



drishti

Integration of Rural Development & Agriculture Ministry

 drishtiias.com/printpdf/integration-of-rural-development-agriculture-ministry

The Government of India has decided to **integrate the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development**.

It marks the start of an effort to integrate two departments that have tended to work in isolation with markedly varying performance.

The need for integration

- The success in the rural sector through schemes like “Swachh Bharat” has not been seen vis-a-vis agriculture.
- The flagship rural development schemes have been well-funded.
 - They have been target-oriented with clear deadlines and dashboards tracking implementation on a near real-time basis.
 - The same sense of purpose and scale has been missing in agriculture-specific programmes.
- The schemes of Agriculture ministry like Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana is alleged to have benefited insurance companies more than farmers.

Not only have the gross premiums collected by insurers far exceeded the claims paid out but even these have been made with considerable delays, due to the lack of mechanisms for timely and accurate crop loss assessments.
- The inability to make any tangible impact on the ground by schemes of agriculture ministry like e-Nam, soil health cards, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, Rashtriya Gokul Mission.

Potential benefits

- Agriculture and rural coming under a single minister is a good thing as it will help bring in **synergies**.

For example, **MGNREGA** is viewed as a pure rural scheme when we should be looking at greater convergence with agriculture for achieving the doubling of

- farm incomes. There should be the increased focus at asset creation on individual farms, as opposed to community-based works
- The benefits of rural development can be more targeted towards farmers welfare.
 - It will streamline the decision making process and negate bureaucratic hindrances among different ministries.

Existing issues

- The Agriculture and Rural Development has been brought under a single minister, but a new ministry is created of **Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries and are kept separate.**
- Ministry of Food Processing Industries is separate from the Ministry of Food.
- The Department of Fertilizers is with other ministries. The synchronisation is still not visible in real term and the fragmentation still continues.