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# Establishment Of Agricultural Estates In Bangladesh

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**UPAZILA Estates.** Since the Upazila is the centre of all development activities of our nation, the Agricultural Estates will be the centre of agricultural activities in the Upazila. These Upazila Estates will be slightly different from the private enterprises of Agricultural Estates. These will be the Government sponsored Farm and will be organised at Upazila level under the supervision of one technical expert with requisite practical training in all fields. This will help the young technical graduates to improve their knowledge and human quality. They will produce all hybrid cattle, improved vegetable seeds, poultry eggs, fish etc and distribute to the rural people to replace their old stock. These estates will be production oriented and also a demonstrative and training Farm on improvised agriculture.

Capital Outlays each project within the Agricultural Estates will cost about Taka 15-35 lacs and each Upazila Estates will cost about Taka 40 lacs. The total capital expenditure for proposed 10 Agricultural Estates and 100 Upazila Estates will be (Taka 30 crores + Taka 40.00 crores) i.e. Taka 70 crores which is one time expenditure but produce continuous output worth of Tk. 25 crores annually. It also shown that each project will earn marginal net profit Taka 1.0-1.75 lacs after meeting all recurring expenditure to be made by the entrepreneurs.

**Cost Analysis:** The Estates in private initiative will not be sustained as the net annual income is only Taka 1.00 to 1.75 lacs which will be more than bank interest of total investment. So, Government should arrange for allotment of land, infrastructural development and capital investment for the project as grant from its own exchequer or from foreign aid.

Moreover, they should be offered soft loan for their recurring expenditure at the rate of 10% interest from 2nd year which may be raised later when they will attain higher production and higher income. The Government should take the land revenue from the sponsors from 2nd year of the allotment @ Taka 500/- to 1,000/- per acre according to quality of the land.

The Government can also fix a levy of Taka 1.00-2.00 lacs accordingly to size and income of the project after certain period. In Upazila level Government will earn Taka 1.00 crore annually in addition to extension services to the rural farmers.

## SPONSORING AUTHORITY

The task is very important in our national perspective. A country is not an independent country in a true sense unless it is self-sufficient in food. It will be a type of colonisation only. It can buy food, but can never help to achieve food self-sufficiency. Bangladesh imports foodgrains worth of Taka 1,200.00 - 1,500.00 crores every year including food aids. Hence it much be given top priority. Countries like Malaysia and Philippines gave top priority to agriculture and executed agricultural schemes directly under their heads of the States and attained food sufficiency in a very short period of time. With the present structure of the Government, the programme may be sponsored by a Ministry or Cell directly under the Honourable President. Otherwise, arrangement of fund, land and other Government supports will not be available in time. It may also be sponsored by the Agricultural Ministry with full authority to organise such ventures as a

step to attain food self-sufficiency. This Cell should be comprised of experienced agricultural experts of various disciplines who will extend all co-operation to the entrepreneurs in technical side and for all services from the Government.

**Terms and Conditions to Entrepreneurs.** There must be clear terms and conditions to be offered by the Government for execution of the Scheme by the entrepreneurs. The allotment of land and capital expenditure is to be made provisional for a period of 5-8 years which may be withdrawn if the entrepreneurs are not likely to achieve the target within the stipulated time to be fixed for each project. The soft loan for recurring expenditure may be given under the supervision of the Government organisation and the Bank responsible for controlling the activities of Estates. It should be rather in instalments with conditions to reimburse on the progress of preceding instalments and on concurrence from the Controlling Organisations. In Japan, the supervisory loan (paid under the supervision of Bank staff with responsibility of realisation by him) has been proved successful. The process will ensure maximum realisation and continuous use of loan. A detailed planning and modus operandi of the scheme allotment of project, reimbursement of loan, etc may be prepared before executing the projects.

**Development and Facilities.** Any Organisation formed should have enough scope for development. The Estates should be very closely supervised by a Government Organisation for all out development and assistance for solving the problems. Development should be made by promoting management improve-

ment of soil, rich marketing of products and bi-products, adequate supply of agriculture inputs over and above the amenities of life. Continuous efforts must be made to attain optimum yield of the products. To control law and order situation against local hostilities, police assistance is to be ensured. If require, the entrepreneurs with suitable background may be given authority for Magistral power to have complete control within their area. The entrepreneurs may be given training on advanced agriculture. The infrastructural network should be developed by concerned departments. The facilities for procurement of machineries and equipment for billing and manufacture of bi-products must be ensured by the Government.

**Conclusion:** No doubt, the scheme is a very difficult proposition and needs very careful attention. To make it successful we need the following:

- Appropriate authority of the Government.
- Appropriate Private Sponsors.
- Appropriate Financial Support.
- Appropriate land.

However, if the people of developed countries can make these successful, there is no reason why we cannot do it. But once we start it, we cannot afford to fail and no room should be left for failure. Otherwise, it will set a bad example and will discourage the foreign aid giving agencies and also many others engaged in the field of agriculture. So, we should take it as a challenge to attain food self-sufficiency in Bangladesh and regenerate rural economy in a shortest possible time.

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