

# Food Security and Need for Second Green Revolution in India

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## INTRODUCTION

However, problems of hunger and starvation continue to plague the country. No wonder, a big part of the Indian population suffers from hunger. On the Global Hunger Index, India stands at the 97th position. According to a report by International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), one-sixth of the population is undernourished; 190 million people go hungry daily. About 30% children below 5 years of age are underweight. India accounts for 30% of neo-natal deaths internationally, linked to malnutrition. Perhaps, it is time for a second Green Revolution.

The **Second Green Revolution** is a change in agricultural production widely thought necessary to feed and sustain the growing population on Earth. These calls have precipitated in part, as a response to rising food commodity prices, and fears of peak oil among other factors. It is named after the Green Revolution, a movement to increase crop selection and agrichemical usage to increase yield in the 1930s through to the 1960s.

Bill Gates has been among the proponents of a second green revolution, saying:

Three quarters of the world's poorest people get their food and income by farming small plots of land...if we can make smallholder farming more productive and more profitable, we can have a massive impact on hunger and nutrition and poverty...the charge is clear—we have to develop crops that can grow in a drought; that can survive in a flood; that can resist pests and disease...we need higher yields on the same land in harsher weather."

Gates made these remarks during the World Food Prize. He has made over 1.4 billion in contributions towards agricultural developments.

The then Union Finance Minister of India, Pranab Mukherjee, made a statement to parliament that he would explore the possibility of setting up a committee of CMs of the eastern states for a second green revolution in the region and praised Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal for substantial increase in rice production during the current fiscal. Replying to the debate on 2012-13 Union Budget in Rajya Sabha, Mukherjee said due to substantial increase in rice output in the eastern states to the tune of 7 million tonnes in 2011-12, production of the staple grain has risen to a record 10.2 million tonnes. He said this was possible because of special thrust given on realizing the agricultural potential of eastern states.

Accepting the suggestion of JD(U) member N K Singh, Mukherjee said he would explore the possibility of setting up a committee of chief ministers of eastern states "to give further impetus to achieving green revolution" in the region. Singh had suggested setting up of such a panel. He said: "Given the importance of incentivizing agriculture in the eastern region, a chief ministers' committee comprising the CMs from the eastern states should be constituted for a coherent action plan and adequate support from the central government". His suggestion came as one of the eight "tangible actions" which, he thought, would lend credibility to the budgetary announcements. The government had earlier allocated an additional Rs 400 crore in 2011-12 under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana for extending green revolution to the eastern region comprising Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Eastern UP, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal. Rice was a priority crop under the scheme. Seeing the success of the scheme, the Budget 2012-13 has raised the allocation to Rs 1,000 crore. Mukherjee lauded CMs of these states, particularly Bihar CM Nitish Kumar, whose state has doubled rice output to 67.5 lakh tonnes in 2011-12. Handsome increase in rice production has also been witnessed in Jharkhand, West Bengal and other eastern states.

Noting that the achievement has attracted accolades from world over, he said the **UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Indonesia-based World Rice Institute have commended the eastern states.**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday laid stress on the need for second Green Revolution in the country. "There is an immediate need of Green Revolution in the country. The Green Revolution should immediately start in eastern India including Jharkhand, Bihar, eastern Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha and Assam," said Modi. The prime minister was addressing the people at Barhi in Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand after laying the foundation stone of the Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI).

IARI-Jharkhand would achieve inclusive agricultural growth through Integrated Farming Systems (IFS) in the region, an official release said in Ranchi. "The institute will attract the cream of post-graduate and doctoral students from all over India and abroad to conduct region-specific research. The major regional challenges will be addressed by the IARI-Jharkhand, through prioritised thrust areas of research, integrated with post-graduate education and extension programmes", the release said.

"The government of India has started initiatives for the development of the region and decided to open the closed plants of fertilisers at Sindri of Jharkhand and Gorakhpur of Uttar Pradesh and opening new fertiliser plants in West Bengal. The opening of closed fertiliser plants and new plants will help the farmers and generate employment to youths," the prime minister said. Modi also appealed to the farmers to use scientific methods for modern farming. He asked them to use micro irrigation to increase production of foodgrain.

"I also appeal farmers to increase production of dalhan (pulses) as country still imports in large quantity of pulses. There is government policy to provide addition Minimum Support Price (MSP) to promote dalhan production in the country," he said. The prime minister appealed the farmers to avail the benefit of the Krishi Channel launched for the farming. He expressed his concerns over the Indian farmers lagging behind in comparison to other countries' farmers.

Besides Modi, Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh, Jharkhand Governor Draupadi Murmu and Chief Minister Raghubar Das also present on the occasion. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday laid stress on the need for second Green Revolution in the country.

### **CONCLUSION**

India needs second green revolution to bring food security to its billion plus population, to remove distress of farming community and to make its agriculture globally competitive. To achieve these goals, yield rates of foodgrains, pulses, oil seeds, dairying and poultry, horticultural crops, and vegetables need to be enhanced; and forward-backward linkages of agriculture with technology, food processing industry needs to be strengthened to match soil to seed and product to market. High productivity and better value addition by agro-processing are its key parameters.

The change in a farmer's mindset is also utmost necessary. A farmer typical believes that their role is limited to grow crops only. They must be realized that their scope can increase from grain production to food processing and marketing. Further, the farmers need to be encouraged to move to produce crops where they have natural advantage.

This is possible by concerted efforts towards bridging the technology gap and assuring remunerative prices for the produce. It will require new technologies and better farming practices. In this endeavour, marginal and small farmers and raising agricultural productivity in dry areas need special attention without compromising on preserving soil and water resources. This demands proper coordination, implementation and monitoring of the support policies in addition to allocation of resources.

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