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Adopt Village for Growth

Rural development must be worked on steadily, area by area, till every village in the country has been uplifted in the remaining nine years of the 10-year time limit set for the task, Prime Minister Morarji Desai said while inaugurating a national seminar on "Rural Development—Focus on the Weakest," organised jointly by PADI (Peoples Action for Development—India). Seminars are good in their own way, but if they don't result in any action, they are a waste, he felt.

The problems facing us are urgent and the people's expectations are high—these high expectations bring great frustration if they are not fulfilled. Propaganda is not effective. People want to see what's being done. Official and non-official bodies should adopt one village each at a time and develop them completely. Eighty per cent of our population lived in villages where job opportunities were scarce. This resulted in a rush to the cities and the creation of slums. The villages must be given productive employment in keeping with their capacity. Villages also must be given roads and proper sanitation. But nothing should be given free, it loses value and has the effect of making people helpless and dependent. The help should be given commensurate with their capacity to absorb it. Bharat Krishak Samaj Units should adopt at least one village in the District for all round development.

—Dr. D.A. Bholay

Food Production Touches All-Time High

The foodgrain production during 1977-78 would touch the all-time high of 125 million tonnes, the Agriculture Minister, Mr. Surjit Singh Barnala, announced in the Lok Sabha. The output, he said, was four million tonnes higher than the record production of 121 million tonnes in 1975-76 and seven million tonnes in excess of the cautious target fixed for this year. With a comfortable foodstock and stabilising trend of production, the Minister said, the Government would try to ensure equitable food distribution in the country. His ministry would make all efforts to achieve this goal.

Replying to the marathon 15-hour debate on the demands for grants of the Agriculture Ministry, Mr. Barnala pleaded that politics should be kept out of food production. He was keen to build a National food security system to help all sections. He noted there were still large sections of the population who did not get a square meal, and the Minister touched on different aspects of food and agriculture problems, land reforms and irrigation. In the field of irrigation also, he announced that in one year 2.8 million hectares of land had been brought under irrigation. This was the record achievement for any country in the world in one year. In the field of agriculture, the overall growth rate during the year would be 10 to 12 per cent. This was the highest growth rate in any one year.

Mr. Barnala said the highest production hitherto had been achieved in 1975-76 when it touched 121 million tonnes. Next year, however, there was a drop of ten million tonnes to 111 million tonnes. The Government had cautiously fixed a target of 118 million tonnes for 1977-78 and the target had been exceeded. Even in rice production they had achieved an increase of 8 to 10 per cent. There had been of late stagnation in rice output. But now a breakthrough had been possible and rice production had touched 50 million tonnes. In Punjab itself rice output had gone up by about 42 per cent.

The production of commercial crops had shown tangible increase. He also claimed that the Centre had been able to meet in full the food requirements of the States during the year. This was not being done earlier. The demand for both wheat and rice had been met and the States were satisfied with the food policy. Higher production coupled with removal of zonal restrictions on movement had helped in price stabilisation and elimination of regional price disparities in wheat and rice. Mr. Barnala recounted the achievements with a sense of pride and fulfillment and emphatically refuted allegations that the Government had been partial in favour of the wheat growing region or northern States in respect of fixation of procurement prices of wheat and paddy.

He commended the States "food for work" programme as an instrument to give employment to the poor. While they could be legitimately proud of an adequate reserve, still a large number of men, women and children went to bed without a meal. It was primarily to help this section that the "food for work" programme had been initiated. The project was working well in some states like West Bengal, Orissa and Assam. During the current year, one million tonnes of wheat was proposed to be provided free to the States to generate employment for this section of people.

Mr. Barnala spelt out steps to promote consumption of fertiliser and said a recent study by the NCAER showed that small and marginal farmers were relatively using large quantity of fertiliser. This exposed the propaganda that the benefit of fertiliser only reached the big farmer. He said 1.3 million hectares of land had so far been taken possession of and distributed. In Karnataka, he said, only 8779 hectares had been distributed last year. In Andhra Pradesh, against a total of 15 lakh hectares declared surplus, a little over three lakh hectares had been acquired and 1,73,000 hectares distributed so far. The quality of land declared surplus and distributed to the landless was "very poor" the Minister said. He had

suggested to the states to ensure that cultivable land was distributed to the landless.

On irrigation facilities, he said the allocation for major, medium and minor irrigation had been stepped up considerably. It was proposed to bring under irrigation 17 million hectares in the next five years—eight million under major and medium irrigation and nine million under minor irrigation. By the end of the century, he hoped, the entire 107 million hectares would be brought under irrigation if the present tempo was maintained. He also said the Central Water Commission had prepared a master plan for flood protection works around Delhi in view of the threats posed by Sahabi Nadi and some inter-State drains.

He assured the members there was no question of discrimination in respect of procurement price for paddy and wheat or subsidy. The subsidy for wheat benefited consumers and not the growing States. For instance, only one-fourth of the wheat supplied from the public distribution system went to the northern wheat-growing States, whereas three-fourth went to the non-wheat States. So the wheat subsidy had gone mainly to the consuming areas. There was no question of north and south in food management. Referring to the demand for credit facilities for the small and marginal farmers, he said efforts were being made to increase it. He was not satisfied with the 35 per cent share of rural credit facilities having gone to the small and marginal farmers. This should be stepped up.

Prime Minister : Cooperatives can act as Effective Middlemen

The Prime Minister, Mr. Morarji Desai called upon cooperatives strengthen and spread their marketing network in a big way to ensure not only a fair return to the producer of farm goods but also providing them to the consumer at reasonable prices. Inaugurating a joint session of the National Congress of Marketing Cooperative and the annual general meeting of the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) Mr. Desai said that cooperatives could act as effective middlemen without a profit motive. Stressing the importance of marketing, that this task could be properly carried out only through Cooperatives. While a majority of cooperatives had been engaged in this task, still a lot more remained to be done. He expressed the hope that the cooperative movement would take every citizen in the country in the years to come. It was the most effective way of ending exploitation of man by man. Mr. Desai also felt that cooperatives were vital for a democracy and in fact, could be the main stay of this institution. He regretted that the growth of the cooperative movement was not uniform throughout the country. He said

that agriculture was the back-bone of our society and as much as 70 per cent of the population depended on it. It was here that cooperatives had a vital role to play, and need to strengthen the cooperative movement in areas where vulnerable sections of society, such as tribals and adivasis were living. In this connection, he recalled the experience and success of cooperatives in Maharashtra and Gujarat.

The Commerce Minister, Mr. Mohan Dharia said that the Government would favour an integrated policy which would protect the interests of both producers and consumers. He said that the proposed massive production-cum-distribution programme of the Government would provide a great opportunity for the cooperative sector to carry out its role. He assured that the Government would come to the rescue of agricultural producers by way of support prices whenever necessary. He cited the example of mustard seed in this connection and expressed the hope that the congress would be able to suggest suitable measures for formulating support prices for various agricultural commodities.

Mr. Dharia said that for the effective functioning of the cooperative sector, coordination among primary marketing societies, state-level agencies and the NAFED was necessary. He assured all Government help for cooperative and suggested streamlining of administrative and managerial functioning in this sector. He also said that ban on exports of certain agricultural products would not be a permanent feature of the Government's policy. If there was a surplus to the extent that it would harm the interests of producers, the Government would not hesitate to go in for exports.

The Chairman of NAFED, Mr. R.G. Tiwari, said that the congress was the first of its kind held in the country so far and it would discuss both organisational and functional problems of marketing cooperatives. He said that cooperative marketing had an important role in improving the socio-economic conditions of farmers since agriculture being the mainstay of 85 per cent of the population. The farmer, Mr. Tiwari said, by and large represented a self-employed and economically weaker section of the society. The farmer, particularly in the small and marginal bracket, needed protection from middlemen.

Terms of Reference of Agricultural Prices Commission to be Modified

The terms of reference of the Agricultural Prices Commission may be modified. The Government is presently examining the possibilities of how best the price tool can be used as a mechanism to bring about a policy for the rational use of agricultural land and proper crop planning, free from the constraints of the past. Such an exercise has become necessary in order to bring about a parity in return on different crops. The Government also believes that the time is opportune to evolve a strategy in this respect in view of the success in the production of food grains, expected to touch a record 125 million tonnes this year.

A spokesman of the Ministry of Agriculture said that top agricultural economists of the country were being consulted on the issue. According to him, the matter is of such vital importance that it deserved a national debate. He said that the Government would begin its efforts on evolving crop pattern planning in June-July this year. Referring to the block development programme, he said that this year, as many as 2,000 blocks had been selected under the scheme, costing about Rs. 100 crores. He is confident that under this programme, more than one million families of small farmers will be benefited by way of credit for farm inputs and animal husbandry development, and

said that a million tonnes of foodgrains would be distributed under the food for work programme this year against 150,000 tonnes last year. This is because of the success reported from West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa. The programme is also catching on in almost all States.

The Centre will hold regional meetings of States to review the progress of the programme, will also cover all aspects of foodgrain production, including that of pulses and oilseeds. The spokesman attributed the success on the food front to three factors, namely increase in the acreage of irrigated land, more use of fertiliser, better plant protection measures and availability of more credit to farmers to buy inputs. While the irrigated acreage went up by 2.8 million hectares during 1977-78, the fertiliser use shot up by seven lakh tonnes to 42 lakh tonnes. The credit granted touched the Rs. 2,000 crore mark, an estimated Rs. 300 crore rise during the year.

Of the total estimated foodgrain production of 125.69 million tonnes, the kharif contribution will be 77.39 million tonnes and the rest the rabi share. The prospect of pulses too is bright with a total estimated crop of over four million tonnes.

Per Capita Availability Falls

The per capita net availability of cereals per day showed a moderate fall to 395.4 grams in 1976-77 after registering an encouraging rise from 368.5 grams in 1974-76 to 406.6 grams in 1975-76.

In the case of pulses too, there was a moderate fall in the per capita availability at 43.3 grams compared with 51.2 grams in 1975-76. Thus, the decline in the per capita availability of cereals and pulses in 1976-77 amounted to 2.8 per cent and 15.4 per cent respectively over the previous year.

It was only in 1961-65 that the country had the highest per capita food grains of 480 grams, but sharply plummeted to 401 grams in 1966-67. The green revolution period of 1969-70 ushered in an era of plentiful supply of food grains, and as a result, their per capita availability recovered to 455 grams per day. After rising further to 469 grams in 1970-71, the trend got reversed thereafter and reached 409 grams in 1974-75. The bumper harvest of 121 million tonnes of food grains in 1975-76 enhanced the availability to 458 grams.

but again fell to 439 grams per day in the following year.

For more than a decade, production of pulses has remained stagnant. Their output has consistently hovered around 9 to 11 million tonnes, with the exception of 13 million tonnes scaled in 1975-76. Consequently, the per capita availability of pulses which was around 69 grams in 1960-61 has slowly come down to about 40 grams because of the increased demand from the expanding population.

Similarly, the outturn of major oilseeds declined from the record level of 9.9 million tonnes in 1975-76 to 7.8 million tonnes in 1976-77. After the encouraging improvement in the availability of edible oils at 3.5 kg. in 1970-71 with a repeat performance in 1975-76, the availability invariably remained below this level since 1965-66. During 1976-77, the per capita availability of edible oils was lower at 3.3 kg.

The per capita availability of cotton cloth and sugar has moved both ways owing to wide fluctuations in the produc-

(Contd. on page 8)

PER CAPITA AVAILABILITY OF ARTICLES OF MASS CONSUMPTION

Year	<i>Per capita net availability per day (in grams)</i>			<i>Per capita availability of selected items of consumption</i>							
	Cereals	Pulses	Total	Edible oils (Kgs)	Vanas-pati (Kgs)	Sugar (Kgs)	Cotton cloth (Metres)	Man made fib-res (Metres)	Tea (Grams)	Coffee (+) (Grams)	Electric (Domes-tic) (Kwh)
1955-56	360.5	70.4	430.9	2.5	0.7	5.0	14.4	N.A.	257	67	2.4
1960-61	399.7	69.0	468.7	3.2	0.8	4.7	13.8	1.2	287	80	3.4
1965-66	360.0	48.2	408.2	2.7	0.8	5.7	14.7	1.7	337	70	4.8
1969-70	403.1	51.9	455.0	3.0	0.9	6.1	13.6	1.8	377	59	6.5
1970-71	417.8	51.3	469.1	3.5	1.0	7.3	13.6	1.7	387	113	7.0
1971-72	420.2	47.1	467.3	3.0	1.1	6.7	12.4	1.7	392	45	7.3
1972-73	382.3	41.4	423.7	2.4	1.0	6.1	13.2	1.6	404	69	7.5
1973-74	411.6	40.9	452.5	3.4	0.8	6.0	12.0	1.5	421	64	7.9
1974-75	368.5	40.1	408.6	3.3	0.6	6.8	12.9	1.4	435	62	8.8
1975-76	406.6	51.2	457.8	3.5	0.8	6.1	12.6	1.4	446	62	9.6
1976-77	395.4	43.3	438.7	3.2	0.9	6.1	11.4	1.4	461	72	10.1

BHARAT KRISHAK SAMAJ, NEW DELHI

Statement of Enrollment of Life Members

<i>Name of State</i>	<i>LIFE MEMBERS ENROLLED</i>		
	<i>As on 31-3-77.</i>	<i>During 1-4-1977 To 31-3-1978</i>	<i>Grand Total</i>
1. Andhra Pradesh	376	30	406
2. Assam	24	—	24
3. Bihar	118	2	120
4. Gujarat	413	1	414
5. Kerala	229	5	234
6. Maharashtra	5,871	254	6,125
7. Madhya Pradesh	1,969	95	2,064
8. Karnataka	249	434	683
9. Rajasthan	220	11	231
10. Tamilnadu	728	33	761
11. Orissa	600	2	602
12. West Bengal	61	5	66
13. Himachal Pradesh	107	13	120
14. Punjab	1,585	60	1,645
15. Haryana	1,122	3	1,125
16. Uttar Pradesh	749	167	916
17. Meghalaya	4	—	4
18. Nagaland	1	—	1
19. Manipur	10	—	10
20. Tripura	13	—	13
21. Chandigarh	4	—	4
22. Delhi	96	2	98
23. Goa, Daman & Diu	47	—	47
24. Pondicherry	6	—	6
25. J. & K.	31	—	31
26. Mizoram	2	—	2
27. Philippines	1	—	1
28. U.S.A.	3	—	3
	14,639	1,117	15,756

Samaj News

Karnataka Pradesh Krishak Samaj— Bangalore

“Meeting the Farmers in their villages” the programme put forward by Shri Sriram, President of the Bangalore City Unit of the Krishak Samaj, has now gone on for five months. Working in coordination with the Deputy Director of Agriculture and his group of Experts has been a pleasant experience and representatives of the University of Agriculture, different departments, and concerns and Block Officers of particular village areas have helped in the get together and exchange of farm experiments with the local farmers. Spot discussions, answers being provided to field problems by the Experts, noting down the difficulties of the farmers in general and forwarding the notes to the concerned Heads of Departments, have been features of the programme.

The programme started by a visit to Bagalur on the Gandhi Jayanthi Day 2nd October, 1977. The position of the silk industry in the locality, the unremunerative aspect of vegetable marketing, diseases of the ginger crop newly taken up, Paddy and other crops, the problems of finding sales for Sun Flower seeds, newly introduced, the utility of tractors greatly diminished for want of spares, the high rates of interest for farm loans, etc. came up for discussions. A visit was arranged to Immadi Hally near White Field in November 1977. Advanced in the matter of having taken up farm improvements, the farmers discussed with the experts on Indaf, Ragis, possibility of raising 2 crops of paddy in the year, marketing of sun flower seed, mixture cropping, supply of seed potatoes, manuring of mulberry etc. The “Mangala Fertilizer” Representative spoke about better organisation of the fertilizers supply.

Sakkalavara, a village with a high urban influme was visited during December 1977. It had its interesting features in the eucalyptus plantation, brick making industry and nearness to the National Park Project. That farming was not remunerative, was the general complaint,

reasons being pinpointed as high cost of inputs and low price of commodities. The small farmers problems were discussed at length, the Representative of the Small Farmers Agency clarifying several issues. Obtaining of loans by small farmers on lands was a complicated issue, it being difficult to fix the owners trip of the land. It was easier, it was explained that loans to buy dairy animals could be managed more easily under the rules and this dairying aspect of the small farmers' programme was presently a more hopeful aspect.

In Tharlu Village, visited in January 1978, a demonstration of compost preparation by the pit method and reinforcing by superphosphate was arranged. A traditional community prospering on sugarcane growing and jaggery making in a modern way, a fair amount of improved machinery, and adoption of cooperative input stores, had still its general complaint that being nearer to hill and forest area of the district, the farms of the locality had to contend against wild animals including elephants. In February 1978, the Group visited Gollarapalya, 26 miles from Bangalore in Magadi taluk, a very hilly area which Dr. Vaidhynath who has taken up farming in his ancestral jodi village, explained which would barely yield a fraction of its total assured extent as arable land with the fisheries officer contributing a great deal to the discussions it was suggested that if consolidated indents placed for fingerlings a considerable range of fish rearing may be taken up in the area. The villager leadership having already undergone training in poultry in anticipation of starting a Poultry Farm in the village. The group found that much thought was being bestowed to bring the geographically inhospitable area to a shape. The group was enlightened about the socio-economic aspect of the area, stating that it was very much under banked. The “Programme of Village Visit” is being pursued.

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Farmers Meeting at Paratwada and Resolution to Organise Coop. Khandasari Industry at Achalpur Camp

The farmers of Achalpur Tehsil interested in irrigation and Sugar Cane cultivation gathered together in the Hall of Achalpur Camp Municipal Committee under the Presidentship of Narayanrao Watane, President of Amravati District Krishak Samaj on the 2nd April, 1978. Shri Babaurao Kaley, B. Sc. Agri., Organiser of the Youth Unit of the Krishak Samaj invited the meeting. Shri Mukundrao Deshmukh, Councillor of the Krishak Samaj introduced the subject matter of the meeting. It was resolved to start the share collection of the proposed "Achalpur Krishak Samaj Coop. Khandasari Industry" and Shri Mukundrao, Deshmukh, Councillor of Krishak Samaj was elected as Chief promoter. Shri Narayanrao Watane, Babanrao Kaley, Rakrishana Lavale, Sahebrao Hood and others were elected as promoters. The share collection is in full swing.

A Farmers meeting on behalf of Amravati District Bharat Krishak Samaj was held in Amravati on the 28th April, 1978 under the Presidentship of Shri M.T. Ingole. Shri Ulemale, Principal of Shri Shivaji Agriculture College, Advocate

Shrekar, Harihar Daterao, Smt. Deshmukh, Smt. Kamalabai Shinde, Ingole Advocate and Shri Narayanrao Watane, President of Amravati District Krishak Samaj participated. Shri Harihar Daterao has been elected as Organiser of City Unit. Following subjects were discussed in the meeting:

Crop protection from stray cattle. Wrong policy of retagging of H-4 Cotton seed of the Maharashtra State Govt. Forcible debt collection from the farmers after the harvest is over. Sharp fall in prices of Cotton and grains. Bad conditions of crop this year.

Maharashtra Bans on Cow Slaughter

Maharashtra joined the rest of the country except one or two States in imposing a complete ban on cow slaughter with the coming into force of the Maharashtra Animal Preservation Act, passed in 1976. The Minister for Animal Husbandry, Mr. Sudhakar Naik, told that Section 5 of the Act provides that no person hereafter shall slaughter or cause to be slaughtered or offer for slaughter any cow at any place in the State. He said under the legislation cow slaughter has been banned even for research or experimental purposes at any institution established, conducted or recognised by the State Government.

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tion of cotton and sugarcane in the last decade. While the output of cotton (list declined by 2.8 per cent to 5.78 million bales in 1976-77 from 5.95 million bales in the (previous) year, sugarcane outturn improved somewhat from 14.41 million tonnes to 15.84 million tonnes. In 1976-77, availability of sugar remained static at 6.1 kg. per capita while cotton cloth availability per capita was lower from 12.6 metres in 1975-76 to 11.4 metres.

In contrast to the general downtrend in the per capita availability of food grains and certain other selected essential items in 1976-77 compared with the previous year, there was a discernible improvement in this regard in the case of tea and coffee. This was largely the result of their higher output. The index of production (1969-70=100) for tea went up from 123.7 in 1975-76 to 130.00 in 1976-77 and that of coffee from 1296 to 1582. Per capita availability of tea was up from 446 grams to 461 grams in 1976-77 and that of coffee improved from 62 grams in 1975-76 to 72 grams.