

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP 'D' OF STATE  
PLANNING BOARD HELD ON 18.8.2005 AND 19.8.2005 IN ROOM NO. 370 YOJANA  
BHAVAN TO REVIEW PLAN SCHEMES 2004-2005**

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**Members and Officers present at Annexure – I**

Shri S.D. Khongwir, Deputy Chairman, State Planning Board welcomed the Members State Planning Board and the officers present who informed that the purpose of the meeting is to review the implementation/achievement of Plan Schemes during 2004-2005.

The Departments taken up are as follows :-

**18.8.2005.**

1. **Agriculture** :- Going through the trend of expenditure during the 1<sup>st</sup> 3 years of the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan the Working Group observed that there is likely to be a huge shortfall of expenditure in terms of the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan which is unfortunate since this key sector is linked to 75% to 80% of the population. The Department assures that it can step up efforts to utilize funds wherever the Plan Outlay is enhanced. Moreover the Department feels that the scope to spend is endless if there is no distinction between Agriculture and Horticulture. The Working Group would like a note on this point for further discussion in the State Planning Board.

On requirement of funds it further transpires that the Department requires around Rs.9 crores for Power tillers Rs.1 crore for Pumpssets and Rs.10 crores for setting up of the Meghalaya Horticulture Board. The Working Group suggested for a suitable build up of the Agriculture Mechanical Engineering Wing with adequate repair and servicing facilities as agriculture can go in a big way through mechanization in the state. It was noted that the scheme of Agro Labour Hiring and training centre for unemployed Diploma Holders is a step in the right direction.

On production of food grains the Working Group noted a marked improvement from 336 lacs MT in 2003-2004 to 5.19 lac MT in 2004-2005. This is mainly due to use of HYV seeds informed by the Department. Chemical fertilizers and soil testing are required for use of HYV seeds. The Working Group also noted a sizeable intake of chemical fertilizer- will it require a major break through to switch over to organic manure. The Department is trying to frozen subsidy gradually for a move towards organic manure. The amount of Rs.27 lacs under subsidy was kept at last year's level. On organic subsidy Rs.2.5 crores was spent during 2004-2005.

It was observed that the cold storages at Mawiong and Garobadha are not functioning satisfactorily being wrongly located in the market complex itself. The Department should come up with some alternative arrangement necessary to ensure optimum utilization.

The Working Group desires detailed information on the marketing scheme under Horticulture.

2. **Minor Irrigation** :- During the discussion it transpires that the irrigation ratio in the state compared to all India Level is hardly 20%. In Jaintia Hills the Schemes are functional but coal extraction has affected some projects. Maintenance of projects are met from Non-Plan

Govt. of India is giving some assistance to form the Projects Users Association. So far 108 Nos. of projects have been registered, which the Department will hand over the project to the people. Department is of the view that micro irrigation is better than minor irrigation as the former is directly demanded and maintained by the farmer.

**3. Animal Husbandry & Dairy Development :-** The Working Group observed that the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan outlay was fixed at Rs.55.00 crores for Animal Husbandry and Rs.8.00 crores for Dairy Development. The highest priority is Rs.12.00 crores for Piggery development followed by Poultry at Rs.16.00 crores and Cattle at Rs.5.50 crores. In spite of the substantial investments during the last 30 years or so there is still a big shortage of meat products. This shortage has led to a huge outflow of funds to meet the meat requirement of the state. The Department opine that due to Annual Plan cuts sufficient investments under Piggery and Poultry Development could not be made. It requires more piggery base farms as it also supplies to Regional farms.

Under Poultry Development the Department informed that out of 10 Poultry farms in the state there is only one Regional Breeding farm in Kyrdekulai. Planning Commission has agreed for setting up 2 (two) new hatcheries at Jowai and Nongstoin with assistance from Govt. of India. 32 millions eggs are brought from outside the state annually.

The Working Group felt that the Department should be supported to invest sufficient funds under Piggery and Poultry Development to boost up production in order to stem the flow of funds outside the state provided that the Department has the capacity to utilize the funds. The Department was asked to present a good case on this so that the same could be further discussed in the State Planning Board.

The Working Group observed that targets achieved in the number of vaccinations, milk production, number of layers broilers etc. are nowhere near the level of targets envisaged in the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan. The revolving fund concept in a modified form to boost milk production is likely to be approved shortly as informed by the Department. This is a good sign for getting more wholesome milk in the market. Most of the concentrated feed like maize wheat bran ground nut cake, fish meal etc. are imported at a high cost. Since feed is a crucial input to improve productivity the Department may consider self sufficiency as a goal within a certain time frame.

**4. Fisheries :-** The Working Group observed that the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan targets are very high on fish production. The Department fixes the target based on available water bodies but due to less fund the Department is faring very low with poor achievements. During the course of discussion it transpires that 10,000 M.T. of fish is imported annually causing an outflow of fund to the tune of Rs.50 crores. The annual production from internal sources is only 5147 M.T. - only 10% of the requirement. The Directorate is weak without a Joint Director and Assistant Director as senior enough officers for promotion are not available at present.

The Working Group is of the view that one of the reasons for low performance of this Department could be due to low budgetary allocation and less priority to fisheries as a Department. Since the Department is now energized with the sanction of the 1000 pond scheme for provision of food security and generation of employment opportunities the Department

should be strengthened by considering deputation of officers as a temporary measure. A bigger role for the Department is a must during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan.

**5. Soil and Water Conservation** :- Going through the information submitted by the Department the Working Group observes that the Department is having a number of small schemes and felt that if the Department is able to include under one scheme to make it easier to evaluate the progress of achievement made. The Department expressed difficulty to club the items as the state scheme is part of the Central Scheme.

Enquiring on the functioning of the Commercial Crop Development Board the Department informed that the Board was set up for the purpose of getting assistance from financial institutions but since this concept has been deviated the Board has not been functional although it constitutes a High Power Committee. The Department is however proposing to take steps to strengthen the Board.

Enquiring on any new scheme envisaged by the Department it was informed that the Department is proposing for promotion of Jatropha cultivation a kind of crop whose oil can be used as a commercially viable alternative to diesel, Kerosene etc. It can be grown in the jhummed lands and fallow wasteland along the international border with Bangladesh and the boundary with Assam. The Department proposes to take up this cultivation on a large scale with target areas of 7000 hectares spanning for a period of five years with a financial involvement of Rs.2423.39 lacs.

The Working Group desires the Department to submit a note on this for further discussion in the State Planning Board.

**6. Sports & Youth Affairs** :- Discussing on incomplete stadiums the Department informed that there are 14 Nos. ongoing schemes and an amount of Rs.14.9 crores would be required to complete the schemes. As suggested by the Working Group the Department expresses that if it is possible it would like to complete all these schemes during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan.

On query it was informed that the cost of the swimming pool in Tura is Rs.60.00 lacs. There are 17 Nos. of coaches posted in all the districts, football is still the popular game in the state although cricket is catching up.

The Working Group observed that the nature of schemes are so made out, that spending the full amount of Rs.39.00 crores 10<sup>th</sup> Plan Outlay poses no problems, but the contents are such, it is difficult to detect any glorious vision as would promote Sports and Youth Affairs commendably. Coaches training and scholarships for talented sportspersons must be given due importance. Above all it is the completion of all indoor and outdoor stadiums which must be given top priority during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan. The Department to indicate annual phasing of such expenditure, by reducing if necessary expenditure on other schemes.

### **19.8.2005**

**1. PHE** :- While briefing on implementation of its schemes the Department informed that maintenance work for water supply projects is recurring in nature. As a matter of fact the responsibility for maintenance is given to the village concerned but this did not come up as

expected. The Department is trying to involve the people by asking them to contribute 10% of the project cost towards maintenance. It is felt necessary that the Government should come up with a strong policy to insist upon service charge from the public. The Working Group however stressed on the importance of improvement infrastructure and efficiency for regular supply of water so that people will be more willing to pay for service charge. It is informed that revision of Water Supply Rules have been submitted to the cabinet for approval.

The Working Group observed that Rural Water Supply accounts for more than half of the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan outlay of Rs. 235.00 crores. Investments in the GSWSS including modification of the pumping system, and replacements of treatment units will have reached an all time high of Rs.113.69 crores without a corresponding improvement in the distribution system. Another Rs.12.09 crores for Tura and Rs.13.82 crores for Jowai is required. The Department therefore proposes to revise the tariff. With the revised tariff an amount of Rs.6.00 crores can be generated annually to meet the energy bill of the GSWSS. At present the Department is generating revenue of Rs.10 lakhs per annum to supply of water to Central Offices like Army, Air Force and Assam Rifles.

The Department informed that Aus-Aid is conducting a trial by giving water connection to 70 houses for two weeks, two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening using the meter system. The Department will take over the projects started by the Aus-Aid. The Working Group expresses desire to visit some projects of the Aus-Aid. Integration of the Municipal sources is a welcome trend as this would increase bulk supply of 10%.

2. **Home Guards and Civil Defence** :- It was informed by the Department that the land acquired in Kenches Trace is being claimed by the army. The construction work for the office building has now been started at Mawdiangdiang. The Tenth Plan outlay for Home Guards is Rs. 22 crores. The Working Group felt that the amount is quite low for construction of office and residential complex. The Department is advised to get the correct figures from the PWD regarding the break up of expenditure while submitting such information to the State Planning Board.

3. **District Council Affairs** :- The Department mentioned that the fund/grant for the District Councils is received from the Central Government and have to be utilized judiciously. Since the Utilization Certificates have not been submitted regularly, the Government of India could not release funds in time. The Working Group observed that the perennial problem of non submission of U/Cs persists. The major defaulter is the Garo Hills District Council amounting to Rs.2.98 crores, followed by the Khasi Hills District Council with Rs.1.98 crore and the Jaintia Hills District Council with Rs.0.46 crore. The Department is advised to devise steps to bring down the arrears.

4. **Jails** :- The 10<sup>th</sup> Plan allocation is Rs.8 crores and the expenditure for the first three years is Rs.11.77 lakhs only. The Working Group wanted to know whether the Department will be able to step up the expenditure in the last two remaining years of the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan. It was informed that modernization of jails is funded under Non-Plan. The Working Group felt that the

building component of the Department is very important and the amount allotted should not be surrendered as it will affect the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan.

While discussing District Jails, the Department informed that in Williamnagar the sanctioned capacity is 40 males and 10 females, in Jowai it is 120 males and 10 females, in Tura the capacity is 190 males and 10 females and in Shillong the capacity is 135 males and 15 females. At present there are no convicts in the District Jails of Williamnagar and Jowai whereas in Tura there are 5 convicts and in Shillong there are 32 convicts. The Working Group felt that convicts and undertrials should be put up separately. Regarding inspection of Jails, it was informed that only the District Session Judge Shillong is inspecting the Jails. It was suggested that the IGP should inspect once a year and also to allow NGOs to visit the Jails with special permission. It was also felt that the Department should reconstitute the Board of visitors for Jails.

**5. Police Housing** :- The 10<sup>th</sup> Plan projected outlay is Rs.1320 lakhs and the expenditure for the first three years of the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan is Rs.172 lakhs only. Construction works have been allotted to MGCC but the Department is not satisfied as the work is lagging far behind. In view of the overriding need to meet the housing requirements of the Department the Working Group advised the Department to discuss the matter with the MGCC to speed up construction works or to find out alternative steps to utilize the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan allocation during the remaining two years.

**6. Economics and Statistics** :- It was informed that the Department needs the cooperation of various Departments for updating the correct statistical figures of the State. The Department is now taking up a Pilot Project on Infant mortality in Jaintia Hills. The concluded Economic Census Survey is fully funded by the Government of India and under ICR technology for compilation of data. Government of India will publish the Report. The Report on Human Development is also completed with the help of Government of India under the guidance of the Planning Commission and they are hopeful to publish the same by the end of the year. It was also informed that computerization of the Department may be one of the best in the state as they are getting all the equipment from the Government of India. At present computerization of 3 District Offices has been done.

The Working Group suggested that the Department should seek clarification from India Today regarding source of statistics for placing Meghalaya at the lowest rank in various areas of development. Information on latest figures in the state and other North East States on production of foodgrains, literacy rate, number of villages electrified, birth rate etc. is desired by the Working Group.

**7. P.W.D.(Flood Control and Medium Irrigation)** :- The Department clarified that the difference between Medium Irrigation and Minor Irrigation is based mainly on the command area. During a brief discussion on the Rongai Valley Medium Irrigation scheme, it was informed that the project was conceived in 1989 and in 1990 it was approved by the Planning Commission. The work actually started in 1992 and upto now the progress is very slow. However, 95% of barrage works have been completed, but 90% of the canal works which is

about 30 Kms are yet to be done. It was informed that land acquisition has not been finalized. The initial cost of Rongai Valley was Rs.16.30 crores and subsequently revised to Rs. 131.72 crores. The land required for construction of canals inclusive of main canal and feeder canals is approximately 6 lakhs square metres. The Working Group feels that the Department will have to find alternative sources of financing to meet the revised cost of the project.

The Working Group would like a status note in the Rongai Valley Project with information on contribution of the command area involved to the people and how this has affected their economy.

**8. Housing :-** The Working Group noted that the Department will not be able to achieve the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan targets. Out of the target of 48000 beneficiaries the Department will achieve only 18609 beneficiaries in the 1<sup>st</sup> four years of the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan. On Rural Housing Scheme the Department informed that the scheme is taken according to Central Government norms. Government owes HUDCO Rs.33.27 crores and hence loans have not been received since 2001. HUDCO agrees to waive off the interest if a one time settlement of the loan can be made. The Working Group would like to know the progress in recovery of dues from the beneficiaries who have availed loans from Meghalaya State Housing Board.

**9. Border Areas Development :-** Discussing on the economic condition of the people in the border areas after Partition the Department informed that discontinuation of the Border Trade is still affecting the people. Illegal trading exist, but to a small extent. If free trade is allowed in the 5 border hats, the economy of the people will definitely improve, but till now the Bangladesh Government have not responded. It appears from the discussion that there is a communication gap between the Border Areas Development and the Border Trade Department.

The Working Group noted that the Department have spent only 12 crores during the first three years of the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan out of an allocation of Rs.44.70 crores. The Department is advised to focus on schemes that are economically productive. It was informed that Tea plantation is doing well. Training for Tea plantation is given at Jorhat and assisted by Tea Officers from Umsning and for processing system it is tying up with Horticulture Department. More fund will be required so that small units can be set up as there is plenty of land suitable for tea plantation. It was informed that the whole village of Mawlyngat is involved in tea plantation. The Department is giving financial assistance annually for payment of labourers, purchase of seedlings manure, etc. On border roads, the Department informed that there are no new roads projected under PWD except maintenance. An amount of Rs.30 lakhs is placed annually under PWD Budget for completion of On-going Schemes and for maintenance of Border roads.

The Working Group desired the Department to submit the following information :-

- (a) Since substantial investments have been made from one Plan to another, to what extent has the economic condition of the border people improved? Are there any specific areas which require special attention?

- (b) Size of investment required in setting up border hats at Muktapur, Hat Mawdon, Balat, Mahendraganj, Gasuapara which are awaiting Bangladesh approval. Will these HATS promote border trade, and if so, which are the trade items on both sides of the border? Are anymore border hats required?
- (c) Give a brief account on the performance of ropeways as a form of transportation. Is there need for more ropeways, if so where, and what is the likely initial cost?
- (d) Salient features of tea plantation at Mawlyngat, and fruit processing at Mawkdait.

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

Sd/-  
**(S.D. Khongwir)**  
**Deputy Chairman,**  
**State Planning Board.**