

Rs. 3 hike for milk not enough, say farmers



Farmers representative highlighting a point at the Farmers Grievances Day meeting, in Tiruchi on Friday. — PHOTO: M. Moorthy

POURING WOES

- **'For one litre of cow's milk, private dairies offer Rs.27, cooperative societies offer Rs.23'**
- **'State should hike procurement price by Rs.10 for cow's milk, Rs.15 for buffalo milk a litre'**
- **'Government should release 2,500 to 3,000 cusecs of water in the Cauvery during Mettur closure'**
- **'Authorities must prevent lift irrigation in Namakkal and Erode districts during non-Mettur season'**

'Government could give us fodder subsidy amount directly'

TIRUCHI, February 1, 2014 - Demands for a further increase in milk procurement price and sanction of compensation for crops damaged during last year's drought and pleas for release of 3,000 of cusecs of water during non-Mettur season dominated the proceedings at the farmers' grievances meeting held here on Friday.

Speaking on behalf of milk producers in the cooperative sector, N.Ganesan, joint secretary, Tamil Nadu Milk Producers Welfare Association, said although the State government has recently hiked the procurement price of milk by Rs.3 a litre, private milk producers were offering better price for farmers.

"Private dairies are offering Rs.27 a litre for cow's milk while cooperative societies offer a maximum of Rs.23 for member-producers. If the situation continues, it will be very difficult for cooperative milk societies to remain competitive as milk producers will prefer to supply milk to the private dairies which are running well-knit network for procurement at villages.

The government should hike the procurement price by Rs.10 for cow's milk and Rs.15 for buffalo milk a litre," said Mr.Ganesan.

Instead of giving fodder at subsidised rates, the government could give the subsidy amount directly to producers along with the procurement price, he suggested. He also urged the government to take steps to fill up staff vacancies in milk societies.

Collector Jayashree Muralidharan, in response to his complaint that officials in some societies were selling the subsidised fodder at a higher price, directed cooperative department officials to initiate stern action against guilty officials. A.Nagarajan, president, Tamil Nadu Horticulture Crop Producers Association, and R.Subramanian, deputy secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, urged the government to release 2,500 to 3,000 cusecs of water in the Cauvery River to meet the drinking water requirement of people and irrigation requirements of cash crops dependent on 17 irrigation canals during the Mettur closure period. They also urged the district authorities to take steps to prevent lift irrigation in Namakkal and Erode districts by disconnecting power supply during the non-Mettur season.

Farmers' representatives also made a joint representation to the Collector demanding sanction of compensation to crop losses suffered by farmers due to drought last year. R.Raja Chidambaram, State Secretary, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, and P.Viswanathan, president, Tamizhaga Eri and Attru Pasan Vivasayigal Sangam, drew the attention of the authorities to the slump in the price of small onions, causing huge losses to farmers in the district.

Mr.Raja Chidambaram demanded fixation of procurement price for small onions, while Mr.Viswanathan urged the authorities to prevent traders from charging commission for procurement from farmers.

TRY(R) 3 variety paddy suited for non-sodic soil

Average yield has been 13.5 tonne per hectare



Farmers and farm experts participating in the crop contest event, in Mannachanallur near Tiruchi. — Photo: A. Muralitharan

TIRUCHI, February 1, 2014 - A paddy variety meant for the sodic soil in Manikandam block has recorded better yield in non-sodic soil.

The TRY(R) 3, a paddy variety released by the TNAU – Anbil Dharmalingam Agricultural College and Research Institute to suit the alkaline soil in Manikandam block, has proved its mettle in non-alkaline soil. The TNAU – ADACRI was founded in Manikandam block, about 25 years ago, to evolve and release paddy varieties suited for the alkaline soil. Soil in around 5,000 hectares in the block have turned alkaline affecting the yield.

N. Periyasamy, farmer from Manachanallur, has raised the variety in his one acre in his fields. The 'field day' celebrated on Tuesday when the crop was harvested and on Friday, the farmer along with scientists from the Krishi Vigyan Kendra found that the yield was 13.5 tonnes a hectare. "The grain weighs 27 grams per 1,000 grains indicating the high yield," says A. Sakunthalai, Project Coordinator KVK. The soil is less sodic nature, she said. The Kendra not only provided seeds but also guided the farmer with crop cultivation techniques. "A sustained follow-up on the cultivation practice, supply of Dhaincha seeds and prevention of leaf folder disease were some of the measures adopted by us to achieve a higher yield," she said.

R. Pandiyarajan, Dean of TNAU – ADACRI, said that the variety, yielded 5.1 tonnes in sodic soil of Manikandam. The grain weight was 23 grams. He said that the variety could be raised during the thaladi season too.

Gururaj Singh, Joint Director of Agriculture and officials ascertained the quality of paddy.

Budget recommendations will help farmers, says Mani

KOTTAYAM, February 1, 2014 - Finance Minister K.M. Mani on Friday said he had the satisfaction of presenting a 'green budget' with innovative features. He claimed the budget would help farmers to ride out the difficult period of economic crisis. He was speaking at a Budget symposium organised by the K.N. Raj Centre for Planning and Centre-State Relations. However, economists who attended the symposium raised serious questions about the efficacy of budgetary measures in overcoming the crisis in the farm sector.

Mr. Mani said despite many constraints, the Budget could introduce Income Guarantee Scheme for farmers and earmarked Rs.10 crore for natural rubber procurement.

K.N. Harilal, former Planning Board member, said the fall in rubber price was not a Kerala-specific phenomenon. "If he want effective measures against the price fall, Mr. Mani should take the lead in bringing together the small growers and planters from the rubber producing countries," Dr Harilal said. John Samuel, UNDP governance advisor, said in spite of the special status given to the primary sector in the 12 Budget, its share in the economy had declined to 9.3 per cent last year. On the other hand the share of the tertiary sector had gone up to 66.72 per cent, he said. Mahatma Gandhi University Vice chancellor A.V. George presided. Pro Vice Chancellor Sheena Shukkoor welcomed the gathering.

Farm expo

THRISSUR, February 1, 2014 - The Kerala Agricultural University will hold 'Agrifesta 2014', an agricultural exhibition and technology meet, here from February 28 to March 6. There will be about 250 stalls in the exhibition, KAU Vice Chancellor P. Rajendran told a press conference here on Friday.

Power supply for farming cut down

HYDERABAD, February 1, 2014 - *Ryots worried as sowing in progress*

The much-vaunted seven-hour power supply for agriculture has beaten a significant retreat for the first time, with the Central Power Distribution Company cutting down supply to less than four hours a day.

"We have not been getting even four-hour supply for the last one month, and with sowing in progress, the unscheduled power cuts are proving a menace," said M. Lakshmaiah, a farmer from Manchal mandal in RR district.

However, the city is yet to feel the impact, as the power authorities are apparently not ready to forego the high tariff income. But, it is only a matter of time before the city, too, will be brought under the power cut regime to sustain supply for increased agricultural consumption, CPDCL officials warn.

They explained that with units tripping in the last few days, power shortage has gone up to 1,000 MW, and that the APGenco's Krishnapatnam unit had not taken off when it was expected to provide 800 MW.

The city must be put under a three-hour daily load relief regime, if at least five hours of farm supply is to be provided in the coming months.

The Central Power Distribution Company cutting down supply to less than four hours a day

Farmers lay siege to power sub-station

KHAMMAM, February 1, 2014 - Peeved over erratic power supply, farmers locked the electricity sub-station at Nagulavancha in Chintakani mandal on Friday.

The farmers hailing from Sitampeta, Tamminenipalem, Pandillapalli, and Nagulavancha villages laid a siege to the sub-station resenting the long hours of disruption in power supply to agriculture pumpsets.

They locked the entrance of the sub-station, confining the staff to the building as a mark of protest against the government's "failure" to ensure the assured nine-hour power supply to them. The farmers lamented that their crops, mainly chilli and maize, were facing the threat of withering owing to erratic power supply.

They demanded that the district administration ensure uninterrupted power to the pumpsets as assured by the government.

The protesters raised slogans seeking redress of their grievances pertaining to repair of transformers and frequent interruptions in power supply.

Leaders of various political parties and farmer organisations expressed their solidarity with the protesters. The farmers called off the protest after one hour following the intervention of APNPDCL ADE Rama Rao.

Mr Rao assured the farmers that their grievances would be redressed in two days.

Disruption in power supply for long hours to pumpsets the trigger

Farmers urge govt. to fulfil their demands

BHUBANESWAR, February 1, 2014 - *Lakhs of farmers not able to sell their paddy and resorting to distress sale*

The leaders of several farmers' organisations came together on Friday to urge the State government to fulfil various demands of the farmers of the State.

Addressing a press conference here, the leaders of Odisha Krushak Sangha, Chasi Surakshya Mancha and Krushak Shakti said that agriculture had remained most neglected despite the fact that 80 per cent people of the State depending on agriculture.

They lamented that lakhs of farmers were not being able to sell their paddy and resorting to distress sale when the State government was making tall claims about welfare of the farm community.

Those who addressed the press conference include Ajay Kumar Jena of Odisha Krushak Sangha, Digambar Mohapatra of Chasi Surakshya Mancha and Chittaranjan Mohanty of Krushak Shakti.

They lamented that none of the 104 cold storages of the State government was functioning in the entire State at present and the farmers were not being included in the cooperative organisations.

Among other things they demanded irrigation coverage for all cultivable land, provision of electricity for cultivation at a cheaper price, crop insurance for all farmers, proper loan facility and proper functioning of regional market committees to help farmers to sell their produce in their respective areas.

The three leaders announced that they will unite the farmers' bodies working for the benefit of the farmers in different regions of the State shortly and launch a State-wide movement to make the State government take necessary measures for the benefit of the farmers at large.

'Promote agriculture among youth'



Students participating in the intra-university Yuvajanotsava of University of Agriculture and Horticulture Sciences in Shimoga. — Photo: VAIDYA

source of livelihood but as a way of life.

He was speaking after inaugurating the Yuvajanotsava, intra-university cultural competitions, held at University of Agriculture and Horticultural Sciences, Shimoga here. Because of problems like fluctuating prices of agriculture produces, lack of irrigation facilities and poor access to credit facilities, the youths in rural areas were reluctant to take up agriculture, he said. Major chunk of the rural youths were migrating to urban centres for jobs.

The rituals and cultural practices associated with tilling the land, sowing the seeds, transplantation of paddy saplings, harvesting were fading away owing to this exodus. The exodus has resulted in socio-cultural changes in the rural areas, he said.

It is necessary to instil confidence among the rural youths that agriculture can also yield profits if scientific farming practices are adopted. Agriculture universities play an important role in this regard. It is necessary to promote agriculture to conserve the rural culture, he said.

Extension Director of the university Ganesh Babu released a souvenir titled 'Inchara' on the occasion.

Market-oriented agriculture key for viability: William Dar

SANGAREDDY, February 1, 2014 - ICRISAT director general William Dar said inclusive market-oriented agriculture was the key to making farming more profitable for the ryots in India as well as those from Eastern and Southern Africa.

Participating in the three-day regional planning meeting of International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) held in Nairobi, Kenya, he said that partnerships and collaboration among countries were critical to developing tailor-made solutions to the problems being faced by the farmers.

They should also be given access to science-based innovations that would build their resilience, according to a release here on Friday.

ICRISAT scientists and senior staff from Kenya, Malawi, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, as well as from West and Central Africa participated in the meeting.

In-coming chair of the ICRISAT Board, Prof. Chandra Madramotoo, reiterated that science alone was not enough and it must be translated into impacts that make a difference in the lives of smallholder farmers in dry lands.

He emphasised that efficient management of natural resource base was critical to continued productivity in the smallholder cropping system and must be addressed soon, preferably at the watershed level.

Modified crop insurance scheme extended to all districts

TIRUCHI, February 1, 2014 - Villages with more than 20 hectares under a crop will be notified
The State government has extended the Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS) to all districts in Tamil Nadu from the current Rabi season (October to March) this year.

The MNAIS is already in operation on a pilot basis in Cuddalore, Sivagangai and Namakkal districts.

The Centre had introduced the new scheme, under the new National Crop Insurance Programme (NCIP), replacing the earlier National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS).

The State government, in an order issued on December 30, 2013, has accorded administrative approval for extending the MNAIS for agricultural and horticultural crops from the 2013-14 Rabi season to the remaining 28 districts other than the three pilot districts. As per the order, villages with more than 20 hectares under a crop in the season will be notified.

The Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme stands withdrawn from this season.

A salient feature of the MNAIS is that the village is taken as the unit of insurance, whereas under the NAIS the block or firka was the unit.

Farmers have long been complaining that they did not benefit much under the NAIS, as compensation was given only if the notified crop area in the entire firka suffered damage. Agriculture Department officials said that farmers would now stand to benefit as the crop yield will be calculated more accurately reflecting the situation in nearly 90 per cent of area in a village under the new scheme.

S.Renganathan, Secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, welcomed the extension of the MNAIS, although the premium payable by farmers could be slightly higher. 'Taking the village as the unit of insurance is definitely an improvement,' he said. He suggested fixation of different premium structures for food and cash crops to make the insurance scheme commercially viable.

Chief Minister Jayalalitha in a recent letter to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, said that the NCIP would increase the burden of premium on farmers of Tamil Nadu 'manifold'.

Under the old scheme, the stipulated premium level was 2 per cent to 3.5 per cent of the sum insured, depending on the season and crop. Whereas for State government's assistance, farmers had to pay only one per cent to 1.75 per cent of the sum insured. Now, this would go up to 3.75 to 4.8 per cent.

She had suggested that the additional premium burden be borne equally by the State government and also by the Centre.

📌 ***On Pilot mode in Cuddalore, Sivagangai and Namakkal districts***

📌 ***MNAIS for agricultural and horticultural crops from the 2013-14 Rabi season***

Encroachments turn Salem bus stand into fruit market

SALEM, February 1, 2014 - The corridors and platforms at the Dr. M.G.R. Central Bus Stand (New Bus Stand) here have turned into a fruit market as unauthorised shop keepers encroach upon most of the available space, making it difficult for passengers to move freely. Thousands of passengers use the bus stand located in the heart of the city, to travel to nearby districts and other States.

Though the Corporation has rented out more than 50 shops on the premises, unauthorised shops, particularly those selling fruits, have come up in large numbers on the platforms and pathways.

Perennial

Though it continues to be a perennial problem, inaction by the corporation has resulted in more shops coming up recently, selling seasonal fruits.

This adds to the woes of the passengers who already face problems due to the shrunken space because of shop keepers encroaching upon the pathways and displaying their products for sale.

The authorised shop keepers say that unlike the unauthorised shops, they have to pay the rent and their business is also getting affected. "Corporation engineers do not inspect the premises regularly, hence these shops are mushrooming," a shop owner said.

Passengers said that the fruit shops on the pavements prevent them from moving freely and they have to be careful with their steps or they could land on the fruits.

"Officials concerned should evict the unauthorised shopkeepers because the whole premises has turned into a market," says M. Murugan from Erode.

He also added that the fruits and food items on the entire premises were kept in the open and consumption would lead to health hazards.

Millet Fest inaugurated



Event is being organised by the Department of Agriculture

Different kinds of millets on display during Millets Fest-2014 at NTR Stadium in Hyderabad on Friday.- PHOTO: G. RAMAKRISHNA

HYDERABAD, February 1, 2014 - A three-day exhibition of millets and their products – Millet Fest – was inaugurated on Friday at NTR Stadium by Agriculture Minister Kanna Laxminarayana. It is organised by the Agriculture Department and the faculty of home science of Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University.

After going round the 30 odd stalls in the exhibition, the Minister said a similar event in Guntur recently had drawn large crowds and resulted in good business as the awareness about millet consumption grew among public. Millets production

and usage enhanced nutrition value. The lower nutrition levels in people contributed to their poor health.

Agriculture Commissioner K. Madhusudhan Rao and university vice-chancellor A. Padmaraju were present. The students of home science set up a stall to test the perception abilities of visitors while a kitchen cooking only millet items served food at reasonable rates.

Sharma: rubber farmers will be protected

NEW DELHI, February 1, 2014 - Union Minister for Commerce Anand Sharma has assured Kerala Chief Minister Oommen Chandy that his Ministry will take steps to protect the interests of rubber farmers, particularly those in Kerala, who have been agitating on the steep fall in the procurement prices of rubber due to imports. He will direct the Central agencies to procure more rubber directly from the farmers.

Mr. Sharma agreed to consider the request of Mr. Chandy to increase the rubber planting subsidy to 30 per cent from the present 20 per cent.

New KPCC chief

Mr. Chandy also met Congress general secretary in charge of Kerala Mukul Wasnik and discussed about the appointment of a new president for the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC). The names of G. Karthikeyan, V.M. Sudheeran, and V.D. Satheesan are doing rounds for appointment of new KPCC president.

Probe demanded into functioning of NGO

MYSORE, February 1, 2014 - Members of the Mysore district unit of the Karnataka Adivasi Rakshana Parishat staged a dharna outside the office of the Deputy Commissioner here on Thursday, demanding a probe into the functioning of a non-government organisation in the Nagarhole National Park and speedy implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Rights) Act.

They alleged that a representative of the NGO was conniving with Forest Department officials to coax the latter to book false cases against Adivasis for collecting minor forest produces, which actually was a right granted to them under the Forest Rights Act.

Tigers and elephants were losing way in the forests and straying into human habitats as water holes had dried up. However, it was not being brought to the notice of the government, they said, demanding a probe into the matter.

Cases

Forest officials were registering cases against Adivasis for collecting forest produces even though 19 tribal hadis in Mysore district were granted community rights. Officials responsible for the act must be placed under suspension, they said, adding that false cases booked against adivasis should be withdrawn.

The government must come out with special policies to counter reported Maoist presence in the Western Ghats and declare them as scheduled areas for tribals.

Ashram schools needed to be upgraded and 50 per cent of posts of teachers filled with the members from the Scheduled Tribes, they said. More number of Largescale Adivasi Multipurpose Cooperative Societies should be set up by the government to market minor forest produce, they said.

ABCs of organic home gardening

How do we tackle pests without synthetic pesticides? How can we get a huge haul of vegetables without resorting to chemical fertilisers? A workshop series teaches us organic gardening step-by-step



The classes focus on everything related to urban gardens and caring for them.

Most of us love the idea of urban farming and growing our own organic vegetables, fruits and flowers, or just simply to have a patch of green around the house or on our roof. But the trouble is, we don't know how to get started on it. And then, sometimes, we do feel helpless while encountering the gardening hiccups that may crop up occasionally.

Well, this series of monthly organic gardening workshops conducted by The Offshoot in collaboration with Ashvita Bistro and Eco Alternatives on 'How to start and sustain an organic garden' might help you in establishing organic home gardens. With horticulturist Hariesh of The Offshoot as the resource person, the workshops address various aspects of organic gardening on a step-by-step basis, taking up one aspect of gardening every month. The first of the workshop series was held in December and focused on sowing seeds and preparing soil mixture for growing plants.

Meanwhile, the second workshop of the series, which was held last Saturday was on pest management, wherein Hariesh taught wannabe gardeners how to identify the various pests, counter pest infestation, and of course on how to prevent pest attacks on our plants, in the first place.

The participants were educated to distinguish between insects that cause economic damage and those that don't. Alongside information, various methods and products used in organic terrace gardening were discussed and demonstrated at the workshop. For instance, in this month's workshop, use of organic pest control mechanisms like pheromone impregnated funnel traps to trap insects was demonstrated.

It helps that Ashvita Bistro has a small but functional terrace garden on its terrace that allows the workshop to host a few practical demonstrations too.

Judging from the fact that over 70 persons of assorted ages and from diverse walks of life turned up for this month's workshop, it looks like the city is slowly, but surely warming up to urban farming. These gardening workshops are held on the second Saturday of every month at Ashvita Bistro on Bawa road, between 4 p.m. to 6 p.m in the evening. Entry for the workshop is free.

HEMA VIJAY

Participants were educated to distinguish between insects that cause economic damage and those that don't

WATER LEVEL

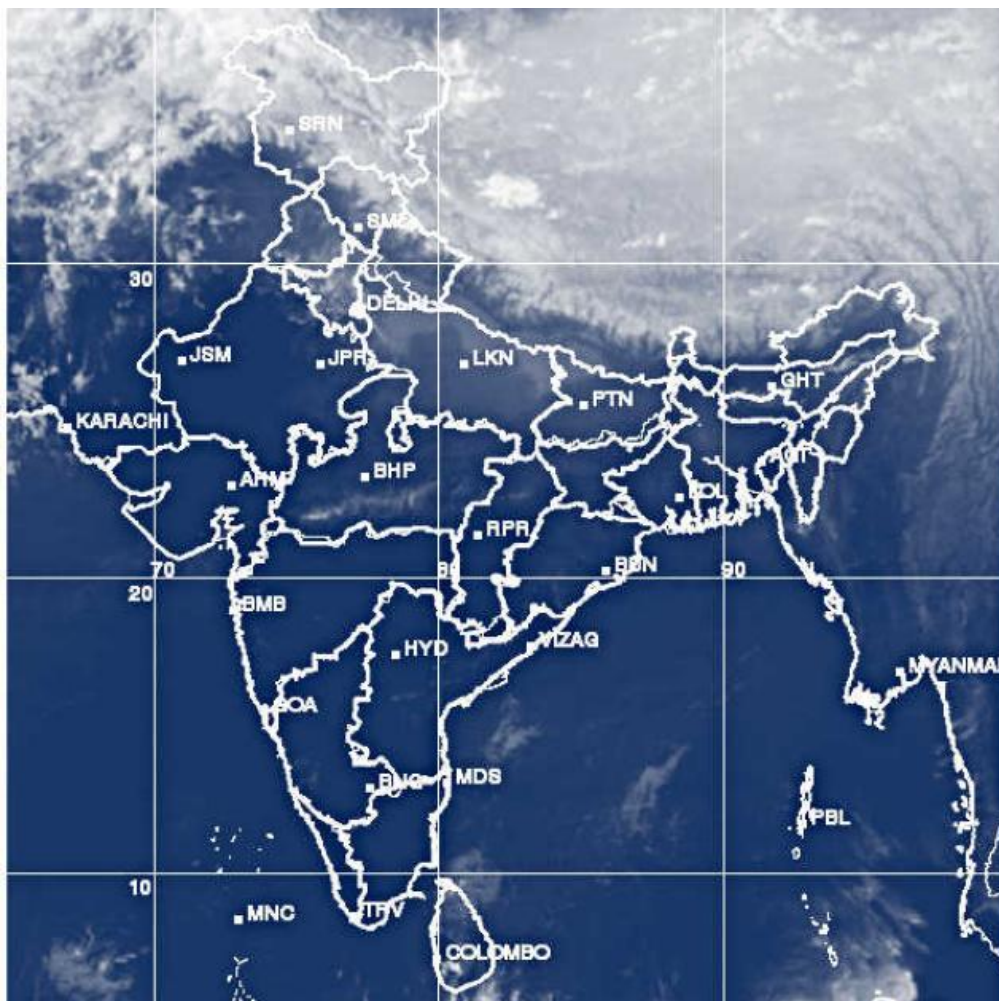
The water level in Periyar dam stood at 111.30 feet on Friday with an inflow of 14 cusecs and a discharge of 200 cusecs. The level in Vaigai dam was 35.56 feet with no inflow and a discharge of 40 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 1,045 mcft. There was no rainfall recorded during the 24 hours ending 8.30 a.m. on Friday.

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 51.64 feet on Friday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 907 cusecs and the discharge nil.

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Friday stood at 83.80 feet. The dam had an inflow of 234.74 cusecs and 1,154.75 cusecs of water was discharged. The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 83.28 feet. The dam had an inflow of 28 cusecs and 45 cusecs of water was discharged.

Kanyakumari - The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 17.80 feet and 50.95 feet in Perunchani.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on January 31.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Rain: 0

Humidity: 66

Wind: normal

Saturday, Feb 1

Max Min

29° | 22°

Sunrise: 06:35

Sunset: 06:09

Barometer: 1015

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Sunday, Feb 2

Max Min

29° | 20°

Extended Forecast for a week

Monday

Feb 3



30° | 21°

Partly Cloudy

Tuesday

Feb 4



25° | 22°

Overcast

Wednesday

Feb 5



25° | 21°

Cloudy

Thursday

Feb 6



25° | 20°

Sunny

Friday

Feb 7



25° | 21°

Cloudy

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Madhya Pradesh farmers to study advanced farming abroad

INDORE: To make agriculture profitable, the state government has initiated a programme in which farmers will be sent abroad to study advanced methods of farming. After learning, they will inform their fellow farmers about the techniques for better productivity.

A district's plan will be chalked out in district itself. For this, a committee comprising public representatives and senior citizens will be formed in every district. Districts' plan will be chalked out keeping in view their specific requirements and resources.

Chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced the scheme while addressing a convention 'Aao Banayen Madhya Pradesh' at Burhanpur. On the occasion, he inaugurated and laid foundation stones for construction works costing Rs 30 crore 77 lakh. He also distributed assistance worth about Rs 24 crore to over 11 thousand beneficiaries.

The Chief Minister said that apart from improving ancient heritage of historic city Burhanpur, tourism will also be promoted there. Textile industry, powerlooms and all kinds of industry will be promoted in the district. Initiative to establish an industrial area in the district will also be taken. He also urged people to contribute to state's all-round

development. He also administered pledge of Aao Banayen Madhya Pradesh" on the occasion.

Karnataka sugarcane farmers see red

BELGAUM: The government's incentive of Rs 150 per tonne of sugarcane cannot be availed by farmers

sending sugarcane to Maharashtra-based factories. have kept away from this benefit, which cause to fresh raw.

Around 20% of the sugarcane produced in Belgaum district is supplied to inter-state licenced factories on the Maharashtra border, especially in Kolhapur and Sangli districts. Some of the factories on the Karnataka border too receive sugarcane from Maharashtra area. But this quantity is less.

This year, the government announced Rs 150 support price to [sugarcane farmers](#) of the state and already releasing the grants. But the farmers sending sugarcane to Maharashtra are not getting this benefit.

"The government order is not clear about covering farmers who send their produce to Maharashtra. We will write to the government seeking clarification on the issue," said Vinodkumar Heggalagi, deputy director of food and civil supplies department.

According to department sources, 47 factories in the state have altogether crushed 1.32 crore tonnes of sugarcane till January 18, and the government has so far released Rs 193 crore as support price. The food and civil supplies department is depositing support price directly into bank accounts of farmers, after availing certified details from factories. But farmers sending sugarcane to Maharashtra are excluded from this process.

"There is no rule that farmers of Karnataka should supply their produce only to factories in the state. I have membership to two factories in Maharashtra and send my produce to them. As the government has announced a support price, it must be applied to all sugarcane growers in the state. It's irrelevant where I send my produce," said Sangappa Patil, a sugarcane grower from Athani.

However, Mallikarjun Jakati, district president of [Karnataka Krishik Sangh](#) (KKS), said there is no need of paying support price to farmers sending sugarcane to Maharashtra, as factories in Maharashtra always pay better than factories in the state.

Don't create fear psychosis in farmers mind on survival of agriculture

MYSORE: Agriculture minister [Krishna Byregowda](#) on Friday urged the people connected with agriculture not to create panic in the farmers mind by predicting a gloomy future for farm sector in the country and said instead efforts should be made to find solutions to problems afflicting agriculture.

Speaking at Suttur Krishi mela organized as a part of jatra celebrations of 11th century saint Shri Shivarathreshwara Swamiji near here, he said whenever people, particularly people claiming themselves the ambassadors of farmers and farming sector speak about agriculture they present a gloomy picture and even go to the extent of saying that in coming years

agriculture in India will become a non-profitable avocation. Even some say that agriculture may become extinct one day, he said, adding that instead of being pessimistic on the issue one should speak about alternative measures and how agriculture should be turned into a profitable avocation.

He said definitely farmers are an unprotected lot as far as package of practices and marketing of their produces are concerned, but this does not mean that agriculture will vanish from the scene. " We have huge number of research institutes and back up of battalion of scientists and experts to support the farmers , while farmers should make up their mind to use the modern technologies and research in the farm sector and scientists should make efforts to take their technologies to farms" he suggested .

Farmers instead of clinging to old practices or reverting back to traditional methods of agriculture should open up themselves for the new developments, he said. One has forgotten the fact that country faced hunger in the sixties , but the green revolution initiated by then governments brought in a sea change on the production front and today not only tackled hunger is tackled , even farmers are exporting their produces , he pointed out and said the state government is determined to constitute agriculture commission to tackle the farmers problems , particularly the marketing issues. This will not only revive the agriculture in the state , e farmers can be able to get remunerative prices for their produce , he said . Chief minister will announce its constitution in his budget next month, he disclosed.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Butterfly House to be ready by March



In a few weeks from now, residents can look forward to catch a glimpse of butterflies in a 'house' at the Vandalur Zoo. The construction work of the butterfly house at the zoo is all set to be completed by March.

The house, which is part of the ` five crore butterfly park project, will be shaped in the form of a caterpillar complete with waterfalls and a path running through it for butterfly lovers. "The construction work of the butterfly house is expected to be completed by March. The caterpillar-shaped structure will be around seven metres tall with mesh walls to suit the butterflies. It will have a transparent polycarbonate sheets as roof to imitate natural conditions," said a senior official with the Tourism Board, which has undertaken the project. The butterfly park will be housed within 2,000 square feet in the 2.79 hectare butterfly park that is expected to be opened to the public by the end of this year.

The key attraction of the butterfly house will be the controlled conditions, which allow visitors to view the butterflies in all seasons and any time of the day.

“While in the park outside we will have a variety of host plants that will attract the butterflies, these cannot be viewed through the day and across seasons. For instance, around noon all the butterflies will move away. But within the house, the conditions will be controlled to suit the butterflies and people can observe them at any time and at a close range,” says Emeritus Scientist from the Kerala Forest Reserve Institute, George Mathew, who is part of the project.

The butterfly house will have a range of mini habitats to suit the various species. So, while there will be a few appropriate host plants placed close to the waterfalls for the butterflies that live in the damp, opening on the walls will be made for sunlight for butterflies that require warmer conditions.

The house will be landscaped with undulations and a range of suitable plants for the butterflies.

Around 120 species are spotted in the area including common wanderer, crimson rose, snippers, blue butterfly, grass yellow, emigrants, common rose etc. The park will also have a number of host plants like curry leaves, citrus, nettle plant, creepers etc.

It will also have models of butterflies, a restaurant, a path through the park and seats and other amenities for visitors.

A laboratory will be built at the park, where the butterflies will be bred in the laboratory conditions. These will be released into the house, when they reach the pupal stage.

THE HINDU Business Line

Family-run tea estate gets special certification for social commitments



Gets Trusttea accreditation for environment protection, sustainability and safety too

Coimbatore, January 31: A family-run tea estate in the Nilgiris has become the first one to get a special certification, Trusttea. The certification has been given to the Golden Hills Estates Private Ltd's Erinkadu brand for its social and economic commitments to its workforce besides ensuring environmental protection and sustainability. The estate will also ensure safety of the workplace as well as the product.

Erinkadu is the second one after Wentworth Estate of Harrisons

Malayalam to get the certification in South India. The latter has got the certification as a company run estate.

“This accreditation has brought laurels to the family. It was an uphill task, but we managed. We will continue to be guided by Trusttea in our efforts to maintain sustainability in tea,” said N Lakshman Chettiar, the third generation entrepreneur managing the Golden Hills Estates.

The estate comprises 121 hectares of tea with an orthodox factory, producing about 4 lakh kg of orthodox tea annually. Teas are sold in southern auction centres of Coonoor, Coimbatore and Kochi.

Lakshman Chettiar recalled the efforts taken by his father L Narayanan Chettiar in designing a solar roof over two decades ago. "This has helped us save some 37 per cent on fossil fuel consumption annually and contribute towards carbon credit.

"We have also developed a moisture sensor, which helps save power on the withers and gets the exact wither percentage," he said.

Trusttea certificate has been initiated by IDH, the sustainable trade initiative.

When asked how many estates in India have been given the Trusttea certification, Rohinton Kurus Babaycon, Local Coordinator, Tea- India, said, three have bagged the certification since its launch in July 2013.

Two estates are in the South and one in the North. The official further said that the network is targeting to cover 600 tea factories, five lakh tea plantation workers, 40,000 small growers in two years time.

"Out of the 1.1 billion kg of tea produced in India, nearly 800-900 million kg consumed in the domestic market is not verified. This India-specific tea code developed for and by the industry, and championed by the Tea Board aims at creating a sustainable sector.

Limited arrivals support cotton

Rajkot, January 31: Cotton price ruled steady on Friday on the back of stable demand. *Kapas* or raw cotton prices ruled steady as demand from ginneries was limited.

Gujarat Sankar-6 cotton traded at Rs 42,900-43,000 for a candy of 356 kg.

Kapas was quoted Rs 1,050-1,085 for a maund of 20 kg and gin delivery kapas traded at Rs 1,085-1,100 a maund in Rajkot.

About 60,000-62,000 bales of cotton arrived in Gujarat and 2 lakh bales across the country.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, kapas April contracts decreased by Rs 11.50 to Rs 983 a maund, with an open interest of 18,478 lots.

A Rajkot-based broker said that buying by domestic was hand-to-mouth. Export demand is limited at current price level. Prices may not drop in the coming days due to restricted arrivals. Traders and ginneries said that arrivals are restricted since farmers are holding back their produce.

Rains, cold wave likely to delay arrival of masur crop

Indore, January 31: RAINS TO DELAY MASUR ARRIVALS

A steady rise in arrivals of imported masur has arrested the uptrend in prices. Masur (bold) was quoted at Rs. 4,375-4,400 a quintal (Rs. 4,400-25), while masur (Madhya Pradesh) ruled at Rs. 4,000-4,200 on Friday. With unseasonal rains and cold wave, the growth of masur crop seems to have been affected. In that eventuality, arrival of new masur in local mandis may be delayed, said a trader. Decline in spot masur dragged its dal with masur dal (average) at Rs. 5,000-25, masur dal (medium) at Rs. 5,100-25, while masur dal (bold) declined to Rs. 5,200-50 a quintal. Our Correspondent

Wheat unlikely to see any change next few days

Karnal, January 31: NO MAJOR CHANGE IN WHEAT

After witnessing a marginal fluctuation in the last few days, prices of dara wheat remained unchanged on Friday. In the absence of any major market moving factors, prices have been ruling in a tight range, said Radhey Shayam, a trade expert. In the physical market, dara wheat sold at Rs. 1,620-25 a quintal. Around 1,000 bags of wheat arrived and stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs. 1,620, while delivery at the chakki was at Rs. 1,625. In spot market, wheat traded at Rs. 1,610. Following a steady trend in wheat and good domestic demand for flour in the region, prices remained unchanged and sold at Rs. 1,850. Similarly, Chokar ruled flat at Rs. 1,470 a quintal. Our Correspondent

Turmeric gleams on export enquiries, N. India orders

Erode, January 31: Turmeric prices increased by over Rs 500 a quintal for almost all varieties on Friday following export enquiries from countries such as Malaysia and UAE, and orders from North India have

“Due to heavy demand for the root variety in North India and also from other countries, prices increased sharply. The hybrid root increased by Rs. 650 a quintal to Rs. 7,044 a quintal. Turmeric exporters are getting good orders for the root variety from countries such as Malaysia, Sri Lanka and UAE. So, they are buying stocks that have arrived,” said a trader. RKV Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association, said some traders have received upcountry orders for the root variety and they are buying both varieties for a high price. Turmeric exporters having orders from Sri Lanka and Malaysia are expecting more orders. Due to the arrival of quality produce, prices of both varieties of turmeric increased. Prices in the futures market have been ruling stable for the last couple of days. If the prices rise in the futures market, they could rise in the spot markets too.

Traders bought all the 200 bags of the new crop by quoting a higher price on Friday. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard (new crop), the finger variety was sold at Rs. 5,695-6,714 a quintal and root variety at Rs. 5,499-6,714.

The finger variety (old crop) was sold at Rs. 4,868-6,897 and root variety Rs. 4,699-6,699.

Salem hybrid : The finger variety fetched Rs. 6,689-7,599 and the root variety Rs. 5,866-7,044. Of the 1,217 bags that arrived, 598 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs. 5,969-6,889, the root variety at Rs. 5,834-6,789. Of the 1,169 bags on offer, 1,113 were traded.

At the Erode Co-operative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs. 5,731-6,929 and root variety Rs. 5,347-6,899. Out of the 715 bags put up for sale, 686 were picked up.

Coconut oil manufacturers stop crushing copra

Erode, January 31: COPRA CRUSHING HALTED ON POOR SALES

Coconut oil manufacturers have stopped crushing copra because of poor sales. However, coconut oil prices continue to zoom. “For the last couple of days, prices have increased and on Friday, it was sold at Rs. 1,680 for 15 kg loose pack (Rs. 112/kg). But very little quantity

was sold as buyers are expecting prices to drop in the next 2-3 days. Coconut oil crushers have stopped crushing because of poor sales,” said R. M. Palanisamy, an oil trader in Erode. Copra prices increased to Rs. 7,800-8,000 a quintal in the open market. In the Gobichettipalayam Regulated Marketing Committee, copra was sold at Rs. 7,683-8,193 and the 11.5 tonnes that arrived were sold. At the Avalpoondurai Regulated Market Committee, the first quality was sold at Rs. 7,605-7,925 , the second quality at Rs. 5,765-7,775 a quintal. Our Correspondent

Mixed trend at Kochi tea sale

Kochi, January 31: A mixed trend prevailed at the Kochi Tea auction this week with prices quoting lower for some varieties. In sale number 5, the quantity on offer in CTC dust grades was 11,24,500 kg.

With demand being fair, the market was Rs. 3-5 lower and sometimes more.

However, the decline in price was less for good liquoring teas, which came under the selection of AVT. Low medium and plainer teas were steady to firm and sometimes dearer, especially the blacker varieties.

The arrival was low for orthodox varieties at 9,500 kg. The market witnessed heavy withdrawals. Small quantities sold were absorbed by exporters.

In the best CTC dusts, PD varieties quoted Rs. 93/114, RD grades fetched Rs. 102/127, SRD ruled at Rs.115/140 and SFD stood at Rs. 120/152.

The quantity on offer in orthodox leaf grades was 168,500 kg. The market for Nilgiri smaller broken was steady to firm and sometimes dearer following quality.

Heavy withdrawals

Bolder broken and whole leaf was irregular and lower and witnessed heavy withdrawals. Corresponding fannings appreciated in value. The quantity on offer in CTC grades was 53,000 kg. The market for good liquoring teas was steady to dearer, while others were irregular and lower.

In the dust varieties, Monica SFD quoted the best prices of Rs. 153 followed by both Sholayar SFD and Mayura SFD at Rs. 146 each.

In the leaf grades, Pascoes Hyson Green Tea fetched the best prices of Rs. 286 followed by Chamraj FOP at Rs. 284.

Weather clouds wheat prospects despite record plantings

New Delhi, January 31: The winter or rabi plantings is almost coming to an end and acreages under crops such as wheat and gram have touched new highs this year raising the prospect of a record foodgrain harvest. The plantings were boosted by comfortable water levels in reservoirs and higher soil moisture levels.

The rabi rice planting this year is up by about a fourth at 21.13 lakh hectares (lh) as transplantation goes on in States such as Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Karnataka, Odisha and West Bengal among others.

Wheat prospects

With regard to wheat, sowing has ended even as planting data continues to trickle in. The wheat acreage is higher by more than two million hectares with states such as Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh reporting higher coverage.

The process of grain formation is set to begin in the early planted varieties.

Prolonged foggy and cloudy weather condition at this stage is seen as a concern.

The crop needs sunshine at this stage, said Indu Sharma, Director at the Karnal-based Directorate of Wheat Research.

Though outbreak of yellow rust – a fungal disease was reported in Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana and Punjab, it is kept under check. “The availability of fungicides has helped us to

Robust coverage

in lakh hectares as on Jan 31, 2014

| | This year | Last year |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Rice | 21.13 | 15.15 |
| Wheat | 315.25 | 296.32 |
| Gram | 101.33 | 93.40 |
| Field Pea | 8.51 | 8.04 |
| Urdbean | 7.10 | 8.35 |
| Moong bean | 6.07 | 6.03 |
| Jowar | 36.31 | 38.81 |
| Malze | 15.40 | 14.27 |
| Barley | 8.04 | 7.94 |
| Rapeseed/ Mustard | 71.17 | 67.17 |
| Groundnut | 7.52 | 8.11 |
| Safflower | 1.77 | 1.48 |
| Sunflower | 4.13 | 4.86 |
| Total | 642.89 | 606.65 |

Source: Ministry of Agriculture

keep yellow rust under check,” Sharma said. If the weather condition is conducive and there’s no major outbreak of any disease, wheat output could touch 100 million tonnes this year, she added.

Pulses coverage

Apart from wheat, the acreage under gram has also touched a new high, exceeding 101 million hectares. Except for urad, the acreage under pulses such as field pea and moong are higher than last year. The total area under pulses is higher by 12 lh at 156.7 lh.

The acreage under coarse cereals such as maize and barley is also higher this year. However, jowar acreage is lower than last year mainly on account of decline in Maharashtra.

The area under oilseeds has so far touched 89 lh, about three lh more than last year. The acreage under rapeseed mustard stood at 71.16 lh, higher than last year, but lower than the record acreage of 72.22 lh witnessed in 2010-11.

The acreages of groundnut and sunflower are marginally lower than last year, while that of safflower and sesame were higher than last year.

Ministerial panel favours hike in fixed costs for urea



New Delhi, January 31: In a move that may provide some relief to the beleaguered domestic urea producers, a ministerial panel has recommended increase in fixed cost for urea by Rs. 350 a tonne.

This will not impact the urea prices as the Government proposes to absorb the additional cost through subsidy.

A Group of Ministers headed by Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar has approved the Fertiliser Ministry’s proposal to raise the fixed production cost of urea by Rs. 350 a tonne. According to the New Pricing Scheme (NPS) III, the Department of Fertiliser calculates the production cost of urea to pay the subsidy. Fertiliser Minister Srikant Jena said the move to increase fixed cost of urea would lead to an increase in subsidy outgo by Rs. 900 crore a year. The proposal would be sent to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs for approval. According to the proposal, the fixed costs – that

includes cost of converting natural gas to urea, salary, interest, depreciation and selling expenses among others – for the nutrient produced by plants which are 30 years old or more would be increased by Rs. 300 a tonne.

For all other plants, the fixed costs would be raised by Rs. 350 .

Base year change

The minimum fixed cost would be fixed at Rs. 2,300 and the base year for calculating the fixed cost has been changed from 2002-03 to 2008-09.

The scheme would be applicable for one year from the date of notification.

Assuming the proposal gets notified in the next two months, the fertiliser units would be able to take full advantage of the scheme only in the next financial year, sources said.

The price of urea – the most widely used fertiliser in the country – is controlled by the Government. The maximum retail price of urea is currently fixed at Rs. 5,360 and the difference between the production cost and the MRP is reimbursed to the producers in the form of subsidy.

Output profile

The domestic production of urea is estimated at 22 million tonnes while about eight tonnes is imported to meet the domestic shortfall.

The Government had pegged the fertiliser subsidy at Rs. 65,971 crore for the current fiscal and the industry estimates outstanding dues at around Rs. 40,000 crore.

The delay in subsidy payment has created a liquidity crisis for the fertiliser producers.

Business Standard

Mpeda to expand farming of new variety Tilapia fish

The Marine Products Export Development Authority ([Mpeda](#)) has chalked out a plan to culture [Nilotics](#) variety of [Tilapia fish](#) in Kerala. The authority has identified farm area across 12,000 hectares in the districts of Palakkad, Ernakulam, Kottayam and Alappuzha.

M Shaji, deputy director, Mpeda, said the Nilotics variety of Tilapia was seeing good demand not only in the local markets but also in the US and European Union. Mpeda projects an annual revenue of Rs 700 crore from rearing this variety.

The US had imported 22,000 tonne fillets of this fish from the southeast Asian countries during 2012-13, it said.

The Kerala government recently issued an order allowing the farming of Nilotics variety, which is a foreign breed.

Farmers in Ernakulam and Alappuzha districts had already started farming Nilotics (popularly called 'Nile Tilapia') by importing the brood stock from Malaysia.

Shaji said Nilotics was a fast growing variety as it attained a weight of 300-350 gm in just four months. In India, the Mossambicus variety of Tilapia was being widely cultured in states including Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha for the last 30 years.

It offers other advantages like the flesh is more whitish and tastier than Mossambicus. On average, five tonnes can be produced from a hectare in just eight months.

Farmers get an average price of Rs 150 -200 per kg and the production cost is rather low compared with other species of fish.

Part from Nile and Mossambicus, Blue Tilapia is also widely used for farming.

Tilapia, which is an African fish by origin, is mainly a scavenger type fish and requires less fish meal.

The Rajiv Gandhi Center for Aquaculture, Vijayawada, had started producing infants of this variety three years ago based on a technology adopted from the World Fish Centre in Malaysia. The centre already has a stock of around 1 million infants and is capable of meeting the demand from other states.

The annual global production of Tilapia is around 3.5 million tonnes and the estimated value is \$3 billion. Around 20 countries are farming Tilapia, with China, Egypt, Indonesian Philippines, Thailand and Brazil taking the lead.

Potato down 1.3% on weak demand, adequate stocks

[Potato](#) prices fell 1.38% to Rs 1,038.10 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators offloaded positions due to low demand in spot markets.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), potato prices for March contract fell by Rs 14.60, or 1.38%, to Rs 1,038.10 per quintal, with a business volume of 248 lots.

Potato for delivery in April declined by Rs 12.90, or 1.19%, to Rs 1,070 per quintal, with a trading volume of 118 lots.

Market experts attributed the fall in potato futures to offloading of positions due to low demand in the spot markets against adequate stocks following higher supplies.

Cardamom down 3.9% on profit-booking

[Cardamom](#) prices plunged 3.90% to Rs 757 per kg in futures trade today as speculators booked profits at prevailing higher levels amid subdued demand in the spot market.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for delivery in February declined by Rs 30.80, or 3.90%, to Rs 757 per kg in a business turnover of 871 lots.

Likewise, the spice for delivery in March shed Rs 29.80, or 3.64%, to Rs 788 per kg with a trading volume of 813 lots.

Market analysts said speculators booking profits at prevailing higher levels and subdued demand in the spot market that kept pressure on cardamom prices at futures trade.

Palm oil down 0.3% on subdued demand

[Crude palm oil](#) prices fell 0.36% to Rs 522.80 per 10 kg in futures trading today as speculators offloaded positions due to subdued demand in the spot market against higher supplies.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), crude palm oil for delivery in January fell by Rs 1.90, or 0.36%, to Rs 522.80 per 10 kg in a business turnover of 77 lots.

Likewise, oil for delivery in February traded lower by Rs 1.10, or 0.20%, to Rs 531 per 10 kg in 63 lots.

Market analysts said offloading of positions by speculators due to subdued demand in the spot market against supply pressure, mainly led to a fall in crude palm oil futures.
