

ICAR-CIARI Inaugurates Dweep Agro-Eco Walk and KisanMela



SRI VIJAYA PURAM, MAR 18/— ICAR-CIARI, with its KVKs, inaugurated the Dweep Agro-Eco Walk, an agro-eco-tourism initiative at its Horticulture Farm in Sippighat, and the two-day KisanMela-cum-

Exhibition at its Garacharma farm on March 18th, 2025, at the Mela ground within the Garacharma Research Complex. Dr. Chandra Bhushan Kumar, IAS, Chief Secretary of the Andaman and Nicobar Administration, inaugurated the Dweep Agro-Eco Walk in the presence of Ms. Pallavi Sarkar, IAS, Secretary of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. The tree planting of coffee trees was also carried out by the Chief Secretary and the Secretary of Agriculture at the Horticulture Farm in Sippighat.

During his inaugural address, the Chief Secretary praised the contributions of ICAR-CIARI in advancing technology development and transfer in the fields of Agriculture, Horticulture, Livestock, and Fisheries. He emphasized that agriculture is the cornerstone of India's economy, referencing an old adage that prioritizes farming over employment. He also pointed out the challenges urban residents face when establishing small kitchen gardens, noting the significant effort

required managing diseases and climate conditions. This raises concerns about the difficulties faced by large-scale farmers, who need technical support from research institutions to avoid substantial losses that

could impact both the farmers and the broader community.

The Chief Secretary also praised the agro-eco walk initiative at the Sippighat farm and emphasized that more focus should be given to branding the quality of organic produce for better market acceptance and tourism potential. He further added that with good coordination between ICAR-CIARI and the development department, more technological benefits would reach island farmers, contributing to the island's economic growth. The Chief Secretary observed that many farmers in the islands tend to focus solely on cultivating arecanut, which is less susceptible to climate variations and requires minimal effort, as opposed to more labor-intensive crops like paddy, spices, and vegetables. He also underscored the critical role of food processing, branding, and packaging in increasing farmers' profits in the islands. He urged ICAR-CIARI and local administrations to

collaborate for the benefit of island farmers and

advocated for more events like KisanMela to enhance farmers' knowledge and skills.

The Chief Secretary visited all the stalls and interacted with scientists, expressing his satisfaction with the technologies showcased that have the potential to enhance farmers' incomes.

A total of 22 stalls, including technological displays from ICAR-CIARI, the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, NABARD, SBI, SHGs, PPVFRA, and private firms, were set up. Approximately 250 farmers, farm women, and schoolchildren participated in the program.

Dr. E. B. Chakurkar, Director of ICAR-CIARI, commenced the event by extending a warm welcome and providing an overview of the institute's mission, highlighting its relevance to farmers, youth, and other stakeholders in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep. During the event, six farmers were felicitated for their successful implementation of agricultural technologies and entrepreneurial achievements, representing three districts.

Dr. Jai Sunder, Head of the Animal Science Division, delivered the vote of thanks, while Dr. Pooja Bohra, Senior Scientist, coordinated the event.