Gangtok, April 25 : (IPR) The Department of Horticulture, Government of Sikkim distributed Four Refrigerated Vans to the Self Help Groups (SHGs) of identified Model Village and SIMFED for the transportation of Farmers Produce in the State of Sikkim. The Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture and Horticulture Shri Lok Nath Sharma flagged off the well equipped Refrigerated Vans from Krishi Bhawan, Gangtok, this morning.

Out of the four vehicles, Minister Sharma handed over one each vehicle to the Tundong Self Help Group from Ringhim Nampatam, North District; Lower Kamrang Labour Cooperative Society from Mamley Kamrang, South District, Sikkim Vegetables Growers Association from Bermiok Berthang, West District and Sikkim State Cooperative Supply and Marketing Federations Ltd. (SIMFED), Gangtok.

While interacting with the Media Persons, Minister Sharma congratulated the SHGs & SIMFED and urged SHGs to collect farmers produce from their Model Village and clusters of their peripheries in coordination of concerned Farmer Producers Organization (FPOs) and to carry out marketing in their respective districts. Minister Sharma informed that the Refrigerated Vans are well equipped with technical facilities to sustain life of perishable vegetables after collecting from the farmers. The state government has handed over refrigerated light weight fabricated vehicle of Rs. 17 (Seventeen) Lakhs to each SHG, which has storage capacity of thirteen hundred kilograms with external AC system that works even when the vehicle is not running or started. He also urged SHGs to utilise vehicles only for the transportation and Marketing of Farmers Produce and not to misuse against its dedicated purpose. He also said that, already more than thirty vehicles are in the field with FPOs and this additional refrigerated van will strengthen the marketing of farmers produce at large as envisioned by the Chief Minister of Sikkim Shri P S Tamang to benefit the farmers in all districts.

Later, the Minister interacted with the senior officials who have been working for packaging of flowers and selling through online delivery system aap "Mitho" which receives online order from the customers.

Minister congratulated and appreciated Senior officers and staff for coming forward and setting a historic record for grading and packaging of the flowers in the office during lockdown period to ensure marketing of the flowers of the local growers from different parts of the state.