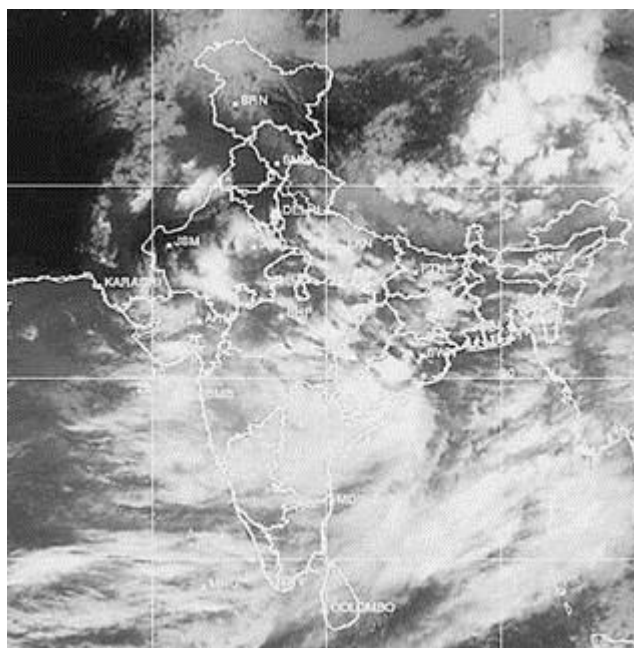


THE HINDU

July 12, 2013

weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on July 11th.

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	35	26	11	217
New Delhi (Sfd)	35	27	2	195
Chandigarh	34	27	0	331
Hissar	35	26	17	183
Bhuntar	28	17	tr	208
Shimla	25	17	1	415
Jammu	30	23	11	258
Srinagar	27	17	1	85
Amritsar	37	23	9	214
Patiala	34	27	0	268
Jaipur	35	26	0	201
Udaipur	33	26	0	173

Allahabad	33	26	2	449
Lucknow	29	24	12	358
Varanasi	32	26	4	300
Dehradun	32	25	0	1315
Agartala	34	27	0	405
Ahmedabad	33	25	13	292
Bangalore	27	19	19	221
Bhubaneshwar	35	24	4	324
Bhopal	28	24	9	568
Chennai	34	23	33	225
Guwahati	33	27	0	392
Hyderabad	28	22	4	211
Kolkata	34	28	3	408
Mumbai	26	24	93	1189
Nagpur	32	24	3	557
Patna	33	27	3	154
Pune	26	22	2	316
Thiruvananthapuram	26	23	11	600
Imphal	32	22	116	299
Shillong	26	19	2	409

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

HEAT WAVE

The axis of Monsoon trough at MSL passes through Anupgarh, Hissar, Meerut, Kanpur, Allahabad and thence southeast-wards.

RAINFALL: Rain/thundershowers have occurred at many places over Himachal Pradesh and east Uttar Pradesh, at a few places over Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, east Rajasthan, west Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and at isolated places over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm are: (3 cm and above) HARYANA: Siwani, Jind, Hodal, Palwal, Pataudi and Jhajjar 3 each , HIMACHAL PRADESH: Berthin and Jhandutta 3 each, PUNJAB: Mukerian and Balachaur 4 each, EAST RAJASTHAN: Jhalarapatan 9, Chipabarod,

8, Chambal 6, Kumher, Mandrayal, Sapotra and Arnod 5 each, Banswara, Kotkeshim, Anta, Chabra, Sabla, Bakani, Pachpahar, Piawa, Nadoti, Gangapur and Mount Abu 4 each and Tizara, Nainwa and Jhalawar each 3, EAST UTTAR PRADESH: Bansi 9, Sidhauri and Handia 8 each, Ramnagar and Amethi 7 each, Rajghat 6, Karchhana] Birdghat, Bhatpurwaghat and Dudhi 5 each, Haidergarh, Nawabganj and Basti 4 and Fursatganj, Chhatnag, Meja, Gaighat and Bhinga 3 each, WEST UTTAR PRADESH: Mauranipur and Jalalabad 6 each, Aonla and Pawayan 5 each and Bareilly, Shahajahanpur, Nawabganj and Bharthana 3 each and UTTARAKHAND: Champawat and Haldwani 5, Joshimath and Pithoragarh 3 each.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 13th July 2013: Rain/thundershowers would occur at many places over Uttar Pradesh, east Rajasthan, and Uttarakhand. Rain/thundershowers may occur at few places over Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Haryana. Rain/thundershowers may occur at a few places over Himachal Pradesh during next 48 hours and increase thereafter. Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places over rest of the region . **HEAVY RAINFALL WARNING:** Heavy rainfall may occur at one or two places over southern parts of Uttarakhand on 12th and 13th July. Heavy rainfall may occur at one or two places over east Rajasthan on 13th.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 13th July 2013: Generally cloudy sky. Light Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places.

Focus is on farm mechanisation

‘Coimbatore should come up with more equipment suited for farmers’



Agriculture Minister S. Damodaran at a stall of ‘Agri Intex 2013’ in Coimbatore on Thursday.—
Photo: M. Periasamy

Agriculture Production Commissioner and Principal Secretary, State Department of Agriculture, Sandeep Saxena stressed the need for developing farm equipment for the Indian farmer with small land holdings, here on Thursday.

Speaking at the inauguration of the Agri Intex 2013, an agricultural exhibition, organised by the Coimbatore District Small Industries Association (Codissia) in association with the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) at the Codissia Trade Fair Complex, he said that entrepreneurs in Coimbatore were capable of making such machinery.

“Shortage of agricultural labour coupled with the limitation of small and fragmented land holdings is making agriculture a difficult proposition today. It is the duty of every citizen to make the farming community sustainable, if not rich,” Mr. Saxena said.

The State Government would soon come out with a policy to address the issues of the farmers, said the Agriculture Production Commissioner.

Minister for Agriculture S. Damodaran stressed the importance of use of farm implements in agriculture in the light of shortage of agricultural labour.

“Studies show that though there are 82 million farm families in India, only 36 lakh tractors are in use. There is a felt need for farm mechanisation,” the Minister added.

Transfer of technologies and innovations from lab to land was not happening for want of small modifications, corrections and suitability, Mr. Damodaran said.

Director of Agriculture M Rajendran said that the State Government had for the first time initiated measures to test the soil, understand the fertility and advise farmers appropriately.

“Junior researchers are working on this on a war-footing and soil-health cards are being issued to the farmers,” he said.

K. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor of TNAU, stressed the need for strengthening production of small millets. He sought the State Government’s support for fixing the Minimum Support Price for small millets.

Nearly 19 departments of the university had put up stalls at the exhibition to give information on the latest know-how on agriculture.

The exhibition has 225 participants who have put up nearly 400 stalls that have a wide range of farm implements and tractors. A demonstration plot on integrated farming is also on display.

It has two concurrent events — one on food processing and the other on animal husbandry. Companies from the U.S., Japan and Israel have put up four stalls.

The exhibition will be open till July 14 from 9.30am to 6pm.

Nearly 400 stalls by 225 participants

19 departments of TNAU have put up stalls

Time: 9.30am to 6pm

Venue: Codissia Trade Fair Complex

Experts highlight scope of cassava as bio fuel crop

Experts participating in the International Conference on Tropical Roots and Tubers organised by the Central Tuber Crops Research Institute (CTCRI) and the Indian Society for Root Crops (ISRC) have highlighted the increasing potential of cassava as feedstock for the production of bioethanol as fuel.

In a paper presented at the meet, S.P. Ghosh, former Deputy Director-General, Indian Council for Agricultural Research, said the cultivation of cassava could be extended to more areas in India to make it a competitive biofuel crop.

With its high energy content, low maintenance and ability to grow under a wide range of climatic conditions, cassava had emerged as a potential candidate for production of bioethanol.

The technology for cassava alcohol, patented by the CTCRI in the 1980s, required refinement for commercial scale production.

He said the high productivity of cassava crop in India would make production of bioethanol cost competitive. The move to bring comparatively less fertile land in the semi-arid tracts of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh and high rainfall areas in the north-eastern region under cassava cultivation would ensure supply of raw material for ethanol production and benefit local farmers, the paper noted.

Another presentation by Reinhardt Howeler, Emeritus Scientist, International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), said 50 per cent of the ethanol produced in China, the third largest producer of biofuel after the U.S. and Brazil, was made from either cassava or sweet potato. Mr. Howeler said the situation would open up opportunities for Asian countries as well as some nations in Africa and Latin America to export cassava chips or starch.

R.C. Ray from the regional centre of the CTCRI at Bhubaneswar described the optimisation of bioethanol production from dried sweet potato root flour by using commercial grade enzymes.

Water level

The water level in Periyar dam was 124 feet with an inflow of 1824 cusecs and a discharge of 1,372 cusecs on Thursday.

The water level in Vaigai dam was 47.34 feet with an inflow of 1043 cusecs and a discharge of 60 cusecs.

The combined storage in Periyar credit was 5.073 mcft.

Rainfall

The rainfall recorded (in mm) is as follows: Periyar dam: 27, Thekkadi: 20.2, Gudalur: 11.6, Shanmuganadhi: 8, Uthamapalayam: 11, Veerapandi: 10, Vaigai dam: 1, Manjalaru: 3, Sothuparai 2 and Kodaikanal recorded 3 mm rainfall, PWD officials said.

Food processing units

Applications have been called for establishing food processing industries with Central and State Government subsidies in Karur district. The aim of the program is to increase food processing industries, deploy modern technology, establish cold storages, and cold chain in the district, according to a release from the Deputy Director (Agri Marketing).

'Sell only certified seeds'

As the farmers are pinning their hopes on a good monsoon this year, the district administration has decided to make available 2,200 tonnes of certified paddy seeds, through Agriculture Department, private dealers and Primary Agriculture Cooperative Credit Societies (PACCS).

As paddy is cultivated on 1.30 lakh hectares in the district, the district administration has decided to make available 1,600 tonnes of certified seeds through private dealers, 400 tonnes through Agriculture Department and 250 tonnes through the PACCS at a subsidised rate. Under the National Food Security Mission, the farmers are offered a subsidy of Rs.5 per kg of seed.

Addressing the dealers recently, Deputy Director, Agriculture (State Scheme) R.Harivasan said the dealers should procure the seeds well in advance and get them certified in the Seed Testing Lab at Paramakudi.

Water level



Water level in the Papanasam dam on Thursday stood at 120.95 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 3,522 cusecs and 1,551 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam.

The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 66.56 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 53 cusecs and 275 cusecs was discharged.

Kanyakumari

The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 26.40 feet, 63.20 feet in Perunchani, 10.46 feet in Chittar I, 10.56 feet in Chittar II and 18.86 feet in Mambazathuraiyaru dam.

Farmers' grievance day meetings today

Revenue division-level farmers' grievance day meetings will be held on Friday. In a statement, Collector C.Samayamoorthy said the meetings would be conducted at Kalakkad Town Panchayat community hall, Alangulam Nadar marriage hall and Sivanthipatti community hall. Farmers could participate in the meetings to get their grievances redressed, he said.

Udumalpet to become vegetable production hub

The agrarian community in Udumalpet block has every reason to cheer as the Department of Horticulture is set to roll out initiatives to convert the block into a 'vegetable production hub' to supply produces to the urban consumers in Coimbatore city.

Under the project, the cultivation of tomato, onion, brinjal and beetroot will be promoted by giving inputs like seeds of high-yielding varieties, planting materials, bio-pesticides, shade nets and poly-houses at subsidised rates to the needy farmers.

"By doing so, it has been envisaged to increase the total acreage under tomato, onion, brinjal and beetroot in Udumalpet block from the present 800ha to 1,600ha," B. Elangovan, Assistant Director of Horticulture, told *The Hindu*.

To attain the production targets, the scheme is going to be implemented through a cluster-based approach.

"We are aiming to constitute 30 clusters in the block, with each group having 19 farmers, so that execution of the scheme becomes easier," Dr. Elangovan said. Even a small farmer with minimum land holding of 0.1ha will be involved in the scheme.

The horticulture department has identified places to set up two collection centres for storing the harvested vegetables before being transported to Coimbatore through designated-supply chain networks.

“The centres, each having space of around 1,000 sq metres, will be located on poramboke lands at Kannamanaickanoor and Andiyagoundanoor hamlets,” the horticulture officials said. Since the vegetable farmers in the locality have been facing difficulties to transport the produces to collection centres without losing its freshness, they would be given subsidy assistance to offset 40 per cent of the cost of buying ‘refer vans’.

“The ‘refer vans’ are the vehicles that can carry vegetables in refrigerated state and assistance will given for such vehicles with a capacity of taking 12 tonnes of vegetables at a time,” Dr. Elangovan said.

Aim is to constitute 30 clusters in the block

B. Elangovan

Assistant Director, Horticulture

Farmers fear steep rise in production costs

Farmers who have been facing steep rise in input costs in the recent times, are worried as steep escalation in fertilizers and transportation stare at them.

With Union Government making it clear on Thursday that it would stick to the ‘Rangarajan formula’ for the pricing of domestically produced natural gas, the agrarian community feels that it could give rise to the fertilizer prices especially the urea.

“The urea is presently distributed at a uniform selling price to farmers, with subsidy. But the end prices at which it is sold can go up once actual price of urea rises following a raise in price of natural gas, as the government will not be able to subsidise the increased price completely,” said K.C.M. Balasubramaniam, a former agriculture economist from Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.

Already, prices of many fertilizers like Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) and Muriate of Potash (MoP) have gone up.

Farmers say that a bag of 50 kg of DAP that was costing a little over Rs. 500 three years back now costs Rs. 1,200.

Another major concern for farmers is the pressure from oil companies on the Government during the last few days to allow them to raise the prices of diesel further.

“Any raise on diesel price can make transportation of agriculture produces from farms to markets costlier. This will eat into the already thin-profit margins of farmers as prices cannot be raised correspondingly at the same level,” farmers say.

The diesel price increase will affect farmers who depend on diesel-run generators as alternative power source during power cut periods for pumping water to irrigate crops.

“To help farmers, the government should come out with good support prices for the produce that commensurate with the cost of production,” Mr. Balasubramaiah said.

Government should come up with good support prices for produces

K.C.M. Balasubramanian

Former agriculture economist, TNAU

Tuticorin to get salt research station

A salt research station would be established here, said Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry E.M.Sudarsana Natchiappan.

Addressing a function organised here on Thursday evening, he said training programmes on salt production would be conducted in Tuticorin. The Mahatma Gandhi Salt Satyagraha Memorial Research Centre would be set up at Ennore near Chennai soon. For infrastructure development and expansion, the Central Government had no land holdings and depended on the State Government, he said.

The Central Government had 18,000 acres of land for salt production across the country. Unproductive lands could be utilised for setting up industries. Closure of industries citing pollution or other problems as reason did not auger well for industrialisation of the State, he noted.

If the people opposed any accidental flaw during the production process in the industries, investors would be reluctant to do business in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu.

Industrialisation would generate more employment, and the people did not have to travel abroad for jobs, the Minister said.

Demands

A.R.A.S.Dhanabalan, secretary of Tuticorin Small-Scale Salt Manufacturers Association, said the State Government should not take over salt pans for setting up a ship building yard. He also sought the Minister's intervention to control pollution caused by power plants. Fly ash deposits on salt degraded its quality, he said.

He also sought exemption to salt from the purview of the Food Safety and Standards Act and urged the need to bring small-scale salt production under the agriculture sector. Michael Motha, salt manufacturer and exporter, said government lands should be given on long-term lease. Service tax must be abolished, he said. M.A.Kirubakaran, secretary of Salt Manufacturers and Merchants Association, called for setting up of salt-based chemical industries in Tuticorin.

D.R.Kodeeswaran, secretary of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Tuticorin, sought the expansion of airport at Vagaikulam in Tuticorin and doubling of Madurai-Tuticorin rail line.

V.V.Laxmi, Assistant Salt Commissioner, N.Sundararajan, Superintendent of Salt, Chennai, M.S.A.Peter Jebaraj, president of Gandhi Irwin Salt Producers Association, and others also spoke.

Official warns against sale of free milch animals

The Regional Joint Director of Animal Husbandry, Vellore, has warned the beneficiaries of the free milch animals and free goats scheme against the sale of the animals.

In a release, G. Kamalanathan, the joint director, said that the beneficiaries of free goats should not sell them for two years, while the beneficiaries of the free milch cows should not sell them for four years. Criminal cases would be filed against those who sell the animals by violating the rules, since they have given a declaration in the contract document obtained from them at the time of distribution of the animals.

He said that Naduthambi, s/o Sandhana Gownder of Narsampatti who purchased the free milch animals distributed at Narsampatti in Mottur village panchayat has been arrested. Hence, no one should sell or buy the animals in violation of the rules.

Subsidy to farmers for growing fodder

A total of 2,800 farmers interested in dairying are to be selected in Vellore for the grant of subsidy for fodder cultivation.

According to a release from Vellore District Collector and the Regional Joint Director of Animal Husbandry, a subsidy of Rs. 3,000 each would be given to the selected farmers through the Department of Animal Husbandry for the cultivation of CO4 fodder variety on 0.25 acres of land.

The Collector has requested interested farmers to obtain the prescribed application forms from the veterinary assistant surgeon of the nearest veterinary dispensary or the agricultural officer of the concerned panchayat union.

2,800 farmers

can avail it

Loan waiver sought for pomegranate

Karnataka State Pomegranate Growers' Welfare Struggle Committee has sought waiver of loans, amounting to Rs. 206 crore of approximately 9,000 pomegranate farmers, who are in dire straits.

Addressing reporters here on Thursday, R.S. Patil, former MP and president of the committee, said that pomegranate farmers in 13 districts in the State had incurred huge losses after the crop cultivated in 13,187 hectares was afflicted with the bacterial blight disease.

"Even agriculture scientists have concluded that there is no other option but to destroy the crop, as the disease cannot be prevented. They had even recommended to the government to waive loans of the growers," he said. Mr. Patil said that though the recommendation was made in 2007, the government was yet to waive loans that the growers had borrowed from nationalised banks.

“It was the government that chose 13 districts where the climate was conducive for the cultivation of pomegranate and urged farmers to take up the crop. The Union and State governments also came out with loan schemes for such farmers. But the crop was entirely destroyed by the disease,” he said.

Grape growers seek bail-out package



Grape growers from Karnataka, the second largest producer of grapes, have appealed to the Union government to bail them out from financial distress following crop loss due to severe drought in the last few years.

Nearly 8,000 growers of North Karnataka, who have lost their crop, have demanded that Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar announce a Vidarbha-type package, under which bank loans are waived.

The growers also sought assistance for adopting good management practices, support for rainwater harvesting and post-harvest management.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Abhaykumar S. Nandrekar, president, Karnataka Grape Growers Association, said that growers have been facing severe shortage of water in eight districts — Bagalkot, Bijapur, Koppal, Belgaum, Bidar, Gulbarga, Gadag and Bellary.

The situation deteriorated in the last two years as the entire State reeled under drought. All taluks in these districts were declared drought-affected in 2012.

The crop has been raised in 15,000 hectares in the eight districts and plants in nearly 9,000 hectares have been damaged in the last two years on account of drought. “There was no rainfall after the plants were pruned,” he said.

The association members recently met Mr. Pawar and sought an urgent package to save farmers from financial distress. The proposal also sought a package for growers in Kolar and Chickballapur.

A majority of vineyards are in the drought-hit areas. The State accounts for an estimated 20 per cent of India’s grape production at 3.30 lakh tonnes. Maharashtra contributes 80 per cent of the national output. India’s grape orchards cover 1.16 lakh hectares. About 70 per cent of production in the State is converted into raisins (dry grapes).

During March-June, a few grape growers saved their orchards by watering them with the help of tankers. But after that it became difficult as it did not rain adequately, he said.

“There is a limit on how much a farmer can water the orchards through tankers. Unlike in Maharashtra, we do not get funds from the government for watering orchards with water tankers. The Maharashtra government grants Rs. 60,000 per hectare for watering the plants through tankers,” he said. Nearly 90 per cent of growers have borrowed loans from nationalised and cooperative banks and they have been brought under the non-performing assets head. As much as 70 per cent of the loans have turned into doubtful assets. The total amount (both principal and interest) runs into nearly Rs. 600 crore, he said.

Growers would struggle to survive, and retain their crops, if the Union and State governments do not waive their loans, he said.

Late sowing results in low yields: farm official



An official speaking at the Karnataka Development Programme review meeting in Davangere on Thursday.

President of the zilla panchayat Sheela Gadigesh and chairman of the Standing Committee (Health and Education) H. Nagaraj on Thursday instructed R.G. Gollar, joint director of Agriculture, not to go strictly by the rules while distributing seeds to farmers.

Chairing the Karnataka Development Programme review meeting here, Ms. Gadigesh said that the rainfall across the district was not uniform. Moreover, small and marginal farmers could not afford to purchase subsidised seeds and store them, she said and urged Mr. Gollar to continue distributing subsidised seeds to farmers. Mr. Nagaraj said that farmers in many places, including Sokke and Jagalur, had complained that the department had stopped supplying subsidised seeds to them.

Mr. Gollar said that the government had fixed a time for distributing seeds, which was aimed at enabling the farmers to sow seeds in time. The department had set up 48 outlets, instead of 24 last year, for distributing seeds to farmers, all over the district.

He cautioned the farmers by stating that delay in sowing would result in low yields. So far, 18,000 quintals of seeds, comprising 14,00 q of maize, 1,500 q of paddy and 1,100 q of groundnut, had been distributed in the district.

He said that the officials would be asked to continue distributing subsidised seeds to farmers.

Referring to greengram crop, Mr. Gollar said a record yield was expected this year, going by the growth of plants in different places, including Jagalur, Chigateri, Arisikere and Santhebennur hoblis.

As against the normal rainfall of 296.2 mm up to July-end, the district had so far received 317.2 mm. However, while Davangere and Harihar recorded above normal rainfall, Jagalur received near-normal rainfall in the remaining three taluks, it was below normal, he said.

Mr. Gollar said that 46,000 tonnes of fertilizer and 17,000 tonnes of urea had been stored for the season. Pointing out that many farmers were in the habit of applying excessive urea to crops, he said such a practice would make crops wither. Chief Executive Officer of the zilla panchayat A.B. Hemachandra asked executive engineer of the Engineering Division Nagaraj to complete all pending drinking water projects by next month and submit a report at the next review meeting.

Sheela and C.N. Veerabhadrapa, chairman of the Standing Committee (Social Justice), alleged that the repair of roads taken up by the Public Works Department was of low quality and urged the department to set them right by using concrete.

Farmland only for farming: draft policy

The draft agriculture development policy, submitted to the Chief Minister by the drafting committee chaired by K. Krishnankutty on Thursday, proposes that purchase of farmlands should be restricted to farmers and farming purposes only.

“The farmlands are to be protected and should not be put to any other use than farming activities. Paddy fields are to be declared as ‘Paddy Field Reserves of the State’ protecting the entitlement rights of owners,” it said. The policy recommends ‘ecological incentives’ to the owners who keep wetlands and paddy lands without converting them. Legislation may be evolved to promote ‘Rent a Land for Farming’ programmes. The policy proposes an *actio apportum* cess, claiming to be a means for assuring farmers a legal demand of right for sharing revenue or profit generated out of the farm produce when it is traded. The suggestion is for introduction of Re.1 a kg as cess at the terminal point of sale, to be routed to small and marginal farmers. A similar cess is proposed for milk also at 50 paise a litre. Rupees 5 a kg will be given as *actio apportum* for rice procured by the government. The policy also proposes a production for farm labourers who work for not less than 100 days. The rate suggested is Rs.6 a day. Agriculture labour banks shall be started to address the issue of shortage of labourers.

Price fixing

The policy suggests that a price fixation authority should be formed for fixing the price of the agricultural commodity to protect farmers from fall in prices. Minimum Support Price for paddy, vegetables, banana and spices may be announced during the commencement of the season by the government. A law should be enacted to ensure assured income for farmers to the tune of that received by a Class Four Employees in the State service.

An Agriculture Credit Relief Fund is to be formed for addressing the waiver of farm loans in the event of natural calamities. A farmer welfare fund should also be established.

Agriculture Minister K.P. Mohanan said the draft policy, which would be uploaded to the websites of government, would be subjected to wider discussions.

Incessant rains bring relief to farmers



Farmers can prepare the land for cultivation, says Agriculture Department

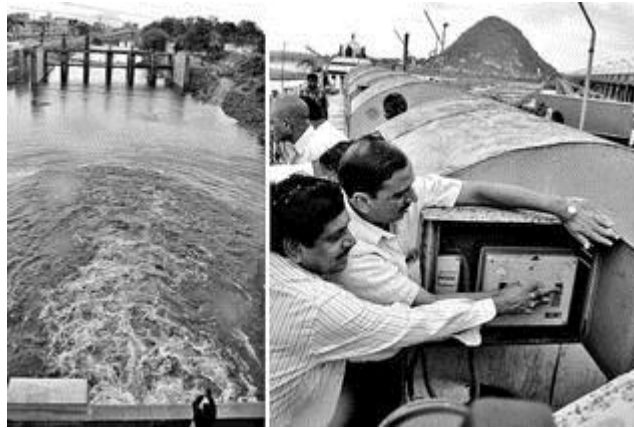
Incessant rains continue to lash Medak district since Thursday morning bringing a huge relief to farmers, who were eagerly waiting for rains for the past three weeks. The officials of the Agriculture Department claimed that the rains, at this point, would be useful as crops were withering away.

U. Umamaheswaramma, Joint Director, Agriculture, said that farmers can prepare the land for cultivation. While the normal rainfall till date stood at 77 m.m., the rainfall recorded so far was 85 m.m. which has increased the ground water table.

Continuous rainfall was reported at several parts of the district thereby inundating roads. The district administration has asked the officials in remote areas to be on high alert to avoid any untoward incident.

Water released into Krishna Eastern Main Canal

No elected representatives attend the programme due to poll code



Irrigation officials releasing water into the Krishna Eastern Main Canal for kharif season at the Prakasam Barrage in Vijayawada on Wednesday. PHOTOS: V. RAJU

Vijayawada Irrigation Circle officials released water into the Krishna Eastern Main Canal from the head sluice near the Prakasam Barrage here on Thursday.

Krishna Delta System Chief Engineer D. Sambaiah and Vijayawada circle superintending engineer K.L. Narashima Murthy jointly switched on the motors for hoisting gates.

The two officials later performed puja at the 100-year-old head sluice breaking coconuts and offering flowers to the water released into the main canal. Neither the Minister nor the elected representatives attended the function as the Election Code is in place.

Scheduled date

The State government and Irrigation Department have been under a lot of pressure to release water for the raising of seed beds in Krishna Eastern Delta. Telugu Desam MLA Devineni Umamaheswara Rao and other leaders have been issuing statements and participating in agitations at the Prakasam Barrage and the Irrigation Office demanding release of water.

While the scheduled date for release of water is June 15, water could not be released on the date for two reasons -- delay caused by modernisation works and the non-availability of water in major reservoirs.

Vijayawada Circle Deputy SE C. Ramakrishna said that 200 cusecs had been released to fill the Krishna Eastern Main Canal Basin. The basin is part of the canal which extends from the head sluice to the regulators of the three canals -- the Eluru, Ryve's and Bandar. Mr. Sambaiah said that the level of water at the barrage was 12 feet and more water would be released in a phased manner in accordance with the requirement of farmers.

The ayacut of the Krishna Eastern Main Canal was 6.7 lakh areas, he said. Guntur District Irrigation SE V. Ramesh Babu and other officials of the department were present.

More water will be released in a phased manner in accordance with the requirement of farmers, says an official

Lessons from a little farmer

12-year-old Devipriya grows 25 kinds of vegetables on 20 cents of land



A Moment to cherish: Union Minister of State for Human Resource Development Shashi Tharoor presenting an award of the State Agriculture Department to Devipriya Raju of Nehru Memorial

Model School, Kadakkal, at a function held at Government Higher Secondary School for Girls, Cotton Hill, on Tuesday. Health Minister V.S. Sivakumar is seen.

She is only 12 years old, but speaks with clarity and wisdom far beyond her age. Devipriya Raju received one of the awards presented by the State Agriculture Department for her efforts in promoting vegetable cultivation. The award function was held at the Government Higher Secondary School for Girls, Cotton Hill, here on Tuesday.

Union Minister of State for Human Resource Development Shashi Tharoor made a mention of her efforts in his address after the prize distribution ceremony. "I asked her what she grows at home and she said everything except onions. That too, she said, she will begin cultivating this year," said an impressed Minister.

Speaking to *The Hindu* later, Devipriya was very matter of fact about how her home had virtually turned into a vegetable store. Also, her interest in agriculture has made her decide what she wants to be when she grows up. "I wanted to become a doctor, but when I began to take farming seriously, I realised that I want to be an agricultural scientist," she said. She, with the support of her family, grows 25 kinds of vegetables, including tomato, cabbage, cauliflower, chilli, lady's finger and various gourds, on 20 cents of land adjacent to her house at Kadakkal, near Kilimanoor. Lack of availability of onion seeds makes this an exception to the impressive collection. So far she has cultivated around 1,020 kg of vegetables in total. There is also a beehive and hen coop at her house.

A student of the Nehru Memorial Model School at Kadakkal, she boasts of the activities that the Eco Club of the school has been carrying out since the launch of the comprehensive vegetable cultivation development programme by the State government last year.

"When we were given the seed kits last year, everyone took up the task seriously and began cultivation at their homes. When we have favourable conditions for cultivation, it does not make sense to spend so much on buying vegetables brought from outside. Home-grown vegetables are so much healthier as well," said Devipriya, a testament to the Agriculture Department's scheme that focuses on mobilising support and promoting awareness on self-sustainability at the school level.

Tuesday's function also marked the inauguration of this financial year's programme.

Devipriya said her parents and brother were as enthusiastic as she was about farming, and helped her in growing vegetables. The persistent bug attacks and lack of water during this year's harsh summer were two problems she faced in cultivation. Most of the vegetables are used at home, and the remaining is given to neighbours and friends.

Devipriya, 12, who has won an award from the Agriculture Department, cultivates 25 varieties of vegetables.

Maize dryers to be set up in Punjab

The Punjab Government on Thursday directed the agriculture department to set up maize dryers in all the *mandis* at a cost of Rs.150 crore before the commencement of next kharif season.

The directions were issued by Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal here as part of State's crop diversification programme, said an official release.

Mr. Badal also announced to provide 75 per cent subsidy on the purchase of maize seed to growers in 12 districts during the next kharif season-2014.-

"This step will enable farmers to fetch remunerative price of the maize crop in the *mandis* because dried maize fetches better returns as compared to maize with moisture content," he said.- PTI

NIC sanctions Rs. 17.95 crore for chilli ryots

COMPENSATION

The long wait of chilli farmers, who incurred a huge loss due to fire that swept through Nandini and Vengamamba cold storages here two years ago, for compensation ended but only partially as the National Insurance Company has sanctioned Rs. 17.95 crore as an ex gratia out of the total claim of Rs. 26.50 crore. Nearly 98,275 bags of chilli, belonging to 1,800 farmers, were gutted in the fire accidents that occurred in quick succession in April and May, 2011.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, farmers Joint Action Committee convener Muppalla Nageswara Rao and co-convener T. Rama Rao expressed the hope that the National

Consumer Forum would give a judgment in their favour with regard to the balance amount of Rs. 8.55 crore.



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Today's Weather

 **Friday, Jul 12**
Max 33° | Min 25°

Rain: 0
Humidity: 89
Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:49
Sunset: 06:39
Barometer: 1005

Tomorrow's Forecast

 **Saturday, Jul 13**
Max 34° | Min 26°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday Jul 14	Monday Jul 15	Tuesday Jul 16	Wednesday Jul 17	Thursday Jul 18
				
35° 26° Cloudy	35° 25° Overcast	34° 26° Overcast	34° 26° Overcast	34° 25° Overcast

Airport Weather

Chennai Chennai

Rain: 0
Humidity: 89
Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:49
Sunset: 06:39
Barometer: 1005



NAMO MEETS FARMERS OVER SIR IN STATE

Chief Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday met farmers of Mandal-Becharaji area where the Government is planning to develop Special Investment Region (SIR). Modi heard concern of the representatives belonging to 44 affected villages in the area and gave assurance to them that

their land would not be acquired against their wish. The final call on the proposed SIR would be taken by August 15.

The meeting was attended by around 100 representatives of farmers, leaders of Bhartiya Kisan Sangh and local BJP leaders. After the meeting, the State Government has decided to form a committee of four senior Ministers that includes Urban Development Minister Nitin Patel, Revenue Minister Anandiben Patel, Education Minister Bhupendrasinh Chudasama and Energy & Petrochemical Minister Saurabh Patel. The committee will review various aspects pertaining to the upcoming SIR that include concern of farmers in 44 affected villages. The committee will submit detail report to the CM in a week.

Modi said the decision to develop SIR was taken with a view to develop those areas which are underdeveloped.

THE HINDU Business Line

Slow inflow, demand may boost jeera



Domestic demand and increasing overseas enquiries pushed up jeera in spot and futures market on Thursday.

According to market sources, jeera prices may increase on slow arrivals and rising demand.

In Unjha mandi of Gujarat, about 8,000-9,000 bags of jeera arrived, while around 10,000 bags were traded.

Prices were up Rs 10-15 and stood at Rs 2,030-2,892 for 20 kg.

In Rajkot, jeera price was at Rs 2,200-2,514.

On the NCDEX, jeera August contract gained Rs 97.50 at Rs 13,650 a quintal with an open interest of 16,806 lots.

NCDEX jeera September contract increased by Rs 112.50 to Rs 13,912.50 with an open interest of 4,881 lots.

Market analysts said that export demand is likely to improve in the coming weeks because of lack of supplies from Syria and Turkey. Jeera planting was reported only 10 per cent of normal in the second largest producing country, Syria.

Meanwhile, output in Turkey may be at 8,000-10,000 tonnes.

According to Spices Board, jeera exports in 2012-13 (April-March) were 79,900 tonnes (45,500 tonnes).

According to market sources, India is likely to have exported over 20,000 tonnes of the spice in April-May 2013.

70% of turmeric arrivals unsold at Erode



With the absence of any fresh orders from North India, only thirty per cent of the total arrivals was sold at a lower price.

“No trader or exporter has received upcountry orders, so they are not buying the turmeric. Only negligible number of turmeric bags was procured by few traders to fulfil their local orders. The traders are in a confused state as they have not yet received any fresh orders and also the price is sliding , ” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said the spice lost two per cent in the futures and this has reflected in the auction.

As usual, many traders attended the auction sale conducted in four places but they did not procure the stock.

However, stockists picked up 25 per cent of the offerings.

Prices were down by Rs 200 a quintal.

Only medium variety turmeric including the hybrid variety arrived for sale.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,106-6,689; the root variety Rs 3,711-5,865 a quintal.

Salem Hybrid Crop: The finger variety fetched Rs 5,613-7,166 and the root variety Rs 5,389-6,009.

Of the 728 bags that arrived, 218 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety quoted Rs 5,314-6,664; the root variety Rs 5,016-5,816.

Of the 594 bags on offer, 254 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,274-6,296 and the root variety Rs 4,899-5,730.

Of the 517 put up for sale, 413 were traded.

Cotton blooms on quality arrivals, demand



Cotton prices gained Rs 1,180 a quintal at the Bhoodapady Regulated Market Committee (RMC) on Wednesday.

“As expected, the arrivals have increased to 1,428 quintals during this week against 1,114 quintals last week. Similarly, the price of the Surabi cotton was increased by Rs 1,180 a quintal more than last week price. Because of the quality the buyers from Salem, Coimbatore and Annur and also some spinning mills have quoted higher prices and purchased all the arrived goods,” said the RMC authorities. They also said that the price of Bt Cotton also increased by Rs 400 a quintal. They said that they are expecting further increased price from next week. This year though the cultivable area has decreased due to drought, the cotton growers will get higher price for want of demand.

The Surabi cotton was sold at Rs 6,200-6,550, Bt cotton fetched Rs 5,000-5,500 a quintal. All the 1,128 quintals were sold.

Similarly, at the Anthiyur RMC the arrival of cotton on Wednesday was increased and 5,280 bags (roughly 2,100 quintals) arrived for sale and the Surabi cotton was sold at Rs 5,100-5,380 a quintal, Bt cotton Rs 4,800-5,100 a quintal.

Talk of import duty hike heats up mustard oil



Mustard oil, which had been ruling low for the past two weeks, is witnessing an uptrend for the past few days on rise in buying support and decline in arrival .

Added to this, apprehension of rise in import duty on oil by the Government, has supported the bullish sentiment.

In Indore mandis, mustard oil on Thursday ruled at Rs 642 for 10 kg, while it was Rs 635 in Neemuch and Rs 640 in Morena.

In Rajasthan mandis also, mustard oil has been witnessing an uptrend on improved demand with its price in Kota and Ganga Nagar at Rs 645 and Rs 650 for 10 kg (up Rs 10 from last week), while in Jaipur, it was up Rs 5 from last week at Rs 655.

In Gujarat also, mustard oil is up Rs 5 from last week at Rs 635. Even as arrival continues to be on the lower side, mustard seeds in Indore mandis ruled stable at Rs 4,100-4,200 a quintal, while raida ruled at Rs 3,000-3,100.

Mustard seeds futures traded higher with July and August contracts on the NCDEX closing at Rs 3,471 a quintal (up Rs 50 from last week) and Rs 3,502 (up Rs 27 from last week).

Arrival of mustard seeds across the country on Thursday declined to one lakh bags (1.25 lakh bags last week) .

New crop arrivals put pressure on rice



Rice market may continue to rule in a tight range for the next few days, said trade sources.

With not much trading taking place in the market, aromatic and non-basmati varieties remained unchanged on Thursday.

Tara Chand Sharma, proprietor of Tara Chand and Sons, told *Business Line* that the market may continue to rule in a tight range with marginal fluctuations even in the coming days. New paddy crop arrivals have started from the Uttar Pradesh and the quality of the stock is very good.

New crop arrivals are also putting some pressure on the market. However, currently there are no buyers for the PR and Sharbati variety, while rice millers have shown some interest in buying of Pusa-1121. Traders expect that buying may pickup within a week and then the arrivals of PR variety will also increase.

In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) sold at Rs 7,500-7,600, while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted at Rs 7,030 a quintal.

Pure basmati (raw) quoted at Rs 8,800-8,820. Duplicate basmati (steam) sold at Rs 6,700.

For the brokens of Pusa-1121, Dubar quoted at Rs 3,900, Tibar sold at Rs 4,400 while Mongra was at Rs 3,050.

In the non-basmati section, Sharbati (Steam) sold at Rs 4,750-4,770 while Sharbati (Sela) quoted at Rs 4,400.

Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,300-2,350 while Permal (sela) went for Rs 2,300. PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 3,000 while PR-11 (Raw) quoted at Rs 2,750. PR14 (steam) sold at Rs 3,300.

PADDY ARRIVALS

Around 4,000 bags of different paddy varieties arrived at the Karnal Grain Market Terminal on Thursday from Uttar Pradesh. About 1,000 bags of Pusa-1121 arrived and quoted at Rs 3,100-3,200 a quintal. Around 2,500 bags of PR and 500 bags Sharbati arrived and both the varieties remained unsold.

Pulses trade irked by move to hike import duty

On March 26, the Finance Ministry issued a notification that extended duty-free import of pulses until March 31, 2014. In such a situation, the Food Ministry's reported move to ask the Centre to impose a 7.5 per cent import duty on pulses has led to confusion among traders.

"When the Finance Ministry has issued a notification of extending duty-free import, how can the Government suddenly impose duty?" wondered a Chennai-based importer, who did not wish to be identified.

The Food Ministry's reported move is on the heels of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices recommending a 10 per cent customs duty on pulses to encourage farmers grow more pulses as imported pulses are ruling cheaper.

"The Agricultural Costs Commission people are the only ones talking of this," said another trader from Mumbai. The pulses trade says it would not be wise on the part of the Government to impose import duty now, since traders have been badly hit by slack domestic demand and plunging rupee.

“Importers, in particular, have been badly mauled in pulses trade with the rupee diving to record low,” said the Mumbai trader.

The rupee dropped to a record, breaching the 61-mark against the dollar earlier this week before recovering to 59.67 on Thursday.

“Even prices of pulses in the domestic market have crashed in the last few months,” said the Chennai-based importer.

According to Ankur Pandya, a trader in Indore, the landed price of imported arhar (tur) is Rs 4,125 a quintal, while its domestic price is Rs 4,450.

Similarly, imported masur costs around Rs 4,450 a quintal, while the domestic price is Rs 4,250.

Prakash Vora, a wholesale trader at Indore, said importers are selling masoor at a lower rate because the stock is old.

Official sources, when contacted, said there are plans in the Food Ministry to recommend a duty hike in pulses import.

The reported move has, in fact, pushed up prices of various pulses by at least Rs 100 a quintal in the last couple of sessions.

Traders are, however, hopeful that with the rupee plunging and India being the top importer and consumer of pulses, the Finance Ministry may not agree to any hike in the duty.

Cotton blooms on quality arrivals, demand

Cotton prices gained by Rs 1,180 a quintal at the Bhoadapady Regulated Market Committee on Wednesday.

“As expected, arrivals increased to 1,428 quintals during this week against 1,114 quintals last week. Similarly, the price of the Surabi cotton increased by Rs 1,180 a quintal. Because of the quality, buyers from Salem, Coimbatore and Annur besides some spinning mills quoted higher price. They purchased all the arrivals,” said the market authorities. They also said that the price of Bt Cotton increased by Rs 400 a quintal. They said that they are expecting further increased

price from next week. This year though the cultivable area has decreased due to drought, the cotton growers will get higher price for want of demand.

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Business Standard



The dairy sector expects a surge in its export to Southeast Asia, where local entities seem unable to satisfy a growing demand for milk. Insiders say skimmed milk powder (SMP) export to the region could rise to 10,000 tonnes from the present 5,000 tonnes.

"Across Asia, India is the only country with surplus milk. Above all, we have the location advantage to cater to the Southeast Asian market. Also, price competitiveness is there," said R S Sodhi, managing director of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), which sells products under the Amul brand.

Milk consumption in the area is mainly driven by high birth rates, rising incomes, improving diets, growth in modern retailing, urbanisation and countrywide school milk programmes. Competition is rising among international dairy companies, with six countries in the Association of South East Asian Nations bloc - Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam - increasingly depending on imports. A Rabobank report said dairy trade flows into the region surpassed 1.6 million tonnes in 2012, equating to a \$5.5 billion export opportunity.

The region is one of the few remaining dairy battlegrounds and the boom in demand has triggered intense competition among producers.

"We expect dairy consumption across the Asean-6 to grow 2.4 per cent per year through to 2020. This creates a requirement for an extra three billion litres of milk, which local players are ill-equipped to deliver," said Rabobank analyst Michael Harvey.

"We see 7,000-8,000 tonnes of SMP exports every month. Farmers benefit from this, as we get a good price from the international market," said Sodhi. Amul alone exported around Rs 100 crore worth of SMP in April-June. It eyes Rs 300 crore of export this financial year.

According to sector insiders, Indian SMP costs around \$3,450 a tonne. Competing nations such as Australia and New Zealand charge \$3,550-3,650 a tonne. A stronger dollar against the rupee further benefits exporters. "Prices are getting lucrative. When the dollar was Rs 56, the price was worked out at Rs 193; now it is over Rs 207 a kg," said Viney Mahajan, associated with a private dairy in North India.

Rabobank analysts say outcompeting rival companies will not be enough to secure victory in this market. Exporters must also conquer a number of structural challenges, such as food price inflation, protectionist policies and supply chain inefficiencies.

"Southeast Asia is a major market. Milk powder export is a commodity business; hence, our advantage is our quality and price. However, despite having surplus milk production, we are still a marginal exporter. We export hardly one per cent of our total production," said R G Chandramogan, chairman, Hatsun Agro Products. The company exports SMP to some countries in the region, he said. India's total milk powder exports are likely to touch 100,000 tonnes this year.

Barley falls 1.99% on mounting stocks

Barley prices fell mainly attributes to weak physical markets due to ample supply from mills against reduced off take by beer and cattle feed making industries



Barley prices dropped by Rs 27.50 to Rs 1,353.50 per quintal in futures trade today as traders preferred to reduce holdings on the back of rising stocks position in spot markets.

Market analysts said the fall in Barley futures prices mainly attributes to weak physical markets due to ample supply from mills against reduced off take by beer and cattle feed making industries.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, barley prices for November slipped by Rs 27.50 or 1.99% to Rs 1,353.50 per quintal, with an open interest of 250 lots.

Current July contract dipped by Rs 16.50 or 1.29%, to Rs 1,258.50 per quintal in an open interest of 2,150 lots.

Most active August contract looked down by Rs 14, or 1.08%, to Rs 1,278 per quintal, open interest was 33,920 lots.

Chana declines by 0.35% on increased supply

Good monsoon rains in growing regions fuelled the downtrend in chana prices at futures trade



Chana prices declined by Rs 11 to Rs 3,162 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators reduced their positions, driven by increased supplies at spot market. Good monsoon rains in growing regions further fuelled the downtrend in chana prices at futures trade.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, chana for delivery in August declined by Rs 11, or 0.35%, to Rs 3,162 per quintal, with an open interest of 58,010 lots. Similarly, the commodity for delivery in July shed Rs 9, or 0.29%, to Rs 3,093 per quintal in 2,12,220 lots. Market analysts said speculators trimmed their positions, driven by increased supplies from producing region amid good monsoon rains in growing areas mainly influenced chana prices at futures trading.

Potato up by 0.91%, pick up in spot demand

Potato prices moved up as speculators created fresh positions, supported by pick up demand in spot markets



Potato prices moved up by Rs 6.50 to Rs 717 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators created fresh positions, supported by pick up demand in spot markets amid tight supplies from producing belt.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for delivery in August rose by Rs 6.50 or 0.91% to Rs 717 per quintal in business turnover of 37 lots. Potato for the month of September also traded higher by Rs 1.30 or 0.20% to Rs 665 per quintal in 22 lots.

Turmeric falls 1.47% on adequate supply

Turmeric prices fell due to adequate supplies against subdued demand in the spot market



Turmeric prices fell by 1.47% to Rs 5750 per quintal in futures trading today due to adequate supplies against subdued demand in the spot market.

Good progress in sowing due to favourable weather in growing areas also influenced turmeric futures prices.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, turmeric for delivery in August fell by Rs 86, or 1.47%, to Rs 5,750 per quintal, with an open interest of 23,160 lots.

Likewise, the spice for delivery in July traded lower by Rs 76, or 1.32%, to Rs 5,670 per quintal in 4,315 lots.

Market analysts attributed the fall in turmeric futures to adequate supplies against subdued demand in the spot market.

Cardamom plunges by 3% on weak demand, higher supply

Cardamom prices plunged today as speculators engaged in reducing holdings amid sluggish demand in the spot market



Continuing its losing streak for the fifth straight day, cardamom prices plunged nearly 3% to Rs 638.50 per kg in futures trading today as speculators engaged in reducing holdings amid sluggish demand in the spot market.

Besides, adequate stocks availability in the physical market following higher arrivals from producing region also kept pressure on cardamom at futures trading.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom prices for delivery in July plunged by Rs 19.70, or 2.99%, to Rs 638.50 per kg in business turnover of 24 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in August traded lower by Rs 3.50, or 0.46%, to Rs 765.70 per kg in 224 lots.

Market analysts said the fall in cardamom futures prices was due to off-loading of positions by speculators on sluggish demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position following higher arrivals from producing belts.