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# Budget 2018: Startup CXOs demand tax sops for employees and reduction in GST

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### Hospitality Sector:

**Puneet Gupta, co-founder, and COO, icanstay:**

*India Union Budget 2018-19 Live: News, updates and highlights from FM Arun Jaitley's Budget 2018 speech, announcements*

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"The year of 2017 has seen a consistent growth of digital payment transaction. The government has done a laudable work by empowering citizens of the country to transact digitally by equipping them with bank accounts and payment instruments," said Thattil.

"However, 30 lakh POS terminal and few lakh QR codes for a billion plus say a lot on the scope for building the acceptance infrastructure and the upcoming budget must take steps in this direction. One such step would be the creation of acceptance development fund. This is akin to any market development fund set up by new businesses to create awareness, build a loyal customer base. On similar lines acceptance development fund will incentivize merchants, banks, payment processor to enable digital payments to the grassroots levels and conduct mass education campaign to promote the awareness and benefits of digital payments," he added.

**Robin Raina, CEO, Chairman, and President at Ebix:**

"Today, the basic electronic blocks for digital transactions to take off are in place – UPI, eKYC, and Aadhaar – and they are all talking to each other. The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax will go a long way in bringing the so-called 'black economy' into mainstream GDP. Citizens should now realize paying taxes has long-term advantages over unaccountable and untaxed wealth," said Raina.

**Gaurav Hinduja cofounder of Capital Float:**

"For the Budget 2018-19, we hope that the government will continue to push digitization of financial services and encourage consumers to use digital platforms for transactions. Initiatives such Aadhaar and UPI provide a good opportunity for banks, insurers, and fintech players to expand India's efforts towards financial inclusion. Another area of focus should be reducing the cost of capital for the MSMEs by improving lenders access to low-cost funding sources such as MUDRA and SIDBI and relaxing securitization norms," said Hinduja.

**Sanjay Sharma, MD, and CEO, Aye Finance:**

"As we approach for the budget this year, one of the primary suggestions would be that the government should continue its firm stand on not allowing unnecessary loan freebies to the agro or MSME sector. Passing on such freebies destroys the credit discipline and rewards the offenders, and thus indirectly punishes the diligent loan repayers. Further, the regulatory rules governing the fintech businesses need to be finalized on priority. Last year has seen these go through discussions and consensus building. This year should see the rules formalized into policy pronouncements. The focus of the regulators should be to enlarge the reach of organized lending, especially in bringing the excluded parts of the economy into the fold of organized lending. Fintechs are, and will, play an important part in achieving this objective," said Sharma.

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"As a fintech service which has data and technology in its core, the GST did not impact us directly but this unified tax with and the recent systemic changes would bring about a much-needed digital push and increased accountability. We hope in the year ahead that the Digital India initiatives along with the GST which functions entirely online would bring about a shift in mindset and increased digital adoption," said Punja.

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"Start-ups are doing a great service to the Nation. Besides obvious things like job creation, FDI & innovation, they are bringing consumer-centric approach to the business. This is pushing well entrenched old-world companies to look after customers as individuals with varying needs, unlike a production belt approach which they presently have towards the customers. Naturally 'startup' ecosystem needs soft-hand approach from government & regulators. Of course, the authorities also need to differentiate based on good and bad intentions of the startup," said Kumar

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"Introduce a separate tax deduction of Rs 20,000 for Pure Life Insurance Cover Beyond Section 80C Rs 1.5 lac Deduction: In India, death of a family member can destroy that family's future and development. We hope no one ever faces such a situation, but the truth is millions of people do, as they are highly dependent on the income of the earning member(s)," said Dahiya.

**Nikhil Arora, Vice-President, and, Managing Director, GoDaddy India:**

"The government's push to sensitize and encourage MSMEs towards the adoption of new IT technologies has promoted the growth of MSMEs in recent years. The announcement and focus on digital MSME scheme and monetary support stands to benefit a large number of MSMEs coming from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. We anticipate that the Digital India theme is expected to continue its run in the 2018-19 budget, embarking on a new economic growth model aligned with global technological and developmental trends, providing opportunities for further growth for MSMEs to move into digital technologies," said Arora.

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"The telemedicine or virtual healthcare market in India has witnessed significant growth, owing to its potential of providing the world-class clinical and medical services to distant and rural locations as well as to large cities where People have time constraints and telemedicine provides Instant access addressing the health needs anytime, anywhere. Though the industry has garnered the good support of both the government (SEHAT Program) and private organizations that are investing religiously in telemedicine industry, infrastructure issues still remain an impediment albeit less than earlier in unleashing the growth of this sector. Even though the market is poised for an upswing, it is still currently constrained by the slower than expected adoption and engagement of users," said Munjal.

**Meena Ganesh, MD and CEO, Portea Medical:**

"Critical care equipment like a ventilator, oxygen concentrator, BIPAP, CPAP are under 12 percent GST and 7.5 percent customs duty. Since these are life-saving equipment, these should be made tax free. Mobility Assist equipment like wheel chair/walking stick/crutches is under 5-7.5 percent GST. Under VAT they were tax-free. The mobility assist equipment should be made tax free. Spare parts for all Medical Equipment is being taxed at 28 percent GST. This is too high and should be taxed at a lower rate as the original equipment," said Ganesh.

**Rekuram Varadharaj, Co-founder and COO and Krishna Ulagaratchagan, Co-founder and CEO of healthi:**

"Health insurance is a big area of concern and healthcare expenses are also on the rise. We hope to see more allocations towards this end in this budget. Statistics indicate that while 85 percent people are covered by private medical insurance, about two-thirds of medical expenses are self-funded in India. About 15 percent of the population is neither covered by private nor government insurance schemes. A positive step in this direction would be to increase the exemption on medical reimbursement," said Varadharaj and Ulagaratchagan.

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"We require more clarity with regard to the laws governing telemedicine, online consultations, and medicine delivery. The directives are limited and do not cover the vast scope and alternatives prevalent in the digital healthcare space. We are considered an IT company which delivers healthcare, and therefore it's mandatory to pay GST. On the other hand, health care providers do not fall under the GST umbrella. It would be great to have a clear, and uniform, policy for all businesses operating in the healthcare space," said Kannan.

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"The hinterland continues to suffer power outages, poor data connectivity and road infrastructure that leaves a lot to be desired. Incidentally, these three are crucial for the success of e-commerce industry. If the government focuses on developing infrastructure in rural areas, then e-commerce industry can make a substantial contribution to bring about more inclusive growth in the nation as a whole. Also, we live in a time where mobile phones have become a very important part of our lives, our social interactions, and our safety. However, keeping the batteries charged is a challenge. Power banks, hence, have become an essential accessory. Power banks are currently listed under 28 percent slab. If it is brought under a lower slab of 18 percent, we would have taken a big step towards realizing the dream of a truly digital India," he added.

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"We are expecting that the income tax slabs are revised so that people have more in-hand cash as compared to the in-hand component with the current tax slabs. This would increase the disposable income of the employees and hence allow them to spend more on HungerBox platform," he added.

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## Co-working space

### **Sudeep Singh, Co-founder, and Chief Evangelist, GoWork:**

"The Indian co-working industry has seen a phenomenal growth in the year 2017. Co-working has become a thriving ground for start-ups and is encouraging their growth within its ecosystem. To make this growth upbeat and continuous, we look forward to furthering developments in government's smart cities initiative, as occupiers are looking for improvement in infrastructure in these cities to be able to make a move towards Tier II and Tier III cities. Also, keeping in mind that startups do not make a profit in their primary years, the government can rather lower the income tax slabs for startup employees which will aid startups to reduce costs. This year, we look ahead to some important tax exemptions that would give an enhancement to all existing and upcoming startups," said Singh.

## Agritech:

### **Sandeep Sabharwal, CEO, SLCM Group:**

"India has improved its ranking in global index for ease of doing business as the government continues to work on providing enabling environment. However, one area where the government can do more in Budget-2018 is the agriculture and the allied sectors. The government can take a cue from last Economic Survey that has put an ambitious target of 4% growth rate for the sector that accounts for 40-45% of India's workforce. However, for achieving this, the government needs to lend helping hand to the agriculture financing arms and warehousing service providers, by rationalizing the tax burden on them. It will not only help achieve growth targets and food security but it may also attract investment and newer technology in the sector," said Sabharwal.

## Tourism

### **Jayanth Sharma, Co-founder and CEO, Toehold:**

"Tourism is a particularly beneficial industry for a country, as it brings revenue to the exchequer by allowing people to experience its beauty and culture. It provides an incentive for people to preserve their heritage, both historical and ecological, and finds ways to bring joy and happiness to many. India's tourism industry is at an inflection point, with the amount of domestic and international tourists spending in India on the rise. Investment in tourism from Budget 2018, especially in building much-needed infrastructure, would be a welcome shot in the arm for Indian tourism. While India's brand as a tourist destination has become more globally prominent than ever before, investing in tourism-centric infrastructure could help make our country's beauty more accessible to its citizens and international tourists. Countries like Kenya have created a wonderful travel-friendly ecosystem, and the focus and prominence it receives as an industry could be a guide to Indian authorities," said Sharma.



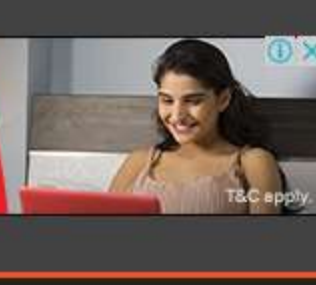
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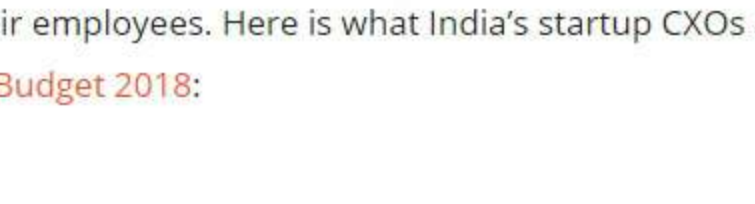
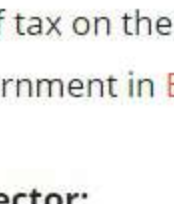


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GST GST TAX

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By prahlad - January 31, 2018 32 0



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## Co-working space

### Sudeep Singh, Co-founder, and Chief Evangelist, GoWork:

"The Indian co-working industry has seen a phenomenal growth in the year 2017. Co-working has become a thriving ground for start-ups and is encouraging their growth within its ecosystem. To make this growth upbeat and continuous, we look forward to furthering developments in government's smart cities initiative, as occupiers are looking for improvement in infrastructure in these cities to be able to make a move towards Tier II and Tier III cities. Also, keeping in mind that startups do not make a profit in their early years, the government can rather lower the income tax slabs for startup employees which will aid startups to reduce costs. This year, we look ahead to some important tax exemptions that would give an enhancement to all existing and upcoming startups," said Singh.

## Agritech:

### Sandeep Sabharwal, CEO, SLCM Group:

"India has improved its ranking in global index for ease of doing business as the government continues to work on providing enabling environment. However, one area where the government can do more in Budget-2018 is the agriculture and the allied sectors. The government can take a cue from last Economic Survey that has put an ambitious target of 4% growth rate for the sector that accounts for 40-45% of India's workforce. However, for achieving this, the government needs to lend helping hand to the agriculture financing arms and warehousing service providers, by rationalizing the tax burden on them. It will not only help achieve growth targets, and food security but it may also attract investment and newer technology in the sector," said Sabharwal.

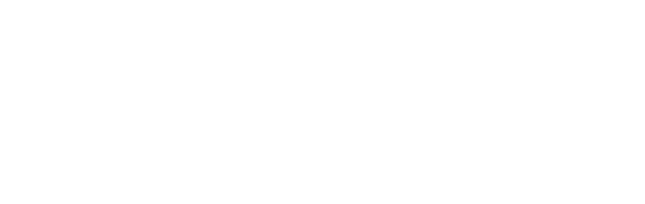
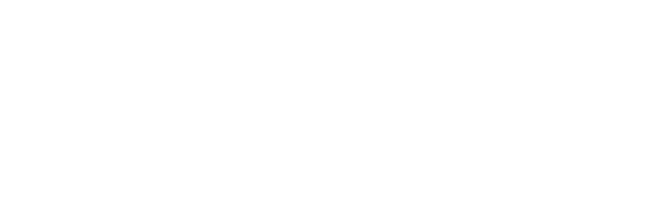
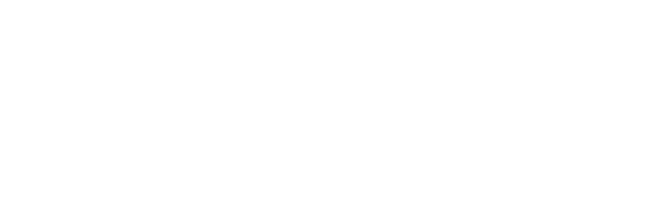
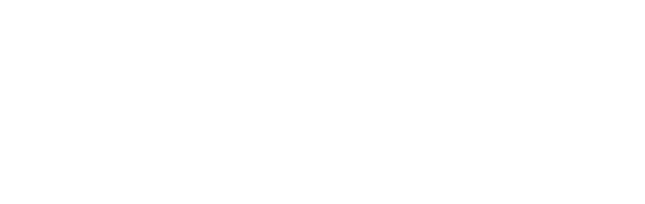
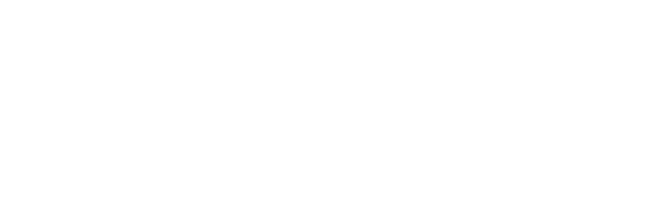
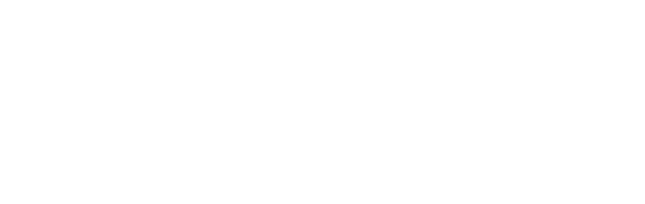
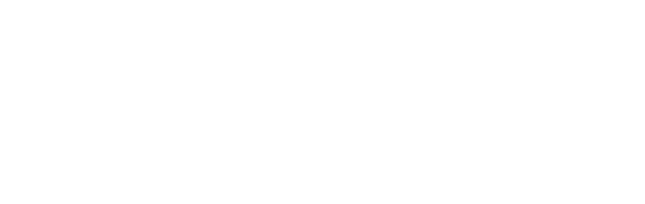
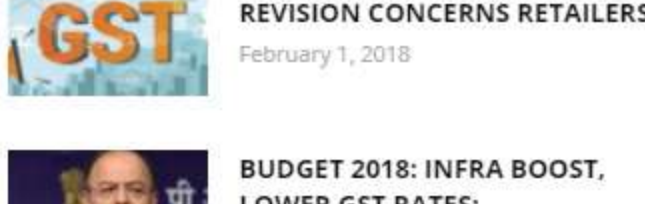
## Tourism

### Jayanth Sharma, Co-founder and CEO, Toehold:

"Tourism is a particularly beneficial industry for a country, as it brings revenue to the exchequer by allowing people to experience its beauty and culture. It provides an incentive for people to preserve their heritage, both historical and ecological, and finds ways to bring joy and happiness to many. India's tourism industry is at an inflection point, with the amount of domestic and international tourists spending in India on the rise. Investment in tourism from **Budget 2018**, especially in building much-needed infrastructure, would be a welcome shot in the arm for Indian tourism. While India's brand as a tourist destination has become more globally prominent than ever before, investing in tourism-centric infrastructure could help make our country's beauty more accessible to its friendly ecosystem, and the focus and prominence it receives as an industry could be a guide to Indian authorities," said Sharma.

*India Union Budget 2018: What does Finance Minister Arun Jaitley have up his sleeve? Click here for top and latest Budget 2018 news, views and analyses.*

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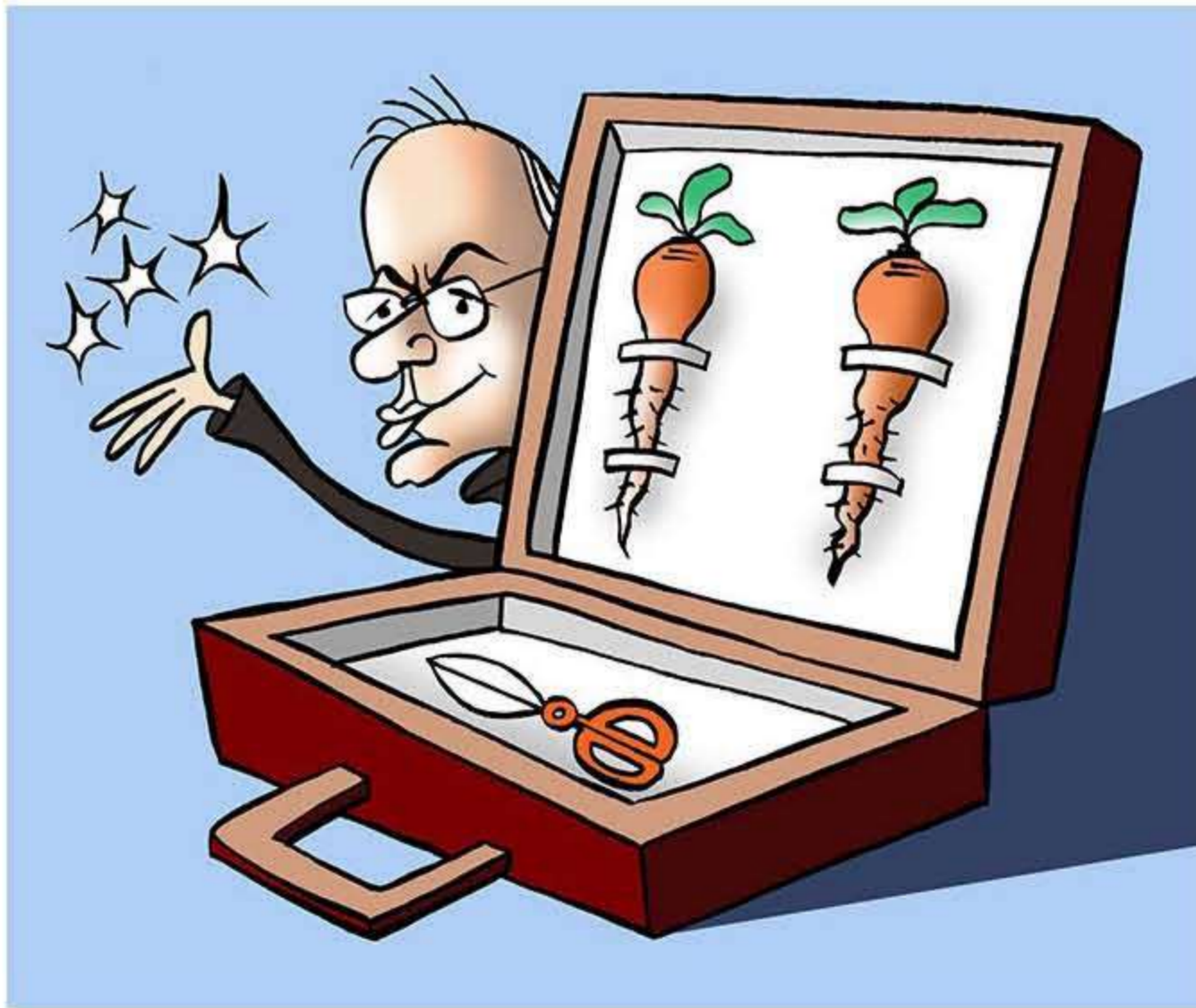


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January 11, 2018 12:00 AM IST  
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The budget session is about to start in the month to come and the anticipation has started to arise amongst the population about the allocation of funds in different sectors. Few promises and comments from the minister has shown interest and possibility of a higher allocation for funds for the agricultural and allied sector.

With this, **Sandeep Sabharwal, CEO, SLCM Group** has shared his budget expectation.



Sandeep Sabharwal says "India has improved its ranking in global index for ease of doing business as government continues to work on providing enabling environment. However, one area where government can do more in Budget-2018 is the agriculture and the allied sectors. Government can take a cue from last Economic Survey that has put an ambitious target of 4% growth rate for the sector that accounts for 40-45% of India's workforce. However, for achieving this, government needs to lend helping hand to the agriculture financing arms and warehousing service providers, by rationalizing the tax burden on them. It will not only help achieve growth targets and food security but it may also attract investment and newer technology in the sector."



SLCM is an ISO certified global post-harvest agri-warehousing group providing one-stop integrated solutions with a diversified portfolio of services ranging from Warehouse Management, Agriculture Financing and Collateral Management to Procurement. The group currently manages 2100 warehouses and 19 cold storages across India using a proprietary scientific storage management system 'AGRI REACH'. The efficacy of 'AGRI REACH' has been attested in a study conducted by industry body FICCI which found that storage losses can be reduced to a minimal 0.5 percent using AGRI REACH.

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## Agri financing firm urges for tax relaxation in Union Budget 2018-19

10 January 2018 Author: Mohd Mustaqim Section: Industry Category: Agriculture



As the Central Government is headed towards to table its Annual Budget in the upcoming Budget Session of the Parliament, the agriculture finance companies are expecting some relief for them in the budget

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As the Central Government is headed towards to table its Annual Budget in the upcoming Budget Session of the Parliament, the agriculture finance companies are expecting some relief for them in the budget. The country's improved tally in the global raking of ease of doing business has boosted expectation among the agri finance companies.

Highlighting the role of agri finance companies in the agriculture sector which provides livelihood to over half of India's population, have urged the government to provide them some relief to them from current taxation rates.

"The Government can take a cue from last Economic Survey that has put an ambitious target of 4% growth rate for agriculture. However, for achieving this, Government needs to lend helping hand to the agriculture financing arms and warehousing service providers, by rationalising the tax burden on them. Agriculture and the allied sectors are the areas where government can do more in Budget-2018-19", said, Sandeep Sabharwal, CEO, Sohan Lal Commodity Management (SLCM).

"It will not only help achieve growth targets and food security but it may also attract investment and newer technology in the sector," he added.

SLCM offers storage and protection services for the entire range of agriculture commodities. It has been handling about 610 agriculture commodities including rice, wheat, maize, mustard, pulses, cotton, barley, bajra, castor seeds, spices among others across India. The company manages a technology enabled network of more than 2,045 warehouses and 19 cold storages pan India spread over 37.63 million sq. ft. area and a throughput of more than 593.38 million metric tonnes.

The Group also has a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC), Kissandhan. In a short tenure, Kissandhan has already financed more than Rs 1116.62 crore for multiple commodities pan India. It has impacted about 244,491 farmers till October 31, 2017.

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