

Dr. Ashish Kumar Bhutani, Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation inaugurated National-Level Workshop cum Review meeting with States/UTs on Strengthening the Cooperative Sector in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

Cooperative movement is playing a pivotal role in advancing the vision of Sahkar Se Samriddhi

Cooperatives are extending beyond traditional sectors such as agriculture and credit into areas like healthcare, services, and value-chain integration

Two-day Workshop highlighted efforts to ensure complete digitization of PACS operations, build the digital capacity of PACS staff and members, and enable PACS to function as one-stop shops offering integrated services such as agricultural inputs, credit, procurement, and storage

World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in the Cooperative Sector was one of the key themes of workshop

Workshop stressed on formation and strengthening of two lakh Multipurpose PACS, Dairy, and Fishery

Cooperatives across all panchayats and villages

States and UTs to actively organize major events under International Year of Cooperatives (IYC)

States were requested to institute Cooperative Awards on progress made by societies as per benchmarking parameters

Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation urged States to work on the theme of 'Reform, Perform, Transform, and Inform' for strengthening the cooperative sector in the states

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The two-day National-Level Workshop and Review Meeting on Strengthening the Cooperative Sector was held in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. Organised by the Ministry of Cooperation, the workshop brought together representatives from the State/UTs Governments, Secretaries, Registrars of Cooperative Societies (RCS) along with key stakeholders from the cooperative sector. The workshop was inaugurated by Dr. Ashish Kumar Bhutani, Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation, in the presence of Shri Pankaj Kumar Bansal, Additional Secretary and other senior officers of the Ministry and several other distinguished dignitaries.



In his keynote address, Dr. Bhutani highlighted the pivotal role of the cooperative movement in advancing the

vision of Sahkar Se Samriddhi, noting that cooperatives today extend beyond traditional sectors such as agriculture and credit into areas like healthcare, services, and value-chain integration. He emphasized the Ministry's commitment to blending technological advancement with institutional and human capacity development, ensuring cooperatives remain people-centric and future-ready.

A dedicated workshop on computerization of PACS, ARDBs, and Offices of Registrars of Cooperative Societies, was held focused on accelerating the digital transformation of the cooperative sector. The discussions highlighted efforts to ensure complete digitization of PACS operations, build the digital capacity of PACS staff and members, and enable PACS to function as one-stop shops offering integrated services such as agricultural inputs, credit, procurement, and storage. NABARD also presented updates on software development, hardware procurement, and capacity-building support for the project.



Another key theme of the session was the World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in the Cooperative Sector. The workshop focused on accelerating the implementation of the plan, starting with 500 PACS under a pilot phase and scaling up to 29,000 PACS nationwide. Discussions highlighted ensuring the economic viability of godowns through business diversification, mapping PACS based on land availability, cooperative strength, and existing infrastructure, and providing technical and managerial support to ensure sustainable operations.

The session also covered the formation and strengthening of two lakh Multipurpose PACS, Dairy, and Fishery Cooperatives across all panchayats and villages, focused on identifying potential districts and blocks for new cooperative formation, strengthening existing societies through business activation and diversification, and ensuring last-mile connectivity for rural livelihood generation.

The workshop also featured a dedicated segment on the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) and media outreach, which underlined the significance of the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC-2025) and urged States and UTs to actively organize major events under. Highlighting key campaigns such as the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" plantation drive, states were requested to institute Cooperative Awards on progress made by societies as per benchmarking parameters. Emphasizing the importance of outreach, the session encouraged wider use of the social media handles to showcase best practices and innovations.

Another session was held on redressal of difficulties of Cooperative Banking Sector. In this session senior officials of RBI also actively participated during the discussion.



As a continuation of the two-day National Level Workshop and Review Meeting on strengthening the cooperative sector, on second day, a session on best practices commenced focused on the theme “Expanding the Horizons of PACS through Business Diversification”, with discussions also covering key initiatives. Various States/UTs made presentations and shared their best practices.

The workshop also reviewed the progress of three national-level multi-state cooperative societies under the Atmanirbharta Abhiyan: National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL), National Cooperative Organics Limited (NCOL), and Bharatiya Beej Sahakari Samiti Limited (BBSSL).

The Ministry also reviewed the implementation of the National Cooperative Database (NCD), launched in March 2024, which covers over 8.4 lakh cooperatives across 30 sectors and 32 crore members. The NCD provides detailed data on cooperative activities, financial performance, audit status, and infrastructure.

An important part of the workshop was a discussion on the role of cooperatives in insurance sector in the presence of representative for IFFCO-Tokio.

In the last session of the workshop, CRCS briefed the states about the issues and challenges being faced by the Multi-State Cooperative Societies and sought their assistance for better coordination.

In his closing address, the Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation, appreciated the constructive deliberations and emphasized the role of PACS and multi-state cooperatives as catalysts for rural development, Atmanirbharta, and digital transformation. He emphasized the importance of enhancing collaboration between central and state agencies, leveraging digital tools and data-driven insights for effective governance of cooperatives. He further stated that the state should work on the theme of ‘Reform, Perform, Transform, and Inform’ for strengthening the cooperative sector in the state.



Furthermore, he stated that all States and Union Territories should share their data with the National Cooperative Database (NCD) to ensure balanced development across the country. He also stressed that the Ministry is already working to sort out the problem regarding banking. This includes encouraging diversification of cooperative businesses to increase income opportunities and strengthen local entrepreneurship. Additionally, he highlighted the need to ensure the timely implementation of schemes, transparency in financial operations, and sustainable management of cooperative resources. While concluding, the Secretary thanked the government of Andhra Pradesh and the cooperative departments for the successful

organization of the workshop in Tirupati.

The session concluded with a vote of thanks by Shri Raman Kumar, Joint Secretary, acknowledging the efforts of state representatives, central officials, and stakeholders for their active participation and valuable contributions.

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