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# THE HINDU

## **'Panchangam'-based rainfall predictions condemned**

Dravida Viduthalai Kazhagam cadre staged a demonstration here on Monday condemning a booklet published and distributed to farmers by the Tamil Nadu Agriculture University on rainfall forecast, with content referring to 'Panchangam'-based predictions. The demonstrators led by the Kazhagam's founder Kolathur Mani raised slogans urging the university to forecast rainfall based on scientific facts and the climatic changes to benefit farmers, than misguiding them with superstitious predictions. Noting that the purpose of education is to disseminate knowledge, Mr. Mani has stated that the purpose is lost through inclusion of superstitious predictions.

It is learnt that the booklet titled 'Mazhaikala Kuripu Puthagam – 2014' has 70 pages, including 13 pages on 'Panchangam'-based predictions. He pointed out that there were contradictions in predictions made by astrologers in that booklet. They urged TNAU to remove those pages and come out with scientific predictions alone to help farmers cultivate the right crop at the right time.

***TNAU urged to come out with scientific predictions to help farmers***

## **Two cooperative credit societies come out of red**

Two Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Societies, one at Annavasal and another at Thudaiyur, which remained sick for the past several years, had been emerging out of the red in the past one year thanks to special cash credit scheme introduced by the Department of Cooperation.

These two societies remained sick due to poor business turnover till seven years ago but the intervention of the District Central Cooperative Bank through a special credit of Rs. 50 lakh in 2013-14, has come in handy for them to revive their business this year.

“The societies are bound to come out of the red,” says K.V.S. Kumar, Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies.

Explaining the efforts made for the revival of sick cooperative societies here on Monday, he said that these societies had started sanctioning jewellery loan to the beneficiaries.

He said that similar assistance would be extended to society in Aththani.

He said similar assistance had been granted under the Cooperative Research and Development Fund to three societies in Viralimalai, Kudumiyamalai, and Veeramangalam.

A total of 13 cooperative bodies had been adjudged the best units in the district for their outstanding performance.

### **Shields distributed**

Distributing shields to these bodies on Sunday, C. Vijaya Baskar, Minister for Health, said a target of Rs. 110 crore had been fixed this year of which Rs. 60.12 crore had been disbursed so far to 20,510 farmers.

Construction of strong rooms was on at 12 primary agricultural cooperative credit societies at an expenditure of 36 lakh. He gave away loans totalling Rs.1.68 crore to 237 beneficiaries.

N. Subramanian, Minister for Adi Dravidar Welfare, spoke.

### **Farm meet from today**

The 22nd annual conference of Agricultural Economics Research Association will begin on Tuesday at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur.

According to a press release, the three-day conference is designed around the theme of leveraging institutional innovations for agricultural development.

The conference will focus on efficient management of irrigation and common property resources, innovations in the transfer of technology, delivery of credit and farm services like research and development, collective initiatives for improving the efficiency and bargaining power for farmer producers, institutional innovations for improving scale and efficiency of small holder agriculture in terms of factor and product markets.

Three special sessions will be held on strengthening agricultural economics research and education, converging policies and programmes for sustainable and climate resilient agriculture in India, and development model for accelerating agriculture in Hyderabad Karnataka

The deliberations will be synthesised and policy recommendations for strengthening and improving institutional innovations for accelerating agricultural development in the country and the recommendations will be sent to all stakeholders.

*It will be for three days at the University of Agricultural Sciences*

### **Agri. polytechnic college to come up in Sircilla**

Minister for Panchayat Raj and IT K.T. Rama Rao stated here on Monday that an agricultural polytechnic college would be established at Sircilla in Karimnagar district. He announced sanction of Rs. 5 crore for setting up of the college stating that all necessary permissions were secured already. The Minister said the college would be set up on 10 acres land in Sardapur gram panchayat limits abutting Sircilla town.

### **High-tech mushroom village in the making**

Edakkara grama panchayat is poised to become the first high-tech mushroom village in the State.

Minister for Agriculture K.P. Mohanan launched a project at Edakkara on Monday, which will cultivate mushroom in large quantities under the supervision of the Kudumbasree Mission. The Minister said that Kerala would welcome any agricultural move by local bodies and political parties. "Many of the party symbols are directly connected with agriculture. Any agricultural advancement will be our political advancement as well," he said.

Mr. Mohanan said that the State government would distribute one lakh calves this year as part of increasing milk production. Next year, two lakh calves will be distributed. He said that in two years, the State would produce 30 lakh litres more of milk. Minister for Power Aryadan Mohammed launched the Samridhi Women's

Charitable Society, a collective of Kudumbasree women who will manage the production and sale of mushroom. Edakkara grama panchayat president O.J. James and Nilambur municipal chairman Aryadan Shoukath spoke.

The Kudumbasree unit of Edakkara panchayat took up the project aimed at converting their area into a high-tech mushroom village in response to a call by the State Kudumbasree wing to provide more jobs for women. As many as 110 women have come forward to cultivate mushroom.

## **Agricultural varsity switches to e-governance mode**

*Vice Chancellor launches university suite*

Electronic management tools enhance efficiency of administration and ensure satisfaction of stakeholders, Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) Vice-Chancellor P. Rajendran has said.

Launching the university suite on Monday as part of complete e-governance programme at KAU, the Vice Chancellor said, "Adoption of futuristic technology will lead to a bright future. Appreciation for the e-governance initiatives of KAU is evident from the awards earned by the e-learning centre of the university. The launching of university suite developed in association with NIC is a milestone in the history of KAU."

University suite includes e-modules for file flow, academic management, and human resources management as well as pay disbursement and allied matters. The KAU had earlier developed indigenous packages for financial management, pension distribution, legal monitoring and research administration.

Registrar P.V. Balachandran presided over the function.

## **Agri-engg. graduates seek role in farm mechanisation**

The Telangana Agricultural Engineering Graduates' Association urged the Telangana government to use the services of the agricultural engineering professionals in farm mechanisation,

greenhouse and micro-irrigation initiatives. Though the Union government has recognised the significance of agricultural engineers in implementation of farm mechanisation processes, there have not been recruitments in the united Andhra Pradesh for the last 24 years, general secretary of the Association J. Abhinav Reddy and Treasurer G. Kishore Kumar said at a press conference here on Monday.

The last recruitment was done in 1991 when 40 engineers were appointed. Since then, though farm mechanisation is being taken up in a big way, agricultural engineers are not being involved as is the practice in the neighbouring States of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Orissa.

Agri-engineering graduates specialise in farm mechanisation, soil and water conservation, renewable energy, food processing, post-harvesting and greenhouse technologies. Due to absence of the engineers, the Department of Agriculture is totally dependent on manufacturers of equipment-related to these operations, especially for micro-irrigation project, the office-bearers informed. Agricultural engineers are the apt technical experts to carry out even the greenhouse cultivation.

## **Urea production issue in court, MCF hopes early resolution**

*District may not face urea shortage, says Agriculture Department*

While the Mangalore Chemicals and Fertilisers (MCF) eagerly awaits an early resolution to recommence naphtha-fed urea production, the State Agriculture Department has said it is the Union government's call to ensure availability of urea to farmers irrespective of MCF's closure.

It is learnt that the MCF has filed a writ petition before the Delhi High Court seeking a direction to the Centre to allow continuation of naphtha-based urea production till natural gas is made available.

The Union government had directed naphtha-based urea plants in the country to switch over to natural gas to reduce cost and the

MCF had to shut down production from October 1 as natural gas was not available in Mangaluru.

Company sources told *The Hindu* that they were expecting some “positive development” by Wednesday when the petition comes before the High Court. The Union Cabinet is also expected to meet the same day and might take a decision on the issue, sources said. Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilisers H.N. Ananth Kumar had recommended continuation of naphtha-fed urea production until alternative arrangements were made.

Meanwhile, lack of production of urea at the MCF might not affect its availability in the district, said H. Kempe Gowda, Joint Director of Agriculture, Dakshina Kannada. The urea produced went to the national pool and it was the Union government that allocated the fertiliser to different States, he said.

Shortage of urea had not been noticed in the district so far as the rabi season for paddy was yet to take off, Mr. Gowda added.

MCF Mangala Workers’ Union president K.N. Suryanarayana said no aid had come from the State government so far to revive urea production.

***District may not face urea shortage, says Agriculture Department***

## **7 missions form part of climate change plan**

*National Steering Committee clears SAPCC, World Bank funding likely*



An Anna University study has found 4.2 per cent erosion of the total Puducherry coast.— Photo: S.S. Kumar

For environmentalists, climate change is a topic that makes them sound alarm bells a little louder each passing day to force attention on an important issue affecting the future of the planet.

And, with its geographical profile including its lengthy coastline, climate change is a very real issue for the Union Territory of Puducherry.

In the years to come, the Union Territory is expected to be warmer, experience a large degree of rainfall variability and have extreme weather events which would affect sectors such as agriculture and tourism, says the concept note of Puducherry's State Action Plan on Climate Change.

It also quotes a study by Anna University which analysed data from 1972 to 2010 and found coastal erosion of 4.2 per cent of the total Puducherry coast. Now, Puducherry's State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) has been endorsed by the National Steering Committee on Climate Change of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.

It is now with the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance with regard to funds. As the Plan was prepared in consultation with World Bank, officials of the Department of Science, Technology and Environment say there is a good chance of the Plan receiving funding from the World Bank of around Rs. 800 crore in the five-year period. Puducherry is among three States being considered by the World Bank for funding, apart from Odisha and Himachal Pradesh, said M. Dwarakanath, director, Department of Science, Technology and Environment.

The short-term part (current financial year 2014-15) of the Plan of Rs. 105 crore is also expected to 'stand a fair chance' of getting funding from the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, they said.

Under the SAPCC, seven missions deemed relevant to the UT were picked. These include the Solar Mission, the Enhanced Energy Efficiency Mission, the Sustainable Habitat Mission, Green Puducherry and Sustainable Agriculture Mission, Water Mission, Strategic Knowledge Mission, and Coastal and Disaster Management Mission.

“Implementing the Climate Change Action Plan in Puducherry has some advantages like accessibility because of a smaller size and there is a good awareness of the environment here, thus implementation will be easier,” said a top official of the government, adding, “it can serve as a model for other States.”

The SAPCC also includes a capacity building component, with a Climate Change Cell proposed to be formulated under the Department of Science, Technology and Environment. The Department will be the nodal agency responsible for implementation and monitoring of projects. The ambitious SAPCC will involve multiple departments in implementation.

## Nirmala faces the heat



Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Nirmala Sitaraman going round tobacco fields before interacting with growers at Koyyalagudem in West Godavari district on Monday.-Photo: A.V.G. Prasad

The Tobacco Board’s move for regularisation of tobacco crop triggered protest from the growers in the northern light soil (NLS) area at a programme attended by Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Nirmala Sitaraman here on Monday.

Some formers interrupted her address to complain that they were subjected to harassment by the Tobacco Board in the name of regularizing the tobacco crop. As part of the endeavour to discourage unauthorised tobacco cultivation, the board is said to



have suspended renewal of a little over 2,000 barons in the NLS area alone falling under West Godavari district this year. The measure was intended to off-set the demand-supply gaps and ensure price stabilisation in the international market. The growers witnessed a decline in price by Rs 14 per kg last year in view of the glut in the market caused by excess production from the unauthorised area. The Minister grew impatient at one stage and asked why the growers remained calm during the 10-year UPA regime. "You don't expect to get all the problems solved overnight by the NDA government," she said.

Ms. Nirmala offered to lead a delegation of tobacco growers to the Union Ministers concerned on imposition of a blanket ban on tobacco cultivation in line with the WHO's health concerns. Sharing the growers' concern, she said the blanket ban on the tobacco crop was not possible and feasible until suitable alternative crops were suggested by the government. Kakarla V.V.S. Prakasa Rao, president of the Virginia Tobacco Growers Association, informed the Minister that the so-called alternative crops recommended by the Centre for Tobacco Research Institute were not viable economically and climate-wise also in the NLS area marked by sandy loams.

## **'Water cannot be supplied under Telugu Ganga for rabi'**

The Irrigation Advisory Board here on Monday expressed its inability to supply water to rabi crop under Telugu Ganga, KC canal, HNSS, SRBC and other irrigation systems due to the poor inflows in canal. The Board wanted the Irrigation officials to take every measure to protect the standing crops in the canal areas sown in kharif season. The board advised the government to draw water from Hundri-Neeva and river generation water to protect crops under KC canal. It was clarified that water could not be supplied to rabi crop under Telugu Ganga this year. The meeting resolved that the Krishna Water Management Board be located at Kurnool in view of major canals originating from here. The government was urged to ensure adequate level in the Srisailem reservoir.

## **Need-based market-led crops ensure increased revenue**

An exposure visit organised by the Department of Horticulture has come in handy for the small farmers, who can meticulously decide on the crops to be cultivated and its season so that they can get attractive revenue throughout the year by using small quantity of available water.

“If the crops being selected by the farmers are need-based and market-led crops, it will certainly fetch a comfortable revenue, besides the good yield and revenue from perennial crops,” according to S. Raja Mohamed, Deputy Director of Horticulture, Tirunelveli. Horticulture crops have turned out to be a viable source of income generation for the farming community in rural areas of the district after monsoon let the agriculturists down for the past five years.

## **Open cotton purchase centres in Chitradurga, says KRRS**

Members of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene took out a procession and staged a dharna outside the Deputy Commissioner’s office here on Monday urging the authorities to announce support price for cotton and open purchase centres in Chitradurga district.

The protesters took out a procession from Gandhi Circle which passed through the main streets of the city, including Mahaveer Circle, and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Circle before culminating outside the Deputy Commissioner’s office. They also raised slogans against the State government and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for their failure to protect the interests of farmers.

They said that the farmers in the district had grown cotton on a large area of land to get more profit, but they could not get the expected yield owing to untimely rain and other reasons. The price of cotton had come down too making it difficult to get back the investment.

The growers had taken loans from banks and other financial institutions, but the decline in price had worsened their condition.

Keeping in view the plight of the growers, the State government should announce a support price for the crop and open purchase centres, they added.

The protesters submitted a memorandum to Deputy Commissioner Hemaji Nayak.

- *'Growers could not get expected yield because of rain'*
- *'The price of cotton has fallen too'*

### **Crop loss compensation of Rs 15,000 per acre sought**

Owing to water stagnation, caused by the recent spell of rain, standing paddy crops on about 10,000 acres in the tail-end delta region is facing an imminent threat of wilting, said Chidambaram MLA K. Balakrishnan

He visited the Parangipettai block near here to inspect the waterlogged farms in about 25 villages, including Mettukuppam, Arunmozhithevan, Manjakuzhi, Thatchakadu and Manalmedu. Mr. Balakrishnan told reporters that the farmers were severely affected by the recent rain. There was absolutely no drainage facilities places such as Chidambaram and Kattumannarkoil. This has resulted in water stagnating in the farmlands.

He urged the authorities to give a compensation at the rate of Rs. 15,000 per acre of crop loss, free farm inputs and fertilizers to the farmers to recoup their losses. He also pointed out that there existed acute shortage of urea in this region and fix the responsibility on the officialdom to supply the requirements to the farmers without any hitch.

### **Coconut plants distributed to farmers**

In view of the total wipeout of coconut plantations due to cyclone Hudhud in Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram districts, Bharatiya Kisan Sangh has come forward to distribute coconut plants to farmers, Visakhapatnam MP and president of State unit of Bharatiya Janata Party K Haribabu has said.

The BKS would be distributing 50,000 coconut plants in Viskahapatnam district and 25,000 plants in the two Hudhud-affected mandals in Vizianagaram district. These plants were being distributed free of cost, he said.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu handed over some plants to a few coconut farmers here on Monday at a meeting organised at MVP Colony by the government to mark the plantation programme under the 'Rejuvenating Vizag' campaign.

The State government promotes the tradition of 'Karteeka Vanabhojanam' as a part of the green campaign in the State, the Chief Minister said. The government would also review the status of greenery across the State and take steps to improve the green cover.

Decrying the attitude of viewing sapling plantation only as a photo opportunity, Mr Naidu wanted everyone to take social forestry programme seriously. Each household should plant at least a sapling and nurture it till it grows into a tree.

## **Decline in orange production causes concern**

A widespread decline in the production of citrus fruits in several Arunachal Pradesh districts has caused alarm among orange farmers in the state as well as in the Horticulture Department.

Lohit and Lower Dibang Valley, the two major orange producing districts, are particularly affected by the phenomenon as many farmers had to abandon hundreds of hectares of orange orchards. According to a survey conducted by the Arunachal Pradesh Horticulture Research and Development Mission (APHRDM) from October 26 to October 31, Wakro in Lohit district, known as the orange bowl of the state, and Roing and Korunu circles in Lower Dibang Valley district are worst affected.

A farmer at Chidu village has lost 10,500 orange trees. Similar stories of losses were reported in the Korunu circle in Lower Dibang Valley district, where about 20,000 citrus trees were found bereft of fruits.PTI

## **Press Centre for more urea: EVKS**

TNCC president E.V.K.S. Elangovan said on Monday that Congress workers would identify themselves with the problems faced by the people and urged the government to act fast to help farmers overcome fertiliser shortage.

“Farmers are in a precarious situation: the monsoon is good this year, but fertilisers, especially urea, are in short supply. Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam should visit New Delhi and meet the Ministers concerned to get enough quantum of urea for Tamil Nadu. Sending memoranda would not serve any purpose,” he said while talking to journalists here. If the Centre could not earmark an adequate quantum of urea for Tamil Nadu, the State should import it.

Confident of returning to power in the State by 2016, Mr. Elangovan said the party leaders would work together to achieve the aim. “We will organise interfaces with people at the grassroots in every district and highlight local issues.”

### **Special Correspondent reports from Erode**

Speaking at a meeting in Erode, Mr. Elangovan said the Congress would bring back the Kamaraj rule on its own or become the kingmaker after the 2016 Assembly elections.

Touching on the exit of G.K. Vasan from the party, he said his presence had not strengthened the party, nor his absence weakened it. On ties with the Dravidian parties, Mr. Elangovan said the Congress did not consider any party as untouchable, and party president Sonia Gandhi would take a decision on alliance at the time of elections.

## **‘Make dairying profitable’**

Calling on dairy farmers to adopt scientific methods to make dairy farming profitable, Rural Development Minister K.C. Joseph has said that frequent hikes in milk price are not a sustainable solution to end the grievances of farmers. He was inaugurating an integrated dairy development project here on Monday. He said that

milk price was hiked 13 times in the past three years. — Special Correspondent

- *State-level meet of dairy farmers to be held at Manikkadavu*
- *Rs.5 crore each for Kannur, Thrissur for producing more milk*

## **Cattle feed shortage leading to low milk production: DKMUL**

Due to the lack of cattle feed, milk production in the district falls short of demand by more than 25 per cent, said Raviraj Hegde, president, Dakshina Kannada Cooperative Milk Union Ltd. (DKMUL) here on Monday.

Talking during the launch of Nandini products here, he said while the demand for milk in the region was around 4 lakh litres daily, the production was just 3.13 lakh.

“This is largely due to lack of quality cattle fodder, which is deterring more farmers from taking up dairy farming,” he said.

One of the solutions propounded for increasing the production of cattle feed was to allow for farmers to use gomala land (grazing land) and other suitable government land for cultivation of fodder, said Mr. Hegde. “We have already written to the State government to earmark land in the villages for growing fodder,” he said.

Another proposal presented before P. Nagaraj, president of Karnataka Milk Federation — who participated in the launch — was the setting up of a dairy unit at Uppoor in Udupi district, and the setting up of an ice cream factory in the district.

Assuring the district Union of pursuing the proposals, Mr. Nagaraj said, “The Uppoor factory may cost Rs. 70 crore. We will have to ask Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, and we will push for at least Rs. 40 crore funding for this.”

Meanwhile, he said the ‘Nandini Gold’ cattle feed introduced by the State government was “a success” that could generate additional revenues of up to Rs. 300 crore annually for farmers. According to him, 500 societies had already given positive feedback for the feed

that used maize as its primary component (45 per cent), instead of paddy that was being traditionally used.

“Farmers are reporting that fat content in milk had increased by 2 per cent, while the cows were giving an average of one litre extra daily,” he said.

From “thicker” curd to rich cream, Dakshina Kannada Cooperative Milk Union Ltd. (DKMUL) has launched two new products in their expanding Nandini line on Monday.

The Nandini “Real thick curd” comes in cans of 200g (Rs. 20) and 400g (Rs. 36), unlike the packet curd that is being sold now, said officials of the union.

### **Health benefits**

After opening, the curd — which is being advertised for its health benefits of having fat, protein, lactose, minerals and vitamins — can be refrigerated for around 15 days.

The cream has 35 per cent fat when compared to the 25 per cent fat available commonly in the market now, said BV. Satyanarayana, Managing Director, DKMUL.

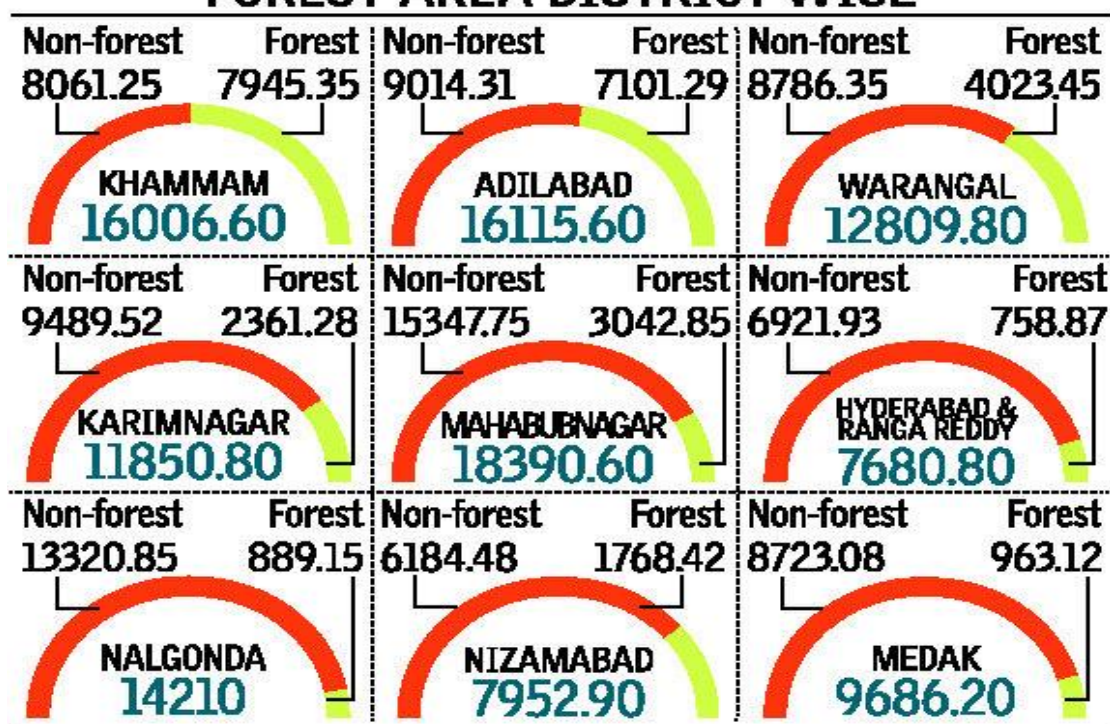
“Nearly 360g of ghee can be obtained from Nandini cream, compared to around 200g from the cream currently available,” he said.

### **Products**

With this, the product catalogue of the Karnataka Milk Federation extends to more than 82 products.

## TS in need of a touch of green

### FOREST AREA DISTRICT-WISE



*With forest cover at just 25.16 per cent, the State has miles to go. A 'zero tolerance' approach towards smuggling, poaching and encroachment was also suggested for protection and improvement of forests.*

Telangana State lags behind with 25.16 per cent forest cover as against a national goal of having 33 per cent of geographical area under tree cover, which calls for steps to protect existing forests and to increase green cover outside the forest areas.

With geographical area being 114.703 lakh hectares, the forest area is found to account for 28.853 lakh hectares, just above a quarter standing at 25.16 per cent. A note on forest protection for the budget session concedes that the forests of TS were subjected to immense biotic pressures leading to their degradation.

Khammam with 7,945 square km leads the table of district-wise forest area followed by Adilabad with 7,101 square km and Warangal with 4,023 square km. Medak district with 963 square km and Nalgonda district with 889.15 square km find a place at the bottom of the table.



The note makes a mention on the 'urgent need to treat and nurture the forest area' and adds that efforts were needed to protect 'existing forests and to increase green cover outside the designated forest areas as well through social forestry activities.' The objective was sought to be achieved by a multi-pronged approach of rejuvenating degraded forests, ensuring more effective protection of forests against smuggling, encroachment, fire and grazing, among other steps.

A 'zero tolerance' approach towards smuggling, poaching and encroachment was also suggested for protection and improvement of forests. The Forest Department in recent times has taken up initiatives such as establishing 128 base camps in interior areas and engaging five local tribal helpers at each camp. Also, 56 strike forces with vehicles were set up to control teak smuggling and 56 check posts strengthened with additional manpower.

## **Launch bhagya scheme for farmers: Deve Gowda**

*Says it will help prevent farmers from committing suicide*

Charging the State government with neglecting the farmers, Janata Dala (Secular) supremo and MP H.D. Deve Gowda on Friday urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to launch "Bhagya scheme" for farmers on the lines of Anna Bhagya and Ksheera Bhagya. "The government should launch a Raitha Bhagya scheme and protect farmers from committing suicide," he said.

He was speaking to presspersons after inaugurating an ATM (automotive teller machine) of Hassan District Central Cooperative Bank in Hassan. Farmers were facing difficulties owing to a fall in the prices of many products, including onion, arecanut and tobacco. The government had not responded to their problems, he said.

He said that he had sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appointment twice to discuss farmers' issues. However, he had not yet got a chance to meet the Prime Minister. "I will actively take part in the Parliament session beginning on November 24 and raise farmers' issues there," he said. Mr. Deve Gowda said that Congress president Sonia Gandhi had invited him to attend the

inaugural plenary session of the international conference on Nehru's Legacy on November 17. He would take part in the session and share his views on Nehru's role in shaping India, he added.



## Reduce salt intake for better kidney health



Too much salt in one's diet increases the risk of contracting kidney problems, says a new research.

The researchers found high sodium intake (an average of 4.7g a day) is linked with an increased risk of needing dialysis, but no benefit was seen for low sodium intake (average 2g a day).

"Our findings extend the known benefits of healthy eating and show that the consumption of a healthy diet may protect from future major renal events," said Andrew Smyth from the National University of Ireland, Galway.

"As dietary modification is a low-cost, simple intervention, it offers the potential to significantly reduce the burden from chronic kidney disease, while also protecting from cardiovascular disease," Smyth added in the study involving 544,635 participants.

These findings were confirmed by a separate study that found that reducing salt intake reduces albuminuria, or excess protein in the urine, which is a hallmark of kidney dysfunction.

In the study involving 120 rural villages in China, researchers analysed the results of an 18-month sodium reduction programme. The findings of the study led by Meg Jardine from The George Institute for International Health, in Australia and her colleagues revealed that individuals who underwent sodium reduction had a 33 percent decreased likelihood of having albuminuria compared with individuals in the control villages.

Both the studies were presented at ASN (American Society of Nephrology) Kidney Week Nov 11-16, 2014 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

INDIAN CITIES

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather

Tomorrow's Forecast

Clear

Rain: 0

Humidity: 94

Wind: normal

Tuesday, Nov 18

Max 29°  
Min 25°  
Cloudy

Sunrise: 06:07

Sunset: 05:39

Barometer: 1011

Wednesday, Nov 19

Max 32°  
Min 24°

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday  
Nov 20



32° | 24°

Partly Cloudy

Friday  
Nov 21



33° | 27°

Sunny

Saturday  
Nov 22



34° | 27°

Partly Cloudy

Sunday  
Nov 23



33° | 27°

Partly Cloudy

Monday  
Nov 24



33° | 27°

Partly Cloudy

## Submit proposal to stop rhino poaching: Harsh Vardhan to Assam



*Union science and technology minister Harsh Vardhan on Monday asked the Assam forest department to submit a scientific proposal to stop poaching of one-horned rhinos and protect the species in the state.*

GUWAHATI: Union science and technology minister Harsh Vardhan on Monday asked the Assam forest department to submit a scientific proposal to stop poaching of one-horned rhinos and protect the species in the state.

The minister said this while visiting the Institute of Advanced Studies in Science and Technology in Boragaon area of the city.

Harsh Vardhan, who reached Assam on Saturday, visited the famous Kaziranga National Park Sunday.

"We should use science and the acumen of the youth to make things better as far as the issue of protection of wildlife is concerned and stop poaching of rhinos," he said.

"I have asked the forest department to give me a proposal to stop poaching and protect wildlife using science and technology," he told newsmen after visiting the science and technology institute.

Over 25 rhinos have been killed in Assam this year - 23 in the high-security Kaziranga park alone.

While the state government has taken many steps to stop poaching, the killings continue in various protected areas of Assam.

According to statistics from the forest department, Assam has lost 193 rhinos since 2001 due to poaching.

At a function at the North East Institute of Science and Technology in Jorhat district on Saturday, Harsh Vardhan said the central government was trying to document the impact of climate change on the ecosystem and biodiversity of the northeast region.

### Healthy heart prevents future ill-health

*People who adopt a healthy lifestyle in their teenage years face a significantly reduced risk of contracting heart diseases, says a new research.*

Maintaining a healthy heart while young may help prevent future disease and disability, the findings showed.

"People should adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle at all ages, especially young," said study lead author Thanh Huyen T. Vu, research assistant professor at the Northwestern University in the US.

A healthy lifestyle has been shown to be associated with favourable levels of cardio-vascular disease risk factors.

In the study spanning more than three decades, participants who were at low risk of heart and blood vessel disease as young adults were found 60 percent less likely to report disability as older adults.

To determine risk level, researchers used blood pressure, cholesterol and body mass index measurements, as well as diabetes and smoking status.

The study involved data from 3,669 men and 2,345 women.

Participants were aged 29-68 when the study began in 1967 to 1973. The researchers co-related the data to the participants' responses to a 2003 health survey about functional disability and quality of life.

The findings were presented at the "American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2014" in Chicago, Illinois.

### [Home-cooked food ideal for healthy diet](#)

*People who frequently cook meals at home eat healthier and consume fewer calories than those who cook less, says a study.*

Those who frequently cooked at home -- six-to-seven nights a week -- also consumed fewer calories on the occasions when they ate out, the findings showed.

"When people cook most of their meals at home, they consume fewer carbohydrates, less sugar and less fat than those who cook less or not at all - even if they are not trying to lose weight," said study author Julia Wolfson from the Johns Hopkins University in the US.

The researchers analysed data from the 2007-2010 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey from more than 9,000 participants aged 20 and older.

The researchers found that eight percent of adults cooked dinner once or less a week and this group consumed, on an average day, 2,301 total calories, 84 grams of fat and 135 grams of sugar.

Forty-eight percent of participants cooked dinner six to seven times a week and they consumed 2,164 calories, 81 grams of fat and 119 grams of sugar on an average day.

The researchers also found that those who cook at home rely less frequently on frozen foods and are also less likely to choose fast foods on the occasions when they eat out.

"The evidence shows people who cook at home eat a more healthy diet," Wolfson added.

The study will be published online in the journal *Public Health Nutrition*.



# DECCAN Chronicle

## Rooftop solar scheme gets 2,140 consumer applications



Those living in the city preferred solar systems without battery backup as there was no load shedding, but in other districts, people were looking for a battery-supported system.

**Chennai:** The grid tied domestic rooftop solar photovoltaic scheme, promoted by the TN Energy Development Agency (TEDA), has gathered momentum as it received 2,140 applications from consumers seeking its installation.

According to a Teda official, about 240 solar systems have been installed by vendors in the state under the CM's solar rooftop capital incentive scheme. "We are hoping to receive more applications from consumers in the coming days," the official said.

Mr Subramanian of Green Pearl Solar Systems, one of the enlisted Teda vendors, said that there was a good demand for installation of rooftop solar panels with net metering facility. "We have installed nearly 40 solar systems in homes. After reduction in subsidy, a one kw solar system will cost about Rs 50,000, including cost of net meters supplied by Tangedco," he added.

Those living in the city preferred solar systems without battery backup as there was no load shedding, but in other districts, people were looking for a battery-supported system. The battery has to be replaced every two or three years, which amounts to a recurring expenditure, he noted.

Another enlisted vendor of Teda said that inordinate delay by the ministry of new and renewable energy (MNRE) in releasing subsidy for the rooftop photovoltaic system had slowed down implementation of the scheme. “We have installed solar systems on consumer rooftops after collecting only the amount, reducing the state and Central government subsidies,” he said adding that though the state government had released its subsidy of Rs 20,000, the MNRE’s share was yet to be released.

A senior Teda official said there was delay in releasing subsidy by the Union ministry for the past two years. But in the last two months, they started releasing the subsidy amount. But the official said the delay in installation was due to less availability of locally manufactured inverters.

### Use solar panels, save 40 per cent on your power bill



K. Chandrasekar, a resident of Rajkilpakkam, shows the rooftop solar photovoltaic system installed at his residence. (Photo: DC)

**Chennai:** Mr Chandrasekar's four-bedroom house in Rajkilpakkam, a city suburb, looks no different from other houses in the city. And yet, the family is among the few that has reduced its electricity bill by 40 per cent through harnessing solar power.

"Our bi-monthly electricity bill has come down by 30 to 40 per cent after installation of a grid tied rooftop SPV system with net metering facility under the Chief Minister's Solar Rooftop Capital Incentive Scheme (CMSRCIS)," said Mr K. Chandrasekar, who works in Southern Railway.

Tamil Nadu is the first state in the country to introduce net meters, which will record both power consumption as well as supply to the grid.

Like the Chandrasekars, there are 240 residents in the state who look to the sun as a main source of energy and are less affected by the constant threats of a tariff hike.

Installation of rooftop solar photovoltaic system (SPV) at homes seems to be a better option to overcome the proposed tariff hike as a kilowatt system generates five units on a sunny day and two to three units on cloudy days.

His house is also designed to make use of natural light and better ventilation facilities to reduce electricity consumption. Mr Chandrasekar said that normally his power consumption for a bimonthly billing period varies from 700 to 800 units but with the help of solar power generation his net payable units has come down to 500, which qualifies him to avail power tariff subsidy.

## Run of the millet



Pickled vegetables, mixed grain and millets salad is a healthy salad, which uses lacto-fermented vegetables, quinoa, red rice and Himalayan millet, alongwith fresh herbs and dried fruits

It all started with me planning to go and see the Valley of Flowers. Located in Uttarakhand, it is known for its beautiful fauna and flora. I was first introduced to this valley about four years ago, as lots of my fellow chefs hailed from this region. I must admit that the inhabitants of the valley are talented, hardworking and beautiful.

On my way to the valley, I realised that I had underestimated the region completely. It was even more beautiful than what I had visualised and even more challenging than I had thought.

Narrow roadways overlooking deep and steep trenches, landslides, rains and unplanned halts made the trip adventurous, exciting and memorable.

It got extended way beyond my imagination and schedule because of the rains and frequent landslides. I had no choice but to spend a night in a village with the locals.

I was tired, hungry and frustrated, and what I got to eat was some kind of cereal, which was very similar to broken rice, along with some spiced lentils.

I instantly fell in love with slightly coarse yet gooey texture of the cereal and its nutty taste. I learnt that the cereal is locally called

mundwa or popularly known as the Himalayan millet or the barnyard millet. It is grown in the Shivaliks and it's a staple of people there.

The real fun started when my team and I decided to use it in our kitchen. We checked its flavour profile, cooking methods and other ingredients that could go well with it and came up with some innovative dishes using the millet.

The writer is a chef at Dramz Whisky Bar and Lounge, Mehrauli  
**Himalayan millet, Bamboo rice and sticky rice pudding**

The addition of Himalayan millets gives this dish the desired nutty flavour and an aftertaste. The taste of burnt sugar and reduced milk goes well with the taste of millets.

### **Ingredients**

- Bamboo rice, soaked in water for 2 and 1/2 hours
- Himalayan millet 50 gm
- Sticky rice 30 gm
- One vanilla bean, scraped
- Toned milk 1.25 litre
- Condensed milk 30 gm
- Heavy cream 400 ml
- Brown sugar 50 gm

### **Method**

- In a heavy bottom pan, boil bamboo rice and sticky rice in toned milk for 20 minutes.
- Once it has become soft, blend it for 30 seconds with a hand blender. This is to break the rice and to give a fuller texture to the pudding.
- To this, add the Himalayan millet and scrapings of the vanilla bean and simmer for another 10 minutes.
- Now, add condensed milk and cream to the above mixture. Cook till it becomes thick. To check, see if the liquid coats the back of the spoon evenly or not.
- Take it off the heat and leave in the refrigerator to chill.
- Brown sugar will be used at a later stage.

## **TART SHELL FOR THE PUDDING**

- Refined flour 300 gm
- Icing sugar 100 gm
- Butter 200 gm
- Two beaten eggs
- Kidney beans 50 gm

### **Method**

- Cream butter, sugar and egg together.
- Sift in the flour to it, knead briefly so that it becomes a cohesive mass.
- Leave in the refrigerator to chill for two hours.
- Take it out from the refrigerator and roll into thin sheets.
- Line tart moulds of your choice and insert the sheets properly. Once the tart moulds are lined, keep them for chilling once again for an hour.
- Take out the moulds and line it with aluminium foil. Pour in some kidney beans in the tart moulds and bake in the oven at 180°C for 15 minutes. The beans are used for putting pressure on the moulds. This helps in maintaining the shape of the tart.
- Remove the kidney beans and the aluminium foil and bake it for another five minutes at the same temperature. The tart mould should get a nice golden colour, that's the key.
- Remove the tarts from the mould and allow them to cool at room temperature.

### **Assembly**

- Take out the rice and millet pudding from the refrigerator and fill it in the tart moulds.
- Even out the surface with a palate knife.
- Sprinkle brown sugar on top and caramelize the sugar with a blow torch.
- It's ready to be served.

## **Stewed lamb with root vegetables and Himalayan Millet**

This is a hearty dish, which takes its own sweet time before it is ready to be served. It is often served as a one-pot meal. The presence of the millets breaks the monotony of the dish, gives additional texture and eliminates the need of any other accompaniment like rice or bread with the dish.

### **Ingredients**

- Olive oil 75 ml
- Mild red chilli powder 5 gm
- Salt to taste
- Two onions cut into big dices
- Two carrots cut into big dices
- Garlic 10 cloves (whole)
- One turnip, cut into big dices
- Himalayan millet 50 gm
- Peppercorn 2 gm (whole)
- Lamb stock 700 ml
- Cloves 5
- Boneless leg of lamb, cubed 600 gm
- Tomato paste 100 gm
- Fresh cilantro, roughly chopped 20 gm

### **Method**

- Make a marinade by mixing together olive oil, chilli powder, salt, clove and peppercorn. Marinate the lamb cubes and leave in a refrigerator for 3 hours.
- In a heavy bottom pan, heat 50 ml of olive oil and put 1/3rd of the marinated lamb. Keep cooking till the lamb cubes turn brown. Keep the browned lamb aside. Similarly, to the oil in the pan add and cook till browned the remaining marinated lamb in two batches, and keep aside.
- In the same pan, sauté onions, carrot, turnip and garlic cloves for 5 minutes.
- Add tomato paste to it and cook for additional 5 minutes.
- Add the browned lamb to the pot and add the lamb stock to it.

- Stir in the Himalayan millets now and bring everything to a boil. Let it simmer and skim off all the froth.
- Keep simmering it for another 1 1/2 to 2 hours and check the lamb for softness. If the lamb is not tender enough, then simmer till it becomes tender.
- Once done, check the seasonings and take it off the flame. Add the chopped cilantro and serve.

### Herbal mouthwash to ease cancer pain



The plants used for herbal mouthwash have anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory, mucolytic or analgesic properties, which are found to be effective individually or in various combinations. (Photo: DC/File)

**Chennai:** The Medical Superintendent of Regional Cancer Centre, Dr K. Ramadas says, “The liquid is a mix of equal quantities of powdered dried leaves and bark of neem (*Azadiracta indica*); fruits of amla (*Emblica officinalis*), yellow myrobalan/haritaki (*Terminalia chebula*) and beleric myrobalan/bibhitaki (*Terminalia bellirica*); and dried liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) roots, all dissolved in water.”

The plants used for herbal mouthwash have anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory, mucolytic or analgesic properties, which are found to



be effective individually or in various combinations. The mouthwash works better on oral cancer patients or any other cancer patients, who are receiving radiation therapy. The mouthwash also combats ulcers and infections.

The mouthwash is found effective for the oral mucositis, a painful side effect of radiation therapy given to cancer patients. As a result of cell death in reaction to chemo or radiotherapy, the mucosal lining of the mouth becomes thin, may slough off and then become red, inflamed and ulcerated, he says.

About oral mucositis, Ramadas says, “Oral mucositis is a severe pain, and the degree of pain is usually related to the extent of the tissue damage. The pain would be a burning sensation accompanied by reddening. Due to pain, the patient may experience trouble speaking, eating, or even opening the mouth.”

The mouthwash itself may not have anti-cancer properties, but by reducing toxicity it lowers treatment cost and hospitalisation while allowing patients to complete their treatment. The mouthwash has been developed, clinically tested and patented.

Dr G. Selvalakshmi, Radiation Oncologist, Cancer Institute, Adyar, says, “Side effects cannot be avoided in any treatment. But, advanced technologies are used to minimise the side effects. In case of oral mucositis, the problem usually appears at the end of the third or fourth week for a six-week course. During this time, the patient is given anti-bacterial mouthwash, painkillers, antibiotics and anti-fungals. There are instances where patients are reluctant to continue the radiation therapy, because of the pain. But, they are counselled by the psycho- oncologists in the institute.”

# THE HINDU BusinessLine

## 'Union and State govts must extend sops to tea industry'

Kochi, November 17:

Falling prices, wage increases coupled with high fertiliser cost have put the South Indian tea industry in dire straits. Tea prices of late have dropped 13 per cent compared with last year, thereby putting several companies in an unviable position. There has been a growing demand from the plantation industry for government support as a whole on account of high labour involvement in various phases of tea production.

Chacko P Thomas, Managing Director, Kanan Devan Hills Plantations Company Pvt Ltd (KDHP), spoke to *BusinessLine* on the current phase of the industry, issues faced by the sector and increase in production cost which have put the plantation sector on the verge of collapse. Labour wages have increased by 18.34 per cent in the past two years while prices registered a 13-per cent drop.

Edited excerpts from the interaction:

**With the prices falling, how do you see the prospects in the current year?**

Tea prices in South India have fallen to alarmingly low levels from April and the free fall is continuing. It is certainly a threat for the survival of the plantation sector and the industry has sought support from the Union and State Governments in the form of export incentives, plantation and land reforms and tax breaks to ensure sustainability of the plantation industry.

Unfavourable policies such as Plantation Tax, Agriculture Income Tax, Basic Land Tax etc specifically in Kerala have further aggravated the situation, forcing South Indian tea companies to operate on razor thin margins.

With wage increase in the North-East, I understand that the situation there too is expected to deteriorate.

**What is the situation on the export front? Have problems in West Asia and Pakistan affected the trade?**

Export markets are dull as far as Indian tea is concerned due to over production in export-oriented tea economies such as Kenya and Sri Lanka, making low-priced teas easily available in the international market.

The demand in West Asia and Pakistan, due to political turmoil and cheaper Kenyan teas, is for very low-priced Indian teas, which is not economically feasible to produce.

**What is the status of the proposal for tourism-promotion activities in estates?**

All activities on the non-tea and plantation tourism front have been suspended at the moment as we are awaiting certain clearances from the government.

The continued viability of the plantations is greatly dependent on obtaining these permissions and implementing the same in the shortest possible time.

**Do you have any plans to acquire other plantations?**

There are no plans to acquire any plantations. However, we will continue to support partial, inorganic growth, by taking factories in other States to process bought leaf.

**How was the performance of KDHP last year?**

The performance of KDHP during the last year was quite good with the company turning out with a profit before tax of Rs. 23.94 crore. The production in 2013-14 was 23.46 million kg while the turnover was Rs. 287 crore.

**How is your Ripple brand doing in the retail market?**

Ripple has created a strong market presence in Kerala and we have now slowly introduced it into Tamil Nadu in the first stage, after which we will cover the rest of South India in a phased manner.

We are also working on introducing new variants of Ripple in the market.

**What is your share in organic tea business?**

We produce up to 2 lakh kg of organic teas annually. We have a small yet significant presence in the organic market.

## Demand-supply balance keeps cardamom steady



**Kochi, November 17:**

The cardamom market last week ruled steady at auctions held last week as demand matched supply, despite higher arrivals. This was in view of active covering by domestic buyers, mand matched supply, trade sources in Kumily said.

At the Cardamom Planters' Association (CPA) auction on Monday in Bodinayakannur, 64.6 tonnes of capsules arrived and of this, 59.4 tonnes were traded. The maximum price was Rs. 864 and the auction average stood at Rs. 742.90 a kg, indicating good demand.

### **Inferior quality**

It is believed that the material at the auction was comparatively inferior, trade sources pointed out. The current buying trend gives the impression that the pipelines are empty. At the same time since this is the peak harvesting period, good green colour and bold capsules are available in good volume.

Therefore, many are buying it for replenishing the inventories for their future needs. The third round of picking is currently under way, growers said. Good variety capsules are arriving in numbers and are being traded at Rs. 750-800 a kg.

At the Sunday auction held by the Kerala Cardamom Processing and Marketing Company, arrivals stood at 126.2 tonnes against 125 tonnes at the previous auction and the entire quantity was sold out.

## **Good numbers**

The maximum price was Rs. 1,018 a kg and the minimum Rs. 578. The auction average was up Rs. 762.02 against Rs. 761 the previous Sunday, PC Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, told *BusinessLine* .

Supply of 8mm bold cardamom constituted 40 per cent of the lots and good colour bold capsules were fetching Rs. 950-1,000 a kg. Total arrivals during the season so far stood at 6,691 tonnes against 7,778 tonnes during the same period last year. Sales were 6,574 tonnes against 7,519 tonnes.

The individual auction average as on November 16 was at around Rs. 757 a kg and on the corresponding date last year was at around Rs. 603.

Prices of graded varieties ( Rs. /kg): 8mm bold (950-1,000); 7mm-8mm (800-830); 6mm-7mm (720-730); below 6 mm (650-660).