

Small onion brings cheer to farmers



Women working at an onion field near Sathyamangalam. —PHOTO: M. GOVARTHAN

The small onion prices may be bringing tears to the consumers. But the farmers who are engaged in the cultivation of the crop in the district are making a handsome profit this year as the prices have shot up to Rs. 40 to Rs. 45 a kg.

A good number of farmers, particularly those in the TN Palayam block of the district, have taken up small onion cultivation. Vaniputhur, Goundampalayam, Kongarpalayam and Chendrayanpalayam in the TN Palayam block are the largest onion producing areas in the district.

“Small onion is a short-term crop. Its water requirement is modest when compared to paddy and sugarcane. Since cash crops like turmeric do not fetch good income, I chose to cultivate small onion this year. The return is good because the price remains high in the market,” says R. Chenniappan, a farmer in TN Palayam block, who cultivated small onions in an acre of his land.

The price of small onion, which hovered around Rs. 25-a-kg three weeks ago, has now increased to Rs. 32-a-kg in the wholesale markets. Meanwhile, people in the district are spending Rs. 40 to Rs. 45 to purchase a kg of onion at the neighbourhood stores.

Farmers in the district cultivate small onions in more than 1,500 hectares, horticulture officials say.

“The average yield is around four tonnes an acre and we get a return of about Rs. 1.2 lakh an acre at the current price,” farmers point out.

“While the farming community is facing a heavy loss in the cultivation of crops such as paddy, sugarcane and turmeric, vegetables, particularly the small onions, give them a significant return. The income from the vegetables helps the farmers to meet their living expenses,” points out district secretary of Tamil Nadu Farmers Association T. Subbu.

Kulithalai farmers seek water from Amaravathy and Bhavani



The dry riverbed of Cauvery at Kulithalai in Karur district.—File photo

Worried farmers dismayed at the parched fields in the Kulithalai and Krishnarayapuram areas of the district have urged the State government to arrange water for irrigating their fields from rivers Amaravathy and Bhavani to save the standing crops. Though they do not have the right to a share from those rivers the farmers have been left with no choice but to plead for diversion from those rivers whose ayacuts end miles ahead of Kulithalai.

The western and north western parts of Karur district have old aycuts existing since the days of yore and served by the tail end of rivers Amaravathy and Bhavani and all fall in the Karur taluk. Several thousand acres of fertile lands were being irrigated by the Amaravathy and Bhavani that feed Erode, Tirupur, and Coimbatore district before draining into river Cauvery.

Pointing that out, some farmers in Karur district, particularly those at the head of the Cauvery delta in the Kulithalai-Krishnarayapuram belt, have petitioned the State government to make available water from those two rivers to irrigate the starved areas of Kulithalai.

Stating that crops such as paddy, banana, sugarcane and betel vine raised in thousands of acres are withering for want of adequate water in the region, State vice-president of the farmers' wing of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee Puliur Nagarajan has urged the State government to save the standing crops by ordering release of water from Amaravathy and Bhavani reservoirs in those rivers so that the realized water in river Cauvery could be channelised to feed downstream areas in Kulithalai-Krishnarayapuram belt.

Moreover he has pointed out that there were a total of 17 channels on either banks of river Cauvery down Mettur and they have assured irrigation rights for decades during specific conditioned periods. They have aycuts measuring more than two lakh acres where cash crops and food crops are raised. They remain parched and require water urgently for at least a wetting to save the crops.

Besides there are more than 40 combined water supply schemes in the Tiruchi region having their source in river Cauvery. They have been siphoning off ground water and the aquifers in the river bed have been numbed to a great extent that water table to a distance of 30 km on either side of the river bed has got depleted alarmingly causing untold misery to agriculturalists as their crops and live stock have been affected .

Since water availability is low in Mettur dam, the Chief Minister Jayalalithaa could direct the PWD officials to release adequate quantum of water from Amaravathy and Bhavani reservoirs to save the standing crops in the upper delta of Cauvery. If not saved in time crops worth more than Rs. 20,000 crore would be lost to drought, Mr. Nagarajan has stated in his memorandum.

Water level

Water level in the Periyar dam on Monday stood at 112.90 feet (136 feet) with no inflow and a discharge of 105 cusecs. The level in the Vaigai dam was 49.21 feet (71 feet) with an inflow and a discharge of 60 cusecs. The combined Periyar credit stood at 2,511 mcft.

Farmers in Delta hail SC order

Farmers in Cauvery delta districts of Thanjavur and Tiruvarur on Monday welcomed the Supreme Court order setting February 20 as the deadline for gazetting the final award of the Cauvery River Water Disputes Tribunal.

“The order is a welcome one. At least now, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh should realise its urgency and importance and gazette the final award” said S. Ranganathan, secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association.

He also said the Supreme Court had reminded the Centre of notifying the final award four times in the past but in vain. “It is not known why the Central government is so indifferent to SC’s order. Now it cannot afford to be indifferent as a final date has been fixed by the SC.”

The release of two tmc may not be sufficient for saving the entire samba crop in the delta, Mr. Ranganathan said. A study conducted by farmers showed that the crop was lost in coastal areas from Tharangampadi in Nagapattinam district up to Muthupettai in Tiruvarur district. In the upper reaches of Thanjavur district, the crop on nearly 1,000 acres had been affected at Kadambakudi in Budalur taluk. Crop on three lakh acres in Thanjavur, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam districts under pump set irrigation alone was safe.

P.R. Pandian, State council member of Tamil Nadu Vivsayigal Sangam, said that delta districts were facing drinking water problem and it should be immediately addressed to. “At least now the Central Government should gazette the final award,” he said.

Minister announces welfare schemes for coir workers



COIR ART:A replica of the 'Mona Lisa' in coir is the centre of attraction at the Coir Kerala 2013, in Alappuzha.— PHOTO: BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Union Minister of State for Labour Kodikkunnil Suresh said the Centre was planning to extend a number of welfare schemes including Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), Employees State Insurance (ESI) and Employees Provident Fund (EPF) to coir workers.

The Minister was inaugurating a national seminar organised here as part of Coir Kerala 2013, an international event on coir and natural fibre products, on Monday. The Skill Development Initiative, a programme designed to increase employability of individuals by providing them vocational training and to certify existing skills that will help them find jobs, will be also extended to coir workers. Urging the coir agencies to take the lead in forming projects with investment in skill upgrading, new technology and product development in coir, he said that the country stands to gain the ground that Chinese products are losing worldwide through such initiatives. He also mooted the idea of coir parks on the parallels of rubber parks to buy technology, make products and find export markets for them.

He asked the State Government to take advantage of schemes like Assistance to States for Infrastructure Development and Exports (ASDE) for setting up coir parks.

He also asked the State Government to set up a Coir and Natural Fibre Design Institute on the lines of National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) and Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) to focus on research and design aspects.

Delivering the key note address, Planning Board member, G. Vijayaraghavan proposed an idea of an innovation zone for coir sector like a start up village for technology. Coir Minister Adoor Prakash, Coir Development Director K. Madanan and National Coir Research and Management Institute (NCRMI) director K.R. Anil also spoke.

C.P. John, member, Planning Board, said that was not shortage of funds but lack of new projects that stalled modernisation in the coir industry. He was inaugurating a second session of national seminar here on Monday. Coir Kerala 2013 will conclude on February 6.

Delta districts farmers hail Supreme Court order

Cauvery delta districts farmers welcomed the Supreme Court order setting February 20 as the deadline for gazetting the final award of the Cauvery River Water Disputes Tribunal

Awaiting the mangoes



Coming soon: The flowering mango trees are a sign of a bumper harvest, in Medak.- PHOTO: MOHAMMED ARIF

Ganjam farmers oppose water project

The proposed project to provide water to the Krushnaprasad block within the limits of Chilika Lake in Puri district is being opposed by farmers of Ganjam block.

They have approached Chief Minister Naveen Patniak on the issue through a memorandum. They have also suggested alternatives to the proposed project. They have threatened to launch a 'jail bhara' agitation in April, if the State government did not show any sympathetic attitude towards the issue.

On Monday, a group of local leaders of Ganjam block spoke to media in the city. According to them, the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) Department has proposed a project worth Rs. 2,500 crore to take water from Kansarigand natural reservoir on the Rushikulya river near Potlampur to Krushnaprasad block through a pipeline. The natural reservoir is also the recharging source for three wells near Badamadhapur which provide water to Berhampur city. The Ruhsikulya river bed remains almost dry from December to June. They feel taking away water from the Kansarigand reservoir will affect the collection of water from the three wells the water levels of which have already gone down.

“There are several lift irrigation points on the periphery of this reservoir and some of them have already dried up. If water supply in the reservoir gets further reduced due to the proposed project, then more numbers of lift irrigation points may get dry,” says one of the leaders. This area happens to be a major zone for vegetable cultivation due to availability of irrigation facility.

Clarification sought from Amartya Sen on fiscal growth

India is likely to have worse food security problem than China in 21st century’



Gujarath Vidyapeeth Visiting professor Mark Lindley delivering speech at The Hindu BL Club Interface on Acharya Nagarjuna University Campus in Guntur on Monday. Also seen are Dean Social Sciences B. Sambasiva Rao, university Registrar R.R.L .Kantham and former member of Maharashtra Planning Board H.M. Desarda. —Photo: T. Vijaya Kumar

“I sense a contradiction between Amartya Sen’s statement of 2006 that ‘India certainly needs more economic growth’ and the argument in his book of 2009 that ‘GDP doesn’t add up’. I like him to clarify what kind of growth – if not GDP – he thinks India needs.”

Mark Lindley, visiting professor in Economics at Gujarath Vidyapith, university founded in 1920 by Mahatma Gandhi, spoke at *The Hindu-Business Line* Club campus interface to the corporate world at the Acharya Nagarjuna University near here on Monday.

“India is likely to have worse food security problem than China in the 21st century because the population density is some two and a half times that of China (and 12 times that of the USA). It is true that India’s population is growing only about 1.5 per cent a year nowadays

whereas the rate was some two per cent per year until the 1990s. I hope this trend continues,” Mr. Lindley said.

Speaking on the dwindling non-renewable resources, Mr. Lindley said economist Kenneth E. Boulding had predicted already in 1966 a ‘Spaceship Earth’ economy.

But the closed economy of the future might be called the “spaceman” economy in which the Earth would become - a single spaceship without unlimited reservoirs of anything either for exploitation or for pollution and in which man must find his place in a cyclical ecological system. He said at the end of different geological eras were noted by the huge amounts of extinctions and humankind was now entering into the end of such an era. Recalling Rachel Carson the author of the path-breaking book ‘Silent Spring’, Mr Lindley said, “Indication of harm, not absolute proof of harm, is the call to action.”

University of Hyderabad executive council member Ecological Economist H.M. Desarda said what was being considered growth was not development. It was anti-development.

The Indian farmer who strayed from organic farming to chemical farming had got into the debt trap and was being forced to commit suicide. Nearly a quarter of a million farmers had committed suicides.

People were being seen as resources by scientists, as voters by politicians and as customers by corporate firms. Acharya Nagarjuna University (ANU) Registrar R R L Kantham, Officer on Special Duty Z. Vishnuvardhan and Dean Faculty of Social Sciences B. Sambasiva Rao spoke.

‘Release water from KRS’

Demand: Members of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha staging a protest in Mandya on Monday.— photo: B. Mahadeva

Farmers from Gejjalagere and members of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) staged separate protests here on Monday demanding the immediate release of water from the Krishnaraja Sagar (KRS) into canals to save standing crops.

While the KRRS members staged a protest outside the office of Cauvery Neeravari Nigam Ltd. (CNNL), farmers blocked traffic near Maddur on the Bangalore–Mysore Highway. Traffic was affected for a while following the protest.

CNNL had stopped releasing water from the reservoir into canals on January 1 as the water-level in the reservoir dipped to 82.80 ft. Since then, farmers have been requesting CNNL to release water. On Monday, more than 200 protesters reached the CNNL office and requested the officials to consider their demand.

“CNNL should immediately release water into canals,” KRRS leader Shambhuna Halli Suresh told *The Hindu*. The KRRS members submitted a memorandum to CNNL officials. The agitating farmers dispersed after officials promised to consider their demand.

Symposium on disability management in farming

A ten-point charter of recommendations was adopted at the conclusion of the four-day national symposium on “Disability Management in Agriculture and Farming” at Indian Spinal Injuries Centre here on Monday, seeking constitution of a task force on the issue among other things.

The other major recommendations include promoting indigenously developed assistive technologies for farmers with disabilities, setting up a unit on disability management in agriculture/farming at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) as also the Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering, development of skill-development in agriculture (along with the implementation strategy) and inclusion of an optional/extra paper on disability management in the curricula of various courses offered by Central, State Agricultural Universities and ICAR-funded Research Institutes.

Speaking on the occasion, disability affairs expert Bhushan Punani stressed the need to follow a comprehensive multi-sectoral community-based rehabilitation programme to cover the key domains of well-being such as health, education and livelihood and the empowerment of persons with disabilities and their families.

Disability Studies expert P. R. Ramanujam demanded that persons with disabilities should be given due share and representation in all high-level constitutional and statutory bodies such as

Parliament and Public Sector Undertakings to achieve the goal of empowering persons with disabilities.

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Briefly/ 04febcan03cm sugarcane

Chief Minister Jayalalithaa issued orders appointing farmers as members of the Sugarcane Allotment Committee, at the Secretariat on Monday.

An official release said the farmers represented Coimbatore, Thanjavur and Tiruvannamalai districts and their main task was to allot suitable lands to new sugar mills for sugarcane

cultivation and to enable the existing mills to carry out necessary changes as required. —
Special Correspondent

Send CWC team to Tamil Nadu to inspect standing crops, says court

With a view to assessing Tamil Nadu's claim on the condition of the standing crops, the Supreme Court on Monday directed the Central Water Commission (CWC) Chairman to appoint an experts committee of three members to visit the Cauvery delta region of Thiruvarur, Thanjavur and Nagapattinam districts and submit a report to it latest by February 6.

A Bench of Justices R.M. Lodha, J. Chelameswar and Madan B. Lokur gave this direction following disputed claims by Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on the standing crops' condition in Tamil Nadu.

Till the report was submitted, the Bench said, Tamil Nadu, which had stopped release from the Mettur reservoir, could release 2 tmcft of water to save the standing crops and this quantity would have to be replenished by Karnataka.

Conflicting stand

The court said, "There is a conflicting stand of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on the standing crops. According to Tamil Nadu, as of today, 6 lakh acres of its delta region are under single samba paddy crop. Three lakh acres of this will require two wetting and the remaining one wetting and in all, the water requirement for this crop is 9 tmcft. In the affidavit filed by Karnataka today, it is stated that about 40% of the area has already been harvested. In the 50% of the area, the crop is ready for harvest. As regards remaining 10% of the area, it is stated that it is at the stage of physiological maturity and even in this area no water is required as the crop is in maturity stage."

Earlier, senior counsel C.S. Vaidyanathan, appearing for Tamil Nadu, told the court that Karnataka's claim for drinking water supply, including the requirement of Bangalore city as 23 tmcft was highly inflated and excessive. The pro-rata requirement from February to May would be only 6 tmcft and if availability of groundwater was taken into consideration, the requirement would be only 3 tmcft. He said the gross storage in the 4 reservoirs of Karnataka as on January 31 was 24.3 tmcft and the effective storage was 14.3 tmcft.

He sought a direction to Karnataka to release at least 9 tmcft.

Senior counsel Fali Nariman, appearing for Karnataka, disputed the figures given by Tamil Nadu. He said no water was required by that State as there was no standing crop. Even if there were some crops they were ready for harvesting and no water was required.

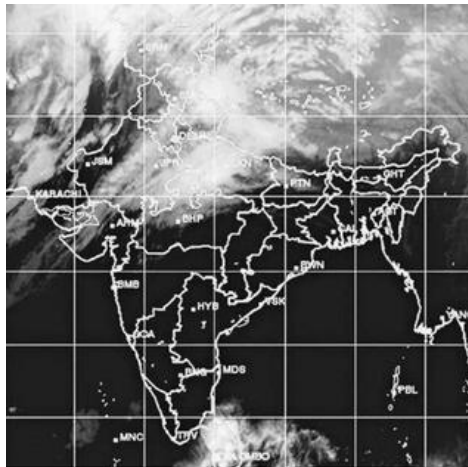
He suggested that the court depute a team from the CWC to verify the claim made by Tamil Nadu.

Water released from Mettur

T. Ramakrishnan reports from Chennai:

Following the court order, the Tamil Nadu authorities started releasing 9,000 cusecs from the Mettur dam from 9 p.m. on Monday. This will go on for three days, an official said.

weather



New Delhi (Plm)	27	12	0	31
New Delhi (Sfd)	26	12	Tr.	34
Chandigarh	24	14	4	53
Hissar	23	15	3	36
Bhuntar	16	4	26	123

Shimla	13	4	12	130
Jammu	18	12	24	68
Srinagar	8	2	3	61
Amritsar	18	8	11	27
Patiala	22	14	3	28
Jaipur	24	16	0	1
Udaipur	27	15	0	0
Allahabad	28	11	0	0
Lucknow	26	11	0	5
Varanasi	25	10	0	16
Dehradun	22	13	1	120
Agartala	29	12	0	0
Ahmedabad	33	18	0	0
Bangalore	30	16	0	0
Bhubaneshwar	32	17	0	1
Bhopal	28	18	0	0
Chennai	31	21	0	tr
Guwahati	28	9	0	0
Hyderabad	30	19	0	Tr.
Kolkata	28	16	0	12
Mumbai	29	21	0	0
Nagpur	32	15	0	10
Patna	25	12	0	12
Pune	33	16	0	0
Thiruvananthapuram	33	22	0	4
Imphal	24	6	0	0
Shillong	17	7	7	9

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

Rain at most places

RAINFALL: Rain/snow has occurred at most places over Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Uttarakhand. Rain/thundershower have occurred at many places over Punjab, at a few places over Haryana and west Rajasthan and at a isolated places over east Rajasthan and west Uttar Pradesh. Weather was mainly dry over rest of the region. The chief amounts of precipitation in cm are: HIMACHAL PRADESH: (3 cm and above) Kumarsen, 11, Saloni, Seobagh, Dhundi and Udaipur 5 each, Dharamshala and Solangnala 4 each and Kangra, Palampur and Bhuntar 3 each, JAMMU AND KASHMIR: (3cm and above) Batote 5, Katra 4 and Banihal and Bhadarwah 3 each, PUNJAB: (3 cm and above) Kapurthala 5 and Gurdaspur and Phangota 3 each, WEST RAJASTHAN: Sriganganagar 3 and Suratganj 2 and UTTARAKHAND: Tehri 1.

MINIIMUM TEMPERATURES : The minimum temperatures rose markedly in west Uttar Pradesh, rose appreciably in Haryana, Punjab and east Uttar Pradesh, rose in east Rajasthan and Uttarakhand and changed little elsewhere. They were largely above normal in Haryana, markedly above normal in Punjab, Rajasthan, west Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, appreciably above normal in Jammu and Kashmir and above normal in rest of the region. The lowest minimum temperature in the plains was 06.6°C recorded at Etawah (Uttar Pradesh).

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 06th FEBRUARY 2013: Rain/snow would occur at many places over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand during the next 48 hours and decrease thereafter. Rain/thundershower would occur at many places over north Rajasthan , Punjab, Haryana and west Uttar Pradesh during the next 48 hours and decrease thereafter. Rain/thundershowers may also occur at one or two places over south Rajasthan and east Uttar Pradesh.

WARNING: Heavy to very heavy snowfall may occur at one or two places over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand during the next 48 hours. Thunder squall accompanied with hailstorm may occur at one or two places over Jammu division of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, north Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and west Uttar Pradesh during the next 48 hours.

**FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 06th
FEBRUARY 2013: Generally cloudy sky. Rain/thundershowers would occur. Thunder
squall/hailstorm may occur in some areas. Mist/shallow fog in the morning.**

weather

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Tuesday, Feb 5

Max Min

30° | 23°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 83

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:34

Sunset: 06:11

Barometer: 1016

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Feb 6

Max Min

30° | 21°

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday
Feb 7



31° | 22°
Partly Cloudy

Friday
Feb 8



26° | 24°
Overcast

Saturday
Feb 9



26° | 22°
Overcast

Sunday
Feb 10



25° | 22°
Overcast

Monday
Feb 11



24° | 22°
Overcast

Airport Weather

Delhi

Rain: 46.0

Sunrise: 07:07

Humidity: 100

Sunset: 06:03

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1015



4th jan 2013

Turmeric Traders awaiting upcountry orders



The Turmeric traders and the exporters are eagerly waiting for the upcountry orders.

“The spot turmeric was decreased by Rs 200 a quintal on Monday. Though the turmeric season has started no exporter have received fresh upcountry orders till date. They are waiting for the same and they may get fresh order by the middle of this month, as still the winter is severe in North India. If they receive fresh orders, certainly the prices may increase. Now for want of orders they are quoting decreased price and of the arrival of 3021` bags of turmeric, 65 percent stocks

were sold. Major buyers are the stockists”, said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said for the past one week fresh turmeric from Mysore is arriving and daily about 50 to 75 bags are arriving. Soon the arrival from other areas will increase. The yellow spice from Erode district villages is expected to be arrived by the first week of March.

The turmeric farmers said that they are busy now in harvesting their turmeric, so they are bringing very limited stocks, as they require money for the harvesting charges.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association the finger variety fetched Rs 4400 to Rs 6295 a quintal, root variety Rs 4119 to Rs 5585 a quintal.

Salem Hybrid Crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5399 to Rs 6509 a quintal, root variety Rs 5199 to Rs 5711 a quintal. Of the arrival of 608 bags of turmeric 301 bags were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5309 to Rs 6219 a quintal, root variety Rs 5169 to Rs 5585 a quintal.

Of the arrival of 562 bags of turmeric 450 bags were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society

finger variety was sold at Rs 4869 to Rs 6272 a quintal, root variety Rs 4750 to Rs 5889 a quintal. All the 24 bags arrived for sales were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society finger variety was sold at Rs 5309 to Rs 6340 a quintal, root variety Rs 4769 to Rs 5939 a quintal. All the 216 bags of turmeric kept for sales were sold. EOM

Cotton flat on limited demand for exports



Cotton prices remained unchanged on Monday as demand was normal and arrival slightly lower in Gujarat.

Gujarat Sankar-6 cotton was traded at Rs 33,900-34,100 for a candy of 355 kg in Gujarat.

About 45,000-50,000 bales cotton arrived in Gujarat and 1.85 lakh bales cotton arrived in India. A Rajkot-based cotton broker said, "Currently, mills are primary buyers, while export demand is very limited. In this condition, price may remain at the current level." On the other hand, traders expect cotton exports from India to South-East Asia to more than double in 2013, and that could compensate to some extent for a fall in demand from China, the world's largest consumer and traditionally the biggest buyer of the Indian fibre.

Kapas also traded flat in Rajkot. Kapas price stood at Rs 840-845 for a *maund* of 20 kg.

Kadi delivery kapas price was quoted at Rs 855-860.

Cotton traded slightly up Rs 10-15 in North India Monday on decreased arrivals around 10,000 bales. New cotton ready delivery quoted at Rs 3,660-3,725 a quintal in Punjab, Rs 3,645-3,660 in Haryana and Rs 3,640-3,650 in Rajasthan.

Bloomberg reports: Cotton tumbled to a 21-month low during the weekend after a US government report showed global inventories will gain and data from Asia showed a further slowdown in industrial output..

Costlier soya oil affects offtake



Despite foreign support, soya oil either ruled firm or declined marginally, with traders not showing interest in buying at the higher rate.

Soya refined on Monday ruled at Rs 720-23 for 10 kg, while soya solvent ruled at Rs 683-86.

Compared with last week, soya oil, however, is ruling marginally lower. Notwithstanding improved foreign support, higher rate quoted by crushing units has dragged demand in soya oil.

On the other hand, soya oil futures showed a mixed trend, notwithstanding strong running projection in soya oil on the CBOT.

On the NCDEX, soya refined's February and March contracts closed at Rs 741.10 (down Rs 1.95) and Rs 724 (up 20 paise).

Soyabean, on the other hand, ruled stable Rs 3,140-3,280 a quintal on subdued buying support.

Plant deliveries in soyabean also ruled stable at Rs 3,300-3,350 amid lack of enthusiastic demand from the crushers.

Arrival of soyabean in the State mandis continue to remain steady between 1 lakh and 1.25 lakh bags as current sluggish sentiment in soyabean has made big farmers and stockists hold up stocks of soyabean to get higher returns in future when soyabean prices cross Rs 3,500 and even more, Mukesh Purohit told *Business Line*.

Arrival of soyabean in Indore mandis was recorded at 6,000 bags, while it was 5,000 in Dewas and 4,000 in Ujjain respectively.

Soyabean futures traded higher on strong CBOT projection and buying support with its February and March contracts on the NCEDX closing at Rs 3,525 (up Rs 20.50) and Rs 3,288 (up Rs 33.50) respectively.

Soyameal which had been ruling low has of late been witnessing a revival in its demand both in the domestic and export markets.

In the domestic market, soyameal ruled at Rs 27,500-28,000, while it was Rs 29,000 a quintal at the port.

Bearish trend prolongs in sugar futures



Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market ruled unchanged on Monday on routine demand and ample supply.

Domestic futures extended their bearish trend, losing Rs 20 till noon in the absence of any positive cues. Lack of exports prospects added pressure on physical markets.

In spot, small grade sugar sold Rs 5 a quintal higher while M-grade prices were unchanged.

Naka and mill tender rates were steady. Sentiment was calm with routine volume. Markets are awaiting for some positive cues, traders said.

Sources said “as free sale quota seems high considering dull demand since Diwali and supply from mills are ample, activities remained subdued on need-based buying.

No one wants to take any risk as market is slowly but continuously plunging. Retail demand has also not improved as expected despite start of the new month.

The Vashi market is carrying over 120 truckloads of inventory. This year, sugar production is also expected higher than domestic requirement. All these factors are putting pressure on markets”.

The arrivals in the Vashi market were higher at 64-65 truckloads (each of 100 bags) and local dispatches were 60-62 truckloads.

On Saturday, 7-8 mills offered tenders and sold hardly 28,000-30,000 bags (each of 100 kg) in the range of Rs 3,100-3,140 (Rs 3,100-3,140) for S-grade and Rs 3,190-3,260 (Rs 3,190-3,260) for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar prices for March was lower by Rs 18 to Rs 3,130 (Rs 3,148) and April was down by Rs 20 to Rs 3,186 (Rs 3,206) till noon losing more than Rs 60 in the last three days.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 3,236-3,306 (Rs 3,232-3,321) and M-grade Rs 3,302-3,446 (Rs 3,302-3,446).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs 3,185-3,225 (Rs 3,185-3,225) and M-grade Rs 3,230-3,350 (Rs 3,230-3,350).

Commodity transaction tax will drive hedgers to illegal trade, says regulator

Mumbai, Feb. 4:

With the buzz on imposition of commodity transaction tax (CTT) in the forthcoming Budget getting louder, Forward Markets Commission Chairman Ramesh Abhishek feels the market should be given more time to absorb such a levy.

“The commodity market performs the crucial role of providing the industry with a transparent hedging platform. It cannot be compared with any other market where such a levy is imposed currently,” Abhishek told *Business Line* in an interaction.

Investors in stock market attract a similar levy – Securities Transaction Tax – on all their transactions. However, unlike stock market, financial institutions and banks are not allowed to trade in commodities.

All the five national exchanges have made representation to FMC listing out the drawbacks on levy of CTT. The views of exchanges have been forwarded to the Ministry along with the FMC opinion, he said.

An increase in cost of trading will push hedgers from the exchange to illegal (dabba) trading system which already costs a fraction of what is charged in the online trading. Imposing CTT will only drive away liquidity from online exchange to dabba trading which neither collects any tax nor regulated, he said.

Exchanges have been conducting series of awareness programmes in rural areas in order to attract farmer participation. It is also exploring the possibility of bringing in aggregators to help farmers tap the commodity market efficiently.

TURNOVER DIPS

Commodity exchanges have raised apprehension against the new levy particularly when the turnover on five online exchanges has dipped nearly six per cent in December to Rs 12,962,448 crore. The dip in turnover was largely due to fall in gold prices. This apart, the interest of speculators in commodity markets has been deterred due to drop in price volatility.

Price signal

Besides hedgers, the online platform also helps farmers to get better prices for their produce by giving them price signals, said Abhishek. The price co-relation between the spot and futures markets have improved to a great extent with the implementation of staggered delivery system in agriculture commodities.

The new levy, if imposed, will distort the price signal even as efficiency of spot markets across the country suffer due to different tax structure followed by State Governments, he said. Last month, the top honchos of five commodity exchanges came together to oppose CTT.

Forests in Indonesia, Malaysia threatened by growing palm oil demand

New Delhi, Feb. 4:

Growing demand for palm oil in India is threatening wildlife in Indonesia and Malaysia, a study released by WWF India said.

According to the report, India is the fourth largest oilseed producing country and the world's largest importer of palm oil and nearly 73 per cent of India's demand for palm oil is supplied by Indonesia.

It stated that this has resulted in Indonesia and Malaysia, witnessing almost a third of forest loss in the last 10 years due to the expansion of oil palm.

According to estimates, edible oil demand in India has been growing a CAGR of 4.4 per cent in the past 11 years which has been fuelled by improvement in per capita consumption.

Though the report pointed out that the current per capital consumption levels of India are lower than global averages.

Also, India is the world's largest consumer of palm oil with 23 per cent of the global consumption in 2011-12.

In 2011-12 alone, India imported as much as 7.2 million tonnes of palm oil.

Ravi Singh, Secretary General & CEO, WWF India, in a statement said, "When forests shrink, so does the home of endangered species, such as the tiger, rhino, elephant and orangutan — species which are now on the brink of extinction. 15 per cent of all human-induced GHG emissions are caused by deforestation, forest degradation and peatland emissions."

Adam Harrison, Senior Policy Officer - Food and Agriculture, WWF, said that when forests that are vital to communities are cleared people lose their land and other livelihoods and believed that the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) is the best answer.

The report stated that to avoid contributing to deforestation and social problems, palm oil producers, users and traders need to move towards sustainable palm oil.

Darrel Webber, Secretary General of the RSPO said that , “The current consumption of palm oil in India well corresponds with the existing production volume of RSPO certified sustainable palm oil which stands at more than 8 million tonne, which is progressively increasing. This means India is ready to play its part by establishing commitments and policies that will allow the nation and the industry to ensure sustainable provision of certified sustainable palm oil along its supply chain.”

Industry wants 20% import duty on RBD palmolein, refined edible oils

New Delhi, Feb. 4:

Fearing large-scale cheaper refined oil imports, the edible oil industry has urged the Government to hike duty on refined, bleached and deodorised (RBD) palmolein to up to 20 per cent.

At present, refined oils attract a duty of 7.5 per cent. The Government recently imposed a duty of 2.5 per cent on crude palm oil (CPO).

This has reduced the duty differential between the two oil categories to 5 per cent and has made imports of refined oil cheaper, thereby threatening the viability of domestic refineries.

“A 10 per cent duty differential between crude and refined edible oils will benefit both the farmers and refining industry,” said Vijay Data, President, the Solvent Extractors Association of India (SEAI).

However, Data said the hike in import duty would not affect consumers as edible oil prices have seen the slowest hike in the past eight years, according to the Government’s wholesale price index data, compared with other commodities such as rice, wheat, pulses and eggs.

SEAI wants the import duty on crude edible oils to be increased to a minimum of 10 per cent and that of refined oils be pegged at 20 per cent to protect the domestic industry, Data said.

India is the largest importer of edible oils and its total imports stood at 9.8 million tonnes (mt) last year.

For the current oil year ending October 2013, SEAI expects imports to grow by 15 per cent to 11.5 mt, Data said.

India imports bulk of its palm oil required from Indonesia and Malaysia.

Capacity utilisation

The 15 million tonne edible oil refining industry is currently operating at a capacity of 50-60 per cent. “With refined oils turning cheaper, the capacity utilisation could slip further to 40 per cent,” said Sushil Goenka, Director, Food Fats and Fertilisers Ltd

RBD palmolein accounted for about 11 per cent of the total palm oil imports into the country during the August-December period.

“If the duty structure is not changed, we expect the RBD palmolein to account for 20-25 per cent of the total imports in the next few months,” Data said.

Sugar output up 3% at 13.75 million tonnes



Sugar production touched 13.75 million tonnes (mt) in the first three months of the 2012-13 crushing season starting October.

This is about 2.95 per cent more than the corresponding last year, the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) said on Monday.

ISMA recently revised upwards its forecast 2012-13 season by three lakh tonnes at 24.3 million tonnes on better recovery and lesser sugar cane diversion to other sweeteners.

Maharashtra has produced 4.82 mt of the sweetener so far, marginally higher than corresponding last year.

However, sugar recovery in the State is marginally lower at 10.82 per cent. Maharashtra is expected to produce 6.8 mt this year.

Uttar Pradesh, which will emerge as the largest producer this year, has so far produced 3.62 mt, marginally lower than last year. Sugar recovery is marginally higher in the State, which is expected to produce 8 mt in the current season.

Karnataka has so far produced 2.4 mt, about 11 per cent more than corresponding last year. The State is expected to produce 3.2 mt.

Similarly, Andhra Pradesh has produce 5.85 lakh tonnes, about 5 per cent more.

Tamil Nadu has produced 6.25 lakh tonnes, about 9 per cent more than last year. However, the recovery has been marginally lower due to the poor North East monsoon. Tamil Nadu is expected to produce 2.2 mt this season.

Slack demand drags cardamom below Rs 800/kg



Cardamom lost flavour on slack demand at auctions held last week and consequently individual auction average dropped to below Rs 800 a kg. It was vacillating between Rs 728 and Rs 798 last week.

The market declined as the upcountry dealers were comparatively less active last week due to fall in retail sales because of the prevailing cold wave conditions in the North Indian States, market sources said. They attributed the slow buying to the bearish outlook in the trade, albeit speculative, that growers are holding back their produce anticipating rise in prices and hence a portion of the current crop would come to the market later.

However, exporters were actively covering as prices slipped to below Rs 800 a kg and an estimated 40 tonnes of capsules were bought by them. At the same time, the supply was limited as 90 per cent of the crop has been harvested leaving some 10 per cent hither and thither, they told *Business Line*.

Dry spell

Weather conditions continued to remain totally unfavourable. According to veterans in the field of cardamom growing region, the plants would withstand the current dry spell till mid-February. "If summer rains fail to arrive after February 15, then the plants would start withering and subsequently would dry up", they said.

The current total output is estimated at somewhere between 13,000 tonnes and 15,000 tonnes as against the production last season of 26,000 – 30,000 tonnes, trade sources claimed.

Total arrivals last week stood at 371 tonnes, as against 316 tonnes arrived during the week before last, and of this 349 tonnes were sold, they said.

"At present, the plants are healthy but they require one or two showers now and if the growing areas received it in the coming days then that would have a positive impact on the next crop," they said.

At the Sunday auction conducted by the KCPMC total arrivals stood at 65 tonnes as against 64 tonnes arrived in the previous Sunday and the entire quantity was sold out. The maximum price was at Rs 1,143 and minimum was at Rs 545. Auction average price dropped to Rs 774.52 from Rs 805 the previous Sunday, P.C. Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, told *Business Line*.

Total arrivals and sales during the current season from Aug 1, 2012 to Feb 3, 2013 were at 7,722 tonnes and 7,340 tonnes respectively. Total arrivals and sales during the corresponding period last year were about 11,562 tonnes and about 11,250 tonnes respectively.

The weighted average price as on Feb 3 stood at Rs 773.37 against Rs 554.46 on the same date last year.

Prices of graded varieties (Rs/kg): AGEB 900-1,000; AGB 780 -790; AGS 745-755 and AGS -1: 720-730.

CTC tea of 3 factories fetches Rs 200/kg at Coonoor sale



New price records have been set at Sale No: 5 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association (CTTA) auctions.

For the first time, at one auction, CTC teas of three bought-leaf factories – Homedale, Cross Hill and Vigneshwar – crossed the Rs 200-a-kg mark.

“Our Broken Orange Pekoe Small leaf grade, auctioned by Global Tea Brokers, created a new record when Mittal Tea Company bought it for Rs 252 a kg. This is the highest price fetched by any CTC tea of any bought leaf factory in the 50 years of CTTA’s regular auctions,” Prasant Menon, Managing Partner, Homedale Tea Factory, told *Business Line*.

Closely following this, Cross Hill Tea Factory fetched Rs 250 for its Broken Pekoe leaf grade. Among orthodox teas, Chamraj and Highfield Estate got Rs 250 each.

Mixed trend at Kochi tea auction



A mixed trend persisted for almost all varieties of tea at the Kochi tea auction. In Cochin Sale No: 5 in dust category, the quantity on offer in the CTC grades was 11,59,000 kg.

The market for good liquoring teas with black appearance was fully firm to dearer by Re 1 to Rs 2 and sometimes more. Others were irregular and sometimes dearer, the auctioneers Forbes, Ewart and Figgis Pvt Ltd said in a statement.

Of the quantity of 15,500 kg on offer in the orthodox grades, primary grades remained steady to sometimes dearer. Others were irregular. Bulk of the offerings was absorbed by exporters and upcountry buyers.

In the best CTC dusts, PD varieties quoted Rs 101/110, RD grades fetched Rs 10.30/114, SRD ruled at Rs 105/116 while SFD grades stood at Rs 105/115.

The leaf sale also witnessed a mixed trend and the quantity on offer in the orthodox grades was 1,97,500 kg. Good Liquoring Nilgiri Brokens and whole leaf barely remained steady. Well-made, clean, black medium bolder brokens, tippy grades tended to ease. Whole leaf was firm to dearer.

The quantity on offer in the CTC leaf grades was 97,500 kg. The market was dearer by Re 1 to Rs 2 and sometimes more especially the blacker cleaner varieties.

In the dust category, Injipara (Prm) SFD quoted the best prices of Rs 143 followed by Injipara (Prm) SRD at Rs 136. In the leaf grades Pascoes Hyson Green Tea fetched the best prices of Rs 357 followed by Chamraj Green FOP (S) at Rs 352.

Hailstorm may hit U.P., Haryana, Himachal

Hills and plains of north-west India are getting battered by an 'intense western disturbance' coming in from across the border.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has warned of heavy to very heavy rainfall/snowfall, at times extremely heavy, over Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.

2-DAY WARNING

The warning is valid for at least next two days, the IMD said in its evening bulletin on Monday.

A similar warning is also in place for Uttarakhand. Besides, hailstorm may rough up Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. Adjoining north Haryana and Himachal Pradesh too may get clobbered by hailstorm during next two days.

Squally winds would rip through Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, north Rajasthan and west Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday.

All this happens as the intense low-pressure wave makes a forced entry from overnight perch over north Pakistan/Afghanistan.

DESERT 'LOW'

The scenario will transform entirely with the formation of a low-pressure area over the deserts of west Rajasthan by Tuesday.

This may sound slightly far-fetched but weather-setting low-pressure areas can also form over Rajasthan when typical meteorological factors converge.

Lying in wait already is a cyclonic circulation, induced by the sheer size and scale of the western disturbance, with 'limbs' probing the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal.

Winds associated with the disturbance will fan into both the peninsular oceans to mop up moisture.

FOG, COLD OFF

The moisture will get deposited as rain (in plains) or snow (over hills) in Northwest India depending on the type of geography. The upshot of these conditions is that foggy conditions and extreme cold would get blown away for next two or three days. Western disturbances feature 'weather engines' upfront with moisture steaming as air rises up as in cyclonic circulation. This will warm up the atmosphere, and formation of clouds will trap warmth from escaping into space.

Minimum (night) temperatures also look up in the bargain, and IMD has mentioned it in Monday's bulletin.

Dairy farmers in AP want to do an Amul

Small dairy farmers in Andhra Pradesh have decided not to depend on the corporate milk firms to sell their produce.

After the recent milk glut that resulted in huge losses, farmers have resolved to form a cooperative to procure milk, process it and market the same by creating its own brand.

To begin with, a group of 25 farmers will form the cooperative in the State capital.

“The milk firms pay us just Rs 17 a litre but sell it at Rs 36 to the consumer. We are perennially facing losses. We will start the cooperative in the next few weeks,” K. Bal Reddy, a dairy farmer from Bhongir in Nalgonda district with about 500 animals, told *Business Line*.

Andhra Pradesh has about 40 lakh dairy farmers, small and big, who are by and large unorganised. With a cattle population (cows and buffaloes) of 2.45 crore, the State produces 12.1 million tonnes of milk comprising 10 per cent of country’s annual production of 122 million tonnes.

Only 30 per cent of the 12.1 million tonnes of milk is procured by organised players such as Vijaya-Visakha, Heritage, Tirumala and Jersey dairies.

Panic selling

About two months ago, the private dairies had either stopped or significantly reduced milk procurement owing to a glut. This had led to panic selling by farmers. In several towns, some even dumped the produce on roads as a mark of protest.

“Neither the consumers nor the producers are getting any benefit. The companies are making money. We can’t run the show like this for long. So, we floated the idea. The response has been good from members. We know that change cannot happen overnight,” Bal Reddy, who is also Secretary of Progressive Dairy Farmers’ Association (PDFA), said.

On the milk firms’ argument that the cost of production forced them to fix a cap on purchase price, Bal Reddy said Mulkanur Cooperative Society (a successful cooperative in Telangana) was giving Rs 22 a litre.

“We should work for 2-3 years to see some results in our model. We are holding meetings at district levels to gain support for our model,” M. Jitender Reddy, President of PDFA, said.

Rubber gains on global cues



Spot rubber improved on Monday. Sharp gains in the global trendsetters catalysed the domestic mood and selected counters improved marginally on covering purchases at lower levels. Meanwhile, the key TOCOM rubber futures jumped more than 4 per cent on early trades as yen dropped further against dollar but the gains were shed partially on profit booking at higher levels.

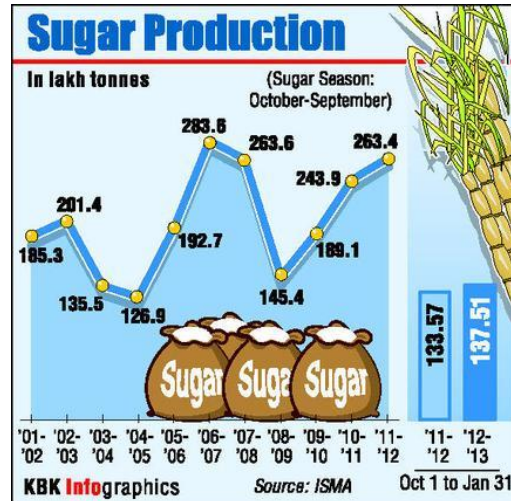
Sheet rubber increased to Rs 157.50 (157) a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board. The trend was mixed.

The February series slipped to Rs 158.30 (158.97), March to Rs 160.90 (161.48), April to Rs 163.60 (164.45) May to Rs 166.10 (166.65) and June to Rs 169.70 (171.76), while the July series firmed up to Rs 173.90 (171.33) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) recovered to Rs 176.93 (173.77) at Bangkok. The February futures flared up to ¥310.2 (Rs 177.96) from ¥300.4 during the day session and then to ¥311.9 (Rs 178.96) in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 157.50 (157); RSS-5: 152.50 (152.50); ungraded: 147.50 (147); ISNR 20: 153 (153) and latex 60 per cent: 103.50 (103.50).

Sugar output up 3% at 13.75 mt



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This is about 2.95 per cent more than the corresponding period last year, the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) said on Monday.

ISMA has recently revised upwards its forecast for 2012-13 season by 3 lakh tonnes at 24.3 mt on better recovery and lesser sugarcane diversion to other sweeteners.

Maharashtra, UP

Maharashtra has produced 4.82 mt so far, marginally higher than last year. However, sugar recovery in the State is marginally lower at 10.82 per cent. Maharashtra is expected to produce 6.8 mt this year.

Uttar Pradesh, which will emerge as the largest producer this year, has so far produced 3.62 mt, marginally lower than last year. Sugar recovery is marginally higher in the State, which is expected to produce 8 mt in the current season.

Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh

Karnataka has so far produced 2.4 mt, about 11 per cent more than last year. The State is expected to produce 3.2 mt. Similarly, Andhra Pradesh has produced 5.85 lakh tonnes, about 5 per cent more.

Tamil Nadu has produced 6.25 lakh tonnes, about 9 per cent more than last year. However, the recovery has been marginally lower due to the poor North-East monsoon. Tamil Nadu is expected to produce 2.2 mt this season.

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Orthodox, CTC dust

Of the quantity of 15,500 kg on offer in the Orthodox grade, primary grade remained steady to sometimes dearer. Others were irregular. Bulk of the offerings was absorbed by exporters and upcountry buyers.

In the best CTC dust, PD varieties quoted Rs 101/110, RD grade fetched Rs 10.30/114, SRD ruled at Rs 105/116 while SFD grade stood at Rs 105/115.

Leaf sale

The leaf sale also witnessed a mixed trend and the quantity on offer in the Orthodox grade was 197,500 kg. Good liquoring Nilgiri broken and whole leaf barely remained steady.

Others were irregular and lower. Fannings showed a decline in prices. Well-made clean black medium bolder broken and tippy grades tended to ease.

Other broken were lower with many withdrawals. Whole leaf was firm to dearer, while corresponding fannings barely remained steady.

The quantity on offer in the CTC leaf grade was 97,500 kg. The market was dearer by Rs 1 to Rs 2 and sometimes more especially the blacker cleaner varieties.

In the dust category, Injipara (Prm) SFD quoted the best prices of Rs 143 followed by Injipara (Prm) SRD at Rs 136. In the leaf grade, Pascoes Hyson Green Tea fetched the best price of Rs 357 followed by Chamraj Green FOP (S) at Rs 352.

Business Standard

TODAY FARM NEWS

05.02.2013 A.M

Chicken to be off the menu in Kerala

The Kerala Hotel and Restaurants Association (KHRA) has decided to stop selling chicken dishes from February 7. The association said its 20,000-plus member hotels and restaurants would stop serving chicken in view of the recent steep hike in the price.

KHRA general secretary Jose Mohan said hotels, especially small and medium, were not in a position to serve chicken dishes as the price had increased during the last four weeks. Live chicken is now priced at Rs 115-120 a kg from Rs 70-80 a month ago while dressed chicken is Rs 160-170 a kg. The price of dressed chicken, supplied by Tamil Nadu, stood at Rs 105 to Rs 120 a kg a few weeks ago.

"Four months back the price of live chicken dropped to Rs 60 a kg," Mohan claimed, stating the prices were being manipulated by a section of brokers and middlemen.

Kerala gets most of the supply from Tamil Nadu through agents and middle-men while 15-20 per cent of the state's demand is met locally. Hotels, restaurants and caterers consume 80 per cent of the chicken brought to the state.

Rejecting the claim of the hotel body that the hike was a planned one, VT Babu, office bearer of the Poultry Growers Association, said, "Today a kg chicken costs Rs 85 for us and we take a margin of just Rs 10 per kg of chicken. The wholesale price at which we supply is Rs 92-95," he said.

Most of the poultry farms in the state get their supply from Tamil Nadu at around Rs 35 per bird and they sell these after around 45 days, a poultry farm owner said.

The state government had banned chicken and poultry products from other states after bird flu claimed lives of 4,265 turkeys during last October.

Maharashtra against ban on onion exports

The Maharashtra government on Monday said it would take strict action against those involved in hoarding of onion. It also opposed any move to ban onion exports, in the wake of a surge in prices.



Speaking to Business Standard, state agriculture minister Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil said, "The government will act tough against hoarders and speculators. We are constantly monitoring the situation. However, the state government is against any move to curb or ban onion exports, as the Centre shouldn't adopt a 'switch-on, switch-off' policy in this regard."

He added farmers were getting higher prices for the commodity.

Samir Bhujbal, Nationalist Congress Party member of Parliament from Nashik, agreed. He said farmers should be allowed to benefit from the prevailing price of Rs 1,500 a quintal. "Let the government take action against hoarders and speculators. But there should not be any attempt to put restrictions on onion exports," he added.

A state agriculture department official said for 2012-13, onion production in Maharashtra was estimated at 2.95 million tonnes (mt), against 5.82 mt in 2011-12. The drop is largely due to the drought conditions prevailing across large parts of the state.

GRIM SCENARIO

- In 2012-13, onion production in Maharashtra is estimated at 2.95 mt
- Area under onion cultivation has fallen to 0.18 million hectares
- NCAER estimates India's onion output to fall 20% in 2012-13
- The state has opposed any move to ban onion exports

- The prevailing price of onion is Rs 1,500 a quintal

In 2012-13, the area under onion cultivation has fallen to 0.18 million hectares, from 0.38 million hectares in 2011-12.

According to a recent study by the Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium, the onion crop in Maharashtra and Karnataka, two leading producers, could decline 35 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively, compared to the previous year, owing to water shortage and delay in the monsoons last year.

For 2012-13, the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) has estimated India's onion output to drop 20 per cent compared to 16.34 mt in 2011-12. NCAER, however, said demand for Indian onions would remain high.

R P Gupta, director, National Horticulture Research & Development Foundation, said in December, onion exports had declined 40-50 per cent.

Prices moderate

The arrival of onions from mandis in Mahua and Bhavnagar in Gujarat has resulted in moderation in onion prices. At the Lasalgaon and Pimpalgaon mandis in Nashik district, onion prices today fell to Rs 16-17 a kg, compared with Rs 19-20 a kg last week.

Uttar Pradesh sugar output nearing 4 mn tonnes

Uttar Pradesh sugar output is inching towards the 4 million tonnes (MT) mark, which is halfway mark of the 8 MT production target for the state this crushing season. As per the latest available statistics, the mills had produced nearly 3.7 MT of the sweetener by crushing 4.1 MT of sugarcane. However, the sugar production and total cane crushed levels are



lower compared to the corresponding period last year.

The sugar recovery percentage in the state stands at 8.86 per cent, which is higher by 0.22 per cent vis-à-vis 2011-12 crushing season. Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) said the crushing in UP had started late this year, which had resulted in better recoveries, especially in western and central zones.

The Association had already revised initial sugar production estimates for 2012-13 from 24 MT to 24.3 MT on account of lesser cane diversion to local sweeteners and better recoveries.

On December 7, 2012, the Akhilesh government had announced the cane State Advised Price (SAP) for 2012-13, which was 17 per cent higher for the common variety compared to 2011-12.

SAP now stands at Rs 280/quintal for common variety vis-à-vis Rs 240/quintal last year, which forms the bulk of the sugarcane grown in UP. The prices for early and rejected/unsuitable varieties of cane have been hiked to Rs 290/quintal and Rs 275/quintal compared to Rs 250/quintal and Rs 235/quintal respectively.

The hike is likely to translate into total sugarcane payments of Rs 21,500 crore to farmers this crushing season compared to Rs 18,200 crore during 2011-12.

Recently, a UP Sugar Mills Association (UPSMA) delegation led by its chairman C B Patodia and secretary S L Gupta had met the union food secretary and demanded increase in customs duty on white sugar and raw sugar from 10 per cent to 60 per cent and removal of 10 per cent levy sugar obligation on millers.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

TODAY FARM NEWS

05.02.2013 A.M

CM's stance on GM crops will hit farmers: Tikait

LUCKNOW: [Bharatiya Kisan Union general secretary](#) Rakesh Tikait on Monday said farmers are shocked and dismayed that chief minister has taken up the cause of the industry promoting genetically modified (GM) crops, which would be highly detrimental to farmers. He demanded that government should not allow field trials of the GM crops and if it does, farmers will burn the trial field.

Addressing media persons, Tikait said introduction of GM technology in farming will not only jeopardise safety of human/animal health but also the environment which is critical for the success of farming in India. The BKU has requested chief minister to promote the solutions which ensures economic sustainability to farmers, ecological sustainability, access and control of productive resources by farmers and non toxic, nutritious and diverse food for all Indians.

National co-convener of coalition for GM-free India, Pankaj Bhushan said "Given the socio economic realities and lack of proper regulatory system in the country, it has been highlighted by credible organisations and individuals time and again that GM crops is not the right way forward for sustainable development of our farming and farmers. At the same time it has been shown that food security in India is more importantly an issue of distribution, purchasing power rather than production alone". So far, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and some other states have already banned the GM seeds and their trials in the states, because agriculture is a state subject, he added.

Farmers' leaders want to revive their movement in Karnataka

MYSORE: Local leaders of the [KRRS \(Karnataka State Farmers' Association\)](#) met here on Monday and discussed on how to utilize the 77th birthday celebrations of their leader M D Nanjunadaswamy being organized at [Chamarajnagar](#) in the second week of February.

KRRS leaders, who are organizing seminars on the occasion for four days beginning from February 13, felt that the opportunity should be utilized to unite all like-minded forces in the state to revive the farmers [movement](#) which has suffered for various reasons.

"Agriculture sector is facing crisis and the farmers life is becoming miserable on daily basis, to overcome this crisis farmers apart from planning agitations, should start Gram Swaraj centres where farmers should not only get the farm inputs, they should also get a service and guidance on the problems faced by them," the leaders felt, adding that leaders converging for the celebrations should give a serious thought to the farmers life.

Disclosing about the meet, KRRS leaders said that farmer leaders from Haryana, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh are attending this three-day meet which will be inaugurated by tribal movement leader from Kerala C K John and writer Devanur Mahadev.

Subash Palekar, K S Puttannaiah, Yogendra Yadav, Henry Saragi and Nanjundaswamy's daughter Chukki Nanjundaswamy will participate in the deliberations, the leaders said disclosing that Devender Verma and Rajender Singh will speak on the challenges before the farmers on February 14.

"Overall, this meet will not only discuss the farmers problems and issues, it will try to deliberate on how farmers should stay united and take on the governments under the changed circumstances where neocolonialism is spreading it's tentacles in the guise of MNCs" the leaders said.

Leaders who attended this preparatory meeting included Badagalpura Nagendra, Hosur Kumar and Hoskote Basavaraj.

Horticulture authorities are encouraging farmers to grow GI crops

MYSORE: The horticulture department in Mysore is going all out in its efforts to protect Geographical Indications (GI) crops NanjangudRasabale (banana), Mysore Mallige and Mysore veeledele (betel leaf), which are on the verge of extinction. But they have taken the organic farming route over conventional system, wherein chemicals are used.

The officials, who have been doing research for past two years at the department's Kukkarahalli Farm, claim that it has yielded good results. Now, they are on a mission to protect the GI crops by encouraging farmers in the region to grow them using organic method. To increase the area of production and protect crops, the department has encouraged some farmers in Nanjangud by setting up SrikanteshwaraNanjangudRasabale Growers' Association.

Association members are successfully growing the crop since a year. Association chief H K Channappa told TOI that he and his friends in Haginavalu village are growing rasabale using organic method. "It is best if grown in this method. This crop has longer shelf-life and safe for consumption," he added.

Kukkarahalli Farm assistant horticulture officer M Marigowda said that they have been growing the three crops in a small area using organic method since 2011. "We have harvested rasabale once, and half of the produce was sold like hot cake at an organic fair in Bangalore. Similarly, we harvested Mysore Mallige and veeledele (a perennial crop) once," he said.

"Our aim is to promote farmers to grow crops in a big way, and to educate them about the benefits. A training hall is coming up at the farm to educate farmers about organic farming," Marigowda stated.

The department's deputy director H M Nagaraj said that their aim is to protect and encourage farmers in Mysore region to take up farming of GI produces.

Over the years, the yield of these products has come down due to various reasons, including low yield and lack of effective pest-management system. "After learning about the extinction of

GI crops, we took interest and have been trying to protect them. We want to propagate the crops in the farm, and distribute among farmers who are interested," he added.

Geographical Indications crops

NanjangudRasabale : This variety of banana is very appetizing in comparison with others. It was being grown largely in Mysore, Chamarjanagar and Mandya districts. But over the years, the area of its cultivation came down drastically. The decline was because the variety was badly hit by a disease, which dealt a severe blow to farmers. Then they preferred to grow other varieties like 'Elakkibale' and 'Pachbale.' Now, rasabale is grown only in Haginavalu, Dyvarasanahalli, Kodinarasipura and Veeradevarapura.

Mysore Mallige: The jasmine known for its unique fragrance was largely grown in Mysore and Srirangapatnataluks. Earlier, farmers growing the variety reaped good benefits. But over the years, the growth of its petals decreased, prompting the farmers to grow 'Dundumallige', whose petal growth is high. Presently, Mysore Mallige is being grown in less than 10 acres.

Mysore Veeledele: Boom in [real estate](#) has had its impact on veeledele, which was being grown in Mysore and surrounding areas like Udbur and Chamundipuram. Following rise in land prices, those cultivating veeledele sold their properties and migrated to urban areas. Veeledele is used in rituals, including weddings, and for chewing with areca nut.

'45,000 farmers deprived of loan waiver benefits

PUNE: KisanSabha, a farmers' organization, has claimed that about 45,000 farmers from Kolhapur district are no longer on the beneficiary list of Centre's 72,000 crore loan waiver package announced in 2008-09.

Kisan Sabha leader Namdev Gawde, who held a press conference in Pune on Sunday, said that the [Kolhapur District Central Cooperative Bank](#) (KDCC), which is controlled by the [state administrator](#), has calculated the unpaid loan to Rs 113 crore. The government has already started recovery of the loan from farmers' bank accounts, said Gawde.

The Kisan Sabha will hold protests at the regional office of the National Bank for Agriculture and

Rural Development (NABARD) in Pune on Tuesday, he said.

Gawde blamed the administrator appointed on the bank for the disqualification and the loan recovery. "The bank receives funding from the Union government and it is distributed to farmers via various local-level credit cooperative societies. The total loan waived off in the scheme is Rs 296 crore. These societies hold accounts of farmers and the loan is disbursed and repaid only through societies. The Kisan Sabha believes that vested political interests is the cause behind harassment of farmers," said Gawde.

Gawde contended that all loans till 2008 were waived off by the government, which means they were verified earlier by the same government. "It is surprising to know why after a gap of four years the KDCC bank suddenly disqualified the farmers. The bank has also started recovery of the loan from the accounts of farmers. The recovered loan amount by the KDCC bank so far is close to Rs 60 crore," he said.

Sambhaji Chabuk, another leader from Kolhapur, said, "Once the loan waiver was implemented, all the beneficiaries were told that their debt history is clear and they can avail fresh loans. Now, the bank has disqualified the farmers, most of whom are from Kagal tehsil in the district."

After losing farmer status, builders now face I-T probe

VADODARA: Having faced the ire of district administration for doing dubious land deals by claiming to be farmers, this group of builders and land agents may now come under the [income tax](#) (I-T) department scanner. The [I-T department](#) is planning to inquire into the cases of individuals whose names have cropped up in the land irregularities over the last few days. The district collector has been cracking down on several builders who claimed to be [farmers](#) and dealt in agricultural land.

"The district collector has recently annulled status of several people as farmers and many more such cases may surface in the coming days. These people must have purchased or sold

agricultural land and even got I-T exemption on the income shown from agriculture," said a senior I-T official.

When contacted, chief income tax commissioner Rajiv Lal said, "We will collect information about the cases. The idea is to get details of the issue, whether the land in question was agricultural or who sold or purchased it. We will certainly conduct inquiry into it." The I-T department would then use the information to find out taxation on sale procedure.

The idea is to find out whether the individuals evaded taxes under the garb of farmers. "Now that their farmer status has been annulled, the persons involved in the case won't be able to show their income as accrued from agriculture," an I-T official said.

District collector Vinod Rao has unearthed several cases wherein builders and businessmen have acquired status of farmers by entering their names in the will of genuine farmers. After acquiring status of farmers, they went on to buy and sell agricultural land in different parts of Vadodara.

Organic route to promote Geographical Indications crops

MYSORE: The horticulture department in Mysore is going all out in its efforts to protect Geographical Indications (GI) crops Nanjangud Rasabale (banana), Mysore Mallige and Mysore veeledele (betel leaf), which are on the verge of extinction. But they have taken the organic farming route over conventional system, wherein chemicals are used.

The officials, who have been doing research for past two years at the department's Kukkarahalli Farm, claim that it has yielded good results. Now, they are on a mission to protect the GI crops by encouraging farmers in the region to grow them using organic method. To increase the area of production and protect crops, the department has encouraged some farmers in Nanjangud by setting up Srikanteshwara Nanjangud Rasabale Growers' Association.

Association members are successfully growing the crop since a year. Association chief H K Channappa told TOI that he and his [friends](#) in Haginavalu village are growing rasabale using organic method. "It is best if grown in this method. This crop has longer shelf-life and safe for consumption," he added.

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GI Crops

Nanjangud Rasabale

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Mysore Veeledele

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Wild animals damage crops

BICHOLIM: Farmers from Bicholim taluka have expressed concern over the damage caused to their crops by wild animals straying into their farms.

Aapa Raut, a farmer from Sal, said that herds of [bisons](#) are on a rampage damaging standing crop causing them financial losses.

Another farmer said that besides bisons, wild boars and monkeys have attacked their paddy farms in areas like Latarbarcem, Sal, Ladfe and also parts of Pirna and Advalpal.

"Some time ago we suffered because of lack of water from Tillari but now that the water has

been released, we are suffering from wild animals," he added.

Sal sarpanch Ghanashyam Raut said that he has raised the issue with WRD minister [Dayanand Mandrekar](#) when the latter visited the area two days ago .

Farmers also raised the issue of compensation to them due to the loss caused by the wild animals.

Wholesale onion prices drop by Rs 4/kg in Delhi & Nasik

Wholesale price of onion fell by 17 per cent to Rs 18.21 per kg in the last two days at Nasik in Maharashtra, the major producing region in the country, due to low demand.



On February 1, the wholesale price stood at Rs 22 per kg at Lasalgoan in Nasik, Asia's largest wholesale market for onion, as per the data maintained by National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation (NHRDF).

Prices today fell to Rs 18.21 per kg in Nasik despite fall in supply of the key kitchen item. In Delhi too, wholesale prices have declined by Rs 4 per kg to Rs 21 per kg in the last few days.

Traders attributed the moderation in prices to low demand compared with previous few days. The buying was more last week in anticipation of further rise in prices.

Onion production is expected to be close to last year's level of 174 lakh tonnes even as total area under the crop is down by 10 per cent this year.

The government is watching closely the price movement of onion both in wholesale and retail markets.

Chilli, turmeric prices rise on buying support

Red chilli and turmeric prices rose by Rs 100 per quintal in the national capital today on fresh buying by retailers and stockists amid low stocks.

Fall in supplies from producing belts also supported the upside in prices.

Red chilli and turmeric prices rose by Rs 100 each to settle at Rs 6,600-11,300 and Rs 6,500-10,100 per quintal, respectively.

Traders said buying support from retailers and stockists against fall in supplies from producing belts, mainly pushed up chilli and turmeric prices in the wholesale kirana market here.

The following are today's quotations:

Ajwain 10,000-15,000, black pepper (per kg) 450-580, betel-nut (kg) 180-200, cardamom brown-Jhundiwali (kg)

800-900 and cardamom brown-Kanchicut (kg) 950-1,050.

Cardamom small (kg): Chitridar 760-900, cardamom (colour robin) 750-890, cardamom bold 750-850, cardamom extra (bold) 950-1,080 and cloves (kg) 620-775.

DECCAN Chronicle

TODAY FARM NEWS

05.02.2013 A.M

Congress wins in over 50% PACS



Hyderabad: Congress supported nominees continued their winning streak in the second phase of the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) polls held on Monday.

The government is now eyeing control of a majority of the coveted 22 District Cooperative Central Banks (DCCBs). When results last came in, Congress bagged a majority of over 50 per cent of the PACS that went to polls followed by the TD, YSRC and TRS.

Barring sporadic cases of violence in some places, attempt to kidnap a candidate in Warangal and rampant flow of liquor and money, the polling went off peacefully due to the heavy police bandobust.

In the second phase, elections were held to 940 PACS out of a total of 1,484 in the state.

Out of this, 475 PACS were unanimously elected while government postponed elections to 69 PACS due to various reasons.

“Elections were peaceful barring some stray incidents. The counting is in full swing. The average poll percentage in the first and second phase is about 85 per cent indicating good voter turnout,” Srinivas Srinamesh, commissioner for cooperation and registrar of cooperative societies told this newspaper late on Monday.

Senior Congress leader and MLA J.C. Diwakar Reddy said Congress policies and programmes were the main reasons for its spectacular win in coop elections.

Reports of clashes between rival parties were reportedly from Vemula in Pulivendla Assembly constituency, Guntur, Khammam, Warangal, East Godavari, West Godavari, Kurnool, Srikakulam and other districts.

Police swung into action and caned agitating and stone pelting mobs. Congress bagged majority of single window presidents in Kurnool district to retain KDCC bank chairman post. As against, elections held for 93 single window societies, Congress supported candidates won in 50 PAC societies while YSR Congress won 32 societies followed by the Telugu Desam just in 5 societies.

Farmers gave a jolt to law minister Erasu Prathap Reddy in his Velugodu society where YSR Congress won majority of single window directors. Congress supported presidents won in 15 societies and YSR Congress in 17 seats while Telugu Desam in 2 societies leaving 6 to others. Congress recouped in Anantapur district and is all set to retain the DCCB chairman post DCMS (district co-operative marketing society) chairman post.

Congress won in 47 societies while YSR Congress candidates in 36 societies followed by the Telugu Desam with 20 societies in the district.

However, uncertainty witnessed in 9 societies where three parties got equal number of directors in the PAC society.

In Chittoor, the Chittoor District Congress Committee (DCC) president and the DCCB chairman Mr Amasa Rajasekhar Reddy is likely to retain his post as the party bagged a majority.

In Nellore district, election was conducted for 34 societies and counting completed for 21 societies till evening. Congress won 10 societies, TD 5, TD rebels 2, YSRC rebel 1 and YSRC 1. Common candidates of the parties won 2 societies among the 21. Winning streak continued in Adilabad for 34 PACS out of 39.

Congress backed nominees won 20, TD 9, TRS 1, and YSRC 1. Uncertainty prevailed over 6 president posts of PACS and one independent.

In Kadapa, even as three ministers and other leaders concentrated on coop elections, they could not prevent YSR Congress winning 30 societies leaving the Congress with 12 seats and Telugu Desam just 5.

YSR Congress supported candidates won majority of seats to have a clear way to bag Kadapa District Co-operative Central Bank chairman, vice-chairman and DCMS chairman and other district level director posts. Congress romped victorious in Krishna, West Godavari districts, Medak, Mahabubnagar and other districts too.

Soaring food prices hurt family budget



Chennai: Prices of boiled and raw rice have gone through the roof. They have witnessed a steep increase this month with a 25-kg bag of the moderately priced variety of Ponni crossing `1,000.

Homemakers are concerned about the increased prices of staple commodities, as they are forced to shell out more. Retail traders attribute it to illegal hoarding by wholesalers and seek government intervention to streamline the trade.

Though the prices of rice has been going north since the last few months, it has gone up significantly this month, by Rs 4- Rs 6 a kg across all varieties, say retailers.

“For instance, the fast selling boiled Ponni rice, which sold for Rs 900-Rs 950 a bag, is now being sold for Rs 1,100- Rs 1,150. White Ponni’s price has touched Rs 1,250 from Rs 1,050,” informed Mr S.P. Soruban, president, TN Maligai Vyabarigal Sangam.

Apart from the decrease in supply after the poor monsoon and power cut in the southern districts, arrival of lorries from other states has also dwindled from 500 to 10. "The demand is also because hoarders are taking advantage of the situation. The government has to regularise the rice trade," said Mr Soruban.

"Low-priced rice has also seen a huge increase in recent times, making it tough for the underprivileged. We suspect hoarding by wholesalers," said a trader from K.K. Nagar.

Traders hope that the rice prices would fall slightly while new arrivals start to hit the market in the coming months. But till the new arrivals hit the wholesale market, the common man will be hard pressed to balance his household budget as he has to shell out more for the staple diet which is the major food intake for a typical family in Tamil Nadu.

Food demand to continue for 2 yrs

With the state facing drought and agriculture productivity hitting an all-time low, the demand for pulses and foodgrains will continue for the next two years. Except sugarcane and garlic, the prices of all farm products, including cattle and livestock feed, will surge from 10-20 per cent, say farmers.

According to Mr Arupathy Kalyanam, general secretary of the delta districts farmers federation, the monsoon failure has adversely affected paddy and other crops in the region. He opined that it would take at least another three years for farmers to emerge from the crisis.

The existing Central and state government policies have become anti-farmer and there is a need for immediate intervention. Even when there are adequate rains, dealers stock rice to make huge margins.

The present scenario will only help the middlemen, resulting in price rise, he said.

Even though paddy crops appeared green in areas where pumpsets are used, the yield would be just one-third.

A solution to the existing power crisis and comprehensive crop insurance may bring in some respite, he suggested.

The 54-year-old farmer also added that besides affecting paddy, rains and climatic changes have caused considerable damage to sugarcane, banana, groundnut and other horticulture crops across the state.

India remains upbeat



London: Global consumer confidence dipped at the end of 2012, a survey showed on Monday, and more than 60 per cent of respondents said the next 12 months would not be a good time to spend.

India remained the most optimistic consumer market globally for a second straight quarter, followed by the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand.

Concerns about US budget talks, which have since eased, and worries about the euro zone crisis weighed on consumer sentiment in the final quarter of 2012, according to the survey by global insights company Nielsen.

About 63 per cent of respondents said it was not a good time to buy discretionary or non-discretionary things over the next 12 months, with spending restraint most notable among Europeans.

Consumers in the Asia Pacific were most upbeat but even there 59 per cent said the next 12 months would not be a good time to spend, the survey showed.

The Nielsen Global Consumer Confidence Index dipped one point in the fourth quarter to 91, after rising one point in the third quarter, and was two points higher than a year earlier.