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The construction work of Chalakudy bridge on NH-44 has reached the final phase | A SANESH

Chalakudy bridge on NH-44 to be opened by mid May

Project had faced setback after 2 local bodies issued stop memo restricting excavation of soil

ANILKUMAR T @Kochi

BRINGING relief to commuters, the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) plans to open the Chalakudy Bridge on NH-44 to traffic by mid-May.

"The development of a strengthened earthen wall is advancing at a rapid rate. It can be completed by the end of this month. Subsequently, the laying of metal and other tasks, such as the construction of barriers, will be carried out.

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Antony Pius, vice-president of Operations at EKK Ltd

The construction project for the bridge was initially awarded to Guruvayur Infrastructure Ltd. (GIL), but the company failed to complete the project on time and the contract was given to EKK.

However, the construction faced a significant setback when two local grama panchayats issued a stop memo that restricted the excavation of soil for the project.

"It was after the intervention of district administration and the geology department that we were able to fill the road with soil. The delay in getting sufficient soil on time has affected the completion of the project. Though our earlier plan was to execute the project by March, it got delayed by two months. The stop-order memo from the panchayat has resulted in a ₹2 crore loss for the company," said Ajeesh, project coordinator, EKK.

The recurring hurdles encountered in building the Chalakudy bridge have become a source of distress for travellers on the roadway that links Kochi to Palakkad.

P&T Colony rehabilitation project enters final phase

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

THE much-delayed housing project to rehabilitate the residents of P&T Colony to Mundamveli in Rameswaram village has reached its final stage.

The GCDA officials are now hopeful of completing the project and shifting the residents to their new homes before the monsoon season. The total cost of the project is ₹14.61 crore.

As common amenities, the housing colony also has a sick

Shift likely before monsoon

GCDA officials are hopeful of completing the Rs 14.61-crore project and shifting the residents to their new homes before monsoon season



room, daycare centre, administration room, reading room, rainwater harvesting system, potable water system and fire-fighting system.

The GCDA had in October 2020 signed a memorandum of understanding with the Thiruvananthapuram District Labour Contract

Cooperative Society (TDLCCS) for implementing the project. On the same day, the site was handed over to the construction company, with an advance payment of ₹2.48 crore.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan laid the foundation stone for the housing project in 2018. The project's progress was affected by the pandemic, leading to the delay in completing the work.

A team headed by an executive engineer from GCDA is working at the site.

Meanwhile, the Kerala High Court has ordered the completion of the rehabilitation of the residents of P&T Colony before April 26, 2023.



Gang dupes family of narcotics case accused of ₹4 lakh

TOBY ANTONY @Kochi

THE Ernakulam Central police have launched a probe into the incident in which the family members of a narcotics case accused were duped of ₹4 lakh by a gang that promised to help him get exonerated.

The police have registered a case against Alex Chandy, Nirmalan, Muhammad Salih and Naveen for duping the relatives of Scaria, who was arrested in a narcotic case registered in Muvattupuzha.

Another person who impersonated an excise officer is the fifth accused. The statements of Scaria and his relatives have been recorded. Attempts are on to trace the accused persons.

"Last year, after Scaria was arrested in a case registered under the NDPS (Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances Act) case, Chandy approached his relatives offering help to get him exonerated. Chandy claimed his friends knew a high-ranking excise officer who could help them. Through Salih, Nirmalan got ₹2 lakh from the family in September 2022. In October, another ₹2 lakh was sent to Chandy's account," said a source.

When nothing happened, the relatives realised they had been duped. They tried contacting Chandy, but to no avail. They then approached the excise additional commissioner (enforcement), Thiruvananthapuram, with a complaint.

The additional commissioner forwarded the complaint to the state police chief, who then sent it to the Kochi city police commissioner. The commissioner directed the Central police to register a case and conduct a probe.



HOLY PATH

A 'nagari kanikkal' procession being taken out as part of Good Friday observance at St Francis Assisi Cathedral | A SANESH

By successfully managing waste in over 18 cities, CREDAI's initiative aims at zero waste

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

ZERO solid waste is a possibility and this has been proved by an initiative launched by CREDAI. The initiative called CCC Zero Waste Pvt Ltd has been successfully managing solid waste disposal in more than 18 cities, servicing 550 apartments and more than 29,818 families.

even civic bodies are finding tough to handle! "We have a streamlined process," says Sailesh Prabhu, CEO at CREDAI Clean City Movement. According to him, the end result of the waste management system implemented by the company is such that those living in apartment complexes don't have to be worried about garbage disposal.



Eco-composter installed at a building

needed for the waste management but also ensure that the resultant byproducts are taken care of in an appropriate man-

ner," he says adding the company is an authorised service provider for Suchitwa Mission and also approved by the Kerala State Pollution Control Board. The company has also tied up with Kerala Enviro Infrastructure Ltd.

According to him, bio-degradable waste is turned into compost using the eco-composter.

"The total installation cost comes to be around ₹70,000 for

an apartment complex having 35 to 40 flats. A pair of eco-composter bins are ideal for an apartment complex having the aforesaid dimensions," he says. "In most cases, the compost produced by the eco-composter is utilised by the apartments in their gardens. It takes 30 days for a bin to produce compost. As for those that don't have such facilities, we clear out the compost and supply it to those who

need the compost. We get such requests from farmers," says Sailesh. "These supervisors are responsible for training the people involved in the waste management in a particular flat. They visit an apartment complex once every week. They also monitor whether the composting process is being carried out in the right way. If composting is not done correctly, we won't get the desired result," says

Sailesh. The company manages around 300 tonnes of biodegradable waste and 50 tonnes of non-biodegradable waste. "Plastic waste is collected from the apartments once a month. The non-biodegradable waste thus collected is further segregated at our facility," says Sailesh. The clean plastic is sent to recycling units while the remaining are transported to the cement kilns.

EXPRESS READ

Election petition: Swaraj files caveat in Supreme Court

Kochi: CPM leader M Swaraj on Friday filed a caveat before the Supreme Court requesting it not to pass any order related to the Special Leave Petition that is likely to be moved by MLA K Babu against the Kerala High Court order in the election petition. The HC on March 29 decided to proceed with the election petition filed by rival candidate Swaraj seeking to declare the election of Congress candidate Babu from Tripunithura constituency void.

with the consent of Babu, used Hindu religious symbol by distributing a slip to voters, has made out a sufficient cause of action for a trial on the election petition to decide whether the election is null and void.

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