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1. The return of targeted cash transfers

- What is the need for providing structured income support to the poor land-holder farmer families in the country?
- What is Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi?
- Is Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi similar to UBI?

GS paper 2 (Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes)

In this video, you can find detailed answers for all the above questions.

The above article has been retrieved from:

Himanshu. (2019, February , 4). The return of targeted cash transfers. The Hindu. Retrieved from <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/the-return-of-targeted-cash-transfers/article26155629.ece>

What is the context about?

- With the announcement of a minimum income guarantee (MIG) scheme by the Congress president, the agenda of universal basic income (UBI) has moved from an academic discussion to the political arena.
- On Friday, the general budget announced a scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, under which vulnerable landholding farmer families, having cultivable

land up to 2 hectares, will be provided direct income support of ₹6,000 a year.

What is the need for providing structured income support to the poor land-holder farmer families in the country?

- ❑ Agriculture continues to be the main driver of the rural economy.
- ❑ Declining prices of agricultural commodities in the international market and fall in food inflation in India since 2017-18, relative to non-food sector, have however, reduced the returns from farming.
- ❑ Small and fragmented land holding on account of repeated divisions has also contributed in decline in the income of the farmer family.
- ❑ Hence, there is a need for providing structured income support to the poor land-holder farmer families in the country for procuring inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, equipment, labour etc. and to meet other needs. Such support will help them in avoiding indebtedness as well and falling into clutches of money lenders.

What is Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi?

- ❑ To provide an assured income support to the small and marginal farmers, Government is launching a historic programme namely “Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)”.

- ❑ Under this programme, vulnerable landholding farmer families, having cultivable land upto 2 hectares, will be provided direct income support at the rate of Rs 6,000 per year.
- ❑ This income support will be transferred directly into the bank accounts of beneficiary farmers, in three equal installments of Rs 2,000 each. This programme will be funded by Government of India.

Is Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi similar to UBI?

- ❑ In simple terms the proposal of transferring some income to every citizen is built on the twin principles of universality and a notion of minimum basic income to those living at the poverty line.
- ❑ The principle of universality is at the core of it given the problems of targeting. Although the idea of universal basic income (UBI) has been in discussion for decades, no country has implemented it.
- ❑ But even with free and universal access to public services and access to livelihood opportunities, there may be a role for cash transfers, particularly for those who are unable to access the labour market or are marginalised due to other reasons.