

THE HINDU

COIMBATORE, May 7, 2012

Afghan officials complete training at TNAU

STAFF REPORTER

Five officers from the Plant Protection and Quarantine Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Afghanistan, completed a four-month training programme at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.

The participants attended an international training programme on “Plant Pest and Disease Diagnosis” to implement the same in their country.

The training programme was the second of its kind, and was held under the aegis of GRM International Limited, Australia.

It will be followed up with online classes for two months.

The trainees were introduced to subjects related to plant pathology, entomology, nematology, weed science and seed certification, molecular detection of pathogens, bio-control of pests, weeds and diseases.

At the valediction, P. Subbian, Registrar, TNAU, said the training project was obtained by the university through global tender.

“Since Afghanistan has a small quarantine station, TNAU has given all the needed technical knowledge through this training to empower them to establish an advanced quarantine and seed testing laboratory there,” the Registrar said.

He urged officers to adopt the knowledge gained in their homeland in an appropriate manner for developing their agriculture.

He also expressed happiness over the fact that some students from Afghanistan had expressed desire to pursue higher studies in TNAU.

In addition to the technical training, the officers were also exposed to the socio-cultural aspects of India.

They visited many places of cultural interest across the country.

COIMBATORE, May 7, 2012

High feed price weakens poultry farms

M. SOUNDARIYA PREETHA



matter of concern:Chicks at a farm in Coimbatore.Photo: M. Periasamy.

Poultry farms in the district are concerned over the 12.5 per cent increase in the price of feed for poultry birds in the last two months.

Chairman of Broiler Co-ordination Committee, Coimbatore, R. Lakshmanan, told *The Hindu* on Saturday that maize and soya are the main ingredients of poultry feed.

Soya constitutes 20 per cent of the feed and is a major source of protein.

India is the third largest producer of soya globally and with rupee depreciation and higher demand from Iran, its exports are going up. Cost of soya meal in the domestic market in May last year was Rs. 20 a kg and it is Rs. 32 a kg now.

The weekly broiler production in the district is almost 10 million birds. The domestic poultry industry has also grown by 15 per cent to 20 per cent and thus the demand for soya has shot up.

Broiler demand goes up in April-May every year and the market is good now. The farm gate price has also peaked to Rs. 60 a kg. While the poultry farms and integrated companies are unable to increase the product price further, the feed prices are shooting up.

“The price rise now is a peculiar situation. The total feed cost has gone up by Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 2,500 a tonne,” he says.

Though the poultry farmers are trying to reduce the cost by using alternative protein sources such as cotton seed or sunflower extraction, the high prices of soya are a matter of concern, he says.

The integrated poultry firms are bearing the increase in the feed cost now. However, they will not be able to do so in the long run. The Government should take efforts to control the price of soya, according to poultry sector sources here.

COIMBATORE, May 7, 2012

TNAU application forms

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University will begin issuing application forms for its 13 undergraduate programmes on Monday.

Vice-Chancellor P. Murugesu Boopathi will launch the issuing of the forms at 9.30 a.m., university officials said on Sunday.

ERODE, May 7, 2012

Banana crop damaged in rain

STAFF REPORTER

Banana crop in more than 30 hectares was damaged during the rains accompanied by strong winds that lashed many parts of Erode district during the last two weeks.

On Saturday, many parts of Gobichettipalayam experienced light showers accompanied by gusty winds.

Farmers in Vellankovil, Siruvalur, Kadukkanpalayam, Koravanpalayam, Mullankarai and Nagadevanpalayam suffered heavy losses as most of the trees were in the fruit-bearing stage.

“The wind was so strong that most of the trees in our plantation were completely destroyed,” Nagappan, a farmer in Vellankovil, said.

Preliminary estimates after a survey conducted by the Horticulture Department identified that trees in more than 8.5 hectares got damaged in the strong winds on Saturday.

Sources in the department said that Gobichettipalayam was the worst affected block in the district and a detailed report on the crop damage had been submitted to the government.

“The government will soon announce compensation to the affected farmers,” sources added.

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THANJAVUR, May 7, 2012

PWD begins cleaning up of channels in delta region

DELTA BUREAU

Clearing of silt and repairs to be completed before opening of Mettur Dam, says R. Vaithilingam



groundwork:R. Vaithilingam, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, inaugurating cleaning up of irrigation channels at Karur Rajendiram village on Sunday.— Photo:B. Velankanni Raj

The Public Works Department will take up clearing of silt, repair and construction works in the district to the tune of Rs. 4.40 crore this year, said R. Vaithilingam, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, here on Sunday. He inaugurated the removal of silt works in Konakidangalar drainage-cum-irrigation canal at Karur Rajendiram village in Thiruvaiyaru taluk. Later speaking to presspersons the Minister said that a total of 118 works will be taken up in the district and completed before June 12, when water will be released from Mettur dam for Kuruvai cultivation. Clearing of silt will facilitate water to reach tail-end areas.

Konakidangalar branches out from the right bank of Cauvery and runs for about 22 km to join Vettar. This important drainage-cum irrigation canal has an ayacut of 2,275 acres. During rainy season, it acts as drainage canal for Nemam, Obathuveli, Pazhamaneri, Manathidal, Varahur, Impathumelnagaram, Vellamperambur, Umaiyaval Arcot, Nagathi, Karur Rajendiram and Kattukottai villages.

Weed growth, narrowing of the canal at many places, problem in draining of flood water necessitated the removal of silt works.

De-silting is to be done for a distance of 1.40 km at a cost of Rs.7 lakh.

Mr. Vaithilingam said that repair of shutters, masonry works and renovation of certain constructions will also be done .

According to S. Asokan, Superintending Engineer, PWD, Thanjavur Circle, the government has allotted Rs.12 crore for taking up 321 de-silting works in the three delta districts of Thanjavur, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam this year. A distance of 1,147.41 km will be covered under this project. Works on removing of silt are being taken up on a priority basis after processing petitions received by the Chief Minister's cell, demands made by MPs and MLAs, demands made by farmers in monthly farmers grievances day.

One-hundred-and-three works will be taken up in Tiruvarur district at a cost of Rs 3.97 crore .

Collector K.Baskaran, MLAs M.Rangasamy (Thanjavur) and M.Rathnasamy (Thiruvaiyaru), participated.Nagapattinam

Silt would be removed from irrigation channels in the district at an expenditure of Rs.3.35 crore this year. The works for the district commenced at Thethi drainage channel in Nagapattinam.

The proposal envisages 92 works, which entails de-silting coverage of over 363.68 kms. Further, construction, repair and renovation works will be carried out at an estimated cost of Rs.2.3 crore. This envisages 41 construction works that includes repair, and renovation of head sluices, damaged structures among others. Additionally, the PWD has proposed to repair or replace 83 shutters at an expenditure of Rs.1.60 crore.

According to the PWD, the works that commenced on Sunday, will be completed within one month, just in time for the opening up of Mettur water. Further, as part of planned works of the PWD, proposals for 47 works extending up to 232 km have been sent to the State government. These additional works estimated at Rs.2.63 lakh, would be taken up after clearance from the government, a PWD official told *The Hindu* .

Farmers here however feel that handing over work of removing silt to contractors outside the villages has compromised on the quality .

According to Kaveri Danapalan, Secretary, Cauvery Farmers Protection Association, traditionally, de-silting was an extension of farm activity, with farmers as primary stakeholders actively engaged in the process. Such participatory approach has been affected over the years with the transfer of activity to the government, and its subsequent issue of works to contractors as a commercial activity has affected the quality , he says.

“There are about 612 ‘paasanadaragal sabhas’ in the Delta areas, and these should be brought on board for audit of works ,” says Mr.Danapalan. Odampokki, as the primary river flowing through the district from Tiruvarur, branches out into 100 channels. Along these channels, damaged shutters have been a bane . Further, there has to be a mechanism put in place to check thefts of regulators. There are no efforts to retrieve loss, and a new estimate is placed each time there is a theft, says Mr.Danapalan.

Earlier on Sunday, K.A.Jayapal, Minister for Fisheries, inaugurated de-silting works in the district .

TIRUCHI, May 7, 2012

Mettur level

The water level at the Mettur Dam stood at 78.75 feet on Sunday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 1,252 cusecs and the discharge 997 cusecs.

TIRUPUR, May 7, 2012

NABARD institutes 'rural innovation awards'

R. VIMAL KUMAR

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is set to give away 'rural innovation awards' to recognise the far-reaching contributions of individuals and organisations which have created a paradigm shift in quality of rural life.

Celebrations

Bank Assistant General Manager V.S. Sriram told *The Hindu* here that the awards, instituted as part of 30th year celebrations of NABARD, were aimed at enthusing five category of participants like individuals, NGOs, academic/research institutions, private companies and public sector/government institutions who had excelled with innovations in sectors like agriculture/allied activities, technology, skill upgradation, rural-level manpower training, energy and financial services.

The innovation could be a product, service, project or a process/methodology developed exclusively for the development of rural sector.

Two awards each would be distributed to each of the five categories of applicants.

"The major criteria for getting selected for the award is that the innovation should have got implemented at the field-level between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2011," he said.

Those ideas which were in the conceptualization/planning stage would not be considered for the award.

Last date

Mr. Sriram said that the innovators from Tirupur district could apply for the award before May 15 by obtaining the application form either from NABARD office here or from the website.

The filled-in applications should be sent to the office of Chief General Manager in Mumbai.

"The awardees will be selected by a national-level expert panel," Mr. Sriram said.

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UDHAGAMANDALAM, May 7, 2012

Vegetable Show kicks off summer festival

D. RADHAKRISHNAN

10 districts put up stalls at the fair



The Nilgiris Collector Archana Patnaik at the vegetable show in Kotagiri. Photo: M. Sathyamoorthy

With a two-day Vegetable Show getting under way at the Nehru Park in Kotagiri on Saturday, the curtain went up on the 2012 Summer Festival in the Blue Mountains.

In the show, which was the fifth of its kind in Kotagiri, the cynosure of all eyes was a 25 feet high Eiffel Tower made of about 15,000 drumsticks. Vying for attention were a large number of vegetable carvings.

Ten districts, including Coimbatore, Trichy, Salem, Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri, Erode and the Nilgiris, had put up stalls. A cultural programme marked the occasion. Some of the visitors, who spoke to *The Hindu* said that they were happy that they had seen a show which not only was related to a major economic activity of the district but was also very attractive and informative.

Commenting on the vegetable carvings, they said, “it showed what a creative mind can do.”

Though such shows can be organised anywhere, when they are held in the Nilgiris they assume a great deal of importance.

Delivering the inaugural address, the Nilgiris Collector, Archana Patnaik, said that in keeping with an announcement made by the government the festival is being organised till the end of the month.

Stating that the Departments of Tourism and Horticulture have put together an interesting mix of events, she added that the Ooty Lake will be the venue for a boat race and boat pageant, while Gudalur will host a Spice Show and Coonoor, a Fruit Show.

Arrangements are apace for the Annual Floral Carnival at the Government Botanical Garden and a Rose Show at the Government Rose Garden.

Efforts are on to showcase various aspects of the Nilgiris like its natural beauty, fauna and flora through a 10-day photo exhibition here from May 21.

The Superintendent of Police, S. Nizamuddin, urged the Department of Horticulture to make available hill vegetables at affordable prices.

“The need of the hour is a second green revolution,” he added.

Senate Member, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, K.R. Arjunan, listed out the schemes being implemented by the government for the benefit of different sections of the society.

Among those present were the Project Director, Hill Area Development Programme (HADP), Srinivas R. Reddy, and the Tourist Officer, S. Dorairaj.

The Joint Director of Horticulture, K. Mohan, welcomed the gathering.

The Deputy Director of Horticulture, A.J. Jagadeesh Kumar, proposed a vote of thanks.

ALAPPUZHA, May 7, 2012

Foodgrains godown to come up at Purakkad

STAFF REPORTER

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Union Minister of State for Food and Consumer Affairs, K.V. Thomas said that the State government had committed a lapse in ensuring the quality of food grains provided by the Centre.

The Minister was speaking at the function to hand over land to the Centre Warehousing Corporation to construct a 5,000-tonne capacity godown at Purakkad, at the district collectorate here on Sunday.

Mr. Thomas said that it was the responsibility of the State government to ensure the quality and quantity of the food grains. He also said that based on its request, the State government was given full power to decide on the conversion of wheat into atta. He said that godowns will be constructed across the country entailing a cost of Rs 670.3 crore. Godowns will be constructed in the State with the help of FCI at Pathanamthitta, Arakkulam in Idukki district and Meenangadi in Wayanad district. Godowns of a total

capacity of 25,000 tonnes will be constructed across the State with the help of private companies. The 10,000-tonne capacity godown at Pathanamthitta will be commissioned by September this year.

The godown at Purakkad was being constructed as part of the Kuttanad Package and will be completed in one year. The Centre will construct e-toilets and bus shelter in Alappuzha if the State government procure land for the same.

Union Minister of State for Power, K.C.Venugopal said that the Purakkad godown was being constructed for procuring paddy easily and efficiently from Kuttanad.

District Collector V. Ratheeshan handed over the documents of the land for the construction of the godown to the Corporation Managing Director, B.B.Patnaik. T.M.Thomas Isaac, MLA, municipality Chairperson Mercy Diana Macido and Additional District Magistrate K.P. Thampy were also present.

The facility is part of the Kuttanad Package.

ELURU, May 7, 2012

With drop in paddy production, millers press the panic button

G. NAGARAJA

They are forced to pay Rs. 100 in excess of MSP to growers



A worker dries up paddy on a field near Unguturu in West Godavari district.— Photo: A.V.G. Prasad

The steep fall in paddy production in view of the acute water crisis leading to a crop holiday in the Godavari and the Krishna delta regions gives no room for distress sales by the farmers in the current rabi. Instead, it is the turn of the millers to press the panic button. The peculiar situation which sees the otherwise hapless farmers sitting pretty, rendering the minimum support price (MSP) stipulation renders irrelevant so also the IKP-run paddy purchase centres.

To quote M.V. Suryanarayana Raju of the Andhra Pradesh Rytu Karyacharana Samithi, who spearheaded a protest a couple of weeks ago for effective enforcement of the MSP, the farmers received a price more than the MSP by Rs. 30-40 per 75kg bag and there were no rabi stocks with the farmers waiting for buyers.

According to information, millers from East Godavari district have been after the farmers for the produce. A section of millers from Palacole deployed their agents for paddy procurement in Undi area within the district. Cherukuvada Sriranganadha Raju, president of the West Godavari District Rice Millers Association, said the millers were forced to pay Rs. 100 in excess of the MSP per quintal to the growers in the district because of the demand factor in the district. The Godavari delta with 10.5 lakh acres in East and West Godavari districts together has produced 15 lakh tonnes in rabi as against the average production of 30 lakh tonnes during the period every year in view of the water crisis in the Godavari.

The government was constrained to enforce a crop holiday in around 5 lakh acres in both the districts. Similarly, the entire Krishna delta with an ayacut of 13.5 lakh acres spread over Krishna, Guntur and Prakasam districts also reeled under crop holiday during the season.

Consequently, it failed to contribute its share of 30 lakh tonnes of rice to the State pool.

Yerneni Nagendranath, president of the Andhra Pradesh Rytanga Samakhya, attributed the unique demand for the rabi produce to the Cottondora Sannalu (MTU 1010), the most sought-after paddy variety in international market which is widely raised in the delta as a second crop. The millers go all out for the slender, elongated and fine export variety to which the farmers switched from the coarse variety of 1001 in the delta a decade ago.

- ***Millers from Palacole deploy their agents for paddy procurement***
 - ***Three districts failed to contribute their share to the State pool***
-

weather

INDIAN CITIES

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Monday, May 7

Max 40° | **Min** 26.5°

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 79%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 6:35

Sunset: 18:03

Barometer: 1009

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Tuesday, May 8

Max 39° | **Min** 28°

Extended Forecast for a week

Wednesday May 9	Thursday May 10	Friday May 11	Saturday May 12	Sunday May 13
37° 27°	37° 27°	36° 26°	36° 26°	37° 27°
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Sunny	Partly Cloudy

Airport Weather

Delhi

Delhi

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 36%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 7:14

Sunset: 17:48

Barometer: 1006



Govt seeks review of HC order on levy sugar

Ajay Modi / New Delhi May 06, 2012, 00:18

The Centre has sought a review of the Patna High Court's single judge bench order on levy sugar at a larger bench.

In January, the court had directed the government to use all unlifted levy sugar obligation by mid-April and said levy sugar of one season should not be carried to the next.

This has not gone well with the food ministry. The ministry, on behalf of the government, levies an obligation on sugar mills to sell 10 per cent of their produce every year at a price fixed for the public distribution system. This price is Rs 1,900 per quintal compared to the open market price of Rs 2,900 per quintal in north India.

Mohan Parasaran, additional solicitor general for the Union government, had appeared in the court last week and sought an early hearing to decide on the hearing by a larger bench. The matter would now be heard on May 17.

The Indian Sugar Mills Association (Isma), the apex private sugar industry body,

has impleaded itself in the case while cooperative sugar body, the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories, will implead itself soon.

In January, the court, regarding a petition filed by Kolkata-based Vishnu Sugar Mills, had directed the central government to liquidate the carryover quota of levy sugar (currently about two million tonne) in three months beginning January 12 (the date of the judgment).

The court had directed the government to "liquidate the accumulated monthly carry forward liabilities within three months beyond which it would not be allowed, and with the next sugar production year, commencing from October each year, there would not be any carry forward of past liability and the levy liability would start with clean slate every year".

The government, however, could not lift this amount, implying a lapse of the unused levy quota.

While mills are required to sell 10 per cent as levy every year, study of past data shows that government had failed to lift even half of its levy entitlement. Currently, mills continue to carry the obligation of unsold levy sugar quota of one year for two following years. Mills are allowed to sell the unlifted levy sugar in the open market after lapse of three months from the date of allotment. However on demand, the obligation has to be met at a price of the year for which the levy sugar was allotted.

Isma has also sought a reduction of the levy obligation from 10 to 4 per cent in the current sugar year (October-September).

Isma director general Abinash Verma said, "Carrying forward of previous years' levy obligation is a financial burden for mills as they have to sell it at the previous year's price. Mills also bear the inventory cost. One will be surprised to know the carry forward obligation of previous years currently stands at 2.1 million tonnes, which is the maximum the government has lifted in any single year."

Cardamom prices may rise over Rs 2,000 per kg

Press Trust of India / Mumbai May 06, 2012, 13:51

Cardamom prices may touch a new peak of over Rs 2,000 per kg in the near future due to damage of crop in Kerala coupled with high export growth.

"We expect cardamom prices may rise to over Rs 2,000 per kg in the days to come even before the new season begins in August from the present Rs 1,185 per kg, following crop failure due to weather woes," Cardamom Trader Dinesh Gupta told PTI here.

The country may also see a shortage of supply in local market due to higher exports from India owing to reported crop failure in Guatemala, the world's highest producer of cardamom, he said.

MCX quality cardamom is being traded at Rs 1,070-1,200 per kg in the physical market. The price shot up to Rs 1,350 per kg a fortnight back in the local market.

Traders say that good grade of cardamom prices will rise further as stocks are hard to come

by.

"The erratic weather conditions have made the planters anxious for their new season's crop at Idukki district in Kerala. Idukki is the main centre for cardamom in India. Lack of rainfall during this season has already damaged cardamom crop by more than 40 per cent till date," he said.

Generally, harvesting of cardamom starts from July every year. Cardamom plant requires summer showers for new offshoots to grow resulting in new pods of cardamom.

"Due to 4 months of no rainfall, the plants have been damaged to such an extent that new offshoots are not growing as desired. Most planters, who have no irrigation facilities, have lost nearly all their plants and offshoots," Cardamom Planters Association President Subramanian said.

New season harvest estimates by planters body is 9,000 tonnes only.

On the other hand, exports of cardamom this season have been the highest recorded in over a decade. Indian exports to the Gulf and other countries have increased substantially within one year.

Exports have risen from approximately 1,200 tonnes in 2010-11 season to above 4,000 tonnes in 7 months of 2011-12 season, Gupta said.

Noby Jose, an exporter and a trader said, "Export figures are estimated to cross 5,500-6,000 tonnes by the end of this season. India saw a phenomenal increase in exports by 400 per cent over the last year. Spices Board report also shows export of 3,900 tonnes from August 2011 to January 2012."

High exports from India are mainly being attributed to crop failure in Guatemala, which produces nearly 55-60 per cent of total cardamom production globally, Jose said.

Guatemala crop is severely damaged due to lack of pest control. As per information gathered, plants have been damaged substantially, and will need to be re-planted for new harvest to happen. Guatemala supplies have been very small and limited to gulf countries, who are one of main consumers of cardamom.

THE HINDU Business Line

Pepper market sees mixed trend

G. K. NAIR

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KOCHI, MAY 6:

The pepper market last week witnessed a series of measures aimed at arresting highly speculative activities in the trade,

The measures appear to have limited activities with liquidation and drop in prices. Consequently, the trading scenario has shown a mixed trend with marginal changes at the weekend.

May contract on the NCDEX witnessed a marginal increase June and July declined slightly during the week. May moved up by Rs 70 to the last traded price (LTP) of Rs 37,450 a quintal, while June and July declined by Rs 95 and Rs 20 a quintal during the week to the LTP of Rs 38,060 and Rs 38,700 a quintal.

Total turnover fell by 5,635 tonnes to end at 16,298 tonnes. Total open interest dropped by 336 tonnes to 5,566 tonnes.

Spot prices were up by Rs 200 a quintal during the week to close on Saturday at Rs 36,800 (ungarbled) and Rs 38,300 (MG 1) a quintal.

Balanced approach often seems to be lacking while imposing new measures to curb certain things, says the trade.

In fact, since Nov-Dec, as the new crop arrivals from Kerala's southern districts showed limited arrivals coupled with feedback from the farmers indicating shortfall in production more than 60 per cent from these districts activated Indian extraction units, who normally cover immature pepper, to buy Green pepper at a premium from the farmers inducing them to pluck immature green pepper suitable for extraction.

As reports of shortfall in production in the country started gathering momentum, big operators in the futures delivery market started covering from the exchange platform where thousands of tonnes of pepper was being traded regularly, therefore the

cornering/covering by these big operators was not noticed by the trade in general. However, as they took delivery of large quantities in November, the cat was out of the bag. Exploiting the limited availability of physical pepper due to shortfall in production, operators also pushed up spot pepper prices to Rs 350 a kg to Rs 365 a kg.

As arrivals were not picking up and availability of spot pepper in the physical market remained tight, Indian pepper prices were ruling firmer compared to other origins in the international market.

Exporters with pending commitments for March, April, May, June were seeing huge losses to fulfil their commitments because of the spurt in the market specially future delivery prices on the national exchange platform. Therefore, representations were made by the Exporters' Organization to the Spices Board to put curb on the futures delivery markets as well as to seek permission to import 10,000 tonnes of pepper to support the consumer who was paying Rs 300-350 a kg while the international market was ruling at around Rs 150/200 a kg.

Pepper farmers, on the other hand, in their representations said their production was only 40-50 per cent of last year's production and hence their earning had come down to an average of Rs 200 a kg and hence demanded that their interest must be protected because of the high input production cost which included high labour cost as well. In spite of the fact that pepper future prices were being trading below spot prices, the regulator introduced many curbs in the pepper futures. The first was to reduce the validity of the deposited pepper from six to four months with no revalidation allowed.

Secondly they brought down the penalty clause from 3 per cent to 1.5 per cent. Therefore, it is suggested that for a compulsory delivery contract there should not be any penalty clause which will water down the entire sanctity of the compulsory delivery contract by introducing penalty clause in case of default by seller.

ardamom prices may top Rs 2,000/kg

PTI

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MUMBAI, MAY 6:

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Corruption common in Maharashtra Irrigation Department, says Hazare

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

With the Maharashtra Chief Minister, Mr Prithviraj Chavan, announcing the introduction of a white paper on dipping irrigation potential in the State and examining the spending by the department, Mr Anna Hazare today said he could give evidences against the corrupt officials, provided the Government acts on them.

“There are umpteen evidences of corruption in the Irrigation Department and so white paper should be released at the earliest,” Mr Hazare told a public meeting here as part of his ongoing statewide tour for Lokpal Bill.

Speaking at the symposium on ‘Maharashtra — Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow’ on the occasion of the birth centenary of Maharashtra's first Chief Minister, Mr Yashwantrao Chavan, the Chief Minister on Saturday admitted that irrigation potential had grown only by 0.1 per cent in the last decade in the State, and said he would ask the department to examine the spending.

“I will ask the irrigation department to verify the exact amount spent on increasing irrigation capacity and what has actually been done and direct the concerned department to bring out a white paper,” he had said.



Mr Anna Hazare

OSMANABAD, MAY 6:

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Reacting to Mr Chavan's statement, Mr Hazare said, “I have evidences listing the instances of corruption with the names of the irrigation officers. However, I could disclose them if the government assures me of action against them.”

Mr Chavan's statement set the cat among pigeons as the irrigation department, which is now renamed as water resources, is held by Congress's coalition partner NCP for the last 15 years since the alliance took over the state.

Meanwhile, Mr Hazare told the gathering that the strong Lokayukta at State and Lokpal at the Centre is the need of the hour to weed out corruption from the system.

He said the Centre remained “insensitive” towards the public outcry that was generated when he had launched the movement for strong Lokpal.

“Another battle for the Lokpal Bill is needed,” the Gandhian said.

Mr Hazare, who embarked on the 35-day State-wide tour from Shirdi on May 1, left for Latur as part of the drive.

farmers plant more cane for 2012-13 despite payment delays

VISHWANATH KULKARNI



Area in Uttar Pradesh up 4%; TN, Bihar also see rise

NEW DELHI, MAY 6:

The delay in payment by sugar factories has not deterred farmers in Uttar Pradesh from planting more cane for the new 2012-13 season.

Lured by a high State-advised price for sugarcane last year, farmers in Uttar Pradesh have planted cane in an additional area of 90,000 hectares till May 2, or 4 per cent higher than the corresponding previous year. The total area under sugarcane in Uttar Pradesh has, so far, increased to 23.60 lakh ha as against 22.70 lakh ha last year, according to latest Government data.

This is even as cane arrears or payment to be made by factories to farmers in Uttar Pradesh exceeds Rs 4,500 crore for the 2011-12 sugar season that comes to an end in September. It is estimated that cumulative cane arrear build up across the country stands at over Rs 10,000 crore. Uttar Pradesh is the largest grower accounting for close to half the country's area under sugarcane. The State is the second largest producer of sugar after Maharashtra.

Besides Uttar Pradesh, states such as Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar have also reported higher area under sugar cane, according to the latest Government data. The overall area under cane across the country has gone up by one per cent to 48.61 lakh hectares as against 47.61 lakh hectares.

Tamil Nadu has reported a 21 per cent rise in area at 3.73 lakh hectares, while in Bihar the increase is about 8.5 per cent. However, states such as Maharashtra and Karnataka have reported a marginal dip in area so far. Karnataka has registered a 11.6 per cent decline at 3.80 lakh ha, while in Maharashtra the decline is less than a per cent.

SURPLUS OUTPUT

The increasing area under sugarcane has raised the prospects of a surplus sugar output in 2012-13, for the fourth consecutive year in a row. For the past three consecutive years, the country has registered a surplus in sugar output and in the current 2011-12 season, production is set to touch a record 26 million tonnes, while domestic consumption is pegged at 22 mt.

Based on the current sowing pattern, the International Sugar Organisation (ISO) has pegged India's 2012-13 output at 24.5 mt, down 5 per cent over the previous year.

ISO believes that the cyclical nature of sugar industry and build up of cane arrears would hurt the output marginally.

However, the National Federation of Co-Operative Sugar Factories estimates the 2012-13 output at 25 mt. The Indian Sugar Mills Association is yet to come up with its projections for 2012-13.

The Government recently freed up sugar exports by lifting the quantitative restrictions, a move that industry believes will help liquidate rising stocks and reduce cane arrears.

About 88% Coonoor tea sold

P.S. SUNDAR

COONOOR, MAY 6:

Nearly 88 per cent of the three-week low offer of 9.61 lakh kg was sold at sale No: 18 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auctions.

Vigneshwar Specialty Tea, auctioned by Paramount Tea Marketing (SI) P Ltd, topped the CTC market at Rs 187 a kg. Homedale Estate got Rs 162, Shanthi Supreme and Kotagiri Estate Specialty Rs 150 each. In all, 106 marks got Rs 100 and more.

Among orthodox teas from the corporate sector, Chamraj got Rs 245, Curzon Rs 172, Havukal and Kairbetta Rs 166 each and Highfield Estate Rs 162

In all, 40 marks got Rs 100 and more.



“Orthodox leaf market was irregular oscillating up and down Rs 2-3 a kg. High-priced CTC leaf lost Rs 2-3 and mediums, up to Rs 2. Orthodox dust market oscillated up and down Rs 2-3. CTC dust market generally gained Rs 2-3”, an auctioneer told *Business Line*.

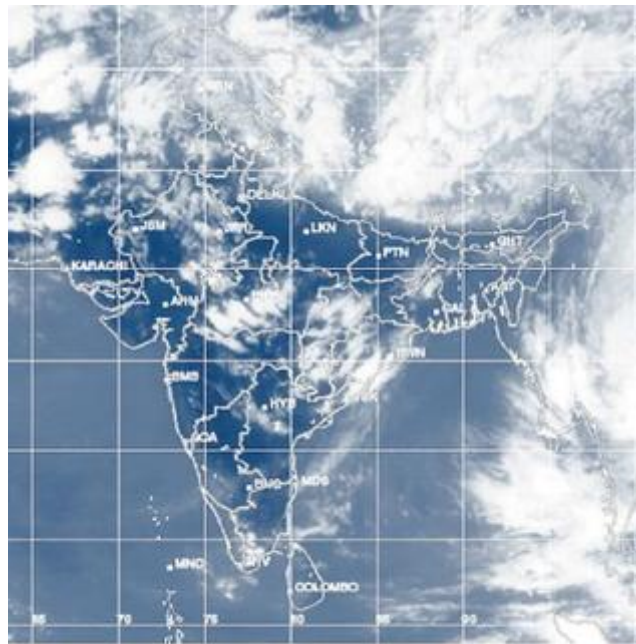
On the export front, Pakistan bought selectively for Rs 52-77 a kg and the CIS Rs 57-92.

Quotations held by brokers indicated bids ranging Rs 50-54 a kg for plain leaf grades and Rs 95-157 for brighter liquoring sorts. They ranged Rs 63-67 for plain dusts and Rs 90-162 for brighter liquoring dusts.

Mercury to dip below normal over north-west

VINSON KURIAN

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MAY 6:



India Meteorological dept picture at 15-30 hrs

Maximum temperatures are expected to remain below normal by 2-4 degree Celsius over northwest, central and east India. This is what India Meteorological Department's (IMD) weather outlook valid until Wednesday says.

THUNDERSTORMS FORECAST

Rain or thundershowers would break out over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand on Monday and at a few places thereafter. Dust storms or thunderstorms are likely over Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and west Madhya Pradesh on Monday and increase thereafter.

Thunderstorm activity would continue over plains of northwest and adjoining central and east India until Wednesday.

This puts paid to any hopes of sustained heating to begin over northwest India any time soon. How this would impact the monsoon, which rides the heating/pressure differential from the peninsular tip, remains to be seen. But initial signals from global weather models suggest that seasonal rains might arrive over the Andaman and Nicobar around the usual time of May 15-20.

ONSET IN BAY

They are likely to be heralded by a weather system – low-pressure or depression – though prevailing westerlies would guide which direction it would travel.

A US model suggests the formation of such a system, which would be guided by westerlies to take a north-northeast direction towards Bangladesh/Myanmar. Simultaneously, east-central Arabian Sea may also throw up a weaker system that is forecast to die out just as the Bay gains in strength and moves north-northeast.

These are initial forecasts just yet and need to be monitored continuously for verification and assessment.

CYCLONIC WHIRL

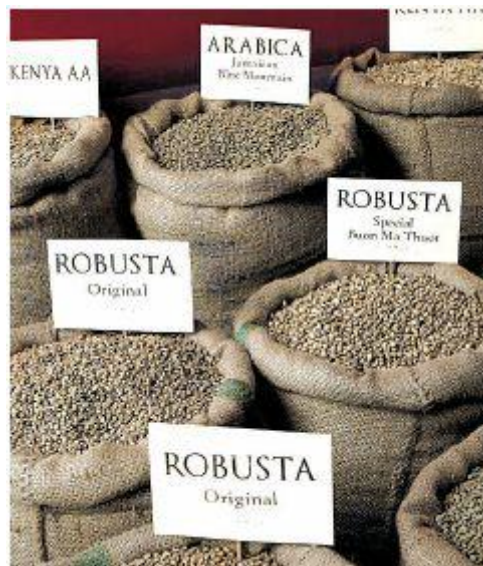
Meanwhile on Sunday, the western disturbance over north Pakistan kicked up a cyclonic circulation over central Pakistan and adjoining northwest Rajasthan.

A trough from this system extended up to east Madhya Pradesh. This 'combo system' is mainly responsible for prevailing weather conditions over northwest. Thunder squalls have been forecast over Madhya Pradesh while dust storms and thunderstorms have been forecast elsewhere.

The volatile weather over east and northeast India is also set to continue with Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and north coastal Andhra Pradesh at the receiving end.

Indian coffee may brew success with untapped potential

May 6, 2012:



The second-most traded commodity in the world after crude oil, coffee is one of the most valuable primary products in world trade. It is an important source of foreign exchange to producing countries. Its cultivation, processing, trading, transportation and marketing provide employment to more than a hundred million people worldwide. It is one of the most important commodities for many of the least developed economies in Africa.

Considered as the alternative hot beverage of India, coffee is said to have originated in Ethiopia, from where, it spread to Egypt and Yemen. Today, there are two main coffee species cultivated commercially- *Coffea arabica* and *Coffea robusta*.

GLOBAL SCENARIO

Global production of coffee was estimated to be around 8.36 million tonnes (mt) in 2010 with Brazil accounting for almost 35 per cent of total production as the world's leading green coffee producer. This is followed by Vietnam (13 per cent), Indonesia (9.6 per cent) and Colombia (6.5 per cent) in 2010.

Arabica coffee is cultivated in Latin America, eastern Africa, Arabia, and Asia while Robusta coffee is grown in western and central Africa, throughout South-east Asia, and to some extent in Brazil. Major consumers of coffee include the US, the EU nations particularly Germany, France and the UK followed by Brazil, Japan and other countries in Europe and North America.

INDIAN SCENARIO

Production: India is the sixth-largest producer of coffee after Brazil, Vietnam, Columbia, Indonesia, and Ethiopia. With 4,04,645 hectares under coffee cultivation, India accounts for 3.8 per cent of total coffee production (3,02,000 tonnes in 2010-11). In India, Karnataka (70 per cent), Kerala (20 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (7 per cent) are the major producers of coffee. Arabica production amounted to 31 per cent of total output, the remaining 69 per cent being contributed by Robusta. In 2010-11, coffee production in Karnataka and Kerala stood at 2,13,780 tonnes and 65,650 tonnes, respectively, while Tamil Nadu produced 16,650 tonnes during the period. Production of coffee, which was highly concentrated in the South, has now extended to non-traditional areas particularly Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and to North East in the recent years to almost 40,000 ha.

Consumption: Coffee has become increasingly popular in India over the last few years. It is no longer a traditional beverage, but positioned as a youthful and trendy beverage. According to the Coffee Board, domestic consumption is increasing 5 to 6 per cent annually, partly due to expansion of the café culture and the spread of the coffee drinking habit throughout India. Coffee consumption is estimated to be 108,000 tonnes (2010). Urban consumption dominates with about 73 per cent of total volumes and the remaining from rural consumption. South India alone consumes nearly 78 per cent of total coffee consumed in India.

Recent Trends: The coffee planting and bearing area in India has shown an upward trend mostly due to expansion of cultivation in non-traditional States. Arabica coffee productivity in the non-traditional areas is reported to be much lower than in the traditional belt (9.2 quintals/ha), which has brought down the overall yield to 8.4 quintals/ha. Compared to an yield of 21 quintals in Vietnam and 13 quintals in Brazil, productivity is low in India on account of limited mechanisation, pest infestation and labour shortage. Higher price realisation during the past three to four years has prompted coffee growers to follow better agronomic practices, supporting higher production. However, labour costs, which account for almost 65 per cent of the cost of coffee cultivation have continued to escalate in the past few years.

Policy: The Indian Government/Coffee Board provides various subsidies, mostly to small and marginal coffee producers to increase production and improve quality. In addition, the Ministry of Commerce has included coffee in the list of products eligible for the duty entitlement passbook (DEPB) scheme and the Vishesh Krishi Upaj Gramodyog Yojana (VKUGY). Total duty credit under the programmes is subject to a maximum of 7.5 per cent. On April 29, 2010, the Finance Minister announced a new Debt Relief Package in Parliament, intended mainly for small coffee growers. Accordingly, 50 per cent of the pre-2002 term loans taken by coffee growers were to be waived, subject to a maximum of Rs 5,00,000 for a farmer.

WAY FORWARD

Globally coffee consumption is expected to grow at 6 per cent annually. Both domestic and international coffee prices hit record highs in calendar year 2011, coupled with all-time high exported volumes. The domestic coffee production is expected to increase at a CAGR of 6.2 per cent for the next three years, while consumption is expected to grow at 6.4 per cent. With coffee outlets set to increase multi-fold in the next 3 years, the coffee industry is likely to continue witnessing similar growth trend in future. India being a minor player in the global market has great potential to improve its market share through higher yields and improved quality. Besides, with domestic consumption being very small when compared to the consumption trend globally, there lies a huge opportunity to expand the market with the help of intensive coffee promotion. At the same time key pressing issues of labour shortage and migration, and tremendous increase in cost of labour are major concern areas for the industry, which are to be critically addressed through effective policy interventions.

Source: YES Bank
