

UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR AND UNION COMMERCE MINISTER SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL ADDRESS CHIEF MINISTERS' CONFERENCE ON INITIATIVES AND SCHEMES FOR FARMERS' WELFARE

Relevant for: Indian Economy | Topic: Agriculture Issues and related constraints

Agriculture has to be linked with digital technology, scientific research and knowledge, stating this at the Chief Ministers' conference on initiatives and schemes of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare held via video conferencing today, Union Agriculture Minister Shri Narendra Singh Tomar emphasized that the Central government and State governments must work together for agriculture to give a boost to the economy.



Talking about digital agriculture, the Minister urged all States to study the Karnataka Model which was presented during the conference. He told the States to create a database for the State using the federated farmer database prepared by Government of India and allow linkage to state land record database. He said that MoAFW has created database of 5.5 crore farmers and it will be increased to 8 crore farmers by December, 2021 with the help of State governments. The Minister said that with the establishment of Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, FPOs, PACS, Mandis and start-ups will get loans easily. Talking about the Oil Palm Mission the Minister said that ICAR has conducted a study on the areas in which oil palm cultivation can be expanded.

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs and Textiles Shri Piyush Goyal said in his address that with an increase in agriculture exports, India is

emerging as a trusted export partner and there is further scope for improvement of agri-exports. He emphasized that the infrastructure needs to be strengthened for storage and warehousing.

The objectives of the conference were to highlight the salient features of AatmanirbharKrishi and to enable States to enhance farmers' income. It was also an occasion to share innovative initiatives undertaken by the States.

The discussion with the States centered around the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund set up to drive infrastructure investment. The recent modifications in the scheme were explained – the eligibility has been extended to APMSs/state agencies/ National and state federations of cooperatives/ FPOs and SHGs. The eligible activities were explained like community farming, assets, post-harvest management projects and primary processing. The need to make India self-reliant in edible oils and palms was stressed and the role of the States was discussed. Digital agriculture and use of emerging technology for smart agriculture was also discussed.

The concept of farmers' database was explained. A national farmer database is being created by taking data from existing schemes like PM-KISAN, soil health card and PM FasalBimaYojana. The database will have connectivity to State land records data base. The Pradhan MantriKisanSammanNidhi and the saturation ofKisan Credit Card for small and marginal farmers was also discussed. Upgradation of the beneficiary database was emphasized. There was discussion on export of agriculture products and the role of APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) in increasing agriculture exports. APEDA will facilitate cluster centric capacity building exercise for state officials, FPOs, farmers, start-ups etc.

The first day of the two-day conference saw the participation of Chief Ministers and Agriculture Ministers of around a dozen States.

Union Minister of States Shri Kailash Choudhary gave the vote of thanks. Secretary, MoAFW, Shri Sanjay Agarwal gave the welcome address and moderated the conference. MoSMs. ShobhaKarandlaje, Secretary MoF&PD, Shri Sudhanshu Pandey were also present. Additional Secretary, MoAFW Shri Vivek Agarwal gave a presentation on the agenda points of the conference. Chairman, APEDA gave a presentation on Agri exports. Other senior officials from Central and State Governments also participated in the conference.

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