



President of India addresses concluding ceremony of World Food India-2017; says summit showcased vast, near limitless opportunities in Indian food industry

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The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, addressed the concluding ceremony of World Food India-2017, organised by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Govt. of India, today (November 5, 2017) in New Delhi.

Speaking on the occasion, the President congratulated the organisers for the resounding and truly historic success of the World Food India-2017. He stated that this Summit saw the participation of delegates from over 60 countries, including CEOs of 60 global companies. It has helped showcase the vast and near limitless opportunities in the food industry and in food processing in India. It has been the Kumbh Mela of Indian food.

The President said that food is culture – but food is also commerce. India's food consumption is currently valued at US \$370 billion. It is expected to reach \$1 trillion by 2025, in less than a decade. There are opportunities across the entire food value chain in India – including post-harvest facilities, logistics, cold chains, and manufacturing. It is a sector with a large business appetite. The food industry can be a huge employer. And this is of utmost importance for a country such as India, which has such a large youth population. It is also noteworthy that women are deeply involved in the food sector. Especially in our rural areas, there is great potential for women to emerge as micro-entrepreneurs by setting up small food processing units.

The President said that the Government of India is conscious of the social and economic benefits of a thriving food industry. This is a major area for attracting domestic and foreign investment. 41 mega food parks and cold chains are being established in all parts of the country to enhance food production. There is an increasing stress on food safety, accurate labelling, intellectual property issues and innovation in the food processing sector – as well as on using technology as an enabler.

The President congratulated the winners of Start-up Awards and Hackathon Awards. He expressed confidence that they will go on to shape India's food processing sector and improve quality and safety standards. He noted that one of the start-ups selected has adapted Raman Spectroscopy, the discovery of India's very own Nobel Prize winning scientist Dr C.V. Raman, into a low-cost hand-held device that can instantly detect food adulteration. This technology can save billions in food fraud.

The President said he was confident that Indian farmers and the Indian food processing industry can produce food products for India and – given India's competitive cost structure – for the world as well. This would insulate both farmers and consumers from price shocks, and go a long way in ensuring remunerative incomes for the agricultural community.

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