

# 'Farmers doing better under NDA'

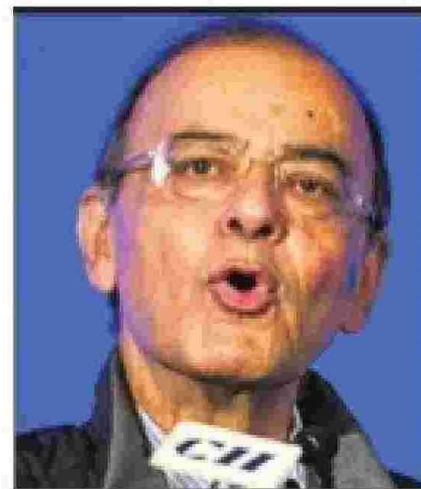
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 5

Facing criticism for prevailing agrarian distress, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley and Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh have listed the performance of the Narendra Modi government vis-à-vis the previous Congress-led UPA's regime in the sector, including improving productivity, procurement of crops at the minimum support price (MSP).

In response to last week's protest march by Opposition parties, Jaitley said removing the agrarian distress and improving the quality of life in rural areas couldn't be done by slogans alone.

Blaming the previous government for not doing much, he said pumping in more resources into rural areas by the NDA had improved agricultural productivity and the quality of lives of people in villages. With the current level of



“The NDA government has pumped in resources into the rural areas, which have improved infrastructure... the policy measures have been taken to ensure remunerative prices to the farmers. Arun Jaitley, FINANCE MINISTER

investment in the next two decades, the infrastructure in rural areas would come on a par with that in the cities.

Meanwhile, according to the Agriculture Ministry, pulses and oilseeds worth Rs 44,142 crore were procured from farmers in the NDA regime between 2014-15 and 2018-19. It listed various interventions made by the BJP-led government to boost production during the past four and a half years to achieve self-sufficiency in pulses and oil seeds.

“While during five years from 2009-10 to 2013-14, only 7.28 lakh MT of pulses and

oilseeds worth Rs 3,117.38 crore was procured at MSP between 2014-15 and 2018-19, 93.97 lakh MT of pulses and oilseeds valuing Rs 44,142.50 crore were procured at MSP by the government. More than 54 lakh farmers benefited from the procurement of pulses and oilseeds during this period indicating that on an average a farmer was benefited to the extent of approximately Rs 80,000 by this MSP procurement,” it said.

The statements came in the backdrop of allegations of ignoring rural India and agriculture sector and the last

week's massive protest in the Capital by farmers across the country. Jaitley wrote that “from 1971 onwards, the Congress policy was slogans and not resources.”

Listing out sectors, he said the government has already increased expenditure in animal husbandry, dairy and fisheries, besides providing more funds for agriculture research and education. “The Narendra Modi government assumed office on May 26, 2014. Stress in the agricultural sector was not born thereafter. It was inadequacy of the resources pumped into the agricultural sector by the Congress that had led to both an agrarian distress and an inadequate quality of life in the rural areas.

“The NDA government planned a multi-pronged strategy to improve the quality of life in Indian villages to enlarge quantum of investment and to make the Indian farmer self-sufficient and farming remunerative,” he said.