

Farmer-scientist interaction

NAGERCOIL, November 21, 2013 - A farmer-scientist interaction was organised at Theroor in Agastheeswaram block under the aegis of Agriculture Technology Management Agency on Wednesday to help paddy growers of the district.

According to Agricultural Officer of Field Training Centre J. Amala Jeyan, farmers have been divided into three groups and the group leaders compiled a list of problems faced by them in paddy cultivation.

The major outcome of the interaction has been that the problem encountered by the paddy farmers during the samba season was frequent incidences of stem borer and leaf folder diseases.

The speakers suggested that this could be managed by an integrated approach of pest management starting from summer ploughing and field sanitation which prevented the harbouring of pest by killing their pupae.

The scientists said that while applying pesticide, it should be ensured that water in the field must be drained. A second dose after 15 days of the first application was also suggested, said Mr. Jeyan.

Dr. Jane Sujatha, Head, KVK, Pechipparai, Dr. Irulandi, entomologist, Dr. Deva Prakash, agronomist, Joint Director for Agriculture S. Nagamoni Pillai, Deputy Directors of Agriculture, Boslin Winston Sam and Kalavathy, participated the interaction.

Onions wipe tears of farmers

Farmers have already received orders from Mysore for shallot



HAPPY DAYS ARE BACK: Workers sorting shallots at Yesanani village near Perambalur on Wednesday. — PHOTO: A. MURALITHARAN

PERAMBALUR, November 21, 2013 - Undeterred by failure of sambar onion crop last season because of monsoon failure, farmers of Esanai and surrounding villages of Perambalur district have commenced the next samba

pattam with confidence.

Work of producing seed onion in Esanai and about 30 surrounding villages, including Irattaimalaisanthu, Puthur, Navalur, Melapuliyur, Ammapalaiyam, Ladapuram, and Kalarapatti, has been in full swing for the past two months.

Perambalur district is famous for the production of sambar onion and onion seeds. The seeds produced here are supplied to various parts of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

Despatch of seed onions to other centres after sorting and segregation has commenced in these villages. A large number of farm workers from Esanai and nearby villages are engaged in this work at present.

Already, traders from Coimbatore, Rasipuram, and Tiruppur have got their stock of seed onions. Farmers of Perambalur district have got orders from Mysore and neighbouring areas and the stock will be despatched to them shortly, says M. Sivaji Ganesan of Irattaimalaisanthu village, who raises sambar onion on his 10-acre land every year.

After harvesting the seeds, the stock is kept under "patty" (country storage technique) for a few months for its preservation and protection, mainly from rain. After this, it will take two months for harvesting the crop.

The seeds now raised are for the Aippasi / Karthigai samba pattam, he says. The crop is raised at Esanai village on about 1,000 acres of land.

While the wages for the segregation is Rs. 1 to 1.50 a kg of onion, the seeds are sold at Rs. 65 a kg.

No doubt, monsoon failure hit the crop badly in the last season, and this led to scarcity of sambar onion in various parts of the State, says N. Venkatesan of Esanai.

During this season, the rainfall experienced by the district has been below normal. If this situation continues, sambar onion production will be affected in the forthcoming season.

"But we have launched the preliminary work pinning hopes on rain gods", he says.

M. Kaliappan of Neikuppai village, who had come to Esanai for buying seeds, says usually he harvested eight tonnes of sambar onion on his two-acre land. "But, last season, I realised only fivetonnes," he says.

Farm loan interest to be waived

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, November 21, 2013 - The Cabinet on Wednesday decided to waive interest on loans taken from cooperatives in 2012-13 for cultivation of paddy, vegetables, pepper and banana and for fish farming.

This would be on condition that outstanding amounts should be paid within a year of the due date. The waiver will cover interest for the period from due date to the date of payment. The Cabinet earmarked Rs.40 crore for the subsidy.

Nod for appointments

The Cabinet also gave sanction for the appointments made in government and aided schools after announcement of the package for teachers in 2011. It also decided to protect teachers who stand to lose their posts following fall in divisions. They should have been in service at the time of implementation of the package.

ANERT to set up 2-MW solar farm in Palakkad

CATCHING THE SUN



ANERT

- **Kuzhalmandam project to cost Rs.16 crore**
- **30 lakh units of power every year**
- **Crystalline silicon technology**
- **Flat plate collectors, intelligent inverters**
- **To be established as a turnkey project**

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, November 21, 2013 - Kerala's first solar farm on the Mega Watt scale is expected to become operational at Kuzhalmandam in Palakkad district by March next year. The Agency for Non-conventional Energy and Rural Technology (ANERT) will implement the project estimated to cost Rs.16 crore.

Utilising crystalline silicon technology, the grid-fed solar power plant of 2 MW capacity will come up on 12 acres of land. Designed in-house by ANERT, it features flat plate collectors and intelligent inverters. Once commissioned, the farm will feed 30 lakh units of power to the grid every year.

Officials said the project was designed to assist in research and development of grid-interactive power plants. The farm would be established as a turnkey project.

DPR released

Chief Minister Oommen Chandy released the detailed project report (DPR) of the solar farm during the inauguration of the new headquarters building of ANERT here on Wednesday.

He said the availability of quality power was a critical element in Kerala's development. He said the power situation in the State warranted a focus on non-conventional energy sources and energy conservation.

Mr. Chandy said mini-hydel projects and solar power offered clean and eco-friendly means of power generation ideal for a State like Kerala.

Solution to power crisis

Delivering the presidential address, Electricity Minister Aryadan Mohammed said non-conventional energy sources were the obvious solution to the power crisis faced by the State.

"With no further scope for additional

generation through conventional means, the State will have to make maximum use of wind and solar power to bridge the widening gap between demand and supply."

Pointing out that 5,000 houses across the State had been provided with subsidized rooftop solar panels generating a total of 5 MW, he stressed the need to popularise the initiative. Mr. Mohammed stressed the need to equip government buildings with green features to save energy.

Saving energy

Highlighting the need for energy conservation, he directed the officials at the open-air venue to switch off the lights that were kept on in broad daylight.

With a built-up area of 25,000 sq ft., the new headquarters complex of ANERT is built on the Green Building concept. It will feature a roof top solar power plant of 15 kW capacity, solar-wind hybrid system, biogas plants, and solar water heaters.

K. Muraleedharan, MLA, Additional Chief Secretary Niveditha P. Haran, and ANERT director M. Jayaraju were among those who spoke.

Subsidy for banana farming

Subsidy is being given in Paralam panchayat for banana cultivation. It will be available for farmers who cultivate at least 50 Nendran plantains each. For details, contact the agricultural office at Paralam.

Seasonal migration of small farmers begins



*Hard grind: Small and marginal farmers from Nalgonda district migrating to Khammam in search of livelihood.-
Photo: Singam Venkataramana*

NALGONDA, November 21, 2013 - Small and marginal farmers have limited options of eking out livelihood and one among them is migration. Those in Nalgonda district are not any different.

The farmers from Chandur, Deverakonda, Gurrampode and Kanagal mandals, with the holdings below five acres, began migrating in huge numbers to Khammam district. And the journey isn't that smooth.

They have to travel for about 200 km on bullock carts spending five days and nights on road to reach Sattupalli area where sugarcane crop is grown in plenty.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, one of the farmers, K. Lingaiah, a native of Uduthalapalli village of Chandur mandal, said that he has been going to work in sugarcane fields for 15 years now along with his wife.

Though they have land holdings below five acres, they purchase expensive and strong bullocks investing anywhere between Rs.60,000 to Rs.100,000 as moving sugarcane from fields to road needs considerable effort. Besides, they also invest Rs.50,000 on cart specially made for carrying sugarcane.

“The mechanisation of agriculture has rendered little help to us as we cannot use tractor or any other vehicle to shift the crop from fields,” say farmers.

They are paid Rs.80 for transporting one tonne of sugarcane from fields to road. At the end of the season, a couple returns home with at least Rs.50,000 earnings excluding all the expenses during their stay.

About 24 farmers began their journey from Uduthalapalli, Bapulapuram, Mathnonigudem, Padamatithalla, Kotaiahgudem, Dubbugudem of Chandur and Kanagal mandals on Monday morning.

With these farmers migrating to Khammam, their villages almost wear a deserted look until the younger ones return home after Sankranti.

When asked to what extent the MNRREGS is useful to them, another farmer, S. Krishna, says that it only helps them during summer.

Farmers throng Nashik exhibition

NASHIK, November 21, 2013 - Farmers from across the country visited the ‘Krishi 13’ exhibition organised by the Human Service Foundation and Media Exhibitors here.

The five-day event, which began on November 15 at Dongre Hostel ground, concluded on Tuesday night.

Organisers said apart from over five lakh farmers from across the country, an expert team from Germany also visited the agriculture exhibition wherein various workshops were arranged on expert information for farmers on climate change, modern farming technique, marketing strategy, packaging, and information on import and export.

“Farmers who visited the exhibition booked more than 150 tractors of various companies. They also purchased insecticides, fertilisers, pesticides, agri-pumps, drip-irrigation system and other articles,” said Media Exhibitor Sanjay Nyaharkar.- PTI

Four more cattle heads die

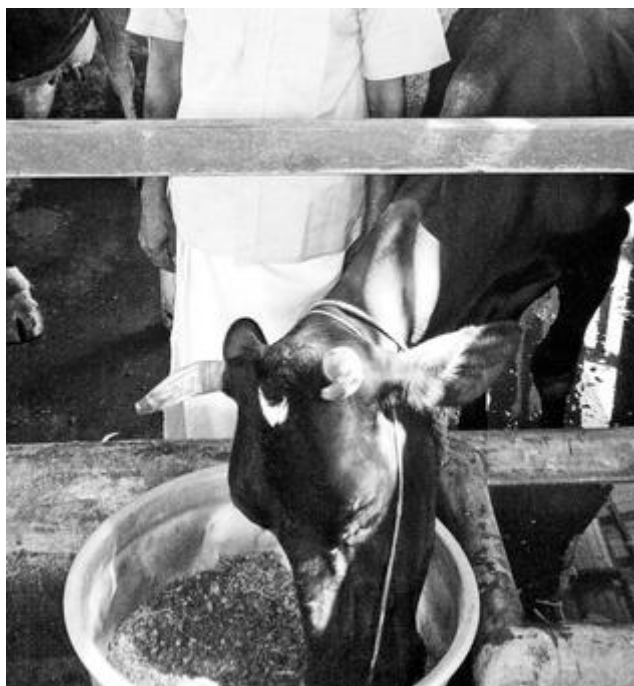
DINDIGUL, November 21, 2013 - Four more cattle heads died owing to foot-and-mouth disease at Vendasandur here on Wednesday forecasting a bleak future for cattle growers.

With these, the number of cattle heads dead in Vendasandur block rose to nine.

Acting on information by local people, a veterinary team inspected the affected area and assessed the situation.

It also administered preventive medicine to other cattle in this area.

Farmer's notebook



Complete nutrition: An animal weighing 300 kg and yielding 20 litres of milk per day requires 13-14 kg of TMR.— Photo: Special Arrangement

Aavin maintains normal milk procurement

Round-the-clock treatment offered by six veterinarians



Unaffected: Despite the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, milk procurement of Aavin has not been hit.— FILE PHOTO

TIRUCHI, November 21, 2013 - Prevalence of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) among cattle in Perambalur and Ariyalur districts has not hit milk procurement by cooperative societies, thanks to the precautionary steps taken

by Aavin with the active support of district administration and Animal Husbandry Department.

Almost normal milk procurement is being maintained in both the districts, said Aavin sources here on Wednesday. Ever since the outbreak of FMD was reported in the central districts, Perambalur and Ariyalur district units of the Tiruchi District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union took several precautionary steps. The veterinary doctors of Aavin and those of the department were pressed into service for vaccinating the animals and creating

awareness among farmers. About 90 per cent of the animals belonging to 60,000 members affiliated to 173 milk producers' cooperative societies in Perambalur district had been covered and this helped in maintaining normal milk procurement of 1.60 lakh litres a day. The reduction in milk supply was negligible, the sources said.

Six veterinary doctors attached to Aavin had been treating the cattle round-the-clock in both the districts, along with the veterinary experts of animal husbandry department.

Thanks to the action of District Collector Darez Ahamed, both Aavin and the department had been provided with adequate stock of vaccines and medicines.

The presidents and secretaries of the societies had been directed to have a close watch on the situation.

📌 **90 p.c. animals belonging to members vaccinated**

📌 **Six veterinary doctors keeping tab on the situation**

Water level

The water level in Papanasam dam stood at 94.90 feet against the maximum level of 143 feet on Wednesday. The dam had an inflow of 1,303.75 cusecs and 602.25 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam.

The level in Manimuthar dam was 69.55 feet (118 feet), with an inflow of 194 cusecs and a discharge of 35 cusecs.

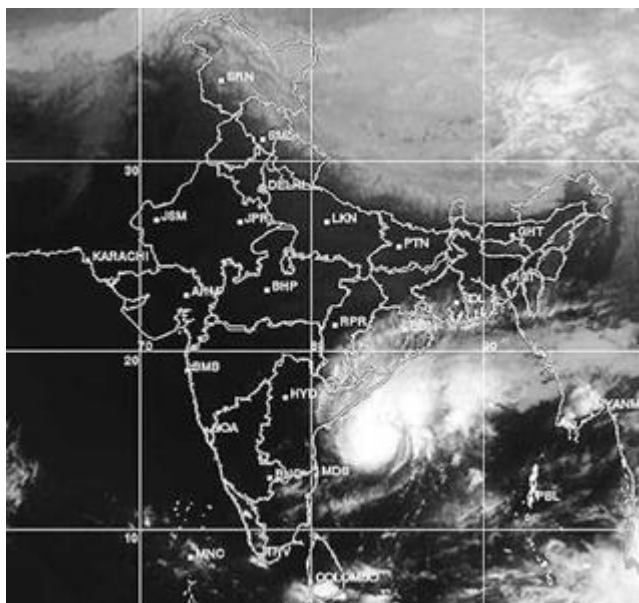
Nagercoil

The water level stood at 25.70 feet in Pechipparai dam, 60.60 feet in Perunchani, 9.87 feet in Chittar I, 9.97 feet in Chittar II, 3.70 feet in Poigai and 42.49 feet in Mamabazathuraiyaru dam.

Mettur level

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 82.51 feet on Wednesday against its full level of 120 cusecs. The inflow was 10,390 cusecs and the discharge, nil.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on November 20.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Anantapur	32	18	0	51
Arogyavaram	29	19	0	174
Bapatla	32	22	0	505
Calingapatnam	29	23	0	922
Gannavaram	32	22	0	411
Hanamkonda	31	19	0	284
Hyderabad AP	31	16	0	239
Kakinada	31	24	0	622
Khammam	33	18	0	98
Kavali	31	22	0	534
Kurnool	33	18	0	96
Mahabubnagar	34	17	0	163
Machilipatnam	32	23	0	384
Nandyal	32	21	0	73
Narasapur	32	23	0	606
Nellore	31	24	0	437
Nizamabad	31	14	0	107
Ongole	32	22	0	507
Ramagundam	30	14	0	201
Tirupathi AP	31	21	0	312
Tuni	33	24	0	470
Vizag AP	32	25	tr	555
Vizag	31	23	0	511

KARNATAKA

Agumbe	29	14	0	600
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Bengaluru AP	28	18	0	125
Bengaluru	29	19	0	133
Bagalkote	—	—	—	—
Belgaum AP	30	15	0	60
Bellary	32	16	0	63
Bijapur	31	15	0	113
Chitradurga	30	14	0	55
Chickmagalur	27	18	0	41
Chintamani	28	16	0	64
Gadag	30	17	0	88
Gulbarga	33	16	0	35
Hassan	30	18	0	86
Honavar	35	21	0	261
Karwar	34	22	0	167
Madikeri	25	15	0	189
Mangalore AP	34	23	0	305
Mysore	29	20	0	153
Mandya	29	19	0	149
Panambur	34	25	0	235
Raichur	32	13	0	102
Shirali	34	21	0	414
KERALA				
Alappuzha	32	25	tr	238
Kannur	33	25	0	321
Kochi AP	32	25	0	473
Kottayam	33	23	2	489
Kozhikode	33	25	0	273
Punalur	33	23	4	537
Thiruvanantha				
-puram AP	31	25	0	324
Thiruvanantha				
-puram City	32	25	0	389
Vellanikkara	33	24	0	437
TAMIL NADU				
Adiramapattinam	32	23	0	121
Chennai	31	24	0	332
Chennai AP	31	23	0	400
Coimbatore AP	31	21	0	134
Coonoor	19	13	0	420
Cuddalore	31	23	0	257
Dharmapuri	30	20	0	251
Kanyakumari	30	24	0	249
Karaikal	29	24	0	322
Kodaikanal	15	9	1	229
Madurai AP	33	23	0	202
Nagapattinam	29	25	0	268
Palayamkottai	31	23	2	245

Pamban	30	26	0	195
Parangipettai	32	24	0	401
Puducherry	32	23	0	256
Salem	32	20	0	205
Thanjavur	30	25	0	177
Tiruchi AP	31	23	0	319
Tiruttani	31	27	0	315
Tondi	32	24	0	259
Tuticorin	30	25	0	192
Ooty	18	10	0	245
Valparai	25	11	0	294
Vellore	31	22	0	99
LAKSHADWEEP				
Amini Divi	29	26	2	166
Minicoy	31	25	0	119
Kavarathi	—	—	—	—
OTHER STATIONS				
Kolkata (Alipore)	29	17	0	523
Mumbai	34	23	0	66
New Delhi	27	10	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.

HEAVY RAIN LIKELY

IN COASTAL A.P.

CHENNAI: Isolated rainfall occurred over Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Lakshadweep. Dry weather prevailed over Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

The minimum temperature rose at one or two places over coastal Andhra Pradesh, fell appreciably at one or two places over south interior Karnataka, Rayalaseema, coastal Karnataka, fell at many places over Telangana, at one or two places over rest coastal Karnataka and changed little elsewhere over the region. They were appreciably above normal at one or two places over coastal A.P., above normal at one or two places over south T.N., rest coastal A.P. , Kerala, markedly below normal at one or two places over south interior Karnataka, appreciably below normal at one or two places over Telangana, rest south interior Karnataka, below normal at one or two places over Rayalaseema, north interior Karnataka and remained normal over the rest of the region.

FORECAST (valid till Friday morning): Rain will occur at most places in coastal A.P. and at a few places over T.N., Puducherry and Lakshadweep. Isolated rain may occur over Kerala. **Heavy rainfall warning:** Heavy to very heavy rain at a few places with isolated extremely heavy falls (25cm or more) will occur over coastal A.P. during next 48 hours. Isolated heavy to very heavy rain will occur over Rayalaseema, north T.N. and Puducherry from Friday.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Thursday, Nov 21

Max 31° | Min 24°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 62

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:06

Sunset: 05:39

Barometer: 1009

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Friday, Nov 22

Max 31° | Min 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday Nov 23	Sunday Nov 24	Monday Nov 25	Tuesday Nov 26	Wednesday Nov 27
30° 24° Cloudy	29° 24° Cloudy	27° 25° Overcast	27° 25° Overcast	28° 25° Overcast

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Onion prices go up 10.7% at Lasalgaon

NASHIK: The average wholesale [onion prices](#) at the country's largest wholesale onion market at Lasalgaon Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC) increased by 10.71% to Rs 3,100 per quintal on Wednesday, thanks to rising demands in the domestic market.

The average wholesale onion prices have increased by almost Rs 700 a quintal in just two days, from Rs 2,400 a quintal on Monday to Rs 3,100 a quintal on Wednesday at Lasalgaon. "The demand of onions from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, West Bengal and Assam had increased in the past few days. Traders had signed deals in advance and they had to deliver consignments, like a rake (with 40 wagons) of 680 tonnes of (6,800 quintals) onions being sent to Guwahati. As a result, they procured onions with higher bids. This led to a rise in the wholesale prices of onions over the last two-three days," Changdev Holkar, director of the

National Agriculture Co-operative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), told TOI on Wednesday.

In district APMCs, the average wholesale onion prices were recorded in the range of Rs 2,800 and Rs 3,100 a quintal on Wednesday, against the range of Rs 2,800 and Rs 2,951 a quintal on Tuesday. In retail markets across city, good quality onions were sold in the range of Rs 30-35 a kg on Wednesday.

In Lasalgaon, the average wholesale price of onions increased by Rs 300 (10.71 per cent) to Rs 3,100 a quintal on Wednesday, against Rs 2,800 a quintal on Tuesday. The minimum and maximum prices were recorded at Rs 1,500 and Rs 3,570 a quintal, respectively, on Wednesday. Around 12,000 quintals of onions were auctioned at Lasalgaon on Wednesday.

According to sources, the fluctuations in the prices will continue over the next few days. Although prices have increased by almost Rs 700 to Rs 3,100 a quintal in the last two days, wholesale prices had continuously declined from Rs 5,000 a quintal on November 8 to Rs 2,400 a quintal on Nov 18. The price trend will be a downside, with the arrival of the crop expected to increase to the range of 15,000 to 18,000 quintals a day. At present, the arrival quantity has been between 10,000 to 12,000 quintals. The prices are expected to decline upto Rs 2,000 a quintal, said market experts. The average wholesale onion price at Pimpalgaon APMC increased by Rs 149 a quintal (9.65 per cent) to Rs 3,100 a quintal on Wednesday, against Rs 2,951 a quintal on Wednesday. The minimum and maximum prices were recorded at Rs 1,950 and Rs 3,800 a quintal, respectively, on Wednesday. Around 12,240 quintals of onions were auctioned at Pimpalgaon on Wednesday.

In Yeola, the average wholesale onion prices were recorded at Rs 2,800 a quintal on Wednesday. The minimum and maximum prices were recorded at Rs 800 and Rs 3,275 a quintal, respectively on Wednesday. Around 3,000 quintals of onions were auctioned at Yeola on Wednesday.

Onion trader duped of Rs 10 lakh

NASHIK: [Kalwan police](#) have booked two people on charges of cheating a woman trader from Kalwan to the tune of Rs 9.93 lakh. The two accused have been identified as Sanjay, a truck driver and the truck's owner, Faizal Khan.

Anita Mahajan (36) alleged in her complaint that she had dispatched onions worth Rs 9.93 lakh to Darbhanga in Bihar on November 11. However, a couple of days later, Mahajan realised that her consignment had not reached the concerned party, while the truck driver and its owner could not be traced. Following this, Mahajan lodged a complaint with the Kalwan police on Monday.

Mahajan has stated in her complaint that she had sent the consignment of 424 onion bags to Bihar. While the police have the truck number in which the consignment was sent, they have launched a hunt to trace the truck driver and its owner.

The police said they suspect the driver and the truck owner may have fled to Faizabad in Uttar Pradesh. A team from the Kalwan police has been sent to Faizabad for the investigation.



Milk getting costlier: Dairy farmers

Milk is also becoming an unaffordable item in India like many other grocery goods. It is cheaper in New Zealand and almost at par in USA, UK and other countries, dairy farmers who attended a seminar organised by International farms comparison network (IFCN) said. A team of IFCN experts also visited Halwara based frontier dairy farm.

The seminar discussed topics such as 'how to improve genes of dairy animals and also how to make milk more affordable item across the world. The research is funded by world bank. It needs to be mentioned that Punjab which is popular for milk and milk products is selling milk and milk products at sky rocketing prices and the prices increase almost twice in a year. Narinder Singh, owner of frontier dairy farm said, "Genetic make up of the animals need to be improved so as to increase the yield of animals and once milking capacity increases, prices are expected to come down."

Singh has an automated dairy farm of about 300 cows.

IFCN experts said dairy industry in Punjab needs upgradation and also need to work on increasing the yield of its animals.

They will be visiting more farms in Punjab and other parts of the country as well.

Narinder's farm was chosen because of the hi-tech facilities created by him inside his farm.

Experts, however, indicated that the results of the research will be revealed once it is complete. Apart from India, research is also being conducted in New Zealand, Italy, The United States of America among other countries.



Reservoir levels up, crisis unlikely

Bangalore is unlikely to face a water crisis this year as reservoirs in the Cauvery basin, particularly KRS and Kabini, have enough stored as compared to last year.

The levels at the reservoirs are the highest in the last five years and inflow has continued due to rains in the past couple of days after the depression in the Bay of Bengal.

People in Mysore, especially farmers, were the worst affected last year and had laid siege to the reservoirs. They had also called for a Mandya-Mysore bandh following the Supreme Court's directions to release water from Kabini and KRS to Tamil Nadu.

However, the situation has improved this year and there is bumper crop across the Cauvery basin. The Irrigation Department will release water for standing crops in Kabini achukat for the next 15 days and is likely to take up modernisation work.

As of now, Kabini has about 10 tmc ft, including 4.5 tmc ft in dead storage.

The water level at Kabini reservoir is at 2,275 ft as against its maximum of 2,284 ft, with inflow of 1,300 cusecs. Last year, the water level was only 2,265 ft as much of it was released to Tamil Nadu. The present reservoir levels will encourage farmers to grow semi-dry crops in the summer.

The water level at KRS is 119 ft as against its total capacity of 124 ft, with 37 tmc ft in live storage. Inflow is 3,143 cusecs while outflow is 690 cusecs.

At Hemavathi reservoir, the water level is 2,907 ft as against its maximum capacity of 2,922 ft. Officials have released water into various irrigation canals in Hemavathi and KRS achukats and will provide water till December 31.

The Cauvery basin has seen a decline in sugarcane cultivation as farmers are no longer interested in short-term crops due to the lack of water last year and also the prevailing drought situation for the last three years.

Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) leader and MLA K S Puttanniah said Pandavapura sugar factory has crushed around 1.5 lakh tonnes of sugarcane. They are running short of cane as farmers have not grown the crop, fearing the drought situation may continue. He said the cultivation area of sugarcane will increase only if the Cauvery basin continues to receive good rain.

Shivashankar, chief engineer of the Cauvery Niravari Nigam, said this year's storage is much more as compared to last year.

He said the Cauvery achukat has witnessed good yield as the department had taken efforts to ensure water was supplied to irrigated areas. Paddy will be harvested in Kabini achukat if they are given water for another 15 days, he said.

Recalling the efforts taken last year to provide water to Bangalore and Mysore, he said there will be no drinking water scarcity in both Bangalore and Mysore.

Livelihood fears leave high range farmers unsettled

P C Mathew, a farmer hailing from Mlamala in Idukki, felt the heat of the Kasturirangan and Gadgil panel reports when he approached a deed writer to register 10 cents of land that he was about to purchase. The deed writer asked him to put the deal on hold as there exists a direction from sub-registrar office in Peermed to keep all the registration processes on abeyance. The settlers in the region raise various other concerns as well, such as possibility of restrictions on cultivation in hilly areas, construction of new roads and maintenance of existing ones, and use of various earthmover machineries for agricultural purposes. With the fear psychosis escalating, people across the political and religious spectrum joined hands with the agitation led by Catholic Church. "We are not against the conservation of

environment. However, the ambiguities in the Kasturirangan report should be removed. The recommendations that negatively impact common people, if there are any, should immediately be repealed,” said C K Mohanan, president of SNDP Malanadu Union.

Though, the government has already declared that it has not imposed any restrictions in the region so far, especially in the proposed Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs), it is the ambiguity in the recommendations that triggered the ire of settlers. “One of the major mistakes that the Kasturirangan panel is that it predominantly relied on a remote sensing survey of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), which was conducted to determine the extent of flora in Western Ghats. The panel superimposed protected areas (PAs), which was earlier determined by Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF), into this survey map. This was the reason why the Wagamon hills and many of the quarry areas in the Western Ghats were excluded from the ESAs,” said Harish Vasudevan, an environmental activist.

Fr Sebastian Kochupurakkal, the general convener of Highrange Protection council, which spearheads the agitation, pointed out that the panel had violated its own criteria for determining ESAs. “Contrary to a clause in the report that the areas with density of 100 people/km² will be excluded from ESAs, places like Kattappana have been made part of ESAs. The panel report found a total of 52 lakh people in the entire 4156 ESA villages in Western Ghats spread over six states. Out of this 22 lakh people belong to the 123 villages in Kerala, which means that the panel totally ignored the density factor,” he said.

Unlike Gadgil report that proposes a participatory approach for the measures to be initiated for the conservation of the Western Ghats, the implementation of Kasturirangan panel report, which does not provide any room for discussions, will be a tough task for the government, which may have to further dilute the recommendations. The Kasturirangan panel had reduced the number of panchayats to be included under ESZs in the Gadgil report from 633 to 121.

Onion prices drop; Cityzens relieved

Customers are heaving a sigh of relief, with the markets finally succeeding in tackling the bulged prices of the bulb root this week. The price, that had gone up to Rs 80 by the end of last month, has now finally stepped down to between Rs 50 and Rs 60.

Even when the national average of the wholesale prices of onions is showing no signs of dropping down, the southern states are enjoying a far better price, thanks to the fresh harvest.

Onions, which have been the king of the city markets with whopping prices for both big and small varieties, suffered a drop in prices with the arrival of extra stocks from Bellary, the hub of south India’s onion economy. Fresh harvest by the producers in Pune also enhanced the dropping down of prices. The wholesale price of big onions from Karnataka has ended up at Rs 56 and that from Pune, at Rs 60. The prices are Rs 70 and Rs 76 respectively for small onions.

“There is no shortage of stock, unlike the previous months this year. Also, the quality of the product also has increased as it is mostly freshly harvested. The consumer base has also been restored, thanks to the affordable price,” said Ramanan, a wholesale vegetable vendor at Connemara market.

The dip in production in Tamil Nadu following the severe drought conditions owing to the monsoon failure last season had caused the prices to rocket up to around Rs 100 in the open market a month ago.

Now onions have been stolen in Maharashtra



Officials at the Kalvan police at Nashik said that it is the first time that the police station has got report of onions being stolen. (Tsering Topgyal/AP)

With the spiralling prices of onions has now led to an incident which was feared – onions being a subject of theft. The incident happened in Maharashtra, which is the largest producer of onion, where a truckload of fresh crop is missing since two weeks. The officials at the Kalvan police at Nashik said that it is the first time that the police station has got report of onions being stolen. Under the police investigations is 194 quintals of onions costing Rs 9.93 lakh that was despatched from Nashik to Uttar Pradesh.

According to Kalvan police officials, Swami Samarth Enterprises, owner Anita Mahajan had purchased 194 quintals of onions from the onion markets in Nashik. The onions were packed in 424 sacks and were to be sent to Uttar Pradesh. Mahajan had booked a truck belonging to one Faizal Khan to transport the onions. The consignment was to despatched on on November 11, normally the distance between Nashik and Uttar Pradesh is 21 hours to 30 hours depending on where in Uttar Pradesh the onions have to be transported.

However Mahajan was perplexed when even after four days the onions did not reach the intended destination. Failing to locate the driver or the truck, Mahajan on November 18, filed a First Information Report (FIR) with the Kalvan police station. Kalvan police officials said that the driver of the truck whose name has only been given as Sanjay has been missing and that they suspect that the driver of the truck has sold off the onions on his own. "We suspect he did not even enter Uttar Pradesh but could have sold it in Madhya Pradesh or elsewhere," said a Police officer from Kalwan police station. Three teams of police officials

have been formed to trace the driver and the vehicle under the supervision of Inspector Vilas Sonavane.

Changdev Holkar a member of NAFED said that though it is not a common occurrence, such incidences of theft are known to occur every time whenever prices go through the roof. "The years in which prices of onion go up, we see one or two such instances," said Holkar. He explained that there are inter-state syndicates that target food items whose prices have risen sharply. He said trucks hundreds of sugar have gone missing when the sugar prices go up and added that that in most of the cases the traders come to know about the robbery very late as the traders are also aware that on certain occasions the truck could have a break down on route to delivery. "However when you do not hear from the driver of the truck and the delivery to the intended destination is delayed by more than two days then you need to go to the police immediately," said Holkar.

Business Standard

Sugar factories in Karnataka adamant; farmers in a fix

As opposed to Rs 2,500 per tonne of sugarcane fixed by govt, factories are now willing to pay only Rs 2,000 cr per tonne



Following the decision by farmers to not send [sugarcane](#) to [factories](#) unless they get remunerative prices, factories in north [Karnataka](#) have refused to pay the price fixed by the state [government](#).

The state government had announced a minimum support price of Rs 2,500 a tonne for sugarcane grown in north Karnataka and Rs 2,400 a tonne for the produce in the south.

Farmers, though unhappy with the prices, had decided to sell the produce to factories, fearing delays would lead to losses.

However, [sugar](#) factories are offering just Rs 2,000 a tonne; they want the state government to pay the remaining Rs 500 a tonne.

Of the 65 sugar factories in Karnataka, 58 are functional. While the cooperative sector has 22 factories, two are run by the government and 34 are privately owned. Of the private factories, 33 are owned/managed by politicians.

Belgaum district stands first in sugarcane production in Karnataka accounting for 35% of the state's total production. With 21 sugar factories, the district produces 1.30 crore tonnes of sugarcane every year, while the total production in the state stands at 3.5 crore tonnes. Bagalkot has nine factories while Bidar has four, Bijapur, Gulbarga and Davanagere three each.

Last year, the farmers in Bagalkot district had produced 1.3 crore tonnes of sugarcane in four lakh acres of land. But this year the production has come down to 1.10 crore tonnes. The nine factories in the district together have the capacity of crushing 70,000 tonnes per day.

Only two factories-Ranna Sugars in Mudhol and Sameerwadi sugar factory in Sameerwadi of Bagalkot district have started crushing the canes. Sameerwadi Sugars after crushing 96,000 tonnes had stopped crushing following an agitation staged by farmers. Sameerwadi Sugars has already started paying the farmers at the rate of Rs 2,000 per tonne.

Last year 3.20 crore tonne of sugarcane yield was recorded in the State. However this year, it has reduced to 2.88 crore tonnes. There has been a decline in the yield of sugarcane not only in Karnataka but also in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamilnadu. President of State Sugarcane Growers' Association Kurabur Shantakumar said the farmers were not happy with the price fixed by the government but were ready to sell the standing crop because any delay would cause loss to the farmers as well as to the factories. If cane is not harvested in time, than recover level comes down.

He urged the factory managements to start crushing immediately and warned that the factories or the state government will have to make good any loss suffered by the farmers due to delay in crushing. He hoped that the factories in Belgaum district will commence crushing in a couple of days.

Karnataka has 25 lakh sugarcane growers and the government earns Rs 6 crore every year by way of tax from this sector, Shantakumar said and alleged that the government was also apathetic towards farmers. Sugarcane growers in North Karnataka districts in general and those in Belgaum district often bear the brunt of price fluctuation as the region accounts for nearly 65% of sugarcane production.

The area under sugarcane cultivation in the state is 3.5 lakh hectares and the requirement by all the factories put together is 3 crore tonnes. Farmers' leader in Bagalkot Muttappa Komar said the government should take the responsibility of not only fixing the price of sugarcane but also implement the same. The government should ensure that the factory accept the sugarcane and pay the price fixed by the government to farmers.

Sugar crisis: Call on remedial steps in 8-10 days

Senior ministers met on Wednesday to take stock of the crisis, caused by mounting cane arrears and huge unsold stock



The Centre will take a [call on](#) a host of measures - including revising the duty drawback rate for [sugar](#) exports, providing [interest-free loans](#) for millers and lowering the time frame for re-export of imported raw sugar - in eight to 10 days to bail out the sector.

Senior ministers met on Wednesday to take stock of the crisis, caused by mounting cane arrears and huge unsold stock. Agriculture Minister [Sharad Pawar](#), Finance Minister [P Chidambaram](#), Civil Aviation Minister Ajit Singh, and senior officials from the food and commerce ministries participated in the meeting.

Officials said mills have to approach a committee under the chairmanship of Planning Commission member Saumitra Chaudhuri on raising the duty drawback rates. Millers want the drawback rate raised to four per cent from 1.3 per cent.

Among the suggestions discussed at the meeting was allowing mills to access loans against the excise duty paid by them; the interest on which will be adjusted from the Sugar Development Fund, and not from the millers. "This, in a way, will make such loans interest-free," said an official. Relaxation could also be granted by way of lowering the time frame for re-export of raw sugar into processed sugar from 18 months to three to four months. "This will squeeze imports, which have soared to 170,000 tonnes in October, adding to the glut," the official added.

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 want more than Rs 300 a quintal, the millers can't pay more than last year's price (Rs 280 a quintal), said an industry source.

"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," he added.

Gujarat co-op sugar mills operate even on squeezed margins

Unlike UP, Gujarat's sugar sector is led by the cooperative societies, which operate on a no-profit-no-loss basis



Co-operative sugar mills in Gujarat — among the top five sugar producing states with 17 factories that can produce 65,000 tonnes a day — have managed to withstand the squeezed margins.

Unlike UP, Gujarat's sugar sector is led by the cooperative societies, which operate on a no-profit-no-loss basis. "The cooperative sugar mills work for their own members," said [Ketan Bhatt](#), managing director of Federation of Gujarat State cooperative Sugar Factories (FGSCSF). "Therefore, they continue crushing despite losses. Margins have not been good in recent months, but mills continue operations."

The margins were under pressure due to a reduction in sugar prices and the growing preference for imported sugar.

Dilip Bhakta, chairman of Madhi Sugar cooperative, said: "In 2012-13, our sugar cooperative paid an average of Rs 3,120 a tonne to farmers. Sugar prices have come down to Rs 2,650 (factory gate prices) a quintal. As a result, there is a shortfall in margins."

According to cooperative sources, even if the sugar prices fall significantly, procurement prices do not fall below the fair and remunerative prices (FRP), fixed by the Centre. However, states such as [Uttar Pradesh](#) and Tamil Nadu have their own prices for farmers, known as the [state advisory price](#) (SAP), usually higher than the FRP. Currently, sugar FRP is Rs 210 a quintal for 2013-14.

Experts said cooperative mills pay high procurement price to sugarcane farmers based on the selling price of sugar. A sugar cooperative society deducts costs such as processing, labour and administration charges from the earnings from sugar sales and pays the entire remaining amount to farmers in the form of procurement price.

"Last year, we paid around Rs 150-350 a quintal more to the farmers than the previous year," said Mansinh Patel, chairman of FGSCSF. "But this year, looking at the lower sugar prices, the average procurement price may also go down. So, there is an impact on margins due to excess stock and imports."

Gujarat is among the top five sugar producing states in the country, with 17 factories, which have an installed capacity of sugarcane crushing of 65,000 tonnes a day.

Fertiliser firms likely to get Rs 10,000 cr more as bank credit

Instead of extending subsidy, Govt to bear 8% of interest



New Delhi, Nov. 20: Fertiliser companies may get up to Rs 10,000 crore more under the special banking arrangement against the subsidy due for the current fiscal year.

This is in addition to the Rs 5,500 crore approved earlier. Under the arrangement, fertiliser companies will get short-term credit from the banks. Originally, the interest rate for such an

arrangement was 10.5 per cent.

However, banks agreed to lend only at 10.7 per cent. Of this, the Government will bear 8 per cent, while remaining is to be borne by the companies. The amount will be repaid through provisions made in the supplementary demands for grants to be tabled during the Winter session of Parliament starting December 5

“It is yet to be decided how much money will be used immediately. But, considering the current financial situation of the fertiliser companies, such a fund flow will be critical, even if companies have to pay a small interest on that,” a senior Government official said. Last year, fertiliser companies availed credit facility to the tune of Rs 5,000 crore.

However, the final interest rate on additional banking arrangement could go up, as banks agreed to lend the first tranche of Rs 5,500 crore for the current fiscal only at 10.7 per cent interest.

This means that fertiliser companies will have to pay an extra 20 basis points (bps). Since, there is no possibility of the overall interest rate going down in the near future, there will be no option except getting credit at 10.7 per cent. The industry estimates a rise in total fertiliser subsidy to Rs 30,000 crore. Against this, the Fertiliser Ministry has sought Rs 15,000 crore under the special banking arrangement to clear subsidy arrears. The rise in subsidy is due to the increase in the cost of imported fertilisers due to the rupee depreciating against the dollar.

For 2013-14, the Government reduced the fertiliser subsidy to Rs 65,971.50 crore from the revised estimate of Rs 65,974 crore in 2012-13 but it was higher than the budget estimate of Rs 60,974 in 2012-13.

Lower tea volume on offer at Coonoor sale

Coonoor, Nov. 20: A volume of 16.79 lakh kg has been catalogued for Sale No: 47 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auction to be held on Thursday and Friday, reveals our analysis of the brokers' listing.

This is some 7,000 kg less than last week's offer but about 1.99 lakh kg more than the offer this time last year.

Of the 16.79 lakh kg on offer, 11.77 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 5.02 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades.

As much as 15.93 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 0.86 lakh kg, orthodox variety.

Small growers to look at tea farming in Mozambique

Kolkata, Nov. 20: A delegation of small tea growers, led by Bijoy Gopal Chakraborty, President, Confederation of Indian Small Tea Growers Association (CISTA), on Tuesday met Jose Maria Morais, Mozambique's High Commissioner to India, and Vincent Paulo C. Chihale, Commercial Counsellor, to explore the scope of developing small tea farming in that country.

There are 39,000 hectares of old tea plantations in Mozambique, out of which only 6,000 acres are currently under private ownership. Mozambique needs expertise and investment to boost tea production.

The delegation explained to the Mozambique envoy the growth of small tea farming in India – nearly two lakh small growers accounting for an estimated 35 per cent of the country's total tea production. In many tea growing States, small tea growers have formed self-help groups to upgrade themselves and cooperatives for sustainable green leaf trade. The small tea growers thus act as catalysts in bringing about socio-economic change in rural areas. The delegation pointed out how the Tea Board of India has been systematically extending support to small growers since the 10th Plan, more recently with the constitution of a Small Tea Growers Development Directorate, which has initiated move to upgrade small growers from mere green leaf producers to made-tea producers also.

The association invited Morais to visit some of the successful small farms in Assam, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu.

Spot rubber slips on lack of buyers

Kottayam, Nov.20: Rubber prices fell further on Wednesday. Declines in domestic futures and the absence of buyers kept the local market under pressure during late trading hours.

The trend continued to be mixed as ISNR 20 and latex finished unchanged, while the remaining counters ended in the red amidst low volumes.

Sheet rubber declined to Rs 156 (Rs 157) a kg, according to traders. The grade weakened to Rs 156.50 (Rs 157) and Rs 153.50 (Rs 154) respectively, as reported by the Rubber Board and dealers.

December futures dropped to Rs 156.80 (Rs 157.91), January to Rs 158.61 (Rs 159.99) and February to Rs 161.10 (Rs 161.88) for RSS 4, while the March futures remained inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) slipped to Rs 155.31 (Rs 155.85) at Bangkok. November futures closed ¥ 249.0 (Rs. 155.94) from ¥ 247.3 on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were: RSS-4: 156 (157); RSS-5: 147 (148); Ungraded: 144 (144.50); ISNR 20: 149 (149) and Latex 60%: 106 (106).

Bengal to send one lakh tonnes potato to Odisha

Kolkata, Nov. 20: The West Bengal Government on Wednesday decided to send one lakh tonnes of potato to Odisha by the end of this week.

A meeting of the task-force took a call in this regard following demands from potato farmers and traders in West Midnapore district, according to member of the force.

The task-force decision came after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's statement in the State Assembly on Wednesday.

"The entire process will be done under the supervision of the district administration," the member, who did not wish to be identified, said. According to him, Subrata Biswas, Principal Secretary, State Agricultural Marketing Department, is likely to issue a notice to West Midnapore district magistrate regarding this.

This is the first-ever official inter-State movement of potato from West Bengal after the State Government imposed restrictions on export on October 20.

Govt exploring measures to rescue sugar industry

New Delhi, Nov. 20: The Centre is exploring alternative measures to bail out the sugar industry, including a significant reduction in the time period for re-export of imported sugar under advance licensing scheme from the present 18 months to three months.

It is also considering increasing duty drawback on exports to rescue the crisis-ridden industry.

Also, sugar mills may be allowed to get loans to the extent of excise duty paid by them last year for which interest subvention would be provided from the Sugar Development Fund

(SDF). These were some of the measures discussed by the Centre on Wednesday following a threat of shutdown by about two-thirds of the private sugar companies in Uttar Pradesh. Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar and Civil Aviation Minister Ajit Singh, apart from Food and Commerce secretaries deliberated on the current sugar crisis in Uttar Pradesh and discussed these potential interventions, but no decision was taken on Wednesday.

“We have to study the impact of these alternatives. This information we will get in next 8-10 days and again we will sit and finalise,” said Pawar, while stating that the cane crushing should start soon.

In anticipation of some kind of a bailout for the industry, the scrips of sugar companies, such as Balrampur Chini Mills Ltd and Bajaj Hindustan Ltd staged a rally on the bourses.

Balrampur ended 9.64 per cent higher at Rs 48.90 on the BSE, while Bajaj Hindustan gained about 14 per cent to close at Rs 14.88. Dalmia Bharat Sugar gained 6 per cent to end at Rs 15.35, while DCM Shriram ended 3.61 per cent higher at Rs 53.10 on BSE.

“We discussed various alternatives but have not taken any decisions,” said Ajit Singh, stating that eventually the Union Cabinet will decide on the issue.

Among the measures discussed include increasing the duty drawback on export from the present 1.3 per cent to around 4 per cent.

Assuming that sugar mills are allowed to avail themselves of loans based on the excise duty paid, they could raise about Rs 1,775 crore. For every quintal of sugar produced, the mills pay a central excise duty of Rs 71 and cess of Rs 24 toward SDF. At last year’s sugar production of 25 million tonnes, the excise duty collected by the Centre is estimated to be around Rs 1,775 crore.

Cyclone Helen may cross Andhra coast tonight

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 20: The Bay of Bengal is now hosting tropical cyclone Helen, the second in the basin in a month after the very severe cyclone Phailin scorched Odisha in early October.

‘Helen’ is forecast to grow into a severe cyclone and cross south Andhra Pradesh coast by Thursday night, an India Met Department update said on Wednesday.

SWIFT TRANSFORMATION

The transformation of Tuesday’s depression as a cyclone by next morning was as swift and unanticipated as the previous day when it had intensified twice over in less than 24 hours. Sea-surface temperatures are at 28 to 29 degree Celsius over west-central Bay of Bengal, just above the threshold for the waters to be able to host and sustain a cyclonic storm. This compared with the steaming 30 degree Celsius around south-east Bay of Bengal where Helen had originated as a low-pressure area on Monday. The high temperatures sustained there on Wednesday as well.

Helen was located to 470 km east-northeast of Chennai, 430 km east of Kavali and 320 km east-southeast of Machilipatnam on Wednesday afternoon.

The cyclone would further intensify into a severe cyclonic storm by Thursday and cross south Andhra Pradesh coast between Sriharikota and Ongole, close to Kavali by night.

Rain or thundershowers will occur at a few places over Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Lakshadweep by Thursday and increase thereafter.

A weather warning for Wednesday said that heavy to very heavy rainfall with isolated extremely heavy rains will have already lashed south coastal Andhra Pradesh.

HIGH WINDS

A few places over north coastal Andhra Pradesh hit earlier by very severe cyclone Phailin too will have witnessed heavy to very heavy rains.

Winds speed reaching 55-65 km/hr gusting to 75 km/hr will prevail along and off Andhra Pradesh and north Tamil Nadu coast from Wednesday night.

Sea conditions would be rough to very rough along and off Andhra Pradesh coast.

Thursday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall with isolated extremely heavy falls may continue to lash south coastal Andhra Pradesh. Heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely over north coastal Andhra Pradesh.

FRESH 'LOW'

Wind speeds will race to gale strength at 100-110 km/hr, gusting to 120 km/hr along and off south Andhra Pradesh and north Tamil Nadu coasts.

Sea conditions would be very high along and off Andhra Pradesh coast.

Friday: Continued heavy to very heavy rainfall with isolated extremely heavy falls for coastal Andhra Pradesh. Heavy to very heavy over Rayalaseema and north Tamil Nadu.

The Met has also retained outlook for a fresh low-pressure developing over south Andaman Sea during next two days. It will go on to intensify further.

Profit booking crushes castorseed futures



Rajkot, Nov. 20: Castorseed futures dropped as investors booked profits and arrivals improved in spot markets.

On the other hand spot castor was traded higher due to good demand from millers and exporters.

According to market sources, export demand in castor oil has increased in past few days and therefore, mills' buying is good this time.

However, improved arrivals capped gains in the price..

About 35,000-40,000 bags of castorseed arrived in Gujarat, it was around 30,000-35,000 bags on Tuesday.

Price increased by Rs 10 to Rs 735-745 for 20 kg.

About 5,300-5,400 bags arrived in Saurashtra and they were quoted at Rs 675-725 for a *maund* of 20 kg.

Castor oil was traded higher by Rs 7 at Rs 775 for 10 kg. On the Rajkot Commodity Exchange, spot castor increased by Rs 35 to Rs 3,650 a quintal.

RCX December castor contract declined by Rs 30 to Rs 3,964 a quintal.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, castorseed January contract decreased by Rs 46 to Rs 4,260 with an open interest of 175,010 lots.

NCDEX February contracts were down by Rs 29 at Rs 4,214 with an open interest of 74,830 lots.

Urad may rule firm on lower output



Indore, Nov. 20: Pulses and pulse seeds ruled flat on slack buying support in Indore *mandis* on Wednesday.

The downtrend continued in tur on weak demand with tur (Maharashtra) quoting at Rs 4,400-50 a quintal (down Rs 100 from last week), while tur (Madhya Pradesh) ruled at Rs 4,000-4,100.

According to Prakash Vora, a local pulse trader, a rally in tur appears unlikely in the coming days, as new crop will hit the market in 8-10 days.

Tur dal (full) in local *mandis* was being quoted at Rs 6,900-7,100, tur dal (sawa no.) at Rs 6,200-6,400, while tur dal

marka ruled at Rs 7,400-7,600.

Urad and its dal also ruled steady on subdued demand with urad (bold) ruling at Rs 4,400-4,500, while urad (medium) ruled at Rs 3,800-3,900.

Given extensive damage to the crop and weak crop output, any major fall in urad prices from its current level appears unlikely.

Urad dal (medium) was at Rs 5,300-5,400, urad dal (bold) ruled at Rs 5,500-5,600, while urad mongar ruled at Rs 5,800-6,200.

Moong and its dal also ruled steady on slack demand with moong (bold) being quoted at Rs 5,800- 6,200, while moong (memidium) was quoted at Rs 5,000-5,300.

Moong dal (medium) was at Rs 6,700-7,000, moong dal (bold) ruled at Rs 7,100-7,300, while moong mongar ruled at Rs 7,500-7,600 a quintal respectively.

Pepper buyers adopt 'wait-n-watch' mode



Kochi, Nov. 20: Pepper futures moved up further on Wednesday, while spot prices remained unchanged. Activities were limited as no sellers were forthcoming while buyers resorted to a wait-and-watch mode. On the spot, eight tonnes of pepper from the plains arrived and the offtake was at 12 tonnes at Rs 500-505 a kg. Sellers were not ready to offer Rajkumari pepper below Rs 520, while high range material was offered at Rs 512-515.

Meanwhile, processors were quoting reprocessed pepper of 550 GL from the plains at Rs 512.

Buyers were, however, holding back offering only Rs 510 .

On the NMCE, December and January contracts increased by Rs 105 and Rs 315 respectively to Rs 52,370 and Rs 52,570 a quintal.

Turnover rose by six tonnes to 10 tonnes, while the net open position moved up by two tonnes to five tonnes.

On the IPSTA, all the active contracts scaled up by Re 1.

The turnover increased by 26 tonnes to 160 tonnes, while the net open position remained at 4 tonnes.

Spot prices stayed unchanged at Rs 50,000 (ungarbled) and Rs 52,000 (garbled) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market rose to \$8,850 (c&f) for Europe and \$9,150 a tonne (c&f) for the US and remained totally outpriced.

Turmeric gleams on N. India orders

Erode, Nov. 20: Spot turmeric prices increased in Erode markets on the back of quality arrivals and receipt of some upcountry orders.

“After a long time, turmeric exporters and traders have received a few orders from North India. Also, farmers brought quality turmeric. These two factors propped up turmeric price by Rs 400 a quintal. Almost all States in North India have placed orders for yellow spice from Erode. Delhi merchants demand quality root and hybrid variety turmeric,” said R.K.V.

Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.



He also said that for the past three days quality turmeric is arriving in the four markets and sales have been encouraging with 70 per cent of the stocks being cleared.

He said that farmers are getting a higher price of Rs 400/quintal and the price may continue at this level for some more days.

Stockists also procured about ten per cent of the offerings.

On Wednesday, 3,500 bags of turmeric arrived for sale and 70 per cent was sold.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,114-6,309; the root variety Rs 4,099-5,329 a quintal.

Salem Hybrid: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,900-7,196 and the root variety Rs 4,874-5,695. Of the 1,113 bags that arrived, only 438 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 5,468-6,324; the root variety Rs 4,569-5,569. Of the 949 bags on sale, 892 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,439-6,511 and the root variety Rs 4,199-5,719. Of the 879 bags on offer, 857 were picked up.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 5,139-6,372 and the root variety Rs 4,769-5,420. All the 60 bags were traded.

Poultry-feed may rule flat on steady input costs



Karnal, Nov. 20: With input costs ruling steady, poultry-feed prices may continue to rule flat over the next few days too, according to trade experts. A marginal fluctuation in input prices kept poultry-feed prices unchanged on Wednesday.

Aditya Mishra, a commodity expert, told *Business Line* that feed products are unlikely to see any alteration in the near future.

A steady trend is prevailing in the market following a range-bound trend in the key ingredients, he said.

In the physical market, soyameal dropped by Rs 300 to Rs 34,700 a tonne, while bajra improved by Rs 100 to Rs 12,700 a quintal.

After witnessing a fall last weekend, DCP and MBM have regained their previous levels.

Di-calcium phosphate improved by 80 paise to Rs

34.80 a kg, MBM moved up by 50 paise to Rs 31.50 a kg while maize was unchanged at Rs 1,490 a quintal.

Rice bran oil moved up by Rs 5 to Rs 65 a kg, DRB eased by Rs 100 to Rs 8,400, while mustard de-oiled cake was unchanged at Rs 15,000 a tonne.

Feed products

Broiler Concentrate was at Rs 2,010, while Broiler starter mash sold at Rs 1,550 for a 50 kg bag.

Pre-lay mash was Rs 1,040 . Layer concentrate 25 per cent was at Rs 1,480 while Layer concentrate 35 per cent sold at Rs 1,165 for a 50-kg bag.

Poultry Products

Meanwhile, a downtrend was witnessed in the poultry products market on Wednesday.

Broiler dropped by Rs 4 and quoted at Rs 57-60 a kg, egg eased by 15 paise and quoted at Rs 3.85, while chick went for Rs 22, Rs 2 down.

Coconut oil zooms to new high on copra shortage



Kochi, Nov. 20: Coconut oil prices continue to surge, touching a new high of Rs 112 a kg in Kerala, on tight copra supply.

Last week, prices in Kerala ruled at Rs 105.

In Tamil Nadu coconut oil ruled at Rs 109 against Rs 99.

According to Prakash B. Rao, President, Cochin Oil Merchants Association (COMA), copra prices have firmed up to Rs 83 a kg (Rs 76) in Kerala and they were ruling at Rs 80 a kg in Tamil Nadu.

He said that acute copra shortage has affected the availability of the commodity, which has forced major corporates to go for bargain hunting.

This has resulted in the strengthening of prices.

Even though domestic consumption of coconut oil in Kerala has dropped, he said that huge demand from corporates pushed up prices.

Prices are likely to rule more or less steady in the coming days, he said adding that the current Sabarimala season is result in prices rallying further due to demand for raw coconut. Palm oil prices are ruling flat at Rs 65/kg, palm kernel oil touched a high of Rs 85 against Rs 72 quoted last week.

Thalath Mahmood, Director, COMA, attributed the price hike to offseason, copra shortage and export of raw coconuts to Pakistan from Tamil Nadu.

This would continue till the start of the next season in March-April.

Bharat N. Khona, former Board Member, COMA, was of the view that high prices have dampened the local and upcountry demand for coconut oil. This could result in consumers shifting to other edible oils.
