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Tea exports regain market in Russia

Supply constraints bring better price realisation

Russia's drinking preference shifts to orthodox tea

KOLKATA: India has penetrated further the Russian tea market, the dominant player.

Constraints in supply coupled with improved prices brought better price realisation in each market, with India increasing its earnings to Rs. 2,617 crore in 2009 from Rs. 2,393 crore in 2008, exporting 192 million kg of tea which was 11 million kg less than the previous year. "Better clonal varieties were emerging through replantation as there is greater awareness about improved quality now," sources said.

Referring to Russia, sources said that lower crop in countries like Sri Lanka which has captured some of India's traditional markets has also helped. India exported 45 million kg of tea to Russia in 2009 as compared to 40 million kg in 2008. The total market in Russia is estimated at around 180 million kg in which Sri Lanka, a producer of orthodox tea, had a dominant share till 2008. India has been able to make gains due to increased orthodox tea production. Prices stood at Rs. 116.80 in 2009 against Rs. 100.80 a kg in 2008.

Pointing out that India planned to retain its gains in Russia this year too, sources said that although Sri Lanka had now been able to increase its output, supply disruptions were not taken kindly by importing countries as it upset their blend. "Once they settle down to a blend they normally do not disrupt that," sources said. Unlike most other tea producing and exporting countries, India has dual manufacturing base, producing both the crush-tear-curl (CTC) and orthodox tea varieties besides green tea. The weightage in production is in favour of CTC tea in tune with domestic preference and orthodox tea production is balanced basically in proportion with export demand.

The government has announced schemes to boost orthodox tea production as it was found that traditional markets like Russia's tea drinking preferences were shifting in favour of the aromatic orthodox tea.

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Krishi Vigyan Kendra designs trap to lure insects

Pheromones trap, costing Rs. 65, will help mango growers to save mango from fruit fly



To get rid of fruit fly: Pheromone trap, designed by Dr. Perumal Krishi Vigyan Kendra in Krishnagiri

KRISHNAGIRI: Dr. Perumal Krishi Vigyan Kendra, near Krishnagiri, has designed a cheap fruit fly trap called pheromones trap to save fully-grown mango from fruit fly called 'Bactocera Dorsalis'

Project co-ordinator of the Kendra T. Sundararajan told The Hindu that the Kendra has designed the trap to help mango growers to save it from the flies at the harvest stage itself. The trap cost Rs. 65 only.

Mango varieties such as Bangaloor, Alphonso, Senthura, Banganapalli and Malgoa are cultivated on more than 35,000 hectares in Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri districts. Fruit fly affect mango production during April and May by nearly 30 per cent to 40 per cent.

The 'Bactocera Dorsalis' used to lay two to 15 eggs one to four mm deep inside the skin of the mango. When the larva comes out from the eggs, these mango get rotten.

To safeguard from this fly, farmers can keep at least six pheromones trap to attract the female flies and control their population. In addition to this, farmers could use another method by mixing 100 gram of jaggery in one litre water and two ml deltamethrin worm killer. This liquid mixture should be sprinkled in about 200 places on the mango leaves. The jaggery will attract the flies and the deltamethrin will kill them as soon as they sit on the leaves.

For more information: Dr. T. Sundararajan, Project Coordinator, Dr. Perumal Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Elumichangiri, Krishnagiri 635 120. Phone: 04343 – 296 039, Mobile: 94438 88644 and 98422 94615.

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Storage level up by one foot in Periyar dam

Thanks to torrential showers in its catchment in Kerala

THENI: Storage level in Periyar dam has gone by up one foot here on Monday evening, thanks to torrential showers in its catchments in Kerala. Water level in the dam touched 109 feet. Inflow into the dam was 185 cusecs. Discharge was nil. Storage was 755 mcft.

The district too has been receiving moderate to heavy showers for the past two days.

Water level in Vaigai dam stood at 30.71 cusecs. With no inflow, discharge was 41 cusecs only. Storage was 398 mcft.

The Public Works engineers heaved a sigh of relief with the increase in dam level. If the intermittent showers continued till April end, drinking water crisis in the district could be solved to a larger extent, they opined.

Strong wind coupled with showers had not only brought the mercury level down in both urban and rural areas but also uprooted standing crops at several villages. Drumstick and banana trees were uprooted at Iyyampatti, Erasakkanaickanur and nearby villages in Chinnamanur block.

Despite damage in certain pockets, early onset of summer rain kicked off agriculture activities in several areas. Farmers in rain-fed areas have started preparing the field. Ploughing work also commenced in certain pockets. Cool breeze cheered residents within town limits. Several banners on roadsides were shattered.

Arrival of farm labourers for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme work was also increasing at villages as the summer rain made their task easy.

Acute water crisis

Already, several parts of the district had been reeling under acute water crisis and the district administration snapped power supply to irrigation pump sets along the Mullaperiyar in Cumbum valley to prevent illegal tapping of water meant for drinking water purpose.

Water supply has been made once in 12 days in Theni town. Condition was worst in rural habitations.

Rainfall was moderate in Shanmuga River dam and Uthamapalayam and Veerapandi. Rainfall recorded at various places at 8 a.m. on Monday in mm: Periyar 1, Thekkadi 31, Shanmuga Nadhi dam 14, Goodalur 5, Uthamapalayam 24 and Veerapandi 20.

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TAFE's Turkish plant to roll out tractors by July

CHENNAI: TAFE will start rolling out Massey Ferguson tractors from its Turkish plant by July, vice-chairman Mallika Srinivasan said here on Monday.

The plant at Manisa will be TAFE's first overseas green field tractor manufacturing facility. The rollout was delayed because of the economic slowdown and currency volatility, said a company official.

Addressing members of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) at the CEO's roundtable with Turkey's Ambassador to India, Ms. Srinivasan said: "Our aspiration is to develop an efficient and competitive supply chain... We want to have a manufacturing footprint in India, China and Turkey. Getting into Turkey is easy. The unique feature of this market is that Turks prefer local products. Our manufacturing unit and service network will be the differentiating factor."

Speaking to The Hindu, she said construction began in January after a delay of six to eight months. Almost 60 per cent of the civil engineering work was over. The unit would produce 15,000 tractors annually.

"Initially, we will sell tractors in Turkey and then focus on the neighbouring countries... Language is not a problem as we have employed over 80 per cent local workers," she said.

In 2009-2010, TAFE registered a sale volume of 100,000 tractors and ranked among top three tractor makers in the world.

Urging Indian businessmen to invest in Turkey, its Ambassador to India Levent Bilman said: "It takes only three simple steps to set up a new business unit in Turkey. The company can be opened in a day. In the case of TAFE, it was done in half-a-day. Chennai and Turkey can collaborate in the fields of IT, engineering and automobiles."

In his presentation, Ravi Chaudhry, India representative of the Turkish Prime Minister's office, said that Turkey was the fastest growing economy in the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) during the period 2003-2008 and expected to post 6.7 per cent growth in the coming years.

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TNAU to open gene bank

COIMBATORE: Tamil Nadu Agricultural University will open a gene bank on April 23.

A press release says it will be opened with assistance from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

The bank, which is the first of its kind for any State agricultural university, is meant for conservation of genetic resources for future use. Germplasm collections of cultivators, land races and species will be maintained in the bank.

It will function at the Department of Plant Genetic Resources.

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Fishing ban sparks dry fish trade boom

Prices have almost doubled in the last few days following fall in fresh arrivals

— Photo: C. Venkatachalapathy



Brisk sales: Dry fish market in Cuddalore.

CUDDALORE: The fishing holiday that came into force on April 15 — and the resulting drastic fall in the arrivals of fresh fish — has come given an impetus to the dry fish trade in Cuddalore district, with prices doubling in the past few days.

The ban will be in effect till May 29, and the dry fish trade is all set to make a tidy profit during that time.

The weekly market at Karamanikuppam near Nellikuppam on Mondays is now flooded with a wide variety of dry fish such as vanjiram, pulichan, ram parai, nethili, kaarai, prawns, vazhai, kola, sena, chennakuni, koduva and karapodi. Packed in raw jute, they lie in heaps in the market place awaiting buyers. P. Venkatesan, a dry fish trader, told The Hindu that the trade was doing exceptionally well in the summer months, particularly when the fishing holiday was enforced. In the absence of large arrivals by

trawlers, small-time fishermen with manually operated boats provided the main supply to the trade. In the peak summer season, it takes three to four days to dry the fish and ready it for the market. Venkatesan said that the price of lower varieties of dry fish had gone up from Rs 20 to Rs 60 a kg and that of the higher varieties from Rs 65 to Rs 125 a kg. On an average 500 bags of dry fish, each weighing 80 kg, were being traded in a day, he said.

Additional Director of Fisheries Department R. Ilamparithi said that during the regular season the dry fish trade provided a supplementary income to fishermen; during the fishing holiday it was the main source of income.

The fishermen used traditional drying methods, with little idea about hygiene and contamination. Therefore, it was left to the consumers to properly preserve dry fish for the table.

Though a solar drier had been put up by the department it was hardly used by the fishermen, because of its low and slow output, and the high cost of production).

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Floral carnival contests

Udhagamandalam: With the 114th Annual Floral Carnival scheduled for May 14, 15 and 16 at the Government Botanical Garden here arrangements are being made by the district administration and the Department of Horticulture.

Entry forms

The Assistant Director of Horticulture M. Prakasam said here on Monday that entry forms for various garden related competitions being organised as part of the carnival are now being distributed.

Flower and vegetable growers, owners of kitchen gardens etc could obtain the forms from the garden here, the Sim's Park in Coonoor and the respective Assistant Directors of Horticulture in Kotagiri and Gudalur.

The application forms would be distributed till April 24. The forms along with the necessary fees should be submitted to the garden on or before April 24.

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By Reuters

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RBI inflation in focus ahead of review



MUMBAI: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which until recently had focused monetary policy largely on encouraging economic recovery, said on Monday the weight of policy balance may have to shift to containing high inflation.

Indian bond yields, which hit an 18-1/2 month high last week, ended flat on Monday, a day before the Reserve Bank of India is widely expected to tighten monetary policy further after surprising markets last month with an increase in interest rates.

"While recovery in private demand needs to be stronger to reinforce the growth momentum, the already elevated headline inflation suggests that the weight of policy balance may have to shift to containing inflation, since high inflation itself will dampen recovery in growth," the Reserve Bank of India said.

Though inflation is expected to moderate in the next few months from near-10 percent levels seen recently, upside risks remain, the RBI said in its Monday report on macroeconomic and monetary developments for the fiscal year 2009/10 (April-March). The RBI will release its annual monetary policy statement for 2010/11 on Tuesday. Of 20 economists polled by Reuters last week, 19 expect the RBI to raise the repo rate, at which it lends to banks, by at least 25 basis points; 17 expect a similar jump in the reverse repo rate, at which it absorbs excess cash from the banking system.

Inflation in India is broadening beyond food prices.

For example, Hero Honda Motors Ltd, the country's largest maker of motorbikes, on Monday warned that profitability and growth could be hurt by a rise in commodity prices, inflation and interest rates.

"These factors will play a crucial role in the industry growth and profitability in the days to come," Managing Director and Chief Executive Pawan Munjal said in a statement.

The yield on India's benchmark bond ended steady at Friday's closing level of 8.08 percent after easing to 8.04 percent in early trade. It had risen to an 18-1/2 month high of 8.13 percent on Thursday.

"I think long-tenor bonds have priced in basic 25 basis points hike and aggressive tightening will only result in some flattening with near-end moving higher," said R.K. Gurumurthy, head of treasury at ING Vysya Bank.

UPGRADING OUTLOOK

A survey by professional forecasters conducted by the RBI revised the economic growth expectation for 2010/11 to 8.2 percent from 7.9 percent earlier. The RBI expects economic growth to be higher in 2010/11 than in 2009/10.

Concerns over domestic output growth are now subdued as recovery grows more broad-based, it added.

It also noted that asset price increases were accelerating in recent months as a result of optimism about economic prospects and easy liquidity conditions.

"The revival in private consumption demand and the bridging of the output gap will add to inflationary pressures," the RBI said.

It said that the exit from fiscal and monetary stimulus, unless calibrated carefully, may hurt the growth process.

Since January, inflation has been consistently above the RBI's 2009-10 year-end target of 8.5 percent, which forced it to raise key rates last month, from record low levels, for the first time since it began cutting in 2008.

Headline inflation touched 9.9 percent in March, the strongest since October 2008.

The food price index was up 17.22 percent in the 12 months to April 3, slightly lower than an annual rise of 17.70 percent in the previous week.

Industrial output rose an annual 15.1 percent in February, driven by strong growth in capital goods and consumer durables.

Tamil Nadu to build new check dams

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CHENNAI: In order to preserve scarce water resources in the state, the Tamil Nadu government has decided to spend around Rs.100 crore to build check dams this fiscal, Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi Monday said.

Replying to the debate on the demand for grants for the Public Works Department, Karunanidhi said: "During the past two years, check dams were built at 1,859 places at an outlay of Rs.550 crore. As a result, the ground water table has gone up."

"This year, too, we will be building check dams at an outlay of Rs.100 crore. The government will also desilt the water canals so that Cauvery water can reach the tail-

end portions in the Cauvery delta region spending Rs.12 crore," he added.

He said many of the major irrigation and flood control schemes will get over this year benefiting the farming community.


Karunanidhi said a new dam across Nambiyar in Tirunelveli district will be built at an outlay of Rs.8 crore.

Referring to the sea erosion in Kanyakumari and Chennai, he said: "Protection work at an outlay of Rs.526,000 in Kanyakumari and Rs.99 lakh on the Ennore High Road in Chennai are being carried out."

He said the state government has chalked a mega plan to protect nine coastal districts at an outlay of Rs.666 crore and has sent it to the 13th Finance Commission which, in turn, has recommended a subsidy of Rs.200 crore for the project.

Karunanidhi also unveiled several new plans for over Rs.440 crore like the building of 1,500 apartments for government servants at an outlay of Rs.175 crore here, reconstruction of Kandur Canal at Rs.127 crore and construction of a new Kalaivanar Arangam for Rs.50 crore.

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 Tue, 20 Apr 2010

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Clear

Tuesday, Apr 20

Max Min

38.4° | 27.7°

Tomorrow's Forecast



Sunny






Wednesday, Apr 21

Max Min

37° | 29°

Rain: 00mm in24hrs Sunrise: 05:54
Humidity: 34% Sunset: 18:22
Wind: Normal Barometer: 1008.1mb

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Apr 22	Apr 23	Apr 24	Apr 25	Apr 26
				
37° 29°	37° 29°	37° 29°	37° 28°	36° 29°
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy