

BIRD Kolkata Celebrates NABARD's 44th Foundation Day with Focus on Cooperatives and Rural Development

Bankers Institute of Rural Development (BIRD), Kolkata celebrated the 44th Foundation Day of NABARD on 14th July 2025, in conjunction with the International Year of Cooperatives 2025, by organizing a three-day training programme on “Business Diversification and Profit Planning for PACS” from 14th to 16th July 2025 at its Conference Hall. 34 members of different PACS of Eastern and Northeastern region participated in the Training Programme. The event was graced by Shri P.K. Bharadwaj, Chief General Manager, NABARD West Bengal Regional Office, who attended as the Chief Guest.

The event commenced with a welcome address by Shri Arobinda Kumar Sarkar, Joint Director, BIRD Kolkata. In his speech, he reflected on the inception and evolution of the cooperative movement in India, tracing its roots to the early 1900s. He emphasized how cooperatives were formed to empower rural communities through collective ownership and mutual support, and how they continue to play a vital role in democratizing access to credit, inputs, and services in rural areas. Shri Sarkar urged upon all to take initiatives in shaping a cooperative future that reflects the aspirations of every farmer, artisan, and entrepreneur in rural India.

Shri P.K. Bharadwaj, Chief General Manager, NABARD West Bengal Regional Office delivered the keynote address on “Shaping the Future of Cooperatives: Strategic Roadmap for Sustainable Growth”. During his address CGM, WBRO said that cooperatives are more than economic entities; they are social institutions rooted in trust, solidarity, and resilience and there is a need to reimagine cooperatives as engines of innovation, sustainability, and empowerment. He emphasised the developmental role of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) in rural financial inclusion and stressed the importance of business diversification, digital transformation, and capacity building to ensure the long-term sustainability of PACS.

As the cooperative sector navigates the complexities of rapid technological advancements, climate related challenges, and evolving socio-economic dynamics, it faces a pivotal moment. To remain relevant and resilient, the cooperative movement must not only adapt but strategically evolve to thrive in a changing landscape. In this context, CGM commended the vital role played by BIRD Kolkata in driving this transformation. Through its focused efforts in training, research, and policy advocacy, BIRD Kolkata has emerged as a catalyst for innovation and excellence in the cooperative sector.

A cake-cutting ceremony was held to commemorate 44 years of NABARD's service to rural development. Staff, trainees, and dignitaries participated in the celebration, symbolizing unity, progress, and the shared commitment to strengthening the cooperative sector. Some photos of the event are appended below





