April 07, 2020

Chandigarh April 7: While assuring the farmers that each and every grain of their produce would be purchased by the State Government, the Haryana Chief Minister, Mr Manohar Lal today announced a significant increase in the numbers of mandis and purchase centres for the procurement of mustard and wheat commencing from April 15 and April 20, 2020 respectively. He said that with a view to purchase the farmers’ produce in a staggered way, the number of mandis and purchase centres for the procurement of wheat has been increased from 477 to 2000 and for the procurement of mustard these have been increased from 67 to 140.

Mr Manohar Lal made this and several other announcements while addressing a digital press conference here today.

He also announced that following the call made by Prime Minister, Mr Narendra Modi to the Central Ministers and MPs yesterday, he himself along with the Governor, Deputy Chief Minister, all cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State, Speaker and Deputy Speaker of Haryana Vidhan Sabha have decided to donate Rs 51 crore to the Consolidated Fund out of their discretionary quota to provide financial support in view of the corona virus outbreak and the expected slowdown in economy.

The Chief Minister said that as a precautionary measure in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, a scheme has been prepared to purchase the produce of the farmers in a phased manner. He also thanked the Arhtiyas who have wholeheartedly supported this decision of the State Government.

He said that the State Government has also written to the Central Government requesting that holding incentive be given to those farmers who would delay taking their produce to the mandis. “I am quite hopeful that the Centre Government would soon take a favourable decision on it”, he added.

While referring to the Meri Fasal Mera Byora Scheme, the Chief Minister said that though the State Government has completed the registration of farmers in the State, the Department of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare has been directed to re-open the registration for those farmers who could not get their registration done earlier due to any reason. Such farmers could register themselves on the portal upto April 19, 2020, he added. He assured that the payment to the farmers would be made into their bank accounts through Arhtiyas within 24 hours of procurement of their produce. He said that the government would purchase the mustard crop on MSP and there would be no limit on the procurement of mustard crop in the mandis by the farmers.

Mr Manohar Lal also appealed to the farmers of the State to contribute to the Corona Relief Fund set up by the State Government to fight against COVID-19 pandemic. He also thanked the Farmers’ organizations and Farmers’ Unions who are coming forward and urging the farmers to contribute generously into the fund.

While hailing the contribution of farmers in meeting the food grain requirement of the State and country, he urged them to maintain social distancing and use masks while taking their
produce to the mandis so as to prevent themselves from being affected from the Corona virus. He said that masks would be made available in the mandis and purchase centres.

- He said that three-month ration under the Public Distribution System (PDS) has already reached the depots in the State and all the Pink, Yellow and Khaki card holders could get double ration free of cost. This ration also includes sugar and mustard oil. He said apart from this, the State Government has decided that from now onward, the Above Poverty Line (APL) card holders could also get ration from the depot on low rates as compared to the market rates. He said that even the non-cardholders could also get ration from the depots.

- The Chief Minister exhorted that at this time when the entire society is combating COVID-19, it is the responsibility of people to voluntarily come forward and help those belonging to the poor section of the society. He also thanked the villages, Non Government Organizations (NGOs) and other social organizations for assisting the district administration in relief measures. He said that the State Government is taking care of each and every poor in the State and has distributed 55 lakh food packets and 3.50 lakh ration packets in last seven days.

- He said that on the call made by the State Government, people of different strata of the society have so far contributed about Rs 49 crore in the Corona Relief Fund. He said that while 150 employees of the State Government have contributed their 100 per cent salary for the month of March, 2020, 1.82 lakh employees have made contribution ranging from one percent to 100 per cent.

- In reply to a question, the Chief Minister said that smooth movement of machinery like tractor and combine harvester would be ensured in the State during harvesting season. However, necessary medical tests of manpower coming with this machinery would also be conducted. He said that apart from about 4,500 combine harvester machines in Haryana, harvester machines from Maharashtra and Punjab have reached the State.

- In reply to another question, he stated that Haryana has a storage capacity of 50 to 60 lakh metric tons of food grains. Apart from this, sheds have also been prepared at various places where food grains could be stored for two to three months.