

Taku seeks ASSOCHAM help to tap vast Arunachal potential

*** ASSOCHAM to hold workshop-cum-exhibition: Dr Tyagi**



Pic: Mana Gona

By Taba Yal
ITANAGAR | Jul 27 | Tax & Excise Parliamentary Secretary Taku today exhorted ASSOCHAM to conduct a survey in Arunachal Pradesh to identify high production areas and find out sellers-buyers meeting points to help farmers get remunerative prices for their produce.

In his inaugural address to an Associated Chamber of Commerce & Industry of India and Arunachal Chamber of Commerce & Industries (ACCI) collaborative workshop on "Linking Startup's and SME's in Food Processing with Government Schemes & Markets", he advocated to setup networking between national buyers through Arunachal Pradesh Horticultural Produce Marketing & Processing Board

(APHPM&PB) to benefit the producers and expedite formation of North East Region Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium. Instead of developing this state, previous central Govts allowed it to serve as a buffer zone against China after 1962 China war, Taku said, adding that Arunachal carved a niche for itself in national food production canvas with a new thrust to

agriculture-horticulture sector and won Krishi Karman Commendation Award for four consecutive years. He attributed this success to implementation of various schemes besides CM's Agri-Mechanization Programme and National Food security Mission.

Arunachal is India's highest kiwi producer with more than 4,500 tonnes annual production and APHPM&PB was instrumental in producing kiwi wine while large size cardamom production, an initiative of National Youth Project, has not only made many farmers of Angaw district, located along China border, *lakhparis* but is sold at double the rate in South Indian markets, he informed.

However, state's indigenous tribal people adopt traditional cultivation practices and sell their products at throw away prices for lack of food processing knowledge for value addition, Taku said and hoped that this event would herald a new era for safe farmers.

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Buyer-seller meet requisite to develop food processing in Arunachal

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Tapuk was addressing an awareness workshop of ASSOCHAM on "Linking Startup's and SME's in Food Processing with Government Schemes & Markets" at Banquet Hall here. The workshop is organized collaboratively with NABARD, Ministry of Food Processing Industries Government of India, APEDA, North



Eastern Council and Arunachal Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Instead of developing this state, previous central governments allowed it to serve as a buffer zone against China after 1962 China war, Tapuk said, adding that Arunachal carved a niche for itself in national food production canvas with a new thrust to agriculture-horticulture sector and won Krishna Karman Commenda-

tion Award for four consecutive years. He attributed this success to implementation of various central and state sponsored schemes besides Chief Minister's Agri-Mechanization Programme and National Food Security Mission.

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producing kiwi wine while large size cardamom production, an initiative of National Youth Project, has not only made many farmers of Anjaw district, located along China border, lakhpatis but is sold at double the rate in South Indian markets,' he informed. But state's innocent tribal people adopt traditional cultivation practices and sell their products at throw away prices for lack of food processing knowledge for value addition, Tapuk said and hoped that this event would herald a new era for the state's farmers.

Highlighting importance of age-old indigenous food processing technology closely linked to state's culture, Rajiv Gandhi University Vice Chancellor Prof Tamo Mibang hinted at present trend of switching over from traditional boiled food to processed and packed foods. As none can survive without food, he exhorted the ASSOCHAM to recognise indigenous technology that could generate lot of employment while catering to the market needs by taping the vast scope. Expressing deep concern that many Arunachalee youth, even recommended by lawmakers, come for multi-tasking staff contingency job at a very low wage, state's agriculture secretary Azimul Haque said that the state and central governments have been offering huge scopes to turn entrepreneurs instead of looking for white colour jobs.

He stressed on correlating state's lot of opportunities in agri-horticulture sector and many unemployed youth to find a lasting solution. Terming Arunachal a happening state almost offering loan with no interest, he said that with huge but growing markets, the youth could earn decent livelihood if take up cash crop production.

Highlighting the abundant opportunities with state's suitable agro-climatic condition, mission for integrated development of horticulture director Tage Tatung, said that with change of lifestyle people prefer processed foods which demands setting up of processed industries. Arunachal by default an organic state and its productivity is on the rise though only 1,13,000 hectares land of total 18 lakh hectares are under cultivation, he said.

NABARD has been promoting state farmers with few of its total 36 activities related to agri-horti sector, said its GM Dr Gyanendra Mani adding that like India, Arunachal farmers have also reached a take off stage to explore huge scope to boost state's rural economy. The need of the hour is to tap the available local materials for commercial production beyond self consumption and establish forward and backward linkage and encash the nature's gift, he emphatically said. Terming food processing 5th largest industry in India, industry director Taru Talo said it being largest employment generator contributes 8% to national GDP. While the MSME is the engine for economic growth, PM Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' and state CM's Swavalamban Yojana offering loan ranging from Rs 10 lakh to Rs one crore with subsidy to intending entrepreneurs are giving additional thrust to agri-horti sector, he said and urged the participants to avail the opportunities. ASSOCHAM senior director Dr Om S Tyagi said that the event intended to bring mass awareness about the huge agri-horticulture scopes which could turn into a game changer for the state.

Announcing that Arunachal has been on atop ASSOCHAM radar, he announced that a three-day workshop-cum-exhibition involving the farmers would be conducted here in October-November next to give a special emphasis on the larger interest of the farmers to the thunderous applause of the gathering.

