



भारतीय कृषि एवं खाद्य परिषद्
INDIAN COUNCIL OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

THE ELECTRONIC PLATFORM e NAM: BOON OR BANE

One nation one market was the loud imperative behind launching the e-platform of the National Agriculture Market (NAM). NAM was launched in April 2016 with the ambitious vision of integrating 585 APMCs under one electronic platform by March 2018. It is believed to offer plethora of choices for the farmers as it is focused on enabling farmers to sell their produce to the highest bidders across the country. However, the magnificent initiative has hit a roadblock and the execution seemed to have slowed down due to unanticipated technical glitches and lack of proper ground work.

The e NAM portal has failed to handle heavy volumes of Kharif farm produce arrivals to markets due to technical glitches. Unfortunately, not only is the number of farmers who have registered for this facility is low, the proposed advantages are yet to showcase. Also the technical problems need to be resolved for the smooth functioning of NAM. This is in fact the demonstration stage and if the process fails at this phase itself, farmers and traders can never be convinced of the promises this system has to offer. So the existing service providers should be asked to enhance the Internet speed to meet the demand. By laying high-speed Internet, connectivity issues in rural areas can be addressed.

Just like demonetization which lacked essential groundwork, NAM too is suffering due to lack of homework. Experts aver that a system of scientific grading of agricultural commodities at the market yards, transparent price settlement mechanism and rationalization and imposition of uniform mandi taxes across the states are required to translate NAM into reality. Under NAM, quality parameters for 69 agricultural and horticultural commodities, including cereals, pulses, oilseeds, spices, fruits and vegetables, have been notified for trading.

The ground reality is that except for issuing electronic gate passes to farmers to bring their produce to the markets, no bidding is being conducted online nationally. Trading continues to be done manually and traders and middlemen call the shots. The MSP announced by the government remains only on paper and the actual prices drop sharply even before the produce reaches the markets. Farmers still continue to suffer at the hands of traders and middlemen as e NAM is yet to become fully operational. The e-NAM server has not been able to handle the huge rush of farmers in 250 markets in 10 states. There are also Internet connectivity issues.

In fact, the response to e NAM has been lukewarm. Only 250 regulated whole-sale markets (the country has 585 such Mandis) spread across 12 states under the respective agricultural produce marketing committees (APMCs) have so far been integrated with the NAM platform. However, trading is being carried out at present only in 220 Mandis. NAM has achieved a trade turnover of only 1,825 Crore so far. Of this, Haryana's 54 Mandis have achieved a trading volume of 1,521 Crore. Telangana's 44 Mandis integrated with NAM have reported a trading of 218 Crore. The remaining Mandis integrated with NAM have seen a lower trading volume. Only 3.6 Lakh farmers of an estimated 14 Crore in the country and less than 50,000 traders and 27,000 commission agents have been registered with NAM.

Indian agricultural market is highly fragmented with a long supply chain which progressively eats away whatever profit the farmer has derived from his farm. The greedy middle-men, glut and a myriad of other reasons have hindered farmers from achieving his share of well deserved monetary benefit e NAM, had the brilliant response to this scenario by electronically connecting the farmers to the prospective clients spread across the nation. However, continued and vigorous efforts are required to make it a success.