

## Concept Note on COOP -CONNECT

In the recent years the cooperative sector has emerged as the most vibrant sector of our economy. There is strong realisation that the issues of the cooperative sector need more detailed study and analysis both from the point of view of research and practice. This can materialise only if there is a forum of practitioners/researchers/experts who are able to meet and discuss the burning issues of the cooperative sector from time to time. There is a feeling that the cooperative sector must effectively advocate the strength of cooperative concept to both members of cooperatives and those who can be the potential members of cooperatives. There is a need to take the cooperative concept beyond the boundaries of cooperatives. Besides, serious measures must be undertaken so that research/educational/social science/multi-disciplinary institutions which are involved in research studies, or who may be eager to know more about the growth of cooperatives are connected to the cooperative concept and work towards strengthening it. An inter-disciplinary approach to the growth of the sector based on current cooperative practices has become relevant at this juncture. Besides, the cooperative sector today faces the big challenge of image-building. Image-building efforts through strong advocacy and lobbying can be undertaken only if appropriate strategies and action-points are formulated on the vital issues confronting the sector. Against this back-drop, as a serious initiative, NCUI being the apex organization of the cooperative movement is launching COOP-CONNECT- a forum of practitioners/researchers/experts involved in cooperatives and other diverse fields. The objectives of the forum would be -

- To generate interest of cooperative personnel in the emerging issues confronted by the cooperative sector.
- To involve academicians/researchers/other experts from cooperative, or allied sectors who are involved/interested in cooperatives
- To build up the image of the cooperative sector through study, research and analysis
- To sensitise the cooperative management by devising action-points/strategies based on detailed study and analysis of the issues confronted by the cooperative sector from time to time.

We are convening the first meeting of the Forum on 'Popularising Cooperative Model of Development amongst the Youth.' on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2009 at 2.30 pm. In the recent years it has been well

realised that the cooperative sector can not succeed without active involvement of youth at all levels. At present youth participation in cooperatives is negligible. There are very few student cooperatives in the country. Cooperation as a specific educational discipline has not been popularised in the schools, colleges and universities in the country. There is a feeling that there should be detailed study of cooperative principles and values in the school curricula in the country so that young minds are sensitised on the values of Cooperation, and they are attracted to the cooperative movement. NCUI has long been advocating for active involvement of youth in cooperatives. National Council for Cooperative Training under NCUI organises every year inter-university debating competition on cooperatives which is quite popular . NCUI last year organised Inter-School Quiz Competition on Cooperatives for the schools in Delhi/NCR. NCUI feels that popularising cooperative model of development amongst youth is a big challenge before the cooperative sector. Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India had a vision to convulse India with cooperatives. If the concept of cooperatives is popularised amongst the youth in a big way then Nehru's vision can still be realised.