

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
ABSTRACT**

Agriculture & Cooperation Department - Guidelines for Implementation of Agriculture Investment Support Scheme ("Rythu Bandhu") in Telangana State – Orders - Issued.

AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (AGRI.II) DEPARTMENT

G.O.Rt.No. 231

Dated: 04-04-2018

Read the following:-

1. From the Commissioner of Agriculture, Hyderabad
Lr.No.R.S.S.C/42/2018, Dated 05-02-2018.
2. From the General Manager and Convener SLBC Letter No. GBU/
HYD/214, Dt: 23/03/2018.
3. From the General Manager and Convener SLBC Letter No. GBU/
HYD/216, Dt: 29/03/2018.

ORDER:

Agricultural development has a strong bearing on the lives of large population dependent on agriculture with low income. Telangana State is a predominantly rainfed state and it had one of the highest rate of farmer indebtedness in the country. Hence Debt waiver of Rs. 16124.38 crores was implemented with effect from September 2014, which gave huge relief to about 35 Lakh farmers in the state. Government significantly invested in power sector and is now providing 24 hours free quality power to all the farmers w.e.f. 1st January' 2018. This State embarked on a massive program of constructing new irrigation projects (Major & Medium) and completing the on-going projects, in addition to Kakatiya Mission aiming at revival of all the MI tanks in the state. Government also laid lot of emphasis on Micro Irrigation, Farm Mechanization, Creation of Additional storage space and Strengthening of Extension Machinery.

Further, Government of Telangana is contemplating for providing food security as well as income security to the farmers. Farmers' income in the state has been under stress in view of the ever growing input costs, unpredictable prices and rising family expenses, especially on health and education. Therefore the daunting task before Government of Telangana is to provide a sense of income security to the farmers.

2) KEY FEATURES OF THE SCHEME:

Agriculture in Telangana is characterized by stagnation, low productivity, frequent occurrence of droughts and low levels of public and private investments. Therefore Investment is the surest way to enhance agricultural productivity and also incomes of the farmers, besides breaking the vicious cycle of rural indebtedness. In order to ensure that the farmers do not fall again in to the debt trap, a new scheme called "Agriculture Investment Support Scheme" ("Rythu Bandhu") is proposed to be implemented from the year 2018-19 onwards, from the beginning of the Kharif (Vanakalam) season itself, to take care of the initial investment needs of every farmer. A budget of Rs 12000 crores has already been provided for the financial year 2018-19 and it includes Service charges payable to Banks and also administrative expenditure for implementing the scheme.

The broad details of the scheme are as follows:

Relieving the farmers from debt burden and not allowing them to fall in the debt trap again, this new scheme is proposed for providing investment support to Agriculture and Horticulture crops by way of a grant @ Rs. 4000/- per acre per farmer each season for purchase of inputs like (1)Seeds, (2)Fertilizers, (3)Pesticides, (4)towards Labour and other Investments in the field operations of farmers' choice for the crop season.

3) The Government held widespread consultations and a major decision was taken to take up farmer-wise survey of Agriculture Lands, entitled 'the Land Records Updation Program' (LRUP) and accordingly the Revenue Department has completed the task of updation and purification of land records and now has an updated data base of all agricultural lands.

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The updated and purified land record data base in the form of LRUP will form the basis for implementing the Investment Support Scheme ("Rythu Bandhu Scheme"). The LRUP data of Agricultural Lands has been finalized by the CCLA in March' 2018 and it will be adopted by the Commissioner & Director of Agriculture for working out the budget requirement and implementing the Investment Support Scheme.

4) A Cabinet Sub-committee was constituted on Investment Support Scheme to recommend detailed operational guidelines for implementation of the scheme with the following Ministers.

1) Sri Pocharam Srinivas Reddy, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture & Cooperation	Chairman
2) Sri T. Harish Rao, Hon'ble Minister for Irrigation & Marketing	Member
3) Sri Etela Rajender, Hon'ble Minister for Finance & Civil supplies	Member
4) Sri Tummala Nageshwar Rao, Hon'ble Minister for R&B, Woman & Child Development	Member
5) Sri P. Mahender Reddy, Hon'ble Minister for Transport	Member
6) Sri G. Jagadish Reddy, Hon'ble Minister for Energy & SC Development	Member

5) The Cabinet Sub-committee, based on the options exercised by majority of the farmers in the State, recommended that the amount may be disbursed in the form of cheques to enable the farmers to deposit the same in the Banks of their choice. The cheques will be handed over to the farmers in the villages in the Grama Sabhas during the months of April and May, 2018. It was decided to issue "Order Cheques" to farmers payable at par, in all the branches of the issuing Bank in the State. These Cheques will neither be account payee cheques nor bearer cheques but Order Cheques. It shall be the obligation of the Bank to confirm the identity of the farmer before the actual disbursement of the amounts to him. These cheques will be payable at par in all the branches of the designated bank in the State.

6) The SLBC, Telangana after consultations with all the Banks has furnished a Mandal-wise list of Banks. For every mandal in the state, a designated Bank has been identified. The Order Cheques will be payable at any of the branches of the designated Bank, while the farmer would have freedom to encash the Cheques in any branch of that Bank in the State of Telangana payable at par.

7) IMPLEMENTATION:

Based on the updation and purification of land records, taken up by the Revenue Department, actual number of farmers and extent owned by them in acres is determined. The amount of grant under the Rythu Bandhu Scheme is Rs. 4000/- per acre per crop season. This implies that if the farmer cultivates the land during Rabi also, he is eligible to receive another grant of Rs. 4000/- per acre of cropped area. The scheme will be implemented by the Agriculture department under the leadership of concerned District Collectors from the year 2018-19, with the assistance and coordination of Revenue Department.

The above amount will be distributed through the "Order Cheques" before beginning of the Kharif season. Steps will be taken to avoid crowding of farmers at Bank Branch Level and also to facilitate smooth distribution of cheques in the Grama Sabhas. The Cheques will be distributed during April and May months till the entire task of distribution of Cheques is completed under the close supervision of District Collectors, JCs, DAOs and RDOs concerned.

8) PORTAL FOR SCHEME IMPLEMENTATION (Management Information System)

The National Informatics Center (NIC), Telangana State is designated as nodal agency for development of MIS portal for Rythu Bandhu Scheme. The State Informatics Officer, NIC and Convener, SLBC should ensure seamless flow of data between their respective softwares (NIC and Banks) to enable the implementing officers for retrieving the data of the farmers along with the cheque numbers for obtaining the proper acknowledgement.

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The portal should have the facility of updating the daily cheque disbursements, Revenue Village-wise and AEO cluster-wise and the dash board is to be provided depicting the daily cheque disbursement and amount disbursed.

User IDs, accounts have to be created at all levels right from CMO/Hon'ble Minister for Agrl/CS/Prl Sec (Finance)/Prl Sec (A&C)/Commissioner of Agriculture /District Collector/DAO/ADA/MAO/AEO in the Rythu Bandhu Portal for viewing the dashboard and also updating by the implementing officers.

9) CONSTITUTION OF STATE LEVEL MONITORING COMMITTEE:

The scheme is a top priority scheme to be implemented with various departments and stakeholders, therefore a State Level Monitoring Committee with the following members is constituted:

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| 1. APC & Principal Secretary (A&C Dept.) | - | Chairman |
| 2. Commissioner & Director of Agriculture | - | Convener |
| 3. Joint Secretary (Finance Dept.) | - | Member |
| 4. Convener, SLBC | - | Member |
| 5. State Information Officer, NIC | - | Member |

The committee will meet periodically to review and monitor the implementation of the scheme in each season.

10) Government after careful examination of the matter, hereby issue the following detailed guidelines for implementation:

GUIDELINES FOR INVESTMENT SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION:

- The Commissioner of Agriculture has to obtain the required data in a secured format (basic details being not amenable for editing) from Chief Commissioner of Land Administration and work out the beneficiary-wise amounts with the help of NIC through development of separate MIS portal.
- The SLBC will furnish the format and other technical details for transmitting the data in a secured format.
- The Commissioner of Agriculture, with the help of NIC, will furnish the data in the prescribed secured format to the banks by extracting the information from the LRUP data base.
- The Banks should ensure security of the data provided to them.
- It shall be responsibility of the Banks to ensure that the payee details and amounts printed on Cheques as per the data made available to them.
- The Banks shall provide MIS as required by the Commissioner & Director of Agriculture.
- The Banks shall furnish the data, farmer-wise, along with Cheque numbers at the time of handing over cheques to the C&DA.
- The SLBC has proposed (6) Nationalized banks and (2) Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) for implementing the scheme.
- The cost of printing of cheques and service charges payable to Banks shall be decided by the SLBC.
- The details of participating banks and number of mandals covered by them, as decided by the SLBC are as follows:

Name of the Bank	Number of Mandals
1) State Bank of India	251
2) Andhra Bank	130
3) Syndicate Bank	38
4) Corporation Bank	31
5) Indian Overseas Bank	27
6) Canara Bank	23
7) Telangana Gramina Bank	33
8) Andhra Pradesh Gramina Vikas Bank	35

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- Keeping in view the above details and based on the LRUP data base, the exact number of instruments/Cheques to be printed bank-wise will be intimated by the C&DA.
- The following will be printed on the cheque:
 - (1) Name of the Scheme "Rhythu Bandhu", (2) Name of the Pattadar along with Pattadar Passbook Number (3) Name of the Revenue Village, Mandal and District (4) Amount and (5) Specimen Signature of Commissioner & Director of Agriculture.
- The Cheques will pre-printed by the Banks in the given time frame
- The cheque is neither an account payee nor bearer cheque. It will be in the form of "Order cheque". The farmer has freedom to encash it in any branch of that bank in the entire state, duly producing the ID proof like Pattadar Pass Book or Aadhar Card.
- The Revenue Department is responsible for the veracity of the Farmers' data (LRUP) and MAOs are responsible for organization of entire cheque distribution programme in their concerned Mandals with the help of Tahsildars, including proper documentation, considering the requirements of subsequent Audit teams under the supervision of DAOs and ADAs.
- In addition to six nationalized banks, some of the branches of APGVB and TSGB will also participate in disbursement amounts through cheques to farmers on behalf of SBI in order to have better coverage of villages and for quicker distribution. Mandals will be allotted to these two Banks also.
- If the beneficiary amount equals and exceeds an amount of Rs. 50,000/-, two cheques have to be prepared and accordingly number of instruments have to be calculated. (Single cheque up to an amount of Rs. 49,990/-only).
- The Commissioner of Agriculture should communicate the approved specimen signature in the digital format, to be printed on the instruments/cheques, to SLBC and Nodal Banks to enable banks to print cheques as per the approved specimen.
- The Commissioner of Agriculture has to open accounts in all the participating banks and only Centralized account/accounts should be opened at Hyderabad.
- The State Bank of India has requested to open multiple accounts as a special case, so as to overcome the problem of (6) digit number on the cheques / instruments, since it is having more than 10,00,000 cheques to be issued and the cheques for each account shall be issued only up to 9,99,999 as it is valid up to (6) digits only. Further, they have informed that concurrent access to only six accounts by all the branches of the SBI would increase the load on the core banking system and would delay the payment process. The SBI, therefore, suggested opening of (30) accounts (i.e., district-wise only for SBI) at Hyderabad to facilitate easy operation of MIS and also for smooth and quicker disbursement of amounts to the Pattadars. Andhra Bank requested for two accounts and all other banks agreed to open one account each.
- The Commissioner of Agriculture shall work out handing over and taking over protocol of printed 'Order Cheques' to be delivered by the Bankers.
- The Commissioner of Agriculture should authorize, by way of issuing an order, a team of Senior Officers, who would be receiving the instruments from the Banks.
- SLBC has to communicate the addresses of the cheques delivery points of the Banks to the Agriculture Department and also make suitable arrangements at such locations, including Security precautions.
- Bankers have to handover the instruments sorted Village-Wise and bundled Mandal-Wise and District-Wise at their designated places at Hyderabad to the Commissioner of Agriculture/ his Authorized officers.

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- The Team of officers and staff authorized by the Commissioner of Agriculture will receive the instruments from the Banks and enter the same in the stock register, after due verification.
- The DAO along with his team of officers/MAOs will receive the cheques/instruments at the designated places on the notified date and time, after verifying the same in detail, cheque-wise and under proper acknowledgment.
- The following officers are nominated as State level team, who will assist the APC & Principal Secretary and C&DA in implementing the Investment Support Scheme:
 1. Sri. L. Venkatram Reddy, Director of Horticulture & Sericulture
 2. Smt. G. Laxmi Bai, Director of Agricultural Marketing
 3. Sri. S. Manikandan, Convener, SLBC
 4. Dr. K. Keshavulu, Director of TSSOCA
 5. Sri. G. Srinivas Rao, Additional RCS
 6. Sri. C.H.V.Sai Prasad, Joint Secretary to Govt., Finance Dept.,

DISTRICT LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION:

- Scheme will be implemented by the DAOs under the leadership and supervision of concerned District Collectors with the assistance of the Revenue Department.
- At the District Level, a Special cell shall be created by the District Collector with Joint Collector, District Agriculture Officer, DH&SO, DCO, LDM and DIO, NIC/e-District Managers as committee members for close monitoring.
- The District Collectors should immediately call for a joint meeting of JCs, DAOs, RDOs, ADAs, Tahsildars, MAOs and AEOs for explaining the modalities of implementing the Investment Support Scheme at District level.
- The District Collector also should hold a separate meeting with the all the LDMs and Managers of Mandal Nodal Banks (nominated by the SLBC to all the Mandals) along with the DAOs, RDOs, ADAs and MAOs for implementing the scheme at district level to discuss the issues relating to distribution of cheques and for proper coordination
- The DAOs in consultation with the District Collectors will finalize the Village-wise schedule for distribution of cheques in their Districts.
- The District Collector should appoint Special Officers, each for a group of Mandals, for smooth implementation and proper monitoring of the program.
- The services of District Cooperative Officers and their staff may be utilized in the implementation of Scheme.
- The instruments received from the banks at Hyderabad will be collected by the DAOs and their authorized teams of officers at the designated places, duly verifying the same cheque-wise under proper acknowledgment.
- The DAOs after making Mandal-wise entries in a register will hand over the Mandal-wise and village-wise cheques to the MAOs concerned with proper acknowledgment.
- The MAOs will make entries of details of Revenue village-wise cheques in a register and sort out the village-wise instruments into AEOs cluster-wise under the supervision of divisional ADAs.
- The MAOs will hand over the village-wise bundles of the instruments to the AEOs concerned with proper acknowledgment.
- The Commissioner of agriculture should prepare a meticulous plan of providing proper security, from taking over of printed cheques from the bankers at Hyderabad till their distribution in the villages in consultation with the concerned District Collectors.

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- The AEOs / MAOs should intimate the schedule of the villages well in advance so that all the farmers are available for receiving the cheques on the scheduled day.
- The VROs/VRAs will be instructed to arrange for the beat of tom tom in the villages well before the scheduled date of disbursement, for the benefit of all the stakeholders.
- The VROs/VRAs concerned should compulsorily be present along with the AEOs on the day of cheques disbursement to facilitate the identification of beneficiaries.
- The AEOs and VROs will facilitate the distribution of the cheques as per the village-wise schedule in the Grama Sabhas, duly involving the public representatives by taking proper acquittances under the direct supervision both the MAOs and Tahsildars.
- Intensive effort shall be made to see that the Pattadars should personally collect the cheques in the Gram sabhas
- The Tahsildars and MAOs should meticulously plan distribution of cheques in the villages and deploy adequate staff from other villages for taking acquittances, regulation of queues etc;
- The AEOs should maintain Cheque-Wise/Farmer-Wise acquittance registers and take their signatures/Thumb impressions from them, while disbursing the cheques.
- The details of the Gender, Age, Aadhar number, mobile number, Caste category (SC/ST/BC/Minority/OC) of the farmers etc; should be mentioned in the pre-printed Acquittance Register, to be provided by the C&DA, with the assistance of NIC team.
- The DAOs and MAOs will ensure that all the public representatives, including the Coordinators of 'Rythu Samanvaya Samithies' in the District are informed about the village-wise schedule in their jurisdictions so as to enable them to participate in the cheque distribution programme.
- District Agriculture Officer will be assisted by District Horticulture and Sericulture Officer and District Cooperative Officers and their field staff in implementing the Scheme at District level.
- The DAOs, DH & SOs, DCOs, RDOs and ADAs should intensively tour the villages and supervise the cheque distribution programme daily in their jurisdiction.
- Every cheque shall be delivered to the Pattadar only and no nominee is permissible. However, if any Pattadar is sick or completely disabled, the Officers team can visit their house and deliver the cheque, after due identification.
- Collectors should give adequate publicity with regard to mode of implementing the scheme in the districts during the entire period, particularly making appeal to the Pattadars to attend Gram Sabhas and receive the cheques under proper identification.
- The Cheques which remain "Un-disbursed" in the Gram Sabha shall be listed out separately and must be disbursed only with the joint approval of MAO and Tahsildar concerned within a period of one month. The Collectors should devise a calendar and a mechanism to facilitate and closely monitor the distribution of cheques, which remained undisbursed in the Gram sabhas. After that, all such Cheques should be surrendered to C&DA, who is a cheque issuing authority.
- The "Un-encashed or Time barred Cheques (more than three months)" will be Re-validated by only the cheque issuing authority i.e.; Commissioner & Director of Agriculture.

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- The DAOs, ADAs and MAOs should ensure that every Cheque should be accounted for. Any lapse and negligence on any Officer at any level will be dealt very seriously.
- Identification of the Pattadar is very crucial in implementing the Scheme through the distribution of 'Order Cheques'. It should be ensured that at the time of issuing cheques, beneficiary produces Printed Pattadar Pass Book as well as Aadhar card for verification of identity of the Pattadars. The AEOs and VROs are jointly responsible for the identification of the farmers.
- In case by the time of disbursement of cheques in the village, if the Pattadar Pass Books are not distributed, the Tahsildars should take the print out of first page PPB of all the farmers from his/her log-in, attest them and make them available to both the VRO and AEO concerned in the Gram sabhas.
- The Collectors may also plan to serve the printed and attested first pages of Pattadar Pass Books to the pattadars in the villages prior the scheduled day/days of distribution of cheques itself, it will facilitate their proper identification as well as smooth and quicker distribution. This will also help in easy identification of pattadars in the bank branches for disbursement of amounts to them.
- NIC will make arrangements for pushing the farmers data in to their Samsung Tabs available with all the AEOs, which need to be utilized by them.
- The Bank shall pay the amounts to the farmers after identifying the persons as per norms and provide day-wise disbursement details to Government. NIC may facilitate to all the Banks by providing a suitable window for viewing the data and it may be worked out in consultation with the SLBC.
- The overall responsibility of implementing the scheme in the districts in a smooth and successful manner by utilizing all the resources and machinery available at their command rests with the district collector concerned.

REPORTING SYSTEM:

- After disbursement of cheques in the villages as per schedule, the AEOs should upload the cheque disbursement particulars beneficiary-wise in the portal by 6.00 PM of every day.
- The details of number of VIPs and public representatives attended should be updated in the portal.
- The MAOs shall ensure the uploading of Cheque distribution particulars is completed by 6.00 PM by the AEOs in their jurisdiction and report the same to the ADAs.
- The ADAs shall ensure and inform the DAOs about the completion of uploading of data pertaining to his jurisdiction.
- The DAOs should ensure and inform the District Collector and Commissioner of Agriculture about the completion of uploading of data pertaining to his jurisdiction by 6.30 PM.
- The progress/status can be viewed on the dash board at all levels

SCOPE OF AUDIT:

- After the completion of distribution of all the Cheques, to ensure accuracy of the disbursement of cheques to the farmers, Audit has to be conducted.
- The Audit teams will verify the registers of cheques /instruments, acquaintance registers and other relevant records.
- Audit will be taken up in accordance with the usual procedure prescribed by RBI / NABARD/ CAG
- The audit may be conducted by concurrent auditors, statutory auditors or special auditors or CAG.
- The Banks should furnish the evidence viz. copy of cheque to satisfy the CAG, whenever sought by the Government.

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Monitoring and Grievance Redressal Mechanism:

There will also be a suitable monitoring and grievance redressal mechanism established by the District Collectors at Mandal, ADA Division and District level and similarly by the C&DA at State level and every representation has to be disposed within (30) days, duly examining the case in consultation with the Revenue Department under the guidance of District Collector.

11) The expenditure of the scheme including the cost of printing cheques and incidental expenditure may be met from the budget provided under MH 2401 Agriculture - 800 Other expenditure - SH(31) Investment Support Scheme.

12) This order issues with the concurrence of Finance Department vide their U.O. Note No. 1067-B/79/A1/EBS.II/2018, Dt: 04/04/2018.

(BY ORDER AND IN THE NAME OF THE GOVERNOR OF TELANGANA)

C. PARTHASARATHI
APC & PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

To

The Commissioner & Director of Agriculture, Hyderabad

The Director of Horticulture & Sericulture, Hyderabad

The Director of Agricultural Marketing, Hyderabad.

The State Information Officer, NIC, Hyderabad

The Commissioner of Cooperation & RCS

All Collectors/JCs/DAOs/DH&SOs/LDMs/DCOs

Copy to:

The Spl. Chief Secretary (Revenue Dept.)

The Director, Office of the Chief Commissioner of Land Administration, Hyderabad

The Convener, SLBC, The President, SLBC and all Nodal Banks in the State

The P.S. to Chairman "Telangana Rashtra Rythu Samanvaya Samithi", Hyderabad.

The P.S. to Minister (Finance)

The P.S. to Minister (A&C)

The P.S. to Chief Secretary

The P.S. to Principal Secretary (Finance)

The P.S. to Secretary to Chief Minister

The P.S. to Principal Secretary to Chief Minister

The P.S. to APC & Principal Secretary, Agriculture & Cooperation Dept.

The General Administration (Cabinet) Department.

//FORWARDED BY ORDER//

SECTION OFFICER