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PREFACE

Kerala as its name denotes is known as the 'land of coconuts'. However, in recent years, Kerala has slipped from the top place in terms of coconut production and productivity. The primary reason behind this is the reluctance of the younger generation in taking up agriculture, stemming from lack of appropriate marketing avenues and the economic crisis. Our marketing strategies have to keep pace with the changing times. Emarketing has to be encouraged in a big way. E-marketing is a major platform for reaching out our commodities to the foreign markets. The GeM and e-NAM portals launched by the Government of India also targets the retail markets. The other aspect in driving our youth to agriculture, is of course, making the sector lucrative.

The Kerala Government has launched Farm Tourism to bring monetary benefits to agriculturists by linking farms with tourism. However it is yet to be implemented properly. Environment-friendly farm tourism has to be promoted and healthy market linkages created. We can expect many tourists to visit our farms. Usage of modern agricultural implements can also turn out to be a major draw. Farm tourism can help in bringing youth back to the agrarian sector.

Let me remind you all again - collaborative and consultative approach can bring efforts to fruition. It is heartening to note that our Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) are able to extend a helping hand to those in need. The success of the FPCs also draws from the fact that they are able to effectively market our harvest, besides helping some sections of our differently abled population. Continuous efforts are being made by all of us at CISSA to strengthen our FPCs to reach greater heights.

Dr. Suresh Kumar C General Secreatary, CISSA

Balaramapuram Handloom Producers Company, a historic step: **Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman**



Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurating the Balaramapuram Handloom Producers Company Ltd. Hon'ble Union Minister of State V Muraleedharan also seen.

The Balaramapuram Handloom Producers Company with members of the weaving community as its shareholders is a historic step in the right direction, said Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The formation of the Company will help in reaching out benefits to each and every weaver, the Union Minister said while speaking at the formal inauguration of the Producer Company at a function held at Remya A u d i t o r i u m , P allichal, T hiruvananthapuram on 5 November 2022.

At a time when scientific research has found the presence of Micro plastic even in breast milk, handloom can be an effective substitute to mitigate the effects of environment-harming plastic. Not



CISSA NEWSLETTER



just saris, it should be possible to weave out all needed household items from the handloom. Such a move will not only energise the market for handlooms but also strengthen the international markets for the native yarn, the Minister said.

Our youth are distancing themselves from the handloom sector owing to lack of adequate market and the recessionary pressures. Our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has put forth 5Fs to strengthen this traditional sector. These include Farmer, Fibre, Factory, Fashion and Foreign. To implement these effectively, the handloom sector has to attain self sustainability, the Minister pointed out.

E-marketing should be promoted to market handlooms. A major potential source for exporting handlooms to the foreign markets is registering in the Union Government's e-marketing platform. The Union Minister further informed that states like Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have seen good success in marketing handlooms through the e-route.

The Union Minister also handed over the key of the new office building of Balaramapuram Handloom Producers Company Limited (BHPCL) to its Chairman S Gopakumar.

I have worn handloom clothes from a young age including those from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. But the texture of Balaramapuram handlooms is a class apart. It is as soft as butter and as light as a bird's feather. It is also equally beautiful and attractive. I thank Balaramapuram weavers who have woven such a beautiful sari.

Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman 77

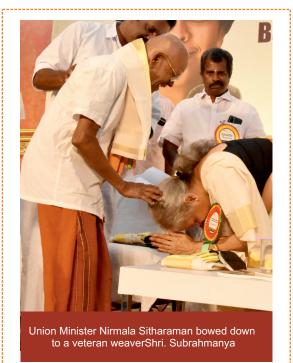
BHPCL Chairman S Gopakumar receiving the key of the office building from Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. NDLOOM



distributing share certificates

Union Minister of State V Muraleedharan, while delivering the keynote address, said it is possible to achieve the same importance to handloom tourism just as farm tourism. If Balaramapuram Handloom Tourism were to be launched, it would attract sufficient tourists who would also be interested in trying their hand at weaving! Such a move would not only enhance the market for handlooms but also help in retaining youngsters in this field. The Minister also distributed shares and share certificates to the shareholder weavers.

M Vincent, MLA presided over the event. M Shaji, NABARD Deputy Managing Director; Dr Suresh Kumar C, CISSA General Secretary; GS Sreekala, Director, BHPCL spoke. Venkataramani Reddy, Chief General Manager, SBI; NABARD and SBI officials, BHPCL and CISSA personnel participated in the event.



FPCs are A Succour for the Differently Abled



Parassala Grama Samriddhi Farmers Producer Co. Ltd. provided Vending cart for selling vegetables to Differently abled Youngsters of Chenkal Grama Panchayat



We are also happy to introduce 18-yearold differently abled Athira J S From chenkal to our dear readers. Athira is a student of BUDS school in Udiyan kulangara of Thiruvananthapuram district. Her mother and grandmother form Athira's support system. Buoyed by the sales from the pushcart, Athira's family has started another shop near

Reshma R surname, place Chenkal 26 years, is a cerebral palsy patient who is dependent on her mother for many things. In spite of her difficulties, this young lady completed her graduation with 68% marks. Political science is Reshma's favourite subject. All the same, Reshma's nagging worry had been about her future and how she would make a living for herself. She found her answer when Grama Samrudhi Farmer Producer Company, Parassala lent her a helping hand in the form of a pushcart. Reshma became one of the five beneficiaries of a scheme for the differently abled floated by the State Horticulture Mission.

Reshma now sells vegetables, packet snacks, lottery, coconut, eggs and the like from her pushcart. Classmates, friends and well-wishers now call on her and come to buy essentials from her. Reshma is delighted at the opportunity to renew her friendships.

Earning my own income has given me a confidence boost. It is as if I have found an answer to what is in store for me in the future," a confident Reshma says with a smile. Manjavilakam School in kollayil panchayat that sells vegetables, grocery and stationery. Grama Samrudhi has shown Athira and her family a path to light, the family feels.

Yet another beneficiary, Anitha V says that the pushcart has given her family a source of income. Anitha, who sells vegetables from her pushcart, says that she and her family now have the confidence to move ahead in life.

Similar thoughts are reflected by Mohanan S of Karode Panchayat and Helen Gracious of Kulathoor, both in Thiruvananthapuram district. The activities of Grama Samrudhi gives a new lease of life to the less-privileged like them, opine all beneficiaries.

Grama Samrudhi has supported five differently abled persons in Parassala and Chenkal panchayats with pushcarts, including four women and one man. An amount of Rs 1.5 lakh was spent in purchasing the pushcart. Fifty percent of the cost of pushcart is subsidised by SHM.

Kisan Service Society Recognizes CISSA



CISSA General Secretary Dr Suresh Kumar C receiving the Kisan Service Society award from Hon'ble Transport Minister Antony Raju

Farmer welfare organization Kisan Service Society has recognized CISSA's contributions to agricultural, scientific, technical and social development with an award. Dr Suresh Kumar C, General Secretary, CISSA received the award from Hon'ble Transport Minister Antony Raju at the State Council Meet of Kisan Service Society (KSS) on 26 November 2022. The National Chairman TM Jose Thayyil, State President Joy Joseph Mukkanthottam, State Vice Presidents Dr Joseph Thomas, Suresh TV, State General Secretary CC Mohandas and other state and district officials of KSS were present.





Chirainkeesh FPC Coconut Nursery - DMI Officials check

DMI Inspection in FPCs



DMI officials at Pothankot FPC Interacting with Board of Directors members

Entrusted by the Central Government, officials of the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection (DMI) inspected FPCs in Pothencode and Chirayinkeezh on 30 November in connection with the scheme for formation and promotion of 10,000 FPOs in the country. The Deputy Agricultural Marketing Advisor (Incharge) Dr Arun Kumar R of DMI's Kochi Regional Office inspected the FPCs on 30 November. CISSA FPO Director Ajith Kumar G and Project Coordinator Arun Kumar S were also present during the inspection. He evaluated the FPOs' functioning and their compliance to guidelines.

At the Pothencode FPO, the DMI official interacted with the Chairman Sasidharan Nair, CEO Devika James L, Pramod PU, Accountant, Director Board Members

and shareholders. He also visited the Agrashala Vegetable Shop run by the Company and the newly opened Input Shop and gave necessary directions for improvement. Dr Arun Kumar further visited the farm of shareholder farmer Anil Kumar and the vegetable farm run by Kizhavoor FIG. He interacted with the farmers to understand their issues and challenges.

The DMI official interacted with the Chairman G Susheelan, CEO Jithu RS, Accountant T Narayanan Nair, Director Board Members and shareholder members to understand and evaluate the functioning

of the Chirayinkeezh FPO. As part of field checks, he visited the vegetable procurement centre and coconut nursery.

Agriculture Infrastructure Fund Scheme: SFAC conducts workshop

Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) organized a five-day national workshop for Cluster Based Business Organization (CBBO) and FPOs. CISSA CBBO and its 24 FPOs participated in the online workshop on 29th November.

The workshop was organized to make FPOs and farmers aware about the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund scheme and the real-time updation of AIF portal. The workshop explained in detail about the utilization of the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund. The financial assistance under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund scheme has several objectives. The primary objective is to improve the agriculture infrastructure in the country. All loans under this scheme have an interest subsidy of 3% per annum. A maximum amount of up to Rs 2 crore is available for a seven year period. A highlight of this scheme is that the funds available under it can be used together with subsidy of projects under any existing or new state or central government projects.

Chittumala FPC: Paddy procurement a relief to farmers



Paddy storage of Chitumala FPC

The paddy procurement initiatives undertaken by Chittumala FPC in Kollam district of Kerala has come as a relief to many paddy farmers in Perinad. The FPC has procured 50 tons of paddy from farmers belonging to Namaste, Janani FIGs in Perinad Panchayat at a rate of Rs 27 per Kg. The farmers are happy that they could sell off their harvest without any delay. FPC Directors Adv. Sunil Thirumuttam, Sudarshan K, Jose C and Arun V Kumar led the procurement.

The procured paddy has been dehusked to obtain rice and is ready for sale. A counter set up at the FPC office is selling rice in wholesale and retail quantities. Good quality Perinad Matta rice is sold wholesale at Rs 58 per kg and for retail price at Rs 59 per kg. The price of rice is more than Rs 60 in the open market. In this context, the procurement of rice at fair prices from the farmers and open sales is noteworthy.

Chittumala FPC Chairman Panayam Vinod and CEO Raghunarayanan say that their objective is to work on projects and schemes that will lead to the holistic development of farmers in Chittumala block



Meeting with KM Tractors

A meeting was held with KM Tractors under the leadership of Chairman N Vijayakumar, Mavelikkara FPC to purchase implements under Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM). Mavelikkara FPC, which is eligible under SMAM, has entered into agreement with KM Tractors to purchase agricultural machinery and implements at rates offered by the dealers. With this, shareholders of the FPC will get agricultural

machines and implements at subsidised rates. KM Tractors was represented by Managing Director Muhammed Ali and Sales Manager Anish Babu. The Directors of the FPC - Rajamohan Pillai, GK Biju, V Sivarajan, Radhamani K and CEO Ashwin Dharan were present.

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Director Board Meeting



The Director Board Meeting of Pandalam FPC was conducted at Kulanada office on 12th November. The new businesses to be launched by the FPC was discussed in the meeting. The meeting was held under the leadership of Chairperson Priya Prasad. Directors of the company and CEO Abhi also



participated.

The Director Board Meeting of Mallappally FPC was conducted at its office on 16th November. The distribution of share certificates to shareholders, formation of FIGs in Mullappally and Kallooppara panchayats and the company's business plan discussion also was done in the meeting. The Chairman Suresh K Pillai, Company Directors and CEO Sudhi P Das participated.



The Director Board Meeting of Grama Samriddhi FPC was held at Pasuvaykal office on 27th November. The meeting primarily discussed about the Annual General Body Meeting to be held in December. The Chairman Ramachandran Nair S, CEO Jyothi VM and Directors Vijeev K, Gopakumar M, Rajendra Kumar M, Sudhi Kumar K, Siva Kumar J and Sreekumar K were present.

Sahya Samriddhi FPC Conducts Agricultural Insurance Campaign



The Sahya Samriddhi FPC conducted a campaign to promote the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) in Kadamankode region of Kulathupuzha Panchayat. As many as 15 farmers registered in PMFBY in Kadamankode panchayat. The FPC could also encourage 35 farmers to register in the scheme through dedicated promotion activities in different panchayats of Anchal block. The CEO of the FPC Sreelekshmi S has said that the insurance campaign will continue in the coming days. The PMFBY was launched with the intention of providing coverage to farmers affected by natural disasters, pests and diseases.

Agricultural Meet Organised



An agricultural meet was organised under the aegis of CISSA CBBO in Vellanad Block on 19 November. The meet was conducted in connection with the setting up of FPO in Vellanad Block. Dr Suresh Kumar C, General Secretary, CISSA presided over.

Dr Suresh Kumar talked about the opportunities and potential for setting up FPOs in Vellanad and the benefits that farmers would get from FPOs. Five promoters were also selected in this connection.

CISSA was represented by Krishna Murali S and Rajesh A Nair. Representatives of various Farmer Interest Groups were also present.

Annual General Body Meet held



The fourth Annual General Body Meet of Harithodayam FPC was held at Karakulam Cooperative Service Bank Hall on 27 November. CISSA General Secretary Dr Suresh Kumar C was the Chief Guest in the function that was presided over by the company chairman KP Krishna Kumar.

Dr Suresh Kumar spoke about the functioning of FPOs, provision of commodities to farmers at reduced prices and the export possibilities of commodities through FPOs.

The meeting also discussed working in collaboration with

other groups, financial assistance to Joint Liability Groups, support from NABARD and capacity building initiatives for farmers. The meeting also selected the Governing Board members. The Directors of the Company, CEO Shaju B and shareholders participated.

FIG Meeting



FIG meetings of Chettikulangara, Muthukulam, Chennithala and Thekkekkara panchayats were held under the auspices of the Mavelikkara FPC. The office bearers were selected from various Panchayat level meetings. The meetings highlighted the scope and importance of FPOs.

The meetings had the participation of CISSA Directors Ajith Kumar G, Sudheesh Kumar K, Mavelikkara FPC Chairman N Vijayakumar, Directors Rajmohan, Sivarajan, Radhamani, GK Biju and CEO Ashwin Dharan. The first meeting of the FIG formed under Mallappally FPC in Kallooppara was held at Sathankal NSS building. The Chairman of Desinganadu FPC who participated in the meeting detailed the formation of FIGs and the benefits accrued to farmers from FPOs. The meeting honoured senior farmer Rajeshekara Panicker. Subsequently, all participants visited his farm and the newly opened bio-fertiliser unit. The Agricultural Officer of Kallooppara Sri.Jayan, Company Chairman



Suresh K Pillai, Directors, CEO Sudhi P Das and shareholders were present.

Weavers Service Centre officials visit BHPCL



Officials of the Weavers Service Centre under the Department of Textiles, Government of India visited Balaramapuram Handloom Producers Company Limited (BHPCL) on 21 November. Technical Superintendent Giri Varma and Deputy Director SD Subramanyan were among those who visited. The officials evaluated the functioning of the company and the distribution of shareholder certificates and loom application forms. It was on 12, 17 and 19 November that certificates were distributed to the shareholders. The officials also interacted with the office bearers of BHPCL. The Chairman S Gopakumar and CEO Asha U and Director Board Members were present during the interaction.

Pandalam FPC Office Inaugurated



The inauguration of new office premises of Pandalam FPC was held at Kulanada on 14 November 2022. The Company Chairperson Priya Prasad made the keynote address. The Directors of the company including MN Ramakaran, Varghese Mathew, KS Arun Kumar, Jijin Lal, Ramakrishnan Nair, Radhakrishnan P, Ajith Kumar NC, Madhusoodhanan Nair, and CEO Abhi A were present.

Grama Samriddhi FPC Farmers get Agricultural Implements



Shareholder farmers of Grama Samriddhi FPC have received agricultural implements at subsidised rates under the scheme called Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM). Shareholders of the FPC - Prabhakaran Nair of Karode Panchayat and Girish Kumar of Thirupuram Panchayat are the beneficiaries. Under the SMAM, up to 40-50 % of the cost of the implements will be refunded to the beneficiaries' account. The cost of a brush cutter is Rs 24,000. Of this, Rs 12,000 will be refunded to the beneficiary. A 16-litre sprayer costs Rs 1,750; the beneficiary will be refunded 40% of the cost under SMAM.

'Mazha Mara' farming launched



The Neyyar Farmer Producer Company has launched 'Mazha Mara' farming. Mazha Mara farming is being done in 25 cents of a nursery under the company ownership. Snake gourd, bitter gourd and tomatoes are being cultivated here, using organic methods of cultivation. Native fertilizers such as cow dung, poultry manure, bone meal powder, neem cake and the like are applied to the plants. The advantage of 'Mazha Mara' farming is that it enables year-round farming without seasonal disturbances.

The cultivation of ginger, turmeric,

arrowroot and tapioca being done by the Karshaka Mitra FIG in Koodayil of Vellarada Panchayat under Neyyar FPC is ready for harvest. The 16-member team of the FIG cultivated the crops purely through organic means. The decision is to sell the commodities through the market outlets of Neyyar FPC and in other regional market places.

Weekly training for FPOs by CISSA CBBO



CISSA organized weekly training programs to the Chairmen, Directors and CEOs of FPOs. First training of the month was held on 1st November2022. It was anchored by Horticulture Mission Asst Director of Agriculture Dr Sandhya R. Various schemes for FPOs floated by the State Horticulture Mission were introduced to the participants. She also talked about the various project-based subsidies available and the rate of subsidies.

ATMA State Coordinator Dr Asha handled a training session on 15th November. The joint projects implemented by Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) and the potential projects that can be submitted by FPOs and FIGs in agriculture and allied areas were discussed in the capacity building session.

The Asst. Director of Agriculture Sri. Ajith C talked in detail about the Central and State schemes of the Department in Kerala in a training session on 22nd November. He emphasized the benefits available to farmers under FPOs through various schemes of the Agriculture Department.

CISSA FPO Directors Ajith Kumar G, Sudheesh Kumar K, FPC Chairmen, Directors, CEOs and the like participated in the weekly training programmes and subsequent weekly review meetings.

Training on Mushroom Cultivation



A training on mushroom cultivation was organized under the auspices of Sahya Samriddhi FPC on 9th November. Trainer and mushroom farmer Ashokan handled the session. He detailed the dos and don'ts of mushroom cultivation and how large-scale farmers can reach their products to the markets. He conducted a demonstration on how a mushroom bed can be prepared.

The trainer cum farmer talked about the expenses involved in mushroom cultivation, and the certificates required to take up mushroom cultivation. He also interacted with the farmers and

clarified their doubts. As many as 15 farmers participated in the training conducted at Sahya Samithi office. The FPC has also taken the decision to distribute mushroom spawns to the interested farmers.

Training on potential Enterprises in food processing sector

Sahya Samithi FPC and Kollam Industries Department jointly organized a training programme on Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme at Pathanapuram Block Panchayat Hall on 28th November. Block Panchayat President Anandavalli A



inaugurated the training programme. Block Panchayat Vice President Aromal Unni R presided over.

The Kollam District Industries Manager Dinesh R talked about the PMFME scheme and the financial benefits under it. The Asst Professor of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kottarakkara Shamsiya IH detailed the enterprises that can be formed under the food processing sector. The emerging opportunities in the food processing sector, processing of various food products and the production of value-added products were discussed.

As many as 50 farmers from Pathanapuram, Anchal and Vettikkavila blocks participated in the training. Officials of Industries Department Abhilash S, CP Sunil Chandran, Gokul R and CEOs of Sahya Samriddhi, Kallada Rivervalley and Pathanapuram Sreelekshmi S, Stefani Alex and Ashwini Dharan respectively were present.



Sahya Samridhi FPC's stall at the function in Kollam organized by the state government to honour farmers



Banana cultivation started by Sreelekshmi FIG under Chenganoor FPC in Cheriyanad Panchayat



FIG meeting in Pavithreshweram, Karinbinpura



KSS General Secretary S Suresh talking about Muttagramam project at the meeting organised at Daesingngad FPC



Board meeting of Mavelikkara F.P.C



Coconut saplings readied for sale at the coconut nursery run by Chiranyinkeezh FPC



In the meeting held by Desinganadu FPC, KSS National General Secretary S. Suresh Muttagram Project Explaining about



Distribution of share certificates organised by BHPCL

CISSA NEWSLETTER

Success Stories

Kerala cattle farm breeds India's indigenous cows



Cattle rearing and dairying is not new in Kerala. However, if a Kerala farm raises only indigenous cattle breeds from other states, it certainly becomes a talking point. The Kamadhenu Cattle Farm run by Nediyamkodil Grama Vikas Samithi FIG in Parassala Panchayat of Thiruvananthapuram district is one such. The farm raises 15 India's indigenous cow breeds such as Gir, Sahiwal and Kankrej.

NS Sreekumar who is back in India after a stint abroad is the President of Grama Vikas FIG. A eight-member

team including two women are actively engaged in the running of the cattle farm. The milk produced is sold in

neighbouring households at a rate of Rs 60 per litre. There are many takers for good milk and it is not often possible to meet the demand, say the Samithi members.

Black gram powder, coconut cake, groundnut cake and such native feeds are fed to the cattle. Green fodder is also grown in 35 cents of land. Dried cow dung is yet another source of income for the farm. Farmers purchase cow dung at Rs 150 per sack. Plans are also on to make Gomutra Ark as postulated by Gavya Siddha method of treatment.



The Samithi is also planning to produce and distribute biogas from cow dung. The plan is to set up a biogas plant with the support of the Panchayat and distribute gas to nearby houses through piped connections. Kamadhenu Farm is also planning to procure some more cows and diversify their business to get the anticipated profits. Sreekumar is hopeful and confident of getting desired profits soon.

Information to farmers

Excerpts from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Mann Ki Baat of 27 November



How can we forget drones when we talk about technological advances? India is advancing fast in drone technology. We recently saw how drones are used to transport apples from Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh. Kinnaur is a remote district of Himachal. Kinnaur experienced heavy snowfall this season so much so that it was by and large cut off from other districts of Himachal Pradesh. In such a

context, transporting apples from Kinnaur was also difficult. Now with drone technology, consumers can relish the tasty apples of Kinnaur much faster. This will reduce the cost of production of farmer friends. Apples reach the market at the right time, reducing spoilage.

Rabi 2022-23; registration for Weather based Crop Insurance Scheme before 31 December 2022



Farmers are requested to register to Rabi 2022 -Weather based Crop Insurance Scheme before 31 December 2022. The insurance scheme is being implemented by the Central Government and the State Agriculture Department through the Agriculture Insurance Company of India. The insurance cover is for banana, tapioca, paddy and vegetables such as snake gourd, bitter gourd, long beans, ash gourd, pumpkin, cucumber, green chilli in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts. In Pathanamthitta and

Alappuzha districts, the insurance is for banana, tapioca and paddy.

Under the Prime Minister Crop Insurance Scheme, compensation is provided at the block/Panchayat level for crop loss due to water logging, hailstone, landslide, fire due to lightning & thunder and cloudburst. The compensation was given based on weather based data available at respective Panchayats during the period of insurance. Compensation is also available for individual crop loss due to floods, wind and landslides. It is however available only in select panchayats for banana cultivation.

The insurance amount and premium is different for each crop. Farmers can register to the insurance scheme either through the portal at www.pmfby.gov.in, through Akshaya common service centres and through insurance agents. For farmers who have availed loans, the respective banks have to enroll them in the insurance scheme. Farmers have to submit their application forms together with Aadhaar card, bank passbook, land tax receipt and the premium amount. For farmers who have taken their land on lease, the lease agreement also has to be submitted. The last date for registering to the scheme is 31 December 2022. For more details, please call 8111816443, 90257 50978.





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