



JANASANYOG, ASSAM
CHIEF MINISTER'S PUBLIC RELATIONS CELL, DISPUR

PRESS RELEASE

No. 724/2020

CM lays foundation stone of Agri Centre of Excellence set up with Israeli support

The Centre would boost government's efforts to double farmers' income: CM

Dispur, November 2: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today laid the foundation stone of Indo-Israeli Centre of Excellence for Vegetables Protected Cultivation at Khetri on the outskirts of the city in presence of Israeli Ambassador to India Dr. Ron Malka. The Rs 10.33 crore project is expected to bolster the agricultural activities in the state by providing exposure to latest Israeli technologies to state's farmers and helping them maximize their production and income.

Hoping that the Center of Excellence would provide a major boost to agricultural and horticultural production in Assam leading to greater economic rewards to state's farmers, the Chief Minister said the center would be a value addition to the government's efforts to double farmers' income through infusion of technology in agriculture, agribusiness and food processing.

Highlighting the tremendous growth story of NE in the last six years due to the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sonowal said that the region has been taken from periphery to the middle of the country's growth narrative through substantial improvement in air, road and river connectivity setting the stage for the state to become the gateway to SE Asia and ASEAN. The region is now seen as a promising destination for cultural exchange, trade and commerce, travel and tourism, he added.

Saying that due to the positive interventions made by the state government Assam's annual production of food grain, fruits, vegetable etc. has significantly increased in the recent years, Sonowal informed that farmers here have now been able to export fruits and vegetables to places like Dubai, London, Bangkok, Abu Dhabi and several others international destinations. He also laid emphasis on the Central Government's plan to make Northeast India an organic hub and elaborated on the initiatives taken by the State Government in this regard.

The Chief Minister also threw light on state's tourism potential in his speech and evinced keen interest in working with Israeli Government in harnessing the sector's true strength in generating employment and contributing immensely to the state's economic progress. He also talked about potential collaborations with Israel in furthering the growth of start-up ecosystem in the state through start-up exchange programme and Israeli mentorship of various start-up projects in Assam.

Industrial development of the state also featured in his speech and he called for Israeli help in furthering state's industrial growth. He said that the cooperation of Israel Government in

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agriculture and allied, tourism and startup as well as other sectors of the economy would help Assam's farmers and entrepreneurs in finding a reliable platform for brighter future at much faster pace.

In his speech, Israel's Ambassador to India Dr Ron Malka underlined the close bond of friendship between India and Israel in the recent years and said that India and Israel is a perfect match where both countries complement each other. Even in fight against COVID19 pandemic, both India and Israel fought closely together and he welcomed Assam into the Indo-Israel partnership dynamics with the opening of Centre of Excellence.

Earlier in the day today, an Israeli delegation led by Ambassador called on the Chief Minister at his residence and held a wide ranging discussion on various issues beneficial for both Israel and Assam.

Agriculture Minister Atul Bora, Legal and Media Advisers to the Chief Minister Shantanu Bharali and Hrishikesh Goswami, MP Queen Ojah, MLA Atul Bora were also present in today's programme among several other dignitaries.

Swakkhyar/BG/2.11.2020