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TNAU welcomes award for best use of SRI technology

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) has welcomed the award announced by the State Government for a farmer who achieves maximum paddy yield by adopting the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) technology. The award carries a purse of Rs. 5 lakh and a medal worth Rs. 3,500.

Vice-Chancellor P. Murugesu Boopathy has expressed happiness and said he believed that the award would motivate large number of farmers in the State to adopt SRI technology to increase yield and also farm income.

Of the 20 lakh hectares under paddy in the State, if SRI technology was adopted in 12 lakh hectares, the targeted food grain production of 115 lakh tonnes set by Chief Minister Jayalalitha could easily be achieved, the Vice-Chancellor added.

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Training programme on millet promotion at KVK

Staff Reporter

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)-Papparapatty, and the Department of Agriculture, Dharmapuri, had organised a five-day training programme on 'Intensive Millet Promotion for Nutrition Security' from December 19 to 23.

Focus

According to release from KVK, special focus was given for improved production technologies and seed production technologies for minor millets like sorghum, *cumbu*, *ragi*, *samai*, *thinai*, *varagu* and *panivarugu*.

Pest management

Farmers were also detailed on mechanisation in millets, soil health management, moisture conservation techniques, integrated nutrients, pest and diseases managements, scope for

organic cultivation in minor millets and value addition products for better marketing prices. Small and marginal farmers who grow millets in Nallampalli block participated in the training programme.

Dr. N. Tamilselvan, Head, KVK, inaugurated the training programme.

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'Thelur, ideal for growing eucalyptus'

Special Correspondent

Completion of works on clearing the silt in Pudhu Eri shortly



ground study:Collector Anu George inspecting the eucalyptus plantation at Thelur in Ariyalur district.

Thelur, a belt of wasteland in the district, is ideally suited for cultivating eucalyptus and farmers owning wasteland, should come forward to cultivate this crop, said Anu George, Collector.

Addressing farmers after inspecting the eucalyptus grown on a wasteland of 11.22 acres under the Agricultural Biomass Cluster Development Programme in the village recently, the collector said six farmers had developed the undulated fields and made it fit for raising eucalyptus.

The Tamil Nadu Watershed Development Agency in consultation with the Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Limited (TNPL), Karur implemented the programme. While the agency had sanctioned Rs.1.42 lakh for levelling the field, the TNPL had sanctioned subsidy-based inputs worth Rs.24,000. "The buy-back arrangement with the TNPL ensures an assured returns for the farmers," she said.

Ms. Anu George said works on clearing the silt in Pudhu Eri and construction of a weir at a total expenditure of Rs. 1.35 lakh at Vilankudi village would be completed soon.

The collector visited the coconut groves of Tamilarasan and Veeramani at J. Thathanur who had grown the trees under the coconut development project sponsored by the Coconut Board, Kochi. The farmers explained the crop protection strategy being adopted by them.

The collector distributed saplings of high-yielding mango variety to farmers of Vilankudi village under the Drought Prone Area Programme.

At Udayarpalayam, the collector inspected the check dam being constructed at an expenditure of Rs.1.24 lakh by Agricultural Engineering Department. It would be utilised for raising cashew crop.

S. Sivakumar, Joint Director of Agriculture, also project officer, District Watershed Development Agency; Manimaran, project manager of the agency; Mani, executive engineer, Agricultural Engineering Department; and Mani, Assistant Director of Horticulture, accompanied the collector.

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Wanted: ad blitzkrieg and patent for Ponni rice

Staff Reporter

Traditional Seed Centre plans awareness yatra

Tamil Nadu Government should get patent for Ponni rice and it should take steps to prevent misuse of the name Ponni for other rice varieties from neighbouring States, said the Traditional Seed Centre.

The centre passed resolutions to this effect at their meet held at Kalasapakkam near here on Sunday. Another resolution said that the forum would take up a yatra across the district to spread awareness about the value of this rice variety and issues faced by it. A resolution asked the State government to advertise about the strengths of the Ponni rice.

Presiding over a seminar on Ponni held in the morning session Ku. Venkatachalam, president, Save the Eastern Ghats Association, said "we produce number of traditional varieties of paddy but we don't get support from the market. But the Ponni rice which enjoys market acceptability is almost like a traditional variety. Speaking or writing is of no use we must act now to save it.

Farmers should form themselves into small groups and try to purchase mini farm equipments,” he said.

P.T. Rajendran, coordinator of the forum said, “Though 11 states tell they have surplus stock of rice government is preventing the export of rice. It is a blow for farming community in general. Inflow of rice varieties from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka discourages Tamil Nadu farmers in going for rice cultivation. If the governments want to alleviate the poverty of farmers, good price for agricultural produce should be ensured. Permission to export agricultural produce only can see farmers get good prices,” he said.

A. Meenakshisundaram, president of the forum, and lot other innovative farmers shared their experiences.

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'Set up procurement centres to stabilise red gram price'

Special Correspondent

Growers demand minimum support price of Rs. 5,000 a quintal

The Gulbarga district Raitha Horata Samiti has demanded that the State Government intervene in the market to stabilise the falling prices of red gram by setting up procurement centres to purchase the produce directly from farmers at all hobli centres.

President of the samiti Kedarlingaiah Hiremath told presspersons here that the State Government should fix the minimum support price of red gram at Rs. 5,000 a quintal and release adequate funds to the Red Gram Development Board immediately to enable it to set up procurement centres throughout the district.

The farmers, who had suffered heavy losses due to the steep fall in the yield due to the stunted growth of the red gram crop, were being forced to sell their crop at a low price as the middlemen dictated the prices in the wholesale market.

Mr. Hiremath said, at present, the prices of red gram in the wholesale market ranged between Rs. 3,200 and Rs. 3,600 a quintal. The worst affected were small and marginal farmers, who were in dire need of money to repay the loans they had taken for cultivating the crop. Many such farmers had already taken to distress sale to meet their financial commitments, he said.

Mr. Hiremath recalled how, last year, intervention by the State Government had stabilised the prices of red gram, which had fallen to Rs. 3,200 a quintal. After the State Government had released funds to the RGDB, the prices of red gram stabilised in the wholesale market, and its prices rose to Rs. 4,300 a quintal.

Last year, the RGDB procured only around 10,000 quintals of red gram, but that had a positive impact on the prices.

Mr. Hiremath said that Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda and Agriculture Minister Umesh V. Katti had assured a delegation of the samiti which had met them in November that the State Government would intervene in case the prices of red gram dropped in December itself. "However, the State Government has failed to stand by its promise, and it has not taken any steps yet to stabilise the red gram prices," he alleged.

Mr. Hiremath said that a board meeting has been scheduled in the city on December 27. Agriculture Commissioner Baburao Mudabi would attend the meeting.

The samiti would meet the official and present a memorandum demanding immediate intervention of the Government. The samiti would also meet the legislators of the region to pressure the Chief Minister to convene a meeting to discuss the falling prices of red gram immediately.

Setting a deadline of January 15 for the State Government to take necessary action, Mr. Hiremath warned the farmers would launch an agitation to bring pressure on the Government if it did not do the needful.

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- *Government urged to release adequate funds to the Red Gram Development Board*
 - *Board meeting scheduled in Gulbarga on December 27*
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Meeting soon to discuss issues of areca growers

Correspondent

Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda has said that steps will be chalked out to mitigate the woes of areca growers, at a meeting of cooperative leaders from Uttara Kannada district, the Cooperative Minister, the district in-charge Minister to be held in the next 10 days in Bangalore.

He was speaking to presspersons at the office of the DDPI here on Sunday.

He said that potholes on all roads in the district would be filled soon.

Discussions were on to make available the airstrip at the naval air base in Karwar for civilian use also, the Chief Minister said.

The issue of 'beta land' (minor forest) was before the Cabinet sub-committee and a concrete decision on the issue would be taken shortly, he added.

He said that a Rangamandira would be constructed in Sirsi at a cost of Rs 2.5 crore soon.

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THE ECONOMIC TIMES

26 DEC, 2011, 02.59AM IST, P K KRISHNAKUMAR, ET BUREAU

Coffee Board sticks to previous export and production data in revised estimate

KOCHI: The Coffee Board's revised estimate of export and production remains little unchanged from previous figures which have been disputed by the industry. Unprecedented exports last year had led growers and exporters to remark that Coffee Board's production figures could be off the mark.

Coffee exports for 2010-11 touched 2.94 lakh tonne, a new high, which was around 50% higher than the previous year's. Total coffee production in the country last year was at 3.02 lakh tonne. Considering that the domestic consumption is around 1.08 lakh tonne and after factoring in the carryover stock, the industry had doubts whether the supply would have been adequate to feed the exports.

Coffee Board chairman Jawaid Akthar told ET that the board considered production, export and consumption for the last ten years and found that the figures put out by the Coffee Board have been accurate. "The carryover stock at the beginning of this coffee year, which began from

October, is at 63,000 tonne. The confusion arose because the coffee crop is considered for the coffee year which is from October to September. Exports, on the other hand, are considered for the financial year," he said. Exports will include stock from 2010-11 and the two previous years.

Another factor that has boosted the export tally is that it consists of coffee imported for value addition for re-export, Akthar said.

"We feel the total production should have been near 3.30 lakh tonne compared with 3.02 lakh tonne for 2010-11," said Ramesh Rajah, president of Coffee Exporters Association of India.

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By Express News Service

26 Dec 2011 01:58:15 AM IST

Mullaiperiyar: Experts leave no stone unturned

THENI: The members of the Supreme Court-appointed Empowered Committee's panel inspected the Vaigai Dam and an electricity sub-station at the Lower Camp here on Sunday. Led by former Chief Justice of India A S Anand, the panel members — Justices A R Lakshmanan and K T Thomas, C D Thattu and K K Mehta — have been on a visit to the Mullaiperiyar dam and adjoining areas to file a report before the Supreme Court on how to resolve the dispute between Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

The Committee has been collecting details about the stability of the dam from December 21. On December 23 and 24, the expert committee visited Idukki dam, Periyar dam, baby dam and its adjoining ones. On Sunday, the members reviewed the water outlets of the Mullaiperiyar dam in TN.

Chief Engineer of Kerala Irrigation Department P Lathika, Periyar Dam Committee member James Wilson, Tamil Nadu Cauvery Technology Committee head Subramaniam, PWD Chief Engineer Rajagopal, Periyar-Vaigai Chief Engineer Sampath Kumar and others accompanied them.

The team inspected the smaller dams, Iraichal Palam and pipes for pumping out water during

emergency situations in the Kumily-Lower Camp forest area. The team members also examined Periyar Hydraulic Power Station at the Lower Camp. As the dam was constructed using the surkhi (a mixture containing burnt brick powder), the expert committee also took samples of limestone near the Lower Camp.

While inspecting the Vaigai dam, the committee opened the shutters to check their functioning and interacted with the engineers to know about the water outlets. The team also reviewed the Madurai-Sedapatti water supply system near Muthalakampatti and Peranai at Nilakottai near Dindigul.

According to the PWD officials, the team is expected to visit the Vaigai river's water storage spots, including Kallandhiri and Melur in Madurai, on Monday.

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Business Standard

Monday, Dec 26, 2011

Sugar stocks dip on buzz delay in export approval

SI Reporter / Mumbai December 26, 2011, 10:15 IST

Sugar stocks are under pressure on the bourses on reports that the announcement of poll schedule in Uttar Pradesh and four other states may delay Government's approval for further sugar exports.

The model code of conduct came into effect on Saturday, after the Election Commissioner announced election schedule.

"The sugar industry has been demanding that the Government allow further exports to help millers take advantage of the global prices, which are now on a downward trend. This would have helped them their cash flows as cane crushing picks up," the report suggests.

Among the individual stocks, Balrampur Chini Mills is down 4% to Rs 36.80, Shree Renuka

Sugars by 3% at Rs 25.30, Bajaj Hindustan by 1.3% at Rs 25.70 on the Bombay Stock Exchange.

THE HINDU Business Line

Guar price rise: Probe panels report soon

Latha Venkatraman

Mumbai, Dec. 25:

The continuous surge in guarseed prices with the futures contract hitting upper circuit has raised alarm bells about excessive speculation and a handful of players cornering the product.

But Forward Markets Commission Chairman, Mr Ramesh Abhishek, said there was no major concentration of buyers and sellers but fundamentals are in favour of a price rise.

“Fundamentally, there is very little left-over stock,” Mr Abhishek said indicating that the rise in prices is due to a strong demand for guar gum.

FMC has sent out a team to Rajasthan to investigate the reason for the sharp rise in price and if speculative activity is exceeding limits or if the buying is genuine. Commodity exchanges have also sent out their teams. The probe is a joint effort of the regulator and exchanges, he said.

The report should be out in a couple of days and appropriate action would be taken based on the teams' findings, Mr Abhishek said.

Although FMC and exchanges have used all regulatory tools such as special margins on buyers, prices of guar seed continued to move up hitting upper price limits on several trading sessions.

Mr Abhishek pointed out that export demand for guar gum this financial year is quite strong.

He was speaking on the sidelines of a function to launch ComFin, a platform for seamless financing of commodity deliveries on Ace Derivatives and Commodity Exchange Ltd.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated December 26, 2011)

Coonor tea auction ends on buoyancy

P.S. Sundar

Coonoor, Dec. 25:

The auctions of Coonoor Tea Trade Association for 2011 have ended on buoyancy with about 84 per cent of the 13-week low volume of 12.48 lakh kg offered at the final auction No: 51 being sold at Rs 2 a kg more than the previous week.

“Orthodox leaf gained Rs 1-2 a kg. Better liquoring CTC leaf gained Rs 2-5 but browner plainers lost Rs 1-2. Primary orthodox dusts fetched Rs 2-5 more. Better medium CTC dusts gained Rs 1-2 but high-priced sorts and plainers eased up to Rs 2”, an auctioneer told *Business Line*.

Among CTC teas, Homedale Estate, auctioned by Global Tea Brokers, topped when S B Traders bought it for Rs 144 a kg. Vigneshwar Estate got Rs 140, Shanthi Supreme Rs 138, Blue Monte Speciality and Kannavarai Rs 136 each and Hittakkal Estate Rs 135.

In all, 88 marks got Rs 100 and more.

Among orthodox teas from corporate sector, Curzon got Rs 199, Chamraj Rs 175, Havukal Rs 171, Kairbetta Rs 170, Highfield Estate Rs 151 and Kodanaad Rs 150.

In all, 32 marks got Rs 100 and more.

exports

On the export front, Pakistan bought in wide range – Rs 51-77 a kg and the CIS Rs 51-64.

Quotations held by brokers indicated bids ranging Rs 43-50 a kg for plain leaf grades and Rs 80-139 for brighter liquoring sorts. They ranged Rs 47-52 for plain dusts and Rs 85-140 for brighter liquoring dusts.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated December 26, 2011)

Pepper market volatile; Idukki farmers buy cardamom on higher realisation hopes

G.K. Nair

Kochi, Dec. 25:

Pepper futures, as it appears, of late, from its activities, continued to remain in the grip of operators and has become a platform to exhibit their strength.

If the market is pushed up significantly by one group today, the next day it is pulled down by the other in the same magnitude and tempo. In fact, it has become a 'gambling den where the mightiest has the upper hand and control'. They can manipulate by securing inside information and drive it to their benefits and interest, market sources alleged. The small and medium players are finding it difficult to withstand it and consequently are opting out. In fact, the market is allegedly controlled by very few, but big operators with multi commodity operations spread all over India.

On the spot, Idukki farmers who are holding stocks were liquidating at every hike high range pepper and buying cardamom which is available cheap at present. They feel it would more beneficial to buy cardamom instead of hanging on to pepper as the former might bring in a profit of at least Rs 100 a kg while the price of pepper remains uncertain of late due to highly speculative activities, trade sources in Idukki told *Business Line*.

Also, some of the traders alleged that the increase in stock position of Jun 5 from 408 tonnes on Dec 12 to 1,046 tonnes as on Dec 19 might have resulted from some kind of manipulation such as re-validation of validity expired stocks lying in the warehouse and are shown as fresh pepper deposited. If that is the case, they urged the Regulator to look into it and initiate steps to arrest such activities reported to have happened in other commodities such as chilli and turmeric.

This kind of high fluctuation and 'tug of war' between the operators is "not healthy sign and how this kind of activities are going to help the hedgers", market sources here claimed. Such activities are taking place when the new crop arrivals are around the corner.

As the light berry prices are ruling high in Sri Lanka said to be at \$9,000-10,000 a tonne, extraction industry and green pepper in brine manufacturers in the southern districts are fishing for the material. The growers reportedly were harvesting green pepper so as to cater to the demand and that in turn is delaying the arrival of matured black pepper, the trade said.

Last week the market, consequent to the tug of war between the bull and bear operators, was highly volatile and eventually the bear operators managed to get into the driving seat and pulled it down sharply.

All contracts dropped significantly. Jan, Feb and Mar fell by Rs 2,100, Rs 2,410 and Rs 2,510 respectively to Rs 33,520, Rs 32,610 and Rs 32,045 a quintal.

Total turn over increased by 7,029 tonnes to end at 31,781 tonnes while total open interest during the week increased by 732 tonnes to close at 11,930 tonnes.

Spot prices in tandem with the futures market trend fell by Rs 1,700 during the week to close on Saturday at Rs 32,800 (ungarbled) and Rs 34,300 (MG 1) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market has dropped to \$6,800 a tonne (c&f) and even though the buyers in Europe and the US are on holidays, the trade here expects some buying to come from some pockets overseas at \$6,800-6,850 a tonne.

Overseas trend

The black pepper market was calm with limited activity last week, according to the International Pepper Community (IPC).

In India local prices of pepper increased by 2-3 per cent and fob price of Malabar black increased marginally by 1 per cent last week. In Sri Lanka price increased by 2 per cent with limited activity. In Lampung, local market was very quiet and prices were reportedly remained unchanged as last week. In Sarawak black pepper prices were stable both for local and fob price. In HCMC, Vietnam local price stood at VND 129,000 (\$6.14) a kg, with \$6,650 and \$6,950 a tonne (fob) for 500g/l and 550g/l respectively.

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UP polls may delay approval for further sugar exports

Vishwanath Kulkarni, *Likely to result in piling up of cane arrears*

New Delhi, Dec. 25:

The model code of conduct that came into effect on Saturday with the announcement of poll schedule in Uttar Pradesh and four other states may delay Government's approval for further sugar exports.

This may put the millers in a spot as cane arrears are expected to start building up from the middle of January, by which time their existing credit drawal limits would have been exhausted.

A relatively subdued trend in prices could create problem of short margins resulting from the value of sugar stocks falling from the levels at which the credit was originally extended.

It is important to maintain the positive sentiment to prevent any short margins from developing into a credit crunch just at the time of elections. UP has the largest area under sugar cane and it is the country's second largest producer of the sweetener.

Politics is very closely linked with the sugar industry in UP, where the incumbent Chief Minister, Ms Mayawati, announced a 20 per cent hike in the prices of sugarcane for the current 2011-12 season, with an eye on the forthcoming polls.

“It (the model code of conduct) is a cause of concern. We may have to make a case before the Election Commissioner seeking approval for exports,” said Mr Abinash Verma, Director-General, Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA).

The industry has been demanding that the Government allow further exports to help millers take advantage of the global prices, which are now on a downward trend. This would have helped them their cash flows as cane crushing picks up.

The ISMA President, Mr Narendra Murkumbi, at the recent annual general meeting had expressed apprehensions on the poll announcement delaying export approvals. He had urged the Government to allow further exports of the surplus sugar starting end of December itself, so that the sugar can be physically moved from January.

In November, the Government had approved exports of one million tonne. However, the exports are yet to pick up as release orders for only 1.36 lakh tonnes have been issued as of December 23. The sluggish trend in exports is attributed to the wait-and-watch policy adopted by the main buyers such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in the context of declining trend in global prices.

Moreover, the Indian sugar now has to compete with the ones from European Union and Thailand, which have entered the market, Mr Verma said.

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Slack exports



Support price cut: A farmer displaying his spoilt Rose onion at K.N. Thotti village near Berigai in Tamil Nadu's Krishnagiri district. Lack of export orders, especially from Malaysia, has affected farmers growing the rose onion that has medicinal value. The Centre, in order to buoy exports, had cut the minimum export price for the variety to \$300 a tonne on November 28.

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Palm oil may test resistance

Gnanasekaar .T

Crude palm oil futures on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives exchange ended sharply higher on Friday climbing to a near three-week high on short-covering ahead of the holiday weekend that was driven by upbeat US. data and prospects of lower output triggered by heavy rain fall in parts of Malaysia. The Malaysian Meteorological Department has issued warning of heavy rains that may cause floods over low-lying areas in key oil palm growing states of Pahang, Johor, Sabah and Sarawak, together. Energy prices held well on Friday, supported by fresh signs of a strengthening US economy and concern of potential supply disruptions in Iran and Iraq.

CPO futures are moving in expected lines. As mentioned in the previous update, while 2,970-75 Malaysian ringgit (MYR) a tonne holds, hopes of a retest of the recent highs look likely and a rise above 3,030 MYR/tonne being a trend line resistance could once again take prices higher back into the 3,100 MYR/tonne zone or even higher. Near-term resistances are seen at 3,185/3,200 MYR/tonne followed by 3,215/3,225 MYR/tonne levels. Indicators have turned bullish again with the MACD crossing above the zero line indicating a bullish reversal. Moves to 3,100 MYR/tonne followed by 3,065 MYR/tonne could support any major dips going forward for a test of recent highs above 3,350 MYR/tonne.

We believe the impulse that began from 1,427 MYR/tonne, which hit 4,486 MYR/tonne ended and a prolonged corrective move has possibly ended at 1,335 MYR/tonne. In the big picture, a new impulse began from 1,335 MYR/tonne and the third wave with a projected objective of 3,900 MYR/tonne has been met. A corrective wave "B" has met one potential target near 3,465 MYR/tonne. A wave "C" kind of a decline ended at 2,755 MYR/tonne itself. A possible new impulse has begun now with immediate targets in the 3,350-65 MYR/tonne range. RSI is in the neutral zone now indicating that it is neither overbought nor oversold. The averages in MACD are above the zero line of the indicator indicating a bullish reversal. Only a cross-over below the zero line again could hint at resumption in bearish trend.

Therefore, look for palm oil futures to test the resistance levels.

Supports are at MYR 3,145, 3,100 and 3,065. Resistances are at MYR 3,185, 3,215 and 3,275.

Gnanasekaar .T

(The author is the Director of Commtrendz Research and also in the advisory panel of Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX). The views expressed in this column are his own and not that of MCX. This analysis is based on the historical price movements and there is risk of loss in trading. He can be reached at gnanasekar_thiagarajan@yahoo.com.)

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Spot rubber rules steady

Our Correspondent

Kottayam, Dec. 24:

Spot rubber finished unchanged on Saturday. The market was totally in a holiday mood prior to Christmas.

In futures, the January series closed at Rs 204.75 (204.37), February at Rs 206.90 (206.36), March at Rs 209.56 (209.27), April at Rs 214.40 (213.66) and May at Rs 214.85 (215.16) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 200 (200); RSS-5: 196 (196); ungraded: 190 (190); ISNR 20: 191 (191) and latex 60 per cent: 110 (110)

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