

Agri workers complain of anomalies

CUDDALORE, November 18, 2013 - The All India Agriculture Workers' Union (AIAWU) has alleged certain anomalies in providing work to beneficiaries under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

In a representation addressed to the Union Ministry of Rural Development, AIAWU State secretary T. Raveendran has said that in Rayarpalayam village falling within the jurisdiction of the Panruti panchayat, 88 persons had applied for works under the scheme on July 15. But, till now they have not been given any work or unemployment allowances due to them. The local body owes the applicants a sum of Rs. 91,168 that should otherwise have been paid to them as unemployment allowance at the rate of Rs 37 a day for 28 days.

Mr. Raveendran urged the Ministry to clear the dues and also arrange provide the beneficiaries works as provided under the MGNREG Act.

Farmers urged to utilise extension programmes

'Benefits of research, development should also reach them'



Farmers look at new equipment at the Krishi Mela in the college of horticulture in Bidar on Sunday.

BIDAR, November 18, 2013- The government will concentrate on extending the benefits of research and development to farmers, Minister of State for Agriculture Krishna Byre Gowda has said here on Sunday.

Inaugurating the Krishi Mela on the

campus of the College of Horticulture here, he said that the extent and quality of extension work being done by the Department of Agriculture or the farm universities was inadequate. A large quantity of research data accumulated by farm universities was available. Resource persons had invented advanced farm methods or equipment. If steps were initiated to reach these two materials to farmers, they would revolutionise agriculture. However, our efforts in this regard appear to be unsatisfactory. The government would make coordinated efforts to ensure effective extension of advanced farming methods, he said. On the other hand, the farmers were slow to react to the government's extension efforts. For instance, the

Department of Agriculture was promoting the use of micro nutrients under the Bhoochetana scheme, under which soil tests were conducted and micro nutrients supplied to farmers at subsidised rates. However, only 20 per cent of farmers seem to be interested in this initiative. the Minister said.

The proposed commission for fixing prices for agricultural produce would start functioning soon. Because of the difficulty in getting policy-makers in agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, sericulture and other fields was delaying the launch of the commission. The commission would suggest policy changes and put in place systems and processes to ensure a fair price to growers. It would have a revolving fund of Rs. 1,000 crore. Efforts would be made to increase the income of farmers, he said. Mr. Gowda defended the minimum support price for sugarcane of Rs. 2,500 a tonne by stating that it was the optimum price as the sugar prices were low. To make the factories pay this price, the government was willing to let go Rs. 330 crore in taxes, he said.

A pilot project of installing solar irrigation pump sets had been taken up in Chitradurga and Bagalkot. If successful, it would be extended to the whole State, he said.

He agreed to consider the demand for increasing the subsidy to farm equipment and drip irrigation by about 50 per cent to Bidar district.

He urged farmers to focus on horticulture crops, as the climate in Bidar district was suitable for such crops, he said. N. Dharam Singh, MP, MLAs Ishwar Khandre and Gurupadappa Nagamarapalli, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Horticultural Sciences, Bagalkot, B.S. Dandin, dean of the College of Horticulture C.N. Hanchinmani and others were present. Farmers visited the various stalls put up by different government departments, universities and private companies. They spoke to experts on various subjects and got their doubts clarified. They also took a close look at the new implements on display.

☐ ***Commission for fixing prices of farm produce may start functioning soon: Krishna Byre Gowda***

☐ ***Panel to have a revolving fund of Rs. 1,000 crore***

ICAR backs watermelon and cowpea farming

PANAJI, November 18, 2013 - The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Goa Research Complex, organised an event on 'Adoption of improved technologies in watermelon and cowpea cultivation for higher income of tribal community of Goa' under Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) programme for tribal farmers of Dhulape, Verna in south Goa recently. Different groups of farmers comprising nearly 100 farmers, have been identified under the programme, which will support cultivation of watermelon and cowpea – two important crops.

Farm inputs like seeds of cowpea (Alsando) and watermelon were distributed to farmers along with bio-control agents. Fertilizer and pesticide will also be provided in due course of time. Narendra Pratap Singh, Director, Goa ICAR, detailed the assistance available under TSP to tribal farmers.

Pumping subsidy enhanced for farmers

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, November 18, 2013 - The government has given retrospective effect from November 7, 2011, to its order enhancing pumping subsidy for farmers to Rs.750 a hectare. An official press note here on Sunday quoted Agriculture Minister K.P. Mohanan as saying that the decision to give retrospective effect to the subsidy enhancement was taken in response to memorandums submitted by farmers' organisations and people's representatives.

ICAR chief asks students to reach out to farmers

GUNTUR, November 18, 2013 - *S. Ayyappan promises to allot Rs.1 crore to Bapatla Agricultural College*



Students of Agricultural College welcoming ICAR Director General S. Ayyappan and other officials at Bapatla in Guntur district on Sunday.— Photo: T.Vijaya Kumar.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is contributing about Rs.1.85 lakh crore worth of agricultural exports, by reaching a production target of 259 million tonnes of foodgrains every year, said ICAR Director General (DG) S. Ayyappan. The DG, who visited the Agricultural College at Bapatla, to attend a meeting with delegates of Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University (ANGRAU), Y.S.R. Horticultural University, S.V. Veterinary University, ICAR institutes and other line departments of agriculture and allied sectors on Sunday, went round the Agricultural College Farm and the hostel buildings on the campus.

Great demand

Addressing the meeting, Dr. Ayyappan said that as agriculture and veterinary courses were in great demand, more than 60 per cent of meritorious students were taking up agricultural courses and a good number of students were opting for veterinary sciences.

The Government is spending about Rs.10 lakh on each agriculture graduate, Rs.15 lakh on PG student, and Rs.25 lakh on Ph.D scholars. About 40,000 degree holders, 10,000 PGs and 5,000 researchers were passing out from 65 Central and State Agricultural Universities and ICAR institutions, he said and advised the students to dedicate themselves to agriculture and the farming community.

Explaining the achievements of ICAR, Mr. Ayyappan, who is also the Secretary for Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), said ICAR could help fulfil the food security needs of the population of India by producing 240 tonnes of horticultural

produce, 120 tonnes of fishery products, and six tonnes of meat through its teaching and research institutions.

Stating that ICAR had allotted Rs.3 crore to farm mechanization in Andhra Pradesh last year, the DG promised to grant Rs.1 crore for the development of the Agricultural College in Bapatla, this fiscal. 0Later, Dr. Ayyappan along with former Union Minister for Agriculture U. Venkateswarlu, ANGRAU Vice-Chancellor A. Padma Raju, Deans P.V. Rao and T.V. Satyanarayana, Directors K. Raja Reddy and A. Sivasankar interacted with the students of the Agricultural Engineering College and College for Food, Science and Technology and enquired about their problems.

Naya Qila farmers likely to get land in city



Police manning the gates at the golf course at the Naya Qila in Golconda on Sunday, after local people protested the fencing of the area recently. — PHOTO: NAGARA GOPAL

HYDERABAD, November 18, 2013 - A solution appears to be at hand for the agitating farmers whose patta lands are acquired by the government in Naya Qila area of Golconda for setting up of the golf course.

The district administration plans to provide land for land to the farmers somewhere in the city since they have refused monetary compensation and the land shown at Kothapalli village of Pudur Mandal in Ranga Reddy district.

A total of 52 acres of patta land was acquired from 54 farmers in 1999. Since then the farmers are up in arms demanding land for land instead of payment of compensation under the Land Acquisition Act. The farmers are also insisting on the exchange of land to be on 'equivalent valuation' basis.

District authorities plan to identify the alternative land within 20 days. It may not be possible to find a big chunk of 52 acres at one place.

"We will try to identify the land in and around Golconda mandal and whatever land is available will be proportionately distributed among the farmers," Hyderabad Collector M.K. Meena told *The Hindu* .

Access denied

Mr. Meena held a meeting with the farmers recently and promised to resolve their problem at the earliest. The farmers, however, want to be allowed to cultivate their lands till the alternative lands are identified and handed over.

The farmers are sore that they are denied access to their lands which are now fenced by the Hyderabad Golf Association for development.

“Till October 29 we were cultivating the fields but all of a sudden we were evicted. The private security is not even allowing us entry into the Naya Qila,” says Mohd. Ilyas, a farmer activist.

Most of the farmers eke out a living from the sale of grass they cultivate. Now they have lost their sole source of revenue. Mr. Meena plans to compensate the loss being suffered by the farmers through the Tourism Department.

“We will find out the daily earnings of the farmers and the same will be recompensed,” Mr. Meena said.

‘No stopping visitors’

He said nobody would be denied entry into the Naya Qila.

There is no question of stopping visitors from seeing the historical sites there.

“I have given oral instructions and if necessary written orders will be issued not to stop anyone,” he said.

‘Abuse of authority’

However, civil society organisations say the private security arranged by the HGA is turning away even tourists from visiting Naya Qila which has the famous Hatiyan-ka-Jhad, Mullah Khayali and Mustafa Khan mosques.

“The action in closing the entrance is illegal and smacks of abuse of authority,” says social activist, Jasveen Jairath.

The displaced farmers feel instead of providing alternative land to them government can as well provide an alternative site to the HGA.

The government had acquired 52 acres of patta land from 54 farmers in 1999 for setting up a golf course

Students cultivate cool season vegetables



Green warriors:(Top) The students of Azhagappa Nagar Panchayat Higher Secondary School in the city prepare to transfer seedlings from trays to growbags. (Above) The about 200 growbags set up on the school premises for cultivating cool season vegetables.— Photos: By special arrangement



THRISSUR, November 18, 2013 - The students of Azhagappa Nagar Panchayat Higher Secondary School have taken to growing cool season vegetables.

They are into organic cultivation of vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower and tomato. About 200 growbags have been set up in the school by the students' farmers' club. Each plant will be tended by a student.

Organic pesticides such as pseudomonas, neem-oil and garlic spray will be used. Vegetables thus grown will be used in the school for preparing lunch for the students.

Puthukad, MLA, C. Ravindranath inaugurated the farming project recently.

Azhagappa Nagar panchayat president K. Rajeswari presided. District Panchayat member Kaloor Babu was the guest of honour.

The Kerala Agricultural University and the Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council of Keralam are taking measures to promote cultivation of cool season vegetables.

The KAU has identified tropical genotypes suitable for cultivation in plains.

Farmers had recently booked two lakh seedlings of cool season vegetables at KAU's Agricultural Research Station (ARS) at Mannuthy.

Egg rate

NAMAKKAL, November 18, 2013 - The National Egg Coordination Committee (NECC) egg rate was Rs. 3.96 on Sunday. – Staff Reporter

Milk chilling unit for Perambalur soon



hand to hand: Darez Ahamed, Collector, handing over loan to a member of woman SHG in Perambalur on Saturday.

PERAMBALUR, November 18, 2013 - The State government has sanctioned crop loans to the tune of Rs. 100 crore to the farmers of the district through the cooperative bodies and Rs. 60 crore had already been disbursed, said Darez Ahamed, District Collector.

The district administration organised special camps for the disbursement of crop loans and initiatives are on for achieving the target, said Mr. Ahamed at the inaugural of the 60th All India Cooperative Week celebrations here on Saturday. The Chief Minister has sanctioned a dairy chilling plant for Perambalur, he said and urged the farmers to take initiative for augmenting milk production. The cooperative bodies should come forward to extend credit more to the farmers for the purchase of milch animals. The farmers and cooperative bodies should join hands for increasing the milk production in the district. Mr. Ahamed distributed welfare assistance to the tune of Rs. 82.57 lakh to beneficiaries and self help groups and also handed over prizes to the winners of the competitions organised by the cooperation department on the eve of the festival.

Cattle shandies in Salem, Namakkal, Krishnagiri to remain closed

SALEM, November 18, 2013 - K. Maharabushanam and V. Dakshinamoorthy, the District Collectors of Salem and Namakkal respectively, have ordered temporary closure of all the shandies in the districts to stop spread of the deadly foot-and-mouth disease among cattle. Mr. Maharabushanam said that 5.81 lakh doses of vaccines have been administered to the cattle in the district during the fifth phase of the State-wide vaccination drive held from September 15 to October 5.

“The vaccination drive covered about 99.5 percent of the total cattle population in the district. Need to vaccinate cattle was discussed by farmers and villagers in special Gram Sabha Meetings too”, he said. As a further step to prevent spread of the disease, the shandies in Muthunayakanpatti, Veeraganur, Perumakovil and Minnampalli will remain temporarily closed, he said.

District level and block level committees comprising officials from the revenue, animal husbandry department and block development officials have been formed to review the preventive measures and level of awareness among farmers, he said.

In **Namakkal**, a total of 3.38 lakh cattle have been vaccinated.

“Suspecting chances of infected cattle being brought to the shandies for sale at a very low price, the Animal Husbandry Department officials vaccinated cows that were brought to the shandies here in the recent days”, Mr. Dakshinamoorthy said.

He added that shandies functioning at Morepalayam, Pudanchanthai, Mallasamudram, Kandampalayam, Kalipatti, Maniyanur, Kalipatti, Mallasamudram, Tiruchengode, Pallakapalayam, Pavithiram, Namagiripettai, Raispuram, Paramathi-Velur, Metala and Kanthampalayam will remain temporarily closed.

“Further orders will be issued to resume sale of cattle in the shandies”, Mr. Dakshinamoorthy added.

In **Krishnagiri**, the District Administration has already declared closure of cattle shandies for two weeks.

Water Level

MADURAI, November 18, 2013

WATER LEVEL

The water level in Periyar dam was 117.20 feet with an inflow of 295 cusecs and a discharge of 501 cusecs.

The water level in Vaigai dam was 46.59 feet with an inflow of 310 cusecs and a discharge of 1,660 cusecs.

The combined storage in Periyar credit was 3,033 mcft.

Rainfall

The rainfall recorded (in mm) in the region during the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on Sunday is as follows: Gudalur- 7.5, Utthamapalayam - 8, Vaigai Dam- 10.8, Manjalar Dam-8, Peranai- 2, Kodaikanal- 3 and Sothuparai recorded 2 mm rainfall, PWD officials said.

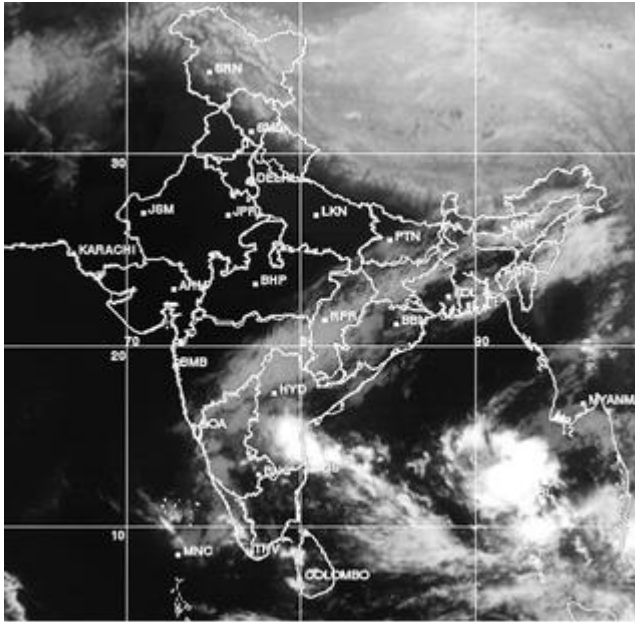
TIRUNELVELI, November 18, 2013

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Sunday stood at 92.90 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 731.16 cusecs and 600 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam. The level of the Manimuthar dam stood at 67.75 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 194 cusecs and no water is discharged.

Nagercoil

The level in the Pechipparai dam stood at 25.35 feet, while it was 60.35 feet in Perunchani, 9.69 feet in Chittar 1, 9.71 feet in Chittar 1, 3 feet in Poigai and 40.68 feet in the Mamabazathuraiyaru dam.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on November 17.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Anantapur	27	21	0	51
Arogyavaram	24	18	13	171
Bapatla	29	20	1	505
Calingapatnam	28	20	0	922
Gannavaram	30	21	0	411
Hanamkonda	29	16	0	284
Hyderabad AP	28	20	tr	239
Kakinada	31	23	tr	622
Khammam	32	20	0	98
Kavali	29	19	53	459
Kurnool	28	21	0	96
Mahabubnagar	31	20	0	163
Machilipatnam	30	21	0	384
Narasapur	31	21	0	606
Nellore	26	21	48	371
Nizamabad	30	16	0	106
Ongole	30	20	5	495
Ramagundam	29	17	0	201
Tirupathi AP	24	21	51	309
Tuni	31	21	0	470
Vizag AP	32	23	0	555
Vizag	32	23	0	511

KARNATAKA

Agumbe	29	16	0	583
Bengaluru AP	22	17	7	121
Bengaluru	23	18	8	112

Bagalkote	29	17	0	—
Belgaum AP	28	17	0	60
Bijapur	28	16	0	113
Chitradurga	28	19	0	54
Chickmagalur	28	15	0	41
Chintamani	22	17	3	53
Gadag	28	18	tr	88
Gulbarga	31	20	tr	35
Hassan	29	19	3	86
Honavar	34	25	0	261
Karwar	35	25	0	167
Madikeri	23	16	tr	189
Mangalore AP	33	23	0	305
Mysore	25	20	15	142
Mandya	26	19	7	139
Panambur	35	23	0	235
Raichur	29	19	0	102
Shirali	34	22	0	414
KERALA				
Alappuzha	31	24	0	236
Kannur	34	25	tr	321
Kochi AP	32	23	0	451
Kottayam	32	23	0	473
Kozhikode	33	25	0	269
Punalur	33	23	0	533
Thiruvanantha				
-puram AP	32	24	16	323
Thiruvanantha				
-puram City	32	24	tr	386
Vellanikkara	32	23	0	405
TAMIL NADU				
Adirampattinam	26	21	8	118
Chennai	26	24	80	289
Chennai AP	26	23	124	390
Coimbatore AP	29	21	6	117
Coonoor	19	14	68	353
Cuddalore	29	23	43	250
Dharmapuri	25	19	90	249
Kanyakumari	31	23	34	248
Karaikal	26	22	20	235
Kodaikanal	13	10	15	180
Madurai AP	33	23	0	197
Nagapattinam	25	21	3	187
Palayamkottai	35	24	0	233
Pamban	32	24	0	194
Parangipettai	27	23	55	394
Puducherry	27	23	100	256

Salem	24	19	49	202
Thanjavur	25	23	40	164
Tiruchi AP	23	21	142	311
Tiruttani	26	23	105	311
Tondi	31	23	0	259
Tuticorin	31	24	25	186
Ooty	17	10	33	237
Valparai	26	13	0	270
Vellore	23	21	15	95
LAKSHADWEEP				
Amini Divi	34	25	0	92
Minicoy	31	25	0	118
OTHER STATIONS				
Kolkata (Alipore)	31	21	0	523
Mumbai	33	23	0	66
New Delhi	27	9	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.

ISOLATED RAIN OVER COASTAL A.P.

CHENNAI: Rainfall occurred at most places over Tamil Nadu and at a few places over Rayalaseema and south interior Karnataka.

Isolated rainfall occurred over coastal Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. Mainly dry weather prevailed over north interior Karnataka and dry weather prevailed over Telangana, Lakshadweep and coastal Karnataka.

The chief amounts of rainfall recorded in centimetres are:-

Tamil Nadu: Mayiladuthurai (Nagapattinam Dist.) 22, Tiruchirappalli Airport 14.

Kerala: Kollam 3.

Andhra Pradesh: Tirumalla(a) (Dist. Chittoor) 9.

Karnataka: MM Hills (Chamarajanagar Dt.) 7 , Kollegala (Chamarajanagar Dt.) 5.

Forecast (valid till Tuesday morning): Rain would occur at many places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, south coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema, Kerala and Lakshadweep and at a few places over coastal and south interior Karnataka.

Isolated rain or thundershowers may occur over north coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and north interior Karnataka.

Heavy rainfall warning: Isolated heavy rain would occur over south coastal Andhra Pradesh and Hill ranges of Nilgiris and Coimbatore Districts during the next 48 hours.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Monday, Nov 18

Max 31° | Min 24°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 62

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:06

Sunset: 05:39

Barometer: 1009

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Tuesday, Nov 19

Max 28° | Min 24°

Extended Forecast for a week

Wednesday
Nov 20



28° | 23°
Cloudy

Thursday
Nov 21



30° | 24°
Cloudy

Friday
Nov 22



28° | 25°
Cloudy

Saturday
Nov 23



28° | 24°
Overcast

Sunday
Nov 24



26° | 25°
Overcast

From farmers' delight to a liability

DHARWAD: There's nothing you can tell Yellappa Bendigeri to make him step inside the agricultural museum at Dharwad. The farmer from Chikkamalligwad says the 98-year-old structure has been rotting away for about four years now.

The museum at Shivaji circle, run by the [Karnataka Krishi Sangha](#) (KKS), was once the go-to place for farmers in the district. They got the low-down on every new farming-related technology - be it an invention, a seed or a crop species. In its heydays, explains farmer [Shivanad Poojar](#), all the rooms in it had on display different kinds of seed and plant breeds. The staff guided visiting farmers on various agricultural aspects - from sowing to harvesting. Woman farmers were also trained, adds Poojar.

The museum's condition today can serve as a study in contrasts. Not only are the exhibit cases empty, but some of them are also broken, alleges Bendigeri. Maps on crop patterns of various regions are damaged and a thick film of dust lines every room. Waste has been generously dumped in some rooms, which many birds like pigeons and sparrows have turned into their homes.

Poojar explains that now, farmers prefer heading off to the [University of Agricultural Sciences](#), instead, when they need guidance.

Blaming the museum's downfall on the severe fund crunch it faces, he claims that the KKS has not got any grant from the state government to run it.

Mallikarjun Malladad, managing director of KKS, admits that the museum is dilapidated. "We have not undertaken any repair work as the building is too old and may crumble during renovations."

He, however, adds that there are big remodelling plans in the pipeline. "We plan to construct a new complex, the [Krishi Smaraka Bhavan](#), which will house the museum. We will develop it in a big way to help farmers."

Retail prices of onions fall to 30 per kg in Nashik

NASHIK: Prices of good quality onions in retail market across Nashik city dropped to Rs 30 a kg on Sunday, from the range of Rs 50-60 a kg last week, due to decline in wholesale onion

prices in past few days. The prices are set to drop further from Monday.

There has been a significant decline in the retail prices of good quality onions over the past few days. The onions with small and medium sizes were sold in the range of Rs 20-25 a kg in the retail market.

Speaking to TOI, onion retailer [Shankar Malode](#) said, "The retail prices of onions have reduced due to decline in wholesale onion prices. The retail prices of good quality onions, which were in the range of Rs 40-45 a kg on Friday, reduced due to fears that the wholesale prices may decline further from Monday. The arrival of the onion crop is expected to increase in district [Agriculture Produce Market Committees](#)."

In district APMCs, the average wholesale onion prices have declined by around Rs 1,900 a quintal in a week, from Rs 5,000 a quintal first week of November to Rs 3,100 a quintal on Friday.

An official from Lasalgaon APMC told TOI, "The arrival of fresh Kharif crop has increased in the last week. The daily arrival, which was around 3,000 to 4,000 quintals a day in first week of November at Lasalgaon APMC, increased to around 10,000 quintals a day last week. This led to decline in average wholesale onion prices by 38%.

The official added, "The present cool climate is better and nutritious for the onion crop. Hence, harvest of fresh crop is expected to increase in the coming week. The regular arrival of kharif crop is expected to commence in next four-five days. The arrival of crop, which is presently 10,000 quintals a day, is expected to increase to 15,000 quintals a day at Lasalgaon. The average wholesale onion prices too are expected to decline in the range of Rs 2,200 to Rs 2,500 a quintal."

He further said, "The shelf life of kharif onion is around a month and it rots thereafter. Hence, kharif onion cannot be stored and farmers have no option but to sell them at prevailing market rates. Therefore, the rates of kharif onions are low as compared with that of the summer crop. The summer crop has a shelf life of around six months and they are storable."

Asha Pachpande, a housewife, says, "There is much relief due to decline in onion prices. Earlier onion prices were above Rs 50 a kg and not affordable. Hence, instead of one kg, we used to buy half kg and used onions economically."

Satish Bhonde, former official of [NHRDF](#) says, "People must learn to make a stock of 50 to 70 kg of onions of summer crop when prices are at low level during April and May, so that they would not fall victim to artificial rise in onions prices during August and October every year."

Milk producers releases new products to mark Cooperation Week

MANGALORE: The Dakshina Kannada Cooperative Milk Producers Union Ltd released two new products-Nandini cashew barfi and Nandini 5 litre ghee jar- on the occasion of the 60th [All India Cooperation Week celebrations](#) here on Saturday.

Minister for forest, ecology and environment and Dakshina Kannada district in-charge B Ramanth Rai said the development of nation is possible through cooperative societies. "Majority of farmers in the nation still do not have access to banking. The sound economy that we see in rural areas in the country is the outcome of efforts made by cooperatives societies," the minister said.

"More than 30 per cent of farmers have no direct access to several government scheme benefits. This will have adverse affect on farming in the country," he said.

He also asked the union to focus more on value-added products and thereby earn more profit.

South Canara District Central Cooperative Bank president MN Rajendra Kumar, Mangalore City South MLA JR Lobo and Mangalore MP Nalin Kumar Kateel were the guests.

Tourists go hungry as vegetable prices force Manali hoteliers shut kitchens



Hoteliers say food has become very expensive and causing losses to them. Even the hotel employees are cooking mostly pulses for them to minimize cost.

MANALI: Tourists visiting Manali will find it tough to get food as several hotels here have shut their kitchens due to the rising prices of onion, tomato, potato, cabbage and other vegetables. Several restaurants and dhabas are not even serving onion

paranthas for the breakfast now.

Hotels, which used to serve their guests with food from in-house kitchens, are now requesting them to have food outside. Hoteliers say food has become very expensive and causing losses to them. Even the hotel employees are cooking mostly pulses for them to

minimize cost.

Winters being lean tourist season, hoteliers are also reducing staff, who would also add to food charges.

"We cannot charge our guests more than the rates listed in menu, but high [vegetable prices](#) have [disturbed](#) our budget," Sushil Chandel, a hotelier, said. Several hotel owners are also confused over what to cook and what items to skip. He said tourists are already seeking off-season discount on room tariff and then providing them with food at the old rates was not possible. "None of the vegetables are available for less than Rs 60 per kg. Tomato and onion cost Rs 80 and Rs 90 per kg."

Another hotelier Amit Manna said increasing food prices may impact their business during the off-season, but they are bound to serve food to tourists who have booked hotels in advance. "We are not serving food to the new guests. But those who had booked rooms in advance with food package, we need to serve them," he said.

Onion parantha, which was available for Rs 20 till recently, is off the menu of several dhabas now. Some dhabas are selling an onion parantha for Rs 40.



Phailin blows rice politics contest into Chhattisgarh



The aftermath of Cyclone Phailin and its effect on Chhattisgarh's agriculture have set the stage for a contest between the BJP and the Congress, which have already tried to outmatch each other in rice politics.

The Congress has promised 35 kg foodgrains free to beat Raman Singh's "chaur waale baba" image, and promised Rs 2,000 a quintal as paddy procurement price against the Rs

1,310 set by the party-led UPA government for the country. Raman Singh has countered that with a promise of Rs 2,400 a quintal — he will recommend to the Centre a minimum support price of Rs 2,100, which he will top up with a Rs 300 bonus from the state government.

What Phailin has done is that it has extended the duration of the rains and delayed paddy harvesting. This has led to sluggish arrival of paddy at purchasing centres across the state, setting the stage for the contest. But for Phailin, procurement should have wound up before the promises were announced, with the season having started almost three weeks ago, on October 21

"Our purchasing centre procures over 50,000 quintals. But so far, only three farmers have brought their produce totalling 74 quintals," says Anil Gopal, manager at Sahaspur's primary agricultural cooperative society, pointing at a pile of jute bags arranged by the society to pack the paddy.

Farmers appear torn between the twin temptations. "Raman Singh has tried to be clever with farmers," says Sugreevar Patel, middle-aged and weather-beaten, who grows paddy at Girisa village in Saraipali assembly seat. "He gives a bonus in two years — just before the elections and just after — and skips it in the remaining three years." Patel's produce is at the procurement centre with that of a few other from his village.

Congress leaders have been advising farmers to hold their crop back until December so that the Congress government will purchase it at Rs 2,000 a quintal. That works out to an effective bonus of Rs 690 a quintal, against the Rs 300 being promised by Raman Singh.

There are farmers sceptical about the Congress's promise too. "The Congress-led Centre has fixed it at Rs 1,310 a quintal. Had Congress been really serious, it should have announced Rs 2,000 a quintal in the first place," says Shivprasad Sahu, also middle-aged, of Jamdi village in Baikunthpur. He is yet to harvest his crop.

While these farmers weigh their options, each party faces the additional challenge of ensuring its traditional supporters are not swayed by the other party's promises.

"The BJP has promised Rs 2,400 a quintal," observes Jaychand Kumhar, a young farmer from Dansara village in Sarangarh, whose family traditionally supported the Congress. He appears unaware that Raman Singh's promise comes with a caveat about extracting an MSP from the Centre.

The Congress's 35-kg-free rice scheme, meanwhile, is not just a referendum on the Raman Singh government. The Congress's election promises have virtually become also a pilot test for its food guarantee law at the national level ahead of the Lok Sabha elections.

In a way, the outcome of this election will provide a pointer the effectiveness of the strategy of more populism to beat the populism of the incumbent.

Govt planning vending machines for PDS wheat, rice, says Sheila

Even as AICC vice-president Rahul Gandhi praised her efforts in improving Delhi's infrastructure at a public rally in Delhi on Sunday, Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit outlined her plans for the national capital if elected to power for a fourth consecutive term.

In her address on Sunday, Dikshit promised vending machines which would be similar to Mother Dairy milk outlets but would dispense food grains.

"Sometimes it is difficult for people to get their quota of grains from public distribution system (PDS) outlets, where things are available in less quantity or not at all. We hope to to

install vending machines for wheat, rice and pulses at PDS shops. (These will be) like Mother Dairy outlets, where people get milk through tokens," Dikshit said.

According to the CM, the Congress has worked hard for 15 years to lay a strong foundation for the future. "Our accomplishments and achievements are an open book. Our government will strive to double Delhi's per capita income in the next five years. If people earn Rs 2 lakh every year now, we will work to see that it becomes Rs 4-5 lakh," Dikshit said.

Dikshit also referred to hawkers in the city — promising them a special zone — and stressed on the need to build more toilets. "We will construct zones for hawkers so that they can run their businesses and police or MCD do not harass them. There is also a scarcity of toilets in Delhi and we will construct toilets in every constituency, with at least 20 in each of them reserved for women," she said.

The CM also took on the BJP and the AAP, requesting voters to not be misled.

"The principal opposition party has nothing to talk about other than corruption. They level allegations without any proof. The BJP has been making false promises and have incited traders to increase inflation," Dikshit claimed.

She added that the BJP's chief ministerial candidate, Harsh Vardhan, made false promises about ensuring women's safety.

Referring to the AAP, Dikshit said the party had no political vision. "We have to look at their fund collection measures. Even the highest courts have expressed concern over this," Dikshit said.

AICC general secretary in-charge of Delhi, Shakeel Ahmed, backed the CM and claimed that the BJP banked on misinformation and untruth. He also alleged that the BJP had a secret understanding with the AAP.

"The AAP has withdrawn its strong candidate against Dr Harsh Vardhan to provide him a safe passage," Ahmed claimed.

He added that adopting the Gujarat development model would take Delhi in reverse gear.

"Gujarat is far behind Delhi as far as PCI and other development parameters are concerned," he said.

MLA Subhash Chopra to head Cong campaign committee

Congress president Sonia Gandhi has approved the campaign committee for the Delhi Assembly elections, which will oversee the party's strategy till elections on December 4.

While Kalkaji MLA Subhash Chopra will chair the committee, West Delhi MP Mahabal Mishra was appointed the convener. Members of the committee include Delhi Congress president J P Agarwal, Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit, AICC general secretary Ajay Maken, MPs Sandeep Dikshit, Krishna Tirath, Parvesh Hashmi, Sajjan Kumar, Jagdish Tytler and Janardan Dwivedi. Delhi MLAs Arvinder Singh Lovely, Raj Kumar Chouhan, Haroon Yusuf, A K Walia and Naseeb Singh have also been included in the committee of 87 members. "We will hold a meeting of the committee within the next few days to discuss and decide our strategy for the elections," Chopra said.

Tea prices continue to slip at Kochi sale

Kochi, Nov. 17: Prices at the Kochi Tea auction continue to decline for the second consecutive week. In sale no 46, the quantity on offer in dust CTC category was 12,75,500 kg.

With a fair demand, the market opened Rs 3-5 lower. The decline was to the tune of Rs 5-10 as the sale progressed.

However, the decline in prices was less for the teas which came under the selection of AVT. There was a subdued demand from exporters and upcountry buyers.

In orthodox grades, the arrival was low and the quantity on offer was 13,500 kg.

The market was irregular and lower by Rs 3-5. Small quantity on offer was absorbed by exporters.

In the best CTC dusts, PD varieties quoted Rs 95/112, RD grades fetched Rs 100/133, SRD ruled at Rs 110/143 and SFD stood at Rs 110/152.

The leaf sale witnessed a mixed trend and the quantity on offer in orthodox grades was 163,000 kg.

The market for select best Nilgiri broken, whole leaf and fannings was fully firm to dearer. Medium, clean, black, well-made, bolder broken, tippy grades, whole leaf was steady to firm.

The quantity on offer in CTC leaf was 74,000 kg. The market for good liquoring teas was barely steady. Upcountry buyers were fairly active.

In the dust category, Manjolai SFD fetched the best prices of Rs 158 followed by Manjolai FD at Rs 157. In the leaf varieties, Chamraj FOP – (S) (Green tea) quoted the best prices of Rs 305 followed by Chamraj FBOP (S) at Rs 266.

Low arrivals lift tomato

Karnal, Nov. 17: Rising demand coupled with low arrivals in the market pushed tomato prices on Sunday.

Vikas Sachdeva, a trade expert, told *Business Line* that after witnessing some correction a couple of days back, lower arrivals pushed tomato prices back into positive territory. The ongoing marriage season demand is also providing good support to the market, he added. Currently, farmers are busy with wheat sowing and tomato arrivals may pick up to around 1,000 crates a-day with in a week or two, said Vikas Sachdeva.

On Sunday, not a single crate remained unsold because of low stocks.

Around 500 crates (of 25 kg each) of different varieties of tomato arrived at the Karnal vegetable market and were quoted between Rs 4,000 and Rs 6,000 a quintal. Around 800 crates of varieties such as 524, Abhilash, Nasik, Himsona and Hybrid were received .

Out of total arrivals, about 20 per cent stock was of low quality around 30 per cent stock was of medium quality while the rest was of superior quality.

Prices of superior quality improved by Rs 300 and quoted at Rs 5,800-6,000 while the prices of medium quality produce went up by Rs 200 and quoted at 4,700-5,000 while low quality produce was at Rs 4,000 a quintal, Rs 150 up.

According to the market experts, tomato prices may continue to rule around current levels with marginal fluctuation .

Pepper expected to rule high next year too on tight supply



Kochi, Nov. 17: Pepper market world over remained firm, albeit much below the Indian parity, on tight supply. According to the statistics released by the International Pepper Community (IPC) at its recently concluded session in Kuching, Malaysia, there is going to be a projected global shortage of 6,300 tonnes in 2014 when compared with the estimated production in 2013. This phenomenon is reflected on the market in recent weeks. The prices are firmer in almost all the origins. However, in Brazil – where harvesting was underway – the prices remained below the other origins. Strong domestic demand coupled with tight availability in India has pushed up

the prices here to unprecedented levels. Spot prices hit the historic levels above Rs 500 a kg. Even there were buyers for ungarbled material at above Rs 500. Availability of high bulk density pepper was very thin, market sources told *Business Line*.

As the prices were moving up daily, those holding pepper stayed away from the market. More buyers were seen, of late, than sellers.

Those industry buyers who were not maintaining any inventory and buying only hand-to-mouth hoping that prices would fall were said to be the most affected.

They have no other alternative now but to buy at the prevailing rates, whatever material available.

As they have to run their factories so as to ensure their presence in the markets industry buyers may not be able to postpone their purchases any more, they said.

pepper stats

At the same time, it is the season to buy for catering to the winter demand. Thus, the domestic demand is strong these days.

Total domestic demand in 2013 is estimated at 47,500 tonnes.

Imports this year is projected as 12,750 tonnes. Currency fluctuation and high prices in other origins made imports unviable, they said.

According to the trade, the carry forward stocks shown in the IPC statistics are unrealistic. When there is a tight supply scenario this year and consequently when the prices are ruling at much higher levels the chances of holding back the material is unlikely, they said. Therefore, one cannot expect such a high volume for carrying forward to 2014, they claimed.

crunch in output

If the projections given by the producing countries turn out to be true then there is a likely squeeze in 2014 and consequently the prices are expected to remain steady/firm next year also.

Indian production in 2014 has been projected at 45,000 tonnes against 58,000 tonnes estimated for 2013, recording a fall of 13,000 tonnes.

The carry forward stock from 2013 is put at 9,760 tonnes.

Thus, the availability in the domestic market is likely to be tight in 2014 also, they said.

In the futures market, both the national and regional, the prices soared last week.

On the NMCE, Dec and Jan contracts increased by Rs 3,242 and Rs 1,547 respectively to Rs 52,250 and Rs 51,831 a quintal.

On IPSTA platform, Dec and Jan rose by Rs 3,014 and Rs 3,932 respectively to Rs 51,014 and Rs 51,932 a quintal.

Spot prices shot up by Rs 1,900 to Rs 49,800 (ungarbled) and Rs 51,800 (garbled) a quintal on strong demand amid tight availability.

global scenario

Indian parity in the international market was at \$8,750 (c&f) for Europe and \$9,050 (c&f) for the US.

Lamong Asta was quoted at \$8,425 a tonne cif, New York while Brazil Asta sellers were reportedly preferred to work firm bids.

UP farmers sell cane to jaggery units as sugar mills delay crushing

Under pressure to clear fields to plant wheat



Turning sour: With no clear signals on cane price, farmers with smaller land holdings, who want to plant a second crop, have begun clearing their fields by selling sugarcane to the jaggery units.

New Delhi, Nov. 17: With private sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh refusing to start cane crushing operations in absence of a viable price policy, farmers in the State have started selling their produce to jaggery units at a lower price.

The private factories account for more than three fourth of the 124 sugar mills in the State. On Sunday, two of the 23 sugar mills in the co-operative sector – one each in Baghpat and Ramala started their crushing operations, sources said.

“With no clear signals on cane price, farmers especially those with smaller land holdings of 2-3 acres and those who want to plant a second crop – wheat, have begun clearing their fields by selling sugarcane to the jaggery units at a lower price of Rs 150-160 a quintal,” said Sudhir Panwar, President of Kisan Jagriti Manch, a farmers body in the State.

High pricing

The UP Government had announced a price of Rs 280 a quintal last year and the broad expectation is that it would be revised upwards this year with farmers demanding Rs 320 citing higher production costs. However, the millers in the State are reeling under the impact of this 'high' price and are still to pay about Rs 2,400 crore to farmers. They have demanded that the cane price to be linked to that of the product price.

On Friday, the private sugar factories such as Bajaj Hindustan Ltd, Balrampur Chini Mills and Dhampur Sugar Mills have written a letter to the UP Government reiterating their inability to start crushing in absence of a viable and reasonable sugarcane price policy in the State. "About 80-90 per cent of the private sugar mills in their individual capacity have written to the UP Cane Commissioner expressing their inability to start operations. The others will also write soon," said Deepak Gupta, Secretary, UP Sugar Mills Association.

Further, in line with the declining trend in sugar prices, these mills have now stated that they can only pay Rs 225 against the earlier Rs 240 a quintal – which accounts for 75 per cent of the product price in line with the Rangarajan Committee recommendations, said Abinash Verma, Director-General of Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA).

Delayed crushing

Last week UP Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav had directed 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. UP 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.

The early arrival of winter this year has compounded the farmers' woes as they are forced to clear their fields to plant wheat amidst delay in start of crushing operations.

"The jaggery units are operating in full swing and farmers are selling cane to these units at Rs 185-200 a quintal across the State," Gupta said. In the riot-hit western UP, the jaggery units are limping back to normalcy, he added.

Depression passes but more rain on way for TN

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 17: The Bay of Bengal depression crossed over the Tamil Nadu coast around midnight on Saturday bringing a vigorous spell of the North-East monsoon rain.

The depression broke up on impacting land, weakening into a well-marked low-pressure area before crossing extreme south and slipping into Arabian Sea.

HEAVY RAIN

In the process, it weakened another round into a conventional 'low' and lay straggled across Kerala and Lakshadweep on Sunday afternoon. Centres receiving heavy to very heavy rain (in cm) included Tiruchi (14); Chennai (12); Tiruthani (11); Puducherry (10); Dharmapuri (9) and Coonoor (7).

An India Met Department outlook said that thundershowers would continue to lash many places over Tamil Nadu, Rayalaseema and south coastal Andhra Pradesh on Monday. Rain or

thundershowers have been forecast also at a few places over coastal and south interior Karnataka on Monday.

Similar conditions have been forecast for both Monday and Tuesday over Kerala and Lakshadweep by when the causative system would die out.

EASTERLY WAVE

Meanwhile, a fresh spurt of rain is expected to hit the southern peninsula from mid-week as a follow-up weather system announces its arrival along the Tamil Nadu coast.

Contrary to expectations, it would not be a full-scale low-pressure area moving in this time round. Instead, it would be a less composite but equally potent 'easterly wave.'

In fact, a fledgling 'low' in the Andaman Sea has merged with comparatively loosely-knit retinue of the easterly wave that is headed towards the coast.

The wave will take mostly the same path in the sea as the depression but whose stretch leading to the coast has been cooled from associated rain.

SNOW, RAIN

The Met Department said that the wave would affect the South from Wednesday and rainfall activity would increase over extreme south peninsular India. Existing 'low' over Lakshadweep and adjoining areas of Kerala is expected to weaken by Monday.

Meanwhile in the North, light rain or snow would occur over at isolated places over high reaches of Jammu & Kashmir during next two days. Minimum (night) temperatures are expected to fall by another 3 deg Celsius over the Indo-Gangetic plains until Wednesday.

These temperatures may look up from Wednesday as a fresh western disturbance calls in from across the international border and brings to bear its associated warmth.
