

KISAN MELA ADOPTS 'SAVE NARC' RESOLUTION

FEDERAL FOOD MINISTER SAYS CENTRE COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING AGRICULTURE SECTOR OF BALOCHISTAN

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

A resolution adopted at the conclusion of two-day Balochistan Kisan mela condemned in strong terms the proposal of Capital Development Authority (CDA) to convert agricultural research land of National Agriculture Research Council (NARC) into a housing society.

A farmer representative of Qalat, Agha Jan presented the resolution to the participants of the mela, stating that farmers of Balochistan condemn the CDA proposal and urging the govern-

ment to reject such summary.

Besides farmers of various districts of the Balochistan province, the Mela was attended by Balochistan CM Dr Abdul Malik and Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Sikandar Hayat Bosan, the Provincial Minister of the Agriculture and Cooperatives Sardar Muhammad Aslam Bizenjo and FAO Country Representative Patrick T Evans were present on the occasion.

The Mela was organised by Food and Agriculture Organisation in collaboration with government of Balochistan and Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) featured sev-

eral programmes including a conference on Agriculture Development of Balochistan.

The resolution stated that the NARC was the only agriculture institute of international standard in the country. Whenever there arise any problem in agriculture in the country, this institute had played central role to overcome the problem, it said, adding, "We the farmers of Balochistan and of other small provinces mostly depend on NARC for getting new skills, technologies and solution of our problems, because there is no well-equipped agriculture institute in our province."

Speaking on the occasion, Bosan said that the federal government has initiated several agricultural development projects in Balochistan to uplift this sector and raise farmers' income. He said the government was aware of the problems of

farmers in Balochistan and was formulating programmes and projects to address these issues. He also announced that his government will provide agriculture trainings to 1,000 farmers from Balochistan at the National Agriculture Research Center (NARC), Islamabad.

He informed the participants that government has approved the Seed Act and now it is up to the provincial governments to implement the Seed Act at provincial level.

Balochistan Chief Minister Abdul Malik, while speaking on the occasion, urged the federal government to help exploit the agricultural resources of the Balochistan province for the betterment of farmers. He said that the provincial would extend all support for all the projects launched for the development of the province. Sardar Aslam Bizenjo while addressing the

participants said, "Majority of the population in the province is engaged in agriculture for their livelihoods. To enhance agriculture development and crop productivity in the province, provincial government is launching 2015/16 as the Year of Agriculture in Balochistan."

On the occasion, FAO's Patrick T Evans said that his organisation was currently implementing two programmes in 14 districts of Balochistan to help increase incomes of resource poor rural men and women through building capacities of farmers to benefit from increased crop and livestock production and improved marketing and organisation. He said FAO was supporting the government of Balochistan in the formulation of the Balochistan Agriculture Policy and Strategy and will also be providing support with the implementation of this policy.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Sikandar Hayat Bosan addressing a conference on "Agriculture Development in Balochistan" during Balochistan Kisan Mela. INP