

MACHILIPATNAM,

Agriculture officials gear up for timely supply of seeds, fertilizers

With the kharif operations all set to kick off, the Agriculture Department officials are gearing up to keep their promise of timely distribution of paddy and cotton seeds and fertilizers to farmers.

The kharif acreage in Krishna district is expected to touch 3.1 lakh hectares and it has been estimated that paddy would be sown above 2.5 lakh hectares, a record of sorts for this kharif.

Giving details about the fertilizers distribution, Agriculture Joint Director V.

Narasimhulu said: “As many as 72,000 metric tonnes of fertilizers have been kept ready for distribution. However, the farmers must rely on private outlets for paddy seeds.”

The State government has sanctioned four lakh Bt cotton seed packets to Krishna district.

However, the officials have made at least 60,000 seed packets available, which will be sold at private outlets. The cotton acreage is expected to be more than

65,000 hectares, including the upland areas. Meanwhile, cotton seeds are available at private company outlets under the trade name of Mahyco, Nuziveedu, Kaveri, Tulasi and Ajit.

A 450-gram packet of BT-1 variety is priced at Rs.830 and BT variety is Rs.930.

TIRUNELVELI,

New fish seed farm to be operational soon

Move to promote livelihood of fishermen, private entrepreneurs



BOON:Minister for Fisheries K.A. Jayapaul (right) inspecting a fish tank at Manimutharuon Sunday.— Photo: A. SHAIKMOHIDEEN

To promote livelihood of fishermen and private entrepreneurs, a newly developed fish seed farm at Manimuthar is all set to be operational soon.

It would be a boon to fishermen and also attract new entrepreneurs since captive fisheries are dwindling.

Fisheries Minister K.A. Jayapaul along with Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Secretary S. Vijayakumar, Chief Engineer of Fishing Harbour Project, Chennai, R. Thangaprakasam and others visited Manimuthar here on Sunday, and inspected the fish seed farm, which is being set up at a cost of Rs.12.7 crore under the financial support of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

The facility is coming up on 35 acres with 60 nursery tanks, five breeder ponds and ground-level reservoir with a capacity of holding 30,000 litres of water.

Quality fish seeds could be obtained from this farm. Freshwater fishes could be bred here and given to entrepreneurs once they attained marketable size, the Minister said.

Rajya Sabha MP S. Muthukaruppan conceded to the demand for connecting water supply line from the Tamirabarani riverbed to the seed farm area, and said funds of Rs.52 lakh would be allotted. The Minister also took stock of the activities in a private ornamental fish seed production centre at Vairavikulam near Manimuthar. Already, a 15-day training in ornamental fish breeding had been provided to 40 stakeholders, he said.

Tirunelveli MP K.R.P. Prabakaran, Joint Director of Fisheries R. Amal Xavier, District Revenue Officer P. Uma Maheswari and others accompanied him.

Tuticorin

The team also inspected emerging facilities at fish landing centre at Tharuvaikulam in Tuticorin district. The fish landing centre was being established at a cost of Rs.16.26 crore.

Facilities, including a 300-metre jetty, 140 metre wharf, net mending centre and an auction hall, are being provided.

Official sources said almost 90 per cent of works had been completed and the project was expected to be over by next month.

Collector M. Ravikumar, president of Tharuvaikulam panchayat S. Maharajan and others were present during the inspection.

The local fishermen demanded breakwater at Tharuvaikulam to safeguard anchored boats.

Tourism Minister S.P. Shanmuganathan also took part in the inspection.

SANGAREDDY,

Farmers opting for soyabean cultivation in Medak

With increasing costs in the paddy and sugarcane cultivation some of the farmers are thinking to shift to soyabean cultivation. However, they were not in hurry and trying to experiment in limited space available in the farm than going for mass shift.

According to sources, the cultivation costs of paddy and sugar cane have abnormally increased forcing the farmers to think for alternatives while continuing cultivation.

Paddy cultivation has been costing about Rs. 17,000 per acre which includes labour cost, weed removal, seed and fertilizers. On the other hand the paddy selling price stands at Rs. 1,300 per quintal.

Coming to sugar cane, farmers are being forced to spend about Rs. 25,000 per acre. In addition, getting labour to work, increased cutting and transport charges have been adversely affecting the farmers. Even wild boars destroying the crop have also become a serious problem for the farmers.

In this back drop, some of the farmers are thinking about shifting to soyabean.

More particularly in areas like Gajwel, Narsapur and Kowdipally farmers are showing interest and the agriculture department has already dumped about 160 quintals of soyabean seed at Gajwel, followed by 150 quintals at Kowdipally and 50 quintals at Narsapur.

According to estimates, the soyabean cultivation would cost about Rs. 8,000 per acre only as against the high cost of cultivation in sugar cane and paddy.

The administration has put a requirement of 13,750 quintals of soya been seed for the present Khariff season for the higher officials and green signal was given for 13,000 quintals allotment. Though initially there was huge rush for soya been seed, the situation came to normal now and the officers were stating that required quantity of seed was kept ready.

“Earlier, soyabean cultivation was limited to Zaheerabad like areas. Now it has been spreading to new areas. Farmers are thinking about reducing the cost of cultivation and getting profits,” said an officer in the agriculture department adding that in about 20,000 farmers may cultivate soyabean this year in about 5,000 acres.

TIRUPUR,

Farmers’ forum wants Dharapuram made a general constituency

Amaravathi Nadhineer Pasana Iyakkam, a forum comprising farmers and people involved in allied activities, has forwarded a representation to the Election Commission of India seeking conversion of Dharapuram Assembly constituency back into a ‘General Constituency’. The segment is presently a Reserved Constituency.

Lingam Chinnasamy, the forum’s general secretary, said a large section of people in the area feel the need for exceptionally talented candidates getting elected into the Assembly, without looking at the candidates’ caste or religion.

“In the last few decades, the development in the areas of agriculture and in cooperative sector has not been up to the desired levels. No constructive

initiative has been made to revive the operations of one of the prominent cooperative sector spinning mills in the region, presently defunct, which once provided employment to many hundreds of people,” he added.

VISAKHAPATNAM,

Southwest monsoon advances in Andhra Pradesh

The Southwest monsoon has advanced into some parts of Rayalaseema and South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and some more parts of the west central Bay of Bengal.

An IMD bulletin on Sunday evening says conditions are favourable for further advance of the monsoon into some parts of interior Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

The monsoon advanced over parts of Andhra Pradesh on Sunday morning, said Director of Cyclone Warning Centre here K. Ramachandra Rao.

Heat wave may abate

The monsoon may take three to four days to touch Visakhapatnam. However, the heat wave conditions may abate. There may be a let up in the sweltering

temperatures by Monday going by the trend during the last two days, Mr. Ramachandra Rao said.

With the westerly winds from Rajasthan continuing to hit the region, heat wave conditions are prevailing during the past few days. The severe heat that had been experienced on Friday all over the State with temperature touching more than 8 to 9 degrees than the normal at some places has come down to 5 degrees to 4 degrees (more than the normal) at a few places.

The monsoon was expected to hit Andhra Pradesh between June 8 and 10 but got delayed. It reached Chennai but with southwest winds eluding Andhra Pradesh and westerly winds blowing the State came under severe heat wave conditions claiming quite a few lives.

Temperatures at many cities and towns continued above 40 degrees Celsius and only at four, five places temperatures came down compared to Saturday, CWC sources said.

The following are the temperatures recorded: Kalingapatnam 39.3 degrees Celsius; Tuni 42.9; Visakhapatnam Airport 40.2; Waltair 35.8; Rentachintala 40.2;

Gannavaram 41; Nandigama 39; Machilipatnam 41.9; Narsapur 41.1; Kakinada 41.6; Bapatla 40.2; Ongole 40.6; Kavali 39; Nellore 38.3 and Tirupati 39.

PUDUKOTTAI,

Artificial insemination to boost production of crossbreed cows

Rs. 3-cr. chilling plant helps improve milk production in Pudukottai



Ministers C.Vijayabaskar and N.Subramanian inspecting Aavin dairy in

Pudukottai on Sunday.— PHOTO: DIPR

Milk production in the district has increased in the last few months thanks to the Rs.3-crore chilling plant set up by the milk producers' union under the Integrated Dairy Development Project, said C. Vijayabaskar, Minister for Health.

Addressing officials after inspecting the milk producers' union office at

Tirugokarnam on Sunday, Mr.Vijayabaskar said that the number of cooperative

milk producers' societies has increased from 110 last year to about 206. Milk production has increased from 16,000 to 25,000 litres, and local sale of milk stood at 12,000 litres a day.

Minister for Adi Dravidar Welfare N.Subramanian said the union had received Rs.2.25 crore under the National Agriculture Development Programme for infrastructure development. About Rs.1.25 crore was spent during 2013-14 in the first phase. Balance would be released during the current financial year.

N.Christopher, General Manager, Aavin, said that a firewood-based boiler, procurement and input unit, a solar panel for heating water and concrete road would form part of the infrastructure development proposals under the project.


A mobile unit with veterinary doctors and personnel had been sanctioned for Aavin in the district, he said. The doctors would visit villages and take up artificial insemination for producing crossbreed cows in the district. "Within a few years, quality cows of Jersey and Friesian crossbreed varieties would help boost milk production in the district," he said.

The Pudukottai municipality has planned to allot 21 sites in the town for marketing Aavin products.

TIRUCHI,

Farmers can strike it rich with pitchipoo

SACRED FLOWER



- Pitchipoo grows round the year except two months
- Growing demand for the flower classified under 'Dasa Pushpam'
- Farmers prefer Rameswaram saplings for longer life of plants
- Just 50 hectares brought under cultivation in Tiruchi district
- One plant fetches a annual return for Rs. 5,000

In spite of growing demand for flowers and possibility of assured returns, not many horticulturists come forward to take up *pitchipoo* cultivation. The flower, normally seen in three distinct colours – red, white, and yellow – fetches revenue all through the year except two months during monsoon.

However, lack of irrigational facility is a major bottleneck in cultivating the flower, which is largely used for making garlands at Vaishnavite shrines. It is one of the flowers classified under *dasa pushpam* ideal for offering to Lord Perumal.

P.C.Subbiah Pillai, a farmer of Mannachanallur, who has taken up the cultivation of the flower, said that he had dug borewells for irrigating his fields. Saplings should be bought from places such as Rameswaram for a prolonged life and yield. About 1,500 plants could be raised in an acre, and the plant provides good revenue. He said he was prepared to guide farmers and entrepreneurs interested in the cultivation of *Ixora coccinea* known as 'Jungle Flame'. The yield is poor during November and December during peak monsoon. "A simple procedure could be adopted to save the crop from pests," he said. The farmer could be contacted at: 93446-76358.

State government should take special efforts to step up cultivation of the flower wherever irrigation facility was available. "It can be raised on the bunds of canals," he said. Ayilai Siva Suriyan, district secretary, Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, said while the normal life span of the plant is 20 years, inferior quality plants withered away within five years. Official sources said that the flower is cultivated in only 50 hectares in the district.

HYDERABAD,

Kishan seeks fresh loans for farmers

'Govt. should issue instructions to banks stating its policy on loan waiver'



G. Kishan Reddy

Telangana BJP chief G. Kishan Reddy asked the TRS government to ensure release of fresh loans to farmers since the monsoon season had set in. Unless the farmers cleared their previous loans banks would not sanction fresh loans. Therefore, it was imperative that government issued clear instructions to banks stating its policy on loan waiver.

Speaking to presspersons here on Sunday, Mr. Reddy deplored that neither the Ministers nor the officials had a clear idea about waiver of crop loans. Nobody was sure whether there were enough stocks of seeds and fertilizers. There was no clarity on fee reimbursement and housing scheme either.

Flays KCR

Mr. Reddy criticised Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao for merely talking about honouring the poll promises without telling how he would go about implementing them. In this connection he praised Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for taking practical steps in several matters, though his government had no capital yet.

Mr. Reddy faulted the Telangana government for passing a spate of resolutions on the last day of the Assembly without allowing discussion on them. Expressing concern over the precarious power position in the State, he asked the Chief Minister to act fast if he wanted to purchase power from Chhattisgarh.

Call for restraint

To a question, the BJP leader said 12 per cent reservation announced by KCR to Muslims was impractical and would not stand judicial scrutiny. On its part the

BJP would not allow religion-based reservations. There was nothing wrong in supporting the economically backward among Muslims.

TV9 controversy

On the TV9 issue, Mr. Reddy asked all TV channels to exercise restraint and maintain decorum in the programmes they telecast. He wanted the Chief Minister to call a meeting of all channels to find a solution to the raging controversy.

TUTICORIN,

“Use only certified seeds”

To ensure quality seed for better productivity in agriculture, farmers are advised to use certified seeds. They need to be precise in adopting better management practices to witness growth in agriculture, T. Bharathi, Assistant Director of Seed Certification, Tuticorin, told *The Hindu* on Saturday.

Certified seed would have the quality of minimum required germination and physical purity with the prescribed moisture content.

Farmers could produce foundation and certified classes of seeds and breeder seeds could be obtained by giving proper indent to the Director of Seed Certification, through Assistant Director of Seed Certification. Certification

procedures would be followed wherever notified varieties were cultivated in seed farms. Seed farms of notified varieties could be registered within 35 days from the date of sowing or 15 days before the date of flowering, whichever was earlier.

“For seed farm registration, a producer has to remit a fee of Rs.25 per crop during season to the Director of Seed Certification. Along with the registration fee, inspection fee and seed testing fee should also be remitted. The amount varies from Rs.80 to Rs.280 according to crop, variety and hybrid,” he said.

The registered seed farms would be inspected to assess the standards.

Subsequently, seed crops possessing field standards would be permitted to harvest and moved to the approved seed processing unit for processing, cleaning and other certification works, said A. Vigneshwari, Seed Certification Officer, Kayathar.

The seed lots in sealed containers from grower would be brought to the seed processing unit within the stipulated time for processing and the processed seed samples would be despatched to seed testing laboratories to ascertain their quality, the officer said. Seed lots, which possessed the minimum prescribed seed standards, would only be tagged. White tags would be affixed to foundation class of seed and blue tags to certified class.

BELLARY,

Release crop loss compensation: Sriramulu

B. Sriramulu, MP, urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to initiate steps to release the compensation amount due to the farmers for the loss of crops in the recent wind and heavy rain in and around Hospet taluk.

Crop loss

Mr. Sriramulu was talking to presspersons on Sunday after going to several places in and around Kampli in Hospet taluk on Sunday to check the extent of crop loss.

Banana, a major horticultural crop grown in about 2,000 acres of land in Kampli, Ramsagar, Kamalapur, Bukkasagar, Hampi, Sanapur and surrounding places using Tungabhadra waters, was severely affected by the rain. The loss was estimated to be around Rs. 30 crore.

Maremma, a farmer, said the investment per acre to raise a banana plantation was around Rs. 60,000, and the grown plants had been destroyed in about 1,000 acres.

Mr. Sriramulu criticised the government for not taking steps to distribute to farmers the compensation amount released by the Union government under the Natural Calamity Relief Fund.

GUNTUR,

Fresh crop loans for kharif: Pulla Rao

Allaying concerns over disbursement of fresh crop loans, Minister for Agriculture Prathipati Pulla Rao on Sunday said that farmers would be provided fresh crop loans in the ensuing kharif season starting from July.

Addressing his maiden media conference after being sworn in as Minister in the Cabinet of N. Chandrababu Naidu, Mr. Pulla Rao said that the State Level Bankers Committee would be meeting shortly to finalise the modalities of providing new crop loans and assured the fresh crop loans would be disbursed from July.

Mr. Pulla Rao also sought to dispel fears among farmers over waiver of crop loans and said that the expert committee formed on loan waiver would be submitting its preliminary report on June 22 and added that the State

Government was committed to waive off all loans, including crop loans, gold loans, SHG loans etc.

The Minister earlier vowed to make farming a profitable endeavour at a time when most youngsters were moving away from farming. He also announced a slew of measures aimed at making farming a more rewarding endeavour including, laying of link roads from farms to villages, enhancing subsidy on seed and construction of new godowns and cold storages.

A short tender for the supply of groundnut seed has already been issued and distribution of seed would begin from next week.

There was sufficient seed available for the kharif . Guntur MLA-elect Modugula Venugopala Reddy was also present.

'State Level Bankers Committee will meet soon to finalise the modalities'

NALGONDA,

Cotton likely to be main crop in kharif



A farmer tilling his land to prepare it for kharif season in Nalgonda district.-Photo:
Singam Venkataramana

The area of cultivation is set to cross 6 lakh hectares during the kharif season in Nalgonda district. It will be 31 per cent more than the normal area of cultivation.

Joint Director (Agriculture) B. Narasimha Rao said that they were expecting the farmers to take up cultivation in 6,02,799 hectares during kharif. Cotton would be the prime crop, which might be cultivated in 3.4 lakh hectares against the normal area that is just below 2 lakh hectares.

Expected to taken up cultivation in nearly 2 lakh hectares, paddy will be the second biggest crop in district during the season.

While the two-third of total crops are rain-fed in district, the remaining two lakh hectares are irrigated under various canals.

The total pulses cultivation was put at 50,000 hectares in which red gram and green gram will be cultivated in 25,000 hectares each. One-third cultivated crops are food grains, while the remaining 3.5 lakh hectares are commercial crops. The remaining are pulses and oil seeds.

Meanwhile, Assistant Joint Director M.D. Jameel Shamed Siddique has said that they had made all arrangements for smooth distribution of seeds and fertilisers.

Now, the farmers are eagerly waiting for monsoon showers to take up the sowing operations, he said.

RAJAHMUNDRY,

Water released from barrage

It will cater to irrigation needs of kharif crops in 10 lakh acres



Water gushing out as sluice gates were lifted at Sir Arthur Cotton Barrage at Dowleswaram in East Godavari district on Sunday.- Photo: S. Rambabu
In pursuance of the demands by farmers for irrigation water for kharif season, Irrigation Department authorities on Sunday released water from the Sir Arthur Cotton Barrage at Dowleswaram.

East and West Godavari Irrigation Circle Superintendent Engineer Sugunakar Rao performed a pooja before releasing water which would cater to the needs of the kharif crops in about 10 lakh acres. In all, 500 cusecs of water had been released to the Godavari Eastern and Central deltas. As many as 4.82 lakh acres in the Eastern and Central deltas would get irrigation water, apart from another 5 lakh acres in the Western delta . According to Mr. Sugunakar Rao, the release of water would first meet the drinking water needs and then irrigation purposes. He said that the officials had studied the data pertaining to water release for the first and third crops in the last 10 years following an instruction of East Godavari Collector Neetu Prasad before fixing the date and quantity of water release.

At present, 3,000 cusecs of water is being released into the sea, while storing 2.5 tmcft of water in the reservoir. "We are maintaining the full reservoir capacity, despite high temperatures. We will not go back on our promise on continuing the release of water and see that no crop in the Eastern and Central delta would suffer," Mr. Rao said. Water release for rabi crops was stopped on April 17 for Eastern delta and on April 20 for Central delta. As a result, the department could complete only short-closure works involving an estimated cost Rs.50 crore in both areas as part of the delta modernisation works.

SRIKAKULAM,

'Complete pending irrigation projects'

Minister of Labour and Employment K. Atchannaidu on Sunday asked the officials to complete the pending works at irrigation projects to ensure water supply to over 2 lakh acres in the district.

He said that pending projects at Vamsadhara river needed Rs.2500 crore for completion and he would convince the government for allocation of more funds to the district. He reviewed the progress of development projects at the Zilla Parishad hall in which Collector Saurabh Gaur and other officials also took part.

The Minister asked the officials to supply adequate seeds and fertilisers to farmers ahead of kharif season.

The Minister said stern action would be taken against the officials indulging in malpractice.

Water level

Mettur

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 44.30 feet on Sunday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 548 cusecs and the discharge, 803 cusecs.

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Monday, Jun 16

Max Min

38° | 29°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:42

Humidity: 59

Sunset: 06:36

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1005

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Tuesday, Jun 17

Max Min

38° | 28°

Extended Forecast for a week

Wednesday

Jun 18



38° | 28°

Cloudy

Thursday

Jun 19



37° | 27°

Partly Cloudy

Friday

Jun 20



36° | 27°

Cloudy

Saturday

Jun 21



36° | 27°

Partly Cloudy

Sunday

Jun 22



36° | 27°

Cloudy

Airport Weather

Delhi

Delhi

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:23

Humidity: 53

Sunset: 07:20

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1000



THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Kharif will Expose the Core of Babu's Nature: Jagan



YSRC party president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy (centre) reviewing the party's performance in the recently concluded polls with party leaders in Vijayawada on Saturday | Express Photo

VIJAYAWADA: YSR Congress president YS Jaganmohan Reddy is learnt to have told the party cadre that chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu's true colours will be revealed soon when the farmers, who are preparing for farming operations during the kharif season, approach the banks for loans.

Reviewing the party's poor show in the recently-concluded Assembly and Parliamentary elections in Krishna district at Ahwanam Kalyana Mandapam at Kanuru on the outskirts of the city Saturday, he said that he had decided against making false promises to come to power.

Earlier, speaking to reporters, party leader Samineni Udaya Bhanu said that the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) had come to power in Andhra Pradesh through wrongful means. He demanded that Chandrababu fulfill his election promise of waiving off loans of farmers. "Chandrababu is not clear on the important issue of loan waiver. This is a perfect example of his cheating attitude," he added. Review of Vijayawada (East) Assembly constituency, Vijayawada (Central), Mylavaram, Nandigama, Jaggaiahpet, Tiruvuru, Pedana, Machilipatnam and Vijayawada (West) was done Saturday. On Sunday, the YSRC chief will review the party's performance in Penamaluru, Gannavaram, Avanigadda and Pamarru Assembly segments which fall under the Machilipatnam Parliamentary constituency. Jagan Mohan Reddy will address a press conference after the meeting Sunday, according to party sources.

Agri Officer from Pondy clears UPSC

PUDUCHERRY: Kumaran R, who hails from an agricultural family in Karikallampakkam, has secured the 689th rank in the civil services examination.

Kumaran (31) obtained a Bachelor's degree in Agriculture from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru College of Agriculture and Research Institute (PAJANCOA&RI), Karaikal, affiliated to Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, and Masters in Agricultural Economics from Sri Venkateswara Agricultural College, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

After completing MBA from the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, campus interview paved his way to seed marketing MNCs.

Currently, he is working as an agricultural officer in Puducherry.

Kumaran is married to a school teacher Usha. He said he managed to devote his time to preparations despite his official commitments. He added that the perseverance to crack the civil services, which was deep-rooted in him, finally helped him achieve success.

Kumaran is hopeful of joining IPS or IRS.

He had qualified the preliminary examination conducted by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) during May 2013 and the Mains examination during December 2013. He attended the interview in May 2014 and the final result was declared on June 12.

Farm Loans to the Tune of Rs 304 Crore to be Issued Via Co-ops

VELLORE: The Department of Cooperatives has decided to disburse `304 crore as farm loans for the year 2014-15 through cooperative institutions as against the previous year's `286 crore, said Minister for Cooperation, Sellur K Raju while reviewing the performance of cooperative institutions in Vellore and Tiruvannamalai districts here on Friday.

He said steps had been taken to provide fertilisers through cooperative societies to the farmers in a hassle-free manner.

Through the Cooperatives Department, loans worth `2.75 crore were disbursed to differently-abled persons this year. The chairpersons of the cooperative societies have been advised not to miss the eligible beneficiaries in this regard, he added.

In Vellore district, 1,724 ration shops are functioning which received ration items from nine godowns and about 8.85 lakh ration cardholders receive rice free of

cost. As many as 43 new buildings had been constructed for ration shops in the past three years. The performance of the ration shops was being monitored by flying squads.

A mobile van scheme has been introduced in Yelagiri Hills to cater to the needs of the people and a farm loan of `74 lakh had been disbursed to farmers this year. The small millet Samai, grown in hills, was also being marketed in plains through the cooperative outlets, the minister added.

For the cooperative printing society, a modern multi-coloured printing machine at a cost of 53 lakh had been installed. According to the Minister, out of the 2.04 lakh office-bearers elected for the cooperative institutions, 57,000 were women and 33,000 belonged to the SC/ST communities.

District Revenue Officer Balaraman, Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies S R Venkatesan (Vellore) and V Periyasamy (Tiruvannamalai), district supply officers Pichaimani (Vellore), Kripananthan (Tiruvannamalai), Joint Registrar of Karpagam Cooperative Stores Thriguna Ayyappadurai and Joint Registrar of Central Cooperative Bank Kamatchi, were also present at the occasion.

No Takers for Dalua, Farmers Left in Lurch

JEYPORE: Farmers of Koraput district are in a spot of bother with their Dalua paddy crop finding no takers. Thousands of tonnes of harvested paddy are lying in dumps in several villages as the Government agencies have stopped procuring the same after achieving the paddy procurement target.

Around 25,000 hectares of land were cultivated with rabi paddy crop during January-March in Jeypore, Kotpad, Kundra, Borrigumma areas. Sources said 90 per cent of paddy has already been harvested by farmers with the yield amounting to over eight lakh quintal.

As per Government norms, the paddy should have been procured from different mandis by LAMPS in coordination with State Civil Supply Corporation. But the paddy stock was not procured by the agencies which has put the farmers in a lurch.

The paddy procuring agencies had opened 17 mandis in the region from first week of June. However, the mandis were closed as the agencies achieved the procurement target.

The procurement target of 2.23 lakh quintal for the season was achieved by second week of June. The agencies are now reluctant to take the remaining paddy from the farmers.

With over three lakh quintals of paddy ready for sale in several areas, not a single agency has come to the rescue of the farmers.

Leaders of farmers' associations and pani panchayats had appealed to the State Government through district administration to fix a target quota of rabi paddy procurement up to 12 lakh quintal but in vain.

With the onset of monsoon, the farmers are now desperately running from pillar to post to sell their paddy.

Officials sources said the district Civil Supply department has sent an SOS to the Government for enhancement of procurement target.

On the other hand, incessant rain for the last three days in the region has compounded the farmers' woes.

TNAU Releases Rank List for Undergraduate Courses

by S Mannar Mannan

Coimbatore: The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in Coimbatore released the rank list for its undergraduate programme on Sunday.

Totally, 25,534 students were found eligible for admission to the courses under the academic stream. Two students - RSuryamallikaraj and T Ilakiya Priya, who scored a cut-off score of 200 marks in their Plus Two examination, have topped the list.

Similarly, in the vocational stream, 1,673 students became eligible and S Gow-

reeshwari- with an aggregate mark of 199.25 secured first rank. The vocational stream students were eligible for admission only to BSc Agriculture, BSc Horticulture, BSc Forestry and B Tech Agricultural Engineering courses.

Under the differently-abled category, 40 students were found to be eligible, including five hearing-impaired, 29 orthopaedic and six visually-challenged students.

As many as 260 eligible students have applied under the special quota for sons/daughters of ex-servicemen. Six students have applied

under the descendants of freedom fighters category.

Apart from this, 91 candidates have applied under the Non Resident Indian (NRI) and industrial sponsorship categories.

The TNAU has also rejected hundreds of application for various reasons including nativity of the candidate being other States, age of the candidate exceeding the prescribed 21-years and also for not securing the required minimum marks in their Class XII examination.

The University had received online applications from candidates from May

12 to June 6.

"We are planning to conduct the first phase of general counselling from June 30. The counselling for differently-abled persons will be held on June 28," said S Mahimairaja, Dean (Agriculture).

The first phase of general counselling will continue till July 9. The second phase of counselling will be held between July 14 and 17.

The university also released last year's cut-off marks of different institutions in different categories. Students can access this on www.tnau.ac.in/ug2013cut-off.pdf.

D'puri Farmer Converts Cane, Coir Waste into Fertilizer

K Rangasamy at his waste to organic manure unit

by M Niyas Ahmed

Dharmapuri: K Rangasamy, a farmer from Puthur in Dharmapuri's Kariamangalam believes in the dictum 'Nothing goes waste by nature's law.' He should know better having tasted success in converting waste from the sugarcane and coir industries into organic fertilizers.

Explaining about his foray into this venture, he said in 2009 with the help of NABARD he had started an organic fertilizer production unit.

He initially focused on producing organic fertilizers from wastes produced from mango pulp industries. "However, as the

mango season ended, I faced difficulties. This led me to switch to coir and press mud," said the farmer, a native of Gobichettipalayam in Erode district.

"After finishing my post graduation, I had a short stint with a fertilizer company. One fine day, I resigned my job and came here (Dharmapuri) where I brought a piece of land to open my fertilizing unit," he recalled.

Ramasamy purchases a tonne of enriched press mud and sprays it on spent wash (another industrial waste of sugarcane). He then mixes it with coir in a ratio of 7:3 using a JCB and allows it to decompose for 60 days.

"During the 60 days, the mixture is spiraled thrice before converting it into a powder. Finally, the bio compost contains more than 20 percent of organic carbon, two percent of nitrogen, 1.5 percent of phosphorus and five percent of potassium. Once the manure is prepared, we sell it for ₹2,500/tonne," he said.

Ramasamy produces more than 500 tonnes of manure a month and sells it to buyers in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. He also makes manures from coconut husk.

"Techniques to produce these organic manure are very simple. Each and every farmer should produce such manure in his/her own farm land," said the proud farmer who is ready to give training to others.

When *Express* contacted Madhubalan, Assistant Director of Agriculture, he was all praise for Ramasamy.

"He is the only farmer in Dharmapuri who produces such organic fertilizers in tonnes," he said.

Tea prices decline at Kochi auction

Kochi,

The Kochi tea auction continues to witness a declining trend in prices for the last two consecutive weeks. The market for good liquoring varieties in CTC dust grades remained steady around last levels.

In sale no 24, the quantity on offer in CTC dust grades was 14,57,000 kg.

Others were irregular and lower by Rs. 5-10 a kg . The drop was less in the case of cleaner blacker plainer varieties, according to auctioneers Forbes, Ewart & Figgis.

However, the market for orthodox grades in the dust category was steady around last levels. The quantity on offer was 10,000 kg.

In the best CTC dusts, both PD and RD varieties quoted Rs. 93/114 each, SRD fetched Rs. 105/135 and SFD stood at Rs. 107/146.

In the leaf sale, the quantity on offer in Orthodox grades was 2,37,000 kg. With fair demand, the market for select Best Nilgiri and Whole Leaf barely remained steady.

All other varieties in the same region were irregular and tended to ease. Medium whole leaf and tippy grades were steady to sometimes dearer following quality.

The quantity on offer in CTC grades was 67,500 kg and the market for Good Liquoring varieties barely remained steady and others tended to ease with some withdrawals. A fair demand witnessed from exporters and upcountry buyers.

'Reduce farmers' distress, boost rural economy'

New Delhi,

In view of anticipated lower-than-average rainfall, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday called for reducing farmers' distress and boosting rural economy.

This message was conveyed to officials and Ministers during a two-hours review meeting on Friday which discussed various issues related to agriculture, rural development, water resources, organic farming, fertilisers and chemicals, and animal husbandry. The Prime Minister was briefed by Secretaries of the various departments on plans for these sectors. The meeting was attended by Chemical

and Fertiliser Minister Ananth Kumar, Water Resources Minister Uma Bharati, Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan, and Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh.

In view of the possibility of a poor monsoon, the Ministry of Agriculture presented a contingency plan for 500 districts. According to sources, the Prime Minister was very keen on the agriculture sector and raised questions on storage facility, distribution through public distribution system, crops requiring less water, crop pattern and preparedness in case of poor rain.

The Agriculture Ministry gave details of Kharif crops (which mainly includes paddy and oilseeds) sowing. According to preliminary reports, as on June 13, rice has been sown/transplanted in 2.38 lakh hectares, pulses in 2.42 lakh hectares and oilseeds in 0.78 lakh hectares. The planting of sugarcane and cotton is in progress. Sugarcane has been planted in 43.52 lakh hectares and cotton in 17.34 lakh hectares.

The meeting was part of a series of review of various Ministries, as the Prime Minister had mentioned in his meeting with Secretaries. The next round of meeting will review Ministries such as Finance, Commerce & Industry and Energy.

Organic products launched

Kochi,

The Kozhikode-based Elements Homestead Products has launched its organic virgin coconut oil, coconut oil, cashew nuts and filter coffee in central Kerala. The company is sourcing organic raw materials from Fair Trade Alliance Kerala, a collective of more than 4,500 organic farmers based in Kannur, Kasargod, Wayanad and Kozhikode. Tomy Mathew, Managing Director, Elements Homestead Products said the company already has its presence in the export markets and fetched a revenue of Rs. 30 crore last year. Our Bureau

DECCAN Chronicle

Dam water levels fast falling in Telangana



Nagarjuna Sagar - Telangana (Photo: DC)

Hyderabad: The monsoon, if it comes in the next three days, will literally be a godsend as the water levels in Telangana reservoirs are dwindling fast.

Even so, with predictions of a deficit monsoon, the Telangana could be in for a rough time. And the crunching power shortage could exacerbate matters as the state's farmers are heavily dependent on borewells for irrigation purposes.

Experts opined that unless the state government comes out with a contingency plan immediately, the delayed monsoon would have an adverse impact on agriculture and allied activities this year.

“Most of the farmers in Adilabad, Karimnagar and Warangal are opting for cotton which requires a large quantity of water. With water levels dwindling in reservoirs, and the ground water levels falling due to lack of rains, the government should encourage farmers to go in for short term crops,” said G.V. Anjaneyulu, executive director, Centre for Sustainable Agriculture.

He said the agriculture sector in the state has been facing a crisis for three to four year due to prolonged dry spells in rainy season.

“The gap between the rain spells has been widening. With this, the seeds sown by farmers are drying up. In drought conditions, farmers should not opt for water-sensitive crops like maize, paddy, cotton and others. Unfortunately, the state government has not been alerting farmers regarding this,” Mr Anjaneyulu added.

The delayed monsoon has also affected ground-water levels in the entire Telangana region.

Since a majority of farmers in Telangana depend on borewells for agriculture, dwindling ground water levels have dismayed farmers.

The situation is expected to further deteriorate in the coming days, if the rains are delayed further.

Not only agriculture, but also drinking water in the rural areas of Telangana will be severely affected due to this.

Dwindling water levels

Reservoir	Full Reservoir Level	Current Water Level
Sriramsagar	1,091 ft	815.6 ft
Nizamsagar	1,405 ft	1,379.54 ft
Singur	1,717.93 ft	1,691.71 ft
Nagarjunasagar	590 ft	520.4 ft
Lower Mannair	920 ft	882.7 ft
Srisaillam	885 ft	815.6 ft
Kaddam Dam	700 ft	686.7 ft
Jaikwad Dam	1,522 ft	1,491.37 ft
Jurala Project	1,045 ft	1,030.51 ft

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University set to introduce 'paperless' exam system

COIMBATORE: Undergraduate students of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University will take their examinations from this academic year in a digital 'paperless' system.

Each student will be provided with a digital exam pad in which he/she can write their examinations akin to writing on a paper. Around 1,800 digital exam pads will be supplied this year by Chennai-based Littlemore Innovation Labs. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the university and the company for the purpose on Friday.

TNAU vice-chancellor K Ramasamy said some of their constituent colleges were using this system for the last few years. The university had decided to implement the new system from the coming December semester examination after seeing the system being implemented successfully in constituent colleges.

CEO of Littlemore Innovation Labs G Srikanth said, "Students will write their answers using a digital pen on the pad. They can write not only objective type answers but also descriptive type answers. The answers can be saved and later transferred to the computers of their teachers," he said.

The equipment has a battery life of 12 hours and a shelf life of three to four years. The digital pad has facilities to write using a few colours and also erase. There is also a calculator which can be used only with the approval of the controller of examinations, he added. "Once we are sure about holding exams in this method, we will try to introduce the study materials digitally so that students can easily refer to them. Even notes can be taken using the pads."

Soya bean in short supply: Farmers worried

DHARWAD: The unscheduled heavy downpour in Madhya Pradesh, has become a cause of worry for farmers in Karnataka.

The unforeseen summer showers that lashed Madhya Pradesh has resulted in short supply of soyabean seeds in the state, and farmers of Dharwad district, in particular, are the most affected.

Karnataka has been depending on MP for good quality soyabean seeds and the department of agriculture is finding it difficult to meet the farmers' demand for seeds.

The agriculture department had asked the University of Agricultural Sciences in Dharwad, Karnataka State Seeds Corporation and National Seeds Corporation,

the seed supplying agencies, to make necessary arrangements to ensure supply of seeds. These agencies have seed production centres at different places.

There has been a decline in the production of seeds in Karnataka due to the vagaries of nature forcing the agencies to look to the north Indian state.

Soyabean is cultivated on 33,500 hectares in Dharwad district and each hectare needs 75 kg soya bean seeds taking the total requirement to 25,125 quintals. But the department has so far been able to supply only 14,100 quintals.

The delay in transportation of seeds is also one of the reasons for the delay in supplying seeds to farmers.

Shabana Sheikh, in-charge joint director of agriculture, said efforts are on to get the required quantity of seeds and the next consignment was expected to reach Dharwad in a couple of days.

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sinchai Yojana to be launched: minister



To boost agricultural yield, the Union Agriculture Ministry is going to launch 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sinchai Yojana' in the country.

"The motive of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sinchai Yojana will be to take irrigation water to each and every agricultural field in the country. Farm productivity could not be increased until water is available for irrigation. We are chalking out the details of the scheme," Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh said here today.

"Productivity is also linked to the health of the soil. High yield is possible only when soil is healthy. The central government will issue Soil Health Card to farmers in the country. Help of scientists and agriculture students will be taken in

this mission to check the condition and fertility of fields," Singh said at a felicitation programme at his maiden visit to Bihar after becoming a union minister.

Under the programme 'Soil Health Card' (SHC) would be distributed among farmers to show the status and production capability of the farm soil and understand its suitability to various types of crops, he said.

The two schemes, he said, were parts of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's agenda to strengthen the country in five years, and this could happen only when the condition of farm and farmers in the country was improved.

According to the union government's statistics, only 44 per cent of the 14 crore hectares of arable land in the country is irrigated. The rest depends on monsoon, he said.

"My ministry's priority is to strengthen and develop villages and farmers. If these two units are strong, our country will be strong. Abundant agricultural productivity will also provide work to the jobless hands," the minister said.

The minister also said that despite the chances of a weak monsoon and a shortfall in agricultural production, inflation would not be allowed to increase.

"Steps are being initiated to check hoarding and black-marketing of food grains and edible commodities and those would be monitored from the highest level of

the central government," he said.

He also talked about the way beneficial proposals remained stuck in the files in the agriculture ministry for years.

"The other day a file carrying a proposal to open a central agriculture university at Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh came to me. I asked whether there were other such proposals, and then came another file which had a proposal of converting the Rajendra Agricultural University at Pusa in Bihar to a central university," he said.

It remained blocked in files for the last three years, despite the fact that there was no central agricultural university in the country, Singh said.

Krishi Vigyan Kendras or agriculture science centres would also be strengthened in all the districts of the country so that they could come to the aid of farmers.

Right now these centres had no facilities for scientists to move around in the villages, he said.

Singh, who is a fifth time Lok Sabha member, is on a whirlwind tour of the state.

He will be visiting Vaishali, Muzaffarpur, Motihari, Gopalganj and Siwan districts before returning to New Delhi on Monday.

PM Narendra Modi reviews drought contingency plan; urges agriculture ministry to focus on boosting rural economy



The agriculture ministry presented a drought contingency plan for 500 districts to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, even as country received just about half the rainfall it normally receives over the past week.

With a poor monsoon threatening to be a challenge for the new government that is looking to step up economic growth and revive the investment cycle, the Prime Minister urged ministers dealing with farm sector issues to focus on boosting the rural economy and reducing farmer distress.

"(I) had a fruitful discussion on agriculture, rural economy, organic farming, soil health and other agri-related issues with ministers & officials. We discussed how innovative ideas like 'lab to land' approach can strengthen agriculture & help our

farmers," the PM said on social media site Twitter after the meeting. The 'lab to land' approach entails effectively communicating experts' advice to farmers to strengthen India's farm sector.

The PM 'reviewed in detail, various issues relating to agriculture, rural development, water resources, organic farming, fertilizers and chemicals, and animal husbandry,' an official statement from the Prime Minister's Office said about the meeting attended by fertiliser minister Ananth Kumar, water resources minister Uma Bharati, food and consumer affairs minister Ram Vilas Paswan and agriculture minister Radha Mohan Singh.

The Prime Minister was briefed by secretaries of the various departments on plans for these sector, the statement said, though the agriculture minister said that all departments were not able to make detailed presentations at the meeting.

"Only the Department of Agriculture Research and Education and Department of Agriculture and Cooperation were able to make the presentation today.

It was a detailed stocktaking of the departments, various schemes, bottlenecks faced and what we plan," Singh told ET, adding that the ministries of fertilisers, food and water resources were not able to make their presentations due to paucity of time.

ET had earlier reported (on April 30) that the Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture had prepared a contingency plan for more than 500 districts out of 540 districts across the country that the Centre was sharing with all state governments."Contingency plans are already in place, states have been suitably advised, sufficient food stocks are in place, and quick action will be taken to tackle any situation arising out of deficient monsoon," agriculture minister Singh had said on Monday.