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# THE HINDU

Good paddy yield likely this kharif season



Even though the monsoon had a late start this year, the Agriculture Department as well as farmers are expecting bumper crop — up to 28 to 30 quintals average per acre. The rains had been steady, thus ensuring proper growth of the crop, said the department.

Paddy is cultivated in about 29,500 hectares of land in the district this kharif, about 600 hectares less compared to the last kharif season, said H. Kempe Gowda, Joint Director of Agriculture, Dakshina Kannada. During the last kharif season, about 30,000 hectares of land were under paddy cultivation.

As against an average yield of 22-25 quintals an acre last season, 28-30 quintals of yield an acre was expected this time, he claimed. The yield had been 15-20 quintals an acre a few years ago, he said. With fragmented holdings and reduced manpower to help cultivation, the department is making every effort to make paddy cultivation

profitable. It has recently opened farm equipment hiring centres, called custom hire centres, in five places in the district.

The officer said that because of steady rainfall since July, the crop has grown well, thereby ensuring a good yield. Mr. Gowda said the two-three days of rain in October last week did not have much impact on the standing crop as a majority of farmers were yet to harvest the crops. The harvesting begins in the first week of November and the present weather is highly conducive for the harvest, he said.

Mr. Gowda said about 20,000 hectares of land was likely to be brought under paddy cultivation during the forthcoming rabi season.

Anantapadmanabha Bhat, a progressive farmer in Soorinje village near Mangalore, said he had got a paddy yield of about 29 quintals per acre this time.

He has completely stopped using chemical fertilizers from four years and is into organic farming. Though he had not been affected by the October rains, many other farmers had suffered losses due to the untimely rains, he added.

## Farmers complain of shortage of urea



Fertilizers, especially urea, were in short supply and sold at a premium above the government fixed rates in the district, alleged a cross-section of farmers' representatives at the monthly farmers grievances meeting here on Friday.

Drawing the attention of the authorities to the problem, Puliur A.Nagarajan of the Congress Farmers Wing complained that there was a shortage of urea, gypsum, di-ammonium phosphate, potash, and complex fertilizers in the districts. Farmers urgently require urea in big quantities right now and have been put into much hardship. Some traders were hoarding the fertilizers, he alleged and demanded steps against black marketing.

Supporting his allegation, P. Ayyakannu, State vice-president, Bharathiya Kisan Sangam, said urea was being sold at Rs. 360 a bag, about Rs. 100 above the government stipulated price.

A section of farmers alleged that most cooperative societies did not have adequate quantity of fertilizers, especially urea. "State and Union government policies are attributed as reasons for the current shortage of urea. The district authorities should ensure adequate stock of urea was made available in the cooperative societies and in the open market," said N. Veerasekaran, organiser, South and North Ayyan Vaical Pasanatharar Sangam.

An officer of the Agriculture Department said that 3320 tonnes of urea, 3580 tonnes of DAP, 4,030 tonnes of potash and 4,998 tonnes of complex fertilizers were available in the district. About 10,900 tonnes of urea have been sought and the consignment is expected to arrive in the first week of November. Meanwhile, special squads have been formed to conduct checks at private fertilizer retail outlets to check over pricing and other irregularities, he said.

A section of the farmers expressed concern over the refusal of the private sugar mills to pay the State advised price for sugarcane. Mr. Ayyakannu urged the district officials to initiate action against the mills. R. Raja Chidambaram, State Secretary, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, urged the district administration to direct village administrative officers to issue promptly copies of 'adangals' which were required to get crop loans from cooperative societies. The update of the land records should be completed at the earliest.

P. Viswanathan, Tamizhaga Eri Mattrum Attru Pasana Vivasayigal Sangam, expressed concern over the poor storage in a majority of tanks in the district despite the recent spells of rain and urged the authorities to take draw up a comprehensive proposal to dredge canals and water bodies to harness the rain water.

Supporting the plea, R. Subramanian, deputy secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, demanded steps to dredge all the 17 irrigation canals. The Kattalai High Level Canal should be renovated and modernised, he demanded.

## Onion growers likely to get relief of Rs. 9,000 a hectare



Following the crash in onion price, the State government has proposed to provide compensation of Rs. 9,000 a hectare to growers in the four districts of Chitradurga, Davangere, Gadag and Dharwad.

Several factors have been attributed to the price crash, including heavy arrivals in the market, and poor quality of onion because of high moisture content following rain. In Chitradurga market, onion price was around Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 a quintal.

Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs T.B. Jayachandra, who heads a Cabinet sub-committee on commodity prices, told presspersons here on Friday that onion crop was damaged owing to heavy rain and markets received inferior quality produce. According to the National Disaster Response Funds norms, compensation had been fixed at Rs. 4,500 a hectare. The State government had proposed to pay an additional compensation of Rs. 4,500 a hectare to growers, he said.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had approved the proposal to pay Rs. 9,000 a hectare, the Minister said.

Onion was cultivated in 85,046 hectares of land in the four districts and the expected production was over 10 lakh tonnes.

In 2011-12, when there was a glut in onion production, the government procured the commodity but incurred a loss of Rs. 45 crore because it was of inferior quality.

### **Maize procurement**

Mr. Jayachandra said the Centre had been urged to allow the government to procure maize from growers. The Centre has banned procurement for the next two months. Owing to increased production and pressure from farmers' organisations, the government had proposed to procure maize at Rs. 1,350 a quintal, he said.

## Food and agri-aqua expo gets under way at KUFOS



The sixth edition of India International Food and Agri-Aqua Expo got underway here on Thursday with a call from Minister for Public Works V. K. Ebrahim Kunju to scientists and researchers to bring back agriculture in the State.

Inaugurating the five-day expo, the Minister said farmers in the State were a harried lot and that agriculture had not proved lucrative. However, it was possible to bring back agriculture, he said.

He said he was in support of providing subsidy for food production so that food security could be ensured.

Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies and Foundation for Organic Agriculture and Rural Development are the organisers of the five-day expo. The programme is supported by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development; Kerala State Department of Agriculture; MPEDA; Coconut Development Board and Directorate of Arecanut and Spices Development.

One of the focus areas of the five-day programme is organic agriculture. India Organic Fair and workshops on organic methods of agriculture will be held over the coming days. A seafood stall is an

added attraction at the show. Students from KUFOS are directly involved in the preparation and sale of traditional delicacies. Vice Chancellor of KUFOS B. Madhusoodana Kurup delivered the keynote address at the inauguration of the event.

## Hybrid paddy sowing planned in 250 acres in Mangalore

The Agriculture Department is planning to get hybrid varieties of paddy sown in 250 acres in the district this rabi season with a view to increase the yield, thereby winning over farmers who are moving away from paddy cultivation.

The required seed — GK 5003 produced by a private player, and KRS 2 developed by University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, — would be distributed along with micro-nutrients free of cost to farmers who were willing to sow hybrid seeds, said H. Kempe Gowda, Joint Director of Agriculture, Dakshina Kannada.

The department's aim is to increase the yield by at least 25 per cent so that farmers would revert to paddy cultivation.

These hybrid seeds were used on small patches of holdings during the kharif sowing and the results were encouraging, he said. Mr. Gowda said the hybrid seeds could be adapted for organic cultivation too.

As for the price of the seeds, Mr. Gowda said 1 kg of hybrid seed would cost about Rs. 250-300, while conventional seeds would cost about Rs. 15-20 per kg.

On the other hand, a farmer would require just about 3 kg of hybrid seeds to sowing in an acre, while he requires about 30 kg of conventional seeds for the same area.

## Rains submerge crops in Madurai



Standing crops that were less than 25 days old had been completely destroyed after being immersed in one foot of water following the torrential rains that lashed the city last week, farmers of Vadipatti union have said.

Collector L. Subramanian and Minister for Cooperation Sellur K. Raju, along with officials, visited Madakulam, Vadipatti, Sholavandan, Mettuneerethan and Nachikulam on Friday to survey rain-affected areas. The Collector said Vadipatti recorded the highest amount of 110 mm rainfall last week, resulting in the crop damage.

According to Mr. Raju, 56 of the 196 tanks in the district are brimming with water following the continuous rains. "As many as 35 of them are in Vadipatti region. Though there are no reports of damage in the water channels, works have been initiated on a war footing to prevent calamities," he said.



## **Sandbags placed**

The Public Works Department had initiated work to place sandbags on water channels between Thanichiyam tank and C. Pudur tank and to repair damage at the channel between Vadakarai tank and Mettuneerethan.

The authorities also visited Madakulam tank. The Minister assured to take steps to increase the storage capacity of the tank which has reached 50 per cent of its capacity after three years.

A. Marichamy, member of Madakulam Kanmai Padhukappu Mempattu Kuzhu, told *The Hindu* that the tank was last desilted in 1993. "It used to irrigate 2,000 acres. But 1,850 acres had become housing plots with 36,000 borewells," he said.

*Facilitating permanent water storage in the tank would help recharge groundwater in the surrounding areas, Mr. Marichamy added.*

*The authorities inspected work being taken up to repair roads damaged in the rains. "A 5.8-km stretch between Sholavandan and Karuppatti is being repaired. An estimate of Rs.2.61 crore has been prepared to extend this road," Mr. Raju said.*

*A stretch of 1.5 km of road near Thuvariman is also being repaired.*

## **Disaster relief**

*The Minister visited the family of B. Ajith Kumar (15) at Ayyankottai and presented a cheque for Rs.1.5 lakh from the disaster relief fund. The boy died after the roof of his house collapsed in the rain on Tuesday.*

*Special representative of the Tamil Nadu government in New Delhi S.T.K. Jakkaiyan and other officials took part in the survey.*

## Farmers urge government to fix remunerative price for tobacco

Tobacco growers in Arkalgud taluk have resolved to stage a protest on November 3 seeking remunerative price for tobacco, a major commercial crop of the taluk.

The protest will be staged in front of the tobacco market at Ramanathapura in the taluk, under the banner of Potato Club of Arkalgud.

At present, the high quality tobacco is purchased from growers at Rs. 80 a kg. Growers want the average minimum price fixed at Rs. 200 a kg., considering the expenditure and the hours of work spent on cultivating the crop, said H. Yoga Ramesh, president of the club.

Speaking to presspersons at Arkalgud on Wednesday, Mr. Ramesh said that for many years, the growers had been seeking remunerative price for tobacco. However, neither the Tobacco Board nor the elected representatives had bothered to consider the demand.

“The government responds to the problems of other farmers, if they suffer loss either due to drought or heavy rain.

However, the problems of tobacco growers remain unresolved.

The protest is to make the government think about this section of farmers, who are being cheated for many years,” he said.

## Panel puts a cap on Srisaillam water utilisation

The Krishna River Management Board has directed Telangana State to use only 3 TMC ft of water from Srisaillam reservoir for power generation till Sunday.

This direction came from the Board on Friday, after it heard the contentious arguments of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh which locked themselves in what is turning out to be an intractable tussle.

Reminding both the States on the need to adhere to the existing protocols with mutual cooperation, till existing rules were updated after a careful study and analysis of data regarding crop water management and other water usage, the Board said it would review the matter, if required, after November 15.

The use of 3 TMC ft of water till Sunday was an option that was suggested in the full board meeting on Thursday, but Telangana had out rightly rejected the proposal.

In the order issued today, the Board maintained that it was Telangana officials who stated that the requirement for power generation at Srisaillam would come down by November 2 as power demand will get reduced considerably and that they would start operating Nagarjunasagar hydel station. The officials were further quoted as going on record that “the need of generating power at Srisaillam may not arise thereafter for some period”.

In the two-day hearing of arguments before the board in Hyderabad on Wednesday and Thursday, AP wanted the water level to be maintained at 854 ft, while Telangana argued that it was entitled to generate power till the water level reached 834 ft. Andhra Pradesh expressed apprehensions about a drinking water crisis if water levels got depleted now.

Telangana, however, argued that use of water from Srisaillam to generate power must be construed as water being used for irrigation purpose only as Telangana farmers were utilising the power to draw water to irrigate their lands. The other argument was that since Andhra Pradesh was not providing the due share of power to Telangana.

# THE HINDU BusinessLine

## Selling pressure dissolves sugar

Sugar prices on the Vashi market dropped further by Rs. 5-10 a quintal on Friday on routine offtake due to month-end. *Naka* rates were down by Rs. 10-20 while mill tender rates eased by Rs. 10-15.

Prices in other States are ruling at par with Maharashtra keeping upcountry demand away from here forcing local mills to sell produce in local markets.

Arrivals were at 58-60 truck loads while local dispatches remained lower at 56-57 truck loads.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs. 2,912-3,035 (Rs. 2,916-3,042) and M-grade Rs. 3,012-3,185 (Rs. 3,022-3,185). *Naka* delivery rates: S-grade Rs. 2,840-2,950 (Rs. 2,860-2,970) and M-grade Rs. 2,970-3,070 (Rs. 2,950-3,090).

## Oilseeds, pulses acreage up in early rabi sowing

Oilseeds and pulses acreage has gained early lead as rabi or winter plantings has commenced across the country.

According to preliminary data released by the Agriculture Ministry, oilseed has been planted on an area of 20.31 lakh hectares (lh) so far, an increase of 13 per cent over last year's 17.94 lh.

However, the acreage break-up was not available.

Rapeseed-mustard is the main oilseed grown during rabi, while toria and safflower are also grown during the winter.

Similarly, pulses have been planted on 7.84 lh, an increase of 18 per cent over last year's 6.66 lh. Gram and lentil are the major pulses grown during the rabi season.

Jowar, a key coarse cereal has seen a decline in acreage at 12.81 lh (20.21 lh). However, maize has seen a marginal increase in acreage at 1.13 lh (0.90 lh).

### Wheat picture

Planting on wheat, the major winter cereal crop, is yet to begin on a large scale.

Indu Sharma, Director of the Karnal-based Directorate of Wheat Research said there has been some early planting in isolated areas, but it will gain momentum only by mid-November.

The wheat acreage is likely to be in the range of 29-31 million hectares. The recent rain across key growing States in North India is expected to aid the rabi sowing process.

## **MSP details**

The Government has declared a Rs. 50 increase in the minimum support price for wheat at Rs. 1,450 a quintal, to be marketed in the 2015-16 season.

For gram, the MSP has been hiked by Rs. 75 to Rs. 3,175 and for rapeseed-mustard the support price has been enhanced by Rs. 50 to Rs. 3,100.

## **Total area edges up**

The total acreage under kharif rice as on October 31 stood at 380.30 lh compared to 376.73 lh in the corresponding last year.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 1, 2014)

## **TN coast may have to brace for a cyclone next week**

Erstwhile Arabian Sea cyclone Nilofar may have died out, but it is now the turn of the Bay of Bengal to come up with its own, the second during this North-East monsoon, by next week.

India Met Department has signalled the formation of a fresh low-pressure area in the southwest Bay of Bengal off the Sri Lanka and adjoining Tamil Nadu coasts by Saturday.

## **TN, likely target**

The Met has refrained from giving indication in its bulletin, but wind field projections suggest that a tropical cyclone could be building up here next week.

Most international models surveyed concurred, with the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts upgrading its projection of a likely depression to one that of a full-blown cyclone.

While a majority of the models seemed to suggest the Nagapattinam-Cuddalore-Puducherry belt along Tamil Nadu as a probable landfall area, the European Centre begged to differ.

Its early projections are pointing to Visakhapatnam and neighbourhood, the same area ravaged by very severe cyclone Hudhud, where the building cyclone will cross over by November 9/10.

### **Varying projections**

The US Climate Prediction Centre sees both the Sri Lankan and adjoining south Tamil Nadu coasts being threatened by the cyclone.

It may interact with a passing western disturbance that digs deep into south to trigger rains over central India and adjoining southeast Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Another model said that the cyclone may not hit the Indian coast but will be driven away by the western disturbance towards Myanmar/Bangladesh.

Yet another model saw the cyclone remnant traversing the peninsula and landing up in the Arabian Sea off Mangalore-Konkan where it will regenerate as a 'low.'

### **Passing MJO wave**

The fresh cyclone threat flows from the inferred eastward movement of a supportive Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) wave from west Arabian Sea and equatorial Indian Ocean.

The MJO wave had earlier precipitated the formation of very severe cyclone Nilofar in the Arabian Sea by influencing cloud formation in the lower atmosphere.

The MJO wave is also precipitating monsoon onsets over stretches of sea directly purveyed while on transit.

Interestingly, the wave will tick off activity in the west Pacific along concurrently with the Bay of Bengal.

Models indicate the formation of a typhoon in the west Pacific off the Philippines.

# Business Standard

## Radha Mohan Singh stresses need of taking Indian Agriculture to newer heights

Shri Radha Mohan Singh, Union Minister of Agriculture has stressed the need to tap all talent and resources to take Indian Agriculture to newer heights. He has said that Indian scientists have great potential and they can take the agriculture to a new horizon. Delivering the key note address at 41st Foundation Day celebrations of Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board (ASRB) here today, ShriRadhaMohan Singh complimented ASRB for its valuable contributions in selecting quality human resource for agricultural research and development.

He highlighted various achievements and records of agricultural production in [India](#) emphasizing this had become possible only due to strong commitment of agricultural scientists and farmers who worked synergistically at farms and fields. He expressed satisfaction over the transparent process of recruitment that has earned credibility for the



ASRB and urged to completely digitize the entire procedure to ensure further transparency.

Agriculture Minister stressed upon various new initiatives being taken by the government to push up Indian agriculture further to new heights including over all development of villages to bring prosperity. Shri Singh said steps are being taken to strengthen infrastructure of the KVKs spread across the country including significant increase in their numbers. Citing various examples, he expressed happiness over adoption of scientific and technological interventions at grass root level.

Agricultural Minister released inaugural issue of the ASRB News (Hindi and English) and ASRB Profile (bilingual).

Dr. S. Ayyappan, Secretary, DARE and DG, ICAR complimented ASRB for its achievements and glorious journey of four decades in bringing excellence to agricultural research system. He highlighted some of the key steps to ensure speedy recruitment of agricultural scientists maintaining high quality and transparency.

Dr. J.S. Samra, CEO, National Rainfed Area Authority, Government of India recalled the conditions in which ASRB was constituted and expressed his satisfaction over the performance of ASRB in view of its mandate and objectives. He made suggestions to further improve the services of ASRB for over all development of agricultural research in the country.

Earlier, Dr. Gurbachan Singh, Chairman, ASRB welcomed the Chief Guest and dignitaries and highlighted some of the significant achievements including new initiatives.

Transformation from pen and paper examination to Computer based test for ARS-Preliminary and NET is one of the recent pioneer steps taken by the ASRB to upgrade and advance talent search, he added.

In the technical session, Prof. RaghavendraGadagkar, President, INSA delivered the Foundation Day Lecture on, 'War & Peace: Conflict & Cooperation in an Insect Society'. He underlined the infinite potential and critical linkage of scientific endeavors to national development.

Prof. Gadagkar elaborated upon social behavior and structure of some of the insects based on his own research experiences in a lucid and interesting manner.

Senior officials and scientists of ICAR, Directors of ICAR Institutes, officials and staff of ASRB and research students participated in the event.

Dr. V.N. Sharda and Dr. S.K. Bandyopadhyay, Members, ASRB proposed vote of thanks in inaugural and technical sessions respectively.