ANDAMAN DAILY

News & Views from Andaman and Nicobar Islands

by NICOBAR TIMES

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AATO Leadership Welcomes Blue Flag Certification for Three More Beaches in Andaman & Nicobar Islands

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Three New Beaches in A&N Islands — Ramnagar, Karmatang and Raman Bagicha — Receive Blue Flag Certification; Radhanagar Retains Award



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 11, 2026

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands has achieved a significant milestone in sustainable coastal tourism, with three additional beaches receiving the prestigious International Blue Flag certification for the 2026–27 season. Radhanagar Beach has also retained its Blue Flag status through a renewal award, taking

CONTD..Pg 3

ED Files Supplementary Prosecution Complaint Against Former MP Kuldeep Rai Sharma and 13 Others in ANSCBL Fraud Case



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 11, 2026

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Kolkata Zonal Office-II, has filed a supplementary prosecution complaint against former Member of Parliament from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Kuldeep Rai Sharma, and 13 other persons and entities in connection with the alleged Andaman and Nicobar State Cooperative Bank Limited (ANSCBL) fraud case.

The supplementary

CONTD..Pg 4





TO REPORT A NEWS CALL OR WHATSAPP ON 7063998178

Contd Pg1...Three New Beaches in A&N Islands — Ramnagar, Karmatang and Raman Bagicha — Receive Blue Flag Certification; Radhanagar Retains Award

the total number of internationally recognised Blue Flag beaches in the Union Territory to four.

The four recognised beaches are Radhanagar Beach in South Andaman District, which has received the renewal award, and three newly certified beaches — Ramnagar Beach, Karmatang Beach and Raman Bagicha Beach, all located in North and Middle Andaman District.

The three newly awarded beaches are scheduled to commence their Blue Flag seasons from November 2026, following the completion of necessary site-level preparations and arrangements to maintain the prescribed certification criteria.

The three newly recognised beaches are located within pristine Reserved Forest Areas. Their development follows an eco-friendly approach, avoiding major hard infrastructure and overtourism while emphasising environmental conservation and visitor education. This approach is expected to serve as a model for sustainable beach management, balancing environmental protection with responsible tourism.

The newly awarded beaches, along with Radhanagar Beach, which has received the renewal award, are now visible on the official global map of Blue Flag-awarded beaches on the website of the Blue Flag [Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)]. The four beaches can be viewed at https://www.blueflag.global/site-map, which features internationally recognised Blue Flag beaches, marinas and tourism boats across different countries.

The Blue Flag is an internationally recognised voluntary eco-label awarded to beaches, marinas and sustainable tourism boats that meet stringent environmental, educational, safety and accessibility standards. The programme is operated by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), an international non-profit organisation. For beaches, certification involves compliance with criteria covering four major areas: environmental education and information, bathing water quality, environmental management and conservation, and safety and services.

The certification promotes clean bathing water, proper waste management, environmental awareness, adequate safety arrangements and responsible tourism practices. Awarded sites are required to maintain the prescribed standards throughout their designated Blue Flag season and remain subject to monitoring.

With three new destinations joining the International Blue Flag network, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands has further strengthened its position as a destination for sustainable and environmentally responsible coastal tourism.

Nicobar Times confirmed the development with Dr. Shriji Kurup, National Operator, Blue Flag India.



Contd Pg1...ED Files Supplementary Prosecution Complaint Against Former MP Kuldeep Rai Sharma and 13 Others in ANSCBL Fraud Case

complaint was filed on November 6, 2026, before the Special Court under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in Port Blair. The newly arraigned accused reportedly include Jayanta Bala, J. Suresh Chandran, an empanelled property valuer of ANSCBL, John Robert Babu, Anil Kumar, Md. Ali, P. Abhilash and Kiran Lal N. H., along with their associated companies. With this addition, the total number of accused persons and entities in the case has risen to 52.

According to the ED, its investigation was initiated following an FIR registered by the Crime and Economic Offences Police Station of the Andaman and Nicobar Police against various private individuals and bank officials.

The investigation pertains to alleged irregularities in the sanctioning of bank loans by officials of ANSCBL, including Kuldeep Rai Sharma, who was then the Vice-Chairman of the bank, and others responsible for approving loans. The ED has alleged that the accused, in connivance with their associates, floated 23 shell companies and facilitated large loans to these companies as well as other entities, allegedly in violation of bank rules and without any intention of repayment.

The ED has stated that loans amounting to approximately Rs. 301.50 crore were sanctioned to 21 shell companies alone, of which around Rs. 271 crore reportedly turned into Non-Performing Assets (NPAs). The agency has identified proceeds of crime exceeding Rs. 500 crore in the case.

As per the investigation, several shell companies were allegedly incorporated in the names of associates or dummy directors and were sanctioned substantial loans within a few months of their incorporation, despite having no business records. The ED has further alleged that properties acquired at low prices were pledged as security after their valuations were artificially inflated, allegedly in collusion with bank officials and private individuals. The same properties were reportedly mortgaged repeatedly to obtain additional loans.

The agency has alleged that after the loan amounts were disbursed, the funds were quickly withdrawn in cash or transferred through multiple bank accounts belonging to shell companies and associates, instead of being utilised for the stated purposes.

The ED has further alleged that the diverted funds were used to purchase land, construct hotels and resorts, acquire semi-submarine tourist vessels and repay earlier loans. These assets were allegedly acquired largely in the names of family members and associates to conceal the identities of the actual beneficiaries. The investigation also reportedly found that several land parcels were transferred through Powers of Attorney or sale agreements without registered sale deeds and were subsequently pledged with the bank to obtain fresh loans, which also allegedly turned into NPAs.

According to the ED,

CONTD..Pg 5



Contd Pg4...ED Files Supplementary Prosecution Complaint Against Former MP Kuldeep Rai Sharma and 13 Others in ANSCBL Fraud Case

the alleged irregularities were not confined to shell companies, as loans were also sanctioned to several operational companies in return for commissions of approximately 5% of the loan amounts. The agency has alleged that these commissions were paid to Kuldeep Rai Sharma and senior bank officials.

The investigation has also allegedly revealed that Kuldeep Rai Sharma and his wife, Vinita Sharma, benefited from fraudulent loans amounting to approximately Rs. 81.10 crore, obtained through companies linked to Sharma and in the name of his wife.

Earlier, the ED had arrested Kuldeep Rai Sharma, K. Murugan, the then Managing Director of ANSCBL who is now deceased, K. Kalaivanan, a Loan Officer, and Sanjay Lal in connection with the case. The agency had filed its initial prosecution complaint on November 14, 2025, against 39 persons and entities.

The ED has so far attached properties worth approximately Rs. 326.91 crore in the case through attachment orders dated February 10, 2026, involving properties worth Rs. 205.56 crore, and November 5, 2026, involving properties worth Rs. 121.35 crore. The attachment of properties worth Rs. 205.56 crore has been confirmed by the Adjudicating Authority.

The agency has also sought confiscation of the attached properties through its supplementary prosecution complaint.

The allegations mentioned above are based on the investigation and findings claimed by the Enforcement Directorate. The filing of a prosecution complaint does not by itself establish the guilt of the accused.

BIS Organises Two-Day Workshop on Standardisation in Andaman and Nicobar Islands



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 11, 2026

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Chennai Branch Office, in collaboration with the Directorate of Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (CS&CA), Andaman and Nicobar Administration, organised a two-day workshop on standardisation at the Directorate of Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs.

The workshop aimed to create awareness about the importance of Indian Standards, quality, safety, standardisation and consumer protection among students, Government officials and industrial personnel.

The Director of CS&CA inaugurated the

CONTD..Pg 6



Contd Pg5...BIS Organises Two-Day Workshop on Standardisation in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

programme and highlighted the importance of developing quality consciousness and promoting standardisation among students and the younger generation. The first day of the workshop was dedicated to students and academic participants, with around 50 students attending the programme.

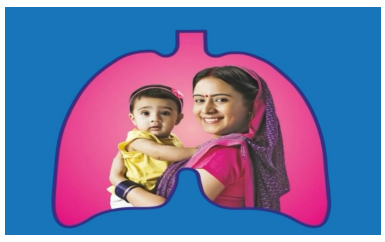
During the session, Mr. Sai Chandra, Scientist-C/DD, BIS Chennai Branch Office, briefed participants on the objectives of the workshop. Mr. Pakki Balu, Scientist-C/DD, BIS Chennai Branch Office, conducted a technical session covering the role of BIS in formulating Indian Standards, product quality, safety, certification and the relevance of standards in everyday life.

The second day began with a session for Government officials of CS&CA. Mr. Rajesh Kumar, Deputy Director (CS&CA), Andaman and Nicobar Administration, inaugurated the session and highlighted the relevance of Indian Standards in Government functioning, public service delivery and consumer protection.

Mr. Sai Chandra and Mr. Pakki Balu jointly conducted the technical sessions, explaining the role and functions of BIS and highlighting opportunities for collaboration between BIS and Government Departments to promote awareness of quality and standards.

An additional workshop was also conducted for industrial personnel by the Scientist-C/DDs of BIS Chennai Branch Office as part of the two-day programme.

SAANS Campaign to Be Held from November 12 to Raise Awareness on Childhood Pneumonia



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 11, 2026

The SAANS (Social Awareness & Action to Neutralize Pneumonia Successfully) campaign will be conducted from November 12, 2026, to February 28, 2027, to strengthen the healthcare system and raise community awareness about childhood pneumonia.

Childhood pneumonia continues to be a major public health concern and remains one of the leading causes of under-five mortality in India, accounting for 17.2% of the Under-Five Mortality Rate (U5MR).

The SAANS campaign for 2026-27 will carry the tagline “Pneumonia Nahi, Toh Bachpan Sahi”, highlighting the importance of ensuring a pneumonia-free childhood.

World Pneumonia Day will be observed on November 12 to

CONTD..Pg 7



Contd Pg6...SAANS Campaign to Be Held from November 12 to Raise Awareness on Childhood Pneumonia

accelerate efforts to combat childhood pneumonia by raising awareness about its protection, prevention and treatment. The initiative will focus on promoting early identification of symptoms, timely medical care and appropriate care-seeking behaviour among parents and caregivers.

The campaign will also promote the Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) and generate awareness about the health risks associated with indoor and outdoor air pollution.

Through community mobilisation and awareness activities, the SAANS campaign aims to encourage the adoption of health-promoting practices related to pneumonia protection, prevention and treatment, thereby intensifying efforts to reduce childhood pneumonia-related mortality.

The general public has been requested to extend cooperation to Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs) and Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) during their community outreach activities for the early identification of childhood pneumonia cases and timely management among children below five years of age.

South Andaman District Planning Committee Finalizes Prioritized Action Plans for 2027-28



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 11, 2026

The second and final day of the District Planning Committee (DPC) meeting of South Andaman District was held on Wednesday at the Conference Hall of Zilla Parishad, South Andaman, under the chairmanship of P. Ummer, Chairperson of the DPC and Adhyaksh, Zilla Parishad, South Andaman.

The meeting was convened to discuss and finalise the prioritized District Action Plan for 2027-2028 and the prioritized Action Plan for 2026-2027 of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in South Andaman District, including Campbell Bay revenue areas.

Bishnu Pada Ray, Member of Parliament, A&N Islands, Hemant Kumar, IAS, Secretary (Planning & Finance), members of Zilla Parishad, councillors of Sri Vijaya Puram Municipal Council and officers of the Administration attended the meeting.

CONTD..Pg 8



Contd Pg7...South Andaman District Planning Committee Finalizes Prioritized Action Plans for 2027-28

During the proceedings, detailed discussions were held on the prioritized action plans concerning various departments, including Shipping, Port Management Board (PMB), Transport, Industries, Information, Publicity & Tourism, Government Press, Health, Labour & Employment, District Administration, Tribal Welfare, Sri Vijaya Puram Municipal Council, Science & Technology, Police, District Jail, Arts & Culture, Civil Aviation, Personnel (Cash), Pay & Accounts, Law, Economics & Statistics, Registrar of Cooperative Societies (RCS), and Environment & Forest.

The Chairperson and members of the DPC, South Andaman, put forward various recommendations and suggestions for incorporation into the respective departmental plans to facilitate their timely implementation.

Following two consecutive days of discussions and deliberations, the Committee finalised the prioritized District Action Plan for 2027-2028 covering all Plan Implementing Departments.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Farmers Urged to Complete Farmer Registry Enrolment by November 30 to Continue Receiving Benefits Under Centrally Sponsored Schemes



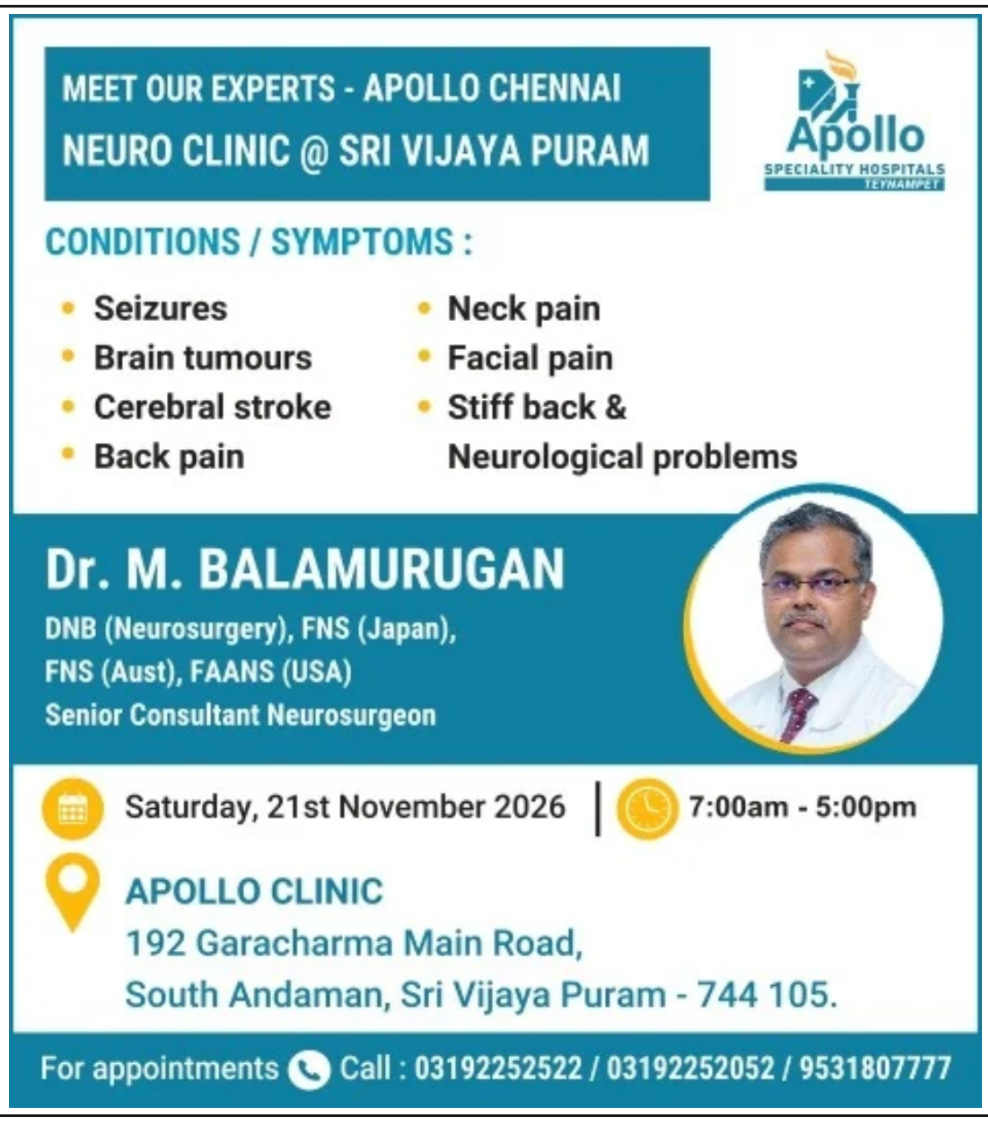
Sri Vijaya Puram | November 11, 2026

The Department of Agriculture has urged all eligible farmers across the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to complete their enrolment under the Farmer Registry on or before November 30, 2026, warning that failure to obtain a valid Farmer ID could affect their access to Government schemes, subsidies and agricultural services.

The Farmer Registry is being implemented under the Government of India's Digital Agriculture Mission as part of the AgriStack initiative. It aims to establish a verified digital identity for every farmer and facilitate the seamless delivery of Government benefits.

The Department has clarified that possession of a valid Farmer ID is mandatory for availing benefits under all Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS). As advised by the Ministry, farmers without a valid Farmer ID will no longer be eligible for benefits under Government schemes, including

CONTD..Pg 9



Contd Pg8...Farmers Urged to Complete Farmer Registry Enrolment by November 30 to Continue Receiving Benefits Under Centrally Sponsored Schemes

subsidised fertilizer booking.

Farmers who fail to complete their registration may also face disruptions in receiving agricultural inputs and PM-KISAN benefits from the upcoming Rabi Season 2027. In view of this, the Department has urged eligible farmers to prioritise their enrolment within the stipulated deadline.

To facilitate the registration process, arrangements have been made through Agriculture Sub-Depots, designated enrolment centres and special Farmer Registry camps being organised across the Islands.

Farmers can visit their nearest Agriculture Sub-Depot, Common Service Centre (CSC) or Farmer Registry camp with the necessary details and supporting documents to complete their enrolment.

The Department has appealed to all eligible farmers to cooperate with field functionaries and utilise the available enrolment facilities to ensure 100% coverage under the Farmer Registry across the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Tsunami Awareness Programme Conducted at Malacca Village in Car Nicobar



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 11, 2026

An Outreach Tsunami Awareness Programme was conducted on Wednesday at the residence of the First Headman of Malacca Village in Car Nicobar as part of the outreach activities planned by the Directorate of Disaster Management in 30 identified villages across the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The programme was organised by the District Emergency Operation Centre (DEOC), under the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Nicobar District, with the objective of strengthening tsunami awareness and disaster preparedness among the local community.

During the programme, participants were sensitised to tsunami hazards, their causes and potential impacts, natural warning signs, early warning systems, tsunami alerts and emergency communication mechanisms.

The participants were also familiarised with designated evacuation routes, safe locations and emergency

CONTD..Pg 10



Contd Pg9...Tsunami Awareness Programme Conducted at Malacca Village in Car Nicobar

response procedures. Special emphasis was laid on family preparedness, maintaining emergency kits and following essential safety measures during emergencies.

Interactive question-and-answer sessions were also held to address participants' queries and encourage active community participation. The programme received enthusiastic cooperation from the local community and concerned stakeholders.

The Directorate of Disaster Management, Andaman and Nicobar Administration, is conducting these outreach activities in coordination with INCOIS, Hyderabad, and the District Administrations of South Andaman, North and Middle Andaman, and Nicobar districts.

Department of Art & Culture to Organise 'Kalapani Trail' Heritage Walk on November 21



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 12, 2026

The Department of Art & Culture, Andaman and Nicobar Administration, will organise a Heritage Walk titled 'Kalapani Trail' in Sri Vijaya Puram on November 21, as part of its initiative to showcase the rich historical and cultural heritage of the Islands.

The walk will be conducted from 5.30 am to 7 am by local historian Mr. Pronab Sircar. The route will cover several historically significant locations, beginning at the Mazar of Allama Fazl-e-Haq Khairabadi, followed by the Lady Convicts' Barrack, Government Press, Blessington, JNRM and the Battle of Aberdeen Memorial.

The Department plans to organise Heritage Walks regularly in and around Sri Vijaya Puram to provide tourists, residents, students and heritage enthusiasts with an opportunity to explore the Islands' historical and cultural legacy.

The walk is open to all, including tourists, students, freelance tourist guides, empanelled guides, representatives of tour operators and individuals interested in exploring the heritage of the Islands. Participants will gain first-hand

CONTD..Pg 11



MG ANDAMAN (Legacy Automobiles Pvt. Ltd.)

SHOWROOM: MB-46, Aberdeen Bazar, Near Clock Tower, Sri Vijaya Puram - 744101

WORKSHOP: Near School Line School, School line, Sri Vijaya Puram - 744103

Contd Pg10...Department of Art & Culture to Organise 'Kalapani Trail' Heritage Walk on November 21

insights into the history, architecture and stories associated with various heritage sites. The initiative will also provide local guides and tourism students an opportunity to enhance their knowledge and help promote the Islands' cultural heritage.

Interested individuals may contact the Department of Art & Culture for participation details by November 19, 2026. They may also call 03192-234775 or email artand.culture@and.nic.in.

Tourism Department Concludes 8-Day Photography and Videography Training Programme at Swaraj Dweep



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 12, 2026

The Department of Tourism, Andaman and Nicobar Administration, in association with the Indian Institute of Photography (IIP), Noida, has successfully concluded an eight-day Training and Certification Programme on Photography, Videography and Camera Handling at Swaraj Dweep under the World Bank-assisted Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) Scheme.

Conducted from November 3 to 11, the programme aimed to equip local youth with industry-oriented technical skills and create opportunities for self-employment, while facilitating their integration into the organised Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) ecosystem.

The training covered professional camera handling, digital photography, videography, drone imaging and post-production workflows. It also included specialised practical sessions in emerging niche areas such as underwater photography and astrophotography. The sessions were conducted by expert resource persons from IIP Noida, Ms. Garima Chaudhary and Mr. Aasif Khan.

Speaking at the valedictory session, Mr. Alok Mridha, Pradhan, Gram Panchayat Shyam Nagar, highlighted the potential of professional photography in generating sustainable and high-value livelihood opportunities for island youth, particularly in the

CONTD..Pg 12



Contd Pg11...Tourism Department Concludes 8-Day Photography and Videography Training Programme at Swaraj Dweep

tourism sector.

He appreciated the Department of Tourism for bringing national-level professional training to Swaraj Dweep and congratulated the participants on their dedication and successful completion of the programme.

The programme concluded with the distribution of course completion certificates to all candidates who successfully completed the eight-day training module.

Sri Vijaya Puram City Receives Special Award at Swachh Survekshan 2025–26 Awards Ceremony



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 12, 2026

Sri Vijaya Puram City has received a Special Award under the category 'Swachh City – UT (With 5 or Less ULBs) – Promising Swachh Shehar' at the Swachh Survekshan 2025–26 Awards Ceremony held in New Delhi.

The award was conferred by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu, in the presence of Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, Manohar Lal, Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs, Tokhan Sahu, and other dignitaries.

The award was received on behalf of Sri Vijaya Puram by Purva Garg, IAS, Secretary (Urban Development); Vasantha, Chairperson, Sri Vijaya Puram Municipal Council (SVPMC); Kamaleshwar Rao S., IAS, Secretary, SVPMC; and Avinash Kumar Singh, Superintending Engineer, SVPMC.

The recognition acknowledges the sustained efforts of SVPMC towards strengthening urban sanitation, scientific solid waste management, cleanliness initiatives, public participation and improving the overall cleanliness of the city.

Dedicating the award to the Safaimitras of SVPMC, the Municipal Council acknowledged their tireless efforts and commitment towards maintaining the city's cleanliness. It also credited the active participation, cooperation and collective commitment of citizens in building a cleaner and healthier urban environment.

CONTD..Pg 13



Contd Pg12...Sri Vijaya Puram City Receives Special Award at Swachh Survekshan 2025–26 Awards Ceremony

SVPMC expressed gratitude to the Andaman and Nicobar Administration, various government departments, sanitation workers, stakeholders and citizens for their continued support and contributions.

The Council described the achievement as a recognition of the collective commitment and teamwork of Safaimitras and citizens towards building a clean and sustainable Sri Vijaya Puram.

National Book Week to Be Celebrated at State Library from November 14 to 20



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 12, 2026

The Directorate of Education will organise National Book Week 2026 at the State Library, Sri Vijaya Puram, from November 14 to 20, featuring a week-long Book Exhibition and various literary and creative competitions.

As part of the celebration, competitions in drawing, essay writing, elocution and storytelling will be organised for junior and senior groups to encourage creativity and literary interest among participants.

The Book Exhibition will be inaugurated on November 14 at 12 noon and will remain open to the general public from November 14 to 20.

Agriculture Department Invites Project Proposals for Financial Assistance Under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund Scheme



Sri Vijaya Puram | November 12, 2026

The Directorate of Agriculture, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, has invited eligible farmers, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), Self Help Groups (SHGs), Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), Cooperative Societies, agri-entrepreneurs, start-ups and other eligible beneficiaries to submit project proposals for availing financial assistance under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), a Central Sector Scheme of the Government of India.

The scheme aims to strengthen agricultural infrastructure by providing medium- to long-term debt financing for viable projects related to post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets. It is intended to enhance agricultural productivity, reduce post-harvest losses, improve market access and promote value addition in the Islands.

Under the scheme, eligible beneficiaries can avail loans through banks and financial institutions with an interest subvention of 3% per annum on eligible loans up to ₹2 crore. The interest subvention is available for a maximum period of seven years, subject to applicable scheme guidelines.

The projects eligible for consideration include post-harvest management infrastructure such as warehouses, pack houses, assaying, sorting and grading units, cold chain and logistics facilities, primary processing centres, ripening chambers and supply chain services, including e-marketing platforms.

The scheme also covers community farming assets, including organic input and bio-stimulant production units, infrastructure for smart and precision agriculture, and other eligible projects as specified under the scheme guidelines.

Interested beneficiaries have been encouraged to identify viable projects and submit proposals clearly indicating the nature of the project, proposed location, estimated project cost and other relevant details required for appraisal by the financing institution.

For further information, guidance and assistance in preparing and submitting project proposals, eligible beneficiaries may contact the Zonal Officers of their respective areas or the Kisan Call Centre, Directorate of Agriculture, Sri Vijaya Puram, at 03192-243434.

The Directorate of Agriculture has urged eligible stakeholders to avail themselves of the scheme's benefits and contribute towards strengthening agricultural infrastructure, improving market linkages and promoting sustainable agricultural development in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.