



भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान परिषद  
**INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH**

भा.कृ.अनु.प. - कृषि प्रौद्योगिकी अनुप्रयोग अनुसंधान संस्थान  
**ICAR-Agricultural Technology Application Research Institute**

ज़ोन-VII, उमियम- ७९३१०३, री-भोई ज़िला, मेघालय, भारत  
**Zone-VII, Umiam-793103, Ri-Bhoi District, Meghalaya, India**  
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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Shri Bhagirath Choudhary, Hon'ble Union MOS for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare stresses on strengthening KVKs for market led and climate resilient farming during his visit to Umiam**

The Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Shri Bhagirath Choudhary interacted with scientists of ICAR institutes and Universities at Umiam namely ICAR-RCNEH, ICAR-ATARI (Zone VII); CPGS (CAU), College of Agriculture (CAU), Kyrdenkulai and KVKs on **26th April, 2026** during his visit to Eastern West Khasi Hills district in Meghalaya. The programme was organized at the M.S. Swaminathan Hall, ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region, Umiam, in the presence of scientists, and staff of all the organisations including students, farmers, FPO members. The programme initiated with live webcasting of the 133<sup>rd</sup> episode of *PM's Mann Ki Baat*, where Northeast region of India was fondly referred "Ashta Lakshmi" by Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi and he highlighted the region's immense potential in bamboo production with attractive bamboo-based different enterprises, which can be tapped for promotion of agriprenureship in te NEH region. In this context, Hon'ble PM also acknowledged the exemplary contributions of progressive farmers and artisans from Tripura, Nagaland, Mizoram and Sikkim.

While assessing the ongoing research and extension programmes by the ICAR institutes, Hon'ble Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Bhagirath Choudhary lauded the relentless efforts of ICAR, ATARI and KVKs in translating the modern scientific technologies for the benefit of the farming community of NEH region. He advised for bringing a transformation in hill agriculture through renewed focus on region specific, resource based, farmer-centric innovations, market-oriented agriculture for better farm productivity, profitability and resilience. He reiterated that the prosperity of farmers is the central point of the *Vikshit Bharat@2047*. In his deliberation, Hon'ble Minister stressed on the bridging the gap between lab and land and rational use of the strengths of the region like its rich biodiversity, suitable agro-ecosystem, indigenous knowledge, and niche crops that needs to be leveraged for sustainable hill agriculture.

At the outset, the programme commenced with the National Song, followed by a warm welcome address by Dr. Sandip Ghatak, Director, ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region, Umiam, who highlighted the genesis of ICAR in the North Eastern Hill Region, the agricultural scenario of the North East, and the significant contributions made by ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region towards regional agricultural development.

Addressing the gathering thereafter, Dr. A.K. Mohanty, Director, ICAR-ATARI, Zone VII, Umiam, elaborated the achievements of ATARI, Umiam and KVKs across the Northeastern Region and outlines the upcoming programmes and plans for skill development of farmers on green job, digital agriculture etc. for promoting rural agriprenureship. He also accentuated the initiatives taken by the



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KVKs for establishment of self-sustainable seed system and indigenous germplasm conservation for sustainable hill agriculture aligned with Vikshit Bharat @ 2047.

In his address, Dr. G. Kadirvel, Director, ICAR-ATARI, Guwahati, emphasized the vital role of KVKs in oilseed production, bridging technological gaps in livestock and poultry sectors, and creating strong market linkages for specialty agricultural products of North East India to ensure higher profitability for farmers.

Hon'ble Minister also gave a special video Byte on 'Balanced use of Fertilizer Campaign' which was escalated through social media platforms of different KVKs and institutes for better awareness. The programme also witnessed the distribution of farm inputs among the farmers. The vote of thanks was extended by Dr. B.P. Singh, PS & Head, Division of Extension, ICAR RC for NEH Region, Umiam.