

More Private Sector Role Needed in Agri R&D: PM Modi

We have to expand our country's agriculture sector into the global market for processed food: Prime minister in a webinar

Our Political Bureau

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said there is a need for more involvement of the private sector in research and development in agriculture section, establishment of agro-industry clusters near villages and encouraging more start-ups in the field to use the latest methods for the benefit of small farmers.

Participating in a webinar on provisions in the budget for agriculture and farmer welfare, Modi said the reforms in this sector should have been ushered in some decades back and the country should move ahead without delay in post-harvest value addition like food processing to improve the profits of the

farmers. The expansion in this sector should help the country make a mark in the global market.

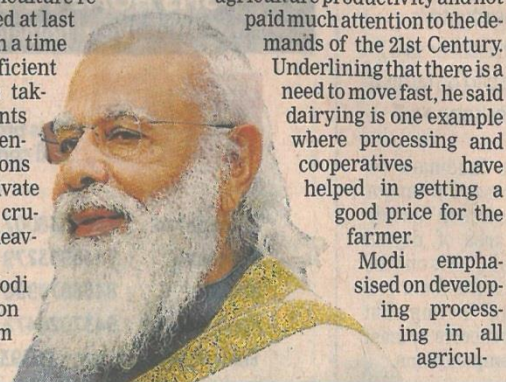
The Prime Minister said his government aims at empowering the 12 crore small farmers in the country and the agriculture reforms are aimed at last mile delivery in a time bound and efficient manner while taking all segments along. The Centre-state relations and public-private partnership is crucial in this endeavour.

Though Modi did not mention the three farm laws in his ad-

dress, he defended them throughout and said country has to move on to improve the condition of farmers.

He maintained that the previous governments had focused only on agriculture productivity and not paid much attention to the demands of the 21st Century. Underlining that there is a need to move fast, he said dairying is one example where processing and cooperatives have helped in getting a good price for the farmer.

Modi emphasised on developing processing in all agricul-



'IT'S GOVT THAT WILL HAVE TO COME FORWARD WITH A PROPOSAL FOR TALKS'

Govt's Silence Indicates it's Planning Steps Against Farmers' Stir: Tikait



BIJNOR: BKU leader Rakesh Tikait has claimed that the Centre's "silence" for the past few days indicates that it is planning some steps against the farmers' agitation over newly enacted agriculture laws. He also stressed that it is the government that will have to come forward with a proposal for talks to resume with the protesting farmers. Before leaving for Uttarakhand's Udham Singh Nagar on Sunday night, the BKU leader told reporters in Bijnor's Afzalgarh: "The government's silence for the past 15-20 days is indicating that something is going to happen. The government is planning some steps against the agitation." -PM

ture sectors like foodgrains, fruits, vegetables and fisheries, as well as establishing modern storage facilities near villages. He said Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) can play a vital role in taking the

produce from the farm to the factory.

"We have to expand our country's agriculture sector into the global market for processed food. We must increase the number of Agro-

Industries Clusters near the village so that the people can get employment related to farming in the village itself," he said, adding that the organic and export clusters are also important.