

## ‘Leaders ignoring agricultural issues’

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MYSORE, April 11, 2014 - The Sugarcane Growers’ Association has taken exception to political parties ‘ignoring’ agricultural issues in the run-up to the elections.

Association president Kurubur Shanthakumar said, “None of the political parties has taken cognisance of the farmers’ manifesto, but were instead shedding crocodile tears over the fate of Indian farmers and paying lip sympathy to their cause.”

Without mentioning Kannada litterateur and Jnanpith Award winner U.R. Ananthamurthy’s name, he said, “Those who have won the Jnanpith Award were embroiled in politics and seeking votes. But, they have not said a word about farmers’ suicide.”

The farmers, under the aegis of the Consortium of Indian Farmers’ Association (CIFA), had released a wish list akin to a manifesto. They had recommended that the minimum support price for agricultural produce should be the actual cost of production, plus 50 per cent extra. They had also called for making the Commission for Agricultural Cost and Prices an autonomous body, and stressed the urgency for enhancing the efficiency in procurements of agricultural produce.

The farmers wanted an overhaul of the crop insurance scheme and the time taken for crop loss evaluation, and listed minimum wages, social security for farmers on the lines of government employees, pension to farmers’ families, medical reimbursement to family members and Rs. 2 lakh for farmers as some of their demands.

“It was unfortunate that none of the issues raised by farmers have been taken seriously by political parties, who are seeking votes through money power and liquor,” Mr. Shanthakumar alleged.

He warned of a backlash by farmers if there was no response to their manifesto within three days.

***None of the parties has taken cognisance of the farmers’ manifesto, says Shanthakumar***

## Water level

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The water level in Periyar dam stood at 110.10 feet on Thursday with an inflow and a discharge of 100 cusecs each. The level in Vaigai dam was 27.49 feet with no inflow and a discharge of 40 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 563 mcft. Veerapandi recorded 18 mm of rainfall and Thekkady recorded 5.8 mm of rainfall during the 24 hours ending 8.30 a.m. on Thursday.

Water level at Mettur dam stood at 44.52 feet on Thursday. The inflow was 151 cusecs and the discharge, 1,500 cusecs.

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Wednesday stood at 41.60 feet (maximum level is 143 feet).

The dam had an inflow of 51.27 cusecs and 204.75 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam.

The level of Manimuthar dam stood at 69.31 feet (118 feet).

The dam had an inflow of 9 cusecs and 100 cusecs of water was discharged.

### **Kanyakumari**

The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 11.85 feet, 36.50 feet in Perunchani, 2.60 feet in Chittar I, 2.98 feet in Chittar II, 2.20 feet in Poigai and 41.65 feet in Mamabazhathuraiyaru.

# Heavy rain lashes Kanyakumari

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NAGERCOIL, April 11, 2014 - The district witnessed widespread rain on Thursday particularly heavy rain lashed Kollencode and Kaliyakkavilai on the Tamil Nadu-Kerala border. People from all walks of life heaved a sigh a relief after widespread rainfall lashed the western part of the district.

The maximum rainfall of 47 mm was recorded at Tiruvattar followed by 29.8 mm in Tirparappu, 25 mm in Adayamadai, 18.8 mm in Balamore, 18 mm in Anyaikidancu, 16.2 mm in Boothapandi, 13 mm in Pechipparai, 10 mm in Mambazhathuraiyaru, 7mm in Puthen dam, 6.4 mm in Perunchani, 5.2 mm in Surulode, 3.6 mm in Chittar I, 1.6 mm in Kannimar and 1.2 mm Chittar II.

The inflow of water into Pechipparai dam was 195 cusecs.

## Tea contest ends

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*Kannan Devan and Woodbriar excel*

UDHAGAMANDALAM, April 11, 2014 - The curtain came down on the tenth edition of The Golden Leaf India: Southern Tea Competition on Wednesday with the final tasting session held in Dubai.

According to C. Shreedharan, Competition Convener, the session coincided with the Global Dubai Tea Forum 2014.

The 76 short-listed teas that got through the first and second level of screening held here over the past few weeks were evaluated by a panel of international jury comprising renowned tasters and major buyers, he said.

The panellists were Kurush Bharucha, Gulf (FZE); Mike Jones, UK; Mohsin M Saify, Pakistan; Sanjay Sethi, Dubai; and Yahya Beyad, UK.

Pointing out that the competition was keen, he said that Kanan Devan Hills Plantations Company Private Limited and Woodbriar group of companies bagged six awards each. While Harrisons Malayalam Limited walked away with four awards, Devon Plantations & Industries Limited, Joonktollee Tea and Industries Limited, Kodanad Estate and Vigneshwar Estate Tea Factory won three each. The United Nilgiri Tea Estates Company Limited lifted two awards and Bhavani Tea and Produce Company Limited, Bluegate Beverages (P) Limited, Hittakkal Estate Tea Factory and Poabs Organic Products Private Limited got one award each.

The certificates to the winners were distributed by the jury members in Dubai on Thursday, the concluding day of the Global Dubai Tea Forum.

***Kanan Devan Hills Plantations Company Private Limited, and Woodbriar group of companies bagged six awards each***

# Weather

Chennai - INDIA

## Today's Weather



Sunny

**Friday, Apr 11**

Max 33° | Min 27°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 63

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:59

Sunset: 06:21

Barometer: 1011

## Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

**Saturday, Apr 12**

Max 36° | Min 27°

## Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday  
**Apr 13**



37° | 27°

Partly Cloudy

Monday  
**Apr 14**



31° | 27°

Cloudy

Tuesday  
**Apr 15**



30° | 26°

Cloudy

Wednesday  
**Apr 16**



31° | 26°

Cloudy

Thursday  
**Apr 17**



31° | 26°

Cloudy

# THE HINDU Business Line

## Palmolein drops to Rs. 600/10 kg



**Mumbai, April 10:** Bearish trend continued in edible oils market on Thursday tracking weak Malaysian palm oil futures amid slack physical demand. Activities remained thin in resale as stockists stayed away. On Bombay Commodity Exchange, groundnut oil dropped by Rs. 20 while soyabean refined, cotton refined, rapeseed refined oil and palmolein declined by Rs. 3 for 10 kg each. Palmolein dropped to Rs. 600 level on higher reselling pressure. Vikram Global Commodities (P) Ltd has quoted Rs. 625/10 kg for Malaysia super palmolein April delivery. End of the day Liberty was quoting palmolein Rs. 605, super palmolein Rs. 625 and soyabean refined oil Rs. 652.

Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs. 607 for April and Rs. 603 for May, soyabean refined oil Rs. 652 for May 20 and sunflower refined oil Rs. 673 for April 14-30. Our Correspondent

# Soyabean yield may be hit by seed shortage

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**New Delhi, April 10:** The shortage of certified and quality soyabean seeds, triggered by last year's poor production has raised concerns for the forthcoming kharif season in Madhya Pradesh, the key oilseed producing State. The soyabean processing industry fears that the yields may get affected due to the lower availability of quality and certified seeds.

The Agriculture Ministry has pegged the shortage of certified and quality soyabean seeds at 69,616 tonnes across the country. The Ministry has assessed the total requirement for the forthcoming kharif season at 3.43 lakh tonnes, whereas the availability is estimated at 2.73 lakh tonnes, according to official sources. Terming the seed shortage as a matter of concern, Rajesh Agarwal, spokesperson for the Indore-based Soybean Processors Association of India, said it would be difficult to assess the availability of quality seeds. The lower-than-expected crop last year due to excess rainfall also affected the quality of the produce, resulting in shortage of quality seeds.

## **Off season production**

"Nothing much can be done mid-season to boost supplies. Though efforts are being made to produce soyabean seeds during the offseason, i.e., during summer months, the outcome in the past has not been encouraging," Agarwal said.

The Madhya Pradesh Seeds Corporation and the National Seeds Corporation are reportedly engaged in off-season production of seeds. A possible option that the Government is exploring is to rationalise the seed replacement ratio (SRR). The Government believes that the SRR, which stood at 51 per cent during kharif 2013 can be reduced to 33 per cent during the forthcoming season to make sure a larger section of farmers can access quality seeds. However, lack of adequate certified and quality seeds will impact productivity, fears Agarwal.

The Government also proposes to carry out an awareness campaign among farmers to make good use of own or farm-saved seeds. Farmers are still holding back a substantial chunk of their produce, anticipating higher price. They are expecting to cash in on concerns over bad weather impacting production in key producing countries such as Brazil and the US.

"So far, only about half the soyabean produced during the last kharif season have arrived in the markets. Farmers seem to be waiting for clarity on the monsoon amid concerns over the emergence of El Nino to bring their produce to the markets," Agarwal said.

Poor arrivals have hit the soyabean crushing resulting in 17 per cent decline in exports of soyameal despite strong demand and better prices from buyers such as Iran and Japan among others.

Soyabean production was estimated lower at 12 million tonnes on excess rains and prices are currently ruling at a high between Rs. 4,200-4,500 a quintal in markets such as Nagpur, Indore and Kota.

# Demand for sunflower oil may grow 50% next year

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**Chennai, April 10:** With burgeoning middle class households in the country, edible oil imports will rise by close to 25 per cent next year, said Satendra Aggarwal, Chief Operating Officer, Ruchi Soya Industries Ltd, the market leader in the packaged edible oils segment. According to him, this growth would predominantly be driven by growing domestic demand for sunflower oil.

He said that the annual consumption of edible oil in India in 2013 was 18 million tonnes.

“This will cross 22 million in 2015,” he said. Of this, a little over 50 per cent came from the packaged oil segment – the other half being unpacked (loosely sold) oil.

Within the packaged category, palm oil was the most consumed with 28 per cent share of the total consumption, followed by soya at 15 per cent, cotton seed oil at 12 per cent and sunflower oil at 11 per cent – while the remaining consists of groundnut oil, rice bran oil, mustard oil, gingelly and coconut oil.

Of the top four categories, palm and sunflower are the fastest growing categories.

Going by his estimates, sunflower will outperform the overall growth.

“With the price differential between palm oil (the cheapest now) and sunflower shrinking in the global market, and considering the shift in consumption pattern which is skewed towards sunflower, the demand for sunflower is expected to grow by over 40-50 per cent next year,” he said.

Reeling out numbers, Aggarwal said the per capita consumption of edible oil in India is 14 kg. This, in comparison with the global average of 22 kg is too low and hence, there is a lot of headroom for growth in this market.

He was here to announce the relaunch of Ruchi Soya’s sunflower oil – Sunrich. The company wants to focus on the southern market for this product, as the South accounts for over 70 per cent of the country’s sunflower oil consumption.

## 45% turmeric on offer unsold in Erode markets

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**Erode, April 10:** At least 45 per cent of the turmeric on offer in Erode markets was unsold on Thursday as traders are waiting for the elections to get over. “Local turmeric traders and exporters have received some upcountry orders, especially for the hybrid variety of turmeric. Many merchants in North India have export orders on hand but are waiting for the new Government to take over at the Centre. Traders are expecting some concessions for exports. Even, turmeric buyers in North India are wary of the strict enforcement of rules by the Election Commission.

They are hesitant to carry money to purchase turmeric. Only after election, local traders may receive orders,” said RKV Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. On Thursday, 4,500 bags of turmeric arrived for sale. Traders bought all the 380 bags of hybrid finger and root turmeric on offer.

Overall, 55 per cent of the stock was sold. Because of the arrival of fine variety hybrid finger turmeric, traders offered a higher price. They procured hybrid finger turmeric at Rs. 8,609 a quintal. Traders quoted higher price for hybrid root as well. For other varieties, traders quoted Rs. 300 a quintal higher for quality produce. Turmeric prices have crossed Rs. 7,000 a quintal in the Regulated Market Committee and Erode Cooperative Marketing society. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association, the finger variety fetched Rs. 4,806-6,931 a quintal, the root variety Rs. 4,600-6,529.

## Kanan Devan , Woodbriar bag 6 Golden Leaf tea awards

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**Bangalore, April 10:** Kanan Devan Hills Plantations Company and Woodbriar Group have won six awards each at the tenth edition of The Golden Leaf India Award: Southern Tea Competition (TGLIA: STC) held at Dubai.

Harrisons Malayalam Limited won four awards, Devon Plantations and Industries Limited, Joonktollee Tea and Industries Limited, Kodanad Estate and Vigneshwar Estate Tea Factory won three awards each, United Nilgiri Tea Estates Company Limited won two awards and



Bhavani Tea and Produce Company Limited, Bluegate Beverages Limited, Hittakkal Estate Tea Factory and Poabs Organic Products Private Limited bagged one award each.

TGLIA: STC at Dubai coincided with the Global Dubai Tea Forum on April 9.

C Shreedharan, Convener, TGLIA: STC, in a release, said that the competition saw 76 short-listed teas that qualified the first and second level of screening. Winners were evaluated by a panel of international jury comprising tasters and major buyers.

## Climbing areca tree made easy



Kiran demonstrating the tree-climbing implement. AJ Vinayak

**Mangalore, April 10:** The shortage of labour is a common problem among farmers.

Crops such as arecanut require skilled persons to climb the trees to pluck arecanut bunches from the plant.

What if any member of the farmer's family can climb the tree? That is what MK Kiran (30), a farmer from Mallesara village in Thirthahalli taluk of Shimoga district, has devised.

Kiran demonstrated an arecanut tree-climbing implement at a plantation of farmer Anantharamakrishna at Peruvai village in Dakshina Kannada district recently.

Kiran told *Business Line* that the prototype of arecanut tree-climber has been developed under the guidance of DN Venkat of Coimbatore.

Venkat has devised a climber for climbing coconut trees, he said.

Two steel frames, rubber bushes and ropes are the main parts of the arecanut tree-climber.

The basic principle is just like climbing an arecanut tree manually.

First, the steel frames are latched on to the tree trunk – one at the waist level of

the person climbing the tree and the other on the ground. The person climbing the tree will have to sit on the frame at the waist-level and will have to pull up the frame at the ground level using his/her feet. Once the process is over, the person has to stand on the lower frame and pull up the upper frame further. These processes will continue till the person reaches the top.

To a query on the chances of these frames slipping, he said the rubber bushes inside the frames tightly hold them to the tree. The two frames are connected by rope or belt.

He has been working on this project for the past four years.

Stating that he had to face failures many a times, Kiran said he did not give up in spite of that. He has around 2-3 tonnes of scrap materials from this project at his home in Thirthahalli, he said. This farm implement weighs around 6.5-7 kg and cost is around Rs. 10,500. Kiran said that he climbed the prototype first.

"When I found it is safe for me, my mother and wife tried it. When I got their feedback that even they can climb the tree with ease, I ventured out to promote this implement," he said.

# Business Standard

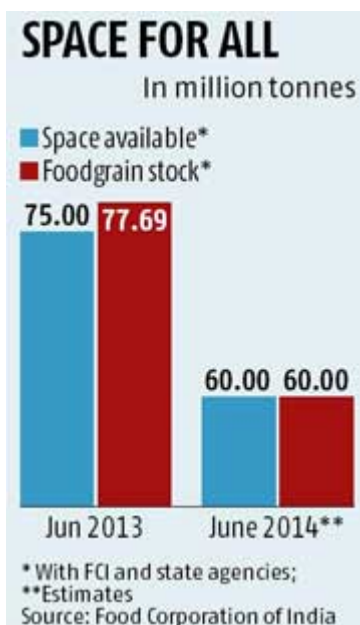
## Storage: FCI in comfort zone



[Food Corporation of India \(FCI\)](#), which has been facing a severe space crunch during the past few [wheat](#) procurement seasons (April-May), might be in a better situation this year, owing to adequate [storage](#) space and as procurement is lower than the initial targets.

Also, lifting of stocks had increased, said an official assessing the storage situation.

Following the addition of 12 million tonnes (mt) of capacity under the entrepreneur guarantee scheme, the corporation is discontinuing existing rental capacities taken on short term contracts, cutting costs. Due to lower stocks and de-hiring of storage, capacity has declined from 79 mt in October 2013 to 75 mt in April 2014. As on April 1, foodgrain stocks stood at 38.12 mt (17.83 mt of wheat and 20.28 mt of rice).



Also, the wheat procurement target is being scaled down; the latest has been fixed at 31 mt. In the previous season, FCI procured only 29 mt, against its initial target of 38 mt.

As on April 1, India had an opening stock of 38.12 mt of foodgrain, against 59.75 mt on April 1, 2013. However, this does not include around 10.2 million tonnes of un-milled rice which FCI is yet to purchase from millers. If the 31-mt procurement target is met, considering FCI's monthly food grain transportation of four mt, the additional storage space will have to be de-hired. "We have projected foodgrain stock of 60-61 mt by June, which means lower requirement," said an official.

Owing to inclement weather, Madhya Pradesh might see a slight drop in procurement. An official said all other states were expected to meet their targets. Of the wheat procurement, a substantial part is expected to be over by May-end.

Traditionally, FCI requires more space during the procurement season, especially for wheat. For this, it enters into monthly storage contracts with private warehouses. FCI's storage capacity stands at 37 mt, of which 34 mt is conventional storage and three mt is cap storage (covered plinths). Of the conventional storage, 21 mt is hired from private players.

The centre incurs Rs 6.14 a quintal a month on preservation of wheat for private storage. Lower dependence on hired storage will result in a cut in costs. Sources confirmed due to better movement of grain and additional space creation under the entrepreneur guarantee scheme, FCI has been able to de-hire space.

"The [Central Warehousing Corporation](#) and state warehousing corporation space is hired under annual contracts but from private players, it is taken on a monthly basis," said an FCI official. "We are currently using 70 per cent of our storage space and with the movement of three-four mt every month, we may be using 90 per cent of our capacity in May, when the wheat stock reaches culmination."

In 2012, the Centre had approved additional capacity of 20 mt—18 mt was to be added as conventional storage and two mt to be earmarked for modern scientific storage (silos). Till April, 12 mt of conventional storage space had been created across states. The creation of silos is under process, and bids for 1.5 mt of capacity were received last week. The availability of more storage space this season is evidently due to lesser opening stock of 38.12 million tone as on April 1, 2014 as compared to 59.75 million tone on April 1, 2013. The wheat procurement target is fixed at 31 million tone for this year. Except for Madhya Pradesh, rests of the states are expected to meet the target, told FCI official.

## Jeera up 1.9% on spot demand

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[Jeera](#) prices moved up by 1.91% to Rs 10,115 per quintal in futures market today after speculators built-up positions, driven by a rise in demand in the spot market against restricted supplies from producing region.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), jeera for delivery in May moved up by Rs 190, or 1.91% to Rs 10,115 per quintal with an open interest of 8400 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in April gained Rs 180, or 1.84% to Rs 9975 per quintal in 2088 lots.

Analysts said the rise in jeera prices at futures trade was mostly on the back of rising demand in the spot markets against restricted supplies.

## Chana up 0.2% as demand picks up

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[Chana](#) prices rose by 0.29% to Rs 3,072 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators created fresh positions, supported by rising demand in the spot market.

However, expectations of higher output restricted the gains.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), chana for delivery in May rose by Rs 9, or 0.29%, to Rs 3,134 per quintal with an open interest of 89,870 lots.

Similarly, the commodity for delivery in April contract traded higher by Rs 8, or 0.26%, to Rs 3,088 per quintal in 26,760 lots.

Analysts said fresh positions built up by speculators after pick up in demand in the spot market mainly led to rise in chana prices at futures trade.



# Sugar down 0.6% on profit-booking

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Amid profit-booking by speculators after recent gains, [sugar](#) prices declined by 0.61% to Rs 3,072 per quintal in futures trading today.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), sugar for delivery in a April month declined by Rs 19, or 0.61% to Rs 3,072 per quintal with an open interest of 15,910 lots.

Similarly, the sweetener for delivery May traded lower by Rs 17, or 0.54% to Rs 3,129 per quintal in 54,620 lots.

Analysts attributed the fall in sugar futures to profit- bookings by speculators at prevailing higher levels but lower output estimates limited the losses.

# Potato up 0.7% on spot demand

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[Potato](#) prices rose by another Rs 10.80 to Rs 1,396.20 per quintal in futures trade today as participants enlarged positions on the back of rising demand in the spot markets against restricted arrivals.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), potato for delivery in May rose by Rs 10.80, or 0.77%, to Rs 1,396.20 per quintal, with trading volume of 187 lots.

The potato for delivery in April also moved up by Rs 7.60, or 0.58% to Rs 1,307.70 per quintal with a trade volume of 12 lots.

Analysts said increased demand in the spot market against tight supplies from producing regions mainly pushed up potato prices at futures trade.

# Cardamom down 0.4% on profit-booking

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[Cardamom](#) prices fell 0.49% to Rs 896.60 per kg in futures trade today as speculators booked profits at prevailing levels amid subdued demand in the spot market.

Also, adequate stocks availability in the physical market put pressure on the cardamom prices in futures trade.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for delivery in May declined by Rs 4.50, or 0.49%, to Rs 896.60 per kg in business turnover of 238 lots.

Likewise, the spice for delivery in April shed Rs 1.20, or 0.12%, to Rs 928 per kg with trading volume of 11 lots.

Market analysts said apart from profit-booking by speculators at prevailing levels, subdued demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position, kept pressure on the cardamom prices at futures trade.

## Palm oil down 0.8% on weak demand

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[Crude palm oil](#) futures prices fell by Rs 4.80 to Rs 556.60 per 10 kg today after speculators reduced their exposures largely on subdued spot demand.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), crude palm oil for delivery in April declined by Rs 4.80, or 0.85%, to Rs 556.60 per 10 kg in business turnover of 228 lots.

Similarly, the oil for delivery in May traded lower by Rs 3.90, or 0.70%, to Rs 552.50 per 10 kg in 93 lots.

Traders said reports of a weakening trend in the domestic spot markets amid adequate stocks, mainly led to a fall in crude palm oil prices in the future trade.

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