



Asian Productivity Organization “The APO in the News”

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Int'l workshop in city stresses roles of cooperatives in sustainable agri-production

DHAKA, April 23, 2017 (BSS)-Speakers including government officials and international agronomists here today stressed strengthening the roles of farmers organizations in ensuring right to fair prices of crops for overcoming low productivity in the agriculture sector for a sustainable food production.

In most developing countries in Asia including Bangladesh, the agriculture landscape is dominated by small farms where productivity is low and farmers have meager income to improve their livelihood, they told an international workshop jointly organized by the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Japan and National Productivity Organization (NPO) under the Ministry of Industries at a city hotel.

"Individual farmers in these countries are facing a lot of challenges, including access to markets, information, agricultural technologies and related services and public goods, for lack of awareness about their rights, " said senior secretary of the Ministry of Industries Md Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan while addressing the inaugural session of the five-day workshop as the chief guest.

The secretary said organizations, groups or associations of farmers have the potential to address these challenges, increase and diversify production in a sustainable manner, improve food and nutrition security, and act as major agents of change in Bangladesh.

A producer organization or growers cooperative can reduce the existence of intermediaries from the supply chain of agricultural products, he told the workshop titled "Emerging Roles of Producers Associations and Farmers Cooperatives."

With additional secretary of the Industries Ministry Sushen Chandra Das in the chair, the workshop, among others, was also addressed by programme officer of the Tokyo-based Asian Productivity Organization (APO) Jisoo Yun and Joint Secretary and National Productivity Organization (NPO) Director SM Ashrafuzzaman.

Even the establishment of cooperatives is ensuring the participation of local farmers and fair price for the growers and consumers in the direct marketing system, he said.

"Organizations of farmers can play their roles in the design and management of investments under the Country Investment Plan (CIP) of the government of Bangladesh, and any plan that covers agriculture, food security and nutrition, said Sushen Chandra Das.

He further said developing farmer organizations capacities -in the design and implementation of activities under the CIP-is one of the key goals of the integrated Agricultural Productivity Project (IAPP), implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.

Terming cooperatives a most smart and innovative concept in the production sector, Jisoo Yun said, "It aims to provide information for practitioners interested in deepening their work with the producers ... it provides a mapping of farmers organizations throughout the country, an assessment of their capacities, a review of enabling environment issues, and proposals to strengthen organizations and increase their involvement in investment programming in agriculture and food and nutrition security." A total of 23 delegates from China, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and Bangladesh are participating in the workshop.