

1.1 Policy Initiatives - Government of India

The following 6 Pillars were highlighted in the first ever digital Budget 2021-22 presented by Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, GoI:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Physical & Financial Capital and Infrastructure
- Inclusive Development for Aspirational India
- Reinvigorating Human Capital
- Innovation and R&D
- Minimum Government and Maximum Governance

1.1.1 Following important announcements were made in the Union Budget 2021-22 for agriculture and farmers' welfare:

- i. The target for agricultural credit enhanced to Rs.16.5 lakh crore for higher credit availability to farmers and agriculture & allied sectors; Animal husbandry, dairy & fisheries to be the focus areas
- ii. Rural Infrastructure Development Fund to be enhanced to Rs.40,000 crore from Rs.30,000 crore.
- iii. Water conservation commitment stands enhanced as the Micro Irrigation Fund corpus has been increased to Rs.10,000 crore via NABARD.
- iv. SWAMITVA Scheme to be extended to all States/UTs and 1.80 lakh property owners in 1,241 villages have already been provided cards.
- v. 'Operation Green Scheme' to be extended to 22 perishable products, to boost value addition in agriculture & allied products.
- vi. 1,000 more mandis to be integrated with e-NAM to bring transparency and competitiveness.
- vii. APMCs to get access to the Agriculture Infrastructure Funds for augmenting infrastructure facilities.
- viii. Setting up a multi-purpose seaweed park in Tamil Nadu proposed to help leverage country's vast ocean resources and R&D capabilities.

Proposals relating to Fisheries sector:

- i. Investments to develop marine and inland modern fishing harbours and fish landing centres.
- ii. 5 major fishing harbours in Kochi, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Paradip and Petuaghat to be developed as hubs of economic activity.
- iii. Multipurpose Seaweed Park in Tamil Nadu to promote seaweed cultivation.

Tax Proposals on Agriculture Products:

- i. Custom duty on cotton increased to 10% and on raw silk and silk yarn from 10% to 15%.
- ii. Withdrawal of end-use based concession on denatured ethyl alcohol.

iii. Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC) on a small number of items.

Achievements and Milestones during the COVID-19 pandemic

- **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY):**
 - Valued at **Rs.2.76 lakh crore**
 - Free food grain to **80 crore people**
 - Free cooking gas for **8 crore families**
 - Direct cash to over **40 crore farmers, women, elderly, the poor and the needy**

- **Aatma Nirbhar Bharat package (ANB 1.0):**
 - Estimated at **Rs.23 lakh crore** – more than **10% of GDP**
 - PMGKY, three ANB packages (ANB 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0), and announcements made later were like **5 mini-budgets** in themselves
 - **Rs.27.1 lakh crore** worth of financial impact of all three ANB packages including RBI's measures – amounting to **more than 13% of GDP**

- **Structural reforms:**
 - One Nation One Ration Card
 - Agriculture and Labour Reforms
 - Redefinition of MSMEs
 - Commercialisation of the Mineral Sector
 - Privatisation of Public Sector Undertakings
 - Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme
 - 2 Made-in-India vaccines – medically safeguarding citizens of India and those of 100 plus countries against COVID-19 & 2 or more new vaccines expected soon

1.1.2 Measures initiated by Govt. of India to mitigate farmers' distress during COVID-19

The worldwide outbreak of Covid-19 has posed a severe threat to human health and to the economy at large and disrupted agriculture supply chain. The various mitigating measures initiated to ensure a sustainable food system are described as under:

1. NABARD extended additional re-finance support of Rs.30,000 crore, in addition to Rs.90,000 already being provided, for meeting crop loan requirement of Rural Cooperative Banks and RRBs.
2. Rs.2 lakh crore credit boost to 2.5 crore farmers under Kisan Credit Card Scheme.
3. Rs.1 lakh crore under Agri Infrastructure Fund for creation of farm-gate infrastructure for farmers.
4. Rs.10,000 crore towards the scheme for Formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises (MFE) to be implemented over a period of five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25.

5. Rs.20,000 crore for fishermen through Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY). Rs.11,000 crore for activities in Marine, Inland fisheries and Aquaculture along with Rs.9000 crore for Infrastructure i.e. Fishing Harbours, Cold chain, Markets, etc.
6. To support private investment in Dairy Processing, value addition and cattle feed infrastructure, an Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF) of Rs.15,000 crore was set up.
7. 10,00,000 ha to be covered under Herbal cultivation in next two years with outlay of Rs.4,000 crore to lead to Rs.5,000 crore income generation for farmers.
8. “Operation Greens” run by Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MOFPI) will be extended from Tomatoes, Onion and Potatoes (TOP) to ALL fruit and vegetables. 50% subsidy on transportation from surplus to deficient markets and 50% subsidy on storage, including cold storages, to be provided. This will lead to better price realisation to farmers, reduced wastages and affordability of products for consumers.
9. Rs.65,000 crore to be provided to ensure increased supply of fertilizers to farmers to enable timely availability of fertilisers in the upcoming crop season.
10. The GoI, launched the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) for ensuring food security through public distribution system, direct benefit transfers to widows, pensioners and women.
11. Besides, the cash support, for better price realisation on farmers’ produce during the ongoing pandemic, GoI has substantially increased the MSP vis-à-vis the cost of cultivation and enhanced the number of commodities to be procured through the state agencies.