

Month-long Van Mahotsav culminates Contribute towards conservation, enrichment of forests: LG



PORT BLAIR, JULY 31/- / The Lt. Governor, A&N Islands, Admiral DK Joshi, PWSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM (Retd.) has called upon the people of the islands, especially the students, teachers, members of PRIs and social organizations to take the message of environment conservation to the masses, so as to sustain and further increase the greenery of these islands. He was speaking at the valedictory function of the 68th Van Mahotsav, organised by the Department of Environment & Forests, A&N Administration, in the auditorium of Tagore Govt College

of Education (TGCE) here this afternoon. The Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Mr. K.R. Meena, PCCF, A&N Islands, Mr. Tarun Coomari, senior officers of the Administration, officials of Forest Department, students, teachers, parents and PM Members were also present on the occasion. The Lt. Governor informed the gathering that the term 'Van Mahotsav' was coined in the year 1947, when a successful tree plantation drive was conducted by leaders like Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Thereafter, in 1950, the then

Union Minister for Agriculture and Food, Dr. KM Munshi called for celebrating 'Van Mahotsav' every year. The Lt. Governor further explained the main objectives of this campaign viz. increasing the production of fruits, helping in creation of shelterbelts around agricultural fields, to provide fodder for animals, encouraging the conservation of soil health and stopping soil erosion etc. The Lt. Governor further said, the A&N Islands are enriched with dense forests, clean and untouched sea beaches and other fascinating sea organisms. "We have

dense forest on about 86% land, and besides depicting high degree of endemism, these islands also houses rare ecosystems like seagrass meadows, coral reefs, mangroves, tropical forest etc. We are proud of the islands' environment, forests and rich bio-diversity", he said. The Lt. Governor also expressed happiness that as per the latest report of the Forest Survey of India, the forest area in the A&N Islands has increased by 40 sq kms, including 13 sq. kms of mangroves while there has been an improvement in the quality of the forests as well. This has become possible due to plantation and effective preservation of forest and our commitment towards the eco restoration of forests and mangroves, said the Lt. Governor.

general public in environment protection for the overall economic and social development of the Islands. He also urged one and all to contribute towards the conservation, expansion and enrichment of forests for the benefit of the community at local, regional and global level. Addressing the gathering, the Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri KR Meena remarked that water, soil and all other life forms originate from the forests are important assets for all living beings and judicious use of natural resources is vital. Citing example of the khejri trees for the people of Rajasthan, the Chief Secretary remarked that people of Rajasthan are striving hard to protect and conserve the khejri trees as it provides food, firewood and supports the rural economy. He said the A&N Islands are blessed with rich flora and fauna and are a hotspot for bio-diversity. Hence, we must ensure judicious utilization of the forest, keeping in mind the need for conservation and protection of the forest for the future generation.

Lauding the Department of Environment and Forests for its untiring efforts towards preservation and conservation of islands' forest cover and vegetation, the Chief Secretary remarked that the responsibility of preservation and conservation of forest and its biodiversity lies in the hands of every individual and urged the Islanders to work in tandem with the Forest Department in creating awareness and sensitizing people about the need.

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State BJP leaders meet PM



PORT BLAIR, JULY 31/- / The General Secretaries of BJYM, A & N Islands, Smt Dipika Biswas and Mr S Balaji, met Prime Minister, Mr Narendra Modi at PMO Office, New Delhi Monday. The Member of Parliament, Mr Bishnu Pada Ray was also present on the occasion.

Outsourcing bid leaves daily-rated Lifeguards in stress



PORT BLAIR, JULY 31/- / The move of the Directorate of Tourism to float tenders for engagement of Lifeguards at various beaches in these islands have put around 78 daily rated workers rendering the same job for several

months under immense stress. While the Tourism Department recently invited bids from firms for supply of 85 Lifeguards in the highly skilled category, incumbents serving the department assert that their legitimate right for employment in the department is being ignored by the ad-

ministration. "We are very much hopeful that the Secretary and Director of the Department of Information, Publicity and Tourism will not snatch our bread and butter. Having undergone requisite training from authorized agencies, we have completed more than 1500 days of continuous services in the department. Recently, a seniority list of all Lifeguards has been prepared for extending benefits of 1/30th of pay scale plus dearness allowances as applicable. In our entire stint working for the department, we've served visitors with utmost dedication and were never rewarded. But we still rest our hopes on our bosses in the department," said some Lifeguards speaking to EOI.

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46 proposals for assistance under PMEGP

PORT BLAIR, JULY 31/- / The 75th meeting of the District Level Task Force Committee (DLTFC) pertaining to A&N KVIC along with the DLTFC for DIC was held on Tuesday under the chairmanship of Dr. Nidhi Sarohe, Assistant Commissioner (HQ), Port Blair for processing of the loan applications received from South Andaman District under PMEGP scheme of KVIC under the aegis of the A&N KVIC and DIC. Mr. AJIT Anand, Director of Industries, Smt. Rosie Dass, Functional Manager (EI), DIC, Mr. K Mohan Rao, Lead District Manager, Lead Bank Office, SBI, Mr. Bidyut Adhikari, Chief Manager (Cr.), Regional Office, SBI, Mr. J.Chandramouli, Dy. Director, MSME-DI, Mr. Arun Srivastava, HOD (Electrical), DBRAT, representatives from the A&N State Cooperative Bank, Syndicate Bank, UBI, NYKS, Mr. Subir Chander, Member, Zilla Parishad, Tushnabad, Smt. B. Laxmi, Panchayat Samiti, Bambooflat-1, Mr. Sanjay Meshak, Smt. Vaishali Rani Dayal and Mr. N. K. Udhaya Kumar, Councilor, PBMC were the other members present during the meeting. Altogether loan cases of 60 beneficiaries were placed before the DLTFC out of which 46 loan proposals (11 cases sponsored by KVIC and 35 cases by DIC) duly involving of an amount of Rs. 3.23 crore as total project cost were recommended for consideration of finance under PMEGP scheme during the current financial year 2018-19.

Some of the projects which were recommended during the DLTFC meetings are fiber fishing boat, tourist vehicle, plying of auto rickshaw, hiring of light & sound, repair & maintenance of electrical appliances, beauty parlour, general sales outlet, sales of engine spare parts, catering services, jet ski etc.

Shreya Das needs your help to fight blood cancer

KURMA RAO

BILLYGROUND, JULY 31/- / Imagine the plight of parents, who discover their six year old daughter is suffering from Blood Cancer. Mr. Sanjib Kumar Das, a professional by work, a father who is currently under a M.I.O.T Hospital, Chennai and struggling to raise money for her treatment from his paltry sources of income. As per the treatment prescribed by M.I.O.T Hospital, an amount of Rs 9.5 lakh is required for complete recovery of Shreya Das from blood cancer. The Directorate of Health Services, A & N Administration has sanctioned Rs 5 lakh for treatment of the little girl, while the remaining Rs 4.5 lakh has to be borne by her parents. But for Sanjib Kumar Das, a poor labourer, resident of Swadesh Nagar, raising funds to the tune of Rs 4.5 lakh is nearly impossible. While staff and students of Saraswati Vidyalaya are trying to arrange money for Shreya's treatment, the school management has also appealed for financial assistance from the Principal of Govt. Sr. Secondary School, Swadesh Nagar. Following the plea, the Principal of Swadesh Nagar School has appealed to all staff members and students to donate generously for the treatment of Shreya Das. "Being a private labourer, I have no financial resources to support my daughter's treatment. The management of Saraswati Vidyalaya came to our help and also sought assistance from nearby government schools. The Directorate of Health Services sanctioned an amount of Rs 5 lakh for the treatment of our daughter. Despite all these, we're still falling short of Rs 4.5 lakh required for complete treatment of my daughter. I humbly request all Islanders to help us and enable my daughter win this arduous battle," pleads Sanjib Kumar Das. The Echo of India requests all Islanders to kindly extend help with whatever little possible donation either in person or to account number: 2008519608 (Smt. Kumar Das), State Bank of India, Billyground Branch and restore hope of a father and dream of a daughter.

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