

ACFI NEWSLETTER

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ACFI IN NEWS

FUTURE PROSPECTS

Indian agrochemical exports likely to cross Rs. 80,000-crore in four years: Report

India's agrochemical exports could exceed Rs. 80,000-crore in the next four years, according to a knowledge paper released at the 7th AGM of Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI).

1 Industry leaders who spoke at the AGM stated that this growth can come about if the government focuses on facilitating a conducive environment which includes streamlining licencing norms, improving infrastructure for storage and sale, incentivising biopesticide production, streamlining registration process for new molecules, entering trade agreements with countries with more relaxed MRL norms, introducing PLI-like scheme to attract investment from global players and reducing GST from 18% to 5%.

The knowledge paper, jointly prepared by ACFI and EY, highlighted that the introduction of PLI incentives for agrochemicals could boost investments by around Rs. 10,000-15,000-crore in the next five years.

Speaking at a panel discussion dur-



ing the AGM, Mr. Parikshit Mundhra, Chairman, ACFI, said, "The reliance on generic molecules, low agrochemical usage, the complex registration process for new molecules and heavy dependence on imports are some of the challenges that must be transformed into opportunities through the 'Make in India' initiatives."

Industry experts like Mr. Parikshith Jhaver, Founder & Promoter, Tagros Chemicals; Mr. Rajesh Aggarwal, MD, Insecticides India, Mr. Ankur Agarwal, MD, Crystal Crop Protection; and Mr. Maulik Mehta, CEO, Deepak Nitrite reiterated that the 'Make in India' ini-

ative has the potential to transform India's agrochemical industry into a global manufacturing and export powerhouse.

"As the fourth-largest producer of agrochemicals globally, India faces a paradox: while it holds significant production capacity, it still imports significant quantities of agrochemicals, primarily from China. The 'Make in India' initiative provides a timely framework to transform these challenges into opportunities, enabling India to become a global manufacturing and export hub for agrochemicals," said Dr. Kalyan Goswami, Director General of ACFI.

Agrochemical exports may hit ₹80K cr in 4 yrs: Report



The country's agrochemical exports could increase to over ₹80,000 crore in the next four years provided the industry is facilitated with a conducive environment, according to a report by ACFI and EY. A report by Industry body Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI) and EY titled 'Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, the challenges and the aspirations' noted that the exports of agrochemicals stood at ₹43,223 crore in FY23.

PTI

Report: Agrochemical exports may touch ₹80,000 cr in 4 years

INDIA'S AGROCHEMICAL EXPORTS could increase to over ₹80,000 crore in the next four years, provided the industry is facilitated with conducive environment, according to a report by industry body ACFI and EY. The report noted the exports of agrochemicals stood at ₹43,223 crore in FY23. The USP of India's agrochemical industry is their quality and affordable prices, it stated.

—PTI

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NEW DELHI

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A report by Industry body Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI) and EY titled 'Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, the challenges and the aspirations' noted that the exports of agrochemicals stood at Rs 43,223 crore in the 2022-23 fiscal. "India's Agrochemical exports outweigh the domestic consumption of the same. The Indian exports by agrochemical industry have witnessed commendable growth in recent times," said the re-



port which was released at the 7th AGM of ACFI held recently. ACFI said that the government must focus on facilitating a conducive environment which includes streamlining licencing norms and improving infrastructure for storage and sale, incentivise biopesticide production, streamline registration process for new molecules, enter trade agreements with countries with more relaxed MRL norms, introduce PLI-like scheme to attract investment from global players.



AGROCHEMICAL EXPORTS SET TO GROW: REPORT

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India's agrochemical exports outweigh the domestic consumption of the same. The exports by agrochemical industry have witnessed commendable growth in recent times, said the report.

"India's agrochemical industry plays a pivotal role in its agricultural success, supporting the increased crop yields and safeguarding the food security," ACFI director general Kalyan Goswami said.

— PTI

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PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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"The USP of India's agrochemical industry is their quality and affordable prices which makes their products the first choice of millions of farmers across 130 nations. If facilitated a conducive environment, the sector shows the potential of

achieving exports of over Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years," the report said.

The industry body also pitched for reducing GST from 18 per cent to 5 per cent.

"The reliance on generic molecules, low agrochemical usage, the complex registration process for new molecules and heavy dependence on imports are some of the challenges that must be transformed into opportunities through the 'Make in India' initiatives," Parikshit Mundhra, Chairman, ACFI said.

Given its role in enhancing agricultural productivity and export potential, he said the agrochemical industry will play a vital role in India's quest of becoming a global manufacturing hub ultimately resulting in a USD 5 trillion economy by 2025.

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The "Make in India" initiative provides a timely framework to transform these challenges into opportunities, enabling India to become a global manufacturing and export hub for agrochemicals, he added.

Agrochemical usage (kg/ha) is lower in the Indian market.

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ભારતની એગ્રોકેમિકલ નિકાસ 2028 સુધીમાં રૂ. 80,000 કરોડને વટાવી જશે: ACFI-EY રિપોર્ટ

એગ્રોકેમિકલ ઇન્ડસ્ટ્રી (ACFI) અને EY દ્વારા



તાજેતરનો અહેવાલ દર્શાવે છે કે ભારતની એગ્રોકેમિકલ નિકાસ આગામી ચાર વર્ષમાં સંભવિતપણે રૂ. 80,000 કરોડને વટાવી શકે છે, જો ઉદ્યોગને યોગ્ય

સમર્થન અને અનુકૂળ ઓપરેટિંગ વાતાવરણ મળે. ભારતીય એગ્રોકેમિકલ ઇન્ડસ્ટ્રી: ઇસ્ટોરી, ઇ ચેલેન્જીસ એન્ડ એસ્પિરેશન્સ' શીર્ષક ધરાવતા અભ્યાસમાં જણાવાયું છે કે 2022-23ના નાણાકીય વર્ષમાં કૃષિ રસાયણની નિકાસ રૂ. 43,223 કરોડ સુધી પહોંચી હતી.

ઉલ્લેખનીય છે કે, ભારતની કૃષિ રસાયણ નિકાસ હાલમાં સ્થાનિક વપરાશને વટાવી જાય છે, આ ક્ષેત્રે તાજેતરના સમયમાં નોંધપાત્ર વૃદ્ધિનો અનુભવ કર્યો છે. આ અંદાજિત વૃદ્ધિ હાંસલ કરવા માટે, ACFI ઘણા મુખ્ય પગલાંની ભલામણ કરે છે.

તેમાં લાઇસન્સિંગના ધોરણોને સુવ્યવસ્થિત કરવા, સંગ્રહ અને વેચાણ માટે ઇન્ફ્રાસ્ટ્રક્ચરમાં સુધારો, બાયોપેસ્ટીસાઇડ ઉત્પાદનને પ્રોત્સાહન આપવા અને નવા પરમાણુઓ માટે નોંધણી પ્રક્રિયાને સરળ બનાવવાનો સમાવેશ થાય છે. ઉદ્યોગ મંડળ વધુ લવચીક મહત્તમ અવશેષ મર્યાદા (MRL) ધોરણો ધરાવતા દેશો સાથે વેપાર કરાર સ્થાપિત કરવા અને વૈશ્વિક રોકાણને આકર્ષવા માટે ઉત્પાદન-લિંક્ડ ઇન્સેન્ટિવ (PLI) યોજના રજૂ કરવાનું પણ સૂચન કરે છે. આ અહેવાલ ગુણવત્તા અને પોષણક્ષમતામાં ભારતીય કૃષિ રસાયણ ઉદ્યોગના સ્પર્ધાત્મક લાભને પ્રકાશિત કરે છે, જે તેના ઉત્પાદનોને 130 દેશોમાં ખેડૂતો માટે પસંદગીની પસંદગી બનાવે છે.

80,000 करोड़ रुपए पर पहुंच सकता है कृषि रसायन निर्यात

एजेंसी ■ नई दिल्ली

भारत का कृषि रसायन निर्यात अगले चार साल में 80,000 करोड़ रुपए से अधिक हो सकता है, बशर्ते उद्योग को अनुकूल माहौल मिले। एएफसीआई और ईवाई की एक रिपोर्ट में यह अनुमान लगाया गया है। उद्योग निकाय एग्रो केम फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (एसीएफआई) और ईवाई की भारतीय कृषि रसायन उद्योग: कहानी, चुनौतियां और आकांक्षाएं शीर्षक वाली रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि वित्त वर्ष 2022-23 में कृषि रसायनों का निर्यात 43,223 करोड़ रुपए रहा था। हाल ही में आयोजित एसीएफआई की 7वीं सालाना आमसभा में जारी की गई रिपोर्ट में कहा गया, भारत का कृषि रसायन निर्यात इसकी घरेलू खपत से अधिक है। हाल के दिनों में कृषि रसायन उद्योग द्वारा भारतीय निर्यात में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि देखी गई है। एसीएफआई ने कहा कि सस्कार को अनुकूल माहौल बनाने पर ध्यान केंद्रित करना चाहिए, जिसमें लाइसेंसिंग मानदंडों को सुव्यवस्थित करना और भंडारण और बिक्री के लिए बुनियादी ढांचे में सुधार करना, जैव कीटनाशक उत्पादन को प्रोत्साहित करना, नए अणुओं (मॉल्युकूल) के लिए पंजीकरण प्रक्रिया को सुव्यवस्थित करना, अधिक शिथिल



एमआरएल मानदंडों वाले देशों के साथ व्यापार समझौते करना, वैश्विक कारोबारियों से निवेश आकर्षित करने के लिए पीएलआई जैसी योजना शुरू करना शामिल है। रिपोर्ट में कहा गया, भारत के कृषि रसायन उद्योग की खासियत उनकी गुणवत्ता और सस्ती कीमतें हैं, जो उनके उत्पादों को 130 देशों के लाखों किसानों की पहली पसंद बनाती हैं। अगर अनुकूल माहौल की सुविधा दी जाए, तो यह क्षेत्र अगले चार वर्षों में 80,000 करोड़ रुपए से अधिक का निर्यात स्तर हासिल करने की क्षमता दिखाता है। उद्योग निकाय ने माल एवं सेवा कर (जीएसटी) को 18 प्रतिशत से घटाकर पांच प्रतिशत करने की भी वकालत की। एसीएफआई के चेयरमैन परीक्षित मुंद्रा ने कहा, जेनेस्कि अणुओं पर निर्भरता, कम कृषि रसायन उपयोग, नए अणुओं के लिए जटिल पंजीकरण प्रक्रिया और आयात पर भारी निर्भरता कुछ ऐसी चुनौतियां हैं, जिन्हें मेक इन इंडिया पहल के माध्यम से अवसरों में बदलना होगा।

130 देशों में किसानों की पहली पसंद हैं भारतीय कृषि रसायन : एसीएफआई

ब्यूरो | नई दिल्ली. भारत से कृषि रसायनों के निर्यात में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि हुई है। एग्रो कैम फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (एसीएफआई) के मुताबिक यदि वृद्धि का यही क्रम जारी रहा तो अगले चार वर्षों में कृषि रसायनों के निर्यात का आंकड़ा 80,000 करोड़ रुपये के पार हो सकता है। एसीएफआई ने जारी नॉलेज पेपर में कहा कि भारतीय कृषि रसायन की अच्छी गुणवत्ता और किफायती दाम के चलते इसके उत्पाद 130 देशों में लाखों किसानों की पहली पसंद बने हुए हैं। उद्योग जगत के दिग्गजों ने निर्यात को बढ़ाने के लिए सरकार से अनुकूल माहौल बनाने का आग्रह

किया है। इसमें लाइसेंसिंग के नियमों को सुगम बनाना, स्टोरेज एवं सेल के लिए बुनियादी सुविधाओं में सुधार लाना, बेहतर एमआरएल नियमों के साथ देशों के साथ व्यवसायिक समझौते करना और जीएसटी को 18 फीसदी से कम कर 5 फीसदी पर लाना शामिल है। एसीएफआई के अध्यक्ष परीक्षित मुंध्रा ने कहा कि जेनेरिक मॉलीब्ड्यूल्स, कृषि रसायनों का कम इस्तेमाल, नए मॉलीब्ड्यूल्स के लिए जटिल रजिस्ट्रेशन प्रक्रिया और आयात पर भारी निर्भरता कुछ ऐसी चुनौतियां हैं, जिन्हें मेक इन इंडिया के माध्यम से अवसरों में बदला जा सकता है।

कृषि रसायनों के निर्माण और निर्यात के लिए सरकार का प्रोत्साहन जरूरी: एसीएफआई

नई दिल्ली। भारतीय कृषि रसायन उद्योग ने हाल ही में निर्यात में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि दर्ज की है, और विशेषज्ञों का मानना है कि यह अगले चार वर्षों में 80,000 करोड़ रुपये के आंकड़े को पार कर सकता है। एग्रो कैम फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (एसीएफआई) ने यहां अपने नॉलेज पेपर-इंडियन एग्रोकैमिकल इंडस्ट्री: द स्टोरी, द चैलेंजेज, द एस्पिरेशन्स-में इस उद्योग की संभावनाओं और चुनौतियों पर प्रकाश डाला।

नॉलेज पेपर के अनुसार: भारतीय कृषि रसायन उद्योग की गुणवत्ता और सस्ते दामों के कारण इसके उत्पाद 130 देशों में लाखों किसानों की पहली पसंद बने हुए हैं। उद्योग के दिग्गजों का कहना है कि अगर इस क्षेत्र को अनुकूल माहौल प्राप्त होता है, तो यह अगले चार वर्षों में 80,000 करोड़ रुपये के निर्यात आंकड़े को पार कर सकता है। एसीएफआई के



चेयरमैन, परीक्षित मुंध्रा ने पैनल चर्चा के दौरान कहा, जेनेरिक मॉलीब्ड्यूल्स की निर्भरता, कृषि रसायनों का कम उपयोग, और जटिल पंजीकरण प्रक्रिया ऐसी चुनौतियां हैं जिन्हें मेक इन इंडिया के माध्यम से अवसरों में बदला जा सकता है।

उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि कृषि क्षेत्र 3.8-4 फीसदी की वार्षिक वृद्धि दर से बढ़ रहा है और निर्धारित लक्ष्यों को प्राप्त करने के लिए इसे 9.3 फीसदी की वार्षिक वृद्धि दर से विकसित किया जाना चाहिए।

पैनल चर्चा में अन्य प्रमुख वक्ता जैसे परीक्षित झावेर, संस्थापक और प्रमोटर, टैगोस कैमिकल्स, राजेश अग्रवाल, एमडी, इन्सेक्टिसाइड्स इंडिया लिमिटेड, अंकुर अग्रवाल, एमडी, क्रिस्टल क्रॉप प्रोटेक्शन लिमिटेड, मिस आशीष कसद, सीनियर पार्टनर, ईवाय, और मौलिक मेहता, सीईओ, दीपक नाइट्राइट लिमिटेड ने भी मेक इन इंडिया पहल के अंतर्गत भारतीय कृषि रसायन उद्योग को वैश्विक निर्माण और निर्यात शक्ति में बदलने की क्षमता पर जोर दिया।

రూ. 80,000 కోట్లకు అప్!

ఏసీఎఫ్ఐ-ఈవై నివేదిక అంచనా • ప్రస్తుత విలువ రూ. 43,223 కోట్లు

న్యూఢిల్లీ: పరిశ్రమకు అనుకూలమైన పరిస్థితులు, అవకాశాలు కల్పిస్తే భారత్ వ్యవసాయ రసాయన ఎగుమతులు రాబోయే నాలుగేళ్లలో రూ. 80,000 కోట్లకు పెరిగే అవకాశం ఉందని ఏఎన్ఐఐ-ఈవై నివేదిక ఒకటి పేర్కొంది. ఇండస్ట్రీ ప్రతినిధ్య సంస్థ అగ్లో కెమ్ పెడరేషన్ ఆఫ్ ఇండియా (ఏసీఎఫ్ఐ)-ఈవై సంయుక్తంగా "భారత్ వ్యవసాయ రసాయన పరిశ్రమ: ప్రస్థానం, సవాళ్లు, అకాంక్షలు" అన్న శీర్షికన ఈ నివేదిక రూపొందించి, ఏసీఎఫ్ఐ ఏడవ సార్వత్రిక సమావేశం నేపథ్యంలో విడుదలైన ఈ నివేదికలోని కొన్ని ముఖ్యాంశాలు పరిశీలిస్తే...

→ 2022-23 ఆర్థిక సంవత్సరంలో వ్యవసాయ రసాయనాల ఎగుమతుల విలువ రూ. 43,223 కోట్లు.

→ భారత్ వ్యవసాయ రసాయన ఎగుమతులు దేశీయ వినియోగం కంటే ఎక్కువగా ఉన్నాయి. వ్యవసాయ రసాయన పరిశ్రమల దన్నుతో భారత్ ఎగుమతులు ఐటీవీ కాలంలో ప్రళంబ నీయమైన వృద్ధిని నమోదు చేసుకున్నాయి.

భారత్ మార్కెట్లో వ్యవసాయ రసాయన వినియోగం (కేజీ/హెక్టార్) తక్కువగా ఉంది. నివేదిక ప్రకారం భారత్ దేశం హెక్టార్కు 400 గ్రాముల వ్యవసాయ రసాయనాలను మాత్రమే వినియోగిస్తోంది. ఇది ప్రపంచ సగటు మొత్తం 2.8 కేజీ/హెక్టార్ కంటే తక్కువగా ఉంది.

→ లైసెన్సింగ్ నిబంధనలను త్రవ్వబెట్టడం, నిల్వ, విక్రయాల కోసం మౌలిక సదుపాయాలను మెరుగుపరచడం, బయోపెస్టిసైడ్ల ఉత్పత్తిని ప్రోత్సహించడం, కొత్త మాలిక్యులస్లకు సంబంధించి రిజిస్ట్రేషన్ ప్రక్రియను త్రవ్వ

బట్టికరించడం, సకలించిన ఎంటర్ప్రైజ్ నిబంధనలతో దేశంలో వాణిజ్య ఉత్పాదనను ప్రోత్సహించడం, అంతర్జాతీయ ఇన్వెస్టర్ల నుండి పెట్టుబడులను ఆకర్షించడానికి పీఎల్ఐ తరహాలో ఒక పథకాన్ని ఆవిష్కరించడం వంటివి చర్యలపై ప్రయత్నం దృష్టి సారించాలి. → వస్తు సేవల పన్నును (జీఎస్టీ) 18 శాతం నుంచి 5 శాతానికి తగ్గించాలని పరిశ్రమల సంఘం

భూదా కేంద్రానికి విజ్ఞప్తి చేస్తుండడం గమనార్హం.

→ 2025 నాటికి 5 ట్రెలియన్ డాలర్ల ఆర్థిక వ్యవస్థను సాధించగల దేశంగా భారత్ ప్రపంచ తయారీ కేంద్రంగా రూపొందాలి. ఇందుకు సంబంధించి వృద్ధి అవకాశాల అన్వేషణలో వ్యవసాయ రసాయన పరిశ్రమ కీలక పాత్ర పోషిస్తుంది. వ్యవసాయ ఉత్పాదకత, ఆహార భద్రత, ఎగుమతి సామర్థ్యాన్ని పెంపొందించడంలో అగ్లోకెమికల్ పరిశ్రమ పాత్ర ఎంతో కీలకం కానుంది.

→ ప్రపంచవ్యాప్తంగా నాణ్యత అతిపెద్ద వ్యవసాయ రసాయనాల ఉత్పాదకారుగా ఉన్నప్పటికీ, భారత్ దేశం ఒక వైరుధ్య పరిస్థితిని ఎదుర్కొంటోంది. దేశం గణనీయమైన ఉత్పత్తి సామర్థ్యాన్ని కలిగి ఉన్నప్పటికీ, ఇప్పటికీ గణనీయమైన స్థాయిలో వ్యవసాయ రసాయనాలను దిగుమతి చేసుకుంటుంది. ప్రత్యేకించి చైనా నుంచి ఈ దిగుమతులు జరుగుతున్నాయి.

→ "మేర్ ఇన్ ఇండియా" చారిత్రో పరిశ్రమ ఎదుర్కొంటున్న సవాళ్లను అధిగమించాల్సి ఉంది. అవకాశాలుగా మార్చడానికి సకాలంలో తగిన ప్రయత్నం చేయాలి. ఆయా చర్యలు దేశాన్ని వ్యవసాయ రసాయనాల కోసం ప్రపంచ తయారీ ఎగుమతి కేంద్రంగా మార్చడానికి దీని కల్పిస్తుంది.

India's agrochemical **exports** could increase to over Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years provided the industry is facilitated with conducive environment, according to a report by ACFI and EY. A report by Industry body Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI) and **EY** titled 'Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, the challenges and the aspirations' noted that the exports of **agrochemicals** stood at Rs 43,223 crore in the 2022-23 fiscal.

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"India's Agrochemical exports outweigh the domestic consumption of the same. The Indian exports by agrochemical industry have witnessed commendable growth in recent times," said the report which was released at the 7th AGM of ACFI held recently.



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Agrochemical Exports Could Soar To Rs 80,000 Crore With Proper Industry Support: Report

A report by Industry body Agro Chem Federation of India and EY noted that the exports of agrochemicals stood at Rs 43,223 crore in the 2022-23 fiscal.

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India's Agrochemical Exports to Reach Rs 80,000 Crore in 4 Years

By Rediff Money Desk, New Delhi Sep 09, 2024 15:18

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An ACFI-EY report predicts Indian agrochemical exports to exceed Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years with a conducive environment. The industry currently exports over Rs 43,000 crore and aims to capitalize on its competitive advantages, including quality and affordability, to achieve this target.

Agrochemicals exports may touch Rs 80,000 cr in 4 yrs: ACFI-EY report

The industry body also pitched for reducing GST from 18% to 5%.

'Make In India' Initiative To Help Agrochemicals Export Cross Rs 80,000 Cr In 4 Years

Exports by the Indian agrochemical industry have witnessed commendable growth in recent times and are likely to cross Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years, according to a new report.



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'Make In India' Initiative To Help Agrochemicals Export Cross Rs 80,000 Cr In 4 Years

The 'Make in India' initiative provides a timely framework to transform challenges into opportunities, enabling India to become a global manufacturing and export hub for agrochemicals.

Agrochemicals exports may touch Rs 80,000 cr in 4 yrs: ACFI-EY report



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New Delhi, Sep 9 (PTI) India's agrochemical exports could increase to over Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years provided the industry is facilitated with conducive environment, according to a report by ACFI and EY.

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"India's Agrochemical exports outweigh the domestic consumption of the same. The Indian exports by agrochemical industry have witnessed commendable growth in recent times," said the report which was released at the 7th AGM of ACFI held recently.

ACFI said that the government must focus on facilitating a conducive environment which includes streamlining licencing norms and improving infrastructure for storage and sale, incentivise biopesticide production, streamline registration process for new molecules, enter trade agreements with countries with more relaxed MRL norms, introduce PLI-like scheme to attract investment from global players.

"The USP of India's agrochemical industry is their quality and affordable prices which makes their products the first choice of millions of farmers across 130 nations.

Agrochemical industry is getting the benefit of 'Make in India', exports can cross Rs 80,000 crore in the next 4 years

Agrochemical industry is getting the benefit of 'Make in India', exports can cross Rs 80,000 crore in the next 4 years

Boosting India's Agrochemical Exports: A Path to Economic Growth

India's agrochemical exports are projected to exceed Rs 80,000 crore over the next four years, if the industry receives suitable support, according to a report by ACFI and EY. The industry's export potential could be maximized through favorable government policies, infrastructure improvements, and investment incentives.



नई दिल्ली: एएफसीआई-ईवाई द्वारा जारी एक ज्ञान पत्र "भारतीय कृषि रसायन उद्योग: कहानी, चुनौतियां, आकांक्षाएं" के अनुसार कृषि रसायन निर्यात में हाल ही में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि हुई है और अगले चार वर्षों में यह 80,000 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक हो सकता है। यह पत्र एग्रो केम फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (एसीएफआई) की मंगलवार को 7वीं वार्षिक आम बैठक में जारी किया गया।

पेपर में कहा गया है, "इस उद्योग की खासियत इसकी गुणवत्ता और किफायती कीमतों में निहित है, जो इसके उत्पादों को 130 देशों के लाखों किसानों की पहली पसंद बनाती है। अनुकूल माहौल के साथ, यह क्षेत्र अगले चार वर्षों में 80,000 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक का कृषि रसायन निर्यात हासिल कर सकता है।"

Government should encourage the manufacture and export of agricultural chemicals: ACFI

Edited By NavodayaTimes , Updated: 04 Sep, 2024 09:24 PM



New Delhi/Team Digital. Exports of agrochemicals have seen a significant rise in recent times and are expected to cross the Rs 80,000 crore mark in the next four years, according to a knowledge paper titled 'Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, The Challenges, The Aspirations' released by the Agro Chem Federation of

Government Should Provide Incentives for Agrochemical Manufacturing and Export: ACFI

India's agrochemical exports are projected to surpass Rs 80,000 crore in four years, fueled by high quality and affordability. Industry experts urge for regulatory and infrastructural improvements to unlock this growth and establish India as a global agrochemical powerhouse.

Government should reduce GST on agricultural chemicals from 18% to 5%: ACFI

According to a recently released ACFI-EY knowledge paper, Indian agrochemical exports could reach Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years. To achieve this growth, reforms in licensing norms, development of infrastructure, and reduction in GST rates have been recommended. The "Make in India" initiative has been cited as a key player in transforming the agrochemical industry into a global manufacturing and export power.



New Delhi: The agrochemical exports have shown remarkable growth recently and could exceed Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years, according to a knowledge paper by ACFI-EY titled "Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, the Challenges, the Aspirations." This paper was released at Tuesday's 7th AGM of the [Agro Chem Federation of India \(ACFI\)](#).

नयी दिल्ली, नौ सितंबर (भाषा) भारत का कृषि रसायन निर्यात अगले चार साल में 80,000 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक हो सकता है, बशर्ते उद्योग को अनुकूल माहौल मिले। एएफसीआई और ईवाई की एक रिपोर्ट में यह अनुमान लगाया गया है।

उद्योग निकाय एग्रो केम फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (एसीएफआई) और ईवाई की 'भारतीय कृषि रसायन उद्योग: कहानी, चुनौतियां और आकांक्षाएं' शीर्षक वाली रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि वित्त वर्ष 2022-23 में कृषि रसायनों का निर्यात 43,223 करोड़ रुपये रहा था।

हाल ही में आयोजित एसीएफआई की 7वीं सालाना आमसभा में जारी की गई रिपोर्ट में कहा गया, "भारत का कृषि रसायन निर्यात इसकी घरेलू खपत से अधिक है। हाल के दिनों में कृषि रसायन उद्योग द्वारा भारतीय निर्यात में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि देखी गई है।"

Streamline registration process for new agrochemical molecules and reduce GST to 5% on agrochemicals from 18%

The agrochemical exports have recorded a significant growth in recent times and could exceed Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years, according to a knowledge paper by ACFI-EY titled Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, the challenges, the aspirations, released at the 7th AGM of Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI) on Tuesday.

"The USP of India agrochemical industry is their quality and affordable prices which makes their products as the first choice of millions of farmers across 130 nations. If facilitated a conducive environment, the sector shows the potential of achieving exports of over Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years," the knowledge paper stated.

Industry leaders said that for exports to grow, the government must focus on facilitating a conducive environment which includes streamlining licencing norms and improving infrastructure for storage and sale, incentivise biopesticide production, streamline registration process for new molecules, enter trade agreements with countries with more relaxed MRL norms, introduce PLI-like scheme to attract investment from global players and reduce GST from 18% to 5%.

The paper further highlighted that the introduction of PLI incentives for agrochemicals can boost investment of around Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000 crore in the next 5 years.

Speaking at the panel discussion, Parikshit Mundhra, Chairman, ACFI said, "The reliance on generic molecules, low agrochemical usage, the complex registration process for new molecules and heavy dependence on imports are some of the challenges that must be transformed into opportunities through the "Make in India" initiatives."

Given its role in enhancing agricultural productivity and export potential, the agrochemical industry will play a vital role in India's quest of becoming a global manufacturing hub ultimately resulting in US\$ 5 trillion economy by 2025, Mundhra added.

The agriculture sector has been growing at 3.8-4% CAGR and to meet this objective, the agriculture and allied sectors need to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.3%.

In the panel discussion titled "Make in India: Transforming challenges into opportunities in the Agrochemical Industry", Parikshit Jhaver, Founder & Promoter, Tagros Chemicals; Rajesh Aggarwal, MD, Insecticides India Limited; Parikshit Mundhra, Chairman, ACFI; Ankur Agarwal, MD, Crystal Crop Protection Ltd.; Aashish Kasad, Sr. Partner, EY and Maulik Mehta, CEO, Deepak Nitrite Ltd. reiterated that the "Make in India" initiative has the potential to transform India's agrochemical industry into a global manufacturing and export powerhouse.

Speakers highlighted the below challenges of Indian agrochemical industry

Government Should Provide Incentive for Agrochemical Manufacturing & Export: ACFI

September 5, 2024 ACFI



05 September 2024, New Delhi: The agrochemical exports have recorded a significant growth in recent times and could exceed Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years, according to a knowledge paper by ACFI-EY titled Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, the challenges, the aspirations, released at the 7th AGM of Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI) on Tuesday.

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Tech-Driven Innovations Crucial for Boosting Agrochemical Exports: ACFI

ACFI also called for a reduction in GST on agrochemicals from 18% to 5%

By Vaishali Mehta | 4 September 2024 | A+A-

ACFI in collaboration with EY released a knowledge report on Make in India

"Indian agrochemical industry is characterised by its quality and affordable prices, making its products the first choice of millions of farmers across 130 countries. If a conducive environment is provided, the sector has the potential to achieve exports of over Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years," the knowledge paper said. Industry leaders said that to boost exports, the government should focus on creating a conducive environment, including streamlining licensing norms and improving infrastructure for storage and sales, encouraging biopesticide production, streamlining the registration process for new molecules, entering into trade agreements with countries with more relaxed MRL norms, introducing a PLI-like scheme to attract investments from global players, and reducing GST from 18% to 5%.

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नई दिल्ली, 5 सितम्बर, 2024: भारतीय कृषि रसायन उद्योग ने हाल ही में निर्यात में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि दर्ज की है, और विशेषज्ञों का मानना है कि यह अगले चार वर्षों में 80,000 करोड़ रुपये के आंकड़े को पार कर सकता है। एग्रो कैम फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (एसीएफआई) ने यहां अपने नॉलेज पेपर—'इंडियन एग्रोकैमिकल इंडस्ट्री: द स्टोरी, द चैलेंजेज, द एस्पिरेशन्स'—में इस उद्योग की संभावनाओं और चुनौतियों पर प्रकाश डाला।

नॉलेज पेपर के अनुसार: भारतीय कृषि रसायन उद्योग की गुणवत्ता और सस्ते दामों के कारण इसके उत्पाद 130 देशों में लाखों किसानों की पहली पसंद बने हुए हैं। उद्योग के दिग्गजों का कहना है कि अगर इस क्षेत्र को अनुकूल माहौल प्राप्त होता है, तो यह अगले चार वर्षों में 80,000 करोड़ रुपये के निर्यात आंकड़े को पार कर सकता है।

प्रस्तावित उपाय:

ACFI Urges Government to Offer Incentives for Agrochemical Manufacturing and Export

By CID Editorial Team - September 5, 2024



Agrochemical exports has witnessed remarkable growth and are projected to surpass ₹80,000 crore within the next four years, according to a paper by Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI-EY), titled Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, the

Challenges, the Aspirations.

Government incentives needed for manufacturing and export of agrochemicals: ACFI

By TNB Bureau , September 5, 2024

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New Delhi. The Indian agrochemical industry has recently recorded a significant growth in exports, and experts believe it could cross the Rs 80,000 crore mark in the next four years. The Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI) here in its knowledge paper -- 'Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, The Challenges, The Aspirations' -- highlights the potential and challenges of the industry.

The agrochemical exports have recorded a significant growth in recent times and could exceed Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years, according to a knowledge paper by ACFI-EY titled Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, the challenges, the aspirations, released at the 7th AGM of Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI) on September 3, 2024.

“The USP of India agrochemical industry is their quality and affordable prices which makes their products as the first choice of millions of farmers across 130 nations. If facilitated a conducive environment, the sector shows the potential of achieving exports of over Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years,” the knowledge paper said.

The Indian agrochemical industry is poised for significant expansion, with exports potentially exceeding ₹80,000 crore over the next four years. This projection comes from a report titled "Indian Agrochemical Industry: The Story, the Challenges, the Aspirations," released during the 7th Annual General Meeting of the Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI). The report highlights that the quality and affordability of Indian agrochemicals have made them popular among farmers in over 130 countries. With appropriate government support and facilities, the sector could experience substantial growth in exports.

India's agrochemical exports could increase to over Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years provided the industry is facilitated with conducive environment. India's Agrochemical exports outweigh the domestic consumption of the same. The Indian exports by agrochemical industry have witnessed commendable growth in recent times. India's agrochemical industry plays a pivotal role in its agricultural success, supporting increased crop yields and safeguarding food security.

Agrochemicals export likely to touch Rs 80,000 crore in 4 yrs: ACFI-EY report

IBEF September 10, 2024

India's agrochemical exports are projected to exceed Rs. 80,000 crore (US\$ 9.61 billion) over the next four years, contingent upon a supportive industry environment, according to a report by the Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI) and EY. The report highlights that agrochemical exports reached Rs. 43,223 crore (US\$ 5.50 billion) in the 2022-23 fiscal year, surpassing domestic consumption. To achieve this growth, the report emphasizes the need for government action, including streamlining licensing processes, enhancing storage and sales infrastructure, incentivizing biopesticide production, and simplifying the registration of new products. ACFI also advocates for trade agreements with countries that have relaxed maximum residue level (MRL) norms and suggests reducing the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on agrochemicals from 18% to 5%.

Despite being the fourth-largest global producer of agrochemicals, India still relies heavily on imports, particularly from China. The report notes that India's agrochemical usage is lower than the global average, with just 400 grams per hectare compared to 2.6 kg per hectare worldwide. The "Make in India" initiative is a crucial opportunity to address these challenges and position India as a global agrochemical manufacturing and export hub.

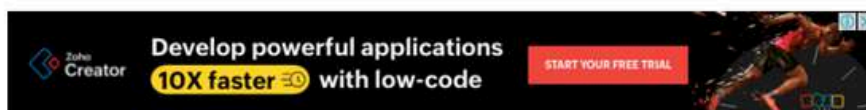
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15 October, 2024

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'Make in India' initiative to help agrochemicals export cross Rs 80,000 cr in 4 years

Exports by the Indian agrochemical industry have witnessed commendable growth in recent times.

New Delhi, Sep 10 (IANS) Exports by the Indian agrochemical industry have witnessed commendable growth in recent times and are likely to cross Rs 80,000 crore in the next four years, according to a new report. The 'Make in India' initiative provides a timely framework to transform challenges into opportunities, enabling India to become a global manufacturing and export hub for agrochemicals.

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India's agrochemical exports set for growth with policy support

September 10, 2024 | 0 Comment



India's agrochemical exports could surpass Rs 80,000 crore in four years with proper government support, according to a report by ACFI and EY. The report urges streamlining regulations and improving infrastructure, while ACFI advocates for GST reduction and leveraging 'Make in India' to boost exports and reduce import dependence.

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'Make in India' initiative to help agrochemicals export cross Rs 80,000 cr in 4 years

10 Sep, 2024 13:35 IST | Sakshi Post

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by Voice — September 10, 2024 in Tech Reading Time: 3 mins read

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By IANS | Published: September 10, 2024 01:30 PM



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India's Agrochemical Exports Set To Surpass Rs 80,000 Crore By 2028: ACFI-EY Report

Updated: Sep 10, 2024 04:33:02pm

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Agrochemical industry is getting the benefit of 'Make in India', exports can cross Rs 80,000 crore in the next 4 years

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10-Sep-2024 4:12 PM

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New Delhi, Sep 10

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By newsimact / September 10, 2024

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राष्ट्रीय व्यापार

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Govt nod for export of essential commodities from Kandla, Vizag ports to Maldives



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Thursday said it has permitted the export of essential commodities, which are under the prohibited or restricted category, to the Maldives from Kandla and Vishakhapatnam seaports during the financial year.

With the addition of these two ports, the number of ports permitted for exports to the Maldives has gone to six.

"Kandla and Vishakhapatnam Customs Sea ports have been added to the list of ports allowed for export of essential commodities, which are under the prohibited/restricted category, to the Maldives for the fiscal year 2024- 25," the Directorate

General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification.

The bilateral trade between India and the Maldives increased marginally to USD 978.56 million in 2023-24 from USD 973.37 million in 2022-23.

India's exports have risen to USD 892 million in the last fiscal from USD 476.75 million in 2022-23.

Indian imports from the Maldives primarily comprise scrap metals while Indian exports include a variety of engineering and industrial products like drugs and pharmaceuticals, radar apparatus, rock boulders, aggregates, cement and agricultural produce like rice, spices, fruits, vegetables and poultry produce.

India holds steady as 8th largest agri exporter in 2023

MIXED FORTUNES. Among top ten exporters, only Brazil, EU, Thailand increased exports

Amiti Sen
New Delhi

Despite a drop in its agriculture exports in 2023 to \$51 billion from \$55 billion in 2022, India maintained its position as world's eighth largest exporter of agriculture products in the year as seven of the top ten exporting nations witnessed a decline, per figures collated by the WTO.

AGRI EXPORT TRENDS

"Among the leading exporters of agricultural products, Brazil, the European Union and Thailand increased their exports by 6 per cent, 5 per cent and 0.2 per cent respectively in 2023. The other seven economies in the top 10 saw a decrease in their exports of agricultural products. Collectively, the top ten exporters represented a 71.9 per cent share in world exports in 2023," noted a report on key insights and trends related to WTO Trade Statistics 2023.

The fall in agriculture exports in India can be attributed to geopolitical factors such as the Red Sea crisis and the continuing Russia-Ukraine war but the decline was largely across regulated commodities such as rice, wheat, sugar, and onions, of-



DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD. Experts say the fall India's agri exports can be attributed to geopolitical ripples but the decline was largely across regulated commodities such as rice, wheat, onions, etc BLOOMBERG

ficials in India had earlier pointed out.

India had imposed a ban on export of wheat in May 2022, non-basmati rice in July 2023 and on sugar from October 2023.

WINNERS AND LOSERS

The EU maintained its top position in 2023 by exporting agriculture produce valued at \$836 billion compared to \$799 billion in 2022. The US, too, continued at the second spot despite a drop in agriculture exports in 2023 to \$198

billion as opposed to \$222 billion in the previous year.

Brazil's agriculture exports increased to \$157 billion in 2023 from \$148 billion in 2022 while it retained the third spot.

China was the fourth largest agriculture exporter in 2023 with shipments valued at \$95 billion which was marginally below exports worth \$96 billion in 2022.

Other countries among top ten agriculture exporters include Canada, Mexico, Indonesia and Australia.

The WTO's World Trade Statistics 2023 has a new interactive tool presenting key data and trends for international merchandise and commercial services trade in 2023.

"The digital platform allows users to view the latest trends in world trade, in terms of both value and volume, using filters to display the data by economy, region, selected grouping, product group and services sector," a WTO note pointed out.

PM releases 109 climate-resilient seeds, engages with farmers

Our Bureau
New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday listened to farmers, who suggested to him steps including strengthening the value chain to help increase their income, when he interacted with them in Delhi's Pusa institute.

To enhance farm productivity as well as farmers' income, Modi released 109 high-yielding, climate-resilient and bio-fortified crop varieties of 34 agricultural and 27 horticultural crops.

"The Prime Minister wanted to know results of the climate-resilient varieties and inquired whether

other farmers were also interested in adopting them," said Kulwant Singh, a farmer from Jalalpur Karira in Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh, who was invited by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

CROP VARIETIES

The 109 varieties developed by ICAR comprise cereals, millets, forage crops, oilseeds, pulses, sugarcane and cotton whereas horticulture crops are of fruits, vegetables, plantation crops, tubers, spices, flowers and medicinal plants.

Among the nine rice varieties unveiled, CR Dhan 416, developed by the Cuttack-based National Rice Research Institute, is moder-



IN FULL 'FARM'. PM Narendra Modi interacting with farmers and scientists in the presence of Union Minister Shriraj Singh Chouhan in New Delhi on Sunday ANI

ately resistant to brown spot, neck blast, sheath rot, rice tungro disease and glume discoloration, and resistant to brown plant hopper, grasshopper and stem borer.

It can be grown in West Bengal, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and can thrive in coastal areas with yield potential of 4.9 tonnes/hectare.

Another cereal crop —

Pusa Gehun Sharbati — is an open pollinated wheat variety developed by ICAR's Regional Station in Indore, with yield potential yield of 3.3 tonnes/hectare. It is tolerant to heat and drought, is bio-fortified with a higher content of zinc (40.0 ppm), is resistant to leaf and stem rust, and can be grown in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and the plains of Tamil Nadu.

NATURAL FARMING

Subhash Deswal, a retired Army Colonel and carrot farmer in Sikandrabad area of UP's Bulandshahr district, suggested that the government set up pack houses at village levels. Such a step can raise farmers' income.

Modi stressed on the significance of value addition while discussing the importance of the new crop varieties with farmers, said an official statement. Farmers present said the new varieties will benefit them as they come with lower input costs, the statement said.

Modi also discussed the importance of millets and underlined how people are transitioning to nutritious food. He talked about the benefits of natural farming, given its increasing demand.

Further, the Prime Minister suggested that the Krishi Vigyan Kendras should proactively inform farmers about the benefits of the new varieties being developed every month.

Modi: India promoting chemical-free farming

PM inaugurates the 32nd International Conference of Agricultural Economists

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 3 AUGUST:

Prim Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated the 32nd International Conference of Agricultural Economists (ICAE) and said the challenges of sustainable agri-food systems can be met through international cooperation in a holistic approach.

The triennial conference, organised by the International Association of Agricultural Economists at the National Agricultural Science Centre (NASC) Complex, has a theme of "Transformation Towards Sustainable Agri-Food Systems" in the face of global challenges such as climate change, natural resource degradation, rising production costs and conflicts.

Mr Modi said India is promoting chemical-free natural farming in a big way to strengthen sustainable farming. This has produced good results. During the current financial budget of the government, there is a big focus on sustainable farming and climate resilient farming.

India is developing an entire eco-system to support farmers, he said. Research and development



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated by Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan at the inauguration ceremony of the 32nd International Association of Agricultural Economists, in New Delhi on Saturday. ■ ANI

is being done for the climate resilient crops. In the last 10 years, India has given to its farmers 1900 new climate resilient varieties.

India has some rice varieties which require 25 per cent lesser water than the traditional varieties.

Black rice has emerged as a superfood, he said. Black rice grown in Manipur, Assam and Meghalaya is being appreciated for its medicinal values. India is ready to share its experiences with the world on this crop, the Prime Minister said.

Welcoming agri-researchers, economists and scientists from 75 countries of the world, Mr Modi said he was delighted that

the ICAE is taking place in India after 65 years.

He said India has 120 million farmers, more than 30 million women farmers, 30 million fishermen and 80 million animal keepers from India.

"You are in the land which is home to more than 500 million livestock. I welcome you to the agricultural and animal-loving country of India," the Prime Minister said.

He said the Indian Council of Agriculture Research has more than one hundred research institutes. There are 500 colleges in the country teaching agriculture and related subjects.

India still follows the six seasons pattern in its

agriculture, Mr Modi said. Each of the 15 agro-climatic zones has its own unique features. Farming changes every 100 kilometers; it is different in the plains, the Himalayas, deserts, water-scarce regions or coastal regions. These diversities help India give a ray of hope in achieving global food security, Mr Modi said.

Recalling the ICAE that took place in India 65 years ago, the Prime Minister said that was a challenging time for India's food security and agriculture. Today, he said, India is a food surplus country, the largest producer of milk, pulses and spices, and the second largest producer of food grain, fruits, vegetables, cotton, sugar, tea and farmed fish.

He said India is today providing solutions to global food and nutrition security. Therefore, India's experience is valuable for discussions on food system transformation and is sure to benefit the global south, he said.

Reiterating India's commitment to global welfare as a Vishwa Bandhu, he recalled India's vision for global welfare and the slogan of One Earth, One Family and One Future put before G20.

Bangladesh political crisis: Indian exporters stare at disruption in goods flow, brace for payment delays

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 5

THE POLITICAL turmoil in Bangladesh that deepened on Monday with Sheikh Hasina resigning as the country's prime minister and flying out has raised concerns among Indian exporters, who see the ongoing political turmoil potentially leading to disruption in the flow of goods at the India-Bangladesh border and payment delays to Indian traders. There is, however, hope among traders that the situation may not take too long to normalise.

Monday's developments in Bangladesh came at a time when the country is grappling with an economic crisis. High inflation has eroded Dhaka's US dollar reserves, limiting the country's ability to import critical goods such as agricultural items, iron and steel, electricity, and plastics from India.

INDIA-BANGLADESH TRADE (in US\$ bn)

	FY22	FY23	FY24	% change FY24 over FY22
India's exports to Bangladesh	16.2	12.2	11.1	-31.5
India's imports from Bangladesh	1.9	2.0	1.8	-5.3
Bangladesh trade deficit	14.3	10.2	9.3	-34.97

Source: GTRI

While New Delhi's imports from Dhaka were stable over the past two years, Dhaka's imports tumbled by 31.5 per cent to \$11.1 billion during 2023-24 (FY24), commerce and industry ministry data showed. In contrast, India's imports from Bangladesh slipped by just 5.3 per cent to \$1.8 billion in FY24 compared to FY22.

Even during the current financial year, economic activity has been slowing in Bangladesh as its imports of petroleum prod-

ucts from India slipped 8 per cent in June compared to May. Similarly, imports of spices fell 42 per cent, rice by 54 per cent, man-made yarn by 38 per cent, and coal and mineral imports by 13 per cent.

Think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that as Bangladesh experiences political turmoil, it is essential for all political factions to protect garment and other factories and keep supply lines open across the

border to sustain trade and economic activity. Bangladesh chiefly relies on garment exports to earn foreign exchange.

"Bangladesh's exports to India are concentrated in a few categories, with textiles, garments, and made-ups making up 56 per cent of their exports. These items benefit from zero tariffs under the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) agreement, extended by India," GTRI said.

GTRI founder Ajay Srivastava stated that India-Bangladesh trade is witnessing an increasing imbalance in favour of India. The persistent trade imbalance can be attributed to the highly diversified nature of India's exports and Bangladesh's exports being concentrated in a few sectors.

"India's exports to Bangladesh are highly diversified, covering sectors such as agriculture, textiles, machinery, electronics, auto parts, iron and steel, electricity, and plastics. Notably, most of these exports to

Bangladesh are subject to full tariffs and fall outside the SAFTA agreement," he said.

"We were facing some disruptions due to the issues in Bangladesh, but we are expecting that the situation will be restored soon and trade will not face any challenges," Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Director General Ajay Sahai said.

FIEO Regional Chairman (Eastern Region) Yogesh Gupta said the development would impact bilateral trade. "Such incidents hurt the movement of goods at borders," Gupta said.

PSY Ltd owner Pravin Saraf said the crisis in Bangladesh would have long-term implications. "We were already facing payment delay issues in that country because of the forex shortage there, and now this development would further hurt bilateral trade. We do not know when the situation will be normalised," Saraf said.

Natural farming is the solution to restore degraded soil and for healthy living: Minister Bhagirath Choudhary

Our Bureau
New Delhi

Minister of State for Agriculture Bhagirath Choudhary on Monday credited the Green Revolution with making the country self-sufficient in food but said several challenges lie ahead to continue to be self-sufficient, amid rising population and degrading soil health.

Addressing an event on agtech start-ups, organised by industry chamber FICCI in New Delhi,

Choudhary said it is time to adopt natural farming.

"We have to save both animal and human population, so also our mother Earth from getting sick. Our mother Earth is more sick than us and until it is ill, we cannot lead a healthy life," he said and blamed overuse of pesticides and chemical fertilizers for the current soil conditions in the country.

The minister said though India had become self-sufficient in food from the days when there was a shortage, sickness

Choudhary linked the importance of leading a healthy life with the vision of making India a developed country by 2047

too had increased. He linked the importance of leading a healthy life with the vision of making India a developed country by 2047 and said that it is not

possible to achieve the target if soil health remains bad.

COOPERATION SOUGHT Earlier in the day, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said in the Rajya Sabha that the government does not want the entire agricultural land be used for natural farming but at least a portion of the agricultural field should be made chemical-free to save the degrading soil conditions.

For instance, if one has five acres of land, one acre

can be used for natural farming, he said.

He also said there were problems in the agriculture sector and he would discuss the issues with the farmers and their associations.

He sought cooperation from the States and said that he had started consultations with their respective agriculture ministers.

He was replying to a discussion in the Rajya Sabha on the working of the Agriculture Ministry and on farmers' welfare.

Dhanuka Agritech Chairman hands over charge to brother

Our Bureau

New Delhi

Leading agrochemical manufacturer Dhanuka Agritech has announced a change in company leadership after its Founder-Chairman RG Agarwal decided to step down on turning 75. Agarwal's brother Mahendra Kumar Dhanuka has become the new Chairman and Rahul Dhanuka is the Managing Director.

Till the change in leadership, M K Dhanuka was functioning as Vice-Chairman and MD and RG Agarwal's son Rahul Dhanuka was Joint Managing Director. But Agarwal will function as Chairman Emeritus, the company said in a statement. However, these appointments are subject to shareholders' approval, it added.

Dhanuka Agritech's market capitalisation was ₹7,904 crore as of July 31, 2024.

The company has strategic collaborations with leading



Mahendra Kumar Dhanuka

Japanese innovators to introduce new eco-friendly and sustainable technologies to India.

Dhanuka has also been closely working with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and various State agriculture Universities in the promotion of drones in the application of pesticides. Dhanuka Agritech started operation in 1980 after Agarwal acquired an ailing company to move on the ladder and emerge as a leading player in the agrochemical sector.

The company had a turnover of ₹1,758 crore with a PAT of ₹240 crore in FY24.



PS KUMAR

Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of May 31, 2023, is on making available in the European Union (EU) market and the export from the EU of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation.

The avowed objective of the Regulation — referred to as 'Deforestation Rules' or 'Rules' in the ensuing narrative — is to minimise the EU's contribution to deforestation and forest degradation worldwide, with the consequential benefits of reducing the EU's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and global biodiversity loss.

The Regulation, as stated in Article 1, lays down rules regarding products, as listed in Annex I, containing, or have been fed with or have been made using, relevant commodities. The relevant commodities are cattle, cocoa, coffee, oil palm, rubber, soya and wood. However, it does not apply to goods that are produced entirely from material that has completed its life-cycle and would have otherwise been discarded as waste.

The thrust of the article is to bring home the risks faced by exporters from India into the EU. The preamble somewhat pre-emptively future claims that these are violative of the WTO fair trade framework. Noting that Indian exports of agri-commodities are currently running at \$50 billion and likely to expand, the Rules may have a significant impact in India's future plans.

WHAT IS PROHIBITED

Article 3, 'Prohibition', states that 'relevant commodities and relevant products shall not be placed or made available on the market or exported, unless all the following conditions are fulfilled: (1) they are deforestation-free; (2) they have been produced in accordance with the relevant legislation of the country of production; and (3) they are covered by a due diligence statement'.

In order to understand the implication of the words 'deforestation-free', one must look at the meaning of the word 'deforestation' which per Article 2(3) is defined as the 'conversion of forest to agriculture use, whether human-induced or not'. 'Agriculture use' is defined per Article 2(5) as inclusive of agricultural plantations, set-aside agricultural areas, and for rearing livestock.

Going further to 2(13), the clause defines 'deforestation-free' as meaning: (a) the relevant products contain, have been fed with or have been made using the relevant commodities that were produced on land that has not been subject to deforestation after December 31, 2020; and (b) in the case of wood, that the wood had been harvested without inducing forest degradation after December 31, 2020.

It is noteworthy that the corresponding Indian statute, the Forest



BSWARAHAN ROUT

EU's forest rules can hurt India's agri exports

STRINGENT NORMS. The rules get triggered if forest land is converted for agricultural use. Exporters risk huge penalties and even being black-listed if the rules are flouted

(Conservation) Act, 1980 as amended by the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act, 2023 states that provisions of this clause shall not apply to such land, which has been changed from forest use to use for non-forest purpose on or before December 12, 1996. It should also be noted that the definitions of 'forest' are not aligned and that should anyone wish to do business with the EU, then the EU Regulation will have to be followed.

CONVERSION OF FORESTS

The crux of the matter, therefore, is whether forests were converted for non-permissible uses after December 31, 2020. As defined by Article 2(27), plot of land means a single real-estate property that allows an evaluation of the aggregate level risk of deforestation and forest degradation associated with the relevant commodities produced on the land.

Further, there is a need for establishing the 'geolocation' with reference to the plot of land with the relevant latitude and longitude coordinates. This is one of the most difficult conditions to satisfy since the evidence has to go back to December 31, 2020. The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) published gives an array of information, clarifications and advice on tech-based solutions for establishing the status of land as at December 31, 2020.

It is important to note that in (a)

above, the word 'deforestation' has been used whereas in (b) the key words are 'forest degradation'. Article 2 (7) defines 'forest degradation' as meaning structural changes to forest cover taking the form of the conversion of primary forest or naturally regenerating forests into plantation forests, wooded land or into planted forests.

It is, therefore, clear that in the case of deforestation, there has to be a conversion of forests into agricultural use for the rules to apply whereas in the case of wood and its usage, even conversion of forests into plantation forests, wooded land, and planted forests is prohibited. This is to ensure that the indigenous people who live off the land in forests are protected whereas, presumably, wood is associated with commercial interests.

OPERATORS AND TRADERS

The rules place a heavy responsibility on operators and traders in the EU. An operator is defined by Article 2(15) as a person (including a legal person) who in the course of a commercial activity 'places' relevant products on the market or exports them. A trader is defined per Article 2(17) as a person (including a legal person) in the supply-chain other than the operator who in the course of a commercial activity 'makes' relevant products available on the market for distribution, consumption or use. It therefore follows that a trader is a step-down entity unless, of course, the operator acts as a trader as well. A branch/subsidiary owned by an Indian entity in the EU will, therefore, be considered an operator or trader depending on the manner of functioning.

The responsibilities of the operator extend to conducting due diligence with

regard to all relevant products supplied by each supplier. For this purpose, the operator should collect information, verify it and analyse the data and documents needed to support the conclusion that the products are deforestation-free per the requirements of Article 9. The operator should also carry out a risk assessment as to whether there is any non-compliance per Article 10 and take steps for risk mitigation per Article 11 prior to placing the relevant materials on the market. SMEs (per EU definition) have different rules.

PENALTIES

Exporters of commodities and products should be concerned with these developments in view of the penalties that can be invoked by the operators placing these products in the EU. Corrective actions will mean preventing the relevant product from being placed, withdrawing the product from the market and recalling it if sold. There are also huge penalties on the operators which will eventually be passed on to the Indian exporters who in addition face the risk of being blacklisted. Noting that the bulk of the rules including Article 3 'prohibition' will become effective from December 30, 2024 (other than SMEs to whom different rules will apply), there isn't much time left. One immediate development will be the rewriting of trade agreements.

Another issue that can come up is whether the principles of revenue recognition need to be changed since it raises the question of when the transfer of goods happens with the attendant tax implications. Accountants and auditors will need to address this issue immediately.

The writer is a chartered accountant

Corrective actions will mean preventing the relevant product from being placed, withdrawing the product from the market and recalling it if sold

India, Malaysia elevate ties to strategic level, ink 8 key pacts

Modi, Ibrahim discuss defence, trade, 'sensitive' issues

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI
NEW DELHI, AUG. 20

After talks filled with "great warmth" between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his visiting Malaysian PM Anwar Ibrahim, both countries decided to elevate their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership as well as bolster ties in fields ranging from defence to trade. Eight pacts were inked, including one for "recruitment, employment and repatriation" of Indian workers in Malaysia that will see their rights being protected apart from access now to work in all sectors open to foreigners there, which was not the case previously.

During the talks, both



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Malaysian PM Anwar Ibrahim at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Tuesday.

— PTI

DURING THE talks, both nations decided to establish a digital council for digital technology cooperation and a startup alliance

nations decided to establish a digital council for digital technology cooperation and a startup

alliance. In view of Chinese military assertiveness in the region, both nations also discussed the situation in the South China Sea.

In his media remarks after the talks, Mr Ibrahim referred to Mr Modi as his "brother" and said a "no-holds barred"

■ **Turn to Page 4**

Farm fest to highlight carbon-neutral farming

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kochi: The govt seed farm at Okkalil will host the second edition of its farm fest from August 29 to 31. Located in Perumbavoor and spanning 32 acres, the farm is owned by the district panchayat. The three-day event will feature approximately 30 stalls showcasing a variety of agricultural products and machinery, along with sales, cultural programmes, and seminars. The fest has also provided an opportunity for public gatherings.

Agriculture minister P Prasad is set to inaugurate the festival, while In-



CELEBRATING SUSTAINABLE FARMING: The farm was established by govt in 1979

dustries minister P Rajeev will lead the closing ceremony. The agricultural activities on the farm are based on

carbon-neutral objectives, including organic farming, ecological engineering, paddy duck farming, and integrated farming.

In 2022, the state govt declared the seed farm in Aluva as carbon-neutral, making it the only one of its kind in the region. Farmers from rural areas of the district will attend the fest with their organically grown vegetables, which will be available for purchase at the stalls. Additionally, students will present an exhibition on climate-friendly lifestyles at the venue.

"Many people, including retirees and alumni have approached us to

hold reunion events in the backdrop of the fest," said Philip T Kanatt, assistant director of agriculture at the farm.

Activities at the fest will include mud football, a tug of war for women, folk songs, quizzes, and videos related to agriculture.

There will also be seminars on topics such as mushroom cultivation, integrated farming, the use of biocontrol agents, crop residue management, and managing solid waste through poultry farming. Students from 40 schools will visit the event to learn about the farm's agricultural practices.

'India as well as other countries face huge crises in fields like health care, and climate changes'

Manoj Kumar, founder of Social Alpha, talks to *The Hindu* about the importance of investing in and creating markets for high-impact sectors, and the need to go beyond consumer internet start-ups

INTERVIEW

Manoj Kumar

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

Bengaluru based Social Alpha which drives innovation and entrepreneurship in critical sectors such as climate, healthcare and livelihoods has been doing so without restricting itself to the conventional roles of an investor, incubator or NGO. A not-for-profit initiative, it supports high-impact start-ups early on from the R&D stages and attempts to create new markets in the process, thereby attracting more investor interest in sectors that much needed it but lacked it so far.

The organisation has so far supported more than 300 ventures and made over 80 investments. Manoj Kumar, founder of Social Alpha, talks to *The Hindu* about the importance of investing in and creating markets for high-impact sectors, the need to go beyond consumer internet start-ups, and the role of India in solving problems of the Global South.

How was Social Alpha conceived and how does it differ from a conventional investor or incubator?

India as well as other countries face huge crises in fields like health care, and climate change is only adding to this crisis. But on the other side, these are also problems India being a global country can solve for and take global leadership. For example, nobody else will innovate for tuberculosis, it has to be done in India.

When you look at the mainstream businesses today, the lab-to-market process is very easy. The



"I don't see many companies working on soil testing and soil regeneration or water resource management or effluent water treatment or pollution or primary healthcare."

academia solves a problem in the lab, licenses it to the industry, and industry commercialises it. This is the case with businesses such as automobiles, aerospace, pharmaceuticals, agro, petrochemicals and so on.

But when it comes to problems related to poverty, climate change and healthcare, the same doesn't happen. I don't see many companies working on soil testing and soil regeneration or water resource management or effluent water treatment or pollution or primary healthcare. We have so many areas where mainstream business is not really excited about R&D. Between academic research and mainstream deployment, there's a huge gap.

The market is not yet ready to underwrite the



Manoj Kumar, founder of Social Alpha

risk in these sectors. Therefore, innovators do not see enough incentive to start-up in these areas. There are 100+ unicorns in India today, but most of them are in consumer internet space because that is where the market is.

At the same time, I don't want to blame the market

because the market will invest where they can make money.

It is to bridge this gap we have built this architecture called Social Alpha where we create new markets, take innovations from the lab to these markets and deploy those solutions.

We realised we cannot do it as a VC or a corporate company, we have to do it as a not-for-profit. Only then will we be able to attract capital from other sources such as government and philanthropy, and not just from the market.

We started working with incubators, cherry-picked companies in climate, health and livelihood, and started helping them with product development and go-to-market readiness, and so on. In this whole process, we ended up making a market for some of

the start-ups. Once there is a market everybody gets excited and family offices, VCs and corporations start coming in.

How do you fund start-ups?

We do grants, equity, debt... We are trying to get out of the binary of for-profit and not-for-profit. Ultimately, we have to solve problems for the planet and its vulnerable population. For that, we work with the government, private sector, NGOs and so on without getting caught up in ideological frameworks. We have sourced funds from grants, family offices, friends, networks, and philanthropies like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Tata Trust, Ikea Funds and so on. We also raise money from CSR. Some of the companies like Phool and

Hasiru Dala which we helped have become very successful.

Do you hold stakes in the companies you invest in?

When we give grants or market access support, we don't take a stake in the company. When we invest in equity we take a stake. However, if we get a return from it in the future, we'd put it back in another company. We call it circular philanthropy. That's our theory of change.

What are your major focus areas?

Climate, healthcare and livelihood. Within those, we have some priorities. For example, we don't have enough money to invest in vaccines or drugs. But we support diagnostic devices, point of care, empowering last mile health

workers with better technology.

We don't invest in EV anymore because mainstream business has understood the value in it. But batteries for EV is a sector yet to pick up, so we invest in that.

We are also working on soil regeneration and water resources.

Sustainable materials is another area. We recently invested in a company that is creating sustainable biodegradable colours. The textile industry today is a highly polluting industry. If dyeing companies can use sustainable colours it will create a huge impact.

How do you screen companies?

We are thesis-driven. We have a list of problem statements that we want to address. If there is a match between our problem statement and the company that is the first step. Then we evaluate their technology and science with the help of our network of renowned scientists.

In the next step, the experts in our team who analyse on the ground would analyse if there's a potential market for the solution, how much impact it could create, how much money it would require, do we have other partners who would pool in some money if we ran out of cash, and so on. We keep talking to incubators. That also gives us a good opportunity to identify companies with potential.

Which are the areas that need more attention from entrepreneurs and investors?

Point-of-care devices in healthcare, extending good quality healthcare closer to rural and tribal settings, and affordable assistive technology for people with disabilities are some of those. We talk about robotics and ad-

vanced engineering, but why is it not being used to solve such problems?

More than 80% of Indian farmers are smallholders. Most of them working in the field are women. Can we have lightweight, good quality, affordable equipment for people in agriculture, fisheries, and poultry?

I can get my bottle of Coke in 10 minutes, but can I deliver a lifesaving drug in a remote area in 10 minutes? We have made great advances in material science and AI, but are we using AI to solve these problems?

These are areas where currently investments are missing. We want to work in such areas, add value, and create markets.

Today a lot of construction materials and packaging materials are not sustainable. We expect a lot more innovation in material science. There should not be a green premium for using sustainable materials. Affordability is as important as sustainability.

What is the future direction for Social Alpha?

The immediate plan is to keep searching for innovators, reduce greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible and reach out to 10 million farmers in the next three years and help them with effective technology solutions. We want to ensure that at least 30-40 good innovations are used in India's public health primary care system.

In the long term, ideally, we shouldn't even exist. What we are doing now should be done by businesses and the market. My hope is that in the next 10-15 years this gap will reduce. I hope more people would want to do start-ups in these difficult areas as they see more capital in these areas and a more developed ecosystem.

LOW ORGANIC CARBON

State's soils are not in great condition, shows data

MANJUNATH HEGDE BOMNALLI
HUBBALLI, DHNS

More than 50% of Karnataka's farmland has low levels of soil organic carbon (SOC), with experts blaming indiscriminate use of chemical fertilisers as one of the main causes of the problem that could lead to a decline in productivity in the long run.

SOC is a key indicator of soil quality and fertility; optimum levels of SOC help in water and nutrient retention, act as a pH level buffer and prevent soil erosion.

But an analysis of soil samples col-



lected by the Agriculture Department between 2017 and 2024 found that SOC was less than 0.5% (the required limit) in 50.41% of agricultural land in the state where tests were conducted, raising concerns about the extent of degradation.

The department analysed over 23

lakh soil samples that were collected in the time period, including around seven lakh samples in the last four years.

Experts say that rampant use of chemical fertilisers and a proportionate decline in organic manure usage are to be blamed for low SOC levels. Monocropping and deforestation have only added to the problem.

According to the Fertiliser Association of India, Karnataka is among the top five states when it comes to use of fertilisers, with the per hectare usage slightly above the national average.

► **Soil, Page 6**

12 industrial parks worth ₹25,000 cr await Cabinet nod

To attract ₹1.5 trn investment in boost to manufacturing

SHREYA NANDI

New Delhi, 25 August

The Union Cabinet is expected to approve 12 industrial parks in Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, and Punjab, with a project cost of around ₹25,000 crore, people aware of the matter said.

These projects are expected to attract investment to the tune of around ₹1.5 trillion, one of the persons told *Business Standard*.

These industrial parks will function more like industrial cities, where residential and commercial setups will co-exist.

This is part of the government's initiative to attract foreign investment, boost domestic manufacturing and spur employment generation.

The approval of the Union Cabinet can come as early as this week.

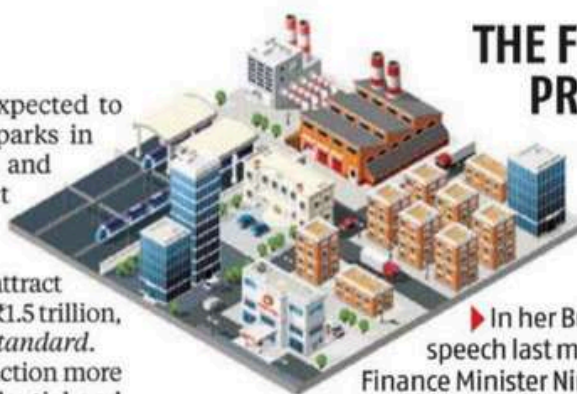
In her Budget speech last month, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had spoken about the plan to sanction 12 industrial parks under the National Industrial Corridor Development programme.

"Our government will facilitate the development of investment-ready 'plug and play' industrial parks with complete infrastructure in or near 100 cities, in partnership with states and private sector, by utilising town planning schemes better," Sitharaman had said.

These industrial cities will be set up in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Kerala, among others, and will include cities such as Agra, Gaya, Prayagraj.

They will be similar to the one developed — Integrated Industrial Township in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh and Special Investment Region in Gujarat's Dholera.

These hubs will see development of industries like technical textiles, fabrication, electric vehicles, aero logistics, food processing and tourism-based, among others, the person



THE FINE PRINT

► In her Budget speech last month, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman spoke about the plan to sanction 12 industrial parks under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme

► The parks will be set up in Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Uttarakhand, Punjab, and Telangana

► States will see the development of industries like technical textiles, fabrication, electric vehicles, aero logistics, and food processing

IMAGING: AJAY MOHANTY

cited above said, adding that these cities are expected to be built over three years.

The government has taken steps to ensure most of the major clearances are granted so that the project is not stuck in limbo.

"Land acquisition has been done, environment and other related clearances have also been taken, which will ensure that these industrial cities are built in a time bound manner," the person added.

The Budget also mentioned that the industrial node at Gaya will also be a 'good model for developing our ancient centres of cultural importance into future centres of modern economy' and will showcase '*Vikas bhi Virasat bhi*' in India's growth trajectory.

Crystal crop protection launches insecticide for maize and soyabean

Our Bureau

Pune

Crystal Crop Protection Ltd, a leading agrochemical company, has introduced its latest insecticide, Proclaim XTRA, specifically formulated for maize and soyabean crops.

This innovative product offers robust protection against a wide range of caterpillars, with a particular focus on Spodoptera species, including the Fall Armyworm. Proclaim XTRA aims to help farmers maximise yields throughout the crop cycle by ensuring prolonged crop safety.

Farmers are advised to apply Proclaim XTRA during specific growth stages to achieve optimal results. For soyabean crops, the recom-



mended application periods are between 30-60 days and 60-90 days after sowing. For maize, the ideal spraying times are 11-25 days and 26-60 days after sowing. It is important to maintain a 15-day interval between two sprays to ensure continued effectiveness.

Crystal Crop Protection will also be conducting training programmes to educate farmers on the correct and safe usage of Proclaim XTRA.

De-hyphenating rice-wheat

With wheat facing production challenges amid rising consumption, and rice seeing a surplus problem, the two cereals have become grains apart



HARISH DAMODARAN

MOST ECONOMISTS and policymakers tend to club wheat and rice, treating them as part of a "cereal surplus" and "mono-cropping/lack of diversification" problem. But today, their respective situations are very different.

In rice, there is a surplus problem: India exported 21.21 million tonnes (mt) of the cereal grain (basmati plus non-basmati) in 2021-22, 22.35 mt in 2022-23, and 16.36 mt in 2023-24. Despite these record shipments, rice stocks in government godowns, at 45.48 mt on August 1, were at an all-time-high for this date.

Things have been the other way round for wheat, with exports plunging from a peak of 7.24 mt in 2021-22 to 4.69 mt in 2022-23 and 0.19 mt in 2023-24. Even though the government banned wheat exports in May 2022, Central pool stocks on August 1, at 26.81 mt, were the lowest for this date in recent times, after 2022 (26.65 mt) and 2008 (24.38 mt).

Usually, rice stocks are below that of wheat at this time of the year. This is because wheat is harvested and marketed in April-June, whereas the main *kharif* rice crop comes in only from October. But over the last three years, rice stocks on August 1, at the tail-end of the crop marketing year, have been higher than that of wheat (see Chart).

Production issue in wheat

Rice is grown both during the *kharif* (south-west monsoon) and *rabi* (winter-spring) seasons. It is cultivated across a wide geography. Table 1 shows as many as 16 states, spread out across India, producing 2 mt and more each.

Wheat, by contrast, has a single *rabi* cropping season, with only eight states producing 2 mt-plus each, all concentrated in northern, central and western India (Table 2). The big four alone (UP, MP, Punjab and Haryana) account for over 76% of India's output. Wheat is, thus, a temporally as well as geographically more constrained crop than rice, making its production relatively more volatile.

While the main limiting factor when it comes to rice production is water availability, wheat production faces structural prob-

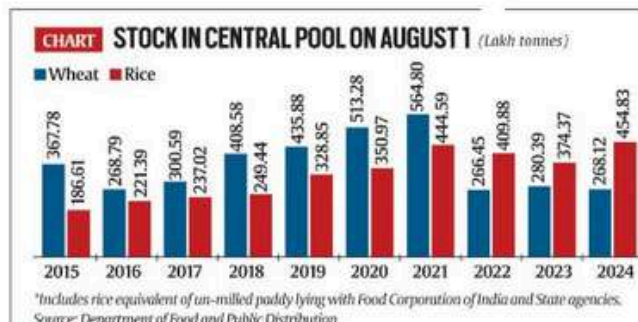


TABLE 2 TOP WHEAT PRODUCERS (million tonnes), All-India: 109.73*

Uttar Pradesh	34.46	Rajasthan	10.69
Madhya Pradesh	20.96	Bihar	6.32
Punjab	16.85	Gujarat	3.42
Haryana	11.37	Maharashtra	2.07

Note: Figures are average of five years from 2019-20 to 2023-24. *Includes production from other states. Source: Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

TABLE 1 TOP RICE PRODUCERS

(million tonnes).

West Bengal	15.95
Uttar Pradesh	15.64
Punjab	12.97
Telangana	12.51
Odisha	8.97
Chhattisgarh	8.29
Andhra Pradesh	7.92
Bihar	7.13
Tamil Nadu	6.92
Madhya Pradesh	5.59
Assam	5.03
Haryana	4.99
Karnataka	3.96
Maharashtra	3.53
Jharkhand	2.41
Gujarat	2.22

All-India: 129.03*

lems. The cereal crop has become vulnerable to winters getting shorter, warmer and less predictable — in part due to climate change. Mercury spikes in March (when the crop is in grain formation and filling stage), or above-average November-December temperatures (during the sowing and vegetative growth period) have taken a toll on production in the last three years.

Divergence in consumption

Even as wheat production faces multiple challenges, consumption has been rising.

Official household expenditure survey data for 2022-23 shows per capita monthly wheat consumption at 3.9 kg in rural and 3.6 kg in urban India, translating to roughly 65 mt for a population of 1.425 billion. But this only includes consumption of wheat that is grounded into whole-grain flour (*atta*) or semi-processed semolina (*sooji/rava*), and consumed at home. An increasing share of wheat consumption today is taking place in the form of processed foods made with refined flour or *maida*.

Whole wheat grain has three edible parts: an outer skin or bran, an inner germ or embryo that can sprout into a new plant, and an endosperm rich in starch and gluten proteins. Whole wheat is grounded in traditional stone *chakki* mills to give *atta*, whereas *sooji/rava* and

maida are produced in roller flour mills (RFM) that remove the bran and germ. *Sooji/rava* is the coarse pale-yellow flour obtained from grinding the separated endosperm. Further grinding, filtering and bleaching yields the refined white *maida* flour.

Maida is the key ingredient in most bakery products, convenience foods, and even sweets — from breads and biscuits, to pizza, and momos to *jalebis* and cake. Not for nothing is it known as all-purpose flour. The refining process makes it lose dietary fibre, minerals, B vitamins, valuable proteins, and fat. But it boasts a longer shelf life, and a finer texture, softness, and stretchability.

Although there is no hard data on wheat consumption in the above processed forms, it is undoubtedly rising, and will continue to do so, with rising incomes and urbanisation. A similar trend is not visible in rice, where processing and convenience food innovations have seemingly not gone beyond *idli*, *dosa*, *murukku*, puffed *murmura*, or *biryani* dishes.

Policy implications

"An average South Indian today takes wheat in some form at least in one meal daily. Rice has not caught on in the North like wheat has in the South," S Pramod Kumar, president of the Roller Flour Millers Federation of India said.

India has 1,500-odd RFMs processing anywhere from 50 to 500 tonnes of wheat a day into *maida*, *sooji/rava*, bran and germ. These are bigger than the stone *chakkis* that grind between 50 and 300 kg of wheat per hour (depending on motor power) to make *atta*.

Given a scenario of rising consumption and production challenges, one can well imagine India turning into an importer of wheat. "That's inevitable in the short term. For the long term, the government needs to focus on boosting per-acre yields, and breeding climate-smart varieties," Kumar said.

Rice faces the opposite problem, where domestic consumption is not keeping pace with production. "The government should immediately lift the ban on exports of white non-basmati rice. The 20 per cent duty on par-boiled non-basmati, and the \$950/tonne floor price on basmati shipments must also go. Not doing so will create an unmanageable excess stocks problem," Vijay Setia, former president of the All India Rice Exporters' Association said.

Either way, the time has come to de-hyphenate rice-wheat, and not conflate one with the other. The two cereals are grains apart in terms of issues faced, both today and in the foreseeable future.

LONGER VERSION ON
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‘Centre will launch new FPO policy this month’

Addl Agri Secy Kidwai says govt aims to reach 50 lakh farmers and disburse ₹ 800 cr in equity under the 10,000 FPO scheme

New FPO Policy

- The draft policy is in its final stages and will be finalised soon
- The new policy will unify existing state-specific FPO schemes
- Key policy goals: Federation of FPOs, value addition, national brand product approach

DIVYA RAO
HYDERABAD



(C) Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, Addl Secretary of Agriculture, Govt of India, Dr A V Bhawani Shankar, CGM, NABARD, Takayuki Hagiwara, FAO Representative in India, leadership team of Samunnati, and others, during the launch of National FPO Conclave, in Hyderabad on Tuesday

ers and disburse Rs 800 crore in equity over the next two to three years, according to Faiz Ahmed Kidwai. Speaking at the fourth National FPO Conclave in Hyderabad on Tuesday, organised by agri enterprise Samunnati, the Additional Secretary of Agriculture told Buzz Buzz that the draft policy is in its final stages and will be finalised soon. "We have called about 74 FPOs on September

4, for a final discussion on the policy, which is likely to be introduced within the next 15 days. While there was a previous policy, I'm not certain if it was in the public domain. This new policy, however, will be a comprehensive and unified National FPO policy," said Faiz Ahmed Kidwai.

Kidwai added that while states like Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu have specific

schemes for FPOs, the National FPO policy will unify these efforts. It aims to federate FPOs, integrate value addition, promote a National brand product approach to ensure the quality of produce, and provide professional marketing support to help FPOs access international markets.

When asked about Cabinet clearance before implementation of the new policy, he told media that FPO policy will be declared by the Ministry while the financial suggestions included in the policy will be sent separately for approval in the Cabinet, which will take time, Kidwai added. "For the first time we will be hosting the National FPO Conclave under the guidance of the Prime Minister, here, the National FPO policy and the branding concept will be officially launched this year"

Elaborating on the branding approach for FPO products, he said that this concept has been developed by SEAC (Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium) in collaboration with ONDC. Currently, more than 7,600 FPOs are selling their products on ONDC (clocking a business of Rs 1 crore). "All of them will not receive branding, as the FPOs have to meet a standard of quality," Kidwai informed. On the credit risk grading system, he told media that SEAC, Samunnati with CIBIL, and NABARD have individually released guidelines for grading FPOs. "I will collate all three grading systems and come up with a uniform grading tool. Many banks are unaware about financing FPOs, whereas cost of capital is high from private institutions. This credit risk grading tool will help FPOs secure loans at

affordable interest rate from banks," the Additional Secretary pointed out.

In 2020, the Government of India introduced 10,000 FPO programme to constitute 10,000 FPOs by March 2024. On its current status, Kidwai said, "Earlier there were nearly 30,000 FPOs. Under the scheme, we have constituted more than 9,000 FPOs, which have about 20 lakh farmers as members, of which 28 per cent are women farmers, and 21 per cent belong to schedule caste and tribe. We have given them more than Rs 410 crore in equity and more than Rs 400 crore has been given as credit guarantee." On the target set under the FPO scheme, he informed that from the current 20 lakh farmer members, the target is to reach 50 lakh farmers over the next two to three years and disburse an equity

of Rs 800 crore over this period. During the two-day conclave, 80 FPOs are exhibiting their products and solutions while 1,200 representatives of FPOs, financial institutions, and agritech startups are participating. On the first day, Chennai-based Samunnati launched a digital platform, "Bharat FPO Finder", with over 42,000 FPOs listed from across the country. The company also launched a White Paper on Financing Climate-Smart Agriculture. The paper outlines strategies to accelerate financing for climate-resilient agricultural practices.

Dr A V Bhawani Shankar, CGM, NABARD; Takayuki Hagiwara, FAO Representative in India; G Anil Kumar, Founder and CEO, Samunnati, and Praveesh Sharma, Director, Samunnati, spoke during the launch of the conclave

THE central government will roll out the new National Farmers Producer Organisation (FPO) policy in September 2024. As part of its 10,000 FPO scheme, the Centre plans to reach 50 lakh farmers

'Syngenta may look to increase manufacturing under Make in India'

Basel (Switzerland)-based Syngenta has had a strong presence in India for a long time. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) **JEFF ROWE**, in an interview with Sanjeev Mukherjee in New Delhi, lays down growth plans. Edited excerpts:

Your presence in India is pretty varied, right? Do you do manufacturing here?
Well, we have third-party manufacturing. We do formulation and we do some breeding. So, we do have some facilities, but our industry is very, very local. We have to have a global presence and a global network, and we also have to be relevant to local farmers.

What are your plans for 'Make in India'?
Some of your colleagues spoke about it at an earlier event. The Prime Minister is encouraging companies to make stuff in India. So, I mean, we do third-party manufacturing here. We do plant breeding here. We do plant selection. We do some seed production. So, we already have a pretty significant footprint in India of 'Make in India'. Now, of

course, we're a big company. We have lots of different supply chains. So, we're also importing into India. It's a combination of imports and made-in-India.

So, do you plan to increase that 'Make in India' part in India?

Yes, I mean, as business grows, it's logical that the footprint and manufacturing would grow as well. And, that's a trend we are seeing again, particularly in the manufacturing of active ingredients and crop protection. We're seeing India become a much more important manufacturer.

So globally, have you transitioned from being a third-party manufacturer to manufacturing locally as well in any country?

No, we're not transitioning away from third-party manufacturing. What I'm saying is that as our



As our volumes grow and as we partner Indian manufacturers, and third-party Indian manufacturers, our manufacturing footprint in India will get bigger.

volumes grow

and as we partner Indian manufacturers, and third-party Indian manufacturers, our manufacturing footprint in India will get bigger.

One big challenge in India is a lot of regulatory issues. So, how do you adjust to that?

Well, it's a big problem, not just in India, but in other jurisdictions of the world as well. It is one thing that I think governments should start paying more attention to. This is because it is a very long and burdensome process to get new products approved. If you talk to farmers, who are on the front lines dealing

with issues, nothing is more frustrating than when they know that there is a solution being applied by other farmers. It can't be used in this country or other countries because of delayed regulatory systems. So it's important that this is addressed because the longer it takes for products to be registered -- not because of legitimate safety and

environmental evaluations -- but because of bureaucracy, it has a real cost for farmers when they're dealing with insects, diseases and extreme weather.

Do you think digitisation can help in clearing those regulatory hurdles?

Yes, I do. I think digitisation can help. We're working on digitisation and using things like artificial intelligence (AI) to improve the quality and speed of our data collection and our regulatory data submission. I also think data analytics, digitisation and AI, on the regulator side, could help speed up the process as well.

A lot of people are talking about natural farming. Do you think it can be a solution to meet food security needs?

There's a niche for that type of farming. If we're serious as a society about food security, and climate change, you have to be able to produce more on every hectare or acre of land. There's no question that if you farm in that way with no chemistry, and no fertiliser, your production is

going to go down. Once the productivity of land goes down, two things have to happen. You have to bring in more land, so you have to start tilling new land, which is bad for the environment. The second thing is that you have to do a lot of tillage on that farm. You have to use plows and end up disturbing the soil.

One other question is on this global debate on herbicide-tolerant crops.
Again, I think it's an important tool. Certain herbicide-tolerant crops create a real positive impact on both farmers and the environment. There are concerns about overuse of chemicals and the resistance that can develop. These are things that can be managed through appropriate weed-resistant management approaches as well as more reasonable application rates. In other words, because of some bad practices, I wouldn't throw out the technology. This is because technology is a game-changer for farmers.

More on business-standard.com

At ₹45,242.01 cr, 28% of BE fertilizer subsidy exhausted in Apr-Jul

Our Bureau
New Delhi

Fertilizer subsidy has reached ₹45,242.01 crore during the April-July period of the current fiscal was ₹45,242.01 crore, which is 28 per cent of ₹1,64,000 crore budgeted this fiscal, even as there is 30 per cent drop in overall import of key chemical fertilizers.

Experts warn that the subsidy may exceed the budgeted amount if global prices rise further.

According to the latest official data, the subsidy on urea has reached ₹32,461.52



SOUNDING CAUTION. Experts warn that the subsidy may exceed the budgeted amount if global prices rise further

crore and that of phosphate (P) and potash (K) at ₹12,759.32 crore in the first four months of the 2024-25 fiscal.

Of the total Budget allocation ₹45,000 crore for phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) subsidy, 28.4 per cent has been exhausted until

July. The government will soon announce the subsidy for the upcoming rabi season (October-March) for P and K fertilizers.

In 2022-23, India's fertilizer subsidy reached a record ₹2.25 lakh crore after a global price surge and current imported prices were lower than those highs.

But, recently prices of N and P have started moving up.

Price of imported urea increased by nearly 26 per cent to \$354/tonne (FOB) in July from \$282 in the year ago period and that of Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP) surged 30 per cent to \$572/

tonne (CFR) in July from \$440.

IMPORTS DOWN

The Fertilizer Ministry data showed that DAP import declined 44.9 per cent to 14.66 lakh tonnes (lt) during April-July from 26.59 lt year-ago and urea import dipped 31.7 per cent to 10.15 lt from 14.87 lt.

Import of overall fertilizers dropped 29.6 per cent to 42.49 lt during April-July from 60.33 lt year-ago, in which that of Muriate of Potash (MOP) fell by 24.2 per cent to 7.32 lt from 9.66 lt.

But, import of complex

fertilizers rose 12.5 per cent to 10.36 lt from 9.21 lt. Complex fertilizer is a combination of nitrogen (N), P, K and sulphur (S) nutrients.

The overall sales (consumption) of key fertilizers -- urea, DAP, MOP and complex -- increased 5.7 per cent to 184.25 lt, whereas the demand was estimated at 210.61 lt for the April-July period.

But, sales of DAP dropped 14.5 per cent to 29.64 lt. Sales of urea during were 1.6 per cent higher at 108.87 lt, while those of MOP rose 36.8 per cent to 4.94 lt and complex increased by 40.8 per cent to 40.8 lt.

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INDIA-UAE TRADE TANGLE

New Delhi seeks review of CEPA as a surge in silver and gold imports raises concerns over tariff concessions, value addition norms, etc.



SHREYA NANDI
New Delhi, 5 September

After walking out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement at the 11th hour of negotiations in 2019, India was seen as protectionist and averse to signing trade deals. To change this image, India signed a trade deal with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in a record 88 days of negotiations in February 2022, which came into force in May that year.

However, just over two years later, India is seeking a review of some components of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with the UAE.

Last month, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said that India wants to assess certain provisions of the India-UAE CEPA. The review will include addressing New Delhi's concerns regarding value addition norms amid a sharp spike in imports of precious metals, particularly silver.

Beyond the surge in imports of precious metals, India's first-ever commitment to government procurement and duty concessions on items such as petrochemicals in the trade deal with the UAE have put New Delhi in a difficult position while negotiating trade deals with other countries.

These issues raise the question of whether India made a mistake by finalising the CEPA rather hastily.

Spike in silver and gold imports

The size of India-UAE trade is significant, with the West Asian nation being India's third-largest trade partner. The value of bilateral trade stood

at \$22.8 billion during 2023-24 (FY24). The UAE is also India's second-largest export destination and third-largest import partner.

However, what came as a surprise was the way silver imports from the UAE surged. Even though overall imports from the UAE contracted by 9.8 per cent to \$48 billion, silver imports saw a 5,853 per cent rise to \$1.74 billion in FY24 from \$29 million a year earlier. The rise was primarily due to the tariff concessions on precious metals agreed upon under the trade deal.

Similarly, gold jewellery imports increased by 290 per cent to \$1.35 billion in FY24 compared to the previous financial year. Imports of gold bars also rose, though to a lesser extent, due to caps on the volume of imports of both product categories.

Government officials said that in the case of silver, the trade is unusual because the UAE does not produce silver but imports large silver bars, melts, and converts them into silver grains.

Over the last four to five months, the commerce department has tried to understand the reasons behind the surge, despite the stringent rules of origin and value addition norms agreed upon under the trade deal. Indian government officials believe it is difficult to achieve a 3 per cent value addition just by melting bars and converting them into grains.

As a result, since the UAE's designated authorities issue certificates allowing importers to benefit from concessional duties, silver imports have continued.

"We will ask UAE officials how they explain their rules of origin when exporting these items," a senior government official told *Business Standard*.

Under the trade agreement, India has committed to gradually taper duty to zero per cent within the next eight years. The import duty on silver currently stands at 8 per cent under the CEPA.

In the case of gold jewellery and bars, a tariff rate quota (TRQ), along with concessional duty, is in place. The TRQ was imposed to prevent a sudden surge in the quantity of imports, as gold is a high-value commodity.

Experts said it is important to note that the UAE is primarily in the business of re-export, not production, and is not a manufacturing hub. Furthermore, the CEPA is more strategic in nature, with limited economic benefits.

Diswaji Dhar, distinguished professor at the Council for Social Development, said India should have exercised caution, as similar problems related to circumvention had occurred in case of the trade deal with the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), particularly with Singapore.

"These issues are bound to arise, as third countries will try to use the UAE to route their products to India. The fact that we have an agreement with the UAE and zero duty imports puts a lot of pressure. We saw similar dynamics with the Asean trade deal, with the government trying to address rules of origin issues," Dhar said.

To address the surge in imports, the Union Budget in July slashed import duties on gold and silver from 15 per cent to 6 per cent, thus nullifying the advantage that UAE enjoyed. According to Delhi-based think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), this will offer tem-

porary relief, as tariffs on gold and silver from Dubai will drop to zero in the coming years, leading to another bout of rise in imports.

"The government saw renegotiating the CEPA to revoke these tariff concessions as the only viable option. Reducing most favoured nation (MFN) tariffs on gold and silver to zero was ruled out as it would lead to high imports and a drain on forex," the GTRI report said.

An industry official noted that the growth in silver imports from the UAE has been exponential, and it is uncertain how this will develop further.

Other issues

Under the CEPA, India opened up its central government procurement market for the first time, granting UAE companies national treatment status, on a par with Indian companies, for bidding on central government tenders, though in limited sectors.

This was seen as a significant shift in India's trade policy stance, considering that New Delhi is not a signatory to the World Trade Organisation (WTO)'s government procurement agreement.

According to Dhar, this move indicated a lack of consistency, as India has been opposing the plurilateral agreement at the WTO.

Moreover, India will have to negotiate firmly on free trade agreements (FTAs) with other developed countries, such as Australia, the UK, and the European Union, as government procurement chapters are non-negotiable for these nations.

Dhar also pointed out that while the India-Japan FTA does not include a chapter on government procurement, there is a clause stating that if India opens its public procurement market to any trading partner, it must extend the same to Japan.

Industry officials believe that duty concessions on petrochemicals, though calibrated, have set a precedent, with Oman now pressuring India for similar cuts.

"India should not have agreed to duty cuts on petrochemicals under the India-UAE CEPA. If the same deal is given to Oman, other Gulf nations, such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, may also demand similar concessions," another industry official said on condition of anonymity.

Pradeep Mehta, secretary general of CUTS International, said India should avoid drastic action. "A review of the agreement in the near term is unlikely. For now, India can raise any concerns in the CEPA Joint Committee or the Subcommittee on Rules of Origin, which provide platforms for consultation and cooperation," Mehta said.

However, the GTRI report suggested India should push to withdraw tariff cuts on platinum, silver, diamonds, and gold jewellery; adjust value addition rules; ban the conversion of expensive silver bars to cheaper silver granules to exploit CEPA benefits; stop imports of sanctioned metals from Russia via Dubai; and revoke special privileges to the Gift City bullion exchange due to misuse.

It will be crucial to observe how the two strategic partners navigate these mutual sensitivities.

iStock

This National Nutrition Week, choose chemical-free food

We all strive to lead healthy lifestyles. Working out, tracking your steps, staying hydrated... the list can go on. But have you examined the food you're eating? True nutrition starts with pure, chemical-free food. This National Nutrition Week, it's time to focus on your diet.

Jayen Mehta (MD, GCMMF) says, "The Amul Organic range, which is free from 225+ chemicals and pesticides, provides the natural goodness your body needs. With a legacy of 75 years, one of India's most trusted dairy brands offers a healthier choice compared to chemically treated food. We believe it is not just about eating well, it's about embracing a movement toward a healthier future. This range is certi-

fied by the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP)."

Today, our lifestyles often have an adverse effect on our health. Organic farming enriches food with vital vitamins and minerals, providing essential nutrients that promote good health. Mehta adds, "By avoiding harmful chemicals and pesticides, we aim to provide the purest food. So,

this National Nutrition Week, we urge people to take the first step towards a healthier lifestyle with Amul Organic that offers essential nutrition and health benefits. Committed to rigorous quality control, we ensure that every product meets the highest standards. The range includes an array of affordable products such as Whole Wheat

Atta, Basmati Rice, Sona Masoori Rice, Dehraduni Basmati, Besan, Toor Dal, Chana Dal, Masoor Dal, Desi Chana, Kabuli Chana, Whole Moong, Whole Urad, Rajma, Ginger Powder and Turmeric."

Website: shop.amul.com



India to host ICA General Assembly and Global Cooperative Conference 2024 for 1st time in 130 yrs

Amit Shah, Minister of Cooperation, Govt of India will attend the event on November 25, 2024

NEW DELHI: First time in the 130 years long history of International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), the ICA General Assembly and Global Cooperative Conference 2024 will be hosted in India by IFFCO Ltd in collaboration with ICA and Union Ministry of Cooperation. During ICA Board meeting in Brussels on June 28, 2023, IFFCO proposed hosting the ICA General Assembly and Global Conference in India. Further, in meeting held at the headquarters of United Nations



Organisation (UNO) it was decided that the Global Cooperative Conference in India will also mark the official launch of

UN International Year of Cooperatives - 2025. (UN IYC2025)

Amit Shah, Minister of Cooperation, Govt of India will attend the event on November 25, 2024 at 3 PM. He will chair the inaugural session of the Global Cooperative Conference as the Chief Guest.

A commemorative stamp on International Year of Cooperatives - 2025 will also be launched in the event.

Jeroen Douglas, DG-ICA informed the press that the event is scheduled to be held

from November 25 to 30, 2024 at Bharat Mandapam, ITPO, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

He said the theme of the event will be 'Cooperatives Build Prosperity of All' and the subthemes will be: (1) Enabling Policy and Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, (2) Nurturing Purposeful Leadership to Create Prosperity for All, (3) Reaffirming The Cooperative Identity, and (4) Shaping The Future: Towards Realising Prosperity for all in 21st Century.

MPOST

Syngenta launches 'Climate Smart Project' to tackle swings in rice yield

Subramani Ra Mancombu
Chennai

Global agricultural technology company Syngenta has initiated the 'Climate Smart Project', along with its value chain partners in Haryana and Punjab, to tackle climate change challenges that have led to fluctuations in rice production, the company's global CEO Jeff Rowe said.

The company had set a target of enabling regenerative agricultural practices across 50 million hectares by 2030. It is committed to innovation and will continue to bring these in crop protection and seeds to help Indian agriculture become more sustainable and profitable, Rowe said in an email interaction with *businessline*.

Stating that Syngenta works with farmers across the globe to adapt and mitigate the challenges of climate change, he said under the 'Climate Smart Project' soil

health analysis is undertaken to regulate the use of fertilizers.

SUCCESS STORY

"For example, urea accounts for 82 per cent of the nitrogen source influencing greenhouse gas emissions; so we train growers on soil health. Crop residue management is carried out to reduce burning. Every year, paddy farmers in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh burn 23 million tonnes of crop residue," the Syngenta global CEO said.

One of Syngenta's success stories in India has been through its Climate Smart Agriculture programme for basmati rice.

"This programme offers soil health analysis, crop residue and water management, stewardship and tools to measure carbon sequestration. It has already reached 700 growers across nearly 14,000 hectares," he said.

The company's 'SoilCare



The Climate Smart Agriculture project for basmati rice has already reached 700 growers across nearly 14,000 hectares

JEFF ROWE

Global CEO, Syngenta



Program' is supporting Indian farmers by providing personalised soil reports and recommendations on better soil management.

The participating farmers understand how to optimise their fertilizer application and receive training in best practices like crop rotation, Rowe said.

The programme has benefited 5,425 farmers so far, covering 10,525 acres across 133 villages in northern India. "Farmers have reduced their costs by 15 per cent and increased yields by 10 per

cent. We have undertaken this initiative with our NGO partner ISAP India Foundation, an organisation committed to advancing ag-based livelihoods and the economic empowerment of rural communities," he said.

On its efforts to compete with its rivals who have launched direct seeded rice and zero tillage in wheat, the company's global CEO said his company recognises the importance of sustainable agricultural practices that can enhance productivity while minimising the environ-

mental impact. "Our teams are continuously exploring innovative solutions and best management practices across various cultivation methods, and we are aware of the potential advantages of direct seeded rice and zero tillage wheat systems," he said.

Syngenta is accelerating its product pipeline, leveraging data and AI across the company. "Data analytics is completely transforming our R&D efforts in genetics and chemistry. All our research projects to find new active ingredients use machine learning models to optimise molecular design and selection across the phases of discovery, optimisation and selection," Rowe said.

This translates into a major improvement in innovation for farmers, from advanced breeding techniques to climate-resilient crop varieties to satellite imagery and remote sensing technologies to help treat crops.

Bayer launches global initiative 'ForwardFarming' in India

Our Bureau
Bengaluru

Bayer has launched its global initiative, 'Bayer ForwardFarming', in India to demonstrate innovative farming techniques with a focus on sustainable rice cultivation, thus promoting regenerative agriculture. This is the newest of 29 ForwardFarms worldwide. Each ForwardFarm serves as a beacon of sustainable agricultural practices, providing a platform for farmers, researchers and stakeholders to collaborate and share knowledge, the company said in a statement.

Natasha Santos, Head of Sustainability & Strategic Engagements at Bayer, said, "Creating value for farmers is at the heart of what we do. We are excited to bring Bayer ForwardFarming to India, a country that is pivotal to global food security. By supporting and empowering

'ForwardFarming' integrates practices such as Direct Seeded Rice Cropping System and innovative weed management

local farmers, we aim to enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability, increasing food security for all."

INNOVATIVE TECH

For Bayer, regenerative agriculture is an outcome-based crop production model with improving soil health at its core. Strengthening resilience is a key objective, alongside mitigating climate change, maintaining or restoring biodiversity, conserving water, and increasing yields.

Spread over 18 hectares in

Panipat, the Bayer ForwardFarm in India is unique as it introduces a convergence of innovative technologies and sustainable interventions specifically designed for smallholder farmers. The farm integrates practices such as the Direct Seeded Rice Cropping System, innovative weed management, customised agronomy systems, carbon farming among others.

Simon Wiebusch, President, Bayer South Asia said, "At Bayer, we envision a regenerative farming future that restores and enhances the environment. The launch of Bayer ForwardFarming in India is a part of it. By providing farmers with tailored solutions, modern tools and practices, proactive stewardship measures and strategic partnerships, we aim to boost productivity, improve quality and yields, all while preserving the environment."

Pest infestation of paddy crops leaves Kodagu farmers worried

K S GIRISH
MADIKERI, DHNS

Pest infestation in paddy crops has left the farmers in Kodagu district worried.

Due to cloudy weather and continuous rainfall, pest infestation has increased. Farmers, who were initially happy with abundant rainfall, are now worried over lack of sunlight.

The consistently damp conditions are likely to increase the chances of fungal diseases and pest attacks, says Dr BS Chandrashekar, Joint Director of the Agriculture Department.

Dr Veerendra Kumar, a plant protection expert at the Gonikoppa Krishi Vigyan Kendra, said, "Leaf folder pest infestation is being witnessed in several paddy fields in the district."



The pest-infested paddy fields in Kodagu district. (Right) A pest-infested paddy seedling.

DH PHOTOS / K S GIRISH

Paddy farming activities have already started across Kodagu district and the transplanting of paddy saplings has been almost completed in all the taluks. In some places,

transplantation is still underway.

During this time, leaf folder pest infestation has been observed in the paddy fields across the district, he added.



leaves and eat the green part of the leaf.

As a result, the crop appears pale and white. In severe cases, the growth is stunted and the crop fails to produce panicles, causing losses. Hence, farmers have been urged to take control measures as soon as they observe signs of pest infestation in their fields, he advised.

Adult insects

The moth of this pest is light yellow with thin black stripes on its wings. The female moth lays about 300 eggs along the midrib of the leaf. The larvae hatch in four to seven days and feed on the leaf for 15 to 27 days before entering the pupal stage. They remain in the pupal stage for six to eight days before emerging as adult insects.

"Farmers must follow expert advice without negligence to control the leaf folder pest in

paddy crops," said Veerendra Kumar. "The current weather conditions are likely to increase the risk of pests and fungal infections in paddy. Farmers should visit their nearest Raitha Samparka Kendra for guidance," adds BS Chandrashekar.

Control measures

To control the infestation, farmers should clean the weeds around the field and ensure cleanliness.

Upon observing signs of pests, they should spray one of the following insecticides: Indoxacarb 0.5 ml, Flubendiamide 0.4 ml, or Profenofos 1.5 ml mixed in one litre of water. It is also recommended to mix an adhesive solution with the pesticide during spraying for better results, advises the expert.

For more information, farmers can contact 08274 - 295274.

T farmers face severe health risks due to pesticides: Study

Also Reveals Wide Unsafe Practices

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Hyderabad: Telangana farmers are facing severe health issues such as respiratory diseases, skin irritations, and asthma from pesticides they are using on crops. They are also afflicted by chronic health problems like Alzheimer's disease and cancers due to pesticide exposure.

These findings were revealed in a study titled 'Biomonitoring of Pesticide Exposure and Its Health Implications in Agricultural Areas of Telangana, India: A Brief Data Report,' conducted by researchers from Hyderabad-based Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Nutrition and Osmania University.

11 highly hazardous

Twenty-eight different pesticides, including 11 of them categorised as highly hazardous by World Health Organisation guidelines, were found in the blood samples of farmers. Further, elevated levels of pesticide residues were found in the blood and urine samples of exposed farmers as compared to the far-

HIGHLY HAZARDOUS PESTICIDES FOUND

SYMPTOMS

Shortness of breath | Chest pain & Rapid heartbeat | Vomiting | Blurred vision & eye irritation | Anger | Numbness & muscle weakness | Headaches & dizziness | Balance problems

STUDY DETAILS

- Conducted between Oct 2021-April 2023
- 5 villages each from Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri, Vikarabad, Sangareddy districts covered
- Farmers grew rice, cotton, other crops
- They sprayed pesticides for at least a year
- Participants aged between 18-70 years



PESTICIDES FOUND

- Coumaphos, Fenamiphos, Dichlorvos, Methamidophos, Monocrotophos, Triazophos – classified as highly hazardous by WHO – found in blood samples

mers in the control groups. A total of 493 farmers from different parts of Telangana, including 341 in the exposure group and 152 in the control group, were assessed for this study.

Pesticide overuse

The research paper was published by Elsevier, a Dutch academic publishing company specialising in scientific, technical, and medical content, and was funded by the department of health research, Union ministry of health and family welfare.

The study, which focused on the impact of pesticide exposure on farmers in Telangana found that overuse of pesticides by commercial growers to maximise profits has led to insufficient awareness of risks, unsafe hand-

ling practices, and also the use of banned chemicals.

The study found farmers in exposed group exhibited significantly higher levels of dialkyl phosphate (DAP) metabolites, which indicate pesticide exposure. Further, the exposed group had lower levels of acetylcholinesterase enzymes, indicating potential neurological damage.

Unsafe practices

The study revealed widespread unsafe practices among farmers, such as using bare hands to mix pesticides, improper storage and unsafe disposal methods, which elevate health risks. It emphasises need for improved safety and regulatory measures in agriculture.

The findings also highlight the potential benefits of

adopting safer and more sustainable agricultural practices, like integrated pest management (IPM), which reduces pesticide usage and mitigates associated health risks.

Adopt IPM practices

The study advocates for the adoption of IPM practices, including the use of bio-pesticides, improved seed varieties, and efficient irrigation and fertilisation methods, leading to a substantial reduction in pesticide use, and regulation and training.

In addition, wearing personal protective equipment while using pesticides to minimise direct exposure through inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact and also regular biomonitoring of pesticide exposure for early detection, the study said.

From locking horns to unlocking potential

India-US trade ties have taken a positive turn under Biden

ASIT RANJAN MISHRA
New Delhi, 18 September

In the Business-20 event during India's G20 presidency last year in August, Trade Minister Piyush Goyal, who donned the hat of the moderator, quizzed his counterpart, United States Trade Representative (USTR) Katherine Tai, on whether it would be fair to say that both sides now had the best relationship ever in their history.

"The quality of engagement, the huge respect, and the huge amount of confidence that was generated during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the US and the bonding between President Biden and Modi. Does all of this reflect possibly the best time in terms of friendship and relationship?" Goyal said.

During that state visit in June last year, the United States and India announced resolutions on key trade issues, including the termination of six disputes (and later another pending dispute) at the World Trade Organization and India's removal of tit-for-tat tariffs on certain US products such as chickpea, lentils, almond, walnut, apple, and boric acid. This almost made up for a mini trade deal that both sides could not agree upon during Modi's visit to the US in 2019, during Donald Trump's presidency.

"You are absolutely right. We are at a very high watermark," Tai responded to Goyal.

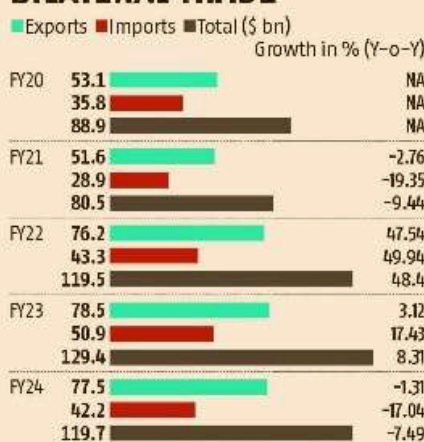
Biden's trade policy

Though President Joe Biden rode to power in 2021 criticising his predecessor, Donald Trump, for his "disastrous" trade policy, he did not show any inclination to reverse the Trump-era trade policies that dealt with friends and foes with the same sword. If anything, Biden further strengthened the trade sanctions against China that Trump had started. His focus on the interests of domestic workers and businesses, siding with the wave of anti-globalisation in the West and providing domestic subsidies to revive some industries like semiconductors, was seen by some experts as the "new" Washington Consensus.

Though Biden was part of the Obama administration that pushed for the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal that Trump rejected, as President he showed no willingness to revive it. With a clear policy not to negotiate trade deals where the US has to cede market access, the Biden administration floated the idea of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) to strengthen economic cooperation among Indo-Pacific nations as a strategic counter to China's growing clout in the region.

However, when it came to India, the Biden administration took a more conciliatory approach. Both sides revived the annual Trade Policy Forum talks after a gap of four years in 2021. India joined three out of the four pillars of the IPEF, though it

BILATERAL TRADE



Source: Commerce department



stayed outside the negotiations of the trade pillar. While India's decision to purchase discounted crude oil from Russia to ensure "energy security" created initial fissures in the relationship, the US has come to acknowledge India's strategic and economic needs.

India's merchandise bilateral trade with the US has increased by 50 per cent to \$120 billion between FY21 and FY24. Eric Garcetti, US Ambassador to India, said in January this year that India-US bilateral trade, including both goods and services, had the potential to increase to \$500 billion annually from the current \$200 billion, riding

on direct investments, joint ventures, partnerships, educational exchanges, and tourism.

India and the US trade and economic relations have also gained from what the US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen calls America's "friend-shoring" approach, which aims to diversify away from countries that present geopolitical and security risks to the US supply chain, such as China.

"We are proactively deepening economic integration with trusted trading partners like India. Our strategy will also create redundancies in our supply chain to mitigate over-concentration risks. And we are also addressing our reliance on manufacturers whose approaches clash with our human rights values," Yellen said during her first visit to India in November 2022.

Ajay Srivastava, founder of Delhi-based think tank Global Trade Research Initiative, said more than the resolution of trade disputes, it was the tangible work on the ground during the Biden presidency that set it apart. "American companies have put dollars in India during the Biden administration, demonstrating the China Plus One policy in a very forceful way. It is during Biden's time when Apple started manufacturing iPhones in India through Foxconn and American chipmaker Micron announced investment in India," he said.

However, Srivastava said, the US support to India under the China Plus One strategy was selective. "When India tried to impose restrictions on laptop imports, the US vehemently opposed it. However, there is now bipartisan support for anti-China trade policy in the US, and India should leverage it further," he added.

Both sides have pending issues to resolve. The Trump-era national security tariffs on India's steel and aluminium imports are still prevalent. India's request for the restoration of its Generalized System of Preferences status for duty-free exports of certain products is still pending. The long-standing negotiations for a totalisation agreement to prevent Indian techies in the US from paying double social security contributions also remain unresolved.

New watermarks?

Further responding to Goyal at the B20 event, Tai said her office, which works on the US-India trade relationship with its institutional memory, has told her that the working relationship between both trade ministers was certainly the best they have seen between India and the US.

This Saturday, Biden will travel to his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware, to host his final Quad summit with the leaders of India, Japan, and Australia, underscoring his personal commitment to strengthening US alliances in the Indo-Pacific region. As the US approaches its November presidential election, and with Biden having withdrawn from the race, it remains to be seen whether the newfound bonhomie on the trade and economic front will reach new watermarks under the next president.

Indian scientists develop sustainable pheromone dispenser for pest control

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Indian scientists have developed a sustainable pheromone dispenser with a controlled release rate which could act as an innovative solution to substantially reduce the costs of pest control and management.

To ensure that the innovation benefit farmers directly on a large scale, Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research JNCASR, Bengaluru and

ICAR-National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources (ICAR-NBAIR) have entered into a Know-how license pact with Krishi Vikas Sahakari Samiti Ltd. (KVSSL), Haryana, recently.

JNCASR is an autonomous institution under the Department of Science and Technology.

Prof. M. Eswaramoorthy from JNCASR and Dr. Kesavan Subaharan from ICAR-NBAIR led the signing of the pact.

Prof. Eswaramoorthy said, "This exercise will enable the



spread of technology across the country and at global level too. The benefit of the research moves from the lab to the field to benefit the farming community for pest management."

"Currently, emphasis is laid on developing technologies that are clean and green. On this line, the technology developed on controlled release of semiochemicals (signalling substances such as pheromones) on transfer to firms will enable to scale up the production to cover a large area," Dr. Subaharan

added.

Sustainable organic pheromone dispensers are not a new concept. In fact, polymer membrane or polypropylene tube dispensers that release pheromones already dominate the market.

The released pheromones alter the behaviour of the target insect species and attract them to sticky traps. Their main drawback, however, is that the rate at which the pheromones are released into the air is not stable, said a statement here.

Coromandel opens hi-tech polyhouse at R&D farm

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Hyderabad: Agri solutions provider Coromandel International Limited on Monday said it has opened a hi-tech polyhouse at its research & development (R&D) farm at Shamirpet as part of new product development.

The company said the hi-tech polyhouse is equipped with the latest technology that will enable it to conduct advanced field trials of its

Company said the hi-tech polyhouse is equipped with the latest technology that will enable it to conduct advanced field trials of its innovative range of agri-inputs and solutions

innovative range of agri-inputs and solutions.

"The facility is designed to conduct pot experiments and advanced trials using

soil-less media, including hydroponics and cocopeat systems. These trials will be focused on the precise calibration of nutrients, making the polyhouse a critical testing ground for breakthrough products such as nano fertilisers, bio-stimulants, liquid fertilisers, slow and controlled release fertilisers, customised and coated fertilisers, and plant growth regulators (PGRs)," the company said.

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