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DECCAN Chronicle

Kerala Agricultural University offers online courses in farming

The courses are: 'Organic Agricultural Management' and 'Plant Propagation and Nursery Management'.



Kerala Agricultural University

Thrissur: The Kerala Agricultural University will be conducting two online courses related to farming this academic year. The two courses are 'Organic Agricultural Management' and 'Plant Propagation and Nursery Management'. The duration of the courses which are scheduled to begin on December 9, 2016 is six months. Minimum qualification is a pass with 50% marks in SSLC/10th Standard, the university authorities said. Farmers, employees, students and house wives including foreign nationals, of any age can apply for the courses.

An applicant can apply for only one course at a time. Applicants should have a valid Email ID and mobile number. Those wishing to be a part of the course need to remit the course fee of `6500. (50% concession for regular students in Government approved institutions) through online banking. The applicant should register for the "Online Course" link in www.celkau.in website. Last date for registration is 8th December 2016. For more details contact: celkau@gmail.com or +91 487-2438567.

Kuttiyadi coconut park a non-starter

Now the land is with the Kerala State Industries Development Council (KSIDC) and the project site is in an abandoned state.



Representational image

KOZHIKODE: The Kuttiyadi Coconut Industrial Park Limited, a project of the state government announced almost a decade ago, is still a non-starter. Envisaged as a holistic solution for the salvation of the coconut, the 116 acres land for the project at Velam near Kuttiyadi was bought when Elamaram Karim was the minister for industries in 2007. There were plans to produce an array of coconut-based products including Coconut ice cream, Virgin coconut oil, Coconut honey and packed tender coconut water.

KP Kunhammad Kutti, who is one of the directors of the company formed in 2011, told DC that the entire project came to a halt due to legal wrangles. The land was purchased through negotiation but what happened was that the owner approached the court demanding that the land should be taken over through acquisition. The government failed to get all necessary documents for the land which helped the land owner approach the court”, he added.

The case is still pending. Now the land is with the Kerala State Industries Development Council (KSIDC) and the project site is in an abandoned state. “For the last several months nothing has happened in connection with the project”, he added. “Even the director board of the company has not been convened for the last several months”, he added. However the coconut farmers of the region are lamenting the delay in executing the much awaited project. The Kuttiyadi Coconut Farmers’ Producer Company chairman Babu Mattath told DC that the announcement of the Coconut park was received with much hope.

“But lack of timely action by government agencies resulted in the legal defeat and the undue delay”, he added. Former Kuttiyadi MLA KK Lathika told DC that the UDF government failed to take any steps to end the legal wrangle and also failed to legally pursue the case correctly. “I hope the present LDF government which has already allocated funds for four mega-coconut development parks in the state will ensure that legal wrangles are cleared to get the dream project going”, he added.

Low salt intake just as harmful: Study

Study conducted in May this year found that, contrary to popular thought, low-salt diets may not be beneficial.



The study suggested that the only people who need to worry about reducing sodium in their diet are those with hypertension (high blood pressure).

Chennai: With Tamil Nadu found to be leading the country in terms of its salt intake, which is way beyond the five grams per person per day limit prescribed by the World Health Organisation (WHO), doctors have been urging the public to cut down on the same to avoid increased risks of developing cardiovascular diseases (CVD).

However, according to a new research, it has been found that low salt intake may be just as harmful. The study, which was published in 'The Lancet' found that low salt or sodium, intake may raise the risk of a heart attack or stroke as compared to an average salt intake.

The study conducted in May this year found that, contrary to popular thought, low-salt diets may not be beneficial and may actually increase the risk of CVDs and death.

The study suggested that the only people who need to worry about reducing sodium in their diet are those with hypertension (high blood pressure).

“Low sodium intake reduces blood pressure modestly as compared to average intake, but low sodium intake also has other effects, including adverse elevations of certain hormones which may outweigh any benefits. The key question is not whether blood pressure is lower with very low salt intake, instead, it is whether it improves health,” said Andrew Mente, lead author of the study.

Supporting the study, Chennai-based dietician Neena P said, “Many tend to follow the extreme — either extremely high dosage of salt or extremely low. Awareness should be created about the right quantity instead of encouraging people to cut down on its intake altogether.”

Stating that it was a common demand made by doctors to educate street vendors on the need to reduce the quantity of salt in the junk they sell, Cardiologist Dr Kumar said, “Many doctors too, are unaware of the importance of a certain amount of salt to be available in one’s diet. Salt intake prevents heat-related complications.”

Fear of dying? Mushrooms may help

The feeling faded, but so did her fear, depression, and anxiety. They have not returned again.



Bazer was a participant in one of two controlled clinical trials of the effects of psilocybin on patients dealing with depression and distress related to facing the end of life.

Dinah Bazer was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the spring of 2010. The Brooklyn resident, an ice skating teacher and former bank IT programmer in her 60s, was devastated. Luckily, doctors were able to successfully treat her disease with chemotherapy, but the dread of a reoccurrence just wouldn't go away. It was like waiting for the other shoe to drop. "I was totally consumed with fear and anxiety," she said on a recent call with a group of reporters.

So in 2011, Bazer enrolled in a trial at New York University, where researchers were looking to test a substance that they hoped would have a seemingly 'mystical' ability to lift depression and anxiety connected to fear about life's end. The drug they were testing wasn't one dreamed up in a lab. It's the essential component of psychoactive magic mushrooms, psilocybin. In a living-room-like setting at the Bluestone Centre at the NYU College of Dentistry, accompanied by trained therapists, Bazer took a pill. At first she couldn't know whether it was the drug or a placebo, but once the effects started to come on, it would be clear. Sure enough, within about 40 minutes, she started to 'trip'. "I visualised my fear as physical mass in my body," a black concentration, she said. She became angry, volcanic. She screamed. "Get the f-out!" And then this woman who said she had been an atheist her entire adult life and still is had a strange sensation. "I was bathed in God's love, and that continued for hours," she said. "I really had no other way to describe this incredibly powerful experience." The feeling faded, but so did her fear, depression, and anxiety. They have not returned.

Spring for psychedelics
Bazer was a participant in one of two controlled clinical trials of the effects of psilocybin on patients dealing with depression and distress related to facing the end of life. Aside from a few smaller pilot studies, these two trials — one by researchers from Johns Hopkins University and the other, which Bazer participated in, at NYU were the first major ones of their kind.

The results from both studies were published in the Journal of Psychopharmacology on December 1, along with 10 commentaries by prominent experts in the field of psychiatry. The results from both trials were encouraging enough that the scientists involved hope they'll be able to get consent from the Food and Drug Administration to move forward to a large-scale Phase 3 study, the third and final set of human trials that is needed before the FDA considers approving a new drug.

"This is a potential pathway to clinical approval," said Roland Griffiths, a professor of psychiatry and behavioural sciences at JHU School of Medicine, who led the JHU study and is one of the pioneers in the modern era of psychedelic research. "But that

(approval) requires the next step of going to the FDA and getting permission to move forward.”

The recent announcement that the FDA would allow trials using MDMA — the chemical name for the drug commonly known as Molly or Ecstasy to treat post-traumatic stress disorder to move to Phase 3 gives him hope, too, especially since he says MDMA might have even more ‘baggage’ than psilocybin when it comes to getting approval.

— *Source: www.sciencealert.com*



‘A new ray of hope for farmers

[Special Correspondent](#)

Bengaluru: December 03, 2016 00:00 IST

Updated: December 03, 2016 04:05 IST

The report of the House Committee recommending a comprehensive probe into the alleged irregularities in implementation of the BMICP has come as a new ray of hope for the land losers after a gap of 11 years, since both the High Court and the Supreme Court, during 2005-06, had rejected pleas for a probe by the CBI.

Expressing “satisfaction” over the report, many of those who lost their land for the project due to “illegalities” hoped that the government would accept the recommendations, including a probe by the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate.

However, some of the land losers have expressed doubt on whether the government would accept the recommendations ‘in toto’ as some “influential politicians and Ministers” are indirectly “supporting” NICE. “The report has given us new hope, and the battle will continue,” said land losers.

M.K Kempegowda, who has been fighting a battle against irregularities by travelling only on his bicycle for several years, is “happy”. He hopes the government will accept the recommendations “without yielding to internal pressures” and will thoroughly examine all the legal aspects.

As some of the old litigations on the project are still pending for adjudication, both in the High Court and the Supreme Court, legal experts say the company would certainly move the courts soon after the government formally comes out with an order, based on the report, as the panel report alone cannot be challenged in the courts. The courts cannot interfere with reports submitted on the floors of the legislature.

Though the High Court in 1998 in Somashekara Reddy case and in the J. Madhuswamy case and others in 2005, had rejected repeated pleas for a CBI probe,

legal experts said the new legal battle would be mainly on the alleged violations of the FWA, signed in 1997, as such violations would also amount to violation of the Courts' orders, which had directed implementation of the project in "letter and spirit" of the FWA. The panel could have gathered sufficient material to establish the alleged irregularities, legal experts said.

Nada leaves with a whimper

TIRUCHI: December 03, 2016 00:00 IST

Updated: December 03, 2016 04:09 IST



Xavier Amalraj, Joint Director of Fisheries, Nagapattinam, told *The Hindu* that the 35 fishermen who had set out from Kodiyakarai on November 28 were safe and being brought back ashore. Sources said that all but the 35 fishermen had returned home. A team of rescue personnel had been despatched for their immediate rescue. The engine of one of the boats of the fishermen had developed a snag, leaving them stranded in mid-sea. However, the fishermen were returning home, thanks to timely assistance from the rescue team, he said.

Meanwhile, O. S. Manian, Minister for Handlooms and Textiles, visited the families of fishermen who were yet to return at Keechankuppam.

Many parts of Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Pudukottai and Tiruchi districts received intermittent though mild showers on Friday. Tiruchi city experienced intermittent showers right through the day and chilly weather conditions continue in these parts.

The following is the chief amount of rainfall recorded in Nagapattinam, Thanjavur and Tiruchi districts in the 24 hour period ending at 8 a.m. on Friday (in mm):

Nagapattinam: Thalaignayiru 31.80, Vedaranyam 24.40, Tirupoondi 21, Nagapattinam 14.10, Sirkazhi 9.50, Manalmedu and Kollidam 9 each and Tranquebar 6.

Thanjavur: Ayyampettai 56, Thirukattupalli 44.30, Adirampattinam 38.90, Vallam 35.20, Grand Anicut 34.40, Pattukottai 27.52, Madukkur 27.20, Lower Anicut 25.60, Thiruvaiyaru 22, Kurungulam 20, Vettikadu and Budalur 19.60 each, Neivasal Thenpathi 18.80, Papanasam 17.50, Kumbakonam 15, Orathanad 13.80, Thiravidamaruthur 13.60, Thanjavur 13 and Manjalaru 10.60

Tiruchi: Ponnaniyar dam 29.08, Nandhiyar Head 27.60, Navalur Kottapattu 27.40, Tiruchi Town 27, Tiruchi Airport 25.90, Golden Rock 24, Tiruchi Junction 23.50, Kallakudi 23.40, Pullampadi 22.60, Samayapuram 22, Thuvakudi 20, Vathalai Anicut 19, Kovilapatti 17.20.

Rain in Salem, Namakkal

SALEM: December 03, 2016 00:00 IST

Updated: December 03, 2016 03:41 IST

Various parts of Salem district experienced intermittent showers throughout Friday.

The sky remained overcast from dawn to dusk and people suffered from biting cold both in early morning and in evening hours. The inclement weather posed much hardship to people waiting in the queues in front of the ATMs in the city and other parts of the district.

The thick fog and the severe cold along with the intermittent showers forced tourists to stay indoors in the hotel rooms and private guest houses in the hill station of Yercaud.

Gangavalli town experienced the maximum rainfall of 20.1 mm in the last 24 hours that ended at 8 a.m. on Friday, followed by Veeraganur 20 mm; Attur 9.2 mm; Yercaud 6.2 mm; Kaadayampatti 6.1 mm; Vazhappadi 4 mm; Salem city 3.3 mm; Pethanayakkanpalayam 3 mm; Aanaimaduvu 3 mm; Kariamedu 3 mm; Sankagiri 2 mm and Edappadi 1 mm.

Namakkal

Various parts of Namakkal district, including Kolli hills, received intermittent showers for the second consecutive day on Friday. The sky remained overcast throughout the day.

The towns of Tiruchengode, Komarapalayam, Rasipuram, Pallipalayam, and their surrounding areas experienced showers.

The following are the chief amounts of rainfall in the district in the last 24 hours that ended at 8 a.m. on Friday: Namakkal and Mohanur 15 mm each; Sendamangalam 10 mm; Rasipuram 9.4 mm; Mangalapuram 9.2 mm; Paramathivelur 9 mm; Tiruchengode 8 mm; Erumapatti 5 mm; Puduchathiram 2.5 mm.

Water level in Siruvani Dam depletes

[Karthik Madhavan](#)

COIMBATORE: December 03, 2016 00:00 IST

Updated: December 03, 2016 03:37 IST



Only if this was done, the civic body would be able to continue supplying Siruvani water to the five Wards, the sources said.

Even after diverting Pilloor water to the 19 Siruvani-fed wards, the corporation should be able to manage the water needs of those in Pilloor-fed Wards as well, the sources said adding that the civic body drew close to 125 million litres a day of Pilloor water.

But this management at the distribution level in the city, will not make things comfortable for the water managers in the corporation. For, they expect the water to go well below the dead storage level in Siruvani by January 2017.

Thereafter, the TWAD Board will be forced to pump water and it can do so with the Kerala Government's permission. Sources said that the board had done so in the past and this time too, if push comes to shove, it will talk to the Kerala Government.

In the added areas - Thudiyalur, Vellakinaru, Chinna Vedapatti, Vilankurichi, Saravanampatty and Kalapatti - the water supply is expected to be at the current level as the Corporation gets water from the board from the Pilloor-I scheme.

Sources said that they did not foresee any problem in supply to Kavundampalayam, Vadavalli, Kuruchi or Kuniyathur either as water supply from the Kavundampalayam-Vadavalli and Aliyar schemes is good.

Government hikes compensation for loss caused by wild animals

[Special Correspondent](#)

CHENNAI: December 03, 2016 00:00 IST

Updated: December 03, 2016 03:36 IST

Financial assistance for human death or permanent incapacitation increased

The State government has enhanced compensation for loss of life and damage to property caused by wild animals.

The compensation / relief (financial assistance) for human death or permanent incapacitation has been increased from Rs. 3 lakh to Rs. 4 lakh. For a major injury, the compensation will be Rs. 59,100. However, there is no increase in compensation for crop damage, which is Rs. 25,000 an acre or the actual, whichever was less.

The enhanced compensation follows the announcement in the budget earlier this year by the Finance Minister that the compensation provided for loss of life and damage to

crops and property because of attacks of wild animals would be fixed on a par with the State Disaster Response Fund norms.

Based on this, the Chief Wildlife Warden prepared a proposal for enhancing compensation or relief amount and its timely disbursements. Karnataka and Kerala had already enhanced the compensation amount.

Since the human-wildlife conflict was an unforeseen natural event, he said making financial assistance on a par with the rates approved by the Revenue Department as per SDRF norms was recommended. The government passed an order enhancing the compensation or relief amount under various heads.

Under the new order, the compensation for a fully damaged or severely pucca house would be Rs. 95,100, for kutcha house it would be Rs. 10,000, and Rs 5,000 for severely damaged house.

The financial assistance for partially damaged house would be Rs. 5,200 per house. Compensation for loss of milch cattle is Rs 30,000, bullock Rs. 25,000, goat and sheep Rs. 3,000, poultry Rs. 100 a bird, pig Rs. 3,000 or actual value, whichever is less. The actual loss or Rs. 2,000, whichever is less for household articles.

Business Standard

Warmer winter likely; crops may be hit

Late rise in temperate would affect maturing rabi crops



India might experience a warm [winter](#) this year, with [temperatures](#) in all the sub-divisions likely to be higher than usual between December 2016 and February 2017.

Last year, the country had recorded the warmest [winter](#) since 1901.

North India, which has the main rabi growing states of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, would also have fewer number of cold wave spells this year.

Releasing its first seasonal forecast for the [winter](#) season, India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Thursday said the forecast indicated during the 2016-2017 cold weather season, [temperatures](#) (mean, maximum and minimum) in all the sub-divisions were likely to be “warmer than normal”.

“The overall [temperatures](#) across the country would be above normal. In North India, which only experiences cold waves, the number of such spells would be fewer this year,” Director General of IMD, K J Ramesh told *Business Standard*.

The Met said there was also an 83 per cent probability that the minimum [temperatures](#) in the core cold wave zone would be above normal.

The core cold wave zone comprises of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Orissa and Telangana and the meteorological subdivisions of Marathwada, Vidarbha, and central Maharashtra.

This could have a negative impact on standing wheat, chana and mustard crops, already battered by demonetisation. But the effect would depend on the time when a warm weather sets in.

TOTAL ACREAGE			
Area covered under rabi crops till November 25			
Crops	2015-16	2016-17	% change
Wheat	11.73	12.71	8.38
Pulses	8.81	9.5	7.92
Coarse cereals	4.23	3.43	-18.91
Oilseeds	5.62	6.42	14.12
Total	31.31	32.76	4.62

Source: Department of agriculture

Total Acreage: Experts said if day [temperatures](#) rise unusually during sowing and harvesting, the impact on standing rabi crop could be less. But if [temperatures](#) rise abnormally during the crop maturing stage, it could have an adverse impact on the final yields of wheat, mustard and chana, said S Mahendra Dev, director of Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Studies.

Sowing has been completed on 51 per cent of the usual area. Till last week, [rabi crops](#) have been planted on 32.76 million hectares, 4.65 per cent more than that of the corresponding period last year but 7.45 per cent less than the normal area covered during the previous five years.

The average “maximum” temperature in most of the subdivisions in Northwest India was expected to be 0.5-1.0-degree-Celsius warmer than normal. [Temperatures](#) in the remaining sub-divisions might be warmer by 0.5 degree Celsius.

The seasonal average “mean” temperature might also be more than normal in most sub-divisions.

The Met department said the main reason for the warmer-than-usual [winter](#) indicated neutral El Nino conditions might return. [IMD](#) had blamed this weather phenomenon, along with some other conditions, for getting its 2016 southwest monsoon forecast wrong.