



## **Ooty gets ready for summer festival**

With the display of colourful posters brought out by the Department of Tourism and the district administration, the stage has been set for The Nilgiris Summer Festival-2014.

It begins on May 3 along with the 7th Vegetable Show at the Nehru Park in Kotagiri and concludes on May 31 at Gudalur.

Promoted with the slogan, 'Come, Involve and Enjoy', the festival will include a photo exhibition at the Horticulture Complex here between May 5 and 16.

Official sources told *The Hindu* that the exhibition which will be organised with the help of various agencies including the Forest Department and the Coimbatore-based environmental organisation Osai, will focus on the rich fauna and flora of the Blue Mountains and the threat they face from different directions.

It is expected to be a highlight of the festival.

Between May 19 and 29 dance, drama and music programmes would be organised at the Brecks Open Air Stadium.

The annual boat race and boat pageant would be held at the Ooty Lake on May 20 and 21 respectively.

## **Heavy rain lashes Ooty for second day**

For the second consecutive day, Udthagamandalam and its surroundings were lashed by heavy rains.

Starting late in the afternoon on Friday, the rains accompanied by hailstones, thunder and lightning which lasted over an hour flooded the municipal market and some of the low-

lying areas in the town. At the Government Botanical Garden where a rainfall of 57 mm was recorded, the downpour sent hundreds of tourists scampering for shelter.

Overflowing ponds led to the flooding of the entrance.

Sources in the Department of Horticulture told *The Hindu* that the rainfall was very heavy in the forests.

Stating that major damages were not reported from any part of the 55-acre garden, they said that following the heavy rain on Thursday most of the potted plants had been moved to safer places.

Lamenting that due to the rains and trampling by tourists the main lawn of the garden had turned soggy, they said that after a couple of days it would be cordoned off.

## **Sudden downpour in Madurai benefits vegetable crops**

*Sudden downpour washed away mealybugs*

The sudden downpour that lashed Madurai city and its peripheries for nearly 100 minutes on Wednesday proved to a blessing to the farmers who are growing vegetables and mango crops, Agriculture Department officials have said.

According to Public Works Department engineers, Madurai recorded 60 mm rainfall on that day.

After the mercury crossed the 40 degree Celsius mark in this part of the region, farmers were striving to save their crops in all possible ways, but not many have succeeded in their efforts.

There was a threat even to those who were dependent on well water for irrigation as the highly dry weather threatened the crops.

### **Water table recharged**

Under such circumstances, the heavy downpour on Wednesday not only inundated low-lying areas, but also helped in recharging the water table in the peripheries to some extent.

“If we had good rain on the following day (Thursday) it would have benefitted farmers in a big way, but unfortunately there was no appreciable rain,” a senior agriculture official said.

### **Mealybug washed away**

Another important reason for the farmers to rejoice was that Wednesday’s rain had relieved them from the menace of mealybug, which was causing damage to vegetable crops.

The rains had washed away the bugs, which could not be destroyed easily even with the use of pesticides.

Similarly, those growing mango too had a reason to feel happy as the yield might go up, officials said.

Murugan, a farmer of Alanganallur, said, “The rain came at the most appropriate time. It was a really boon..”

Like him, many others in Melur and Tirupparankundram blocks were cheerful about the good rain and prayed that it continued for at least a few more days.

### **Summer ploughing**

The agriculture officials said another spell of rain in quick succession would help the farmers prepare for summer ploughing as the first crop season would begin around mid-June.

The rains would make the surface soil loose and also bring down the temperature, which played a crucial role in crop yield, they added.

### **Call to lift EU ban on import of mangoes**

Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam has urged the European Union to lift the ban on import of Alphonso mangoes and vegetables like brinjal, bitter gourd and snake gourd.

In a press release that was issued here, K.M. Ramagoundar, General Secretary of Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, alleged that the European Union had banned import of Alphonso mangoes and vegetables.

### **Quality**

However, farmers and exporters had followed cent percent stringent quality standards prescribed by the EU regarding mango export, he claimed.

Mr. Ramagoundar claimed that the European Union had stopped import of knitted products from Tirupur after testing for pesticides in the cotton yarn used for knitting readymade dresses.

### **Government role**

The Union Government should intervene immediately to have the ban on mangoes lifted, and safeguard the mango industry.

He also urged the government to encourage mango pulp industries to go in for production of value added products from mango.

These products should be aimed at the export market that could help reap rich dividends. For this purpose, pulp industries should be given a minimum of Rs. 5 crore production subsidy, for each pulp industry unit in the district.

### **Safety checks at mango godowns**



A fruit stall in Erode where quality check was held on Friday.-PHOTO: Special Arrangement.

Officials of the Department of Food Safety and Drug Administration conducted checks at mango godowns for adherence to quality norms in the city on Friday morning.

A team led by District Officer for Food Safety and Drug Control G. Karunanidhi checked 15 godowns in order to ensure that the mangoes were not ripened using carbide stones. As the mangoes have just started arriving, we wanted to ensure that only naturally ripened mangoes are kept in the godowns, Mr. Karunanidhi said.

## **Vandalur Zoo turns frugal in water use for fodder**



The water sprinkler at Vandalur Zoo.— Photo: G. Krishnaswamy

Vandalur Zoo joins the elite club of water conserving zoos with the introduction of sprinkler water system to raise fodder.

Hitherto, the zoo was using flood irrigation system for raising fodder, in which water got wasted due to percolation and evaporation.

With the new system in place wastage of water is reduced.

The sprayed water is observed both by the roots and shoots. The sprinkler system had helped the zoo to reduce its water consumption by one tenth, say the zoo authorities.

### **Nutrient recycling**

The leaf litter in the zoo are collected and composed.

The manure made of leaf litter is then used for raising the green fodder.

This is another green measure introduced by the zoo authorities.

The authorities also introduced the mixing of nutrients with the water, another advantage in using sprinklers for raising the fodder.

Talking about the advantage of raising fodder within the zoo premises itself, another wildlife official said earlier they used to buy the fodder and store it for a day and supply to the herbivores.

But, clearly, cultivating fodder in-house meant the herbivores would get fresh, succulent fodder, he added.

### **New method to ripen mangoes**



RIGHT WAY:A vendor checking the quality of mangoes in Tuticorin.Photo: N.Rajesh

A new and legitimate method of ripening mangoes has been introduced.

Food Safety Officers stepped in to guide vendors for ensuring the quality of mangoes.

The vendors were trained to use ethylene to ripen mangoes. Ethylene, secreted from mango trees, was used in liquid form to apply on mangoes, District Designated Officer, Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSA), M. Jagadis Chandrabose told *The Hindu* here on Friday.

The ethylene liquid should be sprayed on mangoes and it would make mangoes ripen in a day or two thus making them fit for consumption as per FSSA norms.

Ethylene produces natural gas initially but ripens mangoes, kept in a favourable atmosphere.

Ten ml of ethylene liquid needs to be dissolved in ten litres of water for spraying it on considerable number of mangoes. With this, sweetness, nutritional value and palatability of the fruit would remain intact, he said.

Explaining adverse effects of artificially ripened mangoes done with the help of calcium carbide, a harmful chemical compound, he said the latter would emit acetylene gas causing health disorder like ulcer, insomnia, loss of appetite.

Such practices were adopted by vendors to skip warehousing expenditure and make a fast buck. Consumption of such mangoes might lead to cancer, he said.

With such a substance, mangoes could ripe within eight hours.

These mangoes would be colourful and attractive but its pulp would not be sweet, Dr. Chandrabose said. He added that surprise raids would be conducted in stalls to check any illegal method of ripening mangoes.

## **Low price leaves acid lime farmers with a bitter aftertaste**



Cultivation cost of acid lime has increased manifold due to various factors, particularly drought and load shedding.

For the farmers of Pudukottai district, the good yield of acid lime recorded this year hasn't turned out to be a reason to celebrate, as poor price for their produce plays spoiler.

Despite severe drought conditions prevailing in the district for the past many months, acid lime farmers of more than 20 villages in Alangudi taluk, have registered good harvest, thanks to water from borewells.

The daily harvest from the villages stands of 15 tonnes is collected by the local commission agents and marketed in areas, including Tiruchi and Madurai. The cultivation cost has increased manifold due to various factors, particularly drought condition and load shedding.

Farmers adopt various methods for raising the crop. While a compact area is brought under comprehensive cultivation practice by some farmers, several others cultivate it as an intercrop. It is also raised in their backyard for commercial purpose.

Though the wholesale price for the fruits has shot up from Rs.15 per kg last year to Rs.50-Rs.60, the hike has not been enough to support the cultivation cost, say a cross section of farmers of Alangudi taluk.

What has come as a big shock to farmers is the exploitation by commission agents, who market it at Rs.150 per kg. There has been a good demand for the fruit this summer with patronage from juice stalls, says Selvam, a farmer of Senthangudi village.



The villages in Alangudi, Keeramangalam, Seriyalur, Kothamangalam, Kulamangalam, Senthankudi, Nagaram and Panankulam are the major areas noted for acid lime production in the district. A majority of the commission agencies are located in Keeramangalam, Kothamangalam, Vadakadu, Pulichangadu Kaikatti, Panankulam, and Kulamangalam.

## **Indigenous crop varieties not remunerative anymore: farmers**

As it produced “Ramnad Mundu” the famous native chilli variety, the district could boast of cultivating three indigenous brinjal varieties – the ‘Venkitankuruchi, Kalani and Pandiyur Kathari’ – but the farmers were dejected as cultivation of these varieties was no more remunerative.

‘Venkitankuruchi kathari’ is cultivated in Paramakudi and surrounding areas, ‘Kalani kathari’ in Ramanathapuram, Mandapam and Tirupullani areas and ‘Paniyur kathari’ in Nainarkoil and Bogalur areas, totally on about 50 hectares.

The farmers could neither reap a bumper crop nor get good price, but still continued with the cultivation as the varieties command good demand and marketing. There was a good demand for the varieties, but the price did not commensurate with the demand, the farmers felt.

B. Rajamanickam, a farmer in Pandiyur, who had been cultivating the native ‘Pandiyur kathari’ for the past 10 years, lamented that the yield had been on the decline every year and this year he had been confronted with more barren plants, a new phenomenon.

The plants would be ready for picking after 90 days and the picking would last for six months, but he had to spend about Rs.3,000 once in 10 days on pesticides and fertilizers, he said. Thanks to the rains last year, the yield was about 150 kg per picking on an acre and this year it had come down to half, he said, adding though the native varieties were sold at Rs.30 a kg in the market, the farmers got only half the price.

Official sources said yield was bound to deteriorate in the indigenous varieties, as the seed collection method by the farmers faced the danger of attracting seed-borne diseases. The salinity in well water would also affect the yield, the sources said.

The Department of Agriculture could not provide certified seeds as these varieties were not notified, the sources added.

The Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA), however, has drawn out a plan to promote the indigenous varieties of not only brinjal, but millets and maize too by establishing village-level seed banks. The ATMA proposed to collect seeds from the farmers and reach out to more farmers as part of promoting the native and traditional varieties, its subject matter specialist M. Egambaram said.

## **Packaged tender coconut water to be sold soon**

The HOPCOMS also propose to introduce packaged tender coconut water for sale at outlets soon.

“A plant has been proposed at Channapatna at a cost of Rs. 1 crore to package tender coconut water. The technology has been derived from the Defence Food Research Laboratory in Mysore. The project will be supported by the Department of Horticulture, the Coconut Development Board and HOPCOMS, Bangalore,” HOPCOMS managing director (in-charge), K.B. Krishnamurthy, told *The Hindu* .

Besides Bangalore, the packaged tender coconut water would be available at HOPCOMS outlets in Mysore, he said.

BIDAR, May 3, 2014

## **State forced to explore options to procure millets**

*PDS needs cannot be met from open market*



It is estimated that 30,000 tonnes of jowar and 25,000 tonnes of ragi are needed for distribution under the PDS along with rice every month.— File Photo: M.A. Sriram

The State government is forced to consider other options for procuring millets for distribution under the public distribution system (PDS) as it could not meet the requirements from open market.

It is estimated that 30,000 tonnes of jowar and 25,000 tonnes of ragi are needed for distribution under the PDS along with rice every month. However, only around 14,000 tonnes of ragi and hardly any jowar have been procured by the Department of Food and Civil Supplies from open market.

Officials said the offer price of Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 1,800 per quintal for both jowar and ragi had deterred farmers from selling them. The recent hailstorm damaged jowar crop on large tracts of land in north Karnataka. With reduced supply, the price has shot up beyond Rs. 35 a kg, a senior officer said.

“We are committed to providing the foodgrains. We have succeeded in providing parboiled rice in coastal districts and ragi in some south Karnataka districts at least to a small extent,” Harsh Gupta, Commissioner, Food and Civil Supplies, said.

“We are exploring other options for procurement of jowar and other foodgrains,” he said.

According to him, the options include decentralised procurement and distribution, and working with cooperative institutions and farmers’ organisations.

### **Buying from farmers**

“The first option is to buy foodgrains from farmers directly at Primary Agriculture Cooperatives (PAC) or Raitha Samparka Kendras (RSK). This will avoid the involvement of intermediary agencies or middlemen. Farmers will get an assured market for what they grow. For us, it will reduce the logistical hassles of centralised procurement from multiple agencies. We could also save on the cost of storage and transport. We also want to experiment with decentralised distribution at the village level, at least in some taluks,” Mr. Gupta said. “We are also inquiring if any cooperatives could help us in this task,” he said.

A pilot project to include minor millets such as bajra and saje on the list of foodgrains to be supplied is on the cards. “Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha units in some districts have volunteered to work with non-governmental organisations such as the Deccan Development Society to help us procure and distribute minor millets. This will involve creating awareness about the nutritional values of these millets and encouraging farmers

to grow them and people to consume them. We want to start the pilot project in Heggadadevanakote and Aurad taulks,” he said.

M.S. Sriram, IIMB fellow and visiting faculty, said decentralisation of procurement and distribution was the “best available method”. “It minimises logistics issue and reduces cash exchange points. It, however, needs to be planned in detail. We need to start with a map of what foodgrains are needed in each district. Then, we need to empower the PACs or RSKs to enable to them procure and distribute the foodgrains. Thirdly, the government should devolve financial powers to gram panchayats and enable officials at the village level to take decisions. Long-range planning and effective implementation will ensure success,” he said.

“The government can also look at gradual reduction of physical distribution of grain and increase use of innovative methods such as direct cash transfer or issuing food stamps. These will reduce costs and increase effectiveness of the delivery mechanisms,” Prof. Sriram said.

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- *‘The options include decentralised procurement and distribution’*
  - *Cooperative institutions and farmers’ organisations may also be involved*

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**KERALA KOTTAYAM :**

## **Rubber Board launches campaign**

*Agency to introduce system for quality certification of materials*



The Rubber Board will lay emphasis on maintaining the quality of planting materials.— FILE PHOTO

Rubber Board chairperson Sheela Thomas has stressed the need to maintain the quality of rubber planting materials to sustain the rubber plantation industry.

Inaugurating a promotional campaign of the Rubber Board on the theme, 'Quality planting materials and certification', here on Friday, Ms. Thomas said it was necessary to ensure the quality of materials to achieve high productivity in the long run.

The Board intends to introduce a new system for quality certification of planting materials to ensure availability of good planting materials. Initially, the certification will be done in nurseries owned by the Rubber Board. The process could be adopted by private nurseries at a later stage, she added.

She also released a book, 'Good Nursery Practices', published by the Rubber Board, The first copy of the book was presented to former Board member Siby J. Monippally. Rubber production commissioner Thomas J.; joint rubber production commissioners D. Anil Kumar and K. Mukundan; National Horticulture Board deputy director C.F. Santhosh Kumar; Aiymcombu Rubber Producers' Society president Binny Mathew; and All India Rubber Nursery Association secretary Chockattu Josekutty Thulumpanmakkel spoke on the occasion.

According to officials, campaign meetings will be held across the traditional rubber growing areas of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala from May 2 to June 13. The extension officers of the Board will meet one lakh small growers. The officials said of the 1.25 crore planting materials required every year, the Board was able to supply only 12-15 lakh plants. The balance demand was met through private nurseries.

KOZHIKODE, May 3, 2014

## **Bread and butter from fish**



Six years ago, when all the prawns in his farm died due to viral infection, Baburaj of Cheriyaathuruthi at Kadalundi saw the world around him crumble. He had taken loans from public and private sector banks to follow his passion, but with the failed attempt, his four-member family was in dire straits. But now, a beaming Baburaj explains how his world turned around for the better, courtesy the Karimeen (green chromide or pearl spot).

Baburaj has been staying at Cheriyaathuruthi, a small island almost at the mouth of the Kadalundi river, for as long as he could remember. The island that houses 14 families has a huge pond at its centre, where Baburaj has been hatching Karimeen fingerlings for the last four years. It is the only Karimeen seed farm in the district. Karimeen, a most favoured delicacy among tourists as well as local people, has helped Baburaj pay back all his loans and make a neat profit.

“Karimeen is easy to rear, not like Chemmeen (prawns) that needs constant attention and care,” Baburaj told *The Hindu*. In fact, he says the island provides the best possible condition for Karimeen farming with constant flow of water from the river to the pond, saving him the effort of artificially managing the oxygen-level in the pond.

The adult fish are fed rice and pellets/cattle feed. The pond is divided into two segments with sand-made bunds and pipelines beneath to facilitate flow of water between the segments. Thus the water level in the pond is maintained at one metre or above depending on the level in the river.

### **Hatching season**

Karimeen costs around Rs.400 a kg in the market. But Baburaj rears them not for sale, only to hatch the fingerlings that he would sell. He gets bulk orders from nurseries across the State as the hatching season approaches. The hatching usually takes place during June-July or November-December.

The fingerlings are collected using a rare technique of inserting a grass-like cage into the pond. The fishes have a tendency to take shelter in them, as the pond is free of any vegetation. When the cage is lifted the fingerlings will be caught inside. They will then be transferred to a tank.

Foreign elements entering the pond by means of the river water is a major threat to the farm.

### **Narimeen, the enemy**

The threat mainly comes in the form of Narimeen, a huge fish that would eat up the small Karimeens. The solution is to rear some prawns as well as another fresh water fish ‘Malan’ in the pond to some extent. These are the favourite food of the Narimeen, and hence would leave the Karimeen alone. The Narimeen itself is a big catch. Last season, Baburaj sold a 10-kg Narimeen for Rs.4,000. It grows up to 50 kg, he said.

At present, the farming is restricted to only one of the segments, as the bund that separated one segment from the river was washed away last January in a flood. Baburaj had a loss of at least Rs.1.5 lakh then, with all the Karimeens, save around 140 of them, drifting into the river. Now he has around 2,000 adult ones in the remaining one segment, ready to hatch in June. By July, he will have thousands of Karimeen seedlings ready for sale. With one seedling fetching Rs.10, the sale would easily cover for his losses.

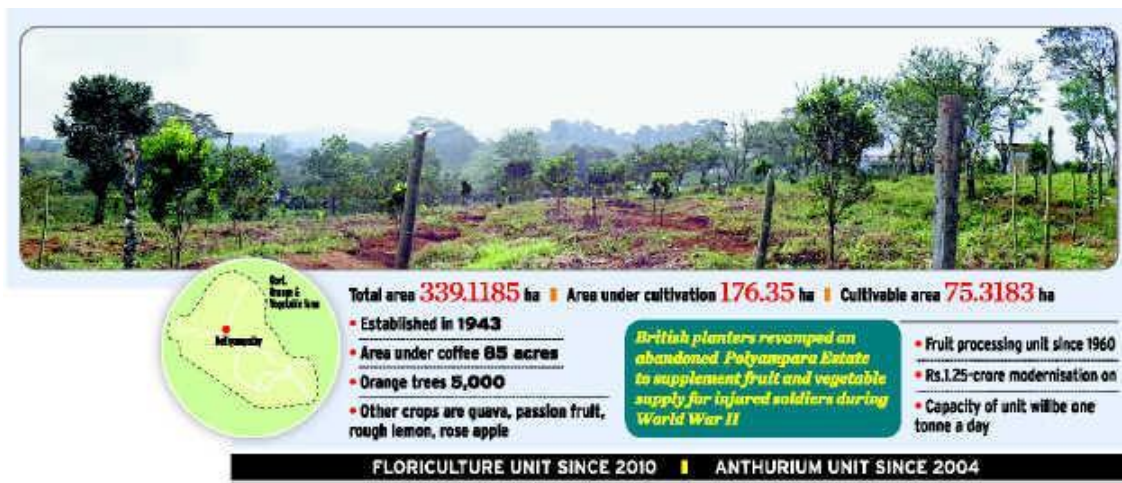
### Mussels too

Apart from the seed farm, Baburaj has Rs.15 lakh worth mussels getting ready for harvest along the river. He also engages in freshwater fishing for his daily living. The fresh water fishes are of great demand even in the coastal belt, he said, thanking the river for all the good fortune.

*Prawns left the aqua farmer deep in debt, Karimeen gave him a foothold to climb back to life.*

PALAKKAD, May 3, 2014

## Fruits of labour await plucking at Nelliampathy





• *The Government Orange and Vegetable Farm, spread around 340 hectares, could be developed into a major tourist attraction*

The Government Orange and Vegetable Farm, spread over 339.1185 hectares of land in the Nelliampathy hills, known as the ‘poor man’s Ooty,’ is a major destination of tourists now as it offers an easy escape from the scorching summer.

The farm was established in 1943 by the erstwhile Maharaja of Cochin, by revamping the abandoned Polyampara Estate with the help of British planters. The aim was to supplement fruit and vegetable supplies for the injured soldiers during World War II. Its oranges were famous for their sweetness and small size. With time, quality and yield have come down, perhaps due to climate change.

The farm lies at an altitude of about 1,050 m from MSL and receives an average annual rainfall of 3,500 mm. The temperature ranges from 12 to 31 degree Celsius. Farm Superintendent E.K. Yusuf said that of 339.1185 hectares, only 176.35 hectares were under cultivation and 75.3183 hectares were cultivable waste land. Coffee was cultivated in 85 acres, he said. There were 5,000 orange trees and a substantial area of the farm came under guava, passion fruit, rough lemon, and rose apple cultivation.

A fruit processing unit, launched in 1960, was being modernised with a financial assistance of Rs.1.25 crore from NABARD. The new plant would be inaugurated next month, he said. Now, one quintal fruits were being processed and with the new plant, the capacity would go up to a tonne a day.

### **Jellies, squashes**



The popular products of the farm include squashes of passion fruit, orange, mango, cherry lemon, guava; jam; jellies of mango, peach, rose apple, turnip guava; cut vegetables; and mango in brine, said M.S. Promode, farm manager.

A floriculture unit was established in 2010 with assistance from the State Horticulture Mission to cultivate 5,000 varieties of anthurium and orchids each. The anthurium unit was started in 2004. Its green house has 20,000-odd anthurium plants imported from Holland.

Nelliampathy has a unique blend of tropical and subtropical climate, a rarity in Kerala. It is suitable for a wide range tropical and temperate vegetables and fruits.

The pluses

With unpolluted air, rich biodiversity, and pleasant weather, there was good scope for attracting tourists, Agriculture Officer of Nelliampathy Krishi Bhavan T.T. Arun said.

But, the absence of affordable and mass lodging was a big handicap in promoting tourism, he said. The farm has a lodging which generates revenue of Rs.1.5 lakh a year. With sufficient land under possession, the farm could offer mass lodging too. With scope for a botanic garden, zodiac garden, varied landscaping styles, trekking, fishing, and boating, the farm could be developed into a tourism centre, he said.

### **Project submitted**

The farm had already submitted a project for introducing boating by constructing nine check dams in the stream flowing through it, Mr. Yusuf said. There was also a proposal to construct more cottages for tourists.

Since there is big demand for the fruit products of the farm there were plans to buy mango, guava, pineapple, and gooseberry from farmers to meet the requirement.

A buyback arrangement would be made with farmers, the Superintendent said. To increase the production of passion fruit juice another 5.5 hectares would be brought under its cultivation. Farmers would also be encouraged to take up passion fruit cultivation, he said.

NEW DELHI:

## **India threatens to drag EU to WTO over mango ban**

Talking tough, India on Friday threatened to drag the European Union to the World Trade Organization if the 28-nation bloc did not lift its ban on the import of Indian mangoes and vegetables.

“We do hope that the EU will see sense, considering the strength of the economic partnership between India and EU, and not precipitate the situation any further, which leads us to go to the WTO,” Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma told reporters here.

Mr. Sharma said he had already written a letter on the matter to EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht.

He said the government had invested in creating world-class laboratories through the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) and their certification processes were acceptable to the EU, the U.S. and other countries. — PTI

## **Water level at Mettur**

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 32.99 feet on Friday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 998 cusecs and the discharge 3,000 cusecs.

TIRUNELVELI :

The water level in the Papanasam Dam on Friday stood at 33.45 feet. The dam had an inflow of 3.47 cusecs and 104.75 cusecs of water was discharged.

The level of Manimuthar Dam stood at 62.79 feet. The dam had an inflow of 5 cusecs and 200 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam.

## **Kanyakumari:**

The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 16 feet, 37.30 feet in Perunchani, 3.28 feet in Chittar 1, 3.78 feet in Chittar 11, 1.70 feet in Poigai and 42.32 feet in Mamabazathuraiyaru.

Chennai - INDIA

## Today's Weather



Sunny

Rain: 0

Humidity: 63

Wind: normal

## Saturday, May 3

Max Min

33° | 27°

Sunrise: 05:47

Sunset: 06:24

Barometer: 1009

## Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

## Sunday, May 4

Max Min

36° | 28°

## Extended Forecast for a week

Monday  
May 5



36° | 27°

Cloudy

Tuesday  
May 6



35° | 27°

Cloudy

Wednesday  
May 7



35° | 26°

Partly Cloudy

Thursday  
May 8



36° | 26°

Partly Cloudy

Friday  
May 9



37° | 26°

Partly Cloudy

# THE HINDU BusinessLine

## Cotton flat on limited buying

Cotton price were unchanged on Friday as demand was limited. On the other hand, arrivals were also marginally lower as most of the stocks have arrived in the markets. Traders said demand for cotton has been low over the last couple of weeks. Millers and exporters are going slow on buying; any huge demand in the near future is unlikely. Prices may rule at current levels on short supply. Gujarat Sankar-6 best quality cotton traded at Rs. 43,200-43,300 for a candy of 356 kg. Cotton average quoted Rs. 40,500-41,000 and lower quality cotton at Rs. 35,000-36,500. Our Correspondent

### **Wheat likely to rule steady**

Wheat prices are likely to rule steady in the physical market over the next few days, according to traders. After witnessing a steady trend over the last few days, dara wheat dropped marginally, while flour managed to rule at previous level on Friday. A steady demand coupled with ample availability pulled down wheat prices marginally, said Satish Kumar, a trader. In the physical market, Dara wheat dropped by Rs 5 to Rs. 1,485-1,490 a quintal. Our Correspondent

### **Turmeric loses gleam as arrivals flood market**

#### **TURMERIC PRICES DOWN ON GLUT**

Turmeric prices dropped as arrivals flooded Erode markets on Friday. “Some 9,200 bags arrived for sale. Traders who have upcountry orders procured selectively. They quoted a lower price, as prices in the futures market dropped by Rs. 100 a quintal; this has reflected in the market. All the traders quoted Rs. 100-200 lower,” said RKV Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. At Erode, the finger variety was sold at Rs. 5,379-7,385 a quintal, and the root variety Rs. 4,876-7,074. Our Correspondent

### **Pepper recovers on supply squeeze**

Pepper prices recovered on supply squeeze amid good demand on Friday. There were buyers at higher levels on both the national and regional exchanges. But sellers withdrew. Karnataka which is selling at ₹660-670 a kg has raised prices to ₹690-710. Interstate dealers are actively covering for the end users who had been buying only hand-to-mouth earlier. They are buying directly from the primary markets and from the suburbs of the terminal markets. On the spot, five tonnes arrived and they were traded at ₹670 -690. Indian export prices increased along with strengthening of the rupee against the dollar to \$11,750 a tonne c&f for the Europe and \$12,000 c&f for the US.

# Business Standard

## Turmeric down 1.2% on sluggish demand



Amid subdued spot demand and adequate supply, [turmeric](#) prices fell by 1.27% to Rs 6,668 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators reduced positions.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), turmeric for delivery in May fell by Rs 86, or 1.27% to Rs 6,668 per quintal with an open interest of 9,390 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in June contract traded lower by Rs 86, or 1.24% to Rs 6,826 per quintal in 6,935 lots.

Marketmen said offloading of positions by speculators, driven by subdued demand in the spot market against adequate supplies from producing belts mainly led to decline in turmeric prices at futures trade.

## Sugar down 0.7% on subdued demand



Extending losses, [sugar](#) prices fell by another 0.77% to Rs 3,220 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators engaged in reducing positions due to slack demand in spot markets, though an estimated decline in production restricted the downside.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), sugar for delivery in May fell by

Rs 25, or 0.77% to Rs 3,220 per quintal with an open interest of 70,240 lots.

Similarly, the sweetener for delivery in June traded lower by Rs 22, or 0.69% to Rs 3,181 per quintal in 30,100 lots.

Analysts attributed the fall in sugar futures to offloading of positions by participants, tracking low demand in the spot markets but expectations of fall in output, limited the fall.

[Chana down 0.6% on increased supply, weak demand](#)



[Chana](#) dropped by 0.64% to Rs 3,118 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators trimmed positions, driven by increased supplies against subdued demand in the spot market.

Adequate stocks in the physical market following increased supplies from the new season crop in Madhya Pradesh also put pressure on chana prices.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, chana for delivery in June fell by Rs 20, or 0.64% to Rs 3,118 per quintal with an open interest of 85,690 lots.

Likewise, the commodity for delivery in May contract also trade lower by Rs 18, or 0.59% to Rs 3054 per quintal in 77,100 lots.

Analysts attributed the fall in chana prices at futures trade to increased supplies from producing regions against subdued demand in the spot mark

[Potato up 1.3% on upsurging spot demand](#)



[Potato](#) prices up by 1.35% to Rs 1,477 per quintal in futures trade today on the back of increased demand in the spot market against tight supply from producing belts.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), potato for delivery in June shot up by Rs 19.70, or 1.35% to Rs 1,477 per quintal in business turnover of 254 lots.

The potato for delivery in May contract also moved up by Rs 14.90, or 1.07% to Rs 1,384 per quintal in 220 lots.

Analysts said the rise in potato prices at futures trade was mostly supported by strong spot market demand against tight supplies from producing regions.



### Maize Stock May Rot if Centre Fails to Decide on Disposal Soon

Nearly seven lakh metric tonnes of maize procured at an estimated cost of `948 crore may go to waste if the government fails to take a decision on its disposal within two months, said Law and Parliamentary Affairs and Animal Husbandry Minister T B Jayachandra on Tuesday.

The maize was procured four months ago to bail out farmers following crash in its price.

“The shelf life of maize is just six months. If it is not disposed of soon we won’t have any option except to use it as manure,” he said.

However, the silver lining, according to him, is that there is a good demand for maize abroad due to failure of the crop.

The Centre's now has to take an immediate decision on exporting maize since the state cannot do so on its own.

“We are optimistic that the Centre will take a decision at the earliest. We do not want the maize to go waste, but we are in a helpless situation”, the Minister told Express.

Usually, the government buys cereals and pulses procured by various states once in three or six months.

A high-level meeting held in Bangalore on Monday decided to ask the Centre to allow the state to auction the stock and reimburse loss incurred by the state.

It was also resolved to write to the Centre seeking urgent attention as time is running out.

The stock, stored in open ground, is exposed to sun and dust. Hence, any further delay means it is going to rot, he added.

“We were not sitting idle in the last two months. The budget for 2014-15 was presented in February followed by the budget session. Subsequently, the code of conduct came into force following the announcement of the Lok Sabha elections. Recently, the Election Commission relaxed the rules that enabled the government to hold review meetings,” Jayachandra said.

The government decided procure maize from farmers at `1,310 per quintal against the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of `1,175 as its price fell to `1,000-1,050 per quintal.

Maize is cultivated on 11.65 lakh hectares in kharif season across the state.

Not First Time

In early 2000, several tonnes of maize, onion and potato procured by Hubli-Dharwad district administration following fall in prices of the crops went waste due to delay in disposal.

The huge stock of maize stored in government and private godowns rotted. Subsequently, the entire stock had to be dumped.