

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE MEGHALAYA RESOURCE & EMPLOYMENT GENERATION COUNCIL HELD ON 22ND APRIL 2004 IN THE CONFERENCE HALL OF THE MEGHALAYA SECRETARIAT

Members present :-

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| 1. Shri D.D. Lapang | Chief Minister & Chairman |
| 2. Shri Charles Pyngrope | Minister & Vice-Chairman |
| 3. Shri P.J. Bazeley, IAS | Chief Secretary |
| 4. Shri S.K. Malik | Director(MPD), N.E.C |
| 5. Shri J.P. Saikia | Chairman & MD, NEDFI, Guwahati |
| 6. Shri J.B. Dutta | Managing Director, MCAB |
| 7. Shri S. Ahamed, IAS | Director, Tourism |
| 8. Shri Bijoy Sangma | IFAD |
| 9. Shri K. Lartang, MCS | Director, Employment & Craftsmen Trg |
| 10. Shri H.M. Shangliang, MCS | Secretary, MREGC |

The meeting was presided over by Shri D.D. Lapang, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya, who welcomed all the members present.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister informed the members that the Council has been constituted to explore the prospects for generation of employment in the state and therefore desired that every member of the Council contributes through their organization in opening avenues in providing self-employment opportunities for the youths of the state.

During the discussion, Shri J.P. Saikia, Chairman, NEDFI, stated that large resources are yet to be exploited by the entrepreneurs of the state. He stated that the NEDFI is ready to provide all necessary assistance to the youths of the state for their self-employment. In fact, he stated that the NEDFI had identified 29 Schemes to assist the youths including women who have been earmarked an amount of Rs.5.00 Lakhs per project to set up small scale industries. The NEDFI is also providing Training to skilled

entrepreneurs. He also stated that a separate scheme for the Rural people with a micro-finance of Rs.4.00 Lakhs has been introduced by the NEDFI. Further, women entrepreneurs are provided Free-Training for a period of 3 weeks to familiarize with the schemes and set up their small scale industries.

Shri J.B. Dutta, Managing Director, MCAB, stated that the state of Meghalaya particularly Shillong has been a seat of Education for the North Eastern region, where prominent and reputed Schools and Colleges has been producing good products. According to him, Education can be treated as an industry and the educated unemployed youths can get opportunities as Teachers and Lecturers in the Schools and Colleges. He further stated that, Tourism Sector can also be given more emphasis so as to create employment opportunities. He stated that there is no dearth of finances and the rate of interest from the Banks have been quite marginal. He also stated that small scale industries and Transport Sector provides enormous employment opportunities. He stated that the KVIC Scheme provides good schemes which should be taken full benefit. He also stated that the SC/ST Corporations has many schemes which are prioritized through a single window and such schemes need to be encouraged to the youths. He stated that identification of activities for the unemployed youths is very important which needs to be done very carefully. He stated that the tie-up arrangements between the unemployed youths and the Banks needs to be cordial so that the credits can be made easily available to the unemployed youths.

Shri Bijoy Sangma, IFAD, stated that a systematic approach by way of resource mapping is required for the Council to enable in the identification of the thrust areas. He stated that a vision document for Meghalaya is essential to plan for the all round development of the state and desired that the Council should concentrate in the investment of major sectors. He also suggested that a small group be constituted to examine and prepare the Action Plan accordingly.

Shri S.K. Malik, Director (MPD), NEC, stated identification of local youths to take up vocational education needs to be encouraged. The NEC can provide funds for vocational trainings and workshops in the rural areas. He stated that information network particularly in the rural areas on the various schemes of the NEC for self-employment is required to be strengthened. He stated that employment can be generated through Tourism related projects, Bamboo crafts, Handloom and Handicrafts.

Shri S. Ahammed, Director, Tourism, stated that agencies like the NEDFI and other banking institutions can organize awareness camps through the respective Deputy Commissioners to make the unemployed youths aware on the various self-employment schemes. He also stated that Tourism in the state could be encouraged through capacity building. The local youths could be encouraged in promoting Tourism by Souvenir-making, Handicrafts etc.

Shri P.J. Bazeley, Chief Secretary, stated that the Council was set up to assess the prospects for generation of employment in all sectors. He also stated that the resources of the State and employment potential are to be properly assessed, analysed

and documented. Since 80% of the State's economic development is essentially agrarian, a qualified action plan needs to be drawn up and introduced for value addition to agriculture products. He stated that organizations like the ADB and IFAD have had discussions with the State Government and are keen to participate in State development and look at new development paradigms. He stated that the Council could hold discussions with ADB and IFAD members and suggest modes for employment generation in the State. He also stated that good schemes of NEDFI, NABARD etc. are not reaching the people since their guidelines were too rigid. He suggested that the Lead Bank/MCAB could set a Capacity Building Cell, to help youth develop entrepreneur skills.

Shri Charles Pyngrope, Minister, stated that Banks need to be more friendly to the people. He suggested that a committee needs to be constituted to monitor, implement and coordinate with the departments of the government.

Shri D.D. Lapang, Chief Minister, stated the Bank schemes do not reach the people due to stringent rules of the Banks. He suggested that the Council should conduct awareness camps through out the state on the various self-employment schemes along with the Banking Institutions. He also suggested that the Council should act as a Nodal organization for generation of employment. He suggested that the Council should start functioning with a proper office and provide all necessary assistance with informative resources to the unemployed youths. He also suggested that Tourism sector should be given more emphasis by providing loans to people to encourage the Paying Guest concept.

After due deliberation, the Council took the following decisions -

1. Capacity Building Cell to be set up by MCAB in coordination with the NEDFI.
2. Literatures/Pamphlets issued be duly translated in the local language on the various schemes available, including Bank Forms etc.
3. The Block Development Officers are to be involved in Awareness Camps to be held by the local Banks.
4. Arrangement of accommodation for the office of the Council be made early.
5. Web-Page to be developed for the Council.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from the Chair.


(D.D. Lapang)
Chief Minister
&
Chairman, MREGC