

Hon'ble Prime Minister,
Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission
Union Ministers
Chief Ministers & Ministers from Other States and
Officers of Govt. of India and States

I am happy to participate in the 55th meeting of the National Development Council convened today to deliberate on the Mid-Term Appraisal of Eleventh Five Year Plan as well as other issues of national importance.

Jharkhand, as you all know, is going through the second spell of President's Rule, within a short period of six months. Political instability on one hand and left wing extremism on the other have had an adverse impact on growth and development in the state. During President's Rule, however, we are making every possible effort to bring governance back on track and achieve, both in physical as well as financial terms, the developmental goals set out in the Plan document.

Jharkhand has abundant natural resources yet a sizable population of the state still lives below the poverty line. The problems of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, malnutrition, insufficient health-care, shortage of safe drinking water, poor road connectivity & limited access to electricity etc pose a formidable challenge to us. In this context we welcome & support the initiative of the Central Government in the form of the Flagship Schemes of the Eleventh Five Year Plan, formulated to address these challenges under the overall umbrella of inclusive growth.

We agree with the diagnosis as well as the prescriptions laid out in the Mid -Term Appraisal Document of 11th Five Year Plan; hence in my submissions before this august Council I would focus exclusively on issues arising out of the unique problems and potentialities of Jharkhand, namely,

- First, the agriculture and allied sector in Jharkhand, on which the majority of the population depends for its livelihood, is characterized by low productivity & monocropping. It is, therefore, necessary that special programmes and strategies are evolved, not only for improving the productivity of agriculture & allied sector but also for bringing additional over 20 lk hectares under cultivation in Jharkhand which will usher in a new chapter in green revolution and strengthen the food security scenario for the state as well as the nation. In this context, increased support of NABARD and Commercial Banks for ensuring easy availability of agriculture credit on one hand and AIBP support to the major and medium irrigation projects, mostly in pockets inhabited by the scheduled tribes, on the other, will go a long way in translating the agriculture potential of the state into reality.

I may also like to bring to notice that in Jharkhand rainfall data from 1.6.2010 to 14.07.2010 show a deficit of 45% from the normal and the

present crop status in most parts is severely low which is a matter of concern. If the rainfall remains scanty in the remaining days of July and August then drought like condition of last year may repeat and we will have to resort to alternative crop strategy as well as early mitigation measures sooner than later.

- Secondly, our efforts at strengthening the Public Distribution System and providing subsidized foodgrains to the BPL have been quite successful although two issues in this area that need to be addressed are -
 - One, exclusion of large number of eligible families out of the operative BPL list, and
 - two, inadequate storage and handling capacity on part of FCI in Jharkhand.
- Third, Jharkhand is experiencing difficulty in earmarking land for compensatory afforestation for its various industrial/mining/irrigation projects since 30% of the land is already under forest cover. We would request that the provisions applicable to Central Sector Projects are also extended to State Projects in view of the peculiar public/ forest land distribution pattern in the state. Further, the process of forest and environment clearance also needs to be streamlined so that time taken for the same could be reduced.
- Next, we lack proper road network in Jharkhand and unfortunately only since last year we have actually started taking benefits of Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojna (PMGSY) for this purpose. The Ministry has kindly opened a window for inclusion of revised core network in Jharkhand and it is imperative that the left out roads are included under PMGSY. Further, it will be our request that, in view of Jharkhand's peculiar topography bridges having span above 50 meters should also be included under PMGSY.
- My next request is for reduction of the sharing pattern of the 8 Railway Projects taken up in Jharkhand at the behest of the State Government from 67:33 ratio to 50:50 cost sharing in conformity with the All India pattern in the matter so as to release scarce resources of the State Government to be utilized in other vital sectors.
- Jharkhand is the future power hub of the nation with ultra mega power project, super thermal power project, and several IPPs at various stages of completion. We, therefore, need to raise our transmission capabilities and in this regard a central sector scheme on strengthening of the inter and intra-state transmission system seems, the need of the hour. We further seek a one time grant of Rs. 1000 cr. for improving the transmission network in the state as we have not been able to provide sufficient resources in this area on our own.
- While on the energy sector, there are two more issues that I would like to place before this Council, namely

- (a) The provision for 12% free power for host state, in case of Hydel Power Projects, should be made applicable to Thermal Power Plants also, to offset the ill effects of environmental degradation; and
- (b) Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojna (RGGVY) scheme design be revised to include three phase lines and high capacity distribution transformers so that rural electrification may galvanize the rural economy as well.
- Left wing extremism of which Jharkhand is a major victim needs to be approached both from security as well as developmental fronts and in this regard we fully support the scheme on integrated action plans for left wing extremism affected districts with the request that 3 more naxal affected districts of Jharkhand, namely Ranchi, Khunti and Giridih be included in the scheme.
 - Jharkhand has 26% tribal population and large portions of the state are covered by the safeguards enshrined in the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution. However, in regard to tribal development there is huge development deficit to be covered for which our tribal sub plans will have to be better defined and more effectively monitored in future. We also agree that vigorous implementation of PESA in letter and spirit together with restoration of tribal forest rights will substantially address the dissatisfaction and alienation experienced in many tribal areas.
 - As a state rich in mineral resources, Jharkhand Government is of the view that the National Mineral Policy should give priority to value adders in the State in grant of mineral concessions on the one hand and discourage export of iron ore on the other. Also, Jharkhand is losing approximately Rs. 200 crores. per year as revenue on Coal because rates of royalty have not been completely fixed on ad-valorem basis. This needs to be looked into as also the need to create a fund like CAMPA out of the profits of power, coal and steel companies for restoration and rehabilitation of the fast polluting Suvarnarekha and Damodar river basins in Jharkhand.

In the end, I once again thank the Hon'ble Prime Minister and the Planning Commission for convening this meeting. I wish and hope that the deliberations of this Conference will go a long way in formulating the right strategies which will do good to Jharkhand as also the entire nation.

-----Jai Hind-----