

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING ON ‘ APPROACH PAPER TO THE ELEVENTH PLAN (2007-2012) – AGRICULTURE SECTOR HELD ON 2.3.2006 IN THE OFFICE CHAMBER OF THE CHAIRMAN, STATE PLANNING BOARD.

Members and officials present at Annexure- ‘A’

The meeting was Chaired by the Chairman, State Planning Board, Shri S.C. Marak. While welcoming the Members and Officers present the Chairman informed the meeting that since this year is the last year of the 10th Plan, the State Planning Board has started an exercise to scrutinize the proposals of various Departments on the ‘Draft Approach Paper to the 11th Plan’. Emphasising on the need of a renewed thrust on Agriculture and allied activities for economic upliftment particularly of the rural areas, the Chairman wanted to share the views of the Department towards self sufficiency in foodgrains and towards achieving food security.

The Hon’ble Member, Shri A.H.Scott Lyngdoh, initiated the discussion on Crop Husbandry being the main component of Agriculture.

The projected outlay for 2002-2007 on Crop Husbandry is Rs.7650.00 lakhs. The Actual expenditure for the first three years i.e. 2002-2005 was Rs.2077.49 lakhs. The anticipated expenditure for 2005-2006 was Rs.798.34 lakhs only and the proposed expenditure for 2006-2007 is Rs.1211.70 lakhs. On the basis of expenditure shown by the Department, the Hon’ble Member, Shri A.H.Scott Lyngdoh remarked as to how the Department could jump from an amount of Rs. 7 crores during 2004-2005 to Rs.12 crores for 2005-2006. Taking into account the trend of expenditure during the 1st four years of the 10th Plan it would appear that either the 10th Plan outlay is only imaginary or the Department’s capacity to spend is limited.

The Department however clarified that the projected amount and the amount released is quite different. It was informed that whatever funds allotted by the Government, the Department was able to utilize. It was also assured that the Department has the capacity to spend if allotted more funds. On this note the Board felt that in spite of resource problems Government should be impressed not to impose Plan cuts on Agriculture being a key sector for economic growth

To achieve self sufficiency in foodgrain, the Department is trying its best to utilize the already available area, using hybrid seeds, good fertilizers, pest control and irrigation facilities. On food security, the Department would take up schemes for growing more vegetables like broccoli, potatoes, coloured capsicums etc. More Power Tillers and Pumpsets are also to be used. It was however pointed out that the fertilizer consumption in our State is 6500 metric tonnes only which is very low. It was also informed that the level of productivity in our state is 1.8. M.T. per hectare as against the All India Level of 3.5 M.T per hectare.

Regarding “Seed Certification” the Department informed that there are some constraints/problems in connection with the seed certification which is presently assisted by the Assam Seed Certification Agency. However in view of fund constraints, setting up of seed certification units in the state would involve additional fund for infrastructure and purchase of machineries. The Chairman felt that it is high time to project the proposal in the 11th Plan.

On further discussion the Board suggested for another discussion with the Department and requested the Department to submit facts and figures on Crop Husbandry during the 10th Plan and projection for the 11th Plan with emphasis on seeds, fertilizers mechanisation potential

for development by increasing inputs etc. and what would be the growth rate viz-a-viz the Department's projection for the 11th Plan.

In conclusion the Board decided to have another meeting with Agriculture Department including Horticulture, Minor Irrigation, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Departments on 16.3.06 and requested the Commissioner & Secretary, Agriculture Department to make available like information in respect of Horticulture, Fisheries and Minor Irrigation also. It was also decided to invite the Agricultural Production Commissioner to the meeting.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from the Chair.

Sd/-
(S.C. Marak)
Chairman,
State Planning Board.