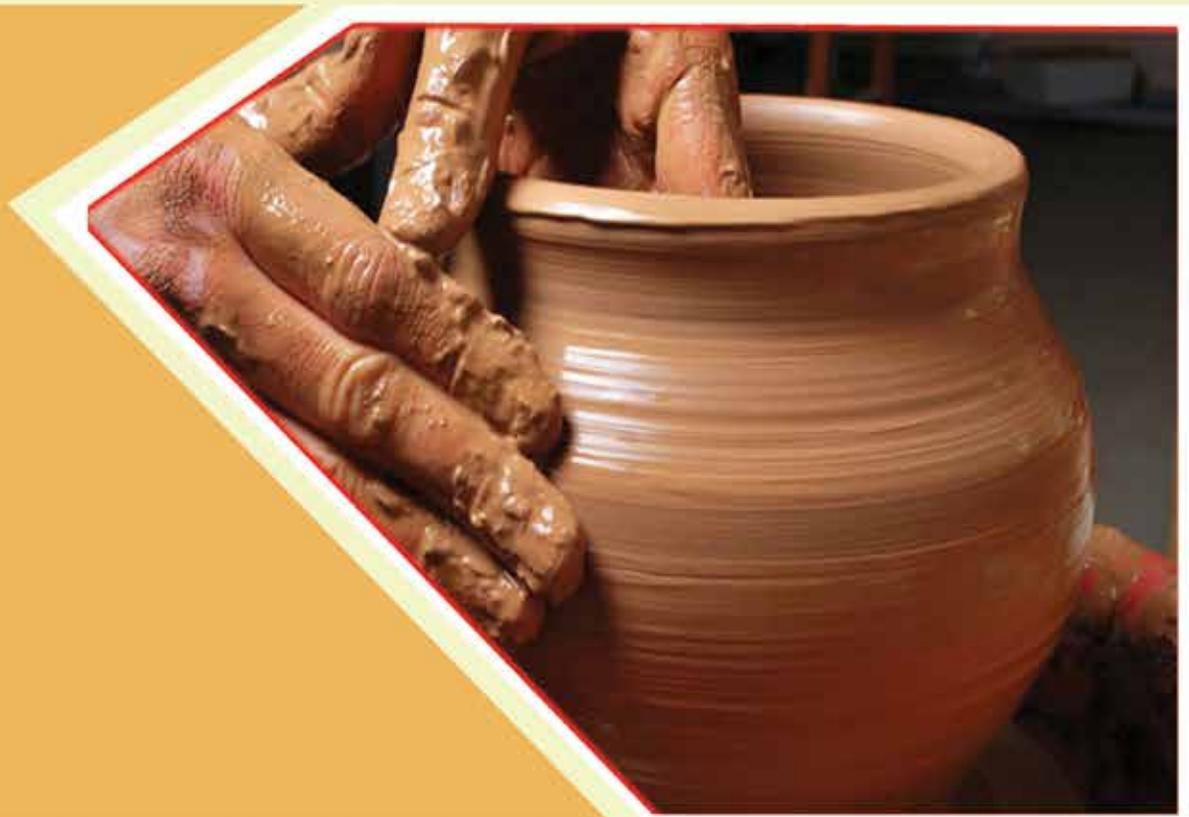
Dental treatment is being given in all Medical College Hospitals, District Hospitals, 152 Regional Hospitals, and 10 Non-Regional Hospitals in the State. To make rural people

aware of dental hygiene, dental treatment is given in 44 Non-Regional Hospitals and 249 PHCs on three days of a week.

At present there is no Government dental college in the State except in Chennai. To fulfill the long-pending demand of the people in Southern parts of the State, Hon'ble Amma announced in the Tamil Nadu Assembly on 25.08.2016 that a dental college at a cost of Rs.50 crore would be started in Southern Districts .

In accordance with the Hon'ble Amma's announcement, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami has issued orders for starting preliminary works for starting the Dental College and for the creation of Principal's post for the college. Due to this measure, students from South Tamil Nadu will get opportunity to study Dentistry. ●





Government keeps promise to potters on clay availability

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in the 2016 Assembly Election manifesto had announced that potters would be given special concession to take clay soil from Government land. To fulfill the election promise, the Tamil Nadu Government has issued orders for an amendment in the existing Tamil Nadu Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 1959.

In view of the existing unprecedented drought, most of the tanks and water bodies in the State have dried up. Utilizing the existing situation, the State Government has decided to take up Kudimaramathu scheme for developing

agricultural lands by filling them with alluvial soil, and cleaning the water bodies to increase their storage capacity. This in turn would reduce the impact of any future drought in the State. Based on this principle, the State Government has amended Section 12 of the Tamil Nadu Minor Minerals Concession Rules, 1959.

The amendment in the Government Rule 12 has been brought to enable proper implementation of Kudimaramathu works by de-silting the water bodies, tanks, ayacuts, and irrigation tanks, under the control of the

PWD, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Departments to improve their storage capacity.

As per the Tamil Nadu Minor Minerals Concession Rules 1959, sand, porous clay soil, and alluvial soil up to an extent of 30 cubic feet only can be taken for agriculture practices from the tanks under the control of PWD, Rural Development Department, and Panchayats without paying seigniorage fee. Similarly, under Rule no. 6 clay and alluvial soil and clay can be taken from river and tanks up to an extent of 80 cubic feet without paying seigniorage fee by the pottery units for making pots.

Under the present amendment, farmers and potters are permitted to take more soil or clay from the water bodies under the control of PWD, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj departments without paying seigniorage fee.

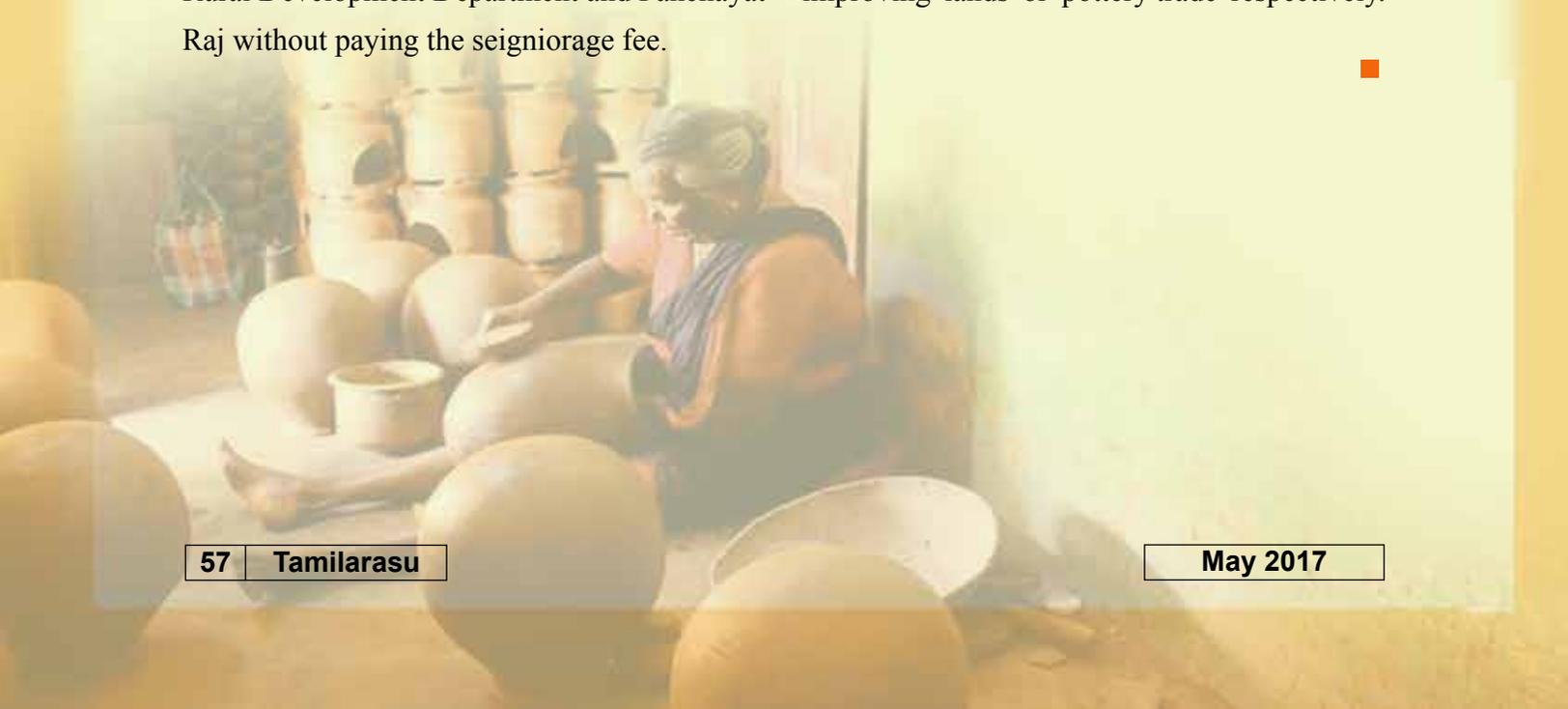
Apart from the existing concession of taking clay soil of 800 bullock cart loads (80 cubic feet), Rule 12 (b) permits the potter to take 60 cubic feet of more clay from the tanks and other water bodies under the control of the PWD, Rural Development Department and Panchayat Raj without paying the seigniorage fee.

As the alluvial soil taken from the water bodies under the control of PWD, Rural Development Department and Panchayat Raj, during de-silting operations can be used as manure for development of lands, farmers can utilize the soil for improving their lands without paying seigniorage fee depending on the extent and classification (wet land and dry land).

Under the change of rules, farmers can take alluvial soil not exceeding 75 cubic feet (25 tractor loads) from one acre of wet land or 90 cubic feet (30 tractor loads) soil from one acre of dry land once in two years.

The above change in laws is applicable to all Districts except Chennai, Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur Districts. The list of water bodies from where the soil can be taken will be published in the District gazettes. Necessary guidelines will be issued by the PWD, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Departments.

The farmers and those engaged in pottery trade are requested to make use of the concessions announced by the Government for improving lands or pottery trade respectively.



Lab Assistants appointed



The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami handed over the appointment orders for the post of Laboratory Assistants in Government High Schools and Higher Secondary Schools in the State to six candidates as a token and greeted the selected candidates at a function in Chennai.

On the occasion, the Hon'ble Minister for School Education, Sports and Youth Welfare Thiru. K.A. Sengottaiyan, Secretary for School Education Department Thiru.T.Udhayachandran I.A.S., Director of School Education Thiru. S.Kannappan, Primary School Education Director Thiru. R.Ilangovan and high Government officials were present.

As per the directions of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the Directorate of Government Examinations conducted written examinations for the sanctioned posts of laboratory assistants in Government High Schools and Higher Secondary Schools in the State, and the results were published online on 24.03.2017.

Based on the number of vacancies in each District, the respective Chief Educational Officers released the list of candidates for certificate verification on the basis of 1:5 of the total vacancies in their respective Districts. The selected list of candidates, which has been prepared based on marks scored by the candidates in the written examinations and the existing communal rotation, was published by

the respective Chief Educational officers on 15.04.2017 and 16.04.2017.

The selected 2,444 candidates were given selection and appointment orders on 17.04.2017 through open counselling in the 21 Districts of Ariyalur, Coimbatore, Dindigul, Erode, Kanniyakumari, Karur, Madurai,

Namakkal, Perambalur, Ramanathapuram, Salem, Sivagangai, Thanjavur, Nilgiris, Theni, Tiruvarur, Tiruppur, Tiruchi, Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi and Villupuram. The remaining 1,678 candidates will receive their selection and appointment orders on 18.04.1017 from their respective CEOs. ■

NEWS IN PICTURE



Thiru. T. Mariappan, who won the Gold Medal at the Para Olympics held at Rio De Janeiro recently met the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat in Chennai on 20.04.2017 and showed the Padma Sri award given by the Central Government for his achievement. The Hon'ble Chief Minister congratulated Thiru. Mariappan for his achievement. On the occasion, the Hon'ble Minister for School Education, Sports and Youth Welfare Thiru. K.A.Sengottaiyan, Chief Secretary Dr.Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Principal Secretary Youth Welfare and Sports Development Dr.Rajendra Kumar I.A.S., Secretary of the School Education Thiru. T.Udhayachandran I.A.S., Trainer Thiru. Sathyanarayanan, Tamil Nadu Para Sports Association General Secretary C.Anandajothi, President Thiru. Dilip Raj, Vice President Thiru. Udayakumar and other Government officials were present.

Sustained efforts of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma secured DAS licence for Arasu Cable TV

Thanks to the sustained efforts of the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and the continued steps taken by the Tamil Nadu Government, the Central Government has given DAS license to the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation. The Order to this effect has been issued by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry on 17.04.2017.

The Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation was started on 04.10.2007 with a sole aim of providing a complete cable TV service at a cheap price to the general public. For this purpose, control rooms were set up in Thanjavur, Tirunelveli, Coimbatore and Vellore. Due to various reasons, the corporation became non-functional.

After Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma took over as Chief Minister in May 2011, the Arasu Cable TV was given a new lease of life and renamed as Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation. The Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma inaugurated the services of the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation in Districts other than Chennai on 02.09.2011 and in Chennai on 20.10.2012.

At present, the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation is providing 90 to 100 channels to its subscribers through local cable TV operators at a reduced rate. The services of Tamil Nadu

Arasu Cable TV have been receiving extremely good response from the cable TV operators and the general public alike. The number of subscribers, which was 4.94 lakh on 02.09.2011 has increased to 70.52 lakh due to various steps taken by Hon'ble Amma's Government.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of the Union Government sanctioned the Arasu Cable TV Corporation Multi-System Operator license through CAS (Conditional Access System) to Chennai Corporation areas. As per the Cable Network Amendment Act, 2011, four Corporations in the Country, including Chennai, should be made digital by 31.10.2012 and the rest of the country by 31.12.2016. The Tamil Nadu Government had applied to the Union Ministry of Information and Technology for DAS license to Chennai areas on 05.07.2012 and for the rest of Tamil Nadu on 23.11.2012.

This was brought to the notice of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) by the Union Ministry of Information and Technology. To find a solution to TRAI's recommendation, the Central Government set up a Ministerial joint committee on 03.01.2013.

The Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in her letter to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 16.12.2012 urged the Hon'ble Prime Minister

to advise the Information and Technology Ministry to issue DAS licence to DAS areas. Subsequently, the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in her memorandum handed over to the Hon'ble Prime Minister personally on 03.06.2014 insisted that DAS should be given to the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation. Further, the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma sent a detailed letter in this connection to the Minister of Information and Technology (Independent Charge). Subsequently, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma sent another letter to the Prime Minister on 05.07.2014.

Further, the Parliament members of the All-India Anna DMK, Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation and officials of the Corporation met the Union Minister of Information and Technology in New Delhi on 08.12.2014 and insisted on speeding up the issue of giving DAS licence.

The Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, when she met the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 07.08.2015 again insisted upon DAS licence for the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation. Meanwhile, when the applications for issue of licence for Multi-System Operator for DAS areas in Chennai and in other parts of the State were pending, the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation sought a temporary licence by its letter on 29.10.2015.

The Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in her memorandum to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 14.06.2015 reiterated that MSO licence be given for DAS areas. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu met the Hon'ble Prime Minister and the Hon'ble Minister for Information and Broadcasting Thiru. Venkaiah Naidu on 27.02.2017 and insisted on that DAS licence be issued.

Due to continued efforts of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting issued DAS licence to the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation.

This is the first time that DAS licence has been issued to a State Government's organization. Soon the people of Tamil Nadu will get Digital Cable TV service of international standard at a cheap price. The Tamil Nadu Government will continue to tread the path laid by the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma who is still in the hearts of the people even after her demise.

For issuing the Digital licence to the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami expressed heartfelt thanks to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and the Hon'ble Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Government and the people of Tamil Nadu.



Tourism drivers with accident-free records honoured by Chief Minister

The Tamil Nadu Government, which is following the path laid down by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has been taking a number of steps to improve tourism in the State as it plays a vital role in providing employment and in earning foreign exchange for the country. To improve the inflow of tourists, new tourist spots are identified, and the infrastructure facilities at tourist spots are developed. Due to these measures, the arrival of tourists in the State has been increasing and the State occupies the prime place in the Country in the arrival of tourists.

To improve the working of the Tourism Department, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami honoured at the Secretariat in Chennai on 26.04.2017, 10 drivers of the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation for

rendering accident-free service for the last 20 years in taking tourists to various places of interest in the luxury coach of the Corporation. The drivers are Thiruvargal Ravi, Bhaskaran, Parthiban, Thiagarajan, Anbazhagan, Vijayan, Deva Alexander, Madhusudhanan, Kannan and Venu. The Hon'ble Chief Minister praised their services by giving them commendation certificate and 4 grams gold medal each.

On the occasion, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism Thiru. Vellamandi N.Natarajan, Chief Secretary Dr. Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S, Principal Secretary for Tourism, Culture and HR and CE Thiru. Apurva Varma I.A.S, Tourism Commissioner and Chairman and Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation Thiru. V.Palanikumar I.A.S, and other Government officials were present. ■

Amma's Government 'swift in solving people's problems'



Hon'ble Amma's Government continues to implement various people's welfare schemes successfully with the prime motive of people's advancement, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami said while addressing pressmen after receiving petitions from the public in Nangavalli, Jalakandapuram and Edappadi under the Edappadi Assembly Constituency on 30.04.2017.

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami also directed the heads of various Departments to take immediate action on petitions received by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu from the public in Nangavalli, Jalakandapuram,

Chettimankurichi, Edappadi and Tharamangalam under Edappadi Assembly constituency.

Addressing the pressmen at the Nangavalli Panchayat Union Office after receiving petitions from the public, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu said that Hon'ble Amma's Government continued to successfully implement various people's welfare schemes for the people's advancement. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu said that within 73 days after taking charge he had cleared 1,570 files. There is nothing lacking in the working of the Government and it has been functioning with the prime motive of people's welfare by implementing various developmental measures.

The Mettur integrated drinking water supply scheme is being implemented to solve



the drinking water problems in Edappadi. Growth-oriented schemes are being implemented in all Assembly Constituencies in Salem District.

As far as Salem District is concerned, schemes for all basic amenities including road facilities and drinking water facilities are being implemented. To reduce traffic congestion in Salem Town, it has been planned to lay a 54km long ring road surrounding Arabic College in the Town. To resume air service to Salem, steps are being taken and already a letter has been written to the Hon'ble Prime Minister in this regard.

The 16-span bridge and the underground drainage system in Mettur Town, four way lane between Thoppur and Bhavani and Integrated drinking water supply schemes for Nangavalli and Mechcheri have been implemented. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu claimed that both as a Minister and as Chief Minister he had implemented various welfare schemes. Soon, Government Higher Secondary School in Vanavasi, Polytechnic College, and Teachers' Training Institute in Ettikuttai will be started.

Steps are being taken to tap 'Neera' from coconut trees and it would come into effect in six months. Coconut farmers will be benefited to a large extent by tapping and marketing Neera from coconut trees. The Hon'ble Amma Government has been always implementing schemes that are in the minds of the people. As the State is facing unprecedented drought in 140 years, special emphasis is being given to drinking water supply schemes, said the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami.

On the occasion, Salem District Collector Thiru. V.Sampath I.A.S, Sankari M.L.A Thiru. S.Raja, Omalur M.L.A Thiru. S. Vetrivel, Mettur Sub-Collector Thiru. Meganath Reddy I.A.S, District Revenue Officer Thiru. R.Sukumar, Director of District Rural Development Agency Tmt. K.Kavitha, Sankari Revenue Divisional Officer Thiru. Paul Princely Rajkumar, P.A to District Collector (General) Thiru. C.Vijay Babu, Assistant Director of Panchayats Thiru. Rajendran and other high Government officials were present. ■

Mobile app for easy payment of Arasu Cable subscription



The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami, on behalf of the Information Technology Department, inaugurated the payment of monthly cable TV subscription for the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation through Mobile Application at the Secretariat in Chennai on 19.04.2017.

Using this Mobile Application, subscribers who are paying the monthly subscription of Rs.70/- for Arasu Cable TV Corporation, can pay their subscription directly to the Corporation. Of this, Rs. 20/- will be accounted to the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation and the balance of Rs. 50/- will be credited to the Cable TV operator. Subscribers using the Mobile Application can remit their monthly subscription between 1 and 10th of every month directly to the Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV

Corporation. The Corporation will acknowledge the acceptance of the subscription through SMS to the subscribers. If the Cable TV operators seek any further details regarding payment of subscription, the subscribers can show the SMS message to them. Those who want to pay after 10th of every month can pay their subscription to their respective cable TV operators.

This Mobile Application is available in Android Cell phones and general public can download the mobile application form from the Google Playstore without any fee. After downloading the form, the subscribers should register their personal data. Subscribers who are having Aadhar Cards have to scan the QR line of the Aadhar Card. After scanning, the personal details will be displayed to the subscribers. If the details are found correct a One Time Pass Word (OTP) will be sent to their mobile phones. If

the OTP is registered then their personal details will be recorded. Those who don't have Aadhar Cards, may register their personal details such as address, cell phone number, e-mail, and gender details and the subscribers will get one time password. After registering the OTP, the personal details will be registered.

After registration, subscribers can register their cable operator's name in the slot of the Cable operators list. After the personal details are registered in the Corporation, an SMS will be sent to the subscribers after which the

subscribers can pay their monthly subscription through their cell phones.

The Hon'ble Minister for Information and Technology Dr.M. Manikandan, Chief Secretary Dr.Girija Vaidyanathan I.A.S., Principal Secretary of the Information Technology Department Thiru. T.K.Ramachandran, I.A.S. and the Managing Director of Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation Thiru. J. Kumaragurubaran I.A.S., and high Government officials were present on the occasion. ●

NEWS IN PICTURE



In connection with the 127th Birth Anniversary of Pavendar Bharathidasan, Hon'ble Minister for Fisheries, Finance, Personnel and Administrative Reforms Thiru. D.Jayakumar, Hon'ble Minister for Information and Publicity Thiru. Kadambur Raju, Hon'ble Minister for Rural Industries Thiru. P.Benjamin, Hon'ble Minister for HR and CE Thiru. Sevvoor S.Ramachandran, S.R.Vijayakumar former MP, Secretary, Tamil Development and Information Department (In charge) Thiru. R.Venkatesan I.A.S., Director of Tamil Development (In charge) Dr. G.Vijayaraghavan I.A.S., paid floral tributes to the portrait of Bharathidasan placed near his statue on Kamarajar Salai in Chennai on 29.04.2017.