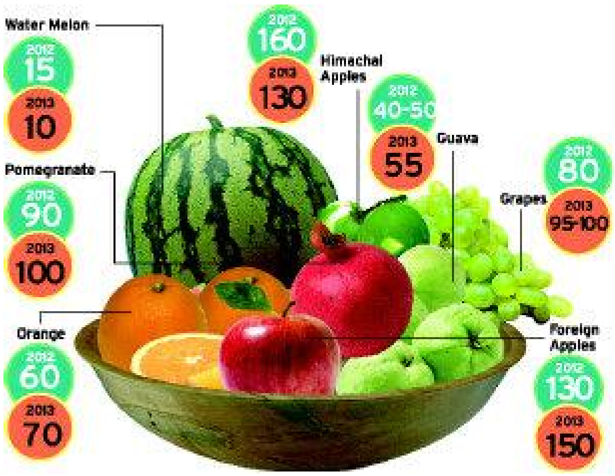
THE HINDU
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2013

When fruits won't taste that sweet anymore



COSTLY BASKETChennaiites have begun cutting down on consumption or buying cheaper varieties

Consumers expect rise in prices; dieticians stress need for balanced diet

COSTLY BASKET

Summer is still a few days away. But, many fruits are already priced around Rs.100 a kg, forcing people to give a second thought before purchase.

Consumers like B. Chitra of Villivakkam say they buy cheaper varieties to cope up with the increasing cost of the fruits. “I get to buy only a handful of pomegranates or apples, grapes for Rs.100-Rs.200. Even the cheapest variety of bananas cost Rs. 4-5 each,” she said. Others have cut down on their fruit consumption claiming the price is unaffordable. Guavas, which are usually affordable, too cost up to Rs.60 a kg.

However, wholesale fruit traders in the Koyambedu market said that many fruits cost lesser now compared to last year. This winter season was another reason for the reduction in consumption.

Murugesan, a wholesale trader, said that the market received more apples from Kashmir this year. But, apples imported from abroad are cheaper. But, apples from China and New Zealand would cost more as import duty on them has been increased.

Though fruits are sold at nominal rate in wholesale markets, they are priced at least 20 per cent more in retail shops as they have add transportation charges. S. Srinivasan, president, wholesale fruits commission agents association, said that this year, people could gorge on water melons as they are priced as low as Rs.10 per kg. This seasonal fruit is likely to come at cheaper rate as summer approaches.

At present, the Koyambedu wholesale market receives 100-150 lorries daily. Traders expect the prices to escalate in summer as the demand would double while the supply will remain the same.

Mr. Srinivasan said that the city has started getting first batch of ‘Sendura’ mangoes. “We expect the cost to go up by 20 -30 per cent in summer months,” he said.

Meanwhile, nutritionists warn that cutting down on fruit portion in diet would mean loss of fibre and natural anti-oxidants. Meenakshi Bajaj, medical nutrition therapist, Institute of Diabetology, Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital, said that on an average, an individual needs to add 100-200 grams of fruits to theur daily diet. Even diabetics need 100 grams a day. Avoiding fruits would lead to heart diseases, obesity related problems and gall bladder stones. Fruits help children develop immunity. “People must watch out while buying apples and grapes as they may come with a wax coating. It is best to eat locally available fruits,” she said.

Water level

: Water level in the Periyar dam on Wednesday with an inflow of 112.70 feet (136 feet) with an inflow and a discharge of 105 cusecs each. The level in the Vaigai dam was 47.74 feet (71 feet) with no inflow and a discharge of 60 cusecs. The combined Periyar credit stood at 2,311 mcft.

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Wednesday stood at 47.30 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 139.12 cusecs and 304.75 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam.

The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 80.57 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 10 cusecs and 30 cusecs of water was discharged.

Kanyakumari

The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 3.35 feet, 33.15 feet in Perunchani, 5.08 feet in Chittar I, 5.18 feet in Chittar II and 6.20 feet in Poigai dam.

Rs. 18 crore-relief sanctioned for Chidambaram Kattumannarkoil farmers

Of Rs. 15,000-relief package, Rs. 5,000 from State Disaster Relief Funds

The government has sanctioned Rs. 18.23 crore as relief to 7,615 farmers in 51 villages of Chidambaram and Kattumannarkoil blocks.

Based on the assessment made by officials of the Revenue and Agriculture Departments, a total of 12,152 acres in Chidambaram and Kattumannarkoil blocks were found to be affected.

As many as 7,615 farmers in 51 villages in both the blocks, including 7,284 in 31 villages in Chidambaram and 331 in 20 villages in Kattumannarkoil block, have been identified as beneficiaries for the special relief package, said M.C. Sampath, Environment Minister.

Based on this estimate, the government has sanctioned Rs. 18.23 crore to be given away as relief to the distressed farmers in these blocks, he added.

The State government has evolved a formula for disbursement of special relief package to delta farmers who have been badly affected this samba season due to poor monsoon and refusal of the Karnataka government to release Cauvery river water for irrigation.

The relief package of Rs. 15,000 an acre announced recently by Chief Minister Jayalalithaa would be partly met from the State Disaster Relief Fund and partly by companies that had provided insurance cover for the crops, the Minister said during his visit to Thirunaraiyur in Kattumannarkoil block on Monday to disburse the relief package to 226 farmers.

"Of the Rs. 15,000-relief package, a sum of Rs. 5,000 would come from the State Disaster Relief Funds and the remaining from crop insurance companies," the Minister said.

As it would take some time for the insurance companies to assess the extent of crop losses and decide on the quantum of relief on a proportional basis, the farmers would not be able to avail themselves of the benefit immediately.

To overcome such a time lag, the government has evolved a strategy under which it would assume the responsibility of disbursing the amount pertaining to the insurance component too as 'advance', and treat the differential amount (between the total package and the share of insurance companies) as the size of the real special package assistance.

Cuddalore Collector R. Kirloshkumar said the relief amount would be deposited in the personal accounts of farmers maintained in the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Banks.

The banks had been categorically told not to adjust the special package amount to the existing loans of farmers.

The disbursal procedure, in the form of depositing money in the respective bank accounts, had already begun in the district on February 23. So far a sum of Rs. 6.44 crore was deposited in the accounts of 2,924 farmers.

Arrangements would also be made for depositing the relief amount in the farmers' accounts kept in nationalised banks, the District Collector said.

MLAs Selvi Ramajayam and N. Murugumaran were present.

Watermelons flood Erode fruit markets

The arrival of watermelon in Erode fruit markets has picked up and is being sold at Rs. 12 a kg.

The thirst quenching summer fruit, watermelon, has flooded the markets in the town as the rising mercury triggered a huge demand for the juicy fruit.

As the town and its suburbs are reeling under scorching heat for the past few months, more and more people are turning to the sweet watery fruit to beat the heat.

140 tonnes

The markets have been receiving more than 140 tonnes of thick and dark-skinned ones and the striped melons, which are more sweeter and tastier, from Gobichettipalayam, Dharapuram, Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri and a few other parts of the State in a day.

The markets also witness supply from the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

“We are getting a huge supply of watermelons particularly the hybrid variety from Erode and neighbouring districts alone as farmers have reported a bumper crop this year,” M. Rajesh, a fruit trader here says.

The increase in the production has led to a 30 per cent to 40 per cent fall in the prices of the delectable fruit.

Price falls

“The fruit, which was sold at Rs. 20 a kg last year, is now available for Rs. 12 a kg in the retail outlets. We procure it for Rs. 8 a kg from the farmers,” Mr. Rajesh says.

“We are expecting a good business this year as the prices have come down significantly. If the arrival is high, the prices will fall further,” says R. Sivakumar, another fruit trader in the town.

Demand

Most traders say that the demand for the fruit continues to go up as temperature levels stay high and the juicy fruit is available at cheaper rates. The increase in the temperature has left people looking for fruits like watermelon to stay cool, they say.

Temporary stalls

Temporary stalls selling watermelons have sprung up in almost all parts of the town following the huge arrival. Traders say the demand for watermelon will last till May after which mangoes will take over.

Arabica coffee growers advised not to lose hope

M.C. Ponnanna, Joint Director (Karnataka zone), Coffee Board, said here on Wednesday that growers of Arabica coffee had been facing difficult times as the price of the variety had fallen following a bumper production in Brazil.

He told presspersons that a 50-kg bag of Arabica coffee beans now costs Rs. 6,300 to Rs. 6,400. It used to cost about Rs. 10,000 last year.

Production

The price had come down as the demand dipped following good production in Brazil. However, planters should not lose hopes and instead make efforts to sustain the cultivation hoping for better prices in the coming days, he said.

Mr. Ponnanna said the Coffee Board would promote coffee cultivation by offering subsidy to purchase agricultural implements. Since 2010-11, when the programme came into effect, 10,092 planters in Karnataka had availed themselves of Rs. 13.48 crore as subsidy. Those interested to avail themselves of the subsidy could contact the board, he added.

Pare fertilizer subsidy, limit urea use

The Economic Survey has called for reduction in subsidies for fertilizers and adoption of appropriate price incentives.

The Survey said production of key fertilizers such as urea, DAP and complex fertilizers had not been satisfactory this fiscal. "The over-use of nitrogenous and limited use of P and K fertilizers is a matter of great concern, and needs appropriate price incentives by reducing fertilizer subsidies so that sustainable practises are encouraged," it said.

Consumption

It said fertilizer consumption had shown improvement as the policies for increasing availability and consumption of crop nutrients at affordable prices had been successful. Urea production is estimated at 22.38 million tonnes this fiscal against 21.98 million tonnes in 2011-12. The production of DAP and complex fertilizers is seen at 3.71 million tonnes and 7.94 million tonnes respectively in 2012-13. India produced 3.96 million tonnes and 7.70 million tonnes of DAP and complex fertilizers in the last fiscal.

It said to counter the shortfall in fertilizer production, the government was banking on its New Investment Policy (NIP) 2012. Under the NIP, the government planned to encourage investments in urea, which would increase indigenous capacity and reduce dependency on imports. "It is expected that fresh investment will come for expansion, revival, and setting up of brownfield and greenfield projects," it said.

hindustantimes
Thu,28 Feb 2013

Weather

INDIAN CITIES | INTERNATIONAL CITIES

Delhi

Delhi - INDIA

Today's Weather

Sunny

Thursday, Feb 28
Max Min
28.4° | 12.2°

Rain: 0
Humidity: 100
Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:48
Sunset: 06:20
Barometer: 1016

Tomorrow's Forecast

Partly Cloudy

Friday, Mar 1
Max Min
24° | 11°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday Mar 2	Sunday Mar 3	Monday Mar 4	Tuesday Mar 5	Wednesday Mar 6
24° | 10°	25° | 10°	27° | 10°	28° | 11°	29° | 15°
Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny

Airport Weather

Delhi

Delhi

Rain: 0
Humidity: 100
Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:48
Sunset: 06:20
Barometer: 1016

THE TIMES OF INDIA
Thu, Feb 28, 2013 | Updated 09.25AM IST

Tyre industry oppose move to hike import duty on natural rubber

"The automobile sector is seeing a sharp negative growth in major vehicles' categories including commercial vehicles, leading to a slowdown in the industry."

KOCHI: Tyre industry has objected to the Centre's move to raise the import duty on natural rubber from Rs 20 per kg to Rs 34 per kg. In view of the widening gap in domestic production and consumption, the industry says, the import of natural rubber is inevitable.

"It will have far-reaching and adverse consequences on tyre industry and its long-term impact will be felt on the entire value chain of rubber sector," said Anant Goenka, chairman of the Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association (ATMA).

The automobile sector is seeing a sharp negative growth in major vehicles' categories including commercial vehicles, leading to a slowdown in the industry, he said. The gap between domestic production and consumption of natural rubber was more than 60,000 tonne last fiscal year.

In the current year too, the production is likely to lag behind consumption by 50,000 tonne, according to the ATMA. The import duty of Rs 34 works out to be 21%, which is higher than the basic duty of 10% on tyres and effective rate of duty of 8.6% from countries such as China in view of trade agreements.

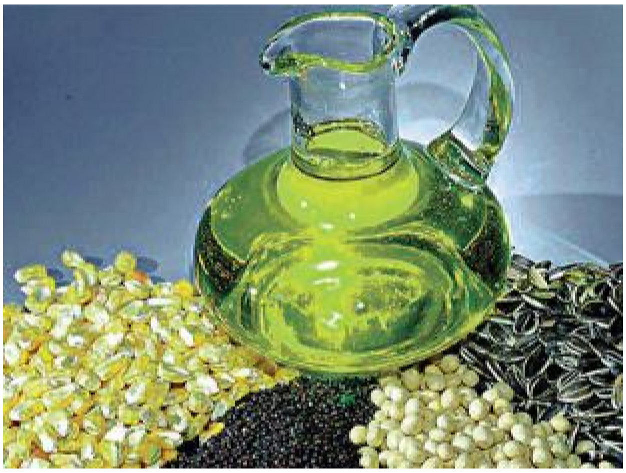
ATMA said the increase in import duty will accentuate the prevailing inverted duty structure in the industry. The peak level reached in natural rubber prices in 2011-12 could be termed as an aberration as the prices zoomed 100% in a short span.

The domestic prices have been higher than the corresponding international prices for a significant part of the year and only in the recent weeks they were dropped below the global price levels.

China has reduced the customs duty on natural rubber imports to 6% from 7.5% since January 2013. This, in addition to nil duty on import of compound rubber into China, will give a significant competitive edge to the Chinese tyre manufacturers, the ATMA added.

Cooking oil imports may touch record as demand surges, says Adani Wilmar

MUMBAI: Cooking oil imports by India, the world's biggest palm oil buyer, will probably climb to a record this year as demand outstrips supplies, said Adani Wilmar Ltd. Purchases in the year through October are set to exceed the 9.98 million tonne in 2011-2012, according to Atul Chaturvedi, chief executive officer of the country's second- biggest importer.



Cooking oil imports by India, the world's biggest palm oil buyer, will probably climb to a record this year as demand outstrips supplies, said Adani Wilmar Ltd.

Buying surged 26% in the three months through January, the Solvent Extractors' Association of India estimates. Increasing purchases may trim inventories in Malaysia and Indonesia, the largest producers, and bolster benchmark futures in Kuala Lumpur, which slumped to a five-week low on Tuesday. Expanding demand in India may counter the impact of an increase in import taxes and higher export duties in Indonesiaand Malaysia, said Chaturvedi.

"The quantum of imports is basically a function of supply and demand," he said in a phone interview from Ahmedabad. "Whatever the price, it will get imported if there is a requirement in the country. Whether you like it or not, vegetable oil is an essential commodity."

India meets more than 50% of its cooking oil demand through imports of mostly palm from Indonesia and Malaysia, and soyabean oil from Brazil and Argentina. Demand will expand 6% to 17.5 million tonne this year due to rising population and disposable incomes, said BV Mehta, executive director of the extractors' association. Consumption may surge to 23 million tonne by 2020, and imports will rise significantly to meet this demand, D Bhalla, a joint secretary at food ministry said in September.

The annual per-capita usage in the country is 13.5 kg, compared with the global average of about 26 kg, he said. Palm oil for May delivery advanced as much as 1% to 2,443 ringgit ($788) a tonne on the Malaysia Derivatives Exchange on Wednesday, before ending 0.4% lower at 2,410 ringgit. Futures fell to a three-year low of 2,217 ringgit on December 13 as stockpiles in the main producers climbed to a record.

Inventories in Malaysia jumped to an all-time high of 2.63 million tonne in December, before falling to 2.58 million tonne last month, according to the palm oil board. The country introduced duty-free shipments from January 1 to clear the holdings and will boost the tariff to 4.5% in March.

Indonesia raises its tax to 10.5% from 9%. India may increase taxes on imports to shield farmers from cheap supplies, according to the extractors' group. Finance Minister P Chidambaram may raise the tariff on unprocessed oils to 10% from 2.5% in the Budget, while the tax on refined varieties could increase to 20% from 7.5%, it said last week.

The government imposed a 2.5% tax on unprocessed oils for the first time since 2008 last month. Oilseed output in India will be little changed at 29.5 million tonne in the year ending June 30, from 29.8 million tonne a year earlier, agriculture ministry said on February 8. Production of rapeseed, the biggest oilseed crop grown in the winter season, is estimated to climb 20% this year to 7.1 million tonne, the extractors' association said earlier. "If we have a bumper rapeseed crop, that might bring some sobriety in imports, but it's early days yet," Chaturvedi said.

DECCAN Chronicle
Thursday, Feb 28, 2013 | Last Update : 09:35 AM IST

Two to mango

It’s closing in on that time of the year when everyone waits with bated breath for the first sign of the ‘king of fruits’ on the streets. However, thanks to the many chains of supermarkets and great connectivity, you can actually crave and then go on to indulge in any mango of your choice, at any given time of the year. But pre-packed, labelled and super-sealed fruits and vegetables really do not make the cut for me. Scouring the market alleyways to find that elusive perfectly ripe mango is one of the many little joys of life and I must say, I thoroughly enjoy the experience! So the first thing we agreed on when we were revamping the menu was that we will serve only the freshest of ingredients to guests to bring out the authentic flavours and aromas of south Indian cuisine.

While ripe mangoes are seasonal, getting a regular supply of fresh green mangoes in the south is no uphill task as it is a staple in most south Indian kitchens. Pickles in numerous varieties make up for the endless supply of these mangoes in the region. It was through the research for recipes for the new menu that I discovered why the flavourful Alleppey Fish Curry from Kerala has been one of the restaurant's highlight dishes for the past 16 years. Since the menu was conceptualised to have a strong accent on seafood with a variety of fish, crabs, prawns, lobsters put together with home-style recipe, this lip-smacking recipe retained its place for its amazing texture, subtle flavour and the use of green mangoes, which are perennially available in the market. In combination with seer fish, local turmeric from Kerala and a generous infusion of coconut milk, my introduction to green mangoes in Kerala cuisine has been nothing short of memorable.

The versatility of the green mango is commendable since it tastes equally delicious when cooked or eaten raw. It's no wonder that the streets hawkers make a living by selling cut slivers of mango with a sprinkling of salt and chilli powder. In Kerala, they make a pickle, where the mango is soaked in brine with a green chilli stuck in for flavour! For variation, the green mango adds just the right amount of zing to the crunchy Vietnamese Mango Salad with roasted peanuts, chives, basil and more. So the next time you give the supermarket a miss and find that all the mangoes on the streets are hard, don't be disappointed. There's a lot that you can do with its green counterpart.

Contrary to popular belief, eating green mangoes with salt in summer prevents excessive loss of water from the body and helps maintain a healthy body temperature.

Eating too much mango causes stomach
Problems: Wrong! Unripe mangoes are in fact very useful in treating gastrointestinal disorders and are very effective in curing diarrhoea, indigestion and constipation.Did you know? Boiled unripe mango juice mixed with sugar, cumin and pinch of salt helps treat sunstroke. Unripe mangoes have more antioxidants and Vitamin C than ripe mangoes, which protect the body against

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THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

- Thursday, February 28, 2013 09:38 AM

India's inflation may fall to 6.2-6.6% in March

Unlike last year when the food price inflation was mainly driven by higher protein food items, this year the pressure has been mounting in cereals. |*EPS*

Inflation is expected to fall in the range of 6.2 to 6.6 percent in March this year, helped by moderation in non-food manufacturing sector and global commodity prices, according to the Economic Survey 2012-13 released Wednesday.

The core inflation based on the whole price index (WPI) has remained muted in the current financial year and declined to a three year low of 6.62 percent in January 2013.

"The recent increase in onion prices in January 2012 and revision in diesel prices may put some pressure on headline inflation. However, inflation is expected to continue the moderating trend," said the annual document presented in Parliament by Finance Minister P Chidambaram.

Addressing a press conference after the release of the annual Economic Survey, Chief Economic Advisor to Finance Ministry Raghuram Rajan said high food inflation remain a worry for the policymakers.

Unlike last year when the food price inflation was mainly driven by higher protein food items, this year the pressure has been mounting in cereals.

The survey authored by Rajan points out that inflation has eased in almost all major advanced and emerging market economies in the current year.

"The positive effect of continuous policy easing by the major advanced and developing countries could pose a higher risk to inflation expectations. However, in the short run, given weak growth sentiments, the impact of policy easing may not lead to a surge in inflation and inflation expectations may remain anchored around current target inflation rates," the Survey said.

As per the World Bank, except for metals, most global commodity prices are expected to decline further in 2013 and 2014.

"The impact of benign inflationary expectations internationally will have a moderating impact on domestic prices," it said.

Business Standard beta
Thursday, Feb 28, 2013 | 09:40 AM IST

Potato gains 1.69% on spot demand, tight supply

The March potato gained Rs 12.90, or 1.69% to Rs 774 per quintal in business turnover of 46 lots

Potato prices gained 1.69% to Rs 774 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators created fresh positions, driven by a pick up in demand in the spot market amid tight supplies from producing belts.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, the March potato gained Rs 12.90, or 1.69% to Rs 774 per quintal in business turnover of 46 lots.

The March contract also moved up by Rs 12.90, or 1.63% to Rs 803.10 per quintal in 37 lots.

Market analysts said speculators created fresh positions on the back of pick up in demand in the spot market amid restricted arrivals from producing belts mainly led to rise in potato prices at futures market.

Pepper rebounds 1.11% as demand picks up

However, estimates of a higher output this year restricted the gains

Pepper prices rebounded by 1.11% to Rs 37,480 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators created fresh positions, driven by a rise in demand in the spot market.

However, estimates of a higher output this year restricted the gains.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, March pepper shot up by Rs 410, or 1.11% to Rs 37,480 per quintal with an open interest of 1,938 lots.

The April delivery jumped up by Rs 345, or 0.99% to Rs 35,110 per quintal in 875 lots.

Analysts said speculators created fresh positions after pick up in demand in the spot market mainly helped pepper prices to rebound at futures trade.

Millers stare at high wheat prices

If temperature rises in March, arrivals could gain momentum and prices may fall to Rs 1,550 from Rs 1,650 a quintal now

Despite abundant stocks of wheat in the country, flour millers are bracing for higher prices, compared to last year.

New wheat crop arrivals, which usually begin by now in Saurashtra (Gujarat) and Madhya Pradesh, have been delayed due to the prolonged winter. In traditional wheat-growing states, such as Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, arrivals are likely to start in the second week of April, provided temperatures start rising.

As on February 1, government warehouses had 30.8 million tonnes (mt) of wheat, against the quarterly buffer requirement of 8.2 mt. Wheat production in rabi 2011-12 stood at 93.9 mt, while procurement stood at 38.1 mt. This rabi season, production is estimated at 94 mt, while government agencies aim to procure about 44 mt. However, supply of wheat in the open market by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) is still a concern for millers, as they aren't securing enough stocks. Also, the delayed arrival of the new crop has made buying from markets difficult.

Ramesh Saraf, president of Gujarat Roller Flour Millers' Association, said mills in Gujarat were buying wheat at Rs 1,650 a quintal. Prices, he said, decreased Rs 60-70 a quintal in the last fortnight, as wheat exporters had deferred purchases.

"We purchased at Rs 1,190 a quintal last year. But the situation is different this year," Saraf said, adding wheat prices had risen due to the withdrawal of subsidies and the cost of gunny bags.

This year, wheat arrivals have been delayed due to a drop in temperatures in the last week of February. If temperatures rise in March, arrivals could gain momentum and prices may drop to Rs 1,550 a quintal. In the export market, prices stand at about Rs 1,550 a quintal. Indian exporters have many takers in Southeast Asia, West Asia and Africa. These exporters trade at low margins, but high volumes.

Adi Narayan Gupta, president of the Roller Flour Millers' Association of Uttar Pradesh, said despite Uttar Pradesh being a wheat producer, millers there were securing wheat at Rs 1,730 a quintal. This had to be rationalised, Gupta said.

FCI officials said wheat procurement in Uttar Pradesh only met public distribution requirements in the state. As wheat sold under the open market sales scheme was secured from other states, the landed cost was high.

Millers refrain from buying from the open market because government policies are inconsistent.

Gupta added, "We may buy wheat from the open market and incur storage costs and interest on bank borrowings. However, the government may, at any time, announce a decrease in the price of wheat sold through the open market sales scheme. This discourages us from buying in advance."

THE HINDU Business Line
Thursday, Feb 28, 2013

Pepper bounces back on bullish activities

KOCHI, FEB. 27: The pepper market on Wednesday bounced back on slow selling pressure and consequently all the active contracts ended much above the previous day closing.
There was no reason for the market to rise today, the trade claimed. The market, in fact, is being pushed up and pulled down on the whims and fancies of the operators, they alleged. Cued by the slow down in arrivals today, the bulls became aggressive and pushed the market up.

"Such high volatility in the market is hurting the trade," market sources told *Business Line*. Because of big difference between March and April, and April and May long position holders were switching over to average it out at a lower level, they said.

On the spot, 55 tonnes of fresh pepper were traded, they said.

Meanwhile, the trade in general believes that the release of the pepper locked up in the warehouses might be delayed indefinitely as they claimed that the "c&f agent" of the cartel had said it openly at the stake holders meeting here recently that the lots were not identifiable. This phenomenon has also aided the bull operators to push up the market, they said.

Given high fluctuations in the trading of a the small commodity pepper, farmers, dealers, traders and stake holders have urged the regulator to bring down the daily fluctuation price band to two per cent from the present 4 per cent.

March contract on the exchange opened on a firm note and moved up sharply in the opening hour itself and traded with volatility and upward trend throughout the day. Just before closing it touched Rs 37,950 a quintal up Rs 945 a quintal from the lowest price of the day. Then slipped marginally to the last traded price of Rs 37,895. March contract on the NCDEX increased by Rs 805 a quintal to close at Rs 37,875 a quintal. April and May went up Rs 535 and Rs 415, respectively, to close at Rs 35,300 and Rs 34260 a quintal.

Total turnover increased by 823 tonnes to 2,560 tonnes. Total open interest decreased by 46 tonnes to 3,465 tonnes.

March open interest fell by 119 tonnes to 1,833 tonnes while that of April and May moved up by 34 tonnes and 39 tonnes, respectively ,to close at 914 tonnes and 718 tonnes.

Spot prices in tandem with the futures market trend increased by Rs 300 a quintal to close at Rs38,300 (ungarbled) and Rs39,800 (MG 1) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market was went up following rise in futures coupled with strengthening of the rupee against the dollar to $7,700 a tonne (c&f) prompt, and Mar at $7,500 a tonne (c&f) and Apr at $7,000 a tonne (c&f).

Higher rabi arrivals pull down edible oils

MUMBAI, FEB 27: Imported edible oils continued to rule weak on increased selling pressure on Wednesday.
Soyabean oil dropped by Rs 2 for 10 kg and palmolein ruled steady on month-end demand. Groundnut oil declined by Rs 5, while higher arrivals of rabi crops in producing centres pulled down rapeseed/mustard oil further by Rs 25. Cottonseed refined oil inched up by Rs 4 on firm reports from producing centres.

Improved arrivals of rabi crops especially mustard and groundnut pulled down indigenous oils.

Arrivals of mustard seeds were at 2.75 lakh bags while groundnut arrivals were 1.75-2 lakh bags".

Liberty offloaded about 800-1,000 tonnes of palmolien for March at Rs 514-516. About 150-200 tonnes of palmolein were bought back by another leading refinery at Rs 510 for February. Weak futures market also weighed on physical markets.

Towards the end of the day, Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 520-522, super palmolein Rs 560 and sunflower refined oil Rs 790.

Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 521, soyabean refined oil at Rs 680 and sunflower refined oil Rs 780. Allana's rate for super palmolein was Rs 560.

In Saurashtra – Rajkot, groundnut oil dropped further to Rs 1,910 (Rs 1,915) for *telia tin* and Rs 1,240 (Rs 1,250) for 10 kg.

In the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil's March futures were Rs 687.50 (Rs 689.75); April was Rs 685.20 (Rs 685.25) and May was Rs 685.50 (Rs 685.30).

Malaysia's crude palm oil's March futures contracts closed at MYR 2,390 (MYR 2,387); April MYR 2,400 (MYR 2,403) and May dropped to MYR 2,410 (MYR 2,419) a tonne.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg): Groundnut oil 1,235 (1,240), soya refined oil 680 (682), sunflower exp. ref. 710 (710), sunflower ref. 785 (790), rapeseed ref. oil 720 (745), rapeseed expeller ref. 690 (715) cottonseed ref. oil 617 (613) and palmolein 512 (512).

Vikram Global Commodities, Chennai has quoted Rs 568 for Malaysian super palmolein.

Huge sugar inventories keep stockists away

MUMBAI, FEB 27: Spot prices on the Vashi wholesale sugar market dropped by Rs 4-10 a quintal on Wednesday.
Activities remained thin at the upper level ahead of the Union Budget.

Selling by some needy mills pulled down Naka rates by Rs10-20. Mill tender rates declined by Rs 10-20. Sources said that “month-end selling pulled down prices further in physical markets.

Maharashtra’s mills sold sugar at Rs 10-20 lower, otherwise most producers are expecting higher local demand with the start of new month from Friday.

“Upcountry buying is absent since long in Maharashtra forcing producers to concentrate on state level markets.

Prices in the other producing centres ruled at par with Maharashtra.

“Vashi market currently carries more than 12,000-12,500 bags (each of 100 kg) inventory keeping stockists away from fresh bulk buying sources said”.

In Vashi markets, arrivals were 64-65 truckloads (each of 100 bag) and local dispatches also improved to 63-64 truckloads.

On Tuesday evening merely 5-7 mills offered tenders and sold 15,000-16,000 bags (each of 100 kg) to local buyers at a lower price Rs 3,060-3,120 (Rs 3,070-3,130) for S-grade and Rs 3,160- 3,250 (Rs 3,180-3,250) for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar prices for March dropped by Rs 13 to Rs 3,055 (Rs 3,068); April declined by Rs 17 to Rs 3,124 (Rs 3,141) and May was Rs 3,175 (Rs 3,181) till noon.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 3,202- 3,282 (Rs 3,206-3,282) and M-grade Rs 3,252-3,421 (Rs 3,262-3,421). **Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 3,140-3,190 (Rs 3,150-3,190) and M-grade Rs 3,220-3,350 (Rs 3,240-3,350).

Poultry feed likely to turn dearer in near-term

KARNAL, FEB 27: Following an uptrend in prices of its key ingredients over the last few days, poultry feed products may turn dearer in the upcoming weeks.

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

However, soyameal and mustard de-oiled cake have witnessed some correction, input cost is still ruling on the higher side, he added.

After witnessing a good rally last week-end, soyameal dropped by Rs 290 and quoted at Rs 28,980 a tonne.

Bajra remained unchanged, after an uptrend last week, and sold at Rs 1,430 a quintal, maize sold at Rs 1,560. Rice bran oil was at Rs 55 a kg.Prices of mustard de-oiled cake decreased by Rs 20 and sold at Rs 1,420, meat and bone meal went for Rs 33 a kg, up 50 paisa, while DRB increased further by Rs 10 and sold at Rs 810 a kg, against Rs 715a week ago.

FEED PRICES

Feed products have been ruling unchanged since February 6 but rising input cost may push feed prices upwards.Broiler concentrate quoted at Rs 1,780 for a 50-kg bag while broiler starter mash was at Rs 1,420.

Layer concentrate 25 per cent sold at Rs 1,385 for a 50-kg bag while layer concentrate 35 per cent quoted at Rs 1,070.

Pre-lay mash quoted at Rs 990 and while broiler finisher went for Rs 1,400.

POULTRY PRODUCTS

Meanwhile, higher supplies in the market coupled with sluggish domestic demand pulled egg, chick and broiler prices down on Wednesday.

Egg went down by 27 paisa and sold at Rs 3.50. Broiler dropped by Rs 8 and quoted at Rs 90 a kg, while chicken sold at Rs 28, down Rs 5.

Slack buying support weakens tur

INDORE, FEB 27:

Profit booking and decline in buying support at higher rates dragged tur prices to Rs 4,450-4,500 a quintal (down Rs 50).

Similarly tur (Madhya Pradesh) declined by Rs 100 to Rs 3,800-4,000.

For the past one week, tur has been witnessing an uptrend with prices rising in Maharashtra and weak arrivals on account of winters rain. Later with improvement in weather condition, higher demand from millers added to the bullish sentiment with prices going as high as Rs 4,625.

However, a drop in demand at higher rate again dragged prices in the past two days by Rs 175-200.

Weak buying support also dragged its dal with tur dal (full) on Wednesday declining to Rs 6,100-6,200, tur dal (sawa no.) at Rs 5,600-5,650, while tur marka ruled stable at Rs 6,700-6,800.

Weak demand also pulled down urad and masoor.

Slack demand and weak buying support dragged urad prices by Rs 100-150 in the past two days.

On Wednesday, urad (bold) ruled at Rs 3,450-3,500, while urad (medium) was quoted at Rs 2,800-3,000.

Urad dal on the other hand ruled steady with urad dal (medium) being quoted at Rs 3,800-4,000, urad dal (bold) at Rs 4,700-4,800, while urad mongar ruled at Rs 5,400-5,600.

Masoor also declined on weak demand and declined in buying support at higher rate. Masoor prices declined by Rs 100 in the past two days to Rs 3,700, while masoor (medium) also declined to Rs 3,500. Masoor dal, however, remained unchanged on subdued demand.

Spot turmeric drops with quality

ERODE, FEB 27: Spot prices of turmeric dropped on Wednesday despite lower arrivals. The fall was mainly due to average quality of turmeric offered for sale.
“Though we are having a few upcountry orders, prices were decreased as the buyers quoted price based on the quality.

“Quality hybrid variety arrived and the traders purchased the entire quantity quoting a slightly higher price. In the next few days more orders from North India is expected,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said that the turmeric futures market ruled flat and prices quoted at Rs 6,200 a quintal.

Growers said that they will only bring 3,000-4,000 bags of old stocks every day till the prices improve.

Of the 5,006 bags that arrived, 60 per cent stocks was sold.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety (new crop) was sold at Rs 4,261-6,499, the root variety Rs 4,085-5,739. The finger variety of old crop was sold at Rs 4,261-6,576; the root variety Rs 4,069-5,639.

Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 6,311-6,807, the root variety Rs 5,755-6,109. Of the 1,060 bags put up for sale, 452 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,346-6,379; the root variety Rs 5,299-5,920. Of the 549 bags on offer, 490 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, finger variety fetched Rs 5,259-6,649; the root variety Rs 5,111-5,899.

Of the 555 bags thar arrived, 549 got sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Bank, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,419-6,619; the root variety Rs 5,017-5,812. All nine bags kept for sale were sold.

Lower output estimates boost castorseed

RAJKOT, FEB 27: Spot and future castorseed prices rose sharply on Wednesday following estimates of lower production for the coming year along with a strong demand for castor oil.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), castorseed March contracts gained 3.02 per cent or Rs 111 at Rs 3,790 a quintal, with an open interest of 96,960 lots.

NCDEX April contract increased by Rs 111 to Rs 3,877, with an open interest of 80,640 lots.

The castorseed production this year is estimated lower at 11.43 lakh tonnes (lt) against 15.76 lt last year, according to a survey conducted by the Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA).

The fall in production is largely due to drop in acreage in Gujarat.

On the Rajkot Commodity Exchange (RCX), castorseed March contract improved by Rs 95 to Rs 3,850.

RCX spot castor price moved up by Rs 52.50 to Rs 3,577.50.

About 65,000-70,000 bags of castorseed arrived in Gujarat and the price increased by Rs 23 to Rs 705-725 for 20 kg in the mandies.

About 3,700-3,800 bags of castor arrived in Saurashtra and the price quoted was Rs 685-707.

Kedia Commodity Comtrade Pvt Ltd said that the market rallied today on short covering as the open interest dropped by 14.05 per cent, clearly indicating that the rally can test Rs 3,850-3,900 in the next session.

Also support is seen due to lower production estimates for the coming year along with strong castor oil demand.

Calibrate import duty on edible oils: Survey

NEW DELHI, FEB 27: In order to boost domestic output of vegetable oil, the Economic Survey today suggested that import duty on cooking oils should be calibrated to protect the interest of farmers, consumers and processors. The recommendation comes in the backdrop of the government raising import duty on crude edible oil to 2.5 per cent from zero, while 'defreezing' the tariff value of all edible oils.

India is one of the largest producers of oilseeds in the world. However, 50 per cent of its domestic requirements are met through imports, which touched a record over 10 million tonnes last year.

“Considering this situation, it is time to frame a price band for edible oils in a manner that harmonises interests of domestic farmers, processors, and consumers through imposition of import duty at an appropriate rate,” the Survey said.

One instrument for promoting future domestic production is “calibration of the import duty structure.”

The import duty would also generate revenue, which could also be utilised for an oilseeds development programme.

The oilseeds production, though it has increased in recent years from 184.40 lakh tonnes in 2000—01 to 297.99 lakh tonnes in 2011—12, has not kept pace with the demand for edible oils in India.

Imports have helped raise the per capita availability of edible oils from 5.8 kg in 1992—93 to 14.5 kg in 2010—11.

Organic poultry farming scandal rocks Europe

BERLIN, FEB. 27: Germany is hit by a new food scandal even as authorities struggled to restore consumers' confidence in meat products shattered by the recent discovery of horse meat in thousands of ready meals sold across Europe labelled as beef.
Prosecutors in the north German city of Oldenburg said they are investigating allegations that more than 150 poultry farms in the State of Lower Saxony have defrauded consumers by marketing millions of mass-produced eggs as products of free-range or organic farming.

FLOUTED RULES

The investigations are based on information that for many years poultry farmers across northern Germany have systematically violated the rules for free-range and organic poultry farming by keeping too many chickens in their stalls than permitted and sold their eggs under the organic label for a higher price, according to chief prosecutor Roland Hermann.

It appears that this was a widespread practice among poultry farms in northern Germany, he said in a TV interview.

Investigators are trying to establish whether the poultry farms deliberately deceived the consumers by mislabelling their eggs and whether they violated the national food safety regulations and the laws on organic farming, Hermann said.

Around 50 poultry farms in three other German states as well as some companies operating in the Netherlands and Belgium also, are currently being investigated, media reports said.

Germany’s agriculture and consumer affairs minister Ilse Aigner said the information available so far pointed to a “large-scale deception of consumers”.

She urged the State Governments to make sure that national and EU regulations concerning free-range and organic farming are strictly implemented.

LICENCES MAY BE CANCELLED

Lower Saxony’s new agriculture minister Chrisitian Meyer said the State Government is examining whether to withdraw the licences of the companies involved in the current investigations.

“There may be criminal forces behind this massive deception of consumers,” he said in a tv interview.

Prosecutors said they believed that the poultry farms and other companies involved in the suspected fraud may have sold millions of eggs under the organic label, which they did not deserve.

Meanwhile, the Swedish furniture giant IKEA became the latest company to be caught up in Europe’s horse meat scandal.

It stopped the sale of its popular meatballs Kottbular at its retail outlets and restaurants in Germany and 23 other countries after horse meat was detected in it by the authorities in the Czech Republic some days go, the company said in a statement.

Price band on edible oils can balance

NEW DELHI, FEB. 27: The Economic Survey has a made a case for creating a price band for edible oils through levy of appropriate import duty.

Such a move will help balance the interests of domestic farmers, processors and consumers.

India, despite being a large producer of oilseeds, depends heavily on imports to meet half its edible oil requirements.

Output of oilseeds has not kept pace with the rising demand for edible oils. Import dependence has increased from 3 per cent to 50 per cent in the past two decades.

Total edible oil imports stood at 9.8 million tonnes in 2011-12, with an import bill of $9.5 billion, and are expected to cross 11.5 million tonnes this year.

CALIBRATION

The Survey said calibration of the import duty structure would help promote domestic production of oilseeds. The high level of imports are primarily because of competitive prices of edible oils in the international market, aided by the prevailing low import duty structure to protect consumers.

“India has a market share that allows it to set some independent tariff policy. Considering the situation, it is time to frame a price band for edible oils in a manner that harmonises the interests of domestic farmers, processors, and consumers through imposition of import duty at an appropriate rate,” the Survey said.

REVENUES

Besides, the import duty will also generate revenues, which can be utilised for an oilseeds development programme.

The edible oil industry has been demanding a hike in import duty on refined oils as a low duty structure has threatened the viability of domestic refineries.

Refined oils attract a duty of 7.5 per cent, while a 2.5 per cent levy has been imposed on the crude palm oil imports recently.

The Government recently hiked the tariff value on all edible oils, which had remained unchanged since 2006.

"This is a right step for aligning the tariffs to current prices of edible oils in the international market," the Survey said. Such a move would also help the domestic production of oil palm.

Subsidy for cardamom growers

KOCHI, FEB. 27: Cardamom growers can avail the subsidy for the replanting scheme for the current financial year ending on March 31. The Spices Board is finalising the beneficiaries now and planters who have not availed of the scheme have to submit applications immediately. The subsidy can be availed of by all growers having area up to eight hectares. The total assistance provided for growers having area up to four hectares under this programme is Rs 34,816, which will be disbursed in two annual instalments of Rs 17,780 and Rs 17,036. An assistance of Rs 26,375, which will be given in two annual instalments of Rs 13,470 and Rs 12,905 will be provided to growers with holding size from four to eight hectares. The growers need to approach the nearest field office of the Board along with copies of cardamom CR (Certificate of Registration)/ ACR (applied for cardamom registration), land tax receipt, survey sketch and bank account details for filing application. The application and necessary guidance in this regard will be provided by the nearest field office of the Board. In the event of any difficulty being faced by the growers in filing application under this scheme in the field offices of the Board, the growers are requested to contact the Regional offices or Head Office of Spices Board.

Budget may not remove curbs on sugar industry

The decision to decontrol may be taken up separately by the Union Cabinet after the Budget ....

NEW DELHI, FEB. 27: Even as the Economic Survey has pitched for decontrol of the sugar sector, there are indications that the decision may not be part of the Union Budget to be presented by Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on Thursday.

"Announcing the removal of levy and imposing an additional excise duty to enable the Government to finance the sugar purchases for the public distribution system as part of the Budget may not be politically expedient. It will give the Opposition just the right handle to dub the Budget as anti-people," sources in the know said.

According to them, the decision to decontrol may be taken up separately by the Union Cabinet after the Budget, possibly next week.

The Finance Ministry has reportedly expressed concern over the potential rise in sugar prices if the release mechanism were to be scrapped and an additional excise duty is imposed on the sweetener.

Food Minister K.V. Thomas is expected to address the Finance Ministry's concerns on the issue and consultations were likely to begin after the Budget.

The Survey pointed out that the Indian sugar sector suffered from "policy inconsistency and unpredictability". The sugar industry in India is over-regulated and prone to cyclicality due to price interventions. Stating that a greater play of market forces would provide better prices and serve the interests of all stakeholders, the Survey suggested the “Government should come into picture only in situations where absolutely necessary”.

The export bans and controls could be replaced with small variable external tariffs to stabilise prices. “A stable, predictable and consistent policy reforms have to be brought about in a fiscally neutral manner and issues considered for implementation in a phased manner,” it said.

The Rangarajan Committee had recommended removal of levy sugar system and scrap the regulated release mechanism for the open market sale. It had also suggested phasing out cane reservation area and dispensing with minimum distance criteria between mills, stable trade policy, no quantitative or movement restrictions on by-products such as molasses and ethanol, besides dispensing with compulsory jute packing.

Hike in import duty buoys rubber

KOTTAYAM, FEB. 27: Spot rubber improved on Wednesday. The market firmed up following the decision of the Government to enhance the import duty to bring down imports and stabilise domestic prices.
“There were fresh enquiries in the market and we expect a moderate recovery in the local market,” an observer said.

Sheet rubber increased to Rs 158 (156.50) a kg, according to traders. The grade closed firm at Rs 157 (156.50) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi as reported by the Rubber Board. The trend was partially mixed as latex finished flat amidst dull volumes.

In futures, the March series improved to Rs 157.80 (157.65), April to Rs 162.90 (162.34) and May to Rs 166.31 (165.32) while the June series dropped to Rs 168.10 (168.41) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) weakened to Rs 161.05 (162.94) a kg at Bangkok. The March futures slid to ¥270.10 (Rs 158.63) from ¥272.5 a kg during the day session but then bounced back to ¥273.90 (Rs 160.87) a kg in the night session on Tokyo Commodity Exchange (TOCOM).

Spot rubber rates (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 158 (156.50); RSS-5: 152.50 (151.50); Ungraded: 148 (146.50); ISNR 20: 153 (152) and Latex 60 per cent: 99 (99).

Dry spell hits arrivals at Coonoor tea auction

COONOOR, FEB. 27: The arrival for the auctions of Coonoor Tea Trade Association continues to decline following prolonged dry weather limiting the harvest of the green leaf supplied as raw material to factories. The arrival of green leaf got reduced by 60 per cent. Collectively, the arrival for Sale No: 9 of auctions to be held on Thursday and Friday has declined to the lowest volume offered so far this calendar.

Of the 10.97 lakh kg coming up for sale, as much as 1.66 lakh kg comprises teas which had remained unsold in previous auctions. Fresh tea accounts for only 9.31 lakh kg – among the lowest so far this year.

This volume is as much as 1.54 lakh kg less than the hitherto lowest volume offered last week although it some 25,000 kg more than the offer this time last year.

Of the 10.97 lakh kg on offer, 8.16 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 2.81 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades. As much as 10.18 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 0.79 lakh kg, orthodox variety. In the leaf counter, only 0.49 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 7.67 lakh kg, CTC. Among the dusts, only 0.30 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 2.51 lakh kg, CTC.

Tyre industry up in arms

KOCHI, FEB. 27: The tyre industry has opposed the Government's decision to increase the import duty on rubber, saying that it will

have adverse consequences for the user industry.
Anant Goenka, Chairman of Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association (ATMA), said in a statement issued here that the decision to restrict imports will have adverse consequences for the tyre industry and its long term impact will be felt on the entire value-chain of rubber sector.

The increase in duty on natural rubber will severely impact the industry at a time when the automobile sector is witnessing a negative growth in major vehicle categories, including commercial vehicles leading to demand slowdown in tyre industry as well.

Commercial vehicle tyres account for over 60 per cent of tyre industry turnover and is a major segment for rubber consumption, he said.

ATMA said that the import of rubber is inevitable in view of widening gap in domestic production and consumption.

Quoting Rubber Board data, the Association said that during the last fiscal, the gap between domestic production and consumption of rubber was over 60,000 tonnes.

During the current fiscal also, the production is likely to lag behind domestic consumption by 50,000 tonnes despite slowdown in the economy.

At current price of approx Rs 157/kg, the import duty of Rs 34 will work out to 21 per cent which is far higher than basic duty on tyres of 10 per cent and effective rate of duty of 8.6 per cent from countries such as China in view of trade agreements.

The increase in import duty has, therefore, accentuated the already prevailing inverted duty structure in the industry.

FinMin to decide on hiking import duty on rubber

NEW DELHI/CHENNAI, FEB. 27: The import duty on natural rubber is likely to be

hiked. The Commerce Ministry has recommended an increase in customs duty on rubber to protect the domestic growers' interests, official sources said.
The hike could range up to Rs 34 a kg, an increase of 70 per cent over the prevailing duty of Rs 20 a kg (or 20 per cent of the domestic price, whichever is lower).

The latest move follows a meeting that Commerce Minister Anand Sharma held with a group of United Democratic Front (UDF) MPs from Kerala on Tuesday on the intervention of the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

The Finance Ministry is expected to take a call on increasing the import duty over the next few days, sources said.

FORMULA APPROACH

The recommended import duty hike is based on a formula worked out on the average domestic price of rubber over the last three years, said Jose K. Mani, Member of Parliament of the Kerala Congress (Mani).

According to the formula, the new import duty on natural rubber will be 20 per cent of the domestic price until the price reaches Rs 171 a kg, when the duty will be capped at Rs 34. The figure of Rs 171 was arrived at after taking the average of the domestic price over the past three years.

Since the current domestic price of rubber is hovering around Rs 157 a kg, the duty to be imposed on every kg of imported natural rubber will be at Rs 31.40. If domestic prices go up, the duty would also go up – until the duty reaches Rs 34, where it would be capped.

Kerala accounts for 90 per cent of rubber produced in the country. Rubber prices have fallen by about a third to below Rs 160 a kg from early last year's Rs 230 a kg. This has triggered worries among the growers.

IMPORTS

The natural rubber is largely imported into the country by tyre makers. Natural rubber imports stood at 1.31 lakh tonnes (lt) during the first half of current fiscal. Unconfirmed reports peg the rubber imports at 2 lt till now. Last fiscal, a record 2.13 lt of rubber were imported.

Natural rubber accounts for about 60 per cent of raw material costs for the tyre industry.

Spices Board finalising beneficiaries for cardamom subsidy

The subsidy can be obtained by all growers having an area up to eight hectares.

KOCHI, FEB 27: The Spices Board is finalising the beneficiaries for subsidy under the cardamom replanting scheme for the current financial year ending on March 31, 2013. Those planters who have not availed themselves of the benefits under the scheme are to submit their applications immediately.
The subsidy can be obtained by all growers having an area up to eight hectares.

The total assistance provided for growers having an area up to four ha under this programme is Rs 34,816/ha, which will be disbursed in two annual instalments of Rs 17,780 and Rs 17,036.

An assistance of Rs 26,375, which will be given in two annual instalments of Rs 13,470 and Rs 12,905, will be provided to growers with holding size from four to eight hectares.

Interested growers in Idukki and Wayanad districts, who have taken up replanting of cardamom in 2012 planting season and not filed applications are requested to submit the same immediately.

The growers need to approach the nearest field office of the Board along with copies of cardamom CR (Certificate of Registration)/ ACR (applied for cardamom registration), land tax receipt, survey sketch and bank account details for filing application.

The application and necessary guidance in this regard will be provided by the nearest field office of the Board.

In the event of any difficulty being faced by the growers in filing application under this scheme in the field offices of the Board, the growers are requested to contact the Regional offices or Head Office of Spices Board.
