**National Farmer’s Day- 23rd December**

“If the farmer is rich, then so is the nation”

National Farmers’ Day, or Kisan Diwas, is celebrated across the country on December 23 to honour India’s farmers and mark the birth anniversary of the nation’s fifth prime minister, Choudhary Charan Singh, also a farmer's leader, who introduced many policies to improve the lives of the Indian farmers.

In 2001, the government decided to recognise Choudhary Charan Singh’s contribution to the agriculture sector and welfare of farmers by celebrating his birth anniversary as Kisan Diwas.

Since then, December 23 has been observed as National Farmers’ Day. Generally, awareness campaigns and drives are organised across the country to educate people on the role of farmers and their contribution to the economy,

Chaudhary Charan Singh, who briefly served as prime minister between 1979 and 1980, is widely regarded as one of the country’s most famous peasant leaders. He was known for his pioneering work to promote the welfare of farmers and the agricultural sector.

Charan Singh was no stranger to the struggles faced by the Indian farmer. He was born in to a middle-class peasant family in Uttar Pradesh on December 23, 1902. Greatly influenced by the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, he took an active part in the fight for independence. After that, his political career largely focused on socialism in rural India.

Charan Singh served twice as chief minister of India’s biggest agrarian state, Uttar Pradesh, where he played a major role in shaping land reforms. He was behind several major farmer-forward Bills, including the Land Utilisation Bill and the Debt Redemption Bill in 1939.

While serving as agriculture minister in 1952, he led UP in its efforts to abolish the zamindari system. In fact, he went on to draft the UP Zamindari and Land Reforms Bill himself.

On 23 December, 1978, he founded the Kisan Trust — a non-political, non-profit making body — with the aim of educating India’s rural masses against injustice, and fostering solidarity among them.

Farmers’ day is celebrated by organising various programs, debates, seminars, quiz competitions, discussions, workshops, exhibitions, essays writing competitions and functions.

This year, Kisan Diwas takes place against the backdrop of intensifying farmers’ protests on the borders of the national capital. Lakhs of farmers from across India have joined the movement — now entering its second month — against the [BJP](https://indianexpress.com/about/bjp/)-led government’s controversial farm laws.

For about the last 10,000 years, agriculture and farming have been arguably the most important occupation allowing us to move from being nomadic hunter-gatherers to literally and figuratively putting down roots and establishing civilizations.

It might seem odd that there aren't more days dedicated to farming, but most of our major holidays and festivals can be traced back to farming, such as the rebirth of spring and the harvest period in the fall.

So, let’s not forget that the cultivation of the earth is the most important labour of man. When tillage begins, other arts will follow. The farmers therefore are the founders of civilisation.