



We are all knit together by bonds of blood..... None can segregate us..... no impassable barriers can be set up between us.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

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DEVELOPMENTS WITH REFERENCE TO NORTH EASTERN REGION

1. Implementation of Agreed Ground Rules of Ceasefire signed with NSCN(I/M) was reviewed in the meeting chaired by Secretary (IS) on 9.6.2011.
2. Joint Monitoring Group meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (NE) at Guwahati on 18.6.2011 to oversee the implementation of Agreed Ground Rules of SoO Agreement signed with UPDS.
3. Meeting of Joint Monitoring Group was held under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (NE) on 23.06.2011 at New Delhi to oversee the implementation of Agreed Ground Rules of SoO Agreement signed with NDFB(P) and DHD. In the meeting it was mutually agreed to extend the SoO Agreement further for a period of six months upto 31.12.2011 with NDFB (P) and DHD.
4. The Central Government extended the Notification declaring the state of Nagaland as 'Disturbed Area' under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (No. 28 of 1958) for a further period of one year beyond 30.6.2011 i.e. upto 30th June, 2012.
5. Union Home Secretary reviewed on 20.6.2011 the progress of action taken on recommendations of Development Seminars held in Manipur. The efforts of the Department of Financial Services and the State Bank of India, in particular, opening of ATMs in Ukhrul/ East Imphal district were appreciated. Action taken/initiated on various recommendations was reviewed.

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT UNDER CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMME IN NORTH EAST BY CENTRAL ARMED POLICE FORCES

A) Activities carried out by Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)

(i) BVFCL Namrup - A platoon led by SI/Exe Jitendra Kumar of NVFCL Namrup interacted with the students and the teachers of BVFCL Model High School on 12.06.2011. The students were very happy to meet the personnel and eager to know about CISF and nature of their duties, drill and combination of platoon while marching. The teachers and students requested for interaction at short intervals so that they could know about the Force which would inspire them to serve the nation valiantly.

(ii) OPS Noonmati- Personnel of CISF Unit OPS Noonmati conducted "Shramdaan" at Shiv Mandir in OIL Complex areas.

(iii) BTPP Bongaigaon- CISF unit BTPP/NTPC Bongaigaon observed World Environment Day on 05.06.2011 by planting trees in the Unit line. Shri D Mitra, AGM, Shri A K Mishra, DGM (HR), employees and CISF personnel were present on the occasion.

B) Activities carried out by the Central Reserve Police Force(CRPF)

(i) 87 Bn CRPF deployed in Tripura organized Civic

Action Programme at Lembucherra, Teliamura, West Tripura on 28.5.2011 in the presence of local people and school students. On the occasion, 06 Nos of cycle rickshaws for the handicapped school students, 17 bicycles for poor school students, 15 sewing machines for poor & tribal women, 03 computers with chair/table and other accessories for 03 schools, books for 03 schools to enrich the school libraries and 10 first aid boxes with medicines to 10 schools were distributed. Mrs. Gauri Das, MLA, Teliamura was the chief guest of the function. Besides this, 02 toilets and 02 urinals have been constructed at Anganbri Centre, Hawauibari, which were inaugurated on 08.06.2011 by SDPO, Teliamura.

(ii) 124 Bn CRPF deployed in Tripura organized Civic Action Programme at District Dhalai on 15.06.2011. On the occasion, 124 Bn distributed 30 bicycles to school students, 20 sewing machines to poor and tribal women and 190 water filters to poor families. A friendly football match for boys at Satyaram C.P Residential High School was also conducted on 15.6.2011. Shri Bijoy Rzankhol MLA, Smt. Sonel Goel, SDM and Comdt 140 Bn CRPF were present on the occasion.

NEW GREEN FIELD AIRPORT AT PAKYONG, SIKKIM

Sikkim, the hilly state of NE region is a land locked state. Its northern border touches China and southern border is with West Bengal. Nearest rail head is Siliguri and airport is Bagdogra. Due to hilly terrain and roads passing along river Teesta, connectivity to its capital Gangtok always remains not too assuring especially during rainy season. Government with a view to improve connectivity to the state capital has decided to construct a new airport at Pakyong, East Sikkim.

New airport shall be suitable for operation of ATR-72 class of aircraft. Its runway shall be 1700 x 30 m and apron able to park 2 ATR-72 aircrafts. New terminal building shall have capacity of handling 100 passengers at a time. All other facilities and features required for a civil airport i.e. ATC tower, fire station, communication and navigational systems, airport runway lighting and metrological aids/system are included in the project.

As the airport construction required a flat land, the biggest challenge while taking up construction is cutting of hills and filling up valleys/ravines to achieve flat terrain. Other challenges included a retaining wall structure up to 75m height, stability of slopes, impact on environment due to cutting and filling, and channelizing surface water (jhoras) and sub-surface water.

The above challenges have been suitably met. The airport is designed in such a way that there is minimum damage to the environment. The cut and fill are balanced and the retaining structures are designed using local stones and geo-synthetics. No cement and steel are being used for retaining structures.

The airport construction is likely to be completed by June 2012. After completion this airport is likely to be one of the most picturesque airports in the country. The presence of ICAR campus in the vicinity of the airport shall further add to the scenic beauty of the airport.

The completion of this airport shall be a boon for the economy of the Sikkim State as its economy is mainly dependent on tourism. With other attractive tourist friendly steps being taken by the State Government, the tourists flow is likely to increase manifold.

Along with airport construction work, Airport Authority of India has also taken up many social welfare activities for the welfare of local residents under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Programme.

Social welfare activities in the following sectors have been taken up under CSR Programme:

- Health
- Establishment of health centre including medical equipments
- Water supply to Lossing and Dikling Villages.

The people in this hilly area generally live in small hamlets, spaced apart by distance. Medical facilities available in the only Primary Health Centre (PHC) in the area located at Pakyong needs to be augmented to cater to any emergency situation in the field of gynaecology, trauma, orthopaedics etc. A new health centre has been established by the Airport Authority of India (AAI) in the existing PHC at a cost of Rs 82 lacs. The new health centre is double storey structure with around 2000 sq.ft. area and will be equipped with ultrasound, pulse oximetry, monitors, infusion pump, laryngoscope with endotracheal, autoclave OT lamp etc complementing the existing facility in PHC.

The augmented medical facilities in the field of paediatrics vaccination, gynaecology including maternity care, internal medicine, adolescent clinic (counseling for drug de-addiction), emergency services and ultrasound shall be available in the new health centre.

The health centre shall be run as a joint venture with the State Govt. of Sikkim. While all medical and para medical staff will be provided by State Govt., the consumables and free medicines to patients shall be provided by AAI through its Women Welfare Association (Kalyanmayee).

AAI is also holding quarterly free health check-up camps at Pakyong where free medical checkup facilities in the fields of Allopathy as well as Ayurvedic and Homeopathy are provided. Free medicines are also distributed to the patients. Four camps have already been held wherein more than 2400 patients got benefited.

In addition to augmentation of health services, AAI has also taken up rural water supply scheme for Lossing & Dikling Villages at an estimated cost of Rs. 30.90 Lacs. The residents of these villages were facing acute shortage of water essentially during the dry season. The scheme included tapping of different perennial water sources located inside and outside airport area, laying of pipelines from sources to the houses in these villages and construction of RCC storage tanks. The population presently covered is 660 and the scheme is designed to cover a population of 2400 progressively over 30 years.

The new health centre and the water supply scheme were already completed and inaugurated by Sh. Madhavan M. Nambiar, Secretary, Civil Aviation, Govt. of India on 29.10.2010 in the presence of Sh. V.P. Agarwal, Chairman AAI, Mrs Archana Agarwal, All India President Kalyanmayee and Sh. S. Raheja Member (PIg.), AAI. Sh. Bhim Dhngel, Hon'ble Minister of Forest, Environment and Tourism, Govt. of Sikkim was the chief guest of the function.

LGBI Airport, Guwahati had a runway of 2743 meters which has been extended by 360 meters. This extended portion of the runway also connects to a new apron having 11 parking bays. The commissioning of this extended portion of the runway will also facilitate use of a simple approach lighting system of 420 meters length. This extension will pave the way for commissioning of new apron after receipt of DGCA clearance and also facilitate aircraft operation with lower visibility due to availability of simple approach lighting system. The extended portion of the runway has been commissioned on 30.3.2011.

CIVIL AVIATION MINISTRY TO IMPROVE AIR CONNECTIVITY IN NORTHEAST

The Union Civil Aviation Ministry has agreed to introduce more flights to Lilabari and Tezpur airports in Assam, which are within the vicinity of Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh. The decision came

in the wake of suspension of helicopter services in Arunachal Pradesh following a spate of accidents including the one in which former Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sh. Dorjee Khandu died.

At a Minister-level meeting held on 20.5.2011 regarding new policy alternatives for civil aviation in the northeastern region, issues relating to improving connectivity in the region, air safety regulations and facilities in the northeastern region, development of new regional hubs, among others were discussed. Lilabari will now have five day flight connectivity with routing from Kolkata - Guwahati - Lilabari- Guwahati - Kolkata. Tezpur will have five day connectivity connecting Guwahati and Jorhat including the existing weekly one flight to Silchar and Kolkata.

The Civil Aviation Ministry has in principle agreed

for developing Guwahati, Agartala, Imphal and Dibrugarh airports as regional hubs. To begin with, the related works for developing regional hub at Guwahati will start. Requisite funds will be provided by the Ministry of DoNER. This will help in night parking of aircrafts at Guwahati and early morning operations.

Ministry of DoNER and Union Civil Aviation Ministry will establish a composite training school for ground level staff for navigation and aircraft maintenance at Lilabari, Assam. Land has already been acquired by Assam Government. North Eastern Council will fund the project.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS CONTINUE TO BE VICTIMS OF MILITANCY IN MANIPUR

Educational institutions continue to be targets of militant organizations in Manipur. Ultras continue to disturb the functioning of premier educational institutions in the state. Recently, some unknown persons fired at the Catholic School in Canchipur located near Manipur University.

Expressing their anger, teachers and students of Catholic School took to the street and demanded the arrest of the culprits and freeing of education from disturbances. "Through this rally we urged the persons responsible for the attack to consider the well being of the society rather than certain individual benefits and requested that such kind of acts should

not repeat in the future," said the Principal, Catholic School.

"We have been facing this problem and we do not like this to happen again," said a teacher. The attack has created a fear psychosis among the students and disturbed the normal functioning of the school.

"I do not feel secure after the incident. If it happens again, we won't be able to study in peace," said a student. Continuous strikes and militant activities have affected the educational institutions in the state forcing children to leave for other states to continue their studies.

POBITORA EMERGING AS A MAJOR TOURIST SPOT

It used to be just a petite piece of wilderness, but now it is among the most popular spots for nature lovers. Pobitora, the natural habitat of the Indian rhino, has emerged as a major draw for Indian and foreign tourists alike. The number of visitors to Pobitora has increased in recent times, one of the reason being its close proximity to Guwahati. Tourists who are on short visits find it much more convenient to visit Pobitora than Kaziranga.

According to the forest officials, the proximity of Pobitora to Guwahati and its birdlife are attractions to tourists. A large number of bird lovers have been visiting the sanctuary in recent times. In winter many varieties of migratory water fowl arrive from far away places. Photographers based in Guwahati find it an attractive destination, and some have become regular visitors.

Another reason for Pobitora's popularity is the easy viewing of wildlife. In the morning and in the afternoon, rhinos and wild buffaloes can be viewed from close quarters. Elephant rides are an additional advantage, as visitors get a good view of wildlife in their natural habitat.

Foreigners have developed liking for natural landscape in and around Pobitora, as revealed by many travellers who find its rich biodiversity interesting.

Visitors from different parts of India have also praised the way the sanctuary spread over 38.81 sq km has been managed. It is worth mentioning that the sanctuary has also found space in international television programmes attracting tourist interest.

CENTRE RELEASES RS. 5 CRORE FOR ROAD PROJECTS IN MIZORAM

The Ministry of Rural Development has released to the state of Mizoram a grant-in-aid of Rs. 5.59 crore for rural road connectivity under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). The sum is from the special window created in National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD) and RIDF as grants in aid to the Mizoram Rural Roads Development Agency (MRRDA). The amount is a part payment of second instalment of phase VI.

About 45 villages will be connected by constructing 220 km of road during 2010-11 and

another 35 villages will be connected during 2011-12, covering 300 km of road. MRRDA is the agency executing the works taken up under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) in the State.

PMGSY is a 100 percent Centrally sponsored scheme to provide road connectivity in the rural areas of the country. PMGSY envisages connectivity to all habitations with a population of 500 people and above in the rural areas and about 250 people and above in respect of the hilly states, tribal areas and desert areas through good and all weather roads.

ASSAM'S ANNUAL PLAN OUTLAY FOR THE FISCAL 2011-12 FIXED AT RS. 9,000 CR.

Assam's annual plan outlay for the fiscal 2011-12 has been fixed at Rs. 9,000 crore. The amount was finalized at a meeting between the Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia and Shri Tarun Gogoi, Chief Minister of Assam in New Delhi. It has shown an increase of Rs. 1,355 crore as compared to the annual plan outlay of last year.

Out of Rs. 9,000 crore, Rs. 6,286 crore would be central assistance and Rs. 2,714/- crore would be from state's own resources. The Central special plan assistance has been doubled from Rs. 400 crore last year to Rs. 800 crore.

Shri Gogoi expressed his satisfaction over the plan outlay and said that the plan size so decided and priorities approved by the Planning Commission would give further boost to the economic growth in the state.

Shri Gogoi also added that special focus would be given to the agriculture sector and new schemes were being introduced to popularise better technologies in farming.

The Planning Commission has also stressed the need on improving industrial sector in the region by promoting Public Private Partnership.

60TH NORTHEAST COUNCIL MEET

The 60th plenary session of the North-East Council was held in the National capital on 16-17 June, 2011.

The participating ministers and functionaries of State Governments stressed the need to expedite infrastructural growth and increase connectivity in the region. Approval for new rail, road and air projects were given and the status of ongoing projects reviewed.

Shri B.K Handique, Minister for North East Development presided over the meeting. Other issues like the need for improvement of telecom services, education reforms and potential for hydel power generation were discussed. Representatives of various ministries, including Railways, Water Resources, Home Affairs and Telecom attended the meet.



Shri B.K Handique, informed that it has been decided to strengthen two airports at Lilabari and Tezpur Airport near Assam-Arunachal border. The number of flights have been increased and additional aircrafts provided.

The Council passed a budget for Rs. 700 crore for 2011-12.

They also decided on 14 new proposals for the region that included establishment of an IIT at Dimapur, a paramedical institute at Dimapur, Capacity Building Program at IIM Shillong, nursing school in Tripura, blood bank in Aizawl and sports infrastructure at Changlang, Nari and Taliha in Arunchal Pradesh.

13 Northeast athletes, including 10 from Manipur and one each from Assam, Sikkim and Tripura who won accolades at Asian Games and Commonwealth Games were also felicitated in the meeting.

Monica Devi, a Bronze medallist at CWG said, "this initiative of felicitating the National and International level performers is very encouraging. This will boost the morale of other players also".

Jayanta Talukdar, Bronze medallist at CWG 2010 said, "it is very helpful and we can use this money to improve our game and scores in future".

North East Council in the past one year has completed 22 projects in the region. It now aims to promote North-East as a large trading hub.

NATIONAL SMALL INDUSTRIES CORPORATION (NSIC) WORKS TO EMPOWER YOUTH IN NORTH EAST

Semaphore Institute of Technologies and Entrepreneurship in Guwahati, running under the aegis of National Small Industries Corporation provides training in various vocational courses using modern methods of teaching. Some of these courses include garment making and needle work, multimedia and graphic designing, beautician and bakery unit etc.

Abhiji Goswami, Managing Director, Semaphore Institute of Technologies and Entrepreneurship said that they are encouraging the entrepreneurs to establish their own business. They support the

upcoming entrepreneurs in various ways right from providing training to the marketing support. They send successful entrepreneurs to international trade fairs.

The main aim of the institute is to create employment and first generation entrepreneurs in the region and to provide a viable platform for the small-scale industries.

Employment generation and imparting specific skills to the youth has been the foremost agenda for the centre in the North-East.



MANAGEMENT OF SOLID-LIQUID WASTE IN RURAL AREAS

In order to pursue management of solid-liquid waste in rural areas on high priority, a meeting, under the chairmanship of Secretary, RM&DD, Sikkim was convened on April 30, 2011 which was attended by officers, panchayat presidents & panchayat secretaries of the eight selected rural towns/cluster. Representatives of Tourism & Civil Aviation Department and the Sikkim Hotels & Restaurants Association also participated in the meeting. The main objective of the

meeting was to provide a forum for the participation of the stakeholders to develop a strategic plan of action for initiating area-specific Solid Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) activities so as to achieve a zero waste society with zero disposal and discharge by adopting reducing, refusing and recycling the waste material. The RM &DD aims to provide a garbage collection vehicle and a compost-cum collection centre/shed for each of the targeted rural clusters.

To give the participants an insight into the current solid waste systems already in place in Sikkim, presentation was made by Sh. Nima Tashi of Khangchendzonga Conservation Committee.

The Chairman said that a fully decentralised approach would be adopted, whereby the GPU panchayats shall run the project by evolving institutional mechanisms for collection and disposal of biodegradable and non-biodegradable wastes separately under the guidance of the BDO concerned. The panchayats were instructed to identify immediately suitable land for the construction of SLWM centre, comprising a compost centre, store, toilet facility etc. The Chairman further directed that the panchayats must not leave any stone unturned in

their solid waste initiative by supplementing it with grants from the 13th Finance Commission, NGP Award money and other grants etc., as Sikkim being a major tourist destination, only a clean environment in the villages would give a fillip to the Nirmal Rajya status of the State. He further commended the efforts of some of the panchayats namely, Gerethang, Mellidara, Yangang and Namthang, who had already made considerable progress in this direction. The representative of the panchayat of Chungthang said that this was an opportune time to launch such a project as in the past, people were only groping in the dark about such measures; however now there are several technological options available to opt for.

WORKSHOP ON DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE VISUALLY CHALLENGED

A non-profit organization, Saksham Trust in association with National Association for Blinds (NAB), Sikkim Branch organized a workshop on development of new technologies for the visually challenged on May 27, 2011. The objective of the workshop was to make the end users, educational institutions and policy makers aware of the various options available for reading and writing for people with blindness or low vision.

Shri S.K. Silal, Special Secretary, Social Justice, Empowerment and Welfare Department who was the chief guest of the workshop said that these types of sensitization programmes create awareness amongst the bureaucrats, civil society and, NGOs working in the disability field. Besides, it would immensely benefit the visually challenged. Demonstration about various technologies would help them acquire skills and make them employable.

Ms Deepika Sood, Sh. Arunish Sharma and Ms Sradha Srivastav who were the resource persons from the Saksham Trust made presentations and spoke about

various technologies that have revolutionized the quality of life of visually challenged. Information was exchanged on Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY), a technology which covers different persons' visibility by which persons can navigate chapter by chapter and page by page and is not voluminous and portable in size.

Ms Druapadi Ghimirey, President of the Sikkim Viklang Shayata Samiti who is also a Florence Nightingale Awardee was felicitated on the occasion. A visual presentation was made on the activities of NAB Sikkim by Mr Lhawang Tshering Lepcha.

Earlier, Mrs Jaishree Pradhan, President of NAB Sikkim in her welcome address mentioned that the workshop was organised mainly to make people aware about the development of new technologies presently available for visually challenged. She stated that NAB believes in imparting education supported by the Government and Private Institutions. She also felt the need of such sensitization programmes at district level.

MANIPUR STATE ACADEMY AWARDS

17 achievers from the fields of art, culture, and literature were presented with tamra patra, cash awards



and citations as part of the Manipur state Akademi award presentation for 2009 on Monday, 30th of May, 2011.



READERS COLUMN

The NE monthly Newsletter is published in English, Assamese, Bengali and Manipuri and has circulation of 40,000 copies. Ministry of Home Affairs brings out the publication incorporating important information/developments concerning North Eastern States.

Ministry of Home Affairs, through the Newsletter, requests for inputs for the Newsletter from the State Governments, agencies, institutions and individuals highlighting the area specific issues, problems, special features including potential for tourism, environmental protection or special efforts/achievement in various fields. Views and

write-ups from general public are also invited on specific issues/problems and possible measures for resolution thereto in the North East.

Articles should be sent in a hard copy format accompanied by floppy/CD version along with photographs. Articles should be accompanied by an abstract of maximum of 150-200 words. Readers are encouraged to send comments and suggestions (upto 300-400 words) on published articles. All letters should have the writer's full name and postal address. The selected articles will be published in the monthly NE Newsletter with due editing.

LETTERS TO EDITOR

1. I have the honour to request you kindly to send the NE Newsletter to the address below. I had the privilege of reading the news letter from a friend which I found it very educative and enlightening for me as well as our NGO (The Rural Foundation, Tamenglong). Our NGO is engaged mainly with the socio-economic development of Rural masses especially in Agri and Horti activities among women SHG and manual labourers.

Sd/-
Zaojianpou,
Secretary, Rural Foundation,
Tamenglong, Manipur.
2. I shall be highly pleased if you kindly send me a free copy of NE Newsletter in English to the following address.

Sd/-
R. Beilochai Khithie
Mara Autonomous District
Council,
Saiha, Mizoram.
3. I have read the NE Newsletter, I find me very useful to know more about NE region. I shall be highly obliged if you kindly send me a free copy of NE Newsletter in English on the following address.

Sd/-
Athanbou Pamei
President of Village Authority
Chairmen's Council,
Tamenglong District, Manipur,
Ward No. V, Spring Valley, Near
Tamenglong Post Office,
TamenglongHQ, Manipur-795141.

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Readers are also requested to e-mail their e-mail address for getting a copy of the N.E. News Letter through e-mail.

Request for free copy of the NE Newsletter indicating language preferred or suggestions, if any, may be sent to the chief Editor/Editor at the address given below: