

## Major farm measures likely in coming weeks: Agri Min

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New Delhi, Jan 17 () Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh Thursday indicated announcement of major measures in the coming weeks to address farm distress across the country, a move that will come ahead of Lok Sabha elections.

The agriculture ministry has prepared a cabinet note on "addressing income deficit syndrome of small and marginal farmers" proposing various steps, including a financial package and interest waiver for timely crop loan repayers, according to sources.

A draft note has been finalised after several meetings with officials of Prime Minister's Office, the Niti Aayog, agriculture and finance ministries, the sources added.

Asked if the government is ready with a big farm package, Singh said: "When it will be announced, everyone will get to know. ...Every year before or during the budget, we have announced something new for farmers. Definitely, there will be something for farmers this time too."

The speciality of the NDA government has been that it has announced something new every year for the farming community in the last four-and-half years, he told reporters on the sidelines of an event.

Agriculture Secretary Sanjay Agarwal, who was also present, refused to provide details saying that the ministry was not directly involved in the matter.

Earlier speaking at the silver jubilee celebration of the Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC), Singh said the prime minister has been personally monitoring all agriculture schemes.

"As a result, many schemes are benefiting the farming community. However, some (Opposition parties) still question. ...Sloganeering alone will not benefit farmers," he said, highlighting the enhanced budget allocated for the farm sector in the last four-and-half years.

Asserting that the agriculture sector has always been a priority for the government, Singh said the government is fully committed towards working for farmers' welfare.

"We are moving forward with full confidence. By December end, every farm field will get water and power," he added.

It may be noted that the central government has taken farmers' issues seriously after the ruling BJP was defeated in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh in the recent state polls, where rural distress was a key factor.

**Source:** <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/major-farm-measures-likely-in-coming-weeks-agri-min/articleshow/67574996.cms>