



**GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR**

***SPEECH***

**OF**

***SHRI N BIREN SINGH,  
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**AT  
THE 66<sup>th</sup> NORTH EASTERN COUNCIL MEETING**

**29<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
New Delhi**

***Hon'ble Minister of DONER & Chairman of the North Eastern Council, Dr Jitendra Singhji, my Distinguished Colleagues & Members of the Council, Ladies and Gentlemen***

It is a privilege for me to participate in this 66<sup>th</sup> North Eastern Council Plenary meeting and for giving me this opportunity to share our views on the agenda items and discuss issues of our concerns. I am also looking forward to an informative session on the action plan and strategy of line Ministries for faster development of North Eastern States. If there is any intervention and support required from my Government, we are committed to extend the same for a faster socio economic development of the State.

## **2. CONVERSION OF NEC SCHEMES TO CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEMES:**

Sir, we are concerned that from the year 2017-18, all NEC projects and Ministry of DoNER programme having converted to Central Sector project, will now generally be implemented by Central Agencies. Funds will be released directly to State agencies through PFMS only with prior approval of Ministry of Finance till March 2020. We request Chairman Sir, to take up the issue with NITI Ayog and Ministry of Finance for restoration of NEC and NLCPR as Central Sponsored Scheme, so that State Agencies and Department may continue to implement the projects. You will agree with me that NEC and NLCPR have been a major support for bridging infrastructure gap in the North Eastern States. Implementation through Central Agencies only after March 2020 is not desirable for the NER and state Agencies. Central Agencies may not be able to appreciate fully the socio-economic implication of such projects

in the lives of the local people. State Departments like PWD and other agencies may be allowed to continue implementation of the NEC and NLCPR projects. We proposed that NEC and NLCPR schemes be considered as one of the core of CSS schemes, in the interest of people of the backward states of North Eastern Region of India. NITI Ayog's Restructuring Committee on CSS may be asked to re-look into our request in this regard.

### **3. ANNUAL PLAN FOR 2017-18**

We support North Eastern Council's proposal of head wise Budget allocation of Rs.925.00 crores by giving thrust areas to Transport & Communication, Agriculture & Allied and Human Resource Management. Peoples aspirations and expectation from the new government of Manipur is tremendous and availability of fund is not much. However, we agree that there is need to give priority to completion of ongoing projects and take up new projects in core thrust areas of NEC in consultation with the State Governments. My State has already submitted priority list of projects for the Year 2017-18. We request NEC to select new projects from the State Priority List in consultation with State Government.

### **4. NORMATIVE ALLOCATION OF NEC BUDGET AMONG THE NE STATES:**

We agree that there should be equitable and transparent distribution of fund among member States. NEC proposal to provide 60% of the NEC Budget for funding projects from Annual Priority Lists and to provide 12% of this allocation for Manipur is supported. For the remaining 40% of the NEC Budget being reserved for regional projects,

NEC may identify new inter-state projects after detailed consultation with all member States to avoid concentration of resources on one or few states only.

## **5. DRAFT REGIONAL PLAN OF NORTH EASTERN COUNCIL**

I understand that NEC proposal of draft NEC Regional Plan is for three years(2017-18 to 2019-2020) for an amount of Rs7500 crores with Annual Plan of Rs. 2500 crores for 2017-18. Budgeted allocation for 2017-18 is Rs925 crores. We support NEC proposal to request Government of India for providing additional fund of Rs. 1500 crores each year from NLCPR accruals or provide one time grant to complete ongoing projects, so that new projects and programmes of the new Government could be taken up. We support regional projects identified by NEC under NERSDS (North East Roads Sector Development Scheme) to be implemented by NHIDCL. We would like NEC to take up similar feasible inter-state roads, which connects Manipur with neighbouring states like Assam and Nagaland. Tamenglong- Tousem-Haflong Road, Tamei-Tenning Road are few NEC orphan roads in Manipur. My State will be submitting revised proposal under NERSDS. With regards to construction of small foot bridges essential in remote hill areas, I am of the opinion that such small projects should be taken up under other programmes and NEC should focus on large scale infrastructure projects.

## **6. LIVELIHOOD PROJECTS:**

Improving livelihoods for people of Manipur is also a priority area of my Government. Community based sustainable **livelihood projects** assisted by IFAD and implemented by North Eastern Region Community

Resource Management Society has been successfully completed in Ukhrul and Senapati. I am informed that NERCORMP has transformed the lives of the rural women of villages covered under this project. Based on the success of this project, expansion of this project is ongoing under Phase-III at Chandel and Churachandpur District with funding from NEC. I understand that NEC and M/oDONER is now proposing to launch Phase-IV project with financial assistance from IFAD. We request M/DoNER to include Tamenglong and Imphal East Districts for upliftment of the poor and weaker section of our Society. I also appeal for clearance of this project.

## **7. SPORTS & YOUTH ACTIVITIES:**

Sir, as you are aware Manipur and other North East States have produced numerous medal winning National and International players, who have brought glory and pride to the Country. Recognising the talent and potential of our youth, a Sports University is being set up in Manipur. We are deeply thankful to Hon'ble Prime Minister for this. We are readying to start the University at Khuman Lampak Sports Complex, till new complex is constructed. This will greatly improve our performance at National and international level and the NE State can produce prominent players in the years to come. Here, I would like to draw your kind attention especially in the field of Football wherein the youths of the State and the North Eastern Region have shown great potential and talent. I strongly feel the need for establishing a Regional Football Academy which will harness and groom the youth from the beginning to specialise in the field of football so that they become world class football players. The youth and players of this academy could be human resource of the University in the field of football in years to come. The

funding could be from several sources under the existing schemes of Ministry of Sports & Youth Affairs, Central NLCPR. NEC could provide gap funding.

## **8. TOURISM:**

As our Hon'ble Prime Minister has emphasised in the 65<sup>th</sup> Plenary of North Eastern Council, North Eastern Region is blessed with natural scenic beauty, distinct historical cultural and ethnic heritage offering tremendous scope for tourism in the region. If developed and promoted well, tourism can emerge as the biggest employer in the region. This will add growth and income of the region. I agree that the region has tremendous potential for both employment generation and revenue generation by harnessing tourism potential. I understand that North East Tourism Development Council(NETDC) is being established, which will identify and promote regional and international circuits, identify tourist product for promotion, etc and NETDC will be nodal agency for coordination with concerned Ministries and Tourism Department of the States. My appeal is that all stakeholders and Deptt of all NE States should be consulted and taken into confidence in identification of circuits and tourist product for promotion. Unique features like Shiroi lily, Sangai deer, Polo and pony of Manipur, INA Memorial and Loktak Lake are a few examples which we are promoting through Sangai festival and International Polo, etc. A pool of trained human resource in the field of Tourism and hospitality under Skill development programme is needed to provide supporting services in this sector. My state proposes to develop a few eco-tourism park with modern public amenities/ infrastructure facilities for promotion of tourism under NEC.

## **9. CONNECTIVITY:**

### **9.1: ROAD CONNECTIVITY:**

The total length of National Highways in Manipur is 1459.995 Km out of which the State PWD is looking after 350.815 Km, the balance by Central Agencies. The National Highways-02 ( Mao to Imphal) and National Highway- 37 ( Imphal to Jiribam) are the two lifelines of Manipur and therefore it is very essential to improve these highways so that these roads can be depended upon throughout the year. Moreover the National Highways 102 connecting the country with Myanmar, being part of Asian Highway No 1 needs to be developed to the international standard. Bailey bridge and baily suspension bridge at Irang , Barak, Makru on NH 37 have been a hindrance to the proper utilisation of Imphal Jiribam road. My Government has taken up maintenance work on these NH 37 to keep the bad stretch of roads to traffic worthy condition. Ministry of Transport and Highways may grant adequate maintenance funds in time considering the importance and priority of these roads to the State and also the cost involved due to high rainfall and difficult terrain.

### **9.2 RAILWAY CONNECTIVITY:**

Sir, our people are waiting eagerly for the day when Imphal-Jiribam railway line will be completed and railway train will reach Manipur. I appeal to the Ministry of Railways for completion of the project early. My Government will extend all possible support needed.

### **9.3 AIR CONNECTIVITY:**

As you are aware, there is no direct flight between Delhi and Imphal, and flights via Guwahati or Kolkata take 4-6 hours to reach Imphal. This has been one of reasons for unwillingness of the tourists/investors to come to Manipur. May I request you to consider emphasizing upon the Ministry of Civil Aviation to ask Air India to start operating direct flights between Delhi and Imphal and also to resume Imphal-Silchar flight.

I am informed that the capacity of present passenger terminal building at Imphal Airport is inadequate to meet the growing air traffic demand. Construction of boundary wall for Imphal airport has been completed and construction of hanger, associated apron & link taxiways works is targeted for completion by March 2019. Planning for construction of new terminal building and allied facilities at Imphal airport is in process at AAI HQRs, New Delhi. This may be supported.

### **10. 7<sup>th</sup> PAY COMMISSION:**

Manipur is facing acute fiscal imbalance. The gap between receipts and expenditures have widened over the past 1-2 years. During 2016-17 State Government had to frequently resort to ways and means advances facility to fill the gap. The gap has risen primarily on account of huge growth in revenue expenditure due to the mismanagement by the previous Government. The State Government is yet to implement the 7<sup>th</sup> Pay Commission award for the State Government employees and the Joint Administrative Council of All Manipur Government Employees Organisation(AMGEO) are demanding immediate implementation of the 7<sup>th</sup> Pay Commission recommendation since some other State



Government have already implemented the same in their State. The revenue transfer under the 14<sup>th</sup> FC have not been and will not be able to support the present level/future level of revenue expenditures. The total gap in revenue expenditure is about Rs 3716 crores. In view of the above, may I appeal to Hon'ble Prime Minister and Finance Minister through this August House to provide additional resources to fill in the gap in revenue expenditures.

#### **11. SETTING UP OF MOBILE DISPENSARY/AMBULANCE FOR HILL AND REMOTE AREAS:**

Sir, I would like to place on record my appreciation of your innovative initiative for introduction of Mobile Ambulance / Helicopter-based "Air Clinics" for Northeast. This will provide the much needed emergency health services to injured or old aged people who require immediate health care on the spot and help in setting up makeshift OPDs of different specialties in remote and inaccessible areas by specialised doctors. This will also be useful in transporting patients to the hospital during its return sortie from very remote places. You would appreciate that many-a-times due to difficult geographical terrain, many people lose their chance of survival during 'golden hour' due to non-availability of doctors/hospitals immediately. In Manipur, as in other parts of NE region, good health facilities are very far and few and hence to save human lives some emergency air-ambulance services are very much required. In order to be useful for the entire region, two such emergency ambulance services can be thought of. One to be served from North East Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (NEIGRIHMS), Shillong and another from RIMS, Imphal. The State Government of Manipur will provide any assistance (in the form of

doctors etc.) that may be required to make this service operational. Necessary funding may be provided under NHM.

**12. STARTING A SCHEME ON THE LINES OF HILL AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (HADP):**

I would like to highlight the need for the speedy development of hill areas in Manipur which requires special attention due to unique topography of the State as well as for the welfare of tribal people of Manipur. As you aware, earlier Hill Area Development Programme was designed for socio-economic development of the hills and people living there in harmony with ecological development. Under this programme, suitable location specific solutions to address crucial environment problems of the hills like De-forestation due to indiscriminate felling of trees for commercial purposes, soil erosion, flash floods due to high rainfall, intensive human and livestock pressures were taken up. Similar problem still exists in the North East States including hill district of Manipur. If such a programme is again started, it will address extra cost, investment required for taking up programme in the topographically difficult hilly terrains, as there is a need to take up infrastructure development programmes in hilly areas based topographical need based budgeting. This is otherwise is not permitted under the existing schemes of Government of India for the reasons like thin and sparse population and differential cost due to difficult terrain and high rainfall. For instance, due to population in many of the Manipur's towns being lesser than one lakh, these towns do not qualify for funding under AMRUT. Further, in many of the remote small villages in the hill areas proper road connectivity could not be provided under the scheme of

Ministry of RD where minimum census population is a requisite criteria. Whereas maintenance cost of roads is much higher in these areas. I seek your kind intervention for implementation of Hill Area Development Programme in the States like Manipur, Assam & Tripura where topography consists of hill and valley both. This will go a long way in addressing the welfare of poor and needy tribal people of Manipur and other States.

### **13. ENHANCEMENT OF ALLOCATION UNDER SIDF:**

Under the UPA Government during 2008-09, Union Finance Minister had announced and provided special package of Rs. 500 crore for the NER under Social and Infrastructure Development Fund (SIDF) to address the special problems that cannot be tackled in the usual course or through normal schemes. As you are aware, there are numerous small villages in Manipur along the Indo-Myanmar border where multi ethnic tribal people habited. Providing connectivity to each village, particularly those located in the border areas irrespective of its location and population size, is the objective to provide the essential services and benefits of welfare schemes to the people besides promoting social harmony, integration and emotional bonding of all people irrespective of the multi ethnic origin or geographical location. However, proper connectivity cannot be provided to these villagers under popular existing schemes of Govt. of India where census population is a requisite criteria. Ever since the new BJP led Government has come to power in Manipur, there is a high expectation of people. This has led to huge demand in infrastructure even in the remote areas of Manipur. The current allocation of SIDF is not able to cater to such a demand. In order to deliver on these expectations from

the first ever BJP led Government in Manipur, I would like to request you to kindly enhance the budgetary support under Social Infrastructure Development Fund (SIDF). This will enable us to take up new projects of specific needs in the State of Manipur.

14. I thank the Ministry of DoNER and North Eastern Council for giving this opportunity to share some of views and concern.

JAI HIND