

CBI probe into Marad carnage

The LDF Government recommended a CBI probe into the carnage in which nine people were killed at Marad in Kozhikode district.

This was following the recommendation of the Thomas P. Joseph committee which probed into the Marad massacre. The report asked the Government to recommend a CBI inquiry in order to unearth the involvement of fundamentalists and terrorists in the incident.

Addressing reporters, Home Minister Kodiyeri Balakrishnan said that the State has written to the Centre to seek a CBI probe into the Marad incident on such aspects as the possible involvement of terrorists, the conspiracy behind it and mobilisation of explosives.

The Home Minister said the action taken report on the findings of the probe was taken up for discussion by the Cabinet, which arrived at the conclusion that a CBI probe was essential to bring out all aspects of the incident.

The minister said that the Government had written to the Centre recommending a CBI probe on September 12.

Government to ensure hassle free education loans

Chief Minister V S Achuthanandan has said that the state government would direct banks to entertain all applications for educational loans for students facing financial difficulties.

Chief Minister told the Assembly that a help desk would be arranged in banks for assisting the students to procure loans in time. Any complaint in this regard would be solved once it was brought to the notice of the Government.

The proposal for district-level committees headed by Collectors to look into the issues would be considered, he said.

Steps taken for release of Keralites detained in Oman

Chief Minister

As many as 83 Indians are still lodged in military detention camps in Oman after they were rounded up for want of proper documents, Kerala Chief Minister, V S Achuthanandan informed the Assembly.

Government had taken steps for the release of Keralites among them with the help of Indian Embassy in Oman, he said. The names of the detainees had been published through media and their relatives asked to come out with documents like nativity certificate, ration card and voter's ID card to secure their release. The embassy had informed the Government that any one of these documents was enough to seek their release. The district collectors had been instructed to collect these documents from the affected families and forward them to Non-Resident Keralites Department.

Centre asked to reduce air fare in Gulf sector

Kerala Government had taken up with the Centre the problems being faced by passengers in the Gulf-Kerala sector including the exorbitant fare hike effected by airline companies, Chief Minister V S Achuthanandan said.

He told the Assembly that the Government had taken the issue seriously and was putting pressure on the Centre to persuade Air India and Indian Airlines to reduce their fares in the sector. Members of Parliament from the State had also requested the Centre to intervene in the issue. A joint effort should be made by parties in the State for the purpose as the problem concerned ordinary labourers going to the Gulf in search of better fortunes, he said.

Arakkal Kettu brings new laurels to Tourism Department

Winning international laurels has become Kerala Tourism's second nature. It is the conservation project of *Arakkal Kettu* in Kannur that has won Kerala Tourism its new recognition.



The project has won the Honourable Mention Award at the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards, 2006. *Arakkal Kettu* was selected from among a total of 36 entries from 11 countries.

The UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards recognise the efforts of private individuals and organisations that have

successfully restored and conserved structures and buildings of heritage value in the region.

The restoration of *Arakkal Kettu* rescued the 400-year-old palace structure from dilapidation and converted it into a self-sustaining heritage museum showcasing the State's Muslim royal traditions, a Tourism Department statement said.