

Third Five Year Plan Strategy

In the Third Plan (1961-66) of Himachal Pradesh, the objectives of the National Third Five Year Plan were reproduced in such a way that the much needed regional focus for planned development was absent. The Indian Third Plan, it is worth noting, was conceived at a time when it was unfavourable to think in terms of any large-scale development. There was a financial crisis, a foreign exchange crisis, and a food crisis. The main objectives of the Third Plan were growth, self-sufficiency, employment, and equality. The specific aims of the Plan were:

- o an increase of over five per cent per year in national income,
- o self-sufficiency in food production,
- o increase in production of other crops to meet the requirement of industries and exports,
- o expansion of basic industries such as steel, chemicals, fuels and power; as well as establishment of machine-building capacity,
- o substantial expansion of employment opportunities and utilisation of manpower resources to the fullest possible extent, and
- o reduction of disparities in income and wealth, and a more even distribution of economic power⁹.

The Third Five Year Plan of Himachal Pradesh proposed a total investment of Rs 338.4 million. The break-up of investment in the Third Plan was more or less similar to that in the Second Plan. Transport and Communications continued to receive top priority accounting for 35.2 per cent of the Plan allocation. Agriculture and allied services got a 22.7 per cent share and social and community services 21.2 per cent. Cooperation, water and power development, and industries respectively were allotted 10.3, 7.1, and 2.5 per cent of the total Plan outlay.

Agriculture

In addition to the National Extension Service and Community Development which are component subjects of the agriculture and allied services group, horticulture, animal husbandry, and forests, in Himachal Pradesh, contributed more than any other to the high percentage of this group in the share of the Third Plan outlay.

The scheme for popularising and distributing fertilizers continued with added vigour. Fertilizers were supplied to the cultivators at All India Pool Prices both on cash payment and on short-term recoverable loan. Under the seed multiplication scheme, it was proposed that 9 more seed farms (one in each block where seed farms had not existed previously) should be established; and one hybrid maize seed farm, to obtain single cross seeds and production of double cross seeds on the

9. Third Five Year Plan (1961-66) (Abridged Edition) pp. 11-12. Shimla: Himachal Pradesh Administration, Planning and Development Department, 1961.

etc. Afforestation, pasture improvement, and check dam construction were carried on lands of registered growers, was proposed. Since very little progress could be made during the First and Second Plans in the construction of seed stores, and since great difficulty was experienced in storing seed, the construction of 50 seed stores was proposed so that one to two seed stores would be in each block. A new scheme to distribute 2,500 improved implements to cultivators at a subsidised rate of 50 per cent, with the remainder to be recovered in short-term loans, was also taken up by the Third Plan.

Development programmes in fruit production and seed potato, ginger, and vegetable cultivation continued. One year's training programme for gardeners, with a stipend of Rs 40 per month, was started. In addition to intensification of research on temperate fruits, about 40 candidates were admitted every year to the Regional Fruit Research Station, Mashobra (near Shimla) where, apart from training in various aspects of orchard cultivation, training in vegetable cultivation and beekeeping was also imparted. At the Fruit Research Station, Dhaulakuan, (Sirmaur District) research work on sub-tropical fruits, viz., citrus fruits, mangoes, guavas, etc was intensified with 50 per cent financial support from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

Provision has been made for refresher courses to be conducted for Village Level Workers; and training for village artisans and also to farmers. The Agricultural Information Unit set up during the Second Plan was further strengthened to cope with the growing volume of work.

Animal Husbandry

Programmes for the development of animal husbandry included:

- o continuation of four poultry extension centres and extension of two centres,
- o strengthening of existing sheep and goat breeding farms by appointing more staff and constructing more buildings,
- o establishment of 12 new sheep and wool extension centres,
- o establishment of 10 transit camps to provide shelter to the migratory herd and flock owners at higher attitudes,
- o establishment of a training centre for subordinate staff,
- o introduction of a scheme for mass castration of scrub bulls,
- o opening of 10 new veterinary hospitals and 30 new dispensaries, and
- o ensuring a pure and wholesome milk supply to the inhabitants of Mandi, Bilaspur, and Solan towns, along with a milk supply scheme for these towns.

Forestry Sector

In the Third Five Year Plan a new scheme for forestry extension (including farm forestry) was started to establish plantations on about 600 acres of uncultivable village wastelands; these were without tree growth or had become denuded as a result of malpractices such as over-felling

and excessive grazing. The areas were selected with the cooperation of Village *Panchayats* with the object of raising plantations to meet the small-sized timber, firewood, and fodder requirements of the villagers.

A scheme to survey and demarcate 50,000 acres of government and private forests, besides settlement work in Chamba and Mandi districts, was taken up during the Third Plan. Boundary records of many demarcated areas were also to be prepared in order to have proper protection of forests as well as their scientific management. It was also felt necessary to carry out forest settlements along with the revenue settlements which were in progress at that time, in order to assign wasteland, undemarcated forests, and wooded and devastated areas to one or the other category of forests. Forest settlement also implies the extent of determination and the nature of rights of the villagers, in such a way as to fulfill the customary needs of villagers for forest products without hampering the sustenance and management of forests. In the absence of final settlement and demarcation, not only do serious complaints from the public arise, but encroachments on forest lands are frequent, resulting in heavy losses of land and money for the Government. Work on forest resources' survey also continued in the Third Plan period to assess the availability of various types of forest resources in order to frame proper plans for their utilization.

Since the Forest Department at that time was very short of professionally trained staff, both at officer's level as well as in the Ranger and Subordinate Cadre, 6 officers in superior forest services and 30 forest rangers were deputed for higher training at the Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun. In addition to the above, facilities at the Forest Subordinate Training School, Mashobra (H.P.), were improved and expanded to meet the increased demand of trained subordinates for the developmental activities of the Department.

Since the large tracts of forests in the State were almost inaccessible, Rs 1.85 million were proposed for construction of forest bridle paths and inspection paths to improve extraction and to introduce mechanised logging and transport.

Soil Conservation Scheme

Land without soil is lifeless, barren, and useless. Soil conservation includes proper land use, protection of land, and maintaining and increasing the fertility of the soil. Soil conservation work is needed on agricultural lands as well as forest lands. During the Third Five Year Plan, soil conservation work on agricultural lands, which primarily consisted of bench terracing, was intensified, particularly in the Bhakra Dam catchment. Fifty per cent of the expenditure was treated as a subsidy and 50 per cent as a long-term loan. A new soil conservation scheme on a watershed basis, involving contiguous private and government land, was introduced. Work on private land was proposed on a self-help basis while the staff of the Land Development Scheme worked on contiguous government land. Soil conservation as a part of river valley projects also continued.

Floods are the indirect result of erosion taking place in the catchments. With continued soil erosion in the catchments, the quantity of runoff and sediment load increases, causing floods in the rivers. Conservation measures are designed to retard the flow of runoff, to minimise soil losses, and consequently the sediment load in the rivers. Causes of erosion are overgrazing, indiscriminate exploitation of forests, and extension of cultivation on high and precipitous slopes,

etc. Afforestation, pasture improvement, and check dam construction were carried out with an expenditure of Rs 1.5 million in the Third Plan.

Since the education of farmers is an essential aspect of the successful soil conservation programme, field demonstrations were conducted representative of a cross section of the problems occurring in a larger area. Hence, Rs 1.0 million were allocated to start five demonstration centres of 1,000 acres each and to maintain three demonstration centres that had been already started in the Second Plan.

Road Transport

Transport and communications still continued to be one of the major items of development in Himachal Pradesh in the Third Plan. The improvements in roads and road transport, among others, help enhance income in the following ways:

- o The transport cost is reduced. This has far-reaching effects in all directions and leads to all-round economic betterment.
- o It results in expanded opportunities for plying vehicles for profit.
- o The State could earn increased revenues from various sources that develop along with the development of roads and road transport.

Power and Industrialisation

Because of the hilly terrain, no major irrigation project would be practicable here. Power development in Himachal Pradesh continued to be confined mainly to electrification for purposes of light as no substantial industrial activities existed in the State. However, against an outlay of Rs 1.1 million allotted in the First Plan, and Rs 4.75 million in the Second, the allocation for the Third Plan was in the order of Rs 11.1 million for village and small industries. This was due to a conscious and deliberate effort to close gaps in the Third Plan so that industrialization in the State no longer continued to be weak. In a State like Himachal Pradesh, where traditional agriculture does not offer much employment and income, village and small-scale industries are among the most important aids to augment income and employment in the rural areas. Industries on a larger scale also help to raise income. Industries started in the public sector include:

- o a rosin and turpentine factory;
- o a fruit preservation factory;
- o a production-cum-common facility centre for blankets, tweeds, shawls, carpets, druggets; and
- o a pilot plant for processing indigenous herbs, forest products, and dehydration of potatoes and ginger.

Some medium and small-scale industries were set up in the private sector in Himachal Pradesh. The Third Plan offered more incentives towards industrialisation, and, as such, two new industrial estates were established in the State so that intending industrialists could enjoy better facilities.