

Brent Crude**\$74.62** 0.46▲

per barrel

Crude Palm Oil**\$540.32** 5.60▼

per tonne

Sugar**₹10.14** 0.10▲

per pound

Rain plays havoc on plantations in TN

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It is not as if the recent rains have played havoc only in Kerala and Kodagu in Karnataka. Plantations situated on the Western Ghats in Tamil Nadu too have been experiencing very heavy rainfall and consequential damage, say planters.

The industry has appealed to the Commodity Boards to sanction a one-time grant-in-aid to affected plantations to enable them to restore normalcy.

According to the Planters' Association of Tamil Nadu (PAT), Valparai area in Coimbatore district has received a total rainfall of 5,240 mm between April and August 21, 2018. "This is expected to far exceed the 1961 levels, (1961-

62 is considered the benchmark year for rainfall comparison) as during the same five month period, parts of Valparai area recorded rainfall of 5242 mm.

"Such unprecedented rainfall has not been seen in the last six decades. There is huge damage in the road network within plantations. Pollachi-Valparai highway has remained totally cut off for over a week due to landslides, and so is the case with the inter-State highway between Valparai and Chalakudi in Kerala, making Valparai an inaccessible island.

There has been a severe drop in green leaf harvest as workers have been unable to perform field operations, which, in turn, has hit their earnings.

The crop harvest in other tea-growing regions such as Nilgiris district, Highways in Theni District and Manjolai in Thirunelveli have also registered a steep drop.

Rubber latex production hit

Production of rubber latex in rubber plantations in Kanyakumari district also remains affected because of continuous rains. The coffee crop in parts of the State has begun to witness leaf-rot disease due to prolonged wet weather, note PAT sources.

The association has appealed to the State government to provide financial aid to the plantation managements to restore the badly damaged estate roads in the interest of people within the plantation,