

2. SPECIAL SECTORAL SUMMITS



Union Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram at Special Summit on Baking

To accelerate the process of the development of the North East Region, it was felt desirable to analyse key sectors affecting the socio-economic development of the region. Therefore, at the initiative of the Hon'ble Minister DoNER, a decision was taken at the 53rd Plenary of the North Eastern Council held at New Delhi in November, 2006 to organize Sectoral Summits. The important decisions taken and implemented in pursuant to Sectoral Summits already held are analysed as under:-

I. Power Sector:

- * Central Electricity Authority finalized the Master Plan for Power in North East & circulated to all State Governments, Planning Commission and all the Members of the Committee.
- * Draft Report on transmission, Sub-transmission and Distribution related issues in the North East was completed in December, 2007 and circulated

to all concerned including State Governments.

- * The Report to study the problems afflicting implementation of New and Renewable Energy schemes in the NER suggested, inter-alia, institutional changes, preparation of Annual Plan for promotion of renewable energy, modification of norms of MNRE, viability gap funding by NEC and identification of un-electrified village hamlets.
- * PGCIL prepared a feasibility report on improving the transmission, sub-transmission and distribution system in the NER for an amount of Rs.12971 crore over XIth and XIIth Plan period. According to the report, the implementation will be in 3 phases. Funds required for Inter-state transmission will be Rs.5173.80 crore & for intra-state Rs.7797.24 crore. It will be on the pattern of 90% grant

and 10% loan. PGCIL requested M/o DONER for release of Rs.25 crore for preparation of the DPRs for Transmission, Sub-Transmission and Distribution for the NE region. Ministry of DoNER has decided to release Rs.25 crore to PGCIL through NEC.

- * Development of power sector including transmission and sub transmission has been identified as a thrust area in NEC's annual plan 2007-08 and 2008-09. NEC sanctioned 30 system improvement schemes during the Xth Plan Period comprising 18 sub-stations and 12 transmission line projects. The approved cost for all these projects was Rs. 234.19 crore.
- * Recognizing the need for continuing assistance to the States for improving their Distribution systems, the Ministry of Power has continued with the Accelerated Power Development and Reform Programme (APDRP) with the existing norms, guidelines and funding pattern (90:10) for the NE States during the XIth Plan.

II. Road Sector:

- * The Committee to address the issues relating to implementation of NHDP-II, NHDP-IIIB and SARDP-NE in its report, inter alia, recommended that BOT (Toll) and BOT (Annuity) funding pattern for roads allotted to NHAI under SARDP-NE is not feasible in the NE Region. This issue was referred to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs by DoRTH and it was decided that roads should be allotted on BOT (Annuity) basis. CCEA has approved the DoRTH proposal to undertake tendering for 4 laning of 330 Km NH-44 in Tripura on EPC basis under phase 'A' of SARDP-NE and seek investment decision from CCEA based on tender. NHAI is the

implementing agency.

- * Agartala to be connected to East-West corridor at Jorbat near Guwahati.
- * Ministry of DONER has accorded priority to funding of conversion of timber bridges to RCC bridges. DoNER may consider funding porter tracks for connectivity to remote hamlets in hill areas.
- * Ministry of DONER has continued funding roads which are not included under other Central and State sector programmes. NEC has continued to focus on roads which provide inter-state road connectivity.
- * Under the ADB funded project of North Eastern State Roads Project (NESRP), two workshops were held in which officials from NER were imparted training on technical and economic aspects of the project as a part of capacity building exercise.
- * Two road projects viz. Birgunj-Kaatihar-Singhabad-Rohanpur-Chittagong with links to Joghani, Biratnagar and Agartala and Agartala-Akhaura-Chittagong road corridors have been identified by MEA for taking up under SAARC.
- * The Board of North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd (NEDFi) is in the process of setting up an equipment bank in joint venture in NER.

III. Commodity Boards

- * The Scheme for Rubber Development in NE Region prepared by the Rubber Board to be implemented during the XI FYP has created provisions for 25000 ha of newly planted and 1750 ha of old plantations to be replanted. The

scheme has components for productivity enhancement, quality upgradation of small growers' rubber, farmer group formation, training/ human resource development, market promotion and research. The scheme envisages opening of new Regional Offices and Field Stations of the Board in remote areas. Based on the additional activities proposed, the outlay of the scheme for Rubber Development in NE Region for the XIth Plan has been revised from Rs. 118.10 crore to Rs. 180.13 crore. This is an approved scheme now.

- * The Government of India has sanctioned the following Agricultural Export Zones (AEZs) in the North East Region and all of them are operationalized:

Tripura - Pineapple

Sikkim - Floriculture, Orchids & Cherry Pepper

Sikkim - Ginger

Assam - Fresh & Processed Ginger

- * APEDA sanctioned financial assistance of Rs.594 lakhs to Assam Industrial Development Corporation (AIDC) for establishment of Pack House and 4 collection centers for export of ginger. Rs.157 lakhs has already been released to AIDC. Work on the Pack House has started.
- * APEDA also sanctioned financial assistance of Rs. 320.36 lakhs for setting up Integrated Pack House Facility at Champhai, Mizoram. Two more proposals for pack house may be taken up, after the first one at Mizoram is successfully established.
- * A Scheme to assist small tea growers from the Xth Plan has been continued in the XIth Plan. New provisions have been added which also include assistance to mini factories.

- * Transport subsidy for tea exported directly from ICD, Amingaon, Assam @ Rs.1.50 per kg to be continued during the XI FYP.

- * Tea Board will streamline electronic auction system for online trading of tea. For this, the project has been given to M/s New Creation Information Technologies (NCIT) for Rs. 9.34 crore.

- * Spices Board have submitted a programme for replanting and rejuvenation of large cardamom in Sikkim where it has planned to replant and rejuvenate 20,000 ha. Currently Sikkim is importing 605 tonnes of large cardamom from Nepal. This is part of the programme on Special Purpose Fund for spices. The various programmes envisaged in the XIth Plan for the North East States include large cardamom planting, rain water harvesting, new planting of black pepper, organic ginger etc. for a total of Rs. 19.77 crore.

- * Govt. of India has approved the XIth Plan proposal for extending financial support for coffee expansion, consolidation and quality upgradation activities in NER during March 2008 and suitable steps are being initiated by the Coffee Board to implement the same. Providing financial support under market support scheme for collection, processing, warehousing, transportation and sale of coffee produced in NE Region will also be continued during XIth Plan. During 2007-08, 100 baby pulpers have been procured and distributed to the growers of NER, out of which 50 Nos. have been given to the growers in Mizoram and 25 Nos. to the growers in Tripura with 50% financial support from respective State Governments and 50% from Coffee Board under the Quality Upgradation Programme. The remaining 25 Nos.

of baby pulpers have also been supplied to the growers of different states at 50% subsidy by the Board. A Mini Coffee Curing Work at Bualpui in Mizoram has been commissioned during April 2007.

- * 46 MT of cured coffee have been processed in respect of coffee procured from growers of NER States for the crop season 2007-08.

III.A Flood Control

- * A scheme “Flood Management Programme” – State Sector for taking up river management, flood control etc. in the XI Five Year Plan has been approved by the Cabinet. 136 schemes with estimated cost of Rs.653.5145 crore in the State of Assam, Sikkim, Tripura, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Northern part of West Bengal were approved for release of 1st instalment of Rs.163.89 crore under “Flood Management Programme” for providing central assistance.
- * The restructuring of the Brahmaputra Board is under active consideration of MOWR which includes amendment of the Brahmaputra Board Act, expansion of its activities and opening up of regional offices.
- * Brahmaputra Board has prepared 8 Master Plans in respect of 8 rivers of Tripura. Brahmaputra Board was also engaged in preparation of DPRs of three drainage development schemes in Tripura. Out of them the DPR of two schemes namely, Kailashahar and Rudra Sagar have been completed. The DPR of the third drainage scheme, i.e. Dharmanagar is under advanced stage of preparation. In addition to the above three drainage schemes, preparation of DPR of Sukhsagar drainage development scheme is at

preliminary stage. The investigations for two flood control schemes in Agartala are under progress and are being expedited. The investigations for preparation of DPR for two anti-erosion schemes namely (i) Flood control scheme of Haora river in and around Agartala town and (ii) Anti-erosion project of Manu and Deo rivers have been taken up.

- * In accordance with the demands of the States to enhance limit of development cost per ha of surface water for minor irrigation schemes, the same has been enhanced from Rs.1.00 lakhs to Rs.1.50 lakhs per ha in October 2007.

III.B Inland Water Transport

- * The Indo-Bangladesh IWT Protocol was renewed for 2 years upto 31.03.2009, which was earlier renewed for shorter periods.
- * Cabinet Committee on Security approved that Silghat should be declared as port of call only if Bangladesh agrees to the declaration of Ashuganj as a port of call.
- * The Bill for NW-6 for Barak river was introduced in the Parliament.
- * Kaladan Multi-modal Project has been launched.

IV. Tourism

- * NEC constituted the North Eastern States Tourism Forum (NEST). The Forum will prepare plans to promote tourism in :

Intra and Inter-State Tourist Circuit
Eco Tourism
Village Tourism
Promotional Events
Destination Promotion for the North East

- * TV Spots on National Channels on NE Tourism promotion have been initiated.
- * ILFS has initiated steps for supporting budget hotels in the North Eastern Region in twelve cities which are under various stages of funding/construction. These are at Agartala, Guwahati, Jorhat, Tezpur, Dibrugarh, Manas, Dimapur, Kohima, Aizawl, Shillong, Tawang & Bomdila and Gangtok. The Budget Hotel at Agartala has been commissioned.
- * Deptt. of Personnel & Training issued orders for allowing air travel to non-entitled officials and conversion of HTC to LTC for travel to the NER. More than 4 lakh Government employees took advantage of this facility which helped in promoting tourism in the region. This has given a fillip to the development of tourism infrastructure in the region which is now coming up at an unprecedented pace. The relaxation has been given for a period of two years, beginning June 2008.
- * Ministry of Tourism sanctioned an Institute for Hotel Management (IHM) at Aizawl for Rs. 10 crore for which Rs. 4 crore has already been released. Ministry of Tourism processed the proposal for approval of a Hotel Management Institute for Nagaland. Such institutes are already available at Guwahati, Shillong and Gangtok.
- * DoNER conducted a programme in July 2008 for the training of 125 youth from NER in Aviation Hospitality and Tourism Management through Ashok Institute, a unit of ITDC.
- * Protected Area Permit/Restricted Area Permit provisions were relaxed by Ministry of Home Affairs for the State of Arunachal Pradesh. In

case of Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Sikkim, such restrictions are yet to be relaxed.

- * Ministry of Tourism sanctioned a Convention Centre at Hotel Brahmaputra Ashok at Guwahati.

V. Air Connectivity:

- * NEC has initiated steps for establishment of dedicated airlines for the NER.
- * Airport Authority of India is in the process of awarding tenders for night landing facility at Imphal. They have requested State Government for security during and after construction.
- * Upgradation of Lengpui Airport to be funded by DoNER
- * Three new Greenfield Airports proposed to be set up at Pakyong (Sikkim), Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh) and Chiethu (near Kohima, Nagaland) with 90:10 funding pattern for ATR operations.
- * Eight airports in NER identified for operationalization in the XI Plan – Pasighat, Tezu, Ziro, Along, Daporijo, Kailashahar, Kamalpur and Tura. Pasighat and Tura airports being taken first for pre-feasibility study.

VI. Rail Connectivity:

- * Ministry of Railways prepared a Cabinet Note seeking a dedicated Special Fund for implementing the National Projects in the North East proposing that the Fund be functional from 2009-10.
- * Nine National Projects already taken up for rail connectivity to link 8 NE State Capitals. Sevoke-Rangpo project linking Sikkim, approved by Cabinet on 6.11.2008 as the Tenth National

Project. The project will take about 4-5 years to complete beginning 2009-10.

- * Train to Agartala launched.

VII. IT and Telecommunications:

- * Action initiated to operationalise easy-billing centres in NE States.
- * Department of Higher Education, Ministry of HRD has initiated action to set up an Indian Institute of Information Technology at Dimapur. This is part of proposed 22 IIITs in the country.
- * NE States to create an enabling environment with appropriate policy intervention and PPP models to develop themselves as preferred IT destinations - Assam adopted an IT Policy and developing an IT Park. Assam is in the process of acquiring 100 acres of land for developing an IT Park. Tripura and Mizoram have also initiated action to set up IT Parks.
- * Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with M/s National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) for administering the Assessment of Competence Test for 20,000 undergraduate youth of the Region. This is a certification and benchmarking programme for employment in the IT-industry. The National Assessment of Competency (NAC) test of NASSCOM generated good response. 5000 students have so far been covered.
- * M/DoNER is funding training of unemployed youth from NE States in IT skills through the Department of Electronics Accreditation to Computer Courses (DOEACC) and other Government institutions.

- * The Department of Telecommunications had granted the licenses to provide mobile services in the border areas without restriction of 500 meters.

- * Use of electoral photo identity card as proof of identity has already been introduced by BSNL.
- * BSNL is using PGCIL cable for connectivity to the State capitals. However for providing bandwidth to other parts of the States, they will be laying their own OF cables. It is also proposing to lay a cable across the river Brahmaputra.
- * Plan to connect Moreh to Tamu on OF Cable.
- * BSNL has proposed Agartala-Brahmanbaria (Bangladesh), 34 mb, 7 GHz link to provide direct connectivity from Agartala to Bangladesh.
- * OF Cable route has been planned from Darjeeling to Gangtok (160 kms), which is expected to be completed during 08-09.
- * Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is setting up a Development Centre on IT in Guwahati.
- * In Tripura, a Software Technology Park is proposed to be established at Agartala. MOU to be signed with Software Technologies Parks of India (STPI).
- * In Aizawl, location for opening an IT park has been identified.
- * NIC has developed its Centres in the State capitals, districts and blocks. Video conferencing facility is also provided in all the 8 States and 83 districts of NE Region.
- * Tripura has allotted land to DOEACC for establishment of a campus for its centre.

VIII. Education, Arts, Sports and Culture

- * Ministry of HRD is in the process of setting up an IIIT in Dimapur.
- * Funding pattern of 90:10 introduced for North Eastern States under SSA programme effective from 2007-08.
- * Sports Authority of India approved Rs. 14.86 lakhs for the Dimapur Centre and the funds have been released to the North East Centre of SAI.
- * NEC initiated action for the establishment of an Institute of Mountaineering, Adventure Sports and Disaster Management should be located in Arunachal Pradesh at Dirang near the snow line.

IX. Agriculture & Allied Sector :

- * Long duration 'Kharif' paddy varieties need to be replaced with HYV of 'Kharif' paddy that mature in less than 120 days and have a potential yield of over five tonne per hectare.
- * Fish pond waters could be used during the water stress periods; will break the speed of the rain water flow; help reduce intensity of floods.
- * Panchayats and institutions and local bodies could be encouraged to take up water harvesting at appropriate sites.
- * The existing and the prevalent local self-government institutions - like Panchayats, Village Councils, the Chieftains or Tribal Councils (having different names and hues), be involved as and when issues that have a bearing on the land ownership are considered.
- * For a gradual reduction of Jhuming, the facilities like electricity, school, medical aid, road, transport and others to reach a central village or a central

area to jhum habitations or a cluster of several tiny Jhum villages and a development nuclei to be started.

- * NE Region has about 17 lakh ha. of cultivable fallow lands (other than current fallow lands) & about 90 lakh ha. waste lands. Growing fruit trees should be encouraged in the region.
- * Area under plantation must be increased. Some areas under Bamboo could selectively be replaced with plantations of Rubber, Spices and horticulture (fruit trees), and medicinal plants to induct variety and generate higher incomes.
- * Large compact areas could be brought under the spices cultivation including black pepper in a planned manner in clusters to bring the advantages to the domestic market. Similar action to promote medicinal and aromatic herbs.
- * Floriculture under the umbrella scheme of Horticulture Mission should be encouraged by the Ministry of Agriculture & Coop. with appropriate inputs from the State Governments.
- * Tea is considered an agricultural activity for policy matters but tea trade does not attract any transport subsidy or other benefits that are available to the agricultural goods. NE States and Central Government need to address this issue.
- * Setting up of cold storages need to be coordinated and selectively directed by the major stakeholders viz. GOI, DoNER, NEC, NABARD & State Governments, to serve the real felt requirements.
- * To sustain trend of rising agricultural production and surpluses in agri and allied services, demand for these surpluses is a must—it should be a demand-driven process growth.



State Finance Ministers (Summit on Banking & Industries)

- * The value addition of the local produce locally is a must. It should begin at the farmers' level.
- * Improvement of technology, skill and infrastructure required to transform Green bamboo into 'Green gold'.
- * Capacity-building in all areas relating to agriculture and allied sectors should start in a phased and dedicated manner.
- * Marketing of all produces and products obtained as consequence of value addition required so that agriculture turns into a profitable profession.
- * Since agriculture is a State subject, States with NEC as partner at the regional level, may consider drawing up time-bound action plans in agriculture and related fields.

X. Banking, Industries & Credit Issues :

- * Increase outreach of formal and informal

credit/bank network including, adopting the SBI Tiny initiative as being implemented in Mizoram.

- * Increase the Self Help Group-Bank Linkage Programme to ensure sustainability of credit system and make the banking system 'more inclusive'.
- * Use of IT-enabled services to reduce the transaction costs to the clients.
- * Strengthening of Regional Rural Banks and Urban Cooperative Banks so as to inculcate banking habits in the Region.
- * Training and sensitization of manpower by holding workshops for banks as well as the public which will give a fillip to micro financing in the region.