

NUSA DUA (BALI):

India's stand prevails in Bali



PTI This December 4, 2013 photo shows Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Anand Sharma with WTO DG Roberto Azevedo at the 9th Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia.

India has had its way on the Bali Package at the Ninth Ministerial of the World Trade Organisation here. The draft Ministerial Decision put up for endorsement to the member-countries is the draft India submitted; it takes care of India's position on both food security and trade facilitation. Ministers were expected to adopt it by early Saturday. As they do so, it would be the first major decision of the century on global trade after the WTO came into being, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma told reporters here.

The draft proposes an interim mechanism to safeguard minimum support prices to farmers against WTO caps till a permanent solution is adopted.

Over the past two days, WTO Director-General (DG) Roberto Azevedo and Ministerial Chair and Indonesian Trade Minister Gita Wirjawan held marathon meetings with U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman and Mr. Sharma. “We live in interesting times, but I stand firm on the Indian position of food security,” Mr. Sharma said while on his way out of his meeting with the three “giants”.

Later on Friday, he told *The Hindu* he had rejected the text prepared by the DG for the Ministerial Decision. “Ambassador Froman told me he would need a mandate from Washington to agree with us, and I told him to convey to President Obama that we wouldn’t like to see him stand against developing countries’ right to food — and I found the USTR receptive.”

Three hours after this meeting, at 3 a.m., India’s Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the WTO in Geneva Jayant Dasgupta handed over to the DG, the Bali text India had prepared. On Friday morning, the DG put up India’s proposed Bali text to the heads of delegations after a one-on-one meeting with Mr. Froman. He assured the heads of delegates that no members would be forced to adopt the final text of the Bali deal now being worked out, said official sources.

A range of gains for Delhi at Ministerial

- * Food Security Law may push India’s minimum support prices above WTO limits, but interim mechanism provides safeguards till WTO rules are corrected
- * Agreement on Trade Facilitation could boost India’s exports
- * India spearheads first agreement in the nine Ministerials held after the Doha Round
- * India gains global leadership by getting a crucial poor-rich country imbalance corrected on a multilateral forum
- * Support subsidies to poor farmers across all developing countries get safeguards against WTO rules
- * With Bali outcomes, Doha Round and therefore WTO remain aliveSuccess a tribute to Nelson Mandela, says Anand Sharma

NEW DELHI:

Rs. 7,500-cr. interest-free loan for sugar mills

To clear arrears payable to cane farmers; loan can be repaid in 5 years with a moratorium of 2 years

In a major initiative to end the face-off between the sugar industry and farmers, an informal Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar on Friday recommended a financial package to millers, which includes an interest-free loan of Rs. 7,500 crore to pay off arrears. The loan can be repaid in five years with a moratorium of two years.

According to sources in the industry, the arrears stood at Rs. 5,064 crore in 2012-13.

After a two-hour meeting with invited Chief Ministers of major sugar-growing States, the GoM agreed on interest subvention of 12 per cent on the Rs. 7,500-crore loan. Of this, 5 per cent will be borne by the Centre and 7 per cent will come from the Sugar Development Fund under the Ministry of Food. Each mill can avail itself of a loan under this arrangement equivalent to the average excise duty paid by it.

Other measures include incentives for production of 4 million tonnes of raw sugar, restructuring of loans as per the Reserve Bank of India guidelines and doubling of ethanol blending in petrol to 10 per cent. An inter-departmental panel will be set up to coordinate with oil marketing companies and sugar mills for ethanol blending.

For now, there will be no increase in duty on sugar imports.

On the millers' demand for the creation of a buffer stock on government account, the Finance Ministry would come up on the financial burden this would create on the exchequer. The States have been asked to examine different modalities for sugarcane pricing, including the revenue-sharing model (suggested by the C. Rangarajan panel), Mr. Pawar told journalists after the meeting.

“Our effort is to help both, the farmers and the industry,” he said adding that the crushing of sugarcane had begun in all parts of the country.

The recommendations will be placed before the Union Cabinet for approval.

Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, Petroleum Minister M. Veerappa Moily, Civil Aviation Minister Ajit Singh and Food Minister K.V. Thomas were present. The Chief Ministers of Karnataka (Siddaramaiah), Maharashtra (Prithviraj Chavan) and Uttar Pradesh (Akhilesh Yadav) participated in the meeting, while Tamil Nadu was represented by Chief Secretary Sheela Balakrishnan.

Coming out of the meeting, Mr. Yadav and Mr. Siddaramaiah said: “Some measures are being worked out,” and Mr. Chavan pointed out that “it is a process.”

The industry, represented by the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA), welcomed the initiatives, saying it will help in clearing the cane arrears. “The proposed measures will also help the industry venture into production of new product ‘raw sugar’ and grab opportunities whenever they are available,” ISMA Director-General Abhinash Verma said.

In the last few weeks, millers had declined to crush cane in the ongoing season, saying it was financially unviable for them to do so. They cited higher production of sugar and decline in sugar price as the reasons for their agony. Farmers, on the other hand, sought higher cane price over last year as input costs had gone up, leading to the formation of the GoM by the Prime Minister to resolve the matter.

COIMBATORE:

ARS: TNAU students bag top ranks

Twenty-seven students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) here have cleared the all-India Agricultural Research Service (ARS) examination held in June 2012. Ten of them are in the top three ranks.

Ten of them find a place among the first three ranks

TNAU toppers in ARS 2012		
Rank	Name of the student	Subject
1	Thondaiman. V	Spices
1	Uthappa. A.R	Agro Forestry
2	Lovejot Kaur	Agricultural Biotechnology
2	Ramya. R.S	Agricultural Entomology
2	Khapte Pratapsingh Suresh	Vegetable Science
2	Arunkumar. T.V	Agricultural Process Engineering
2	Balaji. S.J	Agricultural Economics
3	Abhishek Kumar	Agro Forestry
3	Annamalai. M	Agricultural Entomology
3	Dailyamol	Plant Pathology

Results

The results of the examination were published this month.

The examination is conducted by Agricultural Scientists' Recruitment Board for postgraduates.

Those who clear the ARS get placed as scientists in any of the research centres of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

This has brought much cheer to the university, because ARS is considered the 'IAS' of agriculture, according to K. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor of TNAU.

Though the university always had a few students clearing ARS every year, this was for the first time a higher number of students clearing the examination.

“The ARS examination is equivalent to that of the UPSC (Union Public Service Commission). It includes a preliminary examination, then a main, and a viva voce for final selection. TNAU topped the list of institutions that supplied scientists to ICAR. The ARS results are a motivation to students of the university to find a place in this list,” he said.

“We get quality students and so we are able to give them good input. The role of teachers in motivating these students in preparing for competitive examinations is vital and TNAU teachers have not only motivated, but also guided them at every stage,” Mr. Ramasamy added.

Guidance

True to this, two rank holders who spoke to *The Hindu* attributed much of their success to the guidance and coaching of the teachers of their respective departments. They did not attend any special coaching.

Syllabus

V. Thondaiman, who did his under graduate, post graduate, and doctoral courses at TNAU, said that the content of the syllabus and the coaching of the faculty of the Department of Spices and Plantation Crops made him confident of bagging one among the first three ranks in 'Spices, Plantation, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants.'

With a first rank, he is all set to begin his three-month training in January-March 2014 before he starts work as a scientist.

Lovejot Kaur, Ph.D. scholar in agricultural biotechnology competed with 4,700-odd candidates to bag the second rank in her subject.

She focused on the class notes and help from her seniors and is happy that her childhood dream of becoming an agricultural scientist is becoming a reality. For the university, the results mean an increase in funding from ICAR for enhancing infrastructure for students.

Silk Mark plans to adopt silk clusters

Silk Mark Organisation of India, which promotes use of Silk Marks on pure silk products, plans to adopt two silk clusters in the country to create quality awareness among the weavers.

K.S. Menon, chief executive of Silk Mark Organisation of India, told presspersons here on Friday that the organisation proposed to adopt Uppada (Andhra Pradesh) and Sualkuchi (Assam) silk clusters. The proposal is likely to be finalised in a year.

The organisation will support the weavers with designs and market access and will involve the scientists of the silk technological research institute to create

quality awareness. Silk products faced quality problems such as colour fastness, he said.

Raw silk production in the country is 23,650 tonnes and Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir are the major silk producing States. Nearly 6,000 tonnes of silk is imported from China.

Silk prices have shot up during the last one year. The cost of imported silk is about Rs. 3,700 a kg and that of domestic silk is Rs. 3,500 a kg.

In an effort to create awareness among consumers on silk production and weaving and to promote use of Silk Marks, the organisation conducts 20 exhibitions across the country every year. It has 2,400 authorised users of Silk Mark and this includes 300 in Tamil Nadu. Every year, about 250 users are added and over 25 lakh labels are affixed.

The organisation introduced fusion labels last year and is hopeful of switching over from tags to fusion labels fully in another one year. There are problems such as making it easy to fix the fusion labels, identifying the label, etc and the organisation is working on these.

An exhibition of Silk Mark products will be held at Suguna Kalyana Mandapam here from December 14 to 19. It will have 40 stalls and weavers and product-makers from more than a dozen States will take part.

The focus is on Vanya silk as awareness on this product is low in the southern States. Products made from all types of silks – mulberry, tusar, muga and eri – will be displayed. A show called “Princess of Silk” will be held on December 12 and 15.

The exhibition will include a theme pavilion on the complete process of silk production, he said.

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Free training to women entrepreneurs

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University will offer free training to aspiring women entrepreneurs under the aegis of the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of the Government of Tamil Nadu. According to a release, the University has called for applications to the courses, which will be held in Madurai and Coimbatore.

Courses on processing fruits and vegetables, and making value-added products from millets will be held at the Home Science College and Research Institute, Madurai, from December 16.

Courses on making bakery and confectionery products will be held at the Department of Post Harvest Technology Centre of TNAU in Coimbatore from December 13. Those who have passed Plus-Two are eligible to apply for the courses. The viable projects submitted by aspiring entrepreneurs attending the courses will be referred to District Industries Centre and banks for appropriate financial support and subsidy.

For the programmes in Madurai, contact 04252-2422956 / 2423433; or e-mail todeanhscmdu@tnau.ac.in. For the programmes in Coimbatore, contact 0422-6611268 / 6611340; or e-mail tophtc@tnau.ac.in.

Water Week observation at TNAU

Water Technology Centre of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University will conduct a 'National Groundwater Conference 2013' and the 'Tamil Nadu Water Week 2013' from December 9 to 11.

According to a release, District Collector Archana Patnaik will inaugurate the events, and K. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor of TNAU will preside over.

M.P. Vasimalai, Executive Director, DHAN Foundation, will deliver the special address.

The conference will focus on the present status of groundwater potential, depletion rates in view of increasing urbanisation, deterioration of groundwater

quality and possibilities of exploring the conservation aspects of groundwater, etc.

Farm scientists, agricultural engineers, planners, research scholars and students are attending.

DHARMAPURI:

Farmer bags award for innovative harvester

A farmer hailing from Dharmapuri district has bagged the national award for his innovative design of a harvester for turmeric.

A release from the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Pappalapatti in Dharmapuri said that K. Namanikumar of Agaram village in the district was awarded for the turmeric harvester he had designed at the national conference organised by the Indian Institute of Horticulture Research, Bangalore recently.

The conference was conducted to recognize the farmers who had put forth their efforts to make innovative technologies in agriculture/horticulture or fine tune the existing technologies.

Namanikumar had designed a turmeric harvester by modifying the broad bed former machinery.

The major problem experienced in turmeric cultivation is that a high labour requirement cost is involved in harvesting the rhizomes.

In order to address this problem, he had designed a turmeric harvester which can be attached to a broad bed former with a capacity of 2.5 hours per hectare.

It is suitable for planting in drip fertigation system, which assists the distribution of fertilizers. Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Dharmapuri conducted a farm trial and compared this harvester with manual digging.

The results showed that, using this turmeric harvester, harvesting time and labour requirement cost reduced effectively by 70 and 60 percent respectively as against the manual method.

The damage of rhizome during harvest is drastically reduced and it is almost nil by using this harvester.

The cost of production and drudgery is reduced by his innovation.

Mr. Namanikumar was among 30 farmers participated in the conference and showcased their innovation across the country, the KVK release adds.

Designed at a national conference of Indian Institute of Horticulture Research, Bangalore:

MADURAI:

Cotton expo

An exhibition-cum-sale of cotton and silk textiles, Cottonfab-2013, is underway on the Gandhi Museum Ground here from December 6 to December 25. A press release from the organisers of the exhibition, Awadh Hathkargha Hastshilp Evam Gramodyog Samiti, said that fabrics and handloom designs from 15 States, including Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, would be exhibited. Fashion accessories, bedspreads and other household items are also on sale.

THENI:

Plan to export 10,000 tonnes of banana to Gulf countries

Measures taken to expand area under tissue-cultured banana cultivation

Sandeep Saxena (right), Agricultural Production Commissioner, inspecting a hybrid banana farm at Madhurapuri village in Periyakulam block near Theni on Thursday.

Massive plans are on to export 10,000 tonnes of banana to the Gulf countries from the district, according to Agricultural Production Commissioner Sandeep Saxena.

Inspecting hybrid banana farms in Chinnamanur near here on Thursday, he said that the quality of banana being grown in the district was very good and the fruits were uniform in colour. Moreover, their shelf life was also long and the fruits met all requirements for export.

While taking steps to tap export markets, measures were being taken to expand the area under tissue-cultured banana cultivation to 10,000 hectares from the present 6,000 hectares to meet the growing demand, he added.

The State government had allotted Rs.1.2 lakh crore for agriculture development under its Vision 2023 Plan, according special importance to 10 crops including banana. All required technologies and advanced crop management techniques would be offered to farmers to boost production and scale down production costs.

With effective propagation of drip irrigation system among banana growers, almost all of them in the district had switched over to drip irrigation. Such facility had scaled down use of fertilizers, reduced maintenance costs and cut down weed growth in farms. Moreover, the use of water too reduced substantially. All required inputs reached the root directly and it protected soil fertility.

Form clusters

The Commissioner also advised farmers to form banana clusters to produce banana on a large scale and to enable buyers to procure banana from one spot. Moreover, clusters could handle bulk orders easily and ensure instant supply of large quantities of banana in uniform quality and size. Cluster members would get more assistance under the National Horticulture Mission. Ultimately, profit margin would go up if they sold their produces through clusters, he advised.

Horticulture Commissioner Satyapradha Sahu said that Theni district topped in the State in banana production and stood in the seventh place as far as total area under banana cultivation was concerned.

Collector K.S. Palanisamy said that the government had constructed a banana processing and ripening chamber to process banana at source.

Besides, seven private processing centres too have been functioning to meet the growing demand.

Earlier, banana growers had sent the raw banana to Bangalore for ripening. Some progressive farmers had been exporting hybrid banana to Singapore and Central Asian countries, he added.

The Commissioners also visited farms at Vadapudhupatti, Madhurapuri, Unjampatti villages.

Water released from Sothuparai dam

Water was released from Sothuparai dam to irrigate its old and new ayacut areas in Periakulam block near here on Friday.

PWD officials said 28 cusecs of water would be released continuously for 28 days. A total of 2,865 acres – 1,825 acres in the old ayacut area and 1,040 acres in new ayacut area – would benefit, they added. The officials asked the farmers to use the water judiciously and raise short-term crops for better yield. The water storage had been surplus in the dam for the past 25 days due to heavy rain on the Kodaikanal hill.

PUDUKOTTAI:

Millet brings a windfall

A farmer in Muthukadu had raised it as an alternative crop



A farmer harvesting the conventional 'kuthiraivalee' minor millet at Muthukadu village near Pudukottai on Friday.

A farmer of Muthukadu near here has been harvesting a conventional minor millet “kuthiraivali” on his fields recently.

The minor millet, with duration of 90 days, was raised on three acres of land and he is able to harvest an average 900 kg an acre.

“The kuthiraivali is a minor millet which can be raised on any dry land or wasteland,” says farmer Appavu Balandar.

The crop requires minimum irrigation facility and is suited for areas with less or poor rainfall in the district, he says. It could withstand drought-prone conditions up to 45 days. Against an investment of Rs. 2,500, the crop is expected to fetch prospective returns anywhere between Rs.11,000 and Rs.15,000 depending upon the demand in the market as the produce was priced between Rs. 15 and Rs. 20 a kg, according to the farmer. The crop was being revived through an initiative by Rose, a non-governmental organisation, which has been motivating farmers to re-discover the conventional crops which were raised in this part of the region.

According to the farmer, it could be raised as an alternative to paddy. The crop is free from any pest attack or disease. Less expenditure on cultivation and labour were the major advantages of this minor millet. There was a growing demand for the millet as it could be utilised for various dishes on the lines of rice.

Akila, coordinator of the non-governmental organisation, said the minor millet was raised in several villages in the district for the past few decades but had been given up in course of time. Apart from economy, the millet was an ideal healthy dish, with less calorie and more fibre content.

About 150 farmers in and around Annavasal, Arimalam, and Andakulam blocks had been motivated to raise the conventional crops such as kuthiraivali, varagu, saamai, and thinai. All the rain-fed and even dry lands could be brought under this minor millet, they say.

Collector visits fields

C. Manoharan, District Collector, inspected the fields on Thursday and saw the crop which was about to be harvested.

WARANGAL:

Farmers told to adopt new farming techniques



On a roll: Government chief whip G V Ramana Reddy trying his hand at the tractor in Warangal on Friday.— Photo: M. Murali

Farmers should adopt new methods of farming and technology to turn agriculture into a viable enterprise, said Government chief whip G.V. Ramana Reddy.

Addressing the farmers at the three-day AP-TEC exhibition and conference here at Regional Agricultural Research Station (RARS) on Friday, Mr Ramana Reddy said that there was stiff resistance for mechanisation of farming in the past but now farmers were using tractors, harvesters, cultivators and other equipment. “As time changes, farmers should also adopt changing technologies to benefit. Besides making use of government interventions, the farmers should also come forward with their own initiatives,” he said.

The chief whip explained that new varieties of seeds were being developed which require less water and yield more. Similarly, the farmers should also change the crop patterns taking the help of scientists to suit the soil, water availability and weather conditions rather routinely opting for cotton or paddy.

District Collector G Kishan exhorted the farmers to experiment with the new crops and improve their awareness levels. The farmers should observe the market conditions and accordingly change their crops. “Farmers should show that agriculture is profitable avocation. If not the new generation of people will shy away from it resulting in crisis,” he said explaining the initiatives being taken by the state government for the welfare of farmers.

ANGRAU Vice-Chancellor A Padma Raju urged the farmers to form into groups to acquire machinery that was still costly in the country. The university had been requesting the companies to come out with small machines to suit the small land holdings of Indian farmers. “One farmer cannot buy a huge machine. But if you form into groups, you can benefit collectively. In Ankapur village of Nizamabad, the farmers succeeded through cooperative effort. Such practices can be replicated everywhere,” he pointed out.

RARS associate director D Vishuvaradhan Reddy and many experts attended the conference. About 60 stalls displaying new farm equipment were put up at the venue.

KERALA:

Beauty of wild garden wonders

Urban gardens are mostly landscaped with horticultural hybrids and commercial ornamentals such as the usual frangipanis, adeniums, ixoras, oleanders, balsams and durantas. But a small portion of the garden devoted to growing wild ornamentals might not only fill your garden with colourful wild flowers that attract butterflies and dragonflies but also have tremendous therapeutic potential.

In temperate places, wildflowers such as bluebells, button weeds, buttercups, daffodils, honeysuckles, irises, lilies, poppies, primroses, tulips and violets offer a visual treat during springtime in various public routes and also in private gardens. But wild wonders are often bypassed or overlooked in our cities.

The wild ornamentals adapt very easily to home gardens and do not occupy much space. Most of them are small herbs of not more than 15-20 cm in height. Easily, about 300 species of wild herbs can be spotted in our cities especially in unenviable places such as wastelands, institutional campuses, public compounds and uncared areas, a portion of which that has ever remained wild and has escaped the wrath of anthropogenic landscaping with exotic lawn grasses and horticultural products.

The wild herbs are very significant for maintaining the ecosystem balance and to sustain food webs but this herbaceous layer is always underappreciated unlike their tree counterparts. These herbs do not require massive spaces and their root systems do not crack buildings. They play a pivotal role in mineral cycling, nitrogen fixation, enriching soil fertility, detoxifying compounds and also provide food for winged visitors like bees, butterflies and moths.

Some plants bear stunningly beautiful flowers and are always found in a patch and not as solitary specimens, be it the purple dayflower (*Commelina benghalensis*), pink spade flower (*Hybanthus enneaspermus*), popping-pod plant (*Ruellia tuberosa*), Ceylon spinach (*Talinum triangulare*), yellow-alder (*Turnera ulmifolia*), or the touch-me-not (*Mimosa pudica*). Well, the list is endless.

The popping pod plant (*Ruellia tuberosa*) is a common herb found in stunning hues of pink and purple (sometimes white too). A single plant can quickly colonise through its splattering seed dispersal mechanism. Since the pods burst with a crackling noise when they come in contact with moisture, this plant is popularly known as *pataasu chedi* (cracker plant) in Tamil. A remarkable resemblance to buttercups, the yellow- alders (*Turnera ulmifolia*) are found in shades of cream. This flower has a beautiful and a generous streak of yellow and a subtle dash of purple in the centre of the corolla and is a preferred host plant for Tawny Coster butterflies.

The bright blue flowers of butterfly-pea (*Clitoria ternatea*), commonly known as *Sangupushpam* , is a very common sight amid shrubby wastelands. Interestingly, a food-dye is extracted from the flowers.

The wild herbs colonise an area very quickly and transform it into a hub of buzzing activity with pollinators. One of the most common weeds that attract butterflies is the coat-button plant (*Tridax procumbens*)

R. PAULINE DEBORAH

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RAICHUR

Adopt direct paddy seeding, farmers told

Water can be saved under this method, says Vice-Chancellor

B.V. Patil, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur, has called upon the farmers to change their method of cultivation for achieving high yields at low costs of production.

He was speaking at a programme, jointly organised by PI Industries Ltd., Gurgaon, and the University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur, on Friday, to launch the direct paddy seeding machine developed by PI Industries Ltd.

“Directly seeded paddy crop consumes far less water, compared to transplanted paddy. There will be no difference in terms of output. By adopting the direct paddy seeding method, instead of transplanting, farmers can save water,” he said.

For producing one kg rice, about 4,500 litres of water was being used in India, while mere 50 litres of water was being used in developed countries, he added.

Switching from the transplanting method to direct paddy seeding was imperative, considering the water scarcity being faced in India, he said.

Experiment

Expressing the hope that farmers would change their farming method from transplanting to direct seeding, Mr. Patil said, “Direct seeding was started in one acre of land at Bhimarayanagudi in Raichur district, three years ago, and now it has been extended to 60,000 acres.”

Mr. Patil said that his university would help the farmers in getting subsidies for purchasing direct paddy seeding machine.

Some farmers who had switched over direct seeding method shared their experiences.

R.D. Kapoor, chief executive officer of PI Industries Ltd.; D. Gurusiddaiah, Director, National Horticulture Board; B.K. Desai, Head of the Department of Agronomy, UAS, Raichur, and other senior agricultural scientists were present.

DAVANGERE:

Bring sugar industry under ESMA: association

‘State government should control activities of the factories’

Tejasvi Patel, general secretary of the State Sugarcane Growers’ Association urged the government to bring sugar factories in the State under the purview of Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) to ensure firm control over the activities of the industry and to prevent exploitation of farmers.

Speaking to presspersons here on Friday, Mr. Patel expressed surprise over political leaders, including Murugesh Nirani and Umesh Kathi demanding that the government take over the factories if it were to fix minimum support price of Rs. 2,650 per tonne for sugarcane. The leaders had opposed to give a ‘fair price’ to sugarcane growers and challenged the State government to run the factories. If they continue to pose this challenge, the government should take over the factories permanently,” he said.

Mr. Patil opined that since the Union government had considered sugar as an essential commodity, the services of sugar factories should also be considered essential.

By an order recently, the government had scrapped the levy mechanism (10 per cent of the produce to be made over to the government) and had extended facilities to the industry in the best interest of cane growers. Sugar industries should not be greedy and should share profits with sugarcane growers, he said.

Mr. Patil said that farmers of the Davangere Sugar company in Kukkuwada village would get Rs.2,300 per tonne of sugarcane.

The government had announced a tax rebate of Rs.100 per tonne to sugar factories and an incentive of Rs.150 per tonne of sugarcane to farmers. Sugar factories in Davangere will have to cough up an extra amount of Rs.100, he said.

While Davangere Sugar company may have to incur an additional burden of Rs. 4 crore, Shyamanur Sugars of Harapanahalli may have to incur an additional cost of Rs. 3 crore. He said this was not a huge burden on the factories that earned high profits when the price of sugar had gone up considerably in the previous years.

The profits were not shared with farmers.

Over 8 lakh tonnes of sugarcane is expected to be crushed this season in the two sugar factories, he said. Mr. Patil said Davangere Sugar company had secured an undertaking from farmers that they agreed to sell cane at Rs. 2,300 per tonne.

He asked farmers not to give an undertaking to the factory.

Expressing shock over the statement of Davangere Deputy Commissioner S.T. Anjan Kumar that farmers should supply cane at Rs. 2,300 per tonne,

Mr. Patil said the DC should not go against the government's decision.

- *‘Over 8 lakh tonnes of sugarcane expected to*

- be crushed in Davangere this season’*

- *‘Sugarcane growers are not given a share of the profits made by factories’*

BIDAR:

Sultanpur farmers savour the sweet taste of success

Flower growers here have been introduced to apiculture

Sultanpur village, known across Bidar district for its flowers, is soon likely to be known for its honey too, thanks to an initiative of the College of Horticulture, Bidar.

The village lies in the Manjra river valley on the Karnataka–Andhra Pradesh border. Most of the 200 farmer families in the village are into flower cultivation. As part of an internal arrangement, they grow various varieties of flowers to have an assured harvest every month. The flowers are sold either in retail shops here or in the wholesale market in Hyderabad.

Rajkumar M., assistant professor of entomology, said, “During a visit to Sultanpur, we realised that pollen-bearing flowers were found round the year in the village and that the use of pesticides and insecticides was minimal. We thought this would be an ideal place to start promoting apiculture (beekeeping).”

Promoting IFS

“When we were planning to train farmers, the State government announced a scheme to promote integrated farming system (IFS). Under the scheme, farmers are trained in agricultural diversification and provided financial incentives. We placed an order for 25 beehive boxes from the government apiculture farm in Sirsi, Uttara Kannada, and provided them free of cost to farmers in Sultanpur in October,” said Mr. Rajkumar, who is coordinating the IFS project.

Resource persons from Sirsi, along with Mr. Rajkumar and Brahma Dattatri, technical assistant of the IFS scheme, trained farmers in beekeeping.

“The response has been encouraging. We plan to double the number of boxes this year and train beekeepers in post-harvest technologies and branding,” he said.

Kashinath Hugar, whose family has been growing flowers for generations, wonders why he did not think of beekeeping earlier. “I’m happy that the college

introduced me to it. I will setup four more bee boxes,” he said. He harvested honey from the first batch of beehives earlier this week and is preparing boxes for the next batch.

Kalyanrao Sangappa, who grows 11 varieties of flowers, said he was reading up about producing honey with different flavours. He plans to manufacture bee boxes on his farm using locally available materials.

Sharanappa Basavaraj has enrolled his name in the next list of beneficiaries and is eagerly waiting for the boxes. He plans to place the boxes near his farm where he grows onions.

The college has supplied colonies of Asiatic honey bee (*Apis cerana indica*) to farmers. They are best suited for the Indian climate and can be easily domesticated, Mr. Rajkumar added.

TIRUCHI:

World Soil Day

The Naval Wing NCC cadets of Mukkulathor Higher Secondary School, Tiruverumbur, took out an awareness rally in connection with the World Soil Day on Thursday. Sakthivel, headmaster, flagged off the rally from the school. The NCC cadets carrying placards and banners and led by Kamatchi, NCC officer, marched through bazar, Kakkan colony, Selvapuram, Subramaniapuram before returning to school. .—Special Correspondent

Water level

Mettur: The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 84.42 feet on Friday against its full reservoir level of 120 feet. The inflow was 2,318 cusecs and the discharge 3,000 cusecs.

TIRUNELVELI: Water level in the Papanasam dam on Friday stood at 100.90 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 839.28 cusecs and 227.25 cusecs water was discharged from the dam.

The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 73.95 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 508 cusecs and 35 cusecs of water was discharged.

Kanyakumari: The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 27.60 feet, 60.65 feet in Perunchani, 12.59 feet in Chittar 1, 12.98 feet in Chittar 11, 4.60 feet in Poigai and 50.44 feet in Mamabazathuraiyar.

NAGAPATTINAM:

Cyclone alert in Nagapattinam

Signal 1 has been hoisted at the port office here signalling distant warning over a depression formed over southwest of Bay of Bengal. The depression centred 530 km southeast of Chennai is expected to intensify into a deep depression in the next 24 hours and could turn into a cyclonic storm.

The storm may move northwards initially and weaken north-northeast subsequently. In the last 24-hours that ended at 8 a.m. on Thursday, Tirupoondi recorded a maximum rainfall of 61.40 mm, followed by Nagapattinam at 54.70 mm, Thalainayar at 39.80 mm, and Vedaranyam at 11.20 mm.

NAGERCOIL:

Kanyakumari district experiences heavy rain

Few tanks and ponds are overflowing

Heavy rain lashed various parts of the district on Friday.

However, as demanded by the farmers, particularly in the tail-end areas of the district, the Public Works Department had released water from Pechipparai dam for irrigation, said Executive Engineer (Water Resource Organisation) S. Subramanian.

Farmers in Rajakkamangalam, Thovalai and Agastheeswaram areas have raised paddy crops on over 11,500 acres in the second season. Even though the district witnessed heavy rains in the last two months, the farmers belonging to tail-end areas were solely dependent on dam water, and hence the PWD officials released 250 cusecs of water from Pechipparai dam to Thovalai and Padmanabhapuram-Puthanar channels.

All tanks and ponds are fast filling up. A few tanks and ponds are also overflowing.

The water level in Pechipparai dam was 27.60 feet on Friday where as it was 14.40 feet on the same date last year The level was 60.65 feet in Pechipparai as against 45.30 feet recorded on the same date last year, 12.83 feet in Chittar I (7.94 feet last year), 12.98 feet in Chittar II (8.03 feet last year), 4.60 feet in Poigai dam (10.10 feet last year). The maximum rainfall of 10.8 mm was recorded at Surulode.

NAMAKKAL:

Egg rate

The National Egg Coordination Committee (NECC) egg rate was Rs. 4.03 on Friday. – Staff Reporter

HYDERABAD:

State government blamed for neglecting farmers' problems

BKT award poses danger to 34 lakh acres under NSP canal and Krishna delta

Andhra Pradesh Rytu Sangham general secretary Vangala Subba Rao squarely blamed the State government for “jeopardising” the interests of farmers under the Nagarjunasagar project ayacut and Krishna delta in the State.

Legal recourse

“The failure of the State government in effectively presenting the State’s case before the Brijesh Kumar Tribunal has posed a serious danger to 34 lakh acres ayacut under the NSP canal system and Krishna delta spread in several districts including Khammam in the State,” he charged.

Talking to media persons along with the Rythu Sangham district secretary Nunna Nageswara Rao here on Friday, Mr. Subba Rao demanded that the government should immediately approach the Supreme Court to safeguard the interests of the State’s farming community. The Brajesh Kumar Tribunal should be abolished, he said, adding that the Centre should constitute a new tribunal on river-water sharing in the wake of the changed circumstances.

Trail of destruction

“The recent cyclonic storms had left a trail of destruction causing enormous crop losses in an extent of 70 lakh acres in the State. Instead of taking refuge under the procedural wrangles, the government should provide adequate compensation and the much needed succour to the cyclone-hit farmers on a war footing,” he said.

‘Anti-farmer policies’

The sugarcane farmers had been reeling under the callous attitude of the State government; he charged alleging that the government’s anti-farmer policies were benefitting the sugarcane factory owners.

Mr. Nageswara Rao alleged that the farmers hit hard by flash floods and cyclones in the past were deprived of the assured compensation and relief.

Crop loss

The tardy pace of enumeration process to assess crop damage caused by the recent Cyclone Phailin has cast a shadow on the prospects of provision of compensation to the cyclone-hit farmers, he said.

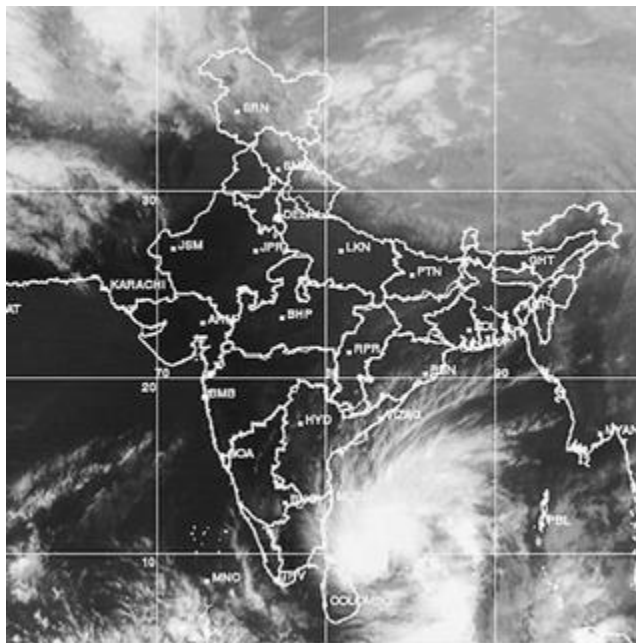
He alleged that a CCI purchase centre was opened at the local market after much delay. The move will only help the traders and mediators as a majority of the farmers had disposed of their cotton produce by now, he said.

Nutrition in early years ensures proper growth of child's brain

More than 80 per cent of brain development in children takes place within the first two years of their lives, and if proper nutrition is provided during that period, the learning capacity can also be ensured, said Lakshmi Bhawani Majji, nutrition specialist, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

She was addressing students of the College of Home Science here at a joint workshop on 'Revision of curriculum for greater career opportunities for home science graduates'.

Weather



	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	25	11	0	53
New Delhi (Sfd)	25	10	0	73
Chandigarh	24	9	0	43
Hissar	26	7	0	10
Bhuntar	23	3	0	26
Shimla	19	9	0	80
Jammu	23	11	0	140
Srinagar	13	1	0	23
Amritsar	24	8	0	100

Patiala	25	9	0	11
Jaipur	27	10	0	5
Udaipur	26	9	0	55
Allahabad	27	10	0	301
Lucknow	26	7	0	42
Varanasi	27	10	0	141
Dehradun	25	8	0	48
Agartala	30	15	0	190
Ahmedabad	31	16	0	63
Bangalore	27	16	0	244
Bhubaneshwar	28	13	0	674
Bhopal	26	11	0	26
Chennai	29	23	0	427
Guwahati	29		0	215
Hyderabad	29	15	0	253
Kolkata	28	16	0	530
Mumbai	32	24	0	73
Nagpur	29	11	0	169
Patna	27	11	0	194
Pune	29	14	0	43
Thiruvananthapuram	34	25	0	466
Imphal	27	11	0	69
Shillong	19	9	0	77

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

MAINLY DRY WEATHER

Rainfall: Weather was dry over the region .

MINIMUM TEMPERTURE : The minimum temperatures rose in Jammu and Kashmir and changed little elsewhere. They were appreciably above normal in Jammu and Kashmir and normal in rest of the region. The lowest minimum temperature in the plains was 02.8°C recorded at Adampur (Punjab).

FORECAST FOR REGION VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 09th DECEMBER 2013: Rain/snow may occur at one or two places over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand during next 24 hours. Rain/snow may occur at one or two places over Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh on 8th December. Weather would be mainly dry over rest of the region. No significant change in the minimum temperature over the region.

Shallow fog may occur over isolated pockets of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and east Uttar Pradesh in the morning . **FORECAST FOR DELHI AND**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 09th
DECEMBER 2013:** Clear sky. Mist/Shallow fog in the morning.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Elections, weak export demand hurt pepper price

KOCHI: Record-breaking bullish trend that was prevailing in pepper [spot market](#) in November has been reined in by relatively sluggish [domestic demand](#) due to elections as well as the wedding season in north India and the weakness in export markets.

The spot price of garbled black pepper, which had crossed Rs 500 per kg during the second week of November in Kochi, the terminal market for pepper, went on to touch a record price of Rs 520 per kg on November 19. However, soon after, the price began to stabilize and even slid down a bit due to low demand in the domestic market. On Thursday, the price of garbled pepper was Rs 510 per kg at the [Pepper Exchange](#) run by Kochi-based Indian Pepper and [Spice Trade Association](#).

"There were elections in five north Indian states and these states are crucial for the pepper market - especially Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Also, internationally, there is low export demand," said Kishor Shamji, a leading exporter of pepper and the former president of Pepper Exchange.

Wheat, flour to rule unchanged



Karnal :

Moderate buying kept wheat and flour prices unaltered on Friday.

Steady domestic demand and supply are keeping wheat and flour prices stable, said market sources.

Radhey Sham, a trade expert, told *Business Line* that the situation was anticipated in the market because domestic demand has settled after the festival season and stocks are easily available.

In the absence of any major market-moving factor, wheat and flour prices have been ruling stable since Tuesday.

Any major fluctuation in wheat prices at this time of the year is unlikely and the market may continue to rule at current levels for the next few days too, he said.

In the physical market, dara wheat sold at Rs 1,630-35 a quintal. Around 1,000 bags of wheat arrived and stocks were directly offloaded at the mills.

Mill delivery was at Rs 1,630 while delivery at the chakki was at Rs 1,635 .

A mixed trend was witnessed on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange on Friday.

Wheat for December delivery traded at 1,660 with an open interest of 1,410 lots.

The grain had touched a high at Rs 1,665 earlier in the day.

December contracts have some support at Rs 1,655 while resistance at Rs 1,667.

January contracts went up by Rs 3 and traded at Rs 1,654 .

In the spot market, wheat traded at Rs 1,580 .

Flour Prices

Following a steady trend in wheat, flour too ruled flat at Rs 1,920.

Similarly, Chokar was unchanged at Rs 1,500 a quintal.

Rising imports will keep pulses under check



Indore :

Both pulses and pulse seeds ruled flat in Indore mandis on Friday on sluggish offtake.

Masoor, which had risen to Rs 4,300 a quintal few days ago, has seen some correction in the last two days with prices declining to Rs 4,250 on rise in arrival of imported masoor and at cheaper prices.

Prices of imported masoor are currently being quoted at Rs 4,050.

Masoor (Madhya Pradesh) is ruling at Rs 3,850.

According to traders, the outlook is bullish on lower crop prospect this year with the area under masoor likely to decline.

However, rise in cheaper imports is expected to keep prices on leash in the coming days, said a trader.

Masoor dal (medium) was being quoted at Rs 5,000-5,100, while masoor dal (bold) ruled at Rs 5,200-5,300.

Moong and its dal ruled firm on subdued demand with moong (best) being quoted at Rs 6,000-6,100 (down Rs 100 from last week), while moong (medium) ruled at Rs 5,000-5,500.

Moong dal (medium) in local mandis was Rs 6,800-7,100 , moong dal (bold) at Rs 7,200-7,300, while moong mongar ruled at Rs 7,400-7,600 (down Rs 100 from last week).

Slack demand and arrival of cheaper imported urad also pounded urad prices with urad (bold) being quoted at Rs 4,300-50 (down Rs 100 from last week).

Urad (medium) ruled at Rs 3,800-4,000.

Urad dal (medium) was being quoted at Rs 5,000-5,100, urad dal (bold) also declined to Rs 5,200-5,300 (down Rs 300 from last week), while urad (mongar) ruled at Rs 5,500-5,900 a quintal.

Lower arrivals fail to lend colour to turmeric

Erode :

Spot turmeric prices ruled flat despite a decrease in arrivals in Erode markets.

“Turmeric prices inched up in the futures market by Rs 14 a quintal initially but decreased by Rs 30 towards close of trade. This will reflect in the spot prices on Monday. Already, winter has begun in Tamil Nadu and other places, so buyers will buy only limited stock and also prices are likely to go down,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.



On Friday, arrivals decreased to 4,200 bags and sales were 45 per cent.

Upcountry demand has started decreasing and traders will get fresh orders only by the second week of January.

Because of the arrival of fine hybrid turmeric, the finger increased by Rs 600 a quintal, but the root variety was unchanged. Prices of other varieties were almost stable.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,029-6,219 a quintal; the root variety Rs 3,811-5,399.

Salem Hybrid: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,694-7,259 and the root variety Rs 4,534-5,814. Of the 1,114 bags that arrived, only 334 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety quoted Rs 4,881-5,884; the root variety Rs 4,823-5,861. Of the 450 bags on sale, 328 were traded.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,180-6,239 and the root variety Rs 4,899-5,735. Of the 757 bags kept for sale, 716 found takers.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,598-6,091; the root variety Rs 4,569-5,369. Of the 105 bags on offer, 91 were sold.

No sellers in pepper market, for now



Kochi :

Pepper continued to rule hot as demand outstripped supply.

No one was offering pepper and hence, there was no trading on the spot today, market sources said.

As elections in some of the north Indian States are over, demand has started picking up.

At the same time some enquiries are pouring in from the US at \$8,500 a tonne for January-March shipments.

Anything above \$8,000 a tonne is a good price. Some deals are likely to be struck, provided farmers are ready to release their produce, export sources told *Business Line*.

Buyers were willing to offer Rs 510 a kg for ungarbled pepper but no seller was ready to offer.

On the National Multi Commodity Exchange, December and January contracts increased by Rs 745 and Rs 796 respectively to Rs 52,550 and Rs 52,750 a quintal.

Total turnover dropped by six tonnes to 15 tonnes. Total open interest moved up by one tonne to 14 tonnes.

On the IPSTA, all active contracts hit the ceiling but there were no sellers. December and January contracts closed at Rs 51,810 and Rs 50,500 respectively by Rs 1,000 a quintal each.

Spot prices soared by Rs 300 to Rs 49,300 (ungarbled) and Rs 51,300 (garbled) a quintal.

Export prices have gone up following rise in prices coupled with strengthening of the rupee against the dollar to \$8,850 (c&f) for Europe and \$9,125 a tonne (c&f) for the US.

Cotton may wilt some more on slack buying

Rajkot :

Cotton prices declined as demand from mills and exporters petered out.

Kapas was also traded lower due to poor ginning activities.

According to traders, prices of cotton may decline further next week.

Gujarat Sankar-6 cotton was down by Rs 200 at Rs 38,200-39,000 for a candy of 356 kg. B-grade cotton was quoted at Rs 38,000-38,500.



Kapas or raw cotton decreased by Rs 5-7 to Rs 860-970 for a maund of 20 kg in Rajkot.

Gin delivery kapas was quoted at Rs 960-975 a maund.

About 60,000 bales (of 170 kg each) cotton arrived in Gujarat and 1.71 lakh bales arrived across the country.

Traders said that buyers are expecting price to be lower as cotton production this year is likely to be higher.

On the demand front, domestic mills' buying is limited.

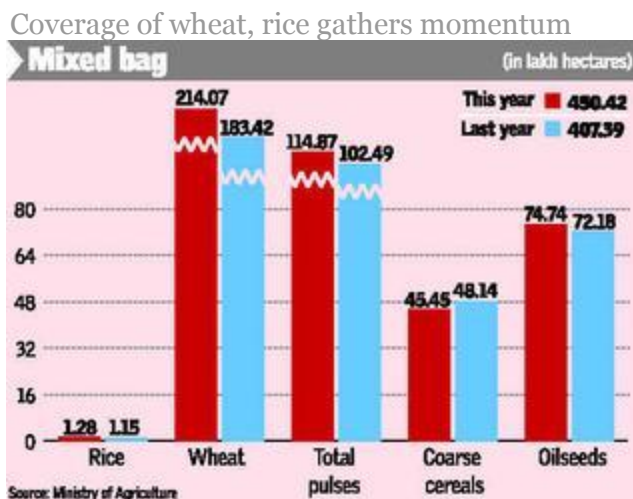
Compared with last year, cotton arrival is slow as farmers are holding back their produce expecting kapas prices to rise.

Experts said farmers are demanding Rs 1,000/maund, and they are ready to wait for prices to reach that level.

Dow Jones reports: *Cotton futures climbed to a six-week high on Friday morning as exchange-certified stocks dropped amid demand for the fibre. ICE-certified stocks dropped 60 per cent this week to a 6-1/2-week low of 94,361 bales. "Buyers wanted that cotton and they're taking it off the board because they have a home to send it to," said Sharon Johnson, senior cotton specialist at*

KCG Futures in Atlanta. Cotton for March delivery on the ICE Futures US exchange was recently 1.2 per cent higher at 79.80 cents a pound, the highest intraday level since Oct. 25.

Sowing of rabi coarse cereals, key pulses dips on lower prices



New Delhi :

Rabi sowing in coarse cereals and key pulses trail but coverage of other crops is progressing at a faster clip, according to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Data released by the Ministry on Friday showed that as on December 6, only 45.45 lakh hectares (lh) have been covered under coarse cereals, mainly maize, jowar and barley, against 48.14 lh during the corresponding period a year ago.

A drop in prices and record kharif maize (corn) crop besides projections of a global surplus seem to be dissuading farmers from opting for coarse cereals.

Currently, maize is quoted at Rs 1,440 a quintal in Delhi against Rs 1,520 during the same time last year.

In growing areas, prices are lower than the minimum support price resulting in farmers' reluctance to grow the coarse cereal.

Similarly, barley is quoted at Rs 1,374 a quintal against Rs 1,403 last year.

Also, the Centre has kept its minimum support price unchanged at Rs 980 this year.

As a result, the area under maize and barely has dropped by at least one lh each.

In the case of jowar, there has virtually been no improvement in prices over the last one year.

Shift from chana

Though the coverage of pulses is higher at 114.87 lh against 102.49 lh, it is mainly because of a rise in chana (gram) sowing.

The acreage under lentil is also higher but sowing of peas, urad, moong, lathyrus and other pulses is lower.

Lower prices for pulses last year is one of the main reasons for the slip in acreage.

This year, too, prices are seen ruling stable, ruling out prospects of farmers getting a higher price.

Though chana coverage is higher, it could also drop when final figures come in since its prices have dropped below the minimum support price of Rs 3,000 a quintal. Currently, it is ruling around Rs 2,850 on ample supplies. In Madhya Pradesh, farmers are shifting from chana to wheat or other cash crops, expecting to earn more.

Rice, wheat

The area under rabi paddy, which makes up only 10 per cent of the total rice production in the country during the crop year, has begun to gather momentum with the weather in South India improving.

So far, 1.28 lh have been covered compared with 1.15 lh last year.

Wheat sowing is in full swing, particularly in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

The coverage has increased by over 15 per cent this year to 214.07 lh (183.42 lh). In fact, wheat coverage makes up over 45 per cent of the total area of 450.42 lh under rabi crops this year.

Mustard gains

Thanks to improved soil moisture and rains in October, sowing in mustard/rapeseed is almost drawing to an early conclusion. Already, the coverage is higher than the normal area under the crop, which makes up nearly 90 per cent of rabi oilseeds output.

Water factor

A higher storage level in the 85 major reservoirs in the country has come in handy for higher coverage of rabi crops.

Excess rain under the influence of the North-East Monsoon has also aided in better acreage.

According to India Meteorological Department, rainfall during the North-East Monsoon from October 1 has been 29 per cent excess.

However, it has been deficient in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, central Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh.

Brewing cyclone Madi will spare TN, head to Myanmar

Thiruvananthapuram :

India Met Department has issued an alert for cyclone formation in southwest Bay of Bengal, the fourth in the series during the ongoing North-East monsoon.

SYSTEM INTENSIFIES

The would-be cyclone will carry the name 'Madi' (Maldivian) according to the tropical cyclone naming protocol applicable for northern Indian Ocean.

The cyclone alert came in the wake of a prevailing low-pressure area intensifying into a depression on Friday afternoon.

The Met said that the depression was located to 530 km south-east of Chennai and 350 km north-east of Trincomalee (Sri Lanka).

SEVERE CYCLONE

It would intensify into a deep depression (to 'numbered' cyclone 06B) by Saturday and subsequently into a 'named' (Madi) cyclonic storm.

Cyclone Madi will travel north along the Tamil Nadu coast for two days and turn away to enter open Bay of Bengal waters.

This will be masterminded by a western disturbance - already parked over Jammu and Kashmir - and the band of associated winds blowing in from northwest to east-northeast.

Global models project that 'Madi' too could become a very severe cyclonic storm by the time it wades into the open Bay.

It is seen parked equidistant from West Bengal, Bangladesh and Myanmar coasts according to projections available until December 12. But it may weaken before hitting the Myanmar coast within the few days that follow, the US National Centres for Environmental Predictions suggested.

MYANMAR-BOUND

On Friday, an update from the Nasa suggested that the brewing system may have already been appropriated by the northwesterly winds. It is now moving north-northeast.

In this manner, the Tamil Nadu coast will be spared of a direct threat of getting hit by the system although fishermen are being warned against venturing out into deep sea.

The rain-deficit State will mostly be left in the lurch this time too since only a few places will be able to benefit from the system according to forecast valid for Saturday.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands is projected to bear the brunt of the rain fury as winds from the cyclone could wallop the islands during the next couple of days.

Oilmeal export drops 13% in November on lower demand



Mumbai :

Oilmeal exports dropped 13 per cent in November to 5,60,648 tonnes (6,41,607 tonnes) due to lower demand from the importing countries as prices ruled higher.

However, oilmeal exports in eight months of the current fiscal are up 18 per cent at 25,80,718 tonnes (23,91,019 tonnes), according to Solvent Extractors Association.

Soybean meal prices were up \$557 a tonne in November from \$541 tonnes in October, while rapeseed and castorseed meal were up at \$242 a tonne (\$240 a tonne) and \$97 a tonne (\$93 a tonne).

Rapeseed meal shipments declined by over 50 per cent to 27,993 tonnes in November compared with 66,966 tonnes in the same period last year, while that of soyabean slipped to 5,03,269 tonnes (5,17,103 tonnes). Castorseed meal dipped to 27,586 tonnes (45,216 tonnes).

During April-November, oilmeal imports by South Korea were up 22 per cent at 7,03,212 tonnes (5,78,431 tonnes).

Imports consisted of 3,15,168 tonnes of rapeseed meal, 3,46,797 tonnes of castor meal and 41,247 tonnes of soyabean meal. Iran imports were up at 7,89,031 tonnes (4,61,687 tonnes), consisting of 7,86,369 tonnes of soyabean meal and 2,662 tonnes of rapeseed meal.

Thailand and Vietnam imported 1,53,523 tonnes (1,43,325 tonnes) and 98,069 tonnes (2,66,111 tonnes). India lost several of its customers in Vietnam due to stiff competition from other origins and increased domestic crushing.

Indonesia imported 60,017 tonnes (1,33,180 tonnes), consisting of 32,050 tonnes of rapeseed meal and 27,967 tonnes of soyabean meal.

Indonesian end-users prefer high protein with low fibre of 4 per cent against 6 per cent supplied by India, said association members.

Europe has turned out to be a bigger market for Indian soyameal.

Europe imported 2,12,545 tonnes compared with 88,973 tonnes last year.

Maharashtra plans steel silos to store grains



Grain storage

Mumbai, Dec. 6:

The Maharashtra Government is planning to build steel silos to store grains in key agricultural areas in the State.

The silos would be built on a public-private partnership basis at market yards controlled by the Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC).

Grains such as rice, wheat, soyabeans, sorghum (jowar) and sugar would be stored in silos. Surplus land belonging to the APMC would be used for this exercise. Agriculture Minister of Maharashtra Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil said that only steel silos would be, henceforth, constructed in the State.

When grains are stored in traditional warehouses, there is a lot of wastage due to pest attacks. Steel silos would offer better protection from weather and moisture, he said.

The State Government has invested Rs 100 crore through its subsidiary the Maharashtra State Warehousing Corporation to build a silo at Baramati, near Pune. However, as the corporation does not have land at its disposal, the State Government is tapping the APMC for land.

Vikhe-Patil said that Maharashtra produces about 140 lakh tonnes of grains annually, but the total storage facility is less than 25 lakh tonnes. Therefore, permanent storage facilities, which would reduce grain wastage, must be constructed. Silos would be constructed near major railheads, for better transportation facilities. The terms of references for building the silos would be formalised in a month's time after which bids would be invited, he said.

It was pointed out that high rainfall and humidity in the State had created the ideal conditions for the development of micro-organisms and insects. In steel silos, the grain could be kept in airtight at a fixed temperature. India Head of Finland-based Outokumpu Yatinder Suri said that steel silos outperform all types of silos due to its strength and corrosion resistance. Steel silos ensure safety levels for stored grains against all odds. Steel or stainless steel silos are also earthquake resistant. They are easily assembled at site and can be set up in any soil condition, he said.

Suri said that due to the ease of assembling silos using stainless or galvanised steel, smaller ones could be closer to harvesting points, while larger ones could be controlled by co-operatives or the government and that both could be built rapidly.

Spot rubber improves on short-covering

Kottayam :

Spot rubber improved on Friday.

The market opened steady but regained strength in the most active RSS 4 and RSS 5 on covering purchases at lower levels, tracking moderate gains in the domestic futures market.

But, gains were limited on buyer resistance and most counters ended flat amidst scattered transactions.

Overall, volumes were low. Sheet rubber increased to Rs 151 (Rs 150) a kg, according to traders.

The grade finished flat at Rs 150 and Rs 147 respectively, according to the Rubber Board and dealers.

December futures improved to Rs 153.43 (Rs 151.43), January to Rs 155.38 (Rs 153.20) and February to Rs 157.75 (Rs 155.46) while the March and April futures remained inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) declined to Rs 157.53 (Rs 159.14) at Bangkok.

December futures closed at ¥270.9 (Rs 163.44) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were: RSS-4: 151 (150); RSS-5: 141 (140); Ungraded: 137 (137); ISNR 20: 143.50 (143.50) and Latex 60%: 107.50 (107.50).

Coconut oil price likely to decline

Erode :

Prices of coconut oil, currently ruling at Rs 102 a litre, are likely to decrease.

“Though the price decreased by Rs 6 a litre or Rs 90 for 15 kg loose pack, buyers are reluctant.

“Coconut oil crushers are having ample stocks.

“Buyers feel the price may decrease in a fortnight, so they are not buying,” said R.M. Palanisamy, a leading coconut oil dealer.

He said alternative oils such as palm oil and palm kernel are also decreasing.

Palm oil is selling at Rs 58-60/litre in the wholesale market.

The biscuit industry and others are buying palm oil.

Copra prices at the Avalpoondurai Regulated Market Committee increased on Friday, but arrivals were lower.

Three days ago, at a special auction, 1,200 quintals arrived for sale, but on Friday, only 725 quintals arrived.

On Friday, the first grade copra was sold at Rs 7,025-7,365; the second grade was sold at Rs 5,425-6,835.

Oil crushers from allover Tamilnadu attended the sale.

No Kerala oil crushers attended the auction sale

Stable output



No effect of delayed crushing: Crushing of sugarcane at the Alanganallur National Co-operative Sugar Mills has commenced at the mill premises near Madurai, in Tamil Nadu. This season, which began on October 1, sugar production is likely to be 25 million tonnes, the same as last year. The delay in mills starting crushing is unlikely to affect production. — S. James