



“Immense Opportunities in Food Processing; Youth Should Become Job Creators, Not Job Seekers”: Shri Chirag Paswan

260 students receive degrees at NIFTEM-K's 7th Convocation; 8 meritorious students awarded Gold Medals

Quality of Indian products is closely linked to the global reputation of 'Brand India': Shri Chirag Paswan

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Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, Shri Chirag Paswan, today said that India's food processing sector offers immense opportunities and has the potential to play a major role in generating employment, promoting entrepreneurship, strengthening farmers' incomes and enhancing India's global presence. Shri Paswan is the Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, while Shri Avinash Joshi is the Secretary of the Ministry.

Addressing the 7th Convocation of the National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management, Kundli (NIFTEM-K), Shri Paswan urged graduating students not to restrict themselves to becoming job seekers, but to emerge as job creators, innovators and solution providers. NIFTEM-K's official portal also identifies the 2026 event as its 7th Convocation.

He said that despite the progress made in recent years, the food processing sector continues to offer enormous untapped potential. The sector can contribute simultaneously to better food quality, value addition, stronger economic opportunities for farmers, employment generation and reduction of food wastage.



Shri Paswan said India's vast agricultural base, diversity of produce and large consumer market give the country the strength to emerge as a "Global Food Basket". He underlined the need to take food value chains, processing facilities and technology closer to farms and rural areas so that the benefits of food processing reach producers at the grassroots.

Calling upon students to think beyond conventional pathways, he urged them to use technology, innovation and entrepreneurship to find solutions to emerging challenges. He assured young innovators that the Government would support new ideas and initiatives aimed at strengthening the sector.



The Minister also made a strong appeal for maintaining quality, stressing that there should be no compromise on quality in the food sector. He said that the quality of an Indian product affects not merely the reputation of an individual company, but also the standing of "Brand India" in global markets.



Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Shri Avinash Joshi, highlighted the wider role of food processing in reducing food wastage, enhancing nutrition and value addition, creating livelihood opportunities and encouraging entrepreneurship. He emphasised the importance of developing skilled human resources and encouraging students and researchers to pursue ideas and innovations that can create value on a larger scale.

Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra, Chairman, Board of Governors, NIFTEM-K, emphasised that the knowledge and skills acquired by students should contribute not only to their individual careers but also to the progress of the country and society. NIFTEM-K officially lists Dr. Mohapatra as Chairperson of its Board of Governors.



He stressed the need to strengthen NIFTEM-K's research, skilled human resource and innovation ecosystem, and called for disruptive innovations that could help India achieve global leadership in food technology, safe and nutritious food, sustainable processing and value addition. Joshi Sir Sec

NIFTEM-K Director Dr. Harinder Singh Oberoi said that the Institute has made significant progress in academics, research, infrastructure and industry partnerships.



A total of 260 students received degrees at the Convocation, comprising 140 B.Tech., 78 M.Tech., 18 MBA and 24 Ph.D. students. Eight meritorious students were awarded Gold Medals in recognition of their academic excellence and dedication.



Dr. Oberoi said that NIFTEM-K's endeavour is to equip students not only with academic qualifications but also with capabilities in research, innovation, entrepreneurship and industry-oriented learning, enabling them to respond effectively to the evolving needs of the food sector.

Dr. R. S. Sodhi, President (Food and Agriculture), Reliance Retail Ltd., said that this was one of the most opportune times for professionals to enter India's food sector. His current industry designation is President (Food and Agriculture), Reliance Retail Ltd.

Dr. Sodhi described food as a relatively recession-resilient sector, noting that while consumers may postpone several discretionary purchases, food remains an essential everyday requirement. He said that with a population of more than 1.4 billion and changing consumption patterns, India offers substantial opportunities across the food value-addition ecosystem.



Shri Deepak Agarwal, Chairman and Managing Director, Bikaji Foods International Limited, encouraged graduating students to make full use of emerging opportunities in the food industry and described them as the future of the sector. Bikaji's official corporate information confirms Shri Agarwal as Chairman and Managing Director.

The speakers collectively underlined that NIFTEM-K's role extends beyond academic education. As an institution connecting research, industry, entrepreneurship and Government, it has the potential to play an increasingly important role in strengthening India's food processing ecosystem and nurturing the next generation of innovators, professionals and entrepreneurs.

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