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Editorial

Farmers and Procurement

Govt. has fixed the procurement prices of wheat @ Rs. 105 per quintal with bonus. Yet the payment of bonus is still in doledrums in many states. Still in the interest of the country farmers are readily cooperating the procurement agencies without tears. Warehousing & Food Corporations have been assigned to collect the levy. The procurement centres are 9 miles away or more from many villages. Farmers carry their wheat and wait a long for the disposal. The quality assessment is sometimes prejudicial and the delay in purchase harrass the farmers who are willingly coming to these centres.

B.K.S. on behalf of the wheat growers appeal to the procurement agencies that they should open more centres to facilitate the farmers. In Bharatpur district of Rajasthan as many as 50 farmers meeting have been organised by the Congress workers to appeal the farmers to give the full levy. On the other hand there is anti-levy movement in the State. Cooperative leader Mr. Nathi Singh, M.P. has appealed the govt. to ask the procurement agencies to reach every village to collect levy wheat. The bringing of wheat to levy centres again costs more to the grower.

B.K.S. appreciate the spirit of such farmers who are willingly giving the wheat, but if they are cooperated by the agencies by reaching, wlighing & taking the wheat on the spot it will save labour, money & wastage etc. Then the growers would actually get Rs. 105 per quintal other wise the incidental charges will reduce this Rs. 105 to Rs. 100 or less. B.K.S. gives the slogan to farmers Levy Do (give levy) and also expect the Govt. to cooperate with the wheat farmers.

Fall in World Wheat Output

Washington. A report recently issued by the USDA estimated world wheat production last year at 346.8 million tonnes, against 366.5 million in 1973, and despite the fact that the acreage sown was 2 per cent higher. US wheat output rose by 5 per cent to 48.8 million tonnes.

Argentina's output in 1974 was estimated at 5.1 million tonnes (down 22 per cent), while the Australian harvest of 11.7 million tonnes was 3 per cent below the level of 1973.

In Europe production of wheat, at 89.8 million tonnes, was 9 percent, above 1973 output.

Farm-Research

New Hybrid Brinjal Arka Navneet

A new hybrid variety of round-purple brinjal has been evolved at the Indian Institute of Horticultural Research, Hesaraghatta (Karnataka).

The new hybrid is a cross between pure line IHR-22-1 and an Australian variety called 'Supreme'. It excels both the parent in yield, by 65 to 80 per cent. The fruits are round to oblong, with an attractive dark purple colour and have more edible flesh with less seeds, good texture and fine flavour.

The fruits retain the attractive colour for a long time after harvest. About 13 to 16 fruits are produced per plant and the yield per hectare ranges from 700 to 750 quintals.

Successful Farmers

Krishi Pandit Award Winners

Mr. Chandrakant Shankar Nakate of Sarawada village in Kolhapur District has been declared "Krishi Pandit" in paddy for the year 1974-75 for raising 14,992 kgs of paddy per hectare in the All-India Crop Competition.

The yield obtained by Mr. Nakate is nearly nine times the average yield of 1,720 kgs per hectare in the country. He will be awarded a cash prize of Rs. 3,000 and a certificate of Krishi Pandit.

This is for the fourth year in succession that Kolhapur District has achieved this distinction.

The second prize of Rs. 1,200 goes to Mr. D.R. Prafullachandra of village Hoshalli in Shimoga District of Karnataka, whose yield was 14,222 kgs per hectare.

Mr. Kirtikumar Ravjibhai Patel of Dabhan village in Kaira District of Gujarat secured the third prize of Rs. 800. He obtained a yield of 9,517 kgs per hectare.

Pusa-140 Rice

The new Pusa-140 variety of rice has been obtained by crossing the best basmati-370 with high-yielding strains. The normal yield of basmati-370 is about 800 kilogram per hectare, while that of the dwarf variety like the IR-8 is about 6,000 kg. per hectare. Pusa-10 which has been obtained by crossing the two has the basmati qualities and an yield of about 5,000 kg. per hectare.

Pusa-140 is now being produced in experimental plots at the institute and has yet not been released. New rice has the aroma of basmati and the grain gets 53 per cent longer than its original size after cooking. The corresponding increase in length of the grain for the best basmati rice is 59 per cent. A rice with qualities of basmati has high public acceptance, but the poor yield of basmati (less than 800 per hectare) makes its cultivation economically unwise.

Samaj's State News

Khargone Krishak Samaj

Khargone District Krishak Samaj presented a memorandum to the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh asking for Procurement price of wheat to be revised up to Rs. 125/- per quintal; passing of a state legislation for Crop Protection Societies; enhancing the land revenue to accommodate all other multiple taxes on farmers for simplicity and to avoid harassment; Fixing electrical capacitors by the Electric Corporation and to charge rent from the farmers; Protection of forests from undue and unlawful cuttings; Start small irrigation project; and start agro-industries in the area. It was also decided to organise Tehsil Krishak Samaj units.

Amravati Krishak Samaj

Amravati District Krishak Samaj organised a seminar and agricultural exhibition at Amravati which was visited by about 5000 farmers from the area. The occasion was coincided with Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh Jayanti Celebrations. In April, the Samaj has presented a memorandum to the Chief Minister of Maharashtra on the following for consideration : (1) Warrants and cases registered against farmers who participated in Farmers demonstration against the defects of Monopoly Cotton Purchase Scheme be withdrawn since the Samaj is not in principle against Monopoly Cotton purchase, (2) Even 30% cotton price to be paid to farmers is not received by him in time which should be made available. (3) The balance cotton-price should be paid by the end of May to facilitate farmers for preparation of Kharif sowing. (4) Irrigation projects should be started in the area. (5) Existing rural roads are in bad conditions which should be repaired and additional roads be constructed. (6) Farmers should not be affected by frequent fires to cotton stocks with the Government or Societies.

Bihar Krishak Samaj

Bihar State Krishak Samaj is organising a State Level Conference of the farmers and members of the Samaj in May at Patna. Similar conference are organised in the District for strengthening

the Samaj activities. Begu Sarai District Krishak Samaj is actively engaged in membership and other activities of farmers interests in the area.

Haryana Krishak Samaj

Haryana Krishak Samaj passed the following resolution in their meeting at Rohtak in April (1) Fixing of wheat price at Rs. 105/- per quintal is too low and against the interest of the farmers. The Government seems to be rigid in its approach to farmers and this policy is most likely to break the back-bone of the farmers. Bonus is of no use to the small farmers. The wheat price should be fixed at least up Rs. 130/- per quintal otherwise the production of wheat would be adversely affected. (2) Hailstorms have destroyed crops in so many villages and farmers are at a loss as to how to maintain themselves. Government should provide early relief to the farmers from the hailstorm affected areas in the form of remission in land revenue, takavi, and postponement of loan instalment of Cooperative Societies; (3) The announcement of the Government to help potato growers from falling prices is welcomed. Immediate steps are needed to save the potato growers from ruination. The support price for potato should be announced and implemented to minimise their losses. The Government should arrange to have the potatoes placed in the cold storage with minimum charges for the season.

U.S.A. Farm Leaders Exchange Programme—1975

Applications are invited from Progressive Farmers who are Life Members of Bharat Krishak Samaj for participation in the 1975 Exchange Programme with U.S.A. The selected candidates will have to be in U.S.A. in the middle of August 1975. The delegation will consist of Six Indian farmers selected from all over India and they will tour the United States for about six weeks. For application forms and further details, please contact your Local State Krishak Samaj office.

Maharashtra Revised Payment mode of Cotton

BOMBAY: The Government of Maharashtra has revised the mode of payment for cotton tendered under the cotton monopoly procurement scheme, with retrospective effect from November 17, 1974 during the 1974-75 cotton season.

According (to the revised) scheme, 80 percent of the guaranteed prices to be paid in two instalments to the cotton tenderers as under : 30 percent in cash or by way of crediting the amount in the tenderer's account in the cooperative bank and 50 per cent to be adjusted towards cooperative loan recoveries in case of borrower member cotton tenderers.

If the recoveries do not amount to 50 percent of the guaranteed price after adjustment of the dues, the balance is to be kept in a deposit with the Maharashtra State Cooperative Marketing Federation carrying an interest of 10 percent per annum.

In the case of non-borrowing member cotton tenderers, the entire 50 per cent of the guaranteed price is to be kept as deposit with the marketing federation at 10 per cent interest.

The remaining 20 per cent of the guaranteed price payable to the cotton tenderers after the close of the cotton season will also carry an interest of 10 per cent till it paid. The deposits with the marketing federation are to be repaid before the end of June 1975 or immediately after the close of the cotton season together with the interest accrued thereon to the respective cotton tenderers.

Maharashtra Farm Labour Front

In line with the Congress High Command's thinking the MPCC and BPCC resolved here on Thursday to bring the unorganised 25 lakh small

farmers and landless labourers in Maharashtra under the umbrella of INTUC, the labour wing of the ruling party. The ringing slogan of the new agricultural labourers' organisation will be the unity of "kamgar and kisan", which is akin to the CPI's emphasis on industrial labour and landless workers' cooperation. At a representative meeting of MPCC, BPCC and INTUC leaders, held in Bombay on Thursday under the presidentship of the INTUC boss, Mr. B. Bhagwati, M.P., discussing the problems of landless for labour, it was decided to form an adhoc body under the chairmanship of Mr. P.K. Sawant, State Congress President, to form state-level agricultural workers' organisation, at a convention to be held either in Ahmednagar or Sangli by May end or June.

Tamil Nadu to Set up Farms Corporation

MADRAS: The Tamil Nadu has decided to set up a State Farms Corporation for organising agricultural and seed farms in the State. The Corporation will also promote, establish and run seed processing units for agricultural purposes and undertake reclamation and development of lands required for these farms.

The Corporation will have an authorised share capital of Rs. One Crore. The State Government has sanctioned Rs. Five lakhs during 1974-75 for the Corporation.

The Corporation is expected to set up farms for the production of cereals, millets, pulses and other foodgrains and seeds for the fibre crops, plantation crops, oilseeds, vegetables and fruits. Cultivation of other crops which are commercially important such as tapioca, maize, pineapple, papaya, and spices will also be taken up.

Moratorium on Farm Debts in Tamil Nadu

MADRAS: The Tamil Nadu has promulgated an Ordinance on January 16 granting a moratorium of one year on the recovery of debts incurred by farmers.

The Ordinance is intended to give relief to agriculturists hit by drought condition in the State.

Entitled the Tamil Nadu Indebted Agriculturists (Temporary Relief) Ordinance, 1975, it provides that no suit for the recovery of a debt shall be instituted and no application for the execution of the decrees for payment of money passed in any such suit shall be made against any agriculturist in any civil court for one year. All further proceedings on pending suits and applications for execution of decrees have also been stayed for a year.

Explaining the objects of the Ordinance, it is stated: "There has been widespread drought in the State and the agriculturists have borrowed money to tide over the crisis caused by failure of crops. It is in the interest of the general public that, at the present time, agriculturists should be spared the distraction and the expenditure involved in litigation launched by their creditors and to rehabilitate themselves in order [that the maximum possible advantage may result to the State in the matter of production of foodgrains."

Forest Corporation in M.P.

BHOPAL : The Madhya Pradesh Forest Corporation, which was approved by the State Cabinet on January 20, is expected to help initially not only in the all round development of the State forests but also to make substantial contribution to the State's income.

The plantation programme alone will increase the revenue from the present Rs. 81.50 lakhs to Rs. 933.37 lakhs by the 30th year and Rs. 2,165.50 lakhs by the 60th year for Project Number-1 and from the present Rs. 500 lakhs to Rs. 9,280 lakhs on completion of project.

The likely indirect benefits of the corporation area the possibility of setting up of a 250,000 tonnes capacity pulp mill, a coordinated saw mill using 170,000 CMT wood. This will also provide resultant increase in the sale tax and other tax revenue.

Institute for Cane Growers

LUCKNOW : The Uttar Pradesh Government has to set up a cane growers institute which will work in close liaison with the Sugarcane Research Institute, an Indian Council of Agricultural Research Institute, here.

Nearly 1,000 cane-growers will be given training at the Institute in an effort to carry the fruits of research to the fields.

The trainees would be acquainted with the latest techniques in three to seven days. If necessary they would also be provided opportunity to study methods adopted by cane growers in others States.

Productive Farm Research Urged

Poona : The Union Minister of State for agriculture and Irrigation, Mr. A.P. Shinde, has said that to arouse the farmers' interest, "research has obviously to be based on the identification of their immediate problems"

Speaking at the concluding plenary session of the sixth convention of Agricultural Universities Association here recently Mr. Shinde said that agricultural research had been put on a sound footing in the country, but "a common citizen will judge the results of research as reflected in production".

Expressing his anxiety over stagnation in food-grain production, particularly wheat, rice, pulses and millet during the last two to three years, Mr. Shinde hoped that the matter was receiving the attention of the research workers.

In order to transfer technology from research to the field, Mr. Shinde said the departments of agriculture in the states should get necessary strength from the university for agricultural development programmes. "Unless the two work in a coordinated manner, it will be difficult to bridge the gap between the findings of research and its application to the field, he added.

Sugar in the Parliament

States can Acquire Sugar Factories

The minister of state for agriculture, Mr. Shah Nawaz Khan, disclosed in the Lok Sabha that the Centre has told the state governments that they could, with prior permission, acquire sugar factories which do not play fair with the cane growers or are not managed properly.

He indicated that his ministry has approached the Reserve Bank and the finance ministry to raise the credit limit to sugar mills to enable them to clear the dues of cane growers.

The Reserve Bank, he said, had fixed the credit limit for the current year to the mills at last year's level. But this year the sugar production had gone up by seven lakhs tonnes and the credit available to the mills had exhausted. He hoped that a decision in this regard would be taken soon.

Mr. Khan said that sugar exports this year would be much higher than the last year's figure of 4.5 lakh tonnes. For facilitating the quick shipment, certain quantity would be stored at the ports. The commerce ministry and the State Trading Corporation had already been informed about the move.

Regarding the criticism that cane growers were not getting a remunerative price for cane, the minister said that the government had already fixed the statutory minimum price. In certain cases, he, however, admitted that mills had not so far raised the cane price.

About the demand for nationalisation of sugar industry, Mr. Khan merely reiterated that the government was giving its "utmost" consideration to the Bhargava Committee's report on the subject.

APC For Small Increase in cane Prices

The Agricultural Prices Commission (APC) has opposed any substantial increase in the statutory minimum price of sugarcane for the 1975-76 season, but at the same time suggested a set of measures to attract larger cane suppliers to the factories to facilitate increased production and export of sugar.

In its report on the price policy for sugarcane for the season, the APC has recommended a nominal increase of one rupee from the existing level of Rs. 8.50 to 9.50 per quintal with basic recovery of 8.5 percent subject to a proportional premium for every 0.1 percent increase in recovery.

The APC is of the view that any increase in the minimum price for cane payable by the sugar mills will hit the consumer as a result of the increase in the price of levy sugar. It will also push up the general commodity prices and worsen inflationary tendencies.

Formation of Sugarcane Commodity Council

In pursuance of the decision of the Standing Committee of the Bharat Krishak Samaj, it has been decided to organise the Sugarcane Commodity Council of the Samaj. Life Members of the Samaj who are sugarcane cultivators and are otherwise interested to become the member of this Commodity Council are requested to write for details to the Secretary General of the Samaj at A-I, Nizamuddin West, New Delhi-110013 enclosing self-addressed and stamped envelop (9" x 4") size.

Steep Fall in Potato Price

Bumper potato crop this year has upset the market to the producers' disadvantage. New crop potato started selling at Rs. 17 to 18 per 40 kg. The current prices range between Rs. 5 and Rs. 9 only. Sometimes news of exports to other states or even abroad spurts the prices by Rs. 1 to Rs. 10 per 40 kg. for best quality white potato. The worst sufferer is C-40 red variety whose yield is very high and which is selling at Rs. 5 to 7 according to size.

There is glut of potatoes and very few buyers, since there is little chance of making any considerable exports, due to lack of transport of its prohibitive cost. There is no room in the existing capacity of cold storages, local or in the nearby towns of Agra, Mathura, Aligarh, Badaun or even Ghaziabad, etc. The cold storage owners are charging Rs. 18 to 25 per quintal against the scheduled rate of Rs. 12.50. If exports of potato are not arranged, a further fall in price by Rs. 1 to 2 is likely and sales may become totally uneconomic. Large quantities may rot up and go waste since a good area of potato crop is still being harvested.

New Chairman of Nafed Comes with promise

The NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd.) plans to boost agricultural exports by undertaking contract cultivation. This was indicated by Shri Tapeshwar Singh, Chairman of the Federation while addressing the General Body Meeting of NAFED. Shri Tapeshwar Singh indicated that there has been all round progress in the activities of the Federation. The turnover of the Organisation which was about 7 crores in 1972-73 and Rs. 16.07 crores in 1973-74 is

expected to exceed Rs. 50 crores mark during 1974-75. The new activity undertaken by the Organisation include participation in the Joint Sector Jute Mill, which has been established in Orissa in collaboration with Industrial Development Corporation of Orissa.

Validity of Maharashtra Land Ceiling Act Upheld

New Delhi : The Supreme Court on March 7 upheld the Constitution Validity of the amended Maharashtra Agriculture Lands (Ceiling on Holdings) Act, 1961, imposing a maximum limit on agricultural land holdings of private individuals and providing for the acquisition of lands in excess of this ceiling.

The court held that all provisions of impugned Act including Section 28, which provides for the setting up of a state-owned farming corporation for the cultivation of some acquired lands were agrarian measures and, therefore, protected by Article 31 (a) of the Constitution.

A division bench of the court dismissed an appeal filed by Godawari Sugar Mills and other against the decision of the Bombay High Court, which had earlier upheld the Constitutional validity of the impugned statute.

The Godawari Mills challenged the validity of the Act after the Maharashtra government had acquired over 10,000 acres of lands attached to their two sugar mills in Ahmednagar district under cultivation of sugarcane to feed as raw material to its mills.

The mills challenged to constitutional validity of the Act on the ground that cultivation of vast tracts of acquired lands of industrial undertaking did not make it an agrarian measure to come under the protection of Article 31 (a) of the Constitution and was, therefore, unconstitutional.

Food Crisis will Blow Over

—Jagjivan Ram

The Union agriculture and Irrigation minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram expressed his confidence that India would soon become not only self-sufficient but also surplus in food.

He said that this would be possible with the combined efforts of agricultural scientists and the farming community.

Inaugurating a two-day conference of I.C.A.R. institute directors here he said that while he was satisfied at the results already achieved in pushing up acre productivity of various crops, there was still room for further improvement.

Referring to the sound agricultural science base that India had developed, Mr. Ram said that most developing countries in Asia and Africa were looking to this country for help in the matter of technology as well as technical personnel. India's food problem is not something impossible to solve.

Mr. Jagjivan Ram pointed out that even in the worst year, the food shortage had not been more than five to six per cent of the total requirement. In a country of the size and population of India, this shortage was only "marginal", he said.

Though this five to six per cent in terms of quantity appeared sizable, it was not "very difficult to cover it" if adequate efforts were initiated, he said.

Mr. Jagjivan Ram asserted, "If we complete irrigation projects and go in a big way for minor irrigation, so that even in the failure of monsoon we have the necessary water reserves to irrigate our grain. I do not see any reason why we cannot become self-sufficient within the next few years.

New cotton varieties

Bombay: About 25 new varieties of cotton, including two hybrid ones, have been identified for release by the Cotton

Technological Research Laboratory (CTRL) under the all-India cotton improvement programme during the past six year.

(i) Variety IAN-579 (188) popularly known as Vishnu, a high yielding better quality hirsutum variety developed at the cotton research station, Surat, which has recorded an average yield of 1,979 kg. per hectare compared to the control variety Deviraj with 1672 kg. hectare. In spinning quality, it was better than Deviraj by about 20 counts, he said.

(ii) Variety CC 1-1-3, named as Jyoti, an arboreum variety developed at the cotton research station Jalgaon (Maharashtra) to replace the variety 6-1 in the Khandesh tract of Maharashtra.

The new variety recorded on an average kapas yield of 515 kg. per hectare compared to 459 kg. per hectare of 6-1. With a spinning value of the 32s HSC, it has recorded better performance than 6-1 in both mill and laboratory tests.

(iii) Variety MCU-8, a superior long-staple hirsutum variety evolved at the Cotton research station, Srivilli Puthur (Tamil Nadu) combines better yield and tolerance to pink boll worms. This possesses a staple length of 1-32 inches and is suitable for spinning good 60s counts.

(iv) Variety SRT-1, a medium staple hirsutum variety developed at Surat which has recorded on an average 27 per cent to 34 per cent higher yield than Digvijay with maturity of about two months. It also possesses better fibre quality and spinning value than Digvijay.

(v) Variety Suvin, an extra-long staple barbadense variety developed at the coordinating station, Coimbatore. It has staple length of 46/32 inches and spinning value of 100 to 120 counts, and has been adjudged as equivalent to the best imported Egyptian cottons like Giza-45.