

Hon'ble Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Science and Health & Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan launched DST Water Innovation Programme at ICAR-CAZRI, Jodhpur

Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Science and Health & Family Welfare, Government of India launched Department of Science & Technology funded Water Innovation Programme at ICAR-Central Arid Zone Research Institute (CAZRI), Jodhpur on December 6, 2019. Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that this new Water Innovation Programme would help in developing new technologies to reduce water evaporation losses and increase water use efficiency in water deprived arid region of India. This project will be implemented in four arid districts i.e. Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Barmer and Bikaner with the help of six national Institutes ICAR-CAZRI, Jodhpur; ICAR-IISWC, Dehradun; NIH, Roorkee; ICAR-CIAH, Bikaner; ICAR-CSWRI RRS, Bikaner and NIAM, Jaipur. The ICAR-CAZRI, Jodhpur will work as Lead Centre for this programme. Before launching the programme he visited different experimental sites at research farm viz; agri-voltaic farming, sewage treatment plant, animal fodder block and export oriented pomegranate production.

During the visit to agri-voltaic system (AVS) the minister emphasized on developing such models in the country to harness abundantly available solar energy to produce electricity from the land that might also be suitable for farming. He also highlighted the need of AVS to specifically produce green energy and appreciated the experimental model of AVS developed at CAZRI, Jodhpur.



During the visit of waste water treatment plant the Hon'ble Minister was informed that by using treated water 2000 quintals of green fodder was produced from 0.6 ha land which had a market value of Rs.4,00,000 and was sufficient for 35 cattle.

He also visited the field where napier hybrid (Co-4) is being grown with rainwater harvested from roof top of nearby buildings. He greatly appreciated model of export oriented pomegranate orchard and said that such self-sustained orchard with respect to water and energy are need of the time.

Earlier Dr. O.P. Yadav, Director, CAZRI, welcomed the Minister. Dr. Yadav in his welcome address said that the farmers of arid region grow under challenging conditions of uncertain and very low rain, high temperature, low soil fertility and other limited resources. The DST Sponsored Water Innovation Programme will give new technologies and use of these modern technologies along with traditional farming can increase the income of farmers and also sustain the arid ecosystem.