March 11, 2026 - Dinamani Newspaper - Tit bits

1. The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal to declare Madurai Airport as an international airport. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said that the decision was taken keeping in mind the wishes of the people of Madurai, one of the major cities of Tamil Nadu.

(i) The decision of the Union Cabinet has received attention as Prime Minister Modi is scheduled to visit Tamil Nadu on Wednesday.

(ii) A Union Cabinet meeting was held in Delhi under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said that the policy decision to declare Madurai Airport as an international airport will ensure air traffic to the temple city from various parts of the world. Industrial activities around Madurai will increase. Madurai will be strengthened as an educational and medical center.

(iii) Various airlines have expressed interest in operating international flights from Madurai Airport.

(iv) Madurai is one of the oldest airports in Tamil Nadu. When this airport is upgraded to International status, regional air traffic will improve; commercial activities will be encouraged. This will be a driving force for regional economic development.

(v) Government officials said that the airport's performance is being improved to attract international pilgrims and businesses in keeping with Madurai's historical glory.

2. Prime Minister Narendra Modi held an emergency meeting with Union Ministers in the wake of the shortage of LPG cylinders due to the war situation in West Asia.

(i) The Prime Minister instructed the Ministers to take coordinated measures to ensure that the public is not affected.

(ii) The US-Israeli joint forces have been attacking Iran for the past week. In retaliation, Iran has closed the Strait of Hormuz, a sea route used for transporting crude oil and gas from West Asia.

(iii) Qatar, a major supplier to India, has completely stopped the production of LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas). Meanwhile, as the war continues to escalate, there is a shortage of gas and crude oil.

(iv) The impact of this has been immediately felt in India. There is a shortage of LPG cylinders in various parts of the country. The supply of commercial LPG cylinders used for restaurants has been affected; in many states, its supply has been completely stopped.

(v) Restaurant owners in metropolitan cities including Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai have expressed concern that since there is stock of LPG cylinders only for the next few days, restaurants will have to close after that.

(vi) Central Government Committee Formation:

- The Central Government has constituted a committee to look into the issue of sudden shortage of LPG cylinders.

- In this regard, the Union Petroleum Ministry in a post published on its X page said, 'Three Executive Directors of Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have been appointed to look into the supply of commercial LPG cylinders to restaurants, hotels and other industrial establishments. It has been reported that an inclusive committee has been formed.

(vii) Domestic production increased by 10% :-

- The Central Government has issued an emergency order under the Essential Commodities Act to oil refineries to increase the production of essential LPG gas. The gas supplied by the refineries should be supplied only for domestic use for cooking purposes. It has also been ordered that strict action will be taken if this order is violated.
- As a result, domestic LPG production has increased by 10 percent due to the intensification of production by oil refineries. Moreover, there is no shortage of LPG in the country at present. Stable supply has been ensured, the Central Government said.

3. The final results of the Parliamentary general elections in neighboring Nepal have been released.

(i) Accordingly, the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), supported by the youth, has achieved a historic victory. The party is preparing to form a Government with a simple majority by winning 125 out of the total 165 seats in the direct election system.

(ii) In September last year, the Coalition Government led by former Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli was toppled due to the youth's protest. After 6 months, the election to elect a new Parliament was held last Thursday.

(iii) Out of the total 275 seats in the Nepal Parliament, 165 members will be elected through direct elections and the remaining 110 members will be elected through the vote-based proportional representation system.

(iv) In this situation, with the counting of votes for the direct election system complete, the country's Election Commission officially released the final results.

4. Peter Elbers, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of India's leading airline IndiGo, has abruptly resigned from his position.

(i) The decision was made at a meeting of the company's board of directors, a stock exchange statement said. Following the departure of Peter Elbers, it was announced that the company's co-founder Rahul Bhatia will take over management responsibilities on an interim basis.

(ii) Peter Elbers had been the CEO of IndiGo since September 2022.

5.The Union government has informed the Parliament that 27 percent reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) is being implemented in direct appointments to administrative posts and officer vacancies in central government departments. In a written reply to a question raised regarding reservation for OBCs, Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, P.L. Verma said:

- The Central Government is implementing the reservation policy based on the Office Memorandum (OM) dated September 8, 1993 of the Central Department of Personnel and Training and the official orders issued by other Government Departments from time to time.

- Accordingly, 27 percent reservation is given to OBC category in direct appointments to administrative posts and officer posts in Central Government departments.
- The Central Government is implementing various schemes for the welfare of OBC category students, including the Prime Minister's Young Achievers Scholarship Scheme for Vibrant India (PM-YASAS VI), the Young Achievers Higher Education Scholarship Scheme.
- He informed that the Central Government is periodically reviewing the welfare schemes for the OBC category based on consultations with various stakeholders, including the concerned ministries and departments.

6. China plans to strengthen the transport infrastructure along its border with India in the next five years under its 15th Five-Year Plan.

(i) The plan has been tabled in the ongoing session of the National People's Congress (NPC), which is likely to be approved by the Parliament.

(ii) The ruling Communist Party has approved the 15th Five-Year Plan, which focuses on artificial intelligence (AI), electric vehicle manufacturing, and battery manufacturing to boost China's sluggish economy.

(iii) The 394-km highway project connecting the northern and southern Tianshan Mountains and the Uyghur Autonomous Region in Xinjiang province has been included in the draft report of the 15th Five-Year Plan, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

(iv) The highway runs parallel to the road built in the disputed Aksai Chin region following the 1962 Indo-China border war.

(v) Construction of the Dushanshi-Kuga Highway in central Xinjiang province is expected to begin in September this year and be completed by 2032.

(vi) The five-year plan includes plans to renovate three highways in Tibet province.

(vii) China's 14th Five-Year Plan was completed last year. Under the plan, China began construction of the world's largest dam across the Brahmaputra River in Tibet province, which borders India, in July last year.

(viii) The project, which would store a large amount of water and alter the flow of the river, has sparked opposition in India and Bangladesh, which are both located in the Brahmaputra river basin.

(ix) In this context, China is continuously improving infrastructure facilities such as highways and high-speed trains in the disputed Tibetan areas near the Indian border.

7. The Union Cabinet has approved relaxation of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) norms for all countries sharing land borders with India, including China, informed sources said. In this regard, the sources said that an amendment has been made to the Press Note 3 issued in 2020.

(i) China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar and Afghanistan share land borders with India. It was made mandatory in 2020 for foreign companies having shareholders from these countries to obtain prior permission from the Central Government before investing in any sector in India. Press Note-3 was issued in this regard. In this context, informed sources said that the Union Cabinet has approved relaxation of FDI norms for all countries sharing a land border with India, including China.

(ii) Following the clash between Indian and Chinese troops in the Galwan Valley in June 2020, bilateral relations were severely affected. Following this, India banned more than 200 Chinese apps, including TikTok and WeChat.

(iii) Although China is now India's second largest trading partner, India receives only limited Foreign Direct Investment from the country. India's exports to China rose to $16.66 billion in 2024-25. This is an increase of 14.5 percent compared to the previous year ($14.25 billion). At the same time, India's imports from China increased from $101.73 billion to $113.45 billion. This led to a widening of the trade deficit from $85 billion to $99.2 billion.

(iv) India's exports to China rose to $15.88 billion and imports to $108.18 billion during the April-January period of the current financial year. The trade deficit is $92.3 billion.

(v) Some more projects...:

- The Union Cabinet has approved the four-lane development of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway between Badnawar and Thimarwani in Madhya Pradesh at a cost of Rs 3,839 crore, and two multi-lane rail projects in West Bengal and Jharkhand at a cost of Rs 4,474 crore.

(vi) Extension of Jaljeevan Scheme :-

- The Union Cabinet has approved increasing the expenditure of the Jaljeevan Scheme, which provides safe piped drinking water to households in rural areas, to Rs 8.7 lakh crore and extending the scheme till December 2028.

9. The Supreme Court has said that it is necessary to enact a Common Civil Code in the country.

(i) Several petitions have been filed in the Supreme Court by advocate Paulomi Bhavini Shukla, urging the repeal of sections of the Muslim Personal Law (Sharia) Application Act, 1937, which discriminate against Muslim women.

(ii) The petition was heard by a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justice Jayamalya Bagchi, and Justice R. Mahadevan. The judges then questioned whether the court could decide whether the personal law practice was constitutional.

(iii) In the year 1951 Narasu Appa Mali case, Justice Bagshi noted that the Bombay High Court had ruled that personal laws (religious laws related to marriage, property rights, etc.) cannot be examined as to whether they are in accordance with the Constitution.

(iv) Responding to a question raised by the bench on whether the court can interfere in personal law, the petitioner's lawyer Prashant Bhushan pointed out that the Supreme Court had ruled that the triple talaq system was unconstitutional in the Shayara Banu case and struck down the system. After that verdict, he argued that there cannot be a situation in the country where women of that religion do not have equal rights as Muslim men.

(v) Chief Justice Surya Kant expressed concern that by intervening in the matter, Muslim women would be deprived of any legal protection.

10. Ethically Failed Government Business - State Government's involvement in the liquor trade (TASMAC)

in Tamil Nadu :-

- The state government generates an annual revenue exceeding ₹45,000 crore through alcohol sales. It is estimated that 70 lakh (7 million) people consume alcohol daily in the state.
- There are currently 5,329 government-run liquor shops across Tamil Nadu, offering approximately 200 different varieties of alcoholic beverages.
- On average, a regular consumer spends about ₹7,000 per month on alcohol purchased from Government outlets.
- The Government sets specific sales targets for festivals; for example, while the Diwali sales target for 2025 was set at ₹600 crore, actual sales exceeded ₹789 crore. For comparison, 2024 Diwali sales were ₹438 crore.
- The introduction of "Tetra Packs" priced at ₹60 to ₹70 is heavily criticized as it allows alcohol to be easily concealed, even by students in school bags.
- Alcohol consumption is identified as a primary cause of the surge in kidney (renal) failure cases in the state,. This has forced Government Hospitals to increase the number of renal treatment centers to manage the influx of patients.
- While the state earns tens of thousands of crore from sales, it allocates only ₹10 crore toward public awareness programs regarding the dangers of alcohol.
- The normalization of alcohol as a "government business" has lowered the threshold for the younger generation to experiment with other illegal narcotics.
- he state's role as a liquor merchant as a betrayal of social ethics, prioritizing revenue over the physical and mental health of its citizens.
- Calls for the gradual closure of shops and eventual total prohibition, asserting that the state cannot protect the welfare of families while simultaneously profiting from an addictive substance,.