Three held with MDMA

SPICAL CORRESPONDENT EDGEN THE KOCH CITY NATOOLIC Cell on Tuesday arrested three youngsters with 5 grams of premium naroolic drug MDMA. The arrested are Krishna K., 22, and Joel Stephen, 24, of Kalamassery and Vijay Krishnan, 23, of Edap-pally. They were nabbed following a search by the District Anti-Narcotics Special Action Force (DANSAF) along with the Thrikkakara police near a rented house at Kangarappady. The police said the seized drug was meant to be sold to school and college students.

Encroachments along Vembanad Lake will be identified, says CM

Committee constituted to suggest remedial measures, Chief Minister tells Assembly

Revenue, Survey and Local Self-Government depart-ments have initiated steps to identity and remove, en-croachments along the Vern-banad Lake, according to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vi-iyaan.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vi-jayan.

A committee was consti-tuted on the recommenda-tion of the Assembly Com-mittee on Environment to examine encroachments and suggest remedial mea-

sures, he said in response to a submission by K. Babu, Thripunithura MIA, on Tuesday. The committee, which includes the District Collector as chairman and officials of various departments, has started work on identifying encroachments. The team will fix the boundary of the Vembanad Lake, which is a Ramsar wetland, as part of efforts to restore the ecosystem, he said. The Chief Minister said the Ministry of Forest, Envi-

inathan Foundation' has found that the water holding capacity of the lake had dedined considerably owing to the increased presence of silt and waste. A project has been formulated to construct an outer boundary around the R-block' paddy field using the removed mud and silt. It is likely to be implemented jointly by the government and the Padasekhara samiti in the

Malappuram DCB-Kerala Bank merger: RBI nod expected

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Cooperation Minister V.N.
Vasawan has said the approval of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for the Malappuram District Cooperative
Bank's merger with the Kerala Bank is expected soon.
Speaking after tabling the Kerala Cooperative Science
(Second Amendment) Bill,
2022, in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, Mr. Vasawan said the RBI nod was bound to be expedited with the Kerala High Court vacating a stay that hindered the
merger. As many as 759 branches that previously functioned under the 13 dis-

trict cooperative banks (DCB) except the one in Malappuram had already received the requisite RBI licerice.

The Bill, which sought to extend the deadline for the merger by a year, was referred to the Subject Committee XI (on Food, Civil Supplies and Cooperation) following discussions.

M. Vincent (Congress) said Kerala Bank remained a disjoint group of banks and lacked a common framework three years after its formation. The government had also been unable to complete software integration in

Motorcyclist's death: truck driver held

reportedly hit a pothole fol-lowing which he lost control of the vehicle and was thrown on the road on the night of August 5. Hanuman-thappa had sped off follow-ing the incident. He was picked up from Karnataka, and the truck was also taken into custody. The police could not track down the were no CCTV cameras in the area. They had booked causing death by negli-gence) and had since then

MOVIE LAND

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Seeking connectivity



Long wait: A candlelight protest held at a bus stop in the Munambam-Vypeen corridor or Tuesday evening against the delay in permitting city entry of private buses from Goshree Islands. The protest was organised by Federation of Residents Associations in Goshree is (FRAG) and NGOS from the region. **strong ARRAGEMENT.

12-hour duty: unions, KSRTC management stick to their guns

It will throw entire system into disarray, says union leader

high-fanking omclair to magericy.

Reacting to Monday's ralls with trade unions on introducing 12-hour duty ending in a stalemate, he said the Motor Transport Workers Act has capped 'hours of work' of bus crew at eight hours per devek - meaning the total time when a driver is steering a bus. Bus crew will have

to work for only eight hours even if the 12-hour shift is in troduced, while also getting 30 minutes rest after driving continuously for five hours. The Act further permits extension of working hours to up to 12 hours, if needed. Thus, the main working hours will be 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. to cater to peak-hour demand, with a four-hour paid break in between, he said.

The situation was warranted since there were insufficient crew members available for evening duty under the existing system, what with most of them opping for double duty or 16 hours of work. This resulted in some of them turning up for work for just two days a week and eight days a month.

The net result was that more personnel had to be recruited, taking the bus-employee ratio to as high as 1.8-the highest in India. This in turn tremendously increased the salary and pen-

to a para, affecting commu-ters, he said.

The management seems to be in a hurry to reduce the number of personnel, said R. Ayyappan, working president of Rerala State Transport Drivers Union. "It is not practicable and proper homework must be done. Both the management and workers will be at a loss if the least of the property of t

HC stays liquor shop closure in Vizhinjam

The Kerala High Court has stayed the Thiruvanan-thapuram District Collec-tor's order for closing down liquor shops within the limits of the Vizhinjam police station.

Directive
The petitioner sought a directive from the State government not to close down the bar hotel for two days within the limits of the Vizhinjam police in view of the agitations.

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SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT TURNSVERSATEPERAM
The 12th edition of 'Bambino presents The Hindu Poolkalam@Home Context, powered by Mangaldeep will be held in four centres, namely Thiruvananthapuram. Kochi, Thrissur, and Kozhikode, on September 3 and 4, 5a-turday and Sunday respectively. The contest, first held in 2007, witnessed increased participation over the years and has become a top contest of its kind. This time too, participants/amily/residence association members are being encouraged to prepare Pookkalams from the comfort of their home adhering to 'COVID-19 protocols.

Prizes
The teams adjudged first will receive ₹15,000 in cash and ₹15000 worth gifts. Second prize will be ₹10,000 and ₹10,000 worth gifts,

421 (M)



Lav Pookkalams at home, win prizes

and third prize will be \$5,000. Three teams will be given \$2,000 as consolation prizes. All these prizes will be given away in every centre. All teams will be given \$1,000 as reimburses. ment towards procurement of flowers. Only 25 teams will be allowed per centre.

Participants should be from Corporation(city limits: Th-ere will be also special gifts for all participating teams. The partner in associa-tion with is Gold Winner-Preeth! Zodiac 2.0 is the Home Appliances partner. For details and registra-tion, call Girish (Thiruva-

kode) 98472 00442.

Terms, conditions
Only 25 teams will be allowed to participate in each lowed to participate in each lowed to participate in each lowed to participate in each should have five to eight members, including the team captain.

Natural flowers and leaves alone should be consistent. Harmony of contestants. Harmony of contestants. Harmony of contestants and shapes and neatness of the Pookkalam contestants. Harmony of the pookkalam provides and the procession of the participate of the should be should