



English rendering of the text of PM's speech at foundation ceremony of Agriculture Research Institute in Gogamukh, Assam

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My dear brothers and sisters.

I was fortunate to meet you people during 2014 General Election when I came here to campaign for Sarbanananda Ji. In a short span of time you made Sarbananada Ji the Chief Minister. I sincerely thank the people of Assam for this. The BJP government in Assam has completed one year under the leadership of Sonowal Ji in very difficult circumstances; you know it better than me what the condition of Assam was. It was a challenge; the state was in a mess. You trusted us to get Assam out of that mess. You gave us the opportunity to form the government in Assam. And now that the government has completed one year, I sincerely congratulate Sarbananda Ji, his cabinet colleagues, all our political allies, all the friends of Assam government and the people of Assam for getting Assam out of that mess.

Brothers and sisters, I have come here for a very important task, to lay the foundation of not an organisation but of creating a system. The task that is going to have an auspicious start here, will not only change the fortune of the state of Assam or North-East, but it will also change the fortune of rural India.

India is an agrarian country. We are such a fortunate people that we have all the weathers. Most of the people in this world would be familiar with three weathers, but we are familiar with more than just three weathers.

In a country where agriculture was considered the most important aspect of life, in a country, where, Mahatma Gandhi had envisioned Ram Rajya (ideal state) through Gram Rajya (where village is the primary unit of governance), we need to transform the agriculture, rural life to suit the needs of the 21st century. We have come thus far by using old methods. Some efforts were made in the meantime, some new things were added. However, this is not the time for going slow. Time doesn't wait for anyone. The science and technology that had not changed for hundreds of years, changed in the past twenty five years. Our farmers must reap the benefit from these rapid changes. Our country is full of diversity, not just in languages and attires. Our land, our way of agriculture, our parks, our fruits, our flowers all have their own uniqueness. Therefore, we must start with a holistic approach to modernize our agriculture in a manner that takes into consideration the special needs of different regions about conducting scientific research, bringing about scientific changes, what should be the intervention of modern technology and how we can move in the direction of mechanising our agriculture.

We have big dreams. And this is a dream to transform the fortune of every single farmer of India. We have a dream of doubling farmer's income by 2022 when India completes seventy five years of its independence. And we're working in that direction. We have five years. We want to bring about those changes in the next five years, want to make that progress through which we can fulfil our dream of doubling the farmers' income.

Brothers and sisters,

Our government has taken several important steps in the last three years. Three years is a very small period for such a huge country. However, the country has seen the feat of accomplishing many great things in such a short span of time. The 112 years old institution stands in Delhi. It will be immensely beneficial if that institution conducts research in different regions of the country. South has a different ecosystem, North has a different ecosystem, North-East and Western parts too have different eco systems. Keeping that in mind, we have decided to start two new research institutes. The foundation of one of those two institutes is being laid here in your area today. And now more research will be done here as per the special needs of the area. Scientists and youth of this area will get an opportunity to carry out their research here. And it will be easier to translate the benefits of the research conducted here from the laboratory to the land because people of this area will be familiar with the research. Therefore, it is our government's thinking to decentralise the system according to the area, time and situation and prepare systems accordingly so that they can give faster results. We recently created a complete chain from the seed, providing seeds to the farmers till the time he takes his produce to market. It was essential to create a seamless chain without any hindrances. And we focussed on this thing when I say from 'seed to market'; and we put lot of emphasis on soil health cards in the last three years. Our farmers were unaware about the health of their soil. Today, if we fall sick then doctor first sends us to a laboratory for blood test so that he can determine the nature of the problem, to diagnose the disease. Our mother earth is like a human body. As we conduct blood test, urine test in laboratory to figure out the problems afflicting our body, to find out what's good in our body, similarly, the strength and deficiencies of our soil can be assessed in a laboratory, like for which crop this land is suitable this too can be determined; what ingredients, which manure, which fertiliser is needed can be determined too. That's why we have decided to provide every Indian farmer with a soil health card. We have launched an ambitious programme.

Brothers and sisters,

It's not that we got to know about the soil health card through modern science. The previous government was also aware about them. It's not like that scientists are born after coming of my government to power. Scientists were there earlier too. However, mere tokenism cannot change the country. There were only 15 soil health card labs in the country. Only 15 soil health card labs for such a massive country! Even if they do work for 15 farmers in the country in a day even then how much they can do. How they will serve such a massive country? Brothers and sisters, we started a big movement. Today, we have established more than 9,000 soil health card labs in the country. And, we are inviting youth to take that forward. We have urged Indian youth working in the start-ups to prepare small machines that can work as a lab in farmer's household; if he puts soil in it so that he can get the information about the potential use of the soil and also the information about the crop for which that soil is suitable. And these youth running the start-ups have developed new machines; in near future, you may come across to these machines working as labs in some houses in your village.

Brothers and sisters,

I would urge the farmers, as we go for blood test in a laboratory when we fall sick, similarly, they should get their soil health cards made from a laboratory every year to find out about any deficiency in the soil and choose crops as per the suggestion given in that soil health card. And you would be able to harvest good crop, bumper crop in low budget. This is what we're doing.

Brothers and sisters,

If our farmers get enough water they can do wonders. That's why we have put emphasis on Prime Minister's Krishi Sinchai Yojna (PMKSY). This is the state that gets abundant water. That's why, sometimes, we fail to understand the value of water. But the areas with deficient rainfall, without rivers, they know the value of the water. That's why we are pushing for schemes like 'per drop more crop', 'micro irrigation' and irrigation through 'sprinkler'. We are running Prime Minister's Agriculture Irrigation Scheme. We have undertaken 90 such schemes worth thousands of crores of Rupees so that water could reach to fields; farmers can use that water in micro irrigation and the water should reach those parts of the country where there is no agriculture due to lack of water, we're working in that direction.

Brothers and sisters,

We've launched Pradhan Mantri Crop Insurance Scheme (PMFBY). Indian farmer is dependent on nature's mercy. If there is extra rain or deficient rain either way our farmers are in trouble, they are in trouble if there is a hailstorm or storm, so such farmers must get protection. This is the first time that a Prime Minister's Crop Insurance Scheme has become so popular among farmers. Those farmers who don't borrow loans from banks are opting for crop insurance scheme. It has registered 700 per cent growth. It has become the favourite scheme of farmers. And the farmer will get enough funds for a year due to the insurance scheme if he suffers any kind of loss. We are working in the direction of implementing the scheme throughout the country so that farmers can face any difficulty with the help of crop insurance scheme.

Brothers and sisters,

There is a huge potential for organic farming in our country, particularly in North-East. And there is a special attraction and huge market for organic farming and organic products in the global market. While ordinary agro products are traded in rupees, organic products fetch dollars. I want Assam, North-Eastern states to adopt organic farming, and we have example of Sikkim. The entire Sikkim state is doing organic farming. If North-East adopts organic farming then it can become the largest organic farming region in the country, in the world. And if the global market wants to source any organic product then it will have to look at North East, will have to look at Assam, and will have to eat the food that carries the scent of Assam's soil. I saw that possibility, that's why, brothers and sisters, we have launched a mega programme for compost. Scores and scores of people are working in that direction to turn the 'waste' into 'best' to provide compost for organic farming. And the government is helping every farmer, to those who want to work in this direction. And it will improve the quality of our soil, improve our agriculture, boost production and help us in doubling our farmers' income.

Brothers and sisters,

With agriculture, I also discuss a 'New India'. So far we have been praising the first 'Green Revolution'. We are now discussing the second 'Green Revolution'. However, I can clearly see that in 'New India' we won't have to stop at the second green Revolution. We will have to march forward in the direction of 'ever green revolution'. Not just the second 'green revolution', but we need to develop our agriculture science in the direction of 'ever green revolution' - 'all the time, green time'. And this research institution would help us in that. Which are the things that are related to agriculture in that direction? How to bring down the cost of farming? We have launched a mega programme of 'solar pumps'; the cost of the pump that runs on solar energy is coming down gradually. This can be used by installing a solar panel in the field itself. It will bring down the cost of electricity. It will remove a huge burden on farmers. We're working in that direction. A farmer can install a solar panel at the corner of his field and can produce enough electricity to meet his requirement. We've been encouraging him. Farmers can plant timber trees at the border of their fields. We've been importing timber to make furniture for our houses, if we encourage our farmers in that direction then we will not have to import timber. We can produce enough timber in our fields without compromising on agriculture. We want to support that. We want to emphasise on animal husbandry in agriculture sector. You must have heard of 'white revolution'. But we're still counted among those countries that have low per capita milk production. We should increase the productivity of our animals instead of increasing their numbers; we should have scientific animal husbandry, scientifically developed food for animals and scientific treatment for them. We want to take all these things forward by focussing on agriculture research. Farmers can supplement their income by simultaneously engaging in areas like fisheries, poultry, honey-bees alongside farming. We are trying to focus in that direction as well.

Brothers and sisters,

As my government has completed three years, today I want to announce a scheme for the country, especially in the direction of the agricultural revolution. The name of that scheme is 'SAMPADA'. Our country has immense potential for value addition to increase the value of agro-products. The scheme will be implemented initially with an investment of Rs.6000 crores and later with public-private partnerships through Foreign Direct Investment. The full form of SAMPADA is 'Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing And Development of Agro-Processing Clusters'. How to add value to agricultural yields? We sell mangoes but receive a meagre amount. But we can get higher return by processing the same mangoes into mango pickle. Similarly, we get a small amount from tomatoes. But tomato ketchup can earn more money for you. Likewise we produce fruits; but by processing them into fruit juices we can get higher value. In this manner the value of our country's agro products will increase thereby increasing the strength of our agro processing industry. As my government has turned three, on this occasion I welcome this scheme 'SAMPADA' which promises to change the fate of the farmers of our vast country by stressing on the importance of food processing industry and by introducing foreign direct investment from all over the world. It will ensure employment opportunities for the young generation in order to transform rural livelihood. Our government has decided to move forward to achieve this objective.

Brothers and sisters,

When we are moving forward in the direction of agricultural development, for our country's 'North East' - the region of 'Ashta-Lakshmi' - the 'panch-path' or five paths have been prescribed for furthering the endeavour. Through these five paths, we wish to connect the entire North East with the country - with its future and to fulfil the hope and aspirations of the youth. The five paths which are basically related to the 21st century infrastructure are as follows: Highways- the first path; Railways, the second; Waterways, the third; Airways, the fourth and the fifth path is the Highway of Information Way - Optical Fibre Network. Through these five paths, the roots of modern infrastructure will have a stronghold in the North East and this Ashta Lakshmi region which was called North East till yesterday will be known as 'New India' and the 'N-E' will mean the New Economy; NE will mean New Energy; NE will mean New Empowerment. In a way, this will become an engine for growth for this 'New India' and a new engine for the North-East. With this confidence, I would like to convey my best wishes to my farmer brothers who have come in hundreds and thousands from each and every corner. And I firmly believe that this research institute will fulfil your dreams. Once again I congratulate Sarbananda ji, his entire team and the people of Assam for the successful journey of one year. And I hope that in the remaining four years, Assam will go ahead in its endeavour to fulfil the dreams of the people at a fast pace. And I assure the people of Assam that the central Government is always ready to lend a helping hand to change the fate of Assam. Assam has immense potential. This strength will not only change the fate of Assam but also change the destiny of India. It has to move forward with this feeling. I convey my very best wishes to you.

Thanks!

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