



Fortnightly media digest based on articles from the media

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1. Panel gives nod for rural bank's entry into Nagapattinam district

The Hindu dated 1st March 2007 reported that The District Consultative Committee of Bankers at a meeting approved the entry of regional rural bank of Pandiyan Grama Bank into Nagapattinam. The District Collector, Tenkasi. S. Jawahar who presided over the meeting convened by Indian Overseas Bank, the lead bank, said that committee approved the opening of the Pandiyan Grama Bank with head quarters at Virudhunagar in Nagapattinam, the district head quarters of the lead bank. The Collector urged the bankers to complete the disbursement of loans and creation of assets for the loans granted under various Government sponsored schemes before the end of this financial year. The State Government is critically reviewing the progress at all levels and the banks should take special efforts in implementation of all the development programmes for the poor. He said that the banks in the district were having a deposit of Rs.1, 774 crore and advanced Rs.1197 crore with CD ratio of 67 percent till the end of December 2006. The Collector also mentioned that the target under Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarajgar Yojana (SGSY) had been achieved during the financial year and a revolving fund of Rs.2.81 crore was provided to 466 Self Help Groups (SHG) and Rs.2.70 crore as economic assistance to 80 SHGs under the SGSY Scheme. Similarly the district has also achieved its target of 540 beneficiaries under the Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) scheme.

2. Students, parents go on fast for tsunami relief

The Indian Express dated 1st March 2007 reported that As many as 200 students and their parents from the tsunami affected villages around Pudupakkam, Sadras and Vayalur Panchayats went on a fast boycotting school, in protest against the non disbursement of aid from the Prime Minister's fund for tsunami affected children. They demanded that the aid money of Rs.300 be released immediately. Officials said that the payment was getting delayed as they had not received the copy of the Government Order. The parents said Rs 8 crore was allocated for tsunami rehabilitation in the area but it had not reached the beneficiaries yet. Despite several representations to the district administration and the Department of Education, no action has been taken.

3. Collector distributes aid

The Hindu dated 5th March 2007 reported that a total of 2.41 lakh families of agricultural labourers and farmers in the Cauvery Delta region of Nagapattinam district will be benefited under the Tamil Nadu Agricultural Labourers and Farmers Social Security Scheme. The Collector who inaugurated the scheme said that Rs.3.70 crore (Rs.1.30 crore for Scheduled Castes and Rs.2.42 crore for other communities) has been allocated for the district and pointed out that under the scheme a sum of Rs.2, 500 would be provided for performing rites of a farm labourers or farmer in case of natural death and Rs.1 lakh compensation would be given for death, owing to accident. The Collector distributed assistance to the tune of Rs.22.27 lakh to 248 beneficiaries under the scheme.

4. School of Hope for tsunami-hit children

The Hindu dated 6th March 2007 reported that Korea based global electronics major Samsung has set up a state-of-the-art English school for the tsunami survivors at Chinnankudi in Nagapattinam district, utilizing the funds contributed by its employees. The project christened 'Samsung School of Hope' was implemented by the United Way of Mumbai, an International NGO in association with Hope Foundation, a New Delhi based NGO. At a function organised by the Hope Foundation, the School of Hope, spread over 3 acres of land, containing facilities such as computer labs, libraries, dining halls, play areas, laboratories and class rooms, was inaugurated by Gunchoon Park General Manager Samsung Electronics in the presence of V L Narayanan, Regional Head and Kandaswami Deputy Collector, tsunami rehabilitation, Nagapattinam. A multi purpose auditorium was also inaugurated at Tharangambadi for the benefit of tsunami survivors. About 1.37 lakhs employees of Samsung Korea contributed nearly 2 million US Dollars towards relief and rehabilitation activities in the tsunami affected areas in Tamil Nadu.

5. Sanitation Campaign van donated to Collector

The Hindu dated 7th March 2007 reported that The United Nations Children Fund donated Information Education and Communication van (a tempo traveler), to Nagapattinam district administration. The van was handed over to the Collector Tenkasi S Jawahar. K.Y.Babu, Nagapattinam district consultant for UNICEF (water and sanitation), who handed over the van to collector said that the van fitted with all communication equipment including television, CD player etc. would be used for creating awareness on sanitation in villages by screening films and other short films relating to water and sanitation. Ms. G.Radha Project Officer, District Rural Development Agency who received the van from the Collector said that the Total Sanitation Campaign was being implemented in all 434 village panchayats in the district.

6. Tsunami survivors get houses

The Indian Express reported on the 8th March, 2007 that The Collector handed over 195 permanent houses sponsored by Church Development Services of Germany and constructed by DPG an NGO, to the tsunami survivors of Vanavanmahadevi village. According to DPG members the 195 houses were constructed at a total cost of Rs.4.72 crore. The cost of each house with plinth area measuring 456 sq.ft works out to Rs.2.30 lakhs. Referring to the progress of the house construction, the Collector said that a total of 18,000 houses were to be constructed in 76 tsunami hit hamlets of which more than 8000 had been handed over to the tsunami survivors. Construction works in the remaining places are going full swing. He also mentioned that about 48 NGOs have undertaken this work and they have been advised not to delay the work completion. He also added that weekly review meetings are being organised to monitor the work progress.

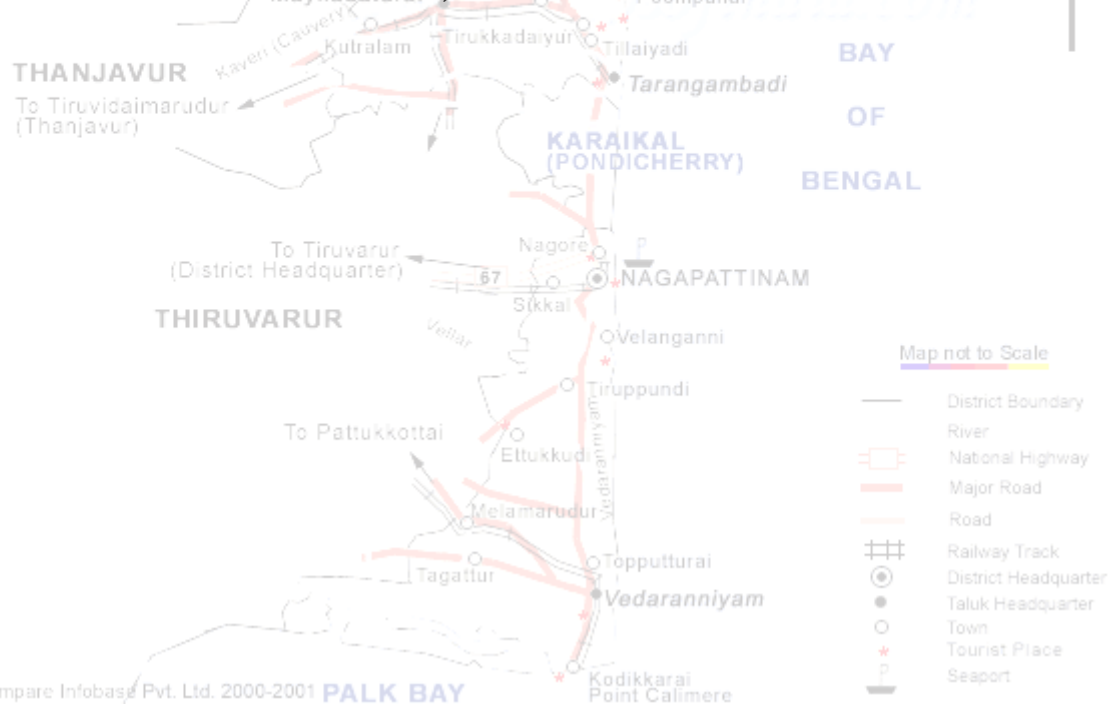
7. Delay in Road work: Contractor fined

Indian Express dated 12th March 2007, reported that District Collector Tenkasi S Jawahar has imposed a fine of Rs.19000 on a contractor for delaying the road construction work at two places in the district. According to official sources road construction works at a cost of Rs.14 crore sponsored by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) are being carried out in various tsunami hit villages in seven Panchayat unions, two town panchayats and two municipalities in the district. The collector who undertakes weekly review of tsunami rehabilitation projects in the district found that the work in two villages – Vanavanmahadevi and Naluvadapathi were progressing at snails pace. Disappointed by the delay the Collector imposed a fine of Rs.19000 on the contractor.

8. UNICEF Child Rights awareness meet

Indian Express dated 14th March 2007, reported that a conference of local body representatives, women SHG members and youth organizations from several tsunami hit villages in Sembanarcoil Panchayat Union was held at Akkur. In order to create awareness on child rights and protection. The conference was organised by UNICEF and Village Educational Service Association (VESA) an NGO. The participant were explained the rights of children under the provisions of Indian Constitution and UNICEF charter, the need for protecting children from abuse, eradicating child labour, sending children below 14 years of age to school and the need for establishing bridge schools for school drop-outs. A booklet on child rights published by VESA was also released in the conference. More than 100 representatives from village panchayats participated in the conference. It was resolved in the conference to fight for eradicating child labour and for equal treatment to male and female children. The Panchayat representatives also agreed to form village level monitoring committees to protect children. Nivedha Murugan, Chairperson of Sembanarkoil Panchayat inaugurated the conference in the presence of Pramila Manoharan, Assistant Project officer, UNICEF.

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