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Next Green Revolution from eastern India: PM

■ Tells farmers to save water, diversify crops, take allied jobs



PM Narendra Modi at the Krishi Unnati Mela in New Delhi on Saturday. Agriculture minister Radha M Singh, Haryana CMM K. Khattar, Rajasthan CM Vasundhara Raje and Chhattisgarh CM Raman Singh are also seen

From the Bureau
New Delhi, March 19

RECALLING the country's first Green Revolution on the strength of water availability in the northern region, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the second such transformation in agriculture would come from eastern states, through the adoption of modern technology and better farming practices.

Inaugurating a mega farmers' fair — Krishi Un-

Boost to agriculture investment

■ FY16 (RE) ■ FY17 (BE) (₹ cr)

5,300 5,717

Irrigation

37,000 38,500

MNREGA

3,020 5,500

Crop insurance

nati Mela — in New Delhi, Modi said there was enormous untapped potential in eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Odisha and the north-eastern states in terms of boosting agricultural output. Stressing the need for raising rural income, which was also a focus area of the recent Union Budget, which increased the outlay for the farm sector, Modi said purchasing power has to rise and this will happen when the village economy is strengthened.

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From the front page

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On the uphill task of doubling farmers' income by 2022, the PM said the Centre would work in tandem with the states. "We must attempt to increase farmers' income through increasing farm productivity and setting up markets and processing facilities for farmers' produce," he said.

On the long-pending 90-odd projects under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme, Modi said in most cases, the works have been completed. However, the farmers are deprived of water because of lack of connecting canals to the fields. "After completion of these projects, more than 80 lakh hectares of land would be irrigated," Modi said. Stating that the recently announced Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) was formulated after wider consultations with the farmers, Modi said farmers had lost interest in crop insurance schemes, but PMFBY would be different as "it is the first crop insurance where premium will be affordable while the coverage would be more".

Modi's comments come at a time when the farm sector growth of 1.1% projected by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) for 2015-16 in the recent advance estimate looks under threat, with reported damage to the rabi crop in six states due to unseasonal rains and hail. Modi stressed the need to conserve water through adopting micro and drip irrigation projects. "Using drip irrigation, even water-intensive sugarcane can be grown," he said, adding that the food processing industry could play a major role in increasing farmers' income.

The fair, jointly organised by the agriculture ministry and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), is being attended by 1 lakh farmers.

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Ar /k News paper Unit