



Five-point Programme to address Agrarian Distress

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- Indian farmers are in the state of distress due various uncertainties in agri sector.
- Such distress can be resolved by a Five-point programme concentrating only on key areas.

\n

\n\n

What are five major reasons which lead to agrarian distress?

\n\n

\n

- **Income uncertainty** - Agricultural transformation has been very slow in India, therefore, the process of generating higher income from agriculture has also been slow.

\n

\n\n

\n

- **Poor employment opportunities** -In the absence of regular employment in rural areas, the rural population, especially the youth, is migrating to urban areas to explore better avenues.

\n

- **Increased Risks** -Risk in agriculture has been increasing over the years, both production and price risks are leading to agrarian distress.

\n

- **Lack of infrastructure** -Agri-infrastructure has not developed commensurate with increasing agricultural production.

\n

\n\n

\n

- **Poor quality of life** -Rural India still lacks basic amenities such as sanitation, hygiene, drinking water, drainage, schooling and health care.

\n

\n\n

What measures had been taken by the government?

\n\n

\n

- Union Budgets of FY 2016-17 and 2017-18 were pro-agriculture and implemented many innovative solutions to address agrarian issues.
- More resources were allocated to agriculture and a number of programmes were initiated to increase irrigated area, improve soil health, promote agro-processing and cover production risk, among other things.
- All these programmes and schemes function independently of each other, though they cannot completely address the distress faced by the farmers.

\n

\n\n

How five point programme will address key areas of distress?

\n\n

\n

- **Increasing incomes-** The government has adopted the target of doubling farmers' incomes by 2020.
- It will require an aggressive push to improve technologies by strengthening the seed sector and the knowledge dissemination system for crop diversification and proper value chain.

\n

\n\n

\n

- **Employment generation** - Combining raw and processed products like pappads, pickles etc.by promoting agro-advisor and rural transport will be a game changer.
- Creating non-farm employment in micro, small and medium enterprises and linking them with the large manufacturing sector is required to achieve success.

\n

- **Reducing risk** -The Prime Minister's Agriculture Insurance Scheme is already in place to cover some production losses.
\n
- Though the scheme is good, the compensation is not enough and does not cover the risk of falling prices.
\n
- Therefore, the government must consider launching a Prime Minister's Climate Resilience Scheme that covers both production and price risks and it should also ensure minimum support prices.
\n
- **Developing agri-infrastructure** -There is immense scope for high economic and social gains through public-private partnerships (PPPs) in developing agri-infrastructure.
\n
- The government should constitute a commission to develop the modalities of PPP in rural agri-markets, cold storage, agro-processing, surface irrigation and agricultural extension.
\n
- **Improving quality of rural life** -Former President APJ Abdul Kalam had coined the acronym PURA (Provision of Urban Amenities to Rural Areas).
\n
- The aim is to provide urban infrastructure and services in rural hubs in a bid to create economic opportunities in rural areas.
\n
- The scheme can be revived to improve the quality of life in rural areas.
\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Business Standard

\n



IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering
 A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative