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### **‘Utilise grama sabha meetings’**

Staff Reporter

Tirupur: Special grama sabha meetings were held in 273 village panchayats in the district in connection with the Republic Day, on Tuesday.

#### **Action plan**

Overseeing the proceedings at one such meeting conducted at K. Iyyampalayam village, Collector C. Samayamoorthy called upon the civic body representatives, villagers and administrators to utilise the grama sabha meetings as a platform to understand the critical gaps in the infrastructure and formulate action plan accordingly to better living standards in the respective areas.

Mr. Samayamoorthy said that the administration took up seven road projects under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in the village at Rs. 21 lakh during the current fiscal.

The residents of K. Iyyampalayam requested the Collector to take steps to set up a veterinary dispensary in the village at the earliest considering the huge size of the predominant domestic fowl rearing business.

“At present, we have to take the fowls all the way to the veterinary hospital at Palladam,” the residents pointed out.

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### **Make use of Pulses Mission, farmers told**

Staff Reporter



***Worthy advice: Villagers participating in the gram sabha meeting at Tiruvarangulam in Pudukottai district on Tuesday.***

PUDUKOTTAI: Farmers should take maximum advantage of the 'National Pulses Mission' programme being implemented in the district and bring more area under pulses, A. Suganthi, Collector, said.

Addressing villagers at a gram sabha meeting convened as part of Republic Day celebrations at Tiruvarankulam on Tuesday, the Collector explained the district's potential for raising pulses particularly black gram and tur dal. She appealed to the farmers to raise these pulses as inter-crop and benefit through special marketing facility provided by the State government. She appealed to plant saplings to protect the environment and check the impact of global warming.

She advised the Village Panchayat president A. Karuppiah to identify the beneficiaries for the 'Kalaingar Housing Scheme' to be implemented in all the village panchayats in the State.

R. Menaka, Deputy Collector; K. Chidambaram, Panchayat union councillor and A. Veerasimhan, Personal Assistant to Collector (Noon Meals) also were among those who spoke.

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## **Assurance on Bt Brinjal**

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi has said the government will not take any hasty decision on allowing cultivation or sale of Bt Brinjal in the State. Representatives of Poovulagin Nanbargal, Safe Food Alliance, Tamil Nadu Women's Collective Group and Tamil Nadu Organic Farmers Federation called on the Chief Minister at his Gopalapuram residence on Monday and sought a ban on the controversial genetically-modified brinjal. In his response, Mr. Karunanidhi said Agriculture Minister Veerapandi S. Arumugam had already given a detailed report in the Assembly. Besides, officials had been instructed not to allow sale or cultivation of Bt Brinjal in Tamil Nadu till the State government permits it.

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## **Water level**

MADURAI: Water level in the Periyar dam on Tuesday stood at 115.60 feet (136 feet) with an inflow of 176 cusecs and a discharge of 788 cusecs. The level in the Vaigai dam was 48.29 feet (71 feet) with no inflow and a discharge of 1,860 cusecs. The combined Periyar credit stood at 2,481 mcft.

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## **Terminal Market Complex to come up in Coimbatore**

N. Anand

CHENNAI: Three Terminal Market Complexes (TMCs) for perishable items will be set up each in Coimbatore, Madurai and Chennai regions, said Atul Anand, Commissioner, Tamil Nadu Agricultural Marketing and Agri-business, on Monday.

Addressing members of the Confederation of Indian Industry at a roundtable on 'Doing business: opportunities and challenges,' he said that the Centre had given in-principle approval for the Rs.111.50 crore Perundurai project in the Coimbatore region and SIPCOT offered 40 acres on lease.

According to him, the department decided to set up TMC in Perundurai instead of Coimbatore as it was in the centre of command area and the land was offered at a reasonable cost.

The department will accept bids for the Perundurai TMC till February 4. Talking to *The Hindu*, he said "150 uzhavar sandhais are functioning in the State and it is proposed to set up 25 more soon."

## **Marketing network**

In his special address, P.K. Swain, Director (Marketing), Ministry of Agriculture said that in the first phase approval was accorded to four states – Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Orissa and Bihar – to set up the TMCs and they were working on the second phase.

## **Secondary cities**

K.P.T. Ganesan, president, Tamil Nadu State Agricultural Marketing Board, urged the Centre to allocate certain percentage of its funds to set up food processing facilities in the State and said that to decongest secondary cities such as Coimbatore and Tiruchi, central markets would be shifted to a nearby place.

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## **Ozone hole's healing may worsen global warming**

Sindya N. Bhanoo

That the hole in the Earth's ozone layer is slowly mending is considered a big victory for environmental policymakers. But in a new report, scientists say there is a downside: Its repair may contribute to global warming.

It turns out that the hole led to the formation of moist, brighter-than-usual clouds that shielded the Antarctic region from the warming induced by greenhouse gas emissions over the last two decades, scientists write in Wednesday's issue of *Geophysical Research Letters*.

"The recovery of the hole will reverse that," said Ken Carslaw, a professor of atmospheric science at the University of Leeds and a co-author of the paper. "Essentially, it will accelerate warming in certain parts of the Southern Hemisphere."

The hole in the layer, discovered above Antarctica in the mid-1980s, caused wide alarm because ozone plays a crucial role in protecting life on Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

The hole was largely attributed to the human use of chlorofluorocarbons, chemical compounds found in refrigerants and aerosol cans that dissipate ozone. Under an international protocol adopted in 1987, many countries phased out the compounds, helping the ozone to start reconstituting itself over the Antarctic.

For their research, the authors of the new study relied on meteorological data recorded between 1980 and 2000, including global wind speeds recorded by the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts.

The data show that the hole in the ozone layer generated high-speed winds that caused sea salt to be swept up into the atmosphere to form moist clouds. The clouds reflect more of the Sun's powerful rays and help fend off warming in the Antarctic atmosphere, the scientists write.

The sea spray influx resulted in an increase in cloud droplet concentration of about 46 per cent in some regions of the Southern Hemisphere, Mr. Carslaw said.

But Judith Perlwitz, a University of Colorado professor and a research scientist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, said that although the paper's data were sound, she questioned the conclusions.

Even as the ozone layer recovers, greenhouse gas emissions are expected to

expand, she said.

She predicted that the rise in temperatures would cause wind speeds to increase over time and have the same cloud-forming effect that the ozone hole now has.

Ms. Perlwitz also pointed out that the ozone hole was not expected to fully recover to pre-1980 levels until at least 2060, according to the World Meteorological Organisation's most recent report on the issue.

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*By Pavan Vangipuram*

*27 Jan 2010 03:41:00 AM IST*

['Bt Brinjal's toxicity is proved in laboratory'](#)

HYDERABAD: In the debate now raging over genetically-modified crops, few voices are more respected or carry more weight than that of Dr Krishna Rao Dronamraju.

A veteran professor of genetics at both Johns Hopkins University and the University of Texas, Dr Dronamraju has been nominated for a Nobel Prize, authored more than seventeen books, and was an adviser to the Clinton Administration. He also heads the Foundation for Genetic Research in Houston, Texas.

On January 31, he will advise the statewide consultation regarding Bt Brinjal, a genetically-modified strain of unproven efficacy.

His remarks, entitled "Bt Brinjal -- Why are we rushing into this so fast?" will emphasize the need for scientific evidence as to the safety of Bt products before they are released on the market. Dr Dronamraju will recommend a two-year moratorium on Bt Brinjal before further consideration.

In an interview, he bemoaned the lack of genetic testing facilities in India.

"There is not a single laboratory in all of India capable of testing the human toxicity of Bt Brinjal," he remarked. "So unless there is scientific evidence, how can we go forward? Consultations are not enough. We need real scientific evidence that Bt Brinjal is not toxic to humans." In a skeptical vein, Dr Dronamraju also wondered whether there were political forces at work behind the sudden appearance of the Bt Brinjal project on the national agenda.

"Even if it were viable, Bt Brinjal is a poor idea," said he. "It is not a staple -- why not focus on some crop central to survival, like wheat or rice? We must ask ourselves if it is even necessary." Dr Dronamraju further pointed out that Bt Brinjal had a demonstrated toxicity in laboratory animals, causing diarrhoea and organ toxicity. And the motives of Monsanto, Bt Brinjal's producer, were suspect as well.

"Large corporations are not interested in the public good," he said, adding: "In the case of Monsanto, they knew for years Bt Corn was toxic but tried to cover it up. They released their data only when forced to." This is not to say that Dr Dronamraju is unsupportive of technological agriculture.

In fact, he emphasises its key role in food security in future: "The first green revolution is fading, and with India's growing population, we need a new green revolution every year. India has a real problem -- its population is increasing but its food production has remained stagnant.

Where will all that extra food come from? Technology." But the caveats were all-important -- the project, he said, should be scientifically and not politically-driven.

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## **Fiddling With Food**

27 January 2010, 12:00am IST

To the price-hit common man, food inflation easing from nearly 20 per cent to a little above 16 per cent is a statistical mirage. And the president's call for a "second Green Revolution" will seem talk in the air. Politicians, nonetheless, are battling each other instead of high prices. Agriculture minister Sharad Pawar has faced opposition snipers and the Congress's friendly fire. Tackling prices, he retorts, is the government's collective responsibility. He's more right than he guesses. In a country with the largest proportion of cultivable land to total land area, recurring food crises can't but be the shared doing of successive governments. UPA, NDA or 'third front', nobody's exempt.

In the current crisis, the recent go-ahead to release foodgrain in the open market should have come sooner, given projections of the drought's impact. In charge of food distribution and consumer affairs, Pawar can't dodge flak for letting things slide. But other UPA representatives too have waffled. Some suggested the rabi crop alone would work magic while others admitted supply side issues without elaborating quick remedies. States, meanwhile, have reportedly not been lifting their quota of PDS food stocks. Again, the Pawar-Mayawati sugar fracas occurred even as raw sugar lay idle at ports waiting to be processed. The food ministry has now asked millers in other states to step in, while UP has got away with stonewalling.

Pratibha Patil's right about India needing to up farm productivity to prevent food crises. But no government till date has genuinely tackled the problem at source. First, efficient food distribution goes a long way towards aiding poor consumers. Yet we're still to see reform in the Food Corporation of India or leak-proof distribution across states. Second, massive upgrade is overdue of irrigation infrastructure to reduce rain-dependence and counteract groundwater depletion. Third, reform of agriculture is imperative to remove structural anomalies bedevilling the sector.

Patil lists the right medicines: better farming inputs and techniques, market access for farmers and industry-agriculture synergies. Administering them is another matter, given political opposition to big retail giving farmers direct approach to better-paying buyers and eliminating predatory middlemen. Big-ticket investment is essential for the farm sector to gain from modern technology, build better storage and cold chain infrastructure and create more jobs, especially in food processing. Agri-marketing reform is equally important. Average size of land holdings being small, boosted corporate and contract farming can bring

the gains of economies of scale to agribusiness. Finally, key industries like sugar badly need price decontrol. Unless the political class acts on these issues, its championship of the aam aadmi and kisan will remain an eyewash.

### **India to grow 7.7% as global recovery picks pace: IMF**

IANS, 27 January 2010, 12:10am IST

WASHINGTON: With the global recovery off to a stronger start, Indian economy is projected to grow at 7.7 percent in 2010, 1.3 percentage points higher than forecast earlier, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Tuesday.

India, that recorded a growth rate of 7.3 percent in 2008, dipping down to an estimated 5.9 percent in 2009, is projected to grow at a still marginally higher 7.8 percent in 2011, up 0.5 percentage points from last year's forecast, the IMF said in an update of World Economic Outlook (WEO).

Noting that the recovery is proceeding at different speeds in the various regions, IMF said world output is expected to rise by 4 percent in 2010, representing an upward revision of .75 percentage point from the October 2009 WEO.

Following the deepest global downturn in recent history, economic growth solidified and broadened to advanced economies in the second half of 2009, it said.

In most advanced economies, the recovery is expected to remain sluggish by past standards, whereas in many emerging and developing economies, activity is expected to be relatively vigorous, largely driven by buoyant internal demand, the WEO said.

IMF suggested that policies need to foster a rebalancing of global demand, remaining supportive where recoveries are not yet well sustained.

Real activity is rebounding, supported by extraordinary policy stimulus global production and trade bounced back in the second half of 2009, the WEO said noting, "confidence rebounded strongly on both the financial and real fronts, as extraordinary policy support forestalled another Great Depression."

In advanced economies, the beginning of a turn in the inventory cycle and the unexpected strength in US consumption contributed to positive developments. Final domestic demand was very strong in key emerging and developing economies, although the turn in the inventory cycle and the normalisation of global trade also played an important role.

Driving the global rebound was the extraordinary amount of policy stimulus. Monetary policy has been highly expansionary, with interest rates down to record lows in most advanced and in many emerging economies, while central bank balance sheets expanded to unprecedented levels in key advanced economies, the WEO said.

Output in the advanced economies is now expected to expand by 2 percent in 2010, following a sharp decline in output in 2009. The new forecast reflects an upward revision of 0.75 percentage point.

In 2011, growth is projected to edge up further to 2.5 percent. In spite of the revision, the recovery in advanced economies is still expected to be weak by historical standards, with real output

remaining below its pre-crisis level until late 2011.

Moreover, high unemployment rates and public debt, as well as not-fully-healed financial systems, and in some countries, weak household balance sheets are presenting further challenges to the recovery in these economies.

Growth in emerging and developing economies is expected to rise to about 6 percent in 2010, following a modest 2 percent in 2009. The new projection reflects an upward revision of almost 1 percentage point.

In 2011, output is projected to accelerate further. Stronger economic frameworks and swift policy responses have helped many emerging economies to cushion the impact of the unprecedented external shock and quickly re-attract capital flows, the IMF said.

## DECCAN **Chronicle** *On The Web*

### **Rubber mat increases milk yield**

By By Our Correspondent  
Jan 27 2010

Jan. 25: The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) has found a new technique of increasing milk yield in cows, while providing them comfort. Cows rested on specially-made rubber mats have shown to yield more milk than those resting on hard ground. TNAU is now experimenting with this technique on goats and pigs.

Dr R. Balagopal, professor (veterinary), central farm unit, TNAU, said this technique has helped animal owners benefit considerably - enhanced revenues from increased milk yield and also adding to the cows' health. He said when cows sleep on rough surface, their knees and hock regions are stressed and blood supply to these regions increases. But when these animals rest on rubber mats, the udders are cushioned and blood supply to the udder and teats increase, consequently milk yield goes up.

The densified rubber mats also have therapeutic effect. The animals would be free from laminitis (inflammation of hoof) and mastitis (inflammation of udder). If these diseases are avoided, it has a positive impact on milk yield. The 6x4 feet rubber mats have anti-bacterial properties and also anti-concussion mechanism adding to the animal's comfort.

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