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Increase sugar output: Pawar

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THE Union Minister for Agriculture, Food, Public Distribution, and Consumer Affairs, Mr Sharad Pawar, has called upon the scientists in the field of sugarcane research to develop cane varieties to meet the need of the hour.

Speaking at a function organised to mark the foundation stone laying of

the Sugarcane Biotechnology Laboratory at the Sugarcane Breeding Institute here, Mr Pawar underscored the need for increasing sugar production to meet rising annual demand.

"This can be achieved only by increasing the productivity of the cane and in higher recovery," he said, and called upon scientists to focus their research to-

wards developing high-yielding and high sucrose cane varieties, evolving pest- and disease-resistant varieties tolerant to drought and salt, and above all, incorporating early maturity.

"The only alternative at this juncture is in striving for higher productivity, considering the limited scope for expansion in cane area."