

**Behind the success of every Jasauti farmer is a lady's finger**



The Hindu Farmers plucking lady's fingers in an agricultural field at Jasauti village in Bharatpur district. Photo: Special arrangement.

The nondescript Jasauti village in Pahari tehsil of Bharatpur district, situated at the Rajasthan-Haryana border, has emerged as the “Bhindi Gaon” (village of lady’s fingers), sending over a dozen vehicles with the popular vegetable everyday for six months in a year to Gurgaon and Delhi. Eighty per cent of agriculturists in the village are engaged in the farming of lady’s fingers.

The transformation in both the social and economic status of farmers in the village is the outcome of their own hard work accompanied by proper planning and effective guidance with the appropriate interventions by experts. Farmers are getting remunerative prices for lady’s fingers in the market.

About three years ago, Jasauti village, comprising just 150 households, was adopted by Bharatpur-based Lupin Human Welfare & Research Foundation with innovative plans for development. Experts attached to the foundation advised the farmers to go for horticulture or farming of vegetables in view of availability of water and productive soil.

On their suggestion, five farmers experimented with lady's fingers, which has now been adopted by almost the entire village.

The Lupin Foundation has, this year, made available lady's finger seeds of a superior variety on subsidy and provided guidance from time to time. Eighty per cent of farmers in Jasauti have left the rabi farming and instead taken up the lady's finger farming, in which they get the produce by March-end. The popular vegetable, consumed in cities in a huge quantity, easily fetches Rs.3,000 to Rs.4,000 per quintal to the farmers.

With the onset of summer, lady's fingers start arriving in *mandis* from other regions and the price of the vegetable drops considerably. By then, each farmer in Jasauti earns an estimated Rs.2 lakh to Rs.3 lakh.

A farmer, Tota Ram, says he has obtained one-and-a-half to two times higher production of lady's fingers this year as a result of assistance provided by the Lupin Foundation. Another farmer, Dharam Singh, has started sending his children to good schools after improvement in his financial condition. He also grows other vegetables and fruits of the summer season to augment his income.

According to farmer Shankar Singh, lady's finger farming has helped raise him out of poverty and enabled him to purchase vehicles. He takes his produce to towns as far as Faridabad, Meerut and Hardwar. His income has greatly increased as a result.

Lupin Foundation executive director Sita Ram Gupta said here on Sunday that the farmers who were assisted through subsidy and guidance included 28 belonging to the BPL (Below Poverty Line) category. Most of them are set to break the shackles of poverty. Several traders come to Jasauti regularly to purchase lady's fingers, while many farmers sell the vegetable on Pahari-Kathaul road.

Mr. Gupta pointed out that the foundation had recently established five women's self-help groups in Jasauti and launched training programmes in food processing and other avocations for them. Men and women are engaged in plucking lady's fingers at

agricultural fields throughout the day and collect them in sacks for being transported outside.

Agriculturists in the nearby villages have also started taking interest in the farming of lady's fingers after witnessing the success of the innovative work in Jasauti. The Lupin Foundation has obtained loans on easy terms for farmers from Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) for purchasing the seeds of improved variety and is providing guidance to them to make the best use of the vegetable's production.

### **'Package for farm sector soon'**

Punjab Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal on Sunday said a comprehensive package for welfare of farmers and labourers including farm labourers would be announced soon. He stated this on the sidelines of a religious congregation here on Sunday.

During the past 20 days, Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal has been involved in evolving a comprehensive broad-based package for agriculture sector and labourers, Mr. Badal said adding the Chief Minister would announce this package soon.- PTI

### **Rajasthan village takes the green road to success**



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and Delhi. Eighty per cent of agriculturists in the village are engaged in the farming of lady's fingers.

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Eighty per cent of farmers in Jasauti have left *rabi* farming and instead taken up lady's fingers farming which gives them the produce by March-end. The popular vegetable, consumed in cities in a huge quantity, easily fetches Rs.3,000 to Rs.4,000 per quintal for the farmers.

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According to farmer Shankar Singh, lady's fingers farming has helped him in getting rid of poverty and enabled him to purchase vehicles. He takes his produce to the towns as far as Faridabad, Meerut and Hardwar for selling, increasing his income many times more than his counterparts.

Lupin Foundation executive director Sita Ram Gupta said here on Sunday that the farmers who received subsidies and guidance included 28 belonging to the below poverty line category. Most of them are set to break the shackles of poverty. Several traders come to Jasauti regularly to purchase lady's fingers, while many farmers sell the vegetable on Pahari-Kathaul road.

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### **Rain pushes salt farmers to the brink**

Price falls to Rs.80-Rs.100 as against Rs.180- Rs.200 per quintal keeping middlemen away



Troubled times:Salt fields near Manginapudi beach filled up with water due to the recent spell of rain.– Photo: By arrangement

Three spells of rain reported at regular intervals along the coastline areas of Krishna district resulted in severe damage of salt fields and left the farmers in distress this season.

Blistering heatwaves, however, are favourable conditions for the formation of salt, but untimely spell of rainfall recorded ten days ago washed away the salt before it was all set to be harvested.

“The maximum salt production per acre in this season –from January to till onset of monsoon – is barely 12-14 quintals as against the all time average of 25 quintals”, said I. Nageswara Rao, a salt farmer from Manginapudi Beach area.

### **Prime reason**

The prime reason for low output was rainfall, and the stretch from Kruthivenu to Nagayalanka experienced a similar situation. Apart from companies which got the land on different modes of lease from the Salt Commission, individual farmers from the Scheduled Caste and fisher folk communities are the worst affected.

“There was no production to export to other parts of Andhra Pradesh this season. Whatever we can extract from the field is sold to the locals,” said Ch. Venkanna, engaged in salt cultivation in the government distributed one-acre land in Machilipatnam rural area. Not even a single lorry had come to procure the salt from Manginapudi beach area in May.

No middlemen turned up to buy the salt expecting poor quality as it was largely mixed with rain water.

The price per quintal was between Rs.80 to Rs.100 as against Rs.180 to Rs. 200 in February and March, Mr. Venkanna told *The Hindu* .

The price cycle depends on the number of middlemen in the fray to procure the production directly from the farmer on the field.

### **Praying for rain**

The commercial affair, production of salt, requires very less input cost and high crop returns and thus unprecedented number of families living along the coastline simply can't shift from any other activity, but had to pray for bountiful seasons with timely rains.

### **Borewells run dry, villages remain parched**

#### **300 borewells drilled at a cost of Rs. 1.5 crore**

The rural water supply department, which is entrusted with ensuring the supply of safe drinking water to rural people in the district, has drilled a total of 300 borewells at a cost

of approximately Rs. 1.5 crore - around Rs. 50,000 each borewell - across the district to increase potable water supply.

But the problem is still not completely solved; the exchequer incurred losses to the tune of more than Rs. 50 lakh with 100 borewells without water while another fifty yielded an insignificant quantum of water and chances are they might not last the current summer.

Meanwhile, conservative figures peg the number of borewells that have gone dry in the last two months alone at over 5,000, corresponding to a financial loss in several crores for farmers whose efforts in search of water remain elusive, thanks to a truant monsoon three years at a stretch.

Notwithstanding all this, many villages in the district add to the list of parched villages every day, forcing the district administration to find immediate alternatives such as arranging for transportation of drinking water to villages at a time when almost all water tankers are in use owing to a crisis like situation in almost half the habitations in the district.

### **Dairying takes a hit**

Meanwhile, the vagaries of the livestock are best untold, as many have to survive on less than 2 litres of water a day while their ideal intake levels run into tens of litres of water so that they regulate their body heat.

With the government proposing dairy as an alternative and giving farmers exotic breeds which require large amounts of water to regulate body heat, the problem has compounded all the more.

With water not sufficient for humans, animals are also left to fend for themselves.

The continuous drought for the last three years has also meant that there is no fodder, dry fodder or otherwise, for the livestock to feed on, almost anywhere in the district and

livestock continue to be sold by farmers to slaughter houses by the truckloads, for they can't afford to feed them.

### **Farmers may get interest-free loans up to Rs. 2 lakh, says Minister**

The State government is considering providing farmers interest-free loans up to Rs. 2 lakh as part of its efforts to strengthen the agricultural sector and the farming community.

This was stated by Minister for Cooperation H.S. Mahadeva Prasad here on Sunday. He said the budget, which would be presented by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in July, would have farmer-friendly initiatives.

He said there was a proposal to increase the quantum for loans to be disbursed to farmers at 3 per cent interest, up to Rs. 5 lakh.

This will enable more farmers to avail themselves of loans for agriculture activities, according to the Minister.

He said cooperative banks lending to farmers would be augmented by Rs. 1,000 crore over the next five years. It is currently Rs. 6,500 crore.

The Minister pegged the recovery rate at 85 per cent. Referring to the elections to cooperative societies, the Minister said they would be held before September.

The government's subsidy to dairy farmers of Rs. 4 per a litre of milk had been implemented.

### **Department sets target to irrigate 9.25 lakh hectares in five years**

The Congress government has set an ambitious target of bringing 9.25 lakh hectares of land under irrigation in the next five years at a cost of Rs. 45,574.10 crore.



Announcing this at a press conference here on Saturday after a review of the progress of implementation of irrigation schemes, Minister for Major and Minor Irrigation M.B. Patil said an action plan would be prepared for the time-bound completion of the ongoing projects to achieve the target.

The action plan would cover projects, including Upper Krishna Project Stage III, Upper Bhadra Project and the Yettinahole Project.

### **UKP Stage-III**

Official sources said the UKP Stage-III would irrigate 14.5 lakh acres of land. This project would require acquisition of about 1.55 lakh acres of land spread across 22 villages, resulting in displacement of 1.4 lakh people.

### **Proposal**

The Minister said he would make a proposal to the government to allow the Water Resources Department to directly take up the land acquisition process for the UKP Stage-III through consensual arrangement with landowners as was being done by the National Highways Authority of India instead of going through the Revenue Department.

### **Clearing bottlenecks**

Plans were also afoot to clear bottlenecks related to rehabilitation and resettlement to speed up the implementation of irrigation projects, Mr. Patil added.

Declaring that his department was committed to defending the State's rights on the Cauvery waters through effective arguments before the Supreme Court and other authorities, he said measures would also be initiated to increase the irrigation potential in the Cauvery basin through extensive use of micro-irrigation systems and sprinklers. He expressed confidence that such measures, if effectively implemented, were bound to increase the irrigation potential by five to seven lakh acres.

Mr. Patil said he would encourage State farmers to adopt the water conservation technologies as had been done in Israel.

### **Security to reservoirs**

He said his Department would take steps to provide security to reservoirs as per reports given by experts by utilising the World Bank aid. Two battalions of the Central Industrial Security Force would be used for this purpose, the Minister added.

### **Farmers demand uniform pricing for sugarcane across the country**

#### **All-India Sugarcane Growers' Association formed**



According to Karnataka State Sugarcane Growers' Association president Kurbur Shanthakumar, there is a need to develop high-yielding sugarcane varieties that can be cultivated in a short span.— File PHOTO: M.A. SRIRAM

The newly formed All-India Sugarcane Growers' Association has urged the Central government to ensure uniform price for sugarcane across the country besides directing sugar producers to bear the cost of harvesting and transportation of sugarcane to factories.

Karnataka State Sugarcane Growers' Association president Kurbur Shanthakumar said this at a press conference here on Sunday a day after the two-day national convention of sugarcane growers concluded here.

He said 10 resolutions were passed in the convention, including demands to implement the reports of the C. Rangarajan Committee and the M.S. Swaminathan Commission.

### **Bilateral agreement**

Mr. Shanthakumar said governments should ensure that sugar factories enter into a bilateral agreement with farmers on procurement of sugarcane and that factories clear all the dues of farmers.

There was a need for further research to develop high-yielding sugarcane varieties that could be cultivated in a short span, Mr. Shanthakumar said. In this background, agriculture mechanisation should receive adequate funds from the Sugarcane Development Fund.

The other demands of the association include full subsidy to farmers installing solar-powered irrigation pump sets; introduction of insurance scheme for standing sugarcane crop for each individual farm; open marketing facility for sale of molasses and bagasse; directing all sugar factories to set up power plants and distribute the power generated at a minimum price to farmers, and extending the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act for the agriculture sector, including sugarcane cultivation.

### **Elected**

The convention decided to form All-India Sugarcane Growers' Association on this occasion and elected Mr. Shanthakumar as its national president, said president of the Confederation of Indian Farmers' Associations Sathyanam Singh.

Confederation general secretary P. Changala Reddy was present.

### **Popularise millet, government told**

The Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha organised a workshop on millets here on Saturday.

Resource person P.V. Sateesh from Deccan Development Society urged farmers to increase the cultivation and usage of the crop. It would address malnutrition and help conserve soil fertility, he said.

“Though India has had better economic growth rates than other countries in the last two decades, we are yet to solve malnutrition. As far as nutrition levels are concerned, India stands at the 126th position,” he said. He urged farmers to “move away from water-guzzling crops such as sugarcane”. According to Mr. Sateesh, every acre of sugarcane needs one crore litres of water, which is enough for a village of 2,000 people. Fifty acres of millet can be grown with much less water, he added.

“Climate change is making summers hotter and changing the rain schedule. In many towns and villages, the water table has gone below 1,000 ft. We should grow crops that use less water and retain soil fertility,” he said.

### **Meeting to address problems of farmers**

A meeting of irrigation experts, elected representatives and farmers from the Tungabhadra command area that spreads across Hospet, Bellary and Sirguppa taluks, is being convened here on June 15 to discuss the plight of farmers due to short supply of water for irrigation and to come out with a suitable plan of action to overcome the chronic problem.

N. Pratap Reddy, Congress leader, who is among the like-minded group to moot the idea of convening the meeting, told presspersons here on Sunday that farmers in Tungabhadra command area, served by high-level and low-level channels, were facing a crisis almost every year due to shortage of water in the reservoir owing to accumulation of silt, which had not been removed for several years for one or the other reason. “Although there have been discussions in this regard in the past, the outcome has not been concrete. If some suggested removal of silt could address the problem, others suggested increasing the height of the dam or construction of balancing

reservoirs at suitable places. However, no steps were initiated so far by any government by stating that the first two suggestions were neither viable nor feasible.

For want of dry land adjacent to the canals, the third suggestion of constructing balancing reservoir is also languishing. Under these circumstances, it was thought that by bringing all like-minded people on one platform, a permanent solution could be found and ensure optimum utilisation of water allotted to the State,” he said.

### **Proposal**

Mr. Reddy said that another proposal had also been made some time ago that flood flow canal could be constructed to divert the surplus water from the reservoir during monsoon and store it.

The stored water could be shared on the already decided pro-rata basis between Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

“The main aim of the proposed meeting is not only to find a permanent solution and protect the interest of farmers but also to remove the misconception among people that flood flow canal would benefit Andhra Pradesh and not farmers of Karnataka. Efforts will also be made to convince that Karnataka stands to gain, if this proposal is implemented, according to experts, who have made a study in this regard,” he said.

### **Dialogue**

Mr. Reddy said: “We want to initiate a dialogue among our farmers first on how to go about resolving the issues and then take up the matter with the State government, to be followed by a joint meeting with its counterpart, Andhra Pradesh, later. As Tungabhadra dam is an inter-State project, a consensus decision needs to be taken before the proposals are implemented, in the interest of farmers of both the States.”

Rudraswamy, former chief engineer of Tungabhadra Board; Govindlu, former superintending engineer of the board; K.C. Kondaiah, former MP and MLC, and

farmers' representatives from the three taluks would be participating in the proposed meeting, he said.

### **Training programme**

The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information and Training Centre will conduct a one-day training programme on kitchen gardens on May 30.

The training programme, which will be conducted between 9.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m., is aimed at those interested in gardening, farmers, entrepreneurs, youngsters, self-help groups, NGOs and students, among others a press release said.

The release added that all participants will get a training certificate at the completion of the programme. Those interested can contact 044-26263484.

### **Strong wind plays havoc with banana trees in two districts**

**Trees that are about to be harvested suffered the most"**



Trees that are about to be harvested suffered the most.

Lakhs of banana trees raised on more than 400 acres in Pudukkottai and Tiruchi districts were ravaged by high-velocity winds on Saturday evening.

G. Ajeethan, general secretary of the Banana Growers' Federation of Tamil Nadu, estimated that the total number of trees uprooted\damaged could be as high as two lakhs and the loss per tree would be Rs. 75.

P. Viswanathan, State president of the Tamilaga Eri Matrum Aatrupasana Vivasayigal Sangham, however, said that at least 20 lakh trees might have been damaged in Lalgudi, Srirangam and Tiruverumbur taluks in Tiruchi district. These regions suffered because of high-velocity winds on Friday evening and also last week. Several varieties of banana, including 'poovan', 'rasthali', 'pachaladam', 'mondham', 'elarisi' and 'karpooravalli' were badly hit. He urged the government to grant a compensation of at least Rs. 1 lakh per acre.

C.G. Thalpathi, Pudukkottai district chairman of the Farmers' Forum India, feared that banana on at least 100 acres in the district should have been damaged. "The most disheartening feature is that the trees that are about to be harvested suffered the most because of the weight of the bunches. Though the gale struck Manaviduthi, Mathur, Kulaivaipatty, Mookipatty, Kammankadu and Manthangudi villages only for about 20 minutes, it played havoc."

He was certain that most of the trees on the verge of harvest had been seriously damaged and only those partially grown had survived the onslaught. Even maize, raised on about 200 acres in Perungalur, Andakulam and Vaithur, apart from the villages where banana had been raised, had also suffered badly, he added.

S. Ponnusamy, Pudukkottai district secretary of the Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, who toured the affected areas on Sunday along with his district president M. Sebastian, said that each farmer had spent at least Rs. 130 per tree and thus the total expenditure they should have incurred per acre should be around Rs. 1.25 lakh. Many of them had already negotiated a price for the fully grown bunches and "I am sure that each farmer would have got a profit of Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 60,000 per acre had they been sold."

A farmer swooned on seeing the pathetic plight of his orchard and had to be hospitalised, he added. He demanded a compensation of Rs. 3 lakh per acre for these farmers.

However, Mr. Ajeethan observed that such high-velocity winds, called “whirlwind,” was not uncommon during April-May-June and “we get reports of such occurrences from various parts of the State every year.”

Weather Department sources in Chennai also said such winds developed because of “convective instability” and it was a common phenomenon during summer.

Mr. Ajeethan admitted that almost all those farmers affected in the latest incident had also not insured their crop. “Considering the fragile nature of the banana crop, a comprehensive unit-based crop insurance scheme is the need of the hour,” he asserted.

Vijayakumar, Deputy Director of Horticulture, Pudukkottai, told *The Hindu* that banana had been raised on about 185 hectares (460 acres) in Manaviduthi, Mookipatti and Sempatti. The crop on 16 hectares was damaged. While extensive damage was assessed in six hectares, the damage was partial in the rest.

The 13-month ‘poovan’ variety had been raised there and it was due for harvest in a couple of months, he said. While Horticulture officials visited the villages and assessed the damage, Revenue officials would conduct a survey shortly, he added.

### **Mother Dairy raises milk prices**

Mother Dairy has increased the price of its full cream, toned and double toned milk from today (Monday).

In a statement, Mother Dairy said its Bulk Vended Milk (token milk) will now cost Rs.2 per litre more and would be available at Rs.30 per litre.



Similarly, the price of its full cream milk poly packs has been increased by Rs.3 per litre and would now cost Rs.42 per litre and the toned milk has been increased by Rs.2 per litre and would sell at Rs.32 per litre. The double toned milk will also cost Rs.2 more and would now sell for Rs.28 per litre.

The price of the skimmed milk and the standard milk will however remain unchanged at Rs.22 and Rs.33 per litre respectively.

Mother Dairy said the price hike has been necessitated by the significant increase in raw material costs (farmer prices) by almost 10 per cent over the last year, power tariffs, petroleum prices and other costs.

Mother Dairy sells close to 30 lakh litres of milk per day in the National Capital Region. It claimed that it passes on nearly 75-76 per cent of the consumer price to the rural farmers.

### **'Kuruvai impossible without Cauvery water'**

Cauvery Farmers' Welfare Association has appealed to the Central government to take over the reservoirs in Karnataka.

Its president G. Kanakasabhai said the level in the Cauvery in Tamil Nadu had been gradually dwindling. Even as pumpsets were unable to tap water in April and May, kuruvai cultivation would become impossible. "It would be a day dream if farmers were to think that the new judgment by the Supreme Court would be able to ensure the livelihood of all the Cauvery delta districts."

Hence, he urged the Centre to realise the adverse impact of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal on the 7.21 crore people of Tamil Nadu and avoid remaining a passive spectator.

### **Tomato price beats that of mango**

## The kitchen essential breaches the Rs. 50 mark for the first time



<b>RED HOT VEGETABLES</b>		
<i>Comparative prices * (highest per kilogram)</i>		
<b>Vegetable</b>	<b>May 2012</b>	<b>May 2013</b>
<b>Tomato</b>	Rs.22	Rs. 50
<b>Beans</b>	Rs. 53	Rs. 100
<b>Cucumber</b>	Rs. 16	Rs. 32
<b>Coriander</b>	Rs. 105	Rs. 150
<b>Ginger</b>	Rs. 110	Rs. 200

*\* Hopcoms rates (prices vary in different markets)*

For the first time ever, tomato prices breached the Rs. 50 mark on Saturday. Traders are scrambling to find enough of the vegetable — in stark contrast to the glut situation when farmers routinely dump their harvest on the streets in protest — even as its price has been snaking upwards since the last one week.

Contrast this with the price this time last year when you could get a kg here for around Rs. 20.

While the farmers' cooperative Hopcoms sold tomato for Rs. 50 a kg on Saturday, it had already reached an eye-watering Rs. 60 in several neighbourhood markets in the old areas of the city. The price was a more reasonable Rs. 40 in the north and eastern areas that are closer to tomato-growing region of Kolar and Hoskote.

“Procuring tomato is a challenge now as the heat wave and lack of water have brought down the crop output drastically. Tomato has never been so expensive,” a Hopcoms source told *The Hindu*. The official pointed out that its price in Bangalore had reached

Rs. 45 some years ago when there was a demand-supply gap. He expected the price to drop from the second week of June.

### **Other veggies too**

It's not only that tomato is in the news for the price rise: some other vegetables too have witnessed drastic spike over the previous year. Beans is now hovering around Rs. 100, and in some places even Rs. 130 a kg. The price of cucumber, another vegetable in high demand during summer, has doubled compared with last year. Coriander, a must-have, along with carrot, is also climbing upwards.

A Hopcoms source said prices of other vegetables have remained more or less steady in May, a month that usually sees a spike in prices due to summer conditions that are not very conducive for crops. The prevailing high prices benefit farmers to a certain extent, the official said, adding that not all will be benefited though.



### **Punjab plans 25,000 new tubewell connections**

Faced with multiple challenges, including depleting groundwater and crop diversification in the state, Punjab chief minister Parkash Singh Badal on Sunday approved an agriculture power tubewells policy, stipulating guidelines for release of electric connections for agricultural pumpsets in the state for 2013-14.

A press release issued by the government said that Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission (PSERC) has mandated the state government to decide the number of agriculture power connections to be released each year in the state, taking into account factors like ecology, inadequate ground water potential, depleting water table or any

other

reason.

The new policy guidelines have been formulated in the backdrop of the state government's move towards crop diversification, besides popularizing drip/micro irrigation among farmers, especially vegetable and fruit growers, with a thrust on conservation of water.

Reckless use of ground water has rendered 45 blocks in Punjab as over exploited as revealed in the latest report of Central Ground Water Board.

Accordingly, the CM gave a go ahead to the policy guidelines for the current fiscal and a proposed target of 25,000 agriculture power connections had been fixed. Of these, 15,000 (60%) are in general category, 7,500 (30%) in priority category and remaining 2,500 (10%) in miscellaneous category.

Of the general category connections, 60% (9,000) would be for small farmers having land holding up to 2.5 acres and without any tubewell connection; 20% (3,000) for farmers having land holding of 2.5 acres to 5 acres and remaining 20% (3,000) for farmers with over five acres of land holding.

As per new policy guidelines, applications pending under the accelerated release of tubewell connections scheme, which could not be cleared in 2012-13, would also be given priority for release either through outsourcing or by the power department.

### **Agriculture department positive about kharif prospects in Dakshina Kannada**

The department of agriculture in DakshinaKannada is upbeat about a good kharif season notwithstanding the dwindling acreage under [paddy cultivation](#) in the district.

The department is eyeing a target of cultivating paddy in 33,500 hectares during the upcoming kharif season even while the area under paddy in kharif season last year

touched 31,498 hectares.

The pre-monsoon showers have added to their sense of optimism.

The targeted area under paddy cultivation has been fixed keeping in mind the gradual transition on part of farmers from cash to horticultural crops, says Honnappa Govinda Gowda, in-charge joint director of the department.

While Mangalore taluk accounts for 11,700 hectares of land under paddy cultivation, Bantwal taluk has 9,350 hectares, Belthangady 8,300 hectares, Puttur 3,150 hectares and Sullia least at 500 hectares.

The district has received an average of 234.40 mm of rainfall till May 23. This has buoyed the farmers in to taking up nursery activities and transplantation activities will commence with the arrival of monsoon. The department as on May 22 has distributed 41.75 quintals of paddy seeds to 109 farmers and has stock of 328.25 quintals of seeds on hand. Against the expected fertiliser demand of 18,000 tonnes for kharif season, the district has 8,100 tonnes stock.

The official said MO4 variety of paddy seeds are most sought after by farmers and was sown in 19,304 hectares last year followed by Kaje Jaya 4090 variety sown in 2,861 hectares. Likewise, Jyothi, Shakti and MTU 1001 varieties of seeds was sown in 2,410 hectares, 797 hectares and 176 hectares of land respectively, he said. The MO4 variety is preferred by farmers as it pertains to local staple of people preferring boiled rice, he points out.

With lack of farm hands preventing thrust to paddy cultivation in a big way, Govinda Gowda said the department is aggressively pushing the farm mechanization agenda by giving subsidy to farmers to purchase farm implements. Despite these problems, the district produced 86,485 tonnes of paddy in the last kharif season against target of

91,000 tonnes, he said, adding the department is providing all assistance to farmers through [raitha samparka kendras](#).

### **Mother Dairy hikes milk prices by upto Rs 3 per litre from Monday**

[Mother Dairy](#) today announced an increase of upto Rs 3 per litre in milk prices in Delhi-NCR region from Monday, citing rise in input costs.

Full cream milk will be dearer by Rs 3 per litre, while other variants will be costlier by Rs 2 per litre.

One litre of full cream milk (poly pack) will now cost Rs 42, toned milk (poly pack) Rs 32, token milk Rs 30, double toned Rs 28. However, prices of skimmed milk have been kept unchanged at Rs 22 per litre, Mother Dairy said in a statement.

Mother Dairy, the largest supplier of milk in the Delhi- NCR, sells more than 30 lakh litres per day (both loose and poly-pack) in the region.

"Price hike has been necessitated due to significant increase in raw material costs (farmer prices) by almost 10 per cent over last year, power tariffs, petroleum prices and other costs," the company said.

Prices have been increased to maintain viability of operations and to be able to adequately cater to the growing liquid milk demand of the consumers in NCR, it added.

Early this month, Amul had increased milk prices by Rs 2 per litre.

The company in statement said it "passes on 75-76 per cent of the consumer price to rural farmers. This may probably be one of the best and most efficient means of ensuring inclusive growth

## Vegetables top the list in the organic food category in India

Data has revealed that vegetables top the category offering organic options in India. As awareness about [organic food](#) options grows in urban areas, it was found that vegetables at 68% lead the way with fruits following at 52%.

Organic pulses (51%), food grains (50%), milk (45%) and fruit juices (51%) are the most regularly purchased items by Indian consumers, said the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) recently.

Packaged food, tea and beverages are amongst the other products for which Indians prefer the organic option, adds a survey conducted by [ASSOCHAM](#). Currently, most organic farmers in India are still in the transition phase and hence their costs are still high, according to ASSOCHAM. As these farmers continue with organic farming, the production costs are expected to reduce, making India as one of the most important producers of organic food, said a spokesperson.

The average weekly expenditure on organic food is estimated at 50% of the weekly food budget, points out the survey.

With all the bad publicity and alarm generated by poor diet, junk food and [rising levels of obesity](#), the boom in the [organic sector](#) comes as a relief said most welcome relief for a food industry, adds DS Rawat of ASSOCHAM.

A majority who participated in the survey said that eating organic food was "healthier". They also said they would eat more organic food if it was available at more convenient stores and even a bigger majority said if it was less expensive.

The government is also promoting production of organic crops, fruits and vegetables etc. through various schemes like the [National Horticulture Mission](#) (NHM), Horticulture Mission for North East and Himalayan States (HMNEH), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana

(RKVY), National Project on Management of Soil Health and Fertility (NPMSHF), National Project on Organic Farming (NPOF), Network Project on Organic Farming under [Indian Council of Agricultural Research](#) (ICAR) and various schemes of Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

### **Bank has adopted 52 drought hit villages in Maharashtra: P Chidambaram**

Union [Finance Minister P Chidambaram](#) on May 25 announced that [Dena Bank](#) has adopted 32 drought affected villages and provided 101 drinking water storage tanks in Aurangabad and Nashik districts in Maharashtra.

The Finance Minister was at the platinum jubilee celebrations of Dena Bank. Dena Bank's Chairman & Managing Director Ashwani Kumar and Executive Director A. K. Dutt welcoming the minister launched a host of new services for consumers.

The Bank also donated 100 wheelchairs for the benefit of physically handicapped to the Indian Red Cross Society, KEM Hospital, Tata Memorial Hospital, Sir JJ Group of Hospitals (Grant Medical) and Jai Vakeel School for Children with Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.

On the occasion Dr. Anil Kakodkar, eminent nuclear scientist and Chairman, Research Advisory Council, JNNSM at Department of [Atomic](#) Energy, Dr. Ramakant Panda eminent [heart](#) surgeon, Vice Chairman and MD of Asian Heart Institute), Monisha Shetty, social worker and daughter of late Vipula Kadri of [Save The Children](#) India, cricketer [Virat Kohli](#), Lt. Commander Abhilash Tomy the first Indian to circumnavigate the globe solo non-stop in 150 days and playback singer Parthiv Gohil were also present at the event.

### **Rs 150cr needed for drought relief**

Even as the divisional administration demanded around Rs 300 crore to deal with [drought situation](#) in [Aurangabad division](#), the state government has released just over



half of the required amount.

After thorough study and calculations, the divisional administration had estimated that it would require Rs 298.33 crore to deal with drought in the division between April 13 and June 13. However, the state government has only released a sum of Rs 152. 21 crore so far, said a senior official at the divisional commissionerate.

Interestingly, the required amount for the first three months of the current fiscal is much more than what was allotted to the division for the entire last financial year. The division had received funds worth Rs 224 crore in 2012-13 for water supply, fodder depots and camps and by the end of the financial year, all the money was spent, sources at the divisional commissionerate said.

Of the Rs 152.21 crore received, Rs 110 crore will be spent on water supply and Rs 42.21 crore will be given to fodder camps. However, the administration will require Rs 175.12 crore more for supplying water and Rs 123.21 crore for fodder camps, said an official.

Aurangabad divisional commissioner Sanjeev Jaiswal had also apprised chief minister Prithviraj Chavan of the situation and told him about the required money during the CM's visit to the city on Saturday.

According to reports, as on May 24, 1,810 villages in Marathwada are being supplied water using 2,318 water tankers and of the 319 sanctioned fodder camps, 295 are active and providing fodder and shelter to 23,58,06 animals.

The number of water tankers will have to be increased so as to deal with the severe drought situation in the region, the official added.

**Agriculture department positive about kharif prospects in Dakshina Kannada**

The department of agriculture in DakshinaKannada is upbeat about a good kharif season notwithstanding the dwindling acreage under [paddy cultivation](#) in the district.

The department is eyeing a target of cultivating paddy in 33,500 hectares during the upcoming kharif season even while the area under paddy in kharif season last year touched 31,498 hectares.

The pre-monsoon showers have added to their sense of optimism.

The targeted area under paddy cultivation has been fixed keeping in mind the gradual transition on part of farmers from cash to horticultural crops, says Honnappa Govinda Gowda, in-charge joint director of the department.

While Mangalore taluk accounts for 11,700 hectares of land under paddy cultivation, Bantwal taluk has 9,350 hectares, Belthangady 8,300 hectares, Puttur 3,150 hectares and Sullia least at 500 hectares.

The district has received an average of 234.40 mm of rainfall till May 23. This has buoyed the farmers in to taking up nursery activities and transplantation activities will commence with the arrival of monsoon. The department as on May 22 has distributed 41.75 quintals of paddy seeds to 109 farmers and has stock of 328.25 quintals of seeds on hand. Against the expected fertiliser demand of 18,000 tonnes for kharif season, the district has 8,100 tonnes stock.

The official said MO4 variety of paddy seeds are most sought after by farmers and was sown in 19,304 hectares last year followed by Kaje Jaya 4090 variety sown in 2,861 hectares. Likewise, Jyothi, Shakti and MTU 1001 varieties of seeds was sown in 2,410 hectares, 797 hectares and 176 hectares of land respectively, he said. The MO4 variety is preferred by farmers as it pertains to local staple of people preferring boiled rice, he points out.

With lack of farm hands preventing thrust to paddy cultivation in a big way, Govinda Gowda said the department is aggressively pushing the farm mechanization agenda by giving subsidy to farmers to purchase farm implements. Despite these problems, the district produced 86,485 tonnes of paddy in the last kharif season against target of 91,000 tonnes, he said, adding the department is providing all assistance to farmers through [raitha samparka kendras](#).

# hindustantimes

Chennai - INDIA

## Today's Weather



Sunny

**Monday, May 27**

Max Min

38° | 26°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:41

Humidity: 43

Sunset: 06:30

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1004.0

## Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

**Tuesday, May 28**

Max Min

40° | 28°

## Extended Forecast for a week

Wednesday

May 29



40° | 28°

Thursday

May 30



40° | 28°

Friday

May 31



40° | 28°

Saturday

Jun 1



39° | 28°

Sunday

Jun 2



39° | 28°

Partly Cloudy    Overcast    Overcast    Overcast    Overcast

Airport Weather

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:25

Humidity: 33    Sunset: 07:11

Delhi

Wind: normal    Barometer: 1002.0



# THE HINDU Business Line

**For customers, mango tastes sweet as prices plunge**

Higher output, arrivals result in rates dropping by a third



Mango prices are down by one-third to half currently compared with last year, owing to higher supplies.

The wholesale price of locally grown varieties such as Himsagar and Bombai are down by 33-42 per cent at around Rs 20 a kg this year, compared with Rs 30-35 last year.

However, Bengal's famous 'Langra aam' is so far ruling flat at last year's level at Rs 40.

"There is a very good supply of mangoes like Himsagar and Bombai this year and this has brought down prices.

"Langra has just started coming into the market now, once the arrival picks up, then, we expect prices to come down," said Chandan Mahato, a fruit trader at the Mechua wholesale market in Kolkata.

Arrival of Bengal mangoes usually happen by the second or third week of May.

However, mangoes such as Banganpalli from Andhra Pradesh and Gulabkhas from Bihar are available in the markets by end of March or early April.

The price of Gulabkhas, which was close to Rs 50 at the beginning of this season, has now come down to Rs 20-25.

"This year, the southern States have also witnessed a good production. Supply of Gulabkhas and Banganpalli is better than last year. This has brought down prices," Shiv Kumar, another fruit trader in the wholesale market said.

## **Production**

According to current estimates, mango production in West Bengal is up by nearly 15 per cent over last year, said P.K. Pramanik, Director, State Horticulture Department.

Exact estimate of the production will be available only by the second week of June, he said. In 2012-13, West Bengal produced 7.23 lakh tonnes of mangoes.

Meanwhile, a bumper production of mango this year has prompted the State Horticulture Department to set up a temporary mango market on the Kolkata Maidan from mid-June.

The department also plans to hold a 7-day fair in Delhi at Banga Bhavan and Delhi Haat starting June 11.

“We plan to showcase the best varieties of mangoes grown in the State such as Langra, Lakshmanbhog, Himsagar and Gopalbhog at the Delhi fair. This will help create a brand for Bengal mangoes,” Pramanik said.

At the mango market in Maidan, the farmers from Murshidabad, Malda, Hooghly and other districts would be encouraged to sell their produce directly to consumers.

“This will help mango lovers to get best quality mangoes at reasonable prices,” he said.

Though the market would be initially set up for a period of seven days, however, it could be extended for a week more depending on the demand, he said.

### **Mixed trend in Kochi tea sale**



A mixed trend persisted for almost all varieties of tea at the Kochi tea auction. In sale no: 21, the offer in CTC dust category was 11,49,500 kg.

The market opened Rs 3-5 dearer. The prices appreciated further with longer margins of Rs 5-10 as the sale progressed.

Clean well made teas witnessed strong feature following export enquiry, the auctioneers Forbes, Ewart and Figgis said.

However, the orthodox dust category remained barely steady and tended to ease. Exporters were the main stay for the product. The quantity on offer was 2,050 kg.

In the best CTC dusts, PD varieties quoted Rs 105-125, RD grades ruled at Rs 106-126, SRD fetched at Rs 111-133, while SFD stood at 113-150.

In the leaf sales, the quantity offered in orthodox grades was 1.03 lakh kg.

The market for select best high grown brokens and whole leaf was steady to firm.

Others were irregular and tended to ease. Corresponding fannings appreciated in value. Tippy grades were barely steady to tending lower.

Whole leaf from the same origin was steady to firm and fannings appreciated. Secondary brokens were irregular and lower and witnessed some withdrawals.

Of 1.07 lakh kg on offer in the CTC leaf grades, the market for clean black well made teas coupled with useful liquors was fully firm to sometimes dearer. Others were irregular and declined in value.

In the dust category, Monica SFD fetched the best prices of Rs 151 followed by Kallayar SFD at Rs 149.

In the leaf grades, Chamraj FOP-S green tea quoted the best prices of Rs 322 followed by Chamraj FPS at Rs 239.

**bl27\_agri\_gnana**

## Gold will consolidate, rise

Comex gold futures ended higher on Friday, supported by a drop in stock markets and comments from a Federal Reserve official that dampened the talk that the US central bank is set to curb monetary stimulus.

Speculation the Fed would scale back its monetary easing programme threatened to weigh on gold this week after Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke said it could start scaling back its \$85 billion in monthly bond purchases in the next few meetings. However, ETF's continue to see fresh outflows.

The SPDR Gold Trust, the world's largest gold-backed ETF, reported at the close of Thursday that its holdings had fallen by another 1.5 tonnes, bringing its total outflow for the week to 19.8 tonnes. Despite the recent outflows which is equal to more than half of the entire production, prices have held well due to strong retail demand for coins and jewellery. Comex gold futures are seen consolidating after almost retesting recent lows. Prices have shown resilience despite all negative factors surrounding it presently. This could hint that we could have most probably seen an intermediate bottom. However, a clear confirmation of the same can be got on a daily close above \$1,490.

As illustrated earlier, several indicators suggest gold is already in the final stages of a bear market. A 38.2 per cent pullback from its 2011 peak at \$1,923 would be close to \$1,280-85 and a 50 per cent retracement of a rally that began in 2008 would be close to \$1,300-02.

This week, prices could consolidate and inch higher gradually while \$1,345-50 holds attempts to decline. Resistance points are lying near \$1,395-1,415 and a stronger one near \$1,440. It has to rise above \$1,450 to cause some uncertainties and revive bullish hopes again, opening the way for a test of \$1,510 or even higher.

The wave counts need to be reviewed once again. As mentioned earlier, a possible corrective wave "C" has ended at \$1,523 and a possible new impulse has begun with a



potential to test \$2,025-30 levels in the form of a fifth wave move. However, a move below \$1,690 has increased the possibility that the broad corrective consolidation is in progress now and the impulse has been converted to a corrective move in the form of a wave "C".

Wave "A" begun from \$1,920, and ended at \$1,527. Wave "B" begun from \$1,527 and ended at \$1,798. Wave "C" has begun from there.

Projected target for the wave "C" is now at \$1,265-1,300.

RSI is still in the neutral zone now indicating that it is neither overbought nor oversold. The averages in MACD are still below the zero line of the indicator hinting at bearishness to be intact.

Therefore, look for gold futures to consolidate and then rise again.

Supports are at \$1,370, \$1,350 & \$1,310 and resistances are at \$1,395, \$1,440 & \$1,485.

**Gnanasekaar T.**

*(The author is the Director of Commtrendz Research and also in the advisory panel of Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX). The views expressed in this column are his own and not that of MCX. This analysis is based on the historical price movements and there is risk of loss in trading. He can be reached at [gnanasekar.t@gmail.com](mailto:gnanasekar.t@gmail.com).)*

### **Pepper gains on buying support**

Karnataka pepper was offered at Rs 331-333 a kg and 48 tonnes of pepper arrived every day, they said.

Pepper from Pulpally and Battery in Kerala's Wayanad district was also coming and sold at Rs 336-337. Domestic demand has started picked up following withdrawal of strike by Maharashtra traders which had stopped trading in pepper for about a month.

There has been conflicting reports about the crop in Karnataka. Some were projecting it as 35,000 tonnes while others claimed it to be 25,000-30,000 tonnes. Similarly, the production in Kerala would be 20,000-25,000 tonnes while in Tamil Nadu, 6,000 tonnes.

In Tamil Nadu's Pattiveeran Patti, much of the pepper produced there are used for converting into white pepper because of heavy and bold berries, they said.

Indian parity in the international market has dropped to \$6,500 a tonne (c&f) due to fall in the currency last week despite the rise in futures prices. But, the overseas buyers were seen waiting hoping the prices would fall further.

Vietnam is reported to have shipped out around 55,000 tonnes of pepper already. They may be exporting more in the coming weeks on fear of the early arrival of Indonesian pepper in the market in July, they said. Last week, prices increased on the IPSTA trading.

June, July and Aug contracts went up by Rs 557, Rs 512 and Rs 453 a quintal respectively to close on Saturday at Rs 35,225, Rs 35,275 and Rs 35,325.

Total turnover moved up by 408 tonnes to 522 tonnes. Total open interest was up by 23 tonnes to 23 tonnes. Spot prices remained unchanged at Rs 33,600 (ungarbled) and Rs 35,100 (MG 1) on matching demand and supply last week.

**Tomato arrivals may improve, drag prices**



### [Ads by Google](#)

Tomato arrivals are likely to improve further and prices may be down, said trade experts.

An increase in arrivals dragged prices down by Rs 200-500 a quintal on Sunday.

Vikas Sachdeva, a trade expert, told *Business Line* that easy availability of stocks mainly pulled prices down.

Arrivals have improved over the last couple of days and it may increase gradually in the coming days.

Traders expect arrivals to be in full swing within the next 10-15 days, he added.

Around 1,100 crates (a crate is 25 kg) of different varieties of tomatoes arrived at the Karnal vegetable market and were quoted at Rs 800-2,000.

Around 2,200 crates of Anoop, Himsona and Trishul were received in the Karnal markets.

Out of total arrivals, about 25 per cent was of low quality; around 40 per cent was of medium while about 35 per cent total arrivals was of superior quality.

Prices of superior quality decreased by Rs 400 at Rs 1,800-2,000.

The prices of medium quality produce went down by Rs 500 at 1,200-1,400 while low quality was Rs 200 down at Rs 800-1,000.

On Sunday, about five per cent stocks remained unsold due to higher arrivals.

According to the market experts, situation of the market was anticipated and tomato prices are likely to remain bearish on higher arrivals while demand is expected to remain steady in the coming days.

### **Kolkata tea sale offerings up**

Last week at Sale 21, the total offerings (packages) at the three North Indian tea auction centres at Kolkata, Guwahati and Siliguri were 1,99,836 compared to 1,40,301 in the corresponding sale (No 21) last year, according to J. Thomas & Company Pvt Ltd, the tea auctioneers.

The offerings at Kolkata comprised CTC/dust 66,396 (47,994), orthodox 20,033 (8,939) and Darjeeling 3,867 (3,475).

The figures for two other centres, handling mainly CTC/dust, were Guwahati 89,424 (51,700) and Siliguri 20,116 (28,193).

Good demand for CTC teas. Medium and non-liquoring sorts tended easier.

Orthodox: Good demand. Whole leaf and broken grades sold at fully firm to dearer rates. Fannings were irregular.

Darjeeling teas: Whole leaf grades witnessed useful enquiries. HUL was selective. Broken sold at firm rates while fannings were dearer.

### **Watch for onset of South-West monsoon continues**

Heavy to very heavy rain has been reported at many places in Kerala and isolated places in Lakshadweep as the watch for onset of South-West monsoon continues.

The winds continue to be northwesterly, and have to become westerly to southwesterly to precipitate the onset over the Kerala coast.

## **ROGUE CIRCULATION**

A rogue circulation in North-West Arabian Sea, fortunately not seen gaining significant strength, has been usurping incoming southwesterly winds off the Somali coast in Africa.

After feeding this circulation, the winds are able to blow only as northwesterlies into the Kerala coast. They need to straighten out and flow in from westerly to southwesterly direction across the Maldives.

India Met Department wind maps plots the rogue circulation as being active off the Yemen coast at least until June 2, sending in northwesterly winds into the Kerala coast.

Under the circumstances, the onset of monsoon could get pushed into June, to fall within the 'window' indicated by the Met Department (June 3 with error margin of four days on either side).

## **HEAVY RAIN**

Some international agencies had indicated the possibility of seasonal rains making a slightly early onset this time.

Meanwhile, centres recording heavy downpour (in cm) overnight in Kerala are Vadakara and Quilandy (Kozhikode) -14 each; Alappuzha -10; Kochi airport and Kumarakom (Kottayam) - 8 each.

Other chief amounts of rainfall reported in cm are: Kozhikode, Konni, Mancompu and Vadakkancherry – 5 each; Irikkur and Mannarkad - 4 each; Chengannur and Kodungallur- 3 each.

Forecast valid until Tuesday morning said that rain or thundershowers would continue to occur at many places in Kerala and at a few places in Lakshadweep.

## **WEATHER WARNING**

A weather warning said that isolated heavy rainfall could break out in the State during the next two days. No significant change is expected until Thursday.

Fishermen have been warned that strong onshore winds occasionally reaching a speed of 45-55 km/hr is likely along off the Kerala coast and over Lakshadweep area until Monday afternoon.

Meanwhile, conditions are favourable for further advance of South-West monsoon over some more parts of southeast and east-central Bay of Bengal and parts of northeast Bay during the next three days

## **Food ministry for 30% dilution in jute bag use rule**

### **Mill body protests, says arguments not factual and sector will lose Rs 2,000 cr**

In a setback to the jute sector, the Union [food ministry](#) has recommended dilution of the [Jute Packaging Materials Act](#) of 1987 (JPMA), pressing instead for a 30 per cent use of plastic bags for packing foodgrain in the 2013-14 [agriculture](#) season.

It has based this on a recent price policy report on raw jute for 2013-14 by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices ([CACP](#)). The CACP said reservation in the JPMA should be reduced to 70 per cent of the total need. JPMA provides for mandatory use of jute bags for packaging of foodgrain and sugar up to 100 per cent by government procurement agencies. The food ministry is the biggest purchaser of the

annually produced 2,000 million jute bags. About 35-40 per cent of jute bags produced by the industry are purchased by the food ministry on behalf of different state food procuring agencies and the Food Corporation of India ([FCI](#)).

"The dilution proposal is very unfortunate. If implemented, it will shrink further. The industry will lose around Rs 2,000 crore if this happens. Though the textile ministry is supposed to take care of the industry, it is neglecting our concerns. There are alternative jute bags available for packaging of foodgrains but these are not being used," said Sanjay Kajaria, joint managing director, Hastings Jute Mill and former chairman, Indian Jute Mills Association. The total market for jute bags, including exports, are estimated at around Rs 10,000 crore.

In 2012-13, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs allowed 10 per cent use of plastic bags for packing foodgrain and 60 per cent for sugar. According to the food ministry, the industry has a peak capacity to supply 2.5-3 million bales (a bale is 180 kg) of jute bags, while the yearly requirement is 3.5-4 million bales.

In a recent letter, Union food secretary Sudhir Kumar complained to his counterpart in the textiles department, Zohra Chatterjee, that for the past two to three years, the state grain procuring agencies were facing many problems regarding timely supply of packaging material. To relax pressure on the grain producing farmers, the JPMA should be eased by 30 per cent, Kumar suggested.

In 2011, Madhya Pradesh witnessed law and order problems because of irregular supply of jute bags. In its proposed arguments before the coming meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee on jute, the industry has claimed the demand for jute bags is lower than production. And, that there are no proven records of supply default to food procuring agencies and FCI.

The Jute Advisory Board at its meeting on May 10 had projected an estimated total

production of 12 million bales for 2013-14 . This includes 11.2 million bales of jute and 0.8 million bale of mesta. In 2012-13, the production was 11.4 million bales, including 10.8 million bales of jute and 0.6 million bales of mesta.

### **Soaring heat hits jaggery trade at Anakapalli**

#### **Traders are worried the heat conditions could damage the jaggery during transport**

Jaggery traders at [Anakapalli](#), despite seeing attractive price for the commodity, are reluctant to offload their stock due to the soaring [heat conditions](#) in the state.

Traders are worried the heat conditions could damage the jaggery during transport. In the current season on the back of good demand, traders have stocked more than 2,800 truck loads (each load contains 10 tonnes) of jaggery, mostly third grade, said KLN Rao, president, Anakapalli Jaggery Merchants Association.

The third grade quality is attracting Rs 3 lakh per load. said K Buchi Raju, a trader, adding they could reap a profit of Rs 30,000-40,000 after excluding expenses like cold storage rentals and interest charges.

In the current season, traders expect early clearance from the usual October-November due to high demand from Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkand, Odisha and Chhattisgarh.