

## **Rs.72,000 crore loans for Mahabubnagar farmers**

Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy has said that agriculture loans to farmers in the State in the current financial year would be extended to the extent of Rs.72,000 crore as against Rs.52,000 crore in the last financial year.

Launching the 'Rythu Chaitanya Yatralu' at Jadcharla on Monday, the Chief Minister said that 'Rytu Sadassulu' (farmers conventions) would be organised throughout the State from May 9 to 13, in which exhibition of modern agricultural implements would be displayed to farmers.

He also said students belonging to SC and ST communities interested in pursuing higher studies abroad in foreign countries would be provided a grant of Rs.10 lakh.

Over 1.80 crore families belonging to SC and ST communities were using power up to 50 units per month for free and that the power charges of around Rs.268 crore was due to the government and had been waived.

### **Construction of houses**

The Chief Minister said that the cost of construction of houses of SC families had been enhanced to Rs.1 lakh each and that of ST families to Rs.1.05 lakh each.

He said the State government was determined to see that all sections of the society in the State were provided with pacca houses and that no family was living in huts.

Announcing sops for Mahabubnagar district, the Chief Minister said that survey for Palamoor lift irrigation would be undertaken soon and added that the survey report too would be prepared very soon.

He said that justice would be done to Mahabubnagar district in declaring drought-prone mandals. He assured that the Jurala Project ayacut would be provided with irrigation water and added that the entire standing crops would be saved. The Chief Minister said that he would talk to the chief secretary of Karnataka to release 3 tmc of water to the Jurala project.

PCC chief Botcha Satyanarayana, agriculture Minister Kanna Laxminarayana and Minister for Information and Public Relations D.K. Aruna, Jadcharla MLA M. Chandra Sekhar, former MP Mallu Ravi too spoke.

District in-charge Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy, MLC S. Jagadeeshwar Reddy were also present.

## **Farmers' association wants free power scheme scrapped**

The United Farmers' Association of Tamil Nadu has appealed to Chief Minister Jayalalithaa to withdraw free power scheme for agriculture as it has led to indiscriminate exploitation of groundwater.

In a statement here, association president C. Vyapurai, while welcoming the announcement for desalination plants to meet the drinking water needs of Chennai city, wondered what would happen to the State in future if the present situation were to continue.

“Is it possible to extend the same facility to villages that are facing serious water shortage,” he asked.

He pointed out that Tamil Nadu was not a desert and even when monsoons had failed and famine had struck the State, “there was never a hue and cry for drinking water at any point of time.” He lamented that the rivers had all dried up and even in the Cauvery delta it was only *karuvel* trees that were able to grow.

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- *Free power supply blamed for overexploitation of groundwater*
  - *‘Water is now being drawn from a depth of 1000 feet’*
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## **Farmers get welfare aid**

Minister for Information and Special Programme Implementation K.T. Rajendhira Balaji distributed welfare assistance to the tune of Rs. 26 lakh to 63 farmers at Naranapuram in Sivakasi taluk on Sunday.

He said that the government had fixed a farm production target of 1.2 million tonnes this year — last year’s production was one million tonnes. The government had announced a drought relief of Rs. 5,000 per hectare in the non-delta areas and Rs. 15,000 in the delta region.

Mr. Balaji distributed farm implements. Seedlings, saplings and guidebooks were distributed to the farmers by the Horticulture and Animal husbandry departments.

## **Elect pro-people, pro-farmer candidates, says CPI(M) leader**

: The Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) Mysore unit, appealed to the working class to vote for candidates who had taken up their issues in the past in the Assembly elections in the State, and in Mysore district in particular.

CPI (M) leader H.R. Seshadri, said in a statement here on Monday that at a meeting here a couple of days ago they decided to teach the ruling party's representatives a lesson because of their alleged anti-people and anti-labour stance.

It was unfortunate that there were no representatives in the State Assembly who would support workers and farmers, Mr. Seshadri stated.

The members present at the meeting criticised the Union and the State governments for not doing anything to check rising prices, loot of natural resources and social disorder.

The government also received flak for remaining silent over the demands of the working class such as minimum wages of Rs. 10,000, pension of Rs. 2,000, framing comprehensive service rules for workers in the unorganised sector, encouraging public sector industries, and amendments to the bonus and gratuity Acts.

The members also decided to support candidates from the CPI, CPI (M) and Sarvodaya Party in Mysore and work for the victory of those candidates who were contesting in other parts of the State, the statement said.

## **‘Only JD(S) safeguards farmers’ interests’**

: Reiterating that the Janata Dal (Secular) is the only party in the State that safeguards the interests of farmers, the former Chief Minister and Janata Dal (Secular) State unit president H.D. Kumaraswamy requested the voters to elect its candidates in the May 5 Assembly elections.

He was addressing party workers at an election meeting near Kallahalli here on Monday.

The former Chief Minister criticised the UPA, and the Bharatiya Janata Party government in the State for neglecting the Karnataka's interests on the Cauvery issue.

“Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda is the only leader who can authoritatively talk on the Cauvery issue,” he said.

Voters in the district should elect JD (S) candidates to support Mr. Deve Gowda’s fight for protecting the interests of farmers.

## **‘Farmers should mechanise agriculture’**

Raviraj Hegde, president of Dakshina Kannada Milk Producers’ Union, said on Monday that farmers should give importance to mechanisation in agriculture.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural function of the one-day ‘Krishi Mela’ organised by the district unit of Bharatiya Kisan Sangha here.

Mr. Hegde said that instead of complaining of labour shortage, farmers should purchase machines which help them in sowing, threshing and harvesting their crops. The labour problem would intensify in the coming years as labourers, who used to come from the districts of North Karnataka, were now finding employment in their own places.

Agriculture was an uncertain profession because it was controlled by market forces. Farmers might get high price for paddy in a particular year and low price the very next year. It would be better if the government provided a fixed support price for agricultural produce. This would bring some stability to agriculture.

It was also necessary to improve marketing of agricultural produce to get better price. There should be proper facilities to take the agricultural produce from the fields to the markets. Cooperatives societies could play an important role in marketing agricultural produce.

Farmers should also take up dairy farming as a complimentary profession to agriculture. The farmers would get suitable price for the milk produced by selling it to the cooperative union. Besides this, having cattle also facilitated organic farming.

Farmers should change their outlook and love their profession to become successful, Mr. Hegde said.

***Farmers should also take up dairying as a complimentary profession***

## **APRS seeks aid for rain-hit farmers**

*Dried paddy sheats drenched*

The Andhra Pradesh Rytu Sangham (APRS) on Monday made a plea to the government for timely help to the farmers hit hard by the current rain accompanied by gale.

A team of leaders from the APRS visited Denduluru, Ganapavaram, and Pentapadu mandals on Monday to ascertain the crop loss.

### **Severe damage**

According to B. Balaram, who led the team, paddy crop was found to have sustained severe damage at Paremella under Pentapadu mandal. The rain and gale resulted in grain shedding leading to 20 per cent of damage in these areas.

The farmers were finding it difficult to salvage and dry up the paddy sheaves which still remained in a sheet of rainwater in the fields. In some other areas, the heaps of paddy were drenched, raising the problems of higher levels of moisture in grains and germination, he said.

Most of the victims were sharecroppers who invested heavy amount on cultivation ranging up to Rs. 22,000 per acre, the APRS leader added.

In upland villages like Medhinaopalem, Ramannagudem, and Challachintalapdu, extensive crop loss was reported for banana and maize. The banana plants got truncated and bunches damaged due to gale, he explained.

### **Plea to assess losses**

Mr. Balaram urged the district administration for deployment of official teams for assessment of crop damage and to ensure payment of compensation to the sufferers without any time loss.

He lamented that the victims of Neelam cyclone were yet to receive succour from even after six months of the calamity.

***A team of sangham leaders visit the affected areas to assess loss to crops due to rain***

## **94% fund use by Agriculture Department**

The Agriculture Department has utilised 94 per cent of the funds under Central and State-sponsored schemes during 2012-13. An official note quoting Director of Agriculture R.Ajithkumar said the department had spent Rs.661 crore of the Rs.709-crore outlay. It said an additional 10,000 hectares had been brought under vegetable cultivation as part of the Samagra flagship project. This, it

said, had resulted in an additional output of 100,000 tonnes of vegetables.

Mr. Ajithkumar said 250 polyhouses were under construction under a project to promote cultivation of horticulture products under controlled conditions for enhanced yield. He said 7,050 tonnes of coconut had been procured from farmers through 235 krishi bhavans.

## **Agriculturists' grievances day**

PERAMBALUR, April 23, 2013: The monthly agriculturists' grievances day would be held at the collectorate here on April 25. According to a release from District Collector Darez Ahmed, all agriculture-related issues including irrigation, financial assistance, inputs, implements and welfare schemes for farmers could be discussed then.

## **Indian agri-business conference on April 26**

The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) are jointly organising an agro-technology commercialisation conference on 26 April at HITEX Exhibition Centre, Hyderabad

The conference will showcase ready-to-commercialise agro-technologies under crops, horticulture, food technology, animal husbandry, cotton, jute fibre and fisheries sector. Innovators will get a platform to present their ideas before a panel of experts to validate their ideas and qualify for incubation services.

The participants will also get a chance to know more about the potential of business incubators and how it can support their venture.



According to a release here on Monday, those interested can attend the programme and meet business managers.

Ready to commercialise technologies will be presented with B2B and deal-making on the sidelines.

The event is open to agri-business entrepreneurs, innovators and start-ups having an agro-tech innovation.

For more information and registration  
email: [abip.icrisat@gmail.com](mailto:abip.icrisat@gmail.com) or call- 040 3071 3417/51/52

## **KSSP plans stir to protect paddy fields**

*Study to be conducted on granite quarrying*

: The Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) district meet here on Monday resolved to launch an agitation against large-scale granite quarrying, hill demolition, and paddy land conversion in the district.

In a statement issued here, N.S. Rajendrakumar and G.Stalin, KSSP district president and secretary respectively, accused the authorities concerned of criminal negligence towards such illegal activities.

The KSSP also resolved to extend active support to the ongoing public agitation to protect paddy land and wetlands in Aranmula and the stir against illegal granite quarrying at Kalanjoor and Chembanoly. The KSSP meeting has decided to conduct a scientific study on granite quarrying, they said.

The meeting further called for immediate withdrawal of the Government Order to privatise drinking water supply in the State.

The KSSP leaders alleged that the Government move to form a company for drinking water supply with 51 per cent equity for private parties would lead to exploitation of the common people. The government decision was aimed at protecting the interests of the corporate lobby, which would bring about a steep hike in the water tariff, they alleged.

The KSSP meet also called for social control over various self-financing medical colleges in the State.

T. Radhamony, KSSP former State president, took a class on 'Safety of women and Varma Commission'. K.P. Krishnankutty, N.K.Sasidharan Pillai, and P.K.Prasannan, Parishad office-bearers, spoke.

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- *Authorities accused of criminal negligence*
  - *Plea to withdraw order to privatise water supply*

## **Rain toll rises to seven; standing crop damaged**

Unseasonable rain triggered by a trough of low pressure over Bay of Bengal lashed the district bringing down day temperature. But, it caused widespread damage to standing crop in most parts of the district.

The district received an average rainfall of 3.8 mm with Rompicharla mandal receiving the maximum amount of rainfall of 4 cm.

Two farm labourers, both women, died when thunderbolts struck them in separate incidents at Arepalli village of Cherukupalli and at

Pathakolimerla village in Kakumanu mandal taking the death toll in rain-related incidents in the district to seven.

On Sunday, three farm labourers were killed after being struck by lightning. Two persons were killed on Saturday.

### **Trees uprooted**

A spell of moderate to heavy rainfall was witnessed in Guntur in the morning. Heavy gale uprooted trees and electric poles on Lakshmipuram Main Road and caused traffic snarls. The lack of efficient storm water drainage system caused cess pools of rainwater along the main roads.

Elsewhere in the district, the rain caused widespread damage to standing crops. In Kollipara, banana plantations were flattened as heavy rain accompanied by strong gale uprooted trees. Heaps of paddy lay submerged under sheets of water in Bapatla mandal.

The worst hit were the chilli farmers from Palnadu region who bore the brunt of the damage.

Farmers had little time to shift chilli usually dried on patches of dry ground and the crop loss was reported to be at least 3-5 quintals per acre. Chilli crop at Kunkalaguntla village in Nakerekallu mandal was damaged by a hailstorm.

### **Hectic activity**

The chilli yard in Guntur witnessed hectic activity as farmers tried to shift the rain-soaked chilli bags to safer places.

### **Control room set up**

District Collector S. Suresh Kumar, who took stock of the situation on Monday morning, instructed Tehsildars to be alert in view of the prevailing weather conditions. A control room was opened at the Collectorate, he added.

***The worst hit were the chilli farmers from Palnadu region***

## **Diversions of rice, pulses detected**

*VACB inspects Civil Supplies district depot*

The Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB) on Monday inspected the district depot of the Civil Supplies Corporation at Valiathura here and said it detected large-scale illegal diversion of subsidised rice, pulses and chilli, and provisions earmarked for the noon meal scheme for schoolchildren.

Circle Inspector S. Sreekanth of the VACB's 'Lightning Squad' led the surprise inspection on the basis of information received by Superintendent of Police of the Special Intelligence Unit-II, E. Sherifudeen.

### **Noon meal scheme**

The depot stocked provisions meant for sale through Maveli stores and Civil Supplies outlets. The commodities included at least three grades of rice, including one exclusively for providing noon meals to schoolchildren.

The VACB received information that government auditors had verified the stock at the warehouse recently and detected a glaring shortfall of more than 100 sacks of rice.

The whistle blowers also told the agency that some corrupt officials, possibly acting in connivance with the auditors, had covered the deficit by persuading certain private wholesale stockists to 'temporarily' supply the 'missing' quantity of rice to the depot. Investigators said that the surprise check revealed that there were an extra 23 sacks of rice, each weighing approximately 50 kg, in the

warehouse. The warehouse officials were at a loss to explain the surplus stock, they said.

The VACB also found significant shortfall in two different grades of black gram and chilli.

Investigators said they suspected that certain corrupt officials illegally diverted the provisions to supermarkets and so called 'margin-free shops,' which were privately run. (At least a few of such outlets were run by front-men of wholesalers contracted to supply provisions at low rates to the government). The traders sold the provisions as packaged commodities at a far higher rate.

Investigators said the records at the warehouse were not up to date and improperly maintained. The security men at the gates rarely kept a record of trucks entering and leaving the compound. (The VACB has recommended a surveillance camera-linked check post system for the warehouse).

Every month, the Corporation's district monitoring committee invited tenders from suppliers and contracted the lowest bidder. The purchases at the district depot here amount to more than Rs.1 crore a month. The suppliers offloaded their wares at the warehouse. However, the warehouse did not have a weighbridge to ensure that the contractors supplied the agreed quantity. Investigators said this was a major avenue for corruption, which required to be closed.

The agency was also investigating allegations that certain warehouse officials regularly received commission from private provision suppliers and had amassed disproportionate wealth. Last year, the agency had charge-sheeted a warehouse official on similar charges.

The inspection which commenced at 11 a.m. concluded at 6 p.m. The investigators prepared an inventory of the items in the warehouse in the presence of its custodian Sajith Kumar. The

agency will send a report to the government seeking departmental action against certain warehouse officials.

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- ***Records at depot improperly maintained***
  - ***No facility to weigh items supplied by contractors***

## **Rooting for rice**



*Rice saviours*A scene from the film that shows children harvesting a traditional variety of rice

*issue Suma Josson's short film In Search Of Our Lost Rice Seeds focuses on the efforts of seed savers from Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka to preserve the traditional varieties of the crop*

Campaigns and movements to conserve rice, which is a dietary staple for Indians, have taken many researchers to the roots of our culture and civilisation. Indigenous rice varieties are being

identified, popularised and conserved through seed banks and cultivation and sharing of experiences and seeds. Real-life stories of such sustained efforts are the subject of a documentary *In Search of Our Lost Rice Seeds*.

Directed by Suma Josson, an award-winning documentary filmmaker and writer, it is an initiative of 'Save Our Rice' campaign, a nation-wide network to sustain rice cultivation that is facilitated by Thanal in Kerala and the Pesticide Action Network-Asia.

"The documentary points out the mistakes we've made. But it emphasises that there is hope for the future as exemplified by the work of paddy seed savers in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka," says Sridhar, programme coordinator, Thanal. Syed Ghani Khan from Mysore, for instance, has conserved over 500 varieties of rice. "Conservation means he is cultivating those varieties on his land," Sridhar explains. The documentary profiles farmers such as Raman Cheruvayal and Haridas from Wayanad, Boregowda from Mysore, Jayaram and Karikalan from Tamil Nadu and Nandish from Karnataka.

"It is believed that there were over 1.5 lakh varieties of rice in India once upon a time. There would have been a few base types and farmers would have developed more from them. Since the Save Our Rice Campaign was launched, we've been trying to identify those people who are collecting the seeds of the traditional varieties and sustaining rice cultivation," says Sridhar. Thanal has a 'diversity block' wherein such seeds are collected and distributed to farmers for cultivation. While 120 varieties have been conserved in Kerala, over 70 traditional varieties are grown in Tamil Nadu. "As part of Save Our Rice campaign, we organise paddy festivals, where the farmers come together and share the seeds among themselves. In Tamil Nadu alone, over 10,000 farmers have been part of the initiative," says Sridhar.

The number of seed savers is more in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu because there is more land under the plough in these states, Sridhar

points out. “Therefore they can afford to test the viability of cultivating traditional varieties,” he adds.

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For Suma Josson, making the documentary was an eye-opener. “Even though I’ve been working on agricultural issues, I never knew what was happening to our staple food. I blame the farmers themselves for the situation. They were driven by yield and greed into adopting farming practices that were not always good for the soil or the crop,” says Suma.

It is heartening to see the work carried out by the seed savers, she says. “ It isn’t a business for them, but a passion,” she adds.

ATHIRA M.

***Save Our Rice Campaign tries to identify people who collect the seeds of traditional varieties and sustain rice cultivation***

***Save Our Rice Campaign tries to identify people who collect the seeds of traditional varieties and sustain rice cultivation***

## **Drought forces ryots to sell cattle**



*Cattle brought for sale in Anantapur market on Sunday. – PHOTO: R.V.S. PRASAD*

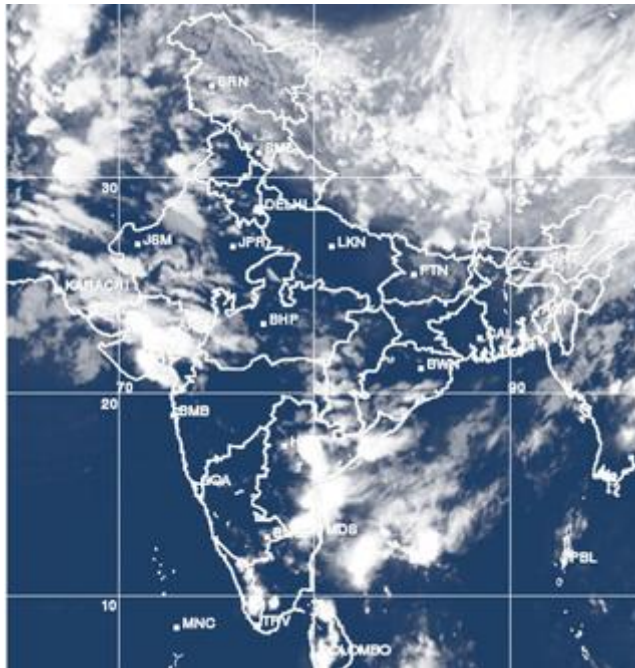


The Anantapur town market yard on Sunday witnessed the sale of not less than 300 cattle – most of them oxen – to vehicles that carry these animals to slaughterhouses in the neighbouring States.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Khasim of Krishnagiri town of Tamil Nadu says, rather emphatically, that the cattle market in the district is the most reliable for them, as their trucks have never had to return empty or half filled, thanks to the exodus in the sale of cattle the district is witnessing since the last two years. “Mostly, we sell it to slaughterhouses in Bangalore as the demand is higher and hence the price better,” he says even as he added that a considerable number of cattle is sold in Kerala at food processing industries which process the meat and export it to the middle east, which is one of the largest importers of meat in the world.

It is estimated that the district witnesses a sale of more than 600 cattle every week translating into a mind numbing figure of over 28,000 cattle in a year. This means an average production of more than 2,500 tonnes of beef. The entire consumption of beef in Bangalore city is just around 1,000 tonnes as per statistics of the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services. While one of the major reasons for the distress sale of cattle is lack of fodder and water owing to consecutive droughts, Y.V. Malla Reddy, Director of AF Ecology centre – an NGO involved in finding ecological and sustainable solutions to the problems of the district – says that the root cause of the lack of fodder is the unmindful shift of almost all farmers to groundnut. He argues that there is nothing left behind once groundnut is harvested as the entire plant is uprooted leaving nothing for the cattle to graze unlike in the past when cultivation of pulses and lentils meant that there was fodder that was left behind for the cattle to graze. “The shift to exotic breeds of cattle is another reason,” contends Mr. Malla Reddy and argues that exotic breeds introduced by the government as the solution to the vagaries of the farmers in the district has meant that these breeds which are not suited for hot weather conditions require better facilities.

# Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on April 22nd.

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	35	21	0	26
New Delhi (Sfd)	33	21	0	22
Chandigarh	32	23	0	26
Hissar	33	20	1	41
Bhuntar	21	9	3	137
Shimla	24	9	1	109
Jammu	30	19	0	35
Srinagar	16	9	2	156
Amritsar	30	17	1	6
Patiala	33	21	0	24
Jaipur	35	20	4	12
Udaipur	32	21	3	15
Allahabad	28	19	0	11
Lucknow	26	16	0	1
Varanasi	25	18	10	21
Dehradun	30	19	19	37
Agartala	34	23	0	67
Ahmedabad	36	26	0	6
Bangalore	35	23	0	22
Bhubaneshwar	34	20	40	52
Bhopal	33	19	0	52
Chennai	35	28	0	32
Guwahati	29	20	1	59
Hyderabad	35	25	0	42
Kolkata	34	22	tr	13
Mumbai	33	25	0	0

Nagpur	36	22	0	16
Patna	26	19	1	14
Pune	36	19	0	3
Thiruvananthapuram	34	27	0	105
Imphal	31	18	0	114
Shillong	20	13	4	67

The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (tr-trace) and total rainfall in mm since 1st March.

## RAIN AT MANY PLACES

**RAINFALL:** Rain/thundershowers have occurred at many places over Jammu and Kashmir, at a few places over Himachal Pradesh, east Rajasthan, east Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and at isolated places over Haryana, Punjab and west Uttar Pradesh. Weather was mainly dry over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm are: HARYANA: Jind and Rohtak 2 each and Julana 1, HAIMACHAL PRADESH: Dehragopipur 3, JAMMU AND KASHMIR: Pahalgam 1, EAST RAJASTHAN: Mount Abu 2 and Ajmer 1, EAST UTTAR PRADESH: Ballia 2 and Varanasi Airport 1, UTTARAKHAND: Dehradun 2.

**MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES:** The maximum temperatures fell largely in Punjab, fell markedly in Haryana and east Uttar Pradesh, fell appreciably in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, west Rajasthan, west Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and changed little elsewhere. They were, largely below normal in Jammu and Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh, markedly below normal Haryana, Punjab and Uttarakhand and appreciably below normal in rest of the region. The highest maximum temperature in the region was 40.0°C recorded at Phalodi (Rajasthan).

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 24th April 2013:** Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places over Uttarakhand during next 24 hours. Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places over Jammu and Kashmir on 23rd and increase thereafter. Rain/thunderstorm may occur at one or two

places over Punjab and north Haryana on 24th. Weather would be mainly dry over rest of the region.

**FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 24th April 2013:** Partly cloudy sky. Thundery development could occur in some areas.

## **Water level**

Water level in Periyar dam was 112.40 feet on Monday with an inflow of 100 cusecs and a discharge of 100 cusecs. Permissible level is 136 feet. In Vaigai dam, the water level was 41.50 feet as against the total permissible level of 71 feet. Inflow was 35 cusecs and discharge was 1,060 cusecs. The combined Periyar credit stood at 1991 mcft.

### **Rainfall**

Thekkady recorded 11 mm rainfall, Gudalur 2, Shanmuganathi 1, Uthamapalayam 15, Veerapandi 17, Vaigai Dam 2, Sothuparai 4 and Kodaikanal 20 mm.

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Monday stood at 66.55 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 103.89 cusecs and 394.75 cusecs was discharged from the dam.

The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 84.99 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 11 cusecs and 5 cusecs was discharged.

### **Kanyakumari**

Water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 13.95 feet, 25.50 feet in Perunchani, 3.05 feet in Chittar I, 3.15 feet in Chittar II and 0.40 feet in Poigai dam.

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## Weather

### Chennai - INDIA

#### Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

**Tuesday, Apr 23**

**Max Min**

33° | 28°

**Rain:** 0

**Sunrise:** 05:52

**Humidity:** 79

**Sunset:** 06:22

**Wind:** normal

**Barometer:** 1010

#### Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

**Wednesday, Apr 24**

**Max Min**

36° | 27°

#### Extended Forecast for a week

<b>Thursday Apr 25</b>	<b>Friday Apr 26</b>	<b>Saturday Apr 27</b>	<b>Sunday Apr 28</b>	<b>Monday Apr 29</b>
37°   27°	36°   26°	36°   26°	36°   26°	38°   27°
Partly Cloudy	Overcast	Overcast	Partly Cloudy	Overcast

## THE TIMES OF INDIA

# Goat farming: Reprieve for panchayat officials

KOCHI: The Kerala high court has quashed revenue recovery proceedings initiated by the government against former office-bearers of a panchayat in Kollam in connection with the implementation of a goat farming project.

Sooranad Vadakku grama panchayat former president S S Vijayakumar and members H Abdul Khaleel and Madathil

Reghu had challenged the proceedings, claiming that the project was approved by various authorities.

The panchayat had, during 2006-'07, implemented two projects under the Kerala Development Projects, aimed at improving the living standards of those belonging to scheduled castes and those below poverty line. One of the projects included supply of goats to individual members of Kudumbashree units while the other one envisaged distribution of cots to the aged and the poor.

The petition said the projects were approved by the block-level technical advisory committee and the district planning committee. The government had -- on August 26, 2008 -- issued an order to recover Rs 1,27,602 from the panchayat president, standing committee chairman and members Khaleel and Raghu. It said the supply of goats without forming 'unit goat farms' was against the scheme.

"The petitioners were not given any notice regarding the proposal to impose the liability. Further it is not evident that any enquiry has been conducted with due notice given to the petitioners," Justice C K Abdul Rehim held.

## TN, Kerala ministers to meet soon as water crisis deepens

CHENNAI: After waging a battle with Karnataka over sharing of [Cauvery water](#), the [Tamil Nadu government](#) is all set to hold talks with Kerala over the [Parambikulam-Aliyar project](#) and the [Neyyar river](#). The meeting is likely to take place on Saturday

or Sunday next in Thiruvananthapuram.

With monsoon failing last year, Kerala has asked Tamil Nadu to release water from Parambikulam-Aliyar for the Palakkad region. In a recent assembly session, Kerala chief minister Oommen Chandy announced that the state would move the Supreme Court to get its share. Sources told TOI that the talks between Tamil Nadu PWD minister K V Ramalingam and his Kerala counterpart was in the wake of Chandy's letter to chief minister J Jayalalithaa in the first week of April, seeking a meeting with her. However, Tamil Nadu insisted on a meeting at the ministerial-level first.

"The main agenda is for release of water from Aliyar to Kerala, and tapping dead storage of Siruvani reservoir in Kerala for drinking water supply to Coimbatore, Tirupur and Erode districts," said a government official. The Parambikulam-Aliyar project is a mammoth scheme, designed and executed by the Tamil Nadu government during the second Five Year Plan to share mutual benefits through the utilization of flows in the rivers of Anamalayar, Nirar, Sholayar, Parambikulam, Palar and Aliyar for generation of hydroelectric power, irrigation, drinking water supply and industrial use in both the states.

The ministers will also discuss the Neyyar irrigation scheme executed by the erstwhile [Travancore-Cochin government](#). After reorganisation of states, a portion of ayacut to an extent of 9,200 acres falls in Vilavancode taluk in Kanyakumari district.

# Forest department team visits Vellingiri sites

COIMBATORE: In an indication that the forest department might initiate strict action against those encroaching and constructing concrete structures along elephant corridor, [chief conservator of forests](#) Ashutosh Samant Singhar inspected some of the institutions situated near Vellingiri foothills on Monday. Singhar told TOI over telephone on Monday evening that the inspection was conducted as elephants had trampled three people to death in the same area in the past three months. He also added that encroachers on forest land will be dealt severely.

Forest officials also visited some of the spiritual and educational institutions in the vicinity as part of the inspection. [Green activists](#) have alleged that some of the institutions have encroached upon forest land obstructing the normal migratory path of elephants. This, they say, is the reason why jumbos step out of forests into human habitations and attack people. "Some of the buildings in the region are constructed in partial violation of the present [hill area conservation authority](#) (HACA) norms. We are primarily trying to ensure that such incidents are not repeated and that we protect the forest and ecosystem," Singhar added.

A private spiritual centre in the locality, which is also under the scanner for violating government norms, confirmed that forest officials had indeed visited their campus, but centre representatives claimed that they had visited just to pray.



# Environment gains foothold in Coimbatore development plan

COIMBATORE: The city municipal corporation has been suggested to give prominence to environmental conservation in its upcoming city development plan which is presently under preparation.

A preliminary meeting of the [City Technical Advisory Group](#) (CTAG) was convened here in the city during which the suggestion was mooted to the senior corporation officials. Some of the CTAG members also explored the possibilities of using construction debris for purposes like land-filling and as a substitute for sand in constructing non load bearing structures. This will reduce the piling up of construction waste and debris along the roadside, open areas and near water-bodies in its limits.

"It was an informal meeting in which the CTAG members were asked to point out their suggestions and remarks about the ongoing works of the civic body. Suggestions like reusing construction debris as a possible substitute for sand was one of the suggestions," said G Latha, commissioner, Coimbatore municipal corporation.

It was the first CTAG meeting convened at the main hall of the corporation office after the new [city municipal corporation commissioner](#) took over as the administrative chief of the civic body. The corporation has constituted the CTAG as an external body to assist it in implementing various developmental work by providing external input and observation about the progress of the ongoing work.

"Construction rubble except stone [jelly](#) could be crushed into powder and could be reused for construction work itself. It is being done in Mumbai and various other parts of the country," said R Elangaovan, executive engineer, quality control division, PWD who was also part of the meeting.

The city corporation is expected to expand the City Technical Advisory Group (CTAG) in the coming future ahead of releasing the new city development plan. Some of the major projects to be included in the new city development plan include mass transit system like monorail that has been already announced by the state government.

## Food safety officials seize three tonnes of mangoes

COIMBATORE: [Food safety](#) officials, in Erode, on Friday seized three tonnes of artificially ripened mangoes sprayed with organophosphate based insecticide, an artificial ripening agent. The compound is toxic and is part of the same chemical family of compounds that are found in various harmful pesticides and even nerve gas agents.

"Based on a tip off, we raided the shops and confiscated the artificially ripened mangoes. They were sprayed with pesticide for quick ripening which is being widely used as a substituent for calcium carbide these days," said G Rameshkumar, designated officer, Food Safety and Drug Administration Department, Erode.

The artificially ripened mangoes were seized from three fruit

warehouses in Nethaji whole sale fruit market in Erode. Officials claimed the traders were spraying pesticide on the mangoes to ensure the entire bunch becomes ripe within five to six days. They acknowledged it difficult to identify fruits ripened by spraying the pesticide which is available in the open market at Rs 1200 per litre.

"These artificially ripened fruits have a pink tinge on their outer skin but that cannot be the only factor to confirm the presence of the toxic artificial ripening agent," [Rameshkumar](#) added.

The team raided more than 15 fruit storage spots in the market from where retail fruit merchants in [Erode](#) and nearby areas procure their fruit consignments for sale. Erode corporation officials were also present during the raid and later seized fruits were destroyed by dumping them in the corporation compost yard in Vendipalayam, Erode.

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# DECCAN Chronicle

## 8 trucks trafficking cattle impounded



Activists of People for Cattle in India intercepted and impounded eight trucks trafficking cattle tethered closely and overloaded in the vehicles at Nazarathpet near Chennai on Sunday.  
— DC

**Chennai:** The activists of the People for Cattle in India (PFCI) who have been waging a lone battle to prevent the slaughter of cows for meat have, in yet another incident, impounded eight trucks carrying about 250 cattle at Poonamallee.

About 30 cattle, huddled in each truck, were being trafficked to Kerala from Odisha. And when the trucks arrived at Kavarapettai through the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, the members of PFCI intercepted the vehicles and informed the Nazarathpet police.

Upon the advice of the Thiruvallur Superintendent of Police, the activists got into touch with the collector and sought his help in saving the cattle from being subjected to cruelty. “The Collector and police had helped us in saving the cows which were later sent to Gosala in Tiruttani,” said G. Arun of PFCI.

The cattle welfare activists have earlier caught about ten trucks carrying cattle to Kerala on three occasions. “This is a biggest haul. The officials were

cooperative. We hope that the government would initiate action to prevent the trafficking of cattle in future,” Arun who was among a team of about 16 activists who participated in Sunday’s operation, said. Initially, the PFCI activists met with stiff opposition from those transporting the cattle and police were not forthcoming in registering cases.

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## **Business Standard**<sup>beta</sup> **Potato slips 0.8% on increased supplies**



Potato futures for June declined by Rs 8.30, or 0.81%, to Rs 1,017.10 per quintal in 65 lots.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), the May contract eased by Rs 7.20, or 0.70%, to Rs 1,018 per quintal in 49 lots.

Prices fell as speculators offloaded their positions tracking weak spot market trend on subdued demand against increased supplies from producing regions.

## **Coriander up almost 2% on tight supply**

**Prices moved up as speculators enlarged their positions**



Coriander futures for June moved up by Rs 138, or 1.97%, to Rs 7,130 per quintal in 12,800 lots.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange (NCDEX), the May contract gained Rs 117, or 1.70%, to Rs 6,980 per quintal in 31,420 lots.

Prices moved up as speculators enlarged their positions triggered by firm spot market trend.

Speculators enlarging their position also had a positive impact on the trade.

Limited arrivals from producing belts also led to an upsurge in coriander futures trade.

## Turmeric declines more than 1% on increased supply



Turmeric futures for June declined by Rs 82, or 1.23% to Rs 6,590 per quintal in 2,460 lots.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), the May contract lost Rs 78, or 1.19% to Rs 6,494 per quintal in 12,565 lots.

However, estimates of lower output this season restricted the fall.

Prices declined as speculators trimmed their positions driven by subdued spot market demand against increased supplies.

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## THE HINDU Business Line

### Irrigation advantage



*4 crops a year: A farmer holding freshly harvested shallot or small onion on a field in Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh. Thanks to borewells and drip-irrigation systems, Kuppam is now a key vegetable growing belt with farmers harvesting at least four crops a year. Small onions are being sold at Rs 65 a kg against Rs 16 for big onions in the retail outlet. — Bijoy Ghosh*

# Weak global cues crush soyabean



**Indore, April 22:** Weak global cues and slack demand in the physical market after expiry of the near-month contracts on the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange pulled down soyabean prices in Indore mandis in the last one week by Rs 100 a quintal.

On Monday, soyabean in Indore mandis ruled at Rs 3,750-3,850 a quintal amid arrival of 40,000 bags in Madhya Pradesh. Added to the contracts expiry on the NCDEX, slack buying support in soya futures lent strength to bearish sentiment. Two weeks ago, soyabean prices had increased to Rs 4,100 a quintal on strong buying support for soyameal in the domestic market.

Soyabean May and June contracts on the NCDEX closed lower at Rs 3,855 and Rs 3,741.50 a quintal, respectively. Soyabean plant deliveries have dropped to Rs 3,850-3,925.

Compared to soyabean, soya oil prices are either ruling firm or have gained marginally despite weak global cues and slack physical demand.

On Monday, soya refined ruled firm at Rs 685-90, while soya solvent ruled at Rs 660-662 for 10 kg. In the futures market, however, soya oil traded lower on weak buying and May and June contracts on the NCDEX closed lower at Rs 701.40 (down Rs 4.25) and Rs 778.80 (down Rs 6.50).



Dip in demand for soyameal in the domestic market dragged its prices by about Rs 1,000 a quintal in the domestic market in the past one week. On Monday, soyameal was quoted at Rs 34,400-34,500 a quintal.

## **Rubber under pressure on supply concerns**

**Kottayam, April 22:** Physical rubber prices showed a mixed mood on Monday.

The market remained under pressure mainly following the declines in domestic futures but the losses were still limited on supply concerns.

Sheet rubber weakened further to Rs 159.00 (Rs 160.00) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

The undercurrent was bearish.

Meanwhile, the key TOCOM rubber futures rose more than one per cent buoyed by a weaker yen recovering from the five-month low hit early last week.

In futures, the May series declined to Rs 155.20 (Rs 157.22), June to Rs 154.00 (Rs 157.02), July to Rs 153.20 (Rs 156.34) and August to Rs 152.50 (Rs 154.51) while the September series remained inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

RSS 3 (spot) bounced back to Rs 152.02 (Rs 148.74) at Bangkok.

April futures improved to ¥242.9 (Rs 131.90) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

**The spot rubber rates/kg were:** RSS-4: 159.00 (160.00); RSS-5: 155.00 (155.00); Ungraded: 150.00 (150.00); ISNR 20: 147.00 (147.00) and Latex 60%: 103.00 (105.00).

# Cardamom loses flavour as supply outstrips demand

*Upsurge in arrivals despite off season*



*Heavy arrivals: A file photo of cardamom.*

**Kochi, April 22:** Cardamom lost its flavour last week on an upsurge in arrivals at the auctions, despite being an off season, according to trade sources.

Having lost hope of a rise in prices, which have been ruling steady for several weeks, the growers/primary market dealers were releasing their stocks and that in turn has led to heavy arrivals.

Arrival of the material at individual auctions was so heavy that it was like in the peak season, they said.

Total arrivals last week crossed 430 tonnes and that is considered as the highest during the off season, they said.

Consequently, prices fell by around Rs 30-40 a kg for all the varieties.

## **Quality capsules**

Prices would have fallen further but for the good export buying, P.C. Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, Kumily, told *Business Line*.

According to trade sources, exporters estimated to have bought over 100 tonnes of good quality capsules last week. However, prices of

good colour 7 mm and above capsules also fell to Rs 800 a kg from Rs 850-875 a kg.

Bold capsules having good green colour are not available from any other sources and, hence, it is bought by exporters for the select markets overseas which preferred this kind of material, they said.

Arrival of this variety of material constituted 15-20 per cent of the total arrivals, he said.

Similarly, the upcountry buyers having liquidated their stocks were also buying for stocking as the current prices are considered as the lowest.

Despite good buying the prices declined last week as the supply outstripped the demand, trade sources in Bodinayakannur said.

The individual auction average continued to stay below Rs 650 kg and vacillating between Rs 600 and Rs 650 a kg for over a month now.

## **Quality**

Much of the material arrived in the market at present are of inferior quality from the last round of picking and that has been keeping the prices low. This kind of material was also responsible for the poor prices, they said.

The harvesting of the current crop is over. What ever material arrives at the market now is of stock held by the farmers.

Total arrivals and sales during the current season from Aug 1, 2012 to April 21 were at 11,436 tonnes and 10,901 tonnes respectively.

Total arrivals and sales during the corresponding period last year were at 16,269 tonnes and 15,747 tonnes respectively.

The weighted average price as on April 21 stood at Rs 739.64 a kg as against Rs 612.36 a kg as on the same date last year.

Prices of graded varieties decreased last week and that in rupees/kg were: AGEB: 860-870; AGB: 610-620; AGS: 600-610; and AGS-1: 570- 580.

### **Dry spell**

Dry spell continues to prevail in general in the growing areas with rise in temperature while some areas have received rains last week, growers said.

The sky has been cloudy and there were scattered rains here and there.

If the dry spell continued for long that would result in drying up of the plants .

In fact, at least one summer shower a month is essential for cardamom plants for its good being, they said.

## **Bill on independent regulator for biotech sector introduced in Lok Sabha**

**New Delhi, April 22:** A statutory independent regulator for the country's rapidly growing biotechnology sector is on the cards.

### **Regulatory authority**

A Bill that provides for setting up the Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India (BRAI) for regulating the research, transport, import, manufacture and the use of organisms and products of modern biotechnology was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Monday.

The Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India Bill, 2013, provides for the setting up of an inter-ministerial governing board to oversee the performance of the proposed BRAI.

It will also provide for setting up the Biotech Advisory Council to render strategic advice to the authority on matters relating to

developments in modern biotechnology and their implications in India.

### **Nodal agency**

The proposed BRAI would be the nodal agency of the Government to ensure comprehensive safety assessment of organisms and biotech products.

It would regulate the trials preceding the clinical trials in the health sector and the present mechanism for regulating clinical trials would continue.

It will also help India keep pace in regulatory measures with the rapid technology advancement in biotechnology and at the same time ensure safety to human and animal health and environment.

### **products**

The biotech industry in India has been growing at an average annual rate of 20-30 per cent during the last five years and its turnover during 2011-12 exceeded Rs 20,440 crore.

A large number of biotech products are already in the market and many more are in the pipeline, namely, the therapeutic biotech drugs, vaccines, genetically modified crops with resistance to pests and diseases, drought and salinity and with enhanced nutritional factors.

The potential of biotechnology with respect to food security, public health, employment generation, intellectual wealth creation, expanding entrepreneurial opportunity and augmenting industrial growth warrants a focussed approach towards innovation, regulation and commercialisation. Currently, the activities and processes involving the genetically engineered organisms and products are broadly regulated under the “Rules for Manufacture, Use/Import/Export and Storage of hazardous Micro-organisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells, 1989” notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the guidelines published by the Department of Biotechnology in the Ministry of Science and Technology.

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***The regulator would be the nodal agency of the Government to ensure comprehensive safety assessment of organisms and biotech products.***

## **Govt wheat purchases up 30% as arrivals rise**



**New Delhi, April 22:** Procurement of wheat by Government agencies has picked up as arrivals have gained momentum in States such as Punjab and Haryana.

In the Rabi marketing season, so far, the Government agencies have procured 11.94 million tonnes of wheat, about 30 per cent more than 9.23 mt in the same period last year.

In Punjab, the Government has procured 4.3 mt so far, more than double the 1.99 mt, it had procured last year.

The Government had procured 12.83 mt from Punjab last year, while overall procurement across the country stood at 38.14 mt.

In Haryana, the procurement, so far is marginally lower at 3.7 mt against last year's 3.79 mt.

The Government had procured 8.66 mt of wheat from Haryana last year.

In Madhya Pradesh, the procurement this year is higher 17 per cent at 3.63 mt against last year's 3.09 m t.

The Government had procured 8.49 mt last year from Madhya Pradesh.

However, in Uttar Pradesh, the country's largest wheat producing State, the procurement by State agencies is still sluggish due to a weak procurement mechanism.

The Government agencies have bought about 75,765 tonnes of wheat in UP, almost half of last year's 1.4 lakh tonnes.

The total wheat crop this year is expected to be higher than last year's 93.9 mt and is pegged at around 96 mt.

The Centre expects to procure a record 44 mt, about 6 mt or 15 per cent more than 38.14 mt procured last year.

Wheat stocks with the Government stood at 24.2 mt as on April 1, and by June 1, the stocks are expected to rise to 62 mt.

## **Cotton wilts on weak export, mills' demand**



**Rajkot, April 22:** Cotton prices traded lower on the back of weak export and domestic demand.

According to traders, the trend in the market is lukewarm as there is no big buying.

Gujarat Sankar-6 cotton decreased by Rs 200 to Rs 37,200-37,500 for a candy of 356 kg. The Kalyan variety cotton traded at Rs 29,000-29,500 for a candy. About 20,000-22,000 bales of cotton arrived in Gujarat and 65,000-68,000 bales across the country.

Cotton ready delivery quoted at Rs 3,870-3,965 a quintal in Punjab, Rs 3,810-3,855 in Haryana and Rs 3,800-3,830 in Rajasthan.

*Kapas* or raw cotton declined by Rs 5-7 to Rs 900-960 for a *maund* of 20 kg and Kadi delivery *kapas* traded at Rs 950-980 a *maund*.

Traders said that spinners have slowed down purchases due to weak offtake in yarn. Some exporters resumed buying at lower levels. However, fresh export demand was very limited.

A Rajkot-based cotton broker said: “Due to weak international market, the export demand is currently dull. Moreover, spinning mills buying is limited putting pressure on the prices.”

Most-active July cotton on ICE Futures U.S. closed down 0.12 cent at 85.36 cents a lb. It marked the contract's third weekly loss in a row. Prices fell even more sharply on Thursday after China's state reserve announced it would sell some of its massive reserves beginning on Friday.



# Edible oils weaken on bearish futures



**Mumbai, April 22:** Edible oils prices ruled weak on Monday tracking bearish futures markets. Mumbai traders observed an one-day token bandh in support of call given by trade association call against the Local Body Tax. Malaysian palm oil futures extended last week's loss further on Monday, hitting a four-month low, as volatility in commodities markets overall and losses in soyabean weighed.

Analyst said that palm oil futures faced pressure from sluggish export data that showed shipments from Malaysia were down nearly 5 per cent during April 1-20 compared with the same period a month ago.

Sources said that in the local market, a meagre 80-100 tonnes of palmolein changed hands in isolated resale trade.

Bearish foreign markets led local refineries to reduce rates for palmolein by Rs 2-3.

Due to bandh, wholesalers kept away from fresh buying. At the national level, mustard arrivals declined to 5.20 lakh bags and they were quoted at Rs 3,350-3,500 a quintal.

At the close of the day, Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 509-511, super palmolein at Rs 543 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 780.

Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 510 ex-Patalganga and Rs 506 ex-JNPT, soyabean refined oil Rs 668 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 760. Allana quoted super palmolein Rs 543.

In Saurashtra – Rajkot groundnut oil ruled unchanged at Rs 1,900 for *telia* tin and Rs 1,240 for loose (10 kg).

On Bursa Malaysia Derivatives Exchange, crude palm oil May contracts settled lower at MYR 2,245 (MYR 2,283), June at MYR 2,252 (MYR 2,294) and July at MYR 2,255 (MYR 2,296) a tonne.

**Nominal spot rates were (Rs/10 kg):** groundnut oil 1,210 (1,210), soya refined oil 670 (675), sunflower exp. ref. 680 (685), sunflower ref. 765 (770), rapeseed ref. oil 705 (706), rapeseed expeller ref. 675 (676) cottonseed ref. oil 645(645) and palmolein 506 (510).

## Short-sellers pull downpepper market



**Kochi, April 22:** Pepper prices fell as short position holders tried to drag the market on Monday as part of their plans to buy back and square off their positions. Leading exporters reportedly covered

good quantity of 520 GL, 525 GL pepper at Rs 343 a kg and 550 GL at Rs 345 a kg from the primary markets and processor- resellers. Upcountry buyers were reportedly covering lower grade material from Karnataka at Rs 325-330 a kg delivered at anywhere in India with advance payment, market sources told *Business Line*.

Even though arrivals at the terminal market were around 25 tonnes of fresh pepper, an estimated 78 tonnes were traded as reseller-processors, who had covered from the primary markets, sold directly to exporters at a discount, they said.

May contract on the NCDEX decreased by Rs225 a quintal to close at Rs 35,275 a quintal. Total turnover dropped by 100 tonnes to 368 tonnes. Total open interest declined by two tonnes to 1,173 tonnes.

Spot prices dropped by Rs 200 a quintal in tandem with the trend in the futures market, despite good buying on the spot market to close at Rs 34,300 (ungarbled) and Rs 35,800 (MG 1) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market was at \$6,800 a tonne (c&f) for prompt shipments and \$6,700 a tonne for May shipments.

“We are becoming competitive in the international market for above 550 GL Malabar and there is good chance for India to market our pepper of above 550 GL in June. The quantity available may be limited, notwithstanding we stand a good chance as Vietnam may not be selling this grade,” export sources told *Business Line*. But there could emerge a problem as June, July contracts have not been listed on the exchange and in the absence of it there would be a vacuum putting the exporters in difficulty, they said.

# Bulk buyers keep away from rice market



**Karnal, April 22:** The rice market witnessed a steady trend with prices of aromatic and non-basmati rice ruling unchanged from previous levels on Monday, despite restricted trading.

With not much trading taking place in the market, rice prices were unchanged said, Amit Chandna, Proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company.

Rallies in the recent past were unjustified, he said. Bulk buyers are keeping themselves out of the market as they are waiting for prices to drop, he said. The rice market has already seen some unexpected rise in the last few days and major changes in prices are unlikely this week, said Amit Chandna.

In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) sold at Rs 8,200 a quintal, while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted at Rs 7,150 a quintal.

Pure basmati (raw) quoted at Rs 9,000 a quintal. Duplicate basmati (steam) traded at Rs 7,100 a quintal.

For the brokens of Pusa-1121, Dubar quoted at Rs 4,100, Tibar sold at Rs 4,950 while Mongra was at Rs 3,100 a quintal.

Similarly, non basmati varieties continued to rule flat. Sharbati (steam) quoted at Rs 5,400, while Sharbati (sela) was at Rs 5,050 a quintal.

PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 3,400-3,450 while PR-11 (Raw) quoted at Rs 3,100-3,150 a quintal. Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,500 a quintal while Permal (sela) went for Rs 2,400 a quintal. PR14 (steam) sold at Rs 3,200 a quintal.

### **Central pool stocks**

According to the reports, rice stocks in country's central po

## **Maharashtra traders' strike drags sugar**



**Mumbai, April 22:** Sugar prices dropped by Rs 10-20 a quintal at the mills level on Monday as the wholesale markets will be closed for three days starting Monday. The market closure is in protest against the imposition of local body tax. In the absence of fresh commitments –buying from traders – selling pressure increased. Spot prices also weakened by the same margin.

As the Vashi market was closed, there were no arrivals. Sources said that the Bombay Sugar Merchants Association has decided to close shutters till Wednesday in protest against the tax. Traders are demanding scrapping of the tax that will require even petty shop owners to register with the authorities. Demand eased in other centres dragging domestic spot and futures by Rs10-14 till noon.

Analyst said that the sugar market is currently passing through a bearish phase on ample supply and need-based demand. As observers expect sufficient closing stock of about 70- 75 lakh tonnes at the end of the season, the effect of lower output projection for the next season will not be seen on market for near future. Progress of monsoon will play a crucial role after June. Mills are under pressure of debt liabilities and payment for farmers dues they will continue selling.

On Saturday evening, 10-12 mills offered tenders and sold 30,000 – 35,000 bags at Rs 2,940-3,020 (Rs 2,940-3,020) for S-grade and Rs 3,040- 3,120 (Rs 3,040 - 3,120) for M-grade said sources.

On National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange sugar May contracts were down by Rs 9 to Rs 2,930 (Rs 2939), June to Rs 2,990 (Rs 3,004) and July to Rs 3,020 (Rs 3,030).

## **Stockists curb building turmeric inventories**



**Erode, April 22:** Spot turmeric prices declined by Rs 200-500 a quintal as stockists as stockists burdened with huge stocks curbed buying.

“Stockists having over 10 lakh bags stocks with them have decided to buy only a negligible quantity. Hence, they quoted lower price.

Exporters also have meagre upcountry orders. Above all, arrivals increased to 8,000 bags against 6,000 bags that arrived last week,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said that usually after ‘*Sri Rama Navami*’ festival, upcountry orders

decrease and will start flowing from April last week. This year, too, upcountry orders are low. In addition, steep fall in turmeric futures reflected in the domestic turmeric market. Other traders said that due to severe heat wave across the country, especially in north Indian towns, traders have not placed any new orders. So they procured very limited stocks.

For want of demand, even the hybrid variety decreased by Rs 500 a quintal and other varieties by Rs 300 a quintal. The sale of turmeric bags was only 50 per cent of arrivals.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,119-8,291 a quintal; the root variety at Rs 4,010-6,911.

**Salem Hybrid Crop:** The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,400-8,807, the root variety at Rs 5,264-7,434. Of the 1,682 bags that arrived only 35 per cent was sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety sold at Rs 7,169-8,234, the root variety Rs 6,299-7,072. Of 503 bags on offer, 400 found takers.

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