

Programme: National Cooperative Conference.

Venue: Indira Gandhi Stadium, New Delhi.

25th September, 2021, 10:00 A.M.

Mr. B. L. Verma, my colleague in Union Cabinet, Dr. Guarco, President, International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), all dignitaries present on the dais, who have worked tirelessly and helped to bring this country's cooperative movement to current level, more than 2,100, all leaders of the cooperative movement present today in this auditorium, all cooperative friends, brothers and sisters and all connected virtually to this programme, my greetings to you.

Today, I would like to begin with paying homage to Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay on his birth anniversary, because of whom many of the workers like me became part of this cooperative movement. It was Pandit Deen Dayal who thought of policy of Antodyay – poor of the poorest/ at the first thought of development. For hundreds and hundreds of workers like me today is the day to get inspired. On this same day, when this National Cooperative Conference is happening, I am very very happy.

Friends, first of all after 75 years of Independence and at this moment when cooperative movement is needed the most, the Prime Minister of Country created Independent Ministry of Cooperation for which I, as a co-operative volunteer, and on behalf of all of you, would like to thank him and express my gratitude towards him. I would like to request all of you to please stand at your respective places for the support and approval of the cooperative movement given by the Hon'ble Prime Minister and urge all of you to welcome this gesture by clapping for him and thanking him whole heartedly for this. I would on behalf of nationwide cooperative workers and leaders of the cooperative movement like to thank the Prime Minister. And from my side, I would like to extend special thanks because this subject is of my interest and for giving me a chance to be the first Minister of Cooperation which is a very proud moment for me. Today, when we are standing here for a new beginning to give cooperative movement thrust, and direction, I would like to say that the Prime Minister has established this Ministry, and as Minister of Cooperation, I would like to say to all the workers and leaders of cooperative movement that the time of neglect has come to an end, the time of priority has begun. Come, let's be together and let's take forward the cooperative movement. In the development of the country, cooperative sector can provide great contribution. In the development of the country, contribution of cooperative sector is still there but

within several dimensions, we will have to reach greater heights. We will have to think about it in a new way, we will have to underline it in a new way, we will have to increase our scope of work, we will have to bring stability in the work, we will have to bring transparency in work and in our sanskar. There is no other way of development for crores and crores farmers, deprived, backward, dalit, poor, neglected women of the country than the medium of cooperation. To many people who question the relevance of cooperative sector, who think that the cooperative movement is irrelevant, I would like to say from my heart and with humility that if cooperative movement had ever been relevant, it is most relevant today and there is a long way to achieve greater heights.

SAHAKAR SE SAMRIDDHI (Prosperity through cooperatives), with this mantra, to help prosper every village with the help of co-operatives and through prosperous villages to make the country prosperous, will be the role of cooperative movement. The word “Cooperative” is made up of two words- Co and Operate. Working with one goal, towards one direction is called Cooperation. I always say this, it is possible that the power of crores of people of our country and the people who work in cooperative sector can be less, and our financial power can also be less, but in numbers we are so much that if through the means of cooperative we can unify this power then there will be a creation of tremendous power that nobody can defeat. And with the new self confidence of the cooperative movement, time has come for a new beginning. Modi Ji has given a mantra; From Cooperative to Prosperity and a goal of five trillion dollar economy that he has setup. Today, I would like to assure Modi Ji that the cooperative sector also will work tirelessly day in and day out to help you achieve your five trillion dollar economy goal.

Friends, I believe, the power that we achieve through our cooperative sector, will help in creating a prosperous country. Cooperative movement will help in the development of rural sector in India and will set up new example for social capital. There are several explanations of capital but we are the people with 10,000 years old culture. The concept of social capital, the idea of social capital will help in the progress of our cooperative movement in a big way. In many countries, cooperatives have come into existence through laws, in some countries they have come into existence through Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) and other cooperative institutions have come into existence through cooperative committees. Idea of cooperatives has blended in the nature of citizens of India. In its culture, it has cooperativeness. This is not a concept

that has been borrowed. This concept has been developed by our own self working nature. That is the reason in India the cooperative movement can never be irrelevant.

Friends, for last 25 years I have been associated with co-operative movement. I have worked with everyone from smallest to state level units. I have seen that, there are many problems that arise, the Governments go ahead and issue circulars, then there has to be monitoring of the circulars but the people for our Co-operative Movement don't wait for any circulars. When flood comes, the PACS of the village stand over there and help in feeding everyone and help in providing shelter. Any Co-operative bank in the district doesn't think about how much they will have to spend, they don't care about how much dividend will be reduced, within their work scope, be it famine, be it cyclone, or be it too much rainfall or the flood. For the work, they are always steadfast over there. The Co-operative Movement has contributed several times during various crises and has helped the country to come out of it. Cooperativeness is not new to India. From 1904 onwards, till today Co-operative movement in India has seen several stages, we have seen several ups and downs, sometimes we fell down, we stood up, we moved forward, we moved very fast, then we slowed down but the Movement didn't stop and I have this only request to all of you that this Movement should not stop. Today, on this occasion I remember the leaders, who strengthened this cooperative movement namely, Madhavrao Godbole, Vaikunthbhai Mehta, Tribhuvan Das Patel, Vithalrao Vikhe Patil, Yashwant Rao Chauhan, Dhananjay Rao Gadgil and Lakshman Rao Naamdar, and by paying homage to them, with their blessings, I pray that we are able to advance this movement.

Friends, I meet several people, People from corporate sector meet me, journalists meet me, leaders of different political parties also meet me and they ask me clearly that, Is co-operative movement relevant? Is its relevance still there? Today, I would like to present some good practices of co-operative movement in front of you. First of all, I belong to Gujarat. I would like to talk about Amul. The Birth of Amul happened because of Sardar Patel's farsightedness. In 1946, Britishers took a decision that all the farmers in a collective way have to give their milk to a private company; a movement was launched against this in district Kheda. Sardar Patel said to Tribhuvan Bhai that till the time you don't find a way to sell your milk, your movement against this will never be successful and there was the beginning of Amul. Tribhuvan Bhai Patel registered two primary village milk production units with which 80 farmers got associated and look where that Amul is

today. In the year 2020-21, its turnover crossed Rupees 53,000 crores. In one day around 30 million tonnes milk management is being done by our Co-operative Institutions. Under this 36 lakhs farmer families are associated and especially they have worked towards the empowerment of Women. I have seen it in the villages in Gujarat. On the Saturdays, when women get their cheque or cash, by seeing the happiness on their face, you get real peace in your heart. Amul has associated with them 36 lakh farmer families; it's a federation of 18 districts. More than 87 dairy manufacturing plants have been established and their management capacity is around 39 million tonnes. Today, installed capacity is 39 million tonnes of milk. Can you visualize that what others big corporate dairies can't do, our Amul has been able to do that and I believe we should move forward along with this example. Lijjat Papad, very few people here would know about it, in the year 1959, a Gujarati woman named Jaswantiben Popat, associated 80 women along with her and created a co-operative- Lijjat Papad Cooperative to prepare papad. In the year 2019, their business is more than Rs. 1,600 crores including export of Rupees 80 crores. 45,000 women are associated with Lijjat co-operative movement and this success story is a source of inspiration for all the women throughout the country. Amul and Lijjat, both are successful today because there is a huge contribution of women over there, in filling up milk and also in making Papad. IFFCO, who is our host today, Mr. Chairman, is also here and Managing Director Mr. Awasthi is also here. IFFCO has given a new direction to the Green Revolution in our country. Founded in 1967 with just 57 co-operatives, today, they are an amalgamation of over more than 36,000 co-operatives that provide benefits to 5.5 crores farmers. Can you imagine that IFFCO, which started in 1967 with just 57 co- operatives, has today more than 36,000 co-operatives as its members and distributes dividends among approximate 5.5 crores farmers? If a very big company will earn something, the biggest part of that will go to the owner and whatever the IFFCO will earn, every penny of it will go to 5.5 crore farmers, and this is called Co-operative. Today, IFFCO along with 2-3 other Cooperatives has taken up country's responsibility of fertilizers and I would like to extend my gratitude to Mr. Chairman and Mr. Awasthi (MD) for bringing the nanotechnology to the ground level which is a great achievement and through this I have full confidence that with the help of co-operative institutions, in near future we will have no requirement of importing fertilizers. We will become self- reliant and we will be able to produce our own fertilizers. Similarly, KRIBHCO also is a federation of 9500 co-operatives with share capital of approximately Rupees 388 crore has distributed Rs 2118 crores in one year to its shareholders as dividends. All these are success stories

and we have a long list of such other success stories including NAFED. I visited Manipur where, Renu Hathkargha Handicrafts has been consistently contributing to the co-operative sector for the last 75 years. Uralungal Labour Contract Co-operative Society Limited in Kerala functioning since 1925, Tudamartha Cooperative Group, Karnataka and Kozhikode District Co-operative Hospital etc. are many such institutions which through Co-operative Movement have set example. How by collecting small sums from a small group of people can provide such a big contribution to the country's development and economy and how the profits can be distributed to small investors, is an idea on which all flag bearers need to think how to do many things? I request all of you Chairmen, Managing Directors, Directors present today in this function to put your best efforts in this direction. Whether in this series, these successful co-operatives can contribute, why we need to import good quality seeds, why we cannot be self sufficient in seed sector, whether any co-operative can accept the challenge to build trading house for farm produce through which small marketing yards can export their farm produce. Certainly, they can do so. Food processing sector is spread over world market but small farmer cannot access that and even if someone has interest he cannot access because of want of resources, if these co-operatives choose any one field and work in that, I believe that within five years there will not be any sector, where co-operatives have not made their presence felt. Ministry of Cooperation has been setup for this purpose. Cooperative Sector has to be strengthened, its graph has to be increased, transparency has to be brought in, co-operative institutions needs modernization, computerization to stay successful in market. Prime Minister has created this Ministry to do all these things.

Friends, today, I would like to tell you this because all of you are associated with co-operative institutions. Till, the time Jamwant Ji didn't tell Hanuman Ji that he could jump from Rameshwaram to Lanka over the sea, he didn't believe it. When Jamwant Ji said that Hanuman, you be confident that you can jump over sea, Hanuman Ji jumped and he easily crossed the sea. What can I tell you, what co-operative is? You all are more experienced co-operators but today I want to tell you something through which we can get to know our strengths.

Friends, around 91% villages are there where small or big some type of co-operative societies are definitely working. There is no country in this world where 91% villages have co-operatives working over there. There are more than 8,55,000 Registered Co-operatives Societies. There are more than 8.5 lakhs Credit Co-operative Societies. There are more than 60 lakh Non-

Credit Co-operative Societies. National Level Co-operative Groups are more than 17, State Level Co-operative Banks are 33, District Level Co-operative Banks are 363 and out of 95,000 PACS only 63,000 PACS are working. In a way, there is one PACS for every ten villages which is a great achievement. I will tell you later on, it is not a satisfactory situation but having one PACS in every ten villages, when we consider the statistics all around the world, then in itself it is a very big achievement. They are transparently doing the work to transfer Government money to the accounts of the farmers. These PACS are the medium to make available useful things to the farmers for agriculture and it should be our goal to strengthen these PACS. I have to tell you that 29% Agriculture credit distribution goes through co-operative system, 35 % fertilizer distribution is done by co-operatives, 30% manufacture of fertilizers is also done by them, 31% sugar is produced by co-operative sugar mills, 20% milk is produced and procured. 13% purchase of wheat, 20% purchase of paddy is done by them. The ratio of co-operatives in spindles is 29% , in the fisheries sector 21% contribution is from this sector.

Friends, I am referring to statistics because we are standing on a very strong platform. Now the time has arrive to set new goals and to move forward to achieve these new goals. This platform that our ancestors of Indian co-operative revolution have given us, on which platform the work of constructing a strong structure have to be done by the people sitting over here and people who are virtually connected to us and that's why Modi Ji has created this Ministry of Cooperation to speed up co-operative movement. Our success depends on four things; Resolve, Clear Intention, Hard work and to work in unison. These are four basic principles which if followed by all co-operatives in letter and spirit by our efforts, I feel our co-operative movement will advance in right direction. The Ministry of Cooperation, which has been created by Shri Narendra Modi Ji, aims at bringing development in rural areas and the Ministry of Cooperation will work continuously to meet the challenge of accessibility to development to every deprived in rural areas and to develop an indigenous (swadeshi) mechanism for this is also the responsibility of the Ministry of Cooperation.

Friends, in farming sector in seven years Modi Ji has brought an amazing transformation. I will only talk about the budget allocation. In 2009-10, Agriculture budget was Rs. 12000 crores, I will repeat it again, Rs.12000 crores which seems a very big sum but in FY 2020-21 this has increased to Rs. 1,34,499 crores . I am telling you this thing because farming sector is the priority

sector of the Narendra Modi Government and achieving this target possible without co-operative. We have talked about supporting several farmers. Swaminathan Commission came and since then talk that the income of farmers should increase by 50% but no one used to do it. For the first time Narendra Modi Government has worked to give benefits to the farmers by fixing MSP more than cost.

Friends, I can talk about several reports that had spirit in it but actually there was not. Under the PM-KISAN Samman Yojana, 11 crore farmers of the country had received Rs. 1,58,000 crores in their bank accounts through DBT. Friends, a campaign has been launched to support start ups. 10,000 FPOs have to be set up. Approximately Rupees 6865 crores have been kept to be financed separately. e-NAM Mandi Scheme has been launched, Soil Health Cards have been given and in all these things, Co-operative sector and PACS have played an important role. After studying all the things in PACS, its implementation agency will have to be started at the village level, then only all these things will reach the grass roots level.

Friends, after formation of Cooperation Ministry, many people say that it is a State subject; I do not want to engage in the fight between Centre and State, which can be answered in a very legal way. Under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, the Ministry of Cooperation will run in cohesion with all the States without any confrontation with anyone and that's why no one needs to think whether it is State Subject or Centre Subject. We will help all the States, take everyone along and take the movement forward. The work of taking co-operative societies to the grass roots level will be done under the aegis of the Ministry of Cooperation. We will soon bring many changes in the Act to facilitate multi-State Cooperatives. To move forward in the path of development it is a very big thing. Atal Ji had brought the cooperative policy in 2002 and now in 2021-22 PM Shri Narendra Modi will bring a new cooperative policy very soon. In the 75th year of Independence, in the "Amrut- Mahotsav", we will start formulating a new cooperative policy. We will strengthen the PACS as 63,000 PACS is a small number for 6 lakh villages and a target will be set to have PACS in every second village within the next five years and to increase this number from 63,000 to 3 lakh, the Ministry of Cooperation will prepare a proper legal road map. This will be an advisory which will be sent to the States. Accordingly, States will change in their respective laws. The biggest problem is that when PACS become bankrupt and unless, winding up work is finished, new PACS cannot be created under existing laws. We have to create a legal

mechanism such that new PACS start functioning as soon as winding up work of old PACS is initiated. This way, new PACS will be created and Cooperative movement will flourish. It will be ensured that all PACS are computerized in which Government of India is also going to contribute in a big way.

Friends, along with computerization we have started an initiative of developing a software which will help PACS, DCBs and NABARD to be connected together and through only one software, accounting systems of PACS, District Co-operative Banks and NABARD will run smoothly and it will be in our all languages, even in our regional languages.

Friends, my Ministry is also working on as to how convert PACS into FPO. I request you to upgrade cooperative training to make it more accurate and professional. Arrangement will be made for the skill development in all areas of skill development related to cooperative sector. There is a very big Corpus but to use that in a correct way, my Ministry is formulating a road map. The role of Credit Societies has to be strengthened and it has to be taken to the grass root level through which even the poorest of the poor can get credit. Its occasion of the Deepawali and someone needs Rupees 1,000 to celebrate, income is there but it is not there today because two months there was illness in the family, such credit, Rupees 1,000 to celebrate Deepawali is tendered by Cooperative Credit Society, which need to be created at ground level. No bank can do this. Banks require documents. Listen, if he had documents why would he come to take Rs. 1000 from you. There are no documents. The small loans are being provided by our Cooperative Credit Societies on the basis of mutual trust and I believe that we will strengthen it at ground level to make it accessible for everybody. PACS are not yet effective in some states to provide Kisan Credit Card (KCC). However, we will emphasize to link up PACS with KCC. Ministry of Cooperation will ensure Priority Sector Lending by working with all the Ministries to enhance the role of cooperative in all Priority Sector Lending. Self Help Groups (SHGs) in our country have not made any specific society so far, this Amul that we know is a specified society of Self-Help Groups. Every State can create their own specified society like Amul for making arrangement for marketing of products made by self-help groups. We are working on this and formulating requisite special legal mechanism. We have longest coast line with us for Fisheries Cooperative but we are not able to exploit it to the fullest. Small fishermen do not have resources for procuring big things like net, mechanized boats. (Work will be done for fishermen's cooperative so that even small fishermen

can take big things and their profits go directly to their bank accounts. Just like that, under leadership of Narendra Modi Ji, we are taking initiative for arrangement of marketing of forest produce through Tribal Cooperative.

Friends, we have taken responsibility for bringing synergy among laws of different States and basic blueprint of cooperative societies. I am not sure how much success we will get but our intention is pious and I believe that the success is imminent and we will definitely succeed. Today, so many leaders of cooperative movements are here. Transparency has to be brought in recruitment, elections, training, skill development, membership drive. We will have to bring all this into our functioning to take the cooperative movement forward or else we will be outdated. Modi Ji has taken an important decision to give momentum to this cooperative movement and to take Modi Ji's cooperative movement forward with speed, we have to make internal changes and do introspection.

Friends, our Ministry has also a vision of cooperative common service centre. My Ministry is moving forward for creating National Database and we have received four applications for creating National Cooperative Initiative. I feel that instead of a professional university, if any cooperative institution come forward that will be better. There is need for setting up a cooperative university. If someone comes forward for this, definitely we will be able to do a good work.

Friends, Chandra Pal Ji, has raised some issues. I want to tell him that I am aware of all problems because I also belong to you. Problems of Urban Cooperative Bank, taxation, discriminatory attitude of Governments and Governments Employees are in my knowledge. I want to assure you all that no one can do injustice to this sector and this is the reason Modi Ji has given priority to cooperative sector. The importance has been given to cooperative movement in the vision of self-reliant India and that is the reason Modi Ji, has given the slogan "Sahkar Se Samriddhi". We want that there should be equitable and all- inclusive development, the model of development having the power to touch all and to encompass all, which is not possible without cooperatives and that is the reason the Ministry of Cooperation has been established. There are several problems faced by sugar mills. There is discussion on disturbance of three tier agricultural finance and since matter is under consideration, all stakeholders are to be consulted, I am not telling you in clear terms but I want to assure you that if you have any problem feel free to write to me. I will take a decision after careful consideration of all such letters. Even if you do not write,

I will be pro-active in solving your problems and it is the desire of Hon'ble PM Modi Ji that every single person is included in the process of development, to help prosper every family with the help of cooperatives, through every prosperous family to make the country prosperous, is the Government mantra for prosperity and we will make all out efforts. Today, I have come here and you have welcomed me and my colleagues. Dr. Guarco, President, ICA has also graced the occasion and I want to assure him that cooperative movement of India may become a platform to exchange good practices in cooperative sector. If, he takes an initiative to set up a Headquarter for exchanging good practices around the world, we will provide all the facilities. Again, I repeat that desire of the Prime Minister to write a new chapter for the economic development of the country is based on cooperatives. I have full confidence that the important role which we will play for making cooperative our nature and fulfilling the dream of Modi Ji's self-reliant India, will be remembered by the coming generations.

Today, as mentioned by the Co-ordinator, that before my address, 6 crores people and many federations/ Committees/ DCBs/Societies are connected virtually I thank them all from the bottom of my heart and assure that the initiative of Shri Narendra Modi Ji, to re-ignite the cooperative movement will be made successful with new vigour.

Vande Mataram, Bharat Mata Ki Jai.