Spices Board inks deal with UNDP to develop blockchain-powered traceability interface

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The Spices Board is aiming to strengthen the supply chain so as to position India as the premier destination for clean and safe spices. | Photo Credit: **M.A. Sriram**

The Spices Board India has inked a Memorandum of Understanding with UNDP India's Accelerator Lab 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," according to a statement released by Spices Board India from New Delhi.

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.

3,000 farmers

Design of Blockchain interface is expected to be completed by May 2021. The project will be piloted with more 3,000 farmers engaged in chilli and turmeric farming in select districts of Andhra Pradesh, the press statement said.

"India is the largest export, producer and consumer of spices in the world. India's spices export crossed a milestone of 3 billion USD during 2019-20 and our estimates indicate that we would cross that milestone and achieve a new high during 2020-21", the statement quoting Secretary of Spices Board India D. Sathiyan said.

Clean and safe spices

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, the statement added.

"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 UNDP," he added in the statement.

Exposure to global market

Speaking on the collaboration, Ms. Shoko Noda, Resident Representative, UNDP India, expressed confidence that the blockchain interface will help connect 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", the statement said quoting Ms Noda.

Source: *https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/spices-board-inks-deal-with-undp-to-develop-blockchain-powered-traceability-interface/article34255490.ece*