



# The Fertiliser Association of India

FAI House, 10 Shaheed Jit Singh Marg, New Delhi – 110067

## Current News

Current news on the latest developments in fertiliser, energy, weather, agriculture, agri-business, logistics, economy, and other related areas

*(The views expressed in the news items are not necessarily of FAI)*

Tuesday, September 19, 2017	
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## **WEATHER**

### **Rain clouds look at North Konkan, Mumbai, South Gujarat**

IMD issues heavy weather alert for entire Konkan-Mumbai and South Gujarat for today

Rain-bearing clouds have taken up positions along and off the West Coast, the East Coast and parts of Central India this morning as a resurgent monsoon continues its run over the country.

The entire coast stretching from North Konkan, Mumbai and Valsad, Surat and Vadodara in adjoining South Gujarat are direct in the line of sight of huge masses of clouds.

#### **Heavy weather alert**

So are the southern-most fringes of Saurashtra and Kutch, extending from Diu into Junagadh and Porbandar, according to satellite pictures this morning. India Met Department (IMD) has already issued a heavy weather alert for entire Konkan-Mumbai and South Gujarat for today.

Along the East Coast, clouds have already entered Nellore, Ongole, Narasapuram, Kakinada, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam in Coastal Andhra Pradesh. Over Central India, Amravati and Achalpur in Maharashtra; and Timarni, Soghapur, Bhopal, Sagar, Jabalpur and Mandla in Madhya Pradesh are witnessing overcast skies.

So too, places in East-Central India in Odisha, Jharkhand and Bengal such as Bhadrak, Deogarh, Rourkela, Biramitrapur, Jamshedpur, Bardhaman and Asansol. A US Climate Prediction Centre outlook said that most of the West Coast and adjoining interior peninsula would witness normal to excess showers until the month-end (12 days more).

#### **Active Bay of Bengal**

Its weather tracker that scans the landscape for signals for emerging heavy weather projects that the Bay of Bengal would remain unstable for some time, meaning presence of active weather systems. It depicts a scenario where activity in the Bay peaks from September 26, subjecting East India and adjoining North-West India to another round of heavy rain.

This would have ramifications for adjoining Central India and peninsular India, which is something that is captured in the weather outlook maps until September 30. Meanwhile, an IMD update said that the monsoon was 'vigorous' over Saurashtra & Kutch, Coastal Karnataka and Kerala yesterday.

It was 'active' over West Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Maharashtra, Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema, North and South Interior Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

IMD has forecast rain at most places along the West Coast, Central and East India until September 25 while it will be isolated to scattered over the rest of the country during the period.

(This article was published on September 18, 2017)

Source: [The Hindu Business Line, Tuesday, September 19, 2017](#)

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## **FERTILISER**

### **Countrywide direct transfer of fertiliser subsidy deferred to March**

The Central government has now fixed March 2018 as the deadline for a planned rollout of direct transfer of the fertiliser subsidy. "We have set this new deadline after extensive testing of the scheme to ensure its full success," said a senior government official.

While the government had originally planned to roll out the direct benefit transfer (DBT) in fertiliser subsidy by June this year, the plan was pushed back for further testing and because of insufficient Point of Sale devices. Then, a tentative deadline of January 1, 2018 was set for the scheme, also known as Aadhaar-enabled Fertiliser Distribution System, which has now been extended to March 31, 2018.

With agriculture being a critical issue, especially as elections in many States are around the corner, the plan is being closely monitored by the Cabinet Secretariat and the Prime Minister's Office. Apart from food, fertiliser is one of the commodities that have an impact on the Exchequer. Other big-ticket subsidy items such as cooking gas have already been moved to DBT.

#### **Big savings expected**

The move is also expected to generate significant savings for the Centre from next fiscal in its outgo towards the fertiliser subsidy. The Finance Ministry, which has already begun working on Union Budget 2018-19, is expected to factor this in its expenditure calculations.

The allocation towards fertiliser subsidy for this fiscal had been retained at ₹70,000 crore. Officials however, are cautious. "DBT in fertilisers is still being rolled out across districts. While it has helped to plug leakages by cutting down ghost beneficiaries, it is too early to estimate the quantum of savings," said the official.

The model for DBT in fertilisers is somewhat different from that of other subsidies. The subsidy is to be released to fertiliser companies, rather than farmers, after the sale. Farmers are identified by retailers after biometric authentication. Earlier, a pilot project was undertaken in over 16 districts, including Hoshangabad (MP), Pali (Rajasthan), Una (Himachal Pradesh), Rangareddy (Telangana) Krishna and West Godavari (AP).

(This article was published on September 18, 2017)

[Source: The Hindu Business Line, Tuesday, September 19, 2017](#)

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## **AGRICULTURE**

### **2-day meet to chalk out strategy for sowing of rabi crops**

The Centre has called a two-day national-level conference starting tomorrow to chalk out a strategy for sowing of rabi (winter) crops like wheat and discuss ways to double farmers' income by 2022. Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh will inaugurate the conference at Vigyan Bhawan here.

"It will take review of kharif crops and discuss with state governments on preparedness for the coming rabi season," a senior Agriculture Ministry official said. It will also review the progress of important schemes like Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, online agri-market and Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana.

Eight groups will be formed to discuss each of the schemes with state agriculture officials and stakeholders and see if any improvement need to be made. The issue on management of drought and drought-proofing of 30 vulnerable districts as well as doubling of farmers' income will be discussed at the conference.

The main rabi crops are wheat, barley, gram, pulses, linseed and mustard.

(This article was published on September 18, 2017)

[Source: The Hindu Business Line, Tuesday, September 19, 2017](#)

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## **ECONOMY**

### **FM Arun Jaitley hopes digital payment bound to pick up with new technology**

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley today said compulsion of going digital post note ban has become a habit and e-payments will gather pace on account of government initiatives and technology advancement.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley today said compulsion of going digital post note ban has become a habit and e-payments will gather pace on account of government initiatives and technology advancement. He further said high denomination currency circulation has come down in terms of volume after demonetisation of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes that came into effect from November 9 last year. "Obviously in the month of November, December and January, a lot of people went in for digitisation in terms of mode of payment more out of compulsion rather than finding it a more convenient method to transact, but that compulsion created a habit for many," he noted. "We reached a peak figure (after the demonetisation), then it marginally slipped and is now bound to pick up again," he said after the launch of mobile app Tez — a Hindi word which means fast — for digital payments developed by Google for India. Various government initiatives to encourage digital transactions are going to make a major advance in that direction, he added. Referring to the benefits of demonetisation, the finance minister said the high denomination currency in circulation has come down.

"As we stand today, the high denomination currency has squeezed... the squeeze process is going to happen in the natural course of the economy. Second important test is as a consequence of this how much we are able to expand the number of assesseees and the tax base, both direct and indirect," he said. According to the RBI, there were as many 588.2 crore of Rs 500 notes, both old and new in circulation, as of March 31, 2017. As of March 31, 2016, there were 1,570.7 crore Rs 500 notes in circulation. As many as 328.5 crore pieces of new Rs 2,000 notes were in circulation as on March 31, 2017, the RBI annual report said. Built on the government-supported Unified Payments Interface (UPI), Tez allows users, free of charge, to make small or big payments straight from their bank accounts, Google said.

The app was built for India, working on the majority of the country's smartphones, and is available in English and seven Indian languages (Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu). Tez works in partnership with four Banks — Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and State Bank of India(SBI) — to facilitate the processing of payments across over 50 UPI- enabled banks. "Now, the time has come with application as simple as this that what started as compulsion becomes a matter of convenience and eventually a matter of spending habit as far as Indian people are concerned," the finance minister noted.

Source: Financial Express, Tuesday, September 19, 2017

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### **[PM Narendra Modi to discuss economic situation with finance minister Arun Jaitley today](#)**

[Modi will likely get briefed on measures to create massive jobs and boost economic growth, which plunged to a three-year low of 5.7% in Q1FY18.](#)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will meet finance minister Arun Jaitley and other top officials on Tuesday to review the state of the economy, a senior government official said on Monday. Modi will likely get briefed on measures to create massive jobs and boost economic growth, which plunged to a three-year low of 5.7% in Q1FY18. Steps to spur private investments could also feature in discussion. Top officials of various departments of the finance ministry will attend the meeting as well. Even last week, chief economic advisor Arvind Subramanian briefed Modi on various economic issues, including the recent pick-up in domestic fuel prices. The meeting comes at a crucial time: GDP growth slowed for a sixth straight quarter through Q1FY18, shedding some 2.2 percentage points since Q1FY17; retail inflation rose close to 2 percentage points in just two months through August; growth in gross fixed capital formation touched just 1.6% in Q1FY18, while private final consumption expenditure slowed 60 basis points in Q1 from the previous quarter.

The teething troubles following the GST rollout and the after-effects of the note ban continue to weigh on the economy. Domestic petrol and diesel prices are hovering around a three-year high, leading to consumer dissatisfaction. Banks are saddled with massive bad debts and credit growth remains muted. CAD has started inching up again — 2.4% of GDP in Q1, against 0.6% in the previous quarter. Exports-to-GDP ratio, in real term, fell to 19.4% in Q1 from 21% in the previous quarter. Imports are rising at a faster pace than exports, leading to a jump in trade deficit.

[Source: Financial Express, Tuesday, September 19, 2017](#)

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**FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES – Monday, September 18, 2017**

Currency	Buy (₹)		Sell (₹)	
	TT	Bill	TT	Bill
Dollar	64.19	64.22	64.1	64.09
Euro	76.73	76.76	76.64	76.63
Pound Sterling	86.93	86.97	86.83	86.82
100 Yen	57.66	57.69	57.58	57.57

Source: The Hindu Business Line, Tuesday, September 19, 2017

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