



JANASANYOG, ASSAM
CHIEF MINISTER'S PUBLIC RELATIONS CELL, DISPUR

PRESS RELEASE

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CM attends International Buyer Seller Meet and Spices Conclave

NE can emerge as the major supplier of organic foods: CM

Dispur, June 30: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today said that in the present scenario, wherein the entire globe is on the look for healthy food, that are at par with the international standards of food safety and quality, free from any chemical residues and other contaminants; the North Eastern India can emerge as the major supplier of organic foods to the globe. He made this observation while speaking at the International Buyer Seller Meet and Spices Conclave organized by the Spices Board of India for the North Eastern Region at Guwahati today.

The conclave was participated by leading foreign buyers, major exporters, farmers, and traders from across the North East. The event was organized in line with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to promote India's rich heritage of traditional spices, herbs and medicinal plants across the globe as well as to facilitate growth and development of Spices, Condiments and similar products from the Region.

Stating that India has been known globally for its home grown spices, Dr. Sarma said that spices and herbs in the country play roles that go way beyond just cooking, and they are regularly used for their curative and therapeutic properties. He mentioned that India produces about 75 of the 109 varieties of spices listed by the International Organization for Standardization. The country has today emerged as the world's largest producer, consumer and exporter of spices and overall production of different types of spices has been growing rapidly over the last few years, he remarked.

Dr. Sarma said that North Eastern Region has acquired special attention in the global map owing to the quality of spices that are considered organic and amongst the many unique products and features for which the region is famous for, spices are of special recognition having global demand.

The Chief Minister further informed that Assam produces nearly 3.1 lakh metric tonnes of spices annually. The state holds a major share in the production of spices such as Ginger, Turmeric, Coriander, Mustard, Chilli, Garlic, etc. He also said that being the gateway of the North East India, with better connectivity and fast developing infrastructural facilities; the state has the potential to be a major hub for post-harvest processing and value addition of spices from the region and can become one of the major exporting hubs.

Moreover, Dr. Sarma said that steps have been taken to make best use of Prime Minister's Developmental Initiative for North East (PM-DevINE), One District One Product (ODOP) scheme and to convert the 'by-default organic' tag of the spices produced in the region to 'certified organic' or 'organic by design' to realize maximum potential of spices sector. He informed that under ODOP scheme, several districts in Assam have identified spices as their focus crop, such as; Turmeric from Bongaigaon; Mustard seeds and Mustard products from the districts of Darrang, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, and Majuli; Ginger from the districts of Karbi Anglong, West Karbi-Anglong, and Dima Hasao ; Chilli from Dhubri and Jorhat.

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Lauding the Spices Board for its initiative to start a Quality Evaluation Laboratory for Spices at Guwahati, the Chief Minister said that the laboratory will be of immense help and benefit to the North Eastern Region as this will make available state-of-the-art testing facilities for spices that are at par with the international standards, in the region itself.

Saying that due to lack of adequate infrastructure & industry presence for processing and value addition of spices, presently most of the produce goes out on raw or semi-processed stage resulting in low income to the farmer and producer, Dr. Sarma stressed on proper coordination between Spices Board, Farmer Producer Organizations and Agriculture as well as Industry Department.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister also presented Large Cardamom Productivity Award Winners for the years 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22 and felicitated Padma Shri Awardees Trinity Saioo and Nanadro B Marak of Meghalaya, who were conferred with the fourth highest civilian award of the country for their excellent work in the spices sector.

While Secretary of the Spices Board of India D Sathiyam delivered the welcome speech, the event was also addressed by Agriculture Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Taje Taki and Commissioner & Secretary of Agriculture of Assam Government Dr. Om Prakash. The vote of thanks was offered by A B Reema Shree, who is the Director of Spices Board of India.

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