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MODI BATS FOR AGRICULTURE

'LAB-TO-LAND', PM SLOGAN FOR HIGHER AGRO OUTPUT

SNS & PTI
New Delhi, 29 July

Pitching for greater use of research for boosting the agriculture sector, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today gave the slogan 'Lab-to-Land', saying that farmers should be able to enhance production to increase their income and feed the country as well as the world.

He pressed for the use of scientific technologies to help raise the agricultural production in "less land, less time" as he expressed concern over the depleting natural resources and the challenge of climate change.

The Prime Minister also called for 'Blue Revolution' in fisheries sector on the lines of Green and White Revolutions.

"We have to prove two points. One is how we can make farmers capable of feeding the whole country and the world. Second is how we can make agriculture capable to fill the pocket of our farmers," Modi said while addressing the 86th Foundation Day of Indian Council Agriculture Research (ICAR) here.

He asked the scientific community to plan for the centenary celebrations of ICAR and achieve more in the next 14 years than what they have over the last 86 years of the existence of the premium agriculture research body.

"Per drop, more crop' can be our mission statement," he said, while noting that India is still dependent on import of edible oil and



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pulses despite being an agrarian economy and efforts need to be made to become self-sufficient.

He emphasised upon the need for taking scientific research to fields and suggested setting up of radio stations by agri-colleges and universities to create awareness among farmers.

The farm growth target cannot be achieved unless farmers' income is increased, Modi said, adding that the government's policies therefore should focus in this direction.

Modi also talked about the need to address the challenge of taking farm research from 'Lab-to-Land' by making efforts to convince farmers about efficacy of new farm techniques in simple ways. "Food demand is huge

and this is an opportunity for us. The biggest challenge before us how we take research work from Lab to Land. Unless this work does not reach field, we cannot get results," Modi said. Exhorting agriculture universities/college to start radio stations, he said that young educated and progressive farmers along with farm research scholars can form a talent pool.

He asked ICAR to digitise database of all agri-research work in the country in the next 4-5 years.

On the need to achieve 'Blue Revolution' in the fishery sector, Modi said: "In India's tri-colour flag, we talk about Green and White Revolution. But there is also blue colour Ashoka Chakra. That revolution we also need to look at." The development of the fishery sector is necessary as there is huge global market for this and has potential to change the life of fishermen, he said, and called for greater research and promotion of coastal seaweed.

In order to reduce dependence on import of pulses and cooking oils, the Prime Minister said that the production of pulses and oilseeds is a big challenge even today and priority should be given to raise productivity.

Modi said that awareness about water conservation is necessary as they are the ones who have to work upon this, though seminars on global warming in 5-Star hotels do have some benefit in this regard.

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