

Century old LTCCS consisting of SCARDBs and PCARDBs is one of the earliest credit institutions in India. However, it looks rather strange that SCARDBs are yet to be recognized as Credit Institutions by Reserve Bank of India under the provisions of Credit Information Companies (Regulation) Act 2005. Credit Information Companies (CIC) are authorized to collect, maintain and analyse credit information of individuals and businesses and calculate their credit scores, which are typically in the range of 300 to 900 with a score above 750 considered ideal for securing a loan from any bank or financial institution on favourable terms. When lending agencies increasingly rely on credit score for advancing loans and deciding its terms including interest rates, it is important that individuals and businesses maintain a clean credit history without delay or default in repaying loans already taken. Banks therefore, consider high credit score of the borrower as a guarantee for timely repayment of loan under normal circumstances. However, when the borrower had his earlier loans from an institution which is not a member of any CIC, his credit score given by CICs do not reflect his credit history. Since SCARDBs are not recognized as Credit Institutions by RBI, they cannot become members of CICs. Consequently even wilful defaulters of SCARDBs can secure high credit scores which is totally misleading. This is not a small issue considering the huge membership of SCARDBs exceeding 1 crore households. Ideally, all Credit/lending institutions should be members of CICs to make the credit scores given by CICs reliable and useful to credit institutions to manage credit risk.

It is in this context that the study on 'Reforms, Restructuring and Innovations in ARDBs' undertaken by the Ministry of Cooperation recently through NABARD Consultancy Services (NABCONS), recommended RBI to permit SCARDBs to become members of CICs, which apart from making the credit scores of CICs more reliable for other banks, will also help ARDBs to improve recovery of loans. However, RBI has not responded favourably to the request of the Federation to permit SCARDBs to become members of CICs under Section 2(f) (viii) of Credit Information Companies (Regulation) Act 2005. RBI has informed that "it is not considered feasible to allow SCARDBs to become CICs under IC Regulation Act at this point of time." RBI has not mentioned any reason, why SCARDBs which are engaged only in lending and credit activities cannot be allowed membership in Credit Information Companies. We request RBI to reconsider its decision since membership of SCARDBs in the CICs will strengthen the credit information system and make credit scores more realistic and reliable for other lenders. More importantly this will avoid the present situation of wilful defaulters in LTCCS getting high credit scores from CICs and loans from other credit institutions at favourable terms while continuing to be a chronic defaulter with the SCARDB.

KK Ravindran

Managing Director

Co-ops only option for employing everyone: Shri Amit Shah at Manthan Meeting



In a major effort to strengthen India's cooperative ecosystem, Union Home & Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah

chaired the "Manthan Baithak" on 30.06.2025 in New Delhi. The high-level meeting, attended by Cooperation Ministers and senior officials from all States and Union Territories, marked the beginning of celebrations for the International Year of Cooperatives 2025 and focused on shaping the next two decades of cooperative development in India. He said that the purpose of this reflection and brainstorming can only be fulfilled if all 140 crore people of the country get employment and live their lives with hard work, and to make this successful, GOI has taken 60 initiatives. He outlined the govt's ambitious vision to ensure the presence of cooperative institutions in every village within the next five years. He emphasized the critical role of cooperation in uplifting rural India and empowering over 60 crore people who now aspire to become entrepreneurs after a decade of access to basic facilities like housing, electricity, healthcare, and clean water. "Cooperation is the only option to ensure

employment & economic participation for all 140 cr. Indians," he said. The Minister highlighted key reforms initiated by the govt in the cooperative sector, including the modernization of laws, expansion of activities, and transparent recruitment practices. He also stressed the importance of the National Cooperative Database, a tool to identify gaps and plan expansion, stating it will guide efforts to establish cooperatives in underserved villages. The govt established Tribhuvan Sahkari University (TSU) to bring consistency and professionalism to cooperative training. He urged states to affiliate at least one training institution with TSU and manage all cooperative





education through it. One of the key announcements was the forthcoming National Cooperative Policy 2025–2045, which will guide the movement toward India's centenary of independence. The policy will be adapted by each state based on its unique socio-economic context, with a deadline of 31.01.2026, for finalization. A Model Cooperative Policy Act is also on the anvil to bring uniformity, discipline, and innovation across the sector. The Baithak also reviewed progress on major national goals, including the creation of two lakh Multi-Purpose Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (M-PACS), boosting dairy and fisheries cooperatives, and implementing the world's largest grain storage plan through cooperatives. The importance of natural farming was underlined, with a call for closer cooperation between State Agriculture and Cooperation departments. Participants reviewed digital reforms such as the computerization of PACS and RCS offices and the integration of cooperative data systems. Financial sector



reforms were discussed, including improved oversight of Urban Cooperative Banks, recruitment

transparency, and the launch of umbrella organizations to support them. The role of new national-level cooperative entities - NCEL, NCOL and BBSSL in driving exports, organic farming and seed distribution was also highlighted. The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of the Centre and State's collective resolve to transform the cooperative sector into a key pillar of India's inclusive, employment-driven and sustainable economic growth. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

International Day of Cooperatives

- The International Day of Cooperatives is celebrated every year on the first Saturday of July.
- The aim of CoopsDay is to raise awareness about cooperatives.
- It promotes the values of international solidarity, economic efficiency, equality, and world peace.
- Through CoopsDay, local, national, and global policy makers, civil society organizations, and the general public get an opportunity to understand the contribution of cooperatives.
- This day highlights cooperative efforts towards a just and sustainable future.



Tribhuvan Sahkari University Board formed; Top Co-operators included

The MOC has constituted the first Governing Board of the newly established Tribhuvan Sahkari University in Anand, Gujarat. The Governing Board comprises a balanced mix of ex-officio members and nominated representatives drawn from central ministries, cooperative institutions, and state govt. This initiative marks a significant step towards institutionalizing cooperative education and fostering leadership rooted in cooperative values and economic inclusivity. The Board, constituted under sub-section (2) of Section 21 of the Tribhuvan Sahkari University Act, 2025, will be effective from 27.05.2025. Among the ex-officio members, there are key figures such as the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Secretaries from the MOC,



Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Food Processing Industries, and Fisheries. Also included are the Managing Director of the NCDC, Chairpersons of the NDB and NABARD along with senior officials from the RBI and other allied bodies. The Finance Officer and Registrar of the University are also members, with the Registrar designated as the Member-Secretary. In addition to the ex-officio members, several nominated members will serve on a rotation basis, bringing in regional and sector-specific expertise. These include Principal Secretaries or Secretaries from the Cooperation Departments of Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Kerala and Gujarat. Among the most noteworthy appointments from grassroots cooperative leadership are NCUI President Shri Dileep Sanghani and RBI Central Board Director and Sahakar Bharati founding member Shri Satish Marathe, two eminent figures whose contributions have been pivotal in shaping cooperative policies at the national level. Chairpersons of major cooperatives like IFFCO, KRIBHCO, NAFED, and NCCF, will serve as rotational members. This rotating model is intended to provide a dynamic policy framework enriched by diverse expertise. Smt Arti Patil, Managing Director and CEO of Saraswat Cooperative Bank, India's largest urban cooperative bank is also included in the Board. Joining this esteemed panel is Smt Jeena Potsangbam, Vice-President of the Manipur State Cooperative Union. Experts say the composition represents a strategic leap in blending academic rigor with cooperative principles, ushering in a new era for rural development, financial literacy, and decentralized economic empowerment across India. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

Gujarat SCARDB – Celebration of Environment Day & International Yoga Day, Ahmedabad



On the occasion of the World Environment Day - 05th June, 2025 and in celebration of the International Year of Cooperative 2025, Kheti Bank launched the "Ek Ped Maa Ke

Naam" campaign, planting over 1,800 trees across all 178 branches, 17 district offices, and the Head Office. Led by Chairman Shri Dolar Kotecha, the initiative honoured environmental sustainability,





cooperative values and the vision of leaders like PM Shri Narendra Modi and Union Minister Shri Amit Shah. The campaign symbolizes a heartfelt tribute to mothers and a commitment to a greener, inclusive future. Kheti Bank also celebrated World Yoga Day on 21st June, 2025 at their head office in Ahmedabad. A special yoga session was held for staff, promoting unity, balance, and the cooperative spirit. The event reflected the message of moving "from yoga to cooperation, from cooperation to prosperity."

Himachal Pradesh SCARDB – Celebration of IYC 2025

Shri Sanjay Singh Chauhan, Chairman of the Himachal Pradesh SCARDB, organized a major camp in Krishi and Grameen Vikas Bank – Nalagarh branch on 10th June, 2025, to mark the International Year of Cooperatives, attended by over 300 representatives from local cooperative societies and banks. The event highlighted various ongoing schemes and beneficial loans for farmers, unemployed and workers. Shri Chauhan announced the bank's plan to celebrate the financial year 2025–26 as the IYC and Credit Distribution and shared upcoming initiatives for women



and unemployed youth. MLA Shri Hardeep Baba urged the extension of One-Time Settlement (OTS) schemes, to which Shri Chauhan responded with news of a proposed 50% interest waiver on agricultural loans up to ₹3 lakh, as per the Chief Minister's directive. Participants were encouraged to take full advantage of the bank's welfare loan and deposit schemes. Also, in another event, Kangra Cooperative Primary Agriculture and Rural Development Bank Ltd. celebrated IYC 2025 at Dharamshala, in Mainja under Palampur branch on 17th June, 2025.



Sahakar Taxi gets going, registers under Multi-State Co-op Act

In a transformative move aimed at empowering taxi drivers and promoting cooperative entrepreneurship, Sahakar Taxi Cooperative Limited has been officially

registered under the MSCS Act this month, with its area of operations covering Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Promoted by NCDC, Sahakar Taxi is backed by seven of India's leading cooperative institutions, Amul, NAFED, NABARD, IFFCO, KRIBHCO, NDB and NCEL. The cooperative will operate on the lines of aggregator platforms like Uber and Ola, but with a key difference, it will be owned and governed by its members, primarily taxi drivers themselves. These institutions have joined forces under the principle of "Cooperation among Cooperatives" to build a sustainable, inclusive, and democratic model in the transport sector. An interim board has been formed to oversee the initial operations. Shri Rohit Gupta, Deputy Managing Director of NCDC, is serving as the Chairman of the board. Other key members include Shri V. Sridhar (NDB), Shri Tarun Handa (NAFED), Shri Naveen Kumar (NABARD), Shri Santosh Shukla (IFFCO), and Shri L.P. Godwin (KRIBHCO), among others. The cooperative has an authorized share capital of ₹300 crore, with ₹80 crore already committed by the eight promoting cooperatives. Each has pledged ₹10 crore to support the foundation of this unique initiative. The operational launch is expected within the next six months, as software and digital infrastructure development is already underway. What makes Sahakar Taxi unique is its cooperative structure, where taxi drivers will be direct members and co-owners. This model allows for equitable profit sharing, democratic governance and ensures that the benefits of the platform flow directly to those who run it. The initiative is currently focusing on onboarding drivers from Gujarat and Maharashtra, with plans to expand nationwide. The cooperative is also exploring collaboration with leading educational institutions like IIIT Bangalore for technological development, operational systems, and digital integration to match industry standards. The idea of Sahakar Taxi was first proposed by Union Home Minister and Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah, who emphasized the need for a cooperative taxi service that would allow the registration of two-wheelers, rickshaws, taxis, and four-wheelers under one platform. Importantly, he envisioned that profits would go directly to the drivers, enhancing their income and quality of life. Functioning on the mantra of "Sahakar se Samridhhi" (Prosperity through Cooperation), Sahakar Taxi Cooperative Limited is expected to significantly improve the working conditions, income and living standards of taxi drivers, while delivering affordable, efficient and reliable transport services to Indian consumers. With this ground breaking initiative, India is set to witness a new era in public transportation, one that is technology-driven, inclusive and rooted in cooperative values. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

Co-ops lead Organic Surge, NCOL on boards 7,000 Co-ops in debut year

In a landmark achievement for India's cooperative and organic farming landscape, the National Cooperative Organics Limited (NCOL), an initiative under the MOC, has made significant progress in its zero commercial operations year (2024–25). In less than a year, NCOL has enrolled over 7,000 cooperative societies spanning



categories like FPOs, dairy cooperatives, tribal cooperatives and self-help groups. This remarkable momentum reflects the growing trust in NCOL's mission to empower grassroots producers and build a nationwide organic ecosystem. Even before beginning full-scale operations, NCOL has begun aggregating and supplying certified organic produce from its member cooperatives to prominent consumer-facing brands such as Amul and Big Basket. This backend supply chain integration has helped reduce procurement costs while improving market access for organic farmers. At the same time, it has enhanced the availability and affordability of organic products for Indian consumers under the govt-backed 'Bharat Organics' brand. Currently, 24 organic products, including pulses, millets, rice, flour, jaggery and spices, are available in the Delhi-NCR region through select retail points. These products will soon reach shelves in major metros like Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Kolkata, as NCOL scales its logistics and retail network. With a clean, farmer-first ethos, the 'Bharat Organics' label is rapidly gaining recognition as a symbol of trust, transparency and sustainability. NCOL's early success comes against the backdrop of the govt's push for "Sahkar Se Samriddhi" (Prosperity Through Cooperation) and the upcoming International Year of Cooperatives 2025 (IYC2025). It represents a bold new model where cooperatives act as both producers and market leaders, bypassing exploitative middlemen. Under the guidance of key ministries and leadership, NCOL is poised to become a transformative force, enabling Indian farmers to benefit from rising global demand for organic goods. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

Maharashtra extends OTS to reduce burden of NPAs & Overdue loans

The Govt of Maharashtra has extended the One-Time Loan Settlement (OTS) Scheme for Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs) until 31.03.2026. This extension follows the recommendations of the Commissioner and Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Maharashtra State, Pune, and is intended to help UCBs recover overdue loans and reduce the burden of non-performing assets (NPAs). Introduced in 2002, the scheme has been periodically extended, reflecting its continued relevance. Each year, a new deadline has been set, and now the cut-off date for eligible loan accounts has been updated to 31.03.2024, from the earlier 31.03.2023. Over the years, it has helped many cooperative banks improve asset recovery and restore financial discipline. Significantly, the terms of the scheme have been amended to provide greater relief to borrowers. Previously, the interest rate on overdue amounts was 8% simple interest, but it has now been reduced to 6%, easing the repayment burden. In the case of deceased borrowers, the earlier provisions allowed banks to continue recovering dues even after the loan account had progressed to the 'Loss Asset' category. However, under the revised one-time settlement scheme, recovery in such cases is now limited to the outstanding balance as on the date the account was classified as 'Doubtful-1'. This means

that no interest or additional charges beyond that stage will be recovered. While this change may lead to a marginal loss for the bank, it provides substantial relief to the families of the deceased borrowers by capping the liability at an earlier stage of classification. The scheme applies to all loans categorized as doubtful or loss assets as of 31.03.2024, including those that were downgraded from substandard assets. It also includes accounts under litigation or recovery proceedings. However, loans disbursed in violation of RBI guidelines, loans granted to current or former directors and their close relatives (without RBI's prior permission), and loans exceeding ₹50 crore (unless approved by the Cooperative Commissioner) are excluded. Under the revised rules, the settlement amount is to be calculated as per RBI's Master Circular dated 01.07.2015. Banks will charge 6% simple interest on the outstanding principal and overdue interest from the date the account was first classified as Doubtful-1. In the case of deceased borrowers, a special formula will apply. If the final settlement amount is less than the sum already repaid, the account will be closed without any refund. Borrowers must deposit 5% of the total outstanding amount at the time of applying. After approval, they can either pay the entire amount within a month or pay 25% upfront and the rest in 11 monthly instalments, with 6% interest. A 12-month grace period is also available at 10% interest, and any delay in EMIs will attract 2% penalty interest. It is important to note that this scheme is voluntary, not mandatory. Only those urban cooperative banks that choose to adopt it, especially weaker banks or those facing difficulty in recovering NPAs, can implement the scheme and pass on its benefits to borrowers. Once adopted, banks must apply it uniformly to all eligible accounts without discrimination. A dedicated sub-committee including the Chairperson, two or three Board members, and the Chief Executive Officer will oversee implementation. Applications must be processed fairly, and rejected cases must receive a written explanation. Banks are strictly prohibited from sanctioning fresh loans to help borrowers repay under this scheme. Guarantors are allowed to apply in case the principal borrower does not. To maintain transparency, banks are required to display scheme details at branches, provide account statements to borrowers on request, and report all settlements to their general body. Additionally, UCB federations have been instructed to run awareness campaigns so more borrowers and banks can benefit from the scheme. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

Co-ops key to Rural Prosperity, says Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan at National Seminar in Mumbai

Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan underscored the transformative role of cooperatives in India's rural and agricultural landscape while addressing a National Seminar in Mumbai themed 'Prosperity through Cooperatives' on 20.06.2025. The event marked the beginning of activities celebrating 2025 as the International Year of Cooperatives, as declared by the United Nations. The dignitaries present on the occasion included Shri Manikrao Kokate, Minister



of Agriculture in the State Govt of Maharashtra; Shri Dilip Sanghanani, Chairman, IFFCO; Shri Chandra Pal Singh, Chairman, KRIBHCO; Shri Jethabhai Ahir, Director, NAFED; Shri Ajay Patel, Chairman, Gujarat State Cooperative Bank; Shri Vishal Singh, Chairman, NCCF; and Shri Deepak Agarwal, Managing Director, NAFED. In his keynote speech, Shri Chouhan emphasized that the spirit of cooperation is deeply rooted in Indian tradition and is essential for holistic development. He noted that the agricultural sector remains the backbone of India's economy, contributing 18% to the GDP and supporting 46% of the population. He credited the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for driving a 44% increase in foodgrain production over the past eleven years. The minister laid out a comprehensive roadmap for the prosperity of farmers. Key strategies include improving per-hectare productivity, reducing production costs, ensuring fair pricing, compensating for crop loss, promoting crop diversification and sustainable use of soil and inputs. He reiterated that policy must reflect the reality of India's predominantly smallholder farming landscape, and that small farmers will remain the focal point of govt efforts. Among the central govt's top priorities are ensuring national food security, boosting farmer incomes, and supplying nutritious food across the country. To that end, integrated farm models tailored to small landholdings are being developed. These models are expected to yield more with less, while being environmentally responsible. Shri Chouhan highlighted the Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan as a key initiative to bridge the gap between scientific research and farm practice. Under this programme, 2,170 teams of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) scientists visited villages across the country, interacting directly with farmers, learning their challenges and disseminating updated research. One of the significant findings from the campaign was the alarming prevalence of low-quality seeds and pesticides in the market. He announced that the central govt would enact strict laws to crack down on those responsible for manufacturing or selling substandard agricultural inputs. On market intervention, the minister spoke of a revamped scheme to support farmers growing TOP (Tomato, Onion, Potato) crops. If farmers transport their produce to states offering better prices, the central govt will bear the transport costs. The aim is to ensure that both farmers and consumers benefit from fair and stable prices. He further mentioned efforts to procure pulses like toor, masoor and urad after farmer registration and shared that record-level purchases of pulses, oilseeds, and soybean have been made. Support for storage infrastructure and expansion of soybean and oilseed production were also highlighted.

Finally, he announced a series of upcoming consultations on agricultural policy, on 24.06.2025 with ICAR scientists, followed by meetings on soybean in Indore, cotton in Gujarat, and sugarcane in Uttar Pradesh. The seminar was also marked by symbolic gestures such as distributing equity grants to NAFED-supported FPOs, awarding NAFED franchise certificates, releasing a book of success stories, and distributing competition prizes. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

No credit appraisal for gold loans below ₹2.5 lakh

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shri Sanjay Malhotra indicated some important changes in the final gold loan guidelines. Borrowers who take loans of below ₹2.5 lakh can expect major relief, in terms of no credit appraisal and a higher loan-to-value ratio from 75% to 85%. "In the draft regulation, there was nothing new. We had just consolidated older guidelines, and it was reiterated because it was seen that some regulated entities were not following the guidelines because there was no clarity," said Shri Malhotra. In April, RBI came out with draft guidelines on lending using gold as a collateral. He said that the final guidelines will be released only after consulting with stakeholders. More clarity of the ownership documents will be provided, in the absence of an invoice of the collateral, a self-declaration can be given instead. Secondly, loans which are less than ₹2.5 lakhs, don't need credit appraisal. End use monitoring is essential if lending made to priority sector. On Loan-To-Value (LTV), which was the biggest issue for gold loan lenders, the governor said that for smaller loans, which are less than ₹2.5 lakhs, LTV can be increased to 85% from the current 75%, but in this case the interest will also have to be included. He added that only for consumption loans, LTV guideline will be applicable. With the minimum risk, gold loan lending space is regulated effectively. Easing of gold loan norms are a positive for the sector largely increasing the ticket size, helping the borrower to mitigate current challenges, which they are facing in terms of availing loans. Largely, there is an unsecured lending, which is going slow. He added that since gold loan is a second product to have an end-consumer or end-borrower kind of a touchpoint. These moves will largely give a push on the deep rural side, where they want to increase end-consumer availability of credit largely through the secured way.

RBI simplifies KYC process through amendment

RBI has issued the Know Your Customer (KYC) (Amendment) Directions, 2025, introducing key changes to simplify and strengthen the KYC process for individual customers. The amended directions aim to improve customer service, ensure uninterrupted banking access, and promote financial inclusion. One of the major changes allows low-risk individual customers to continue all banking transactions even if their KYC update is pending. Regulated Entities (REs) must ensure KYC is completed within one year of the due date or by 30.06.2026, whichever is later. This ensures continued access to banking services for customers with no history of suspicious transactions. To extend outreach, especially in



rural areas, banks can now use Business Correspondents (BCs) for collecting self-declarations and supporting KYC documents. These can be submitted electronically after biometric e-KYC authentication or in physical form until digital facilities are ready. Further, REs must send three advance notices and three post-due reminders, including at least one physical letter in each phase, to prompt KYC updates. All communications must be recorded for audit. RBI has set a compliance deadline of 01.01.2026, for full implementation. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

NABARD to lend ₹10,000 cr in FY2026 for green projects

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) plans to lend about ₹10,000 crore this year as part of its Green Lending Facility. Shri Ajay Kumar Sood, Deputy Managing Director said NABARD unveiled the facility in FY2025 to fund projects of Central and State govts, govt agencies and private entities aimed at meeting sustainable development goals. The minimum loan amount disbursed would be ₹100 crore and these are for projects such as ethanol plants and electric vehicles. The demand offunds for green projects is high.



A review meeting, chaired by Hon'ble Ministers of State for Cooperation, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar and Shri Murlidhar Mohol, was held to review the progress made on the directions issued in the previous meeting and to deliberate on key matters related to media outreach, publications,



and the publicity strategy of the MOC and all National-level Cooperative Federations on 04.06.2025. The discussions emphasized the need to strengthen communication efforts, enhance media outreach, and explore innovative strategies to increase public engagement in alignment with the Ministry's overall objectives. All officials and stakeholders were directed to develop a comprehensive roadmap to expand the reach of their social media platforms to include members, cooperative societies, beneficiaries, and other associated individuals. They were also instructed to ensure the timely and effective dissemination of relevant information, thereby facilitating the successful implementation of initiatives at the grassroots level. Additionally, the importance of consistent branding, unified messaging and leveraging regional languages to maximize outreach and inclusivity was also highlighted during the meeting.



On the occasion of World Environment Day - 05th June, 2025, cooperative institutions across the country united in a green mission, pledging their commitment to environmental protection through widespread tree plantation initiatives. Spearheading this nationwide effort was MOC in New Delhi, which organized a special tree plantation programme at its premises. Union Minister of State for Cooperation, Shri Murlidhar Mohol, joined by Dr. Ashish Kumar Bhutani, Secretary, MOC, and other senior officials, participated enthusiastically in the drive. Their collective involvement underlined the Ministry's unwavering dedication to environmental sustainability and combating climate change. This year's plantation campaign was aligned with the heartfelt theme "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" (One Tree in Mother's Name). By encouraging individuals to plant a sapling in honour of their mothers, the initiative fostered a personal and emotional connection to nature while promoting ecological responsibility. All Ministry officials and staff participated actively, contributing to a shared vision of a greener and healthier planet. Further reinforcing this mission, the Ministry urged everyone to take a yearly pledge to plant at least one tree in their mother earth's name, symbolizing both gratitude and a sustained commitment to the environment.

FEDERATION NEWS

Board and Annual General Meetings of Federation:

The Federation vide its notice dated 27.6.2025 has announced the 179th Board Meeting and the Annual General Meeting - 2025 in the Board Room of NCUI, New Delhi on Tuesday, 22nd July 2025.



AGRICULTURE NEWS

Efforts towards farmer welfare will continue with greater vigour: PM Modi

On 07.06.2025, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi said that several initiatives of his govt during the last 11 years have boosted the prosperity of farmers and ensured the transformation of agriculture. He said, "It's our privilege to serve our hardworking farmers. We have focussed on issues like soil health and irrigation, which have been greatly beneficial. Our efforts towards farmer welfare will continue with greater vigour in the times to come." Farmers were earlier forced to take loans for meeting small needs, but their lives have been made easier now. He cited decisions like annual cash assistance to farmers and the loan insurance scheme. The prime minister has been highlighting his govt's decisions pertaining to specific sectors ahead of its 11th anniversary on June 9, the day he took oath in 2024 for a third consecutive term in office.

Horticulture output up 3.7% in 2024-25 season

India's production of horticulture crops is estimated to have increased by 3.66% to 367.72 million tonne (MT) in 2024-25 crop year (July-June), according to the second advance estimates released by the Union agriculture ministry on 25.06.2025. The output had fallen to 354.74 MT in 2023-24 crop year from 355.54 MT in previous year mainly due to 20% drop in onion production compared to previous year. The horticultural crops production continues to be higher than the food grain production in absolute terms, though the growth rates in last two years were higher for the latter. Output of rice, wheat, pulses and coarse cereals in 2024-25 crop year was estimated at a record 353.2 MT, an increase of 6% compared to previous crop year. Area under horticulture crops rose to 29.2 million hectare (Mha) in 2024-25 against 29.08 Mha last year. In 2024-25 crop year, while output of fruits including mango and banana, rose by 1.36% to 114.5 MT, the production of vegetables including onion, potato and tomato rose by 6% to 219.6 MT. Potato and onion production in 2024-25 rose by 26% and 5.46% to 60.17 MT and 57.05 MT respectively. The horticulture sector contributes about 33% to the agriculture Gross Value Added (GVA), making a significant contribution to the economy.

₹1 L-crore investments supported by agri infra fund

To boost post-harvest facilities like farm gate storage and logistics infrastructure, the Centre has approved proposals worth over ₹63,500 crore under Agri Infrastructure Fund (AIF) for more than 1,09,426 projects since its launch five years back. So far these sanctioned projects by the agriculture ministry have mobilised an investment of ₹1 lakh crore in the sectors including food processing, custom hiring centres, cold chains and

warehousing, out of which a large chunk has been mobilised from private entities. The disbursement under AIF till end of the current fiscal is likely to be around ₹90,000 crore. The funds aim at creation of farm gate storage and logistics infrastructure to enable farmers to store and preserve their farm produce properly and sell them in the market at better price with reduced post-harvest losses and lesser number of intermediaries. To bridge the existing gaps in post-harvest management infrastructure, AIF which was launched in May 2020 aims at disbursing ₹1 lakh crore through banks and financial institutions by the end of FY26. The scheme is operational from 2020-21 to 2032-33. It facilitates loans upto ₹2 crore, with a maximum repayment period of seven years from financial institutions. The fund provides 3% interest subvention with a cap of 9% on rate of investment. The fund also covers the reimbursement of credit guarantee fees paid by banks. Borrowers under AIF need to contribute at least 10% of total project cost irrespective of available capital subsidy. In terms of number of projects sanctioned under AIF, Punjab (21,740), Madhya Pradesh (12,495), Maharashtra (10,418) and Uttar Pradesh (8,563) constitute significant shares. The ministry has stated that improved post-harvest management infrastructure like warehouses, cold stores, sorting and grading units, ripening chambers, etc. will allow farmers to sell directly to a larger base of consumers and hence, increase value realisation for the farmers.

Centre Unveils Model Rules to Ease Agroforestry Regulations and Boost Rural Economy

In a major step towards promoting sustainable agriculture and enhancing the ease of doing business in agroforestry, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has released the 'Model Rules for Felling of Trees in Agricultural Lands' on 29.06.2025. Aimed at simplifying regulatory procedures and encouraging tree-based farming, these model rules will assist States and Union Territories in promoting agroforestry as a viable economic and ecological solution. The initiative also introduces the upcoming National Timber Management System (NTMS) Portal, designed to streamline registrations and approvals for tree harvesting. The move aims to boost agroforestry, aid farmers in integrating trees with crops, and reduce dependency on natural forests. A new NTMS portal is also under development to digitally manage geo-tagged plantation data and harvesting approvals.

Digital farmer IDs, crop survey now used for benefit transfer

With progress in farmer's digital identity (ID) generation and digital crop survey (DCS), the govt has started using these data for providing a host of services. These include direct cash transfer under PM Kisan, digital agricultural



credit, benefits under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and issuance of soil health cards. These digital tools are coming in handy to ensure faster and more targeted delivery of benefits and avoid cumbersome paperwork. Under AgriStack, part of the govt's digital public infrastructure initiative, farmers' digital IDs linked to land records, which is similar to Aadhaar, are now used for new registration under the direct cash transfer program - PM Kisan, granting agri-credit and for crop insurance. The crop sown data under DCS has also been started to verify whether the farmer has grown the same crop as claimed while taking loans under the Kisan Credit Cards and while applying for the crop insurance. Since the beginning of the year, the agriculture ministry has made it mandatory for the new applicant for the PM Kisan to get digital IDs linked to their land records for getting the financial benefits. Under PM Kisan, around 90 million farmers get direct cash benefit of ₹6000 annually through three equal instalments. Over 8.6 million IDs have been seeded to PMFBY. Farmers with IDs will get services instantly without any paperwork. In 2025-26 under Agri-Stack, the govt has made an allocation of ₹4,000 crore for developing farmer registries, including legal heir systems, and ₹2,000 crore for conducting DCS aimed at incentivizing states to accelerate their adoption of digital tools. For crop output estimates, the ministry has started using crop sown area data of DCS in 12 states including Bihar, Gujarat, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. While the DCS was conducted across 17 states in the rabi season of 2024-25, more states were needed to be onboarded to conduct this across the country. At present 29 states, with the exception of West Bengal and a few UTs, have signed MoUs or Agri-Stack implementation. At present, soil health cards using farmer ID and georeferenced village maps in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat have started. Pilots are being conducted across Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, for sanctioning crop loans digitally within an hour's time with connectivity to Agri Stack. For the procurement of pulses and oilseeds under PM-ASHA by agencies NAFED and NCCF, have identified farmers growing arhar and masoor varieties of pulses using the farmer registry and crop sown data under DCS. The agriculture ministry signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Maharashtra, Kerala, Bihar and Odisha and public sector banks for seamless digital access to credit services through farmer registry-linked authentication which would reduce paper-works and benefit small and marginal farmers.

Making rural farmers credit-ready

Farmers making multiple visits to banks and standing for long hours in the queue to avail of agricultural credits, the

norm for many years is changing rapidly with the digitalisation of the process. Nabard in collaboration with Vadodara-based agri-fintech startup '24X7 Moneyworks Consulting Pvt. Ltd.', is helping farmers access agri-credit digitally through eKisan Credit Card (eKCC) portal. The platform is enabling paperless and real-time onboarding of the farmers. The eKCC portal is designed for cooperative banks, PACS and RRBs. It carries out Aadhaar authentication of farmers, land record validation and loans limits based on crop details and area under cultivation. The platform uses Reserve Bank Innovation Hub's unified lending interface for digital land records, and the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) for Aadhaar authentication, e-KYC, e-sign and Aadhaar data vault for sanctioning loans. Till now, 91 banks have onboarded the platform. The aim is to integrate all 350 banks engaged in disbursing agricultural credit onto the digital platform which would vastly reduce cost of processing of loan applications and ensure only genuine farmers get access to agri-credit. Talks are on to integrate the portal with agriculture ministry's digital public infrastructure which consists of three databases viz. Georeferenced village maps, crop sown registry and the farmers registry and Kisan Rin portal. Nabard recently acquired a 10% stake in 24x7 Moneyworks Consulting for an undisclosed amount and this was also the first-ever investment in a bootstrapped start up. Conventional loan application processes for Kisan Credit Card (KCC) holders are 'fraught with inefficiencies' such as multiple visits to banks by farmers, long turnaround time of three-four weeks and being paper-based. A KCC provides farmers with affordable credit for purchasing seeds, fertilisers and pesticides. At present, there are 77.1 million operational KCC holders who have landholdings. In FY25, commercial banks, cooperatives and RRBs had disbursed over ₹28.98 lakh crore, out of which around 60% was towards short-term crop loans. The rest was disbursed as investment loans in agriculture and allied sectors. Farmers do know about the scale of finance available for each crop in the district and through eKCC portal, farmers get to know the eligibility limits for the agri-loans. Besides the reduction in the loan processing cost, the portal also helps in tracking and preventing duplication of collateral-free loans of ₹2 lakh as mandated by RBI available to farmers. Even if banks can reduce the limits of credit to farmers, they have to give reasons for it. Through the portal, farmers are able to submit loan applications without visiting banks. The startup has also developed Agriculture Infrastructure Fund Interest Subvention (AIFIS), a digital platform that automates the interest subsidy workflow under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund of the agriculture ministry.

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