

India to get world-class agri-biotech research institute

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New institute in Jharkhand to push agri-biotech research



New Delhi: The Union Cabinet of India has approved a proposal of the Ministry of Agriculture for the establishment of an Indian Institute of Agricultural Biotechnology (IIAB) in Ranchi, Jharkhand. The institute, under the Department of Agricultural Research (DARE), will come up at the cost of approximately \$51 million (Rs 287.50 crore) during the 12th Five Year Plan.

The setting up of the institution is in keeping with the government's efforts to boost farm productivity to meet the needs of a growing population. As the net cultivable area of 142 million hectares in the country is not likely to increase, an increase in production per hectare is the only way to meet the demand. The mandate of the institute will be to undertake multidisciplinary research to develop crops with traits such as increased yield or increased tolerance to biotic and abiotic stress.

As a mother institute, it will provide both curricula and course material to India's agricultural universities currently running or trying to establish successful agricultural biotechnology graduate and post graduate programs. As a deemed university, it will include schools for genomics, bioinformatics, genetic engineering, nano biotechnology, diagnostics and prophylactics, basic and social sciences and commercialization. The institute will be involved in design and start academic programs to develop the highly trained manpower required for fundamental research in agricultural biotechnology, and award post graduate doctoral and post-doctoral degrees.

It will provide research output to breeders and developers in agricultural universities and other institutions to develop the germplasm and vaccines that would enhance productivity and reduce losses due to biotic and abiotic stress.