

**ADOPTING A HOLISTIC APPROACH TOWARDS RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

- India enjoys a demographic dividend that is the envy of many a country with over 65 percent of its population under 35 years. Over **70 percent of the population are in Tier-2, Tier-3, cities and in rural agri dominant India**. Over 70 percent of the formal and informal labour workforce of India is associated with the MSME of rural India.
- Since ancient times, the Indian rural ecosystem has been an agrarian economy. But now, the rural youth have started engaging themselves in various sectors which are not directly aligned to the agriculture sector.
- The youth have become aspirational and want to bring about rapid changes in the rural society and hence they must be provided with the futuristic 21st century skill sets.

**Changing Nature of Education**

- In 1800s, Prussians came up with the idea of a '**factory model of education**'. The factory model of education states that the schools are built to train the future factory workers and that the students should essentially be trained to become efficient factory workers.
- Inspired by this the Industrial Revolution aimed at **manufacturing employable workers** for the huge pool of opportunities that had opened by the Industrial Revolution.
- Today, we are in a world which is ideating and innovating constantly, and this has been the driving force for both economies and countries. Also, the global economy is galloping towards growth by leveraging emerging technologies like 3D printing, robotics, IoT and sensor technologies etc.
- The current education system **needs game changing radical transformations** in its approach and methodologies keeping pace with rapidly changing trends and digital capabilities of technology.

**Delivering Quality Education**

- The need for technology driven practical education has been stated in the **New Education Policy (NEP) 2020**. Tomorrow's world shall be focussed on **data driven approaches** to solve the problems at hand. The education ecosystem thus needs to incorporate and grow, keeping these incoming changes in mind.
- One such programme that has created waves in the country are the **Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs)** launched by the **Atal Innovation mission**, NITI Aayog. Atal Tinkering Labs are state of the art labs created in schools where children are introduced to new emerging technology toolkits.
- Along with building the physical infrastructure the ATLs **also focus on creating a pedagogy** which makes quality delivery easy and accessible for all. There is also a **year-round teacher training program** which is run to equip the school teachers with the right skill set and introduce them to the new technologies.
- These labs though not part of the approved mainstream curriculum, go a long way in making young school students equipped with the right skill sets required to adopt the next-gen technologies.

**Developing Youth as Change Makers**

- The focus of this decade is to achieve the SDG 2030 and this can be achieved by enabling the youth of the country to be at the front and centre of the solutions that are being created.
- India is a big market and provides a lot of opportunities and with this also come **frugal Jugaad innovations**. We celebrate these frugal Jugaad innovations but have clearly missed out on providing a sustainable path for the development and commercialisation of these developed innovations. We should now focus on providing an institutional based structure to these young innovators.

- The institutional structures formed for developing the youth change makers must provide the young innovators with an equitable opportunity that currently exist with the urban youth.
- There has to be a focussed approach in spreading awareness about the SDGs and showcasing the solutions created by the local youth to the community leaders thus igniting more minds and making them drive the needed change.
- One such effort is being done by the **Atal Innovation Mission of NITI Aayog** by establishing **Atal Community Innovation Centres (ACICs)** in the underserved/unserved regions of the country.
- A similar effort is to be carried out by creating a **rural community youth fellowship program** focussing on harnessing the talent of a young innovator and creating a viable solution to a local SDG challenge.
- It is also imperative that this fellowship program is **strongly supported by a PPP network**. The private sector may drive the fellowship by providing the fellows with a relevant business challenges derived from triple bottom-line goals and guide the fellows through the entire process of developing and implementing the solution.

### **Digital Push and Transformation of the Agrarian Economy**

- **Farm mechanisation and creation of sustainable value chains** has been a pain point that not many innovators have been able to solve. The farm to fork model is also complex.
- With the advent of new technologies like the **AI and block chain**, the entrepreneurs can solve the farming woes of the country. These technologies will not only provide inputs on the growing patterns of the crops but also provide farmers with the knowledge of domestic and global demands of the market.
- **Start-Ups can support the farmers** by providing them with technology driven solutions for quick harvesting and with proper storage facilities. The startups can provide the farmers a **direct market linkage** or may decide to become the buyer of the farm product.
- Local civil society organisations/ NGOs are helping in the formation of local **Farmer Producer Organisation (FPOs)**. These FPOs also can work with the startups in all the above-mentioned activities.
- The FPOs provide the farmer with an added opportunity of creating a bigger value adding network and driving an integrated approach towards creating a vibrant rural economy.

### **Conclusion**

All these efforts stated shall not only be beneficial for the holistic development of the rural economy today but also will have a sustainable future for an AatmaNirbhar Bharat that can serve the world.

### **SWACHH BHARAT MISSION PHASE II AIMS FOR SAMPOORNA SWACHHATA**

- Sanitation by nature is a continuous work. The day we stop cleaning our streets they become dirty again.
- Thus, achieving ODF status was the first great peak conquered, in a series of many more such peaks. And it is not possible without taking everyone along. This is evident from the success of Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM).
- SBM became **world's largest behaviour change programme** and India achieved the seemingly impossible task of **becoming open defecation**

In June 2019, the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation decided to make an <b>iconic swachhata anthem</b> .
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free in a period of five years. It could become possible because the mission was transformed into a Jan Andolan (people's movement).

- As a result, rural sanitation coverage has **increased from 39 percent in 2014 to 100 percent in 2019** with over 10.2 crore toilets built across Indian districts. India achieved SDG Goal for providing safe sanitation for all 11 years before the targeted year 2030.

### Steps Towards Sustainable Sanitation

- The government, in February 2020, approved the **Phase II of the Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G)** to focus on the solid and liquid waste management (SLWM) and on the sustainability of ODF status.
- The 15th Finance Commission report for the year 2020-21 provided much-needed **tiered grants for sanitation to rural local bodies**. The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation is implementing it in Mission Mode from 2020-21 to 2024-25.

### ODF Plus Village Under SBM Phase II

- An ODF Plus village is defined as a village that sustains its ODF status and also ensures solid and liquid waste management and is visually clean. The key objective of the SBM Phase II is to make villages across India ODF Plus villages.
- A village is called visually clean if at least 80 percent of its households and all its public places have minimal litter and minimal stagnant water, and the village does not have any plastic waste dump.

### Components of the SBM Phase II

- Constructions of individual household latrines; retrofitting of toilets; need based construction of community sanitary complexes; biodegradable waste management;
- GOBAR-dhan (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources-dhan); plastic waste management; grey water management and faecal sludge management.
- 5 percent of the total project expenditure has been provided for IEC and Capacity Building for SBM(G) Phase II.

### Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)

- As per the Constitution 73 Amendment Act, 1992, sanitation is included in the 11<sup>th</sup> Schedule. Therefore, the role of Gram Panchayat (GP) is pivotal. Each Gram Panchayat is expected to develop **a village swachhata plan for each financial year**.
- Receiving funds, subject to conformity with State arrangements, and contributing from their own resources for the financing of community toilets and SLWM infrastructure are some of the important roles of the PRIs.
- The GP is also the **custodian of the assets** such as community sanitary complexes, drainages and SLWM infrastructure. The GP has to organise and assist in organising social audits of the Swachh Bharat Mission.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

- **The monitoring and evaluation have two aspects:** first is ensuring the status of ODF Plus villages and second is that of created assets and expenditure incurred.
- Monitoring activities are aimed towards attainment of programme results, both effectively and efficiently. Monitoring of both qualitative (outcomes) and quantitative (output) progress is provided in the operational guidelines.

## Conclusion

The Swachh Bharat Mission in its second phase is committed to achieve Sampoorna Swachhata by transforming the Mission into a Jan andolan. It has to generate a bigger momentum than it did in Phase-I and that is a great challenge.

## EDUCATION IN RURAL INDIA: SCHEMES FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH

The vision of a modern India, free from poverty, rests overwhelmingly on the growth and development of rural India. Education for children and skill training for adults is ultimately the only way to help rural Indians escape the poverty trap and make them self-reliant.

### Status of Education

- The **Right to Education Act, 2009** has been successful in achieving near universal enrolment in elementary education, however retaining children remains a challenge for the schooling system.
- According to government data, in 2015- 16, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) was 56.2 percent at senior secondary level as compared to 99.2 percent at primary level. GER denotes enrolment as a percent of the population of corresponding age group.
- The decline in GER is higher for certain **socio-economically disadvantaged groups**, based on: (i) gender identities (female, transgender persons), (ii) socio-cultural identities (scheduled castes, scheduled tribes), (iii) geographical identities (students from small villages and small towns), (iv) socio-economic identities (migrant communities and low-income households), and (v) disabilities.
- As per the National Sample Survey Report (71<sup>st</sup> round), more than **12 percent of rural households in India did not have secondary schools within 5 km** whereas in urban areas this percentage is less than one percent.
- According to the 2018-19 all-India survey on higher education (AISHE), **GER in higher education in India is 26.3 percent**, which is calculated for 18- 23 years of age group. GER for male population is 26.3 percent and for females, it is 26.4 percent.

### A. Rooting for Rural Education: Steps Taken

#### Samagra Shiksha Scheme

- It is an integrated scheme for school education with effect from 2018-19. It envisages the '**school' as a continuum** from pre-school, primary, upper primary, secondary to senior secondary levels.
- It **subsumes the three erstwhile centrally sponsored schemes** —Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and Teacher Education.
- The scheme reaches out to girls and children belonging to SCs, STs, minority communities and transgender. The scheme also gives attention to urban deprived children, children affected by Periodic migration and children living in remote and scattered habitations.
- Provision has been made for giving preference to Special Focus Districts, Educationally Backward Blocks (EEBs), LWE affected districts, and aspirational districts.
- **Various Interventions Under Samagra Shiksha** - Opening of schools in the neighbourhood, provision of free text-books up to Class VIII, uniforms to all girls and SC, ST, BPL boys up to class VIII, provision of gender segregated toilets in all schools, teachers' sensitisation programmes to promote girls' participation, construction of residential quarters for teachers in remote/hilly areas/in areas with difficult terrain.

- The Department of School Education and Literacy is also implementing the **component of vocational skills training** under the umbrella of Samagra Shiksha.

#### **Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs)**

- The main objective is to provide good quality modern education to talented children predominantly from the rural areas without regard to their family's socio-economic condition.

#### **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)**

- It was introduced in 1997-98 to provide quality upper primary, secondary and senior secondary level education to Scheduled Tribe (ST) students in remote areas.

#### **Mid-Day Meal Scheme**

- The scheme targeted **young children studying upto Class VIII**. Approximately 11.59 crore children in around 11.5 lakh schools benefit daily from MDM.
- Since it is not possible to provide hot cooked meals due to COVID-19, States are providing **Food Security Allowance** comprising foodgrains, pulses, oil, etc., (equivalent to cooking cost) to all eligible children till such time their schools are closed due to the pandemic.

#### **Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs)**

- KGBVs have been sanctioned in Educationally Backward Blocks under Samagra Shiksha.
- These are residential schools from class VI to XII for girls belonging to disadvantaged groups such as SC, ST, OBC, Minority and Below Poverty Line.

#### **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**

- This scheme works to develop an enabling environment for girl child education. It addresses the issues relating to **declining Child Sex Ratio** and aims to change the mindset of people so as to make them appreciate the value of girl child.
- It is a **tri-ministerial, convergent effort** of the Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare and Human Resource Development.
- The **specific objectives** of the scheme are (i) prevent gender biased sex selective elimination (ii) ensure survival and protection of the girl child and (iii) ensure education and Participation of the girl child through coordinated and convergent efforts.
- While the Scheme does not enrol girls for any type of benefits from any segment of the society including rural areas, its biggest impact is in rural India where discrimination against the girl child is entrenched due to social attitudes, structural imbalances in society, and impediments in the education and empowerment of women and girls.
- Evaluation of BBBP scheme carried out by NCAER in August 2020 has indicated a **positive behavioural change towards the value of girl child**.
- The sex ratio at birth has been set as a parameter for monitoring the progress of this scheme. The **sex ratio at birth has shown an improvement of 16 points** at national level from 918 (2014-15) to 934 (2019-20).

#### **B. Empowering the Rural Woman: Mahila Shakti Kendra Scheme**

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme under Ministry of Women and Child Development to empower rural women through community participation. The scheme aims to facilitate **inter-sectoral convergence** of schemes and programmes meant for women.

- The scheme envisages **community engagement through College Student Volunteers** in 115 aspirational districts as part of block level initiatives; **District Level Centre for Women** in 640 districts to facilitate women centric schemes; **State Resource Centre** for Women to support respective governments in implementation of women centric schemes/programmes and also function as **Project Management Unit for BBBP scheme**.

### C. Adult Literacy Programmes

#### Saakshar Bharat Programme

- This Programme (operational till March 2018) **went beyond the '3' R's** (i.e., Reading, Writing and Arithmetic); for it also sought to create awareness of social disparities.
- This Programme was formulated in 2009 with the **objective of achieving 80 percent literacy level at national level**, by focusing on adult women literacy seeking to reduce the gap between male and female literacy to not more than 10 Percentage points.
- It has four broader objectives, namely imparting **functional literacy and numeracy** to non-literates; **acquiring equivalency to formal educational system**; **imparting relevant skill development programme**; and **promoting a learning society by providing opportunities for continuing education**.

#### Padhna Likhna Abhiyaan

- The Padhna Likhna Abhiyan has been rolled out to **replace Saakshar Bharat Scheme**. Launched on Literacy Day in 2020, it focusses on achieving 100 percent literacy by 2030.
- Under this scheme, massive literacy projects will be launched in the tribal and forests areas, prisons, slums, etc., with technology as a facilitator. For this purpose, NITI Aayog, has underlined 112 aspirational districts.

#### Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS)

- It aims to cover 50 lakh students by 2022 by providing 'on the job work exposure' and stipend. SHREYAS is a programme conceived for students, with a view to introduce employable skills into their learning, promote apprenticeship as integral to education.

#### National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS)

- It is instituted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. It provides skill training to fresh graduates, diploma holders in engineering and technology and Plus 2 vocational pass-outs, which rural youth can take advantage of.

#### Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship is implementing PMKVY 2016-20 with an objective to provide skilling to one crore people under Short Term Training and Recognition of Prior Learning across the country for four years.

#### Conclusion:

- The current public (Central Government and State Governments) expenditure on education in India has been **around 4.43 percent of GDP** and around **10 percent of the total government spending towards education** (Economic Survey 2017-18).
- The **National Education Policy 2020** states that the Centre and states will work together to increase the public investment in education sector to reach **6 percent of GDP at the earliest**.

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## **VAJIRAM & RAVI**

### **RECENT FARM BILLS AND BENEFITS TO FARMERS**

#### **Previous Attempt to Modernise Agriculture**

- In 2003, model APMC Act was formulated and shared with the States. As a follow up, the fruit and vegetables were brought out of APMC regulations and 20 States adopted to it.
- Model Act on Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (Promotion and Facilitation), 2017, Model Act on Agricultural Produce and Livestock Contract Farming and Services (Promotion and Facilitation) 2018 were formulated and launched by the Government.

#### **Three Bills Passed by the Parliament**

- The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020,
- The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020 and
- The Essential Commodity (Amendment) Bill, 2020

#### **Apprehensions Raised by Farmers**

- These laws will lead to withdrawal of MSP, deprive the farmers from their lands in favour of big private players and cause hoarding of essential commodities.
- These apprehensions, though imaginative, have somehow percolated deeply in a section of the farmers, the largest being those who have been the biggest beneficiaries of APMC dominated procurements and the price realisation.
- Another apprehension is about diluting the present-day agricultural marketing thereby affecting the benefits of millions of the farmers.

#### **The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020 [FPTC Act]**

- Post 1991 liberalisation, the **gap in the income of the farmers and non-farm worker has been growing**. India is likely to produce **huge surplus of agricultural commodities** in next 10 years much beyond the absorption capacity of the domestic market.
- We need to become **more competitive** in terms of handling, storage, quality standards for the global export destinations in developed and developing countries.
- For this, we require investment for post-harvest infrastructure, and logistics which has not been coming due to restrictive regulations of the APMCs/ECA. A market or aggregation centre close to production sites with some mechanism of price assurance can encourage the small and marginal farmers to **diversify towards high-value crops**.
- The agriculture **markets are too sparse and fragmented** leading to glut and the price crash in some markets while shortage and high prices at major demand centres.
- The reforms will lead to **creation of alternate channels of marketing** and more competition in the transaction leading to transparent price discovery and better price realization to the farmers.
- The agriculture census 2015-16 has put more than **86 percent farmers under small and Marginal category with average holdings of 0.38 ha** to about 68.5percent farm households. This means the likely surplus with them for offering to sale is low and **much low to approach any APMC mandi individually** due to lack of economy of scale.
- On an average **one mandi serve about 472 sq km** against the norm of one market yard at about 80 sq km area. The aggregators come to rescue to the small growers but they use to **offer much less price to producers**.

- Hence, we need a **robust and accountable market intelligence system** packed with technology and well-trained scientific manpower to minimise the chances of any manipulation in the prices of the produce.
- The FPTC Act provides for the **freedom to sell and buy farm produce** at any place in the country, **promote e-commerce** and allows setting up of an electronic platform. It also offers the opportunity to the **Government to intervene to regulate the system**, if the new system fails to work satisfactorily.
- The direct purchase from the farmers at their farm as provided in the FPTC Act, 2020 will be **empowering him to decide the price of his produce**.
- The State must **encourage FPOs to become aggregators** and in due course they will become active price negotiator rather than passive recipients of the price decided by the commission agents in the APMC mandis.

### **The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020 [APAFS Act]**

- The major apprehensions regarding this bill are that **corporates will take away the lands of the farmers** forcibly by manipulating the agreement. This is highly imaginary and devoid of any facts.
- The **old contract farming act was adopted by the 20 States**. The APAFS Act 2020 is an improvement over the old one.
- The APAFS Act 2020 will facilitate an **assured price to the farmers** for his produce as mutually agreed between farmers and sponsor before the commencement of production operations.
- Further, the **sponsor's role is limited to buy the produce** at pre-decided price as agreed in advance and supplying the quality inputs and services to farmers as per the contract.
- The sponsor neither permitted to lease-in the land of the farmers, nor he/she can erect any assets permanent nature on farmers' land or modifying it or acquiring the ownership rights.
- The **farmers will be the sole custodian** of all production operations as well. In fact, the APAFS is historic in the sense that farmers have been empowered to not only negotiate for the price of his produce before production but for the first time in the history of Indian Agriculture, **a farmer will dictate his terms for price settlement to a buyer**.

### **Case Study**

- The **contract farming with Nestle, for milk in Punjab's Moga district** operating since 1961 could be an example to cite. Over one lakh farmers are associated with the contract.
- Nestle has been providing the technical guidance, feed, vaccines and veterinary services to milk producers. A **high order supply chain has been established** based on a pre-announced weekly price based on the fat and solid content in the milk. The assets of the farmers have not been taken by the MNC.

### **The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020**

- The supply of the commodities enlisted in ECA such as cereals, edible oils and oils can only be **regulated under extraordinary circumstances** like war, famine, extraordinary price rise and natural calamities. The **transparent criterion has been laid down** on imposing or regulating stock limits.
- The Government can intervene in the market for price control under the amended act as well. The **recent action in imposing the stock limit on onions in October 2020** is the testimony of such provision. The criticism that a free hand has been given to stockists and market manipulators is baseless.

- Further, the **commodities like fertilisers and seeds**, which are of much interest to farmers, **have not been touched by the modifications**. The modifications in ECA will encourage the **big investment in creating much needed infrastructure** like warehouses, cold storages, pack houses, and logistics.
- We must note that the gap between required and existing infrastructure is 70 percent in pack houses, 98 percent in reefer vehicles and 94 percent in ripening chambers. By creating these infrastructures, much needed income to farmers will be augmented to a large extent.

### **Conclusion**

- The immediate action should be to create the awareness amongst farmers about the positives of the amendments with some live examples and records of advantages based on the real learnings of the farmers themselves.
- We should plan and launch a campaign for awareness on recent market reforms through KVKs aptly funded by Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and supported by the State Governments.

## **PANCHAYATI RAJ SYSTEM TOWARDS CHANGING RURAL INDIA**

### **Devolution of Funds, Function and Functionaries to PRIs**

- The funds, function and functionaries form the three main components of devolution of power across states.
- A devolution report published by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in 2015-6, stated that **devolution has two main aspects: the operational core that includes funds, function, functionaries, and the support system that includes capacity building of PRIs, operationalising constitutional mechanisms and introducing systems of transparency and accountability.**
- In terms of devolving function, functionary and finance, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Karnataka have performed better than other states. However, most of the states have made substantial progress in devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to PRIs.
- Another critical aspect of legislation following the 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment was insertion of a clause under the **article 280 (3) (bb) of the constitution** that the Union Finance Commission would recommend measures to supplementing the resources of the Panchayats in the state on the basis of the recommendation of Finance Commission of the State.

### **Steps Taken**

- The government has initiated several measures such as **incentivising the states** which have devolved more functions, funds and functionaries to PRIs, providing **financial and technical assistance** for capacity building to PRIs and **strengthening systems** of budgets, accounting and **auditing** for bringing in transparency, accountability and efficiency in the functioning of PRIs.
- **On April, 24 (National Panchayati Raj Day), 2020**, Government had launched a unified **e-GramSwaraj Portal** and mobile application **Swamitva scheme**.
- The e-GramSwaraj helps prepare and **execute Gram Panchayat Development Plans**. The portal will ensure **real time monitoring and accountability**. The portal is a major step towards digitization down to the Gram Panchayat level.
- The Swamitva scheme which is launched in pilot mode in 6 states helps to **map rural inhabited lands using drones and latest survey methods**.

**LIVESTOCK: KEY FOR DOUBLING FARMERS' INCOME**

- The Indian agricultural system is the **worlds' most diversified and complex system** due to great variations in agro-climatic regions. More than 60-65 percent of the population is dependent on the agriculture and its allied sectors.
- Animal husbandry has been the most important integral part of Indian agriculture system. It provides **livelihood to two-third of the rural population**, especially the landless and marginal farmers and hence **considered as a living bank for livestock owners** and act as an **insurance against natural calamities and crop failure**.

**Statistics**

- Agriculture contributes **17 percent to India's total GDP**, of which 27 percent comes from animal husbandry. It provides employment opportunities to over 16 million people across the country.
- India's **livestock sector is one of the largest** in the world. As per the 20<sup>th</sup> Livestock census, **India is the owner of about 512.05 million livestock** population.
- It is **first in the total buffalo population** in the world; **second in the population of goats**; **second largest poultry market** in the world; **third in the population** of sheep; fifth in the population of ducks and chicken and tenth in camel population in the world.

**Various Steps**

- To promote livestock and fisheries sector, the Government of India, in 2019, created a new Ministry by merging the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Department of Fisheries and renamed as **Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries**.
- The Government has launched several schemes/programmes viz., Rashtriya Gokul Mission, National Animal Disease Control Programme, Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund, Dairy Processing and infrastructure Development Fund and National Programme for Dairy Development.

**Challenges in Livestock Sector**

- Large population of low-producing cattle needs upgradation; Infertility in Bovines
- Inadequate coverage of artificial insemination services; Chronic shortage of feed along with quality of fodder; Deficiency of vaccines of major diseases like FMD, Brucellosis etc.
- Low interest of youth in animal husbandry because of low market place and lack of knowledge in the area of value addition of livestock products.
- Only 5 percent of the total money has been invested in livestock and this window requires more funding
- Inadequate availability of credit; Poor access to organised market; Limited animal insurance coverage; Stray cattle menace

**Conclusion:**

- Doubling of farmers' income can only be possible if **animal husbandry is integrated into agriculture and allied sectors**.
- It is the time to achieve more conception and reducing the age of puberty; have strategies for the diagnosis of subclinical diseases and wider coverage of vaccination system.
- The artificial insemination coverage should increase and use of sex sorted semen for high producing female animals may be ensured.

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## **VAJIRAM & RAVI**

### **RURAL HEALTHCARE IN INDIA**

- Empirical evidence suggests that poor socio-economic conditions, low education levels, limited exposure to media and lack of health services in rural India were the reasons why they had lower and under-reported morbidity numbers.
- It is with this background that the National Rural Health Mission was launched in 2005. Because **health care is a state responsibility**, the central government can play a supplementary role only. Through Centrally Sponsored Schemes the central government can launch national level health programmes.
- In 2013, NRHM became a sub-mission under the over-arching National Health Mission with the addition of **National Urban Health Mission (NUMH)** as the other sub-mission of the programme.
- Rural healthcare delivers services through a **three-tier system** of **Sub-Centers (SC)**, **Primary Healthcare Centers (PHC)** and **Community Health centers (CHC)**. Access to health care agents was another big challenge that was addressed through NRHM.
- **Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA)** is a grassroot level health worker who is selected from a village to serve that village. The ASHA works as a liaison between the local rural community and the public health system.
- They share information on basic health and hygiene practices; counsel women on child birth and related issues and act as the first point of repository of basic health kits.

#### **Some Programmes for Rural Health Care**

- **Janani Suraksha Yojana** is a cash incentive programme designed to encourage women to use formal healthcare services for institutional deliveries. The objective is to reduce neonatal and maternal mortality among poor, pregnant women, especially those in rural India.
- **Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyak** was launched in 2011 to eliminate the out-of-pocket expenditure for both pregnant mothers and sick infants upon accessing institutional health care.
- **Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA)** was a similar programme launched in 2016 to provide quality antenatal care, free of cost and universally to all pregnant women on the 9<sup>th</sup> of every month in their 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimesters of pregnancy, that can be availed at all government facilities. Under this programme, a minimum package of free antenatal care services is provided to pregnant women in their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> trimesters.
- As a result of these schemes, the **number of institutional deliveries increased** from 38.7 percent to 78.9 percent in the 10 years from 2005 to 2015.
- **Laqshya or the Labour Room and Quality Improvement initiative** was launched in 2017 as a focused and targeted approach to strengthen key processes related to the labour rooms and maternity operation theatres. The objective was to achieve time bound targets and ensure desired outcome of an institutional delivery that ensured new mothers and newborn babies were safe and health.
- **Special Newborn Care Units** were established at district levels and sub-district level hospitals to provide care for sick new-borns who did not need assisted ventilation or major surgeries.
- The **Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Karyakram** targets adolescents between the age of 10 to 19 years. The aim is to provide adolescent-friendly health care services to improve nutrition, mental health, sexual and reproductive health, prevent injuries and violence, substance abuse and non-communicable diseases.

- Similarly, the **Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram** screens children under the age of 18 for **four birth deficiencies** - Defects at birth, Diseases, Deficiencies and Development Delays including Disabilities. It has made significant impact on reducing the child mortality rates under the NRHM.
- To strengthen the **national immunisation programme**, the government has initiatives like the **Teeka Express**, which is a mobile van that provides vaccine services in far reaching areas along with construction, and safe operation of cold chains points for storing vaccines; routine immunisation and training of field volunteers and medical staff, among other provisions.
- **Anemia Mukh Bharat** targets new born and infants, school age children, adolescent boys and girls, women of reproductive age, pregnant and lactating women. It uses **6 interventions** - provision of folic acid supplements, deworming, year-round behaviour change initiatives, communication campaigns, text alerts, mandatory provision of folic acid fortified foods in public health programmes and addressing non-nutritional causes of anemia in endemic pockets like malaria and fluorosis.

#### **Way Forward:**

- Focus on **incentivising medical staff** to serve the rural community is a starting point to ensure all programmes are efficiently delivered.
- Instead of launching new programmes frequently, the mandates and budgets of existing programmes can be expanded. This creates an opportunity for better fund allocation and staff management. ASHA network has to be optimally compensated and trained.

### **IMPORTANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Rural infrastructure is crucial for agriculture, agro-industries and poverty alleviation in the rural areas. Rural infrastructure provides essential production conditions which is required for **social and economic growth** and **for promoting the quality of life in rural areas**.

#### **Roads in Rural India**

- It is the key to success of the rural economy; rural health; education; and for better road connectivity with the rest of the world. It is the main component to reduce the rural poverty by increasing the agricultural income.
- In December 2000, the Government had launched the **Pradhan Mantri Grameen Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)** with the aim to provide all weather access to eligible unconnected habitations. It is a 100 percent centrally sponsored scheme which cover only rural areas, and urban roads are excluded from the preview of this programme.
- Recently, the **third phase of PMGSY** has been launched. It envisages consolidation of the existing rural road network by upgradation of existing through routes and major rural links that **connects habitations to Grameen Agricultural Markets (GrAMs)**, higher secondary schools, and hospitals.
- The government is keen to facilitate easy and faster movements to and from the food processing centres, to Mandis (Agricultural markets) and other farmer related enterprises.

#### **Energy**

- **Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGIY)**: It was launched in 2015 with two components (i) to separate agriculture and non-agriculture feeders facilitating judicious rostering of supply to agricultural and non-agricultural consumers in rural areas and (ii) strengthening and augmentation of sub transmission and distribution infrastructure in rural areas, including metering of distribution transformers/feeders/consumers end

- It also included rural electrification for the completion of the target laid down under **Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidutikaran Yojana** (RGGVY) for 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Plans by subsuming RGGVY in DDUGY.
- **LPG Connections to Poor Household:** “Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana” (PMUY) is providing clean cooking fuel to poor households, especially in the rural areas. It provides **deposit free LPG connections** to the women of poor households. The scope of PMUY has now been expanded to cover all the poor families in the country subject to fulfilling the terms and conditions.
- **Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya):** Under the Saubhagya, free electricity connections to all households (both APL and poor families) in rural areas and poor families in urban areas will be provided. **Rural Electrification Corporation** (REC) has been designated as nodal agency for the Saubhagya scheme.
- **PM-KUSUM:** The “**annadata**” can be “**urjadata**” as well. With this noble thought, the PM-KUSUM scheme was launched. It has the objective of increasing farmers’ income, providing reliable source for irrigation and de-dieselise the farm sector, removing farmers’ dependence on diesel and kerosene and linking pump sets to solar energy.

### **Social and Commercial Infrastructure**

- **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (Gramin):** Under the “Housing for All by 2022” slogan, the Government has initiated the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana—Gramin (PMAY-G) scheme from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2016 to provide pucca houses to all rural homeless and those households living in kutcha and dilapidated houses.
- In addition to the rural housing, the Government has also aimed at providing a dignified life to the beneficiaries by providing basic amenities such as improved sanitation, piped drinking water, electricity & gas connection, etc **under convergence** with existing Central and State sponsored schemes.
- Overall, the PMAY-G has been bringing transformational (both social and economic) changes among the rural households.

### **Water and Sanitation**

- The government is proposing **comprehensive measures for one hundred water stressed districts**. A very focused **safe water (Jal Jeevan Mission)** and comprehensive sanitation program (**Swachchh Bharat Mission**) have been launched to support the health vision.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission** (Har Ghar Jal): It is aiming to provide piped water supply to all households. It envisioned to provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections by 2024 to all households in rural India.
- The Jal Jeevan Mission will be based on a community approach to water and will include extensive Information, Education and communication as a key component of the mission.

### **Communication**

- **Fibre to the Home** (FTTH) connections through Bharatnet had linked 100,000-gram panchayats.
- **BharatNet:** BharatNet is the world’s largest rural broadband network project which is to provide broadband connectivity to all the 2.5 lakh gram panchayats across India.

### **Conclusion**

- The infrastructure schemes for the rural areas have improved the lives of the rural people in different ways and helped in reducing the poverty.
- Infrastructure has brought social and economic change among the rural households and empowered them to live their lives with dignity and safety with improved living standards.