

21.01.2017

DECCAN Chronicle

Department of Environment and Climate Change to create 'virtual climate cells'

DoECC is conducting a training in various government institutions.



The training is being conducted by UK's Department for International Development (DFID).

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The Department of Environment and Climate Change (DoECC) is conducting a training to create 'virtual climate cells' in various government institutions. These teams from each institution will act as a link between the recently formed climate cell at DoECC and the organisations. They are being trained to integrate climate change perspectives into their respective organisation's activities. "Suppose the director of an institution has a project which needs to be in line with climate change perspectives, they can take the help of this focal team. They will assist the institution head in preparing such a project and will also coordinate with the directorate for accessing funds or some technical assistance," says Padma Mahanti, director, DoECC.

Now, 81 people from 34 institutions identified as implementing agencies of the State Action Plan for Climate Change (SAPCC) are taking part in the training programme. These include organisations like Energy Management Centre, KSEB, KSREC, ICAR-CTCRI and IMD. "Many of the projects these organisations take up may be already associated with climate change. The officials will be trained to look into their existing plans and budgets with a climate change lens," says Nirmala Sanu George, team leader, Climate Change

Innovation Programme, DFID.

The training is being conducted by UK's Department for International Development (DFID). Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has entrusted DFID with providing technical support to five Indian states --- Kerala, Assam, Bihar, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh. A similar kind of training is being conducted for officials in local bodies through KILA, according to Padma Mahanti.

Kuttanad: Central team to study water hyacinths

The team led by officials from the Union Agriculture ministry will collect information from farmers and people's representatives.



The water from rivers now cannot be used even for primary needs due to the hyacinths.

ALAPPUZHA: A central team will pay a visit to Kuttanad on January 25 to study the problems of people due to overgrowing water hyacinths across the region. Local MP Kodikunnil Suresh said that the team would visit selected places in 13 panchayths in Kuttanad. The team led by officials from the Union Agriculture ministry will collect information from farmers and people's representatives.

A discussion on the disposal of water hyacinths in the presence of the district collector and tahasildars , principal agriculture officer and officials from various departments will be held at rice research institute at Mankombu on that day. "The report will be submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture", he said. For over a decade, the water hyacinths have been multiplying on the rivers and canals and paddy polders of Kuttanad affecting paddy cultivation.

It is estimated that the uncontrolled multiplication of hyacinths has affected paddy cultivation in at least 15000 hectares. The water from rivers now cannot

be used even for primary needs due to the hyacinths. The Agriculture ministry decided to send a team as a result of repeated complaints by local people to the local MP.

THE HINDU

Best tobacco farmers from AP, TS, Karnataka given awards

VIJAYAWADA: Agriculture Minister P. Pulla Rao has called upon tobacco farmers to wage a relentless fight to achieve their demands and promised them his support.

Participating in the 17th Tobacco Farmers Award function, organised by the Tobacco Institute of India (TII), here on Friday, the Minister, along with MPs M. Venkateshwara Rao (Babu) and G. Gangaraju, MLAs, and members of the TII and Tobacco Board, felicitated 17 best farmers from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Telangana.

Awards were presented to the farmers of Southern Black Cotton Soil, Southern Light Soil, Northern Light Soil, Karnataka Light Soil, Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco and Vinukonda region for Burley tobacco.

The selections were made by an eminent panel of judges from the Tobacco Board, Central Tobacco Research Institute (CTRI), ITC Limited, and other industries.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Pulla Rao asked the farmers to submit representations to the Ministers of State and Central governments and MPs on illegal sale of tobacco products (imported cigarettes), decreasing taxes on cigarettes, besides taking up the cause of farmers who suffered crop loss in the State.

“Our aim is to make agriculture profitable to farmers. As per the request of the farmers, Rythu Bhavan will be constructed in Amaravati and the matter would be discussed with the Chief Minister,” he said.

Mr. Babu said that imported cigarettes were being marketed unchecked, while the government was controlling Indian tobacco by imposing heavy taxes and discouraging farmers.

The farmers urged the government to continue giving subsidies and incentives, and follow uniform tax policy on all tobacco products. They also sought measures to check smuggling of foreign cigarettes.

MLAs Madhava Naidu, Venkateshwara Rao and Sivarama Raju, Tobacco Board member G. Satyanarayana, and CTRI scientist Damodar Reddy were among others who participated.

‘Govt. completing irrigation projects left over by YSR’

The Telugu Desam government is putting on line several irrigation projects that were taken up by the Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy government and left incomplete by it, Minister for Water Resources Devineni Umamaheswara Rao has said.

Responding to the statements made by Opposition leader and YSRC president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy in the capital area, the Minister on Friday alleged that the former was spreading falsehoods and making irresponsible statements that were unbecoming of leader of his stature. The attacks on the State government being made by the Opposition leader were an obstruction to the development of the State, the Minister said.

The Minister said most of the statements made by Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy about farmers in the capital area on Thursday were false. Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy has made it a point to come to the capital area once in three months and sling mud and falsehoods on Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu.

The TDP government was not sparing any efforts to supply water for drinking and irrigation to people in every district in the State, but the Opposition leader was alleging that people were dying after drinking water provided by the government. There was nothing more irresponsible than such statements, he said.

Exotic species, a boon as well as bane



The protest in support of jallikattu has also triggered a debate on the import of Jersey cows for the cattle breeding programme.

It is argued that the exotic species would eradicate native breeds, but the fact is that Jersey and Holstein Friesian cattle were brought into the country almost four decades ago as part of Operation Flood Phase I and Operation Flood Phase II that helped the country secure the status as one of the top milk producers in the world.

“We agree that exotic species does pose grave threats to native species. But we could not have achieved the breakthrough in milk production without the cross-breeding programme as the yield of local breeds have always been less,” a scientist of the Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS) said.

In Tamil Nadu, he explained, there are five region-specific breeds and they are bred for agricultural activities, including ploughing and pulling carts.

Pulikulam, a native of the Madurai region, is normally used in jallikattu, while Umblacherry belongs to the Cauvery delta. Kangeyam, (used in jallikattu) a majestic breed from the Kongu region, has survived because of specific efforts. Bargur and Alambadi breeds are facing the threat of extinction.

The exotic species came into picture when the country launched the White Revolution. Jerseys, capable of withstanding heat, were introduced in plain areas and Holstein Friesian in the hilly regions. Besides the cross-breeding programme, the Murrah buffaloes from Haryana and the Niliravi buffaloes from Punjab helped India become one of the top milk producers.

“Exotic breeds proved to be both as a boon and bane. Even though cross-breeding increased milk yield, there are issues such as providing more and diverse feeds to animals. The animals are also more prone to diseases, and need multiple efforts at insemination as they have a low conception rate. The programme also diluted the native breeds, because instead of using nondescript breeds for cross-breeding programme, we used well-defined breeds like Kangeyam and others,” said a K. N. Raja, senior scientist of the National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resource (NBAGR).

Cross-breeding

TANUVAS scientists said the country could opt for cross-breeding involving Red Sindhi, Tharparker and Sahiwal cattle instead of the exotic species. “But it will take another forty years to achieve full success as full yield will be possible only in the ninth generation of breeding,” they said.