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# THE HINDU

**“Inspect food articles sold in villages regularly”**



Participants at the monthly farmers’ grievances day meeting held here on Friday urged the district administration to inspect the food articles sold in villages on a regular basis to ensure the health and hygiene of the rural populace.

V.Dhanapalan, general secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, said that tea sold in interior villages was most often adulterated, and authorities must conduct surprise raids in the interior villages where people are not aware of the hazards of adulteration. S.Palanisamy, District Collector, who presided over the meeting, directed the officials to initiate action in this regard.

A section of farmers also wanted higher minimum support price for paddy and expressed concern over the meagre hike of Rs. 50 a quintal announced by the Centre. Arupathi Kalyanam, general secretary, Federation of Farmers’ Associations, suggested that farmers, who had raised paddy during the early-kuruvai season, should also be brought under the ‘kuruvai’ package.

The Collector said that an area of 28,777 hectares would be brought under ‘kuruvai’ season this year. Nurseries have been planted on 27,272 hectares, including the 20,472 hectares covered under the ‘System of Rice Intensification’.

A.Benjamin Prabu, District Revenue Officer, G.Rajendra Prasad, Regional Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies, and K.Mayilvahanan, Joint Director of Agriculture, were present.

## **When ‘red water’ forces people to migrate**

Nandaram Kunjam never imagined that one day he would be forced to leave his ancestral village in the Maoist hotbed here, not because of the Naxal terror, but due to the river water turning red due to effluents discharged into it after iron ore mining.

Earlier many from Kunjam’s Madadi village, located at a remote location in Dantewada, left the place due to terror unleashed by the Naxals, but this time the reason for people migrating from the place is different.

Madadi village lies in the foot of Bailadila hills where country’s largest iron-ore producer and exporter National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) has been extracting iron ore for last four decades. The valuable mineral has become a curse for Kunjam and others staying in the periphery.

“My generation has never seen fresh water in Shankhani river (flows in the area),” the 32-year-old villager said.

The villagers call it “Lal Nadi” (red river) rather by its original name, he said, adding that tragically, the villagers have no other option for water which he claimed was posing several health hazards and destroying the crops.

Dankini and Shankhani rivers, the lifeline of Dantewada, in south Chhattisgarh have lost the sheen to iron ore, due to pollution of red oxide discharged from the mines after iron ore extraction. The two rivers, ranked by environmentalists as highly polluted, originate from Bailadila region of Dantewada, located around 450 kms from the state capital, that has been endowed with rich iron ore reserves.

Kunjam was growing rice like many in other villages of the region depending on the two rivers for irrigation. But a couple of years back, he decided to pack his bags and shift to Kirandul town along with his family in search of work.

## **Water released from Amaravathi Dam**

Farmers who are readying to raise paddy in the command areas of Amaravathi Dam during the current kuruvai season have every reason to rejoice as the Public Works Department released water from the dam on Friday.

Officials in PWD (Water Resource Organisation) told *The Hindu* that water would be released in different spells for over a period of 120 days with 45 days break given in between the sequences of water discharge.

“Paddy is usually the predominant crop raised in the 7,520 acres that would be benefitted by the water release. Coconut and sugarcane are the two standing crops in the said region,” said the agriculture department officials. Water was released at the rate of 300 cusecs into the Amaravathi River in order to feed eight irrigation channels namely Ramakulam channel, Kallapuram channel, Komaralingam channel, Sarkar Kannadiputhur

channel, Chomaldevi channel, Kaniyur channel, Kadathur channel and Karatholvu channel.

### **Dindigul experienced surplus rainfall in June**



Dindigul district experienced surplus rainfall in June, as a result of which storage level in tanks and irrigation wells had improved, said Collector T. N. Hariharan on Friday.

Addressing the monthly farmers' grievance redressal meeting here, Mr. Hariharan said that the district recorded 391.17 mm of rainfall in June (till 26), against the average rainfall of 32.30 mm. This was 159.07 mm in excess of the rainfall recorded during the period last year.

As a result, storage in 10 per cent of 91,488 irrigation wells was sufficient for providing water for three to four hours; 20 per cent of them had water to be supplied for two to three hours and 70 per cent of them could provide water for one to two hours a day. Among the 2,065 rainfed tanks in the district, 28 had water sufficient for two months' irrigation, 138 for one month and there was low storage in 1,899 tanks.

The Collector, according to an official press release, appealed to the farmers to begin summer ploughing, taking advantage of the summer rain. Summer ploughing would facilitate retention of water and improve groundwater table.

It would also help in the destruction of residual pests from the previous crop, besides helping multiplication of organisms that were good for the crops.

He advised the farmers from rainfed areas to get their soil tested so as to plan effectively for the next crop.

Those who participated in the meeting included N. Sampath Kumar, Joint Director of Agriculture, and Ramanathan, Joint Director of Horticulture.

## **Focus on increasing sugar cane yield**

The average productivity of sugar cane is low with certain regions in the country reporting yields as low as 60 tonne a hectare.

However, Tamil Nadu is better performing state in terms of productivity, an average productivity in our State is 110 tonne a hectare.

Still there is scope to improve the productivity up to 250 tonne a hectare in Tamil Nadu. Hence, there is an urgent need to improve productivity and protect farmer livelihoods and ecosystem through an integrated approach. Sustainable sugar cane Initiatives is the new integrated technology mainly to improve the productivity of land, water and labour without further degrading the sugar cane growing ecosystems.

To help farmers adopt the technology fully, the National Agricultural Development Programme (RKVY) sponsored training programme on 'sustainable sugar cane initiatives' was held for two days at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra at Sandhiyur near here recently. The participants for the training programme were identified by the Department of Agriculture.

The theme areas were covered by experts and farm scientists through presentation and demonstration during the training programme.

The Sustainable Sugar cane Initiative (SSI) aims at providing practical options to the farmers in improving the productivity of land, water and labour, all at the same time. SSI is also expected to reduce the overall pressure on water resources and contribute to recovery of ecosystems.

SSI is an innovative method of sugar cane production using less seeds, less water and optimum utilisation of fertilizers and land to achieve more yields.

Major Principles that governs the SSI raising nursery using single-budded chips, transplanting young seedlings, maintaining wide spacing in the main field, provision of sufficient moisture and avoiding inundation of water, practicing intercropping, using or organic methods of nutrient management and plant protection, were explained to the farmers in detail. Raising a nursery and grading reduces plant mortality significantly as compared to conventional cultivation.

The farmers were also told about the overall benefits of improved water use efficiency, optimum use of fertilizers favour balanced availability of nutrients, better aeration and more penetration of sunlight favours higher sugar content, reduced cost of cultivation and increased returns through intercropping etc.

Farm scientists led by N. Sriram, Programme Coordinator, KVK, Sandhiyur, urged the farmers to adopt SSI and drip and fertigation methods for improving the sugar cane productivity and sugar content. M. Vijayakumar, Subject matter specialist (Agronomy) and G. Senthilnathan of KVK, Sandhiyur, were among the resource persons who imparted training.

## **Farmers' apprehension on availability of certified seeds allayed**

Farmers were assured that adequate supply of certified paddy seeds would be maintained at the agricultural extension centres ahead of the sowing season.

Officials said during the grievance day meeting chaired by District Collector S. Prabakar on Friday that there was a stock of 416 tonnes of seeds with the Agriculture Department and 132 tonnes with the Cooperative Department, to a query raised by Subi Thalapathi, representative of Thadapalli-Arakankottai Ayacut Farmers Association, who sought to know the preparedness of Agriculture Department.

With water release expected in all ayacuts of all three canals: Thadapalli-Arakankottai, Kalingarayan and Lower Bhavani Project canal, during July-August, farmers were apprehensive about availability of paddy seeds for cultivation in nearly two lakh acres.

Mr. Thalapathi wanted the Agriculture Department to keep a tab on private entities selling uncertified seeds and initiate stringent action.

Mr. Thalapathi also wondered how herbicides could be sold in bulk unauthorisedly. Farmers said the Forest Department was not doing enough to prevent man-animal conflict. The State Government's funding to the tune of Rs. 40.5 crore for the purpose during 2015-16 was utilised optimally in The Nilgiris, Coimbatore and Krishnagiri districts whereas in Erode district, the problem of wild animal intrusion into farms that has turned acute for farmers from the stretch between Sathyamangalam and Anthiyur was not addressed.

The man-animal conflict in Erode district could be prevented substantially by shutting down unauthorised farm houses on the hills that cause disturbance to wild life, Mr. Thalapathy explained.

## **Dues**

Responding to mounting criticism by farmers over non-settlement of dues, officials of Sakthi Sugars Limited said the company has been assured of Rs. 30 crore funding by the Central Government for direct settlement of bank dues of farmers.

## **Govt. to construct new godowns, cold storages**

The State government has taken up the construction of godowns and cold storages to ensure safety to agriculture and horticulture produce grown by farmers across the State, Minister for Horticulture and Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Shamnur Shivshankarappa has said.

Speaking after inaugurating 6,800-metric tonnes capacity godown at the APMC constructed under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana here on Friday, he said that for all these years the State government used to store agriculture and horticulture produce at private godowns by paying rent every month.

But due to lack of maintenance and other technical reasons, farmers used incur loss and get less profit.

Keeping this in view, the State government has taken up construction of godowns of 2,000 to 5,000 metric tonne capacity in different districts of the State.

The State government would pay 80 per cent of the cost of these godowns and the remaining 20 per cent would be borne by APMCs in respective districts.

“The scientifically constructed godowns would play a crucial role in protecting the interests of farmers during price variation in the market. Based on the receipts provided by these APMC godowns, the farmers would be able to obtain loans of up to Rs. 2 lakh,” he added.

### **Concrete roads**

Steps would also be taken to construct concrete roads on APMC premises. District link roads would also be developed along with the main road of the APMC.

Farmers in the district should make use of the facilities provided at the APMC, he said.

APMC president Raghavendra Naik said that the 6,800 metric tonne capacity godown had been constructed by spending Rs. 5.85 crore.

### **Collector promises steps to improve milk procurement**

The district administration will initiate steps to ensure prompt procurement of milk by the Tiruchi District Cooperative Milk Producers Union (Aavin) to protect dairy farmers from incurring losses, said K.S.Palanisamy, District Collector.

Presiding over the monthly ‘Farmers Grievances Day’ meeting held here on Friday, Mr.Palanisamy assured the participants to convene a meeting with the officials to address the complaints over lack of milk procurement by Aavin.

Earlier, N.Ganesan, district secretary, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, said that better price offered by Aavin has attracted a large number of milk producers, who were hitherto supplying milk to private firms, to shift to Aavin. However, due to the lack of bulk coolers in villages, large quantity of milk was getting spoiled every day, he said.

Mr.Ganesan suggested that Aavin booths must be set up on national highways to market milk and dairy products on the lines of those in Puducherry. The Collector said that he would discuss the issue with the Aavin authorities immediately.

Mr.Palanisamy also assured P.K.Shanmugamusandaram, district president, National South Indian River Interlinking Agriculturists Association, that he would convene a meeting of forest officials to evolve ways to control the wild boar menace. The farmer complained of extensive damage to the crop. He also wanted adequate surveillance cameras to be set up at strategic locations to monitor the movement of the animal. Koundampatti S.Subramanian, deputy general secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, said the State government should impress upon the Karnataka government to release Cauvery water at least during the 'samba' season. The Centre should also be persuaded to constitute the Cauvery Management Board immediately, he added. A few farmers expressed disappointment over the meagre hike in the minimum support price for paddy by the Centre. N.Veerasekaran, coordinator, South and North Ayyan Vaikkal Pasanadarar Sangam and M.P.Chinnadurai, a progressive farmer, said the MSP hike of Rs.50 per quintal for paddy was meagre and urged the Centre to factor in the soaring cultivation cost due to hike in the price of agricultural inputs and wages of labourers while deciding the MSP.

P.Viswanathan, State president, Tamizhaga Eri Matrum Attrupasana Vivasayigal Sangam, pleaded for direct auction of onions to help onion growers in the district.

Ayilai Siva.Suriyan, district secretary, Tamizhnadu Vivasaya Sangam, urged the district administration to dredge tanks and irrigational channels well ahead of the monsoon season.

Raja R.Chidambaram, State secretary, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, citing the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement, pleaded for declaring villages with poor crop yield as drought-hit areas.

Earlier, a group of farmers staged a protest in front of the conference hall condemning the discharge of effluents into the Cauvery. P.Ayyakannu, State president, National South Indian River Interlinking Agriculturists Association, said the Cauvery was being polluted at three major places in the district and sought immediate intervention by the Pollution Control Board authorities.

### **Inflow into Cauvery on the rise at Billigundlu and Stanley reservoir**

In what could bring cheer to the farmers of the delta region, that look up to the water level in Stanley reservoir in Mettur, the inflow into Bilingundlu reached 15,000 cusecs and is likely to be double by Saturday evening. As of Friday evening, the inflow from Kabini and Krishnanaraja Sagar reservoir into Biligundlu reached 9,000 cusecs and 6,000 cusecs respectively. According to Dharmapuri Collector K. Vivekanandan, communication received from Kabini and KRS dams has indicated that by Saturday evening the inflow would be 30,000 cusecs.



However, putting to rest speculations of a shutdown of Hogenakkal falls, Mr.Vivekanandan said there is a fixed protocol for 50,000 cusecs onwards. However, since it's the weekend and tourists are likely to arrive, safety precautions have been taken in the falls, he added.

Public Works Department officials in Salem told *The Hindu* that the initial inflow into Stanley Reservoir at Mettur at 11 a.m was 10,376 cusecs and it gradually increased to 14,000 cusecs at 4 p.m. The water level stood at 74.93 feet against its full reservoir level of 120 feet while the storage was 37.089 tmcft against the dam's capacity of 93.470 tmcft. About 1,003 cusecs of water was discharged for drinking water purpose.

Officials said the river course distance from KRS and Kabini dams to the Stanley reservoir was 182 km and 241 km respectively. "It will take 48 hours and 60 hours respectively for the water from these dams to reach Mettur initially due to dry river bed," an official said. Officials said the discharge from Karnataka dams was being stepped up gradually leading to the increase in inflow. All maintenance works in sluices and storage areas have been carried out to face any situation for the current monsoon season, they added.

 *The Indian* **EXPRESS**

**As rain gods smile, farmers plant more pulses and oilseeds**





Consumers can hope for some relief from spiralling dal and edible oil prices, with farmers significantly stepping up sowing of pulses and oilseeds on the back of bountiful monsoon rain.

This comes even as the Met department announced Friday that the south-west monsoon has now covered the entire country and the season's overall rainfall has so far been nearly 27 per cent higher than the normal average for this period.

The good spell of rains in June across central, western and southern India has led to the progressive area planted under kharif pulses nearly doubling to 11.04 lakh hectares (lh), from 6.14 lh covered during this period last year, while going up more than five times in the case of oilseeds (from 5.29 to 27.89 lh).

The main pulses-growing states — Karnataka, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh (MP) — have reported substantial jump in sowing of arhar (toor or pigeon-pea), moong (green gram) and urad (black gram) this time. Likewise, there has been a huge jump in acreages under soyabean in MP (from practically zero at this time last year to 15.82 lh) and groundnut in Gujarat (from 0.64 lh to 3.71 lh) and Andhra Pradesh (from 0.48 lh to 0.91 lh), thanks to monsoon's timely arrival.

This is good news also for consumers, who have seen dal prices soar by roughly 50 per cent over the last one year. Mustard oil is, likewise, currently retailing at around Rs 125 per kg in Delhi compared to Rs 100 a year ago, while groundnut oil prices in Ahmedabad have soared from Rs 85 to 120 a kg for this period. Low domestic production has also resulted in India's aggregate import bill on edible oils and pulses climbing from \$9.08 billion in 2013-14 to \$ 12.46 billion in 2014-15.

## KHARIF CROP ACREAGE IN LAKH HECTARES\*

	Normal	2015	2014
Rice	35.68	23.28	25.04
Pulses	7.10	11.04	6.14
Arhar	2.36	3.99	1.53
Urad	1.29	2.00	0.72
Moong	1.99	3.43	2.00
Oilseeds	7.31	27.89	5.29
Soyabean	1.18	20.34	1.46
Groundnut	4.54	6.42	2.58
Coarse grains	15.82	19.28	16.74
Maize	10.57	14.18	11.32
Bajra	1.94	1.47	2.59
Jowar	1.59	2.01	1.24
Cotton	31.45	34.87	29.07
Jute & Mesta	8.19	7.69	7.98
Sugarcane	45.31	41.58	43.92

\*Progressive coverage as on June 26.

“The picture on pulses and oilseeds is encouraging as of now, though a lot will depend on July and August rains. June rains are important for sowing, but contribute less than a fifth of the season’s total rainfall. Plant growth and yields will be mainly influenced by how the monsoon plays out in the next couple of months,” an Agriculture Ministry official pointed out.

The monsoon's better-than-expected performance so far has also enabled increase in acreages under cotton and coarse grains such as maize. However, rice area has fallen.

The main reason for that is the monsoon rains have not been that good in the Indo-Gangetic plains stretching from Punjab and Haryana to Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal.

“Transplanting has been generally slow in these states, but will pick up given the monsoon's spread and the good spell of rains in the last couple of days. Besides, from an inflationary perspective, there is not much to worry on the rice front, as the government has enough stocks in its godowns. Our primary concern now is pulses and oilseeds,” the official added.

### **PM Narendra Modi to lay foundation stone of IARI in Jharkhand on Jun 28**



To address regional challenges in the agriculture sector, Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#) will lay foundation stone of Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) on June 28 at Barhi in Hazaribagh district, Jharkhand.

“The foundation stone of the campus of IARI will be laid by the Prime Minister on June 28 at Goriya Karma village in Barhi,” said an official release issued by the Agriculture Ministry.

The institute, which will offer post graduate and doctoral courses, will have three major schools focusing on natural resources management, crop improvement and protection and horticulture and forestry, it said.

The institute will give thrust on research and extension programmes for addressing major regional challenges, the statement added.

## Fed up of your boring diet food? Try this healthy, delicious Chana Chaat



This chana chaat is part of my cousin's protein rich diet. Somehow in our minds the word diet means tasteless. But my aunt has made her dieting so much easier with this protein rich recipe without compromising on the taste.

For a vegetarian like me, pulses and legumes are the main sources of protein and I am always looking out for newer recipes because daal everyday does get boring. I had this chaat at her place and I was hooked to it. Now I make it quite often and take it with me in a snack box to office. It's perfect for those before and after lunch hunger pangs.

### **Diet friendly Chana chaat**

Preparation Time: 15 mins | no cooking| Serves 2

#### **Ingredients**

1 cup boiled black chana  
1/2 cup mixed sprouts  
1 potato, boiled and chopped  
1 onion, chopped  
1 tomato, chopped  
1 cucumber, chopped  
1 green chilli, chopped  
2 tsp chana masala  
1 tsp lemon juice  
Salt to taste  
1/4 cup fresh coriander leaves, chopped

#### **Method**

- \* Chop tomato, onion, potato and cucumber in small cubes, roughly similar in size.
- \* In a big mixing bowl, mix together all the ingredients. Give them a nice toss.
- \* Check seasoning and adjust to your taste. You may or may not add chillies depending on your taste buds.

\* Keep in refrigerator for about 30 minutes, serve cold and enjoy without guilt.

### **For water conservation projects, land is no issue**



Even as land acquisition from farmers remains a contentious issue across the country, villagers across rural Maharashtra are voluntarily making their land available to accommodate water conservation projects under the Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan.

By mid-June, 2 lakh farmers had made way on their 25,000 acres of land for 1 lakh water projects across Marathwada, Western Maharashtra, Vidarbha, North Maharashtra and Konkan. Whether it is widening of rivers, creating cement nalla bunds, compartment bunding or making farm ponds, there have been no reports of resistance from villagers, who want water at any cost to combat the drought that threatens 25,000 villages in the state.

At Selu village in Latur district, Nanasaheb Patil says, “In the last 10 years, I dug 22 borewells for water as deep as 900 to 1000 feet. Yet, it was not enough to irrigate my fields. Today, as the 4 km cement nalla deeping work is under way, I am willing to spare 200 ft to 500 ft land on both sides for the Jalyukta Shivar project.”

At Shiradon, villagers initially quarreled over allowing the widening of river Dhori. Today, Vinayak Patil (70) says, “Farmers have give the nod for river expansion across a 17 km stretch without seeking any financial compensation.”

In the remote villages across Latur and Osmanabad, the average price of non-fertile land is Rs 3 to 5 lakh. However, agricultural land which is relatively fertile fetches Rs 7 to 10 lakh per acre.

For the water projects, the villagers are not required to surrender their land but accommodate them to reap dividends of water supply. Panchayat and gram sabhas along with district collectors have been working to ensure that only long-term projects which would benefit entire villages are undertaken. As a result, the administration has not had to face most of the complex problems related to land.

Osmanabad district collector Prashant Narnawre said, “The villagers are headstrong. If they realise the importance of any project, they are ready to take up the cause. They are coming forward to own the projects.”

Nagonath Shendge, a farmer in Kati village in Tuljapur taluka, explains, “Initially, we were in a dilemma. Our mega cement nalla bund projects required both deepening and widening. But we realised that the fields through which the project pass would reap maximum benefit as it would ensure moist soil throughout the year.”

Giving an example, Saoji Bajirao Patil says, “In 50 acres of land the yield has always been 50 per cent. Water scarcity affected production. However, now I have made space for a water project foregoing five acres of land. Now 25 acres will produce 100 per cent crops like soya beans, jowar and bajra.” Patil is also thinking of trying his hand at horticulture.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis says, “The selflessness of the villagers, who owned the Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan, is very heartening. I was speechless when villagers came forward to inform me how a certain project was completed in record time of 60 days at Rs 23 lakh, much less than the estimated Rs 37 lakh.” The CM observed, “The villagers have understood the significance of water and are no longer holding the measuring tapes to seek financial compensation from the government. Instead, they are waiting to transform every drop of water to produce more crop.”



# THE TIMES OF INDIA

## **Sharp rise in sowing has power officials worried**

**HYDERABAD:** An unforeseen spurt in sowing this kharif season in Telangana has officials trying to come to terms with the enthusiasm among farmers. Against 4,28,368 hectares sowed as on June 26 last year, farmers have already begun sowing in a whopping 16,21,505 hectares this year.

The pace of farm operations and the eagerness among farmers is being attributed to the promise of nine-hour guaranteed power supply to the agriculture sector. Officials opine that the recent rains across the state also encouraged farmers to take up planting on a larger scale compared to the last two kharif seasons.

However, the two power distribution companies are already worried about meeting the electricity demand for kharif from the 20 lakh odd agricultural pumpsets in Telangana. In view of the expected farm sector demand, chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao directed officials to arrive at an accurate estimate of electricity required for this sector and directed them to do so in August, when kharif operations reach their peak.

But without separation of supply for agriculture sector from other sectors, such an estimation is expected to be tough, and officials say that the Discoms may be tested this kharif on their ability to live up to the hopes of farmers.

The dramatic increase in the sown area this year can be gauged from the fact that in 2014, a mere 4.28 lakh hectares were covered as on June 26 compared to 12.86 lakh hectares in 2013 on the same date. Both kharif and rabi seasons put together had 61% less coverage.

"Of the total season's normal coverage of 41.43 lakh hectares, 56% planting has been completed in Adilabad, 50% in Nizamabad, 49% in Medak, 48% in Warangal and 47% in Ranga Reddy. The sowing will pick up pace further in the next two weeks and is expected to exceed last year's coverage," agriculture commissioner GD Priyadarshini said.

Interestingly, though Telangana received excess rainfall so far this monsoon compared to last year, it did not help fill the reservoirs in the state. According to irrigation officials, from June 1 to 24, the state received 212 mm as against the normal rainfall of 101 mm, an excess of 110%. Except Nizamabad and Mahbubnagar districts, which received normal rainfall, all other districts received rains in excess this season.

Despite this, inflows into irrigation projects and reservoirs such as Nagarjunasagar, Nizamsagar, Sriramsagar, Singur, Lower Manair and Velugodu have been less compared to last year. For instance, water level in Singur is at 1,690 feet compared to 1,705 ft last year. Similarly, the water level in Lower Manair this year is just 884 ft against 899 ft last year as on date.

"Since it is only the beginning of the monsoon season, rains in the coming months would hopefully fill the reservoirs. There were instances of reservoirs getting filled at the end of the season also," a senior official of irrigation department said.

### **Times View**

Farming community in the state, which has been in a state of despair, is pinning hopes on the government to provide uninterrupted nine-hour power supply to the agriculture sector. If this task is accomplished, it will definitely bring cheer to the farmers of Telangana. However, the government should supply power during the day at a stretch instead of in

spells at nights. It should try to do so this year and not put it off till next as planned by the government.

### **Rozedars avoid onions, prices start declining in Nashik**



NASHIK: Onion prices in the district have started declining, a trend observed every year during Ramzan.

Since the beginning of the holy month about a week ago, the wholesale prices of onion have dipped by about 12% at the Lasalgaon Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC), the country's largest wholesale onion market.

At present, the cost of onion per quintal is Rs 1,500 as against Rs 1,700 per quintal on Tuesday. The rozedars said consumption of onion comes down during Ramzan as their focus after a day-long fast shifts to more nutritious food such as fruits and milk.

An official from the Lasalgaon APMC said, "The average wholesale onion prices have dipped by around 12% because of the decline in demand because of Ramzan. The consumption of onion is very less among Muslims during the holy month. The average wholesale onion prices are expected to be in the range of Rs 1,200 to 1,500 a quintal for the next three weeks. But the prices are expected to rise once Ramzan is over." Sadhab Kokani, a businessman, said, "The onion consumption reduces by almost 80% during Ramzan as most Muslims consume fruits and milk to get energy during the fasting period. We take two meals at 4.30am and at 7.15 pm, which mostly includes fruits and milk."

Speaking to TOI, director of the National Horticulture Research & Development Foundation (NHRDF) R P Gupta said, "The average wholesale onion prices have declined marginally because of reduction in consumption due to Ramzan. Moreover, the



district has been receiving good rains; and better kharif season is expected. It is also one of the factors that had led to decline in onion prices. We have distributed close to 1,000 quintals seeds across the country. The areas under cultivation of kharif onions are expected to be around 2 lakh hectares, including 40% from Maharashtra."

He further said, "The onion prices are expected to be stable for the next few weeks. There may be a marginal rise in the onion prices in July and August. The central government is procuring onions through central agencies like National Agricultural Co-operative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) and Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) under the Price Stability Fund (PCF) as part of its measures to cater to consumers in case the prices rise due to scarcity. The onion market is very sentimental. A buffer stock of 10,000 tonnes kept by the Centre is not enough for the entire country, but it could help stabilise the onion prices and change the market sentiment during price rise."

The average wholesale onion prices have declined from 12% to 18% in the APMCs across the district. The average wholesale onion prices, which were recorded in the range of Rs 1,600 to Rs 1,700 a quintal around four days back, have declined to the range of Rs 1,300-Rs 1,500 per quintal. At Lasalgaon, the minimum and maximum prices were recorded at Rs 500 and Rs 1,892 a quintal, respectively on Friday. Around 12,000 quintals of onions were auctioned.

### **Plan to turn agri varsity in Bihar into central university gathers pace**

NEW DELHI: A bill to convert Rajendra Agriculture University (RAU) at Pusa, Samastipur, in Bihar into a central university will be introduced during the monsoon session of Parliament beginning on July 21. The Union Cabinet is likely to soon approve the draft of the proposed legislation.

Though a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed by agriculture minister Radha Mohan Singh and the then Bihar chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi in January, the matter got stuck in political logjam when Nitish Kumar replaced Manjhi as chief minister in February.

Manjhi had resigned as CM on February 20 on being expelled from the Janata Dal (United). Although Manjhi's resignation had no impact on the MoU, officials here believe that the entire preparation got delayed due to change of guard in the state.

The Centre, which has to take the next step of getting the bill cleared in Parliament, meanwhile, wrote to the state, asking to initiate a process to acquire land for four colleges which the agriculture ministry wants to set up at Saran, Aurangabad, Motihari and Madhubani under the RAU.

The agriculture minister had on May 20 written to Nitish, requesting him to arrange 75 acres of land each for the four proposed colleges. Though Nitish remained quiet over the land issue, Radha Mohan Singh appears to be confident of pushing the central university bill.

Singh told TOI that the Centre would go ahead with the central university bill even if Nitish refused land for the four new colleges. Both the issues are not linked. Land for new colleges can be acquired later, he said.

"The Centre is committed to convert RAU into a central university. Efforts are on to get it approved by the Cabinet and subsequently by the Parliament," said Singh.

Once the bill is passed and the conversion is notified, RAU will be the second central agriculture university in the country after the one at Imphal in Manipur.

The standing finance committee of the finance ministry has already sanctioned Rs 400 crore for the purpose of converting RAU into a central university. Since the Centre aims to get the bill passed and get necessary notification issued before announcement of assembly polls in Bihar, relevant papers had been circulated among the Niti Aayog and different ministries including finance, law and human resource development for their views on the proposal on June 5.

Though the proposal to convert RAU into Rajendra Central Agriculture University (RCAU) had been pending since 2009 when the Planning Commission gave formal consent, the matter did not proceed further during UPA-2 (2009-14) as neither the Centre nor the state government could reach to a solution to the pending court cases filed by permanent staff of the RAU.

The NDA government, however, could manage to end the uncertainty and it was agreed that the court cases of the staff will be attended by a special cell created for this purpose. It was also decided that the engagement\adjustment of such staff in the RCAU will be subject to the requirement of staff in various programmes and the decision of the central university after outcome of the court decisions.

## Govt raises minimum export price of onion by \$175



NEW DELHI: With indications of substantial damage to the [onion production](#) during [rabi season](#), which may impact domestic supply, the government on Friday increased the minimum export price (MEP) of the key kitchen item from \$250 (Rs 15,900) per tonne to \$425 (Rs 27,027).

Meanwhile, the Cabinet is likely to take a decision next week on whether government will extend the deadline for enforcing the stock limit norms beyond July 2. Sources said ministries are divided over the issue. Under stock limit norms, the quantity of items that both retailers and wholesalers can keep with them at any given time is prescribed by the government and violation attracts major punishment.

The last revision in MEP by directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) was in April this year. The increase in MEP is aimed at ensuring adequate domestic supply and to contain price rise. In the past three months, the average wholesale [price of onion](#) across India has increased by over 30%.

## Locally-grown veggies register healthy growth spurt

PANAJI: Until a few years ago, Goa depended entirely on Belagavi for its vegetable supply, but slowly, it has started expanding its base in horticulture cultivation. Though the state still depends on Belagavi for vegetables, the Goa State Horticulture Corporation Ltd's concerted efforts in encouraging farmers to take up vegetable cultivation is yielding results.

Last year, the corporation procured about 200 tonnes of locally grown vegetables, which about four to five years ago, was just 24 tonnes a year. While the exact records of locally produced vegetables are not available, the corporation believes that the total annual production must be over 500 tonnes, as many farmers sell their vegetables directly.

Last financial year, the Goa State Horticulture Corporation Ltd even exported 14 tonnes of green chillies to Belagavi. Goa's daily requirement of vegetables is pegged at 300 tonnes.

Larry Barreto, managing director of the corporation, attributed the corporation's encouragement and assured market support to farmers to cultivate vegetables, to an increase in vegetable cultivation.

Goa State Horticulture Corporation Ltd provides vegetable farmers financial help of 40,000 per hectare which can be utilized to fence farms, construct wells, purchase pump sets, besides giving them seeds at a subsidized rate.

Local cultivation of vegetables like bottle gourd, cluster beans, chillies, cucumbers, brinjals, lady fingers, tomatoes and leafy vegetables etc has gone up in the last two-three years.

He said that some farmers do not sell vegetables such as brinjal and cucumber to the corporation but sell them on their own as they fetch a good rate. "Agasaim brinjal is sold at 50-60 a piece," pointed out Barreto, a price which the corporation is unable to offer to farmers.

As and when locally grown vegetables are in abundance, Goa State Horticulture Corporation Ltd orders less vegetables from Belagavi.

Four years ago, the corporation introduced a hybrid variety of green chilli called 'Nisha' and farmers were trained on how to cultivate it. Special trays were given to them to grow seedlings. The sapling, after a certain period, is required to be planted elsewhere. Mostly grown during the non-rainy season, it can still be grown in the upland region during the monsoon.

Its effort to push farmers to start commercial cultivation of green chillies is now showing results as it exported 14 tonnes of green chilli last year.

Until then, Goan farmers were accustomed to or had expertise in cultivating only red chillies.

Farmers initially found it difficult to adopt a new method of cultivation of chillies but picked it up subsequently. A green chilli plant grows up to a height of about 2.5 to 3 feet and gives an yield of 3 to 4kg. The plant matures in about 135 days.

Encouraged with the response of farmers, the corporation has been experimenting with new varieties of green chillies, as it intends to introduce more pungent chillies.

Barreto said their current variety 'Nisha' is not very spicy. "Market demand is for pungent chillies so we have to have that variety too," he said.

To a question, he said the corporation has stopped giving trays to farmers but the agriculture department has taken up the initiative.

### **Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture delegation to accompany Fadnavis to USA**

AURANGABAD: In line with the initiatives 'Make In India' and 'Make In Maharashtra', launched by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi and chief minister Devendra Fadnavis, to help promote businesses in Marathwada and to attract foreign investments in the region, a Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture (CMIA) delegation comprising five entrepreneurs would be accompanying the CM to a visit to USA from June 29 to July 2. Industries Minister Subhash Desai and the other top senior government officials are also among the dignitaries selected for the tour.

"The CMIA acts as a catalyst for growth and development of industries in and around the region, providing support to existing industries. The CMIA is continuously working to attract new investments and bringing in new industries to Aurangabad, and thus giving momentum to the overall growth and development of the region," said CMIA vice-president Ashish Garde.

"The opportunity to tour with the CM has raised hopes of new investments and ventures in Aurangabad against the backdrop of major projects such as Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) and smart city at Shendra-Bidkin being implemented," said Garde.

"A delegation of five entrepreneurs including managing director (MD) of Nirlep Appliances Ltd, Mukund Bhogale, MD of Rucha Engineers Pvt Ltd, Umesh Dashrathi, founder chairman of Sanjeev Group, S D Tambolkar, president & director, Endress+Hauser Automation, N Sriram, director of Kirdak Autocom Pvt Ltd, Sunil Kirdak, and MD of Rucha Enngineers Pvt Ltd, Bhushan Joshi, will be accompanying the CM to USA. They would mainly be visiting New York, Detroit and California," he said.

"With this initiative of including entrepreneurs from Aurangabad, it is evident that the CM is serious in promoting industrial investment in Marathwada region in line with 'Make-In-India' and 'Make-In-Maharashtra'," said Garde.

CMIA, the apex body of industries in Marathwada, established in the year 1969, represents small, medium and large-scale industries and multi-national companies of Marathwada region. The membership is well over 575 and includes all the leading industries from the region.

"The CMIA's delegation aims to explore business opportunities and promote bilateral trade between USA and India and to also strengthen existing businesses," he added.

# THE HINDU BusinessLine

## Bountiful June showers boost kharif planting

Sowing up 23 per cent, driven by pulses, coarse cereals, oilseeds and cotton

(In lakh ha; as on June 26)

Rising acreage		
	This year	Last year
Rice	23.28	25.04
Pulses	11.04	6.14
Coarse cereals	19.28	16.74
Oilseeds	27.89	5.29
Jute & mesta	7.69	7.98
Cotton	34.87	29.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>165.62</b>	<b>134.18</b>

The rapid progress of the south-west monsoon across the country has accelerated the sowing pace of key kharif crops such as rice, pulses, oilseeds and cotton. The south-west monsoon, the lifeline of India's agriculture, has covered the country two weeks ahead of schedule.

Agriculture Ministry data showed that kharif planting has been done in 165.62 lakh hectares so far this year, against 134.18 lakh hectares in the corresponding period last

year, up 23 per cent. The increase has been largely driven by higher plantings of pulses, coarse cereals, oilseeds and cotton.

While rice has been sown/transplanted in 23.28 lakh ha (against 25.04 lakh ha last year), and pulses acreage stood at 11.04 lakh ha (6.14 lakh ha). Coarse cereals were sown in 19.28 lakh ha (16.74 lakh ha), oilseeds in 27.89 lakh ha (5.29 lakh ha), and cotton in 34.87 lakh ha (29.07 lakh ha), an official release said. The country as a whole has received 167.5 mm of rains during the June 1-26 period, about 27 per cent excess over the normal weighted average for the period. Half of the 36 metrological sub divisions, covering 65 per cent of the country's geographical area, have received excess rainfall so far.

Thirteen sub divisions, accounting for 24 per cent of the area, have received normal rains, while only five sub divisions, accounting for 11 per cent of the country's total area, have received deficient rainfall during the period.

The better-than-normal rain so far has helped improve the water levels in the main reservoirs across the country that stood at 43.222 billion cubic metres as of June 25, accounting for 27 per cent of the total capacity of 155.799 billion cubic metres.

### **Water level higher**

According to the Central Water Commission, which monitors the live storage of 91 important reservoirs, the current water level is 11 per cent greater than the corresponding last year period and 46 per cent higher than the last 10 years' average.

The States having better storage than last year for the corresponding period are Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Odisha, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Those having the same storage as the corresponding period last year are Maharashtra and Uttarakhand.


Rajasthan, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have lesser storage than the previous year period.

### **Centre hikes floor price for onion exports by \$175/t**

In a bid to keep rising onion prices under check, the Centre on Friday steeply hiked the floor price for exports of the bulb by \$175 a tonne to \$425. The Director-General of Foreign Trade issued a notification to this effect on Friday, stating that export of all varieties of onions will be subject to a minimum export price of \$425/tonne FOB (free on board) with immediate effect.

The hike in MEP coincides with the completion of the harvest of the rabi crop, resulting in a marginal increase in prices. At Lasalgaon (Maharashtra), Asia's biggest market, which sets the price trend for onions, the average or modal price moved up from Rs. 1,100 a quintal in early May to a high of Rs. 1,700 on June 24.

<b>Declining shipments</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Quantity (In lakh tonne)</b>	<b>Value (In ₹ cr)</b>
<b>2012-13</b>	<b>18.22</b>	<b>2,294</b>
<b>2013-14</b>	<b>13.58</b>	<b>2,877</b>
<b>2014-15</b>	<b>10.86</b>	<b>2,009</b>



#### **Average price down**

However, with the pick up in sowing of kharif onions on the back of widespread rains in States such as Karnataka, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, the modal prices have dropped by Rs. 200/quintal in the past two days.

“There is adequate supply and farmers are taking up onion cultivation in a big way,” said RP Gupta, Director at the National Horticultural Research Development Foundation. According to the latest estimates, the total production of onion during the crop year 2014-15 (July-June) will be around 189.24 million tonnes.

Trade sources said the sharp rise in the MEP would not have much of an impact on onion exports as the current period is considered a lean one for onion exports.

“Currently, not much export is taking place. It will pick up once the new crop starts arriving, after September. At present, small varieties are being exported, mainly to Malaysia. But exports will pick up during October,” said Ashok Walunj, former director, Onion and Potato Market, Vashi APMC.

“We are confident that the increase in MEP will not affect the domestic market or export prospects, because by October fresh arrivals will start and the government will cut the minimum export price,” added Walunj.



## Cotton flat on weak demand



Cotton price was traded unchanged as demand was very limited from domestic mills. *Kapas* declined on poor buying by ginners. Traders said demand was nominal from domestic mills. With this export buying was also nil. Arrival of cotton is constantly declining as farmers hold the crop expecting better prices. Gujarat Sankar-6 cotton was traded at ₹33,500-34,500 per candy of 356 kg. About 2,000 bales of cotton arrived in Gujarat and 7,000 bales nationwide. *Kapas* or raw cotton declined ₹10 to ₹875-900 per 20 kg and gin delivery *kapas* was quoted at ₹900-915 per 20 kg. Cotton seed declined to ₹420-435/20 kg.

## Monsoon covers entire India ahead of schedule: IMD

The monsoon covered the entire country on Friday two weeks ahead of schedule, delivering a surplus rainfall of 27 per cent, with four days still left for June to end. North-west India delivered a knockout performance over the past two days when it ended a lean patch and returned 39 per cent excess rainfall as on date.

Central India and the southern peninsula suffered a slight dent in their respective surpluses, which now read 48 per cent and 30 per cent respectively. In East and North-East India, the surplus is down to 1 per cent.



### **Above normal rainfall**

The Extended Range Forecast System by the Met Department, Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune, and Indian Council of Agricultural Research, has projected that the next fortnight may see normal or above normal rainfall over Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Telangana.

Either of the next two weeks may see normal or above normal rainfall in Konkan, Goa, coastal Karnataka, north interior Karnataka, east Gujarat, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, coastal Andhra Pradesh, the North-East, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, madhya Maharashtra, Marathwada and Bihar.

The US Centre for Climate Prediction is of the view that significant rain will be confined to the eastern and north-eastern parts of India and the west coast during the week ending July 1. The European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts says a likely typhoon in the west Pacific may help revive the monsoon flows across the Arabian Sea, peninsular India and the Bay of Bengal from July 2.

The powerful typhoon may track in a west-northwest direction. Such a track for typhoons in the Pacific has traditionally aided the Indian monsoon.

## Cafe Coffee Day to raise ₹1,150 crore via IPO



India's largest coffee chain, Cafe Coffee Day (CCD), has filed a draft offer documents with capital market regulator SEBI for a ₹1,150-crore initial public offer.

Coffee Day Enterprises, the company that owns CCD, intends to use ₹633 crore to repay debts while ₹288 crore will be used to set up a new cafe network, outlets and kiosks. In addition, it will refurbish the existing cafe network and vending machines, install a new coffee roasting facility, manufacture and assemble vending machines, and have an integrated coffee and tea packing facility, according to documents filed with SEBI.

The rest will of the money be used for corporate purposes.

VG Siddhartha, the lead promoter of CCD, who is also Chairman and MD, holds a 54.78 per cent stake. Infosys co-founder and former CEO Nandan Nilekani holds 1.77 per cent. Private equity firm KKR, with a 3.43 per cent stake, will continue to stay invested in the company.

The coffee shop brand, which opened its first outlet in Bengaluru in 1996, has a network of 1,472 café outlets spread across 209 cities as of December 2014, according to consultant Technopak.

For the first nine months ending December 2014, the company posted a loss of ₹11 crore on a total income of ₹882 crore.

The public offer is being managed by Kotak Investment Banking, Citigroup, Morgan Stanley, Axis Capital, Edelweiss, and YES Bank.

# Business Standard

## Sugar exports seen doubling as bumper crop looms



Sugar exports from India may double as farmers prepare to harvest the third-biggest crop ever, extending the country's surplus for a sixth year. Shipments will be 2 million metric tons in the 12 months starting Oct. 1, according to the median of six estimates from refiners, brokers and analysts compiled by Bloomberg. That compares with 700,000 tonnes to 800,000 tonnes this year, the Indian Sugar Mills Association says.

Production will be 27.25 million tons from a record 28.4 million tons this year, estimates from eight survey participants show. The glut in the world's second-largest producer threatens to extend a 35 per cent slump in New York futures in the past year.

The decline in prices to the lowest since 2009 has forced the government to subsidize exports and waive interest on bank loans to processors. Stockpiles of 10 million tons will add to supplies and exceed demand of 25.5 million tons, the mills say. That may force producers to ship as much as possible.

"With high carryover stockpiles, you will again have a glut of 10 million tons next year and you will have to throw out the excess," Rahil Shaikh, director at ED&F Man Commodities India Pvt., said in Pune on June 19.

"If the industry has to survive, they have to export. "Domestic prices have fallen below the cost of production to a seven-year low because of weak demand and mounting stockpiles, according to the mills. The cabinet approved interest-free loans of 60 billion rupees (\$943 million) this month to help mills clear 210 billion rupees owed to farmers. The government has pledged a subsidy of 4,000 rupees a ton for raw sugar exports as domestic rates are above global prices.

Arrears may decline before the start of the new crop. While the amounts owing were high in April last year when the mills finished crushing, they had decreased by the time the new season started in October. About 95 percent of the crop is irrigated, countering concern that reduced monsoon rain may hurt output.

For now, shipments are not possible, said Pallavi Munankar, an analyst at Geofin Comtrade Ltd. in Mumbai.

"Looking at the surplus stock in the world and lower prices prevailing in the international market, exports are not feasible," Munankar said by e-mail on Wednesday. "This leaves the industry with no other alternative but to continue to hold huge stocks and incur losses."

Prices on the ICE Futures U.S. fell to 11.52 cents a pound on June 19, the lowest level since January 2009. The contract for October delivery traded at 12.08 cents on Thursday. Prices in Mumbai were at 2,219 rupees per 100 kilograms (220 pounds).

The area under cane in India dropped to 4.16 million hectares as of June 19, compared with 4.39 million hectares a year earlier, the Agriculture Ministry said last week. Exports reached 558,000 tons from October to May, the mills estimate.