

Agricultural education, research, and extension are crucial pillars – Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Research plays a key role in increasing agricultural production and reducing cost – Shri Chouhan

Our effort is to ensure all institutions work in one direction to achieve common goals – Union Agriculture Minister

Target to maintain 5% agricultural growth rate – Shri Chouhan

Determined to work as One Nation – One Agriculture – One Team – Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Focus on increasing production of pulses and oilseeds through genome editing – Union Minister Shri Chouhan

Emphasis on achieving goals through modern technology – Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

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On the occasion of the Annual Conference of Vice-Chancellors of Agricultural Universities and Directors of ICAR Institutes, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, in a press conference, highlighted that agricultural education, research, and extension are

extremely important pillars. He emphasized the crucial role of research in increasing agricultural production and reducing input costs. He stated that all institutions must work together in one direction to achieve the set goals and reiterated that maintaining a 5% agricultural growth rate is a key target.



Speaking to the media, the Agriculture Minister underscored that agriculture is the backbone of the Indian economy and the largest source of livelihood. Around 50% of the population is directly or indirectly dependent on agriculture, which contributes 18% to the GDP. He affirmed that agriculture will remain central to the economy in the future as well. He emphasized that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of a "Viksit Bharat" is firmly rooted in the principle of "Viksit Krishi aur Samruddh Kisan," which serves as our core guiding philosophy.



The Agriculture Minister also accentuated that discussions held during the conference are focused on

developed agriculture and farmer prosperity, with education, research, and extension being the fundamental pillars. He stated that agricultural universities, state agricultural departments, 113 ICAR institutes, and 731 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) all play significant roles in this endeavor. The aim is for all these institutions to function cohesively, guided by the vision of One Nation – One Agriculture – One Team. To achieve the goal of a developed India by 2047 in the agriculture sector, it is essential to consistently maintain a 5% growth rate, including allied sectors.

Shri Chouhan said that the discussions during the conference concluded that this goal is achievable and that maintaining a 5% growth rate in agriculture is possible. He pointed out that while 93% of the country's land is under food grain cultivation, the growth rate for pulses and oilseeds remains low at around 1.5%. There are also wide disparities in productivity across states for example, maize yields are higher in Tamil Nadu but lower in Uttar Pradesh. To bridge this gap, efforts are being made to bring productivity levels across regions at least to a consistent average. This requires clearly defining the roles of various agricultural institutions and departments.

He further stated that if India aims to become a \$5 trillion economy, then the agriculture sector alone must contribute \$1 trillion. To achieve this, goals are being set accordingly. Currently, agriculture exports stand at around 6%, with efforts underway to raise this to 20%. The emphasis is on harnessing modern technology to achieve these targets. He underscored the importance of bridging the gap between laboratory research and farmers, ensuring that research outcomes are practical and directly beneficial to them. The Minister highlighted that land holdings in India are already small and continue to decrease. By 2047, the average landholding is expected to decline to 0.6 hectares. In such a scenario, food grain production alone will not suffice, and diversification will be necessary. This includes promoting beekeeping, animal husbandry, fisheries, horticulture, and other allied activities, which are currently under active consideration.

Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan expressed heartfelt gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for allocating funds for the creation of a new gene bank in this year's budget. He highlighted that two new varieties of rice have recently been developed through genome editing, and similar work is underway to increase production of soybeans, pulses, urad (black gram), chana (chickpeas), and tur (pigeon peas) using the same technique.

He also said that issues such as maximizing yield with minimal water per hectare are being discussed in depth. Time-bound goals are being set for both short-term (within one year) and long-term achievements, and efforts are being made to work swiftly in this direction.

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