

# Youth will lead ‘smart agriculture’ in Bangladesh: Razzaque

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**Online Desk:** Agriculture Minister Dr. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque has said the young generation will lead the advent and adoption of the concept of smart agriculture in Bangladesh. “For food security we need more productivity. Smart agriculture is a need of time and for this we have to go for a mechanized cultivation system,” he said, highlighting the contribution of agriculture in the country’s GDP (12%), reports UNB.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque made these remarks at a seminar titled “Transforming Conventional Agriculture to Smart Agriculture” held on Wednesday (April 12) at a city hotel. He also said the government is committed to give all sorts of policy support needed. He also urged for a multipurpose cold storage system to mitigate wastages. Later he stressed on product variety, efficient use of water and climate resistance crops production.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) President Barrister Md. Sameer Sattar has said it is imperative to invest in modern technology and education to increase productivity, sustainability and profitability for our farmers. According to him, these would help Bangladesh to achieve the goal of Smart Agriculture. “Besides, it is also imperative to train our farmers to adopt technology and advanced technology-based agricultural management,” he said.

The DCCI President also said Bangladesh’s agro and food-processing industry crossed the \$1 billion mark, exporting around 700 items to over 145 countries. During his speech, Md. Sattar highlighted the challenges the agro and food-processing industry – which accounts for about 0.22% of the GDP — currently faces such as limited value-addition skills, lack of diversification, quality assurance, low awareness of sanitary and phytosanitary compliance issues. “Moreover, to keep pace with the 4IR, we have to learn nano-technology, bio-informatics, machines, internet of things and new agriculture technologies,” He said.

Secretary of ICT Division Md. Shamsul Arefin said to meet the growing demand of food Bangladesh need to go for smart agriculture and to adapt this concept we need to go for smart technology. “Most of the countries in the world are now using smart technology, nanotechnology, bio technology and various blessings of 4IR. Therefore, to compete we can not lag behind the others,” He also called upon the private sector to lead smart agriculture to its next stage. In this regard, the government will give all possible support to the private sector, he added.

WFP’s Country Representative and FAO’s acting Country Representative in Bangladesh Domenico Scalpelli said that commercial agriculture in Bangladesh is gradually increasing but he underscored the importance of value addition of agricultural products. He also said that smart agriculture aims to improve productivity and quality of products. He also urged the younger generation to be engaged in the agriculture sector more and more.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, MP was present at the seminar as the Chief Guest. Secretary of ICT Division Md. Shamsul Arefin and WFP’s Country Representative and FAO’s acting Country Representative in Bangladesh Domenico Scalpelli also joined as the Special Guest and Guest of Honour respectively.