



English rendering of PM's address during post-budget webinar on “Agriculture and Rural Transformation”

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Namaskar!

In the third webinar of the Budget Webinar Series, I extend my warm welcome to all of you. Earlier, two webinars were held on important topics such as Technology, Reforms, and Economic Growth. Today, the discussion is focused on crucial sectors like Rural Economy and Agriculture. You all have contributed immensely to the budget-making process with your valuable suggestions, and you must have noticed that your inputs are reflected in the budget and have been very useful. But now that the budget has been presented, it is equally important to ensure that the country derives its full potential. Your experience, your suggestions, and simple ways to maximize the benefits of the budget for the largest number of people are vital. How can every penny allocated in the budget be utilized fully and quickly? Your suggestions are very important for this webinar.

Friends,

You all know that agriculture, farming, and craftsmanship are the main pillars of our economy. Agriculture is also a strategic pillar of India's long-term development journey, and with this vision, our government has continuously strengthened the agricultural sector. Nearly 100 million farmers have received more than 4 lakh crore rupees under the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi. Reforms in MSP have ensured farmers receive up to one and a half times returns. Institutional credit coverage has crossed 75 percent. Under the PM Crop Insurance Scheme, claims worth nearly 2 lakh crore rupees have been settled. These efforts have significantly reduced farmers' risks and provided them with basic economic security. This has boosted the confidence of the agricultural sector. Today, from food grains and pulses to oilseeds, the country is achieving record production. But now, as the second quarter of the 21st century begins, 25 years have passed, it is equally necessary to infuse new energy into agriculture. This year's budget has taken new steps in this direction. I am confident that the discussions and suggestions emerging from this webinar will help in implementing the budget provisions swiftly on the ground.

Friends,

Today, global markets are opening up, and global demand is changing. In this webinar, it is essential to discuss how to make our farming export-oriented. We have diverse climates, and we must take full advantage of them. We are very rich in agro-climatic zones. This year's budget offers countless new opportunities in this regard. It sets the direction for increasing productivity and boosting export strength. The budget focuses on high-value agriculture. Regional-specific promotion has been proposed for products like coconut, cashew, cocoa, and sandalwood. You know that our southern states, especially Kerala and Tamil Nadu, produce a lot of coconuts. But now, those trees have aged and lost their productivity. To provide additional benefits to farmers in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, special emphasis has been placed on coconuts this time, which will benefit farmers in the coming days.

Friends,

Looking towards the North East, few people know that the word “agarbatti” comes from agarwood. In Himalayan states, temperate nut crops are being promoted in this budget. When export-oriented production increases, rural areas will see employment generation through processing and value addition. A coordinated action in this direction is essential, and all stakeholders must deliberate together. If we scale high-value agriculture collectively, it can transform agriculture into a globally competitive sector. How can agri-experts, industry, and farmers come together? How can farmers be connected to global markets? How can goals be set for quality, branding, and standards? Promoting all these aspects will enhance the importance of this webinar. I would also like to emphasize another point. Today, the world is more health-conscious. Holistic healthcare, organic diets, and organic food are gaining interest. In India, we must emphasize chemical-free farming and natural farming. Natural farming and chemical-free products can become a highway to global markets. For this, certification and laboratory facilities are being planned by the government. But you must also share your views on this.

Friends,

A major factor in boosting exports is the potential of the fisheries sector. India is the second-largest fish producer in the world. Today, our reservoirs, ponds, and water bodies together produce about 4 lakh tons of fish. But there is potential for an additional 20 lakh tons of production. Imagine, if we add 20 lakh tons to the current 4 lakh tons, how much the lives of our poor fishermen will change. We have an opportunity to diversify rural income. Fisheries can become a major platform for export growth, as global demand exists. If practical suggestions emerge from this webinar, such as accurate mapping of reservoir potential, cluster planning, and strong coordination between fisheries departments and local communities, it will be excellent. Hatcheries, feed, processing, branding, export, and necessary logistics—all require new business models. This is an opportunity to transform fisheries into a high-value, high-impact sector for rural prosperity, and we must all work together in this direction.

Friends,

Animal husbandry is a high-growth pillar of the rural economy. India is the largest milk producer in the world and ranks second in egg production. To take this further, we must focus on breeding quality, disease prevention, and scientific management. Another important aspect is livestock health. When I speak of One Earth One Health, it includes the health of plants and animals. India is now self-reliant in vaccine production. More than 125 crore doses have been administered to protect animals from foot-and-mouth disease. Under the National Gokul Mission, technology is being expanded. Farmers engaged in animal husbandry are now benefiting from the Kisan Credit Card. To encourage private investment, the Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund has been launched. You also know that we have implemented the Gobardhan scheme. Animal waste and village waste can be utilized under this scheme to keep villages clean. Just as milk generates income, gobar (cow dung) can also generate income. Gobardhan can contribute significantly to energy security through gas supply. This is a multipurpose benefit and very useful for villages. I urge all state governments to prioritize and promote this scheme.

Friends,

From past experiences, we have learned that relying on a single crop is risky for farmers. It limits income options. Therefore, we are focusing on crop diversification. In addition, the National Mission on Edible Oils and Pulses and the National Mission on Natural Farming are strengthening the agricultural sector.

Friends,

You also know that agriculture is a state subject, and states have significant agricultural budgets. We must continuously encourage states to fulfill their responsibilities. How can we help them? How can our suggestions be useful to them? Every rupee allocated for villages and farmers must be utilized properly.

We must strengthen budget provisions down to the district level. Only then can new policies benefit the maximum number of people.

Friends,

This is the century of technology, and the government is emphasizing bringing a technology culture into agriculture. Through e-NAM, market access has been democratized. The government is developing digital public infrastructure for agriculture through AgriStack. Under this, digital identities, i.e., farmer IDs, are being created. So far, nearly 9 crore farmer IDs have been generated, and about 30 crore land parcels have been digitally surveyed. AI-based platforms like Bharat-Vistar are bridging the gap between research institutions and farmers.

But friends,

Technology delivers results only when systems adopt it, institutions integrate it, and entrepreneurs build innovations upon it. In this webinar, you must present strong suggestions related to this. How can we integrate technology effectively? The suggestions emerging from this webinar will play a major role in this direction.

Friends,

Our government is committed to building rural prosperity. Schemes like Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Swamitva Yojana, PM Rural Road Scheme, and financial support to self-help groups have continuously strengthened the rural economy. We must also take the success of the Lakhpati Didi campaign to new heights. So far, we have succeeded in making 3 crore women in villages “Lakhpati Didis.” By 2029, we aim to add another 3 crore, making a total of 6 crore Lakhpati Didis. How can this target be achieved faster? Your suggestions will be crucial.

Friends,

A massive campaign for storage is underway in the country. Millions of warehouses are being built. Beyond storage, agri-entrepreneurs must increase innovation and investment in processing, supply chains, agri-tech, agri-fintech, and exports. I am confident that the deliberations today will energize the rural economy with new strength. My best wishes to all of you for this webinar, and I firmly believe that grassroots ideas will play a vital role in making this budget successful and reaching every village. Best wishes to you all.

Thank you very much. Namaskar!

MJPS/VJ

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