

From Director's Desk

Now, half of monsoon months are over. And West Bengal is still reeling under deficit monsoon. Up to 29th July 2016, the deficit is -16% in the Gangetic West Bengal region, which bears the most fertile soils of the State. In the case of pre-monsoon rain (March to May), Gangetic West Bengal is found to be deficit by -24%. But in the last year, we received more than normal during this period and you can recapitulate that although we got an early warning from Government of India for deficit rainfall during last Kharif, but it actually became the reverse upto end of July and 12 south Bengal districts were inundated affecting 10,40,915 ha with >33% crop loss. This year we got the meteorological forecast of good monsoon yet we have already planned to combat the adverse situation. We planned the list of activities as per Guideline of Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture, Hyderabad, mixed with the working experiences of our own Research and Administrative set up of the entire state. The Contingency Plans are prepared



accordingly and the districts are working in line with the identified line of action. Like previous years, we also integrated the activities from allied sectors including Water Resources, Power and Irrigation. We also planned to go for crop diversification programme with important crops like Maize, Black Gram, Arhar for areas, where soil and land situation encourages their acceptance. We stressed the Zero Tillage

Programme for Rice, to combat the reduced monsoon rain.

Finally, we apply two *mantras* namely "Integration" and "Management" to combat the odds to the maximum. We tried Integration of activities from all associated sectors and management of all available resources. We got some success previously and intend to perform better, learning from our previous failures.

Dr. Paritosh Bhattacharyya
OSD & Ex-Officio, Director of Agriculture,
West Bengal

State level workshop on Farmer Producer Organisation

A workshop on Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) was held on 11th July, 2016 at Bhasha Bhawan Conference Hall, National Library, Kolkata under the Chairmanship of Sri Sanjeev Chopra, Additional Chief Secretary to the Govt. of WB, Dept. of Agriculture. In his inaugural speech ACS informed that 67 nos.



of FPOs have been developed in the state and West Bengal ranked 4th in India in this respect. Sri Pravesh Sharma, an eminent National Expert on FPO at New Delhi advised to form a Federation of the FPOs / FPCs at State Level. Sri B.P Gopalika, Principal Secretary, Dept. of FPI & Horticulture assured to provide assistance for strengthening the FPOs. Sri Rajesh Kumar Sinha, Secretary, Dept of Agriculture Marketing stated that all the outlets of 'SUFAL BANGLA' will be operated by the FPOs & FPCs. Sri P. K. Mazumdar, Advisor on Agriculture & allied sectors to the

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of WB clued up that GOI will procure 10 lakh MT of rice from WB in this current year. So, FPOs have an opportunity to collect rice from farmers and to sell it to GOI. Dr. P Bhattacharyya, OSD & EODAWB, concluded the work shop with sincere thanks to all. ■

Land Shaping at Sundarban – A boon for the low land situation

Ramkrishna Ashram Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Nimpith, South 24 PGs has conceptualized and developed the Land Shaping Technology to combat the constraints of Sundarban like, low land situation resulting in water logging during rainy season, impeded drainage, lack of irrigation facilities accentuated with soil salinity mostly during Rabi-summer season, low yielding traditional variety of kharif paddy or rare option for vegetable cultivation during any of the cropping seasons, having minimum land holding etc. This is a multi-faceted method by which HYV rice replaces low yielding indigenous rice in rainy season and high value vegetable crop cultivation during winter season. Besides, pisciculture with duck rearing in pond and orchards plantation on the embankment developed by the dug up soil are also possible through this method. ■



Hon'ble MIC Agri. watching the land shaping method at Sundarban

Training at Mati Tirtha Krishi Katha Prangan

Farmer's training programmes are being organised at Mati Tirtha Krishi Katha Prangan at District Seed Farm, Bardhaman on and from 11th July 2016 and will be continued throughout the year. ■



Glimpses of training programme for the women.

Setting up village level Soil Testing Laboratory

Soil Testing Laboratories (STL) or Mini Soil Labs are appearing at block level under the Soil Health Management Programme using *Mridapariksha* as an equipment developed by ICAR. The objectives of the scheme are: (i) timely on-line generation and delivery of 'Soil Health Card', (ii) to improve soil quality & profitability of the farmer, (iii) employment generation for the rural youth and (iv) to provide soil testing facility to the farmers at their doorsteps. The village based STL may be developed by the entrepreneurs (18-40 age groups) / input retailers / self help groups / farmer's joint liability groups / farmer's co-operative societies / farmer producer organisations and institutions like schools / colleges etc. ■

International Agri -Horti Expo 2016



State achieved the 2nd place in International Agri-Horti Expo 2016 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on 24th July 2016. ■