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**DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC  
INFRASTRUCTURE IN HARYANA DURING  
BANSI LAL'S CHIEF MINISTERSHIP**



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**A B S T R A C T**

*Haryana came into existence as separate state on November 1, 1966. At the time of its birth, the tiny state having only 44,212 sq. kilometers area, had only 8.9 million populations. It was an economically backward state. Bansilal started development works immediately after taking oath as Chief Minister of Haryana on May 22, 1968. He became the Chief Minister four times. During his regime, he built infrastructure to modernize Haryana. He not only developed agriculture and industry, but also connected every village as well as city by electricity and roads network. He stressed on the development of villages. Resultantly, Haryana became economically and socially prosperous state.*

Bansilal played a significant role in the economic development of Haryana. He became the Chief Minister of Haryana four times. During his Chief Ministership, he not only worked for the development of agriculture, irrigation, electricity and education, but also connected all villages as well as towns by roads. Resultantly, in 1966, Haryana, which was an economically backward state, soon became a land of plenty. This paper seeks to evaluate the Bansilal's works for the economic development of Haryana.

The main object of this study is to delineate the process of modernization of Haryana. It also aims at explicating how Bansilal built economic infrastructure to develop the state.

On November 1, 1966, Haryana was an economically backward state. Only 30 percent of its total land was irrigated. This state had 17.8 per hundred K. M long roads as well as 781 miles long railway lines. Moreover, 268 large-scale and 4,133 small-scale industries were established in this region.<sup>1</sup> However, Bansilal started development

works immediately after taking oath as Chief Minister in 1968. He laid emphasis on the development of agriculture. He took various steps to augment agricultural produce.

He also constructed a large number of canals, wells and tube-wells etc.<sup>2</sup> During his regime, 347 tub-wells were installed in 1968, which went up to 370, 377, 422 and 600 in 1969, 1970, 1971 and 1972 respectively.<sup>3</sup> Besides, 255 tub-wells were working in 1968, which rose up to 357 in 1972.<sup>4</sup> Bansilal also started constructing Beas-Sutlej link canal, which was completed in 1974.

Moreover, he also constructed Delhi branch canal, Gurgaon canal project, Narwana-Karnal link canal etc.<sup>5</sup> He also laid stress on the construction of tube-wells and lift-irrigation. There were 32,989 tube-wells in Haryana in 1967-68.

This number increased up to 184,740 in 1974-75.<sup>6</sup> He started lift-irrigation projects in Loharu, Sewani, Bivipur, Gurgaon and Jhajjar, which were completed in 1973-74.<sup>7</sup> Apart from these, he spent Rs. 30 crores on Jawahar Lal irrigation project. He

also started West Jumuna Canal remodeling as well as feeder projects.<sup>8</sup> However, the total irrigated area increased in the state.<sup>9</sup>

During 1967-68, 1.3 million hectares of land were irrigated, which increased up to 1.6 million hectares in 1975-76. In the same year, 1,766 K. M long canals were constructed.<sup>10</sup> As a result, the yield per acre increased in the region. During 1968-69, about 887 Kg. of food-grains per hectare were produced in Haryana, which increased up to 926 Kg. per hectare in 1974-75. In the same year the production of wheat increased three-fold.<sup>11</sup>

During the period from 1967-68 to 1970-71, the production of wheat, rice and sugarcane was increased about two or three fold. Bansi Lal also developed roads and electricity network during his rule.

In a very short period, he linked every village as well as town of Haryana with the network of roads. In 1968, the total length of roads was 5,650 K. M, which increased up to 14,280 K. M in 1975.<sup>12</sup> In 1966, about 1,386 villages were connected by the network of roads, which increased up to 2,965 villages in 1971.<sup>13</sup> Electricity connections were also given to every house in the state.<sup>14</sup>

During Bansi Lal's regime, hundreds of K.M long electricity lines were laid in Haryana. His government constructed 132, 66 and 33 K.V sub-stations in the state.<sup>15</sup>

He also established 5808 transformers in 1968, which rose up to 17224 in 1971.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, Bansi Lal also stressed on the development of large as well as small scale industries. He established various industrial plants of cars, scooters, nylon, threads, tractors, ghee etc. at Faridabad, Bahadurgarh, Panipat, Ambala, Gurgaon and Rewari. He also gave loans to these industries.<sup>17</sup> During 1968-75, Bansi Lal provided water supply in villages also.

His government constructed a large number of tube-wells for water supply. In 1966, only 170 villages had facilities of water supply, which increased up to 789 villages in 1974-75. Moreover, budget for public health increased from Rs. 41,679,710 in 1968-69 to Rs. 128,669,350 in 1975. Despite of this Bansi Lal government also developed tourism industry in Haryana. He

developed various places of tourist interest at Pinjor, Sohna, Karnal etc. He also constructed a bird sanctuary at Sultanpur.<sup>18</sup>

Bansi Lal again came to power in 1996, when Haryana Vikas Party formed the government with the help of the Bhartiya Janta Party. Before the elections he promised the people of Haryana that 'he would make Haryana alcohol-free.' However, on July 1, 1996, he announced prohibition on alcohol drinking in the whole state.<sup>19</sup> A large number of people, especially women appreciated this decision. However, the government had to bear a loss of Rs. 600 crores by this decision. But it was a brave decision of Bansi Lal.

It is important to mention here that this decision was strongly criticised by the opposition parties. Moreover, illegal trade of liquor also started flourishing in the state. As a result, after 22 months, Bansi Lal had to reverse to the decision of his government.<sup>20</sup>

However, the Haryana Vikas Party's government established thermal plants at Panipat and Faridabad. The people of Haryana started getting more electricity.<sup>21</sup> The government accepted a plan of Rs. 1,375 crores for the growth of the economy of the state, which increased up to Rs. 1,430 crores. In 1997-98, this amount was raised up to Rs. 1,575 crores, which was ten times more in comparison to that in previous years. Between these years, total income as well as the collection of revenue also increased.

The collection of taxes increased up to 34.38 percent.<sup>22</sup> Bansi Lal also implemented a plan to save Haryana from the fury of floods. He spent Rs. 25 crores on the construction of drains at Maham and Lakkhan Majara. The Union Government also helped the state in this project. Besides, 270 plans of Rs. 487,000,000 were granted for 'Flood Control Board'.<sup>23</sup> Bansi Lal also worked for the freedom fighters. He fixed their pension at Rs. 1,000 per month. He also spent Rs. 25,270,000 on the welfare of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.<sup>24</sup>

It is important to note that between 1996-1998, total consumption of the electricity remained 348 units per day, which was 12 units more than what it was during the previous regime. In fact, the production of electricity increased up to 14.5

percent. During this period, Bansilal established 16 new sub-stations of electricity and increased capacity of 101 stations. Moreover, 1890 K. M long electricity wires were laid in the state.<sup>25</sup> He also constructed 50 K. M long wire of 200 Watts from Bahadurgarh to Rewari.

The government spent Rs. 8 crores on this project. He spent Rs. 1.163 crores on establishing N. T. P. C gas plant of 432 megawatt electricity at Faridabad, which had a capacity of 9,000,000 units per day. The government of the Haryana Vikas Party took decision to improve the capacity of four units of 110-110 megawatt of Panipat Thermal Plant.<sup>26</sup> It also decided to establish a project of sixth unit of 210 megawatt with the cost of Rs. 238 crores at Panipat. In fact, for the development of electricity, Bansilal got a loan of Rs. 238 crores from the World Bank.

He established 21 new power sub-stations in the state. Moreover, he also gave sanction for the improvement of 103 sub-stations. His government laid 1890 K. M wires in various areas. Resultantly, 8 hour electricity supply was ensured to the peasants.<sup>27</sup>

Bansilal's government spent Rs. 2,237 crores on peasant welfare schemes. It gave subsidy of Rs. 256 crores on fertilizers, seeds and medicines. Bansilal gave Rs. 7.70 lacs as a grant as well as Rs. 14.48 lacs as loan for constructing tube-wells. Moreover, Chief Minister reduced the interest on crop loans. He fixed the rates of sugarcane as Rs.

91 to 95 per quintal. He also stressed on storage of food-grains.<sup>28</sup> During his tenure, 16,600 hectares of land was made cultivable.

A sum of Rs. 3.21 crores subsidy was given to the peasants on the purchase of *jipsum*.<sup>29</sup> Bansilal also emphasised on the development of villages. His government constructed 86,137 toilets in the countryside. He spent Rs. 5,290.97 lacs on compulsory employment plans. Besides, the H. V. P government gave Rs. 1,306.14 lacs as aid to 27,646 families. It also gave Rs. 3,830.14 lacs as loan to poor families.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, Bansilal constructed 10,646 houses for the poor persons.<sup>31</sup>

**Conclusion:** In the end, this paper can be concluded with the remark that Bansilal was not only an astute politician, but also a good administrator. He was the man who became Chief Minister four times. During his political career, he built economic infrastructure in Haryana. As a Chief Minister, he adopted the policy of the welfare of the state. He connected every village as well as city with roads and electricity network. He also stressed on the development of agriculture, industry and trade also.

As a result, Haryana became economically prosperous state. However, he was usually criticised for his dictatorship as well rude behaviour. In 1991, he formed Haryana Vikas Party, which came in power in 1996. During his last tenure (1996-1998), he continued to implement his development plans.

## REFERENCE

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