

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE REVIEW MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP 'F' OF
STATE PLANNING BOARD HELD ON 4TH DECEMBER, 2006 IN THE
COMMITTEE ROOM, YOJANA BHAVAN TO REVIEW THE
IMPLEMENTATION/ACHIEVEMENTS OF PLAN SCHEMES DURING 2005-2006.**

List of Members and Officers present at Annexure – A.

At the outset, the Deputy Chairman, State Planning Board, Dr. R.C. Laloo welcomed the Chairman, State Planning Board, the Members of the Working Group and all Officers present in the meeting.

The following Departments were taken up:-

1. **Power** :- Discussing on the progress of Leishka Project, the Department informed that the Revised Estimate for Leishka Project is Rs.624 crore, which the Department feel is a bit high and have asked the MSEB to check the R.E. again. Out of this amount, 30% is the loan component and 70% is from REC. The Department assured completion of the project by June 2008. Regarding anticipated expenditure of Leishka Project during the 10th Plan it was informed that the expenditure during the 1st 4 years of the 10th Plan is Rs.95.00 crores. The anticipated expenditure during 2006-2007 is Rs.160.36 crores. The shortfall of expenditure during 2006-2007 is due to non release of fund under APDRP but once Utilisation Certificates are submitted, funds will be made available.

The meeting discussed briefly the 3 new Projects viz., New Umtrew, Umngot and Ganol - construction of which will commence shortly. The DPR for New Umtrew and Ganol will be ready by December, 2006 and for Umngot by March, 2007. Regarding funding of the projects 30% Equity Share will be incorporated in the 11th Plan and funds will be available from State Plan, NEC and DONER.

Under Generation, there is a shortfall of Rs.7 crores due to non-availability of loan under REC. The Deputy Chairman, State Planning Board, Dr. R.C. Laloo wanted to know the amount of grant received from the Government out of the actual expenditure of Rs.11,575.62 lakh during 2005-2006. It was informed that APDRP Grant forms part of the Plan money. The Government of India's Policy is to electrify all villages by 2010 and all households to be covered by 2012. In our State the total No. of villages is 5784, out of which 4116 Nos. are electrified and the remaining 1668 villages are yet to be electrified. The villages which are not close to the Grid are proposed to be covered by MNREDA. About 160 villages are to be covered by the Agency.

The Hon'ble Member Shri A.H.Scott Lyngdoh, while discussing Transmission Schemes is of the view that MSEB should avoid long transmission lines with no viability. It was suggested that ground realities should be looked into and the Department should try to make the Planning Commission understand the problems of the N.E. which is very different from the plain areas. Regarding power theft it was informed that as Govt. of India's Policy is to franchise maintenance works, this franchise system will check the theft of power. Regarding prosecution there are Special Courts under the District and Session Judge. It was however suggested the Department to have its own Investigation Wing to deal with the matter of power theft.

MNREDA :- Understanding that this sector is supposed to fill up the gaps in view of power shortage, the Working Group noted that out of the 10th Plan Outlay of Rs.1490.00 lacs the actual expenditure upto the 4th year is only Rs.525.00 lacs. The anticipated expenditure during the 10th Plan is only 50% of the outlay. This is attributed to less availability of funds under Central Schemes which the Department clarified that if Central Share is not forthcoming State Share also is not released. The Agency faces problems as most schemes are beneficiary oriented but people do not come forward inspite of advertisements.

The Working Group feel that there is lack of peoples awareness in the Department's Programmes. The Department should boost up its activities in this area to make people understand the utility of the schemes. Discussion/Talks through Radio and T.V. should also taken up.

The most popular schemes so far are Biogas Plants and Fixed improved Chulhas. The construction cost for a Biogas Plant is Rs. 17,000 and the beneficiary has to pay around Rs.2,000 and the cost of a Chulha is Rs.800 while the beneficiary has to pay Rs.200/-. Under the scheme, Briquetting, training has been imparted to the people. The utility of this scheme is less requirement of charcoal. Under village electrification the Agency has taken up entire electrification of one village under Mawryngkneng Block.

2. Community & Rural Development :- During the course of discussion the Working Group wanted to know the status of residential quarters in the Blocks as there are complains that most Block Development Officers and staff do not stay in their stations. The Department informed that alongwith the scheme residential quarters have been provided but it appears that most of the buildings are now deteriorating. The Department is taking up to construct new buildings.

The Working Group pointed out to another problem in the Blocks in which most Block Development Officers are not full fledged. They are borrowed temporarily from other Departments with no administrative training. The Block Development Officers are the Cadre Posts of the MCS but at present only 12 Block Development Offices are manned by officers of MCS cadre out of the existing 39 Block Development Offices. In view of the importance attached to the posts of Block Development Officers the Board recommended that fresh appointment of MCS should be taken up by the Government immediately, so that all the 39 Blocks could be manned by Officers of MCS cadre as soon as possible.

Under the scheme NREGA, the Department informed that the response is very good as more than 90,000 Nos. have registered in West Garo Hills and South Garo Hills. The department is targeting the people who do not get employment- especially during the off season. The Chairman, State Planning Board, desired a feedback from the Department regarding this scheme to get some idea of the response to this National Programme. The Govt. of India has laid down policy on the type of works to be implemented under NREGA. The Department is giving more priority to Water Conservation works e.g. digging of tanks, diversion of water for irrigation of crops, land reclamation etc. and less priority to construction of roads.

3. **Border Areas Department** :- It was informed that the number of villages in the Border Areas is 1523 which covers an area of 4430 Sq.Km. Trade and Commerce is important in these areas and the Govt. of Meghalaya have proposed to the Central Govt. for opening again the 5 Border hats as there is much interaction between Meghalaya and Bangladesh on Coal and Limestone trade. The Working Group wanted to know if there is any follow up action on the part of the Government in this regard.

The Working Group is of the view that Look South Policy is more applicable for Meghalaya and as such suggested for an assessment of the impact of Border Schemes on the State's economy. The Working Group suggested for a Good Will Delegation to Dacca by the State Planning Board for boosting up Trade and Commerce between the two countries. The Department was asked to examine the possibility of this Delegation and inform the Board.

Regarding shortage of Officers from the technical line which the Department is facing, the Board advises the Department to resubmit the proposal for creation of the posts of SDOs on deputation on the basis of the volume of construction works in Garo Hills.

4. **Science & Technology** :- The Department informed that the 10th Plan outlay is only a projection. When the Annual Plan allocation is reduced, the schemes are likewise reduced. During the 10th Plan, the Department is depending only on State Plan funding except for Bio Resource Centre which is funded by the Centre. During the 11th Plan, the Department has increased its Projected Outlay to Rs.20 crore with funding from State Plan, NEC and Central Ministry.

The Department has submitted a well defined proposal to the Government to restructure the Science & Technology Cell and upgrade it into a new Directorate. This proposal is well taken by the Working Group. It was informed that the Tura Science Centre and Shillong Science Centre are under Science & Technology Cell. The creation of a Planetarium under the Science Centre in NEHU Campus is included in the 11th Plan.

The Working Group decided to visit the Chulha Centre in Nongmynsong and the State Science Centre on 6th December, 2006.

5. **Planning (VAO's)** :- The approved outlay for 2005-2006 is Rs.50.00 lakh and the amount granted to each NGO is within Rs.1.00 lakh only. The amount is sanctioned by the Committee headed by the Chief Minister. The follow up action of the beneficiaries is done by the District Planning Officers and a report is submitted to Planning Department.

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

Sd/-
(Dr.R.C.Laloo)
Deputy Chairman,
State Planning Board.