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Revive cattle feed plant, says MLA

MADURAI: N.Nanmaran, MLA (Madurai East), has made a request to Chief Minister M.Karunanidhi to revive the defunct cattle feed unit at Kappalur. In a letter to the CM, Mr. Nanmaran said that if funds were allotted to revive the plant, as it would result in cattle getting adequate fodder, which would, in turn, help increase in milk procurement for Aavin and adequate supply of milk could be ensured for sale for public.

The cattle feed plant which was functioning from Kappalur was closed down for several years citing fault in machinery and other reasons. The plant which functioned under the Madurai Aavin management is located on a 20 acre area.

He requested the CM to provide permanent jobs for the daily wage workers of Madurai Aavin who had been working there for many years.

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Human chain to mark World Water Day

Demonstrations held on how to identify fluoride content in groundwater



Protect for future: People forming human chain to mark the World Water Day at a temple tank

KRISHNAGIRI: A human chain was formed around the temple tank at Kanavaipatti village in Agasipalli Panchayat in the district to mark the World Water Day. Members of the women Self-Help Groups among others formed the human chain. The programme was inaugurated by Collector V.K. Shanmugam in the presence of P. Velusamy, UNICEF (Water Ecosystem) advisor.

Oath

Saraswathi Ganesan, Project Officer, Mahalir Thittam, administered oath to the SHG members to protect the temple tank from pollution. The members also took oath to construct toilets at their houses.

Later, members of NGOs conducted demonstrations on how to identify the content of fluoride in groundwater, chlorine level, magnesium, sodium, nitrate, acidity etc. School students also participated.

Seminar

A seminar was conducted at the Collectorate. M. Baskaran, Chief Educational Officer, spoke about the water availability in future.

The Collector gave away prizes to the students who had participated in the essay writing and drawing competitions conducted by the UNICEF. He also distributed awareness materials to the schools. The programmes were jointly organised by the district administration, Education Department, TWARD Board, SSA, DRDA, Mahalir Thittam and UNICEF.

Food prices not a long term worry

Mar 29 2010

Mumbai, March 28: High prices of pulses, grain, sugar and vegetables have become a politically sensitive issue over the past several months. A good winter harvest and a drop in international prices may provide some relief in the next few months.

However, the big worry in many quarters is whether food prices will also stabilise at a higher level as other commodities such as oil, metals, gold etc. The concern isn't misplaced as prices of agricultural inputs such as fuel and fertilisers have increased substantially. The food price index, maintained by Food and Agricultural Organisation, a UN body, was at a level of 169 in February — lower than 2008 but higher than all previous years. Going by the current trends, world food demand is expected to increase by 42 per cent by 2030 and 70 per cent by 2050. This increase will happen as consumption patterns change in the developing world with increasing incomes.

However, this doesn't imply that we are doomed to perennially high food prices, say experts. The high prices of 2008 were because of a combination of factors. Consumption increased in line with global growth but supply was constrained by multiple factors.

Major wheat exporting areas — Australia and Ukraine witnessed a drought in the period. At the same time, because of the biofuel policies, a lot of agricultural land was used for growing fuel instead of food. Bothered by high prices, some governments also intervened, in some cases with outright bans or taxes on exports. A similar combination is unlikely to recur.

In fact, the FAO in its recent report on world agriculture estimates that over 2009-18, food prices are expected to be higher by 10-20 per cent in real terms, compared to 1997-2006. These increases are not much says Dr S. Chandrasekhar development economist at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Research and Development. The jump in food prices over 2009-10 was more due to the poor monsoon in India.

India is a major food importer and when it is known that she will be importing in a big way, international prices adjust accordingly, he adds.

So far, the 2010 monsoon is expected to be normal – which should take care of near term expectations. The El-Nino weather phenomena, which was blamed for poor rains last year, is now dissipating and rains are likely to be as usual, say experts.

Moreover, from a longer term view, a real increase of 10-20 per cent over a decade is not that high. Even the higher end of the FAO estimate means an annual increase of less than 2 per cent. Meanwhile, in spite of the slowdown, India's GDP is expected to grow at over 7 per cent.

In the longer run, this would mean that a smaller share of the total income would be spent on food. In the Indian context, investments in agriculture would also help.

Marketing infrastructure has to be a priority says Sudheendra Kulkarni, transport economist and chairman of the Observer Research Foundation. Proper storage and transport infrastructure can reduce waste and provide an element of stability as well, he notes.

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By Express News Service

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Formulate new ways to preserve water: MK

CHENNAI: Chief Minister M Karunanidhi on Sunday urged the need to formulate new techniques to preserve water and called for conservation efforts so that future generations are benefited.

In his inaugural address at a seminar on 'Water management of ancient Tamils', organised by the Central Institute of Classical Tamil here, Karunanidhi expressed his admiration for the advanced water management systems followed by Tamils in ancient days.

Citing Tholkappiam, Pattinapalai and Purananuru, besides Silapathikaram and Seevakasinthamani, the CM said the Tamils for several years had known the nuances of preserving and using water according to their requirements besides understanding its importance.

"The Grand Anicut constructed across Cauvery by Karikal Cholan about 1,800 years ago was a landmark

achievement in the annals of the water management history of Tamils,” he said adding that engineers to this day wonder at the technology used to build such a great facility.

Referring to the Kooram and Uthiramerur inscriptions, he recounted how many lakes were created by kings like Parameswaravarman even about 1,300 years ago, adding the present day Veeranam lake was actually the “Veera Narayanan lake” founded by Rajendra Chola during the 11th century AD.

The ancient work ‘Koobanool’ spoke of identifying water resources through the analysis of the earth and flora, and there was a need for more research by geologists and scholars. “All this make it clear that Tamil Nadu had clear cut ideas about water and its management even 2,000 years ago,” he noted.

By Express News Service

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Tips on saving power

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) can feel happy about this one and can even take a tip or two. The final year projects of a number of engineering colleges in the district have focused on saving power/energy.

If MG College of Engineering, Vandithadam, has come up with a control system for ‘Intelligent street light system’, a team of students of Mohandas College of Engineering, Nedumangad, has made a device to limit power consumption. Students of Sarabhai Institute of Science and Technology, Vellanad, have brought out an ‘Eco-gymnasium’, which not only improves health, but also saves power.

“Sometimes, street lights are left burning during daytime. And some of them don’t work during night-time when they are needed. So, the Intelligent street light system is controlled in such a way that lights burn and go off depending on the presence of sunlight. Also, this system can control the amount of illumination from the street light. And, the illumination can be increased and decreased depending on the traffic density during night-time,” said students of MG College of Engineering, Vandithanam.

Prasanth Nair R., Sarath A.R., Saran Kumar G.G., Adarsh V.G. and Visakh Dhar of Electrical and Electronics Department, with the guidance of Yamuna M. Nair, have developed this system and have successfully done a demonstration. It is the Light Dependent Resistor which controls the illumination as and when the sunlight falls. The time can also be set using the programme, done on micro-controller. Infrared sensors are used to determine traffic density. “If the traffic density is low, the lights will burn with 50 percent illumination. Through this, we can save a lot of power. The whole system is controlled using GSM technology,” they said. The system is eco-friendly too since it can bring down the carbon dioxide emission from the lights. The students have spent Rs 24,000 for the demo and are planning to present

the concept before the KSEB.

The 'GSM-based wattage limiter', developed by the final year Electrical and Electronics Engineering students of Mohandas College of Engineering and Technology, proposes to work hand-in-hand with the authorities.

The connected load given by the consumer while applying for connection is set in the device and given to the consumer. If the power consumed at any time exceeds the set load, a buzzer is activated to an alarm for 30 seconds. If the consumer is not ready to reduce the load below the set value, power will be cut off. For resuming supply, the device has to be reset with a reduced load level.

The changes can be made only with the consent of the authorities, who can either use a password-incorporated keypad attached with the device or GSM technology. The authorities send an SMS to change the load which, when received in a particular format, is accepted by the device. "The advantage is that if the authorities find it difficult to meet the demand during peak hours, they can reduce a particular quantity of load from all consumers by sending a group SMS facility, thus avoiding load-shedding. A master-controller, if provided, can help in continuous monitoring," the team members said.

The team - Lekshmi Nair K.B., Ajith Prasad S., Rakesh Prakash and Raman Unni V. - has developed this with guidance from Amrutha R.R., lecturer, Dr S. Dasgupta, head of the department, and Dr Ashalatha Thampuran, college principal.

'Eco-gymnasium' of Sarabhai Institute of Science and Technology follows the saying, Health is wealth. That is, energy spent in exercise comes handy in doing other work. While improving health standards, it also brings down power charges.

It mainly consists of a main frame, cycle frame with seat, handle and chain drive, main shaft, secondary shaft, belt drive, alternator, grinder and a double acting reciprocating pump.

"When you pedal the crank at particular rotations per minute for a specified time, water can be taken to a particular height or you can grind grains or can produce DC current, which can be stored in a battery," said the team of final year BTech students - Vishnu A., Vishnu Gopinath, Karthik S. and Gokul M. They have been guided by internal guide Aju S.S., staff advisor Praveen and department head Kesavan Nair.

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TN needs sound water management to overcome scarcity: CM

TNN, Mar 29, 2010, 05.59am

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu has only 2% of the country's water resources, but 6.5% of the country's population. As a result, per capita availability of water in TN is only one third of what an Indian citizen consumes on an average, chief minister M Karunanidhi said here on Sunday.

Recalling the state's long history of water management for the last 2,000 years, he said such water management techniques and strategies were still required because of the state's water-deficient status.

He was inaugurating a seminar on water resources management in ancient Tamil Nadu. As researchers have warned of impending problems in future due to water scarcity, he emphasised the need for better water management and proper schemes to tap the run-off water from the monsoons in Tamil Nadu.

From the literature over the past two millennia and the infrastructural facilities developed over centuries, it could be construed that the Tamils had a clear vision for water management, Karunanidhi said. "Everyone knows that Tamil Nadu is a water-scarce state compared to its neighbours at present, he said and detailed the government's irrigation projects to augment water resources over the years beginning with the construction of Mettur dam in 1934 to Mordhana project in 1996.

After the DMK assumed office in 2006, Karunanidhi said the government began the ambitious task of inter-linking the rivers -- the first state to do so in the country -- to divert the surplus waters from the Cauvery to drought-hit districts. A barrage was constructed at a cost of Rs 189 crore across the Cauvery. Simultaneously, the government took up the Tamaraparani Karumeniaru Nambiaru river linking project at Rs 369 crore, the chief minister said.

In the present budget, the government has promised to take up flood mitigation projects in Kollidam and Vellaru rivers benefiting Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Cuddalore and Villupuram districts at a cost of Rs 609 crore to the exchequer, Karunanidhi said. Under the master plan to improve the groundwater table, the government was in the process of constructing 4,079 water recharging structures, including 1,859 check dams and 1,369 percolation ponds which have already raised the water table in the project areas, he noted.

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Monday, Mar 29

Max Min

36.6° | 27.2°

Rain: 00mm in 24hrs Sunrise: 06:08

Humidity: 89% Sunset: 18:20

Wind: Normal Barometer: 1008.1mb

Tomorrow's Forecast



Tstorm

Tuesday, Mar 30

Max Min

35° | 27°

Extended Forecast for a week

Wednesday

Mar 31



36° | 28°

Sunny

Thursday

Apr 1



36° | 27°

Partly Cloudy

Friday

Apr 2



36° | 28°

Tstorm

Saturday

Apr 3



36° | 28°

Sunny

Sunday

Apr 4



36° | 28°

Sunny