



K. Kurian
Chairman

THE KARNATAKA PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION



NEWS LETTER - 2

Dear Members,

I wish to circulate my Second News Letter. This is to further brief you about various events and developments that have taken place on various fronts relating to the Association and the Plantation Sector since my earlier Letter of 3rd March, 2015.

1. Awareness campaign on Integrated Coffee Development Project (ICDP) of the Coffee Board in the XII Plan on 4th and 5th March, 2015:

The Coffee Board had held an "Awareness Campaign" on ICDP subsidy scheme brought out by the GOI on 4th and 5th March 2015 at the Coffee Board, Chikmagalur. The Secretary had attended the meeting held on 4th March 2015. A few members of the Association had also attended.

The Deputy Director (Extension) Chikmagalur Sri. Hemanth Kumar explained in detail each subsidy scheme and clarified the queries raised by the growers. About 50 coffee growers had participated.

2. BGM and Workshop on Drip Irrigation in Coffee held on 18th March, 2015:

The 57th BGM of the Association followed by a Workshop on Drip Irrigation in Coffee was held on 18th March, 2015 at the KPA Office, Chikmagalur. Mr. S.B. Sankar, Tanodi Estate, Magundi made a power point presentation and explained about preparations to be done for installing Drip Irrigation Plantations. Mr. Nishant R. Gurjer former Chairman of KPA and KPA Committee member shared their experiences in Drip Irrigation installed in their plantations and how to achieve high productivity.

3. Pepper Training Program under MIDH Scheme held on 26th March, 2015:

A half Day Training Program on Pepper under the MIDH Scheme of the Spices Board was held on 26th March, 2015 at Chikmagalur. The Secretary and a few KPA Members had attended the event.

Sri. B.M. Jayaram, Deputy Director, Spices Board, Sakleshpur, spoke informing participants about contribution of Indian Spices to the economy of the nation by way of exports and need to grow pepper as an alternate crop for improving the economic conditions of growers. Dr. K.A. Shaji, Scientist in Charge, Spices Board, Donigal, spoke informing the technical aspects of Cultivating Black Pepper. Dr. Venugopal, Retd. Principal Scientist, Spices Board made a presentation explaining about Growing Pepper, varieties released, cultivation aspects, pests and diseases and its remedies and examples of growers who have achieved high productivity. Suresh Kumar, Asst. Director, Spices Board, Zonal Office, Chikmagalur welcomed and proposed the vote of thanks.

4. Minimum Wage Advisory Board Meeting held on 17th April, 2015:

The Minimum Wage Advisory Board Meeting was held on 17th April, 2015 at the 'Karmika Bhavan' Labour Office at Bangalore. The agenda was for fixing Minimum Wages for various schedule industries (except plantation sector). The Secretary had attended the meeting. The Board discussed agenda relating to fixing of wages for other schedule industries and various other labour issues.

5. Delhi Visit of Chairman and Vice Chairman on 29th and 30th April 2015:

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman had visited Delhi on 29th and 30th April 2015. They had met Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Ms. Nirmala Sitaraman, Union Law Minister Sri. D.V. Sadananda Gowda, Sri. Rajani Ranjan Rashmi, Additional Secretary (Plantations) and submitted Memorandums on various plantation issues, P.F. Matters, etc. They had also met Central PF Commissioner Sri. K.K. Jalan and submitted a Memorandum on various PF issues affecting plantations bringing to his notice the difficulties faced by plantations in implementing various PF matters.

6. Meeting with the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce:

The department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on "Performance of the Plantation Sector" had visited Chikmagalur on 28th May, 2015. The Coffee Board had invited KPA, CPA and the KGF for the meeting.

A meeting with the Standing Committee was held at the Hotel Serai, Chikmagalur. The Chairman and Vice Chairman had attended the meeting and had submitted a Memorandum and brought to the notice of the Committee various issues faced by the plantations. The Memorandum was well received by the Committee. The report of the Committee is awaited.

7. Meeting with the Minister of Energy and Prl. Secretary, Energy Department:

The Vice-Chairman and I had met Sri. D.K. Shiva Kumar, State Energy Minister on 5th June, 2015 and the Vice-Chairman had met Sri. Ravi Kumar, IAS, Principal Secretary, Energy Department, Govt. of Karnataka on 6th June, 2015 at Bangalore and had submitted separate Memorandums on Levy of Electricity Tax on generators used by plantations for Self Consumption of total capacity above 250 KVA and requested them to continue with the exemption of Electricity Tax granted.

8. Visiting of Yara Fertilizers India Ltd., on 9th June, 2015:

The Managing Director of Yaara Fertilizers India Ltd., and his team had visited the KPA Office, Chikmagalur on 9th June, 2015 and had met the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman and discussed various technical aspects of Nutrition Management and Foliage Application in Coffee.

9. KPA Sub-Committee Meetings:

a) A Negotiation Committee Meeting was held with the Trade Unions on 10th March, 2015 at the KPA Office, Chikmagalur regarding revision of salaries and benefits to the Maistries / Supervisors and a settlement was reached. Thereafter, a circular was sent to all members by e-mail and post.

b) A Negotiation Committee Meeting was held on 28th July, 2015 at KPA Office, Chikmagalur with the ESUSI regarding Weather Protection Allowance payable to the Staff category and a settlement was reached fixing the Weather Protection at Rs.1,400 for the years 2014, 2015 and 2016. Thereafter a circular was sent to all Members by e-mail and post informing about the revision.

10. UPASI Meetings:

a) Vice Chairman & I had attended the UPASI Executive Committee and Coffee Committee Meetings and other Meetings on 23rd and 24th March, 2015 at Coonoor.

b) The Secretary had attended the UPASI Sub-Committee Meeting on Environment on 6th March, 2015 and 24th April 2015 at Kochi. UPASI had constituted the sub-committee to list out various environment issues affecting the plantations and find solutions to face them. The sub-committee had discussed and made a list of various environment acts affecting the plantations to take them up for deliberations.

c) The Secretary had attended the UPASI LLC Meeting on 11th April, 2015 at Kochi convened to discuss the Labour Code on Wages Bill - 2015. The sub-committee discussed the same and prepared draft comments to be sent by UPASI to the Labour Ministry.

d) Our Vice-Chairman Mr. Baba P.S. Bedi had attended the UPASI Sub-Committee Meeting on Environment held on 3rd July, 2015. Mr. Sanjay Upadhyay, Environment Advocate, Supreme Court spoke and made a presentation on various environment issues affecting the plantations.

11. Website:

We have uploaded various information on plantations including photographs of various events on the KPA Website. I request all the members to log on the website (<http://www.kpa.org.in>) and browse through the website.

12. Feedback:

Please be free to contact our office for any information which you would like to know and they will provide it to their best extent possible.

Warm Regards,

K. KURIAN
Chairman

14-09-2015