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## State Level Conference for Rabi Campaign 2023-24 (Promotion of Pulses & Oilseed Crops: Rice Fallow Management, Priority for Rabi 2023-24)

**Bhubaneswar, 20th October 2023:** The State Level Conference for Rabi Campaign 2023-24 was inaugurated by Hon'ble Minister Agriculture & Farmers Empowerment and Fishery & ARD Sri Ranendra Pratap Swain today in the State Convention Centre, Lok Seva Bhawan, Bhubaneswar. The objective of the Conference was to review and assess the Crop Performance and facilitate adoption of Technology. The state level and district level officers, state agriculture university, ICAR and CGIAR institutes made technical deliberations. In this Conference the Rabi Campaign Booklet was also released.

Odisha makes a programme to cover around 28.14 lakh hectares under different crops during Rabi-2023-24 which includes 14.34 lakh hectares under pulses, 3.73 lakh hectares under Oilseeds, 5.39 lakh ha under vegetables, 1.13 lakh ha under Condiments and 0.3 lakh hectares under Sugarcane with the production target of 19.39 lakh MT for food grains, 7.53 lakh MT for pulses and 4.18 lakh MT for Oilseeds.

Focus Areas of Rabi programme are: Enhancing irrigation usage, Promotion of Pulses & Oilseeds Crops through Rice Fallow Management, implementation block specific Agriculture Action Plan in Delta command areas.

Addressing the conference, Minister Shri Swain said that Rabi Campaign is very important for the economy of the State. Owing to the visionary initiatives and innovative schemes of the state government, Odisha has become a surplus state in rice production. Crop diversification, integrated farming, rice fallow management, cultivation of cash crops such as pulses and oilseeds, vegetables are being encouraged to cope with climate change and to increase farmers' income. Minister Shri Swain said everybody should show urgency to increase the production of rabi crops by making rational use of the available irrigation facilities in the state.

Chief Secretary Sri Pradeep Kumar Jena joined as the guest of honor and said that Odisha has now created a unique identity as a major food grain exporting state. He emphasized on the practice of climate smart agriculture in view of climate change by diversification of crops with emphasis on pulses, oilseeds and vegetables.

Development Commissioner-cum-ACS, Water Resources Department Smt. Anu Garg said that the state government is investing adequate money in water conservation and irrigation system. She emphasized that every drop of water meant for agriculture should be used properly.

Principal Secretary, Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment Department Dr. Arabinda Kumar Padhi said that the state agricultural policy 'Samridhi' has helped in the economic development of farmers and the use of scientific methods, remarkable success has been achieved in Odisha's agriculture sector. Principal Secretary, Department of Fisheries and ARD Sri Suresh Kumar Vashishth emphasized on the cooperation of farmers, all officials and stakeholders and convergence of all related departmental activities and programmes for the development of agriculture, horticulture, fisheries and animal resources etc.

Assured irrigation is one of the key factors contributing to higher productivity. Coordination with the Water Resources Department is to be ensured for timely and adequate release of water for irrigation.

Emphasis has been given for successful implementation of different Flagship programmes like Rice fallow Management in 4 lakh ha including Acid Soil Management in 1,30,000 ha ,NFSM- Pulses -Oilseeds, National Horticulture Mission, Jackfruit Mission, PMKSY, OIIPCRA in the state in addition to State run programmes like Odisha Millet Mission, Farm Mechanisation, Jalanidhi and other collaborative programmes to accelerate the pace of growth in agriculture sector and enhance farmers' income.

Horticulture sector in the state has been growing with popularity among farmers across the state. Increased number of farmers are adopting improved technologies and diversifying to various horti-crops owing to higher farm income. Therefore, the State Government lays greater emphasis on various developmental activities under way in this sector. Various horticultural programmes like Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) – NHM, Pradhanamantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), National Mission on Edible Oil – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) and state plan schemes like Development of potato, vegetable & Spices, Special Fruits Specific Scheme are being taken up which need to be monitored with utmost care.

Soil Conservation and Watershed Development forms an important part of government activities directed towards the agriculture development. The different programmes like Farm Pond- *plus*, MGNREGS, Rainfed Area Development, Odisha Mineral Bearing Area Development Corporation (OMBADC), District Mineral Foundation (DMF), Watershed Development under PMKSY, Jholakundi under RKVY etc are monitored regularly.

All the Collectors have been issued with a Rabi Circular for taking up the Rabi crops with appropriate strategy suitable to the agro-ecological situation of the district.

Director, Agriculture and Food Production Sri Premchandra Chaudhary gave an outline on the aims and objectives of the state level agricultural conference on 'Rabi Campaign 2023-24'. Sri Rohit Kumar Lenka, Director, Horticulture offered vote of thanks.

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