

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**UNION FINANCE MINISTER HOLDS HIS FIRST PRE-BUDGET
CONSULTATION MEETING WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF
AGRICULTURE SECTOR; VARIOUS SUGGESTIONS RECEIVED TO BOOST
AGRICULTURE GROWTH**

New Delhi, June 5, 2014
Jyaishta 15, 1936

The Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley said though Agriculture and its allied Sector employs largest numbers of people in the country yet its share in the GDP has contracted over the years. He said that the concerns of Agriculture Sector are high on the priority of the Government. The Finance Minister Shri Jaitley assured that despite the constraints of the economy as it exists today, the Government will try its best to boost this sector. The Finance Minister was making the opening remarks while holding his first Pre-Budget Consultation with the representatives of the Agriculture Sector here today.

Along with the Finance Minister, the meeting was attended by Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Dr. Arvind Mayaram, Finance Secretary, Shri Ratan P. Watal, Expenditure Secretary, Shri Rajiv Takru, Revenue Secretary, Shri Ashish Bahuguna, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation and other senior officers of the Ministry of Finance among others.

Various suggestions were received from the different representatives of the Agriculture Sector. Major suggestions include establishing a Kissan TV Channel to create awareness among farmers about new technologies, government programmes and quality parameters etc among others. Other suggestions included timely decision on 'Minimum Support Price' at cost of production plus 50%, timely and efficient procurement policy, priority for mechanization in all commodities, setting-up of commodity wise board, water conservation as a national priority with focus on drip & sprinkler irrigation; timely completion of irrigation projects and linking of rivers; setting-up of National Water Authority and River Valley Authorities among others. Other suggestions included use of information technology, new marketing technologies, setting-up of soil health testing facilities in each Panchayat, making animal husbandry a profitable occupation, and strengthening of agriculture research and extension facilities among others.

Representatives of different agriculture sector groups who participated in today's meeting included Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Shri S. Ayyappan,
[Type text]

Secretary (DARE) & Director General, Indian Council for Agriculture Research, Dr. Ramesh Chand, National Centre for Agricultural Economics & Policy Research (NCAP), Prof. Keshav Das, Gujarat Institute of Development Research, Dr. Gopal Naik, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, Dr. Ashok Vishandass, Commission for Agriculture Costs and Prices, Shri P. Chengal Reddy, Consortium of Indian Farmers Association, Dr. K.V. Prabhu, Indian Agriculture Research Institute Dr. Baldev Singh Dhillon, Punjab Agricultural University, Shri Siraj Chaudhary, Cargill India Pvt. Ltd., Shri Tushar Shah, International Water Management Institute, Shri Crispino Lobo, Watershed Organisation Trust, Dr. Dinesh, National Cooperative Union of India, Shri Vijayan Rajes, United Planters Association of South India (UPASI) and Shri Geemon Korah, All India Spices Exporter Forum among others.

[Type text]