

Shah assumes charge of Co-op Ministry; reiterates his resolve



Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah assumed charge again as the Minister of Cooperation at Atal Akshay Urja Bhawan

in New Delhi on 11.06.2024. After assuming charge, Shri Amit Shah said "The Ministry of Cooperation will continue to work towards strengthening the country's economy along with the rural economy by empowering the farmers as per Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's vision of 'Sahkar Se Samridhi'. Our government is committed to empowering the idea of cooperation, providing new opportunities to millions of people associated with this sector, and bringing positive changes to their lives. Fortunate to assume the responsibility of the Minister of Cooperation in Modi 3.0 today." In a parallel move Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan also officially took charge of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

Know your Minister- Krishan Pal Gurjar, MoS Cooperation

Haryana's Faridabad Member of Parliament, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar, has been appointed as the Union Minister of State for Cooperation.



He completed his graduation from Jawaharlal Nehru College in 1978 and earned his law degree from Meerut University. He was a member of Haryana Legislative Assembly for 3 terms and was the Minister of Transport in Haryana during 1996-1999 and also served as the State President of BJP. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

Know your Minister- Murlidhar Mohol, MoS Cooperation



Shri Murlidhar Mohol hails from Pune, Maharashtra. He was elected as MP from the Pune Lok Sabha constituency. This is his first term as an MP. He previously served as the Mayor of Pune. His

appointment as MoS Cooperation during his first term as MP is a recognition to his achievements in public life. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

Rural Revolution: PACS on boarding on CSC Portal marks significant progress



In less than a year since the idea was introduced, a substantial number of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) have successfully on boarded to the Common Services Centers (CSC) portal. Of approximately 95,000 PACS across the country, about 52,568 have joined the CSC portal, and over 35,379 have begun offering services. Given that there are around 65,000 viable PACS, a majority are now on boarded. These services, which include banking, insurance, and Aadhaar enrolment, previously posed challenges for villagers. Now, residents can conveniently access these services at their local PACS office, significantly simplifying these processes. According to the Ministry of Cooperation, PACS in rural areas are now equipped to offer over 300 services. The integration was formalized in February last year when a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in the presence of Union Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah and Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw. This initiative allows on boarded PACS to provide a broad spectrum of services listed on the Digital Seva Portal of the CSC scheme to citizens, including legal services, agricultural inputs, and travel-related services. This historic initiative is supported by the Ministry of Cooperation, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, NABARD, and CSC e-Governance Services India Limited in New Delhi. Shri Dileep Sanghani, President of the National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI), expressed enthusiasm about the progress, noting that "PACS are the soul of cooperatives and turning them into multipurpose service providers will boost employment opportunities in rural areas." Shri Sanghani emphasized the importance of PACS in rural and agricultural development, marking it as a step towards realizing Prime Minister's vision of 'Sahkar Se



Samridhi' (Prosperity through Cooperation). (Source: Indian Cooperative)

17th Instalment of PM Kisan Nidhi Scheme

Government started disbursing 17th instalment of the PM Kisan Nidhi Scheme, which will benefit 93 million farmers, as the first official decision of the new coalition government. Around ₹20,000 crore will be distributed in this instalment. This is expected to boost rural demand and support consumer stocks that are trading near 52-week highs. Economic policies with focus on more welfare schemes and a direct boost to the rural sector augurs well for overall growth of the economy. Data shows that the rural demand had outpaced urban markets for the first time in five quarters in the January-March period, and indicates a turnaround after 15 months of sluggish demand in the hinterlands when higher prices of daily grocery essentials, vegetables and fuel forced people to cut down on spending. Rural markets grew 7.6% in the first three months of 2024 compared with 5.8% in the preceding quarter. Urban sales, in contrast, slowed sequentially to 5.7% from 6.9%. The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme provides income support to landholding farmers in the country. Announced in 2019, it provides ₹6,000 a year to each of the eligible farmers. This amount is distributed in three equal instalments of ₹2,000 every four months and directly deposited into the beneficiaries' bank accounts. "Ours is a government fully committed to kisan kalyan (farmer welfare). It is therefore fitting that the first file signed on taking charge is related to farmer welfare. We want to keep working even more for the farmers and the agriculture sector in the times to come," PM Shri Narendra Modi said in a statement. In the interim budget for 2024-25, the government had allocated ₹1.27 lakh crore for the Ministry of Agriculture. In the financial year 2023-24, the growth rate of the agriculture and allied sector was estimated to be 0.7% against the previous year's 4.7%, amid scanty rainfall during the monsoon season. Total food grain production declined marginally to an estimated 328.85 million tonnes in 2023-24, as per the third advance estimates of production released by the agriculture ministry earlier this month. Executives at FMCG companies expect above-normal monsoon rains predicted for this year to translate into higher farm production and sustained rural recovery.

Chouhan stresses timely availability of fertilizers & seeds for farmers



Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, held a pivotal meeting

with senior officials to discuss the 100-day action plan for agriculture, aligning with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision. This plan aims to revamp agricultural strategies to enhance the sector's efficiency and alleviate farmers' hardships. During the session, Shri Chouhan urged officials to dedicate their efforts to initiatives that directly benefit farmers, thereby accelerating progress in line with the Prime Minister's 'Sankalp' or pledge. He emphasized the critical need for rapid implementation of farmer-centric policies and programs. A significant part of the discussion focused on improving the agricultural sector's infrastructure and support systems in the early days of the Modi government's third term. Shri Chouhan directed that robust measures be adopted to fortify the sector. Top on the agenda was ensuring the timely availability of high-quality fertilizers, seeds, and other essential agricultural inputs. "Our farmers should not face any hurdles in accessing these necessities," he stated, highlighting the importance of streamlined support for the agricultural community. Moreover, the Union Minister underscored the importance of boosting agricultural output and productivity. He proposed a detailed action plan aimed at not only meeting domestic demands but also enhancing India's capability to export superior agricultural products globally, tailored to international needs. The meeting also saw presentations from senior officials outlining various department-specific schemes and initiatives designed to support this comprehensive plan. Present at the meeting were Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Shri Ram Nath Thakur, and Shri Bhagirath Chaudhary; Agriculture Secretary Shri Manoj Ahuja; and Dr. Himanshu Pathak, Secretary of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) and Director General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). This assembly marks a significant step towards reshaping India's agricultural policies and practices, aiming for a future where the agrarian community thrives and contributes more prominently to the nation's economy. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

Sah Bharati for deposit insurance for PACS to mobilize rural savings



RSS Learning cooperative body Sahakar Bharati has put several ground breaking proposals before the Union Finance Minister and her

team after concluding consultations. The focus of the recommendations was aimed at revitalizing the cooperative sector in India. These initiatives are designed to enhance financial inclusion and support the rural economy through various strategic reforms, said Shri D N Thakur, President of Sahakar Bharati. Elaborating, Thakur said "One of the key proposals includes offering deposit insurance up to ₹50,000 for deposits at Primary Agricultural Cooperative



Societies (PACs). This measure is intended to encourage the mobilization of rural savings into the formal financial system, decreasing the PACs' dependency on higher financing agencies. This proposal echoes the recommendations made by the Khusro Committee in the late 1980s, urging the government to revisit these suggestions." Additionally, he expected the budget to empower PACs to establish agro-processing units, extending them financial support akin to that provided to Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Cooperatives (FPCs). Another significant advancement involves the digitalization of financial transactions in rural areas, with plans to establish norms for providing payment gateways to various cooperative entities, thus deepening the digital footprint in these communities. "For District Cooperative Central Banks (DCCBs) and State Cooperative Banks (StCBs), the government is expected to release new guidelines concerning non-agricultural advances and an upward revision of limits to better meet the credit needs of the rural populace. Furthermore, a pressing need for recapitalization support has been highlighted, with many rural and agricultural cooperative banks still waiting for these funds to make necessary investments", reads a detailed list of recommendations mailed to us. Further, Sahakar Bharati wants enhancement of the regulatory framework for Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs) to support their expansion and increase their effectiveness in meeting the financial needs of urban populations, particularly in the newly emerging urban centers across the country. The budget should ease the establishment of new UCBs by formulating entry point norms and initiating a licensing process on an "on tap" basis. In the housing cooperative sector, significant reforms are expected to encourage the formation of Cooperative Housing Finance Societies (CHFS), particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. These societies would be brought under the supervision of the National Housing Bank, with financial support from major institutions like LIC and HUDCO to provide small-ticket housing loans, reads the proposal. Furthermore, the budget should address the needs of fisheries and dairy cooperatives by formulating special schemes for financing and capacity building, along with introducing insurance covers and concessional interest rates for loans, claimed Sahakar Bharati leader. Overall, the Union Budget for 2024-25 should aim to create a supportive environment for cooperatives across various sectors, enhancing their capacity to contribute to India's rural economy and promoting sustainable development through cooperative enterprises. These measures would reflect the government's commitment to leveraging the cooperative sector as a key driver of economic growth and stability, concluded Thakur. (Source: Indian Cooperative)



Gujarat Kheti Bank concludes 72nd AGM in the presence of Governor



Gujarat State Cooperative Agricultural and Rural Development Bank (popularly known as Kheti Bank) concluded its

72nd Annual General Meeting on 18.06.2024 in the presence of Gujarat Governor Shri Acharya Devvrat, among other esteemed guests. The Bank noted a remarkable performance on all fronts, as revealed during the meeting. Kheti Bank Chairman Shri Dollarbhai Kotecha, Gujarat Legislative Assembly Speaker Shri Shankarbhai Chaudhary, Gujcomsol Vice-Chairman Shri Bipin Patel, GSCU Chairman Shri GH Amin, GCMMF Chairman Shri Shamalbhai Patel and others were present on this occasion. Addressing the participants, Shri Devvrat focused on educating and encouraging farmers about natural farming instead of using chemical fertilizers. "The farmers of the country should adopt sustainable agricultural practices that enhance soil health and biodiversity. It's crucial to reduce our dependence on

chemical fertilizers and pesticides. To take advantage of available resources, such as government programs, training



workshops, and community initiatives, farmers learn more about natural farming practices," said Shri Devvrat. He emphasized the benefits of natural farming, such as improving soil fertility, enhancing the nutritional quality of produce, and minimizing the negative impacts on ecosystems. Kheti Bank Chairman Shri Dollarbhai Kotecha thanked Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for releasing the installment of PM Kisan Samman Nidhi benefits to the beneficiary farmers. He also appreciated the efforts of Union Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah for launching a computerization program for ARDBs at an estimated cost of ₹225 crore. The bank announced a 15% dividend for its shareholders. Kheti Bank earned a gross profit to the tune of ₹92.35 crore and a net profit of ₹64.30 crore as on 31.03.2024. During the year 2023-24 the bank's



net NPA remains 0%. Kheti Bank has created a history of being the first Agriculture bank in the Nation with 0% net NPA. The bank has waived a



total amount of 36.69 Cr., so the farmers have benefited on an average of 38.20% under the settlement scheme. The Bank's head office located at Ashram Road, Ahmedabad, 17 district offices at the state district headquarters and 177 branches at the taluka level plays a leading role in fulfilling the economic needs of the farmers of the state. The 148 buildings are owned by the bank, including the premises of 16 district offices and 132 Branches at the taluka level. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

Marneni Rao elected President of Telangana State Co-op Bank



Warangal District Cooperative Bank President Shri Marneni Ravindar Rao has been elected as the President of Telangana State Cooperative

Bank in place of K Ravindra Rao who resigned earlier. Hyderabad DCCB President Shri K Sathaiah has been elected as the Vice-President in an election held on 10.06.2024 at the bank's headquarters. The terms of new President and Vice-President will continue till February 2025. Telangana State Cooperative Bank has a business mix of nearly 12k crore and earned a net profit of ₹63.08 crore as of 31.03.2024. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

Bhutani discusses PACS computerization with Nabard Chairman

Dr. Ashish Kumar Bhutani, Secretary of the Ministry of Cooperation met with Shri Shaji K V, Chairman of NABARD, on 19.06.2024 to



discuss the ongoing efforts in computerizing over 63,000 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) throughout the country. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on integrating the National Level PACS Software (NLPS) with the Jan Samarth Portal and the Agri Stack application, aiming to streamline operations and enhance service delivery in the agricultural sector. It bears recalling that a centrally sponsored project is currently underway for the computerization of 63,000 functional PACS, Large Area Multi-Purpose Cooperative Societies (LAMPS), and Farmers Service Societies (FSS). This project, with a total financial outlay of ₹2,516 crore, aims to improve the operational efficiency of PACS by ensuring speedy loan disbursal, lowering transaction costs, reducing payment imbalances, achieving seamless accounting coordination with District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs) and State Cooperative Banks (StCBs) and enhancing transparency. The software necessary for

implementing this extensive project has been developed by NABARD. (Source: Indian Cooperative)

VAMNICOM receives "Best Co-op Institution" Award in Mumbai

In a proud moment for cooperative education in India, the Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management



(VAMNICOM) in Pune was honoured with the prestigious "Best Cooperative Institution" award. The ceremony, held in Mumbai, saw Dr. Hema Yadav, the Director of VAMNICOM, accept the award on behalf of the institute. This accolade serves as a testament to VAMNICOM's relentless pursuit of excellence in cooperative and management education over the past five decades. Since its inception, VAMNICOM has established itself as a premier institution, renowned for its rigorous academic programs that blend theoretical knowledge with practical insights. The institute's commitment to high educational standards and its role in shaping future leaders in the cooperative sector have been widely recognized. One of the institute's flagship programs, the Post Graduate Diploma in Agribusiness Management (PGDM-ABM), has received accreditation from the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) for the third consecutive cycle. This program is meticulously designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of contemporary management techniques and their application in the agribusiness sector. By integrating case studies, real-world projects, and strategic problem-solving, the program prepares students to tackle the complexities of the global business landscape. Additionally, VAMNICOM's Post Graduate Diploma in Cooperative Business Management (PGDCBM) emphasizes the institute's commitment to enhancing the cooperative movement. This specialized program equips students with the necessary skills to excel in cooperative business management, focusing on the unique challenges and opportunities within the cooperative framework. The curriculum encourages a deep understanding of cooperative principles and governance, aiming to foster a new generation of leaders adept in promoting sustainable development through cooperatives. The recognition of VAMNICOM as the "Best Cooperative Institution" not only underscores its legacy of educational excellence but also highlights its influential role in advancing the cooperative model in India and beyond. Through its dedicated efforts, VAMNICOM continues to contribute to the development of competent professionals who are well-prepared to drive innovation and growth in both the corporate and cooperative sectors. (Source: Indian Cooperative)





किसानों को आर्थिक सुरक्षा और सम्मान

पोषण किसान सम्मान निधि योजना की 17वीं किस्त का हस्तांतरण

9.26 करोड़

अधिक लाभार्थी किसानों को

₹20,000 करोड़

से अधिक की राशि ट्रांसफर



पोषण किसान सम्मान निधि योजना की 17वीं किस्त का हस्तांतरण

किसान सम्मेलन से जुड़ने 2.5 करोड़ से अधिक किसान

1 लाख से अधिक प्राथमिक कृषि सहकारी समितियाँ

732 कृषि विज्ञान केंद्र (KVK)

5 लाख कॉमन सर्विस सेंटर (CSC) भी लगे भाग

लाइव लिंक

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fE3FzPFY0D>



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21वीं सदी के भारत को दुनिया की तीसरी बड़ी आर्थिक ताकत बनाने में पूरी कृषि व्यवस्था की बड़ी भूमिका है।

हमें वैश्विक रूप से सोचना होगा, ग्लोबल मार्केट को ध्यान में रखना होगा। हमें **दलहन और तिलहन में आत्मनिर्भर** बनना है और कृषि निर्यात में अग्रणी बनना है।

माननीय प्रधानमंत्री

श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी

किसान सम्मेलन, रायचूर 18 जून 2024

FEDERATION NEWS

Shri K.K. Ravindran, Managing Director, NAFCARD chaired the meeting of International Cooperative Alliance Asia & Pacific (ICA-AP) Credit and Banking Committee on 5th June 2024 and the Conference on 'Financial Inclusion and Digital Transformation' jointly organized by ICA-AP Credit and Banking Committee, ANGKASA (The Malaysian National Cooperative Movement) and ACO (ASEAN Cooperative Organisations) on 6th June 2024 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



Review of Central Sector Scheme for Computerisation of ARDBs

The Federation has undertaken a State-wise review of the progress of implementation of the Central Sector Scheme for Computerisation of ARDBs and submitted a report to the Ministry of Cooperation. The Federation suggested to the Ministry to hold a joint meeting of NABARD, NAFCARD and SCARDBs to take steps to speed up implementation of the Scheme.

Study on Business Growth in LTCCS during Amrit Kaal

The Ministry of Cooperation has assigned to IRMA the study on Business Growth in LTCCS during Amrit Kaal and Compliance of Section 24 of MSCS Act, 2002 by the Federation. The study is expected to suggest measures to achieve 25% annual business growth by ARDBs during Amrit Kaal and also strengthening the Federation to step up business services to member banks. The study which is fully funded by the Ministry is progressing as per schedule. The study team constituted by IRMA has completed visits to the Federation and all SCARDBs and draft report is expected to be submitted in August 2024. Shri Pankaj Kumar Bansal, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation, conducted a mid-term review of the progress of the study on 26th June 2024, which was attended by Prof. Indranil De and Dr. S.K. Esther Ali from IRMA and Shri K.K. Ravindran, Managing Director, NAFCARD.



Study on Reforms, Restructuring and Innovations in ARDBs.

The Study on Reforms, Restructuring and Innovations in ARDBs was instituted by the Ministry of Cooperation through NABCONS of NABARD. The study team headed by Shri A.K. Srivastava has already submitted its draft report containing recommendations for wide ranging reforms in the working of ARDBs and their operations including policy support for product innovations and funding arrangements for business diversification and expansion. The Ministry has now received the comments of NABARD and NAFCARD on the draft report and is expected to finalise a list of implementable recommendations and an action plan for the same.

Tackling chronic Overdues and NPAs in LTCCS.

The Federation has undertaken State-wise review of performance of ARDBs in loan recovery and NPA Management. One striking observation in the review is a clear demarcation in recovery performance in respect of loans issued till 2010 and afterwards. It was observed that most of the overdues and NPAs in the structure relates to loans issued till 2010, while recovery performance is satisfactory in loans issued after 2010. There is a need to segregate such old loans, which are difficult to recover now, for liquidation through special efforts/package at the level of State Govt/Central Govt.



Study to Expand Business Growth of LTCCS during Amrit Kaal - Visit of IRMA Study Team to SCARDBS

The Study Team from Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA), after completing discussions with the Federation has now scheduled visits to SCARDBs in various States. The team visited Jammu & Kashmir SCARDB, Srinagar on 06th June 2024. The team also visited Tripura CARDB, Agartala on 13th June 2024 and also held meeting with RCS, Government of Tripura, chaired by RCS at their respective offices. Other study visits were conducted at Telangana SCAB, Hyderabad on 20th May 2024, West Bengal SCARDB, Kolkata on 10th June 2024, Punjab SCARDB, Chandigarh on 12th June 2024, Haryana SCARDB, Panchkula on 13th June 2024, Pondicherry CCLDB, Puducherry on 18th June 2024, Tamil Nadu CSARDB, Chennai on 19th June 2024, Himachal Pradesh SCARDB, Shimla on 24th June 2024 and Kerala SCARDB, Thiruvananthapuram on 24th June 2024.

J & K SCARDB



Delegates: Shri Mohammad Aslam Bhat, MD/ CEO, J & K SCARDB and senior officials of the bank, IRMA team consisting of Prof Sunil Sangwan and Dr. Ishter Ali

Tripura CARDB



Delegates: Shri Manik Dasgupta, General Manager, Tripura CARDB and senior officials of the bank, RCS, Government of Tripura, IRMA team consisting of Prof Indranil De and Dr. Ishter Ali

Tamil Nadu CSARDB



Delegates: Shri M. Murugan, Additional Registrar/ MD, Tamil Nadu CSARDB and senior officials of the bank and Shri K.K. Ravindran, MD, NAFCARD, IRMA team consisting of Prof Sushanta Sarma and Dr. Sangram Mane

Telangana SCAB



Delegates : IRMA team visited Telangana SCAB, seen here are Prof. Sunil Sangwan and Dr Sangram Mane. They held meeting with Managing Director, Telangana SCAB and other senior officials of the bank.

Kerala SCARDB



Delegates: Adv. C.K. Shajimohan, President, Kerala SCARDB, Shri Nawas, Director, Kerala SCARDB and senior officials of the bank, IRMA team consisting of Prof Indranil De and Dr. Sangram Mane

Punjab SCARDB



Delegates: Shri Suresh Kumar Goyal, Chairman, Punjab SCARDB, Shri Jagdeep Ghai, General Manager, Punjab SCARDB and senior officials of the bank and Shri K.K. Ravindran, MD, NAFCARD, IRMA team consisting of Prof Sunil Sangwan and Dr. Sangram Mane

Himachal Pradesh SCARDB



Delegates: Shri Raj Narayan Jamalta, General Manager, Himachal Pradesh SCARDB and senior officials of the bank, IRMA member consisting of Prof Sushanta Sarma

Haryana SCARDB



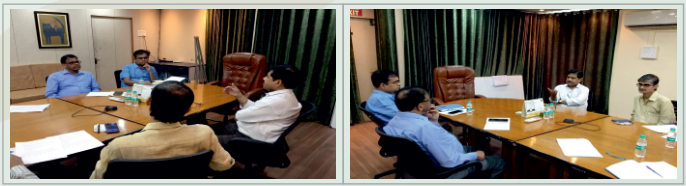
Delegates: Shri Amar Pal Rana, Chairman, Haryana SCARDB, Smt Suman Balhara, Managing Director, Haryana SCARDB and senior officials of the bank and Shri K.K. Ravindran, MD, NAFCARD, IRMA team consisting of Prof Sunil Sangwan and Dr. Sangram Mane

Pondicherry CCLDB



Delegates: IRMA team visited Pondicherry CCLDB, seen are Prof Sushanta Sarma and Dr Sangram Mane. They held meeting with Managing Director, Pondicherry CCLDB and other senior officials of the bank.

West Bengal SCARDB



Delegates: IRMA member visited West Bengal SCARDB, seen are Prof Indranil De and Shri K.K. Ravindran, MD, NAFCARD. They held meeting with Managing Director, West Bengal SCARDB and other senior officials of the bank.



AGRICULTURE NEWS

Over 1 lakh farmers voluntarily gave up their PM-Kisan benefits last year

Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan lead the chart of 1.16 lakh farmers who have voluntarily given up the benefits of the annual ₹6,000 Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme across the country from June 2023 to May 2024, according to data available with the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. The state breakup: 29,176 farmers' families, the maximum, surrendered PM-Kisan benefits in Bihar; followed by Uttar Pradesh (26,593) and Rajasthan (10,343). The Agriculture Ministry had introduced a module in the PM-Kisan mobile app and website last year which enables farmers to voluntarily exit the scheme. The possible reasons for some farmers giving up the PM-Kisan benefits include: absentee landlords who may have decided against availing of the subsidy; land going to tax-paying descendants who are not eligible; change in status of land-owners. As per details available on the PM-Kisan portal, farmers willing to surrender their benefits are required to enter their registration number. After that, they can generate an OTP that will be sent to their Aadhar-registered mobile number. Through this process, the PM-Kisan beneficiary is identified. Thereafter, the beneficiary can surrender their benefits. Under the PM-Kisan scheme, eligible farmer families receive ₹6,000 per annum in three equated instalments through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) every four months. The scheme was launched on 24.02.2019, just before the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. At the time of the first instalment in December-March 2018-19, the number of beneficiaries stood at 30.3 million. As of now, 16 instalments of the PM-Kisan have been released to farmers. The 16th instalment was transferred to the bank accounts of 9.09 crore farmers by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi from Yavatmal in Maharashtra on 29.02.2024.

Govt to focus on liquidating surplus rice in central pool

In what could boost grain supplies in the market, the new central government will focus on liquidating the huge surplus of rice stocks held with the Food Corporation of India (FCI) ahead of the new paddy procurement season (2024-25) scheduled to commence on October 1. An inter-ministerial group on prices will soon meet to discuss measures to deal with surplus rice stock which is currently more than 3.5 times over the buffer required, would be taken up. There are also discussions about the lifting of some of the restrictions imposed on the rice exports last year. The economic cost of rice, including minimum support price (MSP), storage, transportation and other cost is estimated at ₹3,975/quintal for the current fiscal. Currently, FCI holds 50 million tonne (MT) - 32.31 MT of rice stocks and 17.91 MT of grain receivable from millers. The stock is against the buffer of 13.54 MT for July 1. The government needs about 38 MT of rice annually to supply under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY). Because of rising stocks, at present FCI has been unable to receive rice given from milling due to space constraints across several states including Punjab, Haryana and Chhattisgarh. With the steady progress of monsoon since its onset in Kerala on May 30 and the India

Meteorological Department (IMD) predicting 'above normal' rainfall during the June-September period, sowing of kharif paddy, which has a share of 80% in total rice output, is expected to get a boost. With the arrival of paddy expected to commence from October 1, the government has to initiate steps to reduce the stock in the central pool through open market sales and allow exports of white rice on a government-to-government basis. The last fiscal open market sale of rice at ₹29/kg to bulk buyers did not elicit a positive response as only around 0.1 MT of rice was sold. The government will assess the sowing of kharif paddy expected to commence next month before taking a call on removing curbs on shipments. Lifting restrictions on rice shipments as kharif crop prospects looks bright can be beneficial. Last year, the government had initially banned white rice exports and subsequently imposed a 20% shipment duty on parboiled rice to improve domestic supplies as price rises remained in double digits. The government, from time to time, allowed rice exports to meet the food security needs of some countries on the basis of request. Retail rice prices rose 12.51% last month, marginally lower from March. The inflation in rice prices has been in double digits since October 2022. In addition, FCI so far has received a purchase indent for 1.5 MT of rice from agencies such as Nafed, NCCF and Kendriya Bhandar for selling 'Bharat' rice. About one MT of grain has been sold by these agencies for distribution through retail outlets at ₹29/kg under the Bharat rice initiative launched to curb the spike in prices in February.

Bonus to paddy farmers to cost Odisha ₹6000 crore a year

To fulfill its election promise of a 42% bonus over the minimum support price (MSP) to paddy farmers, the new government in Odisha has to make budgetary provision in excess of ₹6000 crore per annum, given the current level of procurement in the state. The largesse will also require the food ministry to give an exemption to the Odisha government for procurement of surplus paddy above what is needed for the central pool, as done for Chhattisgarh in the ongoing procurement season 2023-24 (October-September). The ministry is not quite inclined to accord this waiver, as it will inflate the economic cost of grains due to the higher storage and transport costs. A rise in economic cost of grains handled for the National Food Security Act will result in higher food subsidy. The MSP for the 2024-25 season is likely to be revised upward shortly and agencies have purchased 6.39 million tonne (MT) of paddy in the state in the ongoing season. The centre bears the MSP payment to farmers while bonus is paid from the state government's budget. Under the Kirshak Unnati Yojana launched in March, Chhattisgarh paid a bonus amounting to ₹13,320 crore or a differential of ₹917/quintal over MSP to 2.4 million paddy farmers last year. The bonus is provided as an input assistance of ₹19,257/acre to farmers, which aims to enhance their income, crop production, and productivity while reducing cultivation costs. Chhattisgarh and Odisha have a share of 16% and 9% respectively in the total paddy purchase of 75.29 MT across key growing states in the current season. Typically, when a



bonus over MSP is offered for a crop, the farmers tend to grow that in more areas, leading to surplus output. This is because the Centre is firm that it is against taking over surplus rice and wheat stocks from these states for the 'central pool,' beyond the requirement for the public distribution system and buffer. In 2021, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the food ministry and decentralised procurement (DCP) and non-DCP states for procurement of paddy. It stated 'in the situation of State giving any bonus of financial incentive in direct or indirect form, over and above MSP, if the overall procurement of the State is in excess of the total allocation of the state made by the government under TPDS, such excess quantity shall be treated to be outside the central pool.' After the exemption against the existing guidelines was provided to Chhattisgarh, the state agencies in the

2023-24 season have purchased a record 12.38 MT of paddy against procurement of 8.75 MT in 2022-23 season. If an exemption to Odisha is given on bonus, then all other paddy growing states may demand similar concessions. Under the Kirshak Unnati Yojana launched in March, Chhattisgarh paid a bonus amounting to ₹13,320 crore or a differential of ₹917/quintal over MSP to 2.4 million paddy farmers last year. The bonus is provided as an input assistance of ₹19,257/acre to farmers, which aims to enhance their income, crop production, and productivity while reducing cultivation costs. Currently, FCI holds 32.31 MT of rice stocks and 17.91 MT of grain receivable from millers. The stock is against the buffer of 13.54 MT for July 1. The government needs about 38 MT of rice annually to supply under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY).

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Rajasthan's SHGs help African women to farm and flourish

A women's self-help group (SHG) model in Rajasthan's Dholpur district has helped about 12,500 women in the West African countries of Mali and Senegal earn livelihoods, conserve environment and establish cooperative federations to take up farming, biogas production, poultry farming and goat rearing. Women leaders from nine cooperatives in the two countries were on a visit to Rajasthan recently to get trained in new avocations. Women from Dholpur's SHGs, established by the Rajasthan Grameen Ajeevika Vikas Parishad (Rajeevika), had earlier travelled to Mali and Senegal to share their expertise in rural income generation activities. Dholpur's SHG model is based on five principles of Rajeevika – weekly meeting, weekly savings, internal borrowing, loan repayment and maintenance of records. Additional Chief Secretary (Rural Development) Abhay Kumar said the 'Pancharatna Mission' had immensely helped in the reach of SHG's products in the market. "As the rural women in Rajasthan have good exposure to agricultural technology, they have ensured success of the SHG model," said Mr. Kumar. Women representatives from Mali and Senegal, who are saving up to ₹17 crore a year and utilising the money for inter loaning to connect other women with income generation activities, have supported one another with funds during emergencies. The model has empowered the rural communities to take collective action for promoting economic development and self-governance. Women from Dholpur gave training

in the two African countries for the formation of SHGs, followed by the establishment of cooperative federations. The African women learnt about running the federations and manufacturing of products. The African representatives visited Dholpur, Bharatpur, Ajmer, Jaipur and Udaipur districts to get training from the Rajeevika groups. Since the climate in Rajasthan, suitable for millet production, was similar to that in the two African countries, the federation members received tips about growing millet during the training. Mr. Kumar, who interacted with the African women at Indira Gandhi Nahar Mandal's headquarters here, said the cooperation between the two sides would continue in future. The Rajeevika had played an important role in the socio-economic development of rural communities. Throwing light on similarities in the vegetation in Africa and Rajasthan. The coarse grains were suitable, like Rajasthan, for the environment of African countries as well. Fatouma Diallo Sero, president of a women's cooperative federation in Mali, said she was impressed with the election process of the federation leaders in Rajasthan. She said her federation would adopt a similar process and train other women in entrepreneurship. Niama Ivonne Sacko, another woman leader from Mali, said she would implement the five principles of Rajeevika with an emphasis on the institution building to enable them to play a meaningful role in increasing the income of women farmers. She said she would motivate the farmers to adopt water harvesting techniques, which she had witnessed in Rajasthan, to irrigate their agricultural fields in a productive manner.

NEWS FROM MEMBER BANKS

West Bengal SCARDB

West Bengal SCARDB conducted meeting of SLIC (State Level Implementation Committee) regarding Computerization of ARDBs on 19th June, 2024 at ICMARD, Ultadanga, Kolkata, West Bengal. Dr. Moinul Hassan, Special Officer, West Bengal SCARDB presided over the meeting.



Editor : Shri K.K. Ravindran, Managing Director

Printed, Published & Owned by : National Co-operative Agriculture and Rural Development Banks' Federation Ltd., 703A, 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