



Cabinet approves establishment of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), South Asia Regional Center (ISARC) at campus of National Seed Research and Training Center (NSRTC) in Varanasi

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The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the establishment of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), South Asia Regional Center (ISARC) at campus of National Seed Research and Training Center (NSRTC) in Varanasi.

Under the proposal, a Centre of Excellence in Rice Value Addition (CERVA) will be set up in Varanasi. This will include a modern and sophisticated laboratory with capacity to determine quality and status of heavy metals in grain and straw. The Centre will also undertake capacity building exercises for stakeholders across the rice value chain.

This Center will be the first international Center in the eastern India and it will play a major role in harnessing and sustaining rice production in the region. It is expected to be a boon for food production and skill development in the eastern India and similar ecologies in other South Asian and African countries.

Benefits from ISARC

The Centre will help in utilizing the rich biodiversity of India to develop special rice varieties. This will help India to achieve higher per hectare yields and improved nutritional contents. India's food and nutritional security issues will also be addressed. The Centre will support in adopting value chain based production system in the country. This will reduce wastage, add value and generate higher income for the farmers. The farmers in Eastern India will benefit in particular, besides those in South Asian and African countries.

Management of ISARC

ISARC will operate under the governance of the IRRI Board of Trustees who will appoint an appropriate IRRI staff member as Director. A Coordination Committee will be headed by Director General, IRRI as Chair and Secretary, Government of India, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DACFW) as Co-Chair. The other members of Coordination Committee are Deputy Director General (Crop Sciences), ICAR; Director, NSRTC; IRRI representative in India, representative of Government of UP and representatives of Governments of Nepal & Bangladesh and Private Sector.

For setting up of the Centre, A Memorandum of Agreement, will be signed between DAC&FW and IRRI, Philippines. The Department of DAC&FW will provide physical space for laboratories, offices, training classes, etc. with associated infrastructure and land at NSRTC, Varanasi. The Centre will be commissioned within six months.

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