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presents

15th AGRICULTURE LEADERSHIP CONCLAVE 2024

15th AGRICULTURE LEADERSHIP AWARDS 2024

10 -11 JULY 2024 | Holiday Inn @ Aerocity, New Delhi

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15TH AGRICULTURE LEADERSHIP CONCLAVE 2024

India's agricultural production has tripled over the time, but today we are faced with challenges of climate and has seen its impact on production and productivity. Being the most populous country in the world and an important agriculture exporter, India is today in a difficult position to maintain food security navigating the challenges of climate uncertainties.

The 15th Agriculture Leadership Conclave 2024 was organized to bring all key functionaries of Indian and global agriculture system on one platform to deliberate upon key issues and agenda, and prepare a roadmap to Climate Resilient Food Production System. The event that was held on 10-11 July 2024 Holiday Inn, Aerocity, New Delhi was highly impactful and successful in triggering a chain of discussions along the line.

The participation of veterans from the industry, government departments and academia gave it the much required gravitas and momentum.

Inaugural Ceremony :

The inaugural ceremony that was held on 10th July was resplendent with the attendance of **Hon'ble. Justice P. Sathasivam**, Former Chief Justice of India, Former Governor of Kerala; **H.E. Mr Ali Achoui**, Ambassador of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria; **Sh. Surya Pratap Shahi**, Hon'ble Agriculture Minister of Uttar Pradesh; **Dr. Manoj Nardeo Singh**, Secretary General, AARDO and **Dr. MJ Khan**, President, Agriculture Today Group and Chairman, ICFA.

The lighting of the inaugural lamp was followed by the welcome address by **Dr. MJ Khan.** Welcoming the guests and the audience to the function, Dr Khan stressed on the relevance of climate challenge and gave glimpses of how the climate parameters have changed over the years. He noted that it was a threat to agriculture production systems and livelihood of small farmers. He pointed out the case of Maharashtra that was fighting climate change by intensively promoting Bamboo cultivation, and also how India persuaded the world to look at millets as an important nutritional tool to combat malnutrition and climate change. Dr. Khan stressed on the relevance of global collaboration and private public partnership in combating climate change. He also informed the audience that discussions were afoot for conducting 'Delhi Dialogue on Sustainability' that will showcase to the world India's preparedness and initiatives in combating climate change.

H.E. Mr Ali Achoui quoted that agriculture was life. He said that Algeria could learn a lot from India, especially in the area of millets. In South of Algeria, climate is dry where he thought millets could be a game changer. Sahara region in Algeria was earlier known for its oil and gas, whereas now it was known for vegetables, fruits and wheat. He said he is looking forward for the intense dialogues in the following days and cooperation between the two countries.

Dr. Manoj Nardeosingh introduced ARDO and its activities. He was of the view that agriculture sector needed more leaders to address challenges in agriculture. He encouraged the participation of all stakeholders in agriculture to address climate change. Dr. Nardeo singh remarked that climate change is significantly affecting climate change and vice versa. Agriculture was a contributor and victim of climate change, however he observed that agriculture should be a moderator and facilitator for finding solutions for climate change. New varieties, changing the food patterns and consumption, technology upgradation, propagating millets and crop insurance can help in the fight against climate change. He also urged for the facilitation of technology transfer from one country to another.

3rd MS Swaminathan Global Leadership Award for Sustainable Development

The **3rd MS Swaminathan Global Leadership Award for Sustainable Development** was announced at the event. **Dr. Lindiwe Majele Sibanda** who took over as CGIAR Systems Board Chair was announced as the winner jointly by the dignitaries on stage. As a Farmer-Science-Policy Interface Champion, Dr Lindiwe Sibanda has transformed over 50 public, private, and non- governmental institutions, including farmer organisations, government ministries of agriculture, and academic and research organisations.

Dr. Ambassador Kenneth Quinn, President Emiritus World Food Prize and 2nd MS Swaminathan Global Leadership Award, who joined the event online, congratulated Dr Sibanda, at the same time reminiscing their decade long association. He likened Dr Sibanda to MS Swaminathan in terms of their passion and vision.

Justice P. Sathasivam said that the topic of the event was very relevant. He pointed out that although there were many schemes to help farmers, all of those schemes were either in Hindi or English. He recommended that it would be to of great help if they were printed in regional languages also. He concluded by saying that agriculture is the cornerstone of Indian economy.

THE SEED SPECIAL ISSUE OF AGRICULTURE TODAY WAS ALSO RELEASED IN THE FUNCTION

Sh. Surya Pratap Shahi while addressing the audience noted that Indian agriculture was dependent on climate and 55% of the population depended on agriculture for their livelihood. He reminded that India under the leadership of PM Modi was making strides in fighting climate change. Soil testing, One Drop More Crop, Promotion of Natural Farming were some of the many initiatives in agriculture that India was promoting. He observed that If there was a one degree rise in temperature there would be a loss of more than 3-4 lakh metric tonnes crop production. He urged for immediate action and suggested that the events like these could help arrive at solutions to many of the pressing problems in agriculture. Millets can help in addressing climate change and he also proposed rainwater harvesting to check declining groundwater. He also brought attention to India's dependence on pulses and oilseed import. Sh. Shahi was also for the view that we needed to increase the area under pulses and oilseeds.

Anjana Nair, Group Editor, Agriculture Today Group extended the vote of thanks

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Session 1: Policy Push for Climate Smart Agriculture

The session was chaired by **Dr. Tarun Sridhar, Former Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries.** He noted that despite our advances in food production, chronic hunger and malnutrition remained a reality. By 2050, the world population was expected to reach 10 million and assuring food

production will become a challenge, he said. He reminded the audience that not only the current food production needed to be increased by 50%, the intake of nutritious food will also become a priority.

Mr. Sanjay Sethi, Human Utilization Advisor, South Asia, USSEC was of the view that policy should bring in technology or encourage innovation. He also stressed on the scalability of technologies and noted that policy makers should support youngsters who are bringing in change through start-ups.

Mr. Deepak Pareek, Managing Director, HnyB Tech-Incubations Pvt. Ltd., observed that agriculture is both culprit and a victim of climate change. He noted that India is currently suffering from shortage of wheat as a result of climate change. Mr. Pareek opined that we needed grass root level innovation. In the case of soil testing he cited the example of Absolute's soil testing machine which gave results instantly when compared to the conventional soil testing which took days to give the results. The third instance that he gave was the technology that could analyse the health of plants. He

lamented on the absence of data in the public domain that can be easily accessed by the start-ups to work on their innovation. He suggested that policy changes should be made to make available the data to the start-ups without any delay. He was of the view that rather than funding more start-ups, supportive policies could be of help to them. He also suggested giving subsidies to bio fertilizers and other biological inputs.

Mr. Anand Bhaskar Rapolu, Former MP suggested

tailor made solutions for each region of the country. He observed that farm level processing is low and if performed it would add to climate resilient agriculture.

Mr. Raju Kapoor, Director, Policy and Regulatory Affairs, FMC observed that policy directives needed to

be focussed on feeding the large population of humans and animals, and to support the livelihood of people dependent on it. Lesser Input efficiency and declining land area were important challenges for India, according to him. He wanted Indian agriculture to become Carbon neutral. He was also of the view that India should have a national cropping policy that dictated what to grow where. He wanted agriculture to be transferred into concurrent subject to avoid the tussle between the state and the centre in implementing important agricultural policies. He believed that Regulatory system should undergo a transformation from being a controller to collaborator, while maintaining the integrity of the regulatory system and hastening the delivery. We have to shift away from production centric to value chain system, he said.

Dr. Kalyan Goswami, DG ACFI enumerated the policies related to climate change that were in existence since 2000. He observed that there was no lack of policies,

but we failed when it came to implementation. He also wanted that states to be made aware of the policies at national level.

Session 2 : Bio-Agriculture Approaches to Building Climate Resilient Agriculture

Mr. Vipin Saini, CEO, BASAI moderated the session. In his opening remarks he observed that climate change had impacted biodiversity. According to him biologicals have played an impactful role helping in the uptake of nutrients and also in reducing environmental impact. There were many schemes that were promoting biologicals which intended to reduce agri chemical use, he noted.

Ms. Sandeepa Kanitkar, MD, Kan Biosys Limited said that agriculture cannot happen without carbon sequestration. Focussing on a biological approach for stubble burning, Ms. Kanitkar informed about the technology of "in situ stubble incorporation", which was substantiated by PAU and HAU. She noted that there was microbial technology that can be used to enhance fertilizer use efficiency and seed health. But noted that scalability was important. Right now, the market for microbial is less, but she was optimistic that in near future they would constitute 30% of all the inputs used in agriculture. She also suggested that government should come up with carbon credit support which could be encouraging to the industry and farmers and also in standardisation of technology.

Mr. Ajeet Singh Chahal, Rice Team Lead – Asia, BAYER noted that more than 50 % of people depended on rice for their calorie intake and highlighted the need to increase our rice production globally by 30% by 2050 to meet the growing population. Mr. Chahal observed

that rice was the most vulnerable crop in terms of climate change, which was expected to affect 15% of rice production. However, rice was also contributing to climate change by high water consumption and methane emission. He pointed out that now the world was moving from traditional form to regenerative form of agriculture. He also informed about Bayer's Direct Acre program that promoted DSR. Although DSR was in vogue, it was not been able to scale, he commented. This required a deep understanding of the grass root level conditions and tailor made solutions, he opined.

Mr. Amit Rastogi, Executive VP, Coromandel International Ltd observed that drought was an important climate related issue affecting agriculture. He narrated his experience of working with drought resistant lines which were very effective in withstanding drought. However, the insight could not be translated into real time agriculture as farmers evaluated a variety based on yield, duration and quality.

He noted that farmers were resistant to shift from popular varieties to the drought resistant ones. So, it was important to take into consideration the local aspirations like quality and yield, while breeding for climate change parameters.

Mr. Debabrata Sarkar, Vice President-Asia Pacific, AlgaEnergy stressed on bottom to top approach, where bottom layer was soil and top layer formed the plant. He was concerned about the deteriorating quality of top soil, and brought to the attention of the audience about the numerous microbial technologies that can reclaim the soil.

Dr. Bakul Joshi, President & COO, T. Stanes and Company Limited called for integrated pest management, where biologicals would play a pivotal role in disease and pest management.

Mr. K Srinivasakumar, President, Inera, Absolute pointed out that biologicals could play a major role, while tackling MRLs. He said that the interest of the farmer needed to be put ahead.

Session 3: Global Collaborations for Sustainable Agriculture

Mr. Erwin Muhammad Akbar, Minister Counsellor, Embassy of Indonesian was of the view that climate change needed to be considered as a global challenge. Bilaterally between India and Indonesia, many delegates have come from Indonesia to India to learn. Technology transfer, capacity building, exchange of best practices between countries could facilitate sustainable agriculture, he opined.

Ms. Ingeborg Bayer, Agriculture Counsellor, Embassy of Germany spoke about the sustainability plans that were in practise in Germany. She noted the collaboration and cooperation between private sector globally. Ms Bayer also pointed out the existence of a working group between Germany and India that was a platform for the two countries to closely work together in many areas. She was also confident that future held promise for more collaboration.

Mr. Angelo Mauricio, Agriculture Attache to the Embassy of Brazil in India said that we needed good leaders in agriculture sector. According to him we didn't lack expertise or technology, but what we lacked was collaboration. He also suggested investment in research. He enumerated the techniques that Brazil

had developed to convert pastures into agricultural areas, no tillage system for soil protection, integrated systems like crop-livestock- forestry, use of bio inputs among many others. These experiences could be shared among many countries, and Brazil was open to those, he commented.

Ms. Rina Soni, Executive Director – Passing Gifts (A subsidiary of Heifer International) observed that sustainable agriculture was at the heart of many

problems in rural India. She cited the example of global partnership between Heifer and Cargill through Hatching Hope which had helped improve rural incomes. She also pointed out an index that Heifer and University of Arkansas had developed for measuring how change is brought about in the lives of small holder farmers. She concluded with the relevance of global collaboration in addressing concerns related to climate change.

Sh. Pankaj Pathak, Member, APEDA reminded the audience, that according to Indian culture world was one family. He cited the example of how India persuaded UN to make 2023 a year of millets, and how the millets had taken the world by storm. He also said that collaboration will lead to better solutions.

Dr. Ravinder Grover, Global Business Manager, HarvestPlus Solutions pointed out the declining nutritional values of cereals. The increase in CO2 is expected to bring down zinc, iron and protein levels in staples which indirectly meant that to meet the nutritional demand of the population, production needed to be increased. He said that we lived in a connected world, and problems were common. He cited the successful example of global collaboration such as CGIAR which had led to sharing of research outputs.

Session 4 : Industry-Academia Partnership for Climate Smart Agriculture

Mr. Anup Kalra, Ayurvet moderated the session and cited how industry and academia can come together to develop, scale and impellent solutions.

Dr. Indra Mani, Vice-Chancellor, Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani said that without industry academia partnership change could not happen. He pointed out the triple helix model - AIG model – where apart from academia and industry, government was also involved. The job of academia was to find solution, the industry needed to implement it and government had to facilitate, he explained. He also cited few examples of collaboration between the university and private sector, and mentioned that technology would not grow without this collaboration. He also mentioned sustainability of farmers was also important. While collaborating, duplication of research works should also be avoided as it will save time and resources, he opined.

Mr. Ashwini Bhakshi, CEO, ICFA said that the collaboration between industry and academia can move towards developing and implementing solutions for climate change induced challenges. He was of the view that events like this can bring together different stakeholders to discuss on relevant topics.

Mr. JS Yadav, MD, National Council of State Agricultural Marketing Board discussed the dearth of marketing in the curriculum of agricultural universities. He pointed out that climate change affects the quality of the produce. He also suggested that scientists must be aware of the national and international standards prescribed for an agricultural product.

Dr. Ramesh Mittal, Former Senior Director, NIAM closely examined the collaboration between industry and research institutes. He observed that industry could provide investment and institutes' research output. Academic institutes produced the human resources, whereas the industry absorbed it, he noted. According to him, research organisations should take the industry in confidence, and let them know on what area they were working.

Session 5 : Agro Technologies for Sustainable Agriculture

Dr. KK Unni, Chairman, Malabar Consultants Limited moderated the session. He reminisced about the days of green revolution and how it improved agricultural output. He remarked that today's agriculture had completely changed. Dr. Unni was of the view that technology transfer to farmers should be fast.

Mr. MJ Saxena , Advisor, Dabur Foundation remarked that Indian farmers should be made aware of the new technologies. Technology adoption would definitely help our cause to bring sustainability in agriculture, he noted.

Sh. Chandrashekhar Hari Bhadsavle, MD, Saguna Sustainability Solutions Pvt Ltd. introduced Saguna Regenerative Technique (SRT) to the audience. This technique although primarily developed for rice was today practised in maize, cotton, pulses, vegetables, onion etc. It is a no-till regenerative method of farming. The technology did not require ploughing, removal of roots of previous crops and crop rotation. There was no drudgery and also the productivity is increased. He noted that through this technique cost of production had come down. He also said that the soil qualities improved and soil carbon content was also increased.

Dr. Murtaza Hussain, Principal Scientist, Indian Agricultural Research Institute introduced his work on urban farming. Dr Hussain explained how they were modifying microclimate in accordance with the requirements of crops with the help of low cost structures. He also enlightened the audience with hydroponics, aquaponics and aeroponics and how it can aid in sustainability.

Session 6 : CEOs Panel

Ms Manisha Gupta, Commodities Editor, CNBC moderated the session.

Mr. Uday Anand, CEO, Parijat Industries Limited remarked the challenge of work force which was future ready and development of the same becomes important.

Dr. Rahul Mirchandani, Chairman & Managing Director, Aries Agro Limited remarked that Integrated Nutrient Management should become a national imperative. Import substitution, and customised solution for farmers, would also be a good direction to pursue. He urged to follow residue free farming as it was the bedrock of sustainability. He was of the view

that technology should be kept simple for farmers. Label claim specification was one area which he believed that the government should work on. Export of certain crop nutrients and Inverted duty structure needs to be rationalised, he commented.

Mr. Vishwa V Somannavar, VP, Tirth Agro Technology Private Limited called for a policy change in the northern parts of India with regard to sugarcane harvesting processes that would encourage

mechanized solutions for the same. He enumerated the mechanized solutions for many challenges faced by farmers. He also suggested to use high density planting to increase yield. Policy changes are required to ensure this to materialize, he emphasised.

Mr. Ravi Gupta- ED, Shree Renuka Sugars said that in sugarcane water conservation and mechanization were key areas. He remarked that work needs to be done to carry forward the sugarcane cultivation.

Mr. Shantanu Pendsey, CGM SBI pointed out that banks have been funding rural programmes. He remarked that the different stakeholders should come together to improve productivity. He suggested to make farmers part of value chain so that they get the advantage of extra income. He extolled women led SHG groups which had achieved many phenomenal achievements.

Mr. Ashudeep Garg, Sr Vice President and Head Corporate Development, Absolute described the mode of operation of Absolute and also the importance of connecting farmers to consumers. He also suggested the creation of a platform which gave validation to various agri inputs.

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15TH AGRICULTURE LEADERSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY

The Agriculture Leadership Awards were instituted in 2008 for recognizing excellence and leadership roles played by individuals and organizations towards the development of Indian agriculture and bringing about rural prosperity. These awards are given annually to encourage and recognize the efforts to individuals/organizations/states who/that have made significant contributions to agriculture, livestock, social and rural development, and positively impacted the lives of millions of farmers.

The National Awards Committee this year met on 2nd July in New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Former Chief Justice of India, Justice P Sathasivam and announced the winners for 20 categories. The event was graced by

Sh. Nitin Gadkari, Hon'ble Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways;

Sh. Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare;

Sh. Eknath Shinde, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra;

Sh. Dhananjay Munde, Hon'ble Agriculture Minister of Maharashtra;

Sh. Pasha Patel, Member, CM Task Force, Maharshtra;

Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. Sathasivam, Former Chief Justice of India, Former Governor of Kerala

Dr MJ Khan, President, Agriculture Today Group and Chairman, ICFA.

Justice P Sathasivam welcomed the dignitaries and remarked that the Agriculture Leadership Awards were one of the coveted agricultural awards. He extolled the importance of agriculture in the rural economy and how India had many number of schemes to help farmers. He remarked that the specifics of these schemes however were mentioned in Hindi and English, which might not be useful to the farmers. He made a plea that those be translated into regional languages. He called for reimagining the current

agricultural approaches on account of dwindling resources. He remarked that India had tremendous opportunities and scope for achieving sustainable growth in food and nutrition by policy push and public private partnership. He also highlighted the issues of equity, access and employment. He was hopeful that deliberations of the conclave would find solutions for challenges faced by agriculture and create a roadmap for climate resilient agriculture.

Shri Eknath Shinde after accepting the award for Best State in Agriculture for Maharashtra remarked that the state had a rich heritage in agriculture from the days of green revolution. Dedicating this award to the farmers

of Maharashtra, Shri Shinde said that the farmers of the state were very keen to innovate and interested in adopting new technologies. He suggested planting bamboos as a solution to carbon sequestration. He cited the multiple uses of bamboo and how it could provide additional income to farmers. He said that his government was actively promoting bamboo cultivation and said that they targeted an area of 21 lakh hectares of bamboo plantation. The government was providing Rs 7,00,000 as subsidy to farmers for planting bamboo in one hectare and was planning to replace steel with bamboo. He pointed out the thermal power plants could use biomass instead of conventional source and this could again increase the demand for bamboo. He foresaw green gold revolution. Shri Shinde informed that the government of Maharashtra was working on food security, environment and sustainability and has formed, Chief Minister Environment and Sustainable Development Task Force. He informed the audience that many schemes have been developed and implemented successfully in Maharashtra. The Micromillet cluster in lathur, free electricity to farmers, increasing irrigation potential were some of them.

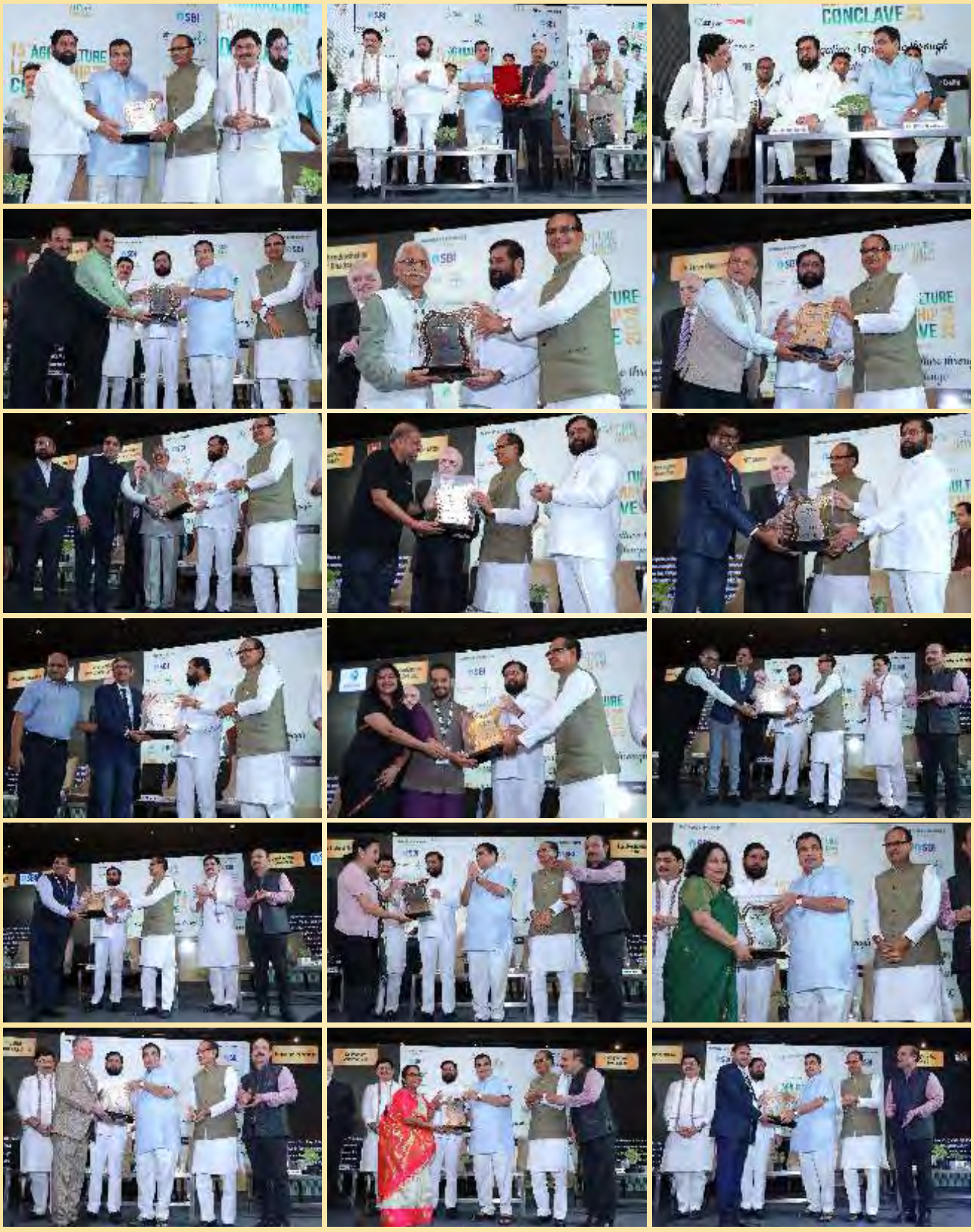
Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan remarked that agriculture was the backbone of Indian economy and the farmers were the soul. He outlined the strategies to make India the food basket of the world. He said that primarily we had to increase yield and productivity. Seeds of HYV and new technologies can help in achieving this goal. Reducing cost of production is equally important as it would increase the profit margin of farmers. Investing in technology, assuring right price to farmers, providing crop insurance and crop diversification were other

suggestions of the minister. While elaborating on crop diversification, he informed about the pulses mission of the government and special impetus given to Masoor, Tur and Urd. He also informed that the government had assured MSP for them. He praised the Maharashtra government for giving impetus to Bamboo. Natural farming and benefits of micro irrigation too figured in his address. He concluded his address by reminding the audience of India's responsibility to work for the welfare of the entire world.

Shri Nitin Gadkari noted that even though agriculture and allied sectors contributed about 15% to country's GDP, 50% of the population depends on it for livelihood. He pointed out that India imported 55% of its vegetable oil requirements, and this indicated that

the country needed to work on increasing vegetable oil production. He also pointed out India's dilemma where the MSP is more than the existing market price which is not healthy for India's economy. He also pointed out how bio ethanol would be revolutionary and be a solution to problem of surplus in crop production. He suggested to reduce cost of production and to depend on technology for the same. He narrated how the use of drones for fertilizer application considerably reduced the amount of fertilizers in comparison to applying them manually. Converting biomass to biofuels was another area of the minister's discussion. Shri Gadkari informed about 40 projects where 5 tonnes of rice straw yielded 1 tonne of CNG. In Panipat, rice stalk were used as the substrate that yielded 1 lakh litre Bioethanol, 1.5 tonne bio -bitumin and 76000 tonne bio aviation fuel per day. He suggested starting a nursery of international standards in each Taluk. This would help to produce good quality planting materials that would help to produce good quality fruits. He also lamented on the dearth of processing infrastructure in India. He suggested providing loans at zero percentage interest for developing storage units. He also informed about the facilities that could increase the shelf life. He also explained the benefits of bamboo cultivation and its profits. He suggested the alternate uses of food crops that can make alternatives to fossil fuels and help in the fight against climate change.

Dr MJ Khan extended his gratitude through the vote of thanks.



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Day - 2 : Session 1: Food and Nutrition Security during Climate Change

Mr. Deepak Pareek, Founder, HnyB Tech-Incubations Pvt. Ltd chaired the session. He noted that there were 300 million people who were food insecure and 800 million people who had limited access to food in the world. He remarked that India was the world leader in stunted children.

Mr. Ravishankar Cherukuri, Customer Experience Lead, Asia Bayer Crop Science remarked that needs of food basket were rapidly changing. As incomes expand, the demand for nutrition would far exceed the demand for plain food. He noted that being on the agri input side had helped Bayer to be enablers and to provide solutions that were sustainable. Availability, Affordability and safety are three pointers in Food and Nutrition, he noted. He also said that we needed to create a better environment for farmers to produce safe, affordable food. He also cited the need for market linkages also.

Mr. Sourabh Bagla Senior VP,Upaj suggested optimisation of agri inputs for better yield realisation than adding more chemicals into the soil. As a first step, he suggested that the farmers needed to know what was there in the soil and for the same soil testing becomes very relevant. He was also quick to point out that most of the farmers were not able to get test results

in the same day, and efforts must be afoot to reduce that time and to make soil testing more accessible. Advisors into crop insurance scheme can help farmers to know the details of the same.

Mr. Pushkal Upadhayay, Senior GM, Mahadhan Agritech Ltd. noted that 98% of farmers do not know RDF- Recommended Dose of Fertilizers. They were unaware of the percentage of nutrients present in the fertilizers available in the market, sometimes leading to over fertilization. Lack of balanced crop nutrition was a serious issue, because of which the potential of quality seeds was not realised resulting in reduced yield and

under performance, he observed. He was of the view that with proper and optimal use of fertilizers, crop yields could be increased. He remarked that there were fertilizer products that are designed to specific stages of crop growth and also mentioned Mahadhan's new product with Nutrient Unlock technology which released nutrients locked in the soil. This way we could reduce the fertilizer application in soil, he said. According to him, the climate below the soil also needed to be taken care of.

Mr Sanjay Sethi Human Utilization Advisor, South Asia, USSEC noted that growing legumes was sustainable however, their prices had skyrocketed. He talked about the dichotomy faced by the humankind in choosing a method of growing crops. On one side depending only on organic farming might lead us to food insecurity whereas depending on chemical inputs-based agriculture might risk human and environmental health. He lamented the stagnation of soyabean productivity for the last 30 years. He called for tough decisions to enable India to find solutions for

multitude of challenges in agriculture sector and also for collaboration among organizations

Dr. Hiresha Verma, Founder and Chairperson, Han agrocare narrated her story of how her chance visit to flood affected area in Uttarakhand led her to mushroom cultivation. She realised that mushroom cultivation was an ideal means of livelihood to the women in hill and helped the women to cultivate mushroom and sell them. Button mushroom, shitake, Ganoderma, Cordyceps, mitake etc. were a few mushrooms that she had helped the women cultivate.

Apart from the mushrooms, her organisation had produced extracts, functional foods and value added products from Mushroom. She noted that mushroom cultivation was independent of climate as it was cultivated indoors. She said that it was a sustainable form of cultivation as nothing goes to waste and it offered good nutrition.

Day - 2 : Session 2: Digital Technologies in Meeting the Climate Challenge

Dr Radhika Trikha, Chief Executive Officer (CEO-AWADH), IIT Ropar moderated the panel discussions.

Mr. Kunal Prasad, COO and Co-Founder, Cropin Technologies remarked that technologies like remote sensing have evolved tremendously in the past few years and they could give the government an idea of how much area has been sowed, what was the expected yield, the existence of crop stress etc. He suggested that the technologies could also provide blended solutions like access to finance, insurance etc. If you knew an area, companies could come and create a portfolio of insurance adapted to that region. Technologies could therefore work for making policies and for additional services. At micro level, level of farmers, data could help to refine solutions for farmers, and help to bring specific advisory to farmers. He also discussed about the combination of GIS with agriculture sector and hoped soon India would lead in using the same. He recommended industry and institutions should partner to get the best results.

Dr. Muneer Khan, Scientist discussed the soil quality assessment technologies and their relevance in agriculture.

Mr. Deepak Pareek, Founder, HnyB Tech-Incubations Pvt. was of the view to keep technology invisible to farmers and to not to confuse them by going into the nitty gritty of it. The results of technology should be tangible, he suggested. Mr Pareek observed that Biologicals, Remote Sensing and AI were going to be important technologies in agriculture .However, he recommended the institutions to be involved in skilling the individuals and creating human resources. He also said that start-ups should not be viewed as a commodity.

Mr Ashish Khetan, President & Chief Investment Officer - Indigram Labs Foundation said that there was a need for an ecosystem for the start-ups to work. He noted that there were a lot of agritech start-ups working in climate change area, trying to develop solutions. He remarked that start-ups must be sustainable profitable business ultimately bringing a solution to farmers.

Day - 2 : Session 3: Agro Ventures and Agribusinesses in Empowering Farmers

Mr. Kapil Mehan, Advisor, Deepak Fertilisers and Petrochemicals Limited chaired the session. In his opening remarks, he mentioned that agriculture was a risky business. He observed how agriculture has transformed since the time of green revolution. Carbon sequestration and Carbon emission have become an important factor in agriculture.

Dr Hulas Pathak, CEO IGKV R-ABI Raipur Chhattisgarh observed that agricultural universities were looking into how value can be increased across the agri value chain. He believed that instead of looking at problems of farmers as challenges, it should be seen as opportunities for creating solution. He said that one of the important parameters to judge the success of a start-up was the impact they will create on farmers.

Mr SahuPawar, CEO, IACG enumerated the challenges faced by the famer such as market linkage, technology, infrastructure building, financial inclusion etc. He cited the example of e-platforms as e-mandi to link farmers to market. Agrotech start-ups could give the farmers the technological solutions and the knowledge gap among the farmers regarding the presence of schemes

could also to some extent be reduced by agro ventures. He said that the farmers needed to be empowered to become agropreneurs and Start-ups should have a domain expert as well.

Mr. Senthil Kumar Natarajan, Public Policy and Government Relations, Ninjacart elaborated on the

operations of Ninjacart and how they had helped farmers in realizing better prices for their market.

Mr Rajiv Ranjan Guru, Founder & COO, Ecopreneurs suggested a bottom-up approach in Research and Development. He narrated his experience in implementing precision farming, bio pelleting from bio waste, installation of storage infrastructure etc.in farms and how this has been transforming farmers' approach.

Ms. Shreyasi Agarwal, VP, Bharat Mandi narrated her project of preventing rural exodus. She pointed out that demand side was also an important area for start-ups to focus. Democratising the products, optimization at grass root level, working on supply chain and logistics

could improve the outreach. Creating a market and demand for farmers should also be made a priority, according to her.

Day - 2 : Session 4: Role of Agro Professionals in Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change

Ms Laxmi Devi, Senior Assistant Editor, PTI chaired the session. She initiated the conversation by describing the importance of agro professionals in

meeting the challenge imposed by climate on agriculture.

Dr. Dinesh Kumar Chauhan, CEO, Agribusiness & Innovation Platform of ICRISAT informed that more than 22+ incubators functioning in India were capacitated and incubated by AIP of ICRISAT. He also mentioned the 4 verticals on which the centre was working. He mentioned that ICRISAT was working on a gamut of climate resilient crops and dry land agriculture. He commented that each organisation had a role to play. We have to create an ecosystem for people to pursue agriculture as profession, he said. He also mentioned that there was a dearth of trained agri professionals and their opportunities were immense.

Mr Ansh Patidar, Founder & CEO Agriwa Organics shared his vision and his business. He said that farmers work by comparison. He said that technology played a

very important role in addressing climate based challenges. He debunked the vision that organic agriculture must steer clear of technologies. He commented that centralisation of data was important for farmers. He suggested advanced training for farmers and that the NPOP standards should be updated with time. He also remarked that more practical education and approaches should be included in the curriculum.

Mr Morup Namgail, Head Agritech Development, IFFCO Kisan Suvidha Limited was of the view that collaboration could go a long way in addressing climate

challenges. He said that it was critical that whatever technology that was introduced in agriculture must be scalable and feasible for the farmers. He hoped the information asymmetry among farmers would go away soon. Technology could also include transparency and traceability back to value chain, he observed. He commented that offerings through advisories to farmers must be tailor made. He said that with more digitization in agriculture, opportunities would be more.

Mr. Manish Shankar, Director, Palladium discussed about voluntary carbon markets, He said that individual farmers might find it difficult to plug into the voluntary carbon market. He noted that agri professionals

needed to be equipped to help farmers adapt. The knowledge set and skill set among agri professionals needed to be updated. He wanted climate smart agriculture to be included in the curriculum.

Mr Sanjay Chaudhary, Vice President of Indogulf Cropsciences Ltd., observed that all the stakeholders starting from farmer to government were agri professionals coming with a specified skill set. He also observed how the approach towards agriculture was being transformed. He commented that discovery of new molecules was not happening in India; however, we had good infrastructure and skill set. He noted that solutions developed for farmers must be simple. He also was unhappy with the quality of agri education imparted in the country.

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PRESENTATION OF 3RD OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL AWARDS

Dr. MJ Khan, President, Agriculture Today Group and Chairman, ICFA addressed the audience. He outlined the objectives of the event and commented on how it would help in addressing climate change problems in agriculture. He also remembered how himself and Dr.

MS Swaminathan conceptualised the Agriculture Leadership Awards. He also noted how climate change is affecting different countries. He said that climate change was real and we had to deal with it. He remarked that both food security and farmers' livelihood was at stake, and hoped that all the stakeholders in the agriculture collaborate and develop strategies to address them.

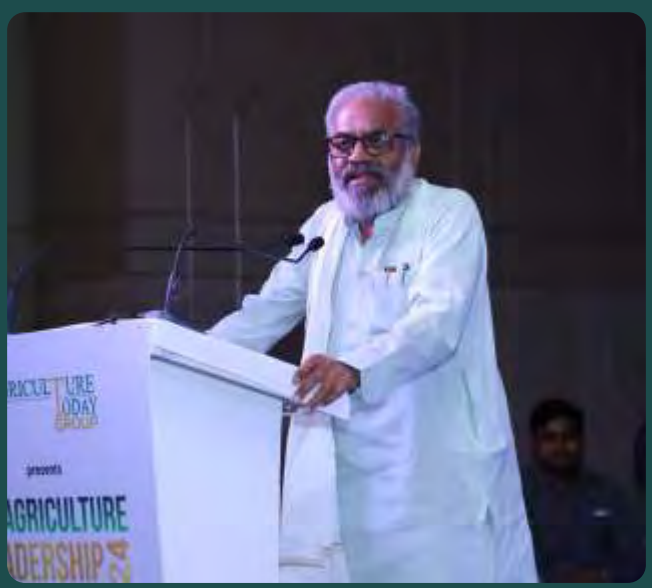
Sh. Tarun Shridhar, former Secretary, AHD&F, Government of India spoke about the discussion that happened on climate change during the past days. He

was of the view that the recommendations that had emerged from these discussions might hold the key to outline strategies for government to develop a climate resilient strategy. He wanted to combine the principles of science while developing strategies.

Sh. Anand Bhaskar Rapolu, Former Member of Parliament was happy that discussions were

focussed on such an important topic. He reminded the audience that there were many challenges in agriculture especially due to climate change, and strategies must be defined to address food security and farmer welfare.

Sh. Pasha Patel, Executive Chairman, Maharastra CM Task Force quoted that era of global warming was over

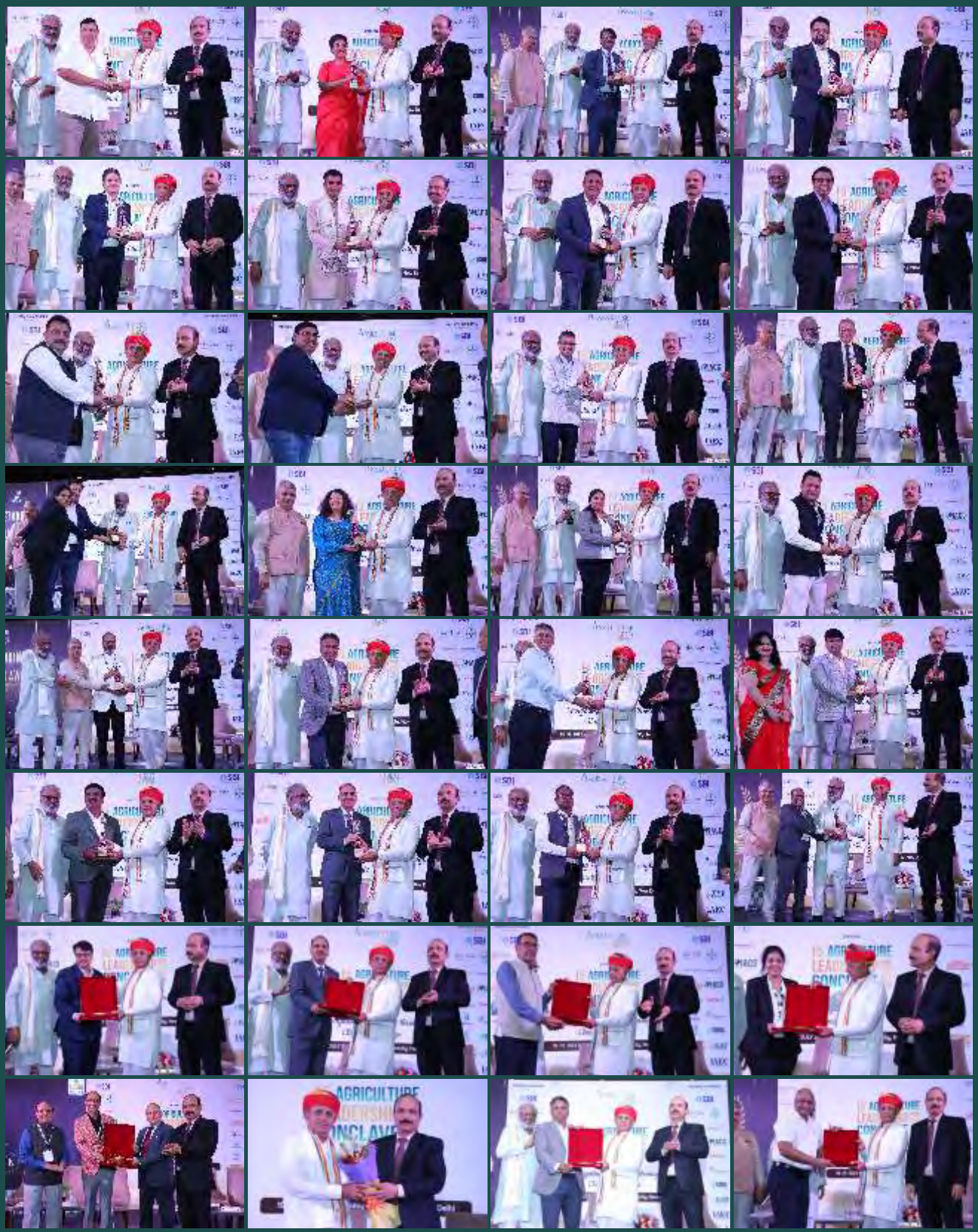


and that of global boiling had started. This required quick action and he outlined the strategies of Maharashtra state in addressing climate change through bamboo cultivation. He said that bamboo could be used as biomass in thermal power plants, and reduces carbon emissions. He observed that both coal and bamboo had the same calorific value. Farmers could therefore become energy producers also. He introduced the different products made out of bamboo and how it would be a good producer of oxygen and absorber of carbon dioxide. He also suggested that we needed to move away from long duration crops to short term crops that use less water like micro millets.

Shri Bhagirath Choudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State (Agri & Farmers Welfare) presented the Outstanding Professional Awards. While addressing the audience, he congratulated Pasha Patel for his vision. He also reminded the audience the hardships taken by the farmers to feeding the population. He also elaborated

on the relevance of Shree Anna. He concluded the address by suggesting that trees must be planted.

Anjana Nair, Group Editor, Agriculture Today Group extended the vote of thanks.



Recommendations

The 15th Agriculture Leadership Conclave held panel discussions with participation of veterans from agriculture industry. The two day long deliberations and discussions addressed many important concerns faced by the agriculture sector. Several recommendations emerged from these impactful and insightful discussions which are summarized below.

Policy level :

- Encourage technology and innovation.
- Support startups
- Ensure data availability in public domain
- Fasttrack Agristack
- Provide subsidies to biological inputs.
- Promote Farm Level Processing
- Development of a national cropping policy
- Make agriculture a concurrent subject.
- Creating of innovation ecosystem
- Public Private partnership in R&D and delivery
- Protection of IPR
- Transformation of the regulatory system from being a controller to collaborator
- Updation of NPOP Standards
- Inclusion of Climate smart Agriculture in the curriculum

Bio Agriculture

- Supporting Carbon credits
- Standardisation of technology
- Scalability of technology
- Microbial technologies to reclaim the soil
- Global collaboration of research
- Global sharing of success stories and failures

Research and Development

- Triple helix model - Academia industry Government collaboration for technology growth
- Research in accordance with national and international standard s
- Creation of working group comprising industry and academia
- Avoid duplication of research
- Collaboration among like minded organization

Technology and Innovation

- Aeroponics, aquaponic and hydroponics
- Protected cultivation
- Integrated Nutrient Management
- Customised solution for farmers
- Residue free farming
- Accessible and Faster soil testing
- Crop insurance advisories

Sustainable Agriculture

- Crop Diversification
- Exploring food crops for biofuels, bio bitumen and bio civil aviation fuel
- Balanced Crop Nutrition
- Nutrition according to specific stages
- Advanced Training to farmers

Glimpses of Conclave 2024

















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LOAN FOR SELF-HELP GROUPS
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- Loan range: ₹1 Lakh - ₹100 Crores
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KISAN SAMRIDDHI RIN
- Higher loan limit for modern farming: ₹5 Lakhs - ₹50 Crores
- Open to all farmer types: Individual, Non-Individual, or Corporate

ATMA NIRBHAR BHARAT SCHEMES:
- Loans available under Agri Infra Fund, PMFME scheme, AHIDF scheme
- To establish cold storage, warehouses, silos, food processing units, etc.
- Credit Guarantee available
- Interest subvention available

FARMER PRODUCER COMPANIES (FPCs)
- Loans available for all activities of FPCs
- Attractive interest rates
- Credit guarantee available
- Interest concession available

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