

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1305
ANSWERED ON:26.11.2002
STRENGTHENING OF N.E. REGION COUNCIL
BHIM PRASAD DAHAL

Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose new initiations for speedy development of the North- Eastern Region including the strengthening of the North-Eastern Regional Council during the 10th Five Year Plan, the curbing of insurgency and ensuring peace in the region; and

(b) if so, the details of specific proposals being considered particularly for the development of infrastructure relating to industries, power and health, etc ?

Answer

MINISTER, DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE)

(a) Yes Sir. Some of the initiatives already taken and proposed to be taken are as under:-

1. The Department for Development of North Eastern Region, set up in September 2001, aims to co-ordinate and synergise developmental efforts in the Region.
2. All the Central Ministries/Departments (except those specifically exempted) are required to earmark at least 10% of their budget for specific programmes in these States. The unspent amounts from 10% of Budgets of various Ministries are to be part of a non-lapsable pool, and Rs. 200 crores have already been provided in 2002-03, out of this pool, to fund physical and social infrastructure projects. 164 such projects have been supported since 1998-99.
3. The Tenth Plan Outlay for North Eastern Council is Rs 3,500 crores as compared to Rs 2114 crore for the Ninth Plan.
4. Air India's international flight from Guwahati to Bangkok which started from 4th April, 2002 has put Gopinath Bordoloi Airport, Guwahati, on the international map.
5. Projects have been started to strengthen and augment facilities at the existing 12 airports in the region to improve connectivity. Lilabari Airport in Assam has started functioning from 9th October 2002.
6. It is also planned to enhance Intra-region connectivity by introduction of four 50-seater aircrafts in the region with a hub at Guwahati. Letter of Intent has been signed by the Alliance Air for taking on lease 50 seater turbo prop aircrafts for the purpose. The services are expected to commence towards the end of December 2002.
7. The Block level Community Information Centres set up by National Informatics Centre in the North East will bridge the digital divide and will also help to attract investments in the region. A vast long distance network consisting of over 5,269 Kms of Optical Fibre Cable has been set up by the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). Shillong and Itanagar have already been linked to Guwahat and Kolkata by an Optical Fibre Network. Further, BSNL has set up 1,017 telephone exchanges, out of which 756 are in rural and 261 in urban areas. There are 19,848 PCOs, 8,847 Kms of microwave connectivity and 117 Satellite Earth Stations are in place. Total number of telephone connections are 8,01,249, in addition to 7,587 connections on Wireless In Local Loop (WLL) system. It is planned to increase Telephone connections by 1,16,500, Optic Fibre Cable by 1,450 Kms, Microwave by 600 Kms and Satellite Stations by 12 nos during the current year.
8. To develop manpower and build capacity, training for officials of North Eastern States in the areas of project identification, implementation and evaluation, energy Efficient Buildings, Solid Waste Management, Environmental Health Hazards & Sustainable Power Development is being organized in association with Institutions of repute.
9. Works at the Naga Hospital, Kohima were earlier held up for about an year. The works have resumed in July 2002 as a result of intervention of this Department.
10. For operationalisation of the Dimapur Referral Hospital, negotiations have been initiated by Government of Nagaland with private Hospitals, at this Department's suggestion.
11. The first North East Business Summit, was organized on 19-20 July, 2002 in Mumbai in collaboration with FICCI and Indiar Chamber of Commerce, Kolkata, to showcase the investment opportunities in that region. High level delegations from North Eastern

States led by Chief Ministers interacted with captains of Indian Industry and there were sector-wise sessions with focus on the potential of the North East Region. The response far exceeded the expectations of the participants as well as the organizers. These Summits will be an annual feature and will be held each year in a major city outside the North East.

12. A North Eastern Council (NEC) Amendment Bill is being introduced in the current Parliament Session. The Bill seeks to bring Sikkim within NEC's ambit.

13. Closer monitoring of Projects is being attempted through Quarterly Progress Reports and physical inspections by officials. The Comptroller and Auditor General has agreed to take up Audit of identified Projects during implementation itself.

14. The Ministry of Home Affairs has extended the scheme of subsidized helicopter services (thus far applicable to Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Sikkim) into the Tenth Plan and have also introduced this in the State of Tripura.

15. Security related expenditure incurred on counter militancy operations by North Eastern States is being reimbursed by Government under Non-Plan schemes. Arms and ammunition are also provided for modernization and upgradation of State Police forces. All support is being provided by Govt of India to control the militancy situation in the North Eastern States, so that speedy economic development may be ensured.

(b) 1. The Projects being considered in the 10th Plan of NEC envisage significant initiatives in various sectors. These include proposals relating to Power (Rs 563.25 crores), Health (Rs 542.06 crores) and Industries (Rs 150 crore) totaling Rs 1255.31 crores. In respect of the Power, Industry and Health sectors, the new schemes proposed in NEC's 10th Plan are as follows :-

Sl No.	SECTOR	NEW NEC SCHEMES	NEC 10th Plan Outlay (Rs Cr)
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1.	POWER	Lakwa Waste Heat Recovery Project (1x38 MW), Assam	100.00
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		Myntdu-Leshka HEP (2x42 MW), Meghalaya	145.00
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		Karbi-Langpi HEP (2x50 MW)	100.00
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		Upgradation/Improvement/Construction of Power Transmission and Distribution Lines (132/11KV)	150.00
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2.	INDUSTRY	Leather Production Development Centre	17.50
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		Rubber Wood Development Centre, Tripura	2.50
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		Trade and Commerce	54.00
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3.	HEALTH	No New scheme. But in respect of Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi Regional Institute of Mental Health, Tezpur (LGBRIMH), Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal, Regional Institute of Paramedical & Nursing, Aizawl, Dr.B.Barua Cancer Institute, Guwahati, and other Health Institutes in the North Eastern Region, most of the planned expenditure on upgradation will be incurred in Xth Plan (Rs 542 Cr).	
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2. The Ministry of Power has proposals for adding 585 MW of generating capacity (covering Assam, Mizoram and Tripura) in the Central Sector during the 10th Plan. These schemes are to be implemented by North Eastern Electric Power Corporation.

3. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has received proposals from the Governments of Assam, Manipur and Nagaland for financial assistance under 'Assistance for Capacity Building' and these are presently under its consideration. In addition, assistance is being provided to various States including North East, for

- (i) establishing additional Sub-Centres, Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres to meet the gap in order to improve access to primary health facilities, and
- (ii) strengthening primary health infrastructure. This assistance is likely to continue during the 10th Plan and gaps would be filled up under the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana/Area Project etc. Funds are also being provided for strengthening of training infrastructure in the NE States and also for maintaining all sub-centres to meet their recurring cost.