Reactions....

ANJAN BOSE, NATHEALTH
Secretary General

FM’s Budget clearly focuses on improving healthcare access for the less privileged and on ‘preventive & wellness’ both of which are very encouraging. Target of transforming 1.5 lakh health sub-centres into health

PRATHAP C REDDY, Apollo Hospitals Group Chairman

While we were hopeful that healthcare would be accorded a national priority sector status, the structural reform in medical education, in particular the increase in number of post graduate medical seats and DNB courses is praiseworthy.

RAJIT MEHTA,
Max Healthcare MD and CEO

From a healthcare perspective, the announcement of the goal of eradicating TB from India by 2025 is welcome. I am happy that a new policy on medical education might be on the anvil and the FM wants to encourage private sector participation in medical education.
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<th>HYDERABAD</th>
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<td>2 FEBRUARY 2017</td>
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<td>CIRCULATION – 5,26,447</td>
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NEW DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2017

CIRCULATION – 2,50,000

SHOT IN ARM FOR HEALTH

FINANCE MINISTER GIVES A BOOST TO WELLNESS WITH TWO NEW AIIMS AND HIKE IN BUDGET ALLOCATION

28%

APPROX RISE IN FUNDS FOR HEALTH SECTOR AS THE CENTRE PLANS TO INVEST ₹4,738.2 CR IN COMING FISCAL YEAR

By Mail Today Bureau

FINANCE MINISTER Arun Jaitley gave the heathcare sector a shot in the arm in the 2017-18 budget, announcing to set up two new All India Institutes of Medical and Research (AIIMS) and a large hike in funds for the sector as the government plans to invest ₹4,738.2 crore in the health sector in the coming fiscal. The Finance Minister also announced a hike in funds for Ayush and a health insurance scheme for the poor.

QUICK TAKE

MORE SEATS, MORE TALENT

We are committed to make #Swachh Bharat by eliminating several diseases in coming years. #Budget2017 #HealthIndia

QUICK TAKE

1.5 LAC HEALTH SUB-CENTRES TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTRES

Mr. Pradhan, Union Health Minister, said that the government plans to invest ₹5,000 crore in the health sector in the budget 2017-18 to transform 1.5 lakh health sub-centres into health and wellness centres.

PHARMA SECTOR FEELS LET DOWN

Arun Jaitley also announced plans to ramp up India’s infant mortality rate from 39 in 2014 to 15 in 2022.

QUICK TAKE

73% OF TOTAL AMOUNT IN THE BUDGET 2016-17 HAS BEEN SPENT BY THE MINISTRY SO FAR

QUICK TAKE

The government should have focused more on the health sector. The proposal for opening new AIIMS should have been for all states. Overall, the budget is good, but it is more focused on road/infrastructure. #Budget2017

QUICK TAKE

5,000 ADDITIONAL POSTGRADUATE SEATS TO BE CREATED EVERY YEAR

QUICK TAKE


QUICK TAKE

The Union budget proposes to reduce maternal mortality rate from 114 in 2015-16 to 102 by 2018-20
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<td>FEBRUARY 2017</td>
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<td>CIRCULATION – 40,000</td>
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A Game Changer for Rural Economy

The government moves with a clear intention and agenda for the next financial year and if the spirit of change remains intact, a TEC India with focus on rural would certainly be in making, BK Jha analyses the implications of Union Budget 2017-18 on rural economy.

Continuing its focus on Agriculture and rural sector, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley presented yet another pro-farmer Budget and a clear agenda indicates that the Union Budget 2017-18 is going to be a game changer. The Budget has accorded priority to rural infrastructure, irrigation, farm credit and other segments which impact the rural people.

The Agenda
The Finance Minister moves ahead with a holy statement of Mahatma Gandhi: “A right cause never fails” and sets Budget agenda that is Transform, Energise and Clean India (TEC India). With announcement of TEC India, he proceeds to focus on Agriculture and rural sectors. “Focus will be on rural economy and poverty alleviation,” he said.

In all, allocation for rural, agriculture and allied industry is at Rs 1.87 lakh crore, up 24 percent year-on-year.

Focus on Farm Credit
The Budget has addressed the main pain point of the Indian Farm sector. Farm credit remains a major challenge and the government knows, in no uncertain term, that the target of doubling farmers’ income would not be possible, if farmers were not provided cheap and timely credit. In pursuance of that the Finance Minister raised farm credit to farmers to a record Rs 10 lakh crore.

www.ruralmarketing.in
Union Budget 2017-18 for Rural Sector

1. Union Budget focuses on spending more on rural areas, infrastructure and poverty alleviation with fiscal prudence.
2. Agriculture sector is expected to grow at 4.6%, agriculture expenditure targeted at Rs 10 lakh crore.
3. The target for agricultural credit in 2017-18 has been fixed at a record level of Rs 10 lakh crore.
4. New crop insurance scheme ‘Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana’ to get Rs 9,000 crore.
5. Allocation under MNREGA increased to Rs 48,000 crore.
6. Total allocation for rural, agricultural and allied sectors for 2017-18 is Rs 187,223 crore, which is 24% higher than last year.
7. One crore houses for poor by 2019.
8. Safe drinking water to cover 26,000 arsenic and fluoride-affected habitations in the next four years.
9. 133-km road per day constructed under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) as against 73-km in 2011-14.
10. Rs 19,000 crore allocated for PMGSY for 2017-18. A total of Rs 27,000 crore will be spent with States’ share.
11. Rs 10,000 crore for BharatNet project. More than 1,50,000 gram panchayats will benefit with this in next year.

This is against the government’s agriculture credit target of Rs 9 lakh crore for the ongoing financial year. Hence, a hike of Rs one lakh crore would certainly go to help the farmers in the country. Moreover, farmers will also benefit from 60 days’ interest waiver announced on December 31, 2016 by the government.

“The government will take special efforts to ensure adequate credit flow to underserved areas – the eastern states and Jammu and Kashmir,” Jaitely said.

The government provides short-term crop loans up to Rs 3 lakh at subsidised interest rate of 7 per cent per annum. An additional incentive of 3 per cent is provided to farmers for prompt repayment of loans within due date, making an effective interest rate for them at 4 per cent.

Agriculture Growth
The Finance Minister noted that the agriculture sector is expected to grow at 4.1 per cent during the current financial year on good monsoon. Sowing of both kharif and rabi crops has been higher.

Jaitely said the allocation for new crop insurance scheme ‘Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana’, which was launched in 2016, has been increased to Rs 13,240 crore this financial year from budgeted Rs 5,500 crore. The allocation for the next financial year has been earmarked at Rs 9,000 crore. With this move, the coverage of this scheme is expected to increase from 30 per cent of the cropped area in 2016-17 to 40 per cent in 2017-18 to 50 per cent in 2018-19.

“The proposal to create a Rs 5,000 crore dedicated micro-irrigation fund at NABARD was also very promising. This would help in reducing another major pain point of the farmers. The government’s priority to irrigation was very clear and that was reflected in creation of long-term irrigation fund again at NABARD with a Rs 40,000 crore corpus. The Finance Minister also assured that the government will prepare a model law on contract farming which will be circulated to state governments.

Dairy sector, an important source of additional income for farmers, has also got a boost from
FM’s Budget clearly focuses on improving healthcare access for the less privileged and on "preventive & wellness" both of which are very encouraging. Target of transforming 1.5 lakh health sub-centers into health wellness centers is in line with the need of the hour for the Indian citizens.”

Anjan Bose
Secretary General, NATHEALTH

The Budget as the government has decided to set up a dairy processing fund of Rs 8,000 crore over three years with initial corpus of Rs 2,000 crore. The decisions, pertaining to agriculture sector, are expected to increase farm activities which will be good for seeds, fertilizers and pesticides companies. A slew of measures, announced by the Finance Minister, would increase contribution of agro economy to the overall GDP.

Health Sector
The Union Budget 2017-18 can be a game changer for healthcare sector as well, as it focuses on the elimination of deadly diseases in a time bound manner and improvement of healthcare services access. The government has accorded high priority to health sector with emphasis on bridging the demand-supply gap.

"FM’s Budget clearly focuses on improving healthcare access for the less privileged and on "preventive & wellness" both of which are very encouraging. Target of transforming 1.5 lakh health sub-centers into health wellness centers is in line with the need of the hour for the Indian citizens," said Anjan Bose, Secretary General, NATHEALTH. NATHEALTH pointed out that creating additional 5,000 post-graduate seats per annum would ensure adequate availability of specialists doctors to strengthen secondary and tertiary levels of healthcare. Annual addition of 5000 PG seats and focus on DNB courses are good attempts to address the serious demand - supply gaps in creating wellness centres.

The government also made projection to eliminate Kala-azar or Leishmaniasis and filaria by 2017; leprosy by 2018; measles by 2020; and tuberculosis by 2025. The Action Plan for this would require higher public spending. For healthcare sector, the Budget can be a game changer on the basis of the fact that the government is committed to take structural reforms in the sector, be it healthcare service, medicine, medical practice or education.

Rural Sector
Apart from agriculture, the Budget also provides much needed momentum to rural activities for holistic development. Rural roads, electrification, infrastructure and the job scheme, all have got higher allocations.

"Apart from agriculture, the Budget also provides much needed momentum to rural activities for holistic development. Rural roads, electrification, infrastructure and the job scheme, all have got higher allocations,” he added. The government also announced to come out with new rules for medical devices which would be harmonised with international practices. New rules for medical devices and amendment in Drug and Cosmetic Act would rationalise the cost of medicine and devices.

No doubt, the government has committed for higher spending on creating wellness centres. However, the government also made clear that it is aware of the fact that the government is committed to take structural reforms in the sector, be it healthcare service, medicine, medical practice or education.

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