



DECCAN DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

101, Kishan Residency, Street No.5

Begumpet, Hyderabad – 500 016, Telangana, INDIA

Tel:+91-40-27764577,27764744, Telefax:+91-40-27764722

Email: ddshyderabad@gmail.com

Project: Pastapur, Zaheerabad – 502 220, Sangareddy Dist., Telangana. INDIA

Tel.: +91-2451-282271/282785, Telefax:+91-8451-281725

Email: ddspastapur@gmail.com

Website: www.ddsindia.com

PRESS RELEASE

July 3, 2018

Are we losing our right to *the* recognition of Organic?

Millions of farmers in India may lose their right to call what they grow as organic, when a new government law comes into operation. This might be as soon as tomorrow. Alarmed by this development, the PGS Organic Council, [an all India body that represents millions of peasant farmers] has, in anguish, reminded the government that these farmers constitute **“more than 75% of the farming community In India. These are the very people, who have symbolized organic farming”**

In a letter addressed to the Prime Minister of India, the PGSOC which has a direct membership of over 10000 organic farmers in 14 Indian states, reminds the government that The PGS is a system that enables farmers, the actual growers to certify the organic nature of their produce. Thus PGS not only saves money for the small and marginal peasant farmers but also produces dignity for them and helps them retain their self worth.

PGSOC has the distinction of sensitizing the Government of India to the democratic, people-centred character of PGS, says the letter to the PM and says “This has given India the rare international recognition of being the only country in the world that allows a civil society PGS to precede and coexist with the Government’s own PGS”. But all this may become a thing of the past once the new notification from the FSSAI comes into operation. “FSSAI [Food Safety and Standards Association of India] set up in the year 2008 which has announced that it will come up with a notification that will decide who can call their produce organic Through this action, knowingly or unknowingly the peasant farmers, the sole inheritors of the concept of organic in this country have been totally disempowered and this will impact negatively on the very people-centered democratic basis of the Indian constitution” agonises the PGSOC.

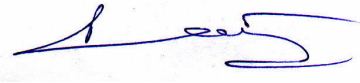
“This is an extraordinary situation Mr. Prime Minister which will also result in farmers being robbed of their right to come together under an umbrella such as PGSOC and stand upright with their dignity intact and tell the market proudly that they are the genesis of the word **Organic.**” says the letter from the PGSOC

The PGSOC national council which met in Pasrtapur Village of Sangareddy District of Telangana to ‘analyse the current situation and articulate their deep concerns’, has

come out with a **Pastapur Declaration of the PGSOC** that reminds the nation that organic farming has been the proud heritage of millions of small peasant farmers in India for several generations and passionately e their civilizational right to retain the title organic title. These authentic organic farmers have occupied the farmscape of the vast stretch of drylands of Deccan, millions of hectares hills in the Northeast, Himalayas, Central India and the Ghats –Eastern and Western, the letter reminds the Prime Minister.

In conclusion the PGSOC has made three demands to the Prime Minister : “

- Please do not permit one single government body to appropriate for itself the right to decide who should be called organic
- Please keep in mind that small peasant farmers cannot approach organic markets that are primarily urban middle class based and therefore need to come together under a broad umbrella of not for profit agencies such as PGSOC. This is the very raison de'tre of PGSOC.
- Therefore as the Prime Minister of the country please ensure that PGSOC is not delegitimized and deprived of its rights and responsibilities by a simplistic purely market-aimed notification.
- Finally as someone who has constantly nurtured India's liberal, democratic image abroad, please treat PGSOC as a flagship of the civil society, people-centered regulatory structure of the organic food regime and with this in view, please don't allow the delegitimation of PGSOC at any cost.



(PV Satheesh)
Director, Deccan Development Society,
Member PGSOC