

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

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**UNION FINANCE MINISTER HOLDS HIS SECOND PRE-BUDGET  
CONSULTATION MEETING WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF SOCIAL  
SECTOR GROUPS; FM ASKS SOCIAL SECTOR GROUPS TO HELP IN TAKING  
POSITIVE ADVANTAGE OF DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND**

**New Delhi, June 5, 2014**  
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The Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley said that social sector groups can play an important role in taking positive advantage of demographic dividend. Shri Jaitley said that we may have been implementing the various social sector programmes but there is need to upgrade them and their delivery mechanisms and also provide adequate interventions within the fiscal space available. He said that there is need to ensure that the benefits of these programmes reach the poor and marginalized and other weaker sections of the society. The Finance Minister was making the Opening Remarks while holding his second Pre-Budget Consultation with the representatives of the Social Sector related Groups here today.

Along with the Finance Minister, the meeting was attended by Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Shri Ratan P. Watal, Expenditure Secretary, Shri Rajiv Takru, Revenue Secretary, Shri Shankar Aggarwal, Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Shri Lov Verma, Secretary, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Shri Sudhir Bhargava, Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri R. Bhattacharya, Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Smt. Gauri Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment, representative from the Ministry of Rural Development and senior officers of the Ministry of Finance among others.

Various suggestions were received during the meeting from the representatives of the different Social Sector Groups. Major suggestions include higher budgetary allocation in General Budget 2014-215 for 2.68 crore disabled people in the country, simplification of procedures for seeking grants and their timely release, helping in making NGOs especially welfare NGOs self-sustainable and financially viable by giving certain tax concessions and allowing creation of corpus fund among others. Other suggestions include higher allocation to promote use of renewable energy especially solar and wind energy, focus on making a roadmap for replacing kerosene and diesel by renewable energy wherever possible and creation of National Green Energy Fund among others.

Other suggestions include adoption and implementation of the National Competition Policy, enactment and implementation of the Public Procurement Act and the National

Procurement Policy, enactment and implementation of an omnibus Financial Consumer Protection Act and fixing of Fiscal Management Practices by establishment of Parliamentary Budget Office, adoption of international best practices in budgetary planning and reduction of non-merit subsidies among others.

Other suggestions made during the aforesaid meeting include focus on financial inclusion by setting-up of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) by Public Sector Banks, universalize the pension for all the poor, extension of Rashtriya Swasthaya Beema Yojana(RSBY) to all the districts in the country, setting-up of old age home in each district of the country for destitute and vulnerable old age people, inculcation of value education in our system , setting-up of National Nutrition Mission and creation of a Dalit Fund to encourage any innovative activity undertaken by a SC/ST person.

Representatives of different social sector groups who participated in today's meeting included Shri Binju Abraham, PRADAN, , Shri Sandeep Pandey, ASHA, Shri M.P. Vasimalai, DHAN, Ms. Vinatha M. Reddy, GRAMEEN KOOA, Shri Ashok Khosla, Development Alternatives Group, Shri D.R. Mehta, JAIPUR FOOT, Mr. Mathew Cherian, HELPAGE, Dr. Rukmani Banerjee, PRATHAM, Shri H. Mahapatra, SA-DHAN, Shri Ajay Mehta, Sewa Mandir, Shri Ashok Bharti, NACDOR, Shri Pradeep S. Mehta, CUTS and Shri Samit Aich, Greenpeace among others.

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