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## Plan to link Then Pennaiyar and Cheyyaru sent to Centre for nod

Staff Reporter

*Sathanur reservoir opened up for irrigation*

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*Food Minister opens sluice gates of pickup dam*

*Water will be released in six instalments*

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Tiruvannamalai: A project has been drafted to link the Then Pennaiyar with the Cheyyaru at a cost of Rs.180 crore and sent for the Union government's approval, Tiruvannamalai Collector M. Rajendran said.

Speaking at the event organised to open the sluice gates of the Sathanur reservoir for irrigation near here, he said that as many as 30 irrigation tanks situated in the sub-basin of Varaganadhi have been repaired at a cost of Rs.2.48 crore with financial assistance from World Bank during the last three and half years. As many as 47 tanks in the district have been deepened and modernised at a cost of Rs.7 crore with the funding of NABARD, he said.

“Proposals have been sent to World Bank for renovating 28 dams and 58 tanks that come under Thuringaluru sub-basin and situated in Tiruvannamalai, Kilpennathur, Thuringapuram, Chengam and Thandampattu blocks at a cost of Rs.10 crore and for renovating 20 dams and 3 tanks that come under Pambaru and Varattaru sub-basins at a cost of Rs.3 crore, during the next year,” Dr. Rajendran added.

Earlier, Food Minister E.V. Velu has opened the sluice gates of pickup dam, an auxiliary structure of Sathanur Reservoir, from where water would be channelled into left and right bank canals for irrigation.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Velu said that dwindled discharge from upstream and failed monsoon led to insufficient water storage in the reservoir that is why government has truncated the number of days of water release into 44. “Water would be released in six instalments in the stipulated 44 days. Totally 2185.92 million Cubic Feet (MCFt) would be released to the farmers and it would close on April 21. Taking the shortage of water into consideration farmers should prudently utilise it. They should realise their responsibility to ensure that tail areas get water,” Mr. Velu said.

DRO S. Viswanathan, Member of Parliament T. Venugopal, MLA K. Pichandi,

PWD-WRO Superintending Engineer A. Kuzhandhaivelu, Executive Engineer G. Vallikandhan were those who participated in the event.

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### **Mettur level**

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 76.99 feet on Monday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 868 cusecs and the discharge, nil.

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### **Farmers to stage demonstration**

Staff Reporter

Coimbatore: Pressing for a charter of demands, the Tamilaga Vivasayigal Sangham has planned to stage a demonstration in front of Red Cross Society on February 2.

In a release, the president of the Sangham, M.R. Sivasamy, said that with agriculture proving to be unviable, farmers were taking to other activities resulting in fall in food production.

The import of commodities will not be a solution to bring down the prices. In the absence of increase in prices of sugarcane, sugarcane cultivation had come down resulting in sugar price hike.

The solution would be to encourage sugarcane cultivation by offering Rs 2,500 a tonne as minimum procurement price.

The sangham also urged the Government to utilise the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREG) for farm works.

NREG could be used for farm works as was done by Kerala and Gujarat. Fixing of meters for agricultural connections would also discourage farmers, hence it should be stopped.

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### **Water level**

MADURAI: Water level in the Periyar dam on Monday stood at 114.80 feet (full

level 136 feet) with an inflow of 21 cusecs and a discharge of 400 cusecs.

The level in the Vaigai dam was 46.13 feet (71 feet) with an inflow of 40 cusecs and a discharge of 60 cusecs.

The combined Periyar credit stood at 1,941 mcft.

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## **ADB to fund climate change study in Northeast Asia**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is to carry out a comprehensive study on the economics of climate change in Northeast Asia, Manila-based ADB said in a press release on Monday.

The study's aim is to help regional and country-level decision makers address the issue of climate change and to develop low- carbon growth strategies in their countries and the region, the ADB said. The study, Economics of Climate Change and Low Carbon Growth Strategies in Northeast Asia, is being financed by a technical assistance grant of \$1 million from ADB, and \$800,000 of grant from the Government of the Republic of Korea. It will cover four countries — China, Japan, Republic of Korea and Mongolia. "The purpose of this assistance is to raise awareness about the urgency of climate change challenges in the region," said Tae Yong Jung, study team leader and Senior Climate Change Specialist in ADB's East Asia Department.

The study will provide the region's policymakers with the latest information on mitigation and adaptation strategies, and suggest policy responses to cope with and counter future climate change impacts. — *Xinhua*

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By V NarayanaMurthi

02 Feb 2010 02:34:00 AM IST

Animal lovers for revival of elephant corridor VELLORE: Animal lovers are concerned over the rise in the death of wild elephants which are straying out from the Vellore-Tiruvannamalai forest areas. A calf was electrocuted last week near Polur in Tiruvannamalai district while a sub-adult tusker was killed when it had rubbed its back against an electric pole in Attiyanur forests in the Javadhi hills in June last year.

The Javadhi Hill forests, spread in an area of 3,140 sq km, houses some 220 hamlets of tribal villages in Vellore and Tiruvannamalai districts. This is where a herd of nine elephants, including three females and two calves, are trapped for the past five years and trying ways to reach out their families in other parts. So far, four elephants were killed and one born dead.

The man-animal conflict has also resulted in trampling to death of five persons and damaging many hutments.

The forest department on its part, besides extending compensation (around Rs 5 lakh in the last two years) to the victims and the damage to the property, is also trying many tricks to keep the animals inside the forests.

Though solar fencing has been tried in some stretches along the forest borders, it has not contained the desperate animals.

Recently the department conducted trials of using chilli sprays but with not much success. Latest in the offing is to try implanting micro transmission chips, which can be tracked by a GPS machine to monitor the movement of the animals.

One has to wait and see how this would help solve the issue.

The options of habitat improvement which includes creation of water bodies near the fodder pastures within the forest areas at an estimated cost of Rs 21 crore, trenching along the borders to restrict the movement of the elephants, manually removing them to safer forests etc are also in the pipeline.

While demanding a ban on overhead power lines within the forests, the animal lovers argued that fodder and water alone cannot keep the trapped animals happy as they deserved free space to move around.

The forest department instead of trying to contain the movement of the elephants within a small area, should work on reviving the once existed 'elephant corridor' between Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh and Hosur in Tamil Nadu.

This corridor has been blocked by the introduction of the National Highway 46 since 2005. The NH authorities should provide animal passes in strategic locations so that the elephant corridor could be revived, they said.

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**THE TIMES OF INDIA**

#### **IMF plans 100 billion dollar fund to help poor mitigate climate impact**

AFP, 1 February 2010, 02:29am IST

DAVOS: The International Monetary Fund is planning a 100 billion dollar fund to help countries mitigate the effects of climate change, the agency's head said.

"The new growth model will be low carbon," Dominique Strauss-Kahn, managing director of the IMF, told political and business leaders meeting at the World Economic Forum in the Swiss ski resort of Davos this weekend.

Efforts to deal with climate change could not be blocked "just because we cannot meet the financing needs," he said.

Developing countries do not have the funds for these adaptation measures, and developed countries' ability to pay is also limited as they are now weighed down by debt after funds were used to deal with the financial crisis.

It was therefore necessary to "think out of the box" on the issue of funding, the IMF chief said.

"We'll have to find innovative ways to finance it," Strauss-Khan said on Saturday.

"We're going to provide some ideas, built around a Green Fund devoted to finance 100 billion dollars (72 billion euros) a year which is the figure currently accepted for addressing the problem based on the capitalisation coming from central banks, backed by special drawing rights issued by the fund," he said.

Special drawing rights are an international reserve asset created by the IMF in 1969 as a supplement to member states' official reserves. They can be exchanged for common currencies.

The IMF said on its website that it would issue a paper detailing ideas on how the fund would be financed.

The United Nations has said that governments should invest in the green sector as they try to create new jobs in the wake of the economic crisis, as it would also help move towards a greener society.

Azim Premji, who chairs India's Wipro corporation noted that the issues of tackling climate change and reducing poverty could be addressed together.

"To me, if you combine these two challenges, they present an opportunity. The key is to look at the very fundamental fact that the developing world has still to build most of its energy infrastructure (and) physical infrastructure, and to buy most of its consumer goods," he said in remarks published on the WEF's website.

"This very simple fact -- that the developing world does not have these things -- is the great opportunity for tackling climate change and ecological sustainability."

Jamie Drummond, Executive Director of campaign group ONE which was co-founded by U2 singer Bono, said the IMF's move for a green fund was a "significant and positive development which, if approved in its most positive form, could seriously help catalyse the financing of a transition to low-carbon economic growth in developing countries."

However, the advocacy group said that large sums of financing are still needed on top of the IMF fund to help poor countries deal with the effects of climate change immediately.

"As the fund would give concessional loans this does not replace the need for significant additional grant financing to help the poorest countries adapt right now to the impacts of climate change," said the group.

The IMF's plans must be "urgently analysed ... and then the solutions must be urgently implemented," it said.

In an 11th-hour deal, the Copenhagen Accord emerged out of the UN's global summit on climate change in December.

The accord calls for limiting warming to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), the threshold set by many climate scientists.

It also commits rich countries to paying out around 30 billion dollars in total over the next three years, and 100 billion dollars annually by 2020, to help poor nations fight climate change and cope with its consequences.

Countries are being asked to indicate by Sunday if they will endorse the deal.

### **'IPCC based ice report on student essay'**

AGENCIAS, 1 February 2010, 12:44am IST

LONDON: The UN climate change panel based claims about ice disappearing from the world's mountain peaks on an essay by a student and an anecdotal article in a mountaineering magazine, a British newspaper reported on Sunday.

The claims risk causing fresh embarrassment for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which apologized this month over inaccurate forecasts about the melting of Himalayan glaciers and promised to reassess claims of a link between global warming and rise in the occurrence of natural disasters.

In a recent report, the IPCC stated that observed reductions in mountain ice in the Andes, Alps and Africa was caused by global warming and it referred to two papers as the source of the information. The Sunday Telegraph said one of the sources quoted was an article published in a magazine for mountaineers which was based on anecdotal evidence about the changes they were witnessing during climbs.

The newspaper said the other source was a dissertation written by a geography student who was studying for a master's degree at the University of Bern in Switzerland that quoted interviews with mountain guides in the Alps.

Barely a week ago, The Sunday Times, London, had reported that the IPCC's claims of a link between global warming and rise in incidence and severity of natural disasters, including hurricanes and floods. The newspaper said the panel based the claims on an unpublished report that had not been subjected to routine scientific scrutiny - and ignored warnings from scientific advisers. The report's author later withdrew the claim because the evidence was too weak.

The link was central to demands at last month's Copenhagen climate summit by African nations for compensation of \$100 billion from the rich nations blamed for creating the most emissions. The newspaper quoted IPCC vice-chair Jean-Pascal van Ypersele as saying that the IPCC was reassessing the evidence at hand.

That claim was preceded by the IPCC's apology for the "poor application of well-established IPCC procedures" in a report on the melting of Himalayan glaciers that said they could all vanish by 2035. The report, it was revealed, was based on a news report in the New Scientist in which an Indian scientist made a "speculation" when interviewed.

## **Herbs swing Bundelkhand tribals' fortune**

Manjari Mishra, TNN, 2 February 2010, 04:08am IST

LUCKNOW: Over the past eight years, Bhure Kol has added two rooms to his house, replaced its thatched roof with corrugated iron sheets and bought a second—hand moped. The illiterate tribal from Masaura, Lalitpur in Bundelkhand owes his prosperity to the rich herbal haul made by the family of six.

The demand for ware on sale — Ashwagandha (*withania somnifera*) known popularly as Indian ginseng, White Museli (*chiorophytum barivillianum*) touted as desi Viagra, and other assorted prized herbs has gone up manifold. Therefore the market is growing, price is good and most importantly buyers turn up at his doorsteps saving him a business trip out of the quiet little hamlet to Jhansi.

A hotbed of intense political activity, Bundelkhand is fast turning into a favourite hunting ground for big players in the alternative medicine. The region, in league with Orissa and Chattisgarh with its abundant medicinal plant produce, is equally vulnerable due to endemic poverty and therefore a gold mine waiting to be exploited by mushrooming herbal industry in Noida, Delhi, Gurgaon, and Faridabad. All they have to do is to send smart agents to pay the tribals advance money during lean seasons and then buy at their own rates. Luckily for them government offers little competition.

Nearly 80% of tribals don't even step into the collection centres set up by the state forest corporation, claimed Hem Raj Tripathi, one of the retailers in Manikpur, Chitrakoot. "Sarkari rates," Tripathi says "are a joke". And sure enough the rate list of the corporation 2007 08 offers Rs 30 for a kg of Satawar (*asparagus racemosus*) which dwindled to Rs 29 in 2009. The herb "greatly in demand by lactating mothers fetches between Rs 300 to 600 depending on the quality in Lucknow," says LL Yadav, a dealer in Aminabad, Lucknow.

Interestingly dozens of names like agani (*cleaodendrum phiamoidis*) a tonic and cure for syphilis, gagelua (*ceropegia tuberosa*) and Arjun (*terminalia Arjuna*) for heart ailments including museli white and black both or Ashwagandha have disappeared from the rate list. The reason not even a kg of these has reached the collection centres since 2004 show the records of the annual auction sources in the forest department claim that they have been missing even before.