CHAPTER XIV.

MAJOR OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS AND THE FUTURE PROSPECTS OF

PACKAGE PROGRAMME.
The main problems of the package programme have been in the fields of administration, credit supply, irrigation facilities.

Administrative problems: 99

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Expert committee on Assessment and Evaluation, 1960-68 op. cit. 29.
The package programme is an administration oriented programme rather than a development oriented programme. The programme has been implemented and fitted in the prevailing executive set up which is based on the principles of checks and balances being evolved in British period for a different purpose. The pattern of administration is static which does not provide momentum and stimulation to the dynamic forces of development programme of this nature. Moreover, development is not a matter of executive and administrative arrangement only but it is exclusively a matter of extension education. No change can take place in the attitudes and understanding of the farmers by issuing orders or fixing superfluous quotas of supplies. The Community Development programme resulted in failure due to this very factor. Nonetheless, the package programme has been fitted in more or less the same set up. The Expert Committee on Assessment and Evaluation has observed that:

"The main concern of Indian administrative system has been to lay down general pattern of conformity to which the areas must adjust rather than otherwise and leave the least possible discretion to the authorities lower in the hierarchical system."

100- Expert Committee on Assessment and Evaluation, 1960-68, op. cit. p. 23.

101- Ibid.
The collector is supposed to provide leadership to the programme at district level who is not a technician or an expert at the process of agricultural development. The bureaucratic patterns of organisation has damaged the self generating spirit and enthusiasm of the workers who are always busy in filling in the time consuming proformas having 27 to 75 columns. Most of the village level workers complained against the heavy paperwork and complicated procedures of their work. Moreover, adequate powers have not been delegated to the officials at block level to facilitate the necessary adjustments in the programme according to the local needs. Mr. Guy Hunter has observed that:

"The present pattern of administration is so complex that it is constantly tripped up in its own triangle, and so rigid that the highly local needs of the farmers and the discretions of the extension staff are excluded." 102.

There are several development departments which have their separate and compartmentalised working. Hence, the lack of co-ordination in these departments has become one of the major impediments to the package.

102-Guy Hunter, The Administration of Agricultural Development—Lessons from India (Oxford University Press, 1971)
programme. At present the following development agencies are involved in the development programmes.

1- The administrative department (Revenue department).
2- The Agriculture Department.
3- The Community Development Department.
4- The Department of Panchayatraj.
5- The Department of Package Programme.
6- The Department of Co-operation.
7- The Department of Irrigation.
8- The Department of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry.
9- The Central Co-operative Bank Raipur.
10- The Nationalised Commercial Banks.
11- The Central Co-operating Marketing Society.
12- The Land Development Bank.
13- The Electricity Board.
14- The Soil Conservation Department.
15- District Statistical Office.
16- The Agricultural College.

The co-ordination in the activities of the various departments is attempted through a district co-ordination committee. But the committee has no power of supervision. S. E. Sherman E. Johnson has suggested to set up a District Development Centre 103 at district level to co-ordinate the various programmes, activities.

103- Sherman E. Johnson, A Prospective View of the Indian Agricultural Districts. (Delhi: Ford Foundation, December, 1965)
and agencies involved in agricultural development in such a manner that the available resources both human and material can be utilised more effectively. But this idea is not based on realistic grounds as the development centre cannot accommodate all the development agencies and as such a result, the work may suffer.

The existing pattern of organisation is not suitable for the development programme of this nature. The package programme should work as an extension agency to educate the farmers in new technology and improved agricultural practices rather than a distribution centre of inputs and credit. The supply of inputs and credit should be made available to the farmers through co-operatives and private agencies independently without unnecessary intrusion. The administration oriented organisation should be changed into extension oriented organisation. The subject-matter specialists, the extension officers and the village level workers should be entrusted with the work of extension education in improved agricultural practices and the officials should be kept free from all the encumbrances such as preparation of loan applications, supply of inputs, linking etc. The information unit should be made more effective and prompt in disseminating important information at proper time. There is no necessity of separate units of
statistical branch and economic research sections. The district statistical unit can undertake the task of data collection regarding various factors and the Agricultural College can undertake the task of economic analysis of agricultural technology and inputs. A strong liaison between the Agricultural College and Package Programme should be established.

The village leaders and village institutions can play a crucial role in popularising the improved agricultural practices, as the farmers generally follow the progressive farmers and the village leaders. The programme needs a village level organisation comprising of village level workers, progressive farmers, and the members of co-operatives and Panchayats to give effective leadership to the programme. Most of the village level workers are only metricalates and possess very little knowledge about modern agricultural practices and technology. Moreover, they are not very enthusiastic regarding their work due to unsatisfactory service conditions. The educational qualification of the village level workers should be at least graduation in agriculture, so that they may understand the implications of new technology. Since the village level worker is the harbinger of change, he should be provided with adequate facilities such as, better service conditions including adequate emoluments and job incentives etc.
The credit factor has received so much importance that the programme has become credit or loan oriented. On the other hand, no attention has been paid to the utilisation of credit. With the result that a great part of cash credit has been spent on consumption. The provision of kind credit has, however, improved this situation, but the misutilisation of credit is still common. The complicated procedures of loan advancement cause irritating dilatoriness and involve various corrupt practices. The preparation of loan application consumes at least three to four weeks and the sanction of loan further consumes two to three weeks.

The loans are still granted on the basis of the securities and land value in place of production capacity, consequently the medium and large farmers receive comparatively more credit than the small farmers.

An unduly security and rule oriented approach has caused unnecessary delay in obtaining long and medium term credit. The demand of medium and long term loans has not been fulfilled by the co-operative banks.
The inadequate supply of medium and long term credit is a serious limiting factor for the modernisation of agriculture. The nationalisation of commercial banks is expected to meet the long term demand of credit. The failure of co-operatives to collect loans and to attract saving has been one of their weakest points. This indicates that the loans advanced have not been profitable to the farmers as their repayment capacity has not increased.

To meet the above problems, it is inevitable to improve the efficiency of the co-operatives regarding their lending operations and policies. A competent and trained staff should be appointed in credit societies in order to facilitate the supply of production credit quickly in realistic amounts. The establishment of Guarantee Association is a right step in enabling the small farmers to receive credit. The farmers should be given education in banking procedures, functions and organisations. The farmers should be induced to save money for future needs. As the consumption needs are more important than production needs, the co-operative banks should also advance consumption credit to the needy farmers on the basis of their production capacity in order to emancipate the farmers from the clutches of
the village money lenders. The entrance of nationalised banks in the rural financing has brought new hopes.

Irrigation Facilities

The Raipur district is predominantly a rainfed district, but during the past ten years, the rainfall has been erratic and often scanty. Moreover, the distribution of rainfall has been uneven which has damaged the crops seriously. In the whole district, only 17 per cent of the total area cultivated area has been covered under protective irrigation facilities. The continuous scanty rainfall for several years has diverted the attention of the authorities towards this problem. There is very limited scope for ground water resources i.e. tube wells and wells. The scope for tank irrigation is also limited. The electricity board has done some commendable work regarding the irrigation facilities. The extension of electric lines has enabled the farmers to install electric pumps at wells or at the bank of rivers and tanks. The best solution of this problem lies in the construction of small dams at the rivers and tanks at the suitable places and the electric or oil engines should be installed to lift the water. The minor irrigation should be given top priority for developing
adequate irrigation facilities.

Socio-economic conditions:

The Zone III second is predominantly a tribal zone which is backward or underdeveloped in all respects. The rigid constitution of castes and races has resisted the development forces. In the interior villages, the farmers have not welcomed the package programme enthusiastically but on the hand, they are suspicious regarding the objectives of the programme. The caste and group Panchayats play a vital role in the villages in taking a decision regarding the adoption of new agricultural practices. Even in the developed areas of zone I and III, the mass illiteracy in the lower groups has been a major obstacle in the popularisation of new technology. The various elections of village institutions have created rival groups and factions which often retard the progress of the programme. Some bad habits i.e. drinking, gambling etc. have demoralised the village people and made them indolent, lethargic.

Unless an overall scheme of rural education is implemented to attack on the mass illiteracy.
the programme of agricultural development cannot receive due response. Adult literacy classes in off-season should be started in the villages for men and women. The information department should prepare audio-visual aids in dialects which should be displayed frequently. Bhajan Mandal, Ramayan Mandali, games, sports etc. should be arranged in the villages for recreation and social awareness. The organisation of youth clubs may also create a harmonious atmosphere in the villages.

Hitherto, attention has been concentrated on production only and the distribution aspect, which is more important, has been almost neglected, with the result that the economic disparities have become visible in the district. The programmes of land redistribution and land reclamation should be implemented immediately. The problems of landless labourers and small farmers have not been tackled properly. To sum up, the programme has been production oriented rather than distribution oriented.

Future needs:-

The package programme is not a job oriented programme. There is already a problem
of acute rural unemployment and underemployment. The population explosion has aggravated the situation. In future the problem of additional job opportunities for the additional labour force is likely to become a most important problem. The population is increasing more than 2.5 per cent per annum. The per capita land holding is reducing progressively. The medium and large farmers are using the family labour on their fields, except in emergency. A labour intensive programme to accommodate the labour force has to be introduced immediately to surmount the multifarious frustration among the less privileged class of people. Some labour consuming schemes i.e. bunding of Nallas, levelling of land, digging of canals, cottage industries, supplementary enterprises etc. should be launched in the villages for the uplift of the less benefited people.

The cropping has to be changed to meet the demand of consumers whose food habits have been changing very fast. The vegetable crops have to be grown on a large area to meet the demand of villages, towns and cities with the help of irrigation facilities. These cash crops can provide a supplementary source of income to the farmers and can improve their diets.
dry areas crops of oilseeds, small millets, maize, groundnut, early varieties of paddy can be grown. There is wide scope for the introduction of root crops and spices.

The new research and technology is still related to research stations only. The quick diffusion of new technology through extension methods is required to promote the new practices and methods. More capital is likely to be required in future for long term development. Hence, the credit agencies have to play a crucial role.

The rate of capital formation has to be increased to make the village economy self-dependent.

With the rapid increase in population, the demand of food grains is likely to increase, which if not followed by an equal increase in the supply of food grains may cause an increase in the price level. The marketing machinery has to play a role of preponderant importance in transferring the marketable surplus from the producers to consumers. The prices have to play a role of vital importance in balancing the benefits of producers and consumers. For an effective marketing system, means of transportation and communication have to be developed to contact the interior villages; the storage facilities have to be developed, and the processing units have to be established.
Shri G.S. Pathak, Vice-President of India has observed that:

"All this calls for important modifications in social organisations as a whole. The process of development is neither smooth nor painless. Change is always difficult because it implies serious departure from established ways of doing things, and thinking about things. Hence, without the transfer of material resources—equipment, machines, infrastructure and new materials—development cannot take place rapidly. Above all, the most important factor in development is man who has to learn new skills and new ways of thinking and doing the things. Therefore, the transfer of technology with the transfer of resources is an important factor in the process of development." 104

In future more sophisticated research and technology, economic implications of new inputs, additional job opportunities, medium and long term credit, effective marketing system, adequate irrigation facilities etc. will need greater attention than ever.

Future of package programme:

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Singh has been appointed as the chairman of the commission. The commission is aimed at a detailed enquiry into the various questions regarding agricultural development. The report of the commission will be of great value, and a drastic change in the policy matters is expected in the near future, in the field of agriculture.