

THE HINDU

MANGALORE, June 17, 2014

Farmers to get Rs. 1.50/kg incentive from Campco

The Central Arecanut and Cocoa Marketing and Processing Cooperative Ltd. (Campco) has declared an incentive of Rs. 1.50 per kg to its farmer-members who have sold arecanut to it during 2013-14. The maximum ceiling will be Rs. 10,000 per member irrespective of the quantity sold to it. The members could avail themselves of the incentive from respective branches of the cooperative from the second week of July, a Campco release said. The cooperative earned a gross profit of Rs. 56 crore during 2013-14. It has declared a 20 per cent bonus/ex-gratia to its employees, it said.

Appointment with PM

Meanwhile, Nalin Kumar Kateel, MP, who visited the Campco office here on Monday promised its president Konkodi Padmanabha on getting an appointment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the earliest, the release said.

Earlier, Mr. Padmanabha requested the MP that a delegation of Campco would like to meet Mr. Modi and Union ministers concerned to discuss problems of arecanut growers. Mr. Kateel also discussed issues related to arecanut with Mr. Padmanabha and managing director of the cooperative M. Suresh Bhandary.

BRAHMAVAR (UDUPI DISTRICT),

Farmers seek revival of Brahmavar sugar factory



Representatives of various farmers' organisations participating in a meeting on the revival of Brahmavar Cooperative Sugar Factory in Brahmavar.

An overwhelming majority of farmers have sought the revival of the ailing Brahmavar Cooperative Sugar Factory. At a meeting organised by the factory management here on Monday, representatives of various farmers' organisations said that it was essential to revive the factory to create confidence among the farmers to grow sugarcane. Farmer Shyamala Bhandary said the revival of the factory would give a new lease of life to the farmers in three districts. She said with the Varahi Irrigation Project nearing completion, this was the right time to revive the factory. The Brahmavar Sugar Factory, established in 1985, stopped crushing cane due to mounting losses in 2004. The factory was established on the premise that the Varahi project, when commissioned, would provide irrigation to a minimum of 12,000 acres of land in Udupi district, which, in turn, would help in production of sugarcane. The construction of the irrigation project is still on. Japti Satyanarayana Udupa, general secretary of district unit of Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, said the factory stopped functioning due to lack of political will. "We are waiting for the factory to be revived as paddy cultivation is no longer profitable. Farmers will definitely grow cane if the factory pays dues in time," he said and demanded a new crushing unit. Another farmer Rajaram Shetty felt that the factory could run on profit only if 2.5 lakh tonnes of cane was crushed annually. Earlier, M. Jayasheela Shetty, chairman of the factory, made a fervent plea for the revival of factory. A sum of Rs. 50 crore was enough to revive the factory, he said. The factory was located on 100 acres of land on National Highway 66.

DHARWAD,

Sugarcane farmers demand support price

'We are forced to give our produce to crushing units in Goa and Maharashtra'



Sugarcane growers have urged the State government to issue orders extending the support price facility for the sugarcane being supplied outside the State.—
FILE PHOTO Farmers of the district urged the State government to provide the support price for sugarcane which was sold to crushing units outside the State.

They held a protest outside the Deputy Commissioner's office here on Monday and submitted a memorandum addressed to Chief Minister Siddaramiah through the Deputy Commissioner's office. The farmers said the government had announced Rs. 150 per tonne. But this was not available for those who gave their sugarcane to crushing units in neighbouring States. This was causing trouble to the farmers, they said. Despite the large number of sugarcane farmers in the district, there were no crushing units to buy the produce from the farmers. The units in other districts preferred to buy the produce from local farmers. Hence Dharwad farmers were forced to give their produce to units in Goa and Maharashtra, but the officials were denying the support price for the produce sold outside the state. Most of the crushing units in Belgaum were not regular in paying farmers and many were yet to conclude payment. Some of them had not

issued bills for the produce taken from the farmers, they alleged. The sugarcane growers have urged the State government to issue orders extending the support price facility for the sugarcane being supplied outside the State and instruct the sugarcane crushing units to issue bills to the farmers without delay.

SHIMOGA,

BE students come up with farmer-friendly devices

Machines to de-husk coconut, wash ginger and push-operated sprayer were among the farmer-friendly models that were displayed by students of eighth semester BE Mechanical Engineering at the Jawaharlal Nehru National College of Engineering (JNNCE) here. They had developed these models as part of their project work. Bharath, Arun and Saisagar, students, had worked on a ginger washing machine under the guidance of D.S. Ramakrishna, chairman of Department of Mechanical Engineering. Mr. Ramakrishna told *The Hindu* that farmers in Malnad region were facing shortage of labour for processing ginger after harvest. It was possible to wash and process ginger mechanically. The machine had been fitted with three blades and a 0.5 HP motor. The machine would wash about 10 kg ginger in 15 minutes, he said. A coconut de-husking machine had been developed by Anil, Chethan and Bharath under the guidance of K.M. Basappaji, assistant professor. This motor-driven machine was mounted on a stand. It could be operated safely and conveniently. Mr. Basappaji said that the machine was operated by a 3 HP motor. A gearbox had been installed to monitor the speed. "When the coconut is placed in between the two rollers that have metal teeth, the husk gets removed," he said. Mr. Ramakrishna told *The Hindu* that as agriculture was a major occupation of people in Malnad region, students were asked to develop time and cost saving devices for the benefit of farmers. The machine to climb arecanut tree for spraying pesticides and harvest the produce, the leaf drier and seed sowing machines that operate with solar

energy were some of the models that were developed and displayed by students this year, he added. The Mechanical Engineering students had developed maize seed separator machine in 2011 and a sugarcane bud-scooping machine in 2013, which became popular among farmers. The models developed this year were being displayed at the Department of Mechanical Engineering of JNNCE. For details, interested can contact 9242982207.

ANANTAPUR, June 17, 2014

Distressed farmers call it quits in Anantapur



With prayer on lips: A farmer waiting for rains to till his land at B Yalaru village in Atmakur mandal of Anantapur district on Monday.- PHOTO: R.V.S. PRASAD

The agriculture scenario in the Anantapur district might well be on the path to irreversible damage if unchecked and acted upon with immediate urgency. Over 15 per cent of farmers are leaving agriculture altogether, if the statistics available with the Agriculture Department are to be extrapolated to the ground realities and understood in that context. Speaking to *The Hindu*, CPI district secretary and State executive member Mr Jagadeesh said that the district is indeed experiencing a huge farmer dropout rate, out of agriculture, as neither the government nor the nature is making it conducive for them to continue the profession. Groundnut is the largest crop and often the only crop cultivated by more than 6.5 lakh farmers since more than two decades, in the district. However, the figure came down to a little under six lakh around the start

of the last decade and remained so for the better part of it before it started to dwindle in huge numbers ever since 2008. According to the statistics of the number of farmers who bought seed from the government, which usually forms over 95 per cent of the total farmers taking to groundnut, the number of farmers benefiting from the seed supply fell from a little over 6.3 lakh farmers in 2008 to 3.2 lakh farmers in 2013 - a decrease of over 48 per cent in just five years. “Most of these farmers who are not buying the seed are not going in for other crops either. They are just choosing not to take to farming at all as the vagaries of the nature and lopsided policies of the government have meant that the farmers have decided not to end up in losses by sowing,” said Mr. Jagadeesh The groundnut crisis has hit the farmers so hard that tens of thousands of farmers have migrated from the district in search of livelihood as the lopsided policies of the government trying to make agriculture a profitable one through crop insurance and input subsidy came a cropper in matter of just a few years. “There is an urgent need for a comprehensive new policy which looks at a very long term solutions with short term alternatives, while being one which is tailored to answer the localised issues through a localised solution,” said Malla Reddy of the AF Ecology Centre, who has been at the forefront of the fight for the betterment of the ecology as a whole and consequently almost all issues relating to the rural economy.

NALGONDA,

Farmers wait with bated breath for rain



A worried farmer waits for the skies to open up in his field near Suryapet in Nalgonda district on Monday.- Photo: Singam Venkataramana

The delay in the arrival of monsoon is worrying farmers who have made arrangements for the Kharif. Investing thousands of rupees, the farmers have tilled their land, purchased fertilizer, seed, but are yet to take up the sowing operations following the delayed monsoon. According to statistics available, two third of 6 lakh hectares expected to be cultivated during the Kharif are rain-fed and the remaining are cultivated under canals. The district has experienced 68 per cent deficit rainfall since June 1, which clearly shows how the rain impacted the sowing operations in district. Joint Director Agriculture B. Narasimha Rao said against the normal rainfall of 90.6 mm in June, the district has experienced just 17 mm so far. The district had received 69.2 mm rainfall last time by June 16 that helped to complete a majority of sowing. Speaking to *The Hindu*, a farmer from Chandur, P. Venkat Reddy, said they had taken up sowing of cotton seed in five acres investing Rs. 15,000, but they are yet to sprout due to delay in monsoon arrival. Besides, he said that he also had invested Rs 3, 000 on tilling of land, and also spent good amount towards labour charges during the sowing. "The seeds would not sprout if there are no rains for next one week," he said. Another farmer from Valigonda, V. Rajendar said they had completed the sowing operations of all the crops before June first week as they have witnessed abundant rains in June last year. Against the expected 3.35 lakh hectares, the Joint Director Agriculture has said the farmers had taken up sowing operations only in 3,000 hectares. Meanwhile, the farmers had taken up paddy nurseries only in just over 2,000 hectares that could be sufficient for only 26,000 hectares against nearly 2 lakh hectares of expected area to be cultivated.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,

Paddy procurement arrears to be cleared

Chief Minister Oommen Chandy told the Assembly on Monday that part of the arrears payable to farmers under the paddy procurement scheme would be cleared this week. Replying to the demands for grants for Heads of States, Ministers and Headquarters Staff and Administration of Justice, the Chief Minister said Rs.644 crore out of Rs.996 crore due to farmers had been paid. The government had just released Rs.170 crore more, which would be disbursed this week. The Chief Minister said the Kerala government offered the highest procurement price to farmers in the country, by adding a subsidy of Rs.5.90 a kg over the procurement price fixed by the Centre. An arrangement with banks to facilitate early payments was being worked out.

Pending bills

Mr. Chandy said the government faced a backlog in bill payments to public works contractors because it had spent Rs.7,335 crore against the budgeted amount of Rs.4,997 crore. Though this could be termed bad financial management, the government could not ignore pressure from the people for road works. Arrears in payment of welfare pensions would be cleared soon. Denying the Opposition's allegation that the education sector was being surrendered to the private sector, the Chief Minister said the government sector was not being ignored. Colleges were sanctioned in Assembly constituencies without a government college. The new medical colleges were also in the government sector. He said that the major infrastructure initiatives were making progress. The SmartCity would be commissioned in 2015 and the Kochi Metro in 2016. After the Chief Minister's

reply, the House passed the demands for grants totalling Rs.668.70 crore for 69 votes against 61.

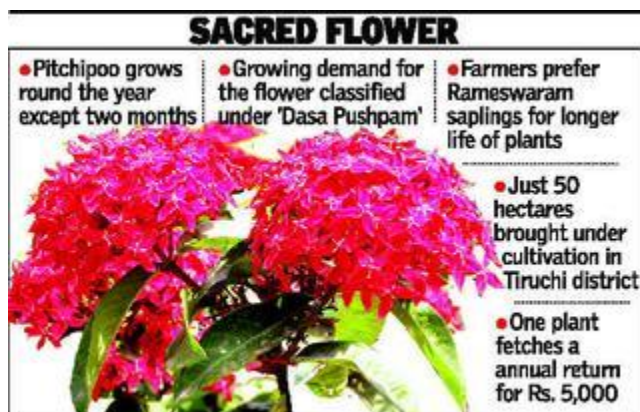
SIRSI,

'Jackfruit should be a plantation crop'

Jackfruit should be considered a plantation crop because of its many varieties said Bagalkot Horticulture University vice-chancellor B. Raju. He was speaking after inaugurating two-day jackfruit fair that began on Saturday. Before declaring jackfruit as plantation crop, breeds of jackfruit should be identified that could be done by Forestry College and Horticulture College in Sirsi jointly.by setting up a research centre here,he said.Book releasedSIRSI JUNE 16-'Sonne Suttiri Chitra Kaliyiri',a book of art for school children prepsred by artist G.m.bomnalli was released by DDPI prasannakumar in a program held at Government Urdu High School hall on Monday.Principal Beeranna Naik Mogata presided over the program.Journalists Ashok Hasyagar,Subray Bhat Bakkal,raghavendra bettakoppa were,Dr Shripsad Bhat were present on the occasion.

TIRUCHI,

Farmers can strike it rich with pitchipoo



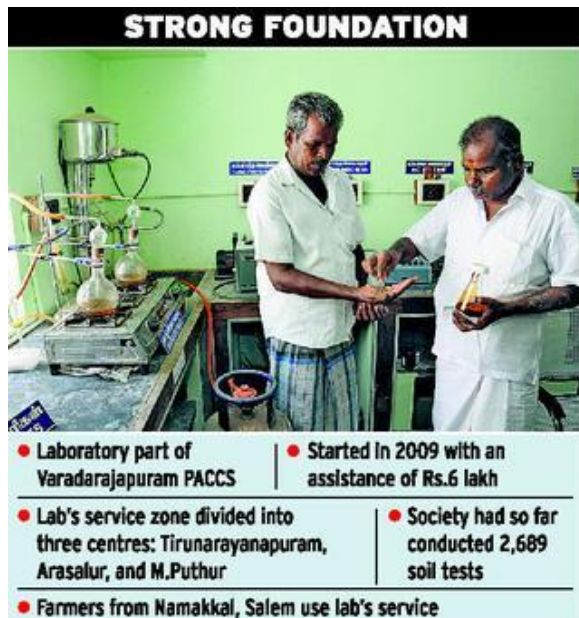
In spite of growing demand for flowers and possibility of assured returns, not many horticulturists come forward to take up *pitchipoocultivation*. The flower, normally seen in three distinct colours – red, white, and yellow – fetches revenue all through the year except two months during monsoon. However, lack of irrigational facility is a major bottleneck in cultivating the flower, which is largely used for making garlands at Vaishnavite shrines, such as Srivilliputhur. It is one of the flowers classified under *dasa pushpam* ideal for offering to the Lord.

P.C. Subbiah Pillai, a farmer of Mannachanallur, who has taken up the cultivation of the flower, said 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 on 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 on 93446-76358. The 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 suggested. Ayilai Siva Suriyan, office-bearer of the Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, said that while the normal lifespan of the plant was 20 years, inferior quality plants withered away within five years.

TIRUCHI,

Soil testing lab gives banana growers a strong grounding

Excess potash and poor urea have confronted farmers for long



The soil testing laboratory at the primary agricultural cooperative credit society at Varadarajapuram in the district has been playing a crucial role in improving the soil fertility of banana cluster in Thottiyam belt. Started in 2009 with a financial assistance of Rs.6 lakh shared equally by the State Departments of Agriculture and Cooperation, the laboratory has been serving the banana farmers of Musiri, Thottiyam and nearby villages well. Excess application of potash and poor availability of urea have been the major problems confronting the farmers. “We educate farmers to stabilise soil nutrients and they have been reducing the quantum of potash and stepping up urea use,” says S.Saravanan, secretary of the society. The entire service zone had been divided into three major centres: Tirunarayanapuram, Arasalur, and M.Puthur. The society had so far conducted 2,689 soil tests, 1,323 field tests, and nine water sample tests; he said adding that the society members also collect samples by visiting the fields. The society has been creating awareness among farmers on a sustained basis. “We convene farmers’ meetings and discuss various issues. A discussion on soil test tops the list of such discussions,” he says. The services being rendered by the society

has gone down well with the farmers of not only Thottiyam but also adjoining districts. "Farmers from Namakkal and Salem districts too make use of our service," he says. Furnishing result within 24 hours of collecting samples makes the lab an attractive option. Farmers show keen interest in taking remedial measures for enriching soil fertility in their fields, he said.

HYDERABAD,

Modalities laid down for insuring four crops

Coverage for irrigated and rain-fed crops

The government of Telangana on Monday announced modalities for implementation of the Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (WBCIS) under National Crop Insurance Programme for cotton, red chilli, oil palm and sweet lime crops in certain districts of the State for the kharif season. The sum insured per hectare has been fixed at Rs. 62,500 for red chilli in Khammam and Warangal districts; Rs. 30,000 for cotton in Adilabad, Khammam, Karimnagar, Warangal and Mahabubnagar district and Rs. 26,000 in Nalgonda district; Rs. 50,000 for oil palm in Khammam district and Rs. 40,000 for sweet lime in Nalgonda district.

According to a GO issued by the government on Monday, the four crops cultivated as irrigated and rain-fed crops would be covered under the insurance scheme. All cultivators including share-croppers and tenant cultivators, growing the four notified crops either irrigated or un-irrigated in the districts concerned are eligible for coverage. However, it would be compulsory for all cultivators who would avail credit from cooperative, commercial, private and regional rural banks. It would be voluntary for cultivators who raise the crops without availing any institutional credit. The government has specified in detail the weather perils which are deemed to cause "adverse weather incidence" affecting crop health leading to crop loss in the 357-page GO.

The risk period for red chilli would commence from July 10, for cotton from July 6, for oil palm from July 15 and for sweet lime from August 10, according to the modalities explained in the GO. The cultivators would be provided 50 per cent subsidy in premium, which would be borne equally by the State and Central Governments. They are required to pay half of the premium amount for getting insurance coverage and the premium amount ranges from 9.8 per cent to 10 per cent of the sum insurance per hectare or acre.

KATTAPPANA,

Idukki water level falls

The delayed monsoon and increase in power generation have depleted the water level in the Idukki dam. The water level in the dam on Monday was 2,308.8 ft compared to 2,310.4 ft the same day last year.

An official of the Dam Monitoring and Research Station, Vazhathoppe, said the average drop in the water level was nearly one ft for a day, which was high.

The power production at the Moolamattom power house remained at 6.23 mu till Monday morning.

The total rainfall recorded in the catchment area this month so far has been only 88 mm.

Water level

Mettur

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 44.24 feet on Monday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 551 cusecs and the discharge 800 cusecs.

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Tuesday, Jun 17

Max Min

38° | 29°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:42

Humidity: 59

Sunset: 06:36

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1003

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Jun 18

Max Min

38° | 29°

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday

Jun 19



38° | 29°

Partly Cloudy

Friday

Jun 20



37° | 29°

Cloudy

Saturday

Jun 21



36° | 29°

Cloudy

Sunday

Jun 22



36° | 28°

Partly Cloudy

Monday

Jun 23



36° | 27°

Partly Cloudy

Airport Weather

Chennai

Chennai

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:42

Humidity: 59

Sunset: 06:36

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1003




THE  NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

Krishi Farms Turn a Damp Squib, Incur Huge Losses to Exchequer

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF KRISHI

Year	Income(cr)	Expense(cr)
2008-09	7.096	16.667
2009-10	5.744	16.732
2010-11	5.597	17.549
2011-12	6.749	27.648
2012-13	6.889	Not available



KASARGOD: The krishi farms formed to boost the agricultural sector in the state are incurring crores of rupees losses to the state exchequer.

The data collected by Express reveal that the running cost of these krishi farms across the state have caused losses to the tune of over ` 60 crores for the past five years alone and the figure will even go higher if losses beyond these five years are taken into account. In all these years, the amount spent for research, farming, agricultural equipment and other allied works associated with farming is over double or treble the amount of income these krishi farms contributed to the

exchequer. The failure in using farms for cultivation, insufficient infrastructure in farm buildings, lack of enough employees, the apathy of officials in implementing various agricultural projects effectively are the reasons for this situation, as pointed out by the farmers.

The krishi farms across the state are lying in a state of neglect, thanks to the apathy of the officials.

This is a major setback to the agricultural sector and ironically, the government is turning a blind eye to the issue. Though several requests were sent to the Agricultural Department, no measures have been taken so far to uplift the sector.

It was in 1905 that the first Krishi farm was formed at Taliparamba in Kannur and at present as many as 64 krishi farms are functioning across the state. As many as 51 krishi farms come under District Panchayats and the remaining are considered as special farms under the Agricultural Department. This is a major setback to the farmers as well.

“It is through the krishi farms that the farmers in Kerala are supposed to get various sophisticated cultivation methods, hybrid seeds etc. But for the past couple of years, researches have not been taking place in krishi farms and farmers in Kerala were not getting hybrid seeds,” said Koya Yousuf, president of the Farmers Association.

He also said that it is due to the inefficient functioning of krishi farms that the agricultural sector in Kerala still lagging behind other states.

“We are forced to buy everything associated with cultivation from other states, from the seeds to the agricultural products. Despite sending several requests to the government, no measures were taken so far,” added Koya Yousuf.

Of the 67 permanent posts at the Kozhikode Krishi farm, as many as 37 are lying vacant and the situation is the same in other districts as well as there are 38, 43

and 21 vacancies, respectively, at the krishi farms in Eranakulam, Thrissur and Malappuram. For the past couple of years, Krishi farms have been spending huge amount of money for various projects but most of the projects have gone useless for want of proper planning by the officials.

The lift irrigation project implemented in the year 2012 by spending `2.75 lakh at Adoor, Pampa irrigation project, Cherupuzha-Chirakkal irrigation project etc are not functional now. The equipment which were purchased for sowing and reaping have also become non-functional and are gathering rust. When contacted, Agricultural Officer Muhammad K M said, "The functioning of krishi farms across the state is in a shambles and measures will be implemented soon for uplifting them. Higher production cost is one of the key reasons for the krishi farms remaining debt-ridden. There is a huge mismatch between the income and expenditure."

THE HINDU **BusinessLine**

Cashew imports suffer from port congestion

Cashew imports through VOC Port at Tuticorin are getting badly affected due to congestion at the port affecting timely clearance of the cargo. The Cashew Export Promotion Council of India has taken up the matter with the port authorities saying that the one-month long congestion has hampered the cashew movements affecting the cashew trade in Kerala. It is pointed out that 40 per cent of import cargo from the State was handled at Tuticorin. In 2013-14, the country imported over four lakh tonnes of raw cashew valued at Rs. 2,344 crore. Tuticorin is one of the major ports for cashew kernel exports and raw cashew imports.

P Sundaran, Vice-Chairman of the council told *Business Line* that the raw cashew season in Africa is in full swing and any disruption in cargo movement

would cause greater difficulties to the Exim trade. The delay in clearance would also hamper exports since the receipt and the demand in supply will not match due to interruption in getting approval from the authorities.

The import consignments, he said, have to be cleared on urgent basis as the quality gets deteriorated if the cargo lies un-cleared in the port. As against the normal 24-hour clearance, it is now taking around 10-12 days for clearance.

The shipping lines informed that due to imports not moving from the terminal, the inventory levels at the terminals is quite high and equipment interchange report (EIR) for export consignments could not be filed. Several mainline vessels with raw cashew consignments are on transit and if the prevailing situation continues, he said the trade has no other option but to change the name of destination port to Kochi from Tuticorin.

27% tea unsold at Coonoor auction

Coonoor,

Due to slack demand, as much as 27 per cent of the 16.03 lakh kg offered at Sale No: 24 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auction worth Rs. 3.59 crore remained unsold despite falling Rs. 1/kg.

Homedale Estate tea, auctioned by Global Tea Brokers, topped the CTC market when Jayashree Tea Traders bought it for Rs. 191 a kg. Vigneshwar Estate got Rs. 188, Shanthi Supreme Rs. 176, Crosshill Estate and Deepika Supreme Rs. 175 each. Among orthodox teas, Kairbetta topped at Rs. 222 followed by Kodanad Rs. 214, Chamraj Rs. 210 and Havukal Rs. 200. Quotations held by brokers indicated bids ranging Rs. 50-52 a kg for plain leaf grades and Rs. 100-160 for brighter liquoring sorts. They ranged Rs. 57-61 for plain dusts and Rs. 120-180 for brighter liquoring dusts.

Export purchase was less and limited to plainer less-priced teas. Some teas were bought for Pakistan in wide range of Rs. 52-71 a kg.

High-priced CTC leaf lost Rs. 2-3 a kg, better Mediums up to Rs. 3 and plainers, Rs. 3-4. Nevertheless, there were withdrawals for want of buyers. Even after shedding up to Rs. 4 a kg, CTC dusts suffered withdrawal.

Cardamom gains flavour on supply squeeze

Uncertain weather and fears of a small crop in Kerala push up prices



Dream79\shutterstock.com

Kochi,

Cardamom recovered on improved upcountry demand amid squeeze in supply at auctions held last week.

Lack of rains in the small cardamom growing regions of Kerala's Idukki district has led to fears over a possible delay in the new crop, market sources in Bodinayakkanur told *Business Line* .

At the same time, the trade feels that given the uncertain weather conditions prevailing currently, the crop might also be lower.

This aided the uptrend in prices last week, they said. Arrivals continued to remain thin. At the auction, 10 per cent of the material that arrived was from the new crop brought by small growers, they said.

Exporters were inactive following slack demand. Major markets such as Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries appear to get their supplies from Guatemala at competitive prices when Indian prices are ruling high.

At the same time, Ramzan falls early this time, almost before the beginning of harvest in India, and hence the buying has also taken place early. At the KCPMC auction, arrivals increased to 43.3 tonnes from 30.2 tonnes the previous Sunday and the entire quantity was sold, PC Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, Kumily, said.

The maximum price was Rs. 975 and the minimum was Rs. 411 a kg. Auction average increased to Rs. 752.97 from Rs. 701.07 the previous Sunday, he said.

In fact, prices recovered last week and vacillated between Rs. 745 and Rs. 770.

During the current season, arrivals stood at 20,610 tonnes against 14,377 tonnes as on June 15 during the last season. The sales were 19,982 tonnes against 13,758 tonnes respectively. The weighted average price as on June 15 stood at Rs. 642.22 (Rs. 706.02).

Prices of all graded varieties (Rs. /kg): AGEB 920-930; AGB 720-730; AGS 690-700 and AGS -1: 670-680.

Vegoil imports rise 13% in May as prices, dollar fall

Steady rise			(In tonnes)
	2013-14	2012-13	%change
March	835,424	889,415	(-) 6
April	832,760	654,827	(+) 27
May	1,033,550	917,964	(+) 13
Total	6,198,541	6,197,469	(+) 0.82

Mumbai, June 16:

Vegetable oil imports increased 13 per cent in May to 1,033,550 tonnes against 917,964 tonnes in the same period a year ago.

Besides improved demand and fall in prices, the appreciation of the rupee against the dollar helped importers to ship in additional quantities last month.

The rupee has depreciated to 59.28 against the dollar in May from the preceding month level of 60.35.

Refined palmolen prices fell by three per cent to \$866 a tonne against \$897 in April.

Similarly, crude soyabean oil was down four per cent at \$934 a tonne, according to data released by the Solvent Extractors' Association of India.

Indian imports in May comprised 1,022,004 tonnes of edible oils and 11,546 tonnes of non-edible oils.

The overall import of vegetable oils between November 2013 and May 2014 was flat at 6,198,541 tonnes (6,197,469 tonnes).

Edible oil stocks as on June 1 at various ports are estimated at 610,000 tonnes, including 285,000 tonnes of crude palmolen, 75,000 tonnes of refined palmolein, 95,000 tonnes of degummed soyabean oil, 145,000 tonnes of crude sunflower oil

and 10,000 tonnes of rapeseed oil. In addition about 810,000 tonnes of vegetable oil is in pipeline.

Total stock, both at ports and in the pipelines, increased to 1,420,000 tonnes from 1,165,000 tonnes.

This was largely due to higher import of sunflower and soyabean oil in the last few months.

Demand for non-edible oil, used by various industries, dipped sharply. Imports halved to 11,546 tonnes in May against 25,898 tonnes in the same period last year.

The overall import of non-edible oils between November 2013 and May 2014 dropped 38 per cent to 103,445 tonnes (166,640 tonnes). Non-edible oil imports include palm fatty acid distillate and crude palm kernel oil.

Lack of enquiries saps spot rubber

Kottayam,

Spot rubber turned weak on Monday. According to sources, the absence of enquiries from the tyre sector and the wide gap between the domestic and international prices continued to dampen the sentiments.

Sheet rubber dropped to Rs. 145 (Rs. 145.50) a kg, according to traders. July futures closed at Rs. 144.20 (Rs. 144.04), August at Rs. 143.10 (Rs. 142.60) for RSS 4 on National Multi Commodity Exchange. RSS 3 (spot) firmed up to Rs. 124.53 (Rs. 123.96) at Bangkok.

Spot rubber rates (Rs. /kg): RSS-4: 145 (145.50); RSS-5: 141 (141.50); Ungraded: 136 (137); ISNR 20: 132 (132) and Latex 60%: 123 (123.50).

Rain continues to lash south Gujarat, Konkan-Goa belt

Thiruvananthapuram,

The monsoon has not progressed from Sunday's alignment but rain or thundershowers lashed South Gujarat and the Konkan-Goa belt on the West Coast on Monday.

This was the handiwork of the remnant of erstwhile cyclone 'Nanauk' that hovered over Northeast Arabian Sea but washed over on Monday along the coasts of Gujarat.

Sparks thunderstorms

The system is expected to be active over land for two more days, according to an India Meteorological Department update. Overnight on Monday, the system also sparked off thunderstorms over Himachal Pradesh, Uttarkhand, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. This caused extreme heat to shift to the east over coastal Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Gangetic West Bengal. In the North-West, only Rajasthan retained the high mercury levels of around 43 deg Celsius.

Dynamics in East

Apart from most places over Konkan and Goa, rain was also reported at many places over south Gujarat, east Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Maharashtra and Vidarbha during this period. Meanwhile, eastern parts of Bay of Bengal have started receiving fresh rains indicating a revival of monsoon in the area. The causative cyclonic circulation hung in over northeast Bay of Bengal.

Models differed in their outlook on the cyclonic circulation or a low-pressure area evolving from it that would preside over the proceedings over East India.

Monsoon easterlies are forecast to meet up with the western disturbance setting up a narrow corridor of two-way flow of winds along the foothills of the Himalayas.

Business Standard

Potato prices to cause more heartburn



Soaring [onion prices](#) that upset the domestic budgets became a political hot [potato](#) in 2013. It could well be a similar story this year as well, albeit with a different commodity in focus. While the government is doing its bit to keep onion prices in check, prices of potato have seen a steady rise.

The latest Wholesale Price [Inflation \(WPI\)](#) figures released Monday show, while prices of onion dipped 2.83 per cent in May as compared to the corresponding period last year, [potato prices](#) have seen a massive rise of 31.44 per cent during the same period. In fact, the rise in potato prices has been the sharpest among all commodities across categories during May on a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis.

In three months, spot prices (Potato Agra) on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) have risen nearly 6.5 per cent to Rs 1,244 per quintal, data compiled by the BS Research Bureau suggests.



Elevated costs for food items, particularly vegetables and fruits have added to inflationary pressures. Higher potato and onion prices pushed up wholesale [food inflation](#) to 9.5 per cent last month from 8.64 per cent in April. Led by costlier protein-based items, fuel and some manufactured products the WPI-based inflation surged to a five-month high of 6.01 per cent in May against 5.2 per cent in the previous month.

So, what's causing the spike in potato prices and going ahead, will it be significant enough to upset your daily budget?

C P Krishnan, wholetime director, Geojit Comtrade, suggests that the rise has been on account of a build up in speculative positions in the futures market due to rising demand. "Another reason has been concerns regarding the monsoons this year – the El Nino condition. There are fears that the potato growing regions like Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab could receive less rainfall thereby impacting overall production."

"Going ahead, the prices are likely to move higher and can touch Rs 1,420 levels in the near-term. A breach can take it higher to Rs 1,500 levels," he adds.

Points out a recent report from SMC Global: "Potato future is likely to trade in the range of Rs 1,280 – 1,360. Overall estimate of 25-30 per cent of production loss, higher export demand due to duty removed by Pakistan on Indian potatoes may support the prices. However, government intervention to control food inflation and profit booking at higher level cannot be denied."

Adds Anuj Gupta, assistant vice-president for technical research at Angel Commodities Broking: “Though prices have did cool off from a peak ofRs 1,500 toRs 1,300, June contract prices are hovering aroundRs 1,388 per quintal. I expect them to rise toRs 1,450 levels in the next one month.”

Sugar sector may see turnaround this year



The [sugar](#) sector is likely to see a turnaround this financial year, owing to an estimated increase in cash flow, following the export incentive scheme for raw sugar being extended till September 2015.

For every tonne of raw sugar export, the government offers Rs 3,300 as [subsidy](#) to [sugar mills](#). For this financial year, the Centre has set an overall export target of four million tonnes (mt).

Back-of-the-envelope calculation shows the proposed extension in export subsidy will increase the sugar sector’s cash flow by Rs 13,200 crore. Of this, Rs 1,200 crore is estimated to go directly to farmers, while the remaining Rs 12,000 crore will go towards sugar mills, depending on their subsidy-refund claims.

“India’s sugar sector will turn around this year, provided mills are able to export the entire allocated quantity of four mt at prices higher than the prevailing rates in Indian markets,” said Abinash Verma, director-general, Indian Sugar Mills

Association.

BRIGHT OUTLOOK

Export subsidy extension to increase sugar sector's cash flow by Rs 13,200 crore

Of this, Rs 1,200 crore will go to farmers directly; mills will get the remaining Rs 12,000 crore

Global prices to remain favourable for export, owing to rising demand

Sugar sector recorded a loss of Rs 3,200 crore in FY14

This year, sugar mills' dispatches are set to stand at the production figure of 24.2 mt

Through the past few months, sugar prices have been volatile in global markets, making [exports](#) viable. After touching an eight week low of 16.67 cents, ICE raw sugar July futures rallied two per cent, while Liffe white sugar August futures surged two per cent to close at \$465.2/tonne on Friday. Prices rose as the number of ships waiting to export sugar from the ports of major grower Brazil increased about 50 per cent from the previous week, indicating a rise in sugar demand.

At prices moderately higher than current ones, exports from India will be feasible. Data compiled by BS Research showed the sugar sector's overall losses for the year ended March this year stood at about Rs 3,200 crore, against a profit of Rs 20 crore in the year-ago period. "India's sugar sector is a beaten-down sector. The sugar sector has been an underperformer in the last few years due to unfavourable government policies. But with the extension in export subsidy

scheme, the sector will blossom this year, with debt-free companies benefiting the most,” said Harish Vasudevan, strategist, SVS Securities.

This year, sugar mills’ dispatches are set to stand at the production figure of 24.2 mt. At the beginning of the new sugar season, India’s stock is estimated to be 1.8-2 mt less than last year’s. But a surplus of 1.5-2 mt can be exported.

The pace of sugar exports had slowed because of the unexpected reduction of export incentive—from Rs 3,300 a tonne to Rs 2,277 a tonne—by the food ministry. The government has, however, restored the incentive to Rs 3,300 a tonne. Vasudevan said the government had to implement reform measures to bring the sugar sector on track. Also, all cyclical sectors, including sugar, have seen favourable policy decisions after long, Vasudevan says, adding the sector will see surprises this year on the profit and share price fronts.

Govt may face challenge over cost in sugarcane floor price

As the National Democratic Alliance government gets down to fulfil its poll promises, it might find it difficult to provide a [floor support price](#) of 50 per cent over the cost of production, at least in [sugarcane](#).

Officials said state governments in their estimates of production cost for sugarcane for the 2015-16 season (October to September) have quoted a rate on which 50 per cent addition would mean over Rs 400 a quintal of the [Fair and Remunerative Price \(FRP\)](#), the equivalent of minimum support price in sugarcane). They said for the 2015-16 sugar season, Uttar Pradesh has reportedly estimated the cost of production at Rs 281 a quintal, while Haryana pegged it at Rs 327. If 50 per cent is added on to the cost of production, then

FRP should be around Rs 420 a quintal.

"Guaranteeing an FRP of over Rs 400 for 2015-16 is almost next to impossible as sugar prices in retail markets would be close to Rs 100 a kg," said an official, who participated in the meeting.

The issue of cost of production of sugarcane was discussed in a meeting on Monday between the [Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices \(CACP\)](#) and all stakeholders of the sugar industry for fixing the FRP for 2015-16 sugar season. The stakeholders also decided to expedite the ethanol-blending programme.

FRP is the benchmark rate set by the Centre, while state governments are free to fix their own State Advised Price or SAP which is followed by the companies while making payment to farmers. For the 2014-15 season, CACP has already announced an FRP of Rs 220 a quintal, only 4.76 per cent more than the previous year.

Rice bran oil units upbeat over surging demand



India's rice bran oil extraction units, dominated by [SMEs](#), have reason to smile. Increase in domestic demand and the government decision's, taken last year, to remove the quantitative ceiling of 20,000 tonnes on export of branded consumer

packs of up to five kg of edible bran oil, have combined to boost the industry's prospects. Rice bran oil is exported to the United States, Australia, Sri Lanka and China, among other countries.

India has around 200 rice bran oil extraction units spread across Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, of which 150-160 are [crude rice bran oil](#) extraction units. The rest are refined rice bran oil producers. The country produces around 900,000 tonnes of crude rice bran oil annually, of which 300,000 tonnes is consumed as [edible oil](#), while the rest is used by the vanaspati industry or is blended with other oils. Five years ago, India's total installed capacity was only 300,000 tonnes.

[A R Sharma](#), chairman and managing director, [Ricela Group](#), said, "Consumption has been increasing by 20-25 per cent per annum for the last three years, which is a healthy sign for the industry. Secondly, the government decision's last year to remove the quantitative ceiling of 20,000 tonnes on export of branded consumer packs of up to five kg of edible bran oil will boost exports. The industry is getting queries and exports have already started materialising."

Sharma said he expects that both factors, coupled with increase in awareness of the health benefits of rice bran oil among the masses, will provide a boost to the industry. With installed capacity of 90,000 tonnes per annum, Ricela Health Foods Limited (formerly known as A P Solvex Limited) is the world's largest producer of rice bran oil. Sharma is also president of the International Association of Rice Bran Oil.

A senior official of Ahmedabad based-Vimal Oil & Foods Ltd, which launched their brand a year ago, added, "The need is to create awareness among the

masses about the health benefits of the oil, which is low at the moment. Once the public at large comes to know of the benefits, acceptability will witness a quantum jump."

To maintain the momentum of demand as the industry's production capacity is ramped up by 50,000 tonnes annually, rice bran oil associations are deploying health awareness campaigns. Producers feel that rice bran oil, which contains oryzanol and has numerous health benefits, has huge potential in the Indian market as well.

Describing the benefits, Sharma added, "The oil is a rich source of an antioxidant named gamma oryzanol, as well as a notable amount of Vitamin E, which enhances the efficiency of the cholesterol toleration process and helps maintain a healthy heart. Rice bran oil consists of 47 per cent mono-saturated fats, 33 per cent poly-saturated fats and 20 per cent saturated fats. This fat composition is extremely close to the recommendation of the American Heart Association on edible oils."

India produces nine million tonnes of rice bran, of which around five million tonnes is processed into oil, and the rest is used as cattle feed. [Paddy production](#) in the country increased from 125 million tonnes in 2004-05 to 160 million tonnes in 2013-14 (provisional).

[Vegetable oil imports down 13% in May: SEA](#)

[Vegetable oil](#) imports in the month of May saw a rise of 13% compared to the same period last year at 1 million tonnes compared to 917, 964 tonnes last year on the back of lower [soybean](#) crushing in the country as the availability of soybean is on the lower side this year, according to data released by [Solvent](#)

[Extractors'](#) Association of India. However, since the start of the current oil year (November- May) [vegetable oil imports](#) have been stagnant at 6.1 million tonnes.

Import of non [edible oil](#) in May was at its lowest level and was down by 38% to 11,546 tonnes. Palm oil imports were also down during the current oil year to 4.3 million tonnes. However, the import of soft oil during the year has almost doubled to 1.7 million tonnes. Indian refiners prefer to import soft oils over CPO which has caused imports of soft oil to double.

Coriander surges 3% on strong demand, tight supply



[Coriander](#) prices sputtered three per cent to Rs 10,166 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators created fresh positions on strong domestic demand in the spot market. At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, coriander for delivery in June climbed by Rs 296, or three per cent, to Rs 10,166 per quintal with an open interest of 1,240 lots. In a similar fashion, the spice for delivery in July shot up by Rs 226, or 2.19 per cent, to Rs 10,541 per quintal in 33,400 lots. Analysts said fresh positions built up by speculators, driven by strong demand in the spot market against restricted supplies from producing region, influenced coriander prices at futures trade.

Cardamom sheds 0.60% on low spot demand



[Cardamom](#) prices eased 0.60 per cent to Rs 924 per kg in futures trading today as speculators trimmed positions amid sluggish domestic demand and increased supplies from producing regions.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for delivery in July traded lower by Rs 5.60, or 0.60 per cent, to Rs 924 per kg in a business turnover of 209 lots. The August contract shed Rs 1.30, or 0.14 per cent, to Rs 896.90 per kg in 19 lots. Analysts said weak demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position weighed on cardamom prices at futures trade.

Refined soya oil up 0.67% on rising demand

[Refined soya oil](#) prices moved up by 0.67 per cent to Rs 699 per 10 kg in futures trade today as speculators enlarged positions on a firm trend at spot market.

In addition, restricted arrivals from producing belts supported the uptrend.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, refined soya oil for delivery in June rose by Rs 4.65, or 0.67 per cent, to Rs 699 per 10 kg with an open interest of 41,620 lots.

The July contract gained Rs 2.95, or 0.43 per cent, to Rs 682.25 per 10 kg in 1,70,820 lots. Analysts said speculators enlarged positions on a firm trend at spot market on rising demand amid lower arrivals from producing regions that supported the upside in refined soya oil prices at futures trade.

Chana up 1% on rising demand



[Chana](#) prices traded higher by 0.94 per cent to Rs 2,800 per quintal in futures market today as speculators engaged in enlarging positions on a firm trend at spot market on rising demand.

Besides, tight stocks position in the physical market due to less arrivals from producing regions further fuelled the uptrend.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, chana for delivery in June rose by Rs 26, or 0.94 per cent, to Rs 2,800 per quintal with an open interest of 1,370 lots.

July chana gained Rs 23, or 0.81 per cent, to Rs 2,880 per quintal in 1,70,570 lots.

Analysts said speculators enlarged positions on rising demand in the spot market against restricted arrivals from producing belts that led to an upward movement in chana prices at futures trade.

Sugar rises 0.13% as demand picks up



[Sugar](#) prices edged higher by 0.13 per cent to Rs 3,065 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators created fresh positions on rising demand in the spot market. However, ample supplies from producing regions limited the gains. At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, sugar for delivery in far-month August rose by Rs 4, or 0.13 per cent, to Rs 3,065 per quintal with an open interest of 20,590 lots. The July contract edged up by Rs 2, or 0.07 per cent, to Rs 3,033 per quintal in 33,880 lots. Analysts attributed the rise in sugar futures to pick-up in demand from bulk consumers in the spot market but ample supplies limited the gains.



Tea prices to climb as output hits rough weather

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's much-touted 'Chai Pe Charcha' campaign worked well with the Indian voters but chats over tea are soon going to cost you a lot more as India is likely to see a sharp decline in the availability of the brew by a whopping 80 million kg this year.

According to industry insiders, this demand-supply mismatch would continue for the next several years with domestic tea consumption growing by around 30 million kg every year and production from the organized sector remaining stagnant.

Facing the crisis, tea growers want the Modi government to increase the replanting subsidy given to the planters in order to speed up the ongoing bush uprooting and replanting programme.

Speedy replantation of old bushes will increase yields.

“Every year we need 30-35 million kg of additional tea to cater to the growing demands. And this year till now we are 50 million kg down due to crop loss in April and May on the back of no rainfall. I am not too optimistic that the deficit could be wholly made up at the end of this year as parts of Assam are still very dry,” former Indian Tea Association (ITA) chairman CS Bedi told FE. “So this year availability of tea is likely to be down by about 80 million kg,” said Bedi, also MD of Rossell Tea.

He said total output of the crop this year was likely to be less than that of last year. The country's tea production stood at 1,200 million kg in 2013. Deficient rain also impacted the production of Darjeeling tea and this year's output of this world-famous tea is expected to be down by 10% compared to last year.

Arun N Singh, ITA chairman, said end customer prices could rise by around Rs 20 per kg. Darjeeling tea prices are expected to go up by Rs 50 a kg, said chairman of Darjeeling Tea Association, SS Bagaria.

“In the coming years demand will outstrip supply due to the stagnating trend in tea production from the organised sector in India. Prices will be buoyant,” said Aditya Khaitan, MD, McLeod Russel, the world largest tea producer.

Tea processors and traders, however, said in this critical short supply situation the country's millions of tea lovers can get some relief from the rising prices of the hot energizer if the government

Veg oil imports up 13% in May

The country's vegetable oils import rose 13 per cent to 10.33 lakh tonnes in May on account of increase in shipments of edible oils, industry body SEA said on Monday.

Vegetable oils import stood at 9.17 lakh tonnes in the same month of the previous year, it said in a statement.

India meets about 60 per cent of its annual vegetable oil demand of 17-18 million tonnes via imports. Palm oils make up 80 per cent of the country's total vegetable oil imports. Vegetable oil import comprises both edible and non-edible oils.

The import of edible oil was up 14.5 per cent to 10.22 lakh tonnes from 8.92 lakh tonnes earlier.

The import of non-edible oil has almost halved to 11,546 tonnes in May 2014 from 25,898 tonnes in the same month last year.

"Indian refiners prefer to import crude soft oils over CPO in India, which was reflected in pattern of import in last few months," Solvent Extractors Association (SEA) said. Soft oils are edible oils that are liquid at room temperature.

Import of vegetable oils during the November-May period of oil year (November-October) 2013-14 increased to 6.198 lakh tonnes from 6.197 lakh tonnes earlier.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

All India mango expo begins at Krishnagiri

The 22nd All India Mango Exhibition at the Government Boys Higher Secondary School here was inaugurated on Saturday evening. State higher education minister P Palaniappan and agriculture minister 'Agri' S S Krishnamoorthy were the chief guests and inaugurated the exhibition. Addressing in the meeting, Minister Palaniappan said that mango was being cultivated in more than 40,000 hectares and producing 3.5 lakh tonnes of mangoes across the district.

"Mango cultivation is the main farming activity in the region including Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri districts and it helps the economic development of the districts as well," he said. Under the national horticulture mission, the government is

extending subsidy to the new and existing farmers under various schemes. He also said that the purpose of organising the mango exhibition is to popularise various varieties of mangoes and other crops among farmers.s

"The various efforts taken by the state government, including the exhibition, will boost mango production in the state. We are trying to expand the area under cultivation. We have received funds from both the central and the state governments of which 20% will be utilised for mango cultivation," said T P Rajesh, Krishnagiri district collector.

More than 40 varieties of mangoes were displayed at some 200 odd stalls at the exhibition.

"We have come here to see such wide variety of mangoes. This exhibition is being organised for 21 years and attract a large number of people," said B Sreedharan, a visitor. Mango eating competition and quiz will also be organised where various of all age groups can participate. The exhibition also provide a platform for orchard owners to reach out to prospective buyers.

A competition to judge the best mango produce will be held , said Rajesh.

"Mango farmers and pulp producers from the states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra will display their produce and prizes would be awarded to the first three selected in each category," he said.

Horticultural farms, National Horticulture Board, Agriculture Processed Foods and Export Development Authority, Safal National Exchange and research stations from the country are expected to display their produce.

[Post a comment](#)

Agriculture Ministry to transfer land for Agriculture University in Andhra Pradesh

Union Urban Development Minister M Venkaiah Naidu today said Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh has approved the transfer of an unused land belonging to the Central Tobacco Research Institution (CTRI) at Rajahmundry for Agriculture University in the residual Andhra Pradesh city.

According to a press release, Naidu had addressed a letter to the Agriculture Minister on June 2 requesting to transfer the land measuring 21.93 acres land of CTRI, which was lying unused, for the Agriculture University at Rajahmundry on a long-term lease.

The Agriculture Minister promptly responded and met Naidu today to convey that the request has been acceded to and the transfer of land approved, the release added.

During the meeting, Naidu also brought to the notice of Singh that East Godavari, Visakhapatnam and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh and Karimnagar, Medak and Rangareddy districts in Telangana do not have Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and sought to establish KVKs in these districts.

The Agriculture Minister immediately agreed to positively consider KVKs in these six districts, the release said.