

Hon'ble Minister of State for Agriculture Visits ICAR-CIPHET, Ludhiana

Sh. **Bhagirath Choudhary**, Hon'ble Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India, visited **ICAR-Central Institute of Post-Harvest Engineering and Technology (CIPHET)**, Ludhiana. He was accompanied by **Dr. Mangi Lal Jat**, Secretary (DARE) & Director General (ICAR); **Dr. S.N. Jha**, Deputy Director General (Agricultural Engineering); and **Dr. Rajbir Singh**, Deputy Director General (Agricultural Extension).

Dr. **Nachiket Kotwaliwale**, Director, ICAR-CIPHET, extended a warm welcome to the dignitaries and presented an overview of the Institute's achievements, emphasizing its pivotal role in advancing post-harvest processing and value addition in Indian agriculture.

During the visit, the dignitaries witnessed demonstrations of several innovative technologies and value-added products developed by ICAR-CIPHET. These included the **modern dal mill, mycelium-based packaging materials, millet processing machinery, plastic-based portable check dams, makhana products and processing machinery, animal housing structures, live fish transportation system, 3D food printer, vacuum fryer, apple-picking robot, and sensor network devices**. The delegation also toured some of the Institute's state-of-the-art laboratories.

Addressing the staff, **Sh. Bhagirath Choudhary** applauded ICAR's significant contribution to strengthening Indian agriculture and ensuring national food security. He remarked that feeding India's 145 crore population is a monumental task, recalling the era when Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri urged citizens to fast once a week due to food shortages. The Minister highlighted that the combined efforts of farmers and scientists have transformed India into a self-sufficient nation in food production, laying a robust foundation for agricultural growth.

He emphasized that the next phase of progress must focus on **translating technologies into benefits for small and marginal farmers**, enabling self-employment, and enhancing rural prosperity. Commending the success of the **Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan**, he encouraged scientists to work tirelessly to ensure that ICAR-CIPHET technologies reach the farmers' fields. "Developed nations may create challenges to slow our progress, but we must stay determined and self-reliant," he added.

In his address, **Dr. Mangi Lal Jat**, DG (ICAR) & Secretary (DARE), underscored the growing importance of post-harvest processing in India's agricultural ecosystem. He noted that while food production remains essential, **farmer prosperity depends on effective market linkage and value chain development**. "A farmer cannot prosper merely through production; prosperity lies in connecting him to the market," he said. He urged scientists to act as change agents by working directly with farmers, focusing on district-level engagement, and aligning their research with the **Viksit Bharat** vision.

The event concluded with a **vote of thanks**, extended by **Dr. Rajbir Singh, DDG (Agricultural Extension)**, expressing gratitude to the Hon'ble Minister, DG (ICAR), and all distinguished guests for their visit and encouragement. The meeting was attended by senior officials including **Dr. S.N. Jha (DDG, Ag. Engg.)**, **Dr. D.K. Yadav**, **Dr. H.S. Sidhu (PAU)**, **Project Coordinators**, and **Heads of Divisions**.



