

25.05.2015

THE HINDU

Rs. 1 crore loan without guarantee for small businesses in Haryana soon

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Sunday said that a new industrial policy is being formulated under which loans up to Rs. 1 crore will be granted without guarantee for small businesses.

While addressing a public meeting in Safeedo here, Mr. Khattar said under the policy would soon be formulated under which small industries will be promoted at village, block and district level and loans up to Rs. 1 crore will be given without any guarantee, he said.

Mr. Khattar also said the State government has approved projects worth Rs. 40 crore for the development of Safeedo and nearby areas and added that a government hospital here will be developed as a 50-bed hospital while a medical college would be set up in Jind.

He also said Rs. 28 crore will be allotted for repair and construction of roads in the area and for the drains and drinking water facility Rs. 5 crore and Rs. 6 crore will be allotted respectively.

Women police stations will be set up in every district and as part of the plan 500 women constables will also be recruited while 5000 police personnel will also be recruited on merit basis in the State.

He said that 164 services would be made available through e-seva in the State, including the birth certificate, caste, age certificate etc.

To promote sports and yoga in the State, yogshalas will be opened in 6500 villages of the state and in the first phase, 50 Yogshalas will be opened in every district, he said.

Besides yogshalas and gyms, village secretariats will be established to ensure better access to various government schemes, the Chief Minister said.

He also said those villages will be provided 24 hours power supply which will have minimum line loss and where locals have cleared their dues.

A committee has been formed under the chairmanship of Agriculture Minister Om Prakash Dhankhar which would take a decision on the demand to make Pillu Khera a Tehsil, the Chief Minister said.

e-clinic inaugurated to guide farmers

Under the joint auspices of M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation and CABI, an 'e-plant clinic' has been inaugurated here.

The objective of the clinic is to guide farmers in identifying the cause of disease or pest attack in their crops and suggest remedial fertilizer for controlling the same. The samples of affected crops are collected at the clinic and, after a scientific study, recommendations would be sent by SMS to the mobile number of the affected farmers.

The SMS would enable farmers to select the correct fertilizer or pesticide at the shops. The impact of remedial measures would be studied and feedback obtained.

The clinic would function, on a trial basis, in 20 villages for a period of eight months. "Based on the success, it will be started in other needy villages," said R. Rajkumar, Coordinator of the Foundation, said while inaugurating the clinic here on Saturday.

He said the remedial measures were based on the recommendations of the crop protection method of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, he added.

In all, 35 farmers from different parts of the district brought the samples of gingili, brinjal, jasmine, maize and blackgram crops which had suffered various diseases or pest attack.

Scientists recommended a few measures to protect the crop.

Mango market proposed in Dharwad district

Minister of State for Food and Civil Supplies and district in-charge Dinesh Gundu Rao on Sunday said that the government will take steps to make Dharwad a 'mango district'.

He was speaking to presspersons after inaugurating a mango mela organised on the premises of the Department of Horticulture on Sunday.

Mr. Dinesh Gundu Rao said as the mangoes cultivated in Dharwad region had a good demand in the domestic and international markets, the government with the help of the State Mango Development and Marketing Corporation would set up a mango market in the district at a cost of Rs. 2 crore on a 10-acre land.

He said the Deputy Commissioner of Dharwad had been the asked to identify the land suitable for setting up the market and the plan was to make the market available to the people by the next season. As there was lack of cold storage facility in Dharwad district, steps were being taken to set it up in taluks under public-private partnership model, he said.

On Navalgund MLA N.H. Konaraddi's complaint on discrepancies in the release of weather-based crop insurance, where farmers have got Rs. 30 lakh as compensation, the Minister said that the Deputy Commissioner would be directed to hold a meeting of farmers and insurance company representatives to address the issue.

Mango growers reap high yield



Despite poor climatic conditions, the total yield of mango in the State for the year has crossed 8 lakh tonnes.

Speaking to presspersons here on Sunday during the inauguration of the three-day Mango Mela, Chairperson of Karnataka State Mango Development and Marketing Corporation, Kamalakshi Rajanna, said despite the bad weather, mango crop had not been affected in Kolar and Dharwad.

She said that after the U.S. and Europe revoked ban on importing mangoes grown in Karnataka, 2,500 tonnes of the Alphonso variety had been exported so far.

She said that special thrust was given on improving other varieties such as Mallika and Neelam and they would be exported to other countries next season.

Ms. Rajanna said the corporation was encouraging farmers to grow mangoes, particularly in Dharwad and Kolar, and had taken steps to link them directly to buyers and major juice manufacturing companies.

Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture Department, Saralamma, said that during the mela over 122 mango varieties were being displayed, while growers would focus on the sale of 12 varieties.

Despite bad weather, the crop has not been affected in Kolar and Dharwad

Kamalakshi Rajanna, Chairperson, Karnataka State Mango Development and Marketing Corporation

Despite bad weather, the crop has not been affected in Kolar and Dharwad
Kamalakshi Rajanna, Chairperson of Karnataka State Mango Development and Marketing Corporation

Students develop multi-purpose tool for farmers



The students of Prakasham Engineering College have developed a farmer-friendly tool with low cost “Multipurpose Planting, Watering and Weed Removal Tool” that reduces maintenance cost of farm fields, reduces labour cost, planting nuts or seeds, watering, spraying fertilizer and also removal of weed.

The tool is portable, easy to carry and handle and its affordability is the USP. The multipurpose tool is indigenously designed and developed and it is handy for small and medium range farmers in all cultivation-related activities. In proper conditions, a single person with this tool can cover one to two acres in a day while discharging any one of the above mentioned cultivation work, says Prof. M. Lakshman Rao, who guided the students.

The tool is fabricated by V. Kiran and Krishna Chaitanaya, second year mechanical engineering students under the guidance of Prof. Lakshman Rao Principle. This was encouraged and successfully tested by a farmer named Malakondaiah, who felt that it can easily be repaired.

Online healthcare services mushroom

Finding a doctor is easier now than it’s probably ever been. Go online, log on to one of several portals that offer searches for doctors and book an appointment. With the mushrooming of online healthcare services, for patients, there are a plethora of options. But while patients and some doctors

find these portals and apps immensely useful, other doctors express apprehension over them.

On websites such as Practo.com, s10health.com and medreach.in, you can look for a doctor by specialty, name, clinic name or even the area you want to go to. Some offer details of consultation fees, one gives feedback from other patients and one allows you to ask for a doctor's opinion online.

For patients, these services have been a boon. "Last year, my cousin contracted a skin allergy. I was looking for a skin specialist in Anna Nagar and I went online. The website gave me a list of options in the area I wanted. It listed reviews, fees and appointment times. I found a doctor, and my experience was very good," said V. Vinoth Kumar, a software engineer.

The Practo Ray software, which allows doctors to upload and access medical records digitally among other things has been both convenient and easy for record-keeping and inventory, said K. Dhanasekhar, consultant paediatric gastroenterologist, Apollo Children's Hospital. "The website makes it easy for patients to find me and book appointments. They get a confirmation and so do I, and the system alerts me when the appointment is due," he said.

Some doctors, however, say there are advantages and disadvantages. Mohan Rajan, medical director, Dr. Rajan Eye Care Hospitals, said such services were not always reliable.

"If you've just moved to a city, such services are great. The problem is in figuring out whether you're going to the right doctor. Patients must use these services judiciously, shortlist and decide based on first-hand information," said Janani Shankar, senior consultant paediatrician, Kanchi Kamakoti Childs Trust Hospital.

Two-day fruit show concludes

The 57th fruit show at Sim's Park in Coonoor concluded on Sunday.

Horticulture Department officials, who organised the two-day event, said that the show attracted more than 30,000 tourists and visitors this year, which is more than close to 25,000 tourists who visited the show last year. The department exhibited fruits from all the districts in the State. Specialty fruits that were grown in The Nilgiris – such as velvet apple, egg fruit and

white sapota and close to 30 varieties of wild fruits and berries that grew in forest areas in The Nilgiris were also exhibited in the show.

Organisers said that the fruits used for various decorations and arrangements in the fruit show would be used for making processed food items such as jam, jelly, pickle and squash at the fruit preservation unit of the Horticulture Department.

The Nilgiris Collector P. Shankar gave away seven rolling trophies and prizes to more than 40 participants who emerged winners in the various competitions as part of the show.

THE HINDU BusinessLine

19 projects cleared under coconut technology mission



The Project Appraisal Committee on Technology Mission on Coconut has cleared 19 projects with an outlay of ₹21 crore and subsidy of ₹4.25 crore.

Of these, 13 projects were for processing and product diversification, while one for market promotion and the remaining were research projects.

Under the sub component 'Processing and Product Diversification', 6 projects are for desiccated coconut powder unit for processing 2 lakh nuts per day, one virgin coconut oil unit for processing 15,000 nuts per day, 2 tender coconut water preservation and packaging units with a capacity to process 30,000 tender coconuts per day, 2 coconut shell charcoal manufacturing units, one shell powder unit, ball copra unit etc and one market promotional programme for establishment of 70 integrated coconut points.

The 45th meeting of the PAC on Technology Mission on Coconut was held under the chairmanship of T.K.Jose, Chairman, Coconut Development Board.

In Kerala, a virgin coconut oil processing unit with a capacity to process 15,000 nuts per day was sanctioned. In Karnataka, a tender coconut water processing unit, desiccated coconut powder processing unit, coconut shell charcoal units were sanctioned.

In Tamil Nadu, two desiccated coconut powder units, one tender coconut water unit, a coconut shell powder unit were sanctioned.

In Andhra Pradesh, a ball copra unit, while in Maharashtra, a desiccated coconut powder unit was sanctioned.

Oil prices edge up on firm Asian, US demand

Crude oil futures edged up on Monday, buoyed by healthy Asian appetite and demand from the US driving season.

Front-month Brent crude prices were up 6 cents at \$65.43 per barrel at 0045 GMT. U. crude prices were also up 6 cents at \$59.78 a barrel.

“Global oil demand continues to surprise to the upside, with April data showing no signs of slowdown despite a pick-up in prices,” Energy Aspects said.

Japan’s customs-cleared crude oil imports rose 9.1 per cent to 3.62 million barrels per day (17.28 million kilolitres) in April from the same month a year earlier, the Ministry of Finance said on Monday.

China crude oil imports

In China, crude imports hit a record 7.4 million barrels per day in April despite a slowing economy, driven largely by healthy car sales.

“We expect Chinese imports to be high in H2 15, potentially averaging 7.5 million barrels per day. This is due to the start-up of 39 mb (million barrels) of commercial storage, five SPR (strategic petroleum reserve) sites and linefill for Kunming refinery-buying for which is ongoing we believe, even though the refinery won’t start up till early 2016,” Energy Aspects said.

Memorial Day

In the United States, the peak summer driving season officially starts with Memorial Day on Monday, and the American Automobile Association said road travel was expected to reach a 10-year high over the Memorial Day week-end, suggesting strong fuel consumption over the next three days.

Air strikes in Libya

In oil exporting Libya, warplanes from the official government attacked an oil tanker docked outside the city of Sirte on Sunday, wounding three people and setting the ship on fire, officials said.

It was the third confirmed strike by the internationally recognised government on oil tankers, part of a conflict between competing administrations and parliaments allied to armed factions fighting for control of the country four years after the ousting of Muammar Gaddafi.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

Govt to kick off mega plantation drive



India has 697,898 sq km (21.23% of the country's geographical area) of forests and 91,266 sq km (2.78% of the geographical area) of tree cover (outside forest area which includes urban green patches).

NEW DELHI: With Rs 38,000 crore set to be unlocked under a proposed law for increasing India's green cover over the next few years, the Centre is planning to launch a major plantation drive across the country on World Environment Day on June 5.

Environment minister Prakash Javadekar has written to all state governments, requesting them to earmark land for planting trees wherever possible.

"The drive will continue throughout the monsoon period (June-September) and eventually be turned into a round-the-year activity under a National Mission for Green India, which is aimed at increasing forest and tree cover of the country from existing 24.01% to 33% of the total geographical area," said an official.

India has 697,898 sq km (21.23% of the country's geographical area) of forests and 91,266 sq km (2.78% of the geographical area) of tree cover (outside forest area which includes urban green patches).

"Since some selected older and larger plants grow faster than younger saplings, the drive will see use of such bigger plants for planting exercise so that they may survive and grow better than the smaller ones. The choice of plants will, however, be area specific, considering water requirement and availability," said the official.

Officials in the environment ministry said the plantation drive this year would be different from such drives earlier as states, under the proposed Compensatory Afforestation Fund Bill, 2015, have to give a detailed account of their plantation works including the expenses involved in the exercise and survival percentage of the plants.

Under the proposed legislation, which was introduced during the budget session and is expected to be passed in the monsoon session during July-August, states will have to submit their annual audit reports on green cover, specifying afforestation and conservation activities. There will be 'state monitoring authority' in each state as part of an institutional mechanism to keep an eye on such activities round-the-year and send reports to a 'national authority'.

The bill will unlock Rs 38,000 crore for disbursement among states for carrying out afforestation activities. This fund is lying unused in the ad-hoc Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) fund, collected from different agencies for diverting forest land for non-forest use in the past over 10 years.

The plantation drive will supplement the work of the National Mission for Green India which is one of the eight missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change for developing forests and their fringe areas in a holistic and sustainable manner.

Under the mission, the government has already approved perspective plans of six states -- Punjab, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh -- with a financial outlay of Rs 2,709 crore over the next six

to ten year. The success of these plans will be monitored using Remote Sensing and Geographical Information System tools.

Bengaluru teens spend pocket money to plant saplings

A group of 28 former students set up an organization called Vanya, with the sole objective of saving the planet.

BENGALURU: While most teenagers are hooked to gaming and social media, there are some who are more rooted; who use the money and resources they have to plant trees and help save the environment.

A group of 28 former students of Vijaya PU College met through the NSS (National Service Scheme) and set up an organization called Vanya, with the sole objective of saving the planet.

The students, currently in their first year of university, have decided to plant 30 saplings every month; 365 saplings a year. Abhiman Jois, 19, who brainstormed Vanya, said, "The idea came to me when I visited Bugle Rock, Basavanagudi, with friends. Instead of feeling happy after a fun-filled time at the park, we felt incomplete. So we decided to do something for humanity."

"We have resources and our pocket money. Rather than wasting them on parties, we decided to invest them in something that will give meaning to our lives, and in a way, complement nature. We began our initiative by planting trees in neighborhoods," he added.

"We collect Rs 30 to Rs 100 from every team member to buy seeds. We then plant trees, water them and pay regular visits to make sure they are in good condition," said Abhiman. The seeds are ordered from a nursery in Kengeri.

Team Vanya has planted 35 trees in Basavanagudi, Vijaya College campus and Netkallappa Circle.

"We received a good response from residents when we began and have been invited to plant saplings in Rajarajeshwari Nagar and Kengeri. We received a special invite to Kathriguppe, Banashankari, where we will plant trees on June 5, World Environment Day" said Abhiman. „- Alisha Deshmukh