

Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu inaugurated the 4th State Conference of Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Tamil Nadu State Unit

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit inaugurated the 4th State Conference of Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Tamil Nadu State Unit at Madurai College Ground, Madurai today (05.01.2019).

Hon'ble Governor said, "I am delighted to be here at Madurai for the 4th State Conference of the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, an organization started in 1979 to safe guard the interests of farmers.

I am informed that it is the only national level farmers organisation having its activities in all the states of the country.

Today, thank to the farmers India is self sufficient in food production. The production of 285 million tones of food grains in 2017 – 2018 is nearly 6 times the level of output of food grains when our nation became independent in 1947. Increased productivity has also boosted the income of the farmers.

Agriculture contributes about 17-18 percent of country's GDP and employs more than 50 percent of total workforce. The share of cultivated Land area in India, is about 60 percent of the total land area making us the No. 1 nation in terms of arable land availability in the world, India is also the Largest producer of Milk, Cashew nuts, Coconuts, Tea, Ginger, Turmeric, Black Pepper, bananas, mangos in the world. The Largest Cattle population is in India. We come second in the production of Wheat, Rice, Sugar and Groundnut and pulses and agriculture has become an important earner of foreign exchange through exports of tea, coffee, cotton, rice, wheat, spices, fruits and vegetables.

Agriculture also provides the basic raw material for Many Industries like cotton, sugar, Jute and food processing and also serves as a large consumer of farm equipment in the form of tractors, tillers, etc.

Out of about 141 m.Ha of net area sown in the country, about 65 million hectare (or 45%) is presently covered under irrigation. Substantial dependency on rainfall

makes cultivation in unirrigated areas a high risk, proposition. Evidence suggests that assured or protective irrigation encourages farmers to invest more in farming technology and inputs leading to productivity enhancement and increased farm income.

The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) has been therefore launched by the Government to ensure access to some means of protective irrigation to all agricultural farms in the country, so as to produce 'per drop more crop'.

With a view towards providing insurance coverage and financial support to the farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crop as a result of natural calamities pests & diseases and to stabilize the income of farmers to ensure their continuance in farming so as to ensure flow of credit to the agriculture sector, the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana was launched in February 2016.

The Soil Health Card Scheme has also been implemented by the Government in recent years. Under the scheme, the government plans to issue soil cards to farmers which will carry crop-wise recommendations of nutrients and fertilisers required for the individual farms to help farmers to improve productivity through judicious use of inputs. After samples are tested in various soil testing labs agricultural experts will analyse the strength and weaknesses (micro-nutrients deficiency) of the soil and suggest measures to deal with it.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister launched National Agriculture Market (NAM) on 14th April 2016. These e-markets will integrate the various agricultural markets across the country, bringing them all to one platform and registered farmers will be able to sell their produce online in any of the markets where they can get the best price.

Agronomical trials on Paddy and Wheat crops with Neem coated Urea as a source of Nitrogen has produced significantly higher yield at research and farm level. The Ministry of Agriculture introduced Neem Coated Urea in July 2014. The use of Neem Coated Urea has been found to improve the uptake of N, P and K significantly. The use of Neem Coated Urea has also prevented the illegal diversion of urea for non-agricultural uses resulting in increased availability of urea to the farmer and also saving valuable foreign exchange in the process.

As per the 19th Livestock Census – 2012 report of Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries, the percentage share of exotic and crossbred cattle

increased from 7% in 1992 to 21% in 2012. In the same two-decade period, the percentage share of indigenous cattle population decreased from 93% to 79%. The decline in native breeds has become a cause for concern.

Indigenous breeds have been here for thousands of years, so they are naturally more adapted to our climatic conditions. If one weighs the pros and cons, native cow's milk is better not only for us but also for the environment, especially with the threat of climate change.

Hence the Government of India introduced the Gokul Mission in December 2014.

The Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) was launched in 2015, with an idea to produce agricultural products free from chemicals and pesticide residues in an eco-friendly manner. The scheme targets to bring nearly 2 lakh hectares of agricultural area under organic farming.

I have outlined a few of the schemes being implemented by the Government for the benefit of farmers to emphasise the importance that the Government attaches to the growth of agriculture.

It is important to take the maximum advantage from these schemes and practise agriculture in a sustainable manner. It is a matter of common awareness that the sector is facing a number of challenges such as decreasing fertility of the soil, interference by middlemen in marketing of agricultural produce, the changes in monsoon patterns on account climate change. The Government and the farmers have to work hand to hand to find solutions to these challenges.

I am happy that farmers from all over Tamil Nadu are taking part in this conference of the Kisan Sangh. The Pongal festival is drawing near. I am sure that dawn of the month of Thai, will bring greater prosperity to the farming community. There is a Tamil Proverb which says 'Thai Pirandaal Vazhi Pirakkum'. The proverb will definitely prove to be a true statement of the things to come.

I congratulate the Tamil Nadu State Unit of the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh for the excellent manner in which the conference has been organised. May success smile on them in all their endeavours."

On this occasion, Thiru. I.N.Basave Gowda, National President, Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Swamy Sivayogananda, Chinmaya Mission, Thiru. T. Perumal, National

Secretary, Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Thiru. K.R.Sundararajan, State President, Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Thiru. R.Sadayandi, District Judge (Retd.), Thiru. L. Murugan, Vice Chairman, National Commission for Schedule Castes and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai -22
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Sd/-
Joint Director (PR)