

TNAU forecast for Thai Pattam crops

Thai pattam (January-February) is one of the major seasons for sowing many crops in Tamil Nadu.

The Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC) of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University has forecast price for certain crops such as maize, groundnut, and small onion.

The predicted price for harvested maize in April-June is Rs. 1,450 a quintal.

Based on the price prevailing in Udumalpet market for the last 16 years, DEMIC has advised farmers to sow varieties / hybrids with bold grains to fetch better price. If the number of grains in 100 gm of maize grain is less than 350, farmers could get better price.

The price foreseen for groundnut to be harvested in April-May is Rs. 48 to Rs. 50 a kg of dried groundnut pod based on the analysis in Sevrur Regulated Market. In Erode district, groundnut is mostly sold for use in confectionary business and hence price is always higher than in other districts.

The farm price of small onion is expected to be around Rs. 22 to Rs. 25 a kg in April-June. This has been forecast based on the price prevailing in Dindigul market for the last 15 years.

For details, contact 0422-2431405 / 2450507 / 231405 / 6611283.

Harvest in 1,000 hectares of pumpset irrigated areas over

Average yield of 5 to 5.50 tonnes per hectare



Hard labour: Farmers transplanting samba crop in a field in Soorakottai in Thanjavur on Monday.— Photo: B. Velankanni Raj

Samba crops in pumpset irrigated areas in the district have been saved thanks to the 12-hour power supply given under samba package by the government. Harvest in pumpset irrigated areas has already started and 1,000 hectares have been covered so far.

Agriculture department officials said that with an average yield of 5 to 5.50 tonnes per hectare, the harvest has been good.

Harvest will pick up by Pongal, they exuded hope. Farmers have raised 120 to 125 days duration varieties such as ADT 39, ADT 38, BPC, and Ponni. There are 62,096 agriculture pumpsets in Thanjavur district and they irrigate around 45,000 hectares. About 1,25,000 hectares of samba was cultivated in the district. Areas under canal irrigation are hit by water scarcity. Kuruvai was raised on 20,000 hectares using pumpsets.

Chennai echoes with delta farmers' protest



Early in the afternoon on Tuesday, Uzhavan Bharati takes the mike and sings one of his thousands songs calling for a revolution of farmers, even as portraits of 10 farmers from the Cauvery delta who committed suicide this year were displayed on the background.

After the song, he looks drained and could not even speak. Hundreds of farmers were on a fast in the city for the release of Cauvery river water, the lifeline of the delta that takes care of the state's food basket.

K. Selvaraj, a farmer who owns 30 acres in Mayiladuthurai in Nagapattinam district, looked distraught like the rest of the crowd. "The returns will not even be half this year," he says. For an investment of Rs 5 lakh, the return is a double. "This year, it won't be even Rs 2.5 lakh," he says.

V. Murugavel, a farmer from Nattaru in Thanjavur district, was also getting the double on investment when the Cauvery flows through. He had no pumpset which compounded the problem. "We have borrowed money from private lenders at an interest of up to five per cent," he says.

The delta farmers were of the opinion that the government's decision to provide power for more hours than the usual three hours came a bit too late right at the end of last November. "By then, the paddy crop had started wilting," says a Thanjavur farmer.

Among the resolutions passed pertained to the mobilisation of people to retrieve the traditional rights of the State in Cauvery river water and a call to all political parties to support the State government's efforts

Arupathi Kalyanam, general secretary, Federation of Delta Farmers Associations, said: "It is not just a farmers' issue. Apart from being the livelihood of 2.5 crore farmers in the delta, the river is a drinking water source for five crore people. Even Chennai's drinking water needs is comfortable because of the Cauvery water from Veeranam scheme."

Farmers to the west of Grand Anicut have their own set of problems. "About two lakh acres of paddy, banana and betel are waiting for harvest but there is no water.

The pumping for drinking water for several schemes, including Ramanathapuram integrated drinking water scheme, is depleting ground water,” said Puliyur Nagarajan of the 17-canal association based in Srirangam constituency represented by Chief Minister Jayalalithaa.

“We have never fasted or protested in Chennai. This is the first time as far as we know,” says Kavundampatti Subramani, another farmer. “It is unfortunate that not even a single Minister or Member of the Legislative Assembly came to hear us at the fast,” he rued.

He blamed the political class for its failure to stand up to the cause of the delta farmers who keep on filling the most of the state’s food basket year after year.

Farmers plan massive stir for fair price

Bhartiya Kisan Union leaders say urgent steps are needed to stop farmers’ suicides



“GIVE US MORE”:Farm leaders Ajmer Singh Lakhawal, Rakesh Tikait and Yudhvir Singh in New Delhi on Tuesday.— Photo: Rajeev Bhatt

Issuing a warning to the Government on rising input costs and denial of remunerative costs to farmers for their produce, Bhartiya Kisan Union on Tuesday announced a country-wide agitation. “Unless we are given a fair remunerative price for our produce, we will drop production,” warned the leaders at a Press conference here.

“These steps are urgently needed to stop farmers from committing suicide and live a dignified life,” they added.

Noting that the Government did not consult any grassroots farmers’ organisation in the pre-Budget meetings, farm leaders Ajmer Singh Lakhawal, Rakesh Tikait and Yudhvir Singh said

the consultations were “eyewash” as no real farmers’ organisations were invited to these meetings.

Mr. Lakhawal said last year Punjab farmers spent Rs. 300 crore on fertilizers, Rs.800 crore on diesel and Rs. 1,500 crore on buying electricity to irrigate their crop. Yet the panel for Agriculture Costs and Prices initially recommended that the minimum support price for wheat be frozen at last year’s level. It is only after farmers protested that a hike of Rs. 65 per quintal was given. “We want crop prices to be fixed as per the recommendations of the Hooda Committee report as well as the National Farmers’ Commission, which says that farmers should receive 50 per cent above the cost of cultivation.”

Asked whether this will not raise the prices for consumers, the leaders said farmers and consumers would have to jointly launch a movement. “There is a need to change the mind-set. Consumers do not mind buying chocolate worth Rs. 100 or electronic toys worth Rs. 1,000, but resent paying an additional Rs. 5 or Rs.10 for essential commodities. Farmers are not benefiting from the price rise of essential commodities. A farmer, for instance, gets Rs. 1.50 per kg for potato, which, by the time it reaches the city, is sold for Rs. 20 per kg. And the high cost of potato chips, etc., is not shared with farmers. It is the industry and middlemen that benefit,” said Mr. Tikait.

They said FDI in multi-brand retail will not benefit farmers as is being projected. “It will only benefit traders. Small middlemen will be replaced by bigger middle-men.”

Bemoaning lack of farm labour, they said the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was a “conspiracy” to make the workforce redundant for the farm sector so that fewer and fewer people remained in the agriculture sector. “As in European countries, the Government should directly give to farmers the difference between cost of production and price at which the produce is sold in the market. Only then will farmers receive a fair price,” said Mr. Yudhvir Singh.

Ryots urged to submit petitions

Farmers of the district have been asked to write about their grievances to the Collector before the monthly grievance meeting.

“The meeting is to be held on January 18. Farmers and farmers’ associations should write about their grievances they want to be addressed at the meeting. Their petitions should reach the Collector on or before January 10. Petitions can directly be sent to the Collector by post or dropped at the ‘maiya petti’ at the Collectorate, taluk offices and Agriculture Department offices,” Mr.Pingale said in a release.

Tiruchi farmers demand release of 3,000 cusecs of water for 17 channels



A number of farmers of the district, who turned up with withering crops, squatted in front of the collectorate here on Monday morning demanding release of at least 3,000 cusecs of water from Mettur Dam to save the standing crops in the 17-channel area.

Led by representatives of various associations including Ayilai Sivasauriyan, S. Masilamani, C.Chinnadurai, S.Subramanian and Puliyur A. Nagarajan, they wanted to meet Collector Jayashree Muralidharan to submit a memorandum.

However, the police were prepared to permit only a few of them to meet the collector which infuriated the farmers. The police pointed out that already the collectorate was crowded because of the people who have gathered in large numbers to submit petitions to the collector as Monday happens to the public grievances day.

But when the farmers tried to get into the collectorate, the police closed the main gate sparking a minor agitation.

They then squatted in front of the collectorate and raised slogans. They also wanted the Collector to meet them at the gate.

However, Senthamizhselvan, Personal Assistant (General) to the Collector, who received their memorandum at the gate, pacified them.

The farmers later told media persons that annual crops including banana, sugarcane and betel vines, apart from paddy, raised in about two lakh acres in the 17-channel area have started withering because of very poor water supply. The current release of about 1,000 cusecs would not reach the 17 channels and hence the release should be stepped up at least to 3,000 cusecs, they demanded.

Their demands include compensation of Rs.40,000 per acre for farmers who have lost samba crop, construction of barrages near the drinking water schemes along the Cauvery, and stoppage of power supply to lift irrigation societies between Mettur and Mayanur as they were drawing water flouting the conditions, and waiver off farm loans.

Farmers demand water from NSP

Tension prevailed as hundreds of farmers blocked traffic at Nandigama here for about four hours on Tuesday demanding release of water from Nagarjuna Sagar Project (NSP).

Police dispersed the protestors by force as they squatted on the road causing inconvenience to the travelling public on Sattenapalli-Guntur highway.

Scores of farmers and also activists of CPM and TDP were taken into custody as the situation became troublesome.

Farmers have been demanding for long that water should be released from NSP as per the Government's commitment to meet the requirement in phases but there has been no improvement in the situation.

The farmers expressed regret that the Government buckled under pressure of some vested interests who secured an injunction by the High Court against releasing water from the NSP in spite of availability of surplus quantity in the project.

The police remained alert to the situation as the farmers warned of intensifying the agitation in the days ahead with support from the Opposition parties.

National seminar on food security

The Economics Department at NTR Government Degree College for Women, Mahabubnagar, is organising a national seminar on “Food Security – A Sustainable Rural Development and Inclusive Growth”. Those who are interested in presenting papers can send their papers before January 18. They can also send papers to the email ID: rangaiabala@gmail.com or contact: 9949305246. – Correspondent

Cotton farmers protest suspension of trading by mill owners

Cotton farmers in Adilabad staged a protest at Punjab Hotel Chowk here on Tuesday following suspension of trading by mill owners. The owners had closed cotton processing factories intending to stage a protest over the frequent and long power cuts.

Traffic obstructed

Angry farmers who arrived at the marketyard in town, assembled at the Chowk and obstructed traffic flow. They relented only after an assurance by the police and Adilabad Revenue officials that trading would be resumed soon.

RDO intervention

Adilabad RDO Gugulothu Ravi intervened and reminded the traders of prohibitory orders being in force in the town. He said the owners cannot take out a rally due to the restrictions which made the mill owners resume trading.

Protest at APTransco

Meanwhile, the Telangana Rashtra Samiti staged a protest at the APTransco office in Adilabad, demanding lifting of power cuts. The agitating activists criticised the government for failing to supply quality and adequate power even to the farming sector.

They ended their protest only after an assurance by the police and Adilabad Revenue officials that trading would be resumed soon

Cashew workers stage dharna

Kerala Cashew Workers Congress seeks protection of public sector factories



For strong action:United Democratic Front convener P.P. Thankachan inaugurating a dharna organised by the Kerala Cashew Workers Congress in Kollam on Tuesday. —Photo: C. Suresh Kumar

Cashew workers under the banner of the INTUC-affiliated Kerala Cashew Workers Congress (KCWC) organised a march and dharna here on Tuesday demanding immediate solution to the problems of the more than three lakh cashew workers in the State.

The workers' demand included protection of the public sector Kerala State Cashew Development Corporation (KSCDC) and cooperative sector Capex cashew factories and action against those private factories denying statutory rights to cashew workers.

Inaugurating the dharna at the Press Club Maidan, United Democratic Front convener P.P. Thankachan warned of strong action against those government officers who tried to deny statutory rights to cashew workers. He alleged that because of the double standards of a section of bureaucrats, the factories of the KSCDC were unable to provide work. The budget allocation made for the KSCDC was not being released as a result of which the company was unable to purchase raw nuts. The attitude of these bureaucrats smacks of a move to destroy the KSCDC, he alleged.

KCWC general secretary V. Sathyaseelan, who led the dharna, said that the 30 factories of the KSCDC had been lying closed for the past 40 days and this had hit the livelihood of more than 24,000 cashew workers. He wondered whether the move to stifle the KSCDC was a 'hidden agenda' to force its workers seek employment with the private sector which was facing a shortage of workers.

The dharna was presided over by INTUC district president N. Azhakeshan. Congress leaders E. Marydasan and A. Rahimkutti spoke. The march which began from Ananandalleshwaram was led by Mr. Sathyaseelan.

Panchayat launches vegetable cultivation scheme

The Naduvil grama panchayat has launched a programme to bring more areas under vegetable cultivation by utilising the resources of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

The panchayat, in the eastern hill areas of the district, intended to enhance the income of farmers, help them tide over the crisis caused by crop loss, increase vegetable production, and effectively implement MGNREGS.

Plantain cultivation

Of the 240 acres of land to be utilised, 100 acres would be brought under plantain cultivation.

Cardamom would be grown on 65 acres, cabbage and cauliflower on 40 acres, and drum stick on 15 acres. Panchayat president P.T. Mathew said the scheme would be implemented at a cost of Rs.16.77 lakh.

Beneficiaries were being selected from grama sabhas and a monitoring committee would supervise the implementation. The aim was to harvest 12,000 tonnes of plantain which would ensure a revenue of Rs.3 crore in one year. Sixty tonnes of cabbage and cauliflower were expected in three months, Mr. Mathew said.

Farmers are being exploited: Kumaraswamy

H.D. Kumaraswamy, working president of the Janata Dal (Secular), has said that his party is committed to fixing remunerative prices for farm produce.

Speaking at the Sarva Dharma Sammelan and a mass marriage ceremony organised by H. Shivappa Abhimanigala Balaga in Harihar on Sunday, he said that farmers were being exploited as successive governments had failed to fix a remunerative price for their produce. What would

happen to food security if farmers started leaving villages in the next few years, he asked and stressed the need to fix remunerative prices for farm produce.

If voted to power in the forthcoming Assembly polls, the Janata Dal (Secular) would take steps to provide permanent irrigation facility all over the State, he said.

Mr. Kumaraswamy claimed that his party had drawn up an action plan for several welfare schemes for poor people, widows and unemployed youth.

He said that the Bharatiya Janata Party had betrayed people and urged voters to be judicious in exercising their franchise.

Advocate and former principal of R.L. Law College S.H. Patel, Madhu Bangarappa, H.Anjaneya, H. Shivappa, H.S. Shivashankar, Naganagowda and Vanamala Shivappa were present.

Farmer commits suicide

A farmer from Palladam allegedly committed suicide on Tuesday.

P. Subramani (49), owned about six acres of farm land at Pallakattuthottam near Palladam. He was reportedly bothered by pressure from money lenders to repay the amounts he borrowed from them prompting him to take the extreme step. He reportedly consumed pesticide and died at Coimbatore Medical College and Hospital. He was survived by his wife and two children. The Palladam police are further investigating.

Honour for Kangayam cattle breeder

Livestock breeder selected for UN conference to be held in Kenya



Kuttapalaya Sivasenaapathy Muralidhara Karthikeya with a Kangayam breed.

In recognition of services in preserving genetically pure Kangayam cattle breed and its grazing land-habitat, Kuttapalaya Sivasenaapathy Muralidhara Karthikeya (40) from Tirupur district has been invited by Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations for its international multi-stakeholder conference in Kenya.

He was among four livestock breeders who were selected from India with the other three being involved in breeding and conservation of Kulu sheep, native camels and Deccani sheep breed.

The meet, to be held at International Livestock Research Institute at Nairobi from January 21 to 25, would be a platform for delegates from across the globe to deliberate how to preserve various native animal breeds and the eco-system that helps breed them.

Karthikeya Sivasenaapathy told *The Hindu* that he would be presenting on the threats faced to grazing land habitat of Kangayam cattle breed called as 'Korangadu', which comprises 29 typical trees and shrubs.

"From over 1.5 lakh hectares in the late 1970s, the expanse of Korangadu in the 'in-situ' Kangayam tract spread over Tirupur, Karur, Erode, Namakkal and Dindigul districts has now come down to almost 50,000 hectares," Mr. Karthikeya, who is also the managing trustee of Senaapathy Kangayam Cattle Research Foundation, said.

According to him, the presence of the 'species-specific' Korangadu is extremely important in the conservation of genetically pure Kangayam cattle. The decrease in the area was attributed to pollution in rivers flowing near the tract, lack of awareness among different stakeholders of Korangadu and conversion of such grazing lands for real estate purposes. "There is also a need

to classify Korangadu as grazing land by revenue officials who presently put such areas as waste lands,” Mr. Karthikeya pointed out.

The plenary discussions at the conference, according to him, will help him bring the much needed global attention to the species (i.e. Kangayam cattle breed).

Not so sweet ‘Pongal’ for Karaikal farmers

Even as people in general prepare themselves to celebrate ‘Pongal,’ it may not be so sweet for farmers of Karaikal this year, who face grim prospects of standing paddy due to failure of monsoon and non-arrival of Cauvery water.

As per the latest weekly report sent by agricultural officials of the Karaikal region to Puducherry government, the condition of standing samba paddy is termed as “drying.” The condition might worsen if there is no rain for a week.

The farmers, who had given up ‘kuruvai’ cultivation due to the non-arrival of Cauvery water, brought as many as 4,708 hectares under paddy cultivation during ‘samba’ season mainly due to the good rainfall received in September and October. However, contrary to the popular method of paddy transplantation, more than 2,500 hectares were brought under direct sowing method, which is quite popular in Ramanathapuram and Sivaganga districts. But, erratic and insufficient rainfall at the crucial stages dampened the spirit of farmers.

According to official records, as against the average rainfall of 485.2 mm and 256.18 mm in November and December, Karaikal received just 75.7 mm and 78.8 mm respectively. Officials felt that though October recorded 774.9 mm as against the average of 261.59 mm, the quantum of rainfall in successive months was insufficient to meet the requirement of paddy crop at vegetative, flowering and maturity stages.

K. Mathialagan, Additional Director of Agriculture, Karaikal region, told *The Hindu* that the non-receipt of Cauvery water and failure of monsoon at crucial stages had affected the prospects of standing paddy crop. Though the sky was cloudy in the past few days, rain was evasive.

Farmers would have been in an advantageous position had they received at least normal rain in December.

B. Bala Gandhi, Additional Director of Agriculture, Puducherry, said that expecting poor prospects in water front, many of the farmers preferred to sow paddy seeds even before the onset of northeast monsoon. In spite of it, reports from Karaikal were not encouraging.

Mr. Mathialagan added that the situation was monitored on a daily basis. Tapping groundwater seems to be the only option to meet the water requirement . Farmers were instructed to tap groundwater through private and community borewells. The government would support them to irrigate crop through borewells. If Karaikal received good rain in the days to come, it might support the paddy crop to an extent.

Relief sought for crop failure

They express solidarity with farmers of the delta region



For a cause:Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam members staging a demonstration at Pudukottaion Tuesday.— Photo: N. Rajesh

: Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam members expressed solidarity with the farmers of the delta region in seeking compensation for crop failure due to poor monsoons at a demonstration at Pudukottai in the district on Tuesday.

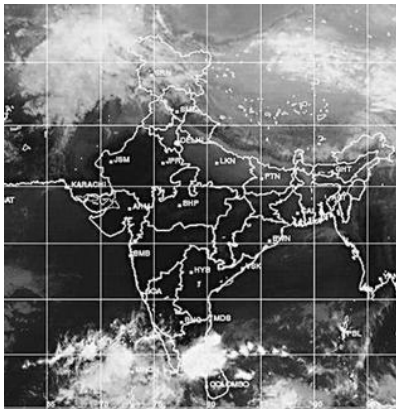
K.P. Perumal, district secretary, who led the agitation, said the farmers from Thiruvarur, Thanjavur and Nagapattinam districts had been agitating before the collectorates since January 7 to safeguard the interests of the farmers demanding compensation.

The State government should pay compensation of Rs.25, 000 per acre for irrigation-based agriculture and Rs.15, 000 per acre for crop failure on dry land depending on rainfed agriculture system, he said.

Despite a series of demonstrations, the government made no effort to compensate the farmers, he noted.. The government should release Rs.10 lakh to nine families of farmers who committed suicide after crop failure. The government should offer jobs to the bereaved families.

Farmers staged another demonstration led by R. Raghavan, district president, Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, in front of the Ottapidaram taluk office. K. Sankaran, union secretary of the sangam, and others took part.

weather



New Delhi (Plm)	12	3	0	0
New Delhi (Sfd)	13	3	0	0
Chandigarh	6	1	0	0
Hissar	12	3	0	0
Bhuntar	17	-2	0	0
Shimla	10	1	0	0
Jammu	7	5	0	0
Srinagar	9	-5	0	0
Amritsar	7	3	0	0
Patiala	11	2	0	0

Jaipur	20	4	0	0
Udaipur	20	3	0	0
Allahabad	14	2	0	0
Lucknow	13	0	0	0
Varanasi	13	3	0	0
Dehradun	18	-1	0	0
Agartala	22	9	0	0
Ahmedabad	24	9	0	0
Bangalore	30	17	0	0
Bhubaneshwar	30	17	tr	1
Bhopal	19	5	0	0
Chennai	31	22	0	0
Guwahati	23	8	0	0
Hyderabad	31	21	0	0
Kolkata	21	12	0	12
Mumbai	28	19	0	0
Nagpur	24	8	0	6
Patna	10	5	0	0
Pune	31	9	0	0
Thiruvananthapuram	32	25	0	0
Imphal	20	7	0	0
Shillong	15	3	0	0

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

Cold wave

Cold wave to severe cold wave conditions are prevailing in many parts of Uttar Pradesh and cold wave conditions are prevailing over some parts of Haryana, Delhi and Rajasthan. Cold day conditions are prevailing over some parts of Punjab.

Weather was dry over the region.

MINIIMUM TEMPERATURES: The minimum temperatures changed little over the region. They were markedly below normal in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, appreciably below normal in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan and below normal in the rest of the region. The lowest minimum temperature in the plains was

-1.0°C recorded at Churu (Rajasthan) and Agra (Uttar Pradesh)).

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 10th JANUARY 2013: Rain/snow may occur at one or two places over Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh during next 48 hours and mainly dry weather thereafter. Weather would be mainly dry over rest of the region. Fog conditions would continue to prevail over some parts of Punjab Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and north Rajasthan during next 48 hours.

WARNING: Dense fog (Visibility 200 meters or less) would occur over some parts of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh during the next 48 hours.

Cold wave conditions would occur in some parts of Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan during next 48 hours. Cold day conditions would occur in some parts over Punjab during next 48 hours. Ground frost would occur in some parts of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan during next two nights.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 10th JANUARY 2013: Mainly clear sky. Fog in the morning.

weather

INDIAN CITIES

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Wednesday, Jan 9

Max Min

29.7° | 21.7°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 89

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:33

Sunset: 05:58

Barometer: 1015

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Thursday, Jan 10

Max Min

30° | 22°

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday
Jan 11



31° | 22°
Partly Cloudy

Saturday
Jan 12



25° | 23°
Overcast

Sunday
Jan 13



25° | 23°
Cloudy

Monday
Jan 14



25° | 23°
Cloudy

Tuesday
Jan 15



25° | 23°
Sunny

Airport Weather

Delhi

Delhi

Rain: 0

Humidity: 100

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 07:15

Sunset: 05:41

Barometer: 1018



8th jan 2013

Cold wave triggers fear of crop damage in chana



Improved buying support ahead of *Makar Sankranti* festival and rise in futures perked up chana prices in the local mandis by about Rs 100 a quintal with chana (kanta) on Tuesday quoting at Rs 3,975-4,000, while chana (desi) ruled at Rs 3,700.

Chana prices for most part of the year have been ruling high with decline in crop output last year. Prices zoomed to as high as Rs 4,850 in October.

However, thereafter, chana witnessed a continuous fall with rise in arrival of imported chana in local mandis. In the past two-and-half months, domestic chana has almost declined by over Rs 800 amid availability of cheap imported chana.

However, in the past few days, rise in chana futures and buying support at lower rate besides report of damage to standing crops of chana in some parts of the State due to intense cold wave have once again lifted its prices by about Rs 100 in the past one week.

Given rise in sowing area of chana this year, which has increased to 89.5 lakh hectares (3.6 per cent rise compared with last year) and hope of bumper crop output, a prolonged rally looks unlikely in the coming days in chana. Compared with spot chana prices, chana dal in the past

one week, however, has witnessed a marginal rise with chana dal (average) on Tuesday being quoted at Rs 4,575-4,600; chan dal (medium) at Rs 4,675-4,700; while chana dal (bold) ruled at Rs 4,900-4,925.

On the other hand, dollar chana which had been trading low for most part of the week, gained Rs 500 a quintal during the past couple of days on rise in buying support.

In local mandis, dollar chana perked up to Rs 4,000-5,000 (Rs 4,700) on improved buying support amid arrival of 3,000 bags.

Rise in buying support in the export market has also perked up dollar chana in the container by over Rs 150, with dollar chana (42/44 count) being quoted at Rs 5,550; 44/46 count at Rs 5,300, while 60/62 count ruled at Rs 4,250.

With the arrival of new crop barely a month away, traders have ruled out any long rally in dollar chana in the coming days.

Edible oils mixed in dull trading



Edible oil market witnessed dull trading and mixed trend on second day on lack of demand and bearish Malaysian palm oil futures. Improved arrivals of indigenous seeds for crushing pulled prices of cotton refined oil by Rs 3 and rapeseed oil by Rs 5.

Groundnut, soyabean and sunflower oil ruled unchanged but the undercurrent was weak. Palmolein rose by Re 1 as reselling pressure eased. The volume was thin due to need-based buying by stockists, said sources.

In the local market, palm oil volumes remained thin. About 350-400 tonnes of palmolein were traded in resale at Rs 505-506.

Most traders have covered sufficient stocks in advance at lower prices kept away from fresh buying.

Indigenous edible oils were under pressure of higher arrivals and better prospects for rabi crops. Weak currency makes import parity costly forcing refiners to hold the prices higher against resellers prices.

In Saurashtra – Rajkot groundnut oil drop to Rs 1,960 (Rs 1,995) for *telia tin* and Rs 1,280 (Rs 1,300) for loose (10 kg). Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 522-524 for Jan and Rs 530-532 for February. Super palmolein Rs 572, soya refined oil Rs 690 and sunflower refined oil Rs 800. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 520 for January and Rs 528 for Feb 1-25, soyabean refined oil at Rs 680 and sunflower refined oil Rs 785 for January.

Allana's rates for palmolein were Rs 518 and super palmolein Rs 565.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil's February futures were up Rs 690.60 (Rs 685.65); March at Rs 680.70 (Rs 678.20) and April Rs 678.70 (Rs 680.60). Malaysia's crude palm oil's February contracts declined to MYR 2,343 (MYR 2,365), March at MYR 2,393 (MYR 2,418) and April drop to MYR 2,434 (MYR 2,461) a tonne.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: Groundnut oil 1,280 (1,280), soya refined oil 685(685), sunflower exp. ref. 720 (720), sunflower ref. 790 (790), rapeseed ref. oil 815 (820), rapeseed expeller ref. 785 (790) cottonseed ref. oil 612 (615) and palmolein 506 (505).

Groundnut oil static as Govt curbs nut exports

Groundnut oil and cottonseed oil were traded unchanged on the back of weak demand in retail.

According to traders and millers after DGFT's notification, export of groundnut was almost on hold and availability of groundnut has increased for crushing which may pressurise the price.

A trader said prices could drop in the coming days.

At Rajkot, groundnut oil loose was traded on Rs 1,270-1,275 for 10 kg and new tin for 15 kg of groundnut oil stood at Rs 2,180-2,185. *Teliya tin* price was quoted Rs 1,947-1,948 for 15 kg.

About 30-40 tonnes groundnut oil were traded in Saurashtra.

Cotton oil also traded unchanged due to normal demand in retail market.

Cotton oil wash traded steady on Rs 590-593 for 10 kg and cotton oil new tin price was quoted at Rs 1,055-1,065 for 15 kg. About 250-300 tonnes cotton oil were traded here.

According to edible oil traders, re-packers were unwilling to make fresh deals due to weak retail demand.

Moreover, the DGFT has restricted export of groundnut without APEDA registration. Because of this notification, groundnut export is on hold and it increased the availability of groundnut for the millers.

Sugar extends loss on ample stocks



Sugar prices in the Vashi wholesale market ruled weak on Tuesday on limited demand and ample supply. In the futures market, prices extended further loss in absence of positive cues. In spot, prices dropped by Rs 10 a quintal. Naka rates ruled unchanged. Mill tender rates declined by Rs 10 on need-based demand. The volume was routine at both upper – mill and lower-market level.

A trader said: “The loading – unloading was stopped till 1 p.m. on meeting called by Mathadi Kamgar Union to protest against the State Government’s move to change the Kamgar’s laws”.

“As market carries ample inventories traders kept away from fresh buying. Reports of possible hike in sugar price in the public distribution scheme (PDS) will only support producers but not the market price” he said.

Analyst said domestic sugar prices started falling after Diwali on lacklustre demand and higher selling by mills trying to raise cash to pay farmers.

Sugar crushing is going on in full scale and mills have to pay farmers for cane. On export front also, current prices are not in favour of India.

In Vashi market, arrivals were 6-62 truck loads (each of 100 bags) while dispatches were 60-61 truck loads. On Monday evening about 18-20 mills offered tenders and sold about 64,000-65,000 bags (each of 100 kg) at Rs 3,120-3,170 (Rs 3,130-3,180) for S-grade and Rs 3,240-3,280 (Rs 3,240-3,290) for M-grade.

On National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar prices for February futures drop to Rs 3,259 (Rs 3,268), March to Rs 3,285 (Rs 3,294) and April Rs 3,339 (Rs 3,342) till noon.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 3,266- 3,342 (Rs 3,266-3,326) and M-grade Rs 3,352-3,482 (Rs 3,346-3,491). **Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 3,230-3,260 (Rs 3,230-3,260) and M-grade Rs 3,280-3,420 (Rs 3,280-3,420).

Late orders bloom to boost turmeric



Exporters getting fresh orders from North India have helped rise in turmeric prices.

“Exporters are getting reasonable orders from Bihar and Kolkatta. Usually, traders will get upcountry orders in November and December. But this year, they received orders only from January”, said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

Price were steady in Nizamabad and Sangli markets.

On Tuesday, the farmers have brought 6,200 bags and 80 per cent was sold.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,411-6,611 and the root variety at Rs 4,296-6,035.

Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 6,639-7,439 and the root variety was sold at Rs 6,055-6,389. Of the 1,247 bags that arrived 320 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,899- 6,917 And the root variety Rs 4,669-6,067. Of 651 bags on offer, 489 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety sold at Rs 5,689-6,369, the root variety Rs 5,593-6,212. All the 759 bags were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,809-6,572 and the root variety Rs 4,672-6,525. All the 159 bags were sold.

Bearish trend in wheat futures continues



Wheat futures remained bearish on Tuesday. On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, wheat for January delivery traded at Rs 1,521 a quintal; it had touched a high at Rs 1,549 and made a low at Rs 1,512 earlier in the day.

While the February contracts extended further loss and went down by Rs 8 to Rs 1,507.

Wheat spot prices traded at Rs 1,495. January contracts were fluctuating between positive and negative territory.

Wheat futures may extend further losses in this week, said market experts.

In the physical market, dara wheat continued to rule unchanged at its previous levels at Rs 1,515-1,525. Around 600 quintals of dara variety arrived from Uttar Pradesh the stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,515-1,520 while delivery at the chakki was Rs 1,525.

Easy availability of stocks coupled with steady domestic demand kept wheat and flour prices unchanged, said Radhey Shyam, a trade expert.

A healthy crop is expected this season as prevailing cold weather conditions are beneficial for the wheat crop. It increases tillering of the crop and ensures an increase in yield, said agricultural experts.

Flour Prices

Following a steady domestic demand, flour prices too ruled flat and quoted at Rs 1,725 a quintal. Similarly, Chokar remained unchanged and sold at Rs 1,400-1450.

Exports

Dubai-based trading company Midgulf International is the highest bidder for the wheat export tender floated by PEC Ltd last month. PEC had floated the tender to sell one lakh tonnes of milling wheat for export. The highest bid was \$321a tonne.

Stockists avoid new deals in edible oils

Edible oil markets witnessed a bearish trend on Monday tracking weak Malaysian palm oil futures and lack of demand in physical market. In Mumbai, following a sharp decline in Malaysian palm oil futures, palmolein and soyabean refined oil dropped by Rs 5 and Rs 3 each.

Cotton refined oil declined by Rs 5, while groundnut, sunflower and rapeseed oils ruled unchanged.

Sources said: "Tracking weak world market and domestic currency that make import parity costly, stockists kept away from fresh bet as most have covered enough during the last 15-20 days.

Arrivals of new import cargoes and ample stocks available with refineries forced them to reduce the rates but traders kept quite. Sellers were dominating the markets".

In Saurashtra – Rajkot, groundnut oil was Rs 1,995 (Rs 2,000) for *telia tin* and Rs 1,300 (Rs 1,295) for loose 10 kg. Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 522-524 for January and Rs 530-532 for February.

Super palmolein Rs 572, soya refined oil Rs 690 and sunflower refined oil Rs 800.

Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 520 for Jan and Rs 528 for 1-25 Feb; soyabean refined oil at Rs 685 and sunflower refined oil Rs 785 for Jan.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil February was Rs 686.50 (Rs 682.80), March Rs 677.80 (Rs 676.20) and April Rs 679.70 (Rs 678.15).

Malaysia's crude palm oil's February contracts declined to MYR 2,365 (MYR 2,425), March at MYR 2,418 (MYR2,467) and April drop to MYR2,461 (MYR 2,504) a tonne.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg): Groundnut oil 1,280 (1,280), soya refined oil 685 (688), sunflower exp. ref. 720 (720), sunflower ref. 790 (785), rapeseed ref. oil 820 (820), rapeseed expeller ref. 790 (790) cottonseed ref. oil 615 (620) and palmolein 505 (510).

Maharashtra mills lower new season sugar price

Sugar prices extended further loss by Rs 10 a quintal at mill level and pulled down spot rates by Rs 15-20 on Monday as producers sold new stocks at lower rates.

The premium of new season's stocks narrowed significantly in the last few days on a routine demand. Naka rates ruled unchanged. Sugar futures prices continued to remain range-bound on higher production and ample supply in the markets, said traders.

A wholesaler said: "Maharashtra's millers have started selling new season's stocks by lowering prices to ease pressure of inventory. Last month they were offering new sugar at a premium of Rs 90-100 which is now cut to Rs 20-30. Other side in physical markets, demand remained need based due to normal off take by retailers. Activities become regular due to ample supply.

The Vashi wholesale market currently carries about 100-110 truckloads inventory. Crushing season is picking up and prices in the other main producing centres are ruling at par with Maharashtra; hence, upcountry buying is lacking in Maharashtra.

"There is nothing to support sugar prices. Unless the Government takes some steps, either raising import duty or announcing some incentives for sugar mills, we don't see recovery in prices," said analysts.

In Vashi market, arrivals were 62-63 truckloads (each of 100 bags), while dispatches were 61-62 loads. On Saturday about 12-14 mills offered tenders and sold 43,000-45,000 bags (each of 100 kg) in the range of Rs 3,130-3,180 (Rs 3,140-3,190) for S-grade and Rs 3,240-3,290 (Rs 3,250-3,290) for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar prices for February futures were Rs 3,267 (Rs 3,273); March dropped to Rs 3,295 (Rs 3,300) and April Rs 3,350 (Rs 3,347) till noon.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 3,266- 3,326 (Rs 3,272- 3,342) and M-grade Rs 3,346-3,491 (Rs 3,352-3,511). **The Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 3,230-3,260 (Rs 3,230-3,260) and M-grade Rs 3,280-3,420 (Rs 3,280-3,420).

Quality issues dog spot turmeric

Spot turmeric prices decreased as the quality of the arrivals on Monday was poor.

"Buyers prefer only quality turmeric as they have received fresh orders from North India. The quoted lower price for the commodity.

"Even the price of hybrid turmeric decreased by Rs 350 a quintal due to quality issues. They said that more than 5,000 bags arrived on Monday, of which 60 per cent was sold. At the Erode

Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,397-6,574 a quintal, the root variety Rs 4,599-6,065.

Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 6,661-7,105 and the root variety Rs 5,906-6,461. Of the of 1,145 bags that arrived, 198 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,549-6,889 and the root variety Rs 5,409-6,013. Of the 905 bags on offer, 666 were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam agricultural cooperative marketing society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,680-6,818 and the root variety Rs 4,169-6,219.

At Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,790-6,709, the root variety Rs 5,393-6,280. All the 832 bags on offer got sold.

Traders dub rally in rice 'unjustified'

An unexpected rally in the market pushed aromatic and sharbati rice prices up by Rs 200-450 a quintal on Monday, while PR varieties ruled firm on good buying interest.

Amit Chandna, proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company, told *Business Line* that despite a low domestic demand at present, rice prices are going upwards.

Following low paddy arrivals of aromatic varieties and frantic buying by the exporters, millers are quoting higher rates, said Amit Chandna.

Though, sentiments are largely positive at present, the market's future is uncertain, he said.

Traders, in general, say that the rally is unjustified as it is not backed by fundamental factors.

In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) went up by Rs 400 and sold at Rs 7,200-7,300 a quintal while Pusa-1121 (sela) went for Rs 6,250, Rs 450 up. Price of pure basmati (raw) increased by Rs 200 and quoted at Rs 8,200. Duplicate basmati (steam) traded Rs 300 up at Rs 5,800-5,900.

Sharbati (steam) up by Rs 200 and quoted at Rs 4,500 while Sharbati (sela) improved by Rs 225 at Rs 4,400.

PR varieties remained unchanged at their previous levels. PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 2,550-2,650; PR-11 (raw) Rs 2,550-2,600; Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,200-2,250 while Permal (sela) went for Rs 2,150-2,250.

About 2,000 bags of PR variety arrived and sold at Rs 1,125-1,200; 1,000 bags Sharbati quoted at Rs 2,100-2,115; 1,000 bags of Sugandha 999 sold at Rs 2,600-2,700.

About 5,000 bags of Pusa-1121 quoted at Rs 3,000-3,250.

Pepper futures surge on fresh demand, short-covering

Buoyed by a pick—up in spot demand and covering—up of short positions, pepper prices rose by Rs 140 to Rs 33,920 per quintal in futures trade on Tuesday as speculators created fresh positions.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, pepper for delivery in March rose by Rs 140, or 0.41 per cent, to Rs 33,920 per quintal, with an open interest of 714 lots.

The spice for delivery in February gained Rs 115, or 0.33 per cent to Rs 34,685 per quintal, with an open interest of 2,721 lots.

Marketmen said rising demand in the spot market and covering—up of short positions, helped pepper futures to trade higher but increased supplies, limited the gains.

Potato futures hit upper limit on speculative buying



Potato prices hit the daily upper limit of four per cent to Rs 777.90 per quintal in the futures market on Tuesday as speculators enlarged their positions on a firming spot markets trend.

The trading sentiment improved further on restricted supply from the producing regions.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for delivery in March surged by Rs 29.90, or 4 per cent, to Rs 777.90 per quintal with a business turnover of 208 lots.

Potato prices for delivery in April also jumped up by Rs 28.20, or 4 per cent, to Rs 733.80 per quintal, with trading volume of 21 lots.

Marketmen said increased buying by speculators on pick-up in spot market demand, mainly led to the rise in potato prices at futures trade.

Better price realisation seen for maize, onion, groundnut

There is some good news for maize, groundnut and small onion growers in Tamil Nadu. Agriculture experts foresee better price realisation from these crops at harvest in April-May, compared with the prevailing rates.

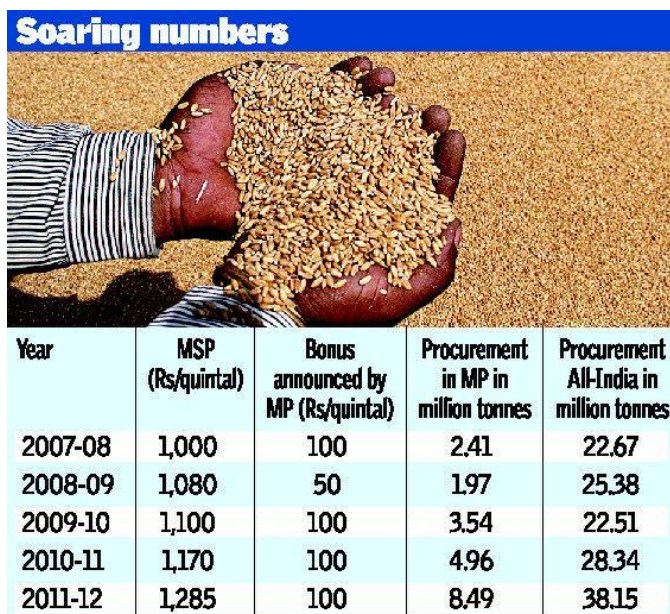
Advising farmers to sow these crops during the ensuing season (Thai Pattam), experts at the Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC) functioning at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, state that the price of maize could touch a level of Rs 1,450 a quintal during April-June 2013 as compared with Rs 1,350-1,400 a quintal at present.

The expert said, "even though maize is cultivated all through the year, farmers with irrigation facilities only would be able to raise the crop during Thai Pattam. The produce will be ready for harvest during April-May. Since there is continuous demand from the poultry industry and good prospects for export as well, the price of maize could rule high. To get better returns farmers should sow varieties/hybrids with bold grains. In 100 gm of maize grain, if the number of grains is less than 350, the farmer can expect higher price."

Reverting to groundnut, the expert said that the dried pod could fetch Rs 48-50 a kg during April-May. Groundnut incidentally is used in confectionary in Erode district. The price, therefore, is higher than in other districts.

Small onion is cultivated all through the year and is one of the profitable vegetables. The prevailing market price is around Rs 30/kg. The farm price of the small onion is expected to hover around Rs 22-25 a kg in April-June, the expert said, after conducting market surveys and analysing price trends.

M.P. wheat area up 35% on bonus, better buying system



The strategy of announcing a bonus over the Centre's minimum support price (MSP) and strengthening of the procurement system has helped Madhya Pradesh expand wheat area over the past few years.

The wheat area in the State has grown by 35 per cent in the past six years and is set to cross 50 lakh hectares in current rabi season.

“Wheat area has been increasing steadily. We have already crossed the targeted area of 49.55 lakh ha last week,” said M.M. Upadhyay, Agriculture Production Commissioner, Madhya Pradesh.

So far, farmers have planted wheat on 49.64 lakh hectares (lh), surpassing last year’s 49.01 lh.

Sowing is almost complete but the numbers are still coming in.

Besides the bonus, the State Government’s move to bring in additional land under cultivation by making fallow land productive and the expansion of irrigation through various schemes has also contributed to the wheat area, Upadhyay said.

Madhya Pradesh started offering bonus of Rs 100 a quintal over the Centre’s MSP to wheat growers since 2007-08 to encourage more production.

There are expectations that the MP Government will announce a bonus this year, too, considering that it is an election year.

For the rabi marketing season 2013-14, the Centre has announced a MSP of Rs 1,350 a quintal, about Rs 65 more than last year.

Acreage jumps

The area under wheat has grown from 37 lh in 2007-08 to 49 lh in 2011-12, while production shot up from six million tonnes to 10.5 million tonnes during the period.

MP has emerged as a major procurer of wheat recent years, almost matching the traditional States of Punjab and Haryana.

“Procurement has picked up substantially over the past five years and there has been a substantial increase in volumes and scale of operations in the past two years. The price support announced by the State through a bonus has made a difference to the growers,” said Mekhala Krishnamurthy, a social anthropologist, who has studied the procurement system in Harda district of MP.

Last year, the Government procured 85 per cent of the wheat produced in the State against 0.8 per cent in 2006-07.

Wheat procurement stood at a record high of 8.5 million tonnes in 2011-12 against 4.90 million tonnes in the previous year.

Special auctions to mark Coonoor tea trade's 50th year

To commemorate the golden jubilee of its auctions, the Coonoor Tea Trade Association (CTTA) will conduct three special auctions on March 23.

“The first tea auction in Coonoor was held on March 23, 1963. Over the 50 years, several landmarks have been reached. We will accordingly make the Golden Jubilee auction to remind the trade of the manual ‘outcry’ system in which the auctions started. We will also have two speciality tea auctions – one comprising the teas participating in ‘The Golden Leaf India Award’ contest to be organised by Tea Board and Upasi and the other, Nilgiri Winter Speciality Teas belonging to the members of the Nilgiri Planters’ Association”, CTTA Chairman Sunil Goyal told *Business Line*.

To enlist better participation of the buyers, CTTA is taking trade delegations to different parts of the country. “We will take trade delegations to south central, north central and north Indian markets in coming months. We are inviting all such traders to our Golden Jubilee celebrations. This follows the encouraging response we had to our recent delegation to Ahmedabad and Mumbai,” he said.

Spot rubber rules steady

Physical rubber prices finished unchanged on Tuesday.

According to observers, there were no active participants in the market despite a better closing in domestic futures.

Marginal weakness in the global trendsetters and the lack of confidence among the local buyers kept the commodity under pressure during late trades. The transactions were low.

Sheet rubber continued to rule flat at Rs 163.50 a kg, according to traders. The grade closed steady at Rs 163 a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, as reported by the Rubber Board.

The January series improved to Rs 166 (165.11), February to Rs 168.70 (167.64) March to Rs 171.60 (170.53) and April to Rs 174.89 (174.48) a kg, while the May and June series remained inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) dropped to Rs 183.42 (184.42) a kg at Bangkok. The January futures slipped to ₹291 (Rs 183.21) from ₹291.2 during the day session but then bounced back to ₹294.1 (Rs 185.15) in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 163.50 (163.50); RSS-5: 158 (158); ungraded: 153 (153); ISNR 20: 154 (154) and latex 60 per cent: 108 (108).

Poppy seeds top Rs 400/kg on supply-demand mismatch

Upsurge in poppy seeds continued with its prices crossing Rs 400 a kg. It is available in ready cash and carry sales as the demand outstripped supply in recent days following a sharp fall in output in all the growing countries.

Upcountry trade sources told *Business Line* that March delivery was traded at Rs 425 and if the present trend is any indication the “prices of this commodity might touch Rs 500 soon”, they predicted.

“Usual quality poppy seeds are sold today at Rs 400 for Feb at Rs 415, the markets are just zooming. Sortex full clean is fetching Rs 425-450 today, this will soon be touching Rs 500, as the price difference should need to be 15-20 per cent due to wastages,” they said.

In the international markets the prices prevailing, at present, are at \$5,800-6,000 a tonne and there are very few sellers.

Factors behind

Apart from the reduction in areas, destruction of plants by severe snow frost in the major growing countries such as Turkey, Czechoslovakia and China would bring down the total global output this year. Indian crop is also going to be very small, they said. Consequently, the markets

would witness an upsurge in the prices to Rs 500-700 a kg soon. Besides, for two years the markets are likely to remain firm as the growing will be too less in Turkey and other countries, they claimed.

India is a net importer and the festival buying is from Jan to July and hence the markets are destined to rule firm now, they said.

Demand

Domestic requirement is estimated at somewhere between 35,000 tonnes and 40,000 tonnes annually. Consequently, India's dependence on imported poppy seeds is on the rise and during the fiscal 2011-12 the country's imports stood at 24,075 tonnes of poppy seeds valued at Rs 268.48 crore against 9,050 tonnes at Rs 127.64 crore the previous fiscal, according to official sources.

India produced 18,374 tonnes of poppy seeds in 2012 and is estimated to produce around 4,400 tonnes in 2013 following reduction in area. Availability, according to the trade, during the period from May 2012 to Apr 2013 is estimated at 10,576 tonnes.

exports

The Indian Narcotic Control Board (NCB), Gwalior, is said to have granted permits for cultivating in 5,700 hectares (ha) only this year (24,000 ha). Indian exports of alkaloids are to the US, Europe and Japan. During 2010-11, the country shipped out 1,500 tonnes of it to US, where as in 2012-13 US would purchase only 500 tonnes. Similarly, Japan also has reduced purchase from India from 1,200 tonnes to only 400 tonnes, they said.

Sharp reduction in growing areas world over by the Narcotic Control authorities would reduce the production significantly and that in turn will push the prices to historically higher levels in 2013, they pointed out.

Pepper bounces back



The pepper market bounced back on Tuesday on favourable market fundamentals and all the active contracts closed above the previous day's closing.

Activities were limited as is evident from the fall in total turnover.

The difference between February contract and the spot continued to remain wide for long. There is reportedly no valid stock available with the exchange.

An estimated 8,000 tonnes of stocks, including the huge quantity held by cartels, are locked up in the exchange warehouses, trade sources alleged.

There was good domestic demand, which was covered directly from the high ranges at Rs 380-385 a kg. At the same time, 18 tonnes of fresh pepper from southern districts having high moisture content and of low bulk density (LBD) arrived at the terminal market and were traded at Rs 320-350-357 a kg, they said. February contract on the NCDEX increased by Rs 165 a quintal to Rs 34,735 a quintal. March and April moved up by Rs 210 and Rs 155 respectively to Rs 33,990 and 33,765 a quintal.

Total turnover fell by 1,557 tonnes to close at 1,060 tonnes. Total open interest increased by 155 tonnes to close at 3,721 tonnes. Spot prices remained unchanged at Rs 37,200 (ungarbed) and Rs 38,700 (MG 1) a quintal despite good domestic demand amid tight supply scenario.

Business Standard

TODAY FARM NEWS

09.01.2013 A.M

UP sugarcane mafia on radar

Uttar Pradesh government has undertaken an extensive drive to weed out 'sugarcane mafia' even as the crushing season is on in full swing in the state.

Under the drive, a vigilance team comprising senior officials is on prowl in the western UP region comprising Pilibhit, Bareilly, Sambhal, Etah and Badaun districts for on the spot action.

Cane mafia refers to elements or local syndicates, who bring about discrepancies in the sugarcane procurement and weighing processes at the cost of farmers. The sugarcane crop supports about 4 million farmers' families in UP, which is the largest cane grower in India.

The team has been intensively keeping tab on the entire process starting from the dispatch of sugarcane from procurement centres, weighing and subsequent crushing.

So far, about 30 police cases had been registered against sugar mills situated in Meerut, Moradabad, Bareilly and Lucknow regions, official sources said here.

Besides, the cane commissioner had directed officials to adhere to the weekly review meeting over sugarcane price to be paid to farmers..

Meanwhile, the 121 operation sugar mills in UP had produced nearly 2.34 million tonnes (MT) of sugar after crushing 26.62 MT of cane. The sugar recovery stands at 8.79 per cent.

The state mills have already run arrears of Rs 2,410 crore against the total payable amount of Rs 4,882 crore, meaning the farmers had already been paid nearly Rs 2,472 crore.

The private mills have accounted for the bulk of payments at Rs 2,180 crore followed by the cooperative units.

In fact, the total dues of the mills are to the tune of about Rs 7,323 crore. However, they get 14 days to pay the outstanding cane dues, which had reduced payable liability to Rs 4,882 crore so far.

Turmeric down 0.34% on profit-booking

Turmeric May futures fell by Rs 24, or 0.34%, to Rs 6,966 per quintal in 6,870 lots.



At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the April contract lost Rs 14, or 0.20%, to Rs 6,880 per quintal in 30,745 lots.

Profit-booking mainly affected the turmeric futures.

However, weather concerns in growing regions capped the loss.

Jeera declines 1.29% on profit-booking



Jeera March futures declined by Rs 190 or 1.29% to Rs 14,500 per quintal in 13,179 lots.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the April contract lost Rs 162.50, or 1.10%, to Rs 14,555 per quintal in 4,011 lots.

Profit-booking by speculators affected the jeera futures.

Hopes of rise in export demand restricted the loss, marketmen said.

Pepper up 0.41% on spot demand short-covering

Pepper March futures rose by Rs 140, or 0.41%, to Rs 33,920 per quintal in 714 lots.



At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the February contract gained Rs 115, or 0.33% to Rs 34,685 per quintal in 2,721 lots.

Rising spot market demand, covering-up of short positions helped pepper futures.

However, increased supplies limited the gains, said marketmen.

Maize up 1.62% on global cues



Maize January futures rose by Rs 22, or 1.62%, to Rs 1,382 per quintal in 6,280 lots.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the February contract moved up by Rs 20, or 1.43% to Rs 1,416 per quintal in 56,800 lots.

Traders raising their holdings guided by higher overseas advices triggered uptrend.

Restricted supply mainly pushed up the trading sentiments, marketmen said.

Chana up 1.14% on good demand

Chana January futures rose by Rs 46, or 1.14%, to Rs 4,064 per quintal in 39,990 lots.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the April contract advanced by Rs 20, or 0.55%, to Rs 3,627 per quintal in 54,610 lots.

Speculators increasing their holdings against restricted arrivals influenced the chana prices.

Castorseed up 0.81% on demand

Castorseed January futures moved up by Rs 12, or 0.81% to Rs 3,836 per quintal in 8,900 lots.



At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the February contract rose by Rs 10, or 0.26% to Rs 3,928 per quintal in 1,45,640 lots.

Renewed buying by traders, firm spot as well as overseas markets triggered the uptrend.

Strong industrial demand and tight supply in physical markets kept the prices higher.

Heavy export demand also supported the trade, said marketmen.

Potato surges 4% on good demand



Potato March futures surged by Rs 29.90, or 4%, to Rs 777.90 per quintal in 208 lots.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, the April contract also jumped up by Rs 28.20, or 4%, to Rs 733.80 per quintal in 21 lots.

Increased buying by speculators, pick-up in spot market demand supported potato futures trade.

Restricted supply too improved trading sentiments.

Palnadu farmers stage protest, demand water for crops

GUNTUR: Upset with the state government for not ensuring water supply even for the irrigated dry (ID) crops, farmers under the Nagarjuna Sagar Right Canal (NSRC) resorted to protests. Traffic on the state highway between Hyderabad-Guntur came to a grinding halt at Sattenapalle on Tuesday when the farmers staged a rasta roko demanding release of water.

In fact, the state government had promised to release water for ID crops when it decided not to release water for Rabi crops under [NSRC](#) about two months ago. Although, disappointed with the government's decision, the farmers of about 12 lakh acres in Sagar ayacut in Guntur and Prakasam districts and farmers of about one lakh acres of tail-end under Krishna Western Delta (Guntur Channel) went in for ID crops like chilli, cotton, black gram, jowar and green gram.

The state government chalked out a detailed programme for release of water for ID crops and promised to release about 16 tmc of water in four spells from November. Keeping faith in the government's promises, the farmers completed sowing operations and were waiting for the water as the plants started withering away for the past few weeks.

Cooperation minister Kasu Krishna Reddy faced the wrath of the farmers when he visited Palnadu region last week and promised to discuss the issue with the chief minister. He admitted that the farmers were suffering due to poor water management under the Sagar canal. The farmers were under extreme pressure with each passing day as they feared that plants could completely dry up if the government did not intervene immediately. Unable to see the crops going dry, farmers in Gurazala, Sattenapalle areas started purchasing water from private water tankers and sprinkled water on the plants to see that they survived at least till the government

released water.

With no response from the government, the farmers staged a rasta roko on the state highway at Sattenapalle for over four hours on Tuesday. The traffic on both sides of the highway got stranded for about 10 km as the farmers did not relent on the promises of local officials. They wanted the government itself to respond and make a categorical statement.

"The government ditched the farmers by making false promises. It not only deprived them of going for paddy crops but did not even come to the rescue of ID crops," CPI(M) district secretary D Ramadevi said. She said the farmers of Palnadu region would intensify the agitation if the government did not take immediate steps to protect the standing crops.

The farmers did not get justice despite the fact that both the agriculture and cooperation ministers represent the district, said TDP leader N Rajanarayana. Farmers across Palnadu region including Sattenapalle, Gurazala, Macherla, Chilakaluripet, Narasaraopet and Vinukonda said they would intensify protests in the coming days.

Declare delta region as drought-hit, say farmers

TRICHY: The [Cauvery Farmers Welfare Protection Association](#) has decided to hoist black flags in the paddy fields, on top of farmers' houses and at T-junctions, to highlight the problem of the delta farmers who have resolved not to celebrate Pongal V Dhanapalan, general secretary of the association admitted that the large number of farmers' organisations had weakened their movement, thanks to the 'divide and rule' policy of the political parties.

With each political party having a farmer's wing, there are about a 100 farmers' associations making it difficult for the government to hold negotiations on a viable scale. As result, it is not clearly known how many farmers have indeed committed suicide on account of the failing monsoon and the subsequent withering crops.

The DMK has already distributed Rs 50,000 each to the next of kin of those farmers who had committed suicide. According to party sources, 11 farmers - four from Nagapattinam, three from Tiruvarur, two from Pudukottai and one each from Cuddalore and Virudhunagar - had committed suicide. Dhanapalan said the DMK has announced that it would pay Rs 25,000 each to the next of kin of the farmers who have committed suicide.

Meanwhile, protests by farmers in the delta region continued for the second day on Tuesday and as a result, some of the women cooked in the open on the road. Their demands included immediate declaration of the delta as drought-affected. The protests were held simultaneously in Thanjavur, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam in front of the respective district collector's office. About 200 farmers each participated in the three demonstrations that was spearheaded by the Tamilaga Vivasayigal Sangam.

Their demands included the insistence to notify the final award of the [Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal](#) in the government gazette. As per the award, Tamil Nadu stands to gain 419 tmcft of water, but the Union government has sought time from the Supreme Court until January 31, to take a final decision on the matter. They also wanted the government to declare the entire delta region as drought-hit, compensation of Rs 25,000 per acre to the delta farmers and ex-gratia payment of Rs 10 lakh to the next of kin of those who committed suicide owing to the failure of monsoon and the consequent failure to protect their crop.

Intense cold boon for farmers

PATNA: While intense [cold](#) conditions continue to trouble people in [Patna](#) and other parts of the state, it is a boon for [farmers](#) who have sowed Rabi crops during [winter](#) season. In fact, a little rainfall in this season will only add to a better harvest of Rabi crops. But, experts feel, if the temperature plummets further, it will create snowfall which will be bad for all the crops which are on the verge of producing good results.

Deputy director of agriculture department (Information) Abhanshu C Jain said this weather is not

only good for Rabi crops but even potatoes and pulses that are currently in fields flourish in low temperature. "The temperature is not very low at the moment and it is, in general, good for Rabi crops such as wheat and maize that are sowed during winter season. A little rainfall along with latest irrigation techniques will give further boost to the crop results," he said.

Organic vegetable growers too are happy with the spell of cold wave the state is experiencing. "Right now we have planted organic potatoes, pumpkin, cauliflower, cabbage and tomatoes, and cold conditions are favourable for better yields. But rainfall may be harmful for these veggies," Nalanda Organic Grower Federation (NOVGA) chairman (marketing wing) Rakesh Kumar said.

Assistant professor of [Bihar Agriculture University](#), Sabour, Sunil Kumar said, "If the current temperature level continue for few more days, farmers will certainly reap the benefit. But if the mercury dips further and snowfall starts, all crops will come under the cold."

Meanwhile, current spate of cold wave has hit the vegetable buyers hard. "While potatoes are available at Rs 50 per 5 kg in the market, onion is being sold at Rs 100 per 5 kg," said a local seller at Anta Haat, adding, "tomatoes are available for Rs 16, brinjals range between Rs 10-12 per kg, cauliflower for Rs 16 per kg and peas for a whopping Rs 24 per kg." Even during peak season the rates of peas are very high. In the retail market, veggies are sold for an even higher rate, adding to the woes of Patnaites.

Sugarcane purchase prices hiked by Rs 30 per quintal

PATNA: The [Bihar Sugar Mills Association](#) (BSMA) on Tuesday hiked sugarcane prices for the 2012-13 crushing season by Rs 30 per quintal for the normal variety of sugarcane.

The price that mill owners are directed to pay cane farmers for the premium variety of cane has been fixed at Rs 265 per quintal and the low variety at Rs 245 per quintal. The price for the premium, general and low variety of cane in the previous season of 2011-12 was fixed at Rs

230, Rs 225 and Rs 210 per quintal, which would fetch the cane growers almost Rs 30-35 per quintal more than the last year.

The prices have been fixed after a series of meeting between association members and Bihar sugarcane industries minister A P Kushwaha and secretary Sudhir Kumar. "The association did not want to increase the prices claiming that the cost of production of sugar was higher than its selling price. Moreover, the state has less recovery too," said [association secretary](#) Naresh Bhatt, adding, "we have hiked the prices on the minister's request and assurance that the government would exempt mill owners' purchase tax for next two years and consider other demands such as increasing prices of molasses and rectified spirit."

The prices are, however, lower than that of the neighbouring state, Uttar Pradesh, with Rs 280 per quintal. "At present Bihar has 11 operational sugar mills and a target of crushing 60 lakh metric tonne sugarcane in this season," said Bihar sugarcane industries secretary Sudhir Kumar. The corresponding figure stood at 49 lakh metric tonne last year.

Sugar mill owners claim that they had to incur heavy losses last year, especially due to import of sugar from other countries that reduced its prices here. "Chief minister Nitish Kumar has also requested the central government to increase custom duty for the benefit of farmers, because the consumption of sugar in the country is less than its production and we don't need to import it," Bhatt said.

Over 1,100 MoUs likely in agricultural sector

AHMEDABAD: As many as 1,100 memorandum of understanding (MoUs) promising investment to the tune of Rs 5624.87 crore have been approved so far in the agriculture sector. An official from the department said that these MoUs will be signed during the [Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors Summit](#) scheduled for January 11-13. Employment opportunities for 73,696 people will be generated once these projects materialized.

The maximum MoUs will be signed with the large-scale agro and food processing units. Of the 1,117 approved MoUs, 553 are with large-scale industries, amounting to Rs 4517.93 crore. From there 55,640 people may get jobs.

While in the micro, small and medium enterprises sector, 291 MoUs had already been okayed. These will bring in Rs 436.21 crore to the state. In the small-scale industries sector, 273 MoUs were approved, pledging investment to the tune of Rs 670.73 crore.

Meanwhile, the state, which has the longest coastline in India, has attracted a large number of sea food processing industries. About 20 units have decided to set up shops here. Sources in the animal husbandry department said that about 20 units have been given approval for prong culture and processing units along the coast and will be registered as exporting units.

DECCAN Chronicle

TODAY FARM NEWS

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Brace for harsh summer, dry taps

Bengaluru: It's official. Bengaluru is going to face a tough summer. BWSSB Minister Suresh Kumar on Tuesday announced that the reservoirs that supply water to Bengaluru have low levels of water. However, he also assured that there was no need to panic.

Krishnaraja Sagar and Kabini reservoirs have a collective live storage of 10.058 TMC of water. Bengaluru needs 7.5 TMC till May. During this period, the least inflow expected into the reservoirs is around 3.5 TMC. Other urban and rural areas would also need drinking water out of this storage.

“Water Resources Minister Basavaraj Bommai and I have discussed at length the water supply situation with the officials of the Cauvery Neeravari Nigam Limited (CNL), BWSSB and BDA. There is no need to panic. We will manage with the available water. However, to do so, we Bengalureans must use every drop of water wisely. I, on behalf of the state government and also on behalf of BWSSB, assure the people of Bengaluru that we will continue to get our regular supply of water. But, the public must understand the water condition and behave accordingly,” Mr Kumar said.

On the question of rationing of water in Bengaluru, BWSSB chairman, Gaurav Gupta, said: “The state government has taken a major policy decision that drinking water will be treated as the top priority, and with the help of this decision, we are going to ensure that water supplied to Bengaluru this year will not drop from the levels that we saw in the corresponding months last year.”

On whether there will be a cut in the frequency and duration of water supply, Mr Gupta said: “No, there will be no changes. We will continue to supply the usual amount. However, if the demand goes up due to various reasons like shortage of groundwater, there might be a shortage. Mr Suresh Kumar appealed to Bengalureans to use Cauvery water for drinking and not for secondary usage.

Farmers up in arms over water



As reports about Cauvery monitoring committee (CMC) meeting in New Delhi on Thursday reached the state capital, thousands of farmers started from delta districts towards the city to fight for their (Cauvery) rights.

General secretary of Federation of Farmers Association (Cauvery districts) Arupathy Kalyanam appealed to Chennaiites to participate in Tuesday's hunger strike at Chepauk and said Cauvery river was not a livelihood source to 2.5 crore people in Cauvery basin but also drinking water source to over eight million Chennaiites who get 180mld from Veeranam lake, which is fed by Cauvery.

Pointing out that the 30-year-annual average water received at Mettur dam till 1970 was 378 tmcft, Mr Kalayanam said the interim and final awards of the tribunal reduced it to 205 and 192 tmcft. Kuruvai acreage reduced from 5.5 to 1.85lakh acres owing to the tribunal reducing the acreage by 4.55 lakh acres in TN over years, Mr Kalayanam claimed faulting Karnataka for increasing acreage beyond the 11.2 lakh acres prescribed by tribunal.

Mettur level hits rock bottom

As the Cauvery issue meanders on with CRA meets, Supreme Court hearings and political rallies, delta farmers, who have been pushed to deep distress owing to crops withering due to lack of water, remain skeptical about the outcome of Cauvery Monitoring Committee meet

reportedly scheduled for January 10. The prevailing water situation in Karnataka lends credence to their doubts.

Senior TN government sources preferring anonymity said the Mettur dam would not be opened for delta irrigation unless another 20tmcft is realized at the dam.

The four reservoirs in Karnataka jointly store a meager 26tmcft and given the state's belligerence, there is a remote possibility of it giving any more water, sources opined. As per tribunal award, TN should get 205tmcft per year, but the state received only 120tmcft till December 2012. While Karnataka depleted the storage for a successful third crop during a distress year, TN is facing the threat of losing its second crop even, pushing some delta farmers to even commit suicide.

On the day the Supreme Court bench posted the hearing of the petition filed by Karnataka, seeking to stay the September 19 order of the CRA, the water level plunged to an alarming low at Mettur Stanley reservoir.

On Monday, the dam's water level stood at 9.7 tmcft, against its full capacity of 93.47 tmcft. About 1,300 cusecs flows in, while 1,500 cusecs is let out from the dam. The CMC meets as per SC direction to assess the water requirement and shortfall and pass appropriate orders after factoring in the plight of standing crops in TN and Karnataka.

Karnataka had of late refused to honour the previous CMC orders forcing TN to move the SC for relief.

Going by chief minister J. Jayalalithaa's statement on Saturday, samba crops spread across 11 lakh acres in the state are at stake.