

## **Scheme for women agriculturists planned**

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The Union government intends to launch by January end a scheme aimed at improving the status of women as agriculturists and open up opportunities for their empowerment.

The scheme, to be taken up by the Ministry of Rural Development, has been named Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP). It will be launched as a sub-component of the renamed, but yet to be launched, National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), which was earlier known as Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY). The scheme hopes to meet the needs of women farmers, who predominantly come under the small and marginal farmer categories. Its objective is to achieve socio-economic and technical empowerment of rural woman farmers. A sum of Rs. 100 crore has been allocated for implementing the MKSP in the initial stages.

The MKSP will serve as a mechanism that will help women access extension services and production assets such as seed, water, credit, and subsidy. At present, they are not considered beneficiaries of various government programmes as they are not recognised as farmers for want of ownership of land.

The programme provides for systematic investments to enhance their participation and productivity and, at the same time, create and sustain agriculture-based livelihoods of rural women.

## Rs. 1.91 crore for watershed project

Special Correspondent

*To provide irrigational facility to an estimated 17,452 hectares, says Collector*



**spot check:M. Vijayakumar, third from right, Collector, inspecting the vermi compost production process at Alampadi near Perambalur.**

PERAMBALUR: A sum of Rs.1.91 crore has been sanctioned under the integrated watershed management programme (IWMP) for stepping up the ground water level and for ensuring maximum utilisation of rain water for irrigation.

The management plan would provide irrigational facility to an estimated 17,452 hectares, said Collector M. Vijayakumar.

Speaking to presspersons at the end of a tour of villages where agricultural activities have been taken up under various schemes, the Collector said under IWMP about 25 watershed units would be set up – eight in Veppanthattai block with a maximum area of 7,400 hectares; seven in Alathur block covering 4,900 hectares and 10 in Perambalur block benefiting 5,152 hectares.

The Collector said works on maintenance of supply channels, clearing of silt from drainage channels and construction of check-dams would be taken up under the IWMP. Watershed committees would be set up in each unit covering an average area of 500 hectares.

He said the watershed committees had already been constituted in Perambalur block while steps were being taken in other blocks.

Preliminary works associated with entry point activities would be taken up at an expenditure of Rs.24 lakh.

Earlier, the Collector inspected the paddy cultivation under 'Rajarajan 1000' technique; demonstration plots where black gram and maize have been cultivated under the irrigated agriculture modernisation and water resources management project (IAM WARM).

R. Reghunathan, Joint Director of Agriculture, said farmers were being trained in vermi compost production under the National Agriculture Development Programme.

Pandian, a farmer, had set up vermi compost unit at Alampadi village, earning a monthly income of Rs.8,000.

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### **Agricultural college releases bio control agent to fight mealy bug**

S.Ganesan



**debugging: Crop protection scientists from the Anbil Dharmalingam Agricultural College and Research Institute, at a papaya mealy bug parasitoid release campaign, in Tiruchi on Wednesday.**

TIRUCHI: Farmers who have been plagued by the severe and large scale mealy bug attack in mulberry, tapioca, and other crops could heave a sigh of relief as the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University's (TNAU) Anbil Dharmalingam Agricultural College and Research Institute at Navalpattu near Tiruchi has started releasing a new bio-control agent to wipe out the bug.

TNAU, Coimbatore, has partnered with the National Bureau of Agriculturally Important Insects (NBAII), Bangalore, to introduce three parasitoids, the bio-control agents. NBAII has imported three species of the parasitoids with the help of the United States Department of Agriculture, according to V.Jayabal, Dean, Anbil Dharmalingam Agricultural College and Research Institute (ADARC).

The parasitoids, *acerophagus papaya*, *pseudleptomastix Mexicana* and *anagyrus loeckii*, were already multiplied by the TNAU, Coimbatore, and released by the Agriculture Minister Veerapandi Arumugam last month.

The mealy bug, commonly referred to as papaya mealy bug (*paracoccus marginatus*), originally introduced from Mexico, was prevalent in Tiruchi, Coimbatore, Tirupur, Namakkal, Erode, Karur and Perambalur.

The bug had caused severe damage and yield loss in tapioca, papaya, mulberry, jatropha, cotton, sunflower, gingelly, vegetable and fruits in the districts. The pest attack was virulent during the summer.

With the recommended chemical pesticides failing to produce the desired result, the TNAU had launched the partnership venture with NBAII. Farmers of Tiruchi region, especially tapioca growers, have been badly affected by the bug attack and demanding effective measures and compensation for the damage caused.

According to TNAU scientists, the bug has caused extensive damage in mulberry. On Tuesday, scientists from the ADARC in the presence of Agriculture and Sericulture Department officials released the parasitoids in three places – at the Government Sericulture Farm at Manikandam and at a couple of farmers fields at Pallakadu near Allithurai and Thoppampatti near Manapparai. G.Gajendran, Head, Crop Protection, and V.R.Saminathan, Assistant Professor, Entomology, ADARC, explained to farmers bio-control method.

Speaking to The Hindu, Dr.Gajendran said the minute parasites offered an effective and cent per cent safe method to control the mealy bug. The parasitoids would lay large number of eggs on the mealy bugs and kill the bugs. It was enough to release the parasitoids in small numbers in the villages as they would multiply naturally and spread quickly.

“We expect very good results by the next season. The mealy bug attack is expected to come down during the rainy season. With the gradual release of the parasitoids, the problem will be overcome completely next season,” Dr.Gajendran said.

Scientists of all TNAU colleges, research institutions and Krishi Vigyan Kendras have been already been trained and multiplication of the parasitoids were underway in various institutions. The institutions would start releasing the parasitoids locally in the coming days.

The ADARC was also now into mass production of the parasitoids and they would released in more villages in the next one month, with the affected villages getting priority.

The parasitoids would be available to farmers on demand within the next two to three months, he added.

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### **'Re-conduct survey on crop damage'**

Correspondent

*The previous one was done two months ago: Deshpande*

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*He refuses to comment on Anand Asnotikar's future political move*

*Development has taken a back seat in the State, says the Congress leader*

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Karwar: R.V. Deshpande, former president of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee, on Tuesday refused to comment on the former Minister Anand Asnotikar's rejoining the party.

Addressing presspersons here, Mr. Deshpande said it was not proper to comment on Mr. Asnotikar's future political move at this juncture because the latter himself had said that he was still with the BJP. Coming down heavily on the State Government, Mr. Deshpande said development had taken a back seat in the State as the Ministers were busy with corruption.

Denied

Mr. Deshpande said his son, Prashant, who is a KPCC member, was still active in the party and denied the allegation that he was staying away from party activities.

He demanded that the Government re-conduct the survey on crop damage, as the previous one was done two months ago, but there was heavy rainfall in the last one month.

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## Farmers destroy transgenic rice

Staff Reporter

*Incident occurred on Krishi Vignan Kendra premises in Doddaballapur taluk*

— Photo: Bhagya Prakash K.



**Wanton destruction:**Farmers go about destroying the rice crop at Hadonahalli in Doddaballapur taluk on Wednesday.

BANGALORE: A transgenic rice variety, currently under trials at the Krishi Vignan Kendra of the University of Agriculture Sciences (UAS) in Doddaballapur taluk, near here, was destroyed by farmers on Wednesday.

A group of sickle-wielding farmers, owing allegiance to the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS), barged into the 30-acre KVK premises at Hadonahalli, where the hybrid rice Seed Production Technology (SPT) developed by DuPont is undergoing 'event selection trials' on a one-acre area, and committed the act.

About 30 activists entered the fenced one-acre area around 8.40 a.m., and destroyed the crop in about an hour's time before the Doddaballapur Rural police arrested them.

75 p.c. loss

An official at KVK estimated that the farmers destroyed about 75 per cent of the crop. Following the incident, the UAS has decided to destroy the remaining crop and cancel the field trial.

"The UAS has undertaken the trial clandestinely, and farmers in the neighbourhood have been kept in the dark.

"We will not allow field trials of transgenic crops developed by multinational companies in our area," KRRS leader and veterinarian C.S. Srinivas, told The Hindu. For, there is always a fear of contamination, he said.

The event selection trials have been approved by the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee

According to a Greenpeace activist, SPT technology is a proprietary technology of DuPont that allows increase of large quantities of genetically male sterile female inbred parent seed.

A top UAS official said that the project came to the university through Union Department of Biotechnology for a period of one year, and that the university was only a facilitator and regulator of bio-safety on field.

"It is unfortunate that the incident took place when the paddy was ready for harvesting over the next 7 to 10 days."

Display boards put up at the field on information about the trials said that the paddy had been sown between July 20 and July 23, and transplanted on August 12.

The duration of the crop is 140 days.

The trial is being monitored by Head, Department of Genetics and Plant Breeding at UAS Shailaja Hittalmani, while N. Rajanna is the Programme Coordinator.

A few farmers owning land in close proximity to the research station also said that they had been asked not to grow paddy during this season.

“I normally grow paddy, but the university authorities asked me not to raise paddy crop this season. We were not told the reason,” N. Srinivas, who owns two acres adjoining the KVK, said and added that the authorities had informed about the possible crossing if he raised paddy during this season.

Meanwhile, vice-president fo the KRRS Venkata Reddy said that the genetically modified rice field trials had major violations and that the local panchayat was not informed. Though the Hadonahalli Gram Panchayat president H.A. Nagaraju acknowledged that information of the field trials had not been given to the panchayat, he, however, said KVK had benefited farmers in the vicinity. Sixteen farmers who were arrested on charges of trespassing and destruction of property were later released on bail.

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### **Farmers' learning conference at Bodinayakanur on Saturday**

Shastry V. Mallady

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*It is a prelude to Pan-Commonwealth Forum conference to be held at Kochi*

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MADURAI: A huge conference of self-help groups and farmers is being organised at Bodinayakanur in Theni district on November 20 under the auspices of Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and Vidiyal, a non-governmental organisation engaged in capacity building initiatives among farmers.

The conference, which will have participation of various universities, including the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), is expected to be attended by over 5,000 farmers/agricultural labourers from Madurai, Dindigul and Theni districts, besides participants from various Asian and African nations.

Sir John Daniel, President and CEO, Commonwealth of Learning, Canada, is among the top officials coming for the conference.

M. Shanmugham, Regional Director, IGNOU Regional Centre- Madurai, told The Hindu on Wednesday that the conference at Bodi was a prelude to the Pan-Commonwealth Forum conference to be held at Kochi from November 24 to 28.

“The IGNOU is hosting the Kochi conference with around 1,000 international participants from different countries. Focus of the conference is on open and distance learning and extension activities,” Dr. Shanmugham informed. According to K. Kamaraj, founder, Vidiyal, there has been sea change in the lives of farmers ever since the NGO started implementing learning models for the farmers.

“We are working since 1994 in this sphere. Panchayat-level federation has been active through a focused forum called Vidi Velli,” he said and added that information/learning based on mobile phones had been very successful. For the past five years, COL has been focusing on using open and distance learning in developmental processes, particularly in agriculture sector and women microfinance.

Mr. Kamaraj explained that information and communication technology was being used to strengthen learning process among farmers/SHG members and create linkage between stakeholders. The COL organises Pan-Commonwealth Forum once in two years by bringing professionals and practitioners of distance learning from various Commonwealth countries to discuss the roadmap for strengthening distance learning.

The last conference took place in London in 2008 and this time it is taking place at Kochi. Representatives from banking sector and financial institutions also are attending the farmers' conference at Bodi.

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## FARMER'S NOTEBOOK

### Tackling major environmental problems caused by human activities

M.J. PRABU

Lokkere is a tiny hamlet bordering the Bandipur tiger reserve forest

— Photo: Special Arrangement



**Buffer zones: Junglescapes volunteers at an interaction with the village residents.**

For the nearly 25 families living in Lokkere on the eastern fringes of the Bandipur tiger reserve in Karnataka life is difficult.

Elephants and wild boar often raid the crops they cultivate on tiny strips of land, and an entire season's hard work gets wiped out in one night.

“Life is equally hard for the wildlife in this region. The thick forests that existed 30 years ago are reduced to sparsely vegetated scrubland, thanks to excessive cattle grazing.

“The animals are losing their habitats in a world that seems ever shrinking for them. Here one can visibly see that the lush dense forest thins out into scrublands adjoining the national park,” says Mr. Ramesh Venkataraman, managing trustee, Junglescapes Charitable Trust, Bangalore.

### Fragile zone

The Lokkere hamlet lies in an ecologically fragile zone, close to a vital migratory corridor connecting the Western and Eastern Ghats.

Thousands of elephants use this route every summer to migrate from the parched Bandipur and Mudumalai national parks to water sources along the Cauvery river in the Eastern Ghats.

“Lokkere is just one example among many such remote and tiny hamlets bordering reserve forests. Protecting and restoring such buffer zones is therefore ecologically critical for both the local communities and the wildlife. These forests serve as a key buffer zone for tigers and act as natural rain water harvesters,” says Mr. Venkataraman. At present Junglescapes works on sustainable wildlife conservation ideas that involve and benefit the local communities.

“Over the last four years, we and the local communities in this area are working to create eco-friendly livelihoods, so that the people take care of the forests and in turn benefit economically from such ecological stewardship.

“Such community-based initiatives include afforestation, seedling nurseries, community-run nature camps and training of local youth in activities such as bird watching and lantana furniture making.

### Rapport building

“Apart from funding, the group frequently visits Lokkere to interact and built rapport with the local communities,” explains Mr. Venkataraman.

Members from another NGO called GE volunteer group, also pitch for the afforestation projects.

“We are also exploring a pilot scale effort to nurture saplings in their own backyards and kitchen balconies. Afforestation in addition to saving rain water also increases the height of the water table.

“In areas where afforestation is being done, water can be found at the depth of 6-10 feet but in other areas even at a depth of 250 feet it becomes hard to find it,” says a volunteer Mr. K. Anand.

#### Income

A 50-acre afforestation means infusion of around Rs 3 lakh into the local economy in terms of work in growing seedlings, digging irrigation trenches and planting saplings.

The ecological benefits of course are immense. The fragile migratory corridor would get greener, according to Mr. Venkataraman.

Junglescapes also pioneers the use of the smokeless eco-chulha designed by Philips as part of an initiative titled 'Philanthropy by Design'. These chulhas are a boon for women and consume almost two-thirds less firewood, so each chulha saves at least two trees every year. More importantly, they run almost entirely on lantana (rapidly growing weed).

#### Conflict reduced

“Forest forays for firewood collection has come down and consequently human-animal conflicts greatly reduced. They are smokeless and help avoid ailments related to indoor pollution and reduced cooking time,” adds Mr. C.H. Satheesha, another GE volunteer.

Training has been given to villagers to fabricate the chulhas locally, thus providing an eco-friendly employment opportunity.

For details log on to [www.junglescapes.org](http://www.junglescapes.org) and the organization at C-3, Cedar crest, 1st cross, 10th main road, Bangalore- 560038, email: [bm.ragini@junglescapes.org](mailto:bm.ragini@junglescapes.org), phone: 080-25295788.

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#### Training programme on grassy weed managment

More production, need of the hour

The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Tindivanam in Villupuram District and the Salem branch of New Delhi based Dhanuka Agritech Limited organized a field day cum farmers training programme on grassy weeds management.

The training was on using Targa Super Herbicide (5 per cent EC Technology) on pulse crops.

Pulses, particularly such as blackgram are predominantly cultivated in Rabi season in Villupuram and Cuddalore Districts at KVK Tindivanam.

#### Field visits

Farmers were taken to the blackgram fields in the KVK farm and shown how the difference between herbicide sprayed field (to control grassy weeds), compared with the nearby unsprayed control, where the main blackgram crop was not visible due to heavy weed growth.

The farmers were informed about the various schemes and support given by the State Agriculture Department to increase pulses growing area and production to farmers.

“The need of the hour was to increase the per hectare productivity of pulses by adopting the crop improvement technologies developed by the University,” said Dr.N. Sathiah, Professor and Head, KVK .

#### Detailed information

A detailed information session about Targa super herbicide, dose per acre, mode of action, time and stages of application and recommended crops was also conducted for the them.

Clarifications regarding rain fastness, effects on succeeding crops and packing availability were done, followed by presentations on importance of seed treatment wetting agent, pest management and mechanisation in pulse crops.

More than 100 farmers from in and around Tindivanam participated in the training programme.

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FARM QUERY

### Preservation of sweet potato

Is there any method to preserve sweet potato?

R. Sachidanand

Bangalore

Farmers in the dryland areas of Tamil Nadu process the tubers of sweet potato by two methods for longer preservation.

i)They boil the tubers in water and cut it into small pieces and dry them under sun for 3-4 days. As a result the tubers become hard. The dried pieces are preserved in boiled salt solution for as long as a year or two and consumed as food during drought period.

ii)In the second method the tubers are cut without boiling them and the pieces are dried under sun for 3-4 days. In this method the tubers remain somewhat soft than in the previous case. Processed tubers are either consumed directly or preserved in boiled and cooled water. But in this method the tubers can be preserved for 3-4 months only. (Honeybee- vol2 (1), May 1991)

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## Weather

Chennai - INDIA

### Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Thursday, Nov 18

Max Min

25.8° | 24.6°

Rain: 47 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 94%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 6:07

Sunset: 17:39

Barometer: 1010.0

### Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

Friday, Nov 19

Max Min

27° | 23°

### Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday

Nov 20



28° | 26°

Rainy

Sunday

Nov 21



28° | 25°

Cloudy

Monday

Nov 22



28° | 24°

Rainy

Tuesday

Nov 23



27° | 25°

Rainy

Wednesday

Nov 24



27° | 25°

Rainy

# Business Standard

Thursday, Nov 18, 2010

## 'Spices will remain bullish for now'

**BS Reporter / Chennai/ Kochi November 18, 2010, 0:57 IST**

Prices of all major spices will continue in the upper circuit for the next 12-14 months owing to a supply crunch in major producing countries across the world, said Alan D Wilson, chairman, president and CEO of US-based McCormick.

Addressing the media here on Wednesday, he said the global demand for spices and spice-based products remained almost static, but production was affected leading to a shortage in the supply recently.

“Prices of major spices like pepper, cardamom and ginger will move upward in the short-term. Consumption in the US and European markets have increased despite the recession. According to the cyclical pattern of prices and production of spices, the market will be in a bull mode for short-to-medium-term,” he said.

McCormick, he said, was planning to expand the sale of Indian spices, flavours and spice-based products in the western markets. The company would source products from India and market them in various western countries under its brand names. The company sources 40 spices from India.

The company has bought 26 per cent in Eastern Condiments, a Kerala-based spice products manufacturer, for \$36 million. It plans to have similar tie-ups with other Indian companies to expand its business in the US, EU and India.

Though the Indian spices market is estimated to be \$5-5.5 billion, only 10 per cent is branded. “There is tremendous potential here,” he said.

Navas Meeran, vice chairman and managing director of Eastern, said the capacity expansion of plants was not an immediate strategy. The company would start new packing facilities at Guntur



in Andhra Pradesh and Ghaziabad (Haryana) for reaching out to upcountry markets in the north and south. It would also introduce various brands like Lawry's Club House, Schwartz, Ducros, Vahine and Aeroplane of McCormick in India for high-end consumers.

### **States failed to lift grains allocated to them**

**Komal Amit Gera / Chandigarh November 17, 2010, 14:06 IST**

The food distribution agencies of states across India have failed to lift the desired quantities of foodgrains under the additional allocation made for the Public Distribution System (PDS).

The Food Corporation of India (FCI) sought instructions from Government of India in September 2010 to offload an additional 2.5 million tonne for the PDS as a consequence of the reports about poor storage and rotting of grains in the various parts of the country. The allocation was further revised to 3.06 million tonnes. This constituted 1.68 million tonnes of wheat and 1.38 million tonnes of rice.

"The allocation was made on September 7 and we have been able to disburse 1.65 lakh tonne only. We need to take up the matter with the state agencies for the tepid response from their side. The additional allocation has to be exhausted by March 2011 but the pace of movement is not satisfactory," said Shiraj Hussain, CMD of FCI.

The states of Bihar, Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka have lifted small quantities of rice. Wheat has been lifted only by Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Bihar, Assam and Uttaranchal.

All the states are lagging behind the quota allocated to them.

The senior officials in the departments of Food and Civil Supplies in the states said, it was done for the first time at this scale and the supplies were done in batches so the grains could not be distributed consistently. Now, the Government of India has released the additional stock for next six months so this distribution would be streamlined.

The officials also apprised that the beneficiaries were not mobilised for the additional allocation that caused snags in distribution.

The government has also become flexible by incorporating the APL (above poverty line) families in the additional allocation, so this may help to expedite the distribution, said one of the official.

The procurement agencies want to offload the buffer stock earliest due to the shortfall of storage area.

The FCI officials apprised that they would have discussions with the officials in the food and supply departments of the states to arrange for the timely distribution of grains.

### **Coffee exports may exceed last year's figures**

**Debasis Mohapatra / Bangalore November 17, 2010, 0:52 IST**

High demand abroad, but a weak dollar may hurt realisations.

Coffee exports from India will exceed last year's figure, despite a possible downward revision of crop estimates for 2010-11, on the back of robust demand from importing countries.



India exported 204,174 tonnes coffee last year. The target this year is 210,000 tonnes.

"Coffee export may exceed this year's projection, on the back of sound demand," a top Coffee Board official said.

The Board is in the process of preparing output estimates for this crop year. Industry experts and planters feel there will be a 10-15 per cent fall, due to heavy rainfall this month in the major growing regions in November. "Still, this will be a good crop year as compared to last year," the official added.

Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Jyotiraditya M Scindia had told Parliament the government had issued permits for export of 184,372 tonnes, more than 80 per cent of the year's target.

October alone saw a 67 per cent rise in exports to 25,000 tonnes, against 15,000 tonnes exported last year in the period. "This year is expected to be a record crop year. Also, on the back of production shortfall in major countries like Brazil, Indian coffee will find more buyers in the international market," said A N Devraj, a Hyderabad-based trader. He said the picture would be clear after mid-January, after the arrival of the new crop.

Realisations, experts said, would be adversely affected by the weak dollar. It is currently Rs 44 to a dollar, putting pressure on the margin, said Devraj. International prices are at \$2.04 per pound from an earlier \$1.7 for the Arabica variety, with a similar rise for Robusta. Despite such high prices, domestic planters are not able to cash in on higher realisations due to the appreciating rupee.

However, some officials differ on output. "Exports will not exceed last year's figure, as production is expected to fall by 10-15 per cent due to untimely rain in Karnataka and adjoining growing regions," said Jabir Asghar, vice-chairman of the Coffee Board. Arabica production would fall, he said.

### **Cane crushing slows in Andhra, Karnataka after heavy rain**

**NewsWire18 / Mumbai November 17, 2010, 0:29 IST**



Crushing of sugarcane in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh is likely to slowdown on reduced supply to mills because of the recent heavy showers in some parts of the growing regions, industry officials said.

The recent heavy rain has hit sugarcane harvesting in many areas, leading to tight supply. Several parts of the states received heavy rainfall at the beginning of this month following low pressure over the Bay of Bengal, which also affected sowing of rabi crops, they said.

"Sugarcane harvest in northern parts of Karnataka might be halted for seven-eight days until the water recedes from fields," said Govinda Reddy, secretary, India Sugar Mills Association,

Karnataka. Currently, around 40 of the total 57 factories in Karnataka are operational, while the rest will start functioning by the end of this month, Reddy said.

Commencement of cane crushing by other mills in the state, however, will largely depend on the pace of harvest, he added. Karnataka is the third largest sugar producer after Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.

“Although, cane crushing might slow down for few days, there are no major concerns regarding the total sugar output from the state mainly because crop size is seen higher this year (October 2010-September 2011),” said Reddy.

Karnataka’s sugar production is seen rising 25 per cent this season to 3.2 million tonnes, with average recovery rate of around 10 per cent, Reddy said.

The state is expected to crush around 30 million tonnes sugar cane this season.

Reddy also said higher sugarcane supplies this year have prompted some mills to boost capacity, which in turn would lead to a rise in total sugar output.

In Andhra Pradesh, the situation is similar, with preliminary reports indicating 10,000-20,000 hectares under sugarcane cultivation was inundated.

“Torrential rain has affected the cane harvest at a time when mills have not even begun operations in full swing,” said R S Bhale Rao, secretary, South India Sugar Mills Association, Andhra Pradesh.

“Cane crushing in the state is likely to get delayed by another week as growers are waiting for fields to get dried in order to start cutting,” he said.

As of now, of the 34 mills in the state, only one-two have started operations, he added. Usually, sugar mills in Andhra Pradesh begin operations from the first week of November. However, total sugar production from the state is unlikely to be affected due to higher acreage and a good monsoon this season. According to the state’s agriculture department, kharif acreage increased to 191,000 hectares from 158,000 hectares last year.

Rao sees Andhra Pradesh's sugar output almost double from last season at 1 million tonnes, with cane output around 10 million tonnes. Rise in production is also because of rise in recovery rate to around 10 per cent from 9.3 per cent last season, Rao said.

### **Cotton output may beat estimate, cool prices**

**Bloomberg / November 17, 2010, 0:34 IST**

Cotton production in India, the world's second-biggest grower, may exceed an industry estimate after the heaviest monsoon rain in three years prompted farmers to plant a record area, likely tempering global prices.

Output in the year started October 1 may reach 35.7 million bales of 170 kilograms each, the Cotton Association of India said in an e-mailed statement on Tuesday. That compares with 34.45 million the group forecast in September and 32.55 million predicted by the nation's Cotton Advisory Board.



A bigger crop may help India ease restrictions on exports, likely pressuring a 78 per cent rally in global prices this year. Cotton reached \$1.5195 on November 10, the highest since trading began 140 years ago, as adverse weather damaged crops in China, Pakistan and the US.

"The crop looks promising this year," said Dhiren Sheth, president of the Cotton Association, a group of 400 growers, ginners, traders and exporters. "Though arrivals started late, they have caught up with figures of last year."

Futures for March delivery advanced as much as 3 per cent to \$1.382 a pound on ICE Futures US in New York on Tuesday.

Sales by farmers were 2.55 million bales as of October 31, the association said. Domestic demand may total 26.6 million bales, leaving a surplus of 15.25 million bales, the group said.

India's textiles ministry October 11 halted registration of new export contracts after it got applications to export 5.5 million bales, the maximum permissible this year, in 10 days after bookings began. Louis Dreyfus Commodities, the top trader of cotton, and Cargill Inc. are among companies that won permits.

### **Foodgrain prices to remain range-bound on high output**

**BS Reporter / Mumbai November 17, 2010, 0:06 IST**

Foodgrain prices are likely to remain range-bound this year due to higher production forecast and abundant stock in the central pool.

India's rice output may rise nine per cent during the current season to 96-97 million tonnes (mt) from 89 mt last year. During the kharif season, which accounts for nearly 90 per cent of the country's annual output, rice output is estimated to surge to 80.41 mt, higher than 75.91 mt in the corresponding season of the previous year. Even distribution of monsoon, leaving adequate sub-soil moisture content, has brightened prospects for the rabi season also.

The government forecasts higher wheat output for the current rabi season at 82 mt as compared to 80.71 mt in the previous year.

But, higher output is unlikely to create a downward pressure on prices due to low availability of grain for open trade, said, Sanjay Kaul, managing director of National Collateral Management Services (NCMSL), a warehousing arm of NCDEX.

Farmers keep nearly half of India's 234 mt foodgrain production for their own consumption. The remaining is procured by the government's procurement agency, the Food Corporation of India (FCI), procures an enormous quantity of nearly 65 mt annually. Thus, a small quantity of 35-40 mt is left for open trade.

"Traders are often blamed for their biased decisions, in case prices rise or fall. But, FCI in real sense is the agency which should be allowed to intervene in the commodity market like the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) does for equity market. This not only will stabilise markets but also create a real time price discovery for farmers betterment," Kaul said at the launch of Commodity Yearbook 2011.

With the Food Security Bill (FSB) all set to rope in into the system anytime, the dependence on FCI will further increase. Last year, FCI procured around 55 mt of foodgrain including the major cereals like rice and wheat. But, under FSB, the country's requirement will increase to nearly 65 mt which means even lesser quantity will be available for open trade.

Meanwhile, 46.2 mt is stored in central pool as on September 30 as against the buffer norm of 16.20 mt.

Kaul admitted that the government's mandatory release of 35 kg of rice and wheat at Rs 3 and Rs 2 respectively for below poverty line people has further increased availability of foodgrain into the system. The government has also ensured additional foodgrain availability at Rs 10 a kg. But, states are reluctant not to lift the quantity as expected by the government.

Kaul emphasised the need to leverage the private sector efficiencies in improving foodgrain management operations in order to reduce dependence on the government agency.

#### **Oil falls below \$84**

**Reuters / London November 17, 2010, 0:05 IST**

Oil fell more than \$1 to below \$84 on Tuesday, weighed down by a stronger dollar and ahead of expected news of a rise in US crude stockpiles.

The dollar touched a six-week high against the euro as investors cut exposure to commodities and risk and as anticipation of the Federal Reserve's \$600 billion bond programme pushed up US Treasury yields. Concerns over the health of the Irish economy also weighed on the euro.

US crude for December dropped by \$1.26 per barrel to a low of \$83.60 by 1125 GMT, extending losses from the previous session. ICE Brent for January fell \$1.00 to \$85.76.

The drop in oil prices came most sharply at the front end of the futures market, helping to steepen the contango in the forward curve.

The December 2013 futures contract for U.S. crude had lost just 39 cents to \$88.60 by 1125 GMT.

## Veg oil imports set a new record

BS Reporter / Mumbai November 17, 2010, 0:04 IST

Vegetable oil imports set a new record in the last oil year (November-October) on increased consumer and institutional domestic demand. Disparity in domestic seed crushing led to poor capacity utilisation and accumulation of stock through imports in the beginning of the season.

Though the surge was a minimal seven per cent at 9.24 million tonnes (worth Rs 38,000 crore) in the last oil year (November 2009-October 2010) from 8.66 million tonnes in the previous year, yet the quantity of vegetable oil was at an all-time high since imports started in 1994, data compiled by the Mumbai-based trade body the Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA) showed.



During October, however, total imports intensified amid apprehensions that crude palm oil prices would rise due to low output in key producing countries including Malaysia and Indonesia.

Imports during the month rose 25 per cent to 832,699 tonnes as compared to 667,276 tonnes in the same month last year.

In September, however, imports were up only a meager six per cent to 960,752 tonnes from 905,192 tonnes in the same month last year. Depreciation of the dollar against the rupee also made imports lucrative.

B V Mehta, executive director of SEA, attributed the record import of vegetable oil to high price elasticity as low price boosted consumption oils like palmolein.

Also, zero import duty on crude edible oil and very nominal (7.5 per cent) duty on refined palmolein favoured the import over domestic oils at the expense of Indian oilseeds farmers and crushers. Rising domestic demand also got support from government schemes like mid-day meals, subsidised oil and NRGPA.



During the season, the profit margin of oilseeds processors deteriorated severely. Many plants were operating at much lower capacity to minimise the losses, resulting in higher imports during the first quarter of the oil year. Owing to disparity, in first quarter (November–January) imports were higher, while in last quarter (August-October) imports jumped 29 per cent over the previous year, due to festival demand.

Total imports of edible oil during November 2009-October 2010 were at 8.82 million tonnes as compared to 8.18 million tonnes last year and 4.42 million tonnes in 2005-06, doubled in five years.

In contrast, arrival of non-edible oils in the country declined nine per cent to 418,068 tonnes last year as compared to 459,599 tonnes during the same period of previous year.

Current stock of edible oils as on November 1 at various ports was estimated at 670,000 tonnes (CPO 400,000 tonnes, RBD palmolein 60,000 tonnes, degummed soybean oil 140,000 tonnes and crude sunflowerseed oil 70,000 tonnes) and about 780,000 tonnes in pipelines. Total stock, both at ports and pipelines, was estimated at 1.45 million tonnes as compared to 1.5 million tonnes a month ago.

### **States unable to lift extra grain under PDS**

**Komal Amit Gera / Chandigarh November 17, 2010, 0:01 IST**

The food distribution agencies of states across India have failed to lift the desired quantities of foodgrains under the additional allocation made recently for the Public Distribution System, says the Food Corporation of India (FCI), the central government's procurement and storage agency.

FCI sought instructions from the Centre in September to offload an additional 2.5 million tonnes for the PDS as a consequence of the reports about poor storage and rotting of grain in various places. The allocation was further revised to 3.06 mt, of 1.68 mt wheat and 1.38 mt rice.

"The allocation was made on September 7 we have been able to disburse 165,000 tonnes only. We need to take up the matter with the state agencies, on the tepid response from their side. The additional allocation has to be exhausted by March 2011 but the pace of movement is not satisfactory," said Siraj Hussain, FCI's chairman and managing director.

The states of Bihar, Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka have lifted small quantities of rice. Wheat has been lifted only by Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Assam and Uttarakhand. All states are lagging on the quota allocated to each.

Senior officials in the departments of food and civil supplies in the states said it was done for the first time on this scale and the supplies were in batches, so the grains could not be distributed consistently.

The central government has now released the additional stock for the next six months. The officials also said the beneficiaries were not mobilised for the additional allocation.

The government has also become flexible by incorporating above-poverty-line families in the additional allocation, so this may help to expedite distribution, said an official.

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**Back Global warming brews trouble for coffee growers**

*In kodagu, higher temperatures, pest attacks destroy 35% of crop.*

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*“Excess rains and changing weather patterns have led to warm summers, and wet or nil sunshine winters leading to crop ripening early”*

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Anil Urs

Hubli, Nov. 17

A great degree of uncertainty still exists with regard to how individual coffee producing countries get affected and how climate change will impact its overall coffee production.

India (coffee growers – stakeholders and Coffee Board), in its submission to the International Coffee Council (ICC) in September, said arabica farms in India are already experiencing the negative effects of global warming.

Indian Scenario

In the Kodagu region, some areas have seen rainfall drop by one-third, from 106 inches per year to 70 inches, dramatically changing the ecosystem and growing conditions.

With higher temperatures, too, infestation of arabica plants by the white stem borer has destroyed up to 35 per cent of the crop, and robusta plants, immune to that pest, have been hit instead by the coffee berry borer.

Growers who had never given a thought to irrigation in such a wet climate have had to dig deep, high-volume wells, lowering the water table in the region.

The Union Government is helping farmers monitor the life-cycle of the borers so that a means to fighting them effectively can be designed.

According to Mr Marvin Rodrigues, Vice-President, Karnataka Planters' Association (KPA), weather patterns in coffee growing regions in India has changed in the last three to four years.

“During north-east monsoon, we used to get rains, but not in excess. Excess is to the tune of 30 to 40 per cent,” he added.

“Excess rains and changing weather patterns have led to warm summers, and wet or nil sunshine winters leading to crop ripening early and coffee processing getting affected due to lack of sunshine,” he further added.

### Quality

As temperature rises, coffee ripens more quickly, leading to a fall in quality. According to Dr Peter Baker, from CABI, if temperatures rise by 3 degree centigrade by the end of this century (some experts believe an increase of up to 5 degree centigrade is possible), the lower altitude limit for growing good quality arabica coffee will rise by roughly 150 feet (46 m) a decade.

This is 15 feet a year, meaning that areas that are currently too cold for growing coffee could become suitable.

### Yields hit

Temperature increases affect different aspects of the metabolism of coffee trees, such as flowering, photosynthesis, respiration and product composition, which in turn affect coffee yields. Temperature increases will favour the proliferation of certain pests and diseases, as well as permitting their dispersion to regions where they were previously not present.

### Global output

As a result of all the changes in the environment, there is a distinct possibility that fewer parts of the world will be suitable for growing quality coffee. If this were to happen, current trends in concentration of production could become even more pronounced. This in turn could make global production more prone to high fluctuations, as any severe disruption in output from one of the major producers would drastically curtail global output.

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## Back Aromatic rice varieties rule steady

Our Correspondent

Karnal, Nov. 17

After witnessing a rise at the beginning of this week, prices of aromatic rice varieties witnessed a steady trend while that of non-basmati varieties continued to rule firm.

According to traders, market may rule steady for the next few days. Rice prices ruled unchanged on Wednesday.

Prices of Pusa-1121 steam (new) ruled between Rs 5,100 and Rs 5,200 a quintal, while the old variety ruled between the levels of Rs 5,200-5,300 and Pusa-1121 sela (new) ruled between Rs 4,100 and Rs 4,170, whereas the old variety was at Rs 4,250-4,320. Pusa-1121 raw (new) ruled at Rs 5,100-5,200, while the old variety quoted at Rs 5,250. Pusa (sela) ruled between Rs 3,250 and Rs 3,300 and Pusa (raw) at Rs 4,100-4,200.

Basmati sela ruled at Rs 6,100-6,200, while basmati raw was at Rs 7,100-7,150.

Prices of PR (old) ruled between Rs 2,000 and Rs 2,200, while the PR (new) ruled between Rs 1,950 and Rs 2,000 a quintal. Sharbati sela (old) ruled between Rs 2,500 and Rs 2,700; Sharbati steam (new) at Rs 2,600-2,800; Permal sela (new) at Rs 2,000-2,170 a quintal.

Brokens such as Tibar ruled around Rs 3,510, Dubar at Rs 2,500 and Mongra around Rs 1,790-1,820.

Downtrend soon

Mr Tara Chand Sharma, a paddy trader, told Business Line that paddy prices and arrivals will witness a downtrend soon. A big share of the total production has already reached in

the mandis, he added. Around 1.6 lakh bags of paddy varieties arrived at the Karnal grain market terminal.

Around 5,000 bags of PR-13 arrived and ruled between Rs 980 and Rs 1,000. Grade-A variety arrived in 80,000 bags and ruled between Rs 1,020 and Rs 1,060. PR-14 arrived with a stock of 10,000 bags and ruled at Rs 1,100-1,115. Around 5,000 bags of RS-10 were quoted at Rs 1,400-1,440.

About 5,000 bags of Sharbati also arrived and ruled between Rs 1,480 and Rs 1,520. Sugandha-999 arrived in about 10,000 bags and quoted at Rs 1,600-1,670.

Around 15,000 bags of Pusa (duplicate basmati) arrived and quoted at Rs 1,800-2,180. Around 15,000 bags of Pusa-1121 quoted at Rs 2,000-2,370. About 15,000 bags of the paddy of pure basmati rice arrived here and quoted at Rs 2,000-2,820. The entire stock was lifted by agencies and rice millers.

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**Back Cracking Diwali for Kerala's cashew body as Delhi sales fetch Rs 40 lakh**

G.K. Nair

Kochi, Nov. 17

The recent Diwali sales turn over turned out to be a boom for the Kerala State-owned Cashew Development Corporation (KSCDC), as the sales in the Capital of its value-added cashew products alone zoomed to Rs 40 lakh in October. Cued by consumer preference, the corporation is going to launch 'cashew noodles and chocolate-coated cashews' shortly, according to its Managing Director, Dr K.A. Retheesh. "There is a growing preference for value-added cashew products, it is evident from the recent Diwali sales, which was a hit as the total turn over during October for branded products in Delhi alone came to Rs 40 lakh," he told Business Line.

"Change of food habits following rise in living standards of the people, especially in the

metros and major cities, consequent to economic growth is aiding the rise in demand for value-added cashew products of late,” he pointed out. Timely diversification into value-added products and introduction of modern and scientific management practices with a pragmatic approach transcending the bureaucratic style of functioning has now proved to have yielded positive results, he said. “Therefore, its success story becomes a model which can be emulated by the sick companies in India.”

#### New packaging tech

KSCDC has already introduced new packing technology. “We have already installed fully automatic packing machine for pouches and are introducing can packing system which will improve shelf life. The process for entering into new markets such as Russia and China is in progress. Discussions at higher levels about tariffs are currently under way. Once it is decided, export to Russia and China focussing the consumer will materialise,” he said.

He said the company, which had been working for few weeks a year in the past worked, for a record 284 days this year and is still working, as a result the turn over has increased to Rs 175 crores so far. During the current fiscal, it is estimated to cross Rs 225 crore, he said. “The support of Government and professionalism in management helped KSCDC to turn around from scratches,” he said.

In fact, it remained closed during the year 2002 and 2003 and worked for only 17 days in 2004. From there it has been revived and now Corporation gives full employment to about 25,000 workers. There is no financial support from bankers, he said. The limited support from the State Government and tie-up with the State Trading Corporation of India (STC) helped KSCDC to over come the working capital deficiency, he said.

At a very crucial juncture bankers — that too public sector banks — refused to fund the operations of KSCDC.

The discussion with bankers to bail out KSCDC in the presence of the Chief Minister did not materialise. Earlier the bankers were siphoning out money from exchequer through KSCDC, he said. In the absence of timely financial assistance from banks, the corporation could not purchase raw nuts at the right time at the right price, which is the key to cashew business and as a result “every operation ended in loss”, he said. He said the company's

liabilities with the banks are estimated around Rs 90 crores and “negotiations on settlement of outstanding to banks is in progress”. Servicing the loans availed by the corporation long back is eating into the company's income and thus depriving it of profits from the present, he said.

In fact, being the market leader value-added products of KSCDC are well accepted in the market. Buyers are willing to take their products on advance payment. KSCDC was started in 1969 mainly to protect the interest of cashew workers who were exploited by private processors. Initially, it was a success, but problems cropped up later on with accumulated losses mounting up. Consequently, the corporation was closed for two years from 2002 to 2004. In 2004-05, the Government decide to re-open the factories by entering into a settlement with banks. First attempt was to give continuous employment. It was a success and gave 235 days in 2005. But the operation ended in loss because of fluctuation in prices, no parity in workers (shelling, peeling and grading), interest burden in the old dues, big over heads, etc. Bankers were reluctant to finance the company any further. At this juncture, naturally the company should have been closed but for professionalism helped the company to survive, a senior Industry Department source said.

In order to get good prices for the end product, KSCDC introduced new products under the brand name 'CDC Cashews'. Thus departing from the hitherto followed sales of bulk kernel in the domestic and overseas markets, for the first time in the history of cashew industry true value-added products like cashew soup, cashew vita, cashew powder and bits developed by the Central Food Technological Research Institute were introduced. Along with it, the corporation tied up with the State Trading Corporation of India for purchasing raw nuts. “This is also a big success and KSCDC is able to get good suppliers who started supplying at a competitive rate. And thus the public sector enterprise has become a major competitor with the private sector in the cashew market,” he added.



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Back Maharashtra assessing rain damage to crops

Rahul Wadke

Mumbai, Nov. 17

The Maharashtra government is still assessing the extent of damage to crops in the State caused by unseasonal rainfall since early November. Crops in over 50,000 to 1.15 lakh hectares are likely to be impacted.

According to preliminary reports, jowar in Amravati, paddy in large areas of Konkan and cotton in Vidarbha have been affected.

The Deputy Chief Minister, Mr Ajit Pawar, after meeting with the Chief Secretary and other senior officials on Tuesday, said that the worst-hit area is the Konkan region. The actual extent of crop damage in the State would be known in about 10 days, when reports from all the districts are collated. Based on the assessment, the State government will announce compensation to affected farmers, he said.

“The State received about 22 mm rainfall from November 1 to 15. Such downpour is unprecedented,” Mr Pawar said.

A senior official said that as the fields are still waterlogged, it is not possible to assess crop damage.

A clear picture is not emerging also because the Agriculture Minister is yet to be named and the post of Agriculture Secretary is lying vacant following the superannuation of the earlier Secretary, the official said. Mr Jagadeesh Sunkad, an agriculture expert, said that in Maharashtra the farmers usually complete the harvesting of paddy by November.

Therefore, the impact on the yield and quality of the crop will not be significant. But there are chances of fungal growth on the standing crop because of the rains, he said.

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[Back](#) **Bullish sentiment sweetens sugar**

Our Correspondent

Mumbai, Nov. 17

Spot sugar prices, after falling continuously for three days, moved up in the ready market by Rs 10 on bullish sentiment at naka and mill tender rates.

Naka rates were up by Rs 35-40 a quintal as resale selling pressure of time-bound purchases eased sharply. In Mumbai, most of the markets were closed on the occasion of Eid.

Mr Mukesh Kuwadia, Secretary of Mumbai Sugar Merchants Association, said that mills which continue to offer at higher rates supported the naka and spot market rates. Kolkata side buying continues at Maharashtra's mills.

On Tuesday, about 10-12 mills came with the tender offer and sold around 50,000 bags in the range of Rs 2,830-2,870 for S-grade and M-grade Rs 2,875-2,920 (excise paid) to local traders.

In the last two days, some trade also took place in rake delivery. Fresh demand from neighbouring States continues. Total arrivals in Vashi markets was 48-50 truck loads (each of 10 tonnes) and lifting was 42-45 trucks. At local level, retail demand is very weak. Currently, price supporting factor for market is only upcountry buying, he added.

According to the Bombay Sugar Merchants Association, spot rates were: S-grade - Rs 2,831-2,900 (Rs 2,831-2,871) and M-grade - Rs 2,890-2,961 (Rs 2,870-2,951). Naka delivery rates were: S-grade - Rs 2,850-2,890 (Rs 2,810-2,850) and M-grade - Rs 2,900-2,930 (Rs 2,850-2,900).

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[Back](#) Export demand boosts castor

Our Correspondent

Rajkot, Nov. 17

Castor seed price on spot and futures increased on fresh export demand. In view of Eid, markets were closed. The Rajkot Commodity Exchange (RCX) was closed for the same reason.

RCX December future contract was traded at Rs 3,575 for 100 kg in the close market. Castor seed November contract was traded Rs 24.50 higher at Rs 3,884.50 a quintal on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX). December contract increased only Rs 2.50 to Rs 3,665 .

A Rajkot-based castor trader, Mr Harilal Chaganlal, said, "Untimely rain will help the castor crop in Gujarat. By December-end, new crop may arrive in the market."

While the spot prices at Hyderabad mandi were at Rs 3,350 a quintal with the fresh arrivals of 15,000 bags reported today.

Decline seen

The price has risen today but with this, according to market participants, some profit booking may happen in coming days as castor price has increased since the last week.

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**Back Farmers agitated**

– P V Sivakumar



Low procurement price: A group of farmers, load their produce into a lorry, before proceeding to the Cotton Corporation of India's Enumamula Agriculture Market Yard in Warangal District of Andhra Pradesh. Over the past week, cotton farmers have been refusing to part with their produce as CCI had dropped procurement price from Rs 4,400 to Rs 3,800 a quintal due to high moisture content. The present price of ginned cotton is ruling at Rs 41,500-43,000 a candy ( of 356 kg).

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**Back Lowest volume on offer at Coonoor tea auction**

P.S. Sundar

Coonoor, Nov. 17

A volume of 9.38 lakh kg will be offered for Sale No: 46 of the auctions of Coonoor Tea Trade Association to be conducted on Thursday and Friday, reveals an analysis of the listing by brokers.

It is the lowest volume so far this year. It is as much as 2.80 lakh kg less than last week's offer, and 5.21 lakh kg lower than the offer this time last year.

#### Adverse weather

Due to adverse weather conditions, production in the Nilgiris fell by 11.35 per cent in October over the same month last year. Accordingly, the arrival of fresh tea for the auctions has dropped significantly.

Fresh tea accounts for only 7.64 lakh kg. As much as 1.74 lakh kg comprises teas remaining unsold in previous auctions.

About 15-25 per cent of the volume offered had remained unsold in recent weeks for want of buyers due to lack of promotion.

Of the 9.38 lakh kg on offer, 7 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 2.38 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades. As much as 8.50 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 0.88 lakh kg the orthodox variety. The proportion of orthodox teas continues to be low in both the leaf and dust grades.

"Low volume can trigger the market prices if supported by regular demand," an auctioneer told Business Line.

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#### Back Spot rubber declines on global cues

Aravindan

Kottayam, Nov. 17

Spot rubber declined on Wednesday on a holiday mood in the market and the prices fell amidst scattered transactions. A weak closing in the international markets kept the prices under pressure on late trades. Most of the traders were inactive and National Multi

Commodity Exchange remained closed owing to Eid.

According to dealers, sheet rubber weakened to Rs 195 (197) a kg mainly on buyer resistance. The grade closed at Rs 195 (197.50) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi according to Rubber Board. RSS 3 declined at its November futures to ₹348.4 (Rs 189.37) from ₹357.3 a kg during the day session and then to ₹346.9 (Rs 188.55) in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange . The grade (spot) slipped to Rs 197.24 (197.74) a kg at Bangkok.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 195 (197); RSS-5: 185 (187); ungraded: 180 (184); ISNR 20: 192 (193) and latex 60 per cent: 130 (130).

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**Back Lacklustre trading hits chana**

Our Correspondent

Indore, Nov. 17

Chana continued to remain stable at the Indore mandi on Wednesday for the second consecutive day, because of the decline in trading activities due to closure of all the main markets and mandis in Madhya Pradesh on account of Eid-UI-Joha.

Though Chawni mandi here remained open, trading interest both among buyers and sellers was missing, leading to further decline in pulse seeds barring chana which remained stable at Rs 2,300-2,310 a quintal.

Unlike other days, business in Indore mandi remained subdued with buyers and sellers not showing interest in trading.

In addition to this, continuing unseasonal rains in various parts of the State added to the sluggishness in the market as arrivals of commodities witnessed further decline as compared with the previous days.

Though chana in the spot remained stable, prices of other pulse seeds in the mandi witnessed a decline of Rs 25-50.

Moong quoted Rs 50 down at Rs 3,800-4,000 a quintal. Similarly, tur and urad also declined by Rs 50 as demand further declined at its existing rates.

Tur quoted at Rs 3,600-3,800 a quintal, while urad quoted at Rs 3,500-3,700 a quintal. Lack of demand also led to decline in masoor by Rs 25 at Rs 3,159 a quintal.

Pulse seeds witnessed decline in arrival with only 400 bags of moong arriving at the local mandi on Wednesday, while arrivals of urad was 1,000 bags.

On the other hand, due to sluggish domestic and export demand, Dollar (kabuli) chana or chickpea also remained stable at Rs 4,500-4,700 a quintal. 42/44 count container quality dollar chana quoted at Rs 5,075 a quintal, while 44/46 count quoted at Rs 5,025 a quintal.

On Wednesday, merely 400 bags of dollar chana arrived at the local mandi.