



Railways will bring all round development for the region: DV Sadananda Gowda Minister lauds the implementation of MPLADS in Meghalaya Centre committed for providing necessary support for development of the region

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Union Minister for Statistics & Programme Implementation Gol Shri D V Sadananda Gowda expressed satisfaction over the utilisation of Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) in Meghalaya. The minister, who is on a two day visit to Shillong, today reviewed the progress of Support for Statistical Strengthening (SSS) scheme, the status of implementation of MPLADS and the implementation status of the Central Sector Infrastructure Projects costing Rs 150 crore and above, being implemented in Meghalaya by Railways and various Central Sector Public Enterprises. The Union Minister also called on the Chief Minister of Meghalaya Dr Mukul Sangma in the evening and comprehensively discussed issues related to the development projects of the state.

While reviewing the implementation of construction of the new BG Railway Line from Byrnihat to Shillong, which was included in the Railway Budget 2010-11 as a National Project, the Minister said that Railways will create huge employment for the youth in Meghalaya. The Minister further said, besides employment generation tourism will also increase manifold. The Minister expressed his concern over the delay in the progress of the project. While speaking with the press after the meeting the Minister said that the potential of railways for the development of the region is immense and every issue hampering the project should be resolved.

While reviewing the status of the Support for Statistical Strengthening (SSS) scheme, he informed that the objective of the SSS Scheme is to strengthen and improve the State Statistical Systems so that the states are able to bring out accurate, reliable and timely data for State and sub-state planning. The Minister also informed that his Ministry provides the requisite funds to the State Government for creating suitable infrastructure for strengthening the State Statistical Systems and that the scheme will be implemented in the state of Meghalaya shortly.

The Minister expressed his satisfaction over the utilisation of 95 per cent of the MPLADS funds in the state. He, however, also added that the release of funds will be subject to timely submission of utilisation certificates. He also requested the District Authorities to make best use of MPLADS portal by updating it on regular basis.

The Minister informed that there are six ongoing central sector infrastructure projects costing Rs 150 crore and above in Meghalaya. The total original cost of these six projects was Rs 7108.02 crore and the anticipated completion cost is Rs 9,025.00, implying a cost overrun of Rs 1,916.98 crore. The Minister urged the concerned officials to complete the projects in a time-bound manner.

The Minister also reviewed the construction works at NEIGHRIMS and asked the officials to expedite the process. While reviewing the 2-Laning of Shillong-Nongstoin Section of NH-44 and Nongstoin – Rongieng – Tura road under phase –A of SARDP-NE, the Minister suggested that Forest Department, Govt of Meghalaya may be requested to expedite the process for giving forest clearance as submitted by PWD to avoid further delay. The Minister also expressed concern over the delay in the completion of Umsning bypass in Ri-Bhoi district of the state and directed NHAI officials to expedite the process. He also directed the officials to repair the existing road at the earliest.

The Minister also informed the press that the construction of International Centre for Performing Arts and Culture in Shillong, implemented by Hindustan Steelworks Construction Ltd (HSLC), is running as per schedules after initial delays due to rain.

The Minister said that the purpose of his visit to the state conforms to the Prime Minister's vision of Act East Policy. He said that the Central Government is committed for providing all kinds of assistance to the Northeastern states to ensure that the development projects in the region are completed within the time frame. He also said that he will request the Chief Secretary, Government of Meghalaya, to convene regular meetings of the Central sector Project Co-ordination Committee (CSPCC) in order to look into and resolve the problems faced by the Central Sector PSUs in the State. He concluded by saying, "I hope that my visit to the state will help in speeding up the implementation of the development projects in Meghalaya".

The meeting was attended by Member of Parliaments Shri. Conrad Sangma (LS) and Smt. Wansuk Syiem (RS) and senior officials from the Government of Meghalaya, MoSPI, Railways, HSCC, NHAI and NEIGHRIMS.

KSP/nb

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