

Farm sector dubs interim Budget proposals as 'visionary'

Our Bureau
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Stakeholders in the agriculture and commodities sector have welcomed the proposals presented in Interim Budget for 2024-25, saying the measures are visionary and aimed at achieving self-sufficiency in some of the areas.

Ajay Jhunjhunwala, President of Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA), said: "We extend our appreciation to the government for unveiling the visionary 'Atmanirbhar Oil Seeds Abhiyan', which focuses on key oilseeds like mustard, groundnut, sesame, soyabean, and sunflower. This initiative encompasses crucial aspects such as research for high-yielding varieties, the widespread adoption of modern farming techniques, establishment of market linkages, procurement, value addition, and crop insurance."

Anand Ramanathan, Partner and Consumer, Products and Retail Sector Leader, Deloitte India, said, the Budget continues to support growth and productivity in agriculture through interventions in crop insurance, encouraging use of nano fertilizers,

promoting self-sufficiency in oilseed production and increasing investments in micro food processing.

"Also, from a protein stand point, boosting dairy productivity and supporting sea food exports are some of the big areas of focus. These announcements will provide employment opportunities for the rural economy," he said.

Saroj Mahapatra, Executive Director at PRADAN, said: "We applaud the government's efforts in assisting 25 crore people to get rid of multi-dimensional poverty, with the pursuit of *Sabka Saath*."

Amandeep Panwar, Co-Founder and Director of BharatRohan, said the ₹20-lakh crore allocation for targeted agricultural credit and the launch of the Agriculture Accelerator Fund are commendable.

Rajesh Aggarwal, Managing Director of Insecticides India Ltd, said, "The integration of *mandis* and the significant trading volume achieved therein highlight the government's efforts towards modernising agricultural markets and enhancing the efficiency of agricultural trade."

Sanjiv Kanwar, Managing Director of Yara South Asia, said, "We are pleased



Finance Minister
Nirmala Sitharaman

to see the government's commitment to modernising storage, supply chains, and branding in the farm sector, which will benefit both farmers and consumers. Overall, we believe that this Budget will provide a much-needed boost to the agriculture sector and encourage private and public investment in post-harvest activities."

Ajai Rana, Chairman, FSII, CEO and Managing Director, Savannah Seeds Pvt Ltd, said the seed industry is particularly happy to see the emphasis given on oilseeds and the imperative to make the sector self-reliant.

KC Ravi, Chief Sustainability Officer, Syngenta India Pet Ltd and Chairman of CropLife India, said digital infrastructure and infusion of technology is imperative to not only sustain the mo-

mentum but also to take the agriculture growth story to its logical conclusion.

"An enabling predictable science based policy environment is absolutely essential to provide farmers cutting edge technologies to fight against climate threats besides the ever increasing complex pests and diseases threatening crop yields," Ravi said.

SK Chaudhary, Founder Director of Safex Chemicals, said "We believe that the move to help micro food processing enterprises via 2.4 lakh SHGs and individuals through credit linkages and promoting of public and private investment in a range of post-harvest storage solutions will not only give a fillip to faster growth but will also benefit domestic agri players."

Simon Wiebusch, President of Bayer South Asia and Vice-Chairman, MD and CEO of Bayer CropScience Ltd (BCSL), said the Finance Minister's announcement, identifying women and farmers as key focus groups for powering India's growth, has set the stage for policies that can substantially boost development in rural areas.

Davish Jain, Chairman of the Soybean Processor's Association of India (SOPA), lauded the govern-

ment's announcement for achieving self-reliance in the oilseeds such as soyabean, sunflower and mustard and thrust on research for high-yielding varieties of seeds, adoption of modern farming techniques among others, which according to him, will contribute to achieving 'atmanirbharta' in oilseeds.

Simon George, President Cargill India and Managing Director Cargill Food Business, South Asia, said the intent to achieve 'atmanirbharta' in oilseeds production, increased focus on dairy and fisheries farming and private and public investment in post-harvest activities like modern storage, efficient supply chains, and marketing, signal a transformative chapter in agriculture.

Tarun Sawhney, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director, Triveni Engineering and Industries Ltd, said noteworthy interventions such as the promotion of crop insurance, encouragement for the use of nano diammonium phosphate (DAP) fertilizers, and both private and public investments in post-harvest activities, are poised to enhance agricultural productivity and generate new employment opportunities for farmers.