

**GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ITANAGAR**

PRESS RELEASE

The Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Shri JP Rajkhowa strongly advocated for improvement of road and air connectivity of the State, in the meeting of the Governors of North Eastern Region on 'Act East Policy' at New Delhi on 6th October 2015. The Governor also called for bringing the communication network and connectivity standard to National level. He also stressed upon strengthening of Civil-Military cooperation in the border areas and harnessing the State tourism to its full potential.

In his address in the meeting convened by the Minister of External Affairs, Smt Sushma Swaraj, the Governor said that for accomplishing the objectives of the Act East Policy (AEP), it will be necessary to improve the road connectivity of Arunachal Pradesh, which is one of the Frontier States towards East, with the rest of India and also to improve the connectivity within the State through building up and upgrading existing National Highways and State roads. The Governor also stressed for improving road connectivity within the State along International Border areas and there is a need for a Frontier Highway connecting all the important centres of the districts along the International borders.

The Governor also stressed on construction of East-West Industrial Corridor of the State from Bhairabkund (West Kameng District) to Ruksin (East Siang District) via Bhalukpong-Seijusa-Digalmukh-Balijan-Naharlagan–Kimin-Likabali-Dipa-Nari (431Km), along the Inter-State Border with Assam. He said that it is very essential to connect the foot hill habitations for future development of resource-based industries in the State. This road will also immensely facilitate mobilization of manpower and equipments for development of hydropower projects also, the Governor pointed.

Similarly, he said that air connectivity for landing of Civilian Aircrafts for benefit of the local population as well as tourists would be necessary, while putting forward proposals for 56 helipads, including 30 helipads to connect border locations along the LAC without road links. The Governor also suggested that appropriate mechanism should be developed to use the Advance landing grounds (ALGs) for civilian aircrafts as well.

The Governor also urged for taking up of 12 Nos. of Interstate road in SARDP-NE, Phase-B (Orphaned Road) by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways through National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (NHIDCL) under Act East Policy, be taken up. He also requested to take up in construction of Lumla (Tawang) to Tashigang Road (12 km) through Indo-Bhutan cooperation, as it will reduce the road distance to Guwahati by 155 km.

The Governor, who has been closely monitoring the railway facilities in the State, called for expediting the work on strategic Railway lines initially to Tawang in the West and Pasighat in the East.

The Governor also reiterated on early completion of the Twin Rail-cum-Road Bogibeel Bridge, already much delayed bridge, which would benefit Arunachal Pradesh and Assam as well as other North East States in a big way. He also pleaded for completion of the Stilwell Road by taking up construction of 160 km in Myanmar under “Goodwill Mission”, which would benefit both the countries immensely.

Underscoring the importance of inland waterways, the Governor said that Arunachal Pradesh has number of large rivers like Siang, Lohit, Subansiri, Burhi Dihing, Noa Dihing, and Tirap, which have been used for navigation by small country boats since time immemorial. He called for developing inland water system in the State and then connecting it to River Brahmaputra and then to Bay of Bengal. He reminded that north eastern region has an estimated 1800 kms of river routes that can be used by steamers and large country boats, of which Arunachal Pradesh has four stretches of total length of 311 km of waterway. He pointed that this sector needs to be explored, harnessed and revived the use of waterways as National priority.

To enhance the communication network for strengthening the ‘Act East Policy’ in the line of Digital India, the Governor called for up-gradation of Internet, Mobile, Radio & Television within a time frame as presently connectivity is absolutely unreliable. Citing that All India Radio covers only 57% of the area of the State, while Doordashan covers 20% area and with 56% population coverage through terrestrial transmission, the Governor stressed on the need for enhancing urgently.

The Governor emphasised that Infrastructure and Livelihood Support to the people living in the border villages have to be provided on priority basis so as to discourage the population living near the International border from leaving their villages to more accessible locations in the State. He informed that in the Border areas, it is only the Indian Army and the ITBP which have good access to basic facilities of survival and livelihood i.e. drinking water, electricity, sanitation, health, education etc. The State Govt. is making all efforts in providing services to our civilian population subject to accessibility and availability of funds. A mechanism can be evolved whereby the joint resources of both the Security forces and the State Govt. can be complementary and both the Army and Civilian can use the facilities.

The Governor called for promoting Arunachal Pradesh as a Tourism Hub under the Act East Policy (AEP) and urged the central government to sanction and implement appropriate project. He emphasized the need for developing different kinds of tourism based on tapping the rich natural resources of the State, i.e. forests, hundreds of streams and rivers and 26 major Tribes and 106 minor Tribes with their colourful costumes, dances, songs and festivals, rich and varied wildlife-animals, birds, orchids (about 600 varieties) and 2 National Parks and several Sanctuaries have very high potential to develop into cultural, adventure and eco tourism destination.

The External Affairs minister Smt Sushma Swaraj, senior officials of External Affairs Ministry and Governors of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram Nagaland and Sikkim attended the meeting.

PRO to Governor
Arunachal Pradesh
ITANAGAR, October 7, 2015