

30th Indo-Israel agri hub opens to mark 30 yrs of diplomatic ties

Centre In Haryana's Bhiwani To Show How To Use Resources In Arid Areas

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New Delhi: India and Israel on Sunday inaugurated the 30th Centre of Excellence (CoE) at Grignow village in Bhiwani, Haryana, as part of their joint agricultural project under their collaborative work programme for the farm sector. Dedicated to semi-arid horticultural crops, the 30th CoE, symbolic of 30 years of full diplomatic relations, will demonstrate how to maximise resources in an arid environment by overcoming harsh climatic conditions.

Besides this latest addition, 29 other CoEs are fully functional in 12 states, including Bihar, UP, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana, Mizoram, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Every year, these CoEs produce more than 40 million premium quality vegetable seedlings and over 500 thousand high-quality fruit plants. These CoEs have also been training more



SEEDS OF FRIENDSHIP: Indian and Israeli officials at the inauguration of the Center of Excellence in Bhiwani on Sunday

than 1.2 lakh farmers per year for best farm practices.

"This is a significant milestone in the agricultural cooperation between Israel and India. It is very special as this is the 30th CoE inaugurated as our countries are nearing the completion of 30 years of full diplomatic relations. With this inauguration, we now have 30 fully-active CoEs in different states across India," said Naor Gilon, ambassador of Israel to India, after jointly inaugurating the Bhiwani's Centre with Jai Parkash Dalal, agri-

culture minister of Haryana, and Kamal Patel, agriculture minister of Madhya Pradesh.

Gilon said, "More such centers are in the pipeline. These centers are increasing farmers' yield and productivity while diversifying local crops and improving the quality of produce."

Both the countries had in 2021 agreed to enhance their cooperation in agriculture and signed a three-year work programme agreement for development in agriculture cooperation, while affirming the ever-growing bilateral

partnership and recognising the centrality of agriculture and water sectors in the bilateral relationship.

Besides the 'Indo-Israel Agricultural Project Centres of Excellence', both the countries are currently also implementing and 'Indo-Israel Villages of Excellence'.

Both countries have already decided to convert 150 villages around the CoEs into 'villages of excellence' with technical assistance from Israel, out of which 75 villages were taken up in the first year to commemorate the 75th year of India's independence.

"These centers provide a suitable platform for a rapid transfer of technology to Indian farmers. New agricultural technologies such as protected cultivation, drip irrigation and fertigation are demonstrated here. The methods and technologies are adapted to local conditions and requirements of the Indian farmers, with the intent of significantly increasing their income," said the Israeli embassy.