

Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan Inaugurates the Annual Conference of Vice- Chancellors of Agricultural Universities and Directors of ICAR Institutes

"Science-based agricultural transformation is our focus, and integrating traditional farming is also our goal" – Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

"The Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan is a historic initiative in the field of agriculture, dedicated to empowering farmers and enhancing their livelihoods" – Union Agriculture Minister

"Our goal is to ensure food security, fill the nation's grain reserves, and make India the food basket of the world" – Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

"We are one team and our vision should be – one nation, one agriculture, one team" – Shri Chouhan

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Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, inaugurated the Annual Conference of Vice-Chancellors of Agricultural Universities and Directors of ICAR Institutes at Dr. C. Subramaniam Auditorium, NASC Complex, Pusa, New Delhi today. In his address, the union minister emphasized that the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is the pride of the nation when it comes to research and extension. He asserted that in order to attain the vision of a "Viksit Bharat", agriculture must be advanced, and farmers must be empowered. Referring to farmers as equivalent to God, who nurture the world; he stated that they truly deserve our respect and reverence. Ensuring their welfare and securing their livelihoods is our responsibility, he added.



Shri Chouhan urged Vice-Chancellors to participate actively in the Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan, along with their academic responsibilities. He stressed that the real-time implementation of the “Lab to Land” initiative is the need of the hour. Outlining a six-point strategy of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare for achieving the goals of a developed India, he listed increasing productivity, reducing the cost of production, ensuring fair prices for produce, compensating losses due to natural disasters, promoting agricultural diversification, and enhancing value addition and food processing. He also emphasized the need to promote natural and organic farming practices.



The Minister further stated that agricultural diversification and protecting Mother Earth are among our greatest collective responsibilities. He reiterated that science-based agricultural transformation is the ministry's primary focus, while also integrating traditional agricultural practices. The Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan, he said, is a historic initiative in the agriculture sector, dedicated to empowering farmers, improving their livelihoods, and providing direct solutions to their problems at the grassroots level. He announced that he would undertake a padayatra (foot march) on May 25–26 to connect directly with farmers and gain firsthand understanding of their issues. Shri Chouhan emphasized that India's goals include ensuring food security, replenishing national grain reserves, and establishing India as the food basket of the world. "We are one team," he said, "and our mantra is One Nation, One Agriculture, One Team."



Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Shri Bhagirath Choudhary, stated that agriculture is the backbone of the country and farmers are its soul. He stressed that the dream of a developed India cannot be fulfilled until the farmers are empowered and strengthened. He called for collective action to address climate change to ensure the sustainability and progress of agriculture. Shri Choudhary added that agriculture must become innovation-driven and research-oriented in order for India to become a developed nation. He urged all participants to take a pledge that this conference should not be limited to discussion alone but should inspire concrete steps in policy-making, innovation, and effective implementation.



Dr. Mangi Lal Jat, Secretary (DARE) and Director General (ICAR), highlighted that the conference is crucial in determining the future direction of agriculture, research, education, and extension. He remarked that ICAR should play the role of an elder brother in the national agricultural education and research system, by guiding and supporting its institutional counterparts such as Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and agricultural universities to help them progress.



Dr. R.C. Agrawal, Deputy Director General (Agricultural Education), ICAR, presented the objectives of the

conference in his welcome address. Shri Sanjay Garg, Additional Secretary (DARE) and Secretary (ICAR), delivered the vote of thanks. Vice-Chancellors of Agricultural Universities, Directors of ICAR Institutes, Deputy Director Generals of ICAR, and senior officials of the Council also participated in the conference.



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