

## Canal Excavation Plan

Our national economy being agro-based, concerted efforts are made to develop the agricultural sector. And measures ranging from use of improved varieties of seeds to application of appropriate technology are being taken to make these efforts meaningful. But these alone would not. It is improved irrigation facilities that constitute the lifeline of crop cultivation round-the-year. Serious attention is therefore being paid to improvement of irrigation system. Apart from sinking deep tubewells, canals are being dug throughout the country for conservation of water resources facilitating local irrigation facilities. The 193 canals that were excavated during the last winter have proved so vital for cultivation particularly during the lean months that a five year plan on canal excavation through voluntary labour is reportedly being prepared. This is not all. A target has also been set to dig 750 canals during the next winter.

Our strategy aims at self-sufficiency in food within the shortest possible time by doubling food production in the country. And for the purpose new methods and technology are being adopted and research work done to develop high yielding varieties of crop seeds. It is heartening that some

of these research works have met with success, resulting in development of HYV rice like BR-10, BR-II and others. Improved irrigation facilities will prove a boon to all the efforts being made to achieve self-sufficiency. Meanwhile, it may be mentioned that the canals hitherto excavated in the country have an encouraging impact on crop cultivation. Apart from contributing greatly towards increasing wheat production in the last winter, these have helped turn one-crop land in most of the areas into multi-crop land. Increase in number of canals following implementation of the proposed five-year plan on canal excavation in the days to come is bound to help bring a radical change in the agricultural sector, thus having a tremendous effect on the national economy.

In this context, it may be recalled that the entire deep tube-well network in the country will reportedly be brought under electrification system during the Second Five-Year Plan period. This scheme must also be properly and expeditiously implemented. The peasants should therefore form cooperative societies for execution of deep tubewell project which will also add greatly to the improvement of irrigation system in the country.