

**GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ITANAGAR**

PRESS RELEASE

Governor highlights potentials of the State in international symposium

The Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Shri JP Rajkhowa inaugurated an International Symposium on Herbal Sweetener, 'Sweet Revolution-Stevia, a Boon to Diabetics' organised by the Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab in collaboration with Industry Green Valley Stevia, Banga, in its University Campus on 21st April 2016. Large number of representatives from business houses, researchers, academicians, NGOs, farmers and entrepreneurs attended the symposium.

In his inaugural address, the Governor said that since the inception of human civilization man has been searching for food which can keep him healthy and active. In this modern era of research and technology this futile search still continues to discover novel herbal drugs and alternate source of nutritional supplements. One such promising plant which has successfully cleared all the tests of nutritional benefits, medicinal properties, environmental and consumption safety is the perennial, multipurpose, plant 'Stevia'. It is very good news for diabetics and health conscious people as also the entrepreneurs to make 'Stevia based' sugar free tablets, sachets, powder, liquid solution etc. It will enable them to enjoy all sweet foods of their choice without any fear of increasing their blood sugar level.

While calling for commercial production of Stevia, the Governor said that being an agricultural State and also having witnessed many revolutions relating to agricultural development, Punjab must take a lead in cultivation, processing and marketing of Stevia and its products.

Informing that Stevia Cultivation is also done in a place called Rani, near Guwahati in Assam, where, it is known as 'Mitha Pat' or Sweet Leaf, the Governor said that it is an incredibly sweet herb, obtained by a natural selective breeding process of the sweetest Mitha Pat parent plants. The sweetener, extracted from the plants, is 300 times sweeter than sugar. The fresh leaves have a nice liquorice taste. Many different uses of Mitha Pat are already well-known: as table sugar, in soft drinks, pastry, pickles, tobacco products, candy, jam, yogurt, chewing gum, sorbets, etc. The dried leaves of Mitha Pat are about 40 times sweeter than sugar. Mitha Pat are antibacterial, anti fungal, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, anti-viral, anti-yeast, cardio tonic, diuretic, hypoglycemic and hence a boon to diabetic people, hypotensive, tonic, and vasodilator. He also informed that gathering of success story of Shri Pankaj Kalita, a software professional, who got attracted to Stevia farming. He informed that Shri Kalita started promoting organic farming of Stevia over an area of about fifty areas or so through 'Buy back Arrangement' with farmers. He has also started making 'Stevia Green Tea' by blending Stevia with Green Tea and receiving excellent market response. In Japan today, Stevia based sugar substitute has captured about 50% of the market for Sugar Free' preparations, he further informed.

Taking the opportunity, the Governor invited researchers to come to Arunachal Pradesh and take up trials for its production. He assured that pristine land will be made available and necessary assistance will be provided. As it has been successful in Assam, the production of Stevia will be successful in sub tropical areas of Arunachal Pradesh bordering Assam also, he opined.

Besides Arunachal Pradesh with barely 5% fertilizer consumption can be made an organic hub for Stevia and other such high paying cash crops including horticultural plants. Only the certification procedure should be simplified and affordable to the common farmer, he pointed.

The Governor commended that Lovely Professional University, Phagwara and Industry Green Valley Stevia, Banga for organising the symposium thereby providing an important

common platform to the industry, researchers, academicians, NGOs, farmers and most importantly entrepreneurs to discuss on various issues and challenges. He said that such joint initiative by Academic institutions and Industries has always benefited all, in term of products and production, employment and entrepreneurship. It has provided alternative means and solution to any issue. And at the end it has always enormously given boost to the country's economy.

The Governor called upon other Universities and Business Houses to emulate such initiatives so that they too contribute towards Nation building and strengthen Prime Minister's 'Make in India' mission'.

The Governor also congratulated Shri RPS Gandhi a progressive farmer, who has been awarded for "stevia farming promotion" by the State Government of Punjab and also given National Award in 2014 & 15.

Addressing the large number of representatives from industries and business on the occasion, who were attending the symposium, the Governor highlighted on the potentials of the State of Arunachal Pradesh. He said that Arunachal Pradesh is on the path of development and will become the power house of the Nation in next decade or so, with an estimated capacity of 55,000 MW of hydel power. It also has immense potential for tourism. He further informed that it has adopted the state Public Private Partnership Policy, paving the way for private investment in various sectors. The policy has opened up the gates for development of various infrastructures both physical and social in the State through much-needed infusion of resources and managerial capability from the private sector in tandem with the overall vision of the State government.

While highlighting on the education sector of the State and policy adopted by the State Government setting up institutions of higher and technical education under the PPP mode, the Governor invited the Lovely Professional University for inter university activities, like exchange programmes of teachers and students, guest faculties, joint researches etc. He said that such initiative will definitely help the students in learning about their peers in your University and vice versa. Exchange programme for the teaching faculty will engrain better teaching methods, he added.

The symposium was organised to bring industry, researchers, academicians, NGOs, farmers and entrepreneurs on a common platform and discuss on importance and benefits of 'Stevia' for health, its farming, product development and international trade. The recommendations made at Symposium will be forwarded to policy makers. The symposium is part of the University effort to protect and boost India's traditional home remedies from Ayurveda.

PRO to Governor
Arunachal Pradesh
ITANAGAR, April 22, 2016