

FOURTEENTH REPORT
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE (2001)

(THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
(DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL
RESEARCH & EDUCATION)

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2000-2001)

*[Action taken by the Government on the Recommendations/
Observations contained in the Seventh Report of the
Standing Committee on Agriculture (1999-2000)]*

Presented to Lok Sabha on.....

Laid in Rajya Sabha on.....



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

March, 2001/Phalgun 1922 (Saka)

COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
FOR THE YEAR 2001

Shri S.S. Palanimanickam — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Ram Tahal Chaudhari
3. Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan
4. Shri Shamsher Singh Dullo
5. Shri Ramdas Rupala Gavit
6. Shri Thawar Chand Gehlot
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23. Shri Adi Shankar
24. Shri Chhatrapal Singh
25. Shri Lakshman Singh

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26. Shri Rampal Singh
27. Shri Tejveer Singh
28. Shri Zora Singh Mann
29. Shri Bhal Chandra Yadav
30. Shri Mahboob Zahedi

Rajya Sabha

31. Smt. Jamana Devi Barupal
32. Shri Khagen Das
33. Shri Devi Lal
34. Shri Oscar Fernandes
35. Shri H.K. Javare Gowda
36. Shri Korambayil Ahammed Haji
37. Shri Kailash Joshi
38. Shri Kanshi Ram
39. Dr. A.R. Kidwai
40. Shri R. Margabandu
41. Shri M. Rajashekara Murthy
42. Shri Yadlapati Venkata Rao
43. Shri Sharief-Ud-Din Shariq
44. Shri Devi Prasad Singh
45. Vacant

SECRETARIAT

1. Dr. (Smt.) Paramjeet Kaur Sandhu — *Joint Secretary*
2. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma — *Deputy Secretary*
3. Shri K.L. Arora — *Under Secretary*
4. Shri Anil Kumar — *Executive Assistant*

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (2001) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Fourteenth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/ observations contained in the Seventh Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (1999-2000) (Thirteenth Lok Sabha), on Demands for Grants (2000-2001) of the Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agricultural Research and Education).

2. The Seventh Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (1999-2000) on Demands for Grants (2000-2001) of the Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agricultural Research & Education) was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 19.4.2000. The Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agricultural Research & Education) was requested to furnish action taken replies of the Government to recommendations contained in the Seventh Report. The replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received.

3. The Committee considered these action taken replies furnished by the Government in its sitting held on 22nd February, 2001, approved the draft comments and adopted the Fourteenth Report. Minutes of the sitting are placed in Appendix-I.

4. An analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/ observations contained in the Seventh Report (13th Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given in Appendix-II.

NEW DELHI;
28 February, 2001

9 Phalgun, 1922 (Saka)

S.S. PALANIMANICKAM,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on Agriculture.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee on Agriculture deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventh Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (1999-2000) on Demands for Grants (2000-2001) of the Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agricultural Research & Education) which was presented to the Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 19th April, 2000.

1.2 Action taken replies have been received from the Government in respect of all the 15 recommendations contained in the Report. These have been categorised as follows :

- (i) Recommendations/Observations that have been accepted by the Government (Chapter II of the Report)
Recommendation Sl. Nos. 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14 & 15
(Total 7)
- (ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies (Chapter III of the Report)
Recommendation Sl. No. 6
(Total 1)
- (iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which reply of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee (Chapter IV of the Report to be commented upon in Chapter I of the Report)
Recommendation Sl. No. 5
(Total 1)
- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited (Chapter V of the Report)
Recommendation Sl. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 11 and 12
(Total 6)

1.3 The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government on some other recommendations.

A. *10% Allocations for the Development of North-East*

Recommendation Sl. No. 5

1.4 The Committee had noted that for the year 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 the Department have failed to allocate minimum 10% of total plan allocations of the Department in favour of plan schemes/projects meant exclusively for the North-Eastern region as per the directive of the Government of India. The actual allocations were 7.19%, 8.24% and 8.88% of the total allocations for the Ist three years of the IXth Plan respectively.

The Committee were happy to note that for the year 2000-2001, Rs. 63.00 crores which happens to be 10.01% of the total plan allocations of Rs. 629.55 crores for the Department, had been provided for the schemes meant for North-East and Sikkim. However, the Committee had desired to be apprised of the decision of the Government of allocating 10% of allocation to North East States based on Domestic Budgeting Support only and not on DBS + EAP basis.

The Committee were hopeful that Department would make all out efforts to spend this 10% amount earmarked for the actual development of much neglected North-Eastern States and Sikkim. They also hoped that there would be no shortfall in achieving financial and physical targets fixed for the year 2000-2001, in this regard.

Furthermore, the Committee had reiterated their earlier recommendation that all the schemes planned for North-Eastern States should be 100% funded by the Union Government.

1.5 The Government in their reply have stated that with regard to the decision of the Government for allocation 10% of allocation to NE States based on Gross Budgetary Support (GBS), the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance were approached by the Department at the level of Hon'ble MOS (Agri.) and Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture to allow the Department to allocate 10% on the basis of Domestic Budgetary Support (DBS) so that the approved programmes could be implemented with full thrust and the funds requirement of EAPs could be met.

Hon'ble MOS (Agri.) had requested Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission for allocating higher funds to DARE during 1999-2000, exempting it from surrendering Rs. 1.13 crore to Non-lapsable Central Pool. In case Planning Commission was not able to grant the exemption, then the Department might be allowed to allocate resources to NE States @ 10 per cent of DBS rather than GBS.

Hon'ble AM has also requested the Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission stating strong need of strengthening agricultural base for economy and achieving growth target through provision of adequate financial outlay during IX Plan. It was further stated that unfortunately, there was regular imposition of severe cut on meagre plan outlay of the Department at RE level. The imposition of these severe cuts were creating considerable constraints in meeting financial requirement of different important on-going schemes and new initiatives of IX Plan which are so essential for growth and competitiveness of Indian agriculture and have remained non starters due to lack of resources.

The Department were making all efforts to spend 10 per cent amount earmarked for development of NE States including Sikkim and there would be no shortfall in achieving financial and physical targets fixed for year 2000-2001. All schemes of the Department were being implemented in the NE States and Sikkim, are funded on 100% basis except the All India Coordinated Research Projects and their centres located in Assam Agricultural University.

Comments of the Committee

1.6 The Committee are very clear in their mind on the budgeting pattern for the North Eastern States by DARE. 10% of the Domestic Budgetary Support is to be allocated yearly for development of North Eastern States including Sikkim and not 10% of DBS + EAP (Externally Aided Project). It is in this context the Committee have reiterated their recommendation requesting the Government to exclude EAP's from the 10% purview.

The Committee are also clear that the allocation for North Eastern States is to be used exclusively for the development of those States only and any amount unspent will have to be used there only.

The Committee would like to draw the attention of the Department of the 3rd para of its recommendation. They are surprised to note that Rs. 1.13 crores has been unspent by the Department from the allocations made by it. This may

indicate a lack of seriousness on the part of the Department especially so because all schemes of the Department for NE States and Sikkim are funded by DARE on 100% basis. The Committee need an explanation from the Department for the accumulated unused funds of Rs. 1.13 crores, giving the year of allocation, the schemes and the amount unspent on each scheme.

The Committee also feel that by making a request to the Planning Commission for exemption to surrender Rs. 1.13 crores to the Non-Lapsable Central Pool will dilute the thrust of the recommendation of the Committee to exclude EAP from 10% of DBS+EAP to NE States as a permanent measure.

The Committee, therefore, reiterate their recommendation that all out efforts should be made by the Department to spend the entire 10% amount for the actual development of the North Eastern States and Sikkim. There should not be any saving on this account so as to request from surrendering the amount. The Committee also reiterate that a continuous effort should be made by the Department to get the 10% allocation to be made for NE States on DBS and not on DBS + EAP basis.

B. Pending Vigilance/Disciplinary Cases

Recommendation Sl. No. 8

1.7 The Committee were informed that the Department is not having any independent vigilance cell or inquiry/vigilance officers. Only one part time CVO; part-time Director with additional charges with some staff and that too from out of the regular staff had been looking after the Vigilance/Disciplinary cases with no separate set up meant for this purpose.

The Committee have observed that at present 19 vigilance cases and 29 disciplinary cases were pending with the Department. Though, some cases might get disposed of during the year, yet some new cases get added to the list of pending cases every year. So, it happened to be a continuous process of handling vigilance/disciplinary cases in the Department with a vast set up across the country.

The Committee had further observed that the Department pursued the matter of getting a post of a Director (Vigilance) sanctioned as per the earlier recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee but due to ban on creation of

new posts, the Ministry of Finance had not acceded to the proposal. The Department had moved the case for upgradation of one of their lower posts.

The Committee were of the considered view that a part-time CVO and that too from within the Department cannot do full justice with regard to the overall vigilance of the Department and there was a need to have some specialist in the field. They, therefore once again strongly recommended that not only an independent vigilance cell should be created in the Department but the same should be headed by an officer not below the rank of a Director who should have been drawn from an organised service as was already the practice in most of the Public Sector Undertakings of the Government of India. They also had desired that all the pending cases should be finalised within a period of two years.

1.8 The Government in their reply have stated that at present 25 pending vigilance cases and 28 pending disciplinary cases were being processed in the Department. In pursuance of the recommendation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, the creation of post of Director (Vigilance) has been taken up the Cadre Review Committee and a proposal is being sent to Ministry of Finance for approval.

Comments of the Committee

1.9 The Committee commend the efforts made by the Department in this regard. However, they would like to be apprised of the final outcome of their proposal for creation of the post of Director (Vigilance) in order to speed up the disposal of pending vigilance cases.

C. Upgrading the Paddy Processing Centre – Thanjavur

Recommendation Sl. No. 12

1.10 The Committee had pointed out that the paddy processing centre at Thanjavur was the only centre which was directly under the control of the Department. This Centre was mandated to concentrate on paddy processing and research. The Committee were informed that seed technology and research and seed technology and processing form a part of mandate of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research rather than Department of Food Processing. Thus the Committee felt that this centre can perform the dual function of being a research centre for the region and also disseminate the research information to the farmers by performing the functions of a Krishi Vigyan Kendra also.

The Committee, therefore, had recommended that the Department should consider upgrading the Institute into a Research cum Educational Institute for the region.

1.11 The Government in their reply have stated that the information regarding assets, liabilities etc. of the Paddy Processing Research Centre (PPRC), Thanjavur was being collected from the Department of Food Processing Industries. Besides, two senior officers of the Engineering Division of the Council have been deputed to get first-hand information and take stock of various activities of the Centre which would help in taking a final decision.

Comments of the Committee

1.12 The Committee desire that the formalities involved in taking over and upgrading the PPRC, Thanjavur should be completed expeditiously. They would also like to be intimated about the latest position in this regard within 3 months of the presentation of this Report to Parliament.

D. AICRP for Bamboos

Recommendation Sl. No. 15

1.13 The Committee were informed that a certain variety of bamboo whose shoot is a delicacy in the North-East and is available in its vast areas and in large quantities. However, there are certain varieties of bamboos available in China which are fully edible bamboos. The local shoots are used by inhabitants for making soups, pickles and so on.

The Committee were of the opinion that, if research is done in this field and the China variety of bamboo was developed in India, it would be a good source of employment for the tribals, besides being a source of food. The Committee had also felt that processed bamboo would be a good export product.

The Committee, had therefore, recommended that an 'All India Coordinated Research Project' might be initiated by the Department in the North Eastern States which might carry out a detailed research programme in that direction.

1.14 The Government in their reply have stated that in the All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Agroforestry there are 5 centres in the North Eastern Region. On the research on edible Bamboos, a network project would be proposed by the Director, National Research Centre on Agroforestry and Project Coordinator, AICRP Agroforestry, at different centres in the region. Depending on the funds allocation, the proposed project will be implemented.

Comments of the Committee

1.15 The Committee may be apprised of the status of the Project after every three months.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation Sl. No. 7

Sectoral Allocations for the year 2000-2001

2.1 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 7 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee observe that the IX Plan Working Group for DARE had recommended a certain percentage of allocation to be made out of the total plan allocation available with the Department for year to year basis.

The Committee further observe that the percentage share of major 7 sectors as proposed by the Working Group stands at (i) 15% for Agril. Education (ii) 10% for Agril, Extension, (iii) 6% for Fisheries, (iv) 14% for Animal Science (v) 10% for Horticulture, (vi) 25% for Crop Science, and (viii) 20% for Natural Resource Management, Agricultural Engineering, Agricultural Economics & Statistic, ICAR headquarters and P&I (clubbed together). The percentage of sectoral allocations actually made by the Department for 2000-2001 stands at (i) 14.69%; (ii) 12.59%; (iii) 6.09%; (iv) 12.38%; (v) 10.28%; (vi) 21.82%; (vii) 10.91% + 5.04 + 0.84 + 5.36 respectively *i.e.*; if clubbed together it comes to 22.15%.

The Committee wish to point out that there happens to be a variation in sectoral allocations. The Committee, therefore, advise the Department to adhere to the percentage of sectoral allocations as recommended by the IX Plan Working Group for DARE so that all the sectors get their ideal proportion of funds.

Reply of the Government

2.2 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

The Department has noted the recommendation of the Committee and the efforts would be made to allocate sectoral allocations in conformity with the recommendation of the IX Plan Working Group. The little variations in respect of

sectoral allocations during 2000-2001 could be attributed to the tight budgeting conditions to which the Department has been subjected to, as the Department has also to keep in view the various national priorities and thrust areas while allocating scheme-wise/sector-wise funds.

Recommendation Sl. No. 8

Pending Vigilance/Disciplinary Cases

2.3 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 8 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee were informed that the Department is not having any independent vigilance cell or inquiry officers/vigilance officers. Only one part time CVO; part time Director with additional charges with some staff and that too from out of the regular staff has been looking after the Vigilance/Disciplinary cases with no separate set up meant for this purpose.

The Committee observe that at present 19 vigilance cases and 29 disciplinary cases are pending with the Department. Though some cases might get disposed of during the year, yet some new cases get added to the list of pending cases every year. So, it happens to be continuous process of handling vigilance/disciplinary cases in the Department with a vast set up across the country.

The Committee further observe that the Department pursued the matter of getting a post of a Director (Vigilance) sanctioned as per the earlier recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee but due to ban on creation of new posts, the Ministry of Finance has not acceded to the proposal. The Department has moved the case for upgradation of one of their lower posts.

The Committee are of the considered view that a part time CVO and that too from within the Department cannot do full justice with regard to the overall vigilance of the Department and there is a need to have some specialist in the field. They, therefore once again strongly recommend that not only an independent vigilance cell should be created in the Department but the same should be headed by an officer not below the rank of a Director who should be drawn from an organised service as is already the practice in most of the Public Sector Undertakings for the Government of India. They also desire that all the pending cases should be finalised within a period of two years.

Reply of the Government

2.4 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

At present 25 pending vigilance cases and 28 pending disciplinary cases are being processed in the Department. In pursuance of the recommendation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, the creation of post of Director (Vigilance) has been taken up by the Cadre Review Committee and a proposal is being sent to Ministry of Finance for approval.

Comments of the Committee

2.5 For Comments of the Committee please see Para No. 1.9 of Chapter I of this report.

Recommendation Sl. No. 9

Separate Budget heads for Crop Science and other programmes under Crop Husbandry

2.6 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 9 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee had recommended in their 10th report (1996-97) that the Budget Head for Crop Husbandry should be suitably modified so that the allocations to other sectors such as Crop Science, Horticulture etc. are properly reflected in the detailed Demands for Grants so that there remains no ambiguity in the actual allocations made to each sector.

The Committee were informed that the Department approached the Ministry of Finance during April, 1997 which in turn has not cleared the proposal giving the remarks to seek CGA's approval to change the standard nomenclature of heads prescribed by him before approaching Ministry of Finance for issuing corrections in the Detailed Demands of the Department. Consequently, the CGA was approached in November, 1997 but till date the matter is pending with him.

The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that the Department should vigorously follow up the case with CGA and convince him about the need for separate and clear budget heads with desirable clarity, to be brought in the Demands for Grants of the Department in the light of the recommendation of the Committee and apprise the Committee of the positive outcome in the matter within three months from the date of presentation of this Report to the House.

Reply of the Government

2.7 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

In view of the above recommendation, a request has been made to the Ministry of Finance (MoF) to open separate sub-heads against the existing sub-heads under the Major Head "2415". In response to our request, the MoF has suggested that the Department may first approach the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) before approaching the MoF for issuing correction to the Detailed Demand for Grants.

After the repeated requests made by this Department, The CGA has suggested that the sub heads may be opened under the existing minor heads in consultation with the Budget Division of MoF. Hence, the Department has approached the Budget Division of MoF for necessary allocation of sub heads on priority basis.

Recommendation Sl. No. 10

World Bank Aided National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP)

2.8 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 10 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee are informed that the National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP) costing Rs. 861.30 crores (US\$ 239.2 million) is a World Bank Aided Project for five years starting from April/June 1998. 18 percent is the share to be borne by the Indian Government whereas 82% will be reimbursed. 100 million Dollars is World Bank credit with a grace period of 10 years. There is no interest on it.

On a recommendation of the Committee on Demands for Grants 1998-99 requesting the Department to speed up the pace of the project, the Department had stated that the process of inviting competitive bids had already been initiated in consultation with the World Bank. Further action for appointing procurement agent and training agent was in progress. In the process of examination of Demands for Grants for (2000-2001) the Department had informed that an International Competitive Bidding process has already been initiated for the purchase of computers, peripherals etc.

The Committee are further informed that the Department has made an allocation of Rs. 148 crore for 2000-2001 from its Budgetary Support of Rs. 629.15 crores.

The Committee are very much concerned about the timely completion of the prestigious project as two years have already passed and important systems are not in place. The project has a term of 5 years. The Committee are afraid that if the project is not completed within 5 years, the World Bank which is giving 82% interest free finance, may not give any extension of time. The project, then will have to face the fate similar to other uncompleted projects. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Department to implement the project with greater earnestness and sincerity. They should fix targets and stick to them by the strength of strict monitoring and supervision. Penal action may be considered for erring partners. The Committee also request the Government to reconsider their decision to make the EAP component a part of DBS and give the Department Rs. 167.00 crores as an additional allocation for 2000-2001.

Reply of the Government

2.9 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

The first phase of procurement of computers through International Competitive Bidding (ICB) is now in the concluding stage. The procurement was effected through the ICB and the items of equipment have been supplied, tested and despatched to consignees. The 80% of installation and commissioning is over and the process is being pursued vigorously. The contract administration is being monitored closely for earliest completion of the entire operation. The procurement agent has already been appointed for NATP since July, 1999. The procurement agent has also set up a liaison office at PIU, NATP. The process for appointment of the Training Agent is now in the concluding stage. The Project Management Committee has constituted a high powered committee to look into various aspects, such as amount of work load, the cost proposed by the firm and possibility of developing in-house capabilities.

Recommendation Sl. No. 13

Sugarcane Cess for ICAR

2.10 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 13 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee have been informed that under the Sugar Cess Act 1982, a cess of Rs. 14/- per quintal is being collected on all sugar produced by the sugar factories in India. As provided under the Sugar Development Fund Act, 1982, the cess fund is allocated to Ministry of Food, Government of India which is being utilised for rehabilitation and modernisation of sugar factories; development scheme of sugarcane; research projects aimed at development of sugar industry and

building up and maintenance of buffer stock. Indian Council of Agricultural Research does not get any share in Sugar Cess Fund though researches of the ICAR in raising sugarcane production are reflected in overall increase in the national sugar production.

The Committee feel that the nation today is able to attain self sufficiency in sugar only because of the tremendous work being done in the field of research on sugarcane. Since the sugar industry is benefited from the research back up for improving productivity, production and stability, it should get a major share of sugar cess funds.

The Committee recommend that the Sugar Development Fund Act, 1982, should be amended and a provision made for allocating need based amount of the cess fund at the disposal of ICAR for strengthening research on sugarcane.

Reply of the Government

2.11 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

The recommendation is noted for compliance. If the sugar industry is to increasingly benefit from research backup for improving the productivity, production and stability on accounts of complex problems faced by it in production and processing, substantial financial support to DARE/ICAR becomes essential. The Hon'ble Minister of Food has been requested to kindly consider providing atleast 50% of the Sugar Cess Fund collected to DARE/ICAR so that sugarcane research could be accelerated for enhanced and sustainable sugar production.

Recommendation Sl. No. 14

Funds for Central Agricultural University – Imphal (Manipur)

2.12 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 14 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee have been informed that the Central Agricultural University (CAU) Imphal has been established by an act of Parliament in 1993 for developing human resources in agriculture and allied sciences for North-Eastern region. This University is 100% funded by ICAR. An allocation of Rs. 52.00 crores has been provided for the IX Plan.

The Committee are of the opinion that any university, be it an Agricultural or non-Agricultural is an asset to the Nation and the State. This university which provides B.Sc (Agri.), B.V.Sc and Animal Husbandry from Mizoram and

B.I.Sc from Tripura caters to the needs of the seven sister States of North East. The burden of the functioning of the University should not be entirely borne by the ICAR from its budgetary allocations but a share of it should also be borne from the non-lapsable funds lying idle with the States. The Committee also feel that the University Grants Commission should also be addressed to render necessary help for smooth functioning of the University.

Reply of the Government

2.13 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

The Central Agricultural University has been set up to cater to the human resource development of the entire North Eastern Region covering eight States. At present the allocation made by the ICAR is inadequate due to resource crunch. Therefore, the request has been made to Planning Commission to provide Rs. 20 crore during this year out of non-lapsable Central Pool for NE Region. Since the ICAR functions as UGC for agricultural Universities, the entire support has to be provided by the ICAR for smooth functioning of the university. In view of lack of resources, the Department has not been able to open all the colleges as provided in the act. If the money is made available from the central pool, it will be possible to develop full-fledged university.

Recommendation Sl. No. 15

AICRP for Bamboos

2.14 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 15 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee are informed that there is a certain variety of Bamboo whose shoot is a delicacy in the North East and is available in its vast areas and in large quantities. However, there are certain varieties of Bamboos available in China which are fully edible Bamboos. The local shoots are used by inhabitants for making soups, pickles and so on.

The Committee are of the opinion that, if research is done in this field and the China variety of Bamboo is developed in India, it will be a good source of employment for the tribes, besides being a source of food. The Committee also feel that processed Bamboo will be a good export product.

The Committee, therefore, recommend that an "All India Coordinated Research Project" may be initiated by the Department in North Eastern Region which may carry out a detailed research programme in that direction.

Reply of the Government

2.15 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

In the All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Agroforestry there are 5 centres in the North-Eastern Region. On the research on edible Bamboos, a network project will be proposed by the Director, National Research Centre on Agroforestry and Project Coordinator, AICRP Agroforestry, at different centres in the region. Depending on the funds allocation, the proposed project will be implemented.

Comments of the Committee

2.16 For Comments of the Committee please *see* Para No. 1.15 of Chapter I of this Report.

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

Recommendation Sl. No. 6

Need to indicate capital requirement separately under the "Capital" Segment

3.1 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 6 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee while scrutinising the detailed Demand No. 2 in respect of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education observe that entire Demands for Grants are divided under two major segments namely "Revenue" and "Capital". Although, the Department has been giving its Capital component requirement for each scheme separately in their Annual Plan Document out of total proposed plan outlay for the relevant year, yet it never shows its capital component requirement separately in the Detailed Demands for Grants as "Capital" Head, the entire demands are projected under "Revenue" Head. However, this year (2000-2001) Annual Plan is also void of the Capital Expenditure. In this connection the Department explained that the exact capital component requirement for various schemes was in the process of finalisation and the same details would be available after some time.

In the opinion of the Committee in this fast communication world with Internet, E-mail, Fax Facilities available with the institutes of the Department the plea of the Department that their institutes are spread all over the country and it takes more time in assessing and collecting capital requirement for each institute is not tenable. Further, the Committee are not satisfied with vague and misleading information that the DARE do not have specific requirements under "Capital" segment.

The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Department should regularly indicate their "Capital" requirements separately for each sector/scheme in their Demand No. 2 and in Detailed Demands for Grants pertaining to the Department. The Committee further recommend that in order to enable the Committee to examine the Demands for Grants effectively the Annual Plan document should also contain the capital expenditure in the relevant column.

Reply of the Government

3.2 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

In so far as the Department of Agricultural Research and Education is concerned, the entire amount of grant-in-aid given to the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) which is an autonomous body under the department, is treated as revenue expenditure. The capital component of ICAR's budget is however, shown separately in ICAR's accounts which is also presented to the Parliament.

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation Sl. No. 5

10% Allocations for the Development of North-East

4.1 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 5 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee noted that for the years 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 the Department failed to allocate minimum 10% of total plan allocations of the Department in favour of plan schemes/projects meant exclusively for the North-Eastern region as per the directive of the Government of India. The actual allocations were 7.19%, 8.24% and 8.88% of the total allocations for the Ist three years of the IX plan respectively.

The Committee are happy to note that for the year 2000-2001, Rs. 63.00 crore which happens to be 10.01% of the total plan allocations of Rs. 629.55 crore for the Department, have been provided for the schemes meant for North-East and Sikkim. However, the Committee would like to be apprised of the decision of the Government of allocating 10% of allocation to North-East States based on Domestic Budgetary Support only and not on DBS + EAP basis.

The Committee are hopeful that Department would make all out efforts to spend this 10% amount earmarked for the actual development of much neglected North Eastern States and Sikkim. They also hope that there would be no shortfall in achieving financial and physical targets fixed for the year 2000-2001, in this regard.

Furthermore, the Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation that all the schemes planned for North-Eastern States should be 100% funded by the Union Government.

Reply of the Government

4.2 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

With regard to the decision of the Government for allocating 10% of allocation to NE States based on Gross Budgetary Support (GBS), the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance were approached by the Department at the level of hon'ble MOS (Agri.) and Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture to allow the Department to allocate 10% on the basis of Domestic Budgetary Support (DBS) so that the approved programmes could be implemented with full thrust and the funds requirement of EAPs could be met.

Hon'ble MOS (Agri.) had requested Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission for allocating higher funds to DARE during 1999-2000, exempting it from surrendering Rs. 1.13 crore to Non-lapsable Central Pool. In case Planning Commission was not able to grant the exemption, then the Department may be allowed to allocate resources to NE States @ 10 per cent of DBS rather than GBS.

Hon'ble AM also requested the Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission stating strong need of strengthening agricultural base for economy and achieving growth target through provision of adequate financial outlay during IX Plan. It was further stated that. Unfortunately, there was regular imposition of severe cut on meagre plan outlay of the Department at RE level. The imposition of these severe cuts were creating considerable constraints[†] in meeting financial requirement of different important on-going schemes and new initiatives of IX Plan which are so essential for growth and competitiveness of Indian agriculture and have remained non starters due to lack of resources.

The Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance have been approached time and again on this issue in view of recommendations contained in the 7th report of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture.

The Department is making all efforts to spend 10 per cent amount earmarked for development of NE State including Sikkim and there would be no shortfall in achieving financial and physical targets fixed for the year 2000-2001. All schemes of the Department being implemented in the NE States and Sikkim, are funded on 100% basis except the All India Coordinated Research Projects and their centres located in Assam Agricultural University.

Comments of the Committee

4.3 For Comments of the Committee please *see* Para No. 1.6 of Chapter I of this Report.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

Recommendation Sl. No. 1

Insufficient Ninth Plan Approved Outlay to DARE/ICAR

5.1 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 1 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee observe that the Department of Agricultural Research and Education has been given an approved IX Plan outlay of Rs. 2635.22 crore which includes Rs. 400 crore as a one time catch up grant for modernisation of Universities and Institutes of the ICAR and also for replacing outdated equipment with latest state-of-the-art equipment for carrying out its mandatory task of agricultural research. Further, the IX Plan outlay of Rs. 2635.22 crore also includes Rs. 135.33 crore towards externally aided projects, thus, leaving only Rs. 2100.00 crore as net Domestic Budgetary Support (DBS) for research and education activities of DARE/ICAR.

The Committee furthermore observe that scientists, economists and persons engaged in planning for the country have found that there are limits to increasing agricultural production through area expansion as the country has almost reached a plateau in so far cultivable land is concerned. For example, the area under foodgrains has more or less remained constant at a round 125 million hectare since 1970-71 which further gets reduced by 2 to 3 million hectare in some years due to aberrant weather conditions and abiotic/biotic stresses. The Government has announced the National Agenda in 1997-98 and has targeted doubling the foodgrains production in the next ten years. But instead of rapid growth in production and productivity, the country is witnessing an estimated foodgrains output of 199.1 million tonnes in 1999-2000 which would be about 4 million tonnes lower than the preceding year output. Thus 3 years of the 10 years time has already elapsed and the country's foodgrains production is fluctuating in a narrow margin every year.

In the opinion of the Committee, the only solution to achieve targeted rapid and desired foodgrains production comes with genuine and timely research work by increasing productivity levels.

Keeping this in view, the Committee firmly believe that the only way of achieving and maintaining self sufficiency in food and fodder for this and future generations of human and fauna of the nation is by making sufficient and timely investment in R&D activities of Agricultural Sector.

The Committee have also been recommending year after year for raising the Plan outlay for DARE/ICAR for the IX Plan to the level of at least 1% of Agricultural Gross Domestic Product (AGDP) with a tendency to gradually increasing it upto 2% of AGDP in future five year plans as have been happening in the agriculturally and economically developed countries of the world. However, to the utter dismay of the Committee the percentage share of Research is on the declining trend as a percentage of AGDP.

The Committee, therefore, once again strongly recommend for increasing the plan outlay for DARE/ICAR to the level of 1% of AGDP, to attain the objective of catching up with the productivity levels of the agriculturally and economically developed countries of the world as well as to double the foodgrain production of the country in 10 years.

Reply of the Government

5.2 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

The reiterated strong recommendation of the Committee that the IX Plan outlay of DARE/ICAR be increased to the level of 1% of AGDP has again been taken up with the concerned agencies i.e. the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance. For the Committee's similar earlier recommendation too, a request was made with Planning Commission and Ministry of Finance for submission of immediate Action Taken Report/Status Report. Both the concerned agencies have again been requested for immediate necessary action and reply.

Recommendation Sl. No. 2

Insufficient plan outlay for the year 2000-2001 to DARE/ICAR

5.3 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 2 had made the following observations/recommendations :

The Committee observe that the Department of Agricultural Research and Education proposed an outlay of Rs. 1082.59 crore for the Annual Plan 2000-2001 and against this proposed projection it has been allocated only Rs. 629.55 crore which includes Rs. 148.00 crore for World Bank and Externally Aided

Projects (EAPs) and Rs. 5.00 crore towards Mini Mission-I on Cotton Project, thus, leaving only Rs. 476.55 crore for Domestic Budgetary Support (DBS). In 1999-2000, the Department had proposed an outlay of Rs. 712.68 crore while it was granted only Rs. 573.50 crore which was further reduced to Rs. 504.00 crore at Revised Estimate stage. And this arbitrary financial cut of Rs. 69.50 crore at RE stage has adversely almost all the major plan schemes as reported by the Department during 1999-2000.

The Committee deplore this attitude of Planning Commission and Ministry of Finance for imposing arbitrary financial cuts at Revised Estimate stage year after year which drastically curbs the planned research activities of the Department which indirectly affects the agricultural output of the whole nation.

The Committee, therefore, are of the strong opinion that the Government is rather curbing the concerted efforts of the Department towards valuable research by including the external aid component in the DBS and reflecting this figure as the Budgetary Support for the Department. The Committee therefore recommend that the Department should be provided at least Rs. 1082.69 crore as requested by them for the year 2000-2001 and no cut should be imposed at RE stage. The Committee are also of the strong opinion that the Budgetary Support to the Department should not include the component of Externally Aided Projects and should be a pure Domestic Budgetary Support as a percentage of Agricultural Gross Domestic Product.

Reply of the Government

5.4 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

The recommendation of the Committee that the DARE/ICAR be provided at least Rs. 1082.69 crore as approved in its Annual Plan during 2000-2001 at Budget Estimates (BE) and that Domestic Budgetary Support to the Department should not include the component of EAPs which should be allocated separately and that there should be no cut imposed at Revised Estimates (RE) stage, has been sent to the Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission for initiating expeditious action. The Department has been requested the concerned agencies to increase its annual allocation to enable the Department to fund its ongoing schemes adequately and take up new initiatives which have largely remained non-starters due to the lack of funds.

Recommendation Sl. No. 3

Need for Proper Planning by Centre in regard to budgetary Allocations to the Ministries

5.5 The Committee in their **Seventh Report (1999-2000)** in Recommendation Sl. No. 3 had made the following observations/recommendations : –

The Committee observe that a budgetary allocation called the Budget Estimate for the year is promised to be given to each Ministry/Department. The Department after working out with the Planning Commission detailing their schemes proposed to spend the BE during the year on these schemes which have been agreed to principally. The Committee note with concern that while the Ministries/Departments get fully geared up for implementing various schemes suddenly in the month of October they receive a rude shock when abruptly hefty cuts are made in the BE and they are advised to spend less. At the Revised Estimate stage allocations are cut and all the schemes which were in the process of picking up momentum gets fizzled out. The cuts are imposed by the Ministry of Finance without taking either the Ministry or the Planning Commission or the Parliament into confidence.

The Committee observe that the Planning Commission, initially agreed principally to some of the new schemes of the Department and the Ministry/ Department make provisions for them from its meagre budgetary allocation. Ultimately these new schemes, do not take off *abinitio* because they do not get the approval by the Planning Commission itself or of some other authorities like EFC, SFC, CCEA etc. Thus the allocations to the schemes go unutilised in anticipation.

The Committee are greatly perturbed over such a sorry state of affairs in respect of scheme approval process by various concerned authorities. They desire that the projected Budgetary Allocations at the Budget Estimate stage should be made more realistic, so that the Ministry can accordingly fix physical as well as financial targets in a more practical manner. The Committee, therefore, recommend that due care should be taken by the Planning Commission, Ministry of Finance and other concerned authorities before making any cuts in the Budgetary Allocation at the RE stage of the Department, which in the opinion of the

Committee puts spokes in the wheels of progress of the nation. They also desire that the whole procedure prescribed for according post-budget approval for plan schemes should be thoroughly overhauled and simplified.

Reply of the Government

5.6 The Government in their reply have stated as under :-

The concern of the Committee that the budgetary allocation at the BE stage should be more realistic and that there should be no cut at RE stage has again been sent to Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission for necessary compliance. The allocation of funds at Budget Estimate (BE) level fall short of requirement and when the allocation is further reduced at Revised Estimates (RE) level, it becomes difficult for the Department to fund its schemes adequately which affects the generation of technology adversely. The Department has been requesting the Ministry of Finance not to reduce its allocation at RE level.

Recommendation Sl. No. 4

One Time Catch up Grant

5.7 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 4 had made the following observations/recommendations :-

The Committee note with disappointment that inspite of recommendations made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture repeatedly year after year in their Reports for the release of One Time Catch Up Grant of Rs. 500 crore during IX Plan, the Planning Commission has not been releasing any money against its own committed allocation of Rs. 400 crore towards this head for the IX Plan.

The Committee also note that the Department had proposed an allocation of Rs. 100 crore, Rs. 200 crore and Rs. 250 crore for the years 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 respectively but no money was provided.

The Committee have been informed that some Institutes and Universities of the Department are 30 to 40 years old and some of them are even 70 to 80 years old now. These institutes/universities badly need some funding for renovation of old

infrastructure and replacement of obsolete equipments and vital general utilities. The Committee are also informed that 49 ICAR institutes and 30 State Agricultural Universities and old Krishi Vigyan Kendras have been identified by the Department for such renovation during IX Plan. The One Time Catch up Grant is meant for these purposes.

The Committee are unhappy to point out that three vital years have already passed during the IX Plan but the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance have not provide even Rs 400.00 crore, which they had committed earlier towards this head during the IX Plan. Scientists cannot do justice to their research work with the decades old and obsolete research equipments and infrastucture. A conducive environment will lead to better results and less brain drain. The Committee feel, refusal of funds amount to gross injustice and casual approach shown towards the present and future agricultural scientists of the nation, who are struggling hard against all odds to find out ways and means to increase production and productivity of agricultural produces to feed billions of human beings at present and also for generations to come.

The Committee are also informed that due to lack of funds in some cases, and to meet this burning requirement, the Department had taken an administrative decision and asked the concerned old universities to utilise 20% and 30% of Plan Budget for the years 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 respectively, towards approved items of One Time Catch up Grant.

The Committee, appreciate the decision taken by the Department in this regard. The Committee strongly recommend that at least Rs. 250.00 crore should be provided to the Department for the year 2000-2001 immediately; and remaining amount of Rs. 250 crore should be given during 2001-2002, so that these renovation activities and replacement of obsolete equipments with latest state-of-the-art equipments could be completed at the earliest.

Reply of the Government

5.8 The Government in their reply have stated as under :-

The recommendation of the Committee has been forwarded to the Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission for allocating atleast Rs. 250 crore during 2000-2001 and also the remaining amount of Rs. 250 crore for the next financial

year 2001-2002 should be made available to the Department for renovation and replacement of obsolete equipments with latest state-of-the-art equipments in respect of old institutions/State Agricultural Universities operating under the National Agricultural Research System.

Recommendation Sl. No. 11

Krishi Vigyan Kendras for North Eastern States

5.9 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 11 had made the following observations/recommendations :-

The Committee have been informed that the Department has prepared a proposal for setting up of 25 KVKs for the North Eastern Region, by utilising the funds available in the non-lapsable Central Pool which could be not spent for North Eastern region. A KVK requires at least sixteen (16) officials at various stages, a sizable measure of land and equipment *i.e.* a lot of funds. KVKs are 100% funded by ICAR.

Looking into the difficult geographical and political situation in the North East the Committee feel that it will be tough task for individuals to run a KVK.

The Committee therefore, recommend that the ICAR should preferably sanction KVKs to potential NGOs of the region after having fully satisfied itself that the money will be used for the development of the KVK. The Committee are of the opinion that a lot of insurgency in the region is because of unemployment of the youth. KVK is a good method of keeping them busy and simultaneously bringing development in the region. However, individuals may not be a good choice for running KVKs. The Committee also feel that the proposal of the Department to utilize funds available in the non-lapsable Central Pool is a very good proposal and urge upon the Government to make these funds available to the Department. However, the Committee stress that even if such funds are not available the setting up of KVKs should not be stopped.

Reply of the Government

5.10 The Government in their reply have stated as under :-

The proposal for establishment of 25 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) exclusively for the North Eastern region has been submitted to the Planning Commission. The Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture has requested the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, for availability of additional financial resources out of the Non-lapsable Fund from Central Pool. The Hon'ble Minister apprised the Planning Commission indicating that the areas of North Eastern Region lack technological, socio-economical and infrastructural facilities of appropriate level, the potentialities of which remained to be tapped to the extent possible. The proposal was further discussed with the Planning Commission and the details of financial implications in this regard are being worked out for further submission to the Planning Commission.

Recommendation Sl. No. 12

Upgrading the Paddy Processing Centre – Thanjavur

5.11 The Committee in their Seventh Report (1999-2000) in Recommendation Sl. No. 12 had made the following observations/recommendations :-

The paddy processing centre at Thanjavur is the only centre which is directly under the control of the Department of Food Processing Industries. This Centre is mandated to concentrate on paddy processing and research. The Committee are informed that seed technology, research and processing form a part of mandate of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research rather than Department of Food Processing. Thus, the Committee feel that this centre can perform the dual function of being a research centre for the region and also disseminate the research information to the farmers by performing the functions of Krishi Vigyan Kendra also.

The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Department should consider taking over and upgrading the Institute into a Research-cum-Educational Institute for the region.

Reply of the Government

5.12 The Government in their reply have stated as under :

The information regarding assets, liabilities etc. of the Paddy Processing Research Centre (PPRC), Thanjavur is being collected from the Department of Food Processing Industries. Besides, two senior officers of the Engineering Division of the Council have been deputed to get first-hand information and take stock of various activities of the Centre which would help in taking a final decision.

Comments of the Committee

5.13 For Comments of the Committee please *see* Para No. 1.12 of the Chapter I of this Report.

NEW DELHI;
22 February, 2001

3 Phalguna, 1922 (Saka)

S.S. PALANIMANICKAM,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on Agriculture.

APPENDIX I

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE HELD ON 22ND FEBRUARY, 2001 IN COMMITTEE ROOM 'C', GROUND FLOOR, PARLIAMENT HOUSE ANNEXE, NEW DELHI

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1540 hrs.

Shri M. Master Mathan — *In the Chair*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Ram Tahal Chaudhari
3. Shri Ramdas Rupala Gavit
4. Shri Raghunath Jha
5. Shri Abul Hasnat Khan
6. Shri Y.G. Mahajan
7. Shri Haribhau Shankar Mahale
8. Shri Savshibhai Makwana
9. Shri Dalpat Singh Paraste
10. Shri Adi Shankar
11. Shri Tejveer Singh
12. Shri Mahboob Zahedi

Rajya Sabha

13. Smt. Jamana Devi Barupal
14. Shri Khagen Das
15. Shri Kailash Joshi
16. Shri Devi Prasad Singh

SECRETARIAT

1. Dr. (Smt.) Paramjeet Kaur Sandhu — *Joint Secretary*
2. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma — *Deputy Secretary*
3. Smt. Anita Jain — *Under Secretary*
4. Shri K.L. Arora — *Under Secretary*

In the absence of Hon'ble Chairman (AC), the Committee chose Shri M. Master Mathan to act as Chairman for the sitting under Rule 258(3) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. The Committee then took up the following Memoranda for their consideration and adoption :

Memoranda No.	Reports
1.	Draft Action Taken Report on 12th Report (12th Lok Sabha) on Cultivation of cotton of the M/o Agriculture (Deptt. of Agriculture and Co-operation).
2.	Draft Action Taken Report on 6th Report (13th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2000-2001) of the M/o Agriculture (Deptt. of Agriculture and Co-operation).
3.	Draft Action Taken Report on 7th Report (13th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2000-2001) of the M/o Agriculture (Deptt. of Agricultural Research and Education).
4.	Draft Action Taken Report on 8th Report (13th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2000-2001) of the M/o Agriculture (Deptt. of Animal Husbandry and Dairying).
5.	Draft Action Taken Report on 9th Report (13th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2000-2001) of the M/o Agriculture (Deptt. of Food Processing Industries).
6.	Draft Action Taken Report on 10th Report (13th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2000-2001) of the Ministry of Water Resources.

The Committee considered the Draft Reports one by one and adopted them without any change.

The members of the Committee, thereafter, authorised the Chairman to present all the above mentioned Reports to the House on a date and time convenient to him.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX II

{Vide Para 4 of Introduction of the Report}

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE SEVENTH REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE (1999-2000) (13TH LOK SABHA)

(i)	Total number of Recommendations	15
(ii)	Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government Serial Nos. 7,8,9,10,13,14 and 15	
	Total	7
	Percentage	46.66%
(iii)	Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies Serial No. 6	
	Total	1
	Percentage	6.67%
(iv)	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee Serial No. 5	
	Total	1
	Percentage	6.67%
(v)	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited Serial Nos. 1,2,3,4,11 and 12	
	Total	6
	Percentage	40%