

FEDERATION NEWS

Shri K. K. Ravindran, Managing Director, NAFCARD visited Bangalore on 17th July, 2023 for attending meeting in Karnataka SCARDB and National Institute of Rural Banking (NIRB)



Shri K.K. Ravindran, Managing Director (NAFCARD) with Shri B.C. Sateesh, Managing Director & Shri Kumar, Secretary of Karnataka SCARDB.



With Shri Dileep Sanghani, President, NCUI and Chairman IFFCO, Shri K. Sivadasan Nair, Vice President, NCUI, Shri P.V. Prabhu, Ex- CEO of NAFCARD and others at NIRB, Bangalore.

Changes in Banks / New Appointments

- 1) Shri Shashi Ranjan Kumar Rao, Additional RCS appointed as Managing Director of the Uttar Pradesh Sahakari Gram Vikas Bank Ltd.
- 2) Smt A.K. Sivamalar, Additional RCS appointed as Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu Coop. State Agriculture & Rural Dev. Bank Ltd.

- 3) Shri B.C. Sateesh, Additional RCS appointed as Managing Director of the Karnataka State Coop. Agri. & Rural Dev. Bank Ltd.
- 4) Shri C. Sarvanane, Additional RCS appointed as Managing Director of the Pondicherry Cooperative Central Land Development Bank Ltd.
- 5) Shri Kumar, Joint RCS appointed as Secretary of Karnataka State Coop. Agri. & Rural Dev. Bank Ltd.

COOPERATIVE NEWS



The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the 17th Indian Cooperative Congress on 1st July 2023 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi coinciding with the International Day of Cooperatives. Shri Modi also launched E-Portals of e-Commerce website for Cooperative Marketing, and Cooperative Extension and Advisory Services Portal. NCUI organised the 17th Indian

Cooperative Congress on the theme 'Amrit Kaal – Prosperity through cooperation'.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister congratulated the delegates on the occasion and said that the country is working towards the goal of a 'Viksit and Atmanirbhar Bharat'. He reiterated the need for 'Sabka Prayas' (everyone's effort) in achieving these goals where



the spirit of cooperation sends the message of everyone's effort. The Prime Minister noted the contributions of the dairy cooperative in making India the world's leading milk producer and the role of cooperatives in making India one of the top sugar-producing countries in the world. He underlined that cooperatives have become a huge support system for small farmers in many parts of the country. The Prime Minister mentioned that the contribution of women in the dairy sector is approximately 60 percent. The government decided to strengthen the cooperative sector to achieve the goals of a Viksit Bharat. He informed that it was the first time that a separate ministry was formed and a budget was allocated for cooperatives, and as a result, the cooperatives are being

NABARD Foundation Day 2023:



The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) celebrated its 42nd Foundation Day on July 12, 2023. Shri Amit Shah, Hon'ble Union Minister for Home & Co-operation, Government of India was the Chief guest of the NABARD's 42nd Foundation Day held at, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on 12th July 2023. Dr. Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad, Hon'ble Minister of State for Finance, was the guest of honour.

The day was marked by a series of events across the country, including a webinar on the theme of "NABARD: 42 Years of Rural Transformation."

The webinar was addressed by the Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, who highlighted the important role that NABARD has played in the development of rural India. He said that NABARD has helped to increase agricultural production, improve rural infrastructure, and promote financial inclusion in rural areas.

The webinar also featured presentations by senior officials from NABARD, who discussed the bank's various initiatives in the areas of agriculture, rural development, and financial inclusion.

Shah: Farmer cooperatives will boost economy, jobs

Addressing the National Mega Conclave on Farmer Producer Organisations (FPO) in the cooperative sector, Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah said the

presented with a platform exactly like the corporate sector. The Govt. has taken several measures to strengthen cooperative societies including reduction in tax rates. Measures have also been taken to strengthen cooperative banks.

Underlining that the importance of PACS, Prime Minister said that PACS will become a model for transparency, and informed that the computerization of more than 60,000 PACS has already taken place. He stressed that cooperatives should make full use of the technology and mentioned that the nation will hugely benefit from the acceptance of core banking and digital transactions by cooperative societies.



three sectors of agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries together make up 18% of India's GDP and said that these three sectors are the backbone of the country's economy and strengthening them will strengthen the country's economy. Unlike manufacturing, if these three sectors are strengthened through cooperatives, then employment opportunities will increase along with the GDP. On the occasion, Shah also released an action plan for the formation of 1,100 new FPOs by Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS). The event was attended by Union Minister for Agriculture Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of State for Cooperation B L Verma, Cooperation Secretary Gyanesh Kumar, Agriculture Secretary Manoj Ahuja and other officials. Shah said a new hybrid model should be designed so that a complete system for information exchange, profit sharing and marketing based on the arrangement between PACS and FPOs can be put in place.

IFFCO to procure 2,500 agri-drones for spraying nano fertilisers

To promote usage of nano urea and di-ammonium phosphate (DAP), leading fertiliser cooperative IFFCO announced procurement of 2500 drones to spray nano soil nutrients. It has already placed an order for about 1,700 drones to be delivered by March 31, 2024. Drones manufacturers like Garuda Aerospace, Paras Aerospace and IoTechWorld Avigation have confirmed to have



received a major chunk of the orders from the cooperative. The cooperative also stated that it would train 5000 rural entrepreneurs for the purpose. Usages of drones results in optimum usage of social nutrients. The cooperative has signed an agreement for procurement of drones for spraying nano fertiliser in the field. The cooperative also announced procurement of 2,500 electric three wheelers to carry drones to farmers' fields. IFFCO had identified the Drone Federation of India after an evaluation for supply of these drones. The drones would be given free of cost to rural entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurs would be given training and guidance to handle the drones, by IFFCO. One drone would be able to cover 20 acres of land per day spraying nano fertilisers and other water-soluble fertilisers. Last year, the agriculture ministry had released standard operating procedures (SPOs) for the use of drones in pesticide and nutrient application. To make drone technology affordable to farmers as well as to other service providers, under the sub-mission on agricultural mechanisation, provides subsidies in the range of 40-100% for the cost of drones.

Amit Shah launches portal to refund Sahara Coops Depositors

Union Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on 18.7.23 launched 'CRCS-Sahara Refund Portal', aimed at refunding the money of millions of depositors in four cooperative societies of Sahara Group in about 45 days. Terming this a historic moment, he said this is the first

time when depositors are getting refunds in a case where multiple government agencies are involved and each one has done a seizure. Shah assured the depositors that no one can stop their money now and that they will get the refund in 45 days after registering on the portal. On March 29, the government had said money will be returned to 10 crore investors of the four cooperative societies within nine months. The announcement followed a Supreme Court order directing transfer of ₹5,000 crore from Sahara-Sebi refund account to the Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies (CRCS). Shah said, depositors would get up to ₹10,000 refund and subsequently the amount would be enhanced for those who have invested higher amounts. The corpus of ₹5,000 crore would be able to take care of the needs of 1.7 crore depositors. About 2.5 crore people have deposits of up to ₹30,000 in the four cooperative societies namely Sahara Credit Cooperative Society Ltd, Saharayan Universal Multipurpose Society Ltd, Humara India Credit Cooperative Society Ltd and Stars Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd. "Once the ₹5,000 crore is utilised, we will approach the Supreme Court and request them to release more money so that the total refund of other depositors with higher amounts are processed," Shah said. The portal is developed by a subsidiary of IFCI, for submission of legitimate claims by the depositors of these cooperative societies. Shah said there are two important requirements: Aadhaar registration with mobile and Aadhaar-linking with the bank account where refund is to be deposited.

AGRICULTURE NEWS

500 farmers sensitised to produce pesticide residue free basmati

Around 500 farmers took part in a workshop aimed to produce pesticide residue free basmati to enhance the export of the aromatic rice. The event was organized by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under the ministry of commerce in coordination with All India Rice Exporter Association (AIREA) at Kotkapura in Faridkot district. Dr Ritesh Sharma, principal scientist, APEDA, said, "India earns maximum foreign revenue by export of rice and the quality of the basmati produced in Kotkapura is excellent. We earned ₹38,542 crore by the export of Basmati during 2022-23 in 150 countries. We have very good demand from the globe, but due to excessive use of pesticides, the residue defected in basmati consignment affect the export. We are providing training to the farmers to produce pesticide residue free basmati with the support of the state governments." Dr Brajendra, Principal Scientist from Indian Institute of Rice Research, Hyderabad, spoke about the soil health. He has demonstrated a rapid soil testing kit developed by him and trained the farmers for soil testing in Kotkapura. Vinod Kaul, executive director, AIREA, explained about the

export scenario and challenges in basmati export. He stressed upon using the right dose, right time and right pesticide to be sprayed only when it's recommended and approved by the scientists.

Retail urea price to remain unchanged till FY25-end

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved continuation of the extant urea subsidy scheme up to the end of the financial year 2024-25. For the period between FY23-FY25, the scheme will have an estimated budgetary cost of ₹3.68 trillion. The scheme allows retail prices of the key soil nutrient to farmers to be kept at 242 per bag of 45 kg, even as the current cost of production is around 2,200/bag. Since March, 2018, the retail urea price has remained at the current level. The Centre's annual fertiliser subsidy is likely to be contained below the budget estimate (BE) of ₹1.75 trillion because of decline in global prices of the relevant commodities, including natural gas and urea. Fertiliser subsidy in FY23 stood at an all-time high of 2.54 trillion, owing to the spike in global commodity prices. It was for the third year in a row, fertiliser on soil nutrients had crossed 1 trillion. In terms of volume, imports account for a third of domestic soil nutrients consumption of around 65 million tonnes annually. The cabinet also approved the launch of sulphur



coated urea (urea gold) which would be more economical compared to existing neem coated urea.

Newer pests and diseases hit vegetable crops

Newer plant viruses resistant to most pesticides are one of the reasons for the rising prices of daily essentials like tomatoes, ginger and tur dal. While tomato growers have been struggling to control new viruses for about a decade now, production of ginger, capsicum, chillies, papaya and this year tur dal have also been affected due to newer pests and diseases. When tomato prices crashed, farmers reduced spraying on the crops to cut losses. This led to increased pests. In high input cost crops like tomatoes and capsicum, farmers shift to other crops when they incur losses due to price crash or plant diseases. The prices of hybrid tomato seeds of big companies are upwards of ₹70,000/kg. Pest and disease resistant varieties of vegetable crops need to be developed. The production cost is high as the seeds and pesticides are expensive. Vegetable crops need more labour, while the prices can fall anytime, causing huge losses.

Kashmiri Saffron - a flavour worth a fortune

Kashmir saffron's prices have risen to ₹3.25 lakh (\$4387) per kg, five times the value of silver, after receiving the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, which verifies the spice's origin. The move has helped Kashmiri saffron compete with Iranian competition, with US, Canadian, and European buyers picking up saffron from Kashmir. A 10 gm packet of saffron costs as much as 47 gm of silver - about ₹3,250. Saffron prices in the Kashmir valley have skyrocketed to ₹3.25 lakh per kg, from ₹2 lakh per kg last year, after the precious crop from the Valley got the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. A GI tag is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation due to that origin. The tag has helped the domestic spice fight off competition in global markets from Iranian saffron, as the Kashmiri crop is clearly seen as superior. The golden crop, which brings colour, flavour and aroma to biryani and many other dishes, is scripting a revival. Its per-hectare production has increased manifold, bringing cheer to growers who had been seeing a constant decline. Kashmir produces 18 tonnes of saffron annually. The agriculture director said the ultimate goal is to take saffron production to 25-27 tonnes in the years to come. After introduction of the National Saffron Mission to revive the crop, production started going up from 1.8 kg gradually, and has now reached close to 5 kg per hectare.

India sows more millets and less rice this kharif season

Kharif sowing is around 9% lower than last year, with the most effect on rice and pulses. Millets like sorghum and bajra however have seen increased sowing. With heavy showers in July, India, which was seeing a 30% deficit in rainfall in mid-June, is now at 2% excess rainfall reading. However, the June deficit has had an effect on kharif

acreage sowing which is around 9% lower than last year. The sowing seen in rice and pulses saw the weakest progress, shrinking by almost a quarter. Within pulses, lower acreage of Arhar (Pigeon pea) and Urad (Black lentil) was noted for the same period. Even the sown area of oilseeds, cotton, jute and mesta have fallen sharply. Uneven distribution of rainfall is the reason for the blip in sowing. This could be due to weak rainfall progress in major rice and tur producing states. As the majority of the season's sowing takes place in July, rainfall progress during the month would be crucial. Eastern belt states like Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and in Central (Maharashtra) and Southern region of Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala have received deficient rainfall. Then there is the El Nino effect which might impact the entire monsoon season. Signalling a bountiful year for millets, sowing seen in bajra or pearl millet was much more than last year. Jowar or sorghum also saw higher sowing, along with coarse cereals and a marginal growth in sugarcane. The year of 2023 has been declared the year of millets by United Nations, and apart from the Union Budget push, most state governments like Chattisgarh and Odisha are providing incentives to farmers as a part of their millet missions.

New rice varieties get nod

The country's first herbicide-tolerant rice varieties will be available for large-scale commercial cultivation next year after the agriculture ministry accorded approval to these. The new varieties of basmati rice have been developed by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), affiliated to the Indian Council for Agricultural Research. Two rice varieties—Pusa basmati (PB) 1979 and PB 1985—can be grown using direct seeding of rice (DSR) method, which significantly reduces water and labour use compared with traditional transplantation methods.

Centre to buy tomatoes from South and West to sell in northern cities

After tomato prices rocketed to ₹200 per kg in some cities, the Centre decided to use its agencies to procure stocks from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra and sell them at a discount in the areas where prices remained high. Rains and floods in Himachal Pradesh have caused transportation disruptions, leading the prices to rise further in northern cities. Bathinda in Punjab recorded the highest price — ₹203 for a kilo of tomatoes — in the country on July 12. The national average price of the day was ₹111.71. Last year, on the same date, the price was ₹40.83. The Department of Consumer Affairs directed the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) and the National Cooperative Consumers Federation (NCCF) to immediately procure tomatoes from markets in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra for distribution in major consumption centres where retail prices have recorded the biggest increase in the last one month. The stocks of tomato will



be distributed through retail outlets at discounted prices to the consumers in Delhi-NCR as per the reports.

Likely damage to sown crops stokes food inflation worries

The intense rainfall spell over Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana is expected to decrease significantly in the coming days, as the rains have caused significant damage to the already sown kharif crops in the north-western states. The damage to the moong, urad, groundnut and soybean crops could range 10-15%, leading to concerns about a significant increase in prices of these commodities. But the rains could help the paddy crop in Punjab and Haryana. The excessive rainfall has caused damage to kharif crops such as cotton, pulses and oilseeds in the northern states. In the northwest, while Rajasthan has received nearly 60% more rains than the long period average till July 10, Gujarat received 15% more, according to the IMD. With Cyclone Biparjoy bringing rains to Gujarat and Rajasthan in early June, sowing for the kharif season had started early. The recent heavy rainfall could have damaged the plants which were in the germination stage. The actual damage can only be assessed after the rains subside and farmers can visit their field to take a look at their crops. While Punjab and Haryana have also witnessed excessive rainfall in the last few days falling in IMD's category of "large excess", it could help the paddy crop which requires standing water. The incessant rains in several northern states have led the IMD to issue advisory for farmers in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. It has asked farmers to postpone transplanting of rice in Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh & Uttarakhand. It has also requested farmers to postpone sowing of maize, kharif pulses, soyabean and vegetables in Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand. In its latest forecast, the IMD has predicted widespread rainfall to continue over Gujarat, and heavy to very heavy rainfall in Rajasthan. It has also predicted extremely heavy rainfall activity over Northeast India and adjoining East India in the coming weeks. Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Sub-Himalayan Sikkim and West Bengal are expected to get extremely heavy rainfall till July 12. It has issued an orange alert for parts of Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim till July 12.

Cotton sowing area goes past 25 lakh hectares in Gujarat

Even as cotton prices remain depressed comparatively and farmers are stuck with sizable amounts of produce from the previous season, cultivators have been sowing this fibre crop with much enthusiasm this Kharif season. As per the latest government data, farmers have already completed sowing cotton in 25.39 lakh hectare (lh) of land, which is 8% higher than the previous three years' average area. As of July 17, cotton sowing was reported in 25.29 lh, which is fractionally lower than the previous year's total sowing area of 25.54 lh. The July 17 figure is substantially

higher when compared to the 23.11 lh area of cotton sowing reported during the corresponding period of 2022. With at least two more reporting weeks to go, the cotton acreage is likely to surpass the last year's mark of 25.54 lh. This marks the second year running when cotton acreage has remained 25 lh or above. The higher-than-average acreage comes on the back of better yields 631.90 kg per hectare in 2022-23 season even though prices of this natural fibre crop slid from around ₹9,500 per quintals in last November-December to around ₹7,000 per quintal in April-May. At the beginning of the 2023 Kharif sowing season in June, the prices were around ₹7,000 per quintal, significantly lower as compared to ₹11,000 levels seen in 2021-22 marketing season, and many farmers having held back their cotton harvest of 2022-23. The jump in cotton acreage is apparently coming at the cost of groundnut with farmers complaining that groundnut is a labour intensive crop and labour costs are increasing every year. Cotton is the single largest crop of Gujarat, followed by groundnut. The state had reported cotton sowing in a record 30.03 lh in 2011-12. But since then, the acreage has fluctuated a great deal due to the BT hybrid cotton variety also becoming susceptible to attacks by pink bollworm and market prices. Soyabean is the other crop, which has recorded a significant rise in acreage.

Need more funds for farm mechanisation: Report

The government must increase investment in research and development in farm mechanisation especially for the small and marginal farmers as it plays a critical role in increasing agricultural production and productivity, a parliamentary panel has stated in its report. The standing committee on agriculture, animal husbandry and food processing (2022-23) on 'research and development in farm mechanisation for small and marginal farmers in the country' has noted that between FY20 and FY23, the agriculture ministry has allocated 30% less fund for research and development to farm mechanisation scheme. The agriculture department should impress upon the finance ministry about the need of the hour for investing money in R and D for farm mechanisation as it plays a key role in improving agricultural production and productivity. There has been continuous reduction in funds allocated for the R&D in farm mechanisation scheme from ₹217 crore in 2019-20 to ₹179 crore in FY23. Currently, the overall agricultural mechanisation level in the country, according to the panel, is around 47% which is lower than that of other developing countries such as China (59.5%) and Brazil (75%). The panel has urged the agriculture ministry to strive for achieving 75% in farm mechanisation from the present level of 47% in a much shorter period than 25 years earlier. The panel has noted that contribution of agricultural mechanisation in India leads to saving in seed. Currently, about 86% of the total land holdings are in small and marginal size groups, which need special efforts for its mechanisation. Under agricultural mechanisation scheme, the agriculture



ministry is providing a subsidy of around 40-50% of the cost of the equipment to small and marginal farmers for the purchase of tractors, power tillers, combine harvesters, rotavators, threshers and rice transplanters. The panel has stated that the government is supporting farmers by providing subsidies to procure machinery to improve farm input and farm power availability. The agriculture ministry had allocated ₹5,490 crore during 2014-15 to 2022-23 for this purpose. The panel report has stated that the tractors, power tillers, combine harvesters, rotavators, threshers and rice transplanters are some of the equipments for which a surge in demand has been witnessed over the past few years. It urged the agriculture ministry to conduct a systematic study to know the mechanisation level in the country in objective terms.

Centre bans exports of non-basmati rice to check local prices

The Centre has prohibited the export of non-basmati rice

to curb price rise in the domestic market. Retail prices of non-basmati rice have increased 3% in the past one month and 11.5% in the past year despite the imposition of 20% export duty since September 2022 to lower prices as well ensure availability in the domestic market. The export of this variety increased from 33.66 LMT (lakh metric tonnes) during September-March 2021-22 period to 42.12 LMT in September-March 2022-23 even after imposition of 20% export duty. In the current FY 2023-24 (April-June), about 15.54 LMT of this variety of rice was exported against only 11.55 LMT during FY 2022-23 (April-June), i.e. an increase by 35%. The sharp increase in exports can be ascribed to factors such as high international prices due to the geopolitical scenario, El Nino sentiments and extreme climatic conditions in other rice producing countries. Non-basmati white rice constitutes about 25% of total rice exported from the country. However, there is no change in export policy of non-basmati rice (parboiled rice) and basmati rice, which forms the bulk of rice exports.

NEWS & NOTES

Amit Shah asks Nabard to fix financing targets for farm sector for next 25 years

Union Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on 12.7.23 asked Nabard to fix targets for financing agriculture sector and rural development for the next 25 years when India will complete 100 years of Independence as he revealed how a letter written by a woman rural dairy farmer led to the dawning of the idea of 'Cooperation Among Cooperatives', being toyed with by the government. Addressing the 42nd Foundation Day of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard), the minister said, "Today district cooperative banks have started issuing Rupay Kisan Credit Cards to farmers. This all began with a letter written by a poor rural woman in the Banaskantha district. She wrote to me that they sell milk to dairies for which they get paid every Saturday. But if they need money prior to that they have to get loans through credit cards issued by private banks at the interest rate of 30%. This made us rethink everything from the beginning which has led us to the new initiative called 'Cooperation Among Cooperatives'. The initiative has not been declared till now. Under this new scheme, we have identified two districts Banaskantha and Panchmahal in Gujarat in which district cooperative banks will issue credit cards to the members of cooperative societies. And all the cooperative societies have been designated as Bank Mitras. This will help the members avail loans at 2% to 3% interest rates. As a result, new 5 lakh new savings accounts have been opened. To serve them 2,038 micro-ATMs will be opened. There has been an increase of ₹2,000 crore in low-cost deposits in the two district cooperative banks. This scheme will ensure that the cooperative sectors money will remain with the sector itself and no one will have to spend money

for this sector. We cannot imagine an India without Nabard where 65% population resides in rural areas. In the last three decades, the Nabard has served as the spine of the nation's rural economy, infrastructure, agriculture, cooperative organisations and self-help groups. Today the rural areas of India too are being developed along with the urban ones. Consequently, our villages are becoming self-reliant and our agriculture sector creating space for itself in the global arena. The Nabard plays a pivotal role in establishing self-help groups with dignity." He also added that till now ₹8 lakh crore has been infused by the Nabard in the rural economy as refinance for capital formation. To strengthen the agriculture economy the Nabard has infused ₹12 lakh crore in the rural economy. This means in the last 42 years the Nabard has refinanced ₹20 lakh crore with a 14% rate of growth rate. He also maintained that in the year 1982 agricultural loans as short-term finance stood at ₹896 crore which has now been increased to ₹1.58 lakh crore. Long-term loans stood at only ₹2,300 crore in 1982. But Nabard has increased it to ₹1 lakh crore. He also said that to overhaul India's cooperative system 63,000 PACS are being computerised. Under this new scheme banking, loan and audit will be done online. "We have changed the bye-laws allowing them to do many more jobs. Now they will be able to get involved in the world's largest storage scheme apart from functioning as CSCs, opening fertiliser shops, Janaushadhi Kendras, petrol pumps etc," he added.

All panchayats to be declared UPI-enabled on August 15 : Centre

All panchayats across the country will mandatorily use digital payments for development work and revenue collection this Independence Day onwards, and be



declared UPI-enabled, a letter issued by the Panchayati Raj Ministry said. According to the Ministry, almost 98% of the panchayats had already started using UPI-based payments. Panchayats have also been asked to choose a single vendor which covers the whole area so as to allow economies of scale. It has also been recommended to create a centralised dashboard for monitoring transactions in real time.

Niti Aayog pitches for reforms, more private sector role in agri sector

NITI Aayog has called for a paradigm shift in approach towards agriculture with focus on liberalization of the sector and changes in the old regulations governing it to ensure significant and sustained increase in farmers' income. "Advancement in science-led technology, an enhanced role for the private sector in both pre and post-harvest phases, liberalised output markets, an active land lease market, and emphasis on efficiency will equip agriculture to address the challenges of the twenty-first century and contribute towards the goal of Viksit Bharat," NITI Aayog member Ramesh Chand said in his working paper, co-authored with Jaspal Singh, a consultant at the Aayog. Elaborating on the need to liberalise the sectors, the paper has proposed providing a facilitating regulatory environment and responsible public and private investments in and for agriculture. This will enable introduction and promotion of knowledge and skill intensive practices within agriculture, private and corporate sector investments in agriculture, new

institutions of producers, integrated food system-based mechanisms, and new types of linkages between producers and end users, which in turn will lead to modernisation of the sector. Identifying lack of efficiency as a bottleneck in the growth of the sector, the paper recommends a shift in emphasis from growth to efficient growth which means a cost effective increase in production. This requires deployment of state-of-the-art technology in agriculture, smart farming and maximising the value of main and by-products. Further, it proposes to introduce a system of competition among states to improve "ease of doing farming and farm business". According to the paper, agriculture will play a key role in India in achieving the goal of Viksit Bharat, inclusive development, green growth and gainful employment during Amrit Kaal. In addition, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 cannot be achieved without paying attention to agriculture, as 11 out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are directly linked to agriculture. Cautioning that the instrument of minimum support price (MSP) should not cause distortions in market signals, the paper suggests that India should use a combination of two instruments, namely procurement and price deficiency payment, to pay MSP to farmers. Public procurement should be linked to the quantity needed for the public distribution system, price stability and strategic stocks. Other than this, MSP in mandated crops should be implemented through price deficiency payment.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Global farmers may grow Tur Dal to meet Indian demand

Farmers in Australia and Brazil are set to experiment with growing arhar (pigeon peas) for consumers in India, where demand for the popular yellow lentil the main ingredient of 'dal tadka' and 'sambhar' has been outpacing domestic production for some years now. At a recent meeting between Australian Agriculture Minister Murray Watt, top officials of India's food ministry and representatives of the Indian Pulses and Grains Association (IPGA), it was decided that IPGA will facilitate pigeon pea farming in Queensland with the help of the Australian trade body Pulse Australia. Suggestions to the Australian industry were given by Indian counterpart to grow pigeon peas for

India, as India no longer imports chickpeas from Australia - once the top supplier of chickpeas to India. Australia had earlier done trial production in 2019 and the quality was good. However, it could not go ahead as the prices in India were not remunerative for them. Now they have again started work to grow pigeon pea for the Indian market. For the initiative to succeed, the Australian counterparts may like to get assured orders from the Indian government. However, a deficit of about 17 lakh tonnes in Indian demand and supply is itself an assurance for any seller of pigeon peas. Earlier this year, IPGA had signed an agreement with Brazil to help farmers there cultivate arhar, which is a new crop for the country.

MOC - SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS

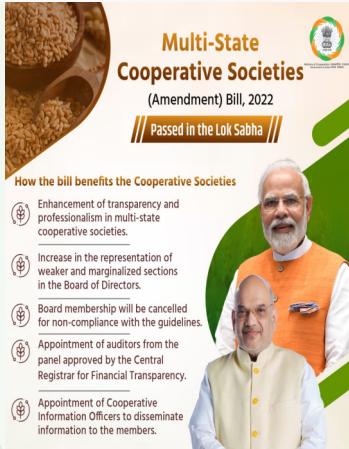


Launch of CRCS - Sahara Refund Portal on 18.7.23 at New Delhi





Union Minister of Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah inaugurated a National General Conference on launching services of Common Services Centre (CSC) by Primary Agricultural Loan Committees (PACS) in New Delhi on 21.7.23.



NEWS FROM MEMBER BANKS

SCARDBs and PCARDBs set up live screening at their respective HO and branches to watch PM's address on the occasion of 17th Indian Cooperative Congress held in New Delhi on 1st July 2023.

JAMMU & KASHMIR SCARDB



HIMACHAL PRADESH SCARDB



KARNATAKA SCARDB



GUJARAT SCARDB



Printed, Published & Owned by : National Co-operative Agriculture and Rural Development Banks' Federation Ltd., 701, BSEL TECH PARK, 7th Floor, A-Wing, Opp. Railway Station, Vashi, Navi Mumbai - 400 703. • Ph. (022) 27814114, 27814226, E-mail : nafcard.org@gmail.com, Website : www.nafcard.org