



भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान परिषद  
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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Shri Ramnath Thakur, Hon'ble MoS Agri & FW, GOI stresses on strengthening convergence among state department and ICAR institutes during his visit to Shillong**

Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Gov. of India Shri Ramnath Thakur visited Meghalaya to review the progress and impact of Central Sector Schemes (CSS) being implemented for agricultural transformation in the state. The meeting was attended by the senior officers from Meghalaya State Department of Agriculture along with scientists from ICAR-Research Complex for NEH Region; ICAR-ATARI, Zone VII; ICAR-NBPGR Regional Station at Umiam & ICAR-CPRS, Shillong; KVK, West Khasi Hills and KVK, Jaintia Hills. The interaction meeting included fruitful discussions on impactful interventions of improved varieties of different crops, promotion of water-efficient rice farming, rice fallow management, adoption of short-duration millets, harnessing the horticulture potential of the region, focussing on natural farming and green manuring and strengthening FPOs to accelerating agricultural growth, enhancing farmers' income, and ensuring resilient agriculture in the region.

The meeting was graced by Shri Timothy D. Shira, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Meghalaya in presence of Shri Franklin L. Khobung, Joint Secretary (NRM/RFS/INM), Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, MoA&FW, Government of India; Shri R. Ninamalai, Secretary (Agriculture), Govt. of Meghalaya, Dr. A.K. Mohanty, Director, ICAR-ATARI, Umiam; Dr. Sandeep Ghatak, Director (Acting), ICAR-RCNEH, Umiam. During the discussion, Hon'ble Minister especially emphasized the need for strengthening convergence among ICAR institutes, state departments and farm organisations to maximize the outreach of improved technologies and impact of the government schemes to the grassroot level.

The event was also featured with the release of Technology Pocket Books on Green manuring, Vermicomposting, Soil Health Card etc. prepared by ICAR-RCNEH by Hon'ble Minister of State for promotion of bio-farming in the region, which are key to enriching soil health, sustaining hill agriculture and improving farmers' livelihoods. Later, the Minister gave a message to the farming community of the region through video byte on ill effects of chemical fertilizers and beneficial effects of Natural Farming, biofertilizers, vermicomposting etc. for a better health in future. He also called for making the NE region self-sufficient in Pulses and Oilseeds production and providing the market opportunities to the farmers for enhancing farm productivity. The visit marked an important step towards strengthening coordination, improving implementation efficiency, and ensuring the reach of CSS benefits to the unreached farmers in a timely and impactful manner.

