

## Director's Independence Day message to NCAP Staff



On the eve of our 60<sup>th</sup> year of Independence, I extend my heartiest greetings to all of you. On this day, we need to remember all those freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for the cause of independence. We, as an Indian, must feel proud of our great country; its culture, traditions and diversity.

NCAP is uniquely placed in our great nation to provide policy solutions for the benefit of millions of farmers and landless labourers who are dependent on agriculture. If you deeply think, you will realize that what a noble cause, we are engaged in. Often I feel that we are lucky ones that we have got an opportunity to work at NCAP.

In the past, the Centre was nurtured and shaped so eloquently that it has become a unique place to work. Its culture, traditions and diversity are often appreciated by many. In my opinion, every staff (former and present) has contributed for our glorious past. We need to maintain our past traditions, culture and diversity. We have the best brains and talented staff in our Centre. The talent must blossom to spread its fragrance in all the directions. For that, we need to do things differently by carefully planning our tasks. Our every action should be unique and must leave indelible memory among our stakeholders. Responsibility, accountability and commitment must be our mantra for taking NCAP to higher growth trajectory.

Working together by harnessing synergies should become a part of our culture. We should also make it sure that 'kindness' and 'smile' are integral parts of our daily life. On this I would like to quote, William Arthur Ward: "A warm smile is the universal language of kindness".

Dear colleagues, I would like to conclude by expressing my gratitude to each and every one of you for your great cooperation and contribution in your own unique way to make NCAP a strong knowledge centre and an island of excellence.

P K Joshi

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

### Wheat price outlook 2007-08

Shortage of wheat and its increasing prices have become causes for concern in India. Beginning June 2007, wheat prices started shooting up. The upward trend continued till first half of July when government ordered for import of 5.11 lakh ton of wheat. The prices remained flat in the subsequent weeks of July and have declined since then. This gave a strong indication that wheat prices in secondary (wholesale) market were highly sensitive to the factors also which affected prices. Based on these trends, it is expected

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that government this year would import roughly 2 million ton of wheat for raising level of buffer stock. This would enable the government to intervene in the market if private trade tightens supply to raise prices, and to meet PDS commitments even though there is sufficient wheat in the country. There is little chance of wheat prices going out of hand in the following months despite high international prices.

### System of rice intensification

System of rice intensification (SRI) is a superior practice of rice cultivation than the traditional method. An evaluation of SRI has shown that it resulted in savings in irrigation (30-40%), seed (30-40 kg/ha), time (upto 20 days of early transplanting) and cost (about 20%). Practising SRI also augmented yields and net returns. SRI yield was 5 to 7 ton/ha, higher than that of normal rice (<2 ton/ha). Adoption rate of SRI is more in favourable districts like Coimbatore and Tanjore in Tamil Nadu, and East Godavari in Andhra Pradesh as compared to severely drought-prone districts of Ramnathapuram and Kancheepuran in Tamil Nadu and Mahboobnagar in Andhra Pradesh.

### Growth crisis in agriculture

Growth rates of agriculture and non-agriculture sectors have followed a disparate growth path in the recent years. At state level, growth rates of agriculture turned out to be negative in four out of 20 major states while in six states it ranged between 0.10 and 0.95 per cent. Further, growth rate of

agriculture in most of the low productivity states was much higher than the national average during 1984-85 to 1995-96. However, after 1995-96, their growth rates not only declined but also turned out to be much lower than the national average. These patterns point to widening inter-regional disparities.

## PUBLICATIONS

Chand, Ramesh, S S Raju and L M Pandey. 2007. Growth crisis in agriculture: severity and options at national and state levels. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42(26): 2528-2533.

Chand, Ramesh. 2007. Wheat import and price outlook for 2007-08: separating the grain from the chaff. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42(30): 3196-3199.

Datta, K K. 2007. Retrospect and prospect of food security in north eastern hilly region of India. *Agricultural Situation in India*, 64(5): 37-49.

Pandey, S and Suresh Pal. 2007. Are less-favored environments over invested? The case of rice research in India. *Food Policy*, 32 (5-6): 606-623.

Joshi, P K and P S BIRTHAL. 2007. Contract farming and new dimensions on Indian agrarian structure. In: Vishva Ballabh (ed.) *Institutional Alternatives and Governance of Agriculture*. New Delhi: Academic Foundation. 237-258.

Reddy, I J, C G David and S S Raju. 2007. Effect of suppression of plasma prolactin on luteinizing hormone concentration, intersequence pause days and egg production in domestic hen. *Domestic Animal Endocrinology*, 33: 167-175.

Singh, Harbir. 2007. Plant variety protection and food security: lessons for developing countries. *Journal of Intellectual Property Rights*, 12 (7): 391-399.

## PARTICIPATION IN SEMINARS

Brainstorming workshop for "Finalizing the priority area for NAIP funding", NASC Complex, New Delhi, 2 August 2007 (Ramesh Chand).

National conference on "Emerging platforms for agricultural marketing", FICCI, New Delhi, 20 September 2007 (S S Raju).

National workshop on "Gender responsive budgets", Hotel Clariages, New Delhi, 12-13 July 2007 (Usha Rani).

Workshop on "Comprehensive assessment of watershed program in India", ICRISAT, Patancheru, Andhra Pradesh, 23-24 July 2007 (P K Joshi).

## POLICY ADVOCACY

### Mainstreaming Gender in Agricultural Research and Education

A brainstorming workshop on "Mainstreaming Gender in Agricultural Research and Education" was organized at the Centre on 10 July 2007. Dr Rita Sharma, Financial Advisor, Department of Agricultural Research and Education, chaired the workshop. The main objectives were to (i) evolve institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in NARS; (ii) develop criteria for gender budgeting in agricultural research and education system; and (iii) identify key areas for building organizational capacity for gender sensitive research and education programs. The discussion revolved around institutional arrangements, gender budgeting and capacity strengthening issues.



### Agrarian Distress in India: Causes and Remedies

The Centre in collaboration with the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics (ISAE) organised a national seminar to address various issues of agrarian distress on 1-2 August 2007. The primary aim of the seminar was to document causes of agrarian distress and identify strategies to improve agricultural performance by augmenting income and linking farmers with the remunerative markets. The themes were: (i) agrarian distress: causes and intensity, (ii) problems in Indian agriculture, (iii) opportunities in Indian agriculture, and (iv) strategies for inclusive agricultural growth.



Dr Mangala Rai, DG, ICAR, in his inaugural speech summed-up agrarian distress as the situation when expectations fall short of achievements which result in crisis in rural areas. Dr S S Johl, President, ISAE presided over the inaugural session. More than 70 delegates comprising of eminent policy researchers, policy advisors, corporate leaders and farmers' representatives participated.

### Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators

A workshop to disseminate the results of the project on "Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators for India" was held on 13 August 2007 at the Centre. The project was a joint study of ICAR-IFPRI-NCAP which is a part of global initiative covering more than 12 countries generating information from a large number of public and private sector research organizations for planning future research priorities and human resource development.

Dr Mruthyunjaya, National Director, NAIP, chaired the workshop proceedings. The workshop was attended by policy advisors and research managers from ICAR and other research institutes. Dr Nienke Beintema, IFPRI, along with the project team members (Dr P S Birthal, Dr P Adhiguru and Dr A K Bawa) presented the trends in R&D, human resource and financial investments at international level and in India over the past decade.



### Centre and State Systems in Agriculture

A workshop on "Role of Centre and State Systems in Agriculture" was organized on 24-25 August 2007 at Bangalore in collaboration with YES BANK, NCAP, Institute for Social and Economic Change and University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore. Though agriculture is a state subject, a large amount of funds and program priorities flow from the Centre. The roles of the central and state systems have been getting mixed-up leading to inefficiency in agricultural research, extension and education. The entry of the corporate sector in agricultural research has raised social and legal issues with respect to technologies and IPR. Delegates from centre and state government organizations, eminent policy researchers, policy advisors and private organizations attended the workshop.



### LECTURES DELIVERED

Valuation of technologies for commercialization. Foundation Course, NAARM, Hyderabad, 16 August 2007 (P K Joshi).

Agri-business opportunities for smallholders. Summer Institute on Agri-business Opportunities, NAARM, Hyderabad, 16 August 2007 (P K Joshi).

ICAR guidelines on IP management and technology transfer/commercialization. Institute Research Council Meeting, NCAP, New Delhi, 18 August 2007 (Harbir Singh).

Rainfed agriculture and high-value commodities. Summer Institute, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, 17 September 2007 (P K Joshi).

WTO and the future of Indian agriculture. Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi, 17 September 2007 (Ramesh Chand).

Livestock industry: a backbone of sustainable agricultural economy. Symposium on "Livestock industry: a key driver of agricultural growth", Ooty, 18 September 2007 (P S Birthal).

Strengthening Indian agriculture: status and perspectives. NAARM, Hyderabad, 19 September 2007 (Ramesh Chand).

Rough set and its applications, DRDO, MetCalfe House, Delhi, 26 September 2007 (Rajni Jain).

### TV TALK

Contract farming. Lok Manch, DD Lok Sabha Channel, 3 September 2007 (P K Joshi).

### VISITS ABROAD

FAO RAP, Bangkok, Thailand, June 24 to July 7, 2007 to identify key issues and countries of interest for policy analytical work and for policy networking, (Ramesh Chand).

### DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

Dr Koichi Fujita, Professor, Centre for East and South East Asian Countries, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan, 17 September 2007.

Dr Williem Janseen, Lead Agricultural Specialist, The World Bank, Washington, DC, 17 August 2007.

### HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

ARIS Cell organized an in-house training program from 2-13 July 2007 to strengthen the computing skills of the finance, administration and supporting staff. The training included hands-on experience on e-mail, internet, windows and MS-Office.

Perspectives and Current Trends in Bio-informatics. Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad 12-18 September 2007 (Rajni Jain).

Senior Certificate Course in Agricultural Statistics and Computing (Module – I), IASRI, New Delhi, 3 July - 29 September 2007 (Sonia Chauhan).

Training on Intelligent Reporting System. IASRI, New Delhi, 10-11 September 2007 (Harbir Singh and Sonia Chauhan).

National workshop on official languages. Institute of Public Administration, Bangalore, 31 August-1 September 2007 (Prem Narayan and Satender Singh).

### PERSONNEL

#### Awards/Recognitions

Dr P K Joshi was nominated as Chairperson, Academic Advisory Committee, Agro-Economic Research Centre, Government of India, Delhi. He was also nominated as Member, Editorial Board, Indian Journal of Animal Sciences, New Delhi; Member, Central Technology Management

Committee, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi; Member, Indo-Brazil and South Africa Joint Working Group on "Policy Issues and Poverty Alleviation", Department of Agricultural Research and Education, Government of India, New Delhi; Member, Working Group on "Land leased-in and owned land", Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, New Delhi; Member, Working Group on "Legal and Technical Experts on Liability and Redress in the Context of Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety", Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India, New Delhi.

Dr Ramesh Chand provided inputs on "Impact of Fertilizer Subsidies on Food Security" to the Prime Minister Advisory Council. He also worked for FAO RAP, Bangkok to identify key issues and countries for policy analysis work and to develop a network of policy and regional institutions to strengthen contribution to policy analysis and capacity building.

### Promotions

Dr P S Birthal was promoted as Principal Scientist w.e.f. 10 December 2005.

### HINDI PAKHWARA

For promotion of the official language, the Centre organized various activities during *Hindi Pakhwara* (14-28 September 2007). It started with lively debate on "Role of Cinema in Indian Society: Merits and Demerits", followed by special debate for non-Hindi speaking staff and debate on the problems of working women. Essay writing, dictation and translation competition were also organized. Extempore speeches, antakshari and quiz competition were very enchanting. All the Centre's staff took part in these events. On this occasion 'NCAP e-Samachar', an online Hindi-version of the NCAP e-News, was released by the Chief Guest, Mr H C Joshi, Director (Rajbhasha), ICAR. He also distributed the prizes to the participants.

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- Brainstorming workshop on Networking for Agricultural Economics and Policy Research, 24 October 2007 at UAS, Dharwad.
- Workshop on "Policy Visioning for Dairy Sector" under the V-PAGE project of NAIP, December 2007.
- Brainstorming session on pipeline technologies in wheat (date to be announced).