

13.33% LOWER THAN BUDGET ESTIMATE FOR CURRENT FISCAL

As beneficiaries dip, PM-Kisan allocation lowest in five years at Rs 60,000 crore

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 1

THE GOVERNMENT has allocated a budget of Rs 60,000 crore for Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman for financial year 2023-24, which is the lowest in last five years.

In fact, the PM-Kisan allocation is 13.33 per cent lower as compared to budgetary estimates (BE) of Rs 68,000 crore made for the financial year 2022-23. In the revised estimates (RE) for 2022-23, the PM-Kisan allocation was reduced to Rs 60,000 crore. In 2021-22, an actual expenditure of Rs 66,825 crore was incurred on the PM-Kisan.

The budgetary allocation of PM-Kisan, which was announced in interim budget of 2019-20 ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, for 2023-24 is the lowest in last five years.

The Modi government had launched the PM-Kisan from the December-March, 2018-19 period. Under the PM-Kisan scheme, the government provides Rs 6,000 to the eligible beneficiary farmer families in a year and the amount is transferred in their bank accounts in three equal 4-monthly instalments of Rs 2,000 each. So far, 12 instalments have been released under the PM-Kisan.

The PM-Kisan's budgetary allocation was highest during 2019-20 and 2020-21, but since then it has come down. According

to sources, the reduction in the PM-Kisan budget is due to a drop in the number of beneficiaries. In the latest round (12th) of the PM-Kisan, 8.42-crore farmers received their instalments for August-November, 2022. This was significantly lower compared to number of beneficiaries (10.45 crore) during the 11th round (April-July, 2022).

The PM-Kisan is the biggest scheme of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare. With the decline in the PM-Kisan budget, the overall budget of the Agriculture Ministry has also come down from Rs 1,24,000 crore in 2022-23 to Rs 1,15,531.79 crore in 2023-24. However, it is marginally higher than the revised estimates of Rs 1,10,254.53 crore for financial year 2022-23.

Among the other agriculture sector schemes, the budgetary allocation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna has been reduced to Rs 10,787 for 2023-24 from Rs 12,954 crore in the BE 2022-23. However, it is higher than RE of Rs 8,085 for 2022-23.

The budgetary allocation of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana has been kept at Rs 13,625 crore for 2023-24, which is lower than the BE of Rs 15,500 crore for 2022-23,

but marginally higher than the RE of Rs 12,376 crore (2022-23).

Allocation for Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS), however, has been hiked to Rs 23,000 crore for 2023-24 from Rs 19,500 crore in 2022-23. Under MISS, short term crop loan up to Rs 3 lakh is provided to farmers at an effective rate of interest of 4 per cent per annum.

In her budget speech, the FM announced that the agriculture credit target will be increased to Rs 20 lakh crore with focus on animal husbandry, dairy and fisheries during 2023-24.

The FM also announced establishing a Digital Public Infrastructure for Agriculture. She also announced setting up of an Agriculture Accelerator Fund, and a Atmanirbhar Horticulture Clean Plant Programme with

an outlay of Rs 2,200 crore. The FM also said to make India a global hub for 'Shree Anna', the Indian Institute of Millet Research, Hyderabad, will be supported as Centre of Excellence for sharing best practices, research and technologies at international level. The FM also announced a new sub-scheme of PM Matsya Sampada Yojana with a targeted investment of Rs 6,000 crore.

OVER THE YEARS

Year	BE	RE	Actual
2018-19	20,000	1,241	
2019-20	75,000	54,370	48,714
2020-21	75,000	65,000	60,990
2021-22	65,000	67,500	66,825
2022-23	68,000	60,000	
2023-24	60,000		

(in Rs crore)