

# THE STORY OF THE HIRAKUD DAM PROJECT

*By*

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MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER  
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## PREFACE

The story of the Hirakud Dam, the longest in the world, built entirely by Indian engineers, is a fascinating account of the victory of engineering over the twin scourges of mankind, famine and flood, that ravaged for ages the beautiful valley of the great river Mahanadi in Orissa, the abode of Lord Jagannath and the land of temples of great architectural and archaeological fame.

The Rs. 100 crore Hirakud Dam Project augurs for the inhabitants of the river basin a life of peace and plenty. The Mahanadi, known for its fury and devastation, has been befriended and harnessed in the service of man. Its enormous water wealth which was running waste will now bring new life to more than two and a half million acres of land and turn the wheels of industry, heralding a new era of progress and prosperity in the State of Orissa. Freed from the devastation of floods and the demoralisation that followed in its wake and assured of a perennial supply of irrigation water and large volume of power, the State can utilise her industrious and intelligent manpower to the optimum. The rich mineral and forest wealth can be fully exploited. The one-crop-a-year pattern of her agriculture will change to a highly diversified and productive one.

In writing the story of the Project it has by no means been an easy task to portray in advance the developments which are yet to take place but there has never been a moment of diffidence regarding the bright future that awaits the people of Orissa. In fact, the completion of the Project makes the beginning of the story of the great agricultural and industrial development in Orissa.

I am very grateful to Sri T. Sivasanker, I. C. S., Secretary to Government of India in the Ministry of Irrigation and Power, for having given me an opportunity to write the story of the first large multi-purpose river valley project on the Mahanadi. I am also very grateful to Sri M. S. Thirumale Iyengar, Chief Engineer of the Project and the officers and staff of the Project and of the Hirakud Land Organisation who spared no pains to bring me in close contact with every detail of the Project. I have drawn material for this publication freely from the published records of the Central and State Governments for which I am thankful to them. The chapter on Planning and Designs has been written with the help of information supplied by the Central Water and Power Commission. My special thanks are also due to Sri K. S. S. Murthy, Personal Assistant to the Chief Engineer, Sri G. K. Dogra, Under Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Irrigation and Power, Sri T. Chellaswami, former Statistician, and Sri Sivaram Singh the cinematographer of the Project. Wherever I have ventured an opinion, it has been entirely in my personal capacity.

The successful completion of the Project has inspired a new confidence in the greatness of India and in the skill of her engineers. They were confronted not only with complicated engineering problems involved in the construction of a project of such a gigantic magnitude but also of personnel management and human relations in dealing with a large task force consisting of skilled and unskilled workers whose total labour contribution exceeds 5.77 crores of man-days. Our engineers have done the job well and deserve the nation's gratitude.

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