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Government will utilize scientific talent for industry: Dr Harsh Vardhan

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Dr Harsh Vardhan, union science and technology minister, has said that Indian scientists and technocrats have an important role to play in implementing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Make in India". Addressing scientists and young researchers of the North East Institute of Science and Technology (NEIST) in Jorhat, Assam, on November 16, 2014, the minister remarked, "A terrific explosion of scientific energy is waiting to be tapped. The Narendra Modi government will channelize this into giving Indian industry a competitive edge in the global economy.

"The nationwide network of laboratories under the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) would also need to give solutions to enable local communities everywhere improve their standards of living," said the minister adding that NEIST's scientists are aware that climate change affects the phenology of crops, emergence of new agricultural pests and spread of new weeds in agriculture. They are already doing commendable work in this area.

"I am here to convey to you the Prime Minister's message that we want a strong and developed India -but not at the cost of the Environment. The North-East is India's greatest resource of biodiversity, genetic resources, ground water and countless other treasures. Accordingly I have instructed NEIST to develop programmes for their safeguarding."

He recounted that as union health minister, he had stressed on use of medicinal and aromatic plants for their vast medical use. NEIST's research output would be crucial to creating a viable economy for local communities.

Dr Harsh Vardhan showed keen interest in the drugs (ointments) to fight arthritis and fungus developed by the institute. He stressed on the need to expedite development of the chemical lead compound for production of anti-lung cancer drugs - a project of NEIST which is in its advanced stage.