

Farmers seek waiver of loans

Dispute officials' claim on extent of loss caused by floods



A farmer showing the damaged cotton plant in Rajam constituency of Srikakulam district. —Photo: Basheer

SRIKAKULAM, October 30, 2013 - Farmers of the district, who have been hit hard first by Phailin Cyclone and then by incessant rain and floods in quick succession, now pin their hopes on waiver of crop loan, as they have nothing in their possession to repay the debt. It is estimated that crops such as paddy, cotton, sugarcane have been damaged either completely or partially in an

extent of 4.5 lakh acres. As per tentative estimates, the crop loss could be to the tune of Rs.820 crore.

The farmers had taken Rs.720 crore as advances from various banks.

Officials, however, have informed the government that the loss could be Rs.401 crore. The estimation covers crop loss, damages caused to houses, government properties, roads, and power infrastructure.

But farmers dispute the figure saying that the loss per each acre is more than Rs.20,000, which means the crop loss itself would be more than Rs.800 crore.

Farmers and tenant farmers say waiver of crop loan and early disbursement of input subsidy would instil confidence in them.

Gadam Rama Rao, a cotton farmer from Rajam constituency, says the entire crop in five acres has been washed away.

“We are not expecting anything from the government for our day-to-day existence. The government will be able to save us from the debt trap if it waives the existing loans. That will be the biggest help to us.”

Coconut farmers and traders are also eagerly waiting for the government’s support.

“I have not seen such a calamity in the last two decades. I have lost the crop as well as coconuts stored in our shop,” says Shankar of Kanchili.

BJP team’s visit

Meanwhile, a BJP delegation, comprising J. Prithviraj, P.V.N. Madhav, and Pudi Tirupati Rao visited the flood-ravaged areas such as Narasannapeta, Ichchapuram, and Srikakulam on Tuesday.

“The government should sanction crop loan afresh apart from waiving the existing loan. The government should also announce Rs.20,000 as input subsidy for paddy and Rs.50,000 per acre of coconut crops,” said Mr. Prithviraj and Mr. Tirupati Rao.

Flag meeting brings relief to farmers

SRINAGAR, October 30, 2013 - The Border Security Force (BSF) and the Pakistani Rangers on Tuesday held October's first flag meeting on the turbulent International Border in Jammu, reducing tension among farmers on both the sides.

Both the sides agreed “not to target the farmers on either side of the Zero Line”.

Sugar mill workers, farmers block traffic

PUDUCHERRY, October 30, 2013 - Registered sugarcane farmers of Puducherry Sugar Mill on Tuesday staged a road roko, protesting non-payment of dues.

Police sources said the farmers, who sat on Mailam-Kuppam Road in front of the mill, shouted slogans against the government and management for failing to settle their dues.

They also demanded the territorial administration to convene tripartite meeting to announce sugarcane price for 2012-13.

Similarly, workers of the mill also staged a protest against non-payment of salary for the last three months. They heckled a senior official, who came out the office when the protest was on. However, they gave up the protest following an assurance by the management that steps would be taken to pay their salary and bonus.

Farmers seek paddy procurement centre

TIRUNELVELI, October 30, 2013 - Demanding the opening of Direct Procurement Centre (DPC) for paddy in their village, a group of farmers from Paalaamadai village near here submitted a petition in the office of the District Collector on Tuesday.

Led by their panchayat president R. Chokkalingam, the villagers said the farmers, who had cultivated paddy, were ready to sell their produce in the DPC at Paalaamadai announced by the Collector during the recently held farmers' grievance day meeting. However, the DPC was never inaugurated after a few paddy buyers spread rumours that the DPC would trigger communal clash in the district as farmers from other communities would also have to come to Paalaamadai to sell paddy.

“If the DPC is not opened at Paalaamadai, those who are spreading rumours will be able buy paddy at the rate fixed by them and not at the rate being given by the government at the DPC. Hence, the Collector should instruct the officials concerned to open the DPC at Paalaamadai at the earliest,” said Mr. Chokkalingam.

Vermiculture unit aims at holistic organic projects for dairy farms



A farmer can harvest vermicompost worth more than Rs. 2 lakh during a year under the ICAR-GSL project.

PANAJI, October 30, 2013 - A vermiculture unit has been set up by Korgao Collective Farming Cooperative Society under a corporate social responsibility project of Goa Shipyard Ltd. implemented by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) under the technical support of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Indian Council of Agricultural Research

(ICAR) at Korgao village in Pernem taluk of north Goa.

The project includes distribution of Jersey/HF (Holstein Friesian) cows to the members of the society along with small-scale vermiculture units to convert dairy waste into high value vermicompost. The project also includes creating facility for green fodder production using hydroponics, said Hiralal Prabhudesai, Subject Matter Specialist of ICAR.

Standardised method

The vermiculture technology has been standardised for small and marginal farmers by the KVK. The 12x4x2.5 ft tank can hold approx one tonne of dairy/farm waste, weeds, grass and other materials, and the waste is converted into vermicompost through earthworms, yielding about 600kg of compost within 45 days. The farmer could have five-six harvests per year yielding three to 3.5 tonnes of vermicompost valued at Rs. 30,000 to 35,000 per unit, said Mr. Prabhudesai.

ICAR researchers say the potential benefit of the technology for farmers was immense since non-availability of quality organic manure was a major concern.

Atla Bala Venkata Reddy, in-charge of TISS project, mentioned that the stakeholders of the project would be facilitated by creating market linkage with the Goa State Horticulture Development Corporation Ltd. for marketing and promoting the sale of vermicompost through its Statewide network of vegetable outlets. He wants the State government to provide 50 per cent subsidy on purchase of vermicompost from the Horticulture Corporation, which would promote the concept of organic farming.

With GSL funding, 77 cows have been distributed in the year 2012-13. For the current financial year, GSL sponsored purchase of 150 cows and also an hydroponic unit to produce quality green fodder – to increase the milk production – and 10 biogas units. The project

promoters have received requests from various panchayats of Pernem taluk to promote this comprehensive model.

Community benefit

The vermicompost project launched in August has so far benefited 10 dairy farmers of Korgao and Ibrampur villages and more than two tonnes of vermicompost was ready for harvesting and marketing, Mr. Prabhudesai said.

In another similar initiative in south Goa, under the agri-co-op project at Canacona in south Goa, the GSL has sponsored in tribal villages 56-60 units of vermicompost and two permanent structures of vermicompost, motors, pumps, barbed wire for fencing, among others, in a bid to promote vegetable cultivation over an area of 30 to 50 acres for 2012-13. In 2013-14, it will promote Honey-Bee-Keeping and mushroom cultivation.

“The aim is to have an area of 50 to 60 acres under vegetable cultivation, and in future, to aim to turn the entire Goa’s vegetable cultivation into fully organic in a few years on the lines of States of Sikkim and Bhutan,” Mr. Prabhudesai said.

Bring more farmers under insurance cover, officers told

SHIMOGA, October 30, 2013 - Minister says government schemes can reach the poor only through awareness campaign

Minister of State for Primary and Secondary Education Kimmane Rathnakar has directed officials of the Department of Agriculture to strive to bring more number of farmers under the purview of crop insurance scheme.

It is necessary to create awareness among the poor and the marginal farmers on the government schemes launched for their welfare. Officials of the Department of Agriculture should use the mass media to create awareness among the farmers on these schemes, Mr. Rathnakar, who is also the Shimoga district in-charge Minister, said at a meeting convened to review the progress made on the implementation of the Karnataka Development Programmes on Tuesday.

Deputy Director of Department of Agriculture Madhusudan told the meeting that more than 41,000 farmers in the district had applied under the crop insurance scheme last year. This year, a total of 31,878 farmers have submitted applications, he said.

Deputy Commissioner Vipul Bansal directed the officials of the Agriculture Department to adopt a planned approach to ensure successful implementation of the scheme. A detailed action plan should be formulated to make the scheme effective. Publicity campaign should start at least a month before inviting the applications, he said.

Focus on SSLC

Deputy Director of Department of Public Instruction B.C. Basavaraju told the meeting that necessary action has been taken to ensure better performance in the forthcoming SSLC examination. The district was ranked 29th in the SSLC results table in 2012-13.

The department had convened a meeting of high school headmasters to work out strategies to improve the performance this year. Mr. Basavaraju said an orientation programmes would be held for the teachers on a regular basis. Senior officials of the department are

visiting the 'non-performing' schools regularly and are personally monitoring the academic activities there, he said.

Bhadravathi MLA M.J. Appaji alleged that a doctor serving at the primary health centre in Antaragange Gram Panchayat limits was drawing salary for the past one year without attending to his work. District Health Officer (DHO) Shivanna Reddy said that, a notice had been issued to the doctor.

Mr. Rathnakar took the DHO to task for allowing the doctor to draw salary without working. He directed the Chief Executive Officer of the zilla panchayat Sasikanth Senthil to probe into the allegations and report at the earliest.

Rajya Sabha member Ayanur Manjunath, Shimoga MLA K.B. Prasanna Kumar, Shimoga Rural MLA Sharada Poorya Naik, Sorab MLA Madhu Bangarappa, MLC M.B. Bhanuprakash, president of the ZP Geetha Mallikarjun, Vice President Hemapavani Srinivas and Superintendent of Police Koushalendra Kumar were present.

📌 ***As many as 31,878 farmers have applied for the scheme so far: official***

📌 ***Orientation programme to be held for teachers to ensure better SSLC results***

Farmers rally against fall in price of natural rubber



KOTTAYAM, October 30, 2013 - UDF convener P.P. Thankachan inaugurates a rally taken out by farmers' organisations of the ruling coalition to the Rubber Board headquarters in Kottayam on Tuesday.— Photo: By Special Arrangement

The farmers' organisations of the United Democratic Front (UDF) held a joint demonstration here in protest against

the fall in the price of natural rubber. Hundreds of farmers participated in the rally that was taken out to the Rubber Board headquarters on Tuesday.

UDF convener P.P. Thankachan inaugurated the demonstration. He assured the gathering that the State government and the UDF would make earnest attempts before the Central government to resolve the crisis.

"As the quantity of rubber imported was in excess of what was required in the domestic market, the Central government must suspend import through advanced license," he said. He pointed out that the present slump in prices had affected around 12 lakh small-scale farmers, who have contributed around 92 per cent of the total productivity in the rubber sector. The fall in rubber price from Rs.240 per kg to around Rs.159 per kg at present has compounded the woes of the growers who have been facing the problem of rising agricultural costs, he added.

Import duty

Stringent measures must be initiated to restrict the import of natural rubber in the country, he said. Moreover, the concerned authorities must raise import duty from the existing rate of Rs.20 per kg to 20 per cent, he said. Karshaka Congress State president Lal Varghese Kalpakavadi presided over the public meeting.

Farmers protectors of ecosystem: forum

KOZHIKODE, October 30, 2013 - A joint forum of farmers' organisations has said that the greatest threat to the ecosystem of the Western Ghats is indiscriminate quarrying and that farmers who grow jackfruit, mango, teak, and rubber should be recognised as true protectors of natural wealth.

Self-styled activists, who were getting funds from foreign agencies, were trying to retard development in the pretext of protecting environment, N.P. Joy, State general secretary and Jose Cheberi, spokesman for the forum, alleged at a press conference on Tuesday.

They appealed to the government to enforce laws that prevented illegal quarrying that damaged environment. The farmers' forum also appealed to the Central government to restrict import of rubber since, in their view, the government decision to import 25 lakh tonnes of rubber when the deficit in domestic market was only 59,000 tonnes was unwarranted and damaged rubber growers' interests.

A meeting of people who had taken educational loans will be held at Kozhikode Sports Council Hall on at 10 a.m. October 31 to discuss the demand for easier repayment options.

Farmers march to Collectorate

PALAKKAD, October 30, 2013 - FARMERS' MARCH : Farmers marched to the Collectorate here today, urging the government to provide compensation for crop loss during the monsoon rains. Inaugurating the march here on Tuesday, the State president of the All India Kisan Sabha V. Chamunni urged the Centre to stop the import of rubber as it had resulted in crash in the prices of the commodity. Mr. Chamunni urged the government to increase the paddy procurement price from Rs.18 a kg to Rs.25 as its cost of production had gone up.

BJP Mahadharna on farmers' issues

ADILABAD, October 30, 2013 - The BJP activists on Tuesday staged a 'Mahadharna' in front of the Collectorate, demanding that the government pay immediate attention to the problems faced by farmers. Party State secretary and district in-charge Aljapur Srinivas condemned the State and Central governments for ignoring the farmers who are reeling

under tremendous hardships owing to crop damage. The BJP leaders also demanded immediate release of compensation to farmers who have incurred losses in rail and flood.

Free fodder seed for farmers

CHITTOOR, October 30, 2013 - The Animal Husbandry Department has undertaken free distribution of fodder seed to the farmers all over the district during the last couple of days, targeting about 6 lakh households which depend on the dairy industry.

A fresh stock of about 40 tonnes of seed was allocated to the district for free distribution, while already two phases were completed and 3,500 quintals of fodder seed distributed on 75 per cent subsidy. The fresh allocation is meant for KV Palle, Madanapalle, Pedda Tippa Samudram and Tamballapalle. Each farmer will be given a 5 kg fodder seed kit at their respective veterinary clinics.

Farmers urged to drain out excess water from fields



Stagnant rainwater in a chilli field at Bollapalli village in Guntur district. — Photo: T.Vijaya Kumar

GUNTUR, October 30, 2013 - Scientists of the Horticultural Research Station (HRS), Lam Farm, advised the chilli farmers to lift the fallen saplings in the fields and spray fertilizers and pesticides to protect the crops from diseases.

If the crop is completely damaged, alternative crops should be planted after removing the damaged saplings, said Dr.

YSR Horticultural University Regional Research Station Head and Principal Scientist Dr. L. Naram Naidu.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Naidu said farmers sowed chilli in Sattenapalli, Amaravathi, Macherla, Peddakurnapadu, Pidiguralla, Peddanandipadu and other areas in Guntur district. But due to the heavy downpour since a week water had stagnated in the fields which could cause a loss to horticulture crops.

“Due to high moisture content plants cannot take nutrients and fungal diseases may affect them causing loss. Vegetables, chilli and turmeric farmers were suggested to take preventive measures depending on the age and condition of the crop,” said another scientist Dr. C. Venkata Ramana. The Principal Scientist said that farmers should drain out the excess water from the fields and clear the sand dunes or mud, if formed immediately.

Farmers are advised to spray 2 per cent urea twice within a week for early recovery since the root system is unable to absorb nutrients from the soil.

Nurseries should be drenched with copper oxychloride at three gm per litre or metalaxyl at two gm per litre to control diseases.

Likewise, copper oxychloride should be sprayed on the plants at three gm per litre to prevent soil-borne fungal diseases, said another scientist Dr. C. Sarada. "After the crop attains normal condition, the field should be inter-cultivated and the farmers are advised to apply 30 kg urea, 15 kg MOP and 200 kg neem cake along with recommended dose of fertilizers," said Mr. Venkata Ramana.

Farm worker electrocuted

KADAPA, October 30, 2013 - An agricultural labourer K. David, 50, was electrocuted when he went to work in agricultural fields in Sikkireddipalle Dalitawada in Mydukur mandal on Tuesday.

He got electrocuted when he stepped on a live electric wire. He is survived by wife, daughter and son.- Special Correspondent

6 held for fraud in farm loans

KHAMMAM, October 30, 2013 - A scam involving sanction of agricultural loans worth around Rs 18 lakh to as many as 17 persons based on fake pattadar passbooks by the local branch of a bank in Charla has come to the fore following the detention of six persons including a village administrative officer (VAO) by the local police on Tuesday.

According to police sources, VAO Yuva Kumar and two others, including a computer operator at the mandal Tehsildar's office besides two employees of the bank were detained by the Charla police for questioning in connection with the scam.

The police have also registered cases against the persons those who allegedly obtained the loans by producing fake pattadar pass books.

A detailed investigation is under way to establish the role of persons responsible for forging the signatures of the officials concerned and sanctioning the loans based on fake documents, said Prasad Rao, Circle Inspector, Venkatapuram.

'Govt neglecting Telangana farmers'

WARANGAL, October 30, 2013 - BJP former MLA M. Dharma Rao lashed out at the State government and Congress ministers for deliberately neglecting the farmers of Telangana region. It is evident from the ways in which the Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy, State and Union ministers are reacting to the floods, they alleged.

"It appears that they are thinking that Telangana is no more a part of the State and it has already been separated. The rain caused more damage in Telangana districts but none of the leaders are touring the region," Dharma Rao deplored.

He demanded that the government be dismissed immediately and President's rule be imposed. "The Chief Minister is deliberately diverting crores of rupees to his native Chittoor district. The ministers too are ignoring the misery of farmers in Telangana," he said. "Paddy, maize, cotton and maize crops are badly damaged in Telangana. The vegetable crops in Warangal were destroyed completely. Neither the Chief Minister nor any other ministers seems bothered," the BJP leader said.

Torrential rains cause misery to farmers



They are now looking towards government for help at this hour of crisis

KOTHAPATNAM, October 30, 2013 - Farmers looking at damaged paddy crop in Prakasam district on Tuesday. — Photo: Kommuri Srinivas

KOTHAPATNAM, October 30, 2013 - The farmers in this coastal mandal were able to grow crops, including paddy, in a big way thanks to good rains during the South West monsoon.

Now the farmers, including dalits and tribals, are in dire straits with the torrential rains flooding the paddy fields in over 750 acres in, among other villages, Motumala, Gajupalem and Aluru in the mandal.

Pouring out their tale of woe, a group of farmers at Motumala told *The Hindu* "it is scanty rainfall in one year and excess rainfall in another year. If we get a good crop then there is no market for our produce".

Recalling the recent rain fury, they said with worries writ large on their faces that "within no time, our fields were in a pool of water. Our houses were also inundated in the wake of unprecedented rains". On a single day on Wednesday the mandal received a very high rainfall of 36 cm in a short span of eight hours, cutting off road transport to the district headquarters with the Nallavagu in spate.

"Water entered our houses and damaged the stored paddy bags numbering 400," another group of farmers said in Aluru to a delegation of leaders of Andhra Pradesh Agriculture Workers Union and Kula Vivaksha Porata Sangam leaders led by APAWU State secretary V.Venkateswarulu.

Taking time while draining out water from their fields, farmer Venkat Reddy said "We have no option but to end our lives if the State government does not extend a helping hand at this hour of crisis".

Compensation sought

Mr Venkateswarulu said the State government should announce a compensation of Rs. 15,000 per acre to the ryots in distress.

AIAUW district secretary P. Hanumantha Rao wanted the government to provide farm inputs, including subsidised seeds and fertilizers, to recoup the losses by growing fresh crop in the Rabi season. After having a look at the wet paddy, KVPS district secretary A. Malyadri said the government should come to the rescue of farmers by directing the Food Corporation of India to purchase the discoloured paddy. Referring to the swirling waters drowning Ch.Neelakandam of Rajupalem, AIAUW district president K.Anjaneyulu urged the government to provide the family two acres and arrange for the studies of his two children. The affected families in dalitwadas and Girijan hamlets, who were without work for a week now, should be provided with 50 kg rice and five litres of kerosene, besides wage employment under the MGNREGS scheme, added, CPI(M) Kothapatnam secretary Somi Reddy.

Crop in 75,000 acres damaged: Minister

VIJAYAWADA, October 30, 2013 - Standing crop in 75,000 acres has been damaged by heavy rains in Krishna district, according to a preliminary estimate by officials of the Agriculture Department, Minister for Secondary Education K. Parthasarathy has said.

The Minister, on Tuesday, visited Paritala, Ganiathukur, and Gottimukkala villages, where standing crop was badly affected.

Addressing people of the affected villages, the Minister said in Kanchikacherla mandal, paddy was damaged in 2,200 hectares, cotton in 5,680 hectares, and chilli in 200 hectares.

Enumeration

The Minister stressed the importance of scientific enumeration of the loss.

The cotton plants in the fields may be alive even after the water dried up, but there would be a lot of difference in the yield. Such factors should be taken into consideration during enumeration of crop loss, he said.

He said a maize purchase centre would be soon opened at Nuzvid for the benefit of maize growers. He recalled that the government released Rs.10 crore compensation to farmers who suffered losses due to Neelam Cyclone.

Later, addressing a gathering in Kanchikacherla, the Minister said rains damaged crop that would have been harvested shortly.

He said the Congress Government increased compensation as soon as it came to power. He said there was extensive damaged to roads in the district — 750 km of R&B roads and 880 km of panchayat raj roads.

Buying centres for maize, paddy to open

Government will buy maize at Rs. 1,310 per quintal

BELGAUM, October 30, 2013 - Following the announcement of minimum support price for maize for the current year, the district administration has announced it will open procurement centres for paddy and maize from November 1.

Deputy Commissioner N. Jayaram said here on Tuesday that procurement centres for maize would be opened at the Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC) yards in Ramdurg, Saundatti, Sankeshwar and Kudachi towns.

Publicity campaigns would be taken up from November 1 to 10, to motivate growers to register names and details of their stocks. The actual procurement would commence from November 11. The government would procure maize at Rs. 1,310 per quintal, he said.

Subsequently, centres would be opened at Bailhongal, Gokak, Haralkatti, Chikkodi, Hanchinal, Katkol, Athani, and Yargatti after November 15.

Paddy

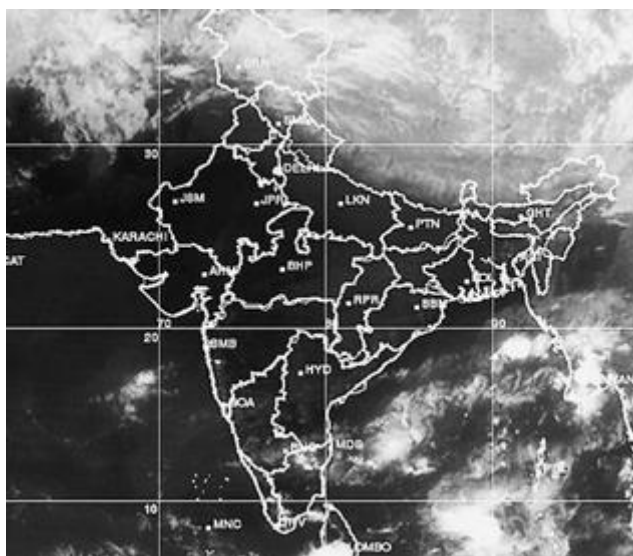
The government will soon announce minimum support price for paddy. Procurement centres for paddy would be opened in Khanapur and Belgaum at APMC yards.

He said only graded and clean paddy stocks would be procured at the MSP. The farmers must produce their 'pahani patra' at these centres. Proper weighing machines would be used for procurement.

☐ ***Centres will be opened in Ramdurg, Saundatti, Sankeshwar and Kudachi***

☐ ***Will soon announce support price for paddy: Jayaram***

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on October 29th.

	Max	Min	R TR
New Delhi (Plm)	31	17	0 52
New Delhi (Sfd)	31	15	0 73
Chandigarh	30	13	0 29
Hissar	31	13	0 4
Bhuntar	26	7	0 9
Shimla	18	10	0 66
Jammu	29	13	0 122
Srinagar	20	3	0 15
Amritsar	29	14	0 77
Patiala	30	15	0 9
Jaipur	34	16	0 2
Udaipur	32	16	0 55
Allahabad	31	17	0 301
Lucknow	31	16	0 42
Varanasi	31	18	0 141
Dehradun	27	13	0 34
Agartala	31	22	0 185
Ahmedabad	34	18	0 63
Bangalore	27	21	0 97
Bhubaneshwar	29	22	0 674
Bhopal	31	15	0 26
Chennai	33	26	0 177
Guwahati	31	19	0 215
Hyderabad	31	21	0 239
Kolkata	31	23	0 530
Mumbai	33	26	0 66
Nagpur	32	19	0 168
Patna	30	20	0 194
Pune	33	20	0 25
Thiruvananthapuram	33	23	0 212
Imphal	29	16	0 69
Shillong	21	12	0 77

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

Rainfall: Weather was dry over the region.

MAXIMUM TEMPATURE: maximum temperature changed little over the region.

They were normal over the region. The highest maximum temperature in the region was 36.0°C recorded at Phalodi (Rajasthan).

MINIMUM TEMPATURE: The minimum temperature fell in Punjab and east Uttar Pradesh and changed little elsewhere.

They were normal over the region. The lowest minimum temperature in the plains was 10.2°C recorded at Nazibabad (Uttar Pradesh).

FORECAST FOR REGION VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 31st OCTOBER 2013: Rain/snow may occur at one or two places over Jammu and Kashmir. Weather would be mainly dry over rest of the region.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 31st OCTOBER 2013: Mainly clear sky. Mist/Shallow fog in the morning.



Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Cloudy

Wednesday, Oct 30

Max Min

32° | 26°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 89

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:01

Sunset: 05:43

Barometer: 1013

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Thursday, Oct 31

Max Min

32° | 25°

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday

Nov 1



33° | 24°

Cloudy

Saturday

Nov 2



28° | 26°

Overcast

Sunday

Nov 3



27° | 26°

Overcast

Monday

Nov 4



27° | 26°

Cloudy

Tuesday

Nov 5



27° | 26°

Overcast

Business Standard

Sugarcane crushing in Maharashtra unlikely to begin until after Diwali

Factories with positive net worth to get working capital



Cane crushing by [sugar factories](#) in [Maharashtra](#) is not expected to begin before [Diwali](#) for a variety of reasons, unlike the usual date of November 1.

Mills point to falling sugar prices, extended rainfall and an agitation call by various farmers' bodies, for higher cane payment. Also, the work force appears likely to arrive only after November 5.

Sanjeev Babar, managing director, Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories in Maharashtra told Business Standard: "Factories are expected to start crushing after Diwali. About 160 factories (100 co-op and 60 private ones) will take part."

Maharashtra contributes about 30 per cent to national sugar production. Babar says output in the 2013-14 season is expected to be 7.2-7.4 million tonnes, against eight mt in 2012-13.

The Shetkari Sanghatana says it will launch a stir from Wednesday for higher cane payment. Suresh Dhas, minister of state for cooperation, said the government had directed that factories not pay less than the state-endorsed 'Fair and Remunerative Price' suggested by the central government, of Rs 2,100 a tonne for 9.5 per cent recovery, with an increase of Rs 221 a tonne for every additional one per cent recovery.

However, the Maharashtra State [Cooperative Bank](#) (MSCB) points to directives from the Reserve Bank of India and the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development to advance no [working capital](#) to factories with negative net worth, of which there are about 30 in the state, unless there is a state government guarantee. 'The state government has decided not to provide a guarantee for such factories,' said Pramod Karnad, managing director of MSCB.

He says they've sanctioned working capital worth Rs 3,200 crore to 29 co-op factories with positive net worth, for the coming season.

And, he noted, with sugar prices at a low of Rs 2,650 a quintal, it was unlikely to lend for a higher cane payment.

According to the information available with state cooperation department, there will be more than 30 sugar factories with negative net worth. However, some of them have approached the private banks and the district central cooperative banks for the working loan.

Cardamom down 1.2% on profit booking



Spice for delivery in December declined by 0.4%

[Cardamom](#) prices fell by Rs 8.60 to Rs 706.60 per kg in futures trade today as speculators booked profits amid subdued demand in the spot market.

Adequate stocks following increased arrivals from producing regions also put pressure on cardamom prices in futures trade.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for delivery in November fell by Rs 8.60, or 1.20%, to Rs 706.60 per kg, with a business turnover of 805 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in December declined by Rs 3, or 0.40%, to Rs 742 per kg with a business turnover of 264 lots.

Market analysts said besides profit-booking at existing higher levels, a fall in demand in the spot market put pressure on cardamom prices in futures trade.

M&M to enter branded fruit business

Company entered into banana procurement, ripening, marketing in August this year on pilot basis



[Mahindra](#) & Mahindra (M&M) is planning to commercialise [banana](#) ripening, as backward integration to support the company's planned [branded fruit](#) launch early next month.

In August this year, the company had launched a banana procurement, ripening and marketing pilot in Delhi. Next month, it is set to introduce long, spotless bananas with increased shelf-life on a commercial basis and expand

these operations to Mumbai early next year. The company has handled 150 tonnes of banana so far this year and plans to scale this up to 15,000 tonnes by next year.

For its farm tech prosperity scheme, M&M has engaged about 100 farmers, primarily in Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh. It provides seed, fertilisers and herbicides, as well as guidance on improved farm practices to these farmers.

With about 15 per cent of the market share and an annual turnover of about Rs 60 crore, M&M has already set its footprints in the global grape market. The company plans to introduce fruit brand 'Saboro' ('taste' in Spanish) next month, for which it is in talks with large retail chains, including Reliance Fresh. It is also looking to tie up with others such as Godrej's Nature Basket and Heritage Foods for distribution.

"We plan to introduce apples, grapes, bananas and other imported fruits under this brand for our Indian consumers. With this, we will be the only Indian corporate to offer such a large basket in the market. Saboro fruits would be available at select organised retail outlets and in general trade across key metro cities. To start with, we would be launching the best-quality Kinnaur (Himachal Pradesh) apples under this brand from November. As it is the second-largest consumer of F&V (fruits and vegetables) in India, we have selected Hyderabad as the launch city. With the strong organised retail presence this city has, we see this as a good opportunity for us to gauge the acceptance of a premium fresh fruit brand in the market," said Ashok Sharma, chief executive (agri & allied business), M&M.

"We will eventually expand to other metros and tier-II cities in the coming months and extend this brand for our fruit export business to Europe, West Asia, Southeast Asia and Russia. Our plan, through the next three years, is to supply Saboro fruits across 200 outlets in India and record a turnover of Rs 300 crore for our fresh fruits business," he added.

"They are in discussion with us. Nothing has been finalised yet. Generally, launching a new concept takes time for consumers to accept. If they (M&M) maintain consistency in quality and quantity, they could succeed, which takes some time," said Mohit Khatter, chief executive, Godrej's Nature Basket.

M&M's agri business plans to provide end-to-end solutions for all farmers' needs, across the agricultural value chain. Realisations from its fruits business is expected to fetch a premium of five-10 per cent over the prevailing market price.

Dry fruit prices drop as Diwali demand tapers off



Consumers have shifted towards chocolates, low priced-sweets

The demand from corporate buyers, who were using [dry fruit](#) hampers as gifts for the festival, came down drastically this year due to high prices a month ago

With [Diwali](#) demand tapering dry fruit prices have fallen 6-11 per cent. Consumers' shift towards chocolates and other low-priced sweets has also led to a drop in demand for dry fruits, leading to a drop in prices.

“The demand for dry fruits has declined almost 30 per cent in the past one week as most of the purchases for Diwali festival is over. The demand from corporate buyers, who were using dry fruit hampers as gift for the festival, has come down alarmingly this year due to very high prices a month ago. The softening of prices in the international markets has also impacted the domestic prices this year,” said Rahul Kamath, partner, Bola Surendra Kamath & Sons, a Mangalore-based dry fruits trader.

Almond prices have declined six to eight per cent to Rs 595-610 a kg against the peak price of Rs 645 a kg about 15 days ago. Similarly, cashew kernel prices for W240 grade have seen a drop of seven to 11 per cent to Rs 625-650 a kg, compared to the peak price of Rs 700 a kg a fortnight ago in major markets of Delhi, Mumbai and Mangalore.

“Indian domestic market moved up during September but has been steady for the past two-to-three weeks. There is good demand for quality product. We can expect a slowing down of activity during October-end or early November. But there should be a revival of buying by traders after mid November for the marriage season, depending on retail off-take in the festival season, which will end by early November,” said Pankaj Sampat of Samsons Traders, a Mumbai-based commodity brokerage house.

The prices of W320 grade cashew kernels have declined from \$3.35 per lb (pound) a fortnight ago to \$3.10 per lb. Similarly, almond prices have dropped from \$2.70 to \$2.40-2.45.

“Orders for gift boxes close a month before Diwali. This year, due to very high prices, the corporate houses have shifted their preference for dry fruits to other items like chocolates, biscuits, low-priced sweets and other items like glassware. The prices of dry fruit gift boxes were almost double this year compared to last year. As a result, the demand for assorted dry fruit boxes has come down as much as 30 per cent this year,” said Kamath.

The traders in mandis of Delhi, Chandigarh, Mumbai and Bangalore are holding enough stocks of dry fruits and are unable to sell at profitable prices due to a sudden drop in demand. Unless some last minute purchases happens, mainly from sweet makers, the stockists may have to incur losses this year, Kamath pointed out.

According to traders, prices of most of the dried fruits had surged a couple of months ago due to multiple reasons including rupee depreciation, increased demand and short supply in the domestic market, among others.

Lack of demand hits turmeric sales



Erode, Oct. 29:

Turmeric sale was affected for want of demand on Tuesday. "The four turmeric markets have received totally 4,200 bags, but for want of demand from North India many traders just attended the market and did not procure any stock. Only 45-50 per cent stocks were sold, most of the quantity was procured by local traders to supply the medium quality turmeric for powder purpose. No goods were sent to North India as the Diwali sales were completed," said R.K.V.

Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety fetched Rs 3,699-5,899 a quintal, root variety Rs 3,571-4,884 a quintal. Of the 1,083 bags on offer, only 310 bags were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,069-5,899 a quintal, root variety Rs 4,189-5,091 a quintal. Of the 713 bags on offer, 481 were traded.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,629-5,780 a quintal and the root variety Rs 4,139-4,842 a quintal. Of the 755 bags on offer, 615 were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,800-6,109 a quintal, root variety Rs 4,072-5,009 a quintal. All the 200 bags found takers.

Small, medium rubber units seek hike in import duty on products

Kochi, Oct. 29: Small and medium rubber units have asked for an increase in import duties on finished rubber products to enable local units face the challenge of fast growing cheaper imports.

In a representation made to the Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) and Director-General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), the industry body All-India Rubber



Industries Association (AIRIA) stated that there were about 5,000 SME rubber units accounting for the largest segment in SME clusters.

However, low import duties on finished goods have rendered Indian manufacturing of rubber products by SMEs uncompetitive in several product areas. A worrisome trend is that

manufacturers are turning traders of imported goods leading to loss of jobs and Indian manufacturing getting seriously compromised, states the association.

Quoting import figures released by the Ministry of Commerce Export Import Data Bank, the association said that import of finished rubber products has gone by 100 per cent in the last three years from Rs 3,810 crore in 2009-10 to Rs 7,608 crore in 2012-13.

Unfortunately, most of the imports consists of low quality, low-tech products. While Indian units are capable of manufacturing superior products, they are challenged by cheap products from countries such as China. The most disturbing aspect is that all raw materials for rubber industry attract higher rates of import duty than finished rubber products. While finished goods can be imported at a duty of 2.5 to 10 per cent, the import duty on all key raw materials ranges between 10 and 70 per cent, said Niraj Thakkar, President, AIRIA.

Interestingly, all rubber manufacturing countries have import duties on finished goods much higher than India with a view to protecting the interests of local units.

Amongst the rubber SMEs, the worst affected were dipped rubber goods manufacturers especially balloon manufacturers, who mainly depend on latex as raw material. With import duty of 70 per cent on NR latex, India has lost the competitive advantage of manufacturing dipped rubber goods, despite the technology and availability of skilled manpower, he said. The balloons from China, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Sri Lanka are being imported at a nominal duty and are far cheaper than Indian manufactured balloons.

According to AIRIA's estimate, the balloons imported from Sri Lanka have already captured 50 per cent of the Indian market. The association has asked for bringing import duty on finished rubber products higher than that on raw materials so that Indian manufacturers get a level playing field.

'Easterly wave' to bring more rain for south TN, Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram, Oct. 29: The Met Department has said that parts of south peninsular India will come under a fresh wet spell of rain from Wednesday. This will come about as an 'easterly wave' debuts over the region, bringing rain to a few places in Tamil Nadu and Kerala to start with.

Easterly waves are fast-moving low-pressure waves across the Bay of Bengal and are frequent during the Northeast monsoon. Some of the 'rain heads' packing the wave have gone on in the past to become low-pressure areas and depressions, even cyclones. But no

such intensified form of weather is being forecast this time round, except the possibility of a typhoon building over the South China Sea (across international waters).

In the North and Northwest, rain and snow has been forecast at isolated places over Jammu and Kashmir from a passing western disturbance.

RAIN FOR ANDHRA

Minimum temperatures will fall by 2 to 3 degree Celsius over Northwest and Central India during the weekend as the warmth of the western disturbance lifts and Arctic air fills the region.

US National Centres for Environmental Prediction continues to suggest stray rains over Gujarat during the coming week and the next as well.

As for South, the Met said that the rains will scale up towards the latter part of the week.

Rain-ravaged coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema are also expected to get hit.

The US agency is of the view that extreme south Kerala and adjoining Tamil Nadu as well as coastal Andhra Pradesh may witness intermittent showery spells for the next two weeks.

Lakshadweep, coastal and south interior Karnataka are the other regions likely to get rains during this weekend.

An extended four-day outlook by the Met Department valid from Friday said that rain or thundershowers would break out at many places over Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

A few places over south Andhra Pradesh and coastal and south interior Karnataka too may receive varying spells.

Groundnut oil slips on higher crushing activity



Rajkot, Oct. 29: As new arrival of groundnut crop has increased in the State, crushing activity has also risen since last few days which pressurised the groundnut oil price. Cotton oil remained steady.

According to edible oil traders, demand in groundnut oil was there but supply side was higher and that's why groundnut oil has decreased since last two days. It may fall more in this week as demand is likely to come down.

During last one week groundnut arrival increased to 90,000-95,000 bags a day. Groundnut oil loose stood at Rs 795-800 for 10 kg, *telia* tin at Rs 1,240-1,241 for 15 kg while new tin of groundnut oil

declined Rs 15 to Rs 1,460-1,465 for 15 kg. About 8-10 tankers of groundnut oil were traded.

With normal demand, cotton oil remained unchanged. Cotton oil wash was traded at Rs 655-658 for 10 kg and new tin price was at Rs 1,160-1,170 for 15 kg. About 55-60 tankers of cotton oil was traded in Saurashtra.

Global glut turns outlook for sugar exports bearish



Mumbai, Oct. 29: Sugar prices on the Vashi market ruled mixed on Tuesday with gain of Rs 2-4 at lower end and loss of Rs 5-10 at higher end on routine activities.

Naka and mill tender rates were steady as producers continued selling while stockists kept away from fresh bets as

sufficient stocks were available with them and in market. They were of the opinion that the bulk and retail demand will ease post-Diwali. Morale was calm, said sources.

A Vashi-based wholesaler said, "Since last one month volatility in physical market remained thin with needy producers selling at lower rates to financial liquidity on hand. On the other hand, new crushing season has already started and more than 85 lakh tonnes of opening stocks (carry over stock of last year) along with optimism about higher production in 2013-14 season (about 250 lakh tonnes) clearly indicate ample supply for near term."

He said, "Sugar prices in other producing States such as Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Gujarat are ruling at par with Maharashtra keeping upcountry buyers away forcing mills to sell the commodity in local markets. On export front also chances still remain bleak due to higher supply from Brazil and Thailand."

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

On Monday, 14-15 mills sold about 33,000-34,000 bags at Rs 2,700-2,840 (Rs 2,700-2,840) for S-grade and Rs 2,880-3,000 (Rs 2,880-3,000) for M-grade.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 2,896-3,025 (Rs 2,892-3,030) and M-grade Rs 3,012-3,221 (Rs 3,010-3,231). **Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 2,840-2,880 (Rs 2,840-2,880) and M-grade Rs 2,950-3,120 (Rs 2,950-3,120). **Uttar Pradesh rates were:** Lakhimpur Rs 3,310 and Muzzafarnagar Rs 3,320.

Pepper futures uptrend continues, spot slips

Kochi, Oct. 29: Spot pepper slipped marginally on Tuesday on slow buying while the running futures contract continued to move up.



There was no selling pressure on the spot and the availability remained tight. However, the buyers are reported to have slowed down as many of them have shifted to dry fruit business for the Diwali festival, market sources told *Business Line*.

Demand is expected to pick up after Diwali for the winter requirements, they said. On the spot, 10 tonnes of farm grade pepper arrived and the offtake was 12 tonnes.

On the NMCE, Nov and Dec contracts increased by Rs 57 and Rs 277 respectively to Rs 47,300 and Rs 47,000 a quintal. On the IPSTA, Nov and Dec contracts went up by Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 respectively to Rs 49,000 and Rs 48,500 .

A total of 14 tonnes of pepper were traded today on regional exchange while on the NMCE only two tonnes were traded, they said. Spot prices, however, slipped by Rs 200 to Rs 46,400 (ungarbled) and Rs 48,400 (garbled) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market moved up to \$8,350 (c&f) Europe and \$8,650 a tonne (c&f) for the US. Even as the Indian parity continued to advance day by day, Indonesia was reportedly "still not making any offers of substance despite the rapid rise seen at other origins. It is rumoured that Lampung sellers are buying and holding in anticipation of higher prices ahead," an overseas report said today.

Vietnam is quietly selling nearby positions as buyers have limited options now when it comes to purchasing sterilized pepper. Brazil continues to be most competitive, but finding a seller there is quite difficult.

Chana prospects fade on rising inflow of imports

Indore, Oct. 29: Chana which rallied to Rs 3,100-25 a quintal yesterday on increased festival demand, declined marginally today on slack demand and buying support with chana (kanta) being quoted at Rs 3,050-3,100, while chana (desi) ruled at Rs 2,900.

Given adequate carryover stock, arrival of new crops and continuous flow of imported chana in the domestic market, future of chana appears to be bearish.

Added to this, expected rise in sowing area this year will also add to the bearish sentiment .



With the rupee continuously gaining strength against dollar, chana imports in the country have also turned cheaper. Against an imported deal of \$500-520 a tonne in November, chana import deals for November-December have declined to \$460-470. Keeping this in mind, chana prices in the local mandis will likely to

remain range-bound between Rs 2,950 and Rs 3,150, said a trader Kamal Agrawal . Chana dal (average) was being quoted at Rs 3,700-50 , chana dal (medium) at Rs 3,800-4,000, while chana dal (bold) ruled at Rs 4,100-4,400. Slack demand and buying support have also dragged dollar chana both in the domestic and export market. Dollar chana (chickpea) was quoted at Rs 4,000-4,200 amid an arrival of 5,000-6,000 bags in Indore mandis. In container also, dollar chana ruled sluggish on slack export demand with dollar chana (42/44 count) being quoted at Rs 5,000-25 , 44/46 count at Rs 4,700-25, 46/48 count declined to Rs 4,500-25, 58/60 count at Rs 3,675-3,700, while dollar chana (60/62 count) ruled at Rs 3,575-3,600 a quintal respectively.

Bulk buyers keep away from edible oils



Mumbai, Oct. 29: Price of edible oils on spot market was mixed while on futures it closed lower of profit booking . Reports of crop loss in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, delay in arrivals and weak rupee kept the sentiment positive in physical market. On the Bombay Commodity Exchange, palmolein and rapeseed oil rose by Rs 2 for 10 kg each. Soyabean and cotton refined oil were steady. Groundnut and sunflower oil dropped by Rs 10 each.

Activities were limited as stockists stayed away at higher level. Traders were expecting some downward correction as prices have gone up sharply in the last 8-10 days. Sources said as stockists have bought enough materials they keep away from fresh bulk buying. Towards the day's close, Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 588, super palmolein Rs 623 and super deluxe Rs 643, soyabean refined oil Rs 710 and sunflower refined oil Rs 820. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 582 ex JNPT for November 5 and Rs 586 ex Patalganga for November 1-20, super palmolein Rs 618 for November 1-20, soyabean refined oil Rs 700 for October and sunflower refined oil Rs 755 for November 5-15. Allana was quoting palmolein at Rs 582-588, super palmolein Rs 615, soyabean refined oil Rs 710 and sunflower refined oil Rs 810.

Malaysia BMD crude palm oil's November futures closed higher at MYR 2,529 (MYR 2,480), December at MYR 2,507 (MYR 2,471) and January at MYR 2,497 (MYR 2,463).

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: groundnut oil 850 (860), soya refined oil 700 (700), sunflower exp. ref. 710 (735), sunflower ref. 785 (790), rapeseed ref. oil 752 (750), rapeseed expeller ref. 722 (720) cottonseed ref. oil 690 (690) and palmolein 580 (578).

Vikram Global Commodities (P) Ltd quoted Rs 653/10 kg for Malaysia super palmolein November delivery.

Wheat likely to rule range-bound



Karnal, Oct. 29: A steady movement is likely to be witnessed in the coming days in the physical market, while futures market may continue to witness a range-bound trend, said trade experts.

Following good demand for flour, interest in dara wheat remained firm, said Ram Kumar, a wheat trader.

Prices have been ruling firm since last weekend and may continue to rule around current levels this week, he added.

The market is getting good support from strong consumer demand in the ongoing festival season, said Kumar.

According to the market experts, market may continue to witness a range-bound to steady movement in the coming days. In the physical market, dara wheat was sold at Rs 1,585-90 a quintal.

Around 1,000 bags of wheat arrived and stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,585 while delivery at the chakki was at Rs 1,590 .

A positive trend was witnessed on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange on Tuesday. Wheat for November delivery improved by Rs 4 and traded at 1,603 with an open interest of 4,700 lots.

November contracts have some support at Rs 1,592 while resistance at Rs 1,603.

December contracts went up by Rs 5 and traded at Rs 1,635.

In the spot market, wheat traded at Rs 1,542.5 .

Flour Prices

Despite a steady trend in wheat, flour moved up by Rs 20 and quoted at Rs 1,850. On the other hand, chokar was unchanged at Rs 1,270-90 a quintal.

Copra market heading for correction



Kochi, Oct. 29: Slight increase in copra arrivals cooled down coconut oil prices in Tamil Nadu this week. The prices came down to Rs 89.75 a kg against Rs 92 quoted last week.

However, Kerala witnessed an increase of Re 1 to Rs 95 a kg due to tight copra supply and increase in domestic demand, Prakash B. Rao, President, Cochin Oil Merchants Association (COMA), said. There was a slowdown in upcountry demand due to reduced intake by corporates. The market, he said, seems

to be heading for a correction which is evident from the low consumption.

Copra prices also started declining at Rs 6,800 a quintal in Kerala (Rs 7,000) and Rs 6,600 in Tamil Nadu against Rs 6,800 quoted last week.

Palm oil prices moved up to Rs 59/kg against Rs 53 due to price increase in Malaysia, the major producing country. Palm kernel oil prices remained at the same level of Rs 72 quoted last week, he said.

T.K. Jose, Chairman, Coconut Development Board, told *Business Line* that there is a significant production fall in major coconut producing States in south India due to climatic changes, drought, delayed monsoon last year affecting output. In order to recoup or rejuvenate production to normal levels, he said it will take at least 6-9 months more.

During this period, the production and availability of copra is expected to be less. This is going to be a major contributing factor to price, he said.

The severe crop loss at Tumkur in Karnataka, where large number of desiccated coconut industries are functioning, is now heavily dependent on north Kerala markets which also resulted in low copra arrivals from these markets.
