

## CLASSIFIEDS

MART Page 6

Karur Yesterday

☁ 40/28

Thanjavur Yesterday

☁ 39/28

Tiruchchirapalli Yesterday

☁ 40/28

Tiruchchirapalli Today

A cheerful and hazy morning. A warm and humid afternoon is likely. Light spells of rain and thundershower is likely. High 39°C, low 28°C. RH max 85%

Tiruchchirapalli Ton

A comfortable morning with sultry afternoon with a partly sky. Light thundershower is likely. High 39°C, low 28°C. RH max 85%

Read RH as Relative Humidity

More Regional Advertisements: Pages 5 &amp; 6

## AROUND THE CITY

## Bus damaged

**TIRUCHI:** Windscreens of a State Transport Corporation town bus were damaged when unidentified persons pelted stones at the vehicle while it was proceeding on the Madurai Road here in the early hours on Friday. The bus was on its way to Chatham bus stand from Ordnance Factory when a group of persons pelted stones at the vehicle. Based on a complaint from the bus driver, Ravi, the Fort Police have registered a case.

## Pension scheme

The Department of Post will function as point of presence for the "New Pension Scheme" which has been introduced by the Central Government. This is made available in all Head Post offices of the region with effect from April 30.

## Mettur level

The water level in Mettur dam stood at 72.33 feet on Friday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 3,397 cusecs and the discharge, 2,100 cusecs.

# Move to restore farmers' rights

## Consortium to take up a campaign from May 1 to October 2

Special Correspondent

**TIRUCHI:** The Consortium of Indian Farmers Associations (CIFA) will take up a nationwide campaign to "restore the Constitutional rights of Indian farmers" from May 1 to October 2, its secretary general, P. Chengal Reddy, said here on Friday.

The campaign was intended to highlight the plight of the country's farmers, who Mr. Reddy said, were in extreme distress owing to wrong policies of the governments.

The growth rate of the farm sector has been going down. Farmers do not have assured and profitable price for their produce, security against crop failure, old age livelihood security, proper access to modern technologies and mechanisation, he said speaking at a consultative meeting with representatives of various farmers organisations to discuss the action-plan for the campaign here on Friday.

Government regulations violated farmers Constitutional rights of justice, liberty and equality, he contended. Two Pay Commission reports have been implemented in re-



**VARIOUS ISSUES:** P. Chengal Reddy, secretary general, Consortium of Indian Farmers Associations, speaking at a consultative meeting with representatives of farmers' organisations in Tiruchi on Friday. — PHOTO: R. ASHOK

cent years, but the report of the National Commission on Agriculture has been put in the cold storage.

## Demands

The campaign would put forward a charter of demands including fixation of minimum support price for farm produce taking into account the production cost and providing for 50 per cent profit margin; removal of controls

on production, processing, marketing and exports; withdrawal of the Essential Commodities Act and other anti-farmer Acts; reduction of income disparities and empowerment of farmers to plan, implement and monitor their resources.

These apart, region and commodity-specific demands of farmers organisations would also be highlighted.

The campaign will start on

May 1 with discussions among farmers organisations to finalise the charter of demands/declarations at the State, district and villages levels.

During June and July, farmers activists would visit villages to meet farmers and explain the objectives.

In August, farmers' leaders would meet local leaders, MPs, MLAs and leaders of political parties to represent

their case.

On October 2, farmers would observe a day-long fast in front of a statue or a portrait of Mahatma Gandhi in their respective villages. On the same day, about one lakh farmers would observe a fast at New Delhi.

Mr. Chengal Reddy said he was engaged in enlisting the support of all farmers organisations across the country for the campaign.

"I have planned to meet Sharad Joshi, Mahendra Singh Tikait and farmers' leaders in other States to enlist their support," he said.

## Action plan

Based on the discussions with various farmers' organisations, the final charter of demands and action plan would be evolved.

Mahadhanapuram V. Rajaram, Executive President, Tiruchi District Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, R. Raja Chidambaram, Secretary, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, G. Ajeethan, general secretary, Tamil Nadu Banana Growers Federation, and representatives of various other farmers' organisations participated in the meeting.