



India to become the global leader in coconut production and productivity

Message of Shri Radha Mohan Singh, Honourable Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India on the 20th World Coconut Day 2018 celebrations.

Coconut palm the 'Kalpavriksha' is Nature's great boon to the healthy and wealthy life of mankind. Coconut is known to have been cultivated for thousands of years in our country. Coconut is an inevitable part of our culture and tradition, religious and social practices, folk lore, food and drink. In folklores coconut is the fruit which provides nutrition, it is our heritage and our legacy. The tree is mankind's true friend and a symbol of national integration.

Every year 2nd September is celebrated as World Coconut Day to commemorate the formation day of Asian Pacific Coconut Community (APCC). APCC is an intergovernmental organization of 18 member countries mandated to promote, coordinate and harmonize coconut developmental activities of the Asian Pacific region to achieve maximum economic development. India is one of the founder members of APCC. In India, World Coconut Day is celebrated every year under the aegis of Coconut Development Board in various coconut growing states across the country. The theme announced by APCC for this year's World Coconut Day is Coconut for Good Health, Wealth & Wellness.

India stands first in global coconut production and productivity. The annual coconut production of India is 2437.80 crore coconuts and the productivity is 11616 coconuts per hectare. The crop is cultivated in 20.98 lakh hectare. The crop contributes Rs.3,41,00 crore to GDP annually. More than one crore people depend on this crop for their livelihood.

National Horticulture Mission is implementing various aspirational schemes for the integrated

development of coconut in the country and through these schemes farmers throughout the country get updated on scientific coconut cultivation, product processing, marketing and export.

For the implementation of Horticulture Mission programmes, an amount of Rs. 61.47 crore and Rs. 89.23 crores was allocated during 2016-17 and 2017-18 respectively in the state of Chhattisgarh. An amount of Rs. 205 crore is provisionally allocated for implementing Horticulture Mission programmes in 2018-19 and an amount of Rs. 57 crore 50 lakhs is already released for the same.

Coconut occupies an area of 1270 ha in Chhattisgarh and about 1.02 crore coconuts are produced with a productivity of 7992 nuts per ha Sukhma, Dantewada, Bijapur, Bastar, Kondagaon, Narayanpur, Durg, Kanker, Dhamtari, Raipur are the few districts in which coconut is cultivated in the State. Since 1985-86, the Board has been implementing various development Schemes in the unified Madhya Pradesh with major thrust for expanding the area under coconut. Besides this, programmes like integrated farming, Technology Mission on Coconut, formation of Farmer Producer Organizations, skill development programmes, FoCT, Coconut palm and Kera Suraksha Insurance schemes, extension, publicity and market promotion activities are undertaken for the coconut productivity improvement in the state

Under Kera Suraksha Insurance Scheme all the trainees from the first day of training will be covered under insurance scheme and the premium during the first year will fully borne by the central government under 'Kera Suraksha Insurance

Scheme' which provides insurance coverage to the coconut tree climbers @ Rs.2 lakh. The annual premium of the policy is only Rs. 94.40 (including GST) of which Rs. 71.40 is borne by the Board and Rs. 23 is contributed by the coconut tree climbers. The scheme is implemented in all coconut growing states.

Coconut Development Board has made significant contribution for the remarkable achievements made in the coconut industry in the country. Coconut farmers can be led to prosperity only through value addition of coconut. For this Coconut Development Board is implementing the Technology Mission on Coconut programme under which 480 coconut processing units are established which is having the capacity to process 274 crore coconuts per year.

After the Narendra Modi Government has sworn in, Board has taken up many new initiatives for the development of coconut in the country and I have got the opportunity to be closely associated with this sector. It is worth mentioning that 9633 Coconut Producer Societies, 740 Coconut Producer Federations and 67 Coconut Producer Companies are established in the country. I hope that all the schemes of the Board will be implemented through these farmer collectives and the farmers will assert their right over the processing, marketing and import of coconut products.

Coconut Development Board has made laudable achievements under its skill development programmes in coconut sector viz. Friends of Coconut Tree (FoCT) Training Programme and the Neera Technician training programme and has given training to more than 60998 FoCTs and 2637 Neera Technicians.

Board through its various sponsored research programmes could bring before the world the goodness of not only coconut oil but also tender coconut and other coconut products. Now we know that coconut oil is having medium chain fatty acids which is disease resistant and heart friendly and virgin coconut oil can prevent premature ageing. Research has proved that Virgin coconut oil is effective in curing diabetes, cancer and Alzheimer disease. I request all of you to kindly take on this sacred fruit which is the identity of our tradition and culture and let us enjoy the innumerable benefits of this fruit for the wellness of our families.

I am happy to inform the coconut farmers, that Government of India has increased the Minimum Support Price of Milling Copra from Rs. 6500 per

Quintal to Rs. 7511 per Quintal and for Ball copra from Rs 6785 per Quintal to Rs.7757 per Quintal for 2018 season.

Besides this, Government of India has declared up to 5% incentive in the export value (FOB) in its new Foreign Trade Policy for 2015-20 for the promotion of coconut product export. Further, as the price of the coconut products are becoming highly competitive, a quantum leap in the export of coconut products is expected in the near future. During the year 2013-14, the country has exported coconut products approximately worth Rs. 1156 crore whereas in 2017-18 the export value has increased to Rs 1764 Crore. The total quantity of coconut oil exported to European countries during the year 2017-18 is 355.57 MT.

The schemes and other activities of the Board are being undertaken in the State through Board's Demonstration cum Seed Production Farm located in Kondagaon. DSP Farm of the Board is producing One lakh good quality coconut seedlings annually for meeting the seedling requirement of the farmers of the state. Under the Nursery and production related activities undertaken in the state, Board has covered around 800 ha in the State. Under the Integrated Farming for Productivity Improvement programme, around 50 ha demonstration plots have been developed so far and 60 organic manure units are established in the State with the assistance of the Board. Coconut Development Board is implementing the Friends of Coconut Tree programme in association with State Agricultural University, State Horticulture Dept and Rama Krishna Mutt in the State. So far more than 400 FoCTs are trained under the programme. An amount of Rs 45.55 lakhs is expended for the Area Expansion Programme in Chhattisgarh from 2001-02 to 2013-14 and an amount of Rs. One Crore 25 lakhs 90 thousand is expended for the same during 2014-15 to 2017-18. I am confident that the farmers of Chattisgarh will avail the benefits of the schemes implemented by the Board in the State and will take forward the coconut cultivation and industry in the state for their better Health, Wealth and Wellness.

I hope that Coconut Development Board will leave no stone unturned to fulfill the dreams of the farmers and beneficiaries through its whole hearted efforts. Our nation will become the global leader in not only the production and productivity of coconut but also in processing and export and the boundless goodness of coconut will emerge before the world.

Jai Hind