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Location-specific ocean forecasting system in place



Madhura Swaminathan takes over as MSSRF chairperson

M S Swaminathan Research Foundation announced the launch of location-specific ocean state forecasting and fisheries information system for southern districts of the State.

On the foundation day of MSSRF on Tuesday, the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Service (INCOIS), a strategic partner of MSSRF, decided to deploy a wave rider buoy at Kodiakarai sanctuary in Vedaranyam in Nagapattinam district in the third week of August.

The buoy will provide real-time information on wave, swell patterns and sea surface temperature which will be used for forecasting sea conditions for another three days at three-hourly intervals to monitor the high wave conditions.

MSSRF's Vedharanyam Village Resource Centre (VRC) will act as a local receiver station to get the real time information and disseminate it to the coastal community. Kodiakarai has been chosen as it will help improving greatly the wave forecasts of the Palk Bay region. Images, movies and text information on ocean forecast and real-time sea conditions will be updated on INCOIS website and displayed in electronic display boards in English and Tamil.

MSSRF will be disseminating the information through voice and text messages to the coastal community. With the deployment of the buoy, the MSSRF will expand the number of villages covered. It will also organise user interaction and feedback meetings as the information will be vital to save lives and property in times of emergency.

Madhura Swaminathan took over as the chairperson of M S Swaminathan Research Foundation. Taking over the chair from her father M.S. Swaminathan, Ms. Madhura, in her address, said the foundation's research would focus on small and marginal farmers.

CUDDALORE, August 8, 2012

"Monsoon failure won't throw cold water on rabi crop"



Arvind Kumar, Deputy Director-General (Education) of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, delivering the commemorative address at the birth anniversary celebrations of Rajah

Sir.M.A. Muthiah Chettiar at Annamalai University in Chidambaram on Monday. Vice-Chancellor M. Ramanathan (centre) is in the picture.— Photo: C. Venkatachalapathy

Though the country has received 18-per-cent-deficit rainfall from the southwest monsoon, that is no cause for concern because the prospects of “rabi” crops hold out hopes, said Arvind Kumar, Deputy Director-General (Education) of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi.

He was delivering the commemoration address at the 108th birth anniversary celebrations of Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar, second founder Pro-Chancellor of Annamalai University, held at the university in Chidambaram on Monday.

Mr. Kumar said that last year foodgrain production in the country touched 270 million tonnes. Horticulture production too went up, thereby increasing the per capita availability fruit and vegetables to 172 gm and 312 gm per day as against 115 gm and 236 gm per day respectively in 2010-2011.

However, one could not miss the fact that 21 per cent of the population, including 42 per cent of children below five years of age, continued to remain malnourished.

In a predominantly agriculture-based economy as India, 52 per cent of the workforce was engaged in farming operation and 75 per cent of rural population depended on farms for their livelihood.

The pertinent question being asked in international conferences was that while agriculture was so dominant in India why so many people should remain malnourished. The reasons were not far to seek: for the gross area under cultivation had come down due to factors such as industrialisation, urbanisation, real estate interests, deficit rainfall, drought condition and migration of labour.

Mr. Kumar said that technology for producing genetically modified crops and nano technology could be used as tools to enhance agricultural production. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was solely responsible for starting the second agriculture college in Tamil Nadu which made significant contribution in creating technical hands and innovations.


Mr. Kumar commended the Faculty of Agriculture for successfully implementing the National Agricultural Innovation Project for sustainable rural livelihood security in disadvantaged districts of Tamil Nadu.

Vice-Chancellor M. Ramanathan recalled the contributions made by Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar in the spheres of education, finance, Tamil language and music, politics and philanthropy.

Registrar R. Meenakshisundaram and Dean (Faculty of Agriculture) RM. Kathiresan were present. ICAR officials gave away prizes to winners of various competitions conducted in connection with the event.

ERODE, August 8, 2012

Emu farming: investors in a private firm allege cheating



What is this bird business?

- Emu is a large, flightless bird, originally native to Australia.
- Commercial emu farming for its meat, eggs in India began in 1990.
- Prevalent in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

How it took flight

A few private firms that came up at Perundurai in Erode five years ago introduced schemes offering huge returns to investors in commercial emu farming.

With more hype, more firms came up in Erode, Tirupur and Coimbatore. Some of these offer staggering monthly returns of up to Rs. 1 lakh.

Normal scheme:

- An investor has to make a minimum deposit of Rs. 1.5 lakh and enter into a two-year contract with the firm.
- The firm provides 10 pairs of chicks to raise to the investor. The investor is offered Rs. 6,000 a month to rear these. The firm also offers a yearly bonus. The firm offers to take back the birds and return the deposit at the end of the contract period.

VIP scheme:

- A minimum deposit of Rs. 1.5 to Rs.2 lakh.
- The firm will rear the chicks and the investor is offered Rs. 7,000 a month for two years and a yearly bonus. The deposit is to be returned at the end of two years.

The controversy: Non-payment of monthly returns for the past few months. Investors allege that the outstanding runs to nearly a crore.

A private firm dealing with emu farming, here, has been charged with cheating investors of their promised monthly returns.

Police on Tuesday registered a case against eight persons, including the Chairman and Managing Director of Susi Emu Farms based at Perundurai, M.S. Guru. The district

administration also launched a detailed probe into what was suspected to be a scam involving several crores of rupees.

Mr. Guru and seven others of the firm were booked under Sections 420 (cheating) and 120B (conspiracy) of Indian Penal Code, based on written complaints from five investors. The complainants claimed that they had invested in the commercial emu farming schemes of the firm, which assured monthly returns.

But the monthly payments dried up recently and the requests for payments were not answered. Police launched a detailed investigation following the complaints.

Deputy Superintendent of Police K. Gunasekaran, who heads the investigation, said investors were turning up at the firm's head office at Perundurai, claiming that they did not receive their monthly payments. "The owner of the firm is absconding," he said.

On Tuesday, more than 2,000 persons who had invested in the firm gathered in front of the head office and claimed that they did not receive their monthly payments. They alleged that the firm had collected a huge amount of money as deposits from them promising staggering returns on their investment. But the firm had failed to return their money. The firm's office has remained closed since Monday.

Meanwhile, the district administration launched a detailed probe under the Tamil Nadu Protection of Interests of Depositors (in Financial Establishments) Act. A team of revenue officials led by District Revenue Officer S. Ganesh inspected the firm's premises on Tuesday.

"We have downloaded all the data from the computers at the firm. We are analysing the data to find out the total investments made in the business. It appears that 8,000 to 12,000 individuals have invested their money in the schemes of the firm," Mr. Ganesh told *The Hindu*.

Some of the individuals had reportedly invested up to Rs. 70 lakh in the schemes of the firm. Companies that supplied feed and other goods on credit to the firm also met the revenue officials and submitted petitions on Tuesday. "Since the number of investors is huge, we have planned to open special counters to receive complaints after completing our analysis," Mr. Ganesh said.

Mr. Ganesh further said that steps were taken up to freeze the assets of the company and impound the passport of Mr. Guru.

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Poultry farmers seek one year loan repayment holiday to reduce loss

M.K. Ananth

Poultry farmers have made an appeal to all the banks that have lend loans to them to declare a one year repayment holiday for the term loans. According to the Chairman of the National Egg Coordination Committee, Namakkal Zone, Dr. P. Selvaraj, the repayment holiday will help farmers manage the escalating feed rates better.

Dr. Selvaraj said that the production cost of an egg was Rs. 2.95 against wholesale price of egg now fixed at Rs. 2.93. "However farmers still suffer a loss of 22 to 27 paise an egg as it is deducted from the cost of an egg as packing and transportation charges", he added.

He told *The Hindu* that banks declared a term loan repayment holiday for a year during the bird flu outbreak in the country in 2006. "Banks also converted the cash credit into term loan and gave an equal amount as fresh cash credit which helped farmers to buy feed without difficulty", he added.

The Chairman said that a representation seeking repayment holiday and 50 per cent cash credit would soon be sent to all the banks and the Bankers Club in Chennai.

"We suffered a loss of Rs. 1.8 lakh to Rs. 2 lakh a day for producing five lakh eggs a day in our farm in the month of July. This took the monthly loss to more than Rs. 55 lakh", Joint Secretary of the Namakkal Poultry Farmers Federation M. Murali told *The Hindu*.

According to him, 15 paise of the production cost of an egg accounts for repaying the base amount they borrowed from banks (10 paise) and interest (5 paise).

"Declaring a repayment holiday will result in deduction of 15 paise from the production cost and help us reduce the loss per day for producing five lakh eggs by Rs. 75,000 a day and about Rs. 23 lakh a month", he added.

Industry sources said that this region produces over 3.40 crore eggs a day and the repayment holiday would help them avoid a loss of nearly Rs. 51 lakh a day and Rs. 15 crore a month.

Senior Manager of a Nationalised Bank here said that poultry farmers in this district have an outstanding loan to the tune of Rs. 500 crore. "Each farmer who has obtained the loan should make a written representation to that bank for restructuring their loan tenure. However for banks to decide upon repayment holiday for a period of one year, the Union Government's Ministry of Finance should take it up as a policy level decision", he said.

August 8, 2012

Entry fee reduced for horticulture show

In the interest of the public, the Department of Horticulture has decided to cut the entry fee for the Horticulture Show at Lalbagh by Rs. 10 on weekdays, from August 9 to 15. According to a press release, the fee on August 11, 12 and 15 (holidays) will be Rs. 40, while on August 9, 10, 13 and 14, it will be Rs. 30 for adults. For children, the entry fee is Rs. 10 on all days, said the release.

BANGALORE, August 8, 2012

Loss of horticultural crops put at Rs. 2,332.5 crore



Sowing/planting of horticultural crops (kharif 2012)			
Crop	Average area of sowing (ha)	Area sown in current season (ha)	% of coverage
▶ Potato	28,225	14,192	50
▶ Tomato	22,067	3,716	17
▶ Onion	99,506	4,928	5
▶ Chilli	41,096	2,731	7

Source: Government of Karnataka

Horticultural crops such as potato, tomato, onion and chilli, and seasonal flowers and perennial fruit crops have been severely affected on account of drought in all regions of Karnataka.

Net sown area of horticultural crops was only 15 per cent of the total 19 lakh hectares as on July 30, 2012. The loss of horticultural crops has been estimated at Rs. 2,332.50 crore on account of 38 per cent deficient rainfall.

Horticultural crops account for 41 per cent of the total agricultural income while its share to the State GDP is 7.35 per cent (Rs. 25,000 crore).

Dry spell

Officials in the State Secretariat told *The Hindu* that due to prolonged dry spell in June and July, plantation of horticultural crops declined. The acreage under onion was just 5 per cent of the estimated area for sowing (99,506 hectares). The onion crop was sown on 4,928 hectares against last year's coverage of 17,984 hectares.

During the normal monsoon, the State has the potential to produce 27.21 lakh tonnes of onion, according to official sources.

Chilli covered only seven per cent (2,731 hectares) of the normal grown area (41,096 hectares). The crop is grown in almost all districts. Tomato crop covered 17 per cent (3,716 hectares) of the estimated grown area of 22,067 hectares. Acreage under potato declined in major crop growing districts of Hassan, Kolar Chickballapur, Belgaum and Bangalore Rural. Area under the crop was 14,192 hectares, constituting only 50 per cent of the normal sown area of 28,225 hectares.

Hassan contributes 50 per cent of the total output. In the wake of drought, legislators from Hassan district have urged the government to announce a special package for potato growers.

Deficient rainfall has severely affected seasonal flowers such as marigold, aster, chrysanthemum and fruit crops — grapes, pomegranate, lime, orange and banana. Prices of banana touched Rs. 60 a kg due to shortfall in supply, a trader said.

Officials noted that deficient rain resulted in reduced sowing/planting and the prolonged dry spell has resulted in drying of germinated crop. The loss estimated due to deficit sowing/planting has

been estimated at Rs. 413 crore while loss due to yield loss/drying of seasonal crops has been put at Rs. 4.5 crore. Yield loss in perennial crops and drying of perennial crops has been estimated at Rs. 1,240 crore and Rs. 675 crore respectively.

The government has urged the Centre to enhance the National Horticultural Mission funds from Rs. 140 crore to Rs. 300 crore in 2012-13 and increase micro-irrigation scheme funds from Rs. 105 crore to Rs. 300 crore.

DAVANGERE, August 8, 2012

Farm activities pick up after good rain

Farmers were seen engaged in agricultural activities in the district on Tuesday following good rain in all six taluks on Monday.

The district received an average of 20.7 mm rainfall on Monday. Davangere taluk received 13.5 mm rainfall on Monday, while Jagalur, which was chronically drought-hit, received a whopping 66.8 mm rain. Chennagiri taluk received 30 mm, Honnali 42.5 mm and Harpanahalli received 46 mm. Official sources said the rainfall was measured at 8 a.m. on Tuesday.

Houses damaged

Four houses in Jagalur and three in Chennagiri were partially-damaged in the heavy rain on Monday. However, official sources said that they had only received information about a damaged house in Chennagiri.

Crops such as sunflower, groundnut, ragi and maize would be revived following rain in the district, Mr. Gollar said. The rain would also solve the fodder problem, he added.

Farmers who had stopped sowing hybrid maize in most parts of the district could take it up again, Mr. Gollar said. Many farmers had taken up sowing on Tuesday in Jagalur, Mayakonda and other parts of the district.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Vijayakumar said the district administration had dropped the idea of setting up a 'goshala' or fodder bank in Harapanahalli.

- *Davangere district recorded rainfall of 20.7 mm on Monday*
 - *'Idea of opening goshala or fodder bank in Harapanahalli dropped'*
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NAGAPATTINAM, August 8, 2012

Subsidy for native chicken farming

: Department of Animal Husbandry has proposed to issue subsidies for native chicken farming in rural areas. This is an extension of the State government's announcement to encourage native poultry farming in select districts of the State.

The scheme for the district here envisages an assistance of Rs.1.17 lakh per beneficiary for 35 beneficiaries. Of this, 50 percent is proposed as subsidy under the Scheme. The subsidy envisages a front-ended subsidy component of 25 percent by the State government, and a back-ended subsidy component of 25 percent by NABARD. The contribution by NABARD would be 33 percent for Adidravidar beneficiaries. This would cater to finance bird-pens, poultry feed, and poultry infrastructure. According to an official release, the Scheme, conceived for rural areas envisages breeding of 250 native chicks in three phased rounds of 14 weeks each through the year. Selected applicants would be provided with five-day training by Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS) along with a certification. Additionally, vaccines and medicines would be provided by Department of Animal Husbandry.

CHENNAI, August 8, 2012

CPI (M) seeks Rs. 10,000 per acre relief for farmers

The State unit of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) on Tuesday urged the government to release Rs. 10,000 per acre to farmers and an equal amount to each family of agricultural workers in Cauvery delta districts as the failure of southwest monsoon had put paid to the hopes of raising the kuruvai paddy crop.

Explaining a resolution adopted at a two-day meeting of the party's district secretaries, which began on Tuesday, G. Ramakrishnan, State secretary, said not even a third of the total kuruvai area was had been brought under cultivation because of the monsoon failure.

Empty announcement

He alleged that though Chief Minister Jayalalithaa had promised 12-hour power supply to delta farmers, it remained an empty announcement; there was no supply beyond seven to eight hours a day.

“Lakhs of farmers and farm labourers have lost their livelihood and agriculture production in the State is likely to go down,” he said.

DHARWAD, August 8, 2012

Seminar on seed production today

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The Department of Horticulture will organise a seminar-cum-interaction programme as part of Horticulture Day on its premises here on Wednesday. Experts will sensitise participants on the rejuvenation of potato, mango crops, and onion seed production, according to a release.

MYSORE, August 8, 2012

Thousands of acres of paddy fields under water

Lakshmanatheertha in Virajpet taluk is in spate



A PROBLEM OF PLENTY: Vast expanse of paddy fields have come under water in Virajpet taluk of Kodagu on Tuesday following floods in the Lakshmanatheertha.

Rain continued to pound Kodagu district on Tuesday with Srimangala and surrounding areas in the southern parts of the district bearing the brunt, according to information received here.

Thousands of acres of paddy fields have been inundated in Virajpet taluk following heavy rains. More than 70 affected persons, mostly workers, had been rehabilitated at T. Shettigeri near Srimangala.

Lakshmanateerta river is still in spate raising concern among the people in Srimangala, T. Shettigeri, Balyamandur, and Harihara villages.

A few people had been rehabilitated at the Srimangala Kodava Samaja building as well.

Roads have taken a battering while landslips occurred in certain places in and around Srimangala.

A newly constructed bridge at Kodchi near Balyamandur built under the NABARD funds involving a sum of Rs. 70 lakh recently has crashed in Lakshmanateerta flood waters.

Initial estimates say that over 1,200 acres of paddy fields have come under water with transplanted paddy seedlings getting washed away in floods in the Balyamandur and Hudikeri areas. Reports said that telephone lines and electric power supply have been disrupted.

Kodagu district has received an average of 1,184.45 mm rainfall from January till August 6 this year against last year's 1858.65 mm in the corresponding period last year. Average rainfall in Madikeri taluk in the last 24 hours was recorded at 120.85 mm while it was 95.42 mm in Virajpet taluk and 70.62 mm in Somwarpet taluk.

Srimangala hobli received 167.40 mm, Shantalli hobli 126.20 mm, Madikeri town 104.80 mm, Napoklu 112 mm, Sampaje hobli 143 mm, Bhagamandala hobli 118.60 mm, and Virajpet town 124.40 mm in the last 24 hours (8 a.m. on Monday morning to 8 a.m. on Tuesday).

The water level at the Harangi reservoir on Tuesday stood at 2,856.87 feet against last year's 2,856.40 feet in the same period last year.

Harangi area received 91.40 mm rainfall in the last 24 hours. Inflow was 9,074 cusecs. As much as 9,088 cusecs was being let into the river and 950 cusecs into the canals.

Helpline

The Kodagu district administration has opened helpline at the Deputy Commissioner's office. In case of emergencies, people can call 08272-221077.

N. Shivashankar, Deputy Commissioner, said a rehabilitation centre has been opened at Srimangala to accommodate affected people. People had been asked to remain alert in other flood-prone areas of the district. The district administration had taken all steps to tackle the rain-related crises, Dr. Shivashankar said.

Bagina

Kodagu district in-charge Minister, M.P. Appachu Ranjan, offered the customary 'Bagina' at the Harangi reservoir on Tuesday on the reservoir attaining full level. Good rainfall had brought cheers to farmers in Kodagu, Mr. Ranjan told presspersons later, according to an official release here.

He would request Chief Minister Jagdish Shettar and Deputy Chief Minister, K.S. Eshwarapa, who also holds the Revenue portfolio, to release Rs. 50 crore to Kodagu to take up rain relief work, Mr. Ranjan said.

About 13 acres of the vacant area in front of the reservoir would be developed as a garden in the first phase. Tenders had been invited for the purpose and the Major Irrigation Minister Basavaraja Bommai, would visit the reservoir site soon to launch the programme, he said.

KALPETTA, August 8, 2012

Dip in banana prices worries farmers

The decline in the prices of the 'Nendran' variety of plantain ahead of the festival season is worrying farmers in Wayanad district, a major plantain cultivating area in the State.

The spot price for first-grade banana was Rs.20 a kg on Tuesday at the Meenangadi plantain market as against the Rs.35 to Rs.38 a few weeks ago. The price was Rs.28 to Rs.30 a kg in the corresponding period last year. The price of second-grade banana declined to Rs.13 a kg from Rs.22 in the same period last year, and the third-grade banana price reached the rock bottom price Rs.6 to Rs.8 a kg.

The excess supply during the season was the major reason for the sharp dip in prices, K. Shameer, a wholesale trader at Meenangadi, said. The good prices prevailed last year had

attracted many farmers to take up banana cultivation, targeting the Onam festival season, he added.

The arrival of Nendran variety from the Mettupalayam region in Tamil Nadu also led to the decline in the prices of the produce, he added.

The prevailing price was not at all remunerative to the farmers who had to spend nearly Rs.125 a plant.

Hence, many a farmer could not recoup the amount they had spent on banana cultivation, P.M. Raju, a small-scale farmer at Panamaram, said.

The sharp decline in price will adversely affect thousands of farmers in the district who mainly depend on plantain cultivation as their main means of income.

KURNOOL, August 8, 2012

Pension sought for farmers over 60

AP Raithu Sangham president K. Ramakrishna has urged the government to introduce a monthly pension of Rs. 3,000 for veteran farmers who have crossed the age of 60.

Talking to reporters here on Tuesday, Mr. Ramakrishna said that while farmers themselves were on the brink of committing suicide due to recurring droughts, one could imagine the fate of veteran farmers who had crossed the age of 60 after toiling for years. Considering their service and sacrifice, the government must announce a pension of Rs. 3,000, he said.

Mr. Ramakrishna urged the government to link NREGS with farming activities in order to improve productivity.

He said that more workers were needed in the fields and not for digging pits or trenches. A productivity-linked NREGS would bring about better results.

Amendment sought

Mr. Ramakrishna underscored the need for amendment to the age-old Land Acquisition Act saying it was drafted by the British in 1884.

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- *AP Raithu Sangham chief urges government to link NREGS with farming activities*
 - *Productivity-linked NREGS will bring about better results, says K. Ramakrishna*
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UNDI (WEST GODAVARI DIST), August 8, 2012

Field trials of new paddy varieties encouraging



New frontiers: Associate Director of Research, Andhra Pradesh Rice Research Institute, M. Bharatalakshmi, speaking at a meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee at Undi in West Godavari district on Tuesday.—Photo: A.V.G. Prasad

Mini-kit trials relating to new paddy varieties developed as a substitute to the Swarna and MTU-1010 varieties have been evoking a good response from the farmers, Associate Director of Research, Andhra Pradesh Rice Research Institute (APRI), Maruteru, M. Bharatalakshmi, has said.

She was speaking at a meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee after unveiling the action plan for rabi-2012 at Krishi Vignana Kendra here on Tuesday.

The APRRI has developed MTU-1121 variety with a duration of 120 days for rabi as an alternative to the MTU-1010 variety. It has also developed the MTU-1112 variety for kharif with 140 days duration as an alternative to Swarna, the ruling paddy variety in the delta during the crop season.

Mini-kits with the new varieties were given to farmers from Krishna, Khammam, East and West Godavari districts for trials for two crop seasons, said Ms. Bharatalakshmi.

The farmers are not so happy with the MTU-1010 variety and are longing for alternative varieties for quite some time, as it is prone to pests and grain shedding.

The Swarna variety, which remains the most sought-after one by virtue of its high-yielding trait, upsets the growers by being susceptible to lodging during rain.

If everything went well during the field trials, Ms. Bharatalakshmi hoped that the MTU-1112 variety would replace the Swarna variety as it had all the admiring qualities of the latter.

“The new variety has a fine grain, which may be relished by consumers,” Ms. Bharatalakshmi said. The field trials had revealed that the MTU-1112 variety was in no way inferior to Swarna in terms of yield by registering 35-40 bags per acre.

Joint Director of Agriculture Krupadas called upon the paddy growers to cut down the cultivation cost by minimising the dosage of fertilizer and adapt themselves to mechanisation. The cost of fertilizer had witnessed a two-fold increase in the last one year. Phosphorous, imported from other countries, was also highly expensive. Similarly, the wage rates in agriculture had been skyrocketing in the delta areas. So, the farmers could not afford to dispense with mechanisation and minimisation of fertilizer in order to keep cultivation under tolerable limits.

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- *APRRI develops MTU-1121 for rabi as an alternative to MTU-1010*
 - *For kharif, it has developed MTU-1112 as an alternative to Swarna*

PUDUKOTTAI, August 8, 2012

University plans to start two-year diploma course in agriculture

Building at Kudumiyamalai to be used for the purpose



Close call:V.Kalaiarasi, Collector, at the horticultural farm at Kudumiyamalai near Pudukottai on Tuesday.

: Tamil Nadu Agricultural University will start a two-year diploma course in agriculture and the district administration has planned to utilise the building available at Kudumiyamalai, near here for the purpose.

Accompanied by officials, Collector V.Kalaiarasi inspected the building on the campus of the State-level Agricultural Extension Management Institute (STAMIN).

The Collector also inspected the application of konoweeder in the 'System of Rice Intensification' technique.

She also inspected the organic farming technique being adopted in groundnut seed production plant and rain gun irrigation methodology.

She declared open the cold storage unit for vegetable seeds and drying yard for vegetable seeds, each set up at an expenditure of Rs.5 lakh under the National Horticulture Mission.

Later, the Collector interacted with a section of agriculture officials undergoing training on agricultural management and documentation skills.

P.Emperumal, Joint Director of Agriculture (in-charge), Vijayakumar, Deputy Director of Horticulture and N.Annamalai, Deputy Director of Agri Business explained the agricultural techniques being adopted at STAMIN.

Agencies

New Delhi, August 08, 2012

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Monsoon session from today; NDA to raise Assam riots issue

The monsoon session of Parliament opening on Wednesday promises to kick up a lot of heat and dust as Opposition parties are planning to raise issues like communal violence in Assam, rising prices, economy and drought. Seeking to corner the government, BJP has announced plans to raise on the very first day the issue of Assam clashes which Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has called a blot on the nation.

The Assam issue could generate a lot of heat as Congress and the Opposition are expected to indulge in charges and counter charges.

The Opposition parties have also given notice that they would raise the alleged spectrum and coal bloc allocation scams as also the controversial Aircel-Maxis deal and the handling of the Railway portfolio by Trinamool Congress, especially in the context of the Tamil Nadu express accident recently.

Pune blasts as also the collapse of the power grid in the North and the east are among the issues that are likely to be raised to pillory the government.

With the monsoon playing truant in several parts of the country, the focus would also turn to the drought situation amid demands for a national water policy and a better deal for farmers.

The session will be a test for the new home minister Sushilkumar Shinde, who has been made the Leader of the Lok Sabha following the exit of Pranab Mukherjee, who was the chief troubleshooter of the government for eight years.

Ahead of the session, UPA will project a united picture with the first meeting of the Coordination Committee of the ruling alliance scheduled on Wednesday.

31 bills for consideration

As many as 31 bills have been listed for consideration in the session, which will conclude on September 7. The bills include those on Forward Contracts, Banking laws, whistle-blowers and women's reservation as also the Prevention of Bribery of Foreign Public Officials bill.

While the much-talked about Lokpal bill has not been listed for consideration, the managers have been maintaining that it would be brought up expeditiously once the report from the Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha is submitted.

The bill was passed in the Lok Sabha, debated in the Rajya Sabha and later referred to the Select Committee.

The Select Committee is expected to give its report on the first day of the last week of the monsoon session.

NDA to move adjournment motion in LS

The NDA has said it will move an adjournment motion in Lok Sabha and suspension of Question Hour in the Rajya Sabha to discuss the ethnic violence in Kokrajhar, Assam.

"NDA has decided that we will not let Parliament function on Wednesday unless the issue of ethnic violence in Assam is taken up for discussion," BJP President Nitin Gadkari said at a programme in Delhi on Tuesday.

BJP parliamentary party chief LK Advani will move an adjournment motion in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday during Question Hour to press for a discussion on this issue. In the Rajya Sabha, deputy leader of BJP Ravi Shankar Prasad and his party colleague Balbir Punj will move a suspension of Question Hour notice on the same issue.

BJP had declared in the all-party meeting called by Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar on Monday that it wants a discussion on this issue on the first day of the session. In case the chair rejects the NDA demand, they are likely to disrupt proceedings on Wednesday, sources said.

The main Opposition is holding a dharna on Wednesday at Jantar Mantar on the issue of communal clashes in Kokrajhar.

NDA floor leaders held a meeting this evening to discuss their joint strategy in the monsoon session.

NDA Convenor and JD(U) leader Sharad Yadav said other than Assam violence, problems caused by drought and floods, FDI in retail, corruption issues raised by the CAG in its report on coal blocs allocation, civil aviation and others, power grid failure, and Centre-State relations will be raised by the BJP-led coalition.

"Our first priority is the ethnic violence in Assam. Four lakh people have been displaced. Such a big displacement has not taken place since Independence," Yadav said.

The NDA will continue to oppose reported attempts by the government to allow FDI in retail. "22 crore people of the country are involved in retail trade. The government is trying to corner them. Other countries are also putting pressure on India," Yadav said.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/910015.aspx>

weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Aug 8

Max Min

37° | 26°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:55

Humidity: 63

Sunset: 06:33

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1007

Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy






Thursday, Aug 9

Max Min

34° | 27°

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday Aug 10	Saturday Aug 11	Sunday Aug 12	Monday Aug 13	Tuesday Aug 14
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33° 27°	33° 27°	33° 27°	33° 27°	33° 28°
Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy

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THE ECONOMIC TIMES

7 AUG, 2012, 02.56PM IST, PTI

Cardamom futures up 1.29 pc on spot demand

NEW DELHI: Cardamom prices rose by Rs 16.60 to Rs 1,306.20 per kg in futures trading today as speculators created fresh positions driven by pick up in demand in the spot market.

Tight supplies in the physical market and less arrivals from producing belts also influenced the cardamom futures.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for delivery in September rose by Rs 16.60, or 1.29 per cent, to Rs 1,306.20 per kg, with a business turnover of 528 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in August traded higher by Rs 5.20, or 0.40 per cent, to Rs 1,291.30 per kg in 206 lots.

Traders said fresh buying by speculators on the back of pick up in demand in the spot market against less arrivals from producing regions led to the rise in cardamom prices at futures market.

7 AUG, 2012, 02.55PM IST, PTI

Soyabean futures up on global cues

NEW DELHI: Soyabean prices rose by Rs 102.50 to Rs 4,652 per quintal in futures trading today as traders raised positions in line with a firm overseas markets cue.

Marketmen said hike in prices at overseas markets Soyabean futures up on global cues

New Delhi, Aug 7 (PTI) Soyabean prices rose by Rs 102.50 to Rs 4,652 per quintal in futures trading today as traders raised positions in line with a firm overseas markets cue.

Marketmen said hike in prices at overseas markets mainly influenced trading sentiments here in futures price of soyabean.

Pick up in demand at domestic markets and rising export demand of soyameal too helped boost trading sentiments, they said.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, soybean for August delivery at Indore-Madhya Pradesh jumped up by Rs 102.50, or 2.25 per cent, to Rs 4,652 per quintal, with an open interest of 31,210 lots.

For delivery in October, the prices gained Rs 39, or 0.99 per cent, to Rs 3,987 per quintal, with an open interest of 84,990 lots. PTI SDG RSm mainly influenced trading sentiments here in futures price of soybean.

Pick up in demand at domestic markets and rising export demand of soymeal too helped boost trading sentiments, they said.

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7 AUG, 2012, 04.47PM IST, REUTERS

Cotton prices seen rising this week on mill demand

MUMBAI: Cotton prices in India are likely to rise this week on higher purchases by yarn makers amid concerns of a decline in output in the next crop season starting October as scanty rains curb sowing.

"Yarn makers are buying in higher quantities as they have very good export orders and are struggling to meet raw material requirements," said Arunbhai Dalal, a trader based in the western state of Gujarat.

On Monday, the most-traded Shankar-6 variety rose Rs 800 to Rs 38,200 per candy of 356 kg, data from the Cotton Association of India showed.

At 0937 GMT, the key August cotton contract on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) was trading down 0.33 percent at Rs 18,250 per bale of 170 kg on Tuesday.

"Cotton prices are likely to rise in the next few weeks as fresh supplies would start hitting the market only from October, only then could there be a price correction," said another trader based in Mumbai.

The fibre's prices could touch Rs 40,000 per candy by the end of this month, traders said.

Tight domestic supplies of the fibre and lower prices in the overseas markets have prompted some textile mills to ramp up imports.

"Cotton imports will not have much impact on prices in the local market as the quality of the imported ones is not very good," Dalal said.

Most farmers in India plant cotton in the months of June and July with the arrival of the monsoon season and begin harvesting after October.

The cotton year runs from October to September. Cotton output in India in the 2011/12 season

ending in September rose to 34.7 million bales, according to an estimate by the Cotton Advisory Board.



Swarming caterpillars damage paddy crop

TUESDAY, 07 AUGUST 2012 19:29

SUDHIR MISHRA N BALANGIR

The recent rainfall has accelerated the agricultural operations in Balangir district, but the farmers are a worried lot as swarming caterpillars are now damaging their crop.

A total of 1,950 hectares of paddy crop land in Gudvella, Agalpur, Puintala, Loisingha, Saintala and Belpada have been affected this year by the pest attack, informed an agriculture official adding that the worst-hit is Gudvella block with paddy crop in 852 hectares of land having been affected.

The rainwater from forests carries this insect, which settles on the Palash trees. From there they come to the bund and then to paddy fields. The rainwater carries and deposits them in the low lands. Once the water inundates the plain fields and deposits the caterpillars, they grow rapidly and attack the crop en masse within two to three days, explained the official.

However the pest menace can be controlled by application of insecticides like Chloropyriphous, Trizophus and Dichlorovos and the pesticides should be applied in the evening, he said.

So far, a total of 1,228 hectares of pest-affected paddy fields have been treated and a total of 383 litres of insecticides have been disbursed, he said.

Business Standard

Wednesday, Aug 08, 2012

Cotton harvest to tumble as dry weather hurts crops

Bloomberg / Mumbai August 8, 2012, 0:58 IST

The cotton harvest in India, the world's second-biggest grower, is poised to decline as the worst monsoon since 2009 parches fields and curbs planting, potentially cutting exports for the first time in three years. The crop in Gujarat, the largest producer, may plunge as much as 30 per cent in the harvest starting October 1 from 12 million bales of 170 kg each a year earlier, said Hasmukhbhai Raval, chairman of the Gujarat State Cooperative Cotton Federation. The planted area in the state will probably slump by as much as 25 percent from 3 million hectares in 2011-2012, he said. Rainfall in some parts of Gujarat is as much as 81 per cent below a 50-year average as more than 50 per cent is threatened by drought, shriveling crops from rice to cotton and oilseeds. A smaller harvest would reduce exports, helping halt a decline in New York prices, which slumped 23 per cent in the past year as demand slowed in China, the biggest consumer. "The outlook for the 2013 crop suggests global supply might be squeezed due to competition for acreage from crops like soybeans, and the weak monsoon in India," Abah Ofon, an analyst at Standard Chartered Plc, said by e-mail. "Output is being disincentivised at current price levels and we believe global supply will be lower next year."

Turmeric plunges over 3% on profit-booking

Less rains in key growing regions restricts losses

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 07, 2012, 14:02 IST



Turmeric prices plunged over 3% to Rs 5,920 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators booked profits at prevailing higher levels, driven by the fall in spot market demand.

Lower rains in the key growing regions restricted the losses. At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, turmeric for delivery in August plunged by Rs 186, or 3.05%, to Rs 5,920 per quintal, with an open interest of 460 lots. The September contract declined by Rs 152, or 2.30%, to Rs 6,456 per quintal in 22,945 lots. Marketmen said besides profit-booking by speculators, fall in demand in the spot market kept pressure on turmeric prices at futures market.

Pepper rises 0.74% on spot demand

Concerns over lower output help price hike

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 07, 2012, 13:56 IST



Pepper prices rose by Rs 325 to Rs 44,190 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators built fresh positions on the back of a rise in the spot demand amid fall in supplies from producing belts. At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, pepper for delivery in September rose by Rs 325, or 0.74%, to Rs 44,190 per quintal, with an open interest of 4,544 lots. August pepper moved up by Rs 305, or 0.70%, to Rs 43,900 per quintal in 2,019 lots. Marketmen said fresh positions built-up by speculators, driven by a rise in demand in the spot market led to the upsurge in pepper futures. They said deficient rainfall in key growing regions raised concerns of lower output this season, contributing to the hike in prices.

Crude palm oil falls on sluggish demand

September contract declines 0.39%

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 07, 2012, 13:49 IST



Crude palm oil prices fell by Rs 2.20 to Rs 559.50 per 10 kg in futures market today due to the sluggish spot market demand against adequate stocks position.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude palm oil for September fell by Rs 2.20, or 0.39%, to Rs 559.50 per 10 kg, with a business turnover of 891 lots.

The August contract traded lower by Rs 1.80, or 0.35%, to Rs 562.50 per 10 kg in 704 lots.

Marketmen said slackened demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position kept pressure on crude palm oil futures.

Cardamom up 1.29% on spot demand

Tight supplies, less arrivals influence prices

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 07, 2012, 13:36 IST



Cardamom prices rose by Rs 16.60 to Rs 1,306.20 per kg in futures trading today as speculators created fresh positions, driven by the pick up in demand in the spot market.

Tight supplies in the physical market and less arrivals from producing belts influenced the cardamom futures.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for delivery in September rose by Rs 16.60, or 1.29%, to Rs 1,306.20 per kg, with a business turnover of 528 lots.

August cardamom traded higher by Rs 5.20, or 0.40%, to Rs 1,291.30 per kg in 206 lots.

Traders said fresh buying by speculators on the back of a pick up in demand in the spot market against less arrivals from producing regions led to the rise in cardamom prices at futures market.

Jute output likely to decline by 12%

Drought-like situation in some states and floods in Assam could impact crop condition

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 07, 2012, 17:34 IST

Jute production in the country is expected to decline by 12% to 90 lakh bales in the 2012-13 crop year due to poor rains in the growing states, the National Jute Board said today.

The country had produced 102 lakh bales of jute last year. One bale of jute is equal to 332.5 kg.

"Jute output is likely to be lower at around 90 lakh bales this year," the Board's Secretary Atri Bhattacharya told reporters on the sidelines of a Ficci function here.

He said drought-like situation in some states and floods in Assam could impact crop condition.

As per the Agriculture Ministry data, area sown under jute is lower at 8.40 lakh hectare so far in the ongoing Kharif season, against 8.92 lakh hectare in the year-ago period.

Jute is cultivated in seven states — West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya and Andhra Pradesh.

In fact sowing of most kharif crops, both food and cash crops, are lagging behind due to poor rains. Monsoon rains were deficient by 20 per cent till July.

Jute is normally cultivated as an inter-crop between the two main agricultural seasons, kharif and rabi. About 5-6% of the total production is used for making 1.6 million tonnes of jute goods every year. Farmers use the remaining fibre for manure and fuel.

The jute industry, which employs about 4 million people directly and indirectly, has been

mainly focusing on making gunny bags. The Textiles Ministry wants the jute industry to produce more value-added items.

Stressing the need for diversification of jute products, Textiles Ministry Secretary Kiran Dhingra said: "We need to work for greater value-addition to jute products before you can get the jute industry to be in a frame of mind to shift to low-value added products".

The natural fibres, especially jute, kenaf and allied fibres, are being diversely used in the manufacture of automobiles and infrastructure in the world.

THE HINDU Business Line

High prices hit groundnut oil demand



Rajkot, Aug. 7:

Poor demand from brand firms and retailers pulled down groundnut oil on Tuesday. The high price of the oil has brought down demand, said a broker here. Moreover, retail buyers have switched over to cheaper substitutes, he added.

Loose oil traded lower by Rs 20 at Rs 1,215-1,220 for 10 kg. A new 15-kg tin was at Rs 2,055-2,060 and a 15-kg *teliatin* declined by Rs 15 to Rs 1,864-1,865. About 40-50 tonnes of groundnut oil was traded by mills in Saurashtra.

According to a market analyst, traders were in no mood to make new purchases as stocks bought earlier to meet festive demand are still lying unsold.

The Federation of Indian Exporters called a meeting in Ahmedabad to resolve issues that emerged after export of groundnut oil in small packs was banned. Consignments are lying at various ports awaiting shipment.

Cotton oil

Cotton oil remained unchanged on festival demand at Rs 1,225-1,235 for a 15-kg new tin and at Rs 720-723 for 10 kg. About 150-200 tonnes of cotton oil were traded here on Tuesday.

Copra, coconut oil rise on festival demand

V. Sajeev Kumar



Kochi, Aug. 7:

Onam and Ramzan festival demand in Kerala pushed up coconut oil prices in Kerala this week.

The oil was steady at Rs 62 a kg (Rs 60 last week), whereas copra was ruling at Rs 4,400 a quintal (Rs 4,200 last week).

Prakash B. Rao, Vice-President, Coconut Oil Merchants Association (COMA), said that the supply of coconut oil and copra has been partially hit in the State following unexpected rains in the last couple of days.

He said coconut oil in Tamil Nadu remained at Rs 59 a kg (Rs 58) whereas copra was firm at Rs 4,200 a quintal (Rs 4,000) due to bulk buying by Kerala traders. Corporate buying was hand-to-mouth, he said.

Palm oil and palm kernel oil, close substitutes of coconut oil, were ruling at Rs 62 a kg and Rs 59 a kg, respectively.

Thalath Mahamood, President, COMA, said that local demand has started picking up in various parts of the State, leading to firming up prices. The market is likely to go up further as festival demand continues.

Bharat N. Khona, former board member, COMA, said that the market would rule steady in the next couple of weeks. He hoped that markets would stabilise by the end of the festival season due to heavy arrivals of coconut oil from Tamil Nadu.

Copra-processing programme

Meanwhile, the Coconut Development Board is all set to launch a project on copra processing through federations of coconut producers societies by the end of this month.

The federations will give processed copra to the State-level designated procurement agencies — Kerafed and Marketfed. Those federations who have installed a copra dryer under the project will get half of the project cost limited to Rs 6 lakh as grant from the Board.

In the beginning, 20 federations will be selected. The Board will ensure the procurement is transparent. The arrival of more federations into the field will create transparency and farmers will be benefited, the Board officials said.

Chana gains marginally on offtake



Indore, Aug. 7:

New demand lifted chana a little in local *mandis* here on Tuesday, quoting at Rs 5,100-5,125 a quintal (Rs 5,050-5,100). Desi chana ruled at Rs 4,900 a quintal.

Kanta chana soared to Rs 5,200 a quintal on buying by millers. With demand outstripping supplies, chana prices in the past one month have gone up by Rs 600 a quintal. On July 4, kanta chana was ruling at Rs 4,600 a quintal; a month later it had zoomed to Rs 5,200 a quintal.

Despite falling stocks and fewer export deals this year pushing up prices, stockists have held on to chana. They expect prices to go up even more as new arrivals won't begin till five to six months from now, a trader said. Output this year is estimated at 75-78 lakh tonnes against 82 lakh tonnes in the past year.

Chana dal ruled stable, with average dal in ruling at Rs 6,175-6,200 a quintal, medium dal at Rs 6,275-6,300 and bold dal at Rs 6,325-6,350 a quintal.

Dollar chana or chickpea gained Rs 100 at Rs 7,700-8,200 a quintal on scattered buying support in the domestic market. Only 300-400 bags of dollar chana arrived. In container, dollar chana ruled flat even as export demand remained slack. On Tuesday, 42/44 count dollar chana

in container ruled at Rs 8,900 a quintal, 44/46 count at Rs 8,700, and 60/62 count at Rs 7,450 a quintal.

Edible oils slip on cautious trading



Mumbai, Aug. 7:

Edible oils prices declined in Mumbai on Tuesday. Sentiment weakened further tracking extended losses in Malaysian palm oil futures which declined by 14, 11 and 1 ringgits a tonne in cautious trading on Tuesday, as traders priced in wetter weather in the US Midwest that eased concerns about further damage to new-crop oilseed supplies.

In Mumbai, imported palmolein and soyabean refined oil dropped by Rs 2 and Re 1 for 10-kg each. Sunflower refined oil declined by Rs 5 and rapeseed oil lost by Rs 3. Cotton refined oil inched lower by Rs.10 while Groundnut oil rule steady despite jump in Rajkot – Saurashtra market. In physical market demand was thin and isolated keep volume lower. Sentiment was weak end of the day.

Market observers said in absence of fresh demand volumes remains thin. Vaibhavi sold about 250-300 tonnes of palmolein at Rs 617 for 1-10 September. About 50-70 tonnes were resale traded in the range of Rs 618-620 during the day. Satisfactory progress of monsoon rain in main producing States such as Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat has increased hope for Kharif oilseeds production.

Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 622-623 for August and Rs 624-625 for September, Super palmolein at Rs 662, Soya oil at Rs 745 and Sunflower refined oil at Rs 770. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 620 for August and Rs 622 for September. Soya refined oil was Rs 741 for August and Rs 744 for September. Sunflower refined oil was Rs 767 for August and Rs 770 for September. Allana's rate for palmolein was Rs 622 and super palmolein Rs 664. Vaibhavi quoted palmolein at Rs 617 for 1-10 September. Bunge's rate for palmolein was Rs 620.

In Saurashtra – Rajkot, groundnut oil was up by Rs 20 to Rs 1,900 for *Telia* tin and by Rs 10 to Rs 1,240 for loose – 10 kgs. On National Board of Trade – Indore, Soya refined oil August futures was at Rs 780 (Rs 780) while September was Rs 788 (Rs 787.50). **Malaysia's crude palm oil** September contracts settled lower at MYR 2,884 (MYR 2,898), October at MYR 2,907 (MYR 2,918) and November at MYR 2,933 (MYR 2,934) a tonne.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates were (Rs/10 kg): groundnut oil 1,220 (1,220), soya refined oil 740 (741), sunflower exp. ref. 705 (705), sunflower ref. 765 (770), rapeseed ref. oil 887 (890), rapeseed expeller ref. 857 (860) cotton ref. oil 745 (755) and palmolein 618 (620).

Bearish futures pull down sugar



Mumbai, Aug. 7:

Sugar prices at mill level in Maharashtra dropped by more than Rs 100 a quintal on second day tracking extended losses in futures and thin demand in physical markets. Following bearish trend, upper level prices declined by Rs 50-100 in Naka trade and by Rs 50-60 in spot market on Tuesday. Market continued bearish trend due to eased demand at higher price level despite festivals. Sentiment was weak at upper level but rule steady in spot said market sources. A Vashi-based wholesaler said that need based and isolated retail demand keep volumes routine as demand for Ramzan, Rakha Bandhan got over and support of Janmashtami festival is lighter than expected. Stockists kept away from building up inventory on fear of government's intervention at higher price level. There are chances that the Union Government may release more quota if the prices move up further. Sugar futures on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) were down by more than Rs 100 till noon tracking weak world market which closed at a five-week low on Monday. In Vashi market arrivals were 56-57 truck loads (of 100 bags each) and local dispatches were about 52-53 truck loads. On Monday, 12-13 mills from Pune, Baramati and Ahmadnagar line sold about 48,000-50,000 bags (of 100 kgs each) to local stockists in the range of Rs 3,530-3,600 (Rs 3,640-3,700) for S-grade and Rs 3,600-3,650 (Rs 3,680-3,800) for M-grade. There were no new purchases witnessed with Kolhapur side mills said traders.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 3,611-3,721 (Rs 3,671-3,742) and M-grade Rs 3,681- 3,831 (Rs 3,742- 3,881). **Naka delivery rates:** S-grade Rs 3,580 -3,620 (Rs 3,640-3,675) and M-grade Rs 3,650-3,700 (Rs 3,730-3,800).

'Consumption of branded edible oil going up'



P_V_SIVAKUMAR Healthy growth: Pradeep Chowdhry (left), Managing Director, Gemini Edibles and Fats India Private Ltd; actor Richa Pallod and P. Chandrasekhara Reddy, Vice-President (Sales and Marketing), launching Freedom Refined Sunflower Oil, in Hyderabad on Tuesday. — Photo: P.V. Sivakumar

Hyderabad, Aug. 7:

With change in lifestyle and improved incomes, consumption of branded edible oils has gone up in the country. Sales of unbranded oils have gone down to 57 per cent in 2011 in the country from 74 per cent in 2005. This change is almost uniform across the country, with some States shifting faster to branded oils.

Consumption of unbranded oils in Tamil Nadu plummeted to 36 per cent from 61 per cent and in Karnataka to 36 per cent from 63 per cent during the period.

India consumed 16 million tonnes of cooking medium (edible oils and fats) in 2010-11. This is growing at 5 per cent annually, Pradeep Chowdhry, Managing Director of Gemini Edibles and Fats India Private Ltd (GEF India), said.

Addressing a press conference here on Tuesday, he said the 5 per cent growth rate was healthy. "But the per capita consumption of cooking medium is quite low when compared with the world average. While the world per capita stands at 21 kg, Indian per capita consumption is nearly half at 12 kg," he said.

Ruchi Soya Industries, the edible oil company, holds 50 per cent in GEF India, with the remaining stake owned by Pradeep Chowdhry. It did a turnover of Rs 1,358 crore in 2011-12 and is looking at crossing the Rs 1,500-crore mark this financial year.

"We have no plans to raise funds," he said.

The Hyderabad-based company, which depends on imported raw material, runs two plants at Kakinada and Krishnapatnam (in Nellore). It launched 1 litre bottle and 15-litre of Freedom branded refined sunflower oil.

GEF India is one of the companies slapped with notices for advertisements with tall claims in Andhra Pradesh. Responding to a question on this, he said the company had not received any notice. "We will handle it when we receive it," he said.

All genuine vegetable oils can boast of zero cholesterol, he added.

N. India demand lends colour to turmeric

Our Correspondent



Erode, Aug. 7:

Heavy buying by exporters lifted spot turmeric on Tuesday. Exporters quoted higher for the root variety to fulfil orders placed by merchants in North India. The spice fell, however, in the futures markets by 4 per cent.

“Prices in the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard increased by Rs 360 a quintal, but fell by Rs 300 a quintal in the Regulated Marketing Committee,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said arrivals rose to 11,010 bags on Tuesday, and 70 per cent of the stocks was sold. Exporters purchased almost all the root variety stock at the higher price. He also said soon they may receive new orders for both the finger and the root varieties from North India, when the prices may increase slightly.

Traders said they were buying only the fine variety, as they may receive orders from North India for it. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,599-7,211 a quintal, the root variety at Rs 3,579-6,396 a quintal.

Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 6,411-7,509 a quintal, the root variety at Rs 6,111-6,570 a quintal. Of the 1,674 bags that arrived, 851 were sold.

At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 6,069-6,769 a quintal, the root variety at Rs 6,010-6,499 a quintal. All the 1,325 bags kept for sale were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 5,799-6,969 a quintal, the root variety Rs 5,511-6,766 a quintal. Of the 1,060 bags that arrived, only four were rejected.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,489-7,219 a quintal, the root variety at Rs 4,489-6,589 a quintal. All the 136 bags kept for sale were sold.

Soyabean futures move north on global cues



Business Line

Chennai, Aug. 7:

Soyabean futures continued to rise on firm overseas markets despite rain lashing the growing areas in Madhya Pradesh.

August futures rose by Rs 125 to Rs 4,675 a quintal as traders also raised positions.

Rain over some key growing regions of the US MidWest eased concerns of further damage to new supplies, but it still kept sentiment buoyant.

A pick-up in domestic demand ahead of the festival season and rising demand for soyameal exports boosted trading sentiments, traders said.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean for October delivery jumped by Rs 21 to close at Rs 3,969.5, while November contracts were up Rs 6 at Rs 3,836 a quintal.

In the spot market at Indore (Madhya Pradesh), soya was quoted at Rs 4,564 a quintal.

On the Chicago Board Of Trade, November soyabean rose 0.4 per cent to \$15.90-1/4 a bushel, having closed down 2.7 per cent in the previous session.

Wheat futures drop on fears of export ban



With the US facing its worst drought in over 50 years, wheat stocks in the open market have dropped despite a record output in India last year. — A.M. Faruqi

Chennai, Aug. 7:

Wheat futures dropped marginally on Tuesday on rumours that the Government would ban exports by private traders. The Forward Market Commission's move to double the initial money that has to be paid as margin for buying contracts has also aided the downtrend.

Wheat has gained over the past one-and-a-half months on news that the US is going through its worst drought in over 50 years. Ever since the news of the US drought broke, there has been a shortage of wheat in the open market.

In India, a private trader had reportedly bought huge quantities and moved it to port destinations.

Besides, higher procurement by the Government to build up buffer stocks has also starved the open market. This is despite a record production of over 93mt this year.

Millers have been complaining that they have been unable to buy stocks despite offering higher prices.

August futures were down Rs 5 at Rs 1,385 a quintal, while September futures declined by Rs 8 at Rs 1,420. October futures slipped by Rs 9 at Rs 1,452, while November slipped by Rs 12 at Rs 1,488 a quintal. December was quoted lower by Rs 15 at Rs 1,517 a quintal.

Spot wheat at Karnal was quoted at Rs 1,355 a quintal.

Farmers take to 2 new paddy varieties in Godavari delta

Eluru (West Godavari), Aug. 7:

Two new varieties developed by the Andhra Pradesh Rice Research Institute at Maruteru in West Godavari district are gaining acceptance at the field level and they are being welcomed by the farmers in the Godavari delta as well as parts of the Krishna delta in Andhra Pradesh, according to M. Bharata Lakshmi, Associate Director of Research.

She was speaking at scientific advisory committee meeting at the Krishi Vijnan Kendra at Undi village in West Godavari district on Tuesday.

She said the institute had developed MTU-1121 variety with a duration of 120 days for the rabi season as an alternative to MTU-1010 variety and also MTU-1112 for kharif season with 140 days duration as an alternative to Swarna, another variety widely grown in the Godavari delta.

She said mini-kits with the new varieties were given to farmers in East and West Godavari districts as well as Krishna and Khammam for trials for two crop seasons.

She said farmers were not so happy with the old variety, MTU-1010, as it was prone to pests and grain-shedding.

The Swarna variety, though still sought-after, as it was high-yielding, had also a disadvantage, as it was susceptible to lodging in the rainy season.

The new varieties addressed these problems, she said. In terms of yields and grain quality, the new variety was as good as Swarna, with a yield of 35-40 bags/acre.

Krupa Das, Joint Director of Agriculture, said the cost of cultivation was ever-increasing in the Godavari delta, as farmers were using more chemical fertilisers and also due to high wage rates.

Therefore, there was a need for high-yielding, pest-resistant varieties to maximise the returns.

No wheat for millers in a record-high output year

M.R. Subramani, Vishwanath Kulkarni



Source: Agmarkenet. *Arrivals in tonnes; modal prices in Rs/quintal at Kanpur APMC, Uttar Pradesh.

Chennai/New Delhi, Aug. 7:

Millers, especially in the South, are finding it difficult to source wheat. This is even as wheat prices have firmed up in recent weeks amid a slowdown in arrivals while exports have gained momentum.

No trader is willing to commit since exporters, who are active in the market, seem to have deeper pockets. Further, farmers are also holding back produce anticipating better prices.

Wheat production has been estimated at a record at 94 million tonnes, and the Government's procurement has also been at an all-time high. "So the Government has procured more than what was seen as extra production," said M.V. Balasubramanian, Managing Director of Sarathy Enterprises (formerly Narasu's Roller Flour Mills).

Also, there are no details on the exact quantity procured by exporters. The overall wheat exports since September last year are pegged at 1.8 million tonnes.

Adi Narayan Gupta, President, Roller Flour Millers Federation of India, said: "The availability of wheat is poor and we feel the Government should stop exports by private trade."

Until the news of drought affecting the US and Black Sea wheat crop came, wheat was available in ample measure.

Balasubramaniam said: "Even if someone commits to supply wheat, it will take at least 25 days now." "We are now seeing shortage throughout the country," he said adding that there should be a ceiling for exports by private parties.

'confusing situation'

S. Pramod Kumar, Executive Director of the Bangalore-based Sunil Agro Foods, said, "The situation is pretty confusing. Despite a record harvest there's a physical shortage of wheat."

Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan were reported to have surplus wheat but all that now has gone missing. Either exporters have bought the produce or farmers are holding on to stocks expecting better prices. Most of the available wheat is now moving towards ports such as Kandla and Visakhapatnam.

Grains analyst Tejinder Narang said: "The private trade is going ahead with exports as the market prices are supportive. As a result, farmers are also getting better prices." The meeting of Russian Commission on Food Security, scheduled to be held on August 8 to discuss the grain market and exports, could set the price trend. If Russia decides to allow exports, there will be pressure on prices or else they'll firm up, he said.

Prices have firmed up by an average of Rs 200 a quintal in the past one month. Gupta of the Millers Federation said that this is being reflected in prices of products such as *atta* and *maida*, which are also seeing a rise. The wheat prices that were quoting around Rs 16,500 a tonne a month ago are now ruling at Rs 17,250 a tonne for delivery in Tamil Nadu.

The Centre came up with the open market sale scheme wherein it was to sell 30 lakh tonnes at Rs 1,170 a quintal. Of this, 13 lakh tonnes were to be sold during July, August and September. However, it has stopped the sale abruptly after prices began to increase in the global market.

At least 60 per cent of the allotted wheat has been sold and millers see two reasons for the abrupt end to the open market sale. Either the Centre does not have the required wheat or the demand is far higher, they say. Though there were rumours that the price will be raised to Rs 1,285, there has been no announcement in this regard. Some of the wheat earmarked to states such as Karnataka and Delhi is being diverted to other States, millers claimed.

Australian wheat which was offered at \$310 a tonne in containers is now quoted at \$460. Balasubramanian said: "Prices are likely to firm up further since the drought effect in the Black Sea region is feared to be worse than anticipated."

"The way things are going, we may not get wheat for conversion into *maida* for Diwali," he said.

Good U.P. monsoon will lift sugar output: Balrampur Chini

Shobha Roy



"There is a drought-like situation in Maharashtra and Karnataka. But in Uttar Pradesh the monsoon has been just perfect for a good produce this year. So our sugar production should increase"

Kolkata, Aug. 7:

Balrampur Chini Mills Ltd expects a 10-15 per cent rise in sugar production this year. The company produced 8.07 lakh tonnes of sugar in the past financial year. According to Vivek Saraogi, Managing Director, the company would crush more cane this year compared with last

year. The 10-odd sugar mills of the company together crushed close to 85 lakh tonnes of cane in the past year.

“There is a drought-like situation in Maharashtra and Karnataka. But in our cane-producing region — Uttar Pradesh — the monsoon has been just perfect for a good produce this year. So our sugar production should increase this year,” Saraogi said on the sidelines of the company’s 36th annual general meeting here on Tuesday.

Prices

The company expects a better price realisation from sugar this year. Sugar, ruling at Rs 2,900 a bag of a quintal each till June, increased to Rs 3,600 a bag in July-end.

According to Santosh Kumar Agrawala, Company Secretary, Balrampur Chini, the spurt in prices was mainly on account of the extended summer this year.

“Summer had extended by almost a month this year and there was a spurt in demand from cold-drink manufacturers.

This led to a rise in sugar prices,” he said. India’s consumption stands at about 230 lakh tonnes.

In 2011-12, the country produced about 250 lakh tonnes of sugar, of which close to 20 lakh tonnes were exported.

“Prices are likely to stabilise at Rs 3,400-3,500 a bag this year,” Agrawala said.

Results

The company’s net loss during the April-June quarter narrowed down to Rs 18 crore, compared with a net loss of Rs 20 crore during the year-ago period.

The sugar business posted a net loss of Rs 23 crore.“

Sugar is a cyclical industry, and the first and second quarters are typically down as there is no production during these two quarters,” Agrawala said.

Net sales increased by 22 per cent to Rs 692 crore.

Coonor tea turnover falls 10.17%



Coonor, Aug. 7:

This week, low volume has pulled down the overall earnings at the auctions of Coonor Tea Trade Association despite buoyant prices, reveals an analysis of the market reports.

The volume sold has been declining in the past few weeks and only 13.39 lakh kg was sold this week – the lowest of the last five weeks.

For that matter, the volume of 14.47 lakh kg offered for sale itself was the lowest of the last eight weeks.

The low volume has been activating the demand-pressure and consequently pushing up the prices.

This week's average price of Rs 81.17 a kg was the highest of the last five weeks.

Collectively, this week's turnover totalled Rs 10.87 crore against Rs 12.10 crore last week.

This was the lowest turnover in seven weeks.

This also meant that in just one week, the trade has lost Rs 1.23 crore or 10.17 per cent in turnover.

Jaggery prices soar ahead of festival season

Ch R. S Sarma



Visakhapatnam, Aug. 7:

Jaggery prices scaled a new high during the peak season at Anakapalle in Visakhapatnam district, one of the major markets in the country.

The spurt in demand, pushing up prices sharply, is attributed to the forecast of delay in arrivals as well as projected poor production in Maharashtra and Karnataka due to drought conditions. The festival demand ahead has also led to the rise in prices.

Inadequate stocks

According to trade sources, another reason is the availability of inadequate stocks in the market. "It is still two to two-and-a-half months for the fresh jaggery season to begin here. Two-thirds of the stocks that were about 2,500 truckloads at one point of time have been off-loaded. With the forecast that it might take until after *Diwali* for stocks to arrive in Maharashtra, the limited stocks

are in demand,” said K. Butchi Raju, a trader. The festival season beginning with *Ganesh Chaturthi* and continuing through *Dasara* and *Diwali* generates heavy demand for jaggery. Over a week, prices rose from Rs 269-270 for a lump of 10-kg to Rs 293 for the inferior black variety that is in much demand. Showing the same trend, jaggery prices at Kamareddy and Chittor in Andhra Pradesh also witnessed a rise. The superior quality has not witnessed such a spurt in price at Anakapalle, as Nidadavole in West Godavari district and Mandya in Karnataka generally cater to the segment. Trade sources now expect the price to touch and even cross Rs 300 a lump.

Soyameal exports up 21% at 1.68 lakh t in July

PTI



During April-July this year, exports rose 12 per cent to 8,24,208 tonnes from 7,37,522 tonnes in the four-month period of 2010-11.

New Delhi, Aug 7:

India's soyameal exports rose 21 per cent to 1,68,341 tonnes in July this year.

The country had shipped 1,39,551 tonnes in the same month in 2011, Indore-based Soyabean Processors Association of India (SOPA) said in a statement today.

During April-July this year, exports rose 12 per cent to 8,24,208 tonnes from 7,37,522 tonnes in the four-month period of 2010-11.

During October-July of the current oil year (October-September), soyameal exports fell 3 per cent to 36,10,040 tonnes compared with 37,35,369 tonnes in the same period of the 2010-11 oil year.

India exports soyameal to Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia and China, among others.

The country is estimated to have harvested 12.28 million tonnes of soyabean in the 2011-12 crop year (July-June) against 12.73 mt in the year-ago period.