THE HINDU

Perambalur farmers welcome dam across Marudhayar

A BIG HAND FOR A LANDMARK DECISION:Farmers attending the grievance meeting in Perambalur on Thursday appreciating the Chief Minister for her decision to build a dam across the Marudhayar.— PHOTO: R.M. RAJARATHINAM

All the farmers' associations in Perambalur district unanimously welcomed Chief Minister Jayalalithaa's announcement that a reservoir at a cost of Rs. 108 crore would be built across the Marudhayar. (It was the floods in this jungle stream that caused the first major train accident at Ariayalur in 1956 in which 144 persons were killed). Farmers have demanded a compensation of Rs. 5 lakh an acre for the land to be acquired for the dam.

Congratulating District Collector Darez Ahmed for his efforts at the agriculturists' grievances day here on Thursday, farmers led by Rajachidambaram, general secretary of the Tamilaga Vivasayigal Sangham, said that apart from ensuring two crops in the rain-fed area, it would replenish the groundwater and provide good drinking water.

In a congratulatory resolution to the Chief Minister, farmers said that 2,000 million cubic feet of water flows through this river annually. Of that the proposed reservoir would be able to store only about 200 mcft. The rest would be let into the river (it joins the Kollidam in Ariyalur district). Hence, farmers contended that it would not in any way affect the downstream areas such as Ariyalur district.

Besides, this scheme would make it possible to store and use water that flows into the sea. They pointed out that it would irrigate 4,200 acres of land, mostly in Perambalur district and a small portion in Ariyalur district.

With specific reference to drinking water, the resolution said he area where the reservoir was to be built (Kottarai) got only saline water and hence it was only a borewell that had been catering to the region. If the proposed scheme were to be completed, the people in the region would be able to get good drinking water.

Above all, groundwater level would automatically go up when reservoir comes into being. This would benefit all water bodies in the vicinity, including the ponds, wells, and lakes.

The farmers pointed out that 464 acres of land in Kottarai and 180 acres of land in Adhanur would have to be acquired for the reservoir. “Those farmers (who would be losing their land in the process) are all small and marginal. They do not have any other land or property. The earning from this land is their sole livelihood.”

Hence, they appealed to the Chief Minister that these farmers should be given a compensation of Rs. 5 lakh an acre. They should be given green houses and land for cultivation (with irrigation facility).

Farm sector gets priority in annual credit plan

Allocation made for crop loan and farm mechanisation

A whopping 69 per cent of the total outlay of Rs. 3,345 crore was allotted to agriculture sector in the Annual Credit Plan for the year 2013-14 that was released here on Thursday.

The plan envisages an outlay of Rs. 3,344.58 crore under the priority sector which is 13 per cent higher or Rs. 391.89 crore over last year's outlay.

Allocation to agriculture and allied activities stands at Rs. 2,319.81 crore which is Rs. 140.64 crore higher than the last year's outlay.

A total of Rs. 1,496 crore has been earmarked for crop loan, Rs. 355 crore for poultry and sheep, Rs. 163 crore for farm mechanisation and Rs. 94 crore for horticulture.

The allocation to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises sector is Rs. 305.93 crore, which is 9 per cent of the total outlay.

A total of Rs. 145 crore is allotted for education loan and Rs. 195 crore for housing loan.

Of the total, the share of commercial banks is Rs. 2,583 crore (77 per cent), cooperatives Rs. 665 crore (20 per cent), Regional Rural banks at 79.07 crore (2 per cent) and TIIC is Rs. 17 crore.

Earlier, Collector K. Maharabushanam released the plan and the first copy was received by S. Chezhian, Zonal Manger, Indian Bank in the presence of V. Raju, Assistant General Manager, Nabard, Salem.

J. Ravichandran, Lead District Manager, Indian Bank, representatives from various banks, government departments and other participated. The plan is prepared by Indian Bank which is the Lead Bank for the district.

Face-to-face for farmers

The Mitraniketan Krishi Vignan Kendram here is organising a face-to-face programme here on May 15 to provide a platform for farmers, agricultural officers, and scientists to interact. Experts will provide answers to doubts raised by farmers at the programme. For details, contact Ph: 0472-2882086. — Special Correspondent

Green chillies bring tears to West Godavari farmers

Farmers stage protest seeking remunerative price

Peram Prasada Rao from Ramaraogudem under the Denduluru mandal of West Godavari district preferred to abandon his green chilli crop in his fields itself instead of harvesting it for marketing. For, the returns he will receive from the crop are not sufficient to pay even wages to the workers engaged for plucking and grading of the produce.

The price quoted by middlemen is not crossing Rs. 3 per kg even as it is priced at Rs 20 in the market outside. “I need to engage three workers by paying a daily wage of Rs 100 each for harvesting a 60 kg bag of green chilli. And, the produce will not fetch me more than Rs 300. Then, what is the point in me taking all the pains,” asks Mr. Prasada Rao.

He is bound to pay Rs 25,000 as lease for each acre. In addition, he has invested Rs 38,000 on mirchi cultivation in six acres. The market vagaries left him in debts amounting to Rs 1.25 lakh which he raised from private lenders at Rs. 2 interest.

All the mirchi farmers from the upland village of Ramaraogudem are literally in tears because of the market fluctuations. Green chilli of certain species is raised in 900 acres in this village. The mirchi farmers from the village staged a demonstration at the office of the Agricultural department seeking remunerative prices for the produce.

Green chilli, which is chiefly used in curries, is a perishable crop by nature and the growers cannot preserved it in cold storage plants as is the case of red chilli waiting for a favourable market environment.

Glut in the market

An officer from the Agriculture department said the green chilli farmers tend to flood the market with the produce at a time, leading to a glut and price crash.

The Andhra Pradesh Rytu Sangham leader K. Srinivas, however, wanted the government to initiate steps for price stabilisation by eliminating middlemen in the process of procurement.

- ***Prasada Rao, a farmer, decides to abandon his crop in the field***
- ***Says returns from the crop are not sufficient even to pay workers' wages***

Priority to farm mechanisation: Kanna

In top gear:Minister for Agriculture Kanna Lakshminarayana at the inaugural of "AGRITEX-2013" in Hyderabad on Thursday.-Photo: Mohammed Yousuf

Agriculture Minister Kanna Lakshminarayana said the State government was according high priority to farm mechanisation and a subsidy of Rs.500 crore was being extended in this regard this year.

Inaugurating AGRITEX-2013, a four-day event organised under the aegis of Hyderabad International Trade Exposition Limited (HITEX), he said that a Rs.2,500 crore action plan was initiated last year for farm mechanisation. The Minister, who went around the exhibition of farm implements, said that similar programmes would be organised in the districts.

Claiming that the State government was pro-farmer, he said many initiatives like free power and seed subsidy were taken up since 2004 in a bid to bring down the production cost and make agriculture remunerative.

He said the Agricultural Department was trying to ensure that new technologies reached the farmer.

Principal Secretary, Agriculture and Cooperative Department, Anil Chandra Punetha, said the State government was giving lot of importance to Agriculture and allied sectors. Government was encouraging adoption of the relevant technology to enable farmers achieve higher productivity. Dr.P.S. Pandey, national coordinator, Network of Indian Agribusiness Incubators (NIABI) said the organisation was focusing on commercialisation of market-ready agriculture technology.

As part of its mission, 10 agri-business development units were set up across the country with a cost of Rs.40 crore. AGRITEX features exhibition and sale of various farming equipments, including tractors.

More than 150 exhibitors are participating in the event.

Akalis to protest wealth tax on agricultural land

The ruling Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) in Punjab will launch a nation-wide protest against the Centre's proposed move to impose wealth tax on agricultural land. Describing the decision as a blow to debt-ridden farmers, media advisor to the Chief Minister Harcharan Singh Bains said here on Thursday that the SAD- BJP alliance will also launch state-wide peaceful dharnas from May 2.

A decision to this effect was taken at the party's core committee meeting. Mr. Bains said that Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal will also meet Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in this regard. The decision to impose 1% wealth tax on the collector rate for agricultural land falling within 8 km of the municipal limits will hit the farmers of the State, because more than 70% of them will have to pay this tax. It will mean that the average farmer will have to pay more than his annual income from the land, he said.

Agriculture gets lion's share in annual credit plan

Allocation for crop loans, farm mechanisation in Namakkal

The Annual Credit Plan (ACP) for Namakkal District for the financial year 2013-14 at an outlay of Rs. 2,565 crore that will cover 10,93,364 borrowers in the priority sectors was released by District Collector D. Jagannathan here on Tuesday.

He said that the targeted credit for this year is Rs. 510.1 crore (24.82 per cent) more than the target for 2012-13 that was fixed at Rs. 2,054.9 crore.

Allocation of credit for the agriculture and allied activities sector is Rs. 1,525 crore and is Rs. 403.38 crore (36 per cent) more than the Rs. 1,121.62 crore allotted for the previous financial year.

It includes a total of Rs. 1,340.90 crore for agriculture and Rs. 184.1 crore as advances towards agriculture-allied activities. In the agriculture sector, Rs. 1,155.10 crore has been allotted for crop loans, Rs. 59.62 crore for farm mechanisation, Rs. 31.98 crore for minor irrigation, Rs. 33.35 crore for plantation and horticulture, Rs. 23.75 crore for land development and Rs. 37.10 crore for all the other agriculture-related loans.

Advances for agriculture-allied activities included Rs. 136.95 crore for poultry, Rs. 30.03 crore for dairy, Rs. 10.57 crore for goat/ sheep and Rs. 6.55 crore for other allied activities. The allocation of advances for non farm sector is Rs. 440 crore against Rs. 353.44 crore for 2012-13, Rs. 86.56 crore (23.5 per cent) more. A sum of Rs. 600 crore has been allotted for other priority sectors such as education and housing loans, against Rs. 479.84 crore for 2012-13, an increase by Rs. 120.16 crore (25 per cent).

Of the total outlay of Rs. 2,565 crore, commercial banks shared Rs. 1,832.61 crore (71.45 per cent), followed by cooperative banks Rs. 665.19 crore (26 per cent), Regional Rural Banks (RRB — Pallavan Gram Bank in Namakkal) with Rs. 45.26 crore (1.76 per cent) and Tamil Nadu Industries Investment Credit with Rs. 21.94 crore (0.85 per cent).Taking into account the various development schemes implemented in the district a sum of Rs. 118.84 crore is allocated for credit oriented government programmes.

Project Director of the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) C. Malathy, Project Officer of Mahalir Thittam V.L. Satheesh Kumar, Assistant General Manager of Nabard S. Bhuvarahan and District Lead Bank Manager R. Arivalagan were present when the ACP was released.

- ***Rs. 1,155.10 crore has been allotted for crop loans***
- ***Rs. 118.84 crore is allocated for credit oriented government programmes***

Allocation also made for priority sectors like education and housing loans

‘Check artificial ripening of mangoes’

Federation of Consumer and Service Organisations has urged the district administration to take steps to check artificial ripening of mangoes using calcium carbide stones. In a representation to the Collector, M.Sekaran, president of the federation, said that the use of carbide stones by some traders posed a grave risk to consumers. He urged the Collector to direct the District Consumer Protection Officer to check the practice.

Sharp fall in turmeric price

Farmers harvesting and processing turmeric at a field in Erode district.—Photo: Special Arrangement

Turmeric prices have witnessed a sharp fall in the last four days in the markets in Erode following increased arrival and poor demand.

The prices of the spice, which hovered around Rs. 8,500 a quintal till last week, came down to Rs. 7,500 this week as a majority of the turmeric farmers have completed the harvest and started bringing the spice to the markets in large numbers.

The fresh crop accounts for about 70 per cent of the total amount of turmeric being traded in the markets and its supply is expected to last a few more months. A majority of turmeric farmers, who normally stock their produce and sell when the prices increase, are not willing to do so as the market is becoming more and more turbulent and volatile. There is an apprehension among farmers that the prices may go below Rs. 6,500 a quintal. As a result, farmers are bringing the spice to the market immediately after harvesting, traders point out.

“The demand from the turmeric consumers also remains weak and the stockists have stopped buying the spice. The poor demand is also a primary reason for the fall in the prices,” Erode Turmeric Merchants’ Association president R.K.V. Ravishankar says. He adds that there will not be any significant increase in prices in the near future. “In the commodity exchanges, the spice is quoting at Rs. 6,650 a quintal for May delivery,” he says.

Goa to move HC for easing ban on cattle slaughter

MLAs express concern over shortage of meat in State

Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar on Thursday assured members of the Legislative Assembly that the government would approach the High Court on Monday seeking easing of the temporary ban on slaughter of animals at the Goa Meat Complex Ltd.

The issue came up for discussion during Zero Hour on Thursday, the second consecutive day when it was taken up.

Court direction

Earlier this week, the Goa Bench of the Bombay High Court sought an inventory of the animals brought for slaughter at the complex. The court also appointed a three-member committee to look into the functioning of the complex and ordered the abattoir to be temporarily shut down. Activists approached the court after finding a herd of young bulls, between 6 months and a year, cleared for slaughter by the veterinary officer there.

This, along with the transporters' blockade over entry tax, has meant that there is a shortage of beef in the State.

Replying to a calling attention motion moved by Naresh Sawal (Independent) seeking clarification from the government on the ban on slaughter of cattle at the complex and the consequent shortage of meat, Mr. Parrikar told the House that it was the High Court that gave the order, not the government. "I cannot go beyond the law," he said.

The meat complex was the only abattoir in the State, where bulls and buffaloes were slaughtered and not cows, and which provided hygienic meat to people of Goa, he pointed out.

BJP member Nilesh Cabral, MLA for Curchorem, wondered what purpose a committee set up by the court would serve, when there was already a committee to oversee slaughter.

Differences in the BJP over the issue of cattle slaughter came out in the open in the Assembly. Some Catholic MLAs expressed concern over the scarcity of beef after the court order.

The Chief Minister had to do a tightrope walk on the issue as Pramod Sawant (BJP) and Naresh Sawal (Independent) expressed concern over the illegal slaughter of cattle.

Mr. Parrikar said he would take immediate action against illegal slaughter of cattle, and urged activists to lodge police complaints.

MLA for Calangute Michael V. Lobo (BJP) alleged that some people in the guise of animal activists were out to create a communal rift over the issue.

What the law says

On Wednesday, Mr. Parrikar told the House that he had directed the Advocate-General to expedite the matter. On Thursday, taking into consideration the anxiety of his own party MLAs, he went a step further, promising that the government would move an affidavit in this regard.

He clarified that the law itself prevented cow slaughter in the State. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, for which rules were notified in 2001, the Goa Animal Preservation Act, 1995, which allows slaughtering of only those cattle that were no longer useful, and the Goa, Daman and Diu Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1978 banning cow slaughter in the State, all prevented illegal animal slaughter, he said.

He told the House that the laws came into force before the BJP came to power.

The BJP government is under pressure from hardliners and right-wing groups, who are demanding an anti-cow slaughter law. Only recently, Prashant Hartalkar, organising secretary of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Maharashtra, demanded during the ‘Go Raksha Abhiyan’ here last month that illegal slaughter of cows and bulls be prohibited by law.

- ***Goa Meat Complex Ltd. abattoir temporarily shut down as per court order***
- ***MLAs call for steps to check illegal slaughter of cattle***

Poultry industry suffers loss of 1,000 crore

"The poultry — egg and broiler — industry suffered heavy loss to the tune of about Rs. 1,000 crore during the financial year 2012-13.

It was mainly due to the drastically price hike of feed, increase in production of egg and inability of farmers to realise prices that match the increasing expenses," Chairman of the National Egg Coordination Committee (NECC) Namakkal Zone Dr. P. Selvaraj told *The Hindu* .

According to the report each layer (egg laying hen) accounted for loss of about Rs. 60 as the price of feed increased by about 33 per cent in 2012-13, compared to its average price in 2011-12.

On the other hand average cost of production of a kilogram of live broiler chicken was Rs. 62.90 in 2012-13, against Rs. 57.89 that was realised by farmers. This forced them to incur a loss of Rs. 5.01 per kg.

Statistics from the Broiler Coordination Committee shows that 153.2 crore kg of live chicken was produced in Tamil Nadu in 2012-13 and that the overall loss suffered by the broiler industry was Rs. 766.83 crore.

According to him one of the main reasons for the inability to fix price of egg steadily is over production.

"The usual annual increase in egg production — expansion of existing farms and establishment of new farms — was around 10 to 12 per cent.

This increased to by 18 per cent — 50 per cent more than normal," the Chairman observed.

Senior Manager (Coordination) of NECC V.S. Balasubramaniam said that the daily average egg production in Namakkal Zone is 3.54 crore eggs, which is 60 lakh more eggs compared to the market demand. “Farmers are forced to reduce the price of their eggs competitively to avoid stagnation of eggs in their farms,” he added.Pointing out at data collected from hatcheries and poultry farms, he said that some farmers have reduced the strength of hens in their farms and this would reflect with a drop in daily egg production in this region — by 33 lakh eggs a day to about 3.21 crore eggs in September 2013.

He said that it should drop by another 10 per cent (to 2.88 crore eggs) to create demand and stabilise the price of egg. Another reason for inability to fix the price of the perishable commodity is the fluctuation in eggs rates throughout the year based on a host of factors such as climatic, religious and price of vegetables.

“The cost of production of an egg is around Rs. 3.20 to 3.30 and the wholesale price of egg has to be fixed at Rs. 3.55 apiece to help farmers get a break even — as 25 paise is reduced for packing and transportation charges,” industry sources said.

Representatives of the NECC and other poultry associations said that they have sought an appointment from the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to explain their plight and to urge the Union Government, to reduce the rate of interest for term loan and cash credit by six per cent — similar to the adjustment during the bird flu crisis — and declare a one year loan repayment holiday or till the prevailing crisis for the poultry sector came to an end.

Tank gets green cover when it goes dry

Cucumber being cultivated at Sakkarakottai Kanmoi in Ramanathapuram.— Photo: L. Balachandar

Come summer, the Sakkarakottai Kanmoi (tank), one of the biggest waterbodies in the district, gets a green cover the moment it goes dry, and this summer too is not an exception. When all other waterbodies in the district have turned an eyesore with deep cracks and wild plants grown all over, this tank looks as if a green carpet has been spread across its bed, thanks to the cucumber cultivation.

As both the southwest and northeast monsoons failed this year, the Sakkarakottai Kanmoi dried up fast to wear a green dress in January itself. Paddy cultivating farmers who depended on the kanmoi for irrigation were worried that the tank dried up fast this season and they lost their crops. However, it was a blessing in disguise for cucumber cultivators.

More than 600 families of farmers, who had been using the tank bed for cucumber cultivation for generations, were busy cultivating cucumber in January.

“As far as I know, the farmers have been cultivating cucumber in the tank for more than 70 years. They divide the tank bed area among themselves and cultivate cucumber during the summer,” S.M.Noor

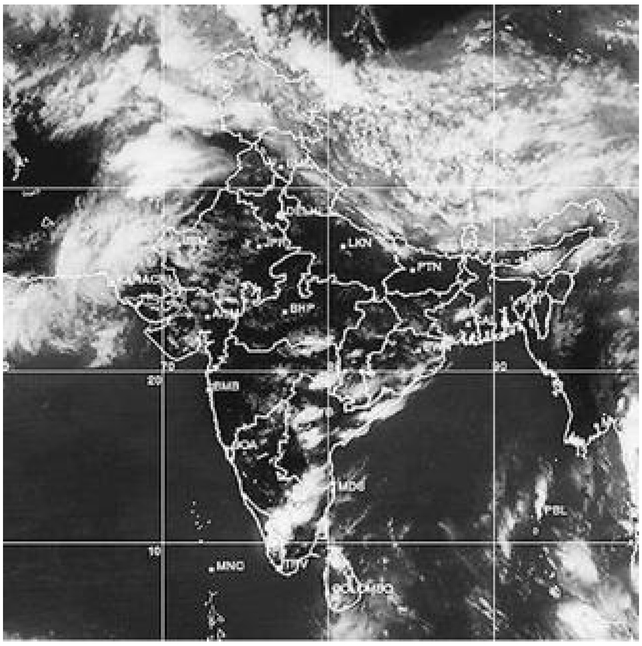
Mohamed, president of Sakarakottai Panchayat, said. Farmers from Sakarakottai, R.S.Madai, Pasumpon Nagar and Sethu Nagar areas would sow cucumber seeds in the tank bed soon after the tank went dry, and would complete the harvest in four months.

It was a kind of encroachment by the farmers, but the Public Works Department (PWD) officials would not mind as it helped the small farmers. After completing the harvest in 90 to 120 days, the farmers leave the tank bed.

Thanks to the massive cultivation, cucumber is omnipresent in the town. Women selling cucumber in the bus stand, railway station, vegetable markets, flower markets and even near commercial establishments is a common sight here during the summer. Those taking the Kilakarai Road could buy fresh tender cucumbers as farmers sell them on both sides of the road. Official sources said a farmer would earn anywhere between from Rs 30,000 and Rs 50,000 per acre. But most farmers could afford to cultivate the crop only in 25 to 75 cents of lands, they said.

The Horticulture Department had no details about the cucumber production. as the farmers used their own seeds, the sources said, and added that a bulk of the production was sent to Madurai and other districts.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on April 25th.

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	39	23	0	26
New Delhi (Sfd)	37	23	0	22
Chandigarh	36	23	0	26
Hissar	38	22	0	41
Bhuntar	30	12	0	137
Shimla	23	14	0	109
Jammu	35	22	0	35
Srinagar	22	10	6	163
Amritsar	37	22	0	6
Patiala	37	24	0	24
Jaipur	38	25	0	12
Udaipur	37	24	0	15
Allahabad	40	24	0	11
Lucknow	37	21	0	1
Varanasi	37	23	0	21
Dehradun	33	19	0	37
Agartala	35	23	0	68
Ahmedabad	40	28	0	6
Bangalore	35	23	0	25
Bhubaneshwar	38	26	0	52
Bhopal	38	25	0	52
Chennai	35	27	0	32
Guwahati	34	20	0	76
Hyderabad	34	26	0	50
Kolkata	35	26	1	32
Mumbai	33	26	0	0
Nagpur	39	23	0	24

Patna	35	24	0	14
Pune	38	23	0	3
Thiruvananthapuram	35	26	0	105
Imphal	32	15	0	114
Shillong	22	13	0	74

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 FEW PLACES

RAINFALL: Rain/thundershowers have occurred at a few places over Jammu and Kashmir and at isolated places over Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Weather was mainly dry over rest of the region.

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES: The maximum temperatures rose appreciably in east Rajasthan, rose in Haryana, Punjab, west Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh and changed little elsewhere. They were appreciably below normal in east Uttar Pradesh, below normal in Uttarakhand and normal in rest of the region. The highest maximum temperature in the region was 41.5°C recorded at Phalodi (Rajasthan).

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 27th April 2013: Rain/thundershowers may occur at a few places over Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh and at one or two places over Uttarakhand. Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places over Punjab, Haryana, west Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan during next 48 hours and mainly dry weather thereafter. Weather would be mainly dry over rest of the region.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 27th April 2013: Partly cloudy sky with possibility of very light rain/thundery development intermittently in some areas. .

Water level

Water level in Periyar dam was 112. 50 feet on Thursday with an inflow and a discharge of 100 cusecs each. Permissible level is 136 feet. In Vaigai dam, the water level was 38.55 feet as against the total permissible level of 71 feet. The discharge was 810 cusecs and there was no inflow.

Aundipatti recorded 12 mm rainfall, Madurai 20.8 mm, Sattayar 5 mm, Mettupatti 4 mm, Melur 1 mm and Kodaikanal 30 mm.

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Thursday stood at 64.35 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 114.49 cusecs and 397.25 cusecs was discharged from the dam.

The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 84.47 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 9 cusecs and 5 cusecs was discharged.

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hindustantimes

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather	
Partly Cloudy	**Friday, Apr 26**
	Max Min
	33° | 27°
Rain: 0	**Sunrise:** 05:50
Humidity: 89	**Sunset:** 06:23
Wind: normal	**Barometer:** 1010

Tomorrow's Forecast	
Partly Cloudy	**Saturday, Apr 27**
	Max Min
	36° | 27°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday Apr 28	Monday Apr 29	Tuesday Apr 30	Wednesday May 1	Thursday May 2
36° | 27°	37° | 27°	38° | 28°	37° | 28°	37° | 28°
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Overcast	Partly Cloudy

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

3k non-eligible farmers gained from Centre's waiver scheme

PUNE: The reaudited report of the National Bank for Rural and Agricultural Development (Nabard) on the Rs 52,000-crore agricultural debt waiver and debt relief scheme (2008), shows that loan amounts of about 3,000 farmers fromKolhapur, who owed Rs 2 lakh each, were waived when the ceiling was set at Rs 1 lakh per farmer. The cumulative amount of such non-eligible farmers stood at Rs 58 crore.

The sanctioned amount for Kolhapur district under the scheme was Rs 290 crore and the funds were meant for 89,000 farmers. The Comptroller and Auditor General has found that the amount waived in violation of the prescribed norms was Rs 112 crore and 45,000 non-eligible farmers from Kagal, Shirol and Hatkanangale tehsils benefitted from this waiver. The amount has been recovered from Kolhapur District Central Cooperative Bank, the disbursing bank.

The CAG report has stated that over 42 lakh farmers in the state were eligible for benefits worth Rs 8,951.33 crore under the scheme. The data released by Nabard states that outstanding loans worth Rs 5,376 crore taken by over 30 lakh farmers in the state were waived under the scheme. Some farmers in the state are yet to receive the benefits.

CAG released its performance audit on 'Implementation of the Agricultural Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme-2008' in the first week of March to make sure that the objectives of the scheme were achieved. The city-based regional office of Nabard had asked all district central cooperative banks in the state on March 18 to reaudit the documents of the beneficiaries of the waiver scheme. Nabard also asked the banks to file police cases against those who had filed fake documents.

"The union finance ministry has asked us to complete the reaudited report, which is the second step in the entire investigation. We will submit the report to Nabard's headquarters in Mumbai. It will be sent to the union finance ministry before April 30 before being tabled in Parliament," a Nabard official told TOI.

Nationally, another official said, about 8% of the Rs 52,000-

crore relief scheme, was waived. "The percentage could be less in Maharashtra as the cooperative movement is strong here. In states like Jharkhand, all claims received from a district were rejected as no farmer could provide authentic documents," the official said. More details would be known when the report is released in Parliament, he added.

Disbursing banks

Crop loans are disbursed through the network of district central cooperative banks (DCC) and primary agriculture credit societies (PAC), where farmers have opened accounts. Nabard receives funds from the Union government and disburses them to the DCC banks and PACs. There are 31 DCC banks in the state and 20,800 PACs.

The Union government in 2008-09 financial year had announced a Rs 71,680-crore agricultural debt waiver and relief scheme covering 3.69 crore small and marginal farmers. It offered a one-time settlement for loans taken by 60 lakh farmers, who owned more than five acres.

Under the scheme, the union government had released Rs 52,000 crore to clear farmers' debts. Of 90,576 cases, lapses were noticed in 20,216 cases. Around Rs 164 crore was waived in violation of guidelines, said the report generated by Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

More-for-some equation

According to the Reserve Bank of India's guidelines stated in 'Production Oriented System of Lending'; the amount of loan for each crop varies. The loan amount is multiplied with the land holding of the farmer to arrive at the amount to be disbursed. But a farmer, apart from a crop loan, also avails of consumption loan or investment loan, which is disbursed to him along with the crop loan. Hence, at the end of the fiscal, the entire outstanding amount of the farmer was considered eligible for waiver by the local bank. However, the union government has clarified that waiver covers only outstanding crop loan and not the other loans. This guideline was ignored by the implementing authorities, officials said.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Sugarcane growers threaten protest

By Express News Service - PUDUCHERRY

25th April 2013 11:04 AM

The All Sugarcane farmers Association affiliated to the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) threatened to organise a massive agitation by mobilising farmers if the administration failed to disburse the cane price for the cane supplied to the Lingareddippalayam Co-operative Sugar Mills during the cropping season 2012-13 and also the bank dues in a week's time.

Secretary of the association S S Senthilkumar in a statement said the administration was yet to release `41 crore towards the price of 1.86 lakh tonnes of sugarcane supplied during 2012-13.

The farmers are not able to cultivate sugar cane by availing of fresh crop loans as the mill management had failed to pay the banks loan dues, by deducting it from their dues.

They were suffering a lot and were not able to pay the labour charges for harvesting and transportation charges, he said

The families of 18,000 cane growers and over 50,000 agricultural labourers were suffering due to this, he added.

Senthilkumar said the cane growers could not obtain a fresh loan from the bank as the management had failed to pay the penal interest of `17 lakh for 2010-11 and `40 lakh for 2011-12.

During a talk between the cane growers and the mill management just before the current year’s crushing season, it was agreed to pay the cane price and also remit the bank dues in a week’s time. But even after four months of cane harvesting nothing materialised, he lamented.

The mill management said that the dues would be paid to the growers after selling the huge sticks of sugar.

“As the price of sugar in the auction market had fallen, we are waiting for the prices to go up after the crushing season,” said managing director of the mill M Rajesekhar. The prices have fallen from `35,000 per metric ton to `29,050 per MT. There is no point in selling it at throw away prices, he said.

Once the stock is cleared, the farmers would be paid their dues, he said. For the last two years, due to financial problems the penal interest has not been paid, he said, and added that the mill management is taking steps to address the problem.

Business Standard beta

Market pulse for agro commodities : Mangal Keshav

Total inflow of small cardamom crop declined to 71.9 tons from which 70.9 tons were sold at CPMC auction held at Kumily.

Total arrivals of chilli crop were steady ~0.6lakh bags while demand was firm among local buyers; but no major export demand was seen. Spot rates were quoted in the range of '53-'60 per kg, based on crop quality.

Arrivals of jeera crop declined to about 28,000-30,000 bags while trades declined to about 25,000 bags at auctions held at Unjha market. Spot rates were quoted at '125-'126 per kg, as per local traders.

Spot rates of pepper garbled declined to '357 per kg and that of un-garbled was down at '342 per kg while arrivals increased to 25 tons & the same were sold at auctions held at Kochi market, as per IPSTA.

Arrivals of turmeric crop declined to below 20,000 bags at mandis of Nizamabad while spot rates were steady & quoted at '54-'56 per kg, as per local traders. Erode & Sangli markets were closed on account of Mahavir Jyanti.

Average price of small cardamom declined to '577.5 per kg while maximum price offered was down at '967 per kg, as per spice board. Total inflow of small cardamom crop declined to 71.9 tons from which 70.9 tons were sold at CPMC auction held at Kumily.

Most of the mandis trading in soya bean were closed on Tuesday, on account of Mahavir Jyanti. Spot rates of soya bean crop offered by planters were steady at '39.5-'40 per kg while rates across major mandis were unchanged at '38-'39 per kg, as per local traders.

Guar seed arrivals increased to 33,745 quintals, while the average of the closing spot rates were down at '9,217.7 per quintal. Inflow of mustard seed crop increased to 271,775 quintals, while average of closing spot rates were down at '3,068.3 per quintal, as per agriculture marketing board of Rajasthan.

Chana futures traded in a narrow range through major part of the session, in the absence of fresh cues from spot, where supply has increased in conjunction with firm demand from local buyers. Spot rates were steady & quoted at '35-'35.5 per kg.

Mentha oil futures fell sharply on the exchange counter with near-month contract hitting lower circuit, pressured by increase in supply, poor demand & estimates of higher output. Spot rates were down by '12-'15 per kg while supply increased to more than 200 oil-drums.

Indian procurement agencies have procured 119.49lakh tons of wheat as on April 22, 2013, up by almost 27% from the same period last year, as per trade reports.

Jeera moves up 0.3% on export enquiries

Prices rose as speculators created fresh positions

Jeera futures for May rose by Rs 45, or 0.34% to Rs 13,095 per quintal in 11,229 lots.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), the June contract traded higher by Rs 40, or 0.30% to Rs 13,280 per quintal in 7,911 lots.

Prices rose as speculators created fresh positions driven by some exports enquiries.

Increased supplies from new season crop and expectations of higher output this year limited the gains.

Soyabean surges on brisk buying

Higher spot markets sentiment supported the trade.

Soybean futures for May spurted by Rs 77.50, or 1.96% to Rs 4,041 per quintal in 1,04,620 lots.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), the June contract followed suit and hardened by Rs 52.50, or 1.38% to Rs 3,870 per quintal in 87,700 lots.

Prices rose following frantic buying by traders in tandem with higher spot markets sentiment.

Chana up 0.3% on spot demand

Prices rose as speculators created fresh positions

Chana futures for June rose by Rs 12, or 0.33% to Rs 3627 per quintal in 71,300 lots.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), the May contract edged up by Rs 8, or 0.23% to Rs 3,553 per quintal in 94,340 lots.

Prices rose as speculators created fresh positions driven by rise spot markets demand.

However, expectations of higher output this season restricted the gains.

Confiscated pepper export stock goes for resampling

To sell it, Indian exporters would have to match the lower prices offered by Vietnamese exporters

There is a chance of boosting Indian pepper export in May and June, if a resampling of a confiscated 6,800 tonnes passes a test and if stockists are willing to match the lower price of global shipments.

The stock in question was confiscated by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India; it has given the permission for resampling, with four testing companes assigned the job. The other issue is the gap between the price of ASTA-grade pepper in India and that in Vietnam; the latter is $150 a tonne cheaper, at present. Domestic prices have been falling, but there is still a gap.

Vietnam is the world's largest producer and exporter. In January-March this year, they exported 39,000 tonnes; India exported 5,000 tonnes. Over 2012-13, Vietnam's export was estimated at 95,000-105,000 tonnes, compared to India's 15,000 tonnes. The Spices Board had aimed at 20,000 tonnes for the year, but leading exporters told Business Standard this was unlikely, even when the figure for Indian export included re-export from some other countries.

By April-end, half of Vietnam's production would have been exported, and they would not be in a hurry to send more, with the next harvesting season set to begin after eight more months. The crop from Indonesia, another leading exporter, is likely to enter the market only by July. So, India will have an edge in the global market for those eight to 10 weeks, said a leading exporter here.

India was leading the global pepper mart till 1990, topping the table of exports for years together. Today, in the export table, India is in the fourth spot, after Vietnam, Indonesia and Brazil.

According to the Vietnam Pepper Association, its exports in volume rose by 23.5 per cent and in value by 20 per cent (to $254 million) in the first quarter of this year, compared to the same period last year. Vietnam's stock is at present 55,000-60,000 tonnes, with harvesting almost ended by February. It will be fully over by the middle of next month. In India, harvesting is over, except in some parts of Karnataka.

Re-launch of pepper futures likely

Pepper futures contracts on commodity exchanges might be re-launched soon when the controversial mineral oil issue is resolved.

The issue had rocked the Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and led to sealing of 8,000 tonnes of the commodity in Kochi and suspension of trade in December 2012. The Forward Markets Commission (FMC) had asked the National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) to resolve the issue before granting permission to re-launch the contracts, temporarily suspended a few months ago.

Following this, NCDEX released the payment for testing the samples of pepper sealed by FSSAI, applying for new contracts afresh. As FMC didn't mention mineral oil testing in the contract, it chose to suspend the contract to avoid controversy. Meanwhile, the mineral oil issue related to the pepper stocks sealed by FSSAI in Kochi has gradually lost relevance.

Used to polish sub-standard pepper, mineral oil evaporates after three months. That FSSAI is in no hurry to release the sealed pepper is evident from the fact that a random check of two lots (of nine tonnes and 24 tonnes) in February found no trace of mineral oil.

The two lots were found deposited by farmers who, according to experts, did not have adequate resources and skill for mineral oil polishing.

However, now, FSSAI has changed the evaluation method. Against random checks earlier, it is now evaluating the stocks through the cleansing method---samples from all packets are taken for testing in an independent laboratory. "We are aware of the fact that pepper absorbs mineral oil and chances are the traces of mineral oil, if any, would evaporate over time.

Hence, instead of random checks earlier, we are carrying out the cleansing method of sampling, which would necessarily call for samples from every pack," said Anil Kumar, joint commissioner of FSSAI, Thiruvananthapuram.

FSSAI's Kerala unit had, on December 18, sealed about 8,000 tonnes of pepper, worth Rs 300 crore, in various warehouses registered with NCDEX.

Experts at the Spices Board have already started issuing the analytical report. "As soon as we get the analytical report from the Spices Board, we would release the quantity," said Kumar.

Mineral oil is banned in India, and it isn't used with edible commodities.

THE HINDU Business Line

Organic yam

Higher yields: The fresh tender shoot rises from the organically grown elephant foot yam (Dioscorea rotundata), a high energy staple food, grown in farms in Ranga Reddy district near Hyderabad. Farmers have got higher yields through organic farming. — P.V. Sivakumar

Nilgiris Q1 tea output up 6.51%

Coonoor, April 25: Tea production in the Nilgiris, South India's largest tea producing district, has risen by 6.51 per cent in the first quarter of current calendar over the same period of last year.

Tea corporates have informed Tea Board of a production totalling 2,92 million kg (mkg) from January to March against 2.73 mkg in the same period last year. However, the production is down compared to the five-year average of 3.02 mkg.

Although the cumulative rainfall was lower than the 10-year decennial average, there was some improvement in the rainfall situation in the first quarter compared to last year. This helped higher harvest.

Higher volume is helping turnover to rise at auctions. The turnover at last week's auction of Coonoor Tea Trade Association which ended on Friday has risen to six-week high despite a fall of Rs 2 a kg in the price because of over 1.50 lakh kg increase in the volume sold compared to last week.

The average price fell to Rs 102.82 a kg from Rs 105.09 last week. For the seventh consecutive week, prices ruled above Rs 100-a-kg mark.

In all, 8.80 lakh kg was sold against 7.34 lakh kg last week. This was the highest volume sold in six weeks. Consequently, the turnover rose to Rs 9.05 crore from Rs 7.71 crore. This meant that the turnover increased by Rs 1.34 crore or 17.38 per cent in just one week.

This month, red spider mite infestation is reported in many estates.

Spot rubber inches up on short covering

Kottayam, April 25: The domestic rubber prices improved on Thursday. In spot, the prices increased following the sharp gains on the NMCE.
According to observers, covering purchases at lower levels kept the market firm during late trading hours. The trend was partially mixed as latex finished flat amidst low volumes.

Sheet rubber improved to Rs 160 (158) a kg, according to traders. The grade was quoted steady at Rs 158 a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, according to Rubber Board.

RSS 4 flared up at its May series to Rs 158.56 (154.65), June to Rs 157.25 (153.51), July to Rs 155.20 (152.14) and August to Rs 153.25 (150.71) a kg while the September series continued to remain inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

RSS 3 (spot) increased to Rs 155.79 (154.75) a kg at Bangkok. The May futures improved to ¥250 (Rs 136.69) from ¥247.5 during the day session but then slid to ¥249.5 (Rs 136.40) in the night session on Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates (Rs/kg): RSS-4 160 (158); RSS-5: 155 (154); Ungraded: 150 (148); ISNR 20: 148 (147) and Latex 60 per cent: 102 (102).

Higher output hopes crush jeera

Rajkot, April 25: Jeera futures declined on the back of higher supply and expectation of good output, while spot prices remained steady on normal buying support.
On the NCDEX, jeera for May delivery was down Rs 75 to Rs 12,975 a quintal with an open interest of 10,707 lots and June contract decreased Rs 90 to Rs 13,150 with an open interest of 8,190 lots.

Arrivals were reported around 23,000-24,000 bags (of 55 kg each). Jeera best quality was quoted at Rs 2,250-2,350 for 20 kg and medium quality traded at Rs 2,050-2,150 at Unjha market. Meanwhile, arrivals in Nagaur market stood at 1,500 bags and rough quality was offered at Rs 2,240.

A Kedia Commodity report said that jeera price was weighed by supplies from the new season crop and expectations of higher output, though some export demand restricted the downside. However, good overseas demand is seen supporting prices at lower levels. Better crop expectations this year could temper the rising rates of the commodity to some extent.

Edible oils rule steady on Malaysian cues

Mumbai, April 25: Despite a steady price trend, sentiment in edible oils remained positive on Thursday on active volume tracking firm Malaysian palm oil futures.
Rapeseed oil rose by Rs 3 and cotton oil declined by Re 1 for 10 kg. But May soyabean refined oil jumped by Rs 9.50.

Liberty sold 200-250 tonnes palmolein at Rs 510-513. Ruchi sold 350-400 tonnes palmolein at Rs 512-514; soyabean refined oil 250-300 tonnes at Rs 665-668. Gokul sold 200-250 tonnes palmolein at Rs 502-503. About 150-200 tonnes palmolein were sold in ready at Rs 508 ex-JNPT by a reseller.

Arrivals of soyabean in Madhya Pradesh declined to 10,000 bags. Mandi prices increased by Rs 25 to Rs 3,850-3,950 and by Rs 50 to Rs 3,975-4,050. Mustard arrivals were 5.15 lakh bags at the national level and prices were Rs 3,350-3,625.

Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 510-513; super palmolein Rs 545 and sunflower refined oil Rs 775. Ruchi was quoting palmolein at Rs 514 ex-Patalganga, Rs 509 ex-JNPT and soyabean refined oil Rs 670.

Allana quoted super palmolein at Rs 545. Resellers quoted palmolein at Rs 508-509.

In Saurashtra – Rajkot, groundnut oil declined by Rs 10 to Rs 1,900 (Rs 1,910) for *telia* tin and Rs 1,230 (Rs 1,240) for loose (10 kg).

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil's May futures were up by Rs 9.50 to Rs 716.00 (Rs 706.50), June was higher by Rs 3.35 to Rs 684.45 (Rs 680.60) and July was higher at Rs 669.00 (Rs 668.80).

In Malaysia BMD, crude palm oil May futures contracts settled higher at MYR 2,310 (MYR 2,285), June at MYR 2,322 (MYR 2,296) and July at MYR 2,309 (MYR 2,289) a tonne.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg): Groundnut oil was 1,210 (1,210), soya refined oil 665 (665), sunflower exp. ref. 680 (680), sunflower ref. 765 (765), rapeseed ref. oil 693 (690), rapeseed expeller ref. 663 (660) cottonseed ref. oil 644(645) and palmolein 508 (508).

Vikram Global Commodities, Chennai, has quoted Malaysian super palmolein for Rs 548 ex-Chennai; $912 CIF JNPT, May delivery; $913 c.i.f Haldia, May delivery.

Demand for soya oil perks up mustard oil too

Indore, April 25: Despite slack demand in the physical market and arrivals remaining stable, mustard oil was mixed on Thursday with prices in Indore and Morena rising marginally, while it ruled steady in Neemuch, Jaipur and Shree Ganga Nagar.
Even as physical demand in mustard oil remained slack, rise in buying support in soyabean and soya oil, perked up mustard oil in Indore on Thursday by Rs 3 to Rs 638 for 10 kg.

Similarly in Morena, mustard oil gained Rs 5at Rs 640; in Neemuch at Rs 630; in Jaipur and Ganga Nagar at Rs 650 and Rs 637.

In Kota, it declined to Rs 635 (down Rs 2), while it was down Rs 5 in Gujarat at Rs 625.

In Indore, mustard oil dropped by Rs 7 in the past one week, down Rs 5 in Moorena and by Rs 10 down in Neemuch.

Bumper crop of mustard seeds this year is expected to cross 71 lakh tonnes against 58 lakh tonnes last year .

In the physical market, mustard seeds in Indore have declined by Rs 100 to Rs 4,100-4,200 a quintal in the past one week, while it is down Rs 50-78 in Mandsaur at Rs 3,050-3,100.

In futures also, mustard seeds traded lower compared with last week.

However, on Thursday, mustard seeds futures showed a mix trend with its May and June contracts on the NCDEX closing at Rs 3,473 a quintal (up Re 1) and Rs 3,521 a quintal (down Rs 3).

Amid adequate stock of mustard seeds with plants, plant deliveries of mustard seeds for Jaipur line in the past one week have also declined to Rs 3,480-85 (Rs 3,530-60 last week).

Plant deliveries of mustard seeds for Kota line on Thursday were Rs 3,700 .

Arrival of mustard seeds on Thursday was recorded at 5.15 lakh tonnes against 5.20 lakh tonnes yesterday.

Rajasthan led the arrival with 2.85 lakh bags, followed by Uttar Pradesh with 55,000, Madhya Pradesh 50,000, Punjab/Haryana 50,000, Gujarat 40,000, while the remaining 35,000 bags were offloaded in the other mandis of the country.

Pepper futures up marginally

Kochi, April 25: Pepper futures witnessed high volatility on Thursday and on buying support, the active contract ended slightly higher.
May contract opened on a firmer note at Rs 35,345 a quintal and traded with high volatility all through the sessions. At close, prices fell to Rs 35,160.

Short position holders tried their best to pull the market down. They were buying-back their sales.

Prices were not showing any indications of converging currently, they said.

On the spot, 45 tonnes of fresh pepper arrived and they were traded.

It was reported that dealers were buying from the growers at their doorsteps at terminal market prices on cash-and-carry basis.

May contracts on the NCDEX increased by Rs 45 to Rs 35,240.

Total turnover went up by 111 tonnes to 303 tonnes . Total open interest decreased by 31 tonnes to 1,115 tonnes.

Spot prices remained unchanged at the previous levels of Rs 34,200 (ungarbled) and Rs 35,700 (garbled).

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

Sluggish demand leaves poultry feed static

Karnal, April 25: Despite a downtrend in prices of its ingredients, poultry feed prices remained unchanged this week. Aditya Mishra, a commodity expert, told*Business Line* that prices of a few ingredients have come down but it hasn’t made any major impact on the cost of production.

Demand for feed products is also sluggish at present but feed prices may continue to rule around current levels even in the next few days, said Aditya Mishra. On Thursday, soyameal eased by Rs 450 and sold to Rs 37,000 a tonne.

Bajra dropped by Rs 10 and sold at Rs 1,470 a quintal, DCP was at 35 a kg, MBM eased by Rs 5 and quoted at Rs 36-37, while maize dropped by Rs 90 and quoted at Rs 1,400-1,500.

After witnessing a fall last weekend, mustard de-oiled cake has been ruling unchanged since then and went for Rs 14,600, DRB eased further by Rs 150 and sold at Rs 9,100 while rice bran oil was at 52. Layer concentrate 25 per cent was sold at Rs 1,465 for a 50-kg bag while layer concentrate 35 per cent went for Rs 1,150. Pre-lay mash quoted at Rs 1,040 while layer grower mash sold at Rs 980. Broiler concentrate quoted at Rs 2,000 while broiler starter mash was at Rs 1,520.

Egg went down by eight paisa on slack demand and sold at Rs 2.38. Broiler was unchanged at Rs 67-72 a kg, while chick improved by Rs 4 at Rs 20-22.

Bearish trend continues in sugar

Mumbai, April 25: Sugar markets re-opened on a bearish note on Thursday after being closed for four days.
On the Vashi wholesale market, spot prices declined by Rs 20 a quintal tracking weak Naka and mill tender rates.

Naka prices dropped by Rs 25-40 on slack demand and higher selling at upper level.

Mill tender rates dropped by Rs 20-30 tracking bearish sentiments. Sugar futures prices dip by Rs 21-22 till noon.

An observer said “ supplies exceed demand this year. The country has a higher production of about 240-245 lakh tonnes and imports of over 10 lakh tonnes while local demand is about 225-230 lakh tonnes. Closing stocks at the end of current year is expected at 70-75 lakh tonnes; so there is ample availability of sugar. In the export front also, world sugar prices are not in favour for shipments”.

In the Vashi market, arrivals were 64-65 truckloads (each of 100 bags) and local dispatches were also 58-60 loads.

On Wednesday evening, only 17-18 mills offered tenders and sold 45,000-50,000 bags at a lower price of Rs 2,900-3,000 (Rs 2,930-3,020) for S-grade and Rs 3,000-3,100 (Rs 3,010-3,110) for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar May futures were at Rs 2,916 (Rs 2,934), June contracts were Rs 2,967 (Rs 2,989) and July were Rs 2,998 (Rs 3,019) till noon.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association’s spot rates were: S-grade Rs 3,096-3,191 (Rs 3,116-3,191) and M-grade Rs 3,172-3,381 (Rs 3,192-3,401). *Naka* **delivery rates:** S-grade Rs 3,020-3,050 (Rs 3,060-3,090) and M-grade Rs 3,100-3,200 (Rs 3,125-3,225).

55% turmeric offerings go unsold at Erode

Erode, April 25: Only 45 per cent of the turmeric that arrived on Thursday in Erode markets found takers due to lack of export orders, especially from the North.
“No exporter has received orders from North India; but they are buying limited stocks to fulfil their old commitments. Local traders

purchased little stock. Of the total arrival of 6,100 bags on Thursday, exporters and local traders procured 20 per cent and stockists bought another 25 per cent," said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said usually during this season, the arrival will be around 15,000 bags.

In 2011, 18,000 bags arrived for sale and 60 per cent were sold, when the price was Rs 9,680 a quintal. In 2012, during the same period 14,000 bags arrived, but prices ruled at Rs 3,600.

Even the hybrid turmeric was sold at Rs 4,400. But this year, though the arrivals are very low, prices are viable for turmeric growers as they are getting more than Rs 8,000. He said due to onset of summer, local exporters and traders are not getting upcountry orders. Traders in North India are not placing any new orders and everyone is expecting that they may get heavy orders from June.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,399-7,885 a quintal, the root variety Rs 4,199-6,785.

Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,834-8,809, the root variety Rs 5,693-7,417. Of the 1,522 bags that arrived, only 25 per cent was sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 6,516-7,899, the root variety Rs 6,009-6,827. Of the 514 bags on offer, 453 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 6,211-7,878, the root variety Rs 5,666-6,861. All the 610 bags were sold.At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 6,789-8,080, the root variety Rs 5,775-6,900. All the 100 bags were sold.