

THE ROLE OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES FOR THE UPLIFTMENT OF THE AGRARIANS IN TAMIL NADU

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The Co-operative Societies played a vital role for the development of agriculture in Tamil Nadu. It emerged as an important factor in the development of agricultural sector and historically stating that in Madras, Co-operative Societies commenced their work since the passing of the Co-operative Credit Societies Act of 1904. Their main aim is to give loan to the agrarians. They have done a valuable work and there were 10,743 primary agricultural co-operative societies in the Madras province in 1939.

The Government expressed their recognition to the chairman and members of the committee for their valuable work and encouraged to contribute fruitfully. The co-operative societies and their allied organisation, co-operation Banks played a vital role for the agriculture development in Tamil Nadu . It gave financial assistance and other support for the purchase of agricultural products and cultivating instruments such as plough, tractors, bulldozers and others. In 1947, 15th All India Co-operative Societies Registrars Conference was held at Madras. Many of the recommendation of these bodies have been implemented in the Madras State. In this regard in 1948 August, the State Government transferred the work of distribution of groundnut cakes from Agriculture Department to the Co-operative Societies. This was another step taken to democratise the distribution of controlled articles. It was packed by a subsidy of 15% of the cost of the groundnut cakes to enable the societies to distribute them to agriculturalists at a price fixed by Government. In March 1949, Officers of the Co-operative Societies Conference was held. Based on the recommendations of the conference "The Madras Journal of Co-operation" was published by the Madras Provincial Co-operative Union and the monthly co-operative journals were published in the regional languages by Tamil Nadu Co-operative Federation. The Madras Information in English and the regional language published by the Director of Publicity and Information also published articles on Co-operative subjects. All India Radio Station at Madras, Tiruchin broad casted related talks on Co-operative and allied subjects. In 1948, the Co-operative Societies distributed cart tyres, salvanishedsheets, axles etc., fabricated agricultural implements valued for Rs. 89,000 were purchased by the co-operative societies. The Agricultural credit societies gave loans for Rs. 377.81 lakhs and Cash Credit Rs. 65.13 lakhs to the agricultural labourers. On 1st February 1949 the state reorganisation scheme was launched. Loans issued to members during the year wasRs. 496.10 lakhs against 440 lakhs in 1948. Nearly 75% of the loans were given for productive purposes, such as cultivation expenses, purchase of cattle improvement etc.

During 1947 - 1950, large number of loans were allotted to the agricultural labourers. In this period so many acres of lands were extended. These details are given below.

Name of the Produce	1947-48			1948-49			1949-50		
	Amount of loans issued Rs.	Extent of land covered acres	Value of produce brought to state societies	Amount of loans issued Rs.	Extent of land covered acres	Value of produce brought to state societies	Amount of loans issued Rs.	Extent of land covered acres	Value of produce brought to state societies
Paddy	79527	5206	--	134549	6565	2600	145911	4940	3450
Ragi	14841	446	--	7114	469	1529	5650	265	200
Groundnut	393402	16937	210122	455491	18514	929755	520748	14733	971063
Cotton	32355	837	15010	60305	3452	69497	76095	3464	231936
Sugarcane	-	-	--	175988	878	272078	--	--	--
Other Crops	160252	3918	189654	167830	5813	109414	851863	5095	3450
Total	680377	27164	414786	1001277	35691	1384873	1600267	28497	1210099

In the year 1950 - 51 was another year of all round progress for the movement in the Madras state. The Government availed the service of the co-operatives for the procurement and distribution of agricultural implements. The government also entrusted during the year the distribution of iron and steel to co-operative societies.

Fifty-Five Agricultural Improvement societies which undertook distribution of manure, agricultural implements, seeds and cattle feed to their 6000 members. This scheme of subsidies for godowns had attracted a large number of applicants from rural societies. In the same year free grants were sanctioned to 68 credit societies and 10 state societies to an amount of Rs. 4,16,000. Loans were also sanctioned to these societies for the amount of Rs. 1,43,000.

In 1950 Agricultural Land Colonisation Societies were entrusted with the co-operative institutions the work of securing land for cultivation in seven selected districts. It was the object of these societies to help the agriculturalist not only to secure land for cultivation but also to give the agricultural facilities. Twenty Seven Land Colonisation Societies have been worked in the same year assigned over 11,000 acres of government land.

The Government sanctioned a scheme for utilising the services of rural credit societies in select districts, such as Coimbatore, Tirunelveli, Madurai, South Kanara, East Godavari, Guntur and Nellore. Under this scheme distribution of chemical manures and agriculture implements etc. were distributed. Under the scheme the government ordered to the bifurcation of each seven districts in to two Deputy Registrars Circle. But the scheme was given effect at Coimbatore in 1949-50. Besides Revenue Department leased out 7927.90 acres of waste lands to be sub-leased to members of the cultivation in Coimbatore. So 2617

acres of private lands have been brought under cultivation. In the same year sale of compost manure brought for Rs. 1.40 lakhs, manures for 9.41 lakhs, seeds sold for Rs. 0.79 lakhs and agriculture implements for Rs. 87.65 lakhs. The Dindigul Co-operative Societies Marketing exported 300 tons of onions to Ceylon. The Nilgiris 6300 lb of fresh English Vegetables valued Rs. 12,172 to Ceylon. The number of Co-operative societies increased year by year. On 30th June 1951 there were 16,330 Agricultural credit societies in the state for the welfare of the agrarians. The government continued to give long-term loans to the ryots in Rayalaseema through the Madras Co-operative Societies.

In 1951, The Tamil Nadu Co-operative Societies Conference recommended a rural savings Campaign to collect at least Rs. 200 lakhs by moving up the savings of the people in the country side. The Co-operative production bringing waste lands under cultivation providing Credit for installation of pumpsets for irrigation, chemical manures and so on. The Primary Land Mortgage Banks issued chemical manures for 6.08 lakhs. 44,421 tons of ammonium sulphate, 10,153 tons of super phosphate were sold by them to agriculturalists.

During 1953-54, the Marketing Societies distributed Chemical manures for Rs. 22.01 lakhs, agriculture implements for Rs. 32.21 lakhs, Compost manure for 8.53 lakhs and improved varieties of seeds for Rs. 60,500. Tanjore was the whole sale distributor, centre Sindi fertilizers commenced on June 1954, they were to set 1922 tons and distributed 930 tons only. But in the end of the year nearly 42,435 tons was distributed by various co-operative agencies for the agriculture development in Tamil Nadu. In the field of Irrigation, 75 rural credit societies issued loans to agriculturalists installing pumpset for Rs. 2.64 lakhs. The Nelvay Agricultural Farming Societies in Chinglepet district brought under cultivation 150 acres of land out of 359 acres taken on lease from private pattadars. In the same year for instance the over dues of societies to central banks were only 20.2% and 4.9% under long term and short term principal respectively. But the Corresponding percentage of over dues from the Members to societies were 46.2% and 25.1%. The primary agricultural credit societies constitute the bulk of Co-operation organisations in the Madras state. In 1955-56 The Madras government desired to express their cordial thanks to the chairman and members of the Co-operative Committee for their dedicated work. On this basis the agriculture credit societies did their work with involvement.

In 1963-64 the Co-operative Department disbursed loans. The loans issued by Agricultural credit societies according to the purpose of value duration were the following.

1. Short term	35,5239 Lakhs
2. Medium term	56,978 Lakhs
Total	<u>41,2217 Lakhs</u>

Loans issued by the Primary Land Mortgage Banks.

(a) for discharge of prior debts - 12,105 Lakhs

(b) for land improvement - 15,703 Lakhs

(c) Other purposes - 4,850 Lakhs

Total 32,658 Lakhs

- a) A sum of Rs. 475 lakhs was disbursed as loans by the Department of Industries and commerce under the Madras Agriculturists Mulbory Cultivation Rules 1960.

Thus, the Co-operative societies emerged as an auxiliary agency for the agricultural department for enhancing not only agricultural wealth but also the upliftment of the agriculturalists. The Co-operative societies is continuing their service till now and they emerge as a potential source for the development of agriculture.

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