



Minister of Food Processing Industry Shri Chirag Paswan Inaugurates SAPLING (South Asian Policy Leadership for Improved Nutrition and Growth) DIALOGUE- 2026

Regional High-Level Policy Dialogue "Unlocking Value" in Ahmedabad on June 9th -10th 2026

Event co-hosted by Ministry of Food Processing Industries, India and World Bank Group aims to advance food processing for employment generation and sustainable growth in South Asia

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The Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Government of India, in collaboration with the World Bank Group-led SAPLING initiative, inaugurated the Regional High-Level Policy Dialogue titled “Unlocking Value: Advancing Food Processing for Employment Generation and Sustainable Growth in South Asia” in Ahmedabad, Gujarat on 9th June 2026.

The two-day regional dialogue brings together around 200 participants including policymakers, industry leaders, development partners, innovators, researchers, startups, and representatives from South Asian countries to deliberate on strengthening food processing ecosystems and building resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food systems in the region.

Union Minister for Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Shri Chirag Paswan, while addressing the inaugural session, highlighted India’s growing role as a global food processing hub and emphasized the importance of value addition, technology adoption, and regional collaboration in transforming South Asia’s food economy.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Chirag Paswan said that food processing is the bridge between agriculture and prosperity and has immense potential to generate employment, reduce post-harvest losses, improve farmer incomes, and strengthen food security. He noted that India’s policy initiatives and infrastructure development efforts are helping create globally competitive food value chains.

Shri Jitubhai Vaghani, Minister of Agriculture, Government of Gujarat appreciated the participation from various countries in this historic occasion of SAPLING, 2026. Shri Vaghani also emphasized the food processing sector as engine of agricultural transformation and shared the commitment of the Government of Gujarat to foster agro-industrial sector as driver of employment, value addition and overall growth of the economy. To further this cause and bridge the gap between agriculture and industry, he advocated for a National Institute for Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management campus in Gujarat.

The opening plenary featured participation from senior dignitaries including Mr. Paul Procee, Acting Country Director for India, World Bank; Ms. Archana Vyas, Country Director for India, Gates Foundation; and Shri Avinash Joshi, Secretary, MoFPI.

The dialogue includes thematic sessions on:

- Think Big, Act Local Unlocking South Asia's Food Processing Opportunity.
- From Farm to Factory: Strengthening Agricultural Supply Chains for Food Processing.
- From Shadow to Spotlight: Formalizing informal food processors (*Bringing small processors into regulate value chains*).
- Smart Tech, Bold Innovations: Transforming Food Processing Through Technology.
- Safe food, strong markets: Health, Quality and Standards for competitive Trade.
- Farm, Firm and Finance: Mobilizing Investment for Food Processing Growth.
- Shaping a Shared Food Future: Regional Collaboration and Policy Action in South Asia

Senior representatives from leading global and Indian organizations including Nestlé, Bayer, Rabobank, Ajinomoto, ITC, SEWA, NABARD, and Food Industry Asia are participating in the discussions.

An Innovation Fair has also been organized alongside the dialogue, showcasing breakthrough solutions in cold chain logistics, digital traceability, sustainable packaging, smart processing technologies and storage systems. The fair aims to strengthen partnerships between innovators, policymakers, and industry stakeholders.

On the occasion, the report titled “Assessment of the Level of Food Processing in India”, commissioned by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries was released by the Ministers and dignitaries. The report presents a comprehensive assessment of food processing levels across major agricultural commodities and highlights the significant progress made in India's food processing sector, with overall processing levels increasing from around 10% in 2016 to nearly 17% in 2023. The study also identifies substantial opportunities for value addition in perishable commodities such as fruits, vegetables and dairy, and provides strategic policy recommendations to strengthen infrastructure, reduce post-harvest losses, enhance farmer incomes and boost India's global competitiveness in the food economy.

The Regional High Level Policy Dialogue SAPLING is aligned with the World Bank Group's AgriConnect initiative and SAPLING platform, which seek to accelerate resilient and nutrition-focused food systems across South Asia through policy reform, investment mobilization, and technology-driven solutions.

The dialogue is expected to foster cross-country learning, strengthen regional cooperation, encourage private investment, support MSMEs, and identify practical pathways for food processing-led growth and employment generation in South Asia.





CMC - MoFPI

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इस विज्ञप्ति को इन भाषाओं में पढ़ें: Telugu , Urdu , हिन्दी , Gujarati , Tamil