



India to contribute to Nigerian Government's priorities in the field of agriculture and allied sectors: Shri Radha Mohan Singh

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Shri Radha Mohan Singh met Nigerian Minister of Agriculture, H.E. Chief Audu Ogbeh

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Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister, Shri Radha Mohan Singh said that India has noted with great interest the new initiatives of the Federal Government of Nigeria, particularly the Green Alternative initiative - a roadmap to make Nigeria self-sufficient in agriculture and a major exporter of agricultural products. The Minister said this today during his meeting with Nigerian Minister of Agriculture, H.E. Chief Audu Ogbeh.

The Minister said India was a food deficient country till the mid-1960s. But now we have produced more than sufficient for domestic consumption. India is now a major exporter of agricultural commodities. He said India will be only too happy to share its experience and expertise in any area of agriculture that Nigeria may identify.

Shri Singh said that India had announced in 2015 concessional loans of US \$10 billion to African countries. He said that he was informed that more than 20 officials have participated in short-term capacity building programmes in agriculture-related areas. More recently Indian had increased training slots under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme from 200 to 310 annually to Nigeria, which also include short-term training programmes in agriculture and allied sectors. He urged the Nigerian Minister to take advantage of this concessional loan (Lines of Credits) and training programme for agriculture and allied sector.

The Minister further said it is a matter of some satisfaction that for the last few years, India has been the largest trading partner of Nigeria and Nigeria is India's largest trading partner in Africa. There is tremendous potential for further expanding this volume. Nigeria may consider importing fresh grapes, pepper, wheat, maize, rice and cotton.

On the occasion, Shri Singh conveyed his deep appreciation to the Nigerian Agriculture Minister for encouraging Indian companies to explore the opportunities in Nigerian agriculture field both as investors as well as providers of agri-services, agricultural machinery and technological assistance. He also thanked Shri Audu Ogbeh for inaugurating the Business Event titled 'India-Nigeria cooperation in Agriculture and Allied Sectors: Opportunities and Way Forward' organized by the Indian High Commission in Abuja last week on 5 December.

Shri Singh concluded that India and Nigeria enjoy warm and friendly relations, the two nations are large developing countries with multi-religious, multi-ethnic societies. We share values such as democracy, pluralist tolerant societies, respect for human rights and rule of law. India would be glad to contribute to Nigerian Government's priorities in the field of agriculture and allied sectors.

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