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Chief Secretary launches "Plant Vegetables, Fruits, Flowers, Community Garden and Save Seeds Campaign Vision 2047-Processed Food Exports"

❑ Calls upon all Departments, Organizations, Individuals to join the movement and make it a mass movement to achieve food security ❑ Mission is to transform Andaman as a Community Garden of Fruits & Vegetables and needy can pluck without any restriction ❑ Motto of this mission is "no one should sleep empty stomach" ❑ A&N Police, A&N Command, Forest Deptt., PBMC, CIARI & all Departments of A&N Administration onboard the mission

Port Blair, July 25

The Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri Jitendra Narain launched "Plant Vegetables, Fruits, Flowers, Community Garden and Save Seeds Campaign Vision 2047-Processed Food Exports" today at Sippighat Agriculture Farm. Addressing the gathering, the Chief Secretary stated that all Departments should play a catalytic role in the success of this mission which will provide food security to all in A&N Islands. Opining that this campaign is a Vision - 2047 for the A&N Islands, he mentioned that with the cooperation of all stakeholders and the people, we can achieve the goal of turning the Islands as a major exporter of fruits and processed food. He exhorted the citizens to strive to turn this mission into a people's movement and appealed to individuals/ organizations and others to plant saplings of fruit and vegetable with the motto "Live for others". The Chief Secretary and others planted saplings of fruit bearing trees in the campus of Sippighat Agriculture Farm on the occasion.

Elaborating on the vision 2047, the Chief Secretary informed that there are 200 components associated with this mission and we are planning to take up one component on every Sunday. The first and foremost aim of launching of this campaign is to lessen the dependency of vegetables and fruits from mainland. There should be a systematic plantation of vegetables and fruit bearing trees on that people can easily reap the vegetable and fruits for their consumption, he said. The Chief Secretary stated that for its value addition and agro – plantation, the Industries

Department will look after it in the next stage.

Dwelling upon the objective of the mission, he said, "Our aim is that no one should remain without food during situations like pandemic, lock downs, blockade or war's. The motto of this mission is "no one should sleep empty stomach". The labourers need vegetables and during this season, the rates of the vegetables were very high and this mission, he said will help in feeding the vulnerable section of the society. He said, jackfruit is a wonder fruit which can be grown abundantly as the climatic condition of these Islands is best suited for planting this tree. He desired that fruit/vegetables should be grown in roadside patches and this, he said, will help in minimizing encroachment of roadside patches. "Wherever a blank grey patch is available, we should plant fruit and vegetable saplings and anyone can reap that vegetable or fruit", he said adding that to achieve this goal, islanders have to come forward. This mission will transform the whole Andaman as a 'Community Garden' where anyone can pluck fruits and there will be no restriction. "My dream is to convert one Island with one fruit and that island will become net exporting Island", he said.

The Chief Secretary mentioned that the Forest Department which spends Rs 20 crores for planting of trees in the Islands, this time will focus on planting fruit bearing saplings as it also protect the environment and soil erosion. The Forest Department has done a good job by giving more emphasis on planting fruit bearing trees. He said, all the Departments should reach to the people and enquire from them which place is suitable in their opinion for taking up plantation. To make the mission successful, he opined that every single patch has to be given to individuals, community groups so that better management of the saplings planted can be done. The task cannot be accomplished by the Administration alone and the cooperation of general public/organizations is also equally important for the success of the mission.

The Chief Secretary also called upon the Police Department and A&N Command to popularize this initiative. "My vision is to plant fruit bearing trees/flowering trees along the entire stretch of NH upto 300 KM. There is need to plant10 KM roads with white and pink colour of Mussaenda which starts flowering within 8 months. In this direction, the Chief Secretary asked the APWD

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Chief Secretary launches "Plant Vegetables, Fruits, Flowers, Community...

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and NHIDCL, who are instrumental in developing roads to carry out planting of Mosanda by utilizing their fund. He said, 0.01% of their funds should be spend on road side tree plantation and then only, we can make the Islands a 'Garden of Eden'. The variety of jackfruit and drum stick needs to be propagated.

The Chief Secretary asked all the Deputy Commissioners and Superintendents of Police to find patches and the seeds will be provided to the people by the Administration to plant it. Thereafter, the Industries Department will chalk-out the plans for food processing. The Forest Department and CIARI will suggest the Administration how much saplings have to be planted in one place. He said, every Sunday there will be voluntary campaign to plant trees. We are also planning to construct 1000 ponds for 'Digi Macchi'. For finding perennial sources of water, the Chief Secretary said the Territorial Army and Forest Guards will be assigned the task and suitable reward will also be instituted as an encouragement.

The Director General of Police, Shri Satyendra Garg said that since the beginning of this campaign, the Police Department has chalked out a yearlong programme on a sustainable level for planting of vegetable and fruit bearing trees in all the police complexes, stations, Fire Brigade Units, LoPs. He said more focus is given on the locally grown vegetables and fruits and more than 900 fruit bearing saplings have been planted so far in different police stations and units. Our goal is not to increase the number of planting materials but we are ensuring that the planted saplings are grown properly and is raised serving the purpose. He said, everyone should know about nutrition and

if a person takes nutritious foods, then he can keep the medicines at bay.

The Chief of Staff, A&N Command, Rear Admiral, DS Gujral thanked the A&N Administration for involving A&N Command in this all important drive of save seed and plant fruit sapling. He said Defence personnel are actively involved in the propagation, conservation and preservation of environment. He said, usually, we throw seeds after having fruits, but the seeds can be saved very easily for its further plantation in our kitchen garden or backyard. Vision 2047 envisages food availability to all and is a welcome step. He assured all support from the A&N command for this all important and meaningful drive.

Speaking on the occasion, the APCCF, Deptt. of Environment & Forests, A&N Administration, P. Subramanyam elaborated on the techniques of how to conserve seeds into planting materials. He said for saving a seed one must eat a fruit first which has good nutrition level for every individual. He said to save seeds we have to collect seeds both at the Institutional levels as well as request the communities to be a part of this good programme. He said, plantation drive can also be taken up through school 'Eco-Clubs' and 'School Nursery' programmes.

In his address, the Director, ICAR-CIARI Port Blair, Dr. Eaknath B. Chakurkar said that A&N is very Specific Island area having rich source of biodiversity with variety of plants and CIARI works on survey, conservation, evaluation and economic viable use in the society. He also advised to plant 'bread fruit' (small kathal/ jackfruit) graded as the plant of the future and CIARI has distributed 200 saplings of small jackfruit for its planting in North & Middle Andaman.

Earlier, in her welcome address, the Secretary, Agriculture, Ms. Veditha Reddy said that this campaign is being launched by the A&N Administration to ensure food security in the Islands. There are different components in this campaign which include planting vegetables and fruits in Govt. complexes and public places to ensure food security. The mission aims to plant flower saplings along the road side for beautification and create awareness on how to generate saplings out of the saved seeds and plant them.

The Deputy Commissioner of North & Middle Andaman, Dr. (Smti.) Angel Bhati Chauhan and Deputy Commissioner, Nicobar District, Shri Yash Chaudhary also attended the function through virtual mode.

The function concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by the IAS Probationer, Ms. Yashaswini.