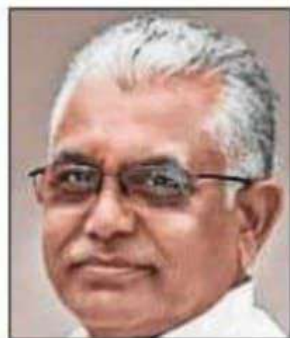


Bengal to disburse ₹40k crore loans to SHGs, says Dilip

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Kolkata: Bengal govt will disburse Rs 40,000 crore in institutional bank loans to self-help groups (SHGs), state panchayat and rural development minister **Dilip Ghosh** told members of Calcutta Chamber of Commerce on Monday. The minister stressed the need to make farmers, comprising these SHGs, self-reliant.

Ghosh said Bengal has 12.5 lakh SHGs and the Rs 40,000-crore target amount was being planned for this fiscal through active groups. The minister added that there were plans for comprehensive audits of existing SHGs to verify their active status and review of past fund utilisation before fresh credit lines are released.



At a special session on "Business Opportunities in West Bengal in a Changing Scenario", where Ghosh was the chief guest, members of the business community and entrepreneurs spoke about the hurdles they faced in dealing with the system. One entrepreneur complained of police asking for bribes and Ghosh said, "Bring him to me."

Around 70% of Bengal was rural population and 62% dependent on farming, Ghosh said. "The previous govt made no effort to help farmers. You can give Anna-purna Yojana to how many people? We want to ensure there is holistic development, something permanent for poor farmers," he added.

Anant Saharia, president of Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, delivered the welcome address.