

**AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKET COMMITTEE  
(APMC) ACT IN UTTARAKHAND AND ITS IMPACT ON  
AGRIBUSINESS**

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**ABSTRACT**

*[Lack of adequate marketing facilities in the agricultural sector has remained one of the most talked about bottlenecks in the efforts for wellbeing of the agriculture dependent population in the newly formed state of Uttarakhand. Following the guidelines of the model national Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act of 2003, Uttarakhand also adopted the Act in the year 2011 with a hope that the Act would streamline the marketing possibilities for farmers and the sector would flourish with new investments pouring in through increased private participation. The present article, with an attempt to review the performance of the Act in the state of Uttarakhand, highlights that not only the Act has failed in improving the marketing opportunities for the agricultural sector, it has in reality squeezed the market for the common producers due to inordinate delays in institutionalizing the Act and other factors related to governance of the Act]*

**[Keywords:** APMC, Agricultural marketing, Uttarakhand agriculture, agribusiness in Uttarakhand, Marketing Committee]

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## Introduction

Agriculture in Uttarakhand has remained non-performing compared to other sectors of the state economy since the inception of the state in 2000. Between 2004-05 and 2012-13, the gross state domestic product (GSDP) grew by around 153 % compared to meagre 21 % growth in agricultural GSDP. The stagnation in the countryside might have been the primary reason for rampant outmigration<sup>1</sup> from the state compared to Chhatisgarh and Jharkhand (Singh, 2013). Although, the sector uses only around 13% of the geographical land, it provides employment to almost half of the workers in the state; albeit at a very subsistence level in the hilly regions (MOSPI: 2013). Being a mountainous state, the scope of spatial expansion in the sector agriculture was never a rational proposition. So, most policy circles including the corporate lobbies<sup>2</sup> have been advocating for possibilities of value addition, improvements in postharvest management and adequate marketing facilities in the state<sup>3</sup>. In its memorandum submitted on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009 to Shri B. C. Khanduri, then Chief Minister of the State, a delegation from CII in its efforts to advocate for linking Uttarakhand economy to Eastern Freight corridor, did make a strong case for immediate implementation of Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee Act in the state along the lines of model APMC Act 2003<sup>4</sup> floated by the ministry of Agriculture, Government of India<sup>5</sup>.

Uttarakhand amended the model Act in 2011 renamed as Uttarakhand Agricultural Produce (Development and Marketing) Act 2011. However, the preparations had started much earlier. In the year 2009 itself, chief minister had handed over the model Act to a subcommittee that visited several states including Andhra Pradesh to study the prospects of the Act. It was expected that soon after the enactment in the state assembly, there would be a remarkable change in the scenario of agricultural marketing in the state (Prashant, 2011). The optimism was evident from the remarks of the agriculture secretary Mr. Om Prakash to the media, "through the new Act, the government would open doors for private investors like Reliance Industries and ITC which have recently entered the agriculture sector in a big way. We have done our job; it is now for the private players to take benefit of the proposed act"<sup>6</sup>. The present paper is an attempt to highlight an assessment of the impact of the APMC Act on the growth of agri-business in the state after three years of its implementation. The paper presents the findings of a study sponsored

by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and undertaken by the authors during August-December 2013 (Mohanty and Singh, 2013).

### **The GIZ Study, Data and Methods**

The study sponsored by GIZ sought to undertake a situation analysis of the agricultural marketing in the state since the enactment of APMC Act vis-à-vis the stated objectives of the Act and to assess the extent to which these objectives have been addressed in Uttarakhand. The study also attempted to highlight the concerns, bottlenecks and the hurdles that have restricted the scope of the Act in the state and made some policy recommendations for the effective implementations of the Act.

Since the Act was supposed to build an ambience of market promotion for the agricultural produce, it was expected to have a bearing on the size of the market, exports of agro produce, growth of agro processing centres, growth in capital formation in the sector and private investment in the sector, growth in the institutional infrastructure and price support for the farmers after the implementation of the Act.

In order to study the impact of the Act on export promotion and size of market outside Uttarakhand, we have studied schemes and programmes like Assistance to States for Developing Export Infrastructure and Allied Activities (ASIDE)<sup>7</sup>, Market Access Initiative (MAI) Scheme, Marketing Development Assistance (MDA), formation of Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India Limited (ECGC), National Export Insurance Account (NEIA), institutionalization of India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), promotion of E-TRADE Project and formation of Export Promotion Councils (EPCs). In order to study the investment scenario and the growth in agri processing units, we have referred to budget documents of the state government, Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), and the information from District Industries Centre (DIC), Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES) and the annual reports of various other agencies. In order to study the price scenario, we have used the daily arrival and price data available from the AGMARKNET website. In order to assess the performance of the Act in promoting some specific interventions such as contract farming etc, we have also conducted some interviews with

Mandi Samiti officials in Dehradun, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Kotdwar and Haldwani. In some specific cases, in order to study the impact of the Act on price and arrival, we have used dummy variable based univariate analysis to assess the differences before and after the implementation of the Act. The major findings are summarised in the sections below.

### APMC Act in Uttarakhand and Export Promotion

The analysis suggests that the share of Uttarakhand in ASIDE, is not only showing a declining trend, it also has also declined in absolute terms in recent years after implementation of the Act (Table-1). Since the scheme is a demand driven one, this may clearly indicate apathy from the side of state government to demand for and utilize funds to develop infrastructure towards agricultural marketing and such other facilities in the state.

**Table-1: Year-wise releases of funds under ASIDE Scheme (Rs. Crore)**

State	Himachal Pradesh	Uttaranchal	Total India (except North Eastern States)	Uttarakhand as % of total
2004-05	5.0	5.0	282.4	1.8
2005-06	5.5	5.3	343.0	1.5
2006-07	6.0	0.0	322.5	0.0
2007-08	6.0	0.0	402.3	0.0
2008-09	6.0	5.8	396.6	1.5
2009-10	5.7	0.0	449.1	0.0
2010-11	5.7	5.5	487.4	1.1
2011-12	5.1	6.0	498.8	1.2
2012-13*	5.3	2.5	426.3	0.6

\* As on 21.12.2012

Source: Data from the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics as reported in APEDA

In order to promote the exports of agricultural products from the state the government of Uttarakhand had initiated development of four Agri Exports Zones (AEZs) in the state. These include horticulture crops, medicinal plants and herbs, litchi and basmati rice. The volume of exports of litchi after 2011 was less than the volume in 2010. Even the unit price of exported litchi was lower in 2012 than in 2010. Between 2008-09 and 2009-10, the total exports of

horticultural products including the processed products and the seed declined marginally. The total area under fruit, vegetables and spices and their output in the country increased significantly. But in Uttarakhand, except for spices, in other horticultural crops there was no significant change in the area under horticultural production. Again, in spices, although there is an increase in the area under crops, there hardly was any impact on the production and in fact the yield rate, although placed at a much higher level than the Indian average, declined in the state. Even after implementation of APMC Act, there hardly was any progress in creation of new export oriented units in the state. As per the reports of the Ministry of Commerce, there were only three formally approved exports oriented SEZs and two notified SEZs in Uttarakhand compared to 580 formally approved and 374 notified SEZs in the country as on 31 December 2010. After two years, as on 11 February 2013, there were 577 formally approved and 385 notified SEZs in the country. But in Uttarakhand, there were only two formally approved and only one notified SEZs on 11 February 2013. So, on many counts, the performance of the state as far as agricultural export is concerned has deteriorated in the state of Uttarakhand after implementation of the Act.

### **Investment in Agriculture in Uttarakhand**

In a state lacking basic marketing infrastructure, it is presumably expected that in order to promote private investment, the initiative should be taken by the government. Such initiative may not be limited only to formulation of an Act for market promotion. In Uttarakhand, there hardly were any effort by the government to promote investment in the state. As evident from the figures of the State Budget Documents, there has not only been a low priority of the state for investment in agriculture, the investment efforts from the government have also declined in the post APMC years. Here, we have considered only the planned expenditure of the government of Uttarakhand both in Revenue Account and Capital Account (Table-2 and Table-3). The share of Agriculture and Allied Activities in total public expenditure has gone down from more than 8 % in the year 2010-11 to almost 6 % in the year 2012-13 (BE). In terms of revenue expenditure also, there has been a decline from around 14 % to less than 12 % during the same period. Although the share of capital expenditure in agriculture has shown an increase in the recent year, it is primarily because of the increase in allocations for capital investments in forestry and

wildlife and not for the purpose of agricultural activities. In the recent budget, the government scaled down most of its activities in the sector except for agricultural research and education.

**Table-2: Planned Government Expenditure (Capital) on Agriculture in Uttarakhand after APMC Act (Rs. Crore)**

Items	2010-11 (Accounts)	2011-12 (Revised Estimates)	2012-13 (Budget Estimates)
Total Capital Outlay	1,858.5	2,497.3	3,635.5
Agriculture and Allied Activities	35.3	44.3	69.7
Crop Husbandry	12.3	0.5	0.8
Animal Husbandry	9.2	9.7	5.7
Fisheries	0.7	2.0	0.7
Forestry and Wild Life	16.5	25.0	52.4
Food Storage and Warehousing	1.5	4.5	7.6

Source: RBI (2013) 'State Finances: A Study of Budgets 2012-13', Government of India

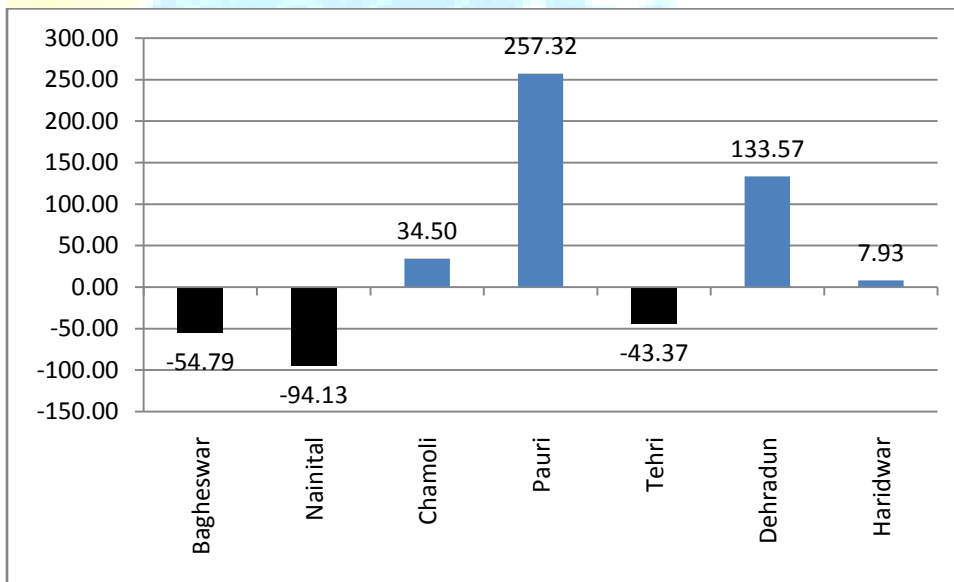
**Table-3: Share of Agriculture in total Government Budget (Rs Crore)**

	2010-11 (Accounts)	2011-12 (Revised Estimates)	2012-13 (Budget Estimates)
Total Revenue Expenditure in Agriculture and Allied Activities	339.71	520.80	369.79
Total Capital Expenditure in Agriculture and Allied Activities	35.30	44.30	69.70
Total Size of Budget of Uttarakhand Government	4331.01	5530.60	6787.13
Total Size of Agriculture Budget	375.01	565.10	439.49
Agriculture and Allied Activities as % of total Expenditure (Revenue)	13.74	17.17	11.73
Agriculture and Allied Activities as % of total Expenditure (Capital)	1.90	1.77	1.92
Agriculture and Allied Activities as % of total Expenditure (total)	8.66	10.22	6.48

Source: RBI (2013) 'State Finances: A Study of Budgets 2012-13', Government of India

While the public investment has been discouraging for the sector, the private investors did not compensate for that. Rather, we can see a similar trend in the private investment as well. From

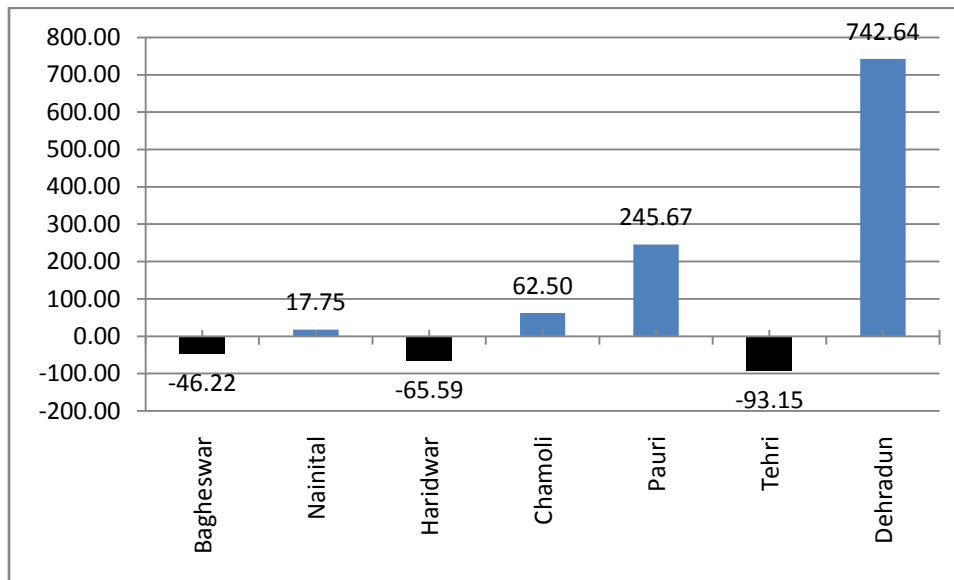
the information collected from various sources about the installed capital, enterprise development and credit flow in the sector we can easily assess that the sector is going through a state of crisis and legislations like APMC Act have not been able to attract any significant orientation towards development of the sector in Uttarakhand State. On the basis of the employment figures and capital use data provided by the Directorate of Industries in Uttarakhand, we can easily see that there has been deterioration in the growth of enterprises in the sector, especially after the implementation of the APMC Act. In many districts, there has been a decline in the number of enterprises associated with agriculture. In the aftermath of APMC Act, there has been a decline in the new capital investment in Tehri by 43 %, in Bagheswar by around 55 % and in Nainital by around 94 %. There has been decline in new production capacity by 46 % in Bagheswar, 66 % in Haridwar and in Tehri by around 93 %.



**Figure-1: Change (%) in Capital Use by Private Enterprises in in the agribusiness sector in Selected districts of Uttarakhand after APMC Act**

Note: Capital use includes land and machinery

Source: Compiled from relevant Entrepreneur Memorandums (EM-II) registered in the District Industries Offices



**Figure-2: Change (%) in New Production Capacity by Private Enterprises in in the agribusiness sector in Selected districts of Uttarakhand after APMC Act**

Source: Compiled from relevant Entrepreneur Memorandums (EM-II) registered in the District Industries Offices

### Market Expansion after Implementation of APMC Act

One of the major objectives behind adoption of APMC Act was also to create a scope for market expansion through Mandi Samities created under APMC. After the implementation of the Act in Uttarakhand, different Mandi Parishads were constituted under different classes. Our study suggests that in several districts of the state mainly in the mountainous regions, the market committees are yet to be functional. One of the main concerns is therefore the failure to initiate the first task of identifying and forming market committees in all the districts of the state. Districts like Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Rudraprayag, Pithoragarh and Almora are probably those districts that seriously lack adequate market infrastructure and facing serious problems of outmigration and other issues that have a lot of linkages with the performance of the agricultural sector in those districts.



Even in the districts where market committees are functional, there are problems in its functioning. It is evident from the analysis of information on commodity arrival and price of commodities traded in these markets. We studied the impact of APMC Act on the daily arrival of three commodities widely traded in some major mandies of Uttarakhand for which data is available from Directorate of Marketing and inspection, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. In order to assess the impact of APMC, we classified the entire dataset into pre and post APMC Act groups. For this, a binary dummy variable was introduced in the daily arrival and price data with value '0' for the period preceding 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011 and '1' for the period 1<sup>st</sup> May 2011 onwards. Results are presented in Table-4 through Table-6

The results show that in case of apple, there was a steep decline in the daily arrival data in case of Haldwani and in all other markets the daily arrival of the crop actually did not change much. Out of three markets analysed for apple, while in kichha, there was a marginal increase in the average daily arrival of the fruit in post APMC phase, there was substantial decline in Haldwani mandi and all the three mandies taken together. One of the preconditions for a successful market infrastructure is probably its ability to ensure a remunerative price for the producers, in this case the farmers. Therefore, it was expected that the APMCs should have provided better prices to the farmers. Again, better prices are not necessarily higher prices only, but prices that would motivate farmers to produce more and sell more in the specific markets. Our analysis suggests that except Haldwani mandi, price of the commodity on a trading day had hardly any role in determining the amount of arrival of the products in the next trading day. In some cases we found that even a higher price in the previous day adversely affected the arrival amount of apple in the mandi. In case of potato, in Haridwar, Khateema, and Kotdwar we observed a negative impact of price on arrival after the initiation of APMCs. In case of tomato, except for Khateema and Kashipur in all other cases, we found that the functioning of APMCs might have had undesired effects on arrivals. Our observation from the discussions with the farmers and traders in Rishikesh and Haldwani mandies suggest that the committee members do not enjoy sufficient trust of the traders. We also observed during our visit to mandi samities that the members of the samities were often missing in their offices and were busy in political activities related to their respective parties. Wherever we were able to meet the members of the mandi samities, most of them were not aware about the Act and its mandates. Some farmers

(especially those growing potatoes in Kotdwar and adjacent areas) also reported that they often find it more profitable to sell their produce to private vendors than selling their produce in mandi.

**Table-4: Average Daily Arrival of Apple in selected Mandies after the APMC Act**

	Dummy	Average Daily Arrival in Tonne	Std. Deviation
Haldwani	Before APMC	67.67	57.27
	After APMC	36.26	42.35
Kichha	Before APMC	3.85	2.60
	After APMC	4.41	3.94
Kotdwar	Before APMC	2.25	1.30
	After APMC	2.00	0.71
Total	Before APMC	27.77	47.22
	After APMC	18.45	33.69

Source: Based on information from AGMARKNET

**Table-5: Average Daily Arrival of Potato in selected Mandies after the APMC Act**

	Dummy	Average Daily Arrival in Tonne	Std. Deviation
Dehradun	Before APMC	142.55	188.62
	After APMC	102.28	41.63
Haldwani	Before APMC	112.40	126.79
	After APMC	88.53	60.49
Haridwar	Before APMC	27.03	18.36
	After APMC	15.27	5.13
Kashipur	Before APMC	9.17	8.92
	After APMC	7.99	6.57
Khateema	Before APMC	14.03	3.67
	After APMC	8.19	4.27
Kichha	Before APMC	5.66	4.01
	After APMC	3.59	1.48
Kotdwar	Before APMC	7.96	3.98
	After APMC	2.87	1.54
Laskar	Before APMC	0.86	0.48
	After APMC	1.16	1.01
Rishikesh	Before APMC	43.12	17.86
	After APMC	32.01	14.52
Rudrapur	Before APMC	7.70	3.85
	After APMC	6.63	2.43

Sitarganj	Before APMC	8.25	8.10
	After APMC	2.88	1.49
Total	Before APMC	40.35	83.50
	After APMC	35.34	46.72

Source: Based on information from AGMARKNET

**Table-6: Average Daily Arrival of Tomatoes in different Mandies after implementation of APMC Act in Uttarakhand**

	Dummy	Average Daily Arrival in Tonne	Std. Deviation
Dehradun	Before APMC	45.7	79.0
	After APMC	64.1	41.6
Haldwani	Before APMC	257.0	177.5
	After APMC	15.2	11.7
Kashipur	Before APMC	1.0	0.6
	After APMC	2.0	1.0
Khateema	Before APMC	0.6	0.2
	After APMC	0.9	0.3
Kichha	Before APMC	2.7	2.4
	After APMC	2.8	1.3
Kotdwar	Before APMC	2.5	1.3
	After APMC	1.2	0.7
Rishikesh	Before APMC	9.8	4.7
	After APMC	8.9	9.3
Rudrapur	Before APMC	1.1	0.4
	After APMC	1.0	0.5
Sitarganj	Before APMC	0.5	0.5
	After APMC	0.2	0.2
Total	Before APMC	61.9	133.0
	After APMC	13.8	26.4

Source: Based on information from AGMARKNET

## Conclusion

The results presented above draw some indicative conclusions about the functioning of the APMC Act in Uttarakhand. Firstly, APMCs in Uttarakhand have failed to achieve their desired goals. Such a situation may be dangerous for the fate of agriculture in the state and unless some urgent action is taken in right direction, the Act may actually hamper the interests of the

farmers and the agricultural sector in the state. Second, institutional bottlenecks need to be strengthened urgently. It is high time that the all the districts have mandi samities as per the mandate of the APMC Act. The state government should make all efforts to expand the scope of the Act in all the mountainous districts. Third, implementation of APMC Act in isolation cannot improve the lots of agriculture dependent population in the state. It has to be backed by adequate infrastructural support from the government in the form of necessary extension services and other support systems. Fourth, it is observed that the private investment in the state is not forthcoming in the agricultural sector although there have been success stories mostly located in the plain districts. Efforts for farm mechanization in the plain districts have been satisfactory, but in the hill districts efforts for crop diversification, the provision of extension services and value addition have largely failed. A mountain focus is clearly missing in the agricultural policies of the government. Fifth, the existing mandi samities need to be revamped and efforts should be taken for some trust building measures among farmers on mandi samiti members. Some monitoring mechanisms should be in place for smooth functioning of the mandies. Finally, the budgetary provisions for capital investment in the sector should be enhanced. Investment in a critical sector like agriculture that still remains the life line of a majority of the workforce in the state cannot be left to be addressed by the private sector only. Unless these issues are addressed, the potential benefits of the Act towards making markets work for the farmers would remain unrealized.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In Uttarakhand the rural outmigration rate was around 15 percent compared to less than 3 percent in Jharkhand and a little more than 6 percent in Chhatisgarh. For more details, please see Singh Atul (2012) "The Issue of Migration in Uttarakhand: Illusion or Reality", Lokkatha: Debate on Development URL:

<http://lokkatha.com/150/index.php/198>

<sup>2</sup> Many believe that in a state with very fragmented and small holdings in the hilly regions, agricultural development in Uttarakhand requires presence of organized and useable markets in the vicinity of farmlands to make the efforts of expansion in the sector sustainable. The Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and many other outfits have been proactive for years in advocating for well organised markets to provide direct access of exchange to the farmers through well designed supply chains in the sector linking farmers to the consumers both within and outside the state

<sup>3</sup>CII, "Annual Report 2009-10: Robust Inclusive Green Growth", URL: <http://www.cii.in/webcms/Upload/CII-AR-Uttrkhnd-2010.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Since agriculture is a state subject in the federal structure of the Indian governance system, policy for promoting marketing activities in the states came from the government of India through the Model Act 2003 and all the state governments were pursued to make required amendments in the model Act relevant to the specific needs of the specific states. The model APMC Act served as a guideline to formulate State Acts with provisions for direct marketing, contract farming in partnership with private and co-operative sector. For more details, please see GOI, (2013) "Overview on Agricultural Marketing", Ministry of Agriculture, URL:

<http://agricoop.nic.in/imagedefault/agriculturemarketing/overview.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>Details of the Model APMC Act can be accessed from the website of the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, URL: <http://agmarknet.nic.in/amrscheme/modelact.htm#Background>

<sup>6</sup> As reported in Prashant, Shishir (January 6, 2011), "Uttarakhand cabinet approves APMC Act", Business Standard

<sup>7</sup> The ASIDE scheme, is a flagship programme of the Department of commerce by clubbing four different infrastructure development schemes such as the Export Promotion Industrial Park Scheme (EPIP), Export Promotion Zones Scheme (EPZ), the Critical Infrastructure Balancing Scheme (CIB) and the Export Development Fund (EDF) for the North-East and Sikkim etc. For more details, one may refer to Department of Commerce, Annual Report 2012-13, Government of India, URL: [http://commerce.nic.in/publications/pdf/annualreport\\_chapter5-2012-13.pdf](http://commerce.nic.in/publications/pdf/annualreport_chapter5-2012-13.pdf)

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