

# NE is the epitome of our Nation's Diversity and strategic importance: Union MoS for DoNER Dr Sukanta Majumdar

Pre-Plenary Thematic and Technical Sessions lay base for a successful 72nd Plenary Meeting of NEC

Development agendas key to boost progress in the NE states discussed

**Agartala, 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2024:** On the eve of the 72nd Plenary Meeting of the North Eastern Council (NEC) being held in Agartala, Pre-Plenary Thematic and Technical Sessions today laid a strong base for a successful Plenary to be held tomorrow under the chairmanship of Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah.

Today, officials from various central ministries showcased the development agendas in some of the key areas, which are fundamental for giving further boost to the development of the region.

Union Minister of State for DoNER, Dr Sukanta Majumdar during his address underscored the strategic importance of the North East region and said that the North Eastern region of India is not just a geographically significant part of our country, but it is also an epitome of the nation's diversity, culture, and strategic importance. "The region's unique geographical location at the confluence of India, China, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal makes it a critical bridge for regional connectivity, trade, and diplomacy", he added.





Acknowledging the crucial role played by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Dr Majumdar said that DoNER has been at the forefront of driving the vision of balanced, sustainable, and inclusive growth for the region. The creation of the Ministry was a landmark moment in Government of India's commitment to the North Eastern States as it understood the need for a dedicated approach to addressing the unique challenges of this region, he added.

While enumerating some of the significant policies and interventions of the Ministry of DoNER and Government of India over the past few years, the Minister said that under the able leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the North Eastern States have seen a significant upsurge in focus and investment over the last few years. The Minister exclaimed that during the last decade, emphasis has been laid to develop the airways, railways and waterways in the region. The Minister said, "The North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme provides 100% central funding to the State Governments of North Eastern Region for the projects of physical infrastructure relating to water supply, power and connectivity enhancing tourism and Social infrastructure. Government of India has taken the specific initiative for improvement of connectivity within the region

by programs such as SARDP-NE, Bharatmala-I, etc. and with rest of India through East-West Corridor program.”

The Minister exclaimed that under the guidance of Hon’ble Prime Minister, it was planned that each NE State would have a visit of a Union Minister in every 15 days in order to accelerate the pace of development in NER and to maximize the efficacy of the projects being implemented by the Government in the region. He further emphasised on the commitment of the central government towards the region while he said, “I would like to share that 74 Union Ministers have visited NER for more than 157 times from January, 2023 to March, 2024. These visits are helping in mapping the aspirations and sentiments of the local population and effective implementation of the schemes of Government in NER.”





The Minister while acknowledging challenges faced by the region said that there are still some challenges that need to be addressed for the region to realize its full potential such as development of border trade routes, smart cities, and digital infrastructure, promoting agriculture-based industries, improving market access, and implementing sustainable farming practices. He added, “It is only through the collective efforts of the Central Ministries, State Governments, and other stakeholders that we can work towards overcoming these challenges.”

He expressed his happiness about today’s deliberations and said that the presentations and discussions on the different thematic areas were indeed fruitful. He further said, “As we prepare for tomorrow’s Plenary session, I urge all the

stakeholders present here today to look beyond the challenges and work together to harness the immense potential that the North Eastern region holds. By forging strong partnerships between the Central Ministries and State Governments, we can create an ecosystem that is inclusive, sustainable, and aligned with the aspirations of the people of the region”.

Secretary DoNER, Shri Chanchal Kumar during his address exclaimed that the presentations by the Ministries were informative and crucial to further boost the development of the region. He also said that concerns raised by various states have been well noted by the Ministries concerned and all stakeholders will work together to ensure proper implementation of the government schemes in the region.

Secretary NEC Shri Angshuman Dey in his inaugural address, while explaining the purpose of the Pre-Plenary sessions, said that NEC Plenary meetings provide an important platform to discuss the needs, challenges and possible solutions for the NER which have in many ways over the years shaped the policies and approaches towards NER by Government of India and the State Governments of North East. During the last NEC Plenary four areas of importance for NER was discussed namely: Investment Policies/Programmes in NER States, Industry 4.0 for NER, Strengthening of logistics in NER and Inter-regional trade/import substitution/export. He expressed his satisfaction over the successful actions that have been taken during the last one year by Government of India and State Governments in this regard.





The Secretary, while enumerating some of the measures taken in order to position Northeast India as a prime investment destination, said that MDoNER is organising the North East Investor Summit in Delhi around April, 2025 whereas a bipartite MoU between Ministry of DoNER and Invest India for strengthening Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) in the eight states of North East has been signed. Further, Government of India has formulated New Industrial Development Scheme, UNNATI (Uttar Poorva Transformative Industrialization Scheme), 2024 as a Central Sector Scheme for the development of Industries and generation of employment in the states of North East Region, he added.

In the technical session, discussions were held on six important sectors which are fundamental for giving further boost to the development of the region namely, National Palm Oil Mission and leveraging North East for increasing Palm Oil Acreage, 4G Saturation Project (State Dependencies), Financial Inclusion (Opening of Bank/IPPB Branch in Uncovered Villages, Un-electrified Villages, Road Connectivity and PM Electric Drive Revolution.







While underscoring the potential of Palm Oil production in the region, Shri Dey said that the role of the North-Eastern Region is pivotal in achieving Atmanirbharta in edible oil, as the scope for Oil Palm production spans across six NER states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura, encompassing a vast potential area of 8.4 lakh hectares, which is 38% of the national potential. As of now, more than 30 nurseries have been established in the region with the capacity of 30 lakh planting material, he added.

Today's session was attended by Members of NEC, Chief Secretaries of State and senior officials of different ministries of the central government and officials of the state governments of the North Eastern states.

**Courtesy: PIB**

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