

Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu participated as Chief Guest at the launching Ceremony of 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi'

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit participated as Chief Guest at the launching Ceremony of 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi' at Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Vepery, Chennai today (24.02.2019) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "We are all assembled here today on the occasion of the launch of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. This historic program which is designed to provide assured income support to small and marginal farmers all over the country entails an annual outlay of Rs.75,000 Crores. By this there is a substantial addition to the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture which goes up from Rs.58,080 Crores in 2018-19 to Rs.1,41,174 Crores in 2019-2020.

During the last few years, several steps have been taken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare of Union of India in the interest of farmers. "Farmers' Welfare" is the primary goal of this Government's agricultural policy. For its implementation, increasing employment in agricultural sector and enhancing the income of farmers are the important factors. To achieve this, the government is trying to increase productivity, reduce cost, and prioritize crops with high value, reduce risks and make agriculture sustainable. The present Government, which has been continuously working on the motto of "Sabka Saath – Sabka Vikas", has once again, with Budget 2019, reaffirmed its commitment to the all-round development of agriculture and allied sectors and enhancing the income of farmers. That is why, the government in accordance with its philosophy of increasing both agriculture production and farmers' income, has created history in Budget 2019 by making provisions of income support and other schemes with focus on rural India.

The "Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)" that is being launched today will benefit vulnerable landholding farmer families, having cultivable land upto 2 hectares. They will be provided direct income support at the rate of Rs 6,000 per year to ensure their investment and other needs. This income support will be transferred directly into the bank accounts of beneficiary farmers, in three equal

installments of Rs 2,000 each. This programme which is being fully funded by the Government of India will protect farmers from the clutches of moneylenders and ensure continuity in their farm activities. This scheme will also enable them to modernize their agricultural practices, and this income support along with other schemes will help them live a life of dignity.

This programme is being made effective from 1st December 2018 and the first installment for the period upto 31st March 2019 would be paid during in this financial year itself. A sum of Rs 20,000 crore has been proposed for 2018-19 for this. From 2019-20, the benefit will be transferred into bank accounts through Aadhar-based database.

A PM-KISAN portal has been started for implementation of the scheme. State/UTs are responsible for identifying the beneficiaries under this scheme and will upload the same on the portal. Based on this list, the Government of India will make direct payment into the account.

Another farmer friendly programme is the Rashtriya Gokul Mission which was started for by the Government of India under Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi to promote our indigenous breed of cattle and buffaloes. It also serves to preserve their genetic resources in scientific and holistic form and for continuous growth in the productivity of Indian bovine. Considering its importance, the allocation for this scheme which was Rs 250 crore in Budget 2018-19 has been raised to Rs 750 crore.

Continuing its effort in this direction, the "Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog" has been proposed to be established to upscale sustainable genetic upgradation of cow resources and to enhance production and productivity of cows. The Aayog will also look after effective implementation of laws and welfare schemes for cows. Besides advising '**Gaushala**' and '**Gausadan**' involved in protecting cows, the body will also help in coordination between livestock farmers and cooperatives, FPOs, dairy entrepreneurs etc.

India is the second largest fish producing nation in the world accounting for 6.3% of global production. The fisheries sector contributes 1% to GDP and provides livelihood to about 1.5 crore people at the primary level. To provide sustained and focused attention towards development of this sector, Government has set up a separate Department of Fisheries.

The SDRF allocation has been almost doubled. Corpus funds have been created such as the Rs 5000 Crore micro irrigation fund, Rs 10,081 Crore for Dairy

Processing and Infrastructure Development Fund, Rs 7550 Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF), Rs 2,450 crore for development of animal husbandry infrastructure and Rs 2,000 crore for the development of Rural Agricultural Market Infrastructure.

Many policy reforms have been carried out with the above financial provisions. For the first time, Soil Health Card is being provided to farmers on the basis of a national standard, eNAM has been started to help farmers receive fair value of their produce and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna to cover the maximum risk of farmers' crops based on the Scale of Finance by removing capping on minimum premium. Soil Health Card and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana for organic farming, Har Medh Par Ped for sustainable agriculture, 'Per Drop More Crop' with special emphasis on micro irrigation and restructured National Bamboo Mission.

It is important to bring farmers within the ambit of institutional credit for which the Government of India with the support of State governments and banks have started a campaign for Kisan Credit Card (KCC). This not only helps in increasing agricultural production but also productivity. KCC facility is being provided to farmers engaged in Animal Husbandry and Fisheries activities and the benefit of interest subvention scheme where farmers are given short-term loan up to Rs 3 lakh per annum by banks on timely payment of loan at the rate of 4%, will be given for Animal Husbandry and Fisheries also 2% interest subvention to the farmers pursuing the activities of animal husbandry and fisheries, who avail loan through Kisan Credit Card will also be provided. It is worth noting that now all farmers affected by severe natural calamities will be provided the benefit of interest subvention of 2%. Further, in case of timely repayment of loan, they will also get an additional 3% interest subvention.

At present, there are about 7 crore active KCC, which means that almost 50% of the farmers are still out of the institutional credit system. To ensure provision of easy and concessional credit and to bring all farmers under KCC fold, Government has decided to initiate a comprehensive drive with a simplified application form. Under this campaign, all interested farmers who are engaged in agriculture, animal husbandry or fisheries business, can submit application of Kisan Credit Card to the banks by filling a simple application form. In addition to the photograph, they will have to give only three documents- landownership record, identity card and residence certificate. In this context, the financial services department has issued

orders separately to all financial institutions. The State Governments have also been requested to organize village wise or bank branch camps under a strategy in which field level staff will assist in filling up the application form and providing necessary records. So far, farmers had to pay various types of fees related to process, documents, inspection etc for applying for Kisan Credit Card. In the interest of the farmers, Indian Banks Association has also decided that the above charges will not be levied for loan upto Rs 3 lakh. It is clear from these provisions and Budget 2019 that the government has taken all steps to ensure the development and income of our farmers. The fixing of minimum support price and providing income support will be helpful in doubling the income of farmers by 2022.

Agriculture contributes about 17-18 percent of country's GDP and employs more than 50 percent of total workforce. The share of cultivated Land area in India, is about 60 percent of the total land area making us the No. 1 nation in terms of arable land availability in the world, India is also the Largest producer of Milk, Cashew nuts, Coconuts, Tea, Ginger, Turmeric, Black Pepper, bananas, mangos in the world. The Largest Cattle population is in India. We come second in the production of Wheat, Rice, Sugar and Groundnut and pulses and agriculture has become an important earner of foreign exchange through exports of tea, coffee, cotton, rice, wheat, spices, fruits and vegetables.

Agriculture also provides the basic raw material for Many Industries like cotton, sugar, Jute and food processing and also serves as a large consumer of farm equipment in the form of tractors, tillers, etc.

I am happy that a large number of farmers are taking part in the launch of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi today.

A bright future beckons them. They will be greeted with success in all their efforts. My best wishes and greetings to all the members of the farming community of Tamil Nadu on this occasion."

On this occasion, Thiru. Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Railways & Coal, Government of India, Thiru.Pon.Radhakrishnan, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Finance and Shipping Dr. C. Balachandran, Vice Chancellor, TANUVAS, Dr. K.K. Vijayan, Director, ICAR-CIBA and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai – 22

Sd/-

Date: 24.02.2019

Joint Director (PR)