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State eyeing agro sector growth rate of 8% to 10%, says Fadnavis

8th edition of Agrovision expo inaugurated



Chief minister of Maharashtra Devendra Fadnavis inaugurated the 8th edition of Agrovision expo at sprawling Reshimbagh Ground in Nagpur on Friday. Union transport and shipping minister Nitin Gadkari, forest minister of Maharashtra Sudhir Munganttiwar, agriculture minister of Haryana Omprakash Dhankar, agriculture minister of Assam Atul Bora, guardian minister of Nagpur district Chandrashekhar Bawankule, agriculture minister of Maharashtra Pandurang Fundkar, animal husbandry minister Mahadeo Jankar, MP Kripal Tumane, MP Ajay Sancheti, MP Dr Vikas Mahatme, mayor Pravin Datke, Nisha Sawarkar, Sanjeev Puri, Harish Chavan and Girish Gandhi were present during the lighting of the ceremonial lamp on this occasion.

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The agricultural growth rate in Maharashtra is a dismal minus 16 per cent.

However, with good monsoon and various schemes being implemented by the Maharashtra government for the last two years, area under rabi crop is going to increase that may lift agricultural sector from morass and further take agricultural growth rate to 8-10 per cent, said chief minister Devendra Fadnavis here on Friday.

He was speaking during the inauguration of 4-day Agro Vision Expo at sprawling Reshimbagh ground. Union transport and shipping minister, Nitin Gadkari presided over the programme.

Among others who were present on the dais included agriculture minister of Haryana, Omprakash Dhankar, agricultural min-

ister of Assam, Atul Bora, finance minister Sudhir Munganttiwar, guardian minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule, agricultural minister of Maharashtra, Pandurang Fundkar, animal husbandry and dairy development minister, Mahadeo Jankar, MP Ajay Sancheti, MLC Dr Vikas Mahatme, MP Kripal Tumane, mayor Pravin Datke, zilla parishad chairperson, Nisha Sawarkar, COO of ITC Limited, Sanjay Puri, CEO of Mahindra Rise (Farm Division), Harish Chavan and Girish Gandhi.

Chief minister on this occasion further stressed the need of increasing productivity of the land by minimising production cost.

Due to low productivity and high cost of production, the remunerative prices for agricultural produce can not become profitable, he opined.

To improve productivity, about 50,000 acre land is being brought under organic cultivation, he further said.

The concept of Zero Budgeting is taking roots in Maharashtra which has resulted into low production cost and high production. Farming should be done in a scientific manner he said and added that experimentation would increase area under agriculture.

In Vidarbha and Marathwada solar energy would be utilised for operating agricultural pumps even as more power is being supplied to agricultural pump sets, he said.

Coupled with this, creation of 1 lakh wells and farm ponds and the projects like Jalyukta Shivar would increase the underground water table, he informed.

Nitin Gadkari said the objective of holding the

expo year after year is to stem farmers' suicide in Vidarbha and increase their income by taking latest technology to the doorstep of farmers.

He said Agrovision office would be started on a permanent basis in Nagpur. The office would function all round the year and provide expert guidance to the ryots of the region. He also appealed to the State government to provide maximum benefit of drip irrigation to the farmers and take efforts for ushering in milk revolution in Vidarbha and Marathwada - like that in Gujarat.

Earlier, chairman of the Agrovision Advisory Committee, Dr C D Mayee and convenor of Agrovision, Ravi Boratkar welcomed the dignitaries.

Renuka Deshkar conducted the proceedings while Ramesh Mankar proposed a vote of thanks.