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Use of biotech in agriculture revolutionary: Mr R M Singh

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Laying the foundation stone of Indian Institute of Agricultural Bio-Technology at Garh Khatanga near Ranchi (Jharkhand) on August 25, 2014, the union agriculture minister, Mr Radha Mohan Singh stated that there is a need for bringing about a second green revolution, particularly, in the eastern states of the country which were not covered earlier during the first green revolution. He mentioned that development can be accelerated in these states because of adequate human resource and suitability of the states for organic farming as use of pesticides,Â chemicals and fertilizers here is almost nil. As such agricultural biotechnology will play a significant role in increasing quality production in these states.

His comments are being looked at as a positive signal as a whole but there is still a lot of air that has to be cleared on genetically modified crops and the regulations surrounding it.Â

Talking further about the inistitute, Mr Singh said that with its opening, the provisions made for biotechnological education will pave a way for developing trained personnel who will create awareness among farmers about advanced agriculture by use of biotechnology techniques along with the traditional methods of farming.

The argiculture minister mentioned that in the past due to climatic changes and fluctuations in temperature, agriculture has been adversely affected. This has led to not only reduction in production but has also affected the quality of crops. He further added that with the use of biotechnology the crops can be made climate- resilient and reduction in production can be checked.

The minister said that there was an urgent need for setting up such types of institutes in this region. The central government has taken a decision to open the Indian institute of Agricultural Biotechnology in Jharkhand keeping in view the importance of agricultural biotechnology. The mission of this institute will be to strengthen ongoing research work and fundamental research in the field of biotechnology, as also building the human resource capacity. This institute will generate technology to enhance agricultural production, give postgraduate and PhD degrees to students, he said.

This will be helpful in the development of quality human resource and in employment generation. This institute will be helpful in strengthening employment security and food security for the tribal population and farmers of this state and the entire country. The government proposes to confer deemed university status to this institute, he added.