

CHAPTER - II

ECONOMIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 AGRICULTURE

Although agricultural growth has been negative in the nineties, it has made considerable progress on a number of fronts. Improved crop production technologies have been adopted, crop and irrigation intensities have increased and a network of support institutions and infrastructure have been developed.

However, the agriculture to grow in the future, these achievements must be seen alongside certain disconcerting trends. Agricultural productivity has remained low and not increased perceptibly during the last ten years. In addition, there are emerging signs of land degradation, poor soil management and excessive exploitation of water resources.

It has become necessary for us to reorient agriculture production so as to enable the farmers to produce for the market. This requires transfer of knowledge and skills to them. Hence the department decided to open Uzhavar Udhaviyagams (Farmers' Help Centres) for each revenue village which will ultimately be the knowledge hub of the villages. It is conceived as a one stop solution for the various problems being faced by the farming community. Towards this end, the department proposes to introduce large scale diversification of agriculture, encourage less water intensive and more profitable horticulture production, mechanization, introduction of concepts of hi-tech and precision agriculture, close co-ordination and interaction between the Government Agriculture College (PAJANCOA) and the farming community, introduction of post-harvest technologies like setting up of cold storage plants, rural godowns etc., setting up of market forecasting centers, introduce contract farming in floriculture activities like orchids, wide spread use of computers and internet etc., are the thrust areas of the current year.

2.2 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Agriculture allied activities such as livestock rearing and fisheries have played an important role in the Pondicherry economy. In the early seventies, when agriculture contributed approximately 30 per cent to NSDP, the livestock economy played an important role in terms of manure, milk and draught power and a source of meat, hides and skins. The total livestock population has decreased from 3,32,733 in 1972 to 2,41,985 in 1997. This decline has had two distinct phases, between 1982 and 1987 and between 1992 and 1997. In the first phase, the decline in livestock was primarily due to the decline in livestock other than cattle, namely poultry, goats, sheep, buffaloes and pigs while in the second phase, it has been mainly due to cattle.

Although the total livestock population has decreased due to the decline mainly in the numbers of 'desi' cattle, buffaloes, sheep, pigs and poultry, there have been notable improvements in this sub-sector. Crossbred livestock population and dairy development have shown impressive growth. At present, there are 44,000 crossbred high quality dairy animals accounting for over 80 per cent of the total cattle population. Productivity of milk has been doubled from 2.5 to 4.7 litres per animal over the last 10 years. There have been some shifts as well in the poultry industry with increased focus on broiler production.

2.3 DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

The main objective is to provide remunerative milk marketing, development of milch cattle for the upliftment of the socio-economic conditions of the milk producers, to maintain an effective supply system of the milk and milk products at reasonable price for the consumers and to provide subsidiary occupation to farmers to supplement their income and improve their standard of living.

To attain the above objectives, primary milk cooperative societies have been organized which have taken over the responsibility of milk collection from member producers. 96 primary cooperatives in Pondicherry are supplying milk to the Pondicherry Cooperative Milk Producers' Union while 19 Primary Co-operatives in Karaikal are supplying milk to the Karaikal Cooperative Milk Producers Union. In Yanam, one Primary Co-operative Milk Producers Society is functioning.

2.4 FISHERIES

The Union Territory of Pondicherry comprises of four maritime regions with 45 kms of a coastal line and 675 sq.kms of inshore waters. Various development oriented plan and welfare schemes are implemented with an objective to augment marine, inland and Brackish water fishery production and to develop socio-economic conditions of fishermen community.

It is proposed to increase the fish production to 57,000 MT by the end of Tenth Plan. Various welfare schemes are implemented for fishermen which include payment of old age pension to fishermen, distribution of cash and rice during fishing ban period, group insurance coverage to fishermen etc.

2.5 MINOR IRRIGATION

Groundwater is the main source for irrigation, drinking and industrial needs of Pondicherry region. The consumption of ground water for irrigation is in the order of around 80% of the total consumption of water for all sectors. The surface water bodies like tanks and ponds which were supplementing irrigation in the sixties have become defunct. Presently the water requirements for all purposes are being fully met out by ground water resources and the extraction of ground water has crossed the average annual replenishment to the aquifers. Owing to this, there is a steep decline of water

level in the aquifers to depth ranging from 15 to 35 mts. which has resulted in sea water intrusion along the coast. Pondicherry faces an increasingly urgent situation, since its finite and fragile water resources are stressed and depleting while the sectoral demands for agriculture, industry and drinking needs are growing rapidly. If the aspirations of the people of Pondicherry are to be met, concerted efforts have to be taken to reduce the total dependency on ground water by harvesting rain water, conserving and recharging ground water. 600 ponds available in Pondicherry are being desilted for Rain Water Harvesting in a phased manner. Recharge tube wells are constructed in all these ponds as Rain Water Harvesting Structures in order to increase artificial recharge of the sub-surface aquifers. Roof Top Rain Water Harvesting Structures are being constructed in Government buildings. The programme of underground pipelining for irrigation to avoid seepage losses is being encouraged. To monitor the ingress of salt water along the coast, to assess the impact of ground water recharge programmes and to monitor the quality of ground water, intensive investigation studies are being carried out. Well inventory survey will be undertaken to assess the ground water potential. Periodical monitoring of record, the change in water level and the water quality from the network of observation tube wells are being undertaken.

The important programmes undertaken by the Public Works Department includes improvement of Tanks, Ayacut Development, Diversion works and Diversion Channels and Ground water recharge scheme. There are no major Irrigation Projects. The only medium irrigation project in Karaikal region could not be implemented in view of embargo imposed by Government of India due to river water disputes pending adjudication by the Tribunal. Tanks and tube-wells are the main sources of irrigation water in the Union Territory of Pondicherry.

Tank Rehabilitation Project is funded by European Union under Externally Aided Project programme. The total cost of the project is Rs.34.73 crore of which European Union contribution is Rs.28.13 crore, Government of Pondicherry's contribution is Rs.4.40 crore and the farmer's contribution is Rs.2.20 crore. It is proposed to rehabilitate 84 tanks having a command area of 6456 Ha. Of which 42 tanks were completed and work is in progress in 25 tanks. Remaining 17 tanks will be covered during this current year.

2.6 POWER

The Power requirement of the Union Territory of Pondicherry region is being met by the allocation of power made by the Government of India from various Central Generating Stations in Pondicherry and Yanam regions, by availing power from the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board and Pondicherry Power Corporation Limited in Karaikal region and from Kerala State Electricity Board in Mahe region.

There is no major power Generation in this Union Territory of Pondicherry. However, the Pondicherry Power Corporation Limited (PPCL), an undertaking of the Government of Pondicherry has established a 32.5 MW Combined Cycle Gas Power Plant at Karaikal and power thus generated from that plant is being utilized fully in the Karaikal region. The PPCL has proposed to expand the generating capacity of the plant

by 100 MW and is awaiting firm allocation of gas from the Gas Authority of India Limited(GAIL) to proceed further with the expansion programme.

In order to meet the ever-growing power demand, EHT Sub-Stations have been contemplated and commissioned in the Five Year Plan periods. There are in total 16 numbers of EHV Sub-Stations in the UT of Pondicherry with two numbers 230 KV Sub-stations and nine numbers 110 KV Sub-stations in Pondicherry region (inclusive of Villianur 110/22 KV Sub-Station which is yet to be taken over from the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board), three numbers in Karaikal region (including the Sub-Station owned by the Pondicherry Power Corporation Limited) and one each in Mahe and Yanam regions. New 110 KV Sub-Stations are being erected, capacity of the existing Sub-stations are augmented and new 110 KV transmission lines are erected in order to meet the growing power demand and to provide more reliable and stable power supply. In order to provide reactive compensation and to reduce the line losses, 22 KV and 11 KV Shunt Capacitor Banks have been provided in the 110 KV Sub-Stations.

The department is providing stable power supply to all the categories of consumer with minimum possible interruptions without imposing power cut, load shedding etc. Reliability Index of the 22 KV urban feeders fed from the 110 KV sub-stations is more than 99%. Power supply to the agricultural services is at a flat rate of Rs.75/H.P./annum and for the small farmers, the power is supplied at free of cost. The department is implementing a scheme "One Hut One Bulb" under which power supply is extended at free of cost upto a domestic power consumption of 80 watts to the economically weaker sections. Billing for various categories of consumers have been computerized and revenue collection is being made in and around 21 computerised bill collection centers in Urban and Sub-Urban areas. It is proposed to commission additional computerized bill collection centers in other sub-urban and rural areas. As part of the Power Sector Reforms and in order to ensure accurate recording of the consumption of the energy and to ensure tamper proof operation, electronic meters are being provided to all the new services and all the electro mechanical meter will be replaced by electronic meters in a phased manner. A System Control Centre (SCC) has been established at Pondicherry Electricity Department under the Unified Load Despatch and Communication (ULDC) Project executed by PGCIL and is in operation.

2.7 INDUSTRIES

The Union Territory of Pondicherry is an Industrially Backward area classified as Category-A, Special District. Due to the pro-active investment policies, hassle free environment and industry friendly Administration, the Union Territory has made rapid strides in industrialisation. There are 55 large scale, 137 medium scale and 6877 Small Scale industries providing employment to 82790 persons.

The Pondicherry Industrial Promotion Development and Investment Corporation(PIPDIC), a state owned Finance Corporation has been playing a catalytic role in the industrial development by extending term loan, hire purchase and lease finance to the entrepreneurs and by developing new Estates/Growth Centres endowing

them with infrastructure facilities. The District Industries Centre, provides all services and support to the small entrepreneurs in the preparation of suitable schemes and assist in getting the required licences and clearances, procurement of machineries and other required help etc., through the Single Window System. It arranges for training in the field of Engineering, Electrical, Technology, Handicrafts, Coir and in various other fields to the educated as well as unemployed youth and also arranges loan through Nationalised Banks for setting up of small industry thereby creating more employment opportunities. It makes entrepreneur and his employees aware of the latest technology.

2.8 HANDLOOMS

Handloom Industry in the Union Territory which is next to agriculture is a source of livelihood for thousands of people and it has tremendous potential. Weaver cooperatives have been formed to ameliorate the economic condition of the weavers by extricating them from the clutches of the master weavers and to help them to cross the poverty line.

In addition to the Handloom Development Scheme, welfare schemes such as assistance to women weavers during Pre-natal/Post-natal period, assistance to weavers during rainy season, pension to weavers, issue of free house-sites to the houseless weavers, assistance for checking eyesight and purchase of spectacles and other health package scheme, issue of free dhothies, sarees, and educational allowance to the children of weavers, assistance to promote small family norms among handloom weavers are implemented.

2.9 PORTS

During the Tenth Plan, it is targeted to handle 30 lakh metric tonnes of cargo from the Port. Therefore, strengthening of the existing infrastructure both in the Old port and New port and adding new infrastructure facilities are envisaged. Dredging operation at the port channel, Repair / Dry-docking of dredgers, Improvements & maintenance of light houses, computerization of port activities, providing a Broad gauge railway siding link to the New port, laying of BT approach roads in the New port area, provision of navigational aids in the channel, providing lighting arrangements to transit sheds in the Old/ New port are some of the on going activities. Besides, a new dredger of higher capacity and cargo handling equipments are proposed to be procured.

2.10 ROADS & BRIDGES

The total length of road network before merger was in the order of 232 km with nearly two thirds of it unsurfaced with rural areas not having connectivity to the main roads. Due to successive Five Year Plans, all the 11 towns and 264 villages in the Union Territory are connected by a road network of total length 2292 km. Out of which 1832 km are surfaced and 460 km are unsurfaced. Coming under the categories of national highways, state highways, district roads and rural roads. However, due to rapid

urbanization and industrialization, the traffic intensity has increased manifold resulting in traffic congestion, poor road/pedestrian safety, strain on public services, stress on road stability, overall degradation of road environment. Therefore, there is a need to upgrade and strengthen the existing roads to IRC standards in a comprehensive manner including widening, strengthening and standardizing the road pavements and junction geometrics, construction / reconstruction of bridges and culverts, subways. etc. An “Integrated Traffic Engineering Study” is proposed to be entrusted on a consultancy basis to identify existing deficiencies in the road network and to prepare a detailed perspective plan of action addressing areas of concern such as road/pedestrian safety, taxation structure, cost effective technology in road making, control/removal of encroachments, unplanned ribbon development, uncoordinated cutting of roads for development of public utilities/services. This consultancy will also cover the possibility of elevated carriageway, intersection design improvements, over bridges, under passages and the like.

2.11 TOURISM

Pondicherry has a rich French Cultural heritage, having been the capital of the French Colonies in India since the 17th Century. Pondicherry region, with a coastal line of 32 Kms, well planned French Boulevard town, palm fringed beaches, resorts, backwaters, water sports centre, fishing villages, harbour, the pier, Aurobindo Ashram, Auroville and other attractions Pondicherry is the ideal place for spending holidays with family. The tourism potential of Pondicherry is not fully tapped. In view of providing adequate and better facilities to visiting tourists the administration with the help of the Government of India has jointly in taking efforts to boost tourism activities.

2.12 EDUCATION

Education plays a vital role in the economic, social and cultural development of a country. Besides, moulding characters and values of the citizens, the overall growth of the country depends entirely on educational growth. Hence, in any development plan education is given top priority among all social activities. In so far as the Union Territory of Pondicherry is concerned education has been placed in a better position due to top priority given by this Administration.

As per the 2001 census figure, the literacy rate in the Union Territory of Pondicherry is 81.49% as against the National average of 65.38% territory has been placed under category-IV having literacy rate of 75% and above and is in the 7th place in the ranking of literacy rate among States / Union Territories. The task before this Union Territory is to achieve 90% literacy rate by the end of Tenth Plan and 100% literacy rate by 2012. In order to ensure universal access to primary education, Compulsory Education Act has been enacted.

Under Collegiate Education 17 Under Graduate courses and 15 Post Graduate courses, 12 M.Phil and 4 P.hd Programme are conducted in different colleges. New courses namely, Corporate Secretaryship, Business Administration, Mass

Communication, Micro Biology have been introduced in the UG level, computer application, Bio- Technology and Electronics in post graduate level have been started. M.Phil courses in Commerce, Mathematics, History, English and French were started in the P.G. Centre. Under technical education new courses in business administration and environmental engineering have been started. Engineering College. New courses in M.Tech (Electrical & Electronics) were started with an intake of 25 studies and M.C.A. with an intake of 30 students. Pondicherry Institute of Post-Matric Technical Education (PIPMATE) is established to impart Post Matric Technical Education and training in various Engineering subjects and make it sensitive and relevant to the changing Industrial Technological Social Environment trends and to assist for maintaining four polytechnics and intake capacity in Women's Polytechnic College have been increased.

2.13 HEALTH

Health Department is providing the Health care services in the U.T. of Pondicherry through various medical institutions. A separate ISM&H Directorate was established to promote Ayurveda, Siddha and Homeopathy systems of Medicines. The National Population Commission has ranked the UT of Pondicherry in the number one position in complete Immunisation of newborn, pre-school children, school children and pregnant women. Family Planning programme is successfully implemented in this territory for more than two decades and eligible couples have been protected. It is confirmed that the reduction of HIV positivity in STD attendants from 4.1% to 2.% and HIV positivity in pregnant women to 0.25%. The HIV prevalence in blood donors decreased from 5.75 to 4.06. Pondicherry is the only UT achieving 100% target of complete treatment for all the leprosy cases. Due to the various measures taken up UT Administration, the number of Malaria and Filaria cases have been effectively brought down The UT has launched a scheme of financial assistance for the poor patients to take specialized treatment in private hospitals outside UT of Pondicherry.

2.14 WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION

The Union Territory of Pondicherry has assigned the highest priority for supply of drinking water followed by irrigation and other uses. This Territory has achieved 100% coverage in provision of drinking water facilities both in the urban sector (11 towns) and in this rural sector (264 villages/habitations). Water supply in Pondicherry and Mahe regions is through ground water sources while in Karaikal it is through conjunctive use of ground water and surface water. In Yanam region, the supply is entirely from surface water. Mahe and Yanam regions are urban and therefore have only urban water supply schemes. In Pondicherry and Karaikal both urban and rural water supply schemes are under implementation. The percapita supply at present under urban system is 135 lpcd (litre per capita per day) and under rural system is 70 lpcd.

2.15 URBAN DEVELOPMENT

As elsewhere in the developing world, urbanization is accompanied by a number of problems arising from population concentration, high density, shortages of housing and civic amenities, traffic congestion, poverty, slums, environmental degradation etc. The Union Territory of Pondicherry is one of a highly urbanised entities with 66% of the population living in urban areas as per 2001 census. Such concentration has no doubt led to severe stress on the infrastructure facilities and urban amenities, traffic problems etc., despite the concerted efforts. Unprecedented population growth added with the migration from the neighbouring states, rapid industrialisation, and fast pace of developments, have accelerated the urbanisation process in the Union Territory. The demand for urban space is therefore increasing constantly and the availability of adequate living space is under threat from other competing demands. Speculative land prices have also ensured that the urban poor are increasingly either crowded in the inner city areas or progressively marginalised to squatter settlements at the city periphery, the offshoots of which is the growing number of slums.

2.16 WELFARE PROGRAMMES

Many welfare programmes are implemented covering different target groups, namely, Physically disabled, senior citizens, adi-dravidars and women. It includes free distribution of sarees and lungies, old-age pension, pension to disabled person, free distribution of cycle to students, free supply of uniform, books and slates. Supply of mid-day meals, breakfast, pre-metric and post-metric scholarships, subsidy to a tune of Rs.50,000/- towards construction of concrete houses by poor people, Hostels to BCs and SCs etc.