

NOTE ON THE TREE GROWERS MELA 2012 INAUGURAL FUNCTION HELD ON 23.2.2012 AT INSTITUTE OF FOREST GENETICS AND TREE BREEDING, COIMBATORE

The Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, Coimbatore is organising Tree Growers Mela on 23rd and 24th February, 2012 at Coimbatore. It was inaugurated on 23rd February 2012 by Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent charge), Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. More than 1000 farmers from Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and palakkad District of Kerala participated in the mela. During the function she released publications brought out by IFGTB - The vision document of IFGTB, Proceedings of Tropical forest structure, function and services workshop, Proceedings of Casuarina Seminar, Book on Biofertilizers and Biomanures, cultivation guide on *Gmelina arborea*, Frankia, Vana Ariviyal a Tamil quarterly newsletter, Brochure on IFGTB in Hindi and an yield table for Casuarina. Hon'ble Minister also released two products, a biofertilizer developed by IFGTB and a pesticide HyACT based on plant formulations. She distributed awards to the staff of IFGTB who had done meritorious service.

She announced a grant of Rs. 1 crore to produce 15 lakhs of quality planting stock of Casuarina for supply to the 'Thane' cyclone affected farmers of Cuddalore, Villupuram and Puducherry areas and distributed seedlings to the farmers of these areas as a symbolic gesture of the launch of the programme. She declared IFGTB as an ENVIS Centre on the subject of Forest Genetic Resources and Tree Improvement.



She congratulated the ICFRE for remaining a stakeholder responsive organization, and suggested that these initiatives need to be sustained in the future. She stated that such functions should serve as an ideal forum to discuss and decide on the specific areas where research and development efforts will eventually enhance the farm income.

She announced that IFGTB will act as nodal agency for Forest Genetic Resource Management and eventually this would lead to the establishment of the National Bureau of Forest Genetics Resources. She also appreciated the efforts taken by IFGTB in preparing the country report for the State of World Forest Genetic Resources (SOW FGR) to be released by FAO in 2013. Thereafter the Hon'ble Minister laid the foundation stone for the Forest Genetic Resource Management Complex and the Extension Auditorium worth Rs. 4.60 crores for outreach programmes for farmers and other stakeholders.

Hon'ble Minister also declared open the Exhibition on Agroforestry and Farm Forestry Technologies, wherein more than 30 forestry research organizations, wood based industries, bio-manures and bio-fertilizers industries, farm equipments and implements, organic products, Irrigation agencies, Tree Growers, hitech nurseries involved in planting stock production, Self help groups, etc participated.

Dr. V.K. Bahuguna, IFS, Director General, Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education in his presidential



address highlighted the achievements of the ICFRE under the dynamic leadership of the Hon'ble Minister. He informed that the ICFRE has started implementing all its research activities oriented towards stakeholders needs and aimed at improving the livelihood of people. He congratulated IFGTB for organizing such an important event in the interest of farming community.



Dr. N. Krishnakumar, Director, IFGTB in his address highlighted the activities undertaken by the institute in reaching out to farmers and other stakeholders. He mentioned that one scientist has been assigned for each district of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, Andaman Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep to address the environmental and forestry issues related to those districts, besides the socioeconomic requirements.



K. Ravichandran, Head, Forest Economics and Extension division welcomed the Hon'ble Minister for Environment and Forests and the gathering. He underlined the importance of Tree Grower's Mela in bringing together a large number of farmers, wood-based industries and forestry research organizations on one platform which will help in understanding the issues related to tree farming and exchange of ideas and sharing of experiences.



T. P. Raghunath, Group Coordinator (Research) proposed the vote of thanks. More than 1000 farmers from TamilNadu, Puducherry and palakkad District of Kerala participated in the mela.

