CHAPTER - V

PRESENT MARKETING PATTERNS OF PADDY AND JUTE AND THE GOVERNMENT POLICY TOWARDS AGRICULTURAL MARKETING IN ASSAM.

"the main characteristic of a rational system of price stabi­

lisation ......... should be on the one hand to allow the free

trade to function on a competitive basis within certain broad

limits and on the other to regulate by suitable countervailing

measures, overall as well as selective, by public authority."

— The Foodgrains Enquiry Committee (1967).

I. Paddy : State Trading by the Government of Assam:

In this chapter, it is proposed to study the present marketing

patterns of paddy and jute and the Government policy towards

agricultural marketing in Assam. For this purpose, the present

period is taken from January, 1967 when the Government appoin­
ted the Food Corporation of India as the sole agent to restore

state trading in paddy after it was suspended in 1966 in the

wake of various adverse effects.

After the suspension of the State trading in paddy on 20th

June, 1966 paddy dealers and rice millers immediately became

active and entered again into the market. The effect of the

entry of paddy dealers and rice millers in the paddy market

was that there was spiralling rise in the prices of paddy and

rice. The consumers were at the mercy of the private trade.

Consequently, there was wide-spread resentment among the

public against the decision of the Government for suspending

state trading. Thereafter, the Government appointed a
Committee known as the Goswami Committee headed by Dr. M.N. Goswami, the then Vice-Chancellor of the Gauhati University to enquire into the various aspects of procurement and distribution of paddy and other allied matters. The Goswami Committee in its report expressed that procurement and distribution of foodgrains should not be left to the free trade. They gave special emphasis on the need for strong State intervention in the procurement and distribution of foodgrains.

The Goswami Committee suggested that the co-operatives should be the principal agency of procurement. The Committee was of the opinion that if co-operatives were substituted by the Food Corporation of India, it would retard the growth of Co-operative movement in Assam. However, the Government appointed the Food Corporation of India as the sole agency contrary to the recommendations of the Goswami Committee, from January 1967. The performance of the Food Corporation of India in the procurement of paddy was not satisfactory because high prices of paddy were prevailing in the open market. During the suspension of State trading, the price of paddy rose to Rs. 30.00 against Rs. 13.00 per maund as procurement price fixed by the Government. When the State trading was restored in January 1967, the Government fixed the procurement price at Rs. 17.00 per maund but the farmers were unwilling to sell their surplus to the Government at this price, because higher prices were offered by private dealers. Besides this, the organisational set-up of the Food Corporation of India was not
adequate for exercising a dominating command over the paddy market. Thus, there were mass hoarding and smuggling of rice. Therefore, the situation further deteriorated with the restoration of State trading in the state. Afterwards, the State Government allowed the Assam Co-operative Apex Marketing Society to procure paddy on Government account in two districts.

The Government was supplying only 250 grams of rice per capita per week, against a minimum rice requirement of about 3 kgs. per capita per week. Therefore, the consumers had to depend upon the unregulated open market where the price of rice was much higher than that in the fair price shops. The open market price of paddy rose to Rs. 45.00 per maund. In the Jorhat market, open market price of rice rose from Rs. 112.00 per quintal in January to Rs. 120.00 in February, Rs. 125.00 in March, Rs. 150.00 in April, Rs. 145.00 to Rs. 175.00 in May-August and about Rs. 200.00 in September-October 1967. The similar condition was also prevailing in other towns of Assam.

The procurement of paddy by the Food Corporation of India and the Assam Co-operative Apex Marketing Society during 1968 to 1972 was very poor. Consequently, the Government could not supply adequate quantity of rice for consumers through fair price shops, for which the consumers were compelled to depend upon the open market. Thus, the monopoly procurement by the State neither helped the farmers who parted with their surplus to the State-appointed agencies
at a much lower procurement price nor the consumers who were hard-hit by high prices in the unregulated open market. The situation further deteriorated during the middle of the year 1973 due to the general scarcity of rice throughout the country. Consequently, the Assam Government again took over the wholesale trade in paddy and rice since the 1st November 1973.

**Agencies in operation of wholesale trade in paddy:**

The principal agency for the operation of wholesale trade in paddy procurement at the village-level is the recently organised wholesale co-operatives at the Gaon Sabha level. The paddy procured by these wholesale co-operatives are handed over to the Assam State Co-operative Marketing and Consumers' Federation Ltd. (previously the Apex Marketing Society) or the Food Corporation of India for milling and distribution of rice. These two organisations have no adequate storage and warehousing facilities, for which they were to depend to a great extent on the millers or former wholesalers for storage. There is also no clear-cut division of work of different agencies involved in the state trading. However, if the wholesale co-operatives show weaknesses in their organisation and functioning, the former paddy-dealers may avail the opportunity of entering into the paddy marketing operations. Dr. P.C. Goswami in his Report on the State Trading in Paddy in Assam (1961) under the auspices of the Agro-Economic Research Centre, Jorhat stated that in the original scheme of State Trading in 1959-60,
the service co-operatives could not function well and the Primary Marketing Societies were controlled in many cases by former paddy-dealers who took recourse to private trade in their own account.

Appraisal of performance:
The figures of procurement of paddy in the State are as follows. As against the procurement target of 24 lakh quintals (which was later refixed at 21 lakhs) for the Kharif season, 1973-74, the total procurement in the State by the two agencies was 16.84 lakh quintals. For the Kharif season, 1974-75, the target of procurement in the State was fixed at 21 lakh quintals. Both the Assam Co-operative Apex Marketing Society Ltd. and the Food Corporation of India procured 19.29 lakh quintals. In 1976, the target for procurement of paddy was first fixed at 20 lakh quintals. Then the target was revised and fixed at 30 lakh quintals. After achieving the target of 30 lakh quintals, a new target of 35 lakh quintals was fixed and this was also achieved.

Assam State Co-operative Consumers' and Marketing Federation Ltd.:
In response to the reorganisation of the cooperative structure in the State, the Assam Co-operative Apex Marketing Society was reorganised into the Assam State Co-operative Consumers' and Marketing Federation Ltd. on August 9, 1975. The Federation is the apex body of all agricultural consumers' and processing co-operative societies of Assam in respect of
reorganisation of co-operative marketing and trading activities of the State.

The Federation is dealing with the distribution of rice and wheat products, pulses, salt, mustard oil, controlled clothes, yarn etc. Besides these, the Federation is also dealing with the distribution of cement. The authorised share capital of the Federation is Rs. 300 lakhs to be subscribed by the Government of Assam and Consumers' Co-operative Societies on 50:50 basis.

Apart from the Food Corporation of India, the Federation is a procuring agent of the State Government and is operating in the north bank of the Brahmaputra and Dibrugarh district. During the Kharif year 1975-76, the Federation procured 22.5 lakh quintals of paddy against the Government's original target of 11 lakhs. This shows a very encouraging performance of the Federation in the field of procurement of paddy.

Public Distribution System:

Maintenance of smooth supplies and stabilisation of prices at a reasonable level for the relief of the vulnerable section of our population is an important policy for the economic programmes of our country. Therefore, in Assam, with the Government takeover of paddy trade the 664 Gaon Panchayat level Co-operative Societies are organised towards this direction. With the increasing emphasis being given by the Government on the Co-operative movement and public distribution system, the Gaon Panchayat level Societies have
greater and greater responsibility in this distribution system. These societies are now doing the business of distribution of some commodities like rice, wheat products, controlled cloths etc. as a distribution agency.

But the role of the Co-operative societies is more important in the public distribution system. The Gaon Panchayat level societies are to act as leaders in the task of fair distribution. Now, the societies are to take up procurement of paddy on Government account to relieve the people from the clutches of intermediaries.

The Director of supply makes monthly allotment of essential commodities like rice, wheat products and sugar on sub-divisional basis. In getting such allotment, Deputy Commissioners/Sub-Divisional Officers in consultation with the Sub-Divisional Procurement and Public Distribution Committees reallocate the quota amongst the Gaon Panchayat Samabai Samiti. On getting the sub-allotment, Gaon Panchayat Samabai Samities bring the quota from the supplier and distribute the same to the consumers through their agents.

The system of distribution through fair price shops appointed by the Department of Supply is replaced by the Gaon Panchayat Level Samabai Samities working through their own agents. However, the Co-operative societies may utilise the services of any of the fair price shops functioning satisfactorily in their area. But in such cases, the fair price
shops are to act as agents of the respective Societies under the Somitee's direct responsibility. The appointment, replacement of the agents and the task of controlling them are the responsibility of the Gaon Panchayat level Society. The Gaon Panchayat level Societies are under the administrative control of the Government. The Gaon Panchayat level Production, Procurement and Distribution Committees also co-ordinate the activities in their respective areas.

**Open Market:**

At present although the State trading in paddy is in operation in Assam, still there is the open market i.e., the traditional open market. Usually millers and paddy dealers and their agents are in operation in the village level 'Hats' where the farmers sell their surplus paddy to the village traders or the paddy dealer or his agent or the rice miller. The village level 'Hats' are the primary assembling centres of paddy and rice. Part of the surplus paddy is sold to the small retailers who, in turn, sell these back to the rural non-farming population or later in the lean months to the cultivators themselves.

In the urban areas, the petty rice traders procure paddy from the farmers in the neighbouring villages. After procuring paddy from villages the petty trader performs milling through a rice-miller.
FIGURE - 1
MARKETING CHANNELS OF PADDY AND RICE IN ASSAM

GROWER
PADDY

FARM RETENTION
HOME CONSUMPTION
SEEDS
PAYMENT-IN-KIND

MARKETED
SURPLUS

RICE
MILLER

(RICE)

PETTY RICE
TRADEERS

F.C.I.
STATEFED

663 WHOLESALE
(COOP. OPERATIVES)

G.P. LEVEL
CONSUMER
CO-OPS.

FAIR
PRICE
SHOPS

CONSUMERS

VILLAGE MARKET

ITINERANT
TRADEERS
VILLAGE DEALERS
F.C.I.
STATEFED

SHOP
KEEPER

VILLAGE
CONSUMER

VILLAGE SALES
CO. VILLAGERS
VILLAGE
RETAILERS

VILLAGE RICE MILLER
Thereafter, the petty traders bring those rice to the open markets in urban areas, for selling it to the urban population. Before the takeover of wholesale trade in paddy by the Government of Assam there were large number of wholesale traders in paddy in Assam. These traders or their agents purchased the produce mainly from the Primary Village Markets (Hats) and thereafter, sold it either to the retailers or the urban consumers in the secondary markets or urban markets. Besides there were superfluous middlemen operating between the village markets and the urban markets.

However, after the suspension of the wholesale trade in paddy and rice by private agencies in Assam since 1st November 1973, the influence of these wholesalers has almost vanished. Now, a petty trader of rice is ordinarily allowed to carry rice or paddy not exceeding five quintals. Even then, this open market still plays a very dominant role in feeding the urban or rural population because the quantum of rice supplied by the Government to the consumers through Fair Price Shops or co-operative societies is not sufficient for meeting even the minimum rice requirements of the consumers. Hence, the open market of rice has an edge over the rice or paddy marketing by the Government agencies or Co-operative societies. Therefore, it is observed that the price of rice prevailing in this open market is much higher than that of the Fair Price shops. The marketing channels of paddy and rice in Assam are shown in the Figure I.
II. Marketing of Jute:

Introduction: Jute is an important fibre of Assam. It plays a dominant role in the agricultural economy of the State. In Assam, jute is sown in the months of March and April, and is harvested between July to September. The jute plant matures in about four months when the crop is ready to be harvested. Therefore, its harvesting depends on the maturity of the plant. The harvesting season usually covers a period of two months. In the process of harvesting, the plant may be cut as bud, while flowering or ripening stage. However, the coarseness of the fibre increases and lowers its quality in each of these stages.

In the harvesting process, jute plants when cut are tied into small bundles (6 to 10 plants) called "Aanti". Thereafter, these small bundles are tied again into larger bundles (6 to 9 Aantis) and then left for three or four days for the shedding of the leaves. Then, the bundles are kept in water for the process of retting. The quality of water in which the plants are kept, determines to a large extent the colour of the fibre. Clean water renders the fibre of good whiteness but dirty water makes it red or brown or darker. After completing the retting process, the fibre is immediately separated from the plant. The fibre is then kept in the sun for drying which requires about three days.

Marketing practices of jute: The early marketing of jute begins in July, but the peak marketing season extends from
September to December during which period more than 80% of the marketable surplus flows into the market. The lean marketing season covers a period from May to August.

The mills located in and around Calcutta are the main consumers of Assam jute. A certain portion of Assam jute is also sent to Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh. The whole process of marketing of jute from the crop fields to the mills is a complicated one. There are also large numbers of middlemen between the growers and the millers. The entire marketing process may be divided into four stages:

(a) from the villages to the primary markets (Hats),
(b) from village (Hats) to baling centres or the secondary markets,
(c) from secondary markets to terminal markets like Newgong, Calcutta, and
(d) from terminal markets to the mills.

In the primary village markets the buyers' representatives, namely itinerant traders, agents of the Kutcha and Pucca balers operate and purchase according to their needs. About 60% of the marketable surplus are sold at the village homes and the remaining portion comes to the primary market. Now the jute Corporation of India also procures jute on Government account. The large sale in the villages is due to various circumstances prevailing in the jute growing areas such as:

(i) the modes of transport are not satisfactory and the inability of the individual farmer to take the risk of bringing the crop at a high cost to the market.
(ii) all jute is ready at different times and hence the cultivator has to sell in small quantities, sometimes not even a full cartload, for which he is constrained to sell in the village markets.

(iii) most of the cultivators are usually indebted to the moneylenders who want that repayment of debt should be made through jute.

One interesting feature of the village markets is that the buyers approach the sellers who, in turn, assemble at one convenient place in the village. Soon after the bargain has been settled, the produce is weighed, transportation arranged and payment is made on the spot.

In the second stage, the Kutchha balers and their agents or brokers (Dalals) generally operate in the baling centres or secondary markets. It would be interesting to observe that a few growers come to secondary markets for selling their surplus jute. It is estimated that only about 5% of the crop is brought from the village to the baling centres through growers themselves; about 45% by the "Beparies" and 10% by the agents.

In the third stage, there are the 'Aratdaus' (Commission agents), Kutchha and Pucca balers and agents of Mills. The mills are the largest buyers of raw jute. They operate only in the terminal markets.
Some important spot markets for jute in India are: (a) Cossipore, (b) Chambazar, and (c) Athkola. The biggest ready market for raw jute in our country is Cossipore and it is fed from North Bengal and North Bihar. Mostly commission agents or brokers operate in the market.

Conclusion:

(a) Marketing of Paddy and Rice:
The need for a price stabilisation policy in India has been repeatedly emphasised by the planners and the Government in the wake of a general inflationary trend in the economy. Since the general price level is only an aggregate result of the prices of individual commodities, it is necessary to stabilise prices of important individual commodities particularly foodgrain prices because, (a) they form the core of the price structure, (b) they affect the pace and pattern of marketed farm surplus, and (c) their prices register wider movements.

With these objects in view, there exists the dual marketing system of supplying rice through fair price shop or co-operative societies and on the other hand through unregulated (open) retail market. But such a notion is fruitful only in competitive conditions. From the past experience and performance, it is observed that complete dependence on the unregulated open market led to the high prices of rice and even the state trading in paddy and rice by the Government could not improve the situation and the price situation further
worsened and the general masses were hard hit by soaring prices of foodgrains. This is because of the fact that the fair price shop or Co-operative Societies have not been able to compete with the open market because of certain defects.

Firstly, the state agencies could not procure enough of paddy to supply required quantities of rice to consumers. Because, the price offered by the Government agencies was much lower than those of the private traders.

Secondly, since the Government procurement was not satisfactory, the state agencies could not meet the demand of the consumers who were thus compelled to depend on the open market for rice.

In this way, the Government could not have a firm grip over the rice trade in Assam. However, price stabilisation of foodgrains through the existing dual marketing system can be achieved if the state agencies can successfully compete with the open market traders in respect of (i) procurement and (ii) distribution of paddy and rice. Success in procurement and distribution can be attained through a carefully planned fixation of minimum and maximum prices of paddy based on reality of the situation. Any attempt by the Government to raise the issue price of rice may create anomalous situation by enlarging the margin between procurement and issue price.
The high price-spread will not only hamper procurement, but also will have adverse effects on the rural economy. Therefore, the important approach should be to minimise the price-spread.

Another important point is that the Government should build up (i) good buffer-stock of paddy to meet the requirements of distribution, (ii) opening more co-operative rice mills and nationalising the rice mills, if the circumstances demand, and (iii) keeping a reserve-stock, distinct from a buffer-stock for periods of real crisis, such as scarcity of rice due to flood etc., which have become a quite regular phenomenon in Assam.

It is perhaps best to put in a word of caution. In the State Trading scheme, there should be no rigidity of approach because it may disturb the normal functioning of the market and thus may dislocate the existing channels of distribution.

However, the ideology of the present scheme of paddy and rice marketing should be to enable price stabilisation and ensure remunerative prices to growers. Therefore, there should be free trade to operate on a competitive basis and on the other hand to regulate by suitable measures by the State agencies. So, there should be neither full control nor complete 'Laissez-faire'. The Foodgrains Enquiry Committee (1967) of the Government of India was also of the same view that
"the main characteristic of a rational system of price
stabilisation .... should be on the one hand to allow the
free trade to function on a competitive basis within certain
broad limits and on the other to regulate by suitable counter-
vailing measures, overall as well as selective, by public
authority."

Although the historical perspective of the state trading in
paddy and rice in Assam embraced failures and weaknesses,
still the existing scheme of state trading shows an encoura-
ging picture as evident from the procurement performance
particularly from the Kharif year 1975-76 when the Assam
State Co-operative Marketing and Consumers' Federation Ltd.
procured 22.5 lakh quintals of paddy against the Government's
original target of 11 lakh quintals. Similarly, in 1976 the
first general target of procurement of paddy was 20 lakh
quintals which was revised to 30 lakhs. Even after achieving
this, a new target of 36 lakh quintals was fixed and this was
also achieved.

Therefore, it can reasonably be expected that the state
trading in paddy and rice in Assam possesses a successful
future if the scheme is planned and implemented in a cautious
and purposeful manner.

(b) Marketing of Jute:
It is observed that marketing practices of jute in Assam are
still traditional and it has not come under the purview of
the State trading. However, the Jute Corporation of India now procures raw jute on the Government account from the primary markets.

It is observed that there is no grading of jute in the primary markets where more than 60% of the jute surplus are sold by the growers. Therefore, if grading of jute is introduced in the primary market level, the growers are likely to get better price than they get now.

Co-operative marketing of jute may also help the growers in getting the benefit of seasonal rise in prices. Co-operative marketing of jute may also ensure a remunerative price for the jute grower.

As there are a great deal of malpractices in the primary markets against the interest of the producers, all important markets of jute should be brought under market regulation. Therefore, it may be expected that the introduction of procurement of jute within the framework of Gaon Panchayat level co-operative societies, and grading of jute may ensure better marketing prospects to jute growers.

References:

1. Source: Paper on "The State Take-over of Wholesale Trade of Rice in Assam" (P IV) by Dr. P.D. Saikia & Dr. N. Saha, Agro Economic Research Centre, Jorhat, Assam.

2 & 3. Kutchha bales range from 0.50 quintals to 1.50 quintals in weight in various sizes, but Rucca bales are usually weighed at 1.80 to 2.00 quintals.

Report on the State Trading in Paddy in Assam (1961): Dr. P.C. Goswami
Efficient marketing of agricultural produce plays a vital role in the planned economy which is dependent on agriculture. The primary and secondary markets where farmers sell their surplus crops constitute the most important link in the process of marketing. Any unfair practices prevalent in these markets deprive the farmers of a substantial share of the price paid by the consumers. For solving these marketing problems and to ensure an efficient marketing system in Assam, regulated markets might have been established. Therefore, the Assam Government enacted the "Assam Agricultural Produce Market Act, 1972."

The idea of regulation of markets took real shape in India in the last decade of the nineteenth century when a special legislation known as "The Cotton and Grain Market Law" was enacted in Berar, then known as "The Hyderabad Assigned District." Similarly, in pursuance of the recommendations of the Indian Cotton Committee appointed by the Government of India, the then Government of Bombay first enacted the "Bombay Cotton Markets' Act" in 1927 for regulation of markets.

The Royal Commission on Agriculture in its report submitted in 1928 observed that "The prosperity of the agriculturists and the success of any policy of general agricultural
improvement depend to a very large degree on the facilities which the agricultural community has at its disposal for marketing to the best advantage." The Commission also recommended that "these defects can only be removed by the establishment of properly regulated markets." This was also endorsed by the Central Banking Enquiry Committee in 1931.

The Five Year Plans visualised the regulation of new markets throughout the country. In November 1955, an all India Conference on Marketing and Co-operation held at Hyderabad made many recommendations for accelerating the progress of regulated markets during the Second Five Year Plan and for improving the working of the markets already established. The Conference on Marketing and Co-operation held at Jaipur in February 1966, particularly stressed the need for accelerating the pace of regulation of the uncovered marketing centres during the Second Five Year Plan period. The Third Plan stressed the regulation of markets in different parts of the country and consolidation of the working of the markets already established during the Second Plan. These were to be achieved by the grant of liberal financial assistance in the form of loans, subsidies for the development of markets, expansion of market intelligence, introduction of commercial grading of a few commodities, construction of warehouses at various marketing centres etc. At the beginning of the Third Plan, legislation for establishment of such markets was in force in nine states. On the eve of the Fourth Plan, the
number of regulated markets and sub-market yards was 1844. The Fourth Plan visualised that the remaining 2300 markets/sub-market yards would be brought within the purview of legislation.

The "Assam Agricultural Produce Market Act, 1972" received the assent of the President of India on the 3rd September, 1974. The main object of this Act is to regulate sale and purchase of agricultural commodities and create conditions for a fair competition and thereby ensure a fair deal to the farmer. The aim of this Act as incorporated therein is "to provide for the better regulation of buying and selling of Agricultural Produce and the establishment of markets for Agricultural Produce in the state of Assam and for matters connected therewith."

**Salient Features of the Legislation:**

**Constitution of Market Committees:**

The Act provides for the constitution of the Market Committee and it shall consist of fifteen members to accommodate various interests in proper proportions.

Every market committee, other than a market committee established by a Co-operative Marketing Society or an Anchalik Panchayat or Gaon Panchayat shall consist of the following members: (i) seven from the agriculturist members of the Gaon Sabha, (ii) three to be elected by the traders,(iii) one to be elected by the Co-operative societies,(iv) one to be appointed
by the Co-operative Bank, (v) one to be appointed by the state Government, (vi) one to be elected by the members of the Municipal Board, Town Committee or Mohkuma Parishad or Anchalik Panchayat or Gaon Panchayat, and (vii) one to be nominated by the Warehousing Corporation if a warehouse has been established by such Corporation within the market area.

The market committee established by any co-operative marketing society shall have eight members to be appointed by the Co-operative Marketing Society from amongst the producers, three to be appointed by the Co-operative Marketing Society from amongst the traders holding valid licences in the market area and one each from the Co-operative Bank, the State Government, Municipal Board, and Warehousing Corporation.

If the market committee is established by any Anchalik Panchayat or any Gaon Panchayat, it shall consist of eight members of the Anchalik or Gaon Panchayat from amongst the producers, three from amongst the traders and one each from the Co-operative Bank, the State Government, Co-operative Marketing Societies and the Warehousing Corporation.

**Objects of Market Committee:**

The objects of a market committee shall be: (i) to maintain, manage the market yard and to control, regulate and run the market in the interest of the agriculturists and traders holding licence from the market committee;
(ii) to regulate and control transactions in the market and to deal licence-holder who is in default, to settle disputes to levy and recover market charges, to impose fines and penalty;

(iii) to act as a mediator, arbitrator or surveyor in all matters of differences, disputes etc. between the licence-holder or between them and agriculturists coming as sellers of farm produce;

(iv) to control and regulate the admission to the market and to prosecute and confiscate the goods of a person trading without licence;

(v) to bring, prosecute or defend any suit, action, proceeding, application or arbitration on behalf of the market committee or otherwise directed by the State Government;

(vi) to purchase, hire or acquire any land for construction of any house thereon or other movable or immovable property and other equipment for the purpose of its business to raise fund from the Government;

(vii) to do such other things as may be required for the purpose of achieving its objects and requirements of the Act.

Powers of Market Committee:

(1) A market committee shall have the power to regulate entry of persons to the market, to supervise the behaviour of the persons and to take disciplinary action against the licence-
holder who fails to fulfil the conditions of the licence.

(ii) Every market committee shall levy and collect a cess on the agricultural produce bought or sold in the market area at a rate not exceeding 50 paisa for every one hundred rupees of the aggregate amount.

Declaration of market yards:
The State Government may declare (i) any enclosure, building or locality in any market area to be the principal market yard or sub-market-yards; and (ii) any area including all lands with the building thereon within such distance of the yard or yards as it thinks fit to be the market proper.

Conclusion:
One important conclusion is that the interests of the growers should predominate in a market Committee and hopefully enough, it is quite interesting to observe that the number of growers in the market committee under the legislation is not less than 50% of the total strength.

The size of the market yards may be scientifically correlated with the volume of market arrivals. There should also be close co-ordination between the activities of the regulated markets and co-operative marketing societies established so far in Assam.

Another important point is that the growers are deprived of a legitimate price of their produce due to the absence of
grading on the basis of quality of the produce. The market committee should, therefore, engage trained graders in the market.

All regulated markets should pay due attention to the aspects of market intelligence. They should display on their notice board the current prices, market arrivals, and minimum prices etc.

However, even a best piece of market legislation may go in vain if it is not implemented properly and effectively. Anyway, the operational aspect of the legislation is the ultimate indicator of its future potentialities.

Prof. M.L. Dantwala in his report on the enquiry into the working of the regulated markets in the Bombay State (1961) has observed that:

"The best that a marketing legislation can do under normal circumstances and without trespassing on the sphere of production and the fiscal-monetary factors affecting demand, is to equalise the bargaining power and create conditions conducive to more perfect competition. This would necessitate strengthening the organisation for market intelligence, storage, grading, pooling and adequate credit and finance to mention a few important items ..... The point to be noted is that unless the attack is from all key points, even the best isolated piece of legislation may not yield the desired result."
In Assam, with the establishment of 664 Gram Panchayat level Co-operative Societies which are functioning almost successfully, it may be hoped that the Act will have increased potentialities. Further, the Act may remove malpractices in the market and may bring reduction in the marketing charges. Apart from providing monetary gains to the producers, regulated markets may exercise dominating influence and command on the market structure.

Reference:

The Assam Gazette Extraordinary (September 24, 1974) Government of Assam.