

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) to be converged with schemes related to agriculture, forests, water resources, land resources and rural roads. Increase in allocation of Rs39,100 cr for 2009-10 for NREGA.

- **The Budget may allocate Rs40,000 cr to the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), an increase of 33% over its preceding allocation. The rural development ministry also proposes that NREGS and some other Central programmes, such as its rural roads programme, called the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), and irrigation projects, be converged.**

Extension of 2% interest subvention to 31 March 2010 for sectors such as textiles, including handlooms, handicrafts, carpets, leather, gems and jewellery, marine products and small and medium exporters.

- **The commerce and industry ministry and an export lobby group have asked the finance ministry to extend an interest rate subsidy of 2 percentage points that some exporters are eligible for.**

Self-employed persons to participate in New Pension

System (NPS) and avail the tax benefits.

- **The Union government might consider providing tax benefits to people putting money in NPS, bringing it at par with older pension programmes**

Increase in allocation of National Rural Health Mission by Rs2,057 crore over and above the Rs12,070 cr provided in the interim budget.

- **The allocation for the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) will be increased by 17% over 2008-09 to Rs13,930 cr.**

Allocation of Rs7,000 crore to the Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana.

- **The scheme is likely to be allotted only Rs1,000 cr over and above the Rs6,000 cr in the interim budget.**

Extension of tax holiday under section 80-IB (9) of the Income-tax Act to natural gas. The Union government to set up an expert group to advise on a viable and sustainable system of pricing petroleum products to bring domestic prices of petrol and diesel broadly in sync with global prices of these items.

- **The announcements expected in the Budget include tax holiday for natural gas production**

and an attempt to address the vexed issue of petroleum product pricing on account of rising subsidy bill.

A 4.8% rise in planned allocation for the department of agriculture and cooperation, with a 15.37% increase in total allocation.

- **The Planning Commission has recommended Rs7,200 crore for the department of agriculture and cooperation—a mere 4.8%, or Rs332 crore, increase over the allocation in budget 2008-09.**

The Union government to pay an additional subvention of 1% as an incentive to those farmers who repay short-term crop loans on schedule.

- **The Union government is thinking of charging 1% less on fresh farm loans to farmers who paid their dues on time and were, thus, not covered under the loan waiver scheme.**

Tax provisions for limited liability partnership brought into finance Bill.

- **The Budget is likely to put in place tax laws for limited liability partnership firms.**