

DEHRADUN,

‘Agriculture Ministry to launch two schemes’



Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh addresses a press conference at Dehradun on Friday.— PHOTO: Virender Singh Negi

Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh on Friday said his ministry would propose two national schemes “to give an impetus to the dying agricultural practice” in the country.

Addressing the media, Mr. Singh said, “There is 14 crore hectares of agricultural land in India, of which only 44 per cent is under irrigation.”

Mr. Singh said that Pradhan Mantri Gram Sinchai Yojana would be introduced so that more agricultural land is irrigated.

Talking about the plight of small and marginal farmers he said that most of them were leaving the agricultural practice because of the uncertainty over the produce and returns.

“We shall try to introduce Krishi Amdani Beema Yojana so that the farmers don’t bear any financial burden if their produce gets destroyed due to unexpected weather or for any other reason.”

In the Lok Sabha polls, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidates won all five seats in the State.

However, none of the five MPs have found representation in the Union Cabinet.

During his first visit to the State after being appointed as the Union Agriculture Minister, Mr Singh, who was also incharge of the BJP's State unit, said that Uttarakhand was a priority State for the Centre.

KURNOOL

Farmers' literature released

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Collector C. Sudharsan Reddy released farmers' literature prepared by Agriculture Department on integrated pest management, micro-nutrient management and judicious fertilizer usage. Mr. Reddy called upon the agriculture officials to extend their reach to farmers.

Joint Director of Agriculture Tagore Naik, Deputy Director Nagavelu and others were present.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Farmers to form marketing co-operative society in Diviseema

STAFF REPORTER



Farmers holding a meeting ahead of the launch of the co-operative marketing society at Nagayatippa in Krishna district.- Photo: by Arrangement

More than 1,000 farmers from six villages in Mopidevi mandal of Krishna district have decided to form a mutually-aided marketing co-operative society for better marketing of agriculture produce.

The farmers, who are engaged in the cultivation of vegetables and horticulture products along the banks of the Krishna, on Friday decided to kick-start the venture in early June.

“With the support of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard), Krishi Vignana Kendra, Ghantasala and Nestham, an NGO, the farmers will open vegetable and fruit collection points in their respective villages and sell the produce in various markets without middlemen,” said Nestham director V. Suresh.

Majority of those who expressed willingness to become members of the society are small farmers from villages such as Nagayatippa, Nadakuduru and Bobbarlanka.

“We will extend the necessary scientific and technical support to turn their fertile fields into a hub of diversified crop varieties. Our immediate aim is to increase yields on a given land holding,” K.V.K. Ghantasala principal scientist M. Satyanarana said.

With the availability of abundant ground water and access to irrigation water through bore wells, farmers in the said villages have been growing crops round the year and have been waiting for better marketing facilities so far.

The society is expected to put to an end to their woes.

□ *Farmers will open vegetable and fruit collection points in their respective villages* □
They will sell the produce in markets without middlemen

COIMBATORE.

Prepare to face El Nino effect, Minister tells agriculture scientists



S.S. Krishnamoorthy (third right), Minister for Agriculture, releasing a booklet on Research Priorities of TNAU at the valediction of the 80th Scientific Workers' Conference at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, in the city, on Friday. (from left) Vice-Chancellor K. Ramasamy, Deputy Speaker of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Pollachi V. Jayaraman, Agricultural Production Commissioner and Secretary to Tamil Nadu Government Sandeep Saxena, and Coimbatore MP A.P.Nagarajan (right) are in the picture.- Photo:K.Ananthan

State Agriculture Minister S.S. Krishnamoorthy has asked scientists to make preparations to counter the effects of the El Nino factor in the South West Monsoon.

Impact

Speaking at the 80th Scientific Workers' Conference at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural Conference on Friday, he said that just as Indonesia and the Philippines had taken cautionary measures to counter the El Nino factor, the scientists should take steps. They should also study its impact on monsoon and agriculture.

Appreciating the efforts taken to bridge the gap between agriculture scientists and field workers in the agriculture, horticulture, agriculture engineering and agriculture marketing departments, he said that the gap should be further reduced.

Sandeep Saxena, Agriculture Production Commissioner and Secretary, Agriculture, Government of Tamil Nadu, spoke on the Government's schemes, micro irrigation plan, 'samba' special package, crop insurance and relief provided to farmers.

Satyabrata Sahoo, Commissioner of Horticulture and Plantation Crops, said that the State stood fourth in the nation in the production of horticulture crops. He stressed on the need for improving export potential of horticulture crops by adopting organic methods of cultivation.

K. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor, TNAU, wanted the University students to take up as projects the challenges the farmers faced on the fields.

Deputy Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Assembly V. Jayaraman, Members of Legislative Assembly, Members of Parliament-elect from Coimbatore and Pollachi and others participated.

Celebrating Mango



Jaypee Vasant Continental presents an assortment of scrumptious mango desserts.

The list includes the likes of Italian Mango Cheese Cake, Fresh Mango Tarte Tatin, Aam Ki Rasbhari, Mango kulfi, mango split, mango brulee, mango meringue tart and mango jubilee.

The food fest is on till June 30th at Eggspectation,

Ano-Tai, Paatra,

The Old Baker, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi.

KERALA

MALAPPURAM,

Thennala Rice to hit market tomorrow

Result of a Kudumbasree initiative

A new brand of rice, named Thennala Rice, will hit the market on Sunday in this part of the world, thanks to the combined effort of the Kudumbasree units of Thennala grama panchayat.

Minister for Education P.K. Abdu Rabb will launch the rice at a function to be chaired by district panchayat president Suhara Mampad. Abdurahman Randathani, MLA, will inaugurate Buds Rehabilitation Centre managed by the Kudumbasree.

“It is a novel venture of the Community Development Society (CDS) of Thennala panchayat,” said Matholi Nafeesa and Ashraf Thennala, president and vice-president respectively of the grama panchayat.

The 90-odd farmer groups led by women in Thennala panchayat took part in the venture. They took on lease 240 acres of barren paddy fields and cultivated paddy varieties such as Uma, Jyothi and Aiswarya. They never took the help of machines.

The women got capacity training, technical training, and exposure visit under the Mahila Kisan Sashakteekaran Pariyojana. “It was this training and exposure which doubled our confidence to venture out with paddy farming,” said Yasmin Arimbra, CDS chairperson.

With loans amounting to Rs.70 lakh, the 450-odd women of Thennala could produce 220 tonnes of paddy. The paddy thus produced was procured by the master farmers of the CDS and processed at a rented rice mill.

Three types of rice

Three types of rice will be available on the Thennala Rice brand name. Normal rice will cost Rs.35 a kg. The packing of the rice is going on. “We are also bringing out rice flakes, payasam rice, and rice powder. We can assure good quality. That will be our strength,” said P.V. Sundar Raj, CDS member secretary.

Apart from rice, the Kudumbasree women cultivated vegetables in 200 acres. Each farmer is estimated to get a profit of Rs.20,000.

“It is quite an achievement. We are so happy about it. We could give them a platform where they could make benefit. It is a beginning, in fact,” said Mr. Ashraf.

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- *Paddy cultivated on 240 acres of barren fields*
 - *450-odd women produced 220 tonnes of paddy*
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RAMANATHAPURAM,

Fish farming in ponds introduced

To help farmers to augment their income

Close on the heels of launching distribution of revolving funds to women self-help groups to improve their standard of living, the District Watershed Development Agency (DWDA) has introduced fish farming in farm ponds to help farmers to augment their income.

The agency, which had been implementing the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) in six blocks in the district, launched fish farming on Friday, under the Farm Productivity System component on an experimental basis with the approval of Collector K. Nanthakumar, who is also the Chairman of DWDA. Launched for the first time in the district, fish farming would go a long way in helping farmers who had farm ponds to enhance their income earning capacity during the lean period as they could harvest freshwater species such as catla, rohu and mirgal and earn about Rs. 35,000 in four to six months.

To begin with, the agency has decided to introduce fish farming in 13 farm ponds in Kadaladi block and seven ponds in RS Mangalam block, Z. Kamaldeen, Deputy Director of Agriculture, said. The agency had helped the farmers to sterilise the ponds with supply of fingerlings and feed, worth Rs. 15,000 a farmer, he added. Fingerlings were released at ponds in T.Alangulam in Peikulam panchayat.

In each pond, 1,000 fingerlings were released and the ponds had sufficient water for one harvest, N. Jothilakshmanan, Inspector of Fisheries, said. After four months, a farmer could harvest about 400 kg of fish and earn about Rs. 35,000, he said adding they could earn more money if they waited for a couple of more months for the fishes to gain weight. As the ponds were sterilised, 80 p.c. of fishes would survive for harvest, he said.

G. Rajendran, a farmer and one of the beneficiaries in T.Alangulam, has ventured into fish farming for the first time. "Fish farming seems to be lucrative and I will give my best to reap a good harvest," he said.

CHITRADURGA.

Grow high-quality pomegranates: VC

Since the area under pomegranate cultivation is increasing considerably in the region owing to higher demand in the domestic and international markets, the growers should make sustained efforts to maintain the quality of produce by getting technical assistance at regular intervals, said Agriculture and Horticulture University of Shimoga Vice-Chancellor C. Vasudevappa.

Speaking after inaugurating a seminar on ‘Training programme for farmers on pomegranate growing’ organised by Hiriur Horticulture College in association with Agriculture and Horticulture University, Shimoga, here on Tuesday, he said that more land in Chitradurga, Bagalkot, Koppal and Bijapur districts were now under pomegranate cultivation as the climate was very conducive for its growth. “Since the price of pomegranate is increasing in the international market and the fruit can be stored normally for about 10 days, more farmers have started growing the fruit,” he said.

Since there was a chance of the price collapsing because of the increase in cultivation, he emphasised on the need for farmers to concentrate on growing quality fruits. If the quality was good, the export would automatically increase and the farmers would get good profits, Dr. Vasudevappa said.

Agriculture and Horticulture University Research Director P. Narayanswamy advised the farmers to always maintain fertility of the soil by getting necessary suggestions from experts in the field.

ANANTAPUR,

Ensure enough groundnut seed stock: Sailajanath

Former Minister and Congress leader Sake Sailajanath on Friday urged the government and the district administration to ensure enough groundnut seed stock is kept available and start sales as the kharif season is about to begin.

Speaking to the press after petitioning district Collector D.S Lokesh Kumar, he said that groundnut seed is not available at many mandal headquarters in the district for distribution to farmers.

“The situation that the farmers are right now in is very pitiable. They don’t know when they will get the seed as officials keep saying they are yet to get the stock while they don’t know if they would be extended crop loans because of the delay in the crop loan waiver scheme,” said Mr. Sailajanath even as he said that the division process of the State is also a culprit for the undue delay of almost all services to farmers.

He appealed to the Chief Minister-designate and TDP president Nara Chandrababu Naidu to immediately give clarity to farmers as well as bankers with regards to farm loan waiver.

ANDHRA PRADESH

ELURU, May 31, 2014

Bifurcation may hit kharif operations in WG dist.

Annual Credit Plan for the current financial year is yet to be unveiled

The bifurcation process is likely to cast a shadow over kharif operations in West Godavari district. The Annual Credit Plan (ACP) for the current financial year is yet to be unfolded even as the kharif season is around the corner.

“Farmers who are preparing for the first crop may find it difficult to get funds from bank in the absence of allocations under ACP,” says M.V. Suryanarayana Raju, president of Godavari Delta Parirakshana Samithi.

The District consultative Committee (DCC) usually unveils ACP by the end of March, but it got delayed this time, thanks to bifurcation.

Agriculture is the principal economic activity in the district and is followed by aquaculture.

In its Potential Linked Plan for 2014-15, Nabard foresees huge growth potential in medium and small enterprises segments, agriculture and allied activities.

DCC meet on June 3

The DCC will hold a meeting with bankers and representatives of the district administration on June 3 apparently to deliberate the credit plan.

The DCC’s move to help farmers obtain bank credit and go for the next crop by launching ACP at the earliest is likely to hit a roadblock owing to uncertainty over the applicability of the loan waiver scheme.

Lead District Manager S. Lakshminarayana said banks would find it difficult to extend fresh crop loans if the existing dues remained unpaid.

“Banks are prepared to facilitate clearance of dues by farmers and grant them fresh loans without waiting for the credit plan to take off,” he added. However, most farmers are reluctant to approach banks for repayment of loans with hopes of their loans getting waived.

B. Balaram of Andhra Pradesh Rythu Sangham said farmers might miss credit facility during the season by the time government came out with its guidelines on the applicability of loan waiver.

Farmers received Rs. 4,374 crore as crop loans from banks in 2013-14, and the allocation in the current year is expected to touch Rs. 5,600 crore, Mr. Lakshminarayana said.

Water level

MADURAI

The water level in Periyar dam stood at 113.80 feet on Friday with an inflow of 100 cusecs and a discharge of 100 cusecs.

The level in Vaigai dam was 32.28 feet with an inflow of 47 cusecs and a discharge of 40 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 1,360 mcft.

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

TIRUNELVELI

The water level in the Papanasam dam on Friday stood at 50.40 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 44.32 cusecs and 204.75 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam. The level of Manimuthar dam stood at 67.47 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 3 cusecs and no water was discharged.

Kanyakumari

The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 21.30 feet, 45.80 feet in Perunchani, 7.95 feet in Chittar I, 8.03 feet in Chittar II, 6 feet in Poigai and 54.12 feet in Mamabazhathuraiyaru dam.

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Saturday, May 31

Max Min

35° | 28°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:41

Humidity: 67

Sunset: 06:31

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1005

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Sunday, Jun 1

Max Min

37° | 28°

Extended Forecast for a week

Monday Jun 2	Tuesday Jun 3	Wednesday Jun 4	Thursday Jun 5	Friday Jun 6
37° 28°	35° 28°	35° 27°	36° 27°	35° 27°
Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny

Airport Weather

Delhi

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:24

Humidity: 39

Sunset: 07:13

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1002



Pepper loses sting as imports flood market

Pepper prices continue to fall despite demand outstripping supply. Spot prices have dropped by about Rs. 2,000 a quintal in a week following reports of the domestic market being flooded with imported material.

At the same time, there has no selling pressure. Even part of pepper consignment imported duty free for value-addition and re-export has been diverted to the domestic market given the prevailing high prices. Upcountry dealers in certain hubs are reportedly offering these material at Rs. 680-700 a kg.

Hence, no one wants to buy from the terminal and primary markets, market sources told *Business Line*.

Total imports during January-April are estimated at over 6,000 tonnes, making India the third top importer from Vietnam. Farmers and dealers in the primary markets allege that imported pepper is being pushed into domestic market in the form of bolder berries of Wayanad and Coorg pepper, since domestic market pays a premium for bolder varieties.

Panic sales grind sugar

Sugar prices dropped further by Rs. 20-60 a quintal for S-grade and Rs. 15-20 for M-grade on the Vashi wholesale market on Friday tracking desperate selling by producers amid thin demand. Similarly, *naka* rates were down by Rs. 30-50. Mills sold normal variety new stocks at Rs. 20-25 a quintal lower. Arrivals at Vashi market were 57-58 truckloads and local offtake was 55-56 loads. Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs. 3,000-3,175 (Rs. 3,066-3,195) and M-grade was Rs. 3,180-3,350

(Rs. 3,196-3,350). *Naka* delivery rates: S-grade Rs. 2,980-3,080 (Rs. 3,030-3,080) and M-grade Rs. 3,100-3,210 (Rs. 3,140-3,240).

Turmeric loses Rs. 1,000/qtl in a month

Spot turmeric prices in Erode markets continued to decline. In the last one month, the yellow spice has lost Rs. 1,000/quintal. “Within a month’s time, the price of the turmeric decreased by Rs. 1,000. This steep decline is due to want of upcountry demand. Further, farmers brought only medium and poor quality turmeric,” said RKV Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association, the finger turmeric was sold at Rs. 4,032-6,326 a quintal; the root variety Rs. 3,699-5,926 . Salem Hybrid: The finger turmeric ruled at Rs. 5,617-6,610 and the root variety Rs. 5,374-6,199. Of the 642 bags put up for sale, 129 were sold.

Wheat to rule stable

Moderate buying kept wheat and flour prices unchanged on Friday. Wheat and flour prices are ruling stable following domestic demand and supply, said market sources. Dara wheat was sold in the physical market at Rs. 1,465-70 a quintal. Around 2,500 bags of wheat arrived and stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs. 1,465 while delivery at the chakki was at Rs. 1,470. Flour ruled flat at Rs. 1,720. Similarly, Chokar was unchanged at Rs. 1,350 a quintal.

Spot rubber turns weak

Physical rubber prices turned weak on Friday. The market opened steady but lost ground.

Sheet rubber declined to Rs. 147 (Rs. 149) a kg. The grade slipped to Rs. 148 (Rs. 149) and Rs. 145 (Rs. 146) respectively, as quoted by the Rubber Board and dealers. June futures weakened to Rs. 146.20 (Rs. 147.86), July to Rs. 144.15 (Rs. 147.02) and

August to Rs. 142 (Rs. 143.35) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. RSS 3 (spot) dropped to Rs. 121.96 (Rs. 124.10) at Bangkok.

Spot rubber rates (Rs. /kg) were: RSS-4: 147 (149); RSS-5: 144 (146); Ungraded: 139(140); ISNR 20: 138 (140) and Latex 60%: 120 (120).

Cotton blooms on mill enquiries

Cotton prices increased on the back of demand at the lower level from domestic mills. Moreover, absence of quality produce also supported the price. *Kapas* or raw cotton also was up a tad.

Best quality Gujarat Sankar-6 cotton was traded up by Rs. 200-300 at Rs. 41,000-800 for a candy of 356 kg. Average grade cotton was traded at Rs. 37,000-38,000 and lower grade cotton at Rs. 32,000-35,000.

About 28,000 bales (of 170 kg each) of cotton arrived in Gujarat and 75,000 bales arrived in India. *Kapas* moved up Rs. 5-7 to Rs. 825-1,030. Gin delivery *kapas* was Rs. 1,035-65 for a *maund* of 20 kg in Rajkot.

Slack buying pounds pulses

Pulses and pulse seeds continued to trade low on slack demand and buying. On Friday, masur (bold) declined to Rs. 4,900-5,050, while masur (Madhya Pradesh) declined to Rs. 4,500-4,700.

Notwithstanding current fall in masur, its future appears bullish on lower crop output, said a trader. Masur dal (average) was being quoted at Rs. 5,900-25, masur dal (medium) at Rs. 6,000-25, while masur dal (bold) ruled at Rs. 6,100-25 a quintal.

Moong (bold) ruled at Rs. 5,500-5,600, while moong (medium) declined to Rs. 5,000-5,400. Moong dal (medium) was being quoted at Rs. 6,800-6,900, moong dal (bold) at Rs. 7,200-7,300, while moong mongar ruled at Rs. 8,500-8,800.

Urad (bold) was Rs. 5,000-5,200 (up Rs. 100), while urad (medium) ruled at Rs. 4,700-5,000. Urad dal (medium) was Rs. 5,800-6,100 , urad dal (bold) at Rs. 6,200-6,400, while urad mongar ruled at Rs. 6,800-7,200.

Monsoon will set in any time after June 5

Thiruvananthapuram,

The US Climate Prediction Centre sees a spurt in rainfall activity over the Kerala coast and adjoining peninsular India after June 4.

This should culminate in the onset of the monsoon over the south-west coast anytime after June 5, possibly the following day itself, as per a survey of various models.

The week beginning June 8 is likely to see heavy to very heavy rainfall along the Kerala and Karnataka coasts.

MJO support

The US forecaster has also said that the monsoon will piggyback a Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) wave transiting the east African coast concurrently.

The MJO wave travels periodically across the Indian Ocean in the higher levels of the atmosphere but sets off clouds and rain-bearing systems such as low-pressure areas and monsoon depressions.

Its movement has also been associated with the onset of monsoon in the past though delayed by a few days this year.

The US Climate Prediction Centre along with the US National Centres for Environmental Prediction is looking for signs of cyclone genesis in the Arabian Sea along with the onset of monsoon.

Low confidence

Confidence in the eventuality is currently low, the US agency said, but the likelihood of churn developing in the south-east Arabian Sea (off Kerala coast) around June 6 was not being ruled out.

Wind profile projections by the India Met Department too indicated the possibility of cyclonic circulation developing over the Lakshadweep Islands around this time.

The Australian Bureau of Meteorology too hinted at a weak MJO event in the western tropical Indian Ocean over the next few days and moving slowly eastwards towards India.

Business Standard

Chana up 1.1% on good demand



Chana prices rose by 1.17% to Rs 2,855 per quintal in futures trade today as traders enlarged their holdings driven by rising demand in spot markets.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, chana for June delivery rose by

Rs 33, or 1.17%, to Rs 2,855 per quintal, with an open interest for 92,170 lots.

Similarly, chana for delivery in July increased by Rs 32, or 1.11%, to Rs 2,918 per quintal, with an open interest of 1,08,490 lots.

Traders said the rise in chana prices at futures trade was mostly on the back of fresh positions created by speculators supported by rising demand in the spot markets.

Maize up 1.8% on spot demand



Maize prices rose by Rs 20 to Rs 1,130 per quintal in futures trading today largely in line with rising demand at spot market.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange counter, maize for the delivery in June shot up by Rs 20, or 1.80%, to Rs 1,130 per quintal, with an open interest of 23,110 lots.

Similarly, the July contracts also traded Rs 16, or 1.39%, higher at Rs 1,164 per quintal, with an open interest of 35,830 lots.

Marketmen said rise in demand against restricted supplies in physical markets mainly pushed up the rise in maize prices in futures trade.

Cardamom up 1% on spot demand



Cardamom prices rose by Rs 8.70 to Rs 921 per kg in futures trade today, largely in tandem with a firming trend in spot markets on rising demand amid restricted arrivals.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for July delivery surged by Rs 8.70, or 0.95 per cent, to Rs 921 per kg in a business volume of 171 lots.

The June contract gained Rs 2.40, or 0.26 per cent, to Rs 910 per kg in a business volume of 198 lots.

Traders said pick-up in demand in the spot markets against restricted arrivals from producing regions, influenced cardamom prices in futures trade.

Potato up 0.6% on pick up in spot demand



Potato futures moved up by 0.65% to Rs 1,325.70 per quintal today as speculators enlarged positions amid increased spot demand against restricted arrivals from producing

regions.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for delivery in June rose by Rs 8.60, or 0.65%, to Rs 1,325.70 per quintal, with trading volume of 8 lots.

The potato for delivery in July also moved up by Rs 4.50, or 0.33%, to Rs 1,355 per quintal, with a trade volume of 9 lots.

Analysts said increased demand in the spot markets against tight supplies from producing regions mainly pushed up potato prices at futures trade.

DECCAN Chronicle

Dam water to be released for ryots



In a move that could bring a major relief to farmers in the southern part of the state, chief minister J. Jayalalithaa on Friday announced that she had directed the public works department to release water from Periyar dam for the benefit of farmers in Theni district and from Pechiparai, Perunchani, Chittar 1 and Chittar 2 dams in Kanyakumari district for resumption of farming activities in these areas, a release said.

Following a request from farmers in Kothaiyaru and Pattanamkal regions of Kanyakumari district regarding release of water for their summer crops, the chief minister announced that the Pechiparai, Perunchai, Chittar 1 and Chittar 2 dams would be releasing water to irrigate approximately 79,000 acres of land from June 1. The chief minister also ordered the release of waters from Periyar Dam from June 1 for the benefit of farmers in Cumbum Valley, Bodinaickenur and Uttamapalayam where there are two crop seasons. “This release of water will benefit the first crop season that begins in June when approximately 14,707 acres of agricultural land could benefit,” the chief minister said in a release.

Farmers in the Periyar Vaigai region are a happy lot with the verdict in the long-pending case related to raising the storage level of the Mullaperiyar dam arriving in their favour. They pointed out that an early release of the Periyar water would help in producing a good harvest.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Training course on storage and processing of horticultural produce held at Punjab Agricultural University

LUDHIANA: The department of Processing and Food Engineering at Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) organized a training course from May 28 to 30 on 'Storage and Processing of Horticultural Produce'. About 40 Horticultural Development Officers from all over Punjab participated in the training programme.

Amarjit Singh, Senior Extension Engineer and Coordinator of the course informed that the delegates were imparted training on cleaning and grading machinery for fruits and vegetables, proper storage practices, post harvest disease management of horticultural crops, processing of onion, garlic, turmeric, menthe. He added that they were also

equipped with the knowledge of modified atmosphere packing and storage of fruits and vegetables. Besides, they were also trained about preparation of fruit squashes, pickles and murraba.

P P S Lubana, Dean of the College of Agricultural Engineering and Technology gave away certificates to the trainees and appreciated the participants for taking interest in the training.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Punjab government to give direct subsidy to farmers for buying farm equipments

CHANDIGARH: Punjab government has launched a special scheme to release direct subsidy to farmers, allowing them to purchase agricultural and horticultural implements from any empanelled firm of their choice.

The decision in this regard was taken by the Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal on the basis of a detailed proposal submitted by the Chairman Punjab State Farmers' Commission after having discussions with the experts of the Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana, Ludhiana, a statement said.

Badal cleared the proposal to this effect, allowing farmers to avail subsidy of 50 per cent on a list of 61 approved agricultural and horticultural implements under various schemes for the current fiscal 2014-15.

The chief minister also directed the state agriculture department to ask various empanelled firms for taking necessary action in this behalf.

This decision would enable the farmers to negotiate price with the supplier of their choice and avail subsidy accordingly.

This would also help in stabilisation of prices of subsidised equipments in the market, besides giving a fillip to farm mechanisation and effective management and disposal of crop residues in order to save the environment from pollution.

Wheat procurement in Haryana reaches targeted level of 65 lakh tonnes



CHANDIGARH: Wheat procurement in Haryana has reached almost the targeted level of 65 lakh tonnes (LT) in the ongoing rabi marketing season.

The crop purchase was up by 11 per cent at 64.98 LT as against 58.68 LT procured in corresponding period of last season.

The government agencies have procured 64.95 LT of wheat whereas 2,813 tonnes of wheat have been purchased by traders, a Food and Supplies Department spokesman said here today.

He said that HAFED has purchased highest 25.17 LT of wheat followed by over 18 LT purchased by the Food and Supplies Department.

Similarly, Agro Industries Corporation has purchased over 5.78 LT, Haryana Warehousing Corporation over 6.35 LT, CONFED over 1.63 LT and Food Corporation of India had procured over 8 LT of wheat during current procurement season so far.

El Nino delays rain, may spell trouble for Modi govt



NEW DELHI: The first signs of a delay in the southwest monsoon have led to anxiety in India as a heat wave is roasting many parts of the country, with temperatures soaring to 47 degrees Celsius in Rajasthan. The monsoon is still some distance away from the Sri Lankan coast four days after should have hit the island. There's little possibility of early respite on the horizon, barring expectations of pre-monsoon showers in the south. The weather office does not see any quick progress in the annual weather system that irrigates fields, replenishes reservoirs and stimulates economic activity in rural areas. "The current conditions of the southwest monsoon with regards to cross-equatorial monsoon flow does not indicate advance of monsoon during next three days. However, the dynamical models of IMD are suggesting the development of a monsoon trough from June 1 onwards over Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal. Heat wave conditions increase and spread across other states in the coming days," said BP Yadav, head of the National Weather Forecasting Centre at the India Meteorology Department in New Delhi.

The monsoon is forecast to be below normal this year, posing a big challenge for the newly elected government of Narendra Modi. The agriculture ministry has made frantic preparations and planned for short-duration crops that can withstand low rainfall. Monsoon rainfall impacts the majority of the people in the country, particularly in rural areas as most farms do not have irrigation facilities.

Low rainfall also hurts hydropower generation and raises farm demand for diesel apart from increasing the demand for electricity. This year's monsoon may be disrupted by the rapidly developing El Nino phenomenon that causes droughts and floods in different parts of the world. The weather office said that apart from the hot afternoon sun, nights are also getting warmer with minimum temperatures up to 5 degrees higher than normal in Rajasthan and Maharashtra.

The Himalayan states of Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir as well as Himachal Pradesh are also warmer than normal, weather office data show. For north India, which saw an unusually benign summer with frequent showers until recently, the outlook is not promising. "Rise in maximum temperatures by 3-4°C likely over east India during next 72 hours and by 2-3°C over northwest India during next 48 hours, the weather office said in its forecast.

Heat wave conditions continue to prevail over Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Vidarbha and Haryana." The weather office is watching closely for any sign of monsoon showers hitting the country.

Cardamom futures up on spot demand



NEW DELHI: Cardamom prices rose by Rs 8.70 to Rs 921 per kg in futures trade today, largely in tandem with a firming trend in spot markets on rising demand amid restricted arrivals.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for July delivery surged by Rs 8.70, or 0.95 per cent, to Rs 921 per kg in a business volume of 171 lots.

The spice for delivery in June gained Rs 2.40, or 0.26 per cent, to Rs 910 per kg in a business volume of 198 lots.

Traders said pick-up in demand in the spot markets against restricted arrivals from producing regions, influenced cardamom prices in futures trade.

Potato futures up 0.65 per cent on pick up in spot demand



NEW DELHI: Potato futures moved up by 0.65 per cent to Rs 1,325.70 per quintal today as speculators enlarged positions amid increased spot demand against restricted arrivals from producing regions.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for delivery in June rose by Rs 8.60, or 0.65 per cent, to Rs 1,325.70 per quintal, with trading volume of 8 lots.

he potato for delivery in July also moved up by Rs 4.50, or 0.33 per cent, to Rs 1,355 per quintal, with a trade volume of 9 lots.

Analysts said increased demand in the spot markets against tight supplies from producing regions mainly pushed up potato prices at futures trade.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Farmer Tastes Success with Variety of Vegetables



When he followed in his father's footsteps in farming at a tender age, K P Divakaran had not imagined that agriculture would bring him fame in future. This 63-year-old farmer,

hailing from Peruvayal, Kozhikode, is the winner of the award of excellence for his outstanding performance in the implementation of various components under the Vegetable Development Programme of the Kozhikode District Agriculture Department, this year.

The award, comprising a memento, a citation and a cash award of `10,000, is more than an encouraging factor for the middle class farmer. “I look upon the award as a recognition of my effort,” smiles the lean man while harvesting ripe bananas at his plantain farm. “With the cash award I am planning to try out new crops in my farm,” says Divakaran, who keeps farming first in his list of priorities. His cluster received the award for the best cluster in the district.

A dropout from Peruvayal UP School, Divakaran took farming as a full-time job to help his father make both ends meet. Uncertain about the satisfaction and comfort level offered by the title of a farmer, he left farming when he was 20.

Without getting a decent job he returned back to farming in his 30s. Asked what he receives from farming, he says, everything. In his 50 cent land, he cultivates plantain, bitter gourd, pumpkin, spinach, tapioca, long beans and many more.

“I am rooted to the soil and rarely do I take my feet off from my field. For the past 33 years I have been following conventional farming methods in my farm.” When asked about experimenting with farming, he says, “I am not from a well-off family and still I am not in a position to experiment with farming. A simple mistake made during new experiments may wholly affect the entire cultivation,” he says.

Divakaran himself sells vegetables to customers without the help of a middleman. “What keeps me close to my customers is the absence of a middlemen. After finishing my works at my farm in the evening I go for door-to-door delivery of my produce. “I have never returned home with unsold vegetables,” he says.

In his words, enough water and manpower are available, but the unavailability of land is a major problem that farmers come across in Peruvayal. You can hardly find a land lying

underutilised in the small panchayat. Thanking the Agriculture Department for its support, he says the department encourages farmers by providing them with new seeds and imparting knowledge on the use of bio-fertilisers. “They also give us a free hand in cultivation,” he says.

Farmers Left in Lurch as Rains Damage Crops

JEYPORE: The low pressure induced rains for the last four days in several parts of Koraput and Jeypore left the farmers in a lurch as hundreds of acres of rabi paddy crop were damaged.

According to sources, rainfall of over 100 mm was recorded in Koraput, Jeypore, Kotpad, Borrigumma, Laxmipur, Lamataput, Nandapur, Potangi and Kakrigumma. The continuous heavy rain in the paddy cultivated areas of Jeypore, Kotpad and Borrigumma has damaged the standing crop which was in the harvesting stage.

About 25,000 hectares of land were cultivated in the rabi season through irrigation from the Upper Kolab project. These crops were in the harvesting stage when rain lashed in the region.

The farmers said as the crop land was inundated, they were unable to harvest. The harvesting process, which should have been completed by May-end, will be delayed, they said. Meanwhile, rains with lightening were also reported from several parts of Koraput and Jeypore on Thursday.

Untimely Rains Destroy Vegetable Crops in N Odisha

BALASORE: Thousands of farmers are scared over huge losses as the untimely rains triggered by a low pressure have destroyed large tracks of vegetable, pulses and paddy crops in northern parts of the State.

The incessant rains had lashed this region for three days since Sunday. Though it cooled down the atmosphere and people got the much-needed respite from the relentless heat wave, the rains dashed hopes of the peasants.

Sources said vegetables and pulses were cultivated in over 12,000 hectares, while paddy crops were grown in nearly 25,000 hectares in coastal Balasore district. While in some areas, the farmers had started harvesting the vegetables, in other areas, these were in full grown stage.

Even as the damage assessment was underway, initial reports indicated that vegetable crops in over 2,000 hectares and paddy crops in more than 5,000 hectares have been affected.

A farmer, Shankarshan Dehuri of Gududa area, said the rains had destroyed cauliflowers, cabbage, bitter gourd, tomato and other green vegetable crops.

“The crop fields still are filled with rainwater. Cabbage crop was about to be harvested. Now all have gone. The labour of our last four months has been washed away. We have suffered a loss of nearly `50,000. We demanded assistance to overcome the loss,” he said.

Several other farmers also have echoed similar feelings and they are scared about incurring heavy losses.

“I had already spent `20,000 for vegetable crop. This time, I was expecting a bumper crop by early next month. But this rain dashed my hopes,” lamented Ramakanta Mandal, a peasant.

After the rains, the price of vegetables also has increased manifold here and more hikes are expected in the coming days due to loss of crops. Traders said vegetables are scarce as continuous rain had adversely affected harvests.