

COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

The history of the Co-operative Movement in A & N Islands dates back to the year 1926 with the framing of Coop. Societies Rules under the Cooperative Societies Act 1912 since promulgated by the A & N Island Coop. Societies Regulation, 1973 and Rules 1974. The first Cooperative Society under the name “Rangachang Cooperative Land Syndicated Ltd.,” was organized and registered with the local inhabitants of the Rangachang, South Andaman in the year 1946. The movement gained momentum only in the post independence period with the implementation of the colonization scheme of the Govt. of India rehabilitating of refugees of the east Bengal in various part of the A & N Islands. Over the years, the movement reached a level of 969 Coop. Societies in different sectors with membership of 73185 with a Share Capital of Rs.346.57 lakhs of which 103 Cooperative societies were organized and registered during the year 2002-2003.

The Cooperative movement also plays a pre-dominant role in the development of tribal communities of A & N Islands. The tribals viz. Nicobarese, Andamanese, and Onges life style and economic stay fully is dependent on the plantation produce like coconut and arecanut. The produces are being marketed through the Cooperative Societies organized by the tribals in their areas. Altogether 67 Cooperative Societies are functioning in the Nicobar district. The other tribals viz. Sentinalees, Jarawas, and Shompens are yet to be brought under the Cooperative fold. The sector wise growth of cooperative movement in the territory of A & N islands is as under:

Market Intervention Scheme

The market intervention scheme has been introduced as per the directions of the Govt. of India for the benefit of the agricultural farmers. ANCOFED and EHL have subsequently been appointed as agents for procurement of arecanut from this UT. The scheme was in existence from 1-8-2002 to 31-10-2002. During the said period 852733 Kgs. of arecanut were procured and the government accepted 204857 kgs. of arecanut purchased. For the current year the work of procurement arecanut has been allotted to ANIFPDC Ltd.

Introduction Of A New Scheme

The department of Cooperation has come up with a new scheme exclusively for the benefit of the farmers of the Copra, Arecanut and other plantation produce taking into the consideration the fact that even if GOI withdraws the MIS, funding of a local scheme will be possible in order to protect, safe guard the interest of the growers of agriculture plantation produce. The new scheme viz “Assistance to cooperative Societies for implementation of 5th PSS, MIS and improvement/diversification of plantation produce “has a total allocation Rs.9.91 crores (5 years period) & Rs.1.09 crores has been envisaged for 2002-03 alone. In the current Annual Plan 2003-2004 also specific provision of 100 lakhs is envisaged to implement the scheme for the benefit of the farmers. Further under the scheme the proposal to provide 50 Copra driers to various co-operatives organized by the growers against which 45 Co-operative Societies have benefited.

Safeguarding Vegetable Growers

The department has taken initiative to safeguard the interest of the vegetable growers and 7 retail outlays for vegetable have been opened at various places. These were allotted to vegetable growers of Neil, Havelock Diglipur, & Hut Bay Islands. The department has already undertaken the construction works of wholesale vegetable Market at phoenix Bay to provide warehousing facilities to the vegetable cooperative societies at an estimated cost of Rs.78.05 lakhs, and the work has already been completed and has been allotted on hire to 8 cooperative societies.

Unemployment Problem

With a view to provide employment opportunities, the educated unemployed youths were motivated to form Coop. Societies to undertake Govt contract works, supply of stationeries, and transportation of goods, tourism sector. At present, 243 Coop. Societies have been formed by the educated unemployment youth of which 28 Coop. Societies have been registered during 2002-2003 and 6 in 2003-2004.