

Farmers seek more mobile paddy procurement centres

7 mobile units, with one for each taluk, currently operational



Talking shop:Collector S.Natarajan at the farmers' grievances day meeting in Tiruvarur on Thursday.

TIRUVARUR, January 31, 2014 - Farmers who spoke at the agriculturists grievances day meeting held here on Thursday, appealed to the district administration to take immediate steps

to sanction more mobile centres for procuring paddy from farmers. They said that there was a strong case for starting more mobile units particularly to benefit farmers of Valangaiman. Initiating a discussion, G.Sundaramurthy, district secretary, Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, said that a large number of farmers in and around Valangaiman had harvested hundreds of bags of paddy and urged the district administration to start more mobile units for procuring it.

S. Natarajan, District Collector, who presided over the meeting, said that presently seven mobile units were functioning in the district at the rate of one unit for each taluk to procure paddy from farmers possessing more than 300 bags each.

There was an overwhelming response to the scheme and so far 1.20 lakh tonnes of paddy worth Rs.169 crore had been procured.

Pointing out that the district has registered a good yield in paddy, he said the average daily procurement stood at 13,466 tonnes. He assured the farmers that steps would be taken for starting more mobile units.

A section of farmers expressed concern over the exclusion of their villages from crop insurance indemnity for the loss suffered during the 2012.

They said that the procedures being followed for crop cutting experiment should be restructured to benefit genuine farmers who had lost their crops. Sathappan, a paddy grower of Needamangalm, wanted inclusion of all farmers under the scheme.

The Collector assured the farmers of necessary action. The Collector said that steps have been taken to improve water table in the district under various schemes. A sum of Rs. 20 crore has been sanctioned for setting up 1,335 artificial recharge structures in the Cauvery and Vennar rivers.

P.Manimaran, District Revenue Officer, A. Azhagirisamy, Senior Regional Manager, Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation and Dhanasekaran, Joint Director of Agriculture, were present.

☐ **'Include farmers of all villages under crop insurance scheme'**

☐ **Rs. 20 crore sanctioned for setting up 1,335 artificial recharge structures**

'Resolve problems of farmers'

DHARWAD, January 31, 2014 - The BJP Kisan Morcha observed the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi as 'Farmer's Rights Assertion Day' here on Thursday.

Kisan Morcha members held a public meeting at the Mahatma Gandhi statue here and urged the government to sort out the problems being faced by farmers in the State.

The Kisan Morcha felt the Union government should drop the existing system of fertilizer subsidy, which it felt was "unscientific." Instead, the government should implement a tariff-based control system.

Likewise, the recommendations of the Swaminathan Committee report on agriculture should be implemented, they said.

The State has been ignoring the interests of cane growers. It fixed the price of sugarcane at Rs. 2,650 a tonne, but most crushing units have yet to implement this. The government should raise the price to Rs. 3,000 a tonne.

The government should also promote ethanol production, which will help farmers supplement their income.

The State had earlier declared 85 taluks as drought-hit, but officials have yet to submit the correct report to the government.

As a result, many areas genuinely affected by the drought have been left out of the list, the morcha alleged.

The State should announce a special package for drought-hit regions, modelled on the one in Vidarbha.

The leaders said they would hold a 'rail roko' on February 7, unless their demands were fulfilled.

Incentive to dairy farmers

KOCHI, January 31, 2014 - Dairy farmers under the Ernakulam region of Milma will get an additional amount of Rs.2 per litre of milk being procured by the cooperative body. The provision was being made in view of the losses suffered by the farmers due to foot-and-mouth disease which affected cattle recently, a press release issued by the organisation said.

The extra amount will be given from February 1 to March 31.

Farmers in Thrissur, Ernakulam, Kottayam and Idukki will benefit from the scheme.

The milk procurement societies will also get an additional amount of Re.0.50 per litre during the same period. The cooperative would also extend relief to the farmers by reducing the price of Milma cattle feed by Rs.700 per tonne, a press release said.

Raje hints at farmer unrest if groundnut crop not procured

Urges Centre to support NAFED facing acute financial crunch

Jaipur: Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje has urged the Centre to extend procurement of groundnut crop till March, hinting at a potential farmers' unrest even as the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) has given signs of cutting down on procurement owing to its precarious financial condition.

In a letter to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Ms. Raje has requested the UPA Government to speed up "allocation of necessary financial support" to NAFED so it could continue with the procurement.

"Rajasthan has had a bumper crop of groundnut this season and more than 20 lakh bags (70,000 MT) of groundnuts have been procured," the Chief Minister said. Another arrival of about 29 lakh bags is expected soon, she wrote. "Due to inadequate budget

allocation...NAFED is finding it difficult hiring godown space, procuring gunny bags and (ensuring) timely payments against groundnut procurement," wrote Ms. Raje. She expressed concern that if the problem persists, it would lead to major unrest among farmers in Jodhpur, Bikaner, Nagaur and Churu — the main groundnut growing districts of the State.

The federation — which is the nodal agency for procurement of 16 commodities including oilseeds and pulses at minimum support price under the Central Government's Price Support Scheme — is reportedly facing an acute financial crunch.

The situation has reached a stage where, failing to get financial support from the Centre, NAFED is reportedly considering selling its bio-fertilizer units in Bharatpur (Rajasthan) and Indore (Madhya Pradesh) to 'healthier' cooperatives like IFFCO and KRIBHCO.

Horticulturist turns barren stretch into verdant garden



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, January 31, 2014 - In 1968, Vinoo Karthikeyan's sprawling farm at Puthenthope on the outskirts of the city was an expanse of unforgiving land beside the Arabian Sea; sandy, sun-scorched, bone dry, bare and wind-swept.

The 50-year-old farmer, who won the State government's award for the best horticulturist in 2013, was barely four years old when his father, V.K. Karthikeyan, a veteran agriculturist now aged 90, acquired the 10 acres of seaside land, much to the bewilderment of his well-wishers.

Model orchard

Over the years, Mr. Karthikeyan dug wells, augmented the top soil with red earth and humus and planted coconut trees, well-spaced from one another, a novelty in those days. By 1984, his farm had become a model for many coconut growers.

The same year Mr. Karthikeyan started cultivating exotic orchids and foliage plants as a subsidiary crop, even though there was little local demand for ornamental plants.

After he took charge from his ageing father, Vinoo extensively toured horticulture farms in South East Asia, learned latest farming techniques, earned a licence to import exotic varieties of ornamental plants, collected and propagated rare orchids, some of them genetically engineered in foreign laboratories to augment their natural beauty. Terrestrial orchids, many of them latest exotic varieties, are his forte.

They are propagated in poly houses and then planted on a bed of coconut fibre, mixed with earth and fertilizers.

The farm uses an extensive network of sprinklers linked to a ground water extraction system to save on labour costs.

Vinoo and his workers start their day early. Mornings are reserved for weeding orchid beds and spraying the plants with nutrients and pesticides. Harvesting foliage leaves and orchid blooms and packing them for clients in Mumbai occupy most of their afternoons.

A legacy

Vinoo says his garden is no Eden. Giant African terrestrial snails, which feed on blooms at night and salt water contamination of the ground water table, are existential threats. So are increasing freight charges and rising labour costs.

However, Vinoo says it's hard to shrug off his legacy and feels an elemental need to sustain his farm against all odds.

His sister, Mini Karthikeyan, is also an award-winning florist and horticulturist.

It seems the green thumb runs in the family.

Pest and disease forecast by TNAU

COIMBATORE, January 31, 2014 - Tamil Nadu Agricultural University has forecast the pest and diseases prevalent during this time of the season and the precautions and measures farmers can take to combat them.

Leaf folder and stem borer incidence are noted in rice in Coimbatore, Erode, Thiruvallur, Kanyakumari, Ramanathapuram, Theni, Pudukkottai, Tirunelveli and Salem districts. Brown spots was found in Theni and Ramanathapuram, while bacterial leaf blight incidence was found in Tiruchi, Thanjavur, Thiruvarur, Nagapattinam, Ramanathapuram and Theni districts. Farmers are asked to set up light traps, spray Neem seed kernel extracts, phosalane, profenophos, mancozeb, or copper hydroxide. Spraying of tricyclozole has been recommended to farmers in Tiruchi spotting incidence of neck blast.

Sugarcane farmers in Pudukkottai, Erode, Salem and Theni spotting incidence of borer pest complex below the ETL are asked to release egg parasitoid trichogramma from the fourth month at 15 days interval till the sixth month. Groundnut farmers in Ramanathapuram, Madurai, Tirunelveli, and Pudukkottai districts spotting leafminer incidence are asked to use light traps, and spray neem seed kernel extract at five per cent. Tikka leaf spot incidence can be dealt by spraying carbendazim or mancozeb or chlorothalonil.

Cotton mealy bug incidence in Theni, Dharmapuri and Madurai districts can be dealt by spraying fish oil rosin soap or neem seed kernel extract.

Yellow sticky trap can be set up for sucking pests in Perambalur districts. Alternaria leaf blight in Bt cotton hybrids can be tackled by foliar application of trifloxystrobin and tebuconazole.

HMDA plans fruit seedling nurseries at Moinabad

HYDERABAD, January 31, 2014 - The Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) is planning to set up two scion bank nurseries in Moinabad mandal towards providing high-value grafted fruit seedling to farmers and home gardens at an affordable price.

It has a similar nursery at Tellapur, spread over 50 acres, which has 60,000 mango grafts of nearly 13 different varieties apart from other fruits such as pomegranate, 'kala jamun', 'sapota' and seedless lemon.

These grafts in the size of three feet to five feet are offered at a price of Rs.16 each.

Tellapur scion bank nursery which has four blocks earmarked to propagate grafts for mango varieties including 'Benishan', 'Mallika', 'Himayat' and 'Dasher' and other blocks for six varieties of 'kala jamun', tamarind and 'usiri'. "We raise high value grafted fruit seedlings through approach, bud and veneer grafting techniques for farmers, individuals and also for supply to different agencies," said an official.

Tellapur project

The HMDA is now looking at replicating the Tellapur initiative at two more locations in Moinabad with a 50 acre site at Peddamangalaram village and 100 acres at Kanakamamidi village at an estimated cost of Rs.20 crore. "In the two new projects, we have drawn plans to have sector-wise development for different graft seedlings and will ensure high quality such as at Tellapur facility," said HMDA Director (Urban Forestry), M. Raja Ramana Reddy.

Govt. lands

The HMDA Commissioner, Neerabh Kumar Prasad, said the land sites identified for new nurseries at Moinabad were government lands that are covered under conservation zone regulations of the GO 111. "The government has sent our plans to the Revenue Department

and we are awaiting necessary orders and once we get possession of land, the work will start,” he added. As part of the urban afforestation initiative, the urban planning body over the decades has come up with a total of 10 big and small nurseries in the city which together boast a collection of nearly 14 lakh seedlings.

The nurseries will come up on a 50-acre site at Peddamangalaram and 100 acres at Kanakamamidi in Moinabad

WATER LEVEL

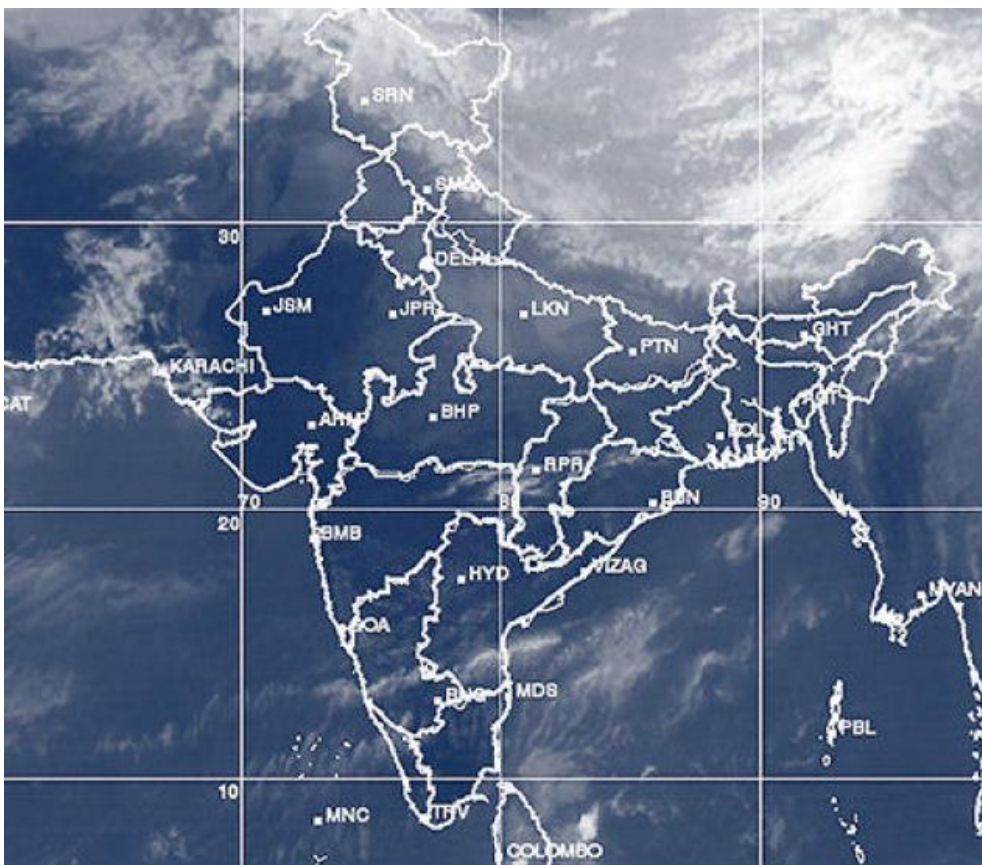


The water level in Periyar dam stood at 111.40 feet on Thursday with an inflow of 3 cusecs and a discharge of 200 cusecs. The water level in Vaigai dam was 35.66 feet with no inflow and a discharge of 40 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 1,066 mcft.

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

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 51.54 feet on Thursday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 877 cusecs and discharge nil.

Weather



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

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Friday, Jan 31

Max 29° | Min 21°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 69

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:35

Sunset: 06:09

Barometer: 1016

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Saturday, Feb 1

Max 30° | Min 21°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday

Feb 2



30° | 21°

Partly Cloudy

Monday

Feb 3



25° | 22°

Partly Cloudy

Tuesday

Feb 4



25° | 22°

Partly Cloudy

Wednesday

Feb 5



25° | 21°

Sunny

Thursday

Feb 6



25° | 21°

Partly Cloudy

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Karnataka sugarcane farmers see red

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar mills ordered to pay up sugarcane farmers

TRICHY: Angry scenes were enacted at a special grievance day for sugarcane farmers on Thursday with most of the farmers seeking speedy payment for their sugarcane production from the mills. They also demanded to revive the practice of supplying 500g sugar for every tonne of sugarcane supplied to the mills at the special day that was presided over by [district collector](#) Jayashree Muralidharan

The meeting was also attended by sugar mill representatives who were given a dressing down by the collector for not complying with the government order. The [state government](#) had stipulated a price of Rs 2,550 per tonne. But, the farmers complained that the mills have not paid them for as long as six months after the supply and the situation has put them in a context of great difficulty to further to move on with their agricultural work. The farmers complained that workers hired by the mills to harvest the sugarcane had to be paid extra, or else they would not put their foot in the field.

As a result, harvesting the sugarcane could not be accomplished at the opportune time for marketing them, the farmers complained. After listening to both the parties, the collector ordered that the mills must pay the farmers the price of their produce as soon as they were supplied. She told the mills that the practice of giving 500g sugar for every tonne supplied should be given to the individual farmers. The mills on their part should take immediate steps to harvest the sugarcane at the opportune time. More importantly, the mills must pay all the outstanding dues to the farmers within a period of one week after duly advertising the payment mode through newspapers and TV channels.

‘Non-populist’ Irrigation Bill shelved for fear of irking farmers

SUMMARY

State Right To People (Public Service) Bill 2013 to get final shape soon

The Narendra Modi-led government, keen on sending the message of good governance to the people, has decided to hold the Gujarat Irrigation and Drainage Bill 2013. However, the State Right To People (Public Service) Bill 2013, is expected to get its final shape very soon, given its populist nature.

Both these bills were cleared by Governor Kamla Beniwal last year.

While the State Right To People (Public Service) Bill, 2013, is a populist one, promising good governance through time-bound delivery of public services, the Gujarat Irrigation and Drainage Bill, 2013, proposes to regulate water resources entirely under government control and has, hence, been shelved as it may make farmers unhappy.

With the Lok Sabha elections round the corner, the government wants to send the good governance message across to the people. “The government’s priority now is to form the final rules and regulations draft for the pending bills, especially the State Right To People (Public Service) Bill 2013. It is very important to send the message of good governance, which is the heart of Modi’s campaign,” said a top level officer on condition of anonymity. Sources in the government maintained that it is already late. But with the BJP prime ministerial candidate busy campaigning, along with several important policies including Industries, tourism and solar, hogging for Modi’s attention, the draft for bills have also been pending.

But the case with the Gujarat Irrigation and Drainage Bill 2013 is quite different. The bill, which has put limit on the depth of borewells and penalty on using canal water, even coincidentally, was passed in the Assembly with a majority, in spite of strong opposition from the Congress. But now, despite the Governor clearing it, signs of intense agitation from ground reports led the government to put the bill on hold.

“It will be suicidal to implement the irrigation bill at this juncture,” said a senior minister in the government, adding, “It is not likely to be touched at all. No ministers want to do it for fear of facing the anger of the farmers in their constituencies.”

But then again, if the State Right To People (Public Service) Bill, 2013, is stalled as well, the BJP leaders will have to gear up for questions being bombarded at them from all quarters. In April 2013, when the public service bill was cleared, Gujarat was the 14th state in India that called for penalising public servant in case of failure in time-bound delivery of services. While the government of Madhya Pradesh, headed by another BJP CM, Shivrajsinh Chauhan, was the first to implement this Act in 2010, in the past three years a total of 13 states, including Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, Chhattishgarh, Delhi, Kerala, Orissa, have implemented this Act.

Falling Tomato, Plantain Prices Leave Farmers in the Lurch

Even as abysmally low market prices have left tomato and plantain farmers in a piquant situation, the Vegetable and Fruit Export Promotion Council of Kerala (VFPCCK) blames the situation on favourable climatic conditions that led to a bumper crop in Tamil Nadu and border villages.

“The prices of tomatoes in the Velanthavalam market in Vadakarapathy panchayat of Palakkad district today was `30 for a 15-kilogram box and `20 for average quality,” said panchayat member R Shashikumar.

According to VFPCCK district manager T V Arun Kumar, there was a bumper crop in the neighbouring state and the border villages of Meenakshipuram, Perumatty, Vadakarapathy, Kozhinjampara, Menonpara and Kinarpallam in the district. “The climate has been good this year. This is the reason for the steep fall in the prices,” he said.

The cost of cultivation of one plantain tree will come to `150 to `200 and the average weight of a plantain in summer months ranged between 7 and 10 kg. Considering the transportation and other overhead costs, if prices remained below `25 per kg it was a losing proposition, said P S Santhosh Kumar, who grows plantain in 40 acres of leased land and won the VFPCCK’s award this year. Arun said the VFPCCK was engaged in selling the farmers’ produce at the retail level. He said the council could give only an additional `1 per kg for plantains.

“As the funds have exhausted, I have sent a fax to the chief executive. The prices in Thrissur was also `16 per kg of plantain today after deduction of agents’ commission and loading and unloading charges,” he said. Meanwhile, Kerala State Horticultural Products Development Corporation managing director K Prathapan said that in the last few weeks the corporation had procured 125 tonnes of tomatoes from the farmers in the border villages of Palakkad at `6 per kg.

THE HINDU Business Line

Demand for strategic rubber reserve gets shriller



Rubber output A Thai worker arranges rubber sheets on racks for drying in the smoke house at the Thai Hua Rubber Pcl factory. Rubber production in Thailand may decline as growers from the main producing regions joined protests seeking to overthrow the government. Bloomberg

Kochi, January 30: The tyre industry has asked the Centre to build a strategic reserve of natural rubber within a policy framework to meet exigencies.

The demand comes in the wake of Kerala Chief Minister Oommen Chandy's statement that the State Government will procure rubber from the open market to lift prices from the current four-year lows.

The move by Kerala Government is in line with the industry's long-standing request to build a buffer stock for rubber to minimise the vagaries of sharp volatility in prices, upward and downward, as witnessed in the last few years.

However, instead of a knee-jerk reaction or an act of desperation, a strategic reserve of rubber should be a part of an institutional framework, said Rajiv Budhraj, Director-General, Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association.

ATMA, in the recent past, has made a number of representations to the Government to have a buffer stock of rubber in the country like China, he said.

In a communication to Ministry of Commerce and Industry, ATMA said that rubber prices, both domestic and international, have exhibited wide ranging volatility that is not desirable from the perspective of both rubber producers and consumers.

Price volatility

Extreme price volatility needs to be minimised through creation of a buffer stock or strategic reserve of approximately 15 days requirement which would take care of managing imports at the time of shortfall in domestic rubber production, and discourage panic selling by growers when prices decline.

Pepper stays hot amid tight supplies

Kochi, January 30: Pepper prices ruled hot on strong internal demand amidst tight supply. Spot prices continued to surge ahead and they were Rs. 4 short of the record high. On Thursday, 32 tonnes of farm-grade pepper were traded at Rs. 505-518 a kg depending upon the quality, bulk density and area of production, market sources told *Business Line*. Validity-expired stocks were offered at Rs. 520, while buyers were quoting Rs. 518 a kg. Fresh pepper arrivals were from high ranges and southern districts of Kerala. Harvesting in Wayanad and Karnataka is expected to commence from next week, they said.

Domestic demand has strengthened following emptying of the pipelines in the north Indian markets. As the grinding industry is active in its operations during the winter months all the small and medium units are reported to have exhausted their stocks. All big, small and medium units and the end users are out to buy, they said adding, "this phenomenon has aided the price rise."

February and March contracts on the NMCE increased by Rs. 55 and Rs. 462 respectively to Rs. 52,620 and Rs. 53,500 a quintal.

Outlook turns bearish for mustard, oil

Indore, January 30: The bullish trend in mustard oil seems to have ended on slack demand and rise in arrival of mustard across the country with the weather improving.

On Thursday, mustard oil in Indore mandis declined to Rs. 640 for 10 kg (Rs. 646). Mustard oil has been witnessing a bullish trend in Indore mandis for the past few days with demand outstripping arrivals.

Besides, rise in prices of soya oil on account of negligible arrival of soyabean also supported rise in mustard oil prices. In Indore, mustard oil on Thursday was quoted at Rs. 662 (up Rs. 6 from last week). With rise in arrivals and slack demand from the crushers, plant deliveries of mustard oil for Jaipur line declined to Rs. 3,500-3,005 a quintal (down Rs. 100 from last week).

Though local mandis remained closed today on account of 'amavasya', in the physical market mustard on Thursday ruled stable at Rs. 4,500-4,600 a quintal (up Rs. 100 from last week).

Weather change may usher in sweeter time for sugar

Mumbai, January 30: WEATHER CHANGE MAY HELP SUGAR

Sugar prices witnessed a mixed trend on the Vashi wholesale spot market on Thursday keeping the undercurrent weak as supply is ample. On the spot, prices for S-grade increased by Rs. 10, while for M-grade they declined by Rs. 10. Naka and mill tender rates were unchanged on routine volume. Sources said that sugar prices are expected to improve in February with change in weather and usual higher demand in start of the month. Arrivals at Vashi market continued to be around 55-56 truckloads (of 100 bags each), while local dispatches were 57-58 loads. Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs. 2,692-2,820 (2,680-2,820) and M-grade declined to Rs. 2,802-2,952 (2,812-2,952). Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs. 2,600-2,780 (2,600-2,780) and M-grade Rs. 2,770-2,915 (2,770-2,915).

Growers worried as rubber prices drop to Rs. 140/kg

Kottayam, January 30: The current drop in rubber prices to a four-year low is a shock to growers, most of who had assumed that the hike in import duty to Rs. 30 a kg would protect them from any sharp fall in the market.

Sheet rubber declined to Rs. 140 a kg on Thursday, with the downward trend gathering pace.

Fall in global demand, withdrawal of China from the international market and continuing slowdown in the world economy are the immediate reasons for the price fall, according George Valy, President of the Indian Rubber Dealers Federation.

When the import duty was raised to Rs. 30, growers welcomed it as a measure that will stabilise prices.

Imports

Though various reasons are attributed to the current trends in prices, the fact is that it has directly affected the lives of thousands of marginal growers who own rubber areas below five hectares. In December, the country imported 25,000 tonnes and during the first half of the current month, another 20,000 tonnes have come into the country.

As a major stake holder in the industry, the dealers' federation is concerned about the price fall. "The Government is morally bound to take appropriate action now," said Valy.

Government agencies should come forward to procure rubber and the Rubber Board must be authorised to supervise and coordinate the procurement process utilising the price stabilisation funds with the Commerce Ministry.

The fund will have a corpus of Rs. 500 crore, of which, Rs. 482.88 crore is made available by the Centre, and Rs. 17.12 crore is to be contributed by growers. The interest from the fund will be used to provide income support for growers. Growers, who own less than 4 hectares of rubber plantation, can enroll in the fund.

The IRDF demanded that the issue should be included in the agenda of the next Cabinet meeting and a decision taken to ameliorate the grievances of the growers. This is the time when the prices have to be high considering the international and domestic situation, said Advocate Joy Nadukkara, ex-MP and spokesman of small growers.

"The only alternative is Government's intervention," he suggested. Domestic rubber prices dropped further on Thursday. Sharp declines in the domestic futures and unfavourable reports from the global trendsetters kept the sentiments weak.

There were no quantity buyers, even at lower levels and major consuming industries seemed to be very comfortable with their stock piles and imports. Sheet rubber declined to Rs. 140 (145) a kg, according to traders. The grade weakened to Rs. 142 (Rs. 145) and Rs. 139 (Rs. 142) respectively, according to the Rubber Board and dealers.

Hybrid turmeric tops Rs. 8,000

Erode, January 30: Spot turmeric price increased further on Thursday, especially for the hybrid variety. All 400 the four hundred bags of the quality hybrid variety that arrived were sold and the variety fetched Rs. 8,280 a quintal. On Thursday, all 180 bags of new turmeric that arrived were sold. The finger variety (old crop) sold at Rs. 4,769-6,689 a quintal and root variety Rs. 4,689-6,680 a quintal. Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety fetched Rs. 6,477-8,280 a quintal and root variety Rs. 6,099-6,620. Out of the 903 bags that arrived, 402 were sold. At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs. 5,989-6,784 a quintal and root variety Rs. 5,864-6,769 a quintal. Out of the 768 bags that arrived, 744 were sold. Our Correspondent

Business Standard

Soybean up 1.1% on fresh buying



Soybean prices rose by Rs 42 to Rs 3,378 per quintal in futures trading today on low levels buying amid firm physical sentiment.

Marketmen said apart from increased buying by traders, limited supplies in spot markets mainly pushed up soybean prices.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, soybean prices for April month rose by Rs 42, or 1.14%, to Rs 3,378 per quintal, clocking an open interest of 1,04,000 lots.

Most active near March month improved by Rs 36.50, or 0.97%, to Rs 3,780.50 per quintal, with an open interest of 1,09,260 lots.

February month rose by Rs 24, or 0.63%, at Rs 3,858 per quintal, in an open interest of 79,460 lots.

Potato adds 1.5% on limited supply, high demand

Potato prices rose by 1.54 per cent to Rs 1,101.70 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators enlarged their positions on a firming spot markets trend amid restricted arrivals from major producing regions.

The trading sentiment improved further as the traders enlarged their holdings on account of a surge in the demand for the commodity in the domestic market.



At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for delivery in April surged by Rs 16.80, or 1.54 per cent, to Rs 1,101.70 per quintal with a business turnover of 86 lots.

March potato gained Rs 13.70, or 1.29 per cent, to Rs 1,072.50 per quintal, with trading volume of 158 lots.

Marketmen said increased buying by speculators on pick-up in spot market demand, mainly led to the rise in potato prices at futures trade.

Cardamom surges 1.5% on strong demand



Cardamom prices rose 1.54 per cent to Rs 768.90 per kg in futures trade today as speculators engaged in enlarging positions driven by strong demand in spot markets amid restricted arrivals.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for delivery in February gained Rs 11.70, or 1.54 per cent, to Rs 768.90 per kg, with a business turnover of 468 lots.

The March contract edged up by Rs 10, or 1.27 per cent, to Rs 796.80 per kg in 328 lots.

Traders said that besides restricted supplies from producing belts, strong domestic and export demand also supported the upside in cardamom prices at futures trade.

Castorseed futures rise further on brisk buying



[Castorseed](#) prices firmed up by Rs 43 to Rs 4,240 per quintal in futures trading today due to speculators buying, driven by spot and global markets demand.

Marketmen said rising demand in spot and overseas markets mainly advised speculators to enlarge their positions.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), castorseed prices for near March contract spurted by Rs 43, or 1.02%, to Rs 4,240 per quintal, with an open interest of 1,07,380 lots.

Most active February contract climbed up by Rs 41, or 0.99%, to Rs 4,168 per quintal, in an open interest of 1,34,230 lots.

Crude palm oil marginally up on spot demand



[Crude palm oil](#) futures traded marginally higher by Rs 2.40 to Rs 533.60 per 10 kg today on pick-up in demand in the spot markets amid a firming global trend.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude palm oil for delivery in February rose Rs 2.40, or 0.45 per cent, to Rs 533.60 per 10 kg, with a trading volume of 184 lots.

The January contract gained Rs 1.20, or 0.22 per cent, to Rs 527.30 per 10 kg, with a business volume of 160 lots.

Market analysts said apart from a firming trend overseas, pick-up in the spot demand at domestic markets, influenced crude palm oil futures prices.

Meanwhile, palm oil for the April contract gained 0.80 per cent to 2,563 ringgit (\$766) a tonne on the [Malaysia Derivatives Exchange](#).
