

# MODI RELEASES AID FOR FARMERS

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Narendra Modi releasing the 10th instalment under the PM KISAN scheme at a virtual event in New Delhi.PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday released over Rs. 20,900 crore to more than 10.09 crore farmers across India as the 10th instalment of financial aid under the PM-KISAN scheme.

Mr. Modi released the amount to beneficiaries at an event held through video conference.

Speaking on the first day of 2022, his 35-minute address was also a report card of the performance of his government over the past one year.

The economic indicators, Mr. Modi claimed, are in a better position than in the pre-COVID era. The foreign direct investment and the GST collections are high. The growth rate he said, is more than 8%. He applauded the 42 unicorn firms that came into existence during the pandemic.

The year 2021, Mr. Modi said, will be remembered for the country's fight against the pandemic but equally it will also be remembered for the government's effort to bring in reforms. "In 2022 we have to increase our pace," he said.

He also spoke at length about all the government policy initiatives in the farm sector. He did not though speak about the controversial farm laws that his government was forced to repeal following sustained agitation by agricultural groups.

## Efforts to handle COVID

The Prime Minister also spoke about India's efforts to deal with the pandemic. "Could any one imagine a country as diverse as India administer 145 crore doses of COVID vaccine? Who would have thought that India could make a record 2.5 crore vaccine in a day." he said. During these tough pandemic years, he said, 2 crore households have got piped water connection.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, a financial benefit of Rs. 6,000 per year is provided to the eligible farmer families, payable in three equal instalments of Rs. 2,000. The money is transferred directly to the bank account of the beneficiaries.

During the virtual event, the Prime Minister also released an equity grant of more than Rs. 14 crore to about 351 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), benefiting 1.24 lakh farmers. He stressed the effectiveness of the FPOs which he said, has helped in bringing down the input cost. The FPOs, he said, also give a better bargaining power to the farmers.

The virtual event was attended by as many as nine Chief Ministers, several Ministers from different States, and representatives of agricultural institutions.

On the occasion, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said on the first day of the New Year 2022, around Rs. 20,900 crore is being transferred to about 10.09 crore beneficiaries. He also said the PM-KISAN programme was launched as part of the government's effort to help double the income of farmers.

The 9th instalment of PM-KISAN was released in August 2021.

With the released latest tranche, the total amount provided under the scheme has touched about Rs. 1.8 lakh crore.

PM-KISAN scheme was announced in the February 2019 Budget. The first instalment was for the period December 2018 to March 2019.

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