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IMPACT OF AGRICULTURE AND ALLIED SECTORS ON ECONOMY OF BIHAR

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ABSTRACT—

Traditionally, Bihar's Economy is dominated by the agricultural sector. Around 90 percent of the population still live in rural areas where agriculture, along with animal husbandry, has been the mainstay of their livelihood. This has become even more true with the bifurcation of the state which took place in November, 2000. Bifurcation took away the mineral rich part from Bihar and the state



of crops. Besides cereals, the state produces pulses, oilseeds, fibre crops, sugarcane, fruits, vegetables and other minor food crops. Recently there has been diversification in the production of crops, including the introduction of floriculture in many districts of the state, catering to the rising demand. During the recent year, the economy has shown a turnaround, throwing new issues and enhancing people's aspirations. But, despite this progress, rural Bihar is far from benefiting fully from the opportunities generated by rapid growth.

was left with its fertile land and abundant water resources. Agriculture, therefore, is sure to play the most important role for the development of the state. Bihar is endowed with fertile Gangetic alluvial soil with abundant water resources, particularly ground water resources. With different soil categories associated with different agro-climatic ones, the farmers in the state grow a variety

KEY WORDS: Agriculture, Allied Agriculture, Economy of Bihar.

INTRODUCTION :

The state government is trying utmost to bridge the rural-urban divide by promoting higher agricultural growth. The support mechanisms for enhancement of agricultural development are being further strengthened, to ensure that growth of Bihar economy remains sustainable in the years ahead. Recently, the Chief Minister is undertaking the 'Seva Yatra' to take stock of implementation of agricultural and other programmes at the grassroot level. Support services like irrigation, seed, fertilisers, farm mechanization, credit flows, and awareness are being stressed to make agriculture more viable. The state government is exploring ways so that rural areas (all sections and communities within them) can participate fully in the growth process for a more prosperous Bihar.

Bihar has a geographical area of 93.6 lakh hectares with three important agro-climatic zones- North-West, North-East and South. The North-West zone has 13 districts. The zone receives an annual rainfall of 1040-1450 mms. The soil is mostly loam and sandy loam. The North-East Zone has 8 districts. This zone

receives rainfall ranging from 1200-1700mms. The soil here is loam and clay loam. Finally, the South-Zone having 17 districts receives an average rainfall of 990-1300 mms and the soil consist sandy loam, loam, clay and clay loam. The details of agricultural and allied sectors are presented in this chapter under the major heads of- Rainfall, Land utilization, Production an productivity, Irrigation, Agricultural input (seed, fertilizer, agricultural equipment and extension services), Agricultural credit and Animal husbandry.

PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY

The fertility of soil and the endowment of abundant ground water resources enable the farmers of Bihar to produce a variety of crops, both food and non-food. Apart from cereals and pulses, farmers in Bihar also produce oilseeds, fibre, fruits and vegetables. Of lact, the farmers have taken to floriculture, in view of growing demand of flowers both from within and outside the state.

Bihar produced 35.99 lakh tonnes of rice, 45.71 lakh tonnes of wheat, 14.78 lakh tonnes of maize, 1.43 lakh tonnes of oilseeds and 50.32 lakh tonnes of sugarcane. If one compares it with the triennium average ending 2002-03, acreage under rice fell from 35.97 lakh hectares to 32.14 lakh hectares in 2009-10, whereas its production decreased from 52.44 lakh tonnes to 36 lakh tonnes due to severe drought in about 28 districts of Bihar. The area under wheat increased from 21.08 lakh hectares in the triennium 2000-03 to 21.93 lakh hectares in 2009-10 and its productions of increased to 45.71 lakh tonnes in 2009-10 from an average level of 42.90 lakh 37 tonnes in the triennium 2000-03. This also indicates a higher increase in yield rate of wheat over the years. The level of production in maize in 2009-10 was 14.79 lakh tonnes as compared to average productions of 14.26 lakh tonnes in the triennium 2000-03. In case of maize, one again observed a steady positive trend in production. The production of pulses showed a decline from 575 lakh tonnes in 2000-03 to 4.72 lakh tonnes in 2009-10, with a corresponding fall in acreage from 7.02 lakh hectares in 2000-03 to 5.65 lakh hectares in 2009-10.

The trend of rice production over the years has not been consistent. There exists much variation in the production of rice over the years. This is due to fact that around 50 percent of net sown area are bereft of irrigation and dependant on rain. The average production figures are bereft of irrigation and dependant on rain. The average production figures are around 50 lakh tonnes each year. On the other hand, wheat and maize show a growing trend. The average annual wheat production level was 40-45 lakh tonnes between trend. The average annual wheat production level was 40-45 lakh tonnes between 2000-01 ti 2009-10. The annual growth rate of wheat production for these years turns out to be 1.1 percent similar is the case with maize. The average annual production level between 2000-01 to 2009-10. is around 15 lakh tonnes. The annual growth rate for production 38 of maize for the reference period comes out to be 1.9 percent. The pulses show a declining rae of growing. The oilseeds during 2000-01 to 2009-10 grew at the rate of 1.8 percent, whereas fibers grew at the rate of 0.8 percent during the same period.

CROPPING PATTERNS:

Area, Production and Productivity of Rice:

In Bihar, agro-climatic conditions vary from one region to another Because of this, the cropping pattern would tend to vary over the regions.

The districts wise shares in the area under rice for 2009-10, it is found that the top rice producing district are-East Champaran (6.7 percent), Rohts (5.9 percent) Madhubani (5.7 percent), West Champaran (6.7 percent), Muzaffarpur (4.1 percent) an Araria (4.3 percent). In terms of area, the lowest ranking districts are Araria (4.3 percent). In terms of area, the lowest ranking districts are Sheohar (0.4 percent) Jamui (0.4 percent) Sheikhpura (0.4 percent) and Khagaria (0.6 percent).

Area Production and Productivity of Wheat

The districtwise share in the area under wheat for 2009-10, it is found that the top wheat producing district are - Rohtas (5.9 percent), Siwan (4.8 percent), Madhubani (4.7 percent), Muzaffarpur (4.7 percent), East Champaran (4.6 percent) and Aurangabad (4.6 percent). The bottom districts in terms of share of area

are- Arwal (0.5 percent), Kishanganj (0.5 percent), Jamui (0.5 percent), Sheohar (0.5 percent) and Munger (0.8 percent). Considering districtwise shares in production in 2009-10, the top district are - Rohtas (6.8 percent), Siwan (6.6 percent), Bhojpur (5.6 percent), Saran (4.8 percent) and Madhubani (4.8 percent). In terms of production, the bottom district are- Jamui (0.4 percent), Arwal (0.5 percent), Sheohar (0.6 percent) and Munger (0.8 percent), According to productivity ranking in 2009-10, the top 5 district are Khagaria, Bhojpur, Siwan, Samastipur and Sheohar. The highest productivity level in 2009-10 was achieved by Khagaria (3345 kgs/ha).

Area Production and Productivity of Maize:

Considering districtwise shares in the area under wheat for 2009-10, the top maize producing district are- Begusarai (9.5 percent), Khagaria (9.3 percent), Samastipur (8.3 percent), Katihar (7.3 percent) and Madhepura (7.0 percent). Area-wise, the bottom districts are - Rohtas (0.0 percent) Sheikhpura (0.0 percent), Madhubani (0.2 percent) and Arwal (0.2 percent).

In case of production shares of different district, the top districts are Khagaria (11.9 percent), Katihar (8.4 percent), Saharsa (8.1 percent) and Madhepura (7.8 percent). The districts with high productivity levels are Saharsa, Supaul, Sheohar, Darbhanga and Khagaria. The highest productivity level registered by Saharsa was 3162 kgs/ha.

Productivity of Pulses

Considering the relative share of the districts in the total area under production in 2009-10 for pulses, the top districts are - Patna (9.2 percent), Aurangabad (7.1 percent), Nalanda (4.9 percent), Bhojpur (4.7 percent) and Muzaffarpur (4.5 percent). If one takes into account the shares in production of each district in total production in 2009-10 the leading districts are - Patna (11.8 percent), Bhojpur (8.6 percent), Aurangabad (6.1 percent), Nalanda (6.0 percent). In terms of productivity, the leading district are - Bhojpur, Sheikhpura, Jamui and Gaya. The highest productivity level in 2009-10 of 1543 kgs/ha was achieved by Bhojpur.

Production and Productivity of Vegetables and Fruit:

Apart from major cereals and pulses, Bihar also produces a variety of vegetables and fruits. In terms of vegetable production, the state is proud to be holding the topmost position in the country in recent times. Taking into account the figures for 2009-10, the important vegetable crops include potato (57.84 lakh tonnes), onion (10.82 lakh tonnes), tomato (10.56 lakh tonnes), cauliflower (11.18 lakh tonnes) and brinjal (12.16 lakh tonnes). It can be noted that Hajipur in Vaishali is famous for early variety of cauliflower which reaches the market in the last week of September itself. In 2009-10, the total area under vegetable production was 8.45 lakh hectares which is about 11.02 percent of the gross sown area.

It can be noted that area under vegetable production is showing an upward trend. The area under vegetable which was 8.24 lakh hectares in 2006-07 rose to 8.45 lakh hectares in 2009-10. Alongside production, the cropwise productivity is also increasing. The productivity of potato increased from 17,180 kgs/hect in 2008-09 to 18,410 kgs/hect in 2009-10. The productivity of onion which was 19,270 kgs/hect in 2008-09 went up to 20,317 kgs/hect in 2009-10 and, for cauliflower, the rise was from 17,360 kgs/hect to 17,861 kgs/ha in 2009-10.

One of the foremost input requirements of agriculture is the timely availability of water. The optimum use of water resources, which is fortunately abundant in Bihar, is the only key to increasing the crop productivity in Bihar. Newer and modern irrigation techniques have got to be nurtured to increase agricultural efficiency to boost farm production. The present state government has been taking several initiatives to enhance the total irrigated area in the state. Between 2000-01 to 2008-09, the total irrigated area in Bihar has increased from 44.6 lakh hectares to 49.20 lakh hectares. This is only a 10 percent increase in total irrigated area over a period of 8 long years. So there is still a large potential for exploration of ground water resource through extensive use of pump sets. Since there is a recurring problem of power shortage in

the state, the pump sets depend largely on the use of diesel. Since it is much costlier, the cost effectiveness of agriculture operations get reduced.

Animal Husbandry

Besides agriculture, livestock and dairy is one of the key sectors for creation of livelihood and employment opportunities in the rural sector. This sector also plays an important role for womenfolk belonging to the marginal sector. This sector holds an important position in the state's economy and it contributes about one-fifth of the total rural income. Further, since 90 percent of state's population is rural, animal husbandry is extremely important for providing gainful employment to population living in rural areas, where many households are either landless and have landholdings of less than one hectare. The state government has taken position steps during the Eleventh plan to strengthen the animal husbandry sector.

According to livestock census of 2007, the total livestock population of Bihar is 416.13 lakh. The state also has a substantial number of goats (101.69 lakh) which are popularly known as poor man's cow. The size of poultry is also quite large at 114.14 lakhs. With such a large livestock sector, the growth potential is abundant. As most of the rural households are landless or marginal farmers, the sector functions more or less as a subsistence sector. The state government has taken a number of initiatives for the development of livestock and dairy sector of the economy in recent times. These initiatives include breed upgradation, health and nutrition, insurance scheme for which animals, as well as marketing of animal husbandry and dairy products. The development of livestock wealth and higher production from this sector would go a long way in providing a sound base for economic prosperity of rural Bihar.

The production of milk has increased from 26.32 lakh tonnes in 2001-02 to 65.00 lakh tonnes in 2010-11. This implied an annual growth rate of 11.16 percent. During the same period, the production of eggs has increased to 110-10 crores in 2009-10 from a production level of 74.00 crore in 2001-02. But, in 2010-11, the production level fell to 74.00 crores leading to an annual growth rate of 3.25 percent. The production of wool now stands stagnated at a level of 2.50-2.60 lakh kgs.

The state government has several schemes like treatment of animals, sterilization, artificial insemination, immunization and free distribution of fodder seeds for the promotion of the animal husbandry sector.

Fisheries

Bihar has a span 237.3 thousand hectares of water area and 3200 kms. of river. This constitutes around 3.9 percent of the total geographical area of the state. There exists, therefore, an ample scope of providing gainful employment to rural households through the development of pisciculture. There has been a steady growth of fish production in the state.

In 2004-05, the production of fish in Bihar was 2.67 lakh tonnes. There was a steady increase in the production thereafter and the level reached the peak position of 3.06 lakh tonnes in 2008-09. In 2010-11, the level came down to 2.89 lakh tonnes. The growth of fish production has been at an annual rate of 1.8 percent which is rather healthy.

The state government has taken positive initiative for the development of fisheries sector in general and for the betterment of fish farmers in particular. A provision of easy credit facilities through Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) and extension services in the form of education and training to fish farmers have been important landmarks in the development of the sector. Recently, a fisheries insurance scheme has been introduced for fish farmers. For this scheme, a premium of Rs. 3200 per hectare has been fixed. The beneficiary has to pay Rs. 1600 per hectare and the rest Rs. 1600 would be borne by the state government. An MOU has been signed with Oriental Insurance Company, a public sector unit, to launch this scheme.

Economy of Bihar

In recent years, Bihar has acquired considerable attention throughout the country and even abroad for its remarkable performance in the development front. For a state which had suffered stagnation for long and which had almost resigned to its perpetual backwardness, this was a turning point, leading to new hopes and aspirations. These changes were possible because of the state government's firm commitment to an agenda of development which is both speedy and inclusive. To fulfill this agenda, the state government had not only utilised its limited resources most prudently, but had also strengthened its administrative machinery and introduced a number of institutional reforms. The results clearly show that the past growth process of the state's economy is not a short term phenomenon, but the beginning of a long term stable growth process.

CONCLUSION

The recent data on state income shows that the economy of Bihar has been showing a steady growth trend for the last 8 years. After separation of Jharkhand in 2000, the economy had grown at an annual rate of 4.42 percent at constant prices. The already stagnating economy of Bihar had become even more crippled after the bifurcation. However, the economy witnessed a turnaround due to policies pursued by the present state government and, as a result the economy grew at an annual rate of 11.36 percent during the period 200-05 to 2010-11. Thus, we can term the recent growth process as revival of a stagnant economy. This has been made possible by the fact that the investment pattern showed a massive upsurge. From a small average annual plan size of around Rs. 1200 crores during the Tenth Plan (2002-2007), the annual plan size climbed to more than Rs. 15,000 crores during the Eleventh Plan period (2007-2012). The investment portfolio also changed and there was a massive stress on infrastructural development and social delivery system. Now, the economy can claim to be at a 'taking off stage to a sustained development path. The buoyancy in the economy can be easily sustained by the interlinkages in its various sectors.

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