

₹11,000 crore for self-sufficiency in edible oil production: PM

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The Centre will spend ₹11,000 crore on a new mission to ensure self-sufficiency in edible oil production at a time when India's dependence on expensive imports has driven retail oil prices to new highs, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday.

This financial outlay for the **National Mission on Edible Oil-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) will be over a five-year period**, Agriculture Ministry officials later said.

The Prime Minister was speaking at a virtual event to

release the ninth instalment **of income support worth ₹19,500 crore to 9.75 crore farmers under the PM Kisan scheme.**

"Today, when India is being recognised as a major agricultural exporting country, then it is not appropriate for us to depend on imports for our edible oil needs," Mr. Modi said noting that the **share of imported palm oil is more than 55%.** "We have to change this situation. The thousands of crores that we have to give to others abroad to buy edible oil should be given to the farmers of the country only," he added,

naming north-eastern India and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands as prime locations for oil palm cultivation.

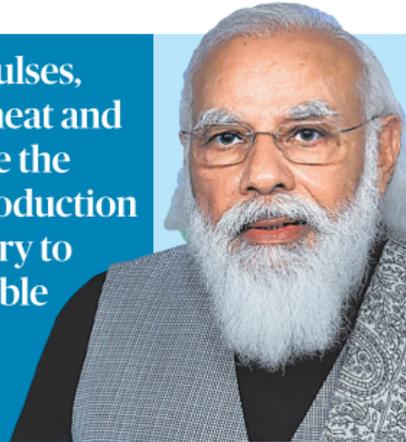
In response to a Rajya Sabha query in February 2020, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal had said the **NMEO proposal would aim to reduce import dependence from 60% to 45% by 2024-25, by increasing domestic edible oil production from 10.5 million tonnes to 18 million tonnes, a 70% growth target.**

It projected a 55% growth in oilseed production, to 47.8 million tonnes. It is not clear whether these targets



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Prime Minister



have changed under the final version of the mission.

Rise in yield

The NMEO-OP's predecessor was the National Mission on Oil Seeds and Oil Palm, which was launched at the

fag end of the UPA government's tenure and later merged with the National Food Security Mission. Laying out its achievements in May 2020, the Agriculture Ministry said oilseed production had grown 35% from

27.5 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 37.3 million tonnes by 2020-21. Although oilseed acreage rose only 8.6% over that six year period, yields rose more than 20%.

At the PM-Kisan event, Mr. Modi noted that although the country's granaries were full of cereals such as rice and wheat, with the government making record purchases from farmers at MSP rates, self-sufficiency was yet to be attained in pulses and oil. Previous efforts to boost the production of pulses in the country had resulted in a 50% growth over the last six years, he said. "The work we

did in pulses, or in the past with wheat and paddy, now we have to take the same resolution for the production of edible oil also. For our country to be self-sufficient in this edible oil, we have to work fast," he added.

"Through this mission, more than ₹11,000 crore will be invested in the edible oil ecosystem. The government will ensure that farmers get all needed facilities, from quality seeds to technology. Along with promoting the cultivation of oil palm, this mission will also expand the cultivation of our other traditional oilseed crops," he said.