

East UP's marigold to spread fragrance in the Gulf market

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Varanasi: After mango, fresh green vegetables and other agricultural products, now, Purvanchal's marigold flower will spread its fragrance in the Gulf market. The first consignment of 400 kg of marigold flowers from east UP left for UAE from Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport on Wednesday.

The consignment was flagged off virtually by chairman, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) Abhishek Dev. The APEDA's deputy general manager CB Singh told TOI, that, "Working in close collaboration with the ministry of commerce & industry, APEDA's initiatives had turned landlocked Purvanchal region into a new destination for agri-export activities. Farm produce organisations in the region are now exporting green chilli, fresh vegetables, Banarasi Langda Mango, banana and several other agriculture products."

"Marigold of Purvanchal was sent off to the UAE market on Wednesday," said Singh, explaining how APEDA's regional wing in Varanasi coordinated with the FPO and linked them with exporters for grounding the shipment smoothly to UAE. This consignment of marigold was exported by a Varanasi-



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based farm producing organisation. 400 kg of marigold flowers packed in 200 boxes occupied the entire cargo space in which three to four tonnes of green vegetable are exported to Gulf market from Varanasi airport, said Singh, adding, marigold cultivators of the region were currently getting Rs 40-Rs 50 per kg for this product in the local market, while the consignment had been exported at the rate of Rs 60 per kg. Export of agri-exports from the Purvanchal region was negligible due to lack of basic infrastructure, recalled Singh, adding that after establishing an office in Varanasi in 2020 with support from the UP government, APEDA had, apart from mobilising farmers and forming FPOs, also made sustained efforts to boost export-oriented farm production in

east UP region. "Now, the region is abuzz with activities which have given a boost to exports," he added.

Currently, the region has a number of exporters and agri export is being undertaken through air route due to establishment of robust quarantine as well as custom clearance facilitation centre at LBSI airport.

The APEDA has set up more than 30 capacity building programmes and international buyer-seller meets in the region to provide a platform to exporters to market their food products in the global marketplace.

APEDA officials said, "The Purvanchal region has seen a surge in demand for its perishable products, leading to a 248% increase in agricultural product exports in Q1 2022-23, compared to the same period last year. The region has become a preferred export destination for horticultural products catering to Gulf and European countries, apart from neighbours including Nepal, and Bangladesh."

Dev highlighted the immense potential of agricultural products from UP and reaffirmed APEDA's commitment to fostering its international market linkage. He said, work on integrating more FPOs in the agricultural export supply chain was in progress.