

# THE HINDU

TODAY FARM NEWS

16.11.2012 A.M

## Farmers stage demonstrations

Shetakari Sanghatana activists on Thursday held demonstrations in various areas in the southern Maharashtra region, demanding better price for sugarcane. All sugar mills in the region are closed and police pickets posted.

Three farmers' organisations have come together to pursue the demand and not to allow crushing in the sugar mills unless their demand for payment of first instalment for cane is conceded by the mills. Shetakari Sanghatana leader Radhanathdada Patil said the Chief Minister should take the initiative to hold discussions with the three organisations to sort out the issue.

## Farmers should benefit from innovations: seer

Technological advancements are a boon to farmers only if they are taken to the farmlands, Siddhalinga Swami of Tontadarya Math said on Thursday.

He was addressing a gathering of farmers at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) at Hulakoti, near Gadag, after inaugurating two fodder machines procured by the KVK.

He lauded the initiative taken by the former Minister H.K. Patil and KVK in bringing technology closer to the farmers.

The swami referred to the findings of a survey that said that around 40 per cent of successful agricultural experiments in laboratories never reached the farmers.

He added that only when a "lab-to-land" approach was followed effectively would the farmers would get the benefit of agricultural research.

He also spoke about Israel and said that the country achieved progress in agriculture due to its innovations. He mentioned Verghese Kurien and others, who had helped make farming viable and profitable.\

### **'Protect Kappatagudda'**

The swami appealed to farmers to protect Kappatagudda in Gadag district, which, he said, was rich in biodiversity.

Mr. Patil emphasised the importance of technology in agriculture, and said: "we need to make use of the technology in farming which will help us survive."

He pointed out that technological advancements were not immediately accepted by the public.

"Once they are convinced about the benefits, people will definitely put them to good use," he said.

The former Minister also mentioned the cloud seeding exercise taken up in the Cauvery basin.

Earlier, making introductory remarks, the former MLA D.R. Patil stressed the need to take technology to farmers and also make changes in the available technology to suit local needs.

### **Fodder machines a boon to farmers**



On Thursday, two fodder machines were formally inaugurated by Siddhalinga Swami of Tontadarya Math.

The machines can produce 100 kg of grass by using 14 kg of seeds put into it. They can produce fodder in a matter of weeks. Siddhalinga Swami, the former Minister H.K. Patil and with the former MLA D.R. Patil inspected the product produced through the fodder machines.

Laxman Hiregoudar, KVK director, said the technology was not new and had been tested and used successfully in States such as Haryana and Gujarat.

He said the fodder produced by the machines was not different from fodder grown on fields. Since there was no soil involved in the cultivation process, cattle could even feed on the roots, he added. He said that in the coming days, KVK would experiment on how the machine could be used for purposes other than simply producing fodder. "While fodder is not a problem in areas with irrigation facility, it is a problem in arid lands dependent on rainfall. Such machines could be of great help to farmers, especially during dry days," he added.

### **Dry spell after Nilam hits Nellore district farmers**

A high-level meeting of the Irrigation Advisory Board, attended by Finance Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy, here decided to release water for 3 lakh acres this kharif season despite inadequate water levels in Somasila, Kandaleru and other reservoirs in the district.

The meeting sought cooperation from farmers and asked them to go for short-duration crops requiring less water so that the available water could be used to meet the requirements of all the ayacut.

Despite the heavy rains during the recent Nilam cyclone, Nellore district received a deficit rainfall of 27 mm less than normal mainly because of the two-week dry spell after the super storm. The existing levels are 33.26 tmc in Somasila, 1.615 tmc in Kanigiri reservoir, 20.17 tmc in Kandaleru and 0.39 tmc in Sarvepalli reservoir.

The Irrigation Advisory Board set aside 8 tmc water for meeting drinking water, dead storage and evaporation requirements. The allotment would have to be made from the remaining 24.50 tmc and it was decided to cover 12,000 acres with 1 tmc water.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Ramanarayana Reddy and district Collector B. Sridhar pointed out that expected rainfall was not received in the Nilam cyclone while the monsoon expectations were also not fulfilled considering the deficit rainfall this kharif season. N

ot enough inflows were received in the catchment areas of Somasila, Kandaleru and other reservoirs.

The position of small and medium irrigation tanks was also the same with only 20 to 30 per cent tanks getting totally filled, while 80 per cent of them receiving just 50 per cent water.

In view of the demand from farmers, water will be released through the Somasila North and South feeder canals and simultaneously through Kanupuru and Kavali canals. This is to meet the irrigation requirements in upland areas.

Gudur MLA Balli Durga Prasad, Udayagiri MLA Mekapati Chandrasekhara Reddy, Kavali MLA Beeda Mastan Rao and others said that water should be released to help farmers who already went for nurseries.

### **Krishi Vigyan Kendra to come up in Tirupur district**

The Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS) is set to establish a Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) here to promote value-addition in animal husbandry, dairy and related agriculture activities through dissemination of advanced technologies.

“The facility, to be named TANUVAS-KVK, is planned with the objective to provide a linkage between research and field by implementing Lab-to-Land projects in a holistic manner, and thereby, improve the socio-economic conditions of farmers and livestock owners,” R. Selvaraj, head of Veterinary University Training and Research Centre (VUTRC) under TANUVAS, said.

The centre, according to him, is planned on an expanse of 50 acres with the funding support from Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

The proposed KVK will be having model farms to demonstrate latest techniques in goat and poultry rearing, and raising of fodder crops under the principles of ‘learning by doing’ and ‘teaching by seeing’, besides running on-farm trial programmes for livestock owners to make them utilise animal science technologies for commercial benefits.

Another advantage of setting up a KVK in the district will be that the researchers could conduct farm families' surveys at frequent intervals to derive the professional needs of the farm youth and livestock keepers and subsequently bridge the critical gaps in skill developments in the community at a quicker pace, sources pointed out.

### Rubber planters strike it rich with ash gourd, yam



A GOOD MIX: If farmers cultivate elephant foot yam and ash gourd, they need not sell them in a hurry, says O.K. Sham Prasad, a farmer at Punnjathodi village in Bantwal taluk.— PHOTO: RAVIPRASAD KAMILA

A stranger to a rubber plantation at Kedila village in Bantwal taluk may confuse vastly spread creepers there to some wild weed. A closer look shows hundreds of ash gourds hidden underneath the leaves of creepers.

O.K. Sham Prasad, an agriculturist at Punjathodi in the village, has cultivated ash gourd as an inter-crop in his rubber plantation. Such cultivation in two acres of land is said to be rare in Dakshina Kannada. According to him, he harvested about 15,000 kg of white (ash) gourd a few days ago from 1,250 creepers planted this July. "I expect the yield between 15,000 kg and 20,000 kg," he said.

The gourd grown by Mr. Prasad is small "kashi kumbla" variety and is not large in size. He said people preferred small-sized gourds as they were easy to carry home.

Mr. Prasad has stocked the harvested produce hoping for a better price. "The maximum price quoted by a trader is Rs. 9.50 a kg," he said.

He said that the gourd would fetch him additional income and it could be harvested in four months after planting. As the ash gourd had long shelf-life there was no need to sell it in a hurry.

Mr. Prasad has also cultivated “suvarna gadde” (elephant foot yam). He planted 450 saplings of yam in April-May 2011. Yam can be harvested after six months of planting. Usually, a yam weighed 13 kg after six months. It would have a shelf-life of three months. This year, its price varied from Rs. 14 to Rs. 25 a kg, he said.

This farmer is yet to harvest the yam planted last year. “There is no hurry. After two years of planting, a yam usually weighs 20 kg. Sometimes its price touches Rs. 45 a kg. It can be harvested when the price is attractive,” he said.

Mr. Prasad said if farmers cultivated elephant foot yam and ash gourd there was no pressure on them to sell them immediately unlike other vegetables which did not have shelf-life.

In addition, Mr. Prasad has cultivated 600 nendran banana variety which can be harvested in nine months.

RAVIPRASAD KAMILA

### **Farmers' club inaugurated**

Farmers should aim at the overall development of a village, said non-governmental organisation Nestham Director Suresh.

Speaking at the inauguration of a farmers' club in Ambapuram village on Thursday, he said that small and marginal farmers must come together and form into a large group for the common interest of goal achievement. This will lead to progress in agriculture and its allied activities, he said.

The NGO director gave an orientation on leadership qualities, rules and regulations of running the club

### **Ryots told to cultivate ID crops**

In the wake of shortage of water at the Sriram Sagar Project (SRSP) and Lower Manair Dam (LMD) reservoir, the district administration had called upon the farming community to take up only Irrigated Dry (ID) crops during this rabi season to save water for the drinking water needs in four districts of Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Adilabad and Warangal.

Presently, the SRSP was having 52.400 tmcft of water against the capacity of 90 tmcft and the LMD was having 5.970 tmcft against the capacity of 24 tmcft due to poor inflows into the projects following the deficit rainfall in the catchment areas.

Among the total available 58.370 tmcft of water in SRSP and LMD projects, the authorities have chalked out strategies to release only 29.47 tmcft of water for the irrigation needs. About 5.55 tmcft of water would be utilised for the drinking water requirements, about 7.70 tmcft of waters would go for the dead storage in both the SRSP and LMD and 6.95 tmcft would go as evaporation. On the other hand, about 2.70 tmcft of water would be provided to the NTPC Ramagundam for power generation and four tmcft of water would be provided to the lift schemes foreshore of SRSP.

Following the acute shortage of water in both the projects, Collector Smita Sabharwal informed the farmers to go in for ID crops such as maize, green gram, Bengal gram, sunflower, ground nut, etc. which would provide yield in 90 days only. If the farmers have decided to go for paddy cultivation, she informed them to take up paddy cultivation through drum-seeder technology, which consumes less water and gives more harvest.

SRSP Chief Engineer B.Yellareddy said that they would release water from the projects only from January to March next year for the rabi season and urged the farmers to take up only ID crops. He said that they would release water for 10 days every month for three months period and appealed to the farmers to use water judiciously.

Joint Director (Agriculture) Prasad and others were also present.

### **Cotton farmers cry foul**

Cotton farmers on Thursday once again accused agriculture market officials and private traders of cheating them during trading of cotton at market yards and at processing centres. They

accused the officials of colluding with the traders in turning a blind eye towards the illegal activities of the latter.

Farmers Atram Bheem Rao and Thatipalli Raju of Kamatwada in Tamsi mandal and G. Ram Reddy of Pusai and others from Sangvi in Jainad mandal complained of the 'tak' patti or weighment receipt issued by the Agriculture Market Committee not showing the percentage of moisture in the cotton. The receipt should have such an entry so that the farmer was not confused as to the amount of money being deducted for the moisture content, they pointed out.

### **Old software**

Assistant Director Marketing Ajmera Raju's clarification on the issue was revelatory. "As the software being used to generate computerised receipts by the market committee was old, there is no column for moisture content," he said.

"In any case moisture meters are being used only at the private mills where the produce is unloaded after weighment. This is for the benefit of farmers," he further claimed.

As to the accusation of farmers of being charged for re-weighment and unloading of their produce in private mills, the Assistant Director denied the allegation. He said the marketing officials had curbed such a practice.

### **Oil Palm's diversification plans**

Oil Palm India is planning to set up a waste-to-energy plant that will utilise 13,000 tonnes of waste from its production units to generate 1 MW of electricity. The company also has plans to launch farm tourism at its estates as part of its diversification strategy. The company registered a record revenue of Rs.45 crore during the 2011-'12 fiscal. A press note here said it registered a record profit of Rs.14.6 crore. It has announced a dividend of Rs.2.35 crore. Company chairman Sheikh P. Haris handed over a cheque for Rs.1.35 crore as the State government's share to Agriculture Minister K.P. Mohanan.



## Falling price vexes pineapple farmers



Farmers expect the Agro Processing company to step in to help them out

Pineapple farmers in Kerala are seeking the help of Nadukkara Agro Processing Company Limited to stop prices from falling further in a season that gave good harvest.

A-grade pineapple was fetching around Rs. 20 a kg over the last six months, but price has fallen during the last three weeks to the Rs. 10, prompting farmers to appeal to the Agro Processing Company, which was set up specifically to bail out farmers in times of trouble.

Director of Pineapple Farmers' Association Baby John told *The Hindu* on Thursday that NAPC had not entered the market so far despite a promise by the Minister for Agriculture early this year that pineapple would be procured at Rs. 15 a kg.

He also blamed the processing company for setting an unprecedented condition that farmers should produce certificates from Agricultural Officers if company has to procure fruits. The company had also set a limit of three tonnes per farmer.

This was not the practice over the previous years, said Mr. John. NAPC was set up with farmers holding 70 per cent of the shares and the government 30 per cent.

However, NAPC had not intervened so far, leaving the farmers to reap a bitter harvest amid a good season that would have seen sales of up to Rs. 450 crore with a marginally higher price.

Mr. John said price of pineapple was better in November last year at Rs. 13 to 14 a kg. The remunerative price had prompted farmers to keep steady the area under pineapple. There were about 13,000 hectares under the fruit across the state, with almost 2,000 farmers involved in cultivation. The total production this year is expected to be around 3.25 lakh tonnes. Higher land lease rates this year raised the production cost this season and farmers need at least Rs. 15 a kg to break even, he said.

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#### Initiative

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“Once they are convinced about the benefits, people will definitely put them to good use,” he said.

### **Cloud seeding**

The former Minister also mentioned the cloud seeding exercise taken up in the Cauvery basin.

Earlier, making introductory remarks, the former MLA D.R. Patil stressed the need to take technology to farmers and also make changes in the available technology to suit local needs.

C.G. Korvanavar, KVK Chairman, was present.

### **Millet farmers learn new practices**

A delegation of 100 millet farmers from Tirupur district taken out on an exposure visit by the Department of Agriculture to research stations and progressive fields in Dharmapuri district has returned richer with knowledge on advanced cultivation practices.

Deputy Director of Agriculture P. Santanakrishnan, who led the entourage, told reporters that the objective of the expedition was to help the farmers here learn more on the crop and thereby increase the yield of millet varieties like sorghum, pearl millet, finger millet and minor millets.

“By augmenting the productivity, the department wanted to improve the usage of millets as a food grain, instead of using more as fodder crop, since it is nutritionally rich,” he said.

The farmers, during their visit to Dharmapuri, had interactions with scientists at Krishi Vigyan Kendra in Paapparapatti, and also studied cropping patterns as well as latest technologies at progressive farms in various villages.

“The 100 farmers will now be able to to implement the lessons learnt from the exposure trip and also teach the techniques to other farmers in the respective blocks,” Mr. Santanakrishnan said.

## Farmers urged to realise benefits of Commodity Futures Market



Collector D. Jagannathan speaking at a seminar on 'Agri-Business and Commodity Futures Market Price Risk Management' organised by The Hindu Business Line in Namakkal on Thursday.

"From just four commodities in the commodities exchange market in India in 2003 it has now increased to 81 commodities in the last nine years," Collector D. Jagannathan said.

He was addressing the gathering after inaugurating the awareness and education seminar on 'Agri-Business and Commodity Futures Market Price Risk Management' here on Thursday. It was organised by *The Hindu Business Line* in association with the Forward Markets Commission and National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange Ltd. (NCDEX).

Mr. Jagannathan explained the need for streamlining unofficial price fixation markets of various commodities by strengthening future exchange with better infrastructure market.

He noted that organising such programmes would be instrumental in throwing light on the commodity and futures market in Namakkal, which is a hub for the poultry, rig and transport industries.

Commodities Editor of *The Hindu Business Line* G. Chandrashekar highlighted the role played by the commodities market in helping farmers in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh realise better prices for their produce. "Every morning farmers there look for the price before they decide whether to take the produce to the market or to hold it back," he said.

Pointing out that 55 per cent of our country's population accounts for only 15 per cent of the GDP, he expressed the need for agriculture and the revenue of farmers to grow to help the majority population realise a balanced income. "Two decades ago it was enough if farmers knew the local market price of their produce but now they have to have a global view as many products that we use in our day-to-day life are imported," he noted.

Chairman of the National Egg Coordination Committee (NECC) Namakkal Zone, Dr. P. Selvaraj said that future markets would be very useful for the poultry industry if it was properly used by farmers. "The industry requires more than 5,000 tonnes of soya and maize every day as they are important ingredients for the poultry feed. These grains are important commodities and the requirement is delivery points. The commodities market will be of use only if those grains could be delivered here," he said.

In response, Davey Cherimulla of NCDEX said that they were in the process of expanding their warehousing facilities. "The request of poultry farmers will be passed on to the officials concerned," he added.

During an interactive session that followed, Mr. Chandrashekhar and Mr. Dhavey clarified the queries raised by the participants. They explained that the price hike of many essential agricultural products was due to the demand-supply gap and not because of the future market.

About 150 participants from the poultry industry and education institutions from Namakkal and nearby districts participated.

### **Cotton prices remain dull**

More than a month since the new cotton season began, the prices for cotton remains dull. In some areas in the country, the prices are expected to drop less than the Minimum Support Price (MSP).

According to sources in the trade and industry, the cotton prices range between Rs. 33,000 and Rs. 34,000 a candy now. It is not likely to go up as the international prices are lower than the Indian price. Arrivals to the domestic market will only increase in the coming weeks.

The textile mills, which are the largest consumers of Indian cotton, are buying in small quantities. The yarn market is also slow, expecting a fall in cotton yarn prices. Hence the mills are not rushing with cotton purchases. The export demand is not high since there is excess availability in the international market.

Though there may be a dip in prices to below MSP in some pockets, the prices are expected to remain stable. The textile industry is reviving, especially in the domestic market. However, there are liquidity problems as the mills have just paid bonus, they say.

The ginnerers are not willing to take cotton kappas now as the demand from textile mills and exporters is not high.

### Planting the seed of confidence

APD's Horticulture Training Centre fosters future gardeners



**TRAINING AND SKILLS:**Hundreds of persons with disabilities have been trained at the Horticulture Training Centre in Jeevanbimanagar in Bangalore.— Photo: Harini Shivaraya

At a time when persons with disabilities (PWDs) struggle to find a suitable vocation, the Association of People with Disability (APD) is one of the few organisations lending a helping hand. On Thursday, APD's Horticulture Training Centre kicked off its golden jubilee celebrations to mark the successful years during which hundreds of PWDs have been trained in gardening.

The unit, in Jeevanbimanagar, and the five-acre campus at Kyalasanhalli, has provided a therapeutic and attractive setting to foster future gardeners. Trained gardeners from here are in demand, making persons with disabilities self-sufficient and self-confident.

### **Big plans now**

“At home there was nothing that I could do. When I first came here, I felt I couldn’t do gardening. But now with encouragement, I am learning and feel confident about myself,” Jayasheela, in her 20s, told *The Hindu*. Born armless, the Chamarajanagar native is honing her skills in gardening and plans to fund her mother’s ambition to set up an eatery.

Radha, another trainee, is hoping to get a job soon after finishing the course. “After an accident, I couldn’t walk without support. I never thought I could do something in life, but now I am independent.”

### **Felicitated**

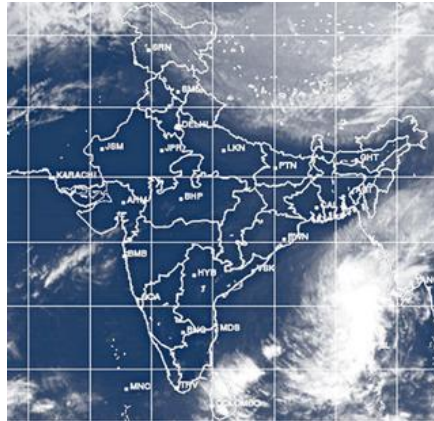
Kumar Manikandan, the 26-year-old, polio-afflicted athlete who won a gold medal at the IFSC Paraclimbing World Championship in Paris recently, was felicitated during the celebrations, which was inaugurated by C. Somashekhar, Managing Director of Karnataka Agricultural Marketing Board. Present on the occasion was R. Gururajan, retired High Court Judge and a trustee of the APD.

The APD also honoured former trainees, former employees and senior staff. Among them was Govinda Gowda, a trainee from the first batch, currently working as a gardener at Cubbon Park; Ganesh Hegde, APD assistant director; and Siddalingappa, a former APD staff, who contributed to the horticulture programme.

### **Plants for sale**

A weeklong garden fair where plants nurtured by the differently abled are being sold was also inaugurated. Call 9449869434 for further details.

## Weather



The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (trace) and total rainfall in mm since October 01, 2012.

### Dry weather in Tamil Nadu

**CHENNAI:** Dry weather prevailed over Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Lakshadweep and Karnataka.

The minimum temperature rose appreciably at one or two places over north coastal Andhra Pradesh, rose at one or two places over rest north coastal Andhra Pradesh, fell largely at one or two places over north interior Tamil Nadu, fell appreciably at one or two places over north interior Tamil Nadu, north interior Karnataka, Rayalaseema, fell at many places over rest Tamil Nadu, at a few places over rest Rayalaseema, south interior Karnataka, at one or two places over Kerala and changed a little elsewhere over the region.

They were largely below normal at a few places over Rayalaseema, at one or two places over north interior Tamil Nadu, interior Karnataka, markedly below normal at a few places over coastal Andhra Pradesh, at one or two places over rest interior Karnataka, appreciably below normal at many places over rest north Tamil Nadu, at one or two places over coastal Karnataka, rest Andhra Pradesh, below normal at a few places over south Tamil Nadu, at one or two places over Kerala, rest coastal Karnataka and were generally normal over the rest of the region.

**Forecast (valid till Saturday morning):** Isolated rain may occur over Kerala. Mainly dry weather will prevail over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Karnataka and A.P.



## Weather

Chennai

### Chennai - INDIA

#### Today's Weather



Sunny

Friday, Nov 16

Max Min

29.9° | 20.5°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 78

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:08

Sunset: 05:39

Barometer: 1013

#### Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Saturday, Nov 17

Max Min

31° | 21°

#### Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday Nov 18	Monday Nov 19	Tuesday Nov 20	Wednesday Nov 21	Thursday Nov 22
31°   21° Partly Cloudy	33°   25° Overcast	34°   25° Overcast	34°   25° Sunny	34°   25° Cloudy

#### Airport Weather

Delhi

Rain: 0

Humidity: 77

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:44

Sunset: 05:26

Barometer: 1017



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15.11.2012 P.M

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## Sell potato crop on harvest: TNAU

The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore, has advised potato growers to sell the crop on harvest as prospects for a price spiral are bleak.

In a release, the University said at the Mettupalayam auction centre, a bag of potato weighing 45 kg fetched Rs 700 to Rs 950. The centre was also receiving potatoes in large quantities from Hassan and Kolar in Karnataka.

In response to farmers' queries as to whether the potato crop to be harvested from November would fetch a higher price, the Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell of TNAU analysed data at the Nilgiris Cooperative Marketing Society (NCMS) in Mettupalayam in Coimbatore district over the past 22 years. The study showed that the price would rule around Rs 750 to Rs 1,000 per bag of 45 kg from the current month to January and the best quality tubers would fetch the maximum price.

As there was little chance of prices going up in the next three months, the "farmers have been advised to sell potato upon harvest", TNAU said.

## Kerala, TN coconut oil markets hold steady

The coconut oil markets both in Kerala and Tamil Nadu have been in holiday mood with prices remaining more or less steady.

The prices in Kerala are ruling at Rs 60 per kg, at the same level as quoted last week, while in Tamil Nadu it went up by 50 paise, quoting Rs 58.50. Palm oil and palm kernel oil prices also stood at last week's level of Rs 58 and Rs 52 a kg respectively.

Copra prices both in Tamil Nadu and Kerala stood at Rs 4,200 per quintal, the same as that quoted last week.

According to Prakash B. Rao, Vice-President, Cochin Oil Merchants' Association (COMA), festival demand was low and was not reflected in the market with less interest shown by upcountry buyers.

However, traders expect an improvement in coconut oil prices in the coming weeks due to the recent rally in palm oil prices in Malaysia. It is reported that palm oil prices in Malaysia have firmed up in the last couple of days due to bulk enquiries from Asian countries, he said.

Rao said lack of demand from upcountry buyers and local consumers also reflected in Muhurat trading in coconut oil in Kochi. The trade during Muhurat was seen lower at 200 quintals compared with 600 quintals last year, he added.

Meanwhile, the Kerala Government has approved a scheme prepared by the Agriculture Department for coconut procurement in the State at Rs 14 per kg through Krishi Bhavans. This would be processed at 20 centres, including 14 farms of the Agriculture Department.

The State Cabinet had sanctioned Rs 8 crore for the Rs 21-crore scheme. The remaining would be adjusted from the budgetary allocations for the department

### **Training in rubber clones**

The Rubber Board will organise a one-day training in new clones of rubber at Rubber Training Institute, Kottayam on December 4. The fee is Rs 300 (12.36% service tax extra). SC/ST candidates will be given 50 per cent concession in fee.

The payment may be made by money order or demand draft drawn in favour of Director (Training), Rubber Board, Kottayam-9 payable at Kottayam.

Application on white paper along with fee may be forwarded to the Director (Training). For further details, contact phone 0481- 2351313, 2353127.

### **Vegetable oil imports top record 10 million tonnes**



Vegetable oil imports increased 18 per cent to 10.2 million tonnes (mt) in the oil year ended October. Besides lower prices, the demand was largely driven by sharp fall in oilseed output and rise in demand.

The overall vegetable oil production was down by 0.7 mt due to reduced oilseed crop. The domestic vegetable oil consumption increased by 0.7-0.8 million tonnes due to increase in per capita consumption and population growth.

In October, the country's vegetable oil imports were the highest in last 12 months at 1,036,107 tonnes. It was up 16 per cent compared with last year. Edible oil imports were up 16 per cent at 1,018,113 tonnes (877,799 tonnes), while that of non-edible oil increased 11 per cent at 877,799 tonnes (16,246 tonnes) in October.

### **inventory**

Closing stock of imported vegetable oil as of last month end increased by 0.2 mt to 1.57 mt.

As of November 1, edible oil inventory at various ports is estimated at 0.92 mt and about 0.65 mt in pipelines.

The stock at ports includes crude palm oil 600,000 tonnes, RBD palmolein 95,000 tonnes, degummed soya oil 125,000 tonnes, crude sunflower oil 85,000 tonnes and canola rape oil 15,000 tonnes.

### **Rise in offtake**

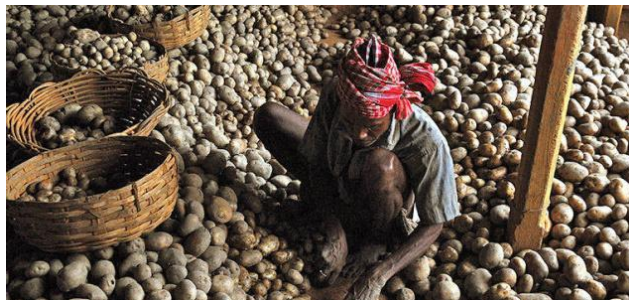
Malaysia and Indonesia pushed the palm oil export into India during the year to reduce their inventory. Import of RBD palmolein from Indonesia increased substantially during the year due to inverted export duty structure. The overall consumption increased by about 1.25 mt, leading to higher import during the year.

In oil year 2011-12, import of refined oil was up 46 per cent at 1.57 mt (1.08 mt). Import of crude oil was also up 15 per cent at 8.40 mt (7.28 mt).

### Edible oil imports

Palm oil imports increased to 7.7 mt compared with 6.5 mt during the last year and soft oil import also increased to 2.3 mt, consisting of 1.07 mt of soya oil, 1.13 mt sunflower oil, 91,000 tonnes of rape oil and 7,000 tonnes of other soft oils compared with 1.82 mt during the same period last year. Non-edible oil imports in 2011-12 were down 29 per cent at 0.21 mt (0.29 mt) due to increased domestic production.

**Irked by flat rentals, Bengal's potato cold storages plan one-day strike on Nov 19**



Rising operational cost coupled with stagnant rentals for almost past three years have turned a number of cold storages in West Bengal cash-strapped.

According to Patit Paban De, member, West Bengal Cold Storage Association, operational costs have gone up by 40-50 per cent in the last two years. However, there has been no hike in rentals during this period.

“The last hike happened in February 2010 when rentals increased by Rs 14 a quintal. The hike took into account the rise in operational costs in 2009 over that in 2008,” De said.

The rental for storing potatoes in cold storages in Bengal stands at Rs 101 a quintal. There are close to 403 cold storages in the State, which together store about 60 lakh tonnes of potatoes depending on the production during a particular year.

The cost of electricity, diesel and labour has all gone up in the last three years. But the State Government is not allowing the industry to hike rentals. Most of the cold storages are, therefore, running at a cash loss.

“Last year nearly nine cold storages had to be closed down as they could not meet the expenses,” he said.

Cash-strapped cold storages plan to shut down their operations for one day on November 19 as a mark of their protest.

“Only in West Bengal and Tripura the rentals are controlled by the State Government while for all other States it is decided by the cold storage associations depending on the market condition,” he said.

The average rentals of cold storages in States such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Gujarat stands at around Rs 150-180 a quintal. “Cold storage rentals in West Bengal should be revised to a minimum of Rs 150 in tune with the prevailing rent in other potato producing States,” he said.

### **Potato prices**

Hike in rentals, whenever it comes into effect, will have its impact on potato prices. The cost of rentals paid to cold storage is built into the price of the tuber, which is borne by the end-consumer. However, the impact will be of very little consequence to a customer, De said.

“For instance, for a hike of Rs 20 a quintal in rentals the end-consumer might have to shell out an additional 20 paise on a kg of potatoes purchased,” he explained.

### **Floor price for RBD palmolein import cut to \$887/tonne**

The Government has further slashed the tariff value, or the base import price, for refined, bleached and deodorised (RBD) palmolein to \$887 a tonne from \$889 .

The cut in base import prices is prompted by the decline in global edible oil prices. However, base import prices for other crude and refined oils were kept unchanged.

The base import price is the reference price for assessing import taxes.

The Government had set a new base import price of \$1,053 for RBD palmolein in early August and has since reduced it gradually, based on the movement of global prices.

India has emerged as the largest importer of edible oils in recent years, with RBD palmolein imports for the year-ended October 2012 at 1.57 million tonnes (mt), up 31 per cent from 1.08 mt last year.

### **MMTC invites bids for 1 lakh tonne wheat exports**

State trading firm MMTC has invited a global tender for the export of 1,00,000 tonnes of wheat stored in the government godowns.

Bids, which will open on December 18, will remain valid up to December 26. Bidders should quote for a minimum 35,000 tonnes and a maximum of 1,00,000 tonnes of wheat, MMTC said in a statement.

Wheat offered for export is stored at the godowns of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) at Kakinada port in Andhra Pradesh.

Wheat offered would be of the 2012-13 crop year (July-June). The bidder should export wheat by January 31, 2013.

MMTC and other state trading companies have been floating bids following the government's decision to export two million tonnes of the grain from the FCI godowns.

The government godowns are overflowing due to an all-time high procurement of about 38 million tonnes last year.

## Mixed trend in pepper



Pepper market showed a mixed trend on Thursday as activities were limited and as a result November and February moved up slightly while December dropped slightly.

“Still some have apprehensions about depositing the material even though things are smooth at the warehouses ever since the FMC representatives came to study what was happening,” market sources told *Business Line*.

There was a lot of switching over to December and additional buying today, they said..

The operators appear to “be caught up,” they said. The prices have not shot up as they anticipated because the new crop is expected to trickle in from mid-December and it will be in full swing from January.

Looking at this possibility, domestic dealers were buying only hand to mouth, they said. Besides, systematic liquidation was there earlier by growers and dealers when the prices were ruling above Rs410 a kg, they claimed.

Arrival of farm grade pepper today stood at eight tonnes and of this six tonnes were traded.

Nov contract on the NCDEX moved up by Rs 35 to close at Rs 41,420 a quintal while December declined by Rs 70 to close at Rs 40,785 a quintal. February increased by Rs 20 to close at Rs 36,540 a quintal.

## Turnover



Total turnover moved up by 53 tonnes to 1,595 tonnes while the total open interest went up by 151 tonnes showing good additional buying.

November open interest decreased by 102 tonnes to 1,316 tonnes while that of Dec and Feb increased by 204 tonnes and 46 tonnes indicating good switching over from November to December.

Spot prices remained unchanged at the previous level of Rs 39,200 (ungarbled) and Rs 40,700 (MG 1) a quintal on limited activities.

Indian parity in the international market remained at \$7,800 a tonne (c&f) Europe and \$8,100 a tonne (c&f) US and still remained much above other origins, they said.

### **FMC launches 'probe' into complaints against pepper market movement**

Commodities market regulator Forward Markets Commission (FMC) is understood to have launched a probe into an alleged market manipulation of pepper futures contracts by certain market participants in collusion with some exchange officials.

According to sources, certain large operating cartels who were earlier involved in guar scam are behind the unnatural price rise in pepper futures since June, Cochin Hill Produce Merchants' Association (CHPMA) sources said.

These operators allegedly with insider information picked up about 6,000 tonnes of pepper from the exchange platform, hoping to make a "killing by squeezing genuine hedgers/small investors", a CHPMA source said.

Since it is against the existing restrictions, the FMC is probing as to how "one or two entities could manage to cover/corner such large quantities with in such a short time. "There are restrictions on the exchange platform with regard to near month positions where in no one individual party is allowed to hold more than 300 tonnes outstanding position for the near month," the source said.

The Assocham has also appealed to the FMC to probe the unusual price movements in pepper since June 2012. The exchange, in a statement some time ago, stated that they had a robust

mechanism in place to take care of any quality issue that may arise. Therefore, the present allegations regarding quality are appear to be instigated.

The trade, however, expressed the fear that FMC might ban futures trading in pepper in the wake of the present happenings.

### **Bullish trend continues in edible oils**



The bullish trend continued in edible oils market on Thursday, tracking firm futures markets and signs of recovery.

Domestic soyabean oil futures extended gain further by Rs 9-10 on the back of sharp jump witnessed in Malaysian palm oil futures the previous day that pushed prices higher in physical market.

In Mumbai market, groundnut oil and cotton refined oil increased by Rs 9 and Rs 5 respectively.

Imported palmolein and soyabean refined oil were up by Rs 6 and Rs 4 respectively on a similar price rise by local refineries tracking firm sign from the overseas market. Malaysia's Bursa Malaysia Derivatives Exchange and the local markets were closed, hence, volume remained low.

At the end of the day, Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 518- 520 and super palmolein Rs 576; soya refined oil Rs 672 for delivery up to Dec 15. Ruchi quoted palmolein Rs 518 up to Dec 10, Rs 521 for Dec 11-31, super palmolein Rs 579 up to Dec 10, Rs 582 for Dec 11-31, soyabean refined oil Rs 670 for Nov-Dec, and sunflower refined oil Rs 730 for Nov-Dec.

Allana's rate for palmolein was Rs 515 and super palmolein Rs 574. In Saurashtra – Rajkot, groundnut oil *telia tin* ruled steady at Rs 1,840 (Rs 1,840) and loose 10 kg increased by Rs 10 to Rs 1,190 (Rs 1,180).

**On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange**, soyabean refined oil Dec was higher by Rs 8.60 to Rs 684.90 (Rs 676.30), Jan up by Rs 9.35 to Rs 680.40 (Rs 671.05) and Feb up by Rs 10.90 to Rs 679.00 (Rs.668.10).

**The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates were (Rs/10 kg):** Groundnut oil 1,180 (1,171.25), soya refined oil 669 (665.25), sunflower exp. ref. 670 (670.25), sunflower ref. 730 (730.25), rapeseed ref. oil 845 (850.25), rapeseed exp ref. 815 (820.25), cotton ref. oil 680 (675.25) and palmolein was 517 (511.15).

### Turmeric arrivals hit record low in Erode markets



A meagre 415 bags of turmeric arrived in the four markets in and around Erode on Thursday. Despite the sparse arrivals, prices failed to gain.

“After five days of closure, traders and exporters expected 3,000-4,000 bags will arrive for sale. But only 415 e arrived for sale. Of this, the traders procured 40 per cent stocks and stockists have purchased 20 per cent.

Prices did not appreciate despite low arrival.

Prices in the Regulated marketing committee decreased by Rs 1,000 a quintal due to poor quality of the arrivals. This is the lowest arrival during this year.

“Only farmers living 2-3 km from Erode brought the stocks,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. “It is the record lowest arrival.” The Regulated Marketing Committee officials said that this is the first time in ever that a very low quantity of 47 bags arrived for sale and 17 bags were sold.

They said that usually after Diwali the arrival will decrease, but this year record decrease is witnessed by everyone.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,096-5,509 a quintal; root variety Rs 3,711-4,490.

**Salem Hybrid Crop:** The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,509-5,861 a quintal. The root variety was sold at Rs 4,496-5,006. Of the arrival of 252 bags, only 60 sold. At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,313-4,777, the root variety Rs 4,370-4,690. Of 47 bags, only 17 were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,319-5,655, the root variety Rs 4,390-4,969.

All the 85 bags were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,402-5,609, root variety Rs 3,402-4,690.

All the 31 bags were sold.

The Erode Turmeric Merchants Association President said it was holiday for the markets on Friday to condole the death of a member.

The markets will assemble again on Monday.

### **Wheat, flour seen ruling firm in short-term**

As expected, wheat and flour prices continued to rule firm at their previous levels, on Thursday. A steady trend is anticipated as market is getting good support from strong consumer demand, said Radhey Sham, a wheat trader.

Prices have been ruling firm since last week and may continue to rule around current levels for the next few days, too, he added.

Food Corporation of India has not resumed sales under the open market scheme yet and it is unlikely to see any major alteration in prices until FCI resumes its sales, said Radhey Sham.

In the physical market, around 55 tonnes of dara variety from Uttar Pradesh were directly offloaded at the mills.

Mill delivery was at Rs 1,540-1,545 a quintal while chakki was Rs 1,550. Similarly, Desi varieties ruled flat amid slack trading and quoted at Rs 2,050-2,200. On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, November delivery increased by Rs 25 and traded at Rs 1,635, it had touched a high at Rs 1,660 earlier on Thursday. December contracts went up by Rs 11 to Rs 1,596. Spot prices went down by Rs 5 and traded at Rs 1,560.

### Flour Prices

With a steady trend, flour prices were unchanged at Rs 1,750. Chokar was up by Rs 100 on strong demand and sold at Rs 1,400. MMTC has issued a global tender to export one lakh tonnes of wheat for shipments in January.

### Sugar gains on farmers' stir in Maharashtra



Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market ruled unchanged on Thursday as spot market was closed for Bhau Bij festival.

Domestic sugar futures prices were up by Rs 12-16 a quintal on expectation of delay in crushing due to the ongoing farmer's agitation for increase in cane price in main producing areas of Maharashtra.

There were no arrivals – dispatches or loading – unloading in the Vashi market due to holiday.

Under tone remained slightly firm due to disturbance in supply from producing areas. Business will be normal from Friday said a wholesaler.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association has fixed the Naka rates Rs 3,411.25-3,471.25 for S-grade and Rs 3,425.25-3,660.25 for M-grade, fine bold variety M-grade Rs 3,680.25 on Diwali Muhurat day for three days.

Due to holiday, only a few mills are expected to float tenders in the evening at Rs 3,330-3,380 (Rs 3,330-3,380) for S-grade and Rs 3,400- 3,500 (3,400- 3,500) for M-grade. Vashi spot rates: S-grade Rs 3,470-3,550 (Rs 3,470-3,550) and M-grade Rs 3,510-3,710 (Rs 3,510- 3,710).

**On National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange**, December futures was higher Rs16 to Rs 3,331 (Rs 3,315), January up by Rs 12 to Rs 3,342 (Rs 3,330) and February Rs 3,361 (Rs 3,349).

### Slack demand cools mustard oil

Slack demand and poor buying support have reigned in mustard oil prices further in the past one week.

Though local mandis remained closed on Thursday, mustard oil in Indore mandis is currently ruling at Rs 777 for 10 kg (down Rs 5 from last week).

Similarly, it is ruling at Rs 770 in Neemuch and Rs 780 in Moorena mandis (down Rs 5 from last week).

In Rajasthan and Gujarat mandis also, mustard oil is ruling low with its price in Kota mandi currently being quoted at Rs 780, while it is Rs 775 in Shree Ganga Nagar (down Rs 10 from last week) and Rs 795 in Jaipur (down Rs 5 from last week).

In Gujarat also, it is ruling low at Rs 795 (down Rs from last week).

Demand in mustard oil at higher rate has declined leading to sluggishness.

However, any major fall in prices in the coming days appears unlikely given the decline in domestic stocks in mustard and increased demand during the winter season.

Mustard may witness a bearish sentiment if crop estimates turn out to be favourable in December indicating higher yield compared with last year.

### **Mustard seeds**

Mustard seeds are currently ruling at Rs 4,500-4,600 a quintal, while raida is ruling at Rs 4,000-4,100.

According to Vinod Choudhary, a trader, mustard seeds appear to remain range-bound with a fluctuation of Rs 50-100 a quintal at least for a month before new crop estimate for mustard comes out in December this year.

### **Punjab, Haryana want rate cut on refinance by Nabard to co-ops**

Punjab and Haryana will seek a reduction in rate of interest on refinance by Nabard to state cooperatives and also demand speeding up of financial inclusion exercise in rural areas with Union Finance Minister P Chidambaram tomorrow.

Chidambaram will meet Chief Ministers of the northern states and heads of public sector banks tomorrow to review the credit requirements and the progress of central schemes.

“We will demand (in the meeting) that the rate of interest on refinance to cooperatives for short-term agriculture loan by Nabard should be brought down to give relief to state cooperatives,” a senior official of Punjab Finance Department told PTI here today.

Terming the current rate of interest on refinance as “very high” for cooperative societies, he said National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) should reduce the rate of interest from 4.5 per cent to 2 per cent.

Echoing similar views, Haryana Finance Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal said, "We want (from Centre) that refinance rate to cooperative banks by Nabard should be cut down and this issue will be raised in tomorrow's meeting".

Punjab and Haryana have 21 and 20 cooperative banks with short term lending to the tune of Rs 4,500 crore and Rs 4,000 crore per annum, respectively.

Both agrarian states will also seek that Nabard should provide at least 75 per cent of total farm credit of cooperatives on refinance basis.

"Currently, only 45 per cent of total cooperative credit is available on refinance terms but we want this percentage should be enhanced to 75 per cent so that minimum deposits of cooperative banks could be deployed for that purpose," he said.

Punjab and Haryana also want banks to gear up to provide banking facilities in each village under the financial inclusion programme.

"Banks need to gear up to open branches in villages, provide banking services to rural people," Kaushal said.

"We want each member of family in a village should have a bank account to have an access to banking services either by setting up a branch or through banking correspondent," Punjab official said.

The delay in appointing common Business Correspondent (BC) in Punjab also posed problems in implementing financial inclusion programme, official said.

Punjab National Bank has been allotted a cluster comprising Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir to appoint a common BC for covering 4,794 villages.

Punjab and Haryana will also demand that the imposition of income tax on state cooperatives should be rolled back, citing that these institutions facilitate only farm credit.

**Karnataka told to release 4.8 tmc of water to Tamil Nadu**





The Cauvery Monitoring Committee (CMC) today directed Karnataka to release 4.8 tmc of water to Tamil Nadu over the next fortnight even as it refused to get into the issue of settling previous shortfall raised by the latter.

The CMC, headed by Secretary Water Resources, said Karnataka will have to release 4.8 thousand million cubic feet (tmc) of water between November 16 and 30.

Sources privy to the eight-page order said Karnataka may not have to release the entire 4.8 tmc water as it had released additional supply for neighbouring Tamil Nadu in the previous fortnight.

In a written submission, Tamil Nadu had on November 2 demanded that its shortfall of 52.5 tmc during the just-concluded South-West monsoon season be settled by the panel.

But the Committee refused to get into the issue as there was lack of consensus on period of the monsoon season.

While the order does not mention how the dispute can be settled, sources in Karnataka inferred that the two states will have to approach the Supreme Court which is already hearing the two sides on Cauvery water sharing dispute.

During the previous fortnight, Karnataka was asked to release 4 tmc of water to Tamil Nadu.

On Supreme Court orders, the CMC had asked Tamil Nadu to make a written submission before the panel by November 2 on issues it wants to be addressed.

“We hereby direct CMC to examine all issues as may be raised on behalf of the states and make recommendations,” a Bench of justices D K Jain and J S Khehar had said in October.

The Bench said both the states shall comply with all the recommendations made by the CMC in letter and spirit.

The Monitoring Committee consists of Union Water Resources Secretary as Chairperson, chief secretaries and chief engineers of the basin states and Chairman, Central Water Commission as members.

# Business Standard

TODAY FARM NEWS

16.11.2012 A.M

## Commercial banks falter in advancing crop loans

Punjab & Sind bank, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Travancore and ING Vysya bank have failed to open their accounts

**Nirmalya Behera / Bhubaneswar November 15, 2012, 18:22 IST**

As many as 28 out of 41 commercial banks operating in the state have failed to achieve the 18% lending target stipulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for the agricultural sector, by September end.

Public sector lenders that have fallen short of the target include State Bank of India (15.01%), Allahabad Bank (11%), Andhra Bank (17.02%), Bank of Baroda (15.43%), Canara Bank (11.8%), Central Bank of India (8.28%), Oriental Bank of Commerce(2.1%) and Punjab National Bank (17.87%) among others.

Punjab & Sind bank, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Travancore and ING Vysya bank have failed to open their accounts.

The private sector banks which have faltered in achieving the target include Kotak Mahindra Bank (8.86%), Karanataka Bank (11.41%), HDFC bank (10.03 percent) and Indus Ind bank (6.16%).

On the contrary, all the regional rural banks (RRBs) - Baitarani Gramya Bank, Kalinga Gramya Bank, Utkal Gramya Bank, Neelachal Gramya Bank and Rushikulya Gramya Bank have achieved RBI stipulated targets.

Expressing displeasure over this, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said that there is serious imbalance between the share of cooperatives and commercial banks financing the credit needs of the agriculture sector.

“The commercial banks and regional rural banks must share at least 50% of the credit requirements of the agriculture sector and it must be given top priority”, Patnaik said at the inaugural ceremony of the 129th meeting of State Level Bankers Committee organised here on Thursday.

Patnaik said, even if the overall CD (credit deposit) ratio of the banks is around 76% in the state, the ratio continues to be below 40% in few districts.

On the whole, the CD ratio of all the banks stood at 75.8%. District-wise analysis of CD ratios shows a lopsided trend. While Sambalpur languishes at the bottom of the table with CD ratio of 10.71%, Naxal infested Malakangiri had a CD ratio of 19.76%. The CD ratios of Deogarh (33.34%), Gajapati (39.25%), Jagatsinghpur (36.95%), Nuapada (37.64%) and Kandhamal (38.30%) were also disappointing.

The banks having low CD ratio includes Bank of Maharashtra (40.14%), Indian Bank (58.47%), Vijaya Bank (29.35%), Indus Ind Bank (42.85%), ING Bank Vysya Bank (3.23%) among others.

he banks have achieved 79% of the lending target in the first six months of the current fiscal. Of the total credit target of Rs 12505 crore, the bankers have lent Rs 9837.30 crore.

The Annual Credit Plan has been pegged at Rs 29,927.41 crore for 2012-13, an increase of 20% over the credit plan of Rs 25,019.39 crore fixed for 2011-12.

Commercial banks should play a greater role in advancing loans to the agricultural sector as 95-96% of the state's deposit is mopped up by them, said Prasanna Acharya, state finance minister.



# THE TIMES OF INDIA

TODAY FARM NEWS

16.11.2012 A.M

## Panel asks Karnataka to release 4.81 tmcft to Tamil Nadu

CHENNAI: The [Cauvery Monitoring Committee](#), an advisory body of the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh-led [Cauvery River Authority](#), on Thursday directed the Karnataka government to release 4.81tmcft to Tamil Nadu between November 16 and 30.

This is the third time that the high-level committee is meeting since October 11 to take a call on the quantum of water to be released by Karnataka to Tamil Nadu.

The meeting, convened by [Union water resources secretary Dhruv Vijai Singh](#), was attended by chief secretaries and irrigation and PWD secretaries of the Cauvery basin states.

Having lost the opportunity to raise kuruvasi (short-term paddy crop) owing to the delay in release of water from the Mettur reservoir this year, Tamil Nadu has been waging a legal battle with the neighbouring state in the apex court to get water released from Karnataka's four reservoirs—Kabini, Krishnarajasagar, Hemavathi and Harangi—to save at least the ongoing samba cultivation. Tamil Nadu has been able to raise only nine lakh acres of samba (long-term paddy crop) till date, as against the traditional coverage of 14.73 lakh acres in the delta districts of Thanjavur, Tiruvaur and Nagapattinam. This is despite a slew of subsidies and uninterrupted power supply guaranteed to farmers to operate pumpsets.

The CMC's directive to Karnataka to release 4.81tmcft is based on a distress sharing formula, worked out at 40% yield in Karnataka reservoirs.

A senior state official said, "We expected the committee to decide on the backlog of 52.8tmcft

during the southwest monsoon, before taking a call on the fortnightly release."

The state is likely to take up the issue again before the Supreme Court on November 26. The fourth meeting of the CMC is slated for November 28, when a decision on further release of water will be taken.

As things stand now, Karnataka has been complying with the CMC directives. "Mettur reservoir has been getting inflows as prescribed by the CMC," the official said.

In its first meeting on October 11, the CMC directed Karnataka to release 8.85tmcft between October 15 and 31, while in its second meeting on October 31, it directed Karnataka to release 3.94tmcft.

Rains triggered by Cyclone Nilam was a blessing for the delta region, where about 1.4 lakh hectares of directly sown areas were benefited, said officials.

### **Mega stocking by government pushing up food prices?**

NEW DELHI: Stocking up of foodgrains by the government could be one of the major factors for the continuing surge in food prices, warn experts.

Latest wholesale price data available on the industry department's website shows that wheat prices are up almost 20% in October compared to a year ago. That's at a time when the government is holding stocks of 42 million tonnes — three times the buffer stock norm.

Experts say the government is not releasing enough wheat in time and exports were not pushed to unload the massive stocks. In some cases, roller flour mills are being impacted as not enough wheat is being released in the open market.