

Foot-and-mouth disease scare hits Aavin procurement

MADURAI, November 22, 2013 - There was a marginal dip in milk procurement levels in Madurai Aavin, officials said here on Thursday.

Even as rumours of cattle falling prey to foot-and-mouth disease were spreading in Vadakku Navinipatti and a few places surrounding Melur near here, the officials from the Department of Animal Husbandry and a team of experts from the Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Chennai, camped at these villages and interacted with the people.

The officials said they had created awareness among the people of the preventive measures to be taken to save their cattle and instilled confidence in them at this crucial hour.

According to Aavin General Manager Christie, the normal milk procurement level was around 1.75 lakh litres per day during this season. Apart from Madurai, Aavin procured milk from neighbouring Theni district as well, he noted.

The scare of spread of foot-and-mouth disease and the intermittent rains had resulted in a marginal dip in milk procurement. Milk procurement dropped from 1.80 lakh litres to 1.75 lakh litres within two days, another official pointed out.

Except for Melur region, the procurement was almost steady from the other areas. There seemed to be no big threat from the disease, he asserted.

Joint Director (Animal Husbandry) A. Babuji said the officials had conducted a series of campaigns on the safety measures to be taken.

So far, 1.80 lakh doses of vaccine against foot-and-mouth disease had been administered to the cattle in the district.

“The animals left out of the massive exercise – around 4,000 – would be covered soon. All veterinarians had been asked to sensitise the people in this regard,” he said.

Dr.K. Kumanan of the Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University said bio-security measures like the sprinkling of bleaching powder and other chemical fluids would control the spread of any disease to a certain extent. It was the strategy to eliminate viruses, he added.

Special meetings

Collector L. Subramanian said special gram sabha meetings were organised in all the 420 village panchayats in the district in the last two days.

“The entire official machinery in the district is geared up to tackle any situation,” he added.

☐ ***Milk procurement dropped from 1.80 lakh litres to 1.75 lakh litres in 2 days***

☐ ***1.80 lakh doses of vaccine against foot-and-mouth disease given to the cattle***

Immunisation drive to contain foot and mouth disease in full swing



The exercise will be completed before November 25

Precaution: Disinfectant being sprayed on the Masinagudy-Mudumalai Tiger Reserve road. —Photo: M. Sathyamoorthy

COIMBATORE, November 22, 2013 - The Animal Husbandry Department has swung into action to prevent the spread of the foot and mouth disease by deputing its staff to complete the vaccination process of cattle in the district.

The drive would end before November 25. R. Perumalsamy, a specialist with the department, told *The Hindu* that a total of 2.30 lakh doses of vaccine were obtained and 2,28,000 had already been administered.

Meanwhile, the Forest Department in coordination with the Animal Husbandry Department have set up an “immune wall” along the forests.

The focus was more on Anamalai Tiger Reserve (ATR), Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR), Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR) and Kalakkad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve (KMTR). Forest check posts have been strengthened to prevent the entry of cattle for grazing. In addition to these measures, all routes to the forests are being sprayed with bactericidal powders.

Vigil stepped up at MTR

Meanwhile, vigil has been stepped up at the MTR.

Pointing out that most of the cattle owners in Masinagudy, Mavanhallah and other areas abutting the reserve have realised the gravity of the situation, official sources told *The Hindu* that they were cooperating with the wildlife authorities to stem the spread of the disease.

The sources said that about 4,000 heads of cattle in the area have been vaccinated. Naturopathy treatment

The Veterinary University Training and Research Centre (VUTRC) has began the popularisation of a unique ‘naturopathy’ treatment to contain the disease.

“The particular methodology using certain herbs and agriculture produces has been developed by Ethno Veterinary Medicine wing of VUTRC under the Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS),” R. Selvaraj, head of VUTRC (Tirupur centre), told *The Hindu*. Explaining its making, Dr. Selvaraj said that for the preparation of one unit of the oral electuary mixture, 20 grams each of cumin (seeragam in Tamil), Fenugreek (vendayam), black pepper and turmeric powder, four garlic cloves, 100 grams of jaggery and coconut gratings from one nut were required.

Bio-security measures

In Erode, the Animal Husbandry Department has initiated bio-security measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

The department has instructed milk societies to install footpaths for cattle-rearers supplying milk to wash their feet before entering the premises in the mornings and evenings. The footpath would be sprayed with a solution of sodium hydroxide or sodium carbonate.

P. Rajasekar, Additional Director, Directorate of Animal Husbandry, visited the affected villages in Gobichettipalayam area on Wednesday.

Senior officials demonstrated the utility of the solution at Aavin's Ottarkarattupalayam dairy, where 2,700 litres of milk were procured everyday, the highest in the district and at Vettaikarankovil.

Since even immunised animals could contract the infection due to the virulence of the virus, the department has initiated bio-security measures for application in the dairies as well as cattle sheds, alongside the vaccination exercises, official sources said.

(With inputs from V.S. Palaniappan in Coimbatore, D. Radhakrishnan in Udthagamandalam, R. Vimal Kumar in Tirupur and R. Krishnamoorthy in Erode)

Cumbum valley farmers reap a bumper harvest

THENI, November 22, 2013 - *Highest yield is 10,140 kilogram paddy per hectare*

Early onset of monsoon, sufficient storage in Periyar dam for irrigation and the adoption of System of Rice Intensification and modern agriculture practices in paddy cultivation have helped farmers in the Cumbum valley get a bumper kuruvasi yield.

The highest yield in the district this season was 10,140 kilogram per hectare and the lowest was 8,563 kg per hectare.

The Agriculture Department had set up eight model paddy plots – two plots each in Karakattankulam, Kuchanur, Mela Gudalur and Keezha Gudalur – in the district to assess the yield. Harvest was over in six of these plots and it would be completed in the remaining two plots within a week, according to Joint Director of Agriculture G. Sundaram.

To assess the kuruvasi yield, the officials had conducted crop cutting experiments in some fields in the valley recently. The average yield was around 9,300 kg per hectare against the normal yield of 8,500 kg per hectare, the officials said.

Effective propagation of the SRI by agriculture extension officials, the interest shown by the farmers, their readiness to accept new things and the quick implementation of innovative practices helped achieve success, they added.

Kuruvasi paddy crop was cultivated on over 14,000 acres in Cumbum, Uthamapalayam, Chinnamanur, Bodi and Theni blocks using Periyar water. Farmers had raised hybrid and high-yielding paddy varieties this season. The new varieties used by them were also frost-tolerant, said farmer M. Palpandi of Chinnamanur.

Farm mechanisation, which helped the farmers manage shortage of labour, and on-the-spot procurement by private traders have minimised post-harvest loss.

Farmers in the valley had started using machines for raising nurseries, transplantation, weeding, applying fertilizers and harvesting.

The district administration had opened direct procurement centres at Kuchanur, Boothipuram and Chinnamanur to enable the farmers get a better price for their produce.

Paddy is being procured at Rs.14.5 a kg for finer variety and Rs.13.6 for coarse variety with a humidity of less than 17 per cent. Even outstation buyers have camped in the district and started procuring paddy from the fields directly.

With a good second spell of monsoon, progressive farmers have started preparing their fields for the second crop that would be ready for harvest in March. Raising of nurseries commenced in Gudalur, and harvest was over in Uthamapalayam well in advance.

Scientists trying to establish cause of foot-and-mouth disease

KOLAR, November 22, 2013 - Scientists are making efforts to ascertain the exact cause for the spread of foot-and-mouth disease in cattle in Kolar district, according to Ravindra Hegde of Animal Health and Biological Institute, Hebbal, Bangalore.

Though the disease in cattle was reported from many parts of the State, the situation in Kolar has perplexed scientists and the authorities concerned. However, they are expected to make a breakthrough in the case in a fortnight, Dr. Hegde said at a meeting organised by the Karnataka Prantha Raitha Sangha (KPRS) district unit here on Thursday.

Stating that cattle with pure blood line were prone to the disease, Dr. Hedge said most of the cattle in Kolar region have lost immunity.

Stating that 100 per cent vaccination can help tackle the disease, he admitted to the failure of the administration in creating adequate awareness among farmers on the process.

Immunity in cows in the State before the launch of a vaccination drive in September 2011 was only 5 per cent but now it has risen to 45 per cent, he said.

Calves afflicted by the disease were easily prone to death causing economic loss to farmers, he added.

Narrating that the virus is highly contagious, he stressed the need for adopting biosecurity measures to prevent the disease.

Participating in the discussion, Srinivaspur MLA K.R. Ramesh Kumar blamed the authorities for not creating enough awareness among farmers about vaccination.

Our position at WTO not in conflict with food security Act: Centre

NEW DELHI, November 22, 2013 - *Kisan Sabha, Third World Network oppose "peace clause"*

Even as the All-India Kisan Sabha and Third World Network urged India not to agree to a "peace clause" in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations on subsidies for public stock holding for food security, the Commerce Ministry on Thursday said India will settle for it "only as an interim solution leading to a permanent solution."

Reacting to a letter written by former bureaucrat E.A.S. Sarma to UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi on agreeing to limit food security to four years under a "peace clause" in WTO, the

Ministry said draft ministerial declaration on the subject awaits a decision by relevant governments and is not an agreed position in the WTO.

“India has maintained that its position on the subject in the WTO is in line with the government’s resolve to offer food security on a lasting basis to the targeted population. India’s position does not contradict or conflict with its commitment under the National Food Security Act and remains aligned to stated national policy,” the Ministry said.

It said that “the text of draft ministerial declaration for consideration offers restraint from challenge under the WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism till 11{+t}{+h} Ministerial Conference at which time Ministers are expected to decide ‘next steps’ as a follow up to a work programme to begin post-Bali.”

“Protect farmers”

Meanwhile, rejecting the interim solution offered by WTO Director-General Roberto Azvedo to the G-33 proposal, the Kisan Sabha called upon the government to “intervene” in the negotiations to protect the livelihoods of millions of farmers and remain committed to India’s sovereign right to decide its price support policy as well as the food security programme.

The Agreement on Agriculture only allows ‘*de minimis*’ subsidy of 10 per cent of production cost which defies logic calculated as it is on a fixed reference price of 1986-88 when prices were much lower. “This reflects inflated subsidies while remaining totally oblivious to the present day global agricultural prices. It also calculates subsidy on the basis of total production rather than actual procurement.”

“A peace clause means that the use of such subsidies is still illegal but WTO members will not go to dispute settlement for this period,” the Third World Network comprising 270 civil society groups, has said in a letter written to Mr. Azvedo.

Farmers intercept cane-carrying trucks

KOLHAPUR, November 22, 2013 - Sugar mills in Sangli district are facing wrath of farmers who demanded that fair price be fixed before the crushing commenced. Farmer activists turned violent on Wednesday and broke tires of trucks carrying cane for crushing. Two mills that started crushing against the demand of ‘Swabhimani Shetakari Sangathana’ are facing a crisis. Warana mill in Kolhapur district has also started crushing and the activists have opposed it with the result that the atmosphere around the mill is tense.

RAIL ROKO BY PENSIONERS

Pensioners in various establishments in southern Maharashtra came together at Miraj in Sangli district and staged rail roko for the fulfilment of their demands on Wednesday. They shouted slogans and tried to obstruct the railway when the police arrested them and released them later. According to pensioners’ wing of ‘Maharashtra Rajya Shramik Sangh’ which organised demonstrations, the pension fund of pensioners in various establishments amounting to Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 84,000 crore was lying with the Union government. But only Rs. 900 to Rs. 1000 was being paid as pension which should be increased.

Farmers' grievances meet on November 28

TIRUVARUR, November 22, 2013 - The monthly farmers grievances day meeting will be held at the collectorate hall here at 10.30 a.m. on November 28. S. Natarajan, Collector, will preside over the meeting. An official press release issued here on Thursday urged the farmers to participate in the meeting and get their grievances solved. — Special Correspondent

V.C. Farm's diamond jubilee celebrations

MANDYA, November 22, 2013 - Visvesvaraya Farm, set up in 1931, will celebrate its diamond jubilee on Friday.

Housing Minister M.H. Ambareesh will inaugurate the celebrations on the premises of the institution, popularly known as V.C. Farm, a release said here on Thursday.

Krishna Byre Gowda, Minister of State for Agriculture, will inaugurate a Krishi Mela, while Union Minister Rahman Khan will release a book on the farm.

Ramya, MP, and S.M. Krishna, former External Affairs Minister, will be present.

The institution has been serving farmers by developing hybrid seeds, and conducting research.

Fighting for farmers



Protest against report: Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil, Bishop of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Diocese of Thamarassery, and Kozhikode Bishop Varghese Chakkalakkal with Wayanad MP M.A. Shanavas at a hunger strike against the Kasturirangan report on Western Ghats at the Kozhikode Collectorate on Thursday. The protest was organised by Jana Samrakshana Samithi.— Photo: K. Ragesh

Access sought to lands of Naya Qila farmers

HYDERABAD, November 22, 2013 - *'Works causing damage to water bodies'*

The Coordination Committee of Naya Qila Farmers, Save Our Urban Lakes (SOUL) and heritage activists on Thursday sought immediate restoration of access to lands of the farmers of Naya Qila till negotiations were completed and alternative land was provided to them.

Speaking to presspersons, they described as 'unilateral' the dispossession of Naya Qila farmers from their 52 acre land by the Revenue and Tourism Departments while negotiations were going on for alternative lands.

'Rampant illegalities'

The government and Hyderabad Golf Association were indulging in 'rampant illegalities' and causing destruction of water bodies such as Shatam Cheruvu and Jamali Kunta apart from destruction of heritage of Naya Qila-Golconda Fort, they alleged.

Ilyas Khan of Coordination Committee of Naya Qila Farmers said this ancestral land was cared, protected and cultivated for centuries, but now truck loads of sand was being brought in and dumped after they were prevented access to the land. S. Chakri of SOUL said the entire area was closed down and farmers were being denied access.

Violation

Jasveen Jairath alleged that in violation of court orders, the works were continuing that caused damage to water bodies, heritage and archaeological aspects here.

International Year of Family Farming

HYDERABAD, November 22, 2013 - The Deccan Development Society which is actively involved in the promotion of millets with a project office at Pastapur in Medak district will observe the International Year of Family Farming in 2014 by working closely with various other farmers' organisations.

The society director P.V. Satheesh told a press conference today that the society was represented last week at the west African regional assembly of Coalition for Protection of African Genetic Heritage comprising nine African countries.

The assembly acknowledged the intellectual inspiration provided by the society for their work in west Africa.

Mr. Satheesh said the research of Bt cotton by the society in Adilabad, Nalgonda and Warangal was followed in Burkina Faso, one of the larger countries of west Africa, to know the impact of the genetic seed.

Farmers worked as researchers to collect data.

Cotton farmers a happy lot

Ban on sale of cotton to unlicensed traders pays dividends



Tribal farmers selling their produce at the market yard in Indervelli on Thursday.-PHOTO: S. HARPAL SINGH

INDERVELLI (ADILABAD DIST.), November 22, 2013 - The ban on sale of cotton to unlicensed private traders in Adilabad seems to have paid off as it has brought happiness to small and marginal farmers. This section of the farming community used to be cheated by the unscrupulous among such traders causing the poor

farmers some financial loss.

Poor farmers, who used to sell their meagre crops to private traders used to get cheated on account of weighment. The latter weighed the produce on sub-standard and suspect scales. "I am happy now even if it means waiting for my turn to get the bundle weighed on the weigh bridge," said Jadhav Kailash of Dongergaon who had come to the market to sell just a dozen kilograms of cotton.

He however, raised a question over the possibility of underweighment of his bundle at the large capacity weighbridge at the market yard. The smaller weighbridges which are suitable for weighing smaller weights are not computerised at Indervelli market yard. This makes it necessary for the produce to be weighed at the large apparatus which does not specify the weight in grams.

TRRS seeks reasonable compensation to farmers

SANGAREDDY, November 22, 2013 - Telangana Rytu Rakshana Samithi (TRRS) Pakala Srihari Rao has urged the Central team to pay reasonable compensation to the farmers in Telangana districts who incurred losses due to recent heavy rains.

In a memorandum submitted to the team in Hyderabad on Thursday, the TRRS members said that the rains had damaged not only the standing crops but also the harvested crops.

Cyclone Helen: farmers fear damage to crops



Officials say cyclone will have little impact on Srikakulam dt.

Students going to school despite heavy rain near Ampolu, on the outskirts of Srikakulam, on Thursday. —Photos: Basheer

SRIKAKULAM, November 22, 2013 - Farmers in Srikakulam district fear damage with incessant rains occurring

with the impact of Helen cyclone. Several areas of Srikakulam district received a good amount of rainfall on Thursday. Tekkali received 10.6 mm followed by Gara with 9 mm. Santabommali mandal 7.2 mm and Jalumuru received 4.4 mm . Palasa, Meliyaputti and Srikakulam town have also received up to 2 mm rainfall.

A farmer B.Lakshmana Rao of Ampolu village said that the little crop left after floods was damaged with the fresh rain. He said that there was no hope over crops this year. Another farmer G. Tatarao said that vegetable farmers suffered a huge loss with continuous rains in the district.

Officials said that cyclone Helen would have little impact on the Srikakulam district as it concentrated on South Coastal Andhra Pradesh. However, the rain has thrown the normal life out of gear in many areas, particularly in Tekkali and Gara mandals. Students struggled a lot to reach the schools with no respite from rain till 11 am on Thursday.

Weather was clear in the evening in Srikakulam town and other places. The district administration asked all the officials to be on alert since the district might receive widespread rains in the season though the cyclone might not be severe compared to Phailin that caused devastation in Srikakulam district in October.

Officials say cyclone Helen will have little impact on Srikakulam district as it concentrated on South Coast Andhra Pradesh

Prepare for second crop, Krishna delta farmers told

VIJAYAWADA, November 22, 2013 - *Green signal comes after a gap of two years*

The State government has given farmers in the Krishna delta a green signal to prepare for raising the second crop after a gap of two years.

Farmers, a few days ago, staged a rasta roko in Mudinepalli and dharna at Machilipatnam demanding that water be released for rabi at least this year.

Helen threat

Cyclone Helen is threatening standing crop in over 3.5 lakh hectares in the district. Ninety per cent of paddy that has been sown in 2.56 lakh hectares for kharif is ready to be harvested and cotton in around 54,000 hectares ready for the second or third picking. Keeping in view the vagaries of the weather, it is uncertain whether the farmer will be able to harvest the crop or not.

The announcement that water will be released for the second crop gives the farmers a ray of hope in these anxious moments.

Minister for Secondary Education K. Parthasarathy, in a statement, asked the delta farmers to keep ready the seed and other inputs needed for the rabi.

Krishna delta farmers were denied rabi in 2011 and 2012 under the pretext of water shortage and delta modernisation works.

Reservoir levels

Nagarjuna Sagar reservoir, which has 280 tmcft on Thursday, is 90 per cent full. There was, however, only 175 tmcft in the dam on the corresponding date last year. In addition to this, the amount of water in Srisailem was also comparatively low. While 204.35 tmcft was available in Srisailem on Thursday, just 119 tmcft was available on the corresponding date last year.

This provided the authorities the perfect reason to cancel the rabi though the actual reason was the inordinate delay in the completion of the modernisation works.

Tentative plan

Agriculture Joint Director N.Ch. Balu Naiyak said a tentative plan to raise crop in 1.20 lakh hectares had been prepared for the rabi. Since there was still some time, the break-up in pulses and paddy would be announced later, he said.

☐ ***Farmers were denied rabi in 2011 and 2012***

☐ ***Water shortage and modernisation works cited as reasons***

They were denied rabi in 2011 and 2012 on the pretext of water shortage and delta modernisation works

Sugarcane farmers plan agitation for higher prices

NEW DELHI, November 22, 2013 - *State Advised Price for sugarcane is unviable, says Indian Sugar Mills Association*

The Uttar Pradesh government's announcement to retain last year's State Advised Price for sugarcane has left both, the sugar millers and farmers, dissatisfied and agitated.

While the Bharatiya Kisan Union announced on Thursday a State-wide protest from next week, the Indian Sugar Mills Association, said this SAP was "unviable" for factories to start crushing. On Wednesday, the U.P. government declared Rs.280 per quintal as the SAP for 2013-14 as against farmers demanding Rs.330 per quintal and the millers wanting Rs.225 per quintal.

“We are left with no option but to offload our sugarcane at the offices of District Magistrates all over the State . When the price of all commodities are rising and our input costs have escalated over last year, the government cannot declare Rs.280 per quintal at last year’s level,” BKU leader Rakesh Tikait told *The Hindu* on Thursday.

He said the agitation will start from DM’s offices and be taken to mills and even the other businesses of factory owners. “Millers cannot decide that they can kill farmers and continue with their other businesses by not crushing. The cane will either remain in the fields or at DM’s office,” he said.

BKU convenor Yudhvir Singh said that if high production had resulted in the current situation then sugarcane farmers will have to think whether they should reduce output next year and keep the fields vacant. “Whether production is high or low, farmers bear the brunt. Let them give us subsidy if they are ready to give incentives to millers,” he said.

The farmers’ leaders said if the matter is not resolved to their satisfaction then they will bring their agitation to Delhi. Their apprehension is that the government and millers had joined hands against farmers.

ISMA, on the other hand, said that with a SAP of Rs.280 per quintal in the previous sugar season, cane arrears had touched Rs.7,800 crore in March/April 2013. “The average sugar price realisation in the last season was Rs.3,150 in U.P. which has dropped to Rs.2,900- Rs.2,950 resulting in a decline in paying capacity of the sugar mills. The declaration of SAP of Rs.280 per quintal will only lead to cane price arrears to cross Rs.12,000 to Rs.13,000 crore in March-April, 2014.”

At these prices it will be difficult to convince Banks to extend loans or to ensure that mills start cane crushing in 2013-14, ISMA said adding that it will pay only Rs.225 per quintal to farmers this season against Rs.280 per quintal paid last year.

The Central government has decided to intervene and will soon come up with measures to give relief to the industry which will include an interest-free loan from the Sugar Development Fund.

Farmers protest, millers suspend crushing over sugarcane price

NEW DELHI, November 22, 2013 - *State-Advised Price is Rs.280 while farmers demand Rs.330 and millers want Rs.225*

The Uttar Pradesh government’s announcement to retain last year’s State-Advised Price for sugarcane has left both sugar millers as well as farmers dissatisfied and agitated.

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escalated over the last year, the government cannot declare Rs.280 per quintal at last year's level," BKU leader Rakesh Tikait told *The Hindu* on Thursday.

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"Whether production is high or low, farmers bear the brunt. Let them give us subsidy if they are ready to give incentives to millers," he said.

The farmers' leaders said that if the matter was not resolved to their satisfaction, the agitation would be brought to Delhi.

They suspect that the government and millers had formed a nexus against farmers' interests.

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Banks

"The average sugar price realisation in the last season was Rs.3,150 in U.P., which has dropped to Rs.2,900-Rs.2,950, resulting in a decline in the paying-capacity of the sugar mills. The declaration of SAP of Rs.280 per quintal will only lead to cane price arrears reaching Rs.13,000 crore in March-April, 2014."

At these prices, it will be difficult to convince banks to extend loans or to ensure that mills start cane crushing in 2013-14, the ISMA said, adding that it would pay only Rs.225 per quintal to farmers this season as against the Rs.280 per quintal paid last year.

The Centre has decided to intervene and give relief to the industry through measures such as providing interest-free loans out of the Sugar Development Fund.

☞ ***Cane arrears will reach Rs.13,000 crore at current SAP: Indian Sugarcane Mills***

Association

☞ ***Farmers may contemplate reducing production from next year, says Bharat Kisan Union head***

Improved agricultural practices ready: Professor

GULBARGA, November 22, 2013 - The agricultural scientists at the Agricultural Research Station and Agricultural Science College here have come out with new agricultural practices and techniques for optimum yield of grain and injecting a few chemicals into the land to retain moisture, particularly in the cultivation of Bengal gram.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, dean of Agricultural Science College B.T. Pujari said that a team of scientists, led by J.R. Patil, had developed a new way of doing

away with the leaves through the application of a few chemicals at the time of harvesting of Bengal gram for optimum yield and making the entire harvesting procedure, easy.

Prof. Patil said particularly for farmers using mechanical harvesting, this procedure of defoliating crops ready for harvest by using chemicals was very beneficial and it would not have any harmful effect on the grain.

Scientists were also working on solving the problem of flower-drop in red gram and pest attack by using natural agents available in the soil and atmosphere.

Intercropping

While a team of scientists led by Pandit S. Rathod had successfully used intercropping of sunflower with red gram to avoid *Helicoverpa* pod borer pest attacking the red gram, scientists led by him (Prof. Patil), were working on using natural agents to avert flower drop in red gram. Scientists led by R.C. Gundappagoal had come out with new *Rhizobium* strains for increasing the yield of chickpea and the experiments in the laboratory and field trials on college campus had given encouraging results.

New strain

It would now be extended to farmland before seeking government permission for going ahead with the use of the new strain of *Rhizobium* in the cultivation of chickpea, Prof. Pujari said.

To a question, Prof. Pujari said that the three-day *Krishi Mela* would be inaugurated by Railway Minister M. Mallikarjun Kharge on the college campus on November 23.

Nature and YOU

Chatline Nature enthusiast A. Sivakumar speaks to K. JESHI on how hitting the outdoors brings alive the conservationist in every traveller



He spends weekends in the company of birds, butterflies and Nature. He goes trekking in Wayanad, Mudumalai and the Niligiris and believes enjoying Nature is the first step in conservation. "You take ownership and want to give something back," says A. Sivakumar. He enrolled as a member of Salim Ali Naturalist Forum (SANF) for bird watching. During an

outing, he realised that trekkers often sourced camping and trekking equipment from other States. That's when he got the idea of starting Adventure Shoppe. It stocks equipment for camping and trekking, riding, racing and wildlife management, and has compact travel kits and accessories. "We want to encourage people to travel more. The idea is to kindle the conservationist in every traveller," says Sivakumar.

Pay compensation: milk producers

SALEM, November 22, 2013 - Tamil Nadu Milk Producers Welfare Association has demanded that compensation should be provided to farmers who have lost their cattle because of foot-and-mouth disease.

The association president, K.A. Sengutuvel, told reporters here that the Union Government was providing free medicines twice a year to prevent the disease.

But the Animal Husbandry Department had failed to immunise the cattle resulting in the deaths.

Special camps should be held across the State for immunising the cattle the same way polio vaccination camps were held, he said.

Procurement price

He said that the cost of cattle feed had increased by 52 per cent, fodder by 100 per cent and the labour cost has doubled in the last one year.

The government should increase the procurement price of cow's milk from Rs. 20 to Rs. 30 and buffalo's milk from Rs. 26 to Rs. 41, he said.

Cattle feed should be provided at subsidised rate, 5 per cent of administrative expenses of the associations should be given, he said. An incentive of Rs. 4 a litre be provided by the government.

Chief Minister should invite the association for talks before December 13.

State working committee meeting of the association to be held on December 14 would decide on further action.

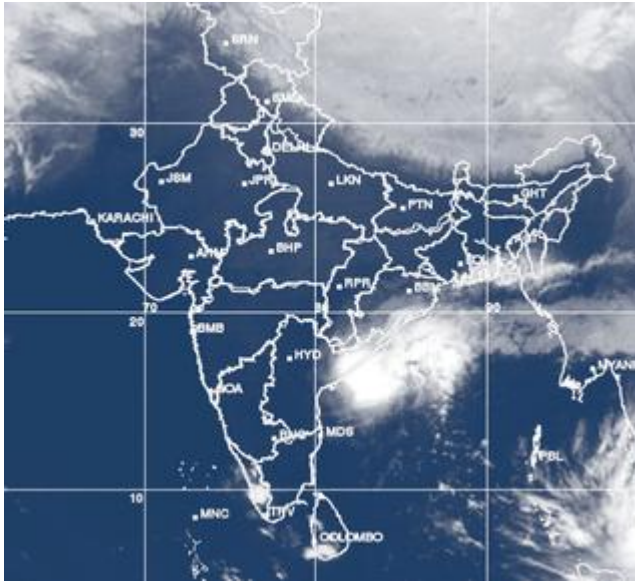
M. Padmana Naidu, vice-president, M.G. Rajendran, general secretary, and others were present.

The association's state general body meeting was also held here on Thursday.

Water level at Mettur

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 83.23 feet on Thursday against its full reservoir level of 120 feet. The inflow was 7,942 cusecs and the discharge nil.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on November 21.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Anantapur	32	16	0	51
Arogyavaram	29	16	0	174
Bapatla	32	21	0	505
Calingapatnam	27	21	13	935
Gannavaram	33	22	0	411
Hanamkonda	31	17	0	284
Hyderabad AP	32	16	0	239
Kakinada	31	22	2	624
Khammam	32	18	0	98
Kavali	32	22	0	534
Kurnool	32	18	0	96
Mahabubnagar	34	17	0	163
Machilipatnam	32	23	0	384
Nandyal	32	21	0	73
Narasapur	31	23	4	611
Nellore	32	24	0	437
Nizamabad	32	14	0	107
Ongole	33	23	0	507
Ramagundam	31	15	0	201
Tirupathi AP	31	21	0	312
Tuni	31	25	0	470
Vizag AP	30	23	tr	555
Vizag	29	21	4	515

KARNATAKA

Agumbe	30	10	0	600
Bengaluru AP	29	17	0	125
Bengaluru	29	17	0	133

Belgaum AP	29	10	0	60
Bellary	31	15	0	63
Bijapur	30	10	0	113
Chitradurga	31	13	0	55
Chickmagalur	27	15	0	41
Chintamani	28	13	0	64
Gadag	31	15	0	88
Gulbarga	33	16	0	35
Hassan	31	19	0	86
Honavar	36	17	0	261
Karwar	36	19	0	167
Madikeri	27	16	0	189
Mangalore AP	33	22	0	305
Mysore	31	17	0	153
Mandya	31	16	0	149
Raichur	31	14	0	102
Shirali	34	21	0	414
KERALA				
Alappuzha	31	25	0	238
Kannur	33	25	0	321
Kochi AP	32	24	0	473
Kottayam	34	23	0	489
Kozhikode	34	23	0	273
Punalur	33	23	0	537
Thiruvanantha				
-puram AP	32	25	0	324
Thiruvanantha				
-puram City	32	25	0	389
Vellanikkara	33	25	0	437
TAMIL NADU				
Adirapattinam	33	23	0	121
Chennai	31	25	0	332
Chennai AP	31	23	0	400
Coimbatore AP	32	23	0	134
Coonoor	21	11	0	420
Cuddalore	31	24	0	257
Dharmapuri	30	21	0	251
Kanyakumari	31	23	13	262
Karaikal	31	25	0	322
Kodaikanal	17	10	0	229
Madurai AP	34	24	12	214
Nagapattinam	31	25	0	268
Palayamkottai	33	25	1	246
Pamban	32	25	0	195
Parangipettai	31	25	0	401
Puducherry	32	23	0	256
Salem	32	20	0	205

Tiruchi AP	32	24	0	319
Tiruttani	31	22	0	315
Tondi	31	25	0	259
Tuticorin	31	27	0	192
Ooty	19	8	0	245
Valparai	27	12	0	294
Vellore	31	21	0	99
LAKSHADWEEP				
Amini Divi	33	26	0	166
Minicoy	32	26	0	119
OTHER STATIONS				
Kolkata (Alipore)	29	17	0	523
Mumbai	32	21	0	66
New Delhi	28	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.

RAIN LIKELY IN COASTAL A.P.

CHENNAI: ISOLATED RAINFALL OCCURRED OVER TAMIL NADU, KERALA AND COASTAL ANDHRA PRADESH. DRY WEATHER PREVAILED OVER RAYALASEEMA, TELANGANA, LAKSHADWEEP AND KARNATAKA.

FORECAST (VALID UNTIL SATURDAY MORNING): RAIN OR THUNDERSHOWER WOULD OCCUR AT MOST PLACES OVER COASTAL ANDHRA PRADESH AND AT A FEW PLACES OVER SOUTH TAMIL NADU. ISOLATED RAIN OR THUNDERSHOWER MAY OCCUR OVER NORTH TAMIL NADU, PUDUCHERRY, RAYALASEEMA, TELANGANA, KERALA AND LAKSHADWEEP. MAINLY DRY WEATHER WILL PREVAIL OVER KARNATAKA.

SQUALLY WIND WARNING: SQUALLY WINDS SPEED REACHING 55-65 KMPH GUSTING TO 75 KMPH WOULD PREVAIL ALONG AND OFF SOUTH ANDHRA PRADESH COAST COMMENCING FROM THURSDAY EVENING. THE WIND SPEED WOULD GRADUALLY INCREASE UP TO GALE WIND SPEED OF 100-110 KMPH, GUSTING TO 120 KMPH AT THE TIME OF LANDFALL OVER GUNTUR, KRISHNA, EAST AND WEST GODAVARI DISTRICTS. SQUALLY WINDS SPEED REACHING 45-55 KMPH GUSTING TO 65 KMPH WOULD PREVAIL ALONG AND OFF REMAINING PARTS OF ANDHRA PRADESH COASTS COMMENCING FROM 21ST EVENING AND REACH UPTO 60-70 KMPH AT THE TIME OF LANDFALL.

STORM SURGE WARNING: STORM SURGE OF ABOUT 1 TO 1.5M HEIGHT ABOVE ASTRONOMICAL TIDE WOULD INUNDATE THE LOW LYING AREAS OF GUNTUR, KRISHNA, WEST AND EAST GODAVARI DISTRICTS OF ANDHRA PRADESH AT THE TIME OF LANDFALL.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Friday, Nov 22

Max 30° | Min 25°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 89

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:10

Sunset: 05:39

Barometer: 1009

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Saturday, Nov 23

Max 28° | Min 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

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

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Farmers opt for low cost herbal medicines to treat dreaded Foot and Mouth Disease

Foot and mouth disease kills 2 deer in parkFarmers' demand relief from govt for cattle affected by foot and mout...Tamil Nadu police alert reduced blast intensityTamil Nadu governor hosts Independence Day receptionTamil Nadu hold edge against struggling MP COIMBATORE: Simple concoctions of herbs and spices from our regular household kitchen could just be the strongest shield against the attack of Picorna virus one of the most virulent and unstable micro organisms responsible for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in cattle and livestock. Scientists and experts at the Ethno Veterinary Herbal Research and Training Unit for Livestock Health Care at the Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University

(TANUVAS) research and training centre in Thanjavur have been promoting the administration of traditional medicines that could be prepared from natural ingredients including herbal leaves. However the traditional method is more time consuming and laborious.

"We are trying to promote community based medical approach using traditional and natural ingredients. We have been trying to standardise the doses to be administered. The ingredients are all tested and proven anti microbial and inflammatory agents," said Dr N Punniamurthy, professor and head of Ethno Veterinary Herbal Research and Training Unit for Livestock Health Care Unit at Veterinary University Training and Research centre of TANUVAS at Thanjavur.

The effect of the traditional Ethno Veterinary Medicine (EVM) has already been proven as farmers from across the state have been contacting the TANUVAS centre to seek guidance on preparing the herbal and spicy mixture. The special FMD gramsabhas convened in the affected districts have also been encouraging the farmers to try the Ethno Veterinary Medicine (EVM) methods to combat the disease outbreak along with proper vaccination and medical aid provided by the veterinary doctors deployed.

"We are focussing on proper medication and bio security measures in all affected areas. Traditional and herbal medicines are also being administered to the animals by farmers," said Dr V Muthu Gopalakrishnan, Regional Joint Director of Animal Husbandry, Coimbatore.

There are two types of herbal medications to treat animals affected with FMD. The first involves the making of a herbal and spicy mixture using ingredients like cumin, garlic, pepper, turmeric, coconut shavings, fenugreek and applying it on the ulcerated and blistered gums of the infected animal, thrice a day, in small quantities to ensure it is chewed properly.

"People used to be sceptical about the effectiveness of these medicines. It involves simple ingredients used in routine cooking that don't cost much," Punniamurthy added.

Another herbal medicine involves a concoction of herbal leaves fried in gingelly oil. This mixture is applied to the blistered limbs of infected cattle to keep it free from maggots and speed up the healing process.

"I had tried traditional medicines on my cows when they came down with FMD last month. It was very effective and the animals were cured within a week. Some of my friends in the locality also started following this method," said K Senthilkumar, a farmer from Marandhalli in Dharmapuri district.

TA Somasundaram, organising secretary of Bharathiyakisan Sangh from Erode pointed out that a large section of farmers and government officials have forgotten the importance of traditional medicine.

"It is all connected, the disease outbreak, farmers preferring cow breeds like jersey instead of the native breed which is more resistant to diseases," he added.

34% marginal farmers in Punjab living below poverty line

PATIALA: A new study has revealed that over 34% of [marginal farmers in Punjab](#) are still [living below poverty line](#), denting the tall claims of SAD-BJP government on uplift of the farmers, who are considered the traditional vote bank of the over nine-decade-old Shiromani Akali Dal.

Besides marginal farmers, the study conducted by the Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana, has also brought to the fore that over 20% of small farmers in the state, who till land holdings of 1-2 hectare, are also living below poverty line. Those tilling land holding less than one hectare (2.5 acres) are categorized as marginal farmers.

The study, which was conducted in different agro-climatic zones of the states, has taken Rs 935 per capita per month as the baseline income to define poverty line. This means, that each family member of such peasant families are earning less than Rs 935 per month or Rs 11,225 per annum.

Financial conditions of such farmers continue to remain miserable despite that earlier reports on farmer suicides had substantiated that more than 78% of total farmers who committed suicide in the last one decade were small or marginal farmers.

Pertinently, marginal and small farmers constitute around 34% of the total peasant population of the state. Experts said that there were around 10 lakh farm families in Punjab of which 3.4 lakh are the marginal and small land holding families.

The study, "A Study into the Economics of Farming and the Pattern of Income and Expenditure Distribution in Punjab Agriculture", contradicts the repeated assertions being made by the ruling SAD-BJP alliance that numerous welfare measures, including heavy subsidy to agriculture sector, introduced by the alliance have made the significant improvement in the quality of life of the poor peasants of the state.

Earlier, in its report "Status of Small Farmers who Left Farming in Punjab" published in 2007, the Punjab State Farmers Commission has made a shocking revelation that over 2 lakh peasants, most of whom were marginal and small farmers, had left farming by 1991 up to 2005.

In 1991, the total number of small farmers in Punjab was around 5 lakh which was reduced to around 3 lakh in 2005. The report had also attributed exit of small farmers to the rapid decreasing profits in agriculture and their indebtedness. It was the first such report that highlighted that around 22% of the total such famers, who discontinued agriculture as profession, had started doing daily labor in cities.

"The latest study has once again revealed that large section of Punjab peasantry is still living miserable life. If conditions continues to remain the same, there will be certainly more depesantization in the state, an indication that numerous policies of both state and central government targeting agriculture sector have failed to generate positive results", said one of the three authors of the report.

Small tea-growers demand equitable distribution of welfare fund built on cess

GUWAHATI: Small tea-growers in the state have demanded uniform distribution of the cess collected from them by the government since 2009 for the welfare of workers in their gardens.

There are about one lakh small tea-growers in Assam who contribute about 30 per cent to the total tea production in the state.

The All Assam Small Tea Growers' Association (AASTGA), which represents the small tea-growers sector, said that since 2009, the government has been collecting Rs 0.25 from small growers as cess for a corpus fund for welfare of workers engaged in small tea gardens.

"Surprisingly, of one lakh-odd growers, only 600 small tea-growers self help groups (SHGs) have been selected to be given the benefits. A large chunk of the growers were left out despite the fact that all the small growers bore the cess," AASTGA general secretary [Karuna Mahanta](#) said.

He added that of the 600 SHGs selected for availing the corpus fund benefit, eight were from Tinsukia, 10 from Dibrugarh, five each from Sivasagar and Jorhat and two from Golaghat.

The AASTGA said that as all the one lakh-odd small tea growers bore the cess, they are entitled to the same benefits under the Assam Cess Utilization Policy, 2010. The organisation has also asked the government to make public the total amount collected as cess from small tea-growers since 2009.

"Despite small tea-growers contributing 30 per cent of the state's total tea production, the state government has no exclusive policy for this sector and the people engaged in it. Besides, the money for the corpus fund is contributed by small tea growers. We haven't seen the government contributing to the corpus fund an amount equal to the cess collected from us," Mahanta said.

Demanding that the Assam Cess Utilization Policy, 2010, should be amended so that small tea-growers in the state gets the actual benefits, he said, "For a long time, we have been

asking the government to amend certain clauses in the policy so that small tea-growers get the real benefit of the corpus fund. Unfortunately, the government has not made any such move yet."

Business Standard

Soymeal exports likely to fall on bean quality, higher prices

Poor quality soybean seed for crushing and higher prices making it unviable for exports



The momentum seen in the exports of soymeal will slow in the second half of the financial year. Reasons: Poor quality of bean and higher prices.

Players estimate a 20-25 per cent fall in exports this year. The export during April-October was up 15 per cent at one million tonnes from 0.9 million a year ago, according to The Solvent Extractors' Association of India

(SEA).

In 2012-13, exports, three-fourths of oilmeal exports, were 3.43 million. Lower supplies could force Japan, Iran, Indonesia and Thailand to buy spot cargoes from other suppliers, like Vietnam.

Late rains have kept moisture content high in the crop, damaging the beans and reducing the protein content. Prices in the domestic market went up as farmers were holding on to stock. Crushing is down this season 50 per cent.

Soymeal prices are \$20-30 a tonne higher than others' in the exports market. India's average free-on-board (a trade term requiring the seller to deliver goods on board a vessel to the buyer) export price, which includes transportation cost, for September was \$510. It has gone up to \$540 in October and to \$555 in the current month. The US, Brazil and Argentina and Portugal are quoting this at \$530-535.

Prices have gone up 5.6 per cent to Rs 33,010 a tonne in line with the bean prices, up 14.1 per cent in two months to Rs 3,864 a quintal.

"Soymeal is of low quality. This will impact realisations of crushers," said B V Mehta, executive director, SEA.

EXPORTS

Month-wise (tonnes)

Month	2012	2013	% change
April	313,832	99,451	-68.31
May	142,588	96,492	-32.33
June	180,987	213,564	18.00
July	168,341	107,038	-36.42
August	10,005	183,555	1,734.63
September	6,525	173,381	2,557.18
October	49,840	182,724	266.62
Total	872,118	1,056,205	21.11

Source: The Solvent Extractors' Association of India

India may be able to meet the export commitment of up to December, but has started to lose orders. Bean production this year is pegged at 10 to 1.5 million tonnes.

“Many that have not been able to fulfill commitments from India and with operations in China have exported from there. This oil year, exports are expected to be lower than last year by one million tonnes,” said Neerav Desai, partner, GGN research.

“Buyers have cancelled their orders,” said Ramesh Kotecha, a Mumbai-based

soymeal broker.

Arrivals on Madhya Pradesh’s spot market were lower. Daily arrivals over the country are 600,000 bags.

“Usually, during this time, all crushers work at full capacity. But they are working at half-capacity,” said Rajesh Agrawal, chief coordinator, Soybean Processors Association of India.

Chana up 0.5% as demand picks up

Analysts said speculators created fresh positions on pick up in demand in the spot market mainly led to rise in chana prices at futures trade



[Chana](#) prices rose by Rs 17 to Rs 3,249 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators created fresh positions, supported by pick up in demand in the spot market.

However, expectations of higher output this season on favourable weather for sowing limited the gains.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), chana for delivery in far-month January rose by Rs 17, or 0.53% to Rs 3,249 per quintal with an open interest of 47,920 lots.

Similarly, the commodity for delivery in December gained Rs 16, or 0.51% to Rs 3,152 per quintal in 88850 lots.

Analysts said speculators created fresh positions on pick up in demand in the spot market mainly led to rise in chana prices at futures trade.

Sugar up 0.1% on spot demand

Sweetener for delivery in January edged up by 0.14%



[Sugar](#) prices rose by 0.18% to Rs 2,821 per quintal in futures market today as speculators enlarged positions due to a rise in demand in the spot market, supported by ongoing marriage season.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), sugar for delivery in December rose by Rs 5, or 0.18% to Rs 2,821 per quintal with an open interest of 11160 lots.

Similarly, the sweetener for delivery in January edged up by Rs 4, or 0.14% to Rs 2,826 per quintal in 19,760 lots.

Market analysts said rising demand in the spot markets following ongoing wedding season, led to rise in sugar prices at futures trade.

Turmeric down 2% on profit booking

Spice for delivery in April declined by 1.5%



[Turmeric](#) prices moved down by 2.09% to Rs 5,158 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators booked profit at prevailing higher levels, driven by a weak trend at spot market on sluggish local and overseas demand.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), turmeric for delivery in December moved down by Rs 110, or 2.09% to Rs 5,158 per quintal with an open

interest of 15,710 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in April declined by Rs 92, or 1.55% to Rs 5,850 per quintal in 3,155 lots.

Analysts said besides profit-booking by speculators at prevailing higher levels, sluggish local and overseas demand in the spot market mainly kept pressure on turmeric prices at futures trade.

Potato down 0.6% on higher supply

Analysts said fall in potato prices was mostly due to offloading of positions by speculators



[Potato](#) prices fell by 0.63% to Rs 892 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators reduced positions triggered by higher supplies from producing regions in spot market against subdued demand.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), potato for delivery in March weakened by Rs 5.70, or 0.63% to Rs 892 per quintal in business turnover of 26 lots.

Analysts said fall in potato prices was mostly due to offloading of positions by speculators driven by higher supply from growing regions.

Cardamom down 0.6% on profit booking



Spice for delivery in January shed 0.24%

[Cardamom](#) futures prices fell by 0.60% to Rs 746.40 per kg in futures trading today as speculators booked profits at prevailing levels amid fall in demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for delivery in December fell by Rs 4.50, or 0.60% to Rs 746.40 per kg in business turnover of 372 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in January shed Rs 1.90, or 0.24% to Rs 778 per kg in 61 lots.

Analysts said besides profit taking by speculators at existing higher prices, fall in demand in spot market against adequate stocks position mainly influenced cardamom prices at futures trade.

NCDEX to offer its own low-cost demat service



Move follows SEBI's fiat on depositories post-NSEL scam

In-house aid: NCDEX has developed its own software Comtrack to provide the depository service at a 60-70 per cent lower cost. It should be ready by January.

Mumbai, Nov. 21: The National

Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) will offer its own depository service, discontinuing the services of the National Securities Depository and Central Depository Services for holding commodities in demat form.

The exchange has developed its own software Comtrack to provide the service at a 60-70 per cent lower cost. It should be ready by January.

The move comes after the capital market regulator SEBI directed the two depository service providers to keep away from dealing with commodities post the Rs 5,600-crore National Spot Exchange Ltd scam.

The two depositories were issuing demat credits to investors based on the assurance given by warehouse service providers on physical stocks stored with them. The beleaguered NSEL had used the services of NSDL and CDSL for its e-series contract on metals. The settlement of e-series contract is now stuck and is being done under the supervision of the Bombay High Court. SEBI wanted to ring-fence the two depositories from the possibility of being caught in a similar scam.

Modus operandi

Comtrack was developed by a NCDEX in-house team and has 1,300 accounts. Demat credits have been issued to over three lakh tonnes of commodities deposited at its accredited warehouses. Sellers who deposit goods at the warehouses will be provided with a login id and password to keep track of the quality and quantity of goods any time.

Depending on the commodity, it will take less than five days for a seller to get the demat credit after depositing the goods in the warehouse.

Sellers using multiple warehouse service providers will be given separate login id for each warehouse to check their holdings.

Cost cuts

Investors have to now pay a deposit of Rs 500 to open an account against Rs 22,000 to Rs 25,000 they paid earlier. The cost of getting demat credit against goods deposited in the warehouse has been reduced to Rs 50 against Rs 310. Asset management charges have been reduced to Rs 500 a year against Rs 600-700 charged before.

Interestingly, the International Securities Identification Number for commodities in both futures and spot exchanges has been integrated. It may enable the exchange to provide both futures and spot trading on a single platform.

Ravindra Menon, Vice-President, NCDEX, said that the exchange is in the process of tying up with banks and NBFCs (non-banking finance companies) to arrange funds for farmers against the demat credit in their account.

“We will provide a login id for the banks with rights to track the pledged commodity in the warehouse anytime of day. Since the lot size of commodities traded on the spot and futures exchange are same they can sell it in the spot market in case of default,” he said.

Asked whether the regulator is comfortable with the exchange operating Comtrack by itself, Menon said that the thought process of spinning it off into a separate entity is under consideration and it would be taken up at an appropriate time.

Panel to study impact of fruit rot disease on areca

Mangalore, Nov. 21: A committee set up by the Arecanut Research and Development Foundation will study the impact of fruit rot disease in arecanut plantations.

A committee under the chairmanship of G.V. Joshi, Professor at the Nitte-based Justice K.S. Hegde Institute of Management, has been set up by the foundation to revise the cost of production of the commodity.

Joshi told *Business Line* that though the committee would primarily look at revising the cost of arecanut production, it would also focus on other areas such as the impact of fruit rot disease in plantations on growers.

The recent monsoon had brought misery to arecanut growers as the plantations suffered crop losses due to fruit rot disease, he said.

Though the Karnataka Government had estimated the crop loss at Rs 750 crore, the Centre released a compensation of around Rs 135 crore to growers.

This amount did not even touch the fringe of the problem, he said.

Ramesh Kaintaje, member of the committee and a grower, said that an arecanut tree produces around 350-400 nuts on an average. However, the spread of fruit rot disease in arecanut plantations during the monsoon season had led to around 70-80 per cent crop loss.

Giving an example of the loss, he said: “If 300 nuts were lost from one tree as a result of the fruit rot disease, the grower got compensation for the value of only 8-10 nuts. Added to this, only those who applied for the compensation got this benefit. Considering the bottlenecks in getting compensation, many growers did not even approach the Government for the package,” he said.

In view of this, the committee has decided to focus on the impact of diseases on the crop and the steps needed to tackle them, Joshi said.

It may be mentioned here that the committee constituted by the foundation had come out with a report on the production cost of arecanut in 2010.

Then, it had fixed the production cost of white arecanut at Rs 114 a kg and red arecanut at Rs 148 a kg.

Lack of buyers saps spot rubber

Kottayam, Nov.21: Absence of enquiries from major consuming industries and another weak closing in the domestic futures market kept spot rubber under pressure on Thursday. Selling pressure on dealers and growers was visible from dealers and growers, who fear further decline in prices.

The trend was partially mixed.

Sheet rubber was quoted weak at Rs 155 (156) a kg by traders. The grade dropped to Rs 156 (Rs 156.50) and Rs 153 (Rs 153.50) respectively, according to the Rubber Board and dealers. December futures dropped to Rs 156 (Rs 156.68), January to Rs 157.72 (Rs 158.55), February to Rs 159.80 (Rs 161.08) and March to Rs 161 (Rs 162.43) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) improved marginally to Rs 155.73 (Rs 155.31) at Bangkok. November futures closed at ₹248.5 (Rs 154.97) from ₹249 on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 155 (156); RSS-5: 146 (147); Ungraded: 143 (144); ISNR 20: 148 (149) and Latex 60%: 106 (106).

Cyclone Helen changes course, spooks weathermen

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 21: Severe cyclone Helen prowled the waters on a day when it kept changing its bearing over the west-central Bay of Bengal.

It gave nothing away with regard to location and track on Thursday, shifting both at will, and spooked weathermen on the watch.

LANDFALL LOCATION

The storm has delayed landfall by at least 24 hours and changed location lately to Machilipatnam in Andhra Pradesh. The crossover is expected into Friday evening only.

Meanwhile, the US Joint Typhoon Warning Centre said that Helen may remain over water for the next 24 hours and gradually start weakening.

This is attributed to decreasing ocean heat content and increasing vertical wind shear. The cyclone needs warm waters to sustain the process of convection (cloud-building).

Vertical wind shear refers to sudden change in wind speed and direction with height due to external factors.

The storm tower rises 10-12 km in height and enhanced wind shear 'shears off' the top the storm, affecting its build and compromising its strength.

SUCCESSOR STORM

The agency did not rule out the possibility of rapid weakening in which case the storm will track more southwest than west.

Close on the heels of Helen, the Andhra Pradesh coast is threatened with the prospect of another likely cyclone early next week.

India Met Department has already said that a causative 'low' will form over the boiling cauldron of south-east Bay of Bengal around the time when Helen hits the coast. It will

rapidly deepen into a depression, the Met Department said in its update on Thursday evening.

US Fleet Numerical Meteorology and Oceanography Centre sees another destructive cyclone in the making and barrelling towards Andhra Pradesh coast by Tuesday.

LANDFALL AREA

The area of landfall is projected to be the same one as Helen will hurtle into on Friday, according the US agency.

Meanwhile, the Met Department said Helen will have brought heavy to very heavy rainfall with isolated extremely heavy falls over north coastal Andhra Pradesh on Thursday.

On Friday, heavy to very heavy rainfall with isolated extremely heavy falls is forecast over north coastal Andhra Pradesh.

Isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall would break out over south coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema and Telangana.

Gale winds reaching 100-110 km/hr and gusting to 120 km/hr would prevail along and off remaining parts of Andhra Pradesh coast. Sea conditions would be very high.

Volatility keeps traders away from rice



Karnal, Nov. 21: The rice market ruled steady with prices of aromatic and non-basmati varieties ruling unchanged on Thursday.

Due to restricted trading, prices have been ruling almost unchanged since Tuesday, said market sources.

Tara Chand Sharma, Proprietor of Tara Chand and Sons, told *Business Line* that lack of trading at all levels kept aromatic and non-basmati prices unchanged.

Traders have adopted a wait-and-watch policy following a volatile trend in the market of late, said Tara Chand Sharma.

According to trade experts, the market may witness only need-based buying

with marginal fluctuation in prices in the coming days.

A fall in paddy prices is also a reason behind the softness in aromatic rice prices, said experts. In the physical market, Pusa 1121 and Sharbati varieties remained unchanged. Pusa-1121 (steam) sold at Rs 9,100 a quintal, while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted at Rs 8,000 a quintal.

Pure Basmati (raw) quoted at Rs 12,700 a quintal. Duplicate basmati (steam) sold at Rs 7,500 a quintal.

In the non-basmati section, Sharbati (steam) sold at Rs 5,500, while Sharbati (sela) quoted at Rs 5,200 a quintal.

Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,350-2,400 a quintal, while Permal (sela) was at Rs 2,400 a quintal. PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 3,300 while PR-11 (Raw) quoted at Rs 3,000-3,100 a quintal. PR14 (steam) sold at Rs 3,400 a quintal.

Paddy arrivals

About 20,000 bags of PR paddy arrived and quoted at Rs 1,310 a quintal, around 30,000 bags of Pusa-1121 arrived and sold at Rs 3,700-3,950 a quintal, while 10 thousand bags of Sharbati arrived and sold at Rs 2,300 a quintal.

Around 5,000 bags of duplicate Basmati arrived and went for Rs 3,800 a quintal, while 1,000 bags of pure Basmati sold at Rs 5,700-5,900 a quintal.

Higher output prospect drags jeera futures



Rajkot, Nov. 21: Jeera future decreased on lower enquiries for export in the spot market and profit booking by participants in the futures market. Prices in the spot market traded flat despite good domestic and exporters buying. On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera December contracts declined by Rs 65 to Rs 12,710 a quintal with an open interest of 7,986 lots. NCDEX jeera March contracts decreased by Rs 47.50 to Rs 13,305 a quintal with an open interest of 2,205 lots.

Traders said that hopes of a higher production of the rabi crop in view of increase in its acreage could drag its demand. Favourable weather conditions, too, are aiding higher planting of jeera this year.

However, market sources say that the area under jeera could drop this year as some farmers are expected to diversify to other crops such as pulses.

Sowing of jeera has gathered pace in Gujarat and a clear picture will be available in a week or two.

On the other hand, spot price ruled steady at Rs 2,220-2,450 for a maund of 20 kg in Rajkot. It traded at Rs 2,350-2,600/maund in Unjha. In Unjha mandi, 10,000 bags arrived and demand was 12,500.

Total carryover stocks are currently estimated at 7 lakh bags against 10 bags last year.

Turmeric gains colour on quality arrivals



Erode, Nov. 21: With prices increasing in other parts of the country, turmeric prices gained in Erode markets on Thursday on arrivals of quality produce. Sales also increased as a result. “Though prices in the futures market decreased by three per cent, spot prices were almost stable. But rates in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Assam increased by Rs 1,000 a quintal. As prices were up by Rs 300-500 a quintal, growers brought 5,500 bags to the market,” said

R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

North India Orders

Traders and exporters have received reasonable orders from North India, he said. The current price trend may prevail for another few days.

The price of hybrid finger variety improved by Rs 220 a quintal to Rs 7,309 a quintal.

It is after a long time that prices of the hybrid variety have topped Rs 7,000 a quintal.

Whatever quality hybrid variety arrived in the market was picked up by buyers.

Prices of other varieties ruled almost stable at Rs 6,300 a quintal.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,209- 6,514 a quintal, the root variety Rs 4,100-5,569.

Salem Hybrid: The finger variety was sold at Rs 6,000-7,309, root variety Rs 5,009-5,894.

Of the 1,106 bags that arrived, only 398 bags were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 5,490-6,316, the root variety Rs 4,590-5,569. Of the 1,579 bags on offer, 1,435 were picked up.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing society, the finger variety fetched Rs 5,171-6,510. The root variety fetched Rs 4,679-5,630. All the 841 bags were traded.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 5,217-6,269, the root variety Rs 4,498-5,190. All the 112 bags were sold.

Mustard may rise on winter demand

Indore, Nov. 21: Mustard oil prices increased in mandis across Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan on Thursday, notwithstanding slack demand as the futures market rose.

On Thursday, mustard oil in Indore mandis quoted at Rs 710 (up Rs 4). Similarly, in Neemuch it quoted at Rs 702 (up Rs 2). .



However, compared with last week, mustard oil is ruling Rs 2 lower in Indore. In Rajasthan mandis, mustard oil ruled higher with prices in Kota and Ganga Nagar ruling at Rs 720 each (up Rs 5), while in Jaipur it quoted at Rs 730 (Rs 5). In comparison, weak arrivals lifted plant deliveries of mustard for Jaipur line on Thursday to Rs 3,855-60 a quintal (Rs 3,815-35 a quintal last week). Mustard ruled firm at Rs 4,900-5,100 a quintal (down Rs 100 from last week), while raída ruled at Rs 3,300-3,350 a quintal (down Rs 50 from last week). In the futures market, mustard traded higher on improved buying support with December and January contracts on the NCDEX closing at Rs 3,822 a quintal (up Rs 39) and Rs 3,899 (up Rs 39) respectively.

According to a trader, mustard is likely to

rule flat in the physical market for a few days but with demand expected to rise due to winter, it may gain further.

This year, mustard plantings may rise due to favourable climatic conditions and soil moisture.

Arrivals across mandis in the country on Thursday were one lakh bags (1.5 lakh bags last week) with Rajasthan topping at 55,000 bags, followed by Uttar Pradesh (15,000), Punjab/Haryana (10,000), Madhya Pradesh (8,000) and Gujarat (5,000). Some 7,000 bags were offloaded elsewhere in the country.

No material to offer, say pepper dealers

Kochi, Nov. 21: Pepper futures continued their uptrend on Thursday while spot prices ruled steady on limited activities. There were no sellers. Primary market dealers said that there was no material to offer.

Markets in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Chhattisgarh were under the grip of election fever and consequently, buying activities from these States have slowed, market sources told *Business Line*.



On the spot, only two tonnes of farm-grade pepper arrived and the offtake was 3 tonnes. On the NMCE, December and January contracts increased by Rs 378 and Rs 172 respectively to Rs 52,780 and Rs 52,700 a quintal. The turnover dropped by 3 tonnes to 7 tonnes, while net open position declined to four tonnes.

On IPSTA platform, December and January contracts went up by Rs 264 and Rs 400 respectively to Rs 52,534 and Rs 52,628.

Spot prices stayed unchanged at the previous level of Rs 50,000 (ungarbled) and 52,000 (garbled) on limited activities.

Prices for exports declined to \$8,800 a tonne (c&f) for Europe and \$9,100 a tonne (c&f) for the US but Indian pepper is out-priced in the global market. All the other origins except Brazil were reportedly ruling firm but much below the Indian parity.
