

Save water, take up allied jobs: PM to farmers

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NEW DELHI, 19 MARCH. Calling upon farmers to diversify to double their income by 2022, the Prime Minister, Mr Narendra Modi, today said rural spending is going to drive the Indian economy in the coming years.

Inaugurating the Krishi Utsav Mela here today, the PM said the task of doubling farmers' income might be challenging but "the objective is worth aiming for". On the revolution in the agriculture sector, the Prime Minister said the next revolution in Indian agriculture would come from the eastern part of the country.

He asked farmers to use innovative methods, save water and fertilisers and use latest technology and modern measures to

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~ Narendra Modi



bring down costs. Mr Modi said India's future would be built on growth of agriculture and the prosperity of its farmers.

He emphasised on reduction of input cost in agriculture using various scientific measures taken by the government, mainly Soil Health Card scheme, and Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchay Yojana. He told farmers to go for diversifica-

tion in farming activities and use animal husbandry and agro forestry along the edges of their fields to supplement their income.

Mr Modi explained the benefits of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana that ensures minimum premium and maximum security to farmers. The Prime Minister visited the exhibition

pavilions, and was given an overview of best practices and techniques followed by various institutions and agriculture entrepreneurs; latest agriculture equipment, and milch cattle.

He also launched a mobile application for farmers, "Kisan Suvidha". This will provide information to farmers on subjects such as weather, market prices, seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and agricultural machinery.

Attacking opposition parties for claiming that all projects and programmes started when they were in power, the Prime Minister said, "You would be surprised to know that as much as 90 projects which are full of water like dams have been built, but there is no way to provide water to farmers."

He added: "Now, my govern-

ment is working to provide water from these projects and once it is completed, around 80 lakh hectares will get water. And once water reaches there, you all can think how much that land will give us back."

The Prime Minister spoke of funds from MNREGA programme to be utilised this summer for creation of assets such as ponds to conserve water.

"About MNREGA, many discussions take place, but no asset has been created. This government is emphasising... during this summer in every village, one work should be done through MNREGA and that is desilting of ponds, deepening of ponds and creating new ones. In this Budget, the government is aiming at 5 lakh ponds," Modi said.

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