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CHIEF MINISTER'S PUBLIC RELATIONS CELL, DISPUR**

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CM takes part in Conference on Transformation of Indian Agriculture

Sonowal stresses the importance of adopting organic farming in NE

Dispur, August 2: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today took part in the inaugural programme of Northeast Regional Conference on Transformation of Indian Agriculture organised at a city hotel. Speaking on the occasion, he said that the constitution of a committee consisting of chief ministers for the transformation of Indian agriculture was indicative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphasis on the growth of the sector.

It is to be mentioned, Government of India had recently constituted a high level committee consisting of chief ministers to achieve the target of doubling of farmers income by 2022. Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu was included in the committee as a member and today's meeting of agriculture production commissioners and secretaries of North Eastern States was organised under the aegis of the Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister. The committee will offer its suggestions and inputs for increasing agricultural production of North East region.

Chief Minister Sonowal, in his speech, said that Prime Minister Modi had taken pragmatic steps for doubling farmers' income right after assuming office for the first time in 2014 and now the constitution of this high level committee would make positive impact towards achieving the goal by 2022. 'Terms of Reference' set by the committee were also very timely which would boost the agriculture sector of the Northeast region and increased agricultural production would help the country achieve the target of being a 5 trillion economy, he opined.

"North East region with its fertile land, sufficient rainfall and rich bio diversity has the potential to capture not only the country's market but also the market of the entire South East Asia consisting of 800 million people. Act East Policy has provided a great opportunity to the NE region for massive economic growth through the export of quality organic agricultural products. Assam Government has taken up exhaustive plans to convert the state agriculture sector into organic farming and state's vegetables and fruits have received good response in international market." Sonowal said.

Referring to the example of Vietnam which did not have a flourishing economy 30 years back, the chief minister said that within three decades the country had achieved 34 million dollar worth of yearly agricultural exports. Saying the way Vietnam had been able to capture the world market through 'value addition' of their agricultural products, Sonowal opined that NE agri exports could capture the market of entire SE Asia by following such



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example. In view of the great potential of NE region, Prime Minister Modi had termed the the region *astlaxmi* and new engine of growth for the country, he said.

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Chairman of FICCI NEC Ranjit Borthakur, Chairman of Agricultural Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Paban Borthakur also spoke at the programme.

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