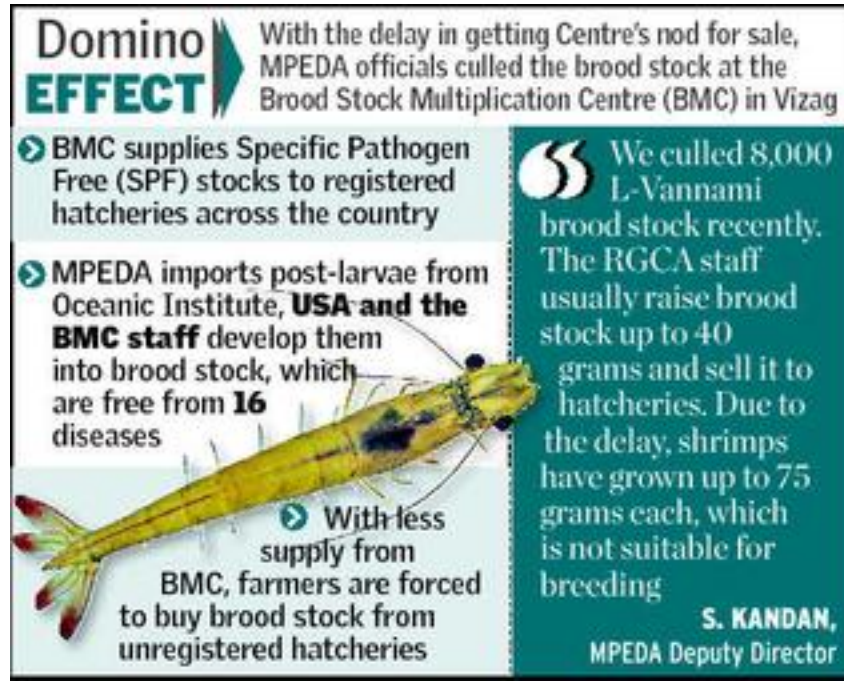


DATE:28.01.2015

# THE HINDU

**Prawn seed worth Rs. 32 crore culled**



**Domino EFFECT** With the delay in getting Centre's nod for sale, MPEDA officials culled the brood stock at the Brood Stock Multiplication Centre (BMC) in Vizag

- BMC supplies Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) stocks to registered hatcheries across the country
- MPEDA imports post-larvae from Oceanic Institute, **USA and the BMC staff** develop them into brood stock, which are free from **16** diseases
- With less supply from BMC, farmers are forced to buy brood stock from unregistered hatcheries

“ We culled 8,000 L-Vannami brood stock recently. The RGCA staff usually raise brood stock up to 40 grams and sell it to hatcheries. Due to the delay, shrimps have grown up to 75 grams each, which is not suitable for breeding

**S. KANDAN,**  
MPEDA Deputy Director

The officials of Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) has culled L-Vannami variety shrimp brood stock worth around Rs. 32 crore at its Brood Stock Multiplication Centre (BMC) in Visakhapatnam, with the Union Ministry for Agriculture not according permission for the sale of the stocks in time.

Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Aquaculture (RGCA), a research unit of the MPEDA, is running the BMC and is supplying Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) stocks to registered hatcheries across the country. However, farmers are forced to depend on private unregistered hatcheries owing to the delay in granting of permission from the Centre.

MPEDA imports post-larvae (PL) from Oceanic Institute, USA and the BMC staff develop the PL into brood stock and the mother prawns, which are Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) and free from 16 diseases.

With the Centre failing to give the permission in the stipulated time, the MPEDA officials killed the stocks at the multiplication centre, as it would be expensive for them to cultivate the brood stock from it.

“We culled 8,000 L-Vannami brood stock recently. The RGCA staff usually raise the brood stock up to 40 grams and sell it to hatcheries to raise quality seed.

But, due to the delay, shrimps have grown up to 75 grams each, which is not suitable for breeding,” explained MPEDA Deputy Director S. Kandan.

“The officials have brought the issue to the notice of Agriculture Minister P. Pulla Rao, Health Minister Kamineni Srinivas, and Municipal Minister P. Narayana during the aqua farmers and stakeholders’ meeting and the Ministers promised to take up the matter with the Union Ministers concerned,” Mr. Kandan told *The Hindu*.

However, some farmers allege foul play by some private and unauthorised hatchery owners, saying that the latter wanted the permission got delayed to ensure smooth sale of their stocks which was not disease resistant.

Aqua farmers S. Bhaskar Rao and B. Krishna complained that the seed procured from some private hatcheries had no growth and they suffered huge loss due to poor quality seed.

“I purchased seed worth around 3 lakh for raising shrimp in my four acres tank. But, the weight of prawns became less after 110 days,” said Ramakrishna, a shrimp grower from Bangarupalem in Visakhapatnam district.

### **‘Rise in drought-prone areas in State’**

-prone area in Karnataka has increased from 63 per cent to 72 per cent of the total area owing to erratic monsoon and lack of drought-proofing methods.

G.R. Chintala, Chief General Manager, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Bengaluru, who made a presentation on the Potential Linked Credit Plan (PLP) for the State for the 2015-16 fiscal here on Tuesday, said “area under sowing has stagnated in the State”.

While the total cropped area is 120.59 lakh hectares, the net sown area is 99.41 lakh hectares, he said. Karnataka ranked second after Rajasthan in drought-prone area. In 2011-12, 123 taluks in 23 districts were declared drought-hit.

A total of 157 taluks and 64 taluks were declared drought-hit in 2012-13 and 2013-14, respectively, according to NABARD. “Forest coverage can be increased by making use of barren land, uncultivable land, cultivable wasteland and fallow land,” Mr. Chintala said.

Mr. Chintala said contribution of the farm sector to the overall GDP of the State has estimated to have fallen from 18.7 per cent in 2004-05 to 13.2 per cent in 2013-14. However, nearly 50 per cent of the total workforce in the State was still engaged in agriculture for their livelihood.

*Karnataka ranks second after Rajasthan in the country,  
says NABARD*

### **Nalin Kumar Kateel moots SAZ for district**



Nalin Kumar Kateel speaking at a meeting near Mangaluru on Tuesday.—  
Photo: H.S. Manjunath

Nalin Kumar Kateel, Dakshina Kannada MP, said on Tuesday that he is pursuing a proposal to set up a special agricultural zone in the district.

Mr. Kateel, who is a member of a standing committee on agriculture in Parliament and also a member of the Union government’s Coconut Development Board, said that he has asked an agricultural scientist to draft a proposal to this effect.

Once it is ready, he will pursue the same with the government for creating the zone.

He was addressing coconut growers at Ganjimath near here.

The growers had come together in connection with floating a farmers' company for promoting coconut cultivation and its value-added products such as neera (a sweet sap from its palm), sugar, jaggery, desiccated coconut, virgin coconut oil and the like.

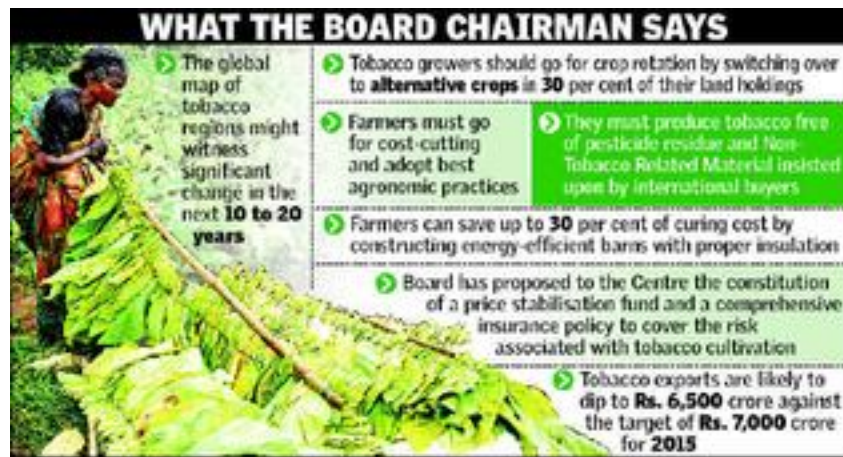
Sanjeeva Naik, Assistant Director of Horticulture, said that two coconut growers' federations have been formed and registered in the district in Mangaluru and at Bantwal.

The process of forming federations in Puttur, Belthangady and Sullia was under progress.

If a company was to be formed it required a share capital of Rs. 5 crore and initially 1,000 farmer members were required. The government would provide Rs. 40 lakh as seed money to the company to start activities.

Mr. Naik said that by extracting neera, a grower could earn Rs. 10,000 per palm per year.

### Farmers asked to cut down on tobacco production



Tobacco Board Chairman K. Gopal on Tuesday exhorted the farmers to go for alternative crops in at least part of their land holdings in view of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC)'s determination to discourage its cultivation over a period.

Inaugurating a two-day workshop for farmers on 'Sustainable Agricultural Practices' organised by the tobacco major ITC, he said the global map of tobacco regions might witness significant change in the next 10 to 20 years.



Tobacco growers in their own interest should go for crop rotation by switching over to alternative crops in 30 per cent of their land holdings to restore the soil health and thus improve productivity in the process, to stay competitive.

He said ensuring remunerative price for the tobacco growers posed a challenge to the Board in the present global scenario. He wanted the ryots to go for cost cutting and adopt best agronomic practices to produce tobacco free of pesticide residue and Non-Tobacco Related Material (NTRM) insisted upon by international buyers.

Farmers could save up to 30 per cent of curing cost by constructing energy-efficient barns with proper insulation and by going for captive social forestry plantations, he added.

Expressing satisfaction over the Board's efforts to restrict the annual tobacco production to less than 300 million kg in the country, he said tobacco production of about 250 million kg would be enough to meet the demand of domestic manufacturers and overseas buyers.

Bringing cheer to the farmers, he said the Board had proposed to the Centre constitution of a price stabilisation fund and a comprehensive insurance policy to cover the risk associated with tobacco cultivation.

## Fertilizer soon for Nellore

*Nellore ryots to get enough urea to meet demands*



With fertilizer shortage leaving farmers a harried lot, the government now plans to provide them with necessary supplies with immediate effect. The district administration expects supply of nearly 20,400 tonnes of urea from the government in the next one week.

Arrangements have been made for transfer of 75 per cent of the stock to primary agricultural cooperative societies (PACS) to meet farmers' requirements. The remaining stock will be routed through private agencies and dealers.

The government has also made arrangements for import of nearly 3,000 tonnes of urea on a daily basis. "Necessary supplies will be provided to the district by the end of this month," said Municipal Administration Minister P. Narayana. As of now, more than 4.15 lakh acres have been brought under cultivation for the rabi season. Meanwhile, farmer leaders said another two lakh acres had also been brought under cultivation.

### **Wheat warrior**



It is an accepted fact that importing food cannot solve the problem of food shortage. "Modern technologies do offer vast prospects for crop improvement, but that alone cannot make it popular among small and marginal farmers," says farmer Mahavir Singh Arya from Rajasthan.

Born in a remote village called Neva of Churu district, Mahavir Singh fought poverty in childhood to grow up into a successful farmer. With keen observation and tremendous hard work, he has developed numerous varieties of wheat and mustard.

Mahavir has less than a hectare land but he gets a good yield. And he is known for innovative agricultural practices.

Despite facing acute problem of water shortage, Mahavir, an advocate of organic farming, developed numerous varieties of wheat and mustard.

### **Educate children**

“The aspiration of rural folk is to seek out greener pastures in nearby metros, educate their kids and push them out of the village. A farmer’s life is a tale of continuous experimentation and struggle for existence, and even getting a good price for the produce is difficult for us,” he explains.

“The government should start introducing agriculture as a part of curriculum for school students. Children should know that the food they eat comes from hard work of a farmer and farming is important and tedious job.”

### **India appeals to Dispute Settlement Board over import of U.S. farm products**

India has appealed to the Dispute Settlement Board of the World Trade Organization (WTO) for a panel decision on its issues with the U.S. over agricultural imports.

“WTO Secretariat received today a notice by India announcing its decision to appeal certain issues of law and legal interpretation in the panel report in the case ‘India — Measures concerning the importation of certain agricultural products’,” the WTO said on Monday.

India had in 2012 imposed some prohibitions with regard to importation of various agricultural products from the U.S. because of concerns related to Avian Influenza.

This import prohibition is maintained through India’s Avian Influenza (AI) measures, mainly, the Indian Livestock Importation Act, 1898.

The U.S. contended that India's AI measures amounted to an import prohibition that was not based on the relevant international standard or on a scientific risk assessment.

### **Panel view**

The dispute settlement panel (DSP) ruled that India's AI measures were inconsistent with the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement because they were not based on the relevant international standards. India claimed that the panel committed several legal errors in its interpretation and application of numerous articles of the SPS agreement.

### **Pollinator decline vs human health**

*Dwindling bee population poses malnutrition risk: study*

More than half the people in some developing countries could be at the risk of malnutrition if crop-pollinating animals like bees continue to decline, a study shows.

Scientists at the University of Vermont and Harvard University have connected what people actually eat in four developing countries to the pollination requirements of the crops that provide their food and nutrients.

The team gathered survey data about people's daily diets in parts of Zambia, Mozambique, Uganda and Bangladesh.

"The take-home is: pollinator declines can really matter to human health with quite scary numbers for vitamin A deficiencies, for example," said scientist Taylor Ricketts from University of Vermont.

It can lead to blindness and increase death rates for some diseases, including malaria. It is not just plummeting populations of bees.

Scientists around the world have observed a worrisome decline of many pollinator species, threatening the world's food supply.

Recent studies have shown that these pollinators are responsible for up to 40 percent of the world's supply of nutrients.

"Ecosystem damage can damage human health so conservation can be thought of as an investment in public health," Ricketts said.



“Continued declines could have drastic consequences for global public health,” the team wrote. IANS

### **Excise officials destroy poppy plantation**

Excise and Prohibition wing personnel on Tuesday morning raided a location abutting the Boyakonda Gangamma hillock at Chowdepalle mandal in the district and destroyed poppy seeds (‘gasagasalu’) plantation spread in six acres.

The raids were undertaken on instructions from District Collector Siddarth Jain and Superintendent of Police G. Srinivas. Excise Deputy Commissioner Satyaprasad led the raids. According to officials, poppy cultivation has been banned in the State and is allowed only in West Bengal and Rajasthan. However, the crop is raised in more than 2,000 acres in the district, they said. As many as six persons, including two farmers and middlemen, were nabbed during the operation.

*Poppy raised in more than 2,000 acres in Chittoor, say officials*

### **Water scarcity hits rabi crop in Godavari delta region**

Water shortage is looming over the Godavari delta, thanks to dwindling inflows into the Godavari. The shortage has forced farmers to extend paddy transplantation to the first week of February.

### **Taskforce**

Meanwhile, the district administration has introduced turn system to supply water to fields from February 1 and has constituted a taskforce of engineers from the Irrigation Department to monitor water supply. The West Godavari District Irrigation Advisory Board (IAB) has resolved to extend irrigation facilities to 4.50 lakh acres of paddy area.

According to M.V. Suryanarayana Raju, president of the Godavari Delta Pariraskhana Samiti, plantation will take place in one lakh acres owing to water shortage.

The problem is acute in the tail-end ayacuts of Narsapur Main canal, Kakaraparru and Mogalturu canals, he added. The western delta has been receiving 4,000 cusecs of water on a daily basis as against the requirement of 6,000 cusecs. Srinivas, Executive Engineer, Irrigation Department, said

the inflows at the Dhavaleswaram Barrage were recorded at 9,500 cusecs, according to the latest readings, and the water is to be distributed to the central, western and eastern delta regions spread over 10.5 lakh acres from the barrage.

**The Sileru has been feeding the Godavari in an uninterrupted manner, but there has been a drop in inflows to Godavari this year, Mr. Srinivas said.**

*Godavari Delta Pariraskhana Samiti president M.V. Suryanarayana Raju says the problem is acute in the tail-end ayacuts of Narsapur Main canal, Kakaraparru and Mogalturu canals*

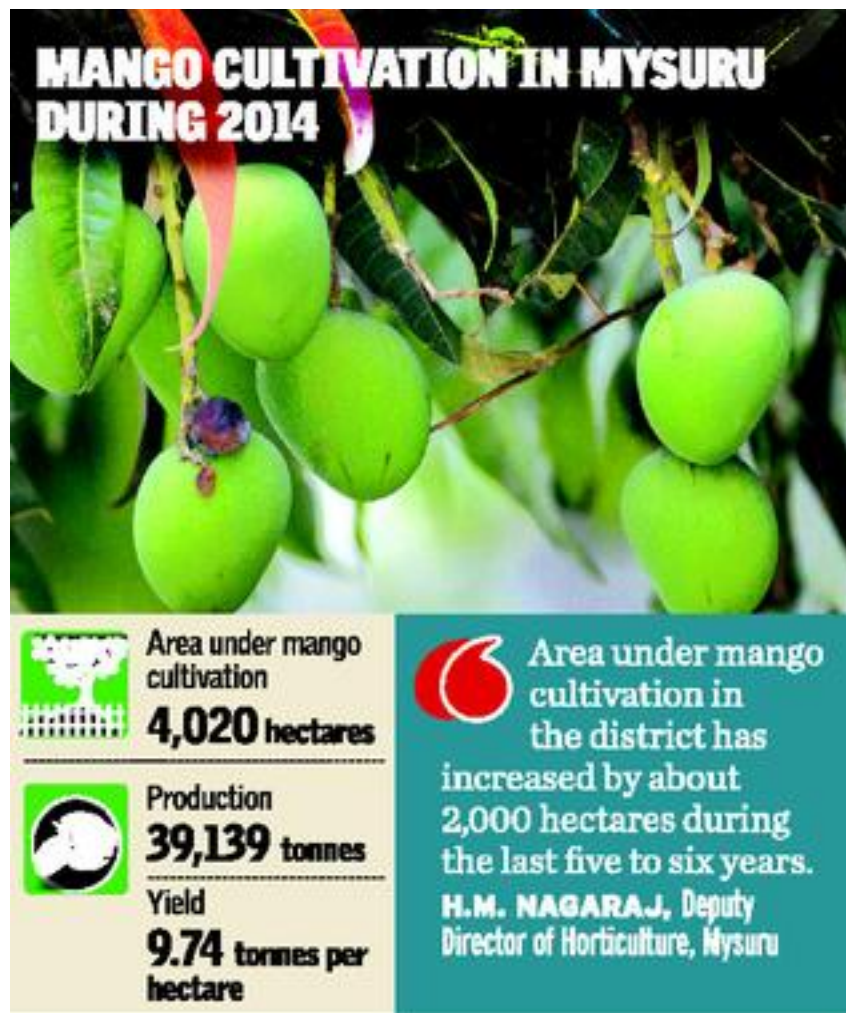
### **‘Exports may not meet target’**

Tobacco exports are likely to dip to Rs. 6,500 crore as against the target of Rs. 7,000 crore during 2015 fiscal in view of decline in demand in the USA and countries in the European Union on the one hand and excess production in African countries.

The export during the last fiscal was to the tune of Rs. 6,000 crore. Giving an indication to this effect, Tobacco Board Chairman K. Gopal told reporters here, “We may not be able to meet the target.” Though the growers in Karnataka, where e-auctions were on, got a maximum of Rs. 176 per kg for bright grade from international buyers, the average price fell to Rs. 112.14 per kg for the 72.91 million kg marketed till last week, according to Tobacco Board sources. Growers in Karnataka produced 99 million kg as against the crop size of 101.65 kg. Ahead of the auctions beginning next month in A.P., he estimated production at about 180 million kg as against the crop size of 172 million kg.

## Mango harvest: ‘line between on and off years has blurred’

*It's attributed to improved and effective management of orchards*



Until a few years ago, the harvest of mangoes used to alternate between ‘on year’ – when yield is bountiful – and ‘off year’, when the yield is scarce. This is no longer the case in Mysuru, say Horticulture Department officials in Mysuru.

Ever since the area under mango cultivation in the district increased and growers began managing the orchards better with effective pest and disease management techniques, the lines between on and off years have blurred, claim officials.

### ‘No fluctuation’

“There has not been much fluctuation in the arrival of mangoes in the district since the last four years. Though it was an ‘off year’ in 2014, there were

sufficient arrival of mangoes and the price was also reasonable,” claimed H.C. Shashikala, Assistant Director of Horticulture, Mysuru. The mango season used to alternate between on year and off year in the district due to various reasons, including nutrition of the tree and climatic conditions.

With barely two months left for the mango season to start, Horticulture Department officials have begun creating awareness among growers in the district to use appropriate fungicide to tackle powdery mildew, which attacks the crop during flowering season.

“We have asked growers to take precautionary measures during the flowering season,” said Ms. Shashikala.

H.M. Nagaraj, Deputy Director of Horticulture Department, Mysuru, said area under mango cultivation in Mysuru has increased by more than 2,000 hectares during last five to six years. Even though many newly added orchards are yet to begin bearing fruit to the optimal level, the yield has increased considerably.

Several farmers have shifted to mango cultivation due to the schemes offered by the National Horticulture Mission, which include a subsidy of Rs. 12,000 for every hectare.

The figure includes Rs. 6,000 for every hectare of new orchard and Rs. 3,000 for maintenance in the subsequent two years.

### **Scent of cloves fills the air in Ambanad**

*400 labourers harvest clove from 20,000 trees in one month*



Migrant labourers from Tamil Nadu segregate harvested raw cloves at the Ambanad Estate in Kollam.—  
Photo C. Suresh Kumar



This is the part of the year when a heady aroma of harvested clove buds fills the air as one travels through hairpin bends higher from Thenmala to reach the Ambanad hills in Kollam district.

It is also the time when more than 400 migrant labourers from Tamil Nadu with their families reach Ambanad for harvesting cloves.

The labourers stay in the plantation for over a month to complete the harvest process and go back with earnings. The pay tempts them to return the same time next year for the clove harvest job.

At the Ambanad estate, more than 20,000 clove trees have to be harvested within a span of one month. Each tree will be more than 10 meters tall, bearing the buds to be harvested from top to bottom. Every tree will bear about 10 to 15 kg of raw buds this season. The labourers, including women, climb the trees to harvest the buds. After harvesting the bud stalks, the labourers will have to segregate the buds from the stalks. They gather at an open space after each day's harvest for the job that could extend well beyond midnight. The labour charges are separate for harvesting and segregating. The segregated buds are then sun dried.

Last year, the harvest was poor, but this year's crop is good and more than 60,000 kg of dried cloves are expected from Ambanad.

### **Prey base vital to sustain tiger population, say wildlife experts**

*ATR to take up fodder plantation on 250 acres this year*



As the tiger population increases at the Anamalai Tiger Reserve in Coimbatore district, wildlife activists have called for more focus on increasing the prey base. —Photo: Special Arrangement

Even as there is considerable joy at the increase in tiger population at the Anamalai Tiger Reserve (ATR), a trend reflected at the national level as well, wildlife activists are sounding a word of caution. While the last census conducted at ATR in 2010 put the count at 13, it is now nearly 23.

While there is a lot of focus on conserving tigers, activists say equal importance must be paid to conserving the prey base of the big cats.

Environment Conservation Group president R. Mohammed Saleem, who was involved in the recent tiger census, says the favoured natural prey for tigers is the gaur (Indian Bison), which can sustain the big cat for nearly a week.

Other preys include the Sambar Deer and Spotted Deer.

These herbivores can be sustained only by healthy vegetation that are threatened at ATR by invasive exotic alien weed species such as Lantana Camara.

“Besides degrading other vegetation, these weeds are thorny and hence shunned by deers and gaurs. They were introduced in Western Ghats by the British who used them as ornamental plants. However, now they are a major threat. While the situation is under control at ATR as of now, the tight vigil must continue,” says Mr. Saleem.

K. Kalidasan, president of OSAI, an NGO involved in wildlife conservation, says tigers are territorial and a cub leaves its mother at the age of two.

Each tiger will carve out its own territory, which must have enough prey base to sustain it in order to avoid conflicts. Tigers were earlier confined to Bandipore – Mudumalai stretch.

However, the increasing population resulted in tigers spilling over to Sathyamangalam, which was initially a reserve and later declared as a tiger reserve.

With tiger population on an upward trajectory, it is expected to soon spill over to the adjoining areas in Erode and the Coimbatore Forest Division ranges of Sirumugai, Mettupalayam and Karamadai.

The prey base in these regions must also be maintained by controlling poaching and maintaining an undisturbed forest. Authorities should ensure there are no human activities in these areas so that man-animal conflict is minimised, he adds.

The ATR has already taken steps to sustain the herbivore population by increasing fodder availability. While crops have been planted on around 1,000 acres till now, it would be taken up on another 250 acres during the current year, said its field director V.T. Kandasamy.

Further, the personnel are also trained and equipped to combat forest fires.

The local populace have also been sensitised and eco-development committees formed among them to elicit their cooperation in fighting forest fires.

“The tiger census also revealed a healthy increase in prey base. We would soon step up the fodder cultivation,” Mr. Kandasamy said.

### **26,843 tonnes of paddy procured in Thanjavur**

A total of 26,843 tonnes of paddy has been procured through 339 Direct Purchase Centres (DPCs) in Thanjavur district till January 26 during this kharif season which began in October last year, according to S. Gopalakrishnan, Commissioner, Civil Supplies.

Mr. Gopalakrishnan, who inspected taluk rice godown at Vandayariruppu, asked the staff to expedite sending of rice to public distribution system from the godown. “Supply of rice to PDS should not be delayed at any cost,” Mr. Gopalakrishnan said.

He inspected the DPC and grain godown at Vandayariruppu. He enquired with farmers whether the system of payments made through banks was working well. Farmers said they would prefer direct payment of money to bank transaction. The commissioner said they could get the money in

whichever method was easy and simple for them. He checked whether there were adequate gunnies and adequate amount for payment at the DPC.

He found out whether 17 per cent moisture was maintained in the paddy brought for sale and he checked the weighing machine.

### **Farmers protest delay in procurement of paddy**

*They say a politician is preventing the process*

Farmers of villages in Chennimalai Union staged a novel protest by proceeding to the district administration carrying bags of paddy to present a petition, decrying attempts made by a local party functionary to prevent start of a Direct Procurement Centre sanctioned for this year.

The farmers of Pasuvapatti, Ekkatampalayam, and Ellaigramam complained to Collector S. Prabakar that though the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation had identified an ideal location at Veppili Pirivu, the ruling party functionary was exerting political pressure on the Corporation to establish the proposed DPC at Pudupalayam where he owned a mill, despite the remote location of the spot. The district administration had sanctioned a DPC after repeated requests over five years.

Farmers, Mr. Ponnaiyan said, expect the administration to ensure that they do not suffer due to the pressure by the political functionary for personal gains.



## Jackfruit: A fruit, a vegetable and everything in between



### Jackfruit

The one thing that anyone travelling across Kerala just cannot miss is the jackfruit tree as it is tall and well spread. On most occasions, one can see the greenish-yellow jackfruit hanging in adequate numbers – not surprising as this is by far the largest tree-borne fruit.

Over the years this fruit still maintains its status as one that is affordable to all and can be consumed raw or ripe.

Each jackfruit weighs from three to 30 kilograms.

Believed to have originated in the country's southwestern rain forests, the word jackfruit comes from Portuguese jaca, which in turn, is derived from the Malayalam word chakka.

In common parlance, chakka is often referred to as the pre-ripe form and the fragrance of the fleshy jackfruit is first noticed by squirrels and the birds. The ripe form is called chakka pazham.

In Kerala the two most commonly found variety are 'koozha', which is not much in demand as 'varikka' which of late has become a much sought after one.

Molly Thomas, an 80-year-old grandmother from Thiruvalla, said this is one food item that was once the succour of many people, especially the labour class.

“I remember that when work was difficult to come by during the rainy season, my father-in-law used to allow the the labour class to cut the near-ripe jackfruit. The mashed jackfruit, prepared with grated coconut and spices, is not only mouth-watering but also quite a filling meal. Also, the tasty chips prepared from jackfruit is a hit among one and all,” Thomas told IANS.

The process of weaning out the pieces after cutting open the jackfruit is a laborious one and is very messy because of the sticky white fluid that oozes out, but for experienced people, it’s child’s play.

The seed or ‘chola’ inside each fleshy piece is also used for making excellent dishes. One of the most popular ones is when it’s mixed with raw mango and coconut paste and for a curry called ‘chakkakuru manga’ that is eaten with steaming rice.

“When eaten with typical Kerala fish curry, mashed jackfruit is second to none. We have now started promoting this among the foreign tourists who opt for home stays,” Jacob Punnen, who rents out rooms in Kottayam, told IANS.

Today, the koozha variety is not much in demand and householders find it difficult to dispose it off because after it ripens and falls, it’s a big messy affair with lots of flies and birds feeding on it. The varikka variety of a jackfruit is available at a fancy price of Rs.150 upwards.

“We have both varieties of jackfruit. Of late, it’s buyers from Tamil Nadu who come and buy the varikka variety. They do not want the koozha variety. They rip us off as while we get around Rs.10 for a varikka jackfruit, we are told that they sell it from above Rs.100. See, if we do not sell it for Rs.10 per piece, then it will become food for the birds and squirrels. Another problem is if we hire a tree-climber to cut the fruit, he asks for at least Rs.250. As a result, even if we get just Rs.10 per piece, we sell it to the buyers from Tamil Nadu,” farmer Sreekantan Nair told IANS. Countries like Thailand, the Philippines and Sri Lanka have taken the jackfruit to the next level by coming with value-added products. “We lived in Thailand for three years and there are numerous sweet products that are made out of jackfruit. I am surprised that this is not happening in our state. The only notable product that is now available is ‘chakka varatiyathu’ and that too, the present generation of womenfolk are not as expert as our mothers used to be,” homemaker Susan Jacob, who spent three years in Thailand, told IANS. And last but not the least, while the outer thick skin of the jackfruit is a much sought after feed for cattle, the leaves of the jackfruit tree are equally in demand by goat farmers

## Recipe: Cheesy pasta



**Ingredients** - One packet of penne - One each of red capsicum and yellow capsicum - Two tsp corn flour or plain flour (maida) - One cheese cube - One tsp dried oregano and dried thyme - Dry red chilli flakes (paprika) - One cob of sweet corn, boiled - Salt and black pepper powder to taste - Three florets of broccoli - One tbsp butter - Four big cloves of garlic, grated - Two cups milk

### **Method:**

#### **For white sauce**

1. Heat butter in a pan. Add the grated garlic and saute for a minute.
2. Once it's done, add the corn flour, and saute for a brief while.
3. Add milk and stir it continuously to avoid lumps.
4. Once the mixture starts thickening, add oregano, thyme, salt, pepper powder and red chilli flakes.
5. Add grated cheese.
6. Keep this sauce aside.

### **For the vegetables**

1. Boil peppers, sweet corns and broccoli together with little salt.
2. Don't over boil the vegetables. It has to be crunchy.

### **For the pasta**

1. Boil the pasta as per the instruction in the packet.

### **To serve**

1. Put the sauce back on flame.
2. Add all the boiled vegetables and the boiled pasta.
3. At the time of serving you can add more cheese.
4. Serve hot.

### [Classic salad dressings recipe](#)



**The classic vinaigrette:** Take two tablespoons of balsamic vinegar and whisk in two teaspoons of mustard. Add a pinch of kosher salt and pepper to taste. Mix half a cup of olive oil and pour all over your salad!  
**Garlic vinaigrette:** Peel half a bulb of garlic and drizzle it with olive oil on a tray. Wrap it with an aluminum foil and roast it in the oven till it is tender.



Let it cool down and then gently crush them. Blend it with the vinaigrette (above mentioned) you made and add some parmesan to finish it off.

**Spicy honey-mustard:** Mix two teaspoons of honey with two teaspoons of mustard. Add two tablespoons of lime juice and a pinch of lemon zest and kosher salt to taste. Add some olive oil and finish it off with chopped thyme. If you want it to be spicier, you can add chili flakes or chopped jalapeno.

**Creamy Italian:** Mix a little less than half a cup of mayonnaise with two tablespoons of balsamic vinegar. Add two tablespoons of olive oil and sour cream. Add a clove of garlic (crushed), kosher salt and oregano to taste and mix it all in a blender. Add a spoon of finely chopped parsley.

**Mediterranean:** Make a Mediterranean salad dressing with half a cup of feta cheese (crumbled). Mix this with the classic vinaigrette (shown above). Add chopped parsley, dried oregano and one diced tomato (as much as you want).

### [Make healthy dishes with sausages](#)



As such, sausage fans will agree that they are best eaten just the way they are. If you're a sausage addict you know you can't stop at one. But if you're looking for a healthier change, here's what you can do.

**Make a casserole** - It makes your sausages healthier with the addition of veggies and also, makes a drab tasting casserole, taste tons better because the flavour of the meat will seep through your veggies and gravy, giving it an impeccable taste. Win-win for everyone!

**Make rolls** - Just wrap a sausage in a roti or tortilla and add some raw salads and dressings to it. Its quick, fresh and packed with healthy goodness. You can even use some leftover curry or gravy as sauce to use with the sausages. That way, you use leftovers, get your family to eat veggies and rotis and nobody complains.

**Stir fried** - Since you love eating sausages so much, keep the ratio of sausages versus veggies fare. For every one portion of veggies, use 2 portions of sausages - fair game? Enhance the taste with herbs so you don't overpower the sausage flavour.

**Sausage rice** - Leftover rice can be reheated with some ground tomato and basil and chilli and tossed around with some cut up sausages and veggies. This way, you eat a flavour packed, nutritious meal without compromising on taste.

#### How to make 'gajak' at home



*Getting that perfect crunch, which is not too tough to bite into, can be difficult to get when you are making gajak for the first time. However, follow this quick recipe for a simple gajak...*

**Ingredients:**

Half cup til or sesame seeds,  
1/4 cup kaju pieces (halved cashewnuts),  
around 200 gms sugar  
two tablespoons of pure ghee

**Method:**

Grease a rectangular tray with ghee and keep aside. On a large heavy bottomed kadhai dry roast sesame seeds on low heat till they turn brown. Keep aside. Now combine sugar ghee with two tablespoons of water and cook on medium heat till it turns thick and syrupy. Take off from the heat and fold in the roasted sesame seeds and cashewnuts. Mix well and then transfer to the ghee coated tray and level it with a large flat spatula. While still hot/warm, make cuts on it. Once it has cooled down, you can separate the pieces. Serve or store them in an air-tight container once properly cooled.

**Recipe: Pudina Paneer****Ingredients:**

Four tbsp oil, three sliced onions, quarter tsp haldi, two tomatoes, three-fourth tsp chilli powder, 300 gram malai paneer, quarter cup dried Pudina, three-fourth tsp garam masala.

**Method:**

Heat oil and fry the onions, add haldi, chilli powder and salt. Add tomato pulp and cook till dry. Now add the malai paneer, dried Pudina and other tomato pieces. Add garam masala and cook for two-three minutes. It is ready to serve.

## Recipe: Rajma burger



**Preparation time:** 20 mins

**Cooking time:** 15 mins

**Serves:** 4

### **Ingredients**

250 gms Boiled Kidney Beans (Rajma), mashed

¼ cup onion, finely diced

1 clove garlic, minced

2 Tbs. bread crumbs

2 Tbs. chopped fresh parsley

1 Tbsp. Ketchup

½ tsp. Chili Powder

½ tsp. Curry Powder

¼ tsp. Ground Cumin Seed

¼ tsp. Salt

¼ tsp. Black Pepper Powder

4 slice Cheese

4 Burger buns

Lettuce leaves, tomato slices, cucumber slices, onion slices and butter as required

### **Method:**

-In a large bowl combine the mashed kidney beans, onion, garlic, bread crumb, parsley, ketchup, chili powder, curry powder, cumin, salt, and pepper. Mix well and chill for 15 minutes. Form into burgers and fry in a



small amount of oil, or in a nonstick pan with oil, over medium heat.

-Toast a burger bun, spread butter top with lettuce, tomato, cucumber, onion, patty and cheese.

### Recipe: Chinese Bhel



*We are savour Chinese food; especially the Chinese bhel that has become a hot favourite among youngsters and has replaced their plates of vada pav and bhel puri is a must learn. Here are two recipes that will help you serve a Chinese platter at home, with a twist.*

#### **Ingredients:**

Noodles- 1 cup

Onion finely chopped- 1 cup

Shredded cabbage- 1 cup

Capsicum cut in thin slices- 1/2

Carrot shredded- 1 cup

Cornflour- 2 tbsp

Soy sauce- 1 tbsp

Red chilli sauce- 1 tbsp

Ajinomoto- 1 tsp

Ginger Garlic Paste- 1 tsp

Black pepper powder- 1 tsp

salt to taste

Oil- 2 tbsp

Tomato sauce- 1 tsp

Oil to deep fry noodles

**Method:**

Boil noodles in hot water adding ½ tsp oil to it

Once it's boiled put it under cold water so that the noodles don't stick to each other.

Once it cools down dust corn flour over it and mix well & deep fry them.

Take another pan and pour some oil and saute the onion

Add Ginger garlic paste then add Carrot , cabbage & capsicum and turn your gas on high flame.

Now add Ajinomto, salt, black pepper powder, chilli sauce ,tomato sauce and soy sauce

Now mix Fried Noodles and mix well

Garnish with Coriander leaves and green onions (optional) serve immediately

**Soyabean and Baby corn fried rice****Ingredients:**

Rice- 2 cups

Oil- 3 tbsp

Soya chunks- 200 gms

Baby corn- About 10 pieces cut in four equals

Beans Finely Chopped- 100 gms

Carrot Finely Chopped- 2

Onion sliced- 1

Cabbage Finely Chopped- 100 gms

Spring Onions Finely Chopped- 2

Green Chillies finely chopped- 2-3

Ginger Chopped Finely- 1 tsp

Garlic Finely Chopped- 1 tsp

Soya Sauce- 2 tbsp

Vinegar (optional)- 2 tbsp

Salt & pepper to taste

**Method:**

Wash and soak the soya chunks for a while, and bring them to a slight boil till they become soft, drain them and keep it aside

Cut the baby corns in four equals, and boil them for a while, later shallow fry them and keep aside

Wash and soak the rice in enough water for 10-15 minutes and drain.  
Boil water, add rice and little salt.  
Cook uncovered on low heat till rice is tender.  
Take care not to overcook the rice. Each grain of rice should be separate.  
When rice is done, drain and add some cold water  
Heat oil in a kadhai / large pan  
Saute onion ,then add garlic, ginger and green chillies  
Add and stir fry all the chopped vegetables, along with the soya chunks and baby corn  
Cook for 3-4 minutes.  
Take care that vegetables are not overdone, they should be crisp.  
Mix salt and pepper to taste.  
Add the cooked rice and mix well. Now mix the soya sauce to it.  
Cook for 2-3 minutes and serve hot.  
Garnish with spring onion  
P. S. Non vegetarians can add shredded chicken and scrambled egg

#### The wonder 'Matcha' Japanese green tea



*A traditional Japanese green tea, matcha is racing ahead of all other green teas. We explore the powers of this superfood.*

For 2015, don't drink just about any green tea. Upgrade to matcha, a green-hued, powdered tea from Japan. Though it has been consumed for centuries in Japan, as part of their tea ceremony Chanoyu, the world is now taking notice because of its metabolism-enhancing, stress-reducing, immune boosting and cholesterol-lowering benefits...

## **MORE POWERFUL THAN OTHER TEAS**

"Unlike other green teas that are steeped in bags, matcha leaves are entirely dissolved in water while consumption. Hence, you ingest all its antioxidants. One cup of matcha tea has as many antioxidants as 10 cups of regular tea! Because you consume it whole, the catechins, amino acids, proteins, vitamins and minerals in it are considerably higher. Hence it has strong anti-cancer and anti-ageing properties," explains tea sommelier Dr Rupali Ambegaonkar. It also promotes a Zen state of mind, as it contains L-Theanine, a rare amino acid that helps in relaxation. It helps burn fat by increasing the rate of metabolism without promoting increased heart rate and blood pressure. It also improves immunity by fighting viruses and bacteria as it is rich in potassium, vitamins A and C, iron, protein, and calcium. Some studies even suggest people who drink matcha are less likely to develop heart diseases.

## **YOU CAN EAT IT TOO**

Chefs have realised the potential of this tea in cooking. They are using matcha to enhance the flavour of a dish naturally, as a colouring agent, in dressings or as decorative garnish. Says tea connoisseur Amit Mehta, "The tasting notes of matcha are umami, vegetal and grassy. This is not only a well-accepted flavour profile with the developing Indian palate but also considered nutritious, thus appealing to health-conscious people." While Japan uses this ingredient in savoury dishes like the matcha curry, and matcha soba noodles, in India, the tea is more popular in desserts. Mumbai-based baker Pooja Dhingra often uses it in her recipes. "The flavour of matcha complements a lot of desserts. It has a certain sweetness to it, which is enhanced with white chocolate. Personally, I love using matcha with white chocolate to make cookies, macarons or cupcakes. Matcha powder can be used in almost all desserts - cakes, eclairs, mille-feuilles, milkshake and smoothies."

While choosing matcha as an ingredient for your recipe, it is important to note that matcha powders that are lighter in colour are on the sweeter side and the darker ones are more astringent. Choose one depending on what you're baking.

## How vegans can get calcium



Calcium keeps bones and teeth healthy and strong, and around 1,000 mg of calcium per day is advisable for those aged between 19 and 50. It's the equivalent of about three glasses of milk, but for vegans, there can be more options, reports [femalefirst.co.uk](http://femalefirst.co.uk).

There are few food items that can help calcium supply for the body:

**Kale:** Just one cup of raw kale has 90 mg of calcium so three cups will give you more than one cup of milk. Great for salads and smoothies, it is an easy food to include in your diet.

**Oranges:** Just one orange has 60 mg of calcium so snacking on this citrus fruit through the day will get you close to your target. Or why not enjoy a glass of fortified orange juice in the morning?

**Soy Milk:** It's a dairy free alternative that contains 300 mg of calcium, just like a normal glass of milk.

**Oatmeal:** It's full of fibre, filling, and helps keep your heart healthy. Just one packet of this has 105 mg of calcium. Just watch out as most porridge is not suitable for milk allergy sufferers or vegans so choose wisely.

**Soy Beans:** One cup of Soy milk contains 261 mg of calcium.

**Almonds:** It helps in encouraging weight loss and reduce cholesterol.



**White Beans:** Only half a cup of white beans have 100 mg of calcium and they look like they do too!

**Figs:** These are high in fibre and iron but also give you 55 mg of calcium in just two figs.

**Broccoli:** This green vegetable has 180 mg of calcium in only one cup so when you were told to eat your greens as a child, your mother was actually thinking about your teeth and bones.

### Super benefits of ginger you did not know



*Here are some benefits of ginger that will have you biting into it.*

Ginger is one condiment which not just spices up your food and gives it the punch; it also comes with a lot of health and beauty benefits. Here are some of them –

Bite into a small piece of ginger before a meal and it will help increase your appetite.

Ginger can get your digestive juices working.

Ginger absorbs essential nutrients in the body.

If you are feeling nauseous, chew on to some ginger, preferably with a splash of honey.

Bogged down with stomach cramps? Chew on to some ginger for relief.

Suffering from pain in joints? Bite into ginger and feel the relief.

Ginger tea is great for a soar throat and a blocked nose.

Ginger also has aphrodisiac properties to spice up your life.

### [9 food combos to make you lean](#)

#### **Combination: Eggs and Mango**

##### **Gives you: Firm skin**

There's no need to apply several products to get good, firm skin. Just eat some eggs and mango, especially now that the fruit is in season. Eggs are naturally rich in amino acids that are essential for formation of skin-plumping collagen. And mango, which is rich in Vitamin C, works with these acids to boost collagen production. This helps build back lost stores in the body, which can significantly improve the appearance of skin.

**Do it right:** To give a boost to your next breakfast, pair an omelette with a cup of fresh mango chunks, which supply nearly an entire day's supply of Vitamin C.

#### **Combination: Red Bell Peppers and Black Beans**

##### **Gives you: Better Immunity**

They look good at the veggie market and are expensive. But here's a good reason to buy them. You'll absorb more immune-boosting plant iron by adding in some red bell peppers on your plate. Iron in black beans is hard for the body to absorb, however, adding a dose of Vitamin C-rich produce like red peppers converts the iron into a type that's easier for the body to use.

**Do it right:** There are great recipes online that show you how to mix your beans with red bell peppers and make the meal a tasty one too.

#### **Combination: Extra-Virgin Olive Oil and Tomatoes**

##### **Gives you: Better protection from diseases**

Tomatoes boast of four major carotenoids (alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, lutein, and lycopene) besides three potent antioxidants (betacarotene, Vitamin E, and Vitamin C) which may help fight cancer and heart disease. These protective chemicals are better absorbed with extra-virgin olive oil,

which is high in healthy monounsaturated fats.

**Do it right:** Leave the tomato skin on, since it is packed with phytochemicals. Extra-virgin olive oil is the least processed form, so it contains the most beneficial compounds. Store it away from heat and light to prevent it from going rancid.

### **Combination: Broccoli and Tomatoes**

#### **Gives you: Protection against cancer**

Both are individually known to have cancer-fighting properties, but research has shown that together they are the Hulk of cancerfighting foods. Scientists found consuming tomato and broccoli at the same time was more effective at slowing the growth of cancerous prostate tumours than eating either vegetable alone.

**Do it right:** Have one-and-a-half cups of broccoli along with twoand-a-half cups of fresh tomato, with pizza or spaghetti.

### **Combination: Oatmeal and Strawberries**

#### **Gives you: A healthier heart**

Oats contain two important phytochemicals called avenanthramides and phenolic acids, which are known to work with Vitamin C to reduce harmful effects of bad cholesterol and help prevent plaque build-up that lead to heart attacks.

**Do it right:** Enjoy a half cup of sliced strawberries with your morning bowl of oatmeal.

### **Combination: Green Tea and Lemon**

#### **Gives you: A healthier heart**

Green tea, a rich source of powerful antioxidants called catechins, is known to help improve the heart's health. However, according to studies only about 20 per cent of these compounds are absorbed by the human body. Adding lemon juice to green tea has been shown to increase the catechins level to 80 per cent.

**Do it right:** After brewing yourself a cup of green tea, squeeze in the juice of one whole lemon.

### **Combination: Cinnamon and Whole Grain Toast**

**Gives you: Extra energy and quicker weight loss**

Sprinkling cinnamon on your toast may help keep your blood sugar at a healthier level, which prevents dips in your energy and spikes in your hunger level. In a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, cinnamon was found to slow the rate of stomach emptying after meals and reduce the rise in blood sugar after meals to negate more bingeing later.

**Do it right:** Use whole grain bread, trans-free margarine and a teaspoon of cinnamon.

### **Combination: Garlic and Onions**

**Gives you: Full-body protection**

Both these veggies contain a number of organosulfur compounds and heart-healthy plant chemicals that help keep arteries free of plaque. Some of these compounds have even been studied for their power to detoxify carcinogens in the body.

**Do it right:** Most Indian cooking combines the two, however if you are in the mood for something else, the combination even works for soups and sauces.

### **Combination: Green Tea and Black Pepper**

**Gives you: A slimmer waistline**

Forget crash dieting. After your next meal sip a cup of green tea with a little black pepper thrown in. The combination boosts the absorption of EGCG, a key antioxidant in tea tied to calorie burning, by 130 per cent. Experts say the compounds in green tea can affect the hormones that regulate hunger and fullness.

**Do it right:** Studies say as little as a half-teaspoon of black pepper can increase the absorption of tea's beneficial compounds.

# THE HINDU BusinessLine

**Talk to farmers, don't bully them**



The twain can meet Agriculture and industrialisation can accommodate each other

Empower them with information. Then they will make the right decisions on parting with land for industrial expansion

With India's capital formation rate hitting rock bottom and unemployment inching upwards to touch 4.9 per cent mainly on account of rural joblessness, there should be no doubt that land needs to be acquired for industrial expansion. It is manufacturing activity that has the best chance to bring about economic growth, large-scale job creation, skill development and income growth in India.

According to the World Bank, 60.3 per cent of India's land area was constituted by agricultural land as on 2012, compared to the global average of 37.7 per cent. The diversion of agricultural land for industrial purposes is inevitable. The recent land ordinance, which has rekindled an old debate, mainly undoes the need for a 70 or 80 per cent consent of landowners for land acquisition if the sectors involved are any of the following: defence,



rural infrastructure, affordable housing, industrial corridors, and social and physical infrastructure projects including public-private partnership (PPP) projects.

### **Consent, rights, choices**

While it is a fact that the UPA-era Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (LARR), was in effect anti-industry because of the combined effect of a number of restrictive clauses, including the provision that land be returned if there is no utilisation after five years of acquisition, the NDA ordinance is not without faults. It is to be noted that the compensation, relief and rehabilitation clauses in the original Act have all been retained, indicating that the intent was not so much anti-farmer as pro-industry.

This article discusses matters of consent, rights and choices that have been thrown open by some of the provisions of the ordinance, while at the same time empathising with the government's desperate efforts to kick-start growth in the five identified sectors.

The exercise of choice is at the heart of any democratic framework. Accordingly, India's democracy must provide the right of choice to farmers and other landowners with respect to land acquisition. The use of state power to acquire land without majority consent is unfair. Therefore, the provision in the ordinance allowing for land acquisition even when, let's say, less than 5 per cent of landowners provide consent, is an act of bulldozing.

However, for the five important sectors identified, 70-80 per cent consent is a tad steep; 51 per cent should work well. But the exercise of this choice will potentially amount to a veto against development, if it is not an informed one. Information is the operational word here. There is a need to educate the targeted populace on the benefits of industrialisation, and then give them the right to make an informed choice.

### **Farmers as decision-makers**

High quality rural infrastructure (rural housing, roads, irrigation, electrification) will also benefit the very farmers the Opposition claims to be standing by. In light of the latest Annual Status of Education Report that paints a gloomy picture of school education in rural India, building social infrastructure in the form of schools and colleges is a laudable move too.

The point is that the five areas of exemption are important sectors, and incentivising activity in these is perfectly reasonable. The question is why not try to make landowners/farmers see the same logic as the government and make them part of the decision? There is no harm in countering ignorance, if any, through information.

Farm incomes aren't stable any longer; nor are they sufficient. Farm distress leads to either debt-fuelled suicides or migration in search of greener pastures. Already, non-farm activities contribute roughly half the total rural incomes, even as the share of agriculture in the labour-force plummets. If the rural population is already quitting their lands to move to unfamiliar urban centres for jobs, farmers will see perfect logic in job-creating industrial corridors running along their villages. That way, farmers get to stay where they belong, obtain gainful employment, and keep at bay the costs of migration including a sense of dislocation and alienation in faraway metropolises.

The case for putting information out there is made stronger by the sanitation and banking examples. A research survey published by RICE , shows that most of the rural population show a preference for open defecation, an unhygienic practice that leads to diseases. Those who can afford toilets don't build one; worse, 40 per cent of those with the said infrastructure (many built by the government) still defecates in the open. Why? Because an act of imposition may seem to the villagers alien or an act of elitist transfer of behavioural habits. So, what is needed is not the imposition of physical infrastructure, but the spread of the idea of its benefits. India needs farmers to be part of its development, not feel alienated or disgruntled by it. This would ensure the achievement of truly inclusive development.

### **Saving's the better option**

Farmers need to be convinced that saving money at the nearest bank is a far better option than hoarding cash under the quilt. That the banking correspondent, not the manipulative moneylender, is his true friend. There is no condescension in acknowledging that often decisions are not arrived at with one's own best interests in mind, but simply due to lack of information. Here, the role of the state is to enable information for the biggest stakeholders (farmers/landowners) to be able to make the right choices for themselves. It is only when the state steps in with brute force that the populace feels victimised.

Unlike what some critics think, the diversion of agricultural land won't have a dramatic bearing on food security given that the state is already sitting on excess foodgrain stocks worth ₹50,000 crore. This contention is also bolstered by the fact that rice and wheat make up almost 70 per cent of India's agricultural produce by area. Moreover, increases in yield per hectare will further erase doubts over food security.

What will, in fact, have an impact on nutrition levels in the country is the fact that farmers shy away from venturing into growing vegetables and pulses. Two of the main causes for this are a higher risk of crop failure for vegetables and fruits and the lack of cold storage facilities, resulting in spoilage and lower price realisation. But just as 'rural infrastructure' rings a very loud bell here (as intended), generating consent rather than exempting its requirement seems like a better option.

*The writer is a policy and research analyst*

### **Castorseed may drop to Rs. 3,800/quintal**



Lying low Unless there is a robust export demand, prices will remain close to ₹4,000 a quintal levels

Prices will be bearish on record inventory and subdued demand for oil  
Castorseed prices mainly move on production estimates, export demand and strategies adopted by stockists. Over the last one month, prices have been volatile due to speculative activities by traders.

In fact, since last month, prices have moved in both directions. They moved up 18 per cent from Rs. 4,500 a quintal to Rs. 5,294, highest for the year.

They then dropped to Rs. 4,200 levels last week. Prices surged, after slipping to Rs. 3,800 levels in May, which is 18.6 per cent recovery.

Commodity prices have moved both ways, making it attractive for financial investors and speculators.

Of late, castorseed has been the most traded agricultural commodity by value and volume on the derivatives market (NCDEX) as there are limited government interventions in physical trade as well as exports.

### **Acreage up; exports down**

Castor is sown mostly in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh after the onset of monsoon (July-August) and harvested in December-January. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, castor was sown on 10.36 lakh hectares during 2014-15 – up 5.3 per cent compared with the previous year.

In Gujarat, it was sown on 7.33 lh, some 18 per cent higher. Meanwhile, acreage in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana was less compared with the previous year.

On the exports front, castor oil and its derivatives have dropped. During the 2014-15 marketing year (April-March), shipments of castor oil and meal dropped 15 per cent and 20 per cent respectively, Solvent Extractors' Association of India data show.

The drop in castor oil exports was attributed to lower demand in China, which imports about 50 per cent of castor oil from India. Meanwhile, exports have increased month-on-month for castor derivatives.

After an incessant downfall in prices during January-May 2014, supported by record production last year, castorseed prices rebounded in December.

### **Speculative movement**

The commodity gained about 25 per cent despite weak fundamentals – higher carryover stocks, good sowing, favourable late showers and lower export demand.

The rise in castorseed prices was probably due to speculative moves by some strong financial investors.

According to trade sources, speculators have accumulated long positions in the futures and simultaneously bought stocks from physical markets.

They have planned to square-off their positions once prices rise to the desired levels before the start of the tender period on the future exchanges.

However, to curb the speculative activities and safeguard the interests of genuine participants, the exchange advanced the tender period and also levied pre-expiry margins for the active-January contract.

The extended time gave genuine market participants more time to arrange for delivery while the rising margin forced speculators to exit their positions.

In the process, prices have plunged by almost 15 per cent to Rs. 4,350/quintal. For the January series, a record delivery allocation of over 2 lakh tonnes was made by NCDEX.

## **Outlook**

Prices have dropped more than 10 per cent since the beginning of the year and new crop are due to arrive from next month. Peak arrivals will be in April and May.

Currently, the February contract on the NCDEX is trading around levels of Rs. 4,200, same as last years' average January prices.

Further, according to trade sources, there are more than three lakh tonnes of carryover stocks, including the NCDEX stock and stockists' holdings. This year's production is estimated at 15-16 lakh tonnes.

Citing the record availability of castorseed and subdued castor oil export demand, we expect prices to dip in the coming months and touch Rs. 3,800 levels. Unless there is a robust export demand, prices will remain close to Rs. 4,000 a quintal levels.

The writer is Associate Director - Commodities & Currencies, Angel Commodities Broking Pvt. Ltd. Views are personal.



## US poultry import: India appeals against WTO rejection of ban



Bone of contention Domestic breeders fear that cheap chicken legs from the US could eat up at least 40 per cent of their market share

**New Delhi, January 27:**

India has challenged a World Trade Organisation (WTO) ruling against a ban on US poultry imports as scientifically invalid. India had banned these imports on fears that they could result in spread of the bird flu.

“Our representatives in Geneva have filed an appeal with the WTO against its ruling on our poultry import restrictions on January 26, which was in fact the last date for doing so,” a Commerce Ministry official told *BusinessLine* .

Over four lakh poultry farmers in India, who produce an estimated 3.5 million tonnes of chicken every year, could be hit if imports from the US are allowed.

Domestic breeders fear that cheap chicken legs from the US could eat up at least 40 per cent of their market share.

The US had dragged India to the WTO last year claiming that the restrictions being imposed by India on poultry imports were on unscientific basis. In October, a WTO panel ruled that India’s import curbs on farm products, including poultry, from the US on fears that “low-intensity” bird flu can affect public health, were not in line with multilateral trade rules.

“We have put in additional arguments to prove that our fears are valid. Let us see what happens,” the official said. The Commerce Ministry has also

asked poultry breeders to work out fresh risk assessments on health concerns that would better withstand scientific scrutiny.

Risk assessment could be done on factors such as US poultry being fed genetically modified food or the fact that frozen chicken is kept in that state for long periods, the official said.

### **Prices rise at Coonoor tea sale**



#### **Coonoor, January 27:**

The Broken Pekoe of Homedale Estate, auctioned by Global Tea Brokers, topped the overall CTC market and Leaf auctions when Mittal Tea Co bought it for Rs. 205 a kg at Sale No: 4 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auction.

The Super Red Dust of Darmona Tea Industry, auctioned by Paramount Tea Marketing, topped the Dust auctions at Rs. 200 along with Pekoe Dust of Homedale Estate (also Rs. 200).

Broken Orange Pekoe Fannings grade of Homedale Estate ( Rs. 204) and Broken Pekoe of Ambukal Estate, auctioned by Paramount Tea Marketing ( Rs. 200), were the other grades which fetched Rs. 200.

In all, 117 marks got Rs. 125 and more.

Kairbetta topped the orthodox auction at Rs. 244 a kg, followed by Havukal Rs. 243, Kodanad Rs. 241 and Highfield Estate Rs. 210.

In all, 26 marks got Rs. 125 and more per kg.

Quotations held by brokers indicated bids ranging Rs. 45-49 a kg for plain leaf grades and Rs. 90-170 for brighter liquoring sorts.

They ranged Rs. 56-59 for plain dusts and Rs. 110-190 for brighter liquoring dusts. There was some purchase for Pakistan in a wide range Rs. 51-78 a kg.

### **Fresh rain likely in North-West from Feb 1**

#### **Thiruvananthapuram, January 27:**

The India Met Department has joined the watch for rain/thundershowers for north and north-west India into the weekend and early next.

In a way, this is a miniaturised version of what is playing out big in the US as a worst snowstorm not seen since 1872 bears down on the country's east coast.

#### **Interactive weather**

Both are at best interactive weather borne out when a mass of warm and steamy weather from the ocean is forced to ride a huge build up of cold, heavy, heavy and arctic air.

Being in the latitudes closer to the Arctic Circle, the cold is severe in the US; the moisture that the warm air from the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic freezes into being snow that is dumped on the ground.

The warm is packed into a weather system that has the build and strength of a depression by the time it approaches the US east coast for the rendezvous with the resident Arctic air.

Given this, it also has the potential of setting of high winds as well as rustling up higher waves, leading to frequent occurrences of coastal surges and flooding.

## **US snow storm**

This is what plays out currently in the US as the snowstorm is forecast to grind ever so slowly across the plains of the US, prolonging the harsh weather for the next couple of days.

The same atmospheric forces are at work almost half a world away to the east-southeast in India as moist and warm air (fortunately not amounting to strong systems) blows into cold winter air in the north-west.

But India is spared given the huge distance that separates it from the 'vulnerable' latitudes to the north.

The air chill factor of the cold air would also be much less compared to Pakistan and Afghanistan which it would have rolled past.

The warm and moist air from the Bay of Bengal to the south and south-east interacts with this cold fair from the north and north-west to set up the winter rain.

## **Mercury plunge**

A fresh western disturbance carrying the relatively cold air (compared to the ocean air) is expected to approach north-west India from February 1.

It will bring showers to Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, east Rajasthan, west Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Vidarbha.

Meanwhile, the Met has forecast the possibility of the minimum (night) temperatures plunging given that an existing western disturbance is preparing to leave north-west India.

## US port strike muddies waters; pear exports slow



### **Mumbai, January 27:**

The labour impasse at the ports along the US West Coast has severely affected shipments of pears to India. The Pear Bureau Northwest, a US marketing organisation, is struggling to export its 2014 pear crop, with a senior official stating that the US Port strike has resulted in loss of several millions of dollars in sales.

India was at the seventh position among US' top ten export markets for fresh pear exports in 2012-13, behind Mexico, Canada, Brazil, Russia, UAE and Colombia. India imported 129,880 cartons of 44 pounds each, way below top importer Mexico's 2,930,504 cartons.

The US had a bounty crop in 2014 at 20.8 million boxes, though exports have been hit. "This season, exports are below last season, principally due to the US port strike and slowdown," said Jeff Correa, International Marketing Director, The Pear Bureau Northwest.

"Exports between August and November 2014 were 83,700 boxes against 110,000 boxes last season during the same time period," he said.



Though no precise numbers were available as to the overall impact of the US port strike, “it has impacted our industry by several millions of dollars of lost sales,” Correa told *BusinessLine* in a mailed interaction.

### **Trade blocks**

The Pear Bureau Northwest markets fresh pears grown in Oregon and Washington. These two regions comprise US’ largest pear producing area, accounting for 84 per cent of all fresh pears grown in the United States, and 92 per cent of America’s fresh pear exports. Pears from these two states are distributed under the USA Pears brand.

Speaking about the impediments to trade, Correa said, “USA pears face many of the same impediments to trade that the Washington Apple industry faces. High tariffs are the biggest constraint to market expansion, as is uncertainty or confusing language interpretations in the phyto-sanitary and labelling requirements.”

While India places a 50 per cent tariff on imported apples, imported pears command a 30 per cent tariff. Despite the tariff, imports of both apples and pears have grown substantially in the country.

### **Port problem**

The US port imbroglio has been delaying shipments since last October. It first began at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, California, and spread to the Seattle and Washington ports. Exports from Washington have taken the hardest hit.

Incidentally, Russia’s embargo of agricultural imports from western nations, and a potential anti dumping case threatening agricultural exports to Mexico has also added to the problem.

## Nabard pegs credit potential for agri, rural sectors in Karnataka at Rs. 1.08 lakh crore

State Focus Paper for Karnataka released



Crop savers Farmers use traditional scarecrows and a novel technique of tying empty pesticide bottles between coconut trees to protect pomegranate crops from birds at a farm at Mankikere village near Tiptur. Pomegranates are planted as an intercrop in many coconut farms GRN Somashekar

### **Bengaluru, January 27:**

Bankers in Karnataka have the potential to extend credit of up to Rs. 1.08 lakh crore in 2015-16 for agriculture and allied sectors, medium and small enterprises and development of rural infrastructure, according to projections made by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard).

The estimates represent a 26 per cent increase over projections made for the current financial year.

### **Sectoral projections**

Of the total estimated potential credit projections, close to two thirds (64.58 per cent) was assessed for agriculture and allied sector, 12.29 per cent for the medium and small enterprises, including agro processing units, and 23.13 for the other priority sector.

Releasing the State Focus Paper for 2015-16, Nabard's Chief General Manager GR Chintala said the potential linked credit plans (PLPs) for 2015-16 were prepared on the edifice of base PLPs for 2015-16 after accounting for factors such as changes in government's priorities and policies,

strengthening of rural infrastructure, market forces and cost escalation among others.

Chintala said that keeping the importance of capital formation in agriculture sector for its sustainability over a period of time, the paper is focused on “accelerating the pace of capital formation in agriculture and allied sector.”

In its efforts to facilitate increased credit flow to agriculture, the bank has identified 74 area-based schemes (ABS) in the 2015-16 credit plans involving an outlay of Rs. 952 crore. These proposed schemes are in sectors such as dairy, poly house, agro processing, storage and small ruminants, plantation, horticulture and sericulture.

The adoption of ABS through cluster approach with assured backward and forward linkages is expected to result in increased ground level credit to allied agricultural activities, Chintala said, exhorting the bankers to create awareness among farmers with respect to adoption of better technology and best practices.

### **Potential areas**

Karnataka Horticulture Secretary Rajeev Chawala said sectors such as sericulture, horticulture and the possibility of tapping and processing of neera from coconut trees hold potential for credit expansion.

He said the survey of horticulture farmers in Karnataka has been taken up and the result for about 7-8 districts will be made available this year, which would give an insight on credit profile and the cropping trends among others.

## Coconut growers call for 'neera' policy in Karnataka

Plea to set up coconut farmers' cooperatives to promote neera



Neera being tapped on the outskirts of Mangaluru, using a technology developed by the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI), Kasaragode HS Manjunath

**Mangaluru, January 27:**

A meeting of coconut growers in Dakshina Kannada district has called for a 'neera' policy in the State.

U Rajesh Nayak, a farmer from Ganjimath village of Mangaluru taluk, said the lack of 'neera' policy is preventing Karnataka farmers from exploring its potential.

### **Kerala example**

Giving the example of neighbouring Kerala, Nayak said at least 14 coconut growers' companies in Kerala are marketing 'neera' in that State. All these companies put together do a business of around Rs. 100 crore a year, he said.

(Neera is a sweet sap tapped from coconut tree. If not consumed within a couple of hours or stored under controlled temperature, it will ferment into toddy with alcohol content.)

Stating that many farmers in the district have small holdings, Nayak said they find it difficult to get labour for the farm-related activities. In such a situation, cooperative farming is the need of the hour for farmers.

If come together in the form of company for crops such as coconut, farmers with small holdings could add value to the commodity in the form of 'neera' and other products and market such products, he said.

Sanjeev Naik from the Karnataka Horticulture Department in the district spoke on the benefits of 'neera' extraction from coconut plants.

### **Farmers' co-ops**

Sincy Thomas, technical officer from Coconut Development Board, explained the process involved in the establishment of coconut growers' companies.

Nalin Kumar Kateel, Member of Parliament from Dakshina Kannada, who presided over the meeting of coconut growers, said that farmers should take the benefit of cooperative system to boost their farming income.

Agriculture is the backbone of Bantwal, Puttur, Sullia and Belthangady taluks in the Dakshina Kannada district. In such a situation, there is a need to develop agriculture-based industries in the region, he said.

### **Special agri zone**

Kateel said he would submit a proposal to the Centre seeking the establishment of a special agricultural zone in the district. Stating that there will not be any need for acquiring land in such a zone, he said the thrust will be given for integrated farming by farmers in such a zone.

Manohar Shetty, who represented the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha, proposed a vote of thanks.

### **India needs to improve quality of spices: Minister**

#### **New Delhi, January 27:**

In order to sustain its position as the biggest exporter of spices, India needs to produce competitively-priced and unadulterated spices that were of superior quality and better packaged, Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh said at a national conference on spices development here on Tuesday.

The Minister said that competition had risen from countries such as Sri Lanka and Indonesia. "We need to increase acreage of spices and have better



standards,” he said, while commending the Spices Board for its role in enhancing quality and hygiene of spices.

Commerce Secretary Rajeev Kher urged stakeholders to devise a national policy on spices trading at the earliest. He said there was a need to increase production of value-added products, such as extracts, that would allow good returns for spice traders.

“It is becoming important for India to export the best commodities since competition is rising. It is important that those involved in the back-end of agri-practices and post-harvesting are informed about the quality-related demands,” he said.

Kher said the industry should take advantage of ‘Geographical Indicators’ which attribute a product’s quality to its origin for branding Indian spices.

India saw exports expand by 12 per cent to 4.21 lakh tonnes in the April-September period, as compared to the same period in 2013-14.

## Business Standard

Nabard projects 26% growth in Karnataka's credit plan for FY16

### **Bank has identified 74 area-based schemes with a financial outlay of Rs 953 cr**

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) has projected a 26 per cent growth in the potential linked credit plan (PLP) for [Karnataka](#) at Rs 1,08,373 crore during the year 2015-16 compared to the ongoing fiscal.

Of the total projection, 64.58 per cent (Rs 69,985 crore) is assessed for agriculture and allied sector, 12.29 per cent for MSE including agro-processing and 23.13 per cent for other priority sector.

"The PLPs for 2015-16 are prepared on the edifice of base PLP projections for the year after accounting for factors such as changes in government's priorities and policies, strengthening of rural infrastructure, market forces, cost escalation and trends among others," said G R Chintala, chief general manager, Nabard, Karnataka.

Presenting the highlights of the credit plan for FY16 at a seminar, here today, he said Nabard has formulated Area Based Schemes in each district which will form a part of the District Credit Plan of the district with detailed banking plan in an effort to provide a further fillip to disbursement of agriculture term loan.

Keeping the importance of capital formation in agriculture sector for its sustainability over a period of time, the theme for State Focus Paper is chosen as "accelerating the pace of capital formation in agriculture and allied sector", he said.

As against the target of priority sector advances of Rs 73,362 crore under the Annual Credit Plan(ACP) for the state for 2013-14, an amount of Rs 73,995 crore was disbursed during the year, thereby recording an achievement of over 100 per cent.

Although the state has been consistently achieving its overall targets under ACP for the last few years, achievement under Agriculture Term Loan was 79 per cent of target during 2013-14 with as many as 11 districts in the state with low achievement (below the state average) under Term Loan sector. Achievements under MSME and other priority sectors were at 122.39 per cent and 77.45 per cent respectively, Chintala said.

For the year 2015-16, Nabard has identified 74 area-based schemes involving a total financial outlay of Rs 953 crore in the areas of dairy farming, playhouses, agro-processing, storage, small ruminants, plantation and horticulture.

[Soon, farmers can insure against losses from natural disasters](#)

**Currently, the Department of Agriculture runs two crop insurance schemes, one of which is weather-based**

The Centre is devising an insurance product for farmers that will guarantee to make good their loss in income from natural calamities for at least seven years. For crops with minimum support prices (MSPs), the loss in income will be based on the MSP; for others, it will be calculated based on the average market price of the commodity for the past seven years. If states do not want to avail of the central scheme, they can frame individual income insurance schemes, depending on their geographical and agro-climatic

needs. The proposed scheme, to be called the National Agriculture Income Insurance Scheme, will be run on a pilot basis from 2015-16.

“The farm income insurance scheme will have two components — price-based insurance and yield-based insurance. A committee comprising senior agriculture officials and representatives from state governments will be formed to look into the suggestions of state governments to prepare a national insurance product,” Agriculture Minister [Radha Mohan Singh](#) told reporters at the end of a day-long meeting with state officials. Currently, the Department of Agriculture runs two crop insurance schemes, one of which is weather-based. Guarantee compensation for loss of yield in case of [natural disasters](#) but do not make good the loss in income. “The Centre will give the same financial assistance to states that want to have their own income insurance scheme as it does for other crop insurance schemes,” Singh said. Haryana and Uttarakhand have decided to devise individual income insurance schemes. For crop insurance schemes, 75 per cent of the premium is borne by the central and state governments, while farmers bear the rest.

In India, crop insurance is provided by state-run Agriculture Insurance Company and 10 private insurers, including ICICI Lombard, HDFC Ergo and Iffco Tokio.

According to Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India guidelines, at least six per cent of the premium should be from crop insurance products for all insurers.



### **Subsidised fish likely from March**

#### **Five govt mobile vans to sell fish at subsidised rates**

MARGAO: After failed deadlines over the last one year and half, fish loving Goans can now look forward to subsidised fish at mobile counters tentatively from March this year.

The Fisheries department has also announced plans to set up a marine park at the defunct pilot prawn hatchery at Benaulim.

Director of Fisheries Dr Sharmila Monteiro said that five mobile vans laden with fish will move around the two districts to sell fish at subsidised rates for the common man. While two vans each will be move around in the two district, the fifth van will cater to the requirements of people from Ponda taluka.

The Fisheries Director made the announcement when questioned whether the promise made by the government headed by former Chief Minister, Manohar Parrikar to sell fish at subsidised rates will at all become a reality. “ We are going in for five mobile vans for the moment. Fish will be supplied to the vans by the Fisheries Cooperatives Societies.

The five vans should become operations from March this year”, Monteiro said in the presence of Fisheries Minister Avertano Furtado and Secretary Fisheries Amjad Tak.

Incidentally, the Fisheries Director expressed her helplessness in controlling the prices of fish at the wholesale fish market. When the media sought to know why the Fisheries department is not intervening to control the skyrocketing of prices of fish in the wholesale fish market, Monteiro frankly admitted that her department has no control over the price mechanism. In fact, she pointed out that the price of fish is determined by the demand and supply in the market.

Meanwhile, the Fisheries Director has said the government has in principle decided to utilise the sprawling land at Benaulim, which houses the defunct pilot prawn hatchery, to set up a marine park. “ A de- FISH FOR ALL cision to this effect has been taken by the government. The project is presently at the planning stage”, she added.