

● FOLLOWING GANDHI'S FOOTSTEPS

KAPAS ORGANIC COTTON PROJECT
REAPS DIVIDENDS IN THENUR

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COMMEMORATING the day when Mahatma Gandhi resolved to wear only a loin cloth after seeing the poverty stricken farmers in Madurai, the Covenant Centre for Development (CCD), Madurai and Upasana Design Studio, Auroville, Pondicherry launched the 'Kapas Organic Cotton Project' products at Thenur village near Madurai on Wednesday. The project stresses on khadi products produced from 100 percent organic cotton.

Interacting with media persons, Uma Haimavathi, Director of Upasana Design Studio said that Kapas in Sanskrit meant cotton and the organisation was collaborating with CCD and Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) to launch the products.

The products created out of this was completely organic as all the 22 processes involved in transforming cotton into a cloth strictly adhered to organic methods including dying, bleaching etc.

Organic cotton cultivation was promoted in Thenur village with 900 acres of rainfed lands coming under it in the year 2008.

"We had involved around 400 farmers in this region and the products created out of the cotton produced here is being launched on this special day", she said. Organic cultivation is the means for sustainable development as the cotton used in normal textiles was heavily contaminated with pesticides and chemicals. The short staple cotton produced in this region was discarded by mills as unfit but this cotton was useful in Khadi industry, she said. "Cultivation of organic cotton should spread like a movement and like Gandhi, we should oppose foreign made cloths which was ruining the livelihood of thousands of Indian farmers during pre Independence era", she added.

Collaborating her views, M R Rajagopal, Secretary of Gandhigram Trust said research was on regarding medicinal textiles and it is in a developmental stage in Gandhigram. It will be made available soon for Upasana, he added.

During the launching ceremony, Ramasubramanian from Samanvaya Consulting, Chennai spoke about 'Gandhiji, Khadi and Madurai - an historic overview'. Uma Haimavathi spoke about the evolution of Kapas and Prayag.