Chapter -7

Madras State – Execution of The Plans First Five-Year Plan
MADRAS STATE – EXECUTION OF THE PLANS
FIRST FIVE – YEAR PLAN (1951-56)

The introduction of First Five-Year Plan in the Madras State is described in this chapter. The First Plan executed many projects to develop the agricultural sector in the Madras State, which had the backbone of agrarian economy.

The First Five-Year Plan gave importance to agricultural programmes. Increase in agricultural production during the First Plan was mainly aimed for meeting the deficit of food and was designed to make the country self-sufficient in food.

More than any other factor, increase in agricultural production which took place during the First Five-Year Plan period helped to control inflation and stabilize the economy of the country and to prepare the way for a higher rate of development which was being attempted during the Second Five-Year Plan period.

The First Five-Year Plan of the residuary Madras State provided for an outlay of Rs.86.4 crores in the State sector of which Rs.80 crores, i.e., 93 per cent was spent during the plan period.
During the Plan period 1952-54 C.Rajagopalachari was the Chief Minister of the Madras State.1

The target for additional production for food grains for the period of the First Plan had been worked out in terms of the contribution, anticipated from different sources such as irrigation, more intensive use of fertilizers, supply of improved seeds and programmes of land reclamation and development.

Cultivation was the main occupation of the people of the State. Paddy, cholam, cumbu, samai, ragi, varagu, maize, korra and other pulses and cereals are the food crops raised in the State. Groundnut, gingelly, sugarcane, oilseeds, tapioca and cotton are the chief commercial crops of the Madras State.2

When the First Five-Year Plan was put into operation, the country had faced with a serious shortage of food and large quantities of food grains had to be imported from foreign countries involving a severe drain on the foreign exchange resources. The increase of agricultural production achieved during the First Plan made the country largely self-sufficient.

The most important crop cultivated in the State was paddy. In 1951-56, cultivated an area of the food crops was 15,004,075 acres. The production of rice was 4,839,620 tons. On the whole food crops occupied 90% of the total area of the State in 1951-56.

The commercial crops of the cultivated area was 46,64,149 acres. During the year under land development schemes 23,524 acres were brought under cultivation with the aid of 958 tractors 85 of which were equipped with the bull-dozer attachments. The Board of Revenue through the Collectors distributed 64,234 tons of Ammonium Sulphate which helped substantially for increasing food production.

Modified Japanese Method of Cultivation was one of means for increasing the food production. During the year 1951-56 the area under this method was 8,84,081 acres. Particular emphasis was laid in this Plan on food production.

3. Ibid. Details of cultivated area in each district are shown in Appendix 1, 2, 3 & 4.
By the various measures adopted, the food production of the State increased from 38 lakhs of tons in the beginning of the Plan to 44 lakhs of tons by the end of the Plan period.\(^7\)

The Manimuthar, Amaravathi, Vaigai, Sathanur and Krishnagiri Reservoir Projects were taken up under the First Plan, but were completed during the Second Plan period. The Araniar Project was sanctioned under the First Plan but it had not yet been completed due to various reasons. This State exceeded the targets set for the major and medium-sized projects. Under the First Plan 1,31,600 acres were newly irrigated and 6,000 acres were also developed.\(^8\)

The irrigation system in Madras State had greatly improved since Independence. During the First Five-Year Plan period an irrigation schemes were taken and Rs. 28.91 crores were spent on this 3,46,000 acres of land were newly irrigated and 1,24,100 acres of land which were already being irrigated, gained more benefits.\(^9\)

The Lower Bhavani Project and the Cauvery Delta Project were completed during the First Planning period. The Mettur Canal Project,

\(^7\) Ibid.


One lakh and thirty two thousand acres were brought under irrigation increasing the food production potential by 66,000 tons. Besides, a sum of Rs.3 crores was spent on improvement of 2,458 minor irrigation sources increasing the food production potential by 88,000 tons.  

Among the sources of irrigation, mention made on government canals, tanks, wells and other sources such as springs, channels, etc., among these the most important source was tank irrigation. At the end of the First Plan, tanks irrigated an area of 1,982,929 acres in the State.

The length of Government canals had irrigated 13,668 miles. The length of private canals was 87 miles in 1951-56. The number of tube wells in the State was 1,944. The number of wells irrigated 12,58,007 acres. The area of crops irrigated in the State was 73,07,635 acres.

Cattle played an important role in the rural economy of the country. The welfare of cattle is a matter of vital concern to the people of the State because of their close connection with agriculture which was the main occupation of the bulk of the people.


12. Ibid..
Under Community Development and National Extension Service Scheme, breeding bulls were supplied at half cost to ryots at suitable centres, the custodians being eligible for maintenance grant under the premium scheme.\textsuperscript{13}

The achievements in the field of generation, transmission and distribution of electrical energy in Madras State were very impressive. The generating capacity of the Grid increased from 156 Mega Watt in 1951 to 560 M.W. in 1956. In rural electrification of Madras State leads the rest of India. The All-India Power Survey Committee consisting of foreign and Indian experts appointed by the Government of India had recently estimated that the peak demand of the Madras Grid.\textsuperscript{14}

The First Five-Year Plan period was confined to the construction of a new power-house at Moyar and extensions to the existing stations at Pykara, Papanasam, Madurai and Madras. The installed generating capacity increased by 65 per cent from 1,56,000 K.W. to 2,56,700 K.W.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} First Five-Year Plan – Programme for Madras State 1951-56. The Director of Information and Publicity, the Government of Madras, p.97.


With these schemes, we hope to march ahead in the field of socio-economic development of our State by the spread of electricity. The Madras Plant Extension first and second stages were completed during the Plan, adding an installed capacity of 110,700 K.W. to the grid. Under the programme of rural electrification, 1,900 villages were electrified, increasing the number of electrified villages from 1,610 to 3,500.\(^{16}\)

The total area of reserved forests during the year continued to be 8,633 square miles, consisting of 7,674 square miles of class I forests Protective and Remunerative forests and 959 sq. miles of class III forests Panchayat forests.\(^{17}\)

The total area of reserved lands increased from 1,301 sq. miles to 1,497 sq. miles. A length of nine miles of reserved forest boundaries was demarcated in Madurai West during the year 1951-56. Out of a total length of 17,034 miles of artificial boundaries, 10,756 miles were cleared free of cost and 3,392 miles at a cost of Rs.6,753.\(^{18}\)

There was no doubt that Madras was well set to taking the lead in industrialization. This was a remarkable achievement for a State which

\(^{16}\) Ibid..


\(^{18}\) Ibid..
lagged behind many others in industrialization even as late as the end of the First Plan. It provided for the preliminary works of the Neyveli Project. By 1954, it became clear that the project could require a heavy investment of the order of Rs.80 to 90 crores which was beyond the ordinary resources of the State Government.\textsuperscript{19}

Therefore, the integrated Neyveli Development Project was launched in the central sector of the plan. Other developments in the industrial sphere included the setting up of the Integral Coach Factory at Perambur.

The investment on this during the First Plan was Rs.5 crores with a building capacity of 350 coaches a year.\textsuperscript{20} The mileage of roads in the State increased during the plan period from 21,195 to 24,045 and that of the surfaced roads from 14,067 to 15,710.\textsuperscript{21}

The Community Development Movement commenced operation in 66 blocks during this period. The people also responded enthusiastically


\textsuperscript{20} Ibid..

to the Local Development Works Programme initiated in the year 1953-54 under which, works valued at Rs.205 lakhs were executed during the plan period.\textsuperscript{22}

In the field of social services too, the performance in the First Plan was substantial. Five thousand and five hundred new elementary schools were opened. The number of schools increased from 16,037 to 21,530 and the enrollment increased from 18.53 lakhs to 24.95 lakhs. The total bed strength of hospitals was increased from 8,500 to 9,800.\textsuperscript{23}

After explaining the execution of the First Five-Year Plan and its benefits, the focus is now an implementation of the Second Five-Year Plan in the Madras State, which is stated in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.