



International Capacity Building Programme on Fisheries Cooperatives Inaugurated at VAMNICOM to Strengthen Sri Lankan Fisheries Sector

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The Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management (VAMNICOM), Pune, today launched an ambitious international capacity-building initiative aimed at enhancing the viability and sustainability of fisheries cooperatives in Sri Lanka. The week-long programme 15th – 22nd September 2026, titled “Exposure Visits to Indian Cooperatives for Strengthening and Building Viable Fisheries Cooperatives in Sri Lanka,” commenced amid a ceremony attended by distinguished officials and cooperative leaders from both countries.

Organized in collaboration with the High Commission of India in Colombo and Sri Lanka’s Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resources, the programme seeks to foster knowledge exchange and institutional learning between Indian and Sri Lankan fisheries sectors. The initiative underscores the importance of cooperative models in addressing challenges faced by fishing communities, including limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, market fluctuations, climate risks, and post-harvest losses.

The inaugural session began with traditional ceremonial lighting and Saraswati Vandana, followed by the national anthems of India and Sri Lanka. Hon. Mr. Nadaraja Sivalingam, Additional Secretary at Sri Lanka’s Ministry of Fisheries, emphasized the critical need for capacity building and cross-border collaboration to empower fishing communities and promote sustainable development.

Dr. Suva Kanta Mohanty, Director, VAMNICOM, highlighted fisheries’ vital role in supporting livelihoods, food security, and rural development. They stressed that well-governed, professionally managed cooperatives could serve as effective tools for addressing sectoral challenges while fostering social inclusion and environmental responsibility.

Dr. Mohanty elaborated on persistent issues faced by fishing communities, such as access to institutional finance, infrastructure gaps, market dependence, and climate-related vulnerabilities. He emphasized that cooperative institutions, through collective action, can facilitate access to quality inputs, financial services, technology, and markets ultimately leading to improved incomes and enhanced livelihoods.

Participants from Sri Lanka will visit selected Indian cooperatives and institutions to gain practical insights into governance, financial management, fish procurement, processing, storage, branding, digital platforms, and sustainability initiatives. The visits aim to adapt successful Indian practices to Sri Lanka’s unique legal and socio-economic context, fostering models that are economically viable, socially inclusive, and environmentally sustainable.

This programme not only reflects the historic, cultural, and economic ties between India and Sri Lanka but also aims to deepen cooperation in fisheries, capacity development, and community empowerment. By promoting shared learning and institutional strengthening, it aspires to bolster the resilience and welfare of fishing communities in both nations.

VAMNICOM reaffirmed its commitment to fostering international cooperation through training, research, consultancy, and expert exchanges. Participants were encouraged to leverage this opportunity for professional growth, institutional reflection, and collaborative problem-solving, with a focus on translating insights into actionable strategies for Sri Lanka's fisheries sector. The programme is expected to lay the foundation for a sustained network of cooperative institutions and professionals committed to advancing inclusive and sustainable fisheries development. The event concluded with a group photograph of participants and organizers, symbolizing the beginning of a fruitful partnership aimed at transforming fisheries cooperatives and uplifting fishing communities.

Led by Programme Director Dr. D. Ravi, the initiative aims to lay a strong foundation for a sustained network of cooperative institutions and professionals dedicated to advancing inclusive and sustainable fisheries development.

Prof. Smt. Vijayashri Bhagawati, VAMNICOM, delivered the Vote of Thanks, marking the closure of the inauguration ceremony.



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