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FOREWORD

The drawing up a comprehensive “Development Plan” for a chronically backward State like Orissa poses special difficulties. There are innumerable problems one has to face in modernising an economy where financial constrictions are enormous and the growth rate in many of the vital sectors is sluggish. Even after 50 years of planning the State is plagued by appalling poverty with very little diversification of its economy. We have a plan gap and a budget gap while many other States are marching ahead in building a modern and self-reliant economy. What is necessary in such an environment is to marshal the scarce resources of the State by concerted efforts to build its capital base in the various sectors to increase their productivity, so as to promote a rapid rise in the standard of living of the people offering opportunities of employment to all, who are employable and willing to work.

Having regard to these objectives, the Orissa Development Report 2001 prepared by the Planning Commission along with the Government of Orissa through Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for Development Studies, Bhubaneswar. The institute has made an assessment of material, capital and human resources of the state and examined the possibilities of augmenting and improving the areas which are deficient to achieve the goal that is aimed at. We have a vision to increase the rate of growth of income by 6.2 per cent per year during the Tenth Plan period by ensuring two important parameters, one is efficiency of or increased return to investment (this is extremely important in the face of severe resource crunch) and second, the poverty reducing capacity of different sectors (which is equally important since planning essentially implies that all the citizens of the country have the right to adequate means of livelihood). Planning does not mean adding together a number of projects. There should be a sense of priority alongwith a definite thrust and direction. The Orissa Development Report has made an attempt to meet the specific goals by overcoming the critical challenges that confront in the process of development.

Several areas, which require immediate attention, have been given importance in the Report. Agricultural growth to the extent of 4.5 per cent per annum has been envisaged with a view to increasing the level of income of the farming community and reducing poverty particularly in the rural areas. Greater emphasis has been laid on increasing the productivity and income of the farming community and reducing poverty particularly in the rural areas. Greater emphasis has been laid on increasing the productivity and income of small holdings, which dominate the agrarian economy of the State. This would be possible if there is adequate improvement in rural infrastructure, which will not only facilitate agricultural development but also provide scope for the improvement of agro-based and small industries to increase the by-products of agriculture and to increase employment opportunities. Another area, which require immediate attention, is the increase in allocation of resources to social sector to improve the quality of life and promote productive sectors of the economy. There are also many other important measures, which have been analysed in the Report. The main objective of the Report to build an Orissa that is free from want, ignorance and disease.

The Report is built on the edifice of the vision that we have for the State. Let us join together with determination achieving these objectives and building a vibrant, just and prosperous modern Orissa.