

On World Environment Day, Nagaland minister urges people to strengthen conservation efforts

KOHIMA: On the occasion of World Environment Day, Nagaland minister C L John on Friday called upon people to strengthen conservation efforts as he urged the youth to lead environmental awareness campaigns and become agents of change in their communities.

At a state-level event at Kohima Peace Memorial and Eco Park, the Nagaland environment minister identified forest fires, especially jungle burning associated with cultivation practices, as a major contributor to environmental degradation in the state.

He also expressed concern over continued hunting activities, stating that forests require birds and wildlife to maintain ecological balance. Drawing a parallel with the abandonment of headhunting, the minister said society should work towards ending the hunting of animals and birds.

He urged students and young people to lead environmental awareness cam-



paigns and become agents of change in their communities. Highlighting the visible impacts of climate change, John pointed to rising temperatures in Kohima, Dimapur and other parts of the state as evidence of global warming.

He also reminded citizens of the government's ban on single-use plastics and stressed the need for stricter adherence to environmental regulations.

Expressing concern over poor waste management practices, John urged people to adopt responsible civic habits and contribute towards maintaining a cleaner and greener Nagaland.

John further called on every individual to plant at least one tree, stressing that environmental conservation was essential for public health and sustainable livelihoods. He warned that continued destruction of natural resources would have long-term consequences for future generations.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force, Vedpal Singh, said environmental protection was critical to sustaining life and human well-being. He warned that pollution, global warming and plastic contamination were increasingly threatening ecosystems due to unsustainable

human activities. Singh urged citizens to reduce the use of plastic, conserve natural resources and minimise waste generation, emphasising that individual responsibility was key to building a cleaner and more sustainable future.

The day was also observed at the NSSA Park within the Nagaland Civil Secretariat under the aegis of the Eco and Beautification Club and the Nagaland Secretariat Service Association (NSSA). In another initiative marking the occasion, the Municipal Affairs Department organised a Waste-to-Resource Exchange programme at the Secretariat Plaza.

Arrested TMC leader pelted with eggs during police search at flat near Kolkata

KOLKATA: Arrested TMC vice-president Jayprakash Majumdar was pelted with eggs by angry residents on Friday when police took him to a flat in Salt Lake near the city for a search in connection with a case alleging illegal occupation of the property and intimidation of its owner.

Police personnel escorting Majumdar had to shield him and quickly take him inside the flat as residents gathered outside and hurled eggs while shouting slogans against him. Majumdar was arrested on Wednesday by Bidhannagar North Police Station based on a complaint alleging that he had occupied the flat for years and threatened the owner when asked to vacate the premises or pay rent.

The development took place a month after the BJP defeated the TMC and came to power in West Bengal. According to police sources, investigators took the arrested leader to the flat on Friday as part of the probe.

As soon as he got down from the police vehicle, a crowd surrounded him and began protesting, accusing him of illegally retaining possession of the property. Several eggs were thrown at him before the police escorted him into the building.

The property owner alleged that Majumdar had rented the flat in Salt



Lake in 2014 but continued to occupy it despite repeated requests to vacate. The complainant also alleged that attempts to collect rent or seek possession of the property were met with threats and intimidation.

Tension flared in the area on Wednesday before Majumdar's arrest when locals staged a protest against him. Witnesses said residents surrounded the leader, raised slogans of "chor, chor" (thief, thief) and demanded that he vacate the property.

Police later intervened and took him to the police station before formally arresting him. Friday's incident was

not the first time that Majumdar has faced public hostility.

During the 2019 Lok Sabha election campaign, when he was a BJP candidate from Karimpur, a video showing him being kicked and pushed into a marshy field during a political confrontation went viral on social media. The BJP then accused TMC workers of being behind the attack. Majumdar later quit the saffron party and joined the Mamata Banerjee-led outfit in 2021.

Police said the investigation into the property-related allegations is underway.

Kerala to restore cooperative sector credibility: Minister Liju

THRISSUR: Kerala Minister M Liju on Friday said the state government will work to restore the credibility of the cooperative sector and ensure the safety of societies and depositors.

He was speaking after inaugurating the Cooperation Day celebrations and the state-level launch of the Thanal environmental project at Viyyur.

Liju said Kerala, which accounts for a major share of India's cooperative sector, would strengthen the system while ensuring investor safety.

The state cooperation and excise minister warned that strict action would be taken against

those who exploit or misuse the sector. He said a cooperative policy would be prepared after collecting views from institutions and stakeholders across the state.

Liju added that pending complaints would be addressed as part of the government's 100-day action plan. He also called for faster resolution of disputes and said unnecessary litigation should be avoided so that ordinary complainants do not face delays.

His remarks come at a time when Kerala's cooperative sector has been facing scrutiny over several high-profile financial scams and loan fraud cases in recent years. The sector has

been hit by concerns over weak internal controls and allegations of political interference, leading to a decline in public confidence.

The cases have also triggered investigations by agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate (ED), the Crime Branch, and the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB).

As part of the Environment Day programme, the Minister planted saplings at the Viyyur Cooperative Bank premises. Liju said planting trees alone was not enough and stressed the need to protect them and adopt environmentally friendly lifestyles.

First meeting of CM's cabinet unveiled roadmap for 436 projects: Minister

CHENNAI: The first meeting of the Tamil Nadu cabinet led by CM C Joseph Vijay, on Friday, unveiled a comprehensive roadmap for 436 targeted projects across various government departments, Electricity Minister CTR Nirmal Kumar said.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Kumar stated that the chief minister has set specific, long-term goals for every department, emphasising time-bound execution of welfare and development initiatives.

"Chief Minister Vijay presided over the first cabinet meeting today and provided a clear, visionary direction for all departments. A total of 436 specific projects and



goals have been outlined to guide the governance trajectory of this administration," Kumar said.

The minister underscored that the departmental plans mainly incorporate the promises in TVK's election manifesto. "The respective ministers and top officials of each department will thoroughly

assess these plans, formulate detailed execution strategies, and determine the timeline to implement them efficiently. A presentation will be done to the chief minister for final approval," he added.

According to the minister, the cabinet meeting prioritised accelerating development and creating enhanced em-

ployment opportunities for youth and women. The team also talked about formulating robust welfare measures for farmers and boosting industrial expansion and ensuring transparent, corruption-free governance across all levels of public service, the minister said.

Minister Kumar highlighted that achieving a "Drug-Free Tamil Nadu" remains a top priority for the administration. He noted that the government has already taken decisive action by ordering the closure of 117 TASMAL liquor shops. "We are fully aware of the proliferation of synthetic drugs, ganja, and banned tobacco products like gutkha

over the last few years, which have even affected school students. The chief minister has issued strict directives to the police and relevant departments to completely eradicate illegal drug networks," Kumar said, adding that extensive raids are being conducted daily, resulting in the sealing of over 24 shops in Madurai alone within a week. When questioned about the government's stance on the proposed Parandur airport project, against which Vijay protested before coming to power, and other industrial projects, the minister stated that detailed policy announcements would be made by the government in due course.

KPTCL begins shift to biodegradable oil in transformers to boost green power transmission

BENGALURU: KPTCL on Friday said it has started replacing conventional mineral oil with environment-friendly, biodegradable natural ester oil in its high-voltage transformer network as part of a move towards greener power transmission.

The move is aimed at enhancing grid safety, reducing environmental risks, and extending the operational life of critical transmission assets while supporting Karnataka's broader commitment to sustainable energy infrastructure, they said. According to a statement, the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited currently operates 3,754 transformers across the state.

As part of its modernisation strategy, the utility has already replaced convention-

al mineral oil with natural ester oil in 45 high-capacity transformers.

Rather than incurring substantial capital expenditure on replacing ageing transformers, KPTCL has adopted a cost-effective approach by upgrading transformers that are over 15 years old, thereby improving their performance and extending their service life, it said.

Officials noted that the initiative is expected to enhance the thermal efficiency of ageing grid assets while significantly reducing environmental risks associated with petroleum-based transformer oils.

They said natural ester oil, derived from vegetable sources, offers several advantages over traditional mineral oil as it is fully biodegradable, has a higher fire point, and provides superior

thermal performance. This makes it particularly suitable for densely populated urban areas and remote substations where operational safety is critical.

The corporation said it has already avoided the use of nearly 1,500 litres of mineral oil through the pilot deployment across 45 transformers. KPTCL plans to gradually scale up the initiative across its transmission network as part of its long-term sustainability roadmap, they added.

State Energy Minister K J George said Karnataka has consistently been at the forefront of adopting sustainable policies that balance infrastructure modernisation with environmental responsibility. According to him, by introducing biodegradable natural ester oil in its transmis-

sion network, KPTCL is not only reducing environmental risks associated with petroleum-based products but also significantly enhancing fire safety across critical power installations.

"This initiative reflects our commitment to building a safer, greener, and more resilient power sector for the future," he added.

V Ram Prasath Manohar, Managing Director of KPTCL, noted that as Karnataka's industrial and urban centres continue to expand, strengthening the reliability and sustainability of the transmission network remains a top priority.

"Upgrading transformers that are more than 15 years old with natural ester oil allows us to extend the life of critical grid assets at a fraction of the replacement cost," he added.

Pariyathukavu land dispute likely to be resolved before June 16: Kerala minister

KOCHI: The UDF government on Friday expressed confidence that the long-pending land dispute at Pariyathukavu in Ernakulam district will be resolved before June 16, the deadline set by the Kerala High Court. Seven Dalit families are facing eviction in Pariyathukavu near Kizhakkambalam following a court verdict.

The state government has said it will not be left homeless and has promised alternative land and housing.

After holding discussions with the parties involved, Higher Education Minister Roji M John said the government is trying to arrive at a practical solution acceptable to both sides.

He said the interests of all parties will be protected



while finalising any decision.

According to officials, the family of Sankaran Nair has agreed in principle to provide five cents of land each to the residents of Pariyathukavu at a nearby location, away from the disputed property. The court order is in their

favour.

However, the government has suggested that the residents be given five cents of land along with proper access roads within the disputed area itself.

Both sides have sought time to consult their family members before making a final decision.

The minister said the government is hopeful of reaching an agreement before the High Court deadline of June 16, after discussions with both parties.

A meeting in this regard was held in the district collector's chamber.

It was attended by MLA V P Sajeendran, District Collector G Priyanka, and Ernakulam Rural District Police Chief K S Sudarshan, among others.

The Pariyathukavu case relates to a long-standing land dispute near Kizhakkambalam, where Dalit families have been residing for decades on land claimed by private parties. A court has ordered their eviction based on ownership claims, triggering demands for rehabilitation and political debate on the issue.

Noida high-rise fire: AC short circuit triggers blaze, family rescued; CM takes cognisance

NOIDA: A fire broke out in a 12th-floor flat of a high-rise residential society in Sector 75 here on Friday morning, following which a family trapped inside was rescued, and the building was evacuated, officials said.

Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Gautam Buddh Nagar, Pradeep Kumar said the fire was caused by a short circuit in an air conditioner. Officials said the incident occurred around 7 am at Ivy County society in Sector 75, where flames erupted from a flat on the 12th floor of the 28-storey building.

Taking cognisance of the incident, chief minister Yogi Adityanath directed officials to expedite relief and rescue operations and ensure proper medical assistance, if required, according to an official statement issued in Lucknow.

The chief minister also directed the administration to remain alert at all levels and ensure continuous monitoring of the relief efforts.



Kumar said, "After receiving the information about the fire, the local police and fire service unit immediately reached the spot and started firefighting operations." He said along with fire tenders, a hydraulic platform was deployed at the site.

"Due to the presence of firefighting equipment within the building, our equipment and vehicles were not engaged in the firefighting operation. The fire was possibly caused by the air conditioner's malfunction, or it potentially originated in the flat's

'puja' room. Our personnel entered flats 1203 and 1204 and doused the fire. Six fire tenders were used," Kumar said.

He said the fire service team rescued the husband, wife, and their children who were trapped inside the flat.

"The blaze was brought under control with the assistance of six fire tenders. There was no loss of life," the CFO said.

Police said residents evacuated the building via the staircases, and occupants of neighbouring flats were also moved to a safe location as a

precaution. Meanwhile, videos of the Ivy County fire surfaced on social media.

Several users raised concerns that the fire tender's water stream, directed towards the building from the ground level, appeared to reach only the sixth floor, while the fire had broken out on the 12th floor. Many users questioned whether the Noida fire department, which serves several high-rise residential buildings with towers ranging up to 20 or 30 floors, was adequately prepared to handle such situations.

Responding to the concerns, CFO Kumar said the impression that the fire tender's water jet could reach only the sixth floor resulted from a different operation being carried out at the spot.

He said the society's maintenance team had connected a hose pipe from the building's fire hydrant system and placed it over the fire tender to cool down the balconies below the affected floor.

TN Assembly session to begin on June 18 with Guv address: Speaker

CHENNAI: The Tamil Nadu Assembly session will commence on June 18 with the customary address of the Governor, Speaker J C D Prabhakar announced on Friday.

Responding to media queries regarding the duration of the session and other details, the Speaker stated that everything will be officially announced after the conclusion of the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) meeting.

"Whenever BAC meets, all information will be shared with you," Prabhakar told reporters.

When questioned by journalists about protocol regarding the national song 'Vande Mataram' and the national anthem, or whether any specific request had been received from the Governor, the Speaker said, "You will see for yourself what happens when the Governor delivers his address."

On the status of petitions concerning AIADMK, including requests that were reportedly withdrawn, the Speaker clarified that no decision has been finalised yet.

"If a decision had been taken, I would have announced it immediately. It is under review. We are examining all petitions and demands. Appropriate action will be taken and communicated at the right time," the Speaker

stated.

25 AIADMK MLAs defied the party's official line of voting against the motion of confidence for the TVK government, proposed by CM C Joseph Vijay on the floor of the Assembly on May 13 and voted in favour of the government. Both General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami-led faction and rebels led by C Ve Shanmugam and SP Velumani sought the disqualification of the other group's MLAs under the anti-defection law. However, after four rebel MLAs resigned and joined TVK, both camps patched up and withdrew their petitions.

Palaniswami sought to condone all the rebel MLAs except those who resigned and joined the ruling party. Addressing the demand for a full live telecast of the Assembly proceedings, the Speaker noted that there was a surging interest among the public, especially the youth, to watch the house proceedings live.

"Particularly the younger generation, who previously only followed politics through occasional news, are now very keen to directly watch how their MLAs, ministers, and the chief minister function," the Speaker said, adding that an appropriate decision on expanding live telecasts will be taken at the right time.

DU extends PG admission registration deadline till June 9, announces allocation schedule

NEW DELHI: Delhi University on Friday extended the registration deadline for admissions to its post-graduate programmes for the 2026-27 academic session under the Common Seat Allocation System (CSAS-PG), according to a public notice.

The university said candidates can now complete their registration process till 4:59 pm on June 9, as compared to the earlier deadline of June 7. A correction window for already registered candidates will remain open from 10 am on June 10 to 4:59 pm on June 11.

The admission branch also announced the schedule for seat allocation and admissions under the first and second rounds of the CSAS-PG process.

According to the notification, the first round of seat allocations will be declared on June 15.