

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE REVIEW MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP 'C' OF
STATE PLANNING BOARD HELD ON 1-12-2004 AND 2-12-2004 IN THE OFFICE
CHAMBER OF THE CO-CHAIRMAN, STATE PLANNING BOARD,
SHRI P.T. SAWKMIE.**

Members and Officers present at Annexure-I

At the outset Shri P.T. Sawkmie, Co-Chairman, State Planning Board welcomed the Members and the officers present in the meeting. The sectorwise discussion followed as indicated below:-

1-12-2004.

1. **P.H.E.** :- The Department informed that laying of pipeline work in Zone II (Lachumiere area) and Zone VI (Polo area) was completed except for small works. The work for Tura Phase III is expected to be completed by 2005-2006. There is a proposal to improve the water sources in Shillong town. There are 7(seven) sources in Shillong Peak and all the sources will be utilized.

On the question of Aus-aid, the Department informed that the programme is basically to study, and they are yet to submit their final reports. The Department of P.H.E. is monitoring the projects.

Baghmara Water Supply Scheme under accelerated Urban Water Supply has been started during the current financial year. Pumping Scheme has been taken up from Ranglong to Baghmara covering an area of 40 square kilometers. Treatment plant has been completed and likely to be functional this year.

On Rural Water Supply Programme, the problem is with day to day maintenance. Hence, after completion of the schemes, they are to be handed over to the Village Committees. The other step proposed is to hike the water tariff to about Rs. 105/- per month for house connection. Once the revised tariff is accepted, problem will be solved and revenue will be generated. The Department is expecting a revenue of Rs. 9 crores annually from Shillong.

On Household latrines, the Department informed that out of the target of 8000 numbers, only 1700 have been achieved. This low achievement was because of a new concept adopted by the Government. In the last four years, it is 80% from Government and 20% from beneficiaries, but now the subsidy level has been reduced to Rs. 500.00 only from the Government.

On Total Sanitation Campaign, the Deputy Commissioner is overall in charge. P.H.E will prepare the estimates for the Deputy Commissioner, projects will be submitted to Government of India and funds will be sanctioned directly to the Deputy Commissioner by Government of India.

It was informed by the Department that Khliehriat scheme could not be taken up as no source could be identified. The Water Supply Scheme at Sohra is completed except for the treatment plant. As the source water is not fit for drinking, the Department informed that the water is chemically treated, pending completion of treatment plant. Another good source of

water gravity has been identified near Laitryngew. Regarding the long pending scheme of Simsangiri, it was informed that the pipeline work is almost completed and the Department is hopeful to complete the same by December, 2004.

2. **P.W.D. (Buildings)**:- On a query from the Co-Chairman regarding the gate to M.L.A Hostel, it was informed that the land belonged to the Assembly but all construction works have been done by P.W.D. (Buildings).

On renovation of Meghalaya House, Vellore, Phase IV Group II, the Department informed that work is almost completed. On renovation of ground floor and painting of Meghalaya House, Gauhati, the work is in progress for which an amount of Rs. 1.85 lakhs had been spent during 2003-2004.

On the construction of New Meghalaya Legislative Assembly Building, the Department informed that only surveying work was done at Mawdiangdiang and civil works has not been started. P.W.D.(Buildings) is entrusted with the work and monitoring will be done by the Assembly.

On the construction of Meghalaya House at Mumbai, the Department informed that land had been acquired. The detailed plan/estimates, designs and specifications have been entrusted to CIDCO.

On the Judiciary Buildings, the Department informed that during 2002-2003, Planning Commission had provided ACA of Rs. 300.00 lakhs for construction of High Court Building. An expenditure of Rs. 227.00 lakhs had been incurred during 2003-2004 out of an estimated cost of Rs. 1563.14 lakhs.

The Co-Chairman State Planning Board, noted that there are cases in the Department where work orders are issued without calling for tenders and in most cases, selective contractors get the works. He felt that there should be a general instruction for calling tenders so that people at large could be benefited.

The Working Group desired the following information :-

1. The types of work undertaken under the scheme Addition/Allocation - 2nd Meghalaya House Kolkatta.
2. The budgeted schemes which have not been sanctioned for the past few years.

3. Medium Irrigation & Flood Control:- The Working Group discussed threadbare on the various schemes of the Department. The Department was advised to take up investigation works regarding non-functional irrigation works and flood control works for Wah Umkhrah. The Department informed that estimates have been submitted for consultancy in this regard.

The Co- Chairman felt that Medium & Minor Irrigation should be clubbed together into one Department like Water Resources Department in Assam, since the Command Area Development also falls under Minor Irrigation.

4. Information Technology:- The Department being a new one does not have any Information Technology infrastructure. The Annual Plan Outlay for the year 2003-2004 is Rs. 75.00 lakhs and the expenditure incurred during the year for conducting of workshops, seminars, procurement of laptops etc. was Rs. 74.80 lakhs.

The role and function of Information Technology Department is to facilitate E-Governance, Information Technology industry etc. It involves with entrepreneurs, schools etc. and gives technical advice to different departments. The Department informed that as per the direction of the Planning Commission, 3-5% of the allocated amount of each Department is earmarked for Information Technology, hence it will not be a problem if all Departments comply. Presently the major connectivity in our State is on Telecom and Wireless. These are the constraints because of poor infrastructure.

The Department informed that office building of Meghalaya Watches would be a good option for setting up of Information Technology Department.

5. Home (Police, Fire Service, Jails):- During the year 2004-2005 an amount of Rs. 83.00 lakhs was allocated and out of this amount Rs. 23.00 lakhs was budgeted to P.W.D. to complete the Central Heating Works for the DGP's office building at Shillong.

The Department informed the need of modernization of Fire Service and procurement of fire fighting equipments for disaster management and for emergency services.

During discussions, the Working Group brought to the notice of the Department the condition of the Shillong Jail. The 14 women inmates are put together in two rooms which is very congested and recreation place is also not enough. There is no special cell for women in all the Districts. However cleanliness and food given to the inmates are satisfactory. There are 4 existing Jails in the State i.e. in Shillong, Jowai, Williamnagar and Tura, and construction of two more jails in Nongpoh and Nongstoin under Non-Plan has been started since 2002-2003.

6. Food & Civil Supplies :- The Department informed that the scheme Mobile Fair Price Shop involves distribution and sale of essential commodities through vans in the interior and far flung areas under the supervision and control of Deputy Commissioners/ Sub-Divisional Officers. In rural areas, the fair price shops are running very well.

One of the Members mentioned about the less quantity of Kerosene supplied in Meghalaya. The Department informed that they had pleaded to the Govt. of India to allot more Kerosene for Meghalaya but was not accepted due to increased LPG connection. The allotment of kerosene in the whole state is 1716 metric tonnes per month. Distribution to districts depended on the number of consumers/population. The Working Group however advised the Department to check for leakage as it was learnt that Kerosene is sold at Rs.12 by a Co-operative Society but Rs.25 outside the Co-operative Society.

Regarding the functioning of the Consumers Protection Board the Department informed that the State Commission is functioning and lots of cases are being disposed. Regarding Awareness Programme under the District Forum Rs.50,000 for each District are being sanctioned to take up awareness programme right from the Block Level.

Under the scheme, 'Annapurna' 10 Kgs of rice are supplied free of cost per month to each old age person not covered under the National Old Age Pension Scheme. About 8000 people have been identified and the target for Meghalaya is 9263. The achievement is indicated below :-

Shillong	-	1938
Sohra	-	272
Nongpoh	-	201
Nongstoin	-	531
Mairang	-	306
Mawkyrwat	-	514
Khliehriat	-	91
Jowai	-	917
Amlarem	-	611
Tura	-	1392
Ampati	-	658
Dadengiri	-	272
Baghmara	-	659
Williamnagar	-	245
<u>Resubelpara</u>	-	<u>105</u>
Total	-	8712

2-12-2004

7. Forest :- The Department informed that the total Annual Plan Outlay could not be utilized in full due to late sanction of schemes and shortage of time for implementation of the schemes. Hence the balance unspent amount of Rs.19.60 lacs.

The Co-Chairman sought clarification on an amount of Rs.178.99 lakhs spent on payment of wages. It was informed that the main objective of the Forest Department is preservation and protection of Forests. As such, a large number of workers skilled and unskilled are employed on daily wages for new plantation, weeding etc. Most of the wages component goes towards Social Forestry.

The Working Group pointed out that inspite of keeping Forest Guards, large scale smuggling and felling of trees are going on in Garo Hills. It appears that, the saw mills in Bangladesh are depending on timber from our Reserved Forests. It was also observed that it is not only an international problem with Bangladesh but the problem with Assam also is of great magnitude. The Working Group wanted to know whether the Government is aware and what are the measures taken. The Department informed that the Forest Guards are not fully equipped and stressed for co-operation from the public in the protection of Forests.

Replying to a query from the Co-Chairman the Department informed that 3 industrial estates have been cleared in Garo Hills. The Saw Mills are allowed to shift to the Industrial Estates. Interested parties can apply now and submit a Working Plan to the District Council. Regarding status of saw mills in Khasi Hills it was informed that a number of saw mills in Ri-Bhoi and Nongstoin have been cleared and shifted to the Industrial Estates, but so far none of the saw mills in East Khasi Hills have been cleared.

The Working Group noted that Wildlife is perishing in Balpakram National Park. The Department informed that steps have been taken to improve the flora and fauna of the state and a fulltime Divisional Forest Officer has been posted. The Department has also taken steps to improve/protect the Medicinal Plants in the Reserved Forests.

Regarding the status of the State Zoo, the Department informed that the capital required for setting up a zoo is Rs.10 crores and the recurring costs will be about Rs.50 lacs annually.

8. Information & Public Relations :- The Annual Plan Outlay 2003-2004 for DIPR is Rs.140 lakhs and the expenditure already incurred is Rs.138.13 lakhs.

On the question of Advertising & Visual Publicity, the Department informed that presently they do not have a Video Camera, and no Cameraman. The Department felt that engaging an outside agency is more economical than keeping the machine. It is more cost effective than to employ a cameraman in all Districts. However, the Working Group is of the view that purchase of a Video Camera and employing a Cameraman would create job opportunities for the Mass Media students of our state.

The Working Group suggested that the Department should introduce computers with internet facilities in all District Offices in the state and purchase of a digital camera for use in official functions.

It was informed by the Department that the fund under the scheme 'Press Information Services' is used for maintenance of the Press Club, payment of telephone bills and meeting wages of casual employees. Under the scheme Field publicity, the fund is used for purchase and repair of loud speakers. The purchases of computers fall under the Publication scheme.

9. MATI & PETC :- An outlay of Rs.10.00 lakhs was allotted for 2003-2004 but the amount could not be spent due to non clearance of building permission. As per present decision the MATI building is to be shifted to Mawdiangdiang. The Department is preparing a concept paper and has submitted to Planning Department for funds from DONER.

It was informed that the strength of staff is 40 only and non creation of posts is due to absence of hostels.

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

Sd/-
(P.T.Sawkmie)
Co-Chairman
State Planning Board