

THE HINDU

Do not obstruct flow of water, farmers told

Water was released from Thirumurthy dam under the Parambikulam – Aliyar Project for the irrigation needs of lands in the fourth zone of the ayacut. Farmers have been asked not to obstruct the flow of water.

'Evolve integrated policy for farmers'

A call to evolve an integrated agriculture policy to protect the interests of farmers was given by K. Veeramani, Chancellor, Periyar Maniammai University, while speaking at the Agrotech festival 2013 held to mark the silver jubilee of the university at Vallam near here on Friday.

Mr. Veeramani said that government should make an all-out effort to protect natural resources and should not allow private sector to exploit them. While food grains rot in godowns, farmers are committing suicide elsewhere. T. Venkatapathi, horticulturist and Padma Shri award-winner, inaugurated the festival. S. Natarajan, General Manager, NABARD, spoke.

Rain comes as respite to farmers

Heavy rains lashed parts of Vellore district on Thursday night, bringing relief to people, especially farmers.

According to a spokesman of the Agriculture Department, the rain would benefit cotton farmers and those who have sowed red gram, which are now in vegetative stage. Farmers in Tirupattur, Alangayam, Kandili, Natrampalli and Jolarpet blocks

who have cultivated cotton are expected to benefit by the rain, which would aid germination of crop.

As far as groundnut farmers are concerned, most farmers could not sow seeds on account of the delayed rain.

While there was some rain in June, there was no rain in July. The August rains in the above areas would encourage groundnut farmers to switch over to cotton, the official said.

The normal rain-fed cotton area - which was 7,000 hectares - is expected to increase to 10,000 hectares now, thanks to the rain. The rain would also encourage cotton farmers to cultivate tomato and other vegetables as inter-crop.

The rain would aid cholam and red gram crops cultivated in Vellore, Arcot and Walajapet blocks. However, the rain-fed groundnut area, which was about 40,000 to 45,000 hectares in the district, would be reduced by about 3,000 to 5,000 hectares on account of the delayed rain, the official said.

Ambur recorded the highest rainfall of 90.80 mm during the 24 hours ending 8.30 am on Friday, followed by Alangayam 80.50 mm, Arcot 72 mm, Vellore 55 mm, Gudiyatham 51.30 mm, Melalathur 40.60 mm, Walajapet 24 mm and Vaniyambadi 23 mm. The rainfall in other areas was negligible.

Farmers yet to meet this season's sowing targets

There has been a shortfall in achieving targets set for this kharif season by the government, despite the timely rain received in the district. A dramatic increase was expected in the area under red gram, which also did not happen.

As against the target of 4.39 lakh hectares fixed for foodgrain cultivation in the district this year, actual sowing was in just over 4.2 lakh ha. Similarly the increase in the sowing area of red gram was a mere one per cent, and as against the target of 3.65 lakh ha fixed by the government, the actual sowing of red gram was completed in 3.67 lakh ha.

Agriculture Department officials had earlier projected that sowing of red gram would cross the 4 lakh ha-mark this year, considering the profits farmers made last year with this crop.

As per details available, farmers who could not take up green and black gram cultivation due to rain failure earlier in the monsoon preferred cultivating soya bean rather than red gram.

Another disturbing feature of agriculture in Gulbarga was a sharp fall in the area under oilseeds. As against the targeted area of 40,000 ha under sunflower, farmers have so far completed sowing only in 24,152 ha. Similarly, against the target of 7,000 ha fixed for sesame, farmers could complete sowing only in 4,643 ha.

Sources in the Agriculture Department said that farmers had completed sowing in 99 per cent of the target fixed by the government for all crops this kharif season.

Against the target of 5.71 lakh ha fixed for sowing different crops, including foodgrains, oilseeds, and commercial crops, farmers had completed sowing in 5.16 lakh ha.

Increase in sowing area of red gram barely one per cent, owing to farmers' preference for soya bean this season

'Process of compensating rain-hit farmers to be completed in a month'

The process of providing compensation to the farmers who have suffered loss due to rains in the district will be completed by September 30, Deputy Commissioner Vipul Bansal has said.

According to the joint survey conducted by the officials of Agriculture, Revenue and Horticulture departments, agricultural crops on more than 10,000 acres of land had been damaged in the district. Arecanut plantations had been infected with koleroga due to excess moisture in the atmosphere.

The assessment of the loss due to koleroga was under progress, he said at a press conference here on Friday.

He said koleroga had caused extensive damage in Tirthahalli, Hosanagar, Sagar, and Sorab taluks. According to the existing guidelines, Rs. 12,000 per hectare could be paid for the loss of plantation crops under the Natural Disaster Reponse Fund. The process of submitting applications for the crop loss had already commenced. He clarified it was not mandatory to furnish the photo of the plantation along with the application to claim compensation.

Mr. Bansal said the district administration had submitted a detailed report to the State government on the loss caused by the rain. Tushar Girinath, Secretary of Disaster Management section of the Department of Revenue, would visit the affected villages in the district on August 31, he said.

Honouring farmers

Traditional start: Agriculture Minister K.P. Mohanan inaugurating a seminar and distribution of Animal Husbandry Awards organised by the Animal Husbandry Department in Kannur on Friday.— PHOTO: S.K. MOHAN

We are still waiting for water, complain Delta farmers

At least 160 cusecs of water should be released into channel near Nachalur; old loans should be waived, fresh loans sanctioned'

Although water is flowing in the Cauvery, tail-end areas in many irrigation channels in the district are yet to get water, delaying commencement of farming operations, a section of farmers' representatives in the district have complained.

Raising the issue at the farmers grievances day meeting here on Friday, R. Subramanian, deputy secretary of the Cauvery Delta Farmers' Welfare Association, said tail end areas of the Kattalai High Level Channel (KHLC), especially those downstream the Nachalur regulator, were yet to get water.

Farmers at Koundampatti, Suriyanur, Mudalaipatti, Ettarrai, Koppu, Puliur, Posampatti, Thayanur, Pallakadu and Adavathur areas were not able to raise nurseries because of insufficient release of water into the channel from the Nachalur regulator.

"At least 160 cusecs of water should be released in the channel from Nachalur," he said, requesting Collector Jayashree Muralidharan to issue appropriate directions to the Public Works Department.

A.Nagarajan, president, Tamil Nadu Horticulture Crop Producers' Association, regretted that tail-end areas in most of the 17 irrigation channels were yet to get water. He urged the Collector to take steps to ensure release of adequate water to the KHLC and Uyyakondan.

A cross-section of farmers' representatives demanded early sanction of compensation for the crop losses suffered by farmers owing to the drought conditions after monsoon failure last year.

“Although the State government sanctioned relief of Rs. 15,000 an acre not all farmers got it. Apart from paddy, farmers who raised banana, sugarcane, betel vine and other crops, had sustained heavy losses. Rescheduling short-term crop loans into medium-term loans will only push farmers into debt. All crop loans should be fully waived and fresh loans should be sanctioned immediately without any precondition to enable farmers take up samba cultivation now,” said Ayilai Sivasuriyan, district secretary, Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, affiliated to the Communist Party of India.

Explaining the extent of losses, R. Raja Chidambaram, State Secretary, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, said the drought was so severe and prolonged that even mango and coconut had withered. “Acid lime raised in about 7,000 acres of land in over a dozen villages in Lalgudi and Manachanallur taluks have been affected and farmers had sustained huge losses. The district administration should conduct a survey and take steps to get compensation sanctioned by the government for the affected farmers,” he said.

P. Viswanathan, president, Tamizhaga Eri Mattrum Attru Pasana Vivasayigal Sangam, said mango and coconut trees in Manapparai, Marungapuri, Thottiyam, and Vaiyampatti unions had been badly affected.

As farmers were facing much hardship, banks should be instructed not to go ahead with recovery proceedings and sanction fresh loans liberally, said P. Ayyakannu, State vice-president, Bharathiya Kisan Sangam.

N. Veerasekaran, coordinator, Ayyan Vaical Pasanatharar Sangam, complained that farmers were facing several practical difficulties in getting fresh crop loans and requested the Collector to convene a coordination meeting among farmers' representatives and secretaries of primary agricultural cooperative societies.

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'Adequate stock of seeds in Dharmapuri district'

There is enough stock of seeds for distribution to the farmers at all the Agriculture Extension Centres in the district, Collector K. Vivekanandan has said.

Presiding over the monthly grievances meeting that was held at the Collectorate on Friday, Mr. Vivekanandan said that 179.045 mt of paddy, 21.093 mt of small millets, 214.085 mt of dal and 173.263 mt of oil seeds are kept ready for distribution at the centres.

Farmers can approach the nearest agriculture centre and purchase the seeds, he added.

Encroachments

The Collector said that the encroachments on Thenkaraikottai lake were being removed and action has been initiated to give house site pattas to those evicted from the lake.

The farmers were also informed that those who paid Rs. 500 for power connection for motor pumpsets up to January 17, 2005 can opt for self-finance scheme to get power connection by paying Rs. 50,000 as deposit.

If the farmers come forward to avail themselves of the scheme, they have to give concurrence letter to Tangedco, and the power connections would be given as per the target fixed by the government.

A proposal to save the excess water from Chinnar during rainy season costing Rs. 6.81 crore was sent to the government.

It has proposed to divert excess water from Chinnar to Erranaalli lake, Pulikkarai and other lakes.

Steps have been taken to repair the sluice gates of the Somenaalli lake at a cost of Rs. 3 lakh.

It was also proposed to develop the water catchment areas between Kadathur and Puttiredipatty road under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employees Guarantee Scheme.

P. Ramar, District Revenue Officer, P. Manoharan, Joint Director, Agriculture, and R.R. Suseela, personal assistant to Collector (Agriculture), among others participated.

Farmers in the district can approach the nearest agriculture centre and purchase the seeds, says Dharmapuri Collector

Training

A sustained effort towards diversification of honey-based products could lead to significant increase in the income generated by the beekeeping industry, Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI) Director George V. Thomas has said.

He was inaugurating a three-day training programme on beekeeping on Friday.

Sixty-five farmers from the district are attending the programme.

Plantain saplings to be distributed

Plantain saplings produced through tissue culture are being distributed from the Ajanur, Kanhangad, Pallikare, Uduma, Pullur-Periya, and Madikkai Krishi Bhavans in the Kanhangad block panchayat. Farmers may contact the Krishi Bhavans concerned, Assistant Director, Agriculture, Kasaragod said in a release here.

More vegetables from domestic farms

State to ensure adequate supply, price control during Onam



Kerala to ensure adequate supply, price control during Onam.

With the Onam festival season drawing near, the State government has drawn up market intervention plans to ensure adequate supply and price control of vegetables, even as efforts are on to maximise procurement from domestic farmers.

Minister for Agriculture K.P. Mohanan has directed officials to ensure effective market intervention to keep prices from spinning out of control during the festival

season. Officials said a weekly review system had been introduced to keep tabs on the situation. They said the move to reduce the dependence on neighbouring States would help to keep vegetable prices in check.

The Kerala State Horticultural Products Development Corporation (Horticorp) expects its procurement to touch 250 to 275 tonnes a day during the peak demand period from September 1 to 17. Last year, the procurement was 110 to 125 tonnes a day.

Procurement plan

The entire requirement of plantains in Kerala during the Onam season is expected to be met by domestic producers this year. Horticorp Managing Director K. Prathapan said inland farms had hiked production of plantains in anticipation of the increased requirement.

However, consumers in Kerala will have to depend on farmers in Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, and Madurai districts in Tamil Nadu for supply of green cooking banana (peyan), another staple culinary feature during the festival season.

Dr. Prathapan said the maximum amount of pumpkin, cowpea, cucumber, bitter gourd, snake gourd, and elephant foot yam would be procured from farmers in Kerala, while drumstick, tomato, Indian bean (amara), onion, and other vegetables would be procured from outside the State.

Dr. Prathapan, who is also director of the Kerala State Horticulture Mission, said efforts were on to procure carrot, cabbage, radish, and potato from farmers at Vattavada and Kanthalloor in Idukki district.

“Of the 3,000 hectares under vegetable cultivation in the two villages, crops in 300 hectares have been lost to rains. But the vegetables in 1,500 hectares are ready for cropping,” he said.

Meanwhile, HortiCorp and the Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation (Supplyco) are priming their outlets across the State for the festival season.

Apart from the 200 HortiCorp markets, 140 Supplyco outlets, and 70 mega fairs in various districts, 20 mobile vans are being pressed into service to meet the additional demand.

Dr. Prathapan said the network of HortiCorp outlets was already selling vegetables at 30 per cent discount.

VFPCK fairs

On a smaller scale, the Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council Keralam (VFPCK) is gearing up to procure vegetables worth Rs.7 crore for the Onam season. VFPCK Chief Executive Officer S. Sivaprasad said the total procurement over a period of 68 days from Ramzan to Onam was expected to be 500 to 600 tonnes. The VFPCK has set up 13 Mega Onam fairs in Kasaragod, Kannur, Palakkad, Thrissur, Malappuram, and Thiruvananthapuram districts.

As many as 119 retail outlets will also be opened from September 5 to cater to the heavy seasonal demand. All the outlets will sell produce at 30 per cent less than the market rate.

Mr. Sivaprasad said efforts were on to procure the maximum produce from domestic farms through the Swasraya Karshaka Sanghom (SKS) network of farmer clusters established by the VFPCK.

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M&M organises customer meet at its Zaheerabad plant

Leading tractor manufacturer Mahindra & Mahindra organised the first customer meet at its recently inaugurated plant at Zaheerabad in Medak district.

The company's brand ambassador and film star Mahesh Babu handed over tractor keys to 100 farmers. The Zaheerabad plant, acclaimed to be the largest tractor plant in Asia, was inaugurated in March this year. According to Rajesh Jejurikar, M&M's Chief Executive of Tractor & Farm Mechanization division, "Tractor is the backbone for farmers and hence its delivery, an auspicious occasion."

List of beneficiaries to be displayed

The list of farmers who have been disbursed compensation for crop losses on account of drought will be put up for public view in the respective primary agricultural cooperative societies, Collector Jayashree Muralidharan said on Friday.

Taking into account the losses suffered by farmers owing to the drought, the State government had sanctioned compensation of Rs.15,000 an acre to farmers who sustained crop loss of more than 50 per cent. Responding to complaints that not all farmers got the compensation and allegations of irregularities, Ms. Muralidharan said Rs. 23.8 crore had been disbursed as compensation to farmers in the delta areas of the district and Rs. 17.12 crore to those in the non-delta areas.

She said the agricultural cooperative societies have been instructed to convene meetings once a month to address grievances of farmers. Cooperative banks had been directed to sanction loans with subsidy for sinking deep borewells. The Collector promised farmers that steps were being taken to ensure that water reached the tail-end areas of all irrigation channels in the district.

On requests for dredging tanks and removal of encroachments, Ms. Muralidharan called for public participation in such efforts.

However, the district administration had taken steps to clear the silt and remove encroachments in one tank in a taluk every month in the district.

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Rs. 3.5 crore for tribal development programme

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has launched an Integrated Tribal Development Programme (small orchard model) in Jamunamarathur block covering Jawadu Hills in Tiruvannamalai district.

NABARD will allot Rs.3.5 crore for the project covering 1,040 families of tribal farmers identified from 29 hamlets of Kovilur panchayat.

Each beneficiary will be given 60 saplings of fruit-bearing trees such as jack fruit, citrus, nelli (Indian gooseberry) for planting in one acre and 150 forest species such as silver oak, teak and glyricidia. Landless labourers among the beneficiaries would be trained in starting income-generating activities such as dairy, poultry, stall-fed goat rearing, bee keeping, vermin compost, oil cake expeller unit, custom hiring and maintenance of farm machinery.

The identified beneficiaries will also be imparted motivational and capacity building training, a release from NABARD said.

Formally launching the programme at Kovilur recently, Collector A.Gnanasekaran said the programme was aimed at economic and social uplift of people.

Fruits of labour

The grapevine on the terrace of Thomas Varghese and Mini Thomas yielded 20 kg of red grapes and has enabled the couple to ferment them and make wine. M. SAI GOPAL has more



The year 2013 has turned-out, quite literally, 'fruitful' for the couple Thomas Varghese and Mini Thomas. The mini orchard on their terrace has yielded close to 20 kilograms of red grapes of Mangalore variety.

On a casual glance, their terrace appears ordinary like any other. A closer look, however, reveals a bamboo fence, meticulously erected and tied together by strings. The grapevine has grown-up around the trellis, forming a natural roof. Bunches of ripe grapes, hanging from the grapevine, are neatly packed in plastic covers, to protect them from bats, monkeys and other nocturnal visitors.

The other half of the roof has another fence dominated by Ash Gourd vine ('Boodida Gummidakaya'), which has already started yielding the fruit, commonly consumed as a vegetable. The parapet wall is lined with numerous pots of various sizes, in which a host of greens including Amaranth ('Thotakura'), spinach ('Palak'), lemon and ridge gourd being grown.

This year's good yield has enabled the couple to ferment grapes and make wine out of it. They even distributed grapes and a part of the home made wine to neighbours. "It is satisfying to share something with neighbours that you have produced on your own without using fertilizer and pesticides. We want to inspire other families in the locality to take up vegetable gardening. It's not tough and does not need full time attention," says Mr. Varghese.

In addition to grapes, the couple are also proud of the steady supply of ash gourds, passion fruit, beans, lemon, spinach, Amaranth, curry leaves, ridge gourds and chillies all through the year from their vegetable garden. There is also a special section of plants that have medicinal value like Brahmi, Sarvasugandhi, six varieties of Tulasi, turmeric and ginger.

Mr. Varghese, a grocery store owner in Safilguda, insists that maintaining a grapevine and growing all fruits, vegetables and herbs is not a rocket science. The family has become accustomed to plucking fruits, herbs, vegetables and greens from the vegetable garden for cooking.

"Everybody talks about the harmful effects of fertilizer and pesticides. In a Malayalam magazine, we came across a series of articles that described the ways and means to maintain a vegetable garden in the backyard and roof. Along with the column, the magazine also used to supply seeds. I started following the given instructions and soon got a hang of it," he said.

It took three years for Mr. Varghese to achieve a fully matured grapevine.

"Grapevines need support, ample sunlight and water to survive and grow. Except for summer months of April, May and June, the rest of the year, grapevines will yield good results. The first two years were not great in terms of yield. This year, however, everything fell into place," said Mini Thomas.

The couple also learned the art of making natural compost. Nothing is thrown out as waste from their household. “We are piling organic wastes like fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds and other wastes in a composting bin. Eventually, they will decay and can be used to nourish plants,” they described.

To be able to have enough supply of water, the couple constructed a rain water harvesting pit. “Rains were good this year and we did not allow the rain water to go waste. In fact, we do not have to worry for the next one year because of ample water collected in the harvesting pit. Improvisation, commitment and above all interest are important,” they said.

It is satisfying to share something with neighbours that you have produced on your own without using fertilizer and pesticides

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Kovai farmers complain of peacock menace, seek action

COIMBATORE: A group of farmers presented a tricky problem before district collector M Karunakaran at the grievance day at the collectorate on Friday. Their farms are constantly invaded by peafowls and they could do nothing about since it is the national bird, they told Karunakaran. Any action that poses a threat to the bird would invite action from the state, they said.

Farmers claim that the peafowl population in areas including Thadagam, Thondamuthur, Narasipuram, Chettipalayam and Kinathukadavu has become too large that these are spilling over to farms and destroying crops. "If any untoward incident happens when we try to chase the peacocks entering our fields, we will be held accountable," said P Kandasamy, general secretary of Tamil Nadu Farmers' Association. "We have tried our best to get rid of them. However, we are unable to keep them off our farms," said R Ganesan, a farmer from Chettipalayam. Peacocks are quick to adapt to the changing environment. Since there are so many peacocks in Chettipalayam, it is simply impossible to chase them away, he added. Periya Gounder, a farmer from Kuppepalayam, said the [peacock menace](#) has made him wonder if he should abandon agriculture itself.

Forest officials said farmers should employ preventive methods to get rid off the birds. "Being the national bird, peacock enjoys special status and aggressive

population control cannot be undertaken even though it is found in large numbers," said a forest official.

P Pramod, a senior scientist at Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON), Anaikatty, said studies have proved the number of peafowl has increased. Though it is posing a problem for farmers, there is no comprehensive strategy to address the problem, he said. "I also believe that the tolerance level of people towards the birds has come down," Pramod added.

Give special package for arecanut farmers: Sadananda Gowda

MANGALORE: Former chief minister DV Sadananda Gowda had warned the BJP will draw up plans for a massive protest if [chief minister Siddaramaiah](#) does not respond positively to arecanut farmers' plight regarding relief for crop loss through [special package](#) by September 5.

Gowda said the BJP teams led by former Deputy CM KS Eshwarappa and he had surveyed arecanut plantations in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi. The crop loss is close to 60% to 90%. In fact, there is whole scale destruction due to rot disease setting in. We demand the government to give at least Rs 50,000 per acre to the farmers," he said.

As per the present policy, the loss relief is at Rs 12,500 per hectare, which is less. That's why we want the state to announce a special relief package. We know state government's limitations hence though the productivity per acre is Rs 1.5 lakh, we are demanding only Rs 50,000," he said.

Regarding steps BJP government had taken in 2011 in a similar crisis, Gowda claimed that then the crop loss was just 15% to 21%. As the rains had stopped

we gave subsidy for farmers to buy copper sulphate for spraying to save the tress which were standing," he said.

Eshwarappa said that the state apart from Rs 50,000 should also provide for growing alternative crops. If CM visits five districts, which should not take more than a few days, he will understand the ground reality," he said.

MP Nalin Kumar Kateel said that a delegation under Uttara Kannada MP Ananth Kumar Hegde had met union agriculture minister and he had said that the proposal for relief should come from the state and they would immediately dispatch survey teams to assess loss. If the state sends a request for relief we will give it was the message from agriculture minister," Kateel said urging the state to survey the affected areas and send a report to the Centre.

Surat farmers happy due to good rainfall

showering blessings in the form of abundant rainfall and the increased water level at Ukai reservoir.

Compared to last year, this time around the district has recorded a two-fold increase in its seasonal rainfall. Last year during the end of August, the city had received 653 mm of rainfall compared to 1541 mm rainfall in August-2013.

All other talukas in the district namely Bardoli, Choryasi, Kamrej, Mahuva, Mandvi, Mangrol, Olpaad, Palsana, Umarpada etc. have received between 1200 mm to 3200 mm of rainfall in the last two months.

On the other hand, the farmers are happy that the Ukai reservoir has enough

water to satisfy their irrigational needs throughout the year. The Ukai authorities are maintaining the rule level of 333.82 feet at the reservoir and that they will take the rule level a little higher before the monsoon season ends.

Sources said that Rander area recorded the highest rainfall at 1584 mm till August and that the lowest was registered in Varachha at 578 mm and Udhana zone at 771 mm respectively.

As young move away from fishing, Kolis, Agris fight to save tradition

NAVI MUMBAI: For Madhuri Sanjan of Divale village in Belapur, [fishing](#) is a way of life. "My father has been a fisherman, and my brother too started fishing from a young age. We have never thought of doing something else. But the younger generation is not interested in this profession any more. They would rather pick up new trades or jobs than go out into the sea. The government does little or nothing for us. So it's up to the members of the community to fight to survive," she says.

Sanjan should know. Most [Koli](#) families like hers have members who are moving away from the traditional occupation because of rising costs in business and the availability of other opportunities.

Ramdas Mhatre, the son of a local fisherman, is one who does not want to do what his family has been doing for long. "I don't want to be a fisherman. I would rather work in a corporate set-up which I think is much more respectable and lucrative," he says.

Fishing colonies can be found all over the coastal stretch of Navi Mumbai. There's Uran, a fishing village in itself, and there are colonies at Vashi, Sarsole, Karanja and Divale. Along with the Kolis, the Agri-Kolis are the original inhabitants of the city. There are large pockets of the [Agri community](#) at Panvel and Nerul, and there are thousands of them living along the coast. Among the Agris there are both Hindus and Christians, though they belong to the same ethnic community of Kolis. The Agris developed the fishing colonies for Kolis to live in.

These communities came to live here before the marshy lands got filled up and developed. Each village houses approximately 2,000 residents, if not more. Most of them started out as farmers, rice farming being their main occupation, but later switched to fishing. Today, a majority of them are fishermen.

But fishing is not as productive as it used to be. For four months during the monsoon, they do not venture into the high seas, and even drying fish is not possible. "These are four wasted months," says Bharati Tirekar. "How many nets can we repair and how many boats can we mend? Plus, prices of everything seem to have increased. People no longer wanted to spend on fish and if we increase rates, customers don't come."

The lack of work in the rains worries the young generation. Smit Tirekar, who last year worked for a couple of months at a call centre, said, "When I was younger, I used to waste the [monsoon](#) months, sitting around and do nothing. Now I think

differently." She says the corporate world is tempting. "The money is good and there is job security," she says.

At the Karanja jetty, Leela Tirekar, a local fisherwoman well into her seventies, sitting in the midst of huge fishing boats, said though the business has slowed down, the men still venture out.

"Profit-wise, we don't make much, sometimes a mere Rs 10,000 per month if the expenses are high. But this is our livelihood; there is no way we can give it up." Her companion Sariya says the men keep on working, but "the younger generation doesn't want this profession, so it's up to us to carry on the trade."

At Sarsole, the boats are much smaller in size, and Tayem Koli, who is mending the nests, shares the same lament about the disconnect between the old generation and the new. "The children are educated, so why would they want to work here?" she asks.

There is also the question of preserving ethnicity. "We would like our children to carry on the family traditions, but it is becoming quite a task to convince them," says Shashikant Koli. The language they speak is Agri, a peculiar blend of Marathi, Sanskrit, Hindi, English and Kannada, and they would like to protect it.

While the community does have its share of fun, when it comes to festivals and celebrations, many of their traditions have been lost because of urban changes. They hope that not more is lost along the way.

The young are not indifferent to their heritage. "We are proud to be Kolis, but there is so much we feel we are missing out on," say Vaibhav and Dheeraj, cousins who grew up in the fishing hamlet of Karanja.

Much as they love the sea, they hope to finish their education and pursue other avenues. "Our parents do not oppose us, they realise the young generation is different," they say.

Weather

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Saturday, Aug 31

Max Min

32° | 26°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 71

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:57

Sunset: 06:20

Barometer: 1009

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Sunday, Sep 1

Max Min

33° | 26°

Extended Forecast for a week

Monday Sep 2	Tuesday Sep 3	Wednesday Sep 4	Thursday Sep 5	Friday Sep 6
33° 26° Cloudy	34° 26° Overcast	35° 26° Overcast	35° 26° Overcast	35° 26° Overcast

Airport Weather

Delhi

Delhi

Rain: 1

Sunrise: 05:58

Humidity: 84

Sunset: 06:44

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1006



Still on very shaky ground

The Land Acquisition Rehabilitation and Resettlement Bill, passed by the Lok Sabha on Thursday and expected to be passed by the Rajya Sabha next week, has been welcomed by politicians and social activists and criticised by industry. Both these positions are flawed.

To be effective, any law, especially one dealing with expropriation of private property, must be just and equitable. The new law fails this test miserably. To put the issue in perspective, this law does try to address many of the lacunae of the draconian Land Acquisition Act of 1894, also known as Act 1 of 1894, which governs the acquisition of land in India. Since Independence, the government has acquired millions of acres of land under Act 1 by paying inadequate, and, in many cases, no compensation.

The new law protects landowners from such arbitrariness but, in attempting to redress the balance, errs horribly on the side of compassion. It envisages payment of twice the market rate for land in urban areas and four times the market rate for land in rural areas — enough to make any project, public or private, economically unviable. Then, it calls for the consent of 80% of landowners before any acquisition can proceed.

Given the fragmented landholding pattern in India, the acquisition of, say, a thousand acres of land in Uttar Pradesh or Bihar would call for a mini panchayat poll to see if enough people support the decision. It makes a social impact study mandatory for land acquisitions. This will increase red tape and delay acquisitions for years, if not decades.

The Bill seeks, quite unequivocally, to be fair to the landowner who stands to lose his livelihood. Providing for fair valuation is a laudable goal. But this Bill goes much further — it provides for a windfall bonanza for landowners. This provision could well spell the end of India's dreams of emerging as a manufacturing superpower. The only way to quickly lift what the western media pejoratively refers to as India's teeming millions into the lower middle classes and then progressively higher, is to create industrial jobs.

The farm sector accounts for 16% of GDP but supports 60% of the population. This is clearly unsustainable. We need rapid industrialisation. And for this, we need land — not land that has been acquired from their owners for a pittance and given to industry cheap, but land that has acquired at a fair value and given to industry at a price that keeps projects viable.

However, industry must also be fair. Indian industry has, over the decades, got used to getting cheap land. It must get over that mentality and extend to landowners the same free market philosophy it espouses while seeking a level playing field from the government. The Bill, with all its warts intact, is likely to become law by next week.

But it will remain a non-starter as a tool for acquiring land and promoting progress. In this backdrop, we can only set out our wishlist: amend the new law at the earliest possible opportunity to marry equity with compassion. That will make the good intentions practical as well.

Oppn demands more sops for farmers

The government made 28 major amendments in the long-pending land bill and even included proposals from the Opposition parties but it failed to appease them as they demanded more sops for the farmers.

In the debate on the land bill in Lok Sabha on Monday, rural development minister Jairam Ramesh pointed out several instances how the concern of the Opposition has been addressed.

BJP president Rajnath Singh demanded that farmers should get a better compensation package when the government acquires land invoking “emergency clause”. Samajwadi Party chief Mulayam Singh Yadav said that only barren lands

should be allowed for industrial use and demanded farmers should get whatever they demand. He said the proposed legislation would “ruin” and “devastate” farmers.

JD(U) leader Sharad Yadav, however, struck a different note and pointed out the need to control increase in population as more heads will lead to higher demand for land.

DECCAN Chronicle

Land Bill to hike property prices



Chennai: The much debated Land Acquisition Bill that was passed on Friday is expected to push up property rates significantly and delay land acquisition by four to five years, making industrial projects financially unviable.

The crucial Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Bill, 2012 (LARR Bill) seeks to replace the archaic Land Acquisition Act of 1894 proposing compensation to affected families up to four times the market value in rural areas and two times the market value in urban areas. This has drawn significant flak from the developer community.

Questioning the wisdom in rehabilitation packages for privately acquired lands with negotiated prices, CREDAI national chairman Lalit Kumar Jain said the new policy would create huge uncertainty and delay in land acquisition as it is subjected to consent of 70-80 per cent people and the Gram Sabha.

“The Bill provisions will lead to political and land mafia intervention as has been experienced in Mum-bai Slum rehabilitation scheme for 70 per cent consent,” he added.

“It is already difficult to acquire land in India and this bill will make it more difficult and costly to acquire land and will act as a deterrent for investment into large township projects as well as the manufacturing and industrial sector,” opined Mr Anshuman Magazine, CMD, CBRE south Asia “This certainly does not augur well for India’s manufacturing sector. As we all know future jobs can be created if we are able to give necessary push to manufacturing in India,” said industry body Ficci.

Expressing similar views, Sanjay Dutt, executive MD, Cushman & Wakefield, said infrastructure projects would receive the sharpest blow with this rise in input costs. “Post the Bill, the cost of land acquisition will increase across the board and the real estate developers intend to pass on this hike to buyers,” he added.

THE HINDU Business Line

Cotton, sugarcane plantings trail as kharif sowing draws to close

Kharif crop sowing continued this week with more area under rice being brought under cultivation, while sowing in other crops has almost come to an end.

An Agriculture Ministry press release said total area under various kharif crops had crossed 1,000 lakh hectares. During the same time last year, 939.61 lakh hectares had been covered.

Record plantings in soyabean have driven the area under oilseeds this year, while cotton coverage, after initial gains, has begun to slacken.

Area under oilseeds

The area under oilseeds is up at 188.16 lakh hectares (lh), up over 20 lh from last year. Soyabean coverage is seen at a record of over 121 lh.

'The advantage of a higher area may, however, have been lost by continuous rain in the growing areas ever since the monsoon broke out in June. Groundnut, sunflower and sesamum acreage has increased.

The area under cotton so far is 111.65 lh against 112.83 lh during the same period a year ago. The record coverage in cotton is 121 lh in 2011. Last year, the acreage dropped by 5 lh.

Though sowing in the natural fibre has slowed with just 30,000 hectares added last week, higher prices could still encourage farmers to go in for cotton in Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

Currently, the Shankar-6 variety, in demand for exports, is ruling at Rs 47,500 for a candy of 356 kg.

The area under rice is up by over 10 lh at 354.61 lh compared with last year. A higher minimum support price of Rs 1,310 a quintal and rising open market prices are encouraging farmers to go in for the cereal.

The area under pulses is also higher with conducive weather and higher support price aiding the coverage.

Currently, 101.81 lakh hectares have been brought under various pulses against 99.63 lh during the same period last year.

deficient rainfall

With rainfall being deficient over West Bengal and Assam this year, the area under jute and mesta has dropped. Moreover, the Centre's decision to relax the mandatory jute packaging norms has acted as a dampener for growers.

With a prolonged dry period extending till June in States such as Maharashtra and Karnataka, the area under sugarcane is lower at 48.74 lh.

Though rainfall dropped 29 per cent last week, overall it is up 11 per cent this year from June till date.

While 41 per cent area of the country has received excess rainfall, another 86 per cent has received normal rainfall.

The North-East is the one region where rainfall has been 29 per cent deficient during the current monsoon.

According to the Central Water Commission, the water storage level in the 85 major reservoirs of the country is 81 per cent of the live capacity at the full reservoir level against 60 per cent during the same time last year.

The water level as on Thursday was 125.844 billion cubic metres (BCM) against the capacity of 154.877 BCM.

The storage level augurs well for the rabi crop, for which sowing will begin from next month-end.

World pulses market likely to be mixed on tight supplies

He was addressing the annual China Pulse Import and Export Conference 2013 here, organised by the China Chamber of Commerce for Foodstuffs and Native Produce.

Estimating the world dry bean production at 22.6 million tonnes for 2013, against 22.9 million tonnes the previous year, Clancey said South American harvests were down from last year following a crop failure in Argentina.

In North America, production was set to fall as crop development was behind normal, he added.

On lentils, Clancy pointed out that smaller production of 3.3 million tonnes (3.9 million tonnes) and lower carry-in would result in an overall short supply of a little over 1 million tonnes. However, lentil production in Canada, which accounts for close to 50 per cent of world output, will remain stable. Specifically, while harvest of large green lentils will be lower than last year's, in case of red lentils, the carry-in is expected to be significantly smaller.

The estimate of world field pea production in 2013 is placed at 10.6 million tonnes (9.9 million tonnes), with higher harvest in Canada. The expert said demand for peas from the food and feed sectors was strong, and relatively lower prices created new uses.

However, the world's leading producer and exporter of yellow peas, Canada, would harvest slightly lower crop this year as well as have lower carry-in.

Although competition for supply would increase, pea prices were likely to remain strong, Clancey asserted, adding that acreage would likely expand next year as supplies responded to higher prices this year.

M.P. set to make up for drop in AP's chilli acreage



Farm hands sorting and drying chilli at Nallapadu in Guntur district (file photo)

Chilli prices may remain more or less the same this year, though there is a likely drop in acreage in Guntur this season, say major commodity dealers in Guntur.

According to Arun Vaerkar, Partner, Indian Chillies Trading Co in Guntur, there may be a 10-15 per cent decrease in sowing area in the region as some of the farmers are planning to switch to cotton, which seems more remunerative.

But a 20-25 per cent increase in sowing area in Madhya Pradesh will make up for Guntur's loss.

As of now, there are around 35 lakh bags (40 kg each) in cold storages in Guntur.

Though Sri Lanka and Bangladesh are actively buying, offtake by other Asian countries, such as China and Malaysia, is slow this time around. So, there will be a carryover stock of at least 10 lakh bags.

"This, we guess, will keep the local market prices stable during the current season. However, there are feelers that Pakistan is also likely to buy actively. This may push the price up by Rs 4-5 a kg," said Vaerkar.

Currently, he said, prices were ruling at Rs 54-63 a kg (S4 variety), Rs 75-90 (Teja) and Rs 70-85 (Byadgi).

V. Jaisinh, partner, Peninsular Export Company, said that though sowing in Madhya Pradesh was delayed by 10-15 days, besides acreage, the yield was also expected to go up.

"We expect a good crop this year from Madhya Pradesh," he said. The new crop is likely to hit the market by the first week of February, while that of Guntur is expected by mid-November. "This will help keep the price almost steady for the next several months," he said.

Biscuit firms' demand for coconut oil up

Coconut oil prices increased, while copra sales have also gone up.

“The price of the coconut oil has touched at Rs 1,150 for 15 kg loose pack and the palm kernel has decreased slightly. But the demand for the coconut oil from various biscuit firms has increased.

“Considering the situation, the price of coconut oil may increase further,” said R.M. Palanisamy, a coconut oil trader.

He said that one of the biscuit companies purchased good quantity of copra at a higher price.

All the 1,150 quintals were sold.

The price of copra increased by Rs 135 a quintal.

Market officials said that because of the increase in price, more farmers will bring copra next week.

At the Avalpoondurai Regulated Market Committee, the first grade copra was sold at Rs 5,300-5,560, second grade was sold at Rs 4,060-5,265.

Rubber firms up on supply concerns

Physical rubber prices finished firm on Friday. The market improved mainly on supply concerns despite a weak closing in the domestic and international trendsetters. According to market circles, it will take another couple of weeks for any visible improvement in arrivals. The trend was partially mixed as latex lost ground on extremely low demand.

Sheet rubber improved to Rs 186 (185) a kg, according to traders. The grade closed firm at Rs 185.50 (185) at Kottayam and Kochi, as reported by the Rubber Board.

In futures, September contracts weakened to Rs 183.75 (184.48), October to Rs 182.75 (183.87), November to Rs 183.45 (183.80) and December to Rs 183.70 (183.99) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) dropped to Rs 178.62 (180) a kg in Bangkok. September futures for the grade declined to ¥ 256.2 (Rs 173.31) from ¥ 258.8 a kg during the day session and then to ¥ 254.5 (Rs 172.16) a kg in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange (TOCOM).

Spot rubber prices (Rs/kg) were: RSS-4: 186 (185); RSS-5: 182.50 (181.50); Ungraded: 176 (175); ISNR 20: 167 (166) and Latex 60%: 147 (149).

Higher demand for Assam teas

At Sale Number 35 at Kolkata tea auction this week, the average tea prices remained virtually unchanged compared with last week (Sale No. 34). According to J. Thomas & Co Pvt Ltd, the tea auctioneers, this week the average price of CTC was Rs 143.48 a kg (Rs 143.67 a kg last week) and the average price of Orthodox was Rs 227.68 a kg (Rs 226.27). An estimated 78.31 per cent (69.3 per cent) of the CTC and 88.7 per cent (86.2 per cent) of Orthodox volumes offered were sold.

This week the total offerings (packages) at three North Indian auction centres — at Kolkata, Guwahati and Siliguri — were 4,77,946, compared to 4,06,124 in the corresponding sale (No 35) in 2012.

The offerings at Kolkata comprised CTC Dust 1,58,310 (1,48,327), Orthodox 45,118 (27,215) and Darjeeling 6,376 (7,994).

The offerings at two other centres, dealing mainly in CTC/Dust, were: Guwahati 1,52,104 (1,14,505) and Siliguri 1,16,038 (1,08,083).

Assam CTC teas met with improved demand at irregularly lower rates following quality. Dooars were barely steady around last levels. Tata Global was active. Hindustan Unilever operated selectively for the mediums. Western India operated actively for the liquoring teas. There was fair enquiry from other internal and local sections. Exporters operated on the larger broken and fannings.

Edible oils market grinds to a halt



Edible oils market witnessed a bearish trend on Friday, tracking weak futures market and lack of demand.

A rebound in the domestic currency against the dollar also weighed in.

There was virtually no activity in the physical market due to lack of demand, said a leading broker. This is because of sudden drop in prices, giving rise to speculation that more fall in prices is on cards.

In the absence of demand, prices for palmolein and soyabean refined oil declined by Rs 18 and Rs 13 each for 10 kg. Cotton refined oil dropped by Rs 11. Groundnut and sunflower oils ruled unchanged.

Shailesh Kataria of Ridhi Brokers told *Business Line* that weakness in futures markets, absence of demand and decline in value of dollar in the last two days pulled down imported edible oils prices in domestic markets. This month, edible oil prices rose continuously tracking weak rupee and bullish Malaysia palm oil and Chicago soya futures markets.

An analyst said that Malaysian palm oil futures edged lower as investors booked profits from a recent rally fuelled by fears of dry weather in the soya-producing US Midwest.

Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 620, super palmolein Rs 650 and super deluxe Rs 670, soyabean refined oil Rs 715 and sunflower refined oil Rs 850.

Ruchi quoted palmolein Rs 610 ex-JNPT, soyabean refined oil Rs 700 and sunflower refined oil Rs 841.

Allana quoted palmolein Rs 618, super palmolein Rs 645, soyabean refined oil Rs 710 and sunflower refined oil Rs 840. Gokul's rate was Rs 595.

In Rajkot, groundnut oil ruled steady at Rs 1,255 (Rs 1,255) for *telia* tin and loose (10 kg) Rs 800 (Rs 800).

Soyabean arrivals were 45,000 bags at Rs 3,600-3,700 ex- mandi and Rs 3,700-3,800 for plant delivery.

Mustard seed arrivals were 50,000 bags and were Rs 3,400-3,700. On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil's September futures extended lose further by Rs 11.65 to Rs 704.40 (Rs 716.05), October down by Rs 12.80 to Rs 680.30 (Rs 693.10) and November declined by Rs 13.10 to Rs 672.50 (Rs 685.60).

Malaysia BMD crude palm oil's September contracts settled lower at MYR 2,407 (MYR 2,444), October at MYR 2,404 (MYR 2,444) and November at MYR 2,404 (MYR 2,440).

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: Groundnut oil 850 (850), soya refined oil 700 (713), sunflower exp. ref. 755 (760), sunflower ref. 840 (835), rapeseed ref. oil 743 (740), rapeseed expeller ref. 713 (710) cottonseed ref. oil 682 (693) and palmolein 602 (620).

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

Bullish trend unlikely to sustain in pulses



Poor demand and weak buying support arrested the uptrend in pulses and pulse seeds on Friday.

Besides, the recovery of rupee against dollar aided the sluggish trend. Higher arrivals and weak demand dragged moong prices by Rs 400 a quintal over the past one week with moong (bold) on Friday being quoted at Rs 4,500-4,800, while moong (medium) ruled at Rs 4,000- 4,300. Besides rise in arrivals with about 500 bags of new moong being offloaded at Indore mandis, demand in moong declined more so due to arrival of moong with high moisture content.

With weather condition improving, apprehension of damage to moong and other kharif crops, appears to have got minimised. Rise in sowing area and prospects of better output is unlikely to sustain bullish trend in moong in the coming days, said a trader.

Moong dal ruled stable with moong dal (medium) being quoted at Rs 5,700-5,800, moong dal (bold) at Rs 6,000- 6,100, while moong mongar ruled at Rs 7,000-7,250. Masoor which had fallen to Rs 4,400 on weak demand and buying support, gained Rs 50 on improved buying support and further rise in rupee against dollar. Masoor (bold) rose to Rs 4,450, while masoor (medium) ruled at Rs 3,900-4,100. However, compared to last week, masoor is ruling Rs 50-100 lower.

Masoor dal remained unchanged compared to its prices last week with masoor dal (average) being quoted at Rs 5,150-75, masoor dal (medium) at Rs 5,225-50, while masoor dal (bold) ruled at Rs 5,325-50.

Weak demand has also dragged urad prices by Rs 100-150 with urad (bold) being quoted at Rs 3,850-3,900, while urad (medium) ruled at Rs 3,200-3,300. Urad dal ruled stable with urad dal (average) quoted at Rs 4,400-4,700, urad dal

(bold) at Rs 4,800-4,900, while urad mongar ruled at Rs 5,200- 5,400 respectively.

Come September, sugar could see higher offtake



Sugar prices ruled steady at lower level on Friday on routine demand and ample supply amid flat to weak futures market.

Traders believe that the new demand in new month having 11 days long Ganeshotsav may turn the sentiment positive and feed some energy for the market.

Naka and mill tender rates were unchanged on limited activities. Sources said that the undercurrent of the market will remain positive on expectation of higher demand in September.

Sugar prices are already ruling below parity due to higher cane price which will arrest producers selling to avoid further losses.

Since long upcountry States buying is lacking in Maharashtra but now some festivals buying support may emerge that will push up moral here. Analyst said that sugar prices will not see sharp jump as new crushing season is month away and producers are carrying surplus stocks which will force them sell at every stage. Export chances are bleak, despite weak domestic currency due to bearish global prices. Arrivals in the Vashi wholesale market were 65-66 truckloads (each 100 bags), while local dispatches were higher at 64-65 loads.

On Thursday evening, 8-10 mills sold merely 12,000-15,000 bags in isolated trade at Rs 2,885-2,980 (Rs 2,885-2,980) for S-grade and Rs 3,000-3,070 (Rs 3,000-3,070) for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, September futures were flat at Rs 2,999 (Rs 2,999), October dropped by Rs 3 to Rs 3,021 (Rs 3,024) and November was up by Rs 12 to Rs 3,059 (Rs 3,047) till noon.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 3,036-3,135 (Rs 3,052-3,140) and M-grade Rs 3,171-3,362 (Rs 3,166-3,362).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs 2,980-3,050 (Rs 2,980-3,040) and M-grade Rs 3,090-3,220 (Rs 3,070-3,200).

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

Stockists begin building turmeric inventory



Despite lack of orders from upcountry traders, stockists and local traders have begun building inventory of Erode turmeric.

“Usually during this time, exporters and bulk buyers will get substantial upcountry orders for the yellow spice, but this year only a few traders have received negligible number of demand from North India”, said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

On Friday, 5,100 bags arrived for sale, 65 per cent was sold. Of this, the stockists procured 450 bags. Due to inferior quality of hybrid turmeric, prices decreased. Regular crop prices are almost stable.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,191-5,734, the root variety Rs 3,491-5,011.

Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,509-6,574, the root variety Rs 4,529-5,699. Of the 1,166 bags that arrived, 587 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,116-6,055, the root variety Rs 4,643-5,450.

Of the 828 bags on offer, 721 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,860-5,984. The root variety was sold at Rs 4,624-5,494. All the 943 bags put on sale were traded.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, finger variety was sold at Rs 5,100-6,189, the root variety Rs 4,472-5,469. All the 302 bags were sold.

Sluggish demand, ample stocks pound wheat



Dara wheat prices continued to tumble on account of sluggish domestic demand against the availability of ample stocks.

Radhey Sham, a wheat trader, told *Business Line* that easy availability of stocks mainly pulled dara wheat down.

Only need-based buying is taking place in the market and any major fluctuation in market is unlikely.

Dara wheat in physical market may continue to trade at Rs 1,450-1,470 a quintal for the next few days, he said.

In the physical market, dara wheat dropped further by Rs 10 and quoted at Rs 1,450-1,455. Around 1,000 bags of wheat arrived and the stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,450 while delivery at the chakki was at Rs 1,455. Wheat futures were negative on Friday.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, wheat for September contracts dropped by Rs 10 and traded at 1,565 with an open interest of 9,160 lots. The grain had touched a high at Rs 1,576 earlier in the day.

September contracts have some support at Rs 1,561 while resistance at Rs 1,581.

October contracts went down by Rs 13 and traded at Rs 1,583. In the spot market, wheat prices went up by Rs 12.50 to Rs 1,520.

According to the reports, the country may resume wheat exports and weak rupee will make exports more competitive in the global market.

Following steady domestic demand, flour continued to rule flat and quoted at Rs 1,710-1,720.

Similarly, Chokar ruled flat and sold at Rs 1,150-1,200.

Pepper rules above Rs 400/kg, but no sellers



Pepper futures were mixed with the running contract declining and the nearby and spot moving up on good demand amid tight supply.

Availability of physical pepper continued to remain tight, market sources said.

Buyers were said to be ready to buy low bulk density pepper at Rs 405-407 a kg and Wayanad (Pulpally and Bathery) pepper at Rs 410 and high range pepper of good bulk density with less moisture content at Rs 415.

At these rates also there were no sellers, the trade pointed out.

The material arriving from the plains is having moisture content as high as 14.5 per cent, they said.

Upcountry buyers were also showing interest to cover spot pepper, they said. Fluctuations in the rupee are also impacting the market, they said.

On the spot, 18 tonnes arrived and 20 tonnes were traded at Rs 405-407, they said.

Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu-based inter-State dealers were also buying from the doorsteps of growers in Idukki district of Kerala at terminal market prices on cash-and-carry basis.

Sept contract on the NMCE decreased by Rs 249 a quintal to Rs 44,600 while Oct moved up by Rs 225 to Rs 44,900.

Total open interest moved up by 2 tonnes to 61 tonnes. Total turnover dropped by 5 tonnes to 25 tonnes.

Spot market shot up by Rs 300 on tight supply amid good demand to close at Rs 40,500 (ungarbled) and Rs 42,500 (garbled).

Indian parity in the international market remained nearly unchanged at \$6,900 a tonne (c&f) Europe and at \$7,150 a tonne (c&f) USA.

Business Standard

Low wheat production hits farm sector growth

According to department of agriculture's fourth advanced estimate, production of wheat in 2012-13 is estimated to be 92.46 million tonnes, down 2.5% from last year's production



In the first quarter of this financial year, growth in India's [agriculture](#) sector dropped 0.2 percentage points to 2.7 per cent compared to the corresponding period last year, as a fall in wheat production pulled down overall foodgrain output, too.

However, experts believe there could be a smart recovery in the second, third and fourth quarters of 2013-14, as a bumper harvest is expected this kharif season. "The first quarter of any financial year is usually lean for agriculture, as the previous year's rabi output is available in the market. The real impact of good rains and a surge in acreage this year would be felt from the second quarter," Ramesh Chand, director of National Centre for Agricultural Economics and Policy Research told Business Standard.

He added the first-quarter growth data for agriculture, forestry and fishing had been lower than in the corresponding period last year due to a fall in the production of wheat.

According to the Department of Agriculture's fourth advanced estimate, in 2012-13, wheat production was estimated to have stood at 92.46 million tonnes (mt), a fall of 2.5 per cent compared to 2011-12. During the same period, overall foodgrain production dropped from 128.01 mt to 127.16 mt.

In the second, third and fourth quarters of this financial year, kharif and rabi harvests are expected to rise to record levels, owing to a good monsoon. Latest data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD) showed between June 1 and August 30, rains were 11 per cent more than normal.

"If rains maintain the same intensity, there is a possibility overall showers this year could be more than 100 per cent of the long-period average (LPA)," said a senior IMD official. LPA is the average rainfall in the last 50 years (89 cm). Rains in the range of 96 per cent and 104 per cent of LPA are considered normal.

"I am very sure given the good rains this year and the rise in acreage, India is on track to recording five-six per cent agriculture growth this financial year," Chand said.