

Centre hikes farm funds for state

Deccan Chronicle 30/9/16

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THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
SEPT 29

Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Radha Mohan Singh has said that the centre had hiked the allocation for frontline agricultural extension activities and education in Kerala. He was laying the foundation for a new Farmers' Facilitation Centre (FFC) at the Central Tuber Crops Research Institute (CTCRI) at Sreekaryam here.

He said that in place of ₹12 crore allotted for agriculture extension during 2014-15, ₹24 crore had been earmarked in 2015-16. For agricultural education, the increase is from ₹1.60 crore to ₹8 crore. He urged the state government to fully utilise the central aid by ensuring effective cooperation of state agricultural offices at village level and Krishi Vigyan Kendras established by the centre.

Mr. Singh also pointed out that agriculture production and productivity can be increased only through micro-irrigation, production of quality seedlings and value addition of agricultural produce which will ultimately bring more income to the farmers. The Farmers Facilitation Centre is intended to serve as a single window for the tuber crop farmers who visit CTCRI for various purposes such as quality planting materials, tubers, value-added



Union agriculture minister Radha Mohan Singh plants a coconut tree sapling at CPCRI campus as part of national meet on prospects of coconut sector at Kayamkulam on Thursday. —DC

CURBS LIKELY ON AGRI TRADE WITH PAK

T SUDHEESH | DC
ALAPPUZHA, SEPT 29

India will take a tough stand on the agriculture trade with Pakistan following the Uri terror strike on the Army camp, according to Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh. He was talking to DC on the sidelines of a national agro meeting, 'Prospect of coconut sector and Kisan Mela 2016,' organised by the regional station of Central Plantation Crops Research

Institute, Kayamkulam, on Thursday.

India and Pakistan had made great strides since 2010 in easing the movement of goods across the borders. However, with the border situation worsening, the flow of commodities such as cotton, sugar, fruits and onion across the border will be hit. The trade between the two nations had picked up with South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) coming into force in 2006.

India's agriculture

exports to Pakistan is worth USD 800 million per year while India's import is below USD 200 million. India had also proposed increasing the number of goods traded through the Attari-Wagah border.

Faced with the shortage in the production of pulses and oilseeds, Mr Singh, addressing the 6th meet of BRICS agriculture ministers in Delhi on September 23, had sought the cooperation of BRICS nations to meet the demand.

products, bio-pesticides, customers' fertilisers and other products. Besides, there will be farmers' rest rooms,

parking facility and an ATM counter.

The minister who reviewed the working of CTCRI also addressed

the scientists, employees and farmers. CTCRI director James George presided over the function.