



Aizawl Hosts its first-ever Regional Cooperative Reform Conference in Mizoram under the vision of “Sahkar se Samriddhi”

Cooperative Movement Reaching India’s Farthest Corners; Ministry of Cooperation Expands Reform Outreach Across Remote North-Eastern Regions

Ministry of Cooperation Reviews Progress of Cooperative Reforms in North-East; Focus on Strengthening PACS, Organic Value Chains, Banking, Market Linkages and Grain Storage Infrastructure

**“One-Size-Fits-All Approach Cannot Work in North-East; Cooperative Policies Must Reflect Regional Realities”:
Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation**

Ministry of Cooperation Assures Full Support to North-Eastern States for Capacity Building, Cooperative Banking and Market Linkages

Technology Integration, Stronger Cooperative Credit and Modern Value Chains Key Focus Areas at Aizawl Regional Conference

North-East Cooperative Sector Holds Immense Potential in Organic Farming, Local Value Chains and Rural Entrepreneurship

Cyber Security and Digital Readiness now Essential for Cooperative Institutions

‘Cooperation Among Cooperatives’ Campaign to be Expanded Across North-East on Gujarat Model

North-East States Asked to Accelerate PACS-led Credit Outreach and Cooperative Infrastructure Development

World's Largest Grain Storage Plan to be Implemented in Mission Mode Across North-East States

National Cooperative Networks to Help North-East Organic and Indigenous Products Reach Domestic and Global Markets

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As part of the nationwide cooperative reform initiatives inspired by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Sahkar se Samriddhi" and being undertaken under the leadership of Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah, the Ministry of Cooperation today organised the Second Regional Conference on Cooperative Reforms in Aizawl, Mizoram. The conference forms part of a series of regional and national workshops being conducted across the country to strengthen grassroots cooperative institutions and accelerate cooperative-led development. The first regional conference under this initiative was held earlier in Jaipur.

The conference also marked the first-ever regional cooperative reform conference being organised in Mizoram, reflecting the Ministry's continued efforts to take the cooperative movement to the farthest corners of the country and deepen the reach of cooperative reforms in remote and geographically challenging regions of the North-East. The Ministry highlighted that cooperative development is now increasingly expanding beyond traditional regions and reaching far-flung rural and border areas, bringing new opportunities for local communities through cooperative-led economic models.

The regional conference brought together senior officials from the Ministry of Cooperation, representatives of all North-Eastern States including Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim, along with representatives from NABARD, NCDC, NAFED, NCCF, NDDB, NFDB, NEDFi and various cooperative institutions. Participating states made detailed presentations highlighting the progress achieved in the cooperative sector and the initiatives being undertaken by their respective cooperation departments for strengthening dairy cooperatives, cooperative banking, grain storage infrastructure, PACS expansion, fisheries and value-chain development. States also shared their experiences in promoting exports and market linkages for organic and indigenous products, which remain one of the major strengths and unique opportunities of the North-Eastern region.

The Ministry of Cooperation highlighted that the North-East remains one of the priority regions for cooperative expansion and inclusive economic growth. Despite geographical challenges, sparse population density and connectivity constraints, the region possesses immense opportunities in organic farming, horticulture, spices, fisheries, bamboo, forest produce and community-led enterprises. The Ministry observed that cooperative models can become a strong instrument for improving rural livelihoods, expanding market access and strengthening local economic systems across the region.

The conference noted that several North-Eastern states are already making encouraging progress in cooperative-led development. The Ministry emphasized that cooperative reforms can help transform local strengths and indigenous products into sustainable economic opportunities for farmers, women and rural youth.

Addressing the concluding session, Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation, Government of India, Dr. Ashish Kumar Bhutani said that the workshop provided an important platform to understand the unique realities and implementation challenges faced by North-Eastern states. He observed that geographical distance from the mainland, connectivity constraints and local socio-economic conditions require customized and flexible approaches for successful implementation of cooperative schemes in the region. He emphasized that a “one-size-fits-all” model cannot work effectively in the North-East and that state-specific solutions and adaptive guidelines are essential for ensuring smooth implementation of programs.

The Secretary stated that the Ministry has been regularly engaging with states through monthly video conferences and periodic offline review meetings to better understand implementation challenges and improve coordination. He appreciated the detailed presentations made during the conference, noting that they provided important insights into both ministry-level functioning and field-level realities in the North-Eastern region.

Emphasizing the importance of capacity building, Dr. Bhutani said there is a strong need to strengthen planning, conceptualization and execution capabilities at the state level. He assured all North-Eastern states that the Ministry of Cooperation is committed to providing full support, including manpower and financial assistance, for strengthening state cooperative banks and improving implementation capacity under various schemes.

The Secretary informed that the Ministry is also working towards reviving and upgrading several key programs and new schemes are expected to receive approval soon at the Union Cabinet level, which would further strengthen cooperative infrastructure and grassroots implementation.

Highlighting cooperative banking reforms as a major focus area, Dr. Bhutani said that efforts are underway to standardize technology platforms across urban cooperative banks in order to reduce duplication, improve efficiency and provide modern banking services to customers. He noted that nearly 1,500 urban cooperative banks currently procure technology services independently, resulting in higher costs and fragmented systems. The proposed integrated approach would strengthen customer trust and improve operational efficiency across cooperative banking institutions. He urged urban cooperative banks to actively participate in the modernization initiative and stated that financial structuring support is being facilitated through institutions such as NCDC along with support from state and central agencies.

The Secretary further highlighted that the Ministry is working with FCI and other agencies to improve the efficiency of the Public Distribution System by reducing duplication in transportation and streamlining storage and distribution systems. He said these reforms would help lower operational costs and improve delivery mechanisms at the grassroots level. Referring to the World’s Largest Grain Storage Plan, the Secretary said the Ministry has set ambitious targets and is working in mission mode to strengthen cooperative infrastructure across states, including the North-East. He stressed the need for collective efforts to achieve these goals and improve agricultural credit outreach through cooperative institutions.

Dr. Bhutani also emphasized the importance of strengthening exports and market linkages for farmers through cooperative institutions. He stated that national-level institutions are being developed to support branding, packaging, certification and marketing of cooperative products. Initiatives such as “Bharat Organics” are being promoted to help farmers access larger domestic and international markets. He added that the Ministry is ready to support states with infrastructure, machinery and standard operating procedures for these activities.

Highlighting the role of NCDC, the Secretary said the organization continues to play a significant role in financing cooperative initiatives and supporting developmental activities across sectors. State governments were encouraged to actively engage with NCDC and make effective use of available institutional resources.

The Ministry also informed that efforts are underway in coordination with the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) and other agencies to leverage infrastructure development schemes for maximum benefit to North-Eastern states. A special session during the conference focused on the revival and strengthening of the cooperative sector in the North-East. The Ministry informed that a dedicated project has been sanctioned to NEDFi for undertaking a detailed study on cooperative sector revival in three North-Eastern states. Based on the findings, best practices and successful implementation models, a larger framework will subsequently be replicated across other North-Eastern states to accelerate cooperative-led development in the region.

Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram, Shri K.R. Meena, who was also present during the conference, welcomed all dignitaries and participants in Mizoram and thanked the Ministry of Cooperation, Government of India for continuously supporting and promoting cooperative development in Mizoram. He assured that the Government of Mizoram would leave no stone unturned in ensuring effective implementation of the various initiatives and reforms being undertaken by the Ministry for strengthening cooperative institutions and expanding development across sectors in the state.

The conference also focused on strengthening dairy and fisheries cooperatives, particularly in states such as Assam where strong potential exists for expansion of cooperative-led value chains and productivity enhancement. The Ministry reiterated its commitment to supporting these sectors through targeted interventions and collaborative initiatives with concerned ministries.

The workshop featured thematic sessions on strengthening value chains and market linkages, cooperative banking reforms, cyber security preparedness, implementation of the World's Largest Grain Storage Plan, formation and strengthening of MPACS, dairy and fisheries cooperatives, innovative field-level success stories and development strategies for cooperatives in the North-East. Presentations were made by representatives from NABARD, NEDFi, NCDC, NDDB, NFDB and state cooperative departments.

The conference concluded with a collective commitment by the Centre, States and cooperative institutions to work together towards strengthening cooperative-led development in the North-East and ensuring that cooperative reforms contribute meaningfully towards rural prosperity, livelihood generation and the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

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