

**PROVIDE WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE WITH BENEFITS AND FACILITIES:
GOVERNOR**

Panaji, December 21, 2018

"The majority of the agricultural workforce comprises women, and hence facilities and benefits, like those that are maternity-related, should be provided to them," said Governor of Goa, Smt Mridula Sinha while speaking at the State Credit Seminar organized by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in Panaji, today.

The Governor further said that there was also a need to provide counseling facilities to those widows of farmers, who had committed suicide owing to farm distress.

The Governor further added that in Goa there was a lot of agricultural land which is not being cultivated and should be put to optimum agricultural use by the means of innovative thinking. "There's this mentality," she noted, "where people tend to buy their agricultural produce instead of growing it by themselves when there is so much of land which is not being cultivated." The Governor continued, "It's fine to have agricultural goals, but it's important to change mentalities in favour of agriculture," the Governor said.

On the occasion, the State Focus Paper 2019-20 and Desk Calendar for 2019 on the theme Sustainable Agricultural Practices were released.

The Secretary, Finance, Shri. Daulat Hawaldar, IAS, spoke of the vulnerability of farmers and said that their lives are faced with uncertainties because they are rain dependent, and are also faced with other challenges such as climate change, unstable markets, rising cost of cultivation, decreasing yields, increase in cost of living in rural areas etc. Shri Hawaldar lauded NABARD for taking sincere efforts to finance farmers in various areas. He appreciated the initiatives of NABARD in providing loans for the "Open defecation free" (ODF) programme, Solid Waste Management for Swachh Goa etc.

Present on the occasion were the Regional Director, Reserve Bank of India, Dr. S. Rajagopal, General Manager, NABARD, Goa RO, Kamakshi Pai, among others.

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