'Farming sector should make their views known to political parties'

Urge parties to include your recommendations in manifestos, says Montek Singh

EXPERES NEWS SERVICE @Hyderabad

"In my opinion, going by convention, during election year, interim budget is not that significant," said Montek Singh Ahluwalia, former deputy chairman of Planning Commission of India, which was later replaced by NITI Aayog.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Farmers’ Agenda Meet here on Monday, he said: "The previous year’s expenditure will be announced and the government carries on. The real budget will come when the new government comes in."

During the event he urged stakeholders in the farming sector to form a list of long-term and short-term recommendations and present it to political parties and urge them to adopt those in their manifestos.

"We are heading for General Elections. So this is really the time that interest groups should make their views known to the political parties that are going to contest," he said.

"Getting from an idea in a politician’s mind to getting it done is a big chain. However, if that idea is not there you haven’t even started."

He said that parties would be making their manifestos, and stakeholders should get their views across so that it reflects in the document. However he quickly added, that parties do not take manifestos seriously and it was "a way to win elections".

He also urged the Consortium of Indian Farmers Association, the body which was holding the event, to give evidence of distress to a Parliament Standing Committee after the elections.

"If the consortium wants to have its voice heard, they should send a representative to the standing committee, and a similar presentation should be made," he said.

Ahluwalia recommended dividing the issues into long-term effect and short-term effect based on the time-frame of the return.

For instance, the issue of climate change would be a long-term issue, and deciding the minimum support price would be a short-term issue, he said.

He also urged doing away with fertiliser subsidies, and instead recommended that the money be distributed among different states in proportion to their agricultural productivity.

"Farmers have lost respect for universities" farmers and society have lost respect for the universities as no research in agriculture or farming has been done in the last few years, said Arvind Reddy, a University of Hyderabad professor at the Farmers’ Agenda Meet on Monday.

"The government has stopped funding research in agriculture and farming. This has translated into lack of trust in universities."

While ideally farmers should look towards universities for recommendations on how to introduce innovation in farming, nowadays it is the other way round.

He also slammed the excessive use of pesticides on crops, saying, "Did you know that pesticide is sprayed 20 to 22 times on a brinjal? Are we eating brinjal or pesticide?"

Getting from an idea in a politician’s mind to getting it done is a big chain. However, if that idea is not there you haven’t even started.

Montek Singh Ahluwalia

A new method to increase productivity of cows

EXPERES NEWS SERVICE @Hyderabad

WITH an aim to increase income from farming and to encourage farmers to embrace technology, a Hyderabad-based company has introduced a method by which cows could produce milk without getting pregnant and thereby increase productivity and profit.

Presenting the same at the Farmers National Agenda 2019-2029, Dr Pravin Kani, MD of Tropical Bovine Genetics (TBG), claimed three times increase in a farmer’s income from a cow they would ensure has “better genetics” through the processes of in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) and embryo culture.

While a generic cow (bos indicus) in a year yields 1,500 litre of milk, which translates to ₹8,750 profit annually, the TBG-modified cow would yield 4,000 litre with an annual profit of ₹34,250. With the normal way of breeding, there were problems he said, since breeders prefer female offspring. The TBG’s technology has been designed to suit both low input farmers and high input farmers, he said.

While 90 per cent of India’s milk is produced by low-input farmers, they usually come from poor socio-economic backgrounds.

Kani said that whole process would take 36 to 40 months to complete.

"Instead of buying a cow, a farmer would buy a female sex embryo, which would be inseminated into a cow. After 27 months, the heifer would be again inseminated, which would affect nine months, finally turn into a milking cow," he said.

The milking cow “with better genetics” could either be sold or, their milk could be sold — both of which will be profitable for the farmer, he claimed.
‘Many reforms needed to revive agriculture sector’

Pressure groups should bring real issues to policy makers’ notice, says Montek

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Former deputy chairman of the Planning Commission of India (now NITI Aayog), Montek Singh Ahluwalia has suggested large-scale reforms, including scientific and policy support for improving productivity and profitability, to revive the agriculture sector in the country.

“We need to have a relook at the import/export policy, reforms in laws relating to leasing of land, use of river waters as well as groundwater, abolition of the Essential Commodities Act, placing input subsidies such as fertiliser, power, water, seed and others at the disposal of States based on their contribution to GSDP/GDP from agriculture sector among many other measures,” Dr. Ahluwalia said here on Monday.

‘Make voice heard’
Sharing his views at the consultation on fine-tuning national farmers’ agenda 2019-2029 organised by the Consortium of India Farmers’ Associations (CIFA), he felt that interest-groups should make their voices heard/know, particularly in the election year although putting an idea into politicians’ minds and getting it implemented was a long chain process.

The economist, who served the country in various capacities, however, remarked that “parties never take their election manifests as seriously as we (people) think as they are only the tools for winning elections”. At the same time, he opined that post-election determination of the agenda makes much difference and consortium such as CIFA should make an effort to bring the real issues to the notice of those who matter, including through full-page newspaper advertisements, if they could afford.

‘Fertilizer subsidy worst’
Terming the fertilizer subsidy as the “worst”, Dr. Ahluwalia said it should be discontinued, pooled and placed at the disposal of States so that they could use it as per their needs.

“It does not mean taking out all money meant for agriculture but using it an efficient and productive manner,” he noted. All other input subsidies given by States for power, water, seed and others too should be given to farmers in a different manner by encouraging sustainable practices.

He suggested scientific and systematic mapping of aquifers across the country even if required funding from the Centre so that indiscriminate exploitation of surface water and groundwater was curbed. Citing an example, he stated that Maharashtra was using 66% of its water resources for just 3% of its land.

Water at a price
On interlinking of rivers, the economist said it would be possible and feasible only if water was priced as done in Australia. “As long as water is not priced, no State would be surplus and demand more water and blame other States for its problems,” he remarked.

Economist G. Chandraksekhar Aiyar, member of Gene-Editing Sub-Committee of Ministry of Science and Technology Dr. Pravin Kini, Prof. Arjula Reddy of University of Hyderabad and member of Telangana Commission for Debt Relief P. Sree Hari Rao also spoke.
Experts pitch for pregnancy-free lactating cows

Hyderabad: Embryo Technology experts on Monday said that high milk-yielding cows can be developed by transferring embryo into surrogate low milk-yielding country cows which can then be turned into 'pregnancy-free lactating cows' by artificial induction of lactation that will double the income of dairy farmers in the country.

Speaking at the 'Farmers' National Agenda Conference' organised in the city on Monday by Consortium of Indian Farmers' Associations, Dr Pravin Kini, founder of 'Tropical Bovine Genetics' and member of Gene Editing subcommittee of Ministry of Science and Technology, said Embryo Technology will help in increasing milk production manifold and the cows can give milk for 10 years (lactation period) without getting pregnant. "We are working in collaboration with National Dairy Development Board. There is no genetic modification involved in this technology. It is a proven embryo transfer technology. We can have both breeder farmers and producer farmers. Assured lactation and milk production is the key target. Cows can produce milk for 10 lactation periods," said Kini.

Srinivas Cherukuri, CEO of 'Tropical Bovine Genetics', told TOI, "We collect oocytes (eggs) from a good breed that gives 20 litres of milk and above and fertilise in vitro conditions in laboratory with the spermatozoon from a potential male. Once in a week, oocyte can be collected from a donor cow. From one oocyte we can produce five to six embryos. The embryo is then transferred into the uterus of a surrogate (recipient) low milk-yielding cow. When the calf grows, it grows into a high milk-yielding cow."

Experts also demanded that the government should immediately allow the cultivation of genetically modified (GM) crops as a solution to the agrarian crisis. Dr Arjuna Reddy, Professor Emeritus at University of Hyderabad said, "Quality seeds help farmers. BT is the best solution. We transferred BT brinjal to Bangladesh and people there are consuming the brinjal. Have there been any issues reported? No. Lakhs of Indians in the US are also consuming GM foods without any issues. For how long will we carry out safety tests? Protein introduced in GM foods is easily digestible," he said. He added that 40 GM products are in the pipeline and if they are given the nod then they will be made available. "Water should be made taxable. We need to produce varieties that consume less water," he said.

Stop indiscriminate exploitation of groundwater, cautions Montek

Hyderabad: Former Planning Commission deputy chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia on Monday cautioned farmers on indiscriminate extraction of groundwater in the Deccan peninsula "as there is no quick recharging of groundwater table unlike the Indi-Gangetic plain". Mapping of aquifers should be taken up first and then a decision could be taken on putting restrictions on extraction of groundwater, he said.

Speaking at Farmers' National Agenda conference organised here by Consortium of Indian Farmers' Associations, the noted economist said, "Free power and fertiliser subsidy to farmers should go and instead input subsidy must be given to them." "Water has been grossly misused. Even NASA satellites could detect gravitational changes that indicated huge exploitation of water in Punjab. In the Indo-Gangetic plain, groundwater is recharged quickly but it is not so in the Deccan plateau. Current laws allow anyone to draw water from the ground. Fertilisers subsidy results in excessive use of groundwater. Use of MNREGA in agriculture can be pursued in a limited sense. Instead of free power, the money can be converted into input subsidy," he added.

Ahluwalia also said the Essential Commodities Act should be repealed as it was being used to harass the farmers and traders. Instead, the government should control the supply-demand market. "In the current regime (NDA), agriculture growth is only 2.5% though it was targeted at 4%. Agriculture's contribution will fall further. When 47% of the population depends on it and the GDP contribution falls drastically it is difficult to sustain agriculture," he said.

"This is a good time for farmers' associations to put ideas before political parties. Farmers associations should come up with top 12 demands," said Ahluwalia.
హిందీ మాస్పాత్ర సంప్రదాయ విధానం

- 2.5 అడుగు ప్రతిస్థానాన్ని నిర్ధిష్టం చేయండి
- సంప్రదాయ ప్రతిస్థానాన్ని సంకేతాన్ని ఆధారంగా నిర్ధిష్టం చేయండి
- అంశాలక భాగాన్ని కంప్లెక్స్ సంఖ్యలు నిర్ధిష్టం చేయండి
- విద్యా, భూమిశాస్త్ర సంఖ్య అధికంగా అంశాలు నిర్ధిష్టం చేయండి
- లేదా విడిలేదా సంఖ్యలు నిర్ధిష్టం చేయండి

వైట్ సినిమా నిర్మాణం విషయం

మాస్పాత్ర సంప్రదాయ విధానం లో ఉన్నా విషయం. ఇది 2060 లో ఉన్నా విషయం. ఈ విషయం విధానం మీద ఉన్నా విషయం. ఈ విషయం విధానం చేయడానికి మాస్పాత్ర సంప్రదాయ విధానం లో ఉన్నా విషయం. ఈ విషయం విధానం చేయడానికి మాస్పాత్ర సంప్రదాయ విధానం లో ఉన్నా విషయం.
ఫార్మర్స్ నేషనల్ ఏడాది 2018-23కు యోగ్యం మార్గాలు

ఎందుకంటే దీని మార్గాలు సంఖ్య 2019-2023 లకు ప్రతిస్థాపించబడింది. మార్గాలు మాత్రం ఈలా ఉండాలి:

1. ఫార్మర్స్ నేషనల్ ఏడాది ప్రామాణిక ప్రశ్నలు, ఎంపికలు, విద్యా అధికారితత్వం, ప్రాంభిక పరికరాలు
2. ఫార్మర్స్ నేషనల్ ఏడాది ప్రాంభిక పరికరాలు
3. ఫార్మర్స్ నేషనల్ ఏడాది ప్రాంభిక పరికరాలు
4. ఫార్మర్స్ నేషనల్ ఏడాది ప్రాంభిక పరికరాలు
5. ఫార్మర్స్ నేషనల్ ఏడాది ప్రాంభిక పరికరాలు

దీనికి మరొక మార్గాలు ఈ మార్గాలు సంఖ్య 2019-2023 లకు ప్రతిస్థాపించబడింది.