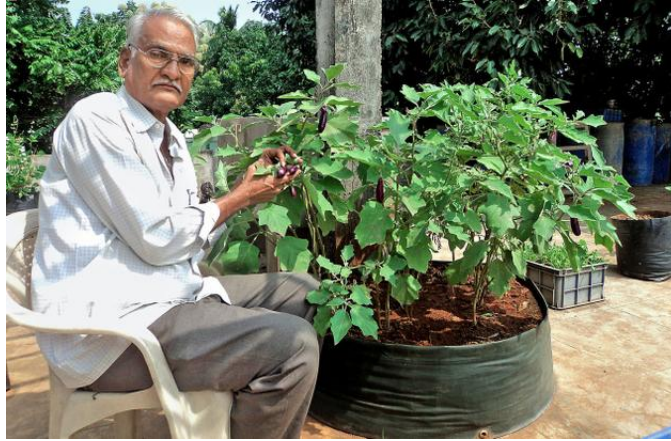


19.11.2015

THE HINDU

Grow vegetables in your backyard or on rooftop



(Above) Suryadevara Paparao growing brinjals on the rooftop of his house at Lakshmipathinagar in Vijayawada. (Below) Dr. U. Venkata Ramana in the backyard of his house at Srinagar Bank Colony in Vijayawada.— Photos: S. Sandeep Kumar



The city may be turning a concrete jungle, but there are still many who cultivate vegetables on rooftops and backyards.

And, the good news is the Horticulture Department is supplying mud, seed, tools and manure on subsidy to those interested, and, as a result, more and more people are taking up backyard farming.

Suryadevara Papa Rao, a retired businessman from Lakshmipathi Colony at Autonagar, is one such person. Though he has been growing mango and coconut in his compound, the idea of cultivating vegetables on rooftop struck him after the Horticulture Department announced the supply of materials at subsidised rates.

For the last six months, he has been cultivating ribbed gourd, lady finger, brinjal, beans and quite a few leafy vegetables, including spinach, on the rooftop. “It fulfils my domestic requirements to a major extent,” Mr. Papa Rao says.

Age has not been a deterrent for him.

“After the Horticulture Department announced the subsidy, it made me think of rooftop farming. After 50 per cent subsidy, all the materials were offered at Rs. 3,000, and it helped me a lot,” he adds. Like him, Dr. U. Venkata Ramana has also been cultivating vegetables at his house in Srinivasanagar Bank Colony for the last couple of months. Hailing from an agriculture family, cultivation was in his blood, but then, striking a balance with work was a challenge.

“All you need to set apart is one hour a day. It actually helps you in de-stressing and gives some relief. I will recommend it to all people,” says the doctor.

The good thing about growing vegetables in your backyard or rooftop, it helps in consuming fresh and pesticide-free vegetables, Mr. Ramana adds. He has cultivated bottle gourd, brinjals, ladyfingers and is now planning to cultivate ivy gourd soon.

As a trial run, the Horticulture Department at Vinayak Theatre, had offered 50 kits earlier this year and now it is offering 300 kits this time. The kits, which usually cost Rs.5,600 in open market, would be offered for Rs.2,800 after 50 per cent subsidy. The kit includes mud, seeds, neem powder and oil to control pests, tarpaulin cover and tools.

For details contact: 81878-90471

The Horticultural Department will offer the kit, which usually cost Rs.5,600 each in open market, at Rs.2,800 after 50 per cent subsidy

NASA to grow flowers in space for first time



Growing flowers first in 'Veggie growth system' will provide knowledge on cultivating fruiting plants like tomatoes to be eaten in space

Flowers could be blooming on the International Space Station (ISS) after the New Year, thanks to NASA's first flowering crop experiment on the orbiting laboratory.

NASA astronaut Kjell Lindgren activated the Veggie plant growth system and its rooting "pillows" containing Zinnia seeds on the space station on Monday.

Growing Zinnias in orbit will help provide precursory information about other flowering plants that could be grown in space.

It is the first time that a flowering crop will be grown on the orbiting laboratory, NASA said.

“Growing a flowering crop is more challenging than growing a vegetative crop such as lettuce,” said Gioia Massa, NASA Kennedy Space Centre payload scientist for Veggie.

“Lighting and other environmental parameters are more critical,” said Massa.

Lindgren will turn on the red, blue and green LED lights, activate the water and nutrient system to Veggie, and monitor the plant growth.

The Zinnias will grow for 60 days, which is twice as long as the first and second crop of Outredgeous red romaine lettuce that grew on the space station.

During the growth cycle, the LED lights will be on for 10 hours and off for 14 hours in order to stimulate the plants to flower.

“Growing the Zinnia plants will help advance our knowledge of how plants flower in the Veggie growth system, and will enable fruiting plants like tomatoes to be grown and eaten in space using Veggie as the in-orbit garden,” said Trent Smith, Veggie program manager at Kennedy.

Researchers also hope to gather good data regarding long-duration seed stow and germination, whether pollen could be an issue, and the impacts on crew morale.

Growing tomato plants on the space station is planned for 2017, NASA said.

The Veggie system was developed by Orbital Technologies Corporation (ORBITEC) in Madison, Wisconsin, and tested at Kennedy before flight.

Veggie, along with two sets of pillows containing romaine seeds and one set of zinnias, was delivered to the station by SpaceX on the third cargo resupply mission in April 2014.

Too young to climb trees, but old enough to care for them

Meet Deepshika, a volunteer with Nizhal, who has shown that age is never a barrier when it comes to service.

Deepshika Raj believes in the power of serendipity to enrich lives. Three years ago, she discovered Nizhal by chance, and the voluntary organisation is now an integral part of her life. All of 10 years, Deepshika plays key roles in activities undertaken by Nizhal.

“As I could not leave her alone at home, I used to take her along to all my programmes,” says Bhuvana Raj, Deepshika’s mother who is a member of Nizhal.

That is how her love for trees began. Along with other volunteers, Deepshika attends to gardening/shramdaan work for the NGO. The ten-year-old has put her heart and soul into the Kotturpuram Tree Park and Chitlapakkam Tree Park projects.

“I have helped write name boards for the trees at the Kotturpuram Tree Park. It was fun as I got to write with different colours and also learnt a lot about plants,” says the class V student of NSN Memorial School, Chitlapakkam.

Other activities that young volunteers like her take up include packing saplings, collecting the weeds, watering plants and tying ribbons for trees that need extra care. She also makes it a practice to bring her friends along for tree walks.

Obese, diabetic? Watch your bones

Obesity and Type-2 diabetes affect bone structure, formation and strength over time, thereby increasing bone fracture risk, says a new study.

The researchers also found that exercise can not only prevent weight gain and diabetes but also increase bone strength. “Researchers once thought obesity was protective of bone because with more body mass, individuals have more bone mass; more bone mass typically decreases risk of osteoporosis and associated fractures,” said Pam Hinton, Associate Professor at the University of Missouri in the U.S.



“What we have come to realise is that the bone of people with obesity and Type-2 diabetes is not good, quality bone. These individuals have an increased risk of fractures; so that extra body weight is not protective,” he said.

For the study, the researchers allowed one group of rats to overeat and voluntarily exercise on running wheels. Another group of rats programmed to overeat remained sedentary.

The researchers also had a control group of rats that remained sedentary but did not overeat.

They studied bones from rats in the three groups at different ages to determine how early in the development of obesity and diabetes the bone was affected negatively.

“As the rats continued to grow, all groups increased their bone mass, but the rats that were obese and sedentary did not accumulate as much bone mass relative to their body weight,” Professor Hinton said.

“So, decreased bone formation, loss of bone mass and decreased bone strength all were present in the obese, diabetic, sedentary rats. However, the rats that exercised did not lose bone strength. In fact, the rats that ran on the wheels had stronger bones than the normal-weight controls,” he said.

The animals in the exercise group did not develop the same insulin resistance and diabetes.

The findings appeared in the journal *Metabolism* . — IANS

Vegetable prices grow twofold



The incessant rains over the last week in and around Tamil Nadu have led to vegetable prices shooting up in Puducherry.

The number of vegetable lorry loads coming to the Goubert Market and wholesale markets in Puducherry has also dwindled over the last few days.

According to V. Sivagurunathan, president of Puducherry Goubert Market All Traders Association, Puducherry gets around 80 tonnes of vegetables from Bengaluru, Hosur, Kolar, Andhra Pradesh, Koyambedu and Nashik.

The price of tomatoes, most of which are supplied from Andhra Pradesh, shot up to Rs. 60 per kilogram from Rs. 30 to Rs. 35 some days ago.

Onions went up from Rs. 25 to around Rs.50. French beans are selling at close to Rs.100 per kilogram in the Goubert Market.

The prices of carrot have increased from Rs. 35 to Rs. 45 per kilogram while cabbage and beetroot prices have touched Rs. 20 and Rs. 30 respectively.

The city gets vegetables such as carrot, beetroot, cauliflower from Bengaluru and chillies and tubers from Andhra Pradesh.

Brinjal prices have reached Rs. 60 to Rs. 70 from around Rs. 20 last week, said Raju, a vendor in the Grand Bazaar. Brinjals are largely sourced from Mettur in Tamil Nadu.

Cultivation of cluster beans and broad beans in the suburbs of Puducherry has been hit by the heavy rains, bringing down its availability, said one of the vendors in the Goubert Market.

Lady's finger, which is also cultivated around Puducherry, used to be priced at Rs.10 a kilogram, and is now selling at Rs. 50, said the vendor.

Puducherry gets around 80 tonnes of vegetables from Bengaluru, Hosur, Kolar, Andhra Pradesh, Koyambedu and Nashik.

V. Sivagurunathan, president of Puducherry Goubert Market All Traders Association

Rain destroys betel crop

Farmers ask State Government to provide compensation



The betel leaves damaged in rain in Attur in Salem.

The widespread rainfall in the district has badly hit the betel leaf cultivation in Attur, Bethanayakkanpalayam, and its surrounding areas.

A large number of farmers are involved in the extensive cultivation of betel, an evergreen and perennial creeper. In the last decade many farmers of Attur

block had abandoned betel leaf cultivation because of drought like conditions.

Now, the incessant rain for the last one week has left betel farms inundated damaging the leaves. The farmers have asked the government to take steps to inspect the farms, and sanction adequate compensation.

The extensive damage to betel leaves is a matter of concern for the traders too, as it is regularly sent to various parts of southern States.

Farmers of Omalur have asked the government to clean all the waterways and water bodies in Omalur without delay.

The farmers said that despite the heavy rain, a majority of the lakes and tanks did not get adequate water.

The River Sarabanga has received a heavy flow of water, due to the continuous rainfall in the hill station of Yercaud. The heavy flooding of the river has damaged check dams across the river, but the water did not reach the tanks much to the concern of both the farmers and the officials alike.

The local people and farmers took the initiative to clean the supply channels. This has enabled ten tanks getting filled.

Farmers say 90 per cent of the tanks including Pottiapuram, Naranampalayam, Pachanapatti, M. Settipatti, Periyeripatti, Karuppur, and Muthunayakkanpatti lakes continue to remain dry.

The farmers complain that a majority of the supply and connecting channels in Omalur block have not been cleaned for a long time. The encroachments of the waterways by anti-social elements has also proved a bane.

The immediate cleaning of the water bodies and waterways is the need of the hour, they say.

Nellai received 971 mm rainfall

Class 6th to 10th Online - Learn CBSE Math/Science Syllabus. From Home.
454 irrigation tanks in the district are brimming with water



Sharp showers that lashed Tirunelveli on Wednesday.

Even as the district has received 971.63 mm rainfall between January and November this year, the district administration, expecting more rains during the northeast monsoon, has kept ready five ‘cyclone shelters’ with basic facilities to accommodate people in case of floods.

According to Collector M. Karunakaran, the annual average rainfall for the district is 814.80 mm. The district received 234.59 mm in October and 263.92 mm in November, he noted.

A total of 454 irrigation tanks in the district were brimming with water while 125 tanks had 75 per cent water, thanks to the recent rains.

Anticipating inclement weather conditions during this monsoon, the district administration had kept ready five cyclone shelters at Koottapanai, Kooduthazhai, Chettikulam, Vijayapathi and Tiruvambalapuram to accommodate people from coastal villages in case of any emergency like cyclone, and one more shelter was coming up at Karaisuttru Uvari. The shelters had a capacity to accommodate 500 to 2,000 people.

Moreover, 453 public buildings, 849 schools, 49 colleges and 295 community halls had been kept ready for sheltering people in case of their evacuation from low-lying areas.

Dr. Karunakaran informed that farmers had taken up 'pisanam' paddy cultivation on 24,500 hectares against the target of 54,100 hectares. "We're very much confident that we'll achieve this target as active monsoon and adequate availability of agricultural inputs at the right price will encourage the agriculturists to start their work on the last paddy season before November-end," he said.

The Collector said that Rs. 68 crore had been allocated for repairing roads damaged in rain.

The recently appointed Monitoring Officer for the district, P. Senthilkumar, is quite convinced with the district administration's preparedness to face any eventuality during this monsoon. "Every possible measure to save the people from distress of any kind has been taken up by the district administration by coordinating various government departments," Dr. Senthilkumar said.

He added that crop damage compensation for the farmers from Maekkarai had been disbursed following his recent inspection.

Threat of disease to cotton

Farm varsity scientists, officials inspect the affected fields

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.

Other crops too are hit

Cotton crop in Veppanthattai 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.

Govt. approves over Rs 1,100 cr subsidy for cane farmers

In the first ever direct subsidy payment to farmers, the government on Wednesday decided to pay sugarcane growers Rs 4.50 per quintal for the cane they will sell to loss-making millers, a move that will cost Rs 1,147 crore to the exchequer.

The Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi decided to give a production-linked subsidy directly to cane growers, as export subsidy, which was provided in the last two sugar seasons 2013-14 and 2014-15 to millers, was questioned by many countries at the WTO.

The decision was hailed by the industry body ISMA, which said that millers' cane price liability would reduce by about Rs 1,100 crore, thus partly compensating their losses.

Sugar mills are facing a liquidity crunch due to surplus output that lead to low retail prices of the sweetener.

“To further ensure timely payment of cane dues in the current sugar season, the government has decided to provide a production subsidy at the rate of Rs 4.50 per quintal of cane crushed to offset cane cost,” an official release said.

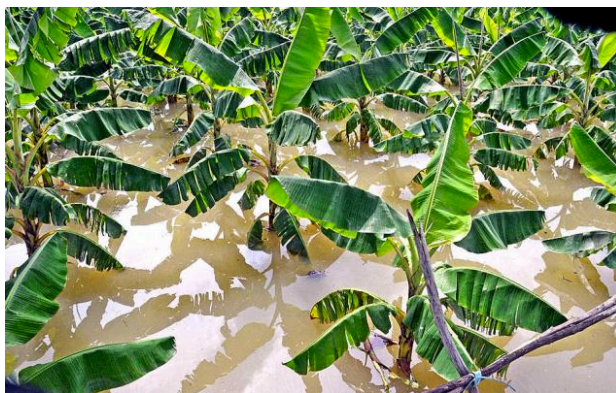
The subsidy would be paid directly to farmers on behalf of millers and adjusted against the cane price payable to farmers towards FRP, including arrears of previous years.

The remaining balance, if any, would be credited into the millers' account, it said, adding that priority will be given to settling cane dues arrears of the previous years.

The Centre has fixed Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP), the minimum price that mills have to pay to cane farmers, at Rs 230 per quintal for the 2015-16 season (October-September).

With the subsidy being borne by the government, mills will now have to pay only Rs 225.5 a quintal to farmers.

Farmers worried over rainwater stagnating in banana fields



Banana crop in a water-logged field at Athimarapatti near Tuticorin on Wednesday.

Banana fields were inundated in some parts of the district following heavy rains recently. The scenario worried farmers of Pudukottai, Palayakayal, Athimarapatti, Sebathaiyapuram, Mullakadu and Maravanmadam.

K.P. Perumal, district secretary, Tamil Nadu Farmers' Association, said here on Wednesday that the banana farmers would take a breather, if stagnating water was drained. If the water-logging prolonged for over a week, the crop would be susceptible to damage, he added.

However, the yield from the waterlogged fields would be reduced more than 40 per cent compared to normal stage. Hence, steps should be taken to drain the rainwater on a war footing from the fields and save the farmers. Since waterbodies remain encroached, rainwater led to water-logging, Mr. Perumal pointed out.

Deputy Director of Horticulture M. Ashok Macrin told *The Hindu* that normally under such water-logging conditions, the banana crop could withstand up to a period of 15 days. He said banana cultivation had been taken up on 9, 281 hectares along the Tamirabarani river basin of Srivaikuntam, Alwarthirunagari, Tiruchendur, Karungulam, Sathankulam and also in Tuticorin blocks.

Referring to other perennial crops, the Deputy Director said fruit crops on 11, 181 hectares, vegetable crops on 400 ha, spices on 1,310 ha, plantation crops, including cashew, beetelwine, palmyrah and coconut, had been cultivated.

Besides, medicinal crops including senna and aloe vera on 54 ha and flower crops on 232 ha had been cultivated. Since the district received a good amount of rainfall, the cultivation of horticultural crops was expected to increase this year.

Water from paddy fields “draining” gradually

Says Monitoring Officer for Nagapattinam Shiv Das Meena

Amidst farmers concerns over a possible loss in yield owing to water logging in paddy fields, Shiv Das Meena, Principal Secretary, Food, Cooperation and Consumer Protection and Monitoring Officer for Nagapattinam, has said that the rain water from the paddy fields was draining gradually.

Although about 12,240 hectares of paddy fields were inundated due to the heavy rain on November 9, the water has drained gradually and as on Tuesday only about 2,676 hectares of paddy had been facing water logging in the district.

Besides, about 118 hectares of banana crops were water logged in Kollidam, Sembanarkovil and Sirkazhi taluks, he said. A press release issued after a press conference held by Mr. Meena here on Tuesday said the district had received 140 mm of rainfall on November 9 and 95 mm of rainfall on November 15.

Till Tuesday, the district had received 537 mm of rainfall, 59 per cent more than the normal average of 339 mm for the month November.

Detailing the measures taken to minimise the impact of the monsoon rain, he said steps were taken to drain the water from Harichandra River and the Adaparu mouth.

He said 65 low lying areas were identified and 65 shelters were identified to move people.

Meanwhile, farmers of the district have expressed concern that the water logging over the past few days may affect the paddy yield.

Kaveri Dhanapalan, general secretary, Cauvery Farmers Protection Association, estimated that 60 to 90 days old paddy crop on over one lakh acres in the district was water logged over the past few days.

“The water is now draining from the fields. Even though the crop may appear green after the water is drained, the yield will be affected,” he said.

As per Revenue Recovery Act, if the production was affected by more than 51 per cent it should be considered as full crop damage, he said.

The district received more than the normal average rainfall

Water released for irrigation from Sothuparai dam

For irrigation of 2,865 acres

Water was released from Sothuparai dam for irrigation of wet and dry lands in Periyakulam Wednesday.

Releasing water from the dam, Collector N. Venkatachalam said that water release would continue till March 15. About 30 cusecs would be released for the next 28 days till December 15, 27 cusecs for 60 days from December 16 to January 15, and 25 cusecs for 60 days from January 16 and March 15.

The total quantum of release would also be shared by Periyakulam municipality to meet its drinking water needs.

A total of 2,865 acres – 1,825 acres of wet lands under old ayacut and 1,040 acres of dry lands in new ayacut – would benefit. The Collector appealed to farmers to use water judiciously and raise short-term crops to get bumper harvest.

Sothuparai dam has been over flowing. Water level stood at 126.28 feet. Storage was 100.22 mcft. The entire inflow of 80 cusecs has been discharged into the river. Manjalar dam too has full storage.

Some areas of Theni district received minor showers. Veerapandi recorded 36 mm rainfall. Rainfall recorded in Periyar dam was 8.2 mm, Thekkadi 7.6 mm and Vaigai dam 2 mm.

Dindigul

Kodaikanal received heavy downpour on Wednesday evening. Water level remained static in almost all major dams owing to sudden slump in rainfall. Water level did not touch even 50 per cent of the total capacity of major dams in Palani region.

Training for farmers

A six-day training programme for dairy farmers from Malappuram, Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur, and Kasaragod districts will be held at the Kerala State Dairy training centre at Naduvattom from November 23. Interested farmers shall report at the centre before 10 a.m. on November 23 with a copy of their photo identity card.

A lifeline for farmers



Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao interacting with the officials during his recent visit to Kudavelli Vagu in Gajwel of Medak district.—Photo: by arrangement

The Kudavelli Vagu also known as Kudleru located in Gajwel constituency will become the lifeline for many farmers soon. If everything goes well as planned, it would be ready by next rainy season.

This lake is located near Peddacheruvu of Chebarthi village and goes up to Upper Manair in Karimnagar district travelling about 60 km covering Jagadevpur, Gajwel, Toguta and Dubbak mandals in the district.

During rainy season the water that overflows from Peddacheruvu reaches Kudavelli and passes to Upper Manair covering about 50,000 acres of lands on both the sides.

It is helpful in improving the groundwater levels as many farmers are dependent on bore-wells.

Presently, the lake was filled with silt and resulting in submergence of surrounding areas and unable to retain water or allow heavy flow to downstream.

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao had recently visited the tank while on his way to Hyderabad from his farm house located at Erravalli and directed the officials to prepare estimates to transform the lake into lifeline for farmers.

It was decided to dig the lake deeper and expand its width by using heavy machinery. The width and depth of the lake would be extended up to Itikyala, about seven km.

The officials will be preparing estimates to assess that amount of water that can be retained in the lake by deepening and widening. Once the estimates were ready, they would be presented before the government to take up works under second phase of Mission Kakatiya.

“The works will be taken up after getting administrative sanction under Mission Kakatiya even if it costs about Rs. 6 crore to Rs. 7 crore. The Chief Minister wants the farmers to easily pump water from the lake without any problem,” Hanumantha Rao, Officer on Special Duty, Gajwel Area Development Authority (GADA), told *The Hindu* .

Restoration works of the lake will be taken up after getting sanction under Mission Kakatiya. It may cost Rs. 6 crore to Rs. 7 crore

Hanumantha Rao OSD, GADA

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.



Do you want to escape pesticides? Convert to non-veg!

Almost a fifth of all foods produced and sold in the country contain pesticide residues, according to a Union agriculture ministry-sponsored nationwide network project involving 25 participating labs.



Significantly, the presence of residues was even higher in vegetables.

If you are a vegetarian in India, the chances of your suffering pesticide exposure may be higher than for those predominantly consuming non-vegetarian foods.

Almost a fifth of all foods produced and sold in the country contain pesticide residues, according to a Union agriculture ministry-sponsored nationwide network project involving 25 participating labs.

During 2014-15, as many as 20,618 food samples were collected and analysed under a 'Monitoring of Pesticide Residues at National Level' scheme. Pesticide residues were detected in 3,857 or 18.7 per cent samples. In the case of 543 samples, representing 2.6 per cent of the total, residues were above the maximum residue limits (MRL) prescribed by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.

Significantly, the presence of residues was even higher in vegetables. In 2014-15, a total of 10,593 vegetable samples were analysed, out of which 2,253 (21.3 per cent) contained measurable pesticide residues. In 306 or 2.9 per cent of samples, the concentrations exceeded the official prescribed MRLs. Even samples collected from so-called organic outlets were, interestingly, found to contained residues.

The most frequently detected pesticides, with their residues exceeding MRLs, were chlorpyrifos, ethion, acetamiprid, dichlorvos and cypermethrin. Besides, residues of even non-approved pesticides — acephate, bifenthrin, triazofos, metalaxyl, malathion, profenofos, among others — were detected in many vegetable samples. Among the market samples, highest residues were found in capsicum, green chilli and cauliflower, followed by cabbage, brinjal, tomato, okra, bitter gourd, cucumber, green pea and coriander leaves.

The other major foods showing high traces of pesticides included spices (coriander seeds, cardamom, fennel, black pepper and cumin), tea and fruits. Among fruits, the samples of grapes, pomegranate and apples commonly harboured residues above MRLs considered safe for consumption. The residues were mainly of chlorpyrifos, imidacloprid, cyhalothrin-1, buprofezin, metalaxyl and difenoconazole, apart from non-approved molecules such as acephate, carbosulfan, profenofos and quinalphos.

The residues of various organo-chlorine, organo-phosphorous, synthetic pyrethroids, carbamate and other chemical pesticides were the least in

animal foods like milk, eggs, fish and meat. Even where detected, these were nowhere near prescribed MRLs.

hindustantimes

Breaking bad habits and living a healthy lifestyle can reverse diabetes



Indians not only develop diabetes a decade before Caucasians but many are not even aware they have it until complications such as nerve damage sets in.

Genes predispose about 30% people to getting the disease early, but in the rest of the cases, poor lifestyle choices are to blame for people getting diagnosed in their 30s and 40s and many more – an estimated 77 million – with insulin resistance. One in three people with insulin resistance develop diabetes if preventive strategies are not implemented.

“Not one but multiple genes are responsible in Asians developing the condition earlier than Caucasians; but having said that, the genetic predisposition was always there. So the sudden rise in numbers is definitely a mix of genetic and an unhealthy lifestyle. I’d say, nearly 70% is lifestyle induced,” says Dr Anoop Misra, chair man, Fortis C-DOC Centre of Excellence for Diabetes, Metabolic Diseases, and Endocrinology.

Obesity as a result of a sedentary lifestyle, high junk food intake, especially refined carbohydrates, lack of exercise and lack of sleep or erratic sleep pattern is proving to be the biggest trigger in developing diabetes.

“Obesity is the root cause, with excess abdominal fat and too much fat within liver pancreas prevents normal insulin secretion. The moment you develop a paunch, you are headed towards diabetes and other metabolic diseases,” said Dr Ambrish Mithal, chairman, department of endocrinology and diabetes, Medanta.

SUGAR-COATED TROUBLE

Type-2 diabetes occurs when the body can't use the insulin produced. As a result, unutilised glucose remains in the blood, forcing the pancreas to produce more insulin, finally wearing it out.

RISK FACTORS

- Inactive lifestyle
- Eating processed food and food high in sugar, carbs and fat
- Obesity, overweight
- Erratic or disrupted sleep
- Family history of diabetes

Uncontrolled sugar levels pose people with diabetes at risk of a clutch of complications, such as blindness, heart attack, stroke and rarely, amputation.

Obesity has proved to be the biggest trigger for diabetes. **HANES BAZAAR**

TESTING

- You are healthy if your blood sugar level after 8 hours of fasting is below 100.
- A 100-125 range indicates impaired fasting glucose (pre-diabetes), and a reading above 125 is classified as diabetes.
- If you use a glucometer to test your sugar level at home, compare its readings with lab results to ensure it does not need re-calibration.

ORAL GLUCOSE TOLERANCE TEST
₹50-₹300 (Test is free at government hospitals)
 The gold standard for diabetes tests is oral glucose tolerance test, which is done after you've had 75 gm of glucose in 200 ml of water two hours after the fasting test. A healthy reading is below 160. A reading above 200 indicates diabetes; and between 140-199 pre-diabetes.

GLYCERATED HAEMOGLOBIN (HbA1c) TEST
₹500-₹600 (HbA1c) test done once every three to six months gives the average blood sugar for the past three months. The final reading should be between 6 and 7%. For people over 65 with complications such as heart disease, it should be 7.5%.

DIABETES IN NUMBERS

- 382** Million people worldwide have diabetes, up from 150 million in 2000
- 65** Million people affected in India by diabetes
- 87** Million Indians will be affected by 2025
- 1/4** people with poorly-controlled diabetes for 10 years develop kidney problems
- 1/5** people develop heart, eyes or nerves disorders that may cause heart attacks, blindness, ulcers and amputations

DOES SURGERY WORK?

- Bariatric or weight-loss surgery is considered the last option for those looking to lose weight.
- Long-term data from 150 patients operated in Delhi between 2006 and 2009 shows surgery helped control diabetes in 85.6%, lower hypertension in 58%, raise heart-protecting good cholesterol (HDL) in 93% and triglycerides in 82.1%.
- Dr Pradeep Chawber of Max Hospital says it is done on people who are at least 40-45kg over their normal weight.
- He says studies have shown every 10kg of excess weight takes away three years of life.

There is, however, growing evidence to support that modifying lifestyle cannot just control but also help reverse diabetes.

“I have plenty of patients who have been off medicines for a couple of years now and their diabetes hasn’t come back,” says Dr Mithal.

Delhi-based rehabilitation psychologist, Divya Parashar, 40, can vouch for it after she reversed her diabetes within a year with diet changes and exercise.

Parashar was diagnosed with diabetes— post meal levels were at 210mg/dl, fasting was 120mg/dl, in 2006.

“I weighed 96 kilos then, which was about 34 kg overweight. I had put on weight while working in the US and when I returned to India, I decided to get back into shape,” says Parashar who now runs marathons.

To lose weight, she started her day with a 90minute exercise regimen, primarily doing aerobics. “Since I put on weight from having canned juices, sweets, corn among other things, I switched my meals to include eggs, green leafy vegetables, nuts and dairy products. I ate frequent but small meal portions and lost my excess weight in eight months,” she said.

With her weight loss, Parashar's glucose levels dropped to fasting 80mg/dl and post-meal 90-95mg/dl and have continued to remain so till now.

"She is a living proof that modifying lifestyle can reverse diabetes," says Dr Misra, who helped her weight and her sugar levels get back to healthy levels.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

Damage to kuruvai crop assessed in Madurai

Though the scanty rainfall has not affected paddy cultivation largely, agricultural officials in the district undertook an assessment after crop damage was reported in some pockets.

The most affected crop due to rain was the recently introduced paddy variety, Ko - 51, and agriculture officials are coordinating with the revenue department to estimate damages, official sources informed.

President of Periyar Irrigation System Farmers, M Murugan said the paddy crop nearing harvest was fortunate enough to escape both the rain spells during Diwali and recent days.

"The actual problem is lack of adequate rain and water for irrigation from the dams," he said. However, farmers complained that the harvest of kuruvai paddy is getting delayed since the fields have turned slushy and harvesting machines could not be deployed. Farmers in some pockets like Karupayurani have suffered crop damage since Ko - 51 variety introduced recently has started leaning once the grains matured.

The paddy variety was a huge success in Coimbatore region replacing the old variety of ADTR - 45. The variety, though produces good grains, suffers damage during rains especially during harvesting time, farmers said.

Joint director of agriculture, Saranath Babu said an assessment is being carried out. The assessment will be correlated with revenue department assessment and sent to the government, he said.

The most affected crop due to rain was the paddy variety Ko - 51, recently introduced

Exporters, cane farmers to get Rs 3,500 crore sops



The two new schemes are expected to cost over Rs 3,500 crore annually, although the one for sugar is an interim measure.

NEW DELHI: The government on Wednesday decided to provide subsidy to two ailing sectors - exports and sugar - in a bid to revive their fortunes. The two new schemes are expected to cost over Rs 3,500 crore annually, although the one for sugar is an interim measure.

The 3% subsidy on credit is for all exports by micro, small and medium enterprises as well as for over 4,000 products, including handicrafts, carpets, several garments, fabrics, toys, sports goods, cosmetics, leather goods, several auto components and some steel, telecom, engineering and electrical products, an official statement said.

The government has also decided to exclude merchant exporters from the ambit of the scheme. The facility would be available for pre- and post-shipment. Although the subsidy scheme had been pending since the BJP government took charge last year, the Cabinet has decided to offer the benefit only from April 2015 and is estimated to cost Rs 2,500-2,700 crore.

The latest aid for the sugar sector, which will cost around Rs 1,100 crore during the sugar season, will see the government provide a production subsidy of Rs 4.50 a quintal of cane crushed to offset the sugarcane cost.

"The said subsidy shall be paid directly to farmers on behalf of the mills and be adjusted against the cane price payable to the farmers towards FRP (Fair and Remunerative Price) including arrears relating to previous years. Subsequent balance, if any, shall be credited into the mill's account. Priority will be given to settling cane dues arrears of the previous years," the government said after a Cabinet meeting.

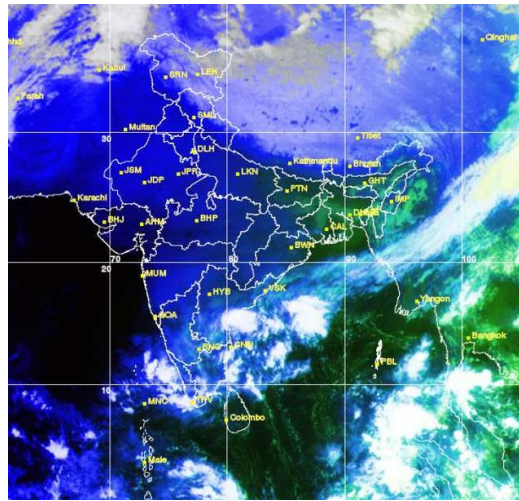
The direct subsidy is expected to reduce the burden on millers. "This decision is significant as it means that the government is no longer shying away from owning up the FRP it fixes for sugarcane, by directly contributing for a part of the cane price, instead of continuously burdening the millers. It will reduce industry's liabilities towards cane to that extent, reducing a part of its losses," ISMA, the lobby group for millers, said in a statement.

THE HINDU BusinessLine

Rains come back to Tamil Nadu, Puducherry as 'low' breaks up

Rains have come back to Chennai and Puducherry even as the causative low-pressure area over the West-Central Bay of Bengal weakened, breaking up into smithereens in the form thunderstorms.

Some of these have meandered to the adjoining Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coast, unleashing their contents in the form of thundershowers.



Nellore and Tirupati in Coastal Andhra Pradesh remain overcast this morning.

HEAVY RAIN

India Met has forecast heavy rain at isolated places - wherever prevailing winds take these thunderstorms to - along the coasts of Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry as also in the interior over Rayalaseema and Kerala over the next two to three days.

An outlook valid for the next six days (until November 25, Wednesday next) spoke about the possibility of rain or thundershowers at many places over extreme South Peninsula (South Tamil Nadu and adjoining South Kerala) as also at isolated places over the rest of the peninsula.

NEXT WAVE

The US Climate Prediction Centre continues to project heavy rain for Chennai and the neighbourhood to the South (likely covering Puducherry) during the week ending Tuesday, November 24.

The rains may lose intensity during the week that follows, but it is again Chennai that would likely receive most of the rain, according to the US agency's outlook.

An experimental storm tracker featured by it suggests that the next wave of organised rainfall (spearheaded by a low-pressure area) would hit the Tamil Nadu coast between November 27 and December 2.

Power: Repeated reforms with no result



From the ground beneath: Freely to fields above - Photo: M Srinath

A lot depends on the initiative of State governments. First, they have to tackle the practice of giving free power

One cannot but feel sympathy for Power Minister Piyush Goyal. He is highly intelligent, articulate and efficient. Unfortunately for him he has been given charge of the impossible portfolio of power.

Power is a concurrent subject in the Constitution. That means the Centre is in charge of everything that is not within a State. Thus central generation companies, all inter-State transmission including lines going through States, inter-State dispatch, regulating power exchanges, are all under the Centre.

State governments have sole responsibility for all generation within their States except plants owned by the Centre or set up to supply other States, intra-State transmission, State load dispatch centres, and distribution and supply to customers and billing them. States appoint the regulatory commissions in the States and the Centre appoints the central electricity commission and the appellate tribunal.

Final contact point

The State government is thus the final contact point that deals with all customers. Tariffs, billing and collection, supplies, maintaining safe, efficient transmission and distribution, preventing electricity theft and technical losses, licensing new operators in the State, are all under the State government.

Some functions are given to a statutory regulator. The State government appoints the selection committees that select regulators, thus ensuring they are compliant with State government interests and preferences. The bane of electricity distribution in India is our erratic monsoon that makes States give free power to farmers. Free power is meant to draw ground water; India is said to be the largest user of ground water for agriculture.

The pumpsets in use are inefficient and use excessive electricity. It is believed that increased thefts of electricity in States are hidden under “free power to agriculture”. Gujarat initiated separate feeders for agriculture and has brought down the number of thefts. The cost of free power has to be first borne by the distribution companies.

Most distribution of electricity is by State-owned electricity boards that have run up huge losses. These have been twice paid off by loans from the Centre but the condition that the States improve performance has not been fulfilled. The present special dispensation that will allow State governments to take these losses into their books from the SEBs and not count them in the deficits for two years, is likely to meet the same fate. There is no compulsion on State governments to improve.

Ways out

One way out is to ask nationalised banks not to lend to SEBs in deficit. This will be politically impossible.

The Centre could lay down strict standards for pumpsets and the States might ensure they are followed. By segregating agricultural feeders the State can ration out the power to agriculture and minimise theft. Gujarat has done this effectively. The State could restrict free power only to small farmers owning only one pump. All power to farms could be metered and so misuse

could be prevented. Ultimately the State governments must have the will to minimise free power.

Proximity to the voter makes free power to agriculture inevitable. Either the SEBs could be given out to private parties on contract management, or they could be privatised, with strong audit and statutory regulation to ensure that the customer is not exploited. A private contract manager or owner will not permit the inefficiency and collusive theft that are common today. Cross-subsidies must be abolished. This could be incorporated in the to-be amended Electricity Act 2003 so that regulators have no option but to disallow them. If farmers have to get free power, that is a political decision by the State government. It should bear the costs.

There is little the Centre can do to improve performance of distribution companies within the present Constitution. It could refuse to supply coal, power, rail transport or other services that have to come from the Centre.

It could ban inefficient pumpsets. Most importantly the Centre can change the relative price structure of agricultural products. Paddy (rice) is no longer a growing item in household budgets and could be discouraged in household use by changing minimum support prices. State governments could be helped to introduce cash transfer schemes so that identified beneficiary households get the subsidy in their bank accounts for the electricity they buy according to the meter.

Without determined action, Goyal's initiative will meet the same fate as similar earlier ones.

The writer is an economist and former chairman of the Central Electricity Regulation Commission

Govt okays ₹1,150 cr direct subsidy for cane farmers

The Centre has decided to pay a production subsidy of ₹4.50/quintal directly to cane farmers in the 2015-16 season to ensure they get timely payment of arrears amounting to over ₹7,000 crore owed by sugar mills. The move is expected to cost the exchequer about ₹1,147 crore.

Simultaneously, the government also notified a minimum indicative export quota (MIEQ) for sugar mills and has tied the payment of production subsidy to only those mills that meet 80 per cent export and ethanol blending targets.



A decision in this regard was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Wednesday.

“Sugar has been facing a crisis with global prices falling. Some States give additional support price, adding to the arrears. We have come up with a World Trade Organisation-compatible scheme for supporting sugar producers,” Power and Coal Minister Piyush Goyal told the media after the Cabinet meeting.

Alongside, the government notified a mill-wise MIEQ for sugar exports, and a national grid allocating ethanol supplies to oil marketing companies by distilleries attached to sugar mills under Ethanol Blending Program (EBP).

Performance-linked sop

“The production subsidy is a performance incentive and will be provided to those mills which have exported at least 80 per cent of the targets notified under the MIEQ and in case of mills having distillation capacities to produce ethanol have achieved 80 per cent of the targets notified by the department under the EBP,” an official statement said.

In September, the Centre had notified mandatory export of 4 million tonnes for the 2015-16 season (October-September), to be divided among the mills based on average production in the last three seasons.

As regards farmers, the Centre said that the direct subsidy shall be paid directly to them on behalf of the mills and will be adjusted against the cane

price payable to farmers towards the fair & remunerative price (FRP), including arrears of previous years.

“The subsequent balance, if any, shall be credited into the mill’s account. Priority will be given to settling cane dues arrears of the previous years,” the release said.

In the past five years, sustained surpluses of production over domestic consumption have led to subdued sugar prices. This has stressed the liquidity position of the industry leading to a build up of cane price arrears, the statement said, adding that “during sugar season 2014-15, the peak cane price arrears were ₹21,000 crore as on April 15, 2015.”

Incidentally, the Food Ministry had proposed a production subsidy of ₹4.75/quintal out of the cane FRP of ₹230/quintal for the 2015-16 season that covers October-September. This season, the country is estimated to produce surplus sugar at 26-27 million tonnes for the sixth consecutive year. To liquidate surplus sugar, the government has made it mandatory for millers to export 4 million tonnes in the 2015-16 season.

Millers hail move

Sugar producers welcomed the government’s decision to give ₹4.50/quintal for cane crushed in 2015-16 sugar season.

“This decision is significant as it means that the government is no longer shying away from owning up the FRP it fixes for sugarcane, by directly contributing for a part of the cane price, instead of continuously burdening the millers,” the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) said in a statement. However, at current low sugar prices, the losses will be over ₹1,100 crore and, therefore, if sugar prices do not improve to cover costs during the season, the industry and farmers may seek further help from the government’s budget, it added.

Scripts of sugar mills reacted positively on the bourses tracking the Cabinet decision. Balrampur Chini Mills gained 15 per cent to end at ₹82.55 on the BSE, while Shree Renuka Sugars and Simbhaoli Sugars gained close to 10 per cent each.

Our Chennai Bureau adds:

Palani G Periasamy, President, South Indian Sugar Mills Association – Tamil Nadu, welcomed the cane subsidy announced by the Centre.

Centre should continue with its thrust on sugar exports to bring down the domestic surplus which have hit sugar prices, Periasamy added.

N Ramanathan, Managing Director, Ponni Sugars, said at the present estimated output, farmers will get about ₹1,100 crore. But at current sugar prices of about ₹2,500 a quintal of sugar, the mills lose about ₹500 on every tonne of cane. This subsidy offsets the loss partially.

It is a welcome step by the Government and for the first time signals that the FRP of ₹2,300 a tonne set for sugarcane during 2015-16 is unviable as compared with the low sugar price. But the subsidy is a step in the right direction, he said.

However, industry sources expressed concern that the condition of meeting 80 per cent of the quota of ethanol supply could be a stumbling block to avail of the subsidy in Tamil Nadu as mills have not been able to participate because of local policies. However, the other condition of meeting 80 per cent of sugar export quota will not be an issue.

Thailand coconut sector looks at India for tie-ups, technical support

Thailand is pushing hard to bring together its coconut sector, an important cash crop which contributes 0.11 per cent of export earnings of the country.

A five-member delegation from CP (Charoen Pokphand) group, Thailand, visited Coconut Development Board to explore the possibilities of establishing individual coconut producing units or starting joint ventures with the coconut producer companies in South India. CP Group is the largest private company in Thailand which has been active in India for the past 20 years and is yet to set foot in the agriculture sector.

Coconut is one of an important cash crop of more than three lakh small farmers of Thailand and the country is lacking in sufficient raw materials for processing industries.

The team headed by Khunsri Thongyoi, Senior Vice-President of CP Crop Integration Business, held detailed discussions with TK Jose, Chairman of CDB, who briefed about the coconut cultivation and industry of India and scope for starting coconut-based industries in association with Indian partnership.

Vannamei farming: Kerala poses a new opportunity



Kerala's fish farmers were too late in taking up Vannamei shrimp culture, even though this particular variety was introduced in India in 2009. The result: other coastal States have gone far ahead in reaping the benefits of Vannamei, the most sought-after prawn species in the overseas seafood market. Of late, the fish farming community in the State has come forward to experiment with Vannamei culture, thanks to the initiatives of Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (Kufos) which conducted a demonstration at its research centre in Puthuvypeen near here. According to B Madhusoodana Kurup, Vice-Chancellor, the demonstration farming was a success given the response from farmers seeking license from the Coastal Aquaculture Authority to do it. He spoke to *BusinessLine* about these new initiatives as well as the steps taken to alleviate the concerns of farmers in adapting this shrimp culture. Edited excerpts:

Why was there a concern among Kerala farmers about Vannamei? What steps has Kufos taken to alleviate it?

The fishing community was apprehensive because of the false propaganda that its introduction in aquaculture would be a threat to local species. However, Kufos, through the trial farming, was able to prove that farming of this species can take place by following the norms prescribed by Coastal Aquaculture Authority, like creation of bio-fencing, total isolation of

farming areas from the natural waters and specific water management protocols.

Can you give a brief on Vannamei shrimps and its potential in overseas markets?

Vannamei continued to be a major export earner in India's seafood export basket in the last few years due to its competitiveness vis-à-vis black tiger. Of the 357,505 tonnes of seafood exports in 2014-15, it constituted 220,000 tonnes compared to 175,000 tonnes in the previous fiscal. This has helped the export sector to gain substantially from markets such as the US and South-East Asian countries.

Vannamei costs \$2.29/kg to produce, which is only half the production cost for other Indian species. Farmers can produce 20 tonnes of small to medium shrimps per hectare. With diseases still ravaging black tiger farms, the survival rate of shrimp in most of farms is about 40 per cent. However, vannamei's survival rate is close to 95-98 per cent.

What is the current status of Vannamei farming in India?

The total production in 2014 was around 350,000 tonnes and it is estimated that this would go up to 500,000 tonnes by this year end. There has been a considerable increase in the area used for farming. Of the one lakh hectares, only 20 per cent was covered by Vannamei in 2009.

This has gone up last year with 80,000 hectares used for farming surpassing 70,000 hectares for black tiger. But the contribution of Kerala was miniscule. This year, it is estimated there is likely to be an increase by 20 per cent in production. The shrimp aquaculture production during 2014-15 registered 4,34,558 tonnes and of this, Vannamei was 40 per cent and black tiger production remained stagnant. Achieving Vannamei production at 50,000 tonnes by 2020, Kerala can contribute 8-10 per cent of all-India production.

Of late, there were reports that Vannamei farming in India is losing its sheen. In this situation, how do you propose to go forward?

A resistance has already been witnessed in the country in Vannamei farming in terms of growth with farmers unable to get the desired size and quantity. This may be due to factors such as spurious seeds, high density stocking, climatic changes or stunted growth. Due to disease of early mortality syndrome, there was a reduced supply amidst surging global demand.

This has forced some hatcheries to export smaller counts which resulted in spurious seeds and broods hitting the markets. All these would be detrimental to the industry in future.

Given this scenario, Kerala poses a new opportunity unlike other coastal States where Vannamei cultivation started much earlier. The recent issues have helped Kerala understand the intricacies associated with this species, especially the need for SPF brood-stock and a bio-secure environment for culture.

Pepper continues to remain steady



Pepper markets on Wednesday remained steady on limited activities. On the terminal market, 18 tonnes were traded. 10 tonnes of semi-processed material sold at ₹710 a kg and the rest at ₹ 690-710. Inter-state dealers were mainly the buyers. Leading exporters were also buying to cater to the demand of domestic masala industry. Spot prices remained unchanged at ₹69,000 (ungarbled) and ₹72,000 (garbled) a quintal. On the IPSTA platform all the futures stayed steady. Export prices were at \$11,250 a tonne c&f for Europe and \$11,500 for the US.

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 ₹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.

Business Standard

Pulses rise again on supply concern



Despite government measures, the price of [pulses](#) have again started rising, on supply concerns from the recently ended [kharif](#) season and less than expected growth in the ongoing [rabi](#) sowing.

[Chana](#) (chickpea) for delivery in December on the benchmark National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange is up five cent or Rs 195 to trade currently at Rs 5,141 a quintal since last Friday, when traders booked profits amid fear of further action by government or regulator.

On November 7, the Securities & Exchange Board of India levied up to 75 per cent margins for near-month contracts, increased as settlement day neared. So, the chana price for delivery in December declined to Rs 4,946 a qtl by Friday.

“Despite the high margins, the chana price bounced back after a marginal decline, indicating that traders are holding pulses on expectations of a further price rise. Also, the government took several steps like stock limits on stockists, including importers, coupled with raids and seizures. These measures did not work to the extent the government was estimating. This means traders anticipate pulses’ prices to remain firm,” said Ajay Kedia, managing director, Kedia Commodity Research, a city-based commodity trading company.

TRACKING PULSE RATE

Pulses' spot price movement (₹/kg)

Particulars	Nov 13	Nov 18	Variations(%)
Lemon tur	125-130	135-138	8
Urad	105	110	5
Masoor	52-53	54-55	4
Chana	50	52	4

Source: Trade

< With a decline in output from local sources and continuous rise in demand, prices moved up sharply in recent months

Prices of other pulses have also moved up, as with [tur](#) (pigeon pea). Lemon tur and African tur saw a Rs 4-5 a kg rise in the past few days. “While Indian Pulses and Grains Association (Ipga) is offering tur at Rs 100 a kg (to support the government’s campaign), the import cost works out to Rs 135 a kg. Tur is unlikely to decline below this (latter) level until the new crop hits the market in December,” said Bimal Kothari, vice-chairman of Ipga.

He said seizure of around 80,000 tonnes of imported pulses was choking supply, resulting in the price rise. Ipga is in talks with the government of Maharashtra for immediate release of seized pulses, he added.

The first advance estimate of the government shows kharif pulses’ output at 5.56 million tonnes, well down from the target of seven mt and the 5.63 mt of actual output in the previous kharif season. With a decline in output from local sources and continuous rise in demand, prices moved up sharply in recent months. The government was estimating a sharp increase in sowing this rabi season but after its actions on traders and stockists, farmers had worries over returns and there has been only a 11 per cent increase in acreage so far this season.

The Indian Institute of Pulses Research forecasts annual demand at 39 mt by 2050. This requires production to grow at an annual rate of 2.2 per cent, compared with the 0.9 per cent rise over the past decade.

“The government needs to focus on increase in area and yield. Actions on traders would discourage importers,” said Himat Chandra, partner, Trimurthi International, a trading entity at Navi Mumbai.

Paris climate talks: India Inc gets directly involved

Ahead of the Paris [climate change](#) negotiations beginning November 30, Indian chambers of business are sending some senior representatives, and

experts, to engage in ‘Track-II’ climate change diplomacy, across developed world capitals.

Supported by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci), these representatives, along with climate and energy experts from think tanks in this country, would be travelling to Washington, Brussels, Berlin, London and Tokyo. The Paris meet is expected to result in a new global compact on addressing climate change, one that would impact specific sectors, beside the Indian economy in general. The delegations are expected to engage with policy makers, business representatives, experts, civil society and the media in these five capital cities on the negotiations.



Who

The representatives include [Mukund Rajan](#) of Tata Group, Jamshed Godrej from Godrej Group and K Krishnan, co-chair of the [Ficci](#) Climate Change Task Force and chairman of the CVC Infrastructure group. Sector experts from CII and Ficci are also expected to be in the teams. The team for Japan departed on Monday from Delhi, on a three day visit.

The team for Washington, Ficci said, includes Shankar Venkateswaran, chief, sustainability, at Tata Sons; ex-ambassador Ajai Malhotra, a Distinguished Fellow at the The Energy and Resources Institute; and Anshu Bharadwaj, executive director in Bengaluru-based think tank CSTEP, beside K Krishnan. The business reps and the bodies they represent have requested the government to help facilitate these meetings through the respective Indian embassies. Officials in the government said this would be done.

Ficci said the delegation to Washington DC, which it is supporting, would meet Todd Stern, the US President's special envoy on climate change, and other senior officials from the department of energy. The delegation would also interact with a range of US-based companies, including First Solar, Aramco, Eaton Corporation and representatives from the American Council on Renewable Energy. Also, meetings with officials from the World Bank and leading think tanks in the US, beside interacting with the media.

While the teams travelling to other capitals are being finalised, Business Standard learnt of some other names on board. These include, Soma Banerjee, in charge of energy & infrastructure at CII; Kirit Parikh, chairman of Integrated Research and Action for Development; Chella Rajan, professor at IIT, Madras; Ardeshir Contractor from Kiran Energy and Karan Mangotra, project manager at the United Nations Development Programme.

The plan

On most occasions, India has seen foreign delegations of officials, business representatives and experts visit this country to advocate their interests in the climate change negotiations and the potential Paris agreement. This venture, a first of a kind, Indian business, with experts, would emphasise how they'd like to see the global agreement to shape up by December 11, when the talks end.

One of the organisers at the business chambers Business Standard spoke with said the teams flying to various capitals hoped to explore spaces for cooperation on economic and climate change issues. And, to explain the Indian scenario, which leads to its specific demands and stance at the negotiations.

This endeavour before the 196 countries meet at Paris is expected to be topped-up by the presence of senior officials from corporate houses such as Mahindra & Mahindra in France's capital at the venue. The chambers have marked their presence earlier, too, at such annual negotiations but their delegations this time are expected to be larger and working more closely with the Government of India.

The latter plans a pavilion at the venue to showcase its ventures and work on climate change. The government has committed to send a separate team, headed by an officer of the rank of joint secretary, to be in charge of the 12 days of activities, side events and meetings at the pavilion. It has also hired a private agency to help in the organisation, while around three dozen officials engage in the main negotiations.

DECCAN Chronicle

Tamil Nadu floods: What next, ask camp inmates



Chennai: The hopes of J.P. John, 61-year- old daily wageworker, and his family staying at Seva Sadan makeshift camp at Tambaram here, were shattered. He has lost most of his belongings after his house went under flood water three days ago.

“When I woke up at 5 am and moved out, my small house was almost submerged. I tried reaching all helpline numbers, but it was very late before I could move out all my household belongings, my son’s job documents and other important certificates,” he said in a mild voice, with tears rolling down his cheeks.

Sitting on the school staircase, he said “It was only two suitcases and a bag that we were able to carry along when we came to this camp at the school,” he added. The auditorium on the second floor of the school accommodated nearly 50 families. Most of them were elderly people lying on the floor and whose kids were found playing in waterlogged grounds.

In total, there are 250 children at the makeshift camp at Seva Sadan School alone. Like John, there are nearly 2,500 persons, who are residing in camps at Seva Sadan higher secondary school in West Mambalam, Kannada

Palayam higher secondary school and Perungalathur higher secondary school with similar stories to narrate.

Meanwhile, those staying in Kanndapalayam School complained that shortage of bedcover and dress materials has made life difficult for them in the past two days. “At night, while it was chilling cold, I and my kids had no bedcover due to which we were not able to sleep as lying on the cold cement slab was very difficult,” said 52-year-old T.Muniyamma, a tailor of MGR Nagar, who is now staying at the Kanndapalayam school with her two daughters.

“We are trying to make sure that all those who have arrived here are registered and are provided with food and shelter with bed sheets and bed cover. We will send the names of all those who are affected to the government who will later decide on the quantum of compensation,” said a senior official at Tambaram municipality. In Tambaram and Perungalathur, there are 11 makeshift camps that are operated by the municipality and the government for the past six days.

Of Food, AND RELIEF

3,19,050 Total food packets given	Total compensation package handed out by government in Chennai: ₹6.5 lakh
55,000 Total bread packets given	
214 Medical Camps held	
36,985 Beneficiaries	

■ All subways have been cleared of water stagnation

■ **75,000** individuals affected in Ambattur SIDCO Nagar and South Jagannath Nagar after excess from Korattur lake was released. **400** people had to be evacuated using seven boats.

■ Nearly **1,500** families living in Velachery, who were affected after water stagnated in **49** streets, are returning to their homes. Commissioner Vikram Kapur said that normalcy would return to all low-lying areas by tomorrow, provided it does not rain.

■ Nearly **10,000** families living in Thoraipakkam Secretariat Colony, Injambakkam Bethel Nagar and Karapakkam returned to their homes after inflow into Muttukadu lake was increased and flow into Buckingham Canal rose subsequently.