

SUGAR

Sugarcane Research Centre produces better quality cane

Thanks to the efforts of the scientists of Rudrur Regional Sugarcane Research Centre in this district, farmers are able to produce better quality sugarcane using less seed material, less fertilisers and incurring less labour costs than the traditional method.

By adopting 'durapusalla' method, the farmers are growing sugarcane suitable for mechanisation. Amid the gaps in the crop onion, potato, cabbage and tomato could be grown using a small tractor, explained scientist T Prabhakar Reddy.

Speaking to The Hans India here on Friday, he said that the farmers were able to get a yield of 50 tonnes per acre, using drip irrigation for achieving the maximum benefit. They use the motor speed drip system which facilitates direct spraying of water mixed with fertilizer, thus preventing 40 to 50 per cent wastage of water. Fertilizer is also not wasted.

Reddy advises the farmers not to burn their waste material, including leaves, in their fields hoping to kill pests and disease-causing insects, citing the recent example of smoke enveloping New Delhi after sugarcane leaf waste was burnt.

As this method affects health, he advocates the disposal of organic method waste disposal by cutting it into bits and leaving in the soil. This will give strength to the soil, by increasing the water content from 3.2 to 16 per cent and reducing the insect damage by 27 per cent. This method also results in getting 20 per cent more output.

The scientist point out that normally four tonnes of waste in an acre is generated. He said that the waste should be spread out in the field and allowed to decay and used as fertilizer (after the addition of eight kg urea and 20 kg of super phosphate to the waste after rain).

Before spreading out the waste, 25 kg of Methyl Parathion should be added. The addition of the two chemicals will expedite the decaying process. This method would not only result in the soil becoming better and strong, but also kills insects and prevents environmental pollution when the waste is burnt, he added.

(Source-<http://sugarnews.in/sugarcane-research-centre-produces-better-quality-cane/>, published on 24th December, 2016)

Cane farmers protest over support price

Seeking remunerative price for sugarcane this crushing season, cane farmers under the banner of State Sugarcane Farmers Association staged a protest in front of sugar minister H S Mahadeva Prasad's house in Kuvempunagar on Monday.

State sugarcane growers association president Kuruburu Shanthakumar said that Bannari Sugar factory in Mysuru has lowered its charges compared to last year for supplying sugarcane to the factory. Presently, sugar price per quintal is Rs 4,000, and factory authorities have failed to provide the fixed price for their produce, he accused.

He said that the government has failed to take any initiative even after several protests in front of the district minister's residence, deputy commissioner's office, and several letters to the government to fix the price at Rs 3,000 per quintal of sugarcane.

At the Belagavi session, the sugar minister had announced additional support price Rs 300 for remunerative price of Rs 2,300 for farmers of Bagalkot, Vijayapura and Belagavi districts, but the minister failed to announce the support price for Mysuru, Chamarajanagar and Mandya farmers, he accused.

Association secretary Athahalli Devaraj said that in Uttar Pradesh farmers are getting Rs 3,150 while the Haryana government is providing Rs 3,200 as state advice price (SAP). "The paddy grown in Kabini catchment area has withered due to drought. There is no water in canals in Kollegal, Chamarajanagar, Yalandur taluks. The government should take measures to provide Rs 25,000 per acre for the crop loss," he said.

(Source-<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mysuru/Cane-farmers-protest-over-support-price/articleshow/56190004.cms>, published on 27th December, 2016)

COGEN

Coal price boom evades Coal India

Co's average price realisation declines in 2016; 2-3 quarters may not see improvement

Coal India Ltd's (CIL's) price realisation per tonne, unlike that of its global peers, fell in April-October to Rs 1,344 because of weak demand and the outlook for the next two quarters does not look good.

Last year it was Rs 1,430 in the same period. CIL had raised its prices in May this year. However, the company's average price realisation per tonne declined, cancelling the benefits of the price hike. In case power demand remains subdued in the next quarter, the average realisation may remain weak.

Globally thermal coal prices have been up 95 per cent this year.

On an average, coal prices were raised by 6.29 per cent a tonne and CIL had said it would earn additional revenue of Rs 3,234 crore during May-March this financial year.

CIL increased the prices of the lower-grade coal (G8-G13) by 13.60-18.03 per cent while reducing the prices of the higher-grade ones. Lower grades are used extensively by power-generating stations and account for more than 80 per cent of the coal production by CIL.

Company executives say the sharp decline in higher-grade coal prices; weak demand, especially in the power sector, its key customer; and lower price realisations in the e-auctions are the primary factors behind the bleak picture in the April-October period.

Looking at the demand situation, a further increase looks difficult, according to sources. The government decides whether to increase the price.

According to analysts, the demand for power will not accelerate unless industrial activity picks up. State discoms' demand has a direct correlation with the index of industrial production.

"As a result of low power demand, the uptake by power companies has been lower than expected. This situation might prevail for the coming two quarters," said Debasish Mishra, partner, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP.

However, CIL executives said the global surge in coal prices would lead to greater demand for domestic coal, a situation CIL could exploit.

While the e-auction volume increased to 39.52 million tonnes (mt) during the April-October period, the average price per tonne declined by 27 per cent at Rs 1,463 a tonne.

"The auction prices are higher than the notified one. However, prices depend on the market conditions as well," a CIL executive said.

Industry analysts have a different take on the matter. They say the fall in the average price realisation is primarily on account of the government's drive to contain grade slippage, which is supplying inferior coal at the prices of better ones, and raise the correct invoice for the grade of coal supplied.

Coal consumers and analysts have been blaming CIL for grade slippage, something Anil Swarup, as coal secretary, had taken up.

"According to our estimates, grade slippages have been controlled, for which CIL could raise the invoice in terms of the correct grade of coal. This has affected the net earnings and hence the average realisation from coal sales fell," an analyst said.

In July-September, CIL posted its worst quarterly results since its listing, with a 77 per cent fall in net profit at Rs 600.17 crore and a decline of eight per cent in net sales at Rs 15,645.05 crore.

(Source-http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/coal-price-boom-evades-coal-india-116122600545_1.html, published on 27th December, 2016)

Demonetisation positive for power sector: Mercom

Demonetisation has turned out to be a positive event for the power sector with distribution companies recovering pending power bills from their customers, Mercom Capital Group said today.

Quoting a number of discoms and government officials on the issue, the consulting firm also

said that the power sector could also benefit from relaxed lending and lower rates, among other things.

"Demonetisation has been chaotic and changing the way the Indian economy functions...banks suddenly flush with funds, all of which could relax lending to the power sector and potentially bring down interest rates," it said.

The government has mandated that the old notes of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 denominations can be used to pay pending utility bills which will help discoms due to their huge backlog of unpaid bills.

Discoms are expecting a substantial influx of payments prior to the December 31 deadline after which these currency notes will become invalid. For cash-strapped discoms this is unexpected good news, it said.

It quoted an official at Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd as saying, "since the announcement of demonetisation, discoms in the state have seen payments of old bills cross Rs 1 billion (\$ 14.74 million) within a week. The signs are positive as this will financially empower the discoms".

Due to the amnesty of taxes and penalties provided to black money holders (unaccounted currency), the government will have a huge influx of money that can be allocated for infrastructural development and funding new projects, stated an official at Transmission Corporation of Telangana Ltd (TCTL), it said.

"India is largely a cash economy so in the short-term demonetisation is going to hurt installations as small developers will find it tough to pay for land acquisition, but in the long-term it will be beneficial as discoms will get paid, lending rates will fall and foreign investment will increase in the face of a falling rupee and rising dollar," Mercom said quoting an official at the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

An official at Bihar State Power Holding Co Ltd informed the consultant that there are many ambitious projects like the Green Energy Transmission Corridor that require large investments and with consumers repaying pending bills and government taxing defaulters, nodal agencies foresee better fund allotment from the government.

It said officials at Jharkhand Renewable Energy Development Agency, Odisha Power Transmission Corp Ltd (OPTCL) and Power Management Company, Madhya Pradesh, all concurred due to demonetisation, peace is being restored in regions like Jammu & Kashmir and Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh [insurgency belt] as insurgents find it hard to fund their operations.

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Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation received tepid response for its 500 MW tender due to demonetisation, but it was an exception said an official at MNRE.

An official at Uttar Pradesh Power Transmission Corporation (UPTCL) stated that the state has been a classic example for unpaid electricity bills. Now the Discoms can get some relief with consumers using their stashed cash to pay pending bills as well as advance payment for future month's electricity bills in some cases.

A slew of government funded projects and subsidies are expected as cash deposits increase in banks, an official at the Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation said.

Demonetisation, Mercom said, is turning out to be an overall positive event for the renewable sector as well.

"This combined with the rapid decline in solar component costs is making a lot of low questionable bids feasible. However, we have to wait and see how government agencies handle the situation - especially payment issues - going forward," Mercom Capital Group CEO Raj Prabhu said.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/demonetisation-positive-for-power-sector-mercom/articleshow/55811207.cms>

Quote of the day

'Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it.' -Confucius