

# THE HINDU

CHENNAI, September 4, 2012

## Cash prizes for farmers

Chief Minister Jayalalithaa has announced cash prizes worth Rs 11.40 lakh to 36 farmers with best yields in crops like paddy, grains, maize and others under categories like rainfed agriculture using latest technology. The first prize will carry a cash award of Rs 50,000, the second Rs 25,000 and the third Rs 10,000. This was to create better awareness among the farming community and inculcate competitive spirit among them for better yield, an official release said. — Special Correspondent

ERODE, September 4, 2012

## Turmeric markets in Erode witness increase in arrivals

After a week of dull trading, turmeric markets in Erode witnessed a significant increase in the arrivals on Monday and the prices hovered around Rs. 6,500 a quintal.

The private market run by the Erode Turmeric Merchants' Association received 180 sample lots, while the market controlled by the Regulated Market Committee got a little over 40 samples. "Trading was also good and we expect the arrivals to go up in the coming days," association president R.K.V. Ravishankar said.

Market authorities, however, adhered to the directions given by the district administration and placed a tag containing the name, contact information and the minimum asking price along with the samples.

Last week, the markets witnessed a turmoil after the Turmeric Farmers' Association of India fixed a floor price of Rs. 9,000 a quintal on the lines of National Egg Co-ordination Committee and asked the farmers not to sell below the price.

## Campaign

It also launched a campaign to make farmers understand the importance of fixing a floor price. The association took the initiative as the farmers were not getting remunerative prices for the yellow spice.

Association president P.K. Deivasigamani said Rs. 9,000 would be the floor price until a fresh announcement was made and asked the farmers not to sell their produce below that rate.

On Monday, association members also met the authorities in Coimbatore Regulated Market Committee and requested them to place the information tag.

“The authorities have agreed to our request,” Mr. Deivasigamani said.

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Published: September 4, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: September 4, 2012 05:21 IST

Plans afoot to set up agro industrial units along East Coast Road: VC

Special Correspondent

Centre to provide 80 per cent subsidy and NABARD the rest

Food production can be increased only with the help of agriculture research and technology said K.Ramasamy, Vice

Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, here on Monday.

He inaugurated the diploma in agriculture course at Soil and Water Management Research Institute (SWMRI)

affiliated to the TNAU. Agriculture land (cultivable land) has come down from 58 lakh hectares to 43 lakh hectares in

the country. Water too is becoming a scarcity and only research and technology could help overcome the situation, he

said.

Mandate given by the State government to agriculture scientists is to help farmers increase their income and

productivity by three fold. Cauvery delta farmers are not rich compared to farmers in Coimbatore and Dharmapuri.

But they have the wherewithal to reap good harvest even at times of water scarcity by adopting cutting edge farming

techniques, the Vice Chancellor said.

East Coast Road is being developed along Cauvery delta districts and plans are afoot to set up agro industrial units

along the road. Government is ready to provide 100 per cent subsidy.

There are schemes under which the Central government would provide 80 per cent subsidy and National Bank for

Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) the rest. Farmers can utilise the opportunity and produce nearly 250

value-added products from rice. "Tamil Nadu Agriculture University has been interacting with Indian Institute of

Crop Processing Technology (IICPT) to establish food production units at various places," Mr.Ramasamy said.

Mr.Ramasamy said that TNAU is in the process of standardising agriculture education in the State. There are five

private agriculture colleges in the State now and five more private colleges are in the pipeline .

There are ten

government agriculture colleges in the State. "We have not increased the intake of students in the government

agriculture colleges for the past 12 years to maintain quality," the Vice-Chancellor said.

For the diploma in agriculture course inaugurated on Monday, 30 students including eight girls would be admitted.

The Vice-Chancellor said that it has been planned to set up cold storages and food processing units.

Published: September 4, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: September 4, 2012 05:21 IST

### **Mettur level**

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 76.77 feet on Monday, against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 3,174

cusecs and the discharge, 2,005 cusecs.

TIRUCHI, September 4, 2012

**Rs.5 crore distributed as incentive to farmers** CORRESPONDENT



helping hand:Collector Jayashree Muralidharan giving away the cheque to a beneficiary in Tiruchi.

About Rs.5 crore was distributed to more than 48,000 farmers attached to the Tiruchi District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union as incentive for their supply during 2010-11. Of them, 21,843 farmers belonging to Tiruchi district have received an incentive of about Rs.1.7 crore.

According to an official press release , 701 milk producers' cooperative societies are functioning under the district union which has jurisdiction over Tiruchi, Karur, Perambalur, and Ariyalur district. About 3.25 lakh litres of milk is procured from these societies every day.

Of that, 1.14 lakh litres of milk is sold in Tiruchi, Perambalur and Karur towns. Tiruchi district alone has 12 chilling centres and one more chilling centre with a capacity of 5,000 litres is planned at Eragudi in Thuraiyur taluk. These 701 societies have a membership of about 50,000 and they have about 73,000 cows and about 7,500 buffaloes. In order to provide healthcare for these animals, 15 mobile dispensaries have been set up. On an average 15 veterinary doctors treat more than 8,000 animals per month. Besides, 235 artificial insemination centres are functioning under the union and about 10,000 artificial inseminations are carried out every month.

In order to identify stud bulls, a genetic experiment scheme is being implemented through 20 societies.

BANGALORE, September 4, 2012

## Farmers' interests being protected: Shettar

Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar said on Monday that the rights of farmers over the Cauvery waters is being fought by advocates in the Supreme Court and that their interests would be protected.

He was reacting to a query by presspersons on Tamil Nadu's demand in the Supreme Court that Karnataka should release water from the Cauvery, even if farmers do not have sufficient water for their crops. .

Mr. Shettar said that the advocates appointed by the State government to argue its case on the Cauvery water issue were effective in their .

Earlier, he released the book *Badalada Bharata* — a collection of articles on various issues affecting the economic problems of the people published in a Kannada daily by columnist K. Vidyashankar — Mr. Shettar said Mr. Vidyashankar had provided useful insights into issues of importance to the public.

Mr. Vidyashankar said that Karnataka had adequate water but was not using it affectively. It irrigates only 31 per cent of agricultural land. Rajasthan, the driest State in the country, had more area under irrigation.

Sapna Book House proprietor Suresh Shaw distributed books to the guests. Karnataka Sanskrit University Vice-Chancellor Mallepuram G. Venkatesha spoke on the occasion.

MYSORE, September 4, 2012

## Fodder banks receive good response

*They are imperative in view of the shifting cropping pattern*



Facility:Fodder banks have been established in different parts of Mysore district for the benefit of farmers.— PHOTO: M.A. SRIRAM

In view of the scanty rainfall and fear of fodder scarcity due to shift in cropping pattern with focus on cotton and tobacco, the authorities have established fodder banks in the district.

Fodder banks have been established at Doddakavalande, Sargur and Yelwal, according to Deputy Commissioner P.S. Vastrad.

He told *The Hindu* that fodder procurement would be a continuous process; the staff had been told to monitor the available stock and replenish them as and when required.

Fodder would be sold on a “no-profit no-loss” basis. “As it’s a government initiative and there are no middlemen involved, farmers will have to pay a nominal amount to purchase fodder,” said Mr. Vastrad.

The concept has been well received by farmers, according to him. “In addition to fodder banks, sufficient stock has been maintained at ‘goshalas’. There will be no charge or fee levied on farmers if the cattle is taken to the goshalas for grazing,” he added.

The fear of fodder scarcity hitting the district was high during July and August, when the monsoon completely failed.

However, things have improved in the course of the last 10 days with incessant rain in many parts. In addition, the fodder bank provides nutritional input to help mitigate the impact of

scarcity if any. Meanwhile, sources said fodder banks would be established in other places such as Antharsanthe in H.D. Kote for the benefit of small and marginal farmers. More APMC yards would also be set up.

In view of the cultivation of paddy, maize and other cereal crops, there was scope to collect the residue for fodder, he said.

Vivek Cariappa, an organic farmer from H.D. Kote, said the initiative to establish fodder banks was welcome as it would help farmers in the rain-shadow areas of Chamarajanagar apart from cotton and tobacco growing areas. Given the growing preference of farmers in parts of Hunsur, most regions of Peiryapatna, and H.D. Kote to cultivate tobacco and cotton, establishing fodder banks was imperative as the residue of these crops could not be used as fodder, he added.

Mr. Cariappa said that while the recent rain might help tide over immediate crisis, the absence of residual crops may lead to scarcity in the run up to summer. "Hence, establishing fodder banks with a mandate to procure them on a continual basis is a timely move," he said.

The farmers suggested that sugarcane, which had wilted due to poor rain, be procured by the authorities to tide over fodder scarcity, a move which would also help sugarcane cultivators.

Published: September 4, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: September 4, 2012 05:20 IST

### Linganamakki dam water-level rises

The catchment area of Linganamakki reservoir received heavy rain on Monday. The water-level which was 1,803.5 ft

here on Sunday rose to 1,804.5 ft on Monday. An inflow of 17,926 cusecs was recorded. The water-level in Bhadra

reservoir was at 170.11 ft against the maximum level of 186 ft. An inflow of 10,943 cusecs was recorded here.

Tirthahalli taluk has received 59.6 mm rainfall, while 29.8 mm rainfall was recorded in Hosanagar taluk. — Staff



**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, September 4, 2012**

**Focus on organic farming**

Kerala will be made an organic farming State to ensure the availability of safe food, Agriculture Minister K.P. Mohanan has said. The State would be equipped to claim the organic farming State status in 2013. He was inaugurating the Integrated Biology and Centre for Microbial Technology blocks and microbial inoculant unit at College of Agriculture, Vellayani, here on Monday.

**September 4, 2012**

**Training in medicinal plants**

Agri-Horticultural Society is conducting a three-day training programme in medicinal plants from Wednesday at its premises in Public Gardens. For details contact: 23299779 / 9912046095.

**ADILABAD, September 4, 2012**

**Farmers stage 'rasta roko'**

Cotton farmers belonging to Adilabad and the surrounding mandals on Monday staged a 'rasta roko' in Adilabad town in two spells, disrupting traffic on the busy NH 7 at Punjab Hotel Chowk for over an hour. The farmers were demanding urea, the short supply of which, has threatened to hinder yield.

The protesters accused the Agriculture Department officials of colluding with black marketeers and diverting the fertiliser to Maharashtra. They said urea was being hoarded in godowns on the outskirts of Adilabad.

The first part of the protest came at about noon, when the farmers gathered at the Chowk to obstruct traffic. Police however, intervened and led the farmers towards godowns in the market yard.

The godown authorities refused to supply urea, which irked the farmers, who once again came onto the road. They relented after about an hour when the police assured them of resuming supply.

Demanding the supply of urea, some farmers stopped the convoy of Women and Child Welfare Minister V. Sunitha Lakshma Reddy. The incident took place at Hatnoora mandal headquarters on Monday.

When the police tried to get them out of the way, the Minister got down from her vehicle and met the farmers. The farmers told her they had been coming regularly since one week for urea . The protest was withdrawn after the Minister assured that urea would be supplied soon.

**HYDERABAD, September 4, 2012**

**State to procure raw rice directly from millers**

*15 lakh tonnes will be routed through PDS under the new decentralised procurement policy*



Decentralised procurement policy to be implemented in phases: D. Sridhar Babu'Plan is to procure the entire 40 lakh tonnes of rice required for PDS in the State'

For the first time, the Andhra Pradesh State Civil Supplies Corporation will directly procure 15 lakh tonnes of raw rice from rice millers for its public distribution system under the new decentralised procurement policy.

Normally, the Food Corporation of India procures levy rice, both for supply to fair price shops under the PDS in the State and for the central pool.

As the State government is determined to roll out the Decentralised Procurement Policy from ensuing kharif marketing season -- to ensure minimum support price to farmers, quality Re.1 kg

rice to customers in their own districts -- a preparatory meeting was held with Joint Collectors, District Supply Officers from 15 districts, officers of Food Corporation of India and rice millers here on Monday.

### **Objective**

“The objective is to take views and inputs from all the stakeholders to finalise the procurement exercise keeping in view available storage capacity with the Food Corporation of India and the Civil Supplies Corporation in various districts,” said Civil Supplies Minister D. Sridhar Babu who chaired the meeting.

The decentralised procurement policy would be implemented in phases, beginning with procurement of 15 lakh tonnes of rice from October. “We plan to procure the entire 40 lakh tonnes of raw rice required for PDS in the State in the next one or two years, once the storage capacity is upgraded,” he said.

For the 15 lakh tonnes of rice to be stored in different districts, the FCI agreed to give a few of its godowns to the Civil Supplies Corporation which had its own storage space of five lakh tonnes. The corporation would also strengthen the mandal level stock points by constructing godowns scientifically.

The FCI agreed to depute its manpower and also train Civil Supplies Corporation staff in procurement process before the kharif marketing season commenced. The corporation will also purchase superfine quality paddy, mill it and supply superfine quality rice through special counters at a reasonable price.

**HYDERABAD, September 4, 2012**

**'Protect interests of delta farmers'**

Former Minister Gade Venkata Reddy has asked Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy take a firm decision on protecting the interests of delta farmers without conceding to pressure from any quarter.

Talking to reporters here on Monday, Mr. Reddy wanted the Chief Minister to clear misconceptions on the government's decision and take a firm stand in protecting farmers of the delta, known since long as granary of the State. He expressed concern that the issue was assuming regional colours, but refuted the charge that the separate Statehood agitation had resulted in the present situation. "It has nothing to do with regional agitations. The situation was solely because of shortage in inflows from upstream areas," he said.

He urged the government to announce measures for time-bound completion of the Pulichintala project.

BIJAPUR, September 4, 2012

Alamatti dam reaches full reservoir level



Good news:Water being discharged from the gates of the Alamatti dam in Bijapur.

The Alamatti dam reached its full reservoir level on Sunday.

The Alamatti dam, officially called Lal Bahadur Shastri dam, has reached its maximum storage capacity of 519.6 meters following rainfall in the region in the past few days.

According to the sources of Karnataka Bhagya Jal Nigam Limited (KBJNL), the dam reached its full capacity for the first time this year primarily because of heavy rainfall in the Western Ghats as the rainwater later flows into the Krishna.

Maharashtra was also discharging excess water from Koyna and Varuna dams resulting in the filling of the Alamatti dam.

Though Alamatti dam had almost filled on August 5 itself, water was discharged from the gates to Narayanapur dam even before it reached its full capacity.

The official said that the water-level of the dam at present is 519.6 meters. The inflow is at 17,854 cusecs and outflow is at 17,459 cusecs.

The storage level was 508 meters till mid-July, it reached its full capacity on Sunday.

It may be noted that in the first week of August, the inflow was at 90,000 cusecs while the outflow was at 30,000 cusecs.

Owing to the increased outflow, the power generating units are producing 181 MW as against the total capacity of 290 MW.

Meanwhile, the fact that the dam is full now has brought cheers among the farmers who would be primary beneficiaries of water for irrigation purposes.

Though the Krishna water is also used for drinking water purposes, a major portion goes for irrigation which helps the farmers.



### Cotton acreage recovers despite early setback

Vishwanath Kulkarni

AP farmers plant more to setting shortfall in Gujarat

New Delhi, Sept. 3:

A 20 per cent rise in cotton sowing in Andhra Pradesh has helped to offset the shortfall in area under the fibre crop in

Gujarat, the top producing State where scanty rain has affected planting.

Cotton acreage in Saurashtra and Kutch regions of Gujarat has declined on deficit monsoon, triggering concerns in several quarters.

“The shortfall in acreage is not a concern any more as planting has largely picked up in central and south India

despite the delay in rains,” said K.R. Kranti, Director of the Nagpur-based Central Institute of Cotton Research. He

expected the total area under the fibre crop to be around 120 lakh hectares, almost close to last year’s level.

“Planting is still on in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, where a total of another 5 lakh hectares could come under the crop,” he said.

However, prospects of a good yield would entirely depend on the rains in September and October. “The cotton crop

enters the boll formation phase in late September and early October for which rains are crucial,” Kranti said, adding that it was too early to estimate the 2012-13 crop.

#### Acreage

Last year, cotton acreage stood at a record 121.9 lakh hectares as farmers, lured by attractive returns, had planted

more. However, the flip-flop in Government export policy had induced volatility in prices and had prompted farmers

to look at other alternatives such as guarseed and soyabean in some areas.

In fact, Rajasthan and Punjab have seen a marginal drop in cotton acreage, where farmers are said to have switched

over to guar. Similarly, in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, there has been a switch-over to soyabean, as prices of

the oilseed are seeing a bullish trend on global supply squeeze.

#### Balance sheet

The Cotton Advisory Board has pegged the 2011-12 output at 353 lakh bales against 339 lakh bales in the previous

year. Exports are pegged at 127 lakh bales against 76 lakh bales in the previous year. For the current season ending

September 2012, India is expected to import 12 lakh bales

#### **Rubber gains on supply concerns**

Our Correspondent

Kottayam, Sept. 3:

Domestic rubber prices improved on Monday. In spot, the market gained strength as sellers stayed back following a

firm opening on NMCE. Positive reports from the global trendsetters and supply concerns at lower levels catalysed the sentiments further.

Sheet rubber firmed up to Rs 172 (171) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders as well as the Rubber

Board. The transactions continued to be low.

RSS 4 improved at its September series to Rs 173.45 (171.76), October to Rs 170.61 (168.76), November to Rs 170.43 (168.58) and December to Rs 170.70 (168.88) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

RSS 3 (spot) increased to Rs 152.94 (152.21) a kg at Bangkok. The September futures for the grade bounced back to ¥ 221.5 (Rs 157.06) from ¥ 215.8 a kg during the day session but then slipped to ¥ 219.7 (Rs 155.79) in the night session on Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 172 (171); RSS-5: 164 (161); Ungraded: 159 (155); ISNR 20: 154 (151) and Latex 60 per cent: 115 (112.50).

Keywords: Rubber rates

Printable version | Sep 4, 2012 10:34:45 AM | <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/agri-biz/article3854903.ece> © The Hindu

### Gujarat braces for heavy showers



Vinson Kurian

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept. 3:

Seasonal rainfall over Rajasthan has turned normal while Gujarat, especially parched Saurashtra and Kutch, is bracing for a heavy spell of showers.



This indicated the turnaround that the 2012 monsoon has accomplished even as it entered the fourth and last month of the season.

#### FRESH 'LOW'

The overall deficit as on Sunday remained at 12 per cent. But a fresh low-pressure area forming over northwest Bay of

Bengal promised to cut down some of this.

East, north-east and north-west India had a deficit of 15 per cent each as on Monday. It was 10 per cent for central

India and 11 per cent for the south peninsula.

The US National Centres for Environmental Prediction saw separate rain heads moving parallel north along central

India and just off the West coast over the next few days.

In this manner, heavy rains are predicted to lash the West once again culminating in the pounding of Saurashtra and

Gujarat.

To the east, the other rain head may move into Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh while raining it heavily all the way before entering Rajasthan.

#### **Coffee exports down 10% at 1.49 lakh tonnes in April-Aug**

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 3:

India's coffee exports fell by 10 per cent to 1,49,426 tonnes in the first 5 months of the current fiscal, the Coffee Board of India has said.

The country had shipped 1,65,498 tonnes of the brew in the April-August period of the 2011-12 fiscal.

In terms of earnings, exports fell marginally to Rs 2,258.73 crore in April-August this fiscal from Rs 2,248.62 crore in the year-ago period.

In US Dollars, earnings declined by 12 per cent to \$439.39 million from \$501.41 million in the reviewed period.

In the first 11 months of the current coffee year, the exports were down by 7 per cent to 3,06,238 tonnes, compared to 3,28,867 tonnes in the October-August period of the 2010-11 coffee year (October-September). For the January-August period of the current calendar year, the shipments fell by 5 per cent to 2,49,697 tonnes from 2,63,652 tonnes in the same period of 2011. Exports of arabica variety of coffee rose to 49,187 tonnes in the January-August period of 2012 from 46,942 tonnes in the year-ago period, while that of robusta fell to 1.36 lakh tonnes from 1.50 lakh tonnes in the same period. The country had exported a record 3.48 lakh tonnes of the brew worth Rs 4,888.30 crore in 2011-12, compared to 3.16 lakh tonnes worth Rs 3,674.98 crore in 2010-11.

### Declining trend continues in cloves on lack of buyers



European buying is claimed to be absent, while India is said to have huge stocks leading to no buyers in the market

Kochi, Sept. 3:

The cloves market continued to fall with prices of Indian cloves declining to Rs 750 a kg while prices for Colombo and

Zanzibar cloves dropping to Rs 500 and Rs 600 a kg in the domestic market, according to the trade sources. "The

market is coming down daily", they said.

Subramanian, a cloves grower in Nagercoil, told Business Line that the prices have dropped and the growers in the major growing belt “are holding back their produce and releasing only small quantity at Rs 750 a kg”.

#### Rain impact

He said the rain in August was good for the cloves trees and if the weather remained favourable, there could be some improvement in the next crop. However, a prediction at this moment when weather turned out to be unpredictable would be immature, he said.

Meanwhile, traders claimed “this year, cloves crops are huge with Indonesia no more a buyer, all the other origin crops are bumper, sales are down as prices falling daily”.

#### European buying

European buying is claimed to be absent, while India is said to have huge stocks leading to no buyers in the market, they said. Big stock holders are allegedly selling in panic and this phenomenon has been pushing the markets down globally, they said.

International markets are down to \$7,800-8,500, the import costs, therefore, vary from Rs 500-550 a kg.

The new crop harvesting is almost under way.

Conflicting estimates are there about the new crop size for both bull and bear operators.

One group has projected Madagascar crop at 21,000 tonnes, Zanzibar 5,000 tonnes, Brazil 5,000 tonnes, Colombo 5,000 tonnes.

The prices in Indonesian markets are at \$8,500-9,000 a tonne, the market sources here said.

The domestic consumption is estimated at 12,000–15,000 tonnes and India continued to remain a net importer.

As against this, the Indian production is estimated between 1,500 tonnes and 2,500 tonnes, Subramanian said adding “notwithstanding we are not getting good prices now”.

## Soya oil heats up on improved offtake

Our Correspondent

Indore, Sept. 3:

Rise in buying support in super palmolein has reined in the bullish trend in soya oil for the past one week. Prices have dropped by Rs 5-8 for 10 kg.

However, on Monday, soya refined ruled relatively higher at Rs 751-55 (Rs 748-50) on strong global cues and some improved buying support in the domestic market.

Similarly, soya solvent also ruled marginally higher at Rs 728-32 (Rs 720-23) on scattered buying support.

Notwithstanding higher prices, demand in soya oil continues to be weak with traders showing more interest in new super palmolein, which in the local mandis, is being sold at Rs 720 for 10 kg.

In futures also, soya oil traded marginally higher on strong foreign cues. Soya refined October contract on the NBOT closed Rs 1.50 higher at Rs 807.50 for 10 kg.

Similarly on the NCDEX, soya oil September and October contracts closed at Rs 803.90 (up Rs 2.25) and Rs 807.15 (up Rs 3.47).

On the other hand, soyabean continued to rule at Rs 4,400-4,500 a quintal on sluggish demand and weak buying support in the futures, even as arrival in State mandis continues to remain poor at merely 12,000 bags.

On the other hand, plant deliveries in soyabean continue to be on the higher side on strong buying support from the crushers.

On Monday plant deliveries rose to Rs 4,450-4,550 (up Rs 50 as compared to its prices last week).

While October contract for soyabean on the NCDEX closed at Rs 4,019 (up Rs 21), its November contract closed Rs 11 down at Rs 3,958 a quintal.

Given weak buying support in soyabean and expected arrival within a span of two months, soyabean prices in all likelihood would remain range-bound at least in the current month with its prices unlikely to fluctuate by over Rs 100 a quintal, said Vinod Choudhary, a broker. Soya DOC continued to rule steady at Rs 40,500-40,800 a quintal on sluggish demand.

### **Open wheat sale: Kerala mills want freight charges to go**

Our Bureau

Chennai, Sept. 3:

Roller flour mills in Kerala have urged the Union Food Ministry to cut the reserve price to bid for wheat that will be

sold by the Food Corporation of India through open sale scheme.

“While the reserve price was raised to Rs 1,285 in August, now we are told that the reserve price is Rs 1,553.14 since it

includes freight charges from Ludhiana to Thiruvananthapuram. This is 33 per cent higher than prices announced in

July when the open sale began,” said P.K. Ahammed, Chairman of Kerala Roller Flour Millers Association.

Already mills in Kerala were selling wheat products such as atta, maida and sooji at a price (Rs 200 a quintal) lower

than in other States. “Such a steep hike will not only affect mills but also sweet makers and bakeries,” he said.

Making wheat available at a higher price despite a record production of 93.9 million tonnes will lead to inflation

resulting in costlier grains, pulses and other food items. “Kerala mills will also have to pay a higher price for wheat

compared with Karnataka or Tamil Nadu due to its distance from Ludhiana,” Ahammed said.

In a letter to the Union Minister of State for Food K.V. Thomas, he said that the Centre should, at least, eliminate the

freight charges while selling wheat through the open sale scheme for bulk consumers.

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