

## Tiruvarur ryots need more water to save samba crop



Farmers of Tiruvarur district may not be able to save the standing samba crop unless they get sufficient water for two or three more wettings.

“We have grown the crop to boot leaf stage (75 days and the stage before flowering) and flowering stage (80 days). But if we don’t get water now for two more wettings we may lose the crop,” a cross section of the farmers told *The Hindu* on Wednesday.

The demand is nearly universal among farmers, as the crops, though green to look at, stand on parched fields. In some places the crop has started withering, indicated by a change in colour to light yellow from green.

The PWD is releasing water at 5,000 cusecs into the Vennar system, which irrigates Tiruvarur district. But this is insufficient as water cannot reach many of the areas. Farmers feel that the flow should be increased to 9,000 cusecs so that all the areas irrigated by Vennar and its branches Mulliyar, Pandavayar, Korayar and Baminiyar get water. That will help in wetting the crop in areas such as Thattankoil, Kottur, Irulneeki, Vikkirapandiyam and Andankarai in Kottur panchayat union.

Senthilvelan, a farmer of Irulneeki village, said he raised samba crop on 20 acres. Of this, he had cultivated the crop under direct sowing on 10 acres and transplanted the crop in the rest. "Both the crops are in boot leaf stage and need water", he said.

At Vikkirapandiyam, a group of women farmers were in tears when they showed the field where the standing crop was starving for water. Lakshmi, a farm woman, said she raised the crop on 2.5 acres and was pained to see the drying crop every day.

P. R. Pandiyan, State council member of the Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, said crops needed water every 15 days three times. "They are 70 to 75 days old and need water for 50 more days. If a wetting is done once in 15 days it will sustain the crop. For that the PWD should increase the release into the Vennar."

S. Ranganathan, Secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, said crops were in three different stages in the district. Nearly 50,000 hectares irrigated by agriculture pump sets were safe. Directly sown and transplanted crop in canal-irrigated areas need water. Those directly sown in the middle and later part of August can be saved.

The second batch of directly sown paddy in September and late September also need water to survive. With respect to transplanted crops using plant seedlings from community nurseries, they are planted during late September and early October. They too need water to survive.

According to Agriculture department officials, samba crop has been raised on 1.31 lakh hectares in the district and Thaladi on 13,625 hectares.

Out of this, direct sowing has been done on 74,700 hectares.

Meanwhile, farmers continued their agitation demanding water release from Karnataka at various places on Wednesday. At Kottur, farmers led by P. R. Pandian, State Council member of Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam organised a road roko and staged a demonstration before the BSNL office condemning Karnataka for not releasing water and protesting against the alleged indifferent attitude of the Centre.

## Farmer cultivates paddy with cow urine, dung

A farmer in Krishna district, Panchakarla Vishnuvardhan Rao, is cultivating paddy with cow dung and urine and the increase in yield is encouraging.

A graduate in science from the local National College, Vishnu is a regular reader of the 'Science and Technology Column' of 'The Hindu' and practices cultivation without using any fertilisers and pesticides.

"Cultivating paddy with 'Jeevamrutam' (known as Zero Budget Natural Farming) will increase soil fertility. It also requires less water and can withstand natural calamities.

The produce is also good for health," he said. Raising MTU-7029 (Swarna variety) paddy in five acres of land in Arisepally village near Machilipatnam, the farmer said natural farming was suitable for the local soil, which has high salinity content.

### Prevents diseases

'Jeevamrutam' prevents diseases like 'shear blight' ( *poda tegulu* in local parlance), 'rice blast' ( *aggi tegulu* ), protects the crop from 'leaf folder insect' ( *kandam toliche purugu* ), and saves the plants from bacteria and fungus, he said.

Explaining the process of natural farming, Vishnu said he prepared 'Jeevamrutam' by mixing 10 kgs of cow dung, 10 litres of urine, stored butter milk, 2 kgs of pulse flour, two kgs of jaggery and fermented it for 72 hours. "The farmer should spray the mixture on the crop and pour the remaining liquid on the field, which will preserve water and absorb nitrogen," he explained.

### Good yield

An insecticide can also be prepared by boiling leaves from custard apple and neem with cow urine and it should be sprayed once every 15 days to prevent crop diseases.

Paddy raised through natural farming is also good for health, he said.

"The duration of cultivation of the crop, by this method, is 145 days and the farmer gets 30 bags of paddy per acre.

Farmers can take up natural farming by using 'Jeevamrutam', with lesser investment and increased soil productivity," said a beaming Vishnu.

### **Farmers stage protest against solar project**

In a first of its kind response from the farmers to the establishment of solar power projects, which are mostly considered non-polluting, farmers of the nearby villages in Peddavaduguru and Singanamala mandal staged a protest against establishment of the plant.

Around 150 farmers from Gangiguntapalli, Naagalapuram villages of the Peddavaduguru mandal and Tarimela and Nidanavada villages of the Singanamala mandal staged a protest at the water pumping site of the proposed 50 MW solar power project being established by MEIL, a company with its major interests in the infrastructure sector, demanding that the company should immediately stop its plans to draw water from the Penna river water bed.

Speaking to The Hindu, the farmers of these villages contended that the water tables would be down if the company operated two pumps of 30 horse power each, effectively playing spoilsport with their future in farming in around six villages in the Peddavaduguru and Singanamala mandals.

Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Pvt Ltd has been building a 50 MW solar thermal power plant near Chittur village of the Peddavaduguru mandal in the district in around 500 acres. Most of the lands acquired for the project was private lands bought by the company directly from the owners in the villages.

Since the plant is a solar thermal power plant, which uses the thermal radiation component for the heat, it also requires adequate water for the heat to be absorbed and to subsequently turn it into energy, just as in a typical thermal power plant.

Speaking on the issue, the manager, who is in-charge of commissioning the plant, Ravinder Reddy told The Hindu that the company was yet to draw water from the river bed. But he added that the company had the requisite permissions to draw 0.01 TMC of water from the Penna river over the four rainy months for the project.

Had the project been a solar photo-voltaic one using only the light packets of the sunlight to produce energy, needing no other raw material other than the sunlight, most farmers might not have had a problem. But, with the current project requiring water, farmers in a district like that of Anantapur were bound to be concerned.

### **'Organic farming ensures more productivity'**

Vice-Chancellor of the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Dharwad, R.R. Hanchinal said the research conducted by scientists from the university had proved that organic farming ensured more productivity than chemical farming in rain-fed areas.

Presiding over the inaugural session of the two-day State-level workshop on 'Plant protection in organic farming' on the university campus here on Tuesday, Prof. Hanchinal said the outcome of a recent comparative study on organic and chemical farming showed that the former was useful for farmers in rain-fed areas. The study indicated that in organic farming, crop yield increases and cost of production decreases. Besides, by providing chemical-free yield, organic farming also helps the economic empowerment of farmers, he said.

Prof. Hanchinal said UAS-Dharwad had created facilities for large-scale production of bio-agents which were essentially required for adopting organic farming.

B.M. Khadi, Director of Research, UAS, Dharwad, said the university had developed organic production technologies for 12 major crops.

Inaugurating the workshop, Bharat Lal Meena, Principal Secretary, Department of Agriculture, stressed the need for agricultural universities and research institutes to focus on transferring the technology that they develop to farmers in remote rural areas. Mr. Meena said such workshops should facilitate exchange of ideas between farmers and scientists. Conservation of soil quality was a major challenge as the pressure on agrarian lands was increasing because of the efforts to enhance the quantity of food production to meet the growing demand of foodgrains. Hence, organic farmers should be told about the requirements of soil and supply of nutrients accordingly, he added.

## Rangasamy attends swearing-in of marketing society chairman

Chief Minister N.Rangasamy arrived here with Minister for Agriculture Chandrakasu for the swearing-in ceremony of the chairman of Karaikal Marketing Society, on Wednesday.

Minister Chandrakasu, addressing the media on the sidelines of the event, said that the State government would provide 60 litres diesel subsidy for 2 hectares to farmers, in a move to address the shortage of water for cultivation. The diesel subsidy was to encourage farmers to use pumpsets for cultivation.

However, the event and the attendance have raised eyebrows here with the model code of conduct currently in force in view of the civic body elections.

When contacted, District Election Officer and Collector J.Ashok Kumar said that there was no official communication on the Chief Minister's arrival, and that it was in his personal capacity.

On Agriculture Minister's announcement of diesel subsidy, Mr.Ashok Kumar said that if any complaint was received regarding the interview, action would be taken.

## Mega tree planting drive launched



To promote green revolution in Tuticorin, sapling distribution programme was launched here on Wednesday.

Actor Vivek, who is the founder of Green Kalam, inaugurated the mega tree planting event organised by the district administration in association with Rotary International District 3212 in the presence of Collector Ashish Kumar.

It was scheduled to distribute as many as 1, 21, 212 saplings to bring the entire Tuticorin under a green cover on the auspicious day. After watering the planted saplings on the premises of the collectorate, the actor appealed to the people to devote time to grow more trees so as to prevent the environment from pollution and to help farmers, who largely rely on rainfall to cultivate agriculture produce. Besides, conserving natural resources, people should also volunteer to plant more saplings, he added.

Later, 20, 000 saplings of 'malai vembu' 'pungan' and 'naval' were kept for distribution at a programme held at Pearl City beach. These species were conducive to grow in the area.

Students from various educational institutions and public, who congregated at the beach, were provided with saplings.

### **Hortcorp vegetables at 30% less price**

Minister for Agriculture K.P. Mohanan said here on Wednesday that the Kerala State Horticultural Products Development Corporation (Hortcorp) would sell vegetables at a price 30 per less than that in the open market.

A press note quoting him said that the decision was taken at a meeting convened by Chief Minister Oommen Chandy to control the surging price of vegetables all over the State.

The press note said that consumers could make use of the discount sale at Hortcorp outlets, Supplyco supermarkets, and 250 stalls to be set up by the Civil Supplies Corporation.

Mr. Mohanan said that Hortcorp was directly procuring vegetables from farmers' cooperatives, markets operated by the Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council Keralam, agricultural wholesale markets, and farmers in Palakkad, Wayanad, Ernakulam, Thiruvananthapuram districts, and Kanthallur and Vattavada in Idukki.

### **UDF apathetic towards agriculture sector: NCP**

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) State unit president T.P. Peethambaran has called for urgent measures to save the agricultural sector in the State.

At a press conference here on Tuesday, he said the United Democratic Front (UDF) government appeared to be completely apathetic towards the agriculture sector.

Procurement of paddy and copra had come to a standstill. He wanted the government to utilise funds of Central government supported agricultural schemes for procurement in order to save the farmers. The policy of the government appeared to be one against procurement. This attitude was pushing the farmers to suicide, he said.

### **Delay condemned**

Mr. Peethambaran said that while his party welcomed the announcement of Agriculture Minister K.P. Mohanan that procurement of copra would commence from December 31, the NCP leader wondered why the exercise should take so long to commence. He said that the NCP would review the situation after December 31 and decide upon the course of action to be taken in support of the farmers.

He said that the industrial sector of the State was in a shambles. "We are having a government that does not function and the people have started having second thoughts about the continuance of the UDF government. Instead of serving the people, the government was engaged in appeasing community and communal leaders in the hope of getting the support of the people," he said.

The NCP leader said his party was in the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance at the Centre because that was the only effective alternative to keep the BJP out of power. In future, if the NCP found another practical alternative to keep the BJP out of power, the party would think on the lines of supporting that alternative.

### **Farmers asked to go for dry crops**

Chief Secretary Minnie Mathew on Wednesday urged officials to impress upon farmers in Prakasam district to go for dry crops in view of shortage of water and power.

Holding a video conference with District Collector Anita Rajendra and other officials, she said farmers should be encouraged to cultivate pulses, edible oil and coarse food-grains during Rabi



instead of Paddy which consumed more water. Ms. Rajendra said Paddy had been cultivated only 20,000 hectares.

A strict vigil was being maintained to prevent misuse of precious water and ensure that water reached the farmers in the tail-end areas.

The power sub-stations at Yerragondapalem and Dornala were overhauled to ensure power to peasants without any disruptions to energise their pumpsets, she added.

### **Paddy cultivation not advisable, says official**

In-Charge Collector N. Yuvaraj said that farmers were cautioned in advance against cultivating paddy due to the difficulty in fulfilling their water requirement in Krishna delta.

This situation was caused by deficit rainfall and the farmers were asked to not entirely rely on paddy, instead go for irrigated dry crops which need lesser quantities of water.

There are yet many farmers who are diverting water meant for ID crops to paddy and they are being discouraged from doing so. Mr. Yuvaraj was responding to Chief Secretary Minnie Mathew's suggestion to give priority to cultivation of ID crops during a video-conference on Wednesday.

Joint Director of Agriculture V. Sridhar was present.

### **Training programme to meet demand for coconut pluckers**



Specialised skills:A training session on climbing coconut trees in progress.

To meet the spike in demand for coconut pluckers a team of 40 youngsters from the district are being trained in coconut tree climbing here.

“There is a rise in demand for coconut pluckers in the city due to shortage of traditional climbers. The programme aims to create a group of youngsters who will take coconut tree climbing as a profession,” said C.P. George, the coordinator of the course.

The training sessions are being held as part of the ‘Friends of Coconut trees’ programme initiated by the Coconut Development Board in association with the Social Welfare Centre of the Thrissur Archdiocese.

As traditional coconut-pluckers did not seem to use their remuneration wisely, special training was being given to help youngsters manage money, Mr. George said.

### **Special sessions**

Special sessions on personality development, leadership qualities, banking and insurance are part of the programme.

The trainees will get a stipend of Rs. 150 per day and a climbing machine worth Rs. 2,500 will be awarded to successful candidates after the training.

Lessons on climbing coconut trees using machines, various diseases that affect coconut trees, identifying tender coconut, proper usage of fertilisers and pesticides, drip irrigation, crop rotation, mixed cropping and preparation of different products from tender coconuts were covered under the training.

“Experts from Agriculture University, Vellanikkara, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) led the classes,” said Mr. George.

He said a training programme for women would also be organised soon.

### **Chittur farmers to meet Chandy**

A delegation of farmers’ organisations will meet Chief Minister Oommen Chandy and Water Resources Minister P.J. Joseph in the State capital on December 17 to seek their intervention to

get water released from the inter-State Parambikulam-Aliyar Project (PAP) to save standing paddy crop in 45,000 acres of land in the Chitturpuzha irrigation project area in Palakkad district.

Desheeya Karshaka Samajam general secretary Muthalamthode Mani told *The Hindu* here on Tuesday that representatives of seven farmers' organisations and the Jala Samrakshana Samithi will meet the Chief Minister and the Minister.

He said the "Parambikulam group of reservoirs (Parambikulam, Thunakadavu, and Peruvripallam) are having a total storage of 5.87 tmcft of water as on Tuesday. What Kerala is asking is only 1.75 tmcft to save the paddy crop in Chittur."

As per the PAP agreement, Kerala ought to get 7.25 tmcft of water annually. So far this water year (June to May), it has got only 3 tmcft of water. Kerala should get 4.25 tmcft more.

The paddy farmers at Chittur are already reeling under financial difficulties owing to the rise in price of fertilizers, pesticides, and labour. A shortfall in water supply will be disastrous for them, Mr. Mani said.

This will bring down paddy production and affect the State's food security as Chittur is one of the major paddy production centres in the State. It is the 'rice bowl' of Palakkad.

Meanwhile, officials of the Joint Water Regulatory Board of the PAP said that they had faxed a request to the Tamil Nadu authorities on Tuesday for urgently convening a meeting of the board to discuss the situation.

### **New UAS institute to study effect of climate change on crops**

The Rs. 5.25-crore project will help in identifying stronger crop varieties



Preparing for the future: Officials from the Regional Agricultural Research Station, on the outskirts of Bijapur, studying the effects of adverse climatic conditions on crops.— Photo: Rajendra Singh Hajeri

To identify crop varieties that can withstand volatile climatic conditions, the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, is in the process of establishing an institute for agricultural research on climate change.

The institute, which is being set up under the Centre-sponsored Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna, would study how crops react to adverse climatic conditions, and identify varieties that can withstand such conditions.

### **Unprecedented**

“Scientists have noticed that owing to global warming, climatic conditions have become extremely unpredictable. Bijapur district alone has seen inconsistent and unprecedented conditions in that last 12 years, with extreme cold, prolonged dry spell, and flood-like situations. Such volatile conditions greatly affect crops and cropping patterns. The institute being set up would study how different crops respond to such weather conditions, which varieties are more susceptible, and which could be adopted for sowing in future,” said H. Venkatesh, agrometeorologist, Regional Agricultural Research Station, and in-charge of the proposed institute. The Rs. 5.25-crore project would have various systems such as the Open Top Chamber in which artificial climatic conditions would be created for different crops to study their response, he said.

“We are essentially focussing on carbon dioxide and heat because these are the primary elements that increase due to global warming. The study will help us not only in identifying the best species, but also in finding out remedial measures to develop strong varieties,” he said.

Besides OTC, tests were being conducted in fields too by sowing seeds of the same crop in different seasons.

### **Regional crops**

Dr. Venkatesh said the institute was primarily focussing on crops such as green gram, chilli, groundnut, maize, Bengal gram, wheat and jowar, the dominant crops of north Karnataka.

He said the institute was a multi-disciplinary body that consisted of a crop physiologist, breeder, agro-economist, pathologists, entomologists and microbiologist.

“All these specialists would study every change in crop condition and suggest solutions. The outcome of the study would be submitted to the government for taking action,” he said.

The institute would be fully functional in a year, Dr. Venkatesh said, adding that he hoped the first study report would be submitted to the government within three years of its functioning.

### **Create awareness of crop insurance, officials told**

Shivdas Meena, Commissioner for Agriculture, on Tuesday appealed to the agriculture and revenue department officials of Thanjavur district to create awareness of crop insurance package announced by the State government.

He reviewed the implementation of second samba package announced by the government. He said that the last date for enrolment of non-loanee farmers in the crop insurance scheme is December 15.

The government is paying the entire premium of Rs.174 an acre and the farmer would get Rs.8,692 an acre as insurance benefit. He also asked the officials to create awareness among farmers of the subsidy given for diesel and pipelines.

K.Baskaran, Collector, S. Suresh Kumar, District Revenue Officer, and Mohammed Yahiya, Joint Director of Agriculture, participated.

The Collector explained to the commissioner about the steps taken to enrol non-loanee farmers.

He said that primary agriculture co-operative societies have been asked to give them chita and other documents, and enrol them getting their signature in the application form for registration under the insurance scheme. Nearly, 80,000 farmers are expected to benefit from the scheme.

## Weather

Chennai

### Chennai - INDIA

#### Today's Weather



Sunny

Thursday, Dec 13

Max Min

30.7° | 21.9°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 89

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:22

Sunset: 05:44

Barometer: 1015

#### Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Friday, Dec 14

Max Min

31° | 22°

#### Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday Dec 15	Sunday Dec 16	Monday Dec 17	Tuesday Dec 18	Wednesday Dec 19
30°   21° Partly Cloudy	26°   23° Overcast	26°   23° Overcast	26°   24° Overcast	26°   25° Cloudy

#### Airport Weather

Delhi

Rain: 0

Humidity: 63

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 07:05

Sunset: 05:25

Barometer: 1015



# THE HINDU Business Line

TODAY FARM NEWS

12.12.2012 P.M

13.12.2012 A.M

12<sup>h</sup>dec 2012 P.M

## Poultry feed rules flat on steady input costs



With the cost of production being steady, prices of poultry feed prices remained unchanged this week.

Aditya Mishra, a commodity expert, told *Business Line* that good demand and a steady input cost kept the prices of feed products unchanged and may continue to rule around current levels for the next few days.

Soyameal improved by Rs 70 and quoted at Rs 2,830 a quintal. Bajra prices increased by Rs 5 and sold at Rs 1,345, while Maize ruled unchanged and quoted Rs 1,570. On the other hand, DCP eased by 50 paise and went for Rs 36 a kg while MBM was unchanged at Rs 32.

Soyameal prices are expected to rule range bound in the upcoming days, said market experts.

### Broiler inputs



Broiler concentrates feed quoted at Rs 1,860 for a 50-kg bag while Broiler Starter Mash was at Rs 1,460.

“Broiler pre-starter concentrate 30 per cent” sold at Rs 1,600 for a 30-kg bag while layer concentrate quoted at Rs 1,425 for a 50-kg bag. Pre-lay mash quoted at Rs 1,030 while broiler finisher sold at Rs 1,440 for a 50-kg bag.

### Egg gains

Meanwhile, an increase in demand pushed egg, broiler and chicken prices up on Wednesday. Egg improved marginally by 7 paise and sold to Rs 3.15, while broiler quoted at Rs 50-51 a kg, Rs 12 up from previous level. Similarly, chick prices increased by Rs 5 and sold at Rs 7-10.

### Spot turmeric drops but futures hit ceiling



Spot turmeric prices declined by Rs 200 a quintal on Wednesday despite rates in the futures market rising by the maximum permissible limit of four per cent.

“Both farmers and traders are in confused state about the daily decreasing trend of turmeric. Turmeric futures increased by 4 per cent on Wednesday but spot prices decreased. The yellow spice was sold at Rs 4,900-5,100 a quintal in Chamrajnagar market on Tuesday and traders in Erode purchased more than 100 bags there. Turmeric prices declined in other markets at Warrangal and Nizamabad also , ” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

Exporters have received some orders and are buying limited stocks to fulfil them. But stockists as usual started building inventories. Of the 4,000 and odd bags that arrived, 60 per cent was sold. Traders said that they will get local orders till the end of this month and after that they will receive further orders only in March. So, they are buying limited stocks.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,890-5,489; the root variety Rs 3,799-5,099.

**Salem Hybrid variety:** The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,699-6,019; the root variety Rs 4,906-5,281. Of the 1,240 bags on offer, only 230 were sold. At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,339-5,764 and the root variety Rs 4,179-5,399. Of the 706 bags that arrived, 444 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety quoted Rs 4,269-5,711 while the root variety Rs 4,194-5,299. Of the arrival of 773 bags put up for sale, 753 were sold. At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,399-5,646 and the root variety Rs 4,260-5,272. All the 294 bags found takers.

### Lack of retail demand dissolves sugar



Sugar prices ruled steady at mill and naka level, while in the spot market they declined by Rs 4-9 a quintal due to eased demand on Wednesday.

The volume was subdued on routine demand and ample supply.

Domestic sugar futures were also range-bound in the absence of a concrete cue.

A wholesaler said that the volume in physical market remained need-based on eased retailer's demand .

At the upper level, producers continued selling old season's stocks and hence the supply is ample weighing on sentiments.

Supply of fine variety from the new season crop is still not picking up as mills are quoting higher prices.

Inventories in the Vashi market is over 100 truckloads and are keeping stockists away from fresh bet.

Retail demand will also remain lower till month end.

An observer said that demand from neighbouring States is lacking in Maharashtra as long as prices in other producing centres are at a par with Maharashtra forcing producers to depend on local markets.

On the export front also, there is no positive sign for shipments from India. In Vashi market, arrivals declined to 62-63 truckloads (each of 100 bags) while dispatches were 61-62 loads.

On Tuesday, 14-15 mills offered tenders but due to lack of demand they manage to sell merely 48,000-50,000 (each of 100 kg) bags only at Rs 3,200-3,280 (Rs 3,200-3,280) for S-grade and Rs 3,290-3,350 (Rs 3,290-3,350) for M-grade.

**The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates:** S-grade Rs 3,342-3,412 (Rs 3,350-3,421) and M-grade Rs 3,416-3,562 (Rs 3,416- 3,566).

**Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 3,290-3,350 (Rs 3,290-3,350) and M-grade Rs 3,360-3,510 (Rs 3,360-3,510).

## Tur may drift on new crop arrivals; moong rises



Improved demand and buying support perked up tur (Maharashtra) on Wednesday by Rs 50 to Rs 3,800 a quintal, while tur (Nimari) remained steady at Rs 3,000-3,100 .

Tur has been trading low in local mandis for quite sometime on slack demand in pulses and weak buying support.

Besides arrival of new tur in mandis across Karnataka and Maharashtra, slack demand in pulses on account of cheap availability of vegetables in the winter season, has also led to sharp fall in tur prices, said a trader.

Tur prices are expected to go down further once arrival of new tur from parts of Madhya Pradesh hits local mandis within 15 days, said a trader Prakash Vora .

On the other hand, notwithstanding improved buying support in tur, its dal ruled stable with tur dal (full) at Rs 5,700-5,800, tur dal (sawa no.) at Rs 5,300-5,400, while tur marka ruled at Rs 6,600-6,700.

### moong

Improved demand in the best quality moong lifted its prices by Rs 100 in the past one week.

In local mandis, moong (best quality) ruled at Rs 5,300 a quintal, while moong (medium) remained stable at Rs 4,500-4,800.

Moong dal was at Rs 6,400-6,500, moong dal (bold) at Rs 6,800-6,900, while moong mongar ruled at Rs 6,800-7,000 a quintal.

## Bearish US report crushes soya oil

Edible oils prices dropped sharply on Wednesday tracking bearish futures markets that reacted to a US Department of Agriculture report on soyabean showing higher supply.

Imported palmolein and soyabean refined oil declined by Rs 5 and Rs 10 each for 10 kg. Groundnut oil drop by Rs 10 and cotton oil eased further by Rs 5. Sunflower and rapeseed oil were unchanged.

The market resumed its downward journey on fundamentals.

In Malaysia, palm oil inventory climbed for the fourth straight month to a record 2.56 million tonnes in November and it weighed on the market. Domestic soya oil futures dropped by more than Rs 13.

A Mumbai-based broker said: "Due to huge stocks and over supply stockists kept away except taking benefits of lower rates in the bear market. As most of the contracts were made at higher prices, traders and stockists are forced to offload it out at lower rates."

"A leading seller has sold about 450-500 tonnes of palmolein at Rs 470 ex-JNPT in ready. Prices are lower than prevailing market rates. Buyers have taken advantage of the lower offering. Except that there was no trade due to lack of demand. Resellers were offered Rs 470 for palmolein to limit losses," he said.

In Saurashtra and Rajkot, groundnut oil declined by Rs 10 to Rs 1950 (Rs 1,960) for a *telia* tin and Rs 1,270 (Rs 1,280) for loose (10 kg).

Towards the close of the day Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 485 –487 ex-Ghatkopar and Rs 483-485 ex-Shapur, super palmolein at Rs 535 for Jan 1-15, soya refined oil at Rs 700 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 785.

Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 481 for Dec and Rs 484 for Jan, soyabean refined oil at Rs 685, sunflower refined oil Rs 780 for Dec 21-30 and Rs 785 for January.

Malaysia's crude palm oil January contracts settled lower at MYR 2,141 (2,187) , February MYR 2,238 (2,291) and March MYR 2,316 (2,365) a tonne.

**The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were:** Groundnut oil 1,250 (1,260), soya refined oil 685 (695), sunflower exp. ref. 720 (720), sunflower ref. 780 (785), rapeseed ref. oil 810 (810), rapeseed expeller ref. 780 (780) cottonseed ref. oil 620 (625) and palmolein 480 (485).

### Pepper heads north on good domestic demand

The pepper market headed north on Wednesday on good domestic demand amid limited supply, and as a result, the running contract December moved up to close at Rs 39,300 a quintal. However, February showed a marginal decline, while March remained steady at previous levels. Good buying interest was visible from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Mumbai, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, as demand has picked up for the winter/festival/wedding season in the upcountry regions, market sources told *Business Line*.

However, availability of the material continued to remain tight so far. Arrivals from the primary markets were also slow and today five tonnes of fresh pepper arrived and that were traded at Rs 370/kg as it had high moisture content. Activities on the exchange were limited as is evident from the decrease in the turnover. December contract on the NCDEX decreased by Rs 290 a quintal to close at Rs 39,300 a quintal. February decreased by Rs 30 a quintal to close at Rs 34,435 a quintal, while March remained unchanged at Rs 34,225 a quintal.

Total turnover dropped by 1,104 tonnes to close at 1,209 tonnes. Total open interest dropped by 102 tonnes to close at 5,043 tonnes. December open interest fell by 117 tonnes to close at 2,209 tonnes, while that of February declined by 10 tonnes to 2,250 tonnes. March open interest moved up by 12 tonnes to close at 511 tonnes. Spot prices remained unchanged at previous levels of Rs 37,200 (ungarbled) and Rs 38,700 (MG 1) a quintal on limited activities. Indian parity in the international market has moved up to \$7,500 a tonne (c&f) for the Europe and \$7,800 a tonne (c&f) for the US and remained totally out priced, they said.

### Spot rubber gains on lack of sellers

Physical rubber prices improved on Wednesday. The local market seemed to be moving in tandem with the moderate gains in the domestic and international rubber futures.

According to observers, enquiries from the major consuming industries and the absence of quantity sellers helped the prices to rule firm on late trades

Meanwhile in the global scene, the Tokyo rubber futures edged higher near to a two-month high, supported by a weaker yen and strong Asian stock markets.

In spot, sheet rubber improved to Rs.164.00 (162.00) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi according to traders and the Rubber board. The trend was partially mixed.

In futures, the December series recovered to Rs 166.20 (Rs 164.76), January to Rs 168.05 (Rs 166.92), February to Rs 170.59 (Rs 169.33) and March to Rs 172.88 (Rs 171.99) while the May series declined to Rs 174.55 (Rs 177.15) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

RSS 3 (spot) firmed up to Rs 165.92 (Rs 164.97) a kg at Bangkok.

The December futures increased to ¥257.5 (Rs 168.60) from ¥252.7 during the day session and then to ¥258.5 (Rs 169.26) in the night session on Tokyo Commodity Exchange (TOCOM).

**The spot rubber rates Rs/kg were:** RSS-4: 164.00 (162.00); RSS-5: 158.00 (156.00); Ungraded: 154.00 (152.00); ISNR 20: 154.00 (154.00) and Latex 60%: 106.00 (106.00).

### **A.N. Singh is new chief of tea body**

The Indian Tea Association, at its National Committee meeting here recently, elected its new office-bearers for 2012-13. A.N. Singh, Managing Director of Goodricke Group Ltd, the Chairman; Ashok Kumar Bhargava, Managing Director of Apeejay Surrendra Corporate Services Ltd, the Vice-Chairman, and Azam Monem, Director, McLeod Russel India Ltd, the Additional Vice-Chairman, according to an ITA release.

### **Coconut Development Board plans to explore markets**

The Coconut Development Board is planning to explore markets for basket of seven coconut products through 63 JNNURM cities.

The basket includes packaged tender coconut water, virgin coconut oil, milk powder and cream, desiccated coconut powder, ball copra, coconut chips and pure coconut oil.

Demands for these products have been identified based on a consumer acceptability study conducted in metros and through the Board's participation in exhibition and fairs in major cities across the country, CDB officials said.

The Boards project on the anvil include promoting 100 tender coconut units, five virgin coconut oil enterprises, 100 desiccated coconut manufacturing companies and 50 chips making units through JNNURM cities during the current financial year.

There is a mismatch of production of various products with their increasing demand.

The Board had already supported 200 processing units under financial assistance of the CDB through Technology mission on coconut (TMOC), the officials said. The CDB proposed to market these products in a phased manner.

In the first phase, the Board could market in seven cities with over four million populations - Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata, Ahmadabad and Hyderabad.

Developing markets for value-added products enhance the price of coconut up to Rs 20 a nut according to the new marketing strategy of the CDB.

The Board is also trying to sell the products through supermarkets, malls, emporia, big stalls and outlets run by the consortia of coconut farmers.

### **Tea offerings slip at Coonoor sale**

A volume of 14.21 lakh kg has been catalogued for the current calendar's penultimate auction of Coonoor Tea Trade Association to be held on Thursday and Friday, reveals an analysis of brokers' listing.

In all, 14.21 lakh kg has been catalogued for Sale No: 50. It is some 73,000 kg less than last week's offer but about 18,000 kg more than the offer this time last year.



Of the 14.21 lakh kg on offer, 10.27 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 3.94 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades. As much as 13.37 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 0.84 lakh kg, orthodox variety.

The proportion of orthodox teas continues to be low in both the leaf and dust grades.

In the leaf counter, only 0.54 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 9.73 lakh kg, CTC.

Among the dusts, only 0.30 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 3.64 lakh kg, CTC.

Fresh tea accounts for 13.77 lakh kg while about 44,000 kg comprises teas which had remained unsold in previous auctions.

**Tea prices will gain on domestic demand rising by 25 mkg a year'**



Mergers and acquisitions are not common in Indian tea industry.

Available reports suggest hardly three to four estates changed hands this year and, two of them have been acquired by Rossell India Ltd.

In an interview to Business Line, company Managing Director C.S. Bedi outlines the Rossell's growth strategies and the future of tea business.

From April this year, you have acquired two estates in Assam. Do you have appetite for more?

Rossell began its journey in 1994 with three estates producing approximately 2.5 million kg of tea. Our plan was to build 10 mkg capacity.

We are now having seven estates producing approximately 6 mkg. We are, therefore, still short of our target and have an appetite for acquisition. This is known in the industry. And, offers keep coming. But, we are not in a hurry. We have already invested heavily this year and will not risk our finances.

We are interested in quality assets in Assam at affordable price.

You are known as producer of orthodox varieties. But your latest acquisition of Kharikatia is a CTC garden. How does it help the company?

Initially Rossell was a CTC producer. However, we have changed the production profile to quality orthodox teas with an aim to ensure better realisation, especially in the export market. This has brought down contribution of CTC in our production basket to approximately 15 per cent.

With the acquisition of Kharikatia, CTC will now contribute nearly 25 per cent of the total offerings by the company. This will help us reduce the downside risk of excessive dependence on orthodox prices. There were phases in the past when orthodox prices remained subdued. Overall, the new acquisition should contribute approximately Rs 15 crore on topline, helping us touch the Rs 100 crore turnover mark in 2013-14. (Rossell grosses Rs 82 crore in 2011-12 and is estimated to close at Rs 90 crore range this fiscal).

What is the size of this acquisition?

Kharikatia is estimated to produce approximately 7.5 lakh kg of CTC and is valued more or less similar to our previous acquisition (Namsang) in April. (Namsang was priced at Rs 28 crore.)

Will you restrict your exposure to Assam? To put it differently, are you interested in gardens in different geographies including overseas destinations to hedge climate risks?

In India, we have taken a conscious decision to restrict exposure to Assam. We think Assam is more protected (in North India) from climate risks when compared to Dooars and Terai. South India is extremely expensive and is not in our radar.

Africa is less affected by pest attacks. So in Western perception, these teas are more eco-friendly.

Two years ago, we made an acquisition attempt at Rwanda. In retrospect, I think we were lucky that it didn't succeed. Rwanda depends faraway on Kenya for marketing of tea as well as maintenance support. Naturally, from operational efficiency point of view, managing one small asset here would have proved costly.

You have just laid down the office of chairman, Indian Tea Association (ITA), do you think tea industry is getting quality conscious?

Definitely. The re-plantation as well as quality upgradation initiatives of Tea Board have paid off well. Today, nearly 60 per cent of the produce are of 'good' and 'good medium' variety. It was nearly half 5-7 years ago.

What is outlook on prices?

Tea production is estimated to be down by nearly 20 mkg in North India in 2013. The supply squeeze is reflecting on reasonably higher end-season prices of quality teas.

With continuing focus on re-plantation and, an estimated 25 mkg additional domestic demand created every year, there should be an upward pressure on prices.

### **Indian wheat gets good export price: Food Secretary**

Amid reports that Iran has some quality problem in importing wheat from India, the government on Wednesday said there is no concern over the quality of Indian wheat and the country is exporting the grain at a good price.

"There is no issue on quality of Indian wheat which is being reflected from the price we are getting in exports," Food Secretary Sudhir Kumar told reporters when asked about the progress made in discussion with Iran for wheat exports.

In the first tender, the government has got a price of \$296 per tonne and in the last tender, the price has reached \$328 per tonne, he said, adding that about 11-12 foreign firms are participating in the global tenders.

In July this year, the Centre had allowed exports of two million tonnes of wheat from its godowns to offload surplus stock and ease storage crunch. The tenders are being floated by the state-owned trading firms PEC, STC and MMTC on behalf of the government.

“Iran has not communicated to us about quality specification so far. Once they do it, we will take a call,” the secretary informed.

Iran has not been importing Indian wheat since 1996 due to quality issues. Early this year, the sanction-hit West Asian country had shown interest to buy Indian wheat and had also sent its team to check quality of the grain. However, the negotiations have not yet fructified.

Asked whether entry of Australian wheat in the global market would hit country’s export realisation, Kumar said: “There is shortage internationally. Anyway, our main objective is to manage foodgrains stock and not maximise price realisation”.

Wheat production of India, the world’s second largest producer, touched a record 93.9 million tonnes in the 2011-12 crop year (July-June) leading to a bumper procurement.

The Food Corporation of India’s godowns are overflowing with foodgrains stocks, prompting the government to lift ban on exports in September, 2011.

From July this year, it even permitted exports of 2 million tonnes from FCI godowns and the allocated quantity is on the verge of getting exhausted. Now, the government is in the process of allowing an additional 2.5 million tonnes of exports.

# Business Standard

TODAY FARM NEWS

13.12.2012 A.M

## Wheat exports may touch record 5 mn tonne

India's wheat exports are pegged to touch a record level of 5 million tonnes in the 2012-13 marketing season on the back of all time high harvest and large carryover stocks, United Nation's body FAO said.

"In India, given the estimated bumper wheat harvest and larger carryover stocks, exports are anticipated to reach a record level of 5 million tonnes in 2012-13," Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said in its latest Crop Prospects and Food Situation report.



Wheat marketing year in India commences in April and ends in March.

"Weather conditions at the start of the 2012-13 season have been generally favourable for planting of winter wheat, barley and secondary rice crop. In India, early official forecast for the 2013 wheat crop is set at a near average level of about 86 million tonnes," the report added.

The government has kept a target of 86 million tonnes of wheat in the 2012-13 rabi (winter) season. The country had harvested a record 93.90 million tonnes in 2011-12 crop year (July-June) due to good rains.

That apart, the government has a wheat stock of 37.65 million tonnes as of Dec 1, 2012, which is above the stipulated buffer and strategic stock requirement of 11.2 million tonnes as of January 1, 2013.

In July this year, the government had allowed export of 2 million tonnes of wheat from central pool stocks of Food Corporation of India (FCI) through central public sector undertakings

(CPSUs) like STC, MMTC and PEC.

Tenders for export of 1.73 million tonnes of wheat has been approved, out of which 8.06 lakh tonnes has been shipped.

Yesterday, Commerce Secretary S R Rao said that the Food Ministry will move a proposal for allowing export of an additional 2.5 million tonnes of wheat from the central stocks in order to ease the storage crunch being faced by the country due to an all time high production.

### Poultry industry in doldrums as egg prices decline

Poultry farmers across India are in a quandary, as egg prices did not see any increase on the onset of winter.

According to sources in the trade, the total egg production in the country stands at 600 million annually, and there has been a five per cent increase in production.

Shabbir Ahmed Khan, the convenor of the Poultry Federation of India, said the production capacities had been increased as there was demand in Indian market due to a rise in disposable income. But middlemen have been reaping the benefits.

Poultry farmers seek consultation for new projects to enhance production, but do not learn the marketing skills. The wholesale price, according to him, was Rs 3.50 per egg during this month last year and has now slipped to Rs 3.22 per egg. At the same time, the cost of production per egg has increased to Rs 2.95 from Rs 2.80 last year.

	2011-12	2012-13
Indicative egg production (in million)	600	480
Cost/egg (₹)	2.80	2.95
Price/egg (₹)	3.50	3.22

(Price per egg is the price in Delhi market)

According Devinder Ahlawat of the Haryana Poultry Farmers Association, prices are sticky as

the number of poultry farms have proliferated in the past few years. This business has less hassles in terms of taxes (no sales tax and excise duty), but marketing is essential. The wholesalers negotiate their terms and the farmers get a lower price.

The plight of poultry farmers down south is worse as they are selling an egg at Rs 2.60 against the cost of Rs 3.

P Tamil Arson of Pepe Farms at Namakkal, Tamil Nadu said, “We are incurring a loss of 40 paise per egg this season. The beginning of the cold wave in the upper reaches of the Himalaya may bring some improvement in the coming weeks.”

The sharp increase in the prices of egg feed from Rs 15 per kg last year to Rs 22 per kg this year was the main driver of increase in cost.

“A drop in the cost of soyabean has resulted in the cost of poultry feed to fall from Rs 22 per kg to Rs 18.50 per kg. But we are still selling at a loss,” he said.

Traders in the business observe that a slight cut in the production was imperative for the industry to remain viable. The current year may end up as a loss-making year.

### **Pranab for robust system to ensure quality food**

As growing globalisation poses a threat to India’s food safety because of faster trans-boundary transfer of microbiological and chemical hazards, the country needs to put in place robust preventive and curative capacities to safeguard the health of Indian people, President Pranab Mukherjee said on Wednesday.



# THE TIMES OF INDIA

TODAY FARM NEWS

13.12.2012 A.M

## Farmers threaten to stop realty project

GREATER NOIDA/GHAZIABAD: Farmers agitating against land acquisition for the proposed [Hi-Tech City](#) on 9,000 acres by [Wave Infratech](#) held a meeting on Wednesday and decided to halt development of the project. Farmers have been agitating against the project for the last two years. Sources said settling issues of the farmers by the government will not be an easy task.

"The [Gautam Budh Nagar administration](#) had said that policies are designed in Lucknow and senior officials there have to take the final call. The buck has now been passed to Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA). So far, we have received no response from the administration. Now farmers have decided to intensify the agitation and halt Wave Infratech's Hi-Tech City project," said farmer Ashok Yadav.

Farmers have been demanding higher compensation against land acquired for the project. The agitators were on hunger strike since December 5, but they suspended it due to deteriorating health of some farmers.

The matter now has to be addressed by GDA vice-chairman Santosh Yadav as most part of the project falls in Ghaziabad. However, farmers said they do not have faith in him. Few months ago farmers had protested outside the GDA office and at that time Yadav had assured them relief, but nothing was done.

Even during the last agitation at GDA Yadav had assured to fix a meeting of a farmer delegation with the principal secretary (housing) but to no avail.



Yadav, however, clarified that the MoU for the project was executed between the former BSP government and the Hi-Tech City developer and GDA has nothing with it. "We have received the farmers' memorandum but this issue cannot be sorted out at our level," said Yadav.

### **Institutions should promote organic seeds: Agro activist**

COIMBATORE: The academic and research institutions in the country should play a proactive role in ensuring the promotion of organic seeds and avoid thrusting genetically-modified seeds on farmers in the country said renowned agriculture activist Dr Vandana Shiva. She was speaking on the sidelines of the international conference on Sustainable Development and Governance: Building Commerce and Communities jointly hosted by [Amrita University](#) and Deakin University here on Wednesday.

The three-day seminar at the Amrita University campus in Ettimadai has many experts from various sectors addressing the delegates on sustainable development- water, energy and waste management and its impact on agriculture and food production.

"There are institutes like the [Tamil Nadu Agricultural University](#) which could play a major role in ensuring that the farmers are not forced to become overtly dependant on genetically-modified seeds," said Dr Vandana Shiva.

Speaking at an interaction with the media earlier in the day, Dr [Vandana Shiva](#) pointed out that water management played a major role in ensuring food sustainability in the agriculture sector.

She slammed the use of genetically-modified seeds which when compared to their traditional counterparts requires more water and exerts additional pressure and burden on farmers already drilled in debt and financial crisis. She also mooted the policy makers to opt for decentralised approach when it came to water management and agriculture sustainability issues with giving ample weightage to the priorities of the local farmers.

Arunabha Ghose, CEO of Council on Energy, Environment and Water also reiterated the need for the academia should step in to solve the major issues related with optimum usage of ecological resources.