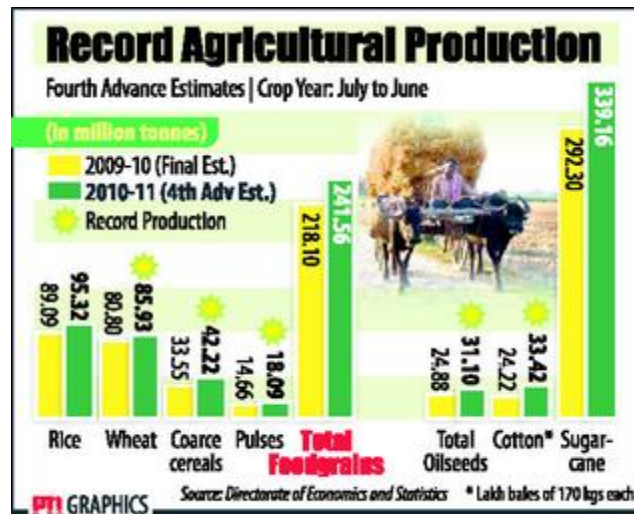


Published: September 12, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: September 12, 2011 04:19 IST  
September 12, 2011

## Embarrassing surplus of wheat and rice



The prospects for harvesting bumper food crops for two seasons in succession have given rise to intractable problems for the ministries concerned on the food front. It was not expected that the yield of foodgrains in the 2010-11 season would rise to dizzy heights and finally estimated that the output of all crops would be 241.56 million tonnes against only 218.11 million tonnes in 2009-10. It was not expected in the initial stages that the total output would be more than 235 million tonnes. What is noteworthy is the fact that an all time peak has been achieved even with rice yield being lower at 95.32 million tonnes against the earlier record of 99.15 million tonnes in 2008-09.

Even so procurement operations in both fine cereals, rice and wheat, had to be intensified and buffer stocks reached a new high level of 65.2 million tonnes even in June this year.

Since procurement of rice had to be intensified in the expectation of a jump in output of this cereal in the 2011-12 season, buffer stocks have been bulging as wheat procurement also has exceeded 27 million tonnes against 22.5 million tonnes out of the crop of the previous season.

No precise estimates are available about the output of different foodgrains in the current agricultural season. But it is generally expected that the total output in the kharif and rabi seasons will be around 250 million tonnes with the content of the rice crop being 102 million tonnes. Wheat crop will be higher at 87-88 million tonnes as compared to 85.93 million tonnes in 2010-11.

### **Bulging buffer stocks**

Apart from the fact that procurement of rice will be around 32 million tonnes in the marketing season, which will be coming to a close by the end of this month, it is being discussed in knowledgeable quarters how procured stocks of rice out of the kharif crop for this season will be handled and buffer stocks theoretically rise to over 75 million tonnes by March next year when arrivals against new wheat crops commence. K. V. Thomas, Minister for Consumers, Food and Public Distribution, is already feeling hard-pressed to ensure the safety of bulging buffer stocks, which should be around 70 million tonnes in spite of the efforts to increase the quotas allotted to States and maximise the export of non-basmati rice. Because Thailand and other rice producing nations are maximising their exports, prices realised in world markets are on the downtrend and it has been necessary for the Ministry of Agriculture to lower the minimum price to \$600 from \$850 a tonne.

There was hesitation on the part of the Ministry of Agriculture to lift the ban on export of wheat since it was felt that higher world prices for this cereal might accentuate inflationary pressures within the country. But the world situation has undergone a metamorphic change and the net prices realisable are less than internal parity even though the ban on exports of wheat has been lifted.

It has been indicated that aggregate permissible exports of non-basmati rice will be three million tonnes and wheat two million tonnes. As the months and weeks pass by, storing of procured foodgrains will become extremely complicated even though it has been decided that there should be an increase in the storage space by two million tonnes in a short period.

The happenings in recent months and those likely to take place in the next eight months will be viewed with glee by those finalising plans for ensuring food security for the population.

There is no definite estimate of what will be required by the population below the poverty line and by others above this level. If net consumption of fine cereals on the basis of the experience in recent years does not turn out to be more than 170 million tonnes, the offtake by fair price shops and retail sales can be raised to 185 million tonnes, if a further raise in buffer stocks has to be obviated.

The question of bringing down buffer stocks, which are already at dizzy heights, will still remain unless exports can be increased substantially, which may be difficult of achievement. It will be appropriate at this stage to indicate how the earlier difficulties were overcome in 2000-02 and subsequently. Even with a foodgrain production of 196.8 million tonnes in 2000-01 and 212.03 million tonnes in 2001-02, buffer stocks jumped to previous peak of 64.8 million tonnes in June 2002 from 44.7 million tonnes and 37 million tonnes on the same date in the two previous years. These stocks had to be liquidated at throw away prices as internal consumption had not risen at a faster rate as in recent years. A jump in the output of foodgrains by nearly 45 million tonnes in ten years has to be absorbed. Unless a new trend in internal consumption arises, the embarrassment to the Government cannot be easily overcome in 2011-12 and subsequent years.

P. A.. SESHAN

*The question of bringing down buffer stocks, which are already at dizzy heights, will still remain unless exports can be increased substantially.*

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KAKINADA, September 12, 2011

### **Kakinada port to export rice**

20 lakh tonnes of rice to be exported after a gap of 4 years

After a gap of four years, the anchorage port here is gearing up to export 20 lakh tonnes of rice to foreign countries, as the government has issued clearance for exporting 10 lakh tonnes of boiled rice and an equal quantity of raw rice after a long wait.

The government's decision has brought cheer to all concerned, including traders and daily labourers, as the entire trade transaction is expected to generate good revenue.

Workers of the century-old anchorage port are the happiest lot, as the export activity had steadily come down in the past few years, particularly after the development of the deep water port.

After carting 25 lakh tonnes of rice in November, 2007, this is going to be the largest export from this port.

“The barges as well as the workers will get handful of work, as the rice has to be sent to the ship anchored near Hope Island from the shore only through the barges,” says Burra Anu Babu, the newly-elected chairman of the Kakinada Port Steel Barge Owners Welfare Association.

In all, 89 steel barges are functioning in the port with a total handling capacity of 36,000 tonnes a day.

Over 2,500 labourers on the regular rolls and 10,000 workers are also depending on the port for their employment. “There is a need to take up minor repairs to the Anchorage Port to take up the export activity,” says Dantu Surya Rao, chairman of the Cocanada Chamber of Commerce.

However, no officer has been appointed to the Anchorage Port for the last three years.

“Since the trade is going under Open General Licence, traders from the north Indian States are rushing here whenever there is a rice export and making brisk business. In all, they are capturing about 80 per cent of the export business,” Mr. Surya Rao observes.

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- *89 steel barges are functioning in the port with a total handling capacity of 36,000 tonnes a day*
  - *Traders from north will capture 80 per cent business as it falls under general licence*
- 

Published: September 12, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: September 12, 2011 04:19 IST Nagercoil, September 12, 2011

**Water release from dam resumes**

Release of water from Perunchani dam for irrigation resumed on Sunday. According to Public Works Department officials, water release from the dam was stopped recently owing to heavy rain, and to carry out maintenance works in the supply channels.

### **Rainfall**

In Kanyakumari district, in the past 24 hours, maximum rainfall of 34 mm was recorded at Chittar II followed by 27 in Pechipparai, 24 in Chittar II, 16.2 in Mullankinavilai, 15.2 in Puthen dam, 15.1 in Perunchani and 9 in Surulode.

### **Water level**

While the water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 28 feet, it was 49.20 feet in Perunchani with the release of 203 cusecs of water and inflow of 264 cusecs, 4.30 feet in Chittar I and 4.39 feet in Chittar II.

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Published: September 12, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: September 12, 2011 04:04 IST Namakkal, September 12, 2011

### **'Increase milk production'**

The 480 Cooperative Milk Producers Societies in the district produce an average of 1.56 lakh litres a day. Steps should be taken to increase it to reach the target of 1.8 lakh litres a day, said Collector J. Kumaragurubaran. He was addressing the officers and secretaries of the societies at a meeting to review milk production in the district recently. He said measures were under way to provide 1,000 cows to beneficiaries through the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Economic Development Corporation Limited. He urged the farmers and milk producers to get loans through the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development to buy cattle.

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KATTAPPANA, September 12, 2011

### **Humidity, the bane of cardamom crop**

Incidence of decay and clump rot disease is more this year



The Spices Board of India has said that the incidence of decay and clump rot diseases affecting cardamom plants this monsoon is higher than that of previous years due to the high humidity in the cardamom plantation tracts. It also said that farmers should take additional measures to check the diseases.

In a press release issued here on Thursday, it said that the fungal diseases were of common occurrence during monsoon and the severity was “a little higher this time though not alarming.”

The disease has been noticed especially in Udumbanchola, Karithodu, Pethotty, Nameri, Pulianmala, Aniyartholu, Vallakadavn, Anavilazam, Vandanmedu in the district. Unlike previous years, the cardamom tracts in the district were still experiencing rains, a reason for the spread of the disease.

Due to continuous rains, the relative humidity in the tracts was high, which was conducive for the multiplication of fungal pathogens causing rotting. In plantations where prophylactic spraying of one per cent Bordeaux Mixture was adopted during May-June, the incidence of fungal disease was relatively less. Many farmers could not adopt this prophylactic measure as there had been no dry spell after monsoon. The incidence of the rot disease was more prevalent in swampy areas where there was stagnation of water and less drainage, it said.

The field officers of the board were conducting meetings and campaigns among farmers to avoid further spread of the disease. Using 0.2 per cent Carbendazim had been recommended

for the control of clump rot disease. It was also advisable to adopt measures like trashing and cleaning the affected plants.

The crop loss due to rot disease is estimated at 7.8 percent during 2011-12 under Nedumkandam region alone.

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Published: September 12, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: September 12, 2011 04:19 IST GUNTUR, September 12, 2011

### **Horticulture farmers bear the brunt**

Hundreds of acres of horticulture crops in Tenali division were submerged under the flood waters as the farmers are coming to grips with the flood.

The situation at villages under Pulichintala project area in Bellamkonda was limping back to normalcy with evacuees returning to their homes on Sunday. Road links to several villages have been partially restored and the families were beginning to move out from the safer places and back to their homes.

The Horticulture Department said fruit-yielding trees and vegetables being cultivated in 3,000 acres were completely submerged. Cotton and chilli fields spread over 1,500 acres were also inundated.

Farmers cultivating turmeric adjacent to river bund were the worst hit. Turmeric sown in about 1,000 acres was completely submerged.

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### **Technology intervention called to enhance seed production**

Being a vital input in increasing the productivity of crops, production of quality seeds becomes a pre-requisite for yield enhancement.

Technology plays a major role in enhancing seed production of pulses and oilseeds, P. Murugesha Boopathi, Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), said here recently.

Inaugurating an entrepreneurial training on “Production and Marketing of Quality Seeds in Oilseeds and Pulses”, he said adoption of even a single and simple technology could significantly contribute to the yield increase in pulses. “In Tamil Nadu, nearly 95 per cent of area under pulses are under rainfed conditions and treated as bonus crops.

They are seldom grown as pure crop with recommended inputs, “ the Vice-Chancellor said. Lower seed replacement ratio of pulses and oilseeds discouraged private sector firms from venturing into seed production of these crops.

This had put pressure on organisations like TNAU and trained progressive farmers to undertake seed production in pulses and oilseeds. TNAU had taken strategic efforts to produce sufficient quantity of breeder seeds of pulses and oilseeds, especially black gram and red gram among pulses and gingelly, groundnut, castor and sunflower, among oilseeds to cater to the seed requirements of the State.

R. Inigo Arul Selvan, Assistant General Manager, NABARD, Coimbatore, said that the availability of quality seeds in pulses and oilseeds was a growing problem, which could be addressed through entrepreneurial training, for which the NABARD was keen to extend support.

“To strengthen the agricultural marketing infrastructure, the Government of India aided subsidy schemes were available. Nearly 25 per cent subsidy is available for primary processing, seed procurement, and market infrastructure establishment activities of farmers,” he said.

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Published: September 11, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: September 11, 2011 04:21 IST TIRUCHI, September 11, 2011

### **Special measures taken to double food productivity: TNAU Vice-Chancellor**

Training imparted to women SHG members on vermicompost, bio-manure





Points to ponder: P.Murugesu Bhoopathi, centre, Vice Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, at the exhibition organised by TNAU and SICCI in Tiruchi on Friday. A.Vellayan, second from right, president, SICCI, is in the picture . — Photo: M. Moorthy

The Tamil Nadu Agriculture University has taken up special measures to increase yield and achieve the State government's goal for doubling food productivity over a period of time, its Vice Chancellor P. Murugesu Bhoopathi said.

He also appealed to farmers to go in for castor and adopt precision farming techniques.

Speaking at a function to mark the inaugural of the two-day exhibition cum conference on 'renewing agriculture through technology updation' organised jointly by TNAU and the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) here on Friday, he said that the University was popularising 'Anna 4' a drought-tolerant rice variety in dry belts of Ramanathapuram, Pudukottai and Sivagangai. The per hectare yield had risen from 1.2 tonnes to 3.7 tonnes.

The State government has planned to increase the annual food production from 85 lakh tonnes to 115 lakh tonnes this year in coordination with the TNAU and he hoped that the 'Anna 4' variety would go a long way in achieving the goals of this scheme.

For increasing the organic carbon through the application of bio-manure, the TNAU was prepared to impart training to women members of self help groups and voluntary organisations on the preparation of vermicompost and manufacture of soil-friendly bio-manures. The programme was already on.

The Vice Chancellor appealed to farmers to take to castor, which till now is only an intercrop. This export-oriented crop would fetch attractive returns up to Rs.1.2 lakh per hectare in six months. The TNAU, to bridge the gap between the demand of 7 lakh tonnes and the actual supply of 3.5 lakh tonnes for red gram, popularised the polythene nursery technology on a trial basis.

Based on the bumper harvest, the TNAU had intensified the implementation of this technology all over Tamil Nadu. A. Vellayan, president of SICCI, underlined the need for restoration of organic carbon to soil for ensuring fertility and enhancing agricultural productivity. Scarcity of labourers posed a challenge to agriculturists, especially small and marginal farmers. On the other hand, farm mechanisation was gaining its roots. The objective of this conference was to act as a bridge between small and marginal farming community and the industries producing implements and equipment needed . The SICCI and TNAU would evolve a strategy to enhance agricultural productivity in the central region at the end of the conference. The next conference would be held at Coimbatore. The SICCI would also evolve marketing strategy for the farm produce in consultation with economic experts.

T. N. Balamohan, special officer, Tamil Nadu Horticulture College for Women, said that the exhibition would provide ample opportunities for the small and marginal farmers to go in for farm mechanisation. He specifically appealed to farmers to simultaneously take up agri-business activities so as to market their produce with higher profit margin, by assessing the period of peak demand for their produce. In this context, he cited the example of banana cultivator-cum-trader whose harvest of the produce coincided with the demand period.

A. Tajudeen, V. Jayabal and T. Jeyaraj all deans of colleges of TNAU spoke. The Vice Chancellor released a souvenir and also inaugurated the exhibition.

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### **Bengal fears floods as Jharkhand releases water from reservoir**

Several low-lying areas in West Bengal's East Medinipur and West Medinipur could face flooding on Sunday as the Jharkhand Government released one lakh cusecs of water from the Chandil reservoir on Saturday – allegedly without informing the State Government.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee told reporters at the State Secretariat here that her government was not given any intimation about the release of such a large volume of water. She feared flooding in several areas of the two districts.

“The Jharkhand Government did not inform us about the release of one lakh cusecs of water from its Chandil reservoir. With heavy rainfall taking place in Jharkhand for the past few days, it is normal that reservoirs there will release water but the government should have informed us before doing so. It would have given us time to prepare for the tackling the situation,” she said.

Ms. Banerjee said an emergency meeting was called by Chief Secretary Samar Ghosh during the day for the matter. The district administrations of the two districts as well as the disaster management department officials have been asked to be on high alert and monitor the situation round-the-clock, she said. “The State's Irrigation and Waterways Secretary, Anjan Kumar Chatterjee, has been asked to take up the issue with his counterpart in the Jharkhand Government so that such incidents are not repeated and they do not release water according to their whim without informing us,” she asserted.

The areas that face the prospect of being submerged are Egra and Patashpur in East Medinipur district and Ghatal, Gopiballabhpur, Sankrail and Nayagram in West Medinipur district.

Ms. Banerjee said the two district administrations have been asked to evacuate people from the low-lying areas on an emergency basis and promised all help from the State Government. “Relief materials are already on their way to the two districts. The suddenness of the event could hamper rescue and relief operations to some extent initially,” she added.

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HYDERABAD, September 11, 2011

### **Check black marketing of fertilizer, Naidu tells Kiran**

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) president N. Chandrababu Naidu has requested Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy to step up vigil against black marketing of fertilizer as it has been affecting the supply to farmers.

In a letter to the Chief Minister on Saturday, Mr. Naidu alleged that fertilizer were being moved to mixing plants illegally in spite of the orders by the Agriculture Department against the supply to the plants till September-end. Farmers were spending sleepless nights before the fertilizer dealers to get only two bags per passbook.

Lack of government vigil on the movement of fertilizer was creating scarcity of urea, DAP, potash and other fertilizer. The government lacked foresight on the issue, though there was serious fertilizer problem in the State last year. Though the farmers were unable to get the required quantity of fertilizer, the mixing plants were getting supplies uninterruptedly, Mr. Naidu alleged.

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### **Subsidy for cold storage units**

Minister for Horticulture and Sugar S.A. Ravindranath, said the Government had no plans to take up construction of cold storage units, but it would provide 40 per cent subsidy to private organisations that come forward to do the same.

The Government was providing financial assistance under the National Horticulture Mission to farmers in the region who cultivate grapes on up to 10 acre of land, he said.

The Minister blamed the delay in construction of the wine park in the district on the absence of proper communication between grape growers and the government.

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### **More rice but fewer pulses sown this kharif season**

Says latest data available with Crop and Weather Watch Group

Rice has been cultivated in more areas across the country this kharif season compared to the corresponding period last year, but there is concern about lower cultivation of pulses and coarse cereals.

A meeting of the Crop and Weather Watch Group held in the Union Agriculture Ministry here over the weekend was informed that as per data received from the States rice had been sown in 369.63 lakh hectares, which is 32.55 lakh hectares higher than last year. Higher cultivation was reported from West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

The area under oilseed cultivation at 176.83 lakh hectares is also higher than last year by 5.18 lakh hectares, on account of greater sowing in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

However, the area under groundnut, sunflower and niger is lower than last year owing to deficient rain in parts of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat. Compared to last year, the sowing of pulses is lower by 11.40 lakh hectares this kharif season. As against 117.23 lakh hectares sown last year, only 105.83 lakh hectares has been sown so far. The shortfall, mainly in the sowing of moong, arhar and urad, is on account of lower coverage in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

The cultivation of coarse cereals is also reported to be lower at 194.18 lakh hectares against 210.14 lakh hectares grown at this time last year, due to lower coverage in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. The shortfall is in the cultivation of maize, sorghum and pearl millet.

Cotton has been sown over 118.90 lakh hectares, compared to 108.90 lakh hectares last year, in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh.

At 51.43 lakh hectares, the area under sugarcane is higher than last year by 2.11 lakh hectares with increased cultivation in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.

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DHARWAD, September 11, 2011

### **Fertilizer supply to be streamlined in a few days**

Minister for Agriculture Umesh V. Katti has promised that fertilizer supply will be streamlined in a few days and that arrangements will be made to distribute seeds for the rabi season through raita samparka kendras by September 30.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the southern regional-level Krishi Mela organised by the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Dharwad, here on Saturday, Mr. Katti said the State required 23 lakh tonnes of fertilizer and the Government had distributed 19 lakh tonnes in the last three months. Arrangements would be made to distribute an additional 1.94 lakh tonnes of urea before September 30. The supply of fertilizer had been disrupted owing to the nationwide lorry strike, he said.

### **Organic farming**

Stressing on the need for farmers to switch to organic farming, Mr. Katti said that nearly 71,000 hectares of land had been brought under organic farming in the State in the last three years. It would be better if farmers took up organic farming keeping in mind cost-effectiveness, future possibilities and health aspects. Moreover, there was no possibility of fertilizer prices coming down in the near future and the Union Government too was cutting down on subsidies for fertilizer. It was high time farmers thought about switching over to organic farming, which was being promoted by the State Government, he said.

### **Direct subsidy**

Referring to the matter of subsidy for agricultural tools and machinery, Mr. Katti said the Government had decided to stop providing subsidy to companies and instead planned to pay the money directly to farmers. The amount would be credited to the farmers' bank accounts on purchasing the tools and machinery. Farmers could buy the tools from any company. A Government Order to this effect would be issued in 15 days.

### **Scheme planned**

The Government was planning to introduce an integrated scheme to improve utilisation of water resources and bring down power consumption by 50 per cent in the agricultural sector. The scheme aimed to provide irrigation facility to a minimum of 60 per cent of the total agricultural area by popularising drip irrigation. At present, of the total cultivable land of 1.33 lakh hectares in the State, only 28 per cent of land was irrigated. A proposal in this regard had been sent to the Union Government, he said.

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Published: September 11, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: September 11, 2011 04:20 IST Karwar,  
September 11, 2011

### Grow 'Kagga' paddy, farmers told



Various varieties of paddy on display at the 'Save Kagga Paddy' workshop in Karwar on Saturday.

Sahaja Samruddha, Bangalore, and Save Paddy Movement, Karnataka, organised a workshop on "Save Kagga Paddy" at Devarabole village in Kumta taluk on Saturday.

"Kagga" paddy is a local variety grown on marshy areas. Geeta Naik, who inaugurated the workshop, said there were 1.4 lakh varieties of paddy all over the world. Of them, most were scientifically developed.

"Kagga" variety, which was fast disappearing, was rich in nutrients and tasty. It had medicinal properties and it could be grown easily, she said. She urged farmers to grow "Kagga" variety.

C.R. Naik, a farmer from Manikatta village, said that in Karnataka,

"Kagga" variety was grown in 5,000 acres of land of which 3,000 was situated in Kumta taluk from Masuru to Aghanashini village. "Kagga" paddy was cultivated on the land where river water entered the sea. "Kagga" variety was on the verge of extinction and farmers should take interest in cultivating it, he added.

R.P. Bhat, Assistant Director of Agriculture, Govind Patgar, and M. S. Patgar were present. Shantakumar, State convener of Sahaja Samruddha, spoke. Local farmers participated in the workshop.

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KOTTAYAM, September 11, 2011

### **Workshop on disease in plantations**

A six-day international workshop and seminar on phytophthora disease in plantation crops and their control, organised by the Rubber Board, will begin here on Monday.

According to a press note, the workshop will be inaugurated by Rubber Board chairperson Sheila Thomas. The seminar, which begins on September 15, will be inaugurated by Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, Minister for Revenue. Jose K. Mani, MP, and Vijayalaxmi Joshi, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, will address the gathering.

The workshop will discuss the results of scientific studies on phytophthora carried out in different countries and in different crops. Preventive and control measures developed and practised, future trends and health hazards of agrochemicals, including insecticides, will also come up for discussions. Scientists from India and abroad are expected to participate in the workshop.

The three-day seminar from September 15 to 17 will be attended by growers, some of whom will present papers on techniques for disease at the seminar, on the last day.

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Published: September 11, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: September 11, 2011 04:22 IST  
Neyyattinkara, September 11, 2011

### **Neyyattinkara municipality turns to natural farming**

The Neyyattinkara municipality plans to launch a novel project to promote natural farming for the cultivation of organic vegetables.

The project, to be implemented in association with Agriculture Department and NIMS Medicity, is based on the Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) technology propagated by agriculturist Subhash Palekar.

ZBNF is an emerging trend in agriculture that propagates use of natural manure and nutrients for farming instead of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Unlike organic farming, this method of



farming focusses on using things that are naturally available inside or around the farm so that nothing is purchased from outside.

“Most prominently, it focusses on the use of dung and urine of local breeds of cows that are considered to be the best source of nutrients and microbes for cultivation. This method has been successfully tested in Palakkad district and has proven to give high yield in vegetable cultivation,” Neyyattinkara municipality secretary G. Sudhakaran said.

Municipality chairman S.S. Jayakumar said a detailed project report would be submitted to the government soon. “NIMS Medicity has consented to give six acres of land for implementing the project. The idea is to involve Kudumbasree workers for doing the cultivation at the farm. The municipality is also planning to open an outlet at the farm itself for marketing the vegetables. We expect to launch the project within two months,” he said.

### **Onam festivities**

Onam celebrations are being organised in the rural areas of the district on as grand a scale as the urban areas. While ‘pookkalam’ contests, fairs, and cultural festivals have been the mainstay of the Onam celebrations in the urban areas, in the suburbs local youth, clubs, and cultural societies are getting together to organise several fun-filled and rustic events such as ‘uriyadi,’ tug of war, or ‘kamuku kayattam’ that involves climbing an areca nut palm that is smeared with some gooey concoction to make the climb an arduous and often an impossible task.

At Kuttichal, Thachancode, in Neyyattinkara taluk, a local club Akshaya has decided to celebrate Onam in a different manner.

The club has been organising events such as awareness classes on HIV, blood donation, distribution of uniforms to indigent students, and a photography contest and exhibition on rural sights that are fast disappearing from even the villages.

The voluntary blood donation camp organised by the club in association with the Kerala AIDS Control Society last week saw over 60 people come forward to donate blood.

An event has been planned to honour young and enterprising farmers in the area, many of whom have taken up organic farming.

#### Accident-prone spots

The three accident-prone spots of Mamom, Poovanpara, and Korani near Attingal on National Highway 47 are causing concern to law-enforcing agencies and road users.

Motorists are aggrieved that the authorities have not put in place road-safety measures on the stretch that is part of the proposed Kovalam-Kollam model road.

Over 20 persons are killed and 100 sustain injuries annually in accidents on the stretch that falls in the Attingal police station limits. Sharp curves, design problems at the Korani junction, and speeding result in accidents here.

The narrow approach to the Korani bridge is another problem faced by the motorists. The inability of those coming via the Chirayinkeezhu road to see approaching vehicles at the Korani junction on NH 47 has resulted in many fatal accidents.

The National Highways Authority of India has not taken any step to rectify the mouth of the 'T' intersection, despite local people taking up the issue at the highest level. Introducing speed barriers on the mouth of the road can slow down vehicles coming from the Chirayinkeezhu road, a local resident says. Appeals to put up signboards and post police personnel to regulate traffic during peak hours remain on paper. *(With inputs from T. Nandakumar, C. Maya and S. Anil Radhakrishnan)*



**Press Trust Of India**

New Delhi, September 11, 2011

First Published: 11:37 IST(11/9/2011)

Last Updated: 11:39 IST(11/9/2011)

## **Aug inflation to remain close to 10%**

With headline inflation hovering around the 10-digit mark, the Reserve Bank is likely to raise its key policy rates again in its mid-quarterly review of the credit policy later in the week.

The inflation numbers for August will be released on September 14, while the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) mid-quarterly policy review is slated for September 16.

Experts said the headline inflation in August is expected to be close to the double-digit mark which will keep RBI on the path of tight monetary policy.

"We expect inflation numbers to be in the range of 9.5-10% for August... RBI is likely to hike rates by 25 basis points in its mid-quarterly review," Crisil Chief Economist D K Joshi said.

He said pressure would be on all fronts, including food, non-food primary articles and manufactured items.

"Inflation is mostly broadbased. So, there will be pressure on each segment of the basket starting from food to manufacturing," Joshi said.

Inflation, as measured by the Wholesale Price Index (WPI), stood at 9.22% in July. It has been above the 9% mark since December last year.

RBI has hiked its key policy rates 11 times since March 2010 to tame inflation.

India Inc has said that repeated rate hikes have affected investments by raising borrowing cost.

The economy grew by 7.7% in April-June, the slowest in six quarters.

"Inflation for August is expected to be around 9.7 due to higher price of primary articles. Mostly, inflation is broadbased and not limited to any particular segment," Standard Chartered Global Research Senior Economist Anubhuti Sahay said.

The sustained price pressure, she added, could prompt the Reserve Bank to continue with its tight monetary policy.

"RBI is likely to hike policy rates by 25 basis points in the upcoming policy review," Sahay said.

While food inflation is close to double-digit mark, the rate of price rise of non-food primary items is over 11%.

Meanwhile, manufactured inflation, which constitutes over 65% of the WPI basket, is over 7%.

Experts also said that after a final rate hike on September 16, RBI may go for a halt in its monetary tightening policy.

"Headline inflation is expected to rise to around 9.7% for August... which is likely to prompt the RBI to raise the repo rate by 25 bps in the upcoming mid-quarter review. However, inflation is expected to ease in the subsequent months which suggests that policy rates may be close to a peak," ICRA economist Aditi Nayar said.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/744266.aspx>

## Weather

Chennai - INDIA

### Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

**Monday, Sep 12**

Max    Min

36.8° | 24.6°

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs

Sunrise: 5:58

Humidity: 79%

Sunset: 18:13

### Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

**Tuesday, Sep 13**

Max    Min

35° | 26°

Wind: Normal

Barometer: 1004

Extended Forecast for a week

Wednesday Sep 14	Thursday Sep 15	Friday Sep 16	Saturday Sep 17	Sunday Sep 18
				
32°   26°	31°   27°	30°   26°	29°   26°	29°   26°
Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy

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### State all set to boost coffee in Koraput hills

A tribal having only one acre of land in cold climate of Koraput could now aspire to earn up to one lakh. Though the estimate sounds strange, the experts in Odisha's ST and SC Development Department (SSD) are optimistic.

The poor tribals having barren land in hills can undertake coffee plantation to tide over poverty, curtesy Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Koraput.

The department has planned to implement a massive coffee cultivation programme in Koraput district. An amount of Rs 400 crore would be invested over 10 years from 2011-12 to 2021-22. Indian Coffee Board (ICB) has come forward to guide and fund the ITDA's plan for production of organic coffee in the district.

Though only 1, 300 hectares of land are now under coffee plantation, the ITDA has planned such cultivation over 22,700 hectares, said an official. While the ICB would pump in Rs 35 crore in the Koraput project, rest of the amount would come from MGNREGS, RLTA and other funds, sources said. "Besides Rs 35 crore, the ICB will guide the ITDA and assist the State Government to make the project successful," said sources.

ICB chairman Jawaid Akhtar has recently visited Odisha and discussed the issue with top officials of the Government. Besides coffee, the farmers could also undertake inter-cropping like black pepper and pine apple.

The coffee project will not only help the tribal population, but also put to an end to the age-old Podu cultivation (burning of forest for cultivation), feels the SSD Department secretary Santosh Sarangi.

Under the active supervision of Sarangi, the ITDA Koraput has chalked out such an ambitious and innovative plan. According to projections, the income from coffee and inter-cropping by 2020-21 will be Rs 10.40 crore from 400 hectares of land. This will go upwards with the scaling of the project. By 2027-28, the total area of yield in 22,700 hectares of land will fetch income of Rs 750 crore, said sources.

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## Business Standard

Monday, Sep 12, 2011

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### **Cotton output likely to exceed estimates**

**Dilip Kumar Jha / Mumbai September 11, 2011, 0:01 IST**

Traders have forecast India's total cotton output at a record 36.3 million bales (170 kg each), surpassing the government's estimate of 35.5 million bales on extended period of sowing this season.

The apex representative body of traders, the Cotton Association of India (CAI), estimated India's cotton crop size at 36.38 million bales for the 2011-12 season, against 33.23 million

bales in the previous year. This year the crop is likely to surpass the acreage benchmark of 12 million hectares, a 10 per cent rise from the last year. CAI issued the forecast base on survey conducted by various traders, farmers and exporters by field supervisions.

In July, the Cotton Advisory Board (CAB) under the chairmanship of A B Joshi, textile Commissioner, had forecast India's cotton output to set a new record this year due to an increase in sowing following the late revival in monsoon in major producing zones. The total production is forecast at 35.5 million bales for the cotton year 2011-12 (October-September), as compared to 32.5 million bales in the comparative period last year.

Joshi also forecast overall sowing to rise nearly 10 per cent to a record 12.1 million hectares (ha) this year, due to farmers' speedy migration to cotton from less remunerative crops such as oilseeds and pulses. During the last season, the total area under cotton was 11.1 million ha.

<b>BATTLE GROUND</b>		
Trade balance sheet (traders vs govt), in lakh tonnes for 2011-12		
	<b>Government</b>	<b>Cotton Association</b>
<b>SUPPLY</b>		
Opening stock	47.50	56.75
Crop	355.00	363.75
Imports	5.00	5.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>407.50</b>	<b>425.50</b>
<b>DEMAND</b>		
Mill consumption	240.00	230.00
Small scale units	24.00	21.00
Non-mill consumption	17.00	17.00
Exports	70.00	70.00
<b>Total demand</b>	<b>351.00</b>	<b>338.00</b>

Closing stock	26.50	87.50
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Meanwhile, the textile ministry has extended its export forecast for the current cotton year to seven million bales from the earlier restricted quota of 6.5 million bales. Consequently, the total closing stocks' estimate is 4.75 million bales for 2010-11, as against the previous forecast of 5.25 million bales. Total export is likely to remain unchanged at seven million bales during the ensuing season of 2011-12. Joshi says they have raised the domestic mill consumption estimate to 26.4 million bales for the next season, as compared to 23.6 million bales during the current season.

Consequently, availability of cotton for 2011-12 is forecast at 40.75 million bales, which includes 0.5 million bales of import. Against that, total consumption is estimated at 35.1 million bales, resulting in an opening stock of 5.65 million bales for 2012-13. CAI, for the year 2011-12, estimated the total cotton supply at 42.55 million bales while the domestic consumption is estimated at 26.8 million bales, thus leaving an available surplus of 15.75 million bales. The cotton crop looks promising for the coming season. The monsoon has been, by and large, normal throughout the cotton belt thereby pushing up the possibility of better yields.

Looking to the bumper crop ahead, CAI urged the government to extend the open general license (OGL) status for exports of cotton without any restrictions into the new season at the earliest in order to ensure continuity.

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### **Pepper market sluggish as prices rule firm**

Kochi, Sept. 11:

Pepper market world over witnessed sluggishness due to high prices prevailing in all the origins even though there were claims of

availability of black pepper cheap in one origin or the other.

But, according to the market sources, the material offered at low price is of lower grade and the price of that grade is quoted even at \$7,000 a tonne. For instance, 500 GL black pepper is



offered by Vietnam at \$7,000 a tonne (fob). Brazil is reportedly offered Asta grade at \$7,300 a tonne (fob).

In India also, farm grade pepper may be available at these rates or even lower but that may be of low bulk density with high moisture content, market sources told *Business Line*. Processing cost, as it has to be done mechanically, is estimated at Rs 15 a kg and, therefore, the price will go up for processed material, they said.

The demand for Malabar in the overseas market is because of its high bulk density. The US buyers demand that the Asta grade pepper should be of 570 GL, while the Europe requirement is for 560 GL.

The quality of the material and its parameters differ with area and thus the prices also vary in India and other growing countries, they said. Prices in other origins, especially Indonesia and Vietnam, were firmer and the latter wasn't offering anything other than 500 GL black pepper, while Lampong was said to be reluctant to sell at lower rates.

The futures and the spot market has been fluctuating last week. Even in Karnataka the prices quoted last week were Rs 305 and Rs295 a kg delivered anywhere in India but these prices are for lower grades, market sources said. The currency factor has kept the Indian parity lower at \$7,500 a tonne (c&f) for Europe and \$7,700 a tonne (c&f) for the US.

September, October and November contracts on the NCDEX dropped by Rs 246, Rs 341 and Rs 142 respectively during the week to close at Rs 33,088, Rs 33,693 and Rs 34,142 a quintal.

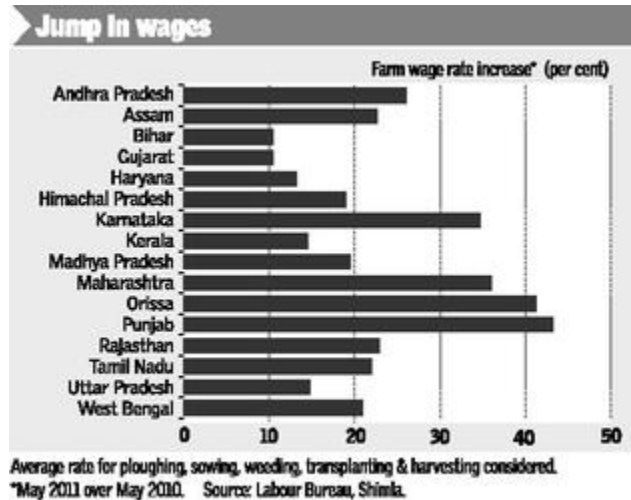
Total turnover fell by 3,035 tonnes to 24,910 tonnes indicating limited activities last week. Total open interest also dropped by 218 tonnes. Spot prices moved up by Rs 200 during last week to close on Saturday at Rs 30,200 (ungarbled) and Rs 31,200 (MG 1) a quintal.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated September 12, 2011)

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## States extend farm equipment subsidy on labour scarcity, rising wages

Gujarat and Rajasthan show the way



New Delhi, Sept. 11:

First, it was sugarcane harvesters and now it is milking machines on which State Governments are offering subsidy to enable farmers to cope with labour shortages in the countryside.

The Gujarat Government has recently announced a subsidy of 50 per cent or Rs 20,000 (whichever is lower) on milking machine purchases by dairy farmers.

“It is a good scheme because some of our member unions are already giving a subsidy of Rs 10,000-13,000. If you add the Government's Rs 20,000, the farmer has to foot only a quarter of the Rs 40,000 cost for a machine that can milk 10 or more animals at a time,” said Mr R.S. Sodhi, Managing Director, Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF).

### Demonstration effect

The Gujarat Government is offering the subsidy on 2,500 machines initially, and plans to extend it to more units as the demand from farmers increases. “It makes sense to go by stages. We will first target one or two farmers from each village society and their experience could rub off on others,” Mr Sodhi added.

The Rs 9,774-crore GCMMF's 13 district unions procure about 95 lakh litres of milk daily from 30 lakh-odd farmers, who are part of over 15,000 village societies.

Dairying in India is largely a family-based enterprise. Much of the labour, whether for milking or for grazing, feeding and cleaning the animals, is contributed by family members, especially the womenfolk. But with family size getting smaller and increasing emphasis on education, the opportunity cost of having children tend to buffaloes (rather than sending them to school) has gone up.

"If milk has to be delivered to the society at six in the morning, it means getting up and start milking from four o'clock. It is unrealistic to sustain this in today's world, where even those who rise early would prefer investing that time in other activities, including readying their children for school," noted Mr Sodhi.

### **Reducing drudgery**

GCMMF claims to have partially solved this problem by installing bulk milk coolers (BMC) in many of its primary societies. Without BMCs, the milk collected from farmers has to be transported quickly to avoid spoilage at ambient temperatures.

The BMCs chill the milk 'at source' and maintain it at 4-6 degrees Celsius to arrest any bacterial growth. That gives flexibility to farmers, as they do not have to rush to pour by 6 am, while the milk remains fresh for the tankers to take delivery later in the day. Moreover, there are savings on fuel costs. The tankers, instead of collecting milk once in the morning and again at 6:00 in the evening, have to only make a single trip to take care of the morning's as well as previous evening's procurement.

"Roughly 65 per cent of our total milk procurement is now through BMCs, which have individual capacities from 1,000 to 10,000 litres. In some unions such as Kaira and Banaskantha, the proportion is 80 per cent," informed Mr Sodhi.

After BMCs, GCMMF's next major focus is on milking machines. "Today, even you get up at 4 am, you will be able to only milk 3-4 cows. With milking machines, you can do 10 and still have time for other things. This would, over a period, also lead to bigger herd sizes going up to 20 or

so. Beyond that, you require hired hands as well more capital, which makes dairying unviable in our conditions,” he pointed out.

### **Subvention schemes**

The Gujarat Government had, earlier, announced a Rs 50 lakh subsidy on sugarcane harvesters acquired by cooperative sugar mills. There were 18 such machines (each costing around Rs 1.1 crore) deployed during the 2010-11 crushing season.

The Maharashtra Government has come out with a similar scheme of providing a 50 per cent subsidy for harvesters bought by self-help groups of cane growers. The subsidy is 25 per cent for mills, as they can also avail concessional loans from the Centre's Sugar Development Fund for the same purpose. The Agriculture Ministry's Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana also has a farm mechanisation assistance component.

All these interventions come at a time when farm labour costs have shot up, soaring by 40 per cent-plus in some States in the last one year alone.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated September 12, 2011)

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