

able objectives to generate gainful employment opportunities, to create productive assets in rural area and also for the improvement of overall quality of rural life. In this programme, the guarantee part has not been operationalized due to lack of funds. In this programme again, preference in employment was given to landless labourers, women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. This programme is totally funded by the Central Government. While allocating resources to State and Union Territories 50 per cent weightage has been given on the number of agricultural labourers, marginal farmers and marginal workers and the remaining 50 per cent weightage to the incidence of poverty. The programme also envisaged that wage component of a project should not be less than 50 per cent of the total expenditure on the programme. 10 per cent of the allocations should be earmarked exclusively for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. In this programme various projects like social forestry, Indira Awaas Yojana and Million Wells Scheme were included.

During the Seventh Plan, an outlay of Rs. 1,744 crore has been allocated by the central sector to generate 1,013 million mandays of employment. During the first three years of the Seventh Plan, Rs. 1,743 crore were utilized which helped to generate employment to an extent of 858 million mandays only. This shows that 65 per cent of the target was fulfilled. Although the entire plan allocation was spent during the first three years but the realisation of target in respect of employment generation was to the extent of 85 per cent. Per capita foodgrains in terms of kgs. per manday which was 1.25 kgs. in 1985-86, gradually rose to 2.88 kgs. in 1986-87 and then declined to 2.6 kg. in 1987-88.

During the three-year period social forestry programme under RLEGP has covered 5.2 lakh hectares of land and about 533 million plants were planted. Moreover, 4.27 lakh houses were constructed till Dec., 1988 at a cost of Rs. 425.5 crore.

The Mid-term Appraisal of the Seventh Plan observed various weaknesses in the implementation of RLEGP. The area approach was not followed; the guarantee of 100 days of employment was also not followed; contractors manipulated the muster rolls and wages paid were found different from those documented. Moreover, the selection of landless labourers was not systematic. The Mid-term Appraisal report also mentioned about the failure of projects as such, "Running an employment guarantee programme for the landless even on a pilot basis in a few selected blocks has not been found feasible as it becomes difficult to refuse work to the unemployed who report to work." In 1989-90, the RLEGP along with NREP were merged into Jawahar Rozgar Yojana.

8.4. JAWAHAR ROZGAR YOJANA (JRY)

Jawahar Rozgar Yojana was launched in 28th April, 1989, by the then Prime Minister Late Rajiv Gandhi. In this programme all the existing rural wage employment programmes were merged into JRY. Thus, the NREP and RLEGP were merged within the single umbrella. From 1st April 1999, JRY is restructured and renamed as Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY).

Main Features : The following are the main features of JRY :

1. The JRY has set a target for reaching every single panchayat.
2. The scheme envisaged to benefit 440 lakh of families lying below the poverty line in India through panchayats.
3. In JRY, the Central assistance component would be 80 per cent and the state's share would be 20 per cent. In 1989-90, the centre made a provision of Rs. 2100 crore for JRY.
4. In JRY, the allocation of fund among different states has been done in proportion to the size of population below the poverty line only. Further devolution of funds to the districts has been determined by the criteria of its backwardness.
5. JRY made adequate provision of funds for their village panchayats to run its employment scheme for the rural poor. On an average, a village panchayat with its population 3000-4000 people will receive between Rs. 80,000 and 1 lakh every year. It was decided to provide employment to at least one member in each poor family for atleast 50 to 100 days annually.
6. JRY reserved 30 per cent of the employment generated particularly for women.

Achievements and Evaluation :

In 1989-90 and 1990-91, total employment generated under JRY were 864 and 875 million mandays respectively. In 1991-92, the achievement of JRY in respect of generation of gainful employment was to the tune of 808 million mandays as against the target of 735 million mandays. In 1992-93, the achievement was 782 million mandays as against the target of 776 million mandays of employment and in 1999-2000, the achievement was 194 million mandays as against of 375.2 million mandays of employment generated during 1998-99.¹ The 1999-2000 budget provides for an allocation of Rs. 1,665 crore and the employment generation has been targetted at 396 million mandays.² But the total mandays of employment generated under JRY during 1999-2000 (upto Feb. '2000) was to the extent of 194.5 million mandays. Again, in respect of JRY, total number of mandays of employment generated during the Eighth Plan was 4,037.4 million as against the target of 4,040.8 million.³

The following are the points of criticisms raised by critics against the programme JRY :

1. In JRY, the entire administration and implementation of the scheme has been rested on village panchayats. It was expected that this will help to economise on administration and to make the scheme more open and subsequently there will be less abuse and leakages involved in it. But in practice, one cannot expect much from a village level politician responsible for the implementation of the scheme with no accountability. This has been creating a lot in interference by panch and sarpanch of the panchayat over the activities of the staff of development administration and banking machinery to function smoothly and independently. Thus, it is quite better to have a judicious mix of panchayat representatives and development administration to maintain a system of check and balance.
2. The JRY engaged in poverty alleviation and creation of durable assets by way of employment generation programmes with people's participation has been ailing since its inception. It is argued that so far it has provided little or no long-term employment in this critical social sector despite ploughing in of crores of scarce resources. The lack of success of the scheme is mainly due to aberration in implementation. In the absence of critical examination of the delivery system which is responsible for leakage and wastage of fund, the scope for misappropriation and skimming off the fund by unscrupulous elements would increase continuously. As the panchayats are not having any teaching staff thus it would be difficult to prepare blue prints of the programme by them and to implement such programme.
3. In JRY, there is a promise to provide 50 to 100 mandays of employment in a year to our member of the family of rural household but in NREP there was a promise to provide 180 mandays of employment per year. Thus, while enlarging the programme JRY seems to be diluted.
4. While allocating funds to different states, JRY has helped the bigger states much as they adopted the criterion of percentage share of population below the poverty line to the total rural poor population of the country.

Thus, under such a situation it can be safely concluded that the scheme like JRY should be redressed properly where social motivation should get much preference in place of political motivation. It is heartening to note that the union rural development ministry is preparing a fresh blueprint to revamp the JRY in order to give a new look in it and all set to introduce the updated scheme from 1993-94 onwards. Under such a situation one can hope that the recast programme will have a refreshingly updated appearance tailored to meet the basic objectives of the programme.

8.5 NATIONAL SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (NSAP)

On 15th August, 1995, another social welfare scheme, namely, National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) was announced. This multi-dimensional NSAP for the poor encompasses old age pension, family benefit in case of death, of the bread winner and maternity benefit. The NSAP is a centrally sponsored programme with 100 percent central funding and it is intended to ensure that social protection to the beneficiaries throughout the country is uniformly available without interruption. The NSAP consists of the following three components :

1. Economic Survey, 2000-2001, p. 196.
2. Ibid.
3. Publications Division, Govt. of India, India 1998, pp. 350-54.

(a) **National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)**

— providing a pension of Rs. 75 per month to destitutes and above 65 years of age.

(b) **National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)**

— providing Rs. 5,000 in case of death due to natural causes and Rs. 10,000 in case of accidental death of the primary bread-winner to the bereaved household.

(c) **National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS)**—Providing Rs. 300 per pregnancy upto the first two live births. This programme involves an expenditure of Rs. 867 crore in a full year. In 1999-2000, an outlay of Rs. 725 crore has been provided for this scheme.¹

Regarding the achievements of NSAP, it is observed that the total number of beneficiaries under NOAPS was 5.43 million in 2001-2002 as compared to 6.42 million in 1998-99. Total number of beneficiaries under NFBS was 0.16 million in 2001-2002 as compared to that of 0.26 million in 1998-99. Again, total number of beneficiaries under NMBS was 1.45 million in 2000-01 as compared to that of 1.51 million in 1998-99.²

8.6. RURAL GROUP LIFE INSURANCE SCHEME (RGLIS)

The Government had launched a new scheme, namely, Rural Group life Insurance Scheme (RGLIS) on 15th August, 1995 in order to provide life insurance coverage to the rural people of the country. The objective of the scheme is to promote social insurance in the rural areas with the active involvement of the Panchayats and to partly alleviate the distress caused by the death of the bread-winner among the rural poor. The scheme is being administered by the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India and implemented by the Panchayats in the rural areas for the age group of 20-60 years. Under this new scheme, a life cover of Rs. 5,000 is provided to the rural population for an annual premium of Rs. 60 to Rs. 70 depending upon the age of entry in the Scheme. As on December 31, 1995, the Scheme has been implemented in 12 states and Union Territories and 50,312 persons under 897 Panchayats have been covered under the scheme.³

8.7 THE SWARNA JAYANTI SHAHARI ROZGAR YOJANA (SJSRY)

The Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) was introduced in the country from 1st December, 1997, amalgamating the earlier urban poverty alleviation programmes viz., Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY), Urban Basic Service Programme (UBSP) and Prime Minister's Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme (PMIUEP). The scheme aims to provide gainful employment to the urban unemployed or underemployed poor by encouraging the setting up of self-employment ventures or provision of wage employment. It is being founded on a 75 : 25 basis between Centre and States. It comprises two special schemes, i.e., the Urban Self Employment Programme (USEP) and the Urban Wage Employment (UWEP) Programme. The scheme gives a special impetus to empowering and uplifting the poor women and launches a special programme, namely, Development of Women and Children in urban areas under which groups of urban poor women setting up self-employment ventures are eligible for subsidy up to 50 per cent of the project cost. During the year 1997-98, a sum of Rs. 98.63 crore was released to States and UTs under SJSRY. A sum of Rs. 189 crore has been provided in 1998-99 (BE) out of which Rs. 64.59 crore has been released in twelve states till 30th November 1998.

Regarding the achievements of SJSRY, it is observed that total number of beneficiaries and persons trained under USEP was 0.08 million and 0.11 million respectively in 2001-2002 as compared to that of 0.04 million and 0.05 million respectively in 1998-99. Again total mandays of employment generated under UWEP was to the extent of 3.62 million in 2001-02 as compared to that of 6.60 million in 1998-99.⁴

8.8. SWARNA JAYANTI GRAM SWAROJGAR YOJANA (SGSY)

Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and allied programmes such as Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DW CRA) and Million Wells

1. Economic Survey, 1999-2000, pp. 148.

2. Economic Survey, 2002-03, p. 215.

3. Economic Survey, 2000-2001, p. 196.

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Scheme (MWS) have been restructured into a single self-employment programme called the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) from April 1999 with the following objectives :

- (i) Introducing focussed approach to poverty alleviation ;
- (ii) Capitalising advantages of group lending ; and
- (iii) Overcoming the problems associated with multiplicity of programmes.

The SGSY is conceived as a holistic programme of micro enterprises covering all aspects of self-employment which includes organising rural poor into Self Help Groups (SHGs). It integrates various agencies – District Rural Development Agencies, banks, line departments, Panchayati Raj Institutions, non-government organisations and other semi-government organisations. This programme is basically a self-employment programme.

The objective of SGSY is to bring the existing poor families above the poverty line by providing them income generating assets through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy and to ensure that an assisted family has a monthly net income of at least Rs. 2,000. Subsidy under SGSY is uniform at 30 per cent of the project cost subject to a maximum of Rs. 7,500. In respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, it is 50 per cent subject to a maximum of Rs. 10,000. For groups, the subsidy is 50 per cent subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.25 lakh. There is no monetary limit on subsidy for irrigation projects. SGSY is funded by the Centre and states in the ratio of 75 : 25.¹

Regarding the achievements of SGSY, it is observed that the total number of families assisted was 0.94 million in 2001-02 as compared to that of 1.66 million families assisted under IRDP in 1998-99.

8.9. JAWAHAR GRAM SAMRIDHI YOJANA (JGSY)

Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) has been restructured and streamlined with effect from April 1999, and has been renamed as Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY). This is basically a wage employment programme. The primary objective of JGSY is creation of demand driven village infrastructure including durable assets at the village level to enable the rural poor to increase the opportunities for sustained employment. The secondary objective is generation of supplementary employment for the unemployed poor in the rural areas.³

The Wage employment under the programme is given to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. While there is no sectoral earmarking of resources under JGSY, 22.5 per cent of the annual allocation must be spent on beneficiary schemes for Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes and 3 per cent of annual allocation is to be utilised for creation of barrier free infrastructure for the disabled. Another objective is to generate supplementary employment for the unemployed rural poor.

Regarding the achievements of JGSY, it is observed that total mandays of employment generated under this programme was 268.32 million in 2000-01 as compared to that of 375.2 million mandays under JRY in 1998-99.⁴

8.10. SAMPOORNA GRAMEEN ROZGAR YOJANA (SGRY)

Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) was launched in September 2001. The scheme aims at providing wage employment in rural areas as also food security, along with the creation of durable community, social and economic assets. The scheme is being implemented on a cost sharing ratio of 75 : 25 between the Centre and the States. The ongoing Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) and Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) would subsequently be fully integrated within the scheme with effect from April 1, 2002.

8.11. PRADHAN MANTRI GRAMODAYA YOJANA (PMGY)

Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) was introduced in 2000-01 with the objective of focussing on village level development in five critical areas, i.e., health, primary education, drinking water, housing and rural roads, with the overall objective of improving the quality of life of people living in the rural areas. This scheme constitutes the following two programmes within its fold :

1. Economic Survey, 1999-2000, pp. 168-69.
2. Economic Survey, 2002-2003, p. 215.
3. Economic Survey, 1999-2000, p. 169.
4. Economic Survey, 2001-2002, p. 242.

Unit 3 Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana.

The Govt. of India has launched Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana to provide profitable employment + food to the rural poor. Under this scheme, govt provides wages + food grains to those who live below the poverty line.

Objectives of SGSY:-

- ① To provide additional + supplementary wage employment in the rural ~~the~~ areas.
- ② To provide food security + improve nutritional levels in all rural areas of our country.
- ③ Creation of durable community, social + economic assets + infrastructural development in rural areas is a secondary objective of SGSY.

Features:-

- ① SGSY programme will be implemented through the Panchayat Raj institutions.
- ② The funds + food grains under the scheme will be available for all three tiers of Panchayat Raj institutions
 - (a) District Panchayat
 - (b) intermediate Panchayat
 - (c) village Panchayat.
- ③ The resources among the District Panchayat, intermediate Panchayat + village Panchayat in a district will be distributed in the ratio of 20:30:50.
- ④ Food grains + 5% of the funds under SGSY

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will be retained in the Ministry for utilizing at the time of acute distress arising out of natural calamities or for taking up preventive measures in the flood affected or chronically drought rural areas.

On this scheme no. of people, ^{will be} ~~sets~~ given preference like agricultural wage earners, non agricultural unskilled wage earners, women, parents of handicapped children, members of SCs + Scheduled tribes, persons affected due to ~~other~~ calamities etc. This scheme is centrally sponsored wage employment scheme. Under this scheme, a minimum of 5kg of food grains per labour is provided as a part of wages. The balance of the wages is paid in cash. Minimum 25% wages will be paid in cash.

Conclusion! - This scheme involves improving food security + nutritional level, economic + health development, community, social + ~~semi~~ economic properties, through additional labour employment in rural areas.

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Unit III (SEP)

~~Program~~ (National Rural Livelihood Mission), a poverty alleviation object implemented by Ministry of Rural development, Govt. of India. This Scheme is focussed on promoting self employment & organization of rural poor. It was launched in 2011, in rural areas by (PM) Manmohan Singh. The basic idea behind this programme is to organize the poor in SHG (Self help groups) & make them capable for self employment. This is one of the world's largest initiatives to improve the livelihood of poor. This programme is supported by the world bank with a credit of \$1 Billion.

NRLM is based on three pillars:-

- ① Enhancing & expanding the existing livelihood options of the poor.
 - ② Building skills for the job market.
 - ③ Nurturing self employed & entrepreneurs.
- Livelihood services include financial & capital enhancement services that include technology, knowledge skills & inputs, market linkages etc. The interested rural BPL youth should be offered skill development after counselling & matching the attitude with the job requirement & placed in jobs that are remunerative, self employed & entrepreneurial oriented. ~~Self~~ poor would be provided skills & financial linkages & nurtured to establish & grow with micro enterprises for products & services in demand.

(5) National Skill Development Mission, 2015, (7) it aims to create convergence across sectors + states in terms of skill training activities.

(6) Make in India Programme :- It was launched on 25th September, 2014 its major objectives is to focus on job creation + skill enhancement in 25 sector of the economy.

Thus, we should keep in mind that one of the most disturbing problems in India has been the mounting rate of unemployment, both in the rural + urban areas. On the whole we can say that more attention should be given otherwise this problem can make jobless youths to set on the wrong path + ultimately lead to country's downfall.

Unit 10

have their empathy with the clause of the non-poor rather than the poor.¹ In one of its report, tabled in Parliament in 4th May, 1993, the Parliamentary Committee observed that in the past three financial years, i.e., from 1990 to 1993, a large chunk of allocation had been shown as spent in the last quarter of each financial year. This amply demonstrated that such a pattern of expenditure was a glaring reflection on the lack of proper planning and implementation leading to wasteful expenditure without any productive results.²

In 1996, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), in its 95th Report on IRDP tabled in the Lok Sabha, expressed serious concern at the failure of the IRDP to act as a major instrument in wiping out rural poverty and asked the Rural Development Ministry to revamp the IRDP. In its report, the PAC has identified certain major areas of concern on the implementation of IRDP requiring immediate Government attention.

These areas of concern include low per capita investment, non-preparation of five-year perspective and annual plans, failure to conduct household surveys for identification of beneficiaries, coverage of ineligible families, failure to conduct proper physical verification of assets and misutilization of assistance, shortcomings in infrastructural development, shortcomings in the administration of subsidy, diversion of funds meant for IRDP to other programmes, lack of proper monitoring and evaluation of the IRDP. The committee noted that despite the general acceptance of the objectives and the extensive organisational apparatus built to translate them into reality, the IRDP had not achieved the desired results.

The PAC report observed that only 14.81 per cent of the beneficiaries of the IRDP had been able to cross the existing poverty line of Rs. 11,000 per annum as per the findings of the latest round of concurrent evaluation, is a "glaring" indicator of the failure of the programme in achieving the objectives. The committee also noted with concern that the flow of credit and institutional financial assistance under the IRDP were beset with certain serious shortcomings such as rejection of loan applications, low per capita disbursement of loans, inordinate delays in sanctioning/disbursal of loan, fixing of repayment period.

Under such a situation, a positive suggestion would be the gradual unionisation of the rural poor and to make provision for their effective representation in the implementation of the programme. This will help the rural poor to get them organised for arousing their consciousness and also to realise maximum benefit from such programme like IRDP.

Merits and Worth of IRDP

In spite of its serious limitations and deficiencies as observed from the style of functioning of IRDP, the programme is still having some merits or worths of its own. These are listed below :

1. IRDP is having a tremendous public appeal because it is considered as the first major programme for development which are directed towards poor families specifically and also offers direct assistance in the form of assets for income earning and thereby build up awareness among the poor beneficiaries.
2. The productive assets rendered by the programme can ultimately add a lot of self respect, self confidence, social standing and finally creditworthiness among the rural households.
3. Finally, IRDP is maintaining a totally indigenous nature both in its ideas and resources. The problems faced by the programme are also indigenous and these are to be solved indigenously.³ Thus as an antipoverty programme, IRDP is considered as a major indigenous effort and the programme has proved its merit in respect of conceptualisation, articulation, policy framing, planning and also its implementation to some extent.

8.2. NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME (NREP)

The National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) replaced and restructured the Food for Work Programme in October 1980. NREP was a centrally sponsored scheme implemented with 50:50 sharing basis between the Centre and the States. The 50 per cent Central assistance was received in the form of foodgrains and cash assistance as well. This programme was conceived as wage-employment programme.

1. N.J. Kurian, "Anti-Poverty Programme : A Reappraisal" *Economic and Political Weekly*, March 25, 1989, p. A - 13.
2. Parliamentary Committees Report tabled on May 4, 1993.
3. N.J. Kurian, op. cit., pp. A-14-15.

Objectives

The main objectives of NREP were :

- generating additional gainful employment opportunities to the extent of 300-400 million mandays per year for the unemployed and underemployed persons in the rural areas ;
- to create durable community assets for strengthening rural economic and social infra-structure which includes drinking water wells, community irrigation wells, minor irrigation works, village tanks, rural roads, schools, panchayat house etc. ; and
- bringing improvement in the overall quality of life in rural areas and to improve the nutritional standards of the rural poor through supply of foodgrains as part of wage.

The overriding objective was to make provision of wage employment for the rural poor. Under this programme, the shelf of projects were prepared on the basis of felt needs of entire rural community. The Sixth Plan in its report observed, "A large number of people in the rural areas are without assets and need to be provided wage employment. This segment of the rural poor which largely depends on wage employment virtually has no source of income during the lean agricultural period. The National Rural Employment Programme is conceived in the main to take care of this segment of the rural poor."

The programme was implemented through District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) at the district level. It was decided that at the district level, 50 per cent of the expenditure would be incurred on wage component, 25 per cent be incurred on social forestry and 10 per cent for the benefit of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes.

Progress and Evaluation of NREP under the Sixth Plan

During the Sixth Plan period a sum of Rs. 1,620 crore was allocated under this programme. But the actual total expenditure both by the Central and State Government was to the extent of Rs. 1,834 crore. During this plan period, there was decline in the utilisation of foodgrains mainly due to inadequate arrangements of distribution, lower market price of foodgrains at open market and preference for coarse grains instead of rice and wheat supplied under this programme. Considering this situation the government decided to subsidise foodgrains by 37 paise to 40 paise per kg. for its distribution under this programme from January, 1984. The following table shows the progress of NREP.

TABLE 8.2
Progress of NREP during the Sixth and Seventh Plan

Period	Cash Funds (Rs. crore)	Food grains (Lakh tonnes)	Employment generated (Million mandays)
Sixth Plan			
1980-81	226	13.34	414
1981-82	319	2.33	354
1982-83	396	1.72	351
1983-84	393	1.47	303
1984-85	501	1.71	353
Total	1834	20.57	1775
Seventh Plan			
1985-86	532	5.81	316
1986-87	718	13.24	396
1987-88	788	11.05	371
1988-89	902	--	394.5
Total	2940		1477.5

Source : Ministry of Agriculture, Annual Report 1985-86 and 1988-89 and Report on Currency and Finance, 1989-90, Vol. 1, p. 61 (RBI).

The above table shows that during the Sixth Plan about 1775 million mandays of gainful employment was generated as against the target of 1,500 to 2,000 million mandays. The utilisation of foodgrains was to the extent

1. Government of India, Planning Commission, Sixth Five Year Plan, 1980-85, p. 174.

of 20.57 lakh tonnes. But the programme had no clear cut focus about target group of beneficiaries. Thus "it is not known how much of this has been directed towards those who are landless and the poorest among the poor. To the extent the programme had apparently lacked a direct focus on the target group population for whom it was meant."¹ However the Seventh Plan in its draft observed that the programme had resulted a substantial impact in respect of stabilisation of wages in rural areas, containing prices of foodgrains, creating community assets which is expected to raise the level of living of the rural population.

Although the productive works like social forestry, soil conservation and irrigation had declined during this plan period but there was an increasing tendency to go for building construction with high material component. This was against the basic objective of NREP.

Another shortcoming of the programme as mentioned in the mid-term appraisal of the Sixth Plan was that "works implemented through NREP are, often, not co-ordinated or integrated with the requirements of families identified for assistance under IRDP"².

The Seventh Plan Draft has also made some comments regarding the working of this programme : (a) The growing propensity of building works has a limited effect on the long term income and employment generation ; (b) the social forestry programmes included in IRDP had been conducted without adherence of appropriate cost and physical norms ; (c) Ten per cent of outlay earmarked for the benefit to members of SC/ST was not spent by the states ; (d) project for the construction of roads on which a substantial amount of fund was earmarked under NREP have not been found to maintain a meaningful relationship with priorities arising from Minimum Needs Programme.³

Progress and Evaluation of NREP under the Seventh Plan

The Seventh Plan allocated an outlay of Rs. 2,487 crore for NREP and set a target to generate employment to the extent of 1,445 million mandays. During the Seventh Plan revised guidelines were issued in the light of past experience for earmarking 25 per cent outlays for social forestry, 10 per cent for works of direct benefit to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe and Rs. 6 crore annually for the construction of sanitary latrines. For ensuring durability of assets created, the ratio of wage to non-wage expenditure was prescribed to be maintained at 50 : 50. Additional amount of foodgrains at subsidised rate were made available under this programme in order to keep the price of foodgrains stable and also to improve the nutritional standards of the rural poor.

Regarding the progress of work under NREP, Table 8.2 reveals that during the first four years of the Seventh Plan, total actual expenditure incurred was amounted to Rs. 2,940 crore as against the target of Rs. 2,487 crore for the entire plan period. Again in respect of employment generation about 1,477.53 million mandays of employment was generated during the first four years as against the target of 1,960 million mandays for the entire Seventh Plan period. During the first three years about 30.10 lakh tonnes of foodgrains were distributed among the rural poor at subsidised rates.

But while evaluating the progress of the programme it has been found that the increase in employment generation was not commensurate with the increase in the volume of expenditure under this programme. Moreover, on the basis of the studies conducted by National Institute of Rural Development, Indian Institute of Public Administration and Gandhi Labour Institute, the Mid-term Appraisal of the Seventh Plan reported some shortcomings of the programme under the following lines : "It is revealed that employment being provided under the programme is for a very short duration and cannot make an impact on the levels of living of the rural people. The wage paid under NREP are often lower than the market wage rates. The selection of beneficiaries is not proper, in as much as the poorest of the poor for whom the programme is meant are sometimes left out altogether."⁴ In 1989-90, NREP alongwith RLEGP were merged into a new programme popularly known as Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY).

8.3. RURAL LANDLESS EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME (RLEGP)

The Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) was launched in 15th August 1983 with the

1. Seventh Five Year Plan, op. cit., p. 58.
2. Planning Commission, Sixth Five Year Plan - Mid term Appraisal (1983), p. 57.
3. Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-90, Vol. II, Table 2.2, pp. 58.9.
4. Planning Commission, Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) Mid-term Appraisal (1988), p. 40.

sole objectives to generate gainful employment opportunities, to create productive assets in rural area and also for the improvement of overall quality of rural life. In this programme, the guarantee part has not been operationalized due to lack of funds. In this programme again, preference in employment was given to landless labourers, women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. This programme is totally funded by the Central Government. While allocating resources to State and Union Territories 50 per cent weightage has been given on the number of agricultural labourers, marginal farmers and marginal workers and the remaining 50 per cent weightage to the incidence of poverty. The programme also envisaged that wage component of a project should not be less than 50 per cent of the total expenditure on the programme. 10 per cent of the allocations should be earmarked exclusively for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. In this programme various projects like social forestry, Indira Awaas Yojana and Million Wells Scheme were included.

During the Seventh Plan, an outlay of Rs. 1,744 crore has been allocated by the central sector to generate 1,013 million mandays of employment. During the first three years of the Seventh Plan, Rs. 1,743 crore were utilized which helped to generate employment to an extent of 858 million mandays only. This shows that 65 per cent of the target was fulfilled. Although the entire plan allocation was spent during the first three years but the realisation of target in respect of employment generation was to the extent of 85 per cent. Per capita foodgrains in terms of kgs. per manday which was 1.25 kgs. in 1985-86, gradually rose to 2.88 kgs. in 1986-87 and then declined to 2.6 kg. in 1987-88.

During the three-year period social forestry programme under RLEGP has covered 5.2 lakh hectares of land and about 533 million plants were planted. Moreover, 4.27 lakh houses were constructed till Dec., 1988 at a cost of Rs. 425.5 crore.

The Mid-term Appraisal of the Seventh Plan observed various weaknesses in the implementation of RLEGP. The area approach was not followed; the guarantee of 100 days of employment was also not followed; contractors manipulated the muster rolls and wages paid were found different from those documented. Moreover, the selection of landless labourers was not systematic. The Mid-term Appraisal report also mentioned about the failure of projects as such. "Running an employment guarantee programme for the landless even on a pilot basis in a few selected blocks has not been found feasible as it becomes difficult to refuse work to the unemployed who report to work." In 1989-90, the RLEGP alongwith NREP were merged into Jawahar Rozgar Yojana.