

We may use UAVs for weather forecasts in future: Ramanan

Seminar on Coastal Tech 2014 organised at Tamil University



Clear picture: S.R. Ramanan, Director, Area Cyclone Warning Centre (ACWC), Regional Meteorological Centre, Chennai, speaking at the Coastal Tech 2014 seminar organised at Tamil University on Thursday. — Photo: B. Velankanni Raj

THANJAVUR, March 14, 2014 -

Technology has helped in giving accurate weather forecasts and predicting cyclones, said S.R.Ramanan, Director, Area Cyclone Warning Centre (ACWC), Regional Meteorological Centre, Chennai, here on Thursday.

Delivering key-note address at the national seminar on Coastal Tech 2014 organised by the Department of Industries and Earth Sciences at Tamil University, Mr.Ramanan cited the examples of Odisha super cyclone in 1999, Thane and Nilam cyclones.

He spoke about cyclonic disturbances, land fall, two distinct seasons in India when cyclones occur, climatology of tracks, track prediction, adverse effects, and numerical methods in cyclone forecasting.

Cyclonic disturbances are called tropical cyclones if they attain a wind speed above 63 km per hour. "When the wind speed is less than 31 km per hour it is called "low", when the speed is between 31 and 51 it's called "depression", between 63 and 87 km a "cyclone", 88 and 117 km "severe cyclone", 118 and 221 km "very severe cyclone" and when the wind speed reaches 222 km per hour and above it's called "super cyclone", Mr. Ramanan explained.

In countries like United States of America, aircrafts penetrate into cyclone formations and research wind velocity and rain formation. In India, perhaps in future, we may use unmanned aerial vehicles to do so, Ramanan predicted.

In India cyclones occur only in April and May and again in October, November and December. In the months of June, July, August, September i.e. during southwest monsoon, they don't occur because of Westerly and Easterly winds, Mr. Ramanan said. When the eye of a cyclone crosses land it is called "land fall" after which the cyclone weakens, the weatherman said.

K.Santhanam, Former Deputy Director, Ground Water Division, Public Works Department, said that the State is likely to face acute water shortage in the future. "We should find out methods for improving the water table," he said.

M.Thirumalai, Vice-Chancellor, Tamil University, presided. The Vice-chancellor released abstract of the research papers.

Price rise most burning issue for farmers: CSDS survey

Sample size 5,000 households with 11,000 interviewees

NEW DELHI, March 14, 2014 - Price rise, not corruption, will be the most important issue for farmers when they go to vote in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, says a Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) random survey. The sample size comprised 5,000 farming households with 11,000 interviewees including 4,298 women and 2,115 youths. Issues of unemployment and lack of irrigation will be other concerns that will influence the target group farmers.

Only 10 per cent of those interviewed believed that poor and small farmers got the benefit from farmer related schemes. Education, health and employment emerged as the major responsibilities that worry Indian farmers, the respondent group said.

Fifty-seven per cent of the people interviewed were "not sure" about which political party cared for farmers. Another 13 per cent opted for "others." While 16 per cent said the BJP cared for farmers and 13 per cent named the Congress, one per cent said the Left parties cared for farmers.

The survey, carried out between December 2013 and January 2014, did not take into account the Aam Aadmi Party or the parties ruling in the States. Also, the sample size was too small and random for it to be truly representative.

Asked who they would vote for, 31 per cent said "can't say," 20 per cent said "others," while 30 per cent said they intended to vote for the BJP, 17 per cent for the Congress and two per cent for the Left parties.

The study, commissioned by the Bharat Krishak Samaj, said around 47 per cent farmers felt the overall condition of farmers was bad and 58 per cent thought both the State and the Centre were responsible for their problems.

Sixty-one of the interviewed farmers said they would leave farming and migrate to the cities if they got employment there. Only 20 per cent of the 2,115 youths interviewed said they would continue farming.

Thirty-seven per cent of the farmers said there had been no change in their economic condition in the last 10 years, although 47 per cent were optimistic about their future. Contrary to the general opinion, a low proportion of farmers worried about repayment of loan. Their major worry appeared to be the future of their children, explained Sanjay Kumar, director of CSDS.

About 85 per cent farmers had heard of MGNREGA. Of them, 51 per cent said their household did not get work under the job guarantee scheme.

Seventy per cent had heard about the Direct Cash Transfer scheme but only 34 per cent supported the idea of subsidy benefits going directly into their bank accounts.

Of the 27 per cent who had heard about the Land Acquisition Act, 57 per cent said that farmers stood to lose from this law.

Eighty-three per cent of the respondent farmers had not heard about Foreign Direct Investment. Of them, 51 per cent said FDI should not be allowed since farmers may not be able to bargain. However, 40 per cent farmers of landless farmers supported the idea. Strangely enough, about 62 per cent of the farmers were not aware of the minimum support price.

Farmers must be looked upon as partners: Zeigler

CHENNAI, March 14, 2014 - The private sector would play a significant role in the next green revolution, said Robert S. Zeigler, director general of the International Rice Research Institute.

Speaking at an international dialogue, 'Take it to the Farmer', commemorating the birth centenary of Nobel laureate Norman Borlaug at the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) here on Thursday, Dr. Zeigler said, "We now have the means to create a second green revolution. I am absolutely convinced that we have created the platform for the next green revolution."

He stressed the need for new varieties of rice resistant to flood, drought and salinity.

“Eastern India will be the granary of the nation in years to come. Four million farmers are already growing flood-tolerant rice in India,” he said.

Planning Commission member K. Kasturi Rangan highlighted various measures taken by the Centre to actively involve farmers in planning, knowledge transfer and the implementation of schemes. “There is need to recognise farmers as producers of knowledge and this can be created through a shared environment,” he said.

M.S. Swaminathan, chairman emeritus, MSSRF, emphasised the contribution of Norman Borlaug in bringing about a change in the farming scenario at a crucial time when India was threatened by famine and was dependent on external food aid.

“Working closely with Borlaug was one of the most exhilarating experiences of my life. He left his footprints on the sands of time in the farming scenario of India,” said Prof. Swaminathan.

“Farmers must not be looked upon as beneficiaries, but as partners. Technology is important, but what is even more critical is political commitment,” he said.

At an international dialogue, scientists stressed the need for a second green revolution

Agri exporters told to comply with new E.U. norms

COIMBATORE, March 14, 2014 - *Officials to inspect all export consignments*

The Plant Quarantine Station here has directed all companies exporting agricultural produce to the European Union to comply with a new set of quality control norms which will be implemented from April 1 this year.

Official sources told *The Hindu* that the E.U. has mandated the officials of Union Agricultural Department to inspect all export consignments of fresh fruits and vegetables at the approved packaging centres itself. This is to ensure the consignment is completely free of pest or bacteria. Till now, only random testing of the products was undertaken.

These new measures have been put in place after pests were detected from an Indian consignment sent to Europe recently. Following this, a review was instituted and changes have been made into the inspection regime.

Products meant for exports were packed only at units approved by the Agriculture Product Export Development Authority, an agency that works under the Union Commerce Ministry and coordinated the exports of all agricultural products.

The Plant Quarantine Station issued the phytosanitary certificate, attesting that the export consignment was free of pest, diseases and bacteria.

The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has directed the Plant Protection Officers across the country to create awareness about the new procedures among all the exporters immediately. The officers have also been directed to issue the phytosanitary certificate only for those fresh fruits and vegetables that had been packed at the approved units. They have also been instructed to depute technical staff to inspect the packaged units and ensure they conformed to the international standards.

Sources said that there were several proposals from Western districts to export fresh fruits such as papaya and mango besides coconut to the European Union and even Britain.

The Plant Quarantine Station comes under the Directorate of Plant Protection, Quarantine and Storage in the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Union Agriculture Ministry.

Water level

The water level in the Periyar dam stood at 110.80 feet (permissible level 136 feet) on Thursday with no inflow and a discharge of 100 cusecs. The level in the Vaigai dam was

31.79 feet (full level 71 feet) with no inflow and a discharge of 40 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 812 mcft. There was no rainfall recorded during the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on Thursday, PWD officials here said.

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 49.26 feet on Thursday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 598 cusecs and the discharge, 500 cusecs.



Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Friday, Mar 14

Max Min

30° | 23°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 74

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:17

Sunset: 06:19

Barometer: 1015

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Saturday, Mar 15

Max Min

33° | 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday

Mar 16



33° | 23°

Partly Cloudy

Monday

Mar 17



27° | 23°

Cloudy

Tuesday

Mar 18



28° | 23°

Sunny

Wednesday

Mar 19



28° | 22°

Partly Cloudy

Thursday

Mar 20



28° | 23°

Cloudy

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Postpone loan recovery, say farmers

HUBLI: Farmers from various districts on Thursday staged a protest in front of the [Lead bank \(Vijaya Bank\)](#) near Chitaguppi Hospital demanding postponement of [recovery of crop and tractor loans](#).

Hundreds of farmers from Navalgund, Indi, Hubli, Dharwad, Shiggaon, Savanur, Hangal, Haveri and other taluks took part in the protest under the banner of Akhil Karnataka Raitarahagu Krishi Tractor Malikara Hitabhivridhi Sangha. Sangha state secretary Y B Inamati said: "Due to untimely rain, farmers have incurred huge loss. They are finding it difficult to pay back the amount. Banks have already started recovering loan from farmers. We want them to postpone the task for some time."

Inamati accused the central government, which has waived Rs 72,000 crore loan taken by

government industries, of turning a blind eye to farmers' issues. "There were many irregularities involving bank officials who are hand in glove with tractor dealers and agents while allocating tractor loans between 2004 and 2009 . As a result of this, farmers have become victims. Banks seized their tractors," alleged Inamati.

He urged the banks to return the seized tractors and enforce strict action against the erring officials and dealers.

University lends financial aid to farmers

The [North Maharashtra University](#) (NMU) has taken a decision to lend financial help to [farmers](#) in Jalgaon, Dhule and Nandurbar hit by unseasonal rains and hailstorms recently.

The decision in this regard was taken by vice chancellor (VC) Sudhir Meshram under the university's programme, 'From training centre to the field', as part of its social responsibility.

The VC has decided to donate a month's salary while all the teachers of the [University](#) and the non-teaching staff will donate a day's salary towards this endeavour.

On March 10, the VC conducted meetings of the representatives of the university's non-teaching staff, employee unions, backward class employee unions, besides meeting the directors of various educational institutes in a bid to bring everyone together to help the farmers.

The amount will be handed over to the respective district collectors.



Colonial Hangover Ails Workers of Assam's Tea Industry



A tea garden worker in Assam. | IANS

Colonial-style bungalows of Assam's expansive tea gardens and the British-era lifestyles of their executives paint a picture postcard of yore. Sadly, this hangover also extends to the poor living conditions of labourers - an issue now

in the limelight after the World Bank said that it was probing the violation of workers' rights in these plantations it jointly finances with Tata Global Beverages.

Mostly Adivasis, or tribals from Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Andhra Pradesh, the tea estate workers are migrants whose forefathers were brought to Assam by the British more than a century back. But despite toiling and tilling the land, and making it their home, their living conditions have remained dismal - even as Assam's tea industry continues to flourish and fetch good prices at home and abroad.

A complaint by a group of NGOs on the poor living conditions of workers led to the International Finance Corporation (IFC) - a member of the World Bank Group - announcing last month that its accountability office was probing the project, run by the Amalgamated Plantations Private Limited (APPL), which has 24 tea plantations. The complaint, although it mentions three particular tea gardens, was put together after an independent study by Columbia University in 23 plantations and concluded that workers face dire living and working conditions in violation of the law.

One of the vital issues that the complainants alleged was that the working and living conditions of the community did not comply with IFC's social safeguard policies or the Plantation Labour Act.

"One of the biggest workplace health problems is insufficient and poor quality protective equipment and medical care for sprayers," the complaint said. "Sprayers informed that only an arbitrary proportion received gear which includes either only a cloth mask, plastic or cloth shoes and flimsy goggles. Only workers who mix chemicals received gloves, and they receive no training."

The condition of women workers, in particular, was dismal. "Women workers reported that they were forced to continue regular, heavy work through eight months of pregnancy, and were told no light work was available," the complaint said. Tea estate labourers are daily wagers, earning about Rs.89 per day.

Health is a major concern among workers. The complainant alleged that unhygienic conditions in the labour colonies, or labour lines as they are called, like overflowing sewers, poor drainage system, broken and unused toilets, and water stagnation all contribute to the prevalence of ailments such as gastrointestinal diseases, diarrhoea, typhoid and tuberculosis, affecting the most vulnerable lot first - children and women.

APPL said that no violations of workers' rights take place and that they comply with the Plantation Labour Act.

Tata Global Beverages said it was committed to the fair and ethical treatment of people across the supply chain. "The management of APPL has confirmed to us that they are in compliance with all legal requirements on wages, they treat their employees fairly, and their employees receive many benefits over and above many other tea plantation companies in India."

TGB added that it had appointed legal advisors to verify compliances by an independent review.

But doctors of other tea estates admit to gross discrimination meted out to workers by the management.

"One cannot say that things have not improved at all over the years for the workers community; but it's also true that they have not improved as much as they should have. Drains in the colonies, for instance, are still not made of concrete, nor are the roads. The two-room houses they live in offer minuscule space for large families and with the exception of some, tea garden hospitals are ill-equipped," a tea garden medical officer in Sonitpur district said.

Agreed Sushanta Talukdar, a retired tea estate doctor. "Tea garden managers are always under pressure to produce fine tea and cut production costs, and when it comes to cost cutting health always gets the axe first," Talukdar said.

Questions are also raised as to why, despite health concerns being made public, things have remained the same, year after year. Anaemia is high in women, and according to Sandip Ghosh of the Assam Branch Indian Tea Association (ABITA), a sample study by the Assam Medical College and Unicef found 95 percent women in the Dibrugarh district tea gardens anaemic. Malnutrition is again very high in children, and the study also found that of 14 meals a week, only two consist of nutritional food.

Manju Lohar, a tea garden worker, lamented that although they get a "labour ration" of 2 kg rice and 1 kg wheat per week, it's not enough to feed the family. "I have four children, and our weekly income after the deductions comes to around Rs.850. But foodgrain is so expensive outside, plus there are other expenditures; so a healthy meal is not possible".

A tea estate manager, on the condition of anonymity, tried explaining: "It's an age-old, colonial mindset on the part of the big bosses of not letting too much development take place among the workers' community...otherwise they would not work in the gardens and the factories."

(Azera Parveen Rahman can be contacted at azera.rahman@gmail.com. This story is part of a National Media Fellowship awarded by the National Foundation of India)

THE HINDU Business Line

US to ease fungicide norms for basmati

Washington re-working the maximum residue limit for Tricylazole



New Delhi, March 13: The US has assured India that it will relax its stringent tolerance norms for fungicide found in Basmati shipped from the country.

Basmati exporters from India have been battling rejections in the US market for over two years as the country does not have a 'maximum residue limit' (MRL) for

Tricylazole fungicide. All consignments that have traces of the fungicide over the default level of 0.1 parts per million (ppm) are being treated as potentially harmful by US importers. Moreover, consignments also have to go through detailed scrutiny because of ambiguity on Tricylazole limits leading to cost and time over-runs as many Indian companies are under the country's import alert.

"We are hopeful that the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will come up with a MRL of 3 by July this year which will take care of most of the problems faced by our Basmati exporters," a Commerce Ministry official told *Business Line*.

Dow Chem, the manufacturer of Tricylazole pesticide, has supplied the complete dossier of the insecticide to the US EPA which includes all information such as molecular composition and toxicity data. The EPA will use this data to come up with a MRL for the pesticide.

“Our industry has had to pay Dow Chem for the services it has rendered as it is not within its normal course of obligation to give submissions to the US Government. But, this is an investment worth making,” the official said.

India exported Basmati rice worth \$240 million to the US in 2012-13. In the first 10 months of the current fiscal, Basmati exports to the country are at \$121.8 billion.

“Once the US settles the matter satisfactorily, we expect Basmati exports to rise substantially,” the official said. The US norms had raised costs, upset schedules and obstructed sales, prompting exporters to seek Government’s intervention. Over 30 firms came under US FDA import alert amid total scrutiny, giving the impression that the US was employing a virtual zero-tolerance policy on Indian pesticides that have been used around the world for years and raised no health concerns.

Indian companies see the US market as a strong branded market which sets benchmark prices and urged the Government to take up the issue with its US counterpart. In 2011, over 100 containers of Basmati consignments were detained by the authorities for analysing the pesticide content. This followed after traces of Tricylazole were found in 30 containers sent by an Amritsar-based firm.

Outlook turns bearish for mustard, oil as new crop begins to hit markets



Indore, March 13: NEW ARRIVALS CRUSH MUSTARD

Arrivals of new mustard crop kept a leash on mustard oil prices on Thursday, leading to a breather after a sharp rally in the last few days. Reports of damage being limited to the crops also cooled the market. In the last one week, mustard oil prices in Indore mandis have dropped by Rs. 10 to Rs. 660. With arrival of new mustard seeds in mandis across the country gaining steam, an uptrend in the near future appears unlikely. On Thursday, plant deliveries of new mustard seeds for Jaipur line were quoted at Rs. 3,415-20 (Rs. 3,535-40).

Rise in arrival also dragged mustard

prices in the physical market by Rs. 100 with prices slipping to Rs. 3,700-3,900 while raida also declined to Rs. 2,700-2,900 a quintal. Our Correspondent

Rice may gather steam on demand hopes

Karnal, March 13: RICE MAY GATHER STEAM

With the trading being lukewarm, prices of aromatic and non-basmati rice prices ruled with nominal fluctuation on Thursday. In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) sold at Rs. 8,700-8,900, while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted at Rs. 7,800. Pure Basmati (Raw) quoted at Rs. 12,200. Duplicate basmati (steam) sold at Rs. 7,000. Pusa-1121 (second wand) was at Rs. 7,100, Tibar at Rs. 6,150 while Dubar at Rs. 5,000 a quintal. In the non-basmati section, Sharbati (Steam) sold at Rs. 5,000 while Sharbati (Sela) quoted at Rs. 4,600. Permal (raw)

sold at Rs. 2,330, Permal (sela) at Rs. 2,350, PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs. 2,700 while PR-11 (Raw) at Rs. 2,600. PR14 (steam) sold at Rs. 2,950 a quintal. Our Correspondent

50% turmeric unsold in Erode markets



Erode, March 13: 50% TURMERIC UNSOLD IN ERODE

Half the turmeric arrivals in Erode markets went unsold on Thursday as only medium quality produce arrived. "Prices decreased by Rs. 100-200 a quintal. Some 6,000 bags were offered for sale and traders bought a few medium quality bags by quoting lower price," said RKV Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs. 4,003-6,803; the root variety Rs. 4,002-6,499 a quintal. The finger variety of the Salem Hybrid fetched Rs. 5,899-7,629 and the root variety Rs. 5,699-

6,794. Of the 1,796 bags that arrived, 798 were sold. Our Correspondent

Kerala begins to procure rubber

Kottayam, March 13: Physical rubber prices ruled steady on Thursday.

The local market failed to recover in tune with the domestic futures which pared early losses partially during late trading hours.

The stalemate continued though the procurement process has begun. Procurement is expected to gather momentum over the next couple of days.

Sheet rubber was quoted unchanged at Rs. 146.50 a kg, by traders. The grade closed flat at Rs. 147 and Rs. 144 respectively, according to the Rubber Board and dealers.

March futures improved to Rs. 146 (Rs. 143.31), April to Rs. 151.95(Rs. 149.01), May to Rs. 155.31 (Rs. 152.03) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) firmed up to Rs. 140.08 (Rs. 136.69) at Bangkok. March futures closed at ¥248 (Rs. 147.79) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates (Rs. /kg) : RSS-4: 146.50 (146.50); RSS-5: 144 (144); Ungraded: 141.50 (141.50); ISNR 20: 142.50 (142.50) and Latex 60%: 112.50 (112.50).

Rubber shortage worries tyre-makers

Board prunes output to 8.5 lakh tonnes this fiscal but industry says it could be even lower

Kochi, March 13: The tyre industry has expressed concern over the shortage of rubber in the domestic market stretching throughout the current fiscal.

In the past, availability of rubber during the peak production season stretching from September to February was not a major problem.

However, during the current fiscal, domestic availability even during the peak production season has been erratic and uncertain, said Rajiv Budhreja, Director-General, Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA).

Peak output

The peak season (September 2013-February 2014) production dropped to 5,18,000 tonnes (5,46,500 tonnes).

The consumption increased by over 6,000 tonnes during this period.

He said that the extent of drop in production can be assessed from the fact that the Rubber Board had already scaled down the original production estimate twice during the current fiscal from 9.6 lakh tonnes (lt) to 8.7 lt to further 8.5 lt.

However, even the revised estimate of 8.5 lt, made as recently as in February is not likely to be achieved as actual production during April-February (11 months) period is just 7.8 lt.

In April-February period of 2012-13, the production was 8.6 lt, he said quoting Rubber Board figures. Even though the peak production season has just concluded, the market availability of rubber has been extremely tight leaving tyre companies with no option but to import.

With the expected revival in automobile sector and resultant demand for tyres improving in the next fiscal, he said an increase in rubber consumption without a matching increase in production will only make the industry rely on import for this critical raw material.

Milk powder to drive dairy exports to record this fiscal

New Delhi, March 13: Dairy exports during the current financial year are set to touch a new high, with shipments of skimmed milk powder (SMP) doubling over last year.

A drought in New Zealand early last year had fuelled demand for Indian SMP, mainly from the developing markets.

Rising rupee

Till February-end this fiscal, SMP shipments stood at 1.22 lakh tonnes, nearly twice the 63,762 tonnes exported during the same time a year ago, official sources said.

However, shipments have now slowed down, with Indian SMP turning unviable in the export market due to the recent decline in global prices and the rupee appreciating against the dollar.

The Amul story

“The domestic market is better now, as prices have moved up. We are getting a price of Rs. 280-290 a kg in the local market, against export realisations of about Rs. 260 a kg,” said RS Sodhi, Managing Director of Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), which owns the Amul brand.

GCMMF has seen a five-fold rise in its SMP shipments in the current financial year, with exports of 20,000 tonnes in the current financial year, the highest so far, Sodhi said.

In the last financial year, Amul shipped out about 4,000 tonnes, after the Government opened up SMP exports in June 2012.

GCMMF, which initially targeted an export turnover of Rs. 350 crore for the current year, expects to close this fiscal with revenue of Rs. 500 crore from overseas, Sodhi added.

Improved prices

RS Khanna, an expert in the sector, feels the value of Indian dairy exports for the current financial year could touch Rs. 5,000 crore. This has been driven by a strong growth in shipments of SMP and improved prices.

Besides, demand from traditional markets, such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, Indian shipments also got a boost from the product contamination scare faced by Fonterra, the world's largest exporter.

According to APEDA, exports of dairy products during April-December stood at Rs. 2,618.72 crore, up 162 per cent over Rs. 996.86 crore a year ago.

“The party is over for the Indian SMP exports.

The surplus stocks that were built up in the past couple of years have been exhausted and the domestic prices are attractive,” said Sandeep Agarwal, Director at SMC Foods, which exported about 1,000 tonnes in the current year.

GOOD UNTIL NOW, BUT...

- ☐ **Till February-end, SMP shipments were 1.22 lakh tonnes**
- ☐ **Indian SMP has now turned unviable in the export market**
- ☐ **Surplus stocks built in the past couple of years are exhausted**

Jeera crackles on higher arrivals, profit-booking



Rajkot, March 13:

HIGHER INFLOWS POUND JEERA

Jeera prices decreased on the back of higher arrival in the mandis and expectation of rise in production. Futures also moved down as traders resorted to profit booking. According to traders and market analysts, the overall scenario for jeera market is negative as arrivals are likely to rise in the coming days which may pressurise the price of the spice. Compared with last week, jeera arrivals increased from 26,000 bags to 40,000 bags in Unjha mandi of Gujarat. Spot price declined Rs. 10-12 to Rs. 1,700-1,975 for *amaund* of 20 kg for medium quality and best quality jeera was traded at Rs. 2,000-2,200 . At Rajkot APMC, jeera was traded down by Rs. 10-15 to Rs. 1,670-1,900 .Our Correspondent

Business Standard

Cardamom down 0.7% on subdued demand



[Cardamom](#) remained weak as prices fell further by 0.79% to Rs 790.10 per kg in futures trading today as speculators trimmed positions due to subdued spot demand against adequate supplies from producing regions.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for delivery in March fell further by Rs 6.30, or 0.79%, to Rs 790.10 per kg in business turnover of 16 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in April traded lower by Rs 5, or 0.61%, to Rs 812.50 per kg in 551 lots.

Analysts said speculators trimmed positions on subdued demand in the spot market against sufficient stocks position that kept pressure on cardamom prices to trade lower at futures trade.

Crude palm oil up 0.1% on spot demand



[Crude palm oil](#) prices rose by 0.12% to Rs 599.70 per 10 kg in futures trade today as speculators created fresh positions driven by rising demand in the spot market.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), crude palm oil for delivery in March rose by 70 paise, or 0.12%, to Rs 599.70 per 10 kg in a business turnover of 42 lots.

Similarly, the oil for delivery in April edged up by 50 paise, or 0.08%, to Rs 598.80 per 10 kg in 47 lots.

Analysts said fresh positions created by speculators following pick-up in demand in the spot market helped crude palm oil prices to trade higher at futures trade.

Chana up 0.7% on pick-up in demand



[Chana](#) prices rose by 0.73% to Rs 3,320 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators enlarged positions, driven by pick-up in demand in the spot market against restricted supplies from producing regions.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), chana for delivery in April rose by Rs 24, or 0.73%, to Rs 3,320 per quintal with an open interest of 88,420 lots.

Similarly, the commodity for delivery in May traded higher by Rs 23, or 0.69%, to Rs 3,364 per quintal in 39,190 lots.

Analysts said speculators enlarged positions driven by pick-up in demand in the spot market against restricted supplies from producing regions which led to rise in chana prices at futures trade.

They said reports of damage to crop due to recent rains in growing regions, particularly in Madhya Pradesh, also influenced the sentiment.

Oilseeds production in Gujarat estimated at 4.2 mn tonnes

The production of [oilseeds](#), excluding cottonseed, in [Gujarat](#) for 2013-14 is estimated to be around 4.25 million tonnes compared to last year's 2.26 million tonnes, according to the

latest data released by the Central Organisation for Oil Industry & Trade ([COOIT](#)).

Apart from castor seed, whose production is likely to see a slight slump this year in comparison to last year because of reduced sowing area, production of groundnut, soybean, sesame and rape/mustard/toria oilseeds is estimated to be higher than last year.

The COOIT report further says that oilseed production during [kharif](#) and rabi season will be around 4.24 million tonnes in 2013-14, higher than last year, which saw production of around 2.24 million tonnes.

Due to good monsoon and favourable weather conditions in the state, the area under [rabi crop](#) has increased this year.

According to study report of COOIT, groundnut production is likely to be about 2.78 million tonnes in this fiscal year as against last year's 8,55,000 tonnes. The report estimated kharif production of groundnut to be around 2.5 million tonnes and rabi production of the same to be around 2,86,000 tonnes in Gujarat.

The second highest production has been estimated for rapeseed/mustard, which is expected to be about 4,80,000 tonnes as against 3,10,000 tonnes in 2012-13.

As per the report, sesame seed production in Gujarat was about 43,000 tonnes in 2012-13 while this year it will be about 75,000 tonnes. The report mentioned that kharif sesame seed production has been lower than rabi this year because of damage to the crop owing to heavy rain at the end of the monsoon.

Production of Kharif sesame seed is estimated to be around 20,000 tonnes while that of rabi sesame seed production may be around 55,000 tonnes in the state.

While production of most of the oil seeds have been estimated to be higher, castor seed production has seen a slight slump due to reduced sowing area. The report says that production of castor seed last year was 9,67,000 tonnes and this year, it is likely to be 8,28,000 tonnes in Gujarat.

COOIT report estimated production of soybean in the state to be around 80,000 tonnes this year as against last year's production of 70,000 tonnes.

Coriander down 1.3% on weak demand, adequate supply

[Coriander](#) prices moved down by 1.30% to Rs 9,445 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators trimmed positions, driven by weak demand in the spot market against adequate supplies from producing regions.



At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, coriander for delivery in April lost Rs 124, or 1.30%, to Rs 9,445 per quintal with an open interest of 35,930 lots.

In a similar fashion, the spice for delivery in May shed Rs 111, or 1.14%, to Rs 9,632 per quintal in 38,950 lots.

Analysts said besides weak demand in the spot market

against adequate supplies from producing region mainly kept pressure on coriander prices at futures trade.

Inclement weather to affect wheat yield



Untimely rains and hailstorms across many [wheat](#)-growing regions in the last few days might hit the crop and lower production to less than the estimated 100 million tonnes.

In the past month, wheat prices have risen five per cent to Rs 1,700 a quintal in mandis in the North. The minimum support price for the crop is Rs 1,350 a quintal.

Farmers ruled out the possibility of late arrivals. They said this time, flattening of plants would hit the crop's yield.

Talking to Business Standard, Indu Sharma, director of the Wheat Research Institute, Karnal, said abrupt rain and hailstorms had affected the wheat crop in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. However, introduction of late-sowing varieties this year might help farmers.

Sharma said had it not been for the adverse [weather](#), India could have recorded a better crop, as wheat acreage increased from 29.6 million hectares in 2012-13 to 31 million hectares in 2013-14. Also, this year saw better seed varieties and the absence of yellow rust.

"The coming 15-20 days are crucial for the wheat crop. If there are no rain showers and no sudden increase in temperature, farmers can expect a good yield," she said.

In [Gujarat](#), [Maharashtra](#), Rajasthan and parts of Madhya Pradesh, wheat arrivals are expected to commence at the end of March.

WHEAT STATS		
	Production in	Yield in
Year	mn tonnes	quintal/hectare
2009-10	80.71	2.80
2010-11	86.87	2.90
2011-12	93.90	3.22
2012-13	92.46	3.10
2013-14*	95.60	3.1-3.2

Source: Wheat Research Institute, Karnal
*Estimates

Bhupinder Singh Mann, president of Bhartiya Kisan Union, said substantial crop losses were recorded in specific belts such as Gurdaspur in Punjab, Hisar in Haryana, Chitrakoot in Uttar Pradesh, owing to hailstorms, sudden rains with strong winds. He, however, added this might not have a significant impact on the overall crop.

R K Garg, president of the Confederation of Roller Flour Mills of North Zone, said the government hadn't brought out tenders for the open market sales scheme in March.

This year, supplies are under stress, as the [Food Security Act](#) has raised government agencies' requirement of food grain, leaving little for the market. For a correction in the price of wheat in the open market, millers are pinning their hopes on new arrivals.
