

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 847
ANSWERED ON 06/02/2026

SUSPENSION OF SIKKIM STATE ORGANIC CERTIFICATION AGENCY

847. SHRI DORJEE TSHERING LEPCHA

Will the Minister of COMMERCE & INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) suspended Sikkim State Organic Certification Agency (SSOCA) for a period of one year starting from October 2024;
- (b) if so, the reasons for such suspension;
- (c) whether the said suspension/ban has been lifted as on date; and
- (d) if not, the present status of the suspension and the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to restore organic certification activities in Sikkim?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

(SHRI JITIN PRASADA)

(a) & (b) The accreditation of the Sikkim State Organic Certification Agency (SSOCA) as a certification body under the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) was suspended by the National Accreditation Body (NAB). The suspension was due to inadequate oversight by SSOCA over its certified operations as major lapses were observed in its certification process. These lapses adversely affected the integrity of the organic products certified by SSOCA.

(c) & (d) The Sikkim State Organic Certification Agency (SSOCA) continues to remain under suspension. As per the decision of NAB, re-instatement of accreditation is subject to satisfactory compliance with the requirements of the NPOP. SSOCA was required to submit details of corrective actions and measures undertaken since its suspension to address the serious lapses observed in its certification programme, which has not been done till date. The verification audit shall be conducted as the next step upon receipt of these details. With regard to organic certification activities in the State of Sikkim, these activities are continuing through other NPOP-accredited certification bodies.
