



Dr. Jitendra Singh chairs 66th Plenary of North Eastern Council

NEC would strive to allocate more liberal grant of resources, says NEC Chairman

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The Chairman, North Eastern Council (NEC) and 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 chaired the 66th Plenary of North Eastern Council here today.

During the occasion, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had attended the last plenary meeting at Shillong in May, 2016 and set in motion a new development agenda for the North Eastern Region. He said that, we are all committed to implement the Prime Minister's vision for the North East.

Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted some of the major achievements of the NEC. He said, NEC has put maximum emphasis on the Transport and Communication Sector with the construction of 10,500 kms of roads including inter-state and roads of economic importance. He said that a new scheme named, North East Road Sector Development Scheme (NERSDS) has been launched to take up all strategically important but hitherto neglected roads/ bridges. Three (3) projects under the scheme (Doimukh-Harmuti; Tura-Mankachar & Wokha-Merapani, Golaghat) for 85 kms has been already awarded to National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL) for implementation at an estimated cost of Rs 213.97 crores, he added. Dr. Jitendra Singh said that 14 projects have been identified to be taken up under NERSDS during 2017-18.

He said that, to promote air connectivity in the region, NEC has supported Airports Authority of India (AAI) for upgradation of infrastructure in 12 operational airports. He said that the construction of Tezu airport in Arunachal Pradesh is supported by NEC and is likely to be operational within the current financial year. He said that NEC is also taking up the runway extension in the Umroi (Shillong) airport to enable bigger aircrafts to land and three (3) numbers of hangars at LGBI Airport in Guwahati has been completed under NEC funding.

The Minister said that NEC has also contributed to the development of Power Sector. He said that during 2016-17, NEC has funded construction of 198 circuit km long transmission lines of 165 MVA capacity in the NER and eleven (11) power sector projects (Manipur-2; Meghalaya-1; Mizoram-1; Nagaland-2; Sikkim-4; Tripura-1) were completed and commissioned.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that, for promoting livelihoods, NEC has been a pioneer in implementing community resource management with a bottom-up approach. He said that the North Eastern Regional Community Resource Management Projects (NERCORMP), is being implemented in 11 most difficult and remote hill districts of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Meghalaya through participating planning. There is proposal for extending the projects into more districts in the region in the Phase-IV of the project, he added.

The Minister said that NEC has supported another noteworthy initiative of construction of wayside amenities as part of Prime Minister Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission) on approved Tourist circuit falling under NERCORMP projects area in Ukhrul, Chandel and Senapati districts of Manipur.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that, to promote tourism in NER, North East Tourism Development Council (NETDC) has been formed by the NEC with the initial subscription from the private sector. He said that NEC would continue to support creation of tourism infrastructure, especially in areas not being covered by Ministry of Tourism.

The Minister said that, NEC has contributed immensely to the Agriculture Sector, Irrigation and Flood Control. He said that, NEC would be providing assistance to Aggregator Agencies for Agri-Horti Produce to help Farmers in the North East Region by extending finance to them as grants-in-aid. NEC is also supporting NERAMAC for obtaining Geographical Indication (GI) registration of various unique and indigenous horticulture products of the region, he added.

Under the Health Sector, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that NEC is providing support for Dr. B. Borooah Cancer Institute in Guwahati, which is in the process of being taken over by the Department of Atomic Energy, through which this hospital would be developed on the model of Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai, as a Premier Post Graduate level institute for cancer treatment in the country.

Under Science & Technology Sector, he said that a special thrust has been given towards establishment of North Eastern Spatial Data Repository (NESDR) by the North East Space Application Centre (NESAC) for facilitating communication linkage, data cataloguing between Regional node of NESAC and State nodes of different State Remote Sensing and Application Centres (SRACs) of NER. He said that, for proper monitoring of all projects sponsored by North Eastern Council Secretariat, Geo-tagging and uploading of projects' images in the public domain has been proposed in collaboration with NESAC.

The Minister said that, during the year 2016-17, NEC was allotted Rs. 800 crore at BE stage and at the RE stage it was enhanced to Rs. 968.79 crore plus Rs. 150 crore for NERSDS making a total of Rs. 1118.79 crore. Depending on the legitimate demand of the North Eastern States based on the Regional Plans approved by the Council, NEC would strive to allocate more liberal grant of resources in the coming years, he added.

During the day, the members discussed the NEC budget for the current financial year, conversion of NEC schemes to Central Sector schemes, issues concerning tourism in the North East, promotion of textiles with special emphasis on handlooms, handicrafts and apparel, agricultural marketing, organic farming, horticulture and bamboo mission, food processing activities and documentation, preservation and promotion of medicinal plants in the NER.

The Minister for State for Home Affairs Shri Kiren Rijiju, Governor of Manipur Dr. Najma Heptulla, Governor of Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh Shri Padmanabha Balakrishna Acharya, Governor of Assam and Meghalaya (I/C) Shri Banwarilal Purohit, Governor of Mizoram Lt. General (Retd.) Nirbhay Sharma, Governor of Sikkim Shri Shrinivas Patil, Governor of Tripura Shri Tathagata Roy, Chief Minister of Mizoram Shri Pu Lalthanhawla, Chief Minister of Meghalaya Dr. Muku Sangma, Chief Minister of Tripura Shri Manik Sarkar, Chief Minister of Manipur Shri Nongthobam Biren Singh, Chief Minister of Nagaland Dr. Shurhozelie Liezietsu, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Shri Pema Khandu, Assam's Minister of Finance Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Member, NEC Shri Chandra Kanta Das, Secretary DoNER Shri Naveen Verma, Secretary, NEC Shri Ram Muivah and other senior officers of DoNER Ministry, NEC and State Governments were also present on the occasion.

