

THE HINDU

TODAY FARM NEWS

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Release 30 tmcft of water to save standing samba crop'

The Tamilaga Eri Matrum Aatru Pasana Vivasayigal Sangham has demanded the release of 30 tmcft of water from Karnataka to save the standing samba crop in Tamil Nadu.

A resolution passed at the forum's district-level conference held here on Wednesday appealed to the Central government to gazette the Interim and Final Awards given by the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal.

The conference also demanded Rs.3,500 as procurement price for a tonne of sugarcane, Rs.1,750 for a quintal of paddy, Rs.75 for a kilogram of cotton, and Rs.2,500 for a quintal of maize .

It urged the Collector to initiate steps to extend power connections to all the agriculturists who have remitted the required fee.

Another resolution pleaded for construction of a barrage across the Kollidam in Thirumanur panchayat union as it would not only help improve the groundwater level but also ensure adequate drinking water. It appealed to the Collector to expedite the construction of Sundakudi Marudhayar Bridge and also get funds for converting the road stretch between Ambalavarkattalai and Yelakurichi into double lane. It also pleaded for linking the Karuppilakatalai Eri with Sukran Eri which would help save rainwater in the latter and irrigate 20,000 acres.

Milletts in mid-day meal to boost nutrition

Come January, schoolchildren may savour the flavour of ragi puttu and cholam biscuits in their mid-day meals.

The State government plans to introduce millets in the mid-day meal owing to its increased nutritional value from January 26, 2013, said T.Thanasekaran, deputy director of the Agriculture department.

“The process is on to include millets in the nutritious meal scheme and we hope to launch it on the Republic Day. Initially, we may introduce items such as puttu, kali or dosai with finger millet (Ragi) and biscuits with barnyard millet (cholam). Soon, depending on how the children receive the recipe we may think of including millets in the Public Distribution System (PDS),” he said.

This move comes in the backdrop of the Agriculture Ministry urging the States to introduce millets in the scheme last September.

“This time, the monsoon can be called a near failure and we have incurred deficit of rainfall. When the production of paddy falls, cultivation of millets, which are highly drought-resistant, could be increased. We are trying to increase the productivity of millets by distributing improved variety of seeds to farmers,” he added.

For quite sometime now, the State has been organising demonstrations and campaigns for farmers to promote cultivation of millets.

V.R. Ananthoo of Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA) who also runs reStore— a not-for-profit store that sells organic products sourced from farmers and underprivileged groups — was asked to facilitate a meeting by the State Planning Commission in October to promote millets. In fact, the officers were given an eight-course millet meals with dishes such as Varagu Bissibelabath, Saamai curd rice etc.

“Just when we had been working at reStore with a focus to bring back millets, we organised a meeting for the Planning Commission with secretaries of various departments to sensitise them about millets. Since millets are easy to grow, drought-resistant and replenish the soil as well, it can be used to address several issues including malnutrition,” he said.

Dr. G. Sivaraman, a Siddha physician, said malnutrition in the State could best be tackled by inclusion of millets in the mid-day meal.

“Malnutrition is mainly caused due to low protein levels in the body. Finger millets and barnyard millets will increase protein content in the body. Plus, millets are low glycemic functional food which prevents non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cardio-vascular diseases and cancers,” he said.

Kalam in Coimbatore

Former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam arrived in Coimbatore on Thursday night on a two-day visit to take part in various functions in city and in Udumalpet.

On Friday, Dr.Kalam will be taking part in the International Conference on Sustainable Development and Governance at Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham in Ettimadai around 9.30 a.m.

Later, he will interact with the differently abled persons at a programme at Sarojini Auditorium, Kikkani Higher Secondary School, at 11.30 a.m. This programme is organised by Lead India 2020 in association with District Differently-abled Welfare Office. Srikanth Bolla, a visually challenged visionary from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, USA, will also participate.

Secretary to Tamil Nadu Government for Welfare of the Differently Abled persons Kannegi Packianathan, Additional Director-General of Police C. Sylendra Babu, Collector M. Karunakaran and Passport Officer S. Sasikumar will be present during Dr.Kalam’s interaction.

Dr.Kalam will take part in the centenary celebrations of Kanniga Parameswari Institutions and lay the stone for the golden jubilee buildings on the school premises in Udumalpet at 3.30 p.m.

At 5.30 p.m., he will interact with students of Sri Krishna Institutions at Krishna College of Engineering and Technology.

On Saturday, Dr.Kalam will take part in Stanes Anglo Indian Higher Secondary School Sesquicentennial year at 9.45 a.m. He will also be taking part in the Regional Science Congress being organised at Kongu Nadu Arts and Science College on Mettupalayam Road at 11.30 a.m.

He will participate in a plantation crops symposium organised by the Tea Research Institute of the United Planters Association of South India at Jenneys Residency at 12.30 p.m.

Later, he will take part in 67th Annual State Conference Meditex 2012 of Indian Medical Association at CODISSIA – E Hall at 3.30 p.m.

Camps organised to provide necessary records to farmers

With the last date for crop insurance for non-loanee farmers closing in , the Collector has urged all uninsured farmers to insure their crops.

The administration has organised special camps in coordination with cooperative, agriculture, and revenue departments to provide farmers with necessary records, including survey numbers and area to be insured. Collector T.Munusamy said that the government had provided 50 per cent subsidy for insurance premium last year. However, 100 per cent premium subsidy of Rs.174 and a slew of measures were announced this year in view of the distress in delta region.

Of the 1,35,000 hectares of Samba and Thaladi crop inundated by rains in October, over 1,19,000 hectare have been insured . With the last date for coverage falling on Saturday, farmers are urged to insure their fields as soon as possible. According to Mr.Munusamy, diesel subsidy of Rs.600 per acre has been announced for farmers, and three-phase supply is already under implementation in Mayiladuthurai division that banks on pump irrigation.

In areas, with poor bore irrigation potential, diesel subsidy is being provided to pump water from water bodies. One hundred per cent subsidy is being provided for buying 30 numbers of 6 meter-long pipes for pumping out water from the nearest water bodies. The Agricultural Engineering department and Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Sikkal, has been engaged to enable sprinkler irrigation, Mr.Munusamy said. The last date for 'loanee' farmers to insure their crops is December 31.

Farmers against proposed formation of tiger sanctuary

The State Government (Department of Forest) has sent a proposal to the Ministry of Environment and Forests on allotting 20,000 hectares of forestland to convert it into a tiger sanctuary in Kanyakumari district.

However, it is objected to by farmers as well as Kani tribes as the formation of the tiger sanctuary will definitely affect their livelihood. According to a cross section of farmers who

depend on agriculture, particularly cash crops, say that the conversion will disastrously affect the lives of more than 5 lakh people who are dependent on this forestland and hence, they have demanded the immediate cancellation of the proposed project.

The area selected for the tiger reserve will include Kilamalai reserve forest in Kaliyal range, Veerapuli reserve forest in Velimalai, Kulasekaram ranges and Panagudi reserve forest in the Mahendaragiri hill. This area has 50 villages and town panchayats.

Moreover, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is having a Liquid Propulsion System Centre in the Mahendaragiri hill and many research operations are being conducted. The proposed project will affect the scientific activities and also pose a great threat to tigers.

The Pechipparai, Perunchani, Chittar I and Chittar II dams which cater the needs of farmers are situated within the earmarked tiger reserve sprawling on 20,000 hectare.

These four dams are the main source of irrigation for nearly 2 lakhs hectares of agriculture land, situated in Kanyakumari and portion of Tirunelveli districts.

If the proposed tiger reserve is formed, water release from these dams for agriculture purposes will be totally disrupted as the Forest Department would try to preserve this water for the needs of the tiger.

N. Kumaran, general secretary of the Labour Trade Union of Arasu Rubber Corporation, affiliated to the Congress, told *The Hindu* that the chosen area for the formation of tiger reserve was having its rubber cultivation and factories and there were about 10,000 employees working in the corporation. Besides, there were a lot of private rubber plantation and factories and nearly 2 lakh people were dependent on this for their livelihood. There are spices gardens in these forest areas and more than one lakh people are dependent on this spices business. There are tea estates owned by private individuals and the tea produced here is famous next to Ooty.

Hence, he appealed the Government not to take any further action on forming tiger reserve in the Western Ghat.

According to Forest Department sources, the Government has sent a proposal for the formation of tiger reserve. There are two categories — core and buffer zones.

The proposed tiger reserve will come under the buffer zone. If the formation of tiger zone is materialised, the tribal people will be highly benefitted and it will lead their uplift and enhance their socio-economic status.

Chairman of Kodayaru irrigation system (Water Resource organization), PWD, A. Vins Anto, said that with the formation of tiger reserve, the farmers would definitely be affected.

However, as this project would be very helpful to the tribals to sustain their livelihood, instead of acquiring 20,000 hectares of land, the officials of Forest Department should acquire only the forest land so that farmers would not be affected. The development activities under the formation of tiger reserve should be a welcome one but at the same time it should not affect the welfare and rights of farmers as well as tribals, said Mr. Vins Anto.

Garlic prices hit an all-time low

The price of garlic has come down to an all-time low at the retail market here bringing joy to consumers.

The price of benchmark quality garlic is between Rs.25 and Rs.30 per kg. Small and medium sized garlic is available from Rs.15 to Rs. 20 per kg.

According to a report, the number of lorries bringing garlic has been gradually increasing in the last couple of weeks, forcing traders to adopt attractive methods to sell garlic to retailers and consumers.

A number of seasonal traders from Villupuram, Cuddalore, Tindivanam and other towns have arrived here with mini-door lorries fitted with public address system.

Seasonal traders have also opened roadside shops to sell garlic. Traders said that the current prices had hit an all-time low. Garlic was not sold less than Rs.50 per kg during the last 10 years.

“The low prices have made us hire mini-lorries to sell garlic as quickly as possible. The mandate is to dump garlic in almost all households. We are getting good response. We sell five kg of garlic at Rs.100. Consumers buy in big quantities. I think there will be no need for them to buy

garlic for the next one year,” said K. Nagarajan, a seasonal trader from Villupuram camping in Puducherry.

Market sources said that the price of garlic was steady until May .

It was around Rs.75 a kg. However, the price started coming down below Rs.50 a kg after that. The arrival of garlic to the market was three times more than actual demand.

The prices had fallen steeply because of the bumper crop in the country as well as in China.

The trend might continue for a few more months.

Breakthrough achieved in fish breeding



HAPPY HARVEST:Fingerlings of Cobia fishes at CMFRI in Mandapam in Ramanathapuram district.— Photo: L. Balachandar

The Mandapam Regional Center of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has achieve a major milestone in its research activities on Wednesday, when it unveiled a technology, a first of its kind in the country in breeding and seed production of Cobia and Silver Pampano, two species of high value marine finfishes.

“We achieved a breakthrough and developed the new technology, a first of its kind in the country after six years of extensive research,” a visibly joyous Mr G.Gopakumar, Principal Scientist and Head (Mariculture) CMFRI, Mandapam told *The Hindu* on Thursday.

When much research attention was not given for developing seed and production methods for high value finfishes suited for sea farming, the Mandapam Regional centre of CMFRI has developed the technology, after intensifying its research activities, he said.

Envisaging the prospects of Cobia farming in the country, about half a dozen scientists took up the research and initiated the broodstock development in sea cages, during 2008 and achieved the first breakthrough in developing a technology in March-April, 2010, he said.

But before releasing the technology and making it available for private entrepreneurship, they carried out trials on sea cage farming till the fishes attained an average weight of 2.5 kg in six months and 7.3 kg in one year, Mr Gopakumar said. The scientists also found that the two species could be grown in low salinity, he added.

Experiments also revealed that up to 15 parts per thousand (ppt), the growth and survival was comparable to that in seawater, he said. "These results point out the possibility of developing lucrative cobia aquaculture enterprise in the country. Similarly, pompano, which has fast growth rate and good meat quality and high market demand was suitable for farming in the vast low saline waters in the country", he added.

Claiming that this could be considered as a milestone towards the development of pompano aquaculture in the country, he said ever since the achievement was made, there has been an increase in demand for the seed from the coastal fish farmers.

He said as of now, a technology was available for commercial seed production only in case of marine finfish, the "sea bass". The technology was developed by Chennai based Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA), but private entrepreneurship has not been developed, he said.

Stating that the scientists would continue their research and perfect the technology, he said, "we, however, thought that this is time for the technology to be transferred".

Thanks to the increasing demand, the Mandapam Regional centre of CMFRI has launched a training programme on "Mass production of live feeds protocols for larviculture of the two species" for the benefit of private companies, which were engaged in shrimp and prawn farming. With little modification of their existing infrastructure facilities, they could take up cobia and pompano farming", he said.

Scientist B Johnson said the training programme, inaugurated by Collector K Nanthakumar on Wednesday, would go on till December 21. Twenty people, including 16 from 13 private

companies and four local fish farmers are being imparted the training free of cost. A pond farming demonstration of pompano was held at Anthervathi in Andhra Pradesh and the fishes had an average survival rate of 95 per cent, he said.

Farmers face bleak prospects as standing crop withers away

About 100 acres at Neppiapatti dry up due to lack of water



on my god!A samba cultivator who lost his crop at Neppiapatti village near Pudukottai.

With the northeast monsoon having failed, samba cultivators have suffered a severe loss, with the standing crop withering away due to non-availability of water.

A number of farmers in the district say that though they had some hopes till last week to save the crop, the prospects now seem bleak.

Savarimuthu, a farmer at Neppiapatti near here, said that the crop he had raised in two acres in October had fully withered.

He had incurred a huge expenditure of up to Rs.10,000 for raising the seedlings. He pleaded for immediate compensation by the State government.

About 100 acres in the entire village have dried up, he said. Most farmers had cultivated the Ponni variety and the culture variety. The farmers pin hopes on late onset of monsoon.

Farmers said that they had given up the idea of applying fertilizers to the crop. Application of fertilizer would be fruitful to protect the crop if irrigation was available. Meanwhile, agriculture

department officials have advised the farmers to apply potash solution to prevent the loss of moisture.

P. M. Emperumal, Joint Director of Agriculture, said that about 75,000 hectares had been brought under samba this season.

Dry weather condition coupled with failure of monsoon has resulted in evaporation of water.

Spraying of chemical solution to save samba crop begins

To help crops sustain 10 to 15 days without water



for greener pasture:Collector S. Natarajan inaugurating the spraying of chemical solution on samba crop in Tiruvarur district on Thursday.

Collector S. Natarajan inaugurated the spraying of water mixed with two per cent of Potassium Chloride to save samba crop affected by drought in the district on Thursday.

Spraying of the solution will help crop sustain 10 to 15 days without water. Spraying using various kinds of sprayers was announced by the government in the samba package scheme.

The Collector inspected the spraying at Korkai and Kachanam villages along with hundreds of farmers. This will help the crops tide over the drought condition. Samba crops are in boot leaf stage (75 days-ie before flowering) and flowering stage (80) days at various places in the district.

They are starving for water. Spraying of the solution will be done throughout the district, the Collector said.

K.Ulaganathan, MLA, Ilangoan, Joint Director of Agriculture, Mayilvahanan, Deputy Director of Agriculture were present. Needamangalam Krishi Vigyan Kendra scientists, officials of agriculture and agricultural engineering department are involved in the exercise.

Crop insurance

Joint Director of Agriculture Department has appealed to farmers in Kolar district to register and avail themselves of the benefit of crop insurance scheme introduced under National Crop Insurance Project. The insurance is mandatory for those farmers who avail themselves of farm loans and the last date for submitting the proposal is December 31. The insurance scheme is optional and voluntary for those who didn't take loans, a release said. — Staff Correspondent

Aid for organic farming project

The Vengeri-based Niravu, a non-governmental organisation (NGO), will get Rs.50,000 from the State government's Department of Environment and Climate Change for its organic farming project 'Jaivasree.' The aid comes under the 'Paristhithikam 2012-13' environment awareness campaign.

Babu Parambath, project-coordinator, said here on Wednesday that the project envisaged the use of garbage to make manure to be used for vegetable cultivation.

Under the project, each house would grow vegetables in at least 10 pots to ensure round-the-year availability.

The garbage would be converted to manure using earthworms. Under the project, Niravu intended to promote the use of biodegradable bags, thereby minimising the use of plastic.

Plastic objects, the use of which cannot be avoided, would be cleaned and kept by the users. These would be sent for recycling every three months.

The Niravu's project has been selected for financial support of the department of environment and climate change under the government's "paristhithikam 2012-13" environment awareness campaign.

NABARD initiative boon for mesta farming

Use of advanced technology for processing the plant prevents pollution



NABARD Assistant General Manager K.Subramaniyam explaining mesta farming techniques to ryots in Veeraghattam mandal of Srikakulam district.

Initiative of National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD) with the support of non governmental organisation, Forum For Integrated Development (FFID), has shown the way to farmers in utilizing advanced technology in growing mesta crop, raw material for jute, in six mandals including Veeraghattam, Vangara and Regidi, and Amudalavalasa in Srikakulam district.

Raw jute consisting of jute and mesta has been used traditionally as a source of raw material for the packaging industry. Jute and allied fibres including mesta and their by-products are highly economical, renewable, natural sources of bio-energy and important means for mitigating global warming. However, the process of whole plant retting is done in conventional method under which defoliated mesta bundles are steeped in clean or stagnant water of local ponds.

The usage of advanced technology prevented pollution of local ponds while helping farmers to get remunerative price from jute mills with the production of quality mesta. Earlier, the mills used to pay only Rs.17 per kilo of mesta but it has gone up to Rs.21. On an average each farmer is able to get around Rs. 2,400 additional income for each acre in which 600 quintals of mesta is produced during six months of crop period.

NABARD Assistant General Manager K.Subramaniyam, FFID Founder V.Vasudeva Rao and Project Coordinator D.Ramesh toured extensively six mandals to promote mesta crop and help

around 2,500 farmers in using new farming techniques. NABARD spent around Rs 10 lakh and FFID invested Rs.2 lakh for the usage of advanced technology.

The adoption of innovative “Ribbon retting” and “In situ whole plant retting technologies” developed by CRIJAF require less volume of ground water, improve fibre quality at least by two grades. “This technology is farmer and environment friendly, cost effective and commercially viable. The introduction of this innovative technology may encourage farmers to revert to mesta cultivation in the district,” said Mr.Subramaniam. Mr.Vasudeva Rao hoped that more farmers will opt for mesta farming as it is providing good returns with less investment.

ICAR project to help ryots

Farmers of Somavaram village, in Neredcharla mandal, which has a population of about 3,000, on Thursday got a first-hand experience of using a toll-free number to explain their problems and getting response from scientists/experts, as part of a pilot project of the ICAR, ‘Annapurna Krushi Prasara Seva’.

Somavaram is one of the three villages in the district where the project is being taken up. Once successful, the project will be replicated elsewhere in the State/country. Some States already have the facility. New Delhi-based Media Asia Lab, Mudra Institute of Communications, NIRD and Acharya N.G. Ranga Agriculture University are overseeing the implementation of the project, in coordination with the Krushi Vignana Kendra (KVK) at Kempasagar, in Tripuraram mandal.

Sailu, a technical expert of Media Asia Lab and Bhanu Prakash of the KVK, were present at the awareness programme organised in Somavaram on Thursday. The villagers said they found the experience of getting to know how to put forth their problems via the toll-free telephone, which is limited to only 100 registered farmers, useful.

Tamil Nadu to release only 600 mcft of water

Tamil Nadu has rejected Kerala’s demand for 1,750 mcft of water and has agreed to release just 600 mcft of water from the inter-State Parambikulam Aliyar Project from December 15 to January 31 for the standing paddy crop on 18,000 hectares of land irrigated by the Chitturpuzha scheme.

The water to be released will not be enough even to save one-fourth of the crop, the farmers here say.

The Tamil Nadu government has rejected the demand of Kerala for an urgent meeting of the Joint Water Regulatory Board of the project to discuss the issue.

K. Ranganathan, Chief Engineer (Inter-State Water), Water Resources Organisation, Tamil Nadu, in his letter to the Chief Engineer of the Kerala Water Resources Department P. Lathika on Wednesday, said, "Since the water storage is very poor and the average yield is only 50 per cent of the yield of a normal water year, it is not possible to provide more than 600 mcft of water to Chittur from December 15 to January 31, 2013." The letter, however, said, "If the storage position improves due to rainfall in this period, we will review the quantity agreed."

If there is no rain in the third week of December, the paddy crop on more than 12,000 hectares of land in Chittur will be destroyed, Muthalathode Mani, general secretary of the Deshiya Karshaka Samajam, said.

High Court asks PWD to consider farmers' plea

A division bench at the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has issued directions to the Secretary of Public Works Department (PWD), Tamil Nadu to consider the plea of a farmers' association to release water for agriculture and drinking water from Palar - Porundalar dam to the old ayacut region in Palani.

In a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) K. Janaharajan, president of Porundalaru Anicut Rajavaikkal Irrigation Farmers Association, said farmers owning nearly 5000 acres of land in and around Palani depend on water from Palar-Porundalar dam. "As per permanent record of the reservoir, release of water to the old ayacut region is scheduled from September 15 to January 31, whereas for the new ayacut region from December 1 to April 15. But a PWD order announced release of water only to 'new ayacut region this year.'"

According to the petitioner, the Secretary of PWD, in a government order issued on December 7, 2012, had directed the water resources organisation and Dindigul district administration to release water to the Left Main Canal in the new ayacut region for the benefit of agriculturalists in

the new ayacut region. However, no mention has been made regarding the requests of the old ayacutdars in the government order, the petitioner pointed out.

Therefore, he filed the PIL at the High Court stating that the order was passed against the usual procedure and against the rights and interests of a large number of farmers in the old ayacut region, who depend on Palar – Porundalar Rivers.

“The district administration and water resources organisation erroneously made a representation to the PWD that water is required predominantly to the new ayacut region. The new ayacut region has only ‘punja’ lands, whereas the old ayacut region has a vast stretch of agriculture land”, he said. The petitioner association also made a representation to the Assistant Engineer of PWD, Palar – Porundalar Dam seeking release of water to the old ayacut region. Thereafter, they also filed the PIL.

A Bench comprising Justice M. Jaichandren and Justice S. Nagamuthu heard the case. On Thursday, the special government pleader told the judges that the Assistant Engineer of PWD had already forwarded the petitioner association’s representation to the Assistant Engineer of PWD, Palani Sub-Division.

Recording the submission, the judges in their order said, “This Court finds it appropriate to direct the Secretary of PWD to pass appropriate orders, based on the said communication, as expeditiously as possible, keeping in mind the interests of the ayacutdars of the petitioner association”.

Rush at cooperative societies for enrolment for insurance scheme



in one line: Non-loanee farmers enrolling their names for the crop insurance scheme announced by the State government in the samba package, at Kalimedu near Thanjavur on Thursday.

With only two days left for the non-loanee farmers to enrol in the crop insurance scheme announced by the State government under the samba package, farmers thronged Primary Agriculture Cooperative Credit Societies (PACCS) in Thanjavur district to enrol their names.

To make the process easy and to include all farmers, Collector K.Baskaran has told the village administrative officers to take the 'chitta adangal' to the society so that farmers can get their enrolment done in the respective societies.

50 farmers

Nearly 50 farmers have enrolled at Kalimedu Primary Agriculture Cooperative Society in Thanjavur block till Thursday. Mathiyalagan, a farmer from Vinnalodai village, who owns one acre of land, said that he came to know about the enrolment through public announcements made by administration.

Those who cultivate lands on lease have been asked to bring certificate from village administrative officer, and the Collector has asked all VAOs to stay in the villages for issuing necessary certificates .

A long queue of farmers was seen at Thennankudi village in Thanjavur block. According to the secretary of the society at the village, 133 farmers have enrolled till Thursday.

A.Vetriselvan, a farmer who owns four acres of land in his name and another four acres in his mother Selvi's name had enrolled for the insurance scheme at Thennankudi.

"This is an easy way of reaching out to farmers. Computer-generated 'chittas' have been sent by VAOs to all societies and farmers will not have any problem in enrolment . Handwritten 'chittas' were also being issued by VAOs . As the last date is December 15, we are working round the clock," Mr.Baskaran said. Under the insurance scheme announced by the government, the State would pay the entire premium of Rs.174 per acre. Farmers would get a compensation of Rs.8,692 per acre in case of crop loss.

Besides this, a sum of Rs.5,000 would also be paid from Chief Minister's disaster relief fund in case of crop loss .

Totally a farmer will get Rs.13,692 per acre.

Anti-cattle slaughter Bill draws flak

Even as the Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Bill, 2010, is pending Presidential assent, the government on Thursday passed the controversial Karnataka Prevention of Cow Slaughter and Preservation (Amendment) Bill, 2012 without debate on the last day of the legislature session in Belgaum.

The amendment to the 1964 legislation, now passed, includes several provisions that the State government had proposed as part of the Bill now pending before the President. Among other things, it expands the definition of 'cow' to include bull and bullock in the category.

Meeting Governor

Janata Dal (Secular) floor leader in the Legislative Council M.C. Nanaiah said that his party leaders would be meeting Governor H.R. Bhardwaj to urge him not to approve the Bill in the light of the fact that legislation on similar lines was still pending approval.

"The entire exercise is directed against one community and furthers the Hindutva agenda," said Mr. Nanaiah.

Anti-minority

K.L. Ashok, State secretary of the Komu Sauharda Vedike, which was part of the agitation against the legislation, said that it was "anti-minority in its intent and anti-farmer in its effect".

He said that while it would hit the food culture of minority communities and a section of the Hindu community, it would also prevent farmers from selling cattle once they are unfit for farming.

KJP stance?

Mr. Ashok said that the Karnataka Janata Paksha, led by the former Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa, should clarify its stand on the Bill. "Mr. Yeddyurappa and his party members have been making efforts to project themselves as 'secular' and they should spell out their stand on the issue," he said, adding that the legislation was first proposed when Mr. Yeddyurappa was

Chief Minister. The Beef Merchants' Association, Karnataka, has condemned the manner in which the BJP government has passed the anti-cattle slaughter Bill.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, association president Aijaz Khuraishi wondered how the BJP government could have passed the Bill when the earlier piece of legislation was pending Presidential assent.

Weather

Chennai ▾

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Clear

Friday, Dec 14

Max Min

30.7° | 21.4°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 62

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:22

Sunset: 05:44

Barometer: 1011

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Saturday, Dec 15

Max Min

31° | 21°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday
Dec 16



31° | 21°
Partly Cloudy

Monday
Dec 17



26° | 24°
Overcast

Tuesday
Dec 18



27° | 24°
Overcast

Wednesday
Dec 19



27° | 25°
Overcast

Thursday
Dec 20



26° | 25°
Overcast

Airport Weather

Delhi ▾

Delhi

Rain: 0

Humidity: 38

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 07:05

Sunset: 05:25

Barometer: 1012



THE HINDU Business Line

TODAY FARM NEWS

13.12.2012 P.M

14.12.2012 A.M

13thdec 2012 P.M

Kalam's gyaan helps Paliganj farmers reap benefits

Call it the 'Kalam touch', farmers of Paliganj village in Patna district are reaping the benefits of the science of agriculture taught by former President APJ Abdul Kalam. From owning cars and TVs to refrigerators, the farmers of Paliganj are a well-to-do lot today, their income from agriculture having registered a three-fold increase in the last decade or so.

The villagers attribute their burgeoning wealth, commensurate with the increase in agricultural yield, to Kalam's several visits to the village over the years.

Between 2003 and 2011, the former President visited the village four times and during each visit he sat with the farmers to teach them how to increase the yield, secretary of Paliganj Bitarni Krishak Samiti (PBKS) Balmiki Sharma said.

The sessions with the President were not confined to his visits only, the farmers met him also at the Rashtrapati Bhawan four times to gain wisdom from the scholarly scientist, he said.

Sharma said, "The villagers have planned to offer 'citizenship of Paliganj' to Kalam due to his dedicated service to the region."

Gopal Singh Yadav, a farmer and president of the PBKS, said the farmers earlier harvested about nine quintals of paddy from an acre, but after the scientific tips from Kalam the productivity has gone up to 27 quintals per acre — a three-fold jump.

"Similarly, the yield of wheat has also risen from about five quintals to 12 quintals per acre now," Yadav, who owns three acres of land, said.

Paliganj MLA Usha Vidyarthi said the State government through a sincere distribution of subsidy on seed and agricultural equipment is providing help to keep the momentum of growth going. Kalam visited Paliganj in 2003, 2005, 2008 and 2011 to provide valuable tips to farmers as part of a project by TIFAC (The Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council), which is a registered society under the Union Science & Technology Ministry.

“Kalam Saheb taught farmers importance of certified seed, duration of sowing the seed and proper storage of the crop,” Sharma, whose organisation has membership from 55 villages in and around Paliganj, said.

Kalam had also taught them to cultivate medicinal plants in between Rabi and Kharif seasons, a young farmer Arvind Kumar Singh, engaged in cultivation of lemon grass, said.

Other farmers such as Rameshwar Yadav and Om Narayan Singh Chandaus said the former President had taught them how to maintain fertility of the soil and also importance of education for their children. Though the TIFAC project ended in 2011, the farmers follow the teachings of Kalam and keep in touch with scientists of the organisation, Sharma said.

They all, however, negated any government role in their relative prosperity, saying though the State government had many agricultural schemes to offer, their delivery was nothing to write home about mainly due to lackadaisical approach of the field officers.

Free export policy for rice, wheat, cotton to continue: Sharma

Commerce Minister Anand Sharma said on Thursday that the government will continue with the free export policy for rice, wheat and cotton this year.

In September 2011, the ban on export of non-basmati rice and wheat was lifted and exports were put on OGL (Open General Licence) due to bumper food grains production in the country.

“Due to higher production, the government has allowed export of rice, wheat and cotton. This will continue as we have enough supply,” Sharma said while addressing the All India Kisan Coordination Committee (AIKCC) here.

Sharma said that stable farm export policy is necessary to ensure better income to farmers and the same has been communicated to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

“I have informed the Prime Minister about it. The Agriculture Minister is also of this view,” he added.

The country has so far exported 10 million tonne non-basmati rice and over 3 million tonne wheat through private trade, he added.

Sharma further said that Indian wheat is dominating in the world market this year. An expected crop failure in the US and Ukraine has generated huge demand for India wheat and traders are fetching good price up to \$ 328 a tonne.

On agriculture reforms sought by the AIKCC, the minister said that he would discuss with ministers of Agriculture and Finance the credit issues such as possibility of loan waiver to some section of farmers, raising credit card limit and increasing loan repayment gestation period.

On a priority, the farm body has sought that the government announce a bonus of Rs 130 per quintal, over and above the support price, for wheat growers in the 2013-14 marketing year starting from April 2013.

The government has not yet announced wheat MSP. Last year, it was fixed at Rs 1,285 per quintal.

Besides, the AIKCC has demanded that the Centre link MSP with Wholesale Price Index; increase cotton MSP for this year; set up pension fund for farmers; have separate pricing of diesel for agriculture sector; control high fertiliser prices; do away with middlemen and free export of farm items through Pakistan to Gulf and other countries.

It has also sought discussion on Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane with farmers before finalisation of Rangarajan report on sugar decontrol.

Govt to soon release sugar quota on half-yearly basis: Thomas



The government will soon start allocating sugar quantity to mills for open market sale on half-yearly basis, instead of four-monthly quota, and also “seriously” consider decontrol of the sector, the Food Minister, K V Thomas said today.

It will also decide on raising import duties on sugar, from the current 10 per cent, within 15 days, he added.

“The recommendations of the Rangarajan Committee on sugar decontrol will be seriously looked into by the government. Some of the recommendations will be implemented,” Thomas said at 78th Annual General Meeting of the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA).

The allocation of sugar for open market sale is being done for four-monthly basis — from the earlier practice of monthly quota, he said, adding, “very soon it will be made six-monthly”.

An expert committee, headed by the PMEAC Chairman C Rangarajan, has recently submitted report on sugar decontrol.

Thomas categorically said that the government “does not want it (Rangarajan Report) to have the fate of earlier reports”.

The panel has suggested immediate removal of regulated mechanism through which the food ministry allocates sugar quota to mills for the open market sale.

It has also asked to do away with levy sugar system, under which mills contribute 10 per cent of their production to the government at subsidised prices for the public distribution system (PDS).

On removal of levy sugar, Thomas said the food ministry is discussing the issue with state governments and the finance ministry on how to implement the recommendation. “We will find some solution in short span of time”.

CCEA clears new urea investment policy



The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) today approved a urea investment policy that is likely to incentivise fertiliser firms setting up new plants and expanding existing capacity.

India imports over 30 per cent of urea requirement and the policy aims at reducing that. But, it is unlikely to have any impact on existing prices.

“The new urea investment policy has been cleared,” sources said after the CCEA meeting here.

The policy, which aims to attract fresh investment of about Rs 35,000 crore to increase domestic production by 8 million tonnes, has been cleared as the 2008 urea investment policy failed to attract the much needed funds.

Under the new policy, the government will give 12-20 per cent post-tax return on fresh capital infused by manufacturers for setting up of new plants as well as for expansion and revamp of the existing ones.

To ensure this return, the government would cover the entire cost of the natural gas, which is the main feedstock of urea and accounts 80 per cent of the cost.

The government controls the urea sector and has fixed the MRP at Rs 5,360 per tonne. The difference between the MRP and cost of production is given as subsidy to manufacturers.

For determining the cost of production of new plants to be set up after the policy comes into effect, the government has set a floor and ceiling price of urea based on the price of natural gas plus 12-20 per cent equity returns.

The new investment policy was approved by the Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by the then Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee on February 24.

However, sources said the ministry made some changes in the draft policy after inter-ministerial consultation. It proposed covering entire cost of natural gas, while the GoM had favoured providing subsidy on gas price within the range of \$6.5—14 mmBtu.

The country produces 22 million tonnes of urea, against the requirement of 32 million tonnes.

Spot jeera steady on dull demand

On the back of dull demand, jeera price ruled steady on Thursday. Moreover trading activities were dull due to the first phase Assembly Election in Gujarat. Jeera futures, however, declined on profit booking.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), jeera December contract declined Rs 82.50 to Rs 14,420 a quintal, with an open interest of 1,602 lots. NCDEX jeera for March decreased Rs 212.50 to Rs 15,287.50 with an open interest of 12,284 lots. NCDEX-accredited warehouses jeera stocks dropped by 159 tonnes to 3,240 tonnes. Jeera medium quoted at Rs 2,350-2,450 for 20 kg; NCDEX quality raw quoted at Rs 2,650-2,750 at Unjha market of Gujarat. At Unjhha market, jeera arrival stood at 4,500-5,000 bags and traded around 5,000 bags.

Rajkot based trader said, "Overall jeera demand is weak in spot, with this trading activity is also dry due to Gujarat assembling election.

However, price may gain on expected export demand and lower arrival."

According to markets sources, about 75 per cent exports target have already been achieved due to a supply crunch in the global markets. Higher stocks for delivery on the exchange warehouses may pressurise prices.

Coonoor tea turnover rises 33% in Jan-Nov

The cumulative turnover of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auctions till November has increased by 32.86 per cent over the corresponding period last year.

This has happened because more volume was sold at higher prices, reveals our analysis of the market reports.

In all, 48 auctions had been conducted in the first 11 months of 2012. A total volume of 5.13 crore kg had been sold against 4.94 crore kg last year. Helped by an increased demand, the average price rose to Rs 81.20 a kg from Rs 63.47 last year.

Consequently, the overall turnover increased to Rs 416.56 crore from Rs 313.54 crore. This increase of Rs 103.02 crore marked a growth of 32.86 per cent.

The increased turnover lay spread among growers, factory owners, dealers, buyers, warehouse keepers and workers.

Spot rubber mixed on weak global cues

Spot rubber showed a mixed mood on Thursday. The undercurrent was weak tracking the sharp declines on NMCE.

Weak global trend setters and the absence of follow up buying in leading counters kept the prices under pressure during the latter half of the session.

According to reports, India's imports of natural rubber increased 41 per cent in November to 22,748 tonnes from a year earlier, as lower overseas prices prompted tyre makers to turn abroad.

Sheet rubber finished unchanged at Rs 164.00 a kg according to traders.

The grade slipped to Rs 163.50 (Rs 164.00) both at Kottayam and Kochi as reported by the Rubber Board. The transactions were dull.


In futures, the December series declined to Rs 162.05 (Rs 165.97), January to Rs 163.83 (Rs 168.11), February to Rs 166.20 (Rs 170.57) and March to Rs 168.51 (Rs 172.89) a kg while the May series improved marginally to Rs 174.90 (Rs 174.55) and April series remained inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

RSS 3 (spot) increased to Rs 166.09 (Rs 165.92) a kg at Bangkok.

The December futures dropped to ¥256.4 (Rs 167.50) from ¥257.1 during the day session and then to ¥254.5 (Rs 166.26) in the night session on Tokyo Commodity Exchange (TOCOM).

The spot rubber rates Rs/kg were: RSS-4: 164.00 (164.00); RSS-5: 157.50 (158.00); Ungraded: 153.50 (154.00); ISNR 20: 153.00 (154.00) and Latex 60%: 106.00 (106.00).

Vegoils import drops 11% in Nov on higher inventory

Dip in shipments		(in tonnes)	
 Edible oils		November	
		2012	2011
RBD palmolein		76,519	110,510
Crude palm oil		534,556	611,193
Sunflower oil		47,500	78,633
Soyabean oil		14,160	8,000
Crude palm ker oil		3,499	19,808
Non edible		24,127	27,679
Total		700,371	855,363

Source: Solvent Extractors Association

Vegetable oil imports dropped 11 per cent in November as the country had huge stocks in various ports and the pipeline in November.

In fact, the situation is likely to lead to some dormancy in imports this month too, according to the Solvent Extractors association.

A data put out by the association projected November imports of vegetable oils at a little over seven lakh tonnes in the first month of the oil year against 8.55 lakh tonnes during the same period a year ago. The edible oil year runs from November to October.

“With huge stocks in ports and the pipeline, imports did not buy much last month. Also, kharif soyabean production is higher besides a volatile currency market also kept importers off,” said B.V. Mehta, Executive Director of the association.

Usually, vegetable oil imports are at a low during November-February as crushing of kharif oilseeds takes place.

According to the solvent extractors body statistics, 9.20 lakh tonnes of vegetable oils were held up in the ports while another 6.5 lakh tonnes were in transit as on November 1.

The port stock position was 6.55 lakh tonnes on December 1 with eight lakh tonnes of vegetable oils in transit. This year’s kharif oilseed output has been pegged higher at 208.9 lakh tonnes against 208.5 lakh tonnes a year ago. Soyabean production has, however, been projected

marginally lower this year at 125.7 lakh tonnes against 126.6 lakh tonnes last year. The industry, however, expects a record harvest of soyabean this year.

Crude oils made up 89 per cent of the imports. Nearly six lakh tonnes of the shipments into the country were crude oils with crude palm oil account for 5.34 lakh tonnes.

Among refined oils, RBD (refined, bleached and deodorised) made up 76,519 tonnes.

When it comes to the issue of palm group oils versus soft oils, the palm group made up 91 per cent of the total imports. Sunflower topped the shipments of soft oils at 47,500 tonnes.

Imports were lower in November despite a drop in prices, barring sunflower oil.

While crude sunflower oil was up at \$1,220 a tonne in November against \$1,186 last year, prices of other oils were lower by at least \$200 a tonne. At the same time, rupee during the period depreciated by over 10 per cent. With regard to stocks at ports, crude palm oil made up 4.6 lakh tonnes, RBD palmolein 75,000 tonnes, degummed soyabean oil 40,000 tonnes, crude sunflower oil 70,000 tonnes and canola/rape oil 10,000 tonnes.

Lukewarm response to wheat open sale



A higher base price fixed by the Food Ministry to sell wheat through the open market sale scheme for bulk users and small traders has led to a lukewarm response in the latest tender.

According to sources, against one lakh tonnes earmarked for sale on December 7, only four bids were received for buying 1,450 tonnes.

“The poor response is due to the higher reserve (base) prices. The Centre will have to cut it because it makes sales of wheat products unviable,” said a source.

In another development, roller flour mills in Kerala have urged the Food Ministry to cut the minimum price at which wheat is offered to bulk users to Rs 1,650. Lowering the price from Rs 1,778 fixed on November 16 will help in better offtake by bulk users and small traders, according to P.K. Ahammed, President of Kerala Roller Flour Millers Association.

In a letter to the Food Ministry, he said bulk buyers were hesitant to bid for wheat from the open market sale as global wheat supply next year is expected to improve on better crop from the US, Ukraine and Australia.

Also, the wheat crop from Gujarat will begin arriving from February. With hopes of another bumper crop, prices are expected to decline. In such a situation, bulk users are caught in two minds, Ahammed said.

A cut in the reserve price will benefit consumers as mills will pass on the benefit to them, he said. The Centre in November raised the price for open sale for the fifth time since July.

Wheat prices have surged this year despite a record production of 93.9 million tonnes. Prices have surged mainly on the Centre procuring a record 38 mt and demand for exports.

Over three million tonnes of wheat have been exported this year on lower crop in the US and the Black Sea region, particularly Russia and Ukraine.

Wheat prices are currently ruling at least 50 per cent higher than the same period a year ago. For example, wheat at Etawah market in Uttar Pradesh is currently quoting at Rs 1,430 a quintal against Rs 970 last year. In the futures market, wheat for January delivery is ruling at Rs 1,583 a quintal.

Need to cultivate public-private partnerships in agriculture



The Government can bring under productive agriculture over 13 million hectares of cultivable wasteland by roping in the private sector, according to S. Chandramohan, President and Group Chief Financial Officer, Tafe Ltd.

Apart from the 140 million hectare of arable land, India has about 13 million hectares of cultivable wasteland which can be exploited to increase agricultural production and rural employment.

The Government can generate interest among the private players through a long term lease based model and policy support in the form of investment credit, tax exemptions and permission for direct farm sourcing of wasteland.

Land could even be leased to companies apart from individual farmers with a strict condition on the usage of the waste lands, he said in his special address at AgriCon 2012, a conference on innovation in agriculture organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry.

Other measures for more agriculture production include precision farming, which is optimising inputs to increase yields and profits while conserving the environment, should be the priority in horticulture, plantations and high value crops.

Increasing productivity through technology application and improved farming practices is the only option. Progressive Indian farmers can be given adequate support to catalyse the spread of such systems.

Small and marginal farmers, who need agriculture credit the most, have the lowest coverage within the farmer base. Innovation in outreach and risk management is essential to propel growth in rural credit, and consequently, catalyse the adoption of quality inputs in agriculture.

Agricultural produce marketing laws too need to be changed to enable large retailers to directly procure produce from farmers. A number of agri parks are needed through public-private partnership to encourage investments in storage infrastructure and forward marketing linkages.

Tamil Nadu Governor K. Rosaiah, said public-private partnerships are a viable approach for development and spread of innovation in agriculture, strengthen rural infrastructure and expand agri businesses.

A mission mode, national effort is needed to develop entrepreneurship in the agriculture. Promoting opportunities for the services sector will help grow agro processing, agro industries and businesses, he said.

Rice gains aroma on buying interest



An unexpected rally in the market pushed aromatic and sharbati varieties prices further up, while all other non-basmati varieties ruled firm on good buying interest on Thursday.

An uptrend in the market was expected but a rally was not expected, said Amit Chandna, proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company. Domestic demand and trade enquires continued to strengthen the bullish sentiment, he added.

Market sentiments are still largely positive but the market's future is uncertain, said Amit.

In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) went up by Rs 300 and sold at Rs 6,600-6,700 a quintal while Pusa-1121 (sela) sold at Rs 5,800 , up Rs 450.

Pure basmati (raw) improved by Rs 250 and quoted at Rs 7,500 while pure basmati (sela) sold at Rs 6,800, up Rs 200.

Duplicate basmati (steam) went up by Rs 300 and traded at Rs 5,300-5,400.

Sharbati (steam) improved by Rs 200 and quoted at Rs 4,200 while Sharbati (sela) was at Rs 4,100 a quintal, Rs 100 up.

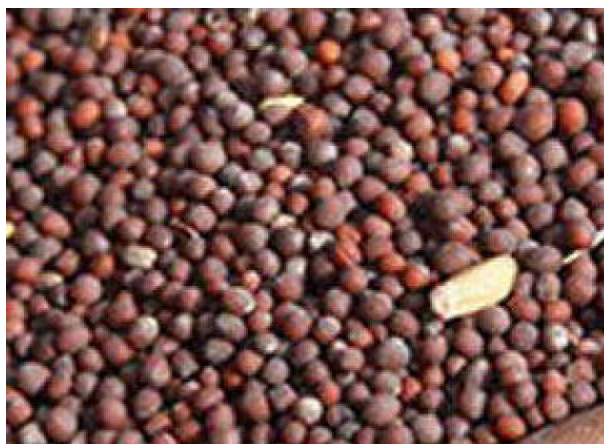
On the other hand, PR varieties managed to maintain their previous levels. PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 2,450-2,550 while PR-11 (raw) quoted at Rs 2,500. Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,050-2,200 while Permal (sela) went for Rs 2,100-2,200 a quintal.

Paddy Arrivals

About 18,000 bags of PR variety arrived and went for Rs 1,170-1,210 ; Sharbati arrived with a stock of around 5,000 bags and quoted at Rs 1,750-1,870; around 5,000 bags of DB variety arrived and sold at Rs 2,500-2,800.

About 15,000 bags of Pusa-1121 arrived and quoted between Rs 2,700 and Rs 3,000 , pure basmati paddy arrived with a stock of around 5,000 bags and sold at Rs 3,300-3,600 a quintal.

Higher yield prospects crush mustard



Sluggish trend continued in mustard oil and seeds on weak demand and buying support.

Mustard oil in Indore mandis on Thursday ruled flat at Rs 757 for 10 kg (down Rs 5 from last week).

Similarly, in Neemuch it ruled at Rs 750 (down Rs 5), while in Moorena it Rs 760 (down Rs 10).

Downtrend in mustard oil continued in Rajasthan and Gujarat mandis as well with its price in Kota and Shree Ganga Nagar at Rs 760 each, while it ruled at Rs 775 in Jaipur. According to a trader, Kailash Agrawal, sluggish trend in mustard oil is likely to continue in near future given

higher demand in palm, super palm and cotton oil which are being sold in local mandis at prices quite lower than that of mustard oil.

Bearish sentiment also prevailed in mustard seeds amid prospect of higher yield this year.

In the past one week, mustard seeds in Indore mandis have declined by Rs 100 a quintal at Rs 4,400-4,500 a quintal, while raida ruled at Rs 3,900-4,000.

In futures also mustard seeds traded lower on weak buying support with mustard seeds December and January contracts on the NCDEX closing at Rs 4,050 a quintal (down Re 1) and Rs 4,088 (down Rs 19) .

Plant deliveries also declined to Rs 4,240-70 (down Rs 100 from last week).

Arrival of mustard seeds in the country was recorded at 74,000 bags with 5,000 bags being offloaded in Madhya Pradesh; 6,000 bags in Uttar Pradesh; 45,000 bags in Rajasthan; 9,000 bags in Punjab and Haryana; 4,000 bags in Gujarat and remaining 5,000 bags elsewhere in the country.

Turmeric gains colour on quality arrivals_blsnm



Spot turmeric prices increased by Rs 200 a quintal as buyers preferred quality turmeric and quoted higher prices.

“Only few orders were received from North India, so exporters and traders purchased limited stocks. But they quoted a higher price for the hybrid and fine variety turmeric and purchased reasonable stocks.

Due to the increase in the turmeric futures, stockists purchased huge stocks predicting that prices may increase substantially. But studying the daily arrival, sales and other market prices of turmeric, immediate rise in prices is unlikely,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said the hybrid variety fetched a better price due to quality arrivals.

The hybrid variety increased by Rs 560 a quintal on Thursday. Similarly, fine variety turmeric also fetched an increased price of Rs 200.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,900-5,584 a quintal and the root variety Rs 3,809-5,117.

Salem Hybrid Crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,829-6,579; the root variety Rs 5,085-5,388. Totally 1,352 bags arrived for sales and 370 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,299-5,639; the root variety Rs 4,169-5,317. Of the 910 bags put up for sale, 894 found takers.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,039-5,699 and the root variety Rs 4,851-5,209. All the 85 bags on offer were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety quoted at Rs 4,377-5,730; the root variety at Rs 4,117-5,345.

Tepid stockists buying keeps edible oils steady



Edible oils prices ruled steady at lower levels on Thursday but rates in the futures markets tumbled.

In the absence of physical demand, volumes remained thin. Imported palmolein and soyabean refined oil dropped by Rs 8 and Rs 5 each.

Sunflower expeller refined oil declined by Rs 10 and cotton refined oil eased by Rs 2 for 10 kg.

Groundnut and rapeseed oil were steady.

In Mumbai, during the day Ruchi sold 300-350 tonnes of palmolein at Rs 475 ex-Patalganga while resellers offloaded 80-100 tonnes of palmolein at Rs 468-470.

Stockists kept away from fresh inventory buying .

In Saurashtra and Rajkot, groundnut oil was unchanged at Rs 1,950 for *telia* tin and Rs 1,270 for loose (10 kg).

Towards the day's close, Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 478-480, super palmolein at Rs 535, soya refined oil Rs 684 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 785.

Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 475, soyabean refined oil at Rs 681, sunflower refined oil Rs 780 for Dec 20-31 and Rs 785 for January.

Allana's rate for palmolein was Rs 477 and Rs 535 for super palmolein.

Malaysia's crude palm oil's January contracts settled at MYR 2,142 (MYR 2,142), February MYR 2,230 (MYR 2,241) and March MYR 2,303 (MYR 2,317) a tonne.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg): groundnut oil 1,250 (1,250), soya refined oil 680 (685), sunflower exp. ref. 710 (720), sunflower ref. 780 (780), rapeseed ref. oil 810 (810), rapeseed expeller ref. 780 (780) cottonseed ref. oil 618 (620) and palmolein 472 (480).

Vikram Global Commodities has offered Malaysian super palmolein at Rs 556 for 10 kg ex-Chennai.

Winter's onset warms up poultry items



Wholesale egg prices are on the rise with the onset of winter in North India.

The National Egg Coordination Committee (Namakkal zone) has increased the price of an egg by seven paise to Rs 2.87.

Spiralling input costs, pick-up in consumption due to winter and spurt in confectioneries' demand on account of Christmas are the reasons for decision to increase the price.

Prices of egg feed are now ruling at Rs 22 a kg against Rs 15 last year.

Broiler gains

Meanwhile, Palladam-based Broiler Co-ordination Committee (BCC) has increased the rates of cull birds by Rs 3 a kg to Rs 58. NECC's layer rates (for birds of 1.3 kg) are ruling flat at Rs 36.

Namakkal and Palladam prices are the benchmarks for eggs and chicken respectively in the country.

Shipments rise

On the export front, egg shipments from India increased to 736.82 lakh in November this year against 302.28 lakh in the same period last year.

This is mainly because of exporters tapping newer markets such as Afghanistan and Morocco.

"Poultry prices are likely to increase in the coming days because of the approaching Christmas and New Year festivals besides the winter season," NECC sources said.

Sugar rules flat as offtake eases



Sugar prices finished unchanged on Thursday. There were no buying inquiry from either retail or wholesale buyers at spot and mill level. Spot market managed to sustain at prevailing level despite in futures market December contracts expiring nearby – next week sharply drops by Rs42 till noon. Volumes in spot remain subdued on regular and ample supply from mills. Sentiment was weak said traders.

Vashi based wholesaler said market is now waiting for any fresh direction as market seems to be under pressure of selling by producers. Millers are continuously selling in local market in absence of buying support of neighboring states. New season's crushing is also picked up. At local level retailers demand ease in middle of month time. Old season's stocks with producers are weighing on sentiments. Supply of fine variety of new season's output is still very low. Millers are quoting higher rates for the same. Vashi market currently carries stocks of more than 100 truck loads. Government has declared total 70 lakh tones of non levy quota for four months Dec to March which is sufficient to meet the local demand he said.

Analyst said World sugar market is also under pressure from weak fundamentals. Sugar futures flirted with the lowest level in nearly 2-1/2 years on Wednesday. Futures prices made sharp losses after Brazil's industry association Unica said its can, sugar and ethanol production surged in the second half of November.

On National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange sugar prices for December was Rs3218 (Rs3260), January-13 futures was Rs 3290(Rs 3298), February-13 was Rs3331 (Rs 3341) and March-13 was Rs3362 (Rs3369) till noon. In World market Sugar March-13 futures closed lower by \$8.00 to \$500.20 (\$508.20) and May-12 drop by \$7.20 to \$507.10 (\$514.30) a ton on Wednesday.

In Vashi market arrivals were 60-62 truck loads (Each of 100 bags) while dispatches were 60-61 truck loads. On Wednesday only 14-15 mills offered tenders and manage to sell about 45,000 - 48,000 (Each of 100 kgs) bags at steady rates of Rs3,200-3,280 (Rs3,200-3,280) for S-grade and Rs 3,290 - 3,350 (Rs3,290 - 3,350) for M-grade.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 3,342- Rs 3,415 (Rs 3,342 - Rs 3,412) and M-grade Rs 3,416 - 3,561 (Rs 3,416- 3,562). 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).

500-acre solar farm to come up in south TN

A 500-acre solar farm, an infrastructure facility to support 100 MW of solar photovoltaic power generation capacity is to come up in Ramanathapuram District, South Tamil Nadu.

According to an official press release, Raasi Green Earth Energy Pvt Ltd will set the Rs 920-crore project in Paramakudi. An agreement was signed between the company and the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation in the presence of the Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa.

The agreement is in line with the State Government's solar policy which envisages establishment of 3,000 MW of solar power generation capacity by 2015. The long term plan in the State is to encourage over 5,000 MW of solar capacity by 2023.

TIDCO will work with the private sector to facilitate establishment of 1,000 MW of solar farms over the next five years as part of the solar power initiative in the State.

This project in the Public-Private Partnership mode will provide adequate infrastructure facilities including water, power evacuation facilities and developed space for solar power projects. The objective is to facilitate investments in solar power generation, the release said.

The project is targeted for completion in 12 months. Raasi Green Earth will initially set up a 10 MW solar farm and has tied up with investors for the balance 90 MW, according to official sources.

The release quoting the Chief Minister said, the State Government will fully support for the project and hoped that it will catalyse further investments in solar power generation.

Business Standard

TODAY FARM NEWS

14.12.2012 A.M

Fertiliser shares rally as Cabinet clears urea policy

Shares of fertiliser companies have rallied up to 18% in opening deals after the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), on Thursday, approved a urea investment policy, which is likely to incentives fertiliser companies to set up new plants and expand existing capacity.

Fertilisers and Chemicals Travancore (FACT) has rallied 18% to Rs 32.60 on the BSE. [National Fertilisers](#), RCF, Chambal Fertilisers, GSFC and Deepak Fertiliser are trading higher by 2 - 5%.

Under the new policy, the government will give 12-20% post-tax return on fresh capital infused by the manufacturers for setting up of new plants as well as for expansion and revamp of the existing ones.

Cardamom falls for third day on low demand, high supply

Cardamom prices continued its downward journey, falling for the third day by losing Rs 17.10 to Rs 1,040.30 per kg in futures trade today due to the adequate stocks availability in the physical market on account of higher supply from the producing belts.

Marketmen said trading sentiment weakened as the traders booked profits at the prevailing levels in the midst of a subdued demand for the commodity.

Prices also fell as the presence of 30% of last year's crop in the arrivals has created apprehensions among the buyers about the stock of old crop held by farmers, they said.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, the January contract fell by Rs 17.10, or 1.61%, to Rs 1,040.30 per kg, with a business turnover of 593 lots.

The December delivery eased by Rs 10.30, or 1.14%, to Rs 890.50 per kg, with a trading volume of 34 lots.

Vegetable oil imports down 18%

Vegetable oil imports in November witnessed a fall of 18%, according to The Solvent Extractors Association of India, due to weak demand in the domestic market.

Crushing of soybean has been good this year and during this season demand for soy oil is higher in the domestic market hence imports of vegetable oils are down, according to analysts.

Last month 7,00,371 tonne of vegetable oils were imported compared to 8,55,363 tonne in the same period last year.

Current stock of edible oils as on 1 December at various ports is estimated at 6,55,000 tonne (CPO 4,60,000 tonne, RBD palmolein 75,000 tonne, degummed soybean oil 40,000 tonne, crude sunflower oil 70,000 tonne and canola rape oil 10,000 tonne) and about 800,000 tonne in pipelines.

Total stock, both at ports and in pipelines is reduced by 1,15,000 tonne to 14,55,000 tonne.

Potato down 0.78% on adequate stocks, low demand

Potato prices fell by Rs 5.70 to Rs 721 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators offloaded their positions due to low demand in spot markets.

The trading sentiment weakened further as a result of easy availability of potato in the spot markets following fresh arrivals from producing regions.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, the March contract fell by Rs 5.70, or 0.78%, to Rs 721 per quintal, with a business volume of 25 lots.

The April delivery declined by Rs 3.60, or 0.51%, to Rs 694.50 per quintal, with a trading volume of six lots.

Market experts said traders offloaded their holdings at existing higher levels, tracking a weak spot market trend on fresh supplies mainly pulled down potato prices.

Govt moots half-yearly release mechanism soon for sugar

In another step towards dismantling of the release mechanism, the government will soon shift to a half-yearly system of allocating quotas to the sugar industry for open market sale.

The government recently shifted to a four-month release mechanism from the earlier quarterly system. Stressing decisions on decontrolling the sugar industry would be taken shortly, Food Minister K V Thomas on Thursday said the government would also take a decision on raising import duties on sugar from the current 10 per cent in the next 15 days.

“The recommendations of the Rangarajan Committee on sugar decontrol will be seriously looked into by the government. Some of those will be implemented,” he said at the 78th annual general meeting of the Indian Sugar Mills Association (Isma). He said the allocation of sugar for open market sale was being done for a four-month period, from the earlier practice of monthly quota and also announced “very soon it will be made six-monthly”.

The Committee, set up by the prime minister and headed by the chairman of PM’s Economic Advisory Council C Rangarajan, recently submitted its report. It has favoured doing away with the levy sugar obligation (under which industry sells ten per cent of produce to government at a dictated price for public distribution system), release mechanism and a revenue-sharing model for sugarcane price. Thomas categorically stated the government “does not want it (Rangarajan report) to have the fate of earlier reports”. The panel has suggested immediate removal of regulated mechanism through which the food ministry allocates sugar quota to mills for open market sale.

On removal of levy sugar, he said the food ministry was discussing the issue with the state governments and the finance ministry on how to implement the recommendation. Adding: “We will find some solution in a short span of time.” On the Rangarajan panel’s recommendations on the cane area reservation, minimum distance criteria between two mills and price of sugarcane, Thomas said these three issues would have to be discussed with states. “We have already started discussions with state governments. I think, we will be able to come to a certain conclusion after discussion.”

Farmers push for better rates for cotton, sugarcane

AURANGABAD: The Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana will stage a protest at the assembly session in Nagpur on December 18, to demand better rates for cotton and soybean, said leaders at a news conference on Wednesday.

"The protest will be staged in order to demand more rates to sell the yield of cotton, soybean and sugarcane. This year the farmers demand Rs 3000 per ton as the rate of sugarcane for selling them to sugar industries," said Rana Chandan, district president.

Many associations have staged protests in the last few months demanding more rates for sugarcane in various districts across Marathwada. "Some industries, however, have agreed to give rates up to Rs 2500 after the demand," added Chandan.

As far as the rate of cotton and soybean yield is concerned, the association has demanded Rs 8000 and 5000 per quintal respectively.

"Last year, the rates were between Rs 1800 to 2500 per quintal while for soybean, the rates were up to Rs 1400 per quintal," said Chandan. However, the government had assured a price of Rs 3800 per quintal last year.

The Shetkari Sanghatana blamed the government for the farmers getting killed during agitations and said it was a deliberate attempt to suppress the protests.

Chandan said that the drought situation in Marathwada has increased the expenses for

cultivation of these crops. "The rate to cultivate one acre soybean was around Rs 1400 last year, while this year the expenses required for the same are around Rs 2000," he added.

Devidas Kale, former Zilla Parishad member, said, "The rates for pesticides have also increased substantially from Rs 700 last year to around 1400 this year."

The increased rate for productivity should be compensated with increase in the rates to sell in industries and markets, Kale said.

Inappropriate rates given by the government have also contributed to farmer suicide in this region, said Chandan.

Around three lakh farmers have committed suicide in Buldhana region alone in the last couple of years, while around 24 farmers have committed suicide in the last three years in Yavatmal district of Vidharbha.

The members of the Sanghatna will continue to increase support from other districts of marathwada like, Jalna, Beed, Parbhani, Latur and Buldhana.

A state wide convention on drought will be held within a month, he added.

Loba farmers return with empty hands

KOLKATA: Farmers from Loba, who had organized a 'dharna' on Rani Rashmoni Road in the city on Thursday, went back disappointed as neither chief minister [Mamata Banerjee](#) nor her deputy [Partha Chatterjee](#) met their representatives. [Loba Krishi Jami Raksha committee](#) leader Samir Putatunda announced in a public meeting that henceforth KJRC would make no attempt to establish contact with the government.

"It is unfortunate that although the chief minister went to Loba on December 4, she did not want

to listen to the villagers of Loba nor accept their memorandum. Villagers are aggrieved that she drove past the dharna mancha at Loba but did not bother to stop to talk to them," it was stated in a [resolution](#) adopted at the meeting.

"If the situation in Loba is allowed to linger like this, there is every possibility that diverse elements would try to take control of the agitation," Putatunda said, hinting at the possibility of Maoist infiltration. He wondered why the [state government](#) was refusing to meet KJRC delegation when the chief minister had said that the police were wrong to have opened fire on Loba farmers on November 6.

Among the pending demands of KJRC are a judicial inquiry into the firing, punishment to those involved in the firing and withdrawal of court cases against the agitators. In the resolution, KJRC requested for Central intervention in Loba as the subject of coal mining was a Central subject. The price of land which would have to be acquired for setting up open cast mines should be fixed in consultation with land owners, as well as the issue of compensation to sharecroppers and landless labourers attached to these plots.

Leaders of a few other political parties - including Congress, SUCI and BJP - were present at Thursday's meeting.

Congress has been trying for some time to get a foothold in Loba. Putatunda said KJRC had invited the chairman of the Left Front also to attend the meeting, but none from the LF was present.

Farmers to get satisfactory compensation for STP land: Shivpal

VARANASI: [UP PWD and irrigation minister Shivpal Yadav](#) has said the state government is all set to pay satisfactory compensation to farmers for taking their land to establish sewage treatment plants (STP) in order to put a complete check on discharge of sewage in Ganga.

Shivpal was in the city to chair the review meeting of PWD and irrigation department on Wednesday. After the meeting, he informed the reporters that establishment of STPs had lingered due to delay in acquisition of required land.

He said the land could not be acquired as the farmers were not satisfied with the compensation estimated by the government machinery. He said without establishing STPs, putting a complete check on sewage disposal in Ganga would remain impossible.

In view of the same, the government has decided to increase the amount of compensation that would satisfy the farmers, said Shivpal. He further stated that the new STPs would be established with advanced technology in which the requirement of land would reduce.

He said the state government has pledged to maintain purity of water and holiness of Ganga. He said the three ghats along Ganga would also be renovated and beautified after the name of Pt Madan Mohan Malviya, socialist leaders [Ram Manohar Lohia](#) and Rajnarain.

Regarding the pathetic condition of roads, he said fresh works would be launched very soon to improve the condition of city roads. He said the pace of such works could remain slow due to cold weather but after February 15, such works would be done with accelerated pace.

He assured that the foundation laying ceremony of all the flyovers proposed for improving traffic scene in the city would be organised before the end of 2012.

He said engineers of the department concerned have been asked to conduct proper study in the field to ensure that the new flyovers are proving relevant for commuters. Commenting on quota in promotion, he said the party had already cleared its stand on this issue.

Off-season rain hits paddy crop

RANCHI: The sudden unseasonal rain that shot up humidity and pushed both day and night temperatures a few degrees above normal since Tuesday has led to conditions congenial for viral and bacterial growth affecting human population and crops as well. The situation has prompted agro met experts of the state to issue advisory. While the untimely rain has affected piled up paddy stocks in Gumla and Khunti, the Rabi crops comprising mainly vegetables, have been affected in several southern districts of Jharkhand.

The minimum temperature in Ranchi and Jamshedpur has been around 4-6 degrees above normal in the past few days. On Thursday Ranchi recorded 14.4 degrees which is four degrees above normal, while Jamshedpur recorded 17.7 degrees which is six degrees above normal. The maximum temperature recorded in the two cities have also been two degrees above normal - Ranchi recording 25.4 and Jamshedpur 28.2 degrees.

Regional director of India meteorological department (Ranchi centre) GK Mohanty said the western disturbance has resulted in the sudden change in weather. "There has been some impediment in the wind flow pattern as a result of which moisture has been locked up causing rains at isolated places," he said. The [IMD observatories](#) on Thursday did not record rainfall anywhere but [satellite](#) imagery and local phenomena indicated that rain-like conditions would prevail during the next 48 hours.

It may be noted here that the freak weather pattern resulting into an expected increase in the temperature and vanishing spells of sunshine has considerably affected the agriculture condition in the state.

With the weather continuing to be overcast, the city-based metrological centre in collaboration with [Birsa Agricultural University](#) issued a bulletin for farmers. Through the bulletin the agro experts have advised farmers to utilize the maximum moisture of the soil and sow different rabi crops like gram, lentil, linseed, mustard, potato pea and likes. Similarly, planting transplant

vegetables with suitable seeding like cauliflower, cabbage, tomato, brinjal, carrot, turnip and spinach is also advisable under the present weather condition, the bulletin stated

PAU invites applications for Innovative Farmers' Awards

The Directorate of Extension Education of the Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) has invited applications from the state farmers for the “Innovative Farmer Awards 2013”, to be conferred during PAU Kisan Mela in March 2013. Five awards, carrying cash prizes, plaques and citations will be bestowed upon the innovative farmers for their excellence in agriculture and horticulture.

Dr M S Gill, director of extension education, said the “Chief Minister Award in Agriculture”, carrying a cash prize of Rs 25,000, would be given to a self-cultivating farmer of field crops in the state of Punjab. The “Chief Minister Award in Horticulture”, carrying a cash prize of Rs 25,000, would be awarded to a self-cultivating farmer of horticulture crops in Punjab.