



Govt bid to finetune farm subsidy PM calls Hasina

subsidies as possible under the green box, which is a safe haven. Only in the case of MSP-based procurement, which is a price-support measure, is such a shift not possible", the officials noted.

India has until now been claiming green box protection for its support towards public stockholding for food security purposes. The opponents to its stance have contended that food security-linked stockholding programmes are trade-distorting, if they entail procuring grain from farmers at above market prices.

India successfully negotiated an open-ended "peace clause" at the WTO's General Council last November. Under this, no country can be dragged to the WTO's dispute settlement body for any alleged breach of farm subsidy limits on account of food security-linked stockholding, pending the finding of a "permanent solution" to the issue.

But in the meantime, the government on its own has sought to limit MSP increases and cracked down on states an-

nouncing bonuses over and above these.

At a recent meeting of top officials from the Commerce, Food, Agriculture and Finance ministries, the idea of an appropriate model of direct "decoupled" farm income support — that is, not linked to prices or production — in the Indian context was also discussed.

This will require identifying the beneficiaries to whom such support would be directed, based on the creation of a comprehensive database of tillers/owners, digitization of land records and fixing the per hectare support to be paid annually to them.

There is a similar plan of overhauling the entire input subsidy delivery mechanism through direct benefit transfers (DBT) in fertilizers, electricity and water.

The DBT model is already being implemented in delivery of subsidized LPG cylinders. It is also being proposed to begin this on an experimental basis for distribution of foodgrains, which could also be extended to other urban areas.

surrounded by the other country), even enclaves within enclaves. Last September, Modi had assured Sheikh Hasina that he would ensure the passage of the bill.

"Today, a historic milestone has been reached in India-Bangladesh relations after the passing of the Constitutional Amendment by Parliament. The amendment passed ensures a permanent settlement of land boundary with Bangladesh and resolution of long pending boundary issues," Modi tweeted.

"This would contribute to a stable & peaceful boundary, better management & coordination of the border & will lead to enhanced security as well," his tweet read. He thanked "all the political parties for their cooperation, as also the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura & West Bengal... this reflects the collective will of the nation to build constructive relations with our neighbours". He said he had spoken to Sonia Gandhi, Jayalalitha, M Karunanidhi, Sitaram Yechury, Mulayam Singh Yadav and Sharad Yadav.