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Centre intervenes to cool tomato prices, sells them at ₹90/kg

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New Delhi: The government owned consumer cooperative, NCCF, sold nearly 18 tonnes of tomato in Delhi and Noida on Friday. Top officials in the consumer affairs ministry, which directed the NCCF and NAFED to procure and sell tomatoes at discounted price, said this will continue till retail prices come down.

The National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India (NCCF) sold tomatoes at Rs 90 per kg while the retail price of the key kitchen commodity in Delhi was Rs 178 a kilo on Friday. A consumer affairs ministry official said that on Saturday mobile vans selling tomato will be deployed at Bata Chowk in Faridabad; IFFCO and Hero Honda Chowk in Gurgaon and 17 other locations in Delhi including Lajpat Nagar, Greater Kailash, North and South Avenue, Mayur Vihar, Mayapuri, Pitampura, Timarpur, Trilokuri, Dwarka, Nangloi and Shalimar Bagh. The sale will start from 11 am.

From Sunday onwards, the NCCF will also start selling tomatoes through 100-odd Kendriya Bhandar outlets in the national capital. The NCCF is also in talks with Mother Dairy about the sale of tomatoes at discounted rates through their 400-odd Safal retail outlets in

Delhi-NCR so that "the outreach can be extensive and purchasing of tomatoes would be easy for the consumers".

On the first day of market intervention by the central government to bring some relief to consumers, about 20 mobile vans were dispatched to areas such as Karol Bagh, Patel Nagar, Pusa Road, CGO Complex, Nehru Place, Govind Lal Shika Marg, Adarsh Nagar, JJ Slum at Wazirpur, and Dhodhapur Shivmandir. In Noida, three mobile vehicles were deployed in Noida Sector-78 and Pari Chowk near Greater Noida.

Officials said the quantity will be increased to more than 20 tonne on Saturday.

As per the government data, the average all-India retail price of tomatoes was at Rs 117 per kg on Friday and the maximum rate was Rs 244 a kilo in Hoshiarpur in Punjab. The prices were lowest at Rs 40 a kg in South Salmara Mankachar in Assam.

Meanwhile, the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) also began selling tomatoes at a discounted rate of Rs 90 per kg in Patna. NAFED brought a truckload of 20 tonne of tomatoes from Chittoor district in Andhra Pradesh. Though the procurement and transportation cost is around Rs 121 a kg, the agency is selling the kitchen item at Rs 90 a kilo.

Tomato trauma: B'lureans get creative with recipes, guide cooks to use them sparingly

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Bengaluru: How many tomatoes are too many tomatoes? That's the chatter in every kitchen these days.

Such is its versatility that it can lift the taste of most dishes by its sheer presence. But the once-modest tomato has gained name and fame for the price tag it comes with now. Homemakers across the city are thinking up ingenious ways to combat the price surge and choosing to go either tomato-less or use them as sparingly as possible.

Ratnamala, 24, who lives in JP Nagar, shared one of her disaster experiments to replace tomatoes. "I have been trying to stop using tomatoes as much as possible. So one time, when my husband asked me to make tomato saaru (broth) and rice for lunch, I thought why not experiment with other items to reduce use of tomatoes. As I searched online for ideas, I read an article which said vinegar can be a great option as it can provide the same texture as tomatoes in a curry I knew I had to try this. So, I made a curry using

one tomato and lots of vinegar. It did smell nice, like an authentic saar. What I didn't know was that there were guests coming over, and they were planning to have lunch with us. The saaru turned out to be so awful, we couldn't even have a spoonful of it. In fact, my husband gave me an earful for wasting one whole tomato on this." Experimenting with a recipe is not new in Indian households.

Every now and then, when an ingredient or two are missing, there will be some alternative to reach out for. Arathi Jain, a resident near City Market, said she started to replace tomatoes with dahi (curd) in almost everything. "Earlier, we would use a kilo of tomatoes daily. Now, we use just one to two of them and at least half a kg of curd." Shahida, a resident of

BTM Layout, has replaced tomatoes with onions and garlic in every dish she makes. "Even these items are expensive but we cannot afford tomatoes on a daily basis," she said. However for Lily Mary, 46, despite the soaring prices, at least a few tomatoes daily are indispensable. Such is the effect of the price spike that many women are personally monitoring

how much tomatoes their cooks are tossing into dishes. In many households, tomatoes have dropped off the must-buy list. From how many kilograms of tomatoes to pick, how to slice and dice them for optimal use and literally keeping a close count, homemakers are leaving no stone unturned to ensure the daily-needed pricey fruit doesn't burn a deep hole in their pocket.



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Farm cooperatives step in to tackle surging tomato prices

Prices have spiked to ₹180 per kg in Delhi, up from ₹20-30 per kg on June 24

Puja Das

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NEW DELHI: Farm cooperatives are scrambling to procure tomatoes directly from farmers wherever it is available to sell them at discounted prices at major consumption centres where prices of the kitchen staple have gone through the roof.

In an interview, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (Nafed) chairman Brijendra Singh said this is in addition to purchases from traders, middlemen and markets.

"We will try to not only purchase it from the mandi, where traders and middlemen are involved but also directly from farmers. If required, we will also purchase tomatoes from adjacent states and distribute them across Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR) from different points," Singh said. "Prices of perishable commodities like tomatoes go high because of middlemen, but farmers do not even get 10% of it."



The government is starting with ₹90 a kg, which could be revised depending on how policy intervention affects the market rate. HT

This comes after the department of consumer affairs (DoCA) on Wednesday directed Nafed and the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation (NCCF) to immediately start buying tomatoes from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra, and simultaneously distribute them in consumption centres, including Delhi, where retail prices have recorded maximum increase in the last one month.

In Delhi, tomato prices have spiked to ₹180 per kg, even

touching ₹280 a kg for some varieties, up from ₹20-30 a kg on June 24. In many other cities and states, including Tamil Nadu and Kerala, tomatoes now cost over ₹180 a kg. Due to floods and damage to crops in the plains of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab, the regular supply of tomatoes to Delhi may remain disrupted for some time. In the meantime, the supply of tomatoes at a discounted rate is expected to moderate prices and provide relief to common people.

"Nafed officials have already started their work, and they will see where Nafed can get tomatoes from and explore the points from where it can distribute the procured tomatoes from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra," Singh said, expressing confidence about the federations' ability to follow the government assignment.

Since the directive came only on Wednesday, it is too early to comment on the procurement target, procurement area, or distribution area, Singh added.

Separately, an NCCF truck carrying 25,000 kg of tomatoes arrived in Delhi on Thursday night from Andhra Pradesh, and the quantity was procured at the market prevailing rate. In Andhra Pradesh, good-quality tomatoes are being sold at ₹120-130 a kg. The quantity NCCF brought to Delhi is being sold at a discounted rate of ₹90 a kg in Delhi NCR at all major locations with high-density populations, two government officials said on condition of anonymity.

The government is starting with ₹90 a kg, which could be revised depending on how the policy intervention affects the market rate, one of the two officials said. "If the market prices start falling, ₹90 will be revised

downwards."

"To distribute the quantity, more than 20 mobile vans have been deployed," the other government official said. "Initially, the plan was to deploy 30 mobile vans to dispose tomatoes at the discounted price, which has not been possible as one-third of Delhi is submerged in water."

Some consumer cooperatives from Dwarka near Delhi have also requested NCCF to supply some stock from Thursday's arrival. From now on, tomato-laden trucks will keep rolling into Delhi. The government plans to sell tomatoes at discounted rates by Safal and Kendriya Bhandar, along with NCCF and Nafed mobile vans, beginning Saturday, the official said.

While supplies reaching Delhi will also serve Haryana's Gurgaon and Noida, separate trucks are also heading for Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan from the targeted procurement centres in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra. While Uttar Pradesh will cover Lucknow, Allahabad, and Kanpur, among others, Rajasthan will supply them in populous regions with soaring prices.

Queries sent to the spokesperson for the consumer affairs ministry remained unanswered till press time.

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Puja Das

17

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"To distribute the quantity, more than 20 mobile vans have been deployed," the other government official said. "Initially, the plan was to deploy 30 mobile vans to dispose tomatoes at the discounted price, which has not been possible as one-third of Delhi is submerged in water."

Some consumer cooperatives from Dwarka near Delhi have also requested NCCF to supply some stock from Thursday's arrival. From now on, tomato-laden trucks will keep rolling into Delhi. The government plans to sell tomatoes at discounted rates by Safal and Kendriya Bhandar, along with NCCF and Nafed mobile vans, beginning Saturday, the official said.

While supplies reaching Delhi will also serve Haryana's Gurugram and Noida, separate trucks are also heading for Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan from the targeted procurement centres in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra. While Uttar Pradesh will cover Lucknow, Allahabad, and Kanpur, among others, Rajasthan will supply them in populous regions with soaring prices.

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LUCKNOW, KANPUR TODAY, PATNA TOMORROW

Centre begins sale of tomatoes at discounted Rs 90 a kg in Delhi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 14

THE CENTRE on Friday began sale of tomatoes at a "discounted" rate of Rs 90 per kg in Delhi, with 17 tonnes sold on the first day.

In view of rising tomato prices, the Centre has roped in two cooperatives—the National Cooperative Consumers Federation and NAFED—to distribute tomatoes at a "discounted" rate. Taking to Twitter, Consumer Affairs Secretary Rohit Kumar Singh said, "Discounted tomatoes sale @ Rs 90 per kg through NCCF started at Karol Bagh, Patel Nagar,

Pusa Road, Nehru Place CGO, Sector 78 Noida, Pari Chowk, Greater Noida and Rajnigandha Chowk. Another 13 vans are getting loaded."

Singh also shared pictures of people buying tomatoes being sold at discounted rates by the NCCF in various parts of Delhi.

According to Singh, a quantity of 17 tonnes of tomatoes was sold on Friday and the government plans to raise it to 40 tonnes in a couple of days.

From Saturday, sales will begin at Lucknow and Kanpur with 15 mobile vans each - from 11 am onwards, he said, adding that the sale of tomatoes will begin on

Sunday in Patna. "Government is committed to provide relief to the consumers," Singh said.

With the all-India average retail price of tomato tripled to over Rs 100 per kg, the Centre swung into action on Wednesday, and directed the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) and the National Cooperative Consumers Federation (NCCF) to immediately procure tomatoes from Mandis in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra for simultaneous distribution in major consumption centres where retail prices have recorded maximum increase in the last one month.

Central agencies start tomato sales in Delhi-NCR, Patna

Facility to be available in Lucknow, Kolkata, Chandigarh and Jaipur soon

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

To provide relief to consumers from soaring prices of tomatoes, Cooperatives NCCF and NAFED on Friday started selling the key kitchen staple at a discounted rate of Rs 90 per kg in Delhi-National Capital Region and Patna.

Both the agencies in association with state government agencies were expected to start selling in other cities including Lucknow, Kolkata, Chandigarh and Jaipur in a couple of days.

The cooperative has procured tomatoes at Rs 115 per kg from Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh as harvesting of farm produce started in the



People buy tomatoes at a discounted rate of Rs 90/kg outside Krishi Bhavan in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

state. The central agencies is also planning to procure it from Karnataka and Maharashtra in the coming days once harvesting start there.

National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India (NCCF) and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) are selling tomatoes on behalf of the Centre. The central government earlier announced that sale of tomatoes to continue till the prices stabilise.

About 80% of 17,000 kg to-

matoes were sold till evening on Friday. "We will increase the reach and the quantity from Saturday onwards in Delhi-NCR," NCCF Managing Director Anice Joseph Chandrasaid.

Response from retail consumers were very good and large number of people were seen buying the products, she added.

About 25 mobile vans were despatched in different parts of Delhi and NCR. Due to flooding of many areas in Delhi, the vans

could not reach several places. Officials of NCCF hoping to arrange more vans by Saturday.

Since last few weeks, the retail price of tomatoes has risen sharply and was ruling as high as Rs 244 per kg on Friday in several parts of the country owing to the lean season plus heavy rain.

"We are selling tomatoes of 'A' grade export quality. The quantity will be increased to more than 20,000 kgs from Saturday. From Sunday onwards, NCCF will also start selling tomatoes through 100-odd Kendra Bhandar outlets in the national capital," she said.

NCCF is also in talks with Mother Dairy about the sale of tomatoes at discounted rates through their 400-odd Safal retail outlets in Delhi-NCR, she added.

On the other hand, NAFED also began selling tomatoes at a discounted rate of Rs 90 per kg in Patna, Bihar.

"A truckload of 20 tonne of tomatoes reached Patna. We are selling at a government fixed rate of Rs 90 per kg there," NAFED Chairman Bijendra Singh said.



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GOVT TAPS FARMERS AS TOMATO PRICES SOAR | PAGE 16

Govt taps farmers as tomato prices soar

Tomato supply at discounted rates to help moderate prices

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NEW DELHI

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This comes after the department of consumer affairs (DoCA) on Wednesday directed Nafed and the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation (NCCF) to immediately start buying

TOMATO TURMOIL



PRICE PATROL

PLANS are afoot to also buy tomatoes from nearby states

THE govt was buying at ₹90 a kg, which could be revised

THE tomatoes are to be sold at lower rates by Safal, other outlets

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Govt taps farmers as tomato prices soar

FROM PAGE 16

tomatoes from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra, and simultaneously distribute them in consumption centres, including Delhi, where retail prices have recorded maximum increase in the last one month.

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day, it is too early to comment on the procurement target, procurement area, or distribution area, Singh added.

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counted rate of ₹90 a kg in Delhi NCR at all major locations with high-density populations, two government officials said on condition of anonymity.

An NCCF truck with 25,000 kg of tomatoes reached Delhi on Thursday night from Andhra Pradesh

The government is starting with ₹90 a kg, which could be revised depending on how the policy intervention affects the market rate, one of the two officials said. "If the market prices start falling, ₹90 will be revised downwards."

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more than 20 mobile vans have been deployed," the other government official said. "Initially, the plan was to deploy 30 mobile vans to dispose tomatoes at the discounted price, which has not been possible as one-third of Delhi is submerged in water."

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Tomato Prices Fall but Soaring Veggies Sour Food Budget

Immediate relief for households unlikely as transport disruption, flooding keep supply of green vegetables tight

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Kolkata: Wholesale tomato prices eased in the national capital after the government stepped in to ensure the arrival of fresh supplies from Karnataka, but other vegetables have become dearer following disruptions, signalling continued pressure on household food costs. In Delhi's key Azadpur mandi, the whole-

sale price of tomatoes was hovering at ₹80-100 per kg, traders said Friday, compared with ₹160 per kg at the peak last week.

The Centre on Wednesday directed the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (Nafed) and the National

Cooperative Consumers Federation (NCCF) to get tomatoes from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra for distribution in major consumption centres where retail prices have spiked.

The arrival of tomatoes from Bengaluru has increased in Delhi.

Ashok Kaushik, president of Azadpur Tomato Association, said on Friday that 16-17 tomato trucks had arrived, which will help increase supply.

Most vegetable prices are up in the national capital.

"Bottle gourd is being sold at ₹70

per kg (up from ₹50 last week), capsicum at ₹80 per kg (₹65 per kg), bitter melon at ₹65 (₹50), green coriander at ₹500 (₹400 per kg), lady's finger at ₹130 (₹100)," said Manoj Dahiya, a vegetable shop owner in Delhi's Vasant Vihar.

"The price of green cucumber has risen to ₹80 per kg (₹60), french beans at ₹220 (₹180-200), ginger at ₹400-470 (₹370), black brinjal at ₹100-120 (₹80), pointed gourd at ₹100-120 (₹80)."

Traders said prices of green vegetables will not soften immediately as the fields are inundated with water.



Mixed Bag

Supply to Delhi's Azadpur mandi increases as truck movement eases

Water is receding on highways, facilitating truck movement

Supply of tomatoes, onions and potatoes to improve further in Delhi-NCR

Tomato prices at wholesale level fall to ₹80-110 per kg

Price fall attributed to Centre's move to procure tomatoes by Nafed and NCCF

Green vegetable prices to remain firm as fields are inundated with water

Traders say that it will take some more time to stabilise prices

Supply Snags → 9



Supply Snags

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“The arrivals have improved on Friday. Nearly 115 trucks containing potatoes and onions have come,” said Rambaran Yadav, a member of the Delhi Agricultural Marketing Board. “The prices will now become steady. Even the wholesale prices of tomatoes which had shot up to Rs 160 per kg have cooled off.”

The Delhi government has stopped the entry of commercial vehicles into the capital after many areas got flooded as the water level

in the Yamuna breached 45-year highs. This has further reduced the supply of fruits and vegetables, pushing prices higher.

Retail prices of tomatoes had soared past Rs 200 per kg in several parts of the country due to supply disruptions caused by heavy rains in northern India, up from about Rs 30 a month previously.

Traders said there has been a nearly 30% drop in the supply of onions coming from Maharashtra and Karnataka, causing retail prices to double in the capital.

They said it will take some time for the prices to stabilise.

Prices have spiked because for smaller farmers, growing them makes little monetary sense

Tomayto, Tomahto, Tomatters



Nilanjan Banik

In 2009, Volkswagen ran a unique ad campaign to promote its new fuel-efficient car. They hired DDB Stockholm and transformed the staircase of the Stockholm Metro Station into a 'piano staircase', which produced musical sounds when people used it. People responded to this environment-friendly energy-saving fun signal, even though it meant more hard work. They started avoiding the escalator.

In India, farmers are no different. In November 2022, the price of tomatoes in the retail market was hovering around ₹20 a kg. This meant that small and marginal growers could not recoup the farming cost. According to RBI, farmers do not even realise 50% of the retail price for major traded crops, such as tomato. The middleman and traders apportion the bulk of what the consumer pays. The margin between what a farmer gets and what a consumer pays consists of a host of other charges such as commissions, mandi charges, Agricultural Produce Market Committee



(APMC) membership fees, weighing and assaying charges, loading and unloading charges, and transport charges.

In 2021, GoI responded to this cascading impact of the price rise by trying to pass a new farm law. The argument was, if there were more markets where farmers could buy and sell their produce, it would lead to price discovery for small and marginal farmers, and, at the same time, the retail price would come down. India has around 260 million people living in poverty, and 83% of them are small and marginal farmers (with less than 2 hectares of landholding size).

If farmers are to sell their produce, they have three options:

► Sell directly to the government. GoI procures 23 essential food items from farmers through its agencies, such as the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (Nafed), at minimum support prices (MSP), which are higher than the market price. From the perspective of tomato growers, this sounds like a good option. However, it isn't easy to administer

It isn't easy to administer MSP for a perishable non-standardised crop like tomato. Unlike rice and wheat that can be stored naturally, tomatoes need cold storage

MSP for a perishable non-standardised crop like tomato. Unlike rice and wheat, which can be stored naturally, tomatoes need cold storage.

Even if GoI agrees to procure tomatoes at MSP, these government-procuring outlets are not uniformly distributed, with almost 70-80% rice and wheat procurement done from Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. These are the states where most of the cold storage



Let them eat other soups

ge units are concentrated.

► Farmers take their produce to a nearby government-designated mandi, where they can auction produce to the middlemen in front of state officers. To do that, they must store their perishable stocks in cold storage. Predominantly tomato-growing states such as Karnataka, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh have relatively fewer cold storage units. Even if a farmer is lucky to get access to cold storage, he needs to book a minimum quantity of 50,000 quintals for his produce, something not possible for a marginal farmer. Nearly 20% of India's tomatoes are wasted for want of storage.

► Farmers can take the produce to the local mandi directly. But there are only 7,700 mandis, against 6,60,000 villages. This means a farmer must arrange for transport, which again may not be a feasible option given the distance and booking a 400 quintal-capacity truck all for himself. In India, the average agricultural yield is 2,070 kg per hectare. Marginal farmers, given their landholding size, can, at the most, produce 24 quintals. So, booking a truck is not cost-efficient.

An easier way out is to sell to village-level aggregators. In most instances, these marginal farmers are so debt-ridden that they are obliged to sell their produce to moneylenders. In India, only 15% of marginal farmers have access to formal credit. Most of the time, they depend upon informal sources for

buying seeds, fertilisers and other farming needs. The cost difference for loans varies between the formal and informal sectors varies 30-45% annually.

In the best possible scenario, if a farmer takes his produce to a mandi, this too does not help. The bargaining power of the farmer is low. Under the APMC Act, state government officers are meant to oversee activities related to auctioning, such as whether the commodities traded are homogenous in quality and the markets are equipped with basic infrastructure for taking correct weights and making payments. However, these middlemen form a cartel and offer a substantially lower price to the farmers during the auction.

The argument behind the farm law was that the reform in the APMC Act would allow farmers and middlemen to trade in markets in addition to mandis. So long, it was the state governments that were in the business of



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regulating mandis. If additional markets for trading are created, the bargaining power of the middlemen is likely to fall, and the farmers will benefit. It is to be noted that it was because of the pressure from the middlemen and big traders (some of whom are also state-level party workers and politicians) that GoI repealed the farm law.

The present rise in tomato prices is purely how marginal farmers reacted to the 'not-so-fun' price 'signal' they faced last November. When they realised that the price was abysmally low, and the risk of pre-monsoon rainfall playing spoilsport high, it was natural for them to grow other weather-resistant crops, such as millets, jowar and soybean. Tomato prices have shot up because of lower supply and market imperfection.

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Ashok Kaushik, president of Azadpur Tomato Association, said on Friday that 16-17 tomato trucks had arrived, which will help increase supply.

Most vegetable prices are up in the national capital. "Bottle gourd is being sold at ₹70

per kg (up from ₹50 last week), capsicum at ₹80 per kg (₹65 per kg), bitter melon at ₹65 (₹50), green coriander at ₹500 (₹400 per kg), lady's finger at ₹130 (₹100)," said Manoj Dahiya, a vegetable shop owner in Delhi's Vasant Vihar. "The price of green cucumber

has risen to ₹80 per kg (₹60), french beans at ₹220 (₹180-200), ginger at ₹400-470 (₹370), black brinjal at ₹100-120 (₹80), pointed gourd at ₹100-120 (₹80)."

Traders said prices of green vegetables will not soften immediately as the fields are inundated with water.

Supply Snags ►► 11



Mixed Bag

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Supply Snags

►► From Page 1

“The arrivals have improved on Friday. Nearly 115 trucks containing potatoes and onions have come,” said Rambaran Yadav, a member of the Delhi Agricultural Marketing Board.

“The prices will now become steady. Even the wholesale prices of tomatoes which had shot up to Rs 160 per kg have cooled off.”

The Delhi government has stopped the entry of commercial vehicles into the capital after many areas got flooded as the water level in the Yamuna breached 45-year highs. This has

further reduced the supply of fruits and vegetables, pushing prices higher.

Retail prices of tomatoes had soared past Rs 200 per kg in several parts of the country due to supply disruptions caused by heavy rains in northern India, up from about Rs 30 a month previously.

Traders said there has been a nearly 30% drop in the supply of onions coming from Maharashtra and Karnataka, causing retail prices to double in the capital.

They said it will take some time for the prices to stabilise.



Prices have spiked because for smaller farmers, growing them makes little monetary sense

Tomayto, Tomahto, Tomatters



Nilanjan Banik

In 2009, Volkswagen ran a unique ad campaign to promote its new fuel-efficient car. They hired DDB Stockholm and transformed the staircase of the Stockholm Metro Station into a 'piano staircase', which produced musical sounds when people used it. People responded to this environment-friendly energy-saving fun signal, even though it meant more hard work. They started avoiding the escalator.

In India, farmers are no different. In November 2022, the price of tomatoes in the retail market was hovering around ₹20 a kg. This meant that small and marginal growers could not recoup the farming cost. According to RBI, farmers do not even realise 50% of the retail price for major traded crops, such as tomato. The middleman and traders apportion the bulk of what the consumer pays. The margin between what a farmer gets and what a consumer pays consists of a host of other charges such as commissions, mandi charges, Agricultural Produce Market Committee



(APMC) memberships fees, weighing and assaying charges, loading and unloading charges, and transport charges.

In 2021, Gol responded to this cascading impact of the price rise by trying to pass a new farm law. The argument was, if there were more markets where farmers could buy and sell their produce, it would lead to price discovery for small and marginal farmers, and, at the same time, the retail price would come down. India has around 260 million people living in poverty, and 83% of them are small and marginal farmers (with less than 2 hectares of landholding size).

If farmers are to sell their produce, they have three options:

► Sell directly to the government. Gol procures 23 essential food items from farmers through its agencies, such as the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (Nafed), at minimum support prices (MSP), which are higher than the market price. From the perspective of tomato growers, this sounds like a good option. However, it isn't easy to administer

It isn't easy to administer MSP for a perishable non-standardised crop like tomato. Unlike rice and wheat that can be stored naturally, tomatoes need cold storage

MSP for a perishable non-standardised crop like tomato. Unlike rice and wheat, which can be stored naturally, tomatoes need cold storage.

Even if Gol agrees to procure tomatoes at MSP, these government-procuring outlets are not uniformly distributed, with almost 70-80% rice and wheat procurement done from Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. These are the states where most of the cold storage



Let them eat other soups

ge units are concentrated.

► Farmers take their produce to a nearby government-designated mandi, where they can auction produce to the middlemen in front of state officers. To do that, they must store their perishable stocks in cold storage. Predominantly tomato-growing states such as Karnataka, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh have relatively fewer cold storage units. Even if a farmer is lucky to get access to cold storage, he needs to book a minimum quantity of 50,000 quintals for his produce, something not possible for a marginal farmer. Nearly 20% of India's tomatoes are wasted for want of storage.

► Farmers can take the produce to the local mandi directly. But there are only 7,700 mandis, against 6,60,000 villages. This means a farmer must arrange for transport, which again may not be a feasible option given the distance and booking a 400 quintal-capacity truck all for himself. In India, the average agricultural yield is 2,070 kg per hectare. Marginal farmers, given their landholding size, can, at the most, produce 24 quintals. So, booking a truck is not cost-efficient.

An easier way out is to sell to village-level aggregators. In most instances, these marginal farmers are so debt-ridden that they are obliged to sell their produce to moneylenders. In India, only 15% of marginal farmers have access to formal credit. Most of the time, they depend upon informal sources for

buying seeds, fertilisers and other farming needs. The cost difference for loan rates between the formal and informal sectors varies 30-45% annually.

In the best possible scenario, if a farmer takes his produce to a mandi, this too does not help. The bargaining power of the farmer is low. Under the APMC Act, state government officers are meant to oversee activities related to auctioning, such as whether the commodities traded are homogenous in quality and the markets are equipped with basic infrastructure for taking correct weights and making payments. However, these middlemen form a cartel and offer a substantially lower price to the farmers during the auction.

The argument behind the farm law was that the reform in the APMC Act would allow farmers and middlemen to trade in markets in addition to mandis. So long, it was the state governments that were in the business of



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regulating mandis. If additional markets for trading are created, the bargaining power of the middlemen is likely to fall, and the farmers will benefit. It is to be noted that it was because of the pressure from the middlemen and big traders (some of whom are also state-level party workers and politicians) that GoI repealed the farm law.

The present rise in tomato prices is purely how marginal farmers reacted to the 'not-so-fun' price signal they faced last November. When they realised that the price was abysmally low, and the risk of pre-monsoon rainfall playing spoilsport high, it was natural for them to grow other weather-resistant crops, such as millets, jowar and soybean. Tomato prices have shot up because of lower supply and market imperfection.

The writer is professor, School of Management, Mahindra University, Hyderabad



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Tomato Prices Drop but Green Veggies to Stay Firm

Any immediate relief in household food costs unlikely even as govt move improves supply of kitchen staple

Sutanuka.Ghosal
@timesgroup.com

Kolkata: Wholesale tomato prices eased in the national capital after the government stepped in to ensure the arrival of fresh supplies from Karnataka, but other vegetables have become dearer following disruptions, signalling continued pressure on household food costs.

In Delhi's key Azadpur mandi, the wholesale price of tomatoes was hovering at Rs 80-100 per kg, traders said Friday, compared with Rs 160 per kg at the peak last week.

The Centre on Wednesday directed the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (Nafed) and the National Cooperative Consumers Federation (NCCF) to get tomatoes from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra for distribution in

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The present rise in tomato prices is purely how marginal farmers reacted to the 'not-so-fun' price 'signal' they faced last November. When they realised that the price was abysmally low, and the risk of pre-monsoon rainfall playing spoilsport high, it was natural for them to grow other weather-resistant crops, such as millets, jowar and soybean. Tomato prices have shot up because of lower supply and market imperfection.

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22 करोड़ के गोलमाल मामले में सहायक रजिस्ट्रार गिरफ्तार

जासं, रेवाड़ी: सहकारिता विभाग से संबंधित एकीकृत सहकारी विकास परियोजना (आइसीडीपी) विंग में हुए 22 करोड़ के घोटाले के मामले में भ्रष्टाचार निरोधक ब्यूरो ने पांचवीं बड़ी गिरफ्तारी की है। ब्यूरो ने विभाग के सहायक रजिस्ट्रार रामकुमार को गिरफ्तार किया है। रामकुमार ने भी सरकारी पैसे को डकारा है, जिसको लेकर विजिलेंस उससे पूछताछ कर रही है। सहायक रजिस्ट्रार रामकुमार बीते काफी समय से ब्यूरो की गिरफ्त से बाहर चल रहा था। रामकुमार से पूछताछ में ब्यूरो को कई और नाम सामने आने की उम्मीद है। एकीकृत सहकारी विकास परियोजना विभाग सहकारिता के क्षेत्र से जुड़ा हुआ है। 2018 से 2022 तक आइसीडीपी विंग के पास केंद्र सरकार से रेवाड़ी जिले के लिए 22 करोड़ रुपये की ग्रांट आई थी। आइसीडीपी विंग के अधिकारी किसानों के कल्याण के लिए आई करोड़ों रुपये की राशि को खुद ही डकार गए। 13 मई को भ्रष्टाचार निरोधक ब्यूरो ने इस मामले में सबसे पहले आइसीडीपी विंग की महाप्रबंधक अन्नू कौशिश को गिरफ्तार किया था। अन्नू के खाते में एक करोड़ 30 लाख रुपये मिले थे। अन्नू कौशिश से पूछताछ के बाद ब्यूरो ने इस गोलमाल में शामिल डिप्टी चीफ आडिटर योगेंद्र अग्रवाल और विकास अधिकारी नितिन शर्मा व लेखाकार सुमित अग्रवाल को भी गिरफ्तार किया था।



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7,338 लंबित मामले वापस लेगा कारपोरेट मंत्रालय

नई दिल्ली : कारपोरेट मामलों के मंत्रालय ने कंपनी कानून के तहत विभिन्न अदालतों में लंबित 7,338 मामलों को वापस लेने का फैसला किया है। ईज आफ डूइंग बिजनेस को बढ़ावा देने के लिए कारपोरेट मंत्रालय ने यह फैसला लिया है। हालांकि, गंभीर अपराधों से संबंधित मामलों को वापस लेने पर विचार नहीं किया जाएगा। (प्रेट्र)



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एनसीआर में 90 रुपये प्रति किलो की दर पर टमाटर की बिक्री शुरू

जासं, नई दिल्ली : सहकारी समितियों एनसीसीएफ और नेफेड ने आमजन को राहत देते हुए शुक्रवार को एनसीआर में 90 रुपये प्रति किग्रा की रियायती दर पर टमाटर बेचना शुरू कर दिया। भारतीय राष्ट्रीय सहकारी उपभोक्ता महासंघ (एनसीसीएफ) और भारतीय राष्ट्रीय कृषि सहकारी विपणन महासंघ (नेफेड) केंद्र की ओर से टमाटर बेचना शुरू किया है।

टमाटर की कीमतों में तेजी से वृद्धि होने पर आमजन को राहत देने के लिए कदम उठाया गया है। वर्तमान में टमाटर की खुदरा कीमत 244 रुपये प्रति किलोग्राम तक पहुंच गई है। एनसीसीएफ के प्रबंध निदेशक एनीस जोसेफ चंद्रा ने बताया कि शुक्रवार शाम तक 17,000 किलो टमाटर में से लगभग 80 प्रतिशत बिक गए।



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सरकार ने रियायती दर पर टमाटर की बिक्री शुरू की

टमाटर पर छाई महंगाई से निजात दिलाने में सरकार की पहल रंग लाती नजर आ रही है। सहकारी समितियों एनसीसीएफ और नेफेड ने टमाटर की ऊंची कीमतों से उपभोक्ताओं को राहत देने के लिए शुक्रवार को कृषि भवन के बाहर 90 रुपये प्रति किलो की रियायती दर पर टमाटर बेचना शुरू कर दिया।

दिल्ली में मिलने लगा है 90 रुपये किलो टमाटर

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): सहकारी समितियों एनसीसीएफ और नेफेड ने आमजन को राहत देते हुए शुक्रवार को दिल्ली-एनसीआर में 90 रुपये प्रति किलोग्राम की रियायती दर पर टमाटर बेचना शुरू कर दिया। भारतीय राष्ट्रीय सहकारी उपभोक्ता महासंघ (एनसीसीएफ) और भारतीय राष्ट्रीय कृषि सहकारी विपणन महासंघ (नेफेड) केंद्र की ओर से टमाटर बेचना शुरू किया है। टमाटर की कीमतों में तेजी से वृद्धि होने पर आमजन को राहत देने के लिए कदम उठाया गया है। वर्तमान में टमाटर की खुदरा कीमत 244 रुपये प्रति किलोग्राम तक पहुंच गई है। एनसीसीएफ के प्रबंध निदेशक एनीस जोसेफ चंद्रा ने बताया कि शुक्रवार



शाम तक 17,000 किलोग्राम टमाटरों में से लगभग 80 प्रतिशत बिक गए। दिल्ली-एनसीआर में शनिवार को ज्यादा टमाटर बेचे जाएंगे। दिल्ली में करोल बाग, पटेल नगर, पूसा रोड, सीजीओ कॉम्प्लेक्स, नेहरू प्लेस, गोविंद लाल शिका मार्ग, आदर्श नगर, वजीरपुर में जेजे स्लम और ढोढ़ापुर शिवमंदिर क्षेत्रों में लगभग 20 मोबाइल वैन के माध्यम से टमाटर बेचे गए।

केंद्र सरकार की वैन 90 रुपये में दे रही है एक किलो टमाटर



■ विशेष संवाददाता, नई दिल्ली

केंद्र सरकार ने शुक्रवार को दिल्ली-NCR में लोगों को राहत देने के लिए मोबाइल वैन के जरिये टमाटर की रियायती कीमत रिटेल बिक्री शुरू की। एग्रीकल्चर मार्केटिंग एजेंसी भारतीय राष्ट्रीय सहकारी उपभोक्ता संघ (NCCF) ने दिल्ली-NCR में टमाटर 90 रुपये प्रति किलो पर बेचा जा रहा है। रियायती दर पर एक व्यक्ति अधिकतम दो किलो टमाटर खरीद सकता है। खाद्य मंत्रालय के अनुसार दिल्ली-NCR में NCUI कॉम्प्लेक्स, सिरीफोर्ट इंस्टिट्यूशनल एरिया, अगस्ता क्रांति मार्ग, होज खास के अलावा नोएडा सेक्टर 78, परी चौक, ग्रेटर नोएडा और रजनीगंधा चौक पर टमाटर की रियायती दरों पर बेचे जा रहे हैं। गौरतलब है कि देशभर में कई जगहों पर टमाटर 200 रुपये प्रति किलो तक की कीमत पर बिक रहा है। NCCF शुक्रवार को दिल्ली-NCR में लगभग 17,000 किलो टमाटर बेचा। शनिवार को लगभग 20,000 किलो टमाटर बेचने की योजना है। फिर उसे बढ़ाकर हर दिन

दिल्ली-NCR में 20 जगह सरकारी वैन

दिल्ली	NCR
NCUI कॉम्प्लेक्स	नोएडा सेक्टर 78
सिरीफोर्ट इंस्टिट्यूशनल एरिया	परी चौक
अगस्ता क्रांति मार्ग	ग्रेटर नोएडा
होज खास	रजनीगंधा चौक

40,000 करने की योजना है। सूत्रों के अनुसार सरकार की योजना मदर डेयरी के जरिये भी रियायती दरों पर टमाटर की रिटेल बिक्री शुरू करने की बातचीत चल रही है। नेफेड में अगले दो दिनों में रियायती दरों में टमाटर की बिक्री दिल्ली-NCR में शुरू करेगा। उपभोक्ता मामलों के सेक्रेटरी रोहित कुमार सिंह का कहना है कि हमारी कोशिश है कि समय के साथ वैनों की संख्या बढ़ाई जाए ताकि दिल्ली NCR में ज्यादा जगहों पर रियायती दर टमाटर की बिक्री हो सके।
