



ADDRESS
OF
GENERAL J.J. SINGH, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)
THE GOVERNOR
OF
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
IN
THE 57th MEETING
OF
THE NORTH EASTERN COUNCIL
ON
JANUARY 7, 2009
AT
THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE ANNEXE
NEW DELHI

Hon'ble Chairman Shri Mani Shankar Aiyarji, Your Excellencies the Governors of North Eastern States & Sikkim, Hon'ble Members of the NEC, Hon'ble Chief Ministers, Secretary and other senior officers from NEC, Government of India and State Governments.

1. It is a great privilege to take part in the august gathering of the North Eastern Council. My experience of taking part in the last Council Meeting at Agartala is still fresh in my mind and I must acknowledge that my knowledge about the developmental issues of the North Eastern Region was immensely enriched by my participation in that meeting. I hope this meeting will also help me and my colleagues to find out solutions to some of the common problems faced by the states of North Eastern Region. I look forward to have a meaningful discussion on the agenda points and would like to touch upon some of the agenda items concerning my State.
2. The release of NER Vision 2020 by the Hon'ble Prime Minister is a historic event. I on the onset will like to congratulate Minister DONER, Hon'ble Sh Mani Shankar Aiyar ji, for following it up with formation of various thematic groups for turning this vision into reality. The Thematic Groups formed for the purpose need to work in close coordination with the MoDONER, NEC and the State Governments and frequent meetings with the stakeholders need to be undertaken. I am sanguine we all have already started making a concerted and focused efforts towards achieving the goals set in the NER-Vision 2020 and I would request the concerned Ministries of the Govt of India to render their cooperation and help to the North Eastern States in making the dream come true.
3. I endorse the view that the 10 % of the Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) of the concerned Union Ministries should be regarded as a dedicated and committed entitlement for the

development of the North Eastern Region in its entirety. The Planning Commission may indicate the size of the Gross Budgetary support to the extent of 10 % of the concerned Union Ministries in lump sum both to the NEC and the Ministry of DoNER. In order to achieve the overall and all-round development of the region the Ministry of DoNER and NEC in consultation with north-eastern States and line Ministries will identify gaps in various sectors in infrastructure and in basic minimum services state-wise in different states and the region as such. The GBS funds so earmarked by the line Ministries would be dovetailed with all other sources including the State Plans of the respective Member States. While doing so, NEC based on the feedback obtained from the States will also suitably guide and advise the concerned Union Ministries on the need for revision/modification of parameters of various ongoing schemes or a scheme in totality to fit the needs / requirements of the North Eastern Region. Planning Commission may also be associated in the planning process.

4. If the concerned Union Ministries fail to utilize the earmarked funds for them in the North Eastern Region, the residual amount should automatically accrue to the NLCPR and the entire NLCPR be placed at the disposal of the Ministry of DoNER. The States should be given due intimation by the Ministry of DoNER about the fund availability in the subsequent year. The States will then submit projects, in order of their priority assigned to them from the gaps identified by NEC in the relevant sectors, for sanction to the Ministry of DoNER.
5. I also feel that the allocation of Rs. 624.00 crores made for NEC in Annual Plan 2008-09 is too meager. The NEC in its last Council Meeting had expressed its apprehension that such limited resources will not be able to fulfill the role of regional planning body. Therefore, we once again endorse the view that this should be enhanced to at least Rs. 1000.00 crore.

6. Rural based employment generation activities like rubber cultivation, production of honey through bee-keeping, floriculture and bamboo related activities are capable of generating maximum employment opportunities in the NER. Therefore, substantial investment should be made and allocations enhanced for encouraging these activities in the whole NER particularly Arunachal Pradesh.
7. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has launched its 'Honey Mission". I would like to request the NEC to supplement our effort in this regard.
8. The main source of Power supply in the NER is hydel and in this regard Arunachal Pradesh by virtue of its huge untapped potential in this sector assumes prime importance. Hence, huge investment will be required in this sector to tap the huge hydro-power resource of the State. The State Government is making all efforts to utilize the hydro power potential of the State for bringing a sea change in its socio-economic developmental scenario. Under the Prime Minister's Package, a programme of electrification of all villages through solar power as well as hydropower projects have been taken up. It is expected that within the next 2 years all the remote villages along the State's international border will be electrified.
9. As is well known to all, tourism is one of the most promising sectors in Arunachal Pradesh. However, the infrastructure needed for development of this sector in the State calls for much improvement and expansion. In this regard, infrastructure of tourist circuits high-lighted in Vision 2020 along with other tourist attractions may be developed by providing adequate fund which will boost the tourism industry and help in generating employment opportunities for the unemployed youth of the State. Here, I would like to mention that the incentives for the LTC tourists to the NER should be continued for increasing the tourist inflow in the region. This

relaxation of air travel to NER on LTC should also include travel to Arunachal Pradesh by Arunachal Helicopter Service, to make various tourist destinations of Arunachal Pradesh more accessible.

10. Air connectivity is another major issue for our State. I am very happy to inform the august House that the forest clearance for the new Greenfield Airport at Itanagar has been accorded and the PMO has asked the MoCA to expedite the PIB note and CCEA approval for Itanagar Airport. There is no doubt that once completed, this project will herald a new era in the history of the State's development. Proposal for improvement of non-operational/operational airports at Aalo, Daporijo, Pasighat, Tezu and Ziro is laudable which will provide better air-connectivity in the State. Due to poor road connectivity in Arunachal Pradesh, especially during the rainy season, improvement of these airports is urgently needed for operation of STOL aircrafts. The NEC may also expedite the issue of finalization of the dedicated air-line for the NER in collaboration with DoNER.
11. I also appreciate the NEC's endorsement of the State Government's proposal to construct an Inter-State Bus Terminus at Itanagar. In view of rapid urbanization and rise in population of the capital complex, many such infrastructures for the urban areas will be required to be implemented in the near future.
12. The proposed new schemes for establishment of hostels for the students of NER in the metropolitan cities should be implemented at the earliest to solve the problem of safe accommodation of the NER students in the metros. Such hostels should also be equipped with minimum facilities like library, indoor sports, internet etc.
13. The NER is a powerhouse of sports talents but it needs active intervention from the Government to bring these latent talents to the national and international arena. The proposed new scheme for sports talent search in the NER is therefore

highly appreciable and should be implemented at the earliest with adequate funding. We should ensure that the youth of the region gets adequate opportunities to show their talents and this kind of schemes will no doubt help diverting attention of the youth from unlawful activities.

14. The education and health infrastructure in the border regions is very poor and it is our duty to provide better amenities to the people living and guarding our frontiers. The NEC may supplement the efforts of the State Government in this regard.
15. Arunachal Pradesh has many archeological heritage sites which needs scientific excavation and preservation. This is also important to boost tourism in the State. NEC may therefore consider providing funds for the purpose out of the proposed 1% of NEC's budget for promotion of cultural activities in NER States. NEC can also help in modernizing the existing museums in the State.
16. Underdevelopment and poverty go hand in hand. It is therefore imperative that to eradicate poverty, developmental activities should be taken up on priority. Since, the NER Community Resource Management Project has been implemented successfully in some States of the region; we feel that the same may be extended to the uncovered States and districts of the region to provide further momentum to their development.
17. We also feel that the issue of equitable distribution of funds amongst the NER States is amicably settled at the earliest and a consensus reached in the interest of all concerned.
18. The State Government is working with all sincerity to ensure timely completion of all developmental schemes including PM's Package, NLCPR, NEC, ACA, SPA, BADP, RIDF etc. Third Party Monitoring system has been introduced to monitor implementation of the PM's Package. Similar steps may be taken up for other schemes also. Monitoring Committees at the State and district levels have been set up

under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary and Deputy Commissioners and they have already started monitoring the progress of the schemes.

19. In order to provide people friendly governance, all the State Government Departments have been asked to host information pertaining to their activities in the websites. Many of the departments have already implemented the same and others will follow soon. This has provided a better transparency in the government's activities. Also it would be prudent that during NEC and DONER conferences like the 3rd and 4th thematic group to promote Vision 2020, the 4th business trade fair, there should be a system of compiling all PowerPoint presentations and reference material by various presenters which should be circulated to all member states. This will allow better assimilation, and make the relevant inputs available to all for future reference. In the same light the best practices and success stories of NER should be highlighted and shared between member States. There he people and systems There is also a need for capacity building of the Human Resources by focusing on their soft skills and systematic managerial upgradation to enable the officials to cope with the magnitude of task at hand with efficiency and effectiveness.
20. I would like to thank our Prime Minister for giving the people of Arunachal Pradesh the power to dream and dream big. The assurance of the Government of India that Arunachal Pradesh is an integral part of India has also helped the people of the State to work for its development with a positive attitude.
21. With this, I conclude by expressing my sincere thanks to the Hon'ble Chairman, distinguished members and others present for giving me a patient hearing.

Jai Hind