

85,000 farmers to get crop loans this year

SIVAKASI, November 20, 2013 - Rs.75.46 crore given as crop loan to 14,686 farmers in 2012-13

Crop loans will be given to 85,000 farmers in the district during 2013-14, according to Collector T. N. Hariharan.

Speaking at a function held here on Monday on the occasion of the 60th Cooperative Week (November 14 to 20), after distributing various loans to the tune of Rs.1.33 crore to 663 beneficiaries, shields to cooperative societies and prizes to students who had won in various competitions, Mr.Hariharan said that crop loans worth Rs.39.59 crore had been disbursed to 7,643 farmers till October 31.

The Collector said crop loans worth Rs.75.46 crore had been disbursed to 14,686 farmers as against the target of 75,000 farmers during the year 2012-13.

Farmers who were prompt in repaying crop loans were exempted from paying the seven per cent interest on the loans based on a scheme introduced on April 1.

The State government had remitted Rs.1.03 crore to the cooperative societies on behalf of 4,554 farmers who were prompt in repaying loans.

Mr.Hariharan said 6,140 tonnes of rice, 898 tonnes of sugar, 358 tonnes of wheat, 331 tonnes of Toor dhal, 331 tonnes of oriandar dhal, 458 tonnes of palm oil and 956 litres of kerosene were distributed every month at a subsidised rate to 5,01,287 card holders through 685 full-time ration shops, 208 part-time shops and seven kerosene outlets in this district.

Besides, co-operative medical stores in the district offered 15 per cent discount on the maximum retail price and medicines worth Rs.1.51 crore had been sold this year, he said.

The Virudhunagar District Central Cooperative Bank, its branches and five Co-operative Urban Banks had been computerised. As many as 182 Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies were being computerised to face the competition from private banks.

Earlier, Mr.Hariharan gave away Rs.6.75 lakh as loans to 15 differently abled persons, link loans worth Rs.52,10,000 to 487 beneficiaries, mid-term loans to the tune of Rs.54,14,000 to 133 persons, small business loans worth Rs.70,000 to seven persons, a sum of Rs. 3,20,000 as loans to two women self-help groups, pledge loans worth Rs.6 lakh to a person and business development loan of Rs.10 lakh to a person.

Sivakasi Municipal Chairman A. Kathiravan, District Revenue Officer S Munusamy, Revenue Divisional Officer Keerthi Priyadarshimi and Tahsildar L. Rajagopal were present.

Dalit farmers get rainwater harvesting ponds to tackle drought



Saving water, creating employment:Vellore Collector R. Nanthagopal in discussion with N. Srinivasan, Project Director, DRDA, during his inspection of a farm pond under formation under MGNREGS in Mungapattu village in Gudiyatham block on Tuesday —Photo: C. Venkatachalapathy

VELLORE, November 20, 2013 - A total of

433 out of the 867 farm ponds targeted to be formed in the lands of farmers in Vellore district have been completed, according to R. Nanthagopal, Collector of Vellore.

Talking to newsmen after inspecting a farm pond under formation in the land of Shenbagavalli, w/o Munusamy, in Moongapattu village panchayat in Gudiyatham panchayat union, under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) on Tuesday, Mr. Nanthagopal said that the objective of forming the ponds was to store the rain water and, thereby, facilitate the recharge of ground water in the agricultural fields and residential areas in the vicinity and tackle drought situations. The ponds are being formed in the lands belonging to small, marginal and Adi Dravida farmers, the government allotment for each pond being Rs.51,000.

One of the unique features of the pond is that a 5-foot-wide open space is being provided on all sides of the pond, and the soil scooped while digging the land for the formation of the pond is heaped on the outer boundary of the open space to form a strong bund for the pond. The space is being provided in order to prevent the soil from sliding into the pond during rains, the Collector said.

N. Srinivasan, Project Director, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) said local residents have been appointed as work site facilitators to undertake the work of pre-marking of the boundaries of the farm pond, and for measuring the work executed by the workers engaged under MGNREGS to carry out the digging work for the pond. They have been provided field-level training for pre-marking as well as measuring the dimensions of the portion of the pond that has been completed on a given day in the on-going pond works. Wages would be paid to the workers based on the extent of the work done by them as per the measurement of the facilitator. Mr. Nanthagopal, who is also the chairman of the DRDA, said that besides the farm ponds in the lands of private farmers, the DRDA has also taken up the work of forming ponds in government poramboke land. Out of the 615 ponds taken up in government land in the district, 240 have been completed, he said.

The Collector also inspected the Santhan irrigation tank in Thattapparai village panchayat where 15,554 *karuvelam* trees have been planted under the MGNREGS for 2013-14, jointly by the Forest Department and the Rural Development Department.

The Forest Department provided the saplings while the wages for the workers who planted the saplings and maintained them came were provided under MGNREGS.

Farmers seek early procurement of food grains



Members of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha staging a protest in Shimoga on Tuesday.

SHIMOGA, November 20, 2013 - Activists of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) staged a protest in the city on Tuesday demanding the government to

commence the process of procurement of agricultural produce at minimum support price (MSP) at the earliest.

Addressing the protest meet, working president of the KRRS H.R. Basavarajappa said there was a slump in the price of the agricultural produce owing to the popular schemes introduced by both the Central and the State governments.

The Anna Bhagya scheme introduced by Congress government in the State to provide rice at Re.1 a kilo for below poverty line families and the Food Security Bill passed in the Parliament recently have triggered a sharp decline in the price of paddy, wheat and other food grains in the open market. The farmers have suffered heavy loss owing to the slump in the prices, he said.

He expressed displeasure against the MSP for paddy, maize and ragi announced by the Central government. The government has announced the MSP without scientifically assessing the production cost incurred by the farmers, he said.

The government should procure paddy, ragi and maize at Rs. 2,500 a quintal. The procurement process should commence at the earliest, he said.

Mr. Basavarajappa flayed the style of functioning of the Congress government in the State. After coming to power, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who waived the loan borrowed by beneficiaries belonging to Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and minorities from various government corporations, was reluctant to extend a similar benefit for farmers. He demanded the government to soon waive the loan borrowed by farmers from nationalised and cooperative banks.

Farmers want Rs. 1.2 crore an acre as compensation for land

TUMKUR, November 20, 2013 - FARMERS TAKE OUT PROTEST MARCH

Farmers whose land will be acquired for the Tumkur-Rayadurga railway line project took out a protest march here on Monday, demanding, among others, compensation of Rs. 1.2 crore an acre, as recommended by the former Deputy Commissioner, and employment to one member of their family.

Thrissur set to net rich haul in fisheries project

Under the Matsya Samridhi scheme, shrimp will be farmed in an additional 200 hectares in the district



Fisheries Minister K. Babu releases fishlings at Pullu in Thrissur on Tuesday.— Photo: K.C. Sowmish

THRISSUR, November 20, 2013 - Under the State government's Matsya Samridhi project, shrimp will be farmed in an additional 200 hectares in the district in 2013-14. The project also envisages fish

farming in 75 kitchen ponds, pearl spot farming in four hectares and, establishment of four cage pisciculture units and seven crab culture units.

Under the project, Fisheries Minister K. Babu released one lakh fishlings in kole fields in Pullu and Manakkodi on Tuesday.

"We have gone above the fixed target in 2013-14. We had set a target of farming fish in 600 hectares of fresh water ponds and tanks. We have already done it in 716 hectares. The target for a paddy farming-cum-pisciculture project was 700 hectares of paddy polders. We have done it in 810 hectares so far. In all, 4,937 fish farmers have been involved in the projects," said P. Aneesh, district nodal officer, Matsya Samridhi.

About 13,632 hectares of kole land (10,185 hectares in Thrissur district and 3,447 hectares in Malappuram district) had been found suitable for scampi farming.

The three-year Matsya Samridhi project, launched in 2012, is expected to raise a gross revenue of Rs. 451.50 crore.

The project outlay is Rs. 194.17 crore. Of this, Rs. 34.79 crore is allocated under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana. The State government's share is Rs. 10.16 crore. The project envisages production of 67,750 tonnes of fish, 6,875 tonnes of scampi, 7,500 tonnes of shrimp, 9,000 tonnes of mussel, 900 tonnes of crab and 300 tonnes of pearl spot.

Local bodies involved

More than 700 grama panchayats in the State are actively involved in the project.

The project envisages promotion of fisheries in 6,000 hectares of inland water areas, 3,000 hectares of paddy polders or kole fields, and 3,000 hectares of brackish water areas. The project promotes *karimeen* (*Etroplus suratensis*) farming in ponds covering 150 hectares and in 3,000 kitchen ponds.

Other units

Several fish seed rearing and sales units have been started. Mussel production units and crab culture units have also been started.

The State's water resources include 46,300 small ponds of about 25,000 hectares, 852 bunds of more than 2,800 hectares, nine lakes of 1,620 hectares, 44 rivers of 85,000 hectares, 53 reservoirs of 4,489 hectares, 80 check dams of 259 hectares and several other small water bodies.

The brackish water resources include backwaters extending to more than 65,200 hectares, 53 brackish water lakes of more than 46,000 hectares, 12,500 hectares of pokkali fields in Ernakulam, Thrissur, Alappuzha and Kannur districts (used for prawn filtration during saline season), 17,000 hectares of kole lands in Thrissur and Malappuram districts, 35,000 hectares of padasekharams in Alappuzha, Kottayam and Pathanamthitta districts and an estimated 1.20 lakh hectares of paddy fields in Palakkad district.

Foundation to be laid for veterinary complex

THRISSUR, November 20, 2013 - Minister for Animal Husbandry K.P. Mohanan will lay the foundation stone for the Dr. K.R. Narayanan Teaching Veterinary Clinical Complex and Dr. Verghese Kurien Institute of Dairy and Food Technology at the College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Mannuthy, on November 21. M. P. Vincent, MLA, will preside.

Call to reorient farm extension strategies

KASARAGOD, November 20, 2013 - There is a need to reorient extension strategies in the plantation sector to proactively respond to the emerging socio-economic and ecological scenario, R.M. Prasad, former Associate Director of Extension, Kerala Agricultural University, has said.

This would require capability building of extension personnel and organisations in tune with the challenges in value chain management, Dr. Prasad said while inaugurating a national training programme at the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute here on Tuesday.

📌 ***National training programme at CPCRI***

📌 ***Focus on product diversification***

'Issue title deeds to farmers'

KOTTAYAM, November 20, 2013 - Kerala Pradesh Karshaka Congress Committee (I) president Lal Varghese Kalpakavadi has urged the State government to issue title deeds to farmers who had settled down in the high range areas before 1977. The distrust among the public against the previous governments resulted in the stiff opposition against the implementation of K. Kasturirangan report on Western Ghats, he said.

Tobacco farmers seek 7-hour power supply

ELURU, November 20, 2013 - *Appeal made to Kavuri Sambasiva Rao*

Tobacco farmers on Tuesday appealed to Union Minister for Textiles Kavuri Sambasiva Rao to give directions to the administration for seven-hour power supply a day for the tobacco crop. They made this plea when the Minister came to participate in the Rachabanda programme at Dendulu under his Lok Sabha constituency.

The inadequate and erratic power supply brought the tobacco crop, which was at plantation stage, under serious threat.

The poor quality in power supply would have an adverse impact on the quality and yield, they feared. Mr. Sambasiva Rao brought the plight of the tobacco farmers to the notice of M.V. Seshagiri Babu, Chairman and Managing Director of the Eastern Power Distribution Company Limited (EPDCL) and asked him to take necessary measures. The farmers showed the Minister paddy panicles damaged in the recent rains while seeking help in procurement of the produce by the government with minimum support price (MSP).

Local MLA Chintamaneni Prabhakar from the TDP sought the Minister's intervention for a fair-play in payment of compensation to the victims of the expansion of the Kolkatta-Chennai National Highway into six lanes. The rates offered by the National Authority of India (NHAI) to the losers in the Vijayawada-Gundugolanu section were not uniform. The victims in Krishna district were offered more compensation compared to those in West Godavari, he said while highlighting the need for removal of disparities.

☑ ***Kavuri brings the matter to the notice of EPDCL Chairman and Managing Director***

☑ ***NHAI urged to ensure parity in compensation to land-losers***

Food processing industry in India set for growth



Governor K. Rosaiah (centre) releasing the 'Knowledge Paper' at the National Conference on Linking Growth Drivers of Food Processing Industries organised by ASSOCHAM in Coimbatore on Tuesday. Chairman of the Southern Regional Council of ASSOCHAM Ravindra Sannareddy (left) and Vice Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University K. Ramasamy (right) are in the picture. —Photo: K. Ananthan

COIMBATORE, November 20, 2013 - World-class food testing laboratories should be established in the country in the public and private sectors, Governor K. Rosaiah said here on Tuesday.

He inaugurated a conference on “Linking Growth Drivers of Food Processing Industries; Market, Retail, Quality with Food Safety and Skills” organised by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM).

Direct investment

The Governor said that India attracted 1,970 million dollars of foreign direct investment in food processing sector between April 2000 and July 2013.

“The future is now in food processing technology revolution, for which the country has started preparing itself,” he said. Food and food products are the largest consumption category in the country with a market size of 181 billion dollars.

The spending on food and food products amounts to nearly 21 per cent of the gross domestic product.

Domestic market

The Indian domestic market is expected to grow by nearly 40 per cent of the current market size by 2015.

Though India ranks first in production of milk, pulses and tea and second in production of fruits and vegetables, its share in the world food trade is less than two per cent. The Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries has launched the National Mission of Food Processing.

The State Government has identified thrust areas in food processing and agro based industries.

The industry in the country should improve to reach international standards of food safety and quality, he said.

Manpower

The food processing industry in the State has generated opportunities for skilled manpower. Educational institutions have started modifying the curriculum to improve the employability of the students for this sector, according to K. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.

The total food production of the country is expected to double in the next 10 years and there is an opportunity for large investments in food and food processing technologies, said Ravindra Sannareddy, chairman, Southern Regional Council of the ASSOCHAM.

Helping cattle owners to keep foot-and-mouth disease at bay

CUDDALORE, November 20, 2013 - Special gram sabha meetings were held in Cuddalore district on Tuesday at the instance of Animal Husbandry Department to create awareness of foot-and-mouth disease and “bio-security measures” for combating the disease, among farmers and cattle breeders.

The meetings drew a large number of people as the disease has started claiming lives of cattle heads in villages. Cattle owners were instructed to apply sodium carbonate in animal

sheds, spray caustic soda solution on the body of the animals and spread bleaching powder in the path leading to the sheds.

Assistant Director of Husbandry (animal disease intelligence unit) D. Ramamurthy told *The Hindu* that his department was supplying sodium carbonate and bleaching powder to panchayat presidents.

Foot-and-mouth disease was reported mainly in the Sethiathope block. It has so far claimed the lives of 50 animals, including 43 cattle heads and seven pigs. A team from Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University had conducted post-mortem on dead animals and collected samples to be sent to the Indian Veterinary Research Institute at Mukteswar in Jharkhand.

Dr. Ramamurthy also said that the disease was under control as an active plan has been put in place.

A total of 32 teams, each one comprising a veterinary assistant surgeon, a livestock inspector and animal husbandry assistants, had been formed in Cuddalore district to administer antibiotic (cefatoxime) to the animals.

Foot-and-mouth disease: 5 cattle heads die

DINDIGUL, November 20, 2013 - Five cattle died of foot-and-mouth disease at Vedasandur near here on Tuesday.

These cattle belonged to two farmers at Pamboolupatti and Nagkolpatti village in Koombur panchayat in Vedasandur block.

Farmers Paneerselvam and Karuppaiah, who lost their cattle, told that the animals had sore in the mouth and struggled to consume food.

Three more animals had been affected by the disease, they added.

Veterinarians camped at the village have advised the farmers to bring the affected animals to the nearest veterinary clinics immediately.

Training programme

DHARWAD, November 20, 2013 - A three-day training programme in bee keeping will be held at the Raitha Seva Kendra located on the premises of the Department of Horticulture here from November 18. For enrolment, contact 0836-2744376. — Staff Correspondent

'Millet ladoos' for kids under pilot project

ARIYALUR, November 20, 2013 - The State government has sanctioned Rs. 1.29 crore for the implementation of a pilot project to provide 'millet ladoo' to primary schoolchildren for five months.

The Collector, E. Saravanelraj, who inspected the distribution of millet ladoo at the Ariyalur East panchayat union middle school on Tuesday, said that the scheme would benefit 40, 680 students in the district.

Under the scheme launched on November 8, children are provided with two ladoos made from millet flour, weighing 25 grams each, a day.

The mixture of flour of different millets, according to an official release, is got from cooperative societies in Vandavasi and Vellore.

The height and weight of the children are recorded before the launch of the pilot project and at the end of it to determine the impact of millets on their health.

A report would be submitted to the government at the end of the project period.

Schoolchildren to be provided two ladoos made from millet flour, weighing 25 grams each, a day

Registration of new crop varieties begins



COIMBATORE, November 20, 2013 - Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB) has commenced the registration process for new variety of forestry crops. Director of IFGTB N. Krishnakumar said there that there was an increased awareness and commitment to preserve forests.

The plantations outside forest areas fulfil the need for timber and other wood products. New varieties of trees that can grow vigorously even on soils with low nutrients and moisture was required to raise high-yielding plantations.

Wood production

IFGTB had been developing fast-growing varieties of different tree species for over 25 years. Superior clones of the short-rotation (3 to 5 years) crops, casuarinas, and eucalyptus had been developed for large scale cultivation. These clones were widely planted by farmers which could double the wood production.

They fetched substantial additional income to farmers and ensure pulpwood supply to paper industries facing acute shortage of raw material.

India enacted the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Act 2001 (PPVFR) to protect rights of farmers. The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPVFRA) was established to implement the Act.

Under this Act, plant varieties could be registered with the authority by following the standard test for distinctiveness, uniformity and stability (DUS Testing).

Registration was given for 15 years to crops and 18 years for others. During this period, the variety could be used only with the permission of those who have registered them.

IFGTB has been developing

fast-growing varieties of different tree species for over 25 years

Decayed crops greet Central team



Ground realities: Farmers showing the rain-damaged onion plants to the Central team members, in Guntur district on Tuesday. – Photo: T. Vijaya Kumar

TADEPALLI (GUNTUR DT.), November 20, 2013 - Members of a Central team, constituted to assess loss due to heavy rains, visited flood-ravaged villages in Guntur district on Tuesday.

Team members – Joint Secretary (NE) Shambhu Singh, Joint Director, Directorate of Pulses Development, R.P. Singh and SE Krishna and Coordination Circle M. Ramesh Kumar – accompanied by Joint Collector Vivek Yadav and other officials witnessed the extent of damage caused due to heavy rains that battered the district in the last week of October. Officials from Agriculture, Horticulture and Revenue Departments arranged

photo exhibitions of marooned villages in Guntur and apprised the team of the losses in different mandals in the district. According to the district officials, agriculture crops in about 1.44 lakh hectares and horticulture crops in an extent of 22,000 hectares were damaged due to floods.

Rotten crops

Decayed crops greeted the team members at Penumaka village on the banks of Krishna river in Tadepalli mandal. Farmers explained that Kondaveedu Vaagu had overflowed and caused extensive breaches damaging crops in some thousands of acres in the mandal. “We raised onion, banana and other vegetable crops in Penumaka, Rayapudi and other villages by

investing Rs.20,000 to Rs.50,000 per acre. But the entire crop was damaged as floodwater was stagnated in the fields for over a month,” said an onion farmer Rama Rao who displayed the withered crop before the team.

Telugu Desam MLA Dhullipalla Narendra submitted a memorandum demanding the government to pay compensation to the farmers and the flood victims immediately. Speaking at a meeting with heads of various departments, Mr. Shambhu Singh said the crop loss was heavy in the district, and a detailed report would be submitted to the government on the calamity.

Correspondent: A two-member Central team, deputed to assess the loss due to heavy rains, visited some remote villages and interacted with farmers and public representatives on the first day of a two-day tour in the district on Tuesday evening.

K. Ramavarma, Secretary, Rural Development and A. Chandrashekar, Research Officer, Planning Commission accompanied by Joint Collector L. Sharman and other officials visited Mannevari Pally, Marlepadu tanda.

Farmers briefed the team about their loss and urged the officials to provide financial assistance soon.

MP from Nagarkurnool M. Jagannath, Achempet MLA P. Ramulu, Wanaparthy MLA R. Chandrashekar Reddy and other leaders apprised the Central team about farmers’ loss in Achampet, Nagarkurnool and Kollapur Assembly segments in the district.

Farmers obstruct assessment

Staff Reporter adds: Farmers of Tadakamalla village obstructed the tour of the Central team deputed to assess loss to farmers due to heavy rains. According to schedule, the two-member Central team comprising Chandrasekhar (Planning Commission) and K. Srirama Varma (Rural Development) first visited Ravulapenta village of Vemulapally mandal commencing their tour.

The team, accompanied by Zilla Parishad Chief Executive Officer S. Venkat Rao, was to leave to Peddadevulapally village when about 20 farmers intercepted them with a request to visit their village which had suffered huge losses. However, the members of the team and CEO managed to convince them saying that they were running out of time and promised that they would get suitable compensation for their loss.

The team visited Tripuraram, Nidamanoor, Peddavura and Dindi mandals in the district.

Rs. 113.50 cr. crop loan distributed

THANJAVUR, November 20, 2013 - Co-operative bodies have disbursed crop loan to the tune of Rs 113.50 crores so far against a target of Rs 160 crore this year said N. Subbaiyan, Thanjavur District Collector here on Sunday.

Speaking at the 60th all India co-operative week celebrations, Subbaiyan said that 27,500 farmers have benefitted. With respect to jewel loans, the target was Rs.750 crore this year. Co-operative institutions have so far distributed Rs 265 crore, the collector said.

To help farmers to store their harvest, 60 godowns have been built for Primary Agriculture Co-operative Credit Societies at a cost of Rs 6.60 crore with financial assistance from National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). Hundred tonnes of commodities can be stored in these godowns.

The collector distributed benefits to the tune of Rs 1.5 crores .

60 godowns built for PACs at a cost of Rs 6.60 crore with financial assistance from NABARD

Sufficient stock of fertilizers available for paddy: official

TIRUCHI, November 20, 2013 - Adequate stocks of fertilizers, including urea, di-ammonium phosphate (DAP), potash, and complex fertilizers required for the samba and thaladi paddy seasons are available in the district. About 2,600 tonnes of urea and 840 tonnes of potash have arrived in the district recently and more consignments are expected shortly. The fertilizers were being sent to the cooperative societies across the district, P. Gururaj Singh, Joint Director of Agriculture, said in a release. — Special Correspondent

Paddy procurement

THRISSUR, November 20, 2013 - Supplyco has invited applications from farmers for paddy procurement. Details may be downloaded from the Supplyco website, www.supplycopaddy.com.

‘Maize production likely to touch 25 million tonnes’

TIRUPATI, November 20, 2013 - *Data predicted based on an econometric analysis of modal prices at major markets*

Maize production is likely to surpass all records this year, thanks to the adequate rains. Studies estimate a higher rabi acreage, a record 25 million tonnes, across major maize-growing States such as Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. The data was predicted based on an econometric analysis of modal prices at major markets by Sri Venkateswara Agricultural College's Agricultural Market Intelligence Centre (AMIC) functioning under the Department of Agricultural Economics. According to the data available with the Union Ministry of Agriculture, the area under maize cultivation (as on October 2) has risen by 11 per cent compared to last year. Rabi production is likely to be higher as last year's production stood at around 6.25 million tonnes despite a bad monsoon. The forecast, along with the market survey given at the present market sentiments, indicated that the prices would be around Rs.1,300 per quintal at harvest and advised the farmers to take up sowing.

Steady increase in MSP

Meanwhile, for pulses production, the government has fixed a target of 19 million tonnes with specific measures like mixed cropping and crop diversification. A steady increase in

minimum support prices in the last three years has provided some encouragement to growers with demand topping production. AMIC's analysis pegged the prices of black gram (Tenali market) and Bengal gram (Kurnool market) at Rs.4,000 and Rs.3,000-3,200 per quintal at harvest.

Good progress of monsoon across the country has brightened prospects for oilseeds and the edible oil industry expects the area under oilseeds such as groundnut to expand by 5 per cent this kharif over the last season. The area under groundnut and sunflower in rabi 2013-14, is expected to be close to the corresponding season of 2012-13. AMIC's forecast pegs the prices of groundnut and sunflower, on the basis of Kurnool market, in the range of Rs.4,000-4,200 and Rs.3,600-3,800 per quintal respectively, at harvest.

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- ☐ *The area under maize cultivation has gone up by 11 per cent compared to last year*
 - ☐ *Good progress of monsoon across the country has also brightened prospects for oilseeds*
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Water level

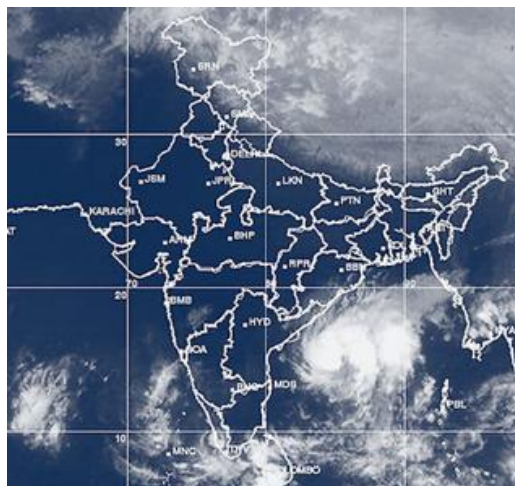
TIRUNELVELI, November 20, 2013 - Water level in the Papanasam dam on Tuesday stood at 93.80 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 1,040.42 cusecs after 35 mm rainfall and 610 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam.

The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 68.30 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 235 cusecs and 35 cusecs of water was discharged.

Kanyakumari

The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 25.60 feet, 60.55 feet in Perunchani, 9.81 feet in Chittar 1, 9.90 feet in Chittar 11, 3.60 feet in Poigai and 41.99 feet in Mamabazathuraiyaru dam.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on November 19.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Anantapur	31	19	0	51
Arogyavaram	27	17	0	174
Bapatla	32	21	0	505
Calingapatnam	29	20	0	922
Gannavaram	32	21	0	411
Hanamkonda	31	17	0	284
Hyderabad AP	31	18	0	239
Kakinada	31	22	0	622
Khammam	32	19	0	98
Kavali	29	21	0	534
Kurnool	31	20	0	96
Mahabubnagar	33	20	0	163
Machilipatnam	32	23	0	384
Narasapur	33	23	0	606
Nellore	29	21	1	437
Nizamabad	32	16	0	107
Ongole	31	23	0	507
Ramagundam	31	16	0	201
Tirupathi AP	29	20	tr	312
Tuni	33	22	0	470
Vizag AP	32	22	0	555
Vizag	31	23	0	511

KARNATAKA

Agumbe	30	16	16	600
Bengaluru AP	26	17	4	125
Bengaluru	26	17	20	133
Bagalkote	31	19	0	—
Belgaum AP	26	16	0	60
Bellary	33	19	0	63
Bijapur	29	17	0	113
Chitradurga	25	18	0	55
Chickmagalur	26	18	0	41
Chintamani	26	15	1	64
Gadag	29	19	tr	88
Gulbarga	33	18	0	35
Hassan	29	19	0	86
Honavar	34	24	0	261
Karwar	36	24	0	167
Madikeri	25	18	0	189
Mangalore AP	34	23	0	305
Mysore	28	21	11	153
Mandya	29	19	10	149
Panambur	35	24	0	235
Raichur	30	18	0	102
Shirali	34	23	tr	414

KERALA

Alappuzha	31	23	2	238
Kannur	34	25	0	321
Kochi AP	32	22	23	473
Kottayam	35	23	14	486
Kozhikode	33	25	2	273
Punalur	33	22	tr	533
Thiruvanantha				
-puram AP	31	24	1	324
Thiruvanantha				
-puram City	31	24	3	389
Vellanikkara	33	24	0	437
TAMIL NADU				
Adirampattinam	31	23	3	121
Chennai	31	23	tr	332
Chennai AP	30	22	3	400
Coimbatore AP	31	22	17	134
Coonoor	19	14	47	420
Cuddalore	31	23	6	257
Dharmapuri	28	20	2	251
Kanyakumari	30	24	1	249
Karaikal	27	23	74	322
Kodaikanal	15	11	31	228
Madurai AP	33	23	4	202
Nagapattinam	26	23	63	268
Palayamkottai	30	23	7	242
Pamban	30	26	0	195
Parangipettai	30	24	3	401
Puducherry	29	23	tr	256
Salem	30	20	3	205
Thanjavur	27	25	13	177
Tiruchi AP	30	22	8	319
Tirupattur	28	19	0	174
Tiruttani	29	21	0	315
Tondi	31	24	0	259
Tuticorin	31	24	1	192
Ooty	17	10	5	245
Valparai	26	15	14	294
Vellore	28	21	2	99
LAKSHADWEEP				
Amini Divi	31	24	tr	164
Minicoy	32	25	1	119
Kavarathi	—	—	—	—
OTHER STATIONS				
Kolkata (Alipore)	30	17	0	523
Mumbai	35	25	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.

RAIN LIKELY IN COASTAL A.P.

CHENNAI: Rainfall occurred at many places over Tamil Nadu and at a few places over Kerala and South interior Karnataka. Isolated rainfall occurred over coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema and coastal and north interior Karnataka. Mainly dry weather prevailed over Telangana and Lakshadweep.

The minimum temperature fell appreciably at many places over interior Karnataka, Rayalaseema, fell at one or two places over Telangana, coastal Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, rose at one or two places over Kerala and changed little elsewhere over the region.

They were appreciably above normal at a few places over coastal and south interior Karnataka, above normal at one or two places over rest of coastal Karnataka, coastal Andhra Pradesh, below normal at one or two places over Telangana, Kerala and remained normal over the rest of the region. Adilabad recorded the lowest minimum temperature of 12 degree celsius in the plains of the region.

FORECAST (valid until Thursday morning): Rain or thundershower would occur at many places over Kerala and south Tamil Nadu and at a few places over coastal Andhra Pradesh, south interior Karnataka and Lakshadweep. Isolated rain or thundershower may occur over North Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Rayalaseema, Coastal and North Interior Karnataka.

hindustantimes

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Nov 20

Max Min

31° | 24°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 62

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:06

Sunset: 05:39

Barometer: 1009

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Thursday, Nov 21

Max Min

31° | 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday
Nov 22



28° | 24°

Cloudy

Saturday
Nov 23



27° | 23°

Cloudy

Sunday
Nov 24



27° | 26°

Overcast

Monday
Nov 25



27° | 25°

Overcast

Tuesday
Nov 26



27° | 25°

Overcast

Finding a sanctuary



A one-horned rhinoceros is seen during the rhino census in the Pobitora wildlife sanctuary, 55 kilometers east of Guwahati. According to the 2006 census, Pobitora has the highest density of rhino population in the world.

Travel plans to Indian sanctuaries or national parks tend to revolve around places that are famed for their tiger populations. However,

most visitors tend to forget that the country is home to several other species, most of whom find a mention on the International Union for Conservation of

Nature's (IUCN) endangered or vulnerable lists as well. Now, Atula Gupta, founder of India's Endangered and Asia editor-in-chief of Jeff Corwin Connect, recommends 10 spots to head to if you are looking to spot animals besides India's favourite big cat.

Indian Bison (Gaur): Not to be confused with tame cattle, the Indian bison is a ferocious creature. Some good options for sighting them include Wayanad National Park in Kerala, Nagarhole National Park in Karnataka and the Mudumalai - Bandipur reserves. The ideal time to visit is between February and June.

Asian elephants: Named as the national heritage animal of India, herds are found in almost all popular sanctuaries in north and south India. However, the best places are the southern reserves, such as the Periyar National Park in Kerala. The best time to visit is from October to June.

Great Indian Bustard: One of the largest flying bird species found in the world today, the critically endangered species was once found across the grasslands of India and Pakistan. The Desert National Park, Rajasthan, from November to March, is a place to see these birds in fair numbers.

Indian one-horned rhino: The Kaziranga National Park in Assam is known for its rhino population. Visit it in September and October, or February and March. Other parks to see them are Orang National Park and Pobitora National Park in Assam, Jaldapara National Park in West Bengal and Dudhwa National Park in Uttar Pradesh.

Asiatic Lion: The Gir National Park in Gujarat is the only place in the world to see the Asiatic Lion in its natural habitat. Peak summer is good to spot them, so plan your trip between mid-October to June.

Snow Leopard: Hemis National Park lies in east Ladakh. Visit the area from November to March to watch these majestic animals that roam the rocky mountain ranges at high altitudes. The other option would be to head to Nanda Devi National Park and the Valley of Flowers National Park in the state of Uttarakhand.

Ganges River Dolphin: The Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary in Bhagalpur, Bihar, is the place to go to see this endangered species from October to June. Their breeding period commences in September and October, and there is a good chance of sighting calves.

Nilgiri Tahr: The Eravikulam National Park in Kerala is home to one of the highest populations, and the best time to visit is from September to March.

Kashmir Red Stag (Hangul): Sight the red deer at the Dachigam National Park in Kashmir in September and October.

Golden Mahseer: The migrating fish, which seeks warmer waters in winters, can be spotted at the Nameri National Park, Assam, from October to April.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Vets get cracking to prevent spread of foot and mouth disease

COIMBATORE: After reports that four cows from Annur region were suffering from symptoms of excessive salivation and frothing resembling typical [foot and mouth disease](#) (FMD) symptoms in Annur, experts from the department of [animal husbandry department](#) carried out medical checks on the affected animals.

They have claimed that only one of these animals is under observation for the FMD viral infection.

As of now, according to official statistics only three animal deaths have been reported from FMD in the district, apart from 38 confirmed cases of FMD infection. The main focus of the officials at the moment is to ensure that they prevent any attempt to carry out distress sale of any cattle that are suspected to be infected with FMD infection.

" We are carrying out preventive measures across the district and are carrying out inspections to ensure proper disposal in case of any further deaths. We are also appealing to the farmers and cattle reares to ensure that they take up necessary precautionary measures to ensure that the outbreak can be contained," said DR V Muthu Gopalakrishnan, Regional Joint Director of Animal Husbandry.

The main cattle shanties, including the ones at Thudiyalur, Boluvampatti and Pollachi areas have been temporarily shut down until further orders from the district administration. The government machinery has formed 83 teams of veterinarians deployed in the district to carry out preventive measures to control the outbreak of the disease in the district.

" We are now carrying out awareness campaigns across the district with special focus on areas in the outer limits like Annur, Thondamuthur, Pollachi and adjacent areas ," Dr Muthu Gopalakrishnan added.

The first case of animals with FMD symptoms this year in Coimbatore was reported from Thondamuthur, where eight animals developed symptoms of excessive salivation and mouth blisters on October 26.

Farmers' demand relief from govt for cattle affected by foot and mouth disease

ERODE: A farmers' organisation has demanded compensation from the state government for the cattle that succumbed to [foot and mouth disease](#). They said farmers in Karnataka were compensated when there was a similar outbreak there. The body has threatened protests if the government does not heed to their demand.

K Venkatachalam, district secretary of the [Tamil Nadu Farmers Association](#), who held a district-level meeting said that around 500 farmers took part in the meeting to discuss about the disease on Tuesday.

"We demand that the government should pay a compensation of Rs 25,000 for a calf and Rs 50,000 for adult cattle that have succumbed to the disease," he said.

Several people have incurred huge losses after the outbreak of the disease, he said. "Many homes have lost their entire cattle to the disease," he said. This has affected many in the farming community who depend on income from the cattle, especially when agriculture is going through a bad phase, he said.

Venkatachalam disputed the government claim that farmers were told to vaccinate and medicate their cattle. "Most of the farmers came to know about preventive vaccination and other measures only after the outbreak. It too late by then," he said. Therefore, steps should be taken and compensation issued. If not the farmers will be forced to abandon farming, he said.

Potato prices slashed to Rs 18/kg

: Homemakers can now heave a sigh of relief as [potato prices](#) have come down to Rs 18 per kg from the soaring Rs 30 per kg. Potatoes are selling at the vegetable market at this current price because the city now has adequate amount of the vegetable to fulfill requirements of the people. Arrival of local potatoes at market has also helped in bringing down the price.

Local trader Faisal from Daily Market said on Tuesday, "The price of potatoes has come down as there is good supply at the markets. Also, we are getting local potatoes which have helped."

Though vegetables grown in winter have now flooded the markets, prices continue to be sky high. Most vegetables including cauliflower, brinjal, ladies finger, capsicum etc are being sold at an average rate of Rs 40 to Rs 50 per kg.

Even radish is being sold at Rs 30 per kg. Onions are being sold at Rs 40 to Rs 50 per kg at the market which has also come down from Rs 60-70 per kg.

Relieved at the slashed prices, Savitri Devi from Hindpidi, said, "Now at least I can include potatoes in my daily menu. But the average homemaker is still reeling under soaring prices of green veggies. The government should take some steps to cut down the vegetable prices as they did for potatoes."

Another local, Rajesh Singh from Ratu Road, said, "With the increased prices of vegetables, nowadays it is becoming difficult for us to buy them. Even if we shop for Rs 200 the bag is just half filled compared to what it used to be earlier. As I am the sole bread earner in my family, it is hurting my pocket."

Business Standard

Sugar crisis deepens in UP: 65 private millers notify suspension of operations

State govt says mills should have waited for 2013-14 cane price

The crisis in the [Uttar Pradesh](#) sugar sector deepened on Tuesday, with private mills, including Bajaj Hindusthan, Balrampur Chini Mills and Dhampur Sugar, announcing suspension of operations, following an impasse over announcement of state sugarcane price.

According to industry representatives, 65 of the state's 99 private [sugar mills](#) filed notices when the state cane commissioner's office in Lucknow was about to close for the day.

The millers are unhappy over the "action initiated and letters issued" by the cane commissioner for starting the mills, without considering the "extremely difficult situation and problems faced by sugar mills — and without our participation in the cane reservation process".

"This (the impasse) has already caused huge losses to us and has created an unavoidable situation where we can't continue to run operations in losses," Bajaj Hindusthan, the country's largest sugar company, said in a BSE filing. It added banks, too, had declined to provide higher working-capital loans to the sugar industry, aggravating private mills' problems.

DCM Shriram Consolidated, Uttam Sugar and Oudh Sugar Mills made similar filings to the exchange.

The millers claimed cane allotment orders were being passed and uploaded on the official website without submission of cane reservation proposals by mills.

Besides, dates for commencing the operation were being announced through press releases, without consulting mills or considering the “real situation and the submissions being made by us”.

Uttar Pradesh accounts for almost a third of the country’s total sugar production. The state’s sugar output stood at 6.97 million tonnes and 7.47 mt in 2011-12 and 2012-13, respectively. The state’s Rs 30,000-crore sugar sector is its largest organised industry and sugarcane farming supports the livelihood of more than four million of its farmers.

The private mills, numbering almost 100, claim they have been incurring losses in successive crushing seasons due to higher prices of cane vis-à-vis sugar. When contacted by Business Standard, Rahul Bhatnagar, UP’s principal secretary (sugarcane development, said the matter had not yet officially come to his notice, but assured it would be looked into whenever it did. “The sugar industry has given such letters in the past, too. And, if the fresh letter talks of suspension of operations, it is unfortunate. The sugar millers should have waited for the state government to fix the sugarcane price for 2013-14,” Bhatnagar said.

Last year, UP had fixed cane price at Rs 280 a quintal for the common variety. The mills still owe more than Rs 2,300 crore to cane farmers for the 2012-13 season. This year, the mills claim, the paying capacity has come down to Rs 225 a quintal and any price above that will lead to arrears and losses to the industry. The millers have been demanding the state fix “affordable” cane prices, in line with the recommendations of the [Rangarajan committee](#). They want the price at 70 per cent of the revenue realised from sugar, bagasse, molasses and press mud, or at 75 per cent of the revenue realised from sugar.

“To break the impasse, Uttar Pradesh needs to rationalise its sugarcane pricing policy and bring it in sync with the committee’s suggestions. That way, it will be able to determine a price that is viable and within mills’ paying capacity. I am sure, if that happens, sugar mills will come forward and start operations,” said Abinash Verma, director-general of the Indian Sugar Mills Association.

In a related development, the Uttar Pradesh Sugar Mills Association urged farmers in Meerut, through advertisements in local newspapers, to supply sugarcane at Rs 225 a quintal.

Meanwhile, it was learnt that two cooperative mills in UP’s [Baghpat](#) district had started crushing operations. The other cooperative mills are likely to follow suit in phases before November 30.

Earlier, Indian Potash Ltd had assured the government its five mills would start crushing by the end of November. The company had procured sugar corporation mills during the

previous Mayawati regime.

Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav had on November 11 directed private mills to start crushing from November 20. He had asked officials to take action against defaulters.

BITTER BATTLE

- **25.14 mt:** India's total sugar production in 2012-13 (October-September); output could be higher this year due to good rains
- **2 mt:** Total stock India's sugar millers might currently be sitting on
- **30%:** Uttar Pradesh's (UP's) share in India's total sugar production
- **7.47 mt:** UP's sugar production during 2012-13 — 7.2% higher than 6.97 mt in 2011-12
- **50%:** Bajaj Hindusthan and Balrampur Chini — both based in
- **UP** — account for around half the state's total sugar production

Likely impact

- **PRICE SPIKE:** A 30% fall in sugar output will lead to an immediate reliance on imports, leading to a rise in both global and domestic rates, as India is the world's largest sugar consumer
- **LAW & ORDER:** Around 4 million UP farmers depend on sugarcane farming for livelihood; if mills stop functioning, there could be a law and order problem
- **INVESTMENT:** The state's overall investment climate might take a hit, as sugar sector is one of UP's biggest organised industries

Sugar crisis: High level meet today to discuss relief

Interest-free loans likely on agenda



The Centre has convened a high-level meeting on Wednesday which is expected to discuss a relief-package for the crisis-ridden [sugar](#) industry in Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Maharashtra, which could include [interest-free loans](#) from banks.

According to officials, a decision on giving mills access to interest-free loans from banks — one of the main demand of the [millers](#) — is expected to be taken up in the meeting, which is likely to be attended by the ministers of food, agriculture, commerce, finance and petroleum. Under the interest-free loan programme, millers can borrow funds from banks while the Centre will bear the interest cost on their behalf. A similar scheme was introduced a few years ago when the mills had faced a cash crunch.

The meeting, officials said, is also expected to discuss the issues of raising import duty on sugar from the existing 15 per cent to 50 per cent, creating a buffer stock of around five million tonnes, relaxation in tenure of loans given to sugar factories, export incentive and other measures. "In total, a package of around Rs 50,000 crore could come up for discussion on Wednesday," a senior government official said. He said sugar mills in both the states are facing a crisis because production in 2013-14 (October-September) is expected to be much more than consumption.

Sugar industry in Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra — the two largest producing states — have not yet started crushing sugarcane in the new crop year, which started in October, citing mounting cane arrears, huge unsold stocks and the inability to pay high price to farmers.

Officials said millers across India owe around Rs 3,400 crore to farmers on account of sugarcane purchased from them last year.

In UP, cane was purchased at Rs 280 a quintal in 2012-13 (October-September).

Even though farmers are demanding a higher price in excess of Rs 300 per quintal, an industry source said the millers can't pay more than last year's price (Rs 280 a quintal). "We are in no position to pay a higher sugarcane price this year as our cash position is precarious due to drop in sugar rates both in the domestic and international markets."

"We urgently need to dispose of 1.75 million tonnes of unsold sugar stocks lying with us, only then can there be any crushing," he added.

Farm ministry favours graded duties on edible oil imports

Wants mechanism under which duties will go up automatically if international edible oil prices fall, and vice versa



As the Centre mulls a proposal to increase the [import duty](#) on refined [edible oil](#) from the current 7.5 per cent to 10 per cent to protect the domestic industry, the ministry of [agriculture](#) has favoured a graded import duty structure to align landed cost – the end cost of a shipped item – with international prices.

In the ministry's comments on a cabinet note to raise the import duty, officials said the department of agriculture it has suggested that instead of a broad one-stroke increase or decrease, edible oil import duties should be made more flexible, whereby they would automatically go up if international edible oil prices fall by a

certain level and fall as soon as international oil prices rise by a certain percentage.

“This would ensure domestic refining industry is adequately protected from duty changes in other countries and there is no ambiguity in the structure,” the official explained.

OIL IS WELL

- Agri ministry favours graded edible oil import duties
- Food min feels graded duty structure be limited to palm oil
- Final decision expected in [CCEA](#) meeting soon
- Industry wants import duties to be raised to protect domestic refining
- India imported record edible oils in 2012-13 marketing year that ended in October

The duty differential between crude and refined edible oils should be maintained at the current level of 5 per cent, the department felt.

India previously revised the import duty on edible oils in January this year when the duty on crude oils was increased to 2.5 per cent from zero per cent, while that on refined oils was maintained at 7.5 per cent.

A final decision on the same is expected to be taken in the meeting of the cabinet committee on economic affairs (CCEA), to whom the matter has now been referred with comments from both departments.

The CCEA could take up the issue in its meeting expected to be held soon, an official said.

India’s imports of refined edible oil has jumped by over 41 per cent in 2012-13 oil marketing year that ended in October as compared to same period last year, mainly due to inverted duty structure in Indonesia and Malaysia.

India meets more than 50 per cent of their domestic demand through imports. Palm oil is being imported from Malaysia and Indonesia, while soyabean oil from Argentina and Brazil. The food ministry, which had originally floated the idea of an increase in import duty, is of the view that such a flexible graded import duty structure for edible oils should be only limited to palm and should not be extended to other oils.

“We also feel that any flexible import duty structure should not lead to spike in domestic edible oil prices as otherwise it would be detrimental to the interests of the consumers,” another official said.

According to the [World Bank](#), the monthly average price of palm oil in October was around \$859 per tonne, while it was \$820 per tonne in September and \$829 per tonne in August.

The prices are much lower than 2012 (January-December) average palm oil rates of \$999.3 a tonne.

In 2012-13 (November-October) edible oil year, India imported a record 10.38 million tonnes of edible oil, of which 5.88 million tonnes was crude palm oil, while 2.22 million tonnes was refined palm oil. Whereas, in 2011-12, India imported 9.98 million tonnes of edible oils, of which crude palm oil was 5.99 million tonnes, while refined was 1.57 million tonnes.

Vietnam pepper output likely to be 150,000 tonnes, India's 45,000



All eyes on the two as their prices would decide market movement

With [pepper](#) prices at their peak, market players are keeping an eye on [Vietnam](#) and [India](#). This is because prices in these two will be among the fundamental factors that would decide the market's movement in the next season. The big question for farmers, traders and exporters is: Would there be an increase in production

or a squeeze in [supply](#)?

The global pepper season begins next month, with Kerala starting to harvest.

The first supply comes from the southern districts, followed by Idukki in the east and later from the north, such as Wynad. In the final lap, harvest from Karnataka hits the market.

Sources in the Spices Board said production in India would be 45,000 tonnes the next season. However, traders and farmers peg it at 35,000 tonnes.

Benny Chacko, a planter at Kumily in Idukki district, said production could drop 40 per cent the next season due to unfavourable climatic condition, decrease in growing area and leaf disease. According to him, production in Kerala would fall to 15,000 tonnes this season from a normal of 22,000-25,000 tonnes.

The prolonged monsoon season, with continuous heavy rainfall for 90 days, has damaged the flowering of pepper vines in major producing centres of Kerala such as Idukki and Wynad. In most cases, flowers have been damaged and, as a result, leaves have grown abundantly, Chacko added.

Production is likely to decline in Karnataka, too, due to various reasons. The drop is expected to be between 4,000 and 5,000 tonnes and the crop size is pegged at 20,000 tonnes.

Meanwhile, the pepper farming community of Vietnam, the world's largest producer and

exporter of the spice, expect good prospects in the next season. Vietnam is likely to harvest 150,000 tonnes of pepper in 2014. The country's season begins in February.

According to a leading exporter from Ho Chi Minh City, berry formation is excellent and pepper vines are healthy, with lush green and no pests or disease attack till date. He said farmers from the highlands of Dak Lak and Gia Lai have reported there can hardly see any leaves as the pepper vines are full of spikes with abundant berries.

The next harvesting season may go up to July 2014, the exporter added. Harvesting is likely to begin after the Tet holidays by mid-February next year and could extend up to July as the farmers have decided to pluck the crop in four stages. The farmers want to completely utilise the abundance of crop and staggered selling strategy, which will keep the [price](#) fluctuation under check .

The Vietnamese farmers agree the current price of 152-155 VND (Vietnamese Dong) a kg is on the higher side. They will not, though, repeat their earlier sale of almost all their 2013 crop before August, fearing the Indonesian harvest would push down prices globally. Most of the farmers in the main growing areas feel the short-term demand will keep prices at the current levels or maybe a little higher, but from February or early March onwards, prices will start softening and they expect stability at 120-130 VND a kg.

Although Vietnam Pepper Association projects 55,000 hectares of planting area and 100,000 tonnes crop in 2014, farmers there peg acreage at 65,000-70,000 hectares and production at 147,0000 tonnes.

Some expect an output of 150,000 tonnes or a bit more in Vietnam, said Jojan Malayil of Kochi-based Bafna Enterprises, a leading exporter. In 2013, Vietnam produced 130,000 tonnes and it has already shipped 120,000 tonnes, which included pepper imported from other countries amounting to 1,5000 tonnes. An estimated 15,000 tonnes illegally crossed the border to Cambodia, China and Thailand.

Coconut oil market heats up, retail price at Rs 110/kg



This is due to the October-December seasonal shortfall in production

[Coconut oil](#) prices touched an all-time high of Rs 10,300 a quintal in the [wholesale market](#) due to an acute [shortage](#) of [copra](#), dried white flesh. This is due to the October-December seasonal shortfall in production. The [retail price](#) went up to Rs 110 a kg in local markets. Supply is likely to rise by January.

Kerala and Tamil Nadu face serious shortage. This has slowed crushing in both. The retail price is Rs 12-16 a nut in production centres. In Kochi, it can go up to Rs 20.

K V Somanathan, a grower, said there was a shortage as this was a lean season for production. In Kerala, production would pick up next year and prices would come down, he added. In Tamil Nadu, it would pick up by March. Hence, oil prices are likely to stay up for the a couple of months, said traders. In Kerala, shortage is severe in the northern districts, where 60 per cent of the state's production is done.

Demand for coconut will be high for a couple of months as the pilgrim season at Sabarimala, Kerala, has started. Thalath Mehmood, a Kochi-based trader, said the supply from Tamil Nadu was weak. Demand is likely to increase during the festival season. Christmas and New Year demand will heat the market, he said.

Quality copra fetches Rs 7,500-7,700 a quintal. Even so, it is not readily available. Most crushing mills in Kerala have stopped production. Industrial users mainly depend on Tamil Nadu supply. A major chunk of the oil traded in the retail segment also comes from Tamil Nadu. Retail traders said local demand was bad. When the price increases, demand shifts to palm oil, Rs 75-80 a kg.

Adulteration of oil (mixing with palm kernel oil) increases in line with the price and most oil in the local markets is inferior.

Over 17.5 million tonnes of paddy procured in Punjab and Haryana



Out of the total procurement, 12.53 mn tonnes of paddy was procured from Punjab

The Government agencies and private millers procured more than 17.5 million tonnes of [Paddy](#) in [Punjab](#) and [Haryana](#). While in Punjab the total [procurement](#) was over 12.5 million tonnes, whereas in Haryana the agencies and traders procured about 5 million tonnes of Paddy till last evening.

In Punjab, out of total procurement of 12.53 million tonnes of paddy in all the procurement centers of the state, the Government agencies procured 11.90 tonnes of paddy (95.1%) till date whereas private traders procured 6.15 lakh tonnes (4.9%) of paddy. Till November 18, Government agencies like PUNGRAIN had procured 3.62 million tonnes (30.4%) whereas MARKFED procured 2.77 million tonnes (23.3%). PUNSUP procured 2.67 million tonnes (22.4%), PSWC procured 1.16 million tonnes (9.8%) whereas PAFC was able to procure 1.22 million tonnes (10.2%) of paddy. The Central Government agency FCI had been able to procure 4.5 lakh tonnes (3.8%).

The spokesperson added that District Sangrur with 1.54 million tonnes of procurement was leading in procurement operations whereas District Ludhiana with 1.46 million tonnes of procurement was at second slot and district Patiala 1.20 million tonnes of procurement ranked at third position.

As far Haryana is concerned, about 4.98 million tonnes of paddy has so far arrived in various mandis during the current procurement season as compared to arrival of over 4.70 million tonnes of paddy during the corresponding period last year.

While stating this here today, a spokesman of the Food and Supplies Department said the Government agencies have purchased over 3.56 million tonnes of paddy. He said that Food and Supplies Department has purchased over 1.44 million tonnes of paddy, HAFED over 1.00 million tonnes, Agro Industries Corporation over 5.80 lakh metric tonnes, Haryana Warehousing Corporation over 3.42 lakh metric tonnes, CONFED over 1.64 lakh metric tonnes and Food Corporation of India had purchased 13,166 metric tonnes of paddy, he added.

He said that district Karnal is leading in the paddy arrival where over 9.35 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has arrived in the mandis, followed by Kurukshetra with over 8.80 lakh metric tonnes. District Kaithal ranks third in the paddy arrival where over 7.76 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has arrived in the mandis, in district Fatehabad over 5.22 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has arrived. Similarly, in Ambala over 5.22 lakh metric tonnes of paddy has arrived in the mandis, in Yamunanagar over 3.38 lakh metric tonnes, in Panipat over 1.65 lakh metric tonnes, in Sonapat over 1.53 lakh metric tonnes, in Palwal over 1.28 lakh metric tonnes, in Sirsa over 1.24 lakh metric tonnes, in Panchkula 83,499 metric tonnes, in Rohtak 26248 metric tonnes, in Faridabad 21,959 metric tonnes and in Hisar 18,702 metric tonnes of paddy has arrived in the mandis.

Edible oils fall on reduced offtake, global cues

Castor, linseed oils also declined on lack of demand from consuming industries



Edible oil prices fell up to Rs 100 per quintal on the wholesale oils and oilseeds market today on reduced [offtake](#) by stockists and retailers amid a weakening global trend.

Castor and linseed oils, in the non-edible section, also declined on lack of demand from consuming industries. Traders said reduced offtake by stockists and retailers, amid a weakening global trend on concern that exports

from Malaysia, the world's second-largest producer, may decline as a rally in the ringgit and weakening crude oil prices curb demand, mainly influenced the sentiment.

Meanwhile, palm oil for delivery in February, fell 0.9 per cent to USD 806 a tonne on the Malaysia Derivatives Exchange.

In the national capital, groundnut mill delivery (Gujarat) and mustard expeller (Dadri) oils fell by Rs 100 and Rs 50 to Rs 8,500 and Rs 7,600 per quintal, respectively.

Tracking a weak global trend, palmolein (rbd) and palmolein (Kandla) oils fell further by Rs 100 each to Rs 6,400 and Rs 6,000 while crude palm oil (ex-kandla) traded lower by the same margin to Rs 5,600 per quintal, respectively.

Soyabean refined mill delivery (Indore) and soyabean degum (Kandla) oils followed suit and lost Rs 100 each to Rs 7,400 and Rs 7,100 per quintal, respectively.

In the non-edible section, castor and linseed oil declined by Rs 50 each to Rs 9,300-9,400 and Rs 6,950 per quintal, respectively.

Jeera futures gain 1.55% on spot demand

The spice for delivery in December traded up by Rs 20, or 0.16%, to Rs 12,830 per quintal in 8,091 lots.



[Jeera](#) prices gained 1.55% to Rs 12,600 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators enlarged positions supported by rising demand in the spot markets due to ongoing marriage season.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera for delivery in November gained Rs 192.50, or 1.55%, to Rs 12,600 per quintal with an open interest of 237 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in December traded up by Rs 20, or 0.16%, to Rs 12,830 per quintal in 8,091 lots.

Analysts said speculators enlarged their positions, supported by good spot market demand due to ongoing marriage season, mainly helped jeera prices to trade higher at futures trade.

Cardamom futures extend gains, up 0.21 on tight supply

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for delivery in January rose by Rs 1.60, or 0.21 per cent, to Rs 781.80 per kg in a business turnover of 68 lots



Cardamom extended gains for the second straight day by gaining 0.21 per cent to Rs 781.80 per kg in [futures](#) trading today as speculators engaged in enlarging positions, supported by a rising demand in the spot market.

Besides, tight supplies following restricted arrivals from growing regions boosted the sentiment.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for delivery in January rose by Rs 1.60, or 0.21 per cent, to Rs 781.80 per kg in a business turnover of 68 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in December edged up by Rs 1.50, or 0.20 per cent, to Rs 752.50 per kg in 289 lots.

Analysts said besides rising demand in the spot market driven by ongoing marriage season mainly kept cardamom prices higher at futures trade.

Turmeric futures rise 2.80% on pick up in demand

The spice for delivery in November gained Rs 98, or 1.96%, to Rs 5,090 per quintal in 315 lots



[Turmeric](#) futures prices rose 2.80% to Rs 5,288 per quintal in futures market today as speculators built-up positions, tracking a firm trend at spot market on pick up in export and local demand.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, turmeric for delivery in December rose Rs 144, or 2.80%, to Rs 5,288 per quintal with an open interest of 15.455 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in November gained Rs 98, or 1.96%, to Rs 5,090 per quintal in 315 lots.

Analysts attributed the rise in turmeric futures to speculators enlarged their positions, tracking a firm trend at spot market on pick up in demand, mainly led to rise in turmeric prices at futures trade.

Potato futures climb 1.53% on strong demand, tight supply

The potato for delivery in April shot up by Rs 10.30, or 1.20%, to Rs 868 per quintal in 31 lots.



[Potato](#) prices surged by 1.53% to Rs 897 per quintal in [futures](#) trade today as speculators enlarged positions, driven by strong demand in the spot market.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), potato for delivery in March spurted Rs 13.50, or 1.53%, to Rs 897 per quintal in business turnover of 91 lots.

Likewise, the potato for delivery in April shot up by Rs 10.30, or 1.20%, to Rs 868 per quintal in 31 lots.

Analysts said speculators enlarged their positions, driven by strong demand in the spot market supported by ongoing marriage season amid restricted arrivals from producing belts, mainly pushed up potato prices at futures trade.

Crude palm oil futures remain weak on subdued demand

Oil for delivery in December traded lower by Rs 1.10, or 0.19%, to Rs 564.90 per 10 kg in 29 lots.



Crude [palm oil](#) remained weak for the second day with prices falling 0.21% to Rs 563 per 10 kg in futures market today due to subdued spot demand.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), crude palm oil for delivery in November declined Rs 1.20, or 0.21%, to Rs 563 per 10 kg in business turnover of 47 lots.

Similarly, oil for delivery in December traded lower by Rs 1.10, or 0.19%, to Rs 564.90 per 10 kg in 29 lots.

Analysts said subdued demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position mainly kept pressure on crude palm oil prices at futures trade.

Mentha oil futures remain up on spot demand

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, mentha oil for delivery in November added Rs 2.80, or 0.33%, to Rs 856.70 per kg in business turnover of 203 lots



[Mentha oil](#) remained higher by adding Rs 2.80 to Rs 856.70 per kg in [futures](#) trading today as speculators enlarged positions, driven by a rising demand from consuming industries in the spot market.

Restricted arrivals from Chandausi in Uttar Pradesh also fuelled the uptrend.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, mentha oil for delivery in November added Rs 2.80, or 0.33%, to Rs 856.70 per kg in business turnover of 203 lots.

Similarly, oil for delivery in December gained Rs 2.10, or 0.24%, to Rs 869 per kg in 39 lots.

Market analysts said speculators enlarging their positions, driven by a rising demand from consuming industries amid restricted arrivals from Chandausi in Uttar Pradesh mainly influenced mentha oil prices at futures trade. PTI KPS SUN RS STS

THE HINDU Business Line

40 NCDEX warehouses get authority registration

Jaipur, Nov. 19: National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange of India has announced that 40 warehouses associated with it have received Warehouse Development and Regulatory Authority registration and another 250 have applied for registration.

The exchange has 500 accredited warehouses and all of them have to get themselves registered with the authority before the end of this year according to commodity market regulator Forward Markets Commission directive.

The new directive was fallout of the Rs 5,600-crore settlement default by the National Spot Exchange which allowed traders to take sell position without the backing of commodity at the warehouses.

Stocks in the 40 warehouses approved by the authority are located in Rajasthan and have goods worth Rs 1,500 crore.

Mahesh Tiwari, Executive Vice-President, NCDEX, said another 250 warehouses from Rajasthan have filed for registration and the exchange would get all its accredited warehouse registered before the FMC deadline.

The exchange registers a daily turnover of Rs 6,000 crore.

suresh.i@thehindu.co.in

(The writer is in Jaipur at the invitation of NCDEX)

Allahabad High Court extends stay on import of poppy seeds

Kochi, Nov. 19: The Allahabad High Court has extended its stay on imports of poppy seeds till November 29.

A Bench comprising Dhananjaya Yashwant Chandrachud, Chief Justice, and Justice Sanjay Misra, ordered the extension of its interim order “till the next date of hearing”.

Following the stay on imports by the court earlier this year, the entire domestic crop has been consumed.

Traders say that some importers are holding back their produce they bought at a higher price. “Importers are waiting for the price to touch Rs 500 a kg. They should be holding at least 4,000 tonnes but the market is not moving up,” a trade source said.

The markets have not reacted to the ban since the Narcotic Commissioner has issued new permits for imports.

Prices have collapsed in Turkey, one of the main sources from where the commodity is sourced for imports. “As the Government has issued permits, cargoes are coming and are kept in warehouses. Once the stay order is lifted, the imported consignments will find their way into the domestic market,” the source said. Currently, poppy seeds are ruling in the range of Rs 380-450 a kg in the domestic market, depending upon the quality.

In the international market, prices are ruling at \$3,100 a tonne but some are able to source it at \$2,800 a tonne, which works out to Rs 300-320 a kg, according to sources.

As there are allegations that huge quantity of poppy seeds from Pakistan is entering India via Turkey, the Centre has taken a serious view of it. Any cargo from Turkey in the future might be screened thoroughly to stop illegal imports.

Spot rubber skids on buyer resistance

Kottayam, Nov.19: Spot rubber declined on Tuesday. Major grades lost ground on buyer resistance, though there was no visible selling pressure in the market. According to sources, widespread rains during the past couple of days disrupted tapping in major plantation areas, putting moderate pressure on production and arrivals. The trend was mixed as ISNR 20 and latex finished flat in almost inactive trading session.

Sheet rubber weakened to Rs 157 (Rs 158) a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board. The grade slipped to Rs 154 (155), as reported by the dealers. December contracts inched up to Rs 157.96 (Rs 157.77), while January contracts dropped to Rs 159.91 (Rs 160), February to Rs.161.75 (Rs 162.67) and March to Rs 164.72 (Rs 167.23) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) declined to Rs 155.85 (Rs 157.31) at Bangkok. November futures closed at ¥ 248.6 (Rs 154.99) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were: RSS-4: 157 (158); RSS-5: 148 (149); Ungraded: 144.50 (145); ISNR 20: 149 (149) and Latex 60%: 106 (106).

Mumbai police to probe tainted pepper controversy



Mumbai, Nov. 19: The Economic Offences Wing of Mumbai Police has decided to launch a preliminary probe into delivery of “mineral oil tainted pepper” by the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange.

Chief of the Economic Offences Wing Rajvardhan told reporters on Tuesday

that a probe has been launched based on complaints from traders in Kerala about the poor quality of pepper worth Rs 400 crore delivered to them late last year.

Traders had taken delivery of Malabar grade pepper in December but it did not meet the quality specifications, allegedly since mineral oil was found mixed with the stocks, he said. Rajvardhan said that the initial complaint in the case was filed by Vineet Chopra, a trader. Defending its position, NCDEX said in a statement that it has not received any query or correspondence from any police authority so far. It appears that the complaint has been filed by the Kalimirch Vyapari Association comprising several entities that traded in pepper futures contracts on the exchange platform.

The association is representing the interest of a cartel comprising Betul Oil Ltd and related entities, against whom investigation for market manipulation is in progress, the statement said. The cartel was also indicted in a probe with regard to guar futures trading carried out by the exchange and the Forward Markets Commission, the statement said. It said that the association had earlier filed a petition in the Indore High Court but withdrew it later.

Recently, Betul Oil and some of the related entities have been found guilty of trading violations by SEBI and have been banned from equity markets.

The statement further said that commodities are deposited in approved warehouses of the exchange for delivery and are assayed by empanelled agencies for quality and are accepted only if they meet the quality parameters as mentioned in contract specifications.

It said that for all other parameters as may be specified by any other law or agency such as Food Safety and Standards Authority, the onus is the on the depositor and seller. The Exchange has made it abundantly clear to market participants through its circulars, product notes and contract specifications that they should comply with all laws and stipulations.

In September, FMC officials told *Business Line* that the controversy cropped up since a “big party” had built up positions, expecting pepper prices to soar. It did not happen and the party wanted to wriggle out of the contract.

The FMC sent two officials, including one who has been with the Spices Board earlier, to look into the issue and they found that the quality adhered to the contract specification.

Sugarcane crushing begins in Maharashtra, to start in Karnataka next week

New Delhi, Nov. 19: Even as sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh have threatened to shut operations, almost all factories in Karnataka are expected to start crushing of cane by the end of next week, while about a third of the 180 have commenced operations in Maharashtra.

“About 65 mills, including 21 private factories, have started crushing in Maharashtra,” said M.G. Joshi, Managing Director of National Federation of Co-operative Sugar Factories Ltd. Except for the mills in the sugar bowl of Kolhapur, factories in almost all regions have started, though the cane price is yet to be decided.

“The deadlock over cane price continues in Kolhapur and we are in dialogue with the farmers,” Joshi said, seeking Government intervention to resolve the issue quickly.

Farmers in Maharashtra are demanding a price of Rs 3,000 a tonne, while the last year’s payout averaged between Rs 2,600 and Rs 2,700 a tonne, depending on the sugar recovery and factories’ performance.

However, Raju Shetty, MP and leader of the Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatan, said a majority of the sugar mills in the State are yet to start operations. Though some of them have started operations, the quantity of cane crushed by them is negligible, Shetty said.

Further, farmers were sticking to their demand of Rs 3,000 a tonne and are willing to wait till the issue was resolved, he said and demanded that the Government provide subsidy of Rs 5,000 a tonne to export two million tonnes of sugar. He also said that blending of ethanol with petrol should be increased to 30 per cent.

In neighbouring Karnataka, where the Government has fixed a price of Rs 2,500 a tonne, factories have slowly resorting to cane crushing. Though both farmers and millers have not agreed on this price, crushing has begun. “About 40-42 of the 58 factories in the State have started operations and others are expected to start soon,” said Kurbur Shanta Kumar, President of the Cane Growers Federation.

Considering that further delay would hurt the sugar recovery, both farmers and millers have agreed to start crushing, Shantkumar said, adding that the final settlement would be linked to the prevailing product prices.

Vishwaraj Sugar Industries Ltd, a private player in North Karnataka, will commence operations in a day or two, said the company’s Executive Director, Mukesh Kumar. “We have decided to pay Rs 2,000 a tonne excluding the harvesting and transportation costs. The final settlement at the end of the season will be based on the revenue realisation,” Kumar said.

NFCSF's Joshi said factories in Haryana were commencing their operations this week and those in Punjab would commence operations by the month-end.

Farmers in Maharashtra are demanding a price of Rs 3,000 a tonne, while the last year's payout averaged between Rs 2,600 and Rs 2,700 a tonne.

Bay beats forecasts, conjures up another depression

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 19: An existing low-pressure area beat forecasts to intensify twice over to become the latest depression in the Bay of Bengal on Tuesday.

The intensification into a well-marked 'low' and then as depression took place overnight causing the system to also track that now faced coastal Andhra Pradesh.

MAY INTENSIFY

The Met Department located it to 600 km east-northeast of Chennai; 500 km east-southeast of Machilipatnam; and 430 km southeast of Visakhapatnam on Tuesday afternoon.

It said that the depression would intensify into a deep depression (just below cyclone status) and cross south Andhra Pradesh and adjoining north Tamil Nadu coast by Thursday night.

The area of landfall is projected between Chennai and Ongole, according to the initial assessment by the Met Department.

Meanwhile, another 'low' is forecast to develop over South Andaman Sea around Friday and intensify further. Indications are that this too could grow to the level of a depression and head towards north Tamil Nadu and adjoining south Andhra Pradesh coast over the next 10 days.

But some models took it extreme south Tamil Nadu, adjoining north Sri Lanka and later into southern Kerala.

Around this time, west Pacific/South China Sea next door will have seen the birth of another likely storm.

International weather agencies have put these seas under watch yet again.

This has relevance for Bay of Bengal since previous such disturbances from there have sent in remnants into the Bay where they regenerated as 'low's/depressions.

RAINS FORECAST

An extended outlook suggested that rainfall activity will scale up once again over the south peninsula from the weekend.

The Met Department said that Tuesday will have already seen isolated heavy rainfall over south Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

On Thursday, isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall is forecast for coastal Andhra Pradesh and coastal Tamil Nadu as the likely deep depression crosses coast.

The Climate Prediction Centre of the US National Weather Services said that the Andhra Pradesh coast will receive very heavy rainfall from November 25 to December 1.

MERCURY DIPS

In the North, night temperatures are below normal by 2 to 4 degree Celsius over parts of northwest and central India; Odisha; Jharkhand; the northeastern States and Gujarat.

The drop in mercury has occurred as the warmth provided by a prevailing low-pressure western disturbance moves away from Jammu and Kashmir.

The chill will lift only when the next western disturbance with an 'steaming engine' upfront (moisture load) crosses in to Jammu and Kashmir by Saturday.

Volume rises at Coonoor tea sale

Coonoor, Nov. 19: For the first time in several months, the volume sold at Coonoor Tea Trade Association has increased above 90 per cent.

At Sale No: 46 which concluded on Friday, as much as 92.28 per cent of the 16.81 lakh kg on offer was sold.

For over two months, 30-35 per cent of the offer had remained unsold. Last week, there was improvement but still, 22 per cent remained unsold.

"The sudden pressure from Pakistan this week helped us to liquidate stocks. However, Pakistan buyers showed keen interest only for the teas in the lower price bracket. Teas were picked up for Rs 60-75 a kg. In fact, because of this increased demand, some low-priced teas which were sold for Rs 65 last week were bought for Rs 75 this week," an auctioneer told *Business Line*.

Low-priced teas were a favourite for the CIS, Egypt, Kenya, European countries and Bangladesh as well. As the global market is facing a glut of CTC teas with as much as 122 million kg of black tea in excess compared to this time last year, importers were choosy but ready to pick up teas when price was lowered.

The demand, however, helped the average price to rise to Rs 74.84 a kg from Rs 72.13 last week.

Chilli surges as rains play havoc with crop in MP



Chilli prices have surged by nearly 20 per cent in the last one month after rains during July-October damaged the crop in Madhya Pradesh.

The price of 334 grade chilli, a benchmark, at Guntur in Andhra Pradesh increased to Rs 6,834.35 a quintal on

Tuesday from Rs 5,758 a month ago. In Guntur, the hub of chillies trade, 35,000 bags (of 40 kg each) were traded on Tuesday.

"At least 80 per cent of the first picking in Madhya Pradesh chilli crop was washed away by rains. Also, arrivals have been delayed by at least 20 days. This has pushed up prices," said Alapati Srinivasa Rao, a trader in Guntur.

"We have got export demand from Bangladesh. The crop damage in Madhya Pradesh has really pushed up demand," said Abhishek Bhandari, an exporter.

Chilli production in 2012-13 has been estimated at 12.99 lakh tonnes, down from 14.26 lakh tonnes a year ago.

The crop was affected last year due to prolonged dry period in key States such as Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka besides farmers shifting to other crops such as cotton.

Andhra Pradesh accounts for about 50 per cent of the total production in the country, followed by Karnataka which accounts for about 10 per cent.

Madhya Pradesh ranks fourth in terms of chilli production with the output making up nine per cent of the country's production.

In the futures market, chilli prices on the NCDEX dropped on Tuesday. Contracts maturing for delivery in December dropped by Rs 200 a quintal to Rs 7,236. It quoted at Rs 6,232 a month ago.

"Prices are higher because export demand is good. But if you ask me, the main reason for the current spike is the Madhya Pradesh crop failure," said a trader.

"We have got demand from Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia," said Rao, adding "Bangladesh demand could drop a bit ahead of elections there next week."

"It is Lankan demand that has lifted the prices. The price rise is not confined to just one variety because there is demand for different varieties for export," said Bhandari.

Traders say prices, at the most, could gain another Rs 400 before beginning to wind down.

"The current uptrend may, at the most, last another week. After that the second pickings of the Madhya Pradesh crop will hit markets. That will lead to drop in prices," Rao said.

Prices could tend to firm up again after mid-December once the arrivals begin to drop.

This year's crop in Andhra Pradesh, on the other hand, is shaping up well with the acreage almost unchanged at around two lakh hectares.

"The acreage could be some two per cent more this year," said Rao.

"At least 80 per cent of the crop in Andhra Pradesh is in a good shape. If weather holds good, production will improve," Bhandari said.

Outlook turns bearish for chana on ample stocks



Indore, Nov. 19: Chana has been witnessing a sluggish for the past few days with sales outstripping demand. Besides, decline in futures has added to the bearish sentiment.

On Tuesday, chana (kanta) in local mandis declined to Rs 3,050-75 a quintal (Rs 3,100-25).

Chana (desi) declined to Rs 2,800, while chana (vishal) ruled at Rs 2,900-3,000.

According to Sanjay Agrawal, a local

trader, chana prices will likely remain range-bound with prices fluctuating between Rs 3,000 and Rs 3,100 in the coming days.

Adequate carryover stock and expected arrival of imported chana will likely to add to the bearish sentiment said another trader.

Chana output this year may see a decline on lower acreage as majority of farmers this year have switched over to wheat which is fetching higher prices compared to chana.

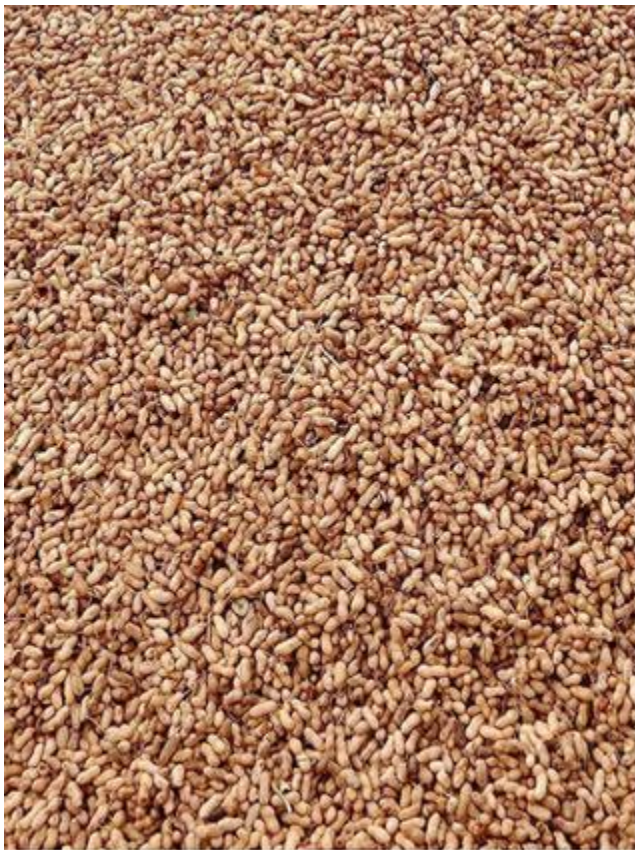
Chana dal (average) was being quoted at Rs 3,500-25 , chana dal (medium) at Rs 3,600-25, while chana dal (bold) declined to Rs 3,900-25.

Dollar chana ruled firm on improved domestic and export demand.

On Tuesday, dollar chana (chickpea) in local mandis was quoted at Rs 3,600-4,700 (up Rs 200 from last week). Arrival of dollar chana in Indore mandis was recorded at 6,000 bags.

In container also dollar chana is ruling higher on improved export demand with dollar chana (42/44 count) in the container was being quoted at Rs 5,375-5,400, while 44/46 count ruled at Rs 5,175, 58/60 count ruled at Rs 4,100-25 a quintal.

Lower demand may crush groundnut oil



Rajkot, Nov. 19: Groundnut oil declined on Tuesday on lower demand from brands and stockists.

Moreover, weak retail buying was also one of the reasons for the downfall. On the other hand, cotton oil ruled steady. Groundnut oil new tin for 15 kg dropped by Rs 15 to Rs 1,470-75 while loose groundnut oil declined Rs 5 to Rs 815-820 for 10 kg.

Groundnut *telia* tin was marginally down by Rs 7 to Rs 1,270-71 for 15 kg.

Against 25-30 tankers traded on Monday, some 5-7 tankers of groundnut oil changed hands on Tuesday.

Retail traders said that demand in groundnut oil has declined after last week's price rise.

Moreover, arrival of new crop has increased to over 1 lakh bags a day.

Higher arrival of raw material has increased the crushing, putting pressure

on prices. According to millers, groundnut oil may decrease further during this week as demand is on the wane.

cotton oil

On the other hand, cotton oil remained steady with normal buying activity.

Cotton oil wash was traded at Rs 610-613 for 10 kg and cotton oil new tin price was quoted at Rs 1,130-1,140 for 15 kg.

About 50-60 tankers of cotton oil were traded in Saurashtra.

Buyers outstrip sellers in pepper market



Kochi, Nov. 19: Prices of ungarbled pepper topped a record Rs 500 a kg even as futures continue to rise following projections of a lower crop next year. "The supply situation is tight. Contrary to expectations, no sellers were forthcoming. There continued to be more buyers," market sources told *Business Line*.

On the spot, eight tonnes of farm grade pepper arrived and 10 tonnes were traded.

On the NMCE, December and January contracts were up by Rs 213 and Rs 266 respectively to Rs 52,430 and Rs 52,460 a quintal. Turnover dropped by 11 tonnes to four tonnes, while the net open position was three tonnes.

On IPSTA platform, December rose by Rs 955 to Rs 52,269 while January remained unchanged at Rs 52,227 a quintal. The turnover increased by 94 tonnes to 134 tonnes, while the net open position was four tonnes.

Spot prices increased by Rs 200 to Rs 50,000 (ungarbled) and Rs 52,000 (garbled) a quintal. Prices for export increased to \$8,850 (c&f) for Europe and \$9,150 (c&f) for the US.

All the other origins are reportedly steady to firm with sellers being reluctant.

Each seller is quoting a different price for Vietnam Asta from \$8,500 up to \$8,825 (c&f) but only on November/December contracts.

Brazil was getting more reluctant quotes at \$7,700-7,800 (fob).

Indonesia or resellers quoted at \$8,250-8,375 a tonne (c&f), an overseas report today said.

Wheat likely to trade range-bound



Karnal, Nov. 19: The bullish trend in wheat market continued with prices of dara variety moving up further by Rs 10 a quintal on Tuesday, while futures market dropped on lack of buying interest.

Radhey Shyam, a trade expert, told *Business Line* that domestic demand for flour is supporting the market and may continue to rule around current levels for the next few days.

Stocks available with private traders are limited, resulting in traders and millers procuring stocks from the Food Corporation of India, he said.

In the physical market, dara wheat went up by Rs 10 to Rs 1,620-25 a quintal.

Around 800 bags of wheat arrived and stocks were directly offloaded at the mills.

Mill delivery was at Rs 1,620, while delivery at the chakki was at Rs 1,625.

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

Wheat for November delivery dropped by Rs 9 to 1,608 with an open interest of 500 lots.

December contracts went down by Rs 3 to Rs 1,646. In the spot market, wheat eased by Rs 10 and settled at Rs 1,590.

According to the market experts, market may continue to witness a range-bound trend in the coming days.

Flour Prices

Despite an uptrend in wheat, flour continued to rule firm and quoted at Rs 1,850.

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