

Government of India
Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2663

To be answered on

Wednesday, August 7, 2024/16 Shrawana, 1946 (Saka)

QUESTION

North Eastern Region Agri. Commodity E-Connect Web Portal

†2663. Shri Shankar Lalwani:

Will the Minister of Development of North Eastern Region be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has launched any web portal and mobile app namely North East Region Agri. Commodity E-Connect (NERACE);
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the details of the benefits likely to accrue to the thereunder?

ANSWER

The Minister of State of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region

[Dr. Sukanta Majumdar]

- (a) Yes, Sir.
- (b) The North Eastern Council (NEC) under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER) in collaboration with North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Limited (NEDFi) has recently introduced a digital initiative called North Eastern Region Agri-Commodity E-Connect (NE-RACE) to provide market linkage for agricultural and horticultural products from the North Eastern Region (NER) in both fresh and processed forms. This initiative, available as a web portal and mobile app was launched by Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Hon'ble Union Minister of Communication & MDoNER, on 12th July 2024 at Shillong. The NE-RACE digital platform is funded by NEC and is developed and managed by the NEDFi.

Through this portal/app, producers such as Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs)/farmers collectives, Self-Help Groups, progressive farmers, and entrepreneurs in the agri and food processing sectors can directly showcase their products to prospective buyers minimizing the role of middlemen and fostering trust and long term

business relationships. These buyers include exporters, aggregators, organized sector buyers, wholesale and retail buyers and individual consumers. The platform also onboards critical agri-value chain service providers such as transporters, cold storage facilities, warehousing and cold chain services. The portal is supported by a help-line number providing one-on-one assistance to buyers, sellers, and service providers in English, Hindi and major regional languages such as Assamese, Bengali, Nepali, Manipuri, Khasi and Mizo. Additionally, there is provision for making available on-ground support through field-level manpower for buyers and sellers. The initiative includes provisions for State-wise and cluster-based farmer onboarding camps to build the capacity of growers, enabling them to use the digital platform effectively to reach global markets. There is also provision for collaboration amongst Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Spices Board, North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation Limited (NERAMAC), North East Region Community Resource Management Society (NERCRMS) and Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC) as well as State Government Departments to ensure the success of this initiative.

(c) The benefits that are likely to accrue under the NE-RACE initiative include :

- Leveraging the unique agricultural strengths of North East India by promoting exotic and premium agro-horticultural crops that have high demand.
- Enabling producers to negotiate directly with buyers, ensuring fair compensation for their products.
- Advance booking of upcoming products under mutually agreeable terms and conditions between producers and buyers.
- Addressing the critical challenges of logistics by onboarding service providers and facilitating their services.
- Providing a one-stop shop for products from North East India that have been produced under various missions and projects.
- Providing empirical evidence on the potential and prospects of the agri-horticultural sector in the North East, enabling the government to undertake more data-driven initiatives for farm sector development, particularly in agri-infrastructure development.
