

● AGRO-PROCESSING

PM launches SAMPADA to push food processing sector

Modi expresses hope that the North-East can emerge as a global hub of organic farming as there are huge possibilities in the region

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PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Friday launched the agro-marine processing scheme SAMPADA to promote food processing and promised to make the North-East the economic hub of "new India".

"There are immense possibilities for agro-product valuation and the ₹6,000-crore SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing) will go a long way in developing the food processing industry and creating employment opportunities for the youth", he said after laying the foundation stone of the Indian Agriculture Research Institute here in the Dhemaji district.

Modi, who kickstarted the celebration of three years of his government, said: "Initially, there will be investment of ₹6,000 crore and later, we will go in for public-private partnership which will include foreign direct investment."

The central government will work "shoulder to shoulder" with the state government to usher in development, he promised.

Modi urged the youth of the North-East to take advantage of this scheme, saying the region will be the "new engine for new India and the term NE will mean new economy,



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being presented with a memento by Union minister for agriculture and farmers welfare Radha Mohan Singh to lay the foundation stone for Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI), at Gogamukh, Assam on Friday

new energy and new empowerment".

This will be achieved by following the 'pancha path' (five paths) with "the focus being on infrastructure development like highway, railway, waterway, airway and I (information)-way".

He expressed hope that the North-East can emerge as a global hub of organic farming as there are huge possibilities in the region.

"Sikkim has already shown the way by becoming an organic state and if the seven other north-eastern states also follow in that direction, the region will become a global organic hub as there is huge market potential in this area," the prime minister said.

Modi talked about his government's aim to

double agricultural income of farmers in the country and change the destiny of rural economy by giving thrust to the agricultural sector.

"I have a dream to double the income of farmers by 2022 when the nation completes 75 years of independence and we have five years to achieve this," he said, stressing on the need to modernise the agriculture sector with the help of science and technology.

"We have to march ahead and we are not talking about a second Green Revolution, but Sada kal harit kal - Green Revolution always and for this, we are committed to modernise agriculture sector by adopting a holistic approach," he said.