

**DYNAMICS OF RURAL SECTOR EMPOWERMENT:**

**WEST BENGAL**

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**ABSTRACT:**

The present paper seeks to examine the intricate relationship between rurality and poverty and the role of an improved agricultural disposition in the mitigation of poverty, rural growth and overall progress. The crucial role of the rural sector and agriculture cannot be misjudged as it serves as the foundation for anti-poverty programmes in an agricultural based country or state like that of India or West Bengal respectively. The expansive rural space has thus perforce the government of West Bengal to begin with the agricultural sector as the starting point for challenging the inherent fortress of poverty particularly in the rural and remote areas of the state. The core of its rural development strategies has thus been the radical agrarian and associated reforms which in fact occupies a central position in its poverty alleviation agenda via generation of more income earning opportunities for the poor and making available adequate food for their consumption. Such a sustained strengthening plans for the rural economy is likely to augment the living standards in the rural areas, reduce the differences in regional income and curb the process of migration to the urban areas. For this to materialize political commitment coupled with popular presence and involvement is an essential pre-condition.

**KEY WORDS:**

Rural development, poverty alleviation, agricultural growth, land reforms, panchayati institutions, decentralization, operation-barga, economic dependence, mass participation, employment opportunities, productive assets.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Till the end of 1940's the state of West Bengal had a rich legacy in the organized sector which obviously gave it a place of pre-eminence in the economic map of the country. But the partition, followed by a large influx of refugees and the not so friendly policies of the central government pushed the state to a condition of economic stagnation and poverty. The situation further deteriorated due to the relatively inefficient and often counterproductive actions of successive state governments. But over the years particularly since the 1980's the state has been steadily moving towards the path of economic progress and rapid economic activity. Till the second half of 1970's the rate of economic progress or in other words the rate of poverty alleviation has been very slow near to stagnant.

As backbone of West Bengal's economy has been the rural sector restructuring of the rural economy in favour of the rural poor has always received priority in the hands of the state administrators. Initially measures in this regard took the shape of land reforms which began to be implemented in the state since the 1950's but it was not met with much success because it failed to lay emphasis on equal access for the common working farmers to the ownership and use of land. Despite the successive governments having continued to boost developmental activities acute unemployment and poverty still persist in the state.

### **AIM OF THE STUDY:**

In the field of social science and political economy studies there is no dearth of studies on anti-poverty programmes being implemented in the various states of the country. But the chief motive of my article would be to show that any meaningful improvement in the rural sector and agriculture goes a long way in promoting growth provided the commitment of the concerned authorities at all levels continue to work with commitment and dedication to improve the lot of the concerned areas and the target population. The aim of this article would be to understand the various aspects of rural programmes and to analyze its impact on the population living in the rural areas. How these programmes have been motivated by the pro-poor stand of the successive state governments and the element of politics involved would also be analyzed. As the overall growth of the state has been impaired due to certain inherent geographical and other limitations, it is very important to judge the consecutive programmes and policies being implemented in the rural areas of the state to arrive at conclusive conclusions. So my work would be a knowledgeable and an enlightened one.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

1. Amin Ruhul, St. Piere Maurice, "Giving Voice to poor : Poverty alleviation in West Bengal and Bangladesh (The University Press Limited, 2002).  
The prime focus of this book is poverty alleviation in Bangladesh and West Bengal in India. The joint authors are of the view that poverty should be of concern not only to developing countries but also the developed world as poverty has repercussions which go beyond geographical limitations. To remove poverty conditions what is crucial is political will of the concerned governments, as such it should promote the interests of the masses in a serious manner and mitigate those forces which hamper such initiatives.
2. Crook, RC, Sverrission, A.S., "Decentralisation and poverty alleviation in developing countries: a comparative analysis or, is West Bengal unique? (Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, UK, 2001)  
This is an interesting work which examines the impact of the process of decentralization on the level of poverty reduction, taking in consideration the extent of participation and involvement of the concerned population. Whether the state government is ideologically committed towards pro-poor policies and to what extent it has been able to unseat the entrenched position of the rural elites have also been discussed.
3. Eshwaran Mukesh, Kotwal Ashok," Why Poverty Persists in India," (Oxford University Press, 1994)

The twin authors of this book provide a fascinating discussion on the roots of our poverty problem and concludes that an increased poverty in our country can be attributed to the free trade with Britain in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and beyond. But the authors are very clear that unless the land labour ratio in India is reduced the millions of poor people living below the poverty line cannot improve their standards. They also show that an increase in agricultural output besides shifting of labour from agriculture to industry and an equal emphasis on both the sectors hold the key to alleviation of poverty.

4. Kohli Atul, "The State and Poverty in India," (Cambridge University Press, 1989)  
This book is a significant analysis of the role of the State / government in the eradication of rural poverty in the India and the determinants which influence redistributive reform policies of the government. A rigorous analysis of the issues involved in the implementation of pro-poor policies and the obstacles therein have also been taken up.
5. Lieten G.K., "Continuity and Change in Rural West Bengal," (Sage Publications 1992).  
This book puts forth a detailed discussion on the nature of land reforms in West Bengal and its impact on the various categories of the rural poor and the landless agriculturists. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach this book also tries to bring in various social issues as well like the issue of caste, religion, literacy etc. and discusses them in the context of poverty amelioration schemes.
6. Ray Chaudhuri Ajitava, Sarkar Debjani, "Economy of West Bengal: Problems and Prospects" (Allied Problems, 1996)  
This book is a comprehensive study of the basic aspects of West Bengal's economy, the nature and problems faced by the agricultural sector being the prime focus of study. What are the constraints and inhibitions which the state is having to encounter in its journey towards improved economic growth has also been discussed. At appropriate junctures the future prospects of both the industrial and agricultural sector have also been taken up for consideration besides putting forth the necessary suggestions.

#### **MAIN TEXT:**

Agriculture being the core of the state's rural sector, success of any anti-poverty programme would mean a reorientation of agricultural relations in such a manner so that the ownership of land is shared by a large section of the poor landless and agricultural labourers. For an industrially backward state like West Bengal land constitutes the most important means of production and the rural poor can have access to it only if they own it. The problem in the state has been compounded because heavy pressure of population has adversely affected land man ratio, thereby calling for a cautious attention to changes in the pattern of land ownership. Such a change was likely to alter the rural socio-economic structure and improve the utilization of land or bring about positive changes in the sphere of agriculture. Moreover, as agriculture constitutes the base of an economy, any transformation in this sector vis-a-vis land reforms would be linked with the basic development strategy followed in the state over the years. Land reforms have thus occupied a central position in the State's anti-poverty programmes via generation of more income for the poor

and making more food available for their consumption. The core of West Bengal's rural development strategy is the radical agrarian reforms which began soon after the state came into existence. To convert the abundant labour force into capital assets and to bring about conditions of equity and efficiency land reforms as the core of the state's poverty alleviation assumed all the more importance. This was meant to curb the social and economic power of the vested interests in the rural areas and bring the poor within the production fold. But as a precursor to this, structural anomalies in the rural society had to be obliterated, as the security of the tenure of the actual tillers of the soil had to be ensured so that they are saved from being exploited.

Land reforms in post independent Bengal began with the Bargadars Act 1950, which was meant to dilute tensions between the actual cultivators and the landowners that were likely to arise because of the prejudiced pattern of land ownership and land tenure system. The West Bengal Estate Acquisition Act 1953 and the West Bengal Land Reform Act 1955 "provided the necessary legislative infrastructure for elimination of intermediary interest, imposition of ceiling on lands, holding and distribution of surplus lands to the landless and the near landless".<sup>1</sup>The passage of these acts notwithstanding, distribution of surplus lands to small and landless peasants, protection against their eviction and a check on the concentration of land could not be carried out. Lack of political will on the part of the government to implement these reforms also proved to be a major handicap. However, the implementation of land reforms gained momentum during the two short spells of the United Front rule in 1967 and 1969. The Front's agricultural policy consisted of two main elements (a) effective implementation of the ceiling laws so that landlordism was completely done away with, thereby paving the way for quick redistribution of surplus land among the landless and (b) preventing eviction of sharecroppers with the help of Panchayati institutions and the representation of peasants. This shows that the Front government instead of exclusively relying on the bureaucracy had made use of decentralized administrative units (who had an obvious pro-poor character because their representative was chosen from the villages) and this had paid them rich dividends. This achievement was possible because of the help received by the government machinery, from the landless and poor peasants in detecting illegal surplus lands.

The Left front (LF) government since its very inception committed itself to lead the struggle of the deprived against poverty and other varied sorts of exploitation. As its main support base constituted the peasants and agricultural labourers, the interests of this category of people were given the topmost priority in all its subsequent programmes. One of the chief features of the land reforms since 1977 has been the involvement of possible beneficiaries in the decisions on distribution of surplus land and the detection of possible beneficiaries. This unique approach met with a remarkable success because the concerned official had a strong and unambiguous political will to overcome all shortcomings. In keeping with its objectives of according to topmost priority to the poor landless peasants the LF government amended the 1955 Act to protect the interests of the share coppers primarily through the redistribution of surplus lands and ensuring effective protection to their legal rights. In respect to the former the government policy has been to reach the benefits of redistribution to each and every landless peasant family even in small pieces, so that each beneficiary may be able to improve his economic status at least to a certain extent. Redistribution of land has always been in favour of the smaller farms because these small farmers compensate their lack of adequate assets with their labour, and this extra effort has a positive impact in increasing agricultural production. But the general impression of the state officials that such a policy would improve the economic position of the small farmers stood questionable motive behind surplus land distribution has been more of a socio-psychological in nature. The main motive of the LF government was to help the landless peasants to give up their debilitating sense of

alienation from the means of livelihood and put an end to land monopoly. It was also meant to ensure that they gain confidence and are able to improve their social ranking.

The most significant programme in the LF government's total package of land reforms has been 'Operation Barga' (OB). It was not based on any new legislation but was an unprecedented programme to safeguard the interests of the bargadars (sharecroppers) by recording their names so that they are saved from eviction. Launched towards the end of 1978 this crash scheme of recording the bargadars in general terms was to strengthen group action among potential beneficiaries so that they overcome their mental fear of economic dependence and strengthen their economic position by becoming conscious of their legal rights. In addition to this step have also been taken to arrange for an alternative credit facility so that the bargadars could all the more free themselves from another set of exploiters i.e. the moneylenders. Of late co-operatives and nationalised banks in collaboration with the state have also contributed to the successful implementation of this programme. OB changed the land relations to the advantage of the sharecroppers and helped them to raise themselves above the poverty this imaginative and innovative technique of recording the bargadars has increased agricultural productivity and has also improved the economic condition of the small farmers. Bargadars gain in terms of higher yield after recording since security of tenure gives them an incentive to exert greater effort on their own land and they are also motivated to make use of other non-land inputs like improved seeds, institutional finance etc. even though in a limited manner. They shed their fear psychosis and do their best to utilize their land which improves their economic position. It is significant to note that in its land reform programmes the state has also taken care to protect the interests of the tribal people and has prevented the alienation of their land. By all the above measures the state government seeks to take care of the poorest sections of the society and has achieved a progressive of transformation in the framework of the rural society. By removing the structural deficiencies of the rural society, the interests of the actual tillers of the soil have been preserved.

Still another priority area in the anti-poverty agricultural programme of the LF government which is closely linked with the OB scheme has been protecting and promoting the interests of the agricultural labourers, majority of whom are deprived of any landed property. Jobs are deliberately created for them through public works programmes. This particularly assumes importance during the lean period when the agricultural labourers have no work to keep themselves occupied. The interest of the sharecroppers in this case do not contradict with those of the agricultural labourers because in actual practice many of the sharecroppers are compelled to act as agricultural labourers to substantiate their income from land. Behind the present state government's pro-poor agricultural policies lies the promotion of the twin goals of equity and social justice as could be seen from various other subsidiary measures. Pursuance of land reforms adversely affects the interests of the landowners who then resort to all means to maintain their original position. In order to deliver quick and assured justice to the landless, the West Bengal Land Reform Tribunal Act of 1991 was enacted to set up a special tribunal dealing with land reforms. This body was meant to adjudicate and deal with dispute and applications concerning land reforms. Another step in this direction consisted of steps taken by the state government to evade a situation where the concerned officials would have been swayed away by the interests of the rural landed gentry. As these calls for an attitudinal change of the officials, reorientation camps have been put to service. In these camps landless agricultural labourers and sharecroppers are made to stay together for a few days with officers of different ranks. The villagers are then encouraged to vent out their feelings and locate the exact cause for their destitution and also to suggest measures for the same. Once this process begins the officials starts feeling annoyed as they see their own selves in the eyes of poor. They develop a feeling of guilt about their past behaviour and activities and starts rectifying themselves.

Still another area in which the LF government is engaged includes those plots which once classified as being unfit for cultivation were actually being cultivated. Seizure of such lands and their subsequent distribution was likely to improve the land supply position and prove beneficial to an additional group of landless rural poor. There have also been cases of land in the state whose future (though once bleak because of its distribution being frozen by court injunction) have now brightened up after the court gave its clearance, thereby paving the way for its distribution. Moreover, as the state sponsored land ceiling legislation has exempted such lands as orchards, fishery, plantation etc. from its purview, steps are now being taken to give legal recognition to those lands so that the excess could be made available for further distribution among the landless and the poor cultivators. All these measures amounted to a few more lakhs of acres of land available for distribution among the rural poor. These were in fact regulatory measures. In other words, in order to bring the beneficiaries of land reforms within the purview of different development schemes under the guise of rural development package, the government has presently expanded the coverage of ceiling limits by making it applicable to all classes of land held by a family. This prevented the indiscriminate conversion of land from one use to another and has removed obstacles in the planned development of the rural sector. Thus, within the existing limitations the state is trying its best to provide economic security to the sharecroppers and landless labourers with the result that a desirable meta-morphosis has come about in the framework of the rural society. Land reform measures in order to be effective and to serve the rural poor better must be supplemented by the provision of non-land inputs or else the beneficiaries would be left to the mercy of the ups and downs of the market. Thus, in the interest of the poor farmers the state government has been trying to improve the provision of such inputs as irrigation, fertilizers, credit facilities etc. These inputs have enabled the poor farmers to increase their output and make adequate gains. Considering the small size of landholdings in the state (impact of land distribution policy) it is only the use of such inputs that can prove and has proved beneficial to the farmers.

Agricultural reforms tend to lose their significance if no steps are taken to make the land fit for increased production. Land being subject to the vagaries of nature, it is only irrigation that can make it immune to the adversities of nature. The importance of an assured supply of water lies in the fact that under conditions of heavy demographic pressure and the consequent limitations on the supply of land, an increased productivity via the effective use of irrigational facilities is the only recourse to keep the rural society going. Moreover, as irrigation serves as an essential prerequisite for all other sophisticated inputs the state government regards it as the most crucial to all non land inputs the state's emphasis since the beginning has been given on the spread of minor irrigation because it is not only land specific but also because the potential it creates is fully utilized. Through it both surface and ground water resources are utilized to the maximum possible extent. "The location is so chosen that beneficiaries include a high proportion of small and marginal farmers with fragmented holdings<sup>2</sup>. The target group of beneficiaries also include farmers belonging to the backward sections of the village community. To ensure that the benefit of irrigation reaches the poor farmers particular attention is being paid to involve the local people through the panchayats in creating irrigation potential. Another important component of non-land input constitutes in the provision of credit facilities which help in gearing up production and accruing incremental benefits to the incomes of the poor farmers. To arrange for adequate financial facilities the state government has set up co-operative institutions all through the state to fulfil the long term and short-term financial requirements of the farmers to carry out production activities. As the beneficiaries are large in number branches of primary co-operative credit societies have been set up in various villages. 'Gramin Banks' too operate in the rural sector through the co-operatives. Individual requirements are also catered to by them. In addition to these, regional rural banks are also set up at the district level to finance the agricultural loans. Persuasive and legal

means are adopted against the defaulters. As such these banks more or less function without any loss. However, these rural level financial bodies need to be strengthened if they are to achieve operational efficacy. They should be toned up both in terms of manpower and financial resources. Further the primary credit co-operatives should be converted into multi purpose societies so that all categories of rural people derive benefits from their activities. As the co-operative credit system is associated with input supply there always remain a wide scope for its expansion. Agriculture in West Bengal is characterized by the dominance of small farm holdings. Such an agriculture makes low cost and adequate supply of mechanized inputs and high-quality seeds an essential pre-requisite for higher production and more income. Disbursal of quality seeds and fertilizers in the form of markets have greatly helped the small and marginal farmers in boosting up their production. However, a scientific and economically viable system of seed multiplication should be evolved so that productivity of crops could be diversified under vigorous and different climatic conditions. Farmers should adopt a progressive outlook so that they realize that investments in high quality seeds is indispensable and that if they do so they would be suitably rewarded in terms of additional production. Moreover, to enable the farmer to get a fair price of their products and improve their economic condition a controlled system of marketing has been introduced.

Moreover, for an effective and judicious use of non-land inputs the knowledge of men behind the plough ought to be enhanced. Such a know-how enables the farmers to sense any odd factors and take timely preventive measures to avoid the same. To systematize the provision of such beneficial wisdom, the West Bengal government has of late introduced an agricultural extension programme which involves wide knowledge and economically viable technology and ensuring the willing involvement of the farmers to augment economic gains. Extension as envisaged and adopted by the state government is a continuous process because it involves a feed back process. Area specific field problems are regularly reported to the concerned official and technical know how for maximum profit and production are made available to them. But this channel of communication from the laboratory to land and vice versa can only become effective when the farmers are made to realize the importance of technical know how and thereby persuaded to use them. As majority of the farmers thrive on credit the existing cooperative system should be made fully equipped to carry out the gigantic task of giving inputs on credit and thus give an initial footing to the poor farmers. The most important consideration in the provision of non-land inputs is the question of choice of technology. Keeping the interests of the poor farmers in mind the state government has always opted for a socially appropriate technology, a technology which would not only be modern but at the same time make an efficient and improved use of the abundant labour power and other local resources.

Panchayats in West Bengal is a pivotal agency for unleashing comprehensive rural development. The importance of the panchayats in the state lies in its pro-poor character and its ability to give rise to a new type of rural leadership in the state. The social composition of these bodies are also considered to be of much significance. Weaker sections of the society have found adequate representation in the category of unreserved seats. However, women are very poorly represented and their absence in these bodies restricts them to express their needs and interests only. But this situation has improved as the state went ahead with the 73rd constitutional amendment (by which one third of seats in the panchayat bodies had to be reserved for women) and arranged for the required quota of reservation for women. Panchayats in West Bengal as effective people's institutions are doing remarkably well in respect of implementation of rural development programmes of the state government and centrally sponsored anti poverty and employment generating schemes (for e.g. NREP, IRDP, JRY etc.). In fact the activities of the panchayats have extended to almost all spheres of developmental and other programmes. In areas where the

panchayats are denied direct involvement they tend to act as a bridge between the public and the state government, thereby narrowing the gap between the two and ensuring an enthusiastic public participation in all progressive efforts of the state.

Creation of gainful employment opportunities in the state under different programmes with the dual objectives of providing employment and its related benefits to the rural poor particularly the landless and the creation of assets to precipitate and strengthen infrastructural development in the rural areas have been the primary objectives of such centrally sponsored programmes like the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) and more recently the Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY). These programmes operate on the belief that any poverty alleviation scheme “should require work in order to target the truly poor when abilities are unobservable and the difference between high and low abilities is small”<sup>3</sup>. NREP and RLEGP were wage employment programmes necessitating work to be done. This approach to poverty relief involved a self screening process via work requirement, as such they are essentially non-welfarist in nature. NREP had sought to generate additional employment opportunities to the unemployed and underemployed section of the rural population with primacy being given to the landless and other weaker sections of the rural society. Productivity community assets were also made available to the poorer groups so that their bargaining capacity is strengthened, and the rural infrastructure is improved. RLEGP had followed the same pattern except for the fact that it had made indispensable to provide employment to at least one member of each rural landless labour household. In the implementation of both these schemes, the panchayats have played a decisive role with prime responsibility being given to the Gram panchayats, its lowest tier.

A significant programme meant to augment the production efforts of the landless farmers is the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). This programme which was started in 1978 is based on the realization that a sustainable policy for poverty alleviation would prove to be successful if it is based on increasing the productive employment opportunities in the process of overall economic growth. IRDP replaced several other programmes as it was a combination of services, technology and assets. Though it aimed at the creation of new sources of income for the rural poor in all the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors but the main target groups are the ST/SC families who are also to receive subsidies on bank loans as well. It is essentially an anti-poverty programme because it sharply focuses on target groups consisting of small/marginal farmers rural artisans, agricultural labourer etc. and it thereby seeks to inflict a direct attack on poverty. Productive assets are to be given to the poor so that they can usefully employ themselves and earn greater incomes. Financial assistance is also given to the target groups so that they are in a position to acquire productive assets in the form of subsidies from the government and credit facilities from the financial institutions. The central and the state government jointly share the cost of this scheme. This scheme is implemented in the state by the panchayats, sometimes under the supervision and guidance of District Rural Development Agency set up in each district. The families of the rural areas living below the poverty line, particularly the enterprising farmers are also provided with institutional credit facilities. The importance of IRDP lies in the fact that it touches the root of the poverty problem by endowing benefits to the poorest of the rural poor as mentioned below and helps to identify rural families to cross the poverty line. Governments in West Bengal have never option for a family oriented rural development programme because it felt that it would benefit families who had adequate means of livelihood. As such it opted for a policy where the panchayats would act as catalysts of development and function as a link between the financial institutions and the poorest families. The panchayats were to act on a non-profit basis. It was meant to strengthen the rural infrastructure by lending out assets and resources, which it has



acquired to the target groups. Thus, the panchayats with the chief responsibility of promoting the twin objectives of economic well-being and social justice was given wide powers to implement the IRDP. But the village bodies had to perform a number of other activities, besides the IRDP. In addition to this problem of overburden they also lacked the needed expertise to implement the scheme. As such IRDP failed to achieve the desired result in its initial years.

To rectify the situation, it was soon decided (in 1981) to handover the administration of IRDP to the then newly constituted District Rural Development Agency. Since then, the performance of IRDP improved considerably. However, the coverage of new families has not witnessed a steady rise. The beneficiaries were not only subjected to inadequate infrastructural facilities but majority of them were not even imparted any training. Even today various negative factors have been operating to reduce the effectiveness of this programme. There is not only a delay in the allotment of funds, but the problem lies in the absence of communication linkages between the panchayati bodies and the financial institutions. Another problem lies in the fact that IRDP schemes rate of investment runs in thousands (maximum of Rs. 9000/-) but not only is the poor unable to absorb such heavy assistance but even the state government has been pleading for gradual improvement/assistance to push the poor families above the poverty line still another impediment lies in the poor repayment position of the beneficiaries. As loan recovery poses a serious problem the banks all the more becomes unwilling to put their financial resources at risks. However, one of the chief positive aspects of this programme is the existence of cordial relationship between the panchayats and the banks. This is demonstrated by the fact that with the passing of each year the amount of money disbursed and invested (percentage of financial achievement) has been steadily increasing. Loans are reaching the poor resulting in an improvement in their material conditions. This is because sample studies have shown that the “association of bank staff and gram panchayats in the identification of poor families has been done in WB, ensures that the benefits of the programme go to the deserving persons”<sup>4</sup>. This also means that the extent of leakage of funds to the non-target groups has been minimum. As the rural masses were given an opportunity to improve their economic conditions, they developed a keen interest in the panchayats, and this has breathed a new life of self confidence among the otherwise poor and indifferent landless farmers. They have also begun to improve their debt position and reduce their dependence on the moneylenders. Thus, the involvement of the panchayats in this scheme has not only received grass root participation but have also provided an insurance to the rural poor against the manipulation of unscrupulous middlemen.

## **CONCLUSION:**

All the above measures go on to prove that successive West Bengal governments have been taking serious steps to overcome its problem of poverty both in an indirect and in a direct manner. The former is being done by strengthening the industrial and the agricultural sector while the latter stands for direct anti-poverty measures. But a close study of available datas leads one to conclude that poverty in the state and its related problem of unemployment continues even today, though in a less acute form. As such the need of the hour is a more serious thinking on the part of the ruling officials who holds the key to the entire developmental process. Politically motivated pro-poor policies will not change the situation in favour of the poor. A holistic approach is thus called for. Moreover, the poor should also come forward and make their legitimate claims on the authorities so that their combined pressure forces the government not to retrace from its pro-poor stand.

**FOOT NOTES:**

1. Economic Review 1993-94, (State Planning Board, Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta, 1994, p. 56)
2. Economic Review 1993-94, (State Planning Board, Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta, 1994, p. 13)
3. Biswanath Ray, (Ed). 'West Bengal Today-A Fresh Look', (Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1993, p. 313)
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