THE HINDU

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Pawar advises sugar factories to diversify

Staff Correspondent

Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar has suggested that cooperative sugar factories diversify into profitable byproducts such as power, ethanol, alcohol and biofertilizers to steer clear of the uncertain sugar market.

Unstable price

Addressing managements of cooperative sugar factories and sugarcane growers at the Mahatma Gandhi Sahakari Sakkare Karakhane (MGSSK) in Hunaji on Saturday, Mr. Pawar said factories could no longer afford to depend on sugar alone as its price was unstable.

He said the Union Government would provide low interest, long-term loans to factories that decide on such diversion."We are providing loans at 4 per cent interest that are repayable over 10 years," he said.He opined that as sugar was being sold at Rs. 2,980 a quintal, factories could afford to pay Rs. 2,400 for a tonne of sugarcane to growers.

Participants

MGSSK president Bheemanna Khandre; MLAs Ishwar Khandre, Rahim Khan and Bandeppa Kashempur; and Bidar Sahakari Sakkare Karakhane president Subhash Kallur were present.

- *Factories can no longer afford to depend on sugar alone as its price is unstable: Minister*
- *'Diversify into profitable byproducts such as power, ethanol, alcohol and biofertilizers'*

Rain damages crop on 21 hectares

A survey carried out in the district so far revealed that 21.39 hectares of standing crop (paddy) belonging to 27 farmers had been damaged in the rains.

This information was conveyed at a meeting convened by special observer Chitaranjan Mohandas in which District Collector U. Sagayam and other revenue officials attended.

According to a press release issued on Sunday, the district administration had prepared a comprehensive report on the damage caused to the roads and the cost involved in repairs. All precautionary measures had been taken in view of the continued rains.

The damaged houses – both partially and fully – would get compensation. Seven persons had died due to rain so far and the families had been given Rs 10 lakh as relief.

Those families who had lost their dwellings had been given rice, dhotis and saris . They have been accommodated in nearby schools. Health Department authorities are on alert.

Similarly, the fire and rescue service personnel were instructed to position themselves in low-lying areas and pockets.

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Training programme for farmers

The Department of Marine Bio Technology, Bharathidasan University, Coir Board, Cochin and Guide Trust, organised a training programme on Preparation and Application of Cyanobacterial Bio Fertilizer for Field Cultivation at Musiri recently to impart to farmers the technique for producing coir-pith based cyanobacterial bio fertilizer preparation. Farmers from Musiri and surrounding areas attended the training.

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Getting youth interested in farming

Around 340 farmers attended the 8th Agromax summit for farmers organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry's Young Indians at Kumaraguru College of Technology on Saturday.

Senthil Raja Duraiswamy, National Co-Chair, Healthcare, Young Indians and Director, Sakthi Masala Private Limited, Dr. M Paramathma, Director of Research, TNAU, Coimbatore, R Varadarajan, Director Rajshree Sugars and Chemicals Limited, Dr. Rahul Mirchandani, chairman, Partnerships and International Relations, Yi, Shankar Vanavarayar, National Chairman, Young Indians, were present at the event.

Mr. Duraiswamy said that giving exposure to famers though the meet would help increase youth's participation in agriculture.

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Farm fair in January

A farm fair for promoting agricultural activities will be organised here in January under the aegis of the Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) and the Thalassery Social Service Society (TSSS). District Collector Anand Singh said at a press conference here on Sunday that the fair — Polika State Farm Fest 2012 — would be held at the Town Square here from January 2 to 8. The objective of the fair was to create awareness of food security and safe food by promoting agricultural activities and organic farming.

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Climate change hits Africa's poorest farmers

AP

AP A woman tills her plot in Harare, Zimbabwe. International climate change negotiators meet in the South African coastal city of Durban starting Monday. File photo

As she surveys her small, bare plot in Zimbabwe’s capital, farmer Janet Vambe knows something serious is happening, even if she has never heard of climate change.

“Long ago, I could set my calendar with the date the rains started,” the 72-year-old said. Nowadays, “we have to gamble with the rains. If you plant early you might lose and if you plant late you might win. We are at a loss of what to do.”

Paramu Mafongoya, a University of Zimbabwe agronomist, says Vambe’s worries and those of millions of other poor farmers most of them women across Africa are a clear sign of the impact of climate change on a continent already struggling to feed itself. Changes have been noted in the timing and the distribution of rainfall on the continent. Zimbabweans say the rainy season has become shorter and more unpredictable, Mafongoya said.

Climate change “is a serious threat to human life,” Mafongoya said. “It affects agriculture and food security everywhere.”

International climate change negotiators meet in the South African coastal city of Durban starting Monday. Their agenda includes how to get African and other developing countries the technology and knowledge to ensure that people like Vambe can keep feeding their families without looking for emergency food aid.

A Green Climate Fund that would give $100 billion a year by 2020 to developing countries to help them fight climate change and its effects was agreed on at last year’s climate talks in Cancun, Mexico. Durban negotiators hope to make progress on addressing questions such as where the money will come from and how will it be managed.

Climate change specialist Rashmi Mistry said her anti-hunger group Oxfam will be in Durban lobbying to ensure that women have a voice in managing the Green Fund, and that their needs are addressed when its money is spent. Most small-scale farmers in Africa are women, and they also are the ones shopping for the family’s food. But tradition often keeps them out of policymaking roles.

Mistry said when yields are low and market prices are high, women are the first to suffer.

“She’s the one usually who will feed her husband first and feed her children first, and she will go hungry,” Mistry said.

Across Africa, said Andrew Steer, the World Bank’s special envoy on climate change, farmers need to triple production by 2050 to meet growing needs.

“At the same time, you’ve got climate change lowering average yields by what’s expected to be 28 per cent,” Steer said. He called for more investment in such areas as agricultural research and water management.

Experts already are working on solutions. For example, Africa Harvest, a think tank that uses science and technology to address poverty and improve livelihoods among some of the poorest people in Africa, is working with farmers in an arid stretch in eastern Kenya who were finding it harder and harder to grow their usual crops of corn and beans. Africa Harvest got farmers to switch to sorghum. They have seen bumper harvests as a result because they are focusing on the right crop and the right practices for the climate, said Moctar Toure, chairman of Africa Harvest, who will be in Durban for the talks.

“The way we do agricultural development has to change,” Toure told The Associated Press. “We need to balance the need to increase farm productivity with environmental conservation. We will also work towards broad policy changes in our target countries in order to address endemic problems (affecting women) such as land right security, access to credit and knowledge.”

Experts worry that one consequence of resources becoming scarcer will be more frequent conflict. Already, Zimbabwe has seen aid used as a political weapon. Those who can prove their loyalty to longtime President Robert Mugabe’s party have been seen to be favoured when it comes time to hand out seeds or food.

Modern techniques of growing drought-resistant crops like sorghum and millet, staggering planting programs, irrigation and harvesting rain and river water in dams help minimize the risk to farmers. But Zimbabwe’s modern agricultural infrastructure has been disrupted by a decade of political and economic turmoil.

Acute food shortages eased after Zimbabwe adopted the U.S. dollar to end world-record inflation in 2009, but local farm production continues to decline. This month, the U.N. food agency said more than 1 million Zimbabweans needed food aid and poor families, especially households with orphans and vulnerable children, can’t afford much of the food that is available. Most of that food is imported.

Climate change, like the political problems linked to poverty in Zimbabwe, is manmade, though over a longer term.

Scientists say the accumulation of carbon dioxide traps the Earth's heat, and is causing dramatic changes in weather patterns, agricultural conditions and heightened risks of devastating sea-level rise. Industrialized nations bear the bulk of the blame, since they have been pumping carbon dioxide into the atmosphere for 200 years.

Africa emits only about 3 per cent of the total greenhouse gases per year, but its fragile systems and impoverished people are hardest hit by the consequences.

Weather experts say Zimbabwe's average rainfall has decreased over the decade and October temperatures this year soared to above 40 Celsius (104 Fahrenheit), the highest since 1962.

Harare meteorologist Jephias Mugumbate said rains in January and February crucial for the ripening of crops can no longer be relied on.

It was often said drought in southern Africa recurred every 10 years.

"But now it has become more frequent and intensified. Temperatures show an upward trend and instead of being cooler our nights are becoming hotter," Mugumbate said

Like Vambe, tens of millions of Africans rely on rain-fed agriculture.

Vambe's corn crop has supported her family for more than five decades. But her yields have been steadily falling.

She walks at daybreak to her nearly bare field 10 miles (15 kilometres) from her home in the impoverished western Harare township of Highfield. She has finished planting her seed with the help of her two grandchildren. The dusty brown soil beckons for rain.

Maize, the nation's staple food, needs 60 days of moisture to reach maturity.

"The rains have become erratic. We can no longer rely on the seasons," Vambe said.

She has had to replant on several occasions because of a "false start" to the rainy season.

"This is what has been affecting our yields since 2000. We are no longer getting good yields because the rain comes and goes away," she said.

In the past, the growing season ended in March and harvests were gathered through April.

"Today, nothing is definite. You get rain in April then our maize rots in the fields," Vambe said. "If we are not respecting our spirits and if they are angry, there will be no rain."

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Over 3,000 hectares of paddy crops inundated in district

Special Correspondent

RESCUE ACT: Transgenders salvaging utensils from an inundated house at Allithurai Saravanapuram in the city on Sunday. PHOTO:R.M. RAJARATHINAM.

About 3,150 hectares of standing paddy crops have been inundated under the current spell of rain in the district.

Inundation of paddy fields was reported in mostly in Lalgudi, Tiruverumbur and Uppilliyapuram blocks. In Lalgudi, fields were inundated as water flowing in a couple of drainage channels, Kuvalaiyar and Panguni, headed up.

Inundation was reported in some of the villages in the three blocks including Nagar, Sirunavalur, Siruthaiyur, Thuraimangalam, Koppavali, Balakrishnampatti, Alathudayanpatti, Arasangudi, Pappakurichi, Natarajaparam and Vengur. In most of these places, the paddy crop was around 50 to 60 days old.

Sources in the Agriculture Department the rain water had started receding from the fields in most places. Officials expect no major crop damage if there was no further heavy rain. However, an assessment would be carried out to find out if there was any actual damage of the crop.

Intermittent rains continued during the day in the district on Sunday, though there was a let up in the forenoon. In Tiruchi city, water started draining from some of the low-lying colonies. In a few places such as Allithurai Saravanapuram, residents were seen struggling to drain the stagnant water.

Minister for Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments M.Paranjothi inspected the work on reinforcing the bunds of the Kudamuritti River near Ammaiyappa Nagar in the city along with Jayashree Muralidharan, Collector, P.Kumar, MP, and A.Jaya, Mayor. He instructed officials to take steps to remove thick growth of water hyacinth from the Uyyakondan and Kudamuritti rivers.

Meanwhile, Ponnaniyar Dam recorded the maximum rainfall of 48.80 mm of rainfall during the 24-hour period ending at 8.30 a.m. on Sunday.

The following were the chief amount of rainfall recorded in other parts of the district during the same period (in mm): Pullampadi and Kallakdi 40.40, Kovilpatti 38, Nandhiyar Head 30, Marungapuri 27.20, Navalur Kottapattu 23.30, Samayapuram 22.50, Golden Rock and Tiruchi Airport 21 each, Tiruchi Junction 20.50, Thuvakudi 20.40, Thuraiyur 19 and Lalgudi 18.20. The district received an average of 21.40 mm of rainfall during the period.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Mon, Nov 28, 2011 | Updated 06.00AM IST

28 NOV, 2011, 05.07AM IST, NIDHI NATH SRINIVAS,ET BUREAU

Cotton turns political hot potato

Farmers have again overproduced themselves out of profits. They have grown enough cotton to last India two years at the current pace of consumption. Unfortunately, no one has the guts to tell them so. The Planning Commission says farming is India's largest private sector enterprise. And cotton is India's largest cash crop. It was planted with eyes wide open and greedy after it fetched a record 100% profit last season. This year, farmers are still in the money.

Commission for Costs and Prices that calculates the cost of growing 22 crops in India figured farmers would have spent between Rs 2,500 and Rs 2,900 for producing a quintal. It fixed MSP at Rs 3,300. But farmers want minimum Rs 4,300 and are going on a rampage to achieve it. Can you imagine businessmen taking to the streets because prices are down? So why are farmers being treated with kid gloves? Farmers are still the single largest vote bank and Maharashtra heads for civic polls in February.

Farmers are also the life blood of professional agitators in all states. In late October, Maharashtra's local parties offered their services to sugar cane farmers clamouring for higher prices. After successfully making the NCP-Congress state government combine bow down on cane, they have offered to help cotton farmers.

The state government wants to wrest the credit for itself. Since the electoral code of conduct has been imposed, chief minister Prithviraj Chavan can't announce a bonus. But he can certainly push the Centre to raise the MSP. With NCP supremo Sharad Pawar as agriculture minister, and boss of CACP, it should be a doddle.

Then again, it is always easy to be generous with other people's money. It will be the central government's headache to find the Rs 30,000 crore needed to procure cotton from farmers at the new higher price if textile mills don't. NCP-Congress will take the credit for something totally off the state government's account books.

What any politician won't mention is the real reason why Vidarbha farmers make so little despite high prices. Only 5% of Maharashtra cotton farms are irrigated, compared to half in Gujarat. Fewer bales per hectare keep farmers trapped in poverty. That is why Gujarat is quietly exporting to China while Vidarbha burns with jealousy. But politically, check dams are not a patch on giving farmers cash in hand. The Central government is equally keen to lend an ear. Parliament is in session. After being branded anti-poor, anti-consumer, anti-trader, the last thing government wants is media coverage of farmers being lathicharged.

The cabinet secretary is learnt to have asked the ministries of agriculture, textiles and commerce for a position paper on the issue.

None of these ministries are likely to take a tough stand. Agriculture ministry has asked CACP to re-do the maths. The new figure can be higher by anything between Rs 300 and Rs 1,000, depending on give and take between parties. The textiles ministry has to find the cash for procuring cotton. Since state-run Cotton Corpora-tion of India doesn't have working capital lines to spend Rs 30,000 crore, the ministry is understandably anxious.

Especially because CCI staff is first to be roughed up by farmers if buying or payment is slow. But current textiles secretary is due to retire in December. Usually, neither an outgoing secretary nor an incoming secretary is keen to take on the government. Commerce and textiles minister Anand Sharma is also unlikely to upset the political apple cart.

A higher MSP is no solution as it artificially raises the value of cotton. No mill is willing to buy it at a price that makes yarn and clothing non-viable. So farmers still won't find customers. Worse, steep raw material prices will worsen the textile industry's precarious financial health. A package

worth Rs 5,000 crore to restructure corporate debt and ease working capital is in the offing to reduce the pain.
In short, government is willing to spend Rs 35,000 crore on cotton and textiles this season. But it doesn't have the gumption to stick to its guns and tell farmers it will only intervene if prices drop below cost of production.
The pattern of profitable crop prices, followed by increased production, resulting in a price crash is not unique to India or to cotton. It is created by farmers riding a bull run. It auto-corrects when farmers face the consequences of their collective irrational exuberance. That's business. Unfortunately, no political leader has the courage to tell this truth. Together, they are merely prolonging farmer misery.

Business Standard

Monday, Nov 28, 2011

Jaggery prices at Anakapalli head south

VDS Rama Raju / Chennai/ Visakhapatnam November 28, 2011, 0:11 IST

Jaggery prices at Anakapalli have declined 20 per cent in the last 20 days as compared with the first week of this month. Traders expects the prices to go down further by 4-5 per cent over the next couple of weeks.Beginning this month, traders purchased black jaggery from farmers at Rs 230 per 10 kg. Now these prices have fallen to Rs 184 while other varieties like Rajbhog have dropped to Rs 197 (Rs 245 per 10 kg), and deluxe to Rs 255 (Rs 220).“The decline in prices is mainly due to plenty of stock in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh and increase in arrivals at Anakapalli,” KLN Rao, secretary, Anakapalli Jaggery Merchants Association, said.

Previously, jaggery traders in Maharashtra used to heavily depend on the Anakapalli market, but this year they have opted for Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh markets, where jaggery is available at reasonable prices.This apart, arrivals have increased this season here compared with last year. Average jaggery arrivals last season in November stood at 5,000-6,000 lumps (each lump contains 15 kg) a day, whereas this year arrivals during the same month have on average increased to 15,000 lumps. In October last year, Anakapalli received about 80,000 lumps while this October this was at 180,000 lumps.Similarly, in November 2010, arrivals were

90,000 lumps and this year so far the market has received 140,000 lumps. “We expect black jaggery prices to fall to Rs 170-175 per 10 kg,” he said.However, with jaggery available at lower prices, traders here are keen on stocking.“We expecting a further drop of Rs 6-7 per 10 kg in the next 10-15 days. If this happens most will start stocking and the decline in prices may be arrested for a few days,” Buchi Raju, a trader, said.

India's rubber supply deficit to widen on demand: Board

Bloomberg / Bangkok November 27, 2011, 0:04 IST

India’s deficit in natural rubber supply will widen as car sales and investments in tires expand, boosting demand in the world’s second-largest consumer, according to the Rubber Board of India.The deficit, currently around 75,000 metric tonnes, may widen in the short term if investments in tire projects proceed as planned, Sheela Thomas, Rubber Board of India’s chairman, said.Annual production growth is estimated at 2.5 to 3 per cent during the next five years, while consumption may expand 2.5 to 3.5 per cent. Output in the current crop year ending March 2012 is projected to total 865,000 tonnes, she said on the sidelines of the Global Rubber Conference in Phnom Penh.

the pioneer

Ginger farmers may get better returns in December

SUNDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2011 21:40

RAJENDRA S MARKUNA | HALDWANI

With increasing demand of agriculture produce like ginger during the winter season coupled with certain market trends currently prevailing, the ginger farmers have been advised by the scientists to dispose of their produce in December for better returns.

The scientists of the GB Pant University of Agriculture and Technology (GBPUAT), Pantnagar after conducting a survey and following certain market indications are of the opinion that the farmers associated with cultivation of ginger may earn better return if they sell their produce during the month of December.

According to a market survey conducted by these scientists, market price of fresh ginger is expected in the range of `2,050 to `2,500 per quintal in November and `2,400 to 2,700 per quintal in December, 2011. The local traders are also of the view that arrival of the ginger is highest during the months of October and November. So the farmers keeping in view these market trends should sell the fresh ginger immediately after harvesting it in stead of resorting to storage of it, they advised.

The scientists of department of agricultural economics conducted a market survey of Haldwani regulated market, a major market for ginger trade in Uttarakhand, and after analysing the wholesale price data which prevailed for the last 21 years in this market gave these predictions about the prices of ginger in the coming days, said Naresh Kumar, senior scientist of the GBPUAT. Since the arrival of fresh ginger is highest during the months of October and November which was revealed from the Haldwani market trend, the farmers have also been advised to dispose of their produce in December, Kumar said.

In a bid to help farmers get better returns of their certain agricultural commodities, the scientists of the GBPUT have been conducting these kind of surveys time-to-time under the project, establishing and networking of agricultural market intelligence centres in India.

One of the objectives of this project was to make price forecast well in advance of sowing and during harvesting of selected agricultural commodities, informed Kumar.

THE HINDU Business Line

24% of tea remains unsold at Coonoor sale

P.S. Sundar

Coonoor, Nov. 27:

As much as 24 per cent of the 16.69 lakh kg, worth about Rs 2.40 lakh, offered in 47th sale of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auctions remained unsold despite shedding Rs 2 a kg.

“Orthodox leaf market was irregular with prices oscillating Rs 1-2 a kg. Better liquoring CTC leaf market was also irregular in Rs 1-2 range and others lost up to Rs 2. Primary orthodox dusts lost Rs 5-10 a kg. CTC dusts lost Rs 1-2 and some up to Rs 3,” an auctioneer told *Business Line*.

Among CTC teas, Vigneshwar Estate, auctioned by Paramount Tea Marketing, topped at Rs 140. Homedale Estate got Rs 130, Hittakkal Estate and Deepika Supreme Rs 128 each. In all, 55 marks got Rs 100 and more.

Among orthodox teas from corporate sector, Curzon and Highfield Estate got Rs 175 each, Kairbetta Rs 166, Corsely Rs 163 and Chamraj Rs 160.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 28, 2011)

Milk prices seen dipping after Feb

Shobha Roy
Kolkata, Nov. 27:

Milk prices, which had inched up by over 20 per cent since the beginning of this year, might soon start trickling down, thanks to the drop in prices of skimmed milk powder. Milk price could dip by Rs 1-2 a litre after February 2012, said Mr Sumit Deb, Managing Director, Metro Dairy Ltd.

Price of skimmed milk powder (SMP), which was ruling at around Rs 200 a kg in August this year dropped to Rs 180 a kg in November. SMP prices might drop further and stabilise at Rs 155-160 a kg, Mr Deb said. Dairy companies add a certain percentage of SMP to the SNF (solids-not-fat) portion of raw milk. In West Bengal, for instance, approximately 20-40 gm of SMP is added to a litre of milk.

“Mother Dairy, Kolkata, had invited tenders from SMP manufacturers across the country in November this year for its winter procurement period (December-January-February). The price which has been quoted is around Rs 153-155 a kg and they plan to procure about 5,000 tonnes of SMP. So this is almost like a benchmark,” Mr Deb said.

The fall in price of SMP would have its impact on milk prices with a lagged effect, so prices would start coming down after February next year, he indicated. “Dairy companies usually carry SMP stock of around 2-3 months so the current drop in prices will be reflected only after February,” Mr Deb explained.

Procurement price of raw milk is expected to drop with the anticipated rise in milk production. “The buffalo calving season falls typically between September-March, so the peak season for milk production is October-March. The increased supply of milk therefore brings down prices to some extent,” Mr Deb said. Buffalo milk containing 6.5 per cent fat and 8.5 per cent solids-not-fat, which was landing in northern dairies at around Rs 30 a litre, has already dropped to about Rs 28.5 as litre, Mr Deb said and added that the procurement cost is likely to come down further.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 28, 2011)

Fertiliser makers decide not to hike retail prices

Our Bureau

Rupee depreciation raises DAP import price by Rs 75/tonne

Total Fertiliser Subsidy

	(Rs Crore)
2011-12 (Budget)	49,997.87
2010-11 (Revised)	54,976.68
2010-11 (Budget)	49,980.73
2009-10 (Actuals)	61,264.29

New Delhi, Nov. 27:

Every 10 paise decline of rupee against the dollar pushes up the import cost of di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) by Rs 75 a tonne, claim fertiliser makers. However, they don't intend to pass on the high import costs to farmers, but renegotiate contracts with foreign suppliers to cut prices in view of currency volatility.

India relies on imports to meet 90 per cent of its phosphorous requirement, while potash is totally imported.

The Fertiliser Association of India, in a statement on Saturday, said the industry has decided not to increase the maximum retail price of fertilisers for now. “The industry has also decided not to ask the Government for any additional subsidy,” FAI Director-General, Mr Satish Chander said. For 2011-12, the fertiliser subsidy was budgeted at Rs 49,997.87 crore. On Friday, the Centre sought Parliament's approval for an additional fertiliser subsidy of Rs 13,778.93 crore. “It (additional subsidy) has no bearing on the import bill,” Mr Chander said, estimating the total requirement for the year at about Rs 80,000 crore.

The rupee has seen a sharp decline against dollar in the past one month of Rs 6.29 at the beginning of November till date. The fertiliser imports were contracted when the rupee was at Rs 49.5 vis-à-vis the dollar against the prevailing rate of Rs 52.5.

“If we take into consideration other costs like taxes, duties and port charges and the prevailing exchange rate, the increase in cost of import of DAP is Rs 2,500 per tonne. This means that the price of DAP need to be increased by Rs 125 a bag of 50 kg. Similarly, the increases will be there in respect of other phosphorous and potash fertilisers,” Mr Chander said.

High global prices coupled with a weak rupee have made fertiliser imports costlier in the past five to six months. The DAP prices, which ruled at Rs 11,000 a tonne at the beginning of kharif season in June have shot up 65 per cent to Rs 18,500 a tonne now. The Government had decontrolled the prices of non-urea fertilisers such as DAP and NPK by introducing the nutrient-based subsidy from April 2010. Since then the prices of DAP have almost doubled from a level of Rs 9,350 a tonne.

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(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 28, 2011)

Rain likely to lash South, Maharashtra next 2 days

Vinson Kurian

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 27:

The belt of heavy to very heavy rain has taken leave of peninsular India and was lately lashing the Lakshadweep islands in the southeast Arabian Sea.

A roaring band of southeasterly winds was seen keeping the easterly flank of the rain-driving monsoon depression “05A” busy on Sunday.

STAYS PUT

The system remained practically stationary to 70 km southeast of Amini Divi (Lakshadweep) and 250 km north of Minicoy (Lakshadweep), an India Meteorological Department (IMD) update said.

The southeasterlies originating from the southern sea were seen rebounding off north Kerala and adjoining south Karnataka coasts and feeding the depression, dropping rains over that part of the land through the day.

Insat imagery showed convective (rain-driving) clouds rising over parts of south peninsular India, south Bay of Bengal, south Andaman Sea, the Comorin area and east Arabian Sea.

WEATHER WARNING

A weather warning issued by the IMD and valid for Monday said that heavy to very heavy rainfall would occur at one or two places over Lakshadweep.

Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea along and off Kerala and Karnataka coasts and Lakshadweep area during this period.

The IMD has forecast residual rain or thundershowers at many places on Monday and Tuesday over Tamil Nadu, Kerala and south Karnataka, south coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema.

Rain or thundershowers would also break out at one or two places over north interior Karnataka, Madhya Maharashtra, Konkan and Goa also during this period.

The winds blowing inland would wind down in speed by Monday as the causative depression slips further away from the coast.

But the IMD saw it intensifying twice over to become a tropical cyclone. This would not impact any part of the west coast of India, since it would have travelled a safe distance into the outer seas.

Global models agree that the system might undergo one round of intensification, which would elevate it as a deep depression.

But the system strength might start withering after it encounters increased vertical wind shear (sudden changes in wind speeds with height) and colder sea-surface which repulses convection and cloud-building.

An extended IMD outlook valid until Friday next said that rainfall would occur at a few places over south peninsular India, Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 28, 2011)