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Government Committed to Transform India as a Global Hub for Wellness Food – Says Union Minister For Science & Technology Dr. Harsha Vardhan

Union Minister for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr Harshvardhan today unveiled a sequence of research outcome initiatives at CSIR - Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) in Mysuru today. The Minister launched the project for establishing an integrated Sugarcane Juice Processing and bottling unit in the campus.

The two tons per day plant will be commissioned in 90 days which will be 'Drive-in Plant' for sugarcane farmers of the nearby region. CSIR-CFTRI has developed and patented a technology for bottling sugarcane juice with 4-months of shelf-life which has been commercialized by over 20 odd entrepreneurs. The beverage which is natural with multitude of health benefits has the potential to dominate the emerging wellness market. The unit has taken shape under the rural development programs of CSIR and soon such a unit will be replicated in association with farmers' cooperatives and SHGs in other sugarcane growing regions.

He also released carbonated fruit juice products based on grape, apple and pomegranate with 20% fruit juices. Earlier the Prime Minister had asked multi-nationals to mix their carbonated drinks with fruit juices to help fruit farmers of the country. Now the laboratory has come forward with a viable process which can help the country towards 'Yellow Revolution'.

"CSIR is committed to transform India as a global hub for wellness foods" Dr. Harsh Vardhan asserted. The Minister also inspected the facilities at the first nutraceutical incubation centre of the country being set up at CSIR-CFTRI along with an entrepreneurs cell. The 'Nutra-Phyto Incubation Centre & Common Instrumentation Facility (NPIC-CIF), established in the campus in collaboration with Government of Karnataka would facilitate discovery and development of new products/innovative technologies by providing world-class laboratories, Pilot Plant facilities, analytical testing and safety studies for promoting entrepreneurs, SHGs and SMEs. Though start-ups are common with e-commerce and IT services, such enterprises in the areas as healthcare, agriculture, food sector and clean energy are just picking up.



As food alone is unable to meet all the nutritional needs of the body, supplementation with non-nutrients such as antioxidants, pre-biotics and probiotics have become essential. And the abilities of many nutraceuticals to influence chronic diseases are to be considered as a great opportunity for the treatment. Presently, in the world market India's share for nutraceuticals is less than 1%. Large number of nutraceuticals are imported and it is highly costly. More concern is also about unproven health claims and benefits of these products. This proposed centre is expected to give a boost in taking the traditional and non-traditional nutraceuticals into global market with proven scientific evidence.

Inaugurating a One Day CEOs Meet of the food sector, at the CFTRI today, with a theme 'catalysing Make in India for growth in agri-food processing', Dr. Harsh Vardhan assured that the deliberations from the Meet will be taken up in the Ministry for appropriate intervention for enabling a robust growth in food processing sector. A total of 50 CEOs from leading industry attended the meet. As the make in India aims at increasing the current level of food processing of 10% to 25% by 2025, linkages with R&D is crucial for industry for transforming the country as a emerging hub for future growth. Sessions at the Meet focused on constraints faced by industry, enabling policy initiatives by Government, Potential for startup ventures in this sector and regulatory issues along

with R&D Industry linkages.

Dr Harshavardhan said that government will support the entrepreneurs in all possible ways to market their products. He said that, all innovators, CSIRs and CFTRI researchers are now focusing on sharing technologies to reach the general public.



The Minister earlier inaugurated the Centre for Food Nano Technology and the 'Make in India Food pavilion' at CFTRI Campus. The Centre for Food Nano Technology would help to accelerate the applications of nanotechnology in food that have relevance in the food industry and consumer market at large. CSIR-CFTRI, being a pioneer institute in the area of food research, can play a significant role in developing advanced processes and products for nanodelivery of food bioactive compounds with improved stability and bioavailability via nanoemulsions, solid lipid nanoparticles, liposomes or biopolymer based nanoparticles. Later addressing the media, Dr Harshavardhan said that the union government is committed to transform India as a global hub for wellness food. Currently India processed only 2.2% of the total production which is far less compared to USA, Philippines and China. Almost 35% of fruits and vegetables are wasted because of the lack of processing and storage capabilities. As the market for soft drink is growing at 30% annually with a whopping 25000 crores for carbonated drinks, this research outcome has immense possibilities in the consumer segment, said the minister who tasted the carbonated drinks and other products which are ready to enter into the market very soon.

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