

Small tractor for farmers of small holdings

Staff Reporter

Company looking to sell product to the users directly

— Photo: K. Ananthan



Hands on: Vice- Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University P. Murugesha Boopathi tries out a small tractor handed over to the University by Mahindra &Mahindra for field testing in Coimbatore on Wednesday.

COIMBATORE: It does not sound like tractor. Nor, does it look like one.

To enable small farmers adopt mechanisation, the solution is also now available in a small size.

Mahindra Yuvraj 215 tractor with rotavator from Mahindra Samriddhi of Mahindra & Mahindra was handed over to Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) at the Agricultural Machinery Research Centre on Wednesday for field-testing, demonstration and promotion of mechanisation in intercultural operations of different crops.

The small, fuel-efficient tractor with a speed of 25 kmph, 15 HP, and haulage capacity of 1.5 tonne, is far removed from the conventional tractors in terms of size and use.

Handing over the tractor to P. Murugesu Boopathi, Vice-Chancellor of TNAU, Sudhir Shah, General Manager (Marketing – Special Projects), Mahindra Samriddhi, said while the conventional tractors were used for preparatory and sometimes harvesting operations, this tractor was designed to be used in post-planting operations such as weeding and crop spraying.

“Yuvraj is not a tractor. As an attempt to introduce mechanisation to small and marginal farmers, it is seen as an agent of social change. The university is the ideal link because scientists are the one who interact with the farmers regularly. Also, when the tractor reaches the farmer, the feedback will help us to come out with other implements,” he said.

Tamil Nadu was the third State after Gujarat and Maharashtra where the tractor was being tested.

It was launched in the other two States after being tested by farmers for nearly 200 hours.

Here too, the same procedure would be followed before the commercial launch of the product.

Sell directly

The company was looking to sell the product to the users directly.

The testing would be done as part of the memorandum of understanding the university signed recently with the company for promoting agricultural education and research.

S. Gandhimathinathan, Deputy General Manager, Mahindra Samriddhi, said in the last 50 years and even with 20 companies manufacturing tractors, there was a large gap in the number being manufactured and agricultural families owning them.

“Tractors are sold as an engineering product to a customer, and not like an agricultural input to a farmer. This is because there is no synergy between engineering and agronomy. This should be addressed so that mechanisation solutions are provided to the farmers,” he said.

Mr. Boopathi said the 100 per cent mechanisation that had been achieved in rice – from sowing to harvest – should be extended to other crops too.

“There is a need for mechanising the operations involved in sugarcane cultivation. Mahindra should adopt a model farm at the Sugarcane Research Station at Cuddalore and introduce mechanisation for all operations,” he said.

50 per cent subsidy

The tractor, priced at Rs. 2.15 lakh, was expected to get a subsidy of 50 per cent.

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<http://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/seta/2011/05/12/stories/2011051255791800.htm>

Managing papaya mealybug through bio control

Outbreak of papaya mealy bug, *Paracoccus marginatus* was noticed during 2008 on papaya, mulberry, tapioca, jatropha, vegetables, fruits, cotton, plantation crops, spices and flowers crops in different parts of Tamil Nadu causing extensive damage upto 90 per cent.

Three parasitoids *Acerophagus papayae*, *Anagyrus loeckii* and *Pseudleptomastix mexicana* were imported through NBAIL (National Bureau of Agriculturally Important Insects) from US.

Field trials

According to Dr. P. Murugesu Boopathi, Vice Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, We obtained the nucleus culture of the parasitoids from NBAIL for multiplication. Subsequently the parasitoids were released as field trials in the University campus.

He says:

“Training on mass multiplication of mealybug parasitoids was given to plant protection scientists from seven colleges, 36 research stations and 14 KVKs within a fortnight to take up mass production throughout the state immediately.

Short time frame

“Within a period of six months, 5,65,000 parasitoids were mass multiplied in a war footing manner and released in farmers field at 100 parasitoids / field / village or block in all districts of Tamil Nadu except Nilgiris. Since, no mealybug incidence was noticed in Nilgiris, the parasitoids were not released.”

“The technology is very well received by the farmers. Previously, on an average 2 sprays were given for a single crop of mulberry and 20-24 sprays in papaya and ten sprays in cassava by the farmers.

Amount saved

“An amount of Rs.122 crores have been saved by rural farmers for not advocating pesticide application for the past six months in papaya, mulberry and cassava. Due to release of mealybug parasitoid an amount of Rs.435 crores have been saved from loss due to the invasive pest in above three crops,” adds Dr. Boopathi

Two thousand parasitoids were also given to Kerala Agricultural University for release.

Anticipation

“We anticipate further flare up of mealybugs, since summer is in progress. In order to prevent mealybugs damage all the research stations were asked to gear up mass production of parasitoids to meet out the demand and release the parasitoids wherever there is infestation,” says Dr. Boopathi.

For further details contact: Dr. E.I. Jonathan, at 94890 56704, Director, Centre for Plant Protection Studies, TNAU, Coimbatore:

Date:12/05/2011 URL:

<http://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/seta/2011/05/12/stories/2011051255281800.htm>

FARMER'S NOTEBOOK

Multiple varieties and different cropping pattern for higher income

M.J. PRABU

The farmer gets an annual income of more than Rs. 7 lakhs

— Photo: M.J. Prabu



Bright Idea: Sadananda modified his old scooter into a power sprayer for spraying.

Farming as a profession, requires patience. Normally, the farmer need not depend on anybody for obligations.

“Though today this might not be true for several farmers in the country, I want to differ on this. Look at my area, just 2 acres and some cents, and my annual income is between Rs. 7 lakh and Rs. 8 lakh in a year,” says farmer Sadananda from Tapasihalli village, Doddaballapura taluk, Bangalore rural district proudly.

“Earning money is not a difficult job for farmers. The secret lies in making use of the available land area and making best use of available resources and technologies,” he says.

Not satisfactory

Mr. Sadananda started cultivating vegetables initially and realized a reasonable income. But he says “the income and marketing did not prove satisfactory”.

He planned the cropping pattern in such a way that it included a combination of perennial, annual, and seasonal crops as well as livestock rearing.

Accordingly, he planted 50 coconut trees, most of them around the field borders, and also planted Chikku, Jack (bearing round the year), Agase (fodder trees), Teak, Silver Oak, Pongamia and other trees. In about 20 cents he planted arecanut and adopted

organic mulching.

“Till 2003-04, I planned my own cropping pattern including dairy, sheep and biogas and obtained a net income of around Rs. 3 lakh. During 2005-06 I came into contact with Rural Bioresource Complex Project (RBRC) project staff from University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, and acted on their advice to shift the cropping pattern from more of vegetables to floriculture, nursery raising, adding improved breeds of sheep, vermicomposting, backyard poultry, and azolla production,” he explains.

Poultry

The farmer started rearing of giriraja and girirani poultry birds in the arecanut plantation by using shade net as fencing material and planted rose in one acre and twenty cents of land.

Subsequently, he started raising a vegetable nursery in an area of 10 cents based on the local demand. Two cross-breed cows generate 6,000 litres of milk annually.

A water storage tank dug at the entrance to the field is used for fish rearing and also for irrigating the crops.

“Since I got free cow dung I set up a bio gas plant and also erected drip irrigation to use water judiciously. Since labour is a problem, I modified my old scooter into a power sprayer for spraying, and fertigation for my crops,” he adds.

According to him, money generation serves as a big energy booster for a farmer. “What farmers in our country need today is finance. Practically all other inputs are available for them.

Must be practical

Whatever be the technology, they must be able to deliver results — be practical and feasible. Merely talking cannot solve the problem,” seems to be his conviction.

He further adds, “If you look at some of the available government and international websites, they give details of the area of sowing, the seasons, cropping and other information. But in reality this information does not help grassroots farmers. Of what use are these data for farmers when they are suffering?” he asks.

There is absolutely no basis to expect the impossible. Careful study, interacting with other experienced farmers and experts alone will help, according to him.

Good example

“A field should be like a kirana store (provision store),” he says.” One can get almost any edible item from the shop. Similarly a farmer must start growing different crops along with fish, poultry, and cattle. Crops are like long term deposits and animals are for the short term, that mature in some months. There is a much needed safety and lesser risks for a farmer practicing more than one avocation. Even if one fails, the other will bail him out,” he explains.

Several awards

Mr. Sadanand has been conferred with several State and national awards in recognition for his work on integrated farming.

“The most important features of Mr. Sadananda's farming are use of own manure, least dependence on external input, and use of family labour.

“In view of well balanced combination of enterprises the annual income generated from seasonal, annual perennial, livestock, and fishery is encouraging and motivating many farmers' in the area to follow him,” adds Dr. K. Narayana Gowda, Vice Chancellor of the University.

For more details readers can contact Mr. Mr. Sadananda at Tapasihalli village, Doddaballapura taluk. Bangalore rural district, phone: 808-7659151 and mobile No.9342022146.

Date:12/05/2011 **URL:**

<http://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/seta/2011/05/12/stories/2011051255061700.htm>

FARM QUERY

Increase milk yield

Is there any simple method to increase milk yield from my 10 cows?

P. Rajaratnam,Andhra Pradesh

A farmer Mr. Mannubhai Vankar feeds his cattle with leaves of Hibiscus(in the form of powder) to increase milk yield . The leaves are shade dried and ground it into fine powder. About 125g powder is given orally to the animal for 7 days (or 150g for five days). The oral administration must be given for at least 15 days to achieve better milk yield. For details contact Mr. Mannubhai Shahera Taluk, Godhara, Panchmahal district, Gujarat -389 210 Mobile : 9979564629.

Date:12/05/2011 **URL:** <http://www.thehindu.com/2011/05/12/stories/2011051251740500.htm>

Not so sweet season for mango growers

Correspondent

VIZIANAGARAM: Export of mangoes to upcountry markets from here is likely to be affected this year for two reasons — due to fog at the flowering stage and later due to strong gales.

Debt trap

According to rough estimates, the crop loss is put at over 50 per cent. Growers, who usually take mangroves on lease from farmers and reap the crop are the worst-hit.

G. Srinivasa Rao, a grower, lamented that he paid more amount for lease than last year but the climatic conditions pushed him into a debt trap. He said that majority of growers paid Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 30,000 per acre as lease amount.

Mango Growers' Association, which markets the fruit in New Delhi and Kolkata, is not sure whether it will be able to utilise or not all the 27 rakes (each rake consists of 42 – 43 box containers) it has indented with the Railways.

Last year, the association utilised the same number of rakes and transported 33,888 tonnes of mangoes. The Railways netted Rs. 4.84 crore then. The freight charge for each rake is Rs.18 lakh this season.

Station Manager D. Jagadeeswar Rao told The Hindu on Wednesday that so far 11 rakes only were sent to New Delhi and the association had scheduled the last (the 27th rake) despatch on June 6.

In 2005, the station registered a record by netting Rs. 6.53 crore by transporting 40,907 tonnes of mango. Again in 2009, the earnings touched its peak of Rs. 6.05 crore, he said and added that this year his expectations were short-lived due to adverse climatic conditions.

Date:12/05/2011 **URL:** <http://www.thehindu.com/2011/05/12/stories/2011051262570300.htm>

New rice variety being developed

Special Correspondent

CHANDIGARH: The CCS Haryana Agricultural University (HAU), Hisar, is focusing on development of a variety of rice that will require much less water for cultivation than the traditional varieties.

Stating this on Wednesday, HAU Director of Research R.P. Narwal said that to save irrigation water in cultivation of rice, one of the promising approaches could be to develop aerobic rice that combined the drought- resistant characteristics of upland varieties, grown on non-flooded sloping islands, with high yielding traits of lowland varieties that are grown in irrigated flooded fields.

Research on development of water-efficient "aerobic" Indica and Basmati rice varieties had already been initiated by a team of scientists of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology Department and Rice Research Station, Kaul, he added.

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<http://www.thehindu.com/2011/05/12/stories/2011051260980300.htm>

Farmers demand dissolution of all cooperative banks

Correspondent

They say they are made to borrow at high interest rates

Huge loans given to sugar factories and other industries by MSCB Farmers suffering at the hands of intermediaries

Kolhapur: Farmers under the leadership of Shetakari Sanghatana chief Raghunathdada Patil have demanded that all district central cooperative banks in Maharashtra be dissolved now that the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank Ltd.(MSCB), which is the apex bank, has been dissolved.Mr. Patil told presspersons at Islampur in Sangli district on Tuesday that the very cooperative structure in the State and district level had been a creation of the Congress.Farmers had been suffering at the hands of intermediaries and had to borrow credit at high interest rates, hence they should be dissolved and credit given to them directly.Referring to the sanction of huge loans to cooperative sugar factories and other industries by MSCB,Mr. Patil said loans worth crores of rupees remained unpaid because of the State government's guarantee.

Wilful defaulters

Mr. Patil said it was because of the guarantee and the government's special package that most sugar barons and other chiefs of cooperative industries had not paid their dues.He said the public money should not be utilised for wilful defaulters. He alleged that the

Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) were misusing power and money.

Estimated dues

There were dues estimated at Rs. 188 crore of Pravara Co-operative Sugar Factory owned by the Congress leader Balasaheb Vikhe Patil and Rs. 90 crore of Sanjeevani Co-operative Sugar Factory owned by the NCP leader Shankarao Kolhe, Mr. Patil said.

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Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Thursday, May 12

Max Min

40.8° | 26.9°

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 75%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 5:44

Sunset: 18:26

Barometer: 1004.0

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Friday, May 13

Max Min

39° | 27°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday

May 14



37° | 27°

Sunny

Sunday

May 15



37° | 27°

Sunny

Monday

May 16



37° | 27°

Cloudy

Tuesday

May 17



35° | 27°

Cloudy

Wednesday

May 18



34° | 25°

Partly Cloudy

Wheat procurement exercise nearing completion

May 12, 2011 10:35:58 AM

Staff Reporter | Bhopal

The exercise of wheat procurement is nearing completion in the State. However, the arrangements regarding purchase of wheat, payment of price to farmers and safe storage of procured wheat, are being constantly monitored right from the top administrative level to the field staff. In this connection, the Chief Secretary Avni Vaish held video conferencing through which he apprised himself of the progress of wheat purchasing on support price in the divisions including Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain, Chambal, Gwalior, Jabalpur and the districts of the aforesaid divisions.

During the video conferencing, Vaish directed the divisional commissioners and collectors to ensure necessary arrangements for safe storage of procured wheat and, if needed, they should extend cooperation for storage of wheat in the neighbouring districts. The Chief Secretary told the commissioners and collectors that the requisition for gunny bags is made as per the estimation of the wheat purchase so that there is no interruption in supply of gunny bags to the districts requiring it.

Vaish further said that the farmers are paid the declared support price along with bonus amount for the wheat sold out by them. At the same time, he asked the collectors and commissioners to keep vigil on arrangements of transportation of procured wheat. The Chief Secretary stated that the Transport Commissioner is camping in the state capital for the last three days to oversee the arrangements of transportation. The Regional Transport Officers (RTOs) with the cooperation of the administration should acquire trucks, he added.

The Chief Secretary further observed that immediate steps should be taken if there arises any problem in the work of wheat procurement.

The Principal Secretary R Ramanujam and Commissioner Food Ajit Kesari apprised themselves of various aspects of wheat procurement division and district wise and issued necessary guidelines.

'Pay full attention to interests of farmers'

May 12, 2011 10:36:14 AM

Pioneer News Service | Gwalior

Full attention should be paid to the interest of farmers while acquiring land for government cases. In this connection, the guideline of the State government should be complied seriously and the work on the land should be started only after paying 80 per cent compensation amount of land acquisition to the farmers.

The collector Akash Tripathi to the officers concerned while reviewing the cases of land distribution gave these orders. In a meeting held in state health management institution, the in charge SDO Revenue AK Rohatgi, Gwalior tehsildar Raghvendra Pandey and other revenue officers and officers of water resources, PWD, power Grid Corporation and SADA were present.

Tripathi ordered the officers and Tehsildars to work with coordination and complete cases of land acquisition, delimitation and division. The land acquisition amount should be distributed speedily where legal process has been completed and work should be started on acquire land. The Collector told the water resources department officers to send the copy of Gazette notification and advertisement published in the paper to the district office of land acquisition branch so that action could be taken to settle those cases.

It was stated in the meeting that 80 per cent compensation amount has been paid to the farmers for Parsen tank, construction of Swarn Rekha Canal of Ramtapura, Jaganapura, Manpur-Gird, Goshpura and Mahalgaon.

Govt directs agencies to procure wheat properly

May 12, 2011 10:36:21 AM

Staff Reporter | Bhopal

The wheat procured on support price in the State will not be allowed to be spoiled. The responsibility of warehousing of the wheat has been entrusted with the District Collectors. Today directives have been issued to them in this regard. The three Government agencies — Krishi Upaj Mandi Board, Cooperative Marketing Federation and Warehousing Corporation — will make available temporary godowns to store an additional 7 lakh metric tons by May 20. With this the total capacity of storing will be increased to 33 lakh metric tons presently.

According to Principal Secretary Food and Civil Supplies R Ramanujam, in view of the procurement of large quantity of wheat, the districts have been alerted to ensure safe storage of the wheat. The district collectors have been entrusted with the responsibility of making arrangements for the godowns and asked that wheat procured should not be damaged or spoiled at any rate. The increase in storing rate made recently for the private godowns should be publicized in all regions so that godown owners come forward with proposal for renting their warehouses for wheat storage. The collectors will have the powers for acquisition of such godowns.

As per the target fixed earlier the government had made arrangement for storing 33 lakh metric tons of wheat. To meet this target there was necessity for godowns for storing seven lakh metric tons additionally. In view of this the government has entrusted the responsibility of creating temporary godowns for the capacity of seven lakh metric tons to its three agencies. Among them, the MP Warehousing Corporation has created storage arrangement of three lakh metric tons, the Marketing Federation and the Mandi Board has created storing arrangement of two lakh metric tons each on technical basis. These godowns will be ready for storage of wheat by May 20. With this, the total warehousing capacity will reach 33 lakh metric tons. Activities of acquisition of godowns and taking them on rent will carry on separately.

The process of making available gunny bags is continuing. The load of gunny bags purchased from Kolkata recently has already reached the state. Now the bags are being dispatched to the

concerned areas as per their demand. At present, there is no shortage of gunny bags in the state vis-a vis wheat procurement.

Haryana records second highest arrival of wheat

May 12, 2011 10:40:07 AM

PNS | Chandigarh

Haryana has recorded second highest arrival of wheat this season. Over 65.55 lakh metric tonnes of wheat has already arrived in the various mandis of the State as against total arrival of 63.61 lakh metric tonnes during the last year. The highest wheat arrival of 69.24 lakh metric tonnes was recorded in 2009-10.

HS Chattha, Food and Supplies Minister said that the State had already surpassed its wheat arrival target of 65 lakh metric tonnes set for the current season.

Out of the total arrival of wheat, over 65.51 lakh metric tonnes of wheat have been purchased by the Government procuring agencies and the rest 4084 metric tonnes by the traders, he added.

District Sirsa was leading in wheat arrival where over 9.34 lakh metric tonnes of wheat had so far arrived in the mandis, followed by district Fatehabad where over 6.68 lakh metric tonnes of wheat had arrived in the mandis.

HAU Director stresses on water conservation during rice cultivation

May 12, 2011 10:40:12 AM

PNS | Chandigarh

Director of Research, CCS Haryana Agricultural University (HAU), Hisar, Dr RP Narwal on Wednesday said that to save irrigation water in cultivation of rice, one of the promising approaches could be to develop aerobic rice that combined the drought resistant characteristics of upland varieties, grown on non-flooded sloping islands, with high yielding traits of lowland varieties that are grown in irrigated flooded fields.

Realising the ever deepening problem of water scarcity, HAU has focused on development of such a variety of rice that will require much less water for cultivation than the traditional varieties. Research on the development of water-efficient 'aerobic' Indica and Basmati rice varieties has already been initiated by a team of scientists of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology Department and Rice Research Station, Kaul of the university.

According to Dr Narwal aerobic rice does not require puddling and submergence and saves water up to 70 per cent. Moreover aerobic rice also demonstrates efficient use of fertilizers, low incidence of pests or diseases and reduced methane emission.

Haryana promotes duo to Joint Director: Haryana Government has promoted Deputy Director in Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila University, Khanpur Kalan in district Sonapat and Deputy Director in Guru Jambheshwar University, Hisar J K Duhan, and Anand Sarup to the posts of Joint Director.

KU approves academic committee: Admission Committee of Kurukshetra University (KU), Kurukshetra, which met under the chairmanship of the KU Vice Chancellor Prof D D Sandhu, approved academic calendar of the varsity which would be implemented uniformly in all the colleges and institutions affiliated to it. It was also decided in the meeting that the new academic session in the varsity and in all the colleges and institutions affiliated to it would commence from July 1, 2011. The admission process in all the departments would last up to July 15.

Business Standard

Thursday, May 12, 2011

Oilseed output to hit 30 mn tonnes

Rutam Vora / Ahmedabad May 12, 2011, 0:35 IST

Govt estimates based on better yield due to favourable monsoon, increase in acreage.

India's oilseeds output is estimated to hit a record high of 30.25 million tonnes for the year 2010-11. The growth in production is attributed to a favourable monsoon and a marginal increase in

oilseeds acreage. Taking a cue from the estimates, experts anticipate a dip in imports of edible oils by half a million tonnes this year. Higher output might also help ease inflation and bring down edible oil prices.

According to revised production estimates for 2010-11 released by the Ministry of Agriculture, oilseeds production will touch 30.25 million tonnes, up from the earlier 27.8 million tonnes. Production will increase by almost six million tonnes from 24 million tonnes recorded last year.

B V Mehta, executive director, Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA), said: "Our imports of edible oils may drop to around 8.5 million tonnes against 9.2 million tonnes imported last year. Capacity utilisation has improved due to higher domestic output. Presently, millers are operating at a capacity utilisation of around 65-70 per cent against 40-50 per cent last year."

The rise in oilseeds production is primarily attributed to a favourable monsoon and a marginal rise in the acreage — from 9.3 million hectares in 2010 to 9.5 million hectares in 2011.

"Oilseed production in the country has been higher than last year. This is mainly because of the increased yield. However, there has been a small increase in the area under oilseed cultivation too. But a favourable monsoon this year has given a good yield," said Mehta.

The yield for the current year has remained in the range of around 950-1,050 kg per hectare, the highest in the last three years.

"India's edible oil prices are linked to international prices. There has been some fluctuations in recent times. But in the domestic market, edible oil prices have remained lower due to increased crushing activity. The demand is high but with robust production scenario, edible oil prices may remain under pressure," said an official of the Central Organisation for Oil Industry & Trade. India's per capita consumption of edible oils is estimated at around 13.5 kg, up from around 11 kg in 2008.

Soyabean and groundnut are among major oilseeds crops cultivated in India. Government estimates said soyabean production will touch 12.59 million tonnes, while groundnut would cross the seven-million-tonnes mark this year.

Coffee traders hold on to exports, await global price rise

Debasis Mohapatra / Bangalore May 12, 2011, 0:33 IST

Following the recent slump in international prices, coffee growers and traders in India are adopting a 'wait and watch' policy, expecting a price rise after the monsoon.

"Coffee prices in the international bourses have witnessed substantial downward correction in the last two weeks. Post-correction, Indian planters are less inclined to sell their produce to international buyers and want to wait till the post-monsoon period," said Ramesh Rajah, president, Coffee Exporters Association.



Arabica prices in the international market have dropped by 26 per cent to \$2.3 per pound in the past few days from \$2.9 per pound a month before on the ICE Exchange. Similarly, robusta prices have corrected by 10 per cent to \$2,570 per tonne in Liffe Futures in London from \$2,700 per tonne.

Industry experts said the downward price revision was attributed to pulling out of US pension funds from the commodity market and higher supply from Brazil.

"Exports in the first four months of this year has seen a significant rise. However, this will slow down in the wake up week price level in the international market," Rajah added.

India's coffee exports rose 46.4 per cent to 142,509 tonnes, during January-April on the back of strong demand from international buyers. While arabica exports jumped 47 per cent to 30,745 tonne in the first four months, robusta shipments surged 58.4 per cent to 77,978 tonne during the same period.

Rajah said Indian exporters will go slow on exports due to the ongoing harvesting season in Brazil. A section of coffee growers echoed similar sentiments. However, they said India will be least affected in such a scenario.

“Prices of arabica and robusta have seen significant correction in the recent past. However, Indian planters are less affected, as more than 80 per cent of arabica and 60 per cent of robusta have already been trans-shipped during the first four months this year,” said Sahadev Balakrishna, chairman of Karnataka Planters Association.

Balakrishna said despite price correction in the international market, domestic prices were unlikely to be revised drastically in the near term. About price expectation in the post-monsoon period, he said prices would see an upward trend from the first week of June.

“Normally, price revision in international bourses start from June onwards, as Brazil goes through winter during this period. Depending on the possibility of frost in the coffee growing regions of Brazil, future prices of this commodity will be determined.”

A Hyderabad-based trader said the recent price correction was overdue because the rise was not supported by fundamentals and driven by hedge fund speculation. “We will rather wait for the price movement in coffee than entering into an export contract now,” he said.

Surge in pepper futures may not last beyond June

George Joseph & Sharleen D'Souza / Kochi May 12, 2011, 0:32 IST

Harvesting of crop to be complete domestically and abroad in weeks. The surge in the price of black pepper in the futures market over recent months shows no sign of coming down in the immediate future, though observers feel it can't last beyond June.



The futures price per quintal was at an all-time high of Rs 30,208 yesterday; it was Rs 15,991 a year before. It may go even higher this month. "We still are bullish and see pepper reaching an upside of Rs 32,000 per 100 kg in the next one week on the futures market," said Faiyaz Hudani, senior research analyst at Kotak Commodity.

This situation may hold till end-June, but not beyond, say observers. The new crop in Malaysia, Brazil and Indonesia would be ready in six to eight weeks. Vietnam is yet to market 65 per cent of its fresh crop. So, global supply is likely to increase during July-September. Overbought Indian pepper futures would burst unless overseas demand increases very sharply, said a trader in the spot market here.

Based on earlier reports that global supply would shrink, Indian futures took a speculative route. According to leading exporters, this was not in line with the reality and the increased supply will begin to impact the price line after a couple of weeks.

India has been a net importer since 2009. This year, with Indian prices staying high, more imports will come into the country, said experts.

Harvesting will be over by the end of this month in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. It has been completed in the new cultivation areas of Meghalaya and Assam, where the output has been a record 5,000 tonnes this time. This rise would partly compensate for an anticipated loss in production in Kerala and Karnataka. With a bullish view on prices, farmers have so far sold only 20 per cent of the fresh crop, or 10,000 tonnes, in the current season. Once the price begins to fall, much stock is likely to be offloaded.

AP asks Centre to allow export of 25 lakh tonnes of rice

Hyderabad, May 11:

The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr N. Kiran Kumar Reddy, today suggested that special officers will supervise paddy procurement in the State and all efforts would be made for the purchase of paddy from farmers.

The Chief Minister informed that he has requested the Union Finance Minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, to permit the movement of raw rice to Karnataka from Andhra Pradesh instead of Punjab and for permission to export 15 lakh tonnes of boiled rice and 10 lakh tonnes of raw rice to other countries. He sought permission to construct new godowns (for 10 lakh tonnes) to overcome godown shortage.

According to a statement, the Chief Minister directed the Chief Secretary to appoint senior IAS officers to ten districts to oversee rabi procurement and to coordinate with the district administration. These offices are expected to coordinate with all the departments concerned and agencies and monitor the paddy procurement effectively.

Mr K.R. Kishore, Principal Secretary, Agriculture Marketing and Cooperation, was appointed to coordinate procurement activities at the State level.

Mr Reddy directed officials to ensure godown space and if necessary to store paddy in the high school and college buildings in case of emergency for short periods during these holidays. The Railways have agreed to provide necessary rakes to evacuate paddy stocks.

Rice production in 2009-2010 was 108 lakh tonnes and 140 lakh tonnes during 2010-11, an increase of 32 per cent in production. Four lakh tonnes of rabi procurement is expected during May to September.

Purchase centres

About 1,209 paddy purchase centres were opened in the State during this season and rice millers purchased 12 lakh tonnes of paddy till now.

Spot rubber down on global cues



Kottayam, May 11:

Spot rubber turned weak on Wednesday. The market lost ground following the weakness on NMCE and the late declines in Japanese futures. Though there was no selling pressure from dealers or growers, the prices moved in to the negative zone on buyer resistance. The trend was mixed.

Sheet rubber moved down Rs 231.00 (232.00) a kg according to traders. The grade dropped to Rs 231.50 (232.00) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi as reported by the Rubber Board.

RSS 4 slipped at its May series to Rs 228.40 (229.38), June to Rs 233.70 (235.43), July to Rs 235.65 (237.48), August to Rs 233.60 (234.94), September to Rs 227.65 (229.50) and October to Rs 226.00 (228.00) per kg for on National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

The May futures finished unchanged at ¥ 414.0 (Rs 228.39) per kg for RSS 3 during the day session and then remained inactive in the night session on Tokyo Commodity Exchange (TOCOM). RSS 3 (spot) inched up to Rs 230.78 (228.75) a kg at Bangkok.

The spot rubber rates in Rs per kg were: RSS-4: 231.00 (232.00), RSS-5: 229.00 (229.00), Ungraded: 226.00 (226.00), ISNR 20: 220.00 (220.00) and Latex 60 per cent: 137.50 (138.50)

'We will promote production, consumption of pulses globally'



Mr Hakan Bahceci, Group CEO, Hakan Agro DMCC

With crop output estimated at about 60 million tonnes a year, the global pulses trade represents a \$100 billion opportunity for market participants from over 60 countries. The International Pulse Trade and Industry Confederation (IPTIC), headquartered in Dubai, is the apex body of national pulses associations of various countries covering numerous origins and markets. The focus of market attention is increasingly moving towards Asia because of sheer size of production, consumption and trade as well as growth potential.

Early May 2011, at the annual convention in Barcelona, Mr Hakan Bahceci, Group CEO of Hakan Agro DMCC, the Dubai-based agri-soft commodities supply multinational, with processing facilities and offices in 26 countries, took over as the president of CICILS-IPTIC. In some way, it is seen as a shift of power towards Asia. Armed with an MBA from Wollongong University, Mr Hakan the entered business 20 years ago to become a successful agri-commodities multinational.

In an exclusive interview to Business Line soon after being elected as IPTIC President, Mr Hakan shares his vision for the world body and the way forward.

Excerpts:

Congratulations on taking over as the new President of CICILS/IPTIC. What are your priorities for the global pulses sector for 2011 and 2012?

Until about ten year ago, the executive body of IPTIC was dominated by old established European trading houses with a few members from North America, and virtually no representation from the Indian sub-continent and West Asia , two of world's large producers and consumers. Today, 80 per cent of IPTIC is represented by India, West Asia , China, Pakistan, Australia, Africa and Turkey, while the rest is represented by Europe, USA and Canada. My priority is to take the organisation to the next level by creating a more dynamic, inclusive, democratic and participative confederation with increased membership benefits by redoing the byelaws completely.

I am keen to increase our exposure to hitherto untapped territories and work closely with various national associations around the world.

Do you visualise IPTIC, the world pulses trade body, playing an active role in encouraging consumption around the world?

Yes, of course. Indeed, increasing pulses consumption is not enough. We shall work on increasing pulses production as well. It is our job to ensure sustainable and affordable pulses across the globe.

Most farmers are getting better returns from corn, soya or wheat. Most North American farmers are not happy with the returns they get on pulses cultivation. On the other hand, we realise, pulses play a critical role in feeding the existing six billion people in the planet and large additions in the years to come. We shall have to strike a good balance between increase in consumption and production.

South Asia has emerged as pulses powerhouse as also protein deficient region. Does IPTIC have any special plan to service the region?

Absolutely. This is what I had in mind when I answered your previous question. We will have to work hard on increasing pulses production to address the issue (of protein deficiency).

What are IPTIC's views on genetically modified crops? Would the global trade accept GM-pulses?

We have no formal policy on gm-pulses because it is not an issue yet. We do realise that pulses production is not sufficient and we do realise prices have not been affordable over the last couple of years and probably won't be so in the near future. One way of increasing pulses production is to eventually work on gm-pulses. I am aware of some studies being made in India on pigeon peas. Is this good or bad? I would say, we need to feed the empty stomachs of hundreds of millions and won't be able to do with traditional production methods.

Currently, there is no organised mechanism for price discovery and price risk management in world pulses trade (except in India, and that too highly restricted). In pulses there is no futures trading of any significance. How does the global trade and industry manage price risks? Would IPTIC support or encourage derivatives trading?

Worldwide, pulses industry is highly fragmented with little realisation that it represents a massive \$100 billion of retail value. There is no price discovery or hedging system at the international level. We do have some national exchanges like in India, but they are not sufficient. Because of the fragmented structure of the industry and price discovery issues, the financial world is not alert about the pulses industry or keen to finance us. This is one of the challenges I have taken upon to handle during my term.

As CICILS-IPTIC speaks for the global pulses industry, we have to create visibility for the body. We shall work closely with Dubai Multi-Commodity Centre to finalise pulses futures trading platform. This will usher in a revolution in our industry. Once this is in place, I am confident that the financial world's attitude towards us will change. We should not forget that we represent the future, and the future is food. We have to be prepared for food shortages in future. That's why we should have more funds investing in this industry's projects and bankers have to come on board. These are critical steps that I propose to initiate so that the pulses sector starts to enjoy the kind of respect I believe it deserves.

In sum, we at CICILS-IPTIC will actively support and accelerate any price discovery mechanism. We shall support pulses production. If our North American or Australian friends are not happy with the prices they get from pulses, we shall encourage new territories to grow more pulses. Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Africa have farmers who would be more than happy

to produce more pulses at much affordable prices. At the same time, we shall support pulses consumption especially in the value-added sectors working closely with food industries in Europe. This value-added high-end market will keep our American, Canadian and Australian friends happy. This is how we can strike a balance.

Huge volumes on offer at Coonoor tea sale



Coonoor, May 11:

Amidst concerns of huge volumes remaining unsold in the recent weeks, as much as 3.17 lakh kg of teas that had remained unsold in previous auctions is being offered for resale at Sale No: 19 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auctions to be conducted tomorrow and Friday, reveals an analysis of the listing by brokers.

Together with the fresh teas accounting for 12.13 lakh kg, the total offer this week is 15.30 lakh kg. It is the largest volume offered so far in 2011.

It is as much as 1.28 lakh kg more than last week's offer and 13,000 kg more than the offer this time last year.

Of the 15.30 lakh kg on offer, 10.67 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 4.63 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades. As much as 14.59 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 0.71 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 0.29 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 10.38 lakh kg, CTC. Among the dusts, only 0.42 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 4.21 lakh kg, CTC.

Producers are concerned that the sale percentage is low despite shedding prices and have called for aggressive promotion strategies to activate demand.

Rubber production up 6.2% in April



Workers making rubber sheets in Kerala. (file photo): K.K. Mustafah

Kochi, May 11:

The intermittent rains throughout last month have resulted in a spurt in natural rubber production in April. The high prices have also ensured that the farmers take an active interest in bringing more areas under rain-guarding, ensuring uninterrupted tapping operations even during the rainy season, sources in the Rubber Board said.

The relatively high domestic and global prices have forced the farmers to overcome the labour shortage by roping in labour from their households. This has also ensured that areas under rubber which were not earlier tapped have become productive, the sources added.

Rubber production increased by 6.2 per cent to 56,800 tonnes in April against 53,500 tonne recorded in the corresponding month last year. Consumption, meanwhile, grew at a more

nominal pace to 82,500 tonnes. The stocks have depleted to 2,50,250 tonnes as against 2,76,110 tonnes at the end of last fiscal.

According to the provisional figures released by the Rubber Board, the total production in the country in 2010-11 was 8,61,950, while consumption grew to 9,49,205 tonnes.

Going by the indications in April, the growth in rubber production recorded last year is likely to be sustained this year as well.

Forecast

The Rubber Board has forecast that the production in 2011-12 is likely to increase by 4.6 per cent to 9,02,000 tonnes, and consumption by 2.9 per cent to 9,77,000 tonnes. Meanwhile, imports are slated to fall this year even as exports are expected to grow. The year is likely to end with a stock of 2,71,000 tonnes, marginally higher than last year's level.

India, once self-sufficient in rubber, is no longer so. With demand-supply mismatch continuing in both the domestic and international markets, the prices have been ruling at all-time highs. The farmers can look forward to good demand and prices in the days to come.

Govt hikes nutrient based subsidy on phosphorous, potash fertiliser

New Delhi, May 11:

The government has hiked the subsidy it provides on the basis of the phosphorous and potash nutrient content of fertilisers to Rs 32.33 and Rs 26.75 a kg, respectively, for the 2011-12 fiscal.

This is the third time the government has effected an upward revision of the subsidy on phosphorous (P) and potash (K) under the Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) Policy in the last few months with a view to absorb high global prices so that farm nutrients can be provided at affordable prices and food inflation can be contained.

At the beginning of the current fiscal, the government had fixed the subsidy on phosphorous at Rs 20.30 a kg and on potash, it was Rs 21.38 a kg for the 2011-12 fiscal. In March, the subsidy on these two nutrients (P and K) was revised upward to Rs 29.40 a kg and Rs 24.62 a kg, respectively.

According to the notification issued early this month, the government has again raised the subsidy on phosphorous (P) to Rs 32.33 a kg and on potash (K) to Rs 26.75 a kg.

The subsidy on other nutrients, nitrogen (N) and sulphur, was revised marginally higher to Rs 27.15 a kg and Rs 1.67 a kg, respectively, it said.

The subsidy on P and K has been increased following a rise in the benchmark price of urea, di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) and muriate of potash (MOP), based on which the government pays subsidy to fertiliser firms.

The benchmark price for DAP and MoP has been increased to \$612/tonne and \$420/tonne, respectively, from the current level of \$580/tonne and \$390/tonne.

This (revision in benchmark prices) will enable companies to import fertilisers to ensure adequate supply in 2011-12. This would also help farmers buy fertilisers at subsidised rates at the maximum retail price.

The budgetary provision for phosphatic and potassic fertilisers for the 2011-12 fiscal is Rs 33,500 crore. However, the total subsidy outgo on potassium and phosphatic fertilisers for the ongoing fiscal will depend on the actual sale of fertilisers.

Under the NBS Policy, the Centre announces subsidies on each nutrient upon commencement of each fiscal, which are valid for the whole year.

Vessel from Africa heralds new cashew season

Kochi, May 11:

The West Africa Raw Cashew season has commenced at Kochi, with the arrival of CMA CGM's vessel m.v. Letavia at the International Container Transshipment Terminal at Vallarpadam.

The arrival draft of the vessel was 12 mt and the LOA (length overall) was 220 mt. The vessel operation was completed in about six hours for a volume of about 600 TEUs at an average productivity of 28.56 moves per crane per hour. With productivity increasing everyday, vessel berth stay has been reduced by over 50 per cent since the start-up of ICTT.

The current vessel is of CMA CGM's WAX service, a weekly service bringing cashew from Tema, Apapa, Abidjan touching Durban before calling Kochi. The season lasts for four months starting May and ending by August, a press release said.

This is a mainline service from Africa to China, which touches Colombo on its normal routing. During the next four months, the service will omit the Colombo call and instead call Kochi. During this season, cargo bound for Colombo will get trans-shipped at Kochi. The service has 11 vessels with a capacity of 3,500 TEU and an LOA of over 220 mt.

Kochi has been used as a transshipment hub by CMA CGM for the past two years at RGCT and this time at ICTT the line has even bigger plans. Cargo bound to Tuticorin, Mangalore and Vizag gets trans-shipped at ICTT apart from cargo for Kollam.

Kochi sees maximum imports and the trade is busiest during this season. An average of 25,000 TEUs of cashew passes through Kochi during this period.

Farmers told to sell sesame on harvest to avoid loss

Coimbatore, May 11:

Despite the drop in yield level of gingelly seeds (sesame), primarily due to non-availability of quality seeds, followed by pest attack and labour shortage, farm varsity sources do not foresee any big improvement in the price level. Researchers are advising farmers to sell gingelly immediately on harvest to avoid loss.

The Thai Pattam (Jan-Feb) sown crop is under harvest and arrivals is said to have started. Farmers normally get 350-400 kg yield of gingelly seed per acre in irrigated area. But this season, the yield is said to have dropped to 240-300 kg a acre.

The Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC) functioning at TNAU foresees prices of gingelly seed to range between Rs 44 and Rs 49 a kg in May-June. Researchers state that there would be no scope for further increase in prices this season.

The crop is grown in an area of about 0.63 lakh hectares in Tamil Nadu around Erode, Villupuram, Thanjavur, Karur, Cuddalore, Thoothukudi and Salem in two seasons – Thai Pattam (Jan -Feb) and Adi Pattam (July-August).

The average yield hovers around 500-plus kg/hectare and the annual production at over 0.30 lakh tonnes.

India and China dominate in production of gingelly seeds. The global gingelly seed trade is estimated at 5-6 lakh tonnes a year.

ISMA may trim 2010-11 sugar output to 24.5 mt



New Delhi, May 11:

The Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) is likely to revise downward the country's total sugar production estimate to around 24.5 million tonnes in 2010-11 sugar season because of lower output in Uttar Pradesh than its earlier projection.

During the beginning of the current season (October-September), the ISMA had projected the total output at 25.5 mt. Later the forecast was revised downward to 25 mt.

According to sources, ISMA is expected to lower further the output at about 24.5 mt on par with the government's estimate for this season, at its meeting of committee members scheduled on May 13 in Bangalore.

Production in 2010-11 season ending September is likely to remain between 24.2-24.5 mt.

The industry body may revise the production forecast downward as Uttar Pradesh — the country's second biggest sugar producing state — could not touch the production estimate of 6.5 mt due to poor yields, they said.

Mills in Uttar Pradesh have been able to produce only 5.9 mt till April this season against the earlier estimate of 6.5 mt.

Between October and April of 2010-11 season, mills in the country have produced a total of 22.6 mt, according to ISMA data.

Production in Maharashtra, the country's largest sugar producing state, touched 8.3 mt till April-end of this season. Mills in the state are continuing the crushing operation and the production is expected to touch the target of 9.2 mt season.

Production in India, the world's second biggest sugar producer and the largest consumer, is expected to rebound this season after a gap of two years. In 2009-10, the production was around 19 mt. The country's annual demand is pegged at 22 mt.

Haryana surpasses 65 lt wheat arrival target



Chandigarh, May 11:

Haryana has recorded the second highest arrival of wheat this season as over 65.55 lakh tonnes have already arrived in the various mandis of the state against total arrival of 63.61 lakh tonnes during last year.

The highest wheat arrival of 69.24 lakh tonnes was recorded in 2009-10.

The state had already surpassed its wheat arrival target of 65 lakh tonnes set for the current season, an official spokesman said here today.

Out of the total arrivals, over 65.51 lakh tonnes have been purchased by the government procuring agencies and the rest 4,084 tonnes by the traders, he added.

Giving details of the wheat procured by the government agencies, he said that over 22.98 lakh tonnes had been purchased by HAFED, over 17.16 lakh tonnes by the Food and Supplies Department, over 8.08 lakh tonnes by the Food Corporation of India, over 6.58 lakh tonnes by the Haryana Agro Industries Corporation, over 5.93 lakh tonnes by the Haryana Warehousing Corporation and over 4.76 lakh tonnes by Confed.

Sirsa district was leading in wheat arrivals where over 9.34 lakh tonnes had so far arrived in the mandis, followed by Fatehabad where over 6.68 lakh tonnes had arrived in the mandis.