



SAPLING Dialogue 2026 Concludes with Call for concrete action plan for holistic development of the food processing Sector

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The two-day Regional High-Level Policy Dialogue “SAPLING (South Asian Policy Leadership for Improved Nutrition and Growth) Dialogue 2026”, jointly organized by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Government of India and the World Bank Group concluded successfully on June 10, 2026 in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

The Dialogue, held under the theme “*Unlocking Value: Advancing Food Processing for Employment Generation and Sustainable Growth in South Asia*”, brought together around 200 participants including policymakers, industry leaders, international organizations, development partners, researchers, startups, financial institutions, and representatives from South Asian countries to deliberate on strengthening resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food systems in the region. The 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.

Addressing the concluding session, Shri Avinash Joshi, Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing Industries Government of India emphasized that food processing is not merely an economic opportunity but a national and regional imperative for South Asia. Highlighting India’s commitment through its flagship schemes and long-term development vision, he reaffirmed that India stands ready to serve as both a catalyst and a committed partner in advancing regional food processing transformation. He further underlined that food processing-led growth must focus on employment generation, MSMEs, women entrepreneurs, and farmer welfare, ensuring that the benefits of growth reach rural communities and small businesses.

Highlighting the importance of collaboration, Shri Joshi stated that governments, industry, and development institutions must work together to translate ideas into impactful action. He noted that the SAPLING Dialogue has demonstrated the strength of multi-stakeholder partnerships in advancing resilient and sustainable food systems across South Asia.

On behalf of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Shri Joshi expressed deep appreciation to the World Bank Group and the entire SAPLING team for conceptualizing and co-organizing the Dialogue. He also thanked the distinguished delegates from South Asian countries for their valuable contributions, noting that their perspectives enriched the deliberations and reinforced the spirit of regional solidarity and cooperation.

The two-day SAPLING Dialogue 2026 concluded with a strong call for a concrete action plan and deeper collaboration between the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) and the World Bank Group for the holistic development of the food processing sector in South Asia.



sustainable growth in South Asia





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(रिलीज़ आईडी: 2271308) आगंतुक पटल : 357
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