

UPASI seeks government support

The United Planters' Association of Southern India (UPASI) has said the south Indian plantation industry in India is facing challenging times owing to low prices and high cost of production, while seeking support from the Centre. The association said that prices of tea, coffee and natural rubber are now fixed below the cost of production. While the price of paddy, maize, wheat, *arhar*, *moong* and *urad* rose 4.84-8.72 times since 1995, that of tea, coffee and rubber have increased by only 1.58-2.47 times. Wages, (which constitute more than 50 per cent of the cost of plantation commodities), of tea, coffee and rubber workers has increased by 7.69 times, 9.72 times and 8.2 times respectively, the association added.