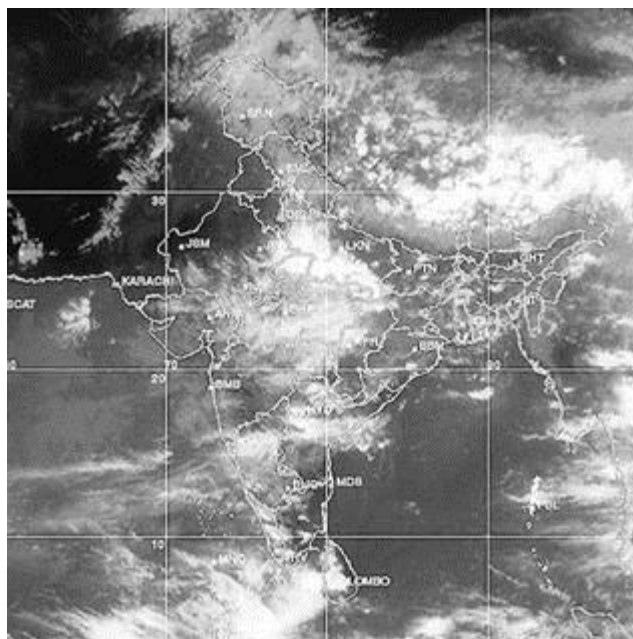


Date : 30.08.2013

THE HINDU

weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on August 29th.

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	34	25	0	517
New Delhi (Sfd)	34	26	0	763
Chandigarh	33	23	4	767
Hissar	36	24	0	507
Bhuntar	33	20	0	391
Shimla	25	16	0	747
Jammu	33	25	0	1127
Srinagar	25	17	7	216
Amritsar	34	24	3	745
Patiala	34	25	0	680
Jaipur	33	24	0	661
Udaipur	31	23	0	656
Allahabad	29	26	2	920
Lucknow	31	24	6	663
Varanasi	31	25	18	643
Dehradun	27	23	tr	2504

Agartala	29	26	3	700
Ahmedabad	34	25	tr	749
Bangalore	29	21	0	400
Bhubaneshwar	28	25	5	659
Bhopal	29	23	0	1113
Chennai	35	25	tr	439
Guwahati	33	25	21	695
Hyderabad	30	21	tr	519
Kolkata	27	26	17	1431
Mumbai	32	26	0	2060
Nagpur	28	23	3	1328
Patna	30	26	16	331
Pune	29	21	tr	535
Thiruvananthapuram	32	25	0	870
Imphal	32	23	0	809
Shillong	21	17	4	779

The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (tr-trace) and total rainfall in mm since 1st June.

RAINFALL

Southwest monsoon has been active over Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. RAINFALL: Rain/thundershowers have occurred at many places over Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, at a few places over Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab and at isolated places over Haryana. Weather was dry over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm are: (3 cm and above) HIMACHAL PRADESH: Una 10, Dharamsala 7, Kasauli and Bangana 5 each, Berthin, Nahan, Paonta and Amb 3 each, PUNJAB: Gurdaspur 8, Anandpur Sahib 7, Shahpur Kandi and Mukerian 4 each and Hoshiarpur and Balachour 3 each, EAST UTTAR PRADESH: (5 cm and above) Akbarpur 9, Phoolpur 8, Salempur 7, Kaisargunj, Bhinga and Robertsganj 5 each, WEST UTTAR PRADESH: (5 cm and above) Garotha 17, Moth 11, Jalesar 10, Moradabad 8, Muzaffarnagar and Deoband 6 each and Shikohabad, Mauranipur and Nakur 5 each and UTTARAKHAND: Tehri and Deoprayag 5 each, Landsdown 4 and Mukteshwar, Jakholi and Rudraprayag 3 each. FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 31ST August 2013 : Rain/thundershowers may occur at many places over Himachal Pradesh, east-Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Rain/thundershowers may occur at many places over west-Uttar Pradesh and Jammu division of Jammu and Kashmir during next 48 hours and decrease thereafter and isolated places over rest of the region

HEAVY RAINFALL WARNING: Heavy rainfall may occur at one or two places over Uttar Pradesh during next 24 hours.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 31ST August 2013: Generally cloudy sky. Very light rain/thundershowers may occur in some areas.

Foot-and-mouth disease may spread to Idukki forests

Wild animals have been entering farms in affected areas

The foot-and-mouth disease spreading fast among cattle at Marayur and Kanthallur can affect wildlife as many animals from the nearby forests enter the cultivated areas.

Veterinary experts, led by K.J. Mariyamma, District Animal Welfare Officer, visited the villages on Thursday and collected samples.

Ms. Mariyamma told The Hindu that the disease was fast spreading at Rajakkad also.

A survey last week confirmed that the disease had affected over 100 head of cattle.

The viral disease spread through air and contact, and hence more cattle and wild animals would be infected.

She said three veterinary surgeons had been deputed to the affected areas and the cattle vaccinated.

Ms. Mariyamma said that preliminary data showed that six cows, two calves and five goats had died of the disease. But unofficial reports said 140 animals died at Marayur and Kanthallur.

Affected areas

The main affected areas are Anackalpetty, Michealgiri, Missionvayal, Kuttiyanad, Karsanad, Chanalmedu and Nachiyvayal.

The absence of a veterinary doctor at Marayur, where the veterinary surgeon of Kanthallur was in charge, did not help matters. The apathy of the Animal Husbandry Department is alleged to be the reason for the fast spread of the disease since being noticed in June, when some cattle died. Ms. Mariyamma said the vaccination, scheduled to be held as part of a State-wide project, could not be done in the affected areas as the staff had gone on a strike, making the situation serious.

Remedial measures

However, she said that immediate remedial measures had been started and the officials were observing the situation.

Rajamany, a farmer at Missionvayal, said he had lost 24 goats. Madasami said his seven goats and two cows died. Selvaraj of Chanalmedu said he had lost 10 goats.

Mr. Madasami said over the phone that he had visited the veterinary hospital with his affected cattle. But there was no surgeon. He said the worst-affected area was Missionvayal and every family there had lost cattle, taking the toll to over 50 there.

It is feared that the wild animals entering the farm areas can turn carriers of the virus.

Wild animals have been entering farms in affected areas

Deworming camp for cattle

The Department of Animal Husbandry will be conducting a reproductive health camp and deworming campaign throughout Tamil Nadu on Friday and Saturday as part of its efforts to provide care to cows, goats or sheep given under the free distribution of milch cows and goats/sheep scheme.

According to a press release, the government launched the scheme on September 15, 2011 to uplift the economic status of the poor women in Tamil Nadu. Under the scheme (four goats/sheep each), 12,43,472 goats and sheep were distributed to 3,10,868 beneficiaries in 31 districts and milch cows to 28,246 beneficiaries in 21 districts during 2011-12. In 2012-13, Dharmapuri district achieved the target in distributing the animals to beneficiaries.

The objective of the camp is to facilitate sustained milk production from milch cows and improve the health of goats/sheep provided under the scheme.

Collector K. Vivekanandan said that besides the beneficiaries of the free distribution scheme, other farmers could also avail themselves of the benefits of the camp by getting their animals checked and dewormed.

The camp would be inaugurated at Nallesanaalli in Nallampalli Union for cattle and Laligam village for goats and sheep, a release from the Collectorate said.

Groundnut cultivation to cover 20,000 hectares

The Agriculture Department has taken up a programme to impart training to groundnut growers at block level about latest cultivation techniques including pests control and measures for enhancing yield.

A subsidy-based integrated oilseeds scheme, being implemented in the district, aims to enhance the area under cultivation of groundnut from 18,000 hectares to 20,000 hectares within a year.

“Groundnut is raised on 10,000 hectares under irrigated methods and on 8,000 hectares under rain-fed method,” said K.M.Shajehan, Joint Director of Agriculture, while inaugurating the training for groundnut growers of Pudukottai block.

So far, the programme had been conducted in Kundrandarkovil and Tiruvarangulam blocks.

Explaining the importance of advanced techniques, he said that the department recommended three major seeds – VRI 2, TMV 7 and K6 seeds with a higher yield.

The average per hectare yield was one tonne in blocks such as Tiruvarangulam while it was about 600 kg in rain fed areas. Pest control measures and irrigational facility would go a long way in improving the yield. Use of polythene sheet would control the growth of weeds. The department has made arrangement for the supply of gypsum under the National Agriculture Development Project, with a fifty per cent subsidy. He appealed to farmers to apply gypsum for quality pod formation.

S.Rajasekaran, Agricultural Officer, Farmers Training Centre, Kudumianmalai, spoke on pest and disease control and water management. The use of light trap would not only kill the adult moths but also ensure an eco-friendly technique to control pests. Demonstration plots would also be set up to motivate the farmers to take up the latest technology in groundnut cultivation.

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- *Integrated oilseeds scheme shows results*
 - *Three major seeds are VRI 2, TMV 7 and K6 seeds*
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Tail-end villages dry

Farmers in tail-end coastal taluks of Avudaiyarkovil and Manamelkudi have expressed resentment over the poor availability of water for irrigation, despite irrigation channels in the area receiving copious inflow from water discharged through the Kallanai Kalvai early this month.

Farmers said that though the water had wetted their fields, discharge has registered a steep decline from the initial 3,500 cusecs. The entire coastal ayacut of 28,000 hectares cannot be irrigated using the water discharged through the Kallanai Kalvai.

Egg rate

The National Egg Coordination Committee egg rate was Rs. 3.33 on Thursday.

Samba nursery raised on 1,825 hectare

TNCSC has setup 22 DPC across Thanjavur district

Samba transplantation has been completed on 580 hectares of land so far in Thanjavur district said K. Baskaran, Collector, here on Thursday.

Speaking at the monthly farmers grievances meeting at the collectorate, Mr. Baskaran said that direct sowing of samba had been done on 324 hectares of land and samba nursery has been raised on 1,825 hectares of land.

There was adequate stock of samba seeds including CR1009, ADT-46, ADT-38, ADT-39, and CO(R)-50 in agriculture extension centres.

So far, 525 tonnes of seeds had been distributed. Further, Primary Agriculture Co-operative Credit Societies has stocked 625 tonnes of ADT-46, BPT-5204, ADT-38 and ADT-39 seeds.

There was a stock of 5,842 tonnes of urea, 5,808 tonnes of Di-Ammonium Phosphate, 2,752 tonnes of potash, and 1,424 tonnes of complex fertilizers.

Monitoring committees had been formed to keep tab on fertilizers sales.

Kuruvai was raised on 28,294 hectares in pumpset irrigated areas and harvest has begun. The Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation (TNCSC) has set up 22 direct purchase centres (DPC) in the district to procure paddy from farmers.

They procure grade 'A' variety of paddy at Rs. 1,350 per quintal and common variety at Rs. 1,300 per quintal. Paddy with moisture content up to 17 per cent was purchased. More DPCs would be opened depending upon the requirement.

Earlier, a section of farmers staged a walk out from the hall demanding payment of State advisory price (SAP) along with interest for arrears for the sugarcane supplied to Thiru Arooran Sugars Ltd at Thirumandankudi and Ambika sugars at Kottur near Kumbakonam.

However, the factories had already paid the fair and remunerative price of Rs.1,700 per quintal to farmers.

"Only SAP and interest for arrears should be paid", farmers said.

S. Suresh Kumar, District Revenue Officer, J. Sekar, Joint Director of Agriculture and other officials participated.

Taking stock

- Cooperatives has 625 tonnes of seeds

- 5,842 tonnes of Urea
 - 5,808 tonnes of DAP
 - 2,752 tonnes of Potash
 - 1,424 tonnes of complex fertiliser
 - 22 monitoring committees to keep check on fertiliser sales
-

Showers cheer up farmers

Scattered showers across the district brought some cheer to farmers in rain-fed areas, especially the dry Marungapuri region, on Wednesday night.

Ponnaniyar Dam recorded the maximum rainfall of 68.40 mm of rainfall during the 24 hours ending at 8 a.m. on Thursday. The following are the chief amount of rainfall recorded in other parts of the district received during the same period (in mm): Marungapuri 62.40; Kallakudi 49.40; Samayapuram 32; Nandhiyar Head 28; Tiruchi Town 24.80; Tiruchi Junction 23.60; Navalurkottapattu 22; Tiruchi Airport 20.20; Golden Rock 14.80; Manapparai 10.20; Thathaiyengarpet, Vathalai Anicut and Kuppampatti 10 each. The district received an average of 17.83 mm.

Sheep washed away

Twenty sheep were reported to have been washed away in flash floods in a jungle stream at Pothapatti near Vaiyampatti in the district during the heavy rain on Wednesday night.

According to sources in the district administration, the sheep were raised by A. Palanisamy of Sivayam in Karur district. The carcasses could not be recovered till Thursday evening.

Mettur level

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 113.79 feet on Thursday as against its full reservoir level of 120 feet. The inflow was 7,749 cusecs and the discharge, 18,998 cusecs.

Cargo manager meets farmers, traders

Farmers and traders were briefed on the facilities available for export of agricultural produce at the cargo terminal at the Tiruchi Airport by S. Subramanian, Manager, Cargo, of the airport during a buyer-seller meet organised by the Agricultural Market Intelligence and Business Promotion Centre of the Department of Agriculture Marketing and Agri Business in the city on

Thursday. The meet was organised to discuss trade opportunities available for agriculture produce.

Water level

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Thursday stood at 112.65 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 435.18 cusecs and 1,404.75 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam. The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 61.47 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 41 cusecs and 255 cusecs was discharged.

More weavers to get credit cards

In an attempt to enhance assistance for handloom weavers towards meeting credit requirements towards investment as well as working capital, it has been decided to issue 1,500 Weavers Credit Cards (WCC) in the district during the current fiscal.

“This is 500 more than the targets set for the previous financial year (ie 2012-13),” Lead District Manager R. Rajagopal told *The Hindu*.

For effective implementation and speedy issuance of the WCC, the Lead Bank has recently set up a ‘Bunker desk’ at its office in a business facilitation model.

“The creation of ‘Bunker desk’ is aimed at collecting all the applications duly recommended by the Assistant Director of Handlooms at a single point before distributing to the banks concerned. This will avoid confusions otherwise could happen if the applications are been asked to take directly to the banks,” Mr. Rajagopal said.

During the current fiscal till August 26, a total of 933 WCCs were distributed through branches of 11 banks.

Of the banks, Canara Bank distributed the maximum of 813 cards in this fiscal followed by State Bank of India (64). “The credit limit for each of the cards are fixed on the basis of assessment on working capital requirements as well as cost of tools needed for carrying out weaving activity,” banking sources said. Sources added that greater thrust on issuance of WCCs was taken up in order to bring ore weavers into institutional credit delivery mechanism as most of them in the past many years were found to be meeting their credit needs through informal channels.

Nannilam gets 80.4 mm rainfall

Rural Nannilam town received the maximum rainfall of 80.4 m.m. in the last 24 hours that ended at 8 a.m. on Thursday. While Valangaiman received 65.2 mm. rainfall during the same period, Tiruthuraipoondi got 62 mm.; Tiruvarur 41.7 mm.; Kodavasal 12.2 mm.; and Needamangalam 5.2 mm.

Sowing completed on 3 lakh hectare in Chitradurga

District received 307 mm rainfall till August 26

Owing to adequate rainfall in the last two months, agricultural activities are in full swing in the district and sowing has been completed in 3,14,801 hectares of land, recording 87.8 per cent of the target.

According to sources in Agriculture Department, the target for cultivation for the current kharif season had been fixed at 3,58,500 hectares of land. Except Hiriya and Molakalmuru, all the four taluks have achieved the expected percentage.

Against a target of 54,900 hectares for Holalkere taluk, sowing has been completed in 51,299 hectares, recording 93.4 per cent.

In Hiriya taluk, sowing has been completed in 30,738 ha against the targeted 49,200 ha recording 61.7 per cent achievement.

Hiriya taluk recorded the lowest percentage of sowing area in the district, sources said.

In Chitradurga taluk, sowing had been completed in 63,351 ha against the targeted 66,500 ha, recording 95.3 per cent achievement, followed by Chalakere taluk with sowing completed in 88,810 ha against the targeted 99,200 ha (89.5 per cent), Hosadurga taluk with sowing completed in 55,997 ha against the targeted 60,500 ha (92.6 per cent) and Molakalmuru taluk with sowing completed in about 24,950 ha of 28,200 ha planned, recording about 88.5 per cent achievement.

According to official sources, the district received 307 mm rainfall against the normal figure of 245.2 mm until August 26. In the corresponding period last year, the district had received 347 mm rainfall. Chitradurga taluk received 520 mm rainfall against the normal of 325.3 mm.

CPCRI never endorsed 'bio' fungicides

Spraying of traditional copper sulphate and lime mixture is the only recommended solution to control fruit-rot disease, scientists of the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI), Kasaragod, said here during their interaction with farmers.

They said the institute had not recommended solutions available in the market with different brand names (fungicides) starting with "bio ..." for controlling the disease in arecanut palms.

Vinayaka Hegde, acting head (plant protection) and principal scientist (plant pathology), and K.B. Hebbar, head, physiology, bio-chemistry and post-harvest technology division asked farmers to spray traditional copper sulphate and lime mixture only. The CPCRI had not recommended anything else though some farmers said that the disease was brought under control by spraying it and while others said that it was of no use.

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- *CPCRI will take two years to find alternatives to control the fruit-rot disease*
 - *Can't ban 'bio' sprays unless proven that they are harmful to crop: government*
-

Areca growers to get Rs. 25 crore

The package will benefit farmers hit by fruit-rot disease in Udupi, DK, UK and Shimoga

Urban Development Minister Vinay Kumar Sorake on Thursday announced that the State government has decided to distribute Rs. 25 crore as relief to the areca farmers who have lost their crop due to 'koleroga' or fruit-rot disease.

Addressing presspersons here, Mr. Sorake said that the compensation would be distributed among the affected areca farmers in Udupi, Dakshina Kannada, Uttara Kannada and Shimoga districts.

He said a sum of Rs. 2.5 crore had been released to those affected by heavy rains in Udupi district under the Natural Calamities Fund. Udupi city has been brought under the Capacity Building programme of the Union government. Udupi will get Rs. 1 crore each every year for the next four years for training municipal officials under the Capacity Building programme, Mr. Sorake said.

He said under the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, as many as 26,710 toilets would be built in the district in 2013-14 in houses which did not have the facility. Already, 2,269 toilets had been constructed at a cost of Rs. 1.01 crore.

Land had been allotted for the construction of a postgraduate (PG) centre of Mangalore University at Belapu village, about 25 km from Udupi.

The government has waived agricultural and non-agricultural loans of 1,340 Scheduled Caste beneficiaries totalling Rs. 2.78 crore in Udupi district. It has also written off agricultural and non-agricultural loans of 26 Scheduled Tribe beneficiaries to the tune of Rs. 6.35 crore, he said. Both the SC/ST beneficiaries have taken these loans from the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Development Corporation.

Self-help groups in Udupi district would be trained and sanctioned loans under the National Rural Livelihood Mission. Infrastructure would be improved in Mangalore, Puttur, Udupi and Kundapur towns under phase-2 of the Karnataka Urban Development and Coastal Environment Management Project (KUDCEMP).

Drinking water

A Rs. 1,760-crore project had been prepared to provide round-the-clock water supply to entire corporation areas of Belgaum, Gulbarga, and Hubli-Dharwad cities on private-public partnership (PPP) model with assistance from World Bank.

An innovative Urban Development Project is being conceptualised for city cluster development around Bangalore. The ministry, Mr. Sorake said, was also preparing a detailed project report for suburban railway system for Bangalore.

Mr. Sorake also released a booklet highlighting the achievements of the Siddaramaiah government in the last 100 days.

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- *Rs. 2.5 crore released to pay out people affected by rains in Udupi district: Sorake*
 - *26,710 homes to get toilets in the district under the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan*
-

Water conservation project to improve paddy production

The district panchayat is all set to start a water conservation project to augment paddy production in the kole fields of the district.

Under the project 'Jala Samruddhi', the district panchayat plans to set up half-a-dozen check-dams in the water canals for water conservation, which is expected to ensure water for two sessions of farming at kole fields.

According to Anil Akkara, the acting president of the panchayat, the project is expected to increase the area of paddy cultivation under kole fields by 8,000 acres and production by 1,600 tonnes.

“At present, farming is being done in 4,000 acres of kole land only once a year. Just before the season, water will be pumped out of the fields, which lay below mean sea level, through the Enamavu canal to the sea,” he said.

Instead of pumping out water into the sea, it will be diverted to various water canals, which will, in turn, help improve the ground water table in the area.

“We plan to set up six check-dams in the 12-km stretch water canals from Puzhakkal to Vyasagiri. The check-dams will maintain a steady water level, which will help solve the severe water crisis in various panchayats such as Mundathikkode, Avanoor, Kolazhy, Kaiparambu, Adattu, Mulakunnathukavu and Wadakanchery.”

The proposed check-dam at Peringandoor will solve the severe water crisis of Thrissur Medical College to a certain extent, Mr. Akkara added.

The district panchayat will attempt paddy cultivation twice a year in 8,000 acres of kole land. An amount of Rs. 10 crore has been earmarked for the first phase of the Jala Samruddhi project, which is expected to take off in October. The project will be implemented within 780 days.

The district panchayat is also exploring the possibilities of fish farming at the check-dams.

“There is huge scope for cage fish farming of varieties such as pearl spot at these check dams,” Mr. Akkara said. They planned to cultivate bamboo on the bunds of the canals, which would fetch the panchayats a tidy income, he added.

Drought haunts Anantapur

Lokanadha Reddy, a farmer of the Marala village of the Bukkapatnam mandal, awaits eagerly the disbursement of the input subsidy of Rs. 8,000 which might be his only earning for the year.

A farmer with ten acres and a family of five, Reddy usually shouldn't have found it hard to feed the family if not for the consistent drought for the last four years and crop loss since the last six years.

“I have sown in two acres this year under tube well hoping to sow the rest if it rains. My tube well has dried up and my crop withered and the rains as expected, failed,” says a rather sarcastic sounding Lokanadha Reddy, apparently sad at receiving much less than expected input subsidy.

He also plans to sell off the three cows he has taken on loan from the local bank soon and migrate to a city to look for work in some factory, lest his family starves. His children already

suffer from Protein Energy Malnutrition (PEM), although it remains unnoticed due to the lack of awareness.

“It is getting increasingly tough to feed my family. Debts are not easy to come by. Even those who have money don’t lend fearing that I might not be able to repay,” he says .

This is not the story of Lokanadha Reddy alone, but of farmers in 13 villages in the vicinity of Marala village and the 1,003 village panchayats in the district, involving a staggering atleast 2.5 lakh farmers in the district.

The agriculture sector in Anantapur district is in dire straits with almost all farmers in the district expecting net losses in the area they have sown while many are yet to sow at all.

It is estimated that people have not taken to groundnut, the only crop that is sown in lakhs of hectares in the district, and consequently agriculture this year, thanks to the rains playing truant again, pushing farmers further deep into the vicious cycle of debts, which are often followed by suicides.

The only solution for the perennial woes of the Anantapur district, as many experts say in reports submitted to the State and Union governments is to provide water enough to fill the village tanks, if not for irrigation directly, so that the twin issues of ground water depletion and drinking water are addressed.

The consistent drought for the last four years hits over 2.5 lakh farmers in the district

‘Use of Bt. cotton increased yield, farmers’ income’

Use of pesticides dropped from 46 to 21%

Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar on Tuesday said that the use of Bt. cotton, the only transgenic crop, cleared by the Environment Ministry and the committee concerned, has resulted in increased cotton production/farmers’ income, and controlled bollworm disease in the cotton crops. “Farmers themselves have accepted Bt.crop. That is why, we have supported it.”

Replying to a question in the Lok Sabha on Bt. cotton, Mr. Pawar said that the Indian farmer was more-wiser than him. They understood what crops should be taken. “When 93 per cent of cotton growers are using this seed [Bt. cotton], .. they are the sensible people and they are for the larger interests of the country. Therefore, it is not proper to say that Bt. cotton is not useful.”

Because of the use of Bt. cotton seed, cotton production had gone up from 137 lakh bales to 352 lakh bales. The use of pesticides had dropped from 46 per cent to 21 per cent as the seed was disease-resistant. “This also shows that it is beneficial to the farmers.” The per hectare

yield of cotton, which was 191 kg in Maharashtra, had gone up to 491 kg due to use of Bt. cotton, he said. .

On farmers' income, Mr. Pawar said prior to Bt., in 2001, the total income per hectare was Rs.7,558 in the rain-fed area. After the introduction of Bt., the income had gone up from Rs.7,000 to Rs.16,000 and in the irrigated area, it touched Rs. 25,000 per hectare. "So, Bt. has established all the benefits and advantages to the farmers and to the nation," he claimed.



Sow the seeds of vegetable self-sufficiency

Against the backdrop of shooting vegetable prices, the Agriculture Department is all set to launch the second phase of the scheme aimed at promoting home gardens to help mitigate the issue and empower people. It is also a means of effective waste management.

“As per the scheme, the department will provide plantain saplings and vegetable seeds through the agricultural offices in the district. Instructions will be given on using the microorganism solution for treating the organic waste generated at homes and on how the by-product can be used as fertiliser during cultivation,” said T R Ushadevi, assistant director, Agriculture Office, Vyttila.

She said the department has already implemented the scheme in as many as 6,500 residences in the district. “After analysing the response of people about the first phase, the second phase will be implemented at 50,000 homes in the district jointly by Kalamassery and Vyttila agriculture offices,” she said.

Meanwhile, Yasoram Group managing director A R S Vadhyar, who proposed the project to the Agricultural Department some months ago, suggested that the authorities concerned appoint more officers to ensure proper implementation of the scheme.

“Appropriate training is a must for the successful implementation of the scheme. The department does not offer training at a time when proper guidance is important to handle the microorganism liquid. More officers must be assigned to monitor the scheme. Moreover, the scheme should be extended to all parts of the district and state also,” he said.

Time to enrol

Residents of Thiruvankulam, Tripunithura, Maradu, Kumbalam, Kumbalangi, Chellanam, Cheranellore, Kandanad, Thrikkakkara and Elamkunnappuzha have been requested to approach the respective agricultural offices to be a part of the scheme. The scheme is aimed at promoting vegetable cultivation in houses.

Hortcorp to bring vegetables on your doorsteps



The vegetable procurement, which has already started, will intensify while the festival days are nearer.

Hortcorp, foreseeing a huge demand for vegetables during Onam, will start a mega fair at Institute of Engineers Hall in Vellayambalam during the Onam week.

Vegetables will be sold at 30-per cent discount at the fair, to be held over a week. It would be apart from the outlets that the Kerala State Horticultural Products Development Corporation is about to start jointly with residents' associations. All vegetables needed to make Onam celebrations complete will be available at the doorsteps through these outlets. They also would remain open for one week.

"Around 150 residents' associations have come forward showing interest in the initiative to open the shops at their associations. Even if we start one Onam outlet in each of the associations, then a vast area in the city would be covered. The 30-per cent discount at all outlets of Hortcorp will be available in the residents associations' shops also. We are selling onion at a price of Rs 39, when it is Rs 69 in the open market," said Hortcorp Managing Director K Prathapan.

The mega fair, the shops at residents' associations, along with the Hortcorp outlets already operating in Palayam, Pazhavangadi, Putharikandam and Poojappura, would cover a commendable share of vegetable market during Onam and would be a great solace for the common man. The huge turnout at the existing outlets has also been boosting the Corporation's attempts to reach more people.

On an average, Horticorp collects around Rs 1.45 lakh from the Onam bazaar at Palayam alone on a single day, while the turnout at other shops contribute another Rs 1 lakh per day. The vegetables cultivated by the farmers on the outskirts of the district like Kattakkada, Kuttichal, Perumpazhuthoor and Parassala are being transported to the city to meet the huge demand during Onam. The procurement, which has already started, will intensify while the festival days are nearer.

It was two weeks ago that Horticorp started sending a mobile unit to Technopark campus. This is apart from the 20 mobile units visiting various points and residents' associations in the city twice or thrice a week.

Chicken prices skyrocketing; Non-veg lovers going vegan

Foodies in the city are moving on to vegan diets as the chicken price is finding new heights. Adding fuel to the fire, chicken traders in the state have called an indefinite strike from Wednesday demanding a rollback of the increased floor price for the item.

The Kerala Commercial Taxes Department has taken a decision to increase the base price of chicken from the present Rs 75 to Rs 95 which will come into effect from Thursday. This will force the poultry farmers to pay Rs 28 extra as tax for every chicken they sell, the price of which has already touched Rs 150 per kilogram. Dressed up chicken will cost Rs 190 per kilogram once the decision come into effect.

"We are being left without a choice. It is a struggle for existence. It is true that we will suffer great business loss in the strike days as the festival season has already begun. Yet, the strike is unavoidable. We are already in trouble with the increasing feed prices and transportation charges. Now, the increased floor price is a bolt from the blue for us," said Shanavas, a meat stall owner in the city.

In many eateries in the city, the prices of chicken dishes, which are the hot favourites of customers, have witnessed a price hike of up to 15 per cent.

"I prefer non-veg food, especially chicken dishes. It is not affordable to buy raw chicken anymore. Now the hoteliers have also raised the price, showing no mercy on chicken lovers like me. Most of my friends have recently moved on to vegetable dishes made of cauliflower and soya. But that is also giving no solace as their prices are also moving up owing to the escalation in the price of ingredients. In no time, chicken dishes will become a luxury," said Ashil Mohammed, hailing from Attingal.

“What can we do, the prices of raw materials are shooting up. It is no longer a profitable business. Many of my fellow hotel owners are facing the threat of closure as they are now running at a loss,” said Mehboob, a hotel owner at Palayam.

“It does sound funny, but the price hike is doing what many doctors have failed to do - turning the non-veg food crazy lot vegetarians,” said Ashil.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Delhi High Court asks Government to take steps to bring down onion prices



With onion prices soaring, Delhi HC asked the Centre and Delhi government to take steps to ensure that prices of kitchen staple are brought down.

NEW DELHI: With onion prices soaring, the Delhi High Court today asked the Centre and Delhi government to take steps to ensure that prices of kitchen staple are brought down so that common people do not suffer.

The high court hearing a PIL filed by a social worker, Poonam Jain, alleging inaction of the governments in controlling the onion price, said, "...Steps to be taken by the Delhi government and Centre to ensure that the onion price issue will be addressed so that common people should not suffer."

A bench of acting Chief Justice B D Ahmed and Justice Vibhu Bakhru passed the order and disposed of the plea after Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Rajeev Mehra, appearing for the Centre, assured the court that major steps have been taken to control the prices.

Placing before the bench a status report filed by the Department of Consumer Affairs of Agriculture Ministry, the senior law officer said the onion price situation depends on its production and arrival and domestic onion prices tend to peak during September to November and fall during January- March every year.

"Generally onion storage gets depleted by August- September," the lawyer said.

He further submitted that the central government has sent a request to Maharashtra, which is the highest onion production state, for steady supply of the commodity to Delhi.

The bench recorded the senior counsel's arguments in its order and said, "ASG assures that the Centre will aggressively persuade Maharashtra for sufficient supply of onions to Delhi so that the issue can be addressed."

Arguing for Delhi government, standing counsel Zubeda Begum told the bench that the onion price was more than Rs 60 for few days but now it has come down to Rs 45 in Mother Dairy outlets.

Petitioner Poonam Jain's counsel had submitted that common people are suffering due to governments' failure to curb the hoarding in the city as well as in Maharashtra causing scarce supply of the onions.

The plea had sought to direct respondents to take special measures to supply the onions in the market in sufficient quantity and the provision of Essential Commodities Act to be invoked to control the rising price of onion.



Government plans to encourage dairy farming

Deputy commissioner Arshdeep Singh Thind has claimed that the state government was providing subsidy on fish-farming and was willing to provide financial assistance to farmers for entering into the areas of fish feed, renovation of pools and aerators (tool for enhancing oxygen).

As part of the drive, senior fishery officer Sukhwinder Singh addressed villagers at Bambiha Bhai, Sukhanand, Mari Mustfa, Smalsar and Langeana. He enumerated the benefits of entering to such allied farming sectors, where there was high return on investment even with small capital. The state government is also working hard and is providing financial aid for horticulture, dairy and fish farming.

Several progressive farmers from Moga have adopted fish farming in large numbers. Prograssive farmer Gurtej Singh of Bambiha Bhai village has set a positive example in the field.

Gurtej bought a fish farm in one acre of land and took the pond in his village on lease and started fish farming. The fisheries department also helped him get a loan from the Canara Bank.

"Returns started coming after four months. Now, I have all good income from my fishery job," he said.

He now runs a farm in six acres and earns about Rs. 10 lakh a year.

Weather

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Friday, Aug 30

Max Min

32° | 25°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 89

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:57

Sunset: 06:21

Barometer: 1010

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Saturday, Aug 31

Max Min

33° | 26°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday
Sep 1



33° | 26°

Cloudy

Monday
Sep 2



33° | 25°

Overcast

Tuesday
Sep 3



34° | 26°

Overcast

Wednesday
Sep 4



35° | 26°

Overcast

Thursday
Sep 5



35° | 26°

Overcast

Airport Weather

Chennai

Delhi

Rain: 0

Humidity: 94

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:57

Sunset: 06:45

Barometer: 1006





THE TIMES OF INDIA

HC directs govt to check onion price

NEW DELHI: Taking judicial notice of the spiralling cost of onions, the Delhi high court directed the Centre and the Delhi government to take steps to control its prices so that common people do not suffer. Acting Chief Justice B D Ahmed and Justice Vibhu Bakhru disposed of a PIL alleging inaction by the government in controlling onion prices and directing the authorities to ensure prices are brought down. The judges on Thursday expressed unhappiness over the issue and took on record the assurances of additional solicitor general Rajeeve Mehra that major steps have been taken to control onion prices. Mehra was appearing for the central government.

Submitting a status report filed by the department of consumer affairs of the agriculture ministry, Mehra told the court that prices of onion depend on their production and arrival, and domestic prices tend to peak in September-November and fall in January-March every year. The Centre has sent a request to Maharashtra, which produces the largest quantity of onions, to supply onions to Delhi, Mehra added. The order then recorded the assurance of additional solicitor general that the Centre will aggressively persuade Maharashtra for sufficient supply to Delhi.

Appearing for the Delhi government, standing counsel Zubeda Begum told the bench that the onion price was over Rs 60 for a few days but has come down to Rs 45 in Mother Dairy outlets.

HC was hearing a PIL filed by Poonam Jain, a social worker. The PIL accused the government of turning a blind eye to illegal trade and not revising its export policy that has pushed up onion price to around Rs 70 to Rs 90 per kg. It urged the court to "direct respondents to take special measures to supply onions in the market in sufficient quantity" and to invoke the provision of Essential Commodities Act in this situation.

Onion auction resumes in Lasalgaon

NASHIK: Onion auction resumed at the Lasalgaon Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC), the country's largest wholesale market near Nashik, on Thursday after the traders promised to accept the new norms from September 1.

At a meeting with APMC officials, the traders accepted the hike in porterage and weighing charges by 27% and abolition of the weighing bridge charges with effect from September 1. Presently, weighing charges are Rs 2.68 per quintal and porterage is Rs 2.12 per quintal. The state government had instructed APMCs to increase the weighing and porterage by 44%.

Moreover, Rs 10 was to be charged per tractor loaded with onion on electronic weighing bridge owned by traders as well as APMCs. The charges (Rs 10 per tractor) for weighing on electronic weighbridge have been scrapped.

It has been decided not to charge the levy of 33% on the total additional porterage and weighing charges, as the issue of levy is pending in the court. Traders will abide by the court verdict.

The state government has instructed APMCs to increase porterage and weighing charges and announced abolition of the weighing bridge charges. Accordingly, the deputy district registrar (DDR) had issued a circular in this regard. Thereafter, the APMC had called a meeting of traders to inform them about the new norms on Tuesday but they had refused to accept the same.

After the traders refused to accept the new norms, the porters decided not to cooperate. Finally, the Lasalgaon APMC had called off the auction on Wednesday to avoid inconvenience.

Speaking to TOI, an official from Lasalgaon APMC said, "We had a meeting with the traders on Wednesday evening and they agreed to 27% hike on porterage and weighing charges, and also to abolish the weighing bridge charges. But about the one license system for both purchaser and broker, it was decided the traders will abide by the decision taken at the district level for all APMCs across the district."

Lasalgaon Onion Traders' Association president Nandkumar Daga said, "We have accepted the hike in present portorage and weighing charges. The APMC has also agreed not to charge 33% levy on the total portorage and weighing charges. We have started participating in auction from today."

The government has decided to have one license system for both purchaser and broker, which means that purchaser and broker will be the same person as per the new rules. The decision taken for all APMCs across the district is to be implemented at Lasalgaon APMC.

Meanwhile, the average wholesale prices at Lasalgaon APMC on Thursday were recorded at Rs 3,500 a quintal. The minimum and maximum prices were recorded at Rs 2,000 and Rs 3,856 a quintal respectively.

Business Standard

Arabica prices crash on fear of record crop in Brazil

Continued economic slowdown in Europe and higher cost of production have compounded problems for producers



Arabica coffee prices have crashed below the cost of production and ruling at 115 cents per pound in New York market, thereby sending shockwaves to growers in India. Compared to 200 cents per pound in January 2012, the prices have declined 43% on the back of a record “Off-year” crop in Brazil and continued economic crisis in European Union, which is a major market for Indian mildArabica coffee.

“The prices of Arabica have hit a low of almost a decade and are about 20% below the cost of production for growers. Currently, the cost of production is about 140 cents per pound. There is a tough time ahead for small and medium growers as they do not have holding power nor have any reserves left for exports,” said Ramesh Rajah, President, Coffee Exporters Association of India.

In 2002, there was a similar situation and the cost of production was higher than the actual market price for beans, he recalled.

He said, a year ago, the prices were ruling at 150 cents per pound and they at least covered the cost of production. This year, higher fertilizer prices, high labour costs and increased transportation costs on account of rising diesel prices have resulted in overall rise in the cost of production for small and medium farmers. The small and medium growers contribute 70% of India’s coffee production.

He said the record “Off-year” crop in Brazil this year has added to the sharp fall in prices. In addition to this, the news of another bumper crop in Brazil next year has created panic world over. Brazil contributes a third of world coffee output at 48.6 million bags (each bag is 60 kg) this year as against 50.8 million bags in 2012, which was an “On-year”.

About a year ago, Arabica prices were ruling at 150 cents per pound and the bearish trend started from the beginning of 2013. The global economic downturn led to consumers switching over to cheaper Robusta from premium Arabica coffees world over. “The recovery in prices of Arabica is unlikely in the near future and we may look for some bounce back only by 2015,” Rajah said.

ICE Arabica coffee futures rose on Wednesday as the Brazilian real strengthened against the US dollar. ICE Arabica coffee futures for December delivery ended 1.5% higher at \$1.1845 a pound.

The depreciation of rupee against the dollar has, however, not benefitted the exporters much as they ship out most of the coffee in the first six months of the year, Rajah said, adding that whoever was holding on to their stocks would get the benefit of rupee drop.

As a result of the depreciation of rupee, the farm gate prices of Arabica parchment have improved around 8% to Rs 6,500 per bag (each bag is 50 kg) in Karnataka compared to Rs 6,000 per bag in May this year.

Buffalo meat to become top agri export

Buffalo meat export, growing at 15% per annum in the last decade, was \$3.2 bn in 2012-13, while in April-May this year, it stood at \$578 mn

India emerged as a top exporter of buffalo meat in 2012-13, with 50 per cent market share and it is growing. The commodity has been in the top three exports items in the agri commodity basket. This year, it could be a tough competition to basmati rice in becoming the top exporting agri item.

The export, growing at 15 per cent per annum in the last decade, was \$3.2 billion in 2012-13,

while in April-May this year it stood at \$578 million, according to data compiled by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (Apeda).

India's export potential is growing further as Brazil, another major meat supplier to the world, is facing issues in exporting, while China's demand is rising. India and China have signed a memorandum of understanding to export buffalo meat directly to China, which otherwise was routed through Vietnam.

Allana Sons is a 146-year-old export house, with the fifth generation running the business at present. The group is not only the number one buffalo meat export but also the number one coffee exporter. Its total export in 2012-13 was \$225 billion with half the revenue from buffalo meat. (IN THE BIG LEAGUE)

Al Kabeer, another exporter, sold meat worth Rs 650 crore abroad in 2012-13. Gulamuddin Shaikh, who founded Al Kabeer in 1970 to export buffalo meat, was considered among the first to think of exporting the meat in the frozen, brick form. He first exported meat in 1968.

"China stopped buying beef from Brazil due to a non-classical bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) case. Only eight plants were authorised to export to China out of a total 200 federally inspected plants in Brazil," according to Rabo Bank.

With a fall in Brazil's exports, India is penetrating its market. India exported 1.1 million tonnes in 2012-13. the export realisation in terms of price was an average \$2,900 per tonne in 2012-13 and has been quoted now at \$3,200 per tonne. Expectations are that in the coming months, it will cross \$3,500 per tonne, with the fall in Brazil's exports and China's growing demand.

"I believe exports will be higher by 20 per cent this year in tonnage and prices could cross \$3,500 per tonne," says Aspi Dinshaw, chief general manager of Al Kabeer. In value terms, total exports could be \$3.6 to \$4 billion, which will be higher even than basmati rice.

While Vietnam has been the single largest buyer of Indian meat with 30 per cent share, Malaysia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Philippines are next in line, each having 7-11 per cent

share. The list of importers is as big as 85 countries. Exports to Vietnam is mostly to meet Chinese demand.

Dinshaw adds: "Efforts are now being made to increase direct exports to China."

The meat exporting industry, which is utilising only unproductive buffalo livestock, has set up modern integrated abattoirs with quality control labs. Modern abattoirs, apart from processing meat, also make better use of the hide and skins of buffaloes, on which the leather industry, another export commodity, thrives. Apart from skins, supplied to tanneries, rendered products are supplied to poultries as feed.

According to the All India Meat and Livestock Exporters Association (Aimlea), there are 42 abattoirs-cum-meat processing plants in India and 32 meat processing plants are registered with the export regulatory authority Apeda, employing 74,000 directly and 150,000 indirectly.

"India has 50 per cent of the world's buffalo population, which, as per the latest census of 2007, stood at 105.3 million. This is at a time when India has emerged as largest milk producing country in the world," says Rashid Kadimi, president of Aimlea.

"Milk production increased because of an increase in productive milch buffaloes and decrease in unproductive culled buffalos, as buffaloes removed from the system improves efficiencies of the system," he adds. Management of cattle fodder, etc is possible only due to that.

Most of the buffaloes and meat are procured from places like Hyderabad, Aligarh, Aurangabad, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab.

Most large exporters have established water treatment and rendering plants. Kadimi says: "Because of exports, a trend is emerging within to ensure quality in meat processing. When animals are properly handled and dressed, good quality of raw hides and skins are made available to tanneries. Even with good quality production of leather and other by products like poultry feed is better and hence exporters have been able to pay higher prices to farmers as well."

Kadimi raises another crucial issue. “There is a need to stop illegal exports of livestock cattle from India which is far higher than meat exports.” He adds it is estimated that \$5 billion worth of cattle is smuggled from India to Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal and from there to other destinations.

Buffalo Meat			
	FY10-11	FY11-12	FY12-13
Qty in MT	7,26,287.3	9,85,491.3	11,06,965
Rs Crore	8,607.79	1,37,25.23	17,400.6
\$ Mn	1,888.5	2,862.66	3,198.17
Value Per MT (Rs)	1,18,517.7	1,39,273	1,57,191.9
Value Per MT (\$)	2,600.21	2,904.81	2,889.13
Growth in Rs	-	59.45	26.78
Growth in \$	-	51.58	11.72

Onion prices stay high as imports likely to take more time

After a brief decline, retail prices surge back to Rs 60-80 a kg at major cities



Even as persistently high onion prices prompted the Central government to import it from other nations, there is no immediate relief for the consumer.

Onion prices continued to stay higher even after a fortnight of the announcement of imports of onion from Pakistan, Iran and China.

At Lasalgaon market, onion prices hovered around Rs 3,400 a quintal, which is higher by around Rs 200 a quintal on August 20.

Central government decided on August 14 to import onions, which hovered around Rs 4,700 a quintal. But there was not much relief as prices continue to remain high at other wholesale markets.

“The government has announced import of onions. But it will take at least a week more to reflect its impact on the market. Prices still continue to stay high at major onion markets,” said a trader from Nashik.

In other markets, including Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Delhi, prices hovered between Rs 3800 Rs 4300 a quintal. Arrivals remained thin between 700 quintal and 5,000 quintal at these markets.

The state agency, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (Nafed) has issued tenders asking interested onion traders to submit their proposals by August 27. The imports will start only a week after the finalization of the parties. Hence, traders see no likelihood of prices to cool off before September 10.

“In retail prices will continue to remain high till the first week of September. We reflect prices at Lasalgaon market. But there are no indications of a fall in prices there. So at other markets also prices will remain high,” an onion wholesaler at Ahmedabad’s Chimanbhai Patel APMC informed.

In retail, prices are once again quoting around Rs 60-70 per kg in Ahmedabad market, while in Delhi, the prices have touched Rs 80 a kg once again.

As per the NHRDF sources, domestic arrivals have not yet started in full swing. It will start after September 15. Till then the government has decided to source more than 3,00,000 tonnes of onions from countries like Pakistan, China, Iran and Egypt.

Early leaf fall virus hits Himachal apple orchards

The premature defoliation of the leaves is also causing black spots and blemishes to appear on the fruit skin

The spread of the dreaded premature leaf-fall disease has set panic among apple farmers in the hills of Himachal Pradesh where the harvest is at its peak.

The disease has spread rapidly in the past couple of weeks, adversely affecting the quality of the fruit. It is reducing the shine, colour and size of the fruit .

The premature defoliation of the leaves is also causing black spots and blemishes to appear on the fruit skin .

The fruit ripens late in higher elevations , but due to the spread of the disease, farmers have been picking it up early causing a glut in the market .

The premature leaf fall disease is caused by fungi and mite which flourishes in wet conditions .

Farmers are puzzled that despite carrying out eight to ten sprays of their orchards in the span of a couple of months, the disease has not been contained. It has been raising its head in the monsoon for the last decade or so .

Farmers suspect the fungicides and insecticides available in the market could be spurious .The disease is more widespread in orchards where the soil captures moisture

Currently over 1,100 truck loads of apple are leaving the state on a daily basis. The harvest began in mid-July and will end in mid-October .

After two years of poor produce, the state is expecting a normal crop season. Himachal Pradesh accounts for a third of the apple production of the country The remaining is produced by neighbouring state, Jammu and Kashmir .

Barley down 1.1% on selling pressure

Accelerating supply against fall in demand in spot markets, put pressure on futures price of barley



Barley prices declined by Rs 16 to Rs 1,323 per quintal in futures trade today on fresh selling by traders, driven by weak physical market sentiments.

Marketmen said accelerating supply against fall in demand in spot markets, mainly put weight on futures price of barley.

Fall in demand from beer and cereal making industries was another dampening factors, they said.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, barley price for October month dropped by Rs 16, or 1.19% at Rs 1,323 per quintal, with an open interest of 10,320 lots.

Prices for September month also drifted by Rs 15.50, or 1.18% to Rs 1,296.50 per quintal, showing an open interest of 18,470 lots.

Jeera down 0.1% on higher sowing hopes

Some export demand limited the downside



Jeera prices fell by another 0.16% to Rs 13,747.50 per quintal in futures market today as speculators indulged in reducing exposures amid expectations of higher sowing in producing region.

However, some export demand limited the downside.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera for delivery in October fell Rs 22.50, or 0.16% to Rs 13,747.50 per quintal with an open interest of 5,394 lots.

In a similar fashion, the spice for delivery in September lost Rs 20, or 0.15%, to Rs 13,595 per quintal with an open interest of 8,667 lots. It had lost 0.05% in yesterday's session. Market analysts attributed the fall in jeera futures to hopes of higher sowing in top producing state Gujarat due to ample rains, but good demand from overseas buyers restricted the fall in prices.

Jeera is a winter crop sown from October.

Cardamom down 3.2% on profit-booking

Subdued demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position led to decline in cardamom prices



Cardamom prices plunged 3.29% to Rs 711 per kg in futures trade today as speculators booked profits at existing levels, driven by subdued demand at the spot market against adequate stocks.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for delivery in September month fell sharply by Rs 24.20, or 3.29% to Rs 711 per kg in business turnover of 638 lots.

Market analysts said profit-booking by speculators at existing higher levels, driven by subdued demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position, mainly led to decline in cardamom prices at futures trade.

Turmeric down 0.8% in futures trade

Higher stocks in the market and a weak trend at spot markets mainly put pressure on turmeric futures



Turmeric prices fell further by 0.75% to Rs 5,024 per quintal in futures trade today after participants trimmed positions amid higher stocks but export demand limited the fall.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, turmeric for delivery in September declined by Rs 38, or 0.75%, to Rs 5,024 per quintal in an open interest of 15,405 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in October edged lower by Rs 34, or 0.66%, to Rs 5,112 per quintal in 10,780 lots.

Market analysts said higher stocks in the market and a weak trend at spot markets mainly put pressure on turmeric futures but export demand capped the losses.

THE HINDU Business Line

Latex drops below Rs 150/kg; sheet rubber up

Spot rubber was mixed on Thursday. Sharp gains in the international markets and recovery in the domestic futures kept the undercurrent firm in most active counters. But prices failed to react in tune with the overall sentiments as major consuming industries were inactive. Though tapping has resumed in most plantations, it will take another couple of weeks for any visible improvement in arrivals. Hence, there may not be any selling pressure in the immediate future.

The key TOCOM rubber futures extended losses on fears that geopolitical tensions in Syria could sap confidence in the global economy.

Sheet rubber improved to Rs 185(Rs 184.50) a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board. Volumes were dull.

In futures, the September contracts increased to Rs 184.35 (Rs 183.15), October to Rs 183.60 (Rs 181.19), November to Rs 183.49 (Rs 178.34) and December to Rs 183.56 (Rs 178.43) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) firmed up further to Rs 180(174.09) a kg at Bangkok. The September futures declined) from ¥ 265 a kg to ¥ 261 (Rs 178.13) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.


Spot rubber (Rs/kg) were: RSS-4: 185(184.50); RSS-5: 181.50 (181); Ungraded: 175(174); ISNR 20: 166(167) and latex 60 per cent: 149(152)

Pulses production set to touch record 18.45 mt

Higher kharif pulses coverage* (In lakh hectares)			
Exceeds normal coverage			
Crop	Normal	2013	2012
Tur/Arhar	32.08	35.76	31.04
Urad	18.98	20.76	19.51
Moong	20.21	20.68	14.42
Others	14.91	16.06	9.51
Total	86.18	93.25	74.48

*as on Aug 16

Source: Ministry of Agriculture



Production of pulses this year is likely to touch a record 18.45 million tonnes (mt), thanks to timely and even coverage of the monsoon across the country.

This is against 18 mt last year, with rabi crops making up with a 12.05 mt production after kharif output was affected by deficient rainfall.

“This year, the area under pulses is higher and weather conditions have also been conducive. This will result in record production,” said Pravin Dongre, Chairman, Indian Pulses and Grains Association.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, the total area under pulses this year has increased to 93.25 lakh hectares against the normal 86.18 lakh hectares at this time of the year. Last year, 74.48 lakh hectares had been covered during the corresponding period.

The association, in its outlook for kharif pulses, said that Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, which are crucial for the crop output, have received excess rainfall this year.

According to the India Meteorological Department, the country has received 13 per cent excess rainfall this year. Of the 623 districts, 440 have received excess to normal rain.

Dongre said that normally, 100-110 lakh hectares are covered under kharif pulses. “Going by the communication that we have received from various parts of the country, we could be exceeding the normal acreage. A final picture should be available by next week,” he said.

A hike in the minimum support prices for pulses is also a factor for the rise in acreage of crops. For example, the support price for tur has been raised to Rs 4,350 a quintal from Rs 3,850 last

year. In the last two years, the support prices have been raised by over 30 per cent for all pulses.

If the weather holds good over the next couple of weeks, kharif pulses production could be between 6.5 mt on the lower side and 7 mt on the higher side against 5.9 mt last year, according to the association.

Asked about fears of damage to urad crop in some parts of the country, Dongre said such an assumption is being made due to damage to soyabean crop in Madhya Pradesh. "We are yet to get any authentic report on damage to crops," he said.

To a question on the tur crop in Maharashtra, where too heavy rainfall has affected crops in the Vidarbha region, he said that the crop was shaping up "satisfactorily".

The higher production could also result in lower imports of pulses. A unique feature of Indian pulses scenario is that it is the highest producer, consumer and importer in the world.

"Imports could drop to 3 mt this year, not only because of higher production but also due to over 25 per cent drop in the rupee's value since the beginning of this year," Dongre said.

Initially, the pulses industry had expected imports to rise to 3.4 mt. During 2012-13 fiscal, 3.2 mt of pulses were imported with yellow peas making up 50 per cent.

"Unless prices drop in some origins, it is unlikely that imports will be higher than 3 mt. The rupee's fall contributes to 10-15 per cent inflation in pulses," he said.

Prices could be stable this year with demand picking up during the festival season, he said.

Chilli cools on rise in arrivals

Futures contracts of most spices ended down on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange in the absence of cues from spot markets, as most were closed today on account of Janmashtami, analysts said.

Chilli futures ended down due to the recent rise in arrivals and adequate build-up of stocks in Guntur market, analysts said. However, good export demand from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and reports of damage to crops in Madhya Pradesh due to continuous rainfall, is likely to push prices higher, Kotak Commodity said.

Higher supplies crush cotton

Cotton prices decreased on higher arrivals at the Bhoodapady Regulated Market Committee. “About 65 tonnes of cotton arrived on Wednesday in the market. Prices of Surabi and Bt cotton decreased, despite competition among mills to buy cotton,” said an RMC official.

The area under cotton decreased last year and so production was , they said. Due to lower production, the price has improved this year. Last year, Surabi was sold at Rs 5,600 a quintal while Bt cotton Rs 4,600 a quintal.

This year, both the varieties have increased by Rs 600 and Rs 1500 a quintal respectively. Of the total arrival of 64.8 tonnes, Surabi’s share was 51.2 tonnes.

Traders said many spinners in Tamil Nadu are having ample orders for Diwali from textile producers, so they were buying all available cotton from all places. Demand was good at Bhoodapady due to the quality of the arrivals, they said.

Pulses, oilseeds, chillies, hit in AP



The area under oilseeds and pulses in Andhra Pradesh is likely to fall this kharif. The monsoon, which started off well in the first week of July, failed to spread out evenly across the State, hitting sowing activity in several parts.

Against the normal area of 7.76 lakh hectares under pulses, the State reported sowings only in 76 per cent. With sowing schedule coming to an end, farmers say that there could be no further coverage. Sowings in red gram, mainly a kharif crop, covered only 3.66 lakh hectares or 84 per cent of the area.

The other two noteworthy pulses — green and black gram, were sown in 72 per cent and 55 per cent of their normal areas of 1.95 lakh hectares and 71,000 hectares respectively, a senior official of the State Agriculture Ministry said.

Groundnut, which is grown in 12 lakh hectares, too is expected to suffer heavily in the kharif. Groundnut farmers have covered only 71 per cent of the total area and there is little hope of any increase in area as they would have completed sowings by now. Sunflower crop faces a complete rout as only 17 per cent (7,000 ha) of the 52,000 hectares has been covered so far. Castor, too, could fare badly as only 61 per cent of the 1.86 lakh hectares has been covered as on Wednesday.

The other two major losers could be chillies and onion. Area under chilli dipped to just 22 per cent of the total 1.66 lakh hectares.

Onion sowings are down to 14,000 hectares or 55 per cent of the total 28,000 hectares.

However, the main crops of paddy, sugarcane and maize are looking up as the coverage is above normal. Soyabean has gained the maximum, with its plantings doubling to 2.84 lakh hectares.

Correction likely in edible oils on currency movements



Edible oil market turned weak on Thursday tracking bearish futures market and sharp recovery in the domestic currency against the dollar.

Market may witness some correction due to slack month-end local demand and cautious mood for fresh bulk buying eyeing uncertainty in currency market. Recovery in rupee will increase selling pressure as import cost will come down.

A firm trend was witnessed on the Bombay Commodity Exchange with sharp rise in palmolein by Rs 30 for 10 kg, soyabean refined oil by Rs 33, sunflower oil by Rs 35, rapeseed oil by Rs 10 and cotton refined oil by Rs 13. This was due to rupee's fall on Wednesday after the market closed.

Needy buyers bought about 150-200 tonnes palmolein at Rs 610-612. Local refineries have sold 250-300 tonnes palmolein at Rs 625 for September delivery. Barring that, there were no activities. The market closed early due to *Janmashtami*.

Towards the end of the day, Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 635, super palmolein Rs 665 and super deluxe Rs 685, soyabean refined oil Rs 725 and sunflower refined oil Rs 875.

Ruchi quoted palmolein Rs 625, soyabean refined oil Rs 715 and sunflower refined oil Rs 845.

Allana quoted palmolein at Rs 625, super palmolein Rs 665, soyabean refined oil Rs 715 and sunflower refined oil Rs 845. The Rajkot market was closed. Soyabean arrivals were 45,000 bags at Rs 3,650-3,750 ex-mandi and Rs 3,800-3,850 for plant delivery. Mustard seed arrivals were 50,000 bags at Rs 3,525-3,750.

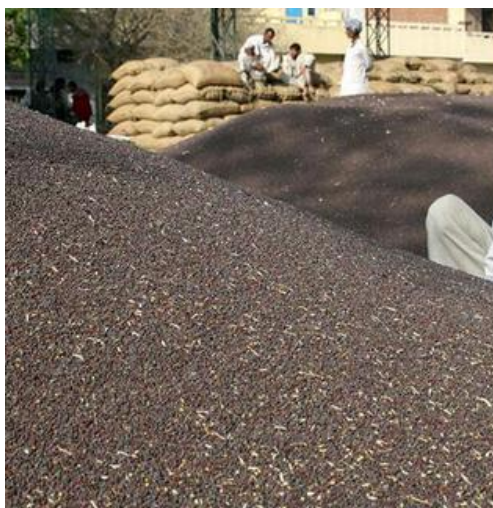
On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil's September futures dropped sharply by Rs 16.30 to Rs 718.40 (Rs 734.70), October down by Rs 14.15 at Rs 697.85 (Rs 712) and November declined by Rs 15.35 to Rs 690 (Rs 705.35).

Malaysia BMD crude palm oil's September contracts settled lower at MYR 2,444 (MYR 2,489), October at MYR 2,444 (MYR 2,490) and November at MYR 2,440 (MYR 2,481).

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: Groundnut oil 850 (850), soya refined oil 713 (680), sunflower exp. ref. 760 (725), sunflower ref. 835 (820), rapeseed ref. oil 740 (730), rapeseed expeller ref. 710 (700) cottonseed ref. oil 693 (680) and palmolein 620 (590).

Vikram Global Commodities (P) Ltd quoted Rs 665 for 10 kg for Malaysia super palmolein for September delivery.

Global cues heat up mustard oil



Strong global cues, rise in imported oils price and improved demand pushed up mustard oil prices.

Mustard oil was seen gaining on Thursday on strong global cues with its price in Indore mandis going up by Rs 9 to Rs 665 for 10 kg.

Similarly it rose by Rs 10 in Moorena to Rs 670, while it was Rs 7 up in Neemuch at Rs 660 for 10 kg.

Uptrend also continued in mustard oil in Rajasthan. Kota and Jaipur prices were quoted Rs 10 up at Rs 675 and Rs 690, while it was up Rs 5 in Ganga Nagar at Rs 675.

Compared with last week, mustard oil is up Rs 15 for 10 kg. The falling rupee also perked up mustardseeds prices by Rs 100 to Rs 4,100-4,300.

Similarly raida was quoted Rs 100 higher at Rs 3,100-3,200.

In futures, however, mustard seeds traded lower as the rupee recovered.

Mustardseeds September and October contracts on the NCDEX closed at Rs 3,515 (down Rs 95) and Rs 3,550 (down Rs 94).

Plant deliveries in mustard seeds for Jaipur line also ruled higher at Rs 3,705-10 a quintal (up Rs 100 from last week) on improved demand from crushers.

Arrival of mustard seeds across the country on Thursday was recorded at 50,000 bags with Rajasthan leading the arrivals with 30,000 bags, followed by Punjab/Haryana with 6,000 bags,

Madhya Pradesh 5,000 bags, Uttar Pradesh 4,000 bags each, Gujarat 2,000 bags each, while 3,000 bags were offloaded elsewhere in the country.

Rice could rule in ranges next few days



The rice market is likely to rule without much fluctuation on account of steady demand and ample stocks over the next few days, said trade experts.

With not much trading taking place in the market, prices of aromatic and non-basmati rice varieties remained unchanged, on Thursday.

Amit Chandna, Proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company, told *Business Line* that lack of buying interest at all levels kept rice prices unchanged.

This situation in the market was anticipated and it may continue to rule in a tight range over the next couple of days.

According to the trade experts, market may witness some alteration next week, he said.

In the physical market, after witnessing an uptrend earlier this week aromatic varieties remained unchanged. Pusa-1121 (steam) sold at Rs 8,000-8,100, while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted at Rs 7,650-7,750.

Pure basmati (raw) quoted at Rs 8,650 a quintal. Duplicate basmati (steam) sold at Rs 6,600.

For the brokens of Pusa-1121, Dubar quoted at Rs 3,600, Tibar sold at Rs 4,250, while Mongra was at Rs 2,900.

In the non-basmati section, Sharbati (Steam) sold at Rs 4,500-4,600 while Sharbati (Sela) quoted at Rs 4,300.

Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,300-2,350 while Permal (sela) went for Rs 2,300 a. PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 2,900 while PR-11 (Raw) quoted at Rs 2,750.

PR14 (steam) sold at Rs 3,100.

Paddy arrivals

Around 5,000 bags of PR paddy variety arrived at the Karnal Grain Market Terminal from the Uttar Pradesh and quoted at Rs 1,220.

Sugar futures fall on profit booking



Sugar prices eased by Rs 5-10 a quintal at the upper level on Thursday as millers continued selling surplus stocks.

The spot market was closed due to *Janmashtami*. The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association was closed.

Nominal rates in spot and naka level were down by Rs 5-8 due to slack month-end demand. Prices on the domestic futures market declined on profit booking. Mukesh Kuwadia, Secretary of Bombay Sugar Merchants Association, said that continuous selling by producers pulled down prices. As the market was closed, there were no loading-unloading in the market.

Sources said that the Vashi wholesale market is carrying over 120 truckloads of inventories. Supply from millers is ample as the neighbouring States buying is lacklustre forcing Maharashtra's mills to sell commodity in the local markets.

Arrivals in the Vashi market were 25-30 truckloads (each of 100 bags) but were not unloaded. There was no lifting from the market.

On Wednesday evening, hardly 10-12 mills offered tenders and sold 32,000- 35,000 bags at Rs 2,885-2,980 (Rs 2,890-2,990) for S-grade and Rs 3,000-3,070 (Rs 3,000-3,080) for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar September futures were lower by Rs 5 to Rs 3,003 (Rs 3,008), October declined by Rs 14 to Rs 3,028 (Rs 3,042) and November Rs 10 to Rs 3,060 (Rs 3,070).

Nominal spot rates were: S-grade Rs 3,048-3,132 (Rs 3,050-3,140) and M-grade Rs 3,160-3,355 (Rs 3,166-3,362) and **Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 2,975-3,030 (Rs 2,980-3,040) and M-grade Rs 3,065-3,190 (Rs 3,070-3,200).

Uttar Pradesh rates were: Lakhimpur Rs 3,300 and Muzzafarnagar Rs 3,320.

Turmeric rules stable despite higher inflow



Turmeric prices ruled stable on Thursday despite higher arrivals. About 6,500 bags of turmeric arrived for sale, but the prices remained the same.

“After several days, arrivals were huge in the four markets and 70 per cent was sold. Only two or three exporters purchased for the orders they have received recently,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said the farmers brought huge stocks expecting good price but nobody quoted a higher price. However, growers willingly sold at quoted prices as they require money for agricultural operations.

Stockists said they had purchased about 1,000 bags on Thursday, as they feel the price may increase soon.

Due to the arrival of medium quality hybrid turmeric, the price decreased. The other varieties ruled stable.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,391-5,895, the root variety Rs 3,511-5,134.

Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,714-6,819, the root variety Rs 4,894-5,809.

Of the 1,640 bags that arrived, 890 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,066-5,934, the root variety Rs 4,669-5,541. Of 1,040 bags on offer, 891 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,400-5,960. The root variety was sold at Rs 4,000-5,479 a quintal.

Of the 1,232 put up for sale, 1,228 were traded.

Non-availability of stocks worries pepper trade



Pepper futures continued to move up on limited supply and limited activities. There were buyers at the IPSTA platform for September at Rs 43,833 a quintal, but no sellers were seen.

Non-availability of stocks continues to worry the trade as it looks for various ways to get the produce.

“If some part of the 6,800 tonnes pepper locked up in the warehouses were released after processing and cleared by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), some business with the overseas buyers might take place”, some of the exporters claimed.

The Tamil Nadu-based inter-State dealers were buying from the farmgate of growers in Kerala’s Idukki district at terminal market prices on cash-and-carry basis.

High fluctuations in the exchange rates are also affecting the trade, they said. On the spot, 11 tonnes farm grade pepper arrived and the entire quantity was traded at Rs 402-405 depending upon the quality of the material, they said.

September and October contracts on the NMCE increased by Rs 162 a kg and Rs 200 respectively to Rs 44,850 and Rs 44,700 a quintal.

Total open interest declined by two tonnes to 59 tonnes.

Total turnover went up by 11 tonnes to 30 tonnes.

Spot market remained unchanged at Rs 40,200 (ungarbled) and Rs 42,200 (garbled).

Indian parity in the international market moved up following the strengthening of the rupee to \$6,900 a tonne (c&f) Europe at \$7,150 (c&f) US.

Nabard okays Rs 113.7 cr for Karnataka

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard), which has allocated Rs 900 crore for Karnataka under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF), has released Rs 113.70 crore in first phase to take up rural and agricultural infrastructure projects in the State.

According to G.R Chintala, Chief General Manager, Nabard-Karnataka, the funds would be used for construction of 354 roads and 22 bridges. These roads and bridges are expected to benefit more than 40 lakh rural populace in 29 districts of the State, he added.

“Roads and bridges will connect 1,006 villages with 404 marketing centres and generate non-recurring employment to the tune of 36.07 lakh man days and recurring employment of 288 jobs a year,” he said.

About 136 anganwadis in 25 districts were also sanctioned, which will improve health and literacy levels of people in 136 villages of the State.

Award for Rubber Board scientist

T.A. Soman, scientist at Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII), Rubber Board, has won the BC Sekhar Gold Medal 2012, instituted by *Rubber Asia*, the rubber magazine. Renowned US rubber scientist Late Alen Gent was the winner of the Medal last year. Announcing this, P.C. Cyriac, chairman of the international jury, said: "Soman was selected for the medal in recognition of his innovative achievement in the development and standard-isation of 'root trainer' rubber planting technology, which has the potential to revolutionise rubber planting practices in the country and across the world."

Gujarat gets Rs 176 cr from Nabard

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) has sanctioned Rs 175.74 crore to Gujarat under its Rural Infrastructure Development Fund-XIX (RIDF-XIX). The funds would be used for construction of lift irrigation facility consisting of a 32.90-km pipeline for transmission of 200 cusecs of water in Mehsana district. On completion, it would provide additional irrigation to 6,000 hectare and address drinking water problems, according to a Nabard release here. With this sanction, the total RIDF loan assistance provided to Gujarat has increased to Rs 12,516 crore, making the State one of the top recipients of this facility, M.K. Mudgal, Chief General Manager, said.

Onion auctions resume, rates settle at Rs 3,500 per quintal

Onion auctions at Lasalgaon market resumed today after an "amicable understanding" was reached between traders and APMC office bearers.

Auctions, especially of onions, did not take place at Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) yesterday due to various demands of traders which were viewed by some as an attempt to jack up onion prices after they tumbled to Rs 1,000 per quintal.

The scuttling of auctions had sparked fears that onion prices, which have seen some correction, may shoot up again.

"The auctions remained stalled on Wednesday following crash in onion prices and rejection of permission sought by APMC permit-holders to participate in the process. Traders boycotted the

procedure because their proposal to hold auction through brokers was turned down,” said Lasalgaon APMC Chairman, Jaydutt Holkar.

Traders withdrew their boycott after an “amicable understanding” was reached in the meeting with APMC office bearers last night.

According to Holkar, auctions of onions and food-grains started as usual today.

While red onions were auctioned at Rs 3,856 per quintal the rates settled down to Rs 3,500 per quintal later in the day at Lasalgaon APMC.

Holkar said auctions at other APMCs, including Pimpalgaon Baswant, were held as usual.

Farmers had staged a rasta roko after onion prices declined to Rs 1,000 per quintal yesterday.
