

Published: August 4, 2011 09:17 IST | Updated: August 4, 2011 09:17 IST MADURAI, August 4, 2011

## “Use of technology boosts agriculture productivity”



USEFUL: B. Murugesha Boopathi, Vice-Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, releasing a booklet on crop details for farmers in the city on Wednesday. Photo: G. Moorthy

An interaction with progressive farmers held

Intensive use of critical technology is expected to increase agriculture productivity in the State, said Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Vice-Chancellor B. Murugesha Boopathi here on Wednesday.

Speaking at the inaugural session of a day-long programme, 'Self-employment opportunities in agriculture,' and an interaction with progressive farmers held at the Agricultural College and Research Institute here, he said that presently, food production, which included rice, pulses, and oil seeds, stood at 85 lakh tonnes in the State. The government was keen to enhance the

production, which would help meet the demand and also lead to better standards of living for farmers.

Experts at the TNAU had examined the techniques, identified the areas for commercialisation and were confident of achieving the goal with the help of farmers. For instance, by implementing the laser levelling technology in all the cultivable fields across the State, not only could water for irrigation be saved phenomenally, but also the output levels could be enhanced from 85 lakh tonnes to 115 lakh tonnes. "Such is the technological development which would lead to tremendous growth," Dr. Murugesu Boopathi said.

The VC also touched upon the need for more entrepreneurs to invest in agriculture. There were so many areas in the sector. For example, small and handy machines, which had replaced manual labour, were fast gaining attraction among farmers following shortage of labour. By producing equipment such as power-weeder and tree climber (coconut and Palmyra), the farmers need not depend on labourers anymore but do the work on their own, with ease and swiftness.

Explaining a few salient features of the agriculture business development centre at the TNAU, he said the centre had resource persons to disseminate the latest technologies and give training at every stage to farmers. There were many success stories of individual farmers getting benefitted from the agriculture business development centre. He appealed to all the participants to utilise the expertise and enrich their confidence level.

Joint Director (Agriculture) P. Sankaralingam, in his felicitation, said that it was time farmers rose to the occasion and joined mainstream business. "You (farmers) should fix the price for your produce...and not give room for others anymore," he asserted. By utilising the infrastructural facilities offered by the TNAU through its experts in the agriculture business development centre, the farmers should benefit right from commencement of sowing seeds to marketing their produce.

The TNAU Agriculture Business Development Director P. Sivasubramanian listed out the achievements of the centre and urged farmers to join in large numbers. At the national level, the TNAU's ABD stood ahead of others in many spheres, he underlined.

During the interaction, a successful agri clinic-cum-business operator, T. Sivasakthi Velan from Coimbatore, shared some of his experiences and invited the young agriculture graduates to become agri-entrepreneurs.

Resource persons B. Mohan from Agriculture Research Institute, Namakkal district, Horticulture consultant C.M. Pappiah, NABARD Assistant General Manager R. Shankar Narayan, and Deputy Director (Agriculture Business Development Centre, Madurai) G. S. Saranath Babu spoke on various topics. Dean of ACRI K. Vairavan and Dean of Home Science College and Research Institute P. Banumathi spoke.

Mohammed Haroon welcomed the participants and A. Daniel Visvasam Samuel proposed a vote of thanks.

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### **Kuruvai paddy coverage touches all time high in district in last 10 years**



**PLANTING SUCCESS:** The System of Rice Intensification technique has caught up in a big way in Tiruchchi district. A paddy field where the technique was adopted at Manakkal near Lalgudi.

Photo: R. Ashok

9,834 hectares covered this year against normal area of about 6,500 hectares

The area under kuruvai paddy in Tiruchi district has reached a 10-year high this season, thanks to the timely release of water and favourable conditions.

According to sources in the Agriculture Department, kuruvai paddy has been raised in about 9,834 hectares (ha) this year. This is the highest coverage achieved in the district during kuruvai after 2000-01. The system of rice intensification technique has been adopted in 5,432 ha, accounting for more than 50 per cent of the total area.

Though samba is the major crop for the district, the prospect of assured water supply for irrigation had enthused farmers to gear up for kuruvai paddy cultivation this year. The confidence of the farmers stemmed from the release of water for irrigation from the Mettur reservoir on June 6, ahead of the normal water release date on June 11.

Agriculture Department officials had been expecting an increase of about 1,500 ha in the area under kuruvai over the normal coverage of about 6,500 ha. Their expectations have well been exceeded.

According to statistics available with the department, kuruvai paddy was at a peak of 10,284 ha in 2000-01 and had been on the decline ever since. The coverage came down to 9,584 ha in 2001-02 and shrunk heavily to 2,616 ha in 2003-04. There was some recovery of sorts as it increased to 4,876 ha in 2004-05. The coverage was around 6,000 ha over the next two years. During 2007-08 and 2008-09, the kuruvai area in the district was over 5,000 ha. There was a fall again when it came down to 4,224 ha in 2009-10 and 4,750 ha in 2010-11 only to witness a resurgence this year.

Lalgudi block, one of the most fertile in the district, as usual accounted for the highest kuruvai area of about 5,116 hectares this season. However, department officials also observed that there has been an increase in kuruvai area in Uppilliyapuram block also on account of some timely rain and inflow into the tanks in the region. Officials said the standing crop across the district was in good condition.

“This has turned out to be a good season. With the opening of the Mettur reservoir ahead of the scheduled date, farmers were able to take up preparatory works and go in for the crop in time. There has been no report of any water scarcity and this is the main reason for the increase in

coverage. We are hopeful of a good harvest also,” observed G.Kanagasabai, president, District Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association.

Meanwhile, the Agriculture Department has started gearing up for the samba season ahead, which starts towards the end of August or September in single crop areas of the district. Officials said more than 620 tonnes of certified paddy seeds of several varieties, including improved white ponni, ADT 39, BPT 5204 and Tiruchi-1, have been stocked up.

The normal area under samba is around 62,600 ha but again this could also be exceeded if favourable conditions prevailed.

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### **Floating pumpset: an innovation well suited for all seasons**



The Hindu HOLISTIC SOLUTION: The water discharges becomes doubled. Photo: Special Arrangement

Farmers can avail a subsidy of Rs. 13,500 for each installation

During heavy rains it is a common sight to see two wheelers parked outside mechanic shops to get their spark plugs cleaned.

“Similarly electrical shops in villages are usually flooded with farmers bringing their pumpsets for changing the coil due to water seepage. But once if they get to know about fixing their pumpsets on a movable floating platform inside wells this small but significant problem can be solved,” says Mr. M. Parthasarathy, from Polyene Film Industries group in Chennai.

### **Innovator award**

The innovative floating platform for surface mounted electrical pump sets developed by the company won the L-RAMP 2007 awards under the Grassroots Innovator category.

“It is a holistic solution to several compartmentalized problems like periodic shifting of pumps with seasonal change,” says Mr. Parthasarathy.

Usually farmers have to keep changing the height of the pumpsets inside the wells. During summer when the water table goes down the farmer needs to shift the pump deep into the well near the water surface.

Similarly when the water level rises, the farmer has to move the pump to a higher level.

“What we have done is to fix a galvanized cage on two floats with a platform in the middle on which the pump set and the self priming chamber are mounted.

“By doing so, the energy efficiency is greatly enhanced due to absence of a long suction pipe and foot valve saving 30 per cent of energy. No need to relocate the pump or worry during the rainy season as the float automatically adjusts its level with the water level, explains Mr. Parthasarathy.

### **Big change**

This innovative floating pump is bound to benefit the farmer in an extraordinary manner bringing about a big change in the small irrigation sector.

This invention is targeted mainly towards the agricultural sector where it can be seen as a panacea for the problems faced by the poor farmer on a day to day basis in the maintenance and running of the conventional pump sets.

The basis of this invention is targeted towards enhancing the wire to water efficiency of existing open well pump sets which are running in the field.

“The severe changes in the water table in open wells often necessitates establishment of pump mounting platforms at more than one level in the wells. The plumbing and reconnection at each shift in location is both expensive and time consuming,” he adds.

Often any delay in upward shifting especially during monsoon season when water levels rise unexpectedly and alarmingly may result in motor getting submerged in water.

### **Dry running**

Majority of the pumpsets require priming and this becomes increasingly difficult in the case of surface mounted pumpsets where the suction pipe length is several metres long. Motor overloads resulting in burnouts due to the dry running of pumps are very common.

Every surface mounted agricultural pumpset is provided with a shed to protect the switchgear and pumpset from rain.

The floats are specially shaped and high molecular density polyethylene blow moulded with a mild steel cage holding the two floats and the pump set is mounted on this cage between the floats and the self priming chamber is also supported on the mild steel cage.

The entire floating pump set assembly is tied to a polypropylene rope and the top end of the rope is tied to an A-frame (galvanized mild steel founded in concrete at the edge of the open well). The 4-core electric cable for the motor is also intertwined with the rope for proper earthing.

### **Constant buoyancy**

A dancing pulley with a counterweight helps to keep the floating pump from tilting and also ensures constant buoyancy. The floating pump assembly rises and lowers with the changes in water level in the well.

The suction is a rigid PVC bend attached to the self priming chamber and the other end dips into water with a blow moulded filter basket. No foot valve is required.

### **Protection from rain**

The delivery pipe is a flexible single length HDPE pipe and water discharges at ground level. The motor is protected from rain by a plastic cowl. By shifting the existing surface mounted pump, the discharge becomes double as assessed by the Centre for Water Resources of Anna University.

Farmers can avail a subsidy of Rs.13,500 for each installation from NABARD for very limited numbers on a seeding programme.

For more details contact Mr. M. Parthasarathy at Polyene group,A-11&A-12, TVK Industrial estate, Guindy, Chennai: 600 032, email: polyenefilmindustries@gmail.com, phone: 044-22500306, Fax: 044-22500470..

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### **Management of mosquito bugs in tea**

Two species of tea mosquito bugs: *Helopeltis thievora* and *Helopeltis antonii* are the most important sucking pests of tea.

The nymphs and adults of these insects suck sap from terminal twigs, buds and leaves by piercing the plant tissues with their mouth stylets besides injecting toxic substances present in their saliva.

As a result of this injury, the leaves become curled up and deformed. The feeding punctures on leaves appear as reddish brown spots.

The attacked shoots may present dieback symptoms. Eventually the terminals of tea bushes will dry up leading to total loss of the crop. The process of egg laying also causes damages to the tender tissues.

### **Bio-ecology**



Adult bugs appear black in color with red thorax and greenish brown wings. They look like any other mosquito species and hence the name mosquito bug.

A characteristic knob is present on the scutellum. These bugs are active early in the morning and late in the evening.

Each female bug can insert as many as 500 eggs in plant tissues. The eggs hatch in about a week's period by releasing the nymphs. After passing through five moltings they turn into adults in a fortnight's period. The entire life cycle is completed in about a month.

In a year there may be several generations. Adults hibernate during winter. These insects are active from January to September. Their damage is predominant in moist and shaded areas especially after monsoon showers.

### **Management methods**

Monitor the pest in the field at regular interval. Collect the nymphs and adults by using hand nets at twilight hours.

Remove the tea bushes which provide moist and warm atmosphere. Grow resistant tea genotypes viz. TV6 and TV18.

Cultivate Annatto (*Bixa orellana*) as trap crop on the contours of the plantation.

Certain parasitoids exert biological control of these insects in nature. Spray chlorpyrifos 20EC or malathion 50EC or Indane20EC or phosalone35EC @2ml/lit of water.

Application of the mixture of quinalphos+dichlorvos may also be resorted to at spray intervals depending on the intensity of incidence.

Spraying of insecticides should be started from the periphery of the infested plantations to trap the migratory and escaping population.

**J. Jayaraj & S. Manisegaran**

*Agricultural College and Research Institute Madurai*

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### **J. Thomas Rubber Production Commissioner**

J. Thomas took charge as the Rubber Production Commissioner in the Rubber Board on Wednesday.

According to a release, Dr. Thomas will be heading the Department of Rubber Production which is responsible for planning, formulation, and implementation of schemes for improving and expansion of rubber cultivation and production in the country.

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### **Irradiation makes cow dung bio-fertilizer safer**



Cow dung compost is easy to process.

Do you know that the humble cow dung can be used in a high technology agricultural practice? Researchers from the Department of Agricultural Chemistry and Soil Science, Bidhan Chandra

Krishi Viswavidyala and MSV Laboratories Private Ltd demonstrated the potential use of irradiated cow dung as a carrier of bio-fertilizers.

On July 9, this year the Board of Radiation and Isotope Technology (BRIT), Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MSV Laboratories Private Limited for setting up a radiation processing plant at Midnapur, West Bengal. The plant will process 60,000 Te of cow dung compost annually for use as a carrier of bio-fertilizers.

BRIT will offer technical guidance including dosimetry to the company and the company will bear the entire capital investment.

### **Mobilising nutrients**

According to the International Crop Research Institute for Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), "bio-fertilizers are ready to use formulates of such beneficial microorganisms which on application to seed, root or soil mobilize the availability of nutrients by their biological activity in particular, and help build up the micro-flora and in turn the soil health in general".

ICRISAT lists the following: for fixing nitrogen, Rhizobium for legume crops and Azotobacter /Azospirillum for non legume crops; Acetobacter for sugarcane only; Blue-green algae and Azolla for low land paddy; for phosphorus mobilization, phosphatika is to be applied with Rhizobium, Azotobacter, Azospirillum and acetobacter; for enriched compost, Cellulolytic fungal culture or Phosphotica and Azotobacter culture.

Researchers prepare bio-fertilizers as carrier-based inoculants containing effective microorganisms. This enables easy-handling, long-term storage and high effectiveness of bio-fertilizers. According to the FENCA's *Bio-fertilizer Manual*, a good carrier must be nontoxic; it should have good capacity to absorb moisture; it should be easy to process and should be free of lump forming materials.

### **The requirements**

Good carrier material must be easily available in adequate quantities; it should be inexpensive and should have good adhesion to the seeds.

The carrier should be easy to be sterilized either by autoclaving or by gamma irradiation.

Charcoal, lignite and peat are costly and are not readily available in the market; so the scientists from the Department of Agricultural Chemistry and Soil Science, Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyala and MSV Laboratories Private Ltd chose low cost cow dung compost (CDC) as a satisfactory carrier material (*Journal of Interacademecia*, Jan- Mar. 2011).

CDC is non toxic to the desired strains of the inoculants. It has good moisture absorption capacity and is easy to process. The authors found gamma sterilization is effective and less time consuming than autoclaving.

Normally, most carrier materials are contaminated with other bacteria. Sterilization offers nutrient and place to the inoculant bacteria against the occupation by the contaminated and/or native bacteria. This is important to keep the number of inoculant bacteria on carrier during the storage period before use.

Unsterilized carrier material will cause undesirable dispersion of pathogenic bacteria into agricultural fields.

Scientists exposed the samples of raw material in low density, 65 to 70 micron thick polyethylene bags to various doses of gamma radiation

They found that CDC, irradiated with a gamma dose of 50kGy, can be used as a carrier for bio-fertilizers (Gy is a unit of radiation dose. When the dose is one Gy the radiation energy absorbed per kilogramme of material is one joule; since during radiation sterilizing we use large doses of radiation, multiples of Gy such as kiloGy or 1000 Gy are used).

### **High initial cost**

The initial cost of gamma irradiation installation will be high, at Rs.50 million compared to autoclave (Rs.20 million).

A ton of irradiated cow dung compost carrier will cost only Rs.2583 as against Rs.20,370 for a ton of sterilized charcoal. The major reason for this is the cost of charcoal (Rs.20,000) compared to cow dung (Rs.2, 250)

A major difficulty with the project may be the collection of enough “raw material”. MSV Laboratories Private Limited may have to set up a chain of cow dung collection centres to keep the programme running.

*Raja Ramanna Fellow, Department of Atomic Energy (ksparth@yahoo.co.uk)*

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### **Demand to ban hormone treatment of mango trees**

The Haritha Development Association, an environmental organisation, has urged the government to ban the use of hormone spray in the mango trees of Muthalamada, known as the Mango City of the State for its commercial production and export of the fruits.

Association president Arumughan Pathichira in a statement has said that chemicals are sprayed in the mango trees for artificial flowering which is harmful to the trees and the fruits. Spraying of the hormone in the mango orchards will also affect the flowering cycle of other plants and trees in the area, he said.

The hormone is sprayed from July to August in Muthalamada. The chemical will affect the health of the mango tree and reduce its life span by ten years. But the manufacturers claim that its use will lead to earlier flowering and an increase in the number panicles.

The climate of Muthalamda is highly favourable for mango cultivation. Since the trees flower early here there is no need for artificial methods like hormone treatment. The unnecessary use of chemicals is an attempt to destroy the natural advantages of the area. The pesticide and hormone manufacturing companies are luring the farmers promising more yield and income, Mr. Arumughan alleges.

Once the chemical is used, the trees cannot flower without it. So every year the hormone treatment has to be done for getting yield. In Muthalamada the mango orchards are taken on contract by merchants and exporters from outside. The hormone treatment is done by the contractors to get maximum yield at a short time. The farmers are not fully aware of its harmful effects, he says.

Mango is cultivated in nearly 4,000 hectares by 2,500 farmers in Muthalamada and the annual production comes to 35,000 tonnes of high quality varieties including Alphonso, Malgova, Sindhooram, Kalapadi, and Banganapilly.

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### **“Scrap tax on edible oil”**

Pre-budget memorandum submitted to Finance Minister

: Trade bodies in the region have called upon the State Government to scrap the 5 per cent tax levied on edible oil.

The State government on July 11 decided to reduce the exemption of the turnover limit for edible oils from Rs 500 crore to Rs 5 crore citing the need to mobilise additional resources to adhere to the fiscal norms and tackle the huge debt of over Rs.1 lakh crore left by the earlier government.

Office-bearers of various trade bodies took part in the pre-Budget meeting presided over by Finance Minister O. Pannerselvam and Commercial Taxes Minister Agri S.S. Krishnamoorthy in Chennai on Monday.

The Tamil Nadu Chamber of Commerce and Industry has requested the Chief Minister Jayalalithaa to withdraw this levy as it would only result in price escalation and tax evasion.

Already reeling from increases in prices of fuel and LPG cylinders, the public would not be able to withstand the steep hike in prices of commodities that would come from increases in tax rates.

A chamber delegation led by president N. Jegatheesan and senior president S. Rethinavelu attended the meeting and put forth their views.

Wheat, which was next only to rice in its use by the people of Tamil Nadu, should be exempted from tax and the tax rates on wheat products should be reduced from 5 to 2 per cent.

Commodities not specified in any of the schedules of Tamil Nadu value added tax (VAT) Act be taxed only at 5 per cent instead of 14.5 per cent.

The chamber also demanded that rate of tax on iron grills be reduced from 14.5 per cent to 5 per cent to provide relief to the production units. Dealers and small manufacturers with annual turnovers less than Rs.10 lakh and Rs.5 lakh respectively should be allowed to collect and remit tax at VAT rates. The dealers should be allowed to raise bills' invoices 'inclusive of tax.' The chamber also called for banning online trading of essential food commodities to contain their prices. A subsidy of Rs.5 a unit should be granted to small and medium industries using diesel generators.

### **Food grain merchants**

The Tamil Nadu Foodgrains Merchants Association has urged the State Government to review the tax exemption limit on edible oil. This reduction to Rs. 5 crore from Rs. 500 crore had affected small manufacturers heavily.

A delegation from the association led by president S.P. Jeyapragasam attended the meeting. The association called for the revival of Samadhan Scheme, a One Time Settlement scheme introduced by Ms. Jayalalithaa during her earlier tenure for expeditious resolution of TNGST cases.

Mr. Jeyapragasam also called for the establishment of a monitoring committee comprising of traders to act as a bridge between the business community and the Government. The association expressed happiness over the State Government's decision to increase 20 per cent revenues through VAT collection during the first quarter of this fiscal.

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August 4, 2011

### **Seed farm aims at introducing dry sowing methodology in Pudukottai**

Taking into consideration the serious depletion in ground water table



sowing idea: State Agriculture Commissioner Sandeep Saxena, left, inspecting a black gram field in Pudukottai recently.

A plan to develop the Anna state seed farm at Kudumiyanmalai has been prepared, taking into consideration the serious depletion in ground water table and focussing on maximum utilisation of ground water.

The plan, among other things, aims to introduce dry sowing methodology among the farmers; more area will be brought under red gram, pulses and maize crops, switching over the conventional cropping pattern wherever possible, said T. Thangavelu, Joint Director of Agriculture.

Mr. Thangavelu explained the importance of the plan to Sandeep Saxena, Agriculture Commissioner who inspected the farm. Mr. Saxena assured of all possible assistance for implementing the new plan.

Earlier, Mr. Saxena inspected the new cultivation techniques being adopted at the farm including polythene mulch groundnut cultivation; transplanting of red gram nurseries raised in polythene envelopes; cultivation in rows of black gram.

Mr. Thangavelu informed that the polythene technique reduced the duration of red gram to four-and-a-half months from its usual six month duration.

He also said that the Agriculture Department had simplified the procedure for the census of small and medium farmers. Four centres Pudukottai, Tirumayam, Viralimalai and Aranthangi had been notified where the farmers gathered and furnished the data needed for the census. The details of about 1.24 lakh farmers should be collected this year. The census officials at each centre were responsible for four blocks in the district.



Earlier, Mr. Saxena visited the State Agriculture Officials Training Centre at Kudumiyanmalai and inspected the micro nutrient mixture production centre; bio-fertiliser production centre and soil testing laboratory.

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### **NFSM consultant briefed on agriculture practices**



Ground study: Shamsher Singh, consultant, National Food Security Mission, inspecting a farm where sprinkler irrigation system was installed for raising pulses at Natarajapuram near Tiruchi on Wednesday.

The National Consultant for National Food Security Mission of the Union Agriculture Ministry, Shamsher Singh, on Wednesday reviewed the mission programme in the district.

Mr.Singh held discussions with the Agriculture Department officials on promotion of pulses cultivation in the district under the programme.

### **Area covered**

J.Sekar, Joint Director of Agriculture, Tiruchi, and other officials briefed Mr.Singh on the different variety of pulses being raised in the district and the productivity trend over the past five years. Mr.Singh was also briefed on the area of coverage achieved during the current year and the technologies promoted among farmers for improving productivity.

He had a first-hand account from a few farmers when he visited Kovalakudi and Natarajapuram villages in Tiruverambur block. He inspected a field where subsidy had been given under the NFSM scheme for laying pipelines to carry water from a well.

The beneficiary Poongavanam and farmers of the area told him that more area could be covered by adopting a similar approach and sought more subsidy for similar projects.

Mr.Singh also inspected a sprinkler irrigation system installed in the field of Senthil Kumar at Natarajapuram.

The farmer had installed the sprinkler system for raising pulses utilising the subsidy granted under the scheme.

Mr.Singh offered a few tips to the farmers on improving productivity by adopting better farm practices such as seed treatment, timely sowing, timely irrigation and DAP foliar application at the proper time. Farmers also represented to Mr.Singh seeking sanction of more such irrigations systems in the village.

Mr.Sekar, R.Chandra Sekaran, Deputy Director of Agriculture (Central Scheme), Ravi, Assistant Director of Agriculture, and other officials accompanied Mr.Singh on his visit.

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### **Top Agriculture official held on bribery charge**

Deputy Director of Agriculture (Agri Business), Tiruchi, J. Udaykumar, was arrested here on Tuesday night by the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti Corruption (DVAC) on bribery charge.

Mr. Udayakumar, 53, who is also Secretary-cum-Special Officer (in-charge) of the Tiruchi Market Committee, was produced before the Chief Judicial Magistrate, who remanded him in judicial custody.

He has been lodged in the Central Prison.

I. Periyasamy had served as a superintendent in the Tiruchi regulated committee and retired in June 2007. After his retirement, an order was issued moving him to selection grade. He was entitled to get gratuity arrears and Rs.41,000 by way of earned leave surrender.

When he approached Mr. Udaykumar on August 2 for early payment of arrears, the latter demanded Rs.4,000 as bribe. Mr. Periyasamy lodged a complaint with the DVAC, Tiruchi unit, which laid a trap.

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### **NABARD to set up 20 farmers' clubs**

Aims at 4 per cent agriculture growth

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has come out with an action plan to ensure sustained agriculture growth of 4 per cent and improve rural credit flow in the district by forming 20 farmers' clubs during the current financial year.

Each of the club will have a minimum of 10 members.

“Our main objective of adding 20 more clubs in a single fiscal to the existing strength of 39 clubs is to provide a package for effective transfer of technology from laboratories to the fields to a larger section of farming community as the emerging needs in agriculture sector now are the adoption of location specific skill and knowledge,” NABARD Assistant General Manager V.S. Sriram told *The Hindu* .

The club members will be oriented on adoption of latest post-harvest handling techniques and methods to improve efficiency in the usage of inputs.

Each of the new clubs will be extended financial assistance by NABARD at the rate of Rs. 10,000 per annum for a period of three years to cover the maintenance and training expenses.

The villagers at large will benefit by the periodic training imparted to the club members as they, in turn, would disseminate the skills to the fellow farmers in the vicinity as well as take up activities to strengthen agriculture extension services.

The NABARD officials pointed out that formation of more and more such clubs would be a boon to the banks since the credit linking of clubs with the banks in the area would increase.

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### **Land not suitable for agricultural purposes: district panchayat**

Ernakulam District Panchayat has pointed out that the land identified by the Greater Cochin Development Authority (GCDA) at Mundamveli in place of the nearly 25 acres at Vyttila, which was handed over to the authority for the bus terminal project, is not suitable for agricultural purposes. A release issued by the panchayat said that the GCDA had agreed to provide suitable land to the Agricultural Department that was operating a coconut nursery at the site before the setting up of the bus terminal.

### **Sub-committee**

A sub-committee appointed by the Ernakulam District Panchayat, which visited Mundamveli on Wednesday, observed that the area was waterlogged and hence not ideal for carrying out various agricultural activities.

B. A. Abdul Muthalib, chairman of the sub-committee, said that the Ernakulam District Panchayat will seek the intervention of the Chief Minister Oommen Chandy in its efforts to get a suitable land for the Agricultural Department.

### **Coconut nursery**

He said that the coconut nursery is now temporarily functioning at a site near the Agricultural Urban Wholesale Market at Maradu.

The farmers here need a land that will help them carry out various agricultural initiatives without any hiccups, he said.

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## **Organic farming of spices to be promoted**

With lifestyle diseases posing a threat to the health of large sections of people, the need for taking up organic cultivation has assumed much significance. Various organisations are slowly moving in the direction of spreading awareness on the organic mode of farming.

The Spices Board India is keen on inducting various practices for implementing its plan to bring more areas under organic cultivation. Organic spice cultivation will find a priority in the 12 {+t} {+h} Plan programme to be submitted to the Government of India, according to the Chairman of the Spices Board, A. Jayathilak.

The Board will establish an organic input and output testing laboratory at the Indian Cardamom Research Institute in Myladumpara in Idukki district during the first year of the 12 {+t} {+h} Plan, commencing next year. The plan envisages the formation of spices producers companies besides setting up of a research-cum-demonstration plot for organic farming in cardamom.

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## **Rajasthan offers 6,000-crore crop loan**

Three per cent subsidy on interest

The Rajasthan Government has set the target for disbursement of crop loans worth Rs. 6,000 crore to farmers during 2011-12. It decided to provide a subsidy of Rs.72 crore to cooperative banks which would select the beneficiaries and pay out the loans.

Farmers who repay loans on time would get a three per cent rebate in interest.

According to an official release here, an additional subsidy of two per cent of the interest would be paid to farmers belonging to Scheduled Tribes.

The State Government will also make available Rs.15 crore as share capital for below poverty line farmers in the Tribal Sub-Plan areas.

The credit limit for each beneficiary has been revised from Rs.60,000 to Rs.1 lakh and the procedure for disbursement of loans through cooperative banks and institutions has been simplified. The simplified procedure will eliminate middlemen in sanctioning and release of crop loans, the release added.

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## Weather

Chennai - INDIA

### Today's Weather



Cloudy

#### Thursday, Aug 4

Max Min  
33.7° | 26.8°

Rain: TRACE

Humidity: 49%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 5:54

Sunset: 18:35

Barometer: 1002

### Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

#### Friday, Aug 5

Max Min  
36° | 28°

### Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday

Aug 6



33° | 26°

Rainy

Sunday

Aug 7



34° | 27°

Rainy

Monday

Aug 8



34° | 27°

Rainy

Tuesday

Aug 9



33° | 27°

Rainy

Wednesday

Aug 10



33° | 27°

Rainy

4 Aug, 2011, 05.53AM IST, Man Mohan Rai,ET Bureau

## **Buy sugar at market rate for ration supply:ISMA**

LUCKNOW: Efforts to decontrol the tightly-regulated sugar sector have gathered pace with the union finance ministry seeking the views of the food ministry on the matter. Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA), the sugar industry body, wrote to Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee last week seeking to do away with the supply of levy sugar for public distribution and monthly release quota which burden the industry.

The Finance ministry, according to sources, has sought the food ministry's view on the matter and the sector is hopeful that the regulations would soon be undone.

ISMA had earlier sought total decontrol but now thinks such a measure would still be some time away because of the regulatory overlap between the union and state governments.

Its director general Abinash Verma said, "Total decontrol would be contentious as state governments want to retain their say in fixing cane price and reservation of cane area. We have instead suggested to the union government to abolish the obligation for mills to supply 10% of their total sugar production as levy to the central government at discounted rates for PDS.

About 27 lakh tonne of sugar is needed by the central government for supplying to PDS which can be purchased by the government from the open market at prevalent prices much the way it does for wheat and paddy. We have also asked that the monthly release quota for sale of sugar in the open market to be abolished. These two subjects fall in the domain of the central government and if done would provide reprieve to the sector."

He said the forum would later try and build a consensus among state governments regarding the fixing of cane price and cane area reservations, which being sensitive issues would take much persuasion and some time.

According to ISMA, decontrol would ultimately work well for consumers, farmers as well as the sugar industry. "We would be able to pay better prices to farmers. With free supply in the open market, the violent fluctuation of sugar price year after year would stabilise at moderate levels helping the consumer," he said.

The demand for decontrol of the sugar sector, which is among the most regulated industries, has been raised in the past as well but the measure failed to take off because some policy issues fall into the domain of the union government and others are in state governments' purview. Right from the price and purchase of sugar cane to the sale of sugar and its quantity, every step in sugar production is regulated by state and union governments.

Such state governments as Uttar Pradesh fix a cane price which is much higher than the centre's mandated price.

The industry says this is the best time for initiating decontrol because the current year has had a surplus production and the next season is expected to be a surplus year again. Industry estimates put production in the coming season to be at Rs 255-260 lakh tonne which would lead to 40 lakh tonne of surplus sugar after domestic consumption.

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4 Aug, 2011, 01.25AM IST, Jayashree Bhosale,ET Bureau

### **Cotton's loss is Soyabean's gain**

PUNE: Delayed rainfall and a drop in cotton prices have ensured that cotton has not eaten into the soyabean acreage as expected before the beginning of the kharif season. In fact, the



situation has reversed in favour of the latter.

According to the statistics available with the Maharashtra agriculture department till August 1, cotton acreage has fallen short by four lakh ha than the government target while the soyabean acreage is higher by three lakh ha than the target and more by one lakh ha than the actual acreage of the previous year.

As cotton prices touched historic high levels in 2011, a record increase in cotton acreage was expected. The expectation has come true across the nation as cotton acreage has gone up by 4% according to the latest statistics available from the Ministry of Agriculture.

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4 Aug, 2011, 01.24AM IST, P K Krishnakumar,ET Bureau

### **Rubber import getting costlier due to high prices**

KOCHI: The import of natural rubber by tyre manufacturers at a lower duty allowed by the Centre now looks like a costly affair because of a rise in global rubber prices. A lean season and the absence of internal demand are keeping the domestic rubber prices low.

The industry is yet to complete the import of 40,000 tonne of natural rubber allowed by the government at 7.5% duty. "We are waiting for some clarifications and approvals before proceeding further," said Rajiv Budhreja, director general of Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association.

But international prices have risen during the two weeks from the time of announcement. The prices have shot up from around Rs 211 per kg by Rs 5 now while domestic rubber prices have fallen by Rs 7 to Rs 207 per kg. The tyre industry is likely to wait for some time after getting the licences for executing the import.

Experts say global rubber prices may show a downward trend in the short term with a weak

demand from China during the month and lower crude oil prices due to a deteriorating world economy. In fact, the industry had argued for the import of 1 lakh tonne without duty.

"If that was the case, the industry would have gone ahead with the import now. But now even with a reduced 7.5% duty, it doesn't look feasible. The notification was a big let-down," said Vinod Simon, president of All India Rubber Industries Association.

Meanwhile, internal demand for rubber has taken a hit with a drop in automobile sales and an increase in interest rates. "The offtake has gone down as the demand from over 1,000 factories has thinned," said N Radhakrishnan, former president of Cochin Rubber Merchants Association.

But this is expected to a temporary phenomenon. By September, car sales could pick up activating the demand for natural rubber. With the arrivals increasing in September, there could be pressure on the domestic prices. "But prices won't fall by a large margin as it could lead to hoarding by farmers," said George Vally, president of Rubber Dealers Association.

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## **Traders welcome Govt's VAT reprieve on branded food items**

August 03, 2011 11:23:56 PM

### **PNS | Jamshedpur**

The city based trade bodies have welcomed the State Government's decision to withdraw its decision to impose five per cent value added tax on branded packaged food items.

From announcing non-procurement of imported branded packaged food items to protest agitation on the streets, several of the trade bodies here had expressed deep disenchantment

with the Government on the VAT issue.

As a mark of protest, the Jamshedpur Chamber of Commerce and Industries had even announced that it will not procure branded packaged food items from other states to protest the imposition of VAT.

The Jharkhand Cabinet has agreed to make branded food products free from value added tax (VAT). However, branded food products of the companies who have an annual turnover of over `75 crore will not get benefit.

“We welcome the Government’s move to withdraw its decision to impose the VAT (on branded food items). When already GST (Goods and Service Tax) regime is likely to come into existence in the country from the next financial year there was no need for VAT,” said Mohanlal Agrawal, president, Jamshedpur Chamber of Commerce.

Beily Bodhanwala, president, Singhbhum Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) said that the Government has respected their demands and it will help to boost confidence of the traders.

“About 95 per cent of the food items consumed in the State are branded and imported from other States so, the VAT regime would have given unchecked power to the tax men who could have misused their chair on every petty issue concerning VAT,” said Suresh Sonthalia, general secretary, Singhbhum Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

He said that the decision of the Government is a welcome move and is well appreciated by the trading fraternity.

SCCI, a leading trade body of Singhbhum-Kolhan region has also threatened to intensify their agitation if their demands were not met. The Jamshedpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry, (JCCI) on the other hand, had announced it will not procure branded packaged food items from

other States in protest against the imposition of VAT.

“We know the consumers would suffer in the long run but we had no option left to make the Government realise its mistake,” said Bharat Vasani, a functionary of SCCI.

According to the traders, State doesn't produce enough edible items to match consumers demand in the market so they are forced to import it from outside the State. Instead of exploring and promoting ways and means to make the State self-sufficient in edible items the Government had come with VAT on branded packaged food items, which was irrational,” said Agarwal.

He also said that it is the consumers who are reeling under sky rocketing price rise of food articles at present, have suffered in the VAT regime.

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### **Govt plans markets, schemes for farmers**

August 03, 2011 11:26:11 PM

### **PNS | Dehradun**

The State Government will take measures like opening Government markets for the benefit of farmers, encouraging use of improved seeds and rearing of Lal Singhi cows in addition to which villages implementing voluntary land consolidation will be provided different facilities.

The Government will provide these facilities with the assistance of Himotthan Project being implemented in Uttarakhand by the Sir Ratan Tata Trust. This project is facilitating works based on water, sanitation, agriculture, animal husbandry and community participation in forest areas.

The working plan for 2011-12 was approved during a meet of the State level steering committee presided over by the State Chief Secretary Subhash Kumar on Wednesday.

The Chief Secretary said that farmers should receive adequate benefit of their produce for which they should be able to sell without middlemen. The Government is planning to open Government markets and mandis to facilitate this. Improved seeds of high yielding crops will be encouraged instead of traditional seeds.

Kumar said that work is being undertaken for artificial insemination of Lal Singhi cows due to the consistently decreasing numbers of this cow variety. Referring to the Agriculture policy, Kumar said that under this provisions have been made to provide different facilities in villages which adopt voluntary land consolidation. The State Government will receive assistance in undertaking these tasks under the Himotthan project being undertaken by the Sir Ratan Tata Trust. Various works are already being executed under the project, he said.

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## Business Standard

Thursday, Aug 04, 2011

### **Govt bats for organic spices to stop use of illegal crop protection products**

**Dilip Kumar Jha / Mumbai August 04, 2011, 0:42 IST**

Faced with extensive use of illegal crop protection products resulting in losses worth crores of rupees, the Spices Board has decided to lay emphasis on organic crop production in the coming years. The board, under the commerce ministry, plans to incentivise farmers and encourage them to increase sowing area under organic spices.

Farmers producing organic crops use no fertiliser and other crop protection products. Hence, the commodity grown organically leaves no residue of these products, thereby fetching a premium over conventional products. The Rs 300-crore organic farming sector is growing rapidly in India.

According to the recent survey by Belgium-based independent consultancy firm CropLife International, 25-40 per cent of illegal crop protection products, like insecticides, herbicides and weedicides, are used on crops in India. These illegal products, worth Rs 2,000-3,000 crore, are produced by unregistered producers, mainly in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra;

and are rapidly spreading in other states too. The consultancy estimated crop damages to the tune of several times the value of illegal pesticides, said D'Arcy Quinn, director (anti counterfeiting), CropLife International, on his recent visit to India.

The Kochi-headquartered Spices Board planned to establish an organic input and output testing lab at the Indian Cardamom Research Institute in Myladumpara next year, said its chairman, A Jayathilak. Spice-producing companies will be formed, besides setting up of a research-cum-demonstration plot for organic farming in cardamom. Jayathilak also promised support to organic farmers in gaining experience through exposure visits to elite farms in various states.

A mix of illegal crop protection products are used by many small pesticide producers and traders. The government must address this before it is too late, says Partho S Lahiri, chairman, CropLife India, an arm of CropLife International. He says these pesticides not only cause crop failure but also have a long-lasting impact on domestic and international trade of agri crops.

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## THE HINDU Business Line

### Rapeseed oil slides on bearish reports



Mumbai, Aug. 3:

Higher demand for festivals starting next week and strong foreign markets lifted prices of most edible oils on Wednesday.

Groundnut and sunflower oils rose by Rs 5 each, palmolein improved by Rs 3, soya oil was up Re 1 and cotton refined oil gained Rs 2 for 10 kg. However, bearish reports from producing centres pulled down rapeseed oil by Rs 4 for 10 kg.

Local demand remains need-based even as the domestic futures market has improved, traders said.

The mood in the spot market was cautious as retail demand is lower than expected. Most players are, however, confident that demand will rise as festivals begin the second half of August. Resellers traded 150-200 tonnes of palmolein at Rs 556-558. There was talk of an importer buying 700-800 tonnes of palmolein at Rs 557-558. Indigenous oils remained bullish on a firm trend at producing centres.

Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 562, soya oil at Rs 645 and sunflower oil Rs 700. Ruchi offered palmolein at Rs 560, soya refined oil at Rs 641 and sunflower oil at Rs 698. Allana quoted palmolein at Rs 562 for delivery during the next fortnight. While a *telia* tin of groundnut oil increased by Rs 15 to Rs 1,500 in Rajkot and Saurashtra, loose (10 kg) gained Rs 10 at Rs 975.

September contracts of crude palm oil on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives closed at MYR3,147 (MYR3,121), October MYR3,136 (MYR3,113) and November at MYR3,131 (MYR3,109) a tonne. August contract of soya oil on National Board of Trade futures closed higher at Rs 668 (Rs 663.80) and September rose to Rs 664 (Rs 661).

**Mumbai Commodity Exchange spot prices (Rs/10 kg):** Groundnut oil 970 (965), soya refined oil 644 (643), sunflower exp. ref. 660 (655), sunflower ref. 710 (710), rapeseed ref. oil 696 (700), rapeseed expeller ref. 666 (670), cotton ref. oil 671 (669) and palmolein 559 (556).

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 4, 2011)

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**India conforming to safety measures for exporting shrimps: USFDA**

Kochi, Aug. 3:

The US Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) has said that India is implementing several of FDA's recommendations that were intended to "better assure the safety of shrimp being exported to the United States."

In a letter dated June 15, Mr William Jones, Acting Deputy Director for Office of Food Safety, Centre for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, FDA, said that in April 2010 the Agency had sent a team of aquaculture experts to assess India's overall control of veterinary drug residues in products intended for the US market.

Reports indicate that this was in response to concerns expressed by the Southern Shrimp Alliance over significant increase in shrimp shipments from an Indian exporter. The consignments were subject to two separate Import Alerts. The Southern Shrimp Alliance is a group of eight US state shrimp fishermen and processors that had successfully got anti-dumping duty implemented on Indian shrimp exports to the US.

The US Food and Drug Administration also provided additional details regarding the agency's efforts to address the continuing problem of the use of banned antibiotics in shrimp aquaculture, the report said.

### **Mandatory testing**

The Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI) said that far more substantive developments have taken place in the last one year. Now shrimps from all the registered farms in the country are mandatorily tested before they can be harvested. No exporter is permitted to buy shrimps without the mandatory pre-harvest testing.

And for the shrimp exporters, it has not been just the samples that were being tested, the whole shrimp consignment to the US has to be tested, Mr Anwar Hashim, President of SEAI, said.

The same is the case for shrimp exports to Europe as well. No exporter in the country entertains shrimps that have not obtained the pre-harvesting certificates and no port in the country will permit exports that are not certified.



The FDA letter also asserts that India has implemented several of the FDA's recommendations “including a mandatory pre-harvest sample and testing programme for unapproved residues for all shrimp exported to the US.”

As a result, the agency's sampling programme could detect nitrofurans and associated metabolites in 2.9 per cent of shrimp and shrimp products in 2010, a sharp drop from the levels of previous year.

### **Pre-harvest sample**

The FDA believed that one reason for this decline was India's adoption of pre-harvest sampling and testing programmes.

While admitting that the implementation of testing programmes are encouraging, FDA was uncertain whether it would be sufficient to meaningfully address the problem of banned and harmful antibiotics used in shrimp aquaculture.

Although it is frequently contended that increased testing is not the solution to the problem of harmful contaminants in farmed seafood, the FDA's recommendations confirm that increased testing is a vital tool in addressing the problem, the report said. Citing the case of India, where hardly any shrimp consignment to the US has generated any import alert during the first seven months of the current year, exporters said increased testing in India was providing the solution.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 4, 2011)

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### **Fair-quality sugar up on festival demand**



Mumbai, Aug. 3:

Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market witnessed a mixed trend on Wednesday. The lack of buying interest for quality sugar due to high prices led to an increase in traded volumes of fair-quality sugar.

Spot rates were down by Rs 10-20 a quintal in fair quality sugar despite good demand from sweet, confectionary and snacks makers. More mills came forward to sell sugar. Naka rates were higher by Rs 10.

Mill tender rates were steady after witnessing a sharp decline on expectation of improvement in local demand. The volume was higher than on Tuesday on increased buying by stockist-retailers at lower rates. The undertone of market was firm, said a wholesaler.

A spokesman for Bombay Sugar Merchants Association said that on Tuesday evening mills did not offer good quality sugar in tenders as rates were high. Fair-quality sugar was largely traded in market as retail shopkeepers, stockiest and bulk consumers were active buyers at lower rates. The purchases come as the festival is set to start soon.

Prices have already come down by over Rs 100 a quintal at upper level after announcement of sugar quota for August last week. Prices are likely to stabilise at current level.

From August 13, India will get into the festival season till next month and sugar demand is expected to increase during this time. Since the last two days Vashi market is witnessing good demand from sweet, confectionary and snacks makers, he said.

According to sources, on Tuesday 28-30 mills offered tenders and sold 1.75-2 lakh bags (of 100 kg each) of sugar (including one or two rakes of 27,000 bags each) in the range of Rs 2,585-2,630 (Rs 2,600-2,640) for S-grade and Rs 2,610-2,690 (Rs 2,660-2,740) for M-grade. Arrival in the market was 54-55 truckloads (100 bags each) and local dispatches were 54-55 truckloads.

**Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot prices** : S-grade Rs 2,721-2,762 (Rs 2,731-2,821) and M-grade Rs 2,761-2,931 (Rs 2,786-2,931).

**Naka delivery rates**: S-grade Rs 2,670-2,700 (Rs 2,645-2,700) and M-grade Rs 2,720-2,860 (Rs 2,700-2,875).

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 4, 2011)

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### Opening of facilitation centre in Chennai helps treble rose onion exports



A view of rose onion stocks at APMC yard in Yeshwanthpur, Bangalore .—G.R.N. Somashekhar Bangalore, Aug. 3:

Exports of Bangalore rose onion exports have increased three-fold in the last one year to touch about 22,000 tonnes.

“For the last five years, the export of onions has been growing marginally at around 5,000-7,000 tonnes. But after we opened an export facilitation centre at Chennai, exports have increased sharply,” said Mr G.K. Vasanth Kumar, Managing Director, Kappec (Karnataka State Agricultural Produce Processing and Export Corporation).

“When onion exports were banned, rose onion was spared. Promotional campaigns were undertaken by us along with the central export agencies and these have helped to increase exports substantially,” he told *Business Line*.

Exports of Bangalore rose onions are exclusively channelised through the corporation.

Karnataka is the only State in the country growing rose onion. Currently, the crop is grown about 11,000 acres mainly in Kolar, Tumkur, Hassan, Davanagere, Dharwad, and Bagalkot.

Mr Vasant Kumar said the demand for this variety of onion is low in local markets. Keeping this in mind, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (Apeda) and Kappec have been promoting the crop in Far-East (Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Brunei) and a few countries such as Bahrain and Dubai in West Asia.

According to Kappec, rose onion exports in the first-three months (April – June) of this financial year (2011-12) have already touched 8,155 tonnes valued at Rs 21.07 crore.

During the last financial year, exports stood at 22,346.49 tonnes valued at Rs 59.55 crore. In 2007-08 fiscal, exports were 7,208.42 tonnes (valued at Rs 14.75 crore). In 2008-09, exports totalled 5,879.79 tonnes (Rs 12.71 crore). In 2009-10, exports 8,318.56 tonnes (Rs 17.14 crore).

After the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority set up an agri export zone (AEZ) for rose onion in Karnataka, the State has exported onions worth over Rs 500 crore in five years.

“AEZ status has offered Kappec to mobilise resources to partner with University of Agricultural Sciences and Indian Institute of Horticultural Research in Bangalore to develop new varieties and offer seed replacement to farmers,” said Mr Umesh C Bagur, General Manager, Kappec.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 4, 2011)

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## **Rajasthan dries up as rains build over S. India**

Thiruvananthapuram, Aug. 3:

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) expects the monsoon trough to shift to normal position on Thursday amid an ongoing bout of frequent north to south oscillations.

What should presumably anchor the eastern end of the trough, at present, is a persisting upper air cyclonic circulation over north-west Bay of Bengal.

### **RAIN WAVE**

The axis of the trough on Wednesday evening had already dipped into east-central Bay, around the normal. The offshore trough along the west coast has also been persisting. This combination is sufficient to fuel a rain wave along the west coast and into east, central and adjoining peninsula for the next three days, the IMD said in its outlook.

But western disturbances over Jammu and Kashmir have exited to the east ruling out the possibility of interactive rains in combination with easterlies from the Bay of Bengal. The main casualty would be west Rajasthan, which is forecast to witness mainly dry conditions through the weekend and into early next.

## **WEATHER WARNING**

A weather warning issued by the IMD and valid for the next two days said that isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall would break out over Orissa, Konkan, Goa, coastal Karnataka, Assam, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. Isolated heavy rainfall has also been forecast over Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, east Madhya Pradesh, north coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Kerala.

Fairly widespread rain or thundershowers would occur over Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, east, central and adjoining peninsular India, the North-eastern States and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Scattered rain or thundershowers would occur over remaining parts of the country except west Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu where it may be isolated. A longer term forecast valid until Monday said that fairly widespread rainfall would occur over many parts of the country except parts of northwest and interior peninsular India where it would be isolated to scattered.

Meanwhile, the 24 hours ending Wednesday morning saw widespread rainfall being reported from the west coast, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Sikkim, coastal Andhra Pradesh, interior Karnataka and Lakshadweep.

## **OVERNIGHT RAIN**

It was fairly widespread over Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Meghalaya, east Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Mainly scattered rains were reported from Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, west Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Rayalaseema, Vidarbha and Madhya Maharashtra and isolated over rest parts of the country except west Rajasthan, the IMD said.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 4, 2011)

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## Export enquiries boost castorseed



Rajkot, Aug. 3:

Castorseed prices rose on new buying and export enquiries on Wednesday.

August contract of castorseed on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange was up Rs 58.50 to Rs 5,265 a quintal, with an open interest of 12,000 lots. September contract gained Rs 53.50 at Rs 5,330, with an open interest of 12,120 lots. Spot castor increased to Rs 5,095.30 from Rs 5,040.95 a quintal.

August contract of castor on Ahmedabad Commodity Exchange rose by Rs 60 to Rs 5,265 a quintal, with an open interest of 347 lots. September contract gained Rs 58.50 at Rs 5,335, with an open interest of 30 lots.

September contract on the Rajkot Commodity Exchange increased by Rs 80 at Rs 5,305 a quintal. It gained Rs 45 at Rs 4,972.50 a quintal in the spot market.

While the 25,000-30,000 bags that arrived in Gujarat quoted at Rs 990-1,010 for a *maund* of 20 kg, 1,400-1,500 bags that arrived in Saurashtra fetched Rs 950-996.

Traders increased positions in the futures market as demand from consuming industries rose in the physical market, market analysts said.

According to latest data from the Solvent Extractors' Association of India, sowing acreage of castorseed increased by 33 per cent to 3.72 lakh hectares as on July 28 on higher sowing in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 4, 2011)

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### Weak buying, futures drag spot chana



Indore, Aug. 3:

Subdued demand and weak futures dragged down chana prices in the spot market to Rs 2,925-2,950 a quintal, down Rs 50-75.

Chana (desi) ruled at Rs 2,900. Chana dal, following spot chana, (bold) declined by Rs 75 at Rs 3,700-3,725. Chana dal (medium) quoted at Rs 3,600-3,625 and chana dal (average) at Rs 3,475-3,500 a quintal.

Dollar chana, bullish for the past few days, ruled firm at Rs 7,600-7,800 a quintal. Arrivals of dollar chana remained weak at 1,200 bags in local *mandis*.

Masoor remained firm at Rs 2,800 and masoor (medium) at Rs 2,500 a quintal. Masoor dal gained marginally on improved demand with masoor dal (bold) selling at Rs 3,400-3,425, masoor dal (medium) at Rs 3,300-3,325 and masoor dal (average) at Rs 3,175-3,200 a quintal.

Poor demand dragged tur by Rs 25-50 with tur (Maharashtra) being quoted at Rs 2,950-2,975 and tur (Nimari) at Rs 2,300-2,500. Tur dal, however, remained steady with tur (marka) remaining stable at Rs 5,900, tur dal (full) at Rs 5,250-5,300 and tur dal (*sawa* no.) at Rs 4,300-4,350. Moong and urad remained stable on restricted queries with moong (bold) ruling at Rs 4,200-4,300 and moong (medium) at Rs 3,500-3,800. Moong dal also ruled steady with moong (marka) being quoted at at Rs 5,700-5,800 and moong dal (bold) at Rs 5,500-5,600 a quintal.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 4, 2011)

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### Rice offtake may rise in domestic market



Karnal, Aug. 3:

With trading being restricted in the rice market, prices of aromatic and non-basmati varieties were quoted with marginal variations on Wednesday.

Pusa-1121(steam) rose by Rs 15 and sold at Rs 4,940-5,190 a quintal, while Pusa-1121(sela) and Pusa-1121(raw) remained unchanged at Rs 4,000 and Rs 4,400 a quintal, respectively.

Mr Praveen Kumar, a rice miller, told *Business Line* that the demand of Broken, Permal and PR-11 varieties is rising in the domestic market. Broken and Permal may hold their position this week, while PR-11 may witness an uptrend.

Duplicate basmati decreased by Rs 10 and was quoted at Rs 3,440 a quintal. Pure basmati (raw) was ruling between Rs 5,875 and Rs 5,900 a quintal, while basmati (sela) quoted was at Rs 4,000 a quintal.

For the broken of Pusa 1121, Tibar sold at Rs 3,100-3,325, Dubar ruled at Rs 2,655 and Mongra was trading at Rs 1,900-2,145 a quintal.

Low buying pulled Sharbati (steam) down by Rs 25 and ruled around Rs 2,875 while the Sharbati (sela) was at Rs 2,740 a quintal.



Among the brokens of Sharbati variety, Tibar quoted at Rs 2,350-2,500, Dubar sold at Rs 2,100-2,250 while Mongra was trading at Rs 1,730-1,750 a quintal.

Permal varieties continued to rule firm, Permal (sela) quoted at Rs 1,700-1,840 a quintal while Permal (raw) sold at Rs 1,900-2,015 a quintal.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 4, 2011)

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### **Coonoor tea sale offerings at 6-week low**

Coonoor, Aug. 3:

An analysis of brokers' listing indicate that 16.30-lakh kg is being offered for sale no: 31 of the auctions of Coonoor Tea Trade Association to be held on Thursday and Friday. This is the lowest volume of the last six weeks. It is 1.30 lakh kg less than last week's offer, and 50,000 kg more than the offer this time last year.

Of the 16.30 lakh kg on offer, 11.18 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 5.12 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades. As much as 15.14 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 1.16 lakh kg the orthodox variety. The proportion of orthodox teas continues to be low in both the leaf and dust grades. In the leaf counter, only 0.58 lakh kg belongs to orthodox, while 10.60 lakh kg, CTC. Among the dusts, only 0.58 lakh kg belongs to orthodox, while 4.54 lakh kg, CTC.

In the 16.30 lakh kg, fresh teas account for as much as 14.15 lakh kg. About 2.15 lakh kg comprises teas which remained unsold in previous auctions. This week, quotations held by brokers indicated bids ranging Rs 36-40 a kg for plain leaf grades and Rs 80-125 for brighter liquoring sorts. They ranged Rs 40-45 for plain dusts and Rs 85-133 for brighter liquoring dusts.

### **CTC market**

Homedale Estate teas, auctioned by Global Tea Brokers, topped the CTC market when Limtex India Ltd bought it for Rs 151 a kg. Vigneshwar Estate got Rs 138, Shanthi Supreme Rs 134, Darmona Estate, Blue Monte Speciality and Hittakkal Estate Rs 130, each. In all, 67 marks got Rs 100 and more. On the export front, Pakistan bought in wide range at Rs 35-75 a kg, the CIS Rs 41-71 and European markets Rs 43-62.

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### **Spot rubber recovers a tad**

Kottayam, Aug. 3:

Spot rubber recovered partially on Wednesday. Prices moved up mainly on covering purchases, following sharp gains on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE). Volumes were comparatively better. Sheet rubber improved to Rs 209 (207) a kg according to traders. The grade closed at Rs 208 (207) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, as reported by the Rubber Board.

RSS 4 flared up at its August series to Rs 211.75 (207.53), September to Rs 211.30 (207.07), October to Rs 211 (206.79), November to Rs 212.10 (208), December to Rs 215 (209.99) and January to Rs 217.50 (211.50) a kg on the NMCE.

RSS 3 (spot) inched up to Rs 216.83 (216.03) a kg at Bangkok. Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 209 (207); RSS-5: 206 (204); ungraded: 199 (198); ISNR 20: 207 (206) and latex 60 per cent: 133.50 (133.50).

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