

Cauvery dispute and February

: February appears to have a special relationship with the century-old Cauvery dispute.

The notification of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal's final award in the Union government gazette on Tuesday took place six years after the Tribunal delivered the award on February 5, 2007. Both the 1892 and 1924 agreements, which the final award superseded, were signed between the erstwhile Madras and Mysore States on the same day - February 18. While the 1892 pact provided, in the words of Cauvery expert S. Guhan, a "framework between the two States for consultation and dispute settlement," the 1924 pact, among others, stipulated that the arrangements envisaged in some of its clauses were open to reconsideration after 50 years.

Veterinary varsity research, training centres inaugurated

Chief Minister Jayalithaa on Wednesday inaugurated three new research and training centres of the Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University in Villupuram, Tiruvannamalai and Krishnagiri districts through video conferencing.

An official release said the centres, set up at an estimated cost of Rs. 80 lakh each, would impart training to cattle owners in modern technologies to improve their economic status.

Research centres would help in identifying problems and find solutions to them. Introducing modern technologies in raising milch cattle, goat and poultry would help in increasing the revenue and improving the living conditions in rural areas, the release said.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated two new technology development centres for fisheries in Nagapattinam and Ponneri in Tiruvallur districts for Fisheries University. Till the construction of new buildings, the centres would function in rented premises in both the districts. At the Ponneri centre, a certificate course on 'Advance Techniques in Prawn Culture Management' would be imparted and at Nagapattinam course on Ornamental Fish Development Technology would be imparted to students, the release said.

They will impart training to cattle owners in modern technologies

Cotton price to be stable, says TNAU

Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC) of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University has predicted the Masipattam sown cotton price to be between Rs. 4,200 and Rs. 4,500 a quintal in July-August.

This is the period the Masipattam (February-March) sown cotton is harvested. This forecast has been derived at from analysing the cotton price that prevailed in Konganapuram Cooperative Marketing Society.

Export orders

Increase in export orders, if any, from China, Bangladesh and Pakistan may bring positive changes in price, otherwise the price will be stable. Hence, farmers are asked to take up sowing with varieties suitable for the Masipattam taking into account the above forecast.

Tamil Nadu, being the major consumer of cotton in India (47 per cent), produces five lakh bales from 1.2 lakh hectares. Masipattam is a special season for cotton in Tamil Nadu and MCU 5, MCU 7, Surabhi, Suvin and Bt varieties are cultivated in this season.

The Government of India has estimated that the area under cotton during 2012-13 will be marginally lower by around five per cent at 117.73 lakh hectares compared to the 121.8 lakh hectares last year. The Cotton Advisory Board has estimated a crop size of 330 lakh bales and consumption of 234 lakh bales for 2012-13.

To protect cotton farmers, the Government has increased Minimum Support Price of cotton to Rs. 3,900 a quintal from Rs. 3,300 a quintal for long staple cotton.

Alert officials on food adulteration; win prize

Awareness campaign on safe food begins in city



Are you fed up with sub-standard foods, expired products sold at shops? Alert officials concerned and win prizes up to Rs. 5,00,00.

With this message the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India's first major Information, Education, Communication (IEC) campaign has reached Coimbatore.

'Food Safety Express,' operated by Consumer Association of India roped in for the campaign will spend 45 days in the city.

The association project manager Kalyani Rajaraman told *The Hindu* over phone from Chennai that the Food Safety Express, launched at the State capital on January 17, was targeting to cover 620 locations in the five districts of Chennai, Vellore, Coimbatore, Madurai, and Tiruchi. The campaign would conclude on May 20.

She said that according to a research food and waterborne diseases constituted up to 70 per cent of all diseases in the country. Besides causing large numbers of mortality and morbidity, many households went deep into debt because of preventable diseases.

The Food Safety Express visited CMC Colony at Ukkadam, Karumbukadai, Townhall, and R.S.Puram, on Thursday. The staff at the express said that they were conducting demonstrations for consumers to easily find out if products had been adulterated.

The general public could bring instances of violations such as mislabelling to the notice of the authority. The national toll-free number is 1800 112 100.

Prizes were distributed for people who participated in various programmes organised by the express staff. Short films on food safety were shown on a television mounted on the vehicle. Pamphlets and handbills containing messages about the food safety in regional language was distributed. Equitas Development Initiative Trust, which works with women SHGs, was assisting the authority in the safety campaign.

Many stakeholders have come together to spread the message of safe food. They include the authority, Civil Supplies and Consumers Association of Tamil Nadu, Food Safety Commission – Tamil Nadu, Citizen Consumer Clubs in schools and colleges and voluntary consumer organisations besides food business operators.

Established under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, the authority is an independent statutory body created for laying down scientific standards for food articles and regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption.

Water level

Water level in Periyar dam stood at 112.80 feet (permissible level is 136 feet) with no inflow and discharge of 105 cusecs on Thursday.

Vaigai dam

The water level in Vaigai dam was 48.23 feet (71 feet) with an inflow of 63 cusecs and discharge 60 cusecs. The combined Periyar credit was at 2,381 mcft. There was no rain in the region, PWD officials said.

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Thursday stood at 47.35 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 182.87 cusecs and no water was discharged from the dam.

The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 80.66 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 21 cusecs and no water was discharged.

Kanyakumari

The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 4.10 feet, 33 feet in Perunchani, 5.15 feet in Chittar I, 5.25 feet in Chittar II and 6.80 feet in Poigai dam.

Mettur level

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 33.15 feet on Thursday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 3,886 cusecs and the discharge 599 cusecs.

Farmers' grievances day advanced

The farmers' grievances day meeting originally scheduled for February 28 has been advanced. The meeting will now be held at the collectorate here at 11 a.m. on February 27, an official press release issued here on Thursday said.

'Form Cauvery Management Board'

The general secretary of Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam affiliated to CPI, V. Durai Manickam appealed to the Central government to form the Cauvery Management Board and water regulating authority closely on the heels of gazetting of final award of the Cauvery River Water Disputes Tribunal and to ensure that Tamil Nadu to get the share of water as per the final award.

In a press release issued here on Thursday, he thanked the Chief Minister Jayalalithaa for taking all efforts legally to get the award gazetted.

He also recalled the struggles that preceded gazetting of the final award. A case praying for formation of a Tribunal to settle the Cauvery issue was filed in 1983 by S.Ranganathan, secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association.

The Tribunal gave the interim award and it was also gazetted.

Final award was given in 2007 and now it has been gazetted.

But lot of agitations, bandhs, fasts have been organised to get a finality in the Cauvery issue, Mr.Durai Manickam said.

He also said that surplus water flowing into Arabian Sea from the west flowing rivers can be diverted and used by Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. He said that modernisation of Cauvery delta irrigation system should be taken up immediately.

'Surplus water flowing into Arabian Sea from west flowing rivers can be diverted and used by Karnataka and Tamil Nadu'

Farmers want settlement of crop insurance claims

Illegal sand mining issue was brought up at the grievance day meet



Patient hearing: Collector Ashish Kumar addressing the farmers during the grievance day meeting in Tuticorin on Thursday.— Photo: N. Rajesh

Farmers have sought quick settlement of crop insurance claims at a meeting convened to redress their grievances here on Thursday. Collector Ashish Kumar, who presided over the meeting, appealed to the officials to expedite the disbursal of insurance benefits to eligible farmers.

Mariappan, a farmer from Karungulam, said farmers were yet to receive the insurance amount due to them, for which they had paid premium to the National Agriculture Insurance Company in 2008-09.

The Collector replied an official communication to release the crop insurance at the earliest had been forwarded to the parties concerned.

K. P. Perumal, district secretary, Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, said farmers attached to primary agriculture cooperative credit societies, including Kulasekaranallur, Vellaram, Pasuvanthanai, M. Meenakshipuram and Jegaveerapandiapuram, which come under Ottapidaram taluk, were treated unfairly in respect of the crop insurance amount earmarked for 2010.

S. Kasivelu, Coordinator, Agriculture Insurance Company, Tuticorin, replied that the amount will be disbursed in three instalments.

K. Pandian, Joint Registrar of Cooperatives, said crop insurance to the tune of Rs. 4.4 crore had been extended to the farmers.

Crop insurance amounting to Rs. 9.49 crore has been allotted for 2010-11 and it would be provided based on provision of payment receipts for the insurance claim.

A total of 9,493 farmers have received the insurance benefits through 74 societies so far.

S. Kanthasami of Velidupatti village in Ettayapuram taluk, sought the intervention of the district administration to prevent illegal sand mining, which was rampant on Vaipar riverbed at Nambipuram panchayat and patta land adjacent to it.

He claimed that the villagers were facing threats from the sand mining mafia.

The Collector assured him that action would be taken to curb illegal sand mining.

N. S. Krishnasamy, a cotton farmer from Kovilpatti, sought market linkage with Cotton Corporation of India for procurement of cotton. The Collector asked the Deputy Director of Agriculture (Marketing) to guide the cotton farmers.

D. Ranjitsingh Dhanraj, Joint Director of Agriculture, M. Muthupandian, Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Tamirabarani Irrigation and M. Kanagaraj, Personal Assistant to Collector (Agriculture) were present.

Red Rice Mela from tomorrow

A three-day 'Red Rice Mela' is being held here from Saturday, as part of an initiative to sensitise the public on the use of 'red rice' (Kempakki in Kannada).

Addressing presspersons here on Thursday, president of the Desi Krishikara Balaga and water harvesting expert Chennabasappa Kombali and vice-president Shrenikraj Yalavatti said that the three-day 'Kempakki Sante' would be held at Laxmi Sadan at J.C. Nagar here.

To get better yields, farmers use pesticides and chemical fertilizers in excess. "However, there are many farmers who have worked hard to preserve the native varieties of rice and grow them through organic farming. There are several varieties of red rice, which are native species and grown through organic farming," he said. Mr. Kombali said that researchers were of the opinion that red rice was good for health since it improves eyesight and acts as a diuretic.

The 'Kempakki Mela' is an attempt to sensitise the public about native rice varieties like red rice.

"There are as many as 250 varieties of red rice. All of them will be on display during the mela, and 25 varieties will be available for sale," he said. The government should supply red rice through the public distribution system in a phased manner, he added.

Mr. Yalavatti said that as many as 60 paddy conservators, Stree Shakti self-help groups and farmers from 12 paddy-growing districts of Karnataka would participate. In addition to the red rice exhibition, various eatables made from red rice would also be sold.

The mela will be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Dip in milk sales

: The two-day strike called by all-India trade unions partially affected milk supply in the city, though it was exempted from the strike.

Milk sales on Wednesday was put at approximately 1.6 lakh litres, while the sale recorded on normal days is approximately 2.16 lakh litres.

According to Marketing Manager of Kerala Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (Milma) K.G. Satheesh, sale of milk was partially affected in the Thiruvananthapuram union (comprising the four districts of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha) due to the strike. "There has been an increase in the procurement rate as there has been no local sale. While 2.16 lakh litres were procured on normal days, on Wednesday, it was 2.31 lakh litres in the Thiruvananthapuram union. Similarly, the sales was 3.5 lakh litres, while on normal days it is 4.63-lakh litres.

According to an official of Milma, almost 80 per cent of the outlets were opened during the two days.

379 water conservation schemes

To provide drinking and irrigation water to the three grama panchayats of Attappady Hills, the water starved tribal heartland of the district, 379 water conservation projects have been started under the MGNREGS.

The water conservation projects were mainly the renovation of ponds and construction of check dams in the 46 wards of the grama panchayats of Pudur, Agali and Sholayur, said P.V. Radhakrishnan, Project Officer of Attappady Block.

In these three grama panchayats, 231 ponds were being renovated and 85 check dams constructed. A sum of Rs.2.68 crore would be spent from the drought relief scheme, he said.

hindustantimes

Thu, 22 Feb 2013

weather

INDIAN CITIES

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Friday, Feb 22

Max Min

30° | 23°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 94

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:28

Sunset: 06:16

Barometer: 1015

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Saturday, Feb 23

Max Min

31° | 22°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday Feb 24	Monday Feb 25	Tuesday Feb 26	Wednesday Feb 27	Thursday Feb 28
31° 22° Partly Cloudy	31° 21° Cloudy	30° 21° Partly Cloudy	32° 20° Partly Cloudy	33° 20° Overcast

Airport Weather

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 06:53

Humidity: 100 Sunset: 06:16



Indian's harvest claim '120% fake', claims Chinese scientist

Beijing, February 22, 2013

Piqued over losing out to an Indian farmer who beat his world record by harvesting 22.4 tonnes of rice per hectare, a top Chinese scientist known as the "father of hybrid rice" has questioned the feat, terming it as "fake". It is "120% fake", Yuan Longping, who held the record earlier by growing 19.4 tonnes of rice in 2011, was quoted as saying by the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post.

"I introduced the intensification method to China myself. It could increase yields by 10 to 15% in low-yield fields, but it's not possible for fields that are already producing relatively high yields," Yuan said.

"He (Indian farmer) said they had lots of rain and little sunshine last year, but high yields would be impossible without adequate sunshine," Yuan told official China News Service, according to the Post.

Yuan was reacting to Sumant Kumar's success story published by the British newspaper Guardian, which carried a feature on the achievement of the young farmer from Nalanda district of Bihar last year by using a method called System of Rice Intensification (SRI).

Yuan said judging by photos, the harvested plants appeared short and couldn't possibly produce high yields.

"Good soil is the basis of high-yield rice," Yuan said, adding that the soil where Kumar farmed was apparently inferior in quality.

Yuan also questioned the way India verified Kumar's claim.

"How could the Indian government have confirmed the number after the harvesting was already done?" he asked.

Chinese scientist Yuan Longping questions Indian's world record rice harvest



Rice production in India reached 22.4 tonnes per hector mark

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"If Kumar is able to repeat his success next year, I will be glad to examine the results in the field personally," Yuan said.

CM urged to resolve Palar row like Cauvery



"The CM should give the same priority to Palar that she had given to Cauvery", Mullai said

The Tamizhaga Vivasaiygal Sangam has appealed to Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa to take up the Palar water dispute immediately, on the lines of the efforts she had taken in the Cauvery issue.

Hailing the achievements of the AIADMK government in getting the Cauvery River Water Tribunal's Final Award notified in the gazette, State executive council member of the sangam R Mullai urged the CM to show a similar concern in the case of all the 14 rivers, including Palar, that shared riparian rights with Karnataka.

Palar originates in Karnataka and passes through a small stretch in Andhra Pradesh before entering Tamil Nadu near Vaniyambadi. Both the neighbouring States had constructed many reservoirs and check dams to divert the river's water within their territories, thus denying water to the downstream districts of Tamil Nadu, almost for the past 10 years.

"The gazette publication in the case of Cauvery is a good beginning and a step ahead in resolving the long-pending disputes between the two States. This has induced a lot of hope and confidence not only among the delta farmers, but also across the State," Mullai said.

Taking into consideration the large irrigation area under the Palar and Thenpennai river basins in northern Tamil Nadu, which was almost equal to the delta region in the Southern districts, the CM should give the same priority to Palar that she had given to Cauvery, he added.

President of the Palar Future Group, Jamuna Thiagarajan, said Chief Minister Jayalalithaa should consider approaching the apex court once again and persuade the Centre to take a decision on Palar also. She said in spite of good rainfall in Karnataka and AP had received good rainfall this season, not a single drop of water was allowed to flow into Palar. Palar

was facing twin problems, lack of surface water and pollution by the leather industry, and hence the attention of the government was urgent.

Lack of water flow had adversely affected the river ecology and the underground water system in the district, she said. It is time that the State government intensified the politico-legal battle on the lines of Cauvery, to save and rescue Palar also, Jamuna pointed out.

Noted octogenarian social worker M M Basheer of Vaniyambadi, "The AIADMK cadre should take up the Palar issue with their party chief and ensure that she finds a solution to save the river at the earliest."

Jayalalithaa opens five research centres

Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa on Thursday inaugurated five research and technology centres aimed at boosting earnings from animal husbandry and fisheries.

The centres, which include three training and research centres of the Veterinary University and two fisheries technology centres of the Fisheries University, are aimed at imparting courses, spreading technological advancements and providing solutions to localised problems in their respective fields.

The veterinary training and research centres have come up at a cost of Rs 80 lakh each in Villupuram, Thiruvannamalai and Krishnagiri districts. This will add to the 15 other similar centres and six agricultural training centres that are already functioning across the State.

Jayalalithaa also inaugurated the sales of two brands of chocolate - 'Milky & Nutty' and 'Nutties' - which are being manufactured from the extra milk that is being acquired by Aavin.

The two fisheries technology centres that Jayalalithaa inaugurated have come up in Nagapattinam and Ponneri in Tiruvallur district. While the Nagapattinam centre will offer a certificate course in advanced techniques in prawn culture, the Ponneri centre will offer a three-month course in ornamental fish culture.

Jayalalithaa inaugurated the facilities through video conferencing from the Secretariat in a ceremony that was attended by Chief Secretary Sheela Balakrishnan, Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Secretary Gagandeep Singh Bedi, Milk and Dairy Development Minister V Moorthy, Animal Husbandry Minister TKM Chinnayya, Fisheries Minister K A Jayapal and other government officials.

Cauvery Final Award notified

The Centre on Wednesday notified the final award of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal, ending a six-year-long wait.

The move came after the Supreme Court rapped the Centre for delaying the decision and had set February 20 as the deadline to issue notification, which was issued in Tuesday's date.

The Tribunal, comprising chairman Justice N P Singh and members N S Rao and Sudhir Narain, in a unanimous award in February 2007, had determined the total availability of water in the Cauvery basin at 740 tmc ft at the Lower Coleroon Anicut site.

The proceedings of the Tribunal, set up in June 1990, went on for more than 16 years. The Tribunal's award will come into effect within 90 days of its notification by the Centre. As per law, the award comes into being after being notified by the Centre through its publication in a gazette.

After the issuance of the notification, institutions like the Cauvery River Authority chaired by the Prime Minister and the Cauvery Monitoring Committee will cease to exist. New organisations like the Cauvery Management Board (CMB) and the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee will be constituted, which will have representatives from all the co-basin states, experts in hydrology and agriculture. They will be headed by an officer of the Central Government.

While Tamil Nadu had been demanding an early notification, Karnataka was opposed to it saying till the times cases filed by it in the Supreme Court are settled, the notification should be kept in abeyance.

Terming the notification as a "great victory for me and my government", particularly the delta farmers, Jayalalithaa said, "Since the final award has been notified, it becomes binding on Karnataka to release water."

"...hereafter Karnataka cannot refuse to obey the order of the tribunal", the AIADMK supremo said, adding Tamil Nadu was "literally at the mercy of Karnataka all these years".

The notification, however, sparked protests in Karnataka with members of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike staging demonstrations in Mysore, Mandya and Bangalore. Shettar said there is no law to say that the CMB has to be constituted. "It (clearance for the proposed Board) has to come before Parliament and there has to be discussions. Under law, there is room for amendment," he added.

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India turns net importer of pepper



India is practically out of the global pepper export with the total exports in 2012 equivalent to just 10 per cent of Vietnam, the world's largest producer. In 2012, Vietnam exported 116,962 tonnes of pepper (100,381 tonnes of black pepper and 16,581 tonnes of white pepper). According to data available, India exported around 12,000 tonnes. India, which was the top exporter till 1995, has turned a net importer of the spice in the last calendar year.

Compared to 2011, Vietnam's export of black pepper increased 463 tonnes, while that of white pepper fell 1,917 tonnes. The total turnover was \$794 million, with black pepper contributing \$642 million and white giving \$152 million, according to latest data from the Vietnam Pepper Association. Compared to 2011, turnover of black pepper increased 18 per cent and that of white pepper rose three per cent. India is nowhere in the global export market and data on exports in 2012 have not yet been released by the Spices Board.

Earlier, the board was keen on releasing the export-import data on a monthly basis. But now they are not revealing the data to the media or the local exporters.

According to unofficial data prepared by some leading traders, India faced a setback on the export front with total exports of just 12,000 tonnes in 2012. This is chiefly due to the high prices offered by India throughout the year. India's prices have been \$600-700 a tonne higher on an average for the past three-four years.

Interestingly, India had imported 15,000 tonnes during 2012, making the country a net importer of pepper. India's shipment was over 20,000 tonnes couple of years back, but now it is not a major destination for pepper.

The average export price of pepper in Vietnam in 2012 was \$6,390 a tonne (\$927 higher than the average price in 2011) and that of white pepper was \$9,176 a tonne (\$1,220 higher than 2011), according to VPA data.

The major import markets for Vietnam pepper are the US, Germany, Holland, India, Singapore, Spain and Egypt. Europe imported 45,609 tonnes, while Asian countries imported 42,249 tonnes. The US imported 17,147 tonnes in 2012.

On the global export front, India has now slipped to fourth spot after Vietnam, Indonesia and Brazil. Sri Lanka, which exports close to 10,000 tonnes, is a real threat to India and is weakening India's position in the global market.

THE HINDU Business Line

Heralding the season



Pricey fruit: The first batch of Alphonso, the king of mangoes, has arrived before the season's onset at the Crawford Market in Mumbai. Vendors have to shell out Rs 1,200-1,500 for a dozen of the variety this year due to the hike in diesel prices for transporting. — Paul Noronha

Global black tea output down 1.37%

Global black tea production in calendar 2012 declined by 1.37 per cent over 2011, reveals an analysis of the latest data available with Tea Board and traders' bodies.

“According to our compilation, global black tea production totalled 2,037.99 million kg (mkg) in 2012 against 2,066.19 mkg in 2011”, Rajesh Gupta, publisher, ‘Global Tea Digest 2012’ told *Business Line*.

This showed a decline of 28.20 mkg or 1.37 per cent.

India continued to top the table with an output of 1,111.76 mkg (1,115.72 mkg). Of this, North India contributed 880.10 mkg (875.57 mkg) and South India 231.66 mkg (240.15 mkg).

Kenya came second with 369.56 mkg (377.91 mkg) followed by Sri Lanka with 326.28 mkg (327.53 mkg).

Each of other producing nations accounted for less than 63 mkg.

The largest production loss of 9.60 mkg has occurred in Indonesia followed by 8.35 mkg in Kenya, 4.60 mkg in Malawi and 3.96 mkg in India.

Bangladesh was the only country which reported an increase in production. Its output rose by 3.02 mkg to reach 62.15 mkg (59.13 mkg).

Rubber futures slip further

The rubber futures declined further on Wednesday. RSS 4 weakened at its March series to Rs 153.25 (156.43), April to Rs 156.73 (159.94), May to Rs 160 (163.31) and June to Rs 162.66 (165.14) a kg while the July series remained inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

RSS 3 (spot) declined to Rs 166.58 (172.52) a kg at Bangkok. The February futures weakened to ₹281 (Rs 164.36) from ₹288 a kg during the day session and then to ₹277.5 (Rs 162.38) in the night session on Tokyo Commodity Exchange (TOCOM).

The spot rubber prices were not available owing to the forty eight hour all India general strike declared by the trade unions.

Low availability of quality stocks pushes tomato prices up



Tomato prices increased further on Thursday despite higher supplies in the market.

Vikas Sachdeva, a trade expert, told *Business Line*, that arrivals have increased in the market over the last couple of days but the low availability of good quality stocks is pushing the prices upwards.

Unfavourable weather has affected the quality of the crop, he added.

Around 1,100 crates (a crate means 25-kg) of different varieties of tomato arrived at the Karnal vegetable market and were quoted at Rs 650-1,800.

Around 6,000 crates of different varieties such as 592, Abhilash, Nashik, Trishul, 525, Avinash and 524 arrived at Karnal markets.

Out of total arrivals, about 45 per cent stock was of low quality; around 35 per cent stock was of medium quality while just about 20 per cent stock of total arrivals was of superior quality.

On Thursday, prices of superior quality increased further by Rs 500-700 and quoted at Rs 1,500-1,800. The prices of medium quality produce went up by Rs 400 and quoted at 850-1,200 while low quality produce was at Rs 450-650, Rs 150 up from the previous levels.

There has been too much volatility in the market over the last few days but it is unlikely to see any major alteration in the next couple of days, said Vikas Sachdeva. Quality of the stocks is likely to remain lower even in the next couple of weeks, he added.

Traders are getting regular demand from Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and a few other markets. Traders expect that tomato prices may go further up in the coming weeks.

All curbs off on cotton exports, for now



The Government has decided to continue with the existing policy of allowing cotton exports without any restrictions..

This decision was taken after an Inter-Ministerial Committee comprising top officials from Commerce, Agriculture and Textiles Ministries reviewed the cotton scenario in the country recently.

The committee, comprising secretaries from the three Ministries took stock of the cotton situation, including production, arrivals, registration and exports, a Commerce Department release said.

“The Committee noted that the situation with respect to cotton availability, prices and export is satisfactory and decided that the current dispensation may continue.

The Committee has decided to keep a watch on the situation and meet as and when the situation warrants," the statement said.

The Government had clamped down on cotton exports last March to ensure domestic availability and check spiralling prices.

However, following pressure from cotton growing States and the Agriculture Ministry, the ban was subsequently withdrawn and cotton exports were allowed after registration of contracts with the Directorate General of Foreign Trade.

Meanwhile, cotton export registrations have seen a rise recently on hopes of higher Chinese demand.

Since the beginning of the year, export registrations have increased to 58 lakh bales from 38 lakh bales (of 170 kg each).

Trade sources expect India's cotton exports to be not more than 8 million bales against 12.9 million bales shipped out last year.

The Cotton Corporation of India has estimated a production of 33.4 lakh bales

India's cotton exports are expected to be not more than 8 million bales against 12.9 million bales shipped out last year.

The Cotton Corporation of India has estimated production of 33.4 million bales pegging the domestic consumption at 26 million bales leaving an exportable surplus of 7 million bales.

Grape exports turn sweet as realisation rises

Sharp rise		
	Quantity	Value
2009-10	1,31,153	545.37
2010-11	98,005	428.28
2011-12	1,08,584	602.86

Quantity in tonnes; value in Rs crore

Source: DGCIIS

The exports of fresh grapes are off to a good start for the 2013 season on strong demand from traditional markets in the European Union.

Shipments to European Union, so far, have almost doubled to over 3,755 tonnes against corresponding last year's 1,906 tonnes, according to data from GrapeNet under the Agricultural and Processed Foods Exports Development Authority (Apeda).

GrapeNet is an online pesticide residue traceability software system for monitoring fresh grape exports from the Indian farms to the retail shelves in the EU.

However, the total export volumes so far, are expected to be much higher if the shipments to Bangladesh and Nepal were considered.

Officials at Apeda said the season has started strong and progressing well. "It appears that the last year's export volumes would be sustained," they said. Last year India exported 1.085 lakh tonnes of fresh grapes valued at Rs 602.86 crore.

“It has been a good beginning and the export demand is better than last year. Even the export realisations are good this year, up by Rs 15-20 a kg,” said Ashok Gaekwad, President of Maharashtra Grape Growers Association. Last year, the realisations ranged between Rs 40 and Rs 45 a kg.

Normal output

The drought last year in parts of Maharashtra and Karnataka doesn't seem to have had any impact on exports. Though some areas in Nashik, Solapur and even Sangli faced scanty rains, growers had taken enough care to irrigate the grapevines, Gaekwad said.

The output this year seems normal, despite scanty rains, said a senior scientist at the National Research Centre for Grapes in Pune. However, the drought has increased the cultivation costs as farmers were forced to buy water in tankers to irrigate their vineyards.

Bulk of the shipments, so far, has been to the Netherlands at 1,764 tonnes, the United Kingdom at 1,302 tonnes and Sweden 508 tonnes. The Netherlands is the largest importer of Indian fresh grapes in value terms, while Bangladesh tops the chart in volume terms.

Water scarcity

The harvest of grapes is currently on and will go on till April-May. However, the big worry faced by the growers is the scarcity of water in summer months that would hurt the output next year, Gaekwad said.

Egg on the boil as consumption rises



Wholesale egg prices surged to a record Rs 3.73 a piece following a rise in consumption.

On Thursday, the price was raised by three paise from last week's Rs 3.70 by the National Egg Coordination Committee (NECC), Namakkal zone.

The average price of egg in January this year stood at Rs 3.37 against last year's Rs 2.84.

Egg production in Namakkal, the country's poultry hub, stood at 3.52 crore in January this year against 3.07 crore during the same period a year ago.

With the exports dwindling slowly, the industry is focussing on the home turf.

Exports in January almost halved to three crore eggs from that of last year.

Broiler prices cut

Meanwhile, the Committee has slashed the price for layer birds to Rs 47 a kg (Rs 51), while the Broiler Coordination Committee's rates for cull birds is down by Rs 8 to Rs 76 to boost consumption.

This is in view of the demand for animal protein being high during summer.

Fear of slowing demand caps gains in edible oils



Edible oils market witnessed a cautious trend on Thursday. Weak futures markets, lack of physical demand and an eye on the Budget next week kept activities thin and isolated. Weak Indian currency resulted in imported palmolein and soyabean refined oil prices rising by Re 1 each.

Groundnut oil increased by Rs 5 for 10 kg. Higher arrivals of rapeseed – mustard (about 1.20 lakh bags) in producing centres cooled rapeseed oil by Rs 5 and cotton oil by Rs 3. Sunflower oil was unchanged. Gains were capped on concerns that dismal export data could signal slowing demand.

A Mumbai-based broker Shailesh Kataria said “weakness in Malaysian palm oil, Chicago soya oil futures and strong US dollar led domestic players to stay away from fresh bet.

Sources said that due to lack of demand merely 150-200 tonnes of palmolein were traded in resale at Rs 515-517/10 kg in Mumbai. Local refineries kept prices unchanged.

Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 523-525 till March; super palmolein at Rs 563 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 800. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 525; soyabean refined oil at Rs 700 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 785.

Allana's quoted super palmolein at Rs 560.

In Saurashtra –Rajkot, groundnut oil was unchanged at Rs 1,940 (Rs 1,940) for *telia tin* and Rs 1,260 (Rs 1,260) for 10 kg.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil's March futures closed lower by Rs 6.65 to Rs 702.00 (Rs 708.65); April dropped to Rs 695.90 (Rs 701.80) and May was Rs 697.35 (Rs.702.55).

Malaysia's crude palm oil's March futures contracts settled lower at MYR 2,481 (MYR 2,509); April at MYR 2,513 (MYR 2,540) and May at MYR 2,536 (MYR 2,565) a tonne. Chicago soya oil projection was bearish (-50 point) late evening.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg): Groundnut oil 1,240 (1,235); soya refined oil 700 (699); sunflower exp. ref. 720 (715); sunflower ref. 790 (790); rapeseed ref. oil 780 (785); rapeseed expeller ref. 750 (755); cottonseed ref. oil 619 (622) and palmolein 518 (517).

Traders turn attention to Odisha turmeric



Spot turmeric prices decreased by Rs 150 a quintal on Thursday as the market still awaited for orders from North India. However, the focus now has turned to turmeric from Odisha.

“Though quality and hybrid varieties of turmeric arrived for sale, the traders quoted lower price, purchased very limited stocks. This is due to want of demand received from North India.

“Some traders in Bihar placed orders for Odisha turmeric and purchased significant stocks. Some Erode traders, too, procured limited quantity of Odisha turmeric.

“Turmeric sales in Nizamabad will commence only on Friday, the local traders purchased restricted quantity here, as they feel prices may decrease after the Nizamabad market opens,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. He said of the 2,500 bags that arrived on Thursday, only 40 per cent was sold.

Buyers including some local traders have procured the turmeric for local masala firms. They said that after the first week of March, they may get new orders from Delhi, Kolkata and some parts of Maharashtra. Turmeric farmers have brought about 950 bags of new turmeric that fetched Rs 6,300 on an average. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association, the finger variety (new crop) was sold at Rs 4,560-6,411 a quintal; the root variety Rs 4,299-5769. Old crop of finger variety was sold at Rs 5,460-6,539; the root variety Rs 5,300-5,939.

Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,698-7,410; the root variety Rs 5,321-6,129. Of 677 bags, that arrived, 230 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety of new crop was sold at Rs 5,409-6,767; the root variety Rs 5,239-5,927. The finger variety of old crop was sold at Rs 5,331-5,944; the root variety Rs 5,411-5,927. Of 894 bags put up for sale, 744 got sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,349-6,499; the root variety Rs 4,270-6,999. Of 590 bags on offer, 502 found takers. At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,219-6,469; the root variety Rs 5,019-5,869. All the 14 bags on sale got sold.

Sluggish trend continues in mustard



Sluggish trend continued in mustard seeds and oil on rise in arrivals of new mustard seeds and decline in buying support at the higher rate.

On Thursday, mustard oil in Indore declined by Rs 13 to Rs 712 for 10 kg.

Similarly in Neemuch and Morena mandis of Madhya Pradesh, mustard oil fell by Rs 10 each to Rs 705 and Rs 720 for 10 kg.

With arrival of mustard seeds picking up in Rajasthan, mustard oil prices in Rajasthan have also declined by Rs 15-20 in a day alone.

In Ganga Nagar and Jaipur, mustard oil declined by Rs 15 each to Rs 730 and Rs 745, while it was down Rs 20 in Kota where mustard oil slipped to Rs 730.

Downtrend in mustard oil also continued in Gujarat where mustard oil was down Rs 15 to Rs 710.

However, compared with its prices last week, mustard oil is ruling stable in Indore and Neemuch mandis, while it is up Rs 5 in Morena.

On the other hand, mustard seeds ruled stable in Indore mandis at Rs 4,500 a quintal; ruled at Rs 3,100-3450 at Neemuch amid arrival of 5,000 bags.

Plant deliveries for new mustard seeds for Jaipur line were quoted at Rs 3,855-60, while plant deliveries for old mustard seeds for Jaipur were quoted at Rs 3,915-20.

Similarly, plant deliveries of mustard seeds for Kota line were quoted at Rs 3,975, while it was Rs 3,600-3,625 for Morena line.

Similarly, mustard seeds futures also traded lower with rise in arrival and slack buying support.

April and May contracts on the NCEDX closed at Rs 3,457 (down Rs 13) and Rs 3,486 (down Rs 14).

Arrival of new mustard seeds in the country rose to 1,20,000 bags.

As mercury rises, so will demand for rice



Fresh buying coupled with the expectations of good demand in the coming days pushed aromatic and non basmati rice prices up by Rs 50-200 a quintal on Thursday.

After witnessing a fall in prices of aromatic and Sharbati varieties earlier this week, bulk buyers have taken advantage by buying at lower levels, said Tara Chand Sharma, Proprietor of Tara Chand and Sons.

Traders expect that market may rule firm at current levels for the next few days and then, it may witness another spike.

As the mercury rises, demand will increase, Sharma said. In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) improved by Rs 200 and sold at Rs 7,500 a quintal while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted at Rs 6,600, Rs 100 up.

Pure basmati (raw) quoted at Rs 8,500. Duplicate basmati (steam) traded Rs 100 up and was at Rs 6,400.

Sharbati (steam) went up by Rs 100 and quoted at Rs 4,900 while Sharbati (sela) was at Rs 4,580-4,600, Rs 80 up.

Similarly, PR and PR 11 varieties managed to gain marginally by Rs 50-75 on improved buying.

PR-11 (sela) was at Rs 3,175 while PR-11 (Raw) quoted at Rs 2,850-2,950. Parmal (raw) sold at Rs 2,400 while Parmal (sela) went for Rs 2,350.

For the brokens of Pusa-1121, Dubar quoted at Rs 3,250, Tibar sold at Rs 4,370 while Mongra was at Rs 2,540.

Paddy Arrivals

About 1,000 bags of PR variety were quoted at Rs 1,300, 3,000 bags of Sharbati quoted at Rs 2,250.

About 5,000 bags of Pusa-1121 were quoted at Rs 3,350-3,500.

Sugar futures range-bound; stockists still buying



Prices on the Vashi wholesale market were mixed on Thursday but the under-current remained positive.

In spot, S-grade sugar ruled steady. M-grade dropped by Rs 20 a quintal due to old stocks offloaded at lower price.

Mills continue to sell at Rs 10-20 higher on buying support that lifted naka rates by Rs 10-30. Domestic futures prices were range bound with thin volatility.

Business in physical markets remained active ahead of annual budget next week in which most of the traders expect hike in excise duty on sugar, said sources.

A Vashi-based wholesaler said that there is a strong possibility of hike in excise duty on sugar in budget next week. Local stockists continued their covering before that. Producers also hold the price expecting higher demand in the coming days. Mills are not very eager to sell at lower rates except old stocks. Retailers also seems eager to cover small inventories considering lower market rates compare to its production cost.

With rise in temperature demand for sugar will improve, he said. On Wednesday evening, merely 18-20 mills offered tenders and sold 72,000-75,000 bags (each of 100 kg) to local buyers at Rs 3,100-3,160 (Rs 3,080-3,130) for S-grade and Rs 3,200-3,270 (Rs 3,180-3,260) for M-grade.

For exports, India needs a sharp rise in global prices, which is unlikely.

Global prices are likely to come under further pressure with new season sugar supplies starting in Brazil from April.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar prices for March were Rs 3,148 (Rs 3,149); April Rs 3,207 (Rs 3,205) and May Rs 3,262 (Rs 3,258) till noon.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 3,222-3,300 (Rs 3,222-3,300) and M-grade Rs 3,272-3,442 (Rs 3,292-3,442).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs 3,200-3,230 (Rs 3,170-3,200) and M-grade Rs 3,240-3,370 (Rs 3,240-3,360).
