

Collector impressed by mechanised farming

ELURU, January 8, 2014 - *Paddy sown by using drummers and mechanized planters to overcome shortage of farm hands*



Collector Siddharth Jain taking a look at farm equipment at Kondropolu near Tadepalligudem on Tuesday. — Photo: A.V.G. Prasad

Collector Siddharth Jain was impressed by the modern farm practices at Kondropolu, a delta village under Tadepalligudem mandal in West Godavari district, during a visit to the

place on Tuesday.

The farmers here adopted non-traditional paddy cultivation methods in sowing by using drummers and mechanized planters in a bid to overcome shortage of farm hands and cut down the increasing cost of cultivation. Paddy plantation through the non-conventional method took place in more than half of the total area under paddy of 4,000 ha in the village. The Collector learned from the farmers that the modern method helped them reduce manpower and water consumption.

Shorter harvest period

Additionally, the new method is expected to lower the harvesting duration by 7-10 days in the current rabi. The traditional method of raising seedbeds and transplantation requires more mandays, which increases the cultivation costs and makes growers stressful at times of acute labour crisis.

The daily wages in the peak period of paddy operations range between Rs 250 and Rs 300 per head, per day.

They said that paddy cultivation through modern methods by way of avoiding labour-intensive and cost-intensive traditional practices of raising nurseries had brought down the cost of cultivation by Rs 5,000 per ha. V.D.V. Krupadas, Joint Director, Agriculture Department, said that it was decided to encourage non-conventional paddy cultivation in at least 55,000 ha out of 1.85 lakh ha of the total paddy area in rabi in the district. The Collector highlighted the need to intensify the drive for mechanization in agriculture at a fast pace.

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Farmers agitate for fair compensation

KHAMMAM, January 8, 2014 - Farmers, mainly consisting of several 'land oustees' from Kommepalli, Kishtaram and a few other neighbouring villages, staged a demonstration near the JVR Open Cast Project (OCP) in Sattupalli on Tuesday demanding payment of adequate compensation in strict adherence to the New Land Acquisition Bill.

According to sources, the protesters gathered at the entrance of the OCP and squatted on the road to press for their demands.

They raised slogans denouncing the alleged attempts by the officials concerned to pay meagre compensation for the imminent loss of their valuable lands under the proposed OCP expansion project.

A section of the local leaders belonging to different political parties also extended their support to the farmers' stir. They decried the alleged attempts of the officials to deprive the land oustees of an opportunity to secure fair compensation as envisaged by the New Land Acquisition Bill.

The protesters threatened to launch an agitation if the authorities failed to concede their demand and render them justice.

Farmers seek market value for land lost to power lines

Federation of Farmers Associations wants market value for the land taken for laying power lines

HYDERABAD, January 8, 2014 - A group of farmers from Ranga Reddy district approached the district Collector B. Sridhar seeking his intervention for better compensation in lieu of their lands on which the APTransco has been laying high tension power lines.

Twenty-three farmers from Kandukur and Shamshabad mandals got together under the banner of 'Federation of Farmers Associations', and signed the petition made to the Collector here on Monday. According to details in the appeal, the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited and the Transmission Corporation of AP (APTransco) are laying 400Kv and 220Kv lines across the farmlands in the mandals such as Shankarpally, Chevella, Shabad, Maheshwaram, Kandukur and Rajendranagar. With most of these mandals abutting the GHMC, values of these lands in terms of real estate development are very high, running into a couple of crores of rupees per acre at times. However, APTransco is offering to compensate only for the loss of standing crops, and not in full for the land lost, farmers complain.

"For each tower erected, we lose the stretch beneath the lines, and up to 80 feet on either side. Due to the radiation from the high tension conductors, construction beneath the lines would not be permitted, thus resulting in real estate losses. Though the corporation is offering to pay for the standing crops, most often we end up not receiving anything due to procedural flaws," complains the secretary of the Federation Ch.Satya Narayana Reddy. Further, under each 400Kv tower, 12.5 cents of land is lost, and when calculated in terms of land value, it runs into lakhs of rupees, he said. Though various judgements have stipulated that high tension power lines cannot be laid without land owners' consent, the corporation has not bothered to issue notices to the farmers, or to fix or pay them compensation in terms of land value, Mr. Reddy alleged. The Federation sought immediate action from the Collector and an MoU with the farmers for payment of compensation in terms of diminution of the land value.

When contacted, senior APTransco officials admitted that the HT lines were being drawn between Suryapet and Shankarpally, but refused to comment on the farmers' allegations. Compensation is usually paid according to appraisal by the Revenue authorities, they said.

Farmers ride motorcycles into city to demand 12 hours power supply

DAVANGERE, January 8, 2014 - *'The power supplied now not enough to water the standing crops'*



The protesters went all around the Davangere city shouting slogans against the government and demanding three-phase 12 hours power supply, on Tuesday

Large number of sugarcane farmers, paddy growers from different villages,

including Kariganur and Kathalagere villages, took out a motorcycle rally from their villages to the Deputy Commissioner's office to press the State government to give at least 12 hours three-phase power supply to rural places, enabling the farmers to feed water to standing crops.

The farmers led by Tejasvi V. Patel, general secretary of the State Sugarcane Growers Association, raised slogans against the government for not supplying adequate power to rural places. The protesters went all around the city shouting slogans against the government.

Later, the farmers submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner to be sent to the government in which they said that five to six hours power was being given at present and it was not at all sufficient to feed water to standing crops such as paddy, sugarcane and various horticulture crops in the district. Expressing their surprise over the meagre supply of power to rural places, the farmers noted that all the reservoirs were filled owing to good rains occurred some months ago and they questioned why the government failed to supply at least 10 to 12 hours of three-phase power supply to rural places.

The farmers set 10 days deadline for the government to supply 12 hours continuous three-phase power to rural places failing which they threatened to stage indefinite hunger strike across over the State. Vasanada Onkarappa, and Poojar Anjinappa took part in the rally.

Non-farm jobs to shrink by 25% in 7 years: CRISIL

CHENNAI, January 8, 2014 - In an indication of poor economic growth taking its toll on the job market, an estimated 12 million people may be forced to look for low-quality, low productivity rural or agriculture jobs over seven years, a reversal of old trend of migration from farm to non-farm employment opportunities, pointed out a report of CRISIL Research. Job generation in the non-farm sector will slow down sharply in the coming years.

Employment outside agriculture is expected to increase by only 38 million between 2011-12 and 2018-19 compared with 52 million between 2004-05 and 2011-12. Due to insufficient employment creation in industry and services sectors, more workers will become locked in the least productive and low-wage agricultural sector or remain unemployed. An estimated 12 million people will join the farm workforce by 2018-19, compared with a decline of 37 million in agriculture employment between 2004-05 and 2011-12.

The report attributed the declining job trend in non-farm sector not just to slowing GDP growth but also to less labour-intensive services segment that is increasingly driving GDP

growth as well as the inability of labour-intensive sectors such as manufacturing to absorb people on account of rising automation and complicated labour laws.

“We expect the Indian economy to expand at slower pace of six per cent per year in FY 2013-19 from 8.5 per cent in FY 2005-12. Further, GDP growth is driven increasingly by less labour-intensive services such as financial, real estate and business services (including IT-ITES). For eg, in FY 2012, these services, with nearly 19 per cent share in GDP, employed only 3 out of 100 workers in the economy,” said Dharmakirti Joshi, chief economist, CRISIL. Mukesh Agarwal, president, CRISIL Research stated that apart from GDP growth, India needs to raise the demand for labour, especially in the manufacturing sector, by simplifying labour laws and debottlenecking labour-intensive industries such as textiles, gems and jewellery and leather.

“Policymakers should also focus on expanding the health, education, construction sectors. This will not only raise India’s growth potential, but also generate a significant number of jobs,” he said adding, “it will also be critical to ramp up the supply of skilled workforce as majority of graduating engineers are not employable due to lack of technical & soft skills. Large supply of youth was seen as a major contributory to country’s brightening prospects – the so-called demographic dividend. However, with insufficient jobs, this can turn into a demographic liability.

AMC to tie up with agri majors

ONGOLE, January 8, 2014 - A long-felt need of farmers in Prakasam district to have a market yard for chilli, Bengal gram and other agricultural commodities in Ongole will become a reality.

“The procurement centre for major agricultural commodities will become operational in the district from February 1,” Ongole Agriculture Market Commodity Chairman A.Ganasyam told reporters here on Tuesday.

Efficient supply chain

“We are going to rope in big corporates involved in export of agricultural commodities to ensure a more efficient supply chain and ensure a remunerative price for peasants and try to regulate the crop size so that farmers do not suffer due to glut in the market,” he explained.

Farmers would be provided interest-free loan against the produce for 90 days and would be charged only "Pavala vaddi" for holding their produce in godowns for 150 days, he added. He said over 1.14 lakh tonnes of Bengal gram lying in cold storages would be purchased offering a decent price to ryots shortly with a Rs 75 crore market intervention fund.

Meeting to discuss irrigation-related issues

BANGALORE, January 8, 2014 - A series of high-level meetings has been convened to discuss issues related to irrigation, particularly the disputes relating to the Krishna, the Cauvery and the Mahadayi.

Speaking to presspersons here on Tuesday, Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs T.B. Jayachandra said that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is meeting the floor leaders in the two Houses on Wednesday to elicit their views on how to go about these issues before the tribunals. The focus of the meeting, however, would be on the award by the second tribunal of the Krishna. He said that Mr. Siddaramaiah and Minister for Water Resources and himself would discuss these issues with the State’s senior counsel F.S. Nariman in New Delhi on Thursday.

Drought-hit

Mr. Jayachandra said that 30 more taluks would be declared drought-hit. This would take the number of taluks affected to 128 calling for measures to supply drinking water, provide jobs to villagers and fodder to cattle. Sowing had not taken place in these areas as there was no for more than one month. Ragi, jowar and groundnut crops had been lost. Of the 1,800 villages affected by drought, 900 were facing a severe crisis due to fluoride-contamination. Pavagada, Sira, Madhugiri, Chikkanayakanahalli and Koratagere in Tumkur district and Bijapur district were badly affected by fluoride-contamination. He said that contamination would be tackled and Rs. 180 crore had been released for this. He attributed water shortage in these regions due to extraction of sand. A committee is expected to give its report to the Union government shortly. Last year, the State government was given Rs. 600 crore for drought relief.

Glut in maize?

The Minister said that maize production this season was expected to be around 45 lakh quintals to 50 lakh quintals and the government had purchased 8,83,349 quintals. He feared that there may be glut in maize and arrangements were afoot to store the produce. It had procured 24,806 quintals of groundnut, 5,580 quintals of sunflower and 5,145 quintals of tur dal. It had procured 3,47,515 quintals of paddy at Rs. 1,600 per quintal.

Tiding over pain of lost harvest and labour

KALPETTA, January 8, 2014 - *Bitter harvest force areca nut farmers in Wayanad to shift to other crops*



Fallen trees: Areca nut palms that have been cut down after the spread of yellow leaf disease hit production.

Farmers in Wayanad are increasingly shifting to other crops after cutting down areca nut palms.

Diseases affecting the palms, uncertainty in price of the produce, and dearth of incentives have forced their hand.

Areca nut production in the district had fallen sharply in the past five years due

to various crop diseases, especially the yellow leaf disease.

Official data

According to data from the Agriculture Department, 80 per cent of the 12,730 hectares under areca nut cultivation had been affected by the yellow leaf disease.

“Nearly 25 per cent of the area under areca nut is under crops such as rice, banana, and oil palm now,” Alex C. Mathew, Deputy Director, Agriculture Department, said.

“I have been cultivating areca nut on one acre for the past 15 years and used to get an average of 20 quintals of nut every year for the first ten years,” Jose of Kandammalil, a small-scale farmer, told *The Hindu*.

He had now shifted to banana cultivation after cutting down areca nut palms on his land. He said production declined sharply after the spread of the yellow leaf disease and he got only two quintals of nut last year. Similar is the experience of the majority of farmers in the district.

Diseases such as bud rot and nut rot (Mahali) had ravaged the crop in the past five years but the government had not taken any step to compensate the farmers, sources said.

The huge fluctuation in price of the produce in the local market during the harvest season also deterred the farmers from going ahead with areca nut cultivation.

Price

The price of tender areca nut was Rs.76 a kg a few months ago but the spot price in the local market on Monday was Rs.66 a kg, the sources said.

The better price for paddy after the market intervention of the government and the introduction of crops such as oil palm had also encouraged the farmers to bid adieu to areca nut cultivation.

Rumours of a Central government move to ban areca nut products had also hastened the decision of the farmers to shift to other crops.

World's biggest fish market set for new home in 2016



TOKYO, January 8, 2014 -

Fishmongers check frozen bluefin tuna on auction. Photo: AFP

As most of Tokyo sleeps, men in rubber boots haggle over tuna in the cavernous halls of Tsukiji market.

The clang of a bell around 5:30 am kicks off the action at the world's biggest fish emporium. Traders flash hand signs and bellow out prices as they buy and sell what will soon end up on plates in the Japanese capital and beyond.

In all, about \$18 million (Rs 112 crore) worth of fish, seafood and vegetables – over 2,900 tons – change hands each day at the market.

"Do you see how we use hand signs?" asks one bidder, seconds after another man violently rings the bell and starts yelling out bids.

"This is exactly how people used to trade

stocks in the old days."

Major stock markets have shifted to computer trading while Tokyo mushroomed into one of the world's biggest cities over the decades, but little has changed in the way business is done at Tsukiji since its opening in 1935.

Now, almost 80 years later, the city plans to move the market to a new location and give the popular tourist draw what advocates say is a badly-needed technological update.

But not everyone is happy about the move away from prime-real estate in the centre of the teeming metropolis. Relocating the market and building to a modern facility about 40 percent larger with state-of-the-art refrigeration will cost upwards of \$3.8 billion (Rs 23678 crore).

And the move, now scheduled for 2016, has been marred by revelations of heavy soil contamination at the site, once formerly a gas plant about 2.3 kilometres away (1.4 miles). That has saddled Tokyo with more than half a billion dollars in cleanup costs. Some of the seafood wholesalers are happy that the proposed new market will help them get modern facilities in refrigeration that will keep their stocks fresh longer. Others feel the government wants to move the market to satisfy real-estate interests in the central area where the market is located. AFP

Sushi restaurateur Kiyoshi Kimura paid 7.36 million yen (about Rs 44 lakh) for a 230-kilogram bluefin tuna in the year's celebratory first auction at Tokyo's Tsukiji market on

Sunday, just 5 percent of what he paid a year earlier despite signs that the species is in serious decline. Bluefin is usually the most expensive fish available at Tsukiji.

Minister assures farmers of shifting problem elephants

HASSAN, January 8, 2014 - B. Ramanath Rai, Forest Minister, on Tuesday assured farmers living in elephant-affected areas of Mudigere taluk of Chikmagalur district that the government would take measures to shift problem elephants.

He was visiting areas frequented by elephants in Mudigere taluk.

The Forest Department had already shifted one elephant that had caused huge damage to life and crops in Sakleshpur taluk.

The department had got clearance from the court to shift 25 elephants.

Similarly, the government would take clearance from the authorities concerned to provide relief to farmers of Mudigere taluk, he said.

He also said the department was contemplating making use of steel rails to construct fences to check movement of elephants into human habitations on the lines of what was being done in Kenya and South Africa.

The Minister visited Belagodu, Bharatibylu, Byragadde, Kundur, Tatkola and Kelagooru in Mudigere taluk. B.B. Ningaiah, Mudigere MLA; A.V. Gayatri Shantegowda, MLC, and senior officers of the Forest Department accompanied the Minister during his visit.

Farmers gherao irrigation officials

BELLARY, January 8, 2014 - Tail-end farmers of the Tungabhadra command area — served by the Gudadur distributary of the low-level canal — gheraoed officials of the Irrigation Department at Korlagundi village in Bellary taluk demanding increase in the release of water into the canal. The farmers said on Monday that 72 cusecs of water should be released. The officials said that the indent for the distributary was only for 55 cusecs and that much quantum was being released; but that did not pacify the farmers. The police intervened and prevented the situation from turning violent.

Farmers oppose proposed cement plant at Yadwad



BELGAUM, January 8, 2014 -

Farmers staging a protest in Belgaum on Tuesday.— photo: d.b. patil

Taking exception to the permission granted to set up a cement factor at Yadwad village in Gokak taluk, hundreds of farmers took out a protest march and here on Tuesday.

The protesting farmers urged the government not to give permission to Messrs. Dalmia Cement for a setting up a

factory at Yadwad village.

Staging a protest under the aegis of Belgaum district unit of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and the Hasiru Sene, the farmers formed a human chain at Kittur Chennamma Circle in Belgaum to register their protest.

Fertile land

The protesters alleged that the land where the cement factory had been proposed was fertile land, which was completely irrigated by the Malaprabha Right Bund Canal. They alleged that the company had purchased the land for mining by misleading farmers. However, it was shocking that the government was giving a red carpet welcome to the company, which wanted to utilise fertile land for mining, they said. They urged the government to get the proposed plant shifted to another place, in the interest of residents. Led by B.M. Malali and Iranagouda Patil, office-bearers of the associations, the protesters marched to the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Belgaum raising slogans against the proposed plant. They later submitted a memorandum addressed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, urging him to intervene in the matter and protect farmers' interests.

Bring water to Thumbalaalli Dam, say farmers

DHARMAPURI, January 8, 2014 - Over thousand farmers and cadre of People's Watch, a Human Rights Organisation, participated in a demonstration in front of the Collectorate here on Tuesday demanding the Government to take measures to bring water to Thumbalaalli Dam from Ennekkolpudur lake.

The demonstration was presided over by S.A. Chinnasamy, State President, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam and Henri Tiphangne, advisor of People's Watch.

Addressing at the demonstration Mr. Chinnasamy said that recently the authorities of Water Resources department of PWD had claimed that they had prepared an estimate of Rs. 80-crore for digging of canal from Ennekkolpudur to Thumbalaalli Dam and had forwarded it for Government's approval.

If the project is implemented, over 50,000 acres of agriculture lands surrounding Thumbalaalli Dam will be benefitted.

The dam was filled up a decade ago, yet the farmer's are depending mostly on rainwater for their agricultural needs, he added.

Melur farmers' case adjourned

MADURAI, January 8, 2014 - The Madras High Court bench here has adjourned to Wednesday the hearing of three public interest litigations filed by farmers seeking release of water from the Periyar dam for irrigation in Melur.

On Tuesday, the officials from the Public Works Department submitted a report containing the amount of water drawn from the Periyar- Vaigai system for irrigation in Theni, Madurai and Sivaganga districts.

The water in the Periyar dam was distributed to the different ayacut regions based on the availability, the Public Works Department officials submitted.

A Division Bench comprising Justices R. Sudhakar and V.M. Velumani heard the arguments and adjourned the case to Wednesday for further hearing.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Jan 8

Max 29° | Min 23°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 62

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:32

Sunset: 05:56

Barometer: 1012

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Thursday, Jan 9

Max 29° | Min 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday
Jan 10



29° | 23°
Cloudy

Saturday
Jan 11



30° | 22°
Cloudy

Sunday
Jan 12



24° | 22°
Overcast

Monday
Jan 13



24° | 22°
Overcast

Tuesday
Jan 14



24° | 22°
Overcast

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Kerala farmers warm up to cool season vegetables

KOZHIKODE: Kerala has never been particularly known for its cool climes. But farmers, in a rare innovative streak in the state's agriculture scene, have successfully battled the odds to embrace cool season vegetable farming, including beet, carrot, cabbage, cauliflower, capsicum and broccoli, even in the plains in all the districts of the state with increasing success.

Spurred mainly by the novelty factor of farming exotic vegetables in their backyards, farmers have brought in a record 600 hectares of land in the state under cool [season vegetables](#) this year, up from around just 100 hectares in 2011.

Farmers in the state have lapped up 30 lakh seedlings of cool season vegetables from Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council, Kerala (VAFPC) alone so far this year in addition to the around 7 lakh seedlings provided by [Kerala Agricultural University](#) (KAU) during the season which extends from November to February. The crops are now getting ready for harvest.

N Vijayan, assistant director of agriculture (vegetable cell), said there has been an overwhelming interest among farmers across the state to grow cool season vegetables with

the acreage climbing to 600 hectares this year.

"The success of new seed varieties suitable for our climate and the experimentation spirit among farmers to try out new crops has made cool season vegetables a hit among farmers in the state," he said.

Prof C Narayanan Kutty, of KAU agriculture research station at Mannuthy, Thrissur, said that in the past, farmers in the state had never thought that it would be possible to grow carrot and cauliflower in their backyard. It was the identification of 35 cool season genotypes suitable for cultivation in the plains of the state as part of a research project undertaken by the varsity which opened the doors for cool season vegetables to the farming scene of the state, he said.

"The average day time temperature in our plains during the season is somewhere around 28- 32 degree Celsius, while the night time temperature hovers around 19- 22 degrees. We have identified some heat tolerant varieties which can be grown viably in our agro- climatic conditions with good yield," he added.

He said the varieties being planted this season are Pusa Meghna of cauliflower, NS183 of cabbage, Shin Kuroda of carrot, Pusa Chetki of radish and Madhur of beetroot.

N Anantha Krishnan, a farmer who has cultivated cabbage and cauliflower in his farm in Thrissur, said he was able to get reasonable yield last time.

"I started the winter vegetables cultivation in a small patch of land last year with the intention of getting pesticide-free vegetables for own use. The crop was good and we managed to get cabbage weighing up to 1.5 kg and cauliflower between 800 grams and 1 kg. This year I have increased the crop area and the plants are fine, thanks to the chilly nights we had," he added.

Sephi Joseph, deputy manager at VAFPCCK, said there has been an over 25% increase in the expansion of area under crops each year in the plains. "This year we have provided over 30 lakh seedlings and non- traditional areas like Kozhikode and Thrissur had fared well in cultivation of cool season crops last year," she added.

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Seeds sown for flower mart in city

BHUBANESWAR: The state government has decided to construct a flower market in Bhubaneswar where farmers from across the state can sell their produce directly to florists.

The horticulture directorate has identified a vacant site in front of the Regional Institute of Education near BDA City Centre. Chief secretary J K Mohapatra had approved the proposed project on November 15, 2013.

"At present, the city does not have an organized flower market. The proposed integrated flower market would benefit farmers, who are finding it difficult to market their produce. The market would also stop panic sale of flowers and involvement of middlemen," director (horticulture) Sanjeev Chadha told TOI.

"We will construct temporary structures for sale of flowers and an auction hall. A cold storage will also be set up where farmers can keep the flowers," Chadha said.

The site, chosen for the market, was allotted by the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) to some flower vendors in August, 2008. Forty florists had set up shops at the site called 'Kusuma Batika'. But now, only three flower shops exist.

"Many traders shifted their shops to some other locations because of poor amenities like connecting road, light and absence of a cold storage," said Purusottam Senapati, a florist.

The horticulture directorate decided to give a fresh lease of life to Kusuma Batika after some flower growers associations and florist association of Bhubaneswar requested the government to renovate the place.

"We recently visited Kusuma Batika and found it in a bad shape. We will renovate the temporary structures and construct basic amenities for traders and customers," another horticulture officer said. To prevent the entry of cattle, the authorities would install barbed fences and gates.

Though farmers in Ganjam, Boudh, Keonjhar and on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar raise flowers, the bulk requirement in the city are mostly met from Howrah and Deolia in West Bengal.

Flowers worth Rs 2 lakh are sold in the city every day.



Veterinary diploma holders demand representation

In an effort to give adequate representation to over 2 lakh diploma holders in veterinary services, Pune-based Veterinary Services of India, a national organisation representing all the diploma holders, is all set to provide their inputs to the national-level committee appointed to examine the Indian Vet Council Act, 1984. The meeting under the Ministry of Agriculture Department of Animal Husbandry Dairying and Fisheries will be held on January 8 in New Delhi.

The organisation is all set to discuss the amendments of various provisions of the IVC Act, as well as help diploma holders to pursue higher studies through distant mode of education under the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi. "Even as the Act mentions that diploma holders can treat ailing animals and birds, the state and union governments have failed to implement the Act. This will affect rural livestock services," said Dr Narayan Joshi, president of the organisation.

In the meeting with Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar earlier last year, the organisation was directed to the National Livestock Department Council to address the issue. "The Centre had admitted that it was difficult to draw a line between regular and minor veterinary services. While graduate veterinary professionals are available at veterinary institutions, vast livestock owners are deprived of services in rural areas. They have to reach these institutions rather than look for local help that can be provided by diploma holders. The Union government, while drafting the notification, and the state government, while finalising the draft of the notification under Section 30(b) of the Act, had not taken proper care," said Joshi.

With the department having set up an expert committee on veterinary education under the chairmanship of former vice-chancellor of Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS), Chennai, the committee will examine the necessity to amend the IVC Act and is likely to furnish its recommendation this year after a discussion with the organisation.

The association aims at improving the recruitment policy, as well as address the issue of an uniform syllabus and standardisation of all the aspects that need to be incorporated by the committee. The organisation is also keen to address the issue of agriculture clinic and agri-business training scheme launched by the ministry.

In a letter sent to the federation by agriculture officials, they said the committee had planned to come out with their recommendations last year, but with the organisation requesting for their inputs, they would release it this year after consultation. On the issue of providing distant education to diploma holders, they have said the admission eligibility should be for diploma holders who have completed the course from government institutions and have ten years of work experience. They also said a graduate course after class XII should be introduced to address the vast livestock issues, especially in rural areas.

Slow Paddy Procurement Leads to Distress Sale

Delay in lifting of paddy from the mandis by the procurement agencies of the State Government has led to distress sale benefiting rice millers and private traders.

According to reports from major paddy producing districts, huge stocks of kharif paddy are lying in open in different mandis and farmers waiting for days to sell their produce had no clue when their stock will be lifted by mandi functionaries.

“Government agencies are in cahoots with the rice millers and the deliberate delay in lifting the paddy will force the farmers to sell the paddy to the millers at cheaper rates,” said a ruling BJD MLA of Kalahandi district.

According to official reports, 10.23 lakh tonnes of paddy have been procured by the Government till January 3 against 14.27 lakh tonnes during the corresponding period last year.

The State Government has set a target for the Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation (OSCSC) to procure three lakh tonnes of rice (equivalent paddy of 4.41 lakh tonnes) from Bargarh district, considered the rice bowl of the State, during the current kharif marketing season.

The State public sector undertaking has procured four lakh tonnes of paddy against 5.18 lakh tonnes procured during the same period last year. The district yielded a bumper crop this kharif despite flash floods due to cyclone induced heavy rain in few areas.

Farmers of Kalahandi district are hit hard by the awfully slow pace of paddy procurement. The OSCSC has procured nearly 87,000 tonnes of paddy against 1.52 lakh tonnes during this period last year.

This is despite the fact that 122 Primary Agriculture Cooperative Societies (PACS) are engaged in the district for procurement. Initially, 74 PACS were selected for procurement in the district.

The State run corporation has been procuring paddy through 2420 PACS in all districts.

The PACS are paid two per cent of the total proceeds towards mandi handling operations. Similar is the situation in Sambalpur and Subarnapur, the two other major paddy producing districts in Western Odisha.

One lakh tonne of paddy has been procured in Sambalpur against 1.45 lakh tonne during the same period last year while in Subarnapur, 85,000 tonnes have been procured against a target of 1.47 lakh tonnes.

The Phailin affected Ganjam district is yet to open its account. The district lost its entire kharif crop to the devastating cyclone followed by subsequent flood.

The Butterfly Effect

Home to over 140 varieties, this unique farm is where Rajendra, 49, has been breeding butterflies naturally since 2005. (Photo: Fotocrop)

Every Sunday, a new bunch of schoolchildren troops into Rajendra Ovalekar’s two-acre farm on the outskirts of Thane. Quite unlike children on a field trip, they instantly whip out their notebooks and pens and walk around noiselessly taking notes, clicking photos and quietly observing the flying specks of colour around them. For darting and flitting across the Ovalekar Wadi Butterfly Garden on Ghodbunder Road are hundreds of butterflies who have

made it their breeding, feeding and nesting place. Home to over 140 varieties, this unique



farm is where Rajendra, 49, has been breeding butterflies naturally since 2005.

“At a session on butterflies conducted by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) in 2004, I realised that a variety of butterflies

inhabited my neighbourhood but I did not know their names. That was when I decided to create a hub for butterflies with my resources,” says Rajendra, a physical education teacher. Around the same time, his friends who knew of his interest informed him that a village not far from Mumbai had a high density of butterflies. On researching about it and touring the outskirts of the city, Rajendra found himself in his own village of Ovale. “I do recollect chasing butterflies as a child in my village home, but it never struck me that my village was in fact the right spot for a butterfly farm,” he says.

From a family with an agricultural background, Rajendra owned a two-acre farm in the village that had been lying barren for over a decade. He decided to convert it into a natural butterfly zone with expert inputs from Issac Kehimkar, general manager, programmes, BNHS, and the author of *The Book of Indian Butterflies*.

Eventually Rajendra planted host plants where butterflies lay eggs, nectar plants and even useful weeds. “All I think about ever since I started the farm is what more plants I should get so that more butterflies are attracted to this place,” he confesses.

“I have procured plants from Kerala and Karnataka where there are butterfly gardens. But what is important to remember is that even weeds that grow on the roadside are perfect for butterflies and people chop them off with impunity. There is hardly any awareness being created about butterflies, especially in Mumbai where we don’t even have a butterfly garden,” he rues.

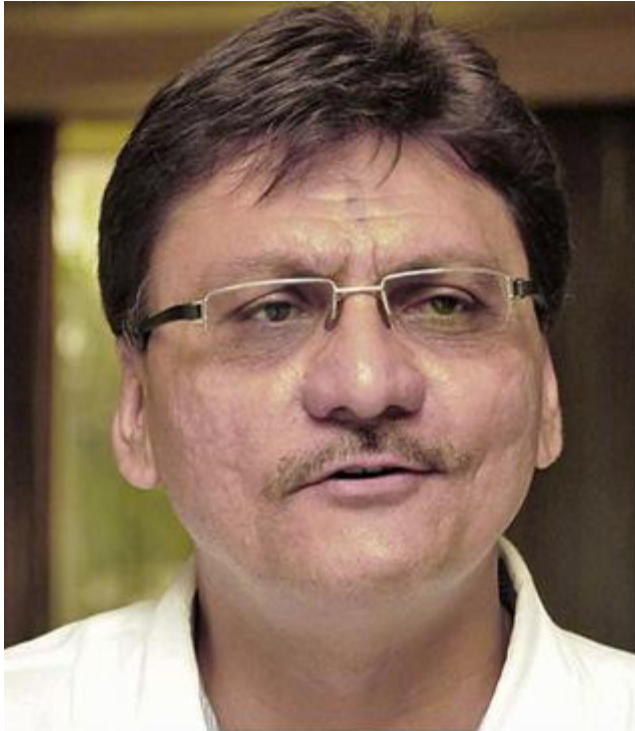
With this aim of spreading awareness about butterflies, host plants and nectar plants, Rajendra opened his garden to visitors soon after setting it up. “Initially I had no plans of doing so but the lack of information in the public domain about butterflies made me do this.” Open only on Sundays, the garden is a favourite among schoolchildren who are able to observe the different stages of a butterfly’s life cycle here. “Children are very interested in knowing what plants they should grow in their gardens and window gardens to attract butterflies,” says Rajendra as he rattles out names of butterflies that feed on Ashoka trees, nest on Lime trees, and so on.

His enthusiasm about butterflies is quite infectious and is shared by his 17-year-old son Pranav and older brother Bhupendra. All three of them guide visitors through the garden and even assist photographers in capturing the butterflies on camera.

Rajendra visits the garden every day after school to keep a record of the butterflies that visit his farm. “Now with my data, I understand the migrating patterns of butterflies and even know when they are late or early. In fact, butterflies that nest on plants more than 3 km away from the garden visit Ovalekar Wadi just for the handpicked nectar plants I have planted. Only recently, the rare Redspot butterfly nested in the garden, but it does not visit anymore. Maybe I do not have the right nectar plant,” he reckons.

The lepidopterist now wishes to write white papers on butterflies and spread the joy of “butterflying”, as Kehimkar calls it. “I would be happier if the government authorities take some initiative to promote preservation of butterflies as this small act of having a butterfly garden can snowball into preserving nature itself,” he says.

Court nod for no-confidence move against GCMMF chief



Vipul Chaudhary, Chairman, GCMMF

Ahmedabad, Jan. 7: The Gujarat High Court has given board members of the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation the go-ahead for moving a no-confidence motion against Chairman Vipul Chaudhary.

The order was issued by a single judge Bench on Monday.

Time till Jan 11

However, Chaudhary has been given time till January 11 to challenge the decision in a higher court.

Of the 17 board members of the cooperative, which markets the Amul brand of milk products, 14 have served a no-confidence motion against the Chairman.

court stay

The move was initially stayed by the High Court.

About 1,100 village-level milk cooperative societies of the Mehsana District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union (Dudhsagar Dairy) joined as respondents in the petition filed against Chaudhary.

"This clearly indicates mounting tension between the cooperative unions in Gujarat.

Politicisation of milk cooperatives is detrimental to the interest of farmers and members of the Federation, that too when our milk producers are venturing into the US for manufacturing," said Ghanshyambhai Amin, Vice-President of National Cooperative Union of India.

GCMMF board members' no-confidence move comes after Chaudhary shared the dais with Congress Vice-President Rahul Gandhi and Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar a few months ago.

It was seen as an attempt to replace Amrita Patel as Chairman of the National Dairy Development Board after her retirement.

Soon, allegations of financial mismanagement at the Mehsana dairy headed by Chaudhary surfaced.

"Politicisation of milk cooperatives is affecting the Amul brand and also drawing attention away from key issues of rising prices and production costs," said Ramsinh Parmar, Chairman of Kaira District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Ltd (Amul Dairy) in Anand.

The cooperative, with a turnover of Rs 14,000 crore for 2012-13, procures 13 million litres of milk daily.

Around 16, 914 village milk co-operative societies from the 17-member milk producing unions spread across 24 districts in Gujarat are affiliated to the Federation, involving around 3-4 million milk producers.

Latex gains on industries' buying

Kottayam, Jan. 7: Spot rubber ruled weak on Tuesday. The market opened steady but shed early gains, partially during late trading hours following declines in the international trendsetters.

The only gainer of the day was latex (with 60% dry rubber contents), flaring up on buying from industries amidst low supplies.

Sheet rubber dropped to Rs 159.50 (Rs 160) a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

The grade slid to Rs 156.50 (Rs 157) at Kottayam, according to dealers.

January futures closed at Rs 159.52 (Rs 159.97), February at Rs 162.49 (Rs 162.54), March at Rs 165.30 (Rs 165.07), April at Rs 168.20 (Rs 168.70) and May at Rs 172 (Rs 172.76) for RSS 4 while the June futures remained inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. RSS 3 (spot) declined to Rs 149.02 (Rs 152.94) at Bangkok.

January futures closed at ¥264.8 (Rs. 157.71) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.


Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were: RSS-4: 159.50 (160); RSS-5: 151 (152); Ungraded: 147 (148); ISNR 20: 157.50 (158) and Latex 60%: 133.50 (129).

Higher rapemeal export lifts oilmeal shipments in December

Surging oilmeal shipments

Country	April-December		% change
	2013	2012	
South Korea	8,21,811	6,47,331	(+) 26.95
Iran	9,23,779	4,93,669	(+) 87.12
Thailand	2,35,372	2,31,199	(+) 1.80
Japan	2,37,386	3,74,226	(-) 36.57
Vietnam	1,41,479	3,86,836	(-) 63.42
Indonesia	76,604	1,46,323	(-) 47.65
Europe	2,40,045	1,20,731	(+) 98.83

Source: Solvent Extractors' Association of India



Mumbai, Jan. 7: Oilmeal exports increased three per cent in December to 5,86,437 tonnes from 5,67,199 tonnes in the same period a year ago as demand for rapeseed meal rose significantly. Export of oilmeals in the first three quarters of this fiscal was up seven per cent at 31,67,155 tonnes against 29,58,218 tonnes in the same period a year ago.

It has been a roller-coaster ride for

oilmeal exports in the last three quarters.

Second quarter

Oilmeal shipments in the first quarter were down 20 per cent due to drastic drop in export of soyameal. In the second quarter, it jumped 43 per cent due to large-scale purchase of soyameal by Iran and Europe, while it moved up 14 per cent due to overall increase in export of soya, rape and castor meals.

The depreciation in the rupee also boosted exports in the last two quarters.

While soyameal prices increased marginally in December to \$559 (Rs 34,552) a tonne against \$557 (Rs 34,428) a tonne in November, rapeseed meal remained unchanged at \$242 and castorseed was up at \$108 a tonne (\$97 a tonne).

Between April and December, oilmeal import by South Korea has been reported at 8,21,811 tonnes against 6,47,331 tonnes last year consisting of 3,88,148 tonnes of rapemeal, 3,81,416 tonnes of castormeal and 52,247 tonnes of soyameal.

India is fast losing its share in the Vietnam market due to stiff competition from other origins and increased availability from domestic crushing.

Shipments to Vietnam more than halved to 1,41,479 tonnes (3,86,836 tonnes) while to Indonesia, too, they dropped 48 per cent at 76,604 tonnes (1,46,323 tonnes). Japan imported 2,37,386 tonnes (3,74,226 tonnes) consisting of 3,840 tonnes rapemeal, 833 tonnes castormeal and 2,32,713 tonnes soyameal.

Iran doubled its import to 9,23,779 tonnes (4,93,669 tonnes), including 9,21,117 tonnes of soyameal, and 2,662 tonnes of rapemeal. Thailand imported 2,35,372 tonnes (2,31,199 tonnes) oilmeals, consisting 1,03,028 tonnes of soyameal and 1,32,344 tonnes of rapemeal. Europe turned out to be a bigger market for Indian non-GMO soyameal. Europe imported 2,40,045 tonnes compared with 1,20,731 tonnes of last year.

Tea turnover tops Rs 500 crore at Coonoor

Coonoor, Jan. 7: Two significant records were created by the Coonoor Tea Trade Association in 2013, the turnover crossed Rs 500-crore mark and the average price topped Rs 100 a kg, reveals an analysis of market reports.

The average price was above Rs 80-a-kg mark for the second consecutive year. The volume sold continued to remain above 5-crore-kg level for the third consecutive year.

In all, 51 auctions were held last year with 5.95 crore kg being sold against 5.53 crore kg in 2012. A higher volume was sold despite average price rising to Rs 89.32 a kg from Rs 82.28 in 2012.

Consequently, the turnover rose to Rs 531.45 crore from Rs 455.01 crore. This increase of Rs 76.44 crore marked 16.80 per cent growth.

The increased turnover lay spread among factory owners, growers, traders, workers, auctioneers and warehouse keepers.

For the first time at the auctions, the average price crossed Rs 100/kg to touch Rs 104.11 on March 8. It remained above Rs 100 till April 26 peaking to a high of Rs 110.70 on March 21.

However, oversupply in global market reduced exports. Availability of low-priced tea in north Indian auctions reduced upcountry demand. Collectively, in the last quarter, CTTA auction average price crashed to Rs 72 – the least in the last two years. Otherwise, the year's average price would have been much higher.

Groundnut oil slips on weak demand



Rajkot, Jan. 7: Groundnut oil and cotton oil prices fell due to weak demand in retail outlets. According to traders, stockists' demand was also low against higher supply.

Groundnut oil loose dropped by Rs 15 to Rs 760-765 for 10 kg.

Teliya tin decreased by Rs 17 to Rs 1,187-1,188 for 15 kg and groundnut oil new tin ruled at Rs 1,405-1,410 for 15 kg. Some 4-5 tankers of groundnut oil were traded in Saurashtra.

Similarly, washed cottonseed oil fell by Rs 10 to Rs 560-563/10 kg.

Cotton oil decreased by Rs 10 to Rs 1,040-1,050/15 kg. About 40-50 tankers of cotton oil were traded here. A Rajkot-based edible oil trader said that prices are likely to fall further in the next few days.

Wheat exports may fetch more on firm global prices



Better prices: India had set minimum export price of \$260 a tonne but received higher quotes from global buyers for tenders floated recently. A file photo of a labourer removing dust from wheat at a wholesale market in Chandigarh .

New Delhi, Jan. 7: India, currently a big wheat seller in the global market, could gain from the firm trend in prices of the cereal on the Chicago Board of Trade, triggered by the concerns over severe cold snap affecting the US crop and large purchases made by African countries.

State trading entities – MMTC, STC and PEC Ltd – have offered to sell a total of nearly 8.3 lakh tonnes of wheat.

Tenders for the sales are expected to be decided over the next 17 days.

Upward revision

“India should exploit the current situation to get the maximum price for its wheat. There is a case for upward revision of the floor price for exports,” said trade sources.

India had set minimum export price of \$260 a tonne but has received higher quotes from global buyers for tenders floated recently.

So far, about nine lakh tonnes of wheat have been tendered for sale, but sales of about six lakh tones only have been finalised.

The Government has planned to export about 20 lakh tonnes to create storage space for the new crop expected to arrive in April.

firm trend

The country’s wheat stocks as on December 1 stood at 31 million tonnes, almost thrice the buffer and strategic reserves to be maintained statutorily. The firm trend in global prices is also aided by the aggressive buying from African nations such as Egypt and Algeria last week.

Egypt has bought 5.35 lakh tonnes from Ukraine, Russia and France at an average price of \$317 a tonne. Algeria has bought about five lakh tonnes, while Syria has bought about two lakh tonnes.

“Going by the recent market trends, India should get better price for its wheat. The intrinsic value of the Indian wheat is \$290-300 a tonne – a price at which India should be selling,” an analyst said.

cbot prices

Wheat futures, which rallied to a two week high on the Chicago Board of Trade on concerns of crops damage in the US winter crop, eased a bit on Tuesday on signs of slack demand.

acreage

Wheat acreage in the current rabi season has touched a record 302 lakh hectares, raising expectation of a bumper harvest of over 95 million tonnes.

cold conditions

Prevailing cold conditions across the wheat growing regions of North India are seen aiding the crop.

Chana output may decline to 75 lakh tonnes



Indore, Jan. 7: Sluggish demand and weak futures have pounded chana (gram) prices in Indore mandis in the last one week by Rs 100-125 a quintal. Chana (kanta) on Tuesday was quoted at Rs 2,800 a quintal (Rs 2,850-2,875), while chana (desi), on the other hand, ruled steady at Rs 2,600.

Contrary to expectations, buying ahead of the *Makar Sankranti* this month has been comparatively weak unlike the

previous year, leading to vertical fall in prices over the last few days.

Though the recent '*mawtha*' (winter rain) appears to have bolstered the prospect of the standing crop, chana output this year is set to decline to 72-75 lakh tonnes from 85 lakh tonnes last year, according to traders. With robust crop output last year, chana prices throughout the year remained low compared with last year, amid demand for cheap imported dollar chana (chickpea) in local mandis.

Local mandis are witnessing scattered arrival of new chana in the last few days from some parts of Madhya Pradesh.

However, arrivals will pick up only from the second week of February, said Sanjay Agrawal, a local chana trader. Chana dal (average) also declined in the local mandis on Tuesday.

It was quoted at Rs 3,400-3,500/quintal, chana dal (medium) at Rs 3,600-3,700, while chana dal (bold) ruled at Rs 3,800-3,900/quintal.

A sluggish trend also continued in dollar chana (chickpea) on weak domestic and export demand. In the local mandis, dollar chana on Tuesday was quoted at Rs 3,500-4,500/quintal amid arrival of 2,500 bags.

In container also, dollar chana (42/44 count) witnessed a sluggish trend on Tuesday and was quoted at Rs 4,925-50, while 44/46 count ruled at Rs 4,725-50, dollar chana 58/60 count ruled at Rs 4,100-4,125 (up Rs 100 from last week), while 60/62 count was quoted at Rs 4,000-4,025 (up Rs 100 from last week).

Reports of Vietnam cutting prices drag pepper



Kochi, Jan. 7: The downtrend in pepper prices continued on Tuesday, following reports that Vietnam cut its prices for the spice sharply.

This, coupled with selling pressure in the domestic market, led to prices falling on Tuesday.

January and February contracts on the National Multi Commodity Exchange and IPSTA dropped along with spot prices.

Nearly 35 to 40 tonnes of pepper, 90 per cent of which were from the high ranges and the rest from Pathanamthitta and Kottayam districts, were traded between Rs 498 and Rs 512 a kg, market sources told *Business Line*.

Besides, exporters who have commitments to fulfil this month bought material released from the warehouses, they said.

Upcountry buyers stayed away from the declining market, hoping prices will fall further. In the international market, Vietnam has brought down prices its their pepper of different grades by \$1,000 a tonne in less than a fortnight, trade sources said. On the NMCE, January and February contracts decreased by Rs 211 and Rs 537, respectively, to Rs 52,300 and Rs 51,809 a quintal. Turnover decreased to 15 tonnes.

Net open position declined by to 23 tonnes.

On the IPSTA, January and February contracts fell by the maximum permissible limit. They dropped Rs 1,000 a quintal to Rs 50,500 and Rs 49,518.

Spot prices fell further by 200 a quintal to Rs 49,800 (ungarbled) and Rs 51,800 (garbled) a quintal.

Fresh bulk buying pushes up Pusa-1121, Sharbati rice



Karnal, Jan. 7: Fresh buying pushed Pusa-1121 and Sharbati rice prices upwards, while other aromatic and non-basmati varieties managed to maintain their previous levels on Tuesday. Amit Chandna, proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company, told *Business Line* that bulk buyers bought Pusa-1121 and Sharbati varieties. A marginal uptrend was anticipated and not an upward movement of Rs 200-500 a

quintal, he said.

It is unlikely to see any major alteration this week and the market may continue to rule around current levels, said Chandna. In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) moved up by Rs 500 to Rs 9,000 a quintal, while Pusa-1121 (sela) improved by Rs 400 to Rs 8,000. Pure Basmati (raw) was quoted at Rs 12,500/quintal. Duplicate Basmati (steam) was sold at Rs 7,000.

Pusa-1121 (second wand) was sold at Rs 7,000, Tibar at Rs 6,000, and Dubar at Rs 5,000. In the non-basmati section, prices of Sharbati (steam) increased by Rs 200 to Rs 5,000; Sharbati (sela) was up by Rs 300 to Rs 4,800. Permal (raw) was sold at Rs 2,300, Permal (sela) at Rs 2,350, PR-11 (sela) at Rs 2,900, while PR-11 (raw) was sold at Rs 2,800. PR14 (steam) sold at Rs 3,200.

Paddy Arrivals

About 10,000 bags of different paddy varieties arrived at the Karnal Grain Market Terminal. About 5,000 bags of Pusa-1121 arrived and were sold at Rs 4,250; 2,000 bags of Sugandha 999 were sold at Rs 2,600-2,650, 2,000 bags of PR were sold at Rs 1,325-1,350, and 1,000 Sharbati bags at Rs 2,200-2,225.

Rising inventories put pressure on sugar



Mumbai, Jan. 7: The sugar market continued to rule weak as producers continued to sell at low prices on Tuesday. Spot prices on the Vashi wholesale market dropped by Rs 10 and Rs 24 a quintal on the higher side for both medium and small varieties. On the lower side, higher offtake resulted in prices rising by Rs 5-10. Naka rates were unchanged. Mills sold at a price Rs 5-10 lower. The volume was routine, as demand dropped due to cold weather across the country. Since Diwali, sugar prices have been bearish on lack of demand in domestic and export markets. Higher inventory

with mills and in the market is continuously putting pressure, said Vashi-based traders. This is particularly when inventories at the Vashi market have increased to 115-120 truckloads (10 tonnes) compared with 110 last week.

Arrivals at the Vashi market were 61-62 truckloads, while local dispatches were 59-60 loads. On Monday, 19-20 mills sold 64,000-65,000 bags (100 kg each) at Rs 2,630-2,730 (Rs 2,630-2,730) for S-grade and Rs 2,730-2,920 (Rs 2,730-2,920) for M-grade.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 2,842-2,975 (Rs 2,842-2,951) and M-grade Rs 2,950-3,122 (Rs 2,940-3,132). **Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 2,760-2,865 (Rs 2,760-2,865) and M-grade Rs 2,810-3,055 (Rs 2,810-3,055).

Uttar Pradesh rates were: Muzzafarnagar Rs 3,170.

Upcountry orders continue to flow for turmeric



Erode, Jan. 7: Turmeric prices rose in Erode markets as upcountry orders continued to flow on Tuesday. "Local traders and exporters have received good upcountry orders; so they are buying the turmeric quoting a higher price. They will receive orders till *Sankranti* but orders may decrease a few days after that. Until then, they will receive fresh orders for both new and old crops," said R. K. V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said based on the increase in price, farmers brought 4,500 bags. Of this 3,100 were sold. He said that medium

and quality turmeric arrived for sale. Almost, the entire lot of quality turmeric was purchased by traders. Due to the arrival of fine variety hybrid turmeric, its prices increased by Rs 300 a quintal. The root variety increased by Rs 200 and other varieties also by Rs 200. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,439-6295 a quintal and the root variety Rs 4,199-5,889.

Salem Hybrid: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,414-7,014, the root variety Rs 5,400-6,427. Out of the 614 bags that arrived, only 129 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,466- 6,395, the root variety Rs 5,301-6,094. Of the 945 bags on offer, 856 were picked up.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,429-6,499, the root variety Rs 5,329-6,129. All 571 bags put up for sale were traded.

Falling edible oil prices keep stockists away



Mumbai, Jan. 7: Edible oils extended their bearish trend for the fourth day on Tuesday, tracking sharp declines in the futures market. Selling pressure in the physical market also aggravated the situation. Imported palmolein declined by Rs 2 and groundnut oil by Rs 10 for 10 kg each. Soyabean, sunflower and cotton oil ruled steady, while rapeseed oil gained Rs 5.

Domestic soya oil futures dropped by one per cent, tracking global markets. Local refineries reduced their rates for palmolein, but the response was poor. The volume was almost nil as stockists

kept away. During the day, hardly 50-60 tonnes were traded. There was no direct trade at local refineries despite their cheap offerings.

“Prospects of higher production of palm oil dragged US and China soya markets. Larger soyabean crops will mean higher volume to be crushed, adding to global stockpiles and pressure on competing palm oil,” said an analyst.

Towards the day’s close, liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 570, super palmolein at Rs 594, super deluxe palmolein at Rs 614, soyabean refined oil at Rs 645 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 700. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 570, soyabean refined oil at Rs 640 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 675. Allana was quoting palmolein at Rs 570, soyabean refined oil at Rs 640 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 675. Resellers were quoting palmolein at Rs 566-567, ex JNPT.

On the NCDEX, February contracts declined by Rs 6.65 to Rs 672.70 (Rs 679.35), March dropped by Rs 7.15 to Rs 667.50 (Rs 674.65) and April by Rs 6.80 to Rs 667.00 (Rs 673.80). Vikram Global Commodities (P) Ltd quoted Rs 630/10 kg for Malaysia super palmolein January delivery.

Malaysia BMD crude palm oil February contracts settled lower at MYR 2,542 (MYR 2,590), March settled at MYR 2,561 (MYR 2,604) and April at MYR 2,569 (MYR 2,610).

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: groundnut oil 790 (800), soya refined oil 645 (645), sunflower exp. ref. 630 (630), sunflower ref. 675 (675), rapeseed ref. oil 735 (730), rapeseed expeller ref. 705 (700) cottonseed ref. oil 605 (605) and palmolein 570 (572).

Edible oil imports set to touch record 11 mt

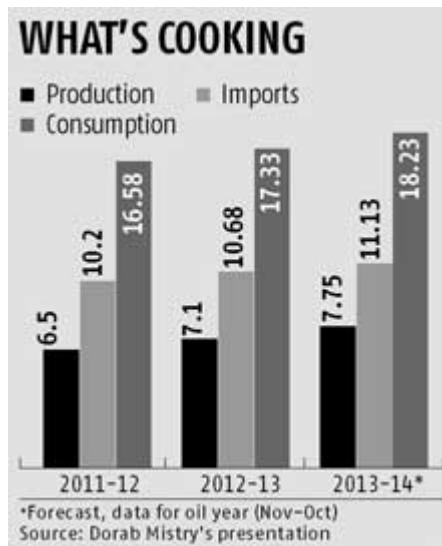
[Edible oil](#) imports could break a record to touch 11 million tonnes (mt) this year, on rising demand from middle class following sustained pressure on prices.

According to [Dorab Mistry](#), director of [Godrej International](#), the imports are set to rise four per cent. Those were 10.7 mt a year ago.

This, however, is not likely to hit domestic production. This is despite the fact that crushing remains unviable due to the sustained increase in the minimum support price. In the oil year 2013-14 (November-October), domestic production is estimated to rise to 7.7 mt compared to 7 mt a year ago.

The ongoing winter-sowing season started on a positive note with an increase in sowing area, due to good monsoon. Data compiled by the ministry of agriculture showed India's total winter-oilseeds sowing area rose 4.2 per cent year-on-year to eight million hectares as on December 19, due to higher sowing area under rapeseed and mustard. The total area under winter oilseeds was 7.63 million ha a year ago.

Rapeseed and mustard sowing area rose six per cent to 6.7 million hectares as on December 19 from 6.4 million a year ago. Area in Rajasthan, the largest producing region in India, increased nine per cent to three million. The momentum is likely to continue resulting in higher production. But, an inverted duty structure with a higher [import](#) tax on crude oil than refined (refined, bleached and diodised or RBD) has hit refineries.



“To protect the interests of the refineries and crushing units, the government, according to the Ashok Lahiri Committee, should keep the differential import duty at least 7.5 per cent, which was narrowed to five per cent with the recent import levy of 2.5 per cent on crude palm oil (CPO). Anything below 7.5 per cent would make refining business unviable. By not raising the duty, the government is incentivising Indonesian refineries and discouraging Indian ones,” said Dinesh Shahra, founder and chairman, Ruchi Soya Industries.

The government had cut the import tariff value on crude and refined oil three per cent to keep edible oil cheaper, fearing a further rise in food inflation.

While the import tariff value has been cut \$29 to \$929 on RBD palmolein; for CPO, it was cut to \$892 a tonne effective January 1 from \$912 a tonne a fortnight ago.

Iran, S Korea stoke oilmeal exports up 7%

[Oilmeal exports](#) rose seven per cent during the first nine months of the current financial year due to increased supply to Iran and South Korea, the newly-developed export markets.

Data compiled by the Solvent Extractors' Association ([SEA](#)) showed exports at 3.2 million tonnes during April-December in 2013 compared to three million tonnes a year ago.

Shipments were down 20 per cent in the first quarter due to a drastic fall in the export of soymeal, followed by a 43 per cent surge in the second quarter.

Heavy buying of soymeal from Iran and Europe lifted overall exports of oilmeal in the third quarter as well, with high export of soya bean, rapeseed and [castorseed](#) meal.

Rupee depreciation also helped exports. Oilmeal import by South Korea during April-December was 821,811 tonnes, up from 647,331 tonnes a year ago.

Iran imported 923,779 tonnes of oilmeal in the first nine months of FY14, double the 493,669 tonnes it had imported a year ago.

Onion exports double in Dec to 0.13 mt on MEP cut

[Onion exports](#) have doubled during December to 0.13 million tonnes (mt) compared with the previous month after the government lowered the [minimum export price \(MEP\)](#). Exports stood at 66,236 tonnes during November, according to data compiled by the National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation.

Last month, the government had slashed onion MEP three times to boost exports and check sliding domestic prices of the edible bulb that led to farmers' protests in producing states. On December 26, MEP, the benchmark price below which the commodity cannot be exported, was reduced to \$150 a tonne from \$350 a tonne.

Before that, MEP was reduced to \$350 a tonne from \$800 a tonne on December 19, while it was cut to \$800 a tonne from \$1,150 on December 16.

India soymeal exports at 0.47 mn tonne in Dec: SOPA

India exported around 471,000 tonne soymeal in December, 2013 which was lower compared with the same period last year, according to Soybean Processors Associations of India ([Sopa](#)).

Last year, in December Indian soymeal export stood at 511,000 tonne. "Soybean supplies in domestic markets are very low which is giving way to low crushing," said Rajesh Agrawal,

spokesman and coordinator, Sopa.

Soybean is crushed to make soymeal and soyoil. Also, soymeal buying is requirement based as the South American soybean crop is on its way and global supplies are likely to be smooth in the coming months, added Agrawal.

According to Sopa data, major buying was from Iran which bought around 132,452.96 tonne of soymeal from Indian in December last year.

On a financial year basis, soymeal export during April 2013 to December 2013 stood at 2.06 million tonne compared with 1.97 million tonne in the same period last year, up 7.56 per cent.

During current Oil year (October 2013 - September 2014), total exports during October 2013 to December 2013 were 1.185 million tonne against 1.08 million tonne last year, up 9.73 per cent.

Soyameal exports down 8% in December

[Soyameal exports](#) fell 8% to 4.71 lakh tonnes in December 2013 due to lower arrivals, according to the industry data.

Shipments of soyameal stood at 5.11 lakh tonnes (LT) in the same month a year ago, Soyabean Processors Association of India ([SOPA](#)) said in a statement.

Soyameal is rich source of protein and used as animal feed.

SOPA spokesperson and coordinator Rajesh Agrawal said: "Exports of soyameal have come down due to lower arrival and decline in crushing margins."

Iran was the leading importer of soyameal last month with a quantity of 1.32 LT, followed by Thailand at 81,254 tonnes and Vietnam at 50,262 tonnes.

India exported 34.73 lakh tonnes of soyameal in 2012-13 marketing year (October-September).

Soyameal exports rose 7.56% to 20.61 LT during April-December 2013, as compared to 19.16 LT in the same period of previous year.

Edible oils drops on subdued demand, global cues

Groundnut oil dropped at the Vashi oils and oilseeds market here today due to subdued demand from stockist and retailers on the back of ample supply position.

Refined palmolein eased further owing to lack of retail buying support amidst lower Malaysian cues.

Meanwhile, linseed oil climbed on fresh demand from paint and allied industries.

In the non-edible section, castorseeds bold and castor oil commercial ruled stable in the absence of any worthwhile buying activity.

The castorseeds futures rates were unavailable today.

In the edible section, [Groundnut oil](#) declined by Rs 10 per 10 kg to Rs 790 from Monday's closing level of Rs 800 and Refined palmolein moved down by Rs 2 per 10 kg to Rs 570 as against Rs 572 previously.

Moving to non-edible segment, Linseedoil gained by Rs 5 per 10kg to Rs 830 as compared to Rs 825 yesterday.

Castorseed bold and castoroil commercial closed unchanged at Rs 4,050 per 100 kg and Rs 840 per 10 kg, respectively.

Refined soya oil down 0.5% on sluggish demand

[Refined soya oil](#) remained weak for the second day and prices shed 0.56% to Rs 682.50 per 10 kg in futures market today as speculators reduced positions following sluggish demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), refined soya oil for delivery in January fell further by Rs 3.85, or 0.56%, to Rs 682.50 per 10 kg with an open interest of 34,140 lots.

Similarly, the oil for delivery in February declined by Rs 3.75, or 0.55%, to Rs 675.60 per 10 kg in 1,24,140 lots.

Analysts said trimming of positions by speculators following sluggish demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position kept pressure on refined soya oil prices at futures trade.

Chana down 0.8% on increased supply

[Chana](#) prices moved down by 0.82% to Rs 3,017 per quintal in futures trading today as participants trimmed positions, triggered by increased supplies from producing regions against subdued demand.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, chana for delivery in January moved down by Rs 25, or 0.82%, to Rs 3,017 per quintal with an open interest of 56,690 lots.

Similarly, the commodity for delivery in February lost Rs 21, or 0.68%, to Rs 3,078 per quintal in 66,030 lots.

Analysts said participants trimmed positions, triggered by increased supplies from producing regions against subdued demand in the spot market that pulled down chana prices at futures trade.

Cardamom gains 1% on rising demand, tight supply

[Cardamom](#) prices moved up by 1.10 per cent to Rs 709.90 per kg in futures trade today as speculators enlarged their positions, supported by rising demand in the spot market.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for delivery in January moved up by Rs 7.70, or 1.10 per cent, to Rs 709.90 per kg in a business turnover of 18 lots.

The February contract added Rs 4.10, or 0.57 per cent, to Rs 725.60 per kg in 71 lots.

Analysts said speculators enlarged their positions, supported by rising demand in the spot market against tight supplies from producing regions that led to rise in cardamom prices at futures trade.

Palm oil sheds 0.6% on weak demand

Crude [palm oil](#) prices declined by 0.60 per cent to Rs 545.40 per 10 kg in futures trading today as speculators offloaded their positions, driven by a weak demand in the spot market.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude palm oil for delivery in February declined by Rs 3.30, or 0.60 per cent, to Rs 545.40 per 10 kg in business turnover of 33 lots.

January palm oil softened by Rs 3.10, or 0.57 per cent, to Rs 540.10 per 10 kg in 29 lots.

Analysts said offloading of positions by speculators on the back of weak demand in the spot market against adequate stock position mainly influenced crude palm oil prices in futures trade.

Potato sheds 1.2% on higher supply, low demand

[Potato](#) prices fell by 1.20 per cent to Rs 952.70 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators offloaded their positions on the back of low demand against higher supplies from producing regions.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for delivery in March was down Rs 11.60, or 1.20 per cent, to Rs 952.70 per quintal in a business turnover of 278 lots.

The April contract lost by Rs 11.30, or 1.19 per cent, to Rs 938 per quintal in 59 lots.

Analysts said speculators offloaded their positions on the back of low demand in the spot market against higher supplies from producing belts that mainly kept pressure on potato prices at futures trade.
