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# THE HINDU

## **TN braces for 'Nada'**



The rescheduled examination date would be announced later. 'Nada' is likely to bring widespread rains over coastal Tamil Nadu and Puducherry till Friday, S. Balachandran, Director, Area Cyclone Warning Centre in Chennai said on Wednesday. "While there will be fairly widespread rains till Friday in most parts of coastal Tamil Nadu, there may not be torrential downpour like last year," he said.

As on Wednesday, 'Nada' lay cantered over southwest Bay of Bengal, about 590 km Southeast of Chennai and 560 km East-Southeast of Puducherry. It is likely to move West-Northwestward, intensify further and its landfall was expected between Vedaranyam and Puducherry and near Cuddalore during the early hours on December 2. It is expected to weaken into a depression by Friday noon.

"A few places over coastal parts and Puducherry may experience heavy to very heavy rainfall up to 20 cm of rainfall on these days. One or two places in interior

Tamil Nadu may have heavy to very heavy rainfall. Chennai too will experience rainfall, which may be heavy at times,” said Mr.Balachandran.

With the squally winds expected to blow at a speed gusting up to 65 km per hour along and off Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coast, fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea. “There may be minor damage to thatched huts, electricity and communication lines and some damage to paddy crops, banana and papaya trees,” he added.

As a precaution, the NDRF has sent four of its teams to Chennai, Cuddalore and Nagapattinam districts. “They have been deployed as a pre-positioning exercise and would be under the respective district administration,” NDRF’s Deputy Inspector General (South Sector) S.P. Selvan said.

### **Cyclone Nada revives memories of last December**



Recalling her ordeal, Uthra Nagarajan, a resident of Jafferkanpet, said that the water began flowing into her house around 11.30 p.m. on December 1, 2015. “My family shifted to the first floor and as the rain continued all through the night, the first floor got flooded as well. We could hear helicopters hovering in the skies to come to the aid of people who were stranded. We were finally rescued by boat,” she recalled.

The downpour, which started in the early hours of December 1 last year, continued well into the next day. While Nungambakkam recorded 29 cm of rainfall, Tambaram received 49 cm and Chembarambakkam 47 cm on December 1 alone last year. Torrential downpour had resulted in a breakdown in services in most

localities, leaving residents struggling without electricity and unable to contact their family and friends as the mobile networks were down.

G. Bhuvaneshwari, a resident of Varadarajapuram, Mudichur, recalled how she and her children survived on bread provided by a councillor and volunteers for three days before they were rescued by boat. “Our area was flooded after the first spell on November 16 and the rain on December 1 made it even more traumatic for us as we had to live on the terrace. We were forced to move in with our relatives and stay there for 20 days, until the water receded,” she said.

### **More steps needed**

Residents complain that although the major waterways are undergoing improvements, much more needs to be done to mitigate urban flooding. The deluge were distressing for government officials as well.

An official of the Water Resources Department recalled how he spent 20 days in his office until the rains subsided. “We had a tough time communicating about the reservoir levels as there was no network or power,” the official said. “It is high time that sensors are fitted to provide data on water levels automatically for flood management,” he added.

Weather enthusiasts say it was unique that a trough of low pressure brought such intense rainfall over the city last year. Pradeep John, an independent weather blogger, said, “Many people thought the rain would stop. But, the downpour that started at 7 a.m. on December 1 subsided only around 3 a.m. on December 2. We will have to wait and see the volume of rainfall that cyclone Nada would bring.”

In areas which were relatively less affected, volunteers took to social media and initiated rescue and relief operations across the city. Iyappan Subramanian from the Chennai Rain Relief recalled how several organisations pitched in to help those in distress, noting that the downpour had begun wreaking havoc in mid-November itself.

“Since the damage caused by the December downpour was on a much larger scale, we intensified work at relief camps. Many were in dire need of food, bedsheets and

clothes and were constantly worried about how they would be able to rebuild their lives,” he said.

With many residents still picking up the pieces after last year’s destructive deluge, the potential impact of Cyclone Nada is all the more worrying.

### **Onion growers resort to immediate sale**

Harvest of onion has been brisk in parts of the district, and farmers across the district are quickly despatching the produce to the wholesale traders at the Gandhi Market in Tiruchi for immediate sale.

Farmers predict that the demand for onion seeds would be far less in the near future in general and during the forthcoming ‘Thai’ pattam in particular due to the scanty rainfall so far during the North East monsoon season.

Onion cultivators usually stock the produce in their conventional storage yards called ‘pattarai’ which can withstand severe heat or floods for about three months.

This storage facilitates farmers to sell the produce when onions fetch higher prices, particularly from farmers seeking to buy seeds.

But farmers of Padalur and Alathur Gate, major clusters of onion production in the district, said that they did not resort to stocking the onion this season. The poor monsoon will result in a serious fall in the area under onion cultivation next season, they say. “The demand for seed will be less,” said Mahendran, one of the farmers of Padalur who has started harvesting the produce on his three acres.

The only solace for him is that he could harvest quality onion. “I had invested huge sum on fertilizer and pesticide,” he said.

Another farmer of Alathur Gate, Revathy, said the price per kg at Gandhi Market stood at Rs 15. Her expenditure came to about Rs. 5 a kg towards fertilizer, pesticide and labour. She said she had to be content with the price as otherwise the onions may go waste. The crop was raised during August.

## Boost to green cover effort



“The experiment has achieved the results that we wanted. The land, which was barren a year ago, has turned out to be productive. It is exciting to see good growth of plants and trees,” said Collector K.S. Palanisamy.

He said that out of 1,000 saplings, 850 have survived. It worked out to 85 per cent survival rate. Moreover, the trees were showing good growth.

G. Malarvizhi, Project Officer, DRDA, said that Rs.7.20 lakh had been spent for the project. The services of workers of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) were used for three months for watering the plants and maintenance. They would continue to offer service whenever it was needed.

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**BusinessLine**

## Turmeric price up with arrivals

The arrival of turmeric to Erode markets increased on Thursday. “After a few months, the price of the spice touched ₹9,000 a quintal today and 1,300 bags arrived for sale and 80 per cent was sold,” said RKV Ravishankar, a trader. The price of the finger variety increased by ₹200-400 a quintal and that of the root variety by ₹50-200. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association, the finger

turmeric traded at ₹5,531-9,088 a quintal; the root variety ₹5,314-8,008. Of the 608 bags offered, 299 were sold.

### **Campco to start pepper purchases from January**

The multi-state Central Arecanut and Cocoa Marketing and Processing Cooperative (Campco) Ltd is likely to begin pepper purchases from farmers next month.

The co-operative had received approval to enter the pepper market in its 41st annual general meeting in August 2015.

Members had approved amendments of bye-laws to procure, process and sell pepper in that meeting. At present, Campco deals in the procurement, processing and sale of arecanut, cocoa and rubber.

Sources in Campco told *BusinessLine* that the co-operative may begin the process of buying pepper from farmers in six-seven centres from January.

Of them, five centres will be in Dakshina Kannada, Shivamogga and Uttara Kannada districts and two in northern Kerala.

Plans are afoot to market pepper in packets of half kg and 1 kg to retail customers in the north Indian market, they said.

### **Tea estates urge banks to keep adequate cash**

Tea planters, small growers and traders have asked banks to keep adequate stock for timely payment given the nationwide cash crunch.

“Most estates pay wages to workers on the seventh and some on the 10th of each month. Hitherto, we have been paying wages by cash. Now, we are liaising with banks to open savings bank accounts for all workers. There are some 60,000 estate workers in the Nilgiris,” K Rajmohan, Vice-Chairman, The Nilgiri Planters’ Association, told *BusinessLine*.

“Managements are ready to credit the wages in their accounts on December 7 or 10 as applicable but banks are yet to complete the task of opening the accounts,” he added.

“Many companies had already opened accounts for their workers for Provident Fund purposes and so, crediting wages to these accounts now will not be a problem. But, banks must ensure that they have enough cash to pay workers,” he said.

“We are also liaising with banks to open their ATMs inside estates or in close proximity to estate clusters,” he said. The association is concerned that workers will have to wait in queues for days together at banks or ATMs in distant places, affecting plantation work.

Glendale Estate, near Coonoor, belonging to Glenworth Estate Ltd, was a pioneer in introducing ATM cards for workers some seven years ago but there is no ATM booth inside the estate.

“Bought-leaf factories have also asked workers to open savings bank accounts as they have discontinued the practice of paying wages in cash. But, factories find it difficult to manage with ₹50,000 per week for their current accounts and have asked for ₹1 lakh withdrawal facility,” said Ramesh Bhojarajan, Chairman, Coonoor Tea Trade Association.

“Bought leaf factories need anywhere from ₹5-10 lakh per week to pay for the green leaf they purchase,” he said.

“Small growers are in a quandary because of the low crop reducing their earnings. Now, banks are refusing to pay the price for the green leaf deposited into their accounts by bought-leaf factories. We have also asked to raise the withdrawal limit to ₹50,000 per week from the present ₹24,000,” said H Thiagarajan, President, Nilgiris Small Tea Growers’ Association.

## Cooking oils in bull grip



Edible oils continued their uptrend tracking firm futures and crude oil. On the BCE, imported palmolein and soya oil increased by ₹7 and ₹5 per 10 kg each. Cotton refined oil was up ₹10. Groundnut, sunflower and rapeseed ruled steady. Sources said as prices went up sharply, traders preferred to stay away from new purchases and concentrate to fulfil old commitments. Liberty's rates: palmolein ₹615, super palmolein ₹638 and soyabean refined oil ₹730. Allana traded palmolein for ₹608, soya refined oil ₹720, sunflower refined oil ₹740. At Rajkot, groundnut oil *telia* tin ruled steady at ₹1,490 and loose (10 kg) at ₹940.

# Business Standard

Q2 agricultural growth fastest in 2 years

Production of foodgrains in this year's kharif rose by 8.9% as compared to a decline of 3.2% during the earlier one





[Agricultural growth](#) as measured in Gross Value Added (GVA) at constant prices was the highest in two years this July-September quarter, second (Q2) of four in this financial year.

The rate of rise was 3.3 per cent, on the back of a record [kharif](#) harvest, aided by a good monsoon.

If production during the ongoing [rabi](#) season matches the target and demonetisation doesn't have a big impact on farmers, then, says P K Joshi, South Asia director at the International Food Policy Research Institute, we could have a growth rate exceeding four per cent in agriculture and allied activities during 2016-17.

The 3.3 per cent growth in [GVA](#) compares to two per cent in the same period last year, and 1.8 per cent in this year's April-June quarter.

Around 51 per cent of the [GVA](#) in agriculture and allied activity is based on livestock products, forestry and fisheries, which had combined growth of 3.6 per cent in the quarter.

Joshi felt there was not likely to be any adverse impact of demonetisation on farm growth, as [rabi](#)sowing is done in about a third of the arable land, where farmers are relatively wealthier.

Production of foodgrains in this year's [kharif](#) rose by 8.9 per cent as compared to a decline of 3.2 per cent during the earlier one. In absolute numbers, the [kharif](#) grain production in 2016 has been estimated at a record 135.03 million tonnes (mt), with bumper rice and pulses production. Pulses output in the [kharif](#) si estimated at nine mt.

The southwest monsoon (June to September) was around 97 per cent of the Long Period Average (LPA). Though lower than the weather office prediction, it was the first normal monsoon in the country since 2013. Rainfall from 96-104 per cent of the [LPA](#) is considered normal. Around 85 per cent of the geographical area received normal or excess rain.

Of the 36 meteorological subdivisions, 23 constituting 72 per cent of the country's total area had normal rain and four had excess (13 per cent of the total area) during the season. Nine sub-divisions were deficient.

At end-September, the levels in 91 major reservoirs was 117 billion cubic metres or 74 per cent of their full capacity.

Farmers attack market yard in Hyderabad over online procurement

Farmers alleged that they were being cheated through the online procurement system that was recently introduced



Farmers attacked the office of a market yard in [Hyderabad](#) on Thursday, alleging that they were being cheated through the online procurement system that was recently introduced.

The irate chilli farmers damaged the furniture leading to escalation of tension. The police here had to intervene to control the situation. They then shut the gates to the market yard.

The incident occurred at Malakpet, a major chilli and onion market in the city.

The farmers complained that they were not getting remunerative prices for their produce. They had heated argument with officials of the marketing department.

Raising slogans against the officials, the farmers attacked the office, leading to tension in the market.

The electronic weighing machine linked to eNAM portal, an agro e-trading platform, was inaugurated at the market only last week.

Farmers complained that injustice was being done to them through online procurement. The officials, however, denied the allegations and said the system was being implemented in a transparent manner.

The market has been witnessing problems over the last three weeks due to cash crunch.

The onion market remained shut as traders had no liquid cash to procure stocks or to pay to porters.