

Safal unit launch today

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Ranchi, March 6: Chief minister Raghubar Das will inaugurate a food and vegetable processing unit set up by National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) at Nagri near Ranchi tomorrow.

NDDB chairman Dilip Rath told the media this evening that the unit was being set up by Mother Dairy Fruits and Vegetables, a wholly owned subsidiary of NDDB, at an expenditure of Rs 82.77 crore. "It is being set up in two phases. The first phase comprising an IQF (individual quick freezers) freezing line with an annual capacity of 5,650 tonne will be commissioned tomorrow," he said.

Products of this facility will be marketed under Safal, the brand used by Mother Dairy.

Mother Dairy managing director S. Nagarajan, who was also present at the briefing, said civil construction of the second phase comprising a pulp processing unit of 17,700 tonne capacity was also nearly complete. It would be commissioned by the end of the year.

In the first phase, freezing of vegetables, particularly green peas, would be taken up, while



NDDB chairman Dilip Rath in Ranchi on Monday.

Picture by Prashant Mitra

in the second phase, processing of tomatoes would be done.

"But quality of tomatoes available locally is not of processing variety. Hence, its quality needs to be upgraded," Nagarajan said, adding they had already engaged their procurement team for motivating farmers to use high quality seeds for getting the desired yield.

"The turnover of the facility in its full capacity is pegged at Rs 150 crore with around 45 per cent likely to be transferred to farmers," NDDB chairman Rath said, adding that the unit would also spur massive direct and indirect employment in ancillary services like supply chain, logistics and transportation.

NDDB got the clearance from the state government in December 2015 for setting up the fruit and vegetable processing plant on a plot measuring about 27 acres in Nagri.

Besides retail sale of vegetables, it also plans to prepare sauce and pulp concentrates using fruits such as banana, guava, mango, papaya and litchi.