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Kuttanad farm workers to get more wages

A meeting of the Kuttanad Labour Relations Committee held here on Monday decided to enhance the daily wages of farm workers in the Kuttanad agricultural zone. The daily wage of male workers has been increased from Rs.560 to Rs.700 and that for women from Rs.330 to Rs.400. The rates for various works have also been revised upward.

Decks for Purushothapatnam lift irrigation scheme cleared

By giving administrative approval to the Purushothapatnam Lift Irrigation Scheme (PLIS), at an estimated cost of Rs.1, 638 crore, the State government has paved the way for calling tenders for two packages out of four to lift 3,500 cusecs of Godavari river water at Purushothapatnam in Seethanagaram mandal of East Godavari.

Ten pump sets will be set up on the left bank of the Godavari at 40.80 km point to facilitate lifting of 23.44 tmcft of water from the Polavaram left canal and take the same to the Yeleru reservoir and Visakhapatnam for irrigating 4 lakh acres and meeting the drinking water needs of the city. M. Venkateswara Rao, Engineer-in-Chief, Polavaram project, told *The Hindu* that with the Yeleru reservoir not getting adequate inflows in the last few years, distressed farmers had been making representations to public representatives.

Taking note of their concerns, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu during his earlier visit to Polavaram directed the officials to prepare a report on PLIS and complete the scheme in six months, he said.

Pithapuram MLA SVSN Varma said the ayacut under the Pithapuram and Yeleru branch canal was 43,000 acres and another 7,000 acres was cultivated unauthorised. Once the PLIS is completed, farmers will get water for the second crop.

The Tuni, Peddapuram, Prattipadu and Jaggampeta constituencies with an ayacut of 50,000 acres under the Yeleru reservoir will also benefit.

Report finalised

Meanwhile, Tuni Irrigation Circle Superintending Engineer S. Sugunakar Rao held a meeting with irrigation experts and finalised a report on two packages for the PLIS and submitted the same to the government.

According to the report, a survey was undertaken up to 10 km from Purushothapatnam to lay 5-metre diameter pipelines with a span of 100 m each for PLIS at 48.2 km point of Polavaram sluice. Water will be released at Gandikota which will flow by gravity to Pushkar lift scheme.

Make 'hay' as harvest nears completion



Non-availability of hay in Pudukottai district has forced farmers to purchase it from Lalgudi block.

With the harvest of paddy crop nearing completion in and around Lalgudi in the district, there has been a big demand for hay among the livestock owners of neighbouring districts

who have been making a beeline to Lalgudi to purchase the hay to feed their milch animals.

A couple of farmers from Kodumbalur near Pudukottai, said that non-availability of hay in Pudukottai district forced them to purchase it at Peruvalappur village in Lalgudi block.

“We conducted a village-wise search in the banks of the river, as we were aware that the harvest of paddy was in progress,” said V. Raju, one of the farmers from Kodumbalur.

Another farmer, Natarajan of Viralimalai said that he incurred a huge expenditure for transporting hay from Peruvalappur to Viralimalai.

The farmers said that they had to shell out Rs. 15,000 for taking the hay from Peruvalappur to their village in Pudukottai district. The farmers said that till a couple of years ago, they managed the situation by feeding their milch animals with maize straw. “But, due to failure of monsoon, maize was not raised in the villages in Pudukottai district, leading to a scramble for hay,” they said.

The growing demand for hay can be gauged from the fact that the livestock owners purchase the hay even as mechanical harvest is in progress right on the fields. This provides an opportunity for labourers to earn some additional wages. “At least 11 labourers are needed for taking the hay from the fields and for loading it on the tractor,” said Mr. Natarajan. The hay will be sufficient for them to feed their cows for a period of six months, he added.

Non-availability of hay in Pudukottai district has forced farmers to purchase it from Lalgudi block

Etala wants millers to handover CMR in 45 days

Minister for Finance and Civil Supplies Etala Rajender has cautioned rice millers against the delay in handing over the custom milled rice (CMR) to the Civil Supplies Department after processing the paddy procured from farmers given to them.

In a meeting with rice millers and officials of the Civil Supplies Department held here on Monday, the Minister warned traders, brokers and fair price shop dealers against diverting subsidised rice to the black market. He stated that Preventive Detention Act would be invoked against the elements resorting to such irregularities.

He also appealed to the ration cardholders that since it was useful only for drawing subsidised rice and a few other commodities and as it was not being considered as a proof of address, for Aarogyasri health scheme or fee reimbursement scheme those not availing rice on the ration card should surrender it to the government to prevent misuse and black marketing of subsidised rice.

The Minister explained that the State Government was covering 2.7 crore population under the subsidised rice scheme at 6 kg per head per month by considering them as below poverty line against 1.91 crore people identified by the Centre for the purpose of food security. Besides, the State Government is also supplying superfine rice to hostels and mid-day meal scheme.

Stating that good rains this year had increase the hopes of good paddy production, the Minister noted that the State Government is procuring the produce to ensure minimum support price to farmers even as the Centre had withdrawn the levy collection of rice. The MSP for common grade paddy was fixed at Rs.1,470 per quintal while it is Rs.1,510 for A grade paddy.

On CMR, the Minister told the millers to handover rice within 45 days of supplying paddy to them and the government would be stubborn in getting the commodity. The millers used to drag on the handing over of CMR even up to two years in the past but the Telangana Government had achieved 98 per cent CMR collection during 2015-16 and is aiming for 100 per cent this year.

Chairman of Telangana State Civil Supplies Corporation Peddi Sudarshan Reddy, Commissioner of Civil Supplies C.V. Anand and others attended the meeting.

Eggs distributed free of cost

To create an awareness among the citizens on the nutrient value of eggs, about 15,000 boiled eggs were distributed to them free of cost on World Egg Day.

The International Egg Commission established the World Egg Day at Vienna 1996 conference where it was decided to celebrate the day on second Friday in October each year, a release here has said.

The function was organised by National Egg Coordination Committee (NECC), Namakkal Zone, Tamil Nadu Egg Poultry Farmers Federation in association with Kemin Industries South Asia Private Limited and Novus International Company.

Training programme

A free one-day training programme on 'tapioca cultivation techniques' will be held at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra on Veterinary College and Research Institute premises on October 20.

A press release from N. Akila, Senior Scientist and Head, KVK, said that the training would focus on types of tapioca, cultivation methods, selection of crop, drip irrigation methods, managing nutrient deficiency in the crop and use of technology for weed management. Farmers, members of self-help groups, youth and interested persons can

participate in the training programme. Interested should register themselves for participating in the training before October 19.

For registration, visit the KVK in person or register through phone: 04286-266345 and 266650, the release added.

THE HINDU BusinessLine

65% turmeric sold in Erode



ERODE, OCTOBER 17:

About 1,300 bags of turmeric were sold at Erode markets on Monday. “Though traders expected huge arrivals, only 2,100 bags were put up for sale and 65 per cent stocks were sold. Only medium variety turmeric arrived for sale,” said RKV Ravishankar, a trader. Regarding the price of the commodity, the finger and root varieties of turmeric were up ₹200 a quintal in the Regulated Market Committee due to the arrival of some good quality turmeric. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association, the finger variety was sold at ₹7,169-8,866 a quintal; the root variety at ₹6,898-7,999. 572 bags were sold against the arrival of 898 bags.

Chandigarh State agricultural board holds seminar on organic farming

he Chandigarh State Agricultural Marketing Board in association with Kheti Virasat Mission organised a seminar on organic farming to observe World Food Day at NITTTR Auditorium in Sector 26, Chandigarh, Monday.

UT administrator VP Singh Badnore was the chief guest and local Member of Parliament (MP) Kirron Kher was the guest of honor at the event.

The seminar evoked positive response as it was attended by experts, farmers, counselors and teachers. The objective of the seminar was to promote eco-friendly concept of cultivation, reducing the dependency on chemicals and fertilizers for the benefit of farmers.

The farmers were guided and motivated to use farmyard manure/vermi compost and organic fertilizers/organic inputs etc for production of organic agriculture produce with the scientific way.

Kirron Kher was overwhelmed to see the turnout at the event, and therefore, she lauded the initiative of the state Agricultural Marketing Board and Kheti Virasat Mission. Expressing her happiness on Chandigarh being awarded the title of the first solar city, she stressed on now making it an organic city.

She further requested the Badnore to extend his support in creating an organic market or mandi in Chandigarh.

The UT administrator said, "I strongly believe that Chandigarh can become smart in true sense by becoming an organic city."

He also appreciated the State Marketing Board and Kheti Virasat Mission for bringing this subject to the public platform, and ensured the Kher his support in creating an organic market or mandi in Chandigarh.

Telangana starts buying onions at Rs 8,000 per tonne to support farmers



In a bid to save the onion farmers from getting poor prices for their crop, Telangana government has started buying the commodity for Rs 8,000 per tonne, a senior official of the state Agricultural Marketing Department said on Monday.

According to G Lakshmi Bai, Additional Director of Marketing, the higher production of onions in neighbouring Maharashtra and Karnataka, results in Telangana markets being flooded with the commodity, bringing its price down to almost Rs 2,000 per tonne (Rs 2 per kg).

“The prices of onion are hovering at lower levels during the past ten days. There is excess production in Maharashtra and Karnataka. There is lot of stored onion available in Maharashtra. It was supposed to be disposed of before October. Since it is not done, prices have been crashed.

“The state government started buying onion at Rs 8,000 per tonne (Rs 8 per kg) from Mahabubnagar markets. So far we have purchased about 6,800 tonnes. We will continue buying until the season is over,” Lakshmi Bai told PTI.

A senior official of Telangana Horticulture Department said onion is cultivated in about 20,000 hectares in the state with an expected yield of 20 tonnes per hectare.

A wholesale dealer of onion at Malakpet Gunj said the government is buying the cheapest variety (Kunool variety) whose shelf life is very short. According to him, the current rate of medium to good variety is between Rs 7,000 to Rs 12,000 (per tonne)

Centre's snubs Maharashtra on legislation to control retail prices of pulses



Amid efforts to revise the draft to satisfy the objections raised by the Centre, the state government has indicated that it would mainly rely on improvement of domestic supplies and drives to check hoarding to control prices.

In a snub to the Bharatiya Janata Party government in Maharashtra, the Centre has returned state's draft legislation for regulating and capping prices of pulses.

In April this year, the state government, which had come under fire for spiralling tur dal prices, had introduced the draft legislation for controlling prices of tur dal, black gram, bengal gram, green gram, lentils, and beans, etc. Reaching out to the middle class in the state, the Devendra Fadnavis had claimed at that time that it was the country's first government to adopt such a price control mechanism.

But the piece of legislation has failed its first hurdle. While the state cabinet had referred the draft to the Centre for the Presidential assent, Mahesh Pathak, Principal Secretary, Food and Civil Supplies, when contacted, confirmed that the Centre had raised queries on the draft, which had been returned back to the state.

Amid efforts to revise the draft to satisfy the objections raised by the Centre, the state government has indicated that it would mainly rely on improvement of domestic supplies and drives to check hoarding to control prices. Pathak informed that the government's move to distribute subsidised tur dal had already impacted retail prices, which had overshoot the Rs 150 per kg mark in April. "The retail prices are now hovering around the Rs 110 per kg mark, whereas the wholesale rates are about Rs 100 per kg," Pathak said. The senior bureaucrat informed that on similar lines the Centre had recently allotted 500

tonne of split bengal gram to the state. “We plan to distribute it at a subsidised rate of Rs 55-Rs 60 per kg. The supplies will be distributed within the next fortnight,” he said. Sources in the government admitted that the Centre’s refusal to grant assent to the bill could lend more ammunition to the Opposition to fire salvos at it. The consumption of pulses is expected to soar during the Diwali festival at the end of the month. Officials said that the Centre’s main objection to the draft legislation was a provision for penalising a producer or a trader found violating the price cap norms. “While the government had proposed an imprisonment of up to one year, the Centre has said that it was not in consonance with the universal Essential Commodities Act (1955), which advocates seven year imprisonment for violators. Some other minor technical inconsistencies have also been identified,” said a senior state government official. Till the time of filing this report, the state government appeared divided on the revision measure. “While the state’s Law department has mandated a Cabinet nod for the revision to the draft, the Food and Civil Supplies department feels this wasn’t necessary,” a source said. The issue could be debated during Tuesday’s cabinet meeting.

Business Standard

Kharif Crop Survey 1: Bumper pulses output likely this year

Sowing acreage is estimated to be higher and crop estimates more optimistic in kharif season, but govt estimates often vary from what market participants claim