

BIJU KBK PLAN : MODALITIES AND GUIDELINES

With a view to continuing their increasing efforts as well as for maintaining the momentum gathered under the Revised Long Term Action Plan (RLTAP) and upscaling the public investment in the Koraput-Bolangir-Kalahandi (KBK) region, the State Government have launched a new initiative, called "the Biju KBK Plan" under State Plan as a tribute to late Biju Patnaik. Former Chief Minister of Orissa who was the first to articulate the need for long-term measures for development of the KBK region. The rationale, modalities and guidelines for the Biju KBK Plan are as follows:

2. The KBK Region: Most Backward Region of the Country

2.1 The KBK region, comprising undivided Koraput (i.e., Koraput, Nawarangpur, Malkanagiri & Rayagada), undivided Bolangir (i.e. Subarnapur and Bolangir) and undivided Kalahandi (i.e., Kalahandi & Nuapada) districts, is the poorest and most backward region of the country. As per estimates of the 55th round of NSS Survey conducted in 1999-2000, the incidence of rural poverty was as high as 87.14%. The region also suffers from acute economic, social and gender disparities, and very adverse socio-economic and human development indicators. The multifaceted deprivation and backwardness of this region are the result of deep rooted factors or processes that have emanated from a complex mix of geographical, economic and social factors. This region is general, and undivided Koraput and Kalahandi districts in particular are almost at the bottom of the list of 250 Backward Districts

identified under Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF). Therefore, long-term and holistic development strategies are needed to bring this region closer to the other regions of the State, as well as that of the Country.

3. The Biju KBK Plan: Rationale

3.1 Because of its very adverse socio-economic and human development indicators, the KBK region has for some time past been attracting the attention of Government of India, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the State Government. The need for longterm measures for speedy development of this region with special attention to removal of poverty and livelihood support was first articulated in early 1990s by late Biju Patnaik, then Chief Minister of Orissa and a Long-Term Action Plan (LTAP) for a period of seven years was submitted by the State Government to Government of India in 1993-94 for their approval. LTAP was approved and launched in August 1995. However, the programme did not take off due to inadequate fund flow and major initiatives could not be undertaken. LTAP was, therefore, modified as Revised Long-Term Action Plan (RLTAP) that was conceived as a comprehensive and long-Term special area development plan for a period of nine years from 1998-99 to 2006-07. The region has been receiving Special Central Assistance (SCA) of Rs.250 crore per year under RLTAP effective from the year 2003-04. With active support from Government of India and pooling of resources the State Government has been making concerted

efforts during the last five years to improve the implementation of RLTA schemes and accelerate the development process in the KBK districts.

3.2 The Government of India have also included the KBK districts under National Food for Work Programme / National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), and propose to include these eight districts under BRGF retaining the special funding for the region at Rs.250 crore per year. Though these initiatives are expected to improve conditions in the region to some extent and are, therefore, a step in right direction, however the quantum of funding may not be adequate to take care of special problems and needs of the region. The major gaps in rural infrastructure like road connectivity, drought proofing, health and education infrastructure, social safety nets etc, act as a drag on the speedy growth and reduction of poverty rates in this region.

3.3 The poverty in this ST & SC dominated region is not only widespread, but is also very severe and of a long duration. More than 50% of the rural poor in the area are at least 20% or more below the poverty line. Moreover, tribals of this region are greatly handicapped because of their physical isolation, low human capital development, poor communication and markets. In his report dated 13th March 2006 to NHRC, the Special Rapporteur, NHRC has observed, among other things, that "... poverty in the KBK region has to be considered in its specific context by recognizing not only the incidence of poverty as per national norm but also the depth and severity of poverty which distinguishes it from poverty in other parts of the country and calls for special strategies and concerted action like RLTA. Considering the importance of the programme and projects taken up under RLTA and the results of implementation which can be improved further by following the Commission's recommendation regarding monitoring, I request the Commission to

recommend to the Government of India a further extension of RLTA for a period of ten years".

3.4 There is, therefore, a growing realization within the State Government and in Civil Society that the KBK region requires a holistic and long-term development strategy, needing continued, focused attention and greater fund flow over and above normal development inputs coming from the State and the Central Plans so that special problems and needs of this region and those of the people are effectively addressed and a serious dent into poverty can be made.

3.5 Therefore, with a view to maintaining and strengthening the momentum gathered by RLTA and upscaling the public investment in the KBK region, the State Government launched a new initiative, called "the Biju KBK Plan" under State Plan as a tribute to late Biju Patnaik who was the first to conceive a Long-Term Action Plan for the KBK region. The Biju KBK Plan is to be implemented over a period of 5-Years effective from the year 2007-08 to 2011-2012 and envisages an annual outlay of Rs 120 crore over and above normal plan allocations, and the Special Central Assistance that may be available to the region under the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF). The Biju KBK Plan shall form the part of the Special Area Development Project that has been constituted vide Planning & Coordination Department Resolution No. 4148/LTAP-86/99/P, dated 14.03.2000.

4. Objectives of Development Strategies for the Plan

4.1 The objectives of the Biju KBK Plan are as follows:

- (i) Creating opportunities for economic, social and human development for the people in the region, especially the disadvantaged,
- (ii) Accelerating poverty reduction and achieving millennium developmental goals, and

(iii) Improving the quality of life of the local people and bringing the region at par with other developed regions.

4.2 In order to achieve the aforesaid objectives, the following strategies would guide the Plan:

(i) Building rural infrastructure (e.g., critical roads and bridges, minor irrigation projects, tanks, watershed development, markets and afforestation),

(ii) Developing district-specific and sub-district-specific livelihood support programmes (e.g., agriculture / horticulture development, animal resources, fisheries, afforestation and forest-based enterprises, micro credit support, agro-processing enterprises and other value addition initiatives),

(iii) Mobilising and empowering the rural poor through SHG, Vana Samrakhan Samities, Pani Panchayats and participatory planning,

(iv) Promoting quality education, employable skills and health programmes taken to the specially distant habitations,

(v) Strengthening social security systems (e.g., food security, old age pensions, special nutrition programmes, houses for the rural poor, and other initiatives),

(vi) Enhancing development effectiveness through convergence of resources and programmes, efficiency in resource use and improved governance and service delivery, and

(vii) Synthesizing the traditional knowledge available with the communities in all developmental activities and preserve the traditions and culture of the region and make the development process inclusive and pro-poor.

5. Increased Fund Flow to the KBK region

5.1 Each Development Department is mandated to allocate atleast 30% of their plan

funds including funds received by them under Central flagship programmes such as Bharat Nirman, NREGP, and other programmes to the KBK region.

5.2 Government of India shall also be requested to direct Central Ministries to ensure that atleast 30% funds available to the concerned line departments under Central Plan and Centrally Sponsored Plan Schemes are allocated to the KBK region.

5.3 With a view to ensuring convergence of resources and programmes, development funds available from all sources including Central Plan, Centrally Sponsored Plan, State Plan and other flagship programmes such as Bharat Nirman and BRGF shall be taken into account while preparing Annual Action Plans for the KBK region.

5.4 The funds available under the Biju KBK plan shall be used as an additionality to fill critical gaps for which funds are either not available or are inadequate. The Plan funds may also be used for innovative schemes.

5.5 Specified amount out of available funds shall also be utilized for strengthening District Planning Committees and grass root level planning, and improving the local self governance.

6. Mechanisms for Implementation of the Plan

6.1 Planning & Coordination Department shall be the Nodal Department for the purpose of Administration of the Biju KBK Plan.

6.2 The Plan shall be executed in all 8 (eight) KBK districts and shall have two windows : (i) State Window, and (ii) District Window. The State Window component of the Plan shall be implemented through different line Departments, which will take appropriate budget provisions for this purpose under appropriate heads of account each year. The District Window component of the Plan shall be implemented under the umbrella

of the District Plans and appropriate budget provisions for this purpose shall be taken by P & C. Department. Each District Collector shall ensure preparation of a District Plan in a specified manner, which shall be examined and consolidated by the District Planning Committee. Grassroots level consultation should be part and parcel of the Plan formulation.

6.3 The Biju KBK Plan shall also fill up critical gaps left uncovered under Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF). It shall specifically take up construction of 10,000 Buildings for Women Self Help Groups (WSHG) at a cost of Rs.3 lakh per building within the 11th Five Year Plan. Priority shall also be accorded to hostel buildings for girl children, critical gaps in connectivity such as cross drainage works including culverts and bridges, buildings for Anganwadi centres etc.

6.4 With a view to maintaining a long term perspective and providing a definite direction to the Plan, each district shall prepare a 5 year perspective plan. The funds available under the District Window should be treated as additionality for the district Plan. Each District shall prepare Annual Action Plan which will form the part of the State Annual Plans. The approval of the State Annual Plan by the State Government as well as the Planning Commission shall be deemed to be the approval of the special plan for the KBK districts.

6.5 The proposals received under the State Window shall be examined and approved by the Government in P & C. Department. The approved State Window component shall be implemented by concerned line Departments in the same manner as RLTA has been implemented. Funds shall be released under the Biju KBK Plan in not more than two installments by the P & C. Department direct to the concerned Collectors who shall maintain a separate head of account for the Plan with the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA). The concerned Project

Director, DRDA shall function as Drawing & Disbursing Officer for the District Window of the Plan.

6.6 The line Departments and District Collectors shall release the received funds to the concerned implementing agencies within 15 days of the receipt of funds from the P & C. Department. The concerned line Departments, District Collectors and Project Directors, DRDA shall be directly responsible for effective and timely implementation of the Plan and shall furnish Monthly Progress Report (MPR) on financial and physical achievements of the Plan to P & C. Department by of the following months.

6.7 The implementation of the Plan shall be periodically monitored and evaluated by District Planning Committees, Planning & Coordination Department and the State Level Committee, constituted for RLTA.

7. Preparation of District Plan

7.1 For availing the additional developmental assistance under the Plan, preparation and consolidation of the District Plan by, and strengthening the capacity of, DPC shall be mandatory. District Plan shall be prepared as per the Guidelines for the District Plan in the 11th 5-year plan as contained in Planning Commission Letter No. 13011/1/2006/SP-Co. dated 25.8.06 which has been already circulated to all Collectors vide P & C. Department letter No.12189(30)/P, dated 04.09.2006 and in such a manner as may be specified by P & C. Department from time to time.

7.2 The needs and aspirations of Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samities and Zilla Parishads shall be fully reflected in the District Plan. DPC shall prioritize the schemes received from different Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samities and Zilla Parishads and incorporate them in the District Plans in a phased manner.

7.3 The DPC shall also prepare a benchmark survey of key monitoring indicators before the first District Plan is implemented. The benchmark indicators shall be used for effective monitoring and evaluation of the plan.

7.4. The main principles which may be taken into consideration for preparation of the District Plan are summarized as follows:

(i) The flow of funds from all sources namely State Plan, Centrally Sponsored Schemes, Central Schemes, externally aided projects and funds received from any other source for development purpose are to be aggregated in arriving at the resource availability for District Plan.

(ii) Funds under the Biju KBK Plan are to be used as additionality for those schemes for which funding from other sources including State Plans, Centrally Sponsored Schemes, Central Schemes and funds received from any other source for development purpose is either not available or is found to be inadequate.

(iii) The cost effectiveness of all Schemes shall be carefully evaluated so that returns from the funds invested under the scheme are maximized.

(iv) People's participation and involvement of PRIs, NGOs, VECs, Pani Panchayats, Self Help Groups and other community based organizations should be ensured at every stage including plan formulation, implementation and monitoring.

(v) There shall be complete transparency in the choice of schemes and projects and their locations. The prioritized list of schemes and projects and the reasons for taking up the schemes and the criteria for choice of locations must be reflected in the District Plan and be made available on the web-site. The involvement of Palli Sabha and Gram Panchayats in selection of investment projects is critical.

(vi) It shall be ensured that the schemes are sustainable and durable assets are created. Special attention is to be given to sustainability of each

project. In the case of community assets, wherever possible future maintenance should be built into the programme, e.g., if a community hall is constructed, individuals who use the hall should be encouraged to pay user fees so that a corpus fund for maintenance can be created.

(vii) Efforts should be made to concentrate the development activities in poorer pockets and for disadvantaged communities within the district. It will be mandatory that the District Plan allocates funds for SC communities under the Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan (SCSP) and ST communities under Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) modes in proportion to their populations in the district.

(viii) The District Plan shall be on the basis for Development Vision for the district and not be a mere collection of schemes and projects for which funding from existing sources is insufficient.

8. Social Audit

8.1 Social Audit and vigilance shall be encouraged at grass-roots level. The District Collector shall also prepare schedules of inspection which prescribe the minimum number of field visits for each supervisory level functionary and ensure that the inspection schedules are faithfully followed by supervisory level functionaries. The Government in Planning & Coordination Department may also prescribe additional monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, reports and returns with a view to assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of the Plan from time to time.

9. Other Matters

9.1 Planning and Coordination Department shall be responsible for clarifying doubts, if any, and ensure that bottlenecks in the implementation of the Plan are removed as expeditiously as possible and communicated to all concerned.

Source : Planning & Co-ordination Department, Government of Orissa.