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Sericulture cluster to come up at Berigai

KRISHNAGIRI: A sericulture cluster will be established at Berigai, near Hosur, with assistance from National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). NABARD will give Rs. 46.94 lakh to the project - Rs. 36.14 lakh as grant and Rs. 10.80 lakh as soft loan. The concept of the project is "soil to silk". This is the first sericulture cluster project in the state sanctioned by NABARD. The project would be implemented by Hosur-based Sanjeevi Trust, which was instrumental in establishing more than 12 farmers clubs, in three years, NABARD Assistant General Manager V. Thirumalai said. The sericulture cluster villages would include Nerigam, Mudukurukki, Malakalakki, Koolu and Chinnamarandoddi in and around Berigai, Mr. Thirumalai said. As part of this programme, farmers would be given intensive training in cultivation of mulberry, rearing of cocoons with modern technology by establishing chawkee rearing centres.. The project envisages establishment of a Common Facility Centre to run the cluster with artisans identified in the cluster. The cluster farmers numbering 200 have been identified for the intensive training on cultivation of mulberry. The training will help the farmers equip themselves to take over, own and manage the project on their own.

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Separate ministry to be announced for differently-abled in State budget

VILLUPURAM: Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi has said that in the budget session of the Assembly an announcement will be made about the formation of a separate Ministry for improving the lot of the differently-abled in Tamil Nadu. The Chief Minister was speaking at a public meeting held at the municipal grounds here recently. India was a signatory to the United Nations Convention that favoured a separate mechanism for protecting the rights of the differently-abled but so far it had not initiated any measures in that direction.

Therefore, he had decided to urge the Centre to act in conformity with the Convention for which he sought the consent of the gathering. The audience readily raised their hands in approval of it.

He emphatically said that people with disability should not be referred to by their physical deformity but should be called as differently-abled persons. They constituted two-three per cent of the country's population and their numbers in Tamil Nadu were put at 18 lakh.

Gopalapuram house

Mr. Karunanidhi said that he had already willed that after his life the Gopalapuram residence should be converted into a hospital. But he asked himself the question whether the place should remain his house till then.

Therefore, he had decided to hand over the house either to the government to a public trust on June 3, "said to be his birthday." He stressed the point that one should not hanker after money and jewellery but should spurn them.

It did not mean that one should renounce the world as Siddhartha or Buddha but learn to lead an austere life as Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave and C.N. Annadurai. He underscored the point that the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam was the movement of the poor.

In this context, he said that he would have given up the golden memento given by Higher Education Minister K. Ponmudy had it not been etched with the figures of Periyar E.V.Ramasamy Naicker and C.N. Annadurai.

He would not convert it as ornaments for his family members but would preserve it in the Kalaingar Treasury (Kalaingar Karuvoolam) for the posterity to know about the achievements of their ancestors and the public appreciation they got.

House scheme

He said that under the direct supervision of Mr. Stalin the scheme to convert huts into concrete houses would be implemented. In the first phase, Rs.1,800 crore had been sanctioned to build three lakh concrete houses this year.

Dismissing the remarks of the sceptics Mr. Karunanidhi said that since it was designed for the uplift of the poor adequate funds could always be mobilised. The DMK, sprung from the Social Justice Party, was avidly fighting for social justice and democracy.

Mr. Stalin, along with his Cabinet colleagues Durai Murugan, K. Ponmudy and M.R.K. Panneerselvam, participated.

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SRM student develops new hard drive technology

CHENNAI: R. Shivaraman, a student of SRM University, has developed an ultra high density hard drive that can store over 60 times more data than the best hard disks available today. And the reward for his research, apart from the patents he has filed and the papers he has published, is a \$280,000 a year job as Associate Scientist in the United States.

He said he will be completing his Ph.D. by the end of the year and is headed to the United States to work on making his technology commercially viable

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Farm implements distributed

To beneficiaries in Tuticorin



HELP:Collector G.Prakash distributing farm implements to beneficiaries in Tuticorin

Tuticorin: With the objective of increasing the productivity of agriculture, farm implements were provided to the farmers under National Agriculture Development programme here on Tuesday.

Collector G. Prakash handed over a harvester to A. Santhanam, a farmer from Vitalapuram. The total cost of the equipment is Rs. 3, 34, 500 with a subsidy of Rs. 4 lakh.

Subsequently, a couple of mini-tractors were given to R. Gunasekaran, Tuticorin, and V. Antonisamy of Vanchchi Maniyachi.

The cost of the equipment is Rs. 2, 69, 800 with a subsidy amount of Rs. 1.25 lakh each.

After distributing the machineries, Mr. Prakash said the farmers could reap benefits with the help of the equipment. It would certainly save time and labour, he added. Under NADP scheme in 2009-10, 27 types of machineries were allotted to the farmers in the district with the total subsidy component of Rs.14.15 lakh.

G. Amuthan, Executive Engineer (in-charge), Agriculture Engineering, D.R. Ganesh Babu, Assistant Engineer, K. Balasingh, Agriculture Officer, and A. Dhanasingh David, Personal Assistant to Collector (Agriculture) were present.

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