

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1756
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2014
DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH EAST
Datta Shri Sankar Prasad

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

(a) whether the Government has conducted any study on the development of the North East Region compared to other parts of the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

The Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region [Dr. Jitendra Singh]

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) Document has provided an analysis of the performance of North Eastern States over previous plan periods alongside all India growth performance for the same periods. The 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) Document has observed that larger plan investment and focus on infrastructure development has resulted in average growth of gross domestic product in NE States at 9.8% which was higher than the national average of 8% during the 11th Five Year Plan (2007-2012) period.

The Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) has previous studies conducted for roads, air, power, water and tourism sectors and has identified the following as areas requiring special attention during the 12th Plan:

A. Roads

1. East-West Corridor (670 KM in Assam) by National Highway Authority (NHAI);
2. All stretches of Special Accelerated Road Development Programme for North Eastern Region (SARDP-NE) connecting State Capitals/District Headquarters, (including National Highway-39 and National Highway-53 in Manipur, NH-31A in Sikkim);
3. Strategic border roads;
4. Trans-Arunachal Highway along with identified district connectivity;
5. Roads connecting Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport Project;
6. Important bridges include Dhola-Sadia over Brahmaputra and all other crucial bridges on the major road projects;
7. Four-lane highway from Tizit in the north to Dimapur via Tuli-Jalukie-Khelma.

B. Railway

1. Broad Gauge (line conversion) connecting Guwahati-Dibrugarh-Tinsukia, Rangia-Murkongselek Bridge (rail-cum-road) across Brahmaputra at Bogibeel;
2. BG route from New Moinaguri to Jogighopa;
3. BG route from Lumding-Silchar and Kumarghat-Agartala-Sabroom;
4. New lines: Agartala-Akhura, Tetelia-Byrnihat-Shillong, Harmuti-Itanagar, Silchar-Jiribam-Imphal (Tupul).

C. Airways

1. Major works for upgradation of Guwahati Airport, Dibrugarh Airport, Silchar Airport, Agartala Airport, Shillong Airport, Imphal Airport and Dimapur Airport; and,
2. Development of new airports at Itanagar, Ceithu (Kohima), Pakyong (Gangtok). In addition, there are smaller airports, Advance Landing Grounds (ALGs) to be upgraded in Arunachal Pradesh.

D. Inland Water Transport (IWT)

1. Inland Waterways Transport (IWT) development in the Brahmaputra and Barak National Waterway.

E. Power

1. Long-term health of power sector seriously undermined (losses Rs.70,000 crore per year). However, aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses are slowly coming down. State Governments must push distribution reform.
2. Hydropower development seriously hindered by forest and environment clearance procedures. Need to look at special dispensation for these States, especially Arunachal Pradesh.
3. A time-bound plan to operationalise development and evacuation of hydropower from NER required.
4. Given limited connectivity of NER with other parts of the country (through Siliguri corridor), access through Bangladesh needs to be explored.
5. Electricity tariffs not being revised to reflect rising costs. Regulators are being held back from allowing justified tariff increases.

F. Agriculture/Horticulture/Allied Sector

1. The growth has to be more rapid and inclusive; the focus has to be on better performance in agriculture, irrigation, drinking water health services, better education in the rural and remote areas, rural connectivity, improved delivery system and governance. Farm-based economic activities - Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Poultry, and so on, have to be the prime drivers.
2. Post-harvest management and marketing infrastructure required to be attended to by dovetailing of programmes/schemes between Central Ministries and the State Governments for filling up gaps in infrastructure.
3. There has to be continued emphasis on creation of employment opportunities. During the Eleventh Plan, there is a general feeling of improvement in the security and law and order scenario. Efforts have to continue to further improve the scenario. The initiatives so far have created some momentum of development as may be seen from the above analysis. This has to continue with all possible support from the Centre.

G. Education/Skill Development/Health

1. Focus on quality of education. Investment in teachers' training and evaluation. Use distance education infrastructure.
2. Social, gender and regional gaps in education need special attention. Special emphasis on capacity building and skill development with focus on curriculum is needed. State-specific approach for creation of opportunities for employment generation may be taken up. Reforms in vocational education to ensure employability in the changing market would help.
3. Development and operationalisation of Public Private Partnership (PPP) models in schools and higher education and focus on increase in seats in medical colleges, nursing colleges and other licensed health professionals require special attention.
4. Improvement in the quality of NRHM services, rationalisation in the manpower requirement and involvement of PRIs/communities in improving health services is important. Special focus required for development of infrastructure and availability of doctors, paramedics and nurses. Role of PPP in secondary and tertiary health care required to be encouraged.

H. Look East

1. Focus on strong relationship with Bangladesh to ensure effective connectivity by different transport modes. Access to Chittagong port, declaring Ashuganj (Bangladesh) as port of call, Kolkata-Agartala-Dhaka bus service.
2. Connecting the NE by road to south-east (SE) Asia through Tri-lateral Highway-Moreh (Manipur)-Mandalay/Bagan (Myanmar)-Mae Sot/Chiang Mai (Thailand).
3. Focus on development of all Land Customs Stations (LCS) for strengthening border trade and business communication.
4. Expedient implementation of multi-modal transport using Kaladan River as alternate connectivity to the North-East.