

Kisan Bazar push: Vacant stalls up for rent-free business

'Around 4,000 stalls are lying empty'

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Kolkata, August 24

The state Agricultural Marketing department is pushing for the utilisation of vacant stalls at Kisan Bazars across Bengal by allowing businesses to operate there free of cost for one year.

"The previous government set up 186 Kisan Bazars across the state, but many of them are lying unutilised, with neither farmers nor sellers or buyers visiting them. There are 16,000 stalls, of which around 4,000 are lying empty without being distributed to anyone. I would urge you to come and do business in these ready-made infrastructures. The state will charge no rent for a period of one year; you will only have to pay the electricity bill," said Dilip



Ghosh, state Agricultural Marketing and Panchayats and Rural Development minister, at a programme organised by the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce.

Minister of State for Agricultural Marketing Ashoke Dinda has visited many Krishak Bazars and found that lack of proper approach roads, narrow space for carrying of

products and locational disadvantage have contributed to non-utilisation of the bazars. As per data of the Agricultural Marketing department out of 180 odd krishak bazars, at least 70-80 odd bazaars are lying unutilised.

Ghosh announced the government's plan of setting up multipurpose cold storage units for preserv-

ing vegetables like carrot, cauliflower, tomato, etc.

"Our existing cold storage facilities are mainly meant for potatoes.

If we can develop storage infrastructure, we will be able to preserve vegetables for a period of 3-4 months which would ensure that farmers get the due price for their produce," said Ghosh.

BIZ PUSH

- » 186 Kisan Bazars were set up across Bengal, but many remain underutilised
- » Around 70-80 Kisan Bazars are currently lying largely unused
- » Of 16,000 stalls, nearly 4,000 remain vacant and undistributed
- » The government will allow businesses to use vacant stalls rent-free for one year, with only electricity charges payable