



Pacific variety helps double shrimp exports

Vannamei has had a big impact on seafood business, for farmers and exporters

Exports of Vannamei variety of shrimps, farmed in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, in value terms were \$730 million during 2012-13 against \$385 million in the previous year.

India exported a record 91,000 tonnes of Vannamei shrimps (40,787 tonnes during 2011-12), helping total seafood exports increase 5 per cent in quantity and 12 per cent in earnings.

Frozen shrimps, including other varieties, constitute 50 per cent of the value of total seafood exports, and India exported 1.89 lakh tonnes of the produce, earning Rs.8,175 crore.

Seafood export figures for the last financial year are yet to be officially released by Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA).

India exported 8.62 lakh tonnes of seafood worth Rs.16,597 crore, about \$3.5 billion last financial year.

A leading seafood exporter here said that Vannamei, still an exotic variety in India and less than six years old in the country, had had a big impact on seafood business — for farmers and exporters.

Farmers had earned an average Rs.300 a kg of shrimp, MPEDA sources said here.

Vannamei shrimps, also called Pacific white shrimp and native to the eastern Pacific Ocean, emerged on the scene with a bang with high productivity.

Export figures have been impressive since 2010-11 when India exported 12,407 tonnes.

The steep rise in production has been supported by remarkable increase in acreage under Vannamei farming. MPEDA accounts put the total area under Vannamei farming at 22,715 hectares. But seafood exporters, some of whom are themselves involved in aquaculture, estimate that there may at least be 50,000 hectares under farming.

The economics of Vannamei farming worked in favour of the farmers, who were now abandoning traditional black tiger shrimp farming, said a seafood exporter.

Vannamei productivity is about 10 tonnes a hectare. The first year of Vannamei farming involves an investment of about Rs.16 lakh a hectare. Earnings in six months can be as much as Rs.25 lakh at an average price of Rs.250 a kg. The next cycle involves an investment of about Rs.12 lakh, including the Rs.10 lakh that go into the feed. As a result, farmers are even encroaching on forest and government lands for farming Vannamei though these farms cannot be put on paper and registered or officially shown as producing shrimp.

Right to Food Campaign opposes ordinance on food bill

Seeks comprehensive Food Security Bill

Right to Food Campaign activists on Thursday opposed an ordinance on the food security bill. They urged the government to conduct business in Parliament and ensure that all parties participated actively in debating, discussing and passing a comprehensive Food Security Bill. Questioning the government's haste in taking the ordinance route, the campaign members said the monsoon session of Parliament was just a few weeks

away and on an issue like food security, which affected millions of people, there should be an in-depth and informed debate in Parliament. Several important parties, including the CPI, CPI(M), BJD, Trinamool Congress and the AIADMK, had moved amendments to the revised Bill in the Lok Sabha and they needed to be heard.

“Most of these parties have placed amendments, asking for universal coverage [under the Public Distribution System] and opposing the reduction of entitlements from seven kg to five kg a month. The BJP would like to present provisions of the Chhattisgarh Food Security Bill, which is more progressive than the National Food Security Bill. Parties with large farmer constituencies like the Shiromani Akali Dal are perturbed at the lack of attention to farmers’ issues. All these voices need to be heard and all the issues raised need to be debated,” the activists said.

According to them, an ordinance on the lines of the revised Bill approved by the Cabinet would be extremely “inadequate” and make a “mockery” of food security.

No provision for community kitchen

“It provides extremely limited food entitlements, is piecemeal and is nowhere close to providing food security. It makes no provisions for the production of food or for support of small and marginal farmers who are food producers, but very food insecure and poor. It even undermines some of the entitlements ensured by the Supreme Court in the Right to Food case. It has no provisions for community kitchens and feeding of the most hunger-prone or to deal with starvation deaths.”

Campaigning for a comprehensive food bill, the activists said the Bill moved in Parliament did not specify a time frame for rolling out the scheme,

remained targeted, cut back on grains entitlements, did nothing to contain malnutrition, allowed for private contractors and commercial interests in the supply of food in the Integrated Child Development Scheme, was ambiguous regarding maternal entitlements and did not have a strong grievance redress mechanism.

The greens brigade

CHATLINE A team of youngsters silently carry out an organic food revolution in the outskirts of our city through their venture Nallakeerai. Akila Kannadasan reports



Two young men walked door-to-door selling keerai (greens) one morning in Ambattur. For every bundle they sold, they earned hope. For, the keerai was an experiment. It was grown organically on a leased plot of land near Thirunindravur, some 30 km from Chennai. They explained this to customers who cared to listen; some even invited them in for tea. Today, nearly two years later, the men drive their own car to deliver their keerai and have over 2,000 customers in and around Chennai. More like-minded youngsters have joined them in their agricultural quest — Nallakeerai.

“I once saw a farmer sleep with a damp towel over his stomach to overcome hunger,” says R. Jaganathan, who started it all. The fact that the people who produce food for the rest of the country sometimes go to bed hungry, haunted him. He decided to do something about it and started by studying the economy of farmers in his village of Melappedu. Along with a few children, he conducted a survey on the daily expenses of some 210 agricultural families in the village. The results were shocking. “Farmers spend about 1.6 crore per annum on fertilizers, pesticides, medicines and alcohol,” he says. Was there a way out? Jagan travelled to farms across Tamil Nadu to find out.

Eco-friendly farmers honoured

S. Nagamma is in her late 50's. She is into farming for the past three decades cultivating millets and other crops as her two-acres farm has no irrigation facility and as such she depends on good monsoon.

She cultivates 15 varieties of crops at any given time which is sufficient not only to feed the family but also surplus enough to sell part of it to meet the education expenses of her children.

June 5, 2013, was a memorable day for Nagamma who was honoured for cultivating millets under Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intense Millet Promotion (INSIMP).

“I am cultivating more than 20 varieties of crops in my two acres farm and we never had a problem to meet the family requirement. Surplus from crops like black gram and green gram will be sold to meet the education expenses. I am receiving an honorarium of Rs. 2,480 for cultivating millets in my farm,” Ms. Nagamma told *The Hindu* .

Growing trend

She is one among the 3,153 farmers who are being recognised and honoured with honorarium for cultivating environment friendly crops. These farmers from 48 villages spread in four mandals- Jharasangam, Zaheerabad, Nyalakal and Raikod- receive cash incentive for cultivating millets in more than 5,000 acres.

K. Ruthamma of Sangapur village in Raikod mandal was also happy for receiving the cash incentive.

“By following this type of cultivation you are saving the earth and one should be proud of you. It is the duty of the government to support your activities and make farming more environment friendly,” K. Madhusudhan Rao, Commissioner for Agriculture, said adding that he was overwhelmed with presence of large number of women participating in the activity. Mr. Madhudhan Rao has also positively responded for the suggestion made by P.V. Satheesh, director of the Deccan Development Society (DDS), to see that these farmers should get incentive every year like other farmers as they are saviours of environment. As of now the INSIMP support to farmers has been coming only once.

Labour shortage: farm mechanisation gets a boost

Three-day AP-TEC 2013 begins in Tirupati



Looking ahead: Farmers taking a look at a farm equipment on display at the inaugural of the three-day AP-TEC 2013 in Tirupati on Thursday.– PHOTO: K.V. POORNACHANDRA KUMAR

Though the ability of farm mechanisation to turn agriculture around was well known, it was neither discussed so widely, nor practised so seriously in the past.

The growing disenchantment among farmers, migration from agriculture to other sources of livelihood and the introduction of several labour-oriented schemes by the government have had a cascading effect on the availability of manpower on the farm. As a result, mechanisation was tipped the only option to fill the gap.

The three-day AP-TEC 2013 conference and exhibition began at ANGRAU's Regional Agricultural Research Station here on Thursday. The event, conducted jointly by Andhra Pradesh Technology Development Corporation (APTDC) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), has its explicit focus on the theme 'Technologies for Modern Agriculture' and as such targets the farmers, members of agri-based industry and allied activities and companies dealing in fertiliser, pesticide, farm engineering equipment etc.

Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University (ANGRAU) Vice-Chancellor A. Padma Raju laid emphasis on the need to strengthen the hands of the small and marginal farmers in view of the growing adversities. "While America has 40 lakh farmers, our State alone has 2.5 times more farmers than that, all of them in the small and marginal category," he pointed out. V. Prabhakar Rao, Vice-Chancellor of Sri Venkateswara Veterinary University listed out scanty rainfall, lack of MSP, fertilisers and pesticides shortage

etc., as factors breaking the farmers' back. "Traditional farming takes us nowhere and it's time for farming to take shape as an industry," he said, citing the role of mechanisation in the transformation.

Armed with an ambitious target figure of doubling the farm yield by 2025, which envisages a constant growth rate of 6.7 per cent, the only tool to rely upon is mechanisation, said P. Ramesh Kumar Reddy, Director (Extension) and T.V. Satyanarayana, Dean (Agricultural Engineering), while focusing on miniature technology to take equipment to smaller farms. Similarly, SV Agricultural College Associate Dean N.V. Naidu presented a rosy picture on returns with enhanced usage of equipment like harvesters and seed separators, while Associate Director of Research (RARS) T. Giridhara Krishna spoke on the relevance of the event.

A similar event was held at Lam Farm in Guntur last year, while the next year's event would be at Warangal RARS.

Cane growers' protest turns violent

The scheduled 'maha dharna' by Latchaiahpeta Sugarcane Growers' Association at NCS Sugars Limited, Sitanagaram in the district, turned violent on Thursday.

The association planned the protest against delay in settlement of dues to the tune of Rs. 27crore for the sugarcane supplied to the factory.

Over 500 farmers staged a dharna on the factory premises demanding an answer for the delay in payment of arrears from the management. When none responded to their appeal, they organised rasta-roko for about three and a half hours on NH-43. Bowing to the pressure, CEO Anjaneyulu came to the agitating spot and conceded their demand for talks with the association leaders .

However, irate farmers attempted to assault the CEO. When he rushed into his office, the farmers smashed windowpanes of his office.

Following information, Parvathipuram Revenue Divisional Officer J. Venkat Rao reached the spot along with DSP Phalguni Rao and pacified them. The farmers lifted roadblock after the management had agreed to settle their dues by June 15.

Bhoo Chetana to enrich soil

Agriculture officials gear up to implement ICRISAT project

The paddy-rich West Godavari district is all set to experiment with the 'Mission Mode Project for Rainfed Agriculture' to be launched by the State government in collaboration with the Hyderabad-based International Crop Research Institute for Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) from the ensuing kharif season across the State.

West Godavari is one of the 14 districts chosen for implementing the project with the motto of bridging the yield gaps with the science-led interventions by way of improving the soil health. The ICRISAT has volunteered to extend technical support for the project to take off. The Agriculture department is busy holding orientation programmes as a prelude to the launch of the so-called mission project, also known as "Bhoo Chetana". V.D. Krupadas, Joint Director, Agriculture Department, told *The Hindu* that the department was planning to bring 350 ha in each mandal of the district with 46 mandals under the coverage of the project in phase-I. The studies revealed that the soil health has been rapidly declining in most parts of the district due to the reported failure on the part of farmers in striking a balance in use of the NPK nutrients and organic manures. Microbial degradation in the soil was observed as a result of

overdependence on the chemical fertilisers, leading to soil fatigue. Mr. Das said the farmers in the kharif season were found to be using 200 kg of NPK nutrients worth Rs 2,000 per acre and 500 kg worth Rs 5,000 in the rabi, which was alarmingly on a higher side. Tenancy farming in more than 75 per cent of the agricultural lands is said to be one of the major reasons for 'deteriorating' soil health in the district. The Joint Director said the soils receiving the Godavari water were found to be healthier than the soils under the Krishna irrigation system. The naturally available plant nutrients were found missing in the Krishna waters as they were getting filtered in course of impounding of the river waters by several major and medium dams upstream. Therefore, focus would be laid on improvement of soil health under the Krishna canal ayacut, Mr. Das added.

Government will help areca farmers if prices crash, says Siddaramaiah
Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday assured the Legislative Council of government help to arecanut growers if prices crashed in the wake of the ban on gutka.

Replying to a debate initiated by Leader of the Opposition D.V. Sadananda Gowda on the perceived "uncertain future" of arecanut growers in the wake of the gutka ban, the Chief Minister said that the government would convene a meeting of the elected representatives concerned in the event of a price crash.

Allaying the Bharatiya Janata Party leaders' fears that arecanut prices might crash, he said that the prices had increased after the gutka ban. Mr. Sadananda Gowda said that the BJP was not against the gutka ban. However, it was concerned that the ban would affect the areca growers.

It wanted the government to convene a meeting of the elected representatives and arecanut growers to discuss the possibility of waiving loans of arecanut farmers, he said.

Unnecessary fears

Earlier, addressing a press conference, Minister for Health and Family Welfare U.T. Khader said that the government's ban on gutka is unlikely to affect areca growers in the State.

He said that the government banned the sale and manufacture of gutka and pan masala under the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations 2011. These regulations have been framed by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India. He and Horticulture Minister Shamnur Shivshankarappa said that there was unnecessary panic among areca growers that the prices are falling.

“While the prices of most varieties of arecanut have remained stable, the rates of some varieties have even gone up. Even if the prices fall, as per the growers' apprehensions, the Union and State governments have put in place several market intervention schemes. We have not banned the sale of tobacco and nicotine-free pan masala,” he said.

The Ministers said that it was inevitable for the government to ban gutka as per the directive of the Supreme Court.

With 25 States and five union territories having banned gutka, Karnataka and several others had to follow suit and submit a compliance report to the Supreme Court before June 23, the Ministers said.

Farmers upset over move to link Uppar with PAP

Farmers irrigating their lands under the present Parambikulam – Aliyar Project (PAP) are worried over the reported move to include the Uppar dam in the PAP scheme at a cost of Rs. 8.10 crore.

At present the PAP scheme helps in irrigating four lakh acres spread over four zones and water used to be released from Thirumurthy dam. Uppar dam near Dharapuram in Tirupur district receives water from the rainfall in Dharapuram, Kundadam and Udumalpet. Uppar dam benefits about 6.060 acres.

With the catchments of Uppar dam not getting adequate water from the rain, farmers in the region wanted Uppar to be included in the PAP scheme.

This required construction of canal for five km at a cost of Rs. 8.10 crore. However, PAP farmers and association representatives are upset over the move as it would deny them their share of water.

They pointed out that four lakh acres are getting water in four zones. When the farmers moved the Madras High Court against apportioning of PAP beneficial areas into four zones, the State Government had informed the court that in future they would not include even one acre under the PAP scheme.

But, now the proposed move will lead to over 6,060 acres being brought under the project.

Unit to promote agro industries

With a view to promoting agro-based industries, a business planning and development (BPD) unit, sanctioned under the National Agricultural

Innovation Project of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, will be launched here on Friday.

The BPD unit is being set up at an outlay of Rs.1.60 crore at the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI) here.

The unit will help provide technology-based business incubation services on commercialisation and entrepreneurship development in coconut, areca nut and cocoa sectors for sustainable and inclusive growth, CPCRI Director George V. Thomas said here on Thursday.

“The venture will be a one-stop solution for agri-business aspirants and aims at consolidating efforts of the CPCRI to accomplish the demands of the agro-industry, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders,” Mr. Thomas told a press conference here.

The major thrust of the BPD unit is to promote entrepreneurship of select business models using proven and potential technologies on coconut, areca nut and cocoa, promote commercialisation of technologies and their marketing, and undertake capacity building programmes for empowering entrepreneurs, farmers and rural women to take up agri-business ventures, C. Thampan, Principal Scientist at the CPCRI said. The BPD unit will support entrepreneurs with plant and machinery and marketing strategies for setting up units for virgin coconut oil, coconut kernel-based products, and value-added coconut by-products.

Besides, activated carbon from coconut shell, processed products of cocoa, and organic farm inputs such as vermicompost and biofertilizers would come in the ambit of the BPD unit.

Collector P.S. Mohammed Sagir will inaugurate the unit at 10 a.m. at the P.J. hall.

Food prices to rise by up to 40 per cent, say world bodies

Production, productivity need to be increased, say FAO and OECD

Rising global food demand will push up prices 10 to 40 per cent over the coming decade and governments need to boost investment to increase farm production, said a forecast by two international agencies on Thursday. Growth in food production has slowed over the past decade even as rising incomes in developing countries boosted consumption, said the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

“We’re observing slower growth in production and productivity, and that is a concern,” said Merritt Cluff, an FAO economist, at a news conference.

Governments need to find ways to give farmers access to technology to increase output and get more of their crops to market, the agencies said in a report, “Agricultural Outlook 2013-2022.”

Prices are expected to rise 10 to 40 per cent over the coming decade, with the cost of meat rising faster and that of grains more slowly, according to Ken Ash, director general of the OECD’s trade and agriculture division.

Shift needed

“We would urge governments around the world to begin to shift and to shift quickly from old-style policies to a greater focus on productivity and innovation,” said Mr. Ash. “If we carry on blissfully as if nothing has changed in the world, there could be a problem.”

Investment in farming has fallen in recent decades due to a long-term decline in commodity prices and has yet to rebound despite price spikes since 2008, the agencies said. As a result, they said, annual production

growth is forecast to slow to 1.5 per cent compared with the past decade's 2.1 per cent.

"It's about a third less. That's a big difference," said Angel Gurría, the OECD secretary-general.

The agencies urged governments to avoid interfering with market forces that can encourage farmers to produce more by raising prices for their goods.

Consumption

Food consumption in developing countries has grown by up to 30 per cent a year over the past decade as incomes rose, while consumption in developed countries changed little, the agencies said.

China's imports of meat and oilseeds are forecast to grow as its increasingly prosperous consumers spend more on food, said the agencies.

Beijing has pursued self-sufficiency in production of rice, wheat and other grain but for soybeans and other oilseeds relies on imports from the United States, Brazil and other countries.

Imports of oilseeds are expected to rise by 40 per cent over the next 10 years, accounting for 59 per cent of global trade in oilseeds, while dairy imports would rise 20 per cent, the OECD and FAO said.

China should remain self-sufficient in its main crops but for other products its sheer size "will keep markets on edge over the next decade," said Mr. Cluff. — AP

Coconut growers are a dejected lot

Caterpillar infestation and continuous drought have hit yield



Loss: Coconut trees in Ramanagaram district infested by the black-headed caterpillar.

The precarious groundwater situation and the black-headed caterpillar infestation have hit coconut growers in Ramanagaram district.

Coconut is grown on nearly 12,000 hectares in the district, with growers here supplying at least four crore tender coconuts annually to various parts of the country. This year, however, they have been forced to axe thousands of dying trees over the past two months. Along the Bangalore–Mysore highway between Ramanagaram and Channapatna, are hundreds of coconut trees, looking as if they are burnt.

The black-headed caterpillar has the tendency to spread quickly from one tree to another, causing nuts to shrink or fall from the tree before they fully develop.

“Nearly 25 per cent of the crop has been hit by the disease,” Krishna, Deputy Director of Horticulture (Ramanagaram), told *The Hindu* over phone on Monday. Besides, scanty rainfall and depleting groundwater levels had also taken a toll on growers, he said.

According to K. Puttaswamy, former State secretary of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and himself a coconut grower, the KRRS had found that at least four lakh coconut trees had stopped giving yield because of the caterpillar infestation and continuous drought.

The department had taken steps to educate farmers on saving their crops, including through classes conducted at farms, Dr. Krishna claimed.

According to another officer, growers have been advised to use neem-based pesticides, take up root-feeding method, spray bio-agents that eat away the caterpillar onto affected trees, and follow proper irrigation methods.

However, Mr. Puttaswamy alleged that the departments concerned were not doing enough to save the trees.

Officials were advising growers to spray pesticides, but this was not possible on tall trees, said Beereshwara, a farmer near Maluru Patna in Channapatna.

Mr. Puttaswamy urged officials of the Coconut Development Board and the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute to visit the affected farms and take up research.

“When the State government can offer subsidy for fishermen to purchase diesel for their boats, why can’t it lend a helping hand to coconut growers here,” he asked, calling for compensation for growers.

ICAR develops two integrated farming system models

While one is suitable for the undulating uplands, the other is for lowlands

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) centre, Goa, has taken up a research project under Integrated Farming System Research (IFSR) for the last four years and developed two integrated farming system

models, one suitable for the undulating uplands and the other for the lowlands.

Narendra Pratap Singh, Director, ICAR Research Complex, Goa, disclosed this at a 10-day national-level training programme under way at the ICAR Research Complex with participants from all over India.

The inaugural function of the training programme was held on Tuesday in the presence of Mr. Singh. He indicated the importance and genesis of the IFSR and emphasised the need for a systematic approach in the context of fragmented landholdings both in Goa and other parts of the country.

Agriculture in Goa and other parts of the country is becoming increasingly uneconomical owing to increasing input costs, especially labour, he said.

Economies of scale for agriculture on small patches of land is unviable unless it is supported by additional intermittent revenue-generating enterprises, he said.

Keeping this in view, the ICAR, New Delhi, was emphasising on a holistic system approach through its coordinated research project.

At the inaugural function, S. Subramanian, former Principal Scientist, briefly outlined the focal concept and components of Integrated Farming Systems in augmenting rural income with optimal utilisation of available resources and its suitability to smallholdings, homesteads and resource-poor farmers.

B.L. Manjunath, Principal Scientist (Agronomy), ICAR, Goa, has been coordinating the programme. All the scientific staff of the institute are guiding the trainees on different aspects and the required scientific approach on IFSR, the result of which will be useful for arriving at specific models for various resource situations in different parts of the country, said Mr. Manjunath on Thursday.

Call to empower forest committees

Forests can be conserved effectively by empowering village forest communities, said B.K. Singh, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, after inaugurating the 'Plant Fair' held at Kadamba Organic and Marketing Trust (KOMT) on Wednesday.

A team would be set up under the leadership of senior forest officer Vinay Lutra to identify areas in the district in the heart of the Western Ghats. Effects on the environment would be considered before undertaking any projects there, he said. He sought the cooperation of the public to safeguard and develop forest wealth.

Referring to 'Betta' development programs in Malnad, Mr. Singh said that a decision would be taken to increase Betta land facilities from 30 per cent to 70 per cent.

Subsidies sought

KOMT president Shambulinga Hegde said that the Forest Department should give subsidies to install ASTRA (Application of Science and Technology for Rural Areas) ovens in rural areas to reduce the pressure on natural forests. Vrakshalaksha Andolan president Anant Ashishar said that the Forest Department should be aware of the proposals for mini-hydel projects in the river valleys here and prevent them from being executed. KOMT manager Vishweshwar Bhat and range forest officers Munitimma and N.B. Naik were present. Hundreds of farmers sold fruit and spice plants to interested cultivators at the fair.

Tenant farmers seek ID cards

State urged to conduct gram sabhas again for the purpose



Tenant farmers at the rythu sadassu organised in Vijayawada on Thursday.

—PHOTO: V. RAJU

Farmers at a rythu sadassu have urged the government to take steps to issue identity cards and provide loans to all tenant farmers.

The meeting also wants the government to extend the subsidy seed, fertilizers, and crop insurance to the tenant farmers as well.

Rythu Sangham, a frontal organisation of the CPI (M), organised the farmers' meet here on Thursday.

On the occasion, sangham district secretary J. Prabhakar said many tenant farmers had not applied for identity cards though gram sabhas were conducted in April. The tenant farmers could not come to a conclusion over tenancy by then.

As the tenant farmers and land owners had come to an agreement, the government should conduct the gram sabhas again, he said, adding that it would be of immense help to the farmers as the cash transfer scheme would be applicable to the card-holders only.

The government was requested to conduct the gram sabhas to receive the applications as it was practically not possible for the farmers to submit the applications at the Mee Seva centres. A facility to submit applications through the VRO or the tehsildar needed to be introduced, he said.

The farmers at the sadassu recalled that there were 1.70 lakh tenant farmers in the district.

The tenant farmers were cultivating 70 per cent of the land in the district.

The government issued identity cards to the tenant farmers after a protracted struggle. The bankers, however, were not willing to sanction loans to them.

The tenant farmers had succeeded in availing themselves of the bank loans after waging a united struggle in Ungutur, Gampalagudem, Kankipadu, Bapulapadu, Veerulapadu, and Chandarlapadu villages. The farmers were forced to knock the doors of money-lenders as the bankers were not willing to provide loans, they said. Rythu Sangham district president Y. Kesava Rao spoke.

Sangam Dairy to implement National Dairy Plan

NDP aims at improving milk production and health of the cattle

The Guntur District Milk Producers' Mutually Aided Cooperative Union Limited (Sangam Dairy) here became the first cooperative dairy in the State to implement the National Dairy Plan (NDP) when district Collector S. Suresh Kumar launched it on Thursday.

The NDP is aimed at increasing milk production to meet the growing demand and provide the rural milk producers greater access to the organised milk processing sector.

On the occasion, Mr. Suresh Kumar said that a substantial number of farmers in the country were dependent on the dairy sector and it was imperative that a concerted effort should be made to harness its full potential.

Sangam Dairy deserved appreciation for being selected by the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) for implementation of the NDP, he said and asserted that this would not be possible without the efforts made by farmers. He expressed hope that the dairy would increase its turnover to Rs 1,000 crore from the present Rs 350 crore. Sangam Dairy Chairman and Ponnur MLA Dhulipalla Narendra Kumar said Village-based Milk Procurement System (VMPS), Ration Balancing Programme (RBP) and Fodder Development Programme (FDP) were the three components of the NDP slated for implementation in its first phase.

The VMPS is aimed at improving the milk quality at society level and strengthening the cooperatives by enrolling more women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The RBP is intended to improve milk production and health of the cattle by duly incorporating the locally available feeds through balanced ration.

The objective of the FDP is to achieve regular supply of quality fodder through different seasons by conserving the fodder and minimising waste.

A grant of Rs 2.90 crore has been approved for the VMPS with the Sangam Dairy contributing Rs 1.60 crore from its own funds. The RBP has been approved with a grant of Rs 1.92 crore and FDP Rs 68 lakh.

District Cooperative Marketing Society Chairman I. Sambasiva Rao, Sangam Dairy Managing Director K. Gopinath, NDDB Deputy Manager

Latha, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) Regional Director V. Venugopala Reddy and others participated.

Earlier, Mr. Suresh Kumar distributed stipend to 12 students doing Diploma in Dairy Technology course offered by the IGNOU.

Unchecked use of urea reduces soil fertility

Unchecked largescale use of urea by ignorant farmers for economic reasons has started to reduce fertility of agricultural fields.

Its examples have started to crop up at several places in Ganjam district.

The agricultural scientists are worried about it and awareness measures are being initiated to reduce unscientific use of urea in paddy fields.

According to agronomist Bhairab Chandra Nayak, who is posted in Ganjam district, farmers in rural areas are still ignorant about ratio in which they should use chemical fertilisers in their fields. Due to which the peasants through over use of urea in the name of increasing yield are destroying fertility of the soil.

Farmers demand better deal

The State government should ensure that farmers get at least 50 per cent of the profit on their produce as per the recommendations of the Justice Swaminathan Committee.

The farmers from the district discussed their problems at a meeting organised under the aegis of the AP Rythu Sangham at Chodavaram in the district on Thursday. Telugu Desam leader Adari Kishore Kumar spoke about the black caterpillar disease which had resulted in the destruction of coconut plantations in 5000 acres at Anakapalle. He sought that the government should come to the rescue of the farmers.

Commenting on the plight of farmers, Mr. Kishore Kumar said that farmers were no longer interested in their sons taking up farming. They were sending them to the city for jobs. The situation has come to such a stage that no farmer was willing to give his daughter in marriage to a farmer. Former Minister Reddy Satyanarayana and CPI(M) secretary Narasinga Rao were among those who attended

Wait till monsoon sets in, ryots told

19 varieties of cotton seed available in the market, says official

Farmers in the district were advised not to sow hurriedly and instead wait for a good rainfall.

The monsoon is yet to set in and might take couple of days to enter the district. Farmers could take up sowing till July 15, said District Agricultural Technology & Transfer (DATT) centre coordinator and senior scientist R Uma Reddy.

Land under cultivation

Speaking to *The Hindu*, he said of the total five lakh hectares of cultivable land, the farmers sow cotton in an extent of 2.67 lakh hectares, more than 50 per cent cultivable land during this Kharif season.

Trying to allay the fears of the cotton farmers, he said there were 19 varieties of cotton seed available in the market and all of them were found to be good. "We have sown and saw practically in our research centre, there is no significant difference in yield. Hence, farmers need not blindly opt for a single variety and scramble for it in the market," Mr Uma Reddy explained.

Farmers should grow cotton as inter-crop with red gram for more profit rather as main crop. In rainfed mandals like Jangaon, Cheriya,

Buchannapet, Lingala Ghanpur and other areas, the farmers were advised to use drip irrigation for effective yield.

After cotton, more farmers grow paddy (1.31 lakh hectares), maize (40,000 hectares), groundnut (6,000 hectares), Chilli (15,000 hectares) among other minor crops.

Paddy crop

Those opting for paddy were advised to grow nurseries – long duration varieties like BPT 5104 (150 days) and apply green manure such as sun hemp and daincha on the main field before transplantation. To save the labour cost, the farmers could use drum seeder or direct sowing, the agricultural scientist said.

The district witnessed few showers in some areas. The rain was not spread in the entire area as the monsoon is yet to set in. According to scientists, monsoon may set in a couple days.

Carrots remain favourite of farmers

About 3,000 farmers are now engaged in carrot cultivation



A farm worker engaged in carrot cultivation near Udagamandalam.

Rain or shine carrots are fine. With this view being shared by many members of the farming community in The Nilgiris and also those from the

plains who take agricultural lands on lease here the area under carrots has been steadily increasing.

Speaking to *The Hindu* here on Thursday, the Joint Director of Horticulture in-charge N. Mani said that out of about 7,600 hectares under various annual crops carrots account for about 2000 hectares every year.

They are cultivated in different parts of the Ooty, Coonoor and Kotagiri blocks like M.Palada, Kullisholai, Nanjanad, Thuneri, Ketti, Ithalar, Kookalthorai and Nedugula.

Good return

Unlike earlier when rotation of crops was the practice among the farmers now most of them cultivate carrots throughout the year on account of the good return and demand.

Each cultivation season lasts about 30 days.

Stating that about 3,000 farmers, including traditional and new are now engaged in carrot cultivation, he said that individual holdings range from 25 cents to two acres. Adverting to the role of the department in helping the carrot growers, Mr. Mani said that seeds and technical inputs are made available to them.

Pointing out that the seeds include the normal variety, hybrid and location specific, he said that a 50 per cent subsidy is extended.

The cost per kg. of seeds depending on the variety ranges between Rs. 1,500 and Rs. 15,000. With the demand increasing, the department now distributes about 3,500 kg. of seeds including 1500 kg. of hybrids.

To a query on the impact of the prolonged dry weather this year on the cultivation of carrots, he said that it was not serious as most of the carrot cultivating areas had either received some rain or had irrigation facilities.

R. Raghu, a veteran carrot cultivator of Bygamund Hosahatty, said that till about 15 days back the weather had been very dry and one or two farmers had even resorted to the purchase of a couple of lorry loads of water. However, the situation was not alarming and the water was only to sprinkle a small area.

P. Vijayaraghavan, a Ketti Palada-based wholesaler, said that though there was some concern on the weather front and farm operations in some places had been delayed, the flow of carrots to the market has been steady.

Pointing out that when the going is good the flow can touch even 500 tonnes a day, he said that now it was about 200 tonnes a day.

Nilgiris carrots which are in demand in many states fetched till recently fancy prices like Rs. 40 a kg.

However, now it was commanding prices ranging between Rs. 20 and Rs. 30. a kg.

The farmers and others connected with the carrot trade are happy.

Rain lashes Thanjavur district

Heavy rain lashed various parts of Thanjavur district for an hour on Thursday evening.

Agriculture Department officials said that the rain was useful for taking up summer crop and for transplanted kuruvai crop in irrigated areas.

Kuruvai transplantation has been completed on 3,500 hectares so far in the district. One hundred and sixteen tonnes of kuruvai seeds have been distributed in the district.

Good response to integrated farming system

Departments of Horticulture, Animal Husbandry set up 48 units



Farmers adopting an Integrated Farming System at Mudhugula near Ooty. Coinciding with the conclusion of the last fiscal, the introduction of a central sector scheme to promote integrated farming has been welcomed by various sections of the farming community here.

Referred to as the Integrated Farming System (IFS), it was part of the National Agriculture Development Programme (NADP).

Pointing out that as per the guidelines of the NADP, Mudhugula in Ooty block, Adhigaratty and Bickol in Coonoor block, Kookalthorai in Kotagiri block and Puthurvayal in Gudalur block had been selected and the concept of combined farming promoted, the Joint Director of Horticulture in-charge, N. Mani, told *The Hindu* here on Thursday that farmers had been encouraged to take up along with their regular farm activities, animal husbandry, production of vermin compost, organic farming etc. Appropriate subsidy was also extended to them.

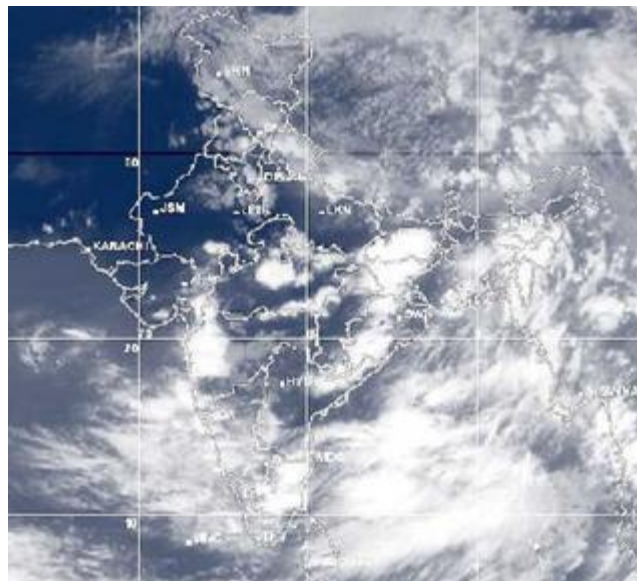
Stating that 48 units had been set up by the horticulture department and the Department of Animal Husbandry, he said that the response was very good.

Pointing out that the number of units would be increased, Mr. Mani said that the objective was to increase the population of milch animals in the

district and also augment the income of the farmers. Since grazing grounds have become difficult to come across in the Nilgiris, farmers have been shown how to make available fodder.

A beneficiary of the scheme J. Balan of Adhigaratty said that he was confident of adopting the system successfully.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on June 06th.

Max	Min R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	46	310 0
New Delhi (Sfd)	44	300 0
Chandigarh	43	310 1
Hissar	46	230 0
Bhuntar	37	180 0
Shimla	29	200 13
Jammu	42	290 8

Srinagar	30	150	13
Amritsar	43	290	0
Patiala	45	300	0
Jaipur	44	330	6
Udaipur	38	290	6
Allahabad	41	310	17
Lucknow	39	270	1
Varanasi	41	290	1
Dehradun	36	220	2
Agartala	32	279	19
Ahmedabad	37	290	11
Bangalore	29	220	119
Bhubaneshwar	39	270	7
Bhopal	39	270	17
Chennai	35	270	91
Guwahati	33	260	59
Hyderabad	36	2324	80
Kolkata	36	280	0
Mumbai	33	280	28
Nagpur	42	270	1
Patna	36	280	29
Pune	34	240	51
Thiruvananthapuram	32	243	119
Imphal	34	23tr	5
Shillong	24	1734	73

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

Heat wave conditions are prevailing over some parts of Rajasthan and isolated pockets of Punjab and Haryana.

RAINFALL: Rain/thundershowers have occurred at few places over Uttarakhand at isolated places over Jammu and Kashmir and east Uttar Pradesh. Weather was mainly dry over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm are: EAST UTTARPRADESH: Bahraich 2 and UTTARAKHAND: Nainital 1.

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES: The maximum temperatures rose in Haryana and changed little elsewhere. They were appreciably above normal in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and west Rajasthan, above normal in Jammu and Kashmir and east Rajasthan and normal in rest of the region. The highest maximum temperature in the region was 47.8°C recorded at Bikaner Airport (Rajasthan).

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 08th June

2013: Rain/thundershowers would occur at one or two places over east Uttar Pradesh. Rain/thundershowers would occur at one or two places over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand during next 24 hours. Weather would be mainly dry over rest of the region.

WARNING: Thunder storm/thunder squall would occur at one or two places over east Uttar Pradesh during next 48 hours. Heat wave conditions would continue to prevail over Rajasthan during next 48 hours.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 08th June 2013: Mainly clear sky..



THE TIMES OF INDIA

Agriculture department focus on seed crisis

The agriculture department is taking every measure to solve the problem of seed shortage before the kharif season.

The department has already started the process of procuring oilseeds and pulses from National Seeds Corporation. It is also promoting seed cultivation to make the state self-reliant and help farmers earn more profit.

KK Soan, director-agriculture, said every year farmers find it difficult to find seeds, especially oilseeds and pulses, and hence could not be sown on time.

"There is huge potential of developing seeds in Jharkhand," said Soan.

While farmers in Jharkhand indigenously produce some quantity of seeds, they majorly depend on multinational companies for hybrid varieties of paddy. Officials at Birsa Agriculture University admit that high-yielding, drought resistant varieties of paddy developed by the university have to be produced on a large commercial scale by the state government.

"We develop new seeds which have to be multiplied by government farms or farmers," said one of the research scientists at the university.

Soan said though there has been no substantial shortage of paddy seeds, pulses and oilseeds has been a bottleneck. "We are trying to encourage farmers to take up seed production at the commercial level and this year we expect some of them to take up seed farming as challenge," said Soan. 15 days on, minister OKs milk price hike Just after a fortnight of his intervention which had led to immediate rollback of the price hike on Sudha milk, animal husbandry and fisheries resources department minister Giriraj Singh justified the Comfed decision on Tuesday to increase the prices by up to Rs 3 per litre.

The minister told TOI on Thursday that it was unavoidable since the Comfed had to pay the milk producers (farmers) at increased rate. "Last time, I had asked the principal secretary of the department to review the prices and then only take a decision. After a thorough review, it was found that with the increasing prices of petrol, diesel and other items like rice bran, mustard oil cakes, linseed cakes, legume, fodder etc, Comfed, too, was forced to increase the rate of milk procured from the producers (farmers). Under the prevailing circumstances, there was definitely a need to increase milk prices to maintain a balance between demand and supply and also to provide quality product. The consumers will have to bear with us," the minister said.

"Comfed is an autonomous body and it has every right to take its decision, provided it is for the benefit of the people at large. However, the state government can review its move," he added.

As per the revised rates, one litre of full cream milk, Sudha Gold, and Sudha Shakti now costs Rs 38 and Rs 33, respectively. One litre of Sudha Healthy is being sold at Rs 29, up from Rs 28. However, the price of Sudha Smart remains unchanged at Rs 26 a litre while that of Cow Milk has been increased by Rs 2 a litre, from Rs 29 to Rs 31.

However, the hike, effective from Wednesday, was the first time after April 14, 2012. Justifying the hike, Comfed AGM (marketing) Rajiv Verma said, "The prices were increased after review and deliberations. Since there has been almost 53% hike in inputs and the milk producers, too, have been given a substantial hike, the consumers have to share the burden. Or else it will be difficult for Comfed to carry on with its quality production."

hindustantimes

Chennai – INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Friday, Jun 7

Max Min

35° | 27°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:41

Humidity: 84

Sunset: 06:33

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1003

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Saturday, Jun 8

Max Min

35° | 28°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Jun 9	Jun 10	Jun 11	Jun 12	Jun 13



36° | 27°

Cloudy



35° | 26°

Overcast



36° | 27°

Overcast



36° | 27°

Overcast



36° | 27°

Overcas

Airport

Weather

Chennai

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:41

Humidity: 84

Sunset: 06:33

Wind: normal Barometer: 1003

THE HINDU Business Line

Global black tea production up 22%

Global black tea production during January-April this year has increased by 21.56 per cent with output rising in Kenya and Sri Lanka, the key competitors to Indian tea in the world market.

However, data available from the Indian Tea Board are up to March only.

“Global black tea production in the first four months of this year has increased to 412.94 million kg (mkg) from 339.69 mkg last year”, Rajesh Gupta, Publisher of annual Global Tea Digest, told *Business Line*. This increase of 73.25 mkg.

In April, Sri Lanka produced 33.30 mkg (up 3.30 mkg), Kenya 38.23 mkg (up 20.11 mkg), Malawi 5.51 mkg (up 0.31 mkg), Bangladesh 2.40 mkg (down 0.10 mkg) and Indonesia 5.10 mkg (down 0.80 mkg), reveals our analysis of the latest data received from different countries.

The cumulative production so far shows that Kenyan output has increased by 64.89 mkg to 155.49 mkg. “This is due to timely showers. In fact, traders have estimated a higher crop and are expecting a revised higher figure to be rolled by the Kenya Tea Board. We anticipate higher output levels till June”, an exporter said.

In the four months, Sri Lanka produced 10.19 mkg more to reach 113.48 mkg.

Weather has been favourable so far with evening showers. Indian output till March was 79.24 mkg (up 4.93 mkg).

Spot rubber prices flat; futures firm

Physical rubber prices finished unchanged on Thursday. Another firm closing in domestic futures failed to make any visible impact on the spot market.

“We expect a recovery in prices as the inflow of the raw material had hit the bottom line,” an analyst said.

Intensified monsoon rain has already affected the production and the market might experience an acute shortage of rubber in the coming weeks.

Sheet rubber closed steady at Rs 171 a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board. The transactions were dull.

June futures improved to Rs 173 (Rs 171.23), July to Rs 167.99 (Rs 167.14), August to Rs 165.23 (Rs 164.30), September to Rs 162.60 (Rs

161.89), October to Rs 162.40 (Rs 162.07) and November to Rs 160 (Rs 167.84) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) weakened to Rs 162.95 (Rs 164.55) at Bangkok. June futures closed at to ¥241.2 (Rs 138.53) on Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were: RSS-4: 171 (171); RSS-5: 166 (166); ungraded: 158 (158); ISNR 20: 157.50 (157.50) and Latex 60%: 108 (108).

Oilmeal exports dip 16% in May on lower demand



Oilmeal exports fell 16 per cent in May following lower demand, especially from South Korea, Iran and Vietnam.

Exports fell to 3,02,837 tonnes against 3,59,855 tonnes in the same period a year ago, according to data released by the Solvent Extractors' Association.

Oilmeal exports in the first two months of the financial year have been dropping.

In April, exports plunged by 51 per cent to 1,99,168 tonnes.

Overall exports in last two months dipped 34 per cent to 5,02,005 tonnes compared with 7,62,945 tonnes.

Soyameal exports in April and May dropped 57 per cent to 1,95,943 tonnes (4,56,420 tonnes).

Apart from the fall in demand, the weakening of the rupee against the dollar also played spoilsport.

In May, the rupee dipped to 54.98 against the dollar, while it was quoted at 54.32 in April.

Soyabean meal prices were up marginally at \$618 (Rs 33,978) a tonne against \$616 (Rs 33,868) in April, while rapeseed meal prices were up by \$1 at \$272.

Iran imports

Oilmeal import by South Korea was down seven per cent at 1,98,367 tonnes (2,12,388 tonnes), which consisted of 68,158 tonnes of rapeseed meal and 1,30,209 tonnes of castor meal. Iran imported 1,48,234 tonnes (1,50,974 tonnes) consisting 1,48,158 tonnes of soyabean meal and a small quantity of rapeseed meal.

other shipments

India's shipments to Thailand were lower at 48,047 tonnes (67,026 tonnes), consisting 9,166 tonnes of soyabean meal and 38,881 tonnes of rapeseed meal.

Vietnam imported of 26,545 tonnes compared to 88,825 tonnes last year, while that of Japan fell to 10,141 tonnes (84,989 tonnes).

Europe and other countries have imported 12,237 tonnes compared to 28,844 tonnes last year.

Over 100 GM crop trials pending as nodal body fails to meet

Agricultural research in India has hit a major roadblock in the last three years with several States deciding not to give no-objection certificates (NOCs) and Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) not meeting ahead of the crucial kharif season.

If it fails to meet in the next 2-3 weeks to consider applications for field trials, the industry fears that they will lose the third consecutive kharif season.

Await consideration

The industry, represented by ABLE-AG, points out that there are as many as 100 applications awaiting GEAC's consideration in rice, maize, vegetables and cotton.

"By the time the new committee was formed in March 2013, planting season was lost. Though the consideration of applications was put on agenda in March, the issue never came up for discussion. To minimise another loss in planting season and a year, the industry expected the GEAC to take up the trials issue immediately," Ram Kaundinya, Chairman of ABLE-AG, said.

When it met last, the GEAC had approved only some trials in hybrid cotton for a trait that had already been accepted earlier.

R & D spend

"Each company spends in the range of Rs 100-200 crore on research and development. If we don't conduct the crucial trials for three years, it would mean that deferring of final output by three years," Kaundinya, who is also the Managing Director of Advanta India, said.

The Association of Biotechnology-led Enterprises (Agriculture Group) represents about 12 top agriculture companies in the country, doing research in biotechnology-based seeds.

No response

"We have approached the Union Ministries of Agriculture and Environment and Forests to expedite the issue.

“But there has been no response from them. If the committee doesn’t meet in the next few weeks, we are going to lose yet another season,” he said. Ram Kaundinya said the issue of giving clearances has slowed down from 2011 when the Union Government mandated the companies to get an NOC from the respective States.

After getting the GEAC approval for a trial, the companies need to approach the States for permission to carry out the trials.

But many of the States have not even formed the committees to consider the applications.

“Only a handful of States such as Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana have given some NOCs.

“States such as Karnataka, Bihar and Tamil Nadu have said they are not going to allow the trials,” the ABLE-AG Chairman said.

Vannamei shrimp boosts marine products export

The Vannamei variety of shrimps played a major role in boosting India’s marine products export during the 2012-13 fiscal.

The export of this shrimp variety, cultivated in the East Coast, fetched \$730 million against \$385 million last year.

exports

India exported 91,000 tonnes of vannamei shrimps in last fiscal against 40,787 tonnes the previous year, the Marine Products Export Development Authority sources said adding that the total shrimp exports comprising tiger, scampi and vannamei during the period was 2.2 lakh tonnes (1.8 lakh tonnes).

Marine product exports data for 2012-13 are yet to be released by the MPEDA.

Last year, the country had garnered export revenue of Rs 19,000 crore (\$3.5 billion).

This year, MPEDA is expecting a five per cent increase in quantity and 12 per cent in value terms.

aqua farms in AP

Official sources at the Seafood Exporters Association of India said that Vanammei exports registered a considerable increase in the last three years, thanks to production by aqua farms in Andhra Pradesh.

Exports were 12,407 tonnes in 2010-11 and 40,787 tonnes in 2011-12.

Farmers in the East Coast region earned Rs 300 a kg in the last fiscal.

The productivity of this variety is about 10 tonnes a hectare in the region.

farming

There has been a considerable increase in acreage under Vannamei farming and the total area under cultivation was 22,715 hectares.

SEAI officials expressed the hope that shrimp exports from the East Coast will do better in the current year also on account of a good yield in aquaculture farms in Andhra Pradesh.

This coupled with the detection of Early Mortality Syndrome for shrimps in Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and China will benefit India considerably, he said.

Monsoon set to consolidate in 2 days, hit Maharashtra, Gujarat

The first significant burst of rain about a week after the onset of South-West monsoon is about to happen along the West Coast anytime from now.

This comes on the heels of a 'rogue' low-pressure area over Northwest Arabian Sea (off Oman coast) dying out after landfall, weather models indicated.

SIGNAL CHANGE

The 'low' was generated as part of the monsoon onset phase; it has been appropriating south-westerly flows bound for India's West Coast even as it waxed and waned in strength off Oman coast.

Two days is all what is now needed to make a signal change in monsoon circulation and strength, said Akhilesh Gupta, expert meteorologist and monsoon watcher.

The stage is well set for the consolidation, which would pull in monsoon flows to cover entire peninsula; Gujarat; South Madhya Pradesh; and parts of East and North-East India, he told *Business Line*.

"I do not see any threat or disruption to the flows at least over the next eight to 10 days," he said.

RACE TO NORTH

This period would see the monsoon race to North along the West Coast into Konkan-Mumbai and South Gujarat.

Gupta also saw probability of a 'monsoon vortex' popping up off the Konkan coast, the kind of which had set off the infamous Mumbai floods in 2005.

The upshot is not just a strong monsoon phase along the West Coast but also new-found activity in the Bay of Bengal.

The Bay has been languishing for sometime after Cyclone Mahasen churned it over late last month, delaying the onset of monsoon in the north eastern States.

BAYACTIVITY

But activity is building slowly, which would get a boost with the Arabian Sea arm of the monsoon shifting gears.

Akhilesh Gupta hoped that this would help the formation of the all-important seasonal trough along the plains of North India from south-east to north-west (West Rajasthan to Head Bay of Bengal).

Cool monsoon easterlies find their way into the farming heartland of India through this trough formation.

This would hopefully lift heat wave conditions in East, Central and Northwest India.

Just as the offshore trough along West Coast signals 'active' Arabian Sea arm of monsoon, so does seasonal trough in the plains with respect to Bay of Bengal arm.

Mustard, oil stay weak on slack buying

The downtrend in mustard oil continued on weak demand. Prices in Indore mandis in the past one week have declined by Rs 8 to Rs 637 for 10 kg.

Similarly in Morena, mustard oil declined to Rs 635, down by Rs 5 from the week before. At Neemuch, it fell by Rs 8 to Rs 630 from the past week.

In Rajasthan, however, mustard gained in the local mandis. Prices in Kota and Ganga Nagar reached Rs 640 for 10 kg each, up Rs 5 from the day before.

It also recovered by Rs 5 to reach Rs 650 in Jaipur.

Compared with last week, mustard oil is ruling stable in Kota and Ganga Nagar, while it is down Rs 5 in Jaipur. In Gujarat, mustard oil on Thursday ruled at Rs 620 (down Rs 15 from last week).

Mustard seeds ruled at Rs 4,200-4,300 a quintal (down Rs 200 from last week) on declining buying support, while raida ruled at Rs 3,100-3,200 a quintal (down Rs 100 from last week).

Plant deliveries in mustard seeds for the Jaipur line ruled at Rs 3,510-15 a quintal (up Rs 20 from last week) on improved buying support from millers. Arrival of mustard seeds across the country was recorded at two lakh bags on Thursday with Madhya Pradesh recording an arrival of 18,000 bags, UP at 20,000, Punjab and Haryana at 18,000, Rajasthan at 1.10 lakh, Gujarat at 13,000, and 21,000 bags from the rest of the country.

Direct procurement by dealers supports pepper

Limited trading in pepper and falling arrivals on the India Pepper and Spice Trade Association prolonged the mixed trend in pepper on Thursday. Turnover and net open interest declined sharply, which also reflected on prices. Domestic demand has turned out to be strong as is evident from the fact that inter-State dealers were directly covering from primary markets and farmers in Idukki and Wayanad.

Total arrival at here was 32 tonnes. 33 tonnes of fresh pepper were traded, all afloat. Of this 16 tonnes of the material were from Karnataka. There was good demand for both highest and lowest grade pepper from leading exporters and expert processors, market sources told *Business Line*. June contract increased by Rs 20 to Rs 35,875 a quintal. July contract decreased by Rs 55 to Rs 35,985 and August increased by Rs 234 to Rs 36,155 a quintal. Total open interest was unchanged at 14 tonnes. Total turnover moved up by 1 tonne to 31 tonnes. Spot prices remained unchanged at Rs 33,700 (ungarbled) and Rs 35,200 (MG 1) a quintal on matching demand and supply.

Indian parity in the international market was at \$6,425 a tonne (c&f) for June shipments for Europe and \$6,625 a tonne (c&f) for the US. Vietnam was offering V Asta at \$6,575-6,625 June/July/August shipments while

Lamong Asta was at \$6,600-\$6,625 a tonne August/October shipments. Brazil was offering B Asta at \$6,400 a tonne (fob). The Indian parity continued to decline despite increase in futures prices due to the weakening rupee, they said.

Rice market may have bottomed out

Lack of bulk buying may keep the rice market under pressure, according to traders. Reduced offtake pulled aromatic and non-basmati rice varieties down by Rs 20-100 a quintal on Thursday.

Against all expectations, the rice market dropped on lack of buying interest, said Tara Chand Sharma, proprietor of Tara Chand and Sons.

“It’s unlikely to see a major drop from here and the market may take some time to recover,” he said.

Bulk buyers are keeping out of the market, hoping that prices will fall further. Nor are traders showing much interest in selling at current levels, said Amit Chandna, proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company. He said: “It’s hard to anticipate the market’s future as there has been too much volatility over the last few weeks.” Aromatic rice varieties have dropped by Rs 100-300 a quintal over the last 3 weeks. In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) went further down by Rs 100 and sold at Rs 7,800 a quintal while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted Rs 7,200 a quintal, down by Rs 50.

After ruling flat for almost a month, Pure basmati (raw) dropped by Rs 100 and quoted at Rs 8,900 a quintal. Duplicate basmati (steam) traded Rs 70 down and was at Rs 6,830 a quintal.

In the non-basmati section, Sharbati (Steam) and Sharbati (Sela) went down by Rs 50 each and quoted at Rs 4,850-4,900 and at Rs 4,500 a quintal respectively.

PR varieties went down by Rs 20-50 a quintal. Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,300 a quintal while Permal (sela) went for Rs 2,370 a quintal. PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 3,100-3,170 while PR-11 (Raw) quoted at Rs 2,800 a quintal. PR14 (steam) sold at Rs 3,400 a quintal.

Sugar July futures top Rs 31,000 a quintal

Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale spot market weakened by Rs 5-20 a quintal on Thursday. Continuous selling by producers and expectations of slowing down in retail offtake after June 10 kept naka and mill tender rates unchanged for the third consecutive day. Volumes were routine. Sufficient inventory with traders has kept them away from bulk buying.

In the domestic futures market, July contracts gained further by Rs 16 and topped Rs 3,100, marking a highest point since May 23. The moral is steady in the spot but firm on the futures market, an observer said.

Jagdish Rawal of B. Bhogilal and Co said, “Due to higher production, ample supply in the domestic market, and sufficient inventory with producers, activities in the market have been routine since the start of the year. World sugar prices are ruling lower and not in India’s favour for exports. So, ample supply in domestic markets is putting pressure on prices.”

He further said, “Though the crushing season is over, the prospect for the new season is expected to be positive for markets due to chances of lower sugar production. Till December, the market may see firm sentiment with thin volatility.” Traders believes that carryover stocks for the next season year will be around 90-95 lakh tonnes at the end of September – 13. In the Vashi market, arrivals continued at about 64-65 truckloads (each 100 bags) and local dispatches were around 63-64 truck loads.

On Wednesday evening, about 12-13 mills offered tenders and sold 34,000-35,000 bags to local traders at a steady price range Rs 2,930-2,990 (Rs 2,930-2,990) for S-grade and Rs 3,000-3,090 (Rs 3,000-3,090) for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar July -13 futures was further up by Rs16 to Rs 3,108 (Rs 3,092), August was higher by Rs16 to Rs 3,162 (Rs 3,146) and September gained by Rs14 to Rs 3,210 (Rs 3,196).

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were

(Rs/quintal): S-grade Rs 3,070–3,140 (Rs 3,072– 3,145) and M-grade Rs 3,172-3,321 (Rs 3,172-3,346). Naka delivery rates: S-grade Rs 3,030-3,070 (Rs 3,030-3,070) and M-grade Rs 3,100-3,200 (Rs 3,100-3,200).

Orders for Erode turmeric trickle in

Turmeric prices continued to rule flat on Thursday, though some demand emanated for the root variety turmeric from Delhi buyers.

“Erode traders have received a few orders for the root variety. This has not helped prices. Local buyers are opting for quality turmeric to store them for their future needs. Stockists procured finger and root variety. Virtually no fresh upcountry order was received by traders,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said that as the price of the yellow spice across the country is almost on par, purchases from Andhra Pradesh have come down. Though the prices of both varieties remain unchanged, the hybrid finger variety has fallen by Rs 200 a quintal as medium quality turmeric has begun to arrive.

Totally 3,796 bags of turmeric arrived for sale, of which 55 per cent was sold. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger

variety was sold at Rs 4,119-6,784 a quintal and the root variety at Rs 4,011-5,861 a quintal.

Salem Hybrid Crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,559-7,319 a quintal, root variety at Rs 5,499-6,411. Some 40 per cent of the 830 bags that arrived were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 6,227-7,072, the root variety at Rs 5,189-6,190. Of the 584 bags that arrived, 262 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,380-7,009 and the root variety at Rs 5,017-6,040. Of the 588 bags on offer, 564 found takers.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, finger variety was sold at Rs 5,893-7,212 and root variety at Rs 5,640-6,440. Of 151 bags put up for sale, 143 got sold.

Export demand could lend support to jeera

Jeera futures moved up on Thursday on short covering even as lower arrivals held spot price firm.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera July contracts increased by Rs 112.50 to Rs 13,280 a quintal, with an open interest of 16,815 lots. Jeera August contract gained Rs 115 to Rs 13,560 a quintal, with an open interest of 4,497 lots.

Rise in domestic demand ahead of the festive season and improved export queries have been supporting prices to some extent. Indian production is expected to be 28-30 lakh bags, translating to more than 1.5 lakh tonnes this year. Around 10,000-11,000 bags arrived (55 kg a bag). About the same quantity was traded. Rough quality jeera quoted at Rs 2,035-2,135

for 20 kg, NCDEX quality quoted at Rs 2,265-2,365 for *amaund* of 20 kg at the Unjha market in Gujarat. In Singapore, one per cent Indian jeera went for \$2,450 a tonne f.o.b Mumbai.

According to Kedia Commodity report, anticipation of strong export demand may support jeera futures in the long term. Jeera has been trading withing a range for the past week, except for the last-minute bounce seen on Thursday as traders rushed to cover their short positions. International demand is expected to pick up in the coming days as tension in Syria make India a good destination for Jeera demand. Additionally, a weak rupee may lead to higher quotes. A jump till Rs 13,600-13,650 is likely this week if prices are sustained above the Rs 13,100-mark.

Business Standard

MCX's market share up on volatility in non-agri space

Market share up by 5 percentage points in first 2 months of FY14 on aggressive traders' participation in non-agri commodities

Multi Commodity Exchange's (MCX) market share rose by five percentage points in the first two months of this financial year, owing to aggressive participation by traders in the non-agricultural space, on higher volatility.

The exchange's market share rose to 90.11 per cent, with a record turnover of Rs 25,45,427.94 crore during April-May, against Rs 23,13,925.76 crore in the corresponding period last year.

In April-May, MCX recorded 10 per cent growth in its overall turnover, as traders hedged their positions due to volatile non-agricultural commodity

prices. “Extreme volatility in the non-agri commodities space was the major contributor to the rise in MCX’s turnover. At the same time, prices of agri commodities remained subdued, resulting in lower business on other exchanges,” said Naveen Mathur, associate director, Angel Broking.

MCX’s gain was a loss for other exchanges. National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) saw a sharp fall in its market share in April and May---from a share of 10.41 per cent in the commodity futures turnover in April-May 2012, its market share slid to 6.86 per cent in April-May this year. The cumulative business of the commodity exchanges stood at Rs 28,24,658.79 crore.

NCDEX recorded an overall turnover of Rs 1,93,651.66 crore in April-May, compared with Rs 2,81,917.40 crore in the year-ago period.

With the onset of the southwest monsoon, volatility in agri commodities was likely to remain high in the coming months, and this would drive NCDEX’s business in the near term, said Mathur.

Kishore Narne, associate director, Motilal Oswal, said, “A year ago, a few commodities, including guar and pepper, contributed significantly to the NCDEX turnover. Despite the re-listing of guar, the turnover continues to remain low in this segment. Also, pepper is yet to see the light of the day on national exchanges and most agricultural commodity prices declined sharply last year.”

Market shares of other exchanges, too, fell in the April-May period. From 2.01 per cent in April-May 2012, the Ahmedabad-headquartered National Multi Commodity Exchange's market share fell to 1.76 per cent. Reliance Group-controlled Indian Commodity Exchange also recorded a fall in its market share---from 1.27 per cent to 0.83 per cent. The market share of Kotak-anchored Ace Derivatives & Commodity Exchange fell from 0.86 per cent to 0.44 per cent. Its turnover fell to Rs 12,438.46 crore from Rs 23,312.03 crore in April-May 2012. With the onset of the southwest monsoon, volatility in agri commodities was likely to remain high in the coming months, and this would drive NCDEX's business in the near term, said Mathur.

TURNOVER ON COMMODITY EXCHANGES

Exchange	Sales during April-May (₹crore)	% of total
NCDEX	2,81,917	10.41
	1,93,652	6.86
MCX	23,13,926	85.45
	25,45,428	90.11
NMCE	54,373	2.01
	49,611	1.76
ICEX	34,372	1.27
	23,530	0.83
Ace	23,312	0.86
	12,438	0.44



Source : Exchanges

Meanwhile, market share of other exchanges also fell in April – May period. From the level of 2.01% with a turnover of Rs 54373.26 crore, the Ahmedabad – headquartered National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE) witnessed a sharp fall in its overall contribution to commodity futures business to 1.76% at an accumulative turnover of Rs

49610.74 crore in the same period this year.

Reliance ADAG Group controlled Indian Commodity Exchange (ICEX) also

witnessed a fall in its market share from 1.27% (Rs 34372.34 crore) in April – May 2012 to Rs 0.83% (Rs 23529.99 crore) in the corresponding period this year.

With a staggering 47% decline in turnover, the market share of Kotak anchored Ace Derivatives & Commodity Exchange (Ace) fell from 0.86% to 0.44% in the first two months of the current financial year.

Between April – May 2013, the turnover of Ace fell to Rs 12438.46 crore from the level of Rs 23312.03 crore in the corresponding period last year.

Maha to pay Rs 2,172 cr to draught-hit farmers

The money would be given as compensation at the rate of Rs 3,000 per hectare for food grain crop and Rs 8,000 per hectare for horticulture
Maharashtra government will distribute funds to the tune of Rs 2,172 crore received from the Centre over the last couple of years towards drought mitigation to farmers in cash.

The decision was taken at the cabinet meeting today.

The funds were received in the kharif season in 2011, rabbi in 2011-12 and kharif season in 2012, official sources said.

The money would be given as compensation to the farmers in the drought hit areas at the rate of Rs 3,000 per hectare for food grain crop and Rs 8,000 per hectare for horticulture, sources said.

The cabinet also approved setting up of an agriculture college in Nandurbar to be affiliated to Mahatma Phule Agriculture University.

There will be 60 new posts including that of 39 teaching staff created for the purpose and 80 per cent seats will be reserved for tribal students.

Similarly, the cabinet gave a go-ahead for setting up a family court in Nanded.