

## NCDC hikes funds for agri & milk cooperatives by 89% during 2014-17

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By : BioVoice Correspondent - July 17, 2017



**New Delhi: Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister, Mr Radha Mohan Singh said that the Indian cooperative movement has sustained itself as one of the biggest cooperative movements in the world. The reach of cooperative in India is from village to national level. Mr Singh said it at the inauguration of Cooperative Conference organised by Amreli District's Milk Producers Association Limited in Amreli, Gujarat.**

**The Minister further said that there are more than 7 lakh cooperatives in the country, which extends from village level committees to national level co-operative organisations. The cooperatives membership is over 40 crores and it includes about 97% villages and 71% rural households. Today, 16.9 per cent of agricultural cooperation, 29 percent of fertiliser production, 40 percent of sugar production, and 54 percent of weavers' cooperatives etc. are being contributed to the Indian economy.**

**Mr Singh said that Indian cooperatives have firmly established themselves in many sectors of the economy like dairy, banking, sugar, fertilisers, marketing, handloom, fisheries and**

construction. The cooperative societies facilitated the way of farmers by providing them with the inputs like loan, fertilisers and seeds. Today, the dairy cooperatives have carved an exclusive identity in the country and abroad. If there has been the growth of sugar mills, credit committees along with dairy in Gujarat and Maharashtra, the southern states witnessed the growth of fisheries and forests based cooperatives.

Agriculture Minister added that the National Cooperative Development Corporation provides assistance to the cooperatives for their overall development, which includes grants and loans from the Government. In Gujarat, financial assistance has been provided for the computerization of dairies, storage and cold storage cooperatives as well as sugar, textile and consumer cooperatives. Under these schemes, Rs 663.23 crore has been approved during the year 2014-2015, 2015-16 and 2016-17; and Rs 133.45 crore, Rs 272.97 crore and Rs 424.04 crore were released respectively. Rs 15143.76 had been released by National Cooperative Development Corporation during the three years (2011-14). On the other hand, the NDA Government increased this by 89.98% and released Rs 28117.31 crore during the three years (2014-17). The Minister called for the representatives of all cooperatives to seek assistance from different development programmes related to NCDC for the economic improvement of the cooperatives thus removing the regional imbalance.

Mr Singh said that cooperative education and training program is an important component of cooperative development. This is a continuous process to enable cooperatives. Training is necessary so that the committees get qualified and professional leadership. Until the efficient human resources are available, the extension of cooperatives will decrease. Therefore, there is a need for strengthening cooperative education and training system. The National Cooperative Development Corporation is making a concerted effort to develop cooperative movement in the country and is playing a significant role in educating, guiding and providing support to the member organisations for strengthening the cooperative sector.