**Press Release (photographs attached)**

**Launch of eCharak web portal and mobile app by Rajasthan Agriculture Minister**

**NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON MEDICINAL PLANTS LAUNCHED IN JAIPUR TODAY**

Jaipur, 20 August: Rajasthan Agriculture Minister, Mr. Prabhu Lal Saini today launched the national campaign of medicinal plants in Jaipur. The occasion was the two-day national seminar on medicinal plants being held in the city.

The Agriculture Minister expressed his gratitude to the Central Government for choosing Jaipur for launching the national campaign. He said that taking a U-turn to Ayurveda will not only benefit the farmers but also the State as well as the nation’s economy. On the occasion he urged the Central Government to allocate more budgetary provisions to traditional medicines. He hoped that through the campaign the focus will be brought on Herbal Production, Processing, Marketing, Value Addition and Organic Farming.

He also highlighted that Rajasthan Government has submitted the Detailed Project Report (DPR) to the Centre for the establishment of State’s first special ‘Laghu Vanopaj Mandi’. This will give confidence to the farmers that there is a market such products and will get fair price for it. The Agriculture Minister also invited investors and farmers to participate in the forthcoming Global Rajasthan Agritech Meet (GRAM), 2015 to be held in Jaipur from 9 to 11 November.

During the inaugural session, Secretary, AYUSH, Government of India, Mr. Ajit M. Sharan said that we need to focus on the cultivation of endangered species of medicinal plants and create a chain for their cultivation, certification and marketing. National Medicinal Plants Board is willing to finance the projects related to certifications of Herbal products.

Principal Secretary, Ayurveda, Government of Rajasthan, Mr. R Venkateswaran said that with the changing lifestyle of the people – the Allopathic medicine will soon become the alternative while the traditional medicine will become more popular. He also underlined the importance of clinical trial and standardization of traditional plants to market the products internationally.

Later the Agriculture Minister launched the logo of National Campaign on medicinal plants as well as the interactive web portal and mobile app – eCharak. He also unveiled the brochure of the National Campaign, Abstract Book on the Seminar, Pamphlet of NAM – a  scheme of Ministry of AYUSH and a School Herbal Garden Poster prepared by school children.

The event was attended by more than 500 farmers from 23 states engaged in cultivation of these plants along with other agencies and stakeholders. An interactive session-cum-seminar involving farmers, industry experts and traders, among others were also held.

It is to be recalled the event was jointly organized by the National Medicinal Plants Board, Ministry of AYUSH in association with State Medicinal Plants Board, Government of Rajasthan and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).