

Seed banks for potato farmers: Mamata

KOLKATA, November 13, 2013 - *Enough stocks to meet demands till December, says Mamata*

The State government will set up “seed banks” to ensure that potato farmers get a fair price for their crops, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Tuesday.

Referring to the ongoing scarcity of potato, she said the State government had enough stocks of the staple vegetable to meet the demand until December.

The previous deadline for emptying all the cold storages with large stocks of potato had also been extended from November 30 to December 15, she told a rally organised by the Trinamool Congress in the Ilambajar area in Birbhum district.

On Monday, the State government claimed to possess a stock of 13.7 lakh metric tons of potatoes which could sustain the demand for two-and-a-half months.

Cheaper in Bengal

Ms. Banerjee said, “It is only in West Bengal that the price of potato has been fixed at Rs. 13 per kg whereas in Delhi it is being sold at Rs. 50 per kg, in Rajasthan between Rs. 45 and Rs. 50.”

To ensure that potato farmers got a fair price for their crop, the State government would buy the vegetable directly from them, said Ms. Banerjee. “Earlier they got only Rs. 2 per kg and now they are getting Rs. 8 per kg.”

State Secretary of the Communist Party of India Manju Kumar Majumdar slammed the State government for its failure to curb the rising price of potatoes.

The task force set up by it to keep prices of essential foodstuff in check is “only in name,” he said.

Farmers made to run from pillar to post: KRRS



SINDHANUR (RAICHUR DISTRICT), November 13, 2013 - *Government criticised for following anti-farmer policies*

Participants at the farmers' conference at Sindhanur in Raichur district on Tuesday.— PHOTO: SANTOSH SAGAR Melukote MLA and farmers' leader K.S. Puttannaiah has alleged that the

government policies have forced farmers to run from pillar to post for just minimum support price for agricultural produce.

He was speaking at a farmers' conference here on Tuesday, organised by the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) and Hasiru Sene.

"Running from one office to another with an application seeking just minimum support price for agricultural produce is an indication of slavery. Our struggle is just against unjust policies," he said.

These anti-farmer policies had pushed farming community out of villages, he said. He demanded that a separate commission be formed to deal exclusively with farmer-related issues. Mr. Puttannaiah urged the government to come up with a policy of encouraging agriculture-based industries to overcome agricultural distress. He announced that a delegation of farmer leaders would soon meet Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to discuss irrigation-related issues of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra command areas. Earlier, Chamarasa Mali Patil, State president of KRRS, urged the government to encourage export of Sona Masuri with a special policy.

The conference, which was attended by farmers from Raichur, Koppal, Bellary, Yadagir and Davangere districts, took five resolutions, including an MSP of Rs. 2,000, Rs. 6,500 and Rs. 1,500 a quintal each of paddy, cotton and corn, respectively. They demanded withdrawal of new levy policy enforced to ensure supply of rice for Anna Bhagya scheme.

Scheme for rural women farmers

KALPETTA, November 13, 2013 - *Kudumbasree is implementing the Centrally aided scheme*

The district Kudumbasree Mission has launched the Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojna (MKSP), a Centrally sponsored project for empowering rural women farmers, in the district. The project is being implemented in association with the Agriculture Department, Krishi Vijnan Kendra (KVK) at Ambalavayal, and local bodies.

"We are planning to provide training programmes in various aspects of joint farming such as improving productivity of various crops, practical training in modern farming implements, scientific application of fertilizers and pesticides, conservation of seeds, marketing and overall farm supervision," Kudumbasree Mission district coordinator P.P. Muhammad told *The Hindu*.

Organic pesticides

Apart from this, the members will be trained in the production, distribution and marketing of organic pesticides. "As part of the programme, 21,000 members of the 3,568 joint liability groups (JLG) of the Kudumbasree Mission will be provided one-day training. The 26 Community Development Societies (CDS) under the organisation will be divided into five clusters and an 18-day training programme has been planned," he said.

The one-day training programme was launched here on Tuesday. As many as 685 master women farmers have been selected for the implementation of the project. Experts from the KVK and Agriculture Department will train them for two days.

A two-day technical training will be provided to presidents and secretaries of the JLGs. The training programmes will begin on Friday. "We are planning to utilise 2,500 hectares of leased land for group farming through JLGs this year as against 1,250 ha last year," Mr. Muhammad said.

Thirteen farmer facilitation centres had been functioning in the district to assist JLGs and the number would be doubled by the end of December. Produces of the JLGs would be procured and marketed by the Kudumbasree through its weekly markets.

☐ **Training in various aspects of joint farming**

☐ **Plan to utilise 2,500 ha for group farming**

Netting profit, awards through freshwater fish farming



KANCHIYAR (IDUKKI DISTRICT), November 13, 2013 -

Good catch: Thomas Thekkel, a farmer, catches fish from the pond close to his house at Anjuruly in Idukki district on Tuesday. – Photo: Giji K. Raman

In 2008, in this village near the Idukki reservoir, a large number of ponds lay abandoned. But they soon turned out to be sources of income for farmers in Anjuruly with the introduction of the 'Matsya Keralam' project. They started freshwater fish farming and is now netting good income from it.

"There are around 100 farmers doing fish farming in ponds. Of them nearly 15 are doing it in large-scale, says P. C. Babu, co-

ordinator, Matsya Club. Under the club there are 219 registered farmers. It was chosen as the best 'Matsya Club' in the district this year. The club had also won the award for the best 'Matsya Club' in the State in 2010.

"Fisheries Department provides free training and fish seeds to the farmers under the Matsya Karshaka Club. Fish seeds are supplied at a subsidized rate", he says.

Like marine fish varieties, fresh water fishes are also in good demand. "There is always good demand for the freshwater fish and most of the farmers sell them to regular buyers locally, says Thomas Thekkel, a farmer at Anjuruly. The main varieties grown are Katla, Rohu and Mrugal.

According to Manikandan, manager of an estate at Meppara, where the fish farming is done in a check dam, no additional investment is needed to grow the fish.

He says it is done as per the suggestions given by the Matsya Club officials. "It is possible to use the ponds in the cardamom plantations too. However, the uncontrolled pesticide application could have a negative impact," he adds.

Babu Vandackal, another farmer, says he sells the fish for around Rs. 200 per kg. Now, the project has a different name, Matsya Samrudhi', under the new government. "A building has been completed at Pallikavala exclusively for fish farmers here. It will be equipped with nets and other materials needed for fish farmers," Mr. Babu says. In the second phase, a project for ornamental fish farming will be started and women will be given training, he says.

Civic body identifies new site for shifting wholesale onion market



Mayor inspects a 2.5-acre site at Sengulam Colony

peeled off: On Tuesday, the business was dull at the otherwise busy wholesale onion market in Tiruchi. —Photo: A. Muralitharan

TIRUCHI, November 13, 2013 - After failing to make any headway on its earlier plan to shift some of the wholesale sections of the Gandhi Market

to G. Corner grounds, the Tiruchirapalli City Corporation is now toying with the idea of shifting wholesale onion traders to the Sengulam Colony market in the city.

The corporation seemed to have dropped, for all practical purposes, the proposal to shift wholesale onion, banana, jaggery, and fruit markets, currently functioning around Gandhi Market in the city, to G. Corner grounds along the Tiruchi-Chennai bypass. The 2.50-acre site near Sengulam Colony, which had been encroached upon by a few private individuals for several years, was recovered by the civic body a few years ago with the help of the district administration. A market was established on a portion of the land. Recently, the Corporation Council gave its nod for constructing a shopping complex on the site.

After an inspection of the site on Tuesday, Mayor A. Jaya instructed civic officials to shift the onion wholesale section, currently functioning along the Sub-Jail Road outside the Gandhi Market, to the Sengulam Colony. Onion wholesale traders could be shifted gradually to the proposed multi-storeyed shopping complex which would have commercial space for a daily market and parking area, she said.

However, enquiries with the onion wholesale traders at the Gandhi Market revealed that the corporation has not consulted them on the matter so far.

"The corporation has come up with different proposals at various times. But so far, we have not been consulted on the suitability of the site or our requirements," said a wholesale onion trader on condition of anonymity.

"We are ready to move out provided we get suitable space as we too are facing problems in functioning along the Sub Jail Road," he said. There are about 70 wholesale traders functioning and each of them requires a minimum of 1,000 square feet of space. Besides,

there should be adequate space for movement of trucks and for loading and unloading, according to the traders.

But most of the wholesale traders engaged in onion and other vegetables feel that both traders and consumers would stand to benefit if the corporation built an integrated market to accommodate all of them rather than moving the wholesale sections in bits and pieces to different parts of the city.

Ms. Jaya, who inspected the “vazhakkai mandi” during the day, instructed the officials to construct a new building at the overhead drinking water tank complex at Viragupettai to accommodate some of the banana traders. The mandi is facing acute space shortage and infrastructure constraints. She directed the officials to build rest rooms with toilets and bathrooms at the corporation lorry parking lot on the East Boulevard Road where trucks coming to the Gandhi Market are parked. Commercial space for selling spare parts for trucks would be provided at the parking lot. A community kitchen with a biogas unit would be built at a cost of Rs. 15 lakh near the Amma canteen at Viragupettai.

☒ *Traders say they are willing to relocate if infrastructure is created*

☒ *There are about 70 traders and each wants a space of 1,000 sq. ft.*

Cotton crop estimate at 380.50 lakh bales

MUMBAI, November 13, 2013 - Cotton production is estimated to be higher at 380.50 lakh bales for the 2013-14 season, beginning on October 1, compared to the previous season, according to the Cotton Association of India (CAI).

During the 2012-13 season, the cotton output stood at 356.75 lakh bales of 170 kg each, it said.

As the monsoon has finally withdrawn, cotton arrivals have begun in right earnest, according to the CAI.

Milk Coop. to launch cashew burfi

MANGALORE, November 13, 2013 - The Dakshina Kannada Cooperative Milk Producers Union (DKMUL) will be introducing cashew burfi in the market on November 16 when the Cooperative Week celebration starts. The union has products such as Mango Lassi, Mysore Pak and Nandini Bite in the market. It will also introduce ghee in a 5-kg bottle.

Union’s chairman Raviraj Hegde said that the sweet will be the best available in the market.

‘The best’

“We have tasted (all of them) and found this to be the best,” he said. Cashew burfi will initially be available in a 100-gram box.

Union's managing director B.V. Satyanarayana said that the product was being manufactured in Bangalore.

The union's plant will be making the sweet with cashew nuts sourced from the local market.

'Good response'

Cashew burfi produced at the union's plant was sent around to different dealers and consumers in the city to get a feedback.

"We made alterations to the product based on the feedback," Mr. Satyanarayana said.

Cashew Burfi, the Nandini brand, will be competing with other cashew burfi brands available in the local market. "We do not use maida and it is not high on sugar content," he said.

The union has procured the film necessary for packing of their new product.

The new Nandini Ghee in 5-kg bottle, Mr. Satyanarayana said, would be targeted at sweet shops, hotels and other bulk ghee users.

Gir cow milk to reach people soon

'Gir cow fed with a special feed can produce milk that has medicinal values'



G. Sudarshana Rao at his farm with Gir breed cows at Veerankilock.—PHOTO: V.RAJU

VUYYURU, November 13, 2013 - Milk from Gir breed of cows that originally inhabited the Gir Forest in Saurashtra region of Gujarat, are here in Krishna District, thanks to the entrepreneur-turned-medico G. Sudarsana Rao, who has set up a dairy at Veerankilock village in Vuyyuru mandal.

In an exclusive chat with *The Hindu*, he said that the Gir breed of cows give milk that contains conjugated lineolic acid, which has been proved to be an anti-cancer compound. The claim that Gir cow milk not only prevents but controls diabetes is not yet settled. As per ongoing research by Sai Butcha Rao, a research associate at International Livestock Research Institute, ICRISAT, Patancheru, if the Gir cow is fed with a special feed it could produce milk that has medicinal values to stimulate the pancreas to produce insulin and thereby control diabetes.

According to him, the mention of this breed was made in the Vedas and the Brazilians had taken thousands of cows of this breed to their country centuries ago from Gujarat.

Today, the breed is called Girolando in Brazil, he said. The breed is on the verge of extinction in its native country, he claims. "Today, there are about 15,000 of these cows left in Gujarat. And to save the breed the Gujarat Government has embarked on an ambitious breeding project at a cost of Rs.1,400 crore," he added.

Dr. Sudarsana Rao said that the Gir cow milk was lighter compared to others, has high concentration of calcium, proteins and vitamins D and C and is sweet and tasteful.

To begin with, he has imported about 34 animals and aims to have a stock of 400 in a year. Terming the milk as 'organic milk' under the brand Ayush Organic Product, he said: "No milk is organic, but it becomes organic based on the organic feed that is fed to the cattle."

No chemical used

The farm has a hydroponic machine that produces tailor-made green organic fodder. The imported machine can generate fodder from seeds such as barley or horseshoe gram in a controlled environment. For every 1.25 kg. of seed we can get green and highly nutrient organic fodder up to 8 to 10 kg. and the facility can be easily expanded depending on the requirement, he observed.

Dr Rao also pointed out that no chemical is used in the processing. "The milk that is extracted goes directly to the chilling machine and is chilled at 2 degrees and immediately packed and transported in insulated boxes, where the temperature is maintained at 3 degree Celsius," he said.

According to him, the yield of the native breed is much less compared to the Holstein Friesian (HF) breed.

Initially, the milk will be marketed in half and one-litre packets in Hyderabad and later sold at other major cities such as Vijayawada and Guntur through select outlets.

The farm will be inaugurated by Animal Husbandry Director D. Venkateswarulu on Wednesday.

📌 ***Gir breed cows that originally inhabited Gujarat are now found in Krishna District***
📌 ***Entrepreneur-turned-medico sets up dairy at Veerankilock in Vuyyuru mandal***

Vegetables harvested at school

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, November 13, 2013 - The students of Carmel Higher Secondary School had a bumper yield of various crops from the vegetable garden on the school premises. The garden was set up as part of a comprehensive vegetable farming project of the Agriculture Department in various schools. The students had planted peas, ladies' finger, tomato, and chilli in 600 tins. They gifted a part of their yield to N. Vijayan, Additional Director of the Agriculture Department, who visited the school on Tuesday.

Relief promised to those hit by irrigation project

BELGAUM, November 13, 2013 - Families affected by the Bellary Nala irrigation project in Belgaum district can look forward to compensation for their land submerged due to the construction of the dam, according to Minister for Water Resources M.B. Patil. He also promised relief and resettlement work within six months.

Mr. Patil, who is inspecting irrigation projects in the Upper Krishna basin in north Karnataka region, inspected the Bellary Nala project site near Siddanahalli village on Tuesday. He promised to award compensation to the affected families, in accordance with the Land Acquisition Bill, within six months.

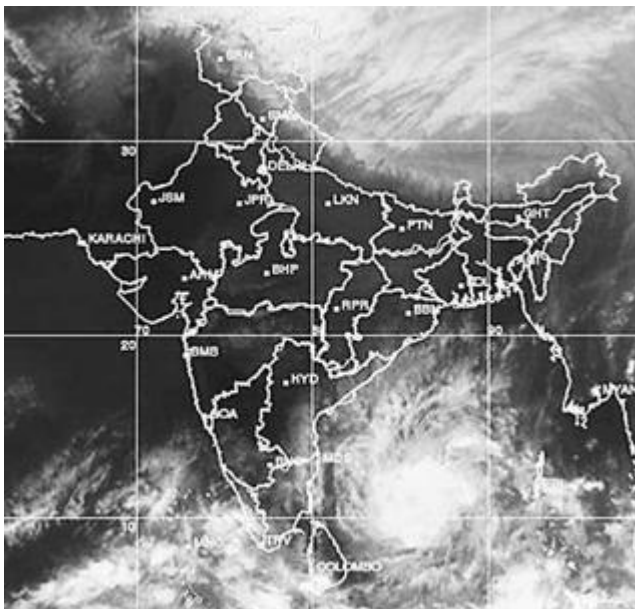
He admitted there had been a delay in the payment of compensation.

The Minister did not rule out the possibility of re-opening the 'file' on large-scale irregularities that came to light during the previous BJP government. An executive engineer had been suspended for large-scale irregularities, but his suspension was revoked later.

Water level

TIRUNELVELI, November 13, 2013 - Water level in the Papanasam dam on Tuesday stood at 90.20 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 920.44 cusecs and 1,113.50 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam. The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 66.10 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 82 cusecs and 35 cusecs of water was discharged.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on November 12.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Anantapur	31	19	0	51
Arogyavaram	28	17	0	159
Bapatla	31	20	0	504
Calingapatnam	29	18	0	922
Gannavaram	31	19	0	411

Hanamkonda	30	17	0	284
Hyderabad AP	29	14	0	239
Kakinada	31	21	0	622
Khammam	32	22	0	98
Kavali	31	21	tr	406
Kurnool	31	18	0	96
Mahabubnagar	31	15	0	163
Machilipatnam	30	21	0	384
Nandyal	—	—	—	—
Narasapur	31	21	0	606
Nellore	32	24	0	323
Nizamabad	31	16	0	106
Ongole	32	22	0	489
Ramagundam	30	15	0	201
Tirupathi AP	31	22	0	256
Tuni	32	21	0	470
Vizag AP	31	21	0	555
Vizag	31	22	0	511
KARNATAKA				
Agumbe	29	13	0	583
Bengaluru AP	28	18	0	113
Bengaluru	29	18	0	104
Bagalkote	29	13	0	—
Belgaum AP	28	12	0	60
Bellary	30	17	0	63
Bijapur	28	12	0	113
Chitradurga	29	15	0	54
Chickmagalur	29	15	0	41
Chintamani	28	15	0	50
Gadag	28	15	0	88
Gulbarga	31	17	0	35
Hassan	31	20	0	83
Honavar	33	21	0	261
Karwar	35	20	0	167
Madikeri	25	15	0	189
Mangalore AP	33	23	0	292
Mysore	29	19	0	125
Mandya	30	19	0	132
Panambur	35	24	0	235
Raichur	30	14	0	102
Shirali	33	21	0	414
KERALA				
Alappuzha	32	25	1	162
Kannur	35	25	0	320
Kochi AP	33	23	2	367
Kottayam	34	24	0	423
Kozhikode	34	25	3	208

Punalur	34	23	7	447
Thiruvanantha				
-puram AP	32	25	43	191
Thiruvanantha				
-puram City	33	23	32	272
Vellanikkara	33	25	0	375
TAMIL NADU				
Adirampattinam	31	23	0	110
Chennai	31	24	0	197
Chennai AP	31	23	0	256
Coimbatore AP	31	24	0	104
Coonoor	19	14	0	283
Cuddalore	31	23	0	170
Dharmapuri	31	19	0	159
Kanyakumari	33	25	0	119
Karaikal	30	24	0	162
Kodaikanal	21	11	0	163
Madurai AP	33	25	0	197
Nagapattinam	30	25	0	154
Palayamkottai	33	25	0	216
Pamban	31	27	0	194
Parangipettai	31	24	0	286
Puducherry	31	23	0	130
Salem	33	21	0	153
Thanjavur	31	25	0	117
Tiruchi AP	31	23	0	161
Tirupattur	30	16	0	133
Tiruttani	31	21	0	205
Tondi	31	24	0	259
Tuticorin	32	25	0	109
Ooty	20	11	0	199
Valparai	25	15	2	243
Vellore	31	21	0	78
LAKSHADWEEP				
Amini Divi	33	25	0	92
Minicoy	31	26	0	109
Kavarathi	—	—	—	—
OTHER STATIONS				
Kolkata (Alipore)	29	18	0	523
Mumbai	33	24	0	66
New Delhi	27	11	0	73

The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (trace) and total rainfall in mm since October 01, 2013.

DRY WEATHER IN ANDHRA PRADESH

CHENNAI: Rainfall occurred at a few places over Kerala. Isolated rainfall occurred over Tamil Nadu.

Dry weather prevailed over Lakshadweep, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

The minimum temperature fell appreciably at one or two places over Coastal Karnataka, fell at one or two places over Telangana, north interior Karnataka, rose at one or two places over Kerala and changed little elsewhere over the region.

They were markedly below normal at one or two places over north interior Karnataka, appreciably below normal at one or two places over Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, rest north interior Karnataka, north Tamil Nadu, below normal at one or two places over rest coastal Andhra Pradesh, rest Telangana, coastal Karnataka, Rayalaseema, north interior Tamil Nadu, appreciably above normal one or two places over rest north interior Tamil Nadu, above normal at one or two places over south Tamil Nadu and were remained normal over the rest of the region.

FORECAST (Valid until Thursday morning): Rain or thundershower would occur at a few places over interior Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Lakshadweep. Isolated rain or thundershowers may occur over coastal Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. Mainly dry weather will prevail over Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.



Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Nov 13

Max 31° | Min 24°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 59

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:05

Sunset: 05:39

Barometer: 1006

Tomorrow's Forecast



Sunny

Thursday, Nov 14

Max 31° | Min 24°

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday
Nov 15



31° | 24°

Partly Cloudy

Saturday
Nov 16



32° | 24°

Partly Cloudy

Sunday
Nov 17



27° | 25°

Overcast

Monday
Nov 18



26° | 26°

Overcast

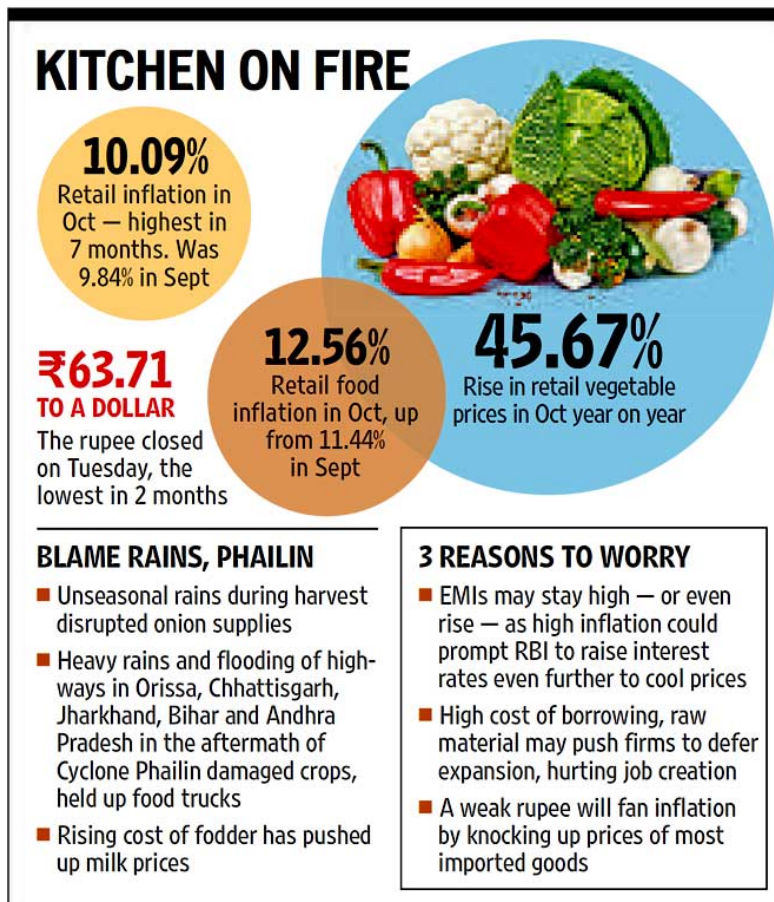
Tuesday
Nov 19



27° | 26°

Overcast

Veggie prices push inflation to 10.09%



Prices of almost all everyday products and services — from food to footwear and movie tickets to medicines — saw a sharp rise in October, pushing retail inflation to 10.09%, the highest in seven months. Costlier onions and tomatoes saw retail inflation — a measure of prices that are asked of you at a shop — cross the double-digit mark for the first time in seven months, indicating Indians are paying some of the highest prices in recent times for virtually everything. Factory output, on the other hand, grew 2% in September, from 0.4% in August, but experts cautioned that it may be too early to conclude this as the beginning of industrial recovery.

Rising prices and sliding growth remain key worries for the government strung in a by a heavy debt burden.

“CPI (consumer price index) at over 10% is a disturbing sign. Growth in CPI is due to a rise in food inflation,” C Rangarajan, chairman of Prime Minister’s economic advisory council, said.

High prices, as shown by data on Tuesday, also signal India’s inability to control household inflation, partly stoked by a falling rupee.

It could get worse with the rupee falling to a two-month low to Rs. 63.17 to a dollar on Tuesday amid fears that the US will begin unwinding its easy-money policy that will prompt foreign funds to move dollars away from emerging markets such as India.

“But Besides, home loans could get costlier and home budgets could get squeezed further as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) could announce another round of interest rate hike next month to tame galloping inflation.

India’s overall CPI-based inflation rose 10.09% in October, up from 9.84% in September. In cities, it was even higher at 10.20%, compared to 10.11% in rural India.

The devil of the fresh price indices lay in the detail. Compared to October 2012, vegetable prices went up 45.67%, while fruits prices rose 12.84%.

Overall food prices rose 12.56% in October compared to the same month last year. Prepared meals' prices — a proxy for restaurant rates — rose 9.1%, primarily because of soaring vegetable prices and high rents. Even personal care is getting expensive -- deodorants and lipstick prices are up 6% when compared to last October.

Prices of onion, tomato continue to rule high in NCR

Tomato and onion prices are continuing to rule high at Rs.60-80 per kg in retail markets of the national capital region despite improved supplies and fall in wholesale prices. Tomatoes are being sold at Rs. 60-70 per kg, while onions are available at high rate of Rs. 70-80 per kg. Prices of another kitchen staple, potato, have also risen to Rs. 40-44 per kg.

Potato, onion and tomatoes are the three most common vegetables used in every household.

Mother Dairy, which has about 400 retail outlets in the national capital region, is selling tomatoes at Rs. 60 and Rs.64 per kg, onions at Rs. 60 and Rs. 63 per kg depending upon the quality. While it is charging Rs. 31-33 per kg for the potato coming from cold storage and Rs. 37-39 for new crop of potato.

"From the beginning of this week prices have come down by Rs. 5-15 per kg as supplies have improved, but its impact is so far not visible in the retail markets," Azadpur Mandi APMC Chairman Rajender Sharma said.

Sharma added that wholesale prices of Onion have come down to Rs. 25-45 per kg, tomato to Rs. 20-45 per kg and potato at Rs. 10-25 per kg.

"Prices would further cool down in the coming days as rains have stopped and supplies are gradually increasing," he said.

Tomato supplies are on the rise from Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, while onion supplies have also improved especially from neighbouring state of Rajasthan, traders said. They added that potato from Punjab and Uttar Pradesh has also started coming to wholesale markets in the national capital.

As per government data, onion was being sold at Rs. 100 per kg in Aizwal, Rs. 90 per kg in Dimapur and Rs. 80 per kg in Hisar. It was cheapest Rs. 35 per kg in Bhopal. The average for 57 cities was Rs. 50 per kg.

Tomato was costliest at Rs. 80 per kg in Jammu, Ludhiana and Portblair, and cheapest at Rs. 21 per kg in Dharwad. The data put price of tomato in Delhi at Rs. 60 per kg and of Onion at Rs. 65 per kg.

Agri graduates come to aid of farmers with hi-tech products

HYDERABAD: With heavy rains having a devastating impact on crops this year, young agricultural researchers are finding ways to improve traditional farming with the use of technologically advanced gadgets made by them.

From making new age pump sets with moisture sensors that can detect groundwater levels to electronic reaping gadgets that allow farmers to improve harvesting and electronically-controlled plowing devices, the young researchers are on their way to contribute to the field of agriculture.

Three years ago, B Tech graduate N Rajesh Kumar decided to develop the semester research project into a product for farmers. The product, electronic reaping gadget, helps farmers reap crops without employing too many workers, which will reduce farming costs, claims Kumar.

"Now with the state facing a farming crisis I think young tech grads should think of helping the agriculturists. I am also working on a product that would help farmers tap rainwater faster than the traditional method," said an enthusiastic Kumar.

In another case, Kondamudi Swarnarekha, a student of BV Raju [Institute of Technology](#) (BVRIT) has come up with an automatic irrigation product for farmers who are reeling under power and water scarcity. The device has moisture sensors that are buried in the soil, which send messages to the farmer's cell phone with instructions to turn off or switch on the water pump based on the water level in the field.

Agriculturists can thus control their pumps from a distance without wasting water and electricity. The product has been developed at a cost of Rs 50,000 to Rs 60,000 by the Microsoft innovation centre.

Most farmers make a beeline at the district agriculture office to get the soil examiner test the characteristics of their respective soil types, but with the product developed by young B Tech graduate Shyam Murali, the famers can carry out tests in their own fields.

"The product helps decide what the crop should be based on the soil type. The meter can also record variation in the composition of the soil, thereby allowing farmers to decide on the amount of fertilizers required to bring out the best crop," said Shyam, a Tamil student who did his studies in the city.

Another tech grad, [Reshma Satheesh](#), who developed a plowing device in her graduation, is

set to market her product. "The device does not dig deep into the soil like a tractor does. It can be used for small crops including vegetable plantation," she explained.

The youngsters are all marketing their products with the help of [NG Ranga Agricultural University](#), located in the city.



Technical aid for farmers on the cards

Aimed at reorienting the functions of agriculture engineers towards extension activities, the Engineering Wing of the Agricultural Department is planning to set up Custom Hiring Centres - a service delivery system - to cater to the various needs of farmers. The centres are being planned to assist the farmers to adopt innovative and latest technologies in each stage of crop production, including the use of information technology tools such as inline monitoring and evaluation, on-line submission of applications at field-level transferring of financial assistance through ECS (Electronic Clearing Service) and e-payments.

Planned at a cost of Rs 77.50 crore under a Central scheme, the Engineering Wing has submitted a proposal for the same to the Centre.

The Hiring Centres will be set up at block level to facilitate integration of mechanisation, which would be under the close supervision and guidance of the Engineering Wing, the proposal says.

Mobile farm clinics will be established at block levels in all districts, as mobility is crucial for successful implementation.

The centres are expected to improve farm clinical services and deliver technical as well as operational support to farmers.

The Custom Hiring Centres will also be used to initiate a large farm-mechanisation project on self-supporting basis, the proposal says.

Business Standard

Vegetable prices push Oct retail inflation to double-digit zone

CPI-based inflation at 10.09%; rising onion and tomato prices add to pressure



Rising vegetable prices catapulted the Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based [inflation](#) to double digits in October, after a gap of six months, even as normal monsoon is expected to yield a bumper crop this financial year.

Retail inflation rose to 10.09 per cent in the month from 9.84 per cent in September as the rate of price rise in [vegetables](#) surged to 45.67 per cent against 34.93 per cent over the period, showed official data released on Tuesday.

Both urban and rural areas witnessed double-digit inflation at 10.20 per cent and 10.11 per cent, respectively, in October.

Overall food and beverages inflation soared to 12.56 per cent against 11.44 per cent in September.



With food items having a weight of more than 45 per cent in the CPI, this inflation surges whenever food prices rise. On the other hand, food items have 24 per cent weight in the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) because of which the WPI inflation stood at just 6.46 per cent in September. WPI inflation for October is slated to come later this week.

“The link between good agriculture production and low food prices have been broken from 2009-10. You require efficient logistics to supply these items as well,” State Bank of India Chief Economic Adviser Soumya Kanti Ghosh told Business Standard.

Besides, local problems in onion and tomatoes also added to the food inflation pressure, he said. Cyclone Phailin had affected paddy crop last month. Cereal inflation remained elevated, despite some moderation at 12.01 per cent in October from 12.77 per cent in September.

Potato supply starts, but prices remain high



Traders in the state are making all-out effort to import the vegetable from other states

Scarcity in supply of [potato](#) eased in the city with arrival of 23 truck-loads of the tuber, though its prices continued to remain high in the market.

Meanwhile, the [West Bengal](#) government refused to relax the restrictions imposed on [export](#) of potatoes.

The traders in the state are making all-out effort to import the vegetable from other states.

"The supply of potato has started from Monday. The prices will normalise if the present flow of supply continues," said Madhusudan Padhi, secretary, Food and Supplies department.

A lion's share of state's potato requirement is met by supplies from West Bengal.

The wholesale price of the tuber hovered around Rs 30 per kg while the retail price remained at about Rs 40 per kg.

The prices of potato has skyrocketed in last few days to around Rs 50 per kg with the West Bengal government imposing restrictions on its export to contain the prices in the local market. Sources said, 400 trucks of potatoes are required daily in the state.

"We are in touch with the traders of different states. Once the supplies improve, there will be no scarcity of potato," said Sudhakar Panda, chairman, Bhubaneswar Merchants Association. Five truck-loads of potato arrived in Cuttack today. Similarly, Sambalpur, Rourkela, Nayagarh and Balasore received four truck-loads each while three trucks carrying the vegetable reached Keonjhar.

Potato up 0.7% on fresh buying

Delivery for March contract traded higher by 0.6%

[Potato](#) prices rose by Rs 6.70 to Rs 899 per quintal in futures trade today as traders created fresh positions on the back of rising demand in the domestic market.

Sentiment improved further on restricted arrivals from producing regions.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), potato for April contract rose by Rs 6.70, or 0.75%, to Rs 899 per quintal, with a trading volume of 15 lots.

The delivery for March contract also traded higher by Rs 5.60, or 0.60%, to Rs 924 per quintal with a business volume of 28 lots.

Marketmen said the rise in potato prices in futures trade was attributed to the rising spot demand.

Also, restricted arrivals in the markets from producing belts in UP, Punjab, MP and West Bengal also influenced the prices, they said.

Coriander up 2.7% on spot demand



Spice for delivery in December traded higher by 1.96%

[Coriander](#) prices rose by 2.71% to Rs 6,887 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators enlarged their positions supported by rising demand in the spot markets.

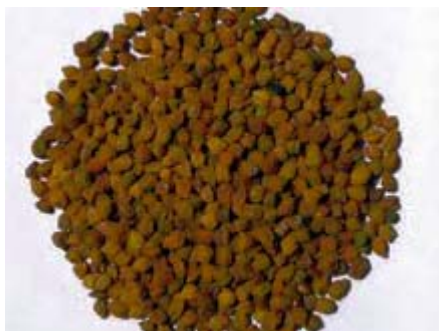
At the [National Commodity and Derivative Exchange](#), coriander for November delivery gained Rs 182, or

2.71%, to Rs 6,887 per quintal with an open interest of 1,190 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in December traded higher by Rs 137, or 1.96%, to Rs 7,135 per quintal, with an open interest of 24,870 lots.

Market analysts said increased buying by speculators on pick up in spot market demand against restricted arrivals from producing belts mainly influenced coriander prices to rise in futures trade.

Chana up 0.7% on high buying activity



Chana prices for delivery in December went higher 0.38%

[Chana](#) prices rose by Rs 21 to Rs 3,015 per quintal in futures trade today as traders enlarged their holdings on account of good demand in the spot market.

However, significant stocks and reports of conducive weather for sowing amid adequate soil moisture

restricted the upside.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), chana for delivery in November rose by Rs 21, or 0.70%, to Rs 3,015 per quintal, with an open interest of 2,610 lots.

Similarly, chana prices for delivery in December went higher by Rs 12, or 0.38%, to Rs 3,145 per quintal, with an open interest of 98,470 lots.

Traders said fresh enquiries from millers at lower levels is supporting the upside in prices, but it is unlikely to sustain the uptrend because sowing is progressing well in the leading cultivating states.

Cardamom down 0.5% on profit booking



Spice for delivery in November month fell by 0.28%

[Cardamom](#) futures prices fell by Rs 3.70 to Rs 730 per kg today, as traders reduced their holdings on account of sluggish demand at the prevailing increased levels.

Sufficient stocks holdings in the physical market also influenced the cardamom prices.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for December contract declined by Rs 3.70, or 0.50%, to Rs 730 per kg, with a business turnover of 224 lots.

The spice for delivery in November month fell by Rs 2.10, or 0.28%, to Rs 733 per kg, with a trading volume of 8 lots.

Marketmen said, besides profit taking by speculators at existing higher prices, fall in demand in spot market also put pressure on cardamom prices in futures market.

Govt tells states to lower levy rice quota for PDS



Increases broken rice content to 12% from 4%

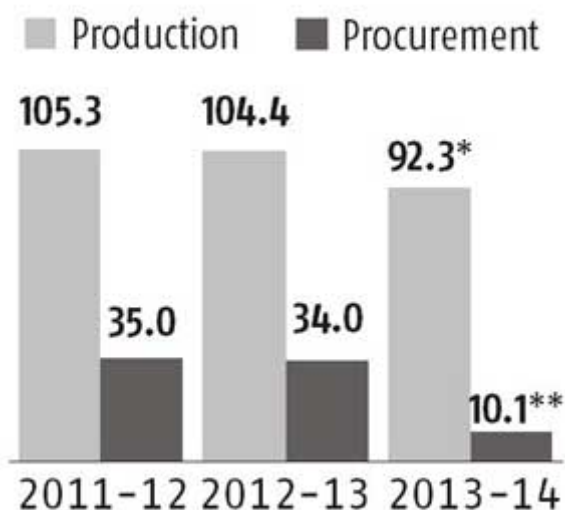
In a move that could increase the supply of rice in the retail markets, the Centre has directed states to reduce quota for [levy rice](#), sold for public distribution system ([PDS](#)), from the existing 30-75 per cent to 25 per cent of the total produce of millers in the current procurement season, which began in October.

However, only Uttar Pradesh and Haryana have reacted favourably to the proposal, officials said. Other states, including the biggest contributor of rice to the central pool, Andhra Pradesh, are not game.

The Centre has decided to accept rice with 12 per cent broken content from millers under custom milled rice (CMR), against the norm of four per cent. This could enable millers to liquidate their rice stocks and undertake fresh processing.

However, for consumers, this could mean they would get inferior quality through PDS.

GRAIN OF CONTENTION



All figures in mt; *Only kharif season; **Till November 11; Note: In 2012-13, of the 34 million tonnes (mt) procured by FCI, 8 mt was levy rice

The government gets the rice for the central pool to be distributed through PDS by two ways: Custom-milled and levy rice.

In CMR, the government purchases husked rice from farmers and then allocates it to mills for processing for a fixed charge and rebuys again from them.

In the levy rice policy, millers are allowed to sell a certain percentage (25–70 per cent in major rice producing states) of rice procured by them in the open market, while the remaining (called levy rice) is collected by government agencies at a minimum support price ([MSP](#)).

In 2012-13, rice procurement season that ended in September, out of the total

procurement of 34 million tonnes, around eight million tonnes or 23.5 per cent was levy rice, while the rest was procured through custom milling.

However, in 2013-14 procurement season, not a single grain of levy rice has been received so far.

Last year, of the eight million tonnes of levy rice received in the central pool, around 5.5 million tonnes was from Andhra Pradesh alone, while Uttar Pradesh contributed 1.09 million tonnes. Karnataka contributed 58,732 tonnes, while Haryana contributed 27,223 tonnes.

“This directive may ensure that in the open market supplies of rice could rise, while there would be more freedom for millers to sell their produce on market rates,” said a senior food ministry official.

The official said assuming the quantum of levy rice remains at the last year’s level, easily two-three million tonnes of additional stock can come in the open market. The government data showed that retail price of rice has risen by almost 30 per cent since 2011.

Officials said for farmers too, it would mean a good option as they would be free to sell their produce to anyone who pays higher price. But, in states like Bihar and UP, where the open market procurement price of rice is much below the Centre-fixed MSP, the proposal could impact the interest of growers.

THE HINDU Business Line

Spot rubber prices recover marginally

Kottayam, Nov.12: Spot rubber recovered marginally on Tuesday. The market opened steady but improved later on covering purchases, at lower levels, following the moderate gains in the domestic futures market. Major manufacturers continued to sideline the market, but absence of genuine sellers kept prices firm, during closing hours. Sheet rubber improved to Rs 157.50 (Rs 156.50) a kg, according to traders. The grade finished flat at Rs 157 and Rs 154 respectively, as reported by the Rubber Board and dealers. November futures increased to Rs 160 (Rs 157.03), December to Rs 161.12 (Rs 158.61) and January to Rs 163.25 (Rs 160.75) while the February and March futures were inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. RSS 3 (spot) weakened to Rs 158.08 (Rs 158.56) at Bangkok. November futures closed up at ¥ 248.5 (Rs 158.60) from ¥ 247.0 on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange. **Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were:** RSS-4: 157.50 (156.50); RSS-5: 149 (148.50); Ungraded: 144.50 (144); ISNR 20: 149 (149) and Latex 60%: 106 (107).

We have no money to run factories, say UP sugar mills



CM issued directive to start sugarcane crushing from Nov 20

New Delhi, Nov. 12: Sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh are heading for a stand-off with the State Government on the issue of crushing sugarcane for the current season that began last month.

A day after Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav issued a directive to start crushing from November 20, sugar millers said on Tuesday that “they are unable to start as banks have refused to lend in the absence of any clarity on cane pricing.”

“There is no money, we are not in a position to run the mills incurring further losses,” said Abinash Verma, Director-General of the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA), the apex body of

private sugar mills.

“We are going to convey this to the Uttar Pradesh Government,” Verma said, adding that mills had already lost their money “very badly” in the last two years and total losses are close to Rs 4,000 crore.

Crushing season

Late on Monday, the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister directed sugar mill owners in Saharanpur, Meerut and Moradabad divisions to begin crushing between November 20 and 25. Similarly, other mills in the State have been asked to start crushing by November 30 without further delay. Uttar Pradesh is the second largest producer of sugar after Maharashtra and accounts for close to a third of country’s sugar output of 25 million tonnes. Crushing operations have been delayed as millers want the Government to declare State Advised Price for sugarcane, while expressing their inability to pay beyond Rs 240 a quintal, based on the current sugar prices. Last year, the State Government announced a SAP of Rs 280 a quintal, while farmers this year have been demanding Rs 320 a quintal.

“We have only one demand: Please link the sugarcane price to that of product price,” Verma said, adding that “if the State Government wants to announce a political cane price, let them bear the extra burden. The State can directly give the difference in price to farmers directly in the form of subsidy.”

The Uttar Pradesh Government earns close to Rs 18,000 crore through duty on molasses and liquor produced through molasses.

Meanwhile, indications are that the Uttar Pradesh Government will announce SAP higher than last year’s Rs 280 a quintal. Considering the rise in cost of labour and other inputs such as fertilisers, the State Government has pegged the cost of cane production at Rs 297 a

quintal for the current year, said Sudhir Panwar of Kisan Jagriti Manch, a farmers' organisation.

Taking cue from Karnataka, which recently reduced the purchase tax on cane for millers and removed value-added tax on sugar, while increasing the cane price by Rs 100 to Rs 2,500 a quintal, the Uttar Pradesh Government may also come out with some measures, Panwar said. It is expected that UP may announce the SAP by November-end or early December, he said.

Rainfall activity may rise in TN, AP from Friday

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 12: India Met Department has extended its outlook for intensification of a well-marked low-pressure area over south-east Bay of Bengal by another day.

The weather system is now expected to become a depression by Wednesday, according to its bulletin.

BEHIND SCHEDULE

The 'low' is already two days behind the original schedule set for calibrated intensification, delaying expected landfall over the Tamil Nadu coast.

Consensus projections now favour the system homing in on either on Saturday night or Sunday morning. Intensification into a depression is also mostly factored in, though not the scope for its further evolution.

One factor that works against this is the tapering of sea-surface temperatures on the home stretch.

This is unlike the outer seas where they are in the range of 30 degree Celsius.

PROMOTES CONVECTION

Warmer seas aid the storm building process since they promote convection, or the process of cloud building.

Another factor is that the western half of the 'low' (that faces the Tamil Nadu coast) is getting exposed to drier air floating in from land. A third is a band of opposing westerly winds from the Arabian Sea blowing in as part of a western disturbance in northwest India.

The Met Department said that a feeble western disturbance, a low-pressure wave across the border, has already called in over northern parts over Jammu and Kashmir.

The US Joint Typhoon Warning Centre has given the system a 'medium chance of significant development.'

RAIN OUTLOOK

Rainfall activity over coastal and south Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu will increase from Friday onwards.

In the North, presence of the western disturbance will translate into rain or snow over Jammu and Kashmir for next two days.

Night temperatures are below normal by 4-6 degree Celsius over Punjab, Haryana, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Saurashtra and Kutch, interior Karnataka and interior Andhra Pradesh.

They are only marginally above over Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat region, West Bengal and Sikkim.

The lowest reading of 6.6 deg Celsius was reported at Adampur in Punjab overnight on Tuesday.

Bearish outlook for chana on ample supplies



Indore, Nov. 12: Chana, which had been trading low for the past few days, gained marginally today on improved buying. Chana (kanta) quoted at Rs 3,000-50 a quintal, while chana (desi) ruled at Rs 2,900, chana (vishal) at Rs 2,900-3,000, chana (mausmi) Rs 3,000-3,300, while Kabuli Bitki ruled at Rs 2,800-2,900 a quintal.

Given adequate carryover stocks, arrival of new crop abroad and cheaper imports, the future of chana looks

bearish.

Besides, the area under chana (a rabi crop) is expected to be higher this year.

This will also add to the bearish sentiment, said Ankur Pandya, a trader .

Chana dal (average) was quoted at Rs 3,500-25 , chana dal (medium) at Rs 3,600-25, while chana dal (bold) ruled at Rs 3,900-25 a quintal.

Dollar chana ruled firm on improved domestic and export demand.

On Tuesday, dollar chana (chickpea) in local mandis quoted at Rs 3,500-4,500 (up Rs 300 from last week).

Arrival of dollar chana in Indore mandis today was recorded at 6,000 bags against 15,000-17,000 bags at the State-level.

In container also dollar chana is ruling higher on strong export demand with dollar chana (42/44 count) in the container being quoted at Rs 5,300-25 , while 44/46 count ruled at Rs 5,050, 58/60 count ruled at Rs 4,025 while dollar chana (60/62 count) ruled at Rs 3,925 a quintal.

Sugar rules flat on subdued demand

Mumbai, Nov. 12: Sugar prices ruled flat across the country on routine demand and supply. On the Vashi wholesale market, spot and *nakarates* ruled unchanged as local demand was subdued. Mills continued selling as they need cash.



A Vashi-based wholesaler said that retail demand has been lacking after Diwali, while supply from producers continues to be normal.

Demand from upcountry is still missing at upper-mill level considering the parity with other producing States.

Maharashtra mills are forced to offload sugar in local markets. Even the dispute between farmers and producers over sugarcane price and delay in crushing

have not lifted prices due to surplus stocks. .

Arrivals in Vashi market declined to 59-60 truckloads (of 100 bags each) while local dispatches were 57-58 truckloads.

On Monday evening, about 15-16 mills offered and sold 42,000-45,000 bags at Rs 2,710-2,830 (Rs 2,710-2,830) for S-grade and Rs 2,860-3,000 (Rs 2,860-3,000) for M-grade.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 2,880-2,995 (Rs 2,880-2,996) and M-grade Rs 3,012-3,232 (Rs 3,012-3,232).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs 2,825-2,900 (Rs 2,825-2,900) and M-grade Rs 2,890-3,110 (Rs 2,990-3,110).

Uttar Pradesh rates were: Muzzafarnagar Rs 3,225.

Sellers refuse to part with pepper stocks



Kochi, Nov. 12: Spot pepper prices rose to a new high on Tuesday. Prices for garbled pepper increased to Rs 513 a kg on lack of supplies. Prices in the futures market were also up.

On the spot, there were no arrivals.

Sellers were reluctant to part with their stocks as they are attracted by the daily rise in prices.

In primary markets, ungarbled pepper was traded at Rs 500 against Rs 493 in the terminal market, market sources

told *Business Line*.

Unavailability coupled with projections of a lower crop in India and Vietnam next season led to the surge in prices.

The projections were made at the International Pepper Community meet at Kuching in Malaysia. Actual projections in all origins are likely to be available on Wednesday.

At the same time, there is a strong demand from upcountry markets due to the onset of winter.

“There are more buyers than sellers. In some instances, three buyers eyed one lot,” a source said.

On the NMCE, November contracts were unchanged at Rs 50,116 while December contracts increased by Rs 538 to Rs 50,301 a quintal. The total turnover increased by 17 tonnes to 24 tonnes. Six tonnes of November contracts were liquidated.

On the IPSTA, November contracts were up at Rs 50,000 by Rs 1,000, while December were up by Rs 700 at Rs 49,700.

The total turnover increased to 50 tonnes, while the net open position was three tonnes.

Spot prices shot up by Rs 600 to Rs 49,300 (ungarbled) and Rs 51,300 (garbled).

Export prices moved up to around \$8,450 (c&f) Europe and about \$8,750 a tonne for the US and ruled higher than origins.

Prices quoted for different origins (c&f) New York (\$/tonne): Vietnam Asta-8,150 (Dec); Vietnam Asta-8,275 (Jan/Feb/Mar); MLV Asta-7,950 (Apr-Oct); Lampung Asta-8,275; Brazil Asta-7,700 fob; Brazil b1-7,600 f.o.b.

Turmeric may rule at current levels until season-end



Erode, Nov. 12: Spot turmeric prices in Erode markets increased on Tuesday as medium variety turmeric arrived after a long gap.

“Medium variety turmeric was on offer after a long gap. Traders quoted higher price and purchased 65 per cent of the produce for local requirements. Till the current season ends in January, the current price trend may continue. Chances for prices to improve are remote as farmers are holding back their

quality produce,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. He said that the exporters and local traders are receiving negligible orders from North India. The sale of the yellow spice in other centres of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Assam are also slow, as upcountry traders are seeking only fine variety.

Traders said that their estimate is that over 65 lakh bags of turmeric are available with farmers and stockists. With harvest scheduled during in December-January, they expect another 50 lakh bags to be added to the inventory. Therefore, next year huge stocks will be available for sale and prices could rule at same level.

On Tuesday, prices improved by Rs 200 a quintal in the Regulated Market Committee and Gobichettipalayam Cooperative Marketing Committee.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety quoted at Rs 3,677-5,814 a quintal, the root variety at Rs 3,696-4,897 a quintal.

Salem Hybrid: The finger variety went for Rs 4,634-6,034 and the root variety Rs 4,519-5,329. Of the 653 bags that arrived, only 68 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 5,399-6,209 and the root variety Rs 4,079-4,804. Of the 294 bags on offer, 249 were traded.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety ruled at Rs 4,249-5,840 and the root variety Rs 4,043-4,871. All the 692 bags found takers.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,311-6,169; the root variety Rs 3,869-5,131. All the 239 bags put up for sale were sold.

Wheat likely to be range-bound



Karnal, Nov. 12: After ruling firm for almost a couple of weeks, dara wheat dropped marginally on Tuesday. Flour prices continued to rule firm on steady demand.

Satish Kumar, a market expert, told *Business Line* that there is no particular reason behind the fall. Domestic demand is good and stocks are easily available.

An alteration of Rs 5-10 a quintal wouldn't make much difference and

market may continue to rule around current levels without much fluctuation in the coming days, he said.

In the physical market, dara wheat sold at Rs 1,580-85 a quintal. Around 1,000 bags of wheat arrived and stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,580, while delivery at the chakki was at Rs 1,585 a quintal.

A mixed trend was witnessed on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange on Tuesday.

Wheat for November delivery improved by Re 1 and traded at Rs 1,593 with an open interest of 3,360 lots.

December contracts dropped by Rs 4 and to Rs 1,648. December contracts have some support at Rs 1,646, while resistance is at Rs 1,661.

According to the market sources, wheat futures may continue to rule in a tight range in the coming days.

In the spot market, wheat was traded at Rs 1,540.

Flour Prices

Despite a marginal fall in wheat, flour continued to rule firm on domestic demand and quoted at Rs 1,850.

Similarly, chokar ruled flat at Rs 1,270-90 a quintal.
