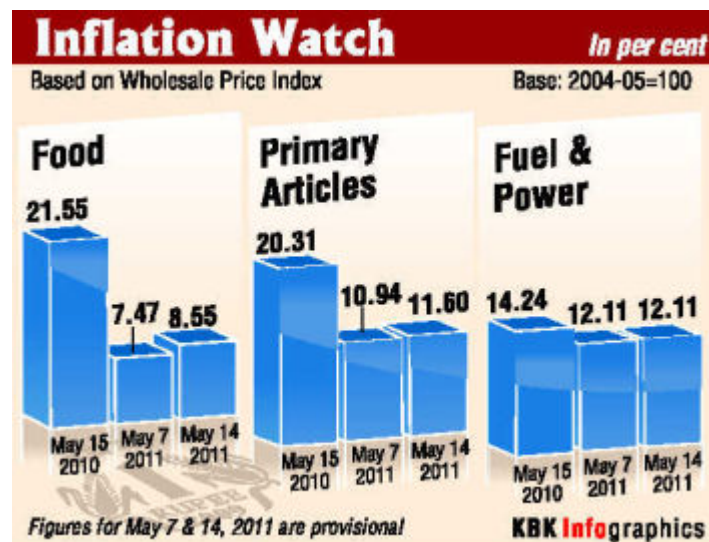


## Food inflation surges to 8.55 %

Special Correspondent



NEW DELHI: Halting the three-week declining trend, food inflation surged to 8.55 per cent for the week ended May 14 from 7.47 per cent in the previous week, mainly owing to spiralling prices of fruits, milk and protein-based items.

The fresh spike in food inflation is not good news, either for the consumer who has been groaning under the overall inflationary impact or the government which has been striving to contain the price spiral. For one, the increase in petrol prices by Rs.5 a litre with effect from May 14 is yet to be factored into the WPI (wholesale price index) data and this will be reflected in the data for the week ended May 21.

Apart from the inflationary impact of the petrol price hike, as and when prices of transportation fuel diesel and cooking gas LPG are raised, it will mean a fresh spurt in food as well as overall inflation which may prompt the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to go in for another stiff hike in its key policy rates.

As per the WPI data on primary articles released here on Thursday, while food inflation rose sharply by 1.08 percentage points during the week, prices of primary articles also surged by 23.22 per cent on an annual basis. Likewise, fuel and power inflation was also pegged higher at 12.11 per cent.

Among edibles, prices of fruits on a year-on-year basis were higher by 32.37 per cent, milk by 5.53 per cent and eggs, meat and fish by 8.26 per cent. Cereals were also costlier by 5.03 per cent and onions by 8.32 per cent. Vegetable prices, however, eased by 1.46 per cent as did pulses by 9.49 per cent. Wheat was also cheaper by 0.30 per cent on an annual basis.

As for non-food primary articles, prices went up by 23.22 per cent during the week, with fibres turning dearer by nearly 61 per cent and minerals by 11.78 per cent.

With the fuel basket yet to add to the inflationary impact, the government and the RBI have already admitted that in the months ahead, inflationary pressure would be more from core (non-food) items owing to high global prices of commodities, especially crude oil as the country is highly dependent on imports.

Commenting on the WPI data, Kassa Director Siddharth Shankar said: "Inflation is expected to rise further sometime in July-August when I expect the fuel & power inflation to rise. We may see a hike in diesel prices in the coming 6-8 weeks and that will add to inflationary pressures. I expect the liquidity situation to tighten in the coming months, something that will adversely affect the industry".

**Date:**27/05/2011 **URL:** <http://www.thehindu.com/2011/05/27/stories/2011052758490700.htm>

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**Endosulfan manufacturer told to stop production**

Staff Reporter

Namakkal: A small-scale manufacturer of endosulfan at Pattanam, near Rasipuram, has been asked to stop production till further directions were received from the Supreme Court, sources from the Agriculture Department has said.

The instruction was given to the manufacturer following an eight-week ban by the Supreme Court, an official said.

According to him, the unit produced around 1,000 litres to 2,000 litres of endosulfan annually, which was much less than the 8,935 litres of the chemical that was used by farmers across the district in the year 2010-11.

This financial year, a total 1,558 litres has been used by farmers till date, he added.

#### Survey

It is learnt that a major share of the endosulfan used in this district was bought from Salem and Tiruchi, he said and added that a survey conducted in Namakkal district to take stock of the availability of the pesticide revealed that 735.65 litres was available with 28 shops and dealers.

He noted that of the 15 blocks in the district, the pesticide was available only in five blocks – Tiruchengode (289 litres), Namakkal (184 litres), Pallipalayam (108 litres), Kabilamalai (84 litres) and Mohanur (70 litres).

The shopkeepers had been advised not to sell the pesticide and the existing stock had been sealed and kept in the shops, he said and added that legal action would be taken if found sold illegally.

**Date:27/05/2011 URL: <http://www.thehindu.com/2011/05/27/stories/2011052751690500.htm>**

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#### **Fertilizer dealers asked to display price list in three days**

Staff Reporter

KRISHNAGIRI: Fertilizer dealers in the district should display the price list within three days, Collector V. Arun Roy said here on Thursday.

Addressing monthly grievance day of farmers, he instructed the officials to ensure that the rule is strictly followed.

K.M. Ramagoundar, State Secretary, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, who took part in the meeting, said that the schemes implemented by the Animal Husbandry Department was not publicised by the department and drugs are not available at the veterinary dispensaries.

Mr. Roy asked the officials to organise a seminar to explain the schemes being implemented through the Animal Husbandry Department jointly with the commercial banks, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development. Mr. Ramagoundar also demanded the district administration to stop collection of daily toll from the small vegetable vendors in the market.

Replying to this demand, the Collector asked the Municipality to take action against those who collect excess tax and instructed them to display a notice board with the tax fixed by the municipality. Mr. Arun Roy promised to look into the request of the farmers for early release of water from the KRP dam.

Date:27/05/2011 URL: <http://www.thehindu.com/2011/05/27/stories/2011052758720800.htm>

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## Farmers demand micro storage facility for paddy in rural areas

M.Balaganessin

*Training on post-harvest technology gave them exposure on protecting produce*



**safe and secure:A. Mariadoss, senior assistant manager (technical), Chennai, giving away a storage bin to a farmer at Kulithalai on Tuesday.**

TIRUCHI: Farmers who participated in the two-day training on 'post-harvest technology' organised jointly by the Central Warehousing Corporation, Chennai region and the Saraswathi Krishi Vigyan Kendra, have made a plea to start micro level storage facility in the rural areas for safe and hygienic storage of paddy.

They made the plea to the officials of the Central Warehousing Corporation during the course of the discussion they had as part of the training on storage of paddy.

In their feedback about the training, they said that the training at the Saraswathi KVK at Pulutheri near Kulithalai in Karur district and also the field visit at the Corporation's godown in Tiruchi, had given them adequate exposure to the importance of protecting the produce.

Speaking on the sidelines of the valediction of the training, A. Paramasivam, Warehousing Manager, Tiruchi, said that the exposure to the godowns in the city provided adequate opportunity to the farmers on the safe handling of paddy.

The godown could stock 90,000 tonnes of wheat and paddy and comprised 18 units, each unit with a storage capacity of 5,000 tonnes.

He said that the visit to the central warehousing unit in the city had prompted the villagers to understand the importance of spacing for the bags; fumigation as part of prevention of entry of insects.

This was the first time that the paddy farmers from Karur district were being exposed to the storage facility in Tiruchi district.

The regional office of the Central Warehousing Corporation in Chennai, realising the importance of sensitising the farmers to the safe storage of produce, was organising the training programme in each and every district. In this context, he explained the guidelines issued by A.V. Jawahar, Regional Manager of the Corporation.

A. Mariadoss, Senior Assistant Manager, (Technical), Chennai, said that rodent menace posed a serious challenge to paddy growers. He explained the safe techniques being adopted at the

Central Warehouse unit in the city. He appealed to paddy cultivators to seek the assistance of the warehousing experts in the city for checking the insects.

He also distributed certificates to the participants. Each trainee also got a storage bin on the occasion.

J. Diraviyam, Programme Coordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, was among those who spoke.

Date:27/05/2011 URL: <http://www.thehindu.com/2011/05/27/stories/2011052758240700.htm>

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### Soil lab shows the way out for banana growers

M. Balaganessin

*Farmers being encouraged to give up chemical fertilizers*



**HELP INDEED FOR FARMERS::**Soil test being conducted at a primary agricultural cooperative thrift and credit society at Varadarajapuram near Thottiam. Guidance to farmers has resulted in a sharp increase in the use of bio-fertilisers.

TIRUCHI: The establishment of the soil test laboratory at the primary agriculture cooperative thrift and credit society in Tirunarayanapuram near Thottiam a couple of years ago has gone a

long way in sensitising the farmers, particularly banana growers, to give up on the use of chemical fertilisers to enable restoration of soil fertility.

The society has been catering to the agriculture credit needs of farmers of 15 hamlets in three major villages of Tirunarayanapuram, Arasalur and M.Puthur. The total irrigated area is 6,700 acres and banana is the major crop grown on 2,500 acres. The other crops are paddy, betel, sugarcane, groundnut and tapioca.

The banana cultivators have been growing 'poovan' variety in these villages and their continued application of chemical fertilisers for decades for registering a higher yield has resulted in the erosion of soil fertility.

The laboratory, established by the Cooperative Department at the society in November 2008, has so far conducted tests on 1,247 soil samples and has been issuing soil cards to farmers.

"The continued use of chemical fertilisers had caused serious increase in potash. We have been recommending the use of bio-fertilizers, green manure, and the response has been overwhelming," says S.Saravanan, secretary of the society.

Quality yield in banana and increase in paddy harvest and other crops are the advantages of the use of green manure. "While the yield per acre of paddy has increased from 35 bags to 45 bags each of 60 kg capacity, the weight of a bunch of banana has increased from the previous 15 kg to 20 kg. In a few cases, where soil restoration has been faster, it is even 25 kg," he says indicating an overall enrichment of soil in the villages.

The village has been adopted by the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO). Periodical meetings are being organised in which farmers interact with agricultural experts and soil scientists for evolving remedial measures for restoring the texture of soil in their fields, Mr.Saravanan said.

## Farmers allege water shortage



**SEEKING SOLUTIONS: A farmer speaking at the farmers' grievance day meeting at Tuticorin Collectorate on Thursday.**

Tuticorin: Farmers from across the district congregated at a meeting and sought remedy to their grievances at Collectorate here on Thursday. Collector C.N. Maheswaran presided over the programme.

“Illegal sand mining seems to be a never ending task along the river bed of Vaipaar. In spite of restrictions, the unlawful activity is on the rise day by day. Hence, district administration should not remain a mute spectator to this recurring problem. People cannot access even drinking water since the offenders are mining sand. Unless the state government engages directly in the issue, there is no remedy for us,” V. Ganapathy Raman, a farmer from Masarpatti, said.

The Collector said measures would be taken to prevent such activities. The farmers of Eeratchi under Ettayapuram taluk had been deceived of money received on mortgage of jewels from Primary Agriculture Cooperative Society, K.P. Perumal, a farmer here, said.

Huge sums of farmers were lost. Fifty farmers had been affected. Ramasamy, Secretary of the Society, was found guilty of pawning away the properties of farmers at a finance firm in Kovilpatti. An official replied that the secretary had been placed under suspension immediately and later dismissed. Action would be taken against him, the official said.



Umer, a farmer of Ettayapuram, said stern action should also be taken against the finance firm, the co-conspirator.

Mr. Perumal also raised objections over the relief assistance extended by the government for the death of 468 goats caused by blue tongue disease in Ettayapuram taluk. During Northeast monsoon rainfall in October and November 2010, goats were found dead. Relief was extended for only 106 goats. Relief of Rs. 1,000 for each of the goats dead had been given, so far.

Desilting works in Srivaikuntam dam should be taken up, he demanded. Tamilmani, a farmer from Kurumbur, said the release of water from Tamirabarani was not adequate for Kar season of vegetation. V.S. Gurusamy of Vedanatham, Ottapidaram taluk, demanded relief assistance for black gram and green gram crops which had been damaged during 2008. Money was properly paid under insurance scheme for the crops damaged but compensation had not been provided until, now.

**Date:27/05/2011 URL: <http://www.thehindu.com/2011/05/27/stories/2011052766270900.htm>**

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## **Weather-based crop insurance to provide better relief to ryots**

B. Chandrashekhar

HYDERABAD: The Agriculture Insurance Company of India Ltd (AIC) has decided to introduce Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme (WBCIS) for groundnut crop in four Rayalaseema districts from Kharif-2011 to provide better benefits to the farmers covered.

### **Scheme misused**

As feared by the insurance planners, the over enthusiasm of politicians to ensure short-term benefits to the farming community in drought-prone districts like Anantapur, the National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (NAIS) has been reduced to a scheme of little use since the insurance claims for groundnut under it have come down drastically for kharif-2010.

In spite of warnings from the agriculture and revenue authorities, including the district Collectors, the NAIS was allowed to be misused, particularly in districts like Anantapur, by projecting higher crop coverage and lower yield than actual area and yield since kharif-2000.

The idea was to help farmers who have availed crop loan but failed to cultivate the crop to get insurance benefit.

However, the regular 'assessment' of lower yield has done more damage than good to farmer in the long run as the crop loss (of groundnut) is estimated on the basis of 60 per cent of the average yield during the last five years. As a result, the insurance claims for the groundnut crop loss suffered in kharif-2010 are learnt to be very low.

"Politicians have realised the problem and started pressing for the introduction of WBCIS since last year as the NAIS will make no sense for districts like Anantapur anymore," an officer said.

Meanwhile, Deputy General Manager of AIC, P. Nagarjun, told The Hindu here on Tuesday that farmers covered under WBCIS would have higher chances of getting benefits as they would be paid compensation (for groundnut) for deficit or excessive rainfall and relative humidity in the classified weather cycles and dry spells beyond 14 days during the crop period.

The WBCIS would be implemented in 14 districts for 2011-12 agriculture year covering five plantation crops (sweetlime, orange, mango, oilpalm and banana-fruit), two vegetables (tomato and brinjal) and three commercial crops (cotton, groundnut, red chilli).

**hindustantimes**



**HT Correspondent, Hindustan Times**

Email Author

New Delhi, May 26, 2011

First Published: 12:05 IST(26/5/2011)

Last Updated: 21:54 IST(26/5/2011)

### **Food inflation at 8.55%, hits 4-week high**

Food inflation surged to a four-week high of 8.55% for the week-ended May 14, amid costlier fruits, and protein-based items such as milk, egg, meat and fish increasing the risk of pushing overall inflation even further. Food inflation stood at 7.47% in the previous week. Food prices are also set to rise next month following a possible hike in prices of diesel and LPG that will pinch household budgets even more, already pummelled by high prices of most goods.

Average inflation in 2010-11 was 9.43% — the highest in 16 years. The government expects the average annual inflation for 2011-12 to be between 7.5% and 8% amid spiralling prices of vital commodities such as oil. Inflation of non-food articles has been in the range of 20-25% over the past many weeks. Both the government and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have acknowledged that underlying inflationary pressures have accentuated, even as risks to growth are emerging.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/702170.aspx>

## Weather

Chennai - INDIA

### Today's Weather



Clear

### Friday, May 27

Max Min  
35.3° | 28.4°

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 79%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 5:41

Sunset: 18:30

Barometer: 1004.0

### Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

### Saturday, May 28

Max Min  
37° | 27°

### Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday

May 29



37° | 29°

Rainy

Monday

May 30



37° | 29°

Rainy

Tuesday

May 31



37° | 29°

Rainy

Wednesday

Jun 1



37° | 29°

Rainy

Thursday

Jun 2



38° | 30°

Rainy

# THE TIMES OF INDIA

## Food inflation rises to 8.55% for week ended May 14

PTI | May 26, 2011, 12.10pm IST

NEW DELHI: Food inflation shot up to 8.55% for the week ended May 14, the highest level in four weeks, as prices of fruits, cereals and protein-based items escalated.

Food inflation, as measured by the Wholesale Price Index (WPI), was on a declining trajectory for the previous three weeks. The figure for the seven-day period under review was 1.08 percentage points higher than the 7.47% inflation rate recorded in the previous week.

During the week ended May 14, cereals became costlier by 5.03% year-on-year and prices of onions were up by 8.32%, official data released here showed.

Prices of fruit rose by 32.37%, milk by 5.53% and eggs, meat and fish by 8.26%.

Rice also became 2.63% more expensive and potatoes 0.17% costlier on an annual basis.

Food inflation remained in double digits for most of 2010, before showing signs of moderation from March, 2011.

Prices of vegetables and pulses declined by 1.46% and 9.49%, respectively. Also, wheat became cheaper by 0.30% on an annual basis.

On an annual basis, the primary articles category saw an inflation rate of 11.60%.

On the other hand, prices of non-food primary articles were up 23.22% during the week under review. Fibres became dearer by almost 61%, while minerals were up 11.78%.

The government and Reserve Bank had said that in the months to come, inflationary pressure would be more from core (non-food) items on account of high global prices of commodities, particularly crude.

27 May, 2011, 01.36AM IST, Jayashree Bhosale,ET Bureau

### **Flower growers smile as prices stay high**

PUNE: All agricultural commodities delivered good returns in 2010 but the year was exceptionally good for flower growers.

"Winter was exceptionally good this year for the floriculture sector," said Me-gha Borse, president, Maharashtra Flower Growers' Association.

Roses were sold for about 7 per stem during the winter marriage season. The annual average price of a rose this year is higher by a couple of rupees as compared to the previous year.

"There were some losses as exports to Japan stopped completely post-tsunami.

The prices in the domestic market too dropped to 50 paise to 75 paise per stem. But the situation improved from April," said Shivaji Bhegade, president of Talegaon Flower Growers' Association . Roses are being sold for 3-4 per stem in the summer.

Growing trend of using artificial flowers in marriage hall decorations might have affected the sales of flowers. However, a small farmer who grew flowers on 10 guntas of land has earned an average income of about 30,000 per month.

26 May, 2011, 12.33PM IST,PTI

### **Cardamom remains up on fall in supply**

NEW DELHI: Cardamom prices rose further by Rs 7.20 to Rs 860.80 per kg in futures trade today on fall in supplies against increased buying by traders on rising in spot demand.

Also, restricted arrivals from the southern producing regions supported the uptrend.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange cardamom for delivery in June rose by Rs 7.20, or 0.84 per cent to Rs 860.80 per kg, with a business volume of 85 lots.

The spice for delivery in July traded higher by Rs 7, or 0.79 per cent to Rs 888 per kg, with a trading volume of 35 lots.

Likewise, prices for August delivery surged by Rs 4.70, or 0.53 per cent to Rs 898 per kg, with open interest of 20 lots.

Traders said rising demand in the spot market amid slow down in arrivals from southern producing regions mainly pushed up cardamom prices at futures market.

**express**<sup>™</sup>  
buzz

*By Tarun Nangia*

*22 May 2011 12:23:00 AM IST*

**No grain but cash for Delhi poor**



NEW DELHI: The Sheila Dikshit government is ready to shut PDS shops in Delhi, ringing the death knell for not only the poor but also the middle class because black marketers will have a free run said Arvind Kejriwal, civil society activist and founder of Parivartan. Instead, the government proposes that Rs 1,000 be deposited in the bank accounts of the women of BPL families for buying foodgrain.

Even though PDS is not working well, the low price of PDS grains help contain market prices. In its absence, there would be no control on grain prices.

He said Sonia Gandhi through the National Advisory Council (NAC), wants PDS to enhance food cover for India's poor, while the Congress government in Delhi is doing the opposite.

Kejriwal alleged that in a meeting held at her office on May 18, Dikshit threatened members of civil society groups with arrest if they come in the way of the removal of PDS implementing the scheme. These groups argue food grains are inflation neutral, whereas cash only depreciates in value. Government claims corruption in PDS is rampant but activists say the corruption in cash-based schemes like widow pension, old-age pension, NREGA is more. Speaking on the Issue food and civil supplies minister Haroon Yusuf said that once the new cash based system in place, diversion of food grains will stop completely. Kejriwal said that Dikshit informed in the meeting that the government is implementing the project on basis of Delhi Government's report, UNDP's report and Sewa's report. She claimed that all these reports claimed that Delhites wanted cash instead of rations. "We have never heard about SEWA's report which is based on a survey of just 150 families in Delhi, which is miniscule compared to 4.5 lakh BPL and 10 lakh APL families who draw rations in the capital." Kejriwal was denied permission to access the list. The RVSA has done a survey of 593 families and there is a glaring difference in the findings. SEWA's report says, 60 per cent people want cash, RVSA's report shows that 99 per cent people want PDS.

"The Delhi government has already stopped rations of 100 families in Raghbir Nagar and are being given cash. Another 500 families will be included this month. When representatives of RVSA went to meet these families at Raghbir nagar, they were stopped by representatives of SEWA," said Kejriwal.

Santosh Kohli, a Parivartan representative present in the meeting said, "Why is the chief minister of Delhi bent on implementing this scheme. She said that the plan will be first implement it in Delhi and the planning commission will roll out the scheme across the country." Kejriwal questioned why the planning commission was forcing the scheme on the Delhi government. Kejriwal said, "World Bank representatives attend such meetings in the planning

commission and UNDP's representatives are present in full strength in all Delhi government meetings.”

Meanwhile the grain of truth remains hidden.

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## **LIC to disburse land compensation to farmers**

May 27, 2011 11:06:08 AM

### **Pioneer News Service | Lucknow**

After burning its fingers over the distribution of compensation for farmers' land acquired for development projects, the State Government has decided to outsource the disbursement to the State-run Life Insurance Company (LIC).

The State Government received a lone bid from the LIC on Thursday, which showed its willingness to take the onerous job of distributing the compensation.

Industrial Development Commissioner (IDC) VN Garg told The Pioneer that as the State Government had received only one bid and that the final decision on this issue would be taken on Friday. "LIC is the only front-runner and now we have to look at the modalities to see how the lone bidder could be given this job," he said.



The last nine months have been torrid for the State Government, first in Tappal (Aligarh) in August last year and now in Bhatta-Parsaul (Gautam Budh Nagar) over compensation of land acquired for either construction of Yamuna Expressway or extension of Greater Noida. The State Government, on September 3, 2010, even brought a new Rehabilitation Policy ensuring a better compensation to the farmers.

But distribution of compensation remained the knotty question. Under the R&R policy, the Government had favoured outsourcing this tedious work. Initially five private banks had shown interest to take up the job but as they failed to meet the Government requirement, the Department of Industrial Development decided to invite bid for this process.

#### **Jairam addresses meet of State forest officers**

May 27, 2011 11:06:38 AM

#### **Staff Reporter | Bhopal**

Union Minister of State for Forest and Environment Jairam Ramesh, who was on a tour of the State capital, addressed a meeting of forest officers here on Wednesday evening. Forest Minister Sartaj Singh, Additional Chief Secretary Forests MK Rai, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Ramesh K Dave and Secretary to the Chief Minister and Mineral Resources and officers of the Forest Department were present at the meeting.

The Forest Department made a presentation on the application of information technology in the activities of the department before the Union Minister. He was informed that how information technology was being used for taking decision, to bring about transparency, quick citizen service and for improving administrative efficiency. Through the presentation, detailed information was provided about Fire Alert Messaging System, Wildlife Management System, Forest Survey System, and Geographical Information System etc.

Jairam Ramesh was informed that the department was making available services in the fields of Web Application Advise, Transfer of Digital Map Techniques etc to states such as Kerala, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Himachal Pradesh.

Jairam Ramesh lauded the efforts in the field of information and telecommunication technology by the forest department. He said that cooperation of the Madhya Pradesh Government and forest department will be sought by the Central Government for preparing such software for other states too.

The Union Minister of State suggested at the meeting that a national level workshop on management and monitoring of Campa should be organised at Bhopal. Representative of the honourable Supreme Court should also be invited to the workshop, he said.

Sartaj Singh urged the Union Minister to provide sufficient funds to the State Forest Department for maintenance of forests and wild life. Additional Chief Secretary Forests MK Rai requested to release the Campa fund in time. Jairam Ramesh informed that 10 per cent of the amount deposited in the Campa Fund this year will be made available to Madhya Pradesh.

### **Farmers' interest in Bt cotton growing in Balangir**

May 27, 2011 11:06:59 AM

#### **Sudhir Mishra | Balangir**

Encouraged by the minimum support price (MSP) per quintal of cotton given to the farmers in Balangir district last year, this year cotton cultivation has been taken up in 30,000 hectares. But farmers seem to be taking more interest in Bt cotton as a hype is doing round that the variety is highly remunerative and immune to pest attack even as the crop is banned here.

Cotton is a 150-160 day crop grown mostly in Patnagarh, Belpada, Khaprakhol, Tureikela, Muribahal, Saintala and Bongomunda areas in the district. Last year, the coverage of the cotton

cultivation was 29,200 hectares. The ideal time for the sowing of cotton is from the second week of June to June last or first week of July. The unique advantage of cotton of Balangir district is its staple length. It is more than 30mm and is considered as organic.

We have earlier convened a meeting of company officials to supply the required seed to the farmers and they have agreed, said an official of the district Agriculture Department. The approved variety cotton seeds are Gabar, Bunny and Tulsi, he informed.

Even as the officials here do not acknowledge the fact that Bt cotton has invaded into cotton cultivation of the district publicly, it is almost an open secret. The seed dealers and seller have induced a wrong conception that Bt cotton is free from pest attack though it is susceptible to sucking pests like Jassids, Aphids, Mealy bug, among others. "We have all along advised the farmers not to go for Bt cotton in view of rain fed condition of the district and once the rain fails, the crop fails worsening the economic conditions of farmers," said SMS cotton K Murmu.

Reports indicate that the price of Bt cotton in Andhra Pradesh has been raised this year by the Andhra Pradesh Government. According to reports, the price of Bt cotton — I has been raised from `650 to `830 per a 450 gram pack while the price of Bt cotton-II pack has been raised from `750 to `930. Due to growing demand of cotton in international market, last year even the last plucking of cotton fetched more than `3,000 per quintal. Seeing the remunerative price, farmers are showing increasing interest in the crop, especially Bt cotton this time. With no official mechanism to check it, it is the unscrupulous traders and company officials who are selling the Bt cotton seeds clandestinely at high prices in the local markets.

## **Business Standard**

Friday, May 27, 2011

**Spurious BT seeds, weather take toll on cotton yield in India**

**BS Reporter / Mumbai/ Ahmedabad May 27, 2011, 0:55 IST**

Yield has been declining since 2007-08

Notwithstanding a rise in acreage, cotton yield in India has been declining for the past three years mainly on account of erratic weather conditions and increased usage of spurious *Bacillus Thuringiensis* (BT) seeds for the cotton cultivation in some parts of the country. According to data available with the Cotton Advisory Board (CAB), the cotton yield in India has dropped from 554 kg per hectare in 2007-08 to 524 kg, 498 kg, 475 kg in 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 respectively.

On the contrary, the area under cotton cultivation in the country has risen 9.41 million hectare in 2007-08 to 11 million hectares 2010-11. The cotton acreage stood at 9.40 million and 10.31 million hectare in 2008-09 and 2009-10 respectively. Meanwhile, the cotton production in the country has been rising at a sluggish pace. The production dipped slightly from 30.7 million bales (a bale = 170 kg) in 2007-08 to 29 million bales in 2008-09.

However, for past two years, the production has been rising at a steady pace. In 2009-10 the cotton production in India rose to 29.5 million bales and 31.2 million bales in 2010-11. Experts and industry players attribute erratic weather conditions and usage of spurious seeds to the constant dip in cotton yield. "The certified BT cottonseed requires a minimum level of genetic purity of 90 per cent, which is much lower in the illegal seeds.

Even a percentage drop from the required level of genetic purity would reduce the cotton output by at least a quintal. Also, the uniformity of the quality of cotton would not be maintained in the case of the illegal seeds. This way, not only the yield is affected but the quality of cotton also gets poorer, which reduces the returns for farmers," said Vidyasagar Parchuri, managing director, Vibha Seeds.

Of the total annual requirement of BT cottonseed of 40 million packets (a packet of 450 gms), about 10-12 per cent is considered to be illegal or non-registered BT seeds. According to the industry insiders, the use of such illegal seeds not only reduces the yield but also hampers the quality of cotton crop. The use of illegal BT cottonseeds is believed to be prevalent in all the major cotton growing regions in India, but the use has been more rampant in the states of Gujarat, Haryana and Punjab.

"The illegal or duplicate BT seeds are extremely hazardous for the cotton growers as it also hurts the financial viability of cotton cultivation. In Gujarat alone such spurious seeds are consumed in the range of 1.1 million to 1.6 million packets every year. There is no assurance of good productivity from such duplicate seeds. It would reduce the yield. Ideally, with the introduction of improved Bollgard II variety of seeds, the yield per hectare should have risen to 900 kg, while it has been reversed to 659 kg per hectare in 2010-11," said N M Sharma, managing director, Gujarat State Cooperative Cotton Federation (Gujcot).

Cotton yield in Gujarat was recorded at 772 kg per hectare in 2007-08. The state grows cotton on 2.6 million hectares, of which 0.8 million hectares is cultivated under traditional cottonseeds, while the remaining is covered under BT cottonseeds. However, industry body maintains a different view about the reducing cotton yield in the country. The National Seeds Association of India (NSAI) holds weather conditions responsible for a drop in the cotton yield rather than the use of illegal cottonseeds. "Drop in the yield is primarily because of the uncertain weather conditions in past couple of years and not because of the use of illegal seeds," said Harish Reddy, secretary, NSAI.

Adding further he said, "A large area of cotton cultivation falls under the rain-fed regions like Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, which holds about 60 per cent of the total cotton acreage in the country. Climatic extremities in this region would lead to a fall in the yield. Hence, the drop in the yield is mainly because of the uncertain weather conditions than the use of the illegal seeds."

Over the years, BT cotton has yielded heavy returns for the cotton growing farmers in India. Lured by the attractive prices of cotton, more and more farmers turned to Bt cotton cultivation, which helped cotton acreage to rise from 9.41 million hectares to over 11 million hectares in 2010-11. According to government statistics, of the total cotton acreage, nearly 88 per cent is under Bt cotton cultivation, which has risen by 10 per cent over last year.

**ANRPC cuts 2011 global natural rubber output to 9.9 mn tonnes**

**Reuters / Singapore May 27, 2011, 0:15 IST**

Global natural rubber production was forecast to rise to 9.936 million tonnes in 2011, lower than a previous estimate of 10.025 million tonnes, due to output revisions in Indonesia and the Philippines, industry group ANRPC said on Thursday.

This was ANRPC's second downward revision of its estimate for this year's output. Production of members of the Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries reached 9.47 million tonnes in 2010.

"The output growth during the full year 2011 now stands revised down further to 4.9 per cent from 5.8 per cent forecast a month before and 6.4 per cent growth attained during the year before," the ANRPC said.

"The new revision results from a down-scaling of Indonesia's anticipated production for the year to 2.891 million tonnes, from 2.972 million tonnes expected a month before. Philippines also has downscaled the output anticipated for this year to 107,000 tonnes, from its earlier forecast of 114,000 tonnes."

ANRPC members include Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia as well as Cambodia, China, India, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, accounting for 92 per cent of global output.

The group also accounts for 92 per cent of global exports and 48 per cent of global consumption of natural rubber. Physical prices have dropped almost 20 per cent since hitting a lifetime high at \$6.40 in February, driven by futures selling on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

### **Turmeric price fall may pause with resumption of exports to Japan**

**Sharleen D`Souza / Mumbai May 27, 2011, 0:07 IST**

The trend of falling prices in turmeric market may halt as exports to Japan have resumed. The export orders, which had come from Japan before the earthquake, are now being dispatched from the various producing centres of the country.

The international demand for turmeric from West Asia, Japan, Europe and US has also now begun to resurface. With resumption in export demand, turmeric is not expected to see any further downside.

The prices of turmeric have seen 50 per cent fall in the last five months. In January, turmeric was trading at Rs 16,822 and is at present trading at Rs 8,430 per 100 kilogram.

Traders hope that the current level, with the help of exports market reviving, will be sustained. However, if it does fall sharply and go below Rs 60 per kilogram, then farmers will not bring their produce into the market as they will then have to incur losses for their produce, as the total cost of production for a kilogram of turmeric is Rs 60 to Rs 65 per kilogram.

### **Maharashtra okays 92 more pvt sugar mills**

**Sanjay Jog / Mumbai May 27, 2011, 0:06 IST**

Expected to generate investment of Rs 9,000 crore in the next 4-5 years.

Maharashtra, which contributes nearly a third to India's sugar production, is expected to have an additional investment of close to Rs 9,000 crore in the next four and half years, in the establishment of 92 private sugar mills.

According to the state cooperation department, there are presently 165 cooperative mills and 43 private mills in the state, with a combined capital investment of Rs 20,000 crore.

Rajendra Chavan, sugar commissioner, told Business Standard: "We have cleared the proposals of 92 private sugar mills as per the aerial distance criteria. The proposed mills will not come in a 15 km area of an existing mill. Generally, four and a half years are required for making a mill operational. However, with advanced technologies, a mill can start its operation within a year."

He noted the private mills had selected their project site considering the adequate availability of sugarcane. Of the mills in existence, he said, 164 had participated during the current crushing season, of which 123 were cooperatives and 41 private mills.

A government official, who did not want to be identified, said the state government had decided a decade earlier against permitting any new cooperative mill. There is also a high court order

staying approvals for new cooperative mills. "Notwithstanding the state government policy, the Government of India has taken a conscious decision on delicensing of the sugar industry and thereby of private mills. With the private sector bringing in new technologies, professionalism and austerity, the cooperative sector needs to take corrective measures," he added.

On the entry of more mills, a miller from cane-rich western Maharashtra said: "Ultimately, farmers will benefit, as they will get a better price."

Earlier, a committee headed by Shivajirao Deshmukh, former agriculture secretary and current director general of the Vasantdada Sugar Institute, had given a report to the government and the high court that more mills should not be allowed, pending formulation of a detailed master plan. It said the existing cane output of 81 million tonnes was enough to meet the requirement of existing mills.

Amit Deshmukh, founder-chairman of the Vikas cooperative sugar factory in Latur, welcomed the establishment of new mills in the private sector. "The fittest will survive. The private mills will bring in competition and innovative processes," he said.

### **Raw cashew nut prices hit global all-time high**

**Mahesh Kulkarni / Bangalore May 27, 2011, 0:04 IST**

Cashew kernel prices are likely to remain firm in the near-to-medium term, on account of record rise in raw cashew nut (RCN) prices in the international market and supply constraints.

Raw cashew prices have been on the upward move over 18 months and recently hit an all-time high of \$1,800 (Rs 81,000) per tonne in the international market, a growth of 100 per cent over \$900 in 2009-10.

The main reason is attributed to a 25 per cent drop in the cashew crop globally, coupled with competition from Brazil and Vietnam for import of raw nuts and political turmoil in Ivory Coast, which crippled supplies. Around 400,000 tonnes of RCN supply was held up by Ivory Coast.

"In the last one year, RCN prices have been moving only upwards due to competition from Brazil and Vietnam. Brazil was never an importer of raw nuts, but this year it imported due to short crop there. Vietnam has turned a processor in the recent years and despite a local



production of 350,000 tonnes, they are buying around 150,000 tonnes this year," Prakash Kalbavi, former president of Karnataka Cashew Manufacturers Association and an exporter said.

The Tanzanian campaign ended with very high prices and all material came into India. The Mozambique and Tanzanian crops are also retained for local processing to some extent. Brazil had a very short crop of 200,000 tonnes, instead of the usual 300,000 tonnes, and was seen shopping for raw cashew in West Africa which normally comes to India, he noted.

As a result the Indian cashew nut processing industry is likely to fall short by about 200,000 tonnes of RCN this year, he said.

The Indian RCN crop is also below normal this year. The arrival of unseasonal rains in December last year has not only resulted in delay of the current crop but also affected the output. The domestic RCN production is likely to be around 500,000 tonnes, about 85 per cent of the last year crop, Kalbavi added.

Giridhar Prabhu, managing director of Mangalore-based export firm, Achal Cashews said, "Prices went to an all time high of Rs 75-85 a kg to farmers in all origins such as Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Orissa. There have been sporadic declines during heavy arrivals due to quality issues. High prices have made it to high costs for processors. Factories who rely on the Indian crop have to pay very high prices and in turn the Indian cashew kernels could reach new highs after August."

Currently, prices are about five per cent lower than the highs reached in December. Cashew kernel prices are presently ruling at Rs 475 per kg to Rs 500 kg (ex-factory), depending on the grade.

"Availability of good quality RCN is limited - a lot of the Ivory Coast RCN will have lower kernel yields and higher percentage of second and third grades because of inadequate post-collection handling and delayed shipments," Pankaj N Sampat of Mumbai-based Samsons Trading Co said.

**Bumper paddy crop seen on good monsoon**

**Komal Amit Gera / Chandigarh May 27, 2011, 0:01 IST**

Output projected to touch 103 million tonnes from 94 million tonnes last year.

Over predictions of a good monsoon, the Union agriculture ministry has suggested a bumper paddy crop this year, of 103 million tonnes.

Sources in the ministry say the area under paddy is likely to remain stagnant (42-43 million hectare), but the total output may improve as it expects a consistent monsoon. The diversification of land to crops such as maize and cotton in north-west India and Jharkhand will slightly impact area under paddy, offset by the intensive agriculture carried out in eastern states.

India recorded its highest production of 99.18 million tonnes (mt) of paddy in 2008-09, followed by two draught years registering an output of 89.13 mt (2009-10) and 94 mt (2010-11).

<b>HEALTHY YIELD</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Area cultivated (mn ha)</b>	<b>Total production (mn tonnes)</b>	<b>Productivity (t/ha)</b>
2007-2008	43.91	96.69	<b>2.20</b>
2008-2009	45.54	99.18	<b>2.18</b>
2009-2010	41.85	89.13	<b>2.13</b>
2010-2011	43.00*	94.00	<b>2.18</b>
2011-2012#	43.00	103.00	<b>2.39</b>

\*tentative #estimated *Source: Central Science Research Institute*

T K Adhya, director, Central Science Research Institute, Cuttack, told Business Standard the minimum support price (MNP) encourages farmers to grow more rice as they are assured of higher returns. He said while MSP has been on the rise during recent years, it is still below the expectations of growers. However, high production will be achieved through higher productivity. "We do not anticipate any large scale increase in area under rice cultivation, there could be marginal increase in area in anticipation of good monsoon," he added.

There is a lot of potential for yield improvement in India. Egypt has the highest productivity of 9.73 tonnes per hectare while India stands at the 13th position with productivity of 3.37 tonnes per hectare of paddy. Globally, India has the largest area under rice cultivation, second in terms of net harvest after China. In 2009-10, India exported two million tonnes of basmati rice and 139,000 tonnes of non-basmati rice, earning foreign currency of Rs. 11,273 crores.

As the monsoon plays a crucial role in Indian agriculture and is usually uncertain, the Central Rice Research Institute, Cuttack, is working on developing alternate technologies that use lesser water. Named as 'aerobic rice', the technology is at the off-take stage, where cultural practices have already been standardised and the institute is working on developing varieties unique to this cultivation practice. The procedure mainly involves growing rice in a wheat way without any standing water and restoring to irrigation only when the field comes to moisture content threatening the plant. The varieties being tested for such situations are fertilizer responsive and yields statistically similar like that of high yielding varieties grown under conventional practice with standing water, added Adhya.

## THE HINDU Business Line

### Indian fertiliser cos' talk with potash suppliers stalled



A farm worker spraying fertiliser at a paddy field near Thrissur in Kerala. (file photo)

Firms seek parity with benchmark import price

New Delhi, May 26:

The deadlock between Indian fertiliser firms and global suppliers of muriate of potash (MOP) over pricing of imports for the current fiscal continues, with neither side ready to blink for the time being.

Indian potash importers failed to reach a supply and pricing agreement with Canpotex Ltd – the world's No. 1 potash exporter based in Canada's Saskatchewan province – at the Annual Conference of the International Fertiliser Industry Association in Montreal during May 23-25.

### **Stalemate**

For 2010-11, Indian Potash Ltd, Coromandel International, Tata Chemicals, Zuari Industries and Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (Iffco) had jointly negotiated a price of \$370 a tonne (cost & freight India) with a cartel of MOP suppliers, including Canpotex, Israel's ICL Fertilisers, the Belarusian Potash Company and Arab Potash Company of Jordan.

This time round, Canpotex and others are quoting a rate no less than \$500, which is the ruling spot price for delivery in South-East Asia.

Indian companies, however, maintain that imports are not viable at over \$ 420 a tonne, which is the Government's benchmark import parity price used to compute the subsidy on potash incorporated into various complex fertilisers.

At the Montreal conference, the Managing Director of Iffco, Dr U.S. Awasthi, was quoted as saying that India would, at best, consider a price of \$ 445-450 a tonne, representing a 10 per cent discount to the prevailing spot rate.

Earlier, on April 11, the Fertiliser Association of India declared a potash import “holiday,” stating that “the country had enough stocks for the ensuing kharif season.”

India does not have any exploitable potash deposits and imports its entire requirements in the form of MOP (containing 60 per cent of the nutrient).

During 2010-11, MOP imports touched a record 6.4 million tonnes (mt), valued at around \$ 2.35 mt.

Of this, 3.9 mt was sold directly as MOP and the balance incorporated into complexes with different proportions of nitrogen, phosphorous, potash and sulphur.

### **Who will blink first?**

There are two questions that are now being asked, the answers to which will probably decide the ongoing war of nerves between global suppliers and Indian importers.

The first is: How long can India hold out by not importing? The second is: How long can the suppliers dictate prices, given that India today accounts for some 13 per cent of the global potash (MOP equivalent) imports of 48 mt. Since 2003-04, India's MOP imports have risen nearly 2.5 times from 2.6 mt to 6.4 mt, making it the largest buyer, ahead of the US (five mt), China (four mt) and Brazil (two mt).

“We are prepared to wait, as we have stocks till end-June. Even after that, the real requirement of potash for the kharif crop would be only during the flowering stage from August. And if our farmers manage this season without potash, it will amount to a permanent demand destruction, which is not good for the global suppliers,” warned a domestic industry source.

According to him, the non-availability of potash may impact production of popular complex fertilisers such as 10:26:26:0 and 12:32:16:0. “But we can still go for other (non-potash) complexes, including 16:20:0:13, 20:20:0:13, 24:24:0:0 and 28:28:0:0”, he added.

On the other hand, Mr Bill Doyle, President and CEO of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc. – one of Canpotex's three equal shareholders, along with Agrium Inc and the Mosaic Company – recently claimed that “the markets are not waiting for India,” while dismissing the talk of an import holiday as mere “negotiating tactic.”

The spurt in MOP prices follow a general hardening of global corn and wheat prices, besides increased demand from Brazil, Australia and South-East Asia that grow sugarcane and oil palm – crops requiring extra potash.

### **Paramount Farms plans to invest more in India**

New Delhi, May 26:

Following an import duty cut on pistachios in Budget 2011-12, Californian grower Paramount Farms International (PFI) has decided to up its investments in India.

On Wednesday, it announced plans to invest an additional \$10 million on its India operations.

The investment, according to Mr Mark Masten, Vice-President, Global Sales & Marketing, PFI, will be to expand capacity at its Gujarat facility.

Right now, Paramount has a pistachio roasting plant in Vadodara which can process 453 tonnes of pistachios. Anticipating an uptake in demand, thanks to the price reduction in pistachios, the company wants to expand capacity by 3-4 times within the next 18-24 months and is scouting for land.

Mr Masten said that prices of in-shell pistachios have come down from Rs 1,100 a kg to Rs 900 a kg, thanks to the import duty cut (from 30 per cent to 10 per cent). As a result, he said, volumes have already doubled in last couple of months.

### **Marketing**

The company will try to further grow the market by spending \$2 million annually on advertising, promotions and consumer awareness for its "Wonderful" brand of pistachios.

In an marketing move, the company has started retailing the pistachios in 17 gm sachets priced at Rs 15.

Already available across 11,000 retail outlets, Paramount now plans to sell pistachios across 20,000 outlets within the next year. India consumes about 2,267 tonnes of Californian Pistachios (overall, we consume about 9,071 tonnes with major imports coming from Iran). Paramount claims it has 60 per cent share of the Californian Pistachios.

### **Spot rubber rules steady**

Kottayam, May 26:

Spot rubber finished unchanged on Thursday. Market activities were dull as there were no active participants, on either side, to set a definite trend. Major manufacturers were seen almost inactive.

According to traders, sheet rubber was steady at Rs 217 a kg amidst scattered transactions. The grade dropped to Rs 217 (217.50) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, according to Rubber Board.

The June series weakened to Rs 216.56 (218.43), July to Rs 220.50 (221.67) and August to Rs 219.63 (220.69) while the September series firmed up to Rs 218.50 (217.47) a kg for RSS 4 on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 improved at its June futures to ₹417 (Rs 230.97) from ₹409 a kg during the day session but then remained inactive in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange. The grade (spot) increased to Rs 233.32 (231.17) a kg at Bangkok.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 217 (217); RSS-5: 214 (214); ungraded: 212 (212); ISNR 20: 209 (209) and latex 60 per cent: 130 (130).

#### **Desi wheat prices ease; Dara range-bound**



Karnal, May 26:

The wheat market has witnessed a mixed trend since beginning the week. Prices of the dara variety remained unchanged, while desi wheat witnessed some correction on Thursday.

With demand being low for the dara variety in the market at present, prices are range-bound, said Mr Sewa Ram, a wheat trader. Dara prices have been ruling between Rs 1,185 and Rs 1,210 since May 4. In order to maintain prices, traders are buying in line with the orders that they get, said Mr Ram.

Traders expect that prices may recover from June as arrivals will end and the demand for wheat and wheat products increases for the festival season starting from August.

Around 480 tonnes of dara variety arrived from Uttar Pradesh and stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,200 a quintal, while it traded at Rs 1,210 in the retail market.

High arrivals pulled the prices of *desi* wheat down. Around 220 tonnes of different varieties of desi wheat arrived from Madhya Pradesh.

The Tohfa variety decreased by Rs 15 and ruled at 2,200-2,235 a quintal while Nokia traded at Rs 2,055 a quintal. With constant demand and supply, flour prices ruled flat and quoted at Rs 1,210 for a 90-kg bag. On the other hand, chokar prices rose further by Rs 10 to Rs 590 for a 49-kg bag.

**Higher arrivals pound spot turmeric**





Erode, May 26:

Spot turmeric prices continued to drop on higher arrivals at Erode Markets. On Thursday, prices declined by over Rs 300 a quintal.

“Usually in May, a lean season, arrivals tend to be low of about 7,000 bags daily. In contrast this year, arrivals have touched 14,000 bags, this has resulted in steep decrease in price” said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. He said at the Regulated Marketing Committee, spot turmeric decreased by Rs 500 a quintal on Thursday. In other markets, it decreased Rs 300.

He said: “Already due to lack of demand from North India, prices are declining and are below Rs 8,000.”

If the price improves, say to above Rs 8,000, farmers will sow turmeric this year. But if prices continue to decrease, then may switch over to some other crop. He said farmers will take a decision only in June.

Currently, only 50 per cent of the crop brought to markets are sold, as the 35-odd traders are buying limited stocks to fulfil local orders.

Some traders said that only low quality (affected by rain) turmeric is arriving, and it contains low curcumin content

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 6,064-7,909 a quintal, the root variety Rs 5,869-6,390.

**Salem crop:** The finger variety was sold at Rs 7,514-8,599, the root variety Rs 6,411-7,091. Of 3,514 bags that arrived, 409 were sold. At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at a low price of Rs 4,227 to Rs 8,109, the root Rs 3,501-6,669. Out of 363 bags that arrived, 241 were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 6,103-7,369 a quintal, the root variety Rs 5,933-6,511 a quintal. Out of 1,251 bags that arrived, 1,077 bags were sold. At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 6,990-7,531, the root variety Rs 5,591-6,169 a quintal. Out of 1,354 bags that arrived, 1,131 were sold.

### **Soya refined oil gains despite tepid demand**

Indore, May 26:

Trading in soya refined in the local *mandis*, by and large, remained subdued on scattered demand from Nagpur in Maharashtra and Gujarat, unlike Wednesday which saw a boil in soya oil prices on strong global cues and improved dollar rates. However, soya refined gained in local *mandis* on improved global cues and rise in demand at lower rate on Thursday. On Thursday, with Malaysian palm oil futures improving, soya refined further gained in the physical market and was quoted higher by Rs 4-5 at Rs 612-615 for 10 kg. As compared to soya solvent, demand in soya refined remained restricted to Maharashtra and Gujarat. On the other hand, soya solvent witnessed some active buying with its prices in the spot being quoted at Rs 580 and in delivery at Rs 585 for 10 kg.

Soya oil futures saw a marginal decline as traders withdrew at the higher rate. On the NBOT, soya refined June contract closed marginally lower at Rs 648.90. Soya oil futures, however, gained slightly on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) with June and July contracts closing at Rs 650.7 and Rs 655 respectively.

Soyabean gained following rise in demand at the plant level. In the spot, soyabean in *mandis* across Madhya Pradesh was quoted at Rs 2,250-2,300 against Rs 2,220-2,260 a quintal on Wednesday. Similarly, plant deliveries in soyabean also perked up to Rs 2,350-2,370 a quintal against Rs 2,300-2,435 a quintal. Soyabean futures on the NCEDX, however, declined on lack of buying interest at the higher rate. June and July contracts of soya seeds on the NCEDX closed lower at Rs 2,384 and Rs 2,414 a quintal respectively. Arrivals of soyabean in State *mandis* was recorded at 50,000 bags against 3,000 bags in Indore *mandis*.

### Jeera futures rise over Rs 100 a quintal



Rajkot, May 26:

Jeera futures rose by more than Rs 100 a quintal on short-covering, bargain-hunting by traders at lower levels and lower arrivals at major *mandis* However, spot jeera remained weak.

At the spot market in Rajkot, jeera traded lower by Rs 25-25 for 20 kg. Inferior quality was quoted at Rs 1,800-2,200, medium at Rs 2,200-2,600, and best quality at Rs 2,700-2,800 for 20 kg. Eight hundred bags arrived in Rajkot. At Unjha agricultural produce market committee yard, jeera was traded at Rs 1,700-3,601 for 20 kg.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, June contract increased by Rs 89 to Rs 14,641 a quintal, with an open interest of 14,487 lots. July contract went up by Rs 109 to Rs 15,107 a quintal, with an open interest of 19,209 lots. NCDEX futures gained almost Rs 200 a quintal from its intra-day lows.

According to market sources, arrivals of jeera in major *mandis* were hovering at 12,000-13,000 bags on Thursday, against 16,000 bags on Wednesday due to restricted selling by traders at lower levels. Stocks on NCDEX-accredited warehouses rose 21 tonnes to 13,792 tonnes.

New crop arrivals from other major producers such as Syria and Turkey are slated to start from May-end or June. These countries are reported to have low carry-over stocks and are awaiting new crop arrivals.

### **Egg price hiked by 3 paise on demand hopes**



Chennai, May 26:

The price of an egg has been raised by three paise to Rs 2.26 in the Namakkal zone, comprising Tamil Nadu and Kerala, on hopes demand will improve. Three days ago, the price had been hiked by a similar margin.

“We are nearing the end of May. The India Meteorological Department has projected that the South-West Monsoon will set in on May 30. We expect demand for eggs to rise once the monsoon sets in,” said a National Egg Coordination Committee source. Namakkal sets the tone

for the rest of the country. However, this hike has been made since the price was raised in centres such as Hyderabad and Barwala (Haryana).

However, an egg industry official from Coimbatore said egg consumption continued to be slack.

“Demand will pick up only when schools reopen after summer holidays,” the official said.

The noon-meal scheme, in particular, will help increase consumption. Under the scheme, school children are given two eggs a week in their meals by the Tamil Nadu Government.

“The offtake through the scheme is 22 crore eggs. It makes up eight days or 22 per cent of the production,” the official said.

Though egg prices have been increased twice within a week, they are still below the cost price.

“What is quoted as the price is in fact the rate at which eggs are offered in wholesale markets.

The lifting price is actually between Rs 2 and Rs 2.05,” the official said.

Elsewhere in the country, in places such as Punjab, Barwala, Hyderabad and Ajmer, the price of an egg is below Rs 2.

A slowdown in exports is also not helping the industry, the industry source said.

Meanwhile, the layer bird rules stable at Rs 38 a kg, while broiler prices have been cut to Rs 3 to Rs 54 a kg.

**Endosulfan: Kerala to urge PM to visit Kasaragod**



Business Line Care for all: The Chief Minister, Mr Oommen Chandy, addressing a meeting of District Collectors in Thiruvananthapuram on Thursday. — Photo: C. Ratheesh Kumar

To get first-hand account of the prevailing healthcare situation

Thiruvananthapuram, May 26:

The State Government proposes to request the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, to visit Kasaragod district to get a first-hand account of a prevailing healthcare situation arising reportedly from use of pesticide endosulfan in local plantations.

Announcing to newsmen here on Thursday, Revenue Minister, Mr Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, said the State Government would take all possible care to protect the interests of the affected persons.

### **COLLECTORS CONFERENCE**

The Minister had presided over a conference of District Collectors earlier in the morning, which was separately addressed by the Chief Minister, Mr Oommen Chandy.

He quoted the Chief Minister as saying that a super-specialty hospital would be set up in the district to provide prompt treatment facilities for the affected.

The State Government was in the process of identifying the required land for the proposed hospital, for which Central financial assistance is also being sought.

At present, the nearest available source of medical help is Manipal in Karnataka that borders Kasaragod district on this side of the inter-State border.

The Chief Minister asked the District Collectors to invoke their discretionary powers to deal with local emergencies and settle them in the best interests of the public.

## **SPOT DECISIONS**

The people at large must not be inconvenienced due to the inability of the Collectors to take spot decisions whenever and wherever warranted; rules and regulations should not come in the way of such decision-making.

The Chief Minister extended to the Collectors a promise that the State Government would stand by the decisions made in this manner, Mr Radhakrishnan said.

The Chief Minister also announced that a monitoring cell would be set up to monitor plan implementation. The Chief Secretary has already been advised to proceed in this direction.

Mr Chandy reminded the Collectors that the responsibility for implementation of the Government rehabilitation packages rested with them.

Illegal land encroachments should be acted upon and distribution of title deeds to the landless expedited.

## **RIVER SAND**

Scarcity of river sand for the construction sector was a major issue that needed immediate solution. The attempt should be to find a viable solution that does not bring incremental damage to the nature. He also invited the attention of the Collectors to a wave of road accidents and rising casualties. This needed to be dealt with on a priority basis by taking all stakeholder departments in the Government into confidence.

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