

Today Farm News

27.09.2012 A.M

27.09.2012 Sep

Maize production likely to go up



Maize production in Erode district is likely to increase this financial year, thanks to the higher prices, good export and domestic demand.

The farming community has brought in more than 3,000 hectares under maize crop this year so far and the agriculture officials predict that the total area under the crop will cross 8,500 hectares. In 2011-12, farmers have cultivated maize on 7,346 hectares.

“Maize consumption in the country has witnessed a healthy growth following the demand from the poultry sector.

A majority of the maize produced in the country is consumed by the poultry farmers. The prices now hover around Rs. 1,400 a quintal and there is good demand in the domestic market. So we expect the acreage under the crop to go up this year,” a senior official in the Agriculture Department says.

Apart from the higher price, water shortage is also one of the primary reasons that has forced many farmers to choose less water intensive, short-term crops such as maize. The storage at the Bhavanisagar reservoir, which is the primary water source for more than two lakh acres in the district, is poor due to the scanty rainfall. As a result, the farming community in the district is left with a few crop choices.

Many farmers particularly those in the Lower Bhavani Project ayacut are not willing to take up long-term cash crops such as sugarcane, banana and turmeric. They consider short-term crops such as maize for cultivation this year.

Maize is 105-day crop and it offers a good yield. Farmers can get up to 9 tonnes per hectare.

Since the maintenance is low, farmers can cultivate the crop with a few labourers. Machines are available for harvesting the crop, officials here point out.

### **Marketing**

The officials claim that the marketing options for the crop are also good.

Since the demand for maize is good, traders offer on-the-spot procurement, which is also a reason for the farmers to choose the crop for cultivation.

Some of the traders even take care of harvesting and transportation by deducting a fixed sum in the total purchase, they point out.

27.09.2012 Sep

IOB disburses Rs.4 crore for agriculture related credit in two months



Indian Overseas Bank has disbursed Rs.4 crore towards agriculture-related credit in the last two months in the district where it was celebrating the Kisan Month, according to Chief Regional Manager S. Kalyanasundaram. The bank is also expanding its services to the farm sector by opening more ATMs and ultra small branches in rural areas. The plan was to boost agri credit disbursements and to help rural customers who have little access to banking service benefits.

Mr. Kalyanasundaram declared open an ATM at Nachalur branch in the district on Wednesday besides opening an ultra small branch at Nallur village nearby.

During the Kisan Months, a total of Rs.4 crore was disbursed to about 406 farmers and the credit disbursements covered SHG loans, agriculture investment and the like.

Lead District Manager S.M. Murugesan, Director, IOB RSETI, K. Chandrasekaran, and Chief Managers P. S. Raju and S.M. Anand, spoke.

27.09.2012 Sep

A golden date



Thirty km from Coimbatore, on a two-and-a-half-acre farm in Vanjipalayam, a farmer tends to date palms 10 feet high. Two hundred palms grow in neat rows, each boxed in by thin sprinkler pipes and separated from each other by eight meters. While the trees stand barren now, barely a month ago, each was laden with 50 to 80 kg of shiny yellow dates, nicknamed 'honey balls'.

Bite into one and its crunchy flesh gives way to a wholesome sweetness quite unlike familiar sun-dried dates. They're officially named Barhi dates and their cultivator, K.G. Murugavel is among the few to organically grow them in South India.

Murugavel's family have been farmers in Tirupur district for three generations. He was one too until the garment industry lured him away. Twenty years later, industry hardships led to losses and Murugavel returned to agriculture. Only this time, he chose Barhi dates over his family's traditional turmeric crops. "During my travels to promote garment exports, I heard of Barhi dates. They were originally found in Israel and are valued for their medicinal properties that can relieve joint and muscle pains," says Murugavel.

### **Tissue culture saplings**

Barhi saplings are today cultivated through tissue culture and are available primarily in the Gulf nations. In February 2009, Murugavel imported 200 saplings from the U.A.E and planted them on his farm. "Growing tissue culture plants is a little like looking after test-tube babies. They need extra care," says Murugavel.

Each sapling is sown in a hole first filled with organic manure, ash and sand. They are distanced such that an acre holds no more than 60 saplings. Sprinklers are placed below the canopy of the palm and they are watered once in three days. Neem cakes and other organic manures are applied once every three months.

Murugavel is meticulous about his methods of cultivation and says turning organic was an unquestioned choice. "The most successful farmers today are organic ones. Look at any organic palm and there's a life in it that the same plant, grown inorganically, won't have," he says.

Murugavel adds that he's taught himself the techniques of Barhi cultivation, primarily through the Internet. With his 12th standard education, he runs a comprehensive website detailing his business. Murugavel's efforts gave fruit within 28 months of planting, a time-period he calls unusually fast for Barhi dates.

In the first year, his palms grew to a height of eight feet and bore 20 kg each. The yield doubled in the second year. When in full maturity, the palms reach 20 meters and are estimated to yield 200-300 kg each. Barhi dates are harvested annually in July and August. This year, each kg cost Rs. 300 and Murugavel's entire produce was sold out within September.

“Barhi dates require no processing. They are plucked at three stages of ripeness, packed in plastic containers and sold at our farm gate. We haven’t tied up with any retail organisation yet,” he says. Murugavel’s clients are primarily from Tamil Nadu. “Erode, Avinashi, Palani and Coimbatore are just a few km away so people come all the way and pick them up.” Hotels in Coimbatore too are Murugavel’s customers since they say his dates are import quality.

### **Training farmers**

Outside Murugavel’s whitewashed home sit rows of imported saplings, each worth Rs. 3,300. They are meant for the 20 farmers he’s training across Tamil Nadu in organic Barhi cultivation. Murugavel works with them till their first harvest, teaching them the nuances of planting, pollination and pest control.

“Barhi grows well in soils that can host the palm family, such as coconut trees. The sapling is also well-suited for 30-40 degree temperatures. Our land has both and the market for Barhi in India is growing,” he says.

For now, Murugavel’s is one of the few families in Tirupur returning to agriculture from the garment industry. It’s a trend he hopes will grow.

27.09.2012 Sep

Training programme for farmers on millet promotion held



A five-day training programme on Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millets Promotion (INSIMP) was held at Krishi Vigyan Kendra functioning under the Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR), Pappalapatti in Dharmapuri district recently.

A release from M. Madhubalan, Assistant Director, Department of Agriculture, said that the aim of the programme was to demonstrate the improvement in production and post-harvest

technologies in an integrated method with visible impact to catalyse improve production of millets in the country.

The programme would enrich the farmers by explaining them the methods of processing to add value to their produce, so as to generate consumer demand for millet-based food products.

The focus of the training was to improve production technologies and seed production technologies for sorghum, cumbu, ragi, samai, thinai, varagu and panivarugu.

The programme also consists of mechanisation in millets, soil health management, moisture conservation techniques, scope for organic cultivation in small millets, value addition products for better marketing prices and sharing experiences by entrepreneur by using ragi, samai biscuits making and other value added products.

N. Tamilselvan, Head and Professor, KVK, Pappalapatti, inaugurated the training programme in the presence of M. Manoharan, Joint Director, Department of Agriculture, Dharmapuri district.

R. Jansirani, Associate Professor, KVK, welcomed the gathering, N.A. Saravanan, Assistant Professor, proposed a vote of thanks.

27.09.2012 Sep

Low prices hit plantain growers in Wayanad

The low price of the Nendran variety of plantain is affecting farmers in Wayanad district, a major plantain growing region in the State.

The spot price of first-grade plantain was Rs.13 a kg on Tuesday at the Meenangadi plantain market as against Rs.35 to Rs.37 some months ago. The price of second-grade plantain declined to Rs.7 a kg, and that of third grade to Rs.4 a kg.

The demand was very low for the produce from the district after the heavy arrival from Mannarkkad and Manjeri and Mettupalayam and Tiruchirapalli in Tamil Nadu state, K. Ibrahim, a wholesale plantain trader at Meenangadi, said. The colour and quality of produce in the district were inferior to the produce from other places, he said.

A report indicating the use of pesticides in plantain-growing areas had also led to a sharp fall in prices, he said. We got only Rs.20 to Rs.22 for a kg of plantain even during the Onam days as against Rs.30 to Rs.32 during the corresponding period last year after the wrong report appeared in the media, K.V. Jose, a small-scale farmer at Karachal, said.

The officers of the Agriculture Department and the Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council, Keralam (VFPCCK) visited plantain-growing regions in the State and clarified that the report was baseless. But, the traders in the district exploited us citing the report, he said.

Farmers who planned a pre-Onam harvest could not make it due to climate changes, sources said. The prevailing price was not at remunerative as we had spent nearly Rs.80 per plant. But, now we are getting an average of Rs.70 a plant. Besides, most farmers had taken loans from banks, Mr. Jose added.

27.09.2012 Sep

Call for group farming

Leader of the Opposition V.S. Achuthanandan has called upon peasants and farmhands to work together for the sustenance of agriculture in the State.

He was inaugurating the delegates session of the 20th State meet of the Kerala State Karshaka Thozhilali Union (KSKTU) at Adoor on Wednesday.

“Farmers and farm workers are not enemies. Sustenance of agriculture is essential to protect farm workers. Farming should be made profitable,” he added.

Mr. Achuthanandan said the recent trend of peasants giving up farming owing to an increase in fertilizer prices and a slump in the market price of various agriculture produce was an alarming situation. It was high time the government took effective steps for the sustenance of agriculture by protecting the interests of the hapless farming community.

The government, he said, should provide subsidy and launch procurement schemes for farm produce, besides stepping up benefits of farmhands in order to save the State farm sector from

the present crisis. He said farmers and farm workers should explore the possibility of launching collective farming in paddy fields that had been left uncultivated.

27.09.2012 Sep

## Judicious feeding to increase milk production

Dairy farming has provided income and employment generating opportunities to millions of rural families.

Large scale implementation of scientific programmes helped in improving the productivity of milch animals with the available feed resources in an environmentally sustainable manner.

### **Better milk yield**

To obtain a good level of milk production from a milch animal, feeding of balanced ration is must. Many farmers in North India in order to enhance milk production and calving of their dairy livestock are feeding their homemade unscientific self made formulations made of cotton seed, wheat –daliya and oil cakes, and wheat bran / rice polish.

It lacks both macro and micro nutrients and not only affects milk yield but also reproductive efficiency.

For better production and maximising profit potential, animals should be fed concentrate mixture made from 20-25 parts of oilcakes, 25-35 parts millets /cereals and 10-25 parts cereal by products such as brans/ polish, and 5-20 parts dal chuni.

This should be fortified with 2 per cent mineral mixture and one per cent common salt. To economise the cost of milk production feed the animal 10 per cent fodder along with green grass and concentrate mixture.

One kg concentrate mixture should be fed to heifers/cows during 2-3 months before calving and also feed one kg additional mixture animals in milking.

Feed additional energy rich concentrate mixture up to 35 per cent during winter and 35 per cent protein rich during summers.



The quality and quantity of water is very important for maximising production of milk because milk constitutes about 83-87 per cent of water.

### Some hints

Other salient points that should be kept in mind are:

Do not change the feeding / watering regimen / management plan abruptly. Quality and optimal quantity of water to dairy animals is necessary to ensure efficiency of production. Always maintain regular feeding schedule of animals.

(Rajinder Singh, Sr extension specialist (animal sciences) Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Rohtak and K.S. Dangi, Director General, Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Haryana, email: raja.udaybhar@gmail.com, mobile: 09416495904.)

27.09.2012 Sep

Focus on climate change resilience of tuber crops

Agricultural scientists across the country are joining hands in a research project to assess the potential of tuber crops like tapioca and yam to withstand climate change.

Scientists from 18 States are being equipped to take up the project. As many as 35 delegates representing different agricultural universities are participating in a training programme on germplasm conservation, climate change mitigation and e-networking which began at the Central Tuber Crop Research Institute (CTCRI) here on Monday under the auspices of the All India Coordinated Research Project on Tuber Crops (AICRPTC).

Inaugurating the training programme, Shashi Tharoor, MP, stressed the need to transfer the technologies generated at CTCRI to the farmers for their benefit.

S.K. Chakrabarti, Director, CTCRI, presided over the inaugural function.

Highlighting the relevance of the programme, Project Coordinator, AICRPTC, James George said studying the potential of climate change resilience in tuber crops like tapioca and yam could be relevant for the country's food security.

Dr. George said the programme was tailored to cover tuber crops in different agro-climatic conditions across the country.

The CTCRI, he said, had developed a simulation programme to predict the impact of climate change in different conditions.

He said the climatological and experimental data from different States would be integrated through an e- network for analysis at the CTCRI. This, he said, could form the basis of informed policy decisions at the national level.

27.09.2012 Sep

Sour story that turned sweet: de-mortgaging tamarind trees



While travelling by car on highways we usually come across huge tamarind trees on the wayside.

“But how many of us know that several of these trees are mortgaged to local money lenders in the area. Even for plucking the leaves one needs to obtain permission from the local bigwig of the area,” rues Dr. P. Alagesan, Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency (Myrada) KVK Programme Coordinator.

## **Steady income**

In Bargur hills region of North Erode there are a number of tamarind trees that provide a steady income of Rs 2,000- Rs. 3,000 per tree during the season. The trees are quite sturdy and last even for 100 years.

During harvest time it is the usual practice for farmers and goat rearers to take some advance amount from local money lenders for harvesting the fruits.

The moneylenders advance a few thousand rupees with only one condition that the entire amount must be repaid in one lump sum and instalments would not be accepted.

This way they could keep the tree permanently under mortgage as the person taking the loan amount can never pay it back in full.

## **Long story**

This situation prevailed for more than 20 years in the region when Myrada KVK at Erode took up the cause on hearing about this from one of the debtors.

The KVK formed people's SHG's or federations called (Sarva Shakti) in the region and discussed the issue to free the tamarind trees. It was realised that there was a need for financial support to release tamarind trees under mortgage.

Accordingly, Myrada arranged a working capital assistance (as an interest free loan) to some persons with the assistance of Nabard.

## **Loan advance**

Except for bank loans to individual members, all loans were routed through the federation, (locally called as Sanghas) organized by Myrada.

The federation advanced loans at Rs10,000 per member at an interest of 18 per cent per annum to redeem the trees.

Over the years, the federation has accessed loans from local commercial banks and other financial sources.

“It has been a long journey since 1993. The movement which was started with two groups called Basaveshwara Sangha in Thattakarai region and Veerbhadraswamy Sangha in Thamarakarai region motivated and enabled 30 groups from 19 villages in Bargur hills to avail loans from the federation.

“It also provided financial support to tamarind farmers and the process of redeeming them from the hands of money lenders was successfully completed,” says Dr. Alagesan.

Many trees that were under bondage for more than 15-20 years were freed by this approach, which enabled several farmers and SHG members to come out of debts.

### **Earning potential**

Today families that have been able to de-mortgage their tamarind trees are able to earn Rs. 4,000-Rs. 5,000 a year by selling 200-250 kg processed tamarind in the market.

Further, seeds and rind removed during processing are also sold and the income from these is utilized for paying the labour of 21 man days required for manual processing that costs Rs.1,350.

So far the federation with Myrada’s help has been able to de-mortgage 455 tamarind trees of 30 SHGs groups in 19 villages in Bargur hills.

### **Rural mart**

It has also de-mortgaged 38 tamarind trees of tribal SHGs at Sholakanai village and helped them earn Rs1.71 lakh in a year. It helped in the establishment of rural mart supported by Nabard.

Those interested in knowing more can contact Dr. P. Alagesan, Programme Coordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kalingiyam P.O., Gobichettipalayam, Erode district-638 453, Email: myradakvk@dataone.in, azhagujanani@yahoo.com, Phone: 04285-241626; 241627, mobile: 09443897654.

27.09.2012 Sep

## Tomato treat



Cherry tomato is a small variety of tomato cultivated since the 1800s. It is believed to have originated in Peru and northern Chile. Cherry tomatoes vary in size from that of small paneer black grapes to the size of a golf ball; they can also vary in shape from spherical to slightly oblong.

### Medicinal benefits

Cherry tomato contains all the four major carotenoids — alpha and beta carotenoids, lutein and lycopene.

A diet rich in tomato-based products may help reduce the risk of pancreatic cancer. When breastfeeding mothers eat tomato products, it is said to increase the concentration of lycopene in their milk. Cherry tomatoes are also rich in potassium.

27.09.2012 Sep

## White revolution in the east



When Anjan Kumar Das, a resident of Subhasnagar village in Bankimnagar panchayat under Jirania block in Tripura's West Tripura district graduated in 1986 with Honours in Political Science from Maharaja Bir Bikram College in Agartala, he could not think of anything else but to get a government job. After wasting several years searching for a job, Mr. Das started his career as a small-time contractor. Despite hard work he could not earn enough. It was in 2002 when officials of the State's Department of Animal Resource Development approached him and other unemployed youth of his village and motivated them to take part in a training programme in Agartala on mini dairy promotion, he started looking at dairy farming as a career option. After undergoing the training, he made up his mind to start his own dairy farm in 2003. He has not looked back since then.

In 2003, Mr. Das took a loan of Rs. two lakh from the Jirania Branch of United Bank of India and bought ten Jersey cows from local markets. Within one year, he repaid the entire loan amount with the profits he had earned. Against this loan amount, NABARD provided an interest subsidy on Rs. one lakh; so he had to pay the bank an amount of Rs. 9,000 as interest in addition to the loan amount.

In the same year, Mr. Das and about 31 dairy farmers were taken by the Animal Resources Development Department to Bihar on an exposure visit to dairy farms in Bihar. "During the trip, I saw exotic Holstein-Friesian cows in a big dairy and decided to buy this breed for my own farm. I took another loan of Rs. three lakh from the bank in 2004 and bought ten Holstein-Friesian breed cows. I have repaid the second loan, too. Then I went to Bihar again twice and bought five Holstein-Friesian breed cows in 2008 and six in 2010 with my own capital and I did not have to take any more bank loan," he says.

Now Mr. Das sells on an average 300 litres of milk every day. Every morning, he sells about 200 litres milk to the Gomati Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Limited for their milk plant at Agartala and every evening, he supplies about 100 litres of milk to local confectioners. The profit earned is not only giving his family comfort of modern living, he has also given employment to ten persons who do various works like taking care of the cows, growing fodder and cleaning among others. He has taken five acres of cultivable land on lease to grow the required fodder. The success story of Mr. Das has motivated several other youth like Shymal Bakshi of Champaknagar village of Jirania block to take to dairy farming. Mr. Bakshi sells about 150 litres of milk every day. There about 20 mini dairies in the block.

Mr. Das says that he earns a profit of Rs. 40,000 every month from his dairy farm. Besides, he also earns additional income from his two trucks that he has bought with profits earned from his dairy business. Over the past nine years, his mud-wall house has been replaced with a RCC house. He got a bike and now plans to buy a car. However, his dream is to become the owner of the biggest dairy farm in Tripura. To realise this dream, Mr. Das now plans to add 25 to 30 more cows and increase the number to 100 within next one or two years.

Managing Director of Gomati Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Limited, Harishankar Chakraborty, feels that Mr. Das' success story is an example that dairy farming can be a remunerative livelihood avenue for rural unemployed youth in Tripura. He, however, says that motivation of the villagers and strong support by various government departments and panchayats were needed to make that happen on a wider scale.

The Cooperative Union, modelled on the Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) that markets the Amul brand, has a milk processing plant in Agartala with a capacity to produce 19,000 litres per day and caters to three districts of West Tripura, Gomati and Sipahijala.

In milk production, however, Tripura is still lagging behind and though the total production of milk in the State increased from 76810 MT in 1998 to 110300 MT in 2011-12, the per capita availability of milk is 79 gram/day as against national average of 281 gram (2010-11).

27.09.2012 Sep

Rural India crying for investments, says M.S. Swaminathan



Magsaysay award winner, Rajya Sabha member and well-known agricultural scientist M.S. Swaminathan said that rural India was crying for investments and it was not bothered whether the investments came from internal or external sources. He also said that there was an urgent need for mechanising the farm sector which was starving for manpower.

Dr. Swaminathan said that farmers would also get benefited with additional investments, though he did not directly answer whether foreign direct investment (FDI) would be advantageous to farmers. “The era of agricultural mechanisation should commence and companies should gear up for the production of energy-efficient machines which would be helpful to farmers,” he said.

Speaking to the media after participating in the 40th Founding Anniversary celebrations held at the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) at Patancheru along with Board Chair Nigel Poole and Director General William Dar on Wednesday, Dr. Swaminathan said that inclusive growth, scaling technology and its access to small-holding farmers should be the top priority.

Stating that dissemination of agricultural technology to the rural areas would be the key in providing food security, Prof. Swaminathan stated that providing nutritional security should be one of the key areas in research.

Referring to the demand and supply gap in the production of pulses, he admitted that not much investment was made in the supply chain mechanism and pulses were being imported from Myanmar, Canada and Australia. “The Union Government is planning to develop 60,000 ‘pulse villages’ across the nation which will address the issue,” he said.

### **Tackling malnutrition**

On malnutrition among children despite substantial growth in the agriculture sector, Dr Swaminathan said that about 200 districts with “high burden of malnutrition” were already identified by the government.

Admitting that much investment was not made on post-harvest technologies, resulting in heavy losses ranging between 25 and 30 per cent of the production, he said that there was a mismatch between harvest and post-harvest technologies.



Prof. Nigel Poole said that investments need not be in the form of money but could be in the form of technology also, which would be helpful.

Mr. Dar said that discussions took place during the two-day programme in which it was felt that sourcing of food produce at the retail chains from local farming communities to the tune of 30 per cent would benefit farmers. He also informed that Bhuchetana, a programme successfully implemented in Karnataka, would be replicated in Andhra Pradesh shortly.

27.09.2012 Sep

Green Revolution outcome extremely encouraging



Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar said here on Wednesday that the outcome of the Centre's programme for bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India has been "extremely encouraging" as rice production in the seven States where it has been implemented has gone up by nearly 85 lakh tonnes in two years.

"It is because of the efforts of the eastern States that we could cross 100 million tonnes of rice production last year, which is an all-time record," Mr. Pawar told journalists after chairing the first meeting of the committee that has been formed to review the implementation of the programme.

Mr. Pawar said that when Pranab Mukherjee as the then Union Finance Minister increased the allocation for the programme from Rs. 400 crore to Rs. 1,000 crore he had recommended the setting up of a committee to monitor its progress. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the Agriculture Ministers of all seven States as well as officials and academicians from Agriculture Universities were present at the meeting.

“The States of Bihar and Jharkhand have made remarkable progress in rice production – it has doubled in the last two years – followed by Chhattisgarh and eastern Uttar Pradesh,” Mr. Pawar said, adding that West Bengal, Odisha and Assam had also worked on improving rice production.

However, it had been found that the agricultural credit in the eastern States had not increased substantially, he said. The Union Agriculture Minister also pointed out that there was “tremendous scope for improvement” in the procurement mechanism in this belt.

On being asked about the spate of farmer suicides witnessed in West Bengal recently even as farmers are claiming that they are not getting fair prices for their produce, Mr. Pawar said that the situation had been created because of a poor procurement mechanism.

“There was practically no programme of procurement (when the previous Left Front government was in power). Unless and until procurement machinery is set up in the State, farmers will not get the Minimum Support Price (MSP),” Mr. Pawar said.

He lauded the efforts of Ms. Banerjee as “for the first time the West Bengal Government has taken the initiative to set up some procurement agencies.” As a result, the State has been able to procure 19 lakh metric tonnes, he said.

27.09.2012 Sep

Jackfruit cultivation is lucrative



Jackfruit, mostly considered as wild and not taken up as a crop, has some takers in Dakshina Kannada. Two agriculturists in Bantwal taluk have now grown it on a large-scale on two acres of land each.

M. N. Shankaranarayana Bhat at Mallya near Punacha planted 200 grafted saplings this June. Venkatakrishna Sharma at Muliya planted 170 grafted saplings - 85 saplings on half the plot last year and as many saplings this year in the remaining farm.

Mr. Sharma told *The Hindu* that another agriculturist Narayana Bhat at Kanyana in the same taluk too has planted 85 saplings one-acre farm in this June.

During a visit to his farm in Mallya, Mr. Bhat told *The Hindu* that the 200 saplings in his farm land had 64 grafted varieties. He purchased the saplings from Gururaja Balthilaya at Hiriyaadka in Udupi district.

Some of the varieties were southe barikka, sakraya chandra, Basrur bilik bakke – II, red rudrakshi, thoobugere, anantady, suvarna and the like.

Mr. Bhat said that in addition to 200 saplings planted this year, his 30 acre farm land had more than 150 jackfruit saplings and trees spread all over (grown) wildly.

Mr. Bhat said he planted 200 saplings from commercial point of view.

Mr. Sharma said that he planted the saplings as he wanted to save different varieties. His 170 saplings had 60 varieties.

Both the farmers said that the grafted saplings would bear fruit in five years.

Mr. Sharma said that Department of Horticulture this year has proposed to promote jackfruit cultivation in Punacha, Kepu, Alike, Peruvai and Manila villages in Bantwal taluk.

“According to the government it should be cultivated as an irrigation crop. If a farmer begins irrigating jackfruit saplings profit is not ensured as it will be expensive,” he said. An Assistant Director of Horticulture here said that the department has begun a scheme to promote jackfruit cultivation in Vittla cluster from this year.

Both the farmers said that so far they have not received any help from the horticulture department and they planted it on their own even before the announcement of the scheme.

27.09.2012 Sep

Don't grow guava or sapota: CM



Here is a caution notice to the farmers who are keen on growing guava or sapota. The marketing of guava is very difficult and there were practical problems involved in growing both the fruits if Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy were to be believed.

Interacting with farmers here, the Chief Minister asserted that the marketing of guava is very difficult. "I have an old guava orchard in Chittoor district. I know the marketing problems involved in it," he said, adding, "The parrots eat away the crop causing losses to the orchard owner. Guava and sapota are similar in nature." Mr. Reddy was reacting to Vasya Naik, a farmer, who plans to develop guava or sapota orchard in his 2-acre land. Mr. Naik said that he and his family had about 10 acres of land. "We are planning to grow guava in two acres now that the borewell and drip are available under the Indira Jala Prabha," Mr. Naik said.

The Chief Minister shared his knowledge on mulberry cultivation as well. Konda Kanthamma, another farmer, said that she was cultivating mulberry for the first time. "You have to be careful in mulberry cultivation. It demands a lot of attention. You have to feed them during night also else the 'pattu purugu' (silk worm) would die," explained Mr. Reddy.

Mr. Reddy, earlier, inaugurated Indira Jala Prabha block that would cater to the needs of 41.40 acre belonging to 20 ST and 4 SC families here. The Indira Jala Prabha block was constructed with a total cost of Rs.10.39 lakh.

27.09.2012 Sep

## Farmers challenge CRA direction on release of water to Tamil Nadu

Karnataka farmers have moved the Supreme Court challenging the direction given to the State by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, as the head of the Cauvery River Authority (CRA), to release 9,000 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu from September 20 to October 15.

Suresh and three other farmers have, in a writ petition, said that this year due to failure of monsoon to the extent of 40 per cent, drought had been severe affecting half of the agricultural operations in the Cauvery basin of Karnataka. Though the requirement of water was not less than 200 tmcft to meet the agricultural operations in about 1.5 million acres of land, the storage was only 70 tmcft. That apart water was required for drinking purposes to residents of Bangalore.

### 'Demand uncalled for'

The petitioners said that the demand of Tamil Nadu seeking water from Karnataka was uncalled for. Farmers in Tamil Nadu would get enough water during the North-East monsoon beginning in October and ending in December.

The Samba crop could be grown with the help of rain received during the North-East monsoon. As the storage in Mettur Dam was 45 tmcft, Tamil Nadu farmers were not in need of water as it would be sufficient for them till November, they said.

Questioning the Prime Minister's direction, they said that the waters of the Cauvery belonged to Karnataka on priority basis. The farmers of Karnataka should first satisfy their requirements before giving it to Tamil Nadu. They said that the decision of the CRA was not based on merits and that it was made under political compulsions. Trinamool Congress, an important ally of the

Congress, withdrew its support on September 18 and the Prime Minister's direction came the next day, they said.

"If the DMK withdrew its support, the Government would collapse and in these circumstances, the CRA had taken an arbitrary decision," they said.

The petitioners apprehended that Karnataka might implement the direction under pressure as it would go against the interests of its farmers. They sought a declaration that the CRA's direction, which, they said, was made without any application of mind, was illegal; to direct the CRA to reconsider its decision and also a direction to restrain Karnataka from releasing waters as per the order of the CRA.

27.09.2012 Sep

Plan to complete construction of green houses in time: Collector



Green shelter:Collector K.S. Palanisamy (left) inspecting a green house at Koduvilarpatti near Theni on Wednesday.— PHOTO: G. KARTHIKEYAN

About 849 green houses will be constructed in the district this year. The district topped in the State last year in construction of green houses, according to Collector K.S. Palanisamy.

Talking to press persons after inspecting green houses that were under construction at Koduvilarpatti near here on Wednesday, he said that the district had achieved the target in the previous year by constructing 859 houses within the stipulated time.

Construction work was completed and owners had already occupied these houses. Now, solar electrification work was being done by technicians deputed by the Tamil Nadu Energy Development Agency. The solar electrification to all houses would be completed shortly.

The government was keen on ensuring shelter to all the poor and the downtrodden, he said.

A total of 2,050 houses would be constructed under Indira Awas Yojana at an estimated cost of Rs.20.05 crore. “Administrative sanction was given to these houses and the construction was at different levels. We have plans to complete the construction within the stipulated time this year also,” Dr. Palanisamy hoped.

Under Tamil Nadu Village Habitation Improvement Scheme, three villages – Unjampatti, Nagalapuram and Aranmanaipudhur – had got infrastructure facilities and basic amenities. Field survey was being done to cover rest of the villages. To a question on utilisation of workers who registered under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, he said that workers were being utilised for undertaking farm work at Government farms near Vaigai dam and at Horticultural College and Research Station in Periakulam.

In the meanwhile, census of workers on the basis of their skills was being conducted at all villages, he said. “We are waiting for further instructions from the government in this connection.”

Health care of the workers was also taken up. “We have been conducting medical camp at the NREGS work sites and conducted all basic tests to diagnose blood pressure, diabetes, eye and other illness,” the Collector added.

Stating that special attention was given for infrastructure development in schools, the Collector said Rs.94 lakh had been allotted under Comprehensive School Infrastructure Development Scheme for construction of additional buildings, toilets, cycle stand and compound wall, providing drinking water facilities and undertaking other maintenance works. Administrative sanction was given for 41 works.

Earlier, Dr. Palanisamy inspected a special medical camp held at Pudhukulam tank, the MGNREGS work site. Project Director S. Dharmasivam accompanied him.



27.09.2012 Sep

### Copra procurement price up by Rs.500

In a bid to provide relief for farmers reeling under the falling price of coconut, the government has enhanced the procurement price of copra by Rs.500 a quintal.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting convened by Chief Minister Oommen Chandy and Agriculture Minister K.P. Mohanan here on Wednesday. The State will chip in with an additional Rs.500 over and above the Rs.5,100 fixed by Nafed .

27.09.2012 Sep

### Cane growers' protest tomorrow

Sugarcane growers from various districts will lay siege to the Vidhana Soudha on Friday to demand the State government to announce a remunerative procurement price for sugarcane. Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha leader K.S. Puttannaiah told journalists on Wednesday that members of the KRRS and the Hasiru Sene would also participate in 'jail bhara' protest on Friday.

27.09.2012 Sep

### Water position remains grim despite fresh spell of rain

Release of water from Bhavanisagar reservoir to LBP ayacut commences

The water position in the district still remains grim despite the fresh spell of rain in the last two days.

Water level in the Bhavanisagar reservoir, which is the primary source of water for more than 2.5 lakh acres of land, stood at 41.41 ft on Wednesday evening as against the full level of 105 ft. The storage was 2.688 tmcft as against the full capacity of 32.800 tmcft. The inflow hovers around 100 cusecs.

The public works department commenced the release of water from the Bhavanisagar reservoir to the Lower Bhavani Project (LBP) ayacut. A total of 2,000 cusecs of water is being discharged into the LBP canal.



The current storage in the dam is expected to satisfy only the water requirement of the standing crops in the ayacut.

“We will not be able to take up any fresh crops such as paddy this year. The storage is very low. If the district witnesses heavy rains, we can cultivate short term crops,” says District Secretary of Tamil Nadu Farmers Association T. Subbu.

The water level in the Kunderipallam and Perumballam reservoirs has also not witnessed any significant improvement.

The Kunderipallam dam currently has a storage of 22.37 mcft, while the water position of the Perumballam reservoir stood at 35.5 mcft as against the total capacity of 124.5 mcft.

The Varattupallam dam now has very little water. A majority of water tanks in the district are either dry or have very little storage.

The grim situation had forced farmers to seek the divine intervention to bring rain.

Prayers and pujas were being held across the district to appease the rain gods. “The farmers have already lost hope of a good crop this year. All we need is adequate water to save the standing crops,” Mr. Subbu said.

27.09.2012 Sep

Farmers demand status report on power situation in Karur



Clearing the air:Collector V. Shobana addressing farmers at the grievances day meeting in Kulithalai on Wednesday.

The grim power situation found its echo at the farmers' grievances day meeting held here on Wednesday with farmers wanting to know when their agony would end and the officials trying to find plausible reasons to explain the situation. The grandiose announcement of a senior TANGEDCO official that the situation would improve in the next three days brought all round mirth. The usually unexciting grievances meet came alive as livid farmers took to task the officials for failing on power availability, absenting themselves at the meet and for failing to clear encroachments.

Raising the issue Cauvery Delta Farmers' Welfare Association deputy secretary Kavandampatti R. Subramanian pointed out that there was announced power outage for more than 14 hours a day and farmers were not getting three phase supply for at least eight hours a day.

While saying that the farmers understood the problems faced by the State government, TANGEDCO, and the district administration in supplying adequate power to all sections of society, Mr. Subramanian wanted the TANGEDCO to detail when the situation would actually improve.

Tamil Nadu Farmers Protection Sangam president A.V. Gopaladesikan intervened to point out that even the TANGEDCO officials could not predict when power would come and go, observing that the situation was indeed grim. Farmers were not able to tap the full benefit of the water flow in the Cauvery and the South Bank Canal, he noted.

The two farmers were supported by others, including K.R. Raju of Keezhaveliyur, M. Veeramalai of Mettumarudur, and M. Karthikeyan of Thennilai who all demanded a status report on the power situation in Karur district.

### **Officials respond**

Worse was to follow as the TANGEDCO official who was called to reply elaborated on what was happening all over Tamil Nadu and sought to explain the power shortage as "the Chief Minister was taking action" to address the situation. Building his case technically, he promised that the situation would definitely improve in the next three days due to efforts of the State government.

This brought all round mirth, wry smile and a ready applause from the farmers who had gathered for the meet. The TANGEDCO officials had a busy time defending the indefensible and pacifying the farmers one-on-one.

Mr. Raju also demanded that the encroachments at Keezhaveliyur Bazar be removed and the road clear for better traffic movement. Another farmer R. Murugesan of Vadaserry pointed out that for the past three years the villagers have been raising the issue of clearing encroachment on the road to the cremation ground in their area but no effort was taken to undertake the job. The officials replied that measurement survey has been conducted and efforts were on to remove the encroachments there.

M. Rajeswari of Parali also raked up the encroachment issue saying the area adjacent to the part time ration shop in her village was under illegal occupation preventing the construction of a own building for the PDS shop and sought action to remove the encroachments.

Farmers were also peeved at the scant respect many officials from various departments show towards the grievances day meeting by staying away from the meet despite queries pertaining to their department being listed on the agenda.

They wanted the district administration to issue a stern advice to the officials to ensure their whole time participation at least for the day when the meet was arranged every month so that they could hear first hand the problems being faced by the farmers, they observed.

District Collector V. Shobana, RDOs Nellai Vendhan (Karur) and Sivasoundaravalli (Kulithalai), Joint Director of Agriculture Deivendran, Deputy Director of Horticulture Sadasivam, Assistant Executive Engineer, PWD RC Division, Podhupani Thilakam, and other officials participated in the deliberations.

27.09.2012 Sep

Rs. 1,000-crore investment envisaged for coffee industry



The Karnataka Planters' Association will submit a detailed proposal to Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Jyotiraditya Scindia for reviving the coffee industry.— File Photo

With the high cost of labour and its shortage affecting coffee plantations in the State, the Karnataka Planters' Association (KPA), Chikmagalur, has said an investment of Rs. 1,000 crore would be required for mechanisation, research and development, and adopting green technologies in the industry in the next five years.

Addressing presspersons here on Wednesday, KPA chairman Marvin Rodrigues said the major constraints facing the coffee industry are shortage of labour, decline in production and productivity, rise in cost of fertilizers and inputs, unserviceable debts, scarcity of water and power resources, and stringent and expensive pollution-control measures. He said the industry would invest Rs. 700 crore in the next five years, while the KPA would seek a Rs. 300-crore subsidy package from the Centre for mechanisation and other activities in the 12th Five-Year Plan.

A detailed proposal of the coffee industry will be submitted to Jyotiraditya Scindia, Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, on Thursday, when he inaugurates the 54th annual conference of the KPA.

Karnataka contributes 70 per cent of the country's coffee. During the 11th Plan period, the Planning Commission had allocated Rs. 50 crore for mechanisation in the fifth year of the Plan, but only Rs. 22 crore was released to the beneficiaries.

The cost of labour in the plantation sector has increased manifold in recent years. At present, the plantations pay Rs. 190 per day for labour, compared to the Rs. 27 per day paid in 1994. There is also an acute shortage of labour and the plantations tide over the crisis by employing temporary workers from the northern districts of Karnataka during the plucking season, said Mr. Rodrigues.

The Coffee Board estimates the coffee output of 2012-13 at 3.25 lakh tonnes.

The KPA has requested the Union Commerce Ministry for an action plan for research and development for the next five years, which would cover development of new high-yielding

Arabica strains (resistant to leaf rust and white stem borer) and effective control measures for white stem borer.

27.09.2012 Sep

Work on minor irrigation projects praised



Central team 'fully satisfied' with quality and progress of projects in Gulbarga and Bidar districts

Review:R. Azhagesan and J. Harsha from the Central Water Commission, and other officials inspecting the bridge-cum-barrage at Gundalli in Gulbarga district on Wednesday.— Photo: Arun Kulkarni

A two-member team from the Central Water Commission (CWC), monitoring minor irrigation projects in the region, has expressed satisfaction over the quality of work and the progress of projects in Bidar and Gulbarga districts.

The team, comprising R. Azhagesan, Director (Appraisal) and J. Harsha, Deputy director (Appraisal), said the projects, funded under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP), were implemented as per norms fixed by the Water Resources Ministry.

They inspected Thana Kushnoor (west) barrage works in Aurad taluk of Bidar district on Tuesday, a unique check-dam with silt flushing system at Dhannur in Basavakalyan taluk in Bidar, the barrage at Sungtan at Basavakalyan, and the bridge-cum-barrage across the Gadorinala, on the border along Bidar and Gulbarga districts on Wednesday, as well as barrages at Hudgi and Hallikhed in Humnabad taluk.

In Gulbarga district, the team inspected the bridge-cum-barrages at Malkood in Chittapur taluk, and Ranjole, Bhootpur and Gundalli in Sedam taluk, as well as the barrage at Madhwar and praised officials for the work.

### **'Improvement'**

Speaking to *The Hindu* at Malkood, team leader Mr. Azhagesan said there had been great improvement in the work. "We are fully satisfied with the quality of the construction."

He said Karnataka stood third in utilisation of AIBP funds. The north zone of the State's Minor Irrigation Department was in the forefront of this, he added.

### **Criticism**

However, Mr. Azhagesan expressed dissatisfaction at the failure of officials to constitute water users' associations in the minor irrigation projects in the north zone. "We have given strict instructions that in all minor irrigation projects funded by AIBP, the associations should be constituted and maintenance of the projects handed over to them immediately."

At almost all the places the team went to, farmers enthusiastically welcomed them and explained how the projects had helped improve their situation.

The team then left for Yadgir district, to see the implementation of work at the barrage near Bandallivillage (Yadgir taluk), an anicut near Wadagera, and the bridge-cum-barrage at Shirwal (both of them in Shahpur taluk).

### **Advice for farmers**

Bidar Special Correspondent reports:

During its visit, the team urged farmers to form water users' societies under the cooperative model to ensure optimum utilisation of water. Adopting a calendar of water impounding and release, and a matrix of suitable crops for the region with water supply, would be beneficial, Mr. Azhagesan said.

He said that of the 121 minor irrigation works planned in the district, funds had been released for 67. Of these, 32 projects that can irrigate 2,752 hectares had been completed, he said.

He advised officials to speed up work taken up under the later phases of AIBP.

In cases where work was delayed because of disputes regarding land ownership, among other problems, the team advised farmers to resolve the issues by taking village residents into confidence and seek the cooperation of the district administration and gram panchayats.

27.09.2012 Sep

CWC panel to look into proposals on 39 minor irrigation projects



Technical Advisory Committee meeting in Bijapur today

The meeting will consider proposals seeking assistance for minor irrigation projects under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme.— FILE PHOTO

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Central Water Commission (CWC) will meet in Bijapur on Thursday to take into consideration the proposals made by the Minor Irrigation Department seeking assistance under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme.

Director (Appraisal) of CWC R. Azhagesan, who will chair the TAC meeting, the second to be held this year, told *The Hindu* here on Wednesday that the TAC would consider proposals for including 39 minor irrigation projects estimated at Rs. 42 crore in the north zone of the Minor Irrigation Department.

Mr. Azhagesan said that in the first meeting in Dharwad in June, the TAC took into consideration the proposal for clearing 42 minor irrigation projects in the north zone of the department at an estimated cost of Rs. 60 crore.

He said that the TAC, after going through the proposals made in the first meeting, had made some observations about detailed project reports of these projects, while seeking clarifications from the State government.

“The State government is yet to submit the clarifications,” he added. Mr. Azhagesan clarified that the TAC has not rejected any of the proposals made by the State government for inclusion in the accelerated programme and had only sought a few clarifications before they were sent to the Water Resources Ministry.

To a question, the CWC official said that 329 minor irrigation projects have been included in the north zone under the accelerated programme and the cost involved was Rs. 470 crore. The total command area under the 329 minor irrigation projects was 33,096 hectares. As per the latest figures available, the State government has spent Rs. 270 crore bringing 13,000 hectares under irrigation.

He said that in many places work on minor irrigation projects, including the construction of barrages, bridge-cum-barrages, check dams and water storage facilities, taken up under the accelerated programme was going on in full swing and it is expected to be completed within the scheduled period.

Mr. Azhagesan said that the Water Resources Ministry had issued a fresh checklist of norms to all State governments for preparing detailed project reports for minor irrigation projects proposed under the accelerated programme and the State government was adhering to these new norms enabling the TAC to clear the projects expeditiously.

27.09.2012 Sep

A multi-purpose fruit

I sold 15 quintals of jackfruit this year at Rs. 13 a kg (for full fruit and not for bulbs). An ice cream maker in Mangalore was the main purchaser,” said, M N Shankaranarayana Bhat at Mallya, near Punacha.

Venkatakrishna Sharma said jackfruit is a multi-purpose fruit.



It is the sweetest fruit which could be cultivated without irrigation and manure. In addition to eating, its bulbs and seeds could be subjected to value addition to manufacture different food products. Its rind served as good cattle feed.

Jackfruit trees are a source of timber that can fetch a lot of money.

27.09.2012 Sep

Plantation company plans to sue makers of toxic endosulfan

The Plantation Corporation of Kerala, the public sector company promoting cash crops, has decided to seek State Government's permission to move court against the manufactures of Endosulfan, which includes public sector firms like Hindustan Insecticides Limited (HIL).

Endosulfan is an off-patent pesticide recently banned in the country for its toxic effects on humans.

According to the corporation chairman Varghese George, the manufacturers were actually responsible for the tragedy that had struck several villages in Kasaragod. Mr George was referring to large-scale congenital deformities reported in Kasaragod district.

At a press conference, Mr. George said the decision was taken at a recent board meeting; the company will file the cases as soon as the government gives the go-ahead.

The chairman drew a parallel between the Bhopal gas tragedy and Kasaragod. He said: In Bhopal, the Union Carbide had been directed to compensate for the damage. Similarly, the endosulfan-producing companies must be held responsible for the ill-effects that have come to light. The liability would have to be placed on the producers indirectly responsible for the contamination, he said.

Mr. Varghese said the company had handed over to the government Rs. 27 crore as compensation to be distributed among those affected by the pesticide.

The Socialist Janata (Democratic) leader also said the party's state conference will be organised in Kozhikode on October 11, 12 and 13. Seminars will be conducted as a prelude to the main event. The first seminar on nuclear reactors will be held at the Tagore Centenary Hall in Thrissur on September 28.

27.09.2012 Sep

Farmers hit by water, power shortage, admits Minister



Advisory to officials:Endowments Minister C. Ramachandraiah at a review meeting in Tsundupalle mandal parishad office on Wednesday.

Farmers are in disarray and the threat of standing crops withering away loomed large due to rainfall deficiency and power supply problems, Minister for Endowments C. Ramachandraiah remarked on Wednesday.

### **Review meeting**

In a review meeting with officials of Tsundupalle and Veeraballe mandals in Rayachoti constituency in Tsundupalle mandal parishad office here, he said that improper supply from the Power Grid led to power shortage and promised to take up the issue of cent per cent subsidy to girijans for horticulture crops with the Minister concerned.

Mr. Ramachandraiah said he would discuss with Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy on establishing a 30-bed hospital and 132 kv sub-station, Rayachoti-Tsundupalle road, bridge across Bahuda river and Piler-Tsundupalle road. Proposals were sent to the Government on setting up a Government library and also for Tahsildar office building at Tsundupalle, he said.

Agriculture officials told the Minister that power was being supplied for only three hours a day and crops were on the verge of drying up due to water shortage. Fodder would also be hit if good rainfall was not received. The Minister told officials to send a report on Rollamadugu water scheme. He promised to discuss about the power supply problems in a meeting on September

27. He wanted the labour to be given work under NREGS by desisting from deployment of machinery. He gave away a cheque of Rs. 1 crore to women self help groups.

Kadapa RDO V. Veerabrahmam, special officers Lavanna (Tsundupalle) and Nagaraju (Veeraballe) and MPDOs Mal Reddy and Janardhana Rao participated.

Today Farm News  
27.09.2012 A.M

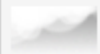
27.09.2012 Sep

Weather

Chennai

**Chennai - INDIA**

### Today's Weather



Cloudy

Rain: 0

Humidity: 74

Wind: normal

**Thursday, Sep 27**

**Max Min**

36.5° | 23.3°

Sunrise: 05:58

Sunset: 06:01

Barometer: 1011

### Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

**Friday, Sep 28**

**Max Min**

33° | 27°

### Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday Sep 29	Sunday Sep 30	Monday Oct 1	Tuesday Oct 2	Wednesday Oct 3
31°   26° Rainy	31°   25° Rainy	28°   25° Rainy	30°   26° Rainy	30°   26° Rainy

### Airport Weather

Delhi

**Delhi**

Rain: 0

Humidity: 74

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:12

Sunset: 06:11

Barometer: 1013



27.09.2012 Sep

Water essential for crops: TN

BANGALORE: [The row](#) over sharing [Cauvery water](#) is in the court now. In its fresh application filed before the [Supreme Court](#), [Tamil Nadu](#) has sought a directive to Karnataka for urgent release of water. It says this is essential to sustain the samba crop. Karnataka, however, maintains TN has enough water for the crop.

"The requirement for the samba crop on 14.93 lakh acres at 150 tmcft per day, for 150 days, is 150 tmcft. Accounting for 30 to 35 rainy days, the requirement comes down to 115 tmcft. The present live storage at Mettur as on September 12 is 42 tmcft. So TN will have 60.5 tmcft balance water for the samba crop," sources in the Karnataka water resources department said. The balance of 60.5 tmcft, they added, can be met from the expected flow from mid-September to January along with vast resources of ground water available in the Cauvery delta.

27.09.2012 Sep

Irrigation dams are 77% full

AHMEDABAD: With the India Metrological Department announcing the withdrawal of monsoon, only 18 of the state's 202 [irrigation dams](#) are overflowing.

The state has 2,490 million cubic metres (MCM) less water than last year. According to data released by the irrigation department, the 202 irrigations dams in the state have 77.7% of their total storage capacity of 15,921 MCM, less than last year.

The irrigation department said no region of the state had more water than last year. Only 17 dams in Central Gujarat were close to last year's storage levels. These 17 dams have 2,461

MCM of water this year, which was 37 MCM less than last year. Among other regions, North Gujarat has 371 MCM water as compared to last year.

However, [the situation](#) in Saurashtra and Kutch was very grim. The 135 dams there have just 455 MCM of water - which was 2,205 MCM last year - 1,749 MCM less.

The 20 dams in Kutch have 118.80 MCM - 188 MCM less - than last year's level of 306.95 MCM.

Officials said that 17 major irrigation dams are 86% full. Of these, five have more than 90% of their capacity of water. These include Ukai, Kadana, Dharoi, Panam and Watrak. Karjan, Damanganga and Sukhi have more than 80% of their water capacity.

27.09.2012 Sep

Industry moots freight train to find new markets for agro products

COIMBATORE: If all goes well, the western region of [Tamil Nadu](#) could get a [special freight train](#) for the movement of goods including [agro products](#) ranging from coconuts in Pollachi to turmeric from Erode to other parts of the country. The alternative transportation plan could benefit traders and farmers alike in the wake of escalating cost of transportation of goods by road. The idea mooted during a meeting of a delegation of Coimbatore Railway Struggle Committee with AK Mittal, general manager of South Western Railway (Hubli), who is also holding the additional charge of general manager, Southern Railway on Tuesday.

"The initial response to the cargo train from Coimbatore or Western Tamil Nadu was positive. The railways claimed it will be actively considered once we submit a proposal," said P R Natarajan, MP, Coimbatore.

The proposal could follow the model of the Kairali Queen, which was recently flagged off from Thiruvananthapuram with a tonne of jackfruit from Kerala to northern and north-eastern states. The rail service was designed and flagged off as part of an initiative to promote agriculture and ethnic products from the state in other parts of the country.

"The model of Kairali Queen was quoted as an apt example for starting an exclusive freight train service from Coimbatore. It will be of a great boost to the region and also we could consider

widening the scope to include other non-agro commodities that are manufactured in Coimbatore," said R Raveendran, honorary secretary, Residents' Awareness Association of Coimbatore, who was also present at the discussion.

The local chapter of The Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry is also involved in the process and is likely to convene a meeting with the manager of Salem division to discuss the project in detail. "We will have a meeting of traders and decide on the goods to be transported and moot a proposal to the railways," said R R Balasundharam, president, The Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Coimbatore.

The railway officials have claimed that if a detailed proposal is submitted to them they will definitely examine it and introduce rail freight service from the region in the near future. "We have to get a detailed proposal first from the concerned sectors. If feasible we will definitely go ahead with it," said a senior Southern Railway official

27.09.2012 Sep

Sugar to extend bearish run as production exceeds demand



World stockpiles will reach a four-year high of 31.6 million tonne at the beginning of 2012- 2013, the US Department of Agriculture estimates.

BANGKOK: Sugar, the fourth-worst performing commodity this year, will be under "bearish pressure" as global production exceeds demand for a third year in 2012-2013, according to the [International Sugar Organization](#).

A rebound in output in Brazil, the biggest exporter, and improved harvests in China, the largest net importer, and Australia will boost global supply 2.25 per cent to a record 177.4 million tonne, executive director Peter Baron said. Supply will outpace demand by 5.85 million tonne from 5.2 million tonne in 2011-2012 and 1.3 million tonne the year before, he said. Futures have dropped 11 per cent this year as prospects improved for the crop in Brazil.

World stockpiles will reach a four-year high of 31.6 million tonne at the beginning of 2012- 2013, the [US Department of Agriculture](#) estimates. China is set to harvest its second-largest crop in the year starting October, lifting production 19 per cent to 13.7 million tonne, the median of nine analyst and trader estimates compiled by Bloomberg show.

"Supply will be quite heavy for the market over the next two-three quarters," said Tom McNeill, a director at Green Pool Commodity Specialists, Brisbane, Australia-based researcher. Prices may fall to 17.5 cents a pound, a level that may attract Brazilian growers to switch to making ethanol, he said. That would be the lowest price since July 2010.

Raw sugar rose 0.4 per cent to 20.81 cents per pound on ICE Futures US at 5:51 p.m. Singapore time. The most-active contract fell to a two-year low of 18.81 cents on September 6. Sugar is the worst performer this year after coffee, cotton and lean hogs on the Standard & Poor's GSCI Spot Index of 24 commodities.

"Taking into account the third year of global surplus with a possible end of the low stocks environment, we think that prices could remain under bearish pressure," Baron said in an interview. The London-based ISO analyses and provides statistics on the world sugar market.

Sugar may have "an appreciating bias" into 2013, as Thailand, China, India and Brazil face possible shortfalls in production, [Standard Chartered](#) analyst Abah Ofon said last week. Industry researcher Datagro on September 19 cut its production outlook for Brazil's centre south, the



world's biggest growing region, to 31.3 million tonne in 2012-2013, from a previous forecast of 32.7 million tonne.

Sugar futures may "consolidate" between 18 cents to 20 cents toward the end of 2012, Samson Tam, head of Asia agriculture at Marex Spectron Group, said by phone from Hong Kong on Wednesday. "We still have uncertainties in weather pattern in key producing countries like Brazil, India and Thailand, which may reduce the current surplus," said Tam, who has traded sugar at companies including Hong Kong-based Kerry Foodstuffs and Singapore's Olam International.

Chamber of Industrial & Commercial Understandings (CICU) Joint Secretary Upkar Singh in a statement issued today said that the need of the hour is to bring farm mechanisation in agriculture sector.

One of the significant factors which accelerate the cost of machinery is the high rates of central excise duty and state value added tax (VAT). In the present scenario, the concern of millions of farmers is to achieve sustainable produce.

Value addition for them is very low and they are passing through vicious circle of low profit due to low investment in technology and shortage of labour which are proving to be counterproductive for their growth and development.

Although there is no value added tax and central excise duty on agricultural machinery, both these taxes are payable on 70-80 per cent of raw materials that are used for their manufacturing. For example, for agriculture machinery of Rs 50,000 comprising of 70 per cent raw-materials costing Rs 35,000, a central excise duty and state value added tax of Rs 6,059 come to be payable.

In this manner, farm machinery is being indirectly taxed making it a costly proposition for adoption by farmers.

Easy availability of low cost agricultural machinery would make enormous contributions to revitalise and encourage farmers to enhance productivity by adopting cheap and innovative technologies.

To achieve this goal and also to solve the problem of labour shortage, there is an urgent need to provide low cost raw material to the agricultural manufacturing

27.09.2012 Sep

Jeera prices succumb to profit-booking in futures trade

Amid profit-booking by speculators and weak overseas demand, jeera prices fell by 1.64 per cent to Rs 13,470 per quintal in futures trade today.

However, thin supplies in the spot markets restricted the losses.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera for delivery in October fell by Rs 225, or 1.64 per cent, to Rs 13,470 per quintal, with a turnover of 15,366 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in November traded lower by Rs 210, or 1.50 per cent, to Rs 13,780 per quintal, with an open interest of 13,950 lots.

Marketmen attributed fall in jeera prices at futures trade to profit-booking by speculators but thin supplies in the market capped the losses.

27.09.2012 Sep

Potato futures fall on weak demand, sufficient stocks

Potato prices fell by Rs 20.10 to Rs 1,020.10 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators offloaded their positions following low demand in the domestic markets.

Sentiment weakened further as a result of easy availability of stocks in the physical markets after fresh arrivals from producing regions in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for delivery in October fell by Rs 20.10, or 1.93 per cent, to Rs 1,020.10 per quintal, with a business turnover of 18 lots.

The potato for delivery in March also declined by Rs 5.50, or 0.73 per cent, to Rs 739 per quintal, with a business turnover of four lots.

Traders said increased supplies from producing belts against lower demand mainly kept pressure on potato futures.

# Business Standard

Today Farm News

27.09.2012 A.M

27.09.2012 Sep

Southwest monsoon begins retreat Season stayed an extra 20 days, auguring well for agriculture during the coming rabi sowing season

The southwest monsoon has begun withdrawing from North India, triggering the end of its four-month journey, starting June, over the sub-continent. Normally, the retreat should have begun in the first week of September but it stayed an extra 20 days, auguring well for agriculture during the coming rabi sowing season.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the monsoon season has ended in Rajasthan, parts of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, the eastern parts of Madhya Pradesh and some areas in Himachal Pradesh. "In the coming days, the rains would retract from more areas," a senior IMD official added.

Overall rainfall deficiency at the end of the season this year should be five to six per cent, said the official, in line with their second-stage forecast released in June. It had, at the time, predicted cumulative rainfall would be 91 per cent of the Long Period Average (LPA), with a model error of plus and minus nine per cent. Rainfall is considered normal when within 96-104 per cent of the LPA. The latter term is the average of rain across the country during the four-month season during 1951-2001. This comes to 89 cm.

The met office regards the monsoon to have withdrawn if three conditions are met. These are cessation of rainfall for a continuous five days, considerable reduction in moisture content and establishment of an anti-cyclone in the troposphere.

The southwest monsoon is Indian agriculture's lifeline, as less than half of arable land has proper irrigation facilities. It is also important for the general economy, as the rains provide almost 70 per cent of the total moisture received during the year.

After a delayed entry into the country, the rains were abnormally low in June and July.

At the end of July, the overall southwest monsoon was around 20 per cent deficient across the country with northwest India, Karnataka, parts of Gujarat and Maharashtra facing severe drought-like conditions. Rainfall deficiency in these parts was 60-80 per cent below normal by end-July.

The patchy performance had hurt sowing of the main kharif crops and by end-June, water levels in the 84 major reservoirs across the country had dipped to just 16 per cent of the Full Reservoir Level (FRL), precariously close to what was seen during the previous big drought, of 2009. The uneven rain impacted the sowing of almost all kharif crops, with coarse cereals, pulses and groundnut the worst hit.

The government's first advance estimate for the 2012-2013 kharif crop marketing season, released on Monday, estimated foodgrain output to drop almost 10 per cent this year as compared to last year. Pulses production is estimated to fall 14.6 per cent and of coarse cereals by 18.3 per cent. Oilseeds' output is projected to drop 9.6 per cent. The loss would have been much higher if the rains had not shown a remarkable recovery from July end.

27.09.2012 Sep

Coffee growers seek Rs 300 cr for mechanisation in 12th Plan



During the 11th Plan period, the govt had allocated Rs 50 cr in the fifth year of the Plan, while only Rs 22 cr of that was released to the beneficiaries

Coffee growers from Karnataka, which accounts for 70 per cent of India's coffee output, have sought a subsidy package of Rs 300 crore from the central government for mechanisation during the 12th Plan period (2012-17). During the 11th Plan period, the government had allocated Rs 50 crore in the fifth year of the Plan, while only Rs 22 crore of that was released to the beneficiaries.

“There is a need to undertake massive mechanisation in the coffee plantations as there is a huge shortage of labour. We have submitted our proposal to the government through the Coffee Board and there are positive responses from the government for allocating a higher amount for mechanisation. However, the final sanction is yet to come from the Plan panel,” Marvin Rodrigues, chairman, Karnataka Planters' Association (KPA) said here on Wednesday.

The cost of labour in the coffee plantation sector has increased manifold in the recent years. Presently, the plantations pay Rs 190 per day, a seven-time increase over that of Rs 27 per day paid in 1994. Also, there is an acute shortage of labour and the plantations manage to bring temporary workers from the northern districts of the state during the plucking season.

He said the coffee planters (small, medium, big and corporates) are planning to invest an estimated Rs 1,000 crore for mechanisation during the next five years. The industry is seeking only about 30 per cent of this amount as subsidy.

India's coffee production for 2011-12 was 314,000 tonnes. For the current year, the Coffee Board has estimated four per cent rise in output at 325,300 tonnes.

27.09.2012 Sep

Rice procurement estimated to rise 14%

**Govt sets a target of 40 million tonnes for the 2012-13 kharif season**

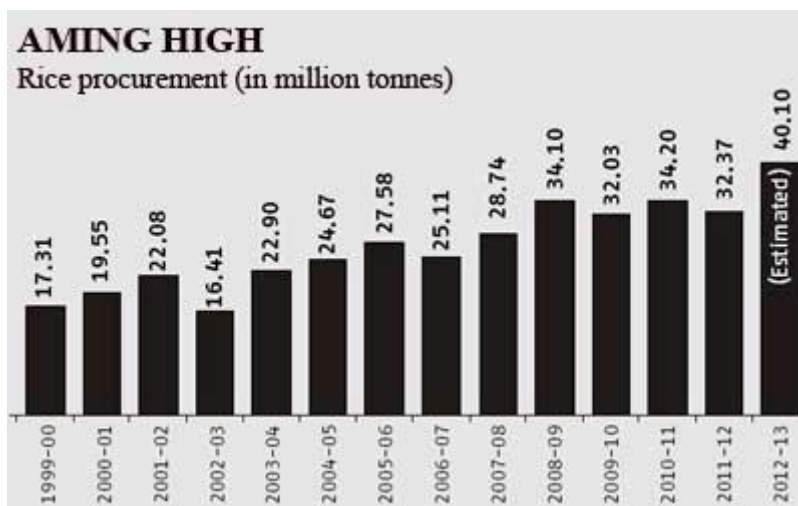


The government has set a target of 40 million tonnes (mt) rice procurement for the 2012-13 kharif season, five mt or 14 per cent higher than the previous year's 35 mt.

The procurement for the central pool by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) starts from October 1 and it will be assisted by the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (Nafed).

This target is against the government's estimate of lower foodgrain production for 2012-13.

According to officials, the record procurement will be possible since it will be done at a higher minimum support price (MSP). The MSP for the common grade variety and 'A' grade variety of paddy have been increased to Rs 1,250 a quintal and Rs 1,280 a quintal from Rs 1,080 and Rs 1,110 a quintal last year, respectively. According to the first advance estimate of the ministry of agriculture, rice output this year is estimated to fall to 85.56 mt from a record 91.53 mt last year.



Officials, however, added market prices might fall below the MSP and in that case, subsidy issue needs will be cleared by the central government to maintain picking up of stock at MSP. For many commodities, the ministry of agriculture had raised MSP quite sharply, by 30-40 per cent.

The first tranche of procurement will be from northern states like Punjab and Haryana. Nafed will start procurement for the eastern states like Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh



under the decentralised procurement system (DPS) in late October and November. “Arrivals have started in the northern states and the crop is yet to arrive in the eastern states,” officials said.

Under DPS, every state nominates an agency to procure on its behalf. But the state procurement is part of the government’s Public Distribution System (PDS) and the central pool. Regional offices of Nafed and FCI form part of the state agencies involved in the food procurement, they added. The advantage of DPS is that for PDS, the foodgrain procured from the state can be used only in that state. Earlier, food procurement used to happen only for the northern states and the stock used to travel from northern states to other states for PDS, leading to wastage in transit. Therefore, DPS was initiated, when other states joined in.

Meanwhile, Nafed has already started procurement of oilseed and pulses (urad variety) from Maharashtra. FCI, with the help of the public-private-partnership mode, has added five-six mt capacity of storage this year.

FCI, the central government’s nodal procurement agency, along with other government agencies, procured 34 mt rice in the 2010-11 kharif marketing season.

The biggest contributors to the central pool were Andhra Pradesh (9.6 mt) followed by Punjab (8.6 mt), Chhattisgarh (3.7 mt), Uttar Pradesh (2.5 mt), Orissa (2.4 mt) and Haryana (1.6 mt). Tamil Nadu and West Bengal contributed 1.5 mt and 1.3 mt, respectively.

27.09.2012 Sep

Sugar firms cut ethanol output target

**Indications of reduced cane availability also, more diversion of molasses for alcohol or chemical industrial use possible**

Despite sustained increase in demand, sugar companies have cut the ethanol production target by a little over eight per cent, due to reduced availability of cane likely during the crushing season beginning October.

While ethanol production of individual companies would depend on the availability of cane for crushing and overall recovery from these, accumulative production of the green fuel is forecast to remain at 2,512 million litres during the sugar season 2012-13, as compared to a record 2,732 mn litres during the previous season.

This would raise the supply deficit to the largest in four years, at 661 mn litres in the ensuing crushing season, as compared to 233 mn litres in the previous year. This is set to hamper the government's plan to make five per ethanol blending with petrol mandatory, to be expanded later to 10 per cent.

Being a valuable byproduct of cane crushing, ethanol production also depends upon overall processing of cane and average recovery of sugar during the season.



“Ethanol is primarily produced using sugarcane molasses, directly dependent on the cane crushed by the sugar mills. Due to the cyclical nature of the sugar industry, huge fluctuation has been observed in the availability of molasses, a byproduct of sugar which is later processed to make ethanol, thereby disrupting supply for the blending programme,” said Revati Kasture, head of CARE Research.

In sugar season 2010-11, cane production and crushing volume by sugar mills increased by 16 per cent and 29 per cent on an annual basis, respectively.

Despite surplus cane production, the country was not successful in achieving the target of five per cent ethanol blending. To do so, it would have required about 1,100 mn litres of ethanol in sugar season 2011-12. It is estimated the industry will be able to meet only 80 per cent of this demand.

Total production of molasses in India was 1.25 million tonnes during the last sugar season. With the lower cane output estimated this year, total molasses output is set to be 1.1 mt. A proportionate decline in ethanol cannot be ruled out, said a senior official with the Indian Sugar Mills Association.

Ethanol is also used extensively by the chemical industry and manufacturers of potable alcohol.

Due to the higher prices offered by the chemical industry and potable alcohol manufacturers, sugar mills have been diverting ethanol to these users. Currently, oil marketing companies are offering Rs 27 a litre of ethanol as against Rs 34 a litre offered by the other competitive users.

“Also, sugar mills are abundantly exporting molasses at an average price of Rs 35 a litre. Today, extra neutral alcohol or potable alcohol, a pre-refined stage of ethanol, is sold at Rs 42-43 a litre, which makes business sense for sugar mills to divert molasses either for potable alcohol or for industrial uses, which chemical companies always look for. Sugar mills exported around 600,000 tonnes of molasses last year,” said Deepak Desai, an independent consultant for the ethanol industry.

Ethanol can be produced through fermentation, using the cane crop.

In India, molasses, the by-product of cane derived during the process of manufacturing sugar, is used as a feedstock for producing ethanol. The cane-based ethanol can be produced by three different routes — directly from cane juice, from B-grade molasses or from C-grade molasses.

Sugarcane planting is estimated to be 5.3 mn hectares and production at 34.2 mt, marginally less than last year.

Today Farm News

27.09.2012 A.M

27.09.2012 Sep

India needs to make food more affordable, accessible



With India expected to be the most populous country in the world, feeding the population is likely to be one of the serious challenges.

India needs to make food more affordable and accessible to its rapidly growing populace to ensure food security.

India is ranked 66 in the Global Food Security Index (GFSI) developed by the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU). Commissioned by DuPont, the index is a dynamic scoring tool that has

measured the drivers of food security in 105 countries on factors such as availability, affordability, quality and safety.

Though India scores slightly higher on the 'availability' front on the index, 'affordability' and 'quality and safety' are still issues that need to be worked on.

"The food security index will help stakeholders to collaborate, generate inputs and stimulate action to feed the growing population" said James C. Borel, Executive Vice-President, DuPont.

The developed countries led by the United States top the index, while the African countries are at the bottom.

With India expected to be the most populous country in the world by 2020, feeding the population is likely to be one of the serious challenges that the country will face in the coming decades. The high level of poverty, lower income, less public spending on farm research, poor infrastructure, sluggish supply of quality protein are some of the key challenges that India need to address.

Pratibha Thaker, Regional Director, EIU, said the index provides a structured framework for understanding the drivers of food security. "In addition to the twin challenges of availability and accessibility, as reflected in the chronic household food insecurity, India also faces a nutrition challenge, reflected in malnutrition," she said.

The EIU would also incorporate the impact of rising food prices in the index to assess the vulnerability of countries when prices change. The rising energy costs are impacting the food prices, she said.

Rajeev Vaidya, President – South Asia, DuPont, said the food security index should be used as a tool to help stakeholders make informed decisions that drive sustainable results at local level. "Collaboration is the key to unlock the power of science and we hope this index will help foster collaborative solutions that address India's food security needs," he added.

27.09.2012 Sep

Farm research bodies should play role in enhancing yields'

As foodgrains requirement expected to increase once the Food Bill come into force, noted farm scientist M S Swaminathan on Wednesday said that global crop research bodies should play a greater role in enhancing farm yields.

The proposed National Food Security Bill, which aims to give legal right to the subsidised foodgrains to 63 per cent of the country's population, was introduced in the Lok Sabha last year. It is being vetted by a Parliamentary panel.

"According to estimates, 70 million tonnes of food grains will be required for implementation of the legislation. For making available such huge quantity of grains will require technological help from crop research institutes like ICRISAT," Swaminathan said at ICRISAT's 40th anniversary.

International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and other crop research bodies will have an important role in providing technologies to ensure sufficient foodgrains for operationalisation of food Bill, he said.

Speaking to reporters separately, Swaminathan said ICRISAT can also play an important role in promoting nutritional security along with providing food security.

The government was also awoken to the problem of providing nutritional security to the people and has identified 200 high-burdened malnourished districts and working to address the problem, he added.

With world population expected to reach 9.1 billion by 2050, ICRISAT Director General William D Dar said there is a need to raise foodgrains production by 78 per cent in developing countries and the institute plans to augment research activities in next seven years, especially in high-yielding crops like sorghum, pulses and millets

ICRISAT, which has developed 800 varieties of seeds of crops in last 40 years, identified global warming, land degradation, rising food prices and burgeoning population as future challenges which need to be tackled through advanced research in plant technology.

ICRISAT is the only global farm research centre dedicated to the semi-arid tropics. Hosted by India, ICRISAT has six other stations strategically located in Africa.

27.09.2012 Sep

High-tech milk farm opened at Mattupetty in Idukki dist

A high-tech farm set up by the Animal Husbandry department at Mattupetty in Idukki district with the objective to revive the dairy sector in the State was commissioned by Chief Minister Oommen Chandy today.

Chandy commissioned the modern bull mother farm and the nucleus breeding system for pure bred and cross-bred animals from here through video-conferencing.

“I am inaugurating the farm by drinking a glass of milk,” Chandy, who was advised rest due to an leg injury, said at the function held at his official residence here.

The research-oriented facility has been established by the Kerala Livestock Development Board (KLDB) on the sprawling premises of the Swiss farm set up in 1963 at Mattupetty.

### Project objective

The Rs 8.47-crore project seeks to produce superior quality bull calves and high-value female calves with enhanced milk production potential for domestic use and supply to different States.

The farm will employ multiple ovulation and embryo transfer technology to improve the genetic stock. The hi-tech bull mother farm is equipped with automatic milking parlour, computerised feeding station, and milk recording facility.

As many as 200 genetically superior cows of the Holstein Freisen and Jersey breeds will be housed in the farm as the nucleus herd, officials said.



The project seeks to produce superior quality bull calves and high-value female calves with enhanced milk production potential.

27.09.2012 Sep

Cotton emerges kharif king in AP; paddy acreage slips



Factor in royalty while deciding cottonseed price, urges industry

For the first time, cotton is going to outshine paddy in Andhra Pradesh. The area under paddy has seen a decline in the kharif, while that of cotton witnessed significant increase.

“Farmers in the State have sown cotton on 22 lakh hectares (lh) far surpassing the season normal of 15.60 lh. The area under paddy, however, has seen decline at 20 lh against the normal area of 26 lh,” P. Sateesh Kumar, President of Seedsmen Association of Andhra Pradesh, said.

“The season is coming to a close and we expect no significant recovery in paddy. So, cotton has emerged as the top crop in the State,” he said.

He pointed out that the seed industry could meet the unprecedented demand for cottonseed. He, however, admitted that there was a shortage for one hybrid variety (of Mahyco). “But for that, there has been no shortage,” he said.

### **Royalty payments**

Cottonseed firms in Andhra Pradesh have asked the State Government to factor in the full royalty payments they make while calculating seed price.



“The government is considering just Rs 90 as royalty payouts (to Mahyco-Monsanto for Bt technology). But we are paying Rs 190 a packet of 450 gm,” Sateesh Kumar said.

“As a result, we are hardly making Rs 20 on a packet,” he told Kanna Lakshminarayana, Andhra Pradesh Minister for Agriculture on Tuesday.

Satish Kumar was addressing the 17<sup>th</sup> annual general meeting (AGM) of the association.

Kanna Lakshminarayana has asked the industry to keep tabs on the firms that resort to unwanted methods. “Since the national level Bill on Seeds is being delayed, we have decided to bring in the Bill at state level. We are going to take opinions of all stakeholders before finalising the Bill,” he said.

27.09.2012 Sep

M.S. Swaminathan favours 51% FDI in retail, but with safeguards

Noted farm scientist M.S. Swaminathan has favoured 51 per cent FDI in multi-brand retail, but wanted some caveats such as increased sourcing of farm produces locally by the retailers.

He wanted states to devise their own safeguards while allowing FDI in retail to protect the interests of their farmers.

“The Indian agriculture sector is crying for investment. Any investment from home or abroad is welcome. It all depends on how you administer the investments,” he told media persons on the sidelines of the 40th anniversary celebrations of International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).

### **Post-harvest production**

In response to a question, Swaminathan said the FDI in retail could help solve problems in post-harvest production such as storage, transportation and marketing of the produce.

“There has been a mis-match in production and post-harvest technology — while the former saw significant investments, the latter did not such funding. Today, post-harvest losses are as much as 25-30 per cent of production. It is a national lapse of priority,” he pointed out.

He hoped that the Food Security Bill would address these issues.

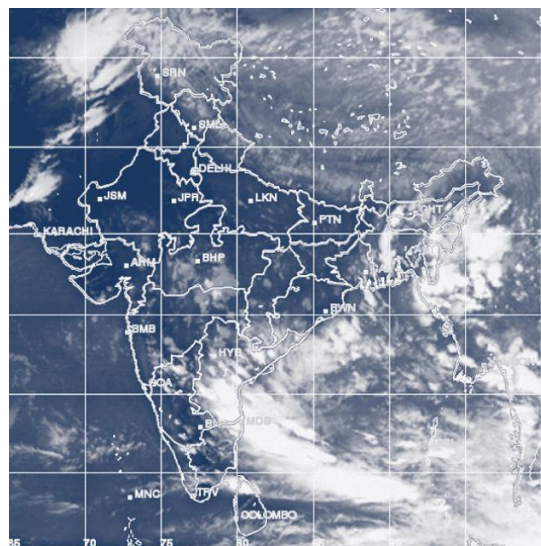
### Farm mechanisation

Swaminathan said India needed a bigger dose of farm mechanisation. This decade will see the transformation of Indian agriculture from the perspective of farm mechanisation, he said.

ICRISAT is a non-profit organisation that conducts agricultural research for development in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. It is headquartered in Hyderabad with two regional hubs and five country offices in sub-Saharan Africa.

27.09.2012 Sep

Rains forecast for most parts of south peninsula



Pacific super typhoon Jelawat has wound down to one step below class-topping strength even as counterpart storm Ewiniar lurked nearby on Wednesday.

Monsoon flows feeding into the two systems have strengthened in upstream Bay of Bengal, which is expected to lead to formation of a low-pressure area.

**'LOW' EXPECTED**

India Meteorological Department (IMD) expects this to happen over the next two days; satellite maps clearly showed a circulation building in the basin.

Global forecasts show this system intensifying into a tropical storm, with the flows taking it into the Gulf of Thailand and adjoining Thailand.

From there, it is forecast to stay suitably positioned to send in some rain bands into Myanmar, Bangladesh and adjoining northeast India.

Rain or thundershowers have been forecast at a few places over coastal Andhra Pradesh on Thursday and at many places thereafter.

#### RAINS FOR SOUTH

Forecast valid until Saturday said rains are likely to lash Telangana, Rayalaseema, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep and Tamil Nadu and scale up later.

Odisha, Marathawada, Madhya Maharashtra, Konkan and Goa also may witness thundershowers.

Elsewhere, the drencher trough of lower pressure running from Assam and Meghalaya to west-central Bay of Bengal persisted.

This formation will continue to fetch rainfall of various amounts to parts of east and northeast, including the heavily flooded Assam and Meghalaya belt.

27.09.2012 Sep

Campco to expand chocolate production capacity



The cooperative chocolate producer Campco will expand its manufacturing capacity by 3,600 tonnes during 2012-13.

The Managing Director of Campco (Central Arecanut and Cocoa Marketing and Processing Cooperative) Ltd, Suresh Bhandary, told *Business Line* that the cooperative has taken a decision to enhance the chocolate production capacity at its chocolate factory in Puttur of Dakshina Kannada district by 3,600 tonnes a year by investing around Rs 21 crore.

He said that the new production line is likely to be commissioned by March 2013.

The new production line will be used for the preparation of industrial chocolate products. (Industrial chocolate is used in the preparation of ice creams, biscuits, bakery products and homemade chocolates among others.)

“We are getting good number of enquiries for industrial chocolates, and we are going for the expansion of bulk chocolate preparation line,” Bhandary said.

With this expansion, the total production capacity of the factory will be increased to 21,000 tonnes.

The total production of the chocolate factory stood at 14,757 tonnes and the net profit at Rs 4.13 crore during 2011-12.

To encourage the cultivation of cocoa, the cooperative supplied cocoa seedlings to its grower-members at subsidised rates during the period, he said.

Bhandary said that the cooperative launched two new chocolate products – ‘Milk & Milk’ and ‘Snack Bar’ – to the market at its recent annual general meeting.

He claimed that ‘Milk & Milk’ is a product with 100 per cent natural ingredients. The main ingredients of this product are milk powder and cocoa butter. ‘Snack Bar’ is positioned as a snack item for school children during their snack break.

Asked about the feedback for these products, he said these products have been launched in the north Indian market. Initial feedback is encouraging, he added.



Spot rubber continued to rule unchanged consecutively for the fourth day on Wednesday.

The market activities were in a slow pace lacking active participants on either side following an almost similar trend on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

Sheet rubber finished steady at Rs 191.50 a kg, according to traders.

The grade was quoted flat at Rs 192 a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, according to Rubber Board.

The October series closed at Rs 191.85 (191.04), November at Rs 188.64 (189.16), December at Rs 188.89 (189.27) and January at Rs 189.10 (189.80) a kg for RSS 4 on the NMCE.

RSS 3 (spot) concluded at Rs 167.72 (167.15) a kg at Bangkok. The October futures weakened to ¥ 250.5 (Rs 172.32) from ¥ 252.1 during the day session and then to ¥ 249.2 (Rs 171.44) in the night session on Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

**Spot rates (Rs/kg) were:** RSS-4: 191.50 (191.50); RSS-5: 186 (186); Ungraded: 179 (179); ISNR 20: 175.50 (175.50) and Latex 60 per cent: 130 (130).

27.09.2012 Sep

Planters' body estimates 2012-13 coffee output at 2.95 lakh tonnes



Karnataka Planters' Association estimates a flat domestic coffee production for crop year this fiscal to 2.95 lakh tonnes (lt).

Arabica production is estimated at 85,000 tonnes and robusta crop to be around 2.10 lt.

"This year, we expect more robusta crop and less of arabica. This is due to an 'off year' for arabica and also 40 per cent of plantation areas receiving patchy blossom rains," Marvin Rodrigues, Chairman, KPA, while announcing 'KPA-UPASI Coffee Conference' here.

The Coffee Board's post blossom estimate for the crop year 2012-13 is the highest ever at 3.25 lakh tonnes consisting of 1.04 lakh tonnes of arabica and 2.21 lakh tonnes of robusta.

As for current crop year 2011-12 final estimate, KPA said the arabica crop is expected to be 95,000 tonnes, an increase of 10 per cent over the previous year.

Robusta is estimated at 2 lt as the crop was low in the prime robusta belt of Balehonnur and Magundi in Chikmagalur district and southern parts of Kodagu.

The Board's final estimate for crop year 2011-12 are 3.14 lt consisting of 1.01 lt arabica and 2.12 lt robusta.

On domestic consumption, Rodrigues said during 2011-12 it was estimated to be 1.15 lt by Coffee Board compared to 1.08 lt during 2010.



Seven Eastern States appear to have brought about a Green Revolution in paddy cultivation. Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar on Monday said the chronically food-deficit Eastern region has made a quantum jump in paddy output. "In two years (2009-10 to 2011-12) the seven Eastern States added around 85 lakh tonnes of paddy production," he said here on Wednesday.

The Minister presided over the first meeting of the committee of the Chief Ministers of seven Eastern States for the Centrally-sponsored programme of 'Bringing Green Revolution in Eastern India'. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Agriculture Ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, Chhattigarh, Assam, and Jharkhand were present at the meeting.

After the meeting Pawar said he has accepted the West Bengal Government's suggestion for the formation of a coordination panel to synergise and expedite the actions under the programme. He would meet the Prime Minister on the issue shortly. "For implementation of the Rs 1000-crore programme for the current fiscal in the seven States it is an imperative to have coordinated efforts among the various Departments and Ministries becomes in the States and the Centre," he added.

A number of constraints were revealed at the meeting. "Absence of adequate storage facilities, modern rice mills, logistics and marketing and procurement-related infrastructures are some of the constraints that need special attention, he said. The Agriculture Minister pointed out that the stepped up efforts were to be directed towards ensuring minimum support price to farmers and spread of awareness about the quality parameters and grading standards.

Pawar said he had discussed with his Cabinet colleagues in power, finance and water Ministries on the issue of agriculture development in the region. "While NABARD has been giving special attention to increase disbursement of credit and its coverage, task forces in water and power ministries were created to liaise with the State power and irrigation departments for the convergence of their activities with those of the Agriculture department under the programme," he said.

He said a team of central officials would visit West Bengal soon to take stock of the agricultural infrastructure needs. The State has taken its first initiative last fiscal by procuring 19 lakh tonnes of paddy. "It needs to set up more paddy procurement centres as also cold storages for vegetables, milk, fish and eggs", the Minister said.

27.09.2012 Sep

Coonoor tea offer hits 8-week high

A volume of 13.44 lakh kg has been catalogued for Sale No: 39 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auctions to be held on Thursday and Friday, reveals an analysis of brokers' listing.

It is the highest offer in the last eight weeks – about 96,000 kg more than last week's offer and 85,000 kg more than the offer this time last year.

Of the 13.44 lakh kg on offer, 9.71 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 3.73 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades.

As much as 12.62 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 0.82 lakh kg, orthodox variety. In the leaf counter, only 0.43 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 9.28 lakh kg, CTC. Among the dusts, only 0.39 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 3.34 lakh kg, CTC.

The substantial portion of this volume comprises fresh teas totalling 12.63 lakh kg. Only about 81,000 kg comprises teas which had remained unsold in previous auctions.

Last week, the turnover fell by as much as Rs 1.89 crore or 20.34 per cent over the previous week because about 30 per cent of the offer remained unsold due to inadequate domestic and export demand.



This week, upcountry buyers are planning to pick higher volume from Coonoor because the floods in Assam have obstructed the movement of tea from there.

In the leaf tea auction, Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) bought good medium varieties.

Tata Global Beverages Ltd and Godfrey Philips India Ltd were selective.

Duncans Tea Ltd showed interest on better medium broken.

In the dust tea auction, HUL and Godfrey Philips were selective.

Tata Global bought better medium smaller grades. Duncans Tea did not operate.