

Gangtok, November 4: (IPR) A conference 'The Organic Movement: The Way Forward' was held at Chintan Bhawan today amidst presence of distinguished visiting delegates from leading global Organic bodies. The conference was graced by Chief Minister Mr Pawan Chamling as the chief guest.

Mr Markus Arbenz, Director, IFOAM, Germany, made a brief presentation on the world wide organic development trend. He also highlighted the Organic 3.0 and also laid thrust on the role of organic agriculture in addressing global challenges. He commended the organic initiatives of Sikkim and particularly praised the vision of Chief Minister Mr Chamling in spearheading the organic movement.

Mr Joseph Wilhelm, Donor, One World Award, and Founder Director Rapunzel, Germany, spoke about the vision of the One World Award and also highlighted international trading and marketing opportunity and trends.

Ms Gila Kriegisch, Senior Manager, Marketing, Rapunzel, gave a brief highlighted on the activities carried out by the Hand in Hand Project of Rapunzel.

Ms Martha Jean Shamiso Mungwashu, One World Award 2017 winner from Zimbabwe shared her experiences from the field visits carried out by the team on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of November. She shared that she was particularly impressed with the way people have dedicated themselves to organic agriculture and take pride in it.

Mr Ashwin Paranjpe, Faculty, United World College, Pune, made a presentation on Community Supported Agriculture and shared how the model is being successfully implemented by his team back in Pune especially through building relationship among producers and consumers.

Mr Bernward Geier, Chairman and General Coordinator of One World Award and Director COLABORA, Germany shared a short video on OWA 2017 and spoke on the contribution of the winners in Organic movements.

Chief Minister Mr Pawan Chamling in his address stated that the visit of the distinguished delegates to Sikkim is a coming together of individuals and institutions passionate about the cause for an organic world and a matter of great pride to share the work that Sikkim has carried out in the field of organic agriculture. He stated that the policy decisions on environmental protection taken by the Government since 1995 have shown the desired result with Sikkim becoming the only fully organic state in the country. "A large number of green initiatives were taken up and taking the decision to convert Sikkim into an organic state was a natural progression of our environment friendly development agenda," he stated.

The Chief Minister further that the efforts of the Government of Sikkim have created a ripple effect across the Indian States and the idea of organic farming has received full emphasis in India, never known in the past. "The Hon'ble Prime Minister has been pleased to mention Sikkim numerous times as a role model in organic farming across the nation, while calling upon all other states to take up organic farming, especially the Himalayan states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and the seven North Eastern States," he added.

Mr Chamling further stated that Sikkim is pleased to host the distinguished global organic leaders who are united in the common concern and commitment to take the organic movement further and wider. “He added that it is crucial for governments in different parts of the world to commit and play a leadership role in creating a safer and healthier world through the organic movement. Especially at this critical juncture, governments have to step in and take responsibility. In the face of a serious threat posed by our consumerist world and chemical laden production systems, our reaction has been very feeble and insufficient. It is urgent to adopt a kinder form of agriculture and governments play a critical role to enable this,” he maintained.

Further, he stated that to safeguard the earth and to save humanity from the looming catastrophe, we must adopt environmental-friendly and sustainable lifestyles to protect and safeguard the environment.

In his concluding note, he stated that the State is now entering into the second phase of organic movement to carry out large scale production of organic produce and to create value-addition to our products, establish a global supply chain and strengthen export mechanisms in the State. He urged the distinguished guests to lend their expertise and valuable advice to strengthen the organic movement in the state of Sikkim and across the nation.



