

THE HINDU

DATE: 17.10.2014

Indian scientist presented World Food Prize

Sanjaya Rajaram, an eminent Indian scientist, has been awarded the World Food Prize in recognition of his significant contributions to global wheat production.

Mr. Rajaram, currently a Senior Scientific Advisor at the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), has developed some 480 wheat varieties that have been released in 51 countries across six continents and an estimated 58 million hectares.

His wheat improvement research has helped secure a 1.3 per cent rise in global wheat production per annum in the last four decades, an official release said.

Coming from a small farming community in Uttar Pradesh, Mr. Rajaram spent much of this early career at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) where he served as Director of the Wheat Breeding Program, working for many years alongside the eminent crop scientist Norman E. Borlaug, the 'Father of the Green Revolution'

The World Food Prize, presented at the 2014 Borlaug Dialogue, currently being held in Des Moines, United States, from October 15-17, is the foremost international award recognising individuals whose achievements have advanced human development by increasing the quality, quantity, or availability of food.

Ban rubber imports: Chandy

Chief Minister Oommen Chandy on Thursday demanded a total ban on rubber imports, besides seeking imposition of higher duty rates on synthetic, sheet and block rubber and other rubber products.

Rubber was one of the main issues that Chief Minister Oommen Chandy brought up during his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Thursday, highlighting the adverse impact of some of the policy perspectives on small and marginal cultivators in the State.

Substantiating his demand for a total ban on rubber imports in his memorandum to the Prime Minister, Mr. Chandy said the Rubber Board had assessed a supply-demand gap in natural rubber for 2014-15 at 60,000 tonnes only. So far, 3.25 lakh tonnes of natural rubber had been imported as against the domestic stock of 1.8 lakh tonnes. This discrepancy has had its impact on the domestic prices, pushing it down to Rs. 120 a kg from Rs. 240 a kg a few years back.

The State government sought duty hike on sheet rubber and rubber products from the current 8 per cent to 40 per cent in order to prevent the import of huge quantities of non-tyre finished products from China much to the detriment of the domestic small-scale rubber industries.

The memorandum wanted an import cess of Rs. 2 per kg on synthetic rubber as in the case of natural rubber by amending the relevant section in the Rubber Act. In order to discourage import of block rubber, the Chief Minister suggested enhancement of import duty on block rubber by 40 per cent.

Mr. Chandy suggested formulation of soft interest loan schemes and interest subvention in order to improve productivity.

His memorandum also wanted the Centre to include treated rubber timber/wood as an agriculture by-product and exempt it from the existing excise duty of 28 per cent. This would facilitate a smooth interstate transit of rubber wood, besides enabling farmers to get a better price. The other points highlighted by the Chief Minister are inclusion of rubber industry to be included in the Prime Minister's 'Make in India' scheme, a price stabilisation scheme and more representation for farming community in the natural rubber policy formulation committee.

Agri varsity urged to adopt 100 villages for integrated farming

Poonam Malakondaiah, Principal Secretary, Agriculture, Telangana government, has suggested developing 100 model villages in Telangana to promote integrated farming to help small and marginalised farmers.

Addressing the World Food Day celebrations at Prof. Jaya Shankar Agricultural University here on Thursday, she said that integrated farming would help farmers to take up dairy farming, fisheries, sericulture and other allied activities along with regular farming to boost their earnings.

She suggested the varsity should adopt 100 villages to promote this to help small and marginal farmers. She reminded that the same experiment was successful in production of vegetables taken up under 'Mana Vooru Mana Kooragayalu' programme by the marketing and horticulture departments.

Ms. Malakondaiah also suggested to the university to offer specialised certificate courses for young farmers so that they can improve productivity and also benefit from changing farming patterns. Their success would also spread positivity in the community and lead to adoption of better practices.

She asked the students to get involved in community service and said developing community radios was one of the methods of

getting involved in the service. Praveen Rao, Registrar, was also present.

Farmers seek solatium, input subsidy

Paddy, sugarcane, maize, cashew growers were the worst hit. After the cyclone, floods in Nagavali and Vamsadhara were making matters worse for several farmers in Srikakulam district.

After deficit rainfall and financial constraints, the Hudhud cyclone came as yet another blow to farmers who lost their crops in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts. “The government should come to the rescue of farmers with sufficient compensation and input subsidy,” said CPI (M) affiliated Rythu Sangham leader Y. Kesava Rao.

Close to 3 lakh hectares of crops have been lost due to the cyclone in the three districts, and farmers cannot bear additional losses, as they are already reeling under severe financial strain. The government should declare an immediate compensation of Rs. 10,000 per acre for traditional crops and Rs. 20,000 per acre for commercial crops, he demanded.

Besides, efforts should be made to pay the compensation at the earliest, enabling farmers to prepare for the next season. It requires more Rs. 20,000 per acre to clear damaged banana trees, Mr. Rao said.

Paddy, sugarcane, maize, cashew growers were the worst hit. After the cyclone, floods in Nagavali and Vamsadhara were making matters worse for several farmers in Srikakulam district.

More importantly, majority of farmers are not eligible for crop insurance, as the loan premiums were not paid in the hope that government would waive off the loans as promised, but that did not happen. Things are going to be tough for tenant farmers, and they need to be helped, said YSRC agriculture wing convenor M.V.S Nagi Reddy

Study picks hole in discriminatory regulation of tobacco cultivation



The discriminatory regulation of tobacco cultivation will cause a revenue loss of about Rs.21,000 crore annually to India Inc, besides forcing about 3.80 crore people out of livelihood, a study report, jointly conducted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham) and the Thought Arbitrage Research Institute (TARI), said.

Releasing the report on 'Tobacco economics in India: the voice of the farmer and other stakeholders' here on Thursday, Assocham national Secretary-General D. S. Rawat and TARI founder Kaushik Dutta said non-ratification of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) would have an adverse impact on the lives of a sizable section of people in the country.

The study suggested that a multi-pronged strategy of agricultural diversification in a phased manner and shifting to other economic activities was the need of the hour to provide sustainable livelihood solutions to the people associated with tobacco. "Tobacco cultivation is a lifeline for a sizable population, including rural

women, tribal communities and other weaker sections,” Mr. Dutta said.

The alternative livelihood should be based on the capabilities of those involved in tobacco cultivation, and should match their present socio-economic position. “Or else, it will lead to economic imbalance and social conflicts,” Mr. Dutta said.

Further, non-ratification of the treaty for limiting tobacco production would lead to trade disputes and illegal smuggling, thereby threatening millions of jobs and lower realisation of taxes, duties and foreign exchange.

Terming the proposal of the Union Health Ministry to limit only Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco, an export-oriented variety, tobacco farmers said they had no qualms if the government banned all varieties of tobacco, including the ones used in other forms of products.

There was a dichotomy among the policy-makers as the Commerce Ministry wanted FVC exports to grow beyond Rs.10,000 crore by 2015-16 from Rs.6,000 crore in 2013-14.

'Folk' rice varieties museum to come up



In a bid to preserve indigenous rice varieties of India, the West Bengal government has proposed setting up a rice museum to showcase 'folk' varieties of rice, a scientist said Wednesday. Proposed to be set up at the Agricultural Training Centre at Fulia in the state's Nadia district, the unique repository will display over 300 samples.

"In the institute's bio-diversity conservation farm, we are maintaining, growing, distributing and characterising over 300 varieties of 'folk' rice. "The proposed museum will be a large scale initiative where the process of cultivating them and their characters will be highlighted," Anupam Paul, assistant director of agriculture at the Centre, told IANS.

Paul is an agricultural scientist committed to preserving traditional rice variants. This will be the first rice museum in Bengal and probably the first such large scale venture in the country.

"We have created a living farm of 'folk' rice varieties where we study their methods of growth, their properties and determine their taste," Paul said. Komal Aghnivar, Kelas, Bhutmuri, Kele Anshkata, Kalabakri, Jota, Gora are some of the varieties of 'folk' rice which will be on display. IANS

Protect to preserve



Sure footed:The Nilgiri Tahr on home ground.Photo: K.K. Mustafah



My special hideout: The Giant Malabar Squirrel. Photo: H. Vibhu

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From elephants to termites and mountains to deserts we have it all. What we need to learn is how to protect and conserve our wildlife and diverse habitats.

India is a unique country for many reasons. When we ask someone about it, most people would tell us that it is the birthplace of one of the greatest civilisations.

Agriculture, languages, and spices strike our mind immediately. But, only a few of us know the specialty of India's natural heritage. From ants to elephants and tigers to termites, we have it all. There is an astonishing diversity in habitats too.

In the country's extreme north, we have the tallest mountains in the world — the snow-capped Himalayas. In the west lies the Thar Desert, in the north-east, lush rainforests, and in the Andaman Sea, some of the finest coral reefs.

There is also an astonishing variety of other natural habitats — different types of deciduous and evergreen forests, scrub jungles, mangroves, *shola* forests, grasslands, lakes, rivers, and marshes. No other country in the world can boast of such variety in wildlife and diverse habitats. These ecosystems have to be protected as they are crucial for our survival.

An evidence of this is the role of the Western Ghats and the Himalayas which block rain-bearing clouds to bring us monsoon. These two mountains are also the source of many major Indian rivers. For example, the *shola* forests in the Western Ghats are the birthplace of major rivers like the Cauvery, Godavari, and Krishna that support around 400 million people in South India.

Origin of rivers

Today, despite a population of 1.2 billion jostling for space, India has such ecosystems and biodiversity. Can you imagine what it would have been like a thousand years ago, when most of India was enveloped in one kind of habitat or another? It must have been a wildlife paradise! Wildlife and forests have been ravaged today, and we must work hard to save what's left.

We could begin this by mapping changes in our environment over the last few decades — what was our environment in the 1920s, 1940s, 1970s and early 2000s? You could go about this in a Sherlock Holmes-styled investigation clubbed with an interest in the environment. Ask questions, read books, think and imagine

how forests would have been when your parents and grandparents were younger. Talk to them and record their memories of nature.

Questions to ask

Did the rains arrive on time? Were they consistent? Did it rain for the entire monsoon period?

From where did you get water and how clean was it? Know about your nearest water source. How has it changed with the times?

How much and what kind of garbage was produced? Did you reuse any of the garbage? How did you dispose the rest?

What were the trees and birds you saw? Do you see them now? If they have disappeared, what do you think could be the reasons?

Each unique memory is a treasure to remind us that we have lost forests and wildlife at an unimaginable rate during the last few decades. This activity will kindle our interest towards nature and conservation. Understanding what we have lost will help us conserve the last pockets of India's natural heritage. With a world population of seven billion and more, conservation should begin. Then, there will be change and our forests and wildlife will be protected.

Nursery transplantation picking up in Karaikal

Farmers need adequate water for better growth of paddy

Transplantation of nurseries is picking up in different parts of the district with available water. Farmers have so far transplanted paddy on over 12,000 acres this samba season.

Rain which lashed the tail end areas of this district and Karaikal recently has encouraged farmers to go ahead with agriculture operations in full swing. But farmers are engaged in direct sowing in a few parts of Karaikal. They need adequate water for better growth.

However, agriculture operations are progressing on a dull note in Thirupattinam, Padutharkollai, Melayur, Varicikudi, Vizithiyur, Thirunallar and nearby areas as farmers are getting very meagre quantum of water. In a few other places including Ambakarathur, farmers are undertaking agriculture operations with the help of pump-sets.

A representative of the Karaikal farmers association blamed the Tamil Nadu Government for not giving due share of water (2 tmc) to them. Farmers skipped kuruvai crop last season due to monsoon failure.

So, the Public Works Department in Karaikal should mount pressure on the Tamil Nadu Government to increase the quantum of water released to Karaikal this season as there is adequate water in the Mettur dam.

The Agriculture Department should ensure availability of fertilizers and pesticides since farmers have been forced to buy seeds and fertilisers at higher price from Thirumarugal, Nannilam and Kumbakonam, he added.

Rise in prices of urea, other fertilisers and pesticide and increase in the cost of labour cause immense hardship to farmers, said A.Vincent, Karaikal district secretary of Communist Party of India (Marxist).

Gulbarga takes to organic farming



A sugarcane field where organic cultivation is practised in Gulbarga.0— PHOTO: ARUN KULKARNI

Organic farming is catching up with farmers both in the irrigated and rain-fed areas in Gulbarga district. The improved agricultural practice of mixed crop cultivation, avoiding the use of the chemical fertilisers and pesticides, is a hit among the farmers in the district.

Joint Director of the Agriculture Department Mohammad Jilani Mokashi told a group of presspersons visiting some of the agriculture plots, where individual farmers have adopted improved agriculture practices, that the awareness levels among the farmers on the need to switch over to organic farming had increased — both in the irrigated and rain-fed areas.

A progressive farmer, Shivasharanappa Bulla, who on his own adopted the organic farming methods to cultivate sugarcane and vegetables in his 40 acre land in Pattan village in Gulbarga taluk, said that the yield has considerably increased after switching over to the organic farming and the cost of cultivation had also come down drastically. “The price for the crops grown without the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides was also high in the market”.

Mr. Mokashi said in all the Agriculture Department has taken up demonstration plots for creating awareness about improved agriculture practices, using mixed cropping methods and organic cultivation, in a total of 6,850 hectares. The crops in all the demonstration plots were healthy and the expected increase in the yield was more than 30 per cent, when compared to the previous year's yield.

During the rabi season, Mr. Mokashi said demonstration plots of Jowar and Bengal gram would be taken up in 12,500 hectares.

Growers allege anomaly in compensation distribution

Cotton growers of Navalgund taluk have alleged irregularities in the distribution of compensation for crop loss.

Raitha Sena president Viresh C. Sorabdmath and Shankarappa R. Ambali told presspersons here on Monday that the Department of Agriculture had violated the orders issued by the Chief Minister and the Deputy Commissioner pertaining to the distribution of compensation.

They said Bt cotton crop on 4,237 hectares of land was destroyed in the 2013 kharif season as a private seed production company supplied substandard quality seeds. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah asked the company to pay a compensation of Rs. 6,000 per hectare with a warning that the company would be blacklisted if it failed to release the amount.

The company deposited Rs. 8.21 crore with the district administration and Rs. 2.54 crore was allotted for Navalgund taluk. Agriculture Department officials identified 3,162 growers as eligible for compensation. However, the growers were shocked when they received the cheques as everyone got Rs. 6,000 per hectare and those who did not grow Bt cotton received the amount too.

For instance, Mr. Ambali was sanctioned Rs. 15,000 for 2.5 hectares. Rudragouda Desai of Shirur village was sanctioned Rs 30,000 for five hectares and Mr. Sorabmath was sanctioned Rs. 9,000 for 1.5 hectares. But all of them got Rs. 6,000. However, Virupakshappa Munavalli of Hebballi village got Rs. 12,000. His name appeared twice in the list. In other taluks, the growers got the compensation as per the survey, they said.

They alleged that N.H. Konaradi, Navalgund MLA, was responsible for the mess. A case has been lodged with the Lokayukta against Department of Agriculture Joint Director Shabana Sheik, assistant directors S.Y. Kalawad, Vittal Rao and Navalgund tahasildar Naveen Hullur, they added.

Bt cotton crop on 4,237 hectares was destroyed in the 2013 kharif season due to substandard seeds

‘Fish, a cheap source of protein’

With nearly one-fourth of the population of the country malnourished, fish can be a cheap source of protein to alleviate hunger, said, Shivakumar Magada, professor of Aquatic Biology, College of Fisheries, during the inauguration of the ‘World Food Day’ celebrations here on Thursday.

He said the country had more than 2 lakh km of rivers, canals and coastlines as well as 6.47 million hectares of reservoirs, water bodies and lakes available for fishing. “While the World Health

Organisation recommends per capita fish consumption to be 18 kg, it is just 11.3 kg in India,” he said. The function followed the theme, ‘Family Farming: Feeding the World, Caring for the Earth’.

Speakers at the programme highlighted the need to buttress fish production to reduce the effects of dwindling agriculture. “When everyone is moving away from agriculture, and the soil is slowly turning infertile, who will grow our food?” asked K.M. Shankar, Dean of the college.

Workshop on farmer empowerment

The Central Food Technological Research Institute is organising a workshop here on Friday ‘All-India farmers’ empowerment workshop’ on its premises. Krishna Byre Gowda, Minister of State for Agriculture, will inaugurate the workshop while R. Dhruvanarayana, MP (Chamarajanagar), will release a souvenir on the occasion. Pratap Simha, MP (Mysore), will release the workshop logo. — Staff Correspondent

“Take up Bengal gram sowing”

The Agro Market Intelligence and Business Promotion Centre (AMI&BPC) of the Department of Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business has indicated that the price of pearl millet would rule around Rs.1,400 to 1,500 a quintal during harvest in February/ March.

In a price advisory, the centre said ‘Karthigai pattam’ is an important cropping season for farmers in rainfed areas in the

State. North East monsoon coincides with the 'Karthigai pattam' and the rainfall followed by winter season is suitable for crops such as Bengal gram, coriander and pearl millet. To help farmers take proper pre-sowing decision, the back office of the AMI&BPC in the Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies (CARDS), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, provides price forecast for the crops.

In Tamil Nadu, pearl millet is cultivated mainly in October-November based on the rainfall. In 2011-12, the crop was grown on an area of about 0.46 lakh hectares with a production of 1.14 lakh tonnes.

The price of coriander during harvest, between February and March, will rule around Rs.11,600 per quintal, the AMI & BPC said. The sowing period is from October to December and harvesting extends from January to April. The current price of coriander in Virudhunagar market is around Rs.11,500 a quintal.

The AMI&BPC advises farmers to take up Bengal gram sowing to get remunerative price during the harvest in February/March when it is expected to fetch Rs. 4,350 to 4,500 a quintal. India is the largest producer and consumer of Bengal gram in the world.

Production is expected to drop by about 5.9 per cent to 9.3 million tonnes during the current year. In Tamil Nadu, Bengal gram is sown only in 'Karthigai pattam' and it was cultivated on 9,800 hectares with a production of nearly 5,800 tonnes during 2012-13.

Agro-forestry

The article, “[For a tree on every field boundary](#)” (Oct. 16), sheds light on the importance of tree-based farming in mitigating greenhouse gases and climate change for which solutions are being widely debated on the world stage. It will be a win-win situation for every person who is involved in agroforestry as it has multidimensional benefits.

The burden cannot rest entirely on the farmer for taking up agroforestry as it involves an element of risk; farmers in India already face a grim situation due to various factors. While taking up agroforestry, a farmer needs technological support, access to credit, political support and, primarily, the support of his community.

India has a meagre percentage of land area with tree cover (as different from forest cover) which should be increased. Agroforestry would be a simple and innovative way to deal with the problems arising due to anthropogenic activities and unforeseen weather events.

West Bengal gets its first hybrid solar micro cold storage facility



A new hybrid solar micro cold storage facility where farmers can store and preserve their agri-horticultural produce has come up in Nadia, West Bengal. Picture for representational purpose only. File Photo: P.V. Sivakumar

Nadia has become the first district in West Bengal to have hybrid solar micro cold storage facility where farmers can store and preserve their agri-horticultural produce.

For the want of a storage solution, most small farmers had to sell their produce at very low prices right after the harvest as cold storages can be afforded only by big farmers and middle-men. It is estimated that more than 30 per cent of the agri-horticulture produce are wasted in the absence of facilities to store and preserve them.

The hybrid solar micro cold storage is a project being implemented by a city-based company "Switch ON" with support from GIZ IGEN-RE, under an Indo-German initiative.

The facility will go a long way in solving problems faced by small and marginal farmers in preserving their produce and can store the perishable produce for seven to 10 days with a maximum capacity of nine tonnes using low cost technology.

'First-of-its-kind'

“This project is first-of-its-kind, that will help build a sustainable and resilient farming community. Upon the success of this pilot project, we will scale up this solution across West Bengal, Odisha and Jharkhand – areas where we are currently operating,” Suman Paul, the project coordinator, said. The farmers will be charged Re one per kg per week while the cost of the solar cold storage is Rs six lakh.

The cold storages will be operated by 'ON Farm', a farmer-producer company run and managed by local farmers. 'Switch ON' is supporting 'ON Farm' to manage their own supply chain operations eliminating middlemen and thereby increasing their profits.

Ekta Jaju of Switch ON said, “These are encapsulated by a structure built with natural material, inspired from Dochala, a two-sided sloped roof prevalent in Bengal in the 1860's.PTI

Officials told to expedite work on Holalur lift irrigation project

The scheme was scheduled to be completed by March 2010



Kalagodu Ratnakar (second from left), president of the Shimoga Zilla Panchayat, at the progress review meeting in Shimoga on Thursday.— Photo: VAIDYA

Kalagodu Ratnakar, president of Shimoga Zilla Panchayat, has directed the Department of Water Resources to ensure expeditious completion of the work related to Holalur lift irrigation project.

Mr. Ratnakar was speaking at a meeting here on Thursday to review the progress of the implementation of works related to the Karnataka Development Programmes.

Launched in February 2008, the Rs. 8.74-crore Holalur lift irrigation project was designed to feed the tanks in Haramaghatta, Kommanalu and Suttukote villages by lifting the water from Tungabhadra river. As per the terms of the contract, the project should have been completed by March 2010.

Gayatri Shanmukhappa, vice-president of the zilla panchayat, said that 1,042 acres of land would be irrigated with the completion of the project. Besides, the project will address the drinking water problems of Haramaghatta, Kommanalu and Suttukote villages.

Ms. Shanmukhappa said that she would stage a protest in the city with farmers of these villages against the delay in completing the work.

Rajashekharappa, Assistant Executive Engineer of the Department of Water Resources, told the meeting that permission from the Mangalore Electricity Supply Company (Mescom) had been sought to install motors for lifting the water from the river.

The work on the first phase of the project would be completed within a month, he said. Mr. Ratnakar said that he had received complaints that the Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) was supplying low quality milk powder to government schools under the Ksheera Bhagya scheme.

The KMF officials said that to meet the demand for Ksheera Bhagya scheme, the federation was getting the milk it procured from farmers powdered at some private dairies also.

The KMF would direct the private dairies to ensure that the milk powder prepared by them was consistent with the federation's standards, they said.

Ansar Ali Beig, nodal officer of the Ksheera Bhagya scheme, alleged that even the packing of milk powder supplied to schools was of poor quality. B. Ramu, Chief Executive Officer of the zilla panchayat, directed the KMF officials not to get the milk powdered at private dairies that did not meet the stipulated standards.

President of Standing Committee on Education and Health S. Kumar and president of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Industries H.L. Shadakshari were present.

· *Once completed, the project will meet irrigation needs of 1,042 acres of land in three villages*

· *'Permission sought from Mescom for installation of motors for lifting water from Tungabhadra river'*

Rain in Nagapattinam

Heavy rain lashed Nagapattinam district for the past two days.

An increase in water release from the Vennar division would be helpful to farmers for saving water-starved transplanted paddy crop.

INDIAN CITIES

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Rain: 0

Humidity: 79

Wind: normal

Tomorrow's Forecast

Friday, Oct 17



Cloudy

Max

30°

Min

26°

Saturday, Oct 18

Max

34°

Min

26°

Sunrise: 05:59

Sunset: 05:49

Barometer: 1012

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday

Oct 19



33° | 26°

Cloudy

Monday

Oct 20



33° | 26°

Partly Cloudy

Tuesday

Oct 21



34° | 26°

Partly Cloudy

Wednesday

Oct 22



34° | 26°

Sunny

Thursday

Oct 23

34° | 26°

Sunny

DECCAN Chronicle

Rift widens over Tungabhadra waters



All the gates of the Tungabhadra reservoir were opened due to heavy inflows at Hospet in Karnatak (Photo: DC)

Anantapur: Inadequate water allocation from Tungabhadra reservoir at Hospet in Karnataka towards the High Level Main Canal (HLMC) has become the bone of contention between MLAs from Anantapur and Kadapa district.

Increased silt in the reservoir has reduced water allocations for Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. About 22.75 TMC ft has been allocated for the present year based on available sources on damasha basis.

To add to woes, the dilapidated condition of main canal on the 100 km stretch from the reservoir to the state makes it difficult to

distribute the allocated quota towards AP. Official sources say, that although 3,000-3,500 cusecs of water is released from the reservoir point, the state receives only about 1,500 cusecs due to loss of water as a result of breaches and tapping by the farmers in Karnataka.

Breaches in the Handri Neeva Sujala Shравanthi canal from Malyal in Kurnool district towards Jeedipalli in Anantapur district further reduces the force from Krishna backwaters.

HNSS water is diverted to Penna Ahobilum Balancing Reservoir (PABR) from where Anantapur and Kadapa districts get water through branch canals.

The HLMC irrigation officials are having a tough time dealing with MLAs threatening for priority in water allocations to their constituencies. Civil supplies minister P. Sunitha plans to release PABR water to Peruru reservoir in Ramagiri mandal in her constituency, while Tadipatri MLA J. C. Prabhakar Reddy is mounting pressure on officials to release allocated quota to Chagallu reservoir.

Further, YSRC leader Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is pressurising irrigation authorities to release full quota to Pulivenudla Branch Canal before releasing water to other parts of Anantapur district. PBC is located at the tailend of HLMC.

Irrigation authorities have decided to release water to 49 tanks in various parts of the district from PABR on October 20. Nearly, 1.5

TMC ft has been allocated for the purpose to meet drinking water requirements of the villages and urban areas.

THE HINDU BusinessLine

Non-ratification of treaty to curb tobacco could affect economy'

Hyderabad, October 16: India stands to lose 38 million jobs and revenue worth Rs. 21,000 crore due to non-ratification of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), which envisages curbing production, sale, distribution, advertisement, and taxation of tobacco. The treaty is meant to end tobacco cultivation world-wide since it is seen as a major health hazard.

The non-ratification will affect collection of revenues by way of exports and excise duty, says a study jointly done by the Assocham and Thought Arbitrage Research Institute (TARI). The non-ratification will lead to trade disputes and smuggling, thereby

threatening millions of jobs and will result in lower taxes, duties and foreign exchange which comes through exports, says the study.

Tobacco contributes over Rs. 21,000 crore to the economy through foreign exchange earnings and internal excise revenue, and accounts for about 10 per cent of total agricultural exports from India.

“A multi-pronged strategy of diversification is likely to be more effective than the legislation to control tobacco as its cultivation is a lifeline for a sizeable population including rural women, tribals and other weaker sections of the society, who have few means of alternative income opportunities,” said DS Rawat, national secretary general of the chamber and Kaushik Dutta, Founder, TARI at a media conference here on Thursday.

Contributing nearly 52 per cent of India’s total tobacco production, Andhra Pradesh makes up about 45 per cent of the area under tobacco cultivation, and it is largely concentrated in East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur, Prakasam, Nellore and Karimnagar districts.

Tea prices drop at Kochi sale

Kochi, October 16: Despite low arrivals, prices at Kochi tea auction continue to slide this week with prices of several varieties quoting lower.

With a fair demand, the quantity on offer in CTC dust grades was low at 10,71,000 kg.

In sale no 42, the market for select best liquoring teas barely remained steady while others were lower by Rs. 5-10 a kg.

In the best quotation for Cochin CTC dusts, good varieties fetched Rs. 90-141, medium grades ruled at Rs.70-90 and plain quoted at Rs. 55-65.

The market for Nilgiri Whole Leaf and Brokens was steady to firm and sometimes dearer.

Corresponding Fannings was lower. CIS countries were active along with traditional exporters.

The quantity on offer in CTC leaf was also low at 71,000 kg and the market for Select Best Bolder Brokens was steady.

In the dust category, Manjolai SFD quoted the best prices of Rs. 148.

In leaf grades, Chamraj Green Tea FOP (sup) fetched the best prices of Rs. 341 .

Don't snuff us out while framing policies, say Karnataka tobacco growers

Bangalore October 16:

Rattled over the move to restrict the cultivation of tobacco, growers in Karnataka have urged the Government to protect their interests while formulating policies.

In the southern Karnataka districts of Mysore, Hassan and Chamrajnagar, an estimated one lakh growers are engaged in cultivating tobacco under rain-fed condition on around 1.25 lakh hectares. The light soil in the region makes it unviable for them to grow alternative crops, they said.

“The cultivation and marketing of flue cured virginia (FCV) tobacco is entirely regulated by the Tobacco Board,” said Vikram Raj Urs, Secretary, Federation of Karnataka Virginia Tobacco Growers Association.

Karnataka produces about 100 million kg (mkg) of tobacco, while total production in the country is estimated at 800 mkg. Of this, about 500 mkg is unregulated mainly in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat.

Javare Gowda, President of the Federation, said that only 15 per cent of the tobacco is used by the cigarette industry, while the rest is consumed in different forms.

The current policies are indirectly leading to large scale smuggling of cigarettes, causing loss to the Government as well as farmers by reducing the demand for locally grown tobacco.

Heavy rain forecast for Kerala, Tamil Nadu & Puducherry

Thiruvananthapuram, October 16: A cyclonic circulation has shot up in the upper air over south-west Bay of Bengal off the Sri Lanka coast, which could help pull in the North-East monsoon over peninsular India.

A trough of lower pressure (not amounting low-pressure area) has formed upstream over the Andaman Sea, confirming the build-up.

Cyclonic whirl

Additionally, a land-based cyclonic circulation has been persisting over interior Tamil Nadu and Karnataka over the past couple of days.

These have prompted India Met Department to forecast heavy rainfall for coastal Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala during the next three days.

Satellite imagery on Thursday afternoon showed convective (rain-causing) clouds rising above Kerala, Tamil Nadu, south Bay of Bengal, south Andaman Sea and south-east Arabian Sea. An extended outlook for the four days until October 23 said that rain or thundershowers would continue to break out at many places over South.

Exit process

In this manner, the platform is being set for the north-easterly to easterly winds gather in strength to precipitate North-East monsoon during the usual October 15-20 timeline.

The exit of South-West monsoon is also expected to be completed by that time, though the withdrawal line remained stuck in east India due to lingering moisture from erstwhile cyclone Hudhud.

During the last 24 hours, moderate to heavy rainfall lashed most places in Kerala. Many places in Tamil Nadu also witnessed rain or thundershowers. Meanwhile, an outlook by the US Climate Prediction Centre did not show any major pick up in rainfall over south India during the week beginning Thursday.

US forecast

In fact, south coastal Andhra Pradesh and parts of adjoining Chennai may not get their normal quota of showers during this week. Excess rain is shown to concentrate over Sri Lanka to the south.

The picture doesn't change drastically the following week. The rains would be in deficit not just over Chennai but also entire peninsula except interior Tamil Nadu, central and northern Kerala. According to the US forecaster, this phase would last until October 29. South India's loss will be Sri Lanka's gain, in terms of excess rain being forecast for the island nation.

To the north of India, transiting western disturbances are forecast to drop some rain during the next week, according to the US National Centre for Environmental Prediction.

Outlook turns bleak for palm oil

Despite arrival of kharif oilseeds, downside seen limited



Mumbai, October 16: Palm oil prices are once again under pressure with rising production, expanding inventory at the origins and slowing demand in major consuming markets.

Rivalry between two of the world's leading producer-exporters – Indonesia and Malaysia – to retain market share through competitive and often retaliatory tariff reduction has exacerbated the situation even as falling crude oil (mineral oil) prices make diversion of palm oil for biodiesel less-viable.

Higher output

Despite market-moving noises over dry weather conditions earlier this year, Malaysian palm oil production is set to be higher than initial expectation and is set to exceed 20 million tonnes (mt) this year. The USDA has forecast Malaysian production at 20.2 mt for 2013-14 and 21.3 mt in 2014-15.

The peak production season that started in April will possibly spill over into November.

Slack demand

Market observers are now convinced that the keenly-watched Malaysian palm oil inventory, a key market driver, may well touch 2.5 mt, levels last seen in 2012.

Falling global vegetable oil prices, under the lead of soyabean oil, is pulling the entire vegoil complex down.

Palm oil's rising inventory is coinciding with the harvest of bumper soyabean crop in the US followed by an anticipated large crop in South America.

No wonder, the price spread of palm oil with other oils has narrowed to \$70 a tonne making palm oil less attractive.

But this is not all. The demand side is not looking energetic. Demand from the biodiesel segment is weakening as crude (mineral oil) prices have drifted, testing \$80 a barrel, affecting biodiesel economics.

Demand in China, arguably the world's largest importer, is weakening. So, considering the supply-demand fundamentals, on current reckoning, the outlook for palm oil is weak.

Prices are unlikely to recover sharply from the present levels. If anything, palm oil prices will have to weaken further so as not to lose market share in the near-term.

The market would continue to hover around MYR 2,000-2,100 a tonne with extremely limited upside until the huge stocks are worked off. However, some market participants are hopeful that demand will pick up momentum.

They point out that China's stocks are low at about 600,000 tonnes while India would need to continue to import about 800,000 tonnes every month given the dwindling pipeline stocks.

But it is important to remember that India's festival season is coming to an end and domestic oil will start to flow soon. R Ramamoorthy of AR Enterprises, a trade intermediary, summed up the situation saying, "the worst may be over for the palm oil market; while prices may not run up sharply, the downside is rather limited."