

Chapter XIII

“Single-Window” facility for investors/entrepreneurs

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The Aim:

To promote private sector investment by issuing all necessary approvals/clearances in a time-bound manner through a single agency in the government.

Past efforts:

Earlier attempts, e.g., “Udyog Vikash” and later “Udyog Sahayak” (Industrial Policy, 1986) had limited success, the most important reasons being the following:

- Inadequate delegation of powers to the Udyog Sahayak-level officers (Directorate of Industries/AIDC) for clearing different aspects of the projects. The proposals had to be referred to the highest line authorities, and inordinate delays could not be avoided.
- A three-tier set up envisaged in the Industrial Policy, 1986, i.e., Udyog Sahayaks at (1) Directorate/AIDC level, (2) Commissioner level, and (3) State level under the Minister of Industries. This became too cumbersome, leading to disappointment amongst the investors/entrepreneurs.

Recommendations:

A high-powered Committee of Secretaries (to be named **Investment Promotion Board - IPB**) should be created on the pattern of the Government of India’s Secretariat for Industrial Approvals (SIA) for medium or large industries (and significant investments in other sectors not declared as industries, e.g., tourism, etc.), leaving the Directorate/AIDC-level Udyog Sahayak for the SSI/tiny sector.

The IPB should be constituted as follows:

Chairman: Chief Secretary (the Additional Chief Secretary will preside in the absence of the CS)

Members: Highest-level secretary (Principal Secretary/Commissioner and Secretary/Secretary) of the following departments:

a. Finance

- b. Power, along with the Chairman, ASEB
- c. Revenue
- d. The controlling department for the Pollution Control Board, along with the Chairman, Pollution Control Board
- e. Industry and Commerce (Member-Secretary)

Any other departmental secretary may be invited to the IPB meeting, if a subject relates to that department.

The Member-Secretary will receive and process the applications for investment, and after processing, will place them before the IPB within a fortnight.

The IPB would meet at least once a fortnight.

The Member-Secretary will circulate the agenda and agenda notes for the meeting at least seven days in advance.

The IPB will discuss the proposals, and may invite the applicants for a face-to-face discussion.

The Member-Secretary will submit the minutes of the IPB meetings to the Chief Minister through the Minister of Industry and Commerce for approval.

Upon receiving approval of the CM, the Member-Secretary will intimate the concerned departments for necessary action within a fixed time frame.

The IPB will also monitor the functioning of the Directorate/AIDC-level Udyog Sahayak and give necessary directions to expedite any pending matter within a fixed time frame.

The “single-window” facility created in this manner will generate confidence among the investors/ entrepreneurs and also expedite implementation of the projects for the benefit of Assam.