



सत्यमेव जयते

**SPEECH  
OF  
HIS EXCELLENCY  
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GOVERNOR  
OF  
ARUNACHAL PRADESH**

**62<sup>nd</sup> PLENARY OF  
NORTH EASTERN COUNCIL  
AT  
NEW DELHI  
ON  
16<sup>th</sup> JULY, 2013.**

- Hon'ble Chairman of the North Eastern Council Sh Ghatowar Ji
- Your Excellencies, the Governors of Northeastern States
- Hon'ble Chief Ministers
- Respected members of NEC
- Secretary, DoNER, Secretary NEC, Senior officers from Govt. of India,
- Planning Commission, Ministry of Home Affairs, DoNER, Civil Aviation, Railways, Transport, Telecom and representatives of the State Governments.
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

(1) It is a matter of great pride and privilege to be here, amongst you all to participate in the 62<sup>nd</sup> NEC Plenary session. On behalf of my beautiful and picturesque State of Arunachal Pradesh, I extend my warm greetings and good wishes to all the participants. I hope this meeting will help us to find out solutions, to some of the common challenges 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 specific agenda items concerning my State.

(2) India's Look East Policy holds immense potential for the region. North east region is the lynchpin for success of this policy, with connectivity as its prime concern. We have been reiterating that the focus must be on developing the historic Stillwell Road. Except distance of about 160 Km on this road from Pangsau (India) – Myitkyina (Myanmar) stretch, the entire road outside India has been brought in a more or less motor able shape. NEC should now take a lead in developing this stretch on the lines of Tamu-Kalewa Indo -Myanmar Friendship road.

(3) The Border Trade Agreement between India and Myanmar has already been signed on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1994 and trade has officially been going on at Moreh in Manipur. At Nampong (Pangsau Pass) a Land Customs Station has also been inaugurated by the then Union MoS Commerce in November 1997 but has practically been lying dysfunctional. It needs to be re-activated and formal trade needs to be started by formalizing, items of trade and providing back-up services like banking. Gradually, a full Customs Post needs to be established. It is worth mentioning that formal border trade through local markets/ haats is already going on with an average of about 300 to 350 Myanmarese nationals visiting Nampong on the Indian side of the Border thrice every month. We need to formalize and improvise the trade through Pangsau Pass, make trading a regular feature and Pangsau town a trading hub.

(4) During my maiden visit to Changlang District, I interacted with Myanmarese delegation led by Chief of the area. They requested for allowing movement of food-grains and construction materials to Myanmar through Pangsau Pass. The delegation also requested for allowing access of Myanmarese national to avail medical facilities at Dibrugarh and Tinsukia, Assam.

Through this platform, I urge NEC to take up this issue with the Ministry of External Affairs for allowing movement of Myanmar nationals through Pangsau pass and find out modalities for providing access to the international neighbour in a regulated manner. Modalities as “Visa on arrival” can be worked out to have a meaningful look east policy, and friendly relations with neighbouring countries.

(5) My predecessor and my Chief Minister have repeatedly stressed for ensuring Air Connectivity to the land locked State of Arunachal Pradesh. Due to its vastness and tough geographical terrain, Arunachal Pradesh is largely dependent on helicopters, air services for its connectivity requirement. NEC funded Tezu Airport has already started functioning. Timely completion of this project will go a long way in improving the connectivity in Arunachal Pradesh. However, the progress of work is slow. The Airport Authority of India (AAI) is urged to speed up the work.

The site for Greenfield Airport at Holongi has been finalized. Through this platform, I request Planning Commission to provide funds for starting this project at the earliest.

8 Advance Landing Grounds (ALGs) namely (1) Tuting in Upper Siang District (2) Mechuka in West Siang District (3) Along in West Siang District, (4) Vijohnagar in Changlang District (5) Walong in Anjaw District (6) Pasighat in East Siang District (7) Ziro in Lower Subansiri District and (8) Tawang helipad in Tawang District have been identified in the State of Arunachal Pradesh. Concerned agencies may be advised to expedite work in a time bound manner in order to have fully functional airport for Arunachal Pradesh.

Till the time these projects are commissioned, good air service from fully developed Airport at Lilabari must be made operational on highest priority. Lilabari Airport was serving the population of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh till December 2012. However, instead of improving its services as requested, the flight connectivity to this airport was suspended since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013. Its services were irregular leaving the passengers stranded at the last moment, disrupting their programme causing them great inconvenience. Not being sure of taking off the

flights, passenger preferred other means of travel and consequently even those flights that landed at Lilabari were not full. It might have been the cause of closing these flights.

Therefore, it is requested strongly that air connectivity at Lilabari may be restored and preferably a hopping flight from Delhi- Guwahati – Lilabari and back would most ideally suit the requirement. Alongside, the State needs additional helicopter effort on immediate basis.

My State had requested for two helicopters to be placed at the disposal of the State Government. One for regular passenger movement and other for ration sorties. This proposal may be again looked into for positive consideration.

(6) I am happy to share with you that project of Harmuti-Naharlagun Railway link which will connect State Capital is due for completion in December 2013. During the last year's budget speech, Hon'ble Union Minister, Railways had made an announcement for a Railway Link from Tinsukia to Parsuram Kund via Rupai and Namsai. Linking of Pasighat enroute is the immediate need. I would request for starting work on this project with a time-bound schedule.

As envisaged in NER Vision 2020 document, Survey for (1) Murkongseleg to Pasighat and (2) Rupai to Parshuramkund Railway Project was supposed to be started on. But even after signing of the document in 2008, no progress has been made on this project. I will request the NEC to speed up the work on these projects.

While the new project would be commissioned in due course of time, there is urgent need of ensuring timely completion of ongoing Bogeebil

Road-cum-Rail Bridge, connecting Dibrugarh and Dhemaji . This bridge will improve connectivity not only for Assam but also for Arunachal Pradesh. It would connect the eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh with the rest of the State. Construction of this project was started in April 2002 and was to be completed in 7 years. It has been assigned the status of a national project in 2007. However, the progress is extremely tardy. It is scheduled to be completed by December 2017 that too when full funding is made available in time.

I request this August House to pass a resolution for requesting Government of India for its completion positively in the revised time-line of December 2017.

(7) BRO is assigned responsibility of completion of road in Arunachal Pradesh through Vartak, Bramkank, Udayak and Arunank projects. There is need for greater Co-ordination between these projects. A senior officer tasked with responsibility of co-ordinating these four projects should be posted in Arunachal Pradesh for proper monitoring of these projects and co-ordination amongst project officers, State Government and Union Government.

I will request NEC to take up this issues with Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways.

(8) Even though Health Sector is identified as priority sector during 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan , but proposed allocation for this sector in draft Plan 2013-14 is only just 5% of total allocation .Going by allocation figure I feel, the sector is in need of higher allocations.

Primary and Secondary Health Care services are being provided by the States with much of difficulties. However in tertiary Health Care Sector,

an effort of State Government needs to be augmented by NEC. Not a single Super Specialty Health Care facility is available in my State. Therefore, I fervently request NEC for considering proposal for :-

(a) Up-gradation of some of the existing district hospitals to super-specialist Centers.

(b) Opening of new 'State of the art modern super specialty Health Centre' at Itanagar

(9) Under development and poverty go hand in hand. It is therefore imperative that to eradicate poverty, development activities should be taken on priority. The Planning Commission through Ministry of DoNER has proposed for additional budget specifically to be given to NEC for providing meaningful and sustainable opportunities to the misguided youth of insurgency affected Tirap, Changlang and Longding Districts under NERCOMP. The scheme was proposed to be implemented from 2011-12 to 2016-17, unfortunately scheme has not yet seen light of the day even after passage of 2 years.

Therefore, all concerned authorities are requested to ensure that some beginning is made in this financial year.

(10) North Eastern Region and Arunachal Pradesh have tremendous potential for development of Agriculture and allied Sector. These sectors can act as major contributor to region's economic prosperity. Agriculture practices of our region are by default organic. We need to devise some mechanism for marketing our 'organic band' of agriculture. Arunachal Pradesh has diverse Agro-Climatic Zones, which can supports cultivation of tropical, sub-tropical, temperate fruits, vegetables. Some Horticultural produces of State are Mandarin Orange, Pineapple, Kiwi, Apple, off-season vegetables, large cardamom.

There is post harvest loss of perishable agricultural produce to the tune of 30-40% (Worth Rupees fifty thousand crores) in India and the figure is predictably higher in case of North East Hill States in general and about 50% in case of Arunachal Pradesh.

Sale of these produce can ensure higher economic return if proper market linkage and infrastructure could be created for post harvesting management in the States of North East Region. These agriculture/ Horticulture produce can fetch higher price after it's export to foreign Countries.

So, a draft North East Comprehensive Agricultural Marketing/ export Policy may be formulated for entire Northeast Region as a unit.

Further, we have planned to introduce double cropping system in the State on large scale. Comprehensive package for Agriculture / Horticulture development is envisaged which has components of community fencing and assured irrigation. These packages are not covered under other scheme of Government of India. We request NEC to provide funding for this scheme.

(11) Arunachal Pradesh has the highest hydro power potential in the country. This potential has been assessed to be nearly 59,000 MW, which is 40% of the total power potential of 1,48,000 MW of the country. The State Government has, in consonance with the national objective of augmenting capacity addition in the country, notified and adopted effective policies for development of its hydro power potential, viz, Small Hydro Power Policy, 2007 and State Hydro Power Policy, 2008 paving way for development of both small and large hydro power projects on Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode through State and Central Sector Power Utilities as well as Independent Power Producers. The State



Government has so far allotted nearly 150 potential hydro power sites to various power developers, both CPSUs and IPPs, through competitive bidding as well as through MoA route as per its hydro power policies formulated in the line of the policies of the Government of India from time to time.

However, for many projects, Forest and Environmental clearance is pending with Government of India for long. Because of which, the projects are getting delayed , resulting into cost escalation and time over run. Through this platform I urge NEC to take up the issue with concerned Ministry for according the Forest and Environmental clearance in a time bound manner.

2000 MW Lower Subansiri project was started in January 2005. Construction work at site has come to grinding halt since 20<sup>th</sup> December 2011. So far, ₹ 6000 crores have been spent and the project is more than half way through. Because of some issues between NHPC, Government of Assam, this is resulting in time and cost Overrun causing huge loss to national exchequer. The issues between concerned parties need to be resolved urgently.

Let there be some forward movement through this platform, I appeal/ request to my counterpart in Assam and Chief Minister of both States, Government of India and NEC to take steps to resolve these issues and get work started on this projects at the earliest.

(12) RESOLUTION OF BOUNDARY ISSUES: It is imperative to focus on issues concerning States of the region. The inter-State boundary issue is one of them. While the international boundary dispute may take its own time, in its resolution, but the inter-State boundaries affecting all NER States, Arunachal, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura ,

Meghalaya and Sikkim can be hoped to be solved through such forum. It required third party intervention in terms of Central Commission with mandate to a time bound making of recommendation and firm will to its implementation will be in the national interest.

As far as inter-State boundary issue of the State of Arunachal Pradesh is concerned, it has contentious issue with its neighboring State of Assam. I am informed that the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India appointed a Local Commission in 2006 with the incidental directions to go into the respective claims of the States of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh and demarcate the boundary between both the States based on the provision of the Constitution of India, describing the territories of both the States while taking into account all legal, historical and political facts and other relevant documents.

I am also informed that the Local Commission accordingly proposed to make spot visit and physical verification on three specific areas claimed to be disputed along Assam – Arunachal border. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has made it a point that the visit and spot verification of the Local Commission be extended to few other areas where perpetual disputes take place actually.

Therefore, I am of the opinion that these issues should be settled once and for all. The Local Commission may be urged to expedite their action in the overall interest of both the brotherly States of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

(13) My State Arunachal Pradesh has a long international border with 3 different countries china 1100 km, Myanmar 440 km ,160 km with Bhutan. This also puts on us the need of developing the border areas, while NER as a whole is lagging behind the rest of the country. The

council needs to lay special emphasis on development of border areas and supplement the resources of BADP.

My State has submitted proposal for 3 projects viz.

- I. Connecting 22 Un-connected Administrative Centres,
- II. Providing Drinking Water Facilities in Border and
- III. Construction of Porter Tracks, Log Bridges and Foot Suspension Bridges in Border Areas, for local Army and Para-Military Forces.

I strongly request NEC and MHA to allocate additional resources for these projects.

(14) Illegal cultivation of poppy/opium in certain districts of Arunachal Pradesh and subsequent addiction amongst local population has reached worrying proportions. Innocent people/villagers have accepted opium as part of their culture, but ignorant of socio-cultural and economic impacts of opium consumption. As per the report submitted by institute of Narcotics studies, analysis (INSA) approximately 98% villages in Anjaw and 74% villages in Lohit Districts had opium cultivation.

The problem of opium cultivation is not confined to Arunachal Pradesh only. Other states of North Eastern Region are also facing this problem. This issue is not just a problem to be dealt by Narcotics Control Bureau, which carries out sporadic destruction of opium in the region. Problem of opium cultivation must be seen from geographical, social and cultural economical prospective as well.

NEC should take lead to curb this problem and devise some strategy to create awareness about evils of cultivation, establishing efficient treatment and rehabilitation facilities in all drug sensitive districts of

region, training of Doctors, Nurses. NEC should support alternative viable livelihood schemes for the poor opium cultivating farmers.

(15) While concluding, I thank the Hon'ble Chairman and the distinguished members of the Council and other dignitaries present here for having given me this opportunity to put forth my views and also for giving me a patient hearing. I shall be eagerly waiting for the proceedings of the meeting to be compiled, documented and sent to the State Governments so that meaningful action can be initiated early. I also compliment the organizers of this meeting for the meticulous arrangements they have made for this important event.

I once again wish the organizers and plenary a success.