



ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS

TAMILNADU STATE BUDGET-2018-19. KEY AREAS AND ALLOTMENTS ON WATER RESOURCES AND IRRIGATION, WATER SUPPLY, ENERGY, SCHOOL EDUCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION & GENDER BUDGET

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 20th April, 2018
Received in revised form
09th May, 2018
Accepted 16th June, 2018
Published online 30th July, 2018

Key Words:

Water Resources and Irrigation,
Water Supply,
School Education.

ABSTRACT

Tamil Nadu being a water scarce State, micro irrigation needs to be promoted extensively for both the agricultural and horticultural crops. Considering the importance of farm ponds in providing life saving irrigation to crops at the tail-end of Cauvery Delta and coastal areas, the Government will take up 10,000 more farm ponds at a cost of Rs.100 crore. Overall for the agricultural sector, a sum of Rs.8,916.25 crore is allocated in the Budget Estimates 2018-2019. The present State Government has revived the traditional practice of 'Kudimaramath' in mission mode since 2016-2017 with the aim of rejuvenating water bodies in the State. An amount of Rs.300 crore has been allocated in the Budget Estimates 2018-2019 for Kudimaramath. In the Budget Estimates 2018-2019, Rs.300 crore, Rs.186 crore and Rs.600 crore have been allocated for the NRDWP, MNP and NABARD funded works respectively. In the Budget Estimates of 2018-2019, Rs.27,205.88crore has been allocated for School Education Department. During the ensuing financial year, the heritage buildings at Government arts and science college in Kumbakonam, Victoria Hostel in Presidency college and Queen Mary's college in Chennai will be restored at a cost of Rs.26 crore. In the Budget Estimates 2018-2019, Rs.4,620.20crore has been allocated for the Higher Education Department. Even as gender inequality poses a challenge to the development of India, the Tamilnadu government, for the first time, has sought to address the issue by presenting a Gender Budget statement, with specific allocations that will benefit women. The Gender Budget has three parts, Part-A deals with exclusive women beneficiaries, Part-B discusses individual beneficiaries among women who will be women. Part-C sets out indivisible allocations under various heads.

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Citation: Richard, M.P. 2018. "Tamilnadu state budget-2018-19. key areas and allotments on water resources and irrigation, water supply, energy, school education, higher education & gender budget", *International Journal of Development Research*, 8, (06), 21639-21641.

INTRODUCTION

Tamil Nadu being a water scarce State, micro irrigation needs to be promoted extensively for both the agricultural and horticultural crops. In 2017-2018, Rs.622 crore was provided for promoting Micro Irrigation. For the year 2018-2019, an amount of Rs.715 crore is provided for this purpose. Considering the importance of farm ponds in providing life saving irrigation to crops at the tail-end of Cauvery Delta and coastal areas, the Government will take up 10,000 more farm ponds at a cost of Rs.100 crore.

Overall for the agricultural sector, a sum of Rs.8,916.25 crore is allocated in the Budget Estimates 2018-2019.

Water Resources and Irrigation: The present State Government has revived the traditional practice of 'Kudimaramath' in mission mode since 2016-2017 with the aim of rejuvenating water bodies in the State. An amount of Rs.300 crore has been allocated in the Budget Estimates 2018-2019 for Kudimaramath. The Hon'ble Chief Minister had earlier announced that the construction of check dams would be taken up at a cost of Rs.1,000crore for improving groundwater recharge in the State. In 2017-2018, the Government has taken up the construction of check dams at a cost of Rs.200 crore with NABARD's loan assistance. The Government will take up the construction of check dams at an

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estimate of Rs.250 crore during 2018-2019 with RIDF assistance from NABARD. With the aim of rehabilitating tanks and increasing groundwater recharge, the Government has taken up the second phase of the Irrigated Agriculture 31 Modernisation and Water-bodies Restoration and Management (IAMWARM) project with the financial assistance of the World Bank at the project cost of Rs.3,008 crore. Under this project, 66 sub-basins in 29 districts are being covered to rehabilitate 4,778 tanks and 477 anicuts, thereby benefiting 5.43 lakh hectares of ayacut lands. In the Budget Estimates for 2018-2019, an amount of Rs.655.29 crore has been allocated for the second phase of the IAMWARM project. The 'Climate Change Adaptation Programme' is being implemented at a cost of Rs.960.66 crore with financial aid from the Asian Development Bank. This programme aims to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change in the Vennar sub-basin of the Cauvery delta and improve the drainage systems. So far, Rs.215.84 crore has been spent for this project, and Rs.437.41 crore has been allocated in the Budget 2018-2019 for this project. The World Bank funded 'Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project' (DRIP) is under implementation in 89 dams in Tamil Nadu at a cost of Rs.745.49 crore. So far, works in 63 dams have been completed and works in 23 dams are under progress and expenditure of Rs.362.02 crore has been incurred. In the Budget Estimates for 2018-2019, Rs.166.08 crore has been allotted for the project. The 'Athikadavu – Avinashi drinking water supply-cum-irrigation scheme' to be sanctioned shortly at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,789 crore. This project will pump and lift 1.5 TMC feet of surplus water from downstream of Kalingarayananicut to fill 32 PWD Tanks, 42 Panchayat Union tanks and 971 ponds in Coimbatore, Tiruppur and Erode districts. In the Budget Estimates for 2018-2019, Rs.250 crore has been allocated for the Athikadavu-Avinashi project. As part of the intraState river linkage project, the Government has spent a sum of Rs.349.36 crore so far for linking Tamiraparani river with Nambiyar river and Rs.100.88 crore has been allocated for this project in this Budget. The Government has been continuously taking legal action in securing the legitimate rights of Tamil Nadu in inter-State river water disputes. In the Budget Estimates of 2018-2019, Rs.5,127.57 crore has been allocated for the Water Resources Department.

Water Supply: Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board (TWAD) is currently implementing 55 water supply schemes at an estimated cost of Rs.4,466 crore covering 2 corporations, 17 municipalities, 49 town panchayats and 14,218 rural villages thus benefitting a population of 101.67 lakh. Water supply projects are under implementation in 27 added areas in Chennai at a cost of Rs.599.66 crore. Under AMRUT, 7 water supply schemes covering 5 corporations and 2 municipalities have been taken up at an estimated cost of Rs.1,823.60 crore benefiting a population of 23.17 lakh. Despite the reduction in allocation by the Government of India for the 'National Rural Drinking Water Programme' (NRDWP), the State Government is implementing water supply projects with NABARD's loan assistance. During 2017-2018, works have been taken up for Rs.300 crore under the NRDWP, for Rs.186 crore under the Minimum Needs Programme (MNP) and for Rs.600 crore under the NABARD's RIDF. In the Budget Estimates 2018-2019, Rs.300 crore, Rs.186 crore and Rs.600 crore have been allocated for the NRDWP, MNP and NABARD funded works respectively. Totally, Rs.1,853.38 crore is provided in the Budget Estimates for provision of drinking water.

Energy: It was the visionary and firm leadership of the late Chief Minister PuratchiThalaiviAmma that brought about a transformation in the State's power sector. The Government has added 10,777 MW of power generation capacity since 2011, which has made it possible to meet even the peak demand of 15,343 MW in the month of April 2016. The Government is taking persistent efforts to expedite the commissioning of ongoing power projects to meet the growing demand for power in the State. Works are in progress in the ongoing thermal power projects like 660 MW Ennore Expansion project, two units of 660 MW each in Ennore SEZ Project, 800 MW North Chennai Project Stage-III, two units of 800 MW each in Uppur Project and two units of 660 MW each in Stage-I in Udangudi Project. This Government is steadfast in its efforts to tap the full potential of the State in the renewable energy sector and is continuously pursuing with the Union Government for the development of a dedicated Inter-State Green Energy Corridor to transmit surplus wind energy to energy deficit states. Tamil Nadu Energy Development Agency (TEDA) will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of India's Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL). This step is expected to expedite the investment to the tune of Rs.11,000 crore in the renewable energy sector over the next three years. The 'Green Energy Corridor Project' is being actively implemented in the State with the aid of KfW at an estimated cost of Rs.1,593 crore, of which Rs.725 crore has already been spent. The 'Tamil Nadu Transmission System Improvement Project' is being implemented at a cost of Rs.5,014 crore with the assistance of JICA for upgrading the transmission capacity of the State. Allocation of Rs.258.21 crore and Rs.673 crore have been made in this Budget for these two projects respectively. The takeover of Rs.22,815 crore debt from TANGEDCO in 2016-2017 under the UjwalDiscom Assurance Yojana (UDAY) by the Government has improved the financial position of TANGEDCO. The net loss of TANGEDCO is estimated to reduce from Rs.4,349 crore in 2016-2017 to Rs.2,975 crore in 2017-2018. For honouring the interest commitment of the State Government, Rs.1,779.42 crore has been provided in the Budget Estimates 2018-2019 and Rs.4,563 crore has been provided as grants for adjusting the loans given to TANGEDCO. As part of the UDAY scheme, the Government has to takeover 10 percent of the losses suffered by TANGEDCO in 2017-2018 in the ensuing financial year, Rs.297.50 crore has been allocated in the Budget Estimates 2018-2019 for this purpose. In the Budget Estimates 2018-2019, an amount of Rs.13,964.08 crore has been provided for the Energy sector, which includes Rs.7,537.78 crore as power subsidy for agriculture and other purposes

School Education: The Government is committed to improving the accessibility of schools for all children and the quality of education. In 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, this Government has opened 6 new primary schools and upgraded 4 primary schools into middle schools, 169 middle schools into high schools and 102 high schools into higher secondary schools. In 2018-2019, this Government will upgrade 100 middle schools into high schools and 100 high schools into higher secondary schools. The Government has also identified 33,519 out- of-school children who will be brought under the mainstream education during 2018-2019. The school curriculum is being revised in consultation with various boards including the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE) for tackling the growing challenges. This Government will refurbish the existing libraries in all high schools and higher

secondary schools to inculcate reading habit among students. In 2018-2019, this Government will take up strengthening of school infrastructure with NABARD's loan assistance at a cost of Rs.200 crore and Rs.333.36 crore has been provided in the Budget Estimates for 2018-2019 for the development of school infrastructure. For maintaining school toilets hygienically, local bodies have contributed Rs.54.50 crore in 2017-2018 and this scheme will continue in the ensuing financial year also. With the noble intention of imparting quality education to all children, students are being provided four sets of uniforms, school bags, footwear, study materials including notebooks, textbooks and geometry boxes, cycles and bus passes free of cost. In the Budget Estimates 2018-2019, Rs.1,653.89 crore has been allocated for these welfare schemes. As a measure to reduce drop-out rates in classes X, XI and XII, a special cash incentive of Rs.5,000 is being extended to all students studying in Government and Government aided schools. An amount of Rs.313.58 crore has been allocated in this Budget for this purpose. The Government has taken many initiatives to leverage technology for improving conceptual learning of students. Virtual Classrooms have been already established in 770 high and higher secondary schools. Smart classrooms are being provided to 3,000 primary and middle schools at a cost of Rs.60 crore. In this financial year, Hi-Tech labs with 10 to 20 computers are being set up in 3,090 High Schools and 2,939 Higher Secondary Schools at a cost of Rs.462.60 crore. This will ensure that every Government High and Higher Secondary school will have Hi-Tech Lab. A sum of Rs.758 crore has been allocated in this Budget for providing laptops to school students during 2018-2019. The SarvaShikshaAbhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) are being successfully implemented by the State Government, despite the fact that the Government of India has not yet released the pending arrear claims of the previous years of Rs.1,312.04 crore and Rs.934.10 crore towards SSA and RMSA respectively. Allocations of Rs.1,750 crore and Rs.850 crore have been made for SSA and RMSA respectively in the Budget Estimates 2018-2019. For the effective implementation of the 'Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act', Rs.200.70 crore has been provided for 2018-2019. In the Budget Estimates of 2018-2019, Rs.27,205.88 crore has been allocated for School Education Department.

Higher Education: The Government is committed to improving the accessibility, affordability and quality of higher education. The efforts taken by this Government to promote higher education in Tamil Nadu has enabled the State to achieve the numerouno status in the country with the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education at 46.90. In 2017-2018, this Government has sanctioned eight new Government Arts and Science colleges, three new University constituent Arts and Science Colleges and one new Government polytechnic college at a cost of Rs.186.87 crore. The Government has also introduced 271 new courses in Government Arts and Science colleges and sanctioned 89 new courses to University constituent colleges in 2017-2018. For strengthening the infrastructure of Government arts and science colleges, the Government has taken up the construction of 862 classrooms and 172 laboratories at a cost of Rs.210 crore.

During the ensuing financial year, the heritage buildings at Government arts and science college in Kumbakonam, Victoria Hostel in Presidency college and Queen Mary's college in Chennai will be restored at a cost of Rs.26 crore. This Government is implementing the scheme of reimbursement of tuition fees to first generation graduate students to improve access to higher education for the educationally backward families. In 2017-2018, 2.17 lakh students have benefitted from this scheme and Rs.682.87 crore has been provided in the Budget Estimates 2018-2019. This Government has decided to revise the block grants from 2018-2019, to Universities which has not been revised for several years. The Government has allocated Rs.500.65 crore for providing grants to Universities, including Rs.250 crore for Annamalai University. In the Budget Estimates 2018-2019, Rs.4,620.20 crore has been allocated for the Higher Education Department.

A women's special in the Budget: Even as gender inequality poses a challenge to the development of India, the Tamilnadu government, for the first time, has sought to address the issue by presenting a Gender Budget statement, with specific allocations that will benefit women. The Gender Budget has three parts, Part-A deals with exclusive women beneficiaries, Part-B discusses individual beneficiaries among women who will be women. Part-C sets out indivisible allocations under various heads. The government estimates women would benefit from these allocations to the extent of atleast 30 percentage. Part-A includes schemes meant for women, which has 100% outlay. Part-B includes beneficiary oriented schemes, with 40 % to 99% funds earmarked for women. Part-C includes indivisible teams, atleast 30% of the outlay is meant for women. Though Gender Budget has been formally adopted in our country by 2005-06, it is appreciable that atleast now it has been implemented by the states. Addressing the needs of sub categories among women, such as those from among the minorities, Dalits and sub castes are some of the unfulfilled expectations as per the activists. They feel that these women need better education, health care and hostel facilities. Employment is also critical for their empowerment. One of the anomalies in allocation is said that the budget provided for women's commission is Rs 31.47 lakh and that for a women's help line is Rs 44 lakh.

Conclusion

A Gender Budget must cover intersectional interests of women. There should be a caste wise mapping of needs among women from various communities. We can't have an over all gender budget and treat women as one to be considered for benefits. It is not the class of women but the caste of women who suffers many kinds of discrimination that must be factored in while budgeting, specifically addressing needs that are curbed or being regulated by social norms and values. The faster the implementation, Higher will be the progress.

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