

**GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ITANAGAR**

PRESS RELEASE

Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Lt. Gen (Retd) Nirbhay Sharma attended the two-day 'Conference of Governors' at Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi on 13th and 14th February 2014. In his maiden participation in the two-day conference, Governor highlighted on issues related to developmental activities in the State, external and internal security, councils, roles of Governor in better Centre-State relation, as Chancellor of University, education and disaster management.

Governor called for review of the developmental plan of the border belt in a big way to ensure that the border villages are made self-sustaining and self-reliant. He pointed that out of the seventeen districts of the State, thirteen have international borders. Around 2.7 lakhs population of the State which is approximately 20% of the total population resides in around 1,600 villages of 41 Border Blocks. Governor said that although, various programmes under the aegis of the Border Area Development Programme and the other developmental packages are addressing the issue. However, the thrust of development peters out as it ascends towards the LAC. Consequently, there is thinning out of the border population which comes down to the lower heights to seek better opportunities. This trend had to be reversed, focusing on infrastructure including road, rail and air connectivity along with other aspects of socio-economic progress have to be addressed in totality and on a war footing against firm time lines, he stressed.

Emphasizing on strengthening the delivery process, Governor said that although the security and development of the North East Region in general and Arunachal in particular has been the focus of attention, the need is to institutionalize the process. Considering the multiplicity of agencies, huge financial outlay and urgent time lines, the decision making, coordinating and monitoring mechanisms have to be streamlined and integrated further. This is especially relevant for road construction projects. The 'centre of gravity' has to shift from Delhi to the respective State Capitals or at least to the North East with a direct access to the PMO. He also called for role clarity between the Ministry of DoNER, and NEC and their interface with the PMO, Planning Commission and the respective States. In the case of Arunachal Pradesh, it has vital security imperative as well, he added.

Governor suggested for a bold rehabilitation policy and a Border Area Security and Development Authority, which should coordinate effort and resources of the Centre and State.

Highlighting the issues of internal security, Governor said that overall law and order situation in the State has been peaceful and remained under control. Expressing concern on the inter-faction rivalry between the outfits for domination and extortion demands on the citizens in Tirap, Changlang, and Longding Districts in the eastern part of the State, Governor suggested for a Unified Coordinating Apparatus at the State level, wherein all the stakeholders, i.e. State Government, Army, Assam Rifles, ITBP, BRO and other Central Government agencies interact on a regular basis to deal with vital issues of security in the border and disturbed areas in a coordinated manner. This apparatus will also be useful in dealing with unforeseen emergencies including natural disasters, he added.

Governor informed that Arunachal Pradesh is prone to multiple natural disasters like earthquakes, flash floods, landslides, storms, cloud bursts, heavy snowfall, fire accidents etc. These disasters have caused widespread damage and disruption to the infrastructure, public property and loss of human and animal lives in the State. It is also in earthquake Zone V and has witnessed major earthquakes in 1897, 1941, 1947, 1950 and a number of minor earthquakes thereafter. He urged upon National Disaster Management Authority and Ministry of Home Affairs to work out and share their contingency plans for responses with States to integrate all available resources. Governor stressed that apart from Disaster Management, the aspect of Disaster Prevention should be looked at especially in the urban centres.

Governor said that given the geo-strategic factors and sensitivity of relationship with China in particular, it is especially in the national interest to ensure security, economic vibrancy, prosperity and peace in Arunachal Pradesh. The creation of strategic infrastructure in terms of road, rail and air connectivity along with matching electronic and IT support are vital for the security and economic growth of the State. The State has already embarked on this journey. Approximately 2000 kms of roads along with bridges and tunnels are under various stages of construction. The State is yet to emerge on the Railway map and now a 11 km stretch in Arunachal Pradesh is in its final stage of completion. Governor called for reintroducing of flights from Lilabari Airport is necessary, while the up-gradation of ALGs is under progress.

Stating that along with hydropower, Tourism has a huge potential to generate employment and economic growth in Arunachal Pradesh, Governor said that the natural landscape of Arunachal with powerful rivers, magnificent mountains, sprawling forests etc. offers huge potential for Adventure tourism, ECO tourism, Religious tourism and Cultural tourism, etc. He further said that the State has distinct and varied cultures among all its 26 major tribes and more than 106 sub-tribes. Their strong tradition of art, music, dance, handicrafts and distinct socio cultural practice are a big tourist draw. To capitalise these assets, Governor informed that the State Government had organised the second International Tourism Mart at Tawang in the month of October 2013, where 204 business-to-business meetings between the local tour operators and foreign delegates from 20 countries.

Governor also briefed the august conference on agriculture and its allied sectors, health and education and on grass-root governance in the State. In education sector, especially in higher education, Governor called for more effective role for Governors for improving the academic and administrative standards of the Higher Educational Institutions.

In order to prepare the future generations for the purpose of meeting the challenges of the future by providing them disciplined training, keeping them fit and instilling in them, a sense of pride for the nation, Governor requested the Ministry of Defence to set up a Sainik School and additional units of NCC in the State, including a naval wing.

The conference is convened by the President of India, in which Vice President, Prime Ministers, Cabinet Ministers, Governors and Lt. Governors of the States of participated in it.

PRO to Governor
Arunachal Pradesh
ITANAGAR, February 14, 2014