

Press Release

VP Addresses Scientists of Central Island Agricultural Research Institute **Hike in Minimum Support Price for Kharif crops will go a long way in improving the incomes of the farmers: Vice President**

Port Blair, July 5: The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has appreciated the Government's resolve to double the farmers' income and complimented the Government of India for the steep hike in MSP for Kharif crops. These measures will go a long way in improving the incomes of the farmers, he added. He was addressing the gathering at an interactive session organized by the Central Island Agricultural Research Institute (ICAR), in Port Blair today. The Lt. Governor, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Admiral D.K. Joshi, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM (Retd), the Member of Parliament Shri Bishnu Pada Ray, Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri Vikram Dev Dutt and other dignitaries from scientific and farming community were there.

The Vice President stressed on the need to streamline the procurement process and the PDS network so that the farmer derives the maximum benefit apart from providing MSP at 50 percent or more over the cost of production. Other income enhancing measures need to be taken to mitigate agrarian distress, especially of the small and marginal farmers, he added.

The Vice President asked the scientific community present at the gathering to have regular interaction with farmers through their scientific teams and Krishi Vigyan Kendras. A good synergy between the research institutes, farmers and the local administration is crucial for development of farm sector, he added.

Expressing concern over the unstable income of farmers owing to risks relating to production, markets and prices, the Vice President stressed on the need to improve farmer's income. Creating greater awareness among farmers on crop diversification, Livestock (dairy and poultry) and horticulture (Green House cultivation, Hitech horticulture) sectors can be best bets for enhancing farmers' income and employment opportunities, he added.

The Vice President asked farmers and those involved in agriculture to be aware of government schemes like Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and The electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM).

The Vice President said that the decreasing man power availability and their increasing costs are making the farming less profitable and

sometimes non-profitable. Secondary agriculture like processing and value addition of farm produce has immense potential to enhance the farmers' economy, he said.

He also suggested Creation of farmers groups such as Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Village Producer Organizations (VPOs) to scale up post-harvest operations and directly link them with markets would also help farmers to realize higher prices for their produce. It would also generate considerable off farm /non-farm employment opportunities for the rural youth, he added.

