CHAPTER II

GENESIS OF PACKAGE PROGRAMME.

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It seems to be ridiculous that being an agricultural country, India has confronted with the gruesome problem of food shortage. During 1890-91 to 1919-20, India exported 7.20 million tonnes of food grains, while the imports amounted to 5.40 million tonnes of food grains. Thus, during these years India was a nett exporter of food grains. Thereafter, she became a nett importer. The situation was deteriorated after the separation of Burma in 1937 and was further aggravated with the outbreak of Second World War. The rice import from Burma was suddenly cut-off in 1942 with the fall of Burma in Japanese hands. During 1942-43, famine conditions took place in Bengal due to...
to crop failure where nearly 3.5 million people died of starvation.

After the Second World War, imports of food grains rose sharply from 25.6 million tonnes in 1946-47 to 30.7 million tonnes in 1948-49. In 1942, the government of India created the Department of Food to deal with the control of food prices, supply, and distribution. In 1947, a food policy committee (Krishnamachari Committee) was appointed to evolve a long-term policy for solving the food shortage. The committee recommended the Grow More Food campaign. The government adopted the measures of food control after the Bengal famine. After independence, food rationing was extended to some towns and cities. The Food Grains Policy Committee, appointed in 1947, recommended a policy of progressive conversion to decontrol but later on, a policy of food control was again adopted. A revised food policy based on the recommendations of the committee was announced on 24th September 1948 to control prices, procurement and distribution of food grains.

However, the gap between the country’s total requirements of food grains and normal supplies remained unfilled. Imports of food grains in 1948 amounted to 5.9 million tonnes. A new food policy was announced on 19th March 1949 to achieve self-sufficiency in food supply by the end of March 1951. It was decided that no food grains would be imported after 1951, except in case of emergency. In
July 1949, government appointed a food production commission to implement the new policy of self-sufficiency. It was decided to increase the food production by 4.4 million tonnes at the end of 1951 but the weather did not remain concomitant and the imports of food grains amounted to 4.7 million tonnes to meet the acute shortage of food supply. In the years 1950-51 and 1951-52, the food production decreased to a great extent due to late rains, heavy rains, floods, and droughts. In March 1951, there were reports of starvation in Bihar, Madras, and Bombay. In the First Five Year plan, agriculture was given top priority and the problem was fought at many fronts. Fortunately, weather conditions remained favourable during the First Five Year plan and a bumper crop was harvested in 1953-54 but self-sufficiency in food grains could not be achieved. However, the imports of food grains reduced to the level of 0.7 million tonnes in 1955 and 1.4 million tonnes in 1956. The rationing of food grains was gradually relaxed. At the end of the First Five Year plan, the problem of food shortage did not remain of the old magnitude. The prices of food grains declined and the government had to take steps of bulk purchasing of food grains to make the buffer stock and to keep the prices stable. In 1955, the government initiated a price support policy for food grains.

In Second Five Year Plan, heavy industries received top priority. An extensive agricultural
programme was adopted to increase the food production by 1.5 million tonnes. But the target of 80.5 million tonnes of food grains could not be achieved due to crop failures, specially in 1957-58 and 1959-60. The food supply was so much adversely affected that the food problem again took a serious turn. In the first year of the Second Five Year plan, the agricultural production remained satisfactory as the total food production touched the level of 68.8 million tonnes but in the second year, the production of food grains reduced to the extent of 6 million tonnes. In the third year again, the total production of food grains increased to 75.5 million tonnes which was followed by a bad crop year with the total food production of 71.7 million tonnes - about 4 million tonnes less than the production of previous year the 1957-58. In the last year of the Second Five Year plan, too, no noticeable increase in the total food production took place as the food production remained at the level of 76 million tonnes inspite of favourable weather conditions. As a result there of, India had to import food grains nearly 2 to 4 million tonnes every year during the Second Five Year plan.

Apart from this, rapid increase in population aggravated the situation. The increase in population was estimated at 20 million people during the Second Five Year plan, supposing that the population was increasing at the rate of 1.5% per cent per annum. In reality the growth of population was much faster. During
the decade ending 1961, the total population stood at 438 million, nearly 27 million more than the projection given in the First and Second Five Year Plans. The rate of growth was nearly 2 per cent instead of 1.33 per cent per annum. As a result, the targets of food production during the Second Five Year plan were pegged up from 76 million tonnes to 90.5 million tonnes. In addition to this, the non-agricultural income which was putting more money in the pockets of consumers increased the demand of food grains and raised the general price level.42

The policy of self-sufficiency in food supply remained unsuccessful and India had to depend on imports to subsist her citizens. The Mehta Committee, appointed in 1957, examined the causes of rising trend of food prices since 1955. The committee recommended for the constitution of Price Stabilisation Board and Food Grains Stabilisation Organisation. The government did not accept the recommendation of establishing the Price Stabilisation Board but undertook the whole sale trade of food grains through the National Development Council. On the whole the reactions of the government to the main recommendations of the report were not favourable. Hence the

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Government invited a team of American experts to make an assessment of the food requirements in the country and to suggest methods to meet it.

A Review of the Report "On Food Crisis and Steps to Meet It."

The team of specialists on different subjects came to India in the month of January 1959 to study the problem of food shortage. The team submitted its report in the month of April 1959. The team made a thorough survey of the country and gave valuable recommendations.

The specialist felt earnest necessity of immediate steps to be taken to meet the food shortage because "without food enough, India's hopes for improving human welfare, achieving social justice, and securing democracy will become almost impossible of attainment." 44

The specialists realised that India has to increase the yield per acre at faster rate to fill up the gap of 25 million tonnes so as to reach the target of 110 million tonnes.

44-ibid.

44-Agricultural Production Team, Report on India's Food Crisis and Steps to Meet it. (The Team Sponsored by the Ford Foundation, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Community Development, and Co-operation), (New Delhi: Directorate of Extension, Department of Agriculture, April 1959)
million tonnes at the end of Third Five Year plan. The target of food grains for the Second Five Year plan was fixed at 40 million tonnes which could not be achieved as the total production remained at 70 million tonnes.

In the light of the prevalent conditions, the team suggested that the entire nation must be made aware of the impending food crisis and steps must be taken to meet it. Adequate supplies of food was considered as an essential factor to survival of democracy and a prerequisite to enjoyment of other freedoms. If, in democracy wants such as food and clothing remained unsatisfied, other freedoms might be sacrificed for the promise of food enough.

The team felt that an increase in the food production at the rate required to reach the target of 110 million tonnes could not be realised without launching an all-out emergency programme. The team envisaged that agriculture should be given top priority and some solid emergency measures should be taken to meet the impending food crisis immediately in the selected areas where irrigation facilities were available and the vagaries of nature were meagre. The team refuted the other measures like imports and rationing of food grains to meet the crisis of this magnitude as the rationing created so many problems such as hoarding of food grains and black marketing.

Main Recommendations of the Team:
1-The need for stabilisation of farm prices:—

The team felt the earnest necessity of assured minimum farm prices for the food grains to induce the farmers to invest in fertilisers and costly inputs to raise the yield level.

2-A public works programme for increasing food production and village employment:—

The team recommended a public works programme for projects requiring primarily manual labour such as contour banding, land levelling, surface drainage, irrigation wells and tanks which would contribute directly to increasing the food production, would provide income to the people and would not be inflationary.

3-Priorities for chemical fertilisers:—

The team suggested that the procurement of fertilisers and means of producing fertilisers should be given top priority.

4-Intensifying the irrigation and drainage programmes:—

The team felt that India could achieve greater and more immediate gains in food production by intensifying expenditure, time and efforts on water management than by constructing large scale water projects which would take years to develop.

5-Selection of certain crops and certain areas for intensive efforts:—

The team recommended for the selection of certain crops and areas in each state which had the
greatest increase potentialities. More efforts should be concentrated on the most promising areas for wheat and rice production i.e. those which had the most rapid rate of increase in the recent past, and which had also greatest potential for rapid increase in the years immediately ahead. These areas would increase India’s food production more rapidly than others if given allocation of fertilisers in combination with improved practices such as plant protection measures, improved seeds and irrigation facilities. Attention to other areas should not be reduced but in the national interest efforts should be directed to the most responsive areas immediately.

6-Land tenure and consolidation of holdings:

The team recommended that land ceiling and reforms should be settled as quickly as possible and plans should be developed immediately to schedule the completion of the consolidation of fragmented land holdings.

7-Immediate supply of credit through co-operative societies:

a-The government should be prepared to supply credit and to assist the co-operatives in developing their capacity.

b-Standards of creditworthiness should be redefined.

c-Progressive reduction of cattle numbers:

The team observed that the excessive
cattle population competed with the people for the products of land. The team recommended that legislation should be considered to tackle the following measures:

- A tax policy for the maintenance of useless cattle,
- Confinement of all bulls not kept for breeding,
- Measures to control the open grazing,
- Establishment of disintegrating plants to process fallen animals with incentive payment to owners who bring the fallen cattle.

9-The urgency of high level co-ordinating food production authority:

The team recommended for a centralised authority with a clear line of command and execution to meet the challenge of growing more food.

10-The role of Community Development and technical Ministries:

The team recommended that Community development and all agencies must be geared to mobilisation and strengthening of village leaders and organisations, and effective channelling of all information to village people to increase the yield level. The team realised that all the Ministries concerned with any aspect of programme relevant to food production should give top priority to food production now and for the period of Third Five Year plan.

11-India's capacity to do the job:

The team felt that it was within the
capacity of India's people to mobilise to meet the great crisis before them.

Besides this, the team suggested three experimental projects to increase food production:

1- Experimental project to determine realistic food production of Indian villages under optimum field conditions.
2- Experimental projects to determine the value of farm management assistance in helping cultivators to increase food production and income.
3- Experimental projects to measure the effectiveness of the intensified use of mass media and visual aids as a part of increased food production.

Regarding the first experiment, the team suggested that an area of five villages should be selected to eminate the intensified programme to determine the realistic food production potentialities. These selected villages should be provided with best opportunities of modern farm techniques viz. water; fertilisers; improved seeds; intensive cropping patterns; pest control; facilities for supplementary enterprises such as poultry, fishery, dairy, bee keeping, and pigery; the use of credit and marketing facilities; balanced family diets by growing fruits and vegetables; use of agricultural implements; farm management techniques etc. The team felt that the best combination of all the production factors would bring about a revolutionary change in the traditional farming. The team contemplated it
realistic to prepare farm production plan for individual farmer under the guidance of farm management experts.

Regarding the second experiment, the team considered the management technique as a most effective measure to increasing the food production. The cultivators who adopted the farm management practices such as better tillage, irrigation, improved seeds, chemical fertilisers, pest control etc. received increased yield per acre.

As regards the third experiment, the team recommended for the intensification of the mass media measures on an experimental basis in an area such as Taluka or district in each state. To obtain the greatest impact, the team suggested that radio should be provided to each village and newspapers should be distributed among the literate persons.

Comments on the recommendations of the team:

The production team recommended a more intensive agricultural programme to be implemented in selected areas on selected crops to meet the impending food crisis in the country. No doubt, the findings and conclusions were realistic in the light of the prevailing circumstances but the recommendations regarding the selection of certain promising or responsive areas were based on the presumption that so-called selected areas would fulfil the gap of 28 million tonnes of food grains during the Third Five Year plan.
This presumption did not stand to the test. The most valuable recommendations of the team regarding some policy matters, i.e., stabilisation of farm prices; land tenure and consolidation of holdings; supply of credit etc., were highly appreciated by everyone. But the dilatoriness on the part of the Government in taking quick decisions on such matters created a great pandemonium. The team recommended a public works programme for increasing food production and village employment on realistic grounds.

The team concentrated its attention on the wheat and rice crops and ignored some important crops, such as pulses, oilseas, cotton, sugarcane which hold major portion of agricultural production. To sum up, the team recommended a short term programme for the period of Third Five Year plan.

The Government accepted most of the recommendations of the team and invited a second Ford Foundation team to assist in planning the Intensive Agricultural District programme, generally known as Package Programme. The second team made its recommendations in a report entitled "Suggestions for ten point programme to increase food production" published in November 1959.  

47-A Second Ford Foundation Team, Suggestions for ten point programme to increase food production (New Delhi: Directorate of Extension, Department of Agriculture, November 1959)
The ten points are as under:

1. Adequate farm credit based on production potential, made accessible through strengthened co-operatives.

2. Adequate supplies of fertilisers, pesticides, improved seeds, improved farm implements, and other production needs made readily accessible through strengthened service co-operatives.

3. Price incentives to participating cultivators through assured price agreements for rice, wheat, and millets which should be announced two years in advance.

4. Marketing arrangements and services which enable the cultivators to obtain the full market price for his marketed surplus.

5. Intensive educational, technical and farm management assistance made available in every village in every development block in the district.

6. Participation of all interested cultivators both large and small in individual farm planning for increased food production.

7. Village planning for increased production and village improvement to induce livestock improvement programmes, strengthening of village organisations and village head leadership.

8. A public works programme, using local labour to undertake drainage, bunding, soil conservation, minor irrigation, building of approach roads, and other development works contributing directly to increased production.
9. Analysis of the programme from its inception.
10. Co-ordination on a priority basis, by village, by block, district, state, centre of all resources essential to mount and carry out the programme with maximum speed and effectiveness.

It was observed that if the country was to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, the traditional allocation of production factors would have to be changed. David Hopper, reporting a study of Sinapur village in India says that:

"It would appear that the average allocation made by the sample of farmers was efficient within the context of the prevailing technical relationships. There is no evidence that an improvement in economic output could be obtained by altering the present allocations as long as the village relies on traditional resources and technology."

The community development programme also made certain efforts to bring about a revolutionary change in village economy, specially in traditional agricultural methods. In this regard Community Development programme was also an intensive programme of its own nature.

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46. David Hopper. In Transferring Traditional Agriculture.

... quoted by Theodore W. Schultz (Yale University press, 1964)
But Community Development programme could not make visible change since its impact was not sufficient. Hence, it was realised that if India was to meet the challenge of adequate food production, major changes would have to be made in the field programmes and methods of working. The Package Programme was prepared in the light of the experience of Community Development programme and other agricultural development programmes.

The Package Programme:-

At the outset, it should be made clear that the Package Programme did not utilise the clean slate but it used the same slate which was already written.

It was not an isolated programme since it adopted the extension methods of community development programme and was operated through the set up of the community development organisation. In this sense it was not a new programme in an absolute term but the same programme (Community Development) was redefined, reoriented and remodelled.

Dr. S.R. Sen has rightly observed that "It is important to note that this programme (Intensive Agricultural District programme) supplement and not replace the Community development programme." 48

The Third Five Year plan recognised the critical situation of food shortage and recommended the selection of certain areas for more intensive efforts as suggested by the Ford Foundation team. The plan documented the necessity of Intensive Agricultural District programme in selected districts to provide all the essential factors of production to raise the yield level. Credit was to be provided on a scale sufficient to reach all the farmers and it was to be linked with marketing. 49

It was recognised that no single factor of production could increase the crop yield but all the factors of production and technical guidance combined in package would bring about a real break through in traditional yield rates. This strategy of agricultural development was termed as Package Programme. Dr. S.R. Sen has objected to this nomenclature on the ground that:

"Intensive Agricultural District Programme is intended as an impact programme, one that will provide the concentration of enough effort in

48-Dr. S.R. Sen, The Strategy for Agricultural Development
(All Bombay: Asia Publishing House, Bombay-1, 1962), P. 34.
49-Third Five Year Plan (Delhi: Planning Commission, 1956-61, P. 316)
areas to bring about a break through. To me the term "package" does not adequately express this basic idea behind the programme." 50

Under Package programme, the individual farmer was to be provided with the package of practices at an easily approachable distance. The farm planning approach in place of recipe approach was adopted for the effective implementation of the programme. The programme concentrated its efforts on the increase in agricultural production by adopting the modern techniques of agriculture which were to be promulgated in other districts, too. The improved agricultural practices included improved seeds treated against various diseases, balanced doses of fertilisers, improved agricultural implements, plant protection measures, technical 'know how', water management practices, cultural practices, credit and marketing facilities etc.

To sum up, the Package Programme aimed at...to perform its pace setting or demonstrational role which would show how to increase production more rapidly on the one hand, and path finding or experimental role on the other hand which would develop new innovations and new procedures for wide adoption.

The main objective of the programme was to increase the crop yields in the short run, and to raise 50-Dr. Sen.op.cit..54.
the production capacity of the farmers in long run. In other words, the programme was intended:

1-To develop an improved package of practices in co-operation with the agricultural research.

2-To test, demonstrate and aid the cultivators in applying the package of practices in ways which would increase food production rapidly.

3-To increase the income of the farmers and their families.

4-To improve the economic resources of the villages.

5-To develop effective institutional, organisational and administrative structure and policies to facilitate the cultivators in adopting the recommended package of practices.

6-To provide a sound agricultural base for speeding up the economic development.

*Difference between the Package Programme and other agricultural development programmes*

- The Package Programme adopted a new strategy of agricultural development based on the science and technology which involved fundamental departure from the traditional methods of agriculture while other rural development programmes, i.e., Community Development Programme and National Extension Service scheme were implemented under the prevailing type of conditions to bring about a change in the traditional atmosphere by persuading the people rather than convincing them. Agricultural science and technology
which was previously confined to the research stations and government farms only, was linked with extension education in order to modernise agriculture.

2-The package programme made a provision of adequate supply of production requisites with technical guidance through the co-operatives and government agencies at suitable prices, to enable the farmers to adopt the recommended practices. No such provisions were made in other agricultural development programmes.

3-Prior to the package programme, attention was, generally, concentrated on one or two factors of production which always resulted in poor impact. In Intensive Agricultural District Programme, a multi-pronged, concentrated and co-ordinated approach to agricultural development was adopted to deal with the multifarious problems of agricultural development.

4-In community development programme, there was no provision for adequate supply of credit to the farmers as the loans were advanced on the basis of the value of land which stood inadequate. As a result, the cultivators had to go to the village money lenders for loan who charged exorbitant rates of interest. Under package programme, the co-operative structure was rejuvenated and strengthened to provide adequate agricultural credit to the farmers on the basis of their repayment capacity and repayment ability. The farm planning technique was developed to judge the resources of the
farmers, their requirements, requirements, their repayment capacity, and repayment ability.

5. The farm management approach was adopted in extension education for the first time with the inception of package programme. Prior to package programme, recipe approach was adopted which did not suit the local conditions. The farm management approach provided multiple choice to the farmer of which he had to select the best one according to his skill, type of soil, irrigation facilities, and material resources.

6. The credit and marketing were linked for the first time to enable the farmers to receive the reasonable prices for their produce and to repay their loans.

7. Under package programme, agriculture was treated as a business rather than a mode of living. Hence input-output relationship of various crops was worked out to select the best package of practices and to assess the remunerativeness of the different packages. Hitherto, the farmers were not profit-minded since they were cultivating the land mainly for home consumption.

8. With the inception of package programme, commercial outlook regarding agriculture was developed.

9. An evaluation and benchmark survey department was established in each package district to evaluate the progress of package programme regularly and to collect agro-economic and agronomic data.

9. Attention was concentrated on the capability and skill of
the technical staff in the package districts, and adequate training was given to the subject matter specialists, extension officers, and village level workers.

10. Under supporting activities, a workshop, a soil testing laboratory, and an information cell were established in each package district.

To sum up, the Package Programme was fully equipped with financial, material, and technical resources to give proper impetus to the agricultural production in the selected districts. The programme aimed at to reach all the farmers small, medium, and large through village institutions like co-operatives and Panchayats.

Fifteen districts were selected for the implementation of package programme on the basis of the following criteria:

1. The district should possess assured water supply over large areas.

2. There should be minimum of natural hazards in the district such as floods, droughts, drainage problem, soil erosion problem etc.

3. The district should have well developed village institutions like co-operatives and Panchayats, and

4. The district must possess maximum potentialities for increasing agricultural production within short period.

The programme was started in the following...
districts and was later on extended to 18 package districts.

TABLE-II

Intensive Agricultural Districts In the Country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Year of Starting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A-First seven districts:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Thanjavur</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>Kharif, 1960-61.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- West Godavari</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>Rabi, 1960-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Sahabba</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>Rabi, 1960-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Agipur</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>Kharif, 1961-62.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B-Second eight districts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Year of Starting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8-Alleppey &amp; Faigat</td>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>Kharif, 1962-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-Srandra</td>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>Kharif, 1963-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-Burdwan</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>Rabi, 1962-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-Cachar</td>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>Rabi, 1963-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-Cana</td>
<td>Mysore</td>
<td>Kharif, 1962-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-Sambalpur</td>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>Kharif, 1962-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-Surat &amp; Bulsar</td>
<td>Gujrat</td>
<td>Kharif, 1962-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-Jammu &amp; Assamnag, Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>Kharif, 1963-64</td>
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</tr>
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C-Other districts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Year of Starting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-Delhi</td>
<td>Union Territory</td>
<td>1964-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-Karnal</td>
<td>Mysore</td>
<td>1967-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-Mysore including</td>
<td>Mysore</td>
<td>1967-68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table based on the Fourth report of Assessment & Evaluation, op. cit. p. 7-6.
through these package districts, the Package
programme initiated a process of transformation of
agriculture from consumption to production for sale; from
subsistence level to business level; from extensive
cultivation to intensive cropping; from exclusively manual
labour to research and technology. The programme aimed at
the rejuvenation of agriculture, which:

"Has been and become a deficit economy to a
very great extent. The Indian cultivator labours
not for profit nor for net return but for
subsistence .......... land is not only underused
but illused." 61