



**Speech of Shri P.B. Acharya**

**Hon'ble Governor of Nagaland**

**At the 64<sup>th</sup> Meeting of North Eastern Council**

**On**

**9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at New Delhi**

**Hon'ble Chairman of the North Eastern Council Dr. Jitender Singh Ji, Hon'ble Governors and Chief Ministers of North Eastern States, Senior Officers from Government of India, esteemed Members of North Eastern Council and distinguished participants.**

**Namaskar.**

It is my pleasure and privilege to be amidst such a distinguished gathering and participants in the Plenary Meeting of the North Eastern Council and I extend my warm greetings to all participants.

Let me share some of pertinent issues concerning the North East Region fraternity so that the ideals and objectives of North Eastern Council are fully realized.

### **Regional Planning**

The Central leaders have enunciated a very clear policy of “Look East, “Act East” and “Make in East, which would result in development of North East which would in turn lead to progress of India as well.

NER underdeveloped is India underdeveloped. Hence, the developmental gaps of NER which have been an issue for a long time should be tackled and addressed along appropriate strategies and policies.

With this pragmatic goal, our Universities should be in the forefront to work out programmes to interact with Universities of Thailand, Malaysia, Korea, Myanmar, China, Bhutan and Bangladesh. We can create goodwill with our neighbouring countries by promoting University to University interaction. Unless our neighbouring countries are friendly, there cannot be peace in our area. Universities have to work out the road map to reach this goal.

The endeavor of North Eastern Council in aptly recognizing areas towards Regional Planning and Strategy for the NER for bridging the developmental chasm and obscurity is highly commendable. The exercise of identification of areas in accordance with the needs of the Region and NER Vision 2020 only reinforces the very objective of the formation of the NEC Body in 2003. It is our firm belief and trust that NEC will spearhead in fulfilling the objectives of plugging the developmental gaps of the NER in accordance with changing times. Government of Nagaland shall avow to support NEC in flagging the developmental issues faced.

NER, has more than 5000 kms of international border. It is thus imperative to put a productive strategy into place to reap gains from International Trade and Border trade. This shall benefit the people of NER and the Nation as a whole. To this effect, Special Development Zone for production of agri and allied products, Special Economic Zones/corridors should be strengthened and established and appropriate infrastructures; both physical and social, should be created.

NE States presently, are substantially dependent on imports for meeting the demands of food items such as eggs, fish, milk, meat, poultry, etc. NEC should put forth a strategy to alter the production scenario of such food items. Given the potential, NER should be transformed from a meat, egg, fish, etc importing region into a self sufficient area.

There is urgent need to reorient the strategy and policy for NER according to the Region's endowment. Scenic Natural Beauty and the Vibrant Cultural Heritage is one such area where NER is amply bequeathed with. Promotion of Tourism in the Region is, therefore, very essential and lucrative. Another area is Sports. The Region has produced numerous Sportsperson and has brought laurels to the Nation. It is imperative to build and provide adequate regional sports infrastructures to tap the talents and equip them to compete in international arena.

**Let me now come to some specific areas concerning Nagaland.**

### **Education**

Gyan Kendras should also be Vikas Kendras, i.e. Knowledge Centres have to be Development Centres. Our University's educated empowered youth should not be self-centered intellectuals for their own prosperity but should be conscious and ready to address the society's needs to make the country prosperous. Then only the empowerment by education has the worth.

Higher education today in India has four challenges in terms of four Es. These are Expansion, Equity, Excellence and Employability. We need to reach the unreached and include the excluded in a continuous sustained manner. We have to improve Excellence, put more money into research, to get much more done in that. And the fourth E, which we don't talk about enough, is Employability. We need to make sure that people actually can come out of the education system, that the economy needs and that the employer needs.

There is an urgent need of supplementing our conventional degree courses like B.A, B.Com, B.Sc. with skill in their three years degree course. When they step out from University to face the real world, they should not be at the mercy of someone for job. They should have self-confidence with their skill to be entrepreneurs or to engage in purposeful wealth creating vocation.

Universities should not be directly or indirectly the reason for the big crime of creating unemployable graduates. Our Graduates must be an asset to the society and not a burden to society/family.

Urgently, our Universities should start continuous interaction with trade, industry & commerce of our areas and address the availability of nature given raw materials/wealth to create more wealth to make use of them by introducing supplementary courses taking into account the law of supply and demand. For example : Resources – we have in Assam – mineral oil (Petrol), tea, lime, waterfalls, bright sunshine, organic food crops, crafts like handloom, handicrafts etc.

Why we should not think of starting new courses by which the exploration of our natural wealth will bring employment and prosperity. For example – for marketing our organic food, we require refrigeration knowledge. We can produce solar energy also.

Knowledge and skills about day to day consumer needs like – mobile repair, electric gadgets maintenance, motor maintenance and repair, spray painting, carpentry, welding, real estate etc. can be introduced.

We should be asset to the society and creators of wealth.

## **Health & Sports**

Medicinal plants/herbs have been identified and used throughout human history. Plants have the ability to synthesize a wide variety of chemical compounds that are used to perform important biological functions.

NEC Dr. T. Ao Memorial Football Tournament has been made into an annual regional event of NER. Besides this, NEC should take initiative in organizing regional sports events in other sports disciplines such as archery, Polo, boxing and indigenous games etc to harness and mould the talents of the region.

The region has tremendous hydro power potential and is aptly referred to as the “Potential Powerhouse of the Nation”. Tapping this potential will redress the energy deficits of the region and the Country significantly. NEC should stress on the development of the power generation in Nagaland and NER as a whole.

Another focus of the Region is Education. Every year there is an exodus of students to mainland India in quest of quality education. Regional Education Institutes in NER should be established and upgraded to impart quality education. Moreover, Facilities of Skill/vocational educational institutes should be upgraded and strengthened for the unemployed youth of the region.

NEC may put emphasis on development of regional institutes in imparting courses in music, IT, Nursing, Paramedic, etc in NER. This will widen the scope of employment of the Youths of NER in India as well as abroad.

### **Establishment of regional institutes:**

#### **i) Horticulture College.**

The State with suitable climatic and soil conditions has potentiality in high value medicinal plants growing naturally as also temperate crops like apple, kiwi along with traditional crops like orange, guava, peach etc. Rare medicinal plants of the State will be permanently extinct if its conservation and cultivation is not taken up. There is need for Research & Development intervention in promoting and developing cultivation technology of indigenous and rare medicinal plants of the State. Hence, it is felt that establishment of a Horticulture college/institute will prove fruitful and benefit not only Nagaland but the entire NE region.

ii) **Institute of Aviation in Nagaland:** Nagaland has been proposing to set up a Flying Academy at Dimapur since 2010. The academy is being proposed in collaboration with the Carver Flying Academy. The academy will not only train up commercial pilots but also air maintenance crews. Such an institute will benefit the other North Eastern States as well; hence, it is suggested to upgrade it into a regional institute.

#### **iii) Cold Storage facility:**

The trade and commerce of Agri and allied products of the State faces a major setback due to lack of proper storage infrastructures. At present, Nagaland has just one cold storage facility at Dimapur which will not be able to cater to the demand of the entire State. As a step towards expansion of regional trade and relief from drought and food scarcity, NEC is requested to provide more funds for construction of more cold storages in the State.

### **3. Urbanization.**

We have a large number of educated youths migrating from rural to the urban centers in search of jobs and livelihood. The younger generation with better education and exposure has higher aspirations and expectations. The recent census has revealed that the urban population increased from 17.23 percent to 28.97 percent in the last decade. We are obliged to plan for our future generation's long term urban needs focused on development of urban conglomerates. We would therefore like to develop urban centers along the foothills. This area also further coincides with our mineral belt bearing oil and coal. This will help shift the population from the hills to the foothills for economic activities creating necessary atmosphere to attract private investments into the State. This being crucial aspects of the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan, it is requested that the four lane foothill highway and the rail line is provided to the State during the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan.

### **4. Tourism**

In the absence of large scale industries, tourism industry is one of the alternatives that can play a pivotal role in socio-economic development in the State. Nagaland with its rich historical, cultural and panoramic landscapes coupled with vibrant and colourful festivals, pristine valleys and exotic flora and fauna, offers the possibility of unique experiences for the tourists.

Affordable hotels should be there for the domestic tourists.

However, the challenge is to make these splendid endowments accessible to the people of India and other countries. The State and the region in general face acute problems of connectivity. Hence, there is a need to develop a regional perspective in tourism development and to also plan in terms of inter-states and regional circuits. The key drivers of a tourism circuit are accessibility, connectivity, infrastructure development and marketing. NEC should initiate to promote private entrepreneurs in the field of hospitality and other tourism related activities for development of tourism in NE Region. Considering the potential for development and scope for employability, the fund allocation in respect of tourism sector may be suitably enhanced.

The required development for the identified inter-state circuits which include "Dimapur-Kohima-Wokha-Zunheboto-Mokokchung" circuit may be expedited.

### **5. Rehabilitation/Construction of State Guest Houses at Shillong with NEC funding.**

It is a very innovative concept. Construction of new State Guest houses and upgradation of existing Guest Houses at Shillong will definitely solve the difficulties of accommodation being faced by the NE States while on official visits.

Shillong is the educational hub of the NER and the preferred education center alongwith Darjeeling. It has been strengthened with the establishment of important educational institutes like the Indian Institute of Management, National Institute of Technology Meghalaya, University of Technology and Management, North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Institute of Hotel Management (IHM), National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Shillong, English and Foreign Languages University, Shillong Campus and several other college and engineering institutions. As such, Shillong continues to attract a high number of students from the NER as a destination for education. Hence, it is also suggested that NEC may come up with plan to construct hostels for the ever increasing aspiring students of NER in Shillong.

Further, with medical specialization services offered both in Guwahati Neurological Research Centre (GNRC), Guwahati and North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (NEIGRIHMS), it will be a tremendous step towards facilitating the poor patients if NEC can also fund construction of State guest houses near these hospitals for the patients.

**Thank you**

**Kuknalim**

**Bharat Mata Ki Jai**