

Repository of diverse crops across 128 agro-climatic zones for better nutritional outcomes launched

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A REPOSITORY OF diverse crops across 128 agro-climatic zones in India for better nutritional outcomes was launched by the women and child development ministry (WCD) on Monday.

Union WCD minister Smriti Zubin Irani along with Bill Gates, co-chair of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, launched the Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh (BPKK) here.

The BPKK will be the repository of diverse crops across 128 agro-climatic zones in India for better nutritional outcomes, a WCD statement said.

At the launch, WCD secretary Rabindra Panwar handed over the letter of intent to Hari Menon, director, India Country Office, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Irani said for India to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is now time to bring together the science of implementation with the science of communication so that nutrition is on the political and administrative agenda along with hygiene and clean drinking water.

Speaking on the occasion, Gates said that if there was one problem that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation would like to solve in India, it is the problem of malnutrition among women, expectant mothers and children.

"Solving this problem will bring about a dramatic change in the development of India and help the country to attain the SDGs," he said.

Eminent agricultural scientist, MS Swaminathan said to make India nutrition secure, a five-point action programme has to be implemented.

The five-point action programme includes ensuring calorie rich diet for women, expectant mothers and children and ensuring intake of proteins in the form of pulses to eradicate protein hunger in women and children.

He also stressed on the need to eradicate hidden hunger due to deficiency of micro nutrients like vitamin A, vitamin B, Iron and Zinc and ensure clean drinking water supply.