

Intra-party rift arises at Cong stir against ED, BJP

Differences emerge over taking protest outside the party office



State party president AV Subramanian on Wednesday condemns the Enforcement Directorate summons to Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi | DEBADATTA MALLICK

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Puducherry

INNER-party differences surfaced in the Congress party office in Puducherry, amid protests against the Centre for its alleged political victimisation of the party leaders.

A dharna was led by State party president AV Subramanian condemning the ED summons. Senior leaders including former chief minister V Narayanasamy, former Lok Sabha member V Vaithilingam, former minister M Kandasamy, former MLAs Neelaganadharan, RKR Anantharaman participated. Soon, differences marked the dharna.

Kandasamy, along with some supporters, staged protest outside the party office, while others were seated inside. The issue cropped up when Kandasamy — while addressing the gathering — exhorted cadre to take advantage of the people's dissatisfaction towards the AINRC-BJP regime, and

said the Congress was still the strongest party in the UT but needed strengthening so, they could contest independently to win the polls.

He stated, due to the alliance, the Congress had faded in Tamil Nadu but the same should not be allowed to happen in Puducherry and hence, the party should contest alone. But the views he expressed on leadership and conducting the agitations outside the party office with a rail roko, instead of sitting inside the office were met with objections from some quarters.

Narayanasamy said that party leadership was advised to conduct agitations in a peaceful way and hence, the dharna was conducted in the party office. Anantharaman advised Subramanian to speak on the views expressed by Kandasamy, but the latter walked out of the party office and sat on a dharna outside the office.

Later, Narayanasamy added, the Puducherry Unit of Congress Party would organise a series of agitations regarding the ED summons. Stating the National Herald case was taken up after eight years, the senior congress leader told media that the party will take out a march to Raj Nivas on Thursday.

MLA protests 'discrimination' by NDA govt

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Puducherry

ALLEGING discrimination against the Congress by the NDA government, Congress legislator M Vaithianathan and cadre picketed the Civil Supplies Department on Wednesday. They were protesting the cancellation of a public grievance camp at Lawspet.

Vaithianathan arranged a camp of the Civil Supplies department on Wednesday for the alteration in ration cards, change of address, inclusion and deletion of names in the card, and applying for new cards in his office. But in the morning, the BJP erected a banner with images of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. There were also images of Civil Supplies Minister AK Sai J Saravanan Kumar and State party president V Saminathan and Central Ministers in front of the MLA's office.

The Congress MLA objected to the banners and removed it with the help of police. However, later, he got a message from the department that the camp was cancelled. Vaithianathan along with volunteers picketed the Directorate of Civil Supplies at Thattanchavady.



Congress MLA Vaithianathan and volunteers block the ECR in Puducherry on Wednesday | DEBADATTA MALLICK

Fresh spike: Puducherry reports 18 Covid-19 cases

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Puducherry

THE Union Territory registered a big spike in Covid-19 cases, with as many as 18 fresh cases on Wednesday. This took the number of active cases to 63 and the overall tally to 1,65,973.

In a release, the Director of Health G Sriramulu said that 14 of the new cases were recorded from Puducherry region, two each in Karaikal and Mahe regions, which were detected from 1,658 samples. Of the 63 active cases, three patients were in hospitals while 60 are in home quarantine.

Around four patients recovered during the last 24 hours and the overall recovery was 1,63,948. No fatality was reported from and the toll remained 1,962. The test positivity rate was 1.09%. Meanwhile the fatalities and recovery rates were recorded as 1.18% and 98.78% respectively.

So far, the Health Department has tested 22,67,186 samples and discovered 19,12,119 out of them to be negative. The department has also administered 17,25,298 doses which comprised 9,69,445 first doses, 7,28,825 second doses and 27,028 booster doses, added Dr Sriramulu.

Tamil youngsters' group conducts meet in Auroville to reaffirm unity

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Villupuram

IN an attempt to reaffirm unity and reject recent divisive sentiments, the Tamil youth group at Auroville organised to discuss the Residents Assembly. Nearly 600 locals, including foreign residents of Auroville, assembled at the gathering held at the Unity Pavilion.

According to an organisers, "the young Tamil Aurovilians called the meet to reinforce the role of the Residents Assembly. The role and responsibilities of the Governing Board, and the Residents Assembly under the Auroville Foundation Act were examined." They highlighted the Assembly's right to self-determination, organise activities and choose its working groups, as enshrined in the Act and preceded by the Charter of

Auroville given by the 'Mother', for those who live in Auroville. "The younger generation felt there was a need for all residents to understand development in all aspects including socio-cultural, economic, educational, physical, ecological, research. "We highlighted the essence that the uniqueness of Auroville's development is the human aspect. All of this must be taken into account for

growth, added the organisers. The meeting was conducted in English and Tamil. During the open floor, many citizens shared their take on togetherness.

Meanwhile, Working Committee of Residents Assembly filed a writ petition on Monday to the HC urging stop the Auroville Foundation represented by its Secretary from interfering with their work.

'Officials must monitor health of girls and ensure safety'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Villupuram

FOR the development of women in the State, the health department must monitor the well-being of girls, said State Commission for Women chairperson AS Kumari. During her visit to Villupuram on Wednesday, the police must also ensure the safety of girls.

She was addressing officials from health, integrated child development schemes, anganwadi centres and social welfare departments. Kumari insisted officials create awareness on the need for protection of adolescent girls and girls through the Department of Public Health and the Integrated Child Development Program. "Teenagers must often be checked for optimal health. Anganwadi centers must provide required supplements as it is crucial for the girls' overall development when they grow to be women," she said.

7K children get seeds Kallakurichi: Collector PN Sridhar on Wednesday provided 13 types of nutritious vegetable seeds to the parents of malnourished children at B Kiliyanur village at Thirunavalur block. Families of 7,512 children were given the seeds, said official sources. The scheme was launched on Wednesday with the ICDS, and the TN Rural Livelihood Mission.

Working committee files writ petition at HC

The Working Committee of Residents Assembly filed a writ petition on Monday to the Madras High Court urging stop the Auroville Foundation represented by its Secretary from interfering with their work. Speaking to TNIE, committee member Hemant Lamba, who filed the plea, said, "Our prayer to the High Court is to forebar the Auroville Foundation from interfering with the Residents Assembly and their lawful Working Committee." He further said the undertaking of counsel for the first respondent, the Foundation office of the Secretary, no steps will be taken by the Secretary's office till the next hearing on Monday, when the matter is to be taken up for final disposal.

EXPRESS READ

Missing doc at PHC, Collector orders enquiry

Villupuram: Collector D Mohan ordered an enquiry as the doctor at the Kandamangalam PHC was absent during duty hours. A source said, there were complaints that Dr S Ilampirai was often unavailable and on Tuesday evening Collector Mohan paid a surprise visit and found him missing. A senior official from the health department said, "The concerned doctor was told to give an explanation and action will be taken based on that." ENS

TTD to hold Srinivasa Thirukalyanam

Puducherry: After six years, the TTD along with Srivari Thirukalyana Siva Trust will hold the Srinivasa Thirukalyanam at Lawspet Helipad on June 19, said PWD Minister K Lakshminarayanan on Wednesday. The deity (Urcharav) will be brought to the UT from Tirumala and the Thirukalyanam. It will start at 4.15 pm and go on till 9 pm. Lakshminarayanan said free bus services from New bus stand will be arranged. ENS

Neythal Kodai festival to begin from Friday

Cuddalore: The three-day Neythal Kodai festival will begin on Friday at Silver Beach here. Collector K Balasubramanian told media. In the inaugural function, Ministers MRK Paneerselvam, CV Annadurai, M Mathivendhan, and State Tourism Development Corporation director Sandeep Nanduri will take part. As part of the festival, book fair stalls, photography exhibitions, and debates will take place. ENS

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