

Beat: News

## Prime Minister Inaugurates Sikkim Organic Festival 2016

### Addresses Plenary Session

Gangtok, Sikkim, India, 19.01.2016, 18:43 Time

**USPA NEWS** - The Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi addressing the National Conference on Sustainable Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, in Gangtok on January 18, 2016.

Addresses Plenary Session Of National Conference On Sustainable Agriculture And Farmers Welfare

The Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi inaugurated the Sikkim Organic Festival 2016, and addressed the Plenary Session of the National Conference on Sustainable Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, at Gangtok in Sikkim on January 18.

Five presentations on reports of different groups of State Agriculture Ministers, Agriculture Production Commissioners and Agriculture Secretaries were made to the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister digitally launched the logo of "Sikkim Organic." He launched three new Orchid species developed in Sikkim.

The Prime Minister handed over to the Chief Minister of Sikkim, Mr. Pawan Chamling, two commendations for its journey towards total organic farming. He also handed over commendations for two districts of Sikkim for achieving 100 percent coverage of soil health cards.

In his address, the Prime Minister paid homage to former Governor of Sikkim, Mr. Rama Rao.

He praised Sikkim Chief Minister Mr. Pawan Chamling for his vision of welfare for farmers and tribes. He credited this vision for the development that the State is witnessing. He said the welfare and development issues raised by the Chief Minister would be looked into by the Union Government.

The Prime Minister said he is in Sikkim as the guest of the farmers of the State. He said the deliberations during the Conference had set the tone for a new holistic vision for the country's agriculture. He said all States could pick up the relevant parts from the presentations, which he said, should be remembered as "Sikkim Declaration."

The Prime Minister described Sikkim as an example of resolve despite difficulties and struggle, towards organic agriculture. He said today the whole world had recognised this effort of the farmers of Sikkim. He said the winds of this organic effort would now spread across the country.

The Prime Minister recalled the recent CoP-21 meeting in Paris, where the idea of "back to basics" had been raised forcefully. He said Sikkim has already achieved that feat of living in harmony with nature, and is therefore a model of development which also protects nature.

The Prime Minister complimented Sikkim for Gangtok being rated as the 10th cleanest city in a survey conducted by the Government of India.

The Prime Minister exhorted States to identify a district, or even a block, to convert to a 100 percent organic area. This he said, would catalyse the process in other parts of the State.

Referring to the recently announced crop insurance scheme, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, the Prime Minister said the scheme had instilled confidence among farmers, and efforts should be made to increase coverage of insurance.

The Prime Minister said farmers have to be motivated for schemes such as soil health card. He said a network of soil laboratories should come up across the country, and even school labs could be used during summer holiday months for this purpose.

The Prime Minister said there was need for special products such as Kisan Mobile Phone, which catered to the special needs and requirements of farmers. He said perhaps Start-ups could take a lead in this direction.

He reiterated his suggestion for a small amount of fruit juice to be mixed with aerated drinks. He said organic exports would receive a huge boost with the building of an airport in Sikkim. He said the vision behind rural roads was also to connect agricultural produce with markets. He said tree plantation and animal husbandry should also become an integral part of farming activities.

The Prime Minister suggested that a digital online platform of progressive farmers should be developed in each State.

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