

Peoples' campaign for planning and veterinary profession

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As we all know Peoples' Campaign for Planning, launched by Government of Kerala, is definitely a land mark in the development of our State. It is true that implementing the movement as envisaged, is still a dream. But if all concerned will rise up to the occasion in true spirit and carry out their moral responsibilities, there is no doubt that the lapses and short falls happened in the last 50 years, can be made up within the next 5-10 years' span.

It is at this occasion, we, the Veterinarians, have to seriously consider as to what role we have to play at this crucial juncture. At many platforms, we hear that Animal Husbandry Sector has been the major contributor to our economy. Seldom do we hear that Veterinarians are responsible for this achievement. Even the meagre role, played by us, is often seen underestimated by authorities and politicians. Though we cannot claim full credit for this status, we have not so far been able to claim the eligible share of the credit. This fact is evident from our own experiences while demanding for better service conditions of our colleagues in service and for better status and recognition for our profession. The indifference and slackness of ours are also contributory factors. So we must realise that now is our chance to show the public and authorities that we have the major role in achieving the developmental target.

The Present State of affairs

In the previous set up, only the concerned governmental departments were involved in formulating and implementing various projects, utilising plan funds. Under the present system, a definite role of the public has also been incorporated in the process and the local bodies are earmarked as the implementing agencies. The important point to be noted is that in the implementation of animal husbandry activities, the technical authority of veterinarians has been retained with us only and it has not been transferred to anybody else. But it looks that many of our colleagues in service forget this fact and they act as though everything has been transferred to public, and implementing officers are only machinery to incur

expenditure, under the direction of the local body authorities. The local body representatives, in most places, also are under the impression that they are the sole authority to implement programmes at their discretion. In many instances, there exist differences of opinion between local body representatives and implementing veterinary officers. Complaints, allegations, counter allegations and even agitations under political interest, are continuing. There is also massive propaganda through medias that the quality of implementation of animal husbandry programmes is the poorest. The net result is that our profession has become the victim to bear the insults, which naturally pain all the vets, whether in service or outside. Many of our colleagues, those not in government service as well as retired personnel, appear indifferent in these matters and remain aloof as though it is a sole departmental matter.

The lapses committed

During the last year, it was very late, when everybody realised the role of different implementing agencies and the procedures. True, the Department of Animal Husbandry and the IVA took an active interest in the beginning in imparting guidelines and know-how. The matter ended there only, as there was no follow up. In the hurry to transfer powers and institutions from departments to local bodies, and release of Government orders on norms and procedures of project implementation, which were modified several times, everybody was put in utter confusion. Our Departmental implementing officers did not care or did not get sufficient time to prepare technically perfect projects. So naturally somebody else, mostly not connected with animal husbandry field, took up the job and several ready made stereotype projects were ready overnight. These dummy projects were not later subjected to technical scrutiny as they were branded by Planning Board as simple projects not requiring technical sanction.

Our Departmental implementing officers, most of them being inexperienced juniors, were forced to implement these substandard projects in the most shabby way, when they

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