

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE CHAIRMAN, CO-CHAIRMEN
AND DEPUTY CHAIRMEN, STATE PLANNING BOARD WITH THE
CONCERNED DEPARTMENTS HELD ON 21ST JULY, 2004 AND 23RD JULY, 2004
IN THE OFFICE CHAMBER OF THE CHAIRMAN, STATE PLANNING BOARD.**

21st July, 2004.

- Present :
1. Shri S.C. Marak, Chairman, State Planning Board.
 2. Dr. F.A. Khonglam, Co-Chairman, State Planning Board.
 3. Shri P.T.Sawkmie, Co-Chairman, State Planning Board.
 4. Shri S.D. Khongwir, Deputy Chairman, State Planning Board.
 5. Dr. R.C. Laloo, Deputy Chairman, State Planning Board.
 6. Shri A.H.Scott, Lyngdoh, Member, State Planning Board.

Officials Present at Annexure –I.

At the outset Shri S.C. Marak, Chairman, State Planning Board welcomed both Dr.F.A.Khonglam and Shri P.T.Sawkmie the new Co-Chairmen of the State Planning Board to the Meeting. The Chairman also welcomed Shri S.D.Khongwir and Dr.R.C.Laloo, Deputy Chairmen, and Shri A.H.Scott Lyngdoh, Member and the Officers to the Meeting.

The Chairman stated that discussions were held on 24th and 25th June,2004 on the information furnished by the concerned Departments vis-à-vis the Board's decision in its meeting held on 19-3-2004 and in view thereof, the Board's observations/decisions were sent to the concerned Departments where certain issues/points need to be clarified and today's meeting was convened for the said purpose.

The Departments taken up:-

1. Agriculture :- The Department clarified that its initial stand to set up a seed farm in each District during the 10th Plan was later dropped in view of the following factors :-

- (i) Cost of land acquisition is very high.
- (ii) Apart from acquiring land, the quality of soil is also to be taken into consideration that adds to the cost of the land.
- (iii) Maintenance of Seed Farm is also very high.
- (iv) Past experience of the Seed Farm set up at Chokpot –the land was acquired at a very high cost.

The Department have decided to continue procurement of Seeds from outside the State with the introduction of "Seed Village Concept". A cluster of villages needed to be identified and the farmers are provided with foundation seeds. The seed multiplication process produced by the farmers needed to be certified by the Assam State Seed Certification Agency and the farmers are getting higher price as the seeds are certified. This seed village concept was started from 2001-2002 in Ri-Bhoi and East Khasi Hills Districts and is very successful. Against the total requirement of 2360 MT of Paddy Seeds, the yield from village Seed Concept during 2001-2002 is 560 MT and by 2003-2004 it is 1600 MT. The Department also stated that after a year or so, Meghalaya will not only be self sufficient but will be able to export seeds outside the state.

In spite of the fact that the Assam State Seed Certification Agency is doing its work well, the Board felt that the state of Meghalaya should have its own Seed Certification Agency.

On the issue of setting up its own Engineering Wing in the Agriculture Department, the Board was of the general view that having an Engineering Wing in every Department is not feasible and also not recommendable other than those Departments whose Engineering Wings were already established. The matter was discussed at length with the Officials of PWD(Buildings) and Agriculture Department. It was generally agreed that the question of setting up an Engineering Wing in the Agriculture Department is not feasible.

2. Animal Husbandry & Veterinary :- On the impression of the Department that it needed a Revolving Fund to improve its activities in Government farms and Dairy Plants the Department stated that as per Treasury Rules, all revenues from Departmental farms etc. are deposited into the Treasury Department and does not come back to the Department and therefore, dependent only on the budget. The Department clarified that Revolving Fund would actually mean that some amount of the revenue earned would be kept with the Department and the bulk of the revenue would be deposited into the Treasury Department.

The Department also informed that it had taken up with Finance Department regarding operation of a Revolving Fund and the matter is still pending with the Finance Department.

In view of the nature of activities of the Department the Board approves in principle for operation of Revolving Funds in Government farms and Dairy Plants.

3. Education :- On the issue of MID DAY MEAL Scheme the Board wanted to be informed on the latest position regarding budget provision, expenditure involved etc. The Department stated that as per the latest Supreme Court directive, of having to appoint cooks, helpers and organizers who should be trained and sensitised on all aspects of serving the Mid Day Meal Scheme, to increase the financial allocation to a minimum of Rs.2/- per day per child (Meghalaya spends 0.63 paise per child), to provide micro nutrient supplements along with Mid Day Meal @ Rs.11/- per child per year, it has worked out a total financial implication amounting to Rs.29,03,70,003/- which includes a non-recurring expenditure of Rs.1,67,62,500/- for purchase of utensils. This Mid Day Meal Scheme is to be provided to every child for a minimum of 200 days a year in Government and Government Aided Primary Schools.

The Department also informed that the amount sanctioned for implementation of cooked Mid Day Meal during 2001-2002 – Rs.1,39,28,000/- under PMGY by S.D.

2002-2003 - Rs.1,34,84,204/- by S.D

2003-2004 –Rs.1,06,08,000/- by re-appropriation

It transpired that fund constraints is the main problem faced by the Department. The Board felt that the plan allocation of the Department should be increased by taking into account the requirements of the Department.

4. PHE/Central Ground Water Board/Mining & Geology:- On the question of co-ordination between the Departments of Mining and Geology and PHE regarding exploration of the potentiality and availability of Ground Water for drinking and Irrigation facilities and the function of the CGWB in this regard the official of CGWB informed that the CGWB does not take up any specific scheme on its own. The function of the CGWB is only on the exploration part for making the data available to the State if they proposed to take up any scheme. Technical help is also provided free of cost. It was informed that in Meghalaya 54 exploration works have been taken up and handed over to P.H.E and Irrigation respectively. It was informed that the water problem in Sohra is due to absence of reservoir facility and at present caves are being explored in limestone areas for storage of water. Regarding the Roof Top Rain Water Harvesting structures the CGWB informed that 6(six) numbers are taken up in East Khasi Hills.

The PHE Department informed that co-ordination with related Departments is taken up under the State Level Water Quality Committee. The Board suggested that Mining & Geology could also be included under this Committee which should meet more frequently. The Board desired updated figures from the CGWB regarding sources of ground water that can be explored and utilised.

5. Industries :- On the issue of “to what extent has employment been generated to the local people so far and other benefits to the state etc”. from the industrial units at Byrnihat, the Department firstly informed that there are 25 units in EPIP and 70 units in Byrnihat area. On the 25 units in EPIP, the Department stated that as per policy for setting up a unit one of the promoters/partners must be a tribal and for employment in the EPIP units, 60% should be given to local tribals. The Department further stated that the units in EPIP are directed to inform the Director and the General Manager or Deputy Commissioner at Nongpoh of any vacancy so that recruitment as per policy could be pursued.

The Board observed that employment avenues are there in 3(three) layers viz., Managerial, Ministerial and Grade IV and the 60% weightage to local tribals is presumably meant for all the said layers. In view thereof, the Board desired a break-up of employment provided to local tribals in the said layers and Community-wise also could be indicated. The Board also wanted to know if accommodation is provided by the units.

On EPIP, the Board learnt that the Department provided only land to the units @ Rs.20/- per sq.metre per year for developed land and Rs.5/- per sq. metre per year for underdeveloped land. The period for such land provided is for 30(thirty) years.

The Board expressed its fear that the industrial units in EPIP, industrial estates and other areas may wind up their business/venture once the facilities of excise exemption, transport subsidy etc. are over. These facilities are also for cement plant and food processing unit set up anywhere in the State. On the contrary, the Department was of the opinion that profit making industrial units will stay especially when the raw materials are locally available and more so, in terms of their investment viz., infrastructure etc.

On pollution, the Department stated that the units are set up only after clearance from the Meghalaya State Pollution Board.

6. Trade (including Border Trade) :- On the issue of Border Trade the Board wanted to know the latest position of developments.

The Department informed that the issue of opening of Border hats was being taken up with the concerned Ministry by the Chief Minister quite recently in the middle of March, 2004 prior to the present Government at the Centre. The Border hats identified are Muktapur, Hat Mawdon, Balat, Mahendraganj and Gasuapara- that is one in each Border District of the State.

The Board asked the Department to follow up with the Union Minister in-charge DONER for speeding up of opening the said 5(five) Border hats.

23rd July, 2004.

1. Planning :- On information as desired by the Board on the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources e.g., Pattern/Norm if any, the amount of fund allotted/granted to other North Eastern States etc., the Department informed that Meghalaya has been implementing 19(Nineteen) Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources Projects and Planning Commission/DONER released an amount of Rs.137.65 crores during the period 1998-1999 to 2004-2005. Out of 19 projects, 6(six) projects have been fully completed and the utilization certificates/completion certificates has been submitted to DONER alongwith photographs. The 13(thirteen) incomplete on-going schemes/projects funded under Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources include construction of Ramkrishna Mission School Building, Primary and Upper Primary School Buildings in the State, Power Projects etc. During 2003-2004, out of 39 projects proposed, 14(fourteen) schemes/project were retained by DONER and funds are not released for these projects. The 14(fourteen) projects include additional financial assistance for construction of the School Building at Ramkrishna Mission at Cherrapunjee, Improvement, Widening etc. of Shillong-Nongstoin-Rongjeng-Tura Road etc.

During the course of discussion the Board also raised a question as to why construction of school building etc. at Ramkrishna Mission at Cherrapunjee figured again during 2003-2004 when it was being taken in the previous years. Planning Department stated that the proposal of such schemes/projects was submitted by Education Department only and presumably with the initiative of the school in question. The Board felt that there

are many other schools in Jaintia Hills, Garo Hills etc. that need financial assistance for improvement of their respective school buildings and was of the opinion that awareness of the availability of funds for infrastructure projects from DONER under NLCPR should be created by the concerned Departments to give equal opportunity. On funds allotted to North East States, the Board felt that the amount of Rs.183.72 crores allotted to Meghalaya during 1998-2004 is comparatively very low even compared with the state of Sikkim with Rs.289.81 crores.

The Department further informed that any scheme/project to be proposed under NLCPR should be to the tune of Rs.1 crore and above. Selection of projects/schemes submitted by the State Government is done by DONER though concerned Ministries examines the projects. On learning that the projects of different Departments submitted by the State Government to DONER needed to be approved by the Chief Secretary and the Chief Minister, the Board was of the opinion that a Committee needed to be constituted to examine the different projects under NLCPR before the same are sent to the Chief Minister.

The Board desires the Department to submit the following information:-

1. Number and location of Primary and Upper Primary schools taken up in the entire State with District-Wise break-up in respect of completed and on-going schemes.
2. To submit to State Planning Board the details of each Project under NLCPR.

2. Transport :- The Board observed that the proposal of the Department for Construction of a Helipad in Upper Shillong does not appear to be making any progress till date. It was learnt from AH&Vety. Department, that the land has been identified and will be made available to Transport Department in compensation for the buildings standing thereon.

The Department however informed that since the Umroi Airport is in the process of being upgraded and this will create facility for construction of a HANGAR in the Umroi airport itself for the Helicopter Service. The matter is being pursued with the Airport Authority of India.

On Meghalaya Transport Corporation, the Department informed that the Cabinet has presently approved the matter of privatization only for Inter-State routes.

Other information are :-

- (i) Out of the total staff strength of 609 numbers, the Government has approved the proposal to retire 216 employees who have opted for the Voluntary Retirement Scheme.
- (ii) The Meghalaya Transport Corporation also operate School Bus Service at subsidised rates involving 16 buses every day to 21 Schools in the State.
- (iii) There are 47 buses that are running which include the 16 buses mentioned above.

The Board felt that operation of School Bus Service which is running at a loss should be discontinued.

3. **PWD(Roads)** :- The Chairman stated that the Board wanted to know on the progress of the Shillong By-Pass work so far. The Department informed that the total length of the Shillong By-Pass is 49.676 Kms. which starts from Umiam (NH-40) and terminates at Mawryngkneng (NH-44). The land in Ri-Bhoi District was taken over and compensation paid to Deputy Commissioner, Nongpoh. It further informed that Rs.8.63 crores was for compensation which includes fencing for the entire length. The position of land acquisition in East Khasi Hills was also handed over to PWD and compensation paid to Deputy Commissioner, Shillong. The Shillong By-Pass will not be taken up by the State PWD but by the National Highway Authority of India. The Department stated that it has learnt that the NHAI has invited tenders for DPR. The Department was asked to submit updated report on the Shillong By-Pass as the same placed before the Board was found to be outdated in certain area.

On the Shillong-Nongstoin-Tura Road, the Department was asked to follow-up on the progress of development as this route is very important for the people of Meghalaya as it is connecting Nongstoin,Williamnagar and Tura. Besides, it will be of great help to the people of the state who have to travel through Assam. The Department stated that the portion from Shillong to Nongstoin of the above route was declared as 44 E National Highway. The Department also informed that the Govt. of India has already sanctioned a number of schemes for this road under the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR), Central Road Fund (CRF) and Additional Central Assistance (ACA) which are in various stages of completion.

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

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