Tamil Nadu Grapples With Cyclone Havoc

CHENNAI: A day after cyclone Vardah devastated Chennai, Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram districts killing as many as 16 people and uprooting over 10,000 trees and several hundreds of electricity poles, the official machinery swung into action on Tuesday in a massive effort to restore normality. Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam said power supply would be completely restored in Chennai city by Tuesday night. In the outskirts and Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram it would take two days. Over 9,000 workers have been engaged to undertake repair and restoration of power cables and electric poles. Suburban and Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS) train services were yet to be resumed for want of electricity supply. Workers of various utilities from different parts of the State were deployed in Chennai and its surroundings. The fallen trees have damaged rail and road networks, apart from electricity and telecommunication infrastructure. In addition to power distribution towers, transmission towers have been affected. The Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (Tangedco) brought in more than 3,000 additional electricity workmen from other places to restore power to several electricity substations and streets. Apart from staff of the Chennai Corporation, other local bodies, police and fire and rescue services, the administration has taken the assistance of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) for clearing the trees.

Tamil Nadu Seeks Rs 10 Billion

CHENNAI: Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam on Tuesday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to urgently sanction Rs. 110 Billion from the National Disaster Response Fund for relief and reconstruction. The Chief Minister also requested Mr. Modi to send a team to study the damage caused by cyclone Vardah. He said that besides Chennai, Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram districts, the cyclone had left a trail of destruction in Vellore, Tiruvannamalai and Dharmapuri districts. A detailed exercise to assess the damages and the requirement of funds for immediate relief and restoration is being carried out. Since the damage to various infrastructure assets and properties has been extensive, the detailed assessment is expected to take two or three days.

Chennai Metro, Last Project Dedicated by Jayalalithaa

CHENNAI: On September 20, AIADMK leader Jayalalithaa dedicated to the city, the second stretch of Chennai Metro Rail from Little Mount to Chennai airport, making it the last project she launched while in office as Chief Minister. Two days later, she was rushed to Apollo Hospitals. After inaugurating the line through video conferencing, she spoke of how the share of public transport will substantially increase with the integration of buses, suburban rail, air services and Metro Rail and eventually the Monorail. Apart from the Independence Day celebrations, the last public project the former Chief Minister personally attended was also that of Chennai Metro Rail.

Internet Connectivity Affected Across City

BENGALURU: Internet connectivity in the city was affected on Tuesday as several Internet Service Providers (ISPs) with infrastructure in Chennai warned their customers of intermittent outages because of the impact of Cyclone Vardah. ACT Broadband, Hathway Broadband and Airtel sent messages to customers stating that internet speeds and network access were likely to be affected. Airtel stated that one of its undersea network cables had been impacted as a result of which internet speeds could be affected. Google India tweeted that the company was facing network issues but did not elaborate. Hathway cited difficulties being faced by Google as the reason for disruption of its services.
**ECONOMIC NEWS**

**Demonetisation A ‘Calamity’, Says Former Union Finance Minister P.Chidambaram**

NEW DELHI: Senior Congress leader and former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram said on Tuesday that the government’s decision to withdraw high-denomination currency was a “calamity” that had caused “indescribable” pain in rural India. He said: “No economy can function if 86 per cent of the country’s currency is immobilised and impounded.” It would take a minimum of seven months to print currency notes to replace the withdrawn banknotes. Mr. Chidambaram said the decision to print Rs.2,000 notes was flawed and made life “easy” for currency-hoarders. He also termed the decision to exclude the District Central Cooperative Banks from the currency exchange process a way of “punishing” the farmers. “The farmers are left with no money to buy seeds, fertilizers and to hire labour.” Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said the Congress was “extremely uncomfortable with the anti-corruption campaign that the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched.”

**Damage at Chennai Port Pegged at Rs 220 Million**

CHENNAI: The damage to the port area following Cyclone Vardah has been estimated to be around Rs 220 Million. Most of the damage was to the structures inside the port premises and officials say it may take a while to fix it. Some of the buoys have gone missing after the cyclone. Each buoy will cost around Rs 8.5 Million. Some navigational aids too have been affected. As of Tuesday evening, the operation of vessels had resumed partially. Only after the power supply is completely restored can full fledged operations begin. On Sunday prior to the cyclone making landfall, precautions were taken and the vessels shifted from the port. They are now being brought back. Even the Madras Atomic Power Station in Kalpakkam was shut down owing to Cyclone Vardah on Monday. As the wind speed was close to 100 kmph, the 230 KV power lines tripped one by one. The unit would be brought back to service in three days.

**Chief Minister Puts Kochi Metro Officials in A Bind**

KOCHI: Officials of Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) and Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) are expected to hold joint brainstorming sessions shortly on commissioning Kochi Metro’s Aluva-Maharaja’s College Ground corridor rather than commission only the 12-km-long Aluva-Palarivattom stretch in April 2017. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had on Sunday directed the metro agencies to commission the entire corridor. He told them to speed up works in the 6-km-long Palarivattom-Maharaja’s corridor to prevent chaos in the vicinity of Palarivattom station when commuters board/disembark the metro en masse. As per revised schedule, the full corridor is slated for commissioning in July 2017. The third train meant for the Kochi Metro is ready for despatch at Alstom’s coach factory in Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh. “The trailer lorries carrying the coaches have been held up due to cyclone in Chennai. They would arrive in Kochi in another week,” said Bharat Salhotra, MD (Transport – India and South Asia) of Alstom.

**New Bridge at Pandalam to Be Commissioned Today**

PATHANAMTHITTA: The Public Works Department is all set to create history by commissioning a major bridge on MC Road at Pandalam on Wednesday, one month ahead of its original schedule. The PWD had begun reconstruction of the Kurunthottayam Bridge on MC Road in Pandalam town on July 12 with a gestation period of six months so that it could be commissioned in mid-January, 2017. Public Works Department Minister G. Sudhakaran, has been closely monitoring the progress of work on the new bridge. The Minister said the government had taken every step to open the new bridge for vehicular traffic before the ensuing Makaravilakku pilgrimage season itself as a large number of pilgrims visit Pandalam for the Thiruvabharanam darshan at the Pandalam Palace.
ECONOMIC NEWS

Solve Currency Problem Before January: Naidu to Bankers

VIJAYAWADA: Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has asked the bankers to solve the currency problem in next 17 days. Addressing a teleconference on demonetisation here on Tuesday, Mr. Naidu stressed the need to ease the situation before January. Petty traders can open current accounts to tide over the currency problem. Bankers should guide them to open current accounts and also switch over to cashless transactions. Small traders were facing procedural issues in opening current accounts, he pointed out. It was necessary to prepare people to adopt cashless transactions, and for which it was necessary to put in place the necessary infrastructure. The banks would have to bring in unified procedures to promote mobile transactions. Mr. Naidu said his government would launch cashless transactions at all fair price shops from January.

Government to Launch Energy Efficient Tubelights at Rs. 250

VIJAYAWADA: Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will launch a programme for distribution of energy efficient tubelights on payment of Rs. 250 at kiosks across the State. The light which costs around Rs. 500 to Rs. 600 in the open market is sold at Rs. 250 at the kiosks. Mr. Naidu will launch the programme during the Energy Conservation week to be celebrated from December 14 to 20. This initiative is expected to bring great relief to the electricity bills of the households and establishments as conventional tubelights were one of the main lighting sources. In an open letter to the people on Tuesday, Mr. Naidu said the AP was ahead of other States in energy conservation and efficiency measures. The AP initiated measures in 2014, while other States were discussing environment friendly policies and energy conservation.

Buddhist Circuit to Attract Tourists Mooted

HYDERABAD: Buddhism came down South very much during the lifetime of Gautama Buddha and when he was propagating his teachings. It started from a village called Badankurti in Adilabad district in between two Godavari rivulets in the fifth century B.C. It spread to Kotilingala, Dhuilkatta (Karimnagar), Phanigiri, Nelakondapally, Karukonda, Nagarjunakonda (Khammam & Nalgonda in TS) and then on to Andhra and Maharashtra before followers took the religion to other parts of South Asia and South East Asia to countries such as Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Vietnam, and so on. Buddhism spread during and after the reign of Emperor Ashoka. Since Telangana holds a unique position in the spread of Buddhism, the Government wants to develop these places of heritage importance not only for the sake of protection and preservation but also to attract tourists from within the country and outside so that they can explore the roots of Buddhism," said TS Tourism Development Corporation chairman P. Ramulu on Tuesday. Nagarjunakonda, where the Buddhavanam project is under way, is the most popular Buddhist site and prominent seat of the Mahayana school of learning at Nagarjunasagar. Here, a Buddhist heritage theme park is being built and the 274 acres has been divided into eight segments like Buddha Charitavanam, Jataka Park, Dhyanavanam, Krishna Valley Park, Acharya Nagarjuna International Higher Buddhist Learning Centre, Buddhism in Telugu States, etc.

Materials Policy for Defence Applications Mooted

HYDERABAD: India's materials policy will determine production and storage of important materials including essentials for defence and space applications, said scientific advisor to Defence Minister G. Sateesh Reddy. Dr. Reddy said a lot needs to be done in materials research for the benefit of the country in sophisticated sectors of science. The draft of the policy will be given to the ministry in a month or two. He added that the Ministry of Defence has changed its tenders to favour Indian ceramics suppliers. “Defence sectors use these materials which are imported. This has to be changed,” he said. The International Conference on Ceramics, Glass and Refractories - Emerging Innovations is being organised by Indian Ceramics Societies, Hyderabad and Vizag chapters. Over 500 delegates, including foreign researchers and 30 exhibitors, are participating in the conference.
PLANT CORNER

PARSNIP
The parsnip (Pastinaca sativa) is a root vegetable closely related to the carrot and parsley. It is a biennial plant usually grown as an annual. Its long, tuberous root has cream-colored skin and flesh; and left in the ground to mature, it becomes sweeter in flavor after winter frosts. In its first growing season, the plant has a rosette of pinnate, mid-green leaves. If unharvested, it produces its flowering stem, topped by an umbel of small yellow flowers, in its second growing season. By this time, the stem is woody and the tuber is inedible. The seeds are pale brown, flat, and winged.

The parsnip is native to Eurasia. It has been used as a vegetable since antiquity and was cultivated by the Romans, although some confusion exists in the literature of the time between parsnips and carrots. It was used as a sweetener before the arrival in Europe of cane sugar. It was introduced into the United States in the 19th century.

The parsnip is usually cooked, but can also be eaten raw. It is high in vitamins and minerals, especially potassium. It also contains antioxidants and both soluble and insoluble dietary fiber. It can be cultivated in deep, stone-free soils. It is attacked by the carrot fly and other insect pests, viruses, and fungal diseases, of which canker is the most serious. Handling the stems and foliage can cause a skin rash if the skin is exposed to sunlight after handling.

USES
Parsnips resemble carrots and can be used in similar ways, but they have a sweeter taste, especially when cooked. They can be baked, boiled, pureed, roasted, fried, or steamed. When used in stews, soups, and casseroles, they give a rich flavor. In some cases, parsnips are boiled and the solid portions are removed from the soup or stew, leaving behind a more subtle flavor than the whole root, and starch to thicken the dish. Roast parsnip is considered an essential part of Christmas dinner in some parts of the English-speaking world and frequently features in the traditional Sunday roast. Parsnips can also be fried or thinly sliced and made into crisps. They can be made into a wine with a taste similar to Madeira.

NUTRIENTS:
A typical 100-g parsnip contains 75 Calories (230 kJ) of energy. Most parsnip cultivars consist of about 80% water, 5% sugar, 1% protein, 0.3% fat, and 5% dietary fiber. The parsnip is rich in vitamins and minerals, and is particularly rich in potassium with 375 mg per 100 g.