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**DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN NORTH-EASTERN STATES THROUGH  
FIVE YEAR PLANS AND ANNUAL PLANS.**  
**(Source - Planning Commission)**

The Government has been resorting to various measures since independence for Socio-economic development of the people of the country and formulating schemes for development of infrastructure, education, culture, health, creating job opportunities etc. In the process, the special needs of particular sector in any State and State specific characteristics are also kept in view and exceptions wherever required have been made for ensuring balanced growth of the country including any region.

Considering the geographical features and special characteristics of the NE States, Central Government Ministries have been resorting to formulating strategies/schemes even by making special concessions/dispensations in respect of the areas Administered by them. The programs/projects are aimed at improving the socio-economic infrastructure, creation of job opportunities, up gradation of culture, education, and creating economic base for bringing people to the mainstream.

In this context, state specific position in respect of Meghalaya is as follows: -

Meghalaya has a geographical area of 22,429 sq. km., shares 443 kms border with Bangladesh in the south and the west and is surrounded by Assam on the north-eastern side. Its surface area comprises mostly of hills and table lands with a small valley land. The State is endowed with rich natural resources, including forests, hydroelectric power potential and mineral deposits such as coal, limestone and uranium. The total area under forest cover is 75.08% of the total geographical area. Meghalaya has 7 districts and 5782 villages. The population density was 103 persons per sq. km against the All-India density of 325 persons per sq. km. About 18.50 percent of the people in the State were below the poverty line in 2004-05 against all India level of 27.80 percent.

The present road connectivity in the State is 37 Km/100Sq. Km which is much below the National Average (75 Km /100Sq. Km). About 51% of 5782 villages are connected by roads. The State is well endowed with mineral resources, with a coal reserve of about 560 MT and limestone reserve of about 12000 MT along with substantial deposits of industrial clay, kaolin, feldspar and uranium.

Industrial development in the State especially in the SPIP, Byrnihat, industrial area near Umiam lake and Khliehriat sub station of Janitia Hills has taken place in the recent years.

Meghalaya achieved a growth rate of 7.8% in the 9<sup>th</sup> Plan. However, it fell to 6% during the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan. The main reason is the inability of having infrastructure, particularly power to sustain and support high level of growth. For 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, the growth target for the State is 7.3% against all India growth target of 9%. For achieving this growth target the State needs accelerated development of infrastructure especially power and road connectivity.

From 2002-03 onwards, under Non-lapsable Central Pool of Reserved (NLCPR) funds, the Ministry of DoNER has sanctioned 24 projects at a total estimated cost of Rs. 181.05 crore against which an amount of Rs 97.97 crore was released. Out of this, the 11 projects mostly relating to power, roads, water supply scheme, housing, etc. with a total support of 79.48 crore have been completed.

Approved outlay for the Tenth Five Year Plan for the State is Rs. 3009.00 crore, which is 20.33 percent higher than the agreed Ninth Five Year Plan of Rs. 2500.62 crore. Total outlay released during 2006-07 is anticipated at the level of approved outlay of Rs. 900 crore.

The aggregate proposed Plan size for 11<sup>th</sup> Plan and Annual Plan 2007-08 for the State is Rs. 8695 crore and Rs. 1360 crore respectively. Compared to 10<sup>th</sup> Plan and Annual Plan 2006-07, there is an increase in outlay of Rs. 5686 Crore (189%) and Rs. 460 Crore (51%) respectively. The proposed outlay for Annual Plan 2007-08 is 15.6% of the proposed 11<sup>th</sup> Plan outlay.

The State Govt. proposes to have rapid industrialization for improving employment and income by taking advantage of the North East Industrial Policy thereby encouraging heavy industries like cement plants and ferrous and non-ferrous industries with captive power generation. The State proposes to give priority to agriculture sector for improving livelihood of the people. Substantial investment is proposed in horticulture, bamboo exploitation to create employment and income, water management through minor irrigation, micro-irrigation and watershed development projects. Priority will also be accorded for imparting vocational training to the youth through polytechnics and IITs for developing employable skills

## **DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**

The Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Programme is a joint GOI-UNDP programme with the overall goal of sustainable reduction in disaster risk across India. The programme aims at developing the capacity of communities, government institutions and local self-governments in disaster mitigation, preparedness and recovery.

A progress report of the main activities and special initiatives undertaken under the DRM programme in selected 169 multi hazard prone districts has been prescribed. These districts have been selected from the 17 States across India namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

The main activities, classified under the Main Result Areas (MRAs), are as follows:

**(i) Disaster management Institutional mechanism and capacity building at all levels:** This MRA encompasses activities related to sensitization, training and capacity building at all levels including government officials, volunteers and civil society. It also includes the constitution of disaster management department at the state level as well as the

formation and training of disaster management committees (DMCs) and teams (DMTs) at all levels.

- In Assam one of the significant achievements during the period has been heightened awareness of the need to institutionalize DM preparedness and response DM now forms an integral part of the agenda and priorities of the administration and community formations at different levels. It is now a part of the State Level Conferences of the District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police. Also, the DM related activities are being reviewed in all the District Development Committees meetings, indicating that it is now being recognized as a part of the development process.
- Efforts to dovetail DRM into the ongoing State level Master Trainers (Teachers) and District level Resource Persons Training under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have been highly successful. Similarly dovetailing of DRM with NRHM (National Rural health Mission) is also being done. The training of components of DM and their role in DRM will commence soon.
- Constitution of the DMCs is complete at the District and the Block levels. At the Gram Panchayat (GP) level it is about 99%, at the village level it is about 83% and at the Urban Local Body (ULB) level it is about 72%. The task, over the remaining period of the project is to build their capacities and response capabilities.
- In Manipur Directorate of Relief and DM has been formed to streamline the implementation of the DRM programme. Infact, Civil Defence Organization's involvement has strengthened the Department.
- In Meghalaya the Department of Revenue has been re-designated as the Revenue and DM Department. State DM Authority has also been constituted but yet to be notified. DMCs have also been formed at the state level (headed by Chief Secretary), at the district (7) level, at the block (39) level and at the village level (4892). Apart from this, a DMT on Search and Rescue (S & R) has also been constituted.
- In Nagaland provision for DM has been made in the annual budget of all departments working on it. DMCs (with 25 members) have been formed and members trained in all the 11 districts. 405 Village level DMCs have been formed in Tuensang, Mokokchung, Okha, Kiphire and Zunheboto districts, to expedite implementation of Village level activities under the DRM programme. The process for formulation of village level committees is going on in the rest of the districts of the state.
- DMTs (8) have also been formed in the districts vis-a-viz S & R, First Aid, Relief Distribution, Information Dissemination, Shelter Management, Water & Sanitation, Carcasses Disposal and Psychological/Trauma Counselling.

- In Sikkim a coordination meeting of District Collectors, Assistant District Collectors, Sub Divisional Magistrates, Revenue Officers/ Additional Directors and staff members of the Land Revenue & DM Department was organized in September, 2006 in Gangtok, to discuss various day-to-day business issues to be executed under the department and the activities under the DRM programme.

(ii) **Sensitisation/ Capacity Building of DMCs/DMTs and Other Stakeholders**

- In Arunachal Pradesh a one-day DRM orientation of DDMC members (about 37 officers from various departments including officers from outpost) was organized in December 2006, at Bomdila, in West Kameng district. This orientation programme was felt essential, as almost all the officers previously oriented under the DRM programme were transferred to other places in the state. After the orientation programme it was decided that all the departments would share information in the prescribed format for IDRN web portal and District Information Officer, NIC would be uploading and updating database at regular intervals. Also it was decided that all the line departments including the district administration will have to review the District DM Plan for further improvement.
- In December 2006, a major fire broke out in the administrative building of the district hospital in Pasighat, due to an electrical short circuit, which caused huge damage to the assets and to one portion of the hospital building. This particular event compelled the hospital administration to organise the training programme for the doctors and other hospital staff on various aspects of DM, such as how to prepare the Hospital DM plan and the aspects to be taken into account while preparing it, structural and non-structural safety aspects required to minimize the chances of a disaster in the hospital. This fire accident in the district hospital exposed the vulnerability of the existing setup and also emphasized the need for DM system to be in place. A one-day training was organised in December 2006 in this hospital, in which Deputy Director Health Services, all the doctors, administrative and nursing staff participated.
- In Assam training of DMC members and other officials has been satisfactory with the following achievement levels i.e. District-100%, Blocks-74%, GPs- 65%, Villages-77% and ULBs – 32%. DMTs training in Search & Rescue (S & R) and first aid are also ongoing.
- Progress of PRIs training has been very encouraging and this will go a long way in institutionalizing DM at the grass root levels. In the programme districts, a total of 6410 Village sensitization meetings have been organized till December, 2006.
- Over and above the trainer from Civil Defence at the State level, for training in the area of S & R, the State has now developed its own resources with the development of 26 Master Trainers. The State Government has also undertaken several initiatives for the capacity building of its own personnel. A team of 12 State level Search & Rescue personnel were sent to NISA (National Industrial Security Academy), Hyderabad for a two months course on “Advanced training on Search &

Rescue.” These trained persons will provide the State with specialized competencies, and build individual capacities as well.

- In Manipur July 2006, State Academy of Training (SAT) organized a four days training programme on DM and responsibilities to carry out the DRM programme, in which 40 officials (including 12 women) of Thoubal DC Office, local NGOs Thoubal KMC members, PRI members, personnel from Nagar Panchayats, teachers etc, participated.
- SAT organized a two-weeks training on S & R and First Aid for the personnel from Imphal Municipal Council with the support from Civil Defence organization. 76 participants (including 49 women) most of them were from Mayang Imphal Bazaar (market), who attended this training, assured to form a S & R as well as First Aid Team for their Baszrs to respond at the time of emergency. During August 2006, the Academy also organized a three days training programme on DM (especially community based DM) for the Nodal officers of different departments.
- During September 2006, in a three days training programme organized by the Academy at the School level in which 41 selected students (from Xth and XIth) and 12 teachers were also given practical training in First Aid as well as S & R operations. Also, about 450 NSS volunteers and 50 teachers from schools in Imphal and one school at Lilong under Thoubal district and 42 NCC cadets at Thoubal were trained on DM, S & R and first aid by the Civil Defence organization. The training was organized by the NSS cell of Manipur. During the training, the students showed their enthusiasm to learn and practice more skills. The school authorities were also advised to prepare their school safety and evacuation plan.
- In October 2006, a five-days training programme for the NCC cadets was organized on DM and DM plan preparation, at Thoubal in which 58 cadets belonging to 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standards participated.
- In Meghalaya regular trainings on DM for various stakeholders have been initiated. 822 DMC members (including 17 % women), 2718 village headmen and more than 400 Women SMG members have been trained on DRM and Community level DM, 314 DMC members have been trained on DRM, 192 officials have been trained on S & R and 203 members been trained on First Aid, organized by District Administration, 8037 VDMC members (including 19% women) have been oriented on Community based DM, 2630 VDMT members (including 11% women) have been trained on First Aid and 2853 volunteers (including 7% women) on S & R by Civil Defence and Home Guards at the Block and Village levels. A total of 3202 Village sensitization meetings were organized.
- Training of 52 Senior Officers, 59 Master Trainers on DM, 5 days practical training for more than 30 District level Senior/Nodal Officers on S & R was organized by the Department of Home (Civil Defence & Home Guard) at the State level. At the district level 226 (16% women) Block level Master Trainers (BMT) have been trained on various aspects of DRM with special emphasis to CBDM and Block DM

Plan. 166 teachers at the District level and 2151 teachers at the Block level, 371 NYKS/NCC/Scouts and Guides members, and 5179 volunteers at the block level have been trained on DRM.

**GUIDELINES FOR CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMME IN NORTH EASTEN REGION - FUNDS RELEASED TO ARMY AND CPMFs FOR CIVIC WORKS.**

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Ministry of Home Affairs had been releasing funds to Army and Central Paramilitary forces (CPMFs) for undertaking Civic Action Program in NE region. Funds are broadly utilized for the following purposes:

- (a) Construction and/or repair to community buildings to include schools, hospitals, health centers, community halls, market sheds, bus/taxi stands etc.
- (b) Developmental activities such as construction of tracks, small bridges, culverts, minor cableways, water supply, electrification schemes, playground etc.
- (c) Running of health, medical, dental, veterinary camps including provisioning of medical equipments and stores etc. to existing hospitals/nursing homes.
- (d) Human Resources Development including imparting of vocational training, conduct of education excursions by the students to places of national interest and the like, organized career counseling, training and coaching etc.
- (e) Initiation of small projects in improvement and care of livestock, beekeeping, fisheries agriculture techniques, orchards, forestry, carpet and/or handloom weaving, hosiery etc.
- (f) Cost of transportation of stores for the execution of the above-mentioned tasks.

**DETAILS OF FUNDS RELEASED UNDER CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMME IN NORTH EAST REGION DURING THE YEAR 2006-07**

Name of Organization	Amount released
Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)	Rs. 80.64 lakh
Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)	Rs. 61.63 lakh
Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)	Rs. 74.15 lakh
Assam Rifles (AR)	Rs. 290.00 lakh
Border Security Force (BSF)	Rs. 91.00 lakh

Army	Rs.102.58 lakh
Total	Rs. 700.00 lakh

## **RAIL BUDGET PUTS NE ON FAST TRACK TO GROWTH**

Railway Budget 2007-08 put the North East on the fast track. Four new national projects, including the construction of Bogibeel bridge over Brahmaputra, Rangiya-Murkongselek gauge conversion, Azra-Byrnihat and Dimapur-Kohima new line projects have been renamed 'National Projects'.

While announcing that Garib Rath will roll between Kolkata and Guwahati twice weekly, additional funds of Rs 2,725 crore were sought from the Ministry of Finance for four ongoing national projects, three of which are in NE. These projects include Jirbam-Imphal Road (Tupul) and Kumargaht-Agartala new line and Lumding-Silchar-Jiribam gauge conversion projects.

As per the Railway Budget, the New Guwahati-Digary railway track will be double-lined. The Railway Minister also announced that on the demand of the honourable members, the survey work of Rupai-Parshuramkund new line has been proposed to be taken up.

The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), as per the Railway Budget 2006-07 witnessed a hike of 40% in fund allocation. The allocation for NFR had increased by Rs 300 crore in comparison to the 2005-06 budget.

Total allocation for construction projects during the year 2006-07 has been earmarked at almost Rs. 900 crore that includes three national projects as well as Rs 230 crore for the Bogibeel bridge and Rs 384 crore for new lines in NE.

The Railway Ministry had also accepted proposals for development of Kamakhya (and Pandu) as the second passenger terminal of Guwahati, development of a goods terminal at changsari, unification of computerized passenger reservation system, extension of platforms to accommodate 24 to 26 coaches, extension of circulating area of Guwahati station and the setting up of multi disciplinary training center at Rangiya.

Funds have also been provided in the budget for work pertaining to the setting up of Rangiya Division, improvement of passenger amenities in Guwahati, New Bongaigaon, Tinsukia and Rangiya stations.

## **PADMA AWARDS**

Padma awards, namely, Padam Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri, are amongst the highest and most prestigious civilian honours of the country. Introduced in 1954, the first list of these awards was announced on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1954. Subsequently, the



awards have been announced on Republic Day each year. During the years 1978 and 1979, no awards were conferred. Also, no awards were conferred during the years 1993 to 1997 while certain public interest litigation challenging the constitutional validity of the awards was pending in the Supreme Court. The Constitutional validity of the awards having being upheld by the Supreme Court, the awards were resumed from 1998. Upto the year 2007, 3214 Padma awards (Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri) have been conferred in different fields of activities.

(ii) The award is conferred for distinguished service in various fields of activities, such as, art, literature, medicine, social work, science and engineering, trade and industry, public affairs, sports, etc. All persons, without distinction of race, occupation, position or sex are eligible for these awards. As a rule, the award is not conferred posthumously; except rarely, if a person has died recently (say within a year preceding the Republic Day on which it is proposed to announce the awards) and in exceptional cases.

(iii) Every year, nominations for Padma awards are invited from all State/ UT Governments, Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India, various institutes of excellence, etc. Recommendations received from them and others, including Ministers, MPs, private bodies and individuals, are scrutinized by the Padma Awards Committee comprising eminent official and non-official members. The Awards committee makes its recommendations to the Prime Minister and the President for final approval. The names approved by the President are announced on the eve of Republic Day every year. In 2007, the following personalities from North Eastern States have been conferred Padma Shri in recognition of their talent and contribution: -

(I.) In 2007, Padam Shri has been conferred on Prof. (Ms.) Temsula Ao, a well known poet, fiction writer and academic from the North-East. Born on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1945, Prof. Temsula graduated with distinction from Fazl Ali college, Mokokchung under Guwhati University, Assam. She obtained her M.A. English degree from the same University, obtained the Post Graduate Diploma in the Teaching of English from the Central Institute of English. Prof. Ao a Fulbright Fellow at the University of Minnesota, USA is currently the Dean, School of Humanities and Education, North Easter Hill University (NEHU). She has successfully guided several M.Phil and Ph. D scholars during her teaching career of NEHU.

(ii) Prof. Temsula served as the Director of North East Zone Cultural Center, Dimapur on deputation from NEHU. During her tenure at the center, she initiated and successfully completed the construction of a Heritage Museum at Shangyu village in Mon District of Nagaland where the world famous 400 hundred year-old single-piece wooden sculpture of unique features has been housed along with artifacts of historical significance from the Ahom era, which were gifted by an Ahom king to the forefathers of the hereditary Angh (King) of the Shangyu Territory of the Konyak Nagas.

(iii) Prof. Temsula is the author of several books among which, her book on Henry James is a standard reading for both Graduate and Post-Graduate students of NEHU. The other book called The Ao-Naga Oral Tradition is considered to be a landmark in the history of documenting the fast-vanishing oral lore of the tribes of North East India. Beside these, Prof. Ao has four books of poetry and a recent book of short stories called

'These Hills called Home' : Stories from a War Zone to her credit, one story from this book has been translated into German and published in an onthology and the book is in the process of being translated into Assamese. She has also contributed a number of articles to journals like Indian Literature of Sahitya Akademi, Indian Horizons of ICCR and the NEHU Journal as well as entries in the Assamese Encyclopedia Project: World Literature and Folk Literature Volume, 2002 and an entry on The Folklore of Nagaland has been published in the Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore and Folk Life, 2006, Westport, Connecticut and London. A number of her poems and short stories have also been published in different anthologies.

(iv) Prof. Temsula was awarded the Shakespeare Prize by Guwhati University in 1973 in connection with the decade-long celebration of the poet's 400<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary.

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**II.** Shri Thingbaijam Babu Singh of Uripok Nooremthong, Takhellambam Leikai, Imphal West, Manipur a renowned artist of Manipuri classical dance and Manipur Nat Sankirtan Pung was conferred Padama Shri in 2007.

(ii) Born on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1936, Shri Singh received his initial taining in Meitei Pung from Guru Liasharm Apabi Singh. He subsequently learnt Manipur Ras under the tutelage of Guru Maisnam Amubi Singh. Working over long years in close association with Guru Amubi Singh as a disciple and assistant, he gained mastery over different aspects of the Manipuri classical dance tradition. He is today considered a rightful heir to his guru's art.

(iii) Shri Singh's career as a teacher began in 1954 at the Manipur Dance College, Imphal as an assistant to his guru. Subsequently, after brief assignment at various institutions outside Manipur, he served as Director of Manipur Jagoi Marup, Imphal from 1970 to 1980. Since 1982, he has been Principal and Pradham Guru at Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy, Imphal.

(iv) Shri Singh is one of the most outstanding Pung artist of Manipur nata Sankirtana and a widely respected Ras guru. Over the years, he has trained a number of students, who are now performing with leading groups. Apart from teaching, preserving and extending his Guru Amubi Singh's work, he has contributed to the Manipuri repertories several compositions and dance-dramas of his own. He has also published three books on Meitei Pung and Ras.

(v) Shri Singh is the recipient of fellowship on Dance by Sangeet Natak Academy 1970-71 under Guru Amubi Singh, Akhil Manipur Kalakar Samelan Award 'Nriitya Charya' in 1984, 'Sangeet Natak Award' in 1991, Manipuri Sahitya Parishad Award 'Nriitya Ratna' in 1977, 'Guru Tarunkumar Sanman' in 2006 and 'N.E.T.V. People Choice Award' in 2006.

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**III** Smt. Naorem Ongbi Neelamani Devi a renowned Master Craftsman of Manipur was conferred Padam Shri in 2007.

ii. Born on 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1938, Smt. Neelamani Devi received initial training in Pottery from her mother. In 1960, she was trained at Shanthal Pargana, Bihar in Pottery under the sponsorship of the 'Khadi and Gram Udyog Mandal', Bihar. After successful completion of her training, she worked as a Demonstrator in the Directorate of Industries, Government of Manipur. She left Government job after few years and returned to her village to do something for villagers. She established one 'Pottery Training-cum-Production Center' in 1966 with a view to imparting improvised modern methods of pottery among the poor rural women of surrounding villages to enable them to produce more attractive designs to generate sustainable income from their products. She designed 'Mother-clay' and because of her tireless efforts, the poor women of the village were able to produce standardized and most modern products which won International recognition for Thongiao village.

iii. In recognition of her artistry in pottery, film Director Shri Mani Kaul produced a documentary film in 1986 titled 'Mittee Aur Manab'. Her potter products formed a scene in Mahabharata T. V. serial as well as first three French T.V. serial Mahabharata. Another documentary film on her pottery works was produced by Shri Aribam Shyam Sharma, renowned Manipuri Film Director. She has participated in the Festival of India in Sweden in the Ethnographical Museum of Sweden featuring Crafts Exhibition and Demonstration entitled 'Five Indian Artisans'; demonstrated the Terra-cotta Art of pottery in Hyogo Prefectural museum of Modern Art, Kobe, Japan titled 'The Art of the Adivasi'; participated in the demonstration of the Indian Adivasi Art Exhibitions at Tobacco and Salt Museum in Tokyo, Tougen Museum in Shirane, Yamanashi; Saitama Prefectural Modern Museum in Saitama And Mithila Museum in Tokamachi and Nigata.

iv. Smt. Neelamani Devi is the recipient of 'Tulasi Samman Award' from the Government of Madhya Pradesh in 1986, 'National Award for Master Craftsman' in 1986 and a 'Certificate of Honour'.

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**IV.** Shri Sonam Tshering Lepcha a folk singer, composer, dramatist, social activist and a living symbol of Lepcha culture of Sikkim was conferred Padam Shri in 2007.

ii. Born on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1928 in Darjeeling District, Shri Sonam enrolled in 10 Gorkha Rifles as a soldier in 1945 but could not continue as his elder brother died in action in the World War II. After World War II, the Govt. of West Bengal and its authorities at Darjeeling/Kalimpong organized volunteer forces against anti social elements of the nation. He voluntarily joined the organization and was appointed as Captain of Bong Busty Volunteer Group.

iii. Shri Sonam has served as a social worker, true survivor of the Lepcha community, who believed that a man without culture is like a man without backbone. He organized the young and enthusiastic groups and led them to Kolkata in 1949 on Independence Day and presented first Lepcha dance. He has brought forward the unknown and unseen Lepcha Folk dances and songs through Publicity Film. He is a member of Committee constituted by Govt. of Sikkim for conferment of award in the field of folk dance/ music and drama of ethnic communities of Sikkim

iv. The Chogyal of Sikkim (King) Late Sir Tashi Namgyal appointed him as an Organiser for Lepcha Songs and Dances in 1954. He became the first Lepcha Artiste in the Song & Drama Division, Darjeeling of Govt. of West Bengal in 1960 and first Lepcha song was broadcasted by the All India Radio, Kolkata. He circulated “ACHULEY”, monthly publication from 1967 to 1969 on to popularize the Lepcha literature. He has composed, compiled Lepcha songs, and has done research on Lepcha Musical instruments (Pantong Pilit, Tumbok, Satsang etc.) and presented dance dramas on Lepcha folklore, popular all over Sikkim.

v. Shri Sonam has written more than 400 songs and composed 102 folk dances and 10 dance dramas. He has also written several popular songs. His folk tales and short stories have been published in the Lepcha text books upto Secondary level. He is the voice of progress and unity among Lepcha Community.

vi. Shri Sonam is recipient of National Sangeet Natak Academy Award 1995 and highest honour “Nur Mayel Kohom” and “Nur Mayel” awarded by District Lepcha association in 1973 and 1974 in honour of his contribution to Lepcha community.

## **READERS COLUMN**

Ministry of Home Affairs would welcome inputs for the NE Newsletter from the Government agencies, institutions and individuals highlighting the area specific problems, special features including potential for tourism, environmental protection, developmental aspects or special efforts as could contribute to the socio-economic development of the North East. The views of intellectual/ professionals like minded people in North-Eastern State highlighting area specific potential/ problems and possible measures for resolution thereto are also invited.

It is requested that special articles/ columns should be sent in a hard copy format accompanied by floppy/ CD version. Special articles should be accompanied by an abstract of a maximum of 150-200 words. Papers should not have been simultaneously submitted for publication to another journal or news paper. Readers are encouraged to send comments and suggestions (300-400 words) on published articles to the Readers column. All letters should have the writer’s full name and postal address.

## **LETTERS TO EDITOR**

I have gone through NE Newsletter and found it very informative about the NE as well the various developments scheme taken by the Govt. of India. Let our NGO be recommended of the regular subscriber for this newsletter. We request you to kindly put our NGO also in your mailing list. We would appreciate if you send regularly the Newsletter.

(K Shantikumar Singh)  
General Secretary

Organization for Rural Improvemtn  
Nambol Bazar, Manipur – 795134

Most respectfully, I beg to state that kindly send me NE Newsletter copy free as regularly at the given address.

Moniruzzamam Miah  
Village & PO – Kharmuza  
District Goalpara – Assam - 783101

With due respect, I beg to state that I came to know that you are publishing a monthly magazine “NE Newsletter”. Therefore I request you to send the magazine.

Dr. R.R. Kar Purkayastha,  
4 Sonali Complex,  
Ambicapatty, Silchar,  
Assam- 788004