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Power subsidy extended to lift irrigation farmers' societies

Staff Reporter



FULFILLING A PROMISE:Deputy Chief Minister M.K. Stalin handing over the key of a house constructed under the Kalaignar Housing Scheme at a function at Ayyermalai in Karur district.

KULITHALAI: The government has extended power subsidy to all lift irrigation farmers' societies in the State, according to Deputy Chief Minister M.K. Stalin. The scheme had come into effect on December 1.

He was addressing a function at Ayyarmalai near here on Wednesday after declaring open buildings, launching schemes, laying foundation stone for projects and disbursing welfare to beneficiaries.

The power subsidy, to the extent of Rs.45 lakh per annum for Karur district, would benefit

11 lift irrigation farmers' societies. An estimated 3,000 families would be benefited.

Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi had considered the long-pending plea of farmers, especially those along the Cauvery, and waived power tariff. The government would bear the cost and pay the subsidy amount directly to the division concerned of the erstwhile Tamil Nadu Electricity Board.

Saying that the government was implementing social welfare and development schemes solely for the benefit of the downtrodden and the poor, Mr. Stalin said the well-meaning schemes were put on the backburner during the rule of "others." If the schemes are to continue the DMK should be returned to power. "All the welfare schemes are being implemented only for the development of people and not with an eye on elections."

Mr. Stalin laid foundation stone for five schemes with an investment of Rs.77.52 crore and inaugurated projects and schemes worth Rs.12.92 crore. He disbursed government welfare measures worth Rs.20.84 crore to 2,987 beneficiaries. Among the new projects declared open were new buildings to house the Dr. Kalaignar Government Arts College, Kulithalai, Samathuvapuram at Panayampalayam near Chinnadarapuram at a cost of Rs.2.5 crore, new building to house the Karur Municipality at a cost of Rs.1.45 crore. Under the aegis of the Tamil Nadu Women's Development Corporation, Mr. Stalin extended revolving fund, credit for economic activity and direct lending to 1,150 members of women self-help groups. He gave away keys of houses to 1,000 beneficiaries under the Kalaignar Housing Scheme.

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<http://www.thehindu.com/2010/12/09/stories/2010120953610300.htm>

Training for farmers

PUDUKOTTAI: The regional office of the Central Warehousing Corporation, Chennai, will conduct a farmers' training on 'Warehousing (Development and Regulation) Act 2007' here on December 9 and 10.

The programme would be held at the office of the Joint Director of Agriculture in the town.

Experts and higher officials of the Central Warehousing Corporation and the state agriculture department would deliver lectures and interact with the farmers on both the days, a press release of A. Paramasivam, Warehouse Manager, Central Warehouse, Chennai, issued on Wednesday said.

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<http://www.thehindu.com/2010/12/09/stories/2010120964140300.htm>

Drip irrigation training for farmers

TIRUCHI: The farmers of villages in Thottiam taluk were given expert training on different aspects of drip and sprinkler irrigation systems recently at a programme organised by the state Agricultural Engineering Department, Musiri, recently. The farmers of Kollakudi, Ammankudi, Karupannapatti, and Alakarai villages participated in the programme held in the premises of Gramalaya, NGO in Kollakudipatti. S. Somasundram, assistant professor (agronomy), explained the various aspects of drip and sprinkler irrigation systems used in different crops like banana, sugarcane, vegetables, groundnut and pulses.

M. Jeyaraman, assistant engineer, State Agricultural Engineering Department, and others interacted with the farmers. The participants said that the training was very informative. Manimekalai, a farmer of Ammankudi said that tips given for growing tissue culture banana under drip irrigation with high density planting, will be useful. Shanmugam, a farmer of Kollakudi, said the programme enabled them to know the various technologies used in drip irrigation such as acid treatment and trifluorolol treatment.

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Spurt in areca nut prices fails to enthuse farmers

C.S. Narayanan Kutty

Sharp fall in yield is anticipated this season

Price rise could be attributed to various reasons

Majority of marginal famers has cleared their stock

Kasaragod: The spurt in areca nut prices, after nearly a decade, should have brought smiles to areca growers in north Kerala. But a sharp fall in yield anticipated this season, thanks to vagaries of weather, mounting cultivation cost and acute shortage of traditional workers, is a matter of concern among the farmers.

The unexpected spurt in prices of old supari up to Rs.115 this week, from a price that remained steady in the range of Rs.70 to Rs.90 for nearly a decade, could be a matter of relief for a few farmers, who are lucky to have huge areca nut stock of previous seasons.

The price rise could be attributed to various reasons, which include marked fall in production thanks to prolonged rain, reports of higher import duty and increased demand from “gutka” manufacturers.

The majority of marginal farmers have already cleared their stocks at lower prices and are unable to take advantage of the nearly Rs.15 a kg hike in recent weeks, said K.N. Krishna Bhat, a major arecanut grower based at Kilingar near Seethangoli in the district.

Prolonged rain

Even as reports forecast further rise in prices, an anticipated shortfall in yield due to the prolonged rain dashed the hopes of farmers due to button shedding (dropping of premature nut from areca bunches). The showers had also resulted in nuts sprouting, a rarely witnessed situation, Mr. Bhat said.

The rain had caused undue delay in spraying of copper sulphate solution prescribed for containing the ‘Mahali’ disease, which causes premature fall of areca nut.

Accentuating their grievances, the rain had prevented the farmers from drying the produce. The commodity should be dried in sunlight for nearly 40 days at a stretch.

Huge stocks of the nut got drenched in the unseasonal rain affecting its quality, preventing farmers from taking advantage of the spurt in prices, Mr. Bhat said.

M. Ranjith Nambiar, a farmer, said farmers should at least get Rs.150 a kg to pursue areca nut cultivation, hit by mounting labour cost and acute shortage of traditional plantation workers, with most of the youngsters switching over to lucrative jobs elsewhere.

Farmers' organisations in the State have called upon authorities to extend the services of those employed under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme to the sector to reduce the current labour cost.

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Rain causes extensive damage to crops in Tenali, Guntur

Staff Reporter

Cotton farmers suffer a major loss in Palnadu area

Guntur: Heavy rain in the last couple of days dealt a severe blow to farmers as paddy, cotton, chilli and other crops were inundated largely in Tenali and Guntur divisions.

It is unofficially estimated that crops in more than three lakh acres were damaged due to the continuous downpour, while the mandal-level officials were yet to begin enumeration of the extent of loss.

Cotton suffered a major loss in Palnadu area where the crop was submerged with little scope of the same drying up anytime soon.

The plight of chilli farmers is no better.

The farming community as a whole is up in arms as they are unable to fetch remunerative price and the damaged crops are bound to compound their woes.

Vehicular traffic between Guntur and Amaravati, Narasaraopet and Chilakaluripet and

Sattenapalli and Macherla was badly affected as streams flew across the roads and trees were razed to the ground by gales.

People in low-lying areas in various towns like Sattenapalli, Bapatla and Chilakaluripet faced teething problems as rainwater entered the habitations and roads became cesspools.

Cyclone special officer Hiralal Samariya is busy making an official assessment of the situation vis-a-vis crops and properties damaged.

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Red gram production exceeds expectations

Farmers unhappy with prevailing market price Cultivation achieved over 430 per cent of targeted area

Raichur: The Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) yard in Raichur is expected to witness heavy arrivals of red gram this season. Farmers, however, are not happy with the prevailing market price for the crop.

Red gram was cultivated on a large scale in Raichur district, and other bordering districts of Andhra Pradesh, this kharif season. Official records show that the crop has been cultivated on 47,850 hectares in Raichur alone, as against the targeted area of 11,100 hectares.

Last season, red gram was cultivated on 10,600 hectares in the district, with a total production of 6,500 tonnes.

Cultivation of the crop exceeded expectations this season, achieving more than 430 per cent of the targeted area. With an average yield of 4.5 quintals per acre, production is expected to cross 22,000 tonnes this year.

Red gram began to arrive at the APMC yard last month. The APMC registered more than 1 lakh tonnes of red gram until December 7. It is expected to receive more than 10,000 tonnes till the end of this season, which normally ends in March.

Priced over MSP

However, the prevailing price of red gram in the market has dashed the hopes of farmers.

The Union Government has fixed the minimum support price (MSP) at Rs. 3,000 per quintal of red gram for this season. However, going by the continued high price of the commodity since last year, the farmers are expected to sell their produce for not below Rs. 4,500 a quintal this season.

But continuing arrival of large quantities of red gram into the market has affected the price. Red gram is being procured by traders at a price between Rs. 3,290 and Rs. 3,800 per quintal.

Disappointed

Ramappa from Ganekal village of Deodurga taluk, who brought his produce to the APMC yard, expressed disappointment at the prevailing price on red gram.

He will not benefit much by selling his produce even though the price on the commodity was more than the MSP.

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<http://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/seta/2010/12/09/stories/2010120950221300.htm>

FARMER'S NOTEBOOK

Improvised motorcycle pump for irrigation from bore-well

M.J. PRABU

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act affects food production

— Photo: Special Arrangement



Worth trying: Vikas Shinde, Jalgaon, with his multipurpose farming vehicle.

“Resource crunch often makes people depressed, especially for small farmers like us who are used to it for decades. We often live in severe cash-strapped situations and learn to adjust or adapt; sometimes we just succumb to it,” says farmer Mr. Vikas Shinde from Jalgaon, Maharashtra, who developed a motor cycle operated water pump to irrigate his fields.

“The government just does not seem interested in encouraging farmers,” he says.

“The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is a good example of how farming and food production can be greatly affected.

“In the name of providing employment, labourers and several small farmers take up menial jobs such as deepening wells, canals, and laying roads: The result: there are no people left in the village to work in the fields,” he notes.

Future for innovation

“According to me, self innovation alone can sustain food production. While the government can remain indifferent to many of our problems, the local communities continue developing their own ways of dealing with it.”

For two consecutive years, lack of rains and a depleting water table created severe financial problems for the farmer.

“A bore-well in my field did not help much as our area had no electricity connection. Lifting water posed a big problem for me. I wanted to somehow overcome the problem and decided to do something about it. Since I also owned a welding shop, I thought of designing a machine that could run without electricity. I had made a drilling machine before and thought it should not be a very difficult task for me. And the concept of a motorcycle operated water pump came to my mind.”

Mr. Vikas initially made some rough sketches of the device to be built and selected a few parts of machinery from scrap and started working on the details of the device.

Wheel, pulley concept

The device, based on the concept of wheel and pulley, is connected to a long pipe which serves as a container for collecting water from the well.

The machine derives its power from a motorcycle engine.

“I place my motorbike near the well on a wooden board connected to the pump device. Once kick started, the rear wheel starts rotating and moves the wheel and pulley arrangement assembled,” he adds.

Mechanism

This mechanism moves the pipe down into the well. Once the water is collected, the pipe moves upwards and lifts it.

Water from the pipe is then collected in a tank or directly taken to the fields by a network of pipes. The capacity of the pump is 50 litres and it takes about 10 minutes to complete one cycle.

“In an hour about 1,200 litres of water can be extracted through this pump. The fuel requirement is very less (for one litre, the machine works for 12 hours),” he says.

Mr. Vikas also designed a multipurpose farming vehicle for cutting grass, ploughing the soil and make markings in the field. He integrated parts of several motorcycles which he collected from scrap shops to develop this machine.

Two acres

“In one day, two acres of land can be ploughed and the machine requires only two litres of petrol. The same work if done by bullocks costs about Rs. 600 a day,” he explains.

For more details readers can contact Mr. Vikas Chaitram Shinde, Pingalvade PO. Nimbhora, Amalner taluk, Jalgaon district, Maharashtra, mobiles: 9422539430, 9423770375.

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<http://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/seta/2010/12/09/stories/2010120950241300.htm>

New crop varieties for a changing climate

As climate change becomes more felt all over the world, the United Nations is currently holding a climate change conference in Cancun, Mexico, which encompasses the sixteenth Conference of the Parties (COP16) and the sixth Conference of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP6).

The India-based International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Patancheru, Secunderabad has gone ahead and developed climate change-ready cultivars of dryland crops.

ICRISAT's research is focused on crops that are important to the livelihoods of the people of the dryland tropics.

These are pearl millet, sorghum, chickpea, pigeonpea and groundnut.

These crops have several natural evolutionary advantages to withstand global warming.

Salinity tolerant

Both pearl millet and sorghum have high levels of salinity tolerance, so are better adapted to areas that are becoming saline due to global warming.

Some of the pearl millet varieties and hybrids, developed from ICRISAT's germplasm are able to flower and set seed at temperatures more than 42 degrees centigrade in areas such as Western Rajasthan and Gujarat in India.

Improved sorghum lines have also been developed that are capable of producing good yields in temperatures of 42 degrees C, and have stay-green traits that can enhance terminal drought tolerance.

Short-duration

Short-duration groundnut varieties such as ICGV 91114 have good levels of drought tolerance, and are already replacing more susceptible older varieties.

For chickpea, ICRISAT has developed extra-early (85 to 90 days to maturity) and super-early (75 to 80 days) varieties that can escape terminal drought.

More recently, ICRISAT researcher team have identified certain chickpea lines that have high levels of heat tolerance, which will enable them to be grown in areas with higher temperatures during the heat-sensitive pod filling stage.

However, with a combination of climate change-ready varieties plus improved agronomic practices, dryland farmers can overcome the adversities of a warmer world.

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<http://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/seta/2010/12/09/stories/2010120950251300.htm>

FARM QUERY

Ghoongroo pigs

Where can I get information on Ghoongroo pigs?

SUBASH

Kolkata

Ghoongroo pigs can be grown both under stall-feeding and stall-feeding-cum-grazing. Simple housing principally made up of bamboo and jute stick can be used for protecting the animals from rains. The animals are black in colour and are in good demand for their meat. For more details contact Prof. Subhansu Pan, Head, Dept. of Livestock, Production Management West Bengal University of Animal & Fishery Sciences, Kolkata-700 037, Ph : 094333 65563, e-mail: span28@rediffmail.com0

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By Joydeep Gupta

09 Dec 2010 09:29:06 AM IST

India makes major move to save climate talks

CANCUN (MEXICO): India has made a major move towards a global treaty where its own attempts to tackle climate change may become a "binding commitment under appropriate legal form". Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh made the offer in an attempt to break the deadlock at the Nov 29-Dec 10 UN climate summit here, and as he put it, "to improve India's image around the world as an honest broker". Speaking at the high level segment of the annual UN Framework Convention on Climate Change conference, Ramesh said Wednesday evening (local time) that "all countries must take binding commitments under appropriate legal form" to control their emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) - mainly carbon dioxide - which are causing climate change.

This is a major departure in the 17-year climate talks, as India had thus far led developing countries in the stance that global warming was a problem caused by rich countries, and it was up to rich countries to reduce their GHG emissions. Since the start of the industrial age, the rich countries have put into the atmosphere almost all the excess GHG that is warming up the earth and already reducing farm output, making droughts, floods and storms more frequent and more severe and raising the sea level. But now China is the largest GHG polluter with 22 percent of global emissions, the US is second with 19 percent and India third with five, though India's per

capita emissions are one-twentieth that of the US. The US is the only rich country that has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol - the sole global treaty that obliges rich countries to reduce their GHG emissions. For years, the US has been insisting it will not get into any legally binding agreement to do so unless China and India do the same.

These large developing countries have stoutly resisted such pressure and this has stalled many climate summits, including this one at this beach resort on the tip of Mexico's Yucatan peninsula. But since last year Ramesh has been gradually shifting India's position: the country has now committed under the voluntary Copenhagen Accord that it will reduce the intensity of its carbon emissions by 20-25 percent by 2020 compared to 2005, and on Wednesday he made another big move towards a possible global deal, though most probably that will still not happen during this summit. Ramesh admitted the move came in response to pressure from industrialised countries, applied through the poorest of the developing countries and those most vulnerable to climate change effects. Officially, he was reacting to a proposal made by Grenada on behalf of the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) that asked all countries to sign up to a legally binding treaty to control their GHG emissions.

India's move came with three riders, however. Ramesh told the media that "there must be clarity on the content (of the agreement), on penalties for non-compliance and on a system of monitoring and enforcement, or we won't even discuss it". Ramesh's speech created a huge buzz among the thousands of delegates gathered here, who had gone mostly quiet as they stared at the failure of yet another climate summit. A senior delegate from host country Mexico told IANS: "Now there is hope that we can salvage something from this summit". Asked to explain his position after his speech, Ramesh told journalists: "India is not against (the agreement having a) legal form. It is against a legally binding agreement.

That is the red line." At the same time, he wondered why so many countries were "discussing the form (of the agreement) without knowing the content. It is putting the cart before the horse." Ramesh said he was "sensitive to what AOSIS and African countries are saying, though we have many questions. We want to keep the discussion going on legal form, instead of a legally binding agreement. We are willing to engage in discussions...We should not pre-judge the nature of the legal form." Ramesh said there was "clearly a move to put pressure on India and China to agree to a legally binding agreement. This was coming from the rich countries, through AOSIS, Africa and the LDCs (least developed countries)." He admitted that the BASIC group -

Brazil, South Africa, India and China - was divided over the issue. "South Africa and Brazil are supportive of a legally binding agreement.

" But he wanted the media to notice that the US, China, Philippines and Bolivia were among the countries that had spoken against it during the high level segment. "There is pressure for one single legal agreement. But at this stage we and China and the US are not agreeable at all." Who had specifically asked him to commit to a legally binding agreement? Ramesh named four South Asian countries - Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal - plus the two BASIC countries, Africa, AOSIS and the LDCs. All these are members of the Group of 77 that negotiates as a bloc in the climate talks. Did this show a crack on the bloc's unity? "It shows there are divergent views within G77," Ramesh replied. "At this stage, India's strategy is to keep the door open. The door was being closed on us."

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THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Thu, Dec 09, 2010 | Updated 08.27AM IST

9 Dec, 2010, 01.07AM IST, PK Krishnakumar & Madhvi Sally,ET Bureau

Arecanut shortage forces gutka makers to hike prices

KOCHI/CHANDIGARH: A sharp increase in arecanut prices has forced pan masala and gutka companies to raise prices at a time when they are facing a threat of ban on these products. The arecanut prices have shot up after a gap of several years, following a severe short supply.

The untimely rains have hit the production in the chief growing areas of Karnataka and Kerala. The imports too have fallen, making the situation worse for the arecanut processors and pan masala manufacturers. "We increased the prices and even reduced the volume in some products following a jump in arecanut prices. The price of small packets have been increased by 50 %," says Mitesh Kothari, executive director of Kothari Products , the makers of Pan Parag. The company, which has units in Kanpur, Vadodara and Bangalore, sells over 2.5 lakh kg pan

masala and gutka in a month.

Traditionally, the pan masala and gutka manufacturers use the red variety of arecanut. But because of the higher prices of red arecanut, there is an increasing shift to the white varieties. The red arecanut price is hovering around Rs 140-150 per kg, an increase of over Rs 40 compared to that of last year's. The prices of white arecanuts, which go for making pan for chewing, are ruling at Rs 100-113 per kg against Rs 80 in the previous year.

Arecanut processors like the Mangalore-based Central Arecanut and Cocoa Processing and Marketing Co-operative (Campco) are feeling the pinch. Campco buys around 5.50 lakh quintals of arecanut which includes equal quantities of white and red arecanuts. High prices may hit the revenue of the company. "Over 70% of Rs 600-crore revenue of the company comes from arecanut," says GKBhat, assistant general manager. According to the Directorate of Arecanut and Spices Development director Dr Tamilselvan, the total production estimate for 2009-10 is 4.78 lakh tonne, a fall from 4.89 lakh tonne in the previous year.

9 Dec, 2010, 01.03AM IST, Madhvi Sally & Sutanuka Ghosal,ET Bureau

Onion prices to fall as new arrivals hit mkt

CHANDIGARH/CALCUTTA: Onion prices may drop as arrivals pick up in Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Karnataka and West Bengal. From Rs 35-40 per kg, onions may soon come down to Rs 10-15 in the wholesale market. How much of this decline will be passed on to consumers remains doubtful.

Owing to unseasonal rains in the onion growing belt of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, the crop's quality and quantity deteriorated marginally.

New arrivals in the Maharashtra market has led to a fall in prices from Rs 35-40 a kg to Rs 15-20, said Vasi onion and potato market president Yashwant Naravade. "New onion crop is arriving from Nashik, Hubli, Bangalore, Pune and Alwar. Arrivals are yet to pick up from Gujarat after which the prices will fall further by Rs 5-10 in January," he said. Old onion, which was being exported to the Middle East and South East Asian markets, was fetching Rs 35-40.

In the northern and eastern markets, the prices still remain firm touching Rs 35-40 a kg in the retail. "Onion prices will fall with local arrivals, which will start coming in a month's time. Also, with arrivals from Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat increasing, we expect a fall in the prices," said Jalandhar-based trader Gaurav Arora of Jeevan Das & Sons. He added that due to poor quality and high prices of Rs 25 a kg, export of onion to Pakistan was also unviable this year.

In the wholesale market in West Bengal, onion prices were hovering around Rs 3,200 per quintal. At the retail end, consumers are getting onions at a price of Rs 35-40 per kg. In Assam, the prices had touched as high as Rs 42 per kg. "Despite paying such high prices, people are not getting good quality onions. The onions that are coming from Nashik are not fully grown. Sometimes in a bag of 45 kg, traders are getting bad quality onions of 5-6 kg," said Gautam Sinha, secretary of Greater Kolkata Potato and Onion Merchants' Association.

Exporters and manufacturers of dehydrated onion, which is in great demand in Europe, the US and Canada, feel that considering the rise and fall in prices local demand for the dehydrated onion may pick up in the country. "After March, we expect prices to remain firm the next year. There has been a 50% crop loss this year of new plantation owing to rains," said Ganshyam Bhai Patel, chairman of Mahuva APMC in Bhavnagar, Gujarat.

"In the wholesale market in Assam, onion is being sold at the rate of Rs 30-35 per kg. At least 15% of the onion is completely damaged in every consignment," said a trader from Assam. Every day, four to five trucks, each with a capacity of 20 tonne, bring onion in to the Guwahati market.

In Hubli, the onion growers have demanded a better price. While a kg of onion is priced at Rs 35-45 in retail market, the traders at APMC have fixed the per-quintal price at Rs 800-900. The farmers have urged the government to announce a minimum support price of Rs 1,400 per quintal.

Mr Sinha said that this firm trend in onion price is expected to continue for another month. "This firm trend in price is likely to continue for another month after which price is likely to come down

by Rs 5-10 per kg,” he said. The sowing of onion in West Bengal will begin by the end of this month. This new crop will enter the local market in March next year.

Business Standard

Thursday, Dec 09, 2010

FMC mulls allowing sugar futures trade in 8-10 days

Press Trust Of India / New Delhi December 09, 2010, 0:44 IST

After over two months since the ban on sugar futures lapsed, commodity markets regulator FMC today said it is mulling grant of permission to commodity bourses to relaunch sugar contracts for futures trading in about 10 days time.

“We are planning to allow the exchanges to relaunch sugar futures contracts in 8-10 days,” Forward Markets Commission (FMC) Chairman B C Khatua said.

The sugar contracts from January month onwards is likely to be made available for futures trading after a meeting with the stakeholders and exchanges, he said.

The meeting with the concerned stakeholders will be convened in a day or two, he added.

Food and Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar had recently said that FMC has right to decide on allowing sugar futures.

Commodity exchanges like MCX and NCDEX said they are ready with the sugar contract for launch at any time.

The government has allowed the ban on sugar futures to lapse on September 30. The ban on the commodity was imposed in May 2009 when prices were rising.

After the lapse of the ban, the regulator however did not permit immediate relaunch of the sugar futures before knowing the country’s likely sugar production this year.

According to official estimates, after a gap of two seasons, India is estimated to see higher production of 24.5 million tonnes of sugar in the 2010-11 season.

This is higher than the country's demand of 23 million tonnes.

Buoyed by increased supplies, retail sugar prices have declined sharply from the peak of nearly Rs 50 a kg in mid-January to Rs 30 a kg now in the national capital.

India is the world's second biggest producer but the largest consumer of sugar. The sugar season runs from October to September.

Oilseed yield may rise 10 per cent on favourable climate

Dilip Kumar Jha / Mumbai December 9, 2010, 0:43 IST

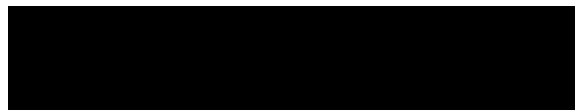
Edible oilseed production is likely to rise 10 per cent on favourable climatic conditions and better soil fertility.

Trade body, Solvent Extractors' Association (SEA), estimates say oilseed yield will rise to 1,050 kg per hectare (ha) this year, from 955 kg per ha last year. Financial year 2008 was a dream year for the oilseed industry in India that fetched an all-time high yield of 1,115 kg per ha.

"This year, the monsoon remained good and it is expected to fetch us better yield in the kharif season. Since unseasonal rainfall extended to December, rabi oilseed yield can also be forecast to remain better this year," said B V Mehta, executive director of the SEA.

The acreage for oilseeds is normally 26-27 million hectare in the country, while productivity is barely 1,000 kg — half of the world average and one-third of the best.

In the next five years, however, per ha yield is estimated to rise between 1,200-1,300 kg as India requires to adopt genetically modified seeds sooner or later to meet the ever rising demand based on economic growth, said Mehta.



Year	Area (mn ha)	Production (mn tonnes)	Yield (kg/ha)
2005-06	27.86	27.98	1,004
2006-07	26.51	24.29	916
2007-08	26.69	29.76	1,115
2008-09	27.56	27.72	1,006
2009-10	26.11	24.93	955
2010-11	17.55*	15.40*	1,050
<i>* Kharif season estimates</i>			

At present, edible oil prices is low due to “nil” import duty on crude oil and a marginal 7.5 per cent on refined oil. Once this duty is revised, edible oil prices is expected to go up and will encourage farmers to bring more area under oilseed production and manage the crop better.

India’s overall edible oil demand is expected to see a surge to 20.8 million tonnes by 2015 from the 15.6 million tonnes now. Of which, 10 million tonnes (6.5 million tonnes now) will be supplied from domestic sources while the remaining will be imported. The import share in India’s edible oil demand will rise marginally from 51 per cent now to 53 per cent by 2015, said Mehta.

The Central Organisation for Oil Industry & Trade (COOIT) estimated the total oilseed output to rise 12.5 per cent in the recently ended kharif season at a staggering 15.41 million tonnes as compared to 13.69 million tonnes in the same season last year. Higher production of oilseeds will also be supported by an overall increase in acreage.

Total acreage during the season is estimated at 17.55 million hectares (ha), a marginal increase from 17.49 million ha covered under major oilseeds during the last kharif season.

COOIT estimates the average yield to rise to 878 kg per ha this year, a rise of 12.13 per cent from an average 783 kg last year. COOIT estimated cottonseed production at 10.23 million tonnes at 33 million bales of cotton output this year as against 9.15 million tonnes and 29.5 million bales last year, respectively.

India could face rubber shortage of 500,000 tn

Press Trust Of India / New Delhi December 9, 2010, 0:41 IST

Increasing demand from rubber manufacturers coupled with stagnant production could lead to a shortage of up to 500,000 tonnes in the country in the next five years, says an industry expert.

"As the demand for rubber is continuously growing but the production is not growing accordingly, it may lead to a situation where there could be a shortage of more than five lakh tonnes in the next five years," All India Rubber Industries Association President Vinod T Simon said.

He said that at present the total demand for natural rubber in the country is around 950,000 tonnes where as the production is expected to be nearly 850,000 tonnes in 2010.

"Domestic demand for natural rubber, a key component in tyre making, is likely to touch 1.5 million tonnes by 2015 but the production is projected to remain stagnant at 900,000 tonnes," Simon said.

Disruption of production in key rubber producing areas due to adverse weather conditions has pushed the prices of the commodity to record high in both international and domestic market.

"Rubber prices have tripled in a short span of time but now, we are more worried about the availability of commodity instead of their prices, as it is impossible to increase the production whereas demand is continuously growing," Simon said.

He said that even though the government was trying to increase the production- by planting rubber in one lakh hectares in Tripura, which is likely to come to production next year--it wouldn't be sufficient to meet the demand.

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Back Higher groundnut output forecasts take sheen off oil

Rains may have affected quality too.

M.R. Subramani



Waiting for purchase:Groundnut packed in gunny bags stacked at the Gondal agricultural produce market yard, 35 km from Rajkot in Gujarat. These consignments have been sold by farmers and are awaiting to be lifted by oil mills. —

M.R. Subramani

Junagadh (Gujarat), Dec. 8

With the groundnut crop estimated higher this kharif against last year, the premium enjoyed by groundnut oil against soyabean oil and RBD (refined, bleached and deodourised) palm oil has dropped.

“Groundnut production this kharif is estimated at 41 lakh tonnes against 32.9 lakh tonnes last year. This has brought down the premium for the oil by nearly half,” said Mr Govindlal G. Patel, Director of Deepak Enterprise that deals in edible oils.

Currently, groundnut oil is quoted at Rs 780 for 10 kg against Rs 560 for soyabean oil and RBD palmolein Rs 554. During the same time last year, groundnut oil was quoted at Rs

681, while soyabean and RBD palmolein quoted at Rs 430 and Rs 388 respectively.

Initially, groundnut production was estimated at 18.7 lakh tonnes in Gujarat but due to rains in early November, it could now be lower at 17.7 lakh tonnes.

“Besides quantity, there has also been damage in quality,” Mr Patel said.

“There is definitely quality problem with groundnut that is arriving now. If crushed, it is leading to higher FFA,” said Mr Bipin V. Patel of S.K. Industries.

“Groundnut oil today is a premium product. Therefore, our product has to be good and fit enough for consumption by the elite few,” said Mr Shanthibhai Chaganbhai of Kanaiya Oil Industries at Keshod. “There is a perceptible shift in groundnut oil consumption. It makes some five per cent of the total edible oil consumption in the country. Only the elite ones are consuming groundnut oil these days,” said Mr Govindlal Patel.

The problem with the current arrivals is that once the groundnut kernel is crushed, the oil that is derived is of a little blackish yellow colour than the usual golden yellow.

“There may not be any problem in consuming it now. But you can store it for six months and then use it since the FFA is higher,” said Mr Hitesh H. Vithlani, a trader in Rajkot.

“The smell will not be good if it is stored,” he said. “Even the kernel that arrives is discoloured. That could also affect direct consumption,” said Mr Govindlal Patel.

Arrivals have peaked and they will continue until January. Though groundnut production is estimated higher, the kernel availability is 28.70 lakh tonnes. Of this, only eight lakh tonnes will be available for crushing with the rest going for direct consumption and retention by growers for sowing and other purposes. This will result in oil availability of 3.48 lakh tonnes.

Last year, of the 23 lakh tonnes of kernel produced, 18.6 lakh tonnes were retained by growers, leading to availability of 4.4 lakh tonnes. This resulted in oil availability of 1.8 lakh tonnes.

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Back **Heavy rains leave 16 dead, 3.67 lakh ha crop damaged**

Our Bureau

Hyderabad, Dec.8

At least 16 deaths have been reported and about 3.67 lakh hectares of agricultural, 4,963 hectares of horticulture crops damaged due to incessant rains in the past two-three days in various parts of the State.

Relief operations

Following a review meeting of the rains and relief operations with the State Revenue Minister, Mr N. Raghuvveera Reddy, the Chief Secretary, Mr S V Prasad and the Commissioner of Disaster Management, Mr T.Radha, at the Secretariat on Wednesday, the Chief Minister, Mr N. Kiran Kumar Reddy, has decided to make an aerial survey of the rain-affected areas on Thursday.

According to a statement from the Chief Minister's Office, Mr Kiran Kumar Reddy also talked to the District Collectors of the worst affected coastal districts and enquired about the latest situation and the rescue and relief measures undertaken thus far. He directed them to immediately initiate measures to save the paddy heaps submerged in the fields and ensure repairs to breaches of roads and minor irrigation tanks.

Depression

According to Met office information, the depression over the Bay of Bengal moved northwest and crossed Andhra Pradesh coast near Bapatla early Wednesday morning. It lay centred about 50 km north west of Bapatla at about 5.30 p.m. This is likely to cause widespread rains over north coastal Andhra Pradesh in the next 24 hours and isolated heavy rainfall may occur over Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Telangana in next 48 hours.

About 197 Mandals were affected in East and West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur, Krishna

and Prakasam districts.

The District Collectors have been asked to keep a close watch and take all precautionary and preventive measures.

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Back Paddy arrivals drop as farmers hold onto stock

Our Correspondent

Karnal, Dec. 8

After having to sell their produce for low prices, paddy farmers are withdrawing from the grain market, leading to a drop in arrivals and trading activity at the Karnal grain market terminal.

Mr Tara Chand Sharma, a paddy trader, told Business Line that farmers are waiting for the prices to come up and then they would approach the market.

Paddy prices of pure basmati have dropped to Rs 2,000-2,600 against the levels of Rs 2,200-2,900 quoted in November.

Similarly, arrivals have dropped to just around 5,000 bags of pure basmati whereas the arrivals were around 10,000-20,000 bags till November-end.

On the other hand, with low trading, the rice market continued to witness steady trend. Prices of aromatic rice and non-basmati rice ruled firm.

Prices of Pusa-1121 steam (new) ruled around Rs 5,300 a quintal, while the old variety sold around Rs 5,400. Pusa-1121 sela (new) was at Rs 4,300, whereas the old variety at Rs 4,400. Pusa-1121 raw (new) ruled between Rs 5,180 and 5,250, while the old variety quoted around Rs 5,350. Pusa (sela) ruled at Rs 3,320-3,370 and Pusa (raw) at Rs 4,200-4,250.

Basmati sela quoted around Rs 6,200-6,250, while basmati raw was around Rs 7,150-7,250. Brokens such as Tibar was at Rs 3,200, Dubar at Rs 2,300-2,320 and Mongra around Rs 2,000.

Prices of Permal sela ruled at Rs 2,000-2,200, while Permal steam ruled between Rs 2,150 and Rs 2,200 a quintal. Sharbati sela sold around Rs 2,800 and Sharbati steam at Rs 3,050 a quintal.

Paddy trading

Around 3,000 bags of PR-13 arrived, sold between Rs 890 and Rs 930. Grade-A variety arrived in 15,000 bags and quoted between Rs 980 and Rs 1,040.

About 2,000 bags of Sharbati ruled between Rs 1,540 and Rs 1,560. Sugandha-999 arrived in about 5,000 bags, and quoted at Rs 1,580-1,670.

Around 3,000 bags of Pusa (duplicate basmati) quoted at Rs 2,000-2,200. Around 8,000 bags of Pusa-1121 ruled at Rs 2,000-2,325.

About 5,000 bags of pure basmati rice quoted at Rs 2,000-2,600. The stock was lifted by millers.

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Back Root-wilt resistant coconut varieties help recover yields

Comprehensive management practices also to be followed to sustain yields.



A file picture of the Kalpa Sankara coconut

G.K. Nair

Kochi, Dec. 8

Root-wilt resistant varieties of coconut seedlings, released by the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute's (CPCRI) Research Station in Kayamkulam, have become popular, particularly in homesteads. The disease had become an endemic, and the resistant variety has helped increase yield after a long time.

Of the three varieties released, two — Kalpasree and Kalpa Sankara — are proved to be ideal for copra and oil production, while the third, Kalparaksha, has exhibited potential as a commercial variety in the tender coconut water segment.

Kalpasree, found to have superior quality of coconut oil, is recommended for cultivation in homesteads in the root-wilt diseased tract, Dr P M Mathew, Head of the CPCRI station told Business Line.

“It has a high yield potential also,” he said.

Kalpa Sankara is also rapidly becoming a popular coconut hybrid in the root-wilt prevalent tract mainly because of its short stature, precocity, tolerance to this disease and satisfactory yield, he said. Last year the station had received request for 10,000 seedlings. Other advantages are its early bearing character, besides being a semi-tall variety, making harvesting easy now when there is a severe shortage of climbers/labour, he pointed out. Drought tolerance studies have revealed that tolerance to moisture stress is also significant in this variety, he said.

Apart from being root-wilt resistant, Kalpasree's "oil has better cooking quality and is healthier compared to West Coast Tall (WCT) oil... data on fatty acid profile reveals that Kalpasree is rich in long chain unsaturated fatty acids (LUFA's) compared to WCT and COD (Chowghat Orange Dwarf)."

"Besides, tender nut water and it's meat is sweeter compared to other varieties," he said.

This variety bears fruit early too. Being a dwarf variety harvesting is easy. "SSR (simple sequence repeat) analysis shows that Kalpasree population in the disease hotspots is uniform. Therefore, huge demand for its seedlings from farmers in the root-wilt diseased tract comes to us," Dr V. Krishnakumar, Senior Scientist, said.

The commercial advantage of Kalparaksha is that its tender nut water is sweet and abundant, therefore, it can be cultivated on a large scale for tender nut water, he said. Moreover, he said, it is semi-tall in nature, hence climbing for harvesting will be easy, reducing the cost of cultivation.

Integrated approach

Experts say though the seedlings of these three varieties can be used for planting in disease-prevalent tracts, integrated management practices will be followed in endemic areas to improve health of palms and sustain productivity.

"Raising different kind of crops in the coconut garden as inter-/mixed crop will help to meet the nutritional requirement of farm families and also to earn additional income for the farmer. It also provides sufficient quantity of organic biomass for recycling to partly meet the nutritional requirement of coconut and component crops," Dr Krishnakumar said.

Suitable crop rotations will also be followed while cultivating annual crops in the garden.

A variety of crops can be cultivated as inter-/mixed in the coconut gardens without affecting the yield of coconut. Tuber crops such as cassava, elephant foot yam, colocasia, other greater and lesser yams, vegetables; annual crops such as ginger, turmeric; perennials like black pepper, nutmeg, and fruit crops, viz., banana, pineapple and papaya can be cultivated.

In fact, cultivating crops having different stature and rooting pattern in the same field ensures effective utilisation of natural resources such as land, water, light and space and provides biomass for recycling and gives maximum returns.

It will not only ensure regular returns to the farmers but also provide more employment for their families.

Since coconut palm is prone to infestation by a large number of pests, an effective pest management system has to be adopted, Dr Jacob and Dr Krishnakumar said.

They said that lack of continuity and consistency in implementing integrated pest management and other farm management practices is mainly responsible for the prevalence of diseases, pest attacks and consequent low yield in the State. Coconut is grown as a homestead crop, hence, by and large, it is neglected, they said, adding, if grown as a plantation crop with high yielding drought- and disease-resistant varieties and strictly adhering to good farm management practices, the yield would increase, besides becoming economically viable.

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Back A rubbery issue

KG Kumar

Close on the heels of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, from

October 18 to 29, comes the rather disturbing news that Kerala (along with Maharashtra) will be the sites for limited-scale field trials of genetically modified (GM) rubber plants.

According to the environmental non-governmental organisation, Thanal, this move goes against the recommendations of the 2004 Task Force on Application of Biotechnology in Agriculture, chaired by eminent agricultural scientist Dr M.S. Swaminathan. The Task Force had recommended that agro-biodiversity hotspots such as the Western Ghats region should be kept GM-free.

Thanal also recalls that the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) had recently backtracked field trials for Bt Brinjal, which would have been the first GM vegetable in India. The Union Environment Minister, Mr Jairam Ramesh, had himself acknowledged public fears over Bt Brinjal. Kerala, says Thanal, led the nation-wide protests over BT Brinjal and it was the only State that sent an official delegation for the public consultations in Bangalore in February, 2010.

Para rubber tree trial

At its 104th meeting on November 15, the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), constituted under the MoEF, considered the request of the Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII), Kottayam, for permission to conduct Biosafety Research Level-1 (BRL-1) trial of Para Rubber Tree (*Hevea brasiliensis*) on two transgenic events (lines developed using the same gene construct in the same species and variety) containing manganese superoxide dismutase gene (cDNA).

Trials will be conducted at two locations, namely, Dapchari, Thane, and Chethackal, Thombikandom, Kerala, in an area of 0.4 ha.

According to a recent report in *The Hindu*, the Rubber Board of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, which oversees the RRII, defended its research programmes as “being essential to protect the interests of Indian cultivators, in the face of considerable progress made by countries such as China, Indonesia and Malaysia in aiding genetic transformation of rubber plants. There was no proposal to cultivate GM rubber on a commercial basis.”

However, in view of the global fears long expressed by scientists and environmentalists

over the potential hazards of GM crops for biodiversity, soil characteristics, agricultural practices and ecosystem integrity, it would perhaps be prudent to tread warily on the GM path.

Maintaining biodiversity – which refers to the wealth of ecosystems in the biosphere, of species within ecosystems, and of genetic information within populations – is necessary to preserve the health and survival of an ecosystem.

Only by sustaining the variability among organisms on Earth and within an ecosystem can the totality of genes, species, and ecosystems in a region or in the world be preserved and allowed to flourish for future generations.

Nagoya Protocol

At the recent Nagoya Biodiversity Summit of the CBD, governments agreed on a package of measures that will ensure that the ecosystems of the planet will continue to sustain human well-being into the future.

The historic agreement called the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilisation creates a framework that balances access to genetic resources on the basis of prior informed consent and mutually agreed terms with the fair and equitable sharing of benefits, while taking into account the important role of traditional knowledge.

In view of the growing threats to biodiversity and ecosystems around the world – also from GM crops and genetically engineered (GE) animals such as salmon for human consumption – it would be crucial to go by the Nagoya Protocol's call for “prior informed consent, mutually agreed terms and fair and equitable sharing of benefits.”

Field trials of GM rubber in India ought to be subject to greater scrutiny keeping in mind the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources.

The writer can be contacted at kgkumar@gmail.com

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Back Pepper futures decline on high volatility

G.K. Nair

Kochi, Dec. 8

Pepper futures on Wednesday dropped marginally after high volatility due to the “tug of war” between the bull and bear operators.

It gives the impression that bear operators, who are able to influence the international market, are in the driving seat, market sources told Business Line.

Not much activity took place because of the high fluctuation; neither the sellers were able to sell nor the buyers able to buy.

“In fact, it is not a good sign as the market has become the platform to exhibit the strength of both the bulls and bears,” they said adding the market does not seem to be following the fundamentals.

Sellers were offering farm grade pepper at Rs 10 below the December delivery price but buyers were demanding a discount of Rs 12 a kg.

Meanwhile, dealers who were holding low bulk density pepper for a long time were trying to liquidate their stocks at Rs 210 a kg but buyers were quoting only Rs 207 a kg. Hence no trading took place.

Rains in the southern districts of Kerala, where harvesting used to take place first, are going to delay arrivals of the new pepper from this region. The wet conditions are also making it difficult to dry the pepper, growers said.

December contract on the NCDEX dropped Rs 88 to close at Rs 22,416 a quintal. January and February fell by Rs 71 and Rs 66 respectively to close at Rs 22,657 and Rs 22,833 a quintal.

Total turnover fell by 1,489 tonnes to 6,691 tonnes. Total open interest moved up by 88 tonnes to 15,152 tonnes.

Open interest for December dropped by 275 tonnes to 8,305 tonnes while January and February increased by 358 tonnes and 19 tonnes respectively to 5,964 tonnes and 439 tonnes showing switching over and additional buying, they said.

Spot prices in the absence of activities remained unchanged at Rs 21,000 (ungarbled) and Rs 21,500 (MG 1) a quintal. Indian parity today was at \$5,175 - \$5,200 a tonne (c&f) and remained nearly competitive, they said.

Tight supply, coupled with change in exchange rates prices for Brazilian pepper was firmer today, according to a report.

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Back Groundnut arrivals steady in North Karnataka

Anil Urs

Hubli, Dec. 8

Kharif grown groundnut arrivals have been steady in north Karnataka.

Daily arrival is ranging between 100 and 200 quintals in the key markets.

In November, groundnut arrival in Bagalkot was three quintals - average price Rs 1,810 a quintal, Gadag 1,121.4 quintals - Rs 3,592.76, Hubli 2,107 quintals - Rs 3,157.99 and Raichur 65.5 quintals - Rs 2,367.85.

Due to good rains during September–October, groundnut yield in north Karnataka region is touching 45-48 quintals a hectare. But, untimely rains during harvest, have affected the quality of the product.

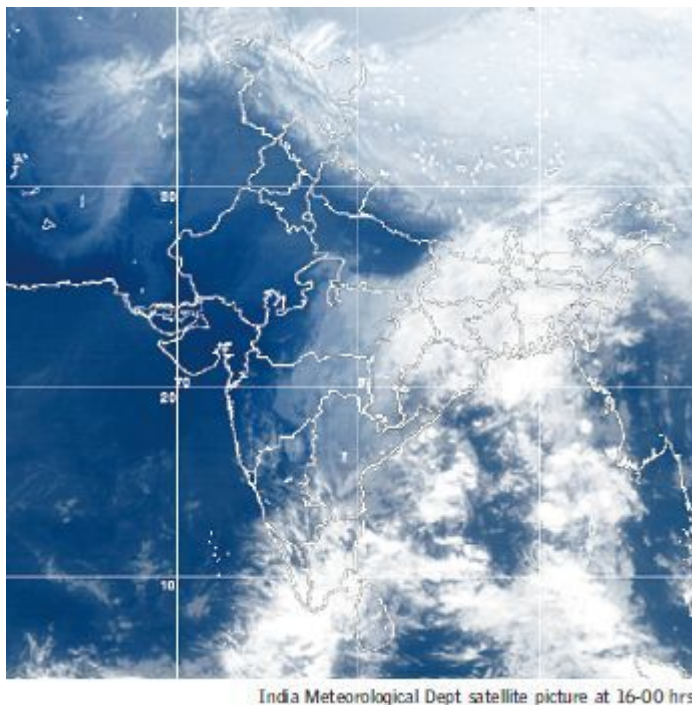
According to trade sources, due to low arrivals, prices are ruling steady between Rs 2,600

and Rs 3,500 a quintal and it is expected to come down marginally as arrivals pick up. Price forecasts by the Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (Demic) of Agri-Business Management, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, groundnut prices are expected to rule around Rs 2,800-3,100 a quintal from December to February months in Raichur market. The minimum support price (MSP) announced by the Central Government for this year is Rs 2,300 a quintal. Keeping this in mind, Demic has advised farmers to hold their produce and then sell only in January or February for better price realisation.

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Back Rains head North-East as depression crosses coast



Vinson Kurian

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec. 8

The monsoon depression over Southwest Bay Bengal crossed the Andhra Pradesh coast on Wednesday morning and weakened as a well-marked low-pressure area by the

evening.

Weakening

The system has not undergone further weakening, and has been attracting flows from even the Arabian Sea, pre-empting the formation of a counterpart system there.

But a trough of low pressure along the West Coast and circumnavigating the peninsular tip connecting with the well-marked 'low' was very much in evidence.

Forecast of wind pattern suggests that southwesterly winds will continue to hold centre-stage over much of the Arabian Sea, Peninsular India and even the Bay of Bengal.

This would lead to a gradual drying up of conditions from Saturday onwards, although some models indicate return to life of easterly wave activity from the week beginning December 16.

But, models tracking the movement of weather-setting Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) wave, do not see an active wet phase returning before the year-end.

The MJO wave transits in alternating dry and wet phases from west to east across the Indian Ocean and has implications for ground-level weather over the peninsular seas.

In fact, a strong dry phase of the MJO wave is being forecast to set in from early next week, denying an external prop for prospective rain-bearing systems in the region, easterly waves included.

Meanwhile, the cross-over of the depression over the Andhra Pradesh coast and its immediate aftermath saw southwesterly winds set up a vigorous band of rain clouds all the way from Southeast Arabian Sea.

They dumped very heavy to exceptionally heavy rains from early morning into late afternoon on Wednesday over extreme south peninsula, leading to flooding conditions in many parts of the region.

Meanwhile, widespread rainfall was also reported from Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Coastal

Andhra Pradesh to coincide with the cross-over of the depression.

It was fairly widespread over Telangana and Rayalaseema, isolated over Madhya Maharashtra and scattered over East Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Vidarbha and Tamil Nadu.

The rain bands extended as far north-northeast as the Northeastern States, Bihar, Gangetic West Bengal to trigger isolated rains in those areas.

An IMD warning valid for Thursday said that isolated heavy rainfall would occur over Orissa, North coastal Andhra Pradesh and the coastal areas of Gangetic West Bengal.

Insat satellite imagery showed the presence of convective (rain-bearing) clouds over parts of Bay of Bengal, Andaman Sea, Comorin area, Southeast Arabian Sea, Gangetic West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, South Kerala and South Tamil Nadu.

A short-term outlook said that fairly widespread rain or thundershowers would occur over Jharkhand, Gangetic West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar Islands on Thursday.

Scattered rain or thundershowers have been forecast over Bihar, Northeastern States, Vidarbha, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema and South Interior Karnataka.

There is the possibility of a slight fall in minimum temperatures over parts of Northwest and adjoining Central India from Thursday. Fog to shallow fog conditions may occur over parts of plains of Northwest India mainly during the morning hours.

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Back Chana recovers on back of better futures

Indore, Dec. 8

Chana continued to trade lower on Wednesday morning due to limited demand at mill level. However, in the evening it recovered the losses with rise in chana futures. Chana in

the morning was quoted at Rs 2,325-Rs 2,330 a quintal due to weak demand at mill level but it recovered the losses by the evening with rise in chana futures at the NCDEX and was quoted at Rs 2,350 a quintal.

At the NCDEX, chana futures which were being traded lower, recovered towards the end on lower stock levels and good marriage season demand from the millers and retailers. At the NCDEX, chana December and January contracts closed higher at Rs 2,494 and Rs 2,556 a quintal.

According to a chana trader, bearish sentiments in chana was primarily based on stockists' rumour about arrival of good quality of imported chana from Australia. However, the rumour turned out to be fake as imported Australian chana was found to be of poor quality. As there were no takers for this quality Australian chana, its prices declined in the market. However, on Wednesday, chana market was found to be in recovery mode and it gained Rs 25 from the previous days.

The acreage of chana at all-India level is down by 2.97 per cent, but it is likely to recover on good weather condition. On the other hand, with sluggish demand in domestic and export market, Dollar chana remained steady at Rs 4,400-Rs 4,600 a quintal, while prices of the container quality of dollar chana (42/44 count) were quoted at Rs 4,800-Rs 5,050 a quintal. Arrival of dollar chana in Indore mandis was recorded at 1,500-2,000 bags. In the wake of recent unseasonal rains in the State, prospect of dollar chana production appears to be sluggish as rains have affected the crops in some parts of the State and farmers have switched to wheat crops.

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Back Turmeric farmers have a field day

Our Correspondent

Erode, Dec. 8

“2010 is the year of turmeric farmers, as they are the deciding authority now. They bring

very limited turmeric for sale to the market, though they are getting attractive price for the commodity,” said Mr R.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said, “Forty-five days more for arrival of new turmeric crop to the market. Now, the farmers are having more than four lakh bags of turmeric with them. They are liquidating the commodity gradually and selling them at good price now.

“The North Indian turmeric traders depend on Erode turmeric market now, as there was no stock in other places in India. The arrival is decreasing for the past three days, whereas the price has increased slightly. On Wednesday, the price has increased by Rs 200 a quintal. Though the arrivals and sales were very limited, comparatively higher than last year during this corresponding period.”

The present price will remain till end of next week, he hoped. The futures was quoted less than Rs 15,000 a quintal on Wednesday, the spot turmeric price has not appreciated for want of demand.

On Wednesday, in the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, finger variety was sold at Rs 9,413 to Rs 16,149 a quintal, root variety Rs 9,113 to Rs 15,900 a quintal. Both arrival and sales were very limited.

In Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, finger variety was sold at Rs 15,556 to Rs 16,100 a quintal, root variety Rs 15,756 to Rs 15,855 a quintal. All the 46 bags kept for sale were sold.

In Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, finger variety was sold at Rs 14,009 to Rs 16,239 a quintal, root variety Rs 14,990 to Rs 16,069 a quintal. Out of arrival of 230 bags, 171 bags were sold.

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<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2010/12/09/stories/2010120951891700.htm>

[Back](#) Firm trend prevails in sugar

Our Correspondent

Mumbai, Dec 8

Sugar prices at Vashi market on Wednesday showed a firm trend. Spot rates were expected higher by Rs 10-15 on the back of higher price at naka and tender rates. Vashi spot market remained closed after initial opening, because of the demise of a leading wholesale broker Mr Vipul Harakhchand Mehta of Vipul and Co.

Arrivals were as usual, but dispatches to local buyers did not take place, said sources of Bombay Sugar Merchants Association.

Naka and mill delivery tender rates continue to rise further by Rs 5-10 a quintal. Neighbouring State's rakes buying encouraged bullish sentiment in the market.

Active volume continues at mill level and naka delivery trade.

On Tuesday evening, about 12-13 mills came forward with tender offer and sold about one lakh bags (each of 100 kg.) sugar to local and State-level traders. One rail rake (27,000 bags - each of 100 kg) trade also took place. Mills sold sugar at the rate of Rs 2780-2,820 for S grade and Rs 2,800-2,850 for M grade. At local level, there was no resale selling pressure. Total arrivals at Vashi markets were about 43-45 truck loads (each of 10 tonnes) and dispatches to local dealers could not take place because of the Bandh. Sugar Naka delivery rates were quoted at S grade Rs 2,860-2,890 (Rs 2,850-2,890) and M grade was Rs 2,900-2,950 (Rs 2,890-2,940).

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Back Rubber improves on dull volumes

Aravindankottayam, Dec. 8

Physical rubber prices turned better on Wednesday. The market seemed to be reacting to the unexpected and unseasonal rains during the last 16 hours.

Moderate gains in Bangkok spot rates catalysed the sentiments considerably discounting the slight weakness in domestic futures. The volumes were dull.

Sheet rubber improved to Rs 198 from Rs 197.50 a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, according to the Dealers and Rubber Board.

RSS-4 slipped at its December series to Rs 198 (Rs 198.96), January to Rs 201.50 (Rs 202.02), February to Rs 205.11 (Rs 205.97) and March to Rs 208.68 (Rs 209.44) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

The volumes totalled 6,140 lots and open interest 6,688 lots. The turnover was Rs 125.02 crore.

The December futures for RSS-3 increased marginally to Rs 369.3 (198.44) from Rs 368.5 a kg during the day session but then remained inactive in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange (TOCOM). RSS-3 (spot) flared up to Rs 205.18 (202.70) a kg at Bangkok.

The spot rubber rates per kg follow: RSS-4 Rs 198 (197.50), RSS-5 Rs 188 (187.50), Ungraded Rs 183 (182), ISNR 20 Rs 191 (190.50), and Latex 60 per cent Rs 128 (128).

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Back Coonoor tea auction volume at 14-week high

P.S. Sundar

Coonoor, Dec. 8

A volume of 12.97 lakh kg will be offered for Sale No: 49 of the auctions of Coonoor Tea Trade Association to be conducted on Thursday and Friday, reveals an analysis of the listing by brokers.

This is the largest volume of the past 14 weeks. It is 58,000 kg more than last week's offer and 50,000 kg more than the offer this time last year.

Of the 12.97 lakh kg on offer, nine lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 3.97 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades. As much as 12.18 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only

0.79 lakh kg, orthodox variety. The proportion of orthodox teas continues to be low in both the leaf and dust grades. In the leaf counter, only 0.35 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 8.65 lakh kg, CTC.

Among the dusts, only 0.44 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 3.53 lakh kg, CTC.

In the 12.97 lakh kg on offer, fresh tea accounts for 11.51 lakh kg. As much as 1.46 lakh kg comprises teas remaining unsold in previous auctions. Quality teas continue to fetch good bids.

“This week, two of our grades – Pekoe Dust (PD) and Super Fine Dust (SFD) – fetched Rs 136 a kg each – the highest price among all teas of bought-leaf factories this week. In all, our seven grades got Rs 120 and more,” Vigneshwar Managing Partner, Mr Ramesh Bhojarajan, said.

In the leaf market, Homedale Estate, auctioned by Global Tea Brokers, got the highest price of Rs 132.

Date:09/12/2010 URL:

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2010/12/09/stories/2010120952091900.htm>

Back Gujarat announces 'pro-farmer'policy

Ahmedabad, Dec. 8

The Gujarat Government today announced a farmer-friendly policy for acquisition of land for the newly proposed industrial estates, envisaging, among other things, market price for their land and sponsored industrial training for a member of each of the families consenting to give their land. Landowners consenting to part with their entire landholding will also be entitled to one-time financial assistance equivalent to 750 days of minimum agricultural wages for loss of livelihood, to the tune of Rs 75,000.

Date:09/12/2010 URL:

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2010/12/09/stories/2010120952211900.htm>

Back Oil merchants upset over hike in copra MSP

Kochi, Dec. 8

The Cochin Oil Merchants Association has said that the decision to hike the support price of mill copra at Rs 4,525 by increasing the price by Rs 75/quintal is highly disappointing. The Association in a release issued here requested the Government to re-examine the support price and ensure that coconut farmers get a fair price. According to the present support price, a farmer gets only Rs 6 a coconut. At least 750 coconuts are required to get a quintal of dry copra.

Date:09/12/2010 URL:

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2010/12/09/stories/2010120953001800.htm>

Back Thrissur to host national rabi conference

Our Bureau

Kochi, Dec. 8

The Agricultural Market Intelligence Centre (AMIC) of Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) will host the all-India Rabi conference from December 20 to 23 at Thrissur.

The workshop will be inaugurated by Mr K. R.Viswambharan, Vice-Chancellor, Kerala Agricultural University, on December 21. Dr T.R. Gopalakrishnan, Director of Research, KAU will preside over the function.

The consortium on Agriculture Market Intelligence came into being on June 27, 2009, with the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore as the Lead Centre and 10 prominent State agricultural universities, including KAU, as the collaborating partners under the National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP). The objective is to provide market intelligence to farmers on production and marketing decisions as majority of them today

lack good understanding and capacity to use market intelligence.

The agricultural market environment is changing with unprecedented speed and in very diverse ways – locally and globally. These dynamics affect farm prices and, thereby, farm income. The majority of the rural farmers are unable to understand and interpret the market and price behaviour to their advantages. Thus, market information and intelligence are crucial to enable farmers and traders make informed decisions about what to grow, when to harvest and sell, and where to sell.

It is a World Bank-assisted project, implemented by the Government of India through the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). The network has made significant progress during the last one year of its existence, with notable price forecasts on major crops grown in India, benefiting the farming community across the country immensely. .

The dedication of the AMIC KAU portal incorporating price forecasts, validations, updates and all possible links with agricultural marketing institutions will also be carried out at the three-day conference by Mr M. Moni, Deputy Director-General, National Informatics Centre, New Delhi. The release of the Impact Study Report prepared by AMIC KAU on the cardamom price forecasts will be made during the occasion.

Dr N.Ajjan from the Lead Centre, TNAU and Prof N. Raveendran, National Consultant, NAIP will receive mementos for leading the project.

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Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Cloudy

Thursday, Dec 9

Max Min

31.3° | 20°

Rain: 36 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 70%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: null

Sunset: null

Barometer: 1003.0

Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

Friday, Dec 10

Max Min

31° | 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday

Dec 11



28° | 24°

Rainy

Sunday

Dec 12



29° | 24°

Rainy

Monday

Dec 13



28° | 24°

Rainy

Tuesday

Dec 14



28° | 23°

Rainy

Wednesday

Dec 15



26° | 24°

Rainy