

Agricultural Inputs

Irrigation

8.42 The Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) was launched during 1996-97 to give loan assistance to the States to help them complete some of the incomplete major/medium irrigation projects which were in an advanced stage of completion. The Surface Minor Irrigation Schemes of North-Eastern States; Hill States of Sikkim; Uttarakhand; Jammu and Kashmir; Himachal Pradesh and Kalahandi; Bolangir and Koraput (KBK) Districts of Orissa have also been provided Central Loan Assistance (CLA) under this programme since 1999-2000. Grant component was introduced in the programme from April, 2004 like other Central sector schemes. The criteria for AIBP have been further relaxed from April, 2005 to include minor irrigation schemes of non-special category States with potential of more than 100 hectare, with preference to tribal and drought-prone areas which benefit dalits and adivasis. The assistance being provided since 2004-05 is on the pattern of normal central assistance, that is, 70 per cent loan and 30 per cent grant in the case of non-special category States and 10 per cent loan and 90 per cent grant in the case of special category States and KBK Districts of Orissa. For funding purposes, the drought-prone, tribal, and flood-prone areas in the country are treated at par with Special Category States.

8.43 Up to March 2006, under AIBP, the State Governments were provided Rs.19,437.88 crore as CLA/grant for 200 major/medium irrigation projects and 5,562 Surface Minor Irrigation Schemes. So far 50 major/medium and 4,187 surface MI schemes have been completed. An additional irrigation potential of 3.25 million hectare has been created through major/medium irrigation projects up to March 2005, and an irrigation potential of 162.85 thousand hectare has been created through Surface MI Schemes up to March 2006. Relaxation in criteria for all approved projects in (a) drought-prone areas, (b) tribal areas, (c) States with lower irrigation

development as compared to National average and (d) districts identified under PM's package for agrarian distress was approved by the Cabinet in November 2006.

8.44 The Centrally Sponsored Command Area Development (CAD) Programme started in 1974-75 with an objective to bridge the gap between the irrigation potential created and its utilization to optimize agriculture productivity/production through an integrated and coordinated approach for efficient land and water management in the irrigated commands. It was restructured in April 2004 and was renamed as Command Area Development and Water Management (CADWM) Programme. Some components were deleted from the programme and two new components — correction of system deficiencies up to distributaries of 150 cusec capacity and renovation and desilting of existing irrigation tanks within CAD Projects — were included under the restructured programme. Mandatory 10 per cent beneficiary contribution in some of the components was also introduced in the restructured programme. Between its inception and December 31, 2006, 311 projects with total Culturable Command Area (CCA) of 28.58 million ha have been covered. By end-March 2006, the construction of field channels has been completed in an area of 17.43 million ha. The programme is presently going on in 136 projects with balance executable CCA of 7.70 million ha.

8.45 Government sanctioned a Pilot Scheme for "National Project for Repair, Renovation & Restoration of Water Bodies directly linked to Agriculture" in January, 2005 with an estimated cost of Rs. 300 crore to be shared by Centre and States in the ratio of 3:1. The water bodies having cultivated command area of more than 40 ha and up to 2000 ha were included under the pilot scheme in one or two districts in each States. The objective of the scheme is to restore and augment storage capacities of water bodies and to recover and extend their lost irrigation potential. The scheme has been approved in 24 district projects in 14 States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand,

Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Gujarat, Kerala and Maharashtra at an estimated cost of Rs. 296.87 crore. Central share of Rs. 132.01 crore has been released to the States by December 31, 2006. These projects cover 1,076 water bodies with total original cultivable command area of 2.99 lakh ha. The physical work for restoration has been completed for 232 water bodies and the work is in progress in the remaining 844 water bodies. The potential created will be part of the 'Bharat Nirman'. It has been decided, as announced in the Budget Speech 2006-07, that the project will be expanded throughout the country through external assistance. The proposals from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa and Tamil Nadu have been posed to the World Bank for external assistance. The proposal

for Andhra Pradesh is at an advanced stage of negotiations with the World Bank and the proposal in respect of Tamil Nadu was concluded on January 23, 2007.

8.46 Irrigation is one of the six components for development of rural infrastructure under Bharat Nirman. The irrigation component of Bharat Nirman aims at creation of irrigation potential of 10 million ha during 2005-06 to 2008-09 mainly through completion of ongoing major and medium irrigation projects. Utilization of completed projects / schemes is also emphasized. Further, development of new projects of minor irrigation to cater to the requirement of specific areas, particularly to provide benefit to small and marginal farmers and dalits and tribals, has also been included in Bharat Nirman. During 2005-06, against the target of 1.90 million ha, the reported irrigation potential created was 1.45 million ha.