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# Cabinet key decisions: Scheme to promote alternative fertilisers, hike in sugarcane prices; and more

The resolutions were passed in the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by PM Narendra Modi.

By: **Express Web Desk**

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Union Ministers Anurag Thakur and Mansukh Mandaviya addressing a press conference after the Cabinet meeting today. (PTI photo)

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The Union Cabinet announced a slew of decisions on Wednesday, including the approval of a new scheme to promote alternative fertilisers in a bid to reduce the use of chemical fertilisers and the constitution of a national organisation to bolster the country's research competence.

The resolutions were passed in the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The announcements include “a unique package of innovative schemes for farmers with a total outlay of Rs 3,70,128.7 crore,” the CCEA said in a release.

### Sugarcane rates hiked

The Cabinet increased the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP), the minimum price that mills have to pay to sugarcane growers, by Rs 10 to Rs 315 per quintal for the 2023-24 season starting October.

“Further, with a view to protect interest of sugarcane farmers, government has also decided that there shall not be any deduction in case of sugar mills where recovery is below 9.5 percent,” the CCEA said. Such farmers will get Rs 291.975/qtl for

sugarcane in the ensuing sugar season of 2023-24 in place of Rs 282.125/qtl in the current sugar season.

The PM has always been with “annadata” and has given priority to agriculture and the farmers, Union Minister Anurag Thakur told reporters after the meeting.

### **National Research Foundation Bill approved**

The government also decided to table a bill to set up the National Research Foundation (NRF) in Parliament. The NRF will be “an apex body to provide high-level strategic direction of scientific research” in India, a statement issued by the Cabinet said.

“The approved Bill will pave the way to establish NRF that will seed, grow and promote Research and Development (R&D) and foster a culture of research and innovation throughout India’s universities, colleges, research institutions, and R&D laboratories.”

The NRF’s governing board will comprise of eminent researchers and professionals, and will be headed by the PM, Union Minister Thakur said.

### **PM-PRANAM scheme for farmers**

The Cabinet approved the ‘PM Programme for Restoration, Awareness Generation, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother – Earth’ (PM-PRANAM) to incentivise states to promote alternative fertilisers and reduce reliance on chemical fertilisers.

The programme had initially been announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1 as part of the Union Budget for this year.

This is part of a bouquet of schemes announced for the farming sector, which primarily focus on sustainable agriculture.

A package of Rs 3,68,676.7 crore has been committed for urea subsidy for the next three years (2022-23 to 2024-25). The outlay also provides for the setting up and revival of 6 urea production units to reduce the current import dependency for urea and make India self-sufficient in this aspect by 2025- 26.

## Ratification of Headquarters Agreement with CDRI

The Union Cabinet also pushed the ratification of the Headquarters Agreement (HQA) between Government of India (GoI) and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), which was signed on August 22, 2022.

The CDRI was launched by PM Modi during the United Nations Climate Action Summit in September 2019. It is a global partnership of national governments, UN agencies, multilateral development banks, the private sector, and academic and knowledge institutions that aims to promote sustainable development.

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Ratification of the signed Headquarters Agreement “will facilitate grant of exemptions, immunities and privileges” and “will provide CDRI an independent and international legal persona so that it can carry out its functions internationally, more efficiently.”

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Sugarcane

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