

Annual conference of NEEA begins



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Abhinav Verma 30 October 2015 Updated 30 Oct 7637 views

The 17th Annual [Conference](#) of the North Eastern Economic Association (NEEA) has kicked off at [Itanagar](#) at Rajiv [Gandhi](#) University, Doimukh in [Arunachal](#) Pradesh on Friday. Speaking at the event, Chief Minister [Nabam](#) Tuki said that the government spending of scarce resource needs to be a judicious mix, with primary focus on the social sector - health and education and Physical Infrastructure - [roads](#), rail and airways and emphasized on innovation in government spending on delivery of public services. Tuki informed that accordingly the [state](#) government has aligned government spending on the philosophy - Innovative Government Expenditure.

To prove his point he cited the popular and innovative Universal [Health Insurance Scheme](#).

“We felt that expenditure on the health sector needs to be enhanced but the benefits of such expenditure must be qualitative. The challenge was that quality couldn’t be ensured with the existing health infrastructure. Therefore to provide immediate and quality health care to each and every citizen of the State, we came up with the scheme - first of its kind in [India](#), with a cover of Rs 3 Lakhs per annum with [as](#) many [as](#) 60 hospitals across [India](#) empanelled,” Tuki said.

He informed that the government introduced a [Health Cess](#) by increasing Excise and VAT on alcohol and VAT on tobacco products to finance the benevolent [health security](#) scheme.

Further, low cost generic drug stores in all district hospitals in convergence with the Govt of [India](#)’s Jan Aushadhi Scheme have been started from this year besides procuring machinery and equipment for all the 5 General Hospitals and 12 district Hospitals in the [state](#) to strengthen the health delivery system.

Zeroing on the two themes adopted by NEEA for this year’s conference – Labour and [Health](#) – the Chief Minister highlighted the various initiatives of the [state](#) government like those taken by the [Arunachal Pradesh Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare](#) Board for [welfare](#) of [workers](#) and upgradation of hospitals and health centers besides establishing nursing schools.

“I am very happy that the NEEA has taken up these two very vital issues for deliberation and discussion in its two-day 17th annual conference. I assure you, the [state](#) government is also alive to these two issues,” he said.

The Chief Minister expressed gratitude to the Fourteenth Finance Commission for according importance to fiscal capacity, with indicators of cost, and revenue disabilities, and assigning a combined weight of 72.5 percent [as against](#) 57.5 percent assigned by the Thirteenth Finance Commission. Under the new devolution formula, share of [Arunachal Pradesh](#) in Central Taxes is much higher and the [state](#) government can put the resources to good use for economic development, he said.

Though a late starter, he expressed pride that [Arunachal Pradesh](#) is progressing at a very rapid pace and is going through a massive transition.

“In order to improve the economic sector and ensure employability of our youths, it is pertinent to boost Industry in the [state](#). The government is paying special attention to this sector and has proposed to establish pilot project on Food Processing Industries under public sector,” he said while informing that subsidies would be provided to unemployed engineers for setting up manufacturing units and small scale industries with support from the [state](#)-run APEX Bank.

Terming connectivity [as](#) a major factor for any economic activity, the Chief Minister highlighted various ongoing projects to improve it like the 1600 Km Trans [Arunachal](#) Highway, district headquarter [roads](#) and cement concrete township [roads](#).

He expressed hope that the advanced landing grounds at [Tezu](#), Mechukha, [Pasighat](#), [Ziro](#), and Vijaynagar would be completed by next year while works on the Greenfield airport at Hollongi would [start soon](#).

Citing sufficient power generation [as](#) another important factor for economic growth of the [state](#), the Chief Minister said the 110 MW Pare HEP and 600 MW Kameng HEP will be Commissioned by next year and the power needs of the [state](#) will be met from these.

He lauded the NEEA for organizing the conference here stating that at such times research discourses at the academic [level](#) to understand the emerging societal changes, its ramifications on other aspects such [as](#) political, economy, youth, etc becomes very important and necessary.

The inaugural function was also attended by RGU Vice Chancellor Pro Tamo Mibang, [Prof](#) Barbara Harris-White, Oxford University ([UK](#)), [Prof](#) Saundariya Borbora, IIT Guwahati and president NEEA, Dr Indraneel Bhowmik, [Tripura](#) University and Secretary NEEA, former Vice Chancellor of RGU [Prof](#) Atul Sharma and delegates from various states of the region.

Abhinav Verma

Itanagar!

BY ABHINAV VERMA

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