

**Date:16/02/2010 URL:**

**<http://www.thehindu.com/2010/02/16/stories/2010021654770700.htm>**

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## **Find cheaper ways of storing solar energy, says Minister**

Special Correspondent

VELLORE: The Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy Farooq Abdullah has called for research targeted at reducing the cost of storing solar energy in the context of the National Solar Mission, recently launched by the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, which aims at generation of an installed capacity of 20,000 MW of solar energy by 2022.

Inaugurating the CO<sub>2</sub> (Carbon Dioxide) Research and Green Technologies Centre and the Rajeswari Towers (Staff Quarters-II) at the VIT University here on Monday, Dr. Abdullah said that under the National Solar Mission, in the next three years, the Government of India hopes to add 1300 MW of solar energy, of which 1100 MW would be grid-connected, and 200 MW would be utilised for providing electricity to villages which do not have energy, and therefore have not seen any electricity so far.

“Here comes the problem of storage of energy. Today we store energy in batteries, using distilled water. But there are a number of villages in Jammu & Kashmir, which are at a height of 8000 to 9000 feet above the sea level where they do not have distilled water. They have to use the available water in the canals and streams, as a result of which the batteries would stop functioning. Batteries that do not use water are expensive, and therefore we have to reduce the prices of such batteries,” he said.

He said that till date, there was no answer to the question of finding an inexpensive means of storage of energy. Under these circumstances, institutions such as VIT University should undertake research to find out ways of storing energy at the right voltage.

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy would provide all help to the institute in undertaking such research. In hill states where roads are very narrow, carrying huge windmills was not possible. He has therefore told the windmill manufacturers to produce windmills, which could be easily transported to such areas. The Army is spending Rs.1200 crore on diesel to meet its power requirements for its operations in the Ladakh region alone, he said.

Dr. Abdullah also called for research on the production of power from the abundant kitchen wastes in the country. The Indian kitchen wastes are different from the kitchen wastes in the U.S. and the European countries. Research should also be undertaken on the suitable technology for generating electricity from rice husk,

which goes waste. Punjab and Haryana are doing a lot of work in this area.

In Chennai, he would be having a meeting with architects to discuss with them ways of constructing energy-efficient buildings and houses and creating cooler buildings without the use of energy or by using less energy. Referring to the proposal of the Government of India to install micro-hydel projects in the villages, especially those which did not have electricity, the minister stressed the need for using cheaper technology. "The products must be good and cheap. Unless you produce cheaper products, they cannot be used by ordinary people," he said.

G. Viswanathan, Chancellor of VIT University who presided said that the VIT University would be shortly submitting a proposal to the Ministry for installing a gassifier plant to produce energy from the husk that is wasted in the rice mills. It was possible to produce 200 MW to 300 MW of power through this process. The proposal includes the setting up of an Energy Centre in Bihar where the VIT would take up research on producing electricity from the rice husk generated by five mills. He requested the minister to grant the project.

The Chancellor said that the Rajeswari Towers (Staff Quarters-II) had 108 apartments, as against 72 in the Staff Quarters-I. Within another year, the VIT University would build another staff quarters to meet the demands of the teachers.

Dr. Abdullah presented a memento to R. Natarajan, Senior Professor and General Manager of the CO2 Research and Green Technologies Centre. Prof. Natarajan requested the minister to recognise the CO2 Research and Green Technologies Centre as a national centre for research and to include it as one of the centres for the National Carbon Dioxide Research Fellowship.

Sekar Viswanathan, Pro-Chancellor, VIT requested the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy to facilitate the production of cheaper photovoltaic solar devices, so that the common man could utilise them to harness solar energy. G.V. Selvam, Pro-Chancellor said that the 12-storeyed Rajeswari Towers has been constructed at a cost of Rs.20 crore.

D.P. Kothari, Vice-Chancellor and Anand A. Samuel, Pro-Vice-Chancellor spoke. S. Narayanan, Director-Administration, welcomed.

**Date:16/02/2010 URL:**

**<http://www.thehindu.com/2010/02/16/stories/2010021654180500.htm>**

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## **Jute festival to be organised**

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: The Jute Manufacturers Development Council, a statutory body under the Union Ministry of Textiles, will organise a jute festival in the State headquarters to promote products, said Union Handlooms and Textile Minister

Dayanidhi Maran here on Monday.

Inaugurating a four-day exhibition-cum-sale of lifestyle jute decorative products here, Mr. Maran said that at present about 60 per cent of jute was being used for gunny bags and the rest as jute value-added products such as saris, bags, and decorative products. To remove the misconception that jute can be used only for making gunny bags the council was organising festivals in different parts of country. A fashion show was also organised in connection with the festival.

**Date:16/02/2010 URL:**

**<http://www.thehindu.com/2010/02/16/stories/2010021658890300.htm>**

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## **Focus on need to increase productivity**

Staff Reporter

MADURAI: The Madurai Productivity Council is celebrating Productivity Week from February 12 to 18 by holding awareness programmes.

These programmes are intended to raise awareness among people about the need to increase productivity among different sections of the public to ensure that their standards of living goes up.

A press release stated that the theme of this year's celebrations was 'Productivity for inclusive growth.' V. Pathervellai, vice- president of the council, who presided over the inaugural function, said that such awareness programmes must also reach rural areas.

Industrialist B.T. Bangera said that productivity in India was low compared to Japan and it was on of the reasons behind the higher cost of Indian products.

G. Subramanian, chairman, programme committee, spoke.

**Date:16/02/2010 URL:**

**<http://www.thehindu.com/2010/02/16/stories/2010021651070200.htm>**

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## **Vazhndhu Kattuvom Project - Theni District**

Velappar Koil - Paliya

Tribals, Traditional Herbal Shop for Tribals

Theni District consists of many hills and forest areas, which are inhabited by tribals. These people possess an abundant knowledge of traditional herbs that can cure common illnesses. Velappar Koil, a forest area, is situated in Aundipatti union. It has a Murugan Temple that attracts tourists and devotees. The temple is maintained by tribals themselves. hese tribals earn a livelihood by collecting herbs and sell them to medicine manufacturers.

Intervention of Vazhndhu

Kattuvom Project

An intervention was made under the Vazhndhu Kattuvom Project to improve the

earning of tribals. They were made aware of a livelihood opportunity and the Village Poverty Reduction Committee provided Rs 50,000 to them to set up a shop to sell herbal medicines. Five beneficiaries -- K.Selvi, S.Meenakshi, T.Kalaiarasi, P.Chinna Velthai and A.Velmani -- were identified and given Rs 10000 each. A shop was built at a cost of Rs 25000 and the remaining money used for buying herbal materials.

The Collector inaugurated the shop on Thai Poosam day near the temple and herbal medicines worth Rs 4000 were sold on the first day.

The tribals are confident of earning Rs 3000 - 5000 a month.

Source : Department of Information and Public Relation, Theni

**Date:16/02/2010 URL:**

**<http://www.thehindu.com/2010/02/16/stories/2010021658770300.htm>**

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### **Mettur level**

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 75.98 feet on Monday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 833 cusecs and the discharge, 1,800 cusecs.

**Date:16/02/2010 URL:**

**<http://www.thehindu.com/2010/02/16/stories/2010021653610300.htm>**

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### **Water level**

MADURAI: Water level in the Periyar dam on Monday stood at 111.50 feet (136 feet) with no inflow and a discharge of 300 cusecs. The level in the Vaigai dam was 38.45 feet (71 feet) with an inflow of 78 cusecs and a discharge of 60 cusecs. The combined Periyar credit stood at 864 mcft.

**Date:16/02/2010 URL:**

**<http://www.thehindu.com/2010/02/16/stories/2010021658710300.htm>**

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### **TIDITSSIA becomes the role model**

Staff Reporter

*Greater thrust for entrepreneurship mooted*

—Photo:M\_Moorthy



**Dr.P.Radhakrishnan (extreme right), Chairman, Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Development, inspecting the products of TIDITSSIA-STED**

### **units in Tiruchi on Monday.**

TIRUCHI: Impressed by the successful execution of the Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Development (STED) project by the Tiruchi District Tiny and Small Scale Industries' Association (TIDITSSIA) over the mandated four-year tenure, the National Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board (NSTEDB), Department of Science and Technology, New Delhi, has identified the Association as a role model for the other entities entrusted with the task of implementing the project in subsequent phases in various parts of the country.

At the start of the Expert Advisory Committee meeting on STED Project 2009-2010 that was marked by inauguration of an exhibition organised by the TIDITSSIA-STED, H.K. Mittal, Advisor and Head, NSTEDB, was all praise for the initiatives of the organisers for fostering entrepreneurship in the region, and dwelt on the future course of action.

The exhibition inaugurated by P. Radhakrishnan, Chairman, STED Advisory Committee, featured 24 products manufactured by mostly first-time entrepreneurs after receiving skills training and mentorship under the TIDITSSIA-STED project. The products included gloves, arecanut plates, banana fibre products, fly ash bricks, and other building products.

For the first time, the Advisory Committee meeting – that is usually held at the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Ahmedabad – was approved in Tiruchi based on performance parameters, according to Ramaswamy Desai, Project Director, TIDITSSIA-STED.

An opportunity provided TIDITSSIA-STED, one among the 42 implementing agencies in the country, to make a presentation of the performance in the final year of the project was a unique privilege, he said.

The Project Directors of 12 STED initiatives that were started about four years ago serve on the Advisory Committee.

Eight among them, including those from New Delhi, Mumbai, Coimbatore and Tiruchi took part in today's proceedings. Addressing the participants earlier, Dr. Radhakrishnan saw a higher inclination among youths to becoming entrepreneurs.

Quality is key to sustaining in the market, he said, referring to the challenges faced by micro-level entrepreneurs, and emphasised on the guidance role played through STED projects for quality enhancement of products.

Date:16/02/2010 URL:

<http://www.thehindu.com/2010/02/16/stories/2010021660701600.htm>

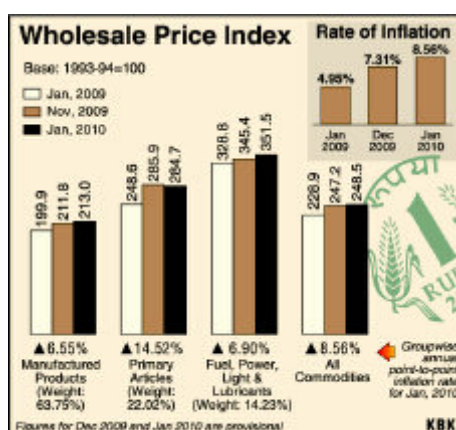
## WPI inflation surges to 8.56% in January

Special Correspondent

*The current bout of rise is led by higher prices of sugar, potato*

*Breaches RBI's projection ahead of expectation*

*May surge well over 10 per cent by the end of the fiscal*



NEW DELHI: Overall inflation based on WPI (wholesale price index) for all commodities soared to 8.56 per cent in January from 7.31 per cent in December last year, thereby breaching the Reserve Bank's projection of 8.5 per cent by the end of the current fiscal two months ahead of official expectation.

With the Union Budget 2010-11 slated for presentation within the next fortnight on February 26, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee has another reason to seriously mull over the pros and cons of timing the withdrawal of the fiscal stimulus measures from the beginning of the new fiscal itself even as the industry has pleaded for a status quo at least for six more months.

In its third quarter monetary policy review earlier this month, the RBI had raised the CRR (cash reserve ratio) by 75 basis points to 5.75 per cent to render it mandatory for banks to park a larger quantum of funds with it so as to suck out excess liquidity of about Rs. 36,000 crore from the banking system as a measure to check rising prices.

Alongside, however, while indicating that the fiscal stimulus measures should also

be gradually withdrawn by the government, the apex bank made it clear that monetary measures alone were not the answer to controlling food price inflation as it was a supply-side problem.

At the same time, rising food inflation, if left unchecked, has a tendency of seeping into the manufacturing sector and contribute to overall inflation, it said.

The WPI inflation figures for January reveal that the seeping may already be happening and may surge well over 10 per cent by the end of the fiscal if adequate steps are not taken.

The official data reveal that the current bout of rising food inflation was led by higher prices of sugar and potato which were costlier by 58.96 per cent and 53.39 per cent, respectively on a yearly basis.

On a monthly basis, while wheat prices were up four per cent, pulses such as masur were dearer by nine per cent and arhar by 6 per cent.

The index for the fuel group also rose by 1.8 per cent owing to higher prices of naphtha (up 21 per cent) and furnace oil (up 6 per cent) while bitumen, non-coking coal and light diesel oil rose by three per cent each.

With the rising inflation numbers coming in the wake of surging industrial growth, which is likely to lead to an overall economic expansion projected at around 7.50-7.75 per cent for 2009-10, the government's dilemma would be to choose between sustaining high growth and containing inflation.

In the event, the Finance Minister is expected to tackle the tricky issue by taking the middle path in his budget provisions.

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*By R Haldorai*

*14 Feb 2010 02:49:00 AM IST*

## Rose sales dip ahead of Valentine's Day in Kovai

COIMBATORE: With Valentine's Day falling on Sunday coupled with vehement opposition to the celebration by Hindu and Muslim organisations, the sale of roses in Coimbatore's busy Poo (Flower) Market remained dull compared to that of last year on Saturday.

Sekar, a wholesale merchant at Flower Market, said: "Eventhough this year the arrival of roses from Hosur, Bangalore and Ooty is low due to fall in production and increased order for export, the demand has not increased. The whole sale rate is up by 5 per cent this time.

The first quality of a bunch containing 20 stems is sold at Rs 130, the next quality at Rs 120 and the third at Rs 100. As usual the demand for red roses has gone up. Though this rate is normal, there were no enough takers on Sunday. Last year I did a roaring business a day before the Lovers' Day. This year the business was normal. However, there is a little hope that the sale of roses may increase during peak hours -8 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Sunday".

Various organisations including Hindu Munnani and Student Islamic Organisation of India (SIO) have vehemently opposed

the celebration of the Valentine's Day in Coimbatore.

M Abbas, secretary (media), SIO, demanded that February 14 should be celebrated as 'Brothers and Sisters' day and instead of lovers day. He said that the valentine's day celebrations would ruin the Indian culture and lead the youth on wrong path.

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## Country needs 9-10 pct growth to move ahead: PM

**Agencies** Posted online: Monday , Feb 15, 2010 at 2005 hrs

**New Delhi :** Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Monday said that the economy needs to grow at 9-10 per cent rate to move forward and the problem of unemployment calls for industrialisation of the country.

"The only way forward for this country is to register a growth rate of 9-10 per cent," he said while giving away Prime Minister's trophy to the steel plants.

Singh's statement came as the economy is on the rebound with industrial growth climbing to 16-year high of 16.8 per cent in December.

The Central Statistical Organisation has estimated India's economic growth at 7.2 per cent this fiscal.

Singh recently said the economy is likely to register 7.5 per cent growth this fiscal, up from 6.7 per cent last year.

The economy, which had been growing at around 9 per cent in the preceding five years, slipped to 6.7 per cent in FY'09 following the impact of the global economic crisis.

He added that the country needs industrialisation to solve the problem of unemployment and steel sector can play a major role in promoting industrialisation.

The Prime Minister gave trophies to Visakhapatnam Steel Plant of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd and Bhilai Steel Plant of SAIL. He gave trophies to Visakhapatnam Steel Plant of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam and Bhilai Steel Plant of SAIL.

India, the Prime Minister said, has a long way to go as per capita consumption of steel per annum is 46 kg compared to the global average of 190 kg.



## TN farmers to get tips from Norway

By DC Correspondent  
Feb 16 2010

Feb. 15: Rice cultivated in Tamil Nadu will soon have a Norwegian flavour. The Norwegian Institute for Agricultural and Environmental Research has selected three villages each in Tiruchy and Thanjavur districts of Tamil Nadu to help farmers increase their productivity, according to Lars Peder Brekk, minister for agriculture and food, Norway.

“Indian farmers are as competitive and efficient as their counterparts in rest of the world. What we are doing is to share the knowledge and expertise developed by our scientists with these farmers,” Mr Brekk told Deccan Chronicle on the sidelines of the international conference on biodiversity being organised by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation here on Monday.

“We would like to share our expertise in combating climate change and increase the food production with institutions like MSSRF and other Indian universities. While increasing the food productivity, we can also ensure the sustainability of the fragile biodiversity,” said Mr Brekk, who was instrumental in setting up the Svalbard Global Seed Vault which has a unique collection of more than a million seeds from across the world.

Hyderabad-born Dr Udaya Sekhar Nagothy of the NIAER who is accompanying the minister said that nearly 300 villages from the districts of Trichy and Thanjavur were in touch with the Norwegian scientists for the last two years. “That was the first phase of this programme. Our association is being facilitated by the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and over the next two years we will help them evolve out as model farmers,” said Dr Nagothu. He disclosed that the Norwegian scientists envisaged these farmers to be the model farmers for the rest of the state.

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### Source URL:

<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/chennai/tn-farmers-get-tips-norway-758>

**hindustantimes**



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi, February 15, 2010

First Published: 12:48 IST(15/2/2010)

Last Updated: 14:28 IST(15/2/2010)

## Inflation rises to 8.56 per cent in January

Wholesale price-based inflation rose to 8.56 per cent in January, shooting past the RBI's forecast of 8.5 per cent for this fiscal end, as food items such as sugar, potatoes and pulses turned costlier.

Overall inflation in December was 7.31 per cent.

Sugar prices rose by 58.96 per cent in January year-on-year while potatoes turned costlier by 53.39 per cent and pulses by 45.64 per cent.

On monthly basis, prices of masur increased by 9 per cent, arhar by 6 per cent and wheat by 4 per cent.

Fuel index rose by 1.8 per cent due to higher prices of naphtha that rose 21 per cent. Furnace oil rose 6 per cent while bitumen, non-coking coal and light diesel oil rose 3 per cent each.

To tame inflation, the RBI, in its quarterly monetary review had asked banks to keep aside more cash with them. It hiked the cash reserve ratio--amount banks have to park with the apex bank--by 75 basis points to 5.75 per cent, which would suck out Rs 36,000 crore from the system.

The RBI has also raised the inflation projection to 8.5 per cent by this fiscal-end from 6.5 per cent.

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#### **Indo-Asian News Service**

New Delhi, January 20, 2010

First Published: 16:34 IST(20/1/2010)

Last Updated: 16:38 IST(20/1/2010)

## **Milk prices set to increase in north India: Pawar**

Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar Wednesday indicated that the price of milk would increase in north India on account of a dip in milk production.

"There is a gap of 18 lakh tonnes between demand and the current milk supply," the minister said here even while maintaining that the government was looking into the issue of price rise.

Pawar was addressing the national conference of state ministers of animal husbandry and dairy here.

Earlier in the day, a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) delegation, led by senior leader L.K. Advani and president Nitin Gadkari, met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at his 7, Race Course Road residence to "convey the concern of the people" on the rising prices of food articles.

The prime minister has called a meeting of chief ministers here Jan 27 to discuss the issue.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/499756.aspx>

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# THE TIMES OF INDIA

## Tamil Nadu farmers to benefit from Norway project

Bhama Devi Ravi, TNN, 16 February 2010, 06:24am IST

CHENNAI: Farmers in the delta regions of the Krishna and Cauvery rivers will soon benefit from a project that aims at reducing water consumption in paddy cultivation by 25% without compromising on the quality or quantum of yield.

IIT-Delhi is working on a proposal to collaborate with Bioforsk, the Norwegian Institute for Agricultural and Environmental Research. Other partners in the project include the city-based MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) and the International Water management Institute in Colombo.

“We will employ dry and wet systems of paddy cultivation alternately, and try out a system of rice intensification without compromising on the yield,” said Udaya Sekhar Nagothu, India head of Bioforsk.

The first phase of the project, on an outlay of 5,00,000 Norwegian kroners (one kroner is Rs 7.8), began in November 2009. “The main proposal will be submitted in July to the Norwegian embassy in Delhi since the project is funded by the Norwegian ministry of foreign affairs,” said Lars Peder Brekk, minister for agriculture and food, Norway. “The project will take off in November,” he added.

This is not the first time that Bioforsk and IIT-Delhi have collaborated. Last March, the two began a study on the impact of climate change on the Godavari basins. However, the ongoing project focussing on select areas of the Krishna and Cauvery river basins is a much bigger project. “We will look at the various components and validate the types of cultivation,” said Nagothu.

“Bioforsk has undertaken studies with the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. We are also working with professor AK Gosain of the Civil Engineering department, IIT-Delhi,” said Brekk.

## Cong sides with Jairam on Bt brinjal

TNN, 16 February 2010, 04:02am IST

NEW DELHI: Amid a raging controversy over allowing the commercial use of Bt brinjal, Congress has sided with environment minister Jairam Ramesh at the expense of science and technology minister Prithviraj Chavan. Asked about the different viewpoints within the government on the issue of the genetically modified vegetable, party spokesman Shakil Ahmed said the government position in the debate had been articulated by Ramesh. “Ramesh has expressed the government view on the issue and we stand by that, after all people’s health is paramount,” Ahmed said.

His remarks assume significance in the backdrop of Chavan defending Bt brinjal, claiming that scientists found it safe. “As far as science is concerned, it is safe,” Chavan had said on Saturday. Early on, agriculture minister Sharad Pawar has also defended Bt brinjal by citing the green light to the GM crop from the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC).

Ramesh, however, announced the government decision to put a moratorium on the commercial cultivation of Bt brinjal after holding public hearings which were dominated by green activists.

