

MP to join National Agri Market platform

Prime Minister Narendra Modi likely to launch it on April 14 from Mhow near Indore

BS P-16 28-3-16

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Bhopal, 27 March

As Madhya Pradesh gears up to join the recently-announced National Agriculture Market (NAM) platform, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to launch it from the state. The PM is expected to visit Mhow (near Indore) on April 14 to mark B R Ambedkar's birth anniversary.

The state government through its Mandi Board had recently sent a proposal to launch the platform from Karond mandi (10 km away from Bhopal).

Modi had announced the platform during his recent visit to nearby Sherpur village of Sehore district, where he addressed a mega rally of farmers.

"We are fully geared up to

join the initiative announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently. We'll start operation soon after the launch of this platform on April 14," said Rajesh Rajora, principal secretary of state farmers' welfare and agriculture development department.

Initially, the state government would include only one commodity — *chana* (gram) — for e-auction through the NAM platform.

According to well-placed officials in the Mandi Board, the central government has agreed to release ₹15 crore for all 50 mandis to equip them with online support system, software, hardware, and grading of farm yield.

The Mandi Board will also chip in with further funds if required to upgrade mandis to enable them to sync with the NAM platform. The



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during an election rally in Sonitpur, Assam, on Sunday

state might also demand additional fund for recurring expenses.

Since mandi traders who participate in regular auction of commodities carry

localised mandi licence, the trading would take place only in Karond mandi. At a later stage, the state will have to make rules so that traders can obtain a single licence for the entire state and country.

"Since single licence fee is very high (₹1 crore), it would require a simpler procedure and less fee to attract more traders to participate in the e-auction of commodities through the NAM platform. They may opt for nation-wide licence once necessary rules and framework is ready," said Vinay Nigam, upper commissioner of Madhya Pradesh Mandi Board.

The NAM platform requires a regulator, a warehousing agency, a grading agency, aggregator and third-party payment system to complete the process of e-auction. "A complete system will be in place at a later

stage," Nigam added.

Trading would gradually include more commodities to be auctioned through the NAM platform.

For logistics management, states will rope in transporters for traded commodities across India. Once the commodity is delivered, the trader will make online payment through public finance management system to the mandi.

At present, farmers sell their farm yield only at nearby mandis by transporting their farm yield.

A fair quantity is lost either in transportation, distress or need-based sale and fetch low returns to their farm yield.

Besides Karond, 50 out of a total of 257 mandis in the state will also have similar facility for farmers in the near future.

Checked 28/3/16
R/c News paper Unit