

Adopting technology and innovation in farming sets them apart



Progressive practices: Velanmai Chemmal awardees with their certificates and mementos, at the State-level Farmers' Day at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in Coimbatore recently.

As it does every year, this time too the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University gave away awards to five select farmers from different parts of the State in recognition

of their innovation and progressive methods followed in agriculture.

Instituted by the university, the Velanmai Chemmal Awards are sponsored by C.R.I. Pumps.

This year's achievers included G. Mayilsamy from Sular Kaliapuram, Coimbatore, for his contribution to seed and bio-fertilizer production by adopting new technologies, and also for making many other farmers follow them to turn them into progressive farmers.

G. Karikalan from Keelapatti, Karur district, for adoption of latest technologies in ensuring sustainable agriculture received an award too. He has also established a co-operative production company, which is operating successfully.

T. Rajkumar from Devankudi, Tiruvarur district, was recognised for his contribution to sustainable agriculture and service to farming community. He is involved in extensive use of mechanisation, from sowing to harvest of rice. He has also associated himself and other farmers with animal husbandry, to generate additional income.

A.P. Karuppiyah, a banana farmer from Sinnamanur, Theni district, received award for his contribution and service to farming community. He has been instrumental in motivating farmers to form associations and take up processing technologies in making banana products

R. Suganthi from Neyveli in Cuddalore district, was recognised for her contribution to rural women's development and service to farming community. She has been associated with making and marketing processed food products. She is also involved in spreading the food processing technologies of the university among women Self Help Groups.

According to Vice-Chancellor K. Ramasamy, the selection procedure is very stringent.

"Applications for the award are distributed by the Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs). The KVKs shortlist and submit a list of five names.

These names are assessed by a five-member committee based on 10 criteria. The criterion is not only to do with their achievements, but also how much they can disseminate the knowledge that made them achieve great heights," he said.

The final five were selected from the shortlisted 12. The winners of the award will visit all the colleges and campuses of the university to share their experiences with students.

Farmers feel the heat as California reels under severe drought

SAN FRANCISCO, January 20, 2014 - Frank Imhof, a Sunol cattleman is checking the weather constantly. If he doesn't get rain soon, "lots of people are going to be out of a job," he says.

He's considering culling nearly 40 per cent of his breeding herd and selling calves that are four to five months short of their market weight, because he doesn't have enough grass in his pastures to feed them.

On Friday, amid California's driest year on record, Governor Jerry Brown declared a drought emergency in the State. As days pass without snow or rain, dairymen, farmers and other livestock producers are finding themselves in the same predicament as Imhof. And without water to irrigate, farmers fear they will have to leave some fields fallow.

Ranchers and farmers say that as long as the drought continues, the nation's largest agricultural State will remain in turmoil, with repercussions stretching to consumer pocketbooks in the form of higher prices for meat, milk, fruit and vegetables. "If it doesn't rain in another month there will be ranchers and farmers going out of business," Imhof said. For most, there is little to no financial relief or government aid to bail them out. Only 35 of the State's 400 crops are eligible for farm insurance, and without the passage of a farm bill, most federal disaster relief programs are not available. — **New York Times News Service**

Government to provide subsidised hay to farmers

COIMBATORE, January 20, 2014 - *Rs. 40 lakh allocated to the district*

The district administration has planned to open four centres to supply hay at subsidised price to farmers, said a release. It had planned the centres at the veterinary clinics in Sulur, Sultanpet, Madukkarai and Kinathukadavu, where the Animal Husbandry Department will supply the hay at Rs. 2 a kg.

The State Government has allocated Rs. 40 lakh to the Coimbatore district administration for the purpose, the release said and added that for the entire State it was Rs. 12.50 crore. The move was aimed at providing fodder to farmers with cattle as they were contemplating selling cattle due to shortage of fodder or hay across the State.

And the fodder/hay shortage was due to the poor monsoon, the impact of which was that the area under fodder cultivation had come down and so was the size of the grazing lands.

The release said that the Department would give hay at three kg an animal a day for a maximum of five animals a farmer for two to three months.

Farmers should apply for the same with their ration card and two passport-size photographs.

The farmers could buy the hay/fodder once a week.

Once they furnished the details, the Department would give identity cards to the farmers to help them buy hay.

The release also said that farmers who could sell hay were also welcome to apply for selling hay. They could also send in details for supply hay in stacks of three kg each to the Department.

For additional information they could get in touch with the Joint Director of Animal Husbandry Department, Union School Road, Coimbatore.

Programme on shrimp farming

NAGAPATTINAM, January 20, 2014 - Institute of Fisheries Technology of Tamil Nadu Fisheries University has organised an awareness programme on best practices in L.Vannamei shrimp farming here recently. The programme envisioned as part of the Pongal Fisheries Technology Transfer Meet-2014 was aimed at imparting in farmers best management practices in L.Vannamei farming prior to the onset of cropping season in February.

T.Anand, assistant professor, Institute of Fisheries Technology, served as the resource person. A publication on best management practices in L.Vannamei farming in vernacular language was distributed.

Farm price panel to be set up next month

INDI (BIJAPUR DISTRICT), January 20, 2014 - *Agriculture Price Commission among promises in manifesto*



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah having a word with Indi MLA Yeshwantaraigouda Patil at a programme in Indi taluk of Bijapur district on Sunday.

Reiterating his government's commitment to ensuring welfare of farmers, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has said that the Agriculture Price Commission will be set up next month to

provide justifiable prices for agriculture commodities.

Speaking after launching development work estimated at Rs. 300 crore in Indi taluk on Sunday, he said that the formation of the commission was one of the promises made by the Congress in its election manifesto.

Admitting that farmers were not getting "scientific" prices for their produces, the Chief Minister said that the commission will address this issue.

Stating that providing irrigation facility was one of the primary objectives of the government, he said that efforts are on to complete work on all irrigation projects coming under Upper Krishna Project within five years.

"The Krishna Water Dispute Tribunal has awarded 130 tmcft of water to the State, of which 80 tmcft will be utilised for irrigation projects in Bijapur district.

"The government is ready to offer adequate funds for these projects to complete work in a time-bound manner," he said.

Stating that Karnataka has the highest number (23.6 per cent) of poor people among all southern States, followed by Tamil Nadu with 22 per cent, the Chief Minister said that welfare programmes such as Anna Bhagya had been launched only with the objective of reducing this number. Ministers M.B. Patil and S.R. Patil were, among others, present.

☐ ***It will help provide justifiable prices for agricultural commodities***

☐ ***Development work estimated at Rs. 300 crore launched in Indi taluk***

Crash in tomato prices shocks farmers

BANGALORE, January 20, 2014 - Farmers in Gubbi, Kunigal and Tumkur taluks decided to sow tomatoes in large tracts of land considering the skyrocketing vegetable prices. The three-and-a-half-month crop, they presumed, would mean good and quick returns. The crash in the tomato prices — to less than Re. 1 a kg — has come as a shock to them now. They say that it neither helps the farmer nor the consumer. While farmers in the

villages of Tumkur district are getting 60 paise to 80 paise per kg of tomato, consumers in the city are buying it for around Rs.10 per kg.

Jayamma of Upparahalli told *The Hindu* : "I went to buy tomatoes after I came to know that tomatoes are sold at 80 paise per kg, but I had to buy at Rs. 10 per kg."

Nagappa of Mekharahalli in Sira taluk said that he was offered Rs. 10 per 20-kg carton of tomatoes and farmers had thrown tomatoes on the road at Bukapatna Circle in Sira taluk. For many farmers, the loss is cumulative. Vasanth Kumar and Roopa, farmer couple at Salagame in Hassan district, are hit by the tomato price crash even as they had not recovered from the loss they suffered after cultivating potato in the kharif season. They are now looking at tough times .

Officials at the Agricultural Produce Market Committee expressed helplessness over these turn of events. Deputy Director of Marketing Department, APMC, Tumkur, M.C. Doreswamy, said: "The rates of these perishable commodities are fixed based on the demand."

Farmers, however, argue for greater regulation. Tumkur district president of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sanga (KRRS) Govindaraju said that it is the responsibility of the government to intervene and purchase tomatoes. "The crash is helping middlemen and not consumers," he pointed out.

Lakshman Gowda, farmer from Kadagamdoddi in Raichur district, associated with KRRS, too blames APMC officials. According to him, tomato supplies from Belgaum to Raichur market is the major reason for the decreased demand there. *(With inputs from S. Bhuvaneshwari in Tumkur, G.T. Satish in Hassan and Kumar Buradikatti in Raichur)*

Tomato price dips to below Re. 1 kg; farmers in despair

But the consumers are yet to benefit from the price crash



Tomato growers are in dire straits in the State as prices of their produce crashed to as low as less than Re. 1 a kg in some parts of the State due to a glut in arrivals. While it was below Re. 1 a kg in Raichur, it slumped to below Rs. 2 in the State's major tomato-growing belt of Kolar. Frustrated tomato farmers threw their produce on the main streets of Raichur city and also dumped heaps of produce in front of the office of the deputy commissioner to protest against the failure of the government to take

effective measures to stabilise prices.

They also distributed the produce free of cost to people as the price on offer was not enough to bear the transportation cost let alone production cost.

But the crash in prices was no good news for consumers as selling price of tomatoes remained unchanged, indicating that middlemen made the best of the situation.

While the HOPCOMS' selling price for tomato stood at Rs. 8 a kg in Bangalore city, consumers had to pay Rs. 12 a kg in Kolar market. Contrary to this, the farmers were given only Rs. 20 to Rs. 50 per 15-kg box of local variety of tomato in the Kolar Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee yard.

The HOPCOMS' officials feel that the price situation is unlikely to improve for the farmers at least for another 15 to 20 days.

Explaining the phenomenon of the price crash, head of the vegetables division of the Indian Institute of Horticultural Research, A.T. Sadashiva, said the winter period was the most-ideal

season for the fruit-setting in the tomato crop. "Normally, tomato farmers get highest yield in this season as the productivity is very high. This leads to glut in production and triggers crash in prices," he said, while pointing out that such a situation is witnessed almost on a yearly basis.

Though winter has almost ended, the tomatoes which are presently arriving in the market are the ones planted during the winter season, he said.

Normally, tomato crop is grown on about 59,000 hectares of land in the State. Of this, Kolar district and surrounding areas account for about 17,000 hectares, Dr. Sadashiva said. The other prominent tomato-growing areas include the districts of Chickballapur, Bangalore Rural, Mandya and surrounding areas.

Of late, farmers have started growing tomato crop in a big way even in northern parts of the State, he said.

MLAs slam food department for hassling farmers

'Farmers are made to wait near procurement centres for days'

Vadnal Rajanna, MLA from Chennagiri and D.G. Shanthana Gowda, MLA from Honnali, took Deputy Director of Food and Civil Supplies Manjunath and nodal officer Karnataka state warehousing Corporation Vidyadar Jain to task for not buying maize and paddy in procurement centres as and when the farmers brought the crop. They came down heavily on the officials for making farmers wait near procurement centres for days together. At the KDP (Karnataka Development Programme) review meeting held here the two MLAs blamed the officials for running the procurement centres haphazardly and said farmers had been put to hardship owing to the apathy of officials to purchase the crop at procurement centres.

MLAs alleged that the officials who connived with traders were intentionally delaying the purchase of the crop from farmers so that farmers would sell their crop to traders for lesser price. They asked officials as to why they started the procurement centres without identifying the warehouse to store the crop purchased.

Officials at procurement centres had made it a habit to refuse to buy crop saying that they had no place to store the crop, MLAs said adding that farmers had been waiting near procurement centres for more than 12 days. They termed it inhuman to make farmers wait for 10 to 12 days to sell their crop at the centres and urged the District in-charge Minister Shyamanur Shivashankarappa to take suitable action against officials for exploiting farmers. However, Manjunath and Jain claimed that such a problem existed in Harihar and Harpanahalli and maintained that they had set right the problem and had made arrangements to store the purchased crop in private warehouses.

Hence, there was no delay in the purchase of crop from farmers.

The MLAs discounted the claims of officials and they said the officials were trying to misguide the body by uttering falsehood. They asked the officials to come with them and they showed how the farmers were waiting near the centres for 10 to 12 days.

Shivashankarappa said it had come to his notice also that farmers were made to wait near procurement centres for days together to sell the crop and instructed officials to set right all anomalies and start purchasing the crop on the day the farmers brought their crop to the centres.

He said he would get even private warehouses to store the crop and he would not tolerate harassment of farmers. He said he would visit procurement centres in the next two days to supervise the functioning of the centres.

MLAs K. Shivamurthy Naika and H.P. Rajesh were among others present. Chief Executive Officer of Davangere Zilla Panchayat A.B. Hemachandra was present.

☒ ***'Officials, who connived with traders, were intentionally delaying the purchase of crop'***

Farmers throw vegetables on roads in Raichur

The vegetable growers on Saturday expressed their ire and frustration over steep fall in prices by throwing tomato and other vegetables on streets here, even as the situation failed to improve after two days of waiting.

The wholesale buyers and commission agents here had refused to buy the produce from local farmers as they had made arrangements to buy vegetables from Belgaum. As a result, heaps of tomato, chilli, cauliflower, brinjal, cucumber, ladyfinger and other vegetables remained unsold at the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) yard for the last two days. The worst hit item was tomato, which had literally flooded the market. With no trader coming forward to buy the vegetables at APMC yard, the farmers, led by the members of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS), decided to protest. Initially, they distributed vegetables to pedestrians on Chandrabanda Road, at Gunj Circle, LBS Nagar, Goshala Road and other places, for free in the morning. Later, they loaded the entire stock of tomato and other vegetables into a tractor and marched through the thoroughfares, throwing them on the roads as they passed by, and raised slogans against the government for its failure to stabilise vegetable prices.

After dumping a large quantity of tomato at the middle of the Ambedkar Circle, they went to the Deputy Commissioner's office and dumped the remaining quantity of vegetables in front of the office. The farmers insisted that the district administration should intervene and initiate steps to prevent the arrival of vegetables from outside. They also submitted a memorandum at the Deputy Commissioner's office.

"I had brought about 600 kg tomato with the hope of selling it for a good price. The wholesale traders offered a price of Rs. 20 for a basket of 25 kg, which will not even meet the transportation cost," K. Raghavendra, farmer from Kadagamdoddi in Raichur taluk, told the *The Hindu*. "The break-even can be achieved only when we get at least Rs. 300 for a 25-kg tomato basket," Nagaraju from Kurubaradoddi, said. He had cultivated tomato in one acre of land.

📄 ***Traders are offering Re. 1 a kg for tomato, says a farmer***

📄 ***Authorities urged to prevent merchants from buying vegetables from other districts***

State to help coconut farmers

KOZHIKODE, January 19, 2014 - The State government is exploring the option of providing coconut farmers with interest-free loans to support the production and marketing of value-added products, Minister for Panchayats and Social Welfare M.K. Muneer has said.

He was speaking after launching the newly formed Kozhikode Coconut Farmers Producers Company at a function here on Saturday.

Dr. Muneer, stressing the role of farmers in popularising coconut-based products in the international market, said it was time to tune in to modern branding, packaging, and marketing techniques. "Compared to the modernisation initiatives taken by Malaysia, Taiwan, and Sri Lanka, we are yet to make the desired advancements in the sector," he said.

Promoting exports

The government was making all efforts to boost the export of coconut products and thus establish a steady market for the product, he said.

“Several supportive financial schemes are now available for farmers from the Kerala Financial Corporation (KFC) and from various cooperative banks to begin with,” he said. The interventions of the State government in the sector were never confined to the procurement of raw coconut alone. The government was trying to get farmers a fair price for their products in the open market as well, Dr. Muneer said.

The Minister lauded the government’s move to liberalise ‘Neera’ tapping regulations and said it would fetch farmers better benefits. “Your new company too would get the benefits from the new initiative for the commercial production and marketing of Neera,” he said.

P. Pradeepkumar, chairman of the company, said the firm would function with the support of 120 coconut producers’ societies in the district. “Now, the company had a strength of 10,000 farmers and they will contribute to the production and marketing of value-added products,” he added.

📌 **Coconut Farmers Producers Company launched**

📌 **More focus on product branding, marketing**

‘Cooperative farming will make agriculture remunerative’

Articles under The Hindu’s Farmers Notebook put together in book form

Speakers at the release of the book, *Impact of The Hindu’s Farmers Note Book on Technology Literacy of Farmers*, here on Saturday dwelt on ways of making farming remunerative.

Welfare Organisation for Rural Development (WORD-Tirupati) and Sustainable Agro Alliance Limited (SAAL-Madurai) brought out the book, a compilation of 180 articles published over the past six years in the Farmers Notebook column of *The Hindu*.

Farm scientist Velamoor Rajagopal, the brain behind the work, said the book carried interesting articles with case studies, success stories and innovative farm practices. It would be translated into Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Marathi and Hindi.

Expressing concern at the falling contribution of agriculture to the Gross Domestic Product, Chittoor Collector K. Ramgopal called cooperative farming the elixir to rid agriculture of its woes.

An agriculture graduate himself, Mr. Ramgopal advised farmers to divide tasks among themselves to cut operational cost.

“Strong leadership at the village level and farmers’ willingness to look beyond their farm bund can ensure its success.”

The Hindu’s Managing Editor V. Jayanth, who released the book, said dissemination of information was a major function of a newspaper. Agriculture was an important sector where information needed to be shared. The successive editors of the newspaper had great concern for agriculture and felt that the newspaper would be failing in its primary duty if due priority was not accorded to agriculture.

K. Ramaswamy, Vice-Chancellor of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (Coimbatore), lauded the efforts of *The Hindu’s* agriculture correspondent M.J. Prabu and wanted the book to be made part of the curriculum. “Science journalists have the ability to look beyond what we [academics] see,” he said, seeking a higher allocation to strengthen the academic infrastructure to match the rise in the number of seats.

The ISCA president and former Vice-Chancellor of Sri Venkateshwara University, R. Ramamurthi, called farmers “rural innovators.”

SV Agricultural College Associate Dean N.P. Eswara Reddy, Regional Agricultural Research Station associate director of research T. Giridhara Krishna, P.N. Vedanarayanan of the

special taskforce on the delta farmers' welfare (Tamil Nadu) and WORD secretary K. Gangadharam participated.

Milk producers hike prices

CHENNAI, January 20, 2014 - Prices of standardised and full cream milk supplied by private brands will go up from Monday by Rs. 2 a litre. Sources of two companies said the hike was necessitated as they had to increase procurement price.

A litre of full cream milk will now cost Rs. 42.

"Aavin, the government-run milk agency, hiked the procurement price by Rs. 3, causing our suppliers also to demand an increase. The prices of all commodities are going up, then why not milk?" asked a company source. [Aavin has not increased its retail price of milk.]

However, prices of toned and double toned milk, which constitute about 60 per cent of the market share, have been retained at Rs. 32 and Rs. 28 a litre respectively.

Chennai consumes about 25 lakh litres of milk a day, of which Aavin supplies 11.50 lakh litres. Consumer activist T. Sadagopan questioned the rationale behind the hike.

Water level

Water level in the Periyar dam stood at 112.70 feet on Sunday with no inflow and a discharge of 344 cusecs.

The level in the Vaigai dam was 35.50 feet with an inflow of 72 cusecs and a discharge of 60 cusecs.

The combined storage in Periyar credit was 1,255 mcft.

There was no rainfall recorded during the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on Sunday, PWD officials here said.

The water level in Mettur dam stood at 52.99 feet on Sunday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 140 cusecs and the discharge 4,991 cusecs.

Manjeshwar to get fishing harbour soon

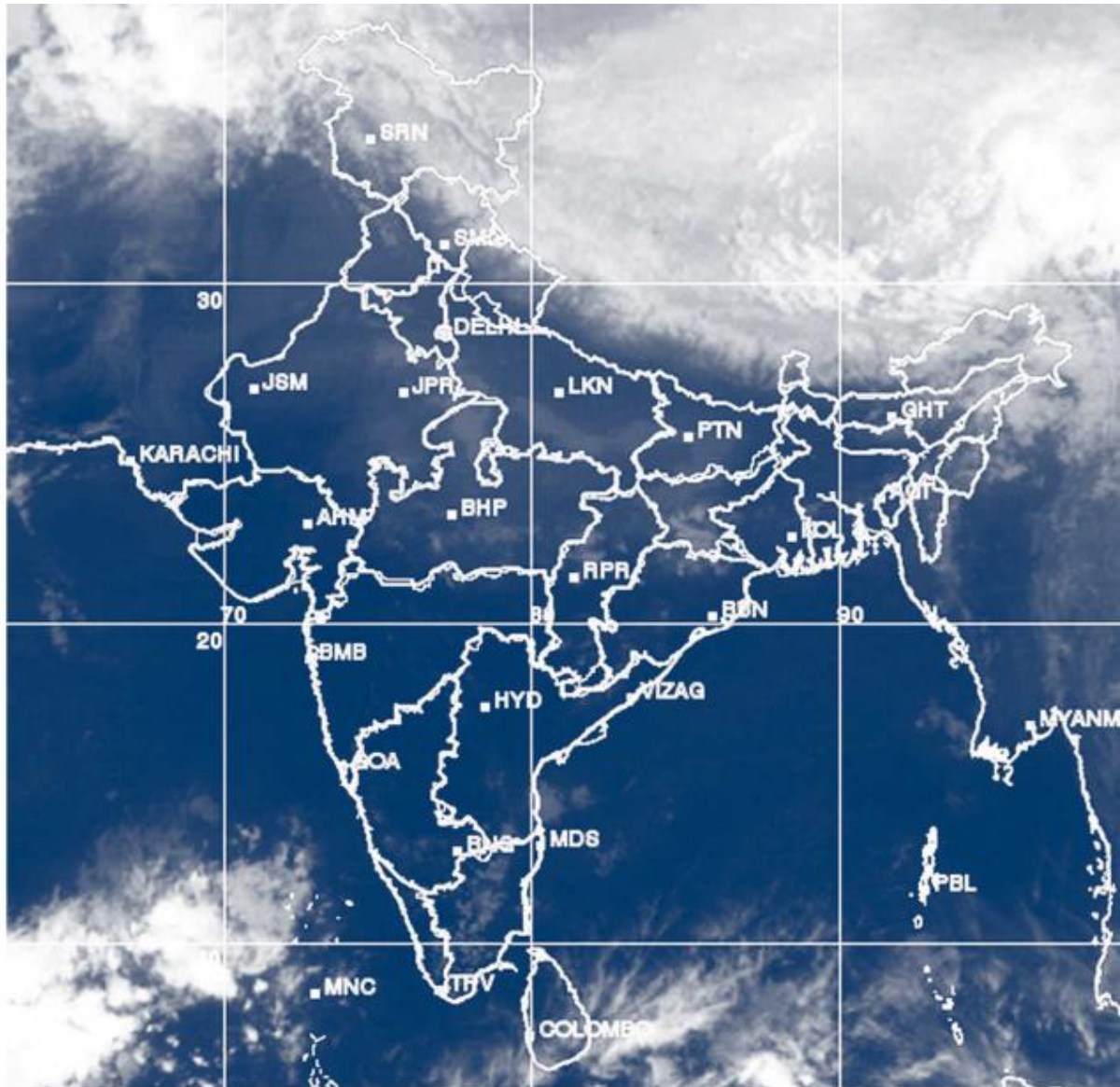
KASARAGOD, January 20, 2014 - Having received environmental clearance from the Centre, the Rs. 48.80-crore Manjeshwar fishing harbour project work at Hosangadi beach would start soon.

The work of the fishing harbour, coming up on 50 hectares would be completed in four years, officials said. While 75 per cent of the project cost would be borne by the Centre, the rest would be shared by the State.

The harbour will facilitate anchoring of fibre and conventional fishing boats besides helping auctioning of fish catch. Nearly, 10,000 fisher folk will focus their activities through the new harbour, the first of its kind in northern Kerala. The harbour will have two breakwaters measuring 530 and 490 metres and 100 metres-long wharf besides 600-square-metre-long auction hall, 40-metres-long loading area and a 10-km-long approach roads, they said. The harbour will also have facility for a 300-square-metre fish net repairing shed. A 100-square-metre engine repairing building, a waste treatment plant, a gear shed for keeping boat engines will be part of the harbour. It will also have a canteen, a toilet and other ancillary

outlets, a compound wall, and a 250-metre-long recreation bund. Around 275 boats set out to the sea every day and the harbour would become a hub for fishing activities.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on January 19.

Foodgrain production expected to break all records: Pranab

PTI Baramati, Maharashtra, January 20, 2014

President Pranab Mukherjee on Sunday expressed confidence that foodgrain production this year will break all records over the previous years and agriculture growth rate could touch 4%.

"It is expected this year our food grain production will break all records over our past record of 259 million tonnes in 2011-12 and 250 million tonnes in the previous year," he said while inaugurating a Krishi Vigyan Kendra building.

Lauding agriculture minister Sharad Pawar and his ministry's role over the good performance in the sector, he said that India today has not only emerged as the largest producer of rice but also largest exporter in rice.

"We have also emerged as the second largest exporter of wheat, sugar and cotton," he said.

The President said that while in the first half of this year agriculture growth has touched 3.6%, it will touch 4% shortly.

Mukherjee also expressed confidence that the country will be able to fulfil the obligation of food security to the people after the enactment of National Food Security Act.

On the role of science and technology in the agricultural sector, he said that the proposed farm innovation fund will encourage development of new product technologies and methodologies by the farmer.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Monday, Jan 20

Max 29° | Min 22°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 70

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:35

Sunset: 06:04

Barometer: 1018

Tomorrow's Forecast








Partly Cloudy

Tuesday, Jan 21

Max 30° | Min 22°

Extended Forecast for a week

Wednesday Jan 22	Thursday Jan 23	Friday Jan 24	Saturday Jan 25	Sunday Jan 26
				
30° 22° Partly Cloudy	24° 23° Overcast	24° 23° Overcast	24° 22° Cloudy	24° 22° Overcast

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Cattle farmers upset as milch cows fail to produce enough milk

TRICHY: Cattle farmers in Trichy and neighbouring districts are a worried lot as they rue that their cows are not producing enough milk. This, they claim is because of the over dosage of vaccinations given to the cattle following the outbreak of [foot and mouth disease](#) (FMD) recently. However, the animal husbandry department has faulted the farmers for not giving vitamin-rich supplements post-vaccination.

Months after the outbreak of the disease, farmers started heaving a sigh of relief as vaccinations were administered to their cattle to contain FMD. But, recently, they have been facing shortage in milk production. They claimed that heavy dosage had resulted in less production of milk. The problem was first detected in the districts of Thiruvarur and Nagapattinam, where the milch cows' stopped producing milk and failed to give birth. Now, veterinary doctors in the region have come up with a mineral mixture for treating these animals to solve this issue.

A C Sampath from Athukudy in [Nagapattinam](#) district claimed that the problem started when vaccinations were administered to cattle through mass camps. "Four shots were given to livestock in order to contain the spread of the disease," he said

"It was a mass camp and all the animals were administered the same amount of medicine irrespective of whether they were affected or not," said Indra S, who lost a calf last week. "After administering the vaccine, our animals are neither becoming pregnant nor delivering properly. I have been advised to give vitamin tonic to my cows. Now, I have to bear the medical expenditure too," complained Sampath, who owns five cows.

Doctors on the other hand are holding the farmers responsible for the ill health of the cattle. [Aveterinarian](#) from Nagapattinam district said the livestock had to be given the right amount of vitamins and proteins post the disease, however the farmers went on with the usual diet.

Talking about the initiatives taken to treat the affected cattle, I Chinnadurai, joint director of animal husbandry department, said five tonnes of mineral mixture have been procured for distribution. "The mixture rich in vitamins and minerals would be given to the affected livestock animals shortly," he said.

Go green with pedal power

HUBLI: Eco-friendly projects help put the spotlight on environmental issues. With this in mind, students from various engineering colleges from across the country displayed innovative projects offering 'green' solutions at Yuva Summit-2014 organized at BVB College of Engineering and Technology in the city on Sunday.

About 65 projects on waste and plastic management, air and water pollution control, rainwater harvesting, power generation, agricultural solutions, food management, slum-cleaning were popular with visitors, who thronged 38 stalls at the summit, organized under the guidance of LEAD of Deshpande Foundation.

Anirudh Ravi, an engineering student of Gogte Institute of Technology College, Belgaum, displayed his innovation that reduces air pollution. "Waste management is a big challenge in many cities like Bangalore, Hubli-Dharwad and other cities. Many people burn dry waste like paper, and plastic, which emit harmful toxic acids. To find a solution to this, I came up with Trash-A-Nator, in which a blower is connected to a dry waste-burning barrel. With this, we can reduce harmful gases. It can be used in small and large-scale industries, housing colonies, and other organizations."

Another engineering student, Amogh Desai of Angadi Institute of Technology and Management College, Belgaum, brought a pedal-powered metal cutter, made only of waste material. On being pedalled, the machine starts cutting the metal and at the same time, generates electricity.

Anjali Kulkarni, Apoorva, Sharanamma and other students of Godutai Women's College of Gulbarga talked about how they motivated dropouts to go back to school.

Another group of students from an engineering college in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, made a project on reusing water bottles as decorations like flower pots.

Besides, there were farmer-friendly projects.

Sensors to find why honeybees are vanishing



As many as 5,000 tiny sensors are being placed on honeybees.

SYDNEY: Alarmed at the dwindling [bee population](#) around the world, scientists have found a novel way to find out what's really causing their colonies to collapse.

A team of researchers in Australia is inserting sensors in thousands of

honeybees in Hobart, Tasmania.

Each sensor contains radio frequency identification technology.

"Every time the bee passes certain checkpoints, its presence would get logged and the data would then be sent to a central research location," according to a press release issued by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia's national science agency.

As many as 5,000 tiny [sensors are being placed on honeybees](#), said Paulo de Souza, a scientist in charge of micro-sensor technologies and systems at CSIRO.

"Their goal is to visualize how bees move in the environment and what's causing bee colonies to shrink," said researchers from University of Tasmania.

"This is a non-destructive process and the sensors appear to have no impact on the bee's ability to fly and carry out its normal duties," Paulo de Souza said.

Colony collapse disorder is a known problem affecting bees around the world.

Next on the scientists' agenda is to try fitting little cameras as 'backpack' on bees — or even smartphones.



Irrigation dept releases water without request



At a time when water cuts have become a norm for Pune, the irrigation department continues to release water for irrigation in the district without any request from farmers. In response to a Right to Information (RTI) application filed by The Indian Express, the Khadakwasla division has replied that it has not received any application from farmers or water users'

associations(WUA) for release of water for irrigation from 2008 to 2013, though the canal committee continued to make provision for agricultural usage in the district during the time. The responsibility of supplying water for drinking, agricultural and other purposes in Pune district lies largely with the Khadakwasla division of the irrigation department and is done through the New Mutha Right Bank Canal and the Chaskaman Canal. Twice a year, the canal committees meet to decide the allocation of water. Documents show that since 2008 the new Mutha Right Bank Canal Committee had met six times and the Chaskaman Canal Advisory Committee met thrice. These committees mostly constitute of MLAs, chairmen of sugar factories and officials from irrigation, agriculture and other departments. Other than the chairman of the Audambar Water Users' Association in Daund, no other farmer or water users' group found place in the committee.

As stated above, in response to the RTI query about the number of such requests received, the officer-in-charge said: "No request was received regarding water supply during the above time period." Minutes of the meetings of the New Mutha Canal Advisory Committee, however, showed water was released for irrigation between 2008 and 2013. While 6.15 TMC was allocated in 2008-09, 10.37 TMC was allocated for 2009-10. Similarly, 11.76 TMC

of water was allocated for irrigation in 2010-11, and 14.91 TMC in 2012-13. The committee decided to conserve water for drinking purposes in 2011-12, which was a dry year. The minutes of the meetings of the committee noted that the issue of water supply to Pune city had come up time and again, with irrigation officials pointing out how the city was drawing more than the water allocated to it. Records show the committee had allowed 13.46 TMC for Pune city in 2008-09, 8.44 TMC in 2009-10, 9.56 TMC in 2011-12 and 9.6 TMC in 2013-14. During 2012-13, a drought year, the committee allowed water to be used for drinking purposes only. Minutes of the 2010-11 meetings show a water cut of 10 per cent was imposed on the city to cope up with the less rains that year, which seemed to have continued since then.

This was in sharp contrast to other irrigation divisions, which seemed to be getting regular requests from farmers and water users' associations for supply of water. The Bhima irrigation sub-division in Kurkumbh, for example, had received 42,875 applications and the Bhima irrigation development region 1 (dealing with talukas of Mohal and North Solapur) received 1,345 applications.

Senior irrigation officers admitted to releasing water for irrigation without any request from farmers. "We do charge them later on. In other regions, the water users' associations are formed and they send out applications," said a senior officer. Irrigation officials said water had become a sensitive and political issue in Pune. However, the final call on water allocation is taken on the basis of the canal committee's decision.

Alleging "lack of transparency" in the water distribution system, Parineeta Dandekar of advocacy group South Asia Network of Dams Rivers and People (SANDRP) said the composition of the canal committee was itself against the farmers. "Water management in this area is heavily tilted in favour of the rich farmers and sugar factories. More transparency is necessary in this region," she said. Activist Vivek Velankar said the formation of water users' association should be made mandatory for every canal committee. "Proper distribution of water should be made through scientific studies rather than arbitrary decisions," he said.



Pawar Draws Flak for Tabling Agriculture Bill Without Consultation



The parliamentary standing committee on agriculture found fault with the Maratha strongman for introducing the Agricultural Biosecurity Bill in Parliament without prior consultation with state governments. | File/PTI Agriculture Minister and NCP chief Sharad Pawar may be proud of his contribution to the nation's agricultural sector, but the parliamentary standing committee headed

by senior CPM leader Basudeb Acharia is not quite impressed.

The parliamentary standing committee on agriculture found fault with the Maratha strongman for introducing the Agricultural Biosecurity Bill in Parliament without prior consultation with state governments.

In its report presented to Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar earlier this month, the standing committee pointed out that there was no prior consultation with the states on the proposed legislation in spite of the fact that agriculture is a state subject and states, the implementing agencies. It is not for the first time that UPA ministers have found themselves on the wrong side of the parliamentary panel's opinion with regard to their performance.

Several standing committee reports in the past have hauled up UPA ministers for drawing weak Bills and for lack of thorough consultative process while drafting historic pieces of legislation with a wide-ranging impact. Pawar had introduced the Bill that seeks setting up an authority for prevention, control, eradication and management of pests and diseases of plants and animals in the Lok Sabha in March last year. The Bill was then referred to the standing committee.

On being asked by the Committee if any Central Act was formulated without prior consultation with the states on an exclusively state subject, the secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture admitted, "there should be consultation. But this subject is not exclusively a state subject. This is not agriculture. This is agricultural biosecurity. But, we should consult with the states."

Nilgiris Tea Cover to be Trimmed to Catch Man-eater

With the man eater tiger remaining elusive, the Nilgiris district administration has asked the farmers to prune tea leaves in the plantations to make the spotting of the animal easier. The officials have decided to put on hold the combing operations for two days to facilitate the pruning works.

The decision was taken during a meeting, chaired by Collector Shankar, held on Saturday night.

The collector along with the forest officials and villagers discussed the plan, which would not only help the cultivators to get better yield, but also help in sighting the tiger easily. The tiger has hitherto managed to give the teams the slip in the thickly grown plantations in the hilly Thummenatty.

The villagers readily agreed to go ahead with the plans, said a source who was part of the whole operation.

The source added that many cultivators had not pruned the plants, which were already chest high and was being used by the animal to its advantage. Further, as an incentive, the collector said the Tea Board would offer the cultivators `15,000 subsidy per acre.

"Till now, the farmers have not cut the tea bushes, and during the meeting we convinced them to do so. This would help us to catch the tiger and the measure would help the plantation as well," Sankar said.

The tea bushes, especially in Kundansappai, were thick and the tiger had been spotted in the area frequently, the Collector added.

Moreover, to alleviate any fears in the workers, the Collector said adequate security would be provided to those involved in the pruning work. A civic official of Thumenatty village said the villagers were ready for the work as it was a matter of life or death for them. He added that the ongoing operations had left most of them jobless, and the works would provide them with some source of income.

THE HINDU Business Line

Rallis to help Andhra Pradesh farmers produce more chilli

Mumbai, Jan 19: Rallis India, a Tata Group company, plans to replicate its success of 'Grow



More Pulses' programme in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka in association with the respective State Governments. Besides, Rallis has started working with 100 farmers growing chilli in Andhra Pradesh's Guntur district.

Metahelix Life Sciences, a subsidiary of Rallis, markets a variety of chilli seed which increases yield by at least 15-20 per cent.

The company currently provides quality inputs and supports pulses farmers on best farming techniques to 2.5 lakh

farmers in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu to increase yield by 15-25 per cent.

Rallis plans to increase its coverage in Maharashtra to eight districts from three last year.

In this process, it will double its farmers' reach to 80,000 covering pulses grown on one lakh acres.

Veeramani Shankar, Managing Director, Rallis India, said the company expects to start working with Madhya Pradesh farmers from the next season.

"Our intention is to support 10 lakh farmers over 4-5 years covering 1.5 million acres. While we get to hand-hold farmers and sell our products, it is going to make a huge difference in pulses production as yield in a few cases have increased by 30-40 per cent depending on how best the farmers implement our advises," he added. Besides helping to identify prospective farmers for 'Grow more pulses' programme, the State Government provide a subsidy directly to farmers to buy seeds and other inputs supplied by the company.

Rallis also buys back the pulses from farmers and retails it as unpolished dal under iShakti brand through Tata Chemicals.

"We have just started working with farmers in Andhra Pradesh and will have a buy-back arrangement in place to explore marketing value-added chilli products to address concern over adulteration in chilli powder," said Shankar.

Though Rallis works closely with farmers growing grapes and pomegranate, it does not buy-back from farmers.

However, the company helps farmers to identify an exporter and gives assurance to international buyers that best farming practices have been followed.

Mixed trend at Kochi tea sale

Kochi, Jan. 19: Tea prices of almost all varieties ruled mixed at the Kochi auctions last week. In sale No. 3, the quantity on offer in CTC dust grades was 12.21 lakh kg.

With a good demand, the market for good liquoring teas was dearer by Rs 2-4 and sometimes more.

Others were irregular.

Besides a better export enquiry, upcountry buying was fair.

There was a slight increase in orthodox arrivals and the quantity on offer was 12,500 kg.

Prices declined and the market witnessed a lot of withdrawals.

Exporters bought whatever small quantity that was sold.

In the best CTC dusts, PD varieties quoted Rs 104-117 a kg, RD grades fetched Rs 110-149, SRD ruled at Rs 122-155 and SFD stood at Rs 132-161.

There was lower demand for orthodox leaf category and the quantity on offer was 1.92 lakh kg.

The market for select best Nilgiri brokens and whole leaf barely remained steady to dearer.

Others tended to ease.

Corresponding fannings were lower.

Well made medium whole leaf and fannings were firm to dearer.

There was a subdued demand from exporters, especially from CIS countries.

The quantity on offer in CTC leaf was 64,500 kg.

The market for good liquoring and blacker varieties appreciated in value, while others were irregular and tended to ease.

dust

In the dust category, both Mayura SFD and Waterfall SFD quoted the best prices of Rs 161 a kg each followed by Pasuparai SFD and Sholayar SFD at Rs 159 each.

In the leaf grades Kodanaa TGFOP fetched the best prices of Rs 296 followed by Pascoes Hyson Green Tea at Rs 287.

Tea prices rule lower at N. India auctions

Kolkata, Jan. 19: Tea prices declined in the North India market last week (Sale No. 3) mainly due to poor quality of the offerings.

export demand

While export demand was subdued, there was a fair amount of enquiries from western and West Bengal buyers.

There was also good demand for selected good quality Assam teas last week.

poor quality

“The teas offered were mostly from end-November and end-December pickings. This is the usual trend of decline in prices due to poor quality during first three sales,” an industry expert said.

For the next couple of sales, offerings at all the three auction centres – Kolkata, Guwahati and Siliguri – will start dropping, he said.

Orthodox fetched a higher price since offerings were lower than the previous week’s sale.

The average price for Darjeeling tea also dropped to Rs 165.45 a kg (Rs 181.69).

At Kolkata, 77 per cent of the offerings was sold,

Guwahati and Siliguri centres sold 74 per cent and 80 per cent, respectively.

The average price across all the centres was lower, except for orthodox tea.

The average price of CTC leaf and orthodox teas at Kolkata were Rs 132.58 (Rs 139.35) and Rs 135.72 (Rs 133.78), respectively.

The average price of CTC leaf and dust ruled at Rs 108.77 (Rs 113.58) and Rs 105.98 (Rs 113.01) respectively.

Siliguri centre CTC leaf and dust were at Rs 113.16 (Rs 117.50) and Rs 117 a kg (Rs 123.27) respectively.

Vietnam harvest casts shadow in pepper market



Kochi, Jan. 19: Pepper prices were mixed on the futures market last week, while they declined on the spot market as activities were limited.

There wasn’t much selling pressure, while the buying activity was slow.

Investors were trying to clear stocks released from warehouses at Rs 510 a kg while buyers quoted Rs 505.

On the spot, fresh pepper was traded at Rs 488-508. Pepper from Kerala’s southern districts were traded at Rs 475-485 while from the

high ranges at Rs 495-500 last week, market sources said.

Upcountry requirement is estimated at 4,000-5000 tonnes a month and that is being met by direct supplies from the primary markets on cash-and-carry basis. Interstate dealers based in Tamil Nadu and Wayand district of Kerala were covering and supplying to the north Indian markets while some were dispatching the material from Kerala by rail.

On the NMCE, Feb contract increased by Rs 253 a quintal last week to Rs 51,320. March dropped by Rs 350 to Rs 51,650.

Total turn over fell by 75 tonnes last week to close at 40 tonnes.

On the IPSTA, Feb contracts surged by Rs 4,392 to Rs 50,910.

Spot prices declined by Rs 100 to close at Rs 48,800 (ungarbled) and Rs 50,800 (garbled) on limited activities.

Indian export prices last week were at \$8,500 a tonne (c&f) Europe and \$8,750 (c&f) for the US and remained out priced.

According to the International Pepper Community (IPC), prices were declined in the first half of this month.

Harvesting of pepper in Vietnam, which has started recently, seems to be one of the reasons for the declining trend on the anticipation of early arrivals of the new crop.

However, heavy arrivals are expected from mid-Feb after the Lunar New Year.

Heavy arrivals smash tomato



Karnal, Jan. 19: Tomato prices dropped sharply on heavy arrivals in northern markets besides lacklustre demand. Vikas Sachdeva, a trade expert, told *Business Line* that ample availability pulled prices down. Domestic demand has not picked up but arrivals have improved over the last couple of days, he said.

Besides arrivals, inferior quality also led to the fall in prices, said trade sources. Currently, the quality of local produce is

not satisfactory, said Vikas.

According to the trade experts, ground frost in the last few days has affected the yield and quality of the new crop.

Yield from the new crop is lower and the size is smaller. Quality is likely to remain a problem in the coming days, said experts.

About 1,000 crates (of 25 kg each) of different tomato varieties arrived at the Karnal vegetable market and were quoted between Rs 500 and Rs 2,500 a quintal.

Around 1,700 crates of varieties such as 524, Abhilash, Nasik, Himsona and Hybrid were received in markets in Karnal district.

Of the total arrivals, about 50 per cent was of low quality, while 30 per cent was of medium quality.

Prices of superior quality, making up the rest, eased by Rs 200 to Rs 2,300-2,500 a quintal, medium quality produce dropped by Rs 500 to Rs 1,300-1,500, while low quality produce ruled at Rs 500-850, down Rs 1,000.

On Sunday, some three per cent of the arrivals was unsold.

The market may continue to rule around current levels with marginal fluctuations in the coming days, said trade experts.
