

THE HINDU

Organic cultivation: learning from the Enabavi example



Inspiration: The small village attracts farmers and policy makers. -Photo: special arrangement

Is it possible to get a good yield without using chemical fertilizers? Will a shift to organic affect our food security? Can we manage insect pests without using pesticides? Will organic cultivation still be profitable for farmers?

These are some of the often asked questions by farmers when problems of modern agriculture are being discussed.

Enabavi, a small village in Warangal district, Andhra Pradesh promises to answer all these.

Situated off the Hyderabad-Warangal highway near Jangaon town, Enabavi is today an inspiration for many other villages and farmers, thanks to the efforts of the local organization called CROPS (Centre for Rural Operations Programmes Society) supported by the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA).

Visitors

This small village attracts visitors ranging from farmers to policy makers who want to understand the concept of successful sustainable agriculture. In the last three years more than 10,000 people have visited this village.

“Commercial crops like cotton are the main crops grown in the district. From 1997 onwards, large numbers of farmers’ suicides have been reported from this district. In the middle of this distress, Enabavi showed the resolve of a strong community which

decided to take control of its agriculture in its own hands. "With just 51 households belonging mostly to the backward castes, the village started shifting to non-chemical farming about a decade ago. In 2005-06, the entire 282 acres was converted to organic farming. There is strong social regulation within the community towards organic cultivation to ensure that there are no 'erring farmers" says Dr. G. V. Ramanjaneyulu, Executive Director, Centre for Sustainable Agriculture, Secunderabad.

The elders in the village take the youth along with them. They have also started investing in teaching their school-going children the knowledge and skills of non-chemical farming.

Variety of crops

The farmers grow paddy, pulses, millets, cotton, chilli, tobacco and vegetables. They process their paddy and sell directly to consumers and also through a marketing channel called Sahaja Aharam in Hyderabad.

Their average spending on chemical fertilizers and pesticides used to be around Rs.3,500 per crop per acre while it was around Rs. 500 per acre for seeds. The traders would dictate the price for the produce in addition to charging interest for the inputs supplied. Now, all of this has changed. The farmers do not spend a single rupee anymore for buying all the inputs.

Past experience

"In the 1970s this village like many others across the country, also went through the same process of using more and more chemicals to increase the productivity. By 1995 problems started showing up. Investments kept increasing but the returns were not good.

"In late 90's pests like red hairy caterpillar caused devastating effects in this region. The initiatives on managing the pest using non chemical approaches evolved into non pesticidal management which is now widely practised in Andhra Pradesh and other states.

The confidence in using non chemical approaches, helped farmers to move away from chemical fertilizers towards sustainable solutions," says Dr. Ramanjaneyulu.

Some farmers started looking for options like using tank silt, poultry manure, vermi-compost and farm yard manure. They set up their own compost manufacturing units in their fields and started following various ecological practices.

They also started to depend on their own seed for many crops, except for cotton. Now farmers also produce seeds for others. They have set up self help groups for men and women separately and started thrift activities too.

As the farmers moved into more and more sustainable models of production they realized the importance of natural and common resources for sustaining their own livelihood.

Social rule

As a result the tank in the village was desilted and is presently being managed by the community. A cooperative called Enabavi Organic Farmers Cooperative was formed for supporting the several activities and to improve their collective bargaining power in the markets.

“Today, Enabavi has many valuable lessons to teach other farmers, not just on how to take up sustainable farming. They also have lessons to share on social regulation, learning from each other, the benefits of conviction born out of experience and most importantly, the way out of agricultural distress by taking control over one’s own farming,” adds Dr. Ramanjaneyulu.

To visit and learn more on Enabavi interested readers can contact Dr. G. V. Ramanjaneyulu, Executive Director, Centre for Sustainable Agriculture, 12-13-445, Street no-1, TarnakaSecunderabad-500 017, ph. 09000699702, email: ramoo.csa@gmail.com, facebook: ramoo.agripage, website: www.krishi.tv

Has climate change altered apples’ taste?



While it may not be evident, the taste and texture of apples may have undergone a considerable change over the last many years due to climate change, says a new study conducted by Toshihiko Sugiura and team at the National Agriculture and

Food Research Organisation in Fujimoto, Japan. The paper was published in *Scientific Reports* last week.

The study attributes the change in taste and texture — essential qualities for a fresh fruit — to the increase in global temperature over the years, specifically during the maturation period of the fruit.

To understand the effect of environmental factors like temperature, precipitation and solar radiation on apple phenology (the study of cyclic natural phenomena related to plant or animal life), the team studied two common and widely-used cultivar varieties of apples in Japan — Fuji and Tsugaru — over a period of 40 years from 1970 to 2010.

Analyzing the environmental factors during this time, the study found that there was a considerable increase in the mean air temperature in these two regions.

Environment

The study then tabulated the environmental factors during the bud breaking and full bloom times of the fruit. A significant increase in the mean air temperature during March and March-April was found; bud breaking and blooming times of the fruit take place during this time.

The authors found an advancement of bud breaking day and full bloom day in the fruit's calendar (nearly one to 2.3 days per decade during the study period), and correlated these to the increase in temperature.

Taste and texture

Acid concentration and soluble solids are the corresponding indicators of sourness and sweetness in a fruit while fruit firmness and watercore rating determine the fruit's hardness and softness respectively. These factors were judged against five maturation indexes for the fruit. The study found that the average change rate of these factors when compared against the five maturation indexes showed a decrease in the acid concentration, firmness and watercore rating levels and an increase in the soluble solid levels.

As per the study, these factors were found to exhibit a similar trend when the mean air temperature rose during the maturation period, resulting in a possible change in the taste and texture of the fruit.

So, while we may not have realised it, it may be possible that our apples have become a tad sweeter over the years!

Electricity generation from cattle waste

A project for electricity generation from cattle dung is currently being run at the Guru Angad Dev Veterinary & Animal Sciences University, Ludhiana.

The University has been encouraging farmers to use cattle dung for both bio gas generation and electricity production.

As a demo model the University set up a plant with a capacity of 4,500 kg (daily) cattle dung in its campus for farmers to see for themselves.

Present generation

As of now the plant generates 240 KW hours of energy daily and with this a 40 KW bio gas operated generator is being run for six hours daily to produce electricity.

The electricity is being used for chaffing green fodder, machine milking, operating the fans, coolers and foggers installed inside the animal sheds.

The waste slurry obtained from the bio gas plant is used as manure for crops. The slurry is a better fertilizer than the farm yard manure for crops.

A tractor operated vacuum tank of 8,000 litre capacity removes the slurry from the unit and spreads it on the fields. This results in more green fodder yield and reduced dependence on chemical fertilizers for growing the crops.

The University's next focus is to separate the methane and carbon dioxide gas emitted from the plant, bottle it and use it for industrial purposes

"Management of dairy farm waste for production of bio-gas/electricity and adding value to it are not only critical to maintaining hygiene but also improve dairy farm economics," says Dr. V.K. Taneja, Vice Chancellor of the university.

Future plan

"Our next focus is to separate methane and carbon dioxide and bottle carbon dioxide for industrial use while using methane for generating electricity. Experiments are carried out on dry slurry using a solar energy system so that it can be stored and used when required," he says.

The Ministry of renewable energy is giving a subsidy of Rs 8 lakhs for such projects and the Punjab Dairy Development Board is also giving a subsidy of Rs. 3.5 lakhs for farmers interested in setting up such units.

(Dr. Ravinder Singh Grewal is Associate Professor, Guru Angad Dev Veterinary & Animal Sciences University, email: ravigrewal71@yahoo.co.in, Mobile:93169-04933.)

Banana farmers get tips on fruit care at NRCB

Farmers gained first-hand information on banana fruit care including better production technologies coupled with post-harvest handling, storage, and value chain management at the 20th foundation day celebrations of National Research Centre for Banana (NRCB) at Thayanur near Tiruchi on Wednesday. The occasion was celebrated as 'Banana Kissan Mela' with the theme 'banana fruit care'. Awards for the best banana grower, the best banana entrepreneur, and the best technology disseminator were given to recipients. S. T. Palanichamy from Cumbum, K. Maruthaipillai from Thottiyam, K. V. Senthil kumar from Kulithalai, K. Murali from Gudalur, and A. Sundararaj from Mohanur received the best banana grower award. A. Sivakumar, received the best banana entrepreneur award, and B. Saravanan bagged the best technology disseminator award. M. M. Mustaffa, Director, NRCB, spoke about the achievements of the centre in the last two decades. An exhibition was organised to display various technologies for banana fruit care.

Farmers need to ensure that their produce is healthy and nutrition-packed, rather than harmful to health due to overuse of chemicals.P.

Velmurugan,Principal District and Sessions judge, Tiruchi

Farmers harvest success from system that needs less water

Efficacy of System of Rice Intensification demonstrated in Tiruchi district



Farmers using cono weeder in a paddy field in Manakal village near Lalgudi.—Photo: A. Muralitharan

: In a region that has been famous for generous use of the Cauvery water [whenever available], farmers are increasingly adopting a cultivation method that requires less water.

A large number of farmers in the Tiruchi district who went in for 'kuruvai' paddy crop in the filter point areas in June amidst concerns over the dwindling water table had successfully adopted the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) to reduce water consumption substantially.

The method, which helps reduce water consumption by 25-50 per cent and promises better yield, has been adopted in over 60 per cent of the area covered under 'kuruvai' paddy in the district this year. The coverage of kuruvai had come down to 8,577 acres in the district against the normal area of 16,000 acres given the prolonged dry spell.

The State government had to implement a special package to help farmers in the filter point areas in the delta to take up the cultivation.

The package included three phase power supply for 12 hours a day, supply of bio-fertilizers, micro nutrients and pesticides free of cost. Besides, HDPE pipes were given to farmers free to help them pump water from borewells.

Farmers say that the measures, coupled with the adoption of the SRI, had helped them raise the crop successfully.

"The water table in our village had gone down by 10 to 15 feet. Thankfully, we were able to pump water from our borewells as power was available. The pipes given by the government also helped in preventing wastage of water," said C. Rajeshkhanna, a farmer of Manakkal near Lalgudi.

Lalgudi block, one of the fertile belts in the district, accounts for a major portion of the crop with nearly 7928 acres. Of this, SRI had been adopted in 5,290 acres thanks to the efforts of the officials of the Agriculture Department. The water consumption had gone down by more than 30 per cent, say farmers of the village.

The efficacy of the cultivation method had already been demonstrated in the village. A father-son duo, Mohammed Haneefa and Abdul Rahman, had bagged prizes for recording the highest yield by adopting SRI in the district over the past two years by recording a yield of 5.5 to 6 tonnes an acre. .

"We are able to harvest at least 60 bags (of 60 kg each) an acre using SRI against the normal of 40-45 bags under traditional method," said Mr. Rajesh Khanna, who has been adopting the method for the past three years.

SRI is also better suited for farm mechanization and this is a big plus given the shortage of labourers and rising wages, the farmers say.

In fact, the entire 'kuruvai' paddy crop in Manakkal village, accounting for about 260 acres, has been raised under SRI this year. "This is one of the six villages where we implemented the 'whole village concept' to promote the SRI," said Gururaj Singh, Joint Director of Agriculture.

The Department plans to adopt the 'whole village concept' to promote SRI in as many as 84 villages across the district for 'kuruvai', 'thaladi' and 'samba' crops, according to R. Chandrasekaran, Deputy Director (Central schemes), Agriculture. With 'samba' coverage expected to touch 1.50 lakh acres (making up for the 'kuruvai' shortfall) in the district this year in the wake of release of water for irrigation and good storage of the Mettur reservoir, the department is gearing up to promote SRI in 90,000 acres.

Farm fresh vegetable outlets, a huge success: Minister

Vegetables and greens worth Rs. 2.75 crore sold in two months in Chennai



Minister for Cooperation Sellur K. Raju (right) inspecting the quality of toor dal sold under the Special PDS by the State Government at a ration shop in Pudupet area in Krishnagiri on Wednesday.- Photo: N.Bashkaran

Vegetables and greens worth Rs. 2.75 crore were sold through the farm-fresh consumer outlets in Chennai in the last two months, Minister for Cooperation Sellur K. Raju said here on Wednesday.

Addressing a review meeting of the cooperative institutions of Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri districts at the Collectorate, Mr. Raju said that the scheme was launched in Chennai on June 20 with a view to provide fresh vegetables to people at a low cost and was a success. Following the increase in vegetable prices in the capital, a proposal for farm-fresh consumer outlets was mooted by the Secretaries of various departments to the Chief Minister and she gave an instant nod for the project, Mr. Raju said.

Special PDS

Last year, the Chief Minister had fixed a target of Rs. 4000 crore for distribution of essentials under the special PDS, while the actual achievement was Rs. 4,080 crore. For the current financial year, the target has been fixed at Rs. 4500 crore, he said. Earlier, the Minister inspected PDS kerosene depots, ration shops and the godown constructed at a cost of Rs. 44 crore by the Agriculture Producers' Cooperative and Sales Society, to store agricultural produce, along with P. Seetharaman, Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Joint Registrars of Cooperative Societies and District Collector T.P Rajesh.

Go for medium -term samba , farmers told

Farmers should go for medium-term samba varieties such as BBT 5204, ADT46, ADT 38, and ADT39 after August 23 as the long-term variety of CR1009, if taken after August 23, would be caught in rain during northeast monsoon in the flowering stage, said J. Sekar, Joint Director of Agriculture, here on Wednesday.

In a press release, Mr. Sekar said that there is a stock of 1,350 tonnes of medium term samba variety seeds at agriculture extension centres, and with private and co-operative sector.

While there is a stock of 505 tonnes of BBT5204 with private and co-operative sector, there is a stock of 110 tonnes of ADT46 at agriculture extension centres. Samba crop is expected to be raised on 1.17 lakh hectares .

Long term variety of CR1009 seeds have been distributed to the tune of 415 tonnes through agriculture extension centres and 750 tonnes through private and co-operative sector. Meanwhile, water level in Mettur dam stood at 118.40 feet.

1,350 tonnes of seeds stocked in extension centres

Farmers seek changes in Contour Canal structure

A section of farmers from the command areas of Thirumoorthy Dam appealed to the Collector, G. Govindaraj, to make a reassessment into the changes made to structure of the Contour Canal as part of the renovation works under way along its 49.3 km stretch. The farmers said that a good chunk of water was getting spilled en route because of the changes made in the basic structure of the 'water passage area of the canal'.

They presented this matter at the grievances redressal meeting organised by the district administration for farmers here on Wednesday.

K.P. Sundararajan, farmer and president of PAP Fourth Zone Agriculturists Association, later told reporters that the earlier shape of the canal had the ability to carry the entire 1,150 cusecs of water pumped from Sarkarpathy power house to the Thirumoorthy Dam.

On bringing the water straight from Upper Neeraru Dam area through a tunnel to Thirumoorthy Dam, Mr. Sundararajan said that this project, originally conceptualised about five decades back, would reduce the distance by about 80 km.

"At present, the water from Upper Neeraru is passing through many smaller dams and then passes via Contour Canal to reach Thirumoorthy Dam travelling a distance of 100 km. If the direct tunnel is laid, the total distance will be only 20 km.," he added.

Public Works Department (Water Resources Organisation) sources said that implementation of this old project, conceptualised under Nallar-Anamalai scheme,

has some practical difficulty as concurrence from Kerala Government was also required.

“The surplus water from the Upper Neeraru Dam is being shared with Kerala at the moment and hence, still sticking to the longer route that passes a stretch through Parambikulam area in Kerala before reaching Thirumoorthy Dam,” PWD officials pointed out.

Free livestock scheme bails out farm hands

Aavin milk procurement in Villupuram district up by 13,000 litres a day



Some of the beneficiaries of the free livestock scheme in Villupuram.

Milk procurement of Villupuram Aavin has gone up from an average of 1.45 lakh litres a day to 1.58 lakh litres a day since the launch of free livestock distribution scheme, said Collector V. Sampath.

On benefits the scheme, the Collector told *The Hindu* that as many as 2,300 milch animals worth Rs. 8.10 crore were given away to beneficiaries in 46 villages of the district in the past two years. Through artificial insemination, these cows gave birth to 900 calves.

Besides giving thrust to milk production, the scheme also supports livelihood of villagers in the lower economic strata of society.

Particularly, the scheme provided sustenance to families of farm hands who faced tough times owing to the failure of successive monsoons.

G. Saroja (45) of Asappur in Marakkanam block told this correspondent that she felt elated on her selection as a beneficiary of the scheme. Her family was earning a frugal amount doing sundry jobs in farmlands. The income trickled down to nothing as farming operations came to a grinding halt for want of water.

She said she could not even bear the educational expenses of her three sons and daughter. But, the milch animal is now yielding 13 litres of milk a day which is being sold to Aavin at the rate of Rs. 17 litre. This helps the family to earn Rs. 221 a day.

Officials from the Animal Husbandry Department too help by taking care of the animals whenever the cattle fell sick.

Another beneficiary, R. Maharani (40) of Narayanapuram in Tindivanam block, has also been cheerful since she got the milch animal two years ago.

Recently, the cow had two calves and she is getting 14 litres of milk a day, which is fetching her Rs. 238 a day.

The earning is sufficient to provide education to her son R.Raghavan, an SSLC student, and daughter R. Ramya, a Class VI student.

As regards selection of beneficiaries, Mr. Sampath said it was being done after verification and in a transparent manner. A list of prospective beneficiaries would be scrutinised at special gram sabha meetings and a final list displayed on the notice board, he said.

‘Cancel licences of poultry farms’

People of Honnuru Gollarahatti village have demanded that the district administration cancel licences given to the poultry farms in the village forthwith, as many in the village developed different diseases owing to the presence of the farms.

They alleged that the farms were not managed properly and the stinking smell had pervaded the village.

They staged demonstrations outside the Deputy Commissioner S.S. Pattanashetty’s office here on Wednesday, demanding that the district administration withdraw licences and direct the owners to shift their poultry farms outside the village.

The village residents submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner.

In it, they said that because of the badly maintained farms, flies were rampant in the whole village resulting in many people falling sick of late. They questioned the propriety of allowing poultry farms to be set up inside the village.

If the district administration is unwilling to shift the farms, then it should shift the village instead, they said.

Residents asked Mr. Pattanashetty to send some officials to stay in the village and experience the hardships faced by the people there.

Assurance

After receiving the memorandum, Mr. Pattanashetty promised to visit the village within two days and take appropriate action.

The interests of the residents would be considered over and above that of the poultry farms.

If the farms were making a nuisance of themselves, they would be asked to shift their units to a far-off place.

Farmers protest against encroachment of market

The officials of the Hubli-Dharwad Municipal Corporation (HDMC) have come under the scanner for allegedly turning a blind eye to the encroachment of space earmarked for farmers to sell their produce at the supermarket here.

The farmers who come from villages to sell vegetables at the supermarket have alleged that the space allocated for them has been encroached by certain persons who had they started setting up stalls and sheds on Monday night.

Protest

The farmers staged a protest outside the HDMC office here on Tuesday and demanded action against the alleged encroachers and HDMC officials for not initiating action.

They told presspersons that they were taken by surprise to see the stalls and sheds come up. HDMC officials have connived with the encroachers instead of taking action against them, they said. Now, efforts were being made to create fake records indicating these shops and sheds were there for the past 15 years, they alleged. Some HDMC officials were assisting them in this malpractice, they alleged.

Memorandum

The agitators submitted a memorandum to HDMC Joint Commissioner Veerendra Kundagol. The Joint Commissioner was unavailable for comment.

-
- ❑ ***'Efforts are being made to create fake records saying shops were present for the past 15 years'***
 - ❑ ***Memorandum submitted to HDMC Joint Commissioner Veerendra Kundagol***
-

Areca, coconut growers seek waiver of farm loans

Form a federation; say they are severely hit by fruit-rot disease

A meeting of representatives of eight farm organisations of Karnataka and Kerala here on Wednesday floated a federation and sought waiver of farm loans of arecanut growers as they said fruit-rot disease has severely hit plantations.

The federation demanded that the government should constitute an arecanut board and implement the report of Gorak Singh Committee (which had recommended the government to waive farm loans of arecanut growers affected by various diseases).

The federation was formed to protect the interests of arecanut and coconut growers as the representatives said the future of farmers was bleak due to various diseases hitting both plantations.

It was named as Federation of Arecanut and Coconut Farmers' Organisations of Karnataka and Kerala.

It was attended by representatives of Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha (KRRS), Karnataka Prantha Raita Sangha, All India Areca Growers' Association, Kisan Sene, Kisan Congress, Kasaragod (Kerala) Areca Growers' Samrakshana Samithi, and Jeevan, an organisation of Kerala.

Strong protest

A prominent leader of KRRS from Hassan, Kanagal Murthy, wanted farmers to assert their rights. He said that forming a body, submitting memoranda to ministers and bureaucrats to come to their help would not serve any purpose. He suggested that arecanut and coconut growers should lock the offices of either agriculture department or horticulture department here or in other districts to register the protest of farmers. It could open up the eyes of politicians and bureaucrats.

Mr. Murthy said that arecanut growers, particularly, in the coastal belt were mild in nature. As a result they have not been able to prove their strength and get compensation from the government for crop loss due to diseases for more than four decades now. Arecanut growers should become more aggressive, he said.

The other representatives in the meeting were hesitant to resort to such a move and said that a decision to this effect could be taken later.

According to Ravikiran Punacha, chief convener of the federation, arecanut growers from Sullia taluk would organise a "hakkottaya chaluvali" (struggle for farmers' rights) in Sullia on August 27. A decision on locking up the offices of the department would be taken there.

Plight of farmers is such that many girls are not ready to marry farmers now.

Naveen K.

Member of KRRS, Sringeri

Farmers' importance will be realised if we stop milk supply to Mangalore for a day.

Venkatramana Bhat

Farmer, Dakshina Kannada

Farmer nets profit with fish-seed rearing

With cultivation of paddy no more remaining a lucrative proposition, many farmers in Malnad region have switched over to growing areca, maize and ginger. However, a young farmer from Shettyhalli village in the district has just refused to take the beaten path and earned a name for him in fish-seed rearing.

“The average profit from cultivation of paddy from an acre land range from Rs 20,000 to Rs 25, 000,” says R. Manjunath, explaining the reasons for breaking away from the herd. “You have to wait for 5 to 6 years to expect yield from an areca plant. The research has proved that cultivation of ginger will render the soil infertile.

Considering these factors, I opted for fish seed rearing,” says the young farmer.

Rearing of fish seed is also an attractive proposition as it takes hardly three months to have your yield ready. “It is possible to undertake fish seed culturing twice a year. An annual profit of Rs. 70,000 to Rs 90,000 can be expected from rearing fish seed on an acre of land,” adds Mr. Manjunath, who began his venture on a 2-acre plot in 2007.



A huge catch:Manjunath, right, and a fellow farmer collecting fingerlings in his pond in Shettyhalli village in Shimoga district. Second picture, a farmer showing the packed fingerlings.— Photo: VAIDYA



• *Manjunath from Shettyhalli says the venture is lucrative, he converts 7-acre paddy field into fish ponds*

He had to wait patiently for a couple of years before making it big. Initially, returns from the venture were not lucrative. An awareness programme on fishery organised by Agriculture College, Navile, in his village in 2009 under the Rashtriya Krushi Vikasa Yojana turned out to be the game-changer. The experts who participated in the programme provided information on scientific methods of fish seed rearing. On his request, they visited his fish pond and tested the samples of soil and the water there. As per their suggestions, he added lime to the pond for soil acidity correction. Prior to releasing the fish seeds to the pond, he added cattle dung to it to facilitate the growth of plankton, the basic food for the fishes. After these preparations, 12 lakh fish seeds were released to the pond. Oil cake and rice bran was provided as additional food for the spawns regularly.

In 72 days, the seeds had grown into fish fingerling of 5.37 cm length. Their survival rate was more than 50 per cent. Of the 12 lakh seeds he released, 6 lakh survived. With an investment of Rs. 80,000, he reaped Rs 1, 50,000 through sale of the fingerling. The profit from fish seeds cultivated on his 2-acre land in three months stood at Rs 70,000.

The lucrative returns from fish-seed rearing motivated Mr. Manjunath to convert his remaining 5-acre paddy field into fish ponds. He has purchased tankers necessary for transport fingerling. He has also purchased additional 2-acre near his village.

Motivation

Mr. Manjunath's success has inspired 135 farmers in Shettyhalli and neighbouring Haatikatte village to take up fish seed rearing. The farmers purchase the seeds from fish seed farm of the State government at the Bhadra Reservoir Project at the price of Rs 1,000 for one lakh seeds. After culturing these fish seeds for three months, they sell them at the rate of Rs 26,000 for one lakh fishes.

The average survival rate of the seeds in Shettyhalli and Haatikatte is around 35 per cent. "By adopting scientific practices, it is possible to achieve a survival rate of 50 per cent," says Mr. Manjunath.

Fingerlings cultured here are purchased by the government and released reservoirs across the State. It is also sold to people contracted by gram panchayats to rear fish in village tanks, and also to private fish rearing firms.

-
- ***Fish-seed rearing on an acre of land can fetch Rs. 70,000-Rs 90,000 a year, he says***
 - ***As many as 135 farmers in Shettyhalli and Haatikatte have taken to fish-seed rearing***
-

BJP demands compensation for farmers hit by rain havoc

Activists of the Bharatiya Janata Party staged a protest in Bhadravathi on Wednesday demanding compensation from the government to the farmers who lost crop during the recent rain havoc.

Addressing the protesters, president of the party's taluk unit M. Manjunath said arecanut crop cultivated on 725 hectare land had been infected with fruit rot disease (popularly known as koleroga) and paddy crop on more than 100 hectare land had been damaged due to the heavy rain in the taluk.

Claiming that the actual loss was much more than the official estimate, Mr. Manjunath urged the government to undertake scientific survey of the loss suffered by the farmers. Minister for Agriculture Krishna Byre Gowda and Minister for Horticulture Shamanur Shivashankarappa should personally visit the affected villages in the taluk, he said.

BJP leader Shivaji Rao Sindhiya said the Congress government in the State had failed to come to the rescue of the farmers reeling under crop damage.

The areca plantations have been infected with koleroga due to excess moisture content in the weather. There will be a sharp decline in the areca yield in the district this year due to koleroga. The government should instil confidence among the areca growers by providing adequate compensation for the loss they have suffered. It is unfortunate that the compensation amount has not reached the farmers yet, he said. The protesters also submitted a memorandum to tahsildar in this connection.

Paddy crop on 100 hectare land has been damaged

MGNREGS must benefit small farms:

Mihir Shah



The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) will become really powerful only when it helps rebuild the decimated productivity of small farms in India and enables small and marginal farmers to return to full-time farming, Planning Commission member Mihir Shah has said.

He was delivering a lecture on 'MGNREGS: employment growth and development in rural India' at a function organised by the Kerala State Planning Board here on Wednesday.

Dr. Shah said millions of small and marginal farmers were forced to work under the programme because the productivity of their own farms was no longer enough to make ends meet.

Citing figures released by the National Sample Survey Organisation, he said a very high proportion of agricultural labour households in India actually owned land — 50 per cent in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, 60 per cent in Odisha and Uttar Pradesh, and over 70 per cent in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. In the case of tribal people, the proportion was as high as 76 per cent to 87 per cent in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Rajasthan.

“Under the NREGA, farmers have come back to land long abandoned. Converging NREGA with other programmes for rural livelihood will carry this forward in an upward spiral, which will broadbase the process. This should result in reductions in allocation for NREGA over time, not only because landed labourers get back to their farms, but also because of a general rise in demand for labour in the rural economy.” Admitting that the MGNREGS had fallen short of its promises and potential, Dr. Shah said the committee headed by him had proposed new guidelines for the programme to create a positive synergy with the agriculture and rural livelihood and strengthen its democratic character.

Terming the MGNREGS the largest employment programme in human history, he said it marked a paradigm shift in development planning in India through its people-centric, inclusive growth approach. “As many as 5 crore families are provided employment every year. Of the Rs.2,000 crore spent on the programme, 70 per cent is on wages. More than 10 crore accounts have been opened in banks and post offices for the poorest, excluded people in the country.”

Capacity building

He, however, said the MGNREGS still had a long way to go in capacity building and creation of assets. “Decisions are still imposed in a top-down manner in many States, though Kerala is an exception. Panchayati Raj institutions do not have the capacity to handle a programme of this scale and architecture, and there is a lack of

human resources for planning and implementation. There is a shortfall in the quality of assets created under the MGNREGS in large parts of the country”.

Dr. Shah said the committee had recommended steps to issue dated receipts to applicants for work. Refusal to adhere to this condition would be a punishable offence. “Other proposals include multiple channels of application, including Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) and a Management Information System (MIS) to record applications.”

He said a labour budget outlining the quantum and schedule of work and provision of requisite human resources at all levels had been proposed. “The list of permissible works has been expanded to respond to location-specific demand.”

Dr. Shah said the new guidelines envisaged a greater role for civil society organisations and a mechanism to strengthen social audit. He said Kerala’s experience with decentralisation of power had provided vital inputs for the MGNREGS.

Planning Board vice-chairman K.M. Chandrasekhar, members C.P. John and G. Vijayaraghavan, member secretary Anuradha Balaram, and Centre for Development Studies director Pulapre Balakrishnan were present.

The origins of the weatherman



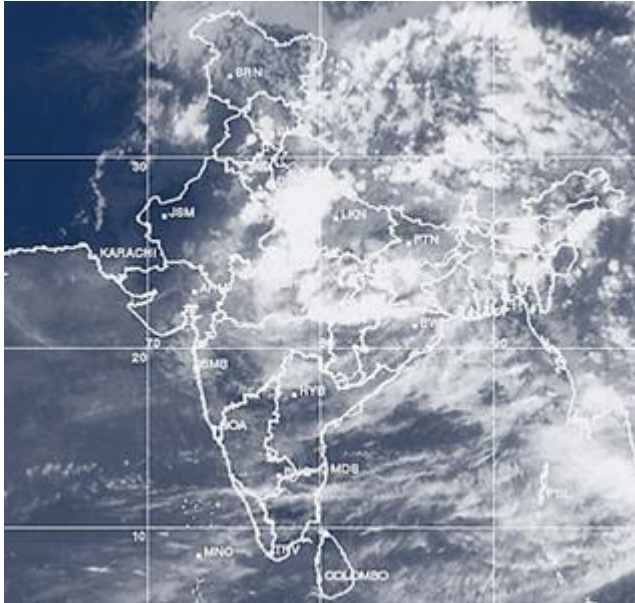
Anyone who has lived in Chennai would agree that the city has three seasons: hot, hotter and hottest. But few know that the city was home to what might have been the first modern astronomical and meteorological observatory in the East.

Sir Charles Oakeley, Governor of Madras, established the Madras Observatory in 1792. Y.E.A. Raj, Deputy Director General of Meteorology, says that the primary aim was to get people interested in astronomy. “The observatory was initially in Egmore; later it moved to Nungambakkam in 1792. Meteorological observations began in 1796,” he says.

Hourly weather observations began in 1840. Daily weather reports started coming out in 1875 when the Indian Meteorological Department was established. “When the observatory moved to Kodaikanal, astronomical observations ceased here,” says Dr. Raj.

Today, all that remains is a 15-foot-tall pillar that carried the original transit equipment. According to the IMD website, the pillar carries the name of the architect, Michael Topping Arch. Tamil and Telugu inscriptions are also present so that (people) “may be informed a thousand years hence of the period when the mathematical sciences were first planted by British liberality in Asia.”

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on Aug. 21.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Anantapur	32	23	1	186
Arogyavaram	31	19	1	173
Bapatla	35	26	0	491
Calingapatnam	32	25	0	300
Gannavaram	33	26	0	557
Hanamkonda	33	23	0	765
Hyderabad AP	28	22	tr	512
Kakinada	33	26	2	384
Kammam	32	24	2	115
Kavali	34	25	0	302
Kurnool	33	23	10	351
Mahabubnagar	29	22	0	576
Machilipatnam	34	26	0	427
Nandyal	33	24	0	237
Narasapur	33	27	0	525
Nellore	34	27	0	422
Nizamabad	27	23	0	1008
Ongole	35	25	0	308
Ramagundam	28	23	3	940
Tirupathi AP	33	25	0	302
Tuni	34	26	tr	314

Vizag AP	36	27	tr	244
Vizag	33	27	0	235
KARNATAKA				
Agumbe	23	17	49	6957
Bengaluru AP	27	20	4	328
Bengaluru	27	20	6	394
Bagalkote	—	—	—	—
Belgaum AP	26	20	tr	547
Bellary	32	22	0	—
Bijapur	30	21	0	364
Chitradurga	27	20	1	228
Chickmagalur	24	19	2	415
Chintamani	29	20	5	162
Gadag	28	21	tr	165
Gulbarga	31	21	0	371
Hassan	26	18	8	611
Honavar	30	23	34	3120
Karwar	31	24	12	2502
Madikeri	19	17	49	3458
Mangalore AP	29	23	17	3023
Mysore	28	20	0	176
Mandya	29	21	0	86
Panambur	30	24	11	2778
Raichur	32	23	0	239
Shirali	29	24	31	3381
KERALA				
Alappuzha	30	25	2	2026
Kannur	30	25	4	3172
Kochi AP	31	22	2	2259
Kottayam	30	23	7	2062
Kozhikode	32	24	0	2310
Punalur	30	24	2	1370
Thiruvanantha				
-puram AP	30	24	1	878
Thiruvanantha				
-puram City	31	25	tr	870
Vellanikkara	29	22	7	2305
TAMIL NADU				
Adiramapattinam	33	25	0	91
Coimbatore AP	33	23	0	31
Coonoor	23	15	0	159
Cuddalore	35	25	0	367
Chennai AP	35	25	5	438
Chennai	35	26	2	327
Dharmapuri	33	22	0	30
Kanyakumari	30	23	0	222
Karaikal	36	27	tr	224
Kodaikanal	18	11	1	277
Madurai AP	39	26	0	85
Nagapattinam	36	25	1	165

Palayamkottai	36	26	0	44
Pamban	32	27	0	5
Parangipettai	—	—	—	—
Puducherry	34	26	1	456
Salem	33	22	0	292
Thanjavur	35	27	0	156
Tiruchi AP	37	27	0	63
Tondi	33	26	0	151
Tuticorin	38	27	tr	5
Ooty	18	12	0	359
Valparai	22	17	10	3311
Vedaranyam	—	—	—	—
Vellore	33	25	5	328

LAKSHADWEEP

Amini Divi	30	27	0	829
Minicoy	32	25	2	869
Kavarathi	—	—	—	—

OTHER STATIONS

Kolkata (Alipore)	27	25	94	1254
Mumbai	31	26	0	2022
New Delhi	33	25	95	745

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

DRY WEATHER OVER COASTAL A.P.

CHENNAI: Rainfall occurred at most places over Coastal Karnataka, at many places over Kerala and at a few places over Lakshadweep, Telangana and South Interior Karnataka. Isolated rainfall occurred over Tamil Nadu and North Interior Karnataka. Mainly dry weather prevailed over Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema.

The chief amounts of rainfall recorded in centimetres are:

Tamil Nadu: Devala (Nilgiris Dist), Arantangi and Tirumayam (both Pudukkottai Dist) 3 each.

Andhra Pradesh: Kaleswaram (dist Karimnagar) and Koida (dist Khammam) 2 each and Kurnool, Adilabad and Adilabad (a) (both dist Adilabad) 1

each. **Kerala:** Peermade and Munnar (both in Idukki district) 3

each. **Karnataka:** Gersoppa (Uttara Kannada dt), Linganamakki, Thirthahalli (both Shimoga dt) 6 each.

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

Heavy Rainfall Warning: Isolated heavy rain may occur over ghat areas of south interior Karnataka during the next 48 hours.

Farmer sells onions at Rs. 8, you buy at Rs. 70

The next time you shell out Rs. 70 to buy a kg of onions, reflect on this: the humble bulb's journey from farm to plate started, as it has ended, with exploitation.

You're right to feel ripped off, but spare a thought for the farmer, too. A National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) report on onion production and marketing seen by HT shows that the farmer makes a profit of just Rs. 3.60 for every kg he sells.

In other words, a farmer would need to sell nearly 20 kg of onion if he, hypothetically, wanted to buy a kg of his own produce in plusher parts of Delhi.

According to the NABARD study, in an ideal situation - with no hoarding or unfair practices, and wastage at the "normal" 25% of the 150 million tonne crop - onions should be available at Rs. 14 per kg, with the farmer getting a selling price of Rs. 8 and making just under half of that as profit.

But as the number of rapacious agents and wastage along the line increases, the cost to the consumer goes up considerably, with no benefit to the farmer.

This year, heavy rains may have resulted in as much as 40% of the crop going waste in the key cultivating state of Maharashtra, where the study was carried out.

And middlemen have made plenty of money.

KG Karmakar, former managing director of NABARD told HT: "This (wastage) was used as a basis for further manipulating the price by agents and thus the cost to the consumer in Delhi and Mumbai peaked at Rs. 70-80 per kg."

The report talks of unfair trade practices in auctioning and storage, and explains how prices are manipulated.

When the farmer goes to sell his produce to the local agricultural produce marketing committee (APMC) market, unscrupulous agents - whose role should actually be to help farmers find a buyer - collude to give him the impression that there is no demand.

Then one of the agents takes the onions off the farmer at a cheap price, only to bring them back in a couple of days and sell them to traders at a much higher price.

"Price manipulation takes place by the agent's men quoting an artificially low price and "self-buying". These agents are making a killing," said Karmakar.

With lack of storage facilities and scant knowledge about price trends, the farmers are at the mercy of the agents.

To make matters worse, they are being forced to pay them a commission of up to 8%, the report says, in contravention of the APMC Act that says agents should charge commissions from buyers and not sellers.

weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Thursday, Aug 22

Max 34° | Min 26°

Rain: 0
Humidity: 74
Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:57
Sunset: 06:26
Barometer: 1005

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Friday, Aug 23

Max 35° | Min 26°

Extended Forecast for a week

**Saturday
Aug 24**



34° | 26°
Cloudy

**Sunday
Aug 25**



34° | 26°
Overcast

**Monday
Aug 26**



34° | 27°
Overcast

**Tuesday
Aug 27**



34° | 27°
Overcast

**Wednesday
Aug 28**



34° | 27°
Overcast

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Techie takes to farming, sets new agriculture trend

MUZAFFARPUR: A Muzaffarpur-based youth, armed with a degree in engineering has now taken up farming and has ended up setting a new agricultural trend in the district.

Ujjwal Kumar, 24, has grown turmeric on about 50 acres of land at two separate plots. The first plot is of 35 acres at village Sirsia under Kanti block and the other one is of 15 acres at village Rahua under Mushahari block. Kumar is expecting a return of Rs 70 lakh after an investment of Rs 31 lakh.

His investment of Rs 31lakh includes Rs 4 lakh on cultivation, Rs 22 lakh on processing plants and Rs 5 lakh on land lease annually.

Ujjwal's father is a state government employee. After obtaining an engineering degree and a diploma in agriculture management, Ujjwal started his farming venture

in 2011 on 5 acres of land with turmeric seeds purchased from [Tirhut College of Agriculture](#), Dholi, Muzaffarpur. Encouraged by the yield, he grew it on 20 acres in 2012 and now on 50 acres in 2013.

Processing of raw turmeric and marketing the crop are the main constraints for a producer and he has overcome both with the help of the banks and other indigenous consumers. Moreover, the medicinal value of the crop has also helped in its marketing.

As per the project report submitted to a bank, Ujjwal is setting up a processing plant at Dadar Kolhua village under Kanti block at an expenditure of Rs 22.27 lakh. Machineries to be installed include a turmeric steam boiler trolley, turmeric polishing machine, a solar crop drier besides polyethylene sheets for processing of the crop which can be stored for more than a year.

The process of drying the raw crop produced at his farm can be completed only within 5 to 8 days whereas it may take more than 20 days if done manually. Moreover, a boiler can boil 2 to 4 quintals of turmeric within 5 minutes, he claimed. He sowed the crop in May last and expects to harvest in January-February next. He has a target of installing processing plant in November next. The plant can help other growers of north [Bihar](#) also, he hopes.

On an experimental basis, Ujjwal has adopted inter-cropping on seven acres of land in Rahua by growing maize crop in the space left between two plants of turmeric. He will also grow wheat crop in the same space after harvesting maize. Till date both turmeric and maize plants have good growth, he said and added that turmeric needs irrigation in September compulsorily but any waterlogging may prove fatal for the crop.

Patanjali Yogpeeth and [ITC](#) have assured to purchase his entire produce of turmeric, said Ujjwal. He would sell the crop in solid form not in powder. Solid turmeric is said to be in good demand in Gulf countries, US and UK. Arrangements of bulk export can be made if the produce is not marketed internally, he added.

Survey points to rising suicides among farmers, farm labourers

PATIALA: Contrary to tall claims by both state and central governments about reining in the suicide trend among farmers and agriculture labourers of Punjab, a survey conducted by state's universities revealed that the number of suicides in the past decade either remained largely unchanged or increased.

Data pertaining to the worst affected six districts, which had witnessed 90% of total suicides, shows that the trend of committing suicide due to "debt and other reasons" had refused to die down in rural Punjab, which is grappling with agriculture crisis since the past more than two decades.

According to the survey, out of total 6,926 suicides recorded in Punjab from 2000 to 2010, over 6,200 suicides were reported from six districts - Moga, Bathinda, Mansa, Sangrur, Ludhiana and Barnala.

The survey, the first and the only one conducted in the entire state so far, revealed that 551 farmers and agriculture laborers committed suicide in these districts due to debt and other reasons in 2000. The figure continued to be around 550 till 2008, when the suicide count shot up to 750 in these districts.

Although after 2008 no such survey was conducted in Bathinda and Sangrur, which were the worst affected, the breakup figure pertaining to other four districts showed that total suicide count of farmers and agriculture labourers kept on increasing till 2010.

Similar is the scenario in cases, where victims committed suicide citing inability to repay the debt.

Pertinently, after much hue and cry, the Punjab government had taken the initiative and roped in Punjabi University, Patiala, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana and [Guru Nanak Dev University](#), Amritsar to conduct the first-ever survey. The SAD-BJP government puts the blame on central government's policies for the agriculture crisis in the state.

Eminent economist and director of Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID), Chandigarh, Sucha Singh Gill, said the government had been taking only "curative, but not preventive, measures" to check the suicide trend in the state.

"There is a need to address the issues of rural society, like education and health, which drain a good part of income and employment generation in non-farming sectors. The crisis would prevail until the government takes these steps," said Gill.



Showers boon for paddy, jute farmers

Even as the spectre of floods hovered over some districts in south Bengal, farmers breathed a sigh of relief as abundant rainfall greeted the agricultural belt facilitating paddy cultivation, according to state agricultural department officials.

August and September are crucial months for paddy and jute cultivation and critical transplantation operation takes place, which needs adequate water for seedlings to survive. Heavy showers over the past few days have submerged cultivable land in several areas.

Monsoon arrived on July 8 this year, but hit a dry spell in the middle, raising concerns. Officials at the Regional Meteorological Centre in Kolkata confirmed the deficiency will be met by month-end.

South Bengal received 707mm rainfall, while North Bengal and Sikkim received 1,254 mm.

Director of agriculture, Dr Bhattacharya said that due to the early onset of monsoon, more than 90 per cent of transplantation has already taken place. He said that if weather conditions remain congenial, the government will be able to meet its target of 4.2 million hectares of paddy transplantation by the month-end.

ADC: Banks have disbursed loans worth Rs 4,662 cr to agriculture, priority sectors

Banks in the district have disbursed loans worth Rs 4,662 crore to agriculture and other priority sectors against a target of Rs 3,259 crore till June this year, Additional Deputy Commissioner (D) Kanwalpreet Kaur Brar said while presiding over a District Level Review Committee on Wednesday. She added that during the current quarter ending June 30, 2013, the banks had disbursed loans of Rs 2,278 crore against a target of Rs 1,557 crore for purely agriculture and other allied activities.

The district-level credit consultative meeting was attended by the district co-ordinators of the banks and officials of various government agencies. Kaur further informed the group that for MSME segments and large industries, loans of Rs 1,486 crore had been handed out against a target of Rs 1,082 crore. She instructed bank officials to give priority to sanction and disburse DRI loans for the upliftment of poor and down-trodden sections of society, so that they can gain from self-employment. It was informed that Punjab and Sind Bank is running Rural Self Employment Training Institute at Master Tara Singh College Complex to impart training to children living below the poverty line. She said that training for dairy farming, computer (hardware and software), stitching and tailoring, electrical repair, motor winding and boutique is being imparted free of cost. Up till now training institute as imparted training to 1,351 beneficiaries comprising 45 course of which 792 beneficiaries have gained employment. Brar also stated that Punjab and Sind Bank is running Financial Literacy and Credit Counselling centres for the benefits of the public.

The ADC (D) warned the officials of the private banks that if they do not fulfil the targets fixed for government sponsored schemes, appropriate action will be taken against the erring officials and the matter will also be taken up with the Reserve Bank of India.

Brar appealed to the citizens of the district to ensure that their Aadhar Cards are linked to their bank accounts, so that subsidy on LPG gas and other government schemes can be credited to their banks accounts. She directed bank officials to give due publicity by organising camps for enlightenment of the citizens.

Brar intimated under SGSY scheme different department have constituted 1,335 self-help groups, of which 763 have taken loans from the banks.

She said that Dairy Development Department has got financed 52 small dairy units and 18 commercial dairy units with loans of Rs 607 lakh.

THE  NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

Bringing tears full fold



The coming days may see a further rise in onion prices in Bangalore. The government is on a teary wicket as far as every man's and household's dietary nutrition is concerned. 'The rise in onion prices has brought tears to the eyes of the common man', comments an opposition leader, highlighting the ongoing politicking on this teary vegetable. As in earlier years, the steep rise in onion prices this time too has caught the UPA government on the wrong foot. This is not the first time that we are facing such a situation when the prices have skyrocketed from a mere Rs 25 per kilogram to Rs 80-100 per kilogram. If one recalls the politics in the consumption of onions, it led to the fall of the BJP government in 1998 in the Delhi state. With supplies decreasing, the demand increasing and the government exporting, the onion prices have remained high for quite a few weeks. Go to any of the main markets in KR Market, Yeshwantpur or Banashankari, the prices have fluctuated depending on the inflow into these wholesale markets. An indispensable ingredient of most Indians especially the poor, many governments have had to pay a heavy price for their skewed policies. Last year's drought followed by heavy rainfall this year, has in fact, affected the production in the prominent growing areas of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Bangalore is presently receiving its quota of onions from Maharashtra and other states, which are basically stored onions, released into the market. In fact, a recent survey by APMC has revealed that farmers and traders in Nashik have released their stocks intermittently albeit at high prices, creating an artificial situation of scarcity in the country. Further, many onion growing states in the country have reported

spoilage of stocks because of heavy rains, therefore, this year, production of onions may see a decrease.

Bangalore, which has 290 retail outlets of Hopcoms are selling onions at the rate of Rs 70 per kg while other retail vendors around the city especially the push carts are selling them at a rate that is as steep as `80-90 per kg. A resident of Jayanagar, Sridevi said, "Till date, we were purchasing it at `46 per kg but now in the last ten days, the prices have increased and in fact, doubled. It is not just onions but even other vegetables have seen a price hike."

The coming days may see a further rise in prices, say retailers in Jayanagar, Basavanagudi, Chamrajpet and other areas as there has been a steady decrease in the arrivals at the APMC yards. "Once we used to pay Rs 2000-2500 for 100 kgs but now it is as high as Rs 6000. Even the quality of the produce has gone down. They are spoilt and afflicted by smut fungus because of the heavy rains. However, the situation may improve by September and prices may go down when local produce from Chitradurga, Bellary, Haveri, Rannebennur and other areas comes into the market," says Raghvendra, a wholesale vendor.

Farmers seek to switch off power project at Cheyyur

The proposed 4,000 mega watt Ultra Mega Power Project (UMPP) to be set up near the Gangadevankuppam village of Kancheepuram has given rise to apprehension among the farming community in the area.

The project got a fillip in 2008 from the then DMK government.

"The moment the project was brought back, many VIPs, including partymen, started buying land here," alleges Shanmugam, a village leader, who claims that the villagers have been given no information regarding the project even though the Expert Appraisal Committee recommended clearance for the project to the Ministry of Environment. A public hearing held in 2010 for the plant was also hurriedly concluded without taking in their views, he says.

The region, in fact, looks abundant in natural resources, including the presence of lagoons, estuaries and a reserved forest. A complex system of water bodies, both natural and artificial, with as many as 80 lakes, dot the area around which the plant is supposed to come up. More importantly, the area is filled with sand dunes almost every few metres. The presence of mangroves also makes it an ecologically sensitive zone.

Fishermen in Panaiyur Periakuppam village, where the captive coal jetty for the plant would be situated, fear the project would completely destroy their livelihood. A port is expected to come up between the village and its neighbouring hamlet occupying shorefront of 650 metres, says environmental activist Nityanand Jayaraman. The coal stockyard will hold 310,000 tonnes of coal and would be built on an 83-acre land.

The villagers have challenged the clearance given to the coal jetty in the National Green Tribunal and say they would do the same for the power project as well by the end of this week. Interestingly, the plant and coal jetty are proposed to be set up 6 km apart.

A report released by environmentalists and endorsed by prominent persons, including former Energy Secretary EAS Sarma, alleged that a number of false representations have been made in trying to get clearance for the project. These included claims such as non-existence of any sensitive ecosystem, the plant's location on barren land and the stability of the shoreline. The report also alleged that the site where the plant is currently set to come up was never considered by the Central Electricity Authority as claimed by the project proponents. Villagers in Cheyyur told Express that they have formed a committee at the panchayat level to campaign against the plant.

Krishna, Veeranam boost city's water supply



Water supply has improved in 25 pc of the city's water-deficit areas, thanks to Veeranam lake. (File photo)

Water supply to the city has gone up to 600 million litres per day (MLD) following the release of 180 MLD of water from Veeranam and 700 cusecs of Krishna water from Kandaleru Dam in Andhra Pradesh.

Water was released from the Veeranam lake on the orders of Chief Minister J Jayalithaa.

"This has resulted in the city now getting 600 MLD of water, an additional 10 pc of what it was getting following the contingency measures to reorganise water distribution," said an official from Metro Water.

As a result, water supply has improved in 25 per cent of the city's areas that were facing shortage, including Velachery, Besant Nagar, Tiruvanmiyur, Taramani, Kottivakkam, Alandur, Mylapore, Anna Nagar, Ayanavaram, Valasaravakkam, Saidapet, CIT Nagar, Vyasarpadi and Washermenpet.

This has also resulted in the decline of 30 to 40 per cent in the paid lorry water supply in South Chennai, said sources.

Water supply in Anna park, Royapuram, Poonga Nagar and Ambattur is also set to improve from August 22. Supply to the city would be further increased depending on

the inflow of Krishna Water from Kandleru Dam, besides increase in water levels in Puzhal and Chembarambakkam reservoirs.

But the normal water supply hinges on the monsoon. "Everything depends on the weather god," said a Metro Water source.

Earlier, the department was forced to reorganise water distribution in seven zones following lack of rainfall and the dwindling water level in the reservoirs. These included Tondiarpet, Royapuram, Thiru Vi Ka Nagar, Anna Nagar, Teynampet, Kodambakkam and Adyar.

"We had to cut the supply from 830 million litres per day to 550 million litres per day following the water levels dwindling in the reservoir due lack of rains," Metro Water sources said.

Business Standard

Cardamom falls by 0.1% on weak demand



Cardamom prices extended losses for third straight day by losing Rs 2.30 to Rs 758.60 per kg in futures trade today as speculators trimmed their positions, driven by weak demand in spot market.

Adequate stocks position in the physical market on increased arrivals from producing regions also influenced cardamom prices.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for delivery in September fell by Rs 2.30, or 0.30% to Rs 758.60 per kg in business turnover of 146 lots.

Likewise, the spice for delivery in October shed 70 paise, or 0.09% to Rs 791 per kg in 8 lots.

Market analysts said speculators trimmed their positions due to weak demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position, that mainly kept pressure on cardamom prices at futures trade.

Potato rises by 1% on good demand



In restricted trade, [potato prices](#) rose by 1.02% to Rs 842.60 per quintal in futures market today as speculators enlarged their positions on the back of good demand in the spot market.

Tight supplies in the physical market following less arrivals from producing regions due to heavy rains also supported the upsurge in potato prices.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), potato for delivery in September rose by Rs 8.50, or 1.02% to Rs 842.60 per quintal in business turnover of 78 lots.

Market analysts said speculators enlarged their positions on the back of good spot market demand against tight supplies on less arrivals from producing regions mainly pushed up potato prices at futures trade.

Onion prices bounce back, up 27% in two days



After a week of continuous decline, the price of onions has bounced back in major spot mandis of Maharashtra, the largest producing state and which sets the lead for markets elsewhere.

With a minuscule quantity left for release before the new season crop comes to the market next month, traders seem to have lowered the supply to take advantage of

the still-high prices.

The price has jumped by 27 per cent in two days at [Lasalgaon](#) in Nashik district, Asia's largest spot mandi for the commodity. Between Monday and Wednesday, the premium quality went from Rs 3,250 a quintal to Rs 4,125 a qtl. It had touched a record Rs 4,700 a qtl at Lasalgaon on August 14 and then began falling.

The market was closed on Tuesday due to [Raksha Bandhan](#). On Wednesday, total arrivals plunged 56 per cent to settle at merely 4,000 tonnes. "Traders are releasing lower quantities into the spot market, perhaps to maintain price," said R P Gupta, director, National [Horticulture](#) Research & Development Foundation.

The commodity jumped by Rs 150 a qtl, to Rs 3,850 a qtl, in Mumbai and by Rs 900 a qtl, to Rs 4,100, at [Pimpalgaon](#), also in Nashik district.

Arrivals at Mumbai and Pimpalgaon were 3,300 qtls and 5,000 qtls on Wednesday, as against 6,700 qtls and 15,659 qtls on Monday, respectively.

These spot markets opened after five days of festival closure. During the period, prices had eased, following news that import consignments were being loaded from ports here and in the south, to sell in local markets. The price of imported [onion](#) works out to Rs 25 a kg.

According to a leading trader and exporter here, arrival of the new season's crop has begun from Andhra Pradesh, for distribution in Hyderabad, Bangalore and some mandis in Orissa. However, this quantity isn't enough to impact the prices.

	Model prices (₹/quintal)			Arrivals (quintal)		
	Aug 19	Aug 21	% Chg	Aug 19	Aug 21	% Chg
Kolhapur	3,500	4,000	14.28	6,300	4,040	-35.87
Lasalgaon	3,250	4,125	26.92	9,000	4,000	-55.55
Malegaon	3,200	3,950	23.43	8,845	6,500	-26.51
Mumbai	3,700	3,850	4.05	6,700	3,300	-50.74
Pimpalgaon	3,200	4,100	28.12	15,659	5,000	-68.07
Pune	2,900	3,600	24.13	2,538	3,497	37.78

Source: NHRDF

"Since the new season crop from Karnataka (which produces about a sixth of the country's crop; a fourth comes from Maharashtra) is scheduled to hit the markets towards the end of September, the price is unlikely to cool until then,"

said Gupta.

The government has levied a minimum export price of \$650 a tonne but this hasn't affected home prices appreciably.

Crude palm oil weakens by 0.3% on subdued demand



[Crude palm oil prices](#) weakened by Rs 1.40 to Rs 517.30 per 10 kg in futures trading today as speculators reduced their positions, tracking a weak trend at spot market on subdued demand against adequate position.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), crude palm oil for deliver in far-month October declined by Rs 1.40, or 0.27% to Rs 517.30 per 10 kg in business turnover of 59 lots.

Similarly, the oil for delivery in September traded lower by Re 1, or 0.19% to Rs 518 per 10 kg in 214 lots.

Traders said speculators reduced their positions, tracking a weak trend at spot market on subdued demand against adequate stocks position, mainly influenced crude palm oil prices at futures trade.

Poppy seeds may rise as court stay on imports continues



Kochi, Aug. 21:

With the Allahabad High Court's order staying imports of poppy seeds continuing, the spice's prices could rise in the coming days.

"The court issue will prolong for 2-3 months. During this period, no new import permit is likely to be issued, leading to shortage," an upcountry market source told *Business Line*.

According to sources, "poppy seeds will soon touch Rs 500 a kg."

As the festival demand has started, prices of poppy seeds have shown an uptrend. They are currently ruling in the range of Rs 370-450 a kg.

The Allahabad High Court on August 8 ordered the posting of the case after two weeks.

supply crunch

This might give the impression that the availability will be tight and in turn, lead to huge buying.

The market, according to them, was up by Rs 20-25 a kg on Tuesday.

The Customs Department is expected to present its views in this issue before the Court at the next hearing.

Similarly, the Court has also sought the response of Directorate-General of Foreign Trade before the next hearing.

Meanwhile, the Union Government is probing imports of poppy seeds from Pakistan and Afghanistan via Turkey.

The weakening of the rupee has, on the other hand, made the landed cost of imported poppy seeds costlier, they said.

Karnataka tobacco crop down 10% this year



Bangalore, Aug. 21:

Karnataka tobacco crop area this season (2013-14) is around one lakh hectares mainly in the districts of Mysore, Chamarajanagar and Hassan. The crop cultivation in the State is lower by around 10 per cent compared with last year.

“This year’s crop looks good at a few places in Hunsur, Periyapatna, compared to last year. However, areas close to forest and rivers have been damaged due to excess rains,” B.N. Jayaram, a tobacco farmer from Hunsur and Tobacco Board member told *Business Line*.

“At present 40-45 per cent of the crop is under curing stage and the balance is on the field,” he added.

For crop year 2013-14, the Board has fixed 102 million kg (mkg) for Karnataka. Last year (2012-13), the crop was fixed at 98 mkg and the Board was able to market 93.86 mkg.

Karnataka tobacco auctions are to commence from August 30. The Tobacco Board, like last year, is to continue the e-auction method in all the 12 platforms.

During the crop year 2012-13, Karnataka tobacco was marketed at an average price of around Rs 115.82 a kg. Bright grades fetched Rs 144 and quantity marketed was 20.79 mkg. Medium Grade fetched Rs 127.72 and 44.66 mkg was sold while Low grades fetched Rs 76.50 for 28.41 mkg.

Jayaram said that farmers in the State got good remunerative price for their produce as e-auction brought high level of transparency and farmers were able to take quick decisions with the help of online display of auction proceedings.

Speaking at the Tobacco Institute of India (TII) awards recently, A.H. Vishwanath, Member of Parliament (MP) representing Mysore, said that the farmers need not fear of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

“As per the FCTC, to which India is a signatory, tobacco availability had to be reduced by 2020, not stopped completely,” he added.

He also said that Governments in States where tobacco was prominently grown must take steps to address growers’ problems and should not bank only on the Centre for solutions.

anil.u@thehindu.co.in

Turmeric arrivals limited at Erode



Erode, Aug. 21:

Only a few farmers have brought their turmeric for sale at the Regulated Market Committee on Wednesday.

Though the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association declared holiday for the turmeric market, only the RMC is functioning for the past two days.

On Wednesday, only eight farmers brought 73 bags for sale.

The sales also decreased to 60 per cent, as out of 73 bags 45 were sold.

Only one or two traders procured the turmeric from RMC for their local supply.

He said the first season of turmeric sale was completed by June and from August 15, second sale season has started, but traders were disappointed as only negligible number of orders were received from North India and they are expecting huge second season orders, after that the sale will increase.

The price of the yellow spice increased to Rs 4,800 a quintal in the futures market, but it did not affect local price, as already turmeric is selling in the local market at a par with turmeric futures.

He hoped that they may get fresh orders from North within a week time.

Similarly, the turmeric farmers said that the price of turmeric will go up by at least Rs 500 soon and before the Diwali they are hopeful that the price may go upto Rs 8,000.

The RMC officials said the auction sale would be conducted as usual on Thursday. Some farmers said they would bring the turmeric for sale on Thursday.

At the RMC, the finger variety turmeric was sold at Rs 4,789-5,701, root variety Rs 4,116 to Rs 5,169 .

Of the 73 bags that arrived, 45 were sold.

Nilgiri speciality gift tea pack launched

Coonoor, Aug. 21:

An innovative 'gift pack' of supreme quality Nilgiri Speciality high-priced teas has been launched for this year's 'gift season'.

"This gift pack comes with Tea Board's Nilgiri logo affording tea connoisseurs opportunity to taste Avataa multiple-brew White, Green and Black tea grades packed in attractive square tins of 25 gm each. The pack highlights Tea Board's research-based observation on tea's positive impact on health, especially its power to fight against cancer and heart ailments. The method of preparing a perfect cup of tea is also shown", Tea Board member S. Ramu told *Business Line* after launching 'Avataa Gift Pack' edition.

"Tea Board had distributed these grades to dignitaries at London Olympics. This gift pack's global version will be launched coinciding with the 4th Annual North American Tea Conference in Bermuda during Sept 24-26. Tea Board India is an exclusive sponsor at the meet," he noted.

"Avataa's affordable Indian edition comes ahead of the 'gift season' . In the Nilgiris, it will be available at Doddabetta Tea Museum in Udhagamandalam. These Avataa teas are hand plucked from single-bud in specific fields of Billimalai Estate, 6,400 ft above sea level in pristine Western Ghats. They fetched Rs 11,550 a kg at Nilgiri Winter Speciality Tea Auction this year," G. Udayakumar, Director, Bluegate Beverages P Ltd., which owns Avataa, said.

Contract farming in plywood takes root at farm varsity's lead

Coimbatore, Aug. 21:

A new initiative of contract farming of plywood has been launched in Tamil Nadu. . The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University's Forest College and Research Institute at Mettupalayam has initiated this activity.

The programme has taken off with Ambiply Panels and Doors inking an agreement with the research institute for training farmers to grow *Melia dubia*, a fast growing tree species that has been gaining importance in recent years in Tamil Nadu.

Research personnel at the College say that after conducting field trails for over a decade, they have released two high yielding varieties– TNAU Melia MTP 1 and TNAU Melia MTP 2 – which were found suitable for making of quality plywood. “These incidentally, are also the most sought after species by the plywood industry. Having witnessed the potential of *Melia dubia* as a raw material for the plywood industry, Ambiply Panels and Doors approached us to promote and support plantations in farm holdings. Hence a consortia-based contract plywood farming model was conceived and designed for implementation in Tamil Nadu,” they said. This model will ensure buyback and assured price supportive mechanism for the growers. This will also create sustained supply of quality raw material to the plywood industry throughout the year.



Coimbatore, Aug. 21:

A new initiative of contract farming of plywood has been launched in Tamil Nadu. . **The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University’s Forest College and Research Institute at Mettupalayam** has initiated this activity.

The programme has taken off with Ambiply Panels and Doors inking an agreement with the research institute for training farmers to grow *Melia dubia*, a fast growing tree species that has been gaining importance in recent years in Tamil Nadu.

Research personnel at the College say that after conducting field trails for over a decade, they have released two high yielding varieties– TNAU Melia MTP 1 and TNAU Melia MTP 2 – which were found suitable for making of quality plywood.

“These incidentally, are also the most sought after species by the plywood industry.

Having witnessed the potential of *Melia dubia* as a raw material for the plywood industry, Ambiply Panels and Doors approached us to promote and support plantations in farm holdings. Hence a consortia-based contract plywood farming model was conceived and designed for implementation in Tamil Nadu,” they said.

This model will ensure buyback and assured price supportive mechanism for the growers. This will also create sustained supply of quality raw material to the plywood industry throughout the year.

On the environmental front, the cultivation of *Melia dubia* tree will help reduce the atmospheric carbon-dioxide levels through carbon sequestration. This tree accumulates a biomass of 300 tonnes/hectares in six years, and removes 150 tonnes of atmospheric carbon-dioxide through sequestration. These consortia mode tree cultivation will help to protect the reserve forests of India, by reducing the pressure on them for supply of raw material, say Forest College experts.

The tree grows in all kinds of soil and the wood fetches a minimum of Rs 7,500/tonne once it reaches a girth of 20 inches. The farmer will be able to get Rs 6-8 lakh from an acre within six years, a source said.

More than 200 farmers, members belonging to the tree growers association, financial institutions, plywood manufacturers and other stakeholders participated in the inaugural function, held at the Institute in Mettupalayam.

Earlier, Forest College Dean P. Durairasu said that contract farming in tree species has been demonstrated in pulpwood and matchwood species by the college and more than 30,000 hectares have been brought under tree cover in 29 districts of the State.

With the availability of solid wood from natural forests coming to a standstill according to the guidelines of the National Forest Policy, 1988, the need for alternate forms of wood like plywood is on the rise.

revathy.lakshminarasimhan@

thehindu.co.in

Spot rubber rules steady

Kottayam, Aug. 21:

Physical rubber prices were steady on Wednesday. There were no active buyers or sellers in the local trading houses and the commodity lost its direction amidst dull volumes.

Sheet rubber closed unchanged at Rs 184 a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

September futures improved to Rs 177.70 (Rs 175.41), October to Rs 172.95 (Rs 170), November to Rs 169.87 (Rs 167.58) and December to Rs 170.40 (Rs 168.21) for RSS 4 on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) increased to Rs 163.69 (Rs 162.12) at Bangkok.

August futures closed at ₹ 251.5 (Rs 166.06) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg: RSS-4: 184 (184); RSS-5: 182 (182); Ungraded: 173 (173); ISNR 20: 170 (170); and Latex 60 per cent: 161 (161).

'Warehoused pepper lots, a clear case of adulteration'

Kochi, Aug. 21:

The food safety commissioner of Kerala Biju Prabhakar, who has ordered to destroy close to 900 tonnes of black pepper, says the warehoused pepper lots were adulterated and unfit for human consumption.

"It is a clear case of adulteration," Prabhakar told *Business Line*. "The black pepper, adulterated with mineral oil, is a health hazard to the consumers and needs to be destroyed." He noted that according to the Food Safety and Standards Regulations 2011 black pepper should be free from traces of mineral oil, which was Group B carcinogenic stuff.

He said that the rest of the pepper, currently lying in six warehouses which had been sealed by the food safety authority, was at various stages of checking and analysis. If tested positive, they risked destruction.

Prabhakar, however, said the adulteration did not seem to be done 'for profit.' The mineral oil was used as a fungicide and polishing agent. Such practice had been in place for long but had not been detected or reported.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India had been tipped off that over 6,000 tonnes of black pepper – stored in NCDEX-accredited warehouses – were adulterated with mineral oil. The food safety officials in Kerala tested five samples and found they were all adulterated and sealed all the warehouses in December. The order to destroy such large quantities of pepper is expected to impact the market prices.

Short-covering boosts castorseed futures



Rajkot, Aug 21:

Castorseed futures gained on short-covering by traders and also good demand in the spot market on Wednesday.

However, the rise in spot prices was curbed by higher stock position and higher sowing in Gujarat.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), castorseed September contracts increased by Rs 23 to Rs 3,471 a quintal, with an open interest of 1,62,640 lots.

NCDEX castorseed October contracts moved up by Rs 26 to Rs 3,554 with an open interest of 36,760 lots.

Castor oil was traded at Rs 705 for 10 kg and spot castor was traded at Rs 3,450 for 100 kg.

Castorseed arrivals, in 75-kg bag reported at 22,000-23,000 versus 30,000-31,000 of the previous day.

It traded on Rs 645-695 for a *maund* of 20 kg in Saurashtra Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee year.

The Rajkot Commodity exchange was closed for *Rakshabandhan*.

According to Kedia Commodity report from Mumbai, castorseed gained on buying support from exporters and upcountry buyers. Sentiments improved further on account of a firm demand in the spot market against restricted arrivals from producing belts.

However, expectations of higher production in the major producing area capped the gains.

According to traders, higher arrival of the castor, according to the demand, has been putting pressure in the last couple of days.

PTI reports from Mumbai: Castorseeds bold and castor oil commercial ruled stable in the absence of buying. Castorseeds bold and castor oil commercial closed unchanged at Rs 3,500 and Rs 730 for 10 kg, respectively.

Profit-booking may cool edible oils



Mumbai Aug 21:

A strong dollar kept edible oils prices boiling ahead of festival season. On Wednesday, weakness in domestic currency forced local refineries to increase their rates.

In Mumbai, local refineries reduced their rates for palmolein by Rs 10 at beginning of the day but raised them by Rs 5 for 10 kg after the dollar gained further.

“The market may see some correction from the current level on fear of Government intervention and profit booking,” an observer said.

Demand for indigenous oils was absent on expectation of new arrivals to start early. At the end of the day, Liberty quoted palmolein Rs 590, super palmolein Rs 615 and super deluxe Rs 635, soyabean refined oil Rs 675 and sunflower refined oil Rs 825.

Ruchi quoted palmolein Rs 590, soyabean refined oil Rs 675 and sunflower refined oil Rs 820. Allana quoted palmolein Rs 585, super palmolein Rs 610, soyabean refined oil Rs 675 and sunflower refined oil Rs 818.

In Rajkot, groundnut oil declined by Rs 40 to Rs 1,435 (Rs 1,475) for *telia* tin and loose (10 kg) by Rs 25 to Rs 925 (Rs 950).

On National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil September futures shot up by Rs 9.70 to Rs 692 (Rs 682.30), October jumped by Rs 14 to Rs 666.50 (Rs 652.50) and November higher by Rs 13.80 to Rs 658.50 (Rs 644.70).

Malaysia BMD crude palm oil September contracts settled at MYR 2,393 (MYR 2,380), October at MYR 2,351 (MYR 2,344) and November at MYR 2,335 (MYR 2,329).

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: Groundnut oil 970 (980), soya refined oil 675 (670), sunflower exp. ref. 730 (730), sunflower ref. 820 (820), rapeseed ref. oil 717 (714), rapeseed expeller ref. 687 (684) cottonseed ref. oil 665 (665) and palmolein 570 (570).

Vikram Global Commodities (P) Ltd quoted Rs 630 for 10 kg for Malaysia super palmolein for September delivery.

Poultry feed could rise on costlier inputs



Karnal, August 21:

Following an uptrend in prices of key ingredients over the last couple of days, poultry feed products may turn dearer in the near future.

Poultry feed prices stayed unchanged this week, despite an uptrend in prices of a few of its key ingredients, said trade expert Aditya Mishra.

Following volatility in soyameal, feed prices have not been altered yet, he said.

There is an uncertainty in the soyameal market and if soyameal moves up further, feed prices will increase, he said. Prices may increase by Rs 200-300 for a tonne.

In the physical market, after witnessing a fall last weekend, soyameal witnessed a good rally, improved by Rs 1,700 to Rs 33,900. Bajra improved further by Rs 80 to

Rs 1,390 a quintal, while di-calcium phosphate improved by 10 paisa and sold at Rs 33.80 a kg.

MBM went up by 30 paisa to 33.30 a kg, while maize moved up by Rs 20 to Rs 1,510 a quintal. Mustard de-oiled cake improved by Rs 200 and sold at Rs 14,200 a tonne, DRB improved by Rs 600 to Rs 11,200 while rice bran oil was at Rs 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.

Poultry Products

Meanwhile, broiler and chick improved on domestic demand while egg remained unchanged on Wednesday.

Broiler improved by Rs 2 and quoted at Rs 86-90 a kg, egg remained unchanged and sold at Rs 3.12, while chick went for Rs 23, Re 1 up from the previous level.

Millers' sugar sale to cut inventory continues



Mumbai, Aug 21:

Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market were mixed on Wednesday despite higher retail offtake.

Loading and unloading were at a par on higher retail offtake. A Vashi-based wholesaler said that as market was closed the previous day, arrivals and local dispatches remained higher. Steady prices kept volume routine.

About 64-65 truckloads (each of 100 bags) of commodity changed hand on Wednesday. Naka and mill tender rates ruled unchanged as millers are selling to

ease inventory surplus burden. Mill tender rates are ruling steady since last two weeks.

Arrivals in the Vashi market were 64-65 truck loads while local dispatches were also 64-65 trucks.

On Tuesday evening, due to Raksha Bandhan festival, only 98-100 mills were able to sell about 8,000-10,000 bags at Rs 2,910-3,000 (Rs 2,910-3,000) for S-grade and Rs 3,010-3,110 (Rs 3,010-3,110) for M-grade.

Vashi market currently carries about 115-120 truckloads of stocks, sources said.

On National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar September futures were steady at Rs 3,021 (Rs 3,021), October was up by Rs 7 to Rs 3,037 (Rs 3,030) and November was higher by Rs 4 to Rs 3,045 (Rs 3,041).

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association;s spot rates were: S-grade Rs 3,042-3,136 (Rs 3,044-3,146) and M-grade Rs 3,162-3,372 (Rs 3,180-3,352).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs 3,005-3,060 (Rs 3,005-3,060) and M-grade Rs 3,120-3,210 (Rs 3,120-3,210).

Fresh wet spell threatens urad crop



Indore, Aug 21:

With rupee tumbling to a record low against dollar, prices of almost all the pulse seeds in Indore mandis hit the roof. This is because imported pulses have become costlier due to the weakening Indian currency.

Though mandis in Madhya Pradesh and Indore remained closed on Wednesday on account of 'Raksha Bandhan', in private trading, chana, masoor and urad ruled higher with further fall in rupee against dollar.

Amid higher demand and weak arrivals, urad prices in Indore have gone up by Rs 650 a quintal in the past fortnight.

Fresh spell of rains have threatened the prospects of the urad crop. Fear of damage to crop and rise in dollar have made stockists go on buying spree, leading to sharp rise in its prices, said a trader.

Rise in urad also lifted its dal with urad dal (medium) being quoted at Rs 4,400-4,500 a quintal (up Rs 100 from last week), urad dal (bold) Rs 4,800-4,900, while urad mongar Rs 6,200-6,300 (up Rs 200 from last week).

Similarly, higher demand and buying support from the millers have also lifted tur and its dal with tur (Maharashtra) in Indore currently being quoted at Rs 4,500-4,525 (up Rs 200 from last week).

Similarly, tur (Madhya Pradesh) has also risen to Rs 3,900-4,100 (up Rs 200 from last week).

Rise in tur also lifted its dal with tur dal (full) in Indore ruling at Rs 6,400 (up Rs 100), tur dal (sawa no.) at Rs 5,800-6,000, while tur marka ruled at Rs 6,800.

Moong has also been witnessing an uptrend with moong (best quality) currently quoted at Rs 5,500-5,700, while moong (medium) at Rs 4,500-4,800.

With rise in buying support and demand, moong prices in Indore have gone up by Rs 400. Uptrend continued in chana with prices in Indore in private trading on Wednesday being quoted at Rs 3,250-75 (up Rs 100-125).

Corporate buying drives copra to new high



Kochi, Aug 21:

Weak copra arrivals coupled with a good demand boosted coconut oil prices to a year's new high in Kerala and Tamil Nadu markets this week. A strong corporate buying also drove copra prices to a new high.

According to Prakash B. Rao, Vice-President, Cochin Oil Merchants Association (COMA), coconut oil prices touched Rs 76 a kg in Kerala (Rs 71), while in Tamil Nadu traders quoted Rs 73 against Rs 68 last week.

Similarly, copra prices inched up to Rs 5,600 a quintal in Kerala (Rs 5,200) while in Tamil Nadu, it went up to Rs 5,500 against Rs 5,000 last week.

Rao attributed the firming up of copra prices mainly to large-scale procurement by corporates on account of the forthcoming festival season.

Due to this, the market is witnessing a bullish trend and the prices are likely to firm up in the coming days, he said.

Elsewhere, imported edible oils also firmed up on a weaker rupee. Palm oil prices shot up to Rs 63 (Rs 56), while palm kernel oil went up to Rs 65 (Rs 58).

Thalath Mahamood, former President, COMA, said that local demand ahead of Onam festival season in Kerala boosted prices due to heavy buying.

The local demand is likely to continue which would further result in price increase. There were also allegations over the quality of copra procured by the government agencies, especially in Kozhikode and Kasargod godowns.

It is reported that majority of these poor quality commodities were non-edible and not good for the market, he said.

Bharat N. Khona, former Board Member, COMA, attributed the unprecedented spurt in prices to local demand ahead of festival season. sajeevkumar.v@thehindu.co.in