

Payment for paddy to be credited to farmers' accounts

NAGAPATTINAM, November 29, 2013 - Payment for paddy procured from farmers is to be credited directly to their bank accounts during the forthcoming agricultural season. According to an administration release, about 6,639 metric tonnes of paddy has been procured through the 62 direct procurement centres in the district, and farmers are paid in cash directly at the respective centres. However, processes are underway to deposit the payments through e-banking to farmers' accounts directly. Hence, farmers are requested to open accounts with nationalised banks immediately.

Delay in declaring State Advised Price rankles sugarcane farmers

PERAMBALUR, November 29, 2013 - 'Government must offer Rs. 3,500 per tonne as SAP'



distress call: Farmers showing withered cotton crop to M. A. Subramaniyan, DRO, at the grievances meeting in Perambalur on Thursday. — Photo: M. Moorthy

The delay on the part of the State government in fixing State Advised Price (SAP) for sugarcane, the prevailing drought in the district, and the prolonged load shedding were among the issues discussed at the farmers' grievances day meeting held here on Thursday.

Representatives of farmers' organisations demanded the State government to announce the SAP immediately and provide compensation to farmers who have suffered huge loss due to monsoon failure. A.K. Rajendran, district president, Tamil Nadu Cane Farmers Association, demanded compensation for drought-affected farmers before Lok Sabha election .

M.A. Subramanian, District Revenue Officer, who presided over the meeting, said that district administration has already sent a report to the State government on the drought condition.

Mr. Rajendran complained that farmers could not operate their pumpsets due to load shedding and demanded uninterrupted power for at least six hours during day-time. The

Central government had fixed Rs. 2,100 per tonne as the Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) for cane. While the Uttar Pradesh government was offering Rs. 3,000 per tonne of cane, the Karnataka government had announced Rs. 400 in addition to the Central government price. Hence, Tamil Nadu government must offer an SAP of Rs. 3,500, he said.

P. Viswanathan, State president, *Tamizhaga Yeri Matrum Atrupasana Vivasayigal Sangam*, and R. Raja Chidambaram, State secretary, *Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam*, said that State government should have announced the SAP in October. Last year, the State offered Rs. 2,350 compared to Rs. 1,700 fixed by the Centre. They demanded the State to fix the SAP at Rs. 4,000. Mr. Viswanathan demanded construction of a check dam across Kallar River between Krishnapuram and Vembavur, which would help in improving the groundwater level and in recharging wells in Veppanthattai union, he said.

When he demanded proper implementation of wasteland development project by sanctioning loans for digging farm ponds, Mr. Subramanian said that the response from farmers for digging farm ponds has not been encouraging. R. Kanagasabai, joint director of agriculture (in-charge), said it was targeted to establish 1,000 farm ponds in the district and beneficiaries too were identified.

Farmers motivated to spray PPFM

RAMANATHAPURAM, November 29, 2013 - *It helps crops remain greener for 15-20 days*

The Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) has recommended spraying of Pink Pigmented Facultative Methylothroph (PPFM) bacteria to mitigate drought and save crops.

The KVK has taken up spraying of PPFM, an invention of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, as an initial cluster demonstration on 1,000 hectares in 10 blocks. R. Durai Singh, Professor and Head, Programme Coordinator, KVK said the spraying of PPFM helped the crops remain greener for 15 to 20 days and help them to rejuvenate when it rains within that period. The KVK has taken up the spraying at a cost of Rs. 20.50 lakh under the National Food Security Mission, he said.

Farmers could buy a 200 ml PPFM tin from the KVK for Rs. 60 and apply the same mixed with 200 litres of water on one acre of paddy crop with hand sprayer. However, a section of farmers felt that spraying of PPFM could be helpful only during the terminal stages of the crops.

Farmers go on fast, demand demolition of encroachments

A FIGHT FOR LAND: Members of the Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam of Manikandam village on fast to highlight their demands in Tiruchi on Thursday.— PHOTO: A. MURALITHARAN



TIRUCHI, November 29, 2013 - Members of Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam observed a day-long fast in front of Manikandam panchayat union office on Thursday demanding removal of encroachments on the Sengulam tank in Alunthur panchayat.

All encroachments on the tank should be cleared and a fence should be erected around the tank. The Forest Department

should plant saplings along the banks of the tank. The association also demanded steps to recover the property of Arulmigu Viswanathar and Arulmigu Kasi Visalakshmi, and renovation of temples. It pressed a charter of demands, including removal of encroachments on irrigation and drainage canals at Somarasampettai and Nachikurichi, expedition of Kumara Vayalur-Keezh Vayalur link road project, and prevention of dumping of garbage into the Uyyakondan canal at the Somarasampettai-Adavathur junction. M.P. Chinnadurai, presided over the fast.

Farmers oppose new rules for crop insurance scheme



up in arms: Farmers staging a protest in front of the collectorate after boycotting the monthly farmers' grievances day meeting in Tiruvarur on Thursday.

TIRUVARUR, November 29, 2013 - Farmers of Tiruvarur district on Thursday boycotted the monthly farmers' grievances day meeting protesting the new rules being framed by the Central government for crop insurance scheme,

and non-distribution of crop insurance compensation to those whose crops were damaged last year.

Concern over FMD

They expressed concern over the increasing cases of foot-and-mouth disease, and urged the district administration to contain the spread.

Cane farmers are at the mercy of sugar mills, says expert



Farmers in State earn even less than the national average: Devinder Sharma

Devinder Sharma

BANGALORE, November 29, 2013 - The Ministry of Agriculture has acknowledged in Parliament that the average monthly income of a farming family in India is less than Rs. 2,400. Farmers in Karnataka earn even less than the national average, Devinder Sharma, food and agricultural policy analyst, has said.

“The tragic case in Belgaum underlines this,” Mr. Sharma said. He was speaking to *The Hindu* on problems in agricultural marketing in the context of the suicide of sugarcane grower Vittal Arabhavi on Wednesday. The farmer was participating in a protest demanding remunerative price for produce, outside the Suvarna Soudha where the legislature is in session.

Excerpts from an interview:

Q. Is the hike in Minimum Support Price demanded by sugarcane farmers justified?

A. If government employees can get DA linked to inflation every six months, and after every few years get the benefit of another pay commission, farmers too deserve to get an assured economic price linked to inflation... Let us not forget that unlike wheat and paddy, sugarcane is an annual crop. Farmers wait for a year to get a remunerative price. When sugar mills across the country form a cartel and refuse to pay a remunerative price, what do you expect the farmers to do?

How do you view the argument of the sugar factories that the demand is down in the global market and they cannot afford to pay high prices?

India is the biggest consumer of sugar. Exports from India are minimal. So the international demand has hardly anything to do with the domestic prices. The problem is the industry’s reluctance to modernise and diversify. Besides sugar that each mill produces, more than 24 byproducts can be produced commercially, including ethanol and methanol. A study by T.N. Prakash of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, shows how the contribution of farmers to the economy is being underplayed. On an average, 1 tonne of sugarcane produces 100 kg sugar, 150 units of electricity and about 35 litres of alcohol (not including other byproducts). Market value of these manufactured

products exceeds Rs. 30,000. Aren't the farmers justified in demanding even 10 per cent or Rs. 3,000 a tonne out of this? How is the farmer at fault if the sugar mills are not run efficiently?

What are the lacunae in the policy in Karnataka in stabilising agriculture prices?

As far as sugarcane prices are concerned, Karnataka has a role to play in determining the price. Sugar mills are invariably controlled by politicians. The prices are therefore determined on the basis of which political party has a bigger clout.

Farmers' organisations seek amendment to Sugar Act

GULBARGA, November 29, 2013 - The Hyderabad Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HKCCI) along with various farmers' organisations made a strong plea for amendment of the Sugar Control Act 1966 to empower the State government to fix the minimum support price for sugarcane.

Maruti Manpade, president of the Karnataka Pranta Raita Sangha, Moula Mulla, secretary of the All India Kisan Sabha, Siddalinga Reddy, State secretary of the Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha, Karisiddappa Patil, secretary of the Karnataka Red Gram Growers Association, and Umakant Nigudgi, president of HKCCI, said that the existing provision in the Act, which helps the State government to fix State Advisory Price, was ineffective. They were addressing a joint press conference in Gulbarga city on Thursday.

Empower

Mr. Manpade said it was high time the Union government intervened in the matter and amended the Sugar Act to empower the State government to regulate the functioning of sugar factories and have control over fixing of sugarcane prices every year.

He said that the present crisis faced by sugarcane growers in Karnataka and other States was mainly due to the failure of the Union government to entrust powers to State governments to fix prices.

Holding the Chief Minister responsible for the suicide of a sugarcane grower in Belgaum, Mr. Manpade said that the incident could have been avoided if Mr. Siddaramaiah had called for talks with the agitating farmers. The farmers' leaders said that the recommendations of the Rangarajan committee had no relevance for farmers.

Referring to the problems of red gram growers', Mr. Manpade said that the minimum support price (MSP) of Rs. 4,350 per quintal was too less and unscientific.

As per the recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission, the Central government should re-fix the MSP to Rs. 6,450 per quintal. Mr. Manpade said that a delegation of farmers' and trade organisations, led by him, will meet the Chief Minister and the Minister of State for Agriculture on December 3.

Paddy farmers yet to get compensation

KOTTAYAM, November 29, 2013 - Paddy farmers in the region are embarking on an agitation in protest against the alleged apathy of the State government in addressing their problems.

Speaking at a press conference, Kerala Karshaka Sangham State committee members R.M. Narendranath and Aymanam Babu said that the cultivation in around 25,000 hectares of paddy fields spread across the districts of Kottayam, Alappuzha and Pathanamthitta were completely destroyed owing to the intrusion of salt water during the previous paddy season. "The Agriculture Minister conducted visits in the region following which the government had declared a compensation of Rs. 20,000 per hectare for the damage. However, the authorities are yet to disburse the compensation. This has resulted in farmers being in the midst of a financial crisis as efforts that would mark the commencement of the present season are under way," they said.

Organising committee convener K. Kunjappan said that paddy cultivation in over 10,000 acres was also significantly affected due to the high salt content in the atmosphere. He held the delay by the government in conducting the maintenance of the Thanneermukkom bund as responsible for the widespread losses during the previous year.

"Farmers are under the apprehension that the damage in the shutters of the bund could result in a similar fate this time around as well. The shutters are usually closed between December 15 and March 15 for agricultural purposes.

However, most of the existing 72 shutters have been severely damaged due to corrosion and this will render their closure ineffective. The farming community has demanded the immediate repair and maintenance of the affected shutters.

Similar preventable factors have resulted in area under paddy cultivation decreasing significantly from 9 lakh hectares to 2.75 lakh hectares in the State," Mr. Kunjappan said. The organisation, which is the farmers' wing of the CPI (M), will organise a "farmers' chain" at Kumarakom near the Thanneermukkom bund on Saturday during which various demands will be raised. CPI(M) district secretary K.J. Thomas will inaugurate the demonstration.

Approach only banks for loans, tribal farmers told

SRIKAKULAM, November 29, 2013 - Andhra Bank Deputy General Manager Ramakrishna on Thursday asked tribal farmers to take loans from banks instead of private financiers who were collecting extra interest on debts. He attended as a chief guest for the programme organised by non- governmental organisation ARTS in association with ITDA in Manapuram village of Seethampet. ITDA Project Officer K. Suneel Rajakumar and ARTS director N. Sanyasi Rao said that farmers could get loans by joining farmer clubs.

Indigenous farming best bet, says expert



Lively interaction:Collector G. Kishan with agricultural scientist Subhash Palekar at a workshop in Warangal on Thursday.- Photo: M. Murali

WARANGAL, November 29, 2013 - Farmers need not spend a single rupee if they try to harness the indigenous knowledge and avoid the use of chemical fertilizer, said Subhasha Palekar, advocate of zero-based natural farming. Addressing over 1,000 farmers here on Thursday, Palekar said farmers should

realise that the hybrid or genetically modified seed is inferior to the local seed. The magic was with the chemical fertilizer which ensures good harvest but at the cost of soil, environment and health of consumers. "One may reap less harvest at the beginning but it does not cost and will not spoil soil or health," he said.

The three-day workshop is being organised by the Maharshi Goshala Charitable Trust and Kakatiya Foundation at the BGR Gardens in Chinthagattu village. Foundation president N. Venugopal Reddy said 1,200 farmers registered for the workshop but more farmers turned up to learn and listen to Palekar, popular for his talks on zero-based natural agricultural methods.

He told farmers to prepare organic manure using cow urine, cow dung and earthworms. They would protect humidity in the soil and the organic life. The chemical fertilizer erodes the plant's friendly life in soil and leaves it barren over a period of time. "The agricultural output should not be calculated in terms of yield but also the health of the soil and other aspects.

The organic farming yields greatly compared to use of chemical fertilizers but farmers need to have patience," Palekar explained.

Mr. Venugopal Reddy said it was disheartening to note excessive use of chemical fertilizers and increased input cost. The farmers were forced into a desperate situation where they were committing suicides.

"Our effort is to encourage farmers to stop using chemical fertilizers and save the soil first. The input cost should come down to relieve the farmer. The produce from organic farm fetches good price where farmer and consumer will be happy," he said.

District Collector G. Kishan and other officials attended.

Farmers urged to prepare organic manure using cow urine, cow dung and earthworms and thereby protect the soil and general health of people

Agri fest on December 1

KOCHI, November 29, 2013 - Muvattupuzha will be bristling with farmers and sessions on their innovative farming methods, as the State Agro Fest (*Samsthana Karshikolsav*) gets underway at the EEC Market on December 1.

Muvattupuzha MLA Joseph Vazhakkan and District Collector P.I. Sheikh Pareeth said a huge pandal spread over an expanse of 60,000 sq.ft for the eight-day long fest is on the verge of completion.

The fest is being organised by the district administration, Muvattupuzha block panchayat, Muvattupuzha municipality and EEC Market. Visitors to the fest would have a slew of attractions to choose from including flower fest, ornamental fish and pets exhibitions, exhibition of agro crops, trade fair, amusement park, food court, and cultural programmes. Seminars on relevant agriculture topics led by agriculture scientists and institutional heads will be held daily as part of the event.

Farm at Panniyur to be inaugurated

KANNUR, November 29, 2013 - An integrated vertical farm developed by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra at Panniyur here will be inaugurated by Agricultural Minister K.P. Mohanan on Saturday.

At a press conference here on Thursday, Giggin T., Assistant Professor at the Kendra, said it was an innovative high-tech livestock farm with vertical space usage. Apart from maximum utilisation of space, the model prevented overheating of the sheds and provided proper ventilation. It had a pyramid structure with gallery to grow fodder and recycle animal waste to keep the unit hygienic.

Dr. Giggin said that galvanised iron pipes, a weld mesh and a plastic interlocking slat floor for hygiene and withstanding climatic changes were among the materials used.

The benefits of the vertical farming model included maximum income from unit space, reduction in the room temperature, year-round income from various components, one-time investment for infrastructure and recycling of animal waste into animal food.

Ganjam seeks Rs.10.50 cr. to revive sugarcane crop

BHUBANESWAR, November 29, 2013 - *Collector seeks assistance from Rastriya Krishi Vikash Yojna*

Ganjam, which was badly hit by Phailin cyclone last month, has sought Rs.10.50 crore to take up sugarcane crop, which is cultivated by thousands of farmers in the district.

District collector Krishna Kumar has submitted a project report seeking assistance from the Rastriya Krishi Vikash Yojna to revive the sugarcane crop.

“There has been severe damage to the sugarcane crop under the impact of Phailin and the subsequent heavy precipitation during the month of October 2013 followed by severe flood. The cyclonic storm has caused lodging, breaking, and uprooting of canes and submergence due to heavy rain and floods has resulted in rotting and decaying of leaves as well as plant,” the report says.

After the damage caused by cyclone, the cane available in the field is unsuitable for seed purpose too.

Sugarcane is one of the most important commercial and livelihood crops grown by more than 6,000 farmers in 17 blocks of the district in an area of about 3,500 ha. There is one agro-based cooperative sugar industry located at Aska, which is dependent on the cane produced from the district.

As per records, on an average, 1.5 lakh tonnes of cane is crushed per season.

As per the report, the Aska Cooperative Sugar Industries has entered into an agreement with 6,335 sugarcane growers for cultivation of sugarcane during the planting season 2012-13. Accordingly, they have cultivated sugarcane covering an area of 8,707.10 acres in 17 blocks.

“The farmers are in need of seed cane as well as fertilizer and pesticide to raise the new crop. Unless they get any special package from the government, it is very difficult for them to take up cultivation during 2013-14. This in turn will endanger the livelihood security of the cane growers as well as the survival of the only agro-based cooperative sugar industry in the district,” the Collector observes in the report.

Water levels

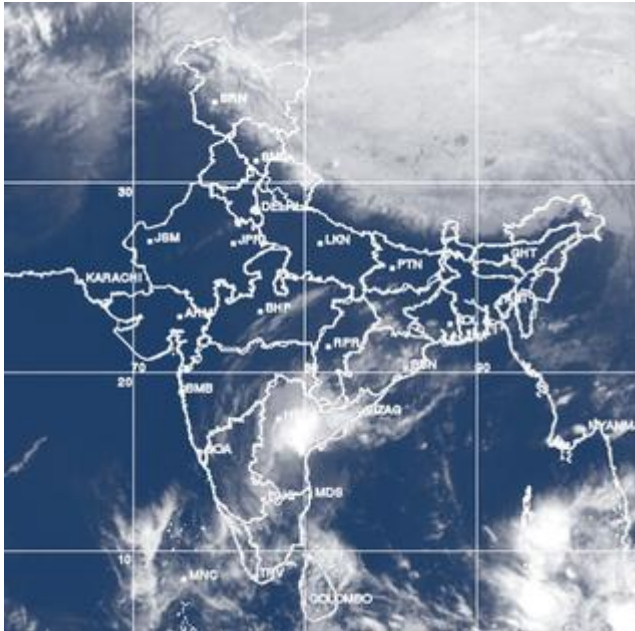
Mettur - The water level in the **Mettur dam** stood at 85.46 feet on Thursday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 5,991 cusecs and the discharge 4,998 cusecs.

Water level in the **Papanasam dam** on Thursday stood at 96.10 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 424.84 cusecs and 601 cusecs of water is discharged from the dam. The level of the **Manimuthar dam** stood at 69.95 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 84 cusecs and 35 cusecs of water is discharged.

Nagercoil - The level in the **Pechipparai dam** stood at 26.70 feet, while it was 61.05 feet in Perunchani, 12.33 feet in Chittar 1, 12.43 feet in Chittar 11, 4.20 feet in Poigai , 49.79 feet in the Mamabazathuraiyaru and 18 feet in **Mukkadal dam**.

Madurai - The water level in **Periyar dam** was 119.40 feet with an inflow of 767 cusecs and discharge of 800 cusecs. The water level in **Vaigai dam** was 45.77 feet with an inflow of 248 cusecs and a discharge of 60 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 3,263 mcft. There was no rainfall recorded in the region during the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on Thursday, PWD Officials said.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on November 28th.

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	28	14	0	53
New Delhi (Sfd)	28	12	0	73
Chandigarh	27	10	0	43
Hissar	29	9	0	10
Bhuntar	24	2	0	26
Shimla	20	8	0	80
Jammu	27	11	0	140
Srinagar	16	-2	0	23
Amritsar	27	10	0	100
Patiala	28	10	0	11
Jaipur	31	14	0	5
Udaipur	29	11	0	55
Allahabad	29	13	0	301
Lucknow	29	11	0	42
Varanasi	27	13	0	141
Dehradun	26	12	0	48
Agartala	31	15	0	190
Ahmedabad	33	18	0	62
Bangalore	29	19	0	244
Bhubaneshwar	28	22	0	674
Bhopal	29	13	0	26
Chennai	31	23	0	360
Guwahati	29	14	0	215
Hyderabad	31	15	0	248
Kolkata	29	18	0	530
Mumbai	32	25	0	72

Nagpur	30	13	0 169
Patna	27	14	0 194
Pune	30	14	0 38
Thiruvananthapuram	32	25	2 456
Imphal	28	14	0 69
Shillong	18	11	0 77

The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (tr-trace)

MAINLY DRY WEATHER

Rainfall: Weather was dry over the region.

MINIMUM TEMPERATURE : The minimum temperatures changed little over the region.

They were appreciably above

normal in west Rajasthan, above normal in Punjab, east Rajasthan and Uttarakhand and normal in rest of the region. The lowest minimum temperature in the plains was 06.2°C recorded at Muzaffarnagar (Uttar Pradesh).

FORECAST FOR REGION VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 01st DECEMBER 2013: Weather would be mainly dry over the region.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 01st DECEMBER 2013: Mainly clear sky. Mist/shallow fog in the morning.

hindustantimes

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Friday, Nov 29

Max 30° | Min 24°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 89

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:14

Sunset: 05:39

Barometer: 1013

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Saturday, Nov 30

Max 32° | Min 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday Dec 1	Monday Dec 2	Tuesday Dec 3	Wednesday Dec 4	Thursday Dec 5
31° 24° Cloudy	26° 25° Overcast	26° 25° Overcast	26° 25° Overcast	26° 25° Overcast

Wholesale onion prices steady at Lasalgaon

NASHIK: The average wholesale price of onions remained stable at Rs 1,800 per quintal in Lasalgaon on Thursday.

The average price, which had dropped from Rs 2,350 to Rs 1,800 per quintal on Wednesday, remained stable on Thursday, with farmers fetching Rs 1,800 per quintal for their produce at the Lasalgaon Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC), the same as on Wednesday.

"The market rates of onion did not vary much from the Wednesday's prices even as they swung between Rs 1,400 and Rs 3,000 per quintal with the average price at Rs 1,800 per quintal. The total arrivals for the day were 13,600 quintals at Lasalgaon," the market sources said.

The rates at the Pimpalgaon APMC were also in the same range, with the farmers fetching an average price of Rs 1,851 per quintal with prices fluctuating from Rs 1,401 to Rs 2,727 per quintal. The arrivals stood at 19,000 quintals for the day.

On Wednesday, prices of onion touched a new low since July 4, as the rates settled at Rs 1,800 a quintal at Lasalgaon market, providing relief to the customers throughout the country. The arrivals also stood more or less the same as that on Wednesday, sources said.

Maharashtra sugar belt on the boil

KOLHAPUR: There is simmering tension in the sugar belt of Satara, Sangli and Kolhapur, with sugarcane farmers and activists of the [Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana](#) (SSS), led by Kolhapur MP [Raju Shetty](#), stepping up their agitation on the sugarcane purchase price issue. Over the last two days, buses have been attacked and traffic on the Mumbai-Bangalore highway stalled for hours.

The farmers' demand for Rs 3,000 per tonne as the first installment of this year's purchase price has so far been stonewalled by sugar mills, which have maintained they cannot pay more than Rs 2,500 to the cultivators.

But there was some sign of a resolution by late Thursday evening, with Shetty saying the

price of Rs 2,650 as offered by one sugar mill was acceptable. "We don't have any objection to the sugarcane cutting for this factory," he said. "If others offer the same or a higher rate, we're ready to discuss with them. The final decision regarding the stir will be taken on Friday evening."

The two-week-old agitation took a violent turn over the last 48 hours after Monday's meeting between Maharashtra ministers, including chief minister [Prithviraj Chavan](#), and the prime minister remained inconclusive.

On Thursday, at least six people were injured when clashes broke out between SSS members and daily wage workers employed by sugar mills to cut cane in Kagal (Kolhapur district), where the larger sugar factories are located. "SSS members obstructed the cane cutting in the fields at Kagal. This resulted in clashes between two groups," said Chandrakant Shinde, inspector, Kagal police station. The police registered complaints against 300 members of the two groups.

Over the last two days, 61 state-run buses have been damaged in Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara. Of these, one was torched on Wednesday night and 25 buses were damaged on Thursday.

Agitating farmers blocked 10 roads in Kolhapur district on Thursday. With the violence showing no sign of abating, public-transport services have been suspended for an indefinite period. Officials said they would ply buses only after they are assured of safety. State-run transport facilities (MSRTC and KMT) reported a collective loss of Rs 85 lakh on Thursday owing to the cancellation of services.

Traffic on NH-4 was hit through the day, particularly on the 100km Pachwad village-Peth Vadgaon stretch on the Pune-Kolhapur road. Vehicular traffic on Sangli-Kolhapur road also slowed down as the police kept a strict vigil on the stretch. Many commuters preferred not to travel on Thursday.

Tukaram Chavan, inspector general of police, Kolhapur circle, said they were reviewing the situation, maintaining law and order in Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara. "According to prima facie information, the SSS is responsible for the violence," he said.

For his part, Shetty said, "I've been asking the protesting farmers not to attack buses and commuters, but it seems there's some lumpen element creating a law and order situation. The state government can waive off excise and purchase tax, which will enable sugar factories to save some money and it can be passed on to farmers."

Of the 46 sugar factories in these three districts, six have started crushing sugarcane, while others have kept their boilers off as a precautionary measure. But a couple of sugar factories from Kolhapur have announced they would start crushing from Friday.

"If the farmers don't call off the agitation soon, the recovery will reduce and impact the profit sharing between the factory and the farmers," said Sanjeev Babar, managing director, Maharashtra state coop sugar factories federation.

Aquarium boost to maritime museum

CUTTACK: A 1,500 sq feet aquarium will soon be an added attraction at the state [maritime museum](#) here. The construction of the Rs 2-crore project is in its final stages. "Looking at the pace of work, we hope to complete it by December 20," said director of the museum Basudev Mohapatra.

The aquarium would exhibit over 50 species of marine creatures and a variety of aquatic plants. The [Indian National Trust for Art and Culture](#) (Intach) has designed the project. The oxygen chamber and glass fittings for the aquarium have been procured from Bangalore, sources said. The museum authorities plan to inaugurate it by the end December.

"We want to create awareness among people about the rich marine ecology of Odisha. Species found exclusively in the state will be showcased in the aquarium," said an official of the museum.

The foundation stone of the aquarium on the museum premises was laid by chief minister [Naveen Patnaik](#) on April 1, the day the maritime museum was inaugurated. "The aquarium was to be completed within six months. But we were forced to stop the work due to Phailin and the project got delayed," said Mohapatra.

The museum is already drawing visitors in hordes. It has earned over Rs 15 lakh with more than 50,000 footfalls in the last eight months.

Encouraged by the overwhelming response, the authorities are taking steps to promote the museum as a tourist destination.

"On a priority basis, we are creating awareness about the museum in the state. We would then focus on its promotion outside the state. We have printed over one lakh pamphlets, which will be distributed across the state. We also plan to put up hoardings in important cities," Mohapatra added.

GHMC, Water Board officials inspect Musi river

HYDERABAD: Senior officials of GHMC and Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWS&SB) on Thursday inspected the Musi river and the nalas flowing into it from Attapur and Moosarambagh on the directions of the high court. GHMC and HMDA were asked to submit a report to the court about the points of sewage entry into the Musi by November 30. Senior officials including GHMC commissioner Somesh Kumar and HMWSSB MD Syamala Rao were present during the inspection.

The officials inspected removal of encroachments along [the river](#) besides the sewage

interception and treatment. HMWS&SB has taken up half of the proposed interception treatment works and funds for the remaining work are awaited from [National River Conservation Board](#).

The GHMC commissioner also directed officials of the bio-diversity wing to beautify the entire stretch along the river.



Cyclonic storm 'Lehar' weakens; turns into deep depression



Cyclonic storm 'Lehar' over west-central Bay of Bengal, which was expected to cause extensive damage in coastal Andhra Pradesh, weakened into a deep depression today bringing much-needed relief to people, as its effect may not be as lethal as feared.

The system lay centred at 0530 hours today over the west-central Bay of Bengal, about 120 kms east-southeast of Machilipatnam in Andhra coast, according to an IMD bulletin.

It would move west-northwestwards, weaken further and cross Andhra Pradesh coast near Machilipatnam as a depression. Under its influence, rainfall at most places with isolated heavy to very heavy falls would occur over coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam district of Puducherry during the next 24 hours.

Rainfall at most places with isolated heavy to very heavy falls would also occur over Telangana during the next 36 hours.

Squally winds with speed reaching 45-55 kmph gusting to 65 kmph would prevail along and off Andhra Pradesh during the next 12 hours.

The state of sea along and off Andhra Pradesh coast will be rough to very rough. 'Lehar' is now expected to cause only minor damage to loose and unsecured structures and the fishermen have been not to venture in the sea.

As 'Lehar' was a 'very severe cyclonic storm', the Andhra Pradesh government had made elaborate arrangements to face the situation and also evacuated over 27,000 people living in low-lying areas to safer places.

It has requisitioned the services of Army and additional teams of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), in addition to its own administrative machinery.

THE HINDU Business Line

Turmeric rules stable on quality arrivals



Turmeric prices ruled stable in Erode markets as quality hybrid finger variety arrived on Thursday.

“Buyers, mainly exporters, quoted a higher price for the hybrid finger variety and purchased all the 300-and-odd bags on offer.

They have got orders from North India. Traders are now purchasing quality produce to fulfil upcountry orders,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

Turmeric prices are ruling stable and sales have improved. Of the 5,200 bags that arrived, 70 per cent was sold. Farmers had no hesitation to sell as they need cash to meet their domestic expenses.

They expect turmeric prices to rise further in January.

On Thursday, the price of the hybrid finger variety increased by Rs 200 a quintal and that of the hybrid root variety by Rs 50 a quintal.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,110-6,486 a quintal and the root variety at Rs 4,080-5,568.

Salem Hybrid: The finger variety sold at Rs 5,871-7,069; the root variety at Rs 5,099-5,969. Of the 124 bags that arrived, 397 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 5,489-6,389 and the root variety Rs 4,699-5,587.

Of the 1,612 bags on offer, 1408 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing society, the finger variety went for Rs 5,098-6,389. The root variety sold at Rs 4,887-5,697.

All the 700 bags put for sale were traded. At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,672-6,398; the root variety Rs 4,760 - 5,454. All the 144 bags that arrived got sold.

Such bitterness over sugar pricing

For the first time since 1976, there is no single unified pan-India policy for the sugar sector. All state governments are deciding sugarcane prices or policies at will, creating intra-state distortions in production, marketable values and exports. The nation stands divided by sugar.

The absurdity has reached a level where the price of output, or sugar, equals input cost of sugarcane with a traditional rate of recovery. Threats by farmers and counter-threats by mills, especially in Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra, are an indication of the impending uncertainty in this sector. About 70 per cent of the sweetener is produced by these two states.

The sugar environment at the start of the 2013-14 season stands altered. First, the Centre decontrolled the release and levy mechanism in April 2013, which created instant surpluses in the market. Second, because of election year, political pressures are mounting to balance interests of cane-growers, millers and consumers.

In less than eight months, the sector has vaulted from control to decontrol and then back to active and ad-hoc interventionism by the Centre. This represents a threat to the liberalisation effort.

The Rangarajan Committee report on sugar decontrol says: “Rationalisation of sugarcane pricing and liberalisation of sugar trade need to be introduced over a *two to three year period*, in a calibrated and phased manner. *However*, levy sugar obligation and administrative control on non-levy sugar need to be *dispensed with immediately*”. (Page 10 para 13 of the report).

A committee headed by Chairman of the Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council would not have suggested a two-stage or split recommendation, unless compelled politically. The Rangarajan committee and the UPA Government erred in pushing sugarcane pricing into a vague zone. That explains the mess this year.

Uttar Pradesh

The trigger point is last year’s State Advisory Price (SAP) for sugarcane of Rs 280/quintal (or \$44/tonne) in Uttar Pradesh (UP). The result — mills are already saddled with a massive liability of sugarcane arrears due to non-remunerative market prices, while farmers are pushing for an SAP of upwards of Rs 300/quintal (or \$48/tonne).

A higher Indian sugar output (about 25 million tonnes) is foreseen in 2013-14, apart from nine million tonnes of stocks. This is against demand of 23 million tonnes; hence, the open market value may further decline below last year's level of Rs 28-30/kg.

Mills can lose heavily under such conditions.

UP's millers feel that Rs 225/quintal (or \$36/tonne) in UP is the limit for viable operations. That is almost at par with other states (Maharashtra/Karnataka/Tamil Nadu), after factoring in cane recovery rates.

The UP Government finds itself in a bind. How can the Samajwadi Party (SP) government of Akhilesh Yadav afford to reduce the SAP, when annual inflation is running into double-digits?

Nevertheless, the Akhilesh administration has refrained from hiking it above Rs 280/quintal (or \$44/mt). This has given rise to a stalemate between farmers, millers and the government.

Skewed market

In a sugar cycle of 5-6 years, farmers claim that millers have made profits in some years, each time due to high market prices. The counterpoint is that Government intervenes to check the abnormal rise in local prices, resulting in a significant loss to millers' potential profitability. However, any additional investments made by them from accrued profits are an asset to the nation.

The fact is that the sugar business is skewed. Markets can work right if inputs and outputs operate on the principle of free trade, rather than one side being administered by irrational political considerations of SAP.

Political mileage

Now, the Agriculture, Food and Finance ministries of the Centre are trying to work out a solution to the impasse, even as it has divested responsibility to states. Ajit Singh, Aviation Minister and of Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD, another ally of UPA) has also chipped in. Likewise, Maharashtra's Congress Chief Minister is also approaching the PMO for relief.

Hence, the Nationalist Congress Party, RLD, Congress and SP are vying for the sugar vote bank. Any relaxation or subsidy means additional fiscal deficit.

That translates into erosion in the value of the rupee, higher inflation and diminishing buying power of savings. But in an election year politics supersedes economics, anyway. The BJP is silently watching the confusion to derive some mileage.

Buffer stock

Buffer stocks of 2-5 million tonnes have been mooted. Apart from the concern over fiscal deficit, the issue of storage is paramount. If this buffer is to be stored at the premises of the mills, it could give rise to controversy.

The NSEL scam is a case in point, where warehouses reflected paper stocks but actual stocks went missing.

The CAG has already commented on the paddy stored by FCI in millers' premises as highly objectionable and questionable.

Exports are not viable, due to surpluses available internationally, except for niche opportunities. Any export subsidy will violate WTO commitments. Moreover, Brazil's raw sugar value will further plunge to match Indian competition.

Court Remedy

A solution lies in approaching the Supreme Court for authorising "Fair Remunerative Price" (FRP) announced by the CACP (Commission for Agriculture Costs and Prices) as the basis for sugarcane pricing for 2013-14.

This would be Rs 210/quintal or \$33/tonne at 9.5 per cent recovery rate, with pro-rata hike linked to higher recovery on a pan-India basis. This will end diverse policies in different states.

The governmental route may be messy and time-consuming, unless worked through an Ordinance, calling for immediate implementation of the second phase of Rangarajan report. Whether that would involve the Election Commission's consent remains to be seen.

A uniform floor rate, with an increase based on cane recovery, could lead us towards a pan-India sugar price.

Sugar may gain on standoff over cane pricing



Sugar prices may begin to look up as the logjam over sugarcane pricing prolongs with all concerned parties hardening their stand.

While growers are demanding higher price for cane, mills are expressing their inability to pay

increased support price. Most private mills in Uttar Pradesh are yet to begin crushing operations, while growers in Maharashtra are not supplying cane.

On Thursday, sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market ruled steady but they dropped marginally in the futures market.

Jagdish Rawal of B. Bhogilal and Cosaid that reports from Kolhapur and Pune talked of farmers agitation disturbing sugar dispatches from mills. Till now, higher carryover stocks have curbed any rise in prices but things could change if farmers intensify their agitation. The Vashi market carries over 120 truckloads of stock as demand has declined after Diwali. Arrivals at the Vashi market were 61-62 truckloads (of 100 bags each), while local dispatches were 58-59 loads. On Wednesday, 16-17 mills offered tenders and sold 43,000-45,000 bags at Rs 2,690-2,790 (Rs 2,690-2,790) for S-grade and Rs 2,800-3,000 (Rs 2,800- 3,000) for M-grade.

On National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, December futures dropped to Rs 2,829 (Rs 2,843), January to Rs 2,833 (Rs 2,844) and February- to Rs 2,835 (Rs. 2,843).

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 2,846- 2,962 (Rs 2,840-2,966) and M-grade Rs 3,010-3,222 (Rs 3,006 -3,222).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs 2,810-2,900 (Rs 2,810-2,900) and M-grade Rs 2,900-3,110 (Rs 2,900-3,110).

Uttar Pradesh rates were: Muzaffarnagar Rs 3,200.

Selling pressure eases in pepper



Kochi, Nov. 28:

Pepper prices continued to drop in spot and futures markets despite selling pressure easing on Thursday.

There were no sellers below Rs 490 a kg in the market.

Karnataka sellers were said to be offering pepper below 500 GL at Rs 490-500 a kg. But, no buyer was interested.

Lower grade material was in great demand from various sectors following the rise in prices, market sources told *Business Line*.

The low grade is mixed with quality material sold after semi-processing in the market.

As adulteration is rampant, pepper arriving even from high ranges with 560 GL and above are now of 530-535 GL, sources said.

On the spot, 20 tonnes of farm-grade pepper arrived and they were sold at Rs 487-497 a kg depending on the quality and area of production, they said.

On the National Multi Commodity Exchange, December and January contracts fell by Rs 502 and Rs 228 a quintal respectively to Rs 51,099 and Rs 50,625.

Total turnover decreased to 12 tonnes. Total open interest increased to 9 tonnes.

On the IPSTA, there was no activity today as there was no buyer or seller.

Spot prices declined by Rs 100 a quintal on selling pressure to Rs 48,700 (ungarbled) and Rs 50,700 (garbled).

Export prices remained at \$8,650 a tonne (c&f) for Europe and \$8,900 a tonne (c&f) for the US.

Bulk, retail buyers keep off rice market



Karnal, Nov. 28:

Lack of buying interest at all levels pulled aromatic and non-basmati prices down sharply on Thursday. Prices for some varieties dropped by as much as Rs 300 a quintal.

Amit Chandna, Proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company, told *Business Line* that bulk buyers kept away, leading to fall in prices.

After witnessing some phenomenal rise earlier this month, the market is now in a correction mode.

Retail traders are keeping off the market as they do not want to make fresh purchase at current levels, he said.

Following a fear of drop in prices, demand at present in the local market is quite low said Tara Chand Sharma, proprietor of Tara Chand and Sons.

In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) eased by Rs 300 to Rs 8,900 a quintal, while Pusa-1121 (sela) dropped by Rs 200 to Rs 7,800.

Pure Basmati (raw) fell by Rs 200 to Rs 12,500. Duplicate basmati (steam) sold at Rs 7,750, (down Rs 250).

In the non-basmati section, Sharbati (steam) dropped by Rs 200 to Rs 5,000-5,100, while Sharbati (Sela) quoted at Rs 4,650, down Rs 150. PR varieties dropped by Rs 50-100.

Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,350, while Permal (sela) quoted at Rs 2,400. PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 3,200, while PR-11 (raw) quoted at Rs 3,000.

PR14 (steam) sold at Rs 3,350.

Paddy arrivals

About 10, 000 bags of PR paddy arrived and quoted at Rs 1,300 a quintal. Around 20,000 bags of Pusa-1121 arrived and went for Rs 4,150-4,400 a quintal, while 10,000 bags of Sharbati arrived and sold at Rs 2,300-2,400 a quintal.

Around 5,000 of duplicate Basmati arrived and sold for Rs 4,150-4,200 a quintal, 5,000 bags of Sugandha-999 went for Rs 3,150-3,200 a quintal, while 1,000 bags of pure Basmati sold at Rs 5,900-5,925 a quintal.

Sluggish trend may continue in mustard



Indore, Nov. 28:

The sluggish trend continued in mustard and oil on weak demand on Thursday.

In Indore, mustard oil declined by Rs 11 to Rs 696, while it was down Rs 10 each at Neemuch and Morena where it quoted at Rs 690 and Rs 700 respectively. Compared with last week, mustard oil is ruling Rs 14 lower in Indore.

The sluggish trend is expected to continue in mustard oil with selling pressure in mustard exceeding demand. However, as demand picks up during winter, mustard oil may gain, said Vinod Choudhary, an Indore-based broker.

With demand being slack in mustard oil, plant deliveries for Jaipur line ruled flat at Rs 3,850-55 a quintal (almost unchanged from last week).

Mustard also ruled firm at Rs 5,100-5,150 a quintal (Rs 4,900-5,100 a quintal last week), while raida ruled firm at Rs 3,350 a quintal.

In the futures market also, mustard traded lower on slack buying with December and January contracts on the NCDEX closing lower at Rs 3,785 a quintal (down Rs 9) and Rs 3,864 a quintal (down Rs 11), respectively.

According to traders, mustard seeds is likely to rule sluggish in the coming days on hope of higher crop output. According to reports, sowing of mustard in the country this year is likely to touch 29 lakh hectares against 27.25 lakh hectares last year.

In Rajasthan, the largest grower of mustard seeds in the country, almost 90 per cent sowing of mustard has been completed. Against 23.21 lakh hectares last year, sowing in Rajasthan so far has been completed on 25.66 lakh hectares, according to the Directorate of Agriculture, Rajasthan Government report.

Arrival of mustard across the mandis in country on Thursday was 1.10 lakh bags (1 lakh bags last week).

Spot rubber rules flat

Kottayam, Nov.28:

Physical rubber prices ruled steady on Monday. It failed to improve in tune with moderate gains in the domestic futures market during late trading hours. Traders had expected a partial recovery in the market, though sentiments were affected in the absence of genuine buyers from the industrial sector.

Sheet rubber quoted steady at Rs 151 a kg and finished flat at Rs 152 and Rs 149 respectively, according to the Rubber Board and dealers. December futures improved to Rs 154.62 (Rs 152.97), January to Rs 156.78 (Rs 154.95), February to Rs 159.04 (Rs 157.49) and March to Rs 159.99 (Rs 155.33) while the April futures slipped to 160.20 (Rs 160.81) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) inched up to Rs 154.45 (Rs 154.30) at Bangkok. December futures closed at ¥253.1 (Rs 154.44) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were: RSS-4: 151 (151); RSS-5: 142 (142); Ungraded: 137 (135); ISNR 20: 144.50 (144.50) and Latex 60%: 105 (105).

Coriander spot, futures up 1%

COGENCIS



Mumbai, Nov. 28:

Despite the rise in daily supply, coriander prices in spot as well as futures markets gained one per cent each on the back of robust domestic and export orders, Kota-based trader Satyanarayan Gupta said.

Lower acreage this season and limited stocks are also supporting coriander prices, analysts said.

Coriander futures on the NCDEX hit a record high of Rs 7,735 for a quintal.

On the NCDEX, the most active December coriander contract was at Rs 7,720, up 1.8 per cent from the previous close.

Spot arrivals were reported at 20,000 bags (1 bag = 40 kg) on Thursday, up from 17,000 bags on Wednesday, two traders said.

Arrivals in Kota and Ramganj were pegged at 8,000 bags each, up from 6,000 bags and 7,000 bags, respectively, while Baran arrivals were seen steady at 4,000 bags, traders said. The spot price of coriander was at Rs 7,300, up Rs 100 from the previous level, a local spice dealer said.

Storms, floods delay rabi planting in Andhra Pradesh

Kharif paddy, onion, oilseeds among worst hit



Hyderabad, Nov. 28:

Three successive cyclones in a span of two months have left farmers in Andhra Pradesh facing serious trouble.

The first two, Phailin and Helen, had caused extensive damage to the kharif crop that was ripe for harvesting, besides delaying the rabi sowings.

Though the third one, Lehar, weakened significantly, it only aggravated the situation.

The two cyclones and floods that followed damaged crop on nearly 20 lakh hectares, or nearly one-fourth of the kharif area of 80 lakh hectares.

Though Government reports suggest that crop on 17 lakh hectares was damaged, unofficial estimates put the figure at 20 lakh hectares.

As a result of incessant rains, farmers could sow only on 10-11 lakh hectares when reports last came in.

By now, farmers would have completed planting on 15 lakh hectares. The total area under rabi crop is 39 lakh hectares. Paddy, oilseeds and onion are among the worst hit.

While paddy was sown on 88,000 hectares or 72 per cent of the as-on-date area of 1.22 lakh hectares, oilseeds were sown on 2.23 lakh hectares.

“They should have covered 3.20 lakh hectares by now,” an official of the Agriculture Department told *Business Line*.

Farmers growing pulses covered only 81 per cent of the area (6.76 lakh hectares) they should have covered by now.

Andhra Pradesh Agriculture Minister Kanna Lakshminarayana said that rabi plantings trailed.

“We have directed the officials to get ready with alternative seeds and make them available whenever required,” he told *Business Line*.

The State machinery, however, is busy enumerating the total losses in the kharif season due to the successive cyclones.

Farmers have lost crop on about 12 lakh hectares, or about one-seventh of the total kharif area.

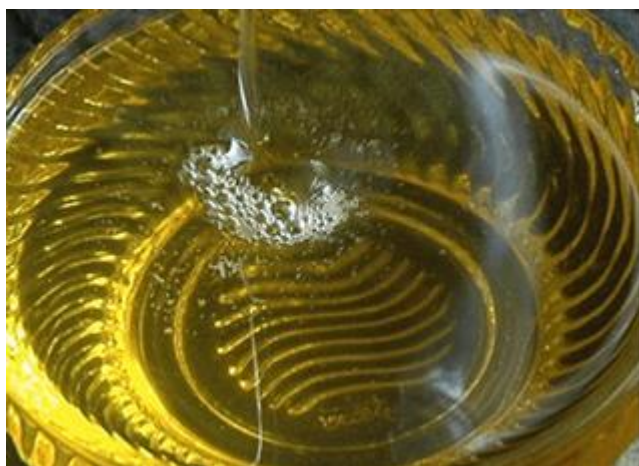
Paddy and cotton farmers suffered most.

Farmers’ organisations have asked the State Government to compensate for the heavy losses.

“We have asked the officials to complete enumeration of losses quickly. We will give an input subsidy of Rs 10,000 a hectare (for paddy),” the Minister said.

The Ministry had asked Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy to increase the compensation to Rs 11,000.

Edible oils mixed despite weak futures



Mumbai, Nov. 28:

Soyabean refined oil dropped by Rs 5 and rapeseed oil declined by Rs 2 for 10 kg on Thursday, tracking weak futures markets amid slack physical demand. Washed cottonseed oil inched up by Rs 3, while palmolein, sunflower and groundnut oil ruled unchanged.

Overall, trading in the edible oils market was choppy for most of the day.

Towards the day’s close, resellers were offering palmolein at Rs 590-592 ex-JNPT and Rs 597-598 in Mumbai.

Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 610, super palmolein at Rs 630 and super deluxe at Rs 650, soyabean refined oil at Rs 685 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 775. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 610, soyabean refined oil at Rs 670 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 721.

Allana quoted palmolein at Rs 610, super palmolein at Rs 628, super deluxe at Rs 648, soyabean refined oil at Rs 675 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 750.

In Rajkot, groundnut oil declined by Rs 30 to Rs 1,270 (Rs 1,300) for *telia* tin and for loose (10 kg) by Rs 15 to Rs 810 (Rs 825). On National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil December contracts closed lower at Rs 722 (Rs 724.05), January at Rs 723 (Rs 724.90) and February at Rs 717 (Rs 721.55).

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

Malaysia BMD crude palm oil December contracts settled at MYR 2,620 (MYR 2,620), January at MYR 2655 (MYR 2639) and February at MYR 2,656 (MYR 2,640).

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: groundnut oil 850 (850), soya refined oil 670 (675), sunflower exp. ref. 670 (670), sunflower ref. 725 (730), rapeseed ref. oil 755(757), rapeseed expeller ref. 725 (727) cottonseed ref. oil 663 (660) and palmolein 591 (591).

Sweet harvest



Gain or loss? A gur (jaggery) outlet at Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh. With sugar mills refusing to start crushing in the new season, gur makers are having a field day purchasing cane from farmers at Rs 150-200 a quintal against the Government's State Advised Price of Rs 280. — Kamal Narang

Another cyclone in the making, may head towards TN

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 28:

Erstwhile very severe cyclone Lehar may have met with a meek end but some US models have put Bay of Bengal under fresh cyclone watch.

US FORECASTS

A causative system may get generated off the Sumatra (Indonesia) coast and head towards Sri Lanka and the adjoining south-east Tamil Nadu.

Climate Prediction Centre of the US National Weather Services has said that the system is likely to form during this weekend or into early next.

It has said that a new disturbance entering the Bay of Bengal has some potential for tropical cyclone development as it moves slowly westward.

As if on cue, India Met Department sees an 'easterly wave' affecting south peninsula from Saturday onwards.

EASTERLY WAVE

Easterly waves are rain-generating waves in the atmosphere moving across the Bay which erupt in rain over Tamil Nadu and adjoining Kerala.

At times in the past, the rain head embedded in the wave has gone on to become low-pressure areas or depressions, even tropical cyclones.

Storm watchers put together the US and India Met Department views to surmise that some activity might get initiated early next week.

A leading storm tracker based in the US had already pointed to the possibility over a fresh buzz here getting louder as the week progresses.

Meanwhile, India Met Department has said that rain or thundershowers would scale up over Andaman and Nicobar Islands from Sunday.

Many places over extreme peninsular India too will experience rain or thundershowers while it will be isolated over rest of adjoining region.

Award for Icrisat scientist

Hyderabad, Nov. 28:

Hari D. Upadhyaya, Principal Scientist (Groundnut) and head of gene bank at the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics has received the Crop Science Research Award from the Crop Science Society of America. He received the award at the society's annual meeting held at Tampa, Florida, in the US recently. He received the award for his "significant and original basic and applied research contributions in crop science and total impact of contributions on crop science," a press release said on Thursday. Upadhyaya is a practical plant breeder and has developed a large number of early-maturing, high-yielding and drought-tolerant groundnut breeding lines.

Business Standard

Stockholding limits for cereals extended by a year

To help address food inflation, states will now be able to impose limits on cereal stocks for another year. On Thursday, the Cabinet decided to extend an order in this regard till November 30, 2014.

The validity of stockholding limits for paddy and rice, which had been extended regularly, was to expire this month.

"The Cabinet has extended the validity of central orders dated December, 2012 in respect of paddy and rice for one year till November 30, 2014," said an official.

The Cabinet decision is aimed at enabling state governments to continue to carry out effective de-hoarding operations under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, by fixing stock limits.

OTHER APPROVALS

Uniform compensation policy for riot victims

National Virtual Library for comprehensive database of digital resources

Rs 1,501.35 cr expenditure for Kolkata Port Trust

Rs 472-crore proposal for scientific deep drilling in Koyna seismic zone to better understand earthquakes

Due to deficient rains in some states, rice production is projected to fall to 92.32 million tonnes (mt) in the kharif season of the 2013-14 crop year (July-June) from 92.76 mt last year.

In October, Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based food inflation stood at 18.2 per cent; this raised overall WPI inflation to seven per cent.