

Centre steps into uplift NE education, sports culture



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New Delhi: The Centre finalised a set of strategies for the North East to uplift a few sectors that have been lingering in the backstage of progress.

In its 8th Sectoral Summit of the North Eastern Council which concluded on Tuesday, the Government assured the region a series of steps to promote a few areas including education, sports and Art and culture.

Chaired by Minister for Panchayati Raj, Youth Affairs & Sports and DoNER Mani Shankar Aiyar, the meeting stressed distance training programme of teachers by IGNOU, NCERT under the assistance of NEC.

The meeting decided that community polytechnics should be involved for vocational training along with conventional system. Language training centres should be established to overcome problems of training students in both the Hindi and English languages. Under the Mid-Day Meal it was observed that the wages for cooks and helpers are not adequate.

A synergy may be established with the NREG Scheme for ensuring minimum wages for the cooks and helpers at least for 100 days. It was

noticed that for delivery of Mid-Day Meal (MDM) teachers are involuntarily being involved instead Village Panchayats, local self governing units/communities should be responsible for the effective delivery of MDM. Parents may also be involved for this purpose, the meeting decided.

Those who attended the meeting decided that carriage costs for hill areas of NER needs to be looked with 'communitization of schools' etc. It was decided that the location of primary schools should not be more than 1 km. An amount of Rs. 5 crore has been released for each Engineering Faculty and Rs. 2 crore for Management Faculty in the Region. Management Faculty should be operationalised and modern course also introduced.

The meeting decided that the Catch Them Young policy should be adopted for exploiting the immense potential in sports and for promoting the sport activities in the country. The ministry of sports and youth affairs will take up the matter with Taekwondo Federation for cancellation of National Taekwondo championship in Nagaland due to law and order problems, it was decided saying Sports Authority of India will take up repairs of Dimapur Sports complex building and will also take up construction of a Hostel. It was observed that due to inadequate funding many of the projects are lying unfinished.

Sufficient funding should be provided for early completion of the projects. The meeting asked NEC to release substantial funds in three installments for completion of the projects sanctioned by it. Projects retained under NLCPR schemes will be followed up for expeditious release.

Since the state Governments in the region are not able to develop sports infrastructure due to financial constraints.

The Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs has been asked to examine providing support for popular games like Archery and other indigenous games in NE States and providing support for setting up Centre of Excellence for training of Coaches and developing Yoga Centres.

Proposal for sports Complex in William Nagar and Tura, Maghalaya will also be examined by Sports Authority of India. Adventure Sports will be included as an important component of Sports Policy as it has tremendous potential in NER, says official sources.

Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs have drafted a Sports Policy with the theme of Sports for all. The Policy has been circulated to all States and also put up on inter-net for comments and endorsement by the State. All the States appreciated, supported and endorsed the Draft Sports Policy subject to minor amendments, if any.

The Summit appealed that Scheme of Setting up of Multipurpose Cultural Complex should be revived. It was decided that NEC should work out what could be done for intellectual Property Rights of Crafts, Handicrafts of NE as has been done in China. NEC would have to act as single window for development of floriculture and adventure sports and exports of flowers and handicraft items.

Manipur Governor S.S.Sidhu Assam Governor Lt.Gen (Retd) Ajay Singh Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, B.L.Joshi, Governor of Meghalaya, Lt.Gen D.N.Sahaya, Governor of Tripura), Nagaland Chief Minister Sushma Singh, DoNER secretary Falguni Rajkumar, NEC secretary and senior State Government officials from the region were among others who attended the meeting.

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