

## Sugarcane farmers seek Rs. 2,650 per tonne

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*'Mills refuse to pay the prescribed price'*

*a bitter lot: Sugarcane farmers staging a protest at Thugili near Kumbakonam on Wednesday.*

KUMBAKONAM, January 2, 2014 - Hundreds of sugarcane farmers staged a demonstration in front of the Sri Ambika

Sugars at Thugili near Kumbakonam demanding payment of Rs. 2,650 per tonne of sugarcane as announced by the Tamil Nadu government on Wednesday.

They said that the management of the mills refuse to pay the amount stating that it had not received the government order yet. The mill is prepared to pay the earlier price of Rs. 2,100 a tonne.

Murugan, president of the movement against proposed Methane extraction project in the Cauvery delta districts led the agitation. He said that when the sugarcane farmers are demanding Rs. 3,000 per tonne stating that the price announced by State government was not reasonable, mill authorities are paying even less than what the Tamil Nadu Government has announced.

"We will not cut the sugarcane till the mill paid the price announced by the State government" Mr. Murugan said and appealed to Tamil Nadu Government to intervene in the matter. He also cautioned the mill authorities that sugarcane farmers may be forced to intensify agitation if the Tamil Nadu Government price is not paid.

## Sirumalai farmers show the way

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*Despite monsoon failure, they save water and crops*

*BOON: A farm pond at Pazhaiyur on Sirumalai Hills. — PHOTO: G. KARTHIKEYAN*

SIRUMALAI, January 2, 2014 - Despite water scarcity caused by destruction of natural resources and resultant monsoon failure, farmers in Sirumalai Hills have

managed to save their crops through irrigation facilities created under the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP).

A.K. Saravanan, a farmer in Pullimanthurai, says the present storage in percolation tanks in their farms helps them save crops even during summer. He has dug a percolation tank and a baby pond in his farm to charge groundwater. He said that he had struggled to save his crops, particularly lemon trees, when monsoon failed last year. Now, despite poor rainfall,

water is available in the new percolation pond so that he can save his lemon and pepper crops.

Many other farmers are also happy to have sufficient storage in their baby ponds and in check dams built under the programme.

The District Watershed Development Agency spent Rs.6.01 crore to create water structures under the IWMP. Eight ponds (with a capacity to store 12 lakh litres each), 17 check dams (1.5 lakh litres) and 85 baby ponds (6,000 litres) were constructed on the hills.

Water in farm ponds is used for defogging 'chow chow,' pepper and lemon crops, said M. Santhanam, another farmer at Pullimanthurai.

"With 6,000 litres of water in pond, fertigation is also possible," he added.

IWMP Assistant Executive Engineer M. Siddique Ali said that agricultural activities on the upper reaches of the Sirumalai Hills were less. Later, lemon trees were grown. Now, with all these water structures, more crops could be grown.

As many as 651 loose-rock check dams and 76 gabion dams, and a 17.8-km-long stone bund have been constructed to arrest water flow and scale down velocity of running water, says District Watershed Development Agency Project Director A. Manoharan. "They will be beneficial to farms on downstream areas also," he says. Ten water sheds were being developed at Pazhaiyur, Pudhur, Kadamankulam, Thenmalai and Aralikadu on the Sirumalai Hills.

The Integrated Watershed Management Programme is aimed at empowering rural women by creating sustainable income generation activities.

Through this programme, a woman's self-help group has started a venture to give on hire chairs, cooking utensils and audio system for functions. Earlier, the hill people depended on contractors in Dindigul, 30 km away from Sirumalai.

Now, they not only hire them locally but also at low charges, says Extension Officer X. Sebastian Britto.

Through the programme, farm tools such as crowbar, sprayer, electric cutters and bamboo tools were given to landless people for self-employment.

They were trained to use the equipment, Mr. Britto says.

## Crash in yield, price leaves Bengal gram farmers in lurch



*They demand compensation for crop loss and minimum support price*

*Nothing to show: Farmers Yerranna and Doddabasavana Gouda of Chellagurki village in Bellary say they cannot shift to alternative crops because of blackbuck menace.*

Farmers in Bellary taluk who sowed

Bengal gram are in a dilemma over harvesting the crop because of the crash in the market price and yield.

As a rabi crop, Bengal gram is cultivated on 61,080 hectares in the district, of which 50 per cent of the acreage is in Bellary taluk. Of the 31,810 hectares in Bellary taluk, around 17,000 hectares falls under the rain-fed area. It is here that the crop loss has occurred due to failure of follow-up post monsoon rains.

"We experienced heavy showers with the onset of post-monsoon, which risen our hopes of getting a good yield at least this year after experiencing drought for the past three years. But to our ill luck, the follow-up rains failed. As a result the growth of the crop was severely affected and also the yield," Yerranna, a farmer, told *The Hindu* .

He said the cost of cultivation was around 9,000 per acre. The normal anticipated yield was around seven to eight bags per acre. But due to failure of rain, the yield was expected to be around two bags per acre.

“Such being the situation, we are in a dilemma whether to harvest the crop or not. For, we are not sure whether we would be able to recover the cost incurred for the harvest. We have to pay Rs. 100 for plucking three rows of plant while the expected yield is very less. Apart from that, the market price has also crashed considerably and we would not be getting anything,” said Mr. Yerranna.

The experience of farmers in Joladrashi, Chellagurki, Veerapur, Rupanagudi and surrounding places is the same, said K.M. Doddabasavana Gouda, another farmer. “Cultivating Bengal gram has become one way. There is only investment but no returns,” he said.

Mr. Gouda said farmers could not go for alternative crop because of blackbuck “menace”. “Blackbucks eat coriander, safflower and other rabi crops. They tend to nibble tender leaves of Bengal gram, too, in the initial stage, but would avoid them when the leaves develop sourness. With a little bit of watch and ward in the initial stage, we can protect the crop,” he said.

The farmers met Minister for Agriculture Krishna Byregowda during his recent visit to Bellary and urged him to survey the extent of crop loss and initiate the process of giving suitable compensation. They also urged the minister to announce a minimum support price to Bengal gram to protect the cultivators from suffering huge losses.

## RuPay debit cards for Shimoga farmers in April

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*Assistant General Manager of NABARD M.S. Raghavendra addressing the gathering after inaugurating a workshop on RuPay cards in Shimoga on Wednesday.— PHOTO: VAIDYA*

SHIMOGA, January 2, 2014 - RuPay debit cards will be issued for the farmers, who are members of cooperative societies, in the district by April, said M.S.

Raghavendra, Assistant General Manager

of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

He was speaking after inaugurating a training programme held in the city on Wednesday for executive officers of Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) on conducting financial transactions on RuPay platform of National Payments Corporation of India.

The ongoing process of computerisation of PACS is likely to be completed by the end of March. After the completion of the computerisation process, the PACS will switch over to core banking system.

This system will enable the PACS to operate on RuPay platform.

After the completion of the computerisation process, RuPay Kisan credit cards will be distributed among the farmers who are members of cooperative societies, he said.

R.M. Manjunatha Gowda, President of Karnataka State Cooperative Apex Bank and Shimoga District Central Cooperative Bank said that the RuPay debit cards were user-friendly.

After the completion of computerisation process, the PACS will emerge as multi-service providing centres.

In future, the subsidy of various government schemes will be directly remitted to the accounts of the farmers in cooperative societies, Mr. Raghavendra said.

# Shortage of workers puts farmers on a sticky wicket

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KATTAPPANA, January 2, 2014 - The harvest season for pepper and coffee beans has begun in the high ranges. But farmers here are not a happy lot. Severe shortage of workers and high wages are making their life difficult.

The price of coffee has plummeted. Besides, unfavourable weather has resulted in low production.

The price of dried coffee beans is around Rs.100 per kg. The wage per person is Rs.400, which makes it impossible for small and medium level farmers to harvest the crop in time. "If the prices remain at the same level, we may not be able to harvest the crop," says Sajan Mathew, a small scale farmer at Kochuthovala near here. He says similar situations had occurred in the past. "Many farmers opted not to harvest the crop because they couldn't afford the labour cost," he adds.

Manoj Puthuvila, another farmer, says there are chances that farmers may shift to other crops.

Though pepper costs Rs.500 per kg, the production has considerably fallen in the main plantation areas such as Erattayar, Melechinnar, Adimaly, Thoprakudy and Vathikudy. It is now grown by farmers as an intercrop after the wilt disease affected large areas of cultivation.

***The wage per person is Rs.400, which makes it impossible for small and medium level farmers to harvest the crop in time.***

## Seminar on joint farming held

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KATTAPPANA, January 2, 2014 - Self-sufficiency in agriculture production is the key to ensure welfare of the society, said V.N. Rajasekhara Pillai, executive vice-president, Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment (KSCSTE) on Wednesday. He was speaking at a seminar on promotion of joint farming organised as part of the agriculture festival at Thodupuzha. Kudumbasree Mission executive director K.B.Valsalakumari, said a large area of land was brought under cultivation through the efforts of the members of the mission, which aims to ensure food security among the economically weaker sections.

## Ladyfish raises hopes of scientists, farmers

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*CMFRI ties up with Nagayalanka-based farmer to cultivate it*

*Sillago Sihama brackish water fish being cultivated in Krishna district. — Photo: T. APPALA NAIDU*

The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute's (CMFRI) project of cultivating *Sillago sihama*, known as 'Ladyfish', in Nagayalanka of Krishna district is raising the hopes of scientists and farmers to tap the potential of the huge market for the fish in Indian metros.

At a time when shrimp cultivation is becoming less lucrative, the brackish water Ladyfish is likely to woo aquaculture farmers in



the Krishna-Godavari delta.

### First project

This is the first project of the CMFRI in the country to test the possibility and survival of the brackish water fish with a view to cultivating it in other parts of India, particularly Karnataka. In July, scientists of the CMFRI Mangalore Research Centre collaborated with Nagayalanka-based farmer T. Raghu Sekhar after he had collected over 20,000 *Sillago sihama* seed from the mangrove forest in Nagayalanka.

“I rejected the scientists’ request to hand over the seed to them. Instead, I sought their support and guidance to cultivate the fish in my own pond and they agreed,” said Mr. Sekhar.

Considering the cultivation of the fish in the two-acre pond at Pedakammavaripalem in Nagayalanka mandal, the scientists began their project and achieved favourable results. “Survival rate of the fish is good when compared with other brackish water species. If each fish records a growth of not less than 100 grams, it would be a huge success and lucrative on the marketing front.

“We will then replicate the cultivation to parts of Karnataka,” a scientist of the research station told *The Hindu* over phone.

### Demand

The fish has a great demand in Indian metros, apart from the local market. “The success of the project will help tap and meet the demand for the fish in our country in the coming years,” the scientist has said.

“By mid-December, the weight of each fish reached 50 grams. It is likely to grow to the targeted weight – 100 grams – by harvest time. Being blessed with mangrove forests that are rich fish seed banks, cultivation of *Sillago sihama* is likely to be seen as an alternative to the Vannamei shrimp in the Krishna-Godavari delta,” Mr. Sekhar said.

According to local communities, the availability of the *Sillago sihama* seed is particularly abundant in the mangrove forest, adjacent to the point where the river merges into the sea.

## Farmer’s Notebook

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*THE EFFECT: Frequency of pesticide spray was reduced from once in seven days to once in 15 days and finally once in 30 days. — photo: special arrangement*

# Farm antibiotics threat to public health in U.S.

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K.K. MUSTAFAH

Citing an overabundance in the use of antibiotics by the agriculture and aquaculture industries that poses a threat to public health in the U.S., a solution — user fees on the non-human use of antibiotics — is proposed.

## How sex is determined in honey bees

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CH. VIJAYA BHASKAR

A study of 14 natural sequence variants of the complementary sex determining switch (CSD gene) for 76 genotypes of honey bees showed that at least five amino acid differences can create femaleness through the CSD gene.



## UAS-B to encourage crop-based associations

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*Ambitious plan to boost farmers' income using innovative methods*

BANGALORE, January 2, 2014 - The University of Agricultural Sciences-Bangalore has drawn up an ambitious plan for the new year to increase the yield and double the income of farmers through various innovative methods, including formation of village-level crop-based growers' associations in the districts coming under its jurisdiction.

Disclosing this to *The Hindu*, UAS-B Vice-Chancellor K. Narayana Gowda said the focus of the proposed plan was to make the farmers self-reliant and also instil a sense of confidence among them to arrest their migration to urban areas in search of menial jobs. "There is a dire need to arrest the trend of farmers shunning agriculture in despair, as that may pose a threat to the country's food security besides denting the economy itself," he said. Underscoring the importance of crop-based growers' associations, he said this would help farmers in 20 tasks — right from procuring agricultural inputs to marketing and value addition. Dr. Gowda — who earlier won the national award of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research for his work as the head of a pilot project of the Union Department of Biotechnology that used such growers' associations among other interventions to increase farmers' incomes in 75 villages of Doddaballapur taluk — recalled that it had been possible to increase farmers' incomes three-fold under that project. Explaining how the growers' associations help farmers, he said farmers were spending heavily on transportation costs like getting the sowing seeds, fertilizers and taking their produce to market. But when done in a group, the cost of transportation would come down. Similarly, taking the produce to market in a group would help in bargaining for better prices. Also, the groups would help share experience and knowledge, he said. He pointed out that formation of a jackfruit growers' association in Tubagere hobli of Doddaballapur taluk had resulted in farmers getting remunerative prices for jackfruit due to collective marketing. Such associations would also help create a conducive atmosphere in villages, he said. However, the university could only provide a model and motivate the farmers to form such groups, while it is the farmers and various development agencies which have to play a crucial role in such a process, he said. In tune with its plan for doubling farmers' incomes, the university has also decided to broaden its extension activities by involving innovative farmers in not only spreading their own innovations, but also creating awareness among fellow farmers about latest crop patterns, technologies and also facilities being provided by the government. Involving innovative farmers in extension activities would help in effective dissemination of information.

## Agri technical guide 2014 released

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COIMBATORE, January 2, 2014 - *Contains information on agri-schemes*

An 'Agri Technical Guide 2014' of the Tamil Nadu Government Agricultural Graduates' Association was released here recently by Agriculture Minister S. Damodaran.

In a release issued here on Wednesday by the Coimbatore District Association president G. Mohanraj Samuel, it said that the guide has important details on all relevant data related to agriculture in Tamil Nadu. Details of all office bearers from the micro to the macro level of the association are available district-wise.

There is also information on the latest agricultural technologies, agricultural schemes, etc., and also a diary attached to the guide.

Besides office-bearers of the association, K. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, was also present during the release.

## Farmers accuse officials at maize-buying centres of fraud

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*KRRS says receipts give after four days, mention lesser quantity*

*The members of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene staging dharna outside Deputy Commissioners office in Chitradurga on Tuesday.*





CHITRADURGA, January 1, 2014 - Members of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene took out a procession and staged dharna outside the Deputy Commissioner's office here on Tuesday demanding action against officials involved in misappropriation of funds while buying maize and waiving loans of farmers.

They also raised slogans against the State government and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. The agitators alleged that the officials in-charge of buying maize and the procurement centres opened by the district administration were not providing proper receipts to farmers. They said receipts were given after three to four days of purchase while loading maize bags to trucks.

They said most farmers had noticed that the receipts were given for lesser quantity than what they had supplied. This clearly showed that the officials were deceiving farmers, the organisation alleged.

The farmers demanded that the officers should be instructed to provide receipts immediately after purchasing the maize, and transparency should be maintained in the entire process of purchasing produce.

#### **Loan waiver**

The farmers' organisation also demanded that the State government should take immediate steps to waive all farm loans because failure of good rains in the past two years had affected the farmers. The central team that visited the district last week was informed about the conditions of farmers in the district.

The KRRS submitted their memorandum to Deputy Commissioner V.P. Ikkeri and stated that the agitation would be intensified if the authorities concerned fail to take immediate steps in this regard.

The agitation was led by KRRS leaders Bedarhalli Basavareddy, Lingaraj, Giriappa, Kodagavalli Rangaswamy and D.S. Halli Mallikarjun.

## **Impose 30 p.c. duty on red gram imports: farmers**

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GULBARGA, January 1, 2014 - *Otherwise, we will observe bandh on January 9, they say* Members of various farmers' organisations and the Hyderabad Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry have threatened to observe bandh on January 9 in the Hyderabad Karnataka region and Bijapur district, if their demand for imposing 30 per cent duty on red gram imports is not conceded.

Addressing a press conference here on Tuesday, president of the Karnataka Red Gram Growers' Association Basavaraj Ingin, president of HKCCI Umakant Nigudgi, secretary of the All India Kisan Sabha Moula Mulla and leaders of other organisations urged the government to withdraw the 15 per cent incentive on imported red gram, immediately.

Mr. Ingin and Mr. Nigudgi alleged that the existing export and import policies were flawed. They said the total demand for red gram in the country was 30 lakh tonnes, which almost matched with production. There was no need to import red gram, they said. Mr. Ingin said red gram of poor quality was being imported by paying an incentive of 15 per cent on the cost and allowed to be sold at a lower price in Indian market, leading to crash in prices here.

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📌 **Leaders term existing import-export policies related to agricultural produce anti-farmer**  
📌 **Government urged to establish pulses development board**

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# Farmers demand Turmeric Board

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ARMOOR (NIZAMABAD DT.), January 1, 2014 - Turmeric farmers on Tuesday demanded that the government establish a Turmeric Board on the lines of the Spices Board, with a corpus of Rs.500 crore. They also demanded the announcement of Rs.10,000 per quintal as remunerative price.

Telangana Turmeric Farmers' Association president Kotapati Narsimha Naidu deplored that turmeric growers had been incurring losses for the last three years owing to the rise in input cost.

## 'No flaws in agri purchases'

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KANNUR, January 1, 2014 - Tender procedures for purchase of agricultural implements required for agricultural mechanisation programme of the panchayat has not violated any stipulated criteria, District panchayat Vice President T. Krishnan has said.

He was attending the district panchayat meeting here on Tuesday. The district panchayat had received tenders for the purchase from the two government-controlled agencies, namely Regional Agro-Industries Co-operative of Kerala Ltd. (RAIDC) and Kerala Agro-Industries Corporation Ltd. (KAICO). The opposition United Democratic Front members demanded that the tender procedures in which only two agencies had participated could not be accepted.

Panchayat members demanded that instructions be given to contractors to complete road works sanctioned in the hill areas of the district under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna. They sought that steps be taken to start the second phase of rural drinking water scheme.

## Egg rate

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NAMAKKAL, January 2, 2014 - The National Egg Coordination Committee egg rate was Rs.3.60 on Wednesday.

## Water Level

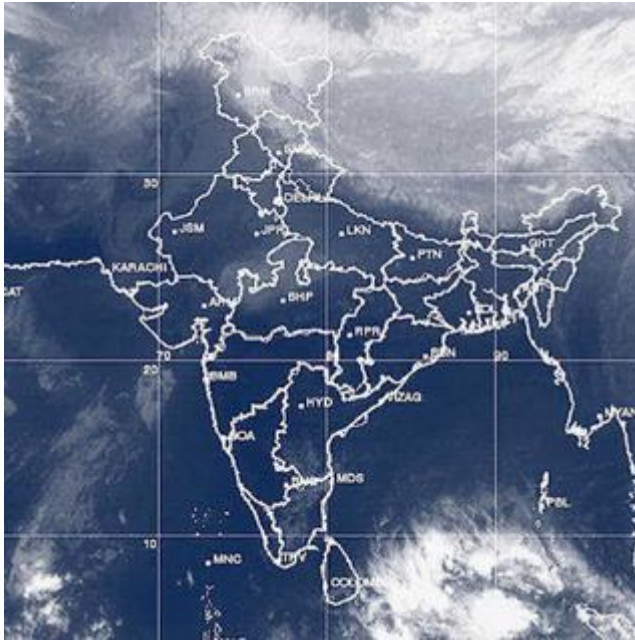
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**Mettur** - The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 66.36 feet on Wednesday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 1,042 cusecs and the discharge 9,000 cusecs.

Water level in the Papanasam dam stood at 84.95 feet on Wednesday. The dam had an inflow of 223.61 cusecs and 304.75 cusecs was discharged. The water level in the Manimuthar dam stood at 74.60 feet. The dam had an inflow of 35 cusecs and 530 cusecs was discharged.

**Nagercoil** - The level in the Pechipparai dam stood at 23.65 feet, while it was 57.25 feet in Perunchani, 13.02 feet in Chittar 1, 13.12 feet in Chittar 11, 4.50 feet in Poigai and 54.12 feet in Mamabazathuraiyaru.

# Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on January 1st.

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	17	10	0	0
New Delhi (Sfd)	18	10	0	0
Chandigarh	15	10	tr	tr
Hissar	18	3	0	0
Bhuntar	14	5	4	4
Shimla	7	2	1	1
Jammu	9	5	9	9
Srinagar	1	-1	26	26
Amritsar	13	1	0	0
Patiala	16	9	0	0
Jaipur	18	6	0	0
Udaipur	21	8	0	0
Allahabad	23	13	0	0
Lucknow	15	10	3	3
Varanasi	21	13	0	0
Dehradun	18	7	tr	tr
Agartala	23	7	0	0
Ahmedabad	26	13	0	0
Bangalore	26	16	0	0
Bhubaneshwar	29	15	0	0
Bhopal	26	14	0	0
Chennai	29	22	0	0
Guwahati	25	9	0	0
Hyderabad	28	18	0	0
Kolkata	25	14	0	0
Mumbai	26	21	0	0
Nagpur	28	13	0	0
Patna	23	11	0	0
Pune	29	13	0	0
Thiruvananthapuram	33	21	0	0
Imphal	24	3	0	0
Shillong	18	7	0	0

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

#### COLD WAVE

Cold wave conditions are prevailing over some parts of west Rajasthan. Cold day conditions are prevailing over some parts of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh .

**Rainfall:** Rain/snow has occurred at most places over Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir and at many places over Uttarakhand. Rain/thundershowers have occurred at a few places over east Uttar Pradesh and at isolated places over Punjab and west Uttar Pradesh. Weather was mainly dry over rest of the region. The chief amounts of precipitation in cm are: HIMACHAL PRADESH: Manali 1, JAMMU AND KASHMIR: Srinagar airport 14, Batote 9, Pahalgam 7, Banihal and Quazigund 5 each, Kukarnag 4, Badharwah and Avantipur 3 each, Katra, Kathua and Udhampur 2 each and Jammu and Gulmarg 1 each, PUNJAB: Pathankot 2 and EAST UTTAR PRADESH: Banda 3 .

**MINIMUM TEMPERATURE:** The minimum temperatures rose appreciably in Haryana and changed little elsewhere. They were markedly below normal in west Rajasthan, appreciably above normal in Uttar Pradesh, above normal in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand and normal in rest of the region. The lowest minimum temperature in the plains was 0.1°C recorded at Churu (Rajasthan) .

**FORECAST FOR REGION VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 4th JANUARY 2014:** Rain/snow may occur at a few places over Jammu and Kashmir on 1st and at one or two places on 3rd. Weather would be mainly dry over rest of the region. The prevailing cold wave conditions over west Rajasthan likely to continue and it may extend into Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh during next 48 hours. Shallow fog/fog may occur over some parts of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. Fall in minimum temperature by 2 to 3 deg cel would occur over the region .

**WARNING:** Ground frost would occur over isolated pockets of Punjab, Haryana and west Rajasthan during next two nights .

**FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 4th JANUARY 2014:** Mainly clear sky. Shallow fog/fog in the morning.

#### ANDHRA PRADESH

Anantapur	29	19	0	0
Arogyavaram	29	17	0	0
Bapatla	30	17	0	0
Calingapatnam	27	17	0	0
Gannavaram	30	18	0	0
Hanamkonda	31	16	0	0
Hyderabad AP	28	18	0	0
Kakinada	28	19	0	0
Khammam	30	18	0	0
Kavali	28	18	0	0
Kurnool	30	17	0	0
Mahabubnagar	27	17	0	0
Machilipatnam	29	19	0	0
Nandyal	29	19	0	0
Narasapur	29	19	0	0
Nellore	28	22	tr	tr
Nizamabad	31	16	0	0
Ongole	30	19	0	0
Ramagundam	30	14	0	0
Tirupathi AP	30	22	0	0
Tuni	30	19	0	0
Vizag AP	29	19	0	0
Vizag	29	21	0	0

#### KARNATAKA

Agumbe	29	10	0	0
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Bangalore AP	26	15	0	0
Bangalore	26	16	0	0
Bagalkote	31	13	0	0
Belgaum AP	28	15	0	0
Bellary	31	16	0	0
Bijapur	28	15	0	0
Chitradurga	28	16	0	0
Chickmagalur	27	15	0	0
Chintamani	27	15	0	0
Gadag	28	14	0	0
Gulbarga	30	17	0	0
Hassan	28	11	0	0
Honavar	34	21	0	0
Karwar	34	20	0	0
Madikeri	25	12	0	0
Mangalore AP	33	20	0	0
Mysore	27	19	0	0
Mandya	28	15	0	0
Panambur	35	21	0	0
Raichur	28	18	0	0
Shirali	33	21	0	0
<b>KERALA</b>				
Alappuzha	33	21	0	0
Kannur	34	22	0	0
Kochi AP	33	20	0	0
Kottayam	35	20	0	0
Kozhikode	33	23	0	0
Punalur	33	18	0	0
Thiruvanantha				
-puram AP	31	21	0	0
Thiruvanantha				
-puram City	33	21	0	0
Vellanikkara	31	23	0	0
<b>TAMIL NADU</b>				
Adiramapattinam	31	21	0	0
Chennai	30	23	0	0
Chennai AP	29	22	0	0
Coimbatore AP	29	19	0	0
Coonoor	18	9	0	0
Cuddalore	30	23	0	0
Dharmapuri	29	18	0	0
Kanyakumari	32	23	0	0
Karaikal	29	24	0	0
Kodaikanal	20	6	0	0
Madurai AP	31	21	0	0
Nagapattinam	29	25	0	0
Palayamkottai	33	21	0	0
Pamban	29	25	0	0
Parangipettai	31	21	0	0
Puducherry	31	21	1	1
Salem	31	19	0	0
Thanjavur	30	22	0	0
Tiruchi AP	30	21	tr	tr
Tiruchi	—	—	—	—
Tirupattur	—	—	—	—
Tiruttani	30	19	0	0
Tondi	30	22	0	0

Tuticorin	31	22	0	0
Ooty	21	6	0	0
Valparai	27	7	0	0
Vedaranyam	—	—	—	—
Vellore	30	21	0	0
<b>LAKSHADWEEP</b>				
Amini Divi	32	24	0	0
Minicoy	31	22	0	0
<b>OTHER STATIONS</b>				
Kolkata (Alipore)	25	14	0	0
Mumbai	28	21	0	0
New Delhi	18	10	tr	0

The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (trace) and total rainfall in mm since October 01, 2013.

#### DRY WEATHER IN ANDHRA PRADESH

**CHENNAI:** Mainly dry weather prevailed over Tamil Nadu and Coastal Andhra Pradesh and dry weather prevailed over Kerala, Lakshadweep, Karnataka, Telangana and Rayalaseema. The minimum temperature rose appreciably at one or two places over Tamil Nadu, Rayalaseema, rose at a few places over rest Tamil Nadu, at one or two places over Telangana, North Interior Karnataka and changed little elsewhere over the region. They were appreciably above normal at one or two places over Telangana, Rayalaseema, above normal at one or two places over Coastal and North Interior Karnataka, appreciably below normal at one or two places over Kerala, below normal at one or two places over rest North Interior Karnataka and were generally normal over the rest of the region. Chamarajnagar recorded the lowest minimum temperature of 11 degree Celsius in the plains of the region.

**Forecast (valid till Friday morning):** Isolated rain may occur over Coastal Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

Mainly dry weather will prevail over interior Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

**Outlook for subsequent two days:** No significant change.

**hindustantimes**

## Weather

Chennai - INDIA

#### Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

#### Thursday, Jan 2

Max 28° | Min 22°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 55

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:30

Sunset: 05:52

Barometer: 1014

#### Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

#### Friday, Jan 3

Max 29° | Min 23°

#### Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday

Jan 4



29° | 22°

Partly Cloudy

Sunday

Jan 5



29° | 22°

Cloudy

Monday

Jan 6



25° | 23°

Overcast

Tuesday

Jan 7



25° | 24°

Overcast

Wednesday

Jan 8



25° | 23°

Overcast

## Constricted by law

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*APMC acts impair the freedoms of farmers and consumers.*

Rahul Gandhi has announced that fruit and vegetables will be removed from the list of commodities under the agricultural produce marketing committee (APMC) acts in Congress-ruled states. This is an important move towards the freeing-up of markets, and will bring in competition and remove barriers to entry. It is expected that the de-listing will reduce the prices of fruit and vegetables in the long run and encourage investment in cold-storage facilities and warehouses. If the government wishes to reform agriculture and control food inflation, the reform should not stop here.

APMC acts were passed by states during our socialist past. They restrict whom farmers can sell to, who can get a licence to buy produce, and where trading can take place. This has given rise to a system with substantial barriers to entry in the trade of agricultural products. The freedom of farmers and other citizens to buy or sell as they like has been abrogated — farmers are forced to sell to traders who hold APMC licences at APMC prices.

As with many other state structures in socialist India, APMC regimes rapidly turned into rackets. Hardly 30 per cent of the mandated "open auctions" are actually open or transparent. New licences are mostly given to persons who already have shops and godowns in the prescribed market area. Shops in these areas are limited and are mostly available only to friends and relatives of existing traders. There are no transparent criteria for sale or for getting a licence. There is no time-bound application processing period during which a licence is either granted or refused. A licence is granted for a period of one to five years. Thus, the incentive for long-term investment is diminished. Regulatory capture by local trading communities is said to be the norm. These traders control the entire marketing chain, including credit, inputs, storage etc. Prices are often bundled, and there is a lack of clarity on what the exact price of the produce is, and what the interest on the credit and other items is.

These traders then sell the fruit and vegetables to wholesalers who are also APMC-licenced traders and set prices in the wholesale market. Pricing is a mark-up over costs. Various studies have identified this monopsonistic-monopolistic market structure and the lack of free entry and competition as the reason for large middleman margins. For some products, the farmer gets only 40 per cent of the price paid by the end consumer. This market structure does not permit the entry of new players who want to set up cold chains and invest in other infrastructure, keeping marketing costs high. Sometimes, the marketing cost is itself nearly a fifth of the total price paid by the consumer.

The government's approach to reform has been to try to change the APMC acts. In 2003, the Central government circulated a model APMC act and asked the states to adopt it. Sixteen states changed their acts accordingly, though only six notified the new rules under their act. The model APMC act does not solve the problem. Though it allows contract farming, it does not free up entry and exit into trading. It does not allow different business models to spring up. Some states allegedly adopted a few elements of the new act because there was a fiscal incentive to do so. The one state to strike a happy note in this bleak landscape is Bihar, which repealed its APMC act in 2006.

While the structure of this market is badly designed, it has not changed over the last decade. Then why has food inflation surged? Part of the answer lies in the change in consumption. The demand for non-cereals — particularly protein, fruits and vegetables — has increased with the increase in household incomes. When income rises, households do not just eat more rice and wheat. They graduate to a better diet and nutrition. Part of the answer also lies in the higher labour costs of production. The labour intensity of the production of non-cereals is higher than that of cereals. Estimates suggest that while it



typically takes 55 man-days per hectare for the production of wheat, it takes 124 for onion, 110 for cabbage and 195 for tomatoes. Wage costs have also been rising since 2008. While the increase in the prices of cereals because of the rise in minimum support prices has got a lot of media attention, the increase in the prices of fruit and vegetables has been relatively neglected. It's sometimes assumed that the supply has not responded to the rising demand. However, an examination of the data reveals that the production of non-cereals like eggs, meat, fish, fruit and vegetables has risen quite rapidly. It is not as if the market economy has not responded. The question is: at what price is the new production willing to come in?

The combination of high costs, a market structure with mark-up prices and the lack of suitable storage facilities has given rise to high and volatile prices. This is why removing these food items from the purview of the APMCs becomes important. This will foster entry, investment and competition in this key weak-link of Indian agriculture: the processes from the farm to the fork.

While it is good that fruit and vegetables will be removed from APMC lists, there is no reason to keep other agricultural items on them. For example, why should the freedom of the producers and consumers of dal be impaired? This calls the entire edifice of the APMCs into question. Why should all Congress-ruled states not match Bihar's modernisation by repealing their APMC acts?

Another element of the five-point programme announced by Gandhi is the use of the Essential Commodities Act (ECA) to attack hoarders. This flies against what is being attempted by bringing private players into the fruit and vegetable markets. The ECA does not permit private traders to hold food above certain quantities or for more than a certain number of days. The state usually does not have storage capacity. If private traders are allowed into trading and storage, food price volatility could decrease. The ECA has often been used arbitrarily to impose restrictions on the trade and holding of food. What we require is economic freedom and a competitive market. This will yield higher productivity in agriculture and lower prices for consumers, and requires getting rid of the APMC acts and the ECA.

*The writer, RBI Chair Professor at the NIPFP, Delhi, is a consulting editor for 'The Indian Express' and non-resident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.*



## NGO Helps Tribal Women in Mysore Dist Become Self-reliant

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Vanavasi Kalyana Karnataka (VKK) seems to be bringing back smiles on the faces of tribal women in remote hamlets of HD Kote and Periyapatna.

The organisation is imparting education to hundreds of forest-dwelling women and motivating them to take up various vocational activities.

The women who were earlier wasting money and time, are now determined to become self-reliant.

They are saving `3,000 to `4,000 a month through SHGs.

Forty-year-old Chikkamani of Chammayanhalli in HD Kote says: "Earlier, we used to spend our hard-earned money on liquor and beedis. After becoming SHG members, we save `4,000 a month."

Devamma of Ankanthapura hamlet says: "We are seeking loan from banks to improve the activities of SHGs. Now other women in the hamlet are coming forward to become members of SHGs."

Vanavasi Kalyana is educating forest-dwellers on various aspects of modern life without giving up their roots. Forest-dwellers are also motivated to take up farming under Krushikendra. As many as 60 volunteers are rendering services in Mysore division.

## World's Biggest Soil Museum

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Soil monoliths on display at the Soil Museum at Central Soil Analytical Laboratory, Parottukonam in the city | Express Photo

It's everywhere. Outside your home, on your feet, and sometimes - most exasperatingly - even in your shoes. Most of the time you barely give it a second glance and even if you do, it is with disdain. Soil. That's the theme of a museum opened by Chief Minister Oommen Chandy at the Central Soil Analytical Laboratory, Parottukonam here, on Wednesday. Arguably the biggest of its kind in the world, the Soil Museum has on display eighty-two 1.5 metre-tall monoliths of benchmark soils found in the state. 'Benchmark soils' are those which are found extensively in a region, have a key position in the soil classification system and are of special significance to farming and engineering.

"This museum is the biggest of its kind in the world. The largest one so far, at the Wageningen University in the Netherlands, has only 32 monoliths on display. So our museum is surely of international standards," said Soil Survey Director P N Premachandran. The 82 monoliths of the soil profiles have been arranged district-wise with detailed explanatory notes on each, including physical characteristics, the region of prevalence and uses in various sectors such as farming and engineering. For instance, seven benchmark soils from Thiruvananthapuram district are on display; Kazhakkootam Series, Amaravila Series, Vellayani Series, Thiruvananthapuram Series, Nedumangad Series, Kallar Series and Ponmudi Series.

The Kazhakkootam Series of soil is coarse and loamy and occurs along the coastal belt of the district. It is well-drained with a high water table during the rainy season. This type of soil is best suited for farming of coconut, vegetables and also for floriculture. Move to the eastern side of the district, and you find soil best suited for growing rubber, coconut, tapioca and pepper. This soil is classified as the Nedumangad Series. Then again, there is the Ponmudi Series where you find grasslands, tea plantations and forests. "Kerala is rich in soils. Of the 12 soil orders in the world, eight are found in the state," said Premachandran. Each monolith has been extracted and processed using a painstaking process that takes between two and three months. The museum has also on display rock and mineral samples, geological maps of the state and charts on geological time periods on rock formation and factors of soil formation.

The basic idea of the museum is to create awareness about the importance of caring for the soil as it is of great importance to farming and industry. For those people who glibly say “why, it’s just soil,” the museum has an interesting tidbit on offer; “it takes about 1,000 years to make an inch of soil. So let us conserve our soils for the present and for the future.”

## THE HINDU Business Line

### Rich harvest

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*Fall in prices: A woman plucking tomatoes on her farm at Chinnasattappadi village near Mecheri in Tamil Nadu's Salem district. Rich harvest of tomatoes has resulted in tomato prices dropping to around Rs 15/kg in retail markets. — E. Lakshmi Narayanan*

### Sell chilli this month, cotton in Feb, farm varsity tells growers

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**Bangalore, Jan. 1:** Chilli farmers, especially in central and north Karnataka, have been advised to sell their crop grown during the kharif season in January for better price realisation.

“Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (Demic), after studying 22 years monthly price data of dry chillies from Byadagi regulated market, has come out with price forecast for January and February,” Balachandra K. Naik, Head of Demic of University of Agricultural Sciences told *Business Line*.



According to the Demic data, prices of Kaddi dry chilli variety are expected to trade at Rs 6,600-7,000 a quintal in January.

Chilli in the State is extensively cultivated in Haveri, Dharwad, Gadag, Belgaum, Bagalkot, Koppal and Bellary districts.

“Prices are expected to rise in January, hence, farmers are advised to sell their commodity in January,” said Naik.

### **Cotton**

Farmers have been advised to store and sell cotton in February. “Cotton prices were low in December and are expected to rule around same levels in January too. It is likely to firm up from February,” said Naik.

Raw cotton prices in Karnataka will rule at Rs 3,800-4,100 a quintal in January and are expected to be in the range of Rs 4,000-4,300 in February.

Naik said prices are expected to be better during February. “Farmers have been advised to sell their produce in February to get better price.”

### **Tur**

Naik said “ tur grown during the kharif season is steadily entering markets in North Karnataka and we have recommended tur farmers to sell their produce in February.”

Tur prices are expected to trade at Rs 3,600-3,900 a quintal in January and Rs 3,900-4,300 in February in Sedam regulated market.

## Tea Board panel to work with small growers' directorate

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**Coonoor, Jan. 1:** The newly formed eight-member National Advisory Committee of the Tea Board to monitor implementation of development schemes for small-scale sector at an outlay of Rs 200 crore will focus on concerted efforts by small growers, factory owners and the Tea Board for long-term benefits. “The small grower Directorate has already started functioning in the Tea Board. Nearly 100 field and factory officers have been newly appointed in North and South. Our Advisory Committee will work with them to guide, rather than regulate, the players on scientific cultivation and manufacturing methods to strengthen the fundamentals through quality production,” Tea Board Vice-Chairman Koshy Baby, who is Chairman of this Advisory Committee, told *Business Line*. “Formation of about 4,000 self help groups (SHG) of tea small growers to route all subsidies through them, launching crash programme for timely pruning and replanting old bushes are our priority,” said Tea Board member S. Ramu, who represents South India on this Advisory Committee.

## Spot rubber weak on buyer resistance

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**Kottayam, Jan. 1:** Rubber prices turned weak on Wednesday.

Most counters in the spot market remained under pressure on buyer resistance following the declines on National Multi Commodity Exchange.

According to observers, the domestic futures were down, mainly on profit booking at higher levels.

The sentiments were also affected by the long holidays in the global markets and the absence of genuine buyers in the local scene.

Sheet rubber dropped to Rs 163.50 (Rs 164) a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

The grade slid to Rs 160.50 (Rs 161) as reported by the dealers.

Volumes were low.

January futures declined to Rs 162.79 (Rs 165.50), February to Rs 165.35 (Rs 167.97) and March to Rs 168.14 (Rs 170.52) while the April, May and June futures remained inactive on the NMCE.

**Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were:** RSS-4: 163.50 (164); RSS-5: 156.50 (157); Ungraded: 151.50 (152); ISNR 20: 160 (160) and Latex 60%: 125 (125).

## Turmeric futures edge up on export demand

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**Mumbai, Jan. 1:** Turmeric futures edged up on export demand, while concerns about the quality of crop in top producer Andhra Pradesh due to excessive rains also aided sentiment. However, large stocks and the approaching new supply season restricted the upside, spot traders said.

Turmeric cultivation usually begins in the last week of May and continues until August. A lengthy harvesting process starts from January.

The most-actively traded turmeric contract for April delivery rose 0.12 per cent to Rs 6,624 a quintal on the NCDEX.

“Turmeric futures may trade on a positive note today supported by export demand as well as crop concerns in Andhra Pradesh. However, huge carryover stocks cap sharp gains,” Angel Commodities said in a research note.

## Castor margins in commodity bourses need a review

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**Mumbai, Jan. 1:** In a commodity with strong industrial demand, that is largely export-oriented and in which India holds a very dominant position in the world market as producer, processor and exporter, it is only logical to expect all the value chain participants to derive substantial commercial benefits.

Unfortunately, it is often not so in the case of castorseed and castor oil. India is the world’s largest producer (18 lt-20 lakh tonnes) and crusher of castorseed, the largest producer and processor of castor oil as also exporter of oil (4 lakh tonnes) and derivative products. Yet, the primary producer – castorseed grower – is often at the mercy of speculators who systematically hammer prices down and deny growers remunerative prices. The pecuniary benefit of the country’s dominant position in the world market does not flow to the primary producer in full measure; and unfortunately not many in the value chain seem to be bothered.

Reflecting the sentiment, analyst Dorab Mistry of Godrej International, London, in a recent presentation emphasised that demand for castor oil with varied industrial applications was inelastic with respect to price and currently, the market was facing a supply gap.

It follows that seed prices have to rise and as a result, farmers will benefit. It is worth noting that while Indian exporters ship out castor oil at about \$1,250 a tonne, its price in Rotterdam is quoted upwards of \$1,550. This huge differential is unjustified and reflects inadequate or lower price realisation by exporters who seem to skim profits through depressed castorseed prices locally rather than squeeze a better export price from overseas buyers.

The huge variation in castorseed production data is not just a cause for concern, but helps fan speculative tendencies. For 2013-14, the Agriculture Ministry’s preliminary estimate shows 18.5 lakh tonnes, down from the previous year’s 21.8 lakh tonnes. On the other hand, the trade estimate is much lower – 12 lakh tonnes for 2013-14 and 11.4 lakh tonnes for the previous year. Anecdotal reports point to even lower numbers.

Whichever number one goes by, seed prices look out of sync with market fundamentals. Quite apart from vague or inaccurate production, inventory and trade data that are often floated in the market, the policy relating to imposition and varying of margins on buy side and sell side of the futures market willy-nilly contribute to unrealistic prices. Castorseed price movements last month are a case in point. This is seen an area where commodity futures exchanges have to be proactive in addressing perceived distortions. It also calls for a certain domain expertise relating to products and markets. To its credit, NCDEX has taken cognisance of the distorted margin structure - while the sell side margin has been retained at 10 per cent, the buy side margin has been reduced from 22 per cent to 17 per cent. Indeed, there is a case for equalising the margin on the sell side and the buy side in order to create a level playing field, and to ensure that primary producers are not short-changed. In the last several days, castor growers in Gujarat have started to protest against falling prices and have threatened to reduce the market arrivals unless prices improve. Interestingly, as soon the buy side margin was reduced by five percentage points last week, prices have gradually started to improve much to the relief of growers. There are important lessons for exchanges and regulators here.

## Export incentives for cotton, meat products scrapped

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**New Delhi, Jan. 1:** The New Year has started on a seemingly bad note for cotton, its yarn and meat product exports.

The Finance Ministry has done away with certain export promotion incentives on cotton, cotton yarn, meat and meat product exports.

The apparent surge in export value of these products in recent years has prompted the Government to remove these export promotion incentives for these products, official sources said.

### **More blow for yarn**

Exports of these products will not be eligible for the benefits of the focus market scheme, the revenue department has said. The objective of the focus market scheme is to offset high freight cost and other externalities to select international markets with a view to enhancing the export competitiveness.

Cotton yarn exports will also not be eligible for benefits of incremental export incentive scheme.

This has come as a jolt to the cotton yarn exporting fraternity, which termed the removal of these export incentives as “illogical”, saying it could stifle “job creation” within the country.

The export registrations for cotton yarn in April-November 2013 jumped 42 per cent to 937.09 million kg from 658.73 mkg in the corresponding period a year ago, mainly on the back of rising demand from China.

The China-intense policy has given India great returns in yarn exports, from almost nothing to accounting for 25 per cent of China’s imports.

India’s exports of meat and meat products saw a 59 per cent increase in April-October in the current fiscal to Rs 14,389 crore against Rs 9,037 crore in the corresponding period last year.

The Directorate-General of Foreign Trade had given its green signal for this move in September and the revenue department has now implemented this decision, it is learnt.

With the withdrawal of focus market scheme benefits, exports of cotton yarn will not earn duty credit scrip of 3 per cent of free-on-board (f.o.b.) value of exports.

### **TEXPROCIL UPSET**

Under the incremental export incentive scheme, 2 per cent was given as incentive on the incremental exports achieved in a year. “The Finance Ministry’s move clearly highlights that the Union Government is not willing to see cotton yarn as a manufactured item and that too when about Rs 1,00,000 crore has been invested in this segment,” said Manikam Ramaswami, Chairman, Texprocil, an export promotion council for cotton textiles. India’s

cotton yarn exports stood at about \$3.5-4 billion, with about \$0.5 billion coming from the focus market countries. Ramasamy told *Business Line* that removal of incentives will hurt cotton yarn export prospects to far-flung markets, which have been identified in the focus market scheme. He played the Centre's move to continue doling out focus market scheme incentives for an industry such as steel, while removing export incentives for cotton yarn. This is especially so when steel input item – iron ore – comes at a very low cost for the domestic steel industry and there is also a hefty export duty on the same raw material, thereby, improving local availability, he said.

Reacting to the Finance Ministry's move on withdrawal of focus market incentives for cotton yarn and meat products, Ajay Sahai, Director General & Chief Executive Officer of Federation of Indian Export Organisations, said the Government should give some time to industry to adjust to these changes.

The Finance Ministry's notification is silent on when these changes would come into effect, Sahai said.

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***Under the incremental export incentive scheme, 2 per cent was given as incentive on incremental exports achieved in a year.***

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## Limited supplies drive up castor seed

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**Rajkot, Jan. 1:** Castor seed prices moved up for the third day on Wednesday on the back of heavy demand from mills and short supplies. On the other hand, prices in the futures market increased on Wednesday following speculative buying. On the NCDEX, castor seed January contracts gained by Rs 47 to Rs 4,609 a quintal with an open interest of 40,190 lots. NCDEX most active February contracts increased by Rs 60 to Rs 4,634 with an open interest of 164,190 lots.

On the Rajkot Commodity Exchange, castor seed March contracts improved by Rs 83 to Rs 4,675 .

Spot castor seed on RCX was up by Rs 167 at Rs 4,290.

According to market sources, low supply and high demand mainly held prices continuously in green zone for the past four trading sessions.

Reports of lower production this year further influenced the sentiment.

About 25,000 bags of castor seed arrived in Gujarat and price was quoted Rs 859-869 for 20 kg.

Around 4,400 bags arrived in Saurashtra and price stood at Rs 827-837.

However, castor oil was marginally down Rs 5 to Rs 890 for 10 kg.



# Mills seek Govt support to export raw sugar

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**Mumbai, Jan. 1:** Sugar prices are unlikely to rise due to peak production season and will remain under pressure. However, if the Government provides some incentives for export of raw sugar, the domestic scenario could change. With ample stocks with mill and in markets, prices in domestic markets will be under check with possibilities of slight

decline that will put more burden on producers, said traders.

Rohit Shah, President of Bombay Sugar Merchants Association, told *Business Line* that except exports, there is no way to sustain the market as supply is more than sufficient in the domestic market. With an opening stock of 85 lakh tonnes and production of 245-250 lakh tonnes, total availability will be around 330-335 lakh tonnes. Assuming that 230 lakh tonnes would be consumed by the domestic market, more than four months' stock is seen as excess. This could lead to further crash in price.

As world prices of \$450/tonne for white – refined sugar is not favourable for shipments, the only way out is to encourage raw sugar exports. Domestic producers are already running factories at losses and in the absence of sufficient outflow, they will be forced to sell in domestic markets at a lower price.”

At the Vashi wholesale market, S-grade prices increased by Rs 8 at lower end, while it declined by Rs 23 a quintal at the higher end. M-grade increased by Rs 14 at the higher end, while it ruled unchanged at lower end.

*Naka and mill tender rates ruled steady on lower-than-expected demand. There is sufficient stock (about 110 truckloads) and producers are continuously selling and stockists are keeping away from fresh buying.*

*Arrivals at Vashi market were 62-63 truckloads (of 100 bags each) while local dispatches were 55-56 loads. On Tuesday, about 19-20 mills sold 58,000-60,000 bags at Rs 2,640-2,740 (Rs 2,640-2,740) for S-grade and Rs 2,720-2,980 (Rs 2,720-2,980) for M-grade.*

**The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were:** S-grade Rs 2,850-2,972 (Rs 2,842-2,995) and M-grade Rs 2,951-3,186 (Rs 2,950-3,172). **Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 2,800-80 (Rs 2,800-80) and M-grade Rs 2,900-3,075 (Rs 2,900-3,075).

**Uttar Pradesh rates were:** Muzzafarnagar Rs 3,180.

# Slump in offtake pounds pepper

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**Kochi, Jan. 1:** Pepper prices turned cold on slack demand and limited activities. Spot prices slipped marginally, while the January and February contracts on the national exchange fell.

On the spot, there were no arrivals as holiday mood still prevailed in primary markets. Growers are also still holidaying, market sources said. Small lots of new pepper arrived with low bulk density and hence, buyers offered Rs 480 a kg. But sellers sought for Rs 485-490, they said.

Overseas markets are also still closed. However, there were reports of continued offers from Vietnam at lower levels which some in the trade here claimed are aimed at spreading a bearish propaganda, market sources told *Business Line*.

In the domestic market, investors are selling pepper released from the warehouses at Rs 535-540 delivered at Mumbai under "H" form. Locally, it was being offered at Rs 520 but buyers were ready to pay only Rs 510. Karnataka dealers, who are holding old pepper stocks, were offering small lots at Rs 535 delivered anywhere in the country on cash-and-carry basis. Upcountry demand is yet to pick up.

On the NMCE, January and February contracts decreased by Rs 357 and Rs 200 respectively to Rs 52,800 and Rs 53,200 a quintal. Turnover dropped by eight tonnes to 11 tonnes while net open position moved up by one tonne to 23 tonnes. On the IPSTA, January and February contracts remained unchanged at Rs 53,000 and Rs 52,029 respectively. Spot prices decreased by Rs 100 to Rs 50,100 (ungarbled) and Rs 52,100 (garbled). Export prices were at \$8,800 cf for Europe and \$9,050 a tonne cf for the US.

## Volatile futures, slack demand drag edible oils

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**Mumbai, Jan. 1:** In the absence of cues from the world market, volatile domestic futures and slack physical demand kept edible oil prices under check on Wednesday.

Domestic soya oil futures ruled weak as speculators trimmed positions by booking profits from previous day's sharp gain.

Local refineries increased their rates for palm oil by Rs 3-5 for 10 kg.

In Mumbai, barring palmolein which rose by Rs 3, groundnut, sunflower and cotton oil dropped by Rs 5 each.

Rapeseed oil declined by Rs 2 for 10 kg.

The volume remained isolated and thin.

Towards the day's close, Liberty was

quoting palmolein at Rs 580, super

palmolein Rs 600, super deluxe

palmolein Rs 620, soyabean refined oil Rs 655 and sunflower refined oil Rs 710.

Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 580, soyabean refined oil Rs 648 and sunflower refined oil Rs 675 for January.

Allana quoted palmolein at Rs 581, super deluxe at Rs 621, soyabean refined oil at Rs 660 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 700. Resellers quoted palmolein at Rs 573-574 ex-JNPT.

In Rajkot, groundnut oil declined further by Rs 5 to Rs 1,260 for *telia* tin and loose (10 kg) at

Rs 800 (Rs 805). Soyabean arrivals were isolated in producing states and prices were Rs

3,620-3,750 and in Madhya Pradesh Rs 3,650-3,900 ex mandi and Rs 3,875-3,950 plant

delivery. Mustard arrivals were 61,000 bags and prices were Rs 3,200-3,600.

**The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were:** groundnut oil 800 (805), soya refined oil 648 (650), sunflower exp. ref. 630 (635), sunflower ref. 675 (680), rapeseed ref. oil 735 (735), rapeseed expeller ref. 705 (705) cottonseed ref. oil 610 (615) and palmolein 575 (572).



# Pulses turn sluggish on weak inquiries

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**Indore, Jan. 1:** With arrivals of new crop increasing, the sluggish trend in tur continued on weak demand.

Even as local mandis were closed on Wednesday, in private trading, tur (old Maharashtra) ruled at Rs 4,100-4,200, while new tur (Maharashtra) ruled at Rs 4,450-4,500. Similarly, tur new (Madhya Pradesh) ruled at Rs 3,800-3,900.

Following reports of improved crop prospects and pressure of imported and new crop in local mandis, prospects for tur appear bearish. Further rise in arrival of new tur in the coming days will strengthen the bearish sentiment.

Tur dal ruled stable on poor demand with tur dal (full) being quoted at Rs 6,000-6,300. Tur dal (sawa no.) ruled at Rs 5,800-5,900, while tur marka ruled at Rs 6,700-6,900.

Slack demand dragged urad prices by Rs

50-75 a quintal with urad (bold) currently being quoted at Rs 4,275-4,300, while urad (medium) ruled at Rs 3,800-4,000.

Urad dal also declined by Rs 50-100 in the past one week on slack demand with urad dal (medium) being quoted at Rs 4,750-4,850, urad dal (bold) at Rs 4,950-5,050, while urad mongar ruled flat at Rs 5,500-5,900.

Moong ruled firm at Rs 6,000-6,400 while moong (medium) ruled at Rs 5,400-5,700. Poor demand in pulses dragged moong dal by Rs 100 in the past one week with moong dal (medium) being quoted at Rs 6,900-7,200 and moong dal (bold) at Rs 7,300-7,400, while moong mongar ruled at Rs 7,200-7,300 respectively.

## Buying may perk up poultry products

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**Karnal, Jan. 1:** With domestic demand rising, prices of poultry products may increase, while feed prices may continue to rule around current levels over the next few days, said trade experts.

Aditya Mishra, a commodity expert, told *Business Line* that fresh buying in the market pushed poultry products up. Demand for feed and poultry products have improved and it may improve further in the coming days, he said.

To reap better margins, poultry farmers have been selling broilers after letting the broiler to become a little heavier, resulting in an increase in feed consumption, said trade sources.

Meanwhile, with the cost of production being steady, prices of feed products remained unchanged on Wednesday.

In the physical market, soyameal dropped by Rs 50 to Rs 34,150 a tonne, while bajra dropped by Rs 200 to Rs 13,400 a quintal.

Di-calcium phosphate moved up by 15 paise to Rs 34.75 a kg, while maize was unchanged at Rs 1,450 a quintal. DRB went dropped by Rs 100 to Rs 7,400; Rice bran oil was at Rs 55 a kg, while mustard de-oiled cake dropped by Rs 100 to Rs 14,700 a tonne.

### **Feed products**

Broiler concentrate quoted at Rs 2,010, while Broiler Starter Mash sold at Rs 1,550. Pre-lay mash sold at Rs 1,040. Layer concentrate 25 per cent was at Rs 1,480, while layer concentrate 35 per cent was sold at Rs 1,165 for a 50-kg bag.

### **Poultry Products**

A positive trend was witnessed in the poultry products market on Wednesday. Broiler went up by Rs 5 and was at Rs 90-95 a kg; egg improved by 14 paise and was at Rs 4, while chick went for Rs 25, unchanged.

## **Business Standard**

### **Sugar price steady on scattered buying**

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The wholesale [sugar](#) prices settled on a steady note in the national capital today following sporadic demand.

Marketmen said after two day's fall prices finally found fresh buying support and held unchanged.

The following were today's quotations per quintal:

**Sugar ready:** M-30 Rs 2,970-3,225, S-30 Rs 2,960-3,200.

**Mill delivery:** M-30 Rs 2,800-3,105; S-30 Rs 2,790-3,090.

Sugar mill gate (including duty): Mawana 2930, Kinnoni 3,105, Asmoli 3,100, Dorala 2925, Budhana 2930, Thanabhavan 2930, Dhanora 2920, Simbholi 3,105, Modi Nagar Rs 2,920, Khatuli Moisture 2,800, Dhampur 2,910, Ramala 2,820, Bulandshar 2,900,

Anupshar 2,800, Baghpat 2,830, Morna 2,820, Sakoti 2,810, Chandpur 2,890, Amroha 2,890 and Nazibabad 2,800.

### **Coriander gains by 1.5% in futures**

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Amid rising domestic demand and restricted arrivals from producing regions, [coriander](#) rose for the third straight day by adding 1.52% in futures trade today as speculators enlarging their positions.

At the [National Commodity and Derivative Exchange](#), coriander for delivery in February gained Rs 130, or 1.52%, to Rs 8,675 per quintal with an open interest of 18,790 lots.

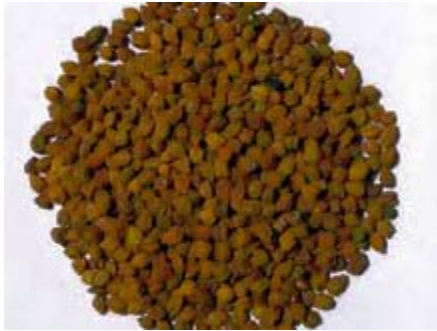
Likewise, the spice for delivery in January moved up by Rs 106, or 1.31% to Rs 8,169 per quintal in 16050 lots.



Analysts said besides rising demand in the spot market, restricted arrivals from producing belts, mainly attributed rise in coriander [prices](#) at futures trade.

## Chana gains by 0.3% on spot demand

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[Chana prices](#) rose 0.26% to Rs 3,083 per quintal in futures market today as traders created fresh positions, supported by a rise in demand in the spot market.

At the [National Commodity and Derivative Exchange](#), chana for delivery in January gained Rs 8, or 0.26% to Rs 3,083 per quintal with an open interest of 72,860 lots.

Similarly, the commodity for delivery in February traded higher by Rs 7, or 0.22% to Rs 3,131 per quintal in 52,510 lots.

Analysts said increased position created by speculators following rise in demand in the spot markets amid limited arrivals from producing regions mainly helped chana prices to trade higher at futures trade.

## Potato down by 0.9% on increased supply

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[Potato prices](#) fell further by 0.96% to Rs 969 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators offloaded their positions, driven by increased supplies from producing regions.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), potato prices for delivery in March fell by Rs 9.40, or 0.96%, to Rs 969 per quintal in business turnover of 78 lots.

The potato for delivery in far-month April shed Rs 8.50, or 0.88%, to Rs 958 per quintal in 16 lots.

Analysts said speculators offloaded their positions on the back of increased supplies from producing belts in the spot markets mainly pulled down potato prices at futures trade.

## Crude palm oil remain weak on sluggish demand

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[Crude palm oil](#) remained weak for the second straight and [prices](#) fell further by 0.13% to Rs 553.20 per 10 kg in futures trade today as speculators trimmed positions amid low demand in the spot market.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), crude palm oil for delivery in January declined by 70

paise, or 0.13% to Rs 553.20 per 10 kg in business turnover of 31 lots.

Similarly, the oil for delivery in February shed 60 paise, or 0.11% to Rs 556.70 per 10 kg in 6 lots.

Analysts said speculators trimming their positions due to sluggish demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position mainly kept pressure on crude palm oil prices at futures trade.

## Cardamom rises by 0.2% as demand pick up

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[Cardamom prices](#) rose 0.18% to Rs 676.50 per kg in futures trading today as speculators indulged in creating positions after demand picked up in spot markets.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for delivery in January rose by Rs 1.20, or 0.18%, to Rs 676.50 per kg in business turnover of 78 lots.

Likewise, the spice for delivery in February edged up by 60 paise, or 0.09%, to Rs 703.10 per kg in 34 lots.

Analysts said fresh positions created by speculators on pick up in demand in the spot market against restricted supplies from producing regions mainly led to rise in cardamom prices at futures trade.

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