

## **Crops uprooted ahead of harvest**

The district administration has swung into action, opening 18 relief camps to accommodate 1,359 people from various parts of the district as rains continued to inflict serious damage to houses and standing crops in Koathamangalam, Moovattupuzha, Perumbavoor on the eastern parts of the district and in Paravoor taluk in the coastal area.

Loss of acreage under crops and number of houses damaged continued to rise. The district administration said on Thursday that 326 houses were been damaged partially and 16 fully in the rains during June. The estimated loss was more than Rs. 47 lakh on account of damaged houses. The loss on account of loss of crops in 68 hectares was Rs. 5.37 crore, said a press release issued by the district administration.

Two relief camps were opened on Thursday. A senior revenue department official said 12 families were shifted to the relief camp at the SN School, Thiruvaniyoor in Kanayannur taluk. Preliminary aid for these families and those in the other relief camps had been distributed and free rations had been ensured. The families received Rs. 2,000 each as well as some clothing and food items.

Fifteen people from six families have been relocated in the other relief camp that opened on Thursday at Manakkappady, Karimaloor in Paravoor taluk, said a statement issued by the district administration here. Paravoor taluk has the most number — 1,160 people from 248 families — in the relief camps.

Relief camps have been opened at Karimaloor Pattikasamajam, Chalakka Government LP School and Vayalkkara SNDP Mandiram in Paravoor taluk to accommodate 191 people from 42 families. Relief camps at the Puthenvelikkara LP School and the North Kuthiathode LP School have 151 people from 39 families.

Eight families from Eloor and 211 people from 40 families from the Edamulam colony in Kadungalloor have taken refuge in the relief camps opened in these villages. A total of 202 people have been shifted to the Kuttikkattukara LP School; 25 people have taken shelter at the Binanipuram LP School. All these areas come under the Paravoor taluk.

A total of 36 people from nine people have been shifted to relief camps in Aluva taluk. Kanayannur taluk has 73 people from 18 families in relief camps, said the press release.

Meanwhile, Edakattuvayal has taken a blow from the rains with extensive damage to houses and standing crops being reported from several parts of the panchayat even as people are complaining about inadequate compensation and farmers are ruing their failure to insure plantations.

Joy Jacob, a farmer, said a portion of his house had been damaged as a rubber tree fell on it in the heavy winds Wednesday night. He also lost nearly 500 banana plants and most of the 1,000 rubber trees on his plot.

C. J. Sabu, a part-time farmer has a small plot in the panchayat. He said he had sustained losses of around Rs. 25,000 because of damage to banana plants.

Karimalayil Mathai, a veteran farmer in the panachayat known for extensive cultivation of traditional vegetables and bananas, rued the fact that he had

not insured his crops. He complained that insurance money for the crops that were damaged last year had not been received.

Mr. Mathai said farmers had timed their crops to hit the market ahead of the Onam season, when demand for vegetables and bananas peak. However, the heavy winds on Wednesday night and rains ruined the prospects.

### On a jute trail



Being a helping handVazeer with some of the women who works with them; a few different jute products made by Zothina and VazeerPhotos: NAGARA GOPAL

“I was a techie and jute was the last thing on my mind. I didn’t feel the need to know and associate myself with jute. Then suddenly out of no where I came across something made of jute and I started seeing its utility and use. This was the time when I was becoming aware about the environment and the impact it has on us and how we as human beings are pushing the limits with the environment,” recalls Vazeer.

This time around Vazeer was also a part of a workshop which dealt with jute. This was the baby step for him and despite being a novice, with the support of his wife, he quit his cushy job and decided to get on with jute

'full-time'. His wife then slowly introduced the idea of running a small industry which made jute bags.

"A thought backed by my wife's support became a goal and then eventually that was to become the source of our family earning. So came into being 'Facco di carta' meaning jute bags. And my wife runs the show. I was so involved and amazed at the things which can be done out of jute and protect the environment at the same time by getting rid of plastic carry bags and shopping bags that I was almost very sure this project will succeed. So I quit my job and stayed in a place called Behala in West Bengal to learn more about jute. In a place like West Bengal where jute is sufficiently available people do everything with jute. The rice bags are made of jute, the shopping bags and even the floor mats in front of the house are made with jute," recalls Vazeer.

Vazeer says at Behala he saw the plight of the people where they work for Rs. 20 and live on one meal a day. "It wasn't the best of the situations but what they made was probably something very unique and beautiful," says Vazeer.

After returning from WB, Vazeer purchased two special machines to stitch jute and the two began their journey on a modest note. "We started with small bags and thank God for my wife being a fabric designer she was able to put more thoughts and ideas into the bags and stitching styles. Initially we felt at sea, unsure of how things would shape up. But gradually it seemed that people do use a lot of jute bags in the city to carry their lunch boxes to work, also as hand bags," says Vazeer.

But Vazeer's goal was not just to make jute items and sell, while learning about jute in WB, he also learned how the material is an alternative source

of income for those involved in agricultural activities. He observed that men and women were involved in the jute industry to make extra money when they were not working in the fields.

“I wanted to do the same for poor farmers. I couldn’t give them anything for free because I wasn’t making surplus, I was barely breaking even and whatever little we would make, went in procuring the materials or updating ourselves. So it took us numerous visits and talks with the rural people in districts to assure them of something different. This is a cottage industry product and even one person working extra with us meant surplus end products which only two of us cannot do. After those numerous visits we had a few people from the rural areas agreeing to do what we were doing. The moment one person agrees, it is nice to see that they are able to get a few more,” Vazeer.

But Vazeer says, this is not a flourishing industry. The struggles they have are manifold and while the ideas are lapped up in other countries, Indians are yet to appreciate the value of the material.

Vazeer and his wife operate from a small place at Neredmet, in Secunderabad and though they haven’t been able to make big money they are happy that they are able to provide a new skill to people who cannot do anything but work hard for a living.

Now Zothina and Vazeer constantly work on items that will make jute more attractive and in the process they have even come up with decoratives for the Christmas tree, jewellery “and everything that one can think of. Our shopping bags come with a message of the environment and Zothina is constantly sitting and making dummies which can be transformed into jute items for use

## **Government told to consider farmers' plea to sell 'Jyothi' variety of paddy**

Why is the State government not buying the "Jyothi" variety of paddy grown by farmers in from Kollegal and Chamarajanagar area, when it intended to distribute rice to the poor at Re. 1 per kg?

The Karnataka High Court posed this question while hearing a public interest litigation petition filed by farmer Nanjundaswamy and others from Kollegal seeking a direction to the government to consider their representation for buying this variety of paddy.

A Division Bench comprising Justice K.L. Manjunath and Justice L. Narayanaswamy, which took notice of the fact that about 7,000 quintals of this variety of paddy was lying with the farmers for a year now, wondered why the government could not buy this paddy when it was procuring rice from other States to distribute it among the poor at Re. 1 a kg under a new scheme.

The petitioners claimed that the State government procured their produce between 2008 and 2011 after fixing minimum support price and was giving it to the Food Corporation of India (FCI) which supplied it to Kerala.

However, since 2012 the Government stopped procurement as there was no demand from FCI.

Then, the Bench asked the government to consider their representation for fixing minimum support price and purchasing their paddy within four weeks.

## **To take up kuruvai or samba is the question**

*Veterans in the field of agriculture favour samba crop*

: With copious showers in Coorg and Kabini catchment area, farmers of the Cauvery delta districts of Thanjavur and Tiruvarur are happy. After water

was released from both Kabini and Krishnarajasagar, it has reached Hogenekkal and Public Works Department engineers hope that inflow into the Mettur dam will soon increase heavily.

The dam received 5,881 cusecs at 4.00 p.m. on Thursday. The level stood at 17.45 ft and the storage was 33.93 thousand million cubic feet. The inflow may increase enormously in the coming days, PWD engineers said.

As water could not be released from Mettur dam on the traditional date of June 12 this year also due to shortage of water, the State government has announced a special kuruvai package and is trying to cover the kuruvai area with underground water and pumpsets. As per the special package, 12-hour three-phase supply is given for agriculture pumpsets from this month. It will continue till September. It is given in six-plus-six hour phases. The government has also announced providing pipes for carrying water from ponds and rivers, wherever it is available for paddyfields, free of cost. Under these circumstances, rain in Coorg and heavy inflows into Kabini and Krishnarajasagar reservoirs has given hopes for the farmers in these two districts.

But, Agriculture Department officials and PWD engineers feel that farmers should go for samba cultivation and skip kuruvai in canal-irrigated areas this year.

The Mettur dam is almost empty and it has to fill up with inflows from Karnataka.

“Only when the level touches 90 ft, can we think of opening the dam. But it can happen as the inflow will rise enormously with copious showers in Coorg” said PWD engineers. Farmers are divided on taking up kuruvai and samba cultivations this year.

While some favour taking up kuruvai cultivation late if the water position improves in the dam, others feel that going directly for samba is better.

“We need 134 tmc of water for kuruvai from June to September and this year this quantum may not be available even if storage improves. Hence it is advisable to go for samba so that water flow could be sustained and given.

For samba, the northeast monsoon (November-December) will supplement the Mettur dam water and hence can be easily taken” said many farmers. S. Ranganathan, secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, said caution should be exercised and samba can be the best bet. Farmers, by and large, welcomed the petition filed by the Tamil Nadu government in the Supreme Court, praying for direction to the Central government to form the Cauvery Management Board and for release of 10 tmc ft of water due for June.

### **Banks asked not to involve in distraint activities against farmers**

#### *Farmers’ grievances meeting held*



Making a point:K.M. Ramagoundar, General Secretary, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, addressing the farmers’ grievances day meet at the collectorate on Thursday. —Photo: N. Bashkaran



Collector T.P. Rajesh asked cooperative and nationalised banks not to involve in distraint activities for failure to pay crop loans by farmers.

Presiding over the farmers' grievances meeting at the collectorate here on Thursday, he said the State Government has sanctioned Rs. 1.5 lakh each to small farmers to dig farm ponds.

Interested farmers could approach the district administration for digging ponds under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). He said that ahead of the monsoon season, the district administration would take action to evict encroachments on the water bodies. Special teams would be formed to check the encroachments across the district. Encroachments identified would be evicted within 15 days.

The Collector said that as many as ten teams in all the panchayat unions, headed by an officer in the rank of Deputy Collector, have been formed to check implementation of MGNREGS.

A few farmers alleged that some persons with no lands availed themselves of subsidy for cultivating green fodder extended by the Animal Husbandry Department.

The Collector promised that action would be initiated against those bogus beneficiaries if names are provided with evidence. Few farmers complained that though they were affected due to water scarcity for irrigation, the crop loss in their land were not taken into account by the officials concerned.

C. Prakasam, District Revenue Officer, and representatives of farmers' association, K.M. Ramagoundar, Logabiram among others participated. A medical camp was also held during the meeting

## **Farmer's suicide takes political turn**

Suicide by a woman farmer here earlier this week took a political turn as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday alleged that the farmer chose to take the extreme step after poor harvest from her paddy field reportedly due to use of substandard seed distributed by the government agencies.

In a release issued here, Cuttack Sadar BJP leader Dillip Mallick alleged that one Susanti Sahu (38) of Bentakar in Baialish Mouza here committed suicide consuming insecticide on Monday. "After a visit to the village by a team of BJP leaders, it was ascertained that Susanti was depressed after she learnt about the poor harvest from their field.

## **Gomukhi dam hopeful of bountiful monsoon**

*Kallakurichi farmers pin hope on this year's monsoon to fill up the dam*



Bone-dry: Successive monsoon failures have dried up Gomukhi Dam in Villupuram district.— Photo: T. Singaravelou

A vast stretch of fallow land without a puddle of water anywhere is not the view of a reservoir. But the Gomukhi Dam, situated on the foothills of the Kalvarayan Hills, looks that now.

The reservoir is almost bone dry owing to failure of subsequent monsoons. The sluices of the dam were last opened in October 2012 for irrigation. Soon after the irrigation season was over, the dam dried up. During normal

monsoons, the dam, with a maximum storage level of 46 feet, caters to an ayacut of 10,800 acres spread over 47 villages in Kallakurichi block. Through the new channel it feeds 5,000 acres and through the old channel 5,800 acres.

The farmers in the region have been raising water-intensive crops such as paddy and sugarcane for generations. But now the dry dam is causing consternation among them as it has scorched the prospects of raising such commercial crops. The sight of the empty dam portends a bleak future for the farming community here.

Mathur A. Ramasamy, former president of the Gomukhi Dam Farmers' Association, told *TheHindu* that he has never seen the dam in such a pitiable condition for decades. It used to be a perennial source of irrigation for the farmers in the area, he said.

Therefore, the farmers confidently grew two paddy crops and sugarcane. The permanent storage also replenished the groundwater enabling the farmers in far off places to go for cultivation by tapping the well water.

"Now, Kallakurichi block has turned out to be a rain deficit area. Therefore, the area under cultivation has shrunk drastically. Only those endowed with scanty subsurface water manage to raise one paddy crop in their partial landholdings," Mr. Ramasamy said.

Therefore, the earning capacity of the farmers had declined steeply. The farm labourers too were rendered jobless forcing them to take up odd works such as construction work. Some of the agricultural labourers scraped through by enrolling in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme, he said. Recalling that the dam was inaugurated by then Chief Minister M. Bakthvatchalam on November 23, 1965, Mr.

Ramasamy said there was a heavy downpour that breached part of the bund causing flooding soon after the dam was dedicated to the people. Now, the dam resembled a piece of vacant land.

Official sources said the critical water situation in the region had gravely affected the crop prospects. The farmers are hoping that the current monsoon would bring adequate rain to fill up the dam so that they could resume normal agricultural operations.

### **Farmers seek drought relief**



Members of the Bharathiya Kisan Sangam staging a protest in front of the Head Post Office in Tiruchi on Thursday.—Photo: A.Muralitharan

The members of the Bharathiya Kisan Sangam, Tamil Nadu, staged a demonstration in front of the Head Post Office here on Thursday morning demanding compensation from the Centre for farmers who had suffered huge losses because of drought.

P. Ayyakkannu, vice-president of the sangam, said Tamil Nadu had witnessed unprecedented drought but the Centre had been neglecting the State. Although it had been more than a month that a Central team visited Tamil Nadu to study the situation, funds had not been released to the State — either as drought relief or as disaster relief.

While the Centre had sanctioned Rs.2,900 crore to some other States for drought in a few districts, “ it has been betraying Tamil Nadu,” he alleged.

Hence, he pleaded that Tamil Nadu should be given Rs. 31,000 crore as drought relief for the 31 districts in the State.

While the salary for legislators had gone up manifold since 1970, the price of agricultural produce had not been raised commensurate with the expenditure incurred in farming.

The contribution of farmers to the welfare of society had not been recognised at all. Hence, all the crop loans obtained by the agriculturists from various banks, including nationalised banks, should be written off.

Besides, he pleaded for linking the Ganga with the Cauvery to tackle the drinking water scarcity in the south and also to avert the disaster in the north due to floods

### **Retailers seek changes in multi-brand FDI norms**

Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma, on Thursday, conveyed to the domestic and global multi-brand retail investors that effective steps would be taken by the government at the earliest to address their concerns on investment and sourcing issues, and clarifications on the guidelines would be given shortly as demands were made to tweak the rules on the line of 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) in single brand retail.

Talking to newsmen after a round-table meeting with the CEOs of leading domestic and global retail chains, Mr. Sharma said the objective of the policy was to encourage investments, job creation, benefits for the farmers and the consumers. "We have sufficient space to address the concerns raised by the investors and bring more clarity. The government will take an early and appropriate view, and issue the necessary guidelines in this regard," he said. Mr. Sharma said he had convened this meeting to have

an in-depth view of the issues faced by the multi-brand retail chains who were already operating in India and also the potential investors to not only give a clarity on the policy but also remove hurdles, if any, in the path of inflow of FDI in this sector.

On their part, the retailers demanded that foreign firms be allowed to put only 50 per cent of the first tranche of investment in back-end infrastructure. The industry was of the view that issues such as 30 per cent sourcing should be 'preferable' and not 'mandatory' as outlined in the policy as it was not possible to buy everything from the SMEs, Bharti Enterprises Vice-Chairman Rajan Bharti Mittal said.

Tata Services resident director Bharat Wakhlu said Mr. Sharma had assured the industry that he would come back on the points raised by it. Reliance Retail President Biju Kurien said it was important that clarifications were issued fast as it would generate greater interest among international retailers to invest in this country.

## TRAIL OF DESTRUCTION

*Rain and wind blew away the roof atop their heads, snatched the morsel and sank the crops they had hoped to harvest in a month. It has left them dependent on government doles.. H. Vibhu captured the ongoing saga of destruction.*



## Rain gives a boost to kharif operations

*The government is hopeful of achieving the target of 225 lakh metric tonnes of foodgrains production set for this year*



Expecting a bountiful: A woman tilling her field near Haliya in Nalgonda district.- Photo: Singam Venkataramana

The kharif season has begun on a bright note in the State with sowings in 9.5 lakh hectares -- double the area covered by this time last monsoon. This is 11 per cent of the season's normal extent of 81 lakh hectares.

### **Widespread rains**

The doubling of the area became possible due to widespread and timely rains. Andhra Pradesh, as a whole, has received till now an excess rainfall of 17 per cent that has benefited all districts except Nellore, Visakhapatnam and Anantapur which, however, suffered a shortfall of 34 per cent, 24 per cent and 22 per cent respectively.

The government is hopeful of achieving the target of 225 lakh metric tonnes of foodgrains production set for this year, if the present trend of monsoon which remained active over the State for most part of the 20-day period so far, continues.

The target set last year was 218 lakh metric tonnes, but this could be achieved only to the extent of 179 lakh m tonnes due to monsoon failure midway.

The monsoon that ensured an even distribution of moderate to heavy rains, however, has not brought any significant inflows to any of the rivers in the State from their upper reaches -- the Krishna, Godavari, Penna and Vamsadhara.

### **Fallout**

The fallout was that the canals of the major reservoirs and dams could not be opened to serve crops.

One exception is the Tungabhadra dam which began to get inflows (6,970 cusecs on Monday). It would be a long way before any inflows could be received into Jurala, Srisailem and Nagarjunasagar, all existing across the Krishna.

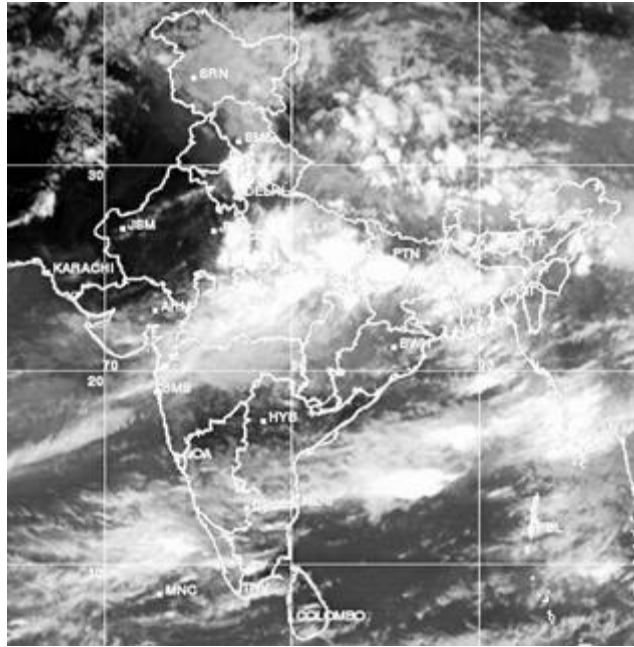
Almatti dam in Karnataka has a long gap to fill, as it has only 29 tmcft storage now, compared to full capacity of 129 tmcft. It was getting 27,000 cusecs on Monday.

Similarly, Godavari-based projects have not received inflows except Sriramsagar (only 232 cusecs).

The scenario relating to the projects suggest that the season in their ayacuts is likely to start only in July or August depending on receipt of inflows.



## weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on June 27.

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	36	29	0	154
New Delhi (Sfd)	35	29	0	113
Chandigarh	34	27	3	196
Hissar	39	29	0	101
Bhuntar	32	20	16	139
Shimla	24	16	22	279
Jammu	34	22	20	76
Srinagar	33	19	8	40
Amritsar	37	21	5	136
Patiala	34	29	3	123
Jaipur	38	24	13	163
Udaipur	32	26	0	93

Allahabad	35	26	40	116
Lucknow	35	24	7	171
Varanasi	34	27	6	78
Dehradun	30	24	7	838
Agartala	31	26	6	361
Ahmedabad	34	26	0	103
Bangalore	28	21	15	154
Bhubaneswar	34	26	0	292
Bhopal	26	22	108	443
Chennai	38	28	0	123
Guwahati	32	25	4	289
Hyderabad	30	23	10	203
Kolkata	33	26	6	315
Mumbai	28	26	7	938
Nagpur	28	24	2	456
Patna	31	25	22	65
Pune	28	23	1	290
Thiruvananthapuram	28	23	2	399
Imphal	32	23	3	104
Shillong	24	18	47	356

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

Southwest Monsoon has been active in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and east Uttar Pradesh. The axis of Monsoon trough at MSL

passes through Sriganaganagar, Gurgaon, Kanpur, centre of IOPAR and thence southeast wards.

**RAINFALL:** Rain/thundershowers have occurred at many places over Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, east Rajasthan and east Uttar Pradesh, at a few places over west Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and at isolated places over Haryana and Punjab. Weather was mainly dry over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm are: (3 cm and above) HIMACHAL PRADESH: Dharamsala 5, Arki and Bhoranj 3 each, JAMMU AND KASHMIR: Katra 6, Rajouri 4 and Samba 3, PUNJAB : Gurdaspur 5, Phangota and R.S.Dam.Site 3 each, EAST RAJASTHAN: Kota 6, Sawai Madhopur 5, EAST UTTAR PRADESH: (5 cm and above) Salon 12, Naraine and Mirzapur 11 each, Banda 10, Fatehpur, Kunda, Dalmau and Ghorawal 9 each, Koraon and Patti 8 each, Handia, Fatehgarh and Purwa 7 each, Phoolpur, Kanpur Airport and Pratapgarh 6 each and HarDOI, Churk, Allahabad Sadar, Turtipar, Salempur, Rae Bareilly and Dudhi 5 each, WEST UTTAR PRADESH: Rath 9, Pawayan 7, Baheri 6, Karhal and Bisalpur 5 each, Auraiya, Bareilly, Etawah, Orai, Chillaghat, Lalitpur and Mahoba 4 each and Hamirpur 3 and UTTARAKHAND: Chamoli and Bambasa 3 each.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 29th June 2013:** Rain/thundershowers would occur at many places over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and east Rajasthan. Rain/thundershowers would occur at a few places over Haryana and Punjab and at one or two places over west Rajasthan.

**HEAVY RAINFALL WARNING:** Heavy to very heavy rainfall may occur at one or two places over Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh

and Heavy rainfall may occur at one or two places over Jammu and Kashmir and east Rajasthan during next 48 hours.

**FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 29th June 2013:** Generally cloudy sky. Rain/thundershowers may occur in some areas.

## Food business licensing procedures go online

*All firms must get licence before February 4, 2014*



New process: A view of the page in the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India website that food business operators must use to apply online for licence. —PHOTO: S. SIVA SARAVANAN

The Tamil Nadu Food Safety Department has taken online the licensing procedures for food businesses in the State. The food business operators can now apply or renew licences without ever having to come to any office of the Food Safety Department.

Official sources told *The Hindu* here on Thursday that Tamil Nadu was the ninth State in the country to take the licensing procedures online.

This step had been mandated by the Food Safety and Standards Act. The online facility was launched by State Food Safety Commissioner Kumar Jayanth in Chennai on Tuesday.

Sources said that the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, a statutory body that implemented the Act, would conduct training programmes for food business operators on the new procedure. Officials here said that they would assist the applicants during the initial period with the online application process.

Licence was mandatory for all food business concerns with an annual turnover of above Rs. 12 lakh. At present, 2,156 firms in Coimbatore had obtained licences, an official said, adding that the total number of food business firms here would be around 8,500. All the firms must get licences before February 4, 2014.

According to the officials, Form B application, submitted for getting the licence, would no longer be issued in paper form and could be obtained only online.

Applicants would have to go to the website [www.fssai.gov.in](http://www.fssai.gov.in) and choose the option 'Food Licensing & Registration System (FLRS)' to commence the process. Once the Form B was submitted, the applicants would have to remit the requisite fee to the treasury, scan the receipts and other relevant documents such as identify proofs and upload them to the website.

However, a senior official said that for this step alone, applicants also have option of sending the documents and receipt through registered post to the Designated Officer of Tamil Nadu Food Safety and Drug Administration Department (Food Safety Wing) in the district.

After this, Food Safety Officers will conduct the physical inspection and would submit their reports online. All the 32 Food Safety Officers in Coimbatore district had been issued with an internet-enabled tablet for the purpose.

Once their reports were scrutinised by the Designated Officer concerned, the applicant would be issued Form C or the licence.

The applicant could track the status of the application during any stage of the process through an Application Reference Number. If any clarifications were needed, the applicant would get an email automatically.

### **'Farm ponds to augment water sources'**

A total of 2,500 farm ponds will be dug in the district to augment groundwater sources. Planting of saplings on the tank bunds and strengthening of tank bunds are the other works to be taken up to prevent soil erosion, according to Collector N.Venkatachalam.

Addressing a special meeting on rainwater harvesting at Collectorate on Thursday, he said the groundwater table had gone too low in different parts of the district. For example, the groundwater level had gone down to 1,121 feet in Thoppampatti union. Recharging of groundwater was need of the hour, he also noted.

Besides establishing farm ponds, construction of check dams, percolation ponds and rural tanks, and desilting of supply channels were in full swing, he pointed out. Preliminary work on construction of tanks had already started, he added.

Construction of rainwater harvesting structures in commercial and residential buildings in both urban and rural areas was mandatory.

Representatives of local bodies should take all efforts to set up rainwater harvesting structures, he advised.



# THE TIMES OF INDIA

## **Minimum support price of kharif crops raised by CCEA**

As sowing picks up across the country, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Thursday approved increasing the minimum support prices (MSP) of kharif crops for 2013-14 crop year (July-June). The increase is expected to boost the sowing of paddy, cotton, oilseeds like soybean, millets and pulses crop in the country. On the basis of recommendations given by Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), the MSP is increased. However, the agriculture ministry changed the proposal for bajra and tur/arhar.

"The agriculture minister's recommendation has been accepted by the CCEA," said a person in the know after the CCEA meeting got over. The MSP of paddy, which constitutes more than 60% of the kharif crop in the country, has seen a Rs 60 increase at Rs 1,310 a quintal for common variety while for grade there has been a Rs 65 increase to Rs 1,345 per quintal.

Cotton prices for medium staple variety increased by Rs 100 to Rs 3,700 per quintal and Rs 4,000 per quintal for long staple. Cotton sowing has been covered on 28.13 lakh hectares across the Northern and Western belt of the country. Currently prices in the spot market were ruling at 4,100 a quintal. Till June 21, kharif sowing picked up with the early onset of monsoon, crossing 109.07 lakh hectares, with maximum area under sugarcane at 44.55 lakh hectares, followed by cotton at 28.13 lakh hectares and paddy at 16.40 lakh hectares. The MSP of bajra as per agriculture ministry has been kept at Rs 1,250 per quintal, an

increase of Rs 75 per quintal from the 2012-13 seasons. CACP had recommended no increase in the MSP for bajra this year. Similarly, tur/arhar MSP price has been kept at 4,300, an increase of 450 from the original recommendation of CACP of Rs 3,850 a quintal. This is expected to lead to an increase in pulses acreage. Sources said that with imported pulses prices cheaper than the domestic price, there could be a likely 10% import duty imposed on the pulses to help the domestic farmers. Moong prices saw a rise of 100 to touch Rs 4,500 per quintal. Urad prices remain similar to the previous year with the MSP at Rs 4,300 per quintal. The increase has come at a time when annual rate of inflation based on wholesale price index fell to 43-month low at 4.7%. The MSP of yellow soyabean has seen a hike of Rs 320 to Rs 2,560 a quintal and for soyabean (black) to Rs 2,500 a quintal a rise of Rs 300. The MSP of sesamum have been increased by Rs 300 per quintal over the last year's MSPs and have been fixed at Rs 4,500 per quintal. However, MSP of sunflower seed and nigerseed have been kept unchanged at Rs 3,700 per quintal and Rs 3,500 per quintal.

### **Central Rice Research Institute sows seeds of hope**

As shortage of seeds is a major problem for farmers in the state, the Central Rice Research Institute (CRRI) here has started a novel initiative to help them. The CRRI has introduced a project on seed production among small farmers in Cuttack region to make good quality seeds available for farming.

Under the project, the CRRI has been encouraging farmers to take up seed production and become self-reliant. The institute provides quality seeds of



rice varieties, developed by it, impart training and technical help to the farmers to produce quality seeds and also procures the seeds from them. The seeds are then branded as CRRI's and sold to farmers on demand. The project started last year on a pilot basis on 30 acre of farmland in Mahanga and it yielded overwhelming results.

"The project was a major success last year as a result this time more farmers have expressed their interest to produce seeds. This year, we have identified at least 80 acre in Mahanga for the project," said director of CRRI Trilochan Mohapatra. He further added the project envisages strengthening seed production and processing infrastructure in the state and making farmers self-sufficient.

"Selling seeds is not our job as the institute focuses on research work. But we have started the project to create awareness among the farmers that seed production will not only ensure a better income for them but also reduce their dependence on government or private organisations to get quality seeds," added Mohapatra.

The CRRI officials said rice varieties like Puja, Sarala and Naveen, which have been developed by the institute specially for Odisha, will be grown on the 80 acre. Farmers can produce 20 to 25 quintal of seeds from each acre. The institute also has plans to impart training on quality seed production and maintaining good standard to the farmers across the state.

### **Government likely to review FDI norms in multi-brand retail sector**

The government on Thursday promised foreign retailers that it will review the stringent investment conditions imposed on foreign investment in the multi-brand retail sector after its much-hyped opening up of sector failed to

enthuse them.

"The objective of the policy is to encourage investments, job creation, benefit to the farmers and benefit to the consumers. Therefore, we have sufficient space to address those concerns, bring in the clarity, and an early and appropriate view will be taken so that the guidelines can accordingly be given out," Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma told reporters after a two-hour long meeting with the retail industry.

Representatives of both foreign and domestic retail companies, including Walmart, Tesco, Metro, Carrefour, Bharti, Aditya Birla Group, Tatas, Reliance and Pantaloon met Sharma.

"The industry raised two-three major points like the 30% sourcing issue. We have said that it should be 'preferable' and not 'mandatory'. Industry cannot buy everything from SMEs," Bharti Enterprises Vice Chairman and Managing Director Rajan Bharti Mittal told reporter after the meeting.

The government has already made this concession to foreign investors in single-brand retail segment. Foreign retailers also want agro-sourcing to be a part of the minimum 30% sourcing.

Retailers sought a relaxation in the rules for investment in the back-end infrastructure. The current policy says that foreign retailer must bring at least \$100 million investment and 50% of this must go into new back-end infrastructure.

We should be asked to invest only 50% of the first tranche of the investment in back-end infrastructure and the condition should not apply to every tranche of future investment," Mittal said.

The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), the administrative department for FDI policy, may approach the Cabinet with

changes in policy.

The DIPP has already begun consultations on the recommendations of the high-level inter-ministerial panel headed by secretary, department of economic affairs Arvind Mayaram that has suggested lifting the FDI cap in multi-brand retail sector to 74%.

The UPA government had thrown open the sector in September last year, a decision that generated much heat and a subsequent vote in parliament on the issue saw Mamta Banerjee's Trinamool Congress walk out of the UPA. The government allowed foreign investment up to 51% in multi-brand retail, but imposed many conditions on such investment to make the decision palatable. Officials of Tesco, Auchan, Walmart and Carrefour had met Sharma earlier and the government even came out with a clarification earlier this month to clarify the policy, but that has not helped.

"The purpose of this meeting has been to interact with the multi brand retailers, potential investors, some of them have established presence in India, in the back end or setting up sourcing establishments," Sharma said. Carrefour India Managing Director (MD) Jean Noel, Landmark MD Vinai Singh, and Aditya Birla Retail CFO Atul Daga attended the meeting. Walmart's Asia president and CEO, Scott Price had a separate closed door meeting with Sharma in the morning on the same issue.

CII delegation led by Bharat Wakhlu, resident director, Tata Services **BSE - 0.59 %**, pitched for treating multi brand retail trade (MBRT) in food and non-food categories differently. The industry body also suggested foreign institutional investment and private equity be treated differently from strategic investments.

Reliance Retail President Biju Kurien said: "If clarifications are received quickly then there will certainly be greater interest amongst international retailers to invest in this country."

### **Worry for farmers, relief for Parvathy Puthanar**

The commissioning of sewage treatment plant has come a good news for the city residents and for Parvathy Puthanar. But a section of farmers are worried over the new developments. A major source of fodder for the cattle farmers and city zoo, the sewage farm has been engaged in natural treatment of sewage for nearly 70 years.

The sewage farm has been functioning since 1945 in over 102 acres. As per the project, the sewage water collected from pumping stations such as Kuriathy, Inchakkal, Kannamoola and Pattoor reach spilling chamber in Muthathara. Sewage is distributed to the farm through various channels. The fodder farm absorbs nutrients from the water, thus treat it naturally. Since 1962, Dairy Development Farm has been in charge of fodder farm. According to K T Saronjini, director, DDF, the farm has shrunken to 40 acres from the original 102 acres, which was given to them on lease. "A lot of farmers, farms and even city zoo have been depending on the farm for fodder. The government has agreed to allot 40 acres for us to grow the fodder. We will have a training centre and food farm in the 40-acre space," she said. Saronjini, who recalled seeing an old map of the site, said that the farm has various levels of mud pipes to distribute sewage. "It was a real marvel. There was various levels of mud pipes, which have gravel in between," she said.

The KWA decided to introduce modern plant after the capacity of sewage exceeded the normal level and it began overflowing to Parvathy Puthanar.

### **Water flow into dams in Cauvery basin increases**

It's raining good news for Karnataka.

Floodwater continues to flow out of Kabini dam near Mysore even as the inflow is likely to go up, given the torrential rainfall in its catchment area in Waynad district (Kerala).

Water resources department is maintaining the water level at 2,280 feet, releasing 35,000 cusecs, the inflow the dam logged on Thursday. "We are not impounding the water anymore and releasing the quantity what we are getting," sources told TOI. The water outflow is likely to go up later as the inflow is steadily increasing, they added.

The outflow was stepped up from 30,000 to 40,000 cusecs late on Wednesday night, but was cut down by 5,000 cusecs following decrease in the inflow. Sources stated that water may be released to the right bank and left bank canals from next week. The water released from the dam has reached Biligundlu located on Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border.

Following an increase outflow, the bridge connecting HD Kote to N Begur downstream of the dam has been submerged. Traffic has also been diverted.

Meanwhile, water flow into three major reservoirs in Cauvery basin has increased in the last 24 hours. It has doubled at Hemavathy dam near Hassan and the level has jumped by 5 feet since Wednesday. The dam is receiving 23,701 cusecs and the level is 2,883.50 feet (as against the maximum of 2,922 feet). It has 11.091 tmcft gross storage.

The water level at Harangi has reached 2,849.34 feet - it is 10 feet below its maximum level of 2,859 feet. The inflow has jumped from 8,670 to 13,831 cusecs. Given the inflow, the dam is likely to be filled to the brim in a week and the floodwater from upstream Harangi will help boost storage at KRS dam, which has seen its level increasing steadily following incessant rainfall in Cauvery river catchment areas in Kodagu district.

The water level in the reservoir has increased by 21 feet since June 12.

The water level, which was stood at 62.92 feet on June 12, has shot up to 85.90 feet on Thursday (the dam is receiving 21,147 cusecs). "The storage will increase steadily at least for a week as it has rained torrentially in Kodagu," a senior official of the water resources department said. This comes amidst farmers' demand to release water to canals from KRS reservoir for agriculture activities.

### **Noted geneticist Sushil Kumar Sinha dies**

Noted geneticist and plant breeder Sushil Kumar Sinha died in Bhubaneswar last week. He was 84. Sinha has left behind his wife, three sons and two daughters.

The famous Sinha theory of 'Ratio of Mitosis and Meiosis, which is referred in cytology books, germinated from his doctoral work.

During his PhD on breeding of maize from Indiana University, Bloomington, USA, in 1960, he worked with distinguished cytogeneticist Barbara McClintock who later won Nobel Prize for physiology and medicine. Sinha was also associated with eminent evolutionary biologist J B S Haldane. Sinha published books on diabetes, numerical taxonomy, plant breeding

and genetics.

Sinha taught at Ravenshaw College as well as Paralakhemundi College for a brief period before going to the US for higher studies. On return, he worked at Central Potato Research Institute, Shimla, for a short period. He then joined the Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) as a professor and went on to become dean of College of Agriculture, OUAT.

### **Binge on monsoon veggies to flay the flu**

Think twice before you reach out for that crispy golden bhajiya or dosa or those oil-soaked samosas served with chutney this monsoon. They may be the best possible munchies to wash down with a steaming cup of tea on a rainy day, but deep-fried snacks and the irresistible chutneys they come with are bad news, say doctors here, who have witnessed a spurt of gastroenteric diseases in the past two weeks.

"The problem with the monsoon is that people crave for fried snacks, and tend to eat from roadside stalls. While food eaten hot may be safe, the pre-prepared chutneys, sauces and chat items are the main culprits that cause water-borne diseases like stomach-flu," Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition assistant lecturer Sujeetha Thali said.

"While foodstuffs like vadas and bhajiyas are eaten during the monsoons to feel warm, people often find that they suffer from indigestion and gain weight during the rainy months. Bingeing on calorie-rich foods during months of limited physical activity, when you are stuck indoors, is a bad idea," sports medicine nutritionist Ryan Fernando said.

"The monsoon months also coincide with the fishing ban, and Goans lose out on heart-healthy omega-3 acids and essential proteins from fish. Chicken or egg whites should be eaten instead of red meat, which can clog up your arteries," Fernando added.

"With the rainy season comes an infestation of houseflies, which are a major cause for the spread of gastrointestinal diseases. We see patients coming in with vomiting and diarrhea on a daily basis, and quite a few cases of viral hepatitis A and C, commonly called jaundice. Colitis, characterized by inflammation of the colon, is another common problem during the rains," Margao-based consultant gastroenterologist Dr Jose Filipe Alvares said. "We advise patients to eat fresh, hot food, and always wash fruits and vegetables to be consumed raw," he added.

The best defense against tummy upsets and flu attacks during the rains, is to switch to a diet of traditional Goan monsoon vegetables, stressed botanist and biodiversity expert Nandkumar Kamat. For youngsters brought up on a staple diet of fast food-be it trans fats-rich burgers and fries or of the Indian-tandoori-Chinese genre-a meal of wild flowers and obscure marshwaterweeds might be unpalatable, but Kamat calls them the 'green wealth' of Goa's red soil.

"Our monsoon vegetables are rich in phytochemicals (chemical compounds occurring naturally in plants) and have probiotic and antibiotic properties to boost the immune system. It is important to know how to clean and cook these veggies properly, especially the tender bamboo shoots that are chock-full of cellulose, vitamins and trace elements," Kamat said and listed out other monsoon must-haves like 'Ankur', white and red amaranthus, and 'Dudhi' , the edible flowers of the red pumpkin plant.



Sadly enough, Goan restaurants, even those that cater to the locals, are not inclined to include monsoon veggies in their menus. "Our menu remains the same throughout the year, and the demand is only for the popular dishes. Palak paneer is the only dish we serve with a leafy vegetable; nobody wants to come to a restaurant to eat some vague vegetables," a restaurateur who runs a well-frequented family joint in Panaji told TOI.



#### **PAU invites applications for farmer awards**

The Directorate of Extension Education of the Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) has invited applications from Punjab farmers for the "Innovative Farmer Awards 2013," to be bestowed during PAU Kisan Mela, scheduled to be held in September 2013 on the main campus. Giving details, Dr M S Gill, Director of Extension Education, informed that the S Dalip Singh Dhaliwal Memorial Award, carrying a cash prize of Rs 5,000 will be given to self-cultivating farmers while the Parwasi Bharti Award, carrying a cash prize of Rs 8,000, will be presented to agriculturists engaged in diversified farming systems. The Sardarni Jagbir Kaur Grewal Memorial Innovative Woman Farmer Award, carrying a cash prize of Rs 3,100 will be conferred on the farm women involved in agriculture and allied enterprises in Punjab. The last date for the receipt of the applications is July 30.

## Weather-Chennai

### Today's Weather



Cloudy

**Friday, Jun 28**

Max Min

36° | 26°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:45

Humidity: 79

Sunset: 06:38

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1007

### Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

**Saturday, Jun 29**

Max Min

38° | 29°

### Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Jun 30

Jul 1

Jul 2

Jul 3

Jul 4



38° | 29°

39° | 28°

38° | 28°

37° | 29°

38° | 29°

Cloudy

Overcast

Overcast

Overcast

Overcast

### Airport Weather

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:25

Humidity: 89

Sunset: 07:22

Wind: normal

Barometer: 999

# THE HINDU Business Line

## Inter-cropping of pepper mooted to overcome land shortage



Some of the concerns in the world pepper market include sustaining adequate supplies, expanding the demand and moderating the price volatility.

In a panel discussion at the International Pepper Conclave here on Tuesday, experts from different producing countries including India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka highlighted the need to encourage inter-cropping to overcome land constraints and diversion to other crops even, while raising yields through improved agronomic practices.

Long gestation period, uncertainty of vine quality and lack of interest in the younger generation to stay on farms were cited as challenges.

As for India, even as rubber has increasingly replaced pepper in the traditional growing areas of Kerala, Karnataka, growers were favouring inter-cropping.

On the demand side, origins are seriously looking at a host of initiatives to expand consumption.

These include newer application of pepper for medicinal purposes, servicing the domestic food sector more intensely and exploring new export markets such as eastern Europe.

From an Indian perspective, domestic demand is rising in any case because of rising purchasing power among the burgeoning middle class.

Demand from newly set up processing industries for value-addition was also mentioned as a possibility. Earlier, Ramesh Abhishek, Chairman, Forward Markets Commission, the commodity futures market regulator in India, said in a statement to the participants of the seminar that the commission has taken a number of proactive steps to ensure market integrity.

Arguing that proper alignment of the futures market with the physical market was essential, he remarked that an integrated system of spot and futures market enhances the credibility of price discovery process and in turn attracts more participants in the futures market, particularly hedgers.

To reduce the instances of unauthorised trade and empower the client with information, a system of sending e-mail alerts and SMSes to all the clients by close of business everyday regarding trades executed in the their account has been put in place, he said.

### **Israeli crop protection firm to double capacity of Indian unit**

Israeli crop protection products maker Makhteshim-Agan is finalising plans to double the capacity of its Indian manufacturing facility at Dahej, expecting a growth in domestic demand for herbicide, fungicide and weedicide in the coming years.

The plant, which has a capacity of 1.20 lakh litres a day, will be adding another 1.20 lakh litres a day capacity, half of which will be for production of herbicide products.

“We will invest about Rs 110 crore for the doubling of capacity,” Josef Goldshmidt, President and CEO of Makhteshim Agan India, told press persons.

The Israeli Ambassador to India Alon Ushpiz visited the facility.

The company, which has a global portfolio of 75 different products, has introduced special products suited for Indian agro-climate.

It also operates an R&D facility in Hyderabad, its only research facility outside Israel.

It has a network of 38 warehouses across the country for effective delivery of its products to farmers.

Goldshmidt said the research facility was also being ramped up, with plans to bring out two to three new products every year, both for the Indian and global markets.

It recently launched an insecticide product ‘plethora’ and a herbicide product ‘agil’, which are also being marketed overseas.

Ushpiz said under a three-year Indo-Israel cooperation programme in agriculture, Israel was to supply farm technologies to set up 29 centres of excellence in different States. “These centres are crop- and State-specific, such as the centre of excellence for mangoes in Maharashtra. The idea is to demonstrate to the farmers how technology could increase farm output and help them transfer it to their farms,” the Israeli Ambassador said.

By the end of this year, 15 centres are expected to become operational, with the rest to come up in the next couple of years.

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## **Board for compulsory auctioning of tea**

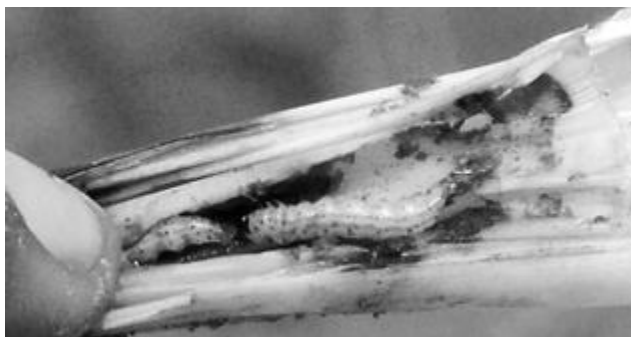
Tea Board has decided to force bought leaf factories to sell at least 70 per cent of their production through public auction.

“A decision to this effect was taken at the Board meeting held at Valparai on Tuesday. This is a welcome move as it will help the correct price recovery for small growers who supply their green leaf as raw material to the factories. Some factories sell their teas in private but the growers are unable to discover the actual realisation”, Tea Board Vice-Chairman Koshy Baby told *Business Line*.

“The Board is working on implementing the order of the Madras High Court for fixing the price for the green leaf. It had engaged Indian Institute of Plantation Management to study the methodology. Based on this, it has been decided to share prices in the ratio of 65 per cent for growers and 35 per cent for factories. For this, price transparency is essential and the insistence of compulsory auctioning helps,” Tea Board member S. Ramu said.

“Tea Board Chairman will convene a separate meeting with the Board members from the South to discuss specific matters relating to the region. This is based on our submission and we expect it to happen within a month,” Koshy Baby added.

## MNCs going all out to push new-gen pesticides



The new generation pesticides being marketed by multinationals in India have three broad characteristics, captured in DuPont's highly successful Rynaxypyr insect control molecule sold as 'Coragen' suspension concentrate and 'Ferterra' granular formulation.

### **Spraying less**

The first is that, being based on completely new chemistry and novel modes of action, they require low levels of spraying.

Sugarcane farmers, for instance, need to use just 150 ml of Coragen formulation that is diluted in 400 litres of water for every acre. For paddy, soyabean, tomato, arhar or chilli, the requirement is even lower at 60 ml/acre.

Compared this with old generation pesticides such as chlorpyrifos, monocrotophos or endosulfan, where farmers typically had to spray anywhere from 250 ml to one litre, leaving behind higher traces of residues in the soil and up the food chain.

Reduced spraying, in turn, is the product of new research. Anthranilic diamides – the class of insecticide molecules to which Rynaxypyr or Bayer's Flubendiamide ('Fame') belong – basically work on the 'ryanodine

receptors' in insect pests that regulate the release of stored calcium critical for their muscle function.

By binding to these receptors, the diamide compounds cause uncontrolled release and depletion of calcium, leading to muscle paralysis and ultimately the death of the insects.

### **Patent protected**

That links up with the second characteristic of the new generation molecules, which are far more efficient and, hence, require lower amount of application for controlling target pests: They are mostly patented.

DuPont's patent for Rynaxypyr was filed in August 2002, which confers it protection for at least another nine years. This is unlike an earlier molecule, Indoxacarb, which DuPont had launched in India in 2000 under the 'Avaunt' brand.

Since Indoxacarb was patented in 1992 and India did not recognise any product patents filed before 1995, this insecticide (used to control cotton bollworm) could not get any protection against 'me-too' players.

With the likes of Gharda Chemicals and Atul Ltd coming out with their generic versions at price 30-40 per cent lower– not to speak of the strides made by Bt cotton, providing in-built genetically engineered resistance to bollworm – 'Avaunt' sales are today half of what they were in the peak year of 2004.

There are no such problems in Rynaxypyr, introduced in India at the same time as in other markets.

"Patent protection is a huge incentive for us to bring the latest products from our research pipeline. The next major insecticide we are planning to launch is Cyazypyr, which would be for kharif 2014," said Ram K.



Mudholkar, Business Director (South Asia) of DuPont's Crop Protection division.

Cyazypyr (or cyantraniliprole, as the molecule is called) is again from the same anthranilic diamide class of chemicals and, of course, fully patent-protected.

### **Price to be paid**

That connects to the final characteristic. Since the new generation pesticides enjoy patent protection, it endows extra pricing power to the companies selling them.

For a sugarcane farmer, the cost of a single 150 ml dose of 'Coragen' formulation works out to Rs 1,600 an acre. This is about a fourth of what he would pay for a single spray of pesticides based on the older chemistries.

But the difference – which is where the new chemistry comes into play – is that farmers were earlier also having to spray four times.

"To control *kansuan* (early shoot borer) and *choti vaidak* (top borer), I used to apply 'Caldan' (cartap hydrochloride) twice and also 'Thimet' (phorate) two times. Each of these sprays cost Rs 400 an acre. Practically speaking, I am ending up paying the same," noted Tejpal Singh, a 30-acre farmer from Kalsoura village in Haryana's Karnal district.

But the important thing, according to him, was that "previously I used to harvest 28-30 tonnes of cane an acre, whereas that has now gone up by 5-7 tonnes." And this clearly had to do with better control over *kansuan* and *choti vaidak*, courtesy 'Coragen'.

"For now, Coragen is certainly working against these pests and has given us value for money. What will happen tomorrow I cannot say," said Mewa

Singh, who grows sugarcane on 20 out of his 50-acre holding in Chorpura, also in Karnal district.

### **Cotton prices rule lower at Bhoodapady sale**

Cotton sale for this year began on a low key with prices ruling lower compared with last year at the Bhoodapady Regulated Market Committee.

Farmers, who grow cotton as a summer crop in Erode district, cater to the needs of textile units in Attur, Salem and Coimbatore. Despite lower production, prices were on leash. However, all the 258 quintals of cotton that arrived in 700 bags were sold. All the arrivals were Bt variety and fetched between Rs 4,400 and Rs 5,100 a quintal.

Over 1,000 quintals of cotton are expected to arrive next week for sale and prices are expected to firm up.

### **Mustard drops with global cues**



Mustard seeds and oil in mandis across Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat have been dropping for the past one week on weak global cues and sluggish demand.

Added to this, heavy rain in Madhya Pradesh in the past few days have also lent strength to the bearish trend.

Mustard oil prices in Indore mandis fell to Rs 632 for 10 kg (down Rs 10 from Wednesday).

Compared with last week, mustard oil is down Rs 20.

Last week, mustard oil witnessed a bullish trend on rise in dollar and improved buying support.

However, in the last one week, sluggishness in soyabean and soya oil has extended to mustard.

Mustard seeds ruled steady at Rs 4,300-4,350 a quintal (Rs 4,200-4,350 last week) on lower arrival. Similarly, raida also ruled stable at Rs 3,100 a quintal.

Weak demand from the crushers also dragged plant deliveries of mustard seeds to Rs 3,460-65 a quintal.

Mustard seeds futures also traded lower with July and August contracts on the NCDEX closing at Rs 3,421 a quintal.

Arrival of mustard seeds across the country on Thursday declined to 1.45 lakh bags with Madhya Pradesh recording an arrival of 11,000 bags, UP - 13,000, Punjab/Haryana - 13,000, Rajasthan - 85,000 bags, Gujarat - 8,000, while 15,000 bags were offloaded in the remaining parts of the country.

### **Latex extends gain; rules at Rs 130/kg**

Spot rubber resumed its upward journey on Thursday.

According to observers, the market started reacting closely to supply concerns as a result of the widespread and heavy rain all over the State.

Sharp gains in the domestic futures catalysed the local sentiments further and traders seemed to be expecting the reentry of major consuming industries to the buyers queue.

Sheet rubber improved to Rs 177 both at Kottayam and Kochi from Rs 176.50 and Rs 176 a kg respectively, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

July futures flared up to Rs 182.80 (Rs 177.64), August to Rs 176.95 (Rs 171.80), September to Rs 171.99 (Rs 167.81) and October to Rs 169 (Rs 164.99) while the November and December futures were inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) inched up Rs 165.01 (Rs 164.98) at Bangkok. July futures increased to ¥ 226 (Rs 138.74) from ¥225 on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

**Spot rubber rates Rs/kg :** RSS-4: 177 (176.50); RSS-5: 172 (171); Ungraded: 162 (161); ISNR 20: 163 (162.50) and Latex 60 per cent: 130 (127).

**Edible oil stockists stay away due to monsoon**



Groundnut oil, soyabean and rapeseed refined oil prices dropped for the third consecutive day on the oils and oilseeds market on Thursday. The fall is in view of optimism generated over the kharif oilseeds crop.

Imported palmolein gained by Rs 5 for 10 kg narrowing the gap between rates quoted by refiners and resellers.

Sunflower and cotton refined oil ruled steady. Volume was thin, tracking slack demand and bearish futures, said traders.

A trader said: "Physical demand for edible oils remains subdued as stockists have already covered enough for the month and now prefer to fulfil their commitments.

Continuous drop in value of the rupee against dollar has made imports costly." Stockists are keeping away from building inventories in view of monsoon.

In the last three weeks, volume has remained need-based. On Thursday, hardly 200-250 tonnes of palmolein were trade in resale at Rs 527-528.

At the end of the day, Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 545, super palmolein at Rs 580 and super deluxe at Rs 600.

Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 548, soyabean refined oil at Rs 668 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 800.

In Rajkot, groundnut oil declined by Rs 40 to Rs 1,410 (Rs1,450) for *telia* tin and by Rs 20 to Rs 910 (Rs 930) for loose (10 kg).

On Bursa Malaysia Derivatives Exchange, crude palm oil July contracts settled lower at MYR 2,348 (MYR 2,370), August at MYR 2,359 (MYR 2,382) and September at MYR 2,355 (MYR 2,379) a tonne.

**The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were:** Groundnut oil 930 (950), soya refined oil 669 (670), sunflower expeller refined oil 735

(735), sunflower ref. 800 (800), rapeseed ref. oil 695 (698), rapeseed expeller ref. 665 (668) cottonseed ref. oil 661 (661) and palmolein 530 (525).

**Vikram Global Commodities**, Chennai quoted Malaysian Super Palmolein at Rs 581 ex-Chennai.

### **Jeera seen hitting Rs 14,000 a quintal soon**



Jeera remained unchanged in the spot market on domestic and export demand, while it gained marginally in the futures market.

A note from Kedia Commodity, Mumbai, said: “Export demand is good and likely to remain firm in the short-term due to lack of supply from other major producers. Despite all factors, we see prices can jump to near Rs 14,000 level soon.”

Jeera exports increased by 76 per cent to 79,900 tonnes in 2012-13 against 45,500 tonnes the previous year. In terms of value, they increased by 70 per cent to Rs 1,093.17 crore.

Also the jeera production is seen around 34-35 lakh bags this year, up almost 1-2 lakh bags from the last year.

At Unjha mandi in Gujarat, about 12,000 bags of jeera arrived and 15,000 bags were traded. Price for best quality jeera was quoted at Rs 2,600-

2,765 for a *maund* of 20 kg, while medium jeera price was quoted Rs 2,400-2,500 and lower quality jeera was traded on Rs 2,000-2,300 per 20 kg.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera July contracts increased by Rs 7.50 to Rs 13,402.50 a quintal with an open interest of 12,570 lots. August contracts gained by Rs 10 to Rs 13,715 a quintal, with an open interest of 10,521 lots.

### **Weaker rupee turns pepper hot**



Pepper prices continued to stay hot on both the futures and the spot on strong demand amid tight supply. As imports of pepper have become costly due to a weak rupee the value-addition industry has no alternative but to buy from the indigenous sources. That phenomenon coupled with the strong upcountry demand has pushed up the prices significantly, market sources told *Business Line*. At the same time heavy rains in the growing areas in Kerala and Karnataka has stopped arrival of the material from the primary markets, they said.

On the spot, five tonnes of pepper arrived and were traded at an average price of Rs 390 a kg. Rajakumari pepper was sold at Rs 395 today, they said. The sellers were reluctant to release their produce at the current levels as they are anticipating the prices to cross Rs 400, they said. The last traded price for all the active contracts July, August and September on the National Multi Commodity Exchange increased by Rs 858, Rs 1,198 and Rs 349 respectively to Rs 40,501, Rs 41,144 and Rs 40,030 a quintal. Total open interest increased by 28 tonnes to 153 tonnes. Total turnover rose by 41 tonnes to 103 tonnes.

On the IPSTA, prices were much below the National Exchange prices. The rise in prices on the NMCE, the trade alleged, was because of the permitted four per cent daily fluctuation. Spot prices soared by Rs 1,000 a quintal to close at Rs 37,500 (ungarbled) and Rs 39,000 (garbled) on strong demand. Indian parity in the international market was at around \$6,900 (c&f) for Europe and around \$7,500 a tonne (c&f) for the US at July prices and moved up above other origins. Indian parity would have been much higher but for the continuous weakening of the rupee against the dollar, they said.



## Upcountry orders lend colour to turmeric



Limited but fresh upcountry orders lifted spot turmeric prices by Rs 500 a quintal on Thursday.

“Further, farmers brought quality produce to the market. Similarly, prices increased in Warangal, Nizamabad and other north Indian markets too, so the local traders and exporters quoted higher price,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said that arrivals also increased to 3,400 bags and sales shot up. Prices may rule around current levels for the next couple of trading sessions. If the arrival improves further, the price will decrease. Because of

Since fine finger variety hybrid turmeric variety arrived for sale, prices increased to Rs 8,279 a quintal against Rs 7,779. The price of the root variety increased by Rs 703 a quintal in the regulated market due to arrival of finger quality root turmeric. Exporters quoted a higher price for orders from Delhi.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,158-6,766 a quintal and the root variety at Rs 4,021-6,100.

**Salem Hybrid Crop:** The finger variety was sold at Rs 6,009-8,279; the root variety at Rs 5,609-6,489. Of the 628 bags that arrived, 298 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety sold at Rs 5,369-6,911 and the root variety at Rs 5,159-6,767. Of the 302 bags on offer, 300 were picked up.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety sold at Rs 5,559-7,058 and the root variety at Rs 5,501-6,301. Of the 497 bags put up for sale, 489 found takers.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety sold at Rs 6,111-7,100, the root variety at Rs 5,737-6,383. All the 259 bags got sold.

#### **Rice may continue to rule at current levels**



The rice market is likely to rule around current levels without much fluctuation in the coming days, according to trade experts.

Despite restricted trading, the market witnessed a steady trend on Thursday with prices of aromatic and non-basmati rice ruling unchanged from previous levels.

Amit Chandna, Proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company, told *Business Line* that demand for full grain is not picking up, while the brokens are maintaining their momentum.

Following continuous fall in the recent past, only need-based buying is taking place in the market, he said. It is unlikely to see any major uptrend from here and full grain varieties may continue to rule around current levels even in the coming days, said Chandna.

In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) sold at Rs 7,700-7,730 a quintal, while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted at Rs 7,150.

Pure basmati (raw) quoted at Rs 8,800-8,820. Duplicate basmati (steam) was at Rs 6,780.

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

In the non basmati section, Sharbati (Steam) sold at Rs 4,850-4,870, while Sharbati (Sela) quoted at Rs 4,450.

Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,300-2,350, while Permal (sela) went for Rs 2,310. PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 3,000 and PR-11 (Raw) quoted at Rs 2,750. PR14 (steam) sold at Rs 3,320 a quintal.

## Mills continue sugar sales to ease inventory burden



The sugar market turned volatile on Thursday with prices dropping by Rs 5-10 a quintal.

Due to continuous supply from producers, the buying has been limited. Prices on the Vashi wholesale market have ruled flat, barring a couple of occasions this month.

“It’s like a vacation period,” said a trader.

Jagdish Rawal of B. Bhogilal and co said: “On Thursday, prices in the Vashi market declined on slack demand.

Naka and mill tender rates rule unchanged with limited activities. Producers are selling continuously to ease inventory burden. On the other hand, local demand has not shown any improvement till now. Ample stocks in the Vashi market and continuous selling pressure have resulted in activities being limited.”

An observer said that from July onwards, hopes of festival demand emerging could lift sentiments in the market.

In the domestic futures market, prices were range-bound but above Rs 3,000 a quintal support level.

Hopes also hinge on State Government floating tenders to purchase for the public distribution system.

Arrivals in the Vashi market were 62-63 truckloads (each 100 bags) and local dispatches were about 57-58 loads. On Wednesday, 12-14 mills sold about 33,000 – 35,000 bags to local traders at Rs 2,920-2,980 for S-grade and Rs 3,000-Rs 3,090 for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, July contracts were quoted at Rs 3,024, August at Rs 3,074 and September at Rs 3,123 a quintal.

**The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were (Rs/quintal):** S-grade Rs 3,062– Rs 3,126 (Rs 3,062– Rs 3,131) and M-grade Rs 3,162 - 3,301 (Rs 3,162- 3,311).

**Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 3,010 -3,060 (Rs 3,010-3,060) and M-grade Rs 3,100-3,180 (Rs 3,100-3,180).

## **Business Standard**

**Govt intends to give upto Rs 2 lakh interest free loan to farmers**

**In order to support farmers and growth in the agriculture sector, state government plans to provide interest free loan to farmers up to Rs two lakh**

**Assuring complete support for growth in the agriculture**

**sector, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah today said the government intends to provide interest free loan to farmers up to Rs two lakh and projected his administration as industry friendly.**

**"In order to support farmers and growth in the agriculture sector, state government plans to provide interest free loan to farmers up to Rs two**

lakh. Loans should be made available easily through co-operative or nationalised banks," he said.

Along with the loan, farmers should also be provided good quality seeds and fertilisers, he said at a Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FKCCI) event.

He said Karnataka would have a separate commission to decide on price for agriculture commodities on the lines of the Commission for Agriculture Costs and prices at the Centre.

"We need a separate commission at the state level to decide on the price for agriculture produce on the lines of the one at the Centre. Our farmers should get fair price for what they grow; this should in turn help in arresting farmer suicides and number of farmers quitting agriculture