



Current Northeast Budget around Rs 50,000 Cr: Dr Jitendra Singh

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Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said here today that the current budget for Northeast for 2017-18 is around Rs. 50,000 crore which is significantly higher than that in earlier years and is also an indication of high priority that the Modi Government accords to the development of that region.

Speaking in Rajya Sabha in reply to a question by Member of Parliament from Assam, Ms. Ranee Narah, Dr Jitendra Singh said that the 10 % contribution from budget of each of the 56 non-exempted Union Ministries earmarked for Northeast, amounts in total to over Rs. 43,000 crore which was earlier around Rs. 33,000 crore.

In addition, he said, the Railway budget for Northeast is to the tune of Rs. 5,500 crore, the budget for special roads scheme for Northeast is Rs. 150 crore and the budget for BTC, KAATC & DHATC amounts to about 120 crore. The DoNER Ministry budget, per se, for 2017-18 is also increased up to Rs. 279.45 crore, he added.

In reply to a supplementary, Dr Jitendra Singh said, both the pace of the various projects as well as the percentage expenditure of the allocated funds has shown significant rise during the last 3 years, as a result of certain pro-active steps taken by the DoNER Ministry under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. For example, he said, the process of submission of approval of DPRs has been expedited using the help of modern technology and portals. Similarly, he said, the services of Space Centre in Shillong are being solicited for appropriate and accurate preparation of Utilization Certificates without wasting time. Result of this, he said, is that while in April 2016, the amount of around Rs. 1158 crore was pending on account of delayed Utilization Certificates but, as on February 2017, the same pending amount got reduced to Rs. 206.5 crore.

Later in the day, Dr Jitendra Singh presided over a meeting of Consultative Committee on the Ministry of DoNER in which, among others, some of the senior Members of Parliament from the region including C. L. Ruala, Neiphiu Rio, Vincent H. Pala, Naba Kumar Sarania and Bijoya Chakravarty and also Union Secretary DoNER Naveen Verma, Secretary North Eastern Council Ram Muivah and senior officers of DoNER Ministry were present.

Dr Jitendra Singh appreciated some of the State Governments like Assam and Sikkim which had expedited the pace of various development projects. He said, in order to simplify procedures, he had suggested to the State Governments to constitute their own State Level Empowered Committee (SLEC) to finalize and approve the DPR and send them directly to the concerned Ministry with the Ministry of DoNER functioning as facilitator or adjunct so that the timeline of the process gets shortened.

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