

Fresh fruits, veggies at filling stations

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: People in the city can now get fresh fruits and vegetables at petrol pumps. Mother Dairy Fruit and Vegetables Limited-Safal, an initiative of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), will open outlets at three petrol pumps in the city on Monday.

“Union petroleum minister Dharmendra Pradhan has proposed this idea of having fruits and vegetables outlets in petrol pumps.

We worked out the plan and are implementing it for the first time in Odisha,” said chairman of NDDB Dilip Rath.

The pilot project is aimed at providing fruits and vegetables to consumers at affordable prices at the same time providing market linkage to vegetable growers and give them a fair price for their produces. “Initially the board will procure fresh fruits and vegetables from vegetable growers’ associations,” he said.

He said Odisha produces 25% less vegetables than the national average and 50% less fruits than the national avera-

ge. Despite having huge potential in the fruits and vegetables sectors in terms of productivity, Odisha is largely dependent on its neighbouring states. Unlike other states Odisha has plenty of groundwater and favourable weather conditions for vegetable growing, he added.

The board also has plans to provide training to farmers and help them with best practices from across the country through agronomic interven-

tion for key horticulture crops like banana,

NDDB INITIATIVE

parbal, tomato, brinjal, chilli and lady’s finger.

Apart from ensuring quality and hygienic fruits and vegetables to consumers, Safal will also promote farm producer organisations, which will streamline procurement. “We have plans to include 1,000 growers from different districts under the project,” Rath said.

Mother Dairy has also plans to expand the facilities to more filling centres in coming days. “If we get good response then we would expand in the state and will also replicate the model in other states,” Rath said.