

Farmers vent their ire at Ministers

BELGAUM, November 26, 2013 - Three Ministers were at the receiving end at a rally of farmers organised under the banner of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene in front of the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha here on Monday, because of the State government's lukewarm response to their main demand of announcing a fresh sugarcane price under the SAP Act.

Minister for Sugar Prakash B. Hukkeri, Cooperation Minister H.S. Mahadev Prasad and Minister of State for Agriculture Krishna Byre Gowda had to leave the rally venue as angry farmers kicked their cars and abused them for allegedly taking their struggle lightly and not making any concrete announcement on their demands.

Mr. Hukkeri, who arrived with the other Ministers towards the end of the day, left the venue after a two-minute address.

He said that the Chief Minister would write to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on a higher price for sugarcane. The farmers were upset that the Minister chose to address the large gathering from where he was seated instead of walking up to the microphone that had been installed.

Mr. Mahadev Prasad promised that the government would ensure that sugar mills paid Rs. 2,500 for a tonne of sugarcane to the growers.

But farmers' leaders who were apparently unhappy over the government's response said their struggle would continue.

110 farmers detained for staging demonstration

CUDDALORE, November 26, 2013 - About 110 farmers who staged a demonstration in front of the Kumaratchi agricultural extension centre, demanding disbursement of proper crop insurance, were secured by the police on Monday.

After detaining them in a marriage hall there, they were all set free towards evening.

According to P. Vinayagamoorthy, president of the Kollidam — Keelanai Paasana Vivasayigal Sangam, that owing to improper assessment of crop losses in the previous drought season many farmers in the Kumaratchi region could not get crop insurance.

For want of compensation the farmers were put to great hardships and he blamed the officials for such a situation.

Farmers' grievances day meet

KARUR, November 26, 2013 - The monthly farmers' grievances day meet for the current month will be held at 10.30 a.m. at the collectorate here on Friday. Issues pertaining to farming and farmers only will be taken up for discussion at the meet, according to a press release issued here by District Collector S. Jayandhi.

Mega market for farmers proposed at Kodikulam

MADURAI, November 26, 2013 - *Proposal submitted for acquisition of 20 acres*

A proposal has been made for an all-new mega market for farmers at Kodikulam on Alagarkoil Road here.

The market will have a host of facilities and will cater to farmers from Madurai and the surrounding districts who want to sell their produce in a market with wide reach.

"A proposal has been submitted for acquisition of 20 acres of land at Kodikulam and we are expecting the G.O soon for this project," J. Thavasumuthu, secretary of the Madurai Market Committee, told *The Hindu* on Monday.

The proposed market will accommodate wholesale and retail shops that can be put up by the farmers for their produce. The facilities planned include a cold storage unit, adequate space for vehicular movement and post harvest trading facilities.

"This market will serve as a hub for the sale of produce from all the major southern districts," said Mr. Thavasumuthu while addressing the concerns of a group of coconut farmers from Usilampatti who wanted to sell their produce in the city.

The uzhar sandhai or farmer's market at Usilampatti which can accommodate as many as 70 shops sees only seven or eight farmers who bring in their produce daily.

"There are many shops near the bus stand which sell vegetables and most customers prefer to finish their shopping there instead of coming to the market even though it is not far away. This has deterred most farmers from bringing their produce here", said A. Tilakavathi, Administrative officer at the Usilampatti Farmer's Market.

The farmers too say that they haven't got much profit at the farmer's market and prefer to sell their produce at a larger market with more customers.

"We want to take our produce to Madurai since the place exposes us to more buyers and will fetch us better pricing. If market comes through, it will give us a good space to sell our produce" said V.R. Muthu, a coconut farmer from Usilampatti.

☐ ***It will benefit farmers from Madurai and surrounding districts***

☐ ***To accommodate wholesale and retail shops***

'Admit only farmers for grievance meet'

NAGERCOIL, November 26, 2013 - The Anandanar Main Canal Water Users' Association has urged the district administration to admit farmers and genuine representatives of various farmers' associations during the grievance redressal day meetings to be held on the third Friday of every month at the collectorate here.

It may be noted that during the recent grievance day meeting, Ponnulinga Iyan, a Communist Party of India-backed farmers' association representative, had disrupted the proceedings. Due to this, Collector S.Nagarajan had left the meeting hall and received petitions from the farmers in his chamber.

Later, the government employees had staged a demonstration and wanted the Collector to initiate action against Ponnulinga Iyan.

In this backdrop, president of Anandanar Main Canal Water Users' Association, S.Pazaniyapillai condemned the happenings during the grievance day meet and asked the district administration to restrict the entry of outsiders during the meetings.

Kumaraswamy promises to fight for the cause of farmers



Farmers protesting outside the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha in Belgaum on Monday. — PHOTO: D.B. PATIL

BELGAUM, November 26, 2013 - Leader of the Opposition H.D. Kumaraswamy demanded the government give sugarcane growers an incentive of Rs. 1,000 a tonne and announce a price of Rs. 3,000 a tonne of sugarcane.

Mr. Kumaraswamy, who was the first to

arrive at the venue of the farmers' rally organised by the Karnataka Rajya Raith Sangh and Hasiru Sene outside the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha here on Monday, wanted to know why the government could not announce Rs. 3,000 a tonne for sugarcane, when the Haryana government had announced Rs. 3,010 a tonne.

He observed that the State government was avoiding its responsibility of coming to the aid of farmers.

Bt Cotton

Drawing attention towards the losses faced by Bt Cotton growers, and the delay in opening procurement centres for paddy, he assured farmers he would "honestly" fight for their cause in the legislature.

Mr. Kumaraswamy, during whose term as Chief Minister of the JD(S)-BJP coalition government, construction under the Kalasa-Banduri Nala project was taken up, said the

Kasturi Rangan report should not come in the way of implementing the project, which was nearing completion.

The canal works were almost complete and the dam was to be constructed. He warned farmers' leaders against remaining divided, indirectly referring to the dharna organised separately by farmers' groups supporting K.S. Puttanaiah.

Influential

The former Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda, who arrived at the rally venue and extended his support, observed that sugar mills were highly influential and dictated terms to the government, irrespective of which party was in power.

He said he had prepared a case in favour of growers, which he would present on the floor of the legislature.

'New farm marketing policy anti-farmer'

GULBARGA, November 26, 2013 - The Karnataka Prantha Raitha Sangha (KPRS) has described the new Agricultural Marketing Policy released by the State government as another attempt at allowing corporate companies through the backdoor into agriculture. The sangha has urged the government to withdraw the new policy immediately in the interest of farmers. Members of the sangha, led by its State president Maruti Manpade, who is also the State secretariat member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), staged a demonstration outside the Deputy Commissioner's office here on Saturday and burnt copies of the new policy. Mr. Manpade said that the new policy was not only anti-farmer but also a tool to stifle the petty traders and those trading in the APMC yards. — Special Correspondent

Reject reports on Ghats: farmers' forum

KOZHIKODE, November 26, 2013 - The State Cabinet should reject the recommendations of the Madhav Gadgil and K. Kasturirangan committees on the conservation of Western Ghats, O.D. Thomas of the Malayora Karshaka Action Committee has said.

In a 15-point memorandum sent to the Chief Minister on Monday, the committee said many political parties and socio-cultural organisations had objected to the implementation of the recommendations.

The committee, reiterating its stance, said any unilateral decision by the authorities to implement the recommendations would turn the people against the government.

The recommendations amounted to violation of the constitutional right to life and property as a large number of people living in the Ghat areas would be affected. Their farming and other livelihood activities would be affected if the report was implemented, the memorandum said.

The 123 villages to be declared as ecologically sensitive areas were home to nearly 25 lakh people Mr. Thomas said in the memorandum.

Farmers' forum seeks public debate on report



Many concerns: AIKS State general secretary Sathyan Mokeri inaugurating a dharna against the K. Kasturirangan committee report in the capital city on Monday.— Photo: S. Gopakumar

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, November 26, 2013 - The All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) took out a march to the State Secretariat here on Monday seeking immediate revocation of the Central order

implementing the K. Kasturirangan Committee report and steps to allay farmers' fears.

Inaugurating the march, Sabha State general secretary Sathyan Mokeri said the notification had been issued without giving the farmers the opportunity to state their views on the report.

Farmers, he said, were not against steps to protect the Western Ghats, but their fears about the way the panel's recommendations would impact their livelihood should be taken into account before the Centre took any further step to implement the report. The Central and State governments should facilitate a detailed public debate on all related issues, he said.

The forum's other demands were an increase the import duty on rubber to 30 per cent; procurement of rubber at Rs.250 a kg; right for coconut growers to tap 'neera'; and raising the procurement price of paddy to Rs.25 a kg.

Farmers protest against Jaadoo seeds

A.KONDURU (KRISHNA DIST), November 26, 2013 - Farmers here took to the streets on Monday in protest against the sub-standard quality of Jaadoo variety of hybrid BT cotton seeds.

They complained that their crops had failed due to the poor quality of seeds marketed by a reputed Secunderabad-based company, but did not give it in writing to the officials concerned.

Joint Director of Agriculture Balu Naik said that the farmers were at loss to understand why their crops did not come to fruition while those of the same variety planted in nearby fields gave good yields.

However, their complaint would be looked into and found out whether the seeds were really not genuine or the fault lied elsewhere takes at least two weeks as testing the seed quality requires expertise of a high order and a lot of procedures have to be followed, he added.

They complained that their crops had failed due to the poor quality of seeds

Give ample space for farm-related issues in manifestoes: APRS

CPI holds roundtable on need to protect agriculture sector



Acharya NG Ranga Agricultural University (Lam Farm) Principal Scientist Edara Narayana speaking at the round table conference on 'Role of political parties and intellectuals in protecting agriculture sector in State', organised by CPI in Guntur on Monday.- Photo: T. Vijaya Kumar

GUNTUR, November 26, 2013 - The Andhra Pradesh Rythu Sangam (APRS) working president K. Ramakrishna has appealed to all political parties to include 'agricultural development' in the manifestoes of Assembly and Parliament elections to be held in 2014.

Addressing the roundtable conference on 'Need to Protect Agricultural Sector – Role of Political Parties and Intellectuals', organised by CPI in Guntur on Monday, Mr. Ramakrishna said that 82 per cent of the farmers were debt-ridden in Andhra Pradesh and added that the agricultural sector was in severe crisis in the country.

Dissatisfaction over Central team

District secretary Muppalla Nageswara Rao said the programme was a preparatory meeting for the three-day 'Jatiya Rythu Sammelanam' (National Farmers Meet) to be held during December 18-20 here. Mr. Ramakrishna, who is also CPI State Secretariat Member, expressed dissatisfaction over the recent tour of the Central team, which spent just a few hours with farmers and in fields devastated by 'Phailin' cyclone and the heavy rainfall.

"To save the agricultural sector and the agrarian community, all political parties should focus on agriculture, which is the prime sector, in election manifestoes and save ryots. This is the only way to protect farming and increase agricultural production," Mr. Ramakrishna said.

Main occupation

Acharya NG Ranga Agricultural University (Lam Farm) Principal Scientist Eedara Narayana said that political leaders should have knowledge on agriculture, which was the main occupation in India. Government should focus on R&D and encourage public and private partnership to give a boost to agriculture.

MLC K.S. Lakshmana Rao stressed the need to increase input subsidy, crop loans, Minimum Support Price (MSP), insurance coverage, construction of more godowns, improve marketing facilities and decrease import tax on farm equipment to help farmers in the State.

Enlighten ryots

Agricultural University, Bapatla, Board Member, K. Nagabushanam said the government should take steps to enlighten farmers on latest farming techniques, new varieties of crops and agriculture machinery, to be used in different soils. TDP MLA Nakka Anand Babu said the government should take measures to implement M.S. Swaminathan and Prof. Jayati Ghosh Committees' recommendations to protect tenant farmers. A.P. Rythu Sangam district secretary N. Guravaiah presided over the programme, Sangam Guntur district president Bhavana Srinivasa Rao, model farmers, scientists, retired agriculture officers, leaders of various political parties were present.

Shortage of harvesters adds to woes of farmers



With the demand for harvesters rising the owners have increased the rentals, in Nizamabad district.—Photo: K.V. RAMANA.

NIZAMABAD, November 26, 2013 - Farming community in the district is in a quandary in the current kharif due to non-availability of harvesters leading to delay in cutting crop. Noticing the demand for harvesters the machine owners doubled the rentals of the machine adding to the woes of the

farmers.

Paddy harvesting was already delayed by 15 to 20 days because of late transplantation and also incessant rains. Another major reason is the non-availability of harvesters in the district as several of them have gone to the neighbouring districts for higher tariff rates. Normally, farmers used to pay a rent of Rs.1,500 per acre for crop cutting, but suddenly it rose by 100 per cent and the farmers are now forced to pay to Rs.3,000.

"I am worried as I am still searching for harvesters to cut my crop. It is already delayed by 15 days. Even if I am prepared to offer double the price I am unable to find the machines," said Manthani Sampath Reddy of Nyalkal village in Nizamabad mandal. Besides, cyclones were threatening the farming community, he said.

His counterpart Uppalwai Narayana said as of now he was able to find a couple of machines moving in the district as most of them were engaged for higher rent by farmers of Jagityal, Korutla and other places. Farmers of neighbouring districts were supposed to have

transplanted the crop a few days before, he said adding that the crop would have gone to market by this time had the machines were available.

Joint Director, Agriculture, K. Narsimha said as per the information available to the department the paddy cutting was almost complete. It might remain hardly in 10 per cent of the total crop sown area. In the current season paddy was transplanted in over 1.50 lakh hectares which was 29 per cent above the normal sown area, he said.

Another farmer Bagarathi Baga Reddy said that farmers faced troubles this year with the crop cutting rates being high and absence of profitable price in the market.

Farmers at receiving end for last 4 years

VIJAYAWADA, November 26, 2013 - *Farmers of Krishna, Godavari districts and Guntur have been at the receiving end*

In May 2010 it was Laila, followed by Jal in November that year, in November 2012 it was Nilam, in October it was Phailin and followed by Helen in November and in all these cyclones farmers of Krishna, Guntur, Nellore, East and West Godavari districts were the worst affected. Every year since 2010, the State was affected by at least one major cyclone, except for 2011-12. During that year the farmers of West and East Godavari, Krishna and Guntur, had, however, announced a crop holiday. So going by the statistics the farmers of Krishna, Godavari districts and Guntur had been at the receiving end for last four years, said Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Member M. V. S. Nagireddy.

While Laila destroyed 26,685 hectares of standing crop, JAL had affected 4.8 lakh hectares, Nilam damaged 7.2 hectares, Phailin affected 3.24 lakh hectares and Helen had flattened 3.5 lakh hectares of standing crop. Most of the cyclones have hit the coast during the month of November, the prime period of harvest for the Kharif season, said Mr. Nagi Reddy.

“This year the crop was very good, be it chillies, cotton, vegetables or paddy. We expected a good harvest and dreamt of clearing our earlier losses caused by Nilam and Laila. But our dreams were first washed away by Phailin in October and then devastated with Helen,” said Bhavanam Jayarami Reddy an award winning farmer from Peda Kurapadu mandal in Guntur district. While Phailin destroyed chilly, cotton and vegetable crops, Helen flattened standing paddy. “At least 30 to 50 per cent of the paddy is flattened,” he said.

Bandaru Srinivasa Rao another award winning farmer from Pamarru in Krishna district said that he lost about 50 per cent of his paddy crop. “On what is to be done?”

Mr. Nagi Reddy pointed out that there was only one way out. “The agro-based research institutes should develop crop with more dormancy period. We need to move from high yielding variety to high resistance variety, as we do not have any control over natural calamities, and this will be recurring more frequently due to the global climate change,” said Mr. Nagi Reddy.

☞ ***While Phailin destroyed chilli, cotton and vegetable crops, Helen flattened standing paddy***

☞ ***We need to move from high yielding variety to high resistance variety, says farmer***

Now, get instant information on managing crops



e-SAP hopes to empower farmers through instant transfer of information

Innovation: A postgraduate student of the University of Agriculture Sciences, Raichur, explaining the working of the e-SAP technology through a tablet in Gulbarga. — Photo: Arun Kulkarni

GULBARGA, November 26, 2013 :
Solutions to day to day problems faced

by farmers ranging from pest and virus attack, lack of vegetative growth, and any other issues, has become a reality with e-SAP, a novel information technology using the latest communication facilities for crop protection.

Scientists working in the University of Agriculture Sciences, Raichur, headed by principal investigator A. Prabhuraj, have successfully tested the technology both at the laboratory and in farms in different districts. The e-SAP works through a tablet using GPRS/3G or Wi-Fi for sending and receiving data.

“This would be a real boon to farmers,” remarked the Vice-Chancellor of the UAS, Raichur, B.V. Patil and said farmers can now have answers to their problems at their finger tips. Farmers can convey problems either through text message or voice mail to the central server in UAS, Raichur, where scientists would assess the problem and provide solutions within minutes.

Prof. Patil said initially the tablet would be provided to agriculture extension officers working in the Agriculture Department, Krishi Vigyan Kendras and Agriculture Research Stations and later the tablets would be supplied to individual farmers at a subsidised cost. He said the e-SAP technology has been developed in collaboration with the Bangalore-based Tene Agriculture Solutions Pvt. Ltd. The company developed the e-SAP platform and customised the tablets as per the requirement of the University. The three main components of e-SAP are the field device, containing the application and content with ability for multimedia data capture and with the facility to send and receive data. One of the features of the tablet is that it can be operated in farms irrespective of the availability of network.

Prof. Patil said the web-based application would enable retrieval and presentation of data generated from the tablet. The e-SAP targeted one of the critical requirements of a crop cycle — Pest Management. As soon as pests attack, farmers can get in touch with scientists through the central server and get remedial solutions.

He said the tablet has been packed with basic information on the growth and development of at least 15 crops. The information included the periodical growth of the crop with visuals, both in static and video format, common pests attacking these crops and the measures to be taken to overcome these problems.

Prof. Patil said the e-SAP was also one of the fastest mediums for technology transfer from the laboratory to the field and to keep farmers posted on all the developments in agriculture. "The e-SAP has the potential to reshape information flow in the agriculture sector, enrich farmers, strengthen researchers and policy makers and pave the way for a strong agriculture economy."

☑ **Scientists at UAS, Raichur, have tested the technology both at the laboratory and field level**

☑ **Farmers to be provided tablets as part of the project**

78 per cent crop area covered in Haryana

CHANDIGARH, November 26, 2013 - As much as 25.23 lakh hectares in Haryana has so far been covered under winter crops against the targeted area of 32.37 lakh hectares for the current rabi season.

A spokesperson of the agriculture department said that the area so far covered this year is 77.94 per cent of the targeted area. During last year, 24.65 lakh hectares of area was covered, he added.

Area under paddy cultivation increases in Erode district

ERODE, November 26, 2013 - Thanks to release of water from the Bhavani Sagar Dam for irrigation during August this year, 27,430 hectares in the district are under paddy cultivation, official sources said.

Due to the drought condition last year, only 5,425 hectares were cultivated.

The availability of agricultural land for paddy cultivation in the district was 35,000 hectares.

Though there was manpower shortage, farmers managed with mechanised processes.

Harvest

The prospect for good harvest seems to be promising. So far, in the fields where the crop was harvested, the productivity was in the range of 8,300 kg per hectare.

Last year, the average yield was 7,492 kg per hectare, the sources said.

Paddy growers in Bellary see success in seed drill sowing



The method is quite popular in Bellary and Sirguppa taluks

Pride produce:Farmer Shivappa showing the paddy output of his field after adopting drill sowing rice cultivation in Bagwadi village in Bellary district to Joint Director of Agriculture K. Ramappa (extreme left).

BELLARY, November 26, 2013 - Paddy

growers in Bellary and Sirguppa taluks are gradually turning towards seed drill sowing instead of the conventional method of transplantation.

“We can save a lot on labour and pesticides and the requirement of water is less too. While the cost of cultivation is less by Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 8,000 an acre, the yield is on a par with the conventional method – around 35 bags to 40 bags of rice an acre,” Mr. Shivappa, a farmer in Bagwadi village of Sirguppa taluk, told *The Hindu*.

Seed drill sowing is new to the district, where 33 percent of the total cultivated area is irrigated by canals using water from the Tungabhadra reservoir.

Paddy is one of the khariff crops in Sirguppa, Bellary and Hospet taluks and a rabi crop in Sirguppa and Hospet taluks. The new system was taken up on an experimental basis three years ago and it started gaining popularity gradually after farmers understood its advantages.

The method is being adopted in the tail-end of the command areas, which have not been getting water regularly.

“As we sow seeds directly, the cost of land preparation is minimum compared to transplantation, where we had to use the puddler twice and then level the land. The cost for transplantation can also be saved and the non-availability of labour too is not bothering us.”

“Water stagnation on the field was a must for the transplantation method, while wetting once in a fortnight will suffice for seed drill sowing. Instances of pest diseases such as bacterial blight and brown plant hoppers are also less because of the better aeration in between rows,” Mr. Shivappa, who adopted the method on an experimental basis on a one-acre land, said. “I will extend it to my 15-acre land soon,” he added.

Ramappa, Joint Director of Agriculture, said seeds were sown using the new method on 300 acres in Sirguppa and Bellary taluks. “This method helps conserve water and protects fertility of the soil. There have been few instances of pest attacks and use of pesticides can also be reduced. In conventional method, the pesticides pollute the ground water because of water stagnation,” he said.

The Department of Agriculture, the University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur and its agriculture research stations have been trying to popularise the method through demonstrations. “We are persuading farmers in the upper reaches of the command area to

adopt the method to prevent excessive use of water and pesticides to protect the fertility of the soil,” Mr. Ramappa added.

Lack of awareness makes ryots victims of greedy seed sellers

WARANGAL, November 26, 2013 - Lack of awareness among the farmers is making them vulnerable to being exploited by the seed sellers, District Agriculture Technology & Transfer Centre (DATT) coordinator R Uma Reddy has said.

‘Processing, a myth’

Paddy farmers sell their produce in a range between Rs.1, 000 to Rs.1,100 per quintal to the seller who sell the same seed again to the ryots as planting material at exorbitant prices of Rs.900 per 30 kg. “The seed sellers purchase the paddy from farmers, process it and sell the same to the latter again farmers at exorbitant prices, cashing in the lack of awareness among the ryots.

In the name of processing, the sellers just select a good portion of the produce, pack it and sell it,” explained Mr. Uma Reddy.

Paddy is grown in nearly four lakh acres in the district and about 70 per cent of the farmers buy seed for sowing every cropping season. However, the experts say paddy, being a self-pollinated crop, retain its good characteristics for decades. “The farmers can save a portion of their produce and use the same as seed next season. They do not really need to buy planting material from the sellers at higher prices. Moreover, a farmer needs only eight kg of seed per acre, but they sow 30 kg per acre due to lack of awareness,” Mr. Uma Reddy pointed out.

Meanwhile, seed traders in the district have found a new to dupe the gullible farmers. Now, they are enticing the farmers stating that they sell seed of single seedling and a pack of 10 kg seed costs Rs. 600. And the farmers fall prey to the bait easily.

However, scientists explain that many farmers in the district grow fine grain variety which needs only eight kg per acre to sow as their test weight is very low. “Farmers need not buy 10 kg pack or 30 kg pack to raise paddy in an acre. Just eight kg per acre will do,” Mr. Uma Reddy said.

He further said that the ANGRAU would provide a free mini kit of 2 kg of seed of the to-be-released varieties to select 50 farmers in the district. “We have been organising field visits to educate the farmers about the superiority of the new variety over the existing ones,” he said.

The traders buy paddy seeds at lower price and sell the same to ryots again by charging exorbitantly in the next season

New distribution chain launched for vegetables



New initiative in addition to online vegetable purchasing platform

Vegetable vending cycle rickshaws -- 'Veggie Kart trolleys' lined up for inauguration in Bhubaneswar on Monday.— PHOTO: LINGARAJ PANDA

BHUBANESWAR, November 26, 2013 - In a bid to provide green and fresh

vegetables to people through a retail distribution chain, the State Agriculture Department in association with VeggieKart Marketing Pvt. Ltd, on Monday, launched the VeggieKart distribution system as well as an online vegetable purchasing platform.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik flagged off the innovative VeggieKart trolleys and launched an online portal in a ceremony at Jayadev Bhavan. Agriculture Minister Debi Prasad Mishra and other dignitaries were present.

Symbiotic ties

The objective of this initiative was to develop a symbiotic relationship between consumers and farmers, wherein the consumers will get good quality vegetables and fruits and there would be an increase in the overall income of farmers. At the same time this shall completely eliminate the role of middlemen from the value chain.

Further, it also aims at organising the otherwise disorganised sector of vegetable selling by bringing in the sellers under the brand banner of Veggie Kart which in turn would help these sellers to increase their sales.

The Veggie Kart was the online vegetable purchasing platform wherein consumers can order vegetables online. The Veggie Wheel is the distribution retail chain which will engage the urban poor and unemployed youth for the distribution of vegetables.

Women vendors to sell organic veggies



OPC wants to start a method of 'sustainable marketing' of vegetables

Green Truly: Farmers nurturing Malabar spinach at an organic farm at Puttur in Dakshina Kannada. KIDS says it will set up shop in Puttur for organic farmers to sell vegetables.— Photo: H.S. Manjunath

MANGALORE, November 26, 2013 - An association of women vegetable vendors will start selling organic vegetables in Mangalore by the end of January, said Rita Noronha, Convenor, Organic Promoters Collective (OPC). Ms. Noronha said that the Tarkari Belagara Mathu Thale Hora Maratagarara Sahakari Sangha has come forward to start marketing the vegetables.

The Sangha has 400 members of whom 200 are active. They will be brought into the OPC's initiative of marketing organic vegetables, sourced from various growers across the state. At present, it is not clear what part of the sale price the association will take, she said.

The OPC wants to start a method of 'sustainable marketing' of vegetables following the response to its sale and exhibition last Thursday in the city. Since the sale, a vehicle with organic vegetables has been visiting several areas of the city to create awareness on organic products. The campaign will wind up on December 6.

Apoline Gomes, president, Tarkari Belagara Mathu Thale Hore Maratagarara Sahakari Sangha, said that 10 to 20 members of the sangha were now selling organic vegetables, which they grow themselves. Prices for selling organic produce were not remunerative at least in the first two years. "That is one reason why some of us step back," she said. However, the vendors were still willing to do it as it helps the soil regenerate.

Self-help groups

John Kunnithethu, Executive Director, Karnataka Integrated Development Society (KIDS), Puttur, which had sold organic vegetables at the sale last Thursday, said he was looking for space in Mangalore to set up a shop where he could sell organic vegetables grown by 60 farmer self-help groups (each with 10 to 20 members) in Puttur. He said transport would not pose a problem and any farmer with vegetables certified as organic could sell them at the shop.

Gayatri V., Editor of Sahaja Saguvali, a Kannada magazine on organic products, working in Institute for Cultural Research and Action (ICRA), said that her organisation had helped link farmer groups growing organic vegetables to the OPC. She said it stood a good chance of succeeding in Mangalore.

☑ ***A vehicle with organic vegetables has been visiting several areas of the city to create awareness on organic products***

☑ ***KIDS to set up shop to sell organic vegetables grown by 60 farmer self-help groups in Puttur***

Water levels

Water level in the **Periyar dam** was 117.10 feet with an inflow of 1,717 cusecs and a discharge of 467 cusecs on Monday. The level in the Vaigai dam was 44.95 feet with an inflow of 722 cusecs and a discharge of 60 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 2,957 mcft.

While Tekkady recorded 15.8 mm of rainfall, Gudalur and Sothuparai recorded 1.6 mm and 3 mm rainfall respectively during the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on Monday, PWD Officials said.

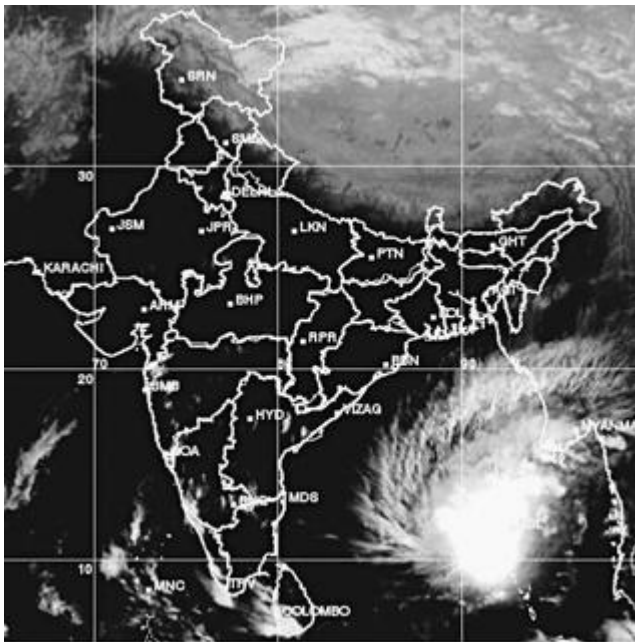
The water level in the **Mettur dam** stood at 84.12 feet on Monday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 9,602 cusecs and the discharge 5,000 cusecs.

Water level in the **Papanasam dam** on Monday stood at 96.15 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 647.01 cusecs and 603.50 cusecs of water is discharged from the dam.

The level of Manimuthar dam stood at 69.70 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 161 cusecs and 35 cusecs of water is discharged.

Kanyakumari - The water level in **Pechipparai dam** stood at 26.45 feet, 60.90 feet in Perunchani, 11.58 feet in Chittar I, 11.68 feet in Chittar II, 4.20 feet in Poigai dam, 44.29 feet in Mambazhathuraiyaru dam and 18 feet in Mukkadal dam.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on November 25.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Anantapur	32	22	0	51
Arogyavaram	29	20	0	174
Bapatla	29	22	33	545
Calingapatnam	29	22	0	980
Gannavaram	30	22	0	512
Hanamkonda	31	19	0	291
Hyderabad AP	28	21	0	248
Kakinada	31	22	0	695
Khammam	32	18	0	100
Kavali	30	23	1	545
Kurnool	32	22	2	98

Mahabubnagar	29	21	0	163
Machilipatnam	30	23	0	477
Nandyal	33	22	4	77
Narasapur	32	23	0	646
Nellore	32	25	0	439
Nizamabad	29	20	0	118
Ongole	29	23	3	516
Ramagundam	30	20	0	201
Tirupathi AP	31	23	35	369
Tuni	32	22	0	512
Vizag AP	30	22	0	713
Vizag	31	21	0	695

KARNATAKA

Agumbe	25	18	0	600
Bengaluru AP	28	19	tr	149
Bengaluru	28	20	1	241
Belgaum AP	31	18	0	60
Bellary	32	20	0	63
Bijapur	31	18	0	113
Chitradurga	30	19	0	55
Chickmagalur	26	17	0	57
Chintamani	27	20	0	64
Gadag	30	20	0	88
Gulbarga	31	21	1	37
Hassan	29	17	0	114
Honavar	33	23	0	261
Karwar	34	24	0	167
Madikeri	22	16	0	195
Mangalore AP	29	23	tr	305
Mysore	29	21	0	181
Mandya	28	21	tr	172
Panambur	30	24	0	235
Raichur	31	21	0	102
Shirali	32	23	0	414

KERALA

Alappuzha	29	24	tr	306
Kannur	30	23	12	333
Kochi AP	31	23	tr	494
Kottayam	32	24	0	493
Kozhikode	30	24	19	300
Punalur	31	22	1	629
Thiruvanantha				
-puram AP	31	24	2	363
Thiruvanantha				
-puram City	32	23	17	426
Vellanikkara	32	24	1	450

TAMIL NADU

Adiramapattinam	25	23	7	141
Chennai	31	25	5	351
Chennai AP	30	24	1	405
Coimbatore AP	31	23	0	135
Coonoor	20	13	10	479
Cuddalore	27	23	7	305
Dharmapuri	30	21	1	263
Kanyakumari	31	24	4	267
Karaikal	27	24	16	340
Kodaikanal	17	11	0	229
Madurai AP	33	23	0	215
Nagapattinam	25	23	33	307
Palayamkottai	31	24	3	285
Pamban	30	25	51	246
Parangipettai	26	24	53	517
Puducherry	27	24	2	312
Salem	31	20	2	209
Thanjavur	26	25	6	197
Tiruchi AP	28	22	2	321
Tirupattur	27	21	4	178
Tiruttani	33	23	3	319
Tondi	25	23	15	282
Tuticorin	31	24	0	265
Ooty	20	11	1	250
Valparai	25	15	38	345
Vellore	29	23	3	102
LAKSHADWEEP				
Amini Divi	32	25	0	166
Minicoy	33	25	4	123
OTHER STATIONS				
Kolkata (Alipore)	29	17	0	523
Mumbai	32	24	6	73
New Delhi	27	14	0	73

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

ISOLATED RAIN IN A.P.

CHENNAI: Rainfall occurred at many places over Coastal Tamil Nadu and at a few places over Kerala.

Isolated rainfall occurred over Andhra Pradesh, Lakshadweep, Interior Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

The minimum temperature fell at one or two places over Telangana, interior Tamil Nadu, rose appreciably at one or two places over North Interior Karnataka, rose at one or two places over south Tamil Nadu, north coastal Andhra Pradesh, coastal and north interior Karnataka and changed little elsewhere over the region.

They were markedly to appreciably above normal at most places over Telangana, at one or two places over coastal Karnataka, Rayalaseema, south coastal Andhra Pradesh,

interior Tamil Nadu, above normal at most places over north interior Karnataka, at one or two places over Rayalaseema, interior Tamil Nadu, north coastal Andhra Pradesh.

Forecast (valid till Wednesday morning): Rain or thundershower would occur at many places over Kerala, south Tamil Nadu, and at a few places over Lakshadweep, coastal and south interior Karnataka.

Isolated rain or thundershower may occur over north Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh and north interior Karnataka.

hindustantimes

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Tuesday, Nov 26

Max Min

31° | 25°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 100

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:12

Sunset: 05:39

Barometer: 1010

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Nov 27

Max Min

32° | 24°

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday
Nov 28



32° | 24°

Partly Cloudy

Friday
Nov 29



29° | 22°

Partly Cloudy

Saturday
Nov 30



28° | 22°

Cloudy

Sunday
Dec 1



27° | 23°

Overcast

Monday
Dec 2



27° | 25°

Overcast

Retired weaver's terrace garden knits up vegetable supply for family

PUDUCHERRY: The [soaring vegetable prices](#) do not bother this [retired mill worker](#) in [Puducherry](#). T Thirugnanasambandam's [terrace garden](#) provides most of his family's daily vegetable requirement for the past six years. It helps him save money that he would have spent at the market.

The 66-year-old retired weaver of the government-run Anglo French Textiles (AFT) has more than 50 potted plants, mostly vegetables, in his 720 square feet terrace garden. The vegetables include tomatoes, brinjal, ladies finger, capsicum, broad beans, snake gourd, ridge gourd, bitter gourd and drumstick. Apart from vegetables, he has flowering plants like rose, jasmine, crossandra and hibiscus.

"The garden caters to more than 80% of our requirement of vegetables every day. We're planning to grow more plants to ensure that we need not buy vegetables from the market at all," Thirugnanasambandam said. The yield of vegetables varies through the year. "A tomato plant yields 10 fruits per day while a brinjal plant five or six per day during the season," he said.

The senior citizen spends roughly three hours everyday to maintain his garden, changing pots, watering plants and pruning them as and when required. His wife Thenmozhi, son Thyagarajan, a physical education teacher in a private school and daughter Subhashini help him maintain the garden. They prefer organic compost, which is also used very sparingly. "Our compost is mostly dry leaves," said Thyagarajan.

Thirugnanasambandam was passionate about agriculture and gardening since his childhood. His dream of joining the agriculture department as a field officer almost came true, but other circumstances forced him to become a weaver. "My interest towards garden grew post retirement as I had ample time and energy. I started focusing more on growing vegetables in the garden, but gradually, due to lack of space, shifted it to the terrace," he said.

Setting up a kitchen garden was not a costly affair as many might think, he said. "It is not money but a passion and interest that is required," he said.

From farms to fish, tribals come a long way

RANCHI: A state government initiative has swung around the fortunes of [tribals](#) steeped in poverty. The tribals, so long dependent on farming for a livelihood, are laughing their way to the bank, courtesy the endeavour of the state government, which has taken up an aggressive promotion of pisciculture.

Binod Brijia, a 30-year old tribal from Latehar district, started [pisciculture](#) a year ago with the money he received by selling his oxen. A matriculate, who received training from the fisheries department in November last year, now earns up to Rs 1.5 lakh a year by selling fish and its seeds.

Narrating his story, he said, "Prior to the training, I would depend solely on farming and work at construction sites for a living. I struggled to make both ends meet with a meager Rs 2000-Rs 3000 per month. Then some of my friends suggested that I attend the training session organized by the fisheries department in Ranchi. After receiving the training, I came back to my native place, sold off my oxen and took up pisciculture subsequently. Now I make anything between Rs 10,000-Rs 12,000 a month. My fortunes have changed and I intend to continue being in this profession."

Sushil Telra and Rajendra Brijia from the Red-hit Latehar district shared similar stories. Sushil, who is a Class IX dropout said, "I wanted to become a police officer, but my dream was shattered when I had to leave studies midway due to financial problems. I started working as a contractual laborer. But the money that I got from that was not sufficient to feed my family. Some matsya mitra (fisherman's friend) came to the village a year back and advised me to opt for fish farming. I received the training in November 2012 and now earn Rs 10,000- Rs 15,000 a month. This has changed my life." Both Sushil and Rajendra are doing fish farming in two ponds, which have been leased out for the same.

H N Dwivedi, fishery department's research and training centre's deputy director, credits the farmers for their newfound success.

Dwivedi said, "Their hard work and firm determination has today made them self-sufficient. It was our duty to provide them training, but they implemented the methods taught by us and are reaping its benefits. Our aim is to develop the state as a rich fish producing state."

Environment ministry backs Juhu runway's sea extension

MUMBAI: The [Juhu airport expansion project](#) is all set to get a major boost with the Union ministry of environment and forest (MoEF) on Monday expressing its "favourable" support to extend runway into the sea.

The approval of the MoEF is being sought by the civil aviation authorities to build the runway on the stilt. The decision over the runway, said a source, might also expedite the [state government](#) proposal to build a coastal road from Versova to Bandra.

At the meeting held on Monday, civil aviation authorities sought the state government's help to resettle slum dwellers and create an underpass on the roads adjacent to the Juhu airport to facilitate the runway's extension into the sea.

The coastline issue in Navi Mumbai that has created a hurdle for the urban development ahead of clearances to the airport and other projects was also discussed at the meeting. "This issue too may be settled favourably soon," a source said.

IIT fest to nurture agriculture interest in students

CHENNAI: [IIT-Madras](#) is making an attempt to get the youth excited about agriculture. Students of the institute are starting a campaign to see how technology can change farmers' lives and make agriculture more sustainable.

The institute will host a symposium on 'Reinventing the agricultural sector' as part of [Shaastra](#), their annual technical festival, from January 4 to 7, 2014. The initiative will try to get students thinking about agriculture and technology, the economics of agriculture and sustainability.

"We looked at various topics, and wanted to take up something that is most unexplored by students. There are not too many forums discussing this," said Vishnu G P, student coordinator of the event.

Participants are first selected based on their understanding of the issues faced by stakeholders in the sector. The selected students will then be taken on field trips and asked to engage in group discussions on what they see and experience during the field trips for three days. On the final day, they will be asked to propose solutions to real time issues. Entries with the most insight, giving workable solutions, will be awarded cash prizes of up to 70,000.

Asish Mondal, member of the National Advisory Council, and representatives of non-governmental organisations working with farmers, will give lectures on the challenges faced by farmers.

IIT-Madras is working on forging an arrangement with Villgro, a non-profit organisation that spots, mentors and incubates innovations that can help people in rural India, to convert the vision statements of winners into solutions.

Farmers demand better services from MSEDCL

AURANGABAD: Farmers from villages around Aurangabad have demanded that timely and proper services should be provided to consumers before bill payments to the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company (MSEDCL). The farmers have been complaining about irregular and fluctuating power supply.

The farmers were represented by Harshwardhan Jadhav, the MLA from Kannad. Jadhav spoke at the monthly meeting held between officials of the municipal corporation, the MSEDCL and GTL-Urja, a power distribution franchisee of the MSEDCL on Monday.

He said that farmers had to spend a lot of money for electricity through generators due to the irregular services by the power utility board. Jadhav said that the company should ensure efficient and prompt service to maintain uninterrupted power supply in rural areas.

"The transformers which were damaged due to excess load have not been repaired for over two months now. As per the norms, damaged transformers should be replaced by new ones within a span of 48 hours," he added.

Jadhav also said that even though the power bills have been paid by the farmers, the areas remain without electricity. "Farmers have to pay bills for usage of 24 hours of electricity, however, they are only privileged to receive power supply for four to six hours a day," he added.

"Voltage fluctuations and tripping of supply have become a regular feature in villages. Also farmers have been facing a burden of excess bills for the usage of water pumps. The committee appointed for spot verification is yet to produce its report," the MLA said.

Other issues of faulty meters and wrong bill readings were also highlighted at the meet. MSEDCL officials said that efforts are being made to resolve issues. tnn

Aurangabad: The farmers of the neighbouring villages of Aurangabad demanded to ensure timely and proper services to the consumers before demanding payment of bills to the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (MSEDCL). The farmers

complained about irregular and fluctuating power supply.

The farmers represented by Harshwardhan Jadhav, MLA, Kannad, said that they had to shell out money from their pockets to avail electricity through generators the reason being irregular services by the power utility.

He was speaking during the monthly meeting held between officials of MSEDCL, GTI-Urja, power distribution franchisee of GTL and Municipal Corporation officials on Monday.

Jadhav said that the company should ensure efficient and prompt services to maintain uninterrupted power supply in rural areas. "The transformers which have been damaged due to excess load have not been repaired for over two months now. As per the norms the transformers should be replaced by new ones within a span of 48 hours," he added.

Jadhav further said that though the bills have been paid by the farmers, still the areas remain in darkness. Also, he said that farmers have to pay bills for usage of 24 hours electricity, however, they are only privileged to receive power supply for four to six hours a day.

"Voltage fluctuations and tripping of supply have become a regular feature in villages. Also farmers have been facing a burden of excess bills for the usage of water pumps. The committee appointed for spot verification has not produced its report," Jadhav said.

Other issues of faulty meters and wrong bill readings were also highlighted during the meet.

The MSEDCL officials said that efforts are being done to resolve the issues.

SC order expected to trigger fresh wave of protests by farmers

COIMBATORE: The Madras High Court nod to Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) to proceed with initial alignment of their proposed natural gas pipeline from Kochi to Bangalore crisscrossing through 310km of agricultural land across seven districts of western [Tamil Nadu](#) is expected to trigger a fresh wave of protests among farmers in the region affected by this project. However, the Rs2,000cr venture to evacuate natural gas from the LNG terminal at Kochi and connect it to the [national grid](#) comes as a major relief for power starved industries in the western region.

"The total capacity of the project is 16 million cubic metres of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) out of which 8 million cubic metres could be utilised in the western region of Tamil Nadu itself on the completion of the project," said a senior GAIL official.

Meanwhile, the court order has already set the ball rolling with various representatives of farmers' outfits and political bodies urging the state government to challenge the Supreme

Court order. The high court had initially ordered the district administrations of Coimbatore, Erode, Tiurpur, Namakkal, Salem, Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri to convene meetings with farmers and hear out their grievances before moving ahead with the project.

"As far as the court order and the resentment among the farmers here is concerned, the message will be taken to the chief minister and appropriate actions will be taken," said S Damodaran, state agriculture minister.

[Communist Party](#) of India (Marxist) MP from Coimbatore PR Natarajan pointed out that the order should be immediately challenged in the apex court. GK Nagarajan, State General Secretary of Kongu Naadu Munnetra Kazhagam, claimed that the project would adversely affect 5 lakh farmers and there will be a series of protests if the pipeline project is allowed without any alternations. The farmers associations along with the state government had suggested that GAIL realign the project along National Highway 209 leading from Coimbatore to Bangalore

GAIL officials say that out of the total capacity of 16 million cubic metre per day at least 8 million cubic metres of natural gas could be utilised in Western Tamil Nadu itself. They also claimed that compared to diesel and petro chemicals LNG has less carbon content, making it more environment-friendly.

"The provisions in the Petroleum and Mineral Pipelines (PMP) Act of 1962 and the recent amendment in 2012 that the land owner would be responsible for any damage to the pipelines are among the main reasons that farmers are opposing the project," said GK Nagaraj of Kongu Nadu Munnetra Kazhagam. GAIL officials claimed that the fear of farmers was misplaced as the process for laying the pipeline was to take over 20 metres of identified land on which five to six metres would be utilised for digging the trench and laying the pipeline and the remaining 15 metres would be used for moving machinery required for carrying out the exercise.

"After the work is completed we will level the earth, fill up the top surface and hand it back to the farmer for cultivation. The only restriction is that he will not be able to construct permanent buildings, plant deep rooted trees and also dig the stretch for laying wells," said a senior official from GAIL involved in the project.

P Kanthasamy, General Secretary of State Farmers Association (non political) pointed out that they would go for a review petition before Madras high court and also approach the Supreme Court to ensure the decision to realign the project along the highway after holding farmers' meetings is implemented.

Paddy producer company reaps its first harvest

KOZHIKODE: Wayanad Agriculture & Spices Producer Company Private Limited (WASP), the state's first producer company formed to promote paddy cultivation, went into harvest mode on Monday by reaping their first crop.

The company formed by a group of traditional farmers and agriculture experts to reclaim the fallow lands of the district harvested the [indigenous](#) rice varieties like Gandhakasala, Paluthody, Adukkam, etc, which was cultivated in six acres.

The promoters said that the yield will be used to develop a seed bank of indigenous rice varieties by giving it for further seed multiplication to other farmers.

The cultivation was carried out in a totally organic manner.

The rest of the crop spread in another 14 acres will be harvested later.

[Managing director](#) of the company, K Narayanan, an agriculture scientist who had done his PhD in organic agriculture from Yamagata University in Japan, said that the yield was good and the whole endeavour of [WASP](#) was to spread out the message that paddy cultivation can still be taken up as a viable and sustainable agro-enterprise in the state.

He said the company plans to expand the cultivation to 200 acres the next season and is in the process of identifying fallow lands with the help of local bodies.

Efforts are also underway to integrate paddy cultivation in a farm to fork model by marketing the organic rice produced by the farmers.

The harvest was inaugurated by district panchayat vice-president A Devaki. Nabard deputy general manager, Saji Kumar, Panamaram grama panchayat president A Asmath and promoters of WASP attended the harvest.

This terrace garden provides 80% of family'S vegetable requirement

PUDUCHERRY: The soaring prices of vegetables did not bother the retired mill worker in the Union territory of [Puducherry](#) as a [vegetable](#) garden he has set up on the terrace of his house has been providing more than 80% of his family's daily vegetable requirement for the past six years.

T Thirugnanasambandam, 66, who retired as a weaver from the government-run Anglo French Textiles (AFT), has a collection of over 50 potted plants, mostly vegetables, in his 720-square-foot [terrace garden](#). The vegetables include tomatoes, brinjal, ladies finger, capsicum, broad beans, snake gourd, ridge gourd, bitter gourd and drumstick, among others. Apart from vegetables, there are flowering plants like rose, jasmine, crossandra and Hibiscus rosa-sinensis.

"The garden caters to more than 80% of our requirement of vegetables daily. We are planning to grow more plants to ensure that we need not buy vegetables from market in the days to come," Thirugnanasambandam said.

The yield of vegetables varies throughout the year. "A tomato plant yields 10 fruits per day while we get five or six brinjals from a plant per day during the season. The yield also varies with season, maintenance and care," he said.

The senior citizen spends roughly three hours everyday to maintain his garden, changing pots, watering plants and pruning the plants as and when required. His wife T Thenmozhi, son T Thyagarajan, who is a physical education teacher at a private school, and daughter T Subhashini help him maintain the garden.

The family is particular not to use chemical fertilizers. "We do not use any chemical fertilizers. We prefer [organic compost](#) and use it very sparingly. Our compost is mostly dry leaves," Thyagarajan said.

Thirugnanasambandam was passionate about agriculture, horticulture and garden since his childhood days. He was at the verge of realizing his dream of joining the agriculture department as a field officer but missed the opportunity and ended up as a weaver in AFT.

"My interest towards garden grew manifold post retirement as I had ample time and energy. I started focussing more on growing vegetables in the garden and slowly shifted the garden to the terrace due to lack of space. Later, I started growing flowering plants too," he said.

He said establishing a kitchen garden was not a costly affair as presumed by many. "It is not the question of money but one must have interest in it," he said.

Koyambedu traders fear loss during Pongal



If the Koyambedu market is converted into a bus stand for the State Transport Corporation buses again, businesses will be hit. (Express photo)

Traders at the Koyambedu Fruits and Vegetable Market fear a repeat scenario during Pongal — the market area being converted into a makeshift bus stand.

During Deepavali, the service roads were clogged as the transport authorities, in a bid to clear the festival rush, had parked State Transport Corporation buses at the market. This made it nearly impossible for the trucks carrying vegetables, fruits and flowers to enter. Traders fear that if a similar measure is put in place again during Pongal, it would be chaos. G S Balasubramanian, a retail trader said that they agreed to the market being converted into a bus stand for Deepavali only because they felt there would be less crowd during the festival.

“We felt people would consume more meat than vegetables for Deepavali,” he said. But Pongal is a different ball game. “During this festival, people consume only vegetables,” he said.

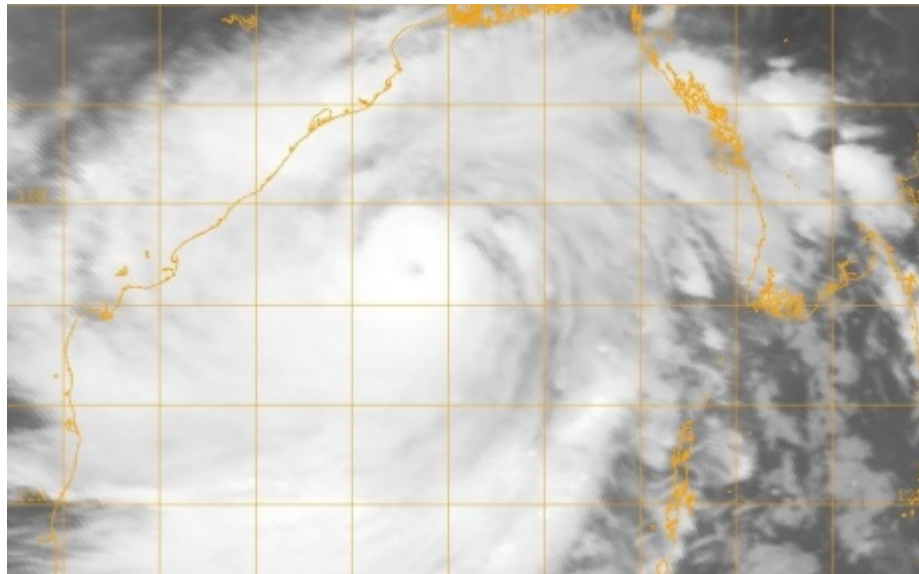
The market usually attracts huge crowds during Pongal. In addition, there would be innumerable number of trucks entering the market carrying sugarcane. “There would be more than 2,000 trucks arriving at the market on a single day. There will be thousands of smaller vehicles,” he added.

“If the key service roads are blocked by parked vehicles, the trucks will find it difficult to enter. Businesses worth crores will be affected,” said another trader who did not want to be named.

“The Transport Department should looking at an alternative site instead of choosing Koyambedu Market, which is a commercial area. They have two months for the festival,” added Balasubramaniam. “If the same traffic arrangement is followed during Pongal, the prices of vegetables will escalate,” said the trader. This year, the Marketing Management Committee is also planning to auction space for sale of sugarcanes.

“We are expecting nearly 1,000 trucks of sugarcane this season,” a source in the committee said. With Metro Rail work going on in one end and the State transport buses eating away the other, it looks like Koyambedu market will be cut off this Pongal.

Coastal AP braces for another Cyclonic lehar



This image, provided by the U.S. Naval Research Lab, shows Indian Cyclone Phailin over the Bay of Bengal Friday morning at 6:32 a.m. ET. (AP/File photo)

Just as the State is picking up the pieces after cyclone Helen left in its wake a trail of death and devastation, another cyclone christened Lehar is moving menacingly towards coastal Andhra. It is expected to be more fearsome than its predecessor and is likely to make landfall between Machilipatnam and Kalingapatnam on Nov 28.

According to the Met department, Lehar lay centred at about 230 km east-southeast of Port Blair on Sunday evening. It is expected to move west-northwestwards and cross Andaman and Nicobar Islands, near Port Blair Sunday night.

“While the impact of cyclonic storm Helen is wearing off after it weakened, the impact of another cyclonic storm Lehar will not be felt till another 48 hours. However, the State is expected to experience heavy rainfall from November 26,” duty officer at the Cyclone Warning Centre in Visakhapatnam told Express. The cyclonic storm is likely to intensify into a severe cyclonic storm on Nov 25 and very severe cyclonic storm the next day. The State government has put collectors of all coastal districts on high alert. As the sea will remain very rough, fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea this week.

Under Lehar's influence, rain or thundershowers will occur at many places over Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha and coastal and south interior Karnataka, the IMD said in its forecast for four days from Nov 28 to Dec 1.

Meanwhile, losses due to Helen were estimated to be around `1,628.66 crore. Disaster Management Commissioner C Parthasarathy said the maximum loss of `1,018 crore was suffered in East Godavari district.

Business Standard

UP millers, govt meet today to end cane pricing impasse



The deadlock between the [UP](#) government and [sugar](#) mills continued, after the mill owners refused to start crushing operations as they were unhappy with the state advisory price (SAP) of Rs 280 a quintal for sugar cane in 2013-14. Mill owners maintained they could not pay more than Rs 225 a quintal this year.

However, sources close to the state government said the impasse was likely to end on Tuesday, as another round of talks between Chief Minister [Akhilesh Yadav](#) and representatives of sugar mills are slated for Tuesday. The last meeting with the chief minister, however, remained inconclusive.

"Since the gridlock could not be broken (in the last meeting), another meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday," an official told Business Standard on conditions of anonymity.

On November 20, the state government had retained SAP of cane at Rs 280 a quintal for the current season, much to the disappointment of both the industry and farmers who had been demanding almost Rs 350 a quintal.

Those who met the CM included Kushagra Bajaj of Bajaj Hindusthan, Vivek Saraogi of Balrampur Chini, Ajit Shriram of DSCL, C S Nopany of Birla Group, Tarun Sawhney of Triveni, and Raj Kumar Adlakha of Uttam Sugar. Of the 123 total mills in UP, about 99 are run by private companies.

On November 11, Yadav had directed mills in western UP to start crushing by Monday (November 25) under "any circumstances", while rest of the mills were to start by month-end. Later on November 19 and 20, about 75 mills informed the government about suspension of crushing operations due to "unviable conditions".

Although the deadline for western UP mills expired on Monday, the government is unlikely

to act against them.

Meanwhile, a delegation of Bharatiya Kisan Union met Yadav, demanding clearance of dues amounting to Rs 2,400 crore and an increase in cane price for 2013-14.

Several cooperative mills have already started crushing and the chief minister launched the operation at Mohinuddinpur sugar mill in Meerut. The Sugar Corporation mill had not been functional for a long time and the government invested Rs 10 crore to revamp the unit, which has a capacity to crush 30,000 quintals of cane a day.

Kisan Jagriti Manch president Sudhir Panwar lamented “the delayed efforts” of the state government in resolving the problems of sugar industry. He said it had upset sugarcane farmers’ budgets.

“There is no possibility that mills will function in full capacity before December 10. Consequently, farmers will not be able to sow wheat crop, thereby causing a loss of Rs 45,000 a hectare, besides expenditure on idle labour and alternative fodder,” he said.

“The government is only concerned about the projected losses of sugar industry and not the real loss of farmers. This will surely affect cane acreage next year, as there is reduction of 50% in October cane planting,” Panwar said.

THE HINDU Business Line

Iran n-deal: Rice exporters likely to lose advantage



‘Thailand and Pakistan could be the two biggest beneficiaries of this deal’

Iran buyers bought more rice this year to liquidate their credit balance in India.

Chennai, Nov. 25: Indian rice exporters are likely to lose the advantage they have been enjoying for the last couple of years in the Iranian market after a landmark deal reached by Iran with global powers on its nuclear programme during the weekend.

“The monopoly we have been enjoying for quite sometime could end because of the nuclear

deal," said Vijay Setia, former president of All-India Rice Exporters' Association.

Early on Sunday, Iran and six world powers reached a deal under which Tehran will curb its nuclear programme.

This includes diluting enrichment of uranium to less than five per cent and halting further progress of the nuclear fuel enrichment plant and the Arak reactor in Iran.

Led by the US, world powers have been asking Iran to curb its nuclear programme and a standoff led to imposition of sanctions on it.

They were imposed rigorously since last year with Iran's banks, shipping and gas imports being targeted by the US and the European Union.

However, India won a waiver from the sanctions, agreeing to cut its oil imports slowly.

Along side, India and Iran entered into an agreement for a payment mechanism based on the rupee.

As an offshoot, Indian basmati exports gained along with other commodities such as soyameal and iron ore.

Iran buyers bought more rice this year to liquidate their credit balance in India that had increased to over \$8 billion last fiscal. "Till now, India was the only supplier of rice to Iran though other origins were cheaper and had plenty of stocks. India enjoyed because of the payment mechanism. Indian basmati rode on this. But with food being covered in the deal, Indian basmati will have to turn competitive," said R.S. Seshadri, Director of Tilda Riceland.

The agreement reached on Sunday says that humanitarian trade will cover food and agricultural products, medicine, medical devices and medical expenses abroad.

India's basmati exports increased to 20 lakh tonnes during April-September of the current fiscal against 17 lakh tonnes during the same period a year ago.

Of this, Iran accounted for 8.49 lakh tonnes valued at Rs 6,115 crore.

Higher shipments have resulted in basmati paddy prices increasing to over Rs 5,000 a quintal this year from Rs 2,500-2,700 a year ago.

On Monday, it was quoted at Rs 5,900-5,950 a quintal.

According to trade sources, demand from Iran was so high that some exporters mixed ordinary Permal variety with basmati in their shipments.

Riding on Iranian demand, Indian basmati is currently quoting at \$1,500-1,525 a tonne, while Pakistan basmati is quoting \$200 lower.

"The rupee business was an assured one for us. Now, when normal business resumes, competition will increase for us. We are already under pressure as the Iranian rice growers association has complained of excess imports last fiscal," said Setia.

However, an executive with an Indian exporting firm, who did not wish to be identified, said Iran with a huge population is a big market for India.

Though rice is grown in Iran, there are not many takers for the domestically grown grain, resulting in demand for Indian rice, particularly Basmati, the executive said.

"The rupee is likely to come under pressure as Iranian money frozen in various parts of the world will find their way back home. It could also lead to some bargaining by buyers from Iran," said a trader.

"Thailand and Pakistan could be the two biggest beneficiaries of this deal. Pakistan being Iran's neighbour stands to gain a lot.

Thailand, on the other hand, is ready to offer its best rice at 40 per cent discount to India's Pusa 1121 basmati," said Seshadri.

May be it is a coincidence but on Monday an Iranian official complained that five varieties of Indian rice were contaminated.

Pepper loses sting on selling pressure

Kochi, Nov. 25: Pepper prices continued to head lower on slack demand and selling pressure from semi-processors and resellers. Prices in the spot market also fell. Semi processors and resellers reportedly offered pepper at Rs 510 a kg, traders said. On the spot, 25 tonnes of farm grade pepper arrived and all were traded. On the NMCE, December and January contracts decreased by Rs 800 and Rs 1,090 respectively to Rs 51,800 and Rs 51,600 a quintal. Total turnover increased by 15 tonnes to 22 tonnes while the open interest moved up by four tonnes to 10 tonnes. Spot prices decreased by Rs 300 to Rs 49,400 (ungarbled) and Rs 51,400 (garbled) a quintal. Indian parity in the international market was at \$8,750 (c&f) for Europe and \$9,000 a tonne (c&f) for the US.

Buyers' resistance saps spot rubber

Kottayam, Nov.25: Rubber prices dropped further on Monday as buyers were hesitant to trade.

"The market seemed to be moving against our expectations of a partial recovery as it has fallen below international prices," an analyst said, adding:

"It was really frustrating to see that buyers are hesitant to re-enter the market even at these attractive levels.

The commodity might fall further, if arrivals improve, reacting to a favourable weather when rains subside in a couple of days'."

Sheet rubber dropped to Rs 153 (Rs 153.50) a kg, according to traders.

The grade moved down to Rs 153.50 (Rs 154) and Rs 150.50 (Rs 151) respectively, according to the Rubber Board and dealers.

December futures dropped to Rs 152.50 (Rs 153.83), January to Rs 154.30 (Rs 155.70) and February to Rs 157 (Rs 158.20).

While the March and April futures remained inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) increased to Rs 157.17 (Rs 156.49) at Bangkok.

November futures closed at ¥253.6 (Rs 155.77) from ¥252.8 on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were: RSS-4: 153 (153.50); RSS-5: 143.50 (144); Ungraded: 139 (140); ISNR 20: 146.50 (147.50); and Latex 60%: 105 (105).

Soya prices may correct lower by Jan on better supply



Ahmedabad, Nov. 25: With late rains in October impacting quality and yield of soybean, its prices are expected to correct by January on better and quality supply.

Soyabean prices hovered around Rs 4,000 a quintal in the initial part of the season as domestic supply remained erratic.

Late rains in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan adversely affected the yields and quality of soyabeans leading to short supply of quality soyabeans and consequently prices spurted, according to Raju Choksi, Vice-President (Agri Commodities), Anil

Nutrients Ltd.

However, the situation is likely to improve once better supply improves and short positions of sellers are fulfilled.

Soyabean production is being scaled back from initial estimates of a record output.

Due to lower yield, the output is likely to be lower.

Prices of soyabean are currently in the range of Rs. 3,950-4,050 across major markets, he said.

High prices and quality issues have led to a poor rate of crushing of soyabean at present affecting soyameal quality and availability which, in turn, has impacted its export.

Choksi said that some international traders have switched from India to other origins for fulfilling their soyameal commitments.

“As the moisture content was higher than stipulated level some of the cargoes faced rejection, thereby, resulting in problems in fulfilling export commitments on time.”

89% tea sold at Coonoor sale

Coonoor, Nov. 25: Some 89 per cent of 16.79 lakh kg offered at Sale No: 47 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auction was sold with prices rising by Rs 2 a kg over the previous week.

Homedale Estate tea, auctioned by Global Tea Brokers, topped the CTC market when Shah Traders bought it for Rs 178 a kg.

Vigneshwar Estate got Rs 175, Hittakkal Estate Rs 170, Shanthi Supreme Rs 168 and Crosshill Estate Rs 165.

In all, 32 marks got Rs 125 and more for a kg.

Chamraj topped orthodox market at Rs 222 followed by Kairbetta and Kodanad Rs 202 each, Highfield Estate Rs 201 and Corsley Rs 200.

In all, 36 marks got Rs 125 and more.

Pakistan bought between Rs 60 and 95.

Low-priced teas were a favourite for the CIS, Egypt and Bangladesh as well.

“With about 129 million kg more tea available in the global market compared to last year, importers place orders only when prices are down”, an exporter told *Business Line*.

Demand from upcountry buyers was low as they contend the availability of teas cheaper than in Coonoor at North Indian auctions.

Prices currently average about Rs 12 a kg less compared to this time last year.

Quotations held by brokers indicated bids ranging Rs 57-60 a kg for plain leaf grades and Rs 100-130 for brighter liquoring sorts.

They ranged Rs 62-65 for plain dusts and Rs 120-170 for brighter liquoring dusts.

Pranab calls for easy credit, tech upgradation to boost coir sector



Need for a brand ambassador: President Pranab Mukherjee, with (from left) Coir Board Chairman G. Balachandran, Minister of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises K. H. Muniyappa, Minister of State for Human Resource Development Shashi Tharoor, and Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman P. J. Kurian, lighting the lamp to inaugurate the Diamond Jubilee celebration of the Coir Board, in New Delhi on Monday. — V. Sudershan

New Delhi, Nov 25: There is a need to ensure easier access to credit and modern technology to boost the coir industry, President Pranab Mukerjee said here on Monday. Inaugurating the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of the Coir Board, Mukerjee said: “I would very much like to see this industry become self-reliant in terms of raw material procurement; and I would urge employers to ensure that the workers engaged in this industry are provided enhanced support through the insurance and welfare schemes of Government.”

The industry employs about seven lakh workers, predominantly women, in more than 14 States and Union Territories and is amongst the foremost foreign exchange earning industries.

The Minister of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (Independent Charge), K.H. Muniyappa, congratulated the Coir Board for popularising the eco-friendly natural fibre, adding that the industry had been playing a pivotal role in the development of the rural economy in coconut-producing States.

Listing out the latest technologies and machinery, the Minister the latest addition was a versatile spinning machine which could produce large quantities of coir yarn without core thread to make products, such as coir jackets, chappals, umbrellas, curtains etc.

The Union Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Shashi Tharoor, called for the need for a brand ambassador for coir to globally spread the Board's activities.

He also stressed the need to raise the level of income in the coir industry, stem the below-par achievements of mechanisation and kindle interest among youngsters to join the traditional sector.

Professor Balachandran, Chairman, Coir Board, said the Board was working on combining coir with other natural fibres such as silk, jute and sisal to bringing out more innovative products.

"That day is not far when coir will find a place in the manufacturing of moulded furniture, TV cabinets and car dash-boards," he added.

Cotton may wilt on record crop estimates



Rajkot, Nov. 25: Cotton prices increased up marginally on Monday as fresh buying was witnessed in the market from mills . Moreover, ginning demand also increased for *kapas* supported the upward price.

Gujarat Sankar-6 cotton gained by Rs 200 at Rs 39,500-39,700 for a candy of 356 kg.

Kapas price was up by Rs 5 at Rs 950-960 for a maund of 20 kg and gin

delivery *kapas* traded at Rs 975-980 .

About 60,000 bales of cotton arrived in Gujarat and 1.60 lakh bales across the country.

Traders said that the sentiment in cotton market is turning strong as fresh buying activity has emerged.

Ginners are also buying *kapas* for the

expected demand from exporters.

A broker said that last week cotton traded mostly weak and now at this price level, exporters are likely to buy over the next few days.

On the other hand, experts said that cotton prices are expected to be lower on higher supplies this season from the record crop amid slowing demand for exports.

Some buying from mills at lower levels is seen supporting prices, though.

Reuters adds: "Weak global markets may also add to the downside pressure. However, Prices may see some recovery in the later part of the week as demand might emerge at lower levels," Angel Commodities said in a research note on Monday. The most-active March cotton contract on ICE Futures U.S. rose 0.41 per cent to 77.55 cents a lb at 1250 GMT, after falling to a 10-month low of Friday.

Rice market seen ruling stable next few days



Karnal, Nov. 25: The rice market may continue to rule around current levels with marginal fluctuations in coming days, according to market experts. The market witnessed a mixed trend with reduced offtake pulling Sharbati rice varieties down by Rs 300-400 a quintal on Monday, while all other aromatic and non-basmati varieties managed to rule firm at their previous levels. Amit Kumar, Proprietor of Ginni Rice, told *Business Line* that a steady trend has prevailed following lack of buying interest in the market. Though prices rose on a few occasions, the market could not retain those levels. Restricted availability of stocks is limiting the fall, he said.

It is unlikely to see any major alteration in the coming days and market may continue to rule around current levels with marginal alteration, said market sources.

In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) sold at Rs 9,100-9,200 , while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted at Rs 8,000-8,100 a quintal.

Pure Basmati (Raw) quoted at Rs 12,700 .

Duplicate basmati (steam) sold at Rs 8,000 .

In the non-basmati section, Sharbati (Steam) dropped by Rs 300 and sold at Rs 5,100-5,300 while Sharbati (Sela) quoted at Rs 4,700-4,900 , Rs 400 down.

Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,350-2,400 while Permal (sela) was at Rs 2,400-2,500. PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 3,300 while PR-11 (Raw) quoted at Rs 3,000-3,100 .

PR14 (steam) sold at Rs 3,400 .

Paddy arrivals

About 10,000 bags of PR paddy arrived and quoted at Rs 1,300, around 20,000 bags of Pusa-1121 arrived and sold at Rs 4,150-4,500, while 10,000 bags of Sharbati arrived and sold at Rs 2,300-2,425 .

Around 5,000 bags of Duplicate Basmati arrived and went for Rs 4,150-4,200 , 5,000 bags of Sugandha-999 went for Rs 3,150-3,200 , while 1,000 bags of Pure Basmati sold at Rs 5,900-5,950 a quintal.

Stockists sell old sugar stocks cheap



Mumbai, Nov. 25: Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market declined by Rs 10-15 a quintal on Monday. Stockists offloaded old stocks at lower rates as demand eased. Activities at *Naka* remained routine keeping prices unchanged. Mills sold sugar lower by Rs 5-10. Freight rates were steady with routine arrivals and dispatches. Farmers' agitation for higher cane price is keeping players in the futures market interested, said traders.

Sources said that all are eyeing the progress in talks on sugarcane pricing as farmers are seeking a higher price for cane.

Jagdish Rawal of B. Bhogilal & Co said: "Continuous supply from producers kept sugar prices under check. The world sugar market is also bearish erasing any chance of sugar exports from India in the near-term. The Vashi market carries about 120 truckloads of inventory forcing stockists to have new commitments need-based," he said.

Sources said that arrivals in Vashi market were 59-60 truckloads (of 100 bags each) while local dispatches were 58-59 loads.

On Saturday, about 14-15 mills offered tenders and sold 38,000-40,000 bags at Rs 2,690-2,790 (Rs 2,700-2,810) for S-grade and Rs 2,810-3,010 (Rs 2,830-3,010) for M-grade.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 2,846-2,971 (Rs 2,862-2,971) and M-grade Rs 3,002-3,222 (Rs 3,011-3,222).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs 2,810-2,900 (Rs 2,810-2,900) and M-grade Rs 2,900-3,130 (Rs 2,900-3,130).

Uttar Pradesh rates were: Muzzafarnagar Rs 3,200.

Bearish futures weigh on edible oils market



Mumbai, Nov. 25: The sentiment in the edible oils market turned weak in the absence of demand on Monday. However, the spot price of palmolein increased by Rs 4 on the Bombay Commodity Exchange as local refineries quoted a higher price. Cotton refined oil declined by Rs 5 on higher selling. Groundnut, soyabean, sunflower and rapeseed oil ruled unchanged. The activity in the physical market was almost nil as stockists kept away. Bearish futures also weighed on the market. Sources said that as stockists have covered enough in advance they kept away from fresh bets .

Towards the day's close, Liberty quoted

palmolein at Rs 615, super palmolein at Rs 635 and super deluxe at Rs 655, soyabean refined oil at Rs 695 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 780.

Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 618, soyabean refined oil at Rs 680 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 730.

Allana was quoting palmolein at Rs 615, super palmolein at Rs 630, super deluxe at Rs 650, soyabean refined oil at Rs 695 and sunflower refined at oil Rs 770.

In Rajkot, groundnut oil was Rs 1,340 (Rs 1,350) for *telia* tin and loose (10 kg) was Rs 850 (Rs 850).

Soyabean arrivals were 2 lakh bags in Maharashtra and prices were Rs 3,600-3,750.

Mustard arrivals were 80,000 bags and its prices were Rs 3,320-3,990.

Malaysia BMD crude palm oil's December closed lower at MYR 2,622 (MYR 2,640), January at MYR 2,630 (MYR 2,642) and February at MYR 2,630 (MYR 2,642).

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: groundnut oil 860 (860), soya refined oil 690 (690), sunflower exp. ref. 680 (680), sunflower ref. 735 (735), rapeseed ref. oil 765 (765), rapeseed expeller ref. 735 (735) cottonseed ref. oil 665 (670) and palmolein 605 (601).

Vikram Global Commodities (P) Ltd quoted Rs 675/10 kg for Malaysia super palmolein December delivery.

Rising arrivals may end soyabean rally



Indore, Nov. 25: With mandis in Madhya Pradesh remaining closed on account of Assembly elections, soyabean prices in private trading ruled firm at Rs 3,750-3,950 a quintal.

Arrivals were negligible.

Increased buying support from crushers and rise in soyabean futures lifted soyabean prices in Indore *mandis* in the

past one week by about Rs 200 a quintal.

Given the fact only about 15 lakh tonnes of soyabean have so far arrived in mandis across the country, against the 122 lakh tonnes projected by the Soyabean Processors Association of India, the current rally in soyabean may not continue for long.

With decline in demand for soya oil and soyameal, soyabean prices in local mandis last week declined to Rs 3,550.

Plant deliveries in the past one week have gone up by Rs 150-200 to Rs 3,950-4,000 on strong buying support from crushers.

Soyameal prices on the spot are currently being quoted at Rs 33,700-33,800.

Currently, soya refined in Indore mandis is ruling at Rs 695-700 for 10 kg (up Rs 15 from last week), while soya solvent is ruling at Rs 650-55 (up Rs 10 from last week).

60% turmeric sold in Erode markets



Erode, Nov. 25: Spot turmeric prices were almost unchanged from last week levels but quality produce met with better demand.

“The price of the turmeric remains almost same as last week. Traders and exporters procured quality turmeric by quoting higher price. The futures market increased marginally and the current price will prevail for another few days,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode

Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said that traders purchased 60 per cent of the 4,000 bags that arrived.

Last week, arrivals touched 5,500 bags a day.

Traders and exporters also received some fresh upcountry orders and are buying only quality produce.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,068-6,239; the root variety at Rs 4,011-5,359 a quintal.

Salem Hybrid: The finger variety fetched Rs 5,719-6,695; the root variety Rs 5,019-5,816 . Of the 1,036 bags that arrived, only 376 bags were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,306-6,389; the root variety Rs 4,687-5,573. Of the 503 bags on offer, 480 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety quoted Rs 5,299-6,430 and the root variety Rs 4,799-5,587. All the 500 bags were traded.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 5,066-6,279; the root variety Rs 4,982-5,417. All the 70 bags were sold.
