

Agricultural activities pick up pace in Belgaum

Sowing completed on 40 p.c. of the target of 6,64,950 ha



*Work in progress: Farmers sowing their land at Benekanhalli village in Belgaum taluk.—
PHOTO: D.B. PATIL*

With the monsoon arriving as expected, agricultural activities in the district have picked up pace.

According to the Agriculture Department here on Tuesday, targets have been set for kharif sowing on 6,64,950 hectares (ha), including 3,53,380 ha of irrigated land and 3,11,570 ha of rain-fed land in the district. Sowing has been completed on 40 per cent of the targeted area.

Sowing is brisk in Athani and Raibag taluks where 60 per cent of the targeted 61,485 ha and 62 per cent of the 51,595 ha respectively have been completed.

Even farmers in Khanapur taluk have covered 61 per cent of the target area of 44,350 ha.

However, sowing in Saundatti taluk is presently limited to areas that received some showers during the first week of June.

As on Monday, sowing in Bailhongal taluk was 29 per cent (target 72,950 ha); Belgaum 27 per cent (52,050 ha); Chikkodi 37 per cent (97,795 ha); Gokak 46 per cent (88,000 ha); Hukkeri 14 per cent (61,400 ha); Ramdurg 29 per cent (46,824 ha); and Saundatti 18 per cent (73,150 ha).

According to the department, a target of 2,33,000 ha has been fixed for the cultivation of cereals such as paddy, jowar, ragi, maize, bajra and minor millets.

Pulses such as toor, horse gram, black gram, green gram, cowpea and avare will be planted on 39,000 ha.

While oilseeds such as groundnut, sesamum, sunflower, castor, niger, mustard and soya bean will be cultivated on 1,35,000 ha; cotton, sugarcane and tobacco will be grown on 2,58,000 ha.

Potato

The Horticulture Department has advised potato growers to complete sowing in June, as late sowing will adversely affect yield.

According to a release issued by department here on Tuesday, the potato variety 'Kufri Jyoti' is popular among growers in Belgaum taluk as it is moderately resistant to early and late blight and yielded within 95 to 100 days.

Agribusiness meet in Bijapur today

Business Line is holding a seminar on agribusiness and commodity price risk management at Neelakanteshwar Mangal Karyalaya on the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee premises at 4 p.m. on Wednesday.

The event has been organised in association with the Bijapur District Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (BDCCIA) to promote agribusiness in the district.

It is part of an ongoing initiative by *Business Line*, jointly with the commodity futures market regulator, Forward Markets Commission (FMC), under the Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs, and the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), India's largest agri-commodity futures exchange.

The seminar intends to create awareness about the need for price risk management. Commodity producers, processors, traders, importers and exporters face price risks in a volatile market. If not managed scientifically, adverse price movements can hurt profits and future growth.

D.S. Guddodgi, BDCCIA president, will preside over the function. M.B. Patil, Minister for Water Resources and district in-charge, and Makbul Bagwan, MLA, will be special guests.

G. Chandrashekhar of *Business Line* will deliver a lecture on 'Commodities as critical driver of India's economic growth'. Deputy General Manager of Canara Bank M.B. Rao will speak on the role of banks in agriculture. Ravindra S. Bijjaragi, president of the Bijapur Merchants' Association, will be present.

Heritage status for Kuttanad agriculture



Paddy workers at work in the fields of Kuttanad. FILE PHOTO

: The United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) formally declared the Kuttanad below sea-level farming system as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) at the International Forum on GIAHS held at Ishikawa Prefecture in Japan from May 29 to June 1.

Sources said agricultural scientist M.S. Swaminathan attended the conference, though an earlier decision was to send a delegation to the Forum. The government is expected to declare the heritage status soon.

The Government of Kerala and the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) had jointly filed an application to the FAO. N. Anil Kumar, head of the Biodiversity Programme of the MSSRF in Wayanad, had presented the case before the GIAHS World Forum in Kanasawa in Japan in December 2011.

The GIAHS official website says "Farmers of Kuttanad have developed and mastered the spectacular technique of below sea-level cultivation over 150 year ago. They made this system unique as it contributes remarkably well to the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services, including several livelihood services for local communities".

The global focus on the Kuttanad unique system of farming will be reinforced by the setting up of proposed international-level institute for below sea-level farming in Kuttanad. Already a Ramsar site, the bio-diversity of Kuttanad will have to be protected by the State government and its people.

Minister promises farmers good seed for kharif

Dispelling apprehensions among farmers about seed shortage and the threat of spurious seeds flooding the markets, Agriculture Minister Kanna Lakshminarayana said effort was being made to ensure that farmers did not suffer in the kharif season.

He released the number of his own mobile phone (98665-22279) as well as two toll-free numbers (1800-425-3536 and 1800-180-1551) and asked farmers facing any problem to call him or report the matter at the helpline. .

Speaking to press persons after a review meeting with officials here on Tuesday, the Minister said excess rainfall had been reported from every district and the Government would do everything to facilitate a bountiful crop.

“Based on seed and fertilizer requirement plans of each district, we have ensured that 80 per cent of the projected quantity is in place. We are looking into complaints received from Adilabad and Medak districts about non-availability of soyabean seed as also some issues pertaining to paddy,” he said

Against an estimated demand of 12.61 lakh quintals of seed, about 10.36 lakh quintals was already in place, compared to 6.87 lakh quintals last kharif. This year the Agriculture Department had prepared a plan to make available 19.50 lakh quintals of different seed for the kharif and rabi on subsidy.

This includes 4.25 lakh quintals of groundnut (against 6 lakh quintals in the seed plan), 95,004 quintals of soyabean (against 1.62 lakh) and 3.63 lakh quintals of paddy (against 2.88 lakh), Mr. Lakshminarayana said and asked Agriculture Commissioner K. Madhusudan Rao to ensure that complaints were acted upon and to monitor action taken.

Farmers worried over poor storage in Periyar dam

PWD engineers wary of announcing date of water release

The farmers of Cumbum Valley remained a disappointed lot as the early onset of monsoon and the showers in Kerala, particularly in Periyar dam site, on Monday failed to change the water level in Periyar dam which remained at 112.7 feet.

Without committing any date for the release of water for the first crop in the double-cropping areas of the valley, the Public Works Department officials asked the farmers to wait.

In the past, Cumbum Valley received water from Periyar dam on June 1 for cultivation. But of late, the poor storage position in the dam has been forcing postponements of release dates. In fact, water was released on June 1 only thrice — in 2001, 2003 and 2008 — in the recent past.

The situation has been worse since 2009.

Water was released between the second and the third weeks of July in 2009, 2010 and 2011, and in July-end in 2012. Periyar dam should have a minimum storage of 2,000 mcft to enable release of water for irrigation. But on Tuesday, the storage was only 1,344 mcft.

The PWD engineers are wary of announcing the date of water release this time. In 2012, after release of water for irrigation, the officials had to ask the farmers to stop agriculture activities within two months in view of monsoon failure. Harvesting could be done only in 5,500 acres, with 40,000 acres lying dry.

Poor storage in Vaigai dam too has been a cause for concern. Farmers say the delay in rainy season will make the situation worse. They want immediate release of water for paddy nurseries, as the delay in raising nurseries will protract all agricultural activities till harvesting.

At present, only 100 cusecs of water has been released from the dam for drinking water supply. To discuss the situation, the PWD officials have convened a meeting with farmers on June 16, says P.Dhanabal, Executive Engineer, Periyar Vaigai Division.

State Seed Farm to be revived

Nursery for coconut and red gram to be established

The State Seed Farm at Pongalur is all set to once again reverberate with activities as the Department of Agriculture plans to set up a nursery for coconut and red gram crops and produce foundation seeds of maize and cholam on its premises.

The State Seed Farm established in 1956.

It is spread over 39.05 acres and was remaining unused for the last few years because of various reasons.

Administrative lapses and insufficient funds to hold back labourers employed for various activities in the farm were some of the reasons.

Joint Director of Agriculture Mohammed Kalimullah Sherif told *The Hindu* that the new initiatives were planned with the objective of bringing back the old glory of the farm.

The proposed coconut nursery will come up on five acres with the seedlings raised to be distributed to the farmers in the district at attractive prices.

“We plan to sell the high variety seedlings at 50 per cent discount. Farmers can buy them for a unit cost of Rs. 7.50,” said Mr. Sherif.

In the case of red gram, almost 30 lakh seedlings will be raised at a time so as to cater to needs for 250 hectares of crop area.

“The red gram variety raised can be transplanted to the farmers’ holdings,” Mr. Sherif said.

As far as maize and cholam, the farm premises will become the hub for production of foundation seeds.

“We are going to lay drip irrigation facilities at the farm and set up model farms for certain crops like oil palm, which will be useful for farmers to learn new technologies,” said Mr. Sherif.

To efficiently coordinate the activities, the department had recently allocated the services of an agriculture officer as the Seed Farm Manager after a long gap.

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- *30 lakh seedlings of reg gram to be raised*
 - *All high variety seedlings to be sold at 50 per cent discount on price to farmers*
-

We will soon return land to farmers: Siddaramaiah

Land notified for formation of Shivaram Karanth Layout

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday hinted that he is in favour of de-notifying certain parcels of land that had been notified for the formation of the Shivaram Karanth Layout.

Speaking at a gathering of farmers and land losers here, Mr. Siddaramaiah said that he has not forgotten that he had opposed acquisition of land for the layout when he was not in power.

“I wouldn’t abandon the cause for which I fought. The government will go by the judicial process. We’re waiting for the land acquisition Act by Union government and we’ll go by it. We will soon give land back to the farmers,” Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said.

He made this statement after the Bangalore North Taluk Land Owners and Revenue Site Owners Welfare Protection Association submitted a memorandum to him. The memorandum said that the BJP government had forcibly notified land belonging to hundreds of farmers for the extension of the layout.

Earlier, senior Congress leader V.S. Ugrappa said, “On October 11, 2010 and November 9, 2011, Congress leaders supported the torchlight protest against the acquisition of land [for the layout]. Mr. Siddaramaiah and I were also part of that protest.” Speaking on behalf of the land losers, he said, “Today, we request the Chief Minister to de-notify the acquired land and return it to the farmers.”

Like most BDA layouts, the Shivram Karanth Layout too has been dogged by controversies. On March 28, 2012, Congress leader K.N. Chakrapani had

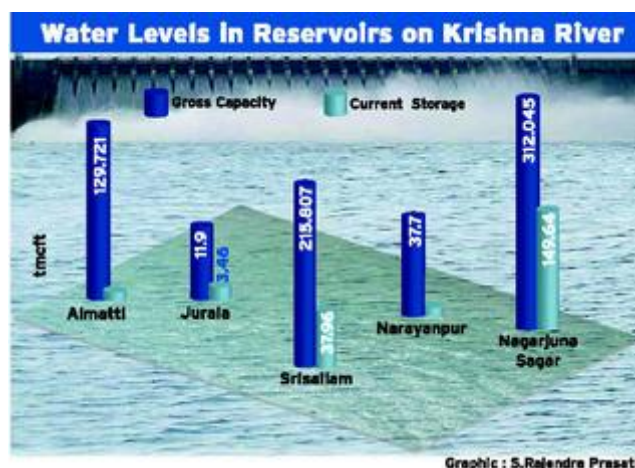
exposed the illegal de-notification of 800 acres of land meant for the layout. His party, which was in opposition, raised a furore in the Assembly forcing then Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda to order a CID probe.

“Nothing seems to have emerged out of the probe. The previous government never even followed up on the promise made by the then Chief Minister. And the CID never registered a case,” Mr. Chakrapani told *The Hindu*.

‘Extend loans to tenant farmers’

Collector Christina Z. Chongthu, addressing the District Consultative Committee meeting here on Tuesday, asked the bankers to extend farm loans to tenant farmers in the current kharif season as the government issued clear orders to sanction interest-free loans to them.

Water-starved farmers pin hopes on monsoon



With the water level touching rock bottom in all the major reservoirs on the Krishna river the Krishna delta farmers wait with bated breath for rains.

Preparing the fields for raising green manure, cotton and paddy, the farmers are hoping that the monsoon would become active soon. As per general practice, water is released to the Krishna delta from Nagarjuna Sagar on June 15. This was not followed during the nine-year TDP rule and the Congress included it in its election manifesto to woo the farmers. But even the Congress was not in a position to release water in accordance with its promise for the past few years. Poor and delayed rains in the Krishna river basin and taking up of works to modernise the irrigation system in the delta were two primary reasons for the Government’s failure to release water in time.

This year too the tentative date for release of water has been fixed as July 15, one month behind. The Krishna delta that has enjoyed irrigation for over 150 years is slowly being converted into a rainfed area. The Alamatti and Narayanapur reservoirs located in Karnataka are literally empty with the Central Water Commission (CMC) Reservoir Storage Monitoring System showing the gross storage in them as zero.

Nearly 130 tmcft is required for filling Alamatti, 38 tmcft for Narayanpur, 8.5 tmcft for Jurala, 178 tmcft for Srisaïlam and 162 tmcft for Nagarjuna Sagar Project, making it 516 tmcft in all. Very heavy precipitation is required in Maharashtra and Karnataka for the filling of these reservoirs.

Nagarjuna Sagar is the only reservoir with just 18 tmcft for irrigation as for department norms. But the level is 520 feet, just 10 feet above the cut-off level of 510 feet. The Andhra Pradesh High Court has ordered that the water level in NSP should never fall below 510 feet to ensure that drinking water was available for Hyderabad city.

Agriculture Department Deputy Director Balu Nayak says farmers in Krishna district were preparing their fields to sow cotton, paddy and sun hemp (green manure). While there was a requirement of 2.41 lakh packets of cotton seed, 4.43 lakh packets (450 gm each) were available.

Lawyer-turned-farmer shows the way

Prasada Varma grows vegetables and pulses organically as inter crops in his mango orchard

For advocate Prasada Varma, cultivating vegetables and raising different varieties of plants is a hobby. He spends some time in his mango garden before attending court.

“As a criminal lawyer, I argued several cases in the last ten years. But, doing farm work and growing organic food gives me a lot of satisfaction. I am raising vegetables and pulses in my five-acre mango garden without using fertilizers and chemicals,” Lakhamraju Durga Shankara Prasada Varma told *The Hindu* .

Mr. Prasada Varma grows brinjal, tomato, leafy vegetables, chilli and pulses like black gram, green gram, red gram and Bengal gram as inter crops in his mango orchard at Kothur-Tadepalli village on Vijayawada’s outskirts. There is great demand for vegetables grown without the use of pesticides, he said.



Prasada Varma showing the brinjals raised through natural farming at Kothur Tadepalli.

Zero budget

“I follow the tips given by natural farming proponent Subash Palekar. ‘Zero Budget Natural Farming’ protects the environment and some useful bacteria in the earth. Farmers should stop using pesticides and chemicals and take up natural farming to protect the endangered species in birds and animals,” he said.

Many people, particularly students, are visiting the garden to purchase vegetables, which are grown without the use of fertilizers and pesticides, said Mr. Prasada Varma, adding that some ryots are arranging separate stalls and selling the products raised through natural farming, which will keep people away from diseases and doctors.

“The leaves that drop from the trees will dry and act as mulching. The process helps to grow micro organisms and earthworms and supply necessary nutrients to the plants,” the advocate explains.

From Bhutan to Kangayam to learn about a cattle breed



Scientists and veterinarians from Bhutan with genetically pure Kangayam cattle during a visit to Kangayam in Tirupur district.

The Kangayam region, home of renowned Kangayam cattle breed, had 14 surprise visitors from Bhutan a few days ago.

Sent by the Bhutanese government, they were livestock scientists and veterinarians from National Biodiversity Centre and from Department of Livestock and Agriculture, both under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests of Royal Government of Bhutan.

Purpose of the visit was to understand the breeding techniques of the elegant native Kangayam cattle and to study more about its dung and urine, which possess immense properties as organic fertiliser, considering that Bhutan is one of the profound propagators of organic farming practices in the world.

For that the entourage visited Senaapathy Kangayam Cattle Research Foundation (SKCRF) in Kangayam, the organisation involved in in-situ conservation and breeding of genetically pure Kangayam cattle for the last six decades and interacted with the experts in the Foundation as well as the local farmers.

Korangadu

The foreign delegation also visited Korangadu, a typical grazing area for the Kangayam cattle, containing 29 types of typical shrubs and trees which is referred by United Nations as “globally important agricultural heritage system”.

K.S.M. Karthikeya, managing trustee of the SKCRF, told *The Hindu* that the visit of the Bhutanese delegation turned to be fruitful for the local Kangayam cattle farmers and breeders too as they came to know more about the Nublang/Thrabum variety (Nublang is the male and Thrabum is female), a genetically unique cattle breed found in Bhutan.

Before leaving, Gonam Tsubsho and Santa Dir Tamang, who led the Bhutanese team, said that a set of farmers would be sent from Bhutan to Kangayam soon so as to get trained on the application of Kangayam cattle's dung and urine in agriculture in appropriate cycles and mixtures.

Pests getting the better of GM crops?



Photo: K.Ananthan

More pest species are becoming resistant to the most popular type of genetically-modified, insect-repellent crops, but not in areas where farmers follow expert advice, a study said on Monday.

Bt corn and Bt cotton are plants that carry a gene to make them exude a bacterium called *Bacillus thuringiensis*, which is toxic to insects.

Researchers analysed studies from eight countries, which included 13 major pest species. Out of these, five were resistant by 2011, compared with only one in 2005, they found.

Of the five species, three were cotton pests and two were corn pests.

How fast is this happening?

The scientists found big differences in the speed at which Bt resistance developed.

In one case, it took just two years for the first signs to emerge; in others, the Bt crops remained as effective in 2011 as they were 15 years earlier.

What made the difference was whether farmers set aside sufficient “refuges” of land for non-BT crops, said the study's authors.

How do refuges help?

The idea behind such refuges comes from evolutionary biology.

The genes that confer resistance are recessive, meaning that insects can survive on Bt plants only if they have two copies of a resistance gene—one from each parent.

Planting refuges near Bt crops reduces the chances of two resistant insects mating and conferring the double gene to their offspring.

In India...

Bt crops in the southwestern United States, where growers work closely with scientists to devise a refuge strategy, do not have a resistance problem.

In India, though, local pink bollworms became resistance within six years, simply because farmers did not follow the guidelines or get this support.

The researchers cautioned that resistance to Bt crops was simply a matter of time, as all pests eventually adapt to the threat they face. But refuges were the key to braking it.

More than a billion acres of land have been planted with Bt crops since the mid-1990s.AFP

WHAT ARE GM CROPS?

Plants whose DNA has been modified to introduce a new trait (like pest-resistance) which does not occur naturally in the species are called GM crops.

For example, Bt-cotton has a portion of DNA inserted into it that produces a toxin that kills several pests.

Fruit exhibition under way in Bellary



Sumangla Gubaji, president of the zilla panchayat (right), at the fruit exhibition which began in Bellary on Tuesday.

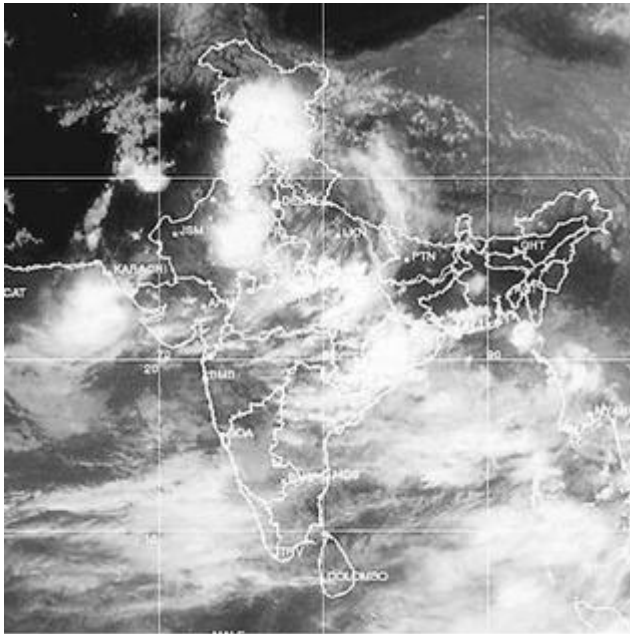
A three-day district-level exhibition-cum-sale of fruit organised by the Department of Horticulture, the Horticulture Producers' Cooperative Marketing and Processing Society (HOPCOMS) and the Karnataka Horticulture Federation was inaugurated by Sumangala Gubaji, president of the zilla panchayat, here on Tuesday.

A variety of fruit such as mango, pomegranate, banana, papaya, fig, guava and orange, and vegetables, are on display. Mango varieties include Alphonso, Neelam and Malgoava, which are not common in the district.

Ms. Gubaji said that such exhibitions should be organised regularly for the benefit of farmers, as they would come to know about different varieties of horticultural crops and the latest technology. H. Mallanagouda, president of the district HOPCOMS; Balchandra Nayak, vice-president; P. Gadeppa and K. Muddunagouda, directors, and Lakshmikant Reddy, president of the district Krishisk Samajwere present.

A few farmers at the venue expressed displeasure over officials not informing all farmers about the exhibition.

Weather



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

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	43	31	0	1
New Delhi (Sfd)	42	29	0	15
Chandigarh	39	32	0	10
Hissar	44	30	0	0
Bhuntar	35	21	5	24
Shimla	26	17	1	36
Jammu	40	34	0	8
Srinagar	34	21	0	13
Amritsar	45	30	0	0
Patiala	42	31	0	1
Jaipur	37	29	0	26
Udaipur	37	26	0	21
Allahabad	41	29	0	22
Lucknow	38	27	0	50
Varanasi	39	30	0	1
Dehradun	35	22	58	71
Agartala	34	25	0	46
Ahmedabad	32	25	4	17
Bangalore	28	21	0	121
Bhubaneshwar	36	26	0	28
Bhopal	37	24	6	46
Chennai	37	27	tr	119
Guwahati	37	27	0	69
Hyderabad	33	23	16	137
Kolkata	34	26	24	27
Mumbai	27	25	103	315
Nagpur	39	26	2	6
Patna	38	29	0	29

Pune	27	23	3	97
Thiruvananthapuram	31	25	tr	101
Imphal	33	21	9	27
Shillong	26	13	0	117

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 abated from west Rajasthan.

RAINFALL: Rain/thundershowers have occurred at most places over Uttarakhand, at a few places over Himachal Pradesh and west Uttar Pradesh and at isolated places over Haryana, Rajasthan and east Uttar Pradesh. Weather was mainly dry over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm are: (2 cm and above) HARYANA: Narnaul 3, HIMACHAL PRADESH: Jogindernagar 9, Dharamsala 7, Sunnibhaji 4, Pandoh 3 and Baijnath 2, EAST RAJASTHAN: Todabhim 5, Ajmer, Puskar, Rajgarh, Viratnagar and Aligarh 3 each and Alwar 2, WEST RAJASTHAN: Balotra 3 and Bautu, Siwan and Nohar 2 each, EAST UTTAR PRADESH: Utarala 5, Lakhimpur Kheri 3 and Bahraich 2, WEST UTTAR PRADESH: Nighasan 17, Moradabad 11, Muhammadi 10, Nagina, Bisauli, Lalitpur and Bilari 5 each, Badaun, Bisalpur and Pureanpur 4 each, Bareilly, Bijnor, Baheri and Pilibhit 3 each and Sahajanpur 2, UTTARAKHAND: Bambasa and landsdown 8 each, Mussoorie and Haldwani 7 each, Dehradun and Barkot 6 each, Roorkee, Pithoragarh and Jakholi 4 each, Kotdwara and Panthnagar 3 each and Champawat, Dunda, Kashipur and Tehri 2 each.

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES: The maximum temperatures rose appreciably in Uttarakhand, rose in west Uttar Pradesh, fell in west Rajasthan and changed little elsewhere. They were appreciably above normal in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab, above normal in Haryana and normal in rest of the region. The highest maximum temperature in the region was 45.2°C recorded at Sriganaganagar (Rajasthan).

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 13th June

2013: Rain/thundershowers would occur at a few places over Uttarakhand. Rain/thundershowers would occur at one or two places over west Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana during next 24 hours and increase thereafter.

Rain/thundershowers would occur at one or two places over rest of the region.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 13th June 2013: Generally cloudy sky. Light rain/thundershowers would occur in some areas. .

hindustantimes

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Cloudy

Wednesday, Jun 12

Max Min

38° | 28°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 44

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:41

Sunset: 06:34

Barometer: 1001

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Thursday, Jun 13

Max Min

37° | 26°

Extended Forecast for a week

**Friday
Jun 14**



37° | 27°

Cloudy

**Saturday
Jun 15**



34° | 27°

Overcast

**Sunday
Jun 16**



36° | 27°

Overcast

**Monday
Jun 17**



37° | 27°

Overcast

**Tuesday
Jun 18**



35° | 27°

Overcast

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Farmers to sell produce across country

NASHIK: The state government is planning to open information offices in five cities in the country with the objective of helping farmers from Maharashtra to sell their agricultural goods in various parts of the country.

The offices will be opened in Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore and Delhi. Another such office will be opened in Dubai as well to help farmers export their agricultural produce.

Speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of a two-day workshop on the empowerment of the Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMCs) of Nashik and Konkan divisions on Tuesday, agriculture and marketing minister [Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil](#) said, "We are focusing on how the state farmers can sell their agricultural goods in various parts of the country. As part of this, we are planning to open information offices in five major cities."

Stating that the APMCs should be farmer-centric, Vikhe-Patil said, "Most of the time, farmers, especially grape, pomegranate and onion growers, are cheated by traders. Hence, the APMCs must announce the list of traders to whom farmers can sell their goods and give license to only those select traders. We will soon make such a policy."

The workshop has been organised by the agriculture and marketing department of the state government. Officials from 58 APMCs - 38 from Nashik division and rest from Konkan division - are participating in the workshop.

In his inaugural speech, Vikhe Patil said, "We are in the process of integrating agriculture and marketing departments of the state government for effective implementation of the government schemes so that farmers can get maximum benefit. Sometimes, farmers are unaware of the facilities being provided at the different facility centres of the government."

APMC secretaries, directors to be made accountable

The state government is planning to make the office-bearers of the APMCs more accountable for financial irregularities. [Agriculture minister](#) Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil said the board of directors and the secretary would be held responsible for financial discipline in the transactions of the APMC. They will also be accountable for any lapse

that caused losses to the APMC, he added.

Vikhe Patil also directed the officials of the Maharashtra State Agriculture Marketing Board to prepare an action plan for boosting the efficiency of the APMCs in the state.

THE  NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

An eco warrior's forest gumption



Shubhendu Sharma's company Afforestt Environmental Conservation Services follows the Dr Akira Miyawaki method with some minor modifications, to suit the Indian environment.

It was a talk that changed a life. In December 2008, Dr Akira Miyawaki came to speak to the staff of Toyota in Bangalore. The 87-year-old is a name to reckon with for his expertise in creating natural forests in degraded environments around the world. According to estimates, Miyawaki has planted four crore trees in his lifetime.

In the audience was a young industrial engineer named Shubhendu Sharma. So inspired was he by Miyawaki's speech that he decided to follow in his footsteps. "I realised that this is something which has to be done all over India," he says. It took Sharma two-and-a-half years to take the plunge, abandoning a brilliant career with the car-maker.

His company Afforestt Environmental Conservation Services follows the Miyawaki method with some minor modifications, to suit the Indian

environment. So when Sharma comes across barren land, one of the first things he does is to take samples of the top soil from one metre deep.

This is taken to a laboratory where tests are carried out to find out the nutrients which are lacking. "If the soil does not have nitrogen I will look for a nutrient which is rich in nitrogen," says Sharma. "This could be chicken manure from a poultry farm."

He also checks the electrical conductivity which is a measure of how much water the soil can hold. Thereafter, a survey is done to identify native trees. Then orders placed with nurseries nearby to grow the saplings. "After that we ensure availability of water," says Sharma. "There has to be a boundary, like a barbed wire fence, on all sides, to prevent the saplings being eaten by cattle or taken away by people."

An earth-mover is used to churn up the soil, and nutrients like herbs and organic manure added. When this is done, the soil becomes very soft. "Once you provide such a soft medium, the penetration becomes very easy," he says. Within three months, the roots reach a depth of three feet. A robust forest is created within three years.

Incidentally, on an acre of land, 6,000 trees can sprout. So far, Afforest has created 17 forests—a total of 36,000 trees—in places like Nainital, Indore, Pune and Bangalore. "I feel a sense of urgency. According to worldwide statistics, every minute, forests the size of 36 football fields are being lost," he says. The maximum damage is being done in Indonesia and Latin America.

Incidentally, his former company, Toyota, sought his help when it wanted to green its Pune plant. "I ended up making a forest of 10,000 trees on the perimeter," he says. On the advantage of having a forest in an urban area, Sharma says, "It adds 30 times more greenery to the area. There is 30 times more carbon dioxide absorption and protection against noise pollution. If we start converting our lawns into forests, we can save a lot of water because forests do not require water after three years. They also retain a lot of water. Every single tree contributes 60,000 gallons of water annually to the water table."

Sharma says that every person has a latent love for nature. "I have seen people get so deeply moved when they plant saplings that they become silent. Many request more opportunities to plant saplings," signs off Sharma.

Business Standard^{beta}

Cardamom up 2.4% on strong demand, limited arrivals

Cardamom for the July contract rose by 1.38%.



[Cardamom prices](#) rose by 2.43% to Rs 715 per kg in futures trade today as speculators created fresh positions, supported by rising export as well as spot demand.

Sentiment also improved on firm demand in the market against restricted arrivals from producing belts.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for the June delivery rose by Rs 17, or 2.43%, to Rs 715 per kg in a business volume of 333 lots.

Cardamom for the July contract rose by Rs 10.10, or 1.38%, to Rs 738.90 per kg in a business volume of 881 lots.

Traders said rising export as well as spot demand against restricted supplies from producing regions mainly led to upsurge in cardamom futures prices.

Crude palm oil remain up by 5.8% on firm spot demand

Palm oil imports by India probably jumped to the highest in three months in May as local supplies fell amid expanding demand..



[Crude palm oil](#) prices rose by Rs 5.80 to Rs 505.50 per 10 kg in futures trade today as speculators created fresh positions driven by pick-up in spot market demand.

Palm oil imports by India, the world's largest buyer, probably jumped to the highest in three months in May as local supplies fell amid expanding demand.

Besides, a firming trend in overseas markets also supported the uptrend.

On the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), crude palm oil for June delivery rose by Rs 5.80, or 1.16%, to Rs 505.50 per 10 kg, with a trading volume of 164 lots.

Similarly, crude palm oil for delivery in July increased by Rs 5.80, or 1.15%, to Rs 506.60 per 10 kg with a business turnover of 317 lots.

Analysts said fresh positions created by speculators amid pick-up in demand in spot markets mainly led to a rise in crude palm oil prices at futures market.

Meanwhile, the oil climbed 0.50% to \$784 a tonne on the [Malaysia Derivatives Exchange](#).

Sugar output could dip 10% in 2013-14 to 22 mt: K V Thomas

Food Minister K V Thomas cites lower cane production in drought-affected areas



Union Food Minister [K.V. Thomas](#) said today [sugar](#) output in the country was projected to drop 10 per cent to 22 million tonnes (mt) in the 2013-14 marketing year starting October, mainly due to lower output in drought-affected states.

Output is likely to be affected, especially in Maharashtra and Karnataka, he added.

Production in the next year would be just enough to meet the annual demand of 22 mt. But there would not be any problem of sugar supply as the country would have good quantity of carryover stock, he said.

Sugar production of India, the world's second largest producer and biggest consumer, in the ongoing 2012-13 marketing year (October-September) is pegged at 24.5 mt and could even reach 25 mt.

The latest estimate on sugar output is almost in line with those of US Department of Agriculture ([USDA](#)), which recently projected an eight per cent fall in India's sugar production at 23.2 million tonnes for 2013-14 marketing year.

According to the USDA, sugar production could decline by 26 per cent in Maharashtra to 5.87 million tonnes and 14 per cent in Karnataka at 2.69 million tonnes in 2013-14.

On increasing import duty on sugar from the current 10 per cent, Thomas said there has been such a demand from the sugar industry but no decision has yet been taken.

Coconut Board bets on neera to avert crisis in sector

Kochi, June 11: The Coconut Development Board is pinning hopes on *neera* production to help revive the coconut sector, which is reeling under severe crisis.

Neera is the sweet, white-coloured sap tapped from the immature inflorescence of coconut. A rich source of sugar, minerals and vitamins, it is seen as a health drink.

However, the inclusion of this zero-alcohol liquid into toddy in the Kerala Abkari Act has led to misconceptions about *neera*, thereby limiting its tapping in the State.

T. K. Jose, Chairman, CDB, stressed the need to take *neera* out of the purview of Abkari Act as it is unfermented sap containing no alcohol. A non-alcoholic drink being included under liquor is factually wrong, injustice and irrational, he said.

The technological advances made in the processing and packaging of *neera* ensure that it remains a zero alcoholic drink, he added.

Emphasising the need to treat *neera* and toddy different drinks, the Board suggested that *neera* tapping and production, processing and packaging be undertaken under the auspices of Federations of Coconut Producers Societies.

He pointed out that Defence Food Research Laboratory and Central Food Technological Research Institute have evolved technologies to preserve *neera* through thermal processing. The Regional Agricultural Research Station at Pilicode under the Kerala Agricultural University has also developed a technology for *neera* preservation and the production of many non-alcoholic value-added products such as soft drinks.

Industry sources said that a committee appointed by the Kerala Government has recommended that *neera* tapping can be allowed but with strict controls. The State Government is yet to take a decision on the report's suggestion.

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Higher raw ginger prices have no impact on dry variety



Kochi, June 11: The sharp rise in raw ginger prices has not impacted the dry ginger market on a couple of major factors and probably for the first time the prices of the former surpassed the latter in many of the domestic markets. First, the raw ginger produced for vegetable market is claimed to be unsuitable for drying/processing into dry ginger and secondly, large quantity of dry ginger is imported from Nigeria at lower prices.

The landed cost of Nigerian ginger works out to Rs 103-105 a kg and it is sold on the domestic market at prices ranging from Rs 105 and Rs 115 whereas the indigenous product is sold at Rs 150-155.

The demand for dry ginger grows at an average rate of five per cent per annum, market sources here told *Business Line*.

Higher prices

The retail price for raw ginger has shot up to Rs 200 a kg in most of the markets in Kerala against Rs 60 just few months ago, a vegetable vendor in Kottayam said.

Ginger seedlings are sold at Rs 300, a farmer said.

Short supply, due to rock bottom prices last year, resulted in people giving up its cultivation which has led to soaring prices.

The total output is only one-third of the total demand.

Daily, 1,500-2,000 tonnes of raw ginger were moved out to various markets in south and western India from the south mainly from Karnataka and Kerala. But, at present, we are only able to send only one-third of it for want of the material.

Cochin ginger

Kochi-based major ginger traders said non-remunerative prices had led to gradual disappearance of cultivation of the well-known, high quality “Cochin Ginger” popular in the international spice markets.

Apart from this variety, a high oil content ginger, popularly known as “Ellakalan”, was also grown in the high ranges in the State's Idukki district.

However, ever since the extraction units in the country had switched over to cheap Nigerian/Ethiopian ginger, cultivation of this variety has slowly vanished, they alleged.

Output

India is the largest producer of ginger in the world with over seven lakh tonnes from an area of 1,42,089 hectares in 2009-10. However, in terms of area Nigeria and China are on top.

The main overseas markets of the commodity are Australia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, UAE, Morocco, Canada, the Netherlands, Japan, the UK and the US. It is estimated that annually around 1.6 million tonnes of ginger is produced all over the world. India and China contribute almost 50 per cent of world ginger production.

Rubber gains further on supply concerns

Kottayam, June 11: Spot rubber made further gains on Tuesday. Supply concerns due to widespread monsoon rains continued to keep sheet rubber firm in the local scene.

The grade improved to Rs 174 from Rs 173.50 and Rs 173 a kg respectively, according to traders and the Rubber Board. Meanwhile, ungraded rubber lost marginally on low demand. The trend was partially mixed.

RSS 4 improved at its June futures to Rs 175.60 (174.97), July to Rs 172.36 (171.02), August to Rs 169.40 (167.73), September to Rs 167.59 (165.07) and October to Rs 165.96 (164.07) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. RSS 3 (spot) flared up to Rs 166.01 (162.30) at Bangkok.

Spot rubber rates (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 174 (173.50); RSS-5: 169 (168); Ungraded: 159 (159.50); ISNR 20: 160 (160) and Latex 60 per cent: 110.50 (109.50).

Bijapur to host commodity seminar today

BUSINESS LINE INITIATIVE



Partnered By



Mumbai, June 11: A Stakeholder Awareness and Education Seminar on agri-business and commodities price risk management will be held at 4 p.m on Wednesday at The Merchants' Association at Shree Neelekanteshwar Mangal Karyalaya, APMC Yard, Bijapur.

Organised by The Hindu Business Line jointly with the commodity futures market regulator – Forward Markets Commission (FMC) – under the Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs, and the country's largest agri-commodity futures exchange National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), the seminar seeks to bring together hedgers and prospective hedgers in the agricultural commodity markets with a view to creating awareness about price risk management.

The event is supported by Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Bijapur District Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (BDCCIA) and The Merchants' Association, Bijapur. Canara Bank is the event's banking partner.

Special guests for the event are M.B. Patil, Minister for Water Resources, Government of Karnataka and Minister in-charge of Bijapur District, and Makbul A. Bagwan, MLA, Bijapur. D.S. Guddodgi, BDCCIA President, will deliver the welcome address and Ravindra S. Bijjaragi, President, The Merchants' Association, will propose a vote of thanks.

Experts will make presentations on various topics of relevance to market participants. These include 'Commodities as critical driver of India's economic growth' by G. Chandrashekhar, The Hindu Business Line; and 'Benefits of commodity futures trading and exchange perspective and price risk management' by a representative of NCDEX. B.M. Rao, DGM, Canara Bank, will speak on role of banks in agriculture.

For registration please contact: Nagaraj Phatak (The Hindu) on 9731400992.

Selling pressure may pound chana

Indore, June 11: Weak demand and increased arrivals have pulled down chana prices in local mandis in the past one week by Rs 150-175 a quintal. On Tuesday, chana (kanta) was quoted at Rs 3,175-3,200, while chana (desi) ruled at Rs 3,000-3,050 a quintal, chana (mausmi) at Rs 3,300, Kabuli Bitki ruled at Rs 2,900-3,000, chana (vishal) at Rs 2,700-2,800, while kaktu ruled at Rs 2,700-2,800.

Bumper production, weak demand from 'besan' manufacturers and rise in selling pressure by stockists have caused a downtrend in its prices and in the past one-and-a-half months, its prices have declined by about Rs 750. Its prices are further expected to decline by about Rs 100-200 with selling pressure out manoeuvring the demand.

According to traders, any major rise in chana prices is expected to be from August as demand for chana will likely to increase with the onset of festive season.

Chana dal (average) was quoted at Rs 3,775-3,800, chana dal (medium) at Rs 3,875-3,900, while chana dal (bold) ruled at Rs 4,050-75.

Dollar chana ruled flat at Rs 3,800-4,000 on subdued demand and increased arrivals. In container, dollar chana declined by Rs 100 on weak export demand with prices of (42/44 count) was quoted at Rs 5,225-50; (44/46) count Rs 5,000-25; 46/48 count Rs 4,800-25; while 58/60 count ruled at Rs 3,750-75.

AP to challenge court order on cottonseed royalty fee

Hyderabad, June 11: The Andhra Pradesh Government will challenge the High Court's order, permitting seed companies to increase the trait value component by Rs 60-100 in the overall cottonseed price.

The Government is planning to move the High Court bench to appeal against the order that did not agree with the State's decision to pare the trait value to Rs 50, while fixing the seed price. This is Rs 100 lower than what the firms pay to Mahyco-Monsanto to acquire the biotechnology to pep up their cottonseed hybrids with the strength to ward off bollworms.

While giving the interim order on Friday, the court, however, had asked the Seedsmen Association and a few other cottonseed firms to deposit the

additional amount thus charged in an escrow account. It had asked them to open the account after consulting the State Government within a week.

Acting on the court order, the seed industry wrote a letter to the Government to discuss the issue of escrow account. “We have received a reply from them saying that they are going to challenge the interim order,” an industry representative told *Business Line*. A top executive of the Agriculture Ministry confirmed the move.

Impact

The industry is not so hopeful about a hike in the seed price. Though it initially hoped to get a benefit of Rs 100, the State’s move had dampened their spirits.

“All the packets are out in the market to catch the season. If they go to the court again, it will take some more time to resolve the issue and the season might be over,” he said.

Almost 99 per cent of the cottonseed sown in the country is Bollgard-II, which is being sold at Rs 930 in the State. While the demand for the present season is pegged at four crore packets (of 450 gm each) in the country, the Andhra Pradesh Government pegged the demand for the season at 1.31 crore packets.

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NMCE launches modified black pepper contract

Kochi, June 11: The National Multi Commodity Exchange has launched modified black pepper contract by launching six contracts from July to December. In this new specification, the black pepper has to be free from mineral oil.

Central Warehousing Corporation will accept the delivery at designated centres of Kottayam, Kozhikode, Vandanmedu, Thrissur with Kochi as the basis centre. At Vandanmedu, the Spices Board’s facilities can be used for grading black pepper from un-garbled to MG1.

NMCE will form an independent team of quality experts consisting of quality expert from Spices Board, officer from regional office of CWC and NMCE representative for periodical check of the quality of black pepper in the exchange certified warehouses.

Better prices seen driving soyabean acreage this kharif

May continue to displace cotton in parts of Maharashtra, M.P.



Higher planting: Soyabean plants stand before harvest on a farm. Prices are ruling higher than last year's levels and could prompt the farmers to bring in more area under the oilseed.

New Delhi, June 11: Planting of soyabean is set to begin in the key producing State of Madhya Pradesh over the next couple of days as monsoon advances further into parts of central India.

Relatively higher realisations from the oilseed may prompt farmers to plant more of soyabean, which may continue to displace cotton in some parts of Maharashtra and groundnut in Gujarat, trade sources said.

acreage

“We expect a five to seven per cent increase in soyabean area and it could even go up further,” said Rajesh Agarwal, spokesperson for the Indore-based Soyabean Processors Association of India (SOPA).

Last year, despite the delayed and erratic monsoon, soyabean was planted on a record 10.6 million hectares (mh) – a marginal increase over previous year's 10.3 mh.

The output, according to the latest or third advance estimates, stood at 14.14 million tonnes (mt), up from 12.21 mt in the previous year.

“This year, we expect the total soyabean acreage to be between 11 mh and 11.2 mh,” Agarwal said.

better prices

Soyabean prices are currently ruling at Rs 3,800 a quintal, much higher than the support price of Rs 2,250. Though the prices have come down a tad in

recent weeks, they are still relatively high and could prompt the farmers to bring in more area under the oilseed.

bright outlook

Agarwal expects the additional soyabean acreage to come mainly from Maharashtra and southern States such as Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

“Prospects are very bright for soyabean and if the rains arrive on time as predicted, there will be some increase in acreage,” said S.K. Srivastava, Director at the Indore-based Directorate of Soyabean Research (formerly National Research Centre for Soyabean).

As the area has almost saturated in Madhya Pradesh, the additional acreage will come from cotton growing areas in Vidarbha and groundnut in Gujarat, Srivastava said, adding that “the economics will eventually drive the acreage”.

Madhya Pradesh plans

Soyabean acreage in Madhya Pradesh stood at 6.158 mh in kharif 2012 and the output was estimated at 7.54 mt.

In the current year, the MP Government is targeting an acreage of 6.23 mh and an output of 8.72 mt.

The State Government plans to boost the productivity of the oilseed by up to 25 per cent through propagation of better agronomic practices, balanced use of fertiliser and increased use of bio-fertilisers.

The soyabean yield/hectare in Madhya Pradesh stood at 1,224 kg and the State Agriculture Department is aiming to increase it to 1,400 kg this year.

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Edible oils extend gains on high currency volatility



Mumbai/Rajkot, June 11: Continued weakness in value of domestic currency against the US dollar supported the edible oils prices to extend further gains. As rupee touched an all-time low 58.96 intraday, it forced local refineries to raise the edible oils rates at Rs 10-17 for 10 kg but improved resale selling pressure curbed prices, said sources.

In Mumbai, palmolein and cotton refined oils were up by Rs 11 each for 10 kg. About 200-250 tonnes palmolein were resale traded at Rs 530-532.

Soyabean arrivals were 90,000- 95,000 bags including 40,000 from Madhya Pradesh at Rs 3,800-3,810 ex-mandi and Rs 3,890-3,890 for plant delivery. Mustard seed arrivals were 1.80-1.85 lakh bags at Rs 3,140-3,625.

Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 555, super palmolein Rs 588 and super deluxe Rs 608. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 555, soyabean refined oil Rs 675 and sunflower refined oil Rs 785. Gokul quoted palmolein at Rs 540 for weekly delivery and Rs 547 for June. In Rajkot, groundnut oil went up by Rs 40 to Rs 1,630 (Rs 1,590) for *telia* tin and by Rs 25 to Rs 1,050 for loose (10 kg).

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil July futures ended lower at Rs 694.50 (Rs 695.65); August higher at Rs 689.85 (Rs 688.90) and September at Rs 682.45 (Rs 678.25).

Malaysia BMD crude palm oil July contracts settled at MYR 2,450 (MYR 2,446); August MYR 2,456 (MYR 2,453); and September MYR 2,456 (MYR 2,451) a tonne.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg): Groundnut oil 1,050 (1,050); soya refined oil 670 (661); sunflower exp. ref. 685 (675); sunflower ref. 780 (765); rapeseed ref. oil 700 (698); rapeseed expeller ref. 670 (668); cottonseed ref. oil 658 (647) and palmolein 535 (524).

Vikram Global Commodities, Chennai, quoted Malaysian super palmolein at Rs 580 ex-Chennai for delivery 15 days.

Cotton oil: Prices moved up on the back of higher price of cotton seeds for crushing. Cotton oil wash marginally gained by Rs 2 to Rs 642-645 for 10 kg while cotton oil new tin 15 kg was traded higher by Rs 1,230-1,240. Groundnut arrivals were 600 bags in Rajkot, 13,000 bags in Gondal and 250 bags in Jamnagar. HPS Saurashtra bold 50-60 was offered at Rs 74,000 a tonne and Rajasthan origin 50-60 count at 74,000 (ex-mill). TN origin 80-90 count HPS was offered at Rs 68,000 (Chennai and Mumbai port delivery).

Sugar volumes up on improved buying interest



Mumbai, June 11: Sugar prices remained in a rangebound volatility on Tuesday.

Routine demand and ample supply from mills kept overall activities limited but volume continues to be higher due to improved buying interest of stockists ahead of festivals starting from next month.

Spot prices gained by Rs 20 for S-grade upper –lower side while M-grade was up by Rs 5. Naka and mill tender rates were unchanged.

Domestic futures prices were firm. Sentiment was steady, said sources.

In the Vashi wholesale sugar market, arrivals were about 65-66 truck loads (each of 100 bags) but local dispatches were restricted to about 62-63 truck loads.

Vashi market currently carries an inventory of about 120-125 truck loads.

On Monday, about 18-20 mills sold 75,000-78,000 bags to local traders at Rs 2,940-3,000 (Rs 2,940-Rs 3,000) for S-grade and Rs 3,000-3,100 (Rs 3,000- 3,100) for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar July futures were up by Rs 21 to Rs 3,127 (Rs 3,106); August was higher by Rs 16 to Rs 3,176 (Rs 3,160) and September was at Rs 3,214 (Rs 3,203).

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 3,052-3,140 (Rs 3,076-3,121) and M-grade Rs 3,194-3,331 (Rs 3,192-3,331).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs 3,020-3,080 (Rs 3,020-3,080) and M-grade Rs 3,130-3,200 (Rs 3,130-3,200).

Turmeric falls on poor upcountry demand



Erode, June 11: Due to poor upcountry demand, turmeric prices decreased. “There is no fresh orders from North India. But they have procured stocks at Warrangal as the yellow spice is available Rs 1,000 a quintal less than Erode turmeric.

Similarly at Nizamabad also the commodity was sold at Rs 6,000. This is also lower than Erode stock. Even the hybrid variety was sold less than Erode price”, said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the price decreased by Rs 100. Of the arrival of 3,000 bags, only 1,400 were sold.

He said only in the last week of July, the exporters will get fresh orders from North India.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,399-6,511; the root variety Rs 4,119-5,869.

Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,906-7,659; root variety Rs 5,665-6,317.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,399-6,509; the root variety Rs 5,131-5,891. Of 371 bags, 343 were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,229-6,674, the root variety Rs 4,889-5,881. Of 711 bags, 674 were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,380-6,706, the root variety Rs 5,107-5,906.

All the 48 bags were sold.

Low stocks push up wheat, flour prices



Karnal, June 11: Wheat in the physical market is likely to remain positive while futures market may see a range-bound movement in the coming days, said trade sources.

Around 1,000 bags of wheat arrived at the Karnal Grain Market Terminal on Tuesday and procurement was done by the private traders.

In the physical market, dara wheat witnessed a good rally and went up by Rs 40 to Rs 1,525-1,530 a quintal. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,525 while delivery at the chakki was at Rs 1,530. Desi wheat was sold at Rs 2,300. Radhey Sham, a trade expert, told *Business Line* that low availability of stocks coupled with good domestic demand pushed dara and flour prices upwards.

Dara wheat prices have increased by Rs 130 a quintal over the last few weeks. Traders expect that prices may increase further this week, he added. On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, wheat for June contracts decreased by Rs 8 at 1,616 with an open interest of 4,950 lots. July contracts went down by Re 1 at Rs 1,636. Spot prices went up by Rs 25 at Rs 1,488.75. Wheat flour went up by Rs 70 at Rs 1,770. Chokar ruled flat at Rs 1,250-1,275.

Pepper rules firm on limited activity



Kochi, June 11: Pepper futures on Tuesday ruled steady on the IPSTA platform on limited activities while the spot continued to move up on tight supply amid good buying support. All the active contracts remained unchanged.

Exporters were buying high range pepper at Rs 350 a kg and high bulk density Rajkumari (Idukki) pepper at Rs 352.

Because of rains, the arrivals dropped further and today only seven tonnes arrived and were traded at Rs 349-350. June, July and August contracts remained unchanged at Rs 35,905, Rs 35,801 and Rs 36,225 respectively.

Total open interest declined by two tonnes to 27 tonnes. Total turnover decreased by two tonnes to 38 tonnes. Spot prices went up by Rs 100 at Rs 34,100 (ungarbled) and Rs 35,600 (MG 1) a quintal on good demand amid tight supply.

Indian parity in the international market has dropped to \$6,250 a tonne (f.o.b.) for June shipments for Europe and about \$6,400 a tonne (f.o.b.) for the US.

The Indian parity continued to decline due to weakening of the rupee against the dollar, they said.

Corporate buying lifts copra



Kochi, June 11: The continuing spell of rain has further spurred the prices of coconut oil in Kerala and Tamil Nadu this week.

Prices in Kerala registered an increase of Rs 2.50 a kg touching Rs 66.50 (Rs 64) whereas in Tamil Nadu, the increase was Re 1 at Rs 62 (Rs 61).

Copra prices also firmed up at Rs 4,800 a quintal in Kerala and Tamil Nadu this week. Last week, the prices were Rs 4,600 and Rs 4,450 respectively.

Prakash B. Rao, Vice-President, Cochin Oil Merchants Association (COMA), attributed widespread rains especially in the producing centres for the price rise.

This coupled with the active participation of major corporates in the market also boosted the price. This is likely to sustain for the time being and expected to firm up the market sentiments.

According to Rao, traders have sufficient stocks and are holding it on anticipation of further rally in prices.

Expressing concern over the delay in starting copra procurement by the Government-designated agencies, he said otherwise the market may witness a downward trend. He said that the other edible oils such as palm oil and palm kernel oil prices also started picking up at Rs 55 and Rs 56 respectively on account of the currency fluctuations.

Thalath Mahamood, former President, COMA, cited the decision of major corporates to enter the market for copra purchase as the reason for the price increase.

Bharat N. Khona, former Board Member, COMA, attributes monsoon progress, low copra arrivals and a sudden local demand in Kerala as the reason to improve the market sentiments, thereby, resulting in a price hike.

However the corporate demand is yet to pick up irrespective of these market sentiments, he said.

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