

## New Coop Policy Must Focus on Implementation



NCUI In a timely initiative organized National Webinar on 'Reformulating National Policy on Cooperatives' on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2021. This was attended by Governing Council Members of NCUI, Chairmen/MDs of national level and state federations, academicians, experts, etc which facilitated emergence of wide range of diverse views on this subject of vital importance. The objective of the webinar was to invite suggestions from all the stake-holders so that these can be submitted to the government.

In his opening remarks, Dr Sudhir Mahajan, ( Retd IAS), Chief Executive, NCUI while highlighting the objectives of current policy said that the Coop Policy needs to be reformulated to make it more relevant to changing times. 'Factors like technology, sustainable development, inclusive growth, active women and youth participation, etc clearly indicate the need for a paradigm shift.', he elaborated. Dileep Sanghani, President, NCUI in his Presidential address extended a warm welcome to all the participants, and invited suggestions from them in the areas requiring changes in National Cooperative Policy. He said ' Reformulating National Policy on Cooperatives, and bringing in changes in Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act are very important for democratic growth of cooperatives.'. Dr Bijender Singh, Vice President, NCUI came up with a very important suggestion related to introducing Cooperation as an elective subject in the school syllabus for making the foundation of the cooperative movement strong.

Shri H.K. Patil, former Minister, Govt of Karnataka, Member, NCUI Governing Council in his thoughtful speech said that there is a big need to bring the unorganized sector into the cooperative fold, and the new Policy must highlight on this issue. Lamenting over the fact that various concessions and privileges to corporates are disproportionately higher as compared to cooperatives and unorganized sector, he said, 'If cooperatives and unorganized sector flourish, then half of the population will better be served. However, if the corporates keep growing, we will have more billionaires'. He also said that the new Policy must focus on protecting the interests of localized institutions like cooperatives. He said that cooperators must work together in a best possible way to formulate best National Cooperative Policy.

Shri B Subrahmanyam, Managing Director, NAFSCOB said that though current Policy Document remains more relevant after two decades, but this calls for more para-wise revision as the implementing agencies have failed to achieve the objectives of Policy. He further said that while roles of GOI and state governments may be specified in the new Policy Document, ILO recommendation 193 on promotion of cooperatives may be considered for incorporation in the new Policy. Shri K.K. Ravindran, Managing Director, National Cooperative Agriculture and Rural Development Banks' Federation said that as the earlier policy did not achieve its objectives, the present policy must be made implementable with clearly defined Action-plans. He suggested the new Policy must focus on computerization of all sectors of the cooperative movement, enhancing role of national federations, strengthening self-regulation, creating recruitment system to bring in professional staff, etc.

Ms. Mirai Chatterjee, Chairperson, SEWA while agreeing with HK Patil's views of bringing a large section of the unorganized sector into the cooperative fold, came up with many vital suggestions which should be reflected in the new Policy. These are – creation of coop entrepreneurial development fund for rejuvenation of cooperatives, providing package of services to tiny and small coops, formulating fellowship programme on cooperativism for youth, convergence and collaboration between Ministries and departments, improving data collection for women coops, etc.

Shri Yashwant Dongre, Retd Professor, Mysore University said that the new Policy must have time-based Action Plans, short-term and long-term. He said the Policy must stress on making coops gender-sensitive, and also emphasize promotion of cooperatives in educational institutions.

Shri Harekrishna Misra, Professor, IRMA suggested that new Policy must lay stress on promoting circular economy, with emphasis on role of cooperatives. He suggested that Policy should lay stress on creating national data base of cooperatives, and creating innovation fund for cooperatives.

Shri KK Gupta, Chief GM( Retd) NABARD on the occasion said that new Policy must have a clear-cut intent on promotion of cooperatives in all sectors of economy. He said that policy must re-define relationship between centre and states, and the new Policy must have implementation review system.

Dr K.K. Tripathy, OSD, Hon'ble Union Minister of Cooperation, expressing his views in personal capacity said that the present policy needs to be reviewed, and the new policy must focus on roles and responsibilities of national and state level cooperatives.

The webinar recommended with unanimity that in order to draft National Policy on Cooperatives, a representative Committee should be constituted by the government, in which NCUI must have a leading role. Shri Ved Prakash, at the end, proposed vote of thanks at the end of the webinar. Sanjay verma, Dy. Director (PR/Pub), NCUI coordinated the webinar.

XXXXXXXXXX