

THE HINDU

TODAY FARM NEWS

26.11.2012 A.M

Endosulfan: Opposition to meet Chandy

Left Democratic Front (LDF) leaders led by Leader of the Opposition V.S. Achuthanandan will meet Chief Minister Oommen Chandy on Monday to seek a better deal for endosulfan victims.

The Opposition wants the government to provide compensation, recommended by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), to all the victims of endosulfan. Till now, the compensation has been given to only about 1,600 bed-ridden and mentally challenged victims, whereas the pesticide has seriously affected more than 6,000 persons in Kasaragod district.

Leader of the CPI Legislature Party C. Divakaran told *The Hindu* on Sunday that the government was yet to fully implement the recommendations of the NHRC regarding rehabilitation and remediation of endosulfan victims. Proper employment schemes for the affected families were yet to be worked out. Assistance was being denied to kidney and cancer patients on the ground that the diseases were not caused by endosulfan. Mr. Divakaran said the LDF did not agree with the recommendation of the expert committee of the Supreme Court that the existing stocks of raw materials should be used to make endosulfan, and that the use of the pesticide should be permitted for two years. The committee itself had admitted that the pesticide caused serious health problems, the CPI leader said.

Ration subsidy

He said the LDF would convey to the Chief Minister its opposition to the proposal to disburse ration subsidy through banks. The scheme would force cardholders to run from ration shop to the bank and back. Ration cardholders would be so inconvenienced that it would ultimately undermine the public distribution system. If corruption was the problem, the government should use the existing anti-corruption machinery to prevent it.

Aadhaar cards opposed

He said the LDF would also object to the introduction of Aadhaar cards in schools for disbursement of scholarships and other benefits. The Central scheme was not suitable for a State such as Kerala which had achieved considerable progress in the field of education. The scheme was meant for States such as Bihar.

14 horticulture clusters in Mysore

The project will adopt new methods to boost yield

Aimed at boosting horticulture productivity, bringing value addition and developing export-oriented produce for generating higher income, 14 horticulture clusters have been formed in seven taluks of Mysore district under the Comprehensive Horticulture Development.

Farmers in these clusters will get subsidy ranging from 40 to 50 per cent for growing horticultural crops and incorporating proven and modern methods.

Under this programme, farmers growing horticultural crops, especially mango, sapota and banana, can set up their sanghas (mango farmers can form a mango growers' sangha) and each one of them will get a revolving fund of Rs. 2 lakh for providing soft loans and exploring marketing avenues for the respective crop.

Probe agriculture jewel loan: farmers' association

The Tamil Nadu Farmers' Association (apolitical) has urged the Centre to probe the pattern of disbursement of agriculture jewel loans. In a release, the organisation says that in most branches of nationalised banks, the officials, in order to achieve the target, disburse loan under the agriculture jewel loan head without verifying land documents or ascertaining if the applicants were farmers.

There is improper utilisation of funds, which the Centre must investigate.

Minister inaugurates three milk cooler units

Minister for Milk and Dairy Development V. Moorthy on Sunday inaugurated three Bulk Milk Cooler (BMC) plants set up by Aavin in the district.

Storage capacity

Each of the plants commissioned at Manupatty, Pappankulam (both Udumalpet taluk) and K. Ayyampalayam (Palladam taluk), had a capacity to store 5,000 litres of milk procured from various milk cooperative societies functioning around the plants every day.

The milk brought to the BMCs would be kept under refrigerated conditions before it is sent to Aavin's main plant in Coimbatore.

N.Kannan, deputy registrar (dairy), Department of Dairy Development, told *The Hindu* that the district already had a BMC at Naduvelampalayam prior to the establishment of the three opened on the day.

Commissioner for Milk Production and Dairy Development T. K. Ramachandran, District Panchayat chairman M. Shanmugam, Collector G. Govindaraj, MLAs and officials from different departments were present during the inauguration.

Red sanders plantation unsuccessful in the State



: Inclement weather and diseases have defeated Kerala's attempt to commercially grow red sanders, a much sought after medicinal tree.

Nearly three decades ago, the research division of the Kerala Forest Department had tried planting the saplings of the species in five climatic zones. The plantings were undertaken in the research ranges of the Forest Department, including Nilambur, Mananthavady and Chalakudy. However, the efforts met with limited success and it was the saplings planted at Varantharapally that overcame the challenges of nature. In Varantharapally, near Chalakudy, 658 trees have grown up to a height of 12 metre and girth of 160 cm. The saplings were planted on a plot of

nearly 1 hectare way back in 1982, said V.R. Vijayakumar, Deputy Conservator of Forest (Research Wing, North).

Besides the ones at Varantharapally, a few saplings, planted on the campus of a public sector company in Kuttanalloor, near Thrissur, have also survived.

The export of red sanders has been banned in the country. There have been several attempts in the past to smuggle them to foreign markets. The Department of Revenue Intelligence had recently seized some consignments of red sanders at the Vallarpadam International Container Terminal in Kochi. The seedlings for the field trials were brought from Andhra Pradesh. During the field trial, some of the saplings had developed blisters indicated by the oozing of the tree sap. There were also incidents of pest attack on the trees. The relatively high water table of the State might not be conducive for the trees, said another official who was associated with the project three decades ago.

Since the project proved to be commercially unsuccessful, the department did not follow it up and later abandoned it. The few trees that survived indicated that commercial plantations of the trees were not successful in the State, an official attached with the project earlier said.

The dry terrains of the Deccan Plateau are the homeland of these species. They grow well in some districts of Andhra Pradesh, including Kadapa. Extracts from the wood have medicinal applications and are used in the treatment of skin diseases, said P. Sujanapal, a researcher at the Kerala Forest Research Institute.

. The moist climate of the State is not suitable for the plant. The plants will be susceptible to various fungal infections in moist conditions prevailing here, he said.

Ptrocarpus marsupium , a close relative of Red Sander, which is known as Venga in local parlance, grows abundantly in Kerala.

More farmers' cooperatives needed, says Kalam

'Rural entrepreneurship will lead to overall progress'



HONOUR: Former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam being presented a souvenir at the launch of the 15th Chaitanya Karshika Mela in Kottayam on Sunday.

Former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has emphasised the need to launch cooperative societies for farmers in order to improve agricultural production.

He was inaugurating the 15th Chaitanya Karshika Mela organised by the Kottayam Social Service Centre (KSSS) here on Sunday.

Dr. Kalam said agricultural productivity could be ensured only through integrated rural development that involved agricultural and non-agricultural growth, and a societal mission. According to him, one of the major problems faced in agriculture was the division of agricultural lands into small holdings, which gets fragmented further due to the prevailing social system. Under the circumstances, the sole method to increase production is by creating a farmers' cooperative movement in the rural sector which would bring together small-scale farmers, facilitating mechanised farming techniques, processing, value-addition and marketing of agro products. Such movements could also establish networks with markets on behalf of the individual farmers. The farmers, who are thus empowered as entrepreneurs, will also be able to plan methods to diversity their operations, he said.

Advocating his concept of PURA (Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas) scheme for rural development, Dr. Kalam said the programme could facilitate a growth driven by rural entrepreneurship, thereby leading to the overall progress of the region.

He added that sustainable development constitutes not just economic factors, but also focuses on social development, environmental considerations, technological infusions and employment generation.

Answering a query by a student on the necessity of the Kudankulam nuclear power project, Dr. Kalam said the country was utilising nuclear energy for power generation because it was a clean source and was similar to other sources like solar, hydel and wind energy. Moreover, there was no cause for worry regarding the safety of nuclear projects as several scientific measures have been put in place to avoid accidents.

Finance Minister K.M. Mani presided over the function. Home Minister Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, Suresh Kurup and Mons Joseph, MLAs, District Collector Mini Antony, Kottayam Archdiocese Auxiliary Bishop Mar Joseph Pandarasseril, former MLA Thomas Chazhikadan, KSSS president Mathew Elappanickal and executive secretary Michael Vettickat also participated in the function.

Steps to increase irrigation potential in Adilabad

A concrete step towards development of irrigation potential in Adilabad has been taken up with finalisation of sharing of waters between Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra from the three proposed barrages across the Penganga river flowing on the district's border with the neighbouring State. Development of irrigation potential in this district is very important to stop the ever increasing conversion of land use from agriculture to commercial purposes .

Though only 20,000 acres of ayacut improvement is envisaged under the three barrages, the latest development could help irrigate about 70,000 acres of parched land in the three mandals of Tamsi, Jainad and Bela, according to experts. Allocation of 2 tmc of water from the three barrages would be sufficient to supply water even through the link canal of the inter-State Lower Penganga Project (LPP) which would eventually command an ayacut of 50,000 acres, said experts.

According to agreement reached last month, Maharashtra would construct the barrages at Rajapet and Pimprad while Andhra Pradesh would construct one at Rudha. These barrages,

which would yield 0.35 tmc, 0.45 tmc and 1.20 tmc of water respectively, could be connected to the LPP link canal which was designed to run parallel to the course of the Penganga.

“With an assurance of flow of water in it, AP can go for construction of the 89-km-long link canal within its territory without waiting for the LPP to reach an appropriate stage in construction. There is hardly any hitch so far as clearances for the canal are concerned,” opined an engineer in Irrigation Department in Adilabad.

“The government should stop dithering on the issue of the inter-state project and release its share of 12 per cent in the cost of the dam to take up construction of the canal in quick time. Such opportunities do not arise frequently,” observed B. Goverdhan Reddy, a senior farmer leader in Adilabad district.

‘Bail out flood-hit farmers’

Rytu Coolie Sangham (Andhra Pradesh) has demanded the State Government to rescue the farmers who suffered losses due to Nilam cyclone and floods which followed it, on a war footing.

Addressing a press conference here, Sangham president S. Jhansi said that the farmers suffered huge losses in the cyclone. The government should announce a remunerative price of Rs. 2,000 per quintal of paddy (numbers) and Rs. 2,500 for quintal of paddy (BPT) variety. The meeting also opposed the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in retail sector and cut in subsidised LPG cylinders.

Order against felling of trees welcomed

Environment protection groups in Kinnaur have welcomed the interim order of National Green Tribunal directing the Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation not to cut trees on disputed lands and using the forest land for the non-forestry purposes. The HPPC is constructing the 120 MW Kashang Hydro Power Project in the heartland of the tribal Kinnaur district.

The clearance of forest for the project and diversion of forest land for the hydel project has been challenged by Devi Gyan Negi, an activist of Paryavaran Sanrakshan Samiti and resident of local Lippa village.

Mr S. S. Negi, president of the NGO maintained that the earlier forest clearance order is a violation of Forest Rights Act 2006 and the unregulated diversion of forest land in the area in last ten years has resulted in serious ecological consequences. It has destroyed the valuable produce of pine nuts (Chigoza Pine, local name-Neoza). The dry fruit nuts of Pinus Gerardiana in the North-Western Himalayas are a good source of income for the local tribal population. A huge number of such trees have been cut by the project developers, said Mr Negi.

This interim order comes close to the heels of another important judgement by the Green Tribunal in relation to forest clearances passed on November 7, 2012.

The Tribunal had ordered that subsequent to the grant of clearance by the Ministry of Environment “it is incumbent upon the State Government to pass a reasoned order transferring or allowing the land in question for being used for non-forest purpose”. The tribunal ordered this based on the provisions under Section 2 of the Forest Conservation Act 1980.

Despite constraints, adivasi farmers harvest their paddy



DARING ACTION: Sheela Toppo argues with a policeman as he tries to stop her son Raju Toppo from carrying their paddy harvest home in Nagri village

Section 144 (IPC) has been imposed thrice at Nagri since July, prohibiting farmers from gathering on their farmland

On November 20, Nandi Kashap and Parveen Toppo woke up at 5 a.m., an hour earlier than usual. By 7 a.m., both women were in the village akhada (square) to join a group of 20. For two days, two companies of Rapid Action Force (RAF) constables, numbering 150, had turned them away when they tried to harvest the paddy they planted in August. “We will have to go to each other’s plots and harvest this together in big groups. Let us see how they stop us,” the women concluded.

By 10 a.m., several women in groups of 12-13 walked along the bunds to reach plots of ripe paddy and began cutting and piling the crop in heaps. Raju Toppo was the first to try carrying two bales balanced on the ends of a stick back to his house. As an Assistant Sub Inspector tried to stop him, his mother Sheela Toppo ran from the field, waving a sickle. “It is my crop; why do I have to ask your officers?” she argued and told her son to keep walking.

In 2010, the Jharkhand government allotted 227 acres to build campuses of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ranchi, the National University of Study & Research in Law (NUSRL) and the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) at Nagri village, 15 km from Ranchi. But the Nagri farmers, more than 400 Oraon adivasi families, refused to move away. The government has imposed Section 144 (IPC) thrice at Nagri since July, prohibiting farmers from gathering on the farmland, and stationed paramilitary forces. In January, the government bulldozed their winter crop of wheat and potato.

The government claims it had acquired the land to build an extension and a seed farm for the Birsa Agricultural University in 1957-58. But the Nagri farmers, led by adivasi activist and journalist Dayamani Barla, contest this citing documents obtained by Ms. Barla through Right to Information applications which reveal that of the 153 families to whom the government had offered compensation in 1957, only 25 had taken it. The rest had refused.

The farmers possess proof of having paid taxes on this farmland till 2007 and even in 2011. Why not the government set up campuses on non-agricultural land instead, they ask. Further, they question if it is legal for the government to have acquired the land under clause 17(4) of the

Land Acquisition Act, meant for situations of urgent public requirement, and not putting it to any use for 55 years.

With the government floundering in providing a solution either to the farmers or to the institutions like the NUSRL and the IIM, which are operating from ad hoc campuses, the Jharkhand High Court has been goading the State into action to secure the campuses of the three institutions in the village.

In April, the farmers held a 150-day peaceful protest on their farms. On April 30, following a PIL filed by the Bar Association of Ranchi, the High Court ordered the government to “to secure the construction of the buildings of the educational institutions within 48 hours.” Three farmers — Mundri Oraon, Dashmi Kirketta, and Poko Tirke — died of heatstroke while sitting on protest on the fields in the blistering May sun. When the High Court dismissed the farmers’ application to review the government’s 1957 land acquisition claim, they approached the Supreme Court. But the Supreme Court declined to hear their special leave petition, saying that in this matter of land acquisition of 1956-57, it was not inclined to interfere in the High Court orders.

Six students of the legal aid clinic of the NUSRL have since become intervener-petitioners in the case. They have submitted research showing that the Nagri village has poor quality soil that does not yield more than “1.98 grams rice per person per day,” disputing the farmers’ claim that agriculture was their primary sustenance. Lauding the NUSRL students’ “valuable data” and citing that the NUSRL had already paid Rs. 75 lakh in rent, the High Court, on September 11, ordered the State government to “clear the construction in the administrative side within two weeks.”

“There is no such unit as ‘gram per person per day’ for measuring soil fertility. Only 15 per cent of land in Jharkhand supports more than one crop and Nagri village is one such area. Because it lies by the Jumar river, farmers grow hybrid paddy, wheat, gram, and even vegetables,” said a senior scientist in the Agricultural Extension department of the Birsa Agricultural University, declining to be named.

Two weeks later, on September 26, the Chief Judicial Magistrate court in Ranchi issued a property warrant against Ms. Barla for leading a demonstration for MGNREGS cards in 2006 at the block officer's office in Angada, Ranchi. She surrendered at the CJM court on October 16 and got bail two days later. But before she could leave the prison, she was charged in a second case — for ploughing the plot of land in Nagri where the NUSRL and the IIM had constructed boundary walls costing Rs. 2.25 crore and Rs 1.7 crore respectively. “

A group of 100-150 farmers from Nagri, led by Ms. Barla, entered the plot where the NUSRL and the IIM had constructed boundary walls and cultivated the land. We told them not to but it had no effect on them,” reads the August 15 first information report. The FIR does not mention any use of force by villagers or by Ms. Barla but a case has been registered against her under Section 353 of the IPC (assaulting or using criminal force to deter a public servant from discharging duty), a non-bailable offence. While the CJM court rejected Ms. Barla's application three weeks ago, on November 24, the district court too followed suit.

On Tuesday, as Nagri's adivasi women reaped a defiant harvest, the area's district magistrate stationed at the site and RAF constables wielding rifles and teargas boxes looked on, expressing their sympathy and helplessness. “The government has no concern for either us, or them. Dew soaks through our tents every morning, the women constables have no access to toilets,” said a constable. “It is these farmers' labour and their money invested in this land. If these students can go abroad to study, why can they not travel a few km further away for their building,” asked another.

Staff at the IIM-Ranchi, which has been allotted 72 acres at Nagri, say they prefer an alternative location. “Farmers are the backbone of our economy, we cannot disregard them. There seems to be a lot of confusion over who is the owner of this land. We are considering an alternative plot of land in Namkum,” said IIM Director M.J. Xavier.

The NUSRL has been allotted 63.76 acres at Nagri. “At present we have five classrooms and two rooms for other work on our rented campus at BIT Mesra. For the 2013 batch, we will have no classrooms. We are merely following government orders on this issue,” said NUSRL Dean

A.K. Gupta. He refused to comment on the soil fertility data submitted by NUSRL students to the court.

“We will reap this harvest and plough the land again to sow gram and mustard. If the government tries to stop us, they should prepare for our response too,” said Vikas Toppo (35), who has emerged as one of the main leaders in the Nagri Bachao Samiti.

“There are five-six families willing to act like *dalals* [middlemen] of the government or even real estate companies, but the village does not support them,” says Toppo, against whom the police have registered three cases in the course of the agitation. Toppo says he studied zoology for two years in the Ranchi University but graduated in arts. He spent some months in Delhi preparing for the civil services exam.

“Ten years ago when I was visiting my village, I got involved in a case my neighbour was fighting against a real estate company trying to build a pathway through his land,” he recalls. He never went back to studying after that.

Cane growers seek Rs.3,000 per tonne

Cane growers tone down their earlier threat to counter the start of the crushing season for 2012-13 scheduled to get underway from Sunday in the Government-run S.V. Co-operative Sugar Factory questioning the propriety of the management launching the crushing for the current season, without clearing the mounting arrears payable to farmers for the cane supplied during the last season.

They had also registered their dissent over the government fixing the cane price at Rs.2,600 per tonne for the season.

The leaders of the farmers association besides the district leaders of the Farmers' Wing of YSR Congress who are leading the agitation have pointed out that the price of sugar in the open market was Rs.26 a kg during 2010-11 when the price per tonne of sugar cane paid to the farmers was pegged at Rs.2,100. As such they questioned the rationale and propriety of fixing

the cane price at a mere Rs.2,600, an increasing of only Rs.500 per tonne for 2012-13 season when the price of a kg of sugar in the open market has shot up to Rs.46 a kg.

It was in this context that the agitating cane growers citing the fact that they were already steeped in a range of problems, demanded a cane price of Rs.3,000 per tonne for the current season to meet the steep increase in the cost of cultivation.

Among those who led the stir were T. Audikesavulu Reddy, R. Chakrapani Reddy, Murali Naidu, Sridhar Reddy.

Fearing crop loss, ryot ends life

Distraught over lack of water supply in the irrigation channel that feeds his fields, a 35-year old farmer committed suicide here in Keezhvelur on Saturday night.

Rajangam of Koorathagudi in Valivalam, consumed pesticide. According to residents , water released under the turn system for the Vennar division had not flown into the Vennar channels in the area until Friday, the last day for the Vennar division channels to get water . Water would be released again only after a week.

Fearing that his six acres of paddy fields would wither away, Rajangam reportedly ended his life.

The body was sent to Tiruvarur Medical College Hospital for post-mortem.

Federation of Farmers' Associations of Cauvery Delta Districts has appealed to Chief Minister Jayalalithaa to grant a solatium of Rs. five lakh to Rajangam's family.

Petition to

Chief Minister

General secretary of the Federation P. Arupathy Kalyanam said that on November 21, his organisation had sent a petition to the Chief Minister about the condition of the Cauvery delta due to withering of paddy crops.

“We also represented at a farmers’ grievance day meeting on November 23 and pleaded for 12-hour three-phase supply.”

Mr. Kalyanam said he had urged the administration to form regulator committees with police protection for the water to reach tail-end areas. He sought 90 per cent diesel subsidy for diesel engines to protect crops from withering at least in 50 per cent of the areas cultivated.

Giving a boost to horticulture

Aimed at boosting horticulture productivity, bringing value addition and developing export-oriented produce for generating higher income, 14 horticulture clusters have been formed in seven taluks of Mysore district under the Comprehensive Horticulture Development.

Farmers in these clusters will get subsidy ranging from 40 to 50 per cent for growing horticultural crops and incorporating proven and modern methods.

Under this programme, farmers growing horticultural crops, especially mango, sapota and banana, can set up their sanghas (mango farmers can form a mango growers’ sangha) and each one of them will get a revolving fund of Rs. 2 lakh for providing soft loans and exploring marketing avenues for the respective crop.

Disclosing details of the project to *The Hindu*, Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture (State sector) M.S. Raju said farmers had been coming forward to avail themselves of benefits of the project, which was launched in August, 2012.

“The clusters — two in each taluk — had been constituted recently and we expect more farmers to avail themselves of the benefits that are available for three years.

At the time of launch, demonstrations had been conducted to explain about the project and how productivity could be enhanced through various initiatives,” he explained.

Subsidy could be availed for perennial and annual horticultural crops. Demonstrations were conducted at horticultural farms on the new methods employed in cultivating crops for achieving higher yield. Nutrient management, water management, use of bio-fertilizers and so on would be explained to farmers who come forward to avail subsidy, Mr. Raju said. For example, the

Yalachanahalli farm, about 18-km from Mysore near Yelwal, had been developed as a 'business model' for promotion of mango crop.

Mango saplings had been planted at the farm to demonstrate high-density mango plantation. Only short-duration varieties had been planted under this method.

This was one such method taken up for boosting mango productivity.

The method is expected to boost yield by nearly 50 per cent, he said. Mr. Raju said farmers belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes could avail themselves of 50 per cent subsidy. Drip irrigation, bio-fertilizers, vermicompost, trench and bund methods were being promoted for increasing yield, he added.

Hindustan Times

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26.11.2012 A.M

Weather

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Cloudy

Monday, Nov 26

Max Min

31.0° | 23.4°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 89

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:13

Sunset: 05:39

Barometer: 1014

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Tuesday, Nov 27

Max Min

33° | 24°

Extended Forecast for a week

Wednesday Nov 28	Thursday Nov 29	Friday Nov 30	Saturday Dec 1	Sunday Dec 2
33° 25° Cloudy	32° 25° Overcast	32° 25° Overcast	32° 25° Overcast	32° 25° Overcast

Airport Weather

Delhi

Rain: 0

Humidity: 63

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:52

Sunset: 05:24

Barometer: 1017



THE HINDU Business Line

TODAY FARM NEWS

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New rice system gaining popularity in Ramanathapuram

The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) technology has been gaining in popularity in Ramanathapuram district, introduced only three years ago, especially in R.S. Mangalam block, according to Z. Kamaldeen, Assistant Director of Agriculture, R.S. Mangalam block.

The farmers have shown how scarcity of water in the drought-prone district could be turned into an opportunity with increased yield, less water and less production cost.

The SRI farming is practised in 900 hectares and a target of 1,500 hectares has been fixed.

Paddy is cultivated in 18,800 hectares in the block.

A cluster approach is promoted, so that farmers in the entire village will adopt the technique, he added.

SRI is implemented in the R.S.Mangalam block under the National Agriculture Development Programme and Rainfed Development Agriculture Programme and progressive farmers involved for demonstrations, are being given subsidy, the sources said.

Pepper futures continue to drop on liquidation

Pepper futures witnessed the usual tug of war between both the operators and the market went down further last week.

The prices dropped despite non-availability of physical pepper on the ready market. There were no arrivals from the primary markets. The harvesting of the new crop has not yet started and the arrival of the fresh pepper is expected only from mid-Dec.

Consequently, no physical pepper was available on the spot either in Kerala or Karnataka. domestic demand started picking up from Monday onwards after the holidays as the pipelines of the stockists are said to be empty following liquidation by many of them in recent weeks.

Absence of supplies from the growers said to have prompted primary market dealers to buy Dec by Rs 7-8 below the delivery price. Upcountry dealers were also showing interest to buy from hedgers.

The total turn over in Dec was at 14,796 tonnes while the open interest in Dec delivery increased by only 54 tonnes. All the active contracts during week decreased. Dec, Feb and Mar fell by Rs 385, Rs 530 and Rs 740 respectively a quintal to close at Rs 38,360, Rs 35,110 and Rs 34,465.

Total turn over increased by 18,372 tonnes to close at 31,475 tonnes. Total open interest decreased by 433 tonnes to close at 7,935 tonnes.

Spot prices in tandem with the futures market trend dropped by Rs 400 during the week to close at Rs 37,600 (ungarbled) and Rs 39,100 (MG 1) a quintal despite a squeeze in supply.

Tea prices gain on demand at Kochi auctions

A good demand perked up prices of almost all varieties of tea at Kochi tea auction. In sale no. 47 dust category, the quantity on offer in CTC grades was 12,69,500 kg.

The market for good liquoring and popular marks of Kerala was fully firm to dearer by Re 1 to Rs 3 and sometimes more. Others remained steady to firm and occasionally dearer following quality.

According to auctioneers Forbes, Ewart and Figgis, the orthodox grades also witnessed a steady market and the quantity on offer was 23,500 kg. Bulk of the offerings was absorbed by upcountry buyers and exporters.

In the best CTC dusts, PD varieties quoted the best price of Rs 95-105, RD grades stood at Rs 100-110, SRD varieties fetched Rs 103-111 and SFD at Rs 103-124.

The Sale No.47 in leaf category also witnessed a good demand and the quantity on offer in orthodox grades was 2,44,500 kg.

Smaller brokens and fannings from the same origins was fully firm to sometimes dearer.

ctc leaf

The CTC leaf grades witnessed a better demand and the quantity on offer was 1,01,500 kg. The market was fully firm to dearer by Rs 2-3 and sometimes more.

In the dust category, Pasuparai SFD quoted the best prices of Rs 126 followed both by Injipara (Prm) RD and Kallayar SFD at Rs 125.

In the leaf grades, Chamraj Green Tea (FOP (S) fetched the best prices of Rs 314 followed by P's Woodlands Hyson Green Tea at Rs 313.

Rallis to train Odisha youths in farming

Rallis India, a crop protection company from the Tata Group, in partnership with the Directorate of Agriculture, Odisha, inaugurated the first Tata Rallis Agri Input Training Scheme (Traits) in the State.

The training programme intends to improve the employability of non-graduate rural youths with the farming background. This is done by imparting them training in agriculture marketing and crop advising to enable them to take up a career in these specialisations.

The company has already selected 25 youth to be trained under this scheme.

V. Shankar, Managing Director, said the company decided to bring this initiative to Odisha, after conducting three successful pilot programmes in Baramati in Maharashtra, Birbhum in West Bengal and Dharwad in Karnataka.

In this 'earn-while-you-learn' training program, the rural youths are provided with an industry and Government recognised certificate with employment support for a minimum of two years after successful completion of training. Minimum SSC pass and non-graduate rural youths with farming background are selected for this programme and trained 'in-house as well as on the job'

in collaboration with Government-run Krishi Vigyan Kendras with the help of existing front lines sales force.

After successful completion of one year training, these youths are given employment support for minimum two years in Rallis.

Import duty restored on skimmed milk powder

The Government has restored the tariff rate quota regime on skimmed milk powder. Under this, it will impose a 15 per cent import duty skimmed milk powder for up to 10,000 tonnes in a year. Above this limit, a duty of 60 per cent will be levied.

The Centre has also lifted the ban on export of whole milk powder, baby milk food and dairy whitener. Earlier, there was no import duty on these products. This was done to check on prices.

Now, with milk prices crashing the Centre has undone all measures taken to rein in prices.

Farmers consortium calls for decontrol of rice, wheat

The Consortium of Indian Farmers Association (CIFA) has demanded removal of all trading controls on exports of rice, wheat and cotton.

The association wanted the Government to allow them to export whenever international markets offered them good prices.

It also asked the Government not to create barriers within the country.

Trade status

A national level meet of farmers, which was held here on Saturday, discussed the status of trade in wheat, rice and cotton and strongly felt that the Government was coming in the way from realising good returns.

The meet demanded that the country should have an exclusive Budget for issues related to agriculture.

“The farming sector deserves an exclusive Budget. This will help the country plan better and tackle farm challenges,” P. Chengal Reddy, Secretary-General of CIFA, said.

detailed discussion

The CIFA called for a detailed discussion on the National Commission of Farmers in Parliament.

Jayaprakash Narayana, President of Lok Satta Party, blamed the Government for making rules that went against the interests of the farmers.

“They bar cotton exports to benefit the textile industry. Cotton is not a perishable commodity.

They should take measures to store it and allow the farmers to sell when the demand goes up,” he said.

Maharashtra goes global with micro-irrigation projects

Maharashtra has become the first State in the country to opt for global tenders in micro irrigation projects from this year.

It will include both drip and sprinkler irrigation projects for 2012-13. Sixty six companies bid recently for the projects, out of which 20 qualified.

Earlier, according to the Central scheme, farmers used to get subsidies for the equipment for drip and sprinkler projects. Every year Rs 1,400 crore was spent on micro-irrigation projects out of which 50 per cent was subsidy from the State and Central Governments.

However there were no specific guidelines for implementation. Subsidies earlier went to the companies and not the farmers, officials in the Agriculture Department said.

According to the new policy, those who want to do business in the State should opt for global tenders. “Earlier, only manual equipment was sold. Now farmers have a variety – manual, semi-automatic and automatic equipment (to choose from),” officials added.

According to them, the cost of the machinery has come down by 14 to 30 per cent due to the new competition that has been introduced and transparent procedure.

Under the new rules, the subsidy amount will be deposited into the bank account of the farmers. The maximum retail price will be fixed because of which there will be standardisation of rates and uniformity will be brought about.

The forms for purchase of the equipment will be available online. Through a bar code using a global positioning system, it will be known whether the system has been installed in the fields.

Rise in sectors posting 'low' growth in Oct-Dec quarter: CII survey

Despite hopes of recovery in the backdrop of slew of economic reforms initiated by the Government, a greater percentage of sectors has reported slow to negative growth in October-December quarter over the corresponding period last year, according to the CII-ASCON survey.

The findings indicated that out of 101 sectors, only 23 per cent predict 'excellent' to 'high' growth in October-December quarter this year, down from 34 per cent in the same quarter last year.

The percentage of sectors reporting 'low' to 'negative' growth performance increased from 48.6 per cent to 56.4 per cent and those reporting negative growth moved up from 17.1 per cent to 20.8 per cent during the same period.

The survey, tracks the growth of industrial sector of the economy on a quarterly basis through feedback received from sectoral industry associations.

Chandrajit Banerjee, Director-General, CII, said that "the Survey points to a continuation of the slowdown and the mood lifters in the form of reform measures that were announced are yet to take effect. While the intent from the Government to contain fiscal deficit is quite clear, a commensurate action is now required from the RBI in the form of reduction in repo rate to ease the monetary situation. Industry is in need of a combination of fiscal, monetary and administrative measures."

Banerjee added that the idea mooted by the Government about the National Investment Board is a good one and should be pursued with all earnestness.

Growth may recover to 6.1% in 2013: Morgan Stanley



India is expected to register a gradual recovery in the growth rate to 6.1 per cent in 2013 driven by positive impact from policy actions and acceleration in farm output growth, says a report by Morgan Stanley.

The country's growth rate would witness gradual recovery considering the "challenging" environment due to high fiscal deficit, high rural wage growth and declining private investments amid a still lacklustre external demand, the report said.

"We, thus, expect only a gradual recovery in growth to 6.1 per cent in 2013 from 5 per cent in 2012, driven by some positive impact from policy actions by the government and acceleration in farm output growth from a low base," the report said.

Morgan Stanley said that the bad growth mix of high fiscal deficit, high rural wage growth and declining private investment, needs to be addressed to revive growth in a sustainable manner.

Moreover, managing macro stability indicators such as inflation and the current account deficit will be difficult, unless the Government initiates a reduction in its expenditure growth and brings rural wage growth lower.

"While we are positive that the Government will continue with more measures to support improvement in investment, we are less confident that the Government will be able to achieve a meaningful reduction in the fiscal deficit via expenditure control and/or cut rural wage growth in the year before the general elections," the report added.

The Government's recent reforms include allowing FDI in multi-brand retail, aviation and broadcasting, hiking diesel price, capping the number of subsidised LPG cylinders, opening up pension sector to foreign investment and raising the FDI cap in insurance to 49 per cent.

India had been growing around 8-9 per cent before the global financial meltdown of 2008. The growth rate in 2011-12 slipped to a nine-year low of 6.5 per cent and in the quarter ended June 30, 2012, the economy grew by 5.5 per cent.

The Government expects the economy to expand by 5.5-6 per cent this fiscal.

According to Morgan Stanley, policy reforms is the key anchor to correct the "bad growth mix". If the government aggressively implements policy reforms and kick-starts large greenfield projects and takes steps towards expenditure control, growth rate could see a significant uptrend.

In a bull case scenario, if the Government aggressively implements policy reforms, and initiates steps for management of rural wages in line with productivity, we could see GDP growth accelerating to 6.1 per cent in 2013, it said.

However, "if the government fails to continue implementing reforms and/or reverses some of the reforms announced recently, we could see GDP growth slipping to 5.1 per cent in our bear case scenario," it added.

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TODAY FARM NEWS

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Wheat sowing gathers pace as winter advances, pulses lag

Delayed harvest of the previous paddy crop responsible

Sanjeeb Mukherjee / New Delhi November 25, 2012, 14:38 IST

With the onset of winter in many parts of north and central India, sowing of wheat and oilseeds has picked up pace. But, overall, the acreage of wheat till November 23 was still marginally lower than the corresponding period of last year mainly because of delayed harvest of the previous paddy crop.

"As the paddy gets harvested, more areas will be brought under wheat and we are hopeful of matching last year's overall wheat acreage," a senior government official said. Wheat is the biggest foodgrain sown during the rabi season.

According to an official statement, the crop has been sown in around 9.18 million hectares of land till last week ended Friday, just 4.6 per cent less than the area sown during the same period last year. Apart from wheat, a big let down in sowing till now has been pulses.

Official data showed that pulses have been planted in around 8.51 million hectares of land till last week, almost 7.9 per cent less than the same period last year.

There was a hope that delayed withdrawal of southwest monsoon rains from several parts of western and northern India would spur pulses sowing, but that did not seem to be the case as of last week.

Among other crops, oilseeds have been planted in around 6.12 million hectares of land till Friday, almost 4.6 per cent more than last year, while the acreage under coarse cereals was just 0.4 per cent less than last year at 4.17 million hectares.

Experts believe that with adequate water available in major reservoirs across the country and

sufficient quantities of moisture in soil because of late withdrawal of southwest monsoon, sowing of wheat will gather momentum in the coming few weeks. The worry could be in pulses. After the loss in kharif, all the focus was on rabi pulses production.

According to an assessment made by National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), production of kharif pulses is expected to be 5.26 million tonnes, around 15 per cent less than last year's. Assuming a normal rabi pulses output of 11.5 million tonnes, total pulses production in 2012-13 would be around 17 million tonnes, 0.2 million tonnes less than last year because of deficient monsoon.

"This could be a big worrying factor as any small drop in pulses production leads to significant rise in prices, Supply is already less than demand for pulses," another expert said.

The NCAER report said the other crops which could suffer adverse impact of uneven rains in the monsoon season are onions, potatoes, bananas and oilseeds.

According to the Central Water Commission (CWC), the level of water in 84 major reservoirs across the country was almost 105 Billion Cubic Meters (BCM) till Thursday, which was 92 per cent of the level in the corresponding period of last year and 105 per cent of the 10-year average storage. EoM

Pointers

- Wheat sowing picks up pace as winters progress
- Pulses lag behind despite late withdrawal of monsoon
- Good Water In Reservoirs Should Aid in Wheat Sowing
- Government targets over 80 million tonnes of wheat production in 2013-14

Farmers' rights authority opens branch in city

GUWAHATI: The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV & FR) Authority's Guwahati branch was opened here recently with an aim to provide an establishment for an effective system for protection of plant varieties, the rights of farmers and the plant breeders.

The Guwahati branch of the PPV & [FR Authority](#) which also aims at promoting the development of new varieties of plants was inaugurated by state agriculture minister [Nilamani Sen Deka](#) here recently.

The branch will collect applications for registration of varieties from the eight northeastern states and will create awareness about the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001, said deputy registrar of the Guwahati branch of the authority A C Sarma.

"The PPV & FR Act is unique as it provides rights to the farmers to register their varieties, extend benefit sharing and accords recognition to farmers for conserving their agro biodiversity", Sarma added. tnn

Govt's eco zone move may leave Malnad farmers in lurch

SHIMOGA: The state government's move to frame suitable and adoptable guidelines to create exclusive eco-sensitive zones (ESZ) around all the reserved forests, national parks and wildlife sanctuary limits has left [Malnad farmers](#) a worried lot.

They fear that if the Wildlife Protection (Amendment) Act-2002 is implemented in compliance with the direction of the apex court, people living on the fringes of forests will lose their livelihood and shelter.

The purpose of ESZ is to prevent human activities in the area, check human-animal conflict and

provide a safe zone for wild animals. Apart from preserving the fragile eco system, it aims to provide a safe habitat to wild animals and birds. The Act envisages barring 26 activities that include villagers entering the 10-kilometre radius and collecting forest produces. So far only Gujarat, Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Haryana and Goa have responded positively to the proposal. Other states are delaying it. Now, pressure is mounting on these states in the wake of the court directing them to adopt suitable safety measures to prevent "human-wild tussles".

Shimoga has three wild life sanctuaries. [Shettyhalli](#), [Sharavathi](#) and Bhadra and the entire Malnad region has three more along with Kudremukh national park.

If the plan is implemented, lakhs of farmers will be subjected untold miseries, eviction, restriction and loss of their land adjacent to such areas.

Officials of the wildlife wing, confirming the proposal, said they have held two meetings to prepare guidelines and will focus on their implementation only in rural areas. The guidelines will be sent to the state authorities for final consideration.

According to BA Ramesh Hegade, chairman of Shimoga Growers' Association, 51 villages will be affected in Shaettihalli wildlife sanctuary limits alone.

If the plan is materialized, farmers, already perturbed with eviction drive and non-clearance of Bagar Hukum land, will be left with little choice, he added.