

July 27, 2011 22:50 IST | Updated: July 27, 2011 22:50 IST July 27, 2011

### **Timely crop management, the mantra for success**



IISR Mr. Azad with his harvested turmeric.

In the advertisement industry it is common for film stars to endorse certain products as brand ambassadors. But for farmers to follow a particular technology or grow a specific variety, the best endorsement comes from another farmer already practising it.

Mr. P. Chandra Sekhar Azad (70 years) from Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, is a brand ambassador for 'Prathibha' turmeric variety in the state.

Mr. Azad has been able to convince hundreds of farmers in the region to take up Prathibha cultivation. The Indian Institute of Spices research (IISR), Kozhikode, Kerala developed the variety.

### **Conviction**

“Nothing substitutes determination and hard work for succeeding in agriculture. Forget all other hurdles; if you possess the will to succeed, you can surely make it,” says the farmer.

Agriculture can never become a loss, if one makes use of new technologies and scientific practices available. Hundred per cent involvement coupled with timely scientific management and usage of modern technologies can definitely increase the productivity many fold, seems to be his strong conviction.

Mr. Azad turned to agriculture around two decades ago. Till the age of 50, he was running a small printing press at Vijayawada. "Later I turned to agriculture, cultivating turmeric, paddy, maize, banana, etc in my nine acres of land which I inherited from my father," recalls Mr. Azad.

Like other farmers in the area, he cultivated turmeric as the main crop, "But the crop did not prove to be profitable in the beginning. Low yields and high infestations ruined the yield," he adds.

The farmer's search for a high yielding and good quality turmeric variety came to an end when he happened to hear about a variety called Prathibha.

"I came across the variety developed by IISR nearly seven years back," says Azad.

### **New beginning**

He started growing the variety from 2004 on an experimental basis procuring 50 kgs of rhizomes. "I never realized that this could mark a new beginning in my faith on the variety and association with the institute," he adds.

During 2007-08 the farmer supplied 12 tonnes of seed rhizomes to the Horticulture Department, Nizamabad, Andhra Pradesh. During the subsequent year he supplied nearly 30 tonnes of rhizomes to Adilabad district, and another 12 tonnes to the Ranga Reddy district in addition to several farmers in and around Guntur district.

### **Secret of success**

During the last season, he cultivated the variety in 2.75 acres.

"I am following organic farming methods using minimum chemical fertilizers. "Timely crop management is the mantra for success in agriculture," he points out.

In his experience, Prathiba is highly resistant to rhizome rot while all local varieties such as Thekurpet and Duggirala are prone to infestation.

Harvesting is done with the help of bullocks. He also employs labourers for cleaning the rhizomes.

Cleaned turmeric is then boiled using huge turmeric boilers. The boiled rhizomes are then dried in sun for 20 days and polished using mechanical polishers. But still a major chunk of the produce is being sold as seed rhizomes.

“What makes Azad different from other farmers of his age is his readiness to adopt innovations.

Even at this age he is computer friendly. He keeps in constant touch with the scientists at each and every stage of cultivation through phone and internet.

### **Record maintenance**

“He maintains a record of all farm activities; clicks photos of the crop at regular intervals, and sends them to the scientists for their advice,” says Dr. V.A. Parthasarathy, Former Director of the institute.

You can contact Mr. Chandra Sekhar Azad at T-3, Maruti Pearls, Kunchanapally, NH-5, Tadepalle Mandal, Guntur - 522501, Andhra Pradesh, email: [pidikitiazad@gmail.com](mailto:pidikitiazad@gmail.com), mobile: 09490878942, .

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### **Call for more awareness on millet byproducts**

Though our country is the largest producer of many kinds of millets, they are not as popular as it should be, given their health benefits. The major constraints being the drudgery involved in domestic processing.

### **Value addition**

“The value addition through processing technology received little attention restricting the utility range and consumption patterns of small millet grains. There is a need to revive and add value to the foods prepared from such grains to promote large scale production and consumption for wider health benefits,” says Dr. B. Ranganna, Emeritus Scientist (ICAR), University of agricultural sciences, Bangalore.

A study was undertaken to study the innumerable value added products made from millets and their popularization at the University.

ICAR has been focusing on increasing the production and productivity of all small millets that are grown in the country, through its All India Co-ordinated Research Project on Small Millets (Headquarter is at UAS, Bangalore).

“We are presently engaged in collection, compilation and documentation of indigenous technical knowledge (ITK) on processing and utilization of small millets in India. In our research on making by products from millets we noticed that traditionally, the milled rice from the selected five small millets are used for the preparation of rice,” he says.

In some regions the rice is further size reduced and used as soji for upma preparation, and also rice is converted into flour and used for vermicelli preparation. Beyond this no product worth mentioning has been developed which could reach the urban population,” says Dr. Ranganna.

According to him the vision of the scientists is that malts from small millets should replace one day the commercial brands in the market, since nutritionally these are on par with them and can be made available to public at half the price.

### **Malt drinks**

“Malt drinks have been developed out of little millet, foxtail millet, kodo millet, proso millet and barnyard millet. These products are diabetic friendly (except the butter biscuit) due to low glycemic index.

“The major vision of this research study is to develop consumer friendly nutri-rich value added products that could be well accepted by all category of people of the society,” he adds.

For more details contact Dr. B. Ranganna, Emeritus Scientist (ICAR), PHT Scheme, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore 560 065, email: rangannab@gmail.com, mobile: 97400 10564

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Published: July 23, 2011 18:50 IST | Updated: July 23, 2011 18:50 IST Indore, July 23, 2011

### **Coromandel Agrico launches plant health developer Aura**

Coromandel Agrico Private Limited on Saturday launched 'Aura', a Plant Health Developer (PHD), to increase the yield and quality of crops including cotton, wheat, chilly and pulses.

One litre of Aura, if applied in four to five acres of cultivable land after 30 days of crop-sowing, would increase the yield, CAP Head (Sales and Marketing) R.K. Goyal told reporters here.

He added that Aura is derived through a multi-stage fermentation process using micro-organisms. It has been tested in field trials.

The product is being imported from the U.S.-based Cytozyme Laboratories Inc, which costs CAP Rs. 1,450 per litre, he said, adding that CAP and the U.S. company have entered into an agreement for the next 20 years for this.

CAP has planned to sell about 50,000 litres of the product in a year with an earning of Rs. 7 crore initially, he aid.

Speaking on the occasion, CAP Business Manager D.B. Sethi said CAP's insecticides, fungicides, herbicides and fertilisers were ISO 9001-2000 certified and leading brands among other competitors.

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Published: July 26, 2011 19:37 IST | Updated: July 26, 2011 19:37 IST KATTAPPANA, July 26, 2011

### **Winter vegetables ready for harvest in Vattavada, Kanthalloor**



Special Arrangement Beans cultivation at Vattavada, Idukki district:

The winter vegetable cultivation in Vattavada and Kanthalloor is ready for harvest for the Onam season.

Compared to the last Onam season, near total cultivable land in Vattavada has been brought under vegetable cultivation this time. In Kanthalloor also, the farmers are readying to harvest the vegetables in view of the season.

The Vegetable and Fruits Promotion Council, Keralam, (VFPCCK) plans to procure 2,000 tonnes of vegetables from these areas to be supplied in the State. It will also open vegetable markets to ensure remunerative prices for farmers as well as quality vegetables for the State during the Onam season.

Bindu Chandran, VFPCCK district manager, told *The Hindu* that the procurement of vegetables would start by the first week of August and the council planned to make it a continuous process to support the farmers.

This time around, large areas in other parts of the district had also been brought under cultivation, especially under *nenthuran* (variety banana) cultivation, which is in high demand during the Onam season.

Of the total vegetables to be procured, around 700 tonnes would be potato, she said.

Vegetables, including cabbage, beans varieties, tomato, carrot and green chillies are ready for harvest. This time, she said that garlic had been cultivated largely in Kanthalloor than Vattavada, which was once the only area known for garlic cultivation in the State.

The Swayasraya Karshaka Viparies has already been prepared to tap the Onam markets and the camps organised by the VFPCK for farmers have helped in increasing production in the non-vegetable cultivating areas in the district as well. A scheme to promote vegetable cultivation by housewives also ensured availability of quality produce, she said.

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### **Miaotong rice variety**

Where can I get information on Miaotong rice variety?

M. Chandra, Orissa

Miaotong rice is a traditional rice variety of Assam used in making a food delicacy. It is a popular tribal dish and with tourists. It is soon set to earn the status of being the first registered farmers' variety from Assam under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority regime. For details you can contact Dr. Pranab Talukdar Professor of Plant Breeding and Genetics of the Assam Agricultural University at 094350-92260.

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Published: July 27, 2011 20:47 IST | Updated: July 27, 2011 20:50 IST KARUR, July 27, 2011

### **Take action against encroachers of waterways, PWD officials told**



THE HINDU Caption: District Collector V. Shobhana chairing the farmers' grievances day meeting in Karur on Wednesday.

Patta transfer petitions to be disposed within 15 days

Desilt the waterways and irrigations channels in Karur district and clear them of any encroachments well ahead of the monsoon, District Collector V.Shobhana said here on Wednesday.

Addressing the farmers' grievances day meeting here Ms.Shobhana told the gathering that farmers would be greatly benefitted if channels were desilted and cleared of vegetation. Stern action must be taken against encroachers of waterways, she told the Public Works Department officials. By listening to farmers and heeding to their just requirements, officials could help increase farm productivity, she opined.

With respect to patta transfers, Ms.Shobhana said that from August 1st petitions seeking patta transfers should be disposed off positively within 15 days.

To facilitate this petitioners must provide all the required documents with proof. Those pattas involving revenue sub divisions transfers would be effected within 30 days, she added.

When farmers enquired on the availability of fertilizers and pesticides, Ms.Shobhana said that adequate quantity of agricultural inputs were available in the depots and primary agricultural cooperative societies .

Crop loans to eligible farmers were being disbursed in time, she said.

Ms.Shobhana lauded the pioneering efforts of farmer Duraisamy of Kumaramangalam village who had designed a deweeder and demonstrated its function at the meeting venue. Duraisamy is a recipient of the ``Velanmai Semmal" award.

A total of 59 petitions were received during the last month's meeting of which 23 had been replied to and the rest 36 under consideration.

District Revenue Officer T.Pitthaiah, Joint Director of Agriculture K.Jagadeesan, Joint-Registrar of Cooperative Societies Hema, working president of the Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association Mahadanapuram V.Rajaram, deputy secretary Kavandampatti R.Subramanian, National Agriculturalists Movement district secretary Esanatham Selvaraj, and others participated.

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Published: July 28, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 28, 2011 04:16 IST RAMANATHAPURAM,  
July 28, 2011

### Clown fish culture launched



MAIDEN: Fingerlings swimming around a sea anemone at clown fish tank at Chinna Erwadi. —  
Photo: L. Balachandar

: The clown fish culture, which is still at the research stage in various coastal and marine laboratories, has been launched by an Eco Development Committee sponsored by the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust (GOMBRT) at Chinna Erwadi near here.

The officials claimed that clown fish fattening was the maiden attempt in the country by a group of fishermen, who have little exposure to the culture of clown fish except a few days training.

A mini fish culture centre along with fibre reinforced tanks, aerators, UV filters and others, has been established at Chinna Erwadi, a seashore hamlet, with Rs.3 lakh loan derived from the GOMBRT.

As per the arrangement made by the GOMBRT with the Centre for Advanced Studies (CAS) of Annamalai University, the EDC members brought 500 fingerlings of *Amphipiron Ocellaris*, a popular and rare species of clown fish based in the Andaman Nicobar islands, from the CAS at a discount rate of Rs.50 each. Due to unscientific method of transportation, around 150 fingerlings were died on the way itself.

However, based on instructions from the biologists of GOMBRT and CAS, remaining fingerlings have been put into 10 tanks, which have been filled with the pumped seawater. Since clownfish maintains symbiotic relationship with some species of sea anemones, they have also been put in the tanks in order to create a natural habitat.

It is said that both sea anemone and clownfish would protect each other and chase away the enemies.

Arrangements have also been made to provide aeration and lights for the healthier growth of fishes. The women members of EDC feed them at regular interval. "Though it is a maiden attempt by the fisher folk, the preliminary observation of fish culture shows that the fingerlings have been growing extremely well. Within two to three months, the EDC members can sell each fingerling at the rate of Rs.300 and beyond. Since there is a huge demand for the clown fish, there will not be much problem in marketing. Moreover a buy back arrangement has also been made," says S. Balaji, Chief Conservator of Forests and Director, GOMBRT, who has initiated the project.

V. Deepak Samuel, Project Support Associate of United Nations Development Programme for GOMBRT and T. Anbazhagam, Bio-Diversity Programme Officer, said that the rate of mortality was very low.

It was going to be the pioneering effort in clown fish culture by fishermen group.

T. Gunasekaran, president, Chinna Erwadi, said that the idea was to showcase the fishermen that clown fish culture was a major source of income for the livelihood of fishermen.

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Published: July 28, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: July 28, 2011 04:13 IST MANGALORE, July 28, 2011

### **MCC plans planting of 20,000 saplings**

Dakshina Kannada Union of Working Journalists celebrates 'Vanamahotsav'



FOR POSTERITY: City Corporation Commissioner K.N. Vijay Prakash turning the sod after planting a sapling at Kadri Park on Wednesday when Dakshina Kannada Working Journalists' Union celebrated 'Vanamahotsava'. — PHOTO: R. ESWARRAJ

A “Vanamahotsava” was organised by the Dakshina Kannada District Working Journalists Union at Kadri Park here on Wednesday.

K.N. Vijay Prakash, Commissioner of Mangalore City Corporation, inaugurated the event by planting a sapling of “kakke” (“Cassia fistula”). He said that road-widening work had required cutting of a number of trees in the city and therefore planting more saplings was helpful.

The corporation would be planting more than 20,000 saplings across the city this year that would help in making the city greener, Mr. Prakash said while appreciating the initiative taken by the journalists to plant the saplings.

Harish Rai, President of the union, said the decision to plant the saplings had been taken last year.

Clifford Lobo, Range Forest Officer, Mangalore, said the department would plant 22,000 saplings this year in and around the city and 200 to 300 saplings would be planted in Kadri Park.

He said that 16,000 saplings were being planted near beaches in and around the city, by next month, to counter sea erosion. The saplings planted were of ornamental trees, fruit-bearing and shade-giving trees. Specifically, the saplings were of peltophorum, “badam”, “oora-honne”,

“gulmohar” (“delonix regia”), “Basavanapaada” (bauhinia, with leaves shaped like that of an ox's hoof), hibiscus (“daasavaala”) and “lavancha” grass, which prevent sea-erosion.

### **Suitable**

Pradeep D'Souza, Assistant Director, Department of Horticulture, said that shade-giving trees were more suitable for planting in Kadri Park as the soil heated up fast.

Mr. Lobo said the department had planted 1,000 saplings of “tabebuia avellanadae” (which have pink blooms and take three years to grow) in Radio Park, Nehru Maidan-RTO Road, and on both sides of the Kulur-NITK road, and had planted 1,000 saplings of the Singapore cherry trees throughout the city. Plans were on to source 2,000 to 3,000 ficus plants from Bangalore for planting on highways in the next two or three years, he said.

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**hindustantimes**



**Reuters**

New Delhi, July 27, 2011

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### **Current food inflation level unacceptable: Pranab**

Finance minister Pranab Mukherjee said on Wednesday food inflation at 8%, around the current level, is not acceptable.

The Reserve Bank of India on Tuesday stunned investors by raising interest rates 50 basis points and indicated it would continue with its anti-inflationary stance despite slowing growth in Asia's third-largest economy and uncertain global demand.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/726144.aspx>

## Weather

Chennai - INDIA

### Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Rain: 28.0 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 66%

Wind: Normal

**Thursday, Jul 28**

Max Min

34.4° | 23.7°

Sunrise: 5:53

Sunset: 18:37

Barometer: 1006

### Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

**Friday, Jul 29**

Max Min

34° | 25°

### Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday

**Jul 30**



30° | 25°

Rainy

Sunday

**Jul 31**



27° | 26°

Rainy

Monday

**Aug 1**



29° | 26°

Rainy

Tuesday

**Aug 2**



31° | 26°

Rainy

Wednesday

**Aug 3**



31° | 27°

Rainy

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# THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Thu, Jul 28, 2011 | Updated 06.15AM IST

28 Jul, 2011, 05.45AM IST, Sutanuka Ghosal & Madhvi Sally, ET Bureau

## Potato growers vexed as export orders dry up

KOLKATA | AHMEDABAD: Farmers in India's potato belt are heading towards a financial crisis.

They had loaded the vegetable incold storages hoping to get export orders from the CIS

countries. But with no business in sight, the glut has pushed down prices by . 2-3 per kg over the last week. Traders and farmers are holding huge stocks following a bumper crop in 2010-11 , estimated to be over 35-36 million tonne by the industry and over 38-40 million tonne by National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation.

"A fall in potato prices is owing to three major reasons. Firstly, India had a bumper production this year with a crop size of over 35 million tonne. Secondly, the export orders which were initially stated were not reached. Thirdly, the consumption of potato lagged by 10% compared to previous year, owing to the availability of green vegetables," said Sachid Madan, director, Technico Agri Sciences, a subsidiary of the cigarette-to-hotel major ITC Limited. He added that there was no possibility of exports this year with new crop arriving in the European market.

"Prices in the domestic market will further fall in October and November when cold storages start emptying the stores as new crop starts arriving," said Madan. Patitpaban Dey, a potato producer in Bengal, added: "Farmers had anticipated that there will be a huge demand from the export markets of CIS and China. They had loaded the cold storages with potatoes and stayed away from releasing them in the domestic market . But this did not happen and farmers are in a fix now.

They are not being able to recover the cost of their farming ." Bengal, the second largest producer of the crop, has produced nearly 95 lakh tonne of potato in 2010-11 . Prices in Bengal have plummeted by . 2-3 a kg. Potato producers have met the state agricultural marketing minister Arup Roy to help them tide over the crisis. "We are looking into the matter. We are trying to send these potatoes to neighbouring states," Roy. But with domestic consumption showing a drop, it will be difficult for the farmers to sell their produce in neighbouring states as well.

In the Jalandhar market, the kufri pukhraj variety is selling for . 3 to . 3.50 a kg and the kufri jyoti variety at . 4 a kg. New supplies from Hassan in Karnataka have arrived and kufri jyoti is

fetching . 7 a kg for and Atlantic, the processing variety, is getting . 10 to . 11 a kg. Jung Bahadur Singh Sangha, a potato grower from Punjab, said, "we are advising fellow farmers not to dump their produce in the market as prices might pick up," he said.

Potato farmers, traders and cold storage owners from the potato seed belt of Punjab have now persuaded the government to set up a Punjab Potato Development Board to promote potato consumption .

### *What's Going Against Potato?*

Traders and farmers are holding huge stocks following a bumper crop in 2010-11.

India had a bumper production last year with a crop size of over 35 million tonne; Bengal, second largest producer , produced 95 lakh tonne.

The export orders, which were initially stated, have not been reached yet.

The consumption of potato lags by 10% this year compared to the previous year owing to the availability of green vegetables.

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27 Jul, 2011, 04.41PM IST, Reuters

### **Sugar futures down 3 per cent on higher supply hopes**

MUMBAI: Sugar futures fell more than 3 percent on Wednesday afternoon on profit taking driven by hopes the government will release higher amount of non-levy quota for August after it deferred a decision over additional exports, dealers said.

At 3:36 p.m., the most active August sugar on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange was down 3.4 percent to 2,700 rupees per 100 kg. It had hit a contract high of 2,858

rupees last week.

In Kolhapur, a key market in top producer Maharashtra, the most traded S-variety fell 0.52 percent to 2,686 rupees per (\$61.05) per 100 kg.

"Market was waiting for non-levy sugar quota for August. There was talk in the market that the government will release higher quota for August as the festival season is beginning next month," said Ashok Jain, president, Bombay Sugar Merchants Association (BSMA).

Non-levy, or free-sale sugar, is sold by millers in the open market, but the quantity each mill can sell is fixed by the federal government on a monthly basis.

The government decision to defer allowing further sugar exports till after September also weighed on sentiment, traders said.

India is not in a hurry to allow additional sugar exports, Food Minister K.V. Thomas said on July 26. A leading industry body had asked the Indian government to allow exports of an additional 500,000 tonnes of sugar immediately.

India, the world's top consumer and the biggest producer after Brazil, should churn out 24.2 million tonnes in the current 2010/11 season and output may jump to 26.5 million tonnes in 2011/12, higher than the country's estimated consumption of around 22 million tonnes, industry estimates.

India can export 3 million tonnes of the sweetener in the 2011/12 season beginning October as it is likely to produce a surplus for the second year in a row, a senior official from trade house ED & F Man said on July 21.

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## **DM directs depts to finish natural disaster works within time**

July 27, 2011 11:56:22 PM

### **GP Semwal | PAURI**

The Pauri District Magistrate, Dilip Jawalkar, expressed dissatisfaction on the slow progress of the Rural Engineering Services in works related to natural disasters and instructed the concerning executive engineer to ensure timely completion of the works along with monitoring of complaints received. He said this while presiding over a meeting at the Pauri district headquarters.

Jawalkar instructed NIS to link the natural disaster control room with Internet, so that the complaints could easily be sent to the concerning department through e-mail for facilitating immediate resolution.

Taking serious cognisance on surrendering of the amounts released by the Kot Block Development Officer for natural disasters without any permission, the DM instructed officials to issue a show cause notice to the official concerned.

Jawalkar instructed officials of the Public Works Department and National Highways Authority to work swiftly for reopening motor roads blocked to traffic due to landslides caused by incessant rains in the district.

He directed Chief Medical Officer to temporarily shift the Sub Health centre, ANM centre Manjaleetaking precautions to the landslides. BJP Khirsu Mandal president, Rajesh Mandwal complained that the damaged condition of the four km long stretch of Matoli-Naikhat motor road approaching the Malwa village is posing danger to the village.

Responding to this Jawalkar instructed the PWD officials to execute work for the removal of the mudslide debris immediately. "All departments involved in natural disaster works should finish

their works without delay within the time frame set by the Uttarakhand chief secretary", stressed Jawalkar.

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# Business Standard

Thursday, Jul 28, 2011

## DGFT to approach SC over cotton export quota

Anindita Dey / Mumbai July 28, 2011, 0:40 IST

The controversy over the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) criteria for allocation of cotton export quota will now reach the Supreme Court, with DGFT proposing to appeal soon.

This follows the judgement of the Bombay High Court, which had ordered DGFT to extend the quota allocation process to August 8, which otherwise got over on July 15.

The high court had also struck down the eligibility criteria set by DGFT for getting additional export quota. The controversy relates to the registration and allocation of an additional million bales of cotton by DGFT on June 9, over and above the earlier 5.5 million bales.

DGFT has set a criteria that those exporters could get additional quota if the exporter has exported cotton in either of the two previous cotton years (October 1 to September 30) 2008-09 and 2009-10. Thereafter, allocation was done on a pro-rata basis with a ceiling of 4,250 tonnes (equal to 25,000 bales) and floor of 100 tonnes. An applicant can apply for a quantity which is the higher of its export of cotton in the two previous cotton years (2008-09 and 2009-10), subject to a quantity ceiling of 4,250 tonnes.

While striking down the criteria, the HC also ordered DGFT should receive, consider and process all applications between June 25 and July 6, while the deadline for application was set by DGFT at June 25. Those who have been allotted 100 tonnes quota will also not be allowed to process the quota till fresh allocation is done to all applicants. Officials said, by considering the applications beyond June 25, it will be unfair both to the sanctity of the deadline set by DGFT and to those who'd completed formalities by June 25.

## **Farmers feel the heat of soaring pesticide prices**

**Rutam Vora / Ahmedabad July 28, 2011, 0:38 IST**

Though the south-west monsoon has been normal in many parts of the country, barring a few, farmers have raised concerns about high prices of pesticides and agro-chemicals, which may rise further.

Prices of key insecticides and pesticides have increased 5-15 per cent over the past year and experts see prices rising further due to short supply. There is 10-15 per cent shortage in the total demand for select molecules.

The industry also attributes the rise in prices to an increase in the production cost, followed by the rise in crude oil prices. Farmers are facing a tough time due to a steep rise in the overall cost of production.

According to an estimate, the farm production cost has increased significantly and a rise in the pesticides and agro-chemicals is believed to have put additional burden on farmers. "It is getting difficult to continue farming activities, as the input costs are rising sharply. The pesticides and other agro-chemical prices have soared in the recent months. This year, the monsoon has already been late and high input costs are hurting farmers," said Maganbhai Patel, president-Gujarat state, Bhartiya Kisan Sangh .

However, the industry argues that while agri commodity prices have increased, giving better returns to farmers for their produce, the increased pesticide prices would not affect farmers.

"The raw material prices have increased substantially. Crude oil prices are also high, making the raw materials for pesticides costlier. Manufacturers are not overpricing the pesticides. They are just passing on the cost burden to consumers and charging normal profits," said R G Agarwal, group chairman, Dhanuka Agritech Ltd.

Going by the claims of industry sources, the generic agro-chemicals like weedicides, herbicides and pesticides, including cypermethrin, 2, 4-D amine, 2, 4-D ethyl ester and glyphosate are in short supply in the country and the imports from China are becoming costlier. A rise in prices of these generic agro-chemicals would mainly affect paddy and cotton growing farmers.

According to industry experts, prices of pesticides may continue to rise until there is a substantial increase in domestic production. "Pesticide and agro-chemicals demand is growing at about 10-15 per cent annually. The capacities are also growing but there are issues of raw material availability, which is causing prices to rise," said a senior official from Gujarat State Fertilizer and Chemicals.

India has been importing the key raw material, organophosphorus compounds (OP compounds) from China. But due to short supply of the compound, Chinese suppliers have increased prices, making imports costlier.

"This year, the prices of insecticides and weedicides alone have increased by about 30 per cent over last year. There is no price control in this segment and the multi-national companies are charging at their will. Farmers are left with no choice but to buy costly agro-chemicals," said Jaipal Reddy, secretary, Confederation of Kisan Organisations.

India's agro-chemicals and pesticides consumption is low in comparison with the developed world. While the US and Europe consume 2.5-3 kg of pesticides per hectare and Japan consumes 11 kg per hectare, India's is about 500 gms per hectare.

### **Better output expectations pull cardamom prices down**

**George Joseph / Kochi July 27, 2011, 0:57 IST**



Cardamom production this season is estimated to be 11,000-12,000 tonnes, almost steady compared to the last season. Harvesting, which is much earlier this time, is active now and will go on till the end of September.

According to market experts, the supply would not be short this year, as last season's stock is pouring into the market now. The market expected a price tag of Rs 2,000 a kg during the off season, hence leading to stocking. To the dismay of farmers, the stock this year is expected to be around 20,000 tonnes and would ensure regular supply through the year.

The market intelligence wing of Kerala Agriculture University had earlier projected a price tag of Rs 2,000a kg. Hence, a major chunk of last season's stock was carried over to this season. This has boomeranged as prices have crashed heavily. The average price in major auction centers

dropped to Rs 650-690 a kg as against Rs 1,000, a year before. In August 2010, auction centres quoted an average price of Rs 1,205 a kg and in September, this was Rs 1,340.

The market intelligence wing of Kerala Agriculture University had earlier projected a price tag of Rs 2,000a kg. Hence, a major chunk of last season's stock was carried over to this season. This has boomeranged as prices have crashed heavily. The average price in major auction centers dropped to Rs 650-690 a kg as against Rs 1,000, a year before. In August 2010, auction centres quoted an average price of Rs 1,205 a kg and in September, this was Rs 1,340.

### **Cotton exports in legal thicket**

**Dilip Kumar Jha / Mumbai July 27, 2011, 0:53 IST**

After small traders got relief on latest quota opening, large ones plan to take DGFT to court.



The ongoing faceoff between cotton traders and the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) over the additional million-bale (170,000 tonnes) export quota is getting into deeper legal complications.

After ginners and small traders got relief from the high court here last Wednesday, large traders are now planning to move court against DGFT's decision to recall their certificates to lower the unit quantity of exports. DGFT has recalled all export registration certificates of over 1,000 tonnes for re-validation, affecting 200 traders. Many of them had already signed contract agreements with buyers abroad; a majority say they'd also shipped a substantial portion of the allocated quantity of 4,250 tonnes each.

"Revalidating means we need to negotiate with overseas buyers again for a lower quantity of shipment. In some cases, we need to cancel our contract notes, which may mean loss of business for ever," said a large trader who received the DGFT notice.

DGFT had invited applications for export registrations from those trading firms that had shipped during the two previous financial years, 2008-09 and 2009-10. Those who'd only taken part in the current year's original export quota of 5.5 million bales were barred from the additional quantity. This decision was later challenged by 82 small traders, mainly ginners, in various high courts (HCs) across the country.

While the orders of various HCs had earlier directed DGFT to consider ginners' applications, the HC here had on July 20 ordered it to receive, consider and process all applications made prior to July 6, the final allocation date previously decided by DGFT.

DGFT had, in its original schedule, allocated 158,460 tonnes of cotton on a pro-rata basis to 227 valid applicants of the total of 581. According to the DGFT trade notice, 8,200 tonnes had been sequestered in obedience to interim orders of various HCs for the list of 82 writ petitioners and 3,339.2 tonnes sequestered in obedience to interim orders of the HC at Kolkata for two petitioners there.

Since, the HC here had ordered allocation of a minimum 100 tonnes to all valid applicants, the DGFT faced a crisis on quantity, resulting in the recall of all certificates of over 1,000 tonnes. The HC had ordered a higher ceiling of 1,000 tonnes for large exporters and, hence, cut the additional quantity from the previous DGFT's ceiling of 4,250 tonnes to accommodate all applicants.

"The DGFT would have received more applications had it invited it without any restrictions," said Chandulal Thakkar, a veteran cotton exporter.

Meanwhile, cotton prices have declined drastically since the government allowed additional exports on June 6. The price of the benchmark Shankar-6 variety is down 31 per cent to Rs 8,436 per quintal, while cotton futures for near-month delivery on the New York cotton exchange fell 35.3 per cent to trade at \$2,153 a tonne

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## THE HINDU Business Line

### Sara Cotton to begin farming in Ethiopia



Coimbatore, July 27:

Coimbatore-based Sara Cotton, a cotton firm, has raised \$6.4 million through a mix of equity and debt to fund its overseas farm-expansion plans in Ethiopia.

The company has raised a debt of \$4.5 million from Development Bank of Ethiopia and mopped up the remaining \$1.9 million from institutional investors and overseas high net-worth individuals, with the latter picking up a 14 per cent stake in the Indian firm.

Chennai-based Kalpathi Group is a strategic investor with a 58 per cent stake in Sara Cotton. Mr Mohammed Saleem, a cotton trader in this textile hub, is the promoter of the company. He has been providing consulting services to cotton farmers in Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Gujarat, and has a strong farm management team, which include soil analysts, cotton experts and agronomists.

### **Research undertaken**

According to a release from the company, these experts had undertaken research for almost two years in Ethiopia to ensure suitability of soil, water and climate before embarking on this expansion plan.

The company has decided to cultivate long-staple certified organic cotton and establish a modern ginning plant to process the cotton in Ethiopia. The estimated demand for the fibre has been put at 20 million bales. It plans to bring the fibre to India after ginning, as the demand for the long staple cotton is high in the domestic market.

It is targeting a revenue of \$50 million in the next 18-24 months.

### **Why Ethiopia?**

On the company's expansion plans, its Chief Finance Officer, Mr Sundhar Rajan, said that the project would encompass establishment of a cotton farm in Ethiopia on 25,000 acres to start with. "We plan to bring around 5 lakh acres under cotton cultivation over the next 5-7 years, enter into oilseeds and grow other agri commodities in the long term.

Asked why Ethiopia, Sara Cotton's founder-CEO Mr Saleem said the country offered an investor-friendly climate for corporates, including a three-year tax holiday, duty-free import of machinery and duty-free import of machinery spares up to 15 per cent of machinery value.

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### **Court stays export allocation of non-basmati rice**

But DGFT goes ahead with the process; 82 firms get quotas

New Delhi, July 27:

The Delhi High Court has stayed the allotment of export quotas to individual firms against the recent Directorate-General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) notification detailing the norms for shipping out 10 lakh tonnes (lt) of non-basmati rice.

“It is directed that no allotment of quota shall be made till the next date of hearing,” a division bench of the Court said in its order on Tuesday, while issuing a show cause to the DGFT for reply by August 10.

The DGFT, however, on Wednesday, went ahead with allocation of quotas to individual exporters in terms of its notification, dated July 19. The total 10 lt exportable quantity has been divided among 82 firms. The allotments, against applications invited through e-mail on July 21 and 22, were made on a first-come-first-serve basis and subject to a maximum individual quota of 12,500 tonnes.

“The DGFT has presumably not received a certified copy of the Court order, though the latter very clearly stays the allocation process,” said an exporter, who did not succeed in getting a quota.

### **SIMILAR SOUNDING NAMES**

The list of 82 successful allottees include Adani Wilmar, State Trading Corporation of India and Marubeni India Pvt. Ltd, besides a host of firms with similar sounding names: LMJ Overseas Ltd, LMJ Commercials Pvt Ltd, LMJ Logistics Ltd, LMJ Construction Pvt Ltd and LMJ Services



Ltd; LGW Ltd and LGW Industries; and ETC Commodities (India) Pvt Ltd and ETC Agro Processing (India) Pvt Ltd. All of them have bagged export quotas of 12,500 tonnes each.

The DGFT notification seeking inviting applications for export quotas had led to an estimated 1,000 intents being received within five minutes of the window opening at 1000 hours on July 21. On the whole, some 7,500 applications were received by the time DGFT closed its window the following day at 1700 hours.

The process of e-mail applications and selection of allottees on a first-cum-first-serve basis came under criticism from many exporters, especially the unsuccessful ones. The All-India Rice Exporters' Association claimed that it was prone to faulty quota allocation since the generation, transmission and receipt of applications was dependent upon server speeds and internet connection efficiencies, "which are beyond the control of the general applicant".

According to Mr Tejinder Narang, a grain trade analyst, the major flaw in the DGFT's quota allocation process was the absence of upfront financial commitments.

"The notification gives a successful allottee three weeks to submit a bank guarantee for 10 per cent of the value of exports, whereas this should have been made a condition precedent to the allocation itself. It would have ensured participation from only genuine exporters, while keeping out non-serious players out to only sell their quotas at a premium," he said.

In fact, the 82 successful allottees include even firms in the business of aluminium, antique arts and carpets.

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**N. Indian buying lends colour to turmeric**



Erode, July 27:

Spot turmeric prices improved on Wednesday following demand from North Indian States.

“Bulk buyers have received a few orders and also the markets have received restricted quantity of turmeric. As a result, prices increased by Rs 200 a quintal. The hybrid variety increased by Rs 400,” said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said: “After more than two months, Erode bulk buyers have received orders from north Indian merchants. So, the price increased. Sales were also very encouraging with 70 per cent of the arrivals being sold.”

He said in the futures market, prices increased by Rs 200-400/quintal and this reflected in the spot market also.

At the Erode Turmeric Traders Association sales yard, the finger variety increased by Rs 200/quintal, while the hybrid variety, Rs 402/quintal. At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the yellow spice increased by Rs 170/quintal. Due to quality issues, the price of spot turmeric decreased at the Regulated Marketing Committee by Rs 100/quintal, but 90 per cent of the stocks that arrived for sale were sold.

In the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety sold at Rs 5,466-7,493/quintal.

**Salem Crop:** The finger variety sold at Rs 6,999-8,091/quintal, the root variety, Rs 6,196-7,004. Of the total 1,943 bags that arrived, 410 were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 6,100-7,589, the root variety at Rs 5,610-6,819.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 6,689-7,477, the root variety Rs 6,263-6,963. Of the 1,006 bags that arrived, 983 were sold.

At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety sold at Rs 6,931-7,398, the root variety at Rs 6,276-6,899. Out of 851 bags kept for sales, 737 were sold.

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### **Premium rice exporters from South seek relief**

New Delhi, July 27:

Exporters of premium non-basmati rice exporters from the southern States have sought some clarity and facility to safeguard their earnings from premium rice exports.

In a communication to the Commerce Secretary, the South India Rice Exporters' Association exporting speciality rice such as Ponni, Sona Masuri and Matta rice said that while basmati rice export is permitted at \$850 a tonne by way of minimum export price (MEP), the July 19 notification by the Directorate-General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) allows export of all non-basmati rice at \$400 a tonne.

They said at a time when Thailand's premium rice akin to India's premium non-basmati rice was selling at \$500-600 a tonne in the overseas markets, an MEP of \$850 a tonne fixed for non-basmati premium rice early this year simply makes it unable to compete in the global market.

But by fixing the price of non-basmati rice export at \$400 a tonne, the cost competitiveness and export margins of premium non-basmati rice exporters would be in serious jeopardy as they have to bear the additional cost of shipping rice from designated ports and packaging.

Industry sources told *Business Line* that currently premium non-basmati rice varieties are restricted to packing sizes of 10 kg and less. They are also subjected to port restrictions with Ponni rice being allowed only from Tuticorin port, Sona masuri from Vizag and Chennai ports and matta rice from Cochin port.

Although all these three key premium varieties are grown widely in all the southern States, the existing port restrictions compel exporters to effect shipment of their export cargo only from the designated ports.

The packaging and transport cost in each tonne of premium rice exported alone add to another \$90-\$100 a tonne, they said adding that when the MEP was \$850 a tonne, this additional cost could be easily absorbed.

But in the light of the general relaxation and setting of MEP at \$400 a tonne for non-basmati rice exports, genuine non-basmati premium rice exporters feel that it would be advantageous for them to export in bulk from any nearest port of availability.

Stating that currently 50,000 tonnes of sona masuri and 25,000 tonnes of Ponni and Matta rice each are allowed from designated ports, sources said already 35,000 tonnes of Sona masuri from Chennai port has been shipped out.

While only 10,000 tonnes of sona masuri has been shipped from Vizag due to logistical cost and feasibility, they said a good quantity of these premium rice varieties remain yet to be shipped from Vizag and also Ponni and Matta rice from Tuticorin and Cochin ports respectively.

In these circumstances, the premium non-basmati rice exporters have pleaded for relaxing the restrictions on export by reducing the MEP to \$600 a tonne and alongside augmenting the packing size to 40 kg and less with the permission to export these premium rice varieties from any of the south Indian ports.

This would definitely help restore the industry's export competitiveness vis-à-vis South East Asian counterparts, besides enabling to differentiate the premium varieties of Ponni, sona masuri and matta rice from other general non-basmati rice in the global rice markets.

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## Chana slides on poor offtake



Indore, July 27:

Weak demand from millers and stockists pulled down chana prices here on Wednesday. Chana slipped to Rs 2,950 a quintal in the physical market even as futures gained.

However, traders expect prices to rebound on depleting stocks and speculation. Chana dal, on the other hand, ruled steady with chana dal (bold) being quoted at Rs 3,700-3,725, chana dal (medium) at Rs 3,575-3,600 and chana dal (average) at Rs 3,500-3,525 a quintal. Tur declined by Rs 50 a quintal on weak demand. Tur (Maharashtra) was quoted at Rs 3,000 and tur (Nimari) at Rs 2,400-2,600 in the spot market. Tur dal ruled steady despite subdued demand with tur (marka) being quoted at Rs 5,900, tur dal (full) at Rs 5,300-5,350 and tur dal ( *sawa* no.) at Rs 4,300-4,350.

Masoor, moong and urad remained unchanged despite weak demand. Masoor (bold) sold at Rs 2,850 and masoor (medium) at Rs 2,550. Masoor dal (bold) fetched Rs 3,400-3,425, masoor dal (medium) Rs 3,300-3,325 and masoor dal (average) Rs 3,175-3,200 a quintal. Moong and urad, too, remained unchanged despite lack of demand. Moong (best) sold at Rs 3,800-4,200 and moong (medium) at Rs 3,600-3,800. Moong (mongar) sold at Rs 5,600-5,700, moong dal (bold) at Rs 5,500-5,600 and moong dal (average) at Rs 5,200-5,300 a quintal.

Improved demand perked up dollar chana or chickpea by Rs 100 in the local *mandis*, where it was quoted at Rs 7,000-7,300 a quintal.

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### **Edible oils steady on lack of demand**



Mumbai, July 27:

A steady trend prevailed in the edible oils market on Wednesday in absence of demand as stockists covered good quantity for the forthcoming festival season on Tuesday.

Continued selling by refiners, ample supply and adequate stocks of imported oils at domestic level along with good progress in kharif sowing kept domestic physical and futures market bearish, pushing down soya oil and palm oil futures prices. Sunflower oil and cotton oil declined by Rs 5 and Rs 3 for 10 kg, tracking weak trend in producing centres. Rapeseed oil recovered by Rs 3 after Tuesday's fall. In Mumbai, bear traders sold palmolein at Rs 553 in resale. Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 560, soya oil at Rs 647 and sunflower oil Rs 700. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 555, soya refined oil Rs 640 and sunflower oil Rs 695.

Malaysia's BMD CPO August contract ended at (in MYR/tonne) 3,130 (3,117), September at 3,133 (3,119) and October at 3,130 (3,119). Indore NBOT soya oil August contract closed at Rs 661.50 (Rs 666.30) and September at Rs 661 (Rs 662.30).

**Mumbai Commodity Exchange spot rate (Rs/10 kg):** Groundnut oil Rs 970 (Rs 970), soya refined oil Rs 645 (Rs 645), sunflower exp. ref. Rs 655 (Rs 660), sunflower ref. Rs 705 (Rs 710), rapeseed ref. oil Rs 698 (Rs 695), rapeseed expeller ref. Rs 668 (Rs 665), cotton ref. oil Rs 666 (Rs 668) and palmolein Rs 555 (Rs 555).

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## Sugar drops on talk of higher free-sale quota



Mumbai, July 27:

Sugar prices at the Vashi spot market declined by Rs 10-15 a quintal on Wednesday, as the market came under fresh selling pressure on account of the expiry of the current month's free sale quota this weekend.

Talk of a higher free sale quota for August was a contributor to today's decline. Naka rates decreased by Rs 10-20 a quintal due to increased pressure on stockists to lift sugar from mills. Mills' tender rates were steady as they have offloaded most of the current month's quota, a leading wholesaler said. The tenders for August 5-10 by mills indicate that they are not under pressure to lift the current month's balance quota. All are eagerly waiting for the announcement of the new month's quota, with most traders expecting a higher quota for August, since the festival season begins from next month.

Rumours of 15.50 -16 lakh tonnes free sale quota for August weighed on physical and futures markets sentiment. With fewer mills offering tenders on Tuesday, volume was also thin. Local demand was less due to month-end. Arrivals at the Vashi market was lower at 38-40 truckloads (each 100 bags) and local dispatches were 42-43 truckloads.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates : S-grade Rs 2,801-2,846 (Rs 2,816-2,856) and M-grade Rs 2,856-2,991 (Rs 2,866-3,001).

Naka delivery rates: S-grade Rs 2,740-2,780 (Rs 2,750-2,800) and M-grade Rs 2,800-2,940 (Rs 2,850-2,960).

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## **Year's highest tea volume on offer at Coonoor sale**

Coonoor, July 27:

An analysis of brokers' listing indicates that 17.60 lakh kg is being offered for the thirtieth sale of the auctions of Coonoor Tea Trade Association to be held tomorrow and Friday.

This is the largest volume offered so far in 2011. It is some 8,000 kg more than last week's offer and 68,000 kg more than the offer this time last year. Of the 17.60 lakh kg on offer, 12.17 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 5.43 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades. As much as 16.46 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 1.14 lakh kg, orthodox variety.

The proportion of orthodox teas continues to be low in both the leaf and dust grades. In the leaf counter, only 0.60 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 11.57 lakh kg, CTC.

Among the dusts, only 0.54 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 4.89 lakh kg, CTC.

In the 17.60 lakh kg, fresh teas account for as much as 15.45 lakh kg.

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## **Sheet rubber saps on buyer resistance**

Kottayam, July 27:

Physical rubber prices continued to remain subdued on Wednesday.

While prices were already under pressure from increasing domestic production, higher stocks and imports, the hike in short-term interest rates by 50 basis points raised further concerns over the demand for the commodity as it will also affect automobile sales.

## **NO SELLING PRESSURE**

There was no panic selling in the market and prices slipped mainly on buyer resistance.

Sheet rubber dropped to Rs. 209 (209.50) a kg, as reported by the traders. The grade moved down to Rs 209.50 (210) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, according to the Rubber Board.



## FUTURES WEAKEN

RSS 4 weakened with the August series falling to Rs 207.36 (209.15), September to Rs 206.65 (208.78), October to Rs 206.50 (208.30), November to Rs 207.01 (208.50), December to Rs 208.40 (209.00) and January to Rs 209.99 (210.10) a kg for RSS 4 on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) improved to Rs 217.82 (214.96) a kg at Bangkok. The August futures increased to ¥386.8 (Rs. 219) from ¥ 380.5 a kg during the day session but then slipped to ¥ 386.4 (Rs. 218.78) in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates (Rs/kg) were: RSS-4: 209 (209.50); RSS-5: 206 (207); Ungraded: 200 (202); ISNR 20: 208 (208); and Latex 60%: 136.50 (137).

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