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THE HINDU

Ramasamy back as TNAU VC

Prof. K. Ramasamy on Tuesday assumed office as the 12th Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) for the second term for a period of three years, a release from the University said. Mr. Ramasamy's previous tenure as V-C came to an end on August 26. A search panel was constituted by the Governor which was headed by former Vigilance Commissioner Vedanayagam and the panel received applications till October 12. Meanwhile, the Governor recently re-appointed Mr. Ramasamy as the VC for another term.

- Special Correspondent

Commodity prices

Potato prices have crashed in the past year. High inventory on the back of overproduction last season has pulled prices lower. In Chennai, potatoes are currently sold at ₹24 per kg, down 40 per cent from ₹40 per kg at which they sold last year. The prices are also down about 14 per cent from ₹28 per kg last week

Here are the prices of various commodities in Chennai.

Price scale is given as Rs./kg

Commodity	Quantity	Now	Year ago
Rice	1 kg	28	30
Wheat	1 kg	34	32
Atta	1 kg	30	34
Gram Dal	1 kg	72	49

Commodity	Quantity	Now	Year ago
Tur Dal	1 kg	165	83
Urad Dal	1 kg	183	86
Moong Dal	1 kg	120	100
Masoor Dal	1 kg	100	80
Sugar	1 kg	32	34
Milk	1 ltr	37	37
Ground Nut Oil	1 ltr	126	104
Sun flower Oil	1 ltr	93	85
Gur (Jaggery)	1 kg	50	50
Tea	1 kg	220	220
Salt	1 kg	18	17
Lime	1 kg	60	60
Apple	1 kg	140	140
Papaya	1 kg	30	25
Pineapple	1 kg	50	40
Pomegranate	1 kg	160	120

Commodity	Quantity	Now	Year ago
Sapota	1 kg	40	40
Banana	1 kg	30	32
Bitter Gourd	1 kg	32	50
Brinjal	1 kg	36	50
Cabbage	1 kg	22	20
Cauli Flower	1 kg	50	50
Garlic	1 kg	140	120
Ginger	1 kg	90	120
Chilly	1 kg	32	32
Onion	1 kg	44	32
Potato	1 kg	24	40
Tomato	1 kg	66	20

*Source: Ministry of Consumer Affairs, National Horticulture Board.

Shift to integrated farming and earn Rs. 40,000 per month

The demonstration plot of the Integrated farming system model in UAS-B in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

UAS-B to showcase integrated farming models' demonstration plots to instil confidence among farmers at Krishi Mela

It is possible to earn around Rs. 35,000 to Rs. 40,000 a month from just one hectare (two and half acres) of farm land with a borewell through the integrated farming system, according to on-field experiments of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru (UAS-B).



Based on its experiments over the years, the university has developed an integrated farming system model, which ensures an average income of up to Rs. 40,000 a month from one hectare of irrigated land, and Rs. 10,000 to 15,000 a month from the rain-fed land.

The UAS-B has decided to instil confidence among farmers in distress by showcasing its integrated farming system model at its annual Krishi Mela to be held on its campus in Bengaluru from November 19 to 22.

Nagaraju, who has worked on these models, explains that efficient utilisation of resources and analysing the market trends was the key to success of these models. Under this, the total plot of 2.5 acres is divided into five components earmarked for growing food crops, commercial crops, ornamental flowers, etc.

The dry-land model has a farm pond to harvest rain water which is used during kharif for growing short-duration vegetables.

UAS-B Vice-Chancellor H. Shivanna said demonstration plots of integrated farming system models would be set up in all the seven Krishi Vigyan Kendras spread across 10 districts coming under the jurisdiction of the university to create awareness among farmers about sustainable agricultural practices.

The Krishi Mela will have a total of 600 stalls.

This is sweet news for those who love sour tamarinds. The University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru, will release a high-yielding variety of tamarind which gives two to four-fold yield than the normal varieties, during the Krishi Mela to be held from November 19 to 22.

Announcing this on Tuesday, UAS-B Vice-Chancellor H. Shivanna and Research Director K.P. Vishwanatha said the 10-year-old tree of the new variety titled GKVK-17 would give an average yield of 101 kg.

The university will also release a high-yielding and drought-tolerant variety of groundnut titled GKVK-5 and rust-resistant food cowpea titled MFC-08-14.

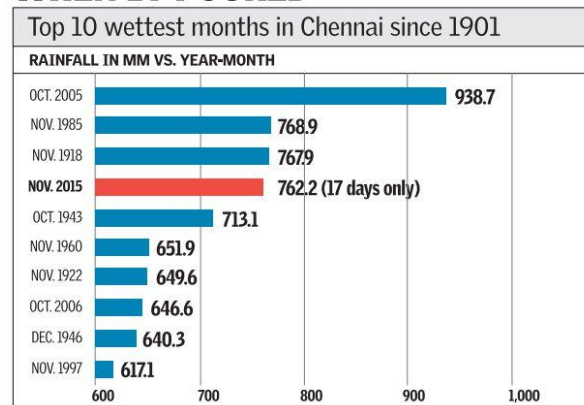
Even as the stage is set for hosting the four-day Krishi Mela from November 19, the UAS-B is looking at skies and keeping its fingers crossed as the rains may play spoilsport for the annual mega farm event.

Agriculture scientists are concerned as the crop demonstration fields have become slushy. But the university has no other option except to go ahead with the Mela as most of the stalls have already been set up. Any change in schedule will not only result in additional expenses, but also involves the complicated exercise of taking all the participants, especially those who have put up the stalls, into confidence.

The only hope for the university is that the weather forecast indicates that the rains triggered by depression over the Bay of Bengal may either reduce or end from now onwards.

Moderate showers expected in Chennai

WHEN IT POURED



Data provided by Srinivasan Ramani

Surplus water from two reservoirs continue to be discharged.

Respite from rain may continue for two more days for city residents. Even if rain returns, it is not likely to be as intense as it was on Sunday.

The well-marked low-pressure area over south Andhra Pradesh and adjoining north Tamil Nadu coast is likely to bring scattered rain over Tamil Nadu. However, the Tiruvallur district is likely to experience heavy rain for two days, said S.R. Ramanan, director, Area Cyclone Warning Centre, Chennai.

Chennai may get light-to-moderate rain in some areas till Thursday.

Authorities have declared a holiday for schools and colleges in Chennai, Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram districts on Wednesday owing to rain.

Meanwhile, Adyar and Kosasthalaiyar rivers are carrying surplus water to their brim for the second day. The discharge from the Poondi reservoir into Kosasthalaiyar river has been increased as the waterbody continues to receive an inflow of 11,000 cubic ft per second. One cusec is equal to 28.3 litres.

Officials of the Water Resources Department said as the water level has to be maintained at 139 ft against the capacity of 140 ft, surplus water has to be discharged. The surplus course now carries over 19,500 cusecs.

This has led to flooding of areas along the river even at the tail end of the river such as Manali New Town. Many of them complained that they were not aware of the flood alert. D. Chandramouli, a resident, said houses were submerged under two ft of water within a few hours after the floodgates of the Poondi reservoir were opened.

Similarly, the Chembarambakkam reservoir is also receiving a heavy inflow of 9,300 cusecs and about 10,000 cusecs is being let into the Adyar river on Tuesday as well.

“The inflows are gradually decreasing. But, we will decide on closing the floodgates only on Wednesday, depending on the rain and inflow from catchment areas,” said an official.

A fleet of mobile science exhibition buses

National Council of Science Museums (NSCM) celebrated golden jubilee of its Mobile Science Exhibition (MSE) programme here in Kolkata with an exhibition of largest number of MSE buses in recent times.

NSCM has put on display 20 of its 23 MSE buses at Science City in Kolkata. The exhibition will continue till November 19.

Each vehicle showcased interesting information on different aspects of science such as rocket science, mathematical sciences, environment sciences, biological sciences and agriculture.

Stressing the novelty of the exhibition, NCSM Director G.S. Rautela, on the inauguration day stated: “It is not a mean feat that the buses with accompanying educators visit 20 lakh rural children each year.” The exhibition was flagged off by Manish Gupta, Minister, and Department of Power Government of West Bengal.

A film titled ‘Fifty Golden Years of Mobile Science Exhibition: Reaching Out to Rural India’, was also released on this occasion.

On November 19, 15 of the 20 buses will go to Ramakrishna Mission School Narendrapur from where 50 years ago the first Mobile Science Exhibition bus was launched.

Tea Board partners with IIT on technology

The Tea Board of India has collaborated with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur to develop technology that will help the industry cut energy costs and produce better teas.

The prototype of the machines incorporating the new technology is currently under field-trials at one tea estate each in the North and the South. Patents have also been applied for the new technology.

The tie-up comes at a time when the tea industry's margins are getting squeezed due to high costs and reduced earnings and should aid in fetching better prices for the brew.

This marks the completion of a 11 {+t} {+h} plan project awarded by the Tea Board to the IIT Kharagpur," an official connected with the developments, who did not wish to be named, told *The Hindu*.

The machinery, called 'circular withering trough' "has already completed field trials at the Tea Research Centre at Nagrakatta, West Bengal and is now undergoing commercial trials at a tea estate in the Darjeeling foothills of a reputed tea company."

Tea prices have remained depressed for most of 2015 even as cost of production has increased , creating a distress situation for workers in many tea gardens in West Bengal. The gardens in Assam have seen crop loss but prices rule higher as the teas are better quality than that of West Bengal.

The Indian Tea Association, the apex industry body for North Indian producers, admitted that many gardens were paying daily cash wages which were lower than the Rs.122.5 agreed upon at the last Tripartite Agreement in West Bengal.

About 80 per cent of the costs are fixed, with labour constituting 50 per cent of total production cost, making the industry clamour for means of mechanisation.

An official at the Tea Research Association, an industry funded research body admitted that the existing tea-processing technology was about 60 years old and there was scope for improving it to enhance efficiencies.

The tie-up, which comes at a time when the tea industry's margins are getting squeezed due to high costs and reduced earnings, should aid in fetching better prices for the brew

Southern rain pushing up onion, tomato prices, says Centre

Already facing flak for the high prices of pulses —red gram (*tur*) and black gram (*urad*) — the government on Tuesday moved for damage control on the steadily rising prices of onions and tomatoes in the retail market, saying the the increases were “temporary.”

To review the situation, the Cabinet Secretary has convened a meeting of senior officials of concerned departments on Wednesday. The meeting will look into the pulses de-hoarding operations by States and the procurement of fresh arrivals to ensure a buffer stock.

While the price of onions in the retail markets has shot up to Rs. 40 per kg, tomatoes are priced around Rs. 60 per kg in Delhi's markets.

It is expected that with the arrival of the new crop and improved weather conditions in south India, normal supplies will be resumed and prices will moderate.

“Marginal increase in the prices of onions and tomatoes in the past week is largely due to disruption of supplies from the southern States which have witnessed severe, unprecedented rainfall over the last one week. These

increases are expected to be temporary and normal supplies should resume soon,” an official press note said on Tuesday.

The government is working closely with States to ensure that quick action is taken to prevent any abnormal increase in prices and to ensure adequate availability of essential commodities, official sources said.

Rs. 20,040-crore crop loan given to 45 lakh farmers

Cooperative Week celebrations held



Students presenting cultural programmes at the Cooperative Week celebration in Palayamkottai on Monday.— Photo: A. SHAIKMOHIDEEN

The cooperative banks across the State had given crop loan to the tune of Rs. 20,040 crore to 45 lakh farmers with the objective of saving agriculturists from falling prey to moneylenders, Minister for Cooperation Sellur K. Raju said.

Participating in the Cooperative Week celebrations held at Palayamkottai on Monday night, Mr. Raju said the State Government was according highest priority to protect the welfare of farmers and was keen on saving them from falling into debt trap by getting loans from moneylenders.

Farmers' welfare

Hence, cooperative societies across the State were being encouraged to give loans liberally to farmers so that they would not be left at the mercy of the moneylenders.


While over 45 lakh farmers had been given crop loan to the tune of Rs. 20,040 crore through cooperative banks, 28,710 differently-abled persons had been given assistance to the tune of Rs. 98.95 crore for starting their business ventures, he said.

Collector M. Karunakaran, MPs S. Muthukaruppan, K.R.P. Prabhakaran, Vijila Sathyananth, Mayor E. Bhuvaneshwari, MLA S. Muthuselvi, Deputy Mayor P. Ganesan alias Jeganathan, vice-chairman of cooperative societies Thatchai N. Ganesh Raja and others participated in the Cooperative Week celebrations.

State Government according highest priority to protect the welfare of farmers: Minister for Cooperation

Vegetable prices shoot up

TOO HOT



Vegetable	(Price in rupees)	
	on Tuesday (a kg)	last week (a kg)
Tomato	50	40
Beans	94	40
Onion	54	40
Small onion	40 - 50	40
Lady's finger	32	20
Drumstick	90	55
Beetroot	46	30
Potato	36	28

he price of vegetables has shot up in the last few days across the district because of widespread crop loss in the rain.

Markets in the districts have recorded a steep fall in the arrival of vegetables. Even in the 11 Uzhavar Santhais in the district too, the vegetables prices have registered an upward trend much to the concern of the consumers.

The price of tomato has shot up to Rs. 60 a kg in the uzhavar santhais in the district on Tuesday, compared to Rs. 30 last week. The onion, which was selling at Rs. 44 a kg is at present priced at Rs. 54, and the small onions Rs. 50 a kg compared to Rs. 40 last week.

The price of beans has touched an all time high of Rs. 94 a kg, compared to Rs. 40 last week.

The carrot has been priced at Rs. 46 (Rs. 33 last week); brinjal at Rs. 34 – Rs. 40 (Rs. 20); potato Rs. 36 (Rs. 28); Lady's finger Rs. 32 (Rs. 21); drumstick Rs. 90 (Rs. 55); beetroot Rs. 46 (Rs, 30); ridge gourd Rs. 24 (Rs. 18).

Even though the tomato is priced at Rs. 50 in the Uzhavar Santhais, it was sold at a price as high as Rs. 80 a kg in the open markets in the district.

Mecheri in Salem district, and Hosur and Royakottai in Krishngiri district, and Palacode in Dharmapuri are the major tomato growing centres in the western districts. Tomato is usually raised in about 20,000 acres in Dharmapuri and another 15,000 acres in Krishnagiri district.

About 5,000 grades, each grade comprising 25 kgs, used to arrive at the Royakottai market every day.

Now it has got reduced to 50 grades a day. In Palacode market, a 15 kg box of tomato is being sold at Rs. 750.

With the commencement of Sabarimalai season, when the devotees are expected to eat only vegetarian food, there is going to be more demand for the vegetables, further leading to the rise in prices in the next few days.

In Thammampatti town and its surrounding villages such as Sentharapatti, Gangavalli, and Koodamalai, the standing crops have been badly hit.

Well-stocked granaries may help hold rice price line, says trade body

Despite a deficient monsoon, Punjab and Haryana, the States that contribute the highest quantity of rice and wheat, have surpassed last year's purchase of paddy.

Amid concern that the price of rice may be next to shoot up after those of pulses and onion, trade bodies put forth divergent views.

V.S. Sethia, former president and currently a governing council member of the All-India Rice Export Association, told *The Hindu* that apprehensions of a sharp rise in rice price were baseless as ample stock of regular (non-basmati) varieties were available.

"I see no reason price of rice would increase in the open market in the near future. During the current kharif marketing season, State government agencies and the Food Corporation of India have procured far more rice than last year," Mr. Sethia said.

Despite a deficient monsoon, Punjab and Haryana, the States that contribute the highest quantity of rice and wheat to the central pool, have till now procured over 182 lakh tonnes of rice, surpassing last year's purchase.

In Punjab, paddy procurement has crossed 130 lakh tonnes from last year's 118 lakh tonnes, say Food and Supplies Department officials. In Haryana, over 52 lakh tonnes has been procured, up from 38.31 lakh tonnes during the corresponding period last year.

A study recently released by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India cautioned that rice prices may soon soar with stocks dwindling as a fallout of the deficient monsoon and a drop in output.

“Prices of rice may shoot up to reach a boiling point in the coming months as the stocks of the staple cereal are depleting fast, owing to deficient rain and fall in output,” Assocham said in a statement.

The study, titled “Impact of weak/deficient monsoon on agricultural production and prices,” said: “Increasing export outgo on account of PDS [public distribution system] and other welfare schemes will continue to weigh on availability in the open market. Unless the government is able to handle the situation prudently, depleting stocks will soon reflect on the open market prices.”

The study said the deficient monsoon this year was likely to slow down the economy considerably and accentuate inflationary pressure, coupled with a shortage of essential food items.

But an Assocham study has warned of an increase in prices

Price fall hits areca nut farmers



De-husked tender areca nut brought to the Kalpetta market by a farmer.

A sharp decline in price and dearth of processing centres have hit areca nut farmers in Wayanad district.

The spot price for tender areca nut at the Kalpetta market on Tuesday was Rs.79 a kg as against the Rs.98 a kg a few weeks ago. It was Rs.102 a kg during the corresponding period last year.

Close to 10 areca nut processing centres had functioned in the Meenangadi area alone a decades ago but they were closed owing to pollution-related issues. Now the produce from the district is sent to the areca nut processing units in various parts of Karnataka.

But those centres could not process the produce owing to heavy rain there, leading to a sudden decline in the price of the produce, trading sources said. It was expected that the price of the produce might improve after a few days, they said.

The farmers here prefer to harvest the areca nut in its tender stage to keep the quality of the produce. Red areca nut is a major ingredient of pan masala. As diseases such as yellow leaf, a viral disease, and nut rot or Mahali disease, a fungal disease, are very low this year owing to the dearth of monsoon, we are expecting a better production this year, farmers said.

But the uncertainty in the price and increasing input costs put the farmers in a fix. Many a time the traders were consciously slashing the price of the produce as the de-husked tender areca nut could not be kept for more than 24 hours, farmers said. The dearth of skilled workers for the purpose was another issue.

According to the data available with the Agriculture Department, the areca nut cultivation is spread over 12,730 hectares in the district.

Crops withering due to scanty rain

Red gram, sown in many taluks in Kalaburagi, showing stunted growth due to the scarcity of rain.— Photo: Arun Kulkarni

Severe drought conditions continue to haunt farmers in Kalaburagi district and those, whose crops failed during the kharif season, are facing uncertainty, with the rabi crops withering due to the scanty rainfall.

The southern districts of Karnataka received copious rainfall in the past fortnight bringing much-needed relief to farmers who could now salvage something from the sown crop.

But those in Hyderabad Karnataka did not receive rain in the past fortnight leading to moisture stress in almost all taluks.



Rain needed

Agriculture Department officials told *The Hindu* here on Tuesday that to save the standing crops farmers need at least one good spell of rain to improve moisture conditions in the soil.

If the district received 65 per cent deficit rainfall in October, in November the shortfall, until now, was 99 per cent. Red gram, known for its drought-resistant quality, has survived the harsh climatic conditions and the failure of rain, but the growth of the crop is stunted and the branching out of the individual plant had not taken place and even the flowering is very little due to the failure of the rains during the flowering and pod formation in the crop.

Similarly, the situation of bengal gram, the major crop in the rabi season, taken was precarious with stunted growth and low flowering due to the moisture stress.

In few taluks, the crop was even withering due to severe moisture stress.

Even the growth of jowar taken up in more than 1.81 lakh hectares was stunted and officials project a steep drop in the yield.

Paddy in four taluks of Mysuru hit by blast disease

Rain, cloudy weather and excessive use of urea are the key reasons



A team of agriculture scientists examining paddy crop in a field in K.R. Nagar in Mysuru recently.— File PHOTO

Paddy crop in many parts of Mysuru district, including K.R. Nagar which cultivates paddy in a vast area, has been affected by blast disease. The node and neck blast occurred owing to frequent and prolonged periods of rain shower and cloudy weather that has enveloped the district for a few weeks now.

Cloudy weather provides a congenial atmosphere for the growth of blast, sheath blight and neck blast.

According to an estimate prepared by the Agriculture Department, paddy crops in over 21,330 hectares had been affected in K.R. Nagar, Hunsur, T. Narasipur and Nanjangud.

Scientists and senior agriculture officials who visited the fields a few days ago said paddy, which is still in flowering stages, could be saved by spraying insecticides, and crops that have reached maturity stage or have crossed grain-formation stage could not be protected.

The Agriculture Department, soon after noticing the blast disease in Nanjangud and K.R. Nagar, has appealed to the Gandhi Krishi Vignan Kendra (GKVK) in Bengaluru to send a team of scientists to visit paddy fields and give their suggestion to protect the crop.

The GKVK had sent a four-member team including D.K. Siddegowda, CSO-Entomology; M.P. Rajanna, Rice Breeder; C. Ramachandra, Rice Agronomist; and B.S. Chethana, Rice Pathologist, during the first week of October.

The team, after visiting the paddy fields in the four taluks, found that leaf blast had affected the crop in most of the areas in the four taluks.

The team also found that paddy crop in a few areas in K.R. Nagar was affected by caseworm. Different varieties of paddy such as PAC-837, Gangavathi Sona, MTU-1001, Vasundara, Jyothi, Thanu, Super amman, BR2655 have been affected in the four taluks.

The team unanimously agreed that apart from the rain and cloudy weather, the other key reason for the outbreak of blast disease was the excessive application of urea and non-application of potash at the time of planting.

The agriculture scientists also recommended applying certain chemicals to control leaf blast, neck blast, sheath blast and BPH. It also advised farmers

to drain the water from paddy plots once in two to three days and fill it up again. This would help slowdown the multiplication of BPH and sheath blight.

Meanwhile, the Agriculture Department has deputed its officials to the taluks to educate farmers on controlling the disease and protecting the crops. The department has also distributed pamphlets on steps to be taken for protection of the crops.

M. Mahanteshappa, Joint Director of Agriculture, told *The Hindu* that the department had written to the State government a few days ago for a grant of Rs. 15 lakh under the plant protection scheme to distribute insecticides as per the recommendations of the GKVK team. The government has released Rs. 8 lakh a couple of days ago as first instalment and it is expected to release the second instalment of the same amount within the next fortnight.

Fishing activity comes to a halt across Coastal Andhra



The fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea for next 24 hours. Nearly 200 boats operating along the Machilipatnam coast have been anchored at the Gilakaladindi harbour and Nagayalanka.

The fishing activity along the Andhra Pradesh coast has comes to a halt for the past two days, owing to incessant rainfall due to vigorous North East monsoon.

The Visakhapatnam Cyclone Warning Centre authorities on Tuesday warned the fishermen from venturing into sea for fishing. Wind speed is likely to be between 50 kmph and 55 kmph, along and off coastal Andhra Pradesh due to influence of well-marked low-pressure area over Southwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining North Tamil Nadu.

"The fishermen hence have been advised not to venture into the sea for next 24 hours", say weathermen. Nearly 200 boats including mechanised boats operating along the Machilipatnam coast have been anchored at the Gilakaladindi harbour and off the Nagayalanka coast since Sunday.

"The fishing activity has been voluntarily stopped by the fishermen as advised by the weathermen. The boat operators have been advised to stop the fishing activity till Wednesday evening, citing unfavourable weather conditions over the sea", Fisheries Department Deputy Director A. Solman Raju told The Hindu.

He also confirmed that there was no report of missing of any boat along the Machilipatnam coast. On the other hand, repeated spells of rainfall has led to inundation of low-lying areas in Krishna District headquarters Machilipatnam, where 9 cm rainfall was recorded by Tuesday morning.

According to report by the meteorological authorities, highest rainfall of 14 cm in Krishna District was recorded in Avanigadda while Gudivada and Vuyyuru received 10 cm and 6 cm rainfall respectively. However, at least 5 cm rainfall was reported in Vijayawada city.

"The two-day rainfall reported across the Krishna district may have little impact on the standing paddy crop. The standing crop will get damaged if winds continue for the next few days", said Agriculture Department officials.

Threat of disease looms over cotton in Perambalur district

Farm varsity scientists, officials inspect the affected fields



Collector Darez Ahamed inspecting the maize crop at Periyammalayam in Perambalur district on Tuesday.

With reports of disease attacks in cotton and crop lodging in maize, banana and arecanut fields following the spell of northeast monsoon, the district administration has taken up a survey to assess the crop damages.

Cotton crop in Veppathanthattai block and other parts of the district is said to have suffered from parawilt and root rot diseases while lodging (where the crop falls down) is reported in maize, banana and arecanut.

Perambalur is major cotton and maize growing district. Cotton has been raised on about 20,328 hectares of land this year while maize has been raised on 51,250 hectares. This apart, banana has been raised on about 173 hectares and arecanut on 55 hectares. The maize, banana and arecanut crops were felled by strong winds during rain. The maize crop at the milking stage would suffer much damage because of this, they said.

District officials said scientists from the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University along with Agriculture Department officials have inspected the affected fields.

On Tuesday, Collector Darez Ahamed inspected some of the affected cotton and maize fields in Thondapadi and Periyammalayam villages.

He said that already scientists from the Veppanthattai Cotton Research Station of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University along with officials of the Agriculture and Revenue Departments would conduct a survey of the fields.

Dr. Ahamed advised farmers to drain water from the fields immediately. The Agriculture Department has come out with advisories for managing the disease attack in the cotton crop, he said.

The survey is expected to be completed over the next few days and a report forwarded to the government for sanction of relief, district officials added.

Rain causes damage to crops in Salem district

Officials inspecting fields to assess loss suffered by farmers



The widespread rain damaged plantain crop in Pillukurichi area near Edapadi.

The widespread rainfall experienced by the district in the last few days had caused extensive damage to standing crop on 2,161 hectares across the district.

The crop damage had affected as many as 2,535 farmers, according to V. Sampath, District Collector.

The horticulture crops such as plantain raised on 65.73 hectares by 313 farmers too had suffered damages. The revenue, agriculture and horticulture officials have been inspecting the rain damaged fields to assess the loss suffered by the farmers.

Mr. Sampath said that compensation to the tune of Rs. 20.30 lakh had so far been disbursed to people. While Rs. 9.50 lakh had been given to the relatives of three persons who died, Rs. 10.08 lakhs had been disbursed to 235 people whose houses were damaged.

The farmers, who lost their cattle, were provided with a compensation of Rs. 72,000, the Collector said.

Minister for State Highways and Minor Ports Edapadi K. Palanisamy, on Tuesday, inspected the Kumaragiri lake in the Corporation limits. He made enquiries with the officials about the new path and protection fence constructed recently. He inspected the supply channel of the lake and directed the officials to clean and maintain it properly.

He directed the officials to ensure that the water released from the lake should not enter the residential localities and fields.

He also urged people residing in the nearby residential localities not to let the drainage water into the lake.

S. Soundappan, Mayor, V. Panneerselvam, MP, and K. R. Selvaraj, Corporation Commissioner, accompanied the Minister.

The Minister also inspected the rain hit areas in Mettur taluk. He said that of the 30 tanks under the control of PWD and panchayats, four tanks were already overflowing. S. Selvaraj, DRO and S. Aneesh Shekar, Sub-Collector, explained the relief measures undertaken in the taluk.

The heavy downpour received on Sunday night damaged the standing plantain crop in Poolampatti, pillukurichi villages in Edapadi block. Many plantains were totally uprooted.

Bio-fortified rice, food crops to hit market in 2 years

Bio-fortified rice and other food crops will be made available in the market within two years, said V. Ravindra Babu, director, ICAR-Indian Institute of Rice Research. The rice variety developed in IIRR will have zinc and protein content.

The institute is also conducting bio-fortification research on eight other crops including wheat, sorghum and bajra among others. Bio-fortified crops have medical properties and are good for newborns and nursing mothers. He was speaking on the sidelines of a media conference held to announce the dates for International Rice Symposium- 2015 where farmers, academics, researchers and industry experts collaborate and hold dialogues with one another.

Farmers to meet in Moga today

Farmers' unions and organisations will meet here tomorrow to chalk out plans for the next stage of agitation against the Punjab government.

The main demands of farmers include Rs 40,000 per acre compensation to the loss of cotton by the whitefly, Rs 20,000 to farm labourers, Rs five lakh compensation to the families of farmers who committed suicides.

Earlier, the farmer unions had staged 'rail roko' agitation and also gheraoed houses of various Punjab ministers.

Tapioca producers' plea to Chief Minister

Tamil Nadu Tapioca Producers Association, affiliated to All India Kisan Sabha, has sought the intervention of Chief Minister Jayalalithaa for fixing a reasonable price for tapioca. In a communication to Ms. Jayalalithaa, K.A.

Govindasamy, State president of the association, said that about 20 lakh farmers were involved in tapioca cultivation in the State.

The farmers got Rs. 10,000 a tonne during 2013. Last year, they got only Rs. 5,000 a tonne. The farmers of Salem district had been asking the district administration to take steps to convene a meeting to fix a reasonable price for tapioca. A meeting was organised, in which the price was fixed at Rs. 260 per point and Rs. 7,000 a tonne. The sago units and traders, however, were procuring tapioca only for Rs. 3,500 a tonne.

Flower prices too go up

The recent rains and the beginning of the high demand season for flowers in the city have led to a hike in the prices of some of the varieties.

The prices of jasmine, lotus and chrysanthemum (sevanthi) shot up on Tuesday. At the flower market, jasmine sold at anything from Rs. 600 and Rs. 1000 a kg and chrysanthemum cost Rs. 160 a kg as against the normal price range of Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 a kg.

According to D. Ramu of Nithyarubini Flowers, jasmine and chrysanthemum come to Coimbatore market from Sathyamangalam area while roses are from Hosur. The prices depend on arrival and demand.

In rainy and winter months, the quantity of jasmine drops and this results in high prices.

One of the lotus vendors at the flower market in the city said the price of a lotus was Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 on Tuesday. Lotus comes mainly from the Nagarcoil area and only 300 to 400 flowers have been coming each day because of the rains in that area. Usually the number is closer to 2,000 flowers. The hike in the cost of the flowers are seeing customers buying less quantity. Where they normally bought five, they are now buying only two, said Ramu and added that prices are expected to remain high till mid-January.

Kumar, a flower vendor in Ramanathapuram area, says customers prefer to buy strands of kadambam, when the price of jasmine goes up.



Maharashtra seeks Rs 4,002 cr from Centre as drought relief

Overall, the state received only 59.4 per cent of the total anticipated rainfall between June 1 and October 31 with long dry spells.



The government has declared a drought-like condition in 15,747 villages across Maharashtra, mostly in Marathwada and parts of Western Maharashtra, affecting 53.1 lakh hectare area.

WITH parts of the state having suffered a severe drought and crop damage, the Maharashtra government has sought Rs 4,002.82 crore from the Union government as relief package. Besides compensating farmers for crop loss, the government plans to use the money to start schemes to boost drinking water supply and set up fodder camps.

The agriculture department sent a memorandum to the Union government three days ago, seeking Rs 3,578.43 crore as aid for farmers who have suffered crop loss, Rs 314.56 crore for supply of drinking water and Rs 109.83 crore to provide adequate fodder to animals. The government has declared a drought-like condition in 15,747 villages across Maharashtra, mostly in Marathwada and parts of Western Maharashtra, affecting 53.1 lakh hectare area.

Agriculture Minister Eknath Khadse said, “A team of Union government officials is expected to arrive in the state tomorrow to visit all drought-hit villages and assess the situation. The team will start its survey from Aurangabad and wind up its visit in two days.”

After the team’s visit, the Union government will convene a meeting with state officials to take a final decision on the aid, Khadse said, adding that until now the Centre had helped with Rs 570 crore to deal with the drought. Besides, the government has also accessed the State Disaster Relief Fund, apart from levying a surcharge on a range of items such as petrol, diamond and gold jewellery, alcohol, cold drinks and cigarettes in order to tackle the drought.

Overall, the state received only 59.4 per cent of the total anticipated rainfall between June 1 and October 31 with long dry spells. Seven districts received between 25 and 50 per cent of the rainfall and that received in 16 districts was between 50 and 75 per cent of the total expected, as per information from the state agriculture department.

“Over the last five years, the groundwater level has fallen by one metre in 13,571 villages. Of this, in 4,189 villages the groundwater level has dipped to 3 metres below average. There is likely to be an acute shortage of drinking water in 10,615 villages by April 2016,” said Khadse.

Why high-fat diet is bad for your heart

The researchers fed high-fat diet to a group of animals for 12 weeks and saw an increased amount of key proteins that stimulate white blood cells bound to red blood cells, which can lead to clogged arteries.



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Researchers have discovered the negative impact a high-fat diet has on red blood cells and how these cells, in turn, promote the development of cardiovascular disease.

“Obesity caused by chronic consumption of a high-calorie, high-fat diet is a worldwide epidemic, representing one of the greatest threats to global health,” said principal investigator Vladimir Bogdanov, associate professor at University of Cincinnati College of Medicine in the US. “We explored how a high fat-diet causes red blood cell dysfunction in this study,” Bogdanov said.

The researchers fed high-fat diet to a group of animals for 12 weeks and saw an increased amount of key proteins that stimulate white blood cells bound to red blood cells. These white blood cells, also known as macrophages, are a type of white blood cell that “eats” cellular debris, foreign substances, microbes, cancer cells and anything else that does not have the types of proteins specific to the surface of healthy body cells on its surface. They also play a crucial role in clogging of arteries, or atherosclerosis.

“In red blood cells from animal models fed a high-fat diet, there was an increase in cholesterol found in the cell membrane and phosphatidylserine levels, promoting inflammatory reactions. Phosphatidylserine is a phospholipid membrane component which plays a key role in the cycle of cells,” Bogdanov explained.

When red blood cells from the animals being fed the high-fat diet were injected into a control group, eating a normal diet, there was a three-fold increase in their spleens' uptake of red blood cells. The spleen is involved in the removal of blood cells, as well as systemic inflammation. "All of these findings show that the dysfunction of red blood cells, corresponding with dysfunction of the lining of blood vessels, occurs very early in diet-induced obesity and may play a part in the formation of atherosclerosis," Bogdanov noted.



India must work with US to fuel its second green revolution

India is a nation of farmers. While agriculture's contribution to India's GDP has steadily declined from 61% at the time of Independence to under 15% today, it still employs over half of the Indian population and it remains one of the few sectors that has the potential to double India's return on investments. At an investor gathering in New York in June Union finance minister Arun Jaitley emphasised the significance of agriculture as one of the main drivers of India's economic growth.

Since the Green Revolution of the 1960s, India has become much more efficient in food production, especially in food staples such as wheat, rice and pulses. The Green Revolution exemplifies the potential of the India-US agricultural partnership, where American agronomist Norman Borlaug worked with Indian farmers to avert famine using advanced wheat varieties that had the capacity for higher yields. As a result, between 1963 and 1968, India's maximum agricultural yield increased from 360 kg per acre to over 2,700 kg. According to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), in 2014, India was the seventh-largest agricultural exporter, up from 13th-largest a

decade ago. India-US bilateral ties are critical for sustaining this momentum and helping India position itself as the ‘breadbasket of Asia’.

The India-US Business Council’s (USIBC’s) food and agriculture committee will also host a meeting this month with USDA under-secretary for farm and foreign agricultural service Michael Scuse, the highest-ranking member of the USDA to visit India since 2010. It is a sign that after many years of silence on agricultural cooperation, the two countries are ready to build a new partnership. The recently-concluded US-India Trade Policy Forum, which for the first time included a representative from the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, is a testament to both governments’ commitment to solve key issues in the agricultural space.

The seeds of a second green revolution have already been sown to ensure long-term food security for India. For over a decade the USDA has promoted knowledge transfer and exchange, and has sponsored 112 Indian agricultural researchers under fellowships that offer training and collaborative research opportunities.

US companies are partnering the Indian private sector and state governments to lead and support investment and development. Food-processing firms supply potato farmers in Punjab with quality seed varieties, technology and sustainable farming practices to help produce process-grade potatoes that can be packaged and readily consumed. This partnership has been scaled up to collaboration with 24,000 farmers in over nine states.

Whether it is business to business, government to government or business to government, with a consistent level of cooperation, food can be a source of

income and prosperity for India. Besides refuelling the sequel to the Green Revolution, it can also fulfil the mandate of Make in India.

Time is of the essence, as by 2022, India will have to be able to feed the maximum number of people in the world. Borlaug rightly said, “Food is the moral right of all who are born into this world. Without food all other components of social justice are meaningless.” Unless we eradicate hunger and malnutrition from India, the work of the government will not be over.

Climate change: States must focus on risk management in agriculture

This year is turning out to be a milestone year for the world’s future: In September, 192 countries signed the Sustainable Development Goals and on November 30, delegates from 195 countries will converge in Paris for 12 days to hammer out a new global climate accord.

There are several cross-cutting issues between the two mega meets, climate change and agriculture being the two big ones.

It is a no-brainer why the impact of climate change on agriculture is significant: While all economic activities experience hazards from nature, agriculture is one of the riskiest and climate change is becoming a source of significant additional risks for agriculture and food systems. In fact, in the last 40 years, the impact of climate change on agriculture has been significant and going forward, it will increasingly become tougher.

A [World Bank paper](#) says that each degree Celsius of global warming is projected to lead to an overall yield loss of about 5%. As climate change progresses, it is increasingly likely that current systems will no longer be viable in many locations. This is a serious warning for the world,

particularly India, since figures show that the country will have 1.5 billion mouths to feed by 2030.

The World Bank paper rightly advises focusing more on risk management in agriculture. There are already examples of such work: The International Rice Research Institute in collaboration with advanced US research labs, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, state agricultural universities, and the ministry of science and technology's department of biotechnology have spearheaded plant breeding to develop strains of rice that are resistant to effects of climate change, like flash flood, stagnant flooding, salinity, and drought.

Just think how much farmers in Bundelkhand and Maharashtra today would have benefited if they had access to drought-resistant crops. Investing in climate-resilient agriculture has several downstream effects: It can stem migration, improve rural demand and ensure food security. The farmers, however, not only need access to climate-resistant varieties across agrarian products, but such interventions have to reach them before a natural disaster actually strikes.

THE HINDU **BusinessLine**

A rich harvest from organic agriculture

Opportunities in organic agriculture are fast spreading among farmers in Ghana, particularly, in the Northern sector where support from the World Bank, European Union and other international organisations are yielding a positive result and a paradigm shift.

Ghana is doing well in discouraging practices such as bush burning and use of harmful pesticides and herbicides. Farmers have been educated on the harmful nature of chemicals and bush

burning to the environment, and its danger to healthy food production. Even though some considerable feat have been attained, the need to nib harmful practices in the bud is more pressing now as the debate on genetically modified (GM) foods was recently a topical issue in Ghana.



The Coalition for the Advancement of Organic Farming (CAOF) some years back presented an overview of organic farming in Ghana, specifically in the Northern Sector. The verdict, which was given to the government of Ghana pointed out that organic farming is a possible alternative to negative agricultural practices that remain with us.

Farms with specialization

Indeed, the issue of Climate Change and good environmental practices have led to the establishment of many greenhouse agricultural farms with a specialisation in organic farming.

There are currently many such farms which include Contelmall Green Farms in Cantonment, Karat Wells Ghana in North Accra, Corporate Bureau Ltd in Spintex, Ghana Farming Network Ltd in Mamprobi , and Thomsula Limited on the Kasoa-Mallam Road Over the years, many more farms have specialized in the production and export of organic greenhouse vegetables like Roma tomatoes, Chili pepper, and Sweet pepper. To ensure a comprehensive result, we must insist on such farms to employ the latest

humane and environmentally friendly methods in the production of their vegetables to meet both local and international standards or face a ban.

The Ghana Farming Network Ltd (GHAFAN) for instance, has provided expert support in the areas of building fish farm cages and other farming infrastructure, including technical support.

The farm is into the production of tilapia, rabbits, guinea fowls and grasscutters among others for both the local and international (African) markets. The farm grows fingerlings in ponds. The fish are then transferred to cages in the Volta River and other streams and rivers to grow to market size.

Recently, an improved variety of maize known as “Obantapa” was introduced to a farmer group in Yua under the SEISUD FFRP programme. This new variety, according to researchers has little protein component in it. The farmers preferred this variety because it is a medium variety and can improve poultry feed as well. Most of the farmers in the area were also taken through the agronomical practices.

To succeed in the fight against Climate Change, we must make farmers in Ghana aware that organic agriculture can increase agricultural productivity while stabilizing returns, as well as incomes. We must encourage the usage of local technologies which do not harm the environment.

We must further point out that a high demand for organic produce will economically drive local investors into the sector. This could lead to increased income and improved living conditions for the producers and exporters of organic produce.

Various benefits

Farmers must be alerted that the benefits include maintenance and building of soil fertility on land that is often threatened by degradation and erosion, as well as enhancing their socio-economic wellbeing through the purchase of their products.

In addition to these benefits for the environment and farmers, we must encourage consumers that organic produce limits exposure to synthetic insecticides, fungicides and herbicides.

A study by Yaw Bonsi Osei-Asare conducted in 2009 concluded that “consumers are willing to pay a maximum of 20 per cent premium on organic products.”

The government of Ghana must make sure that the processes leading to organic certification are simplified so that organic produce can attract premium prices on the market. The government needs to increase extension services to train and share information about organic farming, its positive effect on the environment, and the fact that it results in healthier foods and farming practices.

Organic agriculture is crucial for environmental sustainability, as well as improving the health of consumers. Other benefits include contributing to employment creation, food security, poverty reduction and health.

We believe that the government, the private sector and development partners can all promote the benefits of organic agriculture to encourage its consumption for the farmer to continue.

Heavy rain belt active over north coastal Andhra Pradesh, Odisha

Coastal Andhra Pradesh and possibly parts of adjoining Odisha are now at the receiving end of thunderstorms emanating from the prevailing well-marked low-pressure area off north Tamil Nadu and south Andhra Pradesh coasts.

Moderate to heavy showers or steady drizzle are being reported from Kakinada, Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam, Puri and Bhubaneswar.

Overnight showers

Bulk of the cloud formation has now moved out into the sea over west-central Bay of Bengal off the north Tamil Nadu and south Andhra Pradesh coasts.

During the last 24 hours ended this (Tuesday) morning, rain or thundershowers occurred over most places in coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema, an India Met Department update said.

Main centres reporting rain (in cm) are: Kavali-16; Nellore-12; Machilipatnam-9; Narsapur and Bapatla-7 each; and Chennai and Tirupathi-6 each.

Play washed out

Meanwhile, the fourth day's play of the second cricket test match between India and South Africa in Bengaluru was washed out as was the case with the earlier three days.

The Met has forecast heavy to very rain at isolated places of coastal Andhra Pradesh and heavy showers at isolated places over Kerala for the rest of today.

Tomorrow, isolated places in coastal Andhra Pradesh are expected to receive heavy showers.

There are no weather warnings for Thursday, Friday and Saturday, the Met added.

Supply woes in rain-hit South put tomato on the boil

Price situation		
Commodity	Retail Price	
	as on Nov 17	1 week ago
Onion	37.52	36.82
Tomato	43.18	35.23
Arhar Dal	151.67	149.91
Urad Dal	141.47	137.06

Source: Food Ministry

After onions, tomatoes are now playing hard to get as prices have almost doubled and are reportedly selling at ₹60-80/kg in some cities.

Reacting to media reports, the Food Ministry on Tuesday cited disruption in supplies from the South due to heavy rains, adding that the arrival of new crops of tomatoes is expected to ease prices soon.

Moderate rise

“Marginal increase in the prices of onions in the past week and in the prices of tomatoes is largely on account of disruption of supplies from the Southern States, which have witnessed severe, unprecedented rainfall over the last one week. These increases are expected to be temporary and normal supplies should resume soon,” a Food Ministry release said.

It said the government was closely monitoring the availability and prices of essential commodities.

“There is a moderate increase in prices during September-December due to demand supply mismatch. The government is working closely with the State governments to ensure that quick action is taken to prevent any abnormal increase in prices and to ensure adequate availability of essential commodities,” it added.

Pulses availability

As regards pulses, the Ministry said strong measures to enhance availability of pulses to moderate prices in the market place continue, adding that a high-level review of the prices of essential commodities and their availability and measures required to be taken is scheduled to be held on Wednesday.

The meeting is also expected to review the progress in procurement of pulses aimed at building a buffer stock.

Chennai must not let down its guard just yet, say weather models



A few global models have suggested that the wet North Tamil Nadu coast should not let down its guard against fickle weather with rain/thundershowers likely to return during the rest of the week.

There is no organised weather system (low-pressure area/depression) in the making, but the threat in the form of remnant thunderstorms from a prevailing well-marked low-pressure area is not yet over.

Remnant storms

Some of these storms have come back to hit northern-most tip of Sri Lanka on Tuesday evening. Some others are seen prowling the South-West Bay of Bengal within striking distance of the Tamil Nadu coast.

There are also fresh cloud formations beginning to consolidate around the Sumatra Island, just to the south of Andaman Sea.

This is exactly the area of genesis of the predecessor ‘low’ that went on to intensify as a well-marked ‘low’ and drench both Sri Lanka and the entire Tamil Nadu coast.

The US Climate Prediction Centre has pointed to the possibility of the stretch between Chennai and Puducherry coming in for a very wet spell during the ongoing week ending on November 22.

The Eastern coast of Sri Lanka too is seen getting a hit while the interior would witness moderate showers. As for Tamil Nadu, the rains are likely to get confined to the coast and its immediate hinterland.

Easterly wave

An experimental storm tracker employed by the US Climate Prediction Centre sees a likely cyclonic circulation (not amounting to a 'low') getting embedded in an easterly wave.

The wave is headed towards Sri Lanka and the South-East coast of Tamil Nadu initially, but thunderstorms getting generated as the wave hits coast may propel towards the North Tamil Nadu coast.

Meanwhile, the India Met Department has forecast rain or thundershowers at many places over South Peninsular India and at a few places over the rest of the peninsula from November 22 to 24.

The 24 hours ending Tuesday morning saw heavy to very heavy rainfall being recorded at a few places over Coastal Andhra Pradesh and isolated over North Tamil Nadu.

Among the major stations recording rain (in cm) were Kavali-16; Nellore-12; Machilipatnam-9; Narsapur and Bapatla-7 each; and Chennai and Tirupathi-6 each.

Drop in coffee price triggers worries among growers

The downward slide in coffee prices ahead of the harvest of the 2015-16 crop has left the Indian growers worried, who feel that the trend would hurt their realisations amidst rising production costs.

“Coffee prices are at a 20-month low. The decline in prices is a cause for worry and concern,” said K Kurian, Chairman, Karnataka Planters Association, ahead of the annual meet of the growers body on Tuesday.

The harvest of arabicas is in progress and has commenced early by a fortnight this year due to the timely arrival of rains. Prices of Arabica parchment are hovering in the range of Rs. 7,500-7,700 per 50-kg bag, lower by about 20 per cent over last year.

While the coffee prices have dropped, the input costs have gone up significantly over the years, thereby hurting the realisations, Kurian said. Besides coffee, prices of other major commodities such as tea and rubber have also witnessed decline triggering worries for the growers. Pepper, grown as an intercrop with coffee, has been the only saving grace for growers.

N Dharmaraj, President of Upasi, said that the decline in coffee and tea prices should not be taken lightly as the prices are highly volatile.

Kurian further demanded that the governments – both Centre and States – share the social and welfare costs incurred by the planters, thereby providing some relief to the growers. An inter ministerial committee had recommended sharing of the social costs by the Centre, State government and Plantations in the ratio of 50:30:20. A joint parliamentary standing committee report has also recommended sharing of social costs.

Further Kurian said that high interest rates, unserviceable and unflexible loans are adding to the challenges faced by growers such as changing weather pattern and low productivity and pest incidence among others.

“We have to seriously increase our productivity of our coffee plantations to be sustainable and remain viable,” Kurian said. High yielding, disease free and drought-tolerant planting material coupled with good agricultural practices including mechanisation of estate operations reducing unnecessary costs are absolute necessary to boost the productivity, he added.

India’s combined productivity is pegged at 799 kg per hectare with arabicas at 564 kg/ha and robusta at 1,011 kg/ha. Vietnam’s robusta productivity stands at 2,188 kg/ha and Brazil’s arabica productivity is 1,257 kg/ha.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

Integrated farming practices aims to increase agricultural produces

Aimed at augmenting agriculture produces and thereby bringing change in the socio-economic condition of farmers as well as residents of rural areas, the agriculture experts associated with district agriculture department along with the Krishi Vikas Kendras (KVKs) under Bihar Agricultural University (BAU) has advocated for integrated farming along with businesslike approach towards agriculture.

Along with integrated farming, the experts also suggested adopting livestock rearing like poultry, quail, goat, cow farming etc for substantial increase in household income of the rural families besides using the fodder and other by-products of agriculture and livestock farming. Involving women and other members for making them economically independent is the nitty-gritty of making the farming sector commercially viable through integrated farming system.

On the other, light on edible 'mushroom' farming was also given by the agriculture experts in a recently concluded training session to the farmers in which more than 200 farmers from 16 blocks of the district were trained on mushroom farming besides pisciculture (fish farming) along with paddy farming.

Integrated Farming is a farm management system, which aims to deliver sustainable agriculture. It is a novel approach that can be applied to any farming system around the world informed management processes, said agriculture experts adding it combines the best of modern tools and technologies with traditional practices according to a given site and situation. In simple words, it means using many ways of cultivation in a small space or land.

Agriculture scientist Dr MZ Hoda said that integration of fish farming with livestock production and farming of agricultural crops, including vegetable farming is based on the concept of an all-round development of agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries and other sideline occupations.

Integrated farming is economically and environmentally rational system to bring both socio-economic changes in the lives of farmers as well as increasing the overall farm produces through same resources and supplements the income of families living rural areas, added Dr Hoda saying it requires skills and methodology in different types of activities under integrated farming.

DECCAN Chronicle

Tamil Nadu to be linked to national drug portal



Chennai: Tamil Nadu will soon be integrated and linked to the national e-governance (national portal) program of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), a regulatory body for Indian pharmaceuticals and medical devices, to introduce transparency.

The linking of the e-governance system, according to sources, will ensure uploading from all states valuable information such as ADR reporting, import-export data, drug distribution data, drug approval data etc., which would all be saved on the national portal. These can be easily accessed by the patients or their relatives.

In its first phase, the CDSCO plans to integrate the e-governance system adopted across various state licensing authorities (SLAs) that are running successfully throughout the country and already a high level meeting with

heads of SLAs Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka and Odisha were held in the national capital recently.

“The major objective of this program is to identify and focus on weaker states that require assistance in adopting successful IT enabled system, by providing them with technical and financial support. In addition, integrating initiative would ensure information is available to the general public through a single window,” an official said.

It has been planned to complete the project within a span of six to nine months. The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) has already commenced the process of evaluating and integrating the process, it is said.