

# India is the largest exporter, producer and consumer of spices in the world

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Spices Board India under Ministry of Commerce and Industry and UNDP India's Accelerator Lab today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), with the aim to build a blockchain based traceability interface for Indian spices to enhance transparency in supply chain and trade.

Blockchain is a decentralized process of recording transactions on an open and shared electronic ledger. This allows for ease and transparency in data management across a complex network, including, farmers, brokers, distributors, processors, retailers, regulators, and consumers, thus simplifying the supply chain. It will allow farmers just as all other members of the supply chain to access the information which further makes the entire supply chain more efficient and equitable.

UNDP and Spices Board India are working towards integrating the Blockchain Traceability Interface with the e-Spice Bazaar portal developed by Spices Board India for connecting spices farmers with markets. Design of the Blockchain interface is expected to be completed by May'21. The project will be piloted with over 3,000 farmers engaged in chilli and turmeric farming in select Districts of Andhra Pradesh.

On this joint initiative, Shri. D. Sathiyam, Secretary, Spices Board India said that India is the largest exporter, producer and consumer of spices in the world. India's spices export crossed a milestone of 3 Bn USD during 2019-20 and our estimates indicate that we would cross that milestone and achieve a new high during the 2020-21. Spices Board, the agency responsible for export promotion of Indian spices in the

world markets, is happy about these achievements and would like to facilitate further growth in the sector.

Shri. D. Sathiyansaid that the changing order in the global spices and food sector has increased the relevance of infrastructure development for value addition, certification for quality and food safety, implementation of traceability systems, promotion of spices highlighting the immunity boosting properties, etc., and the Board has been working tirelessly to provide support to the stakeholders of the sector and to strengthen the supply chain so as to position India as the premier destination for clean and safe spices to the world.

This UNDP-Spices Board joint initiative to build a blockchain-powered traceability interface for Indian spices is another significant milestone in our journey to make the spices value chain efficient, transparent and equitable for all stakeholders. This traceability interface is expected to enhance consumer confidence and facilitate sourcing of spices for exports as well as for local value addition and use. Upon successful demonstration, the Board would like to expand the reach of this interface to cover all major spices and regions of the country, and expects to have continuous partnership and support from the UNDP.

Speaking on the collaboration, Ms. Shoko Noda, Resident Representative, UNDP India, said, "We are confident that the blockchain interface will help connect the spice farmers with international markets and add to their income. The technology can also help in rebuilding the pandemic affected supply chains by providing trading partners and consumers with trusted and secured data on goods and transactions."

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