

# ICA-AP NEWSLETTER

News from members, ICA-AP activities,  
ICA-EU Partnership update & more!

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## 11<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Cooperative Ministers' Conference – Registrations Closing on 25 March 2024

**JORDAN**  
11<sup>th</sup> ASIA PACIFIC COOPERATIVE MINISTERS' CONFERENCE  
Dead Sea 28 - 30 April 2024

**11<sup>th</sup> ASIA PACIFIC COOPERATIVE MINISTERS' CONFERENCE**

Theme: Partnerships between Government and Cooperatives for Cooperative Resilience, Sustainable Development, and Inclusive Growth in Asia Pacific and MENA region.

28 - 30 April 2024

Crowne Plaza Jordan - Dead Sea Resort & Spa  
Dead Sea, Jordan

Register now at <https://apministersconf.coop/>

ICA-AP, in collaboration with the Jordan Co-operative Corporation (JCC) and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, is organizing the 11th Asia Pacific Cooperative Ministers' Conference (11th APCMC) from 28 to 30 April 2024 at Crowne Plaza Jordan – Dead Sea Resort & Spa, Jordan.

Why should you attend?

1. To gain valuable insights into cooperative-government partnerships.
2. To network with influential cooperative leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders.
3. To contribute to shaping policies for sustainable development.
4. To explore opportunities for collaboration and mutual growth.

Government representatives and cooperators from across the Asia-Pacific, Middle East and North Africa regions are joining us. All information about the registration process, program, venue, visa, airport transfers, etc. is available at <https://apministersconf.coop/>. We encourage you to register before 25 March 2024.

## NGO CSW68 Forum Virtual Side Event – Registrations Open

10 - 22 MARCH 2024  
**NGO CSW68 FORUM**

**coop** International Cooperative Alliance  
Asia and Pacific

**SAVE THE DATE!!!**

NGO Commission on Status of Women (CSW) 68 Forum  
Virtual Side Event

**March 12, 2024**  
**12:00 - 02:00 PM Indian Standard Time**

Theme: Impact of Cooperative Financing on Women's Empowerment in Asia-Pacific

Organisers: ICA-AP Committee on Women and Committee on Credit and Banking

The ICA-AP Committee on Women and Committee on Credit and Banking are organising a virtual side event at the NGO Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 68 Forum. The event

will discuss the Impact of Cooperative Financing on Women's Empowerment in Asia-Pacific and will be held on Zoom on 12 March 2024 from 12:00 to 2:00 pm Indian Standard Time (IST). For more details and registration, [click here](#).

## Celebrate International Women's Day 2024 With Us



We are celebrating International Women's Day with our Youth Committee in a webinar, *"Inspire Inclusion-International Forum on Youth and Women Cooperatives"* on 8 March 2024 from 11 am to 12:30 pm Indian Standard Time (IST). The forum will explore the challenges faced by women and youth in cooperatives, highlight women's active economic engagement in the movement, and showcase youth's role in empowering women. Registrations are still open, [click here](#).

## International Women's Day 2024: A Solidarity Message

Dear Cooperators,

Greetings from the ICA-AP Committee on Women!

This year's International Women's Day theme is *"Invest in Women, Accelerate Progress"*. The theme seeks to highlight actions toward closing the gender gap to create prosperous economies and ensure sustainable societies. The UN Women has identified the following five key areas where joint actions are required: (1) Investing in women as a human rights issue;(2) Ending poverty;(3) Shifting to a green economy and care society; (4) Implementing gender-responsive financing; and (5) supporting feminist change makers.

Over the past 25 years, the ICA-AP Committee on Women has taken numerous initiatives that echo the message of this year's International Women's Day. Since its inception, the Committee has served as an international platform for women cooperators across the region where they are given opportunities to make themselves visible, voice their views and experiences, and build connections while responding to the emerging needs of capacity-building of women through various programs. This year, the Committee has been implementing its activities with newly adopted strategic pillars: 1) Economic empowerment 2) Social empowerment 3) Knowledge, education, and training, and 4) Solidarity.

Our Committee and its members have taken important and systematic steps to invest in women and mainstream them in their organisations and line of work. They have achieved this by setting up women and gender advancement committees; advocating for women's reservation in management and leadership positions; and giving equal opportunities to women irrespective of their age, experiences, and social background; thus, promoting diversity and gender-inclusion in cooperatives.

Investment in women cooperators in Asia and the Pacific region has yielded desirable results vis-à-vis women's empowerment and sustainable development.

Let me highlight some examples. *Toward ending poverty for all*, the **Gujarat Mahila Credit Cooperative Society (GMCC)** in India provides support and guidance to women in various areas such as entrepreneurship, micro-credit, health, and education. Skills-based training programs for women members opened new avenues of employment and entrepreneurship and improved their economic status in society.

*Toward a care society*, **ICOOP in the Republic of Korea** has evolved from promoting 'ethical consumerism' to 'healing and restoring' and 'lifecare movement' for the security of members by creating a trust-based healthy society which is deeply related to the health of the planet Earth. **ANGKASA in Malaysia** through its Women's Committee supports kindergarten and childcare facilities which not only provide a nurturing environment for children but also enable working women to pursue their careers effectively. **Rah-e-Roshd Educational Complex (RCEC)** in Iran set up by seven mothers to start kindergarten in 1985, offers sustainable jobs to educated women and provides a nurturing environment to children as the largest educational cooperative in the country.

*Toward promoting gender equality in cooperatives*, **the cooperative movement in Nepal** has successfully advocated for the reservation of women in cooperative governance and decision-making. The Cooperative Act of Nepal, which mandates 33% reservation for women on the Board of Directors in cooperatives, improved organizational governance and efficiency and empowered women in their communities. A study conducted by the **Business Council of Cooperatives and Mutuals (BCCM) in Australia** revealed significant improvements in gender diversity among chairs and Chief Executives of Australia's Top 100 cooperative and mutual enterprises (CMEs). In 2022, 23% of the CEO positions among the Top 100 CMEs were held by women.

As these examples, recent discussions and reports by the ICA-AP Committee on Women indicate that the cooperative movement in the Asia and Pacific is progressing well in its commitment to gender equality. However, the journey ahead is not simple. We need to identify new and innovative ways to make our impact effective, visible, and lasting.

Furthermore, amidst the intersecting challenges, the achievement of gender equality remains a distant goal. The snapshot on Women's Leadership in Asia and the Pacific by UN Women Asia and Pacific states that "in Asia and the Pacific, women's role as leaders and agents of change is being increasingly recognized. In recent years, governments, political bodies, businesses, and corporations have moved towards gender parity, although this progress remains slow". This brings to our attention that investment in women is required holistically;



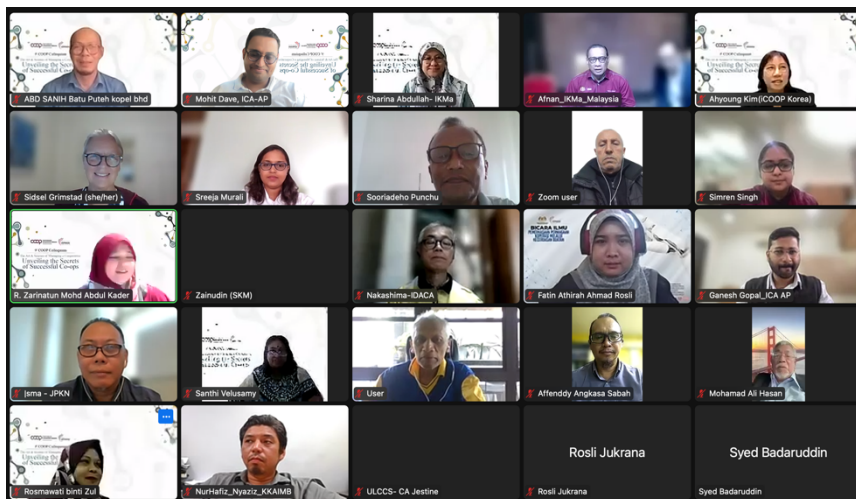
not only through resource allocation but also by giving women fair and equitable opportunities to learn, grow, and prosper.

In my closing remarks, I would like to urge my fellow cooperators in the Asia and Pacific region to continue allocating their time to hear, see, understand, and acknowledge women's voices and facilitate dialogues so that we continue to prosper collectively and develop sustainably.

Best wishes,  
Chitose Arai,  
Chairperson,  
ICA-AP Committee on Women

## ICA-AP Updates

COOP Colloquium on the Art and Science of Managing a Cooperative: Unveiling the Secrets of Successful Co-ops



The 9<sup>th</sup> COOP Colloquium was jointly organized on 27 February 2024 by the ICA-AP Committee on Cooperative Research (CCR) and Cooperative Institute of Malaysia (CIM) to facilitate an academic discussion on cooperative education and research. The theme was "The Art and Science of Managing a Cooperative: Unveiling the Secrets of Successful Co-ops" which explored good practices in cooperative management. Over 120 representatives from cooperatives, research organizations, and educational institutions across 9 countries attended the colloquium.

Dr. Sidsel Grimstad, Vice-Chairperson, CCR said that the colloquium continues to initiate an academic discourse surrounding topics pertinent to cooperative education and research. The landscape of cooperative scholarship throughout the Asia and Pacific region is characterized by its richness and diversity. To consolidate these varied perspectives, the committee endeavours to convene them within the COOP Colloquium platform to foster sharing, enlightenment, and mutual learning.

YBhg. Tuan Haji Mohd Yahya bin Haji Mat Sahri, Chairperson, CIM welcomed all the participants and expressed his excitement about collaborating with ICA-AP CCR for this timely event focusing on the art and science behind managing successful cooperatives. He said that

this theme is pivotal as effective cooperative management and leadership can bolster resilience, spur innovation, and drive community impact. He thanked the distinguished speakers from Malaysia, India, and Korea for sharing their insights from the ground. He said, “Through collective experience and knowledge exchange, may we illuminate best governance practices to nurture our cooperative ecosystem toward inclusive socioeconomic development regionally and globally” and wished everyone a productive and engaging session.

Mr. Abd. Sanih Nasri, Chairman, Batu Putih Kinabatangan Bhd Sub-District Tourism Cooperative Bhd (KOPEL) in Malaysia, spoke on enhancing operational effectiveness and overall development of cooperatives. As the Chairman of KOPEL, a community-based tourism cooperative in Sabah, Malaysia, he has witnessed first-hand how critical good governance and strategic vision are to steer a cooperative sustainably. Mr. Nasri shared that KOPEL overcomes limitations like capital and human resources through integrating technology, collaborating with external stakeholders, and diversifying income streams beyond conventional routes. He highlighted that KOPEL actively invests in training programs to nurture its members' entrepreneurial and management capacities. By consulting members frequently through surveys and dialogues, the cooperative aligns its directives closely with ground needs and aspirations. Mr. Nasri noted that as the business landscape continues to evolve, cooperatives must remain nimble and resilient without compromising cooperative values and social objectives. He expressed hope that sharing KOPEL's journey imparts practical insights toward strengthening operational excellence amid constraints. In closing, he reiterated that the true measure of a co-op is members' socioeconomic empowerment.

Ms. Sreeja Murali, Director, Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society Limited (ULCCS Ltd.) shared how the cooperative has successfully diversified into new business verticals while upholding cooperative values. Established in 1925 as a construction labour contract society, ULCCS has organically grown into a multi-business cooperative with subsidiaries in technology, cybersecurity, events, travel, and more. She elaborated on the detailed strategic planning undertaken by ULCCS leadership before venturing into new markets. Comprehensive feasibility analyses evaluate financial, technical, HR, and risk parameters to align diversification with their vision and mission. By leveraging the cooperative's assets and capabilities while addressing market gaps, they have pioneered innovative enterprises as a coop model. Technology integration has been crucial to enhancing governance, enabling new business lines, and maintaining market relevance. From SMS updates for 7000 members to full-fledged interactive member apps, they continue harnessing technology for efficiency and transparency. In closing, Ms. Murali emphasized that ULCCS's diversification exemplifies cooperatives' potential for business excellence without compromising on core principles of self-help, democracy, equality, and social responsibility. Their journey stands as testimony to managing change for community growth.



Dr. Ahyoung Kim, Director, iCOOP Cooperative Institute in South Korea, delivered an insightful presentation on learning and development for cooperative members and employees. She shared case studies from their customized educational programs that aim to foster a sense of ownership, enhance job competencies, and nurture next-generation leaders. For instance, the cooperative's immersive workshops teach financial planning skills while cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets aligned with cooperative principles. Simulated board director experience through 'Shadowing Leaders' enables young talents to steer decisions for organizational growth. Such targeted capacity building equips members to contribute meaningfully by unlocking their potential. Dr. Kim emphasized that cooperatives must invest continually in human capital development via formal and informal learning channels to sustain a pipeline of motivated talent. This will maximize participatory member engagement while fuelling operational excellence.

Ms. Sharina Abdullah, Senior Director, CIM's Policy and Strategy Division, summarized the key insights from the thought-provoking sessions. She noted how Mr. Nasri offered practical strategies for operational agility and community centricity in tourism cooperatives via governance, capability building, and purpose-driven value creation. Ms. Murali showcased how technology integration and business diversification can power cooperative innovation while embedding member interests. Finally, Dr. Kim's emphasis on bespoke human capital development programs resonated with iCOOP Korea's success in sustaining an engaged community equipped to steer its cooperative ethos onto new horizons. Ms. Abdullah reiterated that beyond profits, the impact on members and the community remains the cooperative lodestar. By synergizing business excellence with social good, coops can build vibrant ecosystems of shared prosperity rooted in their distinctive principles and values.

Mr. Mohit Dave, Secretary, ICA-AP Research Committee gave a vote of thanks and mentioned that the colloquium facilitated valuable sharing of best practices in cooperative management. It highlighted the importance of strong governance, member engagement, leadership development, and leveraging technology among other strategies. Support provided by ICA-AP and CIM staff was critical for the success of the colloquium, and they were duly acknowledged. ICA-AP Research Committee was established in the year 2000 to promote and support the initiation and furtherance of research activities within cooperatives and research organizations at regional, national, and local levels, to enhance their social and economic effectiveness.

## ICA-AP Trade & Business Committee's Resolution to Streamline the Regional Rice Supply Management and Forum on Cooperative Principle 6



The ICA-AP Trade and Business Committee, in its first meeting of the year on 25 February 2024, at the Co-operative League of Thailand (CLT) Training Center, Bangkok, unanimously approved a resolution to establish the Asia-Pacific cooperative movement as a facilitation platform for efficient management of rice supply import and export.

Datuk Seri Dr. Abdul Fattah Abdullah, Vice President, ICA-AP and Chair of the Committee, President ANGKASA and ASEAN Cooperative Organization (ACO), emphasized that the cooperative movement, as a people's movement advocating for community needs, especially in food security, forms a basis for international cooperation. The outcomes of the resolution will be presented at the 11th Asia Pacific Cooperative Ministers' Conference to be held in Jordan from 28 to 30 April 2024.



The meeting was attended by 12 committee members in person with the Committee Secretary, Ms. Wan Azwati Wan Mohamed and 13 observers; Mr. Balasubramanian Iyer, Regional Director, ICA-AP joined online. The meeting covered six agenda items, including the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held in Manila, Philippines, on 7 December 2023, activity planning for the year 2024, discussions on arising matters, and the ICA-AP Trade & Business Survey Form. This form aims to engage ICA-AP members in identifying potential business opportunities and developing business and trade strategies.



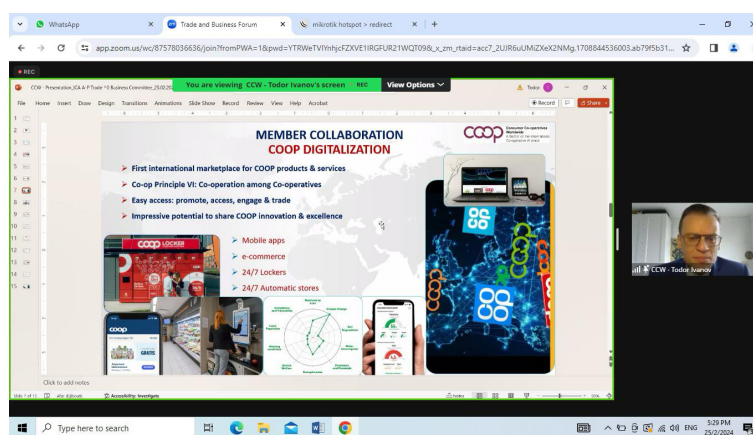
The next Trade and Business Committee Meeting of ICA-AP is scheduled to be held in Kunming, China, in September 2024.

On the side lines, the committee also organized a forum on 'Co-operative Principle in Action: Principle 6 - Co-operation Among Co-operatives' in partnership with ANGKASA and CLT.



The global community recognizes cooperative businesses as transformative agents capable of reducing poverty and driving economic growth. To leverage their potential fully, it is essential to prioritize efforts in advancing cooperative activities through local, national, regional, and international cooperation. In line with this objective, the forum was organized to familiarize members with the significance and direct advantages of adopting the cooperative-to-cooperative (C-2-C) trade model through knowledge exchange. It also assessed the level of cooperatives' engagement with Principle 6, emphasizing cooperation among cooperatives.

Moderated by Ms. Christine Rowena 'Tetay' Plantilla, CEO, Federation of People's Sustainable Development Cooperative (FPSDC) in the Philippines, the forum featured three distinguished panelists in cooperative management and leadership. Dr. Asanka Supun Thilakarathna, CEO, National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka (NCCSL), shared insights on Sri Lanka's collaboration with CLT. Ms. Pham Thi Thu Hien, Store Director of Coop Xtra Linh Trung, Saigon Coop (Vietnam), discussed the C-2-C collaboration between Saigon Coop Vietnam and NTUC Fair Price Singapore. Dato' Haji Kamarudin Ismail, ANGKASA Board Member, ICA Global Board Member, and Vice President of Consumer Co-operative Worldwide (CCW), elaborated on the cooperation between ANGKASA and the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF), Korea, through the 'Heifers Park' Dairy Cattle Project in Johor.



The forum included a knowledge-sharing session by Mr. Todor Ivanov, Secretary General, Euro Coop and Director of Consumer Co-operative Worldwide (CCW), titled 'Co-operative to Co-operative E-Commerce Platform.' Participants gained insights into cooperative collaboration in digitalizing cooperatives and the importance of developing sustainable and resilient supply chains less exposed to climate change. Mr. Ivanov proposed three formulas that cooperatives can apply as solutions to supply chain inefficiencies: 'rethink,' 'redefine,' and 'restructure.'

A total of 17 representatives from the ICA-AP Trade and Business Committee attended the event in person from six countries – Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, China, and the Philippines and 25 participants joined the forum online.

### 1st ICA-MAFF (Japan) Training Course on Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture and Enhancing Farmer's Income Begins



The first ICA-MAFF (Japan) Training Course on “*the Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture and Improvement of Farmer’s Income through Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in FY-2023*” was inaugurated in Bangkok, Thailand on 2 March 2024.

The ceremony was graced by Mr. Poramate Intarachumnum, Chairman of the Co-operative League of Thailand (CLT), Mr. Hirofumi Kobayashi, Executive Director, the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA), course coordinators and staff from ICA-AP, IDACA, and CLT, and participants. Mr. Daisuke Asano, Counsellor of the Emerging Region Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan shared his video message and his words reinforced the shared vision of promoting sustainable agriculture and uplifting farmer's livelihoods through cooperative development.

The four-week-long course, from 1 to 29 March 2024, with additional home country assignments before the training, is guided by a shared purpose to promote sustainable agriculture and enhance farmer's income. The course brings together a diverse cohort of seven participants from Cambodia, Bhutan, the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and Fiji.

Part 1 of the course, from 1 to 15 March, is being hosted by CLT, Bangkok, Thailand, followed by Part 2 from 16 to 21 March, to be hosted by IDACA in Japan. This dual-location approach

ensures a holistic understanding of cooperative development practices, enriched by both regional and international perspectives. Stay tuned for more updates!

## Asia-Pacific Women CEOs in Cooperatives Summit



ICA-AP in collaboration with its Committee on Women and Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA) is organizing the Asia-Pacific Women CEOs in Cooperatives Summit on the theme, *'Empowering Leadership: Navigating the Future of Cooperatives with Women at the Helm.'* It will be held from July 29-31, 2024 in Hanoi, Vietnam. Registrations are opening soon, stay tuned!

## Member Updates

Celebrating a Century of Empowerment: A Momentous Journey of the Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society Ltd.



The year-long centenary celebration of the Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society (ULCCS) Ltd. was inaugurated on 13 February 2024, by the Honourable Chief Minister of Kerala, Mr. Pinarayi Vijayan, at Vadakara, Kerala, India. This landmark event not only commemorates a century of resilience but also highlights ULCCS's unwavering commitment to social justice, empowerment, and sustainable development.

Founded in 1925 by a group of 14 courageous workers in rural Malabar, ULCCS emerged as a testament to the spirit of collective action and social reform. ULCCS was not merely a business venture but a beacon of hope against exploitation, caste oppression, and social injustices prevalent during the struggle for independence.



Mr. Balasubramanian Iyer, Regional Director and Mr. Ganesh Gopal, Lead-Entrepreneurship Development, ICA-AP attended the centenary event held. They utilized the opportunity to meet with the officials of ULCCS and IIM Kozhikode on the sidelines of the event. They also addressed an audience of ULCCS members, employees and local community members at the culmination ceremony of a bike rally and cultural performance held at Vadakara on the day before the centenary launch event.



The Chief Minister, in his inaugural address, hailed ULCCS as a paradigm of people-centric development, contrasting sharply with the prevailing corporate capitalist model. He applauded ULCCS's adherence to principles of honesty, integrity, and quality, echoing the ethos instilled by its visionary founder.

A highlight of the ceremony was the unveiling of the book 'Uralungal: Stories and Facts: A Comprehensive History of ULCCS', authored by journalist Manoj K Puthiyavila. This comprehensive work, released by the Chief Minister and presented to acclaimed writer Mr. M Mukundan, chronicles ULCCS's remarkable journey and its transformative impact on society.

Dignitaries from various spheres of public life graced the centenary celebrations, including several State Ministers, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr. P.K. Kunhalikutty, legislators, literary luminaries and members of the local community. Mr. Iyer delivered an inspiring address, highlighting ULCCS's significance as a model cooperative not only in India but also on the international stage. The festivities also included a vibrant cultural extravaganza, showcasing the rich tapestry of Kerala's heritage and artistic talent. The celebration showcased mesmerising dance performances and musical renditions of various popular artists from across India.

As ULCCS embarks on its centenary year, a series of initiatives have been unveiled to chart the course for the future. Plans include the establishment of a private skill university, integration of solar power and renewable energy in new projects, and a renewed focus on agriculture and tourism ventures. Additionally, the creation of 'model farms' and 'model villages', along with the introduction of labour banks and public solar projects, underscores ULCCS's commitment to holistic development and sustainability.



The centenary celebrations also featured the 'Colours of Resilience' exhibition, showcasing vivid portrayals of ULCCS's transformative journey and the enduring legacy of Guru Vagbhatananda's (a Hindu religious leader) social reform movement.

As ULCCS marks a century of empowerment and progress, it stands as a shining example of the transformative potential of cooperative enterprise. From humble beginnings to becoming one of Asia's largest labour cooperative societies, ULCCS's journey is a testament to the power of collective action in building a more equitable and just society.

#### [Singapore National Co-operative Federation Disburses Progressive Workplace Grant to Cooperatives](#)



Picture credits: SNCF

The Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) has distributed a \$100,000 [special grant](#) to 25 cooperatives in Singapore. The Progressive Workplace Grant, launched in 2022, at the Annual Co-operative Leaders' Conference, offers a one-time \$4,000 grant to eligible cooperatives that have adopted at least one [Tripartite Standard](#), aiming to improve human resources practices. Cooperatives were encouraged to adopt standards and apply for the grant between January and December 2023.

The standards, issued by the Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Employment Practices (TAFEP), promote fairness, inclusivity, agility, sustainability, and productivity, and come with a set of verifiable, actionable employment practices. TAFEP was set up by the tripartite partners, the Ministry of Manpower, the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and the Singapore National Employers Federation.

SNCF plans to introduce new grants in 2024 and 2025 to support cooperatives in their sustainability journey with measurable outcomes across three phases: (1) Training, which encourages co-operatives to understand the importance of sustainability; (2) Adoption, which provides resources to implement practices that are in line with the SG Green Plan; and (3) Development which combines knowledge with actions to support co-operatives' enhanced efforts for sustainability. The Central Co-operative Fund (CCF), a trust fund under the purview of the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth has allocated S\$500,000 for this initiative.

Read the full news [here](#).

## Policy and Legal Watch

### Prime Minister of India Unveils Transformational Initiatives For Cooperatives



Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi launched a series of transformative initiatives aimed at bolstering the cooperative sector during an event organised by the Ministry of Cooperation, Government of India. The event, held at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi, witnessed the unveiling of pioneering projects and strategic measures envisioned to foster prosperity through cooperation (*Sahakar Se Samriddhi*).

Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the pilot project of the 'World's Largest Grain Storage Plant in Cooperative Sector,' spanning 11 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) across 11 states. This ground-breaking initiative aims to integrate PACS godowns with the food grain supply chain, enhancing food security and promoting economic development. Supported by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and spearheaded by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), the project underscores the government's commitment to modernize the agricultural sector.

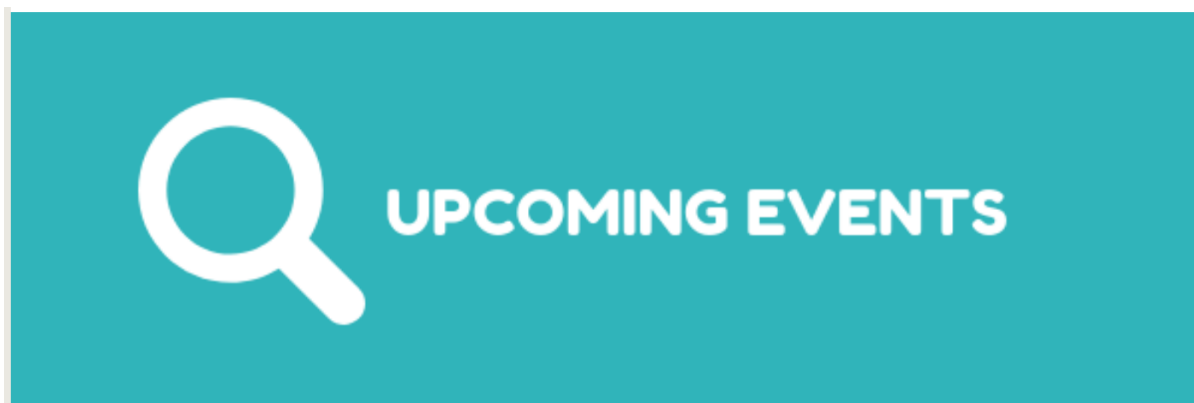
Highlighting the significance of agricultural infrastructure, PM Modi laid the foundation stone for an additional 500 PACS across the country. Emphasizing the importance of warehouses

and other agricultural infrastructure, this expansion initiative is poised to encourage the agricultural landscape and empower farmers nationwide.

In a significant stride towards digital empowerment, the Prime Minister inaugurated a project for computerization in 18,000 PACS nationwide. With a financial outlay exceeding Rs 2,500 crore, this project aims to transition functional PACS onto a unified Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) based national software. The ERP software, developed by NABARD, promises seamless integration and connectivity, enhancing operational efficiency and governance of PACS.

Mr. Amit Shah, Union Minister for Home and Cooperation, applauded the Prime Minister's vision and leadership in transforming the cooperative sector through the establishment of a dedicated Ministry of Cooperation reflecting the Government's impetus to address long-standing concerns of the cooperative movement and foster inclusive growth and national development through cooperatives. Union Cabinet ministers including Mr. Piyush Goyal, the Union minister for Commerce & Industry, Food & Public Distribution, Mr. Arjun Munda, the Union Minister for Agriculture and Mr. B.L. Verma, the Union minister for Cooperation and Development of North East region attended the event.

The event was attended by ICA-AP staff, veteran cooperators, representatives of international development agencies, ministers, registrars' of cooperatives and other officials from States across India. It marked a significant milestone in India's cooperative sector, unveiling ambitious initiatives. With a focus on modernization, digital transformation, and inclusive development, these initiatives are poised to revolutionize the agricultural landscape and empower millions of small and marginal farmers across the country.



- ❑ IWD Webinar: *Inspire Inclusion-International Forum on Youth and Women Cooperatives* by ICA-AP Committee on Youth Cooperation – 8 March 2024. [Register here.](#)
- ❑ UN NGO Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 68 Forum Virtual Side Event on *'Impact of Cooperative Financing on Women's Empowerment in Asia-Pacific'* by ICA-AP Committees on Women, and Credit and Banking – 12 March 2024. [Register here.](#)
- ❑ ICA-AP Regional Board Meeting in Jordan – 27 April 2024
- ❑ 11th Asia Pacific Cooperative Ministers' Conference in Jordan – 28-30 April 2024
- ❑ Regional Workshop by ICA-AP Trade and Business Committee, ICA-AP Consumer Committee, and Saigon Co-op – May 2024

- International Day of Cooperatives – 6 July 2024
- Asia-Pacific Women CEOs in Cooperatives Summit on *'Empowering Leadership: Navigating the Future of Cooperatives with Women at the Helm'* by ICA-AP, ICA-AP Committee on Women and Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA) in Hanoi, Vietnam – 29-31 July 2024
- ICA General Assembly in India – 25-30 November 2024