

Rain brings hope for farmers

The sudden downpour in Usilampatti and Thirumangalam for well over three hours on Tuesday night has brought some hope for the farmers in the region.

Describing the rainfall as ‘cloud burst,’ Joint Director of Agriculture Jayasingh Gnanadurai said on Wednesday that many ponds and tanks in Usilampatti, Kodikulam, Chellampatti and Thirumangalam areas had got adequate water, and the Nilayur canal near Nagamalai Pudukottai was full.

The timely rain had kindled the hopes of farmers, whose spirits were dampened till Monday with the rising mercury levels. The rain would also help recharge the ground water, he noted. Now, the farmers who had sown cotton, maize and pulses were confident of carrying on with the successive phases of activity. Similarly, those who were planning to raise paddy crop could start transplanting the nursery, he pointed out.

To encourage the farmers in the Usilampatti belt – an area considered not so fertile – the State government had introduced an innovative scheme, ‘Integrated Farming System’, which was designed on the lines of self-help groups scheme.

Under this scheme, women formed groups of 12, and each group member would be given a milch cow, 11 goats, 30 chickens, 20 kilograms of black gram and a vermicompost unit. The member had to dig a pond measuring 10x10 metre in her field, in which rainwater would be stored and used for irrigation. “The rain on Monday night had come as a boon to many whose ponds are full now,” Mr.Gnanadurai told *The Hindu* .

Narayanan, a member of the Water Users’ Association in Chellampatti said the introduction of the Integrated Farming System was timely. The Integrated Farming System entailed an investment of Rs.1.10 lakh for each member. The State government gave a subsidy of Rs.55,000 and the remaining amount was raised through bank loans, he said.

The scheme had already been implemented in Thirumangalam, Kallupatti, Kalligudi and Usilampatti blocks.

Vegetable-derived compound protects against radiation

The compound may protect people under radiation therapy and those exposed to radiation from a nuclear accident

A naturally occurring molecule has been shown in laboratory tests to protect mice and rats from lethal doses of radiation. Scientists hope that this substance will be similarly beneficial for people who have to undergo radiation therapy for cancer as well as those who get exposed to radiation from a nuclear accident.

A diet rich in vegetables like cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli has been linked to a lower risk of several sorts of cancer. These vegetables contain a compound, indole-3-carbinol,

which is broken down in the stomach to DIM (3,3'-diindolylmethane). Both compounds are being studied for their cancer prevention properties.

Eliot M. Rosen of the Georgetown University Medical Centre in the U.S. and his colleagues have now examined whether DIM could have protective effects against radiation.

Two groups of mice were exposed to lethal doses of gamma ray radiation. One group received daily injections of DIM for two weeks, with the first dose being given 10 minutes after irradiation, and 60 per cent of those mice were still alive 30 days later. The other group did not get DIM and all the mice died within 10 days of receiving radiation, the scientists reported in a paper just out in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*. When the first dose of DIM was given one day before the administration of radiation, a much lower dose sufficed to protect the mice.



Virtuous vegetables: A diet rich in vegetables like cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli has been linked to a lower risk of several sorts of cancer.— photo: S.R. Raghunathan

In addition, irradiated mice treated with DIM had less reduction in red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets — side effects often seen in patients undergoing radiation treatment for cancer, observed Dr. Rosen in a press release issued by the university. In several experiments, rats that survived for more than 30 days following radiation and DIM treatment were monitored for longer periods of time. There was little or no falloff in survival up to three months, and the animals appeared healthy and regained their original weight.

The scientists also showed that DIM could protect two noncancerous human breast cell lines from the ravages of radiation. The molecule caused rapid activation of an enzyme, ataxia telangiectasia mutated, that regulates cellular responses to DNA damage and oxidative stress, they noted in the paper. But, significantly, when human breast cancer cells were grafted on to immune-deficient mice, DIM did not affect the extent to which the resulting tumours shrank when irradiated.

“We haven't tested enough cell lines to be able to say that DIM does not protect tumours against radiation,” cautioned Dr. Rosen in an email. “This requires further study.” If true, the reason might be that many tumours have defective DNA repair mechanisms.

More animal studies were needed to move the project forward, he went on to point out. The best route for administering DIM — such as whether it should be given orally or as injections — had to be worked out.

Georgetown University has filed a patent application on the use of DIM and DIM-related compounds for radiation protection.

A sustainable model for small and marginal ryots



The change: what began as curiosity, transformed into a conviction making Mr. Patel join Chetna Organic in 2005.—Photo: Special Arrangement

Adilabad is one of the largest cotton growing districts in the country. As a consumption oriented development model took root, small farmers in the region took to cultivating cash crops like cotton, to meet social needs beyond food requirements.

Monocropping

However, over the last two decades, hunger for higher cotton yields gradually transformed into a monocropping culture, in which farmers completely stopped growing food crops and were growing only cotton, making Adilabad one of the largest cotton growing districts in the country.

“This appetite for higher yields, led to indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, devastating soil health in the process. Like most other villages in the region, even here, small and marginal farmers could not withstand the “mighty will” of the State to impose a regime of subsidised chemical fertilizers and pesticides,” says Mr. Ambadass Sonkamble, Block co-ordinator, Chetna Organic, Secunderabad.

Compromised

The monocropping culture severely compromised on food security of small farmers. In the years when crops failed, they were left with no cash and had to depend on money lenders. Debts kept piling, pushing many farmers over the brink. Today the region is a farmers’ suicide hotspot, according to him. However, in this narrative of loss and despair there is a story of hope that stands up like a candle in the dark.

Like many others a tribal farmer Madavi Mahadu Patel in the village detested the use of chemicals but was forced into the system. Productivity of his land was declining every year and yields were low.

Traditional wisdom and common sense told him that organic life in soil was critical for healthy growth of crops. But the extension system was telling him otherwise. It was a time when farmers in neighbouring villages were committing suicides. The alarm bells were ringing — loud and clear.

Chetna organic

In 2004 as part of a Supply Chain Intervention Programme, Chetna Organic initiated activities in neighbouring Choupanguda village, organising farmers into self-help groups (SHG) and offered socio-technical and marketing support for organic cotton.

Chetna was organising Farmer Field Schools (FFS) training, workshops, field days and demo plots to encourage farmers to take up soil and water conservation measures, diversified

cropping and mixed cropping practices where food crops like jowar, paddy, red gram, vegetables, maize, green gram and others could be grown alongside cotton.

Curiosity

Mr. Patel was curious to know how realistic this approach was. Apparently, this initiative seemed to address all his concerns — no chemicals, improved soil fertility, low input costs, good income and food security for the entire year.

Interested, he attended the trainings, and what began as curiosity, transformed into a conviction making him join Chetna Organic in 2005 as a member farmer.

Today, his seven acre field is a manifestation of Chetna's vision. In six acres he has created a model that can teach the world what sustainable agriculture means, and how it can change the script for farmers with small holdings.

In four acres, following intercropping and mixed cropping patterns, the farmer grows a combination of food crops and cash crops like cotton, wheat, maize, groundnut and millets like jowar and sorghum. Legumes, vegetables like tomato, brinjal, chilli, gourds, beans, onion, garlic and leafy vegetables and oil seed crops are grown organically.

In one acre teak and henna are planted. In the remaining acre mango, guava, custard apple, berries and orange are grown. glyricidia, pongamia and neem are also grown for mulching into the soil for biomass. Their open well serves to irrigate the crops during summer and other seasons.

Mr. Patel has devised a strategy to ward off contamination from hybrid cotton crops to the ones grown in his field, an approach he feels is critical to market his cotton at a higher price. He has created layers of shields, restricting the cotton crop to the inner circle of the farm and surrounded it with trap crops like castor, okra and marigold.

In the second circle he grows vegetables and other crops and in the outermost periphery he grows trees like Teak. This strategy has worked well for him and there has been no contamination issue while the rest of the State was struggling with it.

Expansion

During the year 2012-13 the family expanded their basket of income to include fisheries. He was given 1,000 young fingerlings which after 180 days yielded 30 kg fetching him Rs. 2,400 at Rs. 80 per kg.

The remarkable aspect of this family has been that they have achieved all this in an economically viable structure which is replicable without large financial investments and dependence on local money lenders.

For more details contact Mr. Patel at Goyagaom post, Goyagaom mandal, Kerameri dist, Adilabad, Pin:504293 and Mr. Ambadass Sonkamble, block co-ordinator, email: cofadas@gmail.com, Mobile: 9440599213, Plot:187, Sree Sai Durga Nivas Street, No: 1, Tarnaka, Secunderabad.

Management of rice leaf folder pest

Two major limiting factors in rice cultivation are adverse weather and pest epidemics. Yield loss due to insect pest attack in rice cultivation is considerably high. Among the pests attacking rice, leaf folder causes much damage between 30 and 60 days after transplanting. Before the introduction of high yielding and nitrogenous responsive varieties this pest was sporadic in most of the rice growing tracts.

Favourable climate

With the expansion in rice area due to modern agricultural practices, high yielding varieties and indiscriminate use of nitrogenous fertilizers the pest has now attained major status.

Cloudy weather with low sunlight favours pest build-up.

In case of severe infestation, the leaf margins and tips became dry and crop gives a whitish appearance. The damage is more conspicuous during active tillering to booting stage. Flat oval yellowish eggs are laid singly or in pairs on the under surface of tender leaves. The eggs hatch within 4 to 7 days.

Larvae are yellowish green with dark brown heads and turn into actively moving caterpillars. They pupate in loosely woven silk threads inside the leaf roll. Adult moth emerges in 6 to 8 days. It is yellowish brown with several dark wavy lines on the wings.

Management

Split the fertilizer application during the growing season and apply nitrogenous fertilizer judiciously.

Remove grassy weeds to prevent the buildup of rice leaf folders which act as the alternative hosts.

Release the egg parasitoid *Trichogramma chilonis* at 5 cc/ha on 37, 41 and 51 days after transplanting.

Spray any one of the following insecticides: cartap hydrochloride 50 per cent SP at 2 gm/lit or profenofos 50 EC at 1.5 ml/lit or chlorpyrifos 20 per cent EC at 2 ml/lit or indoxacarb 15.8 EC at 0.7 ml/lit or azadirachtin 10,000 ppm at 2 ml/lit of water. Add sticking agent at 1 ml per litre of water.

Avoid excess application of carbofuran and phorate as far as possible as these will result in resurgence of the pest.

(Dr. J. Ramkumar, Assistant Professor (Agrl. Entomology) and Dr. R. Durai Singh, Programme Coordinator, KVK, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Ramanathapuram - 623 503, E.mail: arsrarnad@tnau.ac.in ; Ph. No: 04567-232639.)

Farmers seek release of water from Papanasam Dam

Affected-lot: Farmers from villages near Tirunelveli who came to the Collectorate with withered paddy crops to submit a petition on Tuesday.— Photo: A. Shaikmohideen
Farmers of six villages have sought the intervention of Collector C. Samayamoorthy to ensure release of water from Papanasam dam for agriculture purpose. The farmers led by A. Sorimuthu, Panchayat Councilor of Palamadai, submitted a petition to the Collector here on Tuesday in this regard.

He said farmers, who solely rely on paddy cultivation in the kar season on more than 1, 000 acres at villages of Kattalai, Udhayaneri, Pappayapuram, Shanmugapuram, Alaguneri and Kattampuli in the district, had been facing problems as there was no adequate water to raise the paddy crop. Over the last fifteen days, the paddy fields received no water and the crops had dried up as a result. He also added that they had approached the PWD officials, who had said that due to maintenance works in Suthamalli anaicut, there was a delay in releasing water.

Conversion of farmlands into real estate decried



World Food Day being observed at the YWCA in Ooty on Wednesday.—Photo: D. Radhakrishnan

With a call to check the reckless conversion of farmlands into concrete jungles, World Food Day was observed under the aegis of the Public Awareness Association of Udhamandalam and the YWCA here on Wednesday.

The occasion was also used to spell out the benefits of organic farming. Adverting to the growing tendency among the farming community to trade their agricultural lands for financial offers made by real estate promoters — mostly from outside the district — the President of the Public Welfare Association of Udhamandalam, G. Janardhanan, said that it was not a healthy trend and added that in the long run, food security would be affected.

Pointing out that people from various parts of India and outside were buying large areas, he said that it was not helping the district in any way. A law should be enacted to put an end to such ecologically and economically hazardous transactions.

Former headmaster Raju Bettan cautioned that if precautionary steps are not taken forthwith, the people of the district would soon have to look elsewhere for the renowned English vegetables of The Nilgiris. Lamenting that unsuitable farm practices over the years have affected the health of the soil, David of the Glenmorgan Ashram said that it should be set right by popularising organic farming.

Toda social activist K. Vaasamalli Pothli recalled that in the past, tribal people often survived on wild fruits and berries.

Nabard brings big relief to farm credit societies

State cooperatives to take independent decision on Bakshi report

The decision of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) against steadfast implementation of the Prakash Bakshi report for streamlining the short-term cooperative credit structure has come as a major relief to thousands of primary agricultural credit societies (PACS) in the State.

A major recommendation of the report was that PACS should work only as business correspondents on behalf of the Central Cooperative Bank. This was to ensure safety of deposits and efficient credit delivery to farmers.

Agricultural societies opposed the move of Nabard by stating that such a step would be detrimental to the growth and development of the prevailing credit structure of the State. Minister for Cooperation C.N. Balakrishnan had taken up the issue with Union Minister for Finance P. Chidambaram and urged him to exempt the State from the recommendations. Nabard had asked all State cooperatives societies to take an independent decision on the Bakshi report. It would be difficult to implement the system in States such as Kerala where primary cooperative societies were strong, Josekutty Joseph, Deputy Registrar of Cooperative Societies, said.

State share

The report had pointed out that primary agriculture credit societies in 25 States had mobilised Rs.37,238 crore as on March 2011 and that 80 per cent of the deposits originated from Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. The share of Kerala was estimated to be Rs.21,140 crore.

“We welcome the decision of Nabard. Earlier, the proposal had created some anxieties,” said C.N. Vijayakrishnan, chairman, Calicut City Service Cooperative Bank.

K. Gopalakrishna Bhat, Registrar of Cooperatives, had written to Nabard stating that the deposits made in the credit societies, such as primary agricultural credit cooperative societies, non-agricultural credit societies, and employees’ credit cooperative societies were secure under the Deposit Guarantee Scheme of the Kerala Cooperative Societies Act.

Provision

A provision had also been included in the Act under which societies which failed to enrol in the deposit guarantee scheme would have no right to accept deposits and that the Registrar of Cooperatives shall be competent to issue the order, he said.

A three-tier credit structure was in place in the State. It comprised the Kerala State Cooperative Bank, the apex bank with 20 branches; 14 district cooperative banks with 668 branches; and 1,600 primary agricultural credit societies with 3,000 branches. Besides, there were 60 urban cooperative banks having RBI licences and 350 branches. There were 1,065 employees credit societies.

The total deposit of primary agricultural credit societies was Rs.47,374 crore as on March 31, 2013. The primary agricultural credit societies were also engaged in the supply of agriculture inputs, managing educational institutions, and agricultural and marketing activities, Mr. Bhat said.

The Kerala State Cooperative Bank and three Central Cooperative Banks at Thrissur, Ernakulam, and Alappuzha were working on Core Banking Solution (CBS). By the end of 2013, all Central Cooperative Banks would get CBS, he added.

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- State had sought exemption from recommendation*
 - Deposits in societies in State termed safe*
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Fertilizer tips for banana farmers

Banana farmers to benefit first

Banana farmers in the State can look forward to improved yield from their plantations, thanks to precise fertilizer recommendations based on soil fertility status.

The recommendations will be based on the data generated by scientists and farmers involved in the All India Coordinated Research Project on Soil Test Crop Response Correlations (AICRP on STCR). Soil fertility maps have been prepared for nine districts in Kerala under

the project, A.K. Sikka, Deputy Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, said. The other five districts will be brought under the project during the 12th Plan period, he said.

Dr. Sikka, who was here recently to participate in a national workshop on soil fertility organised by the Kerala State Planning Board, told *The Hindu* that the fertilizer recommendations for 'Nendran' banana were in the final stages of preparation. The project, coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture, aims at generating equations that define the response of crops to soil tests. The equations are used to prescribe optimum fertilizer dose for farmers, thus avoiding wastage of resources.

Verification experiments conducted by scientists are followed up with field trials, and the data thus generated are analysed to come up with recommendations for targeted yield of crops. In Kerala, the AICRP on STCR is implemented by Kerala Agricultural University (KAU). Apart from banana, the project seeks to come up with site-specific fertilizer recommendations for bitter gourd, snake gourd, amaranthus, okra, cucumber, chilli, ginger, and turmeric also.

Dr. Sikka said the high level of soil acidity and deficiency of nutrients had resulted in loss of productivity across the State. "Addressing the issue of soil acidity should be given priority." He said a GPS-based soil fertility mapping programme would be taken up to assess crop response to secondary and micronutrients.

Network project

Meanwhile, the Department of Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry under the KAU has embarked on a network project on soil fertility management for recommendation of secondary and micronutrients.

The project seeks to identify the critical level of secondary (calcium and magnesium) and micro (zinc, copper and boron) nutrient level in soils and in various cropping systems.

"Nutrient deficiency has become a common issue, as farmers increasingly turn to intensive cultivation practices. High doses of NPK fertilizers, introduction of high-yielding crop varieties, and increased cropping intensity have led to an imbalance of nutrients," project coordinator P. Sureshkumar said.

He said paddy farmers had reported an increase of one tonne in yield following the application of five kg of borax costing Rs.350 to address boron deficiency in soil.

Dr. Sureshkumar, who heads the Radio Tracer Laboratory at the farm university, said that the project would come up with soil test-based recommendations on secondary and micronutrients for banana, coconut, rice, pepper, ginger, turmeric, and vegetables, including yard-long bean, bitter gourd, and snake gourd for each of the 23 agro-ecological units.

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- Recommendations to be based on soil tests*
 - Soil fertility maps prepared for nine districts*

Optimum fertilizer dose based on soil fertility status to improve yield

Residents, farmers feel the pinch of power-cut

EPDCL resorting to emergency load relief due to shortage of power

Rising day temperatures, sultry weather and erratic power supply made life miserable for the denizens across the district, thanks to sharp fall in the power generation.

The residents in the district headquarters city experienced shutdowns in power supply for more than five hours on Wednesday while 7-8 hours in rural areas.

This is a two-fold increase in power disruptions when compared to the previous day. The domestic power consumers and the farmers doing cultivation under borewells are feeling the pinch of the shutdowns.

According to P. Radhakrishna, Assistant Divisional Engineer (Commercial), of the Eastern Power Distribution Company Limited (EPDCL), the shutdowns became inevitable in the wake of shortage on the generation front in the State.

Deficit

The State was presently running into a deficit in power generation of 4,000 MW – 2,500mw in thermal and 1,500 hydel generation – leading to ‘emergency load reliefs’, he added.

The district has been allotted 9-10 million units of power as a daily quota for consumption in the current period and the demand has been overshooting the supply on account of the dry spell conditions.

The power cuts turned the situation from bad to worse. Mr. Radhakrishna said the power consumption under the domestic category was bound to shoot up as the consumers are resorting to seek relief from the heat conditions by way of excessively using fans and air-conditioners.

The situation in the upland region is said to be more distressing.

The power situation keeps the tobacco and mirchi farmers on tenterhooks. The planting of mirchi and tobacco is overdue as it did not take off due to the blackouts caused by EPDCL staff strike as part of the Samaikhyandhra agitation and the cyclone.

According to B. Balaram, secretary of the Andhra Pradesh Rytu Sangham, the upland farmers in the Jeelugumilli and Buttayagudem mandals are in a desperate mood to engage diesel engines to complete transplantations in time.

He said the APRS was preparing for protest demonstrations at the sub-stations in the upland region with an appeal to the government to save the crops from the impending danger of withering due to power cuts.

Puddle comes to the rescue of farmers

Only irrigation source, a puddle, has come to the rescue of farmers who are cultivating groundnut and raising casuarina plantations in a stretch of agricultural fields along the coastline in Krishna district.

High saline content in the ground water has been the inevitable hurdle for the farmers to adopt diversified crops and thus the contribution of agriculture produce from the coastline mandals in the district was marginal. Relying on the puddle, the farmers have extensively planted the casuarina saplings and those having investment capacity preferred to grow the groundnut.



Digging up a puddle, which can irrigate 3 cents of land, requires a manual labour instead of using any machine. “At least 30-40 puddles are required to grow casuarina in an acre. Having a depth of five feet at some places to below five meters, the quantity of saline content in the water from the puddle can be reduced and thus the plants or crops are surviving,” say farmers from Peddareddi Palem in Machilipatnam rural.

As puddle came to the rescue of small and marginal farmers, they have also started producing vegetables in the recent years by tapping the fertility of the soil to the maximum. Once barren lands on the outskirts of the town have now turned into green fields and farmers are seen engaged on the fields, reaping profits with the available irrigation source.

Milk price hike: CPI(M) stages dharna

The Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) city unit on Wednesday staged a dharna in front of the milk factory here protesting against the hike in milk price.

Addressing the gathering, CPI (M) city secretary Ch. Babu Rao said the people were facing hardships due to steep rise in prices of essential commodities. The hike in price of milk was another blow for the commoner. The milk factory jacked up the prices when the bifurcation issue was rocking the State for the last two months. The union overnight decided to hike the prices under the garb that the maintenance, procurement etc costs have increased, he said.

. The elected representatives too have no concern for the public. They haven't responded to the steep hike in the milk price.

The children would be deprived of balanced diet due to increase in price, he said.

The milk factory was supplying 2.5 lakh litres of milk every day.

The hike would put a burden of Rs.5 lakh per day, and Rs. 18 crore a year on the city, he said, adding, “the CPI(M) would launch an agitation if the hike was not rolled back.”

CPI(M) city secretariat members U V Rama Raju, D. Vishnuvardhan, B.Ramana, Sambhi Reddy, and G.Nataraj were among those present.

Vijaya milk price up

VIJAYAWADA, October 17, 2013: The Krishna District Milk Producers' Mutually Aided Coop Union Limited has hiked the price of milk sold by it under the brand name Vijaya. The hike in price will come into effect from Wednesday. Vijaya low fat (double toned) costs Rs. 34 per litre, and half a litre at Rs. 17 with butter 1.5 p.c. and SSF 9 p.c.. There is no change in the price of 200 ml Vijaya low fat (double toned), which will be available at Rs. 7.

Paddy procurement centres in Cumbum valley soon

Paddy procurement centres for farmers will be set up in Cumbum, Uthamapalayam and Chinnamanur soon, according to Collector K.S. Palanisamy.

In a press release issued here on Tuesday, he said harvesting of paddy on 14,707 acres in the double cropping area of the Cumbum valley would start by October-end.

Fine variety of paddy will be procured at Rs.1,415 per quintal and common variety at Rs.1,360 by the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation.

Appeal

He appealed to farmers to sell their paddy directly to these centres to get better price for their produce.

Recently, farmers appealed to the State government to set up procurement centres to eliminate middlemen and commission agents.

Paddy growers in the valley abandoned the first crop, owing to monsoon failure and acute water shortage last year.

Roughly 5,000 acres were brought under cultivation in the first crop in the double cropping areas of the Cumbum valley during the same period last year.

With the comfortable storage in Periyar dam at present, the main irrigation source for Theni district, and the comfortable rainfall, the farmers raised paddy on 14,707 acres in the valley.

Lack of machines affects paddy harvest in Palakkad

Shortage of harvesting machines has hit paddy harvest in the district.

The majority of harvesters deployed here had been taken back to Tamil Nadu with the beginning of the harvest season there.

In Chittur taluk, more than half of the cultivation could not be harvested due to non-availability of the machines.

Farmers said the delay in harvest would result in crop loss. Any rain at the moment would be detrimental, they added. Though many grama panchayats had harvesters, they were not working for want of maintenance.

Non-availability of workers for harvest had compounded the problem, the farmers said.

Exploiting the situation, owners had increased the rent of the harvesting machines from Rs.1,200 an hour last year to Rs.1,800 this season, the farmers said.

Separate shed for cattle need of the hour, say residents



A perennial issue that plagues China Waltair is the lack of a cattle-shed and big open canals, which have become dump yards.

The situation is particularly bad in the lanes adjoining the TB Hospital, where stray cattle in the congested streets are a common sight. “Ten years ago, the residents had sought allotment of a separate shelter for cattle behind the VUDA Park. But nothing has been done about it,” complains K.T.S. Prakash, a resident. The stench emanating from the area has become a major problem. To make things worse, the adjoining open canal has turned into a breeding ground for mosquitoes. “We have time and again brought the issue to the notice of the authorities, but nothing has changed till now. Unless a separate cattle-shed is provided, the menace will continue and lead to many health problems,” says Prakash. Residents also complain that the time of water supply has reduced due to the growth in apartments in the locality. “About five to six years ago, we used to get at least two hours of drinking water. Now, it is hardly there for half an hour. After apartments came up, the same one-inch water pipeline is extended to the new residents, and thus we have to manage with limited water,” rues K. Mohan Rao, secretary of China Waltair Colony Residents’ Welfare Association.

The situation is particularly bad

in the lanes adjoining TB Hospital, where stray cattle in the congested streets are a common sight

Foot-and-mouth disease claims 23 head of cattle

The number of cattle deaths due to foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in Hassan district this month has gone up to 23.

Of the 402 head of cattle affected by the disease in the district, 23 died, 124 recovered and the remaining are being provided treatment.

V. Anbukumar, Deputy Commissioner of Hassan district, has instructed officials of the departments of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services to hold vaccination camps at

hobli level and gram panchayat level to avoid the spread of the viral infection. At a meeting here on Tuesday, he asked the officials to set up vaccination camps at weekly market places and spread awareness among farmers about the need to vaccinate cattle.

Dr. Jayaram, Assistant Director of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, said that of the 7.75 lakh head of cattle in the district, 6.73 lakh had been vaccinated.

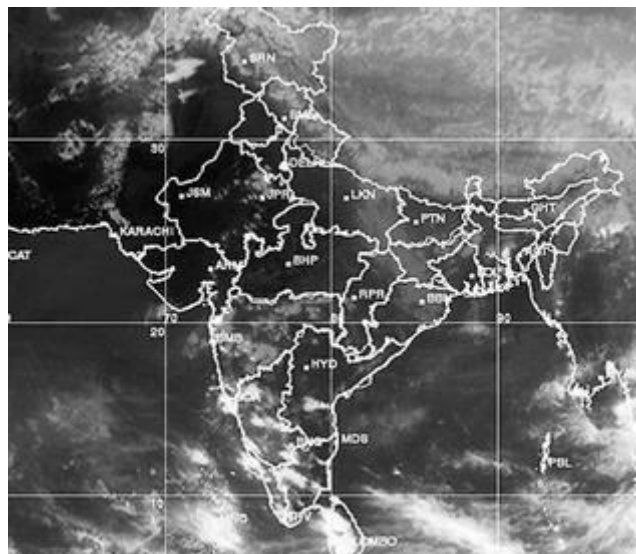
The meeting resolved to set up committees at taluk levels to gather information on cattle deaths due to FMD. Tahsildars will head the committee and assistant directors of Animal Husbandry will be member-secretaries. Mr. Anbukumar instructed the officials to ensure that post-mortem of the animals were conducted within 72 hours.

Helpline

The district administration has appealed to farmers to call the helpline set up at taluk level for matters related to FMD. The helpline numbers are: Arkalgud: 08175-220227, Arasikere: 08174-231154, Alur: 08170-218229, Channarayapatna: 08176-253045, Holenarsipur: 08175-273237, Hassan: 08172-268359, Sakleshpur: 08177-244008 and Belur: 08177-222371.

Officials in Hassan directed to hold vaccination camps at hobli and gram panchayat levels

weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on October 16.

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	33	21	0	52
New Delhi (Sfd)	33	20	0	73
Chandigarh	33	20	0	29
Hissar	35	18	0	4
Bhuntar	31	12	0	5
Shimla	23	12	0	66
Jammu	31	19	0	122
Srinagar	24	9	0	15
Amritsar	33	19	0	77
Patiala	33	20	0	9
Jaipur	35	21	0	2
Udaipur	32	20	0	55

Allahabad	26	22	0	299
Lucknow	28	18	0	42
Varanasi	23	22	1	136
Dehradun	29	20	0	30
Agartala	34	25	tr	167
Ahmedabad	36	24	0	63
Bangalore	29	21	1	30
Bhubaneshwar	31	24	0	314
Bhopal	33	21	0	26
Chennai	34	25	3	22
Guwahati	30	22	tr	192
Hyderabad	32	22	0	108
Kolkata	31	26	tr	318
Mumbai	31	26	1	57
Nagpur	32	22	0	167
Patna	25	23	3	160
Pune	32	21	16	21
Thiruvananthapuram	33	23	0	39
Imphal	31	21	tr	48
Shillong	23	15	1	63

The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (tr-trace) and total rainfall in mm since 1st October.

MAINLY DRY WEATHER

The withdrawal line of South West Monsoon continues to pass through Kalpa, Hisar, Jodhpur and Nalia. Conditions are indicative of further withdrawal of Southwest monsoon from remaining parts of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi, Rajasthan, entire Uttarakhand, most parts of west Uttar Pradesh around 17th October 2013.

Rainfall: Rain/thundershowers have occurred at isolated places over east Uttar Pradesh.

Weather was mainly dry over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm. are:

EAST UTTAR PRADESH: Regoli 4, Balrampur, Zamania and Maharajganj 3 each, Bansi and Kakrahi 2 each and Azamgarh, Utarala and basti 1 each.

MAXIMUM TEMPERTURE: The maximum temperature rose in Jammu and Kashmir and west Rajasthan and changed little elsewhere. They were largely below normal in east Uttar Pradesh, below normal in west Uttar Pradesh and normal in rest of the region. The highest maximum temperature in the region was 38.9°C recorded at Jaisalmer (Rajasthan).

MINIMUM TEMPERTURE: The minimum temperature changed little over the region. They were appreciably above normal in west Rajasthan, above normal in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, east Rajasthan, west Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and normal in rest of the region. The lowest minimum temperature in the plains was 17.7°C recorded at Fatehgarh (Uttar Pradesh).

FORECAST FOR REGION VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 18th OCTOBER

2013:Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places over east Uttar Pradesh.

Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places over Jammu and Kashmir during next 24 hours and mainly dry weather thereafter. Weather would be mainly dry over rest of the region.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE

MORNING OF 18th OCTOBER 2013: Mainly Clear sky.

Odisha: Cyclone Phailin turns farmers into fishermen

If you are a fish lover and heading towards Kharagpur, taking the National Highway-60, in the next few days, do not forget to stop a kilometer after you cross the Balasore town. For you are sure to find, local villagers standing on the highway and selling fish.



Farmers in the villagers of Kashimpur are now fisherman. (Ashok Nath Dey/HT)

The entire one-km stretch between Balasore to Kashimpur, has turned into a makeshift fish market. And if you are lucky, you can get fresh charapona (a smaller version of rohu) for Rs. 100-120 a kg that costs around Rs. 200 in Kolkata and around Rs. 220 in the Balasore fish market.

Thanks to the Phailin and the subsequent floods, most farmers in the neighbourhood villages of Balasore have turned into fishermen and fishmongers. It has turned out to be a boon for the farmers -- hundreds of them -- as this is the only income they may have for quite some time before the water recedes and they can cultivate their fields again.

"What to do? My farmland got flooded and we have lost our all means of livelihood. A large number of fish entered into our fields with floodwaters, so fishing is the best option. If we sell fish, we can make some money even during this distressed period," said Sitaram Hansda, a native of Kashimpur village barely around 120 kms from the Bengal town of Kharagpur. Because of the flood, the ponds in the neighbourhood villages got flooded and the overflowing pond water has submerged the entire adjacent paddy fields. According to locals, fishes like rohu, charapona and chanda(fish resembles promfet but found in ponds) are readily available in these ponds.

"Although we are farmers, we have small fishing nets in our houses. And we used to practice fishing for our own household consumption. When we left home, we carried only commodities like rice, dal, and nets. We were sure that our family could feed on rice and

fishes for the next few days. But net turned out to be a source of income for us," said Chaitanya Hansda, with a grim smile who has already earned Rs.400 by 11am on Wednesday.

Chaitanya is happy, so is Abhijit Pradhan, a small time businessman from Kharagpur. Pradhan went to Chandrakona to meet his relatives and on his way back, he found the makeshift fish market, "I have procured four pieces of charapona. It seems the four together would weigh around 1 kg and 250 grams. After much bargaining I had to shell out only Rs. 150," Pradhan looked very happy.

For people of Kolkata, the makeshift market might remind them of the Cauliflower vendors near Dhapa on Eastern Metropolitan Bypass where passersby notice the Cauliflower sellers standing only with the vegetables at certain intervals. Like the cauliflower sellers, these fishmongers in Balasore do not have a weighing machine, nor do they have a fixed price. "This business seems profitable to some extent and we would continue till we can go back to our houses," said Baburam Hansda, another local villager.

Phailin not only destroyed sources of income but also paved the way of a substitute livelihood.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Thursday, Oct 17

Max Min

31° | 25°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 94

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:59

Sunset: 05:49

Barometer: 1009

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Friday, Oct 18

Max Min

34° | 26°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday
Oct 19



34° | 26°

Cloudy

Sunday
Oct 20



27° | 26°

Overcast

Monday
Oct 21



28° | 27°

Overcast

Tuesday
Oct 22



28° | 27°

Overcast

Wednesday
Oct 23



28° | 26°

Overcast

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University experiments with drip irrigation in paddy cultivation

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University advises rice farmers to carry out ...Depression leads assistant professor to kill herselfFarmer bags Progressive Mushroom Grower awardWater intensive crops not suited for drought affected regions, says e...Tamil Nadu Agricultural University releases 4 new maize varieties at ...

COIMBATORE: With water scarcity becoming a major issue in agriculture, the water technology centre at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) will present a paper on drip irrigation techniques for rice cultivation in the 'international research conference on drip fertigation in rice' which will be held on Thursday at TNAU.

"Rice cultivation consumes a huge amount of water. In fact, around 75 per cent of the water used for agriculture is for paddy cultivation. With water becoming scarce, we need to find ways to reduce its consumption," said B J Pandian Director Water Technology Centre, TNAU. Drip irrigation is widely practiced in the cultivation of vegetables and sugarcane. They experimented with a similar method in irrigating paddy for the last 3 years and found that through the use of drip irrigation, around 50 percent of the water use can be minimised.

"We have studied the effects of drip irrigation in various hybrid varieties. We found that this is more effective in hybrid varieties. However, we need to do more research," he said. Under this system, they were able to farm with less water compared to the existing water conservation methods. Using drip irrigation, with 50 to 60 lakh litres of water in one hectare, around 5 to 6.5 tonnes of rice was produced. This was more effective than the existing methods. Under the 'aerobic rice' method where rice is cultivated in garden land, around 60 to 65 lakh litres of water is used for a hectare to produce 4.5 to 5.5 tonnes of rice. The popular System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method uses around 120 to 150 lakh litres per hectare to produce 7 tonnes of rice.

However Pandian says that their system has some deficiencies and needs to be studied some more. "There is the presence of more weeds in this method. Some hybrid varieties are found to be better adaptable to this system," he said.

Tourists flock to Gir sanctuary on opening day of season

AHMEDABAD: Dekho dekho kaun aaya? Sher dekhne India aaya! The first day of the opening of the [Gir sanctuary](#) saw a historic rise in number of people from all over the country thronging the [Gir National Park](#) to have a dekko at the king of jungle — the [Asiatic lion](#).

As many as 1,785 people visited Gir - double the number last year - on the day the park was opened for visitors post-monsoon on Wednesday. On October 16 last year, when the sanctuary reopened, about 935 people had visited the park.

[Abdul Kadir](#), a businessman from Kolkata came all the way to spend Eid holiday with the Asiatic lion. He spotted six lioness and cubs in the Kardi in Gir sanctuary. "I booked online and would have gone back happy had I spotted even one lion." Officials said the major attraction among tourists were the five cubs who are in lodged Devalia interpretation zone. It was during the wildlife celebrations that the forest department had named the male cubs as Shardul, Yuvraj and Vanraj, while the female cubs will be identified as Heer and Mallika.

Another tourist, [Mahendra Garg](#), said, "We had relatives from Kerala who had come to visit Dwarka and Somnath. We decided to visit Gir first and were lucky to sight two lionesses. It was a great experience to see lions in the green as the forest is still lush because of the extended monsoon." Local guide Hitesh Solanki said that he has never seen such a [rush](#) in his 13-year-long stint here. According to conservator of forest, R L Meena, the [Amitabh Bachchan](#) campaign has played a major role in increasing the tourist flow.



With aquaponics, urban farming is not just about kitchen gardens

Anuradha Bansi Dangat, Joel Vogelaar and Mugdha Pradhan don't have the luxury of sprawling houses with idyllic kitchen gardens. But the spread on their table includes tomatoes, bell peppers, chillies, okra, cucumber, salad leaves, broccoli, pak choi and a large amount of herbs from their own organic "farms", situated either on their terrace or balconies. They point the curious minds to the world of aquaponics.

A farming technique popular in the US, Australia and Europe, it is slowly catching up in India. Aquaponics involve growing vegetables in combination with fish without using soil as a medium.

"Aqua" comes from aquaculture (growing fish) and "ponics" comes from hydroponics (growing plants with the use of water). Unlike hydroponics, in which one needs to add nutrients to the water for the plants to grow, in aquaponics the nutrients come from fish. Vogelaar, who has been researching on the farming technique for some years and built his first aquaponics system in April 2012, said: "The fish produce ammonia, which gets converted by two types of bacteria: first to nitrite and then to nitrate that in turn serve as fertilisers for plants."

While in countries where aquaponics is more common one can buy readymade systems, Vogelaar, Dangat and Pradhan have built their own systems, learning by trial and error. "I have built my systems out of locally available materials like Sintex water tanks, PVC pipes and metal frames. One can also use recycled materials like plastic water bottles. It's all about being creative and learning to build a system as simple as possible, with as little cost," he said, adding that the only other requirements are some fish like Guppies or Tilapia, water and either stones or coconut coir as the bed for the plants to grow in.

A typical system on Vogelaar's terrace includes a tank with fish, and the water being pumped out with a small motor. This water is directed into cut PVC pipes placed on metal frames in which he grows the saplings. The water circulates back into the fish tank and the process continues. Vogelaar said he needs to add a little water to the fish tank once in 15 days.

Dangat, who comes from a family of farmers, learned about aquaponics when she was in Australia and set up her own system in June. "An Australian friend, Frank Waters, introduced me to it and I realised how nutritious vegetables can be grown with less than half the amount of time, money and effort a regular Indian farmer invests. There is no tilling of ground or weeding involved. I spend barely 10 minutes a day," she said.

Having grown lettuce, broccoli, tomatoes and kale in a 1,000-litre tank on her terrace, Dangat plans to go commercial in future. "I desire to set up a large-scale system and even conduct classes for people to learn how to use aquaponics," said Dangat.

Dangat is emphatic that aquaponics is the future. "The nutrient content of vegetables grown through aquaponics is high and very less water is required since it keeps recycling within the system," she said.

An HR manager, Pradhan said she tried aquaponics as a hobby. "I love fish and was into organic gardening. Once I read an article about aquaponics and decided to give it a shot. It is a space-efficient option," said Pradhan. Though she faced glitches while trying to set up her system, Pradhan said it is a "sustainable farming technique that can be done on a large scale with increased returns".

Business Standard

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Coconut Devpt Board clears projects worth Rs 23 cr



A meeting of the Project Approval Committee ([PAC](#)) on Technology Mission on [Coconut](#) ([TMO](#)) of the Coconut Development Board ([CDB](#)) has cleared 14 projects with

an outlay of Rs 19.25 crore and subsidy of Rs 2.86 crore.

Under the project component, 'processing and product diversification', 10 coconut processing units have been sanctioned assistance which includes setting up of five desiccated coconut powder manufacturing units, two tender coconut water (TCW) units, one coconut shell charcoal unit, one coconut shell powder unit and one ball copra unit.

Three research projects were also listed in the approved projects. One unit has been assisted for market promotional activities of coconut kernel products on reimbursement basis.

In Kerala, one unit was sanctioned for producing desiccated coconut powder having the capacity to process 15,000 nuts per day. In Karnataka, four units of desiccated coconut powder having a capacity for processing 240,000 nuts per day, one TCW processing unit with a capacity to process 30,000 tender coconut per day.

In Tamil Nadu, one unit was sanctioned for tender coconut water packing unit with a capacity for processing 60,000 packets per day and one coconut shell powder unit with a capacity to process 6.6 tons per day and another with a capacity to process 3.24 tons per day.

In Andhra Pradesh, the PAC had sanctioned one ball copra unit with a capacity to process 600,000 nuts a year, a CDB press release said.

THE HINDU Business Line

Bangalore, N. India to take turns hosting coffee festival

Bangalore, Oct 16:

Concerted efforts are needed for coffee consumption to increase in northern India, said Hameed Haq, Managing Director, Tata Coffee, principal sponsor of the India International Coffee Festival (IICF).

"Thrust should be there to take coffee consumption from the South to North of India," he said.

"We have taken new direction under India Coffee Trust to bring focus to the domestic consumption in India, which is low by any standards and, therefore, are trying to focus on North India which is a huge market to explore," he said.

The fifth edition of the India International Coffee Festival (IICF) will be held in Bangalore at Lalit Ashok during January 21-25.

The Coffee Board and India Coffee Trust held its fourth edition of the IICF at New Delhi in 2012.

It was the first event outside Bangalore to give a wider exposure among the coffee drinkers in non-traditional areas such as Delhi to boost coffee consumption. "The event was taken to

Delhi at the risk of adventuring in unknown waters but the results surprised us as we were greatly satisfied with the event.

It was a grand success by any standards,” said Jawaid Akthar, Coffee Board Chairman. Now the steering committee of the IICF has decided that ideally the event should be alternated between Bangalore, the headquarters of coffee, and another destination preferably a consuming destination in the south.

Focus on environment

In addition to domestic consumption, the IICF is also to focus on environment.

“We as coffee growers have to keep in mind the changing demand on the environment.

Globally, there is a lot more consciousness on coffee and the environment and during this festival, we will try and cover it all,” said Haq.

Haq further said the IICF started in 2002 and has evolved into a very mature international event and is being held at a right opportune time. Especially at a time when global coffee majors are eyeing Indian market.

New dimensions

“The coffee festivals are the right place to showcase Indian coffee globally; this festival has evolved over a period of time and taken certain new dimensions,” he explained.

IICF is also laying emphasis on quality.

“Of course, quality remains the benchmark and will be the differentiator to get us the premium in the world coffee market.

Small growers

It is important to note that 95 per cent of coffee produced in the country is by small growers. Corporates are very small, Tata Coffee being one of them,” said Haq.

Focus on Coorg

“We are hoping to extend our learning initially to the growers in Kodagu (Coorg) which forms a large part of the production base through the coffee trail, conference and workshops,” he added.

Coffee growers see output below 3 lakh tonnes this season



Healthy crop: Robusta coffee plant on an estate at Polibetta in Karnataka's Kodagu district. Robusta coffee will be ready for harvest during the second half of December. — M.R. Subramani

“We don’t think coffee production will cross 2.85 lakh tonnes this year. This is because the crop was affected by a prolonged dry period during April and continuous rainfall in the growing regions in July,” said Karnataka Planters’ Association Chairman Nishant Gurjer.

Karnataka

Karnataka accounts for over 70 per cent of total coffee production in the country.

In its post-blossom estimate released in July, the board pegged production at a record 3.47 lakh tonnes comprising 1.11 lakh tonnes of arabica and 2.36 lakh tonnes of robusta. This is against last year’s 3.18 lakh tonnes.

The US Department of Agriculture has estimated the crop at 3.02 lakh tonnes.

estimate process

“Our estimate was made on the basis of the blossoms in coffee plants in the early part of the year. We will make another estimate after the monsoon. We are carrying out the estimate and hope to come out with our projections in November,” said Coffee Board Chairman Jawaid Akhtar.

Last month, Akhtar told the United Planters’ Association of Southern India (Upasi) annual meet at Coonoor that the board could lower the production by at least 10 per cent.

Coffee growers say that robusta production may be around two lakh tonnes and arabica may not exceed 85,000 tonnes.

In April, coffee growing regions, mainly Kodagu in Karnataka, did not get any rainfall for almost a month. Further, the temperatures also hovered at 39-40 degree Celsius, a rarity in the region.

In July, Kodagu received a record rainfall of 522 mm.

“In some places such as Naladi, the rainfall was five times the normal. It has resulted in plants developing wet feet that result in the roots falling into some sort of coma,” said Bose Mandanna, a planter in Kodagu and former Vice-Chairman of Coffee Board. Many planters, who delayed spraying of insecticides and pesticides, were caught napping by the continuous rain.

“I was lucky that in our plantations we completed spraying in June.

“But a majority of planters could not complete the spraying, leaving the plants unprotected,” said A.K. Bhandari, former president of Upasi.

Growers are of the view that board’s estimates are a little unscientific.

“Over the last few years, the board’s estimates are being regularly revised downwards,” said Gurjer.

Last year, the board initially projected a crop of 3.25 lakh tonnes before scaling it down to 3.14 lakh tonnes and finally pegging it at 3.18 lakh tonnes (98,600 tonnes arabica and 2.19 lakh tonnes robusta).

The Karnataka Planters Association had projected the output at 2.95 lakh tonnes.

“We have our system in place to make estimates and we make post-blossom and post-monsoon.

The situation changes between the two estimates,” said Akhtar.

But, growers have a different view. “I think arabica production in some estates will be lower than what officials have projected. Plants in many estates have been replanted after they were affected by the white stem borer. In some estates, the output could be only 50 per cent of what the board has projected,” said Mandanna.

On the other hand, this year’s unusual weather pattern has left growers worried over next year’s crop.

“The July rainfall not only resulted in wet feet but plants have shed their leaves. This will affect production next season too,” said Mandanna.

Usually, some 15-20 days of rainfall is followed by 10 days of sunshine helping the plant complete its chemical process such as photosynthesis for growth. The continuous rainfall has affected this process.

“At least, from now on, we need continuous sunshine so that plants can recover their growth process,” said Bhandari.

But the sunshine should be followed by rains during the second half of March next year for an accelerated growth, say growers.

“Besides leaves dropping, high winds have caused damage in many estates in the growing areas. It will take at least a year to recover,” said Gurjer.

The Coffee Board feels it is too early to make any conclusion about next year’s crop.

“We think it is too early to talk about next year’s crop because basically, the developments are climate-related,” said Akhtar.

Tea offerings hit 11-week high at Coonoor sale

Coonoor, Oct. 16:

About 2.40 lakh kg of unsold teas have been re-catalogued for Sale No: 41 to be held at the Coonoor Tea Trade auctions on Thursday and Friday.

The overall offer will be at 11-week high level of 18.55 lakh kg –some 42,000 kg more than last week’s offer and 5.86 lakh kg more than the offer this time last year.

Of the 18.55 lakh kg on offer, 13.08 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 5.47 lakh kg to the dusts. Some 17.78 lakh kg will be CTC variety and only 0.77 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 0.46 lakh kg will be orthodox, while 12.62 lakh kg, CTC. Among the dusts, only 0.31 lakh kg will be orthodox, while 5.16 lakh kg will be CTC.

Last three weeks, 30 to 35 per cent of the offer at Coonoor Tea Trade Association auction had remained unsold.

Tea production likely to rise 5% to 1,180 mkg

Ahmedabad, Oct. 16:

The country’s tea production is expected to increase by about 5 per cent this year to above 1,180 million kg (mkg), according to the Wagh Bakri Tea Group.

Last year, tea production was 1,126 million kgs, according to the Tea Board data.

Between January and August this year, tea production has increased by 6.2 per cent to 705 million kg compared with 664 million kg during the corresponding period a year ago.

The total supply of tea, including imports, is likely to be around 1,200 million kg.

Supplies have grown by a compounded annual growth rate of 4.5 per cent in the three years to 2012.

Last year, demand grew by 1.5 per cent.

Last year, the total tea supply, including imports, was 1,147 million kg against 1,096 million kg demand.

“Until August, growth in tea production has been above the annual growth rate seen in the last three years.

For the full year, we expect growth of five per cent, which will translate into production of around 1,180 kg.

Together with imports of about 20 million kg, the total tea supply would be about 1,200 million kg this year,” said Paras Desai, Executive Director, Wagh Bakri Tea Group.

Production has been good in the Assam valley, Dooars and Terai regions, which together contribute 60 per cent of total production.

“Production in these regions will be higher in September and October and so we expect an overall five per cent growth. Though production in South India has dropped during this period, we expect to improve production in the next two months due to good rains there.”

For the first quarter of this year, exports rose by about 34% to 59.8 million kg.

“Even if the exports were to rise by 15 per cent compared with last year, we would have more than 900 million kg of tea left for domestic consumption,” he said.

Production has exceeded domestic consumption and exports by around 45 million kg, indicating that Indian tea production has exceeded total demand.

Despite this, prices of quality teas have increased.

Cabinet may hike wheat, mustard support price



New Delhi, Oct. 16:

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) may approve Rs 50 a quintal increase in minimum support price for key rabi crops wheat and mustard to Rs 1,400 and Rs 3,050, respectively, on Thursday.

on agenda

Sources said that the rabi support price was on the agenda of the CCEA on Thursday and the hikes were expected to be broadly in line with the recommendations of the Commission for Agriculture Costs and Prices, the crop price advisory body.

gram and masur

The CCEA may also approve a Rs 100 hike in the support price of gram at Rs 3,100.

The support price for masur could be increased by Rs 50 to Rs 2,950 and safflower by Rs 200 to Rs 3,000.

timely announcement

A timely announcement of MSP will help farmers take a decision on which crop to sow during the rabi season, set to start soon with the planting of rapeseed mustard – the main oilseed crop.

Plantings of wheat will start sometime in November, post Diwali, after farmers clear rice and sugarcane from their fields.

The harvest of rice has already begun in Punjab and Haryana, where an estimated two million tonnes of paddy have been procured by the State and Central agencies.

Spot rubber rules firm

Kottayam, Oct. 16:

Physical rubber prices ruled steady on Wednesday.

The market was in a holiday mood as domestic futures were closed owing to Ramzan.

Sheet rubber finished unchanged at Rs 163 and Rs 164 a kg respectively, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

Volumes were dull.

RSS 3 (spot) increased to Rs 160.40 (Rs 158.61) at Bangkok.

October futures closed at ¥256 (Rs 160.83) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates/kg were: RSS-4: 163 (163); RSS-5: 156 (156); Ungraded: 153 (153); ISNR 20: 156 (156) and Latex 60%: 125 (125).

Cashew market turns active as trading for next year begins



Kochi, Oct. 16: The cashew market has turned buoyant over the last 2-3 weeks with some business taking place for the first half of 2014 at a price 15-20 cents higher.

During the second half of September and early October, some processors sold W-240 around \$3.10/lb (f.o.b) for nearby shipments.

There was reasonable buying interest at these levels but the volume traded was limited to a few processors as many have sold earlier at higher prices, said market sources.

Cashew prices last week were in the range for W-240 \$3.60-3.80, W-320 \$3.10-3.30, W-450 \$2.95-3.10, SW-320 \$3-3.10, splits \$2.25-2.30 and pieces \$1.45-1.55/lb (f.o.b).

Domestic prices moved up during September but have been ruling steady for the last 2-3 weeks.

“There is good demand for quality product – wholes as well as broken. We can expect a slow down in activity during the end of this month or early next month. However, there should be a revival after mid-November for the marriage season, depending on retail offtake in the festival season,” Pankaj N. Sampat, a Mumbai-based dealer told *Business Line*.

In the last two months, the kernel market has dropped below the \$3.25-3.40 support range seen in the last 9-12 months and the broader \$3.20-3.50 range over the last 15-18 months. Processors, who are able to make forward sales, have been selling 15-20 cents higher depending on the grade and shipment period.

Due to the high prices and slow shipments from Indonesia and no movement from Tanzania, prices for West African raw cashew nut moved up 10-15 per cent, especially for the better quality, dried nuts.

There are reports of trades for Bissau at around \$1,100 a tonne and for Ivory Coast and Ghana from \$750-850 a tonne depending on quality.

In the next six months, little raw cashew is available for processors in India and Vietnam.

Unless the Tanzania raw cashew prices rule substantially lower than last year, processors will not be able to reduce kernel prices.

Latest reports indicate that Tanzania auctions should start soon.

What processors and raw cashew traders do in the initial auctions will give some idea of where the market is heading to.

Sugar demand seen rising ahead of Diwali

Mumbai, Oct. 16: Sugar prices ruled steady on Wednesday as demand for the fine variety improved. On the spot, prices rose by Rs 5-7 a quintal. *Naka* and mill tender rates were unchanged.

Market sources said that ample supplies from mills and huge inventories in warehouses kept stockists away from buying. Local demand also eased after Dasara but traders are optimistic about higher demand next week ahead of Diwali.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 2,912-3,080 (Rs 2,912-3,080) and M-grade Rs 3,066-3,252 (Rs 3,066-3,246). ***Naka* delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 2,850-2,910 (Rs 2,850-2,910) and M-grade Rs 2,960-3,120 (Rs 2,960-3,120).

Poultry-feed demand likely to rise in near term

Karnal, Oct. 16: A range-bound trend in prices of ingredients kept poultry feed prices unchanged on Wednesday.

Satpal Singh, Proprietor, Sarvottam Poultry Feed Supply Centre Pvt Ltd, told *Business Line* that a steady trend prevailed in the market following a range-bound movement in prices of key ingredients.

Demand for feed products is good currently and it may increase in the coming days, he added.

Feed products have been ruling unchanged since the last week of September and may continue to rule around current levels over the next few days too, said market experts. In the physical market, soyameal improved by Rs 100 to Rs 32,900 a tonne while bajra increased by Rs 200 to Rs 12,200-12,400 a quintal.

Di-calcium phosphate sold at Rs 34.60 a kg, MBM sold at Rs 30 a kg, while maize improved by Rs 10 and went for Rs 1,480-1,500 a quintal.

DRB went dropped further by Rs 100 to Rs 10,500 a quintal while rice bran oil ruled at Rs 59 a kg.

Mustard de-oiled cake remained unchanged 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 eased by Rs 2 and quoted at Rs 64-66 a kg, egg dropped by 4 paise and was at Rs 3.08, while chick went for Rs 26, unchanged.

Edible oils market facing short-term supply shortage

Mumbai, Oct. 16:

Edible oils continued their uptrend on Wednesday on the back of higher demand. Stockists bought more than 1,000 tonnes of palmolein directly from local refineries expecting higher demand from next week for Diwali.

Local refineries raised their rates for palmolein by Rs 3-5 for 10 kg on good buying support. An observer said that the undercurrent in the physical market is firm as local wholesalers are buying continuously to fill the empty pipeline. Earlier on expectation of higher kharif output and early start of arrivals, most players (including processors, refiners, wholesalers and traders) had kept away from buying.

Now, with extended rains delaying new arrivals and crushing being lower, the market is passing through a short-term supply shortage.

Towards the day's close, Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 570, super palmolein Rs 610 and super deluxe Rs 630, soyabean refined oil Rs 700 and sunflower refined oil Rs 810.

Ruchi quoted palmolein Rs 567, super palmolein at Rs 594 and soyabean refined oil Rs 690.

Allana was quoting palmolein Rs 568, super deluxe Rs 620 and sunflower refined oil Rs 820.

In Rajkot, groundnut oil was Rs 1,350-75 for *telia* tin and loose (10 kg) at Rs 850-875.

Mustard seed arrivals were 50,000-55,000 bags and its prices were Rs 3,300-

3,850. **Malaysia BMD crude palm oil's** November futures closed higher at MYR 2,399 (MYR 2,362), December at MYR 2,403 (MYR 2,362) and January at MYR 2410 (MYR 2368).

In Mumbai, nominal rates (Rs/10 kg) were: groundnut oil 890, soya refined oil 695, sunflower exp. ref. 735, sunflower ref. 790, rapeseed ref. oil 735, rapeseed expeller ref. 705, cottonseed ref. oil 700 and palmolein 567.

Vikram Global Commodities (P) Ltd quoted Rs 630/10 kg for Malaysia super palmolein October/Nov delivery.

Tur may trade in range; urad rally to continue

Indore, Oct. 16:

Amid slack demand and buying support, pulse seeds and pulses ruled steady in Indore *mandis* on Wednesday. Tur (Maharashtra) ruled flat at Rs 4,375-4,400 a quintal, while tur (Nimari) ruled at Rs 3,900-4,000.

According to Babulal Khandelwal, a trader, tur prices will likely remain range-bound with prices fluctuating between Rs 4,300 and Rs 4,500 till arrival of new crop hits local *mandis* by mid-December.

Notwithstanding the decline in stocks and bleak domestic crop output this year, projected at around 30 lakh tonnes, due to reported damage to the crop on account of rains, arrival of imported tur has reined in uptrend, said Sanjay Agrawal, a trader.

On the other hand, despite slack demand in tur, its dal has gained Rs 100 in local *mandis* on improved demand and buying support from the millers with tur dal (full) on Wednesday being quoted at Rs 6,250-6,550, tur dal (sawa no.) at Rs 5,750-5,850, tur dal (bold) ruled at Rs 6,700-7,000, while tur marka was quoted at Rs 6,800.

Urad (bold) quoted at Rs 4,000-4,100, while urad (medium) ruled at Rs 3,500-3,750. With arrival remaining on the lower side on account of damage to the crops due to heavy rains and lesser import deals, rally in urad will likely continue in the coming days, said Hanuman Jain, another trader.

Urad dal (medium) was quoted at Rs 4,600-4,700, urad dal (bold) at Rs 4,800-4,900, while urad mongar ruled at Rs 5,100-5,300.

Moong and its dal ruled stable on subdued demand with moong (bold) at Rs 5,200-5,300, while moong (Maharashtra) ruled at Rs 5,600-5,700 and moong (medium) ruled at Rs 4,200-4,800.

Moong dal (medium) was at Rs 6,200-6,400, moong dal (bold) at Rs 6,500-6,600, while moong mongar ruled at Rs 6,800-7,200 a quintal respectively.
