

**Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region
North Eastern Council Secretariat, Shillong
Date: 9th March, 2026**

PRESS NOTE FOR ARUNACHAL PRADESH, FEBRUARY, 2026

12TH BATCH OF ASHTALAKSHMI DARSHAN YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMME INAUGURATED AT RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY

The 12th Batch of the Ashtalakshmi Darshan – Youth Exchange Programme was inaugurated at the Mini Auditorium of Rajiv Gandhi University. The programme is supported by the North Eastern Council under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, Government of India, with the objective of promoting cultural exchange and strengthening national integration.



The inaugural ceremony was graced by Sri Mutchu Mithi as the Chief Guest, while Sri Bamin Tarang joined as Guest of Honour. The programme was presided over by S. K. Nayak. Delegations comprising faculty members and student participants from Jharkhand and Puducherry are participating in the programme.

Supported by the North Eastern Council, the 14-day youth exchange initiative aims to enhance understanding of the culture, geography, and development of the North Eastern region among young participants. The programme includes cultural interactions, academic sessions, and exposure visits designed to promote mutual learning, youth engagement, and stronger ties between the North East and other regions of the country.

NEC RELEASES ₹ 67.41 CRORE ACROSS THE NORTH EASTERN REGION IN FEBRUARY 2026

During February, 2026 NEC released a total amount of **₹67,41,09,587/- (Rupees Sixty-Seven Crore Forty-One Lakhs Nine Thousand Five Hundred and Eighty-Seven only)** during February, 2026 to support developmental initiatives across all Northeastern States as well as regional and other implementing agencies.

The fund releases reflect NEC's continued commitment to strengthening development in the North Eastern Region (NER) through targeted investments in infrastructure development, livelihood generation, agricultural innovation, education, tourism promotion, research, and cultural initiatives. The assistance forms part of NEC's sustained efforts to accelerate inclusive and balanced regional development.

KEY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS SUPPORTED IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

During February, 2026, NEC released ₹11,44,84,865 (Rupees Eleven Crore Forty Four Lakhs Eighty Four Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty Five only) for the state of Arunachal Pradesh to support various ongoing projects such as Construction of a New Administrative Block at Dera Natung Government College, Itanagar and Establishment of a Common Facility Centre (CFC) for Persimmon Processing, Value Chain Development in Dirang, West Kameng District and Construction of a Supermarket-cum-Parking Facility at Kharsang, Changlang District.

These initiatives aim to strengthen higher education infrastructure, promote agricultural value chains, and improve urban commercial infrastructure, thereby supporting economic growth and local livelihoods in the state.

₹30.07 CRORE RELEASED TO REGIONAL AND OTHER AGENCIES

In addition to state-specific allocations, NEC also released ₹30,07,14,985/- (Rupees Thirty-Crore Seven Lakhs Fourteen Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-Five only) to regional institutions and other implementing agencies across the North Eastern Region during the month.

Major project interventions include initiatives in sustainable agriculture, entrepreneurship development including AI-Based farming, infrastructure creation, setting up of sports facilities, tourism promotion, promotion of research and innovations, and livelihood enhancement.

These initiatives are being implemented through leading institutions including IIT-Guwahati, IIM-Shillong, Northeast Space Application Centre (NESAC), North East Handicraft and Handloom Development Corporation (NEHHDC), North East Region Community Resource Management Society (NERCORMS) and other regional universities and specialized organizations.

Support for Cultural, Academic and Capacity Building Initiatives

Apart from project-based funding, NEC also supported several **non-project activities and sponsored cultural & academic programmes** during the month aimed at strengthening knowledge exchange, cultural preservation, tourism promotion, and youth engagement in the region.

Key initiatives included support for international and regional conferences, skill development programmes, tourism workshops, cultural festivals, craft fairs, and youth cultural exchange programmes. Notable events held during the month included the International Conference on Knowledge Organization in Academic Libraries (I-KOAL-2026), Regional International Conference on Natural Language Processing (RegICON), Manipur State Level Kiwi Fruit Festival, and various cultural and craft festivals across the region.

Through these initiatives, NEC continues to promote regional collaboration, knowledge sharing, innovation, and preservation of the rich cultural heritage of the North Eastern Region, while contributing to sustainable and inclusive development.

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PRESS NOTE FOR ASSAM, FEBRUARY, 2026

**NEC RELEASES ₹67.41 CRORE ACROSS NORTH EASTERN REGION IN
FEBRUARY 2026**

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Key Development Projects Supported in Assam

During February 2026, out of total fund released by NEC, Assam received ₹8,76,04,170 (Rupees Eight Crore Seventy-Six Lakhs Four Thousand One Hundred and Seventy only) for key ongoing development projects in Assam.

Major projects supported during the period include:

- Construction of composite Regional Centre (North East) for Disability study and action in Assam
- Establishment of Yatri Niwas and a Guest House at Silghat, Nagaon, Assam
- Construction of Cultural complex of Shankardev Shishu Niketan at Hajongbari Kamrup, Assam
- Construction of College and Hostel Building at Haflong for Hereka community of Assam
- Handloom weaving productions for weavers in Backward areas at Lakhimpur District (Deori Tribe) Assam.

These initiatives aim to strengthen higher education infrastructure, promote cultural heritage, and improve urban commercial infrastructure, thereby supporting economic growth and local livelihoods in the state.

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PRESS NOTE FOR MANIPUR, FEBRUARY, 2026

**NEC RELEASES ₹67.41 CRORE ACROSS NORTH EASTERN REGION IN
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The fund releases reflect NEC's continued commitment to strengthening development in the region through targeted investments in infrastructure development, livelihood generation, agricultural innovation, tourism promotion, education, research, and cultural initiatives. These initiatives form part of NEC's sustained efforts to accelerate inclusive and balanced regional development while improving connectivity, economic opportunities, and social infrastructure across the Northeast.

NEC RELEASES FUND FOR MANIPUR

Among the states benefiting from releases made by NEC, Manipur has received support for important development initiatives aimed at strengthening local infrastructure and promoting economic activities. Key projects include the construction of a Modern Agro Market Complex at Kyamgei Village in Imphal East District, which is expected to enhance agricultural marketing facilities and support farmers and traders through improved market infrastructure.

In addition, NEC is releasing fund for the ongoing project, namely, Development of the Barak Heritage Festival and Tourism Infrastructure at Koide Biisho Village in Senapati District, an initiative aimed at promoting the rich cultural heritage of the region while encouraging tourism-led economic development and community participation.

Through such interventions, NEC continues to play a pivotal role in fostering sustainable development, strengthening regional connectivity, and promoting cultural and economic growth in Manipur and across the North Eastern Region.

₹30.07 CRORE RELEASED TO REGIONAL AND OTHER AGENCIES

In addition to state-specific allocations, NEC also released ₹30,07,14,985/- (Rupees Thirty-Crore Seven Lakhs Fourteen Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-Five only) to regional institutions and other implementing agencies across the North Eastern Region during the month.

Major project interventions include initiatives in sustainable agriculture, entrepreneurship development including AI-Based farming, infrastructure creation, setting up of sports facilities, tourism promotion, promotion of research and innovations, and livelihood enhancement.

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PRESS NOTE FOR MEGHALAYA, FEBRUARY, 2026

**ASHTALAKSHMI DARSHAN YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMME
INAUGURATED AT IIM-SHILLONG**

The 9th Batch of the Ashtalakshmi Darshan – Youth Exchange Programme was inaugurated on 2nd February, 2026 at the Indian Institute of Management Shillong, marking the beginning of a 14-day programme (1–14 February, 2026) aimed at fostering cultural exchange and experiential learning about the North Eastern Region.



The programme was inaugurated by Sri Stander Kumar Bhalla, Secretary, NEC who highlighted the vision of *Viksit Bharat* and the objectives of the Ashtalakshmi Darshan initiative. He also spoke about the Government of India's focused efforts towards the holistic development of the North East and emphasised the valuable lessons the rest of the country can learn from the region's rich culture, community values, and resilience.

IIM-Shillong is the host institution for this programme cycle. The participating cohort includes 20 students each from Delhi and Odisha, accompanied by two faculty mentors from each location.

During the inaugural session, Sanjeev Ningombam presented an overview of the programme, highlighting the objective of experiencing the North East “in letter and spirit” through immersive engagement. Naliniprava Tripathy emphasised the region’s natural beauty, cultural diversity, and emerging opportunities, while underscoring the institute’s role in nurturing inclusive leadership and national integration.

Supported by the North Eastern Council under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, the programme promotes cultural understanding, youth engagement, and stronger connections between the North East and the rest of India through academic sessions, cultural interactions, and exposure visits.

NEC RELEASES ₹67.41 CRORE ACROSS NORTH EASTERN REGION IN FEBRUARY, 2026

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FUND RELEASES FOR MEGHALAYA

Among the states benefiting from above fund releases, Meghalaya has received support for various ongoing important development projects aimed at strengthening connectivity and promoting cultural heritage in the state. One of the key initiatives includes the construction of an RCC bridge over River Lunar to connect Khaddum to Brichyrnot Village in East Jaintia Hills, which will enhance rural connectivity and improve access for local communities, including the Hmar community.

In addition, NEC is supporting the development of a Cultural Complex of Seng Khasi Ri Raid Laban at Lum Shat Sngi, Kenches Trace, Shillong, which is expected to serve as an important centre for preserving and promoting the indigenous cultural heritage and traditions of the region.

These initiatives are expected to strengthen infrastructure, promote cultural preservation, and enhance socio-economic opportunities for local communities. Through such interventions, NEC continues to play a vital role in fostering sustainable development, regional connectivity, and cultural promotion across the North Eastern Region.

₹30.07 CRORE RELEASED TO REGIONAL AND OTHER AGENCIES

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PRESS NOTE FOR MIZORAM, FEBRUARY, 2026

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FUND RELEASES FOR MIZORAM

Among the states benefiting from above fund releases, Mizoram has received **₹5,73,69,245/-** to support for several ongoing key development projects aimed at strengthening infrastructure, agriculture, and public service delivery in the state.

One of the major initiatives includes the construction of a Market Building at West Phaileng in Mamit District, which will enhance local marketing infrastructure and create better opportunities for farmers and traders.

In addition, NEC is supporting the development of a Potato Seed Farm in Mizoram for quality seed production through Tissue Culture and Apical Rooted Cuttings (ARC), an initiative that will strengthen agricultural value chains and improve productivity by ensuring the availability of high-quality planting material for farmers.

The Council is also supporting the establishment of a Central Medical Warehouse at Aizawl, which is expected to strengthen medical logistics and improve the storage and distribution of essential medical supplies across the state. Further, the establishment of a State Veterinary Information and Resource Centre in Mizoram will enhance veterinary services and support livestock development through improved information dissemination and technical resources.

These initiatives are expected to strengthen medical infrastructure, promote agricultural innovation, and improve commercial and institutional infrastructure, thereby contributing to economic growth and improved livelihoods in the state.

₹30.07 CRORE RELEASED TO REGIONAL AND OTHER AGENCIES

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COMPLETED PROJECT(S) DURING FEBRUARY, 2026

Completion of Sewage Canal-cum-Check Dam Project at Kanan–Dawrpui Vengthar, Aizawl

The project titled “Sewage Canal-cum-Check Dam at Kanan–Dawrpui Vengthar, Aizawl, Mizoram”, supported under the schemes of the North Eastern Council (NEC), has been completed on 5 February 2026. The project was originally sanctioned on 2 August 2017 with an approved cost of ₹685.00 lakh, which was later revised to ₹662.11 lakh.



The project was undertaken with the objective of improving drainage infrastructure in the hilly terrain of Aizawl and mitigating risks associated with soil erosion, landslides, and flash floods, particularly during the monsoon season. The construction of the sewage canal-cum-check dam provides a systematic outlet for rainwater and household drainage, thereby helping to protect houses, infrastructure, and human lives from potential damage caused by slope instability and water accumulation.



The completed asset is expected to significantly strengthen the drainage system in the eastern part of Aizawl city, while also contributing to the reduction of soil erosion and landslips. The project will benefit residents of nearby localities including Kanan, Dawrpui, Vengthar, Vaivakawn, and Chawnpui, thereby improving urban resilience and safeguarding the surrounding communities.

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PRESS NOTE FOR NAGALAND, FEBRUARY, 2026

**NAGALAND UNIVERSITY HOSTS 10TH BATCH OF ASHTALAKSHMI
DARSHAN YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMME**

The 10th Batch of the Ashtalakshmi Darshan Youth Exchange Programme was inaugurated on 2 February 2026 at the School of Agricultural Sciences (SAS), Nagaland University, Medziphema Campus. The 14-day programme (1–14 February 2026), supported by the North Eastern Council under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, Government of India, aims to promote cultural exchange, youth engagement, and national integration.



The inaugural programme was attended by 40 students and four faculty mentors from University of Kerala and University of Ladakh, along with faculty members and students of Nagaland University.

In his address, Dipak Sinha encouraged participants to explore the cultural diversity of the North East and serve as ambassadors strengthening connections between the region and the rest of the country. Som Kamei, in his special address, urged the students to make the most of the opportunity to learn about different cultures and experience the hospitality of the people of Nagaland.

The programme was chaired by J. Longkumer, while the welcome address was delivered by Pauline Alila. A brief overview of the itinerary was presented by Kevineituo Bier, followed by presentations by student delegates highlighting the unique cultural features of their respective regions.

The valedictory programme was held on 13 February 2026 at the same campus, attended by university officials, faculty members, and participating students. Over the course of the programme, participants engaged in 29 academic sessions, exposure visits, and cultural exchange activities, providing insights into the cultural heritage, traditions, and developmental landscape of Nagaland and the wider North Eastern Region.

The programme concluded with a cultural presentation celebrating “Unity in Diversity,” reaffirming the commitment of the North Eastern Council and Nagaland University to strengthening youth-to-youth connections and fostering national integration.

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NEC RELEASED FUND FOR NAGALAND

Among the states benefiting from these initiatives, Nagaland has received support for several development projects aimed at strengthening community capacity, promoting agricultural products, and preserving cultural heritage. One of the key initiatives includes capacity-building programmes in Phek, Kiphire, and Noklak districts, which are expected to enhance skills, strengthen local institutions, and support sustainable community development in the state.

NEC is also supporting initiatives for the promotion of Naga Chilli, a unique agricultural product of the region, with the objective of strengthening agricultural value chains and improving market opportunities for local farmers.

In addition, support has been extended for the construction of a Museum-cum-Library and Guest House at Chungliyimti in Nagaland, which will help promote the cultural heritage and historical legacy of the region while also supporting tourism and research activities.

These initiatives are expected to strengthen agricultural promotion, institutional development, and cultural infrastructure, thereby contributing to economic growth and improved livelihoods in

the state. Through such interventions, NEC continues to play a vital role in fostering sustainable development and regional progress across the North Eastern Region.

₹30.07 CRORE RELEASED TO REGIONAL AND OTHER AGENCIES

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PRESS NOTE FOR SIKKIM, FEBRUARY, 2026

11TH BATCH OF ASHTALAKSHMI DARSHAN YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMME INAUGURATED AT SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

The 11th Batch of the Ashtalakshmi Darshan Youth Exchange Programme was formally inaugurated at Sikkim University. The programme brings together 20 students each from Tamil Nadu and Chandigarh, accompanied by two faculty mentors each, to participate in the youth exchange initiative.



Welcoming the participants, Mohan Pradhan highlighted that the programme aims to bridge the experiential and perceptual gap between the North Eastern Region (NER) and the rest of the country. He noted that the region, home to more than 200 ethnic communities and languages, represents immense geographical and cultural diversity that deserves wider national engagement and understanding.

Addressing the gathering, Nawal K. Paswan elaborated on the broader significance and strategic importance of the programme in strengthening national integration and cultural exchange.

The inaugural session concluded with the traditional presentation of Khada to the visiting participants. This was followed by the first technical session on the strategic positioning of the North Eastern Region and cross-border dynamics, along with a visit to the Sikkim University Library. Santanu Kumar Swain also interacted with the students during a separate session.

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NEC RELEASED FUND FOR SIKKIM

Among the states benefiting from above fund releases, Sikkim has received support for ongoing key projects - Construction of a high-altitude adventure trekking route from Thanken to Shizam under Lachung Dzumsa in North Sikkim and Development of tourism infrastructure at Chebuk and Kalapathar in North Sikkim.

These projects are expected to strengthen tourism infrastructure, improve connectivity to remote tourist destinations, and generate livelihood opportunities for local communities. Through such interventions, NEC continues to play a vital role in fostering sustainable tourism development and regional economic growth across the North Eastern Region.

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PRESS NOTE FOR TRIPURA, FEBRUARY, 2026

**HON'BLE MEMBERS OF THE NORTH EASTERN COUNCIL (NEC)
INSPECTED AND REVIEWED NEC-SUPPORTED PROJECTS IN TRIPURA**

In February, 2026 the Hon'ble Members of the North Eastern Council (NEC), Shri Longki Phangcho and Shri Tenzing Norbu Thongdok, visited Tripura to review the progress of ongoing projects being implemented under various NEC Schemes. During the visit, on-site inspections were conducted to assess the status of implementation, and necessary directions were issued to ensure adherence to approved standards and timely completion of the works.



The Hon'ble Members also held a review meeting at Agartala with officials of the National Projects Construction Corporation Limited (NPCC) and the concerned end users. The progress of ongoing projects was comprehensively reviewed, and emphasis was laid on strengthening coordination among stakeholders, maintaining quality standards, and ensuring timely completion.

During the visit, Shri Tenzing Norbu Thongdok, Hon'ble Member, NEC, also inspected projects in the Education, Tourism, and Agriculture sectors being implemented under NEC schemes in the State. Shri Chandan Jena, Senior Technical Assistant, NEC, along with officials from the Government of Tripura, accompanied the Hon'ble Member during the inspections.



The visit reflects the Government of India's continued commitment to the holistic development of the North Eastern Region through effective monitoring and coordinated implementation.

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FUND RELEASED FOR TRIPURA

Among the states benefiting from above fund releases, Tripura has received fund for ongoing development projects aimed at strengthening fisheries-based livelihoods and promoting science education and awareness in the state.

One of the major initiatives includes a *Fisheries-based development project for Dumbur*, which is expected to enhance fisheries productivity, strengthen local value chains, and improve livelihood opportunities for communities dependent on fisheries in the region.

Another project receiving funding support is the *Establishment of a Science Park at Vigyan Gram in Tripura*, an initiative aimed at promoting scientific learning, innovation, and public engagement with science, particularly among students and young learners.

These initiatives are expected to strengthen agricultural and fisheries value chains, promote scientific awareness, and support socio-economic development in the state. Through such interventions, NEC continues to play a vital role in fostering sustainable development and regional progress across the North Eastern Region.

₹30.07 CRORE RELEASED TO REGIONAL AND OTHER AGENCIES

In addition to state-specific allocations, NEC also released ₹30,07,14,985/- (Rupees Thirty-Crore Seven Lakhs Fourteen Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-Five only) to regional institutions and other implementing agencies across the North Eastern Region during the month.

Major project interventions include initiatives in sustainable agriculture, entrepreneurship development including AI-Based farming, infrastructure creation, setting up of sports facilities, tourism promotion, promotion of research and innovations, and livelihood enhancement.

These initiatives are being implemented through leading institutions including IIT-Guwahati, IIM-Shillong, Northeast Space Application Centre (NESAC), North East Handicraft and Handloom Development Corporation (NEHHDC), North East Region Community Resource Management Society (NERCORMS) and other regional universities and specialized organizations.

Support for Cultural, Academic and Capacity Building Initiatives

Apart from project-based funding, NEC also supported several **non-project activities and sponsored cultural & academic programmes** during the month aimed at strengthening knowledge exchange, cultural preservation, tourism promotion, and youth engagement in the region.

Key initiatives included support for international and regional conferences, skill development programmes, tourism workshops, cultural festivals, craft fairs, and youth cultural exchange programmes. Notable events held during the month included the International Conference on Knowledge Organization in Academic Libraries (I-KOAL-2026), Regional International Conference on Natural Language Processing (RegICON), Manipur State Level Kiwi Fruit Festival, and various cultural and craft festivals across the region.

Through these initiatives, NEC continues to promote regional collaboration, knowledge sharing, innovation, and preservation of the rich cultural heritage of the North Eastern Region, while contributing to sustainable and inclusive development.
