

## Administrator hails efforts to cultivate 'Noni' plant

Port Blair, Oct. 17

The Administrator, A & N Islands, Lt. General (Retd.) MM Lakhera has expressed his happiness on the launch of the commercial cultivation of *Morinda Citrifolia* (Noni) plant; which according to him, is an extremely forward looking step, to improve the economic conditions of our farmers, especially those who have been hit by the tsunami disaster.

In a message, which was read in absentia today during the launch of the commercial cultivation programme of Noni to trig the Administrator congratulated CARI and others involved and expressed the hope that the efforts of scientific community involved in this project will strengthen the wealth of the farming community of the islands.

Dr. Mangla Rai, the Director General and Secretary, DARE and Dr. Gautam Kalloo, Deputy Director General (Horticulture ICAR) New Delhi, in their messages also congratulated all involved in the launch of the commercial cultivation.

## Contract farming of *Morinda Citrifolia* launched Noni medicinal plant cultivation in a big way by isles farmers on card



Dev. Commr. releasing the brochure on Noni at the launch of contract farming of this medicinal plant.

Staff Reporter  
Port Blair, Oct 17

For the first time in these islands, especially in the Agriculture sector contract farming has been introduced which will enable the farmers here to sell their produces directly to a private firm in the mainland. To make this project possible, the Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) took the initiative and formally launched today the contract farming on *Morinda* (Noni) cultivation involving farmers, A&N Administration, CARI and M/s Health India Ltd. (HIL) Chennai, as partners.

A function was organized to materialize the project at the conference hall of CARI, which was graced by the Development Commissioner, Shri Janak Digal, Dr. Kirti

Singh, Ex Chairman Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board (ASRB) New Delhi, Dr. P I Peter, Chairman, Health India Laboratories, Chennai and a large number of farmers mostly women.

Speaking as the chief guest on the occasion, Shri Janak Digal informed that after tsunami 4000 hect of land has submerged under sea water of which 1300 hect are in South Andaman alone. Administration plans to start shrimp and fish culture in the sea water ingressed areas and in the intermediate period, high value agriculture, especially in horticulture, is being promoted. The launch of the morinda plants is a step in this direction, he added.

Shri Digal said that High

Value Agriculture covers small area but it fetches reasonable good profit from the cultivation. He urged the farmers to take up organic farming, which, according to him, holds good marketing prospect. He also suggested for taking up schemes i.e organic manure manufacturing. Shri Diga also released a pamphlet having information in Hindi about Noni Cultivation.

In his presidential address, Dr. Kirti Singh, urged the farmers to take up inter-cropping during the cultivation of Noni so that they can earn from both ways. He also requested the Agriculture Department to work towards the promotion and extension of the research works done by the CARI. (Contd. on page 8)

### Noni medicinal...

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Shri Singh urged the CARI to bring the pamphlets about Noni cultivation in different languages for involving more people in the cultivation programme.

In his address on the occasion, Prof. Dr. P I Peter said HIL belongs to an organization namely Empower India Movement, a social action movement, to educate the people to live a quality and healthy life. Referring to the Contract farming, Dr. Peter said that it is 100 percent by bank guarantee for 10 years at a pre-determined price. HIL will provide Rs.10,000 per tonn for the produce of Noni.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director, CARI, Dr. R C Srivastava said that already 8000 Noni plants have been distributed among 112 farmers registered besides Self Help Groups. CARI is providing quality saplings at the rate of Rs.8 of which Rs.5 is contributed by HIL and the farmers are to pay only Rs.3 per sapling.

Shri Noni Gopal Das, a farmer who is already growing Noni since last year, informed that Noni cultivation is seen as a big boon as there is no hard work in this and at a later stage good earning is expected.

The Director, Agriculture, Shri M A Salam, in his address, said that with the inception of the Medicinal Plant Board Society in 2002, the promotion of medicinal plant was discussed, which, he said, is easily cultivable in coastal areas on every island.

Some farmers, as a token measures, signed on the agreement bond with HIL in the presence of the dignitaries. Shri Sanjeev Halder was the youngest of the lot who has taken the plant for its cultivation Hut Bay.

Shri Chaman Behari, a farmer from Sippighat informed that about 40-50 farmers of that area have registered themselves in this project, which, according to him, is an easy one as once the tree grows and yield starts then there is no fear about its damage.

Earlier, Dr. D R Singh, Sr. Scientist (Hort) welcomed the gathering, while Dr. TVRS Sharma, Principal Scientist, CARI proposed the vote of thanks.