

International Year of Cooperatives: CM Tamang felicitates top cooperatives in Sikkim

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GANGTOK, AUG 16 /--/ This year marks a remarkable year for the cooperative sector. The United Nations has declared 2025 as the "International Year of Cooperatives" with the theme "Cooperatives Build a Better World". Befitting the occasion, the Chief Minister of Sikkim, ShriPrem Singh Tamang (Golay), had declared the awards for the best-performing cooperatives from this Independence

Day at the state-level programme.

The awards are conferred in recognition of the vital role played by cooperative societies as economic entities, which accelerate socio-economic development and empowerment at the grassroots level through consistent efforts to promote financial inclusion, maintain operational standards, and deliver quality services to the community,

thereby setting a benchmark for other cooperatives in the state.

The Chief Minister conferred the awards on the top three cooperative societies during the 79th Independence Day celebrations at Paljor Stadium, Gangtok. The winners are: 1) LuingPerbing Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society Ltd./PACS, Gangtok District, securing first position, 2) Kitam Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society Ltd./PACS, Namchi District, securing second position, and 3) PolokBorong Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society Ltd./PACS, Namchi District, securing third position.

They received a citation and a cheque for Rs. 10.00 lakhs, Rs. 7.00 lakhs, and Rs. 5.00 lakhs, respectively. This is the first time the state government has instituted awards for cooperative societies, thereby strengthening and motivating the cooperative sector in Sikkim. (PIB)

Anti-Rabies vaccination and awareness drive

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New Delhi (HS): Union Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah has left no stone unturned in realizing Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Sahkar Se Samridha".

In these four years following the establishment of the new Ministry, the sector has seen transformative growth. Under Shri Shah's leadership, not only have the shortcomings in the cooperative movement been swiftly identified and addressed, but also notable reforms have been introduced to provide a new direction to the sector. To call this the second revolution in India's cooperative movement would not be an exaggeration. During this period, more than 60 critical initiatives have been rolled out.

The Ministry's relentless efforts under Shri Shah in creating a database of cooperative societies are highly praiseworthy. Reforms have been implemented across the spectrum, from model by-laws to apex organizations. A target has been set to establish an additional

200,000 PACS (Primary Agricultural Credit Societies), including agriculture, dairy, fisheries, and salt PACS, to expand the reach of cooperation to every village in the country.

To ensure transparency and efficiency in cooperatives, the computerization of PACS has been fast-tracked. Shri Shah has spearheaded the revival of cooperatives in collaboration with states. Obsolete cooperative laws have been suitably amended, and new provisions introduced.

As part of legal reforms in the cooperative sector, necessary amendments have been made to the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act. A separate Central Cooperative Election Authority has been established to oversee elections in cooperatives.

To empower PACS, they have been linked with commercial activities, integrating schemes from various ministries. Several initiatives have been launched to attract youth to the cooperative movement. To ensure the



participation of trained and skilled youth in cooperatives, the government has established the country's first Tribhuvan Cooperative University, which will commence academic activities from this session. This university will offer specialized courses in cooperative management, leadership, entrepreneurship, digital governance, and policy-

making to train students and cooperative professionals. Through this university, the demand for skilled human resources in cooperative banks, marketing federations, housing societies, agricultural service societies, and other sectors will be met effectively. Addressing the challenges faced by government-owned sugar

mills, Shri Shah has ensured they receive equal opportunities alongside private and public sector mills. The income tax system has been rationalized, and their financial hurdles have been resolved.

Three national-level cooperative societies-focused on seeds, exports, and organics have been established, contributing to

increased farmer incomes. In response to India's food security needs, the cooperative sector has taken up the world's largest grain storage initiative. Work has begun on creating storage facilities at the gram panchayat level, with the pilot project already completed and the first phase underway.

In a notable step to ease farmers' challenges, the Ministry of Cooperation has empowered cooperative societies to procure farmers' produce at the Minimum Support Price (MSP). Cooperative organizations like NAFED and NCCF are now ensuring MSP-based procurement of pulses and oilseeds.

On the government's initiative, cooperative banks are now enjoying facilities similar to those available to public and private sector banks. They have been permitted to open new branches and expand their commercial operations. The National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) has seen an unprecedented increase in its

credit disbursement, with projections for the current financial year approaching ₹1.75 lakh crore. This has significantly strengthened the financial capacity of cooperative institutions.

Over the past four years, the Ministry of Cooperation has undertaken more than 60 landmark initiatives, benefiting cooperative societies across the country.

India has a rich and impactful tradition of cooperative movements, which have played a crucial role in driving socio-economic transformation, especially in rural and agriculture-based economies. Today, there are over 850,000 cooperative societies in the country, with approximately 290 million citizens participating as members. These societies are actively engaged in agricultural production, rural finance, housing, marketing, consumer services, the dairy sector, fisheries, and other industries.
