



A nation's strength ultimately consists in what it can do on its own, and not in what it can borrow from others.

Smt. Indira Gandhi

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DEVELOPMENTS WITH REFERENCE TO NORTH EASTERN REGION

1. The entire State of Assam and a 20 Kms. wide belt in the State of Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya bordering Assam were declared as 'disturbed area' for a period of one year with effect from November 4, 2011 under Section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958.
2. The 12th India-Bangladesh Home Secretary Level meeting was held between 19 and 21 November, 2011 in New Delhi. The Indian delegation was led by Shri R.K.Singh, Union Home Secretary. The Bangladesh delegation was led by Mr. Monzur Hossain, Home Secretary, Government of Bangladesh. Highlighting the fact that both India and Bangladesh attach highest importance to their bilateral relations, both leaders reiterated their commitment to further strengthen mutual cooperation in the security and border related issues.
3. The Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting between India and Bangladesh was held between 19 and 21 November, 2011 at New Delhi. Both India and Bangladesh reiterated to address the issues related to security, Border Management and enhancement of cooperation of law enforcement agencies against smuggling of arms and narcotic drugs, fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN), activities of extremists and terrorists, insurgency and trafficking of women and children. Repatriation of prisoners, border fencing, immigration issues and follow up of the Joint Boundary Working Group meeting etc. were also discussed during the meeting.
4. Sh. P.C. Halder, Government of India Representative has been authorised to initiate talks with NDFB (RD).
5. Agreement Signed between Centre, Assam Govt. and UPDS

- (i) A tripartite Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) was signed on 25.11.2011 between the Central Government, Government of Assam and United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) in the presence of Union Home Minister Shri P. Chidambaram and Assam Chief Minister Shri Tarun Gogoi. The Union Home Minister said that this MoS provide for enhanced autonomy for Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council in Assam and also a special package for speedier socio-economic and educational development of the area. He further stated that Government has always shown its willingness to enter into dialogue with any group, that is willing to abjure the path of violence and place its demand within the framework of the Constitution of India.
- (ii) Shri P. Chidambaram further said that in the past violence marked the agitation of the UPDS that was intended to attract the attention of the Government towards the backwardness of the Karbi Anglong District. After realizing futility of the violence, in August 2002, UPDS came forward and expressed its willingness to give up violence and seek solution of its problems peacefully within the framework of the Indian Constitution.
- (iii) In November 2009, in order to speed up the peace process, Government appointed Shri P.C. Haldar as Interlocutor/Government of India's Representative to negotiate with the UPDS for addressing their grievances. After several rounds of discussion, negotiating team comprising the Representatives of Government of Assam, Ministry of Home Affairs and UPDS finalized tripartite agreement which has been signed.
- (v) MoS provides for the following:
 - Setting up of a Committee under Assam Legislative Assembly as envisaged under Article 371B of the Constitution of India;
 - Renaming of existing Council as Karbi Anglong Autonomous Territorial Council (KAATC);
 - Increased seats in the Council upto 50 members (of which 6 will be nominated by the Governor) as against the existing 30 seats out of which 4 were to be nominated by the Governor. However, the proposed increase in seats shall be applicable for election to the Council due in 2016-17 or mid-term poll, if any, announced, whichever is earlier;
 - Setting up of Village Councils for deepening democratic process at the grass root level;
 - Transfer of additional subjects by the State of Assam to the Council along with legislative and executive powers;
 - Setting up of State Finance Commission (SFC) and consideration of higher fund allocation to the council to undertake viable activities;
 - Strict adherence to established norms of financial management, proper audit of the accounts, etc.
 - Additional measures for socio-economic, education, health, and cultural development;
 - Special economic package of Rs.350 crore (Rs.70 crore per annum) over and above the Plan Fund over the next 5 years to KAATC for identified projects;
 - Improvement of road connectivity, water supply and supply of power in Karbi Anglong District under existing schemes;
 - Providing one-time grant for capacity building in KAATC for preparation of DPR etc;
 - Rehabilitation of UPDS cadres; Withdrawal of cases relating to heinous crimes shall be reviewed case by case according to existing policy for withdrawal of such cases.
 - Action will be taken to implement the MoS and implementation of MoS will be reviewed periodically.

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

(a) Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)

Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), deployed along Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan border in Bongaigaon under its Civic Action Programme/Community Welfare Scheme, has adopted border villages in Chirang, Kokrajhar and Baksa Districts of Assam to help youths, farmers

and women in their social, educational and economic development. The following activities were organised during October, 2011:

A function was organised on 14-10-2011 at Labdanguri village under Baksa District by 32nd Battalion SSB, in which Shri Makhan Swargiary, MCLA

Mathanguri (BTC) participated as Chief Guest and Dy. Inspector General SSB Bongaigaon Sector was Guest of Honour. During the function 2 Computers; Printers with all accessories; 4 sewing machines; 4 sets of agricultural tools and equipment; high quality seedlings duly certified by agriculture department tomato, carrot, cabbage, cauliflower, brinjal, cucumber, mango, litchi and coconut seeds and banana seedlings were distributed. 4 sets of solar lights were also installed in the village during the function.

Addressing the people on the occasion, Dy. Inspector General, SSB said that in order to secure border, welfare and development of the border area and people are very important. Under Civic Action Programme CAPFs. provide various facilities to the people i.e. Medical and Veterinary needs, minor infrastructural requirements like solar lights, community halls, hand pumps and ring well etc and also conduct educational excursion tour, computer education and various other trainings for the youths.

Shri Makhan Swargiary, MCLA Mathanguri (BTC) appreciated the work done and services being provided by SSB in these remote villages and asked people to come forward for active cooperation. School children, village youths and folk dancers presented a colourful programme on the occasion.

Staff Officer SSB Bongaigaon Sector, Smt. Sulekha Das and Officiating Area Organiser, Bongaigaon distributed seeds to the farmers at Sudampara forest village under Koilamoila Circle/BOP in a function

organized on 15 October 2011. Three hand pumps in three villages i.e Mesghat, Simlaguri and Kwirwiguri under Bongaigaon Area for safe drinking water to the villagers were also dedicated to the public. Local leaders, Gaon Buras of different villages and officers from local administration were present during the function. Besides infrastructural assistance, SSB is organising free medical and veterinary camps regularly in the border villages.

(b) Central Reserved Police Force (CRPF)

1st Bn, CRPF organised Civic Action Programme at Zembawak, Aizwal, Mizoram on 31.10.2011 in the presence of local people and school students. During the function, the Unit distributed educational, health and utility items like Computer accessories with table, chair and speaker; 12 Sewing machines; medicine with bags (19 sets and 25 items in each bag) and musical instruments (02 sets and 05 items in each set) to the students and needy people. Shri P.C. Lathanlina, Minister of Social Welfare of Mizoram State was the Chief Guest of the ceremony.

(c). A free medical (anti-malaria) camp for the villagers/ labourers of BTPP/NTPC Bongaigaon was organized by "Anti Malaria Organisation", Kokrajhar (BTAD), Assam on 05.11.2011, in village Kalipukhuri. The organisation reviewed anti-malaria measures, progress of the campaign and remedies and distributed chloroquine & spraying equipment to the villagers. CISF Unit BTPP Bongaigaon also sent a team of volunteers to assist the organisation.

PROGRAMMES UNDERTAKEN BY MINISTRY OF I&B IN THE NORTH EASTERN REGION (Directorate of Field Publicity)

1. Arunachal Pradesh Region

Safe Drinking Water

Sede Village in West Kameng District has been facing acute shortage of potable water for many years as it is located uphill stream. The problem aggravated due to increase in the population in recent years. Villagers obtained water from various sources such as nullah, Kacha wells etc. Due to the implementation of Bharat Nirman Programme now there is provision for safe drinking water. The Sede Villagers expressed their gratefulness to the Govt. of India for this noble/ innovative programme for the villagers.

2. Manipur & Nagaland Region

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

MGNREGA occupies the Centre stage in providing employment to the poor in the backward areas of Manipur. The Chief of Sagang village- Churachandpur District, which has around 380 households, informed

that MGNREGA is currently the biggest employment provider to the unemployed villagers and has brought about all round development of the village. Their economic conditions have improved compared to pre-NREGA days. Construction of Rural roads, agri-link roads, retaining wall, drain, water harvesting ponds, footsteps/footpath, shingling of village road, etc; are some of the works taken up in the rural areas. The success of the programme in the villages is laudable because it is pro-poor, people-centric, demand driven, self-selecting, participatory and of rights-based design.

3. Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura Region

National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)

In West Garo Hills, Meghalaya, the villagers under Dedengre Block are witnessing dramatic changes in Health facilities ever since the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was launched in 2005. The presence of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) has rapidly brought down Infant & Maternal Mortality. The women

brigade of ASHA is able to bond with the beneficiaries who feel confident to express their health problems. Village chairperson and the citizens of Dadengre, West Garo Hills have expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the Centre. The villagers have now started

availing free medicine/free health check up from qualified doctors in dental, homeopathic, Ayurvedic and the ASHA & ANMs appointed under NRHM. Besides, many women have received financial assistance under Junani Suraksha Yojana.



Chief of Sagang Village Churachandpur District in Manipur and DFP official interacting with Villagers during the Campaign on MGNREGA



MGNREGA job card holders levelling the road and laying of culvert at Sagang Village in Churachandpur District (Manipur)

ASSAM GAS CRACKER PROJECT

The Assam Gas Cracker Project was initiated in pursuance of the Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) signed between Central Government and All Assam Students Union (AASU) and All Assam Gana Parishad (AAGP) on 15th August, 1985. Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), in its meeting held on 18th April, 2006, approved the setting up of the Assam Gas Cracker Project at a project cost of Rs. 5460.61 Crores (fixed cost) at Lepethata, district Dibrugarh, Assam. A joint venture company namely M/s. Brahamaputra Cracker & Polymer Limited (BCPL), incorporated on 8th January 2007 is implementing the project. The project was scheduled to get commissioned in April, 2012.

The overall physical progress, as on 15th November, 2011 is 56.6% as against the revised scheduled target of 55.2%. The cumulative expenditure as on 15th November, 2011 is Rs. 3221.23 crore including the expenditure of Rs. 916.48 crore in the year 2011-12. Further, as on 15th November, 2011, the total financial commitment to the tune of Rs. 7700.00 crore has been made.

The civil and structural works, mechanical and piping works for all the process viz. Cracker, polythene 7 polypropylene units and gas processing, gas sweetening & gas de-hydration units are under progress. The delivery of tertiary compressor for Ethylene Cracker Unit and read lines of utility systems (Raw Water Treatment Plant, De-Mineralise Plant, Cooling Tower-1 and 2, Nitrogen 2, Flare) and Captive Power Plant are falling in critical paths of the project schedule. These activities are kept in focus and are being closely followed. All the Critical Material

Requisition (MRs) and Critical Tenders have been ordered/ awarded. As against the total 678 Material Requisitions (MRs), 654 MRs have been ordered and balance MRs are targeted to be ordered progressively by December, 2011. Out of total 108 tenders, 90 tenders have been awarded and balance tenders are targeted to be awarded during December, 2011.

The Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has released the entire budget outlay of Rs. 675.71 crore to BPCL towards Capital Subsidy for the year 2011-12. In view of the pace of expenditure further picking up, BCPL, as per their revised funding plan for the current year and the revised cost estimates and commissioning schedule, has projected increased requirement of capital subsidy from the Government. Accordingly, additional funds amounting to Rs. 1137.33 crore, over and above Rs. 675.71 crore allocated in Budget Estimates have been sought in the second batch of supplementary demand for grants for 2011-12 to support project activities/ progress.

Owing to various reasons such as time overrun, sub optimal size of the plant, increase in infrastructural requirements & utilities and off sites resulting from detailed engineering and operational requirements, increase in construction cost, frequent bandhs, labour unrest, inadequate availability of skilled manpower at the site, prolonged monsoon etc., the project has witnessed time and cost overruns.

The Government of India, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs considered the revised cost proposal for the Assam Gas Cracker Project on 16.11.2011 and

approved the revised cost estimate of Rs. 8920 crore (on “as built basis”) which would be funded by capital subsidy of Rs. 4,690 crore and debt and equity for Rs. 2961 crore and Rs. 1269 crore respectively. In case the planned loans do not materialize, the same would be picked up as additional equity by the Promoters. The revised capital subsidy will be sought by the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals from the Ministry of Finance/Planning Commission in 2011-12 and 2012-13 by way of additional budgetary support.

The project schedule has also been revised with mechanical completion by July, 2013 and commissioning by December, 2013.

The Assam Gas Cracker Project is expected to give rise to substantial employment generation, as a result of investments in downstream plastic processing industries and allied activities. The project is considered to be of crucial significance for the state of Assam and the North-Eastern region.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES ORGANISED BY THE REGIONAL DIRECTORATE OF CENTRAL BOARD OF WORKERS EDUCATION (CBWE) IN NORTH EAST ZONE

A 3-day special Programme on Panchayati Raj Functionaries of NE Region was organised by the Regional Directorate, CBWE, Tinsukia at Conference Hall, West Galaghat Development Block-Bokakhat from 20th to 22nd October, 2011. Altogether 30 (Thirty) participants representing various gaon Panchayat under West Golaghat Anchalik Panchayat of Golaghat District attended the training programme.

2) Two days Awareness Programme on MGNREGA Scheme was organised by the Regional Directorate, CBWE, Tinsukia, out of which one programme was conducted at Amguri Primary School, Amgurj Gaon, Kokopathar Block, Tinsukia from 28th to 29th October, 2011 and 40 participants attended the programme. 30 participants out of 40 stated that they are going

to approach the Panchayat for issuing job cards for MGNREGA scheme.

Another programme was held at L.P. School, Tipomia Gaon, Panitola Block, Dibrugarh from 24th to 25th October, 2011 and the participants were informed of the provisions of MGNREGA.

3) The trainees of 2-days Special Programme for Women Workers conducted by Regional Directorate, CBWE, Imphal at Neina Sang club, Tera Khuraijam Leikai, Imphal West District, Manipur from 25th and 26th February, 2008 formed a Self Help Group named “The Yaiphabi Women SHG”, Sagolbang Tera Tongbram Leikai, Bijoygobinda G.P. Imphal West District, Manipur and opened Bank account at UBI, Imphal and Moirang Branch, Bishnupur dist.

SEMINAR FOR NORTH EASTERN REGION AT GANGTOK ON OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH MANAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT & ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Regional Labour Institute (DGFASLI, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India), Kanpur under a special plan component for **North Eastern Region** organised a seminar on “**Occupational Safety & Health Management for Sustainable Industrial Development & Economic Prosperity**” in collaboration with Labour Department, Government of Sikkim on 19th October, 2011 at Hotel Mayfair, Ranipool, Gangtok (Sikkim). The seminar intended to promote occupational safety & health among the industries of the North Eastern Region as per goals & objectives set in the National Policy on Safety, Health & Environment at Workplace.

The seminar was inaugurated by Ms Neeru Sewa, Minister of Commerce & Industries, Excise & Labour Department, Government of Sikkim. While inaugurating the seminar she requested the industries of Sikkim to create safe & healthy environment to protect workers from illness, injuries and diseases that may arise during the course of their employment.

The Minister made a mention of the National Policy on Safety, Health and Environment of the Workplace made by Government of India in 2009 and about recent initiatives of India and European Union ‘Joint Action Plan’ to have a policy dialogue and co-operation in the field of employment and social policy’. She appreciated the initiative of the Regional Labour Institute, Kanpur to organise the seminar in the State of Sikkim and expressed that the initiative would prove to be a turning point in the State and provide momentum to the activities of safety and health.

The inaugural session was presided over by Shri C.T. Wangdi, Secretary Labour, Government of Sikkim. Dr. Avneesh Singh, Director in-charge, Regional Labour Institute, Faridabad/Kanpur delivered the welcome address and apprised the need of occupational safety & health for economic prosperity of the State. Dr. Brij Mohan, Head of Office Regional Labour Institute, Kanpur proposed vote of thanks.

During the seminar following technical sessions were organised:

- National Policy & Statutory Framework on OSH in India”
- Occupational Safety & Health Management on Sustainable Industrial Development’

- Health Protection through Sound Occupational Hygiene & Health Practices’

The experts from different parts of the country presented their papers in these technical sessions. The seminar got a wide media coverage and was attended by 62 delegates from 17 stakeholders.

MIZORAM'S HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE ON PATH OF IMPROVEMENT

Over the years Mizoram's health care system has improved a lot. Most of the hospitals in the state are equipped with latest machines for treatment, well-arranged operation theatres, labour rooms and other facilities. Their capacity for accommodating more patients has also increased. This has helped in diagnosing diseases and providing appropriate medical care to more people.

The state government is also making efforts to provide healthcare facilities even to the poorest people. They have started an insurance scheme for people below and above the poverty line under the Rastriya Swasthaya Bima Yojna. The government has received a 25 million dollar grant from Asian Development Bank, and is planning to construct medical colleges and cancer hospitals.

Under the insurance scheme, the marginalized sections will be provided a medical cover of Rs.1 lakh on a deposit of Rs.500 premium, Rs.2 lakhs on a deposit of Rs.750 and Rs.3 lakh on a deposit of Rs.1000. The state has also registered a massive decline in the infant mortality rate and malarial deaths in the past few years.

The Mizoram Government is also planning to further improve the health infrastructure by inviting the participation of private players.

"We are now going to open up the public private partnership in the medical infrastructure, as the government alone cannot do it. Those who want to invest into it are welcome in Mizoram," said Shri Lalrinliana Sailo, Mizoram's Health Minister.



Aizawl Hospital & Research Centre

NEW TRAIN FLAGGED OFF FROM DIMAPUR, TO CONNECT ASSAM, NAGALAND

Improving connectivity between the North Eastern states is the topmost priority of both the Central and the State governments. Recently a new train was started from Dimapur that connects Nagaland and Assam.

The Nagaland Express was flagged off from

Dimapur Railway Station on November 15 and will connect Dimapur to Kamakhya in Assam. Several Ministers were present on the occasion. "It is a red-letter day, a momentous occasion of flagging off Nagaland Express from Dimapur-Kamakhya via Guwahati," said Nagaland Chief Minister Shri Nephui Rio.

Train number 15669/15670 leaves Dimapur station at 6:30 a.m. and returns from Kamakhya the same day at 11:10 p.m. The train has one AC two-tier, one AC three-tier, four-sleeper class, five ordinary second class and two luggage van-cum brake van coaches.

"It will benefit the passengers and we can now travel without problems and reach on time without having to wait for a long time," said Uttum Kumar Singh, a passenger. "This dream, the desire of this part

of the country-Nagaland, Manipur and the southern part of Assam, has been fulfilled and will immensely benefit the people, the travellers, carrying of the goods and will integrate the people to the mainland," said the Chief Minister Shri Rio.

People in the northeast have faced problems due to poor connectivity, but over the years the government has been pumping in huge funds under various schemes to improve the road, rail and air network in an effort to address this issue.



Flagging off of Nagaland Express from Dimapur Railway station

IITF 2011 SHOWCASES THE RICH TRADITIONS & CULTURE OF NORTHEAST

The India International Trade Fair (IITF) held in November, 2011 in New Delhi provided a platform for craftsmen and entrepreneurs from different states of the country. Many artisans from the North East used this opportunity to expand their market. Babulal Debnath, a cane and bamboo trader from Agartala, has been regularly exhibiting his products at the annual trade fair. Over the years, bulk buyers for his products have increased and his business has grown.

"Tripura is quite far from New Delhi. Our government has been encouraging us and making efforts to promote cane and bamboo products. We sell these products both in bulk and retail and over the years it has proved good for the artisans," said Babulal Debnath. In all 25 exhibitors from Tripura showcased their handicrafts at the Fair. Large crowds flocked the Tripura pavilion for the cane and bamboo products.

Exhibitors use the Fair to gain experience about customer demand and the changes they need to make to market their products in Delhi and in other places. "Artisans get a good chance to evaluate their products in a direct buyer seller meet like this. They get to know the

demand for their products both outside the state and in the country and how they can increase its marketability," said Pradeep Shah, Director, Tripura Pavilion.

"I liked the handicraft products that are being exhibited here particularly - bamboo and cane. These products from Tripura are good and I will come back to the stall again," said Dhiren Gahlot, a visitor. Exhibitors from Tripura, Manipur, Assam, Meghalaya and Nagaland took part in the Fair.

In the Manipur pavilion, 32 units were displayed which included a variety of products like handloom, artificial jewellery, decorative items, paintings, cultural artifacts and indigenous food items. "We have modified our products like bringing traditional designs on the jackets. Our aim is to bring the culture of Manipur into commodities that are readily marketable," Serong Iping, an exhibitor from that state said.

We bring artisans from all the districts of Manipur and try to give an exposure to our craftsmen so that they get new designs and new pricing and a global platform," said Apam Raguii, nodal officer, Manipur

Pavilion. The fair also helps the visitors get to know more about the culture, economy and people of the North Eastern states. "Manipur and other North Eastern states are known as the corridors to the East, and it is through these states we can get to the South East Asian countries like Myanmar and others," said Ashwini Garg, a visitor.

During the Fair every State was allotted a day to observe State day with the aim to promote awareness

about traditions of the State. On the eve of Assam Day, cultural troupes from different districts of the state performed traditional dances and sang folk songs to entertain the visitors. "Such program tell people about the rich and diverse culture of North East," said Sananda Gogoi, an artist.

The IITF 2011 is a perfect blend of commerce and culture where people from different states got to know more about others.

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 solicited on specific issues/problems and including on 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 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. Please send me your monthly NE Newsletter in English language.

*Sd/-
Rajkumar Kishorjit,
Singjamei Mathak,
Chongtham, Leikai,
Imhal, Manipur-795008*

2. I had the privilege of reading the Newsletter from a friend which I found it very educative and enlightening for me as well as our institution. I shall be highly pleased if you kindly send me a free copy of NE Newsletter in English on regular basis at my address.

*Sd/-
Mrs. Alakabujar baruah,
Director, Bright Career
Foundation, Tihu town,
Daga Mill Field,
P.O & P.S - Tihu-781371,
Dist- Nalbari (Assam)*

3. Your News letter has great importance for giving me information about N.E region. As a development activist and researcher, I am grateful to the Newsletter in many ways. I request you to kindly send me the Newsletter in English on regular basis at my address.

*Sd/-
Mr. K. Lalnunpuia,
New Serchhip IOC Veng
(Harmon road),
Serchhip District,
Mizoram-796181*

MHA requests the readers to send their response through e-mail at: donedc-mha@nic.in

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: