

Published: July 13, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 04:11 IST SANGAREDDY, July 13, 2011

Lack of rains forces farmers to change cropping pattern

As the rain God plays hide and seek even in the second week of July, the farmers in Medak district are being forced to change their cropping pattern. As a precautionary measure, the agriculture department is preparing a contingency plan to meet any eventuality, in case there are no rains till July 15.

According to sources in the agriculture department, out of the total estimated 4.2 lakh hectares of cultivation in the current season, around 75,000 hectares in the district may not be taken up for cultivation by farmers if the situation continues for another three to four weeks.

First causality

The first causality due to lack of rains was green gram and black gram. Officials are estimating that there might be a crop loss (reduction of area) to the tune of 50 to 70 per cent in these two crops followed by five to 10 per cent lesser yield in maize and cotton crops.

Inter-cropping

Farmers have been suggested to take up inter-cropping (maize and red-gram in rows) and multiple cropping (maize- cotton and castor in part-wise sowing) so that they do not face a total loss in a drought like situation, if at all the same prevails by August.

For crops like paddy and sugar cane, officials have been telling the farmers that they can wait till August 20 to take up cultivation activity.

Precautionary measure

The agriculture department officials have already presented the required seed details to the higher officials as a precautionary measure. “72,000 packets of cotton seed, 6,000 quintals of maize, 1,700 quintals of red-gram and 700 quintals of castor are expected to be required for the district in the present conditions,” said Mr. Chandrasekar, joint director, Agriculture department.

Published: July 13, 2011 01:14 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 01:56 IST NEW DELHI, July 13, 2011

The Jairam brand of governance moves from Environment to Rural Development

He hogged the limelight for clashes with corporate interests and for outspoken statements

There will soon be a new set of glass doors at Krishi Bhavan. The newly elevated Cabinet Minister for Rural Development Jairam Ramesh plans to bring the doors — a signature element of his interior décor right from his early days at the Commerce Ministry — to his new office. Over the last two tumultuous years at the Environment Ministry, those doors have symbolised the transparency and accessibility he claims that he tried to bring into his job.

While Mr. Ramesh hogged the limelight for clashes with corporate interests and for outspoken statements, he says his most important innovations were a matter of style: the public consultations which preceded some of his biggest decisions and the speaking orders that attempted to explain the reasoning of those decisions.

The road trip consultations that he opened to the public on Bt Brinjal, coastal zone norms and the Green India Mission were the first of their kind by a Union Minister and may have contributed to the demand for that style of public input in governance demanded by Lokpal activists.

The speaking orders to explain decisions on Posco, Vedanta, Adarsh, Lavasa, Jaitapur, and Navi Mumbai — the controversial projects which propelled him to the headlines on a regular basis — put the rationale behind his decisions in the public domain for critical analysis.

Mr. Ramesh's record has certainly been analysed and debated vigorously by a wide range of people, from the industrialists who vilified him as an anti-growth obstructionist to the activists

who initially hailed him as a green saviour and later crucified him for succumbing to pressures from within his own government. Critics point out that for each of the high-profile projects he rejected, hundreds more were approved at almost the same rate as his predecessors.

'The tigers will miss you'

Without a strong institutional backing, his one-off decisions on a few high-profile cases could not be consolidated into long-term safeguards for the environment. On the implementation of the Forest Rights Act, strongly opposed by his own Forest Department, Mr. Ramesh was a one-man force, and activists fear his efforts may peter out once he leaves. "The tigers will miss you," said the National Tiger Conservation Authority's Rajesh Gopal.

"Mr. Jairam raised the stakes and profile of the Environment Ministry like no one before him," says the Centre for Science and Environment's Sunita Narain. "It will be up to his successor Jayanthi Natarajan to strengthen the institutional base...It cannot be just the Minister who bats for environment, it has to be the institutions." Part of Mr. Ramesh's legacy will be the initial steps he took on this path — the National Green Tribunal which started work this month, and the Cabinet note being circulated to establish a National Environmental Appraisal and Monitoring Authority.

Despite the number of big names he took on, the rejection of Vedanta's refinery project in Orissa may be one of the few battles he decisively won. In fact, one of his final acts as Environment Minister was to say 'no' to environment clearance for Vedanta in reiteration of rejection of the forest clearance.

In other cases, such as the Posco's integrated steel project, the nuclear reactor at Jaitapur or the airport at Navi Mumbai, Mr. Ramesh's initial rejection was followed by later compromises. While the Minister believes he struck the middle path of balance in these decisions, sceptics point to domestic and international political compulsions that pushed him off the straight and narrow road of environmental protection.

Sources within the Ministry say that his attempt to stand up to the political forces backing the Lavasa Lake City project was his ultimate downfall. Others point to his fight for a "no-go" zone to prevent coal mining in heavily forested areas as being the last straw that forced the Prime Minister to change his portfolio even while elevating him to Cabinet Minister status.

Land Acquisition Bill

On top of Mr. Ramesh's agenda at his new Ministry is the proposed Land Acquisition Bill. He brings the expertise gained from dealing with environment protests — many of which were really land acquisition protests at grassroots level — as well as his personal relationships with the members of the National Advisory Council, to which he once belonged, who have given their own recommendations on the issue. His willingness to face tough foes could also be an advantage in bringing out a law that will take on the powerful real estate lobby.

With a Rs. 77,000 crore annual budget — in comparison to the measly Rs. 2,000 crore for Environment — the Rural Development Ministry offers a hefty challenge for Mr. Ramesh. But he says the first job for his staff is to clean up the Ministry's website. He wants to introduce the streamlined, user-friendly, real-time information sharing found on the Environment Ministry's website – the virtual representation of those glass doors.

Published: July 13, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 04:10 IST CHENNAI, July 13, 2011

“Reporting system needed to control poultry diseases”

A foolproof reporting system is essential to diagnose and control diseases in poultry, speakers stressed at a workshop organised by Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University.

The two-day workshop that was inaugurated here focussed on 'Chicken Anaemia and Infectious Bronchitis in India- current scenario and strategies for control.'

Pointing to the lack of sufficient studies about causes and control of diseases, P.K. Shukla, Joint Commissioner (Poultry), Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, Union Ministry of Agriculture, said that the Central government is in the process of implementing National Animal Disease Reporting System across the country through the National Informatics Centre. All the districts of the State would be linked with the nodal central agency for better monitoring of diseases. The equipment for the web-based system is in being installed. The system would soon percolate to block level. The project is set to be completed by this year.

Highlighting the contribution of poultry production to country's and the state's economy, TANUVAS Vice Chancellor R. Prabakaran said the total value of the annual livestock production in the state is Rs.15, 000 crore. Of this, the value of annual poultry production accounts to Rs.4,500 crore.

B. Muralimanohar, Director, Centre for Animal Health Studies, TANUVAS, spoke

Published: July 13, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 04:13 IST VIJAYAWADA, July 13, 2011

Farmers question rationale behind rice export



EXPORT ROW: Secondary Education Minister K. Parthasarathy and Vijayawada MP Lagadapati Rajagopal try to pacify tenant farmers in Vijayawada on Tuesday. - PHOTO: V. RAJU

Farmers grilled Secondary Education Minister K. Parthasarathy and Vijayawada MP Lagadapati Rajagopal on Tuesday, when the latter said that the government had agreed to export 10 lakh tonnes of rice.

At a function to distribute Loan Identity-cum-Eligibility Cards to tenant farmers, the farmers rushed to the dais and vehemently argued with the Minister and other elected representatives on the minimum support price (MSP) for paddy.

Farmers pointed out that they had sold their produce at a price much lower than the MSP and questioned the rationale behind the government's decision to export after the end of rabi season.

It had not allowed export in spite of fervent appeals by the farmers when prices were down. "Now, the decision will benefit the middlemen and millers but not us," the farmers asserted.

Farmers protested against the Government's decision to allow export of the rice after major quantity was in the hands of the businessmen. They also rejected claims on compensation paid to the farmers who suffered crop losses in Jal cyclone last year.

The farmers from G. Konduru, Vatsavai, Chandarlapadu, Veerlapadu and other mandals in the district pointed out that they had not received any compensation for crop losses. Few farmers received paltry amount of Rs.1,000 to Rs.1,400 an acre as against stipulated Rs.2,400. They almed down following the Minister's assurance that the government would inquire into the farmers' grievances and pay the total compensation, if any.

Published: July 13, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 04:11 IST HUBLI, July 13, 2011

Farmers' movement: meet tomorrow

The farmers' movement against land acquisition in Mundaragi taluk of Gadag district took a formal turn on Tuesday with the formation of the Bhoo Swadheena Virodhi Sangrama Samiti.

Sri Annadanishwara Swami of Mundaragi and Sri Tontada Siddhalinga Swami of Gadag will jointly head the samiti. Religious heads of different communities will participate in a convention of seers to be held in Gadag on Thursday. The former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, and Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah will visit the seers and the farmers on Wednesday.

Published: July 13, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 04:06 IST ARANTHANGI, July 13, 2011

Rally on rain water harvesting

A large number of school students, members of the service and voluntary organisations participated in rain water harvesting awareness rally held here on Tuesday. Collector B. Maheswari flagged off the rally at the VOC maidan. The participants carried placards and banners underlining the importance of harvesting rain water, increasing forest cover.

P. Mariappan, Chairman of Aranthangi Municipality, P. Ashok Kumar, Municipal Commissioner, Peer Shaik, president of the Rotary Club of Aranthangi, participated .

Published: July 13, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 04:11 IST TIRUCHI, July 13, 2011

Survey to create database on small farmers starts

The Agriculture Department has taken up a survey to create a database on small and marginal farmers in the district and to identify the requirements for doubling their productivity and income over the next three years.

The survey would come up with a comprehensive database of the small and marginal farmers to include information on their land holdings, ownership/tenancy rights, cropping pattern and their average productivity and income over the past three years. The fertility status of the farmers' fields or the village would also be recorded.

More importantly, the survey would assess the requirements of the farmers in terms of credit flow, agricultural inputs and implements. It would also assess the constraints faced by farmers in increasing productivity and come up with suitable remedial measures, sources in the Agriculture Department said.

The survey is being done in line with the State government's stated objective of putting in place measures to double agricultural productivity.

Once the survey is completed, the database would be uploaded to a State-wide network enabled with GPS (Global Positioning System) and GPRS (General Packet Radio Service) facilities. The data would be uploaded through hand-held PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) to be supplied to the field officers of the department. Each farmer, block and district would be given exclusive code numbers so that the entire information of a particular farmer or area could be accessed immediately once the database was ready.

A team of 86 assistant agricultural officers, 16 agricultural officers, 12 deputy agricultural officers and nine assistant directors of agriculture are engaged in conducting the survey across the district. The exercise was being supervised by J.Sekar, Joint Director of Agriculture,

R.Chandrasekaran, Deputy Director (Central schemes) and S.Saba Natesan, Deputy Director (State Schemes).

After the project was completed, by the month end, appropriate interventional measures are expected to be implemented by the State government.

One third of the identified farmers would be covered every year over the three-year period. The Department would come up with suitable recommendations right from the sowing to harvest stage for every farmer.

It would suggest appropriate cropping pattern, steps to increase the crop intensity, use of micro irrigation systems and modern farm implements.

It would identify the requirement of machines such as tractors, transplanters, weeders and combined harvesters so that measures could be taken to make them accessible to farmers through rental services run by self-help groups, primary agricultural cooperative societies or agri clinics.

Published: July 13, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 04:08 IST MYSORE, July 13, 2011

Double standards on organic cotton in State?

The unbridled promotion of genetically modified (GM) cotton in the State, including Mysore district, has left organic farmers peeved due to the absence of an institutional mechanism to supply non-Bt cotton seeds in the market.

The cotton seed scarcity that plagued the district and other parts of the State in May mainly pertained to Bt cotton seeds which is used by over 90 per cent of growers in H.D. Kote and other cotton-growing areas of the district.

According to statistics available with the Department of Agriculture here, nearly 40,000 hectares of land was brought under cotton cultivation in 2010. The area is expected to increase to 54,000 hectares this year.

Of the 40,000 hectares under cotton cultivation in the district, the area under organic cotton is around 4,000 hectares. But in the absence of non-Bt cotton seeds, farmers using eco-friendly and organic methods may be forced to switch to chemical farming.

Vivek Cariappa, organic farmer from H.D. Kote, told *The Hindu* that a large number of farmers shifted from cereals and pulses to cotton, anticipating a good price. As a result, the area under maize, ragi and banana declined. He said that the Government was catering to their requirements by ensuring supply of Bt cotton seeds.

“However, there are scores of farmers who have rejected Bt technology, shifted focus from conventional chemical-intensive practices and are practitioners of organic farming. These farmers have been left to fend for themselves,” Mr. Cariappa said.

He pointed out that though the State's policy was to promote organic farming, it was encouraging Bt technology.

Contamination

Mr. Cariappa and other organic farmers expressed the view that the germplasm of the non-Bt variety of seeds had been contaminated and that the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Dharwad, was the only place in the country where the germplasm of the non-Bt variety of cotton was not contaminated.

Hence, Mr. Cariappa suggested that the State Government be pro-active in funding the UAS to produce non-Bt varieties of cotton seeds. He said that even indigenous cotton varieties such as Jayadhar cotton, which was cultivated extensively in Hubli and Gadag, were not available and it was imperative for the State to intervene and ensure that the germplasm of these indigenous varieties were produced, preserved and made available to farmers.

The Organic Farmers' Association of H.D. Kote pointed out that each packet of Bt cotton seeds contained a small pouch of non-Bt cotton seeds because it was mandatory for farmers to plant them in the periphery of their fields to prevent contamination of transgenic plants with non-transgenic plants through pollination.

However, Mr. Cariappa said there was no independent laboratory or agency to certify that these pouches indeed contained non-Bt cotton seeds.

The onus was on the Government to establish or appoint an agency to check the seeds and ensure that non-Bt cotton seeds were supplied to farmers.

Published: July 13, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 04:10 IST KASARAGOD, July 13, 2011

Package to sustain organic farming mooted

Comprehensive organic policy sought: With Kasaragod being declared an organic farming district, a senior agriculture official here has suggested the introduction of a comprehensive organic policy in view of the possibility of low yield during the transition period.

Talking to *The Hindu*, Principal Agriculture Officer S. Shiva Prasad said the government's decision to declare Kasaragod as an organic farming district was heartening in view of the grave health hazards caused by the spraying of pesticides such as endosulfan on cashew plantations. However, it called for implementing a comprehensive organic policy and awareness campaign to adopt a new farming method as a lifestyle rather than yet another mode of cultivation, he said.

Yield loss

The sudden switchover to organic farming was certain to pave way for yield loss in the range of 30 to 40 per cent in the first three years and the farmers should be provided monetary compensation to offset the loss, he said.

Farmers should be paid varying compensation amount depending upon the crops they cultivated. This would help allay fears about poor returns in the initial period.

The prime necessity to promote organic farming was to ensure that each homestead functioned as a self-sustained farm unit by finding ways to recycle waste through vermin composing units and devising methods to collect the bio materials generated, the farm officer said.

The efforts could be supplemented by promoting animal husbandry with emphasis on schemes such as poultry farming and goat rearing so that there was ample scope for collecting biomaterials within the homestead. Local bodies and primary cooperative units can play a key role in ensuring an organic marketing network for the high quality produce, Mr. Shiva Prasad said adding that the cooperative bodies could be engaged to procure produces such as raw coconuts.

The authorities concerned should come out with a package under the block level and go in for homestead model demonstration to farmers by developing specimen plots of organic farming.

Certification

He suggested that an organic farming training institute could be set up in the district to create awareness among farmers. Another key factor involved in the promotion of organic farming was that the government should bear the fees charged for procuring organic certification so that the farmers got better market access to their produce, he said.

The seemingly difficult task of switching over to organic farming by discarding synthetic fertilizers and chemical pesticides could be achieved by arranging farmer-to-farmer interaction in organic precision farming pockets in places such as Bangalore, Dehradun and select centres in Andhra Pradesh.

Package sought

The government should evolve a comprehensive package as part of promoting organic farming as a "life style" of the young farmers to ward off serious threats posed by excessive dependence on chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

It was equally important to demonstrate to the farming community effective organic pesticide substitutes to chemical products, he said.

Mr. Shiva Prasad said he was in the process of giving final touches to the new proposals made during a recent seminar on Agriculture here and would send a comprehensive report shortly to the

Agriculture official suggests adoption of a new farming method as a lifestyle rather than yet another mode of cultivation.

Published: July 13, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 04:11 IST KOLLAM, July 13, 2011

Workshop on bioinformatics

The zoology department of Sree Narayana College here is organising a two-day workshop on bioinformatics.

The workshop, to be held on July 13 and 14, will be inaugurated by college Principal Mohan Sreekumar. Coordinator of the event and head of the zoology department S. Sudha said that the keynote address at the workshop would be delivered by Director of the State Inter-University Centre of Excellence in Bioinformatics Achut Sankar on the topic 'Introduction to bioinformatics and sequence alignment.' Joint Director of the Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment Ajit Prabhu would address the workshop.

There would be sessions on database, genomics, and biological pathways. The University of Kerala is a sponsor.

Published: July 13, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 13, 2011 04:10 IST MALAPPURAM, July 13, 2011

Upland paddy farming at Athavanad gains popularity

41 farmers growing paddy on 16.4 hectares of land in the grama panchayat



Farm efforts: Youngsters, housewives, and students have joined farmers at Athavanad, in Malappuram district, in the upland farming initiative promoted by the Agriculture Department.

Upland paddy cultivation is becoming more and more popular at Athavanad grama panchayat in the district. Following an initiative of agricultural officials of the Athavanad Krishi Bhavan, as many as 71 farmers at the panchayat have come forward to cultivate paddy in uplands.

Paddy and other vegetables are cultivated in alternate seasons on about 20 hectares at the panchayat. When 41 farmers had cultivated paddy in 16.4 hectares of uplands last year, this year saw a considerable increase in the acreage.

“This is because the important message of food security has reached the people,” said P.N. Krishnakumar, a Krishi Bhavan official.

The Krishi Bhavan had joined hands with the grama panchayat to create awareness among the people. First, they brought panchayat members to the paddy field. This move was followed up with several initiatives through the Nattukoottam or neighbourhood grouping.

The revival of upland farming has begun to attract many people to Athavanad. Youngsters, housewives, and students have joined the farmers of Athavanad in upland farming.

The Agriculture Department has given an assistance of Rs.5,000 an hectare and the seeds required for upland farming. “This year, we have given a short-duration seed called Jyothi,” Mr. Krishnakumar said.

Last year, when there were 41 farmers cultivating in 16.4 hectares, the government had given Rs.82,000 in aid.

“This year, we gave 2,490 kg of paddy seeds,” Mr. Krishnakumar said. © The Hindu

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Clear

Wednesday, Jul 13

Max Min

35.4° | 26.8°

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 53%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 5:49

Sunset: 18:39

Barometer: 0999

Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

Thursday, Jul 14

Max Min

36° | 27°

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday Jul 15	Saturday Jul 16	Sunday Jul 17	Monday Jul 18	Tuesday Jul 19
32° 25° Rainy	31° 27° Rainy	31° 26° Cloudy	29° 27° Rainy	32° 26° Rainy

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Inflation, rates hit consumer demand

Sidhartha, TNN | Jul 13, 2011, 12.43am IST

NEW DELHI: High inflation and the rise in interest rates are taking a toll on consumer demand.

An analysis of around 270 items that account for over 45% of the index of industrial production (IIP) undertaken by TOI shows that products ranging from apparel, cigarettes, milk, television sets and air conditioners

are at the top of the list of losers during April-May. Though production dipped nearly 50% during the first two months of the current fiscal in case of items like colour TV picture tubes and polythene bags, products such as apparel and milk have a higher weight, resulting in a greater impact on the index (see graphic).

Overall, 115 of the 270-odd items witnessed a fall. So, nearly 42% of these products belonging to five of the six manufacturing segments saw decline in production. The segment includes basic goods, intermediates, consumer goods, consumer durables and consumer non-durables. The TOI analysis did not include consumer goods as data was unavailable. Manufacturing accounts for over three quarters of the index of industrial production.

Economists reckon that the decline in production of these products is the result of lower demand from consumers. For instance, higher interest rates have forced consumers to postpone car purchases, resulting in sales growth moderating to a two-year low. Similarly, gems and jewelry production is down over 8% during April-May as record gold and silver prices have resulted in buyers resisting the temptation to go for fresh purchases.

"Overall, today's data confirm that the economy is slowing down, led primarily by slowing consumer demand," Nomura India economists Sonal Varma and Aman Mahunta said in a research note.

The impact on consumer demand is expected to take a further toll on capacity addition by India Inc, which has deferred expansion due to the rise in interest cost. For the last several months, capital goods production has been affected. During April-May, several products such as cement machinery, reflecting the decline in cement production, farm implements, turbines and furnaces saw a fall in production.

Though government data is often seen to be suspect, even by the Reserve Bank of India, the IIP data does throw up some broad trends. For instance, cement production is down and so is mining equipment. Similarly, copper, which is seen as one of the best advance indicators has also seen a decline in production.

13 Jul, 2011, 07.00AM IST, Madhvi Sally & Sutanuka Ghosal,ET Bureau

Good domestic output tames edible oil prices

AHMEDABAD | KOLKATA: Edible oil prices have eased, prompting branded players to reduce retail prices. Prices are likely to remain at this level for the next couple of months, owing to good domestic production of oil seeds and stable prices in the overseas markets . "The industry has seen a correction of 2% in edible oil prices and passed it on to the consumer in July. Even as palm oil and soybean oil prices appear bearish, no further reduction in retail prices will take place.

This is due to supply becoming tight and the upcoming festive season beginning from August when demand is expected to increase," said Angshu Mallik, chief operating officer of Rs 9,000-crore Adani Wilmar, which processes 1 lakh tonne oil per month. Similarly, Emami group director Aditya Agarwal said the company has reduced prices of by Rs 2-Rs 4 per litre owing to better production.

Emami's edible oil business turnover is at Rs 1,800 crore and it sells oil under the brand name Healthy & Tasty. The edible oil industry in India is valued at Rs 75,000 crore including packaged and unbranded oils. PK Sardar, executive director of Central Organisation for Oil Industry and Trade, said: "The import of edible oil is likely to be less this year which will put a leash on sudden spurt in prices. In fact, there is a carryover stock of edible oil imported last year. Production of edible oil is expected to be better this year as rains are expected to be normal in the oilseedgrowing regions.

In 2010-11 , India produced 60 lakh tonne of edible oil. We estimate that the price of edible oil will remain stable in the coming months." In Gujarat, groundnut oil prices are at Rs 950 per 10 kg while they were ruling at Rs 700 per 10 kg in the corresponding period in 2010. Similarly, cotton seed washed oil is being quoted at Rs 630 per 10 kg as against Rs 450 per 10 kg this period last year. Sunvin Group CEO Sandeep Bajoria said, "With the sowing of cotton and groundnut delayed in Gujarat, prices of edible oil are firm. Local consumption of groundnut and cotton oil has fallen and people are switching to palm and soya oil." Palm oil prices have fallen to Rs 520 per 10 kg from Rs 580 for 10 kg two months ago and a further correction is likely.

"With China delaying purchases, palm oil inventories are higher (21 -22 lakh tonne is held by Malaysia and Indonesia) and traders expect prices to touch Rs 500 for 10 kg in the short term. Similarly, traders expect soya oil prices to correct by Rs 15 from Rs 640 per 10 kg in Indore in a fortnight," said an analyst. JS Pangaria, executive director of the Soyabean Processors Association of India, said sowing was over in almost 80% of the area in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and the crop was in excellent condition.

Sowing is on in Maharashtra and hopefully will be close to the target by July 20. "Soybean cultivation in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Chhattisgarh is going up compared to kharif 2010. Soyabean seeds are now at the vegetative state. If monsoon remains normal in the coming months, production is expected to go up to 110 lakh tonne compared to 103 lakh tonne in 2010-11 ," Pangaria said.

Industry experts said the per capita oil consumption in the country will increase to 13 kg per person from 12.5 kg per person in previous year if prices remain firm. "A stable price will boost the demand for all kinds of edible oil," said Agarwal.

E-pest surveillance training of kharif held at Balangir

July 12, 2011 9:38:46 PM

PNS | Balangir

Encouraged by last year's performance in tackling the pest menace through e-pest surveillance, a two-day State-level training programme on e-pest surveillance of kharif-2011, under RKVY Green Revolution –II, was held at the Regional Institute of Training and Extension (RITE) at Larikpali here on Monday.

Organised jointly by State Agriculture Department and National Council of Integrated Pest Management, New Delhi, it was attended by agriculture officials of Balangir, Sonepur, Kalhandi and Nuapada districts.

Earlier, when there was a pest attack, it took days to get information from the field and there was delay in taking remedial measures to tackle it. As farmers used to get advisory late, there was a huge loss of crop. With e-pest surveillance, agriculture officials must visit the village and maintain the record of pest attack in rice.

The data collected from the field would be sent to the scientist at ICAR, NICPM and OUAT, which would analyze the information and advise the district and block level authorities to take necessary steps.

“The farmers would also be intimated through SMS mode. At best, one to two days would be required to tackle any situation arising out of pest menace,” explained an agriculture official here.

In 2009, there were around 8,000 hectares of paddy affected due to pest in Balangir and Sonepur district. However, in 2010, thanks to e-pest surveillance, we were able to take necessary steps and tackle pest menace, an agriculture official disclosed.

Scientists from National Council of Integrated Pest Management (NICPM), New Delhi, Dr RK Tanwar, AKKanojia, SP Singh, S.Satiyya Kumar, A.A.Jafre and Asif Iqbal, DDA plant protection, Bhubneshwar, Kalidas Viswas and Deputy Director of Agriculture, Balangir, Manoranjan Mallick, imparted the training.

Good monsoon raises hopes of bumper kharif crops

July 12, 2011 11:55:22 PM

Staff Reporter | Bhopal

Possibilities of bumper sowing for kharif crops have increased with the good start of monsoon season in the State. According to latest information from the Weather Office, 344 mm average rainfall has been registered in the State by July 12, which is around 200 mm more than the normal. As many as 42 districts have received more than the normal rainfall. Normal downpour has been registered in five districts - Indore, Dhar, Jhabua, Khargone and Burhanpur - while deficit rainfall has been registered in Alirajpur and Barwani.

Rainfall measuring over three inches is necessary for sowing crops. Therefore, advice is being given to undertake sowing in the districts, which have adequate wetness. But at the same time, the Farmers' Welfare and Agriculture Development Department is advising the farmers to keep suspended their agriculture-related works, especially sowing, in view of forecast of heavy rainfall at several places of the State in the next 24 hours.

The Weather Office has also given the warning of heavy rains in Ujjain, Gwalior and Chambal divisions in view of formation of low-pressure area near Gwalior. The farmers can undertake sowing when the conditions become favourable after five to six days.

According to agriculture experts, sowing should be undertaken only after cessation of rains and conditions becoming favourable. Otherwise, seeds can get damaged or washed away due to

which they will have to undertake sowing afresh.

According to experts, farmers give heed to weather forecast in connection of agricultural activities. At present, weather forecasts are being constantly aired by radio and television and published by newspapers. Therefore, agricultural activities should be undertaken by farmers as per favourable conditions in their respective areas.

Farmers living in the areas where forecast of heavy rains has been made have been told that still there is a lot of time available for sowing. Therefore, they should not make hurry and complete their sowing operations as soon as conditions become favourable. It is also necessary to store agricultural inputs like seed culture, fertilisers etc at dry and safe places. Seed treatment is also vital before sowing.

Business Standard

Wednesday, Jul 13, 2011

Weak monsoon hits sowing in Karnataka

Mahesh Kulkarni / Bangalore July 13, 2011, 0:41 IST

Cash crops witness better coverage than food crops; rainfall to improve in last week of July.

With Karnataka witnessing a below-normal rainfall, sowing operations have slowed for the current kharif. Till the first week of July, 2.10 million hectares of land was sowed, which is about 65.2 per cent of the normal area of 3.22 million hectares.

Till this period of time, sowing status was above normal in 4 districts, normal in 11 and below normal in 15 districts.

After a good spell of rain in the initial part of the current season, the southwest monsoon weakened towards the end of June and early July. The state received an actual rainfall of 55 mm against the normal level of 63 mm, showing an 11 per cent drop. However, the state

recorded an increase of 2 per cent in actual rainfall between early June and July, as it witnessed 258 mm of rainfall compared to the normal level of 253 mm.

Among 176 taluks in 30 districts, rainfall was excess in 41 taluks, normal in 85, deficit in 39 and scanty in one .

“The sowing operations, which were above normal levels till the third week of June, slumped in the last 15 days owing to weakened monsoon in a major part of the state. However, we expect the rains to improve in the next two weeks,”an agriculture department official said.

According to the state agriculture department, sowing for food crops was completed in 1.16 million hectares of land, 23 per cent of the target for this kharif season. The state has set a target of 5.15 million hectares this year.

The planting of sugarcane saw good coverage, as it achieved 82 per cent of its total target of 398,000 hectares. The sowing as a whole in cash crops was completed in 643,000 hectares, about 69 per cent of the target of 933,000 hectares. The sowing for oilseeds was done in 293,000 hectares, is just 21 per cent of the target of 1.37 million.

With a target of 3.49 million hectares, the sowing in cereals was done in 873,000 hectares, accounting a net coverage of 25 per cent. Maize, jowar and minor millets has seen good coverage so far.

Sowing in pulses saw a significant decline with just 17 per cent of the targeted area being sowed till the first week of July. As against the target of 1.66 million hectares sowing has been completed in 292,000 hectares so far. Pulses like, greengram, blackgram and cowpea saw better sowing than tur (red gram) and horsegram.

Despite inadequate rain, cotton sowing was better than last year at 230,000 hectares with 56 per cent of the target covered till date. Tobacco planting was done in 88,000 hectares, showing coverage of 72 per cent of the target.

Refining to the rescue, crushers suffer

Dilip Kumar Jha / Mumbai July 13, 2011, 0:48 IST

Profits of sugar manufacturers are likely to remain under pressure in the March-June quarter due to the losses incurred from their core activity. Sugar mills have incurred a loss of Rs 2-2.50 per kg due to the government's control over pricing. As against an average cost of production at Rs 28.50 a kg, mills were forced to sell sugar at Rs 26.50 a kg.

Things worsened with the extension of the season, when a couple of dozen mills in Maharashtra continued crushing until the second week of May, thereby creating a situation of oversupply. During the June quarter, most mills close their operation across the country, because there is no sugar production.

However, the refineries continue operating with imported raw sugar. As a result, in the first quarter, sugar mills are faced with high cost of employment and stock maintenance, whereas there is no tangible output.

This quarter will be no different in terms of keeping the costs high. However, selling of sugar at a loss will magnify the problems. Revenues from sugar production account for 90 per cent of the sector's turnover. Offsetting the loss from other activities, including molasses exports may help marginally. Sugar mills have exported nearly 500,000 tonnes of molasses this quarter.

Companies like Bajaj Hindusthan, Simbhaoli Sugars, Shree Dwarikesh Sugar and Dhampur Sugar, which are dependent on cane crushing from domestic sources, are likely to be hit by the oversupply and lower realisations.

On the other hand, bigger firms, which are into the refining business, will perform much better. Broking firm Edelweiss Securities forecasted in its recent report that companies like EID Parry and Shree Renuka Sugars may compensate the loss from domestic cane crushing through refining activity, as they had hedged their raw material risk when prices were ruling lower.

According to the report, EID Parry's revenue may rise 14.38 per cent y-o-y to Rs 2,156.6 crore, owing to better margins from conversion of raw sugar into refined (popularly known as white premium) this quarter. But, the management guidance for production volume of sugar and by-

products for this year from standalone operations and subsidiaries would be a key supporting factor.

Renuka Sugars may see a 17.7 per cent growth in revenues on account of lower cane prices. The company had already signed long-term contract for raw sugar exports from its Brazil operation at 22 cents/pound this quarter, as against 17 cents per pound in the same quarter of the previous year. Renuka's Ebitda margin is set to expand on account of lower cane prices, coupled with higher sugar realisation. Q-o-q margins are likely to expand on commencement of the sugar season in Brazil.

These companies with strong refinery operations will be able to offset the losses incurred in crushing operations. Earnings from crushing operation will improve only in the latter half of the year. According to a report by Aditya Birla Money, Balrampur Chini Mills will recover the first two quarter losses from sugar crushing in the fourth quarter, due to an expected rise in sugar prices in the coming months.

With adequate rain, West Bengal expects normal paddy output

Namrata Acharya / Kolkata July 13, 2011, 0:38 IST

After last year's drought, with a 30 per cent dip in output of paddy, West Bengal expects to see normal production this year.



This year, the state government had set a target of cultivation in four million hectares, compared to actual cultivation on 3.38 mha last year. With an average expected yield of three tonnes per ha, the state is likely to produce 12 million tonnes of paddy in the kharif season, against eight mt last year.

Normally, the total area under paddy in the state is about 5.9 mha. The state produces about 14.5 mt of paddy every year in three seasons - aus, aman and boro. Production during the boro or winter season is about 4.5 mt. The other two are cultivated in the summer or kharif season.

**PADDY PRODUCTION
IN THE STATE**

Year	Production (mn tonnes)	Area (mn hectare)
2008-09	15.03	5.94
2009-10	14.34	5.63
2010- 11*	8.88	3.57
*Kharif only		
Note: Rabi estimates yet to come		
<i>Source: Government of West Bengal</i>		

The kharif season is April to November, when moisture from rainfall plus soil storage is enough to support rainfed crops. West Bengal contributes 14-16 per cent of India's rice production.

Monsoon rains were 23 per cent above normal in the week ended June 22 in West Bengal and Orissa. "We can expect normal paddy production this year, even though earlier there were reports of floods in some districts like Bankura," said Pranab Chatterjee, director of farms, Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya.

"This year, one could expect slightly higher production due to increase in the use of hybrid seeds in districts like Purulia. However, the use of hybrid seeds have been limited to 10,000 hectares," said Qutubuddin Ali, a seed producer. The use of hybrid seeds raises yield by 15-20 per cent.

Burdwan, Birbhum, Nadia and Hooghly are the four high rice productivity districts, with 27 per cent of the total rice acreage and 32 per cent of total production.

According to the meteorological department, rainfall deficiency for the country is 25 per cent of the long period average (LPA).

However, this was mainly due to 52 per cent deficiency in central India. The cumulative all-India rainfall till July 6 was one per cent above the LPA.

Guntur chilli prices touch new high

D Gopi / Chennai/ Guntur July 13, 2011, 0:24 IST

Badiga chillies of Guntur in Andhra Pradesh have become the most sought-after variety in the state this season. This variety has greater demand in the global market, particularly in countries like Malaysia and Singapore.

With the demand increasing in the international market, the price had gone up from the initial Rs 8,000 a quintal in June to a little over Rs 12,000. On Monday, it fetched Rs 12,400 a quintal, which is the highest in the season.

Red chillies are mostly from the red soils of Karnataka and has greater demand in the global market. However, farmers from Guntur cultivate the same variety in the black soils here protecting the quality of the produce. This variety is known for its less spice and bright colour.

Though China and Pakistan too produce chillies along with India, the rains have damaged the crop in these two countries, making the global traders to bank on Indian supply. In India too, the crop was damaged in Karnataka, which had come as a blessing in disguise for the farmers of Guntur and the neighbouring districts.

The Guntur's Agriculture Market Committee (AMC) yard is now buzzing with traders and farmers pushing the variety out of cold storages. The arrivals at the Guntur AMC's Market Yard during 2010-11 from April to July was 10,94,939 quintals while this year it 9,34,191 quintals during the period.

With the prices going up, farmers are expected to bring more quantity to the market yard in the next couple of days, said a senior official at the AMC.

THE HINDU
Business Line

Kharif pulses coverage down 54.23% in Karnataka



Erratic rains result in delayed sowing

Bangalore, July 12:

Karnataka's Kharif pulses coverage as on July 4 is down 54.23 per cent at 2.92 lakh hectares compared with 6.38 lakh hectares covered in the same period last year.

The trade and agricultural scientists attribute decline in coverage area due to delayed monsoon and erratic rains resulting in delayed sowing.

According to Mr Ramesh Chandra Lahoti, commodities trader and chairman FKCCI's APMC Committee, "There has been delay in moong dal (greengram) sowing in key north Karnataka districts. Tur dal (redgram) area has stabilised but only with good regular rains output will be normal."

Greengram

As on July 4, greengram coverage in the State is 1.45 lakh hectares (last year 2.64 lakh hectares).

The Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (Demic) under the Department of Agribusiness Management, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad said "The production of greengram is expected to remain same as that of last year with an expected yield of around 5-7 quintals per hectare."

According to the Demic price forecast, greengram in Gadag market is expected to trade in the range between Rs 3,600 and Rs 3,750 a quintal during August-September months. The price of greengram in Gadag market is currently ruling around Rs 3,400 quintal (June 2011).

Blackgram

The current blackgram coverage in the state is 0.29 lakh hectare (last year 0.66 lakh hectares).

Demic predicts the prices to stay static. The yield of blackgram in Bidar region is expected to be around 6-8 quintals per hectare. Prices in Bidar region is expected to trade between Rs 3,200 and Rs 3,400 a quintal during August-September months. The minimum support price (MSP) announced by the government for the crop for this year is Rs 3,300 a quintal.

Tur

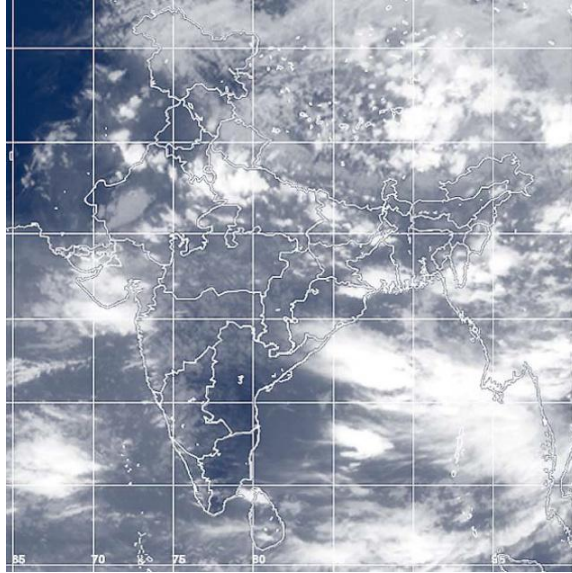
Tur coverage is 0.67 lakh hectares (last year 2.43 lakh hectares).

Mr Lahoti said Gulbarga region is known for Tur. "Here in this region, farmers are waiting for good rains to take up sowing operation. It has been delayed for want of moisture as well."

Demic going by its interaction with farmers forecast that there are chances of good crop this season with the yields touching 10-12 quintals per hectare.

"The prices of tur is expected to hover around Rs 3,200-3300 a quintal during November-December 2011 in Sedam market. The MSP announced by Government for the crop for this year is Rs 3,200 a quintal," said Demic release.

Bay in churn as Pacific throws up fresh storm



Thiruvananthapuram, July 12:

The US Navy's Joint Typhoon Warning Centre has located a fresh tropical storm, Ma-on, around 1,500 km east-southeast of Iwo To, Japan.

The storm has tracked a west-northwest track in the central Pacific and is forecast to keep travelling in the same direction.

SUPER TYPHOON?

While doing so, it is forecast to grow several times over in intensity during the next few days.

The European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts sees the likely super typhoon roaring towards the northeast China coast past southern Japan for a landfall.

This typhoon would be the most significant weather feature during the course of the week, flows feeding into which could also trigger upstream activity towards far west in the Bay of Bengal.

As if on cue, India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said on Tuesday evening that the Bay of Bengal has thrown up a fresh upper air cyclonic circulation.

It has happened side by side an ongoing surge in monsoon flows across the west coast into peninsular India and further into the Bay.

'LOW' BREWING

This system could go on to set up a 'feeble' low-pressure area, which, according to the US National Centres for Environmental Prediction, could push in a rain head into north peninsular India later during the week.

The axis of the seasonal monsoon trough over land has kept oscillating to north and south from its normal position during the 24 hours ending Tuesday morning, deciding the fortunes of the monsoon.

But the monsoon has been active over Gujarat region, among the few Met subdivisions with major rain deficits, during this period.

WEATHER WARNING

Kalpana-1 satellite imagery in the afternoon showed the presence of convective (rain-bearing) clouds over parts of east Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, east, central and northeast India, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, central and south Bay of Bengal, Andaman Sea and southeast Arabian Sea.

A weather warning said that isolated heavy rainfall would break out over coastal Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana and north coastal Andhra Pradesh during the next two days.

It would be isolated heavy over south Chhattisgarh and Orissa on Wednesday, bringing welcome precipitation into the rice-growing areas.

PENINSULAR RAINS

A short-term forecast valid until Friday said that fairly widespread rain or thundershowers would occur along the west coast and the Northeastern States, central and adjoining peninsular India.

Groundnut shortage drives oil to record high

Rajkot, July 12:

Groundnut oil ruled at a record high of Rs 1,615-1,620 for a 15-kg tin on shortage of raw material.

According to market sources, the demand for edible oil is low due to high prices. But the market continues to rule high as groundnut is not available for crushing.

At Rajkot, groundnut oil loose was traded at Rs 970-975 for 10 kg, while new tin price ruled at Rs 1,615-1,620 for 15 kg. *Telia* tin 15-kg traded at Rs 1,494-1,495.

Similarly, cotton oil ruled high in line with groundnut oil prices. Washed cotton oil was quoted at Rs 632-635 for 10 kg. New tin price was Rs 1,090-1,100 for 15 kg and 15-litre was traded at Rs 1,020-1,025.

Groundnut bold was traded at Rs 640-798 for a *maund* of 20 kg in Rajkot and small groundnut oil price was quoted Rs 655-859 for a *maund*. In Junagadh, the price of the bold variety was Rs 582-860 and small was traded at Rs 625-766 for a maund.

Spot rubber declines on global cues

Kottayam, July 12:

Physical rubber prices edged lower on Tuesday. The market seemed to be chasing the weak international markets though the domestic futures finished firm during closing hours.

According to sources, there were no fresh enquiries from the tyre sector and the prices remained under pressure on selling from dealers amidst low demand.

Meanwhile, intermittent rains continued to disrupt tapping in major rubber growing areas.

Sheet rubber slipped to Rs 213 (213.50) a kg, as quoted by traders. The grade dropped to Rs 212.50 (214) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, according to the Rubber Board.

RSS 4 improved at its July series Rs 213 (210.23), August to Rs 215.59 (212.96), September to Rs 215.50 (212.14), October to Rs 215.80 (213.32), November to Rs 217.50 (213.21) and December to Rs 217.10 (215.10) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 weakened to Rs 207.98 (209.60) a kg at Bangkok. The July futures declined to ₹369.9 (Rs 207.69) from ₹380 during the day session but then recovered partially to ₹373 (Rs 209.38) a kg in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 213 (213.50); RSS-5: 210 (211); ungraded: 206 (208); ISNR 20: 210 (211) and latex 60 per cent: 136 (137).

Farmers launch their own firms to get a fair deal



▶ BYE BYE MIDDLEMEN

A few groups of farmers have formed six producer companies and registered their entities with the Registrar of Companies.

A pilot project will be run in Maharashtra, Karnataka, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh this year.

Nabard plans to issue smart cards to farmers including tenant farmers.

DIRECT MARKETING

Hyderabad, July 12:

After getting a raw deal from *mandis* and middlemen, farmers seem to have decided to tap markets directly. They will have an eye on the commodity exchanges as they aggregate produce from fellow farmer-promoters.

A few groups of farmers have formed six producer companies and registered their entities with the Registrar of Companies (RoC) as required by the Companies Act.

Corporates such as Reliance, ITC and Heritage, which are into retailing of agri products, too have been kept in the loop by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

It is not just about getting direct access to markets and having bargaining power as they interact with bulk buyers. They will get handsome credit from Nabard this year. “*Inti Velugu Mahila Deepam* has registered as a dairy company in Nizamabad. An organic cotton company has been formed in Warangal with the help of Oxfam,” Mr Y. Haragopal, a senior Nabard official, told *Business Line*.

“We have begun interactions with producer-groups for the last few months. Some of them have evolved into companies now. They will get access to the Rs 1,200-crore fund set up by the bank nationally,” he said.

A pilot project will be run in Maharashtra, Karnataka, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh this year.

Repositioning

Earlier, addressing a staff gathering to mark the 30th anniversary of the bank, Mr P. Mohanaiah, Chief General Manager (AP) of Nabard, said the bank was in the process to reposition itself to suite the changing credit requirements.

As part of this, it started a new infrastructure development fund to provide financial assistance to public corporations. “For now, it will be Government corporations. In future, we might consider assisting private enterprises too,” he said.

Smart cards

The bank was also planning to turn about 10 crore kisan credit cards into smart cards, giving instant access to farmers to their credit accounts with various banks. “Instead of going to banks each time, the IT-enabled cards would save their time and effort by giving them access to ATMs,” he said.

Interestingly, tenant farmers, too, would be given these cards in order to help them get quicker access to credit.

Gujarat, Maharashtra record highest growth in farm sector

Ahmedabad, July 12:

Clocking a 10.97% of decadal growth rate between 2000-01 and 2009-10, Gujarat has recorded the highest agricultural growth in real terms (at compound annual growth rate, or CAGR) among 15 non-special category States, according to an independent research and analysis of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industries.

Maharashtra has closely followed Gujarat with 10.5% of agricultural growth during the last decade, leaving behind many front-running agricultural States, ASSOCHAM said here on Tuesday.

“Steps like investment in agricultural infrastructure to improve irrigation system, employment of latest technologies and establishment of a dedicated power grid to ensure regular power supply for agricultural sector are significant reasons behind high agricultural growth rate that Gujarat has achieved,” said Mr D.S. Rawat, Secretary-General, ASSOCHAM.

Chhattisgarh has ranked third with 6% of agricultural growth, followed by Orissa (5.28%) and Andhra Pradesh (5.2%), said the ASSOCHAM analysis.

“Innovative and efficient management of the State's groundwater resources is a major turning point in Gujarat's agricultural miracle which has converted barren lands into fertile farms thereby raising yields and resulting in fall of cultivation costs,” said Mr Rawat.

A revolution in agriculture has converted around 15 lakh hectare of additional lands in largely semi-arid Gujarat fit for farming, thereby establishing the State on the top in systematic and scientific development of the farm sector.

Improved diffusion of technology and better utilisation of water through various unconventional initiatives have helped expand area under cultivation and enhanced the crop productivity. Reasonable monsoon season throughout the decade along with rising minimum support prices from the Centre and extension of profitable cash crop BT cotton are the factors that led to superlative performance by Gujarat, it observed.

Farmers in the State have adopted more technology and value addition of agricultural produce to supplement their income. Increased agricultural production has not only increased the State farmers' income but also discouraged them from migrating to urban areas for jobs.

Assocham recommended that other States should also focus on small, minor irrigation projects and watershed facilities which are cheap and affordable.

Cardamom eases on increased arrivals

Kochi, July 12:

The cardamom market was nearly steady with some easier trend last week on increased arrivals at auctions held in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. However, good continued covering by exporters kept the prices nearly steady, according to trade sources.

Nearly 70 per cent of the arrivals at the auctions were of the new crop and rest from the previous crop. Demand is for new crop. However, arrival of 8mm bold capsules was at around 10 per cent only, they said.

Trade sources in Bodinayakannur told *Business Line* that 8 mm bold good colour was fetching Rs 1,100 a kg Tuesday.

The individual auction average, which was vacillating between Rs 700 and Rs 750 a kg at the auctions held in Kerala and Tamil Nadu during last week, has dropped to Rs 665 a kg at the CPA auction on Monday held in Bodinayakannur, because of the inferior quality of the material, they said.

Arrivals at the Sunday auction conducted by the KCPMC in Kumily declined to 58 tonnes from 76.5 tonnes on the previous Sunday, Mr P.C. Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, told *Business Line*. He expected arrivals of the new crop to increase in the coming days as the picking progressed.

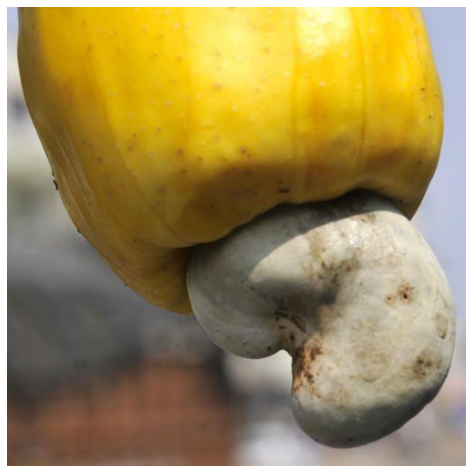
The maximum price fetched at Sunday auction was Rs 995 a kg and the minimum Rs 465 a kg. Individual auction average was at Rs 704 a kg, he said.

Exporters, he said, were actively covering while north Indian buyers were also buying but in small quantities. Exporters estimated to have bought about 60 tonnes last week. The early Ramzan this year coupled with non-availability of cardamom at this point of time from the lone competitor of India, Guatemala, has paved the way for good export buying. The competitive and rather viable price has also aided increased coverage, Mr Punnoose said. Export buying may continue till the end of the month, he added.

Arrivals contrary to the usual trend at this time of the year, continued to hover around 300 tonnes a week. Such heavy arrivals are also pointed out as the reason for the decline in prices in recent weeks, the sources said. Total arrivals during the current season from August 1 to July 10, 2011 stood at around 12,206 tonnes. Of this an estimated 11,895 tonnes were sold. Arrivals and sales in the same period of the previous season were estimated at 10,025 tonnes and around 9,810 tonnes, respectively. Weighted average price as on July 10, was at around Rs 1,004 a kg, as against about Rs 870 a kg same day last year. Prices were nearly steady at Kumily and Bodinayakannur on Tuesday. Prices in Kumily for graded varieties in rupees a kg were: AGEB 900-950; AGB 750-770; AGS 695-725; and AGS 1: 670-690.

Prices in the open market at Bodinayakannur in rupees a kg were: AGEB (7mm) 850 -900; AGB (6mm) 700 – 725; AGS (5mm – 6mm) 680 -700; and AGS 1: 650 - 660. Good bulk was fetching Rs 720–760 a kg.

Buying interest buoys cashew



Kochi, July 12:

The cashew market was buoyant last week with reasonable activity in all markets on good buying interest. Trades and offers were seen in a wide range, with W240 trading from \$4.85 to \$5.00 a lb; W320 from \$4.50 to \$4.65; W450 and SW320 at around \$4.50; splits from \$3.90 to \$4.00 and pieces from \$3.80 to \$3.90/lb (fob).

In general, selling ideas were at higher levels, trade sources in Mumbai said. Buyers were content to buy limited volumes for nearbys — they were looking for discounted offers for forwards, but there were no such offers from reliable processors.

Domestic market

The Indian domestic market was quiet after a month of good activity during which period prices moved up about 15-20 per cent for different grades, they said, adding the next round of domestic activity is expected in August.

Raw Cashew Nut (RCN) market was steady with Ivory Coast (IVC) and Ghana offering \$1,350-\$1,450 a tonne range, Bissau at \$1,675-\$1,725 range, Senegal/Gambia at around \$1,550 (c&f). Most of the activity was in the resale market. Logistic problems continued with delays in loading, apart from longer transit times. "It seems that total RCN shipments from West Africa may be more or less the same as last year (but India's share will be lower). However, in terms of kernel yield, there will be a significant shortage, especially for white/fancy grades," Mr Pankaj Sampat, a Mumbai-based dealer, told *Business Line*.

Kernel inventories

Kernel inventories in the main importing countries are low and buyers have been in market every few weeks to buy "hand to mouth" to keep things running. Due to the high prices, they have been buying small volumes for shorter spreads, he said. Delays in RCN arrivals into India and Vietnam means there is lower than normal inventory with shellers, and so they have not been under pressure in periods of lesser activity. This trend is likely to continue until supply improves significantly or buyers can reduce buying long enough for shellers to feel the pressure to sell.

There are rumblings of delays in shipments from some shellers, some of which might turn into defaults or renegotiation of price. Although this will not reduce overall kernel availability for the

second half, it will certainly mean supply distortion and higher prices if defaulted buyers are forced to buy afresh to fulfill their commitments or requirements, he said.

“Unless something dramatic happens, there is no reason to expect any change in the current trend of regular steady buying and firm prices for next few months, we would not be surprised if we see some more increase in prices in the third quarter which will depend primarily on Asian demand and the need for importing countries to keep buying for nearbys,” Mr Pankaj said.

It is too early to judge or even guess how things will develop for 2012 deliveries, he said. If contracting for 2012 is for lower volumes over normal periods, “We might see prices softening in the last quarter (especially if the southern crops are good). If the 2012 contracting is for short periods, that would mean the trend of regular buying every few weeks will continue providing a floor to the market.”

Nuts

Except for almonds, prices of all nuts (including peanuts) are higher than historical averages. This has not affected consumption too much so far, although there might have been some shifts within the category for some end products. It will be interesting to see what impact this has on roaster and retailer strategies for 2012 for nuts in general and cashews in particular. This and the outlook for 2011-12 crops will determine a realistic price band for cashews by the end of the year for the first half of 2012, the trade said.

Orthodox teas fetch Rs 10 less

Coonoor, July 12:

Orthodox teas, which are mostly exported, are currently fetching Rs 10 a kg lower than this time last year at country's various auction centres.

This week, the best grades orthodox teas fetched Rs 200-280 a kg in North Indian auctions and Rs 90-100 in South Indian auctions. The low-end fannings fetched Rs 95-105 in the North and Rs 50-60 in the South.

The CIS, West Asia, Germany and Japan supported North Indian orthodox teas while the CIS was the major supporter in the South.

Tippy teas

In the North, quality tippy teas remain the favourite with exporters.

“At Kolkata auctions this week, orthodox tea prices averaged Rs 168 – some Rs 10 less than this time last year. But, for the third consecutive week, the ‘second flush’ tippy teas sold between Rs 220 and Rs 330 a kg. Partially tippy teas sold between Rs 170 and Rs 200”, Mr Subodh Paul, Director, Contemporary Brokers Pvt Ltd, told *Business Line*.

“Almost 50 per cent of the present offer belongs to the type which Iran prefers but, we are yet to get the impact of Iran's demand. Besides, the payment position from that country remains uncertain. Unless free rupee trade is opened, prices may not increase. But, the volume on offer is expected to fall by 20 per cent in the next few weeks”, he disclosed.

Edible oil trade turns slack on continuous rain



Mumbai, July 12:

Volumes remained thin in the edible oils market as concerns over Eurozone debt, inflation in China and depressed commodity prices in general weakened Malaysian palm oil futures. Market sentiment drooped on absence of new demand in the local market.

Palmolein was up by Rs 2 as refineries raised prices by Rs 2. Resellers, however, sold at lower prices. Cotton oil increased by Re 1. Soya oil was Rs 2 down and groundnut oil lost Rs 5 for 10 kg. Sunflower and rapeseed oils rule steady.

Groundnut oil was firm in Saurashtra because arrivals of seeds were thin. Domestic futures declined toeing the foreign market line. Satisfactory rain in main producing States in the past week has raised hopes of of higher kharif sowing. As of July 8, 54.36 lakh hectares were covered under oilseeds.

Continuing rain, lack of demand and selling by resellers led to negligible volumes. Resellers traded 80-100 tonnes of palmolein at Rs 528-532. In Rajkot and Saurashtra, while the price of a groundnut-oil *telia* tin bounced back by Rs 15 to Rs 1,490 (Rs 1,475), loose (10 kg) rose by Rs 10 to Rs 965 (Rs 955). Liberty sold palmolein at Rs 535-537 in the local market. Ruchi's price for palmolein was Rs 534, for soya refined oil Rs 626 and for sunflower oil Rs 681. Allana's palmolein was at Rs 534. Resellers sold palmolein at Rs 528-530.

The August contract for crude palm oil on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives closed at MYR3,044 (MYR3,078), September at MYR3,034 (MYR3,073) and October at MYR3,031 (MYR3,070) a tonne. July contract for soya oil on National Board of Trade in Indore up to Rs 642.50 (Rs 643.60) and August fell to Rs 641.20 (Rs 642.40).

Mumbai commodity exchange spot rate (Rs/10 kg): Groundnut oil 960 (965), soya refined oil 628 (630), sunflower exp. ref. 650 (650), sunflower ref. 690 (690), rapeseed ref. oil 662 (662), rapeseed expeller ref. 632 (632), cotton ref. oil 645 (644) and palmolein 534 (532).

Wheat market sees dull trading



Karnal, July 12:

With trading being lukewarm, the wheat market witnessed a mixed trend on Tuesday.

Prices of dara variety witnessed a downtrend while desi wheat managed to maintain their previous levels. Sluggish domestic demand against ample stocks led to a marginal drop of Rs 5-10 a quintal in dara wheat prices, said Mr Sewa Ram, a wheat trader. Despite low arrivals of dara and no arrivals of desi wheat, market is not moving upwards, he added. Market may continue to rule around the current levels this week, said Mr Ram.

Dara variety was quoted at Rs 1,150-1,160 a quintal. Just around 200 quintals of dara variety arrived from Uttar Pradesh and the stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,150 while it traded at Rs 1,160 a quintal at the retail market. In desi wheat, prices of desi wheat varieties continued to rule flat. Tohfa variety quoted at 2,200 a quintal, Maruti sold at Rs 1,810, Lal Quila was at Rs 1,910, while A-1 variety quoted at Rs 2,060 a quintal. With not much trading in the market, desi wheat varieties are ruling flat, said Mr Ram.

Flour Prices

Following a down trend in wheat, flour prices decreased by Rs 10 and quoted at Rs 1,150 for a 90 kg bag. On the other hand, some buying lifted chokar prices by Rs 10 and quoted at Rs 490 for a 49-kg bag.

Sugar prices slightly firm on higher retail demand



Mumbai, July 12:

Spot sugar prices at the Vashi wholesale market ruled slightly firm on Tuesday on higher retail demand as the market was closed the previous day. Dispatches were higher than arrivals. Spot prices increased by Rs 8-10 a quintal in quality S grade sugar. M grade was up by Rs 20. However, due to the increase in resale selling pressure, naka and mill tender rates ruled unchanged with marginal Rs 3-5 increase – decrease on increasing inventory pressure at the higher level. The moral was steady and traders are waiting for any cues to lead sentiment, said market sources.

As the market was closed on Monday due to Ashadhi Ekadashi festival there was no activity at the upper level, a wholesaler of Vashi market said. Very few mills have offered tenders, and in the absence of active buyers, the volume was very thin. The Centre has clarified about no further addition. Relaxation in export quantity already declared has eased the expectation of higher out go from mills. If the local consumer demand support does not improve, prices will again come under pressure. However, from the next month, festival season will start in India and the demand is expected to rise, he added.

Sugar output

This year India's sugar production is far above at 242 lakh tones than 190 lakh tonnes last year. In the next season year also, the mills sector is expecting a further increase in production to about 260-265 lakh tonnes tracking higher sowing of sugar cane this year. According to the agriculture ministry data, as on July 8, total sugarcane acreage in the country is higher by 2.38 lakh hectors to 51.38 lakh hectors.

Monday being a holiday mood, about 10-12 mills offered tenders and sold about 20,000-25,000 bags (100 kg each) in the range of Rs 2,680-2,725 (Rs 2,680-2,730) for S grade and Rs 2,760-2,850 (Rs 2,760-2,840) for the M grade. Arrival in the market was 49-50 truck loads (each 100 bags) and local dispatches were higher at about 50-52 truck loads . In the London market, white sugar August futures price was up by 0.40 to 817.90 dollars (816.30 dollars) a tonne.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association sugar rates:

Spot rates: S grade Rs 2,771-2,851 (Rs 2,761-2,832) and M grade Rs 2,861-2,991 (Rs 2,841-3,001).Naka delivery rates: S grade Rs 2,770-2,800 (Rs 2,780-2,810) and M grade was Rs 2,830-2,900 (Rs 2,820-2,955).

Coconut oil prices perk up



Kochi, July 12:

There has been a steady upward bias in coconut oil prices over last week as several sellers have shifted from the spot to futures markets and availability has declined, Mr Talat Mahmood, President of the Cochin Oil Merchants Association (COMA), said.

The wide disparity between Tamil Nadu and Kerala prices have also been bridged with increased demand and large coconut oil inflows into Kerala. Going by the current trend, the prices are expected to remain stable for the moment and potential direction would be evident maybe a week later, trade sources said.

After the sharp fall of last week, coconut oil prices recovered to Rs 80 a kg in Tamil Nadu and Rs 84 in Kerala markets, Mr Prakash B Rao, Member of COMA, said. However, buying continues to be mainly from Kerala and the large industrial buyers were not very active. In fact, corporate buying price for copra was still at Rs 50 a kg as big players bid their time, assessing which way the market was turning.

The downward pressure on coconut oil was created as huge stocks built up in Tamil Nadu were being released into Kerala before the onset of the *Aadi* month, Dr K Satheesh Babu, Professor of Kerala Agricultural University, said. The huge influx of coconut oil, copra and coconut into Kerala has also helped to bridge the price differentials existing between the two States.

Dr Babu expected the falling trend to be a temporary phenomenon as the peak coconut production season in Tamil Nadu will end by July and prices are expected to recover from August.

adulteration

Marked price differentials between coconut oil and palm oil have always increased the tendency for adulteration. However, with palm oil prices ranging around Rs 59 a kg and palm kernel oil at Rs 74, the adulteration tendency is still being kept at bay. The increased availability of coconut oil would also dissuade adulteration, Mr Talat Mahmood pointed out.

Prices are expected to remain stable as big corporate buyers have built sizeable inventory of competing edible oils during the peak coconut oil prices of the last few month and are not expected to rush into the market. On the flip side, the huge stocks, which had been built up in Tamil Nadu, are being slowly being unwound and released into the market.

Hybrid varieties add colour to turmeric



Erode, July 12:

Spot turmeric prices increased on Tuesday with the hybrid variety evoking good demand from North Indian buyers.

“The north Indian traders have placed orders for hybrid variety which fetched an increased price of Rs 300/quintal. But the other varieties slightly decreased. The sales were normal. Out of

8,200 bags arrived for sales, 45 per cent of the goods were sold”, said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

“Turmeric prices in Nizamabad and Sangli are on a downward trend.. The rise in futures at Rs 7,990/quintal has not reflected in the increase of price in local market. Because of all these reasons, the price of spot turmeric was slightly decreased. Till the end of this month, the same price may prevail,” said the traders. In the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, good hybrid varieties arrived with an encouraging sales and the price has increased by Rs 100/quintal. In the Regulated marketing committee, though the prices were stable, the sales were encouraging as the officials said that quality goods arrived for sale. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, finger variety was sold at Rs 5,864-7,966 a quintal, root variety Rs 5,469-7,289.

Salem Crop: Finger variety was sold at Rs 7,432-8,710 a quintal; root variety at Rs 6,911-7,506. Out of the total arrival of 2154 bags, 452 bags were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, finger variety was sold at Rs 6,491-7,819 a quintal; root variety at Rs 6,300-7,160. Of the 193 bags that arrived, 182 were sold. At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, finger variety was sold at Rs 7,211-8,036 a quintal; root variety Rs 6,464-7,194. Due to good quality and demand, all the 636 bags arrived were sold. At the Regulated Marketing Committee, finger variety fetched Rs 7,460-8,089 a quintal; root variety at Rs 7,004-7,338. Out of 738 bags for sale, 722 were sold.

Chana, tur gain on buying



Indore, July 12:

Pulses and pulse seeds witnessed a mixed trend with chana and tur gaining, and moong (best) declining on weak demand. Pulses trading remained subdued, except for chana and tur, which gained on Tuesday on improved demand.

Chana, which had been sluggish in the past few days, has started rising on fear of declining stocks. Stockists, lying low until now, have gripped the futures market, leading to rising chana prices on the National Commodity of Derivatives Exchange. Consequently, spot chana prices gained Rs 50 at Rs 2,750-2,800 a quintal and chana (*desi*) ruled at Rs 2,600-2,700 a quintal. That also perked up chana dal (bold) in the spot by Rs 25 to Rs 3,450-3,475 a quintal. Chana dal (medium) was at Rs 3,350-3,375 a quintal and chana dal (average) at Rs 3,225-3,250 a quintal.

Tur rose on improved queries. Tur (Maharashtra) gained Rs 50 at Rs 3,200 a quintal and tur (Nimari) quoted at Rs 2,600-2,700. Tur dal, however, ruled firm, with tur (marka) remaining steady at Rs 6,100, tur (full) at Rs 5,400-5,450 and tur dal (*sawa* no.) at Rs 4,500-4,600.

Moong dropped on lack of demand, though arrivals were poor, too. In the spot market, moong (bold) declined by Rs 100 to Rs 4,100-4,300 and moong (medium) ruled at Rs 3,800-3,900 a quintal. Thousand bags of new moong arrived in Indore *mandis* on Tuesday, against 1,200 bags on Monday. Moong (monger), taking cues from moong (best), also declined to Rs 5,600-5,700 a quintal. Moong dal (bold) ruled at Rs 5,500-5,550 a quintal and moong dal (average) at Rs 5,200-5,250 a quintal.

Subdued demand kept urad steady. Urad (bold) sold at Rs 4,100-4,200 and urad (medium) at Rs 3,600-3,800 a quintal. Urad (mongar), on the other hand, declined by Rs 100 on weak demand to Rs 6,500-6,800 a quintal. Urad dal (bold) ruled steady at Rs 5,750-5,800 a quintal and urad dal (average) at Rs 4,850-4,900 a quintal.

Kisan cards to become smart cards

Hyderabad, July 12:

Soon farmers can swipe their kisan cards at ATMs or any farm utility service points and get access to their accounts.

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development is planning to convert kisan cards into a smart card. It is an IT-enabled card that turns kisan cards into normal debit cards. Farmers can withdraw whatever amount they want till they reach their credit limit.

There are about 10 crore kisan cards in the country, according to Mr P. Mohanaiah, Chief General Manager (Andhra Pradesh), said here on Tuesday.

Tenant farmers too would be given these cards to help them get quicker access to credit.

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