

Government of Tripura
Directorate of Information and Cultural Affairs

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Press Note

Fifth Meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog in Delhi

Tripura Chief Minister Sri Biplab Kumar Deb stresses on inland water transport, development of tourism, aviation sector and expedition of HIRA

New Delhi: Chief Minister of Tripura Sri Biplab Kumar Deb stated that Tripura is among the best five performing States in the country in respect of e-PDS and supply chain management. Today, addressing the fifth Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog chaired by the Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi in New Delhi.

Drawing attention to the state's aviation sector the Chief Minister said, the State would be benefitted if the existing aviation guidelines are amended to facilitate the private operators to increase the frequency of flights in the State of Tripura. There is an urgent need to operate direct evening flights from Delhi to Agartala as well as from Agartala to Delhi facilitating the technocrats including doctors and health experts, Central Government officials, private investors and so on to save their valuable time.

Addressing the fifth Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog the Chief Minister hoped that Inland Water Transport in Tripura project could make Tripura a gateway to North East. So, this project may be expedited and grounded at the earliest by declaration of river Gomati as Indo-Bangladesh protocol route etc. South Tripura district may play a significant role in this context. In order to boost tourism in the State, Ministry of Tourism may help the State to construct a ropeway connecting Matabari (Place of Tripurasundari Temple) and Chhabimura, famous for its panels of rock carving on steep mountain wall on the bank of river Gomati, the Chief Minister stated.

The Chief Minister also spoke in favour of having more CSR fund in the North-East, adding that the public sector companies in India may be permitted to spend 10 % of their CSR funds in the NE States. This will pave way for early implementation of 'HIRA', the grand initiative of Hon'ble Prime Minister, which will boost not only tourism sector but also many other sectors in the State.

In the context of state finance the Chief Minister said, the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas may examine the issue of waiving of VAT by setting up a High level committee consisting of members from State Government, Petroleum Ministry and OTPC to suggest course of action as the Palatana power project is completed and waiver of VAT is causing substantial loss to the State Government.

State Government has introduced the NCERT Syllabus from Class VI to XII w.e.f. 2019-20. Further, also steps are on to merge 2-3 schools into one, wherever the number of students is minimum, as this initiative could reduce the establishment cost.

The Chief Minister also said, unlike other parts of the country, Tripura faces more of floods rather than drought. In Tripura we had received 44% more rainfall than normal precipitation in 2017. Similarly in 2018, we have received excess rain fall and there were severe floods. The State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) was not adequate to meet the immediate response due to lack of fund. In such a situation, regular and continuous support is needed from the Government of India for handling floods as it is a recurrent phenomenon in the State every year. Therefore, the annual allocation of SDRF to Tripura may be enhanced, as it is limited to Rs. 38 crore including state share presently.

The Chief Minister also informed, there are 5-6 major perennial rivers in the state namely, Manu, Gomati, Deo, Dhalai, Khowai and Howrah. These rivers historically in the last 30 years have been causing floods very regularly and almost every year. The State Government has been spending or spent huge funds from SDRF. Instead of handling the problem every year, he requested for providing assistance to State Government to construct permanent cemented embankment in phased and gradual manner. To accomplish this, Government of India /NITI Aayog may depute a High Level team to study the above problem and recommend a special package for 5-7 years period.

As per Half-Yearly Baseline Ranking as on 31st October, 2018, Dhalai district ranked 74th amongst the 117 identified Aspirational Districts. However, in agriculture and water resources sector, the district has been ranked 3rd best amongst all districts and flagged as Most Improved District, the Chief Minister Sri Biplab Kumar Deb informed the august platform. He also informed, Dhalai District has been bestowed with National Awards for its best performance in MGNREGA, Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (GSA) and Poshan Abhiyaan Schemes during last 3 years.

Lastly the Chief Minister said, on the similar lines of Government of India, State Government has taken lead and given further fillip to the backward district by declaring 12 Tribal / ADC blocks (4 in Dhalai district, 1 in South Tripura district, 3 in Gomati district, 2 in North Tripura district and 2 in Khowai district etc.) as distressed blocks. Accordingly State Government has provided free ration @ 20 kg per month per NFSA families numbering 62,000 for 2 months.
