

The Times of India

Title : Sugar millers for parity with price fixed by central govt

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Location :

Lucknow:

Article Date : 10/26/2014

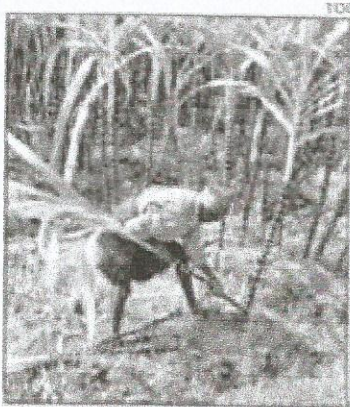
Sugar millers of UP are not relenting and have a fresh demand before they begin crushing sugarcane next month. They now demand Fair and Remunerative Price fixed by Centre--of Rs 220 per quintal--for the first installment to be paid out to cane growers. The remaining part of the State Advisory Price (SAP) fixed by state government may be adjusted as per the price of sugar.

Fresh stance of the millers may cause further embarrassment to the Akhilesh Yadav government which has been considering allowance of subsidy to millers to convince them to start crushing for 2014-15.

A senior UP Sugar Mills Association (UPSMA) member confirmed that the demand would be put forth during the meeting of the high level committee headed by UP chief secretary Alok Ranjan on October 28. The committee will meet to decide on the cane price fixation for the year 2014-15.

UPSMA secretary , Deepak Guptara said there is positive indication from the state government for 2013-14. "But the scenario for 2014-15 is not clear," he said, while speaking to TOI. Guptara, however, confirmed that the demand for granting farmers the rate of FRP fixed by the Centre was surely on the way to get fulfilled. "The rest may be determined as per the prices of sugar," he said. Guptara said Centre had already increased the FRP from Rs 210 to Rs 220. "That is what we want the state government to consider when they decide on the SAP ," he said.

The demand gains importance in the light of the Supreme Court order for cane growers to be given priority over claims of the secured creditors, including banks, while cane dues are paid for 2013-14. The millers have yet to clear around Rs 3,000 crore due to the farmers. This is also seen as a stance to pressurise the government not to increase the SAP significantly in the new crushing season. With the election season now over, millers are finding it the right time to bully the state government. Not surprisingly , though the cane crushing season started in October, the state government has yet to fix the SAP.



NOT SO SWEET