

**MINUTES OF THE 2nd MEETING OF GUWAHATI SPICE DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY (GSDA)**

The 2nd meeting of the Guwahati Spice Development Agency (GSDA) was held at 5.00 pm on 8th October 2015 at the conference hall of the Chief Secretary of Assam, Secretariat of Assam, Dispur.

Shri. VK Pipersenia, I A S, Chief Secretary, Govt of Assam & Chairperson, GSDA presided over the meeting.

Accepting the invitation from GSDA, Dr A.Jayathilak, IAS, Chairman Spices Board, participated in the meeting.

The following members and co opted members were present,

1. Shri V B Pyarelal IAS, Additional Chief Secretary and APC, Govt of Assam
2. Shri AmlanBaruah, IAS, Secretary (Agriculture), Govt of Assam
3. Smt. Anita Karn, Director (Plantations), Ministry of Commerce and Industry
4. Shri Timothy Das Hanse, Director of Horticulture, Assam
5. Dr K Borkahat, Director of Agriculture, Assam
6. Shri B R Khakhlary, Asst DGFT, Guwahati
7. Shri GautamGoswami, Manager, Amalgamated Plantations Pvt. Ltd
8. Shri JeetanSarfarongsa, GINFED, Diphu
9. Shri Pankaj Hazarika, Farmer
10. Shri Deepak Paul, Aroma P Ltd
11. Shri Shahandaz Hussain, Vista Agritech Pvt Ltd
12. Shri S Bhattacharjee, Executive Director, NERAMAC
13. SmtSunita Rai, Assistant General Manager, APEDA
14. Smt. Swati Karki, Manager, NABARD
15. Shri S SSingh, Chairman, AGVB
16. Shri MdMisbahuddin, Chairman, Langa Regulated Marketing Committee
17. Shri H A Vijaya, Deputy Director, Spices Board

The following members were absent

1. Dr Hatobin Mai, OSD to the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh & Member, Spices Board
2. Dr Homey Cheriyan, Director, Directorate of Areccanut and Spices



3. Dr. GirindraNath Hazarika, Director of Research, Assam Agricultural University
4. Ms Leena Saikia, Frontal Agritech Pvt Ltd
5. Shri Vivek, Balajee Trading Co. Ltd
6. Shri Chandan Bora
7. Shri P Banerjea, COO, Amalgamated Plantations
8. Dr. H.C. Bhattacharya, Director, Extension Education, Assam Agricultural University

The following officers of Govt of Assam, Spices Board and GINFED were also present

1. Shri K Talukdar, Jt. Secretary (Agriculture), Govt of Assam
2. Dr. T N Deka, Scientist C, Spices Board
3. Shri Nithin Joe, Assistant Director, Spices Board
4. Shri SimantaSaikia, Senior Field Officer, Spices Board
5. Shri Deepak Kumar Hazarika, GINFED, Diphu

At the outset, Shri V K Pipersenia IAS, Chairperson GSDA welcomed all the members who attended, specially the Chairman, Spices Board and Director (Plantations), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt of India, New Delhi.

ITEM NO.1: CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 1ST MEETING OF GSDA HELD AT THE CONFERENCE HALL OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY, DISPUR ON 31ST AUGUST 2015

GSDA confirmed the minutes of the 1st meeting held on 31st August 2015.

ITEM NO.2: ACTION TAKEN REPORT ON THE DECISIONS OF THE FIRST GSDA MEETING HELD ON 31ST AUGUST 2015.

The Agency noted the status of approach papers submitted. It was informed that the approach papers on Farmer Producer Companies and Status of present research activities and prospective area for research in Spices are under preparation. The Chairperson appreciated all the members for their efforts, particularly for the quick and prompt creation of the webpage.

ITEM NO.3:ADDRESS BY SMT ANITA KARN, DIRECTOR (PLANTATIONS), MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Smt Anita Karn, Director (Plantations), addressing the gathering informed about the Ministry of Commerce and Industry's keen interest in promoting the



development of spices in North East, especially in Assam. She opined that post-harvest processing and value addition of spices are most important and a work plan for the ten focus spices has been given to all the State Governments for their reference and inclusion in the State Government schemes. She pointed out that the lack of infrastructure and transportation facilities are the major constraints for the development of spices from North East which restricts the entry of new market players. It was informed by Smt Anita Karn that a scheme for direct procurement of spices from the farmers and reselling it after processing and value addition is under consideration. The Ministry of Commerce gives due importance to the development of organic spices from North East.

ITEM NO.4: PRESENTATION OF DRAFT ACTION PLAN FOR GSDA - SUGGESTIONS & DISCUSSIONS

Shri Nithin Joe, Assistant Director, Spices Board presented the draft action plan for GSDA and the following suggestions were made by the Chairperson and members of GSDA.

(i) The Chairperson suggested promoting intercropping of Pepper in all the tea gardens of Assam so that it will provide the tea industry one more source of revenue.

(ii) The Chairperson asked Spices Board to prepare a DPR for setting up of Spices Park at Kathiatoli, Nagaon, Assam in the 15 Ha land owned by the Department of Horticulture, Assam (Field Trial Station)] and to submit it in the next meeting of GSDA

It was also suggested to look into the feasibility of setting up of spices parks in the following locations.

- A. Jogighopa on Land owned by Ashok Paper Mill
- B. Tinsukia
- C. Sootea, Sonitpur District

It was suggested to develop the Spices Park under PPP mode or by pooling together funds available under RIDF and Ministry of DONER. The nurseries can also be established in the Spices Park.

(iii) The Chairperson enquired about the possibility of setting up of quality standardization 'Spice Mark' similar to AGMARK which helps the consumer to

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identify the quality of the spices. The Board's officials informed about the existing Indian Spices Logo and the Chairperson called for generating awareness and promotion of the Indian Spices Logo for both export and domestic markets.

(iv) The Chairperson suggested to modify the action plan to have a target groupwise approach by segregating the needs of the various stakeholders of the industry.

(v) Shri Gautam Goswami of Amalgamated Plantations Pvt Ltd presented a brief on setting up of pepper nurseries. While appreciating his presentation, members asked about the costing for establishment of pepper nurseries and to suggest a plan for development and cultivation of black pepper, addressing all the probable constraints.

(vi) The Chairperson stressed the need to promote certified organic cultivation rather than sticking on to the organic by default.

(vii) Smt Sunita Rai, Assistant General Manager, APEDA informed that Export Development Fund (EDF) scheme of APEDA provides financial assistance to the eight north eastern states which can be availed by the entrepreneurs of the spices sector. It was also informed by Smt Rai that APEDA has set up two common processing facilities in Assam; (a) Amingaon Export Promotion Industrial Park (EPIP) in Kamrup Metro district, (b) a pack house in Karimganj, which can be utilized by interested stakeholders.

ITEM NO.5: ADDRESS BY DR A. JAYATHILAK IAS, CHAIRMAN SPICES BOARD

Dr A Jayathilak IAS, Chairman, Spices Board, referring to the modus operandi adopted by the Pepper replanting and rejuvenation scheme implemented in Kerala under NHM, suggested the possibility of certification of private nurseries in Assam for the production of good quality planting materials of pepper and suggested that certified private nurseries can be the right solution to the lack of adequate production materials. Chairman, Spices Board solicited the assistance of Department of Agriculture and Horticulture in translating the publicity materials on Spices to Assamese and other local languages. It was informed by Dr A Jayathilak that the budget allocation to GSDA for 2015-2016 is yet to be finalized by Ministry of Commerce.



The Chairman, Spices Board explained the novel initiative of Spices Board for promotion of Spices through signature stalls and requested Govt. of Assam, to allot a suitable space for the setting up of 'Spices India' signature stall in Guwahati. It was also suggested that the existing schemes of Spices Board may be utilized for development of spices sector in Assam, particularly for programmes like

1. Farmers' training programmes/ exposure visits to South India
2. Buyer seller meets &
3. Participation in domestic/international trade fairs and exhibitions.

It was informed by Chairman that Spices Board proposes to conduct a buyer seller meet at Guwahati in January, 2016.

ITEM NO.6: REMARKS BY THE CHAIRPERSON

Chairperson, GSDA directed the Department of Horticulture to conduct a workshop on nursery management of Black Pepper inviting all the registered private nurseries in Assam and other stakeholders including small tea growers, tea planters, etc. Spices Board and Assam Gramin Vikas Bank were asked to give a presentation in the workshop on how they can assist the nursery owners in setting up of nurseries for the production of quality planting materials of Black Pepper. The Chairperson also pointed out the need to urge major tea producers in Assam to take up intercropping of Black Pepper in Tea Gardens.

The Chairman, GSDA appreciated the Board's novel initiative of establishing signature stalls for promotion of Indian spices and welcomed the suggestion of Chairman Spices Board to set up a signature stall for promotion of Indian Spices in Assam. He expressed the willingness of Govt. of Assam to arrange a suitable land/building, as per the requirements of Spices Board. He said that the Agriculture Department may provide some space in the campus of Department of Agriculture at Sixth Mile, Guwahati with frontage to G.S Road and instructed the Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Assam to process the matter accordingly.



The Chairperson remarked that the activities of the SDA shall include development of infrastructure and vast promotional activities to encourage farmers and entrepreneurs to take up the Spices Sector.

It was decided to send 100 farmers from Assam to South India on an exposure visit to acquaint with the best practices adopted in the Spices Sector. Department of Horticulture was asked to identify the farmers in consultation with Amalgamated Plantations Pvt Ltd and Deputy Director, Spice Board, Guwahati Office and also to make necessary arrangements for the visit. Assam Gramin Vikas Bank was instructed to depute a few of its officials in the study tour. Spices Board was assigned the responsibility for coordinating various stakeholder meetings and study classes in South India. Also, Department of Horticulture was asked to arrange for a delegation of officials from Govt. of Assam for an exposure visit to Processing facilities for spices, E-auction centre, IISR, etc. in South India.

Assam Gramin Vikas Bank was requested to promote entrepreneurship in the Spices Sector by creating Spice Development Cells in its offices. Spices Board, Govt of Assam and Amalgamated Plantations were also requested to extend all possible support in the areas of production, processing, value addition and marketing of spices.

It was informed by the Chairperson that spices will be covered under the fruits and vegetables category and shall be made exempt from Cess. The discussions and decision taken in the meeting is summarised as follows:

Tasks and Responsibilities assigned

- Approach paper on status of present research activities and perspective area for research in spices:- **Dr G N Hazarika, Director (Research), Assam Agricultural University**
- Approach paper on formation of farmer producing companies :- **Amalgamated Plantations Pvt Ltd**
- Revised action plan for GSDA;- **Spices Board**
- Presentation of the Approach paper on production management of spices and making available quality planting materials - **Department of Horticulture, Assam**



- Information on costing for setting up of pepper nurseries& strategic plan for development of cultivation of Black Pepper :- **Amalgamated Plantations Pvt Ltd**
- Translation of contents in the web link of GSDA and other promotional literature on Spices into Assamese:- **Department of Horticulture, Assam**
- Workshop on nursery management of Black Pepper:-**Department of Horticulture, Assam**
- DPR for setting up of Spices Park at Kathiatoli, Nagaon, Assam :- **Spices Board**
- Farmers exposure visit to South India:- **Department of Horticulture, Assam, Amalgamated Plantations Pvt Ltd & Spices Board**

ITEM NO.7: CO OPTING MEMBERS

The Chairperson instructed to co opt the following person as member, GSDA

1. Shri Absar Ali Hazarika, CARD, Guwahati

On behalf of GSDA, the Chairperson thanked all members for their active participation and inputs. The meeting concluded at 6.30 pm with vote of thanks from the Chairman.



Chairman, Guwahati, SDA
&
Chief Secretary, Assam.

Copy to :

11 All members

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Member Secretary
GHS City SDA
&

Deputy Director, Spice Board , GHS

Copy to : All Members.