

## Keshav Chandra Inaugurates 'Kisan Mela' Being Organised by ICAR-CIARI

Denis Giles – 17 March 2023

**The technical know-how, research activities, technological advancement which are developed in the Research institutions should percolate down to the masses: Chief Secretary**



**Port Blair, March 16:** The two days 'Kisan Mela' on the theme 'Promoting Natural Farming' being organised by ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair along with its KVKs got underway with its inauguration by the Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri Keshav Chandra, IAS at its Mela ground at Garacharma Research Complex here this morning. The Commissioner-cum-Secretary (Agriculture/Fisheries), Smti Nandini Paliwal, IAS, Secretary (AH&VS/Fisheries), Shri B S Jaglan, IAS and officers/Scientists from CIARI, KVKs and line Departments were also present on the occasion.

Around 300 farmers representing 28 Gram Panchayat of South and Middle & North Andaman districts are participating in these two-day events.

The basic objective of organizing this Mela is to provide opportunity to the visiting farmers and other stakeholders to interact with the team of Scientists and share the information to the larger audience on different facets of 'Natural Farming'.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Secretary congratulated the farmers gathered in large number for participating in this two days 'Kisan Mela' organized by CIARI, during which, they will be acquainted and introduced to various technologies and modern farming methods developed by the Institute. He said, the demonstration of technology and modern farming methods exhibited by the efficient institutions functioning in A&N Islands in various sectors like Horticulture, Agriculture, Pisciculture, Animal Husbandry, Veterinary and Farming etc. must be passed on to the farming community at ground level and they must be encouraged to adopt such technologies and reap the benefits to increase their produce manifold. The technical know-how, research activities, technological advancement which are developed in the Research institutions should percolate down to the masses, only then it's true objectives and missions can be a success, said the Chief Secretary adding that the challenge before the research institutions is to continuously work towards ensuring that each and every person adopts the latest farming technology and are benefitted from it.

Mentioning that A&N Islands' climatic condition and fertile soil are quite favourable for large scale cultivation of local spices, exotic agri/horticulture etc. the Chief Secretary said farmers and general public should be made aware of the market value of the spices and horticultural produce which when cultivated in large scale can fetch them a good remuneration. In case of financial constraints for taking up such large scale cultivation activities, farmers must be made aware of the schemes implemented by the Govt., bank loan facilities which will facilitate them in taking up such activities, he said.

The Chief Secretary remarked that valuable research activities and farming technology developed by the Institution will merely remain in lab for display, unless it is transferred to the field and urged the researchers/scientists of the Institution to pass on such important knowledge to the farming community at large. "We must not stop until each and every farming community is convinced to switch to modern farming methods, which will not only give better yield but also enable them with better income, only then the hard work and dedication that goes into developing such high end technologies can be fully reaped and realised", said the Chief Secretary.

The Chief Secretary further stated that we must strive to produce agricultural produce which has a brand of its own and stressed on the need to create 'Brand Andaman', so that each and every agricultural products that are produced from Andaman can find its place in the country and in the international markets too. This, he said, can be achieved through adoption of modern agricultural commercial practices, products branding including promotion of bio fertilizers & organic produces which are of high market value in today's world. He called upon the Researchers/Scientists/Officers of various Institutions dealing with Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Sciences, Fisheries and the line Departments to work in tandem towards bringing about a revolutionary reform in the farming sector with the use of latest technologies and research activities for the betterment of the farming community and the society at large. People should be encouraged to take up poultry farming, goatry, Animal husbandry, pisciculture, dairy and other agriculture and allied activities, so that they can become self-sustainable in the long run, the Chief Secretary said.

Encouraging the Officers of AH&VS, Agriculture, Fisheries and the scientific fraternity of CIARI & KVKs, the Chief Secretary said, we must strive to project Andaman as a capable region of producing the best agricultural products, best organic food, high quality dairy and other products etc.

Mentioning about the unique practices of the Apatani tribe inhabiting the Ziro Valley of Arunachal Pradesh, the Chief Secretary said, the Apatani practice aquaculture alongwith rice farming on their plots. Rice- fish culture in the valley is a unique practice in the State where crop of rice and crop of fish are raised together. Integrating aquaculture with agriculture assures higher productivity and year round employment opportunities for farmers, he said and such practices can also be encouraged among the farmers of A&N Islands. He further stated that every Panchayat & village must be sensitized about the benefits of latest agricultural technologies and the farming community must be encouraged to adopt them.

Earlier, the Chief Secretary inaugurated the Modern Goat Unit set up in the campus. He also visited the Cattle & Buffalo shed. The Chief Secretary also flagged off the tableau aimed at promoting 'Natural Farming'. The tableau will traverse across South Andaman to N&M Andaman District with the aim to sensitize farmers on importance of natural farming. The Chief Secretary also inspected the stalls set up at the Mela ground and evinced keen interest on the products on display. He also planted saplings in the campus of CIARI.

The Chief Secretary also felicitated three progressive farmers from South Andaman viz. Smti Kala Devi, Smti Kaushalya Mandal and Shri Ranjit Majhi for their efforts towards practicing and promoting natural farming.

A total of ten stalls depicting the overview of the Institute and its divisional activities, technologies in agriculture & allied sectors for adoption and commercialization, besides dedicated stalls of entrepreneurs adopting CIARI technologies, SHGs selling organic products and Institute Technology Management Unit are open for the visiting farmers during the two days mela.

Earlier, the Director, ICAR-CIARI, Dr. E. B. Chakurkar welcomed the gathering and briefed about the activities of the Institution. The programme concluded with vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Y Ramakrishna, Head KVK and was coordinated by Dr Jai Sundar, i/c Head, Animal Science Division, ICAR-CIARI.