

Valedictory Session

VOTE OF THANKS

K. S. RAJU, Co-Chairman, The Fertiliser Association of India, New Delhi



Hon'ble Shri B. K. Handiqueji, Mr. U. S. Jha, Chairman, FAI, Mr. R.C.Gupta, Deputy Director General, FAI, Distinguished delegates and very Special invitees.

On behalf of all of us, I would like to express our deep gratitude to Hon'ble Shri Handiqueji for his august presence this evening and delivering the valedictory address at the concluding session of our Seminar 2007. Given that the agriculture and fertilisers have not kept pace with the rest of the economy, we in the Fertiliser Association of India feel that there is a need to understand and analyze the multiple factors adversely affecting this sector, and draw a road map for resurgence of this sector in line with the growing demand for food and the growing economy in the country. Therefore, the theme of this Seminar was *Holistic Approach to Agriculture and Fertilisers*.

During the Seminar, we have deliberated upon various issues to ensure sustainable growth of our industry, enhance productivity in agriculture through nutrient management, utilising latest technologies for the processes, improving operational efficiencies, reducing costs, improving environment burdens and also to ensure the challenges in marketing and distribution addressed in a much better manner.

Our thanks are to the very special Chairmen of various sessions, Dr. Sarma Garu, Secretary, Fertilizers, Dr. J. C. Katyal, Mr. Viren Kaushik, Dr. P. S. Gahlaut for conducting the sessions so well. We are indeed grateful to all of them from the bottom of our heart. We are also very grateful to all the speakers who spoke so eloquently on very topical subjects and the way they

were delivered. Our thanks are also to the Rapporteurs who have been silently taking down notes to ensure that the discussions are captured and they are presented after the Seminar is over. We also sincerely thank all the senior government officials and all the dignitaries for their presence.

We are grateful to all the sponsoring organizations, Hotel Ashok, for their support and hospitality. We appreciate the coverage made by the media and we seek their continued support.

An event of this magnitude requires detailed planning many months in advance and it requires meticulous execution. I would say that our colleagues in FAI have done a wonderful job. Hearty congratulations to them.

Sir, there are a couple of concerns; I would like to present before you. The Seminar has gone extremely well. The papers were excellent. But so we had in all the seminars during the last 15 years, I have been associated with this sector. Unfortunately, the ideas which come forth in the seminar, in the form of wonderful presentations and papers, there is so much of a disconnect on the ground that the country does not really get the benefit of all these presentations. In fact, if you see the ground, there is drop in agricultural productivity, degradation of soil health and the share of agricultural growth in overall GDP dropping dramatically. Today, as we are grappling with these problems, we need to realise that we are collectively responsible for this situation that has



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happened – everybody, people in the industry, the policy makers, and the people at large. It is the high time now that we take this very seriously, because if this continues, we will be in a very serious situation.

After the seminar is over, we would like to capture all these ideas and approach the Government and the policy makers with all these programmes and seek your valuable support in ensuring that these things are actually taken to the ground. As an industry, we are committed to our business and our stake-holders. Our stake-holders are the farmers. And, these are the people whom we are not really attending to. We should work with them, work in the fields, work for productivity improvement, for quality improvement, and for improvement in the economic conditions of the farmers.

At the end of the day, we have to strive for a better performance for the organization, for the shareholders in the long-run, so that we continue to be in this sector, invest more money in this sector. This is good for the country, good for all of us. But that has not happened in all these years. Therefore, we seek your support in ensuring that these ideas are actually translated into ground realities. All of us are willing to go through the pains and ensure that this happens. And, ten years from now, when we speak in a seminar like this, we shall look backward and feel proud that we have transferred all these to the ground and we have done it. For this, I seek your valuable support, Sir. Do pardon me if I have tried to capture the mood of the house as this has been of a great concern.

Today, we are talking of 10% growth

of the economy, the share market is quoting 20,000 index, whole economy is booming. Our foreign friends, who have come from the fertiliser sector, are smiling all the way and it is the domestic sector which is glooming. We are not able to deal with our resources. We are not able to give best to all our stake-holders. So, from the industry, we are committed to ensure that we serve the country, serve the farmers, our stake-holders. We will work with the Government to evolve appropriate strategies, policies that will make it work, and as I said when we come back here 10 years hence, we look backward and say, yes, we have actually done it.

Thank you very much, all of you once again and I look forward to meet you in the next seminar.

Thank you, Sir.