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Food inflation edges up to 16.35 %

Analysts expect
the RBI to go in
for another round
of hike in key rates

NEW DELHI: After dipping to a four-month low at 16.22 per cent in the previous week, food inflation inched up yet again to 16.35 per cent for the week ended March 20 mainly on account of higher prices of milk and various pulses.

With the upward movement of food inflation coupled with the hike in fuel prices sending out clear signals of its cascading impact on the manufacturing sector and overall headline inflation, further measures to contain the price rise now appear a certainty when the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) unveils its credit and monetary policy on April 20. Already, the Wholesale Price Index-based headline inflation, which includes manufactured goods and all other non-food item groups, is pegged at 9.89 per cent for February and, going by the current rising trend, it may well cross the double-digit mark to settle at 10.5-11.0 per cent in March.

Last month, the RBI had hiked its key short term lending and borrowing (repo and reverse repo) rates by 25 basis points each to five per cent and 3.5 per cent, respectively, as a measure to contain inflation and check its spread to the manufacturing sector.

However, with the overall inflation already exceeding the RBI projection of 8.5 per cent for the fiscal year, economic analysts expect the apex bank to go in for another round of hike in key policy rates — Cash Reserve Ratio, repo and reverse repo — by at least 25 basis points each. Recently, Governor D Subbarao had also indicated that the RBI would gradually exit from its "soft and accommodative" monetary policy to check inflation and ensure sustainable growth.

In the near term, even as food inflation is expected to soften with the arrival of fresh crops, the increased cost of fuel is also expected to put pressure on prices.

As for prices of food items on a year-on-year basis, pulses were dearer by 31.55 per cent, milk prices by 18.74 per cent and wheat by 13.5 per cent. On a weekly basis, the index for food articles went up by 0.6 per cent owing to higher prices of pulses (moong, urad and arhar), barley, milk, and condiments and spices.

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“Pulses' harvest over in 12,000 hectares”



HARVEST: Farmers drying harvested black gram (urad dal) near Soorakottai in Thanjavur.

THANJAVUR: Thanjavur district farmers are busy harvesting pulses now. They raise black gram and green gram as rice fallow pulses and also as irrigated pulses every year. Sown in in the month of Thai and again in Chithirai, pulses, which are 75 days to 80 days crops, are popular crops of Thanjavur and Tiruvarur districts after samba harvest.

In Thanjavur district, this year pulses (black gram and green gram) were raised on 33,835 hectares. Out of this, black gram was raised on 27,000 hectares and green gram in the rest. According to P. Loganathan, Joint Director of Agriculture, Thanjavur district, harvest has been completed on 12,000 hectares. It will touch the peak during April.

Average yield with respect to rice fallow pulses is 505 kgs per hectare with respect to black gram and 245 Kgs per hectare with respect to green gram. There are farmers who have got maximum yield, ie., 4,100 kgs per hectare and won prizes in the district-level yield competitions for the year 2009-2010.

“K. Periyasamy, of Perumpuliyur in Thiruvaiyaru taluk has taken 4,100 kgs per hectare and has won the first prize at the district-level for the best yield in pulses. He has raised ADT 5 variety of black gram. Prize amount of Rs. 10,000 will be awarded to him on farmers' grievance day”, Loganathan said. A. Govindarajan, of Arumunai village in Orathanadu taluk has won the second prize of Rs. 5000. He has 3,430 Kgs black gram of ADT5 variety per hectare.

However, pulses crop area has come down this year compared to last year in the district. Last year the coverage was 43,000 hectares. Agriculture Department officials attribute the reason to late harvest of samba as water was released for paddy cultivation late this year and use of paddy harvesters at many places.

According to Mr. Loganathan, there is misconception among farmers that after using the paddy harvester the soil may not be ready for pulses cultivation. "But scientists of Tamil Nadu Rice Research Institute at Aduthurai have come out with technologies which can raise pulses in areas where paddy was harvested using machines. They should use harvesters with chain and not with tyres. They should sow the pulses seeds four or five days before harvest of paddy. These technologies will be popularised among farmers" Loganathan said.

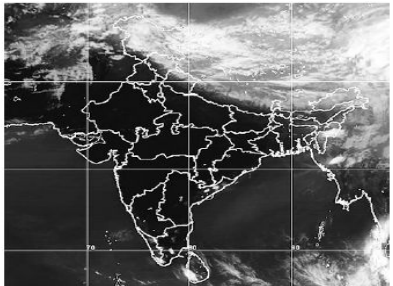
The department has also selected some villages as seed villages. Seeds will be supplied to farmers.

Soil and Water Management Research Institute (SWMRI) at Kattuthottam in Thanjavur has also taken up demonstration of pulses in Cauvery Delta Zone. According to Chandrasekar, head of SWMRI, as per directions of Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, demonstration of black gram ADT3 and breeder seed production has been taken up on 4.25 acres in the institute. institute," Chandrasekar said.

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Weather

WEATHER											
ANDHRA PRADESH						COIMBATORE AP					<p>us, rainfall during last 24 hours (trace) and total rainfall in mm since March 01, 2010</p> <p>Isolated rain in Tamil Nadu</p> <p>CHENNAI: Isolated rainfall occurred at over Tamil Nadu, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Lakshadweep and south interior Karnataka. Mainly dry weather prevailed over Kerala and dry weather prevailed over Rayalaseema, coastal and north interior Karnataka.</p> <p>The chief amounts of rainfall recorded in Centimetres are: Palayamkottai 5, Eluru (West Godavari dt.) and Mangalagiri (Guntur dt.) 2 each and Valparai, Andipatti (Theni dt.) and Kakkhada 1 each.</p> <p>On Wednesday, the maximum temperature fell appreciably at one or two places over Kerala, north interior Tamil Nadu and changed little elsewhere over the region.</p> <p>Adilabad recorded the highest maximum temperature of 43 degree Celsius in the region.</p> <p>FORECAST (Valid until Saturday Morning): Isolated rain or thundershowers may occur over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and south interior Karnataka. Mainly dry weather will prevailed over coastal and north interior Karnataka and Lakshadweep.</p>
Anantapur	39	24	0	0		Coimbatore AP	35	24	0	0	
Aroyavaram	35	21	0	0		Coonoor	24	16	0	0	
Bapatla	35	28	0	0		Cuddalore	37	27	0	0	
Calingapatnam	32	25	tr	1		Chennai AP	38	28	0	0	
Gannavaram	36	25	0	0		Chennai	37	27	0	0	
Hyderabad AP	39	25	0	0		Dharmapuri	37	25	0	7	
Kakinada	36	27	8	8		Kanyakumari	33	27	0	tr	
Khammam	39	24	0	0		Karikal	34	27	0	0	
Kovvili	40	27	0	0		Kodaikanal	19	13	tr	29	
Kumool	41	26	0	0		Madurai AP	39	26	4	4	
Mahabubnagar	35	2	0	0		Nagapattinam	37	28	0	1	
Machilipatnam	36	28	0	0		Palayamkottai	39	23	25	25	
Nandyal	40	25	0	0		Pamban	35	29	0	0	
Narasapur	35	29	0	0		Parangipettai	36	27	0	0	
Nellore	40	28	0	0		Puducherry	36	28	0	0	
Nizamabad	41	24	0	0		Salem	39	26	0	1	
Ongole	38	27	0	0		Thanjavur	39	29	0	0	
Ramagundam	41	22	0	0		Tiruchir AP	40	28	0	0	
Tirupathi AP	41	27	0	0		Tiruchi	—	—	—	—	
Tuni	37	27	0	3		Tirupattur	—	—	—	—	
Vizag AP	36	28	0	0		Tiruttani	41	28	0	0	
Vizag	32	28	0	0		Tondi	36	28	0	0	
KARNATAKA						Tuticorin	35	28	0	0	
Agumbe	30	15	0	0	Ooty	18	12	1	44		
Bangalore AP	27	20	tr	1	Valparai	23	16	14	19		
Bangalore	26	21	tr	6	Vedaranayam	36	28	0	0		
Bagalakote	—	21	0	0	Vellore	41	25	tr	Tr		
Belgaum AP	36	18	0	0	LAKSHADWEEP						
Bellary	39	23	0	0	Amini Divi	34	27	0	0		
Bijapur	36	20	0	0	Minicoy	34	28	4	8		
Chitradurga	34	21	0	17	Kavarathi	33	27	0	0		
Chickmagalur	29	20	0	84	OTHER STATIONS						
Chintamani	32	21	0	—	Kolkata (Alipore)	37	27	0	10		
Gadag	37	20	0	0	Mumbai	34	20	0	0		
Gulbarga	41	24	0	1	New Delhi	38	22	0	0		
Hassan	—	—	—	—	The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius.						
Honavar	33	23	0	0							
KARNATAKA					TAMIL NADU						
Karwar	35	25	0	0	Alappuzha	32	24	0	74		
Madikeri	24	17	0	5	Adirampattinam	35	27	0	0		
Mangalore AP	33	24	0	5							
Mysore	31	20	2	3							
Mandya	26	19	tr	14							
Panambur	34	25	0	1							
Raichur	39	21	0	0							
Shimoga	—	—	—	—							
Shirali	36	24	0	0							
Tumkur	—	—	—	—							

Rs 19.73 cr allocated for Vellore zoo upgradation

Apr 02 2010

April 1: The Central Zoo Authority of India (CZA) has allocated Rs 19.73 crore to upgrade the Amirithi mini zoo into a small zoo in 20 hectares of land in Thellai reserve forest area in the district.

Approving the proposal sent by conservator of forest of Vellore zone A.V. Venkatachalam in July 2008 to upgrade the mini zoo to make use of tourists' inflow to the fort city, the CZA has given the nod to the proposal and allocated the fund for the ambitious project.

"The fund will be released in a phased manner. In the first phase, CZA will grant Rs 7.70 crore to develop the basic infrastructure, including construction of compound wall for 2.5 km at Rs 1.5 crore. Within three years, we will complete the construction of the zoo," Mr Venkatachalam told this newspaper.

The new zoo would be constructed after razing down the existing mini zoo, which was established in 1967 in 10 hectares of land. It would have all infrastructure to ensure the safety of the animals and visitors. Each enclosure of the animals would have withdrawal area, exhibit area and pond. Besides this, the zoo would have food storage, drainage, waste disposal and security system.

A pair of major animals - tiger, leopard, bear, primates and different varieties of snakes, water birds and deer – would be added in the small zoo. Besides this, the existing animals would be retained. At present there are 18 species including deer, crocodile, peacock and snake. "It will also have a full time veterinary doctor, wild life biologist, pharmacist and a caretaker for each animal enclosure. It will also help to treat the injured wild animals from different parts of the district," said district forest officer of Vellore T.V. Manjunatha.

"The mini zoo has been receiving a total of one lakh visitors per year. We hope, the new zoo will draw more than five lakh visitors per year," he added.

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<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/chennai/rs-1973-cr-allocated-vellore-zoo-upgradation-772>



Food inflation jumps to 16.35 pct

Apr 01, 2010 at 1125 hrs



New Delhi : India's food price index rose 16.35 per cent in the 12 months to March 20, while the fuel index was up 12.75 per cent, government data showed on Thursday.

The rise in the food price index was slightly higher than an annual rise of 16.22 per cent in the previous week.

The primary articles index was up 13.86 per cent on the year on March 20.

India's wholesale price inflation leapt to 9.89 per cent in February and Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee and other policymakers have said it could hit double digits in March.