

# Call to promote desi seed

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[Editorial Comment](#): This article was published before Mr Subhash Palekar expressed the view, in mid-2019, that 'organic farming is worse than the atom bomb'.



Vikalp Sangam does not endorse this view. participating in the seed festival at Killoguda in Visakhapatnam district on Monday.

Tribal women from the Agency

## 'It will help farmers fight climate change'

Indigenous seed is a good alternative to hybrid or high-yielding varieties as it is pest-resistant, according to T. Vijay Kumar, vice-chairman of Rythu Sadhikara Samsta (RySS) and advisor (agriculture) to the State government. Participating in the annual indigenous seed festival organised as a part of Eastern Ghats Biodiversity campaign at Killoguda near Araku on Monday, he said only millet varieties and desi seed could adapt to climate change and enable farmers address climate change. He said the zero-budget natural farming taken up by the State government was yielding good results. Farmers should ensure seed purification before sowing and also use desi seed in ZBNF clusters. Mr. Vijay Kumar said the government proposed to provide support to landless women to raise kitchen gardens. They would be provided seed and inputs, not to take it up as a business proposition but for their own consumption and increasing nutrition, he said. Pat for NGOs He complimented the endeavour of NGOs Sanjivani and Kovel Foundation in preserving and propagating indigenous seed varieties. As many as 400 farmers in ZBNF clusters from the north coastal districts, and the neighbouring Koraput and four NGOs participated in the festival, supported by various State government organisations, WASSAN, RySS, National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources. Indigenous seed was displayed in 26 stalls. Sanjivani secretary Devullu said the seed festival was being organised successfully for the past 13 years promoting biodiversity and helping farmers exchange seed. Programme manager of WASSAN Sanyasi Rao said participatory trials should be conducted by conservation and purification of local seeds. Purification should be taken up to prevent mixing up local seeds as well as local and hybrid ones. Kovel Foundation CEO V. Krishna Rao and officials of the Agriculture Department participated in the programme. First published by The Hindu on 29 Apr. 2019