

MANGALURU

## Dairy farmers oppose proposed RCEP



### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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Office-bearers of Dakshina Kannada Cooperative Milk Producers Union Limited (DKMUL) and several milk producing farmers staged a protest here recently against the inclusion of dairy in the Union government's proposed Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) with Australia, New Zealand, and other nations.

DKMUL has joined the Karnataka Milk Federation and other milk cooperatives in opposing the move of the Union government.

Other countries are prevented from bringing their products as there is an import duty of about 20 % on dairy products.

In the proposed RCEP, Mr. Hegde said, the Union government intends to include dairy as among the products for free trade between India and other countries.

Such a step will hit farmers hard as they are ill-equipped to compete with corporate dairy farming of other countries. It will also spell doom for DKMUL and other milk cooperatives, he said.

Haddur Rajeeva Shetty, director of DKMUL, said that the Centre should keep the interests of farmers in mind and keep dairy out of the proposed RCEP.

Following the protest, a delegation of DKMUL office-bearers and farmers representatives submitted a memorandum to Deputy Commissioner Sindhu B. Rupesh.

Earlier, they took out a procession from A.B. Shetty Circle to the office of the Deputy Commissioner.