

Conserving the nearly extinct navara red rice organically



Guiding force: Mr. Narayanan Unny says sourcing pure seeds was difficult. —Photo: M.J. Prabu

The Navara Eco farm is nestled on the banks of the quietly flowing Shokanashini river in Chittur, Palghat district, Kerala. The unique aspect of the farm is that it has the largest navara rice growing field (12 acres) in the State.

“Navara is a medicinal rice variety and its cultivation is almost extinct. Many reasons such as non-availability of pure seeds, low yield and high production cost are attributed for this. The speciality is that this is the only organically grown navara rice farm in the region,” says Mr. P. Narayanan Unni, a third generation marketing executive-turned-farmer, running the everyday activities of the farm.

Unlike other rice varieties, which are white in colour, navara is deep red and has been cultivated in the Palghat region for more than 2,000 years but in the last 40- 50 years it has come close to being completely wiped out due to several new hybrid varieties being introduced.

Focus

After taking over the farm’s management about 15 years ago, Mr. Unni decided to turn his attention to conserving native rice varieties in the region. He figured out that many of the traditional varieties are fast becoming extinct.

“I desired to work on conserving this specific rice because, apart from being a traditional variety, it is well known among the local farmers. After years of strenuous effort I was able to collect and segregate enough seeds and gradually moved into cultivating solely navara rice in my 12 acre farm,” he says.

Concept

During this time, he turned to organic farming in a serious manner and gradually evolved the concept of Navara Eco Farm.

“The journey was not easy,” says Mr. Unni and adds “conserving the variety proved an almost impossible task because sourcing pure seeds seemed uphill.

In some places the variety was already contaminated by other hybrid varieties. In addition the low yield (200 kgs from an acre) made the cultivation commercially unviable.

Added to this were problems faced during conversion to organic farming.

According to him, conversion to organic farming in navara rice was not very remunerative but his interest pulled him on.

Pest control proved a major challenge. “Tulsi and marigold were planted on the field bunds to repel the winged menace. Once pests damaged our four acres. For the next cropping season we trained our workers to catch the pests using nylon nets.”

Being a traditional variety it was grown organically but because of its poor yield and difficulties in controlling pests and diseases conventional method of farming was adopted by some interested farmers to conserve it.

Many moved away to growing other hybrid rice varieties.

The crop is sown for seeds directly in the main field during April and harvested in June. Once the seeds are collected and cleaned it is again sown in December and harvested in February (60 days crop)

Selling price

Approximately from an acre 200 -250 kgs are harvested. The variety is presently being sold for Rs. 400 a kg through personal contacts.

But why organic? Can we not grow this crop using fertilizers?

“Since it is a medicinal rice variety for consumption we decided to adopt only organic methods. We did not want the chemical residues in the harvested grains,” explains Mr. Unni. Over the years the farm has been able to educate the labourers on effective farming methods specifically tailored for this type of rice farming. Today the workers guide other growers on the best practices being followed at the farm, according to Mr. Unni.

Several awards

The several awards and recognitions conferred by State, central governments and other leading agriculture institutions seem to prove the importance of his work.

Recently the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers’ Rights Authority conferred the second annual Plant Genome Saviour community recognition award on him.

“The farm has also formed rice clusters for navara and got it registered under Geographical Indication through farmer led initiatives. The entire farm is certified organic from 2006,” says Mr. Unni.

Many scientists, students, authorities of various government departments and agencies are visiting the farm to learn about this variety and its cultivation details.

For details interested readers can contact Mr. Narayana Unni at Navara Eco Farm, Karukamani Kalam, Chittur College P.O., Palakkad Dist, Kerala, India, Pin: 678 104, Phone: 04923- 221177 and 222277, email: unnsfarm@gmail.com, Mobile:09447277749.

Caring for mulberry nurseries: some tips

Mulberry is propagated mainly through saplings obtained from disease-free nurseries.

When mulberry cuttings are planted in nurseries, several soil borne pathogens cause various diseases. Stem-canker, cutting-rot, collar-rot and die-back are the major nursery diseases, which cause more than 30 per cent mortality of cuttings and saplings in nursery.

Ploughing

For destroying the various soil borne pathogens during summer months, the land selected for nursery preparation should be deeply ploughed and solarised by covering the plots with transparent polythene sheets for about a month.

If soil is infested with nematode/ root rot pathogens soil fumigation should be done with Durofume (Ethylene dibromide + methyl bromide, 1:1) at rate of 9 ml/m².

Application of Organophosphate and Carbamate nematicides like Furadan 3G (Carbofuran) at the rate of 4.0 kg or Rugby 10G (Sebufos) at the rate of 3.0 kg/acre of nursery bed is recommended.

The farm implements used in nursery preparation should be dipped in Kerosene or 5 per cent formaldehyde solution before next use. For avoiding occurrence of soil borne diseases, a bioformulation nursery guard should be applied.

One kg of nursery guard is mixed thoroughly with 60 kg of well-decomposed farmyard manure (sufficient for 2,000 stem cuttings) and added to 10-12 litres of water to maintain the 15-20 per cent moisture.

The mixture is stored under the shade for one week by covering with gunny cloth to enhance the multiplication of trichoderma colony.

It is then broadcasted in nursery beds at the rate of 2 kg/m² and incorporated into the soil by light digging before planting the cuttings. Planting material from healthy plots only should be used.

Weed removal

Stem-cuttings should be soaked in 0.2 per cent Dithane M-45 for half an hour before plantation in nursery beds. Weeds around the nursery beds should be periodically removed and properly disposed of.

(Dr. N. B. Chowdary, Scientist, Research Extension Centre sub unit, Central Silk Board, Giddalur – 523357, Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh and Dr. Ch. Satyanarayana Raju, Scientist, Regional Sericultural Research Station, Central Silk Board, Anantapuramu, Andhra Pradesh, email: recsugid@gmail.com, Mobile: 08520882624.)

Scheme to promote poultry farming

An environment-friendly and spacious broiler shed that houses more than 2,000 chickens in a 2,500 sqft area welcome the visitors in Reddiappatty village near Rajapalayam in Virudhunagar district.

N. Navaneethakrishnan, the poultry farm owner who is a beneficiary in the district, said he received an equal subsidy of Rs 2.06 lakh each from the State and the Central government. While the State government fund is meant for constructing the shed, the Central fund is from Poultry Venture Capital Fund. The remaining amount he has borrowed from a bank, Mr Navaneethakrishnan said.

Animal Husbandry department authorities said the 'Poultry Development Scheme' has been launched in non-poultry areas in the State – Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Virudhunagar, Ariyalur, Perambalur, Cuddalore and Villupuram districts as there is a good scope for broiler farming in these areas.

More than 5,000 plus chicks have been given to the farmer by poultry companies. The chicks have to be grown to a weight of two kilograms within 42 days. The company also provides feed and medicine. Mr Navaneethakrishnan said the main problem they faced was the heat due to which the mortality will increase. However, he was able to curtail the mortality to three per cent and the permissible mortality rate fixed by the animal husbandry department is five per cent.

In order to overcome the heat, the farmers provide glucose to the chicks and spray water inside the shed to bring down the mortality rate.

The poultry sheds are eco-friendly ones. The droppings on the floor of the sheds are useful manure for the agricultural farmers.

Mr Navaneethkrishnan already raised one batch of chicken which was taken back by the poultry company. He was able to get more than Rs 50,000 as revenue from the first batch. The farmer will get five batches of over 5,000 chickens in each batch in a year. Mr Navaneethkrishnan said the government should intervene as electricity board officials were charging industrial tariff for his poultry farm.

Farmers happy

Sowing in progress in many parts of Erode district

Rainfall in several parts of the district in the last few days has brought cheer to the farming community, particularly in the southern part of the district where sowing is in progress. The rain from the Northeast monsoon are vital for sustaining paddy cultivation for the next two to three months.

Though farmers started cultivating paddy after the release of water from the Bhavani Sagar Dam on August 24, the water was inadequate for sowing in Modakurichi area and other southern parts of the district, according to S. Nallasamy, secretary, Federation of Tamil Nadu Agriculturists' Association.

According to him, the rain would help these areas to some extent. The dam had received maximum water from the Southwest monsoon and now, the outflow was much more than inflow.

Since the water level in the dam has come down to 12 tmc, of which 1 tmc constitutes dead storage, turn system must be put in place for sustaining cultivation for the next few months. Going by the agricultural productivity in the past, the harvest was high only in those years when the turn-system or irrigation was followed.

The dam has an ayacut area of 2,47,247 acres, of which 2.07 lakh acres are in Lower Bhavani Project area.

Water from the dam is also let into the Thadapalli Arakankottai and Kalingarayan channels for irrigating 24,504 acres.

Rainfall during the last 24 hours ending 8am on Wednesday is as follows: Chennimalai 39mm, Olapalayam 31, Erode 26, Pungampadi 23.6, Perundurai 23, Bhavani 9.4, Muthur 6, and Kodiveri 1mm.

Farmers block road

Farmers of Arundhavapulam at Thalainayar blocked the Thiruthuraipoondi-Nagapattinam road demanding water for samba crop. The area irrigated by Vennar division has not received water from Palavanar canal affecting the direct-seeded fields. Protesters led by Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam affiliated to the CPI(M) and Tamil Nadu Agricultural Labourers Union sought scrapping of the turn system. Following talks with the PWD officials of Vennar division, the road blockade was called off. — Staff Reporter

Ryots seek govt. subsidy to procure farm machinery

“Agricultural equipment like power weeder will help tackle labour problem”

Farmers of Vellore and Krishnagiri districts on Wednesday urged the government to provide subsidy for procuring modern agricultural machinery to tackle the problem of shortage in farm labourers.

They made this representation at a meeting convened by Agriculture Minister S. Damodaran and Agriculture Production Commissioner (APC) and Principal Secretary, Agriculture, Sandeep Saxena to review the implementation of various schemes of Agriculture Department. K.P. Bhoopalan, a farmer of Sholinghur block said that wages for a particular type of agricultural work which was Rs. five in 1968 has gone up to Rs. 250 now. Power weeders currently supplied to farmers in Vellore district were meant for farmers having large extent of land, whereas the equipment was not useful to farmers of Vellore district who have smaller land holdings. “We want power weeders which can be operated even by old farmers. The power weeders should be given at 90 per cent subsidy,” he said.

Damodaran of Velleri village in Gudiyatham block wanted harvesting machines for Red Gram to be given to farmers. Agriculture can be improved if farmers are supplied machinery on subsidy. “We have decided to cultivate cotton utilising SRI technology (system of rice intensification) to increase yield and tackle labour problem,” he said.

Mr. Saxena said the government would arrange for making machinery available to the farmers through the Agricultural Engineering Department (AED).

P. Ganesan of Chennasamudram in Walajapet block wanted direct procurement centres (DPCs) to be set up for paddy to help farmers get a remunerative price for paddy as traders formed a syndicate to quote less price for paddy at regulated markets. The APC asked Vellore Collector P. Sankar to arrange for setting up DPCs.

Perumal, a farmer of Ussoor, wanted implements for de-husking groundnut and tree-climbing equipment to be supplied to coconut farmers.

L.C. Mani of Ranipet wanted all types of agricultural works to be brought under MGNREGS to enable farmers overcome labour problem. He wanted steps to be taken to provide salary promptly every month to horticultural workers of the State Seed Farm in Navlock who were currently being paid their accumulated weekly wages thrice a year.

Rajappa of Hosur in Krishnagiri district wanted hi-tech machines to be supplied to farmers on a subsidy. The agricultural labour shortage was acute in Hosur as most workers work for industries in the SIPCOT Industrial Estate in Hosur or other industries in Hosur and Bangalore.

The APC said that the Agriculture Department has formed committees to examine the machinery needs of farmers and arrange for lending equipment to them. The AED would assess machinery requirements of farmers so that committees could be formed for lending equipment. He said the government is implementing a foodgrains movement to double agricultural production by 2015-16. Though the State has sufficient foodgrains to meet the requirements of the population, steps would be taken to achieve surplus production so that sufficient buffer stocks could be maintained to manage droughts, he said.

While reviewing the implementation of schemes, he asked the agriculture officials of the two districts to gear up their activities to achieve the target for production of foodgrains, including paddy, pulses and millets by adopting innovative strategies.

J.A. Sundar, Joint Director of Agriculture, Vellore, and Radhakrishnan, Joint Director of Agriculture, Krishnagiri, participated.

Policy for rain-fed farming next year

The State will have an exclusive policy for rain-fed agriculture by the end of next year as a large number of farmers with dry land were dependent on the monsoon, said Minister of State for Agriculture Krishna Byre Gowda.

Speaking to presspersons here on Wednesday, he said that a discussion with agriculture experts was in the initial stages and the policy would focus on the latest technology and farming systems that would help farmers get more productivity and quality crops. An interactive session on dry land farming involving experts would be held on September 21. Mr. Byre Gowda said that sowing has been completed in 70 lakh hectares of the targeted 74 lakh hectares. He said that 169 hoblis were facing shortage of rain sometime ago. However, only 30 hoblis have reported rain shortage now raising hopes of a good yield this year. He said that while the target was 130 lakh tonnes of foodgrains, there was a possibility of yield being in excess.

The Minister said that a draft of the proposed Agricultural Price Commission would be ready by next month and it would be submitted to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for approval.

The commission would be vested with statutory powers to implement its decisions for improving quality of farming.

He said that about 33 per cent of foodgrains was going waste due to lack of infrastructure such as warehouses and cold storages.

The Cabinet, he said, had approved providing warehouses in rural areas for which interest subsidy would be given. Cold storages would be built and leased to private parties.

Project to promote liming of farmland



The Department of Agriculture has chalked out a project to promote the application of lime in farmlands across the State. The project is aimed at neutralising the high level of soil acidity that has affected crop productivity in the State.

The pilot project, estimated to cost Rs.1.5 crore, has been approved by the government for implementation in Wayanad district, Director of Agriculture R. Ajithkumar told *The Hindu* .

Planning Board Chief (Agriculture) P. Rajasekharan said the soil-based intervention was worked out on the basis of a multi-institutional study that revealed excessive levels of acidity in 91 per cent of the soil samples collected from across the State.

Use of dolomite

Mr. Ajithkumar said the department would have to look at the option of sourcing dolomite (calcium magnesium carbonate) in large quantities from Tamil Nadu as an alternative to lime, which was scarcely available and expensive. Dolomite is largely used in the cement industry. “During the pilot phase, we will assess the efficacy of dolomite in neutralising the soil acidity.”

Liming also helps to improve plant nutrient uptake and enhances the activity of soil microorganisms, thereby boosting the effect of biofertilizers and biocontrol agents for pest control.

Mr. Ajithkumar, however, said farmers would need financial support in the form of subsidies to cover the cost of liming their holdings. “In the long term, the expense incurred on liming will be offset by higher crop yield. But in the initial phase, farmers would be reluctant to invest in procuring lime.”

Dr. Rajasekharan said the project would be extended to other districts after the pilot phase. J.S. Samra, CEO of the National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) under the Planning Commission, said it was important for Kerala to take up liming as a priority programme to improve fertilizer efficiency and reduce soil toxicity. Dr. Samra, who was in the city to participate in a workshop organised by the Planning Board, said dolomite would be a cheaper alternative to lime. A.K. Sikka, Deputy Director General, Indian Council for Agriculture (ICAR), highlighted the immediate need for a State-level policy on liming to address the problem of soil acidity. He proposed an incentive scheme for farmers to promote the application of lime or dolomite. Former Director of Agriculture R. Hailey said Kerala would require at least 10 lakh kg of lime if the programme to control soil acidity was to be implemented across the State. This, he said, would necessitate an input supply system supported by industry.

Mobile farm-fresh outlets to be rolled out soon

Five vans to be procured for servicing this consumer-friendly venture

To reach out to more number of households and to give boost to farm-fresh vegetables, the Cooperation, Food and Consumer Protection Department has decided to buy five vans. Currently, the department is selling farm-fresh vegetables in select areas through 29 outlets in the city.

As there is a demand from households, the department plans to deploy two vans for selling vegetables and three for transporting vegetables from different parts of the State.

According to informed sources, the State government will spend Rs. 70 lakh for purchase of five vans.

After modifying it as per the requirements, two of them will be used by the Triplicane Urban Co-operative Society.

The department will use the remaining three vans for procuring vegetables from primary marketing cooperative societies located in the districts of Krishnagiri, The Nilgiris and the regions surrounding Palani.

Design yet to be finalised

“The G.O. was issued on Tuesday. Each truck will have a capacity to carry five to six tonnes of vegetables. We are yet to finalise the design that might include refrigeration or cold storage facility as vegetables and fruits have to be brought to the city in fresh condition. The exact date of launch will be announced soon,” an official said.

Having commenced the sale of farm-fresh vegetables on June 20 in Chennai, the department till date has sold 1,800 tonnes of vegetables with the retail sales volume crossing Rs. 5 crore on Tuesday.

“Though the daily sale of vegetable is about Rs. 4 lakh, more and more customers have started to visit our outlets as the prices are comparatively cheaper than the open market. In the recent times, we have brought down the prices of onion, tomato, ginger and coconut by timely intervention. Following requests from customers, we are deploying two mobile outlets and the routes will be finalised soon,” the official added.

Five vans to be procured for servicing this consumer-friendly venture

Balala Hakkula Sangham seeks ban on milk brands

The Andhra Pradesh Balala Hakkula Sangham on Wednesday filed a petition in Lokayukta seeking ban on popular milk brands alleging that they contained harmful bacteria.

Harmful bacteria

The government food analysis department revealed that a few brands contained very harmful bacteria like e-coli, salmonella, heavy platelet count apart from urea, which will harm children and adults alike by affecting their eyes, brain, digestive system and gynaecomastia, its president Achyuta Rao said in a press release.

25 paise is the allocation for vegetables for each child

Expressing concern over the poor infrastructure of many Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) centres and deficiencies in the services offered through them in Tamil Nadu, Thozhamai, a voluntary organisation, has called for a separate Act and increased funding to ensure universalisation of the scheme.

The organisation, which recently conducted a research study on 500 ICDS centres in 20 districts across Tamil Nadu with the support of CRY (Child Rights and You), has suggested the introduction of a separate early childhood care and education system under the scheme. Currently, the ICDS scheme is burdened with various elements which affect the delivery of services, especially with regard to early childhood care and education, it said.

Providing details of the study findings in Tiruchi and neighbouring districts on the sidelines of a zonal-level consultation meet on “status and problems of ICDS centres in Tamil Nadu”

here on Wednesday, A. Devaneyan, director, Thozhamai, said 31 ICDS centres were covered under the study in Tiruchi district, 16 in Thanjavur, 13 in Perambalur, and 18 in Karur. The study had revealed that about 52 per cent of the 31 centres covered in Tiruchi district were operated from old buildings.

Asbestos or sheet roofing were found in 29 per cent of the centres and the concrete roof was found damaged in 22.6 per cent. Floor damages and poor ventilation were found in some centres. Many ICDS centres were functioning from private/rented buildings, he said. Lack of adequate teaching aids and toys, toilets, space, and poor sanitation were among the other problems identified. Pre-school education was not offered in 19.4 per cent of the centres which were covered under the study in the district. Play-way method was not practised in many of these centres.

Mr. Devaneyan said the money sanctioned for the centres was not adequate for grocery and vegetables. "At the current allocation, just about 25 paise is available for vegetables for each child. Will this be adequate to overcome the problem of malnutrition among children?" he wondered. Most children attending the ICDS centres are from marginalised sections of society, including Dalits, he said.

ICDS centres and workers in the State were being burdened with other work from the local authorities.

Calling for an effective monitoring system, the organisation demanded that village panchayats be given powers to monitor the implementation of the scheme.

Study conducted at 500 ICDS centres in 20 districts in the State

Training programme for tiger reserve officials

: A three-day training programme for tiger reserve officials in the Southern region for assessing the tiger status in the country began at the Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR) here on Wednesday.

About 100 officials are attending the training, co-ordinated by the National Tiger Conservation Authority in association with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and the State Forest Department. Delegates from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala are being given training to prepare for the tiger census 2013-14.

Tiger monitoring is done in four phases. It includes collection of ground data using an eight-day protocol; use of remote sensing data and landscape analysis; use of camera trapping and distance sampling; and tiger reserve-level monitoring of data.



The training is given so as to make the census more accurate and analyse the reserve-level problems related to conservation efforts.

The training module has global importance since the country hosts nearly 60 per cent of the world tiger population. In Kerala, its habitat is spread over a large area as compared to the isolated habitat in the northern and Central Kerala region, said K. Sankar of Wildlife Institute of India.

Bivas Pandav, scientist, WII; H.S.Negi, Inspector General, National Tiger Conservation Authority; K.P. Ouseph, Principal Chief Conservator; K.V. Sunramanian, retired director PTR; and Sanjayankumar, deputy director PTR; are leading the training programme.

Northeast monsoon will bring in more rain

The northeast monsoon, which brings a major share of Chennai's rain, is likely to set in late by two or three days. Meteorologists said it would bring in more rainfall than usual.

The northeast monsoon may set in between October 20 and 25, said Y.E.A. Raj, deputy director general, Regional Meteorological Centre, Chennai, releasing this year's forecast on Tuesday. The department forecasts that the State may receive 12 per cent more than what it usually gets. On an average, Tamil Nadu receives 438.2 mm of rainfall during the season.

The delay is attributed to the fact that the southwest monsoon is yet to withdraw. Usually, the northeast monsoon sets in around October 20. Officials of the meteorological department said the State gets nearly 50 per cent of its annual rainfall between October and December.

Chennai too gets most of its yearly rainfall of 140 cm during the northeast monsoon.

The city and its fringes are expected to receive showers following a depression.

Use technology to support natural resources: environmentalist

Gadgil wants decentralised energy, public availability of information



Madhav Gadgil delivering the late Advocate Pandurang Mulgaonkar memorial lecture in Panaji on Wednesday.

Speaking on “An Incurable Optimist’s Vision of Goa 2035” at the late Advocate Pandurang Mulgaonkar memorial lecture here on Wednesday, environmentalist Madhav Gadgil called for a vibrant technology-based economy which would be supportive and not predatory towards natural resources.

Mr. Gadgil, the D.D. Kosambi Visiting Research Professor at Goa University, said the world was moulded by technology and technological progress, and it was the technology that drove the change. He advocated deploying and guiding technology in a prudent way. Mr. Gadgil, who was part of a Golden Jubilee Development Council formulated by the erstwhile government of Goa to formulate a Vision 2035 document for the State, said the government had done nothing to empower the tribals through The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act.

He said nearly 60 per cent of people in India continue to rely heavily on their surrounding natural resources while another 20 per cent people were fast turning into ecological refugees as they were cut-off from their traditional natural resources in the name of mindless development.

Solar energy

Recalling the days when nuclear scientist Homi Bhabha was pushing for nuclear energy as an eventual answer to resolve the country’s energy woes, Mr. Gadgil recalled that it was D.D. Kosambi who disputed that view and asserted that solar energy was the actual answer. He argued that contrary to highly centralised forms such as diesel and nuclear energy, solar energy was much more economical and decentralised.

Mr. Gadgil lamented that though Indians did not pay enough attention to the fast-developing information technology and tools and mechanisms of effective translation in public domain to their own loss.

Giving an example, Mr. Gadgil said the ‘Code of Comunidades’ governing the age-old Goan “Gavkari”-based village land communes continued to be only in Portuguese and till now no serious efforts had been made to translate it into Konkani.

“If you overcome language and literacy barriers on one hand and use of centralised sources of energy is discouraged, people will be freed of their disempowerment much faster,” he said. Emphasising on free flow of information, Mr. Gadgil predicted that through right to information and other evolving mechanisms, democratic tools and legislations, including a march towards direct democracy, “we might have created a world stripped of official secrets”.

Making a forceful plea for community-based resource sharing, Mr. Gadgil opposed predatory technology-driven growth and industrialisation which is replacing traditional activities and community-based natural resources.

Make report on failure of crop public: sangha

The Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha has demanded the Davangere district administration to make public the report submitted by a team of agricultural experts from Agriculture University, Dharwad, regarding the failure of cotton crop in many parts of Davangere district. The sangha urged the district administration to direct the responsible seed company to pay compensation to the farmers for supplying sub-standard seeds.

Talking to reporters here today, Shekarappa and Malleshappa, general secretaries of the sangha's Davangere unit, said an expert team was asked to examine the crop and submit a report to the administration. Though the plants looked healthy, it failed to produce fruit, and as a result the farmers sustained huge crop losses.

The sangha after visiting cotton fields in many places, including Anegod, assured farmers it would clinically test the plants in the university before giving its report.

Hailstorm damages potato crops



Aftermath: Storm water surrounds a house at Athikunna near Gudalur on Wednesday. (Right) Potato crops damaged by hail stones at Nanjanad near Udhagamandalam.- Photo: Special Arrangement

Torrential rains accompanied by hailstorm affected standing potato crops at Nanjanad and nearby places like Kappathorai, about 15 km, from here on Tuesday.

Speaking to *The Hindu* here on Wednesday, Joint Director of Horticulture N. Mani said that the hailstorm, which was unusual for this part of the year, badly damaged potato crops of about 250 farmers over 300 acres.

Pointing out that the crops were about two months old, he said that they had reached the bulking stage. In about 30 to 40 days, they would have been ready for harvest.

Though the rainfall recorded at the Nanjanad farm of the Horticulture Department was only 22 mm, the accompanying hail stones had broken the stems of the plants. Hence, chances of recovery were poor.

To a question, Mr. Mani said that the financial loss per acre would be about Rs.50,000.

He added that if the wet weather continues, potato crops in various places would be affected by late blight disease and tea bushes by blister blight.

In view of the weather, the main lawn of the Government Botanical Garden here will be cordoned off for about a fortnight.

Heavy rains flooded low-lying areas at Pandhalur and surroundings like Athikunna. Storm water also damaged a few houses.

Rainfall

During the 24 hour period ending 8.30 a.m. Wednesday Burliar recorded 50 mm rainfall, Coonoor:- 30, Devala - 26, and Ketti - 22.

In about 30 to 40 days, the potatoes would have been ready for harvest, say farmers.

Call to propagate health benefits of tea

The benefits of tea on the health front should be widely propagated, said the Deputy Director, Tea Board, Hari Prakash, at Gudalur on Wednesday.

Presiding over a programme jointly organised by the Tea Board and the Gudalur-based Centre for Consumer, Human Resource and Environment Protection, he said that children in particular should be made aware of the medicinal properties of tea. They should be taken to tea factories.

Stringent and sustained action by the Tea Board has to a significant extent tackled problems relating to tea adulteration, he added.

The frequent raids conducted by Tea Board officials have produced good results.

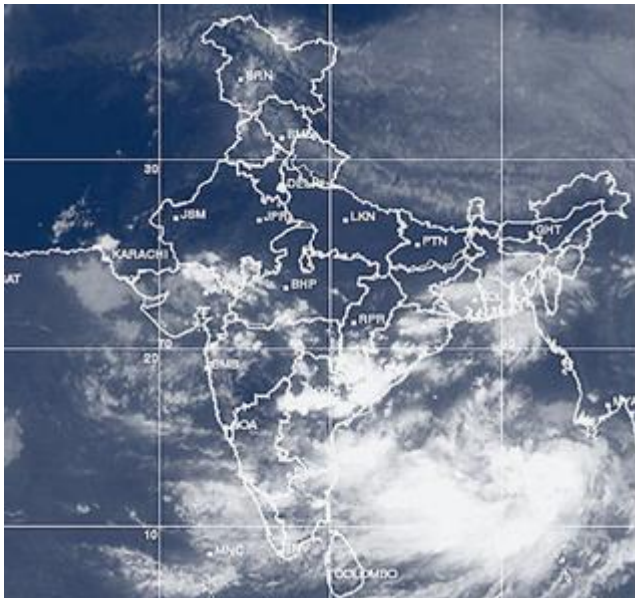
The Tahsildar, Pandhalar Inasimuthu, who inaugurated the programme, said that tea growers should always keep in mind that if the quality of their produce improves, the quality of their life would also improve.

Officer in-charge of Food Safety R.V. Ravi said that duplicate items can be easily identified.

The President, Centre for Consumer, Human Resource and Environment Protection, S.

Sivasubramaniam, said that a series of meetings would be held with the help of the Tea Board to promote tea among children.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on October 09.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Anantapur	30	24	tr	15
Arogyavaram	29	19	2	121
Bapatla	33	24	0	112
Calingapatnam	32	25	1	53
Gannavaram	33	25	1	35
Hanamkonda	35	23	0	15

Hyderabad AP	33	23	0	8
Kakinada	32	26	0	46
Khammam	35	26	0	14
Kavali	35	24	1	11
Kurnool	33	23	7	77
Mahabubnagar	33	21	10	38
Machilipatnam	34	25	0	56
Narasapur	31	26	0	123
Nellore	33	25	7	8
Nizamabad	32	24	0	67
Ongole	37	24	3	4
Ramagundam	32	23	0	63
Tirupathi AP	33	22	4	28
Tuni	33	25	tr	61
Vizag AP	33	26	8	29
Vizag	32	25	3	68

KARNATAKA

Agumbe	28	18	0	316
Bengaluru AP	28	18	15	21
Bengaluru	28	19	22	29
Belgaum AP	30	19	0	11
Bellary	32	24	0	8
Bijapur	33	21	0	5
Chitradurga	30	21	0	1
Chickmagalur	—	18	2	30
Chintamani	28	19	4	7
Gadag	32	20	0	30
Gulbarga	37	24	0	8
Hassan	29	20	0	3
Honavar	32	24	1	89
Karwar	32	25	tr	115
Madikeri	25	18	0	82
Mangalore AP	31	23	26	125
Mysore	31	22	3	31
Mandya	31	22	tr	1
Panambur	32	24	3	119
Raichur	32	24	0	30
Shirali	32	24	21	249

KERALA

Alappuzha	31	23	36	60
Kannur	33	25	15	138
Kochi AP	32	22	72	125
Kottayam	33	22	43	53
Kozhikode	32	25	5	37
Punalur	33	23	11	23
Thiruvanantha				
-puram AP	32	23	4	14
Thiruvanantha				
-puram City	33	24	1	35
Vellanikkara	31	22	3	23

TAMIL NADU

Adiramapattinam	34	23	9	9
Chennai	35	26	0	13
Chennai AP	34	25	0	37
Coimbatore AP	34	23	6	6
Coonoor	22	14	26	27
Cuddalore	36	23	31	31
Dharmapuri	33	18	16	36
Kanyakumari	31	25	0	0
Karaikal	35	24	4	25
Kodaikanal	18	12	3	6
Madurai AP	38	24	6	8
Nagapattinam	35	24	0	3
Palayamkottai	37	25	12	12
Pamban	33	27	0	0
Parangipettai	34	25	0	0
Puducherry	36	24	4	7
Salem	36	19	39	42
Thanjavur	37	26	tr	1
Tiruchi AP	39	22	51	54
Tiruchi	—	—	—	—
Tirupattur	32	17	9	55
Tiruttani	33	23	0	76
Tondi	32	23	7	7
Tuticorin	33	25	2	2
Ooty	20	12	2	19
Valparai	27	16	10	22
Vedaranyam	—	—	—	—
Vellore	34	24	0	27

LAKSHADWEEP

Amini Divi	31	25	2	10
Minicoy	33	27	0	7
Kavarathi	—	—	—	—

OTHER STATIONS

Kolkata (Alipore)	32	25	1	153
Mumbai	32	24	23	23
New Delhi	34	25	0	7

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

RAIN IN SOME PARTS OF A.P.

CHENNAI: The deep depression over North Andaman Sea remained practically stationary and lay centred at 08:30 hrs IST of today, the 09th October 2013 over north Andaman Sea near latitude 13.0 degree N and longitude 93.5 degree E, about 1200 km east-southeast of Visakhapatnam. The system would intensify into a cyclonic storm during next 12 hours. It would move west-northwestwards and cross Andaman islands near Mayabandar by afternoon of today, the 9th October 2013 as a cyclonic storm. It would then continue to move west-northwestwards for some time and then northwestwards and cross north Andhra Pradesh and Odisha coast between Kalingapatnam and Paradip by night of 12th October, 2013 as a very severe cyclonic storm with a maximum sustained wind speed of 175-185 kmph.

Southwest monsoon has been active over Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Rainfall occurred at most places over Kerala, at many places over North Tamil Nadu and at a few places over South Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Coastal Karnataka. Isolated rainfall occurred over Interior Karnataka.

FORECAST (Valid until Friday Morning): Rain or thundershower at many places over North Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala, Telangana, North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and at a few places over South Tamil Nadu, Lakshadweep, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema and Karnataka.



Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Rainy

Thursday, Oct 10

Max 33° | Min 25°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 89

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:58

Sunset: 05:53

Barometer: 1009

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Friday, Oct 11

Max 33° | Min 25°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday
Oct 12



34° | 26°
Cloudy

Sunday
Oct 13



31° | 26°
Overcast

Monday
Oct 14



31° | 25°
Overcast

Tuesday
Oct 15



32° | 25°
Overcast

Wednesday
Oct 16



32° | 25°
Sunny

Porbandar mining scam: High court notice to state government, agriculture minister

AHMEDABAD: Gujarat high court on Wednesday issued notices to the state government and [agriculture minister Babu Bokhiria](#) over three petitions demanding revocation of suspension of his sentence in Rs 54-crore [Porbandar mining scam](#).

Justice S G Shah has sought replies from both the parties by October 17 on demand that the order passed by a Porbandar sessions court on July 20 be quashed. The sessions court suspended the three-year jail term ordered by a magisterial court in connection with illegal mining of limestone. With Bokhiria, Bharat Odedara, Bhima Dula and Lakshman Odedara were also convicted.

These petitions have been filed by Dilip Katariya, Rajesh Vaja and Ashikbhai Vanaliya. Government pleader Prakash Jani objected to this demand. He not only questioned the maintainability of the pleas, but also raised the issue of locus standi of these petitioners. Jani argued that these petitioners did not have any legal right to file litigations in the criminal case.

The petitioners have contended before the high court that the state government had joined hands with the accused and therefore it did not raise any objection to Bokhiria's request before the sessions court for suspension of sentence.

District authorities to apprise farmers about nature of soil

ALLAHABAD: The district authorities have come up with a project 'Know Your Soil' to apprise farmers about the nature of soil in many blocks of the district whether the soil have adequate elements like zinc, carbon, iron etc.

District Magistrate, Raj Shekhar told TOI that a total of 28,797 samples would be collected across the district on October 11 and 25 and November 8. He added that as many as 9,599 samples would be collected on each fixed date.

DM further maintained that duties of employees\officers on panchayat level have been assigned for the same and the assigned officials would be taking [the samples](#) to soil testing laboratories on next date of collection.

Soil testing campaign has proved beneficial for the officials of district [agriculture department](#) as well as farmers. The officials after compiling the soil testing reports have been suggesting farmers to use fertilisers that are replete with zinc and carbon.

The exercise is aimed to maintain the fertility of the soil and check the unbalanced use of chemical fertilisers. DM has asked officials to promote the programme among farmers.

DM, meanwhile, said that at soil testing camps, farmers will be informed about the minerals/elements that can be added to maintain the quality of soil. He added that agro experts have also told farmers about the usage of compost or bio-fertilisers to increase agriculture productivity.

He further added that balanced fertilisation should also take into account the availability of nutrients already present in the soil, crop requirement and other factors.

DM also said that soil health cards would be distributed among farmers on October 20, November 10 and 30 and December 20.

An agro expert said that soil testing is important to practice balanced fertilisation, which differs from region to region and also from crop to crop. Through soil testing, farmers or vegetable growers can know how much and what kind of fertiliser to use for each crop.

A further refinement in fertiliser dose is possible on the basis of type of crop and its variety, water availability and its quality, availability of organic manures, crop residues, and bio-fertilisers.

By testing of soil, farmers can add the required factors to increase the soil productivity.

Farmer bodies oppose meters on new pumpset connections

PATIALA: Reacting to the recent decision of Punjab State Power Corporation Ltd (PSPCL) to install meters on new agriculture pumpset (AP) connections in future, major farmer organizations of the state said they would oppose [the move](#) and will not allow the teams to fix meters.

The organizations termed the decision as nothing but a veiled attempt by PSPCL to start issuing bills to farmers for the power they consumed, being provided free of cost to them for the last over a decade.

"They are fixing meters on the pretext of recording transmission losses. However, it is nothing but an attempt to charge farmers for the power they are getting. First they will install meters and will then gradually start sending bills. We will not allow them to put up meters in our fields. Agriculture is already turning into a non-profitable occupation and the PSPCL

move would ultimately push farmers into economic distress," said Hardev Singh Sandhu, president, Kirti Kisan Union.

PSPCL had recently decided to install electricity meters on new connections following directions from Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission (PSERC).

Although PSERC had directed installation of meters on existing 11.5 lakh AP connections, PSPCL had not taken a decision. It was planning to fix meters in phases, after considering the financial implications, sources said.

Kulwant Singh, general secretary, Jamhuri Kisan Sabha, Punjab, said that if PSPCL wanted to install meters, it should start with agriculturists having big landholdings and should spare small and marginal farmers.

"Installation of meters means that power corporation will start sending bills sooner or later. We are totally against it. Power subsidy is the only benefit a farmer is getting directly from the state government. Installation of meters is the first step towards cutting off this subsidy," he said.

Fatigued cows no good for us, say farmers

PONDA: In a bid to increase milk production, milk producing farmers from Ponda and surrounding talukas have demanded that the government provide cattle procured from Karnataka or Maharashtra as opposed to [Tamil Nadu](#) under the modified Kamdhenu scheme.

Their contention is the long [journey](#) for the milk-producing animals is hampering their yield when they reach Goa.

The scheme which was modified recently requires farmers to purchase cattle only from the government-run farm at Copardem-Sattari. Farmers said on Wednesday that the problem with this is [the animals](#) provided by the Copardem farm yield less milk as compared to animals which were procured earlier from other neighbouring states. Ratnakar Parab Fatrekar, a farmer from Usgao-Ponda explained the causes of poor milk production, "The Copardem farm procures animals from Tamil Nadu which is around 1,200 km from Goa. The animals have to be in standing position for three days during the journey. This makes the animals tired and weak resulting in poor milk production." The actual price for the animal is 60,000 with the government pitching in 40,000 per animal and the farmers having to put up the difference. The farmers also get a further subsidy on the difference.

The state government has implemented the Kamdhenu scheme as a subsidiary occupation in dairy farming. The goal of involving milk producers is to help them set up their own organizations for production enhancement as a subsidiary source of income.

The goal is to help farmers get financial assistance for the purchase of crossbred cows and improved she buffaloes for dairy units, promote self-employment in the dairy sector, boost

the state's milk production, strengthen the dairy co-operative movement in the state, ensure sustainability and provide improved income and livelihood and also encourage the scheduled tribe and scheduled caste communities, farmers claimed.

Adding that the scheme is good, farmers said that the government must eliminate deficiencies in the scheme to make it more feasible to farmers to boost milk production in the state.

"Maharashtra and Karnataka are neighbouring states to Goa and animals from there need lesser time to reach the state as compared to Tamil Nadu. Hence the animals would produce more milk," farmers said.

'Make warehouses for farmers, not traders'

NAGPUR: The committee assessing the feasibility and need for splitting of the Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth (PDKV) in Akola and the Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth (MPKV) in Rahuri had a second-round hearing and interaction with students, teachers and other stakeholders at the College of Agriculture here on Tuesday. Before submitting its report by November end, it will be holding a few more rounds of such interactions.

YSP Thorat, the committee chairman who also is the former chairman of NABARD, did not take any queries and did not make any statements on the interactions. He only reiterated the comments made by the state agriculture commissioner Umakant Dangat while speaking to TOI that there were divided views on the splitting of the university.

However, Thorat also said that he believed that an ideal agriculture university should not just be restricted to developing new varieties and education. "It should encompass everything from the farm to processing, the processing technologies for every possible product from a particular crop to market and the technologies required for everything," he said.

Talking for creating conditions that will allow farmers to hold their crops until they want and get the maximum possible price, Thorat said that the warehouses should be structured for farmers and not traders. "The warehouses should have an accreditation system and must be located right near the villages instead of being stationed in cities," he said.

Former chairman of the national [Agriculture Scientists Recruitment Board](#) (ASRB) CD Mayee, who too is a member of the committee but did not attend the first committee meeting, too wants to widen the scope of the university. He told TOI that he was against the idea of bifurcation or splitting of a university.

Mayee said that he has offered to study the growth pattern of eastern and western Vidarbha using data from various sources and will submit a paper on it to the committee. He also refused to be a member of the team which will look into MPKV and clarified that he will only work for Vidarbha.

"Why can't we have another new university for entire Vidarbha which can address the issues and which PDKV has failed to do. It can focus on secondary agriculture, something which

universities have not done so far. We are only restricting agriculture to just production and selling of certain raw materials, be they grains or crops like cotton. Why can't farmers be involved in entire process of making a finished product with a price decided by him," he said.

Besides Thorat, Dangat and Mayee, Uttam Kadam, the director education of [Maharashtra Council for Agricultural Research](#) (MCAER), and associate dean of agriculture college VS Gonge were also present at the meeting.

Tamil Nadu's forest college moots insurance scheme for tree plantations



Farmers who plant eucalyptus will benefit from the insurance scheme.

COIMBATORE: Here's something for farmers who cultivate trees with commercial value to cheer. The [Forest College and Research Institute](#) at Mettupalayam has tied up with [United India Insurance](#) to insure trees under a small annual premium.

As of now [crop insurance](#) is available only for agricultural crops like paddy, banana and coconut. Farmers who maintain groves of casuarina and eucalyptus do not have the option of insuring their crop. "Farmers generally suffer huge losses due to factors ranging from floods, cyclones and fire to various human causes which destroy years of their toil. This insurance scheme can act as a safety net for these farmers," K T Parthiban, the project leader told TOI.

In the first phase, the insurance scheme will cover seven tree species which are grown in large scale across Tamil Nadu. These include casuarina (chavukku in Tamil), eucalyptus, dalburgia (sissoo), [gmelina arborea](#) (kumil), melia dubia (malai vendhu), ailanthus (peenari) and subabul. Those insured can claim compensation for trees lost due to natural causes like floods and fire, attacks from wild animals, pests and diseases, and even man-made disasters like riots.

"These trees were selected under the scheme as these are among the most widely cultivated trees in the state," said I Sekar, head, department of forest products and utilisation at the forest college, affiliated to [Tamil Nadu](#) Agriculture University. They are used in a range of industries including paper, pulp, timber, firewood and such.

Under the scheme, farmers will have to pay 1.25% of the annual cost of maintaining the trees -- which varies from Rs 300 to Rs 700 per acre depending on the tree - as annual premium. The duration of the insurance scheme for each tree has been fixed.

Sekar said they are trying to get make the terms of insurance more favourable for the farmers. "At present, this is a scheme where the farmer will have to pay an annual premium which we are trying to make it into a one-time payment," he said.

Similarly, they will request the government and industries to bear the insurance cost so that farmers will not have to pay the premium, he said. The insurance scheme may be extended to other tree species in future, he added.

V Balasubramanian, development officer, United India Insurance, Mettupalayam, said the scheme is for those growers who have the said trees in a minimum area of an acre.

China plans geological environmental warning system



The regulation prohibits any individual or companies from publishing environmental monitoring information before it has been reviewed and approved by the county government.

BEIJING: China is planning a geological environment warning system that will issue timely alerts about environmental risks.

Governments at the county level will be responsible for the system.

They should publish geo-environment monitoring results and simultaneously issue warnings if the results indicate abnormal situations, according to a government regulation released today for public opinion.

Local governments should take active measures to prevent possible risks, the regulation said.

The regulation prohibits any individual or companies from publishing environmental monitoring information before it has been reviewed and approved by the county government, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Construction companies must employ qualified geo-environment monitoring institutions to conduct environment appraisals before operations, and they will be responsible for effects caused by their operation.

Karnataka to implement Rs 1900 crore forest project



The project is aimed at expanding forests to bring about ecological restoration and facilitating livelihood improvement of inhabitants of the villages by afforestation.

BANGALORE: The Karnataka government will implement the second phase of the Karnataka Sustainable Forest Management and Biodiversity Conservation Project, aimed at expanding forests, over the next eight years.

The project will involve a cost of Rs 1899.72 crore. It will be implemented with an aid of Rs 1701.98 crore from the [Japan International Co-operation Agency](#) (JICA), with the state government contributing the remaining share.

The project is aimed at expanding forests to bring about ecological restoration and facilitating livelihood improvement of inhabitants of the villages by afforestation.

Forest minister B Ramanath Rai said the state Cabinet has approved the project and a detail project report would be sent to JICA. The first phase of the [KSFMBC](#) was executed between 2005 and 2012 with the aid of JICA (Rs 745 crore). The second phase will run from 2013-14 - 2020-21.

The project would cover all 30 districts, including places such as Bhramagiri, [Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuaries](#), Daroji Bear Sanctuary, Ranebennur Blackbuck Sanctuary, Shettyhalli-Sharavathi Sanctuary, Talacauvery, Bhimgad Wildlife Sanctuary and Kudremukh National Park, Rai said.

Meanwhile, the minister said no wildlife has died due to foot and mouth disease in wildlife sanctuaries of the state.

Department officials have been instructed to take all precautionary steps to prevent the spread of disease in sanctuaries, he said.

More than 2000 cows died due to the disease in various districts, official sources said.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Water conservation policy to be released: Byre Gowda



Minister of Agriculture Krishna Byre Gowda along with officers during the partner summit at NABARD in Bangalore on Tuesday. | Nagaraja Gadikal

The State government is working on releasing a policy for water conservation in rain-fed agricultural areas, Agriculture Minister Krishna Byre Gowda said on Tuesday. He said a meeting in this regard has been arranged with the Chief Minister on October 21.

Speaking at a partners' meet to discuss implementation of the Rs 471.30 crore Karnataka Watershed Development Project (KWDP-II) in seven districts in the State, Byre Gowda said the programme is one of the flagship projects of Karnataka. "It is important because we are now the largest rain-fed agricultural State in India according to some reports. We are looking at a policy which will go beyond watershed development," he said.

Urging all project partners, including the Horticulture and Agriculture Departments, ISRO, agriculture universities and other bodies to work together, Byre Gowda said his experiences with the project are varied. "In some places, the project has brought smiles on farmers' faces and in other places, people are least bothered. We need to strengthen monitoring mechanisms and cannot always depend on the good intentions of the implementing officer," he added.

The project covers Bidar, Gulbarga, Yadgir, Koppal, Gadag, Davangere and Chamrajanagar districts with 28 taluks, 108 gram panchayats in 524 micro watersheds in 2.52 lakh hectares. The project is expected to be completed in 2018-19 and is being funded by the World Bank with a 30 per cent State government share.

Food Security Act now seen in Kolu-land



Ever thought of a connection between the Food Security Act and Navarathri celebrations? If you can't figure out any, one man in Chennai has certainly found one. An employee of the Food Corporation of India and an ardent Navarathri Kolu tradition enthusiast, R Ramadoss and his wife have come up with a Kolu exhibition explaining the workings of the Food Corporation of India, which is the backbone of the Food Security Act.

“There can be no Food Security Act without the Food Corporation of India. Everything from the procurement of grains from the farmers to storing them, creating buffer stocks and distributing it to states, is all done by the FCI. But the awareness about the organisation is very low. That is the reason why we thought of taking this up as the theme for our Kolu exhibition,” said R Ramadoss, Manager at the FCI. Another reason for the exhibition is that this is the golden jubilee celebrations of the Corporation.

The exhibition showcases an elaborate model of the FCI and its operations. Everything from the transportation of the stocks on the train, the lorries, the Purchase center, various types of godowns including Covered Godown, Silo Railway line godown, QC Lab, Electronic Weigh Bridge are displayed in detail. Also seen is a model of a Tanjore temple with the FCI models. “As FCI was inaugurated in Tanjore in 1964, we thought we could include a model of Tanjore Temple to bring out its significance,” said Sukanya Ramadoss.

The couple has also put up a photo display of the FCI to go with the exhibition. The people who come to view the exhibition are given a pamphlet listing out the activities of the FCI along with the traditional Thambulya.

The couple has been making the best of their Navarathri celebrations over the last few years to spread awareness about issues that they believe in. From global warming to untouchability

to awareness about small scale industries and businesses and like weaving, tea shops, etc have been put out on display over the years.

But in spite of the amount of effort that they have put into the exhibition the couples feel that encouragement for it has dwindled over the years. “Earlier every year, a number of organisations would come up at the Navarathri period to showcase competitions for Kolu exhibitions and bring out the best. But over the years the numbers are going down. This year we have not heard of even one,” he says.

Business Standard

Extended rains boost rabi crop prospects



Extended rains across the country have led to hopes of a rise in rabi crop acreage. This follows estimates of a bumper kharif crop this year.

At a recent meeting, Agriculture Minister [Sharad Pawar](#) had said India's wheat output was expected to exceed the record of 94.9 million tonnes (mt) in the 2011-12 crop year (July-June). “The government hopes this rabi season, wheat production would achieve another milestone, given the right amount of moisture available in the soil and various interventions by the central and state governments,” he had said.

In the 2012-13 crop year, wheat production had declined to 92.5 mt. Production of other major [rabi crops](#), including barley, mustard seed and chana, is also likely to rise due to the likelihood of higher acreage this season.

This year, the onset of the southwest monsoon was on time and most areas recorded normal rains. However, in some areas in Bihar, Jharkhand and the northeast, rainfall stood at only 20-30 per cent of the long-period average. Pawar said good rains in July and August had raised hopes of a bumper harvest this year. A dry September would help the rice crop mature well in north India, he added.

Against last year's kharif foodgrain production of 128.2 mt, this year's production was pegged at 129.32 mt, according to the first advance estimate.

This year's rabi crop yield could be very high if winter rains were timely and temperatures favourable, said Prerana Desai, vice-president (research), Kotak Commodity Services.

Prasoon Mathur, a Religare Commodities analyst, said for the rabi crop, the climate had turned favourable, with spells of rains. However, increased soil moisture would be a hurdle to harvesting [kharif crops](#), albeit for a short period. "Initial indications are the rabi crop output will remain high this year," said Mathur.

"The extended monsoon will be good for the rabi crop and given the monsoon is expected to be favourable, we can continue to see good prospects for agriculture. But given the higher base of last year, our forecast for agri output will be 3- 3.5 per cent this year. Wheat, in particular, would do well," said Madan Sabnavis, chief economist, CARE Ratings.

FERTILE GROUND				
Output of major rabi crops (million tonnes)				
Year	Wheat	Rape/mustard seed	Barley	Chana
2005-06	69.35	8.13	1.22	5.60
2006-07	75.81	7.44	1.33	6.33
2007-08	78.57	5.83	1.20	5.75
2008-09	80.68	7.20	1.69	7.06
2009-10	80.80	6.61	1.35	7.48
2010-11	86.87	8.18	1.66	8.22
2011-12	94.88	6.60	1.62	7.70
2012-13	92.46	7.82	1.74	8.88

Source: Ministry of Agriculture

Sugar exports to get a lift from refining growth abroad

A jump in [sugar refining](#) capacity in [Asia and Africa](#) is set to help India boost exports of the raw variety of the sweetener and reduce the world no 2 producer's bulging stocks.

Capacity for turning raw sugar into the white variety in Sri Lanka, Iraq, Yemen, Egypt and Bahrain, is expected to almost double from current levels of 5.6 million tonnes (mt) annually in coming years, industry executives said.

India, which has exported only small quantities of sugar lately, could ship as much as three mt in 2013-14, capitalizing on rising demand in the two regions.

"Significant refining capacities have come up and substantial capacity is being added in both Asia and Africa and that will, in a few years, lead to about 10 mt of total refining capacity in that region," said Leonardo Bichara Rocha, an economist with the International Sugar Organization.

Rapid population growth, a rising middle class and migration to cities from rural areas mean more demand for ice creams, soft drinks and processed food, pushing up sugar consumption to 35-40 mt a year in Asia and Africa, according to trade and industry officials.

When consumption is stagnating elsewhere, traders see an annual 2-3 per cent rise in sugar demand in Asia and Africa.

As production from the cane crop has lagged demand growth in the region, refineries are springing up to fill the gap. The refineries import raws, or unrefined sugar, to process into whites at a refining cost of \$60-\$90 a tonne and charge a premium on the end-product.

Al Khaleej Sugar in Dubai and Savola Group in Saudi Arabia were the first to spot the opportunity and build refineries. Others are now following suit.

In India, sugar production has surged, with 2013-14 expected to be a fourth straight year of surplus output. India's stockpiles stand at more than 8 mt.

Indian mills, on their part, plan to boost production of raws to meet rising demand from the regional refineries. "Companies would focus more on raws to cater to demand overseas," said Sanjay Taparia, chief financial officer of Simbhaoli Sugars.

More production of raws for exports would mean a lower output of whites, which would help cut India's stockpiles. Also aiding exports from Indian mills will be a turnaround in New York raw sugar futures and a drop in refining margins, making it more lucrative to [export](#) raw sugar.

White-over-raws premiums fell to between \$85 and \$88 a tonne from \$121 in August. Meanwhile, New York front-month contract has rebounded 16 percent since falling to a three-year low of 15.93 US cents a pound in mid-July, partly on hopes the market could absorb a global surplus.

Indian shipments will have the benefit of geographical proximity to the refineries compared to competitors such as Brazil, the world's top sugar producer and exporter.

"You have got \$10-\$15 (per tonne) freight advantage than Brazil," said Nick Kwolek, regional manager of Sucden Middle East in Dubai.

Still, India would face stiff competition from Thailand, the world's second-largest sugar exporter, where availability of the sweetener for shipments is expected to jump after the crushing season starts in mid-November.

"The fourth quarter and the early first quarter of next year will be very important for India, before Thai producers have raw sugar volume to export. That will be a window the Indian producers will be able to exploit," said Tom McNeill, director at Brisbane-based commodities analyst Green Pool.

Himachal apple box size to be standardised

A long standing demand of the [Himachal Pradesh apple farmers](#) may soon be fulfilled with the designing of a new apple carton matching the standard international carton size .

Sources in the state [horticulture department](#) say a team from the Indian Institute of Packaging(IIP) from Mumbai has just finished a visit to the state and met farmers among others to design a carton .Currently the height of the cartons available in the market can be increased and more fruit packed into them.

Wholesale buyers who transport and sell the fruit all over the country put pressure on farmers to increase the weight of a carton from 20 kg to around 30 kg as it costs cheaper to ship the produce. But farmers say this cause them losses.

Sources say The IIP designers are now working on a plan to design a carton which will have fixed height so that only 20 kg fruit can be packed into them.

Once apple is picked from trees it is graded on the basis of size and colour . For many years buyers have also been asking farmers to pack much bigger size fruit which increases the weight of the carton and results in losses to growers .

State director of Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) Prakash Thakur says the purpose of designing new cartons is to ensure that only 20 kg of fruit fits into a carton of standard size which matches international standards.

Soyameal exports touch all time high of over Rs 10000 cr

Exports of [soyameal](#) have jumped 37% to touch an all time high of Rs 10,588.43 crore in marketing year 2012-13 (October-September), mainly on the back of rupee depreciation.

Exports of soyameal during the same period last year stood at Rs 7,745.36 crore, according to the data available with Soyabean Processors Association ([SOPA](#)).

"Total realisation from exports this year was high despite fall in the quantity of exports, manly due to fall in the value of rupee against dollar," SOPA spokesperson Rajesh Agrawal said.

However, in quantitative terms, the total exports of soyameal declined 4% to 34.73 lakh tonnes during the marketing year 2012-13 from 36.23 lakh tonnes in the previous year on lower availability of soyabean for crushing.

Also, soyameal exports to Iran have jumped 85% to 9.64 lakh tonnes during marketing year 2012-13 amid trade sanctions from the US.

Japan, France, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and Korea are the other major destinations for Indian Soybean meal exports.

Soyameal is mainly used as animal feed and India is Asia's biggest soyameal exporter.

Mustardseed up 1.2% on firm spot sentiments

[Mustardseed](#) prices strengthened by Rs 45 to Rs 3,713 per quintal in futures trade today following traders buying in line with firm physical cue.

Marketmen said the rise in mustardseed prices mainly attributed to rise in spot demand from vanaspati ghee making units due to festive seasons.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), mustardseed for far January contract shot up by Rs.45, or 1.23% to Rs.3,713 per quintal, with an open interest of 2,340 lots.

Most active near November contract advanced by Rs.32, or 0.89% to Rs.3,635 per quintal, having an open interest of 36,960 lots.

Current October contract rose by Rs 29, or 0.82% to Rs 3,568 per quintal in 16,130 lots.

Chana up 2.3% on rising demand

[Chana](#) rose by Rs 72 to Rs 3,140 per quintal in futures trade today as traders enlarged holdings on rising demand in the spot market.

Restricted arrivals of the commodity in the physical market, tracking a pick-up in festival demand.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), chana for delivery in November rose by Rs 72, or 2.34%, to Rs 3,140 per quintal, with an open interest of 1,09,190 lots.

Similarly, chana prices for delivery in October traded higher by Rs 44, or 1.47%, to Rs 3,020 per quintal, with an open interest of 61,180 lots.

Traders said speculators increased their holdings on hopes of rise in spot market demand against restricted arrivals of the commodity in the physical market.

They said increased enquiries from millers at lower levels against fall in supplies from the producing regions of Gujarat and Rajasthan further supported the uptrend.

Crude palm oil up 0.9% on increase in spot demand, global cues

[Crude palm oil](#) rose by Rs 4.80 to Rs 518 per 10 kg in futures trade today, gaining for the fourth straight day as traders and speculators indulged in expanding positions on expectations of rise in spot demand.

Further, decline in supplies from the overseas markets also influenced prices.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), crude palm oil for delivery in November rose by Rs 4.80, or 0.93%, to Rs 518 per 10 kg, with a business turnover of 167 lots.

The oil for October delivery increased by Rs 4.30, or 0.83%, to Rs 521.90 per 10 kg, with trading volume of 200 lots.

In Malaysia, Palm oil gained as much as 0.70% to 2,365 ringgit (\$737) a tonne on the Malaysia Derivatives Exchange.

Marketmen attributed the rise in crude palm oil prices at futures trade to firm spot demand and a firming global trend where palm oil climbed to one-month high on speculation that output in Malaysia, the world's second-biggest producer, may have expanded last month at a slower pace than predicted by analysts.

Cardamom extend losses on profit-booking, down 2.9%

[Cardamom](#) prices fell further by 2.99% to Rs 621.40 per kg in futures trade today as speculators engaged in booking profits at prevailing levels amid subdued demand in the spot market.

Increased arrivals from the producing regions also put pressure on the cardamom prices in futures trade.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for delivery in October declined by Rs 19.20, or 2.99%, to Rs 621.40 per kg, with a business turnover of 173 lots.

Likewise, the spice for delivery in November declined by Rs 4.90, or 0.66%, to Rs 737.30 per kg, with a trading volume of 620 lots.

Market analysts said besides profit-booking by speculators, subdued demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position also kept pressure on the cardamom prices at futures trade.

Rubber growers want Govt to suspend duty-free imports

Kochi, Oct 9:

Indian Rubber Growers Association has urged the Union Government to issue notification to increase the import duty of rubber to Rs 34 and suspend duty-free imports for six months. In a representation submitted to the Union Commerce Ministry, Association President Siby J. Monippilly said the Rubber Board had passed a resolution recommending the Ministry to change the import duty to 20 per cent or Rs 34 two months ago. However, no action has been taken in this regard.

When the import through duty-free channel increased, the Government temporarily suspended duty-free import (DEEC) in 1999.

The increase in the import duty of manufactured rubber goods to 20 per cent can also be put in place, he said.

When the prices touched Rs 242 during 2009-10, the import duty was changed to 20 per cent or Rs 20 for a period of one year on the request of the consuming industry, which was agreed to by growers too.

Now, the prices have declined to Rs 166 and this could be attributed to unwarranted imports to manipulate the prices, he added.

He pointed out that a reasonable rise in price is absolutely essential to maintain growers in cultivation and to provide supply of natural rubber during March, April, May season where domestic prices are invariably below the international price.

The Association also expressed concern over the decision of the tyre manufacturers to temporarily withdraw from the market by abstaining from rubber trading for a week.

This has created confusion in the trade affecting smooth functioning of the rubber industry, he said.

Consequent to their withdrawal, rubber dealers also abstained from trading due to lack of buyers in the market, he added.

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AP stir hits Coonoor tea trade

Coonoor, Oct. 9:

Telangana issue is affecting Nilgiri tea trade with demand from Andhra Pradesh tapering significantly following paralysing of the transport to many regions.

“We tasted the teas displayed at the golden jubilee of Coonoor Tea Trade Association (CTTA) and found some teas those from Homedale, Vigneshwar and Crosshill factories as of high quality suiting top-bracket markets in Andhra Pradesh. While buying them, we suggested to CTTA to classify such consistently high-priced teas in ‘distinction category’ by rating them ‘gold’ to guide our purchase portfolio”, some buyers from Andhra Pradesh said. However, with frequent and prolonged bandh, demand from Andhra traders has tapered.

Considering that transport to North India via Andhra Pradesh has become uncertain, upcountry buyers are also increasingly procuring their teas from North Indian auctions. In the last two weeks, 30-35 per cent of the offer had remained unsold. No auctioneer could sell more than 77 per cent of the offer. Some auctioneers had to sell as much as 45 per cent of catalogued teas outside the auction. At Sale No: 41 to be held on Thursday and Friday, 1.95 lakh kg of the teas remaining unsold in the previous auctions have been catalogued. In all, 18.12 lakh kg is coming up for auction – 2.01 lakh kg more than last week. Of the 18.12 lakh kg on offer, 12.48 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 5.64 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades. As much as 17.34 lakh kg is of CTC variety and only 0.78 lakh kg, orthodox variety. The proportion of orthodox teas continues to be low in both the leaf and dust grades. In the leaf counter, only 0.43 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 12.05 lakh kg, CTC. Among the dusts, only 0.35 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 5.29 lakh kg, CTC.

Pepper hot on continued good demand

Kochi, Oct. 9:

Uptrend continued in the pepper markets on strong demand amid tight supply and consequently the futures and the spot prices ended above the previous day closing. Brisk buying activities were reported for physical pepper which is at short supply, market sources said. Exporters who have earlier commitments were also covering. Meanwhile, leading exporters and processors reported to have bought about 40 tonnes of pepper released by the food safety authorities sometime ago at a discounted price of Rs 425-430 a kg, despite the tail attached to the transactions by the FSSAI. On the spot, seven tonnes of farm grade pepper arrived and five tonnes were traded at Rs 410-412. Karnataka was reportedly offering what ever little material available at Rs 420-425 delivered anywhere in India on cash and carry basis, the trade said. There is said to be no selling pressure in the primary markets of Kerala, they said. In the international market also, all the origins except Brazil was reported to have a tight availability situation. On the NMCE, Oct and Nov contracts increased by Rs 343 and Rs 275 respectively to Rs 44,150 and Rs 44,151 a quintal. Total turnover decreased by seven tonnes to 22 tonnes. On the IPSTA, Oct and Nov contracts went up by Rs 100 and Rs 300 respectively to close at Rs 44,000 and Rs 44,300. Total turnover was down by 14 tonnes at 35 tonnes. Spot prices also moved up by Rs 200 to close at at Rs 41,000 (ungarbled) and Rs 43,000 (garbled) on good buying support amid tight availability. Indian parity in the international market was up at \$7,400 a tonne (c&f) Europe and \$7,650 a tonne (c&f) for the US. Other origins were also reportedly firm.

Delay in withdrawal of monsoon hits soyabean harvest in M.P.

New Delhi, Oct. 9:

It has been a disturbed beginning for soyabean harvest this year, mainly in Madhya Pradesh. The delay in withdrawal of monsoon is impacting the harvest process resulting in poor quality beans.

Also, market arrivals have been hit resulting in a sluggish start to the crushing season. This has made the exporters of soya meal, who have contracted for an estimated one million tonnes till December, jittery.

“The extended rains have hit the harvest mainly in Madhya Pradesh and parts of Rajasthan. The arrivals in M.P. markets have been around 1.5 lakh bags (15,000 tonnes) on Wednesday, much lower than the 9 lakh-10 lakh bags at this point in time,” said Rajesh Agarwal, spokesperson for the Soyabean Processors Association (SOPA). Also, the high moisture content in beans has affected processing, with only 50 per cent of the 140 units starting crushing operations, Agarwal added.

The beans that are arriving in the market have 17-20 per cent moisture content, while the ideal level for crushing is around 10-12 per cent.

Under normal conditions, the monsoon should have begun withdrawing from parts of M.P. at this time.

“However, it has been raining on and off and we hope that it will not last long,” Agarwal added.

The situation is not that bad in Maharashtra, where the arrivals are estimated at two lakh bags.

According to the India Meteorological Department, East Madhya Pradesh received 386 per cent excess rains during October 1-8 period over normal precipitation for the period. In West M.P., the rains were excess by 94 per cent, East Rajasthan (55 per cent), West Rajasthan (73 per cent), Vidarbha (241 per cent), Saurashtra 189 per cent and Gujarat 140 per cent for the period.

An official at a New Delhi-based export house said the rains impacting harvest had made merchant exporters, who aggregate soya meal from crushing units and sell them to overseas buyers, a bit nervous. These exporters are likely to find it difficult to execute their commitments.

In its first crop estimate, SOPA has pegged output in M.P. at 59.47 lakh tonnes, a decline of 7 per cent over last year's 66.85 lakh tonnes. It said the crop had suffered in districts such as Harda, Hoshangabad, Betul, Raisen, Vidisha, Sagar, Damoh, Bhopal and Bundelkhand on account of excess rains.

In fact, SOPA has pegged the total crop this year at 129.83 lakh tonnes, about 17 per cent lower than the Agriculture Ministry's early estimates of 156.81 lakh tonnes on crop damage and lower yields in M.P.

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Spot rubber rules steady

Kottayam, Oct.9: Physical rubber prices were steady on Wednesday.

The market lost the initial strength tracking the late declines in domestic futures.

The trend was partially mixed while latex fell further amidst scattered transactions.

Sheet rubber finished unchanged at Rs 168 a kg, according to traders.

The grade, improved to Rs 168 (Rs 167.50) at Kottayam and Kochi, as reported by the Rubber Board.

October futures weakened to Rs 169 (Rs 171.46), November to Rs 170.01 (Rs 172.63), December to Rs 172.10 (Rs 174.53) and January to Rs 175.03 (Rs 176.82) while the February and March futures remained inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. RSS 3 (spot) dropped to Rs 156.80 (Rs 157.15) at Bangkok.

October futures closed at ¥247.7 (Rs 157.45) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg RSS-4: 168 (168); RSS-5: 162 (162); Ungraded: 158 (158); ISNR 20: 158 (158) and Latex 60%: 128 (129).

Profit booking crushes castor seed futures



Rajkot, Oct. 9: Castor spot price moved up as buying improved at the lower level.

Moreover, some fresh demand in castor oil also supported the spot price.

Castor seed futures was traded weak on the back of profit booking by traders.

On the Rajkot Commodity Exchange, castor December contract was down by Rs 18 to Rs 3,760 a quintal. Spot castor increased by Rs 20 to Rs 3,465.

On the NCDEX, castor November contract lost Rs 33 to Rs 3,653 with an open interest of 102,840 lots.

NCDEX December castor contract was down Rs 28 to Rs 3,892 with an open interest of 111,660 lots. Castor oil was traded higher by Rs 5 at Rs 725 for 10 kg. About 12,000-13,000 bags of castor seed arrived in Gujarat and price stood at Rs 695-710 for 20 kg. Around 3,200-3,500 bags arrived in Saurashtra and prices were Rs 650-675. A broker said that in the past few days futures saw an uptrend and hence traders resorted to profit booking. However, the fall was limited as spot prices moved up on the back of demand.

Poultry feed may rule unchanged

Karnal, Oct. 9:

Following volatility in prices of key ingredients, poultry feed prices remained unchanged on Wednesday.

Aditya Mishra, an expert, told *Business Line* that despite some recovery in the prices of soyameal and a few other ingredients, prices of poultry feed products were unchanged. “We were waiting for the prices to stabilise and feed products may continue to rule without alteration for the next few days,” he said.

In the physical market, soyameal improved by Rs 500 and sold at Rs 32,900 a tonne while bajra went further up by Rs 100 and sold at Rs 12,400-700 a quintal.

Di-calcium phosphate sold at Rs 34.60 a kg, MBM sold at Rs 30 a kg while maize eased by Rs 15 and went for Rs 1,470-1,510 a quintal. DRB increased by Rs 100 and sold at Rs 11,100 a quintal while rice bran oil was at Rs 59 a kg.

Mustard de-oiled cake went up by Rs 200 and sold at Rs 14,700 a tonne.

Feed products

Broiler concentrate quoted at Rs 1,960 for a 50-kg bag while Broiler Starter Mash sold at Rs 1,500. Pre-lay mash sold at Rs 1,025. Layer concentrate 25 per cent was sold at Rs 1,465 while Layer concentrate 35 per cent was at Rs 1,150.

Poultry Products

Broiler ruled flat at Rs 66-67 a kg, egg went down by 3 paise and was at Rs 3.12, while chick went for Rs 24, unchanged.

Ample supply holds sugar steady

Mumbai, Oct. 9: Sugar prices ruled unchanged on Wednesday with routine activities in absence of any supportive cues. On the Vashi market, spot prices declined by Rs 2-5 at higher end. *Naka* and mill tender rates ruled steady.



As supply is ample morale was calm, said sources. Market carries more than sufficient stocks.

Sources said that since producers are desperate to sell old stocks with the start of new crushing season and in the absence of neighbouring States' buying or export demand liquidity of the commodity remain ample in local markets.

Indian sugar mills are carrying more than 80-85 lakh tonnes of sugar and hopes of higher output in 2013-14 pressurises the market sentiment.

In domestic market, activities remained routine despite higher festival demand due to ample and continuous supply.

Arrivals at Vashi market were 62-63 truck loads (of 100 bags each) while local dispatches were 61-62 truck loads.

On Tuesday, 13-14 mills sold about 24,000-25,000 bags at Rs 2,750-2,850 (Rs 2,750-2,850) for S-grade and Rs 2,900-3,000 (Rs 2,930-3,000) for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar November futures was down by Rs 8 to Rs 2,901 (Rs 2,901) and January declined by Rs 8 to Rs 2,900 till noon.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 2,962-3,100 (Rs 2,962-3,105) and M-grade Rs 3,096-3,271 (Rs 3,096-3,272). **Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 2,890-2,950 (Rs 2,890-2,950) and M-grade Rs 3,005-3,130 (Rs 3,005-3,130). **Uttar Pradesh rates were:** Muzzafarnagar Rs 3,225.

Stockists' buying, festival demand heat up edible oils



Mumbai, Oct. 9:

Edible oils prices extended gain for fourth consecutive day on the back of firm futures and festival demand.

Improved demand for seeds for next sowing and for exports pushed up groundnut oil further by Rs 25 for 10 kg in Saurashtra.

Rapeseed oil rose by Rs 5 and cotton oil by Rs 2.

Hike in price by local refineries tracking bullish futures market lifted palmolen and soyabean refined oil by Rs 2 and Rs 14 respectively.

Sunflower oil ruled unchanged.

Sources said that stockists continued fresh buying to fill up pipeline which remain empty till last month.

Higher physical demand for Dussehra and Diwali kept the volumes higher.

Towards the day's close, Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 565, super palmolein Rs 595 and super deluxe Rs 615, soyabean refined oil Rs 673 and sunflower refined oil Rs 800.

Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 563, soyabean refined oil Rs 671 and sunflower refined oil Rs 785.

Allana was quoting palmolein at Rs 564-568, soyabean refined oil Rs 672 and sunflower refined oil Rs 820.

In Rajkot, groundnut oil rose by Rs 40 to Rs 1,400 for *telia* tin and loose (10 kg) higher by Rs 25 at Rs 900 .

In main producing States, soyabean's arrivals were 1.25-1.5 lakh bags and its prices were Rs 2,800-3,300 (new crop) and Rs 3,300-3,500 (old crop) ex mandi and Rs 3,350-3,650 for plant delivery.

Mustard seed arrivals were 75,000 bags and its prices were Rs 3,220-3,775.

Malaysia BMD crude palm oil's November futures settled higher at MYR 2,368 (MYR 2,349), December at MYR 2,369 (MYR 2,349) and January at MYR 2370 (MYR 2351).

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: groundnut oil 900 (890), soya refined oil 670 (656), sunflower exp. ref. 730 (730), sunflower ref. 785 (785), rapeseed ref. oil 720 (715), rapeseed expeller ref. 690 (685) cottonseed ref. oil 680 (678) and palmolein 560 (558).

Tur to trade in ranges; urad's rally to continue



Indore, Oct. 9: Pulse seeds and pulses in Indore mandis ruled firm even as its arrival declined on account of fresh spell of rains in the State.

Amid weak arrival and subdued demand, tur (Maharashtra) ruled firm at Rs 4,400 a quintal, while tur (Madhya Pradesh) was quoted at Rs 3,700-3,900.

Notwithstanding rise in sowing area in tur, reports of damage to tur crop and possible decline in output have alerted stockists who may go for building inventories before the new crop starts hitting mandis in mid-December.

According to Prakash Vora, tur prices will likely to remain range-bound in the coming days, even as demand will increase as arrival of imported tur will likely to reign in any kind of uptrend .

Tur dal (full) was being quoted at Rs 6,200-6,400, tur dal (sawa no) at Rs 5,600-5,800, while tur marka ruled at Rs 6,600-6,900.

Urad also ruled firm at Rs 4,000-4,100 on weak arrival, while urad (medium) ruled at Rs 3,300-3,600. With arrival continuing to be on the lower side on account of damage to the

crops due to heavy rains and lesser import deals, rally in urad is likely to continue, said a trader. Urad dal (medium) was Rs 4,500-4,600, urad dal (bold) at Rs 4,700-4,800, while urad mongar ruled at Rs 5,200-5,500 a quintal.

Turmeric gains colour as arrivals dwindle



Erode, Oct. 9: Poor arrivals and higher demand have led to a rise in spot turmeric prices. “Quality hybrid finger variety turmeric arrived and its prices were up Rs 600 a quintal. The other varieties also saw uptrend. But still no fresh upcountry order was received by the local turmeric exporters and traders. They are now buying the yellow spice for their local supply,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

Some turmeric farmers are of the opinion that the price of the turmeric will go up to Rs 8,000-9,000 soon. But the traders denied and said that they may get reasonable upcountry orders when the prices may touch a maximum of Rs 7,000 a quintal, as the merchants in North India are having adequate stock of turmeric purchased from Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

The root variety turmeric price was increased to Rs 5,144 in the Regulated Market Committee.

Buyers have purchased almost the entire quantity as they received fresh orders for the same from North India.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,099-5,739; the root variety Rs 3,899-4,111.

Salem Hybrid Crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 4,727-6,419 and the root variety Rs 4,474-5,137. Of the 415 bags arrived, only 102 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,439-5,731 and the root variety Rs 4,109-5,144. All the 108 bags were traded.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety quoted Rs 4,118-5,878 and the root variety Rs 4,149-4,831. All the 202 bags found takers.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,898-5,931 and the root variety Rs 4,760-5,091. All the 150 bags were sold.
