

Speech of the Hon'ble Governor for the closing function of Poultry Expo 2019 at Veterinary College field on 19th October 2019.

I would like to congratulate the organizers of this Poultry Expo, 2019. Being the second largest poultry market of the world and having the fifth largest duck and chicken population, the expo has been organized in the most appropriate time. The poultry industry has not only provided the much needed animal protein to our country men, but also generated extensive livelihood opportunities to our educated unemployed youth. I am hopeful that our poultry farmers take full advantages from the exhibits of this poultry Expo.

Though there has been tremendous leap in commercial poultry production (meat & eggs) in the country, but when it comes to the north east scenario the improvement has not been at par with the national level. States like Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura and Sikkim has a long way to go before they catch up with the rest of the country. Even if we take into account the projected requirement of eggs per person i.e. 90 eggs, which is incidentally half the WHO recommended requirement, the region has to import roughly 200 million eggs from outside sources to meet the shortfall. Similarly, the NE region is procuring roughly 11 lakhs chicks from outside sources to make available 1.4 kilograms of meat per

person. This is totally unacceptable. The poultry farmers and those engaged in poultry industry of this region should pull up their socks and work earnestly to meet these shortfalls.

I am happy to note that both broiler and layer enterprises have been set up by educated unemployment youths with self financing mode and also with financial support from Government and other financial institutes. Such commercial ventures of Broiler and Layer farms will not only create new opportunities to our youths, but will certainly reverse the process of migration of people to urban areas in search of livelihood. The clarion call given by our Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modiji to double farmers' income by **2022**, would see the light only when all components of Agriculture are developed equally.

While developing commercial broiler and layer farms, one should not get carried away and forget to preserve and develop our own gene pools. The North East Region is considered as one of the original areas in Asia for the development of modern poultry from the red jungle fowl, which is still found in the forest of this region. I am told that the region has a rich gene pool as far as poultry is considered, with birds like Miri, Doathigir, Naked neck and Fizzle fowl, unique to this region. Scientific efforts must be made to conserve and propagate these breeds of poultry.

Duck, which is very popular in Upper Assam region of the State, also plays a major role in the culinary habits of the inhabitants of the region. Duck not only provides the much needed animal protein in terms of meat, but the eggs are also equally sought after. The region itself is endowed with rich pool of water borne fowls, Viz. Pati Duck, Nagesuari Duck, Ceena Duck, Keresia, etc. Scientists and workers engaged in poultry research must come up with means to preserve and propagate our local gene stocks.

Most of our farmers are marginal farmers, rearing animals as a back yard farm practice. The ability of these farmers to invest in poultry farming is next to nil. The Government, Banks and other financial institutes should come up with a comprehensive programme to support the farmers. I am happy to note that some of the Banks have already initiated such support programmes.

All our efforts to develop poultry production and poultry product would go in vain, if we fail to provide the support system to the farmers. Poultry being a feed sensitive enterprise, efforts must be made to provide quality feeds to the farmers at low cost. Since most of the raw materials for making poultry feeds are bought from outside the, the cost of feeds becomes higher. The Government should encourage crop

farmers to cultivate crops like Maize, Soya bean, Ground nut, etc, so that the raw materials are available locally.

One of the greatest detractors for poultry farming in this region, especially to Assam, is the Climate. Being a hot humid climate, the birds are prone to bacterial, viral and parasitic diseases. The Government should come up with an efficient support system to tackle these problems in the form of better veterinary health coverage. Another important area which unfortunately, no one has made any effort to tackle the issue, is the annual devastation caused to poultry farmers by the floods. This has resulted in heavy loss to our farmers. I hope the Poultry Expo, 2019, in one of its scientific seminars has deliberated on this issue and come up with some succor to mitigate the problem of these farmers.

I, once again Congratulate the organizers of this Expo and hope that the Expo has lived up to the expectations of the farming community.

Thank You.

Jai Hind