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Food inflation eases to 16.23 %

NEW DELHI:Food inflation eased a tad to 16.23 per cent for the week ended May 15 from 16.49 per cent in the previous week on account of a decline in prices of food grains.

However, with prices of fruits and vegetables continuing to rule higher owing to the heat wave scorching most parts of the country, the wholesale price index-based food inflation remained above the 16-per cent mark for the fifth straight week.

While foodgrain prices have softened following the arrival of rabi crops, a marked decline in prices is now expected to come about only after a normal monsoon rainfall.

Ostensibly, the movement of prices in the coming weeks is being seen as entirely dependent on the monsoon prospects and it was keeping this in view that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had projected overall inflation to be at close to 5-6 per cent by the end of December.

According to Crisil's chief economist D. K. Joshi, food inflation will remain at the current level for some time.

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Clear water channels of obstacles: Farmers

Power connection to be sanctioned on priority basis

ARAVAKURICHI: Farmers in Karur district have urged the district administration to clear the irrigation and drainage channels of all wild growth and natural obstacles to ensure free flow of water.

Reacting to their demands during the farmers' grievances day meeting held here, as a change from the routine meetings at Karur and Kulithalai, Collector (in charge) C. Munirathinam on Friday blamed inadequate funding for not carrying out the work. To that the farmers said that jungle clearance work in the channels could be taken up under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

However, the Public Works Department officials vested the with task of safeguarding the waterways observed that they had no say in the implementation of the scheme popularly called the "100 days work scheme" but indicated that they were ready indeed to sanction jungle clearance work if sought.

Mr. Munirathinam said that a decision on the issue would be taken in the first week of June taking into consideration the views of all stakeholders.

Karur district secretary of the National Agriculturists' Movement Esanatham R. Selvaraj wanted expeditious sanction of subsidy and power connection for the agricultural pump sets sunk with financial aid from the primary agricultural cooperative societies and rural development banks. Supported by other farmers, Mr. Selvaraj pointed out that several farmers have been paying interest for the sanctioned Rs. 1 lakh but have not received the promised 50 per cent subsidy and also power connection so far.

Mr. Munirathinam said that power supply connection would be sanctioned on priority basis once the State Government accorded clearance to the proposals. An estimated 69 connections were pending clearance under the scheme in the district

under the said category, he added. Taking note of the long-pending demand of the farmers, he said the district administration was seized of the matter and would do the needful soon.

Mr. Selvaraj also complained of erratic power supply in several parts of the district adding that was affecting the agricultural operations heavily. Tamil Nadu Electricity Board officials said that power supply was being maintained properly and if there were any problems then that could be rectified immediately.

Deputy Secretary of the Cauvery Delta Farmers' Welfare Association Kavandampatti R. Subramanian wanted assured water supply in the Kattalai High Level Channel to feed the standing banana and sugar cane crops in the ayacut. However, the PWD officials declined to entertain the plea pointing out that June was the closure period for the KHLC during which period maintenance works were to be taken up.

Secretary of the Panchamadevi Nanjai Aycutdars Sangam, Karur, M. Ramasamy wanted the authorities to ensure that the sewage from Karur town limits was not released into the channel near Panchamadevi.

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Absence of provision in TNAU application form irks differently abled

COIMBATORE: Tamil Nadu Agricultural University's application form for undergraduate courses has irked the differently abled.

Section 10 of the 'Application For Admission To Undergraduate Degree Programs 2010-11' has 'BC', 'BCM (Muslim)', 'MBC/DNC', 'SC', 'SCA (SC-Arundhathiyars)', 'ST' and 'Open Competition' categories. It has left out the differently abled, though.

A separate check box for the differently abled is a must because that is the place the applicants can let know the institution of their status. Declaration of the status will help them avail of the reservation they are eligible for, argues Surya Nagappan of Caliber, an organisation working for the challenged people.

The differently abled enjoy three per cent reservation, as per the orders of the State Government. The University acknowledges the same in its brochure: "Three per cent of the seats in the undergraduate degree programme are reserved for physically handicapped candidates. The applicant should possess minimum qualifying marks and should attach proof of evidence along with the application."

The use of the word handicapped has also angered the applicants. "When the Government has discontinued the use of the word and suggested differently abled or persons with disabilities instead, how is it that the University has failed to reflect the change," he asks. "It pains us when such a great institution continues to refer to us as handicapped."

The question Mr. Surya raised has put parents of a differently abled applicant in a fix. Father of the applicant, on conditions of anonymity, says he did not know what to write under Section 10 of the application form. He has not checked any of the boxes and now fears rejection of his daughter's candidature.

The University not making provision for the differently abled to fill in their status stands in stark contrast to the Tamil Nadu Engineering Admission application form. A soft copy of the application form under Section 18 mentions special reservations and among the differently abled categories has separate check boxes for orthopaedically differently abled, persons with hearing impairment and persons with visual impairment.

It also talks about the number of seats for applicants coming under these categories and provides necessary details.

Such provisions have not been made and are not available for the challenged people in The Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University and Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University application forms. A few leading professional colleges are no exception either.

Dean, Admission, TNAU, V. Jayabal, who is in charge of admissions, was not available for comments. A professor, who also takes care of admission, says on conditions of anonymity that absence of the provision does not mean their applications will be rejected.

To be eligible for admission they will have to attach a photocopy of the certificate the District Disabled Rehabilitation Office provides, he clarifies. On the use of the word 'handicapped' in the brochure, he says for the change to take effect, the University's Academic Council will have to approve of the same.

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Strange growth weeds out prospects of cane cultivation

Farmers complain that no official from agriculture department visited village



Deep-rooted problem:A farmer showing the weed growing in the sugarcane fields at Sankaralingapuram near Dindigul.

DINDIGUL: Rapid growth of a strange weed in sugarcane fields has been destroying the standing crops in a large scale in Kannivadi and Sri Ramapuram areas in the district.

With white flowers, one-foot high unknown species that grows around the base of sugarcane crop sucks the greenness in the leaves and spreads rapidly. Within days, leaves of sugarcane turn brown and dry up later. Neither application of weedicide nor removal of the plant was helpful to the farmers in controlling it. The strange plant grows under the 60-day-old crop only and destruction happens within 45 days.

Standing sugarcane crop in Sankaralingapuram, Sri Ramapuram, Kombai and Pannaipatti in Reddiyarchatram union were the worst-hit. With no options left, several farmers had destroyed the sugarcane crop and left their affected field idle. If this trend continued, areas under sugarcane cultivation would shrink sharply.

Farmers had been facing this problem for the past five years. The irony was that no officials of the agriculture department visited these villages till date. All their appeals were ignored by the officials.

“We can neither leave the strange plant in the field nor pluck it. Both expedite the destruction. Removal of one plant even with its roots only scales up its proliferation. Ten plants grow around every stem in a short period,” said T. Subramanian, who had raised sugarcane in six acres at Sankaralingapuram. The cane grown in the weed-affected area had no juice and was unfit for crushing and making jaggery. Even continuous chemical spray did not help, he added.

Farmers had already knocked the doors of Sugarcane Research Institutes and Horticulture College and Research Institute, Periakulam for help and brought

experienced cane growers from Dharmapuri and Erode districts. Nothing had changed the situation. Even organic farming experts' visit too was not helpful, said R. Palanisamy, another cane grower in Kariya Gounenpudhur. Cane growers in Dharmapuri and Erode districts, too had similar problems.

Another farmer Lakshmanan stopped cultivation for two years and left the land idle to rehabilitate the field. He had removed the entire surface soil in two acres and filled it with well silt. The strange plant grew even in the refreshed field in 60 days after sowing.

With no option, he abandoned the two acres and shifted to tomato and groundnut cultivation in the rest of his land. Fortunately, this strange plant was not growing under other horticulture crops.

Another farmer K. Mayilsamy had raised beet root in his affected field. But the yield was less.

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NABARD to open more farmers' clubs

The aim is to ensure development in rural areas

ERODE: The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has decided to open more than 15 Uzhavar Mandram (farmers' clubs) in different parts of the district in the current fiscal, Erode District Central Co-operative Bank Special Officer P. Loganathan has said.

Participating at a camp held at Kembanaickanpalayam Primary Agriculture Co-operative Credit Society near Sathyamangalam recently, he said that farmers' clubs, which were grassroot level informal forums, were already opened in

Polavakalipalayam, Kullampalayam, Thindalmalaii, Peddampalayam and Koodakkarai in the district.

Leading farmers could come together to start similar clubs in others parts of the district.

The primary objective of the initiative was to ensure development in the rural areas through credit, technology transfer, awareness and capacity-building.

The clubs would facilitate the transfer of latest agriculture techniques to the field and help farmers enhance the productivity of various crops, the Special Officer said.

Credit flow

The clubs would also co-ordinate with banks to ensure credit flow among its members and forge better bank-borrower relationship, conduct extension programmes, liaison with input suppliers to purchase bulk inputs on behalf of members, and organise joint activities like value addition, processing and collective farm produce marketing for the benefit of members.

Mr. Loganathan said that the clubs should conduct meetings and send reports to the NBARD periodically.

Deputy Registrar, Gobichettipalayam, M. Santhanan, who presided over the function, said that the Kembanaickanpalayam Credit Society had over 4,000 members and had extended credit to the tune of Rs. 4.10 crore.

Loans disbursed

Earlier, Mr. Loganathan disbursed loans to the tune of Rs. 18.12 lakh to 37 persons at the function.

A free eye screening camp was also conducted by a team of doctors from Dr.

Agarwal's Eye Hospital on the occasion.

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Farmers oppose thermal power projects



ISSUES: Farmers' grievance meeting in progress at Nagapattinam Collectorate on Friday. —

NAGAPATTINAM: The monthly farmers' grievance meeting held here at the district collectorate on Friday witnessed a slew of demands from farmers ranging from early desilting of PWD channels to release of crop loans to opposition of proposed power projects.

There was a collective demand for desilting of PWD channels before water was released from the Mettur Dam. Transparency in the number of channels listed for desilting, along with works cost involved for each channel should be published, said the farmers.

Placing on record objections to the proposed thermal power projects along the coast here in the district, Kaveri Dhanapalan, Cauvery Farmers' Protection Association stated that the Aadanur clayey soil type of the district did not support these projects.

Further, the combined land area proposed for over six power plants here is about 4,000 acres. According to Mr.Dhanapalan, the Mettur Thermal power station in Salem has rendered infertile the agricultural lands in its surroundings. A similar situation would arise here if the power projects were given a go-ahead.

Churning out statistics in support of his argument, Mr.Dhanapalan stated that about 52 per cent of the State's food requirements were fulfilled by the Cauvery delta. Additionally, the highly labour intensive agricultural practices at the tail-end would be affected with the loss of agricultural lands for these projects.

There are 29 rivers flowing into the sea from the delta, and this brings in the required marine organisms that support marine wealth. With the discharge of hot water from the all power plants would affect fisheries sector, the second important occupation in the district, next only to agriculture. Further, the fly ash generated would pose severe hazards to the environment and its people, Mr.Dhanapalan said.

Kodandaraman of Kolidam sought construction of a shutter at the mouth of the confluence of channels Kutti anai and Pudhu Manniaru at Kolliam. According to Mr. Kodandaraman, post-Tsunami, seepage of sea water has increased the salinity of over 10,000 acres, and a shutter would redeem the agricultural lands. A farmer sought administrative intervention to retrieve the Mathankulam at the Arupadhi Panchayat in Semmanar Koil that was under an individual's encroachment. Alleging caste-based intolerance, the farmer stated that the panchayat pond was fenced restraining access to it. Collector C.Munianathan assured of immediate remedy. Among other demands was the release of 10 per cent crop insurance for the losses incurred due to the Nisha cyclone.

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Farmers raise compensation issue in grievance meet

DRO assures issue would be sorted out within a few weeks



Discussion:DRO Balasubramanian speaking at the farmers' grievance day meeting in Ramanathapuram on Friday.

RAMANATHAPURAM: The non- disbursal of insurance compensation to the chilli growers dominated the proceedings of the farmers' grievance day meeting here on Friday.

As soon as the meeting began, farmers hailing from different regions of the district brought to the attention of the District Revenue Officer, K. Balasubramanian, who presided over the meeting, the issue of the long pending compensation due to the farmers, who had insured their chilli crop about two years ago.

Expressing dissatisfaction over the long delay in disbursing the compensation for crop loss, the farmers said the basic purpose of insurance had been defeated. They highlighted that the compensation, which should have been announced and distributed within a few months after the survey of the crop loss, had been withheld for several months. The farmers could not get proper reply from the officials.

The DRO said reminders were sent to the concerned agencies for speedy action in this regard. Though a part of compensation had been received, the remaining part had to be got. The issue would be sorted out within a few weeks and disbursal would begin. Officials were asked to speed up formal proceedings.

Several farmers complained that illegal sand mining had been taking place in different areas including on the banks of the Vaigai. It would pose a great danger to the river infrastructure and farming operations in the longer run, they added.

Mr. Balasubramanian said that surprise raids would be conducted to prevent illegal sand mining. Tough action would be taken against the smugglers and vehicles used for smuggling of sand. Similarly, the trucks and lorries carrying sand should be properly covered.

The Joint Registrar, Cooperatives, Babu, said that a sum of Rs. 40 crore had been earmarked for crop loan this year. It was just Rs. 21 crore last year. Priorities would be given to those who repaid last year's loan properly and those who had not availed crop loan so far. The Deputy Director, Rajendran, took part.

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Kuruvai to be raised on 34,000 hectares

THANJAVUR: It has been planned to raise Kuruvai on 34,000 hectares in Thanjavur district this year, said Collector M.S.Shanmugham here on Friday.

Speaking at the monthly farmers' grievances day meeting, the Collector said that out of this System of Rice Intensification method would be followed on 25,000 hectares. Agriculture Department has so far distributed 300 tonnes of Kuruvai paddy seeds to the farmers. Variety of seeds distributed are ADT 43 (232 tonnes),

ADT 36 (58 tonnes), ADT 45 (10 tonnes).

There is adequate stock of fertilisers. There is a stock of 8,558 tonnes of urea both in co-operative and private sector. There is a stock of 1,785 tonnes of di ammonium phosphate, 2893 tonnes of potash and 1,526 tonnes of complex fertilisers.

The Collector said that that 75 per cent of the desilting works taken up by Public Works Department (PWD) have been completed in the district. All the desilting works will be completed before June six.

Farmers demanded opening of Mettur Dam on June 12 for Kuruvai cultivation for this year. Pinning hopes on a good South West Monsoon, the farmers said that the storage at Mettur dam might improve and there might not be any problem for the Government to open the dam on June 12, they said.

The Collector gave cheques to farmers under Varsuha Beema crop insurance scheme based on rainfall to farmers. Last year, 418 farmers registered under the scheme for 1629 acres of cultivation. They paid Rs. 8 lakh as premium and got a relief of Rs. 23 lakh. The compensation is decided based on maximum and minimum rainfall and continuous drought condition between August 15 to December 31 last year.

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Vegetable show at Nehru Park in Kotagiri today

The three-day event has generated considerable interest among tourists



Tourist attraction: Nehru Park in Kotagiri getting ready on Friday for the third Vegetable Show. –

Udhagamandalam: Whether the show has become popular because of the venue or the prestige of the venue has been enhanced because of the show is a matter of conjecture.

However the fact is that the Vegetable Show being organised by the Department of Horticulture since 2008 and Kotagiri which has been hosting it complement each other.

Consequently, the third two-day Vegetable Show which is scheduled to open on Saturday has generated considerable interest among both the tourists and the local people.

While the question doing the rounds is will the Vegetable Show bring the curtain down on the 2010 Summer Festival in a fitting manner, the organizers are expressing confidence that it will be one of the most talked about events of this summer.

Pointing out that a great deal of effort has gone into organizing the Show, the Assistant Director of Horticulture N.Mani who has been associated with it since its inception told The Hindu here on Friday that it will sport many new features.

By way of providing the ethnic touch there would be a ten-feet-long, eight-feet-wide and seven-feet-high Toda hut made of different kinds of vegetables including carrot, cauliflower and beans.

While a rangoli made with yellow and red capsicums will be another attraction, there would also be an eye-catching design to convey to the visitors that the show was the third in the series.

A welcome arch would be made of vegetables.

The cynosure of all eyes will be a rotating wheel made with 12 varieties of vegetables.

Stating that the show would also be used to promote floriculture, Mr.Mani said that there would be a floral arrangement in the shape of a teddy bear made with carnations.

The stall of the Department of Horticulture would display a variety of temperate vegetables. Vegetable carvings would be bigger than usual. There would also be nine other stalls displaying various items.

For people interested in entertainment there would be cultural programmes.

To a query, he said that ninety percent of the flowers were in full bloom.

The admission rates would be rupees five for adults and rupees two for children.

It would be inaugurated by the Khadi Board Minister K.Ramachandran.

In view of the show the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (TNSTC) has made arrangements to ply special buses to the venue.A security plan has been put in place by the police.



Indo-Asian News Service

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Food inflation eases to 16.23 percent

India's annual food inflation has dipped to 16.23 percent for the week ended May 22 from 16.49 percent in the previous week, official data released on Thursday showed.

Data on the wholesale price index (WPI) released by the commerce and industry ministry showed that both food and non-food index have dropped 0.1 percent each during the week under review.

Fuel prices slowed 12.08 percent during the week against a 12.33 percent increase in the last week, whereas the primary articles index was up 15.9 percent, compared to a rise of 16.19 percent during the previous week.

Following are the rise and fall in prices of some essential food items over the 52-week period:

- Pulses: 33.14 percent
- Milk: 21.12 percent
- Fruits: 13.85 percent
- Rice: 7.27 percent
- Cereals: 5.88 percent

- Wheat: 4 percent
- Potatoes: (-)32.71 percent
- Onions : (-) 17.24 percent

The overall annual rate of inflation in April stood at 9.59 percent.

However, the drop in inflation levels has not been as fast as the government hoped and an international development agency said on Wednesday that high inflation was a problem and that the Reserve Bank of India needed to make more substantial policy rate hikes to contain it.

"With inflation remaining elevated and the recovery appearing to have taken root, there is a risk that price increases for inputs will flow through to second-round increases and that inflationary expectations will become destabilised," Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said in a statement.

"To mitigate this risk, sizeable further monetary tightening will be required through 2010 and into 2011," it added.

The country is betting on a normal monsoon this year as over 60 percent of India's cultivable land are rain-fed. Prime Minister Singh, under attack from opposition parties for failing to check rising prices, recently pledged to almost halve the inflation rate by December this year.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/549739.aspx>

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather

Tomorrow's Forecast



Saturday, May 29

Partly Cloudy

Max Min
40.9° | 28.7°

Rain: Trace

Sunrise: 05:41

Humidity: 71%

Sunset: 18:30

Wind: Normal

Barometer: 1003.0



Sunday, May 30

Partly Cloudy

Max Min
40° | 29°

Extended Forecast for a week

Monday May 31	Tuesday Jun 1	Wednesday Jun 2	Thursday Jun 3	Friday Jun 4
39° 29°	38° 30°	38° 30°	38° 30°	38° 30°
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy

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express[™] buzz

By Manoj Kumar

28 May 2010 12:28:33 PM IST

Food inflation slows; rates seen steady

NEW DELHI: India's food inflation rate slackened in mid-May, after picking up pace for two weeks, giving the Reserve Bank more leeway to hold rates until its July review and gauge the impact of euro zone debt woes on the domestic economy.

The food price index rose to 16.23 percent in the year to May 15, government data

showed, lower than the previous week's annual reading of 16.49 percent as the fruit and vegetable declined marginally.

A forecast of normal June-September monsoon, vital for farm output and rural incomes, should help calm inflation expectations.

"If there is normal monsoon, and as base effect plays its role, I see food inflation coming down to single-digit by July-August," said N.R. Bhanumurthy, an economist with the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy.

"However, if the government decides to raise the procurement price of agricultural commodities in a big way, it can lead to second round of food inflation," he said.

The fuel price index rose 12.08 percent, while the primary articles index was up 15.90 percent, both slower than the rise a week earlier.

Analysts said if the government decides to raise petrol and diesel prices at a ministerial panel meeting expected on June 7, it would have a cascading effect on food prices as well.

On Monday, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said the headline inflation was likely to come down to 5-6 percent by December, and the economy could grow at 8.5 percent in the current financial year that began on April 1.

Wholesale prices, the most closely watched inflation gauge in India, climbed an annual 9.59 percent in April, slower than 9.9 percent rise in March.

The yield on the benchmark 10-year bond was steady at 7.60 percent after the data release.

While food and fuel inflation remain in double digits, manufacturing inflation, which the central bank has said would determine its policy response, slowed in April to 6.70 percent from 7.13 percent in March.

The markets expect the central bank to raise rates by 25 basis points in the policy review on July 27.

Business Standard

Saturday, May 29, 2010

Rice, oilseeds acreage declines, pulses acreage goes up 50%

Press Trust of India / New Delhi May 28, 2010, 18:28 IST

The area sown under rice and oilseeds has declined so far this kharif season while pulses acreage has gone up by over 50 per cent.

The area under rice has decreased by over six per cent to 337,000 hectares this kharif season from 361,000 hectares in the same period last year, according to an official statement.

Area under coverage for oilseeds has decreased to 27,000 hectares, down 43 per cent compared to last year. Area under sugarcane has increased by five per cent to 4,285,000 hectares as compared to 4,075,000 hectares last year.

The area sown under pulses has increased by 53 per cent to 53,500 hectares so far this kharif season compared to 35,000 hectares in the year-ago period.

Higher pulses acreage augurs well for consumers, who have been paying very high prices for the commodity since last year.

Under pulses, the acreage of arhar has increased by 66 per cent to 5,000 hectares, that under urad has risen by one and a half times to 9,000 hectares and moong acreage has almost doubled to 11,000 hectares compared to last year. Moong dal prices are currently raging at Rs 94 per kg.

In oilseeds, the area sown under sunflower has remained stable at 1,000 hectares, that under groundnut has decreased by 25 per cent to 7,500 hectares.

Castor shows rising trend on good demand

Press Trust of India / Mumbai May 28, 2010, 18:10 IST

Castor seeds bold and its oils witnessed a rising trend at the oils and oilseed market here today on persistent demand from soap manufacturers and allied industries.

Castor seed futures also moved up on better export enquiries.

Linseed oil also recovered slightly on the back good demand from paint industry.

Refined palmolein eased further on lower buying support.

Groundnut oil remained stable due to lower stockist offtake.

In non-edible oil section, castor seeds bold gained by Rs 5 to Rs 3,275 from yesterday's closing level of Rs 3,270 and castoroil commercial also edged up by a rupee to Rs 685.

Linseedoil rose by Rs 5 to Rs 505 as against Rs 500 previously.

Moving to futures section, castorseeds June contract resumed higher at Rs 3,150 and moved in a range of Rs 3,156 and Rs 3,145 before ending at Rs 3,148, showing a gain of Rs 6. August contract also opened higher at Rs 3,262 and traded in a range of 3,271 to Rs 3,260 before settling at Rs 3,265, exhibiting a smart rise of Rs 15.

Turning to edible oil section, refined palmolein lost another Rs 2 to Rs 406 from Rs 408 and groundnut oil remained unaltered at Rs 700.

Sugar prices decline on lower demand

Press Trust of India / Mumbai May 28, 2010, 17:12 IST

Sugar prices declined moderately at the Vashi wholesale market here today on lack of demand from stockists amidst ample supply from the mills.

Medium sugar quality (M-30) fell up by Rs 15/20 per quintal to Rs 2,810/2,880 from overnight closing level of Rs 2,825/2,900.

Small sugar quality (S-30) moved down by Rs 10 per quintal to Rs 2,760/2,810 from of Rs 2,770/2,820 previously.

The following are today's closing rates per quintal, with previous rates in brackets: Small sugar (S-30) quality Rs 2,760/2,810 (Rs 2,770/2,820) and Medium sugar (M-30) quality Rs 2,810/2,880(Rs 2,825/2,900)

Pepper futures dip on profit taking, subdued spot demand

Press Trust of India / New Delhi May 28, 2010, 15:31 IST

Pepper prices today fell by Rs 125, or 0.72 per cent to Rs 17,270 per quintal in futures trade, as traders booked profits at higher levels.

A weak trend at spot markets on subdued exports demand also put pressure on the trading sentiment.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange counter, pepper for July contract moved down by Rs 125 or 0.72 per cent to Rs 17,270 per quintal, with an open interest of 2,378 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in June contract traded Rs 107, or 0.62 per cent lower at Rs 17,080 per quintal, with an open interest of 14,353 lots.

Analysts said fall in pepper futures prices were due to profit taking, subdued trend at spot markets and weak exports demand.