



Union Agriculture Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan presents 'Plant Genome Saviour Awards' to farmers in New Delhi

Silver Jubilee of PPV&FRA Act and 21st Foundation Day of the authority celebrated

PPV&FRA Act has played a vital role in conserving disappearing seed varieties: Shri Chouhan

Farmers must be made more aware of the PPV&FRA Act: Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

New varieties are important, but traditional seeds must also be preserved: Union Agriculture Minister

Amendments to PPV&FRA Act will be considered to incorporate new suggestions: Shri Chouhan

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Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan today participated in the 'Plant Genome Saviour Awards Ceremony', celebrating the Silver Jubilee of the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FRA) Act, 2001 and the 21st Foundation Day of the PPV&FRA, held at C. Subramaniam Hall, Pusa Campus, New Delhi. On this occasion, the Union Minister felicitated select farmer awardees from across the country for their outstanding contributions to seed conservation and biodiversity.



Among the awardees were the Community Seed Bank of Telangana, Shiksha Niketan of Purba Bardhaman, West Bengal, Mithilanchal Makhana Producers' Association, CRS-Na Dihing Tenga Unyan Committee of Assam, Shri Bhupendra Joshi of Uttarakhand, Shri T. Joseph of Kerala, Shri Lakshan Pramanik, Shri Ananthamurthy J, Shri Nakul Singh of Bihar, and Shri Narendra Singh of Uttarakhand, among others from various categories.



In his address, Union Agriculture Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan commended the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPV&FRA) for its “remarkable achievements” over the past two decades. He said that Indian agricultural practices are among the oldest in the world, forming the very foundation of the nation’s civilisation. “Many indigenous crop varieties are vital for nutrition and ecological balance,” he said, noting that several traditional varieties were on the verge of extinction, and it was through the dedication of farmers that these seeds have been preserved.



The Union Minister emphasised that under the PPV&FRA Act, the government provides financial incentives of up to ₹15 lakh to promote the conservation of seed varieties. “Seed is the biggest capital of a farmer. It is our fundamental right. While promoting new and high-yielding varieties is essential, preserving traditional seeds is equally important. There must be a balance between the two,” he stated.

Highlighting the need for reforms, Shri Chouhan said that new suggestions received from various stakeholders will be considered and incorporated into future amendments of the PPV&FRA Act, wherever necessary.

He expressed concern that awareness of the PPV&FRA Act among farmers remains limited. “Even today, many farmers are unaware of the Act’s benefits. There are procedural complexities in registration that must be simplified. We also need to enhance transparency and ensure that the real benefits reach the grassroots,” he said.

The Union Minister stressed the need to strengthen coordination between the PPV&FRA and other related legislations, and called for the creation of a robust scientific database to preserve knowledge of indigenous varieties. “The farmers who conserve our seeds and biodiversity are the true custodians of our agricultural heritage. They must be recognized, empowered, and supported,” he added.

Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare, Shri Bhagirath Choudhary, highlighted the natural and organic methods adopted by farmers to conserve plant and seed varieties, emphasising that the PPV&FRA has provided a strong institutional framework to advance such efforts. “Through this authority, conservation work is progressing rapidly, and this empowered system will continue to play a greater role in seed and plant protection while adding new chapters in farmers’ welfare,” he said.

Minister of State for Agriculture, Shri Ramnath Thakur, underlined the importance of conserving seeds of traditional crops such as ‘mandua’ (finger millet). He urged the Authority to undertake more proactive measures in this regard and also drew attention to the medicinal value of several indigenous crop species, calling for their preservation and research-based promotion.

The event was attended by Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare Shri Bhagirath Choudhary, Minister of State for Agriculture Shri Ramnath Thakur, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare, Shri Devesh Chaturvedi, Director General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Dr. Mangi Lal Jat, Joint Secretary (Agriculture), Shri Ajit Kumar Sahu, Chairperson, PPV&FRA, Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra, and Registrar-General, PPV&FRA, Dr. D.K. Agarwal, along with senior officers and participating farmers from across India.



Background:

The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPV&FRA) is a statutory body established under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001, under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Government of India. The Authority is headquartered in New Delhi.

The primary objectives of the PPV&FRA are to:

- Grant intellectual property rights to plant breeders for their innovations in developing new plant varieties
- Recognise and reward farmers and communities who conserve traditional varieties and biodiversity
- Promote the protection of farmers' rights to save, use, sow, resow, exchange, share, and sell farm-saved seed of registered varieties
- Encourage research and innovation in plant breeding and agriculture
- Maintain the National Register of Plant Varieties (NRPV) and ensure the documentation and conservation of valuable germplasm resources

The Authority also plays a pivotal role in safeguarding farmers' traditional knowledge and ensuring equitable benefit sharing arising from the use of indigenous varieties. By bridging scientific innovation and traditional wisdom, the PPV&FRA has emerged as a key instrument in protecting India's agricultural biodiversity, ensuring seed sovereignty, and promoting sustainable development.

Over the past 21 years, the PPV&FRA has registered thousands of new and traditional varieties, acknowledged the contribution of farmer communities, and incentivised conservation efforts through financial and institutional recognition.

The celebration of the Act's Silver Jubilee and the Authority's 21st Foundation Day marks a significant milestone in India's journey toward inclusive, sustainable, and farmer-centric agricultural development. The Authority continues to advance the vision of a resilient and biodiverse agricultural ecosystem in alignment with the principles of Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India).

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