

**GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ITANAGAR**

PRESS RELEASE

**Governor highlights the areas which need attention and consideration of NEC,
DoNER and Central Government**

The Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Shri JP Rajkhowa addressed the 65th Plenary of North Eastern Council at Shillong on 27th May 2016, which was chaired by the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi. In his maiden speech, the Governor highlighted the areas which needed attention and consideration of NEC, including connectivity, communication facilities, environment, defence & border area development, tourism, exploration of minerals, education, health, Human Resource and Skill Development. He also called for special focus on agriculture and horticulture sectors of Arunachal Pradesh in its strive towards an organic State.

Stating that Arunachal Pradesh is one of the youngest States of India and has lagged behind on most socio-economic indicators and developmental parameters as compared to the rest of India and even the northeast region and at the same time strategically located State, the Governor said that the State needs continued assistance and support of the Government of India and the NEC.

Drawing the attention of the Prime Minister of India towards the challenges of the State Government, the Governor said that for the socio-economic development of the State as also the success of the Act East Policy, it will be necessary to improve the road connectivity of the State with the rest of India and also to improve the connectivity within the State by connecting all the district Headquarters of 20 Districts, ADC headquarters, EAC Headquarters, Circle Headquarters as also important towns and clusters and villages, through building up or upgrading of existing National Highways and state roads. Similarly the road from Assam border to the twin cities of Itanagar-Naharlagun, which are in terrible shape, need to be maintained and upgraded as per ongoing NH-52, NH-52A, NH-415 up-gradation projects. He added that for improving road connectivity within the state along international Border areas, there is a need for a Frontier Highway connecting all the important centres along the China-India border. The Governor requested the Prime Minister to expedite sanction of the project which is presently under consideration of the Cabinet Secretariat.

The Governor also highlighted on the construction of the 431 kms East-West Industrial Corridor from Bhairabkund (West Kameng District) to Ruksin (East Siang District) via Bhalukpong-Seijusa-Digalmukh-Balijan-Naharlagun-Kimin-Likabali- Dipa-Nari, the Trans-Arunachal National Highway from Tawang to Longding, 12 Nos. of Inter-State roads in SARDP-NE and Lumla (in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh) to Tashigang (in Bhutan) Road strengthening the border trade between the two

countries. He also said that 160 Kms of the Historic Stilwell road on Myanmar side should be upgraded as part of 'Good Will Mission' under the Act East Policy, as the 61 Kms Indian portion has already been developed by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways as NH- 153. This would largely facilitate promotion of trade and commerce as also setting up of Industrial Enterprises in the region under the 'Make in India mission'.

The Governor pointed that from the Strategic and defence point of view, it is felt that special Road Development Schemes may be conceived and implemented by the Govt. of India connecting all the identified centres with the Trans-Arunachal Highway and the proposed Frontier Highway in my State.

While expressing grateful to the Prime Minister for the Railway connectivity, the Governor requested him to increase the frequency of the daily intercity express to twice a day and the Weekly, A.C. Express to at least thrice a week as per public demand, with additional coaches including AC first class. He also requested the Prime Minister for expediting the work on other railway lines from Bhalukpong to Tawang in the West and Murkongselek in Assam to Pasighat in the East and railway links to all foothills towns and clusters along the Assam-Arunachal border for overall development of the region and in particular for development of trade, commerce, transportation of construction materials, passenger traffic etc.

The Governor also drew the attention of the long awaited Rail cum Road Bogibeel Bridge, which requires urgent completion.

Emphasizing on air connectivity, the Governor said that owing to its vastness and tough geographical terrain, Arunachal Pradesh is largely dependent on helicopter services for ferrying passenger to some far-flung districts. Presently a small Airport at Tezu in the Lohit district approved by DoNER Ministry and sanctioned by the NEC on 10.02.2010 is under construction and scheduled to be commissioned in Nov-2017. He requested for expediting completion of this project which would critically serve the far eastern region of the State.

The Governor stressed that in addition to the proposed Greenfield Airport, the State requires at least 3-4 more Airports, while informing that a request has already been made to the Civil Aviation Ministry to select the sites in consultation with the State Government.

While heartily welcoming the initiative of the DoNER Ministry to start commercial helicopter service within North Eastern Region to improve intra-regional connectivity, the Governor called for concretization of the initiative under a time-frame.

Underscoring that the site for Greenfield Airport at Itanagar-Holongi in Papum Pare district has been finalized by the Civil Aviation Ministry, while there is a long-pending demand to set up the Airport at Karsingsa-Banderdewa which is presently sub-judice, the Governor also requested Gol to expedite the decision on the site in consultation with the present State Government and to issue pending clearances for

the project and implement it under a time frame by the Airport Authority of India Ltd. on top priority basis.

The Governor said that apart from a Greenfield airport at Itanagar, which is under an active consideration of Ministry of Civil Aviation, the State needs urgent upgradation of 26 helipads of State Government in order to meet the standards of DGCA & BCAS, 30 New helipads need to be constructed to provide air connectivity to the border villages having international borders. He added that there are 8 (Eight) Advance Landing Grounds (ALGs) at – Pasighat, Ziro, Aalo (Along), Tuting, Mechuka, Vijaynagar, Walong and Tawang helipad coming up in the border districts of State of Arunachal Pradesh, of which 3 have already been completed. He called upon the NEC to advise the concerned agencies to expedite work of the remaining 5 ALGs in a time bound manner.

While emphasizing on the need for establishing the feasibility of having more ALGs in order to serve all the sensitive border clusters, the Governor said that the ALGs upgraded by IAF should be used for defence as well as civilians purposes and permission may be granted to use existing defence ATC facilities for civilian choppers, including those run by the State Government.

The Governor said that the northeast region has many large and small rivers providing facilities for water transport, especially in their plains sectors. In Arunachal Pradesh the rivers Siang, Lohit, Dibang, Kameng, Subansiri, Burhi Dihing, Noa Dihing, and Tirap are used for navigation by small country boats in those stretches where there are no rapids. He called for revive the use of waterways- National Waterway 2 running along the Brahmaputra and announced in 1988 is yet to become operational. He suggested that these rivers together with the Brahmaputra need to be made navigable throughout the year by regular Dredging operation, for which setting up of North East Dredging Corporation should be considered on priority under NEC or DoNER Ministry. Presently, water connectivity with Arunachal Pradesh using the Brahmaputra has been practically non-existent, he added.

The Governor, while emphasising strengthening the communication network drew attention of the Prime Minister for the urgent need to improve the telecommunication facilities in Arunachal Pradesh. He said that the Internet and mobile connectivity in State Capital Itanagar in particular and the whole State in general is very erratic and unsatisfactory. All India Radio covers only 57% of the area. Doordarshan covers 20% area of the State with 56% population coverage through terrestrial transmission. There is void in the entire border belt, he added while calling for an immediate focus and enhancing their reach even beyond border.

The Governor said that Doordarshan through DTH (Direct to Home) transmission can cover 100% population and 100% area of the State. He suggested that DTH sets be made available to the border areas, free of cost.

Stating that Government is committed to materialize the dream of making Arunachal Pradesh the Power House of India, the Governor requested NEC and Ministry of

DoNER to help the State to identify and implement run of the river off grid projects so as to power the remote administrative headquarters. He also requested for intervention of the Prime Minister to resolve the impasse on 2000 MW Lower Subansiri Project by addressing the unresolved issues raised by NGOs in Assam, in an amicable manner.

The Governor called for redefining the Hydel Projects into small, medium and large categories by fixing appropriate generating capacity for each category. He opined that redefining will allay the general apprehension of the people about Mega Dam Project as any project with installed capacity of above 25 MW is now considered as a large project.

On environment, for enabling the State government to implement compensatory afforestation and other programmes related to wild life and bio diversity conservation, the Governor requested for transfer the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) Fund to the State. He further said that the transfer of fund will help in providing alternative sources of income and livelihood to the farmers involved in Jhum and Opium cultivation. The Governor also request for setting up three battalions of Ecological Task Territorial Army for protecting 68,000 Sq km forests and wild life.

Expressing his concern on the issue of lager scale migration from the remote border areas to the urban areas down south, which is a major national security concern, the Governor proposed that the Ministry of Defence should consider setting up Military cantonments in the remote areas near the Sino-Indian border to seed urbanization in the area. It is necessary to develop infrastructure facility like drinking water, electricity, education, health, fair price shops, grocery stalls etc. in the villages or clusters along the international borders. A mechanism may be evolved for sharing such facilities of the Indian Army and also those provided by the state Government on complementary basis, for the Army and Civilians.

The Governor also requested for relaxation in height and chest norms for youths of Arunachal for recruitment in the Army, as done in State Police and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), so as to enable the youth of our State to join the Armed Forces in good number. This is justified as the average height of the adults in Arunachal Pradesh, a 100% hilly State, as also the chest size is much lower than that of national average.

To harness the abundant mineral potential of the State, the Governor requested the GOI to constitute one Expert group to assist in preparing a Master Plan for exploration of minerals, i.e. coal, petroleum, limestone, dolomite, graphite, quartzite, brine oil, marble etc for development of the State.

Highlighting the huge tourism potential of the State, the Governor requested Government of India to promote the State through all the Indian Missions across the world in important cities and foreign nations. Quoting Prime Minister, 'Terrorism divides and Tourism unites', he emphasised on the need for connecting with the

South-East Asian countries through Tourism and tap in the rich economical buzz of the region, although in a sustainable way.

Stating that Arunachal Pradesh has not been included in the 'National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD)' Scheme, the Governor requested for intervention of Prime Minister in giving the State due recognition as part of Buddhist and Hindu heritage. We also need support to develop the infrastructure of the two national parks and twelve wildlife sanctuaries, including good approach roads and road side amenities for the tourists, he added.

Underlining the abundant agri-horticultural products of the State, the Governor said that support from the NEC and the Central government would be required for setting up of cold storage infrastructure and processing facilities to provide livelihood and for exporting the horticultural products. He added that the fertilizer utilization in our State is less than 15%. Most parts of the State are already organic by default. The Governor expressed his hope that Prime minister will support the noble initiative of the State Government by including Arunachal Pradesh in the Organic Mission.

The Governor requested NEC to augment the effort of the State Government in revamping and overhauling the health service in the state by helping it to set up state-of-the-art hospitals in major district headquarters and superspeciality hospital, such as eye hospitals, Liver and biliary science hospitals, chest and lung disease hospitals, etc.

Stating that due to the unavailability of Vocational Training Providers in the State and in the Northeast region, the State Government had to send most of its students to far off cities such as Delhi and Mumbai. Unfortunately, despite successful placement, more than 80 % of the trained people return back to the State. The Governor requested the NEC to consider a scheme for the State to finance the setting up of Vocational Training Providers in the State.

Appreciating the DoNER Ministry's initiative to organize 27th May every year as Uttar Poorvi Kshetra Vikas Diwas, the Governor suggested that the event should be celebrated across all metropolitan cities and other major cities across India so as to spread awareness about the northeastern culture, the tribal handloom and handicrafts, the culinary practices.

The Governor said that the State requires infrastructure Support from the NEC and DoNER Ministry for setting up one Regional Centre of Entrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI) for Skill Development of the unemployed youth of the State. He requested for setting of North Eastern Institute of Food Processing Technology (NEIFPT) as regional institute. He proposed that a North East Institute of Road Research and Development in the model of Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), Roorkee and CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CRRRI), New Delhi is an urgent necessity.

The Governor said that the committed liability of the Ministry of DoNER against Arunachal Pradesh is around Rs.7313 Lakhs as on date. In addition to this, the

retained but not sanctioned project amounts to Rs. 63,754.00 Lakhs. The State Government has been told that Ministry of DoNER will unilaterally cancel all retained projects submitted before 2012-13. But this will go against the Central Government declared policy of speeding up development of the North-eastern region. Arunachal Pradesh is faced with insurmountable developmental challenges which we hope and expect to overcome with funding from Central Government assistance. He expressed his hope that the State will have more opportunity to address its problems through the instrument of NLCPR Central funds. Under this, we plan to take up crucial projects such as the Naharlagun Medical College and Paramedical College in the State, he informed the forum.

While pointing that in many instances the Ministry of DoNER unilaterally and arbitrarily cuts down the project cost without consulting the State Government agencies, the Governor said that State Government is against 'one size fits all approach' policy.

Giving details on financial liabilities, the Governor said that despite generous funding by the Central Government, the new State Government had to burden tremendous financial liabilities of the past due to mismanagement. He requested the Prime Minister to kindly consider giving the State Government a lump-sum one time financial assistance to tide over the situation.

The Governor requested the Prime Minister to get the proposal of the NEC for enhancing its budget from present level of Rs 800 crores to at least Rs 2000 crores annually from 2016-17 onwards, examined considering the backwardness of the region and take a favorable decision on this subject. He also request for urgent release of the balance amount payable to NEC by way of Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) pending since 1998-99 onwards which is about 15000 crores.

In view of the delays involved in routing, processing and approving proposals of even small amount, submitted by Govt. department, Institutions, NGOs, SHGs, individuals etc., the Governor suggested that upto project cost of about Rs.20 lakhs or so, direct submission of proposal to the NEC without routing through the State Govt. may be allowed.

PRO to Governor
Arunachal Pradesh
ITANAGAR, May 27, 2016