

Atamanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (self reliant) campaign was launched by Indian government last year. It was launched for promotion of Indian materials and goods to penetrate in global market. Local to global is the basis. Its definitely aimed at building in a scale and volume and eventually increase the global market share of Indian products. This will not only boost the economy but also will improve the stand of India in global market which will be beneficial by all aspects in future.

India's Exports of Processed Foods and Related Items in US\$ (billion)



Source: Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)

Graphic©Asia Briefing Ltd.

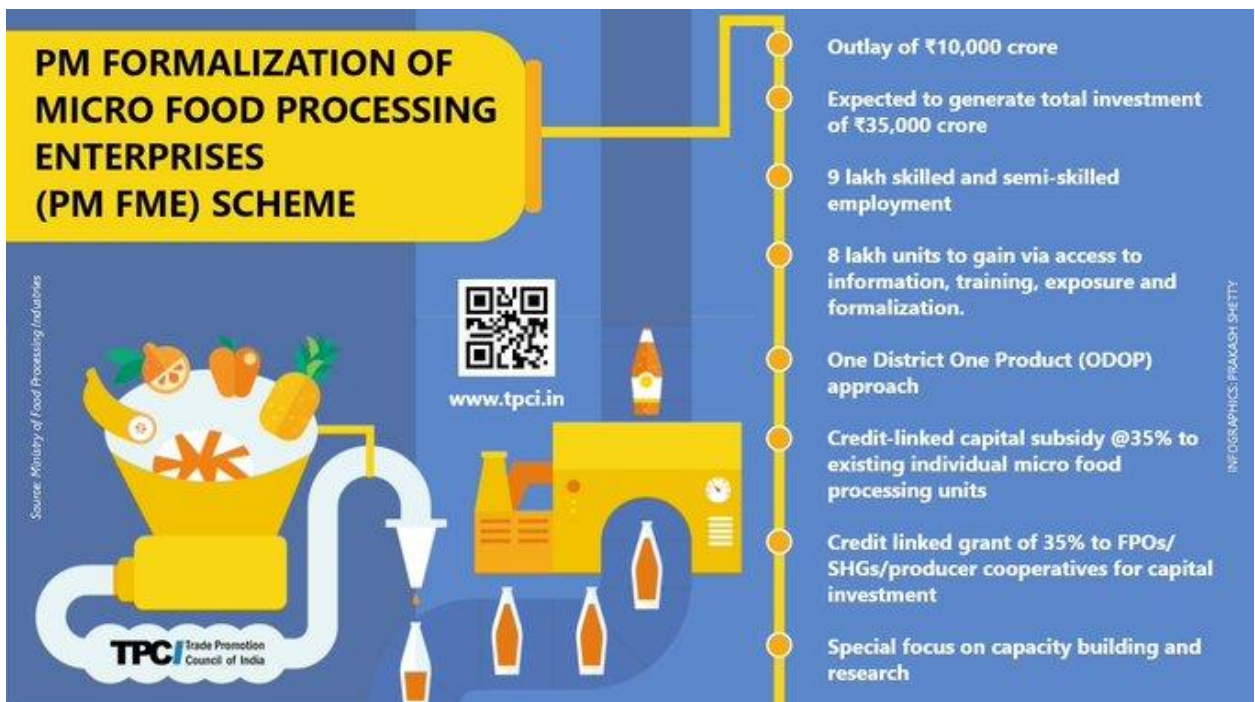
Here we are going to discuss Atamanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan with respect to food processing sector. The food processing sector in India is worth of 600 billion US dollars accommodating 75 lakh workers. Out of which 15 lakhs are women. It's a sunrise sector after textile and automobile. Considering this it is given an importance in Atamanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. Not only just boosting economy but it is also in accordance with National Agenda of doubling farmers income. Even though it has a potential and plays a major role in GDP, it has its own obstacles and limitations. To mention, some are enlisted below

1. High cost capital investment for new entrepreneurs and MSMEs.
2. Unavailability of affordable finances.
3. Minimum support for infrastructural ecosystem.

Apart from these, there are also few requirements which can be considered to complete the loop. These are quality of raw material, availability of skilled and semiskilled manpower etc.

For existing units and entrepreneurs in this sector, there is a huge need for value additions to products and processes, supply chain availability and management, distribution network etc. Those needs can be fulfilled when the focus will be on management and soft skill development. In my interview to a newspaper in 2015, I have mentioned about need of skilled and trained manpower in food processing sector. So capacity building, development of skill sets, management as per various sectors of food processing and technological advancement is need of an hour. State and central government agencies and institutions, Universities and NGOs working in this segments can take early and aggressive initiatives to overcome this challenge. Financial requirements like high capital incentive ventures should also be taken care of. New and MSME entrepreneurs should also be given capacity building training along with marketing and business development inputs for growth and profit.

Prime Ministers Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) is very appreciable initiative by the Government which includes all skill and business developmental activities. Financial aspects are also well taken care of. In short PMFME is will generate Rupees 35000 crores investment with 9 lakh skilled and unskilled employment in between 2021 to 2025. About 8 lakh units will be benefited by information, training, better exposure and formalization.



Food processing is a major part of Atamanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan for its direct and indirect benefits to farmers, entrepreneurs and country's economy as well.