

**Minutes of the 87th meeting of the Project Approval Board (PAB),
Government of India, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi held on
4th August 2006**

1. The 87th meeting of the PAB meeting under the Chairmanship of Secretary School Education & Literacy, Government of India, for consideration and approval of Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWP&B) 2006-07 in respect of West Bengal was held in the office of Secretary (SE&L) at Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi on 4th August 2006. List of participants is given at Annexure-I. The PAB meeting held on 12.4.2006 had approved an interim outlay of Rs. 600 cr. only for maintenance of ongoing activities, pending action from Government of West Bengal and SSA West Bengal on the following issues:-

- (i) a comprehensive arrangement for coordination and convergence between various implementing agencies is worked out and
- (ii) measures outlined to strengthen project management, especially regular follow-up and monitoring of programme implementation.
- (iii) The State Government would evolve a policy regarding upgradation of SSKs and MSKs to regular Primary and Upper Primary Schools respectively, so as to fulfil the constitutional mandate for UEE.
- (iv) It is also expected that a full time State Project Director should be in place by then.

2. A detailed presentation was made by the Principal Secretary, (School Education Department), Government of West Bengal on the implementation of SSA in the State where she highlighted the following:

- (i) Strategies for enrolment of out of school children are being put in place. Intensive mobilisation campaign including media publicity has been planned for enrolment of out of school children.
- (ii) Special plans for addressing special focus group children such as SCs, STs, religious minority groups, tea garden and forest area children, migratory children, children of fishermen and boatmen in riverine areas are being drawn-up.
- (iii) 31972 para teachers have been recruited and 30819 (under SSA) are yet to be recruited. The balance para teachers would be recruited by December 2006. 24545 regular teachers are to be recruited under SSA. The primary school regular teachers, would be recruited by December 2006 and the upper primary teachers by February – March 2007.
- (iv) The completion rate of civil works targets upto 2005-06 is around 65% (except CLRC which is 90%).

- (v) The State intends to undertake special monitoring for 5 special focus districts viz. Purulia, Uttar Dinajpur, Murshidabad, South 24 Parganas and Bankura. The visits to districts by SPO personnel would be made more frequent. A working group will be formed under the Chairpersonship of Principal Secretary, School Education Department for coordination between SSA, SSK and MDM.
- (vi) A more functional sub-Committee of the Executive Committee is being proposed with membership of various Departments and agencies for ensuring regular coordination and convergence.
- (vii) The Principal Secretary has personally taken up with and been assured by the Chief Secretary, West Bengal, that a full time State Project Director will be put in place for SSA soon.
- (viii) On the issue of upgradation of SSK & MSK, the Principal Secretary stated that dialogue with the Panchayati Raj Department of West Bengal and the Department of Education has been initiated.

3. The following discussion took place based on the presentation by Principal Secretary, School Education, West Bengal:-

(i) Civil Works:

The Appraisal Team made the following observations:

- The State had, in the past, made changes unilaterally in the PAB approvals for civil works.
- There appears to be paucity of staff that is adversely affecting the progress of civil works.
- There is no system of quality monitoring by third party.
- Single design for schools being adopted without any local variation.
- Earthquake-resistant construction need to be kept in mind.

Principal Secretary, West Bengal stated that these issues will be attended to. She also committed that all pending civil works (upto AWP & B 2005-06) would be completed by December, 2006. Secretary (SE & L) directed that copies of TORs of some of the third party monitoring arrangements for civil works for other States should be given to SPD, West Bengal as a model.

(ii) Teachers:

SSA West Bengal indicated that the approval of PAB for additional teachers (2005-06) had been divided as 62791 para teachers and 10344 regular teachers (73135 total teachers). The sanction for 401 teachers i.e. the difference between the PAB sanction for 73536 teachers and the teachers actually allocated by SSA WB to all districts, was cancelled. For 2006-07, 14201 new regular teachers for upper primary schools were sanctioned. Secretary (SE & L) also raised a concern about large

number of teacher vacancies under the States own teacher cadre.

Principal Secretary informed that teacher recruitment under SSA would be completed as per the following schedule:-

- Para teachers by December 2006.
- Regular teacher: Primary by December 2006 and Upper primary by March 2007.

(iii) Opening of new schools:

JS(EE-II) raised the issue of upgradation of SSKs and MSKs to regular schools. Secretary (SE & L) also stressed that EGS was an interim strategy and West Bengal Government would need to finalise a policy for opening of new schools / conversion of SSKs / MSKs to regular schools. It was informed that SSA would not fund infrastructure development for SSKs till Government of West Bengal formulate a policy for 'upgraded SSKs' as regular schools. The upgradation of 3000 SSKs sanctioned in 2004-05 was not implemented – only the construction component was taken up. Therefore, GoI would not support any further proposals for construction for SSKs/MSKs.

The ratio of PS:UPS is adverse in West Bengal and JS(EE-II) suggested that GoWB could decide to set up 5000 upper primary schools pending a decision on upgradation of SSKs. The following decisions were taken:

- (a) GoWB would decide on a policy for opening of new schools or recognition of SSK/MSK (on upgradation) as regular schools by Jan-Feb. 2007 so that the proposal for new schools can be included in the AWP&B 2007-08.
- (b) GoWB/SSA West Bengal would undertake habitation-mapping to identify the requirement of new schools – primary & upper primary. Some examples of methodology for habitation-based surveys would be sent to WB SSA by the Department of SE & L.
- (c) The proposal for construction of other items (School, Repair & Maintenance grants, TLM grant, REMS etc.) for upgradation of SSKs / MSKs would not be allowed since the State had not decided on a policy for real upgradation of SSKs/MSKs.

The funds presently proposed for civil works for SSK/MSK would be reallocated for construction of additional classrooms.

(iv) Out of School Children:

Secretary (SE & L) enquired about the time-line for enrolment of 6.54 lakh out of school children. Principal Secretary, West Bengal felt that most of these children would be covered by

December 2006, but some 'hard to reach' groups like children working / straying near brick kilns, working and street children would take some more time for inclusion.

The Appraisal Team raised the issue of non-availability of reliable household-based data on out of school children. SPD West Bengal informed that WB SSA had been following the system of child registers, but a household survey is planned in October – November 2006. JS(EE-II) informed that the national guidelines for HH survey issued in July 2006 should be followed. Principal Secretary, GoWB felt that such an exercise could be entrusted to a reputed agency / institution. JS(EE-II) informed that funds for the survey would be available under AWP&B 2006-07 and it was upto West Bengal to decide the mode of data collection, compilation and analysis.

The issues of reliable mapping of migrating children and convergence with Labour Department for working children were also raised. The inadequacy of data and strategies for forest-dwellers, tea garden workers and other disadvantaged groups was also highlighted. Principal Secretary, Education, WB agreed that these aspects needed much more attention. The appraisal team members also impressed the need for revision of the bridge course strategy by having courses of varying durations for children of different age groups and abilities. SPD West Bengal agreed to modify the present uniform 6 month strategy and take assistance of TSG for this purpose.

(v) *Quality Improvement:*

The following concerns were mentioned:

- (a) Only about 40% of the CRC coordinators were in position and therefore a regular system of academic support through monthly meetings and school visits was not functional.
- (b) Repetition rates were high, especially at the upper primary stage.
- (c) The results of the Diagnostic Achievement Tests (class II & IV) were not utilised for the concrete measures.
- (d) Only about 15% students scored more than 60% marks in class VIII.

SPD informed that the strategies of ILIP are being expanded throughout the State. Principal Secretary, GoWB promised to review the activities relating to quality improvement and ensure that CRC coordinators are placed in the next 3 months.

(vi) State Level Programme Management:

Secretary (SE & L) urged the Principal Secretary, GoWB to put in place the steps outlined by her – (i) subgroup of the Executive Committee for interdepartmental convergence (ii) filling up of SPO / DPO positions (iii) Regular visits from State office to districts, especially to the 5 identified special focus districts (SFD) & (iv) regular monthly review meetings of DPOs at State level. Secretary (SE & L) also requested GoWB to consider placement of additional programme personnel in the 5 SFDs.

4. The representative of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment opined that the criterion of difference in male-female literacy rate at district level results in non-inclusion of some districts with low absolute SC female literacy rates eg. Birbhum & Malda. It was clarified that under NPEGEL only blocks were selected based on the criteria of literacy rates. He further requested GoWB to consider pre-matric scholarships for families engaged in unclean operations and inclusion of a representative of the Department of Backward Classes (GoWB) in the proposed inter-departmental group.

5. The following decisions were also taken regarding admissibility of some of the proposals:-

- (a) The number of CLRC & CRC RTs would be calculated based on the approved pattern of 20/10 RTs per block based on the number of schools in the block.
- (b) CLRC/CRC RTs salaries would not be allowed in the 10 DPEP districts (phase I & II) since as per the norms, these are to be supported by the State Government on completion of DPEP.
- (c) Contingency grants, TLM, TA etc would be for 341 CLRCs only.
- (d) SSKs & MSKs would be provided grant under EGS & AIE of Rs. 845/- & Rs. 1200/- per child per annum.
- (e) The proposal for TLE grant for 2953 UPS was disallowed in line with decision taken by the PAB for all States/UTs.

6. Secretary (SE & L) expressed the hope that SSA would be implemented with urgency and result-orientation in West Bengal in the coming months.

7. The major physical targets approved for 2006-07 are as follows:

(a) Civil Works:

1960 CRCs; 288 new school buildings; 38,500 additional classrooms.

(b) Recruitment of Teachers:

14201 new regular teachers for upper primary schools were approved.

- (c) **EGS & AIE:**
- 2031814 children to be covered under SSK, SSP and MSKs.
 - 5 lakh children under remedial teaching.
 - 1.32 lakh children under primary level bridge courses and 2.74 lakh children under upper primary level non-residential bridge courses.
 - 1.20 lakh children under Rabindra Mukta Vidyalaya.
- (d) **Free textbooks:** For 31.1 lakh children.
- (e) **Inclusive Education:**
140699 CWSN to be covered during 2006-07 (Rs. 16.88 cr.).
- (f) **Teachers Training:**
- In-service training of 10 days for 123663 primary school teachers and 82697 upper primary school teachers.
 - 20 days in-service training for 54783 newly recruited primary school teachers and 52878 upper primary school teachers
- (g) **Community Mobilisation:**
Training of 2.44 lakh community leaders.
- (h) **NPEGEL:**
A total amount of Rs. 2416.99 lakh (including Rs. 404.59 lakh as spillover) was approved with the following physical targets:-
- 528 additional classrooms. Sports material, library books in 528 schools.
 - Community mobilisation in 1064 clusters.
 - Training of 1064 teachers on gender sensitisation.
 - Life skills training for children of 1064 schools through Open School.

8. The following total amounts were approved for SSA and NPEGEL:-

(Rs. in lakh)			
	Fresh	Spillover	Total
SSA	139414.59	1801.33	144070.37
NPEGEL	2012.40	404.59	2416.99
Grand Total	141426.99	2205.92	146487.36

District-wise costing sheets are at Annex-II. Fact Sheet for the State is at Annex-III.

9. The following commitments by GoWB/SSA WB were reiterated at the end:-

- (a) All out of school children, except the 'hardest to reach' would be covered by December 2006 and the rest by March 2007.
- (b) All pending civil works (sanctioned upto 2005-06) would be completed by December 2006.
- (c) All para teachers (sanctioned till 2005-06) would be recruited by December 2006 and all regular teachers by March 2007.
- (d) A full-time SPD would be in position by August 2006. An orientation could be arranged for him by Director (EE) and the TSG.
- (e) New primary & upper primary schools would be proposed in the AWP&B 2007-08.

10 It was directed that the State should also satisfy the following conditions to avail of SSA funds:

- a) The State Government should give a written commitment for meeting its share of the SSA outlay.
- b) First instalment of the State share should also be released to the State Society within one month of the releases of Central share to the State Society.
- c) At least 50% of the teachers recruited should be female.
- d) Teachers appointed against posts created through SSA funds should be made accountable to the VEC for at least the salary payment. The latter would monitor the attendance before releasing the salary.
- e) VECs or equivalent bodies should be constituted and accounts opened to incur expenditure under teachers grant, civil works, maintenance grants, school grants and other such expenditures, which has to be incurred only through these bodies as per SSA norms.
- f) The State Government will maintain their level of investment in elementary education as in 1999-2000 and give the details of this to GOI before the release of second instalment. The contribution as State share for SSA will be over and above this investment.
- g) The second instalment would only be released after the previous instalment of State share has been transferred to the State Implementation Society and substantial progress has been made in expenditure as far as money already released is concerned.
- h) All appointments under the head of management cost should either be on deputation or on contract basis, with all persons being recruited having functional computer literacy.

The meeting concluded with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

ANNEXURE-I

LIST OF ATTENDEES OF 87TH MEETING OF THE PROJECT APPROVAL BOARD

HELD ON 4TH AUGUST 2006 AT SHASTRI BHAVAN, NEW DELHI

1. Shri Champak Chatterji, Secretary (Deptt. of SE & L), MHRD
Chairman
2. Ms. Vrinda Sarup, Joint Secretary, D/o EE&L, MHRD
3. Shri S.K. Rakesh, Director, Deptt. of Drinking Water Supply
4. Shri Hasib Ahmad, Director, M/Social Justice & Empowerment
5. Dr. Pramila Menon, NIEPA, New Delhi
6. Dr. Kiran Devendra, NCERT, New Delhi
7. Dr. N Chatterji, Principal Secretary, School Education Deptt., Govt. of West Bengal
8. Shri S.B. Biswas, SPD, West Bengal
9. Shri Joyasish Ghosh, PC (Planning), PBRPSUS, West Bengal
10. Shri Srikumar Ghosh, PC (Planning), PBRPSUS, West Bengal
11. Shri Dhir Jhingran, Director, MHRD
12. Shri R.K. Sharma, Director (Finance), MHRD
13. Shri K.J. Dyva Prasad, Deputy Secretary, MHRD
14. Shri Binay Pattanayak, Sr. Consultant, TSG, Ed.CIL
15. Shri Satish Girotra, Sr. Consultant, TSG, Ed.CIL
16. Shri Ritwik Patra, Sr. Consultant, TSG, Ed.CIL
17. Ms. Amita Singla, Consultant, TSG, Ed.CIL
18. Ms. Gayatri Singh, Consultant, TSG, Ed.CIL