

Agriculture and Budget 2018-19

IN India 72.2 % population is living in 6.38 lakh villages where people are depending on agriculture and livestock for their livelihood. Climate change, erratic rainfall, deficient quantity of water for irrigation, and poor soil - health has restricted crop productivity. During in last five decades India's production has enhanced 3.7-fold. However, the strategies could not identify the need to raise the farmers' income and there was no direct relation to farmers' welfare. But during 2018-19 budget the focus of the Government of India outlined a slew of measures to boost agricultural production by ensuring irrigation facilities in 96 irrigation deprived districts in addition to funds to boost fisheries and animal husbandry. About 86% farmers are small- and marginal- and our government in doing efforts to link them to markets to get adequate remuneration for their produce. One of the steps in taken is taken by our government is setting the minimum support price at 1.5 – fold of the cost of production of the *kharif* crop. Our government has also announced an increase in agricultural credit to ₹ 11 trillion. There is need to launch 'Operation Green' to promote agricultural logistics and for that our government will efforts to link villages and rural road to agricultural market, *Krishi Vigyan Kendras*, *Kisan Mandi Samiti* under the *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana*.

To secure future of agriculture and to improve livelihood of half of India's population, adequate attention needs to be given to improve the welfare of farmers and raise agricultural income. Achieving this goal will reduce persistent disparity between farm and non-farm income, alleviate agrarian distress, promote inclusive growth and infuse dynamism in the agriculture sector. Doubling farmers' income by 2022 over the base year of 2015-16 is a quite challenging aim, but it is needed, and is attainable. This requires annual growth of 10.41 % in farmers' income and implies that the on-going and previously achieved rate of growth in farm income has to be sharply accelerated. Therefore, strong measures will be needed to harness all possible sources of growth in farmers' income within as well as outside agriculture and its allied sectors.

More priorities to farm sector are given to inspire farm-skilled people to migrate from urban to rural areas and improve condition of rural areas and villagers. This will solve urban problems and change face of rural India. According to *Niti Aayog* to doubling the farmers income by 2022 four-point action plan was suggested. According to plan remunerative prices for farmers by reforming the existing marketing structure; raising the productivity; reforming agricultural policy; and relief measures were suggested. Considering this the Government of India has set a target of doubling agriculture income by 2022 and raising agricultural growth rate from 6.5% to more than 10%. This will be a bench mark for the country. About 20×10³ km of river length is converted into navigable waterways that may be improved adding five more waterways under 'Bharatmala' Project. There is need to ensure farmers to get adequate incumbent from crop prices (production cost + 50% more) and in this direction *Niti Aayog* will take a suitable step. There is need to strengthen agricultural programmes like 'Per drop, more crop', 'Farmer FIRST', 'Prime Minister Phasal Beema Yojana', 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana', 'Make in India', 'Skill India', 'Saubhagya', 'Ujjawala', 'Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana', 'Soil-health Card', 'Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana' (organic farming), 'Rashtriya Gokul Mission' etc. These are target oriented schemes that clear deadlines and dashboards tracking implementations on a near real-time basis.

According to National Sample Survey Office data, only 57.8% of rural household in 2012-13 were agricultural based which donate that atleast one member of the family is engaged in farming. Even for rural families 59.8% of their income was earned from cultivation and animal husbandry. The effects of agrarian distress can reach to null point through policies targeting the other rural half for whom a *pucca*-house with toilet, LPG connection may matter more than the price of paddy.

The ICAR-DKMA has brought out a special issue of *Indian Farming* (January 2018) on 'Doubling Farmers' Income by 2022' and has also disseminating agricultural knowledge for public awareness through ICAR web page. In the same direction present issue also covers articles such as 'Integrated farming system model for livelihood security and doubling the income of small- and marginal-farmers under changing climatic scenario', 'Sustainable benefits to sugarcane farmers through a strong ethanol blending programme in India' etc.

ICAR has also taken steps for enhancing farmers' income by adopting appropriate technologies like Intercropping, Integrated Farming System, better Irrigation Technologies, Rice,-Duck,-*Makhana* farming etc.


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