

Exhibition-cum-Kissan Mela Held at Drass; DC Calls for Transforming Drass into an Agriculture Hub.

DRASS, AUGUST 22: The Exhibition-cum-Kissan Mela (2026–27) was held in the Complex of Drass Tourist Dak Bungalow today by the Agriculture Department with the objective of promoting modern agricultural practices, organic farming, local production and sustainable livelihood opportunities in the region. The event brought together farmers, officials, elected representatives, Self Help Groups and other stakeholders to showcase agricultural innovations and create awareness about various Government schemes and interventions.

Deputy Commissioner Drass, Imteeaz Kacho (JKAS) was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The event was also attended by Superintendent of Police Ishtyaq Kacho (JKPS); Chief Agriculture Officer, Kargil, Ashiq Hussain Basharat; Chief Horticulture Officer, Kargil, Ali Raza; Deputy Director, Agriculture, Mohammad Iqbal, Hon'ble LAHDC Councillors Abdul Samad and Abdul Wahid, officials of the Agriculture Department, progressive farmers, Self Help Groups and other stakeholders.

The programme commenced with the National Anthem followed by a colourful cultural programme and screening of a short documentary highlighting agriculture-related initiatives and opportunities. The exhibition was formally inaugurated by the Chief Guest through a ribbon-cutting ceremony in the presence of other dignitaries.

Various stalls displayed agricultural produce, traditional and modern farming tools, seeds, greenhouse concepts, kitchen gardening techniques, solar-based equipment and other agriculture-related interventions. The exhibition provided farmers with an opportunity to learn about government schemes, improved farming practices and modern technologies aimed at enhancing agricultural productivity and increasing farmers' incomes.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Commissioner appreciated the Agriculture Department's efforts in organising the programme and underscored the enormous agricultural potential of Drass District. He laid special emphasis on effective water management stating that available water resources must be scientifically and efficiently utilized to expand agricultural activities. He called for optimum utilization of cultivable land and encouraged farmers to transform unused and underutilized land into productive agricultural assets.

The Deputy Commissioner said that with sustained efforts, innovation and institutional support, Drass has the potential to emerge as an important agriculture hub. He encouraged farmers to focus on organic farming, quality seed production, vegetable cultivation, pea production, fruit cultivation and other crops suited to the climatic conditions of the region.

He further emphasized the need to promote progressive farmers and young achievers in agriculture, stating that greater youth participation can bring new ideas, technology and entrepreneurship into the farming sector. He also called for increased participation of women farmers and Self Help Groups, particularly in value addition, processing and local agricultural enterprises. Highlighting the importance of market linkages, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the need to establish stronger connections between local agricultural producers and institutional consumers, including the Army, which could provide farmers with a dependable market and create sustainable sources of income.

The Deputy Commissioner also called for strengthening local production to reduce dependence on agricultural commodities brought from outside the region. He said that agriculture, horticulture and allied sectors can play a significant role in improving livelihoods while ensuring the availability of fresh, nutritious and locally produced food. He further emphasized the need for promotion of milk and dairy products in Drass in the coming years and encouraged farmers to explore allied agricultural activities to diversify their sources of income and strengthen the rural economy. Further, he urged farmers to remain committed to their land, adopt scientific and sustainable agricultural practices, explore new avenues in agriculture and make full use of the schemes, subsidies and technical assistance being provided by the Agriculture Department.

Addressing the gathering, Hon'ble Councillor Ranbirpora expressed gratitude to the Agriculture Department for organizing the event and said that such exhibitions provide valuable information and new ideas to farmers. He stressed that agriculture should not remain confined to kitchen gardens and encouraged people to make productive use of their available land. He urged farmers to avail themselves of Government schemes, adopt greenhouse technology and combine traditional knowledge with modern scientific farming practices.

Hon'ble Councillor Bhimbat appreciated the role of the Agriculture Department in holding the exhibition in Drass and highlighted the growing potential of agriculture in the region. He noted that different varieties of vegetables are now being successfully cultivated in Drass and said that sustained efforts, proper technical guidance and improved infrastructure could further enhance agricultural production. He emphasized the need for developing new agricultural land, strengthening irrigation facilities, promoting greenhouse farming and kitchen gardening, and facilitating access to subsidized agricultural and solar equipment. He also stressed the importance of strengthening local production, including the cultivation and protection of the famous Drass zeera, mushroom cultivation and other high-value crops, so that agriculture can emerge as a stronger source of livelihood for local communities.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by the Deputy Director, Agriculture Department in honour of participating farmers, elected representatives, officials, Self Help Groups and all other stakeholders for their valuable contribution towards making the Exhibition-cum-Kissan Mela a grand success..

