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**Women play multi-dimensional roles in agriculture: Shri Singh**

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### **Rashtriya Mahila Kisan Diwas-2017**

Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shri Radha Mohan Singh said that government is giving preference to women under various policies such as organic farming, self-employment scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, etc. The Minister added that women can propel the country towards second Green Revolution and they can change the landscape of the development if they get opportunities and facilities. Shri Singh said this today during Rashtriya Mahila Kisan Diwas celebration at New Delhi.

Smt. Krishna Raj, Central Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Smt. Archana Chitnis, Minister of Women and Child Development, Madhya Pradesh Government, Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra, DG ICAR were also present at the event. Shri Singh informed that last year the Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Ministry had decided to observe October 15 every year as Rashtriya Mahila Kisan Diwas.

Shri Singh said that the decision was inspired by the celebration of October 15 as International Women's Day by the United Nations Organization. And today, all the Agricultural Universities, Institutes, and KVKs are celebrating Rashtriya Mahila Kisan Diwas.

Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister said that under the current scenario, women's contribution to the prevention of climate change and management of natural resources cannot be denied. They play multi-dimensional roles in agriculture. They are contributing in every field of agriculture - from sowing to planting, drainage, irrigation, fertilizer, plant protection, harvesting, weeding, and storage. Apart from this, they are active in other activities like cattle management, fodder collection, milk and allied activities related to agriculture such as beekeeping, mushroom production, suction farming, goat rearing, poultry, etc.

Shri Singh said that within the agricultural sector, the wage workers working on the basis of socio-economic status and regional factors, working in their own land, and also in the management of various aspects of agricultural production, women play important roles through labour supervision and participation in post-harvest operations.

The Minister informed that according to the Food and Agriculture Organization, women's contribution to Indian agriculture is about 32 percent, while in some states (such as Hilly, Northeast, and Kerala) contribution of women to agriculture and rural economy is more than men. Women are involved in 48 percent agriculture-related employment whereas 7.5 crore women are playing a significant role in milk production and livestock management.

Shri Singh said to strengthen women's participating in agriculture and allied activities and to improve their access to land, loans and other facilities, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has policy provisions like joint leasing for both domestic and agricultural land under

National Policy for Farmers. Under Agriculture policies, provisions of issuing Kisan Credit Card to women and creating livelihood opportunities through livestock practices agricultural processing are mentioned. Therefore, the aim of the Ministry is to increase agricultural production and productivity and make policies for the welfare of the farmers. Shri Singh added that the aim is to ensure that women contribute effectively in agricultural production and productivity and get better livelihood opportunities. Therefore, proper structural, functional and institutional measures are being promoted to empower women, to build their abilities and to increase their access to input technology and other agricultural resources and various initiatives have been taken in this regard.

Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister informed that keeping in view the key role of women in agriculture, in the year 1996, the Ministry established ICAR-Central Institute for Women in Agriculture in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. This institute works on various aspects related to women in agriculture. Apart from this, more than 100 institutes of Indian Council of Agricultural Research have developed techniques to reduce the hardships of women and empower them. There are 680 agricultural science centers in the country. Each Krishi Vigyan Kendra has a home science wing. In the year 2016-17, 21 techniques related to women were evaluated and 2.56 lakh women were trained in agriculture-related fields like sewing, manufacturing, value addition, rural handicraft, animal husbandry, beekeeping, poultry, fisheries, etc.

Shri Singh further said that apart from this, at least 30% of the funds are being earmarked for women under various schemes/programs and development related activities. To ensure various beneficiary-oriented programs/schemes reach them, the emphasis is on the formation of women self-help groups (SHGs) to connect them with micro-credit through activities like capacity building and giving them access to information and to encourage their participation in planning and decision-making process. The Ministry is also making pro-women and women supporting measures.

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