



CO-OPERATIVES NOW

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পরিচালকের প্রতিবেদন

প্রতিটি জমিতে যখন লাঙ্গল চলে, প্রতিটি বীজ যখন বপন করা হয়, তখন আমাদের মনে করিয়ে দেওয়া হয় যে বৃদ্ধি কখনো এককভাবে করা যায় না, এটি যৌথ প্রচেষ্টা, সম্মিলিত জ্ঞান এবং পারস্পরিক যত্নের ফলাফল—এই নীতিগুলিই আমাদের সমবায়ের মনোভাবকে স্পষ্ট করে তোলে।

আজ মানবসমাজ যখন জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন এবং অর্থনৈতিক অনিশ্চয়তার দ্বৈত চ্যালেঞ্জের মুখোমুখি, তখন কৃষি সমবায় আন্দোলন আশা এবং ভরসার স্তম্ভ হিসাবে দাঁড়িয়ে আছে। আমাদের গ্রাম এবং শহর জুড়ে, সমবায় প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলি কৃষকদের ন্যায্য বাজার, সাশ্রয়ী মূল্যের উপকরণ এবং সুসংহত কৃষিপদ্ধতি গ্রহণের জ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি দিয়ে সক্ষম করে চলেছে। আমরা কেবল খাদ্য উৎপাদন করছি না—আমরা মর্যাদা, সুযোগ এবং ঐক্য গড়ে তুলছি।

সমাজ উন্নয়ন এই যাত্রাপথের কেন্দ্রবিন্দুতে রয়ে গেছে। যখন সমবায়গুলি স্থানীয় পরিকাঠামো, শিক্ষা এবং যুব কর্মসূচিতে বিনিয়োগ করে, তখন তারা এটা নিশ্চিত করতে সাহায্য করে যে সমৃদ্ধি সবাই এর জন্যে, কেন্দ্রীভূত নয়। প্রতিটি উদ্যোগ—তা সে কৃষক প্রশিক্ষণ কর্মশালা হোক, কিংবা একটি কৃষকগোষ্ঠীর বীজ ব্যাংক, অথবা একটি সমবায়-পরিচালিত প্রক্রিয়াকরণ কেন্দ্র—প্রতিটি অগ্রগতি আমাদের সংগঠিত করে এবং সামাজিক কাঠামোকে শক্তিশালী করে।

আন্তর্জাতিক সমবায় বর্ষ, ২০২৫-এর উদ্দেশ্য দারিদ্র্য হ্রাস, কর্মসংস্থান সৃষ্টি এবং সামাজিক ঐক্যে সমবায় উদ্যোগগুলির অমূল্য অবদান সম্পর্কে জনসচেতনতা বৃদ্ধি করা। এই বছরটি ব্যবসা পরিচালনা এবং আর্থ-সামাজিক উন্নয়নের বিকল্প উপায় হিসেবে সমবায়ের ব্যবসায়িক মডেলের যে শক্তি তার উপরও আলোকপাত করবে।

আসুন আমরা ঐক্যবদ্ধতার এই চেতনাকে লালন করি—কেবল আজকের ফসলের জন্য নয়, বরং এমন একটি ভবিষ্যতের জন্য যেখানে জমিতে কাজ করা প্রতিটি হাত তার শ্রমের মূল্য ভাগ করে নেবে। সামনের সেই পথের জন্য সাহস, সৃজনশীলতা এবং প্রতিশ্রুতির প্রয়োজন—সমবায়ী হিসেবে এই গুণগুলি আমাদের ভালোভাবে জানা আছে।

আসুন একসাথে আমরা আরও শক্তিশালী হই।

From the Director's Desk

In every field tilled and every seed sown, we are reminded that growth is not a solitary act. It is the result of shared effort, collective wisdom, and mutual care — the very principles that define our cooperative spirit.

As our communities face the dual challenges of climate change and economic uncertainty, the agricultural cooperative movement stands as a pillar of hope and resilience. Across our villages and towns, cooperatives continue to empower farmers with access to fair markets, affordable inputs, and the knowledge to adopt sustainable farming practices. We are not only producing food — we are cultivating dignity, opportunity, and unity.

Community development remains at the heart of this journey. When cooperatives invest in local infrastructure, education, and youth programs, they help ensure that prosperity is shared, not concentrated. Each initiative — whether it's a farmer training workshop, a community seed bank, or a cooperative-run processing unit — strengthens the social fabric that binds us together.

The International Year of Cooperative, 2025 is intended to raise public awareness of the invaluable contributions of cooperative enterprises to poverty reduction, employment generation and social integration. The Year will also highlight the strengths of the cooperative business model as an alternative means of doing business and furthering socio-economic development.

Let us continue to nurture this spirit of togetherness — to plant not just for today's harvest, but for a future where every hand that works the land shares in its bounty. The path ahead will demand courage, creativity, and commitment — but as cooperators, these are qualities we know well.

Together, we grow stronger.



**International Year
of Cooperatives**

Cooperatives Build a Better World



**International Year
of Cooperatives**

Cooperatives Build a Better World



RECENT IMPORTANT CIRCULARS ISSUED BY RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

- 1) **RBI/2025-26/66/FIDD.CO.FSD.BC. No 08/05.05.010/2025-26 dated 11 July 2025** - Lending against Gold and Silver Collateral - Voluntary Pledge of Gold and Silver as collateral for Agriculture and MSME Loans
- 2) **RBI/DOR/2025-26/140-DOR.STR.REC.45/13.07.010/2025-26 dated 06 August 2025** - Reserve Bank of India (Non-Fund Based Credit Facilities) Directions- 2025
- 3) **RBI/2025-26/73 - CO.DPSS.RLPD No S536/04-07-001/2025-26 dated 13 August 2025-** Introduction of Continuous Clearing and Settlement on Realisation in Cheque Truncation System
- 4) **RBI/2025-26/75/DOR.AML.REC.46/1401001/2025-26 dated 14 August 2025** - Reserve Bank of India (Know Your Customer (KYC) (2nd Amendment) Directions, 2025
- 5) **RBI/2025-26/80-DOR.MRG.REC.49/00.00011/2025-26 dated 26 September 2025** - Investment by State Co-operative Banks (StCBs) and Central Co-operative Banks (CCBs) in Shared Service Entity (SSE) established by NABARD
- 6) **RBI/2025-26/82- DOR.MCS.REC.50/01.01.003/2025-26 dated 26 September 2025** - Reserve Bank of India (Settlement of Claims in respect of Deceased Customers of Banks) Directions 2025
- 7) **RBI/2025-26/84-DOR.CRE.REC.52/21.01.023/2025-26 dated 29 September 2025** - Reserve Bank of India (Lending Against Gold and Silver Collateral (1st Amendment) Directions, 2025

OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS IN RBI

- 1) **Monitoring Policy Committee Meeting (MPC) of RBI held during 29th September to 1st October 2025**
Major decisions taken in the MPC meeting were as under :
 - i) MPC voted unanimously to keep the policy repo rate unchanged at 5.50 per cent
 - ii) Consequently, the Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) rate remains at 5.25 per cent while the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate remain at 5.75 per cent
 - iii) The MPC also decided to continue with the neutral stance
- 2) As per Press Release dated 30 September 2025, Reserve Bank launches "Scheme for Facilitating Accelerated payout - Inoperative Accounts and Unclaimed Deposits"

RECENT IMPORTANT CIRCULARS ISSUED BY NABARD

- 1) **NB.GSD.HO/MON-15/48116/2025-26 - Circular No 158/GSD-05/2025 dated 01 July 2025** - Continuation of Modified Interest Subvention Scheme for Short Term Loans (agriculture and allied activities) on interim basis during the year 2025-26
- 2) **DMFI/G1728/DAY_NRLM-Policy/2025-26-Circular No 167/DMFI-07/2025 dated 10 July 2025** - Master Circular on Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) for the year 2025-26
- 3) **NB.HO.GSD/95460/ACABC-2/2025-26 - Circular No 224/GSD-08/2025 dated 25 September 2025** - Compendium of Instructions for Implementation of Revised Agri Clinics and Agri-Business Centres (AC&ABC) programme- 2025-26 reg

HIGHLIGHTS OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES CONDUCTED AT ACMART DURING THE QUARTER ENDED SEPTEMBER 2025

SIX IN HOUSE PROGRAMMES FOR THE OFFICIALS OF LAMPS SPONSORED BY WBTDC

Six three day's In house training programme on "Accounting Procedure with emphasis on CAS" were conducted at ACMART for the Officials of LAMPS sponsored by the West Bengal Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation Ltd (WBTDC) during the quarter. All the programmes were inaugurated by Smt. Choten D. Lama, IAS, Principal Secretary, Tribal Development Department, GoWB.



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES FOR SHG MEMBERS

Four Skill Development Programmes for the members of SHGs were conducted at AFRTDC, Coochbehar sponsored by the Cooperation Directorate, GoWB.

WORKSHOP ON ELECTION OF SANGHA COOPERATIVES

One one-day Workshop on Election of Sangha Cooperatives was held for the officials of WBSRLM sponsored by Panchayat & Rural Development Department, Gov. of WB.

IN HOUSE PROGRAMME OF THE COOPERATION DIRECTORATE, GOWB

One three day's training programme on Inspection of PACS and Monitoring of Financial Proposal sponsored by Cooperation Directorate, was conducted at ACMART for the officials of Cooperation Directorate during the period.

**PROGRAMMES CONDUCTED UNDER SOFTCOB
DURING THE QUARTER ENDED SEPTEMBER 2025 AT A GLANCE**

PACS as MSC	09 to 11 July 2025	On location for the officials of PACS in collaboration with VCCB at Digha
Corporate Governance	23 to 25 July 2025	In House for the BoDs of PACS
Project Appraisal in NFS and Documentation	231 July to 02 August 2025	On location for the officials of banks in collaboration with TGCCB at Haldia
Self Sustenance through Improved Governance and Management	06 to 07 August 2025	On location Workshop for the BODs of PACS in collaboration with TGCCB at Haldia
PACs as MSC	11 to 14 August 2025	In house for the officials of PACS (including one day field visit)
Inspection of PACS	18 to 20 August 2025	Customised On location programme for bank officials in collaboration with Malda DCCB at Malda
Legal Drafting	25 to 27 August 2025	In house for the officials of banks conducted for the first time.
Preventive Measures for Deposit Mobilising PACS	04 to 06 September 2025	In house for the officials of PACS conducted for the first time
NPA and Recovery Management	08 to 10 September 2025	Customised On location programme for the officials of PACS in collaboration with Raiganj CCB at Raiganj
Revival Strategy for Weak Societies	11 to 13 September 2025	In house programme for the officials of PACS conducted for the first time

**ABSTRACT OF PROGRAMMES CONDUCTED AT ACMART
DURING THE QUARTER ENDED SEPTEMBER 2025**

PROGRAMMES CONDUCTED		
Under SOFTCOB	Others	Total
10	11	21

NUMBER OF TRAINEES		
Under SOFTCOB	Others	Total
335	286	621



NUMBER OF TRAINEE DAYS		
Under SOFTCOB	Others	Total
1004	2576	3580

CATEGORY WISE BREAK-UP			
In House	On location	Total	Field Visits
17	04	21	1

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF ACMART

Conduct Training Programmes / Workshops for PACS / DCCBs / CCBs / StCB under SOFTCOB Assistance of NABARD

Conduct training programmes sponsored by various departments of the GoWB

Conduct training programmes sponsored by other agencies

Provide Consultancy and Faculty Support

Publication of Educational Booklets, in vernacular

Conduct of Examinations for Promotion in Banks



In-house programme on Inspection of PACS and monitoring of Financial Activities inaugurated by Sri Niranjana Kumar, IAS, RCS, WB along with Sri Ajay Kumar Ram, Addl. RCS During 2-4 July, 2025



In-house programme on Corporate Governance of PACS for BOD Members During 23-25 July, 2025



In-house programme on Accounting Procedure with emphasis on CAS for LAMPS Employees During 30 July-1 August, 2025



On Location programme on Project Appraisal & Loan Documentation in Non-Farm Sector at Haldia (TGCCB) During 31 July-2 August, 2025

On System Audit of Computerised PACS – the way forward

PARTHA BASU

Addl. RCS (ST Credit and Law), West Bengal

Computerisation of PACS Central Project(CSPCP) is the biggest project involving cooperatives in the country. With a 60:40 participation involving GOI and the State Governments, CSPCP denotes a paradigm shift in the mode of operation of PACS and, more particularly, transparency in account keeping and financial reporting.

With computerization and diversification of PACS come the issue of social responsibility and accountability. PACS being autonomous, their respective management should ensure uniformity, stability and vibrancy. The need to bring about transparency is greater now than ever. Recently, with the GOI prescribing on system audit as a substitute for the hitherto practised manual audit, the importance of system generated data is crystal clear. PACS have been operating with unreconciled balances in their accounts for decades now – differences between General Ledger (GL) and Personal Ledger (PL) balances -and the GL has prevailed in conventional accounting and auditing. Despite auditors regularly reporting on these ever-increasing differences and highlighting the need for reconciliation of the two, advices have been largely ignored. This has resulted in suppression of actual balances, underreporting of expenses and income in most cases and inaccurate financial position. On System Audit has attempted to address these issues by clarifying reconciliation of unreconciled balances which were supposed to have been carried out by the PACS in the first place through passing of adjustment entries. However, the said exercise has not been undertaken with due diligence.

On System Audit mandates complete reconciliation of these balances and GOI has prescribed formats and formation of a Committee to oversee this process so that the same is completed within a time frame. While it is a known fact that NPA norms in PACS – prescribed way back in 2009 -are relaxed for PACS, many of these grassroot level cooperatives do not provide for NPA as per norms, especially those who lend out of deposits mobilized. As a result, their profits are overstated and there is financial misreporting. More importantly, frauds

and defalcations are camouflaged in the garb of differences between GL and PL balances. Reconciliation is an indispensable part of accounts preparation and audit and lack of it is simply violative of financial prudence and accounting principles.

The success of On System Audit and its novelty will pave the way PACS present their accounts; in any case, system generated data will not be subject to manipulation like Manual Accounting and Audit. Without a doubt, this is expected to foster greater accountability at PACS level. It is worthwhile to reiterate that mobilizing deposits is a big responsibility as it entails protection of interest of depositors and safeguard of these deposits should be given topmost priority by these organisations. On system Audit ought to facilitate realization of this objective.

Finally, CSPCP is a project that must be implemented jointly by the Ranges and CCBs and monitored likewise. The present laws of the land highlight the role of the State Government as the ultimate regulator irrespective of the nature and extent of financial control. It is, therefore, imperative that the fruits of the cooperative are enjoyed by its members who are the actual owners. This can only be ensured through constant monitoring and guidance.



Programme of LAMPS on Common Accounting Systems inaugurated by

Choten D Lama, IAS, Pr. Secretary,
Tribal Development Department, Govt. WB
along with

Shymal Ch Mondal, IAS, Sp. Commissioner & MD, WBTDC
and

Debasish Karmakar Addl. MD, WBTDC



Leveraging Technology for the Survival and Competitiveness of Agricultural Cooperatives in West Bengal

SAMIT NEOGI

General Manager (Credit), The West Bengal state Cooperative Bank Ltd.

Agricultural cooperatives have long served as the backbone of India's rural economy, enabling small and marginal farmers to access credit, inputs, and markets. In states like West Bengal, cooperatives have played a historic role in rural development and poverty alleviation. However, the current economic environment, marked by increasing competition from private agribusinesses, changing consumer preferences, and rapid technological change poses new challenges to their sustainability and hence to survive and remain competitive, rural agricultural cooperatives must integrate modern technology into their operations, governance, and service delivery

The Changing Context of Rural Cooperatives

India's cooperative movement has undergone a remarkable journey—from early credit societies in the 1900s to diversified organizations involved in banking, dairy, fisheries, and marketing. West Bengal alone has near **5,000 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS)** and several state-level federations like **BENFED** (West Bengal State Cooperative Marketing Federation), **BENFISH** (West Bengal State Fisherman's Cooperative Federation Ltd.) and **BenMilk** (West Bengal Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation). These entities remain vital for input distribution, credit delivery, and collective marketing of farm produce.

Yet, many cooperatives today face operational inefficiencies, weak governance, limited digital literacy, and poor access to real-time data. Their competition includes well-capitalized private agritech startups, organized retailers, and digital marketplaces. In this environment, cooperatives risk marginalization unless they adopt new technologies that enhance efficiency, transparency, and member value.

Why Technology Matters for Cooperative Survival

Technology serves as both a **strategic enabler** and a **competitive equalizer**. For agricultural cooperatives, digital tools can transform nearly every stage of the value chain—from input procurement to post-harvest marketing.

1. Efficiency and Transparency : Computerization of accounts, automated billing, and digital record-keeping reduce errors and leakages.

2. Member Trust : Transparent, real-time reporting and digital audits improve accountability and confidence among members.

3. Market Linkages : E-commerce and digital trading platforms connect cooperatives directly with institutional and retail buyers.

4. Financial Inclusion : Digital payments, mobile banking, and fintech partnerships enable faster and more secure financial transactions.

5. Data-driven Decision-making : Access to production and market data helps cooperatives plan procurement, manage inventory, and forecast demand.

In short, technology enables cooperatives to behave more like modern agribusinesses while preserving their democratic and community-oriented character.

Key Areas Where Technology Creates Impact

1. Digital Financial Management : The foundation of any cooperative's sustainability is its financial health. Many PACS and cooperative banks in West Bengal are adopting **core banking solutions (CBS)**, supported by **NABARD's computerization initiative**. Digital ledgers and real-time integration with district cooperative banks allow faster credit delivery and loan tracking.

Mobile banking and **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** have also transformed payment systems. Instead of delayed cash settlements, farmers can now receive payments instantly for their produce through mobile wallets or cooperative-linked bank accounts. This enhances both transparency and liquidity, reducing dependence on middlemen.

2. E-Marketplaces and Price Discovery : A major weakness in traditional cooperative marketing has been the lack of market transparency. Platforms such as the **electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)** offer real-time price information, digital bidding, and inter-state market linkages. Cooperatives in West Bengal that integrate with



e-NAM can access larger buyer networks and reduce local monopoly pricing.

Additionally, **digital procurement systems** used by federations like BENFED can streamline aggregation, quality grading, and logistics. Such tools allow cooperatives to compete with private aggregators and ensure fair prices for farmers.

3. Supply Chain Digitization and Value Addition : Agricultural cooperatives often lose competitiveness due to inefficiencies in logistics and storage. Technologies such as **IoT-based cold-chain monitoring, QR-code traceability, and cloud-based inventory systems** can significantly reduce wastage and improve product quality.

For instance, in the **dairy sector**, BenMilk could leverage digital milk testing, RFID-based tracking, and mobile payment systems to ensure traceability and quality control from producer to consumer. Similarly, vegetable cooperatives in North and South 24 Parganas could adopt mobile apps for crop collection scheduling and warehouse management to minimize post-harvest losses.

4. Data Analytics and Advisory Services : Digital platforms can provide cooperatives with access to **weather forecasts, pest alerts, and agronomic advice**. Integrating remote sensing data with cooperative extension services enables better risk management and production planning. For example, by using satellite data to predict rainfall or disease outbreaks, a cooperative can advise its members on timely sowing or spraying, reducing losses and improving yields.

Challenges in Technology Adoption

While the benefits are evident, adopting technology in rural cooperatives is far from simple. Several constraints persist:

- **Infrastructure gaps :** Many PACS still lack stable internet connectivity, computers, and power supply.
- **Limited digital literacy :** Staff and members often lack training in digital tools and data interpretation.
- **Cost and scale :** Smaller cooperatives struggle to afford customized software or maintain IT systems.
- **Governance concerns :** Without accountability, technology can be underused or manipulated, defeating its purpose.

Addressing these challenges requires a phased, inclusive approach.

Strategies for Effective Technology Integration in West Bengal

1. Digitalization of PACS : West Bengal should prioritize the **computerization of PACS**, as they are the last-mile link between farmers and the cooperative structure. The introduction of cloud-based accounting, online loan management, and grievance tracking systems can enhance transparency and service delivery.

2. Capacity Building and Digital Literacy : Training programs for cooperative staff and members are essential. NABARD, state cooperative departments, and Cooperative Training Institutes should collaborate to offer **hands-on digital literacy workshops** and create localized learning materials in Bengali.

3. Interlinking with National Platforms : Integration with national digital initiatives such as **e-NAM, Agristack, and DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer)** can expand opportunities for cooperatives. By connecting cooperative databases with these systems, members can access subsidies, credit, and market data more easily.

The Road Ahead: From Survival to Competitiveness

For agricultural cooperatives in West Bengal, technology is not just a survival tool—it is the foundation of future competitiveness. Integrating technology into governance, finance, and marketing can transform these organizations into agile, market-oriented entities while preserving their social and democratic ethos.

The **State Government**, in collaboration with **NABARD, WB State Cooperative Bank, WBSCARDBank, BENFED, BENFISH** and **BenMilk**, must lead a coordinated effort to create a **“Digital Cooperative Ecosystem.”** This should combine physical infrastructure upgrades with digital capacity building, ensuring that cooperatives are not left behind in India’s rapidly digitizing agricultural landscape.

Ultimately, the success of rural cooperatives in West Bengal will depend not merely on adopting new technologies but on **embedding them within strong institutional frameworks, skilled human resources, and member-driven governance**. When used wisely, technology can help these cooperatives reclaim their rightful place as pillars of inclusive rural prosperity—competitive, transparent, and sustainable.



In-house programme on Accounting Procedure with emphasis on CAS for LAMPS Employees
During 4-6 August, 2025



In-house programme on PACS as MSC
During 11-14 August, 2025



In-house programme on Legal Drafting
During 25-27 August, 2025



On Location programme on Preventive Measures for Deposit Mobilising PACS
During 4-6 September, 2025



On Location programme on NPA, Recovery & CRAR Management at Raiganj CCB
During 8-10 September, 2025



In-house programme on Revival Strategy for Weak Societies
During 18-20 September, 2025

Editorial Board

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