

THE HINDU

Low-cost pheromone trap to control fruit fly in papaya

R. Arivanantham



Cost-effective: Dr. T. Sundarraj, Programme Coordinator, Dr. Perumal Krishi Vigyan Kendra, showing the pheromone trap used to attract the fruit fly at a papaya field in Maharajakadai near Krishnagiri on Friday.

KRISHNAGIRI: A low-cost pheromone trap to control fruit fly (*Bacterocera dorsalis*), which attacks papaya at the ripening stage, has been developed by Dr. Perumal Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Elumichangiri near Krishnagiri.

Dr. T. Sundarraj, Programme Coordinator, Dr. Perumal Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), told The Hindu on Friday that the fruit fly normally affected mangoes.

Now that the mango season is over, the flies have moved on to fruits like banana, papaya and guava.

The fruit fly has compounded the woes of papaya farmers who already have to combat with mealy bugs.

Eggs

Female flies lay eggs below the outer layer of the fruits and the maggots feed on the fruit pulp which leads to the rotting of fruits before harvest.

The matured maggots emerge from the fruit, drop to the ground and pupate.

Pupation occurs in the soil. Under optimum conditions a female fly lays more than 3,000 eggs during its lifetime, but under field conditions it lays from 1,200 to 1,500 eggs.

Traps

Krishi Vigyan Kendra has developed a low-cost pheromone trap to help farmers fight the fly menace.

Male annihilation technique (MAT) using methyl eugenol as lure is an effective and easier method.

The cost per trap comes to around Rs. 66. A hectare of fruit orchard needs at least 12 pheromone traps, Dr. Sundarraaj says.

KVK has asked the farmers to avoid insecticides if they want to sell their fruits in national and international markets.

Mr. K. Gunasekar, Subject Matter Expert of Dr. Perumal KVK, said Papaya was being cultivated in about 3,000 hectares in Coimbatore, Tirupur, Salem, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri and Dindigul districts. Over 30 acres in Krishnagiri have papaya cultivation.

Farmer M. Sigamani of Mattuoni village near Maharajakadai in Krishnagiri district said the pheromone trap provided by KVK was useful for his papaya orchard. For more details on pheromone trap contact: Dr. T. Sundarraaj, Programme Coordinator, Dr. Perumal Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Elumichangiri near Krishnagiri.

Mobile: 094438 88644, Phone: 04343 296039, e-mail: drsundarraaj@yahoo.com

Rs.2.05 cr. for banana plantation

Nagercoil: The Government had been implementing National Horticulture Mission Scheme, Micro Irrigation Scheme and Integrated Horticulture Scheme for the benefit of farmers in different parts of the district following a very good response among them to horticulture crops than paddy. They could dispose of their produce, other than paddy, for better price in the open market, said the Deputy Director for Horticulture, T.C. Kannan. He said that under National Horticulture Mission Programme, a sum of Rs.2.05 crore had been allotted in the current year (2010-11) to cover banana plantation in nine blocks including Agastheeswaram, Thovalai, Killiyoor, Rajakkamangalam, Kurunthencode, Thiruvattar, Munchirai, Thovalai and Melpuram.

'Supply ISI-marked pumpsets to farmers'

Special Correspondent

It will help pumpset manufacturers, says association

Photo: M. Periasamy



Protest:Kovai Power Driven Pumps and Spares Manufacturers' Association stages a demonstration in the city on Friday. –

COIMBATORE: The pumpset industry here, which has about 500 units and employs over 50,000 people, expected a boost in business through the schemes announced by the State Government recently for supply of pumpsets to farmers. Very few units seem to benefit from these schemes as the norms are stringent.

The Kovai Power Driven Pumps and Spares Manufacturers' Association, which has about 300 members with an average annual turnover of Rs. 1 crore each, organised a demonstration here on Friday and submitted a memorandum to the District Collector seeking acceptance of ISI-marked pumpsets for these schemes.

President of the association K. Maniraj told The Hindu that at least 70 per cent of its members sold ISI-marked pumpsets.

The units were unable to go in for Bureau of Energy Efficiency star-rating as it involved huge costs and required time. Most of the farmers were now dependent on the Government schemes to buy new motors and pumpsets.

Agriculture sector was a major market for these manufacturers and they would be hit if they were unable to supply to this sector.

TACT president J. James said in a release here that the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation's norm that farmers should submit the receipt for purchase of four-star rated motor and pumpset had hit farmers and pumpset manufacturers. The micro and small-scale pumpset manufacturers were unable to get star-rating for their products as it involved huge cost. The Government should establish common facilities to help these units get star-rating. It should accept ISI-marked pumpsets for its schemes till then, he said.

Training in masala powder preparation at TNAU

Staff Reporter

COIMBATORE: The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University will organise a training in preparation of masala powders and pickles on November 23 and 24 on the university premises.

Pickles

The training will cover the preparation of the following aspects: vegetarian and non-vegetarian powders, ready-to-use pastes, mushroom pickles, amla, brinjal, mixed vegetable and sweet and hot onion pickles.

For details

Those interested can attend the training by paying a fee of Rs. 1,000. For details, contact Head, Post-Harvest Technology Centre, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore – 641003.

For details, contact 0422-6611268.

“There is artificial inflation for cotton yarn, raw cotton”

Special Correspondent

— Photo: E. Lakshmi Narayanan



Concern over price rise: M.S. Mathivanan, Chairman, Tamil Nadu Powerloom Federation, speaking at a meeting of textile manufacturers and buyers in Salem.

SALEM: "Hoarding the stock has led to steep hike in the prices of cotton yarn and hence the industry and weavers are facing a hostile industrial climate," said M.S. Mathivanan, Chairman, Tamil Nadu Powerloom Federation, here on Wednesday.

Participating at the explanatory meeting organised by the Powerloom Development and Export Promotion Council (PDEXCIL), Mr. Mathivanan, also Chairman, Co-ordination Committee of the second edition of 'Global India Textile Show - 2010' to be held in Coimbatore next month, said the price rise had forced the weavers to go for a nation-wide agitation.

"The cotton yarn prices are going high every day. So much so that it has increased almost 100 per cent for certain counts of yarn and industries using yarn are affected very badly. Majority of looms have stopped functioning and most of the weavers are not receiving the beams or the yarns. The spinning mills are refusing to sell the yarn in the local market. Cotton is being hoarded and held in stock anticipating an increase in the prices and there is an artificial inflation for the cotton yarn and raw cotton," he said.

For the past one month, prices of all counts of cotton yarn had gone up by 40 per cent and there was also a fear of further increase.

Because of the announcement of export policy by the government before the arrival of the cotton crop and cotton wastes, it had helped only in the increase of the price.

Whatever cotton yarn came into the market was now diverted to the exports and therefore there was a great shortage or demand in the domestic market.

"Several textile mills have curtailed their production as the cotton prices are soaring indiscriminately and there is dearth in the availability of cotton yarn in the market," he pointed out.

PDEXCIL executive member M. A. Ramasamy and others spoke.

Buyers, manufacturers and weavers took part in the meeting.

Farmers in Salem complain that fertilizer is in short supply

Special Correspondent

They claim they have to purchase fertilizer from sources that exploit them

Photo: Special arrangement



To discuss problems: Agriculture grievance day was held in Salem on Friday. -

SALEM: Farmers of the district on Friday charged that there was no adequate stock of a few fertilizers in agricultural depots.

Participating in the farmers' grievances day meeting, the farmers said that fertilizer shortage was evident in many blocks especially in Veppampatti society and they were forced to purchase from outside sources, which invariably exploited them.

They also pointed out that diesel should be given at subsidized cost to operate agriculture equipment.

Officials also were denying them subsidy when the farmers received loans from co-operative societies to purchase a few equipment, they said further.

Vannakuttai and Vedapatti lakes should be immediately desilted while the Kariakoil dam should be opened for irrigation.

The tripartite meeting on tapioca should be convened before January.

The farmers also insisted that an integrated vegetable market should be formed within the jurisdiction of Salem Corporation limits.

Exhibitions on livestock should be conducted at all places to make the farmers aware of the importance of livestock wealth.

Farmers said that many of their demands were not addressed while a few staged a brief walk-out saying that they were not permitted to speak. District Revenue Officer V. Kalai Arasi presided over the meeting.

Transplantation of samba completed on 1,01,924 hectares, says Collector

Special Correspondent

Photo: M.Srinath



redressing grievances:M.S.Shanmugham, left, Collector, speaking at the farmer's grievances day meeting in Thanjavur on Friday.

THANJAVUR: Samba transplantation has been completed on 1,01,924 hectares in the district, said Collector M. S. Shanmugham, here on Friday.

Presiding over the monthly farmers grievances day meeting at the Collectorate, Mr. Shanmugham said Thaladi transplantation (raised in fields where kuruvai has been harvested) has been finished on 14,691 hectares.

Both in Samba and Thaladi, crop has been cultivated using Rajarajan 1000 method on 57,915 hectares.

The Collector also said Kuruvai harvest has been completed and so far 48,193 tonnes of kuruvai paddy has been procured by the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation (TNCSC). One hundred and forty eight direct purchase centres functioned in the district. As kuruvai procurement has come to an end, they have been reduced to 97. The number would be increased once the samba harvest began, he said.

Crop loan to the tune of Rs.499.93 crore has been disbursed both by nationalised banks and cooperative banks. The Collector appealed to the farmers to insure that their crops are covered under the National Agriculture Crop Insurance scheme. Farmers who had taken loans have to pay a premium of Rs.130 per acre while others have to pay Rs.117 per acre.

Farmers can pay the premium both in nationalised banks or co-operative credit societies. Farmers who had taken loans should pay their premium before December 31 while others have to do so before December 15.

There is adequate stock of fertilisers in private and cooperative institutions. There is a stock of 12,324 tonnes of urea, 3499 tonnes of DAP, 7,352 tonnes of potash and 4,361 tonnes of complex fertilisers. Mr. Shanmugham said a conducive atmosphere prevailed for samba cultivation. The district has been experiencing rain and the water level at the Mettur dam also stood at 109.21 feet on Friday. P.Loganathan, Joint Director of Agriculture and Sivaji, Joint Registrar of Co-operatives participated in the meeting.

Farmers seek free power supply

Special Correspondent

Urge government to relieve those raising horticulture crops from penalties

— PHOTO: R.M.RAJARATHINAM



airing concerns: Farmer representatives raising points at the grievances day meeting in Tiruchi on Friday.

TIRUCHI: Farmers representatives of Tiruchi district have appealed to the government to provide free power for raising all crops and direct the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO) to stop imposing penalties on farmers raising horticulture crops using the free power.

Raising the issue at the farmers grievances day meeting here on Friday, A.Nagarajan, president, Horticulture Crop Growers Association, said that the TANGEDCO has imposed stiff penalties running into lakhs of rupees on some farmers in the district on the charge of using free power for raising horticulture crops.

Officials contend, he said, that power used for raising horticulture crops should be charged under Tariff III A 1 as per an order issued a few years back. He claimed that the order was being implemented only in Tiruchi district in the State and demanded that the government order the revocation of the penalties and withdrawal of the cases booked against them.

Aylai Siva Suriyan, district secretary, Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, said the imposition of penalties was nothing but an attempt to gradually curtail the free power given to farmers. N.Ganesan, joint secretary, TN Milk Producers Welfare Association, insisted that free power should be given to farmers raising all crops. A TANGEDCO officer said that the penalties have been imposed following detection of the use of free power for raising horticulture crops by special squads. Farmers in other districts have also been imposed penalty, she claimed and added that any complaints or demands in this regard could be forwarded to Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission.

Collector Mahesan Kasirajan, who was in the chair, said the farmers demand would be conveyed to the government.

Referring to the government scheme to provide free motors to farmers, R.Raja Chidambaram, secretary, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, and A.Karuppanan, organiser, district farmers wing of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, demanded that farmers be provided with motors of same capacity as that of the ones they were using now. Both contended that though most farmers had registered the capacity of 3 HP motors at the time of obtaining the connections, they had to go in for higher capacity motors as the ground water table has gone down drastically over the years. P.Ayyakannu, general secretary, Bharathiya Kisan Sangam, urged the government not to force farmers to hand over their motors when the new ones were supplied to them.

On the government decision to provide farm connections to two lakh waiting applicants, he said the government should not insist on the farmers fixing motors with four star ratings as the price of such motors sold at higher rates now. B.Viswanathan, president, Tamizhaga Eri Matrum Attru Pasana Vivasayigal Sangam, demanded that the applicants be provided free motors by the government.

Fuel from agro-waste

Staff Reporter



Clean energy:A.G.Murugesan, Professor, and C.Sathesh Prabu, post-doctoral researcher of Sri Paramakalyani Centre for Environmental Sciences, demonstrating their project work in Tirunelveli.

TIRUNELVELI: Two scientists of Sri Paramakalyani Centre of Excellence in Environmental Sciences (SPKCEES), affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, have extracted fuel from agro-waste.

C. Sathesh Prabu, a post-doctoral researcher of the centre, who is working on advanced research on bio-ethanol production from lignocellulosic agro-waste along with A.G. Murugesan, Professor, SPKCEES, says production of ethanol as an alternative fuel through cost-effective methods has become imperative due to global oil shortage and demand.

Demand for ethanol

Currently ethanol accounts for about 86 per cent of total bio-fuel production and demand for ethanol as bio-fuel has steadily increased during this decade.

The production of ethanol from sugar or starch from sugarcane and cereals respectively, impacts negatively on the economics of the process, thus making ethanol more expensive when compared to fossil fuels.

Nowadays, agro-waste is being burnt at the field itself. At the same time, using the agro-waste in a bigger way for bio-ethanol production will not only suffice the fuel requirement but also boost the economy of the country, the researchers say.

The production methods of ethanol from agricultural waste like corn cob, corn stalk and sorghum stover have been successfully standardised at the centre.

Dr. Sathesh Prabhu has come out with easy pre-treatment methods to break down the complex agricultural wastes (carbohydrate sources) into simple form so as to enable the ethanologenic microorganisms to ferment them to produce ethanol. He states that about 250 - 270 litres of ethanol can be produced from one tonne of agricultural waste like corn stover, rice straw and sorghum stover.

Benefits

His study has dual benefits in terms of managing the agro-residues and producing green and clean energy, thus decreasing the amount of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere.

Financial assistance

Dr. Sathesh Prabu has got financial assistance from the Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology and Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund for the research.

Now he is continuing the work with financial assistance from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.

According to Dr. Murgesan, the research by Dr. Sathesh in bio-fuel production would result in high output.

Farm equipment handed over

Staff Reporter

TIRUNELVELI: Farm equipment such as tractors and harvesters worth Rs. 6.25 lakh were handed over to the farmers during the farmers' grievance day meeting held at the Collectorate on Friday.

Six beneficiaries received five tractors and a harvester, supplied under the Agricultural Mechanisation Programme and the National Agricultural Development Programme. While the tractors and power-tillers were supplied with the subsidy of Rs. 45,000 per unit, paddy harvester carried a hefty subsidy of Rs. 4 lakh.

During the year 2010 – 2011, the district had received the subsidy of Rs. 21.25 lakh under the Agricultural Mechanisation Programme and Rs. 98.10 lakh under the National Agricultural Development Programme.

Cooperative loans waived for farmers

Special Correspondent

1,23,446 ryots in Vellore district benefitted

"Welfare schemes reach the people only through the Department of Cooperation"



Durai Murugan

VELLORE: The Tamil Nadu government has waived cooperative loans to the tune of Rs.321.55 crore, benefiting 1,23,446 farmers in Vellore district, according to Durai Murugan, Minister for Law.

Participating in the 57th All India Cooperative Week Celebrations here on Friday, Mr. Durai Murugan said that the cooperative movement is a noble movement since the welfare schemes of the government reached the people only through the Department of Cooperation. It is also a divine movement since the poor people depended on it. The proper implementation of the public distribution system is so crucial for any government that the manner of functioning of the cooperative fair price shops is reflected in the ballot box, he said.

The minister distributed the prizes to the following cooperative institutions in Vellore district for their best performance:

Urban cooperative banks: I prize – Arakkonam Cooperative Urban Bank, II prize – Gudiyatham Urban Cooperative Bank.

Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS): I prize – Kodakkal PACS, II prize – Perambattu PACS.

Special prizes: PACS, Omakuppam and Bagaveli.

C. Gnanasekaran, Vellore MLA urged the Tamil Nadu government to revive the Ariyoor Cooperative Spinning Mills. P. Karthikeyan, Mayor of Vellore and R. Gandhi, Ranipet MLA spoke. T.K. Pandian, Special Officer, Vellore District Cooperative Union administered the cooperative pledge. S. Thiruguna Ayyappadurai, Regional Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies welcomed the gathering.

Skilled labour vital for mechanisation of farm sector, says Minister

Staff Reporter

– PHOTO: C. Suresh Kumar



Demonstration: Agriculture Minister Mullakkara Ratnakaran in the cab of a combine harvester when he arrived in Kollam on Friday to inaugurate a free training programme to the youth for operating agricultural machinery.

KOLLAM: Agriculture Minister Mullakkara Ratnakaran has said that availability of skilled labour to meet mechanisation of the agriculture sector is vital for the food security programme.

He was inaugurating the Agriculture Department's district-level free training programme for the youth for operating farm machinery here on Friday.

Kerala is heavily dependent on other States for meeting its food requirements. But, most of the commodities coming from the other States are unsafe for consumption. Such food is now being seen as the cause for diseases, including cancer, he said. "In order to ensure safe food for the people, we have to become part of the food production process."

He said over the past 30 years, the State had endured a mass exodus of farm labour, which had hit the agriculture sector. Kerala along with many other States were demanding that at least 50 per cent of the allocation to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme should be linked to agriculture. But this alone would not suffice to meet the targets of the food security programme.

"Therefore mechanisation is needed. Taking into consideration the peculiar terrain of Kerala, the State needs specially designed equipment too."

The Minister said soon Kuttanad would be getting combine harvesters specially designed to operate in below sea level paddy fields.

The roadside cultivation scheme of the State government from Vyttila to Kasaragod would be inaugurated next week at a function in Kannur.

Mr. Ratnakaran called for promoting upland farming in the State. While the annual rice requirement of the State was 40 lakh tonnes, the target of the State was to produce 15 lakh tonnes by 2015.

The objective of the training programme was to ensure availability of skilled labour for mechanising the farm sector. Training would also be given to maintain and repair equipment. The training programme was aimed at generating awareness on farm mechanisation and through that more jobs in the sector.

The Minister also inaugurated a mobile soil testing laboratory of the Agriculture Department.

District panchayat president R. Gopalakrishna Pillai presided over the function. Vice-president S. Jayanti spoke. Principal Agricultural Officer S. Mohanachandran welcomed the gathering and Agriculture Deputy Director Geena John proposed a vote of thanks.

Humble 'moringa' pushed to limelight

K. Santhosh

As part of a promotion drive, the National Moringa Mission serves up facts about moringa for the nutrient-conscious to chew on.

Photo: K.C. Sowmish



To the masses: People queue up to collect moringa saplings distributed free by the State Medicinal Plants Board in Thrissur on Friday.

THRISSUR: The next time you scowl at a 'moringa' dish at the dining table, remember these facts dished out by the National Moringa Mission. Moringa oleifera (popular as drumstick tree) has nine essential amino acids that humans should get from food. Moringa has vitamin C seven times more than that in oranges and calcium, four times more than that in milk. Its vitamin A content is four times that in carrots, protein twice more than in milk; potassium thrice more than in bananas; and iron, thrice that in spinach.

The humble 'moringa' tree in your backyard, with its gnarly trunk and thick foliage, is a powerhouse of nutrients. Realising that it is a sustainable food source for Third World countries, the National Moringa Mission, of the National Medicinal Plant Board, plans to provide 'moringa' saplings free to 4,200 households in the State — 300 saplings in each district. The State-level activities of the Mission were flagged off at a function here on Friday. Those who toasted to 'moringa' on the occasion included T.N. Prathapan, MLA, district panchayat president K.V. Dasan and CPI(M) State committee member C.O. Poulouse. Mr. Prathapan promised to plant a 'moringa' sapling each in 1,000 households in his constituency, Nattika.

The funds of the National Amla Mission will be channelled for 'moringa' promotion. A sum of Rs.28 lakh has been earmarked for the State-level activities of the National Moringa Mission in 2010-11, according to

Nagesh Prabhu, chief executive officer of the State Medicinal Plants Board. The Board has identified six agencies for Moringa promotion.

Mr. Prabhu described 'moringa' as a 'wonder herb.' In India, juice of 'moringa' leaves is believed to control blood pressure. In Senegal, an infusion of the juice is used to stabilise glucose level. In Nicaragua, Guatemala and Senegal, 'moringa' leaves are applied as poultice on sores and skin infections. In the Philippines, eating leaves is believed to increase milk supply in lactating women, while in Puerto Rico, a decoction made of 'moringa' flowers is a medicine for hysteria. In Senegal, 'moringa' gum is used to treat fevers, dysentery and asthma.

And closer home, it is used to rustle up delicacies such as 'muringa ila thoran' (a crunchy dish made of finely chopped 'moringa' leaves), 'muringakka mezhukkupuratti' (stir-fried moringa pods seasoned with ginger and garlic), 'muringakka dal curry' (a rich stew of 'moringa' leaves or pods, lentils and tomato puree) and moringa-rich sambar and avial.

Poor agricultural growth despite many research stations: expert

Staff Reporter

Thrissur: Speakers at a meeting of scientists here on Thursday highlighted the need for providing the common man access to research findings. The scientists from various research institutions in the district came together here on Thursday as a prelude to the All India People's Science Congress, which will begin in Thrissur on December 27.

Addressing the meeting, social activist M.P. Parameswaran said that scientists should come forward voluntarily to formulate sustainable development models for the three-tier Panchayati Raj institutions. Public health activist B. Ekbal said that the academic and research achievements of the State were not reflecting in its socio-economic development. "The State witnesses a stunted agricultural growth even when every crop has separate research stations. Kerala has the highest density of technical institutions and scientists. But we fail to utilise opportunities," he said. He urged the research institutions to adopt a few villages and develop them as models.

Jiju P. Alex, a scientist at the Kerala Agricultural University, said that at the university had prepared a database of model agriculture projects, which could be implemented in the State.

Two books—'Kyoto to Copenhagen' by K.K. Janardhanan and 'Mannum Jalavaum' by George Thomas— were released at the function.

Business Standard

Saturday, Nov 20, 2010

Slow paddy procurement in Chhattisgarh

BS Reporter / Kolkata/ Raipur November 19, 2010, 0:40 IST

Paddy arrival in the societies set up by the state government to procure the yield at minimum support price (MSP) is yet to take pace in Chhattisgarh.

Procurement of paddy at MSP started across the state from November 1 and will continue till January 31, 2011. The state marketing federation has set up 1587 procurement centres under 1333 primary cooperative societies.

"Paddy arrival is slow in the societies and as of now, about 80,000 tonnes could be procured," a senior official with the federation said. The untimely rains that hit parts of Chhattisgarh early this month had affected the harvesting work that ultimately affected the procurement, the official added.

Chhattisgarh government had set a target to procure 5 million tonnes of paddy during the kharif marketing season 2010-11. Officials felt that the target could be easily achieved as the state recorded a good rainfall this year. Last year, about 4.4 million tonnes of paddy had been procured in the state.

Chief Minister Raman Singh has announced a bonus of Rs 50 per quintal on paddy over the minimum support price (MSP). Farmers selling their produce in the state-run societies will now get Rs 1030 for a quintal of common variety of paddy and Rs 1060 for grade-A paddy as MSP.

The government earmarked Rs 5,000 crore for purchasing paddy from farmers through the village-level cooperative societies for the kharif marketing season 2010-11. It sought cash credit limit (CCL) from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for procuring paddy in the state.

Tobacco growers to take up alternative curing methods

Press Trust Of India / Chennai/ Bangalore November 19, 2010, 0:24 IST

Karnataka has decided to urge the Central Tobacco Board to extend financial aid to tobacco growers in the state to take up alternative curing methods to put an end to use of fuel wood, which has led to massive deforestation.

Minister for Forest C H Vijayashankar told reporters here that the Board has about Rs 150-crore funds, which it got as penalty from licensed and unlicensed tobacco growers in Karnataka over the years, but remained unspent. He pointed out that India has given an undertaking to the World Health Organisation (WHO) that tobacco cultivation has to be given up by the year 2020.

He said 53,000 licensed growers and 30,000 unlicensed growers in four taluks annually produce 1,700 tonnes of virginia tobacco and use about 85,000 truck loads of firewood to cure it. The Board, which used to provide coal to cure tobacco, has suspended it, the minister said and pointed out that there are alternative methods like use of LPG for this purpose.

He said efforts are on to revive four corporations under the Forest Department — Cashewnut Development Corporation, Karnataka Forest Development Corporation, Forest Industries Development and Cashew Board as these were not doing well.

Vijayashankar said he has asked officials to submit a report in 30 days outlining the measures to be initiated to revive these sick units.

Synthetic rubber use up 26.6% in April-July

George Joseph / Kochi November 19, 2010, 0:14 IST

Reasons: High natural rubber prices, low stock.

The steep rise in natural rubber (NR) prices has resulted in a sharp increase in the consumption of synthetic rubber (SR) in the country. The consumption of SR was up 26.6 per cent during April-July period of the current fiscal year, compared to 4.9 per cent growth in the same period of 2009-10, latest data by the Rubber Board showed.

In volume terms, total SR consumption increased to 132,925 tonnes in April-July as against 104,955 tonnes in the same period of the last financial year.

There has been a deviation in the consumption pattern of rubber-based industries in India, especially by tyre manufacturers. A 32.6 per cent increase was recorded in the consumption of SR by tyre companies during the period at 93,503 tonnes against 70,513 tonnes in the same period last year. Though the consumption of NR by tyre producers during the period increased only 5.1 per cent.

With NR prices almost doubling in the last 15 months and poor stock position led to a supply crunch which forced the industry to depend on SR.

More SR was routed to India through imports as domestic production was only 27 per cent of the total requirement. The price advantage of imported SR compared to NR also caused the increase in its consumption.

Certain segments of tyres like car radials especially meant for export purpose need more SR which is preferable in the overseas markets, according to experts. Traditionally Western countries use SR mainly for production of tyres while Asian countries largely use NR.

The consumption ratio of NR and SR in India was 76:24 few years back, which is now 74:26 in favour of SR. There was an improvement in the domestic production of SR. In April-July period, production increased 2.2 per cent while there was negative growth of 4.4 per cent in the same period of the last financial year. Total SR production increased to 35,144 tonnes as against 34,392 tonnes in April -July of 2009-10.

More grain storage areas soon

Komal Amit Gera / Chandigarh November 19, 2010, 0:12 IST

An investment of Rs 4,500 crore is in pipeline by private entrepreneurs for setting up covered storage area of 15 million tonnes (mt) for foodgrain in India.

The country has a total of 42 mt covered capacity storage. But it has been falling short due to the increasing output in the last few years.

The new capacities are to come up in 19 states and the majority of them would be set up in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. These three states would add over 11 mt of new scientific storage for foodgrain of the total of 15 mt.

"Additional capacities are created in producing states as the movement of foodgrain is dependent on the availability of rakes from railways. As the harvesting is done in short time it is difficult to move huge stock of foodgrain simultaneously. So, producing states need to have larger space for storage," a senior FCI official said. This despite the fact that escalating land prices in this pocket are a big factor dissuading investors from using land for storage than as a real estate asset.

Private players have come forth under the PEG (private enterprenuer guarantee scheme) of FCI under which 7-year guarantee and 10-year guarantee is provided to the private investors for offering scientific storage for foodgrain.

Tenders (technical) have already been opened in Punjab, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Orissa.

Last time, in 2001, under the same scheme the rent was pre-determined at Rs 2.40 per square feet per month. But, rates are open this time and response is better.

The Chairman and Managing Director of FCI Siraj Hussain said the Planning Commission of India is pursuing a study on creation of silos (the most scientific method of foodgrain storage with humidity and temperature control) at various locations in the country. It will determine the capacity and other parameters and submit its report to the government, he added.

Presently silos are put up by Adani group in Punjab and Haryana with a capacity of 200,000 tonnes each at Moga and Kaithal used for wheat storage.

THE HINDU Business Line

Govt admits to lapses in rice exports to Africa

PSU officials did not exercise due diligence: Anand Sharma.

Our Bureau

New Delhi, Nov. 19

The Government today conceded in the Lok Sabha that in the export of non-basmati rice to some countries during the period December 2007 to March 2009 on diplomatic grounds despite the ban on such exports, the public sector undertakings (PSU) officials tasked with canalising such exports did not exercise due diligence, resulting in the denial of legitimate profits to the PSUs.

In a statement made in the midst of disruptive proceedings when papers were to be laid on the table, the Union Commerce and Industry Minister, Mr Anand Sharma, recalled his earlier statement made on July 30, 2009, in which he had pointed out that though the government authorised the release of about 13.5 lakh tonnes (lt) of non-basmati rice, the actual quantity shipped was about 1.22 lt.

5 countries

Stating that the transactions were to be conducted on a commercial basis with the African countries, Mr Sharma said that in respect of transactions with five countries, viz., Comoros, Ghana, Madagascar, Mauritius and Sierra Leone, the recipient African countries nominated both the importing agency in their country and domestic supplier based in India.

Since a subsequent scrutiny of transaction showed infringements, an enquiry was ordered with the Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce as the Enquiry Officer. He further said the transactions with Mauritius (by STC and MMTC) were found to be transparent and competitive.

However, he said, with the exception of Mauritius, the exporting PSUs of the Department of Commerce did not follow a transparent procedure for selection of domestic associates or determination of the price at which the rice was exported. In these cases, the enquiry revealed, the importing country nominated the importing agency in the recipient country and selected a domestic supplier in India, without involving the PSUs. Thus the importing government/agency settled the selling price (purchase price for them) in negotiations with the domestic Indian supplier without associating the PSUs, the designated agencies by the Government.

The enquiry revealed that "all documents showed the PSUs to be the exporter for record," he said adding that the PSUs operated on a meagre trading margin ranging between one per cent and 1.5 per cent. "The pre-determined terms of the contracts between the foreign buyers and the domestic suppliers (with small margins for the PSUs) led to hugely disproportionate profits accruing to private parties, namely, the foreign government nominated domestic suppliers in India.

The Minister maintained that in lifting the ban on exports and conferring the right to export solely on the PSUs, the government took a public policy stance, recognising that commercial profits would accrue to the PSUs because of the large differential between domestic and global prices. But, he said, "it appears that PSU officials did not exercise due diligence in the matter, resulting in a denial of legitimate interests of the PSUs".

He said the concerned officials had been issued show-cause notices calling for their "explanation for not exercising due diligence, failing to act in the best commercial interests of the PSUs and abrogating their responsibility".

Low arrivals, poor demand pound rice

Our Correspondent

Karnal, Nov. 19

Thin demand pulled down prices of aromatic and non- basmati rice by Rs 20-50 a quintal, on Friday.

Prices of Pusa-1121 steam (new) ruled between Rs 5,100 and Rs 5,180 a quintal, while the old variety ruled between the levels of Rs 5,200 and Rs 5,270. Pusa-1121 sela (new) ruled between Rs 4,100 and Rs 4,150, whereas the old variety was at Rs 4,200-4,300.

Pusa-1121 raw (new) ruled at Rs 5,100-5,170, while the old variety quoted at around Rs 5,250. Pusa (sela) ruled between Rs 3,250 and Rs 3,280 and Pusa (raw) at Rs 4,100-4,170.

Basmati sela ruled at Rs 6,100-6,150, while basmati raw was at Rs 7,100-7,120.

Prices of PR-14 ruled between Rs 2,050 and Rs 2,150, while PR ruled between Rs 1,850 and Rs 1,950 a quintal. Sharbati sela (old) ruled between Rs 2,500 and Rs 2,700 and Sharbati steam (new) at Rs 2,600-2,800 a quintal.

Brokens such as Tibar ruled at around Rs 3,200, Dubar at Rs 2,200-2,300 and Mongra at around Rs 1,800-1,820.

Mr Tara Chand Sharma, a paddy trader, told Business Line that, as anticipated, paddy prices and arrivals have started falling. Nearly 90 per cent of the total arrivals are from Uttar Pradesh, he added.

Around 10,000 bags of PR-13 arrived, and ruled between Rs 900 and Rs 950. Grade-A variety arrived in 80,000 bags and ruled between Rs 1,000 and Rs 1,030. PR14 arrived with a stock of 10,000 bags and ruled at Rs 1,070-1,100. Around 3,000 bags of RS-10 were quoted at Rs 1,300-1,350.

About 5,000 bags of Sharbati also arrived and ruled between Rs 1,500-1,550. Sugandha-999 arrived in about 10,000 bags, and quoted at Rs 1,200-1,700.

Around 5,000 bags of Pusa (duplicate basmati) arrived and quoted at Rs 2,000-2,250. Around 10,000 bags of Pusa-1121 quoted at Rs 2,000-2,400. About 10,000 bags of the paddy of pure basmati rice arrived here and quoted at Rs 2,000-2,750.

The entire stock was lifted by agencies and rice millers.

Widespread rain over TN, Kerala

A weather warning valid for Saturday and Sunday said that isolated heavy rainfall would occur over south Tamil Nadu and Kerala.



Vinson Kurian

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 19

Widespread rainfall has occurred over Tamil Nadu and Kerala during the 24 hours ending Friday morning ahead of an easterly wave action expected to be triggered along the Tamil Nadu coast from Saturday.

All the same, the freak weather masterminded by the Arabian Sea along the West Coast persisted, with fairly widespread rain being reported over as far as Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

It was scattered over Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, South Andhra Pradesh, Coastal Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir, an update from India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

MERCURY DOWN

Meanwhile, minimum temperatures have fallen by 2 to 3 deg Celsius over Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and East Madhya Pradesh during past 24 hours with some of the clouds clearing off.

However, they still continue to remain above normal by 4 to 6 deg Celsius over these regions, the IMD noted.

On Friday afternoon, Insat cloud imagery showed convective (rain-bearing) clouds driven down south to over parts of extreme South Peninsula, South Bay of Bengal, South Andaman Sea and East-central and Southeast Arabian Sea.

The upper air cyclonic circulation over East-central Arabian Sea persisted, and so did the trough from this system, though truncated and extending up to Gujarat only on Friday. But, the other weather-making trough embedded in the seasonal westerlies across the North-west border had checked in over North-east Rajasthan and neighbourhood.

WEATHER WARNING

A weather warning valid for Saturday and Sunday said that isolated heavy rainfall would occur over South Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Forecast until Monday spoke about the possibility of fairly widespread rain or thundershowers for Kerala, Lakshadweep, Tamil Nadu and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

It will be scattered or in the form of thundershowers over South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema, Coastal and South Interior Karnataka, Konkan and Goa.

Minimum temperature is expected to fall further by 2 to 4 deg Celsius over many parts of North-west, Central and East India during the next week as colder north-westerlies begin to fill the plains.

Extended forecast until Wednesday said that fairly widespread rains would fall over South Peninsular India while being scattered over Gujarat and adjoining Rajasthan.

LA NINA OUTLOOK

Meanwhile, better model consensus is becoming evident over the tenure of the persisting La Nina event in the East Equatorial Pacific.

The strong La Nina conditions that boosted the Indian monsoon this year will continue at least into early next year, an update from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) said. Earlier, a group of Japanese scientists at the Tokyo-based Regional Institute for Global Change had said that the La Nina might last for entire 2011 and even into 2012.

On Friday, the Climate Prediction Centre (CPC) of the US National Weather Services said that there is a 25 per cent chance that the La Nina would last into August-September-October 2011, well after the south-west monsoon for the year has ended.

'Neutral' (neither La Nina nor monsoon-killer El Nino) conditions have been given a 50 per cent chance of sustaining while El Nino itself is being given only 25 per cent, according to the CPC outlook.

Even 'neutral' conditions are enough to favour the cause of a trouble-free south-west monsoon for India, according to some experts.

Potato perks up on crop failure in South

Potato sowing in the country has been delayed to some extent on account of excessive rainfall in some parts and delayed rainfall in the eastern regions.

Shobha Roy

Kolkata, Nov. 19

Potato price in West Bengal inched up by more than Rs 200-250 a quintal over the last few days on account of a crop failure in the southern markets.

The wholesale price of the tuber (Jyoti variety) was hovering around Rs 700 a quintal on Wednesday, according to Mr Patit Paban De, Past President, West Bengal Cold Storage Association.

"The potato prices have gone up substantially over the last few days due to crop failure in the southern States, particularly Karnataka. There has been a substantial rise in demand for Bengal potatoes in these States over the last 3-4 days," Mr De told Business Line.

Close to 5,000 tonnes were being transported from Bengal to Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on a daily basis, he said. The prices were likely to stay firm at the current levels on account of hoarding by traders and a delay in crop in most parts of the country.

The West Bengal Government had procured 9.75 lakh tonnes through the consumer co-operatives under the West Bengal State Consumers Cooperative Federation (Confed) during this year. Close to 60 per cent of the potatoes held by the State Government has been released into the market.

Potato sowing in the country has been delayed to some extent on account of excessive rainfall in some parts (particularly the northern parts of the country) and delayed rainfall in the eastern regions of the country.

“Sowing has now started in full swing across the country. In Uttar Pradesh, close to 80 per cent of the sowing process is complete while in Bengal it has just started picking up and close to 15 per cent of the sowing has been done so far. Post November 25, things will start picking up and prices should start cooling down to some extent,” Mr De added.

Harvesting should start by the first week of December and this would bring down prices to some extent.

Jute mills face hard times

Shobha Roy

Kolkata, Nov. 19

A combination of factors such as the non-availability of quality jute due to water shortage, substantial rise in raw jute prices, increase in wages of workers post the tripartite agreement and rise in level of absenteeism in mills is adversely affecting the smooth functioning of mills across the country.

The raw jute prices have spiralled by more than 50 per cent this year and are currently ruling around Rs 3,500 a quintal, against Rs 2,500 during the same period last year, according to Mr Manish Poddar, Chairman, Indian Jute Mills Association.

“Prices of raw jute more than doubled over the last two years. The farmers got about 50 per cent higher prices from raw jute last year compared to the year ago period. This year also, farmers have got 50 per cent higher prices compared to last year,” Mr Poddar told Business Line.

There has been hardly any discussion regarding productivity or management-related issues post the signing of tripartite agreement in February last. “The trade unions and the State government have not much bothered about any issues related to the management since,” he pointed out. The average wage increase for a worker was about Rs 75 a day post the settlement. “This kind of increase in wages is not sustainable in the long term,” he added.

The level of absenteeism was about 15-40 per cent across the state. “The labour issue is once again catching momentum with as many as six mills across West Bengal closing down,” he said.

The Tariff Commission report 2009 on the issue of price fixation methodology which was to be implemented by the Textile Ministry post the strike has also not been done so far, adding to the woes of the industry, according to senior officials in the jute industry. The Tariff Commission report is a fair price report based on the actual cost of the 49 jute mills based on 2006-07 and 2008-09 data.

Global cues heat up edible oil

Our Correspondent

Mumbai, Nov. 19

In the edible oil markets, spot prices of most of the oils increased sharply on Friday, erasing sharp losses of the previous day.

Imported oils such as palmolein and soya oil rose by Rs 7 and Rs 10 respectively. Cotton oil was up by Rs 5, sunflower oil was up by Rs 5 and rapeseed oil rose by Rs 11 for 10 kg.

Groundnut oil was steady despite sudden spurt at Rajkot market due to absence of fresh demand.

On Thursday, most of the oils declined sharply by Rs 10-Rs 15/10 kg. Rajkot groundnut oil price rose by Rs 20 a tin and Rs 15 for 10 kg.

Late evening resale pressure cooled down the bullish sentiment. Speculators were quoting lower rates .

Malaysian Bursa market rebounded on Friday erasing sharp early losses. Malaysian CPO futures closed higher by 2,17 ringgits.

Arrivals also declined this week due to the rain. Due to month-end lean demand period and completion of festival, demand for edible oils decreased sharply.

With the new crop arrivals in November-December market generally witnesses pressure on prices.

On Thursday, late evening good volume took place for future delivery on higher closing of Malaysian market but on Friday volume was thin. Total about 300/350 tonnes palmolein was traded. Unseasonal rain has effected the cotton and groundnut crop badly, traders said.

Malaysia's BMD and NBOT futures

Malaysia's BMD CPO December futures closed at MYR 3337 (3335), January -11 closed at 3350 (3333) MYR. Indore NBOT soya oil futures December closed Rs 572 (Rs 575.80).

Mumbai commodity exchange spot rate (Rs/10kg):

Groundnut oil 750 (750), Soya refined oil 560 (550), Sunflower expeller refined 670 (665), Sunflower refined 715 (710), Rapeseed refined oil 603 (592), Rapeseed expeller refined 573 (562), Cotton refined oil 550 (545) and Palmolein was 525 (518).

Slack retail offtake holds sugar on leash

Our Correspondent

Mumbai, Nov. 19

Spot sugar prices that had been rising for the two days, ruled steady at higher levels on Friday.

At the mill level, tender rates continued to show a firm trend. On Thursday despite getting poor response to tender offer, mills continued to hold prices at higher levels.

Spot rates increased by Rs 10 a quintal. Naka rates showed mixed trend, with good quality S-grade gaining Rs 10, and M-grade dropping Rs 10. Mill tender rates were steady. Freight charges were steady at higher levels.

At local level due to the absence of retail demand, the gap between naka and spot prices decreased to Rs 5- 10 only. At spot level, the sentiment was weak but firm trend at mill level arrested the bearish mood. Arrivals were more than the stock lifted, said market players.

Mr Harakhchand Vora of Kavita Trading Company said that in the absence of fresh retail demand, the price difference between naka and ready delivery rates narrowed to Rs 5-10.

On Thursday, four-five mills came with the tender offer and sold only about 30,000-35,000 bags of sugar in the range of Rs 2,880- 2,900 for S-grade and Rs 2,900- 2,935 (excise paid) for M-grade, to local traders. Demand from neighbouring States was absent.

On Friday, total arrivals in Vashi markets was 33/35 truck loads (each of 10 tonnes) and lifting was 25/28 trucks.

According to Bombay Sugar Merchants' Association, spot rates for S-grade were Rs 2,890-2,931 (Rs 2,891-2,921) and for M-grade Rs 2,911-2,986 (Rs 2,911-2,981).

Naka delivery rates for S-grade were Rs 2,880-2,920 (Rs 2,880-2,900) and M-grade Rs 2,920-2,960 (Rs 2,930-2,960).

Pulses steady on subdued buying

Our Correspondent

Indore, Nov. 19

Subdued demand at the mill and retail level, kept pulse prices steady, barring moong dal and urad dal, which declined by Rs 100 in the absence of buyers .

Chana dal and tur dal remained steady on Friday. In the spot, chana dal (average) quoted at Rs 2,775-2,800 a quintal, chana dal (medium) quoted Rs 2,875-2,900 a quintal, while chana dal (bold) quoted at Rs 3,000-3,050.

Similarly, tur dal and masoor dal also remained steady. Masoor dal quoted at Rs 3,750-3,900 a quintal, while tur dal (full) quoted at Rs 5,500-5,600 a quintal, tur dal (sawa number) quoted Rs 4,800-4,900, while tur dal (markewali) quoted at Rs 6,100 a quintal, respectively.

On the other hand, with further dip in demand and weak arrival, moong dal and urad dal declined by Rs 100. In the spot, moong dal (chilkewali) was quoted at Rs 4,700-4,750, moong mongar (medium) quoted Rs 5,500, moong mongar (bold) was quoted at Rs 5,600 a quintal, while moong mongar (extra bold) quoted at Rs 6,100 a quintal, respectively.

Similarly, urad dal (medium) quoted at Rs 4,700-4,850, while urad mongar quoted at Rs 6,500-7,200 a quintal, respectively.

Pulse seeds

Among the pulse seeds, chana remained steady at Rs 2,320 a quintal. Masoor quoted at Rs 3,150-3,175, tur quoted at Rs 3,475, urad quoted at Rs 3,800-4,000, while moong also quoted at Rs 3,800-4,000 a quintal.

Decline in trading interest in pulses was also attributed to the delay in deliveries of pulses due to rains . Traders who have already stocked pulses are not able to deliver them on time because of inclement weather, a pulse trader told Business Line.

Untimely rain affects cotton quality

Our Correspondent

Rajkot, Nov. 19

Untimely rain in Gujarat has affected the quality of the cotton crop According to market sources, in the coming days dry cotton prices are likely to firm up.

In Gujarat, Sankar-6 variety cotton is traded at Rs 43,000-44,000 a candy of 356 kg and price of raw cotton is Rs 900-940 for 20 kg. About 65,000 bales arrive in Gujarat.

A Rajkot-based trader said, "Cotton quality is damaged due to bad weather since last the ten days. The market is facing shortage of dry stocks. It is possible that production of cotton may decrease by 10-15 per cent in Gujarat."

Gujarat ginner had estimated production at 1.20 crore bales for the year 2010-11, but untimely rains in growing areas such as Junagadh, Rajkot damaged to farmers ready crop.

The estimated total supply during the year, which included 5.5 million bales of opening stock, is expected to be around 15.25 million bales, almost 10 million bales more than current allowable exports of 5.5 million bales. Officials said even after maintaining closing stocks similar to last year, this year the exportable surplus should have been 9.75 million bales.

Heavy inflow takes colour off turmeric

Our Correspondent

Erode, Nov. 19

The prices of turmeric which touched Rs 15,000 a quintal on Thursday, declined by Rs 200-500 a quintal on Friday much to the disappointment of farmers.

"This decrease in price is due to heavy arrival of the commodity and lack of demand," said Mr R.K. Viswanathan, a senior turmeric trader.

In the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 9,336 to Rs 15,099 a quintal and the root variety at Rs 9,000-15,060.

It is Rs 300 less than Thursday's price.

In the Regulated Market Committee the finger variety was sold at Rs 14,563-14,915 a quintal; root variety at Rs 14,690-15,019.

The market authorities said on Friday the finger variety decreased by Rs 490 a quintal, while the root variety by Rs 450 a quintal.

Only 30-40 per cent of the goods were sold in the centres. "Such decrease in sales is due to the poor demand for the commodity.

Added to this the prices quoted in the futures decreased by Rs 700-1,000 a quintal, which resulted in the decrease of the spot turmeric price" said Mr Viswanathan.

Pepper futures drop on liquidation amidst good spot buying

G K Nair

Kochi, Nov. 19

Pepper futures declined Friday on plain liquidation by some bull operators and some selling pressure from the primary market.

Leading exporters who had made commitments covered farm grade pepper from the primary market dealers.

Investors bought back their sales in November with the hope that they can sell it in the open market at a discount given the tight availability situation prevailing in the market. Exporters and dealers would buy it in the current situation, market sources told Business Line.

Meanwhile, more and more enquiries were pouring in from overseas and it had given the feeling in the market that the Indian parity at \$5,075 a tonne (c&f) "is very much in line with origins in the international market," they said.

However, domestic demand was low as the buyers opted to wait for the new crop to arrive. In fact, arrival of the new crop is said to be delayed due to erratic rains in the growing areas.

An estimate of around 75 tonnes of farm grade pepper from the Wayanad district of Kerala were bought by leading exporters from the terminal market at Rs 214, Rs 215 and Rs 216 a kg.

November contract on the NCDEX dropped by Rs 142 to close at Rs 21,909 a quintal. December and January were down by Rs 150 and Rs 133 respectively to close at Rs 22,508 and Rs 22,713 a quintal.

November open interest fell by 517 tonnes to 1,085 tonnes while that of December declined by 187 tonnes to 11,126 tonnes. January moved up by 216 tonnes showing switching over.

Spot prices remained steady at previous levels at Rs 21,100 (ungarbled) and Rs 21,600 (MG 1) a quintal.

Prices quoted for black pepper of different origins in dollar per tonne (c&f) New York were: MG1 asta 5,300-5,400; Lampong asta – 5,000 plus f.o.b; Lampong 550g/l – 4,900-4,950 f.o.b; Lampong 500g/l – 4,850-4,900 f.o.b; Vietnam faq 500g/l– 5,000 f.o.b; Brazil 500g/l – 4,800-4,825 f.o.b; Spot MLSV asta treated – 5,400 ex warehouse New York/New Jersey.

White pepper prices quoted for Muntok and Vietnam were \$7,500 a tonne (c&f) and \$7,500 a tonne (f.o.b) respectively while that of Brazil was \$7,200 (f.o.b).

Nilgiri tea output falls 11.35% in Oct

P.S. Sundar

Coonoor, Nov. 19

Tea production in Nilgiris has fallen by 11.35 per cent in October compared with October 2009, reveals an analysis of the latest information available with producers' organisations.

"Production in our member estates fell to 1.25 million kg (mkg) in October from 1.41 mkg in October last year. The five-year average production for the month was still higher at 1.45 mkg," noted Dr B. Radhakrishnan, Assistant Director, Nilgiris Regional Centre, UPASI Tea Research Foundation.

This posts a 13.79 per cent decline compared with the five-year mean production.

Aided by increased output in earlier months, the cumulative production in the ten months was more than last year. "Cumulative production between January and October in our member estates rose to 12 mkg from 11.63 mkg. But, the five-year average cumulative production was higher at 12.13 mkg," Dr Radhakrishnan observed.

This records an increase of 3.18 per cent over January-October 2009 and a decline of 1.07 per cent over the five-year mean cumulative production.

Spot rubber improves on global cues

Aravindan

Kottayam, Nov. 19

Physical rubber prices flared up on Friday. The market appeared to be bullish following the smart gains in the domestic and international futures. There were no quantity sellers even during the closing hours possibly on supply concerns.

Rubber production in Thailand will fall by about 30,000 tonnes a year for the next six years because of damage from floods, according to official circles. About 16,000 hectares of rubber trees have been destroyed in recent floods and landslides though it represented only about 0.5 per cent of Thailand's rubber area.

According to traders, sheet rubber bounced back to Rs 200 (196) a kg on fresh buying and short-covering.

Futures gain

The December futures for RSS 4 improved to Rs 203.12 (202.02), January to Rs 205.96 (204.86), February to Rs 208.35 (207.84) and March series to Rs 211.69 (210.97) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. The November futures for RSS-3 moved up to ₹365.5 (Rs 198.86) from ₹358 during the day session and then to ₹373.6 (Rs 203.25) a kg in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange (TOCOM). Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 200 (196); RSS-5: 188 (185.50); ungraded: 184 (180); ISNR 20: 194 (192) and latex 60 per cent: 130 (130).

Assam CTCs fall marginally

Our Bureau

Kolkata, Nov. 19

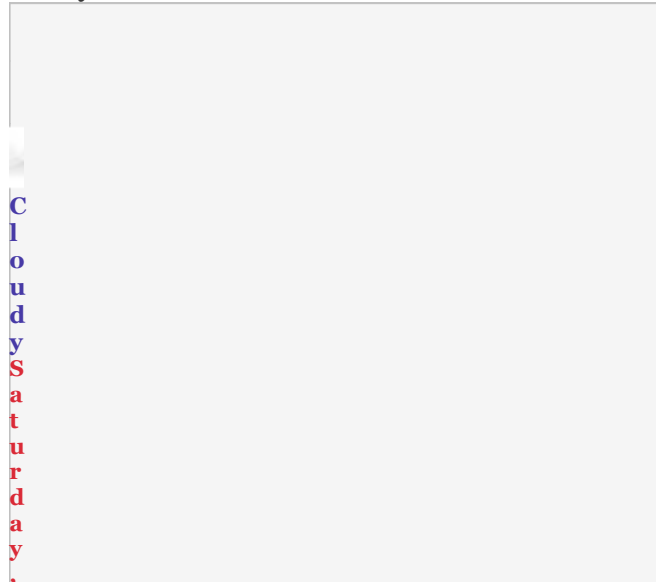
This week (Sale 46) the total offerings (packages) at three North Indian auction centres of Kolkata, Guwahati and Siliguri were 460,038 (423,456 in Sale 46 last year), according to J. Thomas & Company Private Ltd, the tea auctioneers. Of this, the share of Kolkata centre was 197,821 (168,210), comprising 138,925 (128,361) of CTC/Dust, 52,825 (34,888) of Orthodox and 6,071 (4,961) of Darjeeling. The offerings at Guwahati were 149,974 (145,246) and at Siliguri 112,243 (110,000).

Assam CTCs were barely steady and irregularly lower following quality, except the plainer sorts which were around last levels. Dooars sold around last levels. There was good enquiry from Tata Global and selective support from Hindustan Unilever. Western India operated actively on better liquoring teas. Exporters operated on larger brokens. Fair support came from local dealers and other internal sections.

Darjeeling offerings continued to attract strong demand. All whole leaf grades appreciated in value particularly better categories. Liquoring brokens also tended dearer while the remainder sold at last levels.



Chennai - INDIA Today's Weather



Tomorrow's Forecast



Sunday, Nov 21

Max **Min**

31° | **24°**

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Max
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Humidity: 89%

Sunset: 17:39

Wind: Normal

Barometer: 1010.0

Extended Forecast for a week

Monday Nov 22	Tuesday Nov 23	Wednesday Nov 24	Thursday Nov 25	Friday Nov 26
				
29° 25°	28° 24°	29° 25°	28° 26°	27° 26°
Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy