

**GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ITANAGAR**

PRESS RELEASE

Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Lt. Gen (Retd) Nirbhay Sharma is attending the two-day Conference of Governors' at Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi, which started on 11th February 2014.

Addressing the 46th conference of the Governors, the Governor emphasized on need for special focus on Arunachal Pradesh due to geo-strategic urgency. He pointed that lack of connectivity not only affects security but also prevents unlocking the huge potential of the State, particularly in hydropower, tourism, agriculture-horticulture and some other sectors. The areas of main concern are poor connectivity of road, rail, air, waterways, IT, telephone, radio and television, as also the preservation of environment.

The Governor said that in view of the huge infrastructure deficit and strategic urgency, a comprehensive plan for Arunachal Pradesh needs to be formulated based on a 'Vision 2025' perspective of the State Government and take into account the vital security, developmental and financial imperatives. Measures to enhance capacities and adherence to time and cost lines will be vital in this endeavour. Accordingly, in conjunction with Central Government particularly Niti Aayog, the State Government is formulating a vision document.

Highlighting the prioritize infrastructure projects in the State, the Governor said that owing to its vastness, tough geographical terrain and lack of roads and rail, Arunachal Pradesh is largely dependent on air services for its connectivity. He recommended for one Advance Landing Ground each in Kurung Kumey and Dibang Valley Districts, where the road heads are atleast 50-100 kms from the LAC. In order to ensure optimal utilisation, he said that it is necessary that the requirement of Army, ITBP, BRO and civil be taken and a dedicated airlines be created and made available on priority. Further, its immediate planning while the ALGs are being constructed will expedite matters.

The Governor informed that the 1575 km length Trans Arunachal Highway is coming up in the State, but the pace of implementation of this road is very slow and needs to be expedited. For strengthening the road connectivity in the border areas, the Governor suggested. Specific non-lapsable fund must be provided for the maintenance of these roads to the executing agencies like BRO, State PWD etc.

While informing that railway line connecting the State Capital with the rest of the country is ready to be operationalized, the Governor called for starting Rajdhani Express service between Naharlagun and Delhi. He also emphasized that the work on other strategic lines to Tawang in the west and Pasighat in the east in Arunachal Pradesh has to be expedited and the progress of Bogibeel Bridge to be monitored to ensure that it meets the revised timeline of mid 2017.

Highlighting the issues of internal security, Governor said that the insurgency problem in Arunachal Pradesh was initially a spill over from the neighbouring States. Gradually insurgents from neighbouring States entered for their hide out and transit in the dense forest and managed to influence some local youth. Apart from the Disturbed Areas districts of Tirap, Changlang and Longding, the belt bordering Assam in the districts of Lower Dibang Valley, East Siang, West Siang, Lower Subansiri, Papum Pare, East Kameng and West Kameng is affected.

The Governor pointed that post recent carnage in Assam and the visit of Home Minister, security forces and the State Governments have intensified efforts and the situation is improving. In this regard, the recent Declaration of 20 kms belt in Arunachal Pradesh bordering Assam as a Disturbed Area by the MHA shall have a far-reaching effect and is a welcome step.

The Governor suggested for modernization of Police force in terms of numbers, skills and funds including strengthening of specially trained personnel for swift and intelligence based operations. He also suggested for setting up of North East regional Security mechanism involving all the North Eastern States at high level with representatives of Centre and State governments, Army, Police and intelligence apparatus is a vital necessity for a long lasting situation. The Governor commended the developmental initiative of Ministry of DoNER involving North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project (NERCORMP), which he said has the potential to immensely help in curtailing the insurgency by positive engagement of the community and particularly the youth.

The Governor urged for sanctioning of a Sainik School and a TA battalion (ecology) in the State with a provision for funding from the Centre on priority.

The Governor, while expressing his concern on development in the border areas said that it is imperative that the border villages are self-sustaining and self-reliant. He advocated for a Border Area Security and Development Authority, which will create synergy in the effort and resources of the Centre and State. It must have proper legislative backing for planning, implementation and monitoring of border area projects. He said that although, various programmes under the aegis of Border Area Development Programme (BADP) and the other developmental packages have addressed this region, the thrust of development however peters out as it ascends towards the LAC.

On financial inclusion, the Governor said that opening of Bank accounts is a prerequisite and a first step towards financial inclusion efforts. He stressed on 100% coverage of the total population, while pointing that out of 214 administrative centres in the State involving District Headquarters to Circle Headquarters, only 66 administrative centres are covered by the Banks and rest of the Centres do not even have a single Bank branch.

The Governor said that Tele Connectivity is quite poor and un-reliable in the thrust and remote areas of the State and hence poses serious challenge to the practical working of the scheme through CSP in these areas. The efforts have to be made in this direction and also Tele-service operations like BSNL must be on board for the successful implementation of the scheme, as also for the overall development of the State. He also suggested for strengthening Post Offices and utilised, as Customer Service Point to augment the effort.

The Governor also suggested all the State Govt. and Govt. of India beneficiary oriented schemes be linked to the Bank accounts of the beneficiaries involving Aadhaar Number. This platform can then be used in direct transfer of benefits to the beneficiaries and shall eliminate pilferage.

Stressing on availability of credit, the Governor said financial inclusion initiatives must also address the issue of providing easy availability of credit especially to the vulnerable progressive groups including women self help groups to enable generation of self employment on a sustainable basis. More so, in a State like Arunachal Pradesh, where Government jobs have almost reached its saturation. The CD ratio (Credit to Deposit Ratio) in the State stands at around 20%. In some districts, it is as low as it is even 6% and has to be increased significantly.

Highlighting on employment generation and employability, the Governor said that Arunachal Pradesh is an agrarian State, with limited industrialisation, trade and commerce and saturation of govt. jobs and unemployment looms large. The State Government has put-in efforts in skill development of educated unemployed youth and graduate from existing low value skill development initiative to high value skill set creation. Focus is on skill sets required for development projects within the State.

The Governor underscored the requirement for assistance from Central government in establishing ITIs, Livelihood Mission Schools and short-term skill development training for school students. He emphasised on requirement of easy availability of credit and implementation of collateral free loan scheme and reintroduction of North East Industrial and Investment Promotion Policy (NEIIPP) with focus on infrastructure and back up support.

On Swachchh Bharat Abhiyan, the Governor informed that the programme was launched with feeling of participation and inculcating sense of cleanliness in all. Public leaders including Union Minister of Home, other MPs and State government actively encouraging the masses. While further informing on the programme, the Governor said that State and City Sanitation Plan being prepared. He suggested that solid waste management and eco sensitive green habitat have to ensure in the existing and sizeable defence establishments coming up in the State. The Governor also suggested for funding provision for solid waste management programme in State Capital as a pilot project by Ministry of Urban Development.

Reiterating for institutionalising border trade under 'Act East' policy, the Governor said that State has traditional trade relationship with Bhutan, Tibet and Myanmar. Some still persist in formal and informal forms at Pangsu Pass with Myanmar, Bleting, Dongshengmang and Bongkhar with Bhutan. He further said that Pangsu Pass route, can be a trading hub like Moreh in Manipur and at some stage be part of Kolkata-Kunming initiative. To facilitate the endeavour, the Governor suggested that Ministry of External Affairs be appropriately represented in deliberations of DONER and North East Council.

The Governors and the Lt. Governors of the States and Union Territories are attending the Conference. The Prime Minister; Union Ministers of Home Affairs, External Affairs, Finance, Urban Development, Defence, Drinking Water and Sanitation, Tribal Affairs; Minister of State (I/C) of Ministry of Labour and Employment, Minister of State (I/C) of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Minister of State (I/C) of Development of North Eastern Region; Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog and National Security Advisor are also participating.

In the two-day Conference, the participants will deliberate on the security- internal and external with special focus on border security in States sharing international frontiers; financial inclusion; employment generation and employability- making skill development programmes effective; sanitation – achieving the goal of Swachh Bharat by 2019 on Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary; and issues relating to Fifth and Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India and development related issues of North Eastern Areas.

PRO to Governor
Arunachal Pradesh
ITANAGAR, February 11, 2014