

# ONE DISTRICT ONE PRODUCT (ODOP) MISSION OF CENTRE TAKES A GIANT TECHNOLOGY BOOST.

Relevant for: null | Topic: Important Schemes & Programmes of the Government

West Jaintia Hills today witnessed the first-of-its-kind Fly-Off Event to demonstrate the use of novel and innovative Drone/UAV technology for payload delivery, that could serve as a model of solving the 1st mile connectivity issues for Lakadong Turmeric farmers from the hinterland.

Lakadong Turmeric has been identified under The One District, One Product (ODOP) Initiative under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, as a product with excellent potential for growth and export for West Jaintia Hills.

ODOP partnered with AGNli Mission, one of the nine technology missions under the Prime Minister's Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council to identify Indian innovative technologies that can play a transformative role in the end-to-end processing of Lakadong Turmeric, starting with leveraging payload drones (UAVs) to transport the turmeric in large quantities.

Addressing the gathering at the event, Ms. Sumita Dawra, Additional Secretary, DPIIT said that this event was a first step towards showcasing the innovative solutions that can propel 1st mile connectivity while ushering in Industrial Revolution 4.0.

It may be noted that the Lakadong Turmeric from West Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya, one of the world's finest turmeric varieties with the highest curcumin content of 7-9% (in comparison to 3% or less in other varieties), is fast becoming a game changer in the economy of the district. The State of Meghalaya has applied for a Geographical Indication tag for Lakadong turmeric.

The percentage of curcumin and oleoresin content in turmeric determines the demand by the industry along with the price. India is the largest producer and exporter of turmeric (APEDA, 2019). India exported US\$ 236.5 million worth of turmeric in 2018 from US\$ 182.53 million in 2017. Turmeric is a positive crop; it improves health and is not water guzzling.

Highlighting the fact that despite India being the world's largest turmeric producer and exporter, turmeric imports had also been increasing, the Additional Secretary said that the major importers were the extraction and processing industries that require high curcumin and oleo resin.

In spite of the highest curcumin content and excellent potential for domestic sales and export, Lakadong turmeric faces severe market access issues due to the remoteness of the location, topography and terrain. Thus, buyers have to incur additional costs to transport the goods from the villages via local pick-up trucks till the major transporters' loading point. Additional costs of transportation and delays in the same act as barriers / disincentives for the buyer in the process of procurement.

The flyoff event would not only give a fillip to the mandate of the ODOP initiative but also leverage modern technology as a fundamental solution to overcome the bottleneck of transportation that acts as a barrier in realizing the optimal potential of this exceptional spice from Meghalaya, Ms. Dawra said.

In consonance with its mandate in April last year, the ODOP Team successfully facilitated the

trade of 13,136 kgs of sliced and dried Lakadong Turmeric to a large food processing industry in Ernakulam, Kerala in 2021. It may also be noted that under ODOP initiative, the price of Lakadong Turmeric has increased by Rs. 20, from Rs. 150 per Kg in the Year 2021 to Rs. 170 per Kg in 2022.

ODOP is a transformational step forward towards realizing the true potential of a district, fuelling economic growth and advancing the goal of Vocal for Local. Lauding the success of the ODOP team in pitching the highest curcumin content of Lakadong Turmeric as its Unique Selling Proposition, Ms. Dawra said that the team had succeeded in the creation of market linkages for 500+ plus farmers from Self-Help Groups and Co-operative Societies from 4 villages in West Jaintia Hills District.

Ms. Sumita Dawra said that under 'Lakadong Turmeric 2.0', new efforts were being planned to scale up procurements for sustainable sales for the harvest season of 2022 and the years to come. For the same, the ODOP team led buyer visits to Meghalaya in December 2021 wherein direct interactions at the farm level and buyer-seller meets were organized for representatives of interested buyers. These have ended in the finalization of procurement orders for over 25,000 kgs already with a plan to increase the same even further, subject to final negotiations this year, she added.

India produces 78 per cent of the world's turmeric, as per a reply given by the Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar in the Rajya Sabha on March 12, 2021. In the year 2018-19, turmeric production was 389 thousand tonnes, with area and productivity 246 thousand hectares and 5646.34 kg per hectare respectively.

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