

AIDC Sponsored Projects Suffer For Want Of Funds

By A Staff Reporter

GUWAHATI, Sept. 27--Industrialisation of Assam has been affected by the arbitrary decisions of the Industry and the Finance Department of the Government of Assam, contrary to the policy of the Centre, it was stated here by Sri Ibrahim Ali MLA, Chairman of Assam Industries Development Corporation.

Due to limited funds, Sri Ali stated, the AIDC adopted a modest plan of 12 new major and priority industrial projects during 1980-85 having wide employment avenues and involving an outlay of Rs. 153 crores. The Corporation's proposed plans for 1981-82 needed Rs. 35.09 crores, with a capital content of Rs. 9.35 crores, with a capital content of Rs. 1.20 crores covering 12 industrial projects. As against this, the Government of Assam has allocated Rs. 1.20 crores only for the same year which was subsequently reduced to Rs. 1.15 crores. It is not learnt on what basis, the Government of Assam had allocated this sum.

The 12 industries proposed by AIDC included a weaving complex, a jute mill, a brewery project, a textile processing unit, a phthalic anhydride project, polyester spinning mills, rayon pulp and viscose fibre project (non-priority), MG kraft paper project, cigarette, leather, drug formulation and methanol expansion.

Incidentally, all these industries are based on local raw materials and will provide direct employment for nearly 17,000 people.

The Government of Assam, as against this, has proposed outlays against only chemical, textile, and cigarette projects only. During 1980-81, the State Government had proposed outlay of Rs. 11.66 lakhs of which Rs. 7.66 lakhs were allocated for the existing Cachar Sugar Mills, leaving Rs. 4 lakhs for the drug formulation unit, the only new project taken up during the period.

AIDC was set up in 1965 with the prime object to accelerate the industrial development of the State by taking up priority projects based on local raw materials. Initially, the Corporation's policies were made by a Board of Directors consisting of six non-official and three official members. Under this arrangement industries set up during 1965-77 period include Assam Petro Chemicals Limited, Namrup, Fertilchem Ltd., Cachar Sugar Mills Ltd., ASCON. Moreover, chemical unit of the Associated Industries Limited and Assam Glass Works were taken over by AIDC.

The AIDC Chairman met the Governor of Assam recently and submitted a memorandum highlighting the problems faced by the Corporation

and also had a detailed discussion with him. During the course of the discussions, Sri Ali raised problems arising out of the limited finances allotted to the Corporation during 1981-82.

He also raised the problems of the various on-coming industries like down-stream products of BRPL, methanol expansion unit, drug formulation unit etc. Problems faced by the existing industries like Assam petro-Chemical Ltd. ASCON, Fertilchem Ltd etc' were also raised.

Sri Ali stated that he had requested the Governor to use his good offices to allocate more funds to AIDC for taking over and managing the sick and closed but highly potential industries like Assam Glass Industries and Everest Cycle Industries. He pleaded for the nationalisation of the Associated Industries (Chemical unit).

The Governor, reportedly assured the Chairman that he would discuss the problems of AIDC with the Central Government and further assured him that all efforts would be made to arrange additional funds for rapid industrialisation of the State.