

08 Aug, 2013

## **Nematode management in polyhouses**

Polyhouse technology for growing high value crops is gaining popularity among the farmers of Tamil Nadu.

But the soil conditions are highly conducive for nematode infestations of the crops. The most economically important nematode is root-knot nematode. This nematode causes characteristic galls in the roots resulting in damages and dislocation of xylem vessels which impair the movement of water and minerals. The characteristic symptoms are stunted growth and formation of small and chlorotic leaves.

### **Main cause**

In most cases, problems arise from contaminated soil or soil mixture used as a component of the growing medium, monocropping and infested planting materials.

Commonly followed nematode management practices such as summer ploughing, fallowing and crop rotation which are meant for nematode suppression in field crops are not practicable in polyhouses.

Therefore, nematode management here must be considered primarily as exclusion or avoidance. Once nematodes are introduced it is difficult to manage them.

### **Some measures**

- Drenching the soil with 0.5 per cent formalin at 100 ml/kg soil followed by covering with polythene tarps for two weeks before sowing/planting.
- Growing cowpea (trap crop for root-knot nematode) closely to the main crop and removing the plants out of polyhouse at 45 days after sowing.

-Raising marigold (antagonistic to nematodes) and incorporating in situ after plucking flowers.

-Adding well decomposed farm yard manure at rate of 20 tonnes per hectare to enrich soil.

-Incorporating neemcake at 250 kg/ha soil two weeks before sowing/planting. — Filtering irrigation water using mesh sieves before usage.

Applying *Pseudomonas fluorescens*/*Trichoderma viride* @ 2.5 kg/ha mixed with 50 kg farmyard manure ten days before sowing/planting and use chemical pesticide like carbofuran 3G at rate of 1 kg./ha

(Dr. S. Ramakrishnan and K. Devrajan are Professors, Department of Nematology, Mobile: 9442007597, email: nemarama@yahoo.com and kdevarajan@yahoo.co.in, TNAU, Coimbatore.)

### **A simple, low-cost unit for manure production**

*This technique is presently a huge hit among farmers in Erode*

Present day intensive agricultural practices depend largely on external inputs such as fertiliser and pesticides. But the inputs do not come for free. They are priced high and the rising production costs and negative impact on the soil environment have been leading several farmers to think of alternate practices that are environmentally safe and sustain soil fertility.

### **Must practice**

“For getting a good yield the soil must be fertile. To maintain or restore the soil back to health is a time consuming but must practice for farmers. The soil is home to millions of beneficial microorganisms that aid plant growth.

“There is no use of dumping chemicals in the field killing these beneficial organisms and expecting a bountiful yield,” says Dr. P. Alagesan, Programme Coordinator, Myrada, Gobichettipalayam, Erode District. The need of the hour therefore is to make a conscious move towards sustainable practices that do not affect the environment and at the same time help growers to get a good yield.

Thulasiammal Farm near Chennimalai in Erode is nearly 20 acres large. Like many other farms one cannot notice anything unusual in this place. But for several growers in Erode and surrounding areas this place serves as a knowledge hub and training centre for learning the different aspects of organic agriculture.

The manager of the farm Mr. A. Alagesan is an innovative progressive farmer in organic farming practices and is credited to have developed an effective liquid manure manufacturing technology from cow dung and cow urine.

Labelled as a manure factory this technique is presently a huge hit among farmers in the region.

“All one needs for making it is about Rs.800 as investment for purchasing a plastic barrel. The rest of the inputs can be easily sourced from the farm itself. The basic principles behind this technology are fermentation and sedimentation processes,” says Mr. A. Alagesan.

### **Requirements**

A 200 litre plastic barrel and three plastic gate valves are the requirements. Two quarter inch plastic gate valves are fixed one about a quarter inch below the top of the barrel and the second a quarter inch above the bottom. The third one inch valve is fixed behind the barrel at the bottom.

Fresh desi cow dung and urine should be mixed well with 10 parts of water in the barrel and allowed to ferment for a day.

Add one kg of jaggery for the next day along with decomposed fruits, vegetables or practically any vegetative matter available in the farm.

### **Close the mouth**

Close the mouth of the barrel using a thin piece of cloth to prevent mosquitoes or other insects from laying their eggs.

“Only indigenous cow dung and urine must be used because the microbial activity in local cow waste is more than in other cross bred animals,” says Mr. Alagesan.

Leave the solution undisturbed for a week. After a week farmers can use this solution by opening the valve at the top and allowing fermented liquid to flow freely along with irrigating water or through drip irrigation.

### **Once in 10 days**

Once in ten days water must be added to increase the solution level in the barrel and can be used. Every 20-25 days the barrel must be cleaned and the sediments allowed to wash out by opening the valve at the back.

By adopting this technique a farmer can save Rs.4,000-20,000 per hectare. Apart from reduction in cost of cultivation, this technology increases the water holding capacity of the soil and improves the beneficial micro organisms present in the soil.

### **Previous experience**

“Previously we attempted to create a similar model in a cement tank but the cost worked out to nearly Rs. 60,000. Farmers who visited it opined that they could afford such a high cost technology.

“After some thinking I have designed this model and named it manure production factory which is not only affordable but also effective,” he adds. For personal visits and more details readers can contact Mr. A .Alagesan, Manager of URC – Thulasiammal Farm, Mylady near Chennimalai, email: alagesan.ponnusamy@urc.in, Mobile: 09842135117.

### Look east for food security: Pranab



The Hindu President Pranab Mukherjee having a word with M.S.Swaminathan, Founder Chairman, MSSRF, at the M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation 25th Anniversary on Wednesday. Photo: M.Vedhan

*This region of the country has untapped production potential*

The rights-based approach to food, as envisaged in the Food Security Bill, can be sustained only if farmers and farming are given greater attention, President Pranab Mukherjee said on Wednesday.

Addressing the silver jubilee celebrations of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) here, Mr. Mukherjee said it was imperative

for the future of the food security system to exploit regions such as eastern India with untapped production potential.

“The future of our food security system will depend upon the progress we make in assisting farm families in this region to produce more in an environmentally sustainable manner.” Pointing out that the food security initiative, believed to be the world’s largest social protection measure against hunger, would make access to food at an affordable cost a legal right to over two-thirds of the country’s population, Mr. Mukherjee expressed the hope that the ongoing Parliament session would endorse the Bill, which seeks to replace an ordinance.

“Every Indian can be proud of this transition from the days of the Bengal Famine of 1943, in which over 3 million people died, to the implementation of the Right to Food with our own home-grown food.” Noting that land was a shrinking resource and that the only option was to produce more from less land and with less irrigation water, Mr. Mukherjee said this was where the farmer participatory research programme as well as the farmer-to-farmer learning institutions like farm schools promoted by the MSSRF were invaluable.

The President complimented MSSRF founder-chairman M.S. Swaminathan on initiating the concept of “nutri-farms” to address the hidden hunger caused by micronutrient deficiencies and on his valuable recommendations as Chairman of the National Commission on Farmers for converting the green revolution into an evergreen revolution.

Dr. Swaminathan said while the Foundation was started to fill critical gaps in research and extension efforts in the field of agriculture and development with a special focus on technological and skill empowerment of rural

women, the 25-year-old institution was looking forward “to meet new challenges such as reaping the demographic dividend, biodiversity loss, climate change and widespread prevalence of malnutrition.”

Tamil Nadu Governor K. Rosaiah; Agriculture Minister K. Damodaran; FAO Assistant Director-General Hiroyuki Konuma; the former Editor-in-Chief of The Hindu and MSSRF senior trustee N. Ram; the chair, MSSRF Board of Trustees, Madhura Swaminathan; and MSSRF executive director Ajay Parida were present

## **Back to nature**

*Society K. Bhaskaran and Fabian Prince are successful organic farmers*



With organic food finding a permanent place on the plates of many health conscious residents in the city, the demand for organic produce is burgeoning everyday. The trend has encouraged some to discover their

green thumbs and practise organic farming. Meet two farmers who have reaped a rich harvest by being eco-friendly.

## BEFRIENDING THE GOOD EARTH

A mechanical engineer, Fabian Prince could easily have stayed back in Dubai where he worked for seven years. Instead, he chose to return to Kerala and become a farmer. Today, on nearly five acres of land near St. Xavier's College, Thumba, he grows vegetables, plantains and, hold your breath, watermelons.

“Although I come from a coastal area (Kannanthura near Shanghumughom), I have always loved farming. In fact, when I was doing my engineering at College of Engineering Thiruvananthapuram, we used to have 12 cows at home and used to supply milk regularly to the college hostel. Once I returned from Dubai, I decided to take up organic farming. I took a certificate course in organic farming from Mahatma Gandhi University. Later on, from the Livestock Management Training Centre, Kudappanakunnu, I learnt dairy farming and goat/rabbit rearing. I also learnt mushroom farming and bee-keeping from College of Agriculture, Vellayani. Afterwards I started cultivation in a joint venture with the Jesuit fathers of St. Xavier's,” he says.

His land at Thumba is a coconut grove and he started off with cultivating plantain as an inter-crop, and then planted yellow cucumber in between. Amaranthus, cowpea, bitter gourd, snake gourd, ridge gourd, chillies, lady's finger, brinjal and the like followed.

Watermelon cultivation just happened. “We used to dump food waste under the coconut trees and one day we found that the watermelon seeds in it had sprouted. We took good care of the plant and, to our surprise, we got a



great yield as well. We got over 100 watermelons in the first round and in the second, even more, of which one of them weighed 13.6 kg!” he says with pride. Watermelons need enough sunlight, water, sandy soil and base manure which includes cow dung, food compost and coir pith.

“We even tried to grow vine tomato, which is used to make pizzas. I plan to start bee keeping later this month,” he adds. He also had a flourishing mushroom business, which was stopped sometime ago.

Now that he is working in Kochi in a design firm, Fabian shuttles between the two cities twice every week to supervise the cultivation. “Farming is a stress-buster for me. I unwind once I walk into my farm and see the yield,” he says with immense pleasure. Contact: 9349323959

ATHIRA M.

#### BUMPER YIELD

“He will be back from the fields only in the evening...He doesn’t use a mobile.” We had called K. Bhaskaran’s home for an interview and he had already left for the day’s work at six in the morning.

Bhaskaran toils alone on his one-acre plot at Thennoorkkonam near Vizhinjam from dawn till dusk. And organic produce from his field reaches households in the city through Thanal’s organic bazaar and some shops in Chalai market.

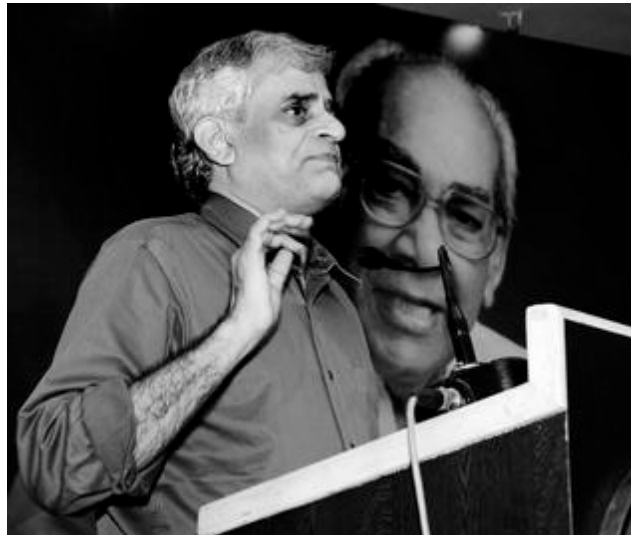
“It was circumstances that forced me to turn to farming. Though I took to farming at the age of 15, I left it behind when I got a job at a spinning mill in Balaramapuram. I worked there 22 years, but it was closed one day and we were asked to quit. We had to find another option for survival. Two years later, I went back to farming,” says Bhaskaran.

It has been his bread and butter for the last nine years or so. Red amaranthus, yams, snake gourd, lady's finger, long beans, chilli, bitter gourd, bananas (nendran, kappa, robusta, palayamthodan and rasakadali varieties) ... his farm is a picture of plenty. "I took to organic farming after attending a meeting organised by Vizhinjam Krishi Bhavan and Thanal. I started it off with amaranthus and slowly moved on to other crops and vegetables," he says.

He vouches for the quality of organic products. "Definitely, the dishes made with organic vegetables are more tastier than vegetables grown with chemical fertilizers. Also, most of the vegetables we buy decay very easily. But it is not the case with organically grown products. Most of them stay fresh for many days, provided they aren't rotten inside," he says.

Bhaskaran admits that organic farming is not always a lucrative business. "It is true that there is a huge demand for organic products. But we don't always get the profit. In addition, there is the huge loss we suffer due to climatic variations. There is no government fund or other agency to help us in those cases. All said and done, I'm always happy to be doing this," he says. Contact: 2485782

## Farmer population declining: Sainath



The Hindu Rural Affairs Editor P. Sainath delivering the Chukkapalli Pitchaiah memorial lecture, in Vijayawada on Wednesday.— Photo: Ch. Vijaya Bhaskar

Andhra Pradesh farmer is three times more likely to kill himself than any other citizen of India, said *The Hindu* Rural Affairs Editor P. Sainath, here on Wednesday.

Delivering a lecture organised in memory of Left leaning industrialist, Chukkapalli Pitchaiah, on “Complexities of Grameena Bharat”, Mr. Sainath said that Andhra Pradesh was among the five worst States where farmer population was rapidly declining, even as the rate of suicides was increasing among the community.

Blaming the government’s neo-liberal economic policies, he said that the State had witnessed highest fall in the number of farmers in the past 10 to 15 years. “On an average, we are losing 2,000 farmers everyday. Where are these farmers going? They are migrating to towns in large chunks in search of work,” he said.

Forced acquisition of land from farmers is one of the reasons, he said, adding that 20 lakh acres were forcefully acquired from the farming community in the last 10 years.

Referring to the Food Security Bill, he ridiculed the changing definition of the poverty line as per the whims and fancies of the people at the helm of affairs. “Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and many other States will lose access to public distribution system,” he said.

Mr. Sainath dwelt at length on what he called ‘flawed’ land reforms “which has a new meaning – taking it from farmers and giving it to the corporate sector”.

Recalling the mass movements by farmers, workers and peasants in the past, he said that the solution to the present-day crisis lies in going back to those days of mass struggle. “Let’s start with effective implementation of the Directive Principles of the State policy,” he said.

### **Three cotton farmers end lives**

Three cotton farmers from different places in Adilabad district committed suicide on Wednesday reportedly perturbed over failure of Bt cotton seed to germinate. While A. Rajesh, a Lambada tribal ended his life at Tanur, G. Kishan consumed poison at Utnoor. Bt cotton seed had failed to germinate in the 10 acres that the former cultivated and the three acres of the latter. Both were mentally disturbed owing to huge debts they had incurred.

Similarly, Madavath Sriram, 40, another Lambada tribal tenant farmer from Tanimadugu in Dandepalli mandal took the extreme step after cotton failed in three acres of land taken on lease. He is said to have incurred a debt of Rs. 2 lakh. — Staff Reporter

### **Announce farm loan waiver, government urged**

The two factions of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and the Hasiru Sene on Wednesday demanded that the government announce waiver of farm loans in view of the drought in Kolar district.

While the Kodihalli Chandrashekhar faction of the organisation took out a procession in support of its demand, the Puttannaiah faction staged a dharna in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office.

The organisations urged the government to take up drought relief work to provide succour to the people and livestock. The organisations stressed the need for a special package on the lines of the Vidarbha package for the district.

All farm loans in the district should be waived as farmers are suffering due to failure of rain, they said.

### **Learn to process food**

The Food Processing Centre of PSG College of Arts and Science, set up in 2011, allows entrepreneurs to manufacture their value-added products, and offers a variety of courses to train people the techniques of value-addition. Operated under the aegis of the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics of the college, the centre has been set up by the college management, with partial funding from Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries. It is licensed by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.

The focus, according to, S. Radhai Sri, Associate Professor of the department and coordinator of the food processing plant, was to take forward the concept of reducing wastage and post-harvest handling of fruits and vegetables.

“It is also to help conduct research and outreach activities for entrepreneurs, members of self help groups, students, and also farmers, to enhance food safety in all spheres of the food system gamut,” she says.

“Equipment such as steam jacketed kettle, pasteuriser, homogeniser, fluidised bed drier, and pulper, can be used by food business operators for research and development work as well as product development.

Consultancy services are also provided on product development and market testing,” she adds.

The unit has product lines for ready-to-serve beverages, jam, jelly, and sauce. It is also equipped for canning of fruits and vegetables, packed and flavoured milk production, instant mixes and masala powders, research and development, and quality checking laboratories.

The centre is equally interested in promoting its training programmes — ranging from one day to one year — for the benefit of those who are trying to establish themselves as entrepreneurs.

There are weeklong programmes on preparing products from fruits, vegetables, etc.

The one-year programme is a Diploma course on Post Harvest Technology approved by the Bharathiar University.

Admissions for the training programmes are open.

### **Contact**

Those interested can contact the Food Processing Centre on 0422-4303300 (extension 3357 / 3314).

## **Nursing hopes for a good crop**

*Farmers say the onus now is on the PWD officials to stabilise flow*

Although the water flow ebbed in the Cauvery river drastically on Wednesday, the river had over the past week given adequate courage to farmers in the district to nourish hopes of breaking even in agricultural prospects in the season ahead.

The farmers hope that there would be enough water from the river, and from the heavens in the later weeks, to see at least the food crops through.

The cash crops could be taken care of once the initial hurdles are crossed in the coming weeks that are crucial for any plantings, the farmers said.

Late on Wednesday, the realisation at Jedarpalayam Bed Regulator on the western end of district was 44,700 cusecs while the eastern end Kattalai Bed Regulator was receiving 47,800 cusecs.

With Mettur Dam discharging 50,000 cusecs, the flow was expected to stabilise at around the same quantum or less over the next week or so.

## **New cropping season**

However, the Public Works Department officials are confident that the flow could be maintained till the end of the season next year at least for the irrigation channels such as South Bank Canal, Kattalai High Level Channel, and Krishnarayapuram Channel in Karur district.

That had revived the sagging morale of farmers in the district who were at the receiving end of the nature's fury for the past couple of years.

“Storage at Mettur Dam and the current discharge levels had given us the much required confidence to go in for samba crop.

But the Public Works Department must ensure that we get assured supply, meaning not wasting available water, till at least end of next January for us to see through the samba paddy crop in the Kulithalai-Krishnarayapuram belt of the district,” says Deputy Secretary of the Cauvery Delta Farmers’ Welfare Association Kavandampatti R. Subramanian.

As for the cash crops such as banana and sugarcane, the water flow in the river has at best kindled the hopes of a new cropping season.

While paddy farmers in areas such as Kulithalai have started raising nurseries, the cash crop farmers have decided to wait to ensure that all would be well, and wells would have enough water over the next couple of weeks to even start fresh plantations. They are reluctant to take the plunge, ravaged as they are by the long drought.

### **Prepare a supply plan for samba, officials told**



**TAKING STOCK OF THE SITUATION:**Registrar of Cooperatives P. Sitaraman and Director of Agriculture M. Rajendran presiding over a meeting with officials in Nagapattinam on Wednesday.

District administrations have been advised to prepare a supply plan for the samba season that includes quantum of seeds, fertilizers, and crop loans, said P. Sitaraman, Registrar of Cooperatives, here on Wednesday.



Mr. Sitaraman and Director of Agriculture M. Rajendran are visiting Central districts to gauge preparedness for samba season.

Mr. Sitaraman said their visit was to address farmers' concerns over the availability of seeds, inputs, fertilizers, and crop loans. As on July 31, the credit disbursement target through primary agricultural cooperative societies (PACS) for the State was Rs. 941.6 crore. However, the PACS had surpassed the target by achieving Rs. 958.68 crore.

The annual target for Nagapattinam was Rs. 110 crore, which includes Rs. 30.20 crore for samba. The crop loan target of Rs. 6.81 crore for kuruvai was exceeded to touch Rs. 7.87 crore, he said.

According to Mr. Rajendran, 45 lakh acres of land had been identified as the cultivable area this year. Of this, 8 lakh acres of land would be brought under kuruvai and the remaining 37 lakh acres under samba. As of date, 3.50 lakh acres of land had been brought under samba. There was adequate availability of seeds, the director said.

Collector T. Munusamy said that about 1.20 lakh hectares of land would be brought under samba against the average of 1.02 lakh hectares. The team is slated to have similar consultations with farmers and line departments in Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Ariyalur, Pudukottai, Tiruchi, and Karur.

### **Sufficient seeds available for samba crop, say officials**

*1,575 tonnes of certified seeds stocked for distribution during samba season*

With water flowing in the irrigation channels all along the Cauvery, farmers are queuing up to buy BPT 3204 samba variety of seeds in Tiruchi district.

The Department of Seed Certification and Organic Certification is ready to meet the demand for this long-duration variety.

It has despatched 30.72 tonnes of BPT 3204 seed to the Agriculture Department extension centres and 178.5 tonnes to private depots. This apart, the department has stocked up 1,575 tonnes of certified seeds for distribution during the samba season.

K. Sakthi Mohan, Director, Seed Certification and Organic Certification, inspected a few private sales units on Tuesday to ascertain the quality of seeds. "Stern action will be taken against those selling seeds above the price fixed by the State government.

Special monitoring cells led by seed inspectors have been constituted for conducting surprise inspection at private depots for ensuring quality of seeds," he said.

At the seed processing unit at Manachanallur, Mr. Mohan verified the quality of seeds stocked. Farmers prefer the long-duration BPT 3204 variety because of its attractive returns. The crop could be harvested between 130 and 140 days. The other long-duration varieties preferred by farmers were *white ponni* and Co-43, said R.Ravi, Assistant Director of Seed Certification, Tiruchi.

K. Muthukoori, Deputy Director of Seed Inspection, said monitoring cells would ensure that seeds were not sold beyond the expiry date. Mr. Sakthi Mohan gave away seeds to a few farmers and advised them to check the expiry date of the seeds before buying them.

## **Watch out for mastitis symptoms in cows, dairy farmers told**

Lack of awareness among dairy farmers on the need for a clean environment for maintaining milch animals has been a cause of concern for scientists and experts in controlling the incidence of mastitis.

The problem exacerbates in summer and cows should be protected from heat under thatched sheds.

Heat causes stress in animals which in turn leads to the disease, said A. Clement, Assistant Professor, Regional Research Centre of the Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS).

Replying to a question from farmers at a day-long training programme on “disease management and vaccination in dairy cows” organised at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra at Vamban near here on Tuesday, he said that factors such as erratic schedule in milking cows and dirty vessels could trigger the disease.

Pointing out that it was a communicable disease, he advised farmers to isolate the infected animals. He gave vital tips to protect the cows from the disease.

Milch cows were also prone to foot-and-mouth and respiratory tract infection. He explained the vaccination programmes being implemented by the State government to protect cows.

M. Asokhan, Professor and Head, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, appealed to farmers to vaccinate their cows. Milch cows could be a good source of supplementary income for farmers, especially in times of distress. Proper care should be taken to feed the calves to increase their immunity.

Noorjehan A.K.A.Hanif, Assistant Professor (Agricultural Extension), delivered a lecture on feed management and explained the importance of the mineral mixture feed recommended by TANUVAS for cattle. She explained the hygienic methods to be adopted during milking and cultivation of low-cost azolla.

### **Sowing completed in 79 p.c. of targeted area in Yadgir**



Good going: Against the targeted area of 2.68 lakh hectares, sowing has been completed in more than 2.12 lakh hectares in Yadgir district.— File Photo

Despite the shortfall in rainfall during June and July, farmers have completed sowing in 79 per cent of the targeted area in Yadgir district during the kharif season.

Official sources told *The Hindu* in Gulbarga on Wednesday that against the targeted area of 2.68 lakh hectares, sowing had been completed in more than 2.12 lakh hectares. Cereals have been sown in 57,842 hectares, pulses in 84,301 hectares, oilseeds in 23,136 hectares and commercial crops in 47,88 hectares.

Farmers have completed sowing in 62,804 hectares against the target of 70,930 hectares in Yadgir taluk, in 82,040 hectares against the target of 98,785 hectares in Shahapur taluk and in 67,537 hectares against the target of 99,605 hectares in Surpur taluk. The sources said that the district received a total of 429 mm of rainfall in July as against the average rainfall of 459 mm.

Yadgir taluk recorded rainfall of 160 mm against the average rainfall of 177 mm, Shahapur 118 mm against the average rainfall of 161 mm and Surpur recorded rainfall of 150 mm as against the average rainfall of 121 mm.

### **Kuttanad to get museum, genetic resources centre**



Recognition:President Pranab Mukherjee handing over the plaque recognising Kuttanad's below-sea-level farming as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System to Chief Minister Oommen Chandy at the MSSRF in Chennai on Wednesday.– Photo: M. Vedhan

Kuttanad will get a heritage museum that showcases its unique below-sea-level ecosystem, Chief Minister Oommen Chandy said here on Wednesday.

Participating in the silver jubilee celebrations of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), Mr. Chandy said a centre for genetic resources for seawater and below-sea-level farming was also proposed at Mancombu.

The Chief Minister was here to receive from President Pranab Mukherjee a plaque from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations declaring Kuttanad's below-sea-level farming system a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System.

### **Second after Koraput**

Mr. Chandy said a major eco-development plan mentored by the MSSRF was under way at Kuttanad, which was only the second farming system after Koraput (Orissa) to be accorded heritage status by the FAO in India. Kuttanad had over two centuries of farmers' toil evolved a unique rice farming system of paddy-fish cycle on lands that were 2.5-3 metres below the sea level.

"And, unlike the Netherlands, where concrete bunds are constructed to keep away the saline seawater, the Kuttanad farmers developed 'bio-bunds' constructed from coir, banana waste, bamboo, clay and other locally available material," Mr. Chandy said.

Declaring a commitment to redouble efforts to develop and protect such unique ecosystems, Mr. Chandy said the State government had sanctioned funds for establishing an International Research and Training Institute for Below-Sea-Level Farming. The institute would have a sustainable Agriculture Research Centre at Mancombu and a Sustainable Fisheries Centre at Kumarakom, he said.

The Chief Minister thanked Dr. Swaminathan and the MSSRF for preparing the Kuttanad Package and the documentation of the farming system that led to the FAO recognition.

### **ICAR offers collaboration with Goa University**

N. P. Singh, Director, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Research Complex for Goa, has offered collaboration by the ICAR for the development of Goa University Campus at Taleigao in north Goa with appropriate crop planning.

Mr. Singh made the offer taking the opportunity in the presence of Suresh Shetye, Vice-chancellor of Goa University, who had come to inaugurate an ex-trainees convention on Crop Science at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, ICAR Research Complex at Old Goa recently.

Mr. Shetye, in his speech highlighted the negative aspects of development without agriculture which had created problems of garbage and distress among the farming community, and asserted that agriculture if pursued with the aid of science and technology, had the ability to bring about sustainable development in the State.

Mr. Shetye recalled the beauty of Goa 100 years back when the Goan economy was based on agriculture and compared it to the present scenario of land conversion, mining, and pollution-inducing industries, which had led to agriculture being neglected.

Appreciating the yeomen services rendered by Krishi Vigyan Kendra and ICAR since its inception, he appealed to the farming community to look upon agriculture as a business so that it contributed not only to the

economic well being of farmers but also the economy of the State, Mr. Shetye said.

He supported the idea of introducing agriculture in the school and college curriculums so that it would not only provide employment opportunities but also attract young generation towards the noble profession.

### **12 lakh acres to be brought under samba cultivation**

With copious inflow into the Cauvery, it has been proposed to bring about 12 lakh acres under samba cultivation in the State, according to R. Rajendran, Director of Agriculture.

Chief Minister Jayalalithaa has deputed top officials to keep seeds and fertilizers ready for farmers in all eight delta districts.

The first meeting of officials of both the departments was held here on Wednesday with Rajendran and Director of Cooperative Societies P. Seetharaman presiding over. Mr. P. Seetharaman said that in Cuddalore district, out of Rs. 100 crore earmarked for crop loans, a sum of Rs 47.5 crore was disbursed. Seeds worth Rs. 45 lakh were given away and 4,830 tonnes of fertilizers from the total stock of 15,140 tonnes distributed.

### **Channels across delta brimming with water**

*Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, in response to the plea of the ayacut farmers, had ordered release of water in the channels*





Wheel comes full circle: Transport Minister V.Senthil Balaji (right), Minister of Housing and Urban Development R.Vaithilingam, Minister of Khadi and Village Industries T.P. Poonatchi, and Chief Whip R.Manoharan turning the lever to release water from the Kattalai High Level Channel near Mayanur in Karur district on Tuesday . —Photo: M.Moorthy

Fields in interior areas of Tiruchi and Thanjavur districts irrigated by the New Kattalai High Level Channel and Pullambadi Channel got a lifeline when water was released into the channels from the Cauvery near Mayanur in Karur district on Tuesday.

The 133.80-km-long NKHLC irrigates more than 11,198 acres directly in the two delta districts besides feeding 107 tanks to irrigate 9,464 acres for a total ayacut of 20,662 acres. The Pullambadi Channel that runs 90.20 km irrigates 22,114 acres, including direct irrigation of 8,831 acres.

### **550 cusecs water**

Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, in response to the plea of the ayacut farmers, had ordered release of water in the channels. Following this, Housing and Urban Development Minister R. Vaithilingam, Transport Minister V. Senthil Balaji and Khadi and Village Industries Minister T.P. Poonatchi operated the lever to open the sluices and let water gush through NKHLC.

Karur Collector S. Jayandhi and her Tiruchi counterpart Jayashree Muralidharan were present. PWD officials said that around 550 cusecs water was being let into the NKHLC and there was possibility of a gradual increase in the discharge in the days ahead. Karur Superintendent of Police Santhosh Kumar, MLAs A. Pappa Sundaram, R. Kamaraj, N.R. Sivapathy, T. Indira Gandhi, Chief Whip R. Manoharan, District Chairpersons Geetha Manivannan (Karur), and T. Rajathi (Tiruchi), PWD

River Conservancy Division Executive Engineer Balasubramanian and others were present.

**Ariyalur:** Cultivation of Kuruvai crop on 1,496 acres of land irrigated by Karavetti and Chengam tanks would be benefitted from the release of surplus water from the Cauvery through the Pullambadi canal that branches off at Vathalai village in Mannachanallur block in Tiruchi district. To facilitate prompt action by the official machinery for undertaking rescue and relief operations, the district administration has established a control room at the collectorate.

Information can be conveyed round the clock over phone: 1077 (toll free number) or 04329 228151, a press release said.

**Tiruvarur:** Water was released from Koraiyar head in the district on Tuesday for irrigation in Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam districts.

### **Two delta districts**

Collector S.Natarajan formally released the water into Vennar, Koraiyar and Bhamaniyar from Koraiyar head at Needamangalam, which will irrigate several thousands acres of agricultural lands in the two delta districts. An official release said 234 cusecs was released into Vennar; 91 cusecs into Koraiyar; and 317 cusecs into Bhamaniyar. Through Vennar 94, 219 acres of land would be irrigated while 1,20, 957 acres and 38,357 acres would be irrigated through Koraiyar and Bhamaniyar respectively.

### **Areca farmers seek Narendra Modi's help**

*Sadananda Gowda leads delegation to Gujarat Chief Minister*

A delegation of areca farmers, led by D.V. Sadananda Gowda, former Chief Minister and leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, met

Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday to discuss the hurdles faced by areca growers all over the country, and especially in Karnataka. The visit followed a notification by the government of Maharashtra prohibiting arecanut products (even without nicotine or tobacco) and placing arecanut on the list of banned products, said a press release.

### **Potential market**

The delegation said that Gujarat was a potential market for arecanut and traders were apprehensive that the Maharashtra Food Commissioner's notification may set a trend, jeopardising the future of arecanut and its farmers and traders, adding to the crisis in the arecanut market.

### **'Ban baseless'**

The ban on arecanut was baseless as the produce was not carcinogenic, they said. Since Gujarat consumes the bulk of arecanut, Mr. Modi was requested to safeguard the interests of the areca farmers.

### **Assurance**

Following the discussion, Mr. Modi assured the delegation that there would no move to ban arecanut products in Gujarat.

The press release said that arecanut was precious, was not carcinogenic, and had medicinal values.

Mangalore MP Nalin Kumar Kateel, the former Deputy Chief Minister K.S. Eshwarappa, Central Arecanut and Cocoa Marketing and Processing Cooperative Ltd. (CAMPCO) president Konkodi Padmanabha and CAMPCO Managing Director M. Suresh Bhandary were part of the team, said the release.

## Farmers roll up their sleeves for samba

*Release of water in the irrigation canals is expected to recharge water table*



in full flow: The water level at an open well near Musiri has risen appreciably following the release of water in the Cauvery. PHOTO: R.M.

### RAJARATHINAM

Buoyed over the release of water in irrigation canals, including Pullampadi and New Kattalai High Level (NKHLC) channels, farmers in Tiruchi district are gearing up to commence samba paddy cultivation over the next few days.

Farmers are expected to start raising nurseries over the next 10 days as the water flows to the interior parts of the district through the canals. The release of surplus water in the irrigation canals is expected to contribute to a rise in the water table. There is already an appreciable rise in the water level in wells in Musiri along the banks of the Cauvery.

“The release of surplus water in the canals will help improve the water table and farmers in pumpset-irrigated areas will take up samba cultivation soon,” said Mahadhanapuram V. Rajaram, working president, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association.

Farmers in the canal irrigated areas are happy after a long spell of dry weather. “It is a special year as water is being released simultaneously in the Cauvery river for irrigation in the core delta districts (Thanjavur,

Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam) and the irrigation channels. Farmers are gearing up to make the most of it,” said P. Ayyakannu, State vice-president, Bharathiya Kisan Sangam.

However, he appealed to the State government to build a new canal from Hogenakkal to Ayyar in Tiruchi district so as to harness the surplus flow. Such a project would help stabilise irrigation for over 2.5 lakh acres of land. This would help the traditionally dry belts in Thottiyam, Thathaiyengarpet, and Musiri blocks in a big way, he said.

### **Above normal**

Agriculture Department officials have announced that adequate quantity of seeds and fertilizers have been moved to the cooperative societies and private shops. The department officials will conduct a samba cultivation campaign to sensitise farmers to latest farming techniques in 204 villages in the delta areas of the district. System of rice intensification technology will be promoted on about 56,000 acres of land.

The department officials expect the samba paddy coverage to easily exceed the anticipated coverage of 92,250 acres of land in the district this year as against the normal area of 87,250 acres.

“We expect that the shortfall in kuruvai area (on account of drought) will be compensated in samba. If we get good rainfall, more area will be covered in the non-delta areas,” said an officer of the department.

But southwest monsoon has been scanty in the district. The district has received just 11.7 mm of rainfall between June 1 and August 8 against the normal of 95.8 mm for the same period. Farmers in the non-delta areas are pinning their hopes on the northeast monsoon now.

## **Farmers seek support to save LBP ecology**

A section of farmers from the command areas of Lower Bhavani Project (LBP) irrigation system made a representation to M.S. Swaminathan, the renowned geneticist, in Chennai on Wednesday, seeking his help to convince the authorities against the proposed move to lay concrete flooring along irrigation canals under LBP scheme.

Karthikeya Sivasenapathy, convener of LBP Anti-Concrete Joint Action Committee, pointed out to Mr. Swaminathan that it would be an ecological disaster if the Public Works Department went ahead with the move to revive the planned project to lay concrete flooring along the 200-km stretch of canals in the LBP region with the funding of World Bank.

“Once the concrete was laid along the floors and on the walls of the canals, the recharging of wells and borewells in the region will stop. It means that sustainable irrigation during the summer season becomes next to impossible considering that LBP command area lies in semi-arid zone and the rain shadow region of western ghats,” he explained.

## **Ponds**

The agrarian community pointed out that almost 300 small irrigation projects and ponds would go dry if the concrete was laid, thus, affecting drinking water resources to 180 ‘revenue villages’, 17 town panchayats, one Corporation and two municipalities spread over Tirupur, Erode and Karur districts. Besides, the felling of trees to facilitate laying of concrete along the banks of the canals would disturb the flora and fauna in the region. The area houses a number of small bird sanctuaries and cattle were reared in plenty.

Terming the project as a 'not sustainable development model', the farmers pointed out that the basic concept of the project itself was against the principles of United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification.

Mr. Senapathy told *The Hindu* over the phone from Chennai that Mr. Swaminathan had assured to look into their grievances.

### ***The area houses a number of small bird sanctuaries***

### **College buildings to be inaugurated today**

The opening ceremony of college and hostel buildings of the College of Horticulture at Tamaka here will be held at 10.30 a.m. on Thursday. Union Minister of State for Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises K.H. Muniyappa will inaugurate the function, S.B. Dandin, vice-chancellor of University of Horticultural Sciences, Bagalkot, told reporters here on Wednesday.

Minister for Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing Shamanuru

Shivashankarappa will inaugurate the college building. While district in-charge Minister U.T. Khader will inaugurate the boys hostel building,

Minister of State for Agriculture C. Krishna Byre Gowda will declare open the girls hostel. S. Ayyappan, director-general, Indian Council for

Agricultural Research, New Delhi, will lay the foundation stone for the Krishi Vijnana Kendra. College Dean V. Nache Gowda and education director V.

Raju were present.

— Staff Correspondent

### **TNAU scientists examine FCI godown**

Scientists from the Centre for Plant Protection Studies of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and an official of Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies

Corporation who visited the Food Corporation of India (FCI) at Peelamedu and nearby residential areas have suggested some pest control measures to prevent the pests from causing further problem to the public.

The team that visited the areas on Wednesday, however, told the people that the insects did not cause any direct harm to human beings, but only fed and multiplied on stored food grains.

They were urged to keep stored food grains in insect-proof containers to prevent multiplication of insects.

The Area Manager of FCI Coimbatore has been asked to use UV light traps for mass trapping of stored grain insect pests in warehouses.

Two traps can be placed at the corners of a warehouse of dimension of 60m X 20m X 5 m for effective storage pest management.

Stack storage traps can be used in stacks of grains without damaging them.

It is been recommended to use aluminium phosphide fumigation once in 45 days if more than two insects were found in 0.5 kg of grain or on need basis.

Fortnightly spraying of malathion 50 EC on alleyways and gangways, and DDVP 76 WSC for air charging, were also suggested.

### **FCI clarifies**

Referring to reports on pest menace near the FCI godown, the management has said that it is taking efforts to control the infestation by deploying pneumatic compressor machines for cleaning the cobwebs, power sprayers for arresting the flying insects, and labourers for prophylactic and curative operations at the godown.



### **Jackfruit processing centre to be launched**

The Kerala Agro Industries Corporation Limited will start a jackfruit processing centre, billed the first of its kind in the State's public sector, at Poopathy in Poyya panchayat, near here, on August 19.

Agriculture Minister K. P. Mohanan will inaugurate the centre. T. N. Prathapan, MLA, will preside. A sum of Rs.1.13 crore has been sanctioned under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana for the first phase of setting up the centre. The jackfruit centre is being started on land bought for setting up a fruit and vegetable processing centre. The foundation for the fruit and vegetable centre was laid on October 9, 1997. Experts say Kerala is yet to effectively use its jackfruit produce.

### **Wholesale flower market yet to become functional in Mysore**

*It has come up at a cost of Rs. 4.5 cr. at APMC yard at Bandipalya*



Bereft of activity: The work on the wholesale flower market, constructed under the National Horticulture Mission, was completed last year.— Photo: M.A. Sriram

A wholesale flower market built at an estimated cost of Rs. 4.5 crore at the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) yard at Bandipalya on the Mysore-Nanjangud Road is yet to become functional.

Though the market is ready, growers are doing business at Devaraja Market, which does not have enough facilities, and on the pavements on Dhanvantri Road and the road opposite Platinum Jubilee Hall near J.K. Grounds. Traders visit these places and purchase flowers from growers. Built under the National Horticulture Mission, the work on the market was completed last year. The market is expected to boost commercial floriculture in Mysore region, a prominent belt for traditional floriculture.

#### **48 stalls**

An official at the APMC here told *The Hindu* that the market would be inaugurated “soon” but did not specify the date. He, however, said 48 stalls had already been allotted to flower merchants.

“Once the inauguration is done, they (traders) will be asked to occupy the stalls and do business. A meeting with flower merchants will be convened soon to discuss the issue,” he said. The market lacks a cold storage facility though it was part of the original plan. This is being cited to be the reason for the delay in the opening of the market.

“Cold storage will be set up in subsequent years,” the official said. The authorities wanted private players to build and operate the cold storage as they cannot look after its maintenance.

In the absence of a “suitable” response from private players, the cold storage project has been kept on hold, it is learnt.

If the flower market had become functional, growers, who bring their produce from different parts of the district and also from neighbouring

districts such as Mandya, would have been benefited during the current monsoon season.

Flower business is done in unhygienic surroundings at the Devaraja Market and also in other places in the city. Grower suffers losses if it rains in the mornings, which is the crucial time for business. Also, there is no shelter for doing business in other places.

Besides traditional flower varieties such as mallige, kakada, kanakambara (crossandra) and tuberose, people in the region are also into cultivation of ornamental flowers such as anthurium.

However, the market in Mysore is primarily for traditional varieties. Mysore Mallige, a unique variety of jasmine known for its lingering fragrance, has secured geographical indication (GI) tag.

Nearly 900 hectares of land have been covered under flower cultivation in Mysore district alone, sources in the Horticulture Department said.

Traditional floriculture, which had slowed down for various reasons, is gradually picking up due to attractive returns and growing demand for flowers in the neighbouring States.

## **NABARD ready to fund ICT solutions**

### *PCBs need to shift to new payment regime*

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is willing to take up with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) the issue of relaxing the time frame set for the 1,603 Primary Cooperative Banks to move over to the new payment regime, and also fund the development of an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) solution that could address their concerns. Kerala chief regional manager of NABARD R.

Amalorpavanathan told media persons here on Tuesday that the bank had only suggested the business correspondent model to cooperatives. The RBI had allowed them a one-year window to join the mainstream or be left out at their own risk.

The bank would call a meeting of experts on August 17 as part of its efforts to evolve the new solution. A high-level committee should be constituted with people from various departments for finding solutions and implementing the RBI decision to move over to the new regime.

PCBs did not form part of the 'payments' system as envisaged under the National Payments Corporation of India and would have to bear consequential risks. At risk was their very business model that was out of sync with mainstream banking.

Among other things, a circular issued by the bank recently had enunciated guidelines on primary cooperatives taking up the role as business correspondent of district cooperative banks, subject to conditions. PCBs were required to transfer all assets and liabilities to the district bank, subject to legal provisions contained in the State Cooperative Societies Act. While acting as business correspondents, they were not authorised to carry out any financial business or services in their own books of account. Mr. Amalorpavanathan said the National Payments Corporation of India was the Indian equivalent of Visa/Mastercard platform for routing payments between financial institutions/banks.

No entity without a banking licence could hope to be a member of the payment system. So this ruled out membership for primary cooperatives unless they associated with an entity holding a bank licence.

This would, in turn, lead to flight of business since customers would not be able to source subsidies and other payments from the government under the direct benefits transfer system.

### UN agency to provide Rs.700 crore lifeline to Uttarakhand villagers



The International Fund for Agricultural Development has decided to provide support to 93,000 households. Photo: V.V.Krishnan

The International Fund for Agricultural Development, a United Nations agency, will provide livelihood opportunities to villagers of calamity-hit Uttarakhand at an expenditure of Rs 700 crore.

The funds will be provided under the Integrated Livelihood Support project. In the first phase, Rs 20 crore have been sanctioned, Chief Secretary Subhash Kumar said here on Wednesday.

This will help in purchase of livestock, purchase of mules and milch animals, as well as seeds according to the requirement of the season, he said.

The decision was taken at a meeting in this regard held at the Secretariat on Tuesday between the members of the International Fund for Agriculture Development and the Chief Secretary. The objective of this project is to

improve the conditions of the economically weaker sections in the hill areas, he said.

The project will be first started in nine hill districts and 38 blocks. It was decided during the meeting that the preparations for the project would conclude by September.

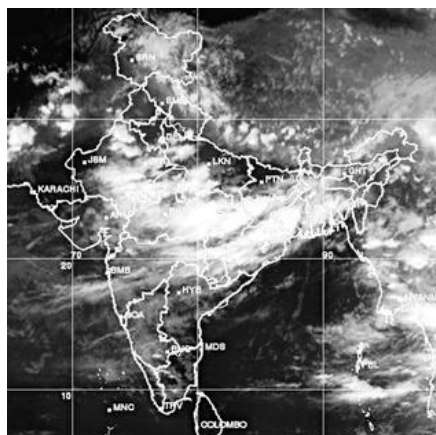
Additional Chief Secretary Rakesh Sharma said that it had to be ensured that benefits would be given on priority to the affected people of disaster-hit areas and they would get aid in buying livestock and mules.

He directed the officials to work with great sincerity and dedication and the required staff should be appointed on priority basis. Providing support to 93,000 households has been targeted.

Planning is also being done to increase the income of villages through dairy, production of crops, vegetables, spices, fruits, poultry, as well as tourism activities. Present at the meeting were Principal Secretary S Raju and mission leader of IFAD Edward Matthew among other officials. PTI

***The project will be first started in nine hill districts and 38 blocks***

## **Weather**



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on Aug. 7.

**ANDHRA PRADESH**

Anantapur	33 23 19	151
Arogyavaram	31 19 0	132
Bapatla	30 25 0	360
Calingapatnam	31 26 0	233
Gannavaram	31 25 tr	418
Hanamkonda	32 23 0	655
Hyderabad AP	27 23 tr	436
Kakinada	33 26 18	346
Khammam	32 24 0	15
Kavali	30 24 3	188
Kurnool	31 24 0	239
Mahabubnagar	27 23 1	425
Machilipatnam	31 25 tr	356
Nandyal	31 24 0	203
Narasapur	31 26 0	450
Nellore	31 25 0	328
Nizamabad	29 23 3	904
Ongole	29 24 0	181
Ramagundam	28 24 5	811
Tirupathi AP	34 24 13	216
Tuni	35 26 0	149
Vizag AP	34 27 1	163
Vizag	30 26 6	180

**KARNATAKA**

Agumbe	22 17 108	6215
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Bengaluru AP	28 20 0	267
Bengaluru	27 20 0	334
Belgaum AP	27 19 9	516
Bellary	32 23 1	212
Bijapur	29 20 1	322
Chitradurga	28 20 tr	212
Chickmagalur	25 19 1	399
Chintamani	30 19 3	138
Gadag	29 20 tr	147
Gulbarga	28 22 0	330
Hassan	25 19 7	583
Honavar	30 23 40	2704
Karwar	30 25 6	2182
Madikeri	18 16 35	3156
Mangalore AP	26 23 39	2745
Mysore	28 19 0	159
Mandya	29 20 1	73
Panambur	26 23 33	2531
Raichur	30 23 0	189
Shirali	28 24 44	2970
<b>KERALA</b>		
Alappuzha	28 23 40	1968
Kannur	26 23 32	3071
Kochi AP	31 22 16	2213
Kottayam	29 23 6	1914
Kozhikode	26 23 13	2233



Punalur	28 22 3	1335
Thiruvanantha		
-puram AP	29 23 tr	870
Thiruvanantha		
-puram City	29 23 tr	854
Vellanikkara	27 23 3	2255
<b>TAMIL NADU</b>		
Adiramapattinam	36 25 0	45
Coimbatore AP	29 22 0	29
Coonoor	21 14 1	113
Cuddalore	36 26 0	181
Chennai AP	33 25 0	328
Chennai	33 25 0	205
Dharmapuri	33 20 0	19
Kanyakumari	29 24 0	222
Karaikal	35 26 tr	169
Kodaikanal	16 11 0	185
Madurai AP	37 25 0	23
Nagapattinam	35 26 0	70
Palayamkottai	34 25 0	23
Pamban	32 27 0	5
Parangipettai	35 26 0	112
Puducherry	36 24 20	163
Salem	33 22 2	232
Thanjavur	36 28 0	43
Tiruchi AP	37 26 0	4

Tirupattur	34 20 0	75
Tiruttani	35 — —	—
Tondi	32 26 tr	90
Tuticorin	37 26 0	5
Ooty	16 11 3	342
Valparai	21 15 2	3169
Vellore	34 25 0	213

#### LAKSHADWEEP

Amini Divi	28 27 tr	813
Minicoy	29 24 5	859
Kavarathi	— — —	—

#### OTHER STATIONS

Kolkata (Alipore)	31 26 58	798
Mumbai	31 25 4	1922
New Delhi	30 25 13	484

The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (trace) and total rainfall in mm since June 01, 2013.

RAIN AT A FEW PLACES OVER A.P.

**CHENNAI:** Rainfall occurred at most places over Kerala and Coastal Karnataka, at many places over Lakshadweep and at a few places over Andhra Pradesh and South Interior Karnataka. Isolated rainfall occurred over Tamil Nadu and North Interior Karnataka.

The chief amounts of rainfall recorded in centimetres are:

**Tamil Nadu:** Devala (Nilgiris District) 5.

**Andhra Pradesh:** Macharla (district, Guntur dt.) 7, Chinnoor (dist Adilabad) 5.

**Kerala:** Alappuzha 4, Kannur, Taliparamba (Kannur district), Hosdurg and Kudulu (both in Kasaragod district) and Vadakara (Kozhikode district) 3 each.

**Karnataka:** Agumbe 11, Dharmasthala, Subramanya (both Dakshina Kannada dt), Siddapura (Udupi dt) 8 each.

**FORECAST (valid until Friday morning):** Rain or thundershower would occur at most places over Coastal Karnataka and Kerala, at many places over South Interior Karnataka and Lakshadweep and at a few places over North Interior Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Isolated rain or thundershower may occur over Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

**Heavy Rainfall Warning:** Isolated heavy rain may occur over Coastal Karnataka and ghat areas of South Interior Karnataka during the next 48 hours.



# THE TIMES OF INDIA

## 'Green Revolution alone can't eliminate hunger'

Green Revolution is not enough to meet the demand of millions of hungry people given that India's population and geographical size PadmaShri professor PramodTandon said here on Wednesday.

Tandon was delivering professor A R Chavan Memorial Lecture at M S University on 'Plantgenetic resources, food security and climate change in Indian perspective.'

Former vice-chancellor of North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, Tandon stressed that crop improvement is needed, post harvest losses are to be minimized and new high yielding disease free varieties need to be developed.

"About 250 million metric tonnes of wheat production will not be enough for future needs. The comparative yields of our crops are less than China, which produces 4.8 tonnes per hectare of wheat in comparison to 2.9 tonnes per hectare produced in India. Hybrid rice in China has increased the yield many times. It is high time to adopt GM crops and meet the increasing demands of cereals, pulses, vegetables among others," he said. Highlighting the issues of use of modern technologies and role of climate change in loss of biodiversity, he also thanked 2.3 million farmers in the country and particularly of Gujarat, who have grown Bt crops in 3.8 million hectares.

He added that 34,000 out of 2,70,000 plant species are endangered.

"Fifteen to 20 per cent of these plants are threatened in their natural

habitat. Poor seed formation and poor growth rate are two main reasons for their extinction. Monoculture of trees is not good for the country," he said.

### **Retailers, consumers sourcing cheaper vegetables from farmers via e-mails, SMS in Maharashtra**

Over 300 farmers from Mulashi near Pune, organised under the Abhinav Farmers' club, plan four months in advance who will grow what.

More than 1,300 women, organised in 117 groups, do attractive packaging of organic vegetables, earning Rs 150 a day (for just 4-5 hours' work).

The fresh vegetables, fruits and grains will be delivered at door step as per the orders booked through e-mails, voice SMS and over phone in Mumbai and Pune.

Metro Cash and Carry, Reliance Fresh, D Mart and other organised retailers are directly sourcing vegetables from farmers as per the state government's cap on the selling price. The organised retailers are also part of the 106 centres in Mumbai, where the state government started direct marketing of vegetables in July.

Young and enterprising farmers of Krishi Vigyan Mandal, Kalvadi, near the tomato cluster of Narayangaon, about 80 km from Pune, supply two tonne of fresh vegetables every day to 15 centres managed by aggregators. The sorting and grading of vegetables is done in the village, while the farmers' vehicles will distribute the produce from Ghatkopar to Malad from 1 am to 7 am. The aggregators are the only people between the farmers and

consumers.

As vegetable prices show no sign of slowdown, direct marketing of vegetables is increasingly becoming popular as it ensures best price to the farmers and consumers. "Direct marketing centres helped reduce vegetable prices by 40% in Mumbai," said Maharashtra Agriculture Minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil.

Now, the state government is planning to open farmer-to-consumer direct marketing centres in all the cities and urban centres. "When we do doorstep delivery, our price realisation becomes double," said Aruna Shelake from Mulashi taluka, who has been part of the direct marketing system of Abhinav Farmers' Club for the last 11 years.

### **No lease of life for Brahmavara sugar factory**

A promise given by KPCC president during a Congress rally in the run up to the recently held elections to the state assembly to reopen the Brahmavara Cooperative Sugar Factory had come as a respite for the employees of the factory who were left in the lurch when it shut down in 2006.

However, the matter did not find a place in the state budget presented by CM Siddaramaiah who was also present at the election rally held in Malpe on February 1.

The CM did not allocate any funds for the company to rejuvenate it, though

the KPCC president had assured the employees that if elected to power the Congress government would sanction a grant of Rs 60 crore to reopen the company.

The management of the factory is yet to pay Rs7.86 crore that is due to its employees even after the state high court directed them to pay it in 2010. In total, the company owes Rs 16.5 crore to various stakeholders including banks, employees and farmers.

A contempt petition was also filed in the high court on this regard and in a recent judgment it directed the company to pay the dues with interest.

S Bhaskar Shetty, president of Brahmavara Sugar Factory Workers' Union, told TOI that the factory, which was started in 1983 with a capital of Rs 90 crore, now requires at least Rs 300 crore for its complete rejuvenation. "All the machineries in the factory need to be changed. We will continue our legal battle till the company pays our dues," he added.

Nagaraj Shettigar, a resident of Matappady who worked in the factory for 15 years in the accounts section, told TOI, that the company owes him Rs 1.90 lakh as his salary was stalled for 26 months prior to the closure.

"I have not also received my PF and gratuity. Now, I depend on agriculture for a livelihood. I also work as a collie," he added.

Another employee Rathnakar Ganiga, a resident of Balkur, who worked in

the company as a field worker for 16 years told TOI that his salary was stalled from 2002 till the closure. He was getting a monthly salary of Rs 7,000. "When it was operating, it was a boon for the locals. It created lots of jobs for the local youth. Our protests for our salaries have fallen on deaf ears," he added.

### **51 taluks stare at drought in rain-rich Karnataka**

Karnataka is facing a strange phenomenon: it's in the grip of a drought and floods at the same time. The floods have followed two successive years of drought.

In the last week of July, five districts bore the brunt of flash floods following heavy rains. Now, the spectre of drought looms over 51 taluks in 20 districts.

The twin calamities have resulted in a massive loss of human life, property, agricultural and horticultural crops and livestock.

Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority chief Tushar Girinath says five districts have received excess rain as per figures available from June 1 to July 31: Chikmagalur (56% excess), Hassan (50%), Shimoga (35%), Kodagu (37%) and Uttara Kannada (29%). In contrast, Kolar and Chikkaballapur districts received 25% and 23% deficit rain respectively, while Yadgir, Dharwad, Ramanagaram and Tumkur were among the districts that received scanty rain.



A power shortage has already hit the state despite all major dams brimming. A drinking water scarcity looms over 500 villages, many of which are being supplied tanker water.

Clearly, drought is a bigger worry than floods. "Don't worry much about floods; these have affected a limited area, and that can be tackled. Drought is the main problem as it's plaguing several districts," chief minister Siddaramaiah told officials at a recent meeting. The state government has announced a contingency plan to supply drinking water and fodder, to set up relief camps and 'goshalas' (fodder camps) in all flood- and drought-affected taluks.

Farmers badly hit:Farmer Munisamappa, 56, of Kammasandra village in Kolar district is hanging on to his 5 acres of dry land. Waiting for rain has become part of his daily routine.

"While last year was much better, the situation this kharif season is bad as we still have got no rain. Our borewells have completely dried up," he says. He is among the 5 lakh people in the Kolar-Chikkaballapur region affected by drought. T Mahadeva, owner of 5 acres in Jennu Hosur village in Chamarajnar district, has migrated to Bangalore with his two teenage daughters to work as a daily-wages labourer.

Things are no different for farmers in north Karnataka. About a lakh farmers have migrated to Goa, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra to find jobs.

Others, along with their cattle, have migrated to other regions within Karnataka in search of greener pastures.

### **Fodder crisis looms large for stray cattle at Kalay farm**

Managers of the cattle pound at the government farm in Kalay are in a dilemma, as the stock of fodder for the 165 stray cattle hauled off Goa's streets during the last few weeks is nearly depleted.

The quiet scene at the seed production farm has transformed into a hub of activity since June 2013, as 16 workers, including two watchmen, a bull attendant, supervisor and a pump attendant have been toiling hard to manage the cattle. Twenty of the animals have died, but officials attribute it to the plastic and other dangerous waste the animals ingested in urban areas.

Nearly 10 tonnes of fodder per month have been diverted from the mouths of local cattle to feed the stray animals, evoking protests from village farmers. But the dwindling stocks of fodder is worrying the farm workers.

"The animal husbandry department does send cattle-feed once the fodder is exhausted. But then, the feed has to be rationed to the cattle until the next stock arrives," a source said.

The stock of fodder at the Kalay farm is likely to exhausted after two days. With the manpower diverted for the cattle care, the primary task of producing fodder appears to be abandoned, as of now.

"There's no option. If we divert the workers to fodder production work, who will take care of the cattle?" one among the farm personnel asked.

Animal welfare activists had cautioned the government about implementing the scheme without ensuring adequate infrastructure and medical care.

"The animals are given enough fodder, but many of them find it unpalatable, as they are used to foraging in garbage dumps," an official said.

The Corporation of the city of Panaji (CCP) has engaged a private agency to operate the scheme from June 18.

While 165 cattle are impounded strays, a dozen-odd bulls were saved from the butcher's knife. Housed in the seven sheds, each shed can accommodate 30 cattle. "But if the catching of cattle continues, it is not known where the new ones will be taken," an animal welfare activist said.

All the 11 workers earlier tasked with fodder production, are now feeding them, cleaning the sheds, disposing the cowdung.

The stray animals were taken off the streets from Calangute, Mercas, Bambolim, Verna, Margao, Sanguem Sanvordem and areas in the port town of Vasco - along the airport road, port area and Mangor.

The government has allocated 4.40 lakh as lump sum seed amount to

operate the scheme. The CCP is trying to purchase a vehicle with a ramp to transport cattle at a cost of 20 lakh, a source said.

### **Rain bounty results in widespread sowing**

Saurashtra farmers have all the reasons to smile. The region has already received nearly 90 per cent of its average rainfall with almost a month still to go before monsoon ends officially.

The rain bounty has also resulted in abundant sowing, which has crossed the cultivable area. As against the average cultivable area of 36,15,500 hectares, sowing has been done in 37,34,100 hectares already, according to the latest data from agriculture department.

According to the department, total area covered under the groundnut crop was registered at 14,23,600 hectares, while that covered under cotton was 16,91,100 hectares. The other crops include bajra, sesame, guvar, vegetable and fodder.

There are many scattered villages and towns across Saurashtra that have already got over 100 per cent average annual rainfall. However, Kutch is yet to receive sufficient rainfall. The district has received only 62 per cent of its average annual rainfall which is the much low as compared to other parts of the state.

Sources said the sowing in Kutch reported in 4,68,800 hectare as against its average cultivable area of 5,38,700 hectares. Meanwhile, India Meteorological Department (IMD) officials issued rainfall warning in the

region. Weather officials said light to moderate rainfall would occur at a few places in districts of the region during the next 48 hours.

According to sources, fresh inflow of rain water has been reported in all major dams in the region over the last one week due to incessant rains. There are 135 dams in Saurashtra and the storage is around 38.27 per cent as on Wednesday. Sources said five dams are overflowing in the region.

### **Pleasant weather greets denizens**

The city woke up to dark clouds and heavy rains on Wednesday making the weather pleasant and giving respite to people from high humidity.

Around 31.8 mm of rainfall was recorded by the met department of ChandraShekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology, which also predicted more rains in next 48 hours.

Many areas witnessed incessant rains while heavy rains lashed several localities including Kakadeo, Govind Nagar, Panki, Kalyanpur. The maximum temperature recorded for the day was 30.6 degrees whereas the minimum temperature was at 22.5 degree Celsius. Humidity recorded for the day was 95% and 92%. "Monsoonal winds are active in the region. More rains are expected on Thursday and Friday," said CB Singh, weather expert of CSA.

Meanwhile, the denizens enjoyed the pleasant weather after a scorching

week. Deserted market areas and places like Ganga Barrage, ghats, parks and open eating joints were abuzz with activities.

### **Onion price soars in Bhubaneswar**

Prices of vegetables have skyrocketed in the last couple of days in the city, upsetting household budgets. The ubiquitous onion, in particular, has left a big hole in the pockets of customers with price shooting up to Rs38 a kg on Wednesday. The price is likely to go up further in the coming days, said vendors.

Vegetable sellers said the reason for the sudden hike in price was supply shortage and price rise at source point. While the state produces about 15% of the onion required, the rest is imported from Nasik, Nagpur, Raipur and Kurnool. "In Delhi and other big cities, onion price has touched Rs 50 a kg. The price has gone up in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, from where we import onions. This has affected prices in Bhubaneswar and other parts of the state," said secretary of Rajdhani Haat Byabasayee Sangha Gayadhar Swain.

"The wholesale price at source point is around Rs 30. Hence, we are forced to sell onions at Rs 38 to 40 a kg, to cover transport and other costs. Besides, heavy rain has damaged crops in many areas leading to price rise," said a wholesale vendor, S S Mishra.

The food supplies and consumer welfare department had in mid-July started selling onions at subsidy from government retail outlets but it was

stopped after a couple of days. "The state government must intervene to check the price rise. We have reduced consumption of onion due to high prices, but that is not a solution of the problem. Most of the vegetables have gone beyond the reach of common men," said Sasmita Baliarsingh, a schoolteacher.

On Wednesday, brinjal sold at Rs 50 a kilo, papaya at Rs 20 a kilo, ladies finger Rs 30, parwal Rs 30, pumpkin Rs 18 to 20, tomato Rs 35 to 40, capsicum Rs 80, bitter gourd Rs 30, green chili Rs 100 a kilo and cauliflower Rs 30 to 35 per piece.

### **Farmers appeal to keep canals and tanks ready**

With water level in Periyar and Vaigai dams steadily increasing in the last one week, the farmers in the region urged the officials to keep ready canals and tanks, especially in single crop areas where water is yet to be released for irrigation. The farmers, who suffered badly last season, want optimum use of available water by storing them in tanks.

During every farmers' grievance redress meetings here, the farmers had expressed concern that irrigation tanks are being encroached by private parties. They also urged the public works department (PWD), which maintains the tanks, to act tough on the encroachers. Farmers claimed the poorly maintained canals are not conducive to transport water at many stretches.

As the water level in Periyar dam is set to touch the magic figure of 136

feet, the farmers demanded the PWD to be well prepared so that water could be stored and used efficiently. "We have suffered enough without water last season and we don't want water to go waste at any cost," said K Devaraj, president of Small Farmers Association in Madurai. "Many of the branch canals are silted and covered with vegetation and if the water has to be released in a week's time considering the abundant flow to Periyar and Vaigai dams, they have to be cleared on a war footing," he said.

De-silting works carried out under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme will not be sufficient if the excess water has to be stored in the irrigation tanks, farmers said. "The de-silting works carried under the scheme is very minimal. The tanks should be properly de-silted using heavy earth movers; only then the water can be stored in the tanks," pointed out P Rajamanickam, a farmer from Vellaripatti. However, PWD sources said that clearing the canals will not be a big problem. "The main canals are ready and the branches could be cleared ahead of the water release. As the encroachment of tanks is minimal in rural areas, there won't be any big problem for storage," a PWD official said.

### **Mahogany trees to beautify Surat roads**

Main roads of the Diamond City may soon be dotted with mahogany trees. After successful pilot plantation of 300 such trees, commonly known as khaya trees, in StonewareMahadev Garden in Pal, Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) is planning to take up the plantation on a much larger scale across the city.



Garden superintendent of SMC Dr S J Gautam said, "The trees in Pal garden have survived and grown well. This has encouraged us to plant 600 more trees in common plot opposite Jogannagar swimming pool on 2,500 square metre land. We are also looking to plant this new species on selected roadsides to add to the city's beauty."

The trees will be planted during a mega drive that will be undertaken by SMC on August 31.

This is a rare instance of a tree that has more of a commercial value than aesthetic is being used for beautifying the city. The wood of khaya tree that has three species is mostly used to make furniture and planted for the purpose of harvesting. Planting them in open plots of SMC could also help the civic body earn some extra revenue.

Gautam added that mahogany is an evergreen tree and they would add to the city's flora.

"The value of this tree's wood is as good as teak and others used to make furniture. We could earn good revenue in the future," he said.

"It is a wise decision. Mahogany has a better canopy and many Asian countries have adopted it to very good effect," a plantation expert Karmaveer Bhatt said.

"The only problem with this tree is that it grows very fast. SMC will have to ensure proper maintenance otherwise it could be a hindrance in the high-tension lines," Bhatt added.

## Weather Chennai

### Today's Weather



Clear

Thursday, Aug 8

Max Min

32° | 26°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:55

Humidity: 70

Sunset: 06:33

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1006

### Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Friday, Aug 9

Max Min

33° | 25°

### Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Aug 10

Aug 11

Aug 12

Aug 13

Aug 14



35° | 25°

Cloudy



33° | 25°

Overcast



33° | 25°

Overcast



33° | 25°

Overcast



30° | 25°

Overcast

### Airport weather

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:55

Humidity: 70

Sunset: 06:33

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1006



# THE HINDU Business Line

Just 6 turmeric bags arrive at Gobi market



For want of upcountry demand, the turmeric industry is facing problems. “Turmeric futures sell below Rs 5,000 a quintal but it is selling at Rs 6,000 in open market at Erode”, said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. The price of the finger variety decreased by Rs 250 in all the markets. Even the good quality hybrid finger variety decreased by Rs 200. Turmeric sale was not conducted in the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society as only six bags, a record low, arrived for sale, brought by two farmers. Arrivals were low since farmers were busy with agricultural operations and local festivals. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,811-5,791, the root variety Rs 3,699-5,427.

**Salem hybrid crop:** The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,409-6,674, the root variety Rs 5,017-5,911. Of 470 bags, 210 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,523-5,702, the root variety Rs 4,272-5,572. Of 266 bags, 214 were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,829-5,860, the root variety Rs 4,699-5,612. All the 594 bags were sold.

### **Sugar extends gains on improved offtake**

Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market extended their gain by Rs 5-7 a quintal for fine-bold variety on Wednesday on improved local demand. Shortage of trucks in Kolhapur-Karad line resulted in lower arrivals. Futures prices were flat due to surplus supplies and an improvement in demand due to festivals.

Naka rates were unchanged on the fourth consecutive day. Mill tender rates were up by Rs 5-10 for fine-bold variety.

Sources said that improve demand for fine variety ahead of festivals pushed up prices in spot market, while in futures, it remained range-bound due to surplus supply.

The arrivals in Vashi market were 59-60 truck loads (each of 100 bags) while local dispatches were 61-62.

On Tuesday evening, 15-17 mills offered tenders and sold about 44,000-45,000 bags at Rs 2,920-2,980 (Rs 2,920-2,980) for S-grade and Rs 2,990-3,120 (Rs 2,980-3,120) for M-grade.

**On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange**, sugar September futures were unchanged at Rs 3,011 (Rs 3,011), October up by Rs 3 to Rs 3,028 (Rs 3,025) and November higher by Rs 14 to Rs 3,015 (Rs 3,001) till noon.

**The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were:** S-grade Rs 3,052-3,145 (Rs 3,052-3,142) and M-grade Rs 3,156-3,342 (Rs 3,162-3,322).

**Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 3,010-3,070 (Rs 3,010-3,070) and M-grade Rs 3,100-3,220 (Rs 3,100-3,220).

### **Imported edible oils up as rupee weakens**

A mixed trend was witnessed in physical edible oil market on Wednesday with prices of imported oils rising as the rupee dropped against the dollar. Local refiners raised prices with stockists too showing interest in building inventories ahead of the festival season. Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 545, super palmolein Rs 575 and super deluxe Rs 595, soyabean refined oil Rs 644 and sunflower refined oil Rs 805. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 545, super palmolein Rs 565, soyabean refined oil Rs 640 and sunflower refined oil Rs 800. Allana quoted palmolein at Rs 542, super palmolein Rs 575, soyabean refined oil Rs 640 and sunflower refined oil Rs 800. Gokul's rates were Rs 540. In Rajkot, groundnut oil improved by Rs 60 to Rs 1,560 (Rs 1,500) for *telia* tin and by Rs 30 for loose (10 kg) to Rs 1,000 (Rs 970). **On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange**, soyabean ref oil Sept futures were lower at Rs 645.30 (Rs 647.85), Oct to Rs 618.70 (Rs 619.90) and Nov to Rs 613.25 (Rs 616.10).

**Malaysia BMD crude palm oil's** Sept futures contracts ended lower at MYR 2,240 (MYR 2,271), Oct at MYR 2,210 (MYR 2,244) and Nov at MYR 2,206 (MYR 2,237).

**The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were:** Groundnut oil 980 (970), soya ref oil 640 (640), sunflower exp. ref. 720 (720), sunflower ref. 800 (800), rapeseed ref. oil 694 (692), rapeseed expeller ref. 664 (662) cottonseed ref. oil 642 (645) and palmolein 540 (537).

**Vikram Global Commodities (P) Ltd** has quoted Rs 585 for 10 kg for Malaysian super palmolein for August delivery

## Poultry feed rules firm on steady input costs



With the cost of production being steady, prices of poultry feed products remained unchanged.

Aditya Mishra, a commodity expert, told *Business Line*, that feed products may continue to rule around the current levels for the next few days.

In the physical market, soyameal continued to witness the downtrend, dropped further by Rs 200 and sold at Rs 30,400 a tonne. Bajra moved dropped by Rs 60 to Rs 1,220 a quintal while di-calcium phosphate dropped by 10 paisa to Rs 34.70 a kg. MBM ruled flat and sold at 33 a kg while maize improved by Rs 50 to Rs 1,450-1,490 a quintal.

Prices of mustard de-oiled cake decreased by Rs 500 and sold at Rs 13,800 a tonne, DRB moved up by Rs 600 and sold at Rs 11,000 while rice bran oil continued to rule flat at 54 a kg.

Broiler concentrate feed quoted at Rs 1,970 for a 50-kg bag while broiler starter mash sold at Rs 1,480. Pre-lay mash sold at Rs 1,015, while layer grower mash quoted at Rs 955. Layer concentrate 25 per cent sold at Rs 1,465 while layer concentrate 35 per cent was at Rs 1,150. Broiler finisher sold at Rs 1,460. Broiler improved by Rs 8 and quoted at Rs 84-86 a kg.

Egg went up by 16 paise and sold at Rs 2.88, while chick was up Rs 4 at Rs 22-24 from the previous levels.

### **Pulses gain on demand but rally may peter out**



Improved demand and buying support have lifted prices of almost all the pulse seeds in Indore mandis this week, more so after the end of incessant rains in the State a few days ago.

Rise in buying support and weak arrival have lifted tur, masoor, moong and urad prices in Indore mandis in the past few days with tur (Maharashtra) currently ruling at Rs 4,250 a quintal, while tur (Madhya Pradesh) declined by Rs 100 to Rs 3,800-4,000.

Tur dal remained stable with tur dal (full) being quoted at Rs 6,100-6,200, tur dal (sawa no.) at Rs 5,700-5,800, while tur marka ruled at Rs 6,600.



Improved demand also lifted masoor and its dal with masoor (bold) currently ruling at Rs 4,250 (up Rs 50 from last week), while masoor (medium) also rose to Rs 3,800-3,900.

In the past two weeks, masoor has almost gained Rs 150.

However, given favourable crop report in pulse seeds and adequate imported stocks on the port, long rally in masoor appears to be unlikely in the coming days, said a trader.

Rise in spot masoor has also lifted its dal by about Rs 100 in the past one week with masoor dal (average) being quoted at Rs 4,900-4,925, masoor dal (medium) at Rs 5,000-5,025, while masoor dal (bold) is ruling at Rs 5,100-5,125.

Improved demand and renewed buying support also lifted urad with prices of urad (bold) being quoted at Rs 3,500-3,550 (up Rs 100 from last week). Similarly urad (medium) also gained Rs 100 to Rs 3,000-3,300.

Rise in urad also lifted its dal by about Rs 200 with urad dal (medium) at Rs 4,100-4,125, urad dal (bold) at Rs 5,200-5,300, while urad (mongar) was quoted at Rs 5,900-5,950.

Moong and its dal also gained on improved demand with moong (bold) being quoted at Rs 4,800-5,000 (up Rs 200), while moong (medium) at Rs 4,400-4,600 on subdued demand, while moong (medium) was quoted at Rs 4,400-4,600.

Similarly moong dal gained Rs 100 in the past one week on rise in buying support with moong (bold) being quoted at Rs 6,100-6,200, moong dal (bold) at Rs 6,600-6,700, moong mongar ruled at Rs 6,900-7,000.

## Covering buys perk up castorseed



Castorseed prices increased over two per cent in the futures market as market participants made covering purchases following demand in the spot market.

On the other hand, the gain was limited on the spot due to increasing arrivals.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, castorseed August contracts moved up by Rs 63 to Rs 3,453 a quintal, with an open interest of 42,350 lots.

Likewise, NCDEX most active September contracts went up by Rs 73 or 2.11 per cent to Rs 3,533, with an open interest of 1,72,530 lots. Due to rising prices, selling also increased on Wednesday. About 24,000-25,000 bags of castorseed arrived in Gujarat today against 15,000-17,000 bags on Tuesday.

Prices stood at Rs 675-692 for 20 kg.

About 2,000-2,100 bags arrived in Saurashtra and was quoted at Rs 645-668. Castor oil traded at Rs 715 for 10 kg at Rajkot. At Rajkot Commodity

Exchange, castor September gained Rs 66 to Rs 3,625. Spot castor increased by Rs 5 to Rs 3,402.50 for 100 kg.

According to market sources, traders preferred to build new positions at the existing lower levels amid rising spot demand.

Pick up in industrial demand against lower supply in physical markets too influenced the sentiments.

# Business Standard

**Excess rains likely to damage 5-7% of kharif crop**

**Concern at possible fall below last year's foodgrain output, if no let-up in rainfall in the next 2 weeks**

Excessive rainfall has hit kharif agricultural commodities, with five to seven per cent of crops feared damaged in major growing regions, especially flood-prone areas.

The India Meteorological Department reported 17 per cent excess rainfall through the country until July 31. Crops like paddy require long spells of heavy rain for germination and survive a short duration of flooding, too. But, inundation for a long while spoils the crop. With around half of agricultural crops being subject to flooding, chances of crop damage have risen.

Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar had at the beginning of the monsoon season forecast this year's foodgrain crop to surpass last year's figure.

Now, this might not happen. "Surplus rainfall does hold the potential to affect crops such as pulses and oilseeds. While paddy can be affected, given that it is a local product and we have stocks, there will be fewer issues on the price front. However as we are importing pulses and edible oils, any shortfall will mean higher imports and at a depreciated rupee, that will tend to spook up domestic prices, too. Therefore, it is a genuine concern, though we need to know the extent of damage," said Madan Sabnavis, chief economist, CARE Ratings.

Total foodgrain output was a record 259.29 million tonnes in the marketing year (July – June) of 2011-12. With a marginal decline, it was 255.36 mt in 2012-13. Kharif and rabi constitute around half the annual output each.

However, rainy season crops hold potential for higher output. Also, prolonged rain leaves the desired moisture for favourable rabi crops. Encouraged by the early rainfalls and sowing trend, Pawar for a record foodgrain crop in 2013-14.

Total sowing area under kharif crops had shot up by 11.6 per cent to 82 mn hectares as on August 2 as compared to 73.46 mn ha around the same time last year. Barring sugarcane, all crops recorded higher sowing in this kharif, with pulses (7.95 mn ha versus 6.3 mn ha) and oilseeds (17.32 mn ha versus 14.49 mn ha) seeing steep growth. Because of weakening sentiment in the sugar industry, sugarcane plantation declined, albeit marginally, to 4.85 mn ha as against five mn ha by August 2 last year.

“Prolonged excessive rain in the soy growing belts, particularly in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra and some part of Madhya Pradesh, have caused damage to the standing crop in the past two weeks. Although crop damage to the extent of five to seven per cent will slash the record output hope in the 2013-14 season, production shall remain near last year’s level, as acreage stands remarkably high so far. If excessive rains continue for the next two weeks, the extent of damage could increase and raise concerns over oilseeds and edible oil availability,” said Vedika Narvekar, chief manager (agri commodities), Angel Commodities Broking.

There is concern at reports of damage to oilseed crops in the central and western states and to paddy in the north and east. Analysts also report possible damage to cardamom and pepper crops in the south. Kharif oilseeds accounted for 61 per cent of total oilseed production in India in 2012-13. Soybean output was 72 per cent of the total.

## **Agri commodities face bearish outlook**

India's export prospects get hampered as prices drop, supplies seen rising  
The bears seem to have gripped agri commodities globally. While improved weather conditions in the US and good monsoon in India have improved the crop prospects, weak global economic conditions have affected demand, putting pressure on prices.

Agri commodities, including cotton, soybean, wheat, sugar and palm oil, are among the major commodities facing a bearish outlook as demand remains subdued with robust crop prospects.

“We maintain a bearish view on most agri commodity prices this month, with further downside expected for the grains and oilseeds markets from current levels as new crop supply becomes more certain,” Rabobank stated in its July report.

According to the report, the global stock of cotton is likely to close the 2012-13 marketing year above the current estimates of a record 85.75 million bales as US exporters are unlikely to reach the current target of 13.3 million bales.

“International prices may remain under pressure and hover around 85-85 cents a pound for some time. But India may face a sharp increase in cotton prices as more-than-expected cotton exports have taken place so far and we may be left with lesser cotton than estimates,” said a leading cotton exporter from Ahmedabad.

ICE New York Cotton hit \$1.80 per pound in the second quarter of 2011.

The prices have fallen to sub-80 cents in the second quarter of 2012.

However, a sharp recovery from this level appears less likely as estimates suggest prices to hover around 80-83 cents for the remaining part of the

year. In India, cotton prices hover around Rs 44,000 per candy (356 kg). Good monsoon in India has boosted cotton sowing in key growing regions. This is likely to boost production, thereby further increase in supplies through the end of this year.

Rabobank further maintained that the wheat price outlook also remained weak as Northern Hemisphere supply recovery trumped unexpected Chinese wheat demand.

Significant year-on-year production increases in the Black Sea region, Europe and Canada will help lift world wheat production by 41 million tonnes (mt), or six per cent in 2013-14. Large increase in exportable wheat surpluses in the Black Sea region, particularly in Russia and Ukraine, are forecast to result in very aggressive pricing, which is likely to dominate world wheat trade over the coming months.

“We expect the trajectory for global wheat prices to remain sideways to lower over coming months. Beyond the Northern Hemisphere summer, we expect multi-year lows to be formed,” the report stated.

Even as India’s palm oil imports are likely to rise by 800,000 tonnes against last year, palm oil demand in other importing nations to remain subdued, causing prices to remain under pressure. “India’s total palm oil imports likely to remain around 11 mt against 10.2 mt last year,” said B V Mehta of Solvent Extractors’ Association of India.

Palm oil prices have fallen from highs of around 3,600 Malaysian ringgit (MYR), or Rs 67,635, per tonne in the second quarter of 2011 to around MYR 3,000 per tonne in second quarter of 2012. However, prices fell sharply after that and touched the lower levels of around MYR 2300 per tonne in the last quarter of 2012. However experts noted that weakening of

the Indian rupee against the dollar adversely affected palm oil imports. Hence, in spite of international prices being lower, palm imports turned costlier for India.

The Rabobank report also commented on that corn prices would remain bearish as production uncertainty prevails. The Chicago Board of Trade corn prices have jumped from \$6 per bushel in first quarter of 2012 to around \$ 7.5 by the third quarter. However, the prices started declining and inched closer to \$6 by the end of first quarter of 2013.

#### **Chana weakens by 0.4% on sluggish demand**

#### **Speculators reduced their positions on the back of sluggish demand against adequate stocks position**

Chana prices weakened by 0.43% to Rs 2811 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators reduced their positions, driven by sluggish demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, chana for delivery in September month declined by Rs 12, or 0.43% to Rs 2811 per quintal with an open interest of 136200 lots.

Likewise, the commodity for delivery in August contract traded lower by Rs 11, or 0.40% to Rs 2760 per quintal in 82050 lots.

Market analysts said speculators reduced their positions on the back of sluggish demand against adequate stocks position mainly influenced chana prices at futures trade.



### **Jeera futures up 0.5% on spot demand**

#### **Speculators created fresh positions on the back of a rise in demand in the spot market**

Jeera prices up by 0.49% to Rs 13350 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators built-up fresh positions, supported by a rise in demand in the spot market.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera for delivery in September month rose by Rs 65, or 0.49% to Rs 13350 per quintal with an open interest of 10197 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in August contract traded higher by Rs 47.50, or 0.36% to Rs 13,160 per quintal in 6453 lots.

Market analysts said speculators created fresh positions on the back of a rise in demand in the spot market, mainly led to rise in jeera prices at futures trade.

### **Turmeric up by 1.3% on better demand**

#### **Speculators created fresh positions after demand improved in the spot market**

Turmeric prices moved up by Rs 60 to Rs 4,672 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators created fresh positions, driven by an improvement in demand in the spot market.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, turmeric for delivery in August month rose by Rs 60, or 1.30% to Rs 4672 per quintal with an open interest of 7460 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in September contract edged up by Rs 58, or 1.24% to Rs 4,726 per quintal in 21,295 lots.

Market analysts said speculators created fresh positions after demand improved in the spot market mainly led to rise in rise in turmeric prices at futures trade

### **Coriander up by 1.4% on strong demand**

**Increased buying by speculators supported by rising demand in the spot market influenced prices**

Coriander prices rose 1.41% to Rs 5,520 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators enlarged their positions, driven by pick-up in demand in the spot market.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, coriander for delivery in September month rose by Rs 77, or 1.41% to Rs 5,520 per quintal with an open interest of 19380 lots.

In a similar fashion, the spice for delivery in August contract moved up by Rs 64, or 1.19% to Rs 5,440 per quintal in 7,940 lots.

Market analysts said increased buying by speculators supported by rising demand in the spot market against restricted rivals from producing belts mainly led to rise in coriander prices at futures market.