

Fertilizers are source of several diseases; switch to organic farming, says Amit Shah

Shah said that the movement for organic farming has reached an important stage and cooperatives have an important role in making India the world's largest organic food producing country

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THE HINDU BUREAU



Union Home Minister Amit Shah during the signing of an MoU between National Co-operative Organic Limited and Uttarakhand Organic Commodity Board, in New Delhi on Friday. | Photo Credit: PTI

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah said on Friday that it has been proven now that chemicals present in fertilizers are the source of several health ailments such as hypertension, diabetes, thyroid and even cancer. He said organic farming was linked to the health of 140 crore Indians.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the National Co-operative Organics Limited (NCOL) and Uttarakhand Organic Commodity Board (UOCB) was signed in the presence of Mr. Shah. Minister of State for Cooperation, Krishna Pal Gurjar, Agriculture

and Farmers Welfare Minister, Uttarakhand, Ganesh Joshi and Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation, Ashish Kumar Bhutani, were present on the occasion.

Mr. Shah said that the movement for organic farming has reached an important stage and cooperatives have an important role in making India the world's largest organic food producing country.

He said there is awareness about organic products all over the world and there is a huge global market for the same. "When we increase India's share by tapping this market, the share of our farmers in the profitable business of organic products and their income also increases."

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"The chemicals that enter our body through the use of fertilizers cause many types of diseases. It also reduces the quality of the land, so much that in many States the land has started becoming as hard as cement, due to which the risk of floods has also increased. On the contrary, as my experience of organic farming since the past nine years shows, despite seven-inch rainfall this time, all water was absorbed by the ground. Organic farming increases groundwater level, production increases and the health of the consumer improves as well. Despite all these benefits, organic farming was not duly promoted," he said.

He said earlier there was no mechanism to check the quality of organic products and farmers did not get high prices and there was hesitation in using these products. "To solve this issue, the Modi government established the NCOL. Amul and NCOL together will establish a network of international level laboratories across the country which will examine both organic land and products. They will provide reliable organic products to consumers as 'Bharat' and 'Amul' brands," he said.

NCOL will ensure that the profit from organic products directly go to the bank accounts of the producing farmers. He stated that it is possible only in a cooperative set up. He said that in another two to three years, products of 'Bharat' brand will cover all types of vegetarian food. He said that the organic products of Bharat brand are reliable in terms of quality and organic property and are inexpensive as the motive of cooperatives is not making money. He said that organic rice, pulses, and wheat produced by the farmers will be purchased by the government.

He said that he aimed to shut down all fertilizer shops in Uttarakhand.