

MEGHALAYA VISION DOCUMENT (2020-21 to 2024-25)

1. INTRODUCTION

Meghalaya has an average per capita GSDP of Rs. 81,016 (2016-17 data) and is one of the poorest states in the country and the north eastern region. Only five states- Assam, Bihar, Manipur, Jharkand and Uttar Pradesh- have lower per capita GSDP than Meghalaya. In terms of human development, the State ranked 26th (among 29 Indian States) on Human Development Index (HDI) for the year 2011. It ranks 7th amongst the eight North Eastern States.

The State Government has, over the last few years, been making concerted efforts at improving the quality of life of its citizens. In the last 8 years, poverty in the state has declined by 4.3 %. In 2004-05, 16.1 % of the State's population lived below the poverty line. This figure declined to 11.9 % in 2011-12.

The State has many unique strengths and opportunities that have to be leveraged upon to promote sustainable development. A salubrious climate conducive to agri-horticulture sectors and eco-tourism, untapped hydroelectric potential, human resources, forest resources, mineral resources and the social capital in the village communities are some of the key ones. Several high-value agriculture and horticulture crops viz., Strawberry, Ginger, Lakadong turmeric (with high curcumin content), Honey, Black Pepper and various exotic flowers (Anthurium, Carnation, different types of Orchids etc), as also Potato, Jackfruit, Pine Apple and Areca Nut are produced in large quantities. Further, most of State's agriculture and horticulture produce is naturally organic, with farmers using traditional methods of cultivation.

The State's literacy rate at 75.5% in 2011 is higher than the national average and the English speaking skills of the population are superior to that of most large Indian States. Further, 76.5 % of the State's area is under forest cover, which provides global public goods and can be tapped for promoting high value eco-tourism and forestry related livelihoods and enterprises. At the grassroots, there is high levels of social capital and community spirit amongst the rural communities, which can be leveraged for fostering sustainable development.

Despite the many strengths and opportunities, the State also faces several critical obstacles in its development efforts like inadequate infrastructure, insufficient access to markets and an underdeveloped private sector. For instance, the road density of the State is only 47.8 Km/ 100 sq. km against the national average of 170. Even amongst

the NE states, Meghalaya's road density is on the lower side of the spectrum. Several of the challenges faced by the State stem from a severe geographical disadvantage. The State is landlocked, far away from well-developed markets, has hilly terrain with very severe slopes on the Southern side and experiences heavy torrential rainfall.

Given this, the State government is crafting a development strategy that builds on our strengths and takes the challenges head on. The prime focus is to foster human development, by prioritizing education and health sectors, to improve physical, social and digital infrastructure, and to build robust rural livelihoods and enterprises in the agri-horticulture, food-processing and tourism sectors. Achievement of the development goals will demand far greater investments than what the State has been able to mobilize (both from its own sources and the Government of India) in the past.

2. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The development strategy of the State is to foster human development, by prioritizing education and health sectors, to improve physical, social and digital infrastructure, and to build robust rural livelihoods and enterprises in the agri-horticulture, food- processing and tourism sectors. Achievement of the development goals will demand greater investments and effective utilization of available funds.

The goal behind the implementation of an effective development strategy is to make Meghalaya a middle income State in the next ten years. The broad focus sectors are as follows :

A. Human Development

The main challenge is inadequate basic infrastructure at all levels. We need additional classrooms in about 5500 primary schools in the State. Basic amenities like toilets in secondary schools are lacking. The dropout rates in secondary and higher secondary are high. Though the dropout rates in primary level is under 5%, in the secondary level it is almost 48%. The other challenge is the inadequate fund release by the Centre.

Our strategy is to focus on secondary education. Recently Government of India under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs sanctioned 11 Eklavya Residential schools. Further, the Centre is planning to sanction additional 25 such schools, one in each block. The State also intends to set up its own residential schools, thus, bringing the total to about 50 ERS in the whole State. We want to complete the ones we already started. This will give a major thrust to Secondary education. In secondary education, we are making major

investments through the Asian Development Bank (ABD) funded project, “Supporting Human Capital Development in Meghalaya”. Improving teaching and learning at the secondary and higher secondary level is one of key components of the project. Under this, the sub-components are building basic infrastructure, teacher training and promoting IT-enabled training. Significant progress has been made on each of these components during the year 2018-19. Around 3,228 teachers have been trained, 33 secondary schools and 2 ITIs have been constructed and ICT enabled classrooms have been set up in 36 schools. Work is in progress on the construction of 4 DIETs and 2 Teacher Training Centres. The next financial year is the last year for the project and we are committed to finishing all targeted works. The Government has put in place the Teacher Information Management System, a centralized data base for all teachers. We also have the State Education Policy which aims to focus on quality education, and not just on access. We are also focusing on the Bottom 30 approach like in Health Education. The strategy is to focus on the improvement and development of the bottom 30 Institutions in the State.

In the Health Sector, our MMR stands at 197 against the national average of 130. Our IMR is only 39. The two main reasons are poor institutional delivery which stands at 52 % compared to 80% National average. Secondly, lack of basic health infrastructure. Mothers have to be encouraged and health systems have to be improved. We intend to put in place a mother-child tracking system. There is a shortage of doctors and medical specialists. The State has 19 Referral Units, but only 6 are as per Government of India’s norm. Inadequate connectivity to health facilities is also a major challenge, especially in rural areas.

The Government has recently approved the Free Drugs Policy, under which 76 essential drugs shall be provided free of cost to patients in Government health facilities. Our strategy is to increase the allocation for medicines and strengthen the procurement and distribution system in the State. The Institutional Deliveries would also be scaled up in the years to come. We presently have 22 health facilities on PPP mode, and will expand the PPP model to ensure competition and efficiency.

The Megha Health Insurance Scheme Phase IV, along with Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, was launched in December 2018. Under these programmes, health insurance coverage of 5 lakh per family is provided to all eligible households. Originally only 3.47 lakh households were eligible for coverage as per norms fixed by the Government of India. We have decided to extend the eligibility to all families in Meghalaya, except Government employees, thus expanding the coverage to over 7 lakh households.

B. Infrastructure

Road transport is the backbone of development. The total road length is 10,800 kms and road density is only 45.6 km/ 100 sq. km, much lower than national average of 170 and one of the lowest amongst the north eastern states. Due to our hostile terrain and extreme climatic condition, maintenance of roads is very high. There is a 27% gap in the maintenance cost of our roads. The annual maintenance cost of SPT bridges is `14 crore, and there is inadequate budget provision.

Our strategy is to leverage on central resources as much as we can. In 2018-19 there was a fivefold increase in PMGSY sanctions. Further, we are also mobilizing resources from EAP and we are prioritizing roads with high growth potential such as those which connect to tourist spots and agri-horti clusters. We have also begun the planning process for the newly sanctioned Meghalaya Integrated Transport Sector Project, an externally aided project funded by the World Bank. The project will take a holistic view of the entire transport sector in the State and integrate all the different modes of transport like roads, railways, waterways, urban transport, and air transport. An investment of ` 1,050 crore will be made over a six-year period.

About 40% of the rural habitation are fully ensured with water supply and the State has become ODF in October 2018. However, our main challenge is also to provide enhanced piped drinking water supply to all Rural Households. In urban water supply scheme, at a critical juncture funds became unavailable from the Centre and these schemes have been delayed and led to cost overrun. There is inadequate Operations and Maintenance funds in NRWDP. Lastly, the issue of sustainability of sources is a major challenge in the State.

To overcome these challenges, the Government is tapping additional resources from various Ministry such as DoNER and Tribal Affairs and we are also focusing on solid waste management.

The State has an installed power capacity of 354 MW and the main challenge in the Power sector is the high AT & C losses around 33% in 2017-18. The losses of DISCOM and the liquidity crisis are a matter of concern including the huge pending liabilities post Corporatization. The total annual loss from all the Utilities is around ₹500 crore

The strategy is to put in place a host of measures like IT enablement, spot billing, input based distribution franchise, smart metering system and also setting up of village electricity committees to combat AT & C losses. These are long term measures and will take time to fructify. Another strategy is the issuance of bonds for better debt management and to improve the liquidity crisis.

Meghalaya is the most exotic and accessible destination in the country today with the excellent connectivity to Guwahati airport and Guwahati with the rest of the country. This sector is identified as a key engine of growth. However, within the State, there is inadequate infrastructure and poor connectivity to various destination spots.

The strategy is to contemplate on new models like Airbnb, develop eco tourism clusters, niche areas- adventure and cave tourism and circuit development is also happening in accordance with the Government of India's scheme.

Massive infrastructure is also needed in connection with the hosting of the National Games in 2022. The airport feasible only for small aircrafts needs to be upgraded and more helipads are required, besides the enormous number of buildings and stadiums. Further, Shillong was selected as one of the cities for development under Smart Cities Mission. Under this project the sharing pattern is 50:50 between the State and the Centre for establishing various infrastructure. The Government has set up a Special Purpose Vehicle, the Shillong Smart City Ltd, to implement the Scheme. Project Management Consultant is being engaged to prepare DPR for various projects under the mission.

C. Primary Sector

The focus of the Government is to promote the growth of agriculture sector and its allied activities on a Mission mode. Though huge investment is required for these Mission, the returns are promising and the same would be ploughed back into the economy, thereby generating a multiplier effect, which, in turn would increase the State's Domestic Product. The main Missions initiated include Mushroom Mission, Lakadong Mission, Milk Mission, Aquaculture Mission, Jackfruit Mission. With immense bio and eco diversity, the Government has also initiated the Megh-Aroma Mission to promote the growth of medicinal and aromatic plants in the State. Without detailing all the Missions, highlighted below is just a snap shot for Mission Lakadong and Mushroom:

With 40% of our horticulture produce wasted, it was necessary to provide value addition to such produce. This will help in realizing higher price value for the product. The production capacity of Ginger is 82000 mt. Currently the State is marketing just the rhizome. However, with focus on value addition, 9 other additional products can be obtained. This simple addition can increase the farmer's income by 42% /Kg. With such focus, the Government found it necessary to set up the Directorate of Food Processing.

The Strategy of the Government is also to develop end to end value chain for certain identified products like black pepper, scented rice, honey banana, oranges (khasi mandarin) and ginger.

D. Entrepreneurship

The Government has established the Enterprise Facilitation centers (EFCs) in all the blocks where some form of enterprise facilitation is being provided to the people. The Government is building on the work of the last 5 years done through the Enterprise Facilitation centers (EFCs). This needs to be taken to another. The Government also proposes to set up incubators in the urban areas of Shillong and Tura where there is huge potential in the sectors of Music, Sports, Art, Digital innovation, F and B, and also Food Processing.

The Start-ups and entrepreneurs in these incubators will be nurtured and handheld. The Government is planning to set up growth hubs. The idea is to map the cluster and sub clusters in a block and identify a few competitive products and build the hub around the products. The idea is not only to have a sectoral incubator but also rural technology park so that we can demonstrate the technologies, a mini industrial estate and an EFC, all in one place. Since a prototype has been developed, it is time for the Government to scale it up. The policy on start-ups was recently discussed in cabinet and the same will be implemented soon.

E. Cross Cutting theme – Environment & Governance

The cross cutting elements are environment and governance. On environment protection, the Government has built conservation and sustainability into all the developmental activities, whether in the implementation of EAPs or regular state programmes. Even in mining, through the MMMCR, everything has been streamlined so that there is no indiscriminate mining and that the same is carried on a sustainable basis. Massive awareness campaigns for citizen engagement and behavior change is being carried out and will continue.

On governance reforms, the Government has strengthened the village level governance through institutionalization of the village employment councils which can deliver development and large projects. On transparency, there is the Social Audit Act, and Meghalaya is the first state in the country to pass a social audit legislation to control irregularities. Further, the successful data-driven governance pilot project in South West Garo Hills will be extended to other districts also.

The above strategy and vision will require a significant amount of funds for its implementation.

3. KEY SECTORS WHERE SUPPORT IS NEEDED

It has always been the priority of the Government to create and upgrade necessary economic and social infrastructure and also to improve the delivery system to ensure overall economic development. Despite limited resources, the State is committed to achieve this objective through intervention in critical sectors such as road, water, sanitation, healthcare, education, etc. However, much is required in terms of assistance because of the growing need to bring the people closer to the administration. Further, these interventions are also expected to improve revenue generation potential of the State and also provide the necessary logistics required to facilitate the hosting and smooth conduct of the 39th National Games 2022 scheduled to be held in the State.

3.1 ROADS AND BRIDGES

The average cost of road construction in Meghalaya is around 47% higher compared to eastern states due to higher carriage charges of the materials due to adverse terrain condition. The development of road network in the State (especially in the urban areas) is required to ease traffic congestion and to connect sports infrastructure meant for 39th National Games.

Cost disabilities and disadvantages in revenue generating capacity of the state may be factored in while lending support through sufficient grant. Support amounting to **₹4956.42 crore** over the five year period would be required for the proposed road construction for the National Games 2022 in Tura, Khasi and Jaintia Hills, conversion of 3750 Rm single lane Semi Permanent Timber bridges into double lane Permanent RCC bridges at ₹0.20 Cr per Rm, maintenance of Roads and Bridges, improvement and upgradation of existing roads, improvement and upgradation of Roads to Tourist Spots.

3.2 HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

The State plans to strengthen the existing health care facilities by providing more in-patient beds and good health care delivery system for better medi-care services for a wider section of people. Existing physical infrastructure of the CHCs, PHCs and Sub-Centres are proposed to be strengthened, renovated and upgraded to meet the Indian Public Health Standard's requirements.

A support amounting to **₹237.5 crore** for the Health Sector would be required for upgradation of existing infrastructure in CHCs, PHCs and sub-centres, purchase of

50 nos of Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance and purchase of diagnostic equipments

3.3 WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

With the increase in population, the old gravity water supply scheme that was commissioned in 1978 for 15 years period has outlived its usability. The State, therefore, proposes to develop a new 'Urban Nongpoh Water Supply Scheme' that will be designed for 30 years and benefit 20 main localities and 38 sub-localities.

The Government also proposes to implement the scheme 'Greater Baghmara Water Supply Scheme' to provide safe and adequate water supply and solve water problem in 16 villages with a provision for drawing of raw water from river Rongdong. An amount of **₹195.51 crore** would be required to implement these.

An amount of **₹919.30 crore** would be required separately under Rural Sanitation (State Swachh Bharat Mission - Gramin) for the upgradation of solid and liquid wastes management, construction of public toilets and toilet retrofitting and capacity building programme for Human Resources Management.

3.4 POWER

In order to improve the power scenario of the state, certain proposals have been formulated and this would require a support of **₹2476.86 crore**, details of which have been highlighted as under.

There is a growing need to reduce Aggregate Technical and Commercial losses in Restructured Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (R-APDRP) towns through a software for electricity billing. Meter replacement with prepaid meters under ADB funding will be needed. Meter testing laboratories need to be modernized.

Furthermore, network strengthening in major towns for the period 2018-19 to 2020-21 has been deemed necessary. Feeder and DT metering will have to be done under Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY - II), prepaid metering through Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS). Introduction of prepaid meters through Smart Metering Scheme of the GoM will also be required.

3.5 EDUCATION

The state has recently formulated an ambitious and robust Education Policy aimed to make Shillong a 'Knowledge city' and the state an 'Education hub'. Enhancement of

investment in the education sector is needed to reduce drop-out rate and increase the Net Enrolment Ratio.

Universalisation of elementary education has created a demand for Secondary education. The state has also made a sizeable progress in the field of Primary and Upper Primary Education. There has been a shortfall of ₹285.51 crore with the GoI reducing the amount released in 2018-19.

The Directorate of School Education and Literacy placed a proposal of **₹957.46 crore** for basic infrastructure, furniture and shortfall on Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) fund together with the upgradation of the infrastructure for 15 elementary, secondary and higher secondary school buildings.

3.6 JUDICIARY

Consistent with the nationally and constitutionally accepted premise of a clear separation between the Judiciary and the Executive, and the directives of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the State is still in an ongoing process towards complete separation between these two pillars of administration.

The Government is committed to, and will effect the separation of the Judiciary from the Executives in the remaining four districts viz, East Jaintia Hills, South West Khasi Hills, North Garo Hills and South Garo Hills.

Consideration and earmarking necessary funds of **₹940 crore** is sought as support for the construction of Court buildings, residential units for Judges and Judicial Officers and upgradation of fencing and approach roads in District Courts as well as Sub Division Courts. This would be besides the implementation of an Alternate Dispute Resolution mechanism in 9 districts, upgradation of Judicial Academy at Shillong and establishment of a National Law University at Shillong.

3.7 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND VETERINARY

Out of the total meat requirement of 14,247 tonnes in the State during 2016-17, the production is about 9,434 tonnes which is 62.22% of the requirement. The shortage is purchased from outside the State.

The per capita availability of milk in the State is only 83 gm per person per day against the National average of 320 gm per person per day, and likewise the per capita availability of eggs is 36 per person per year against 43 which is the Indian Council of Medical Research recommendation.

An amount of **₹314 crore** is urged upon to strengthen the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sector by construction and renovation of veterinary hospitals and dispensaries as well as upgradation and improvement of livestock farms across the state.

3.8 SPORTS AND YOUTH AFFAIRS

The State of Meghalaya will be hosting the 39th National Games in 2022 as it celebrates the Golden Jubilee of its Statehood on that year. The National Games is one of the biggest multi-sports events of the country that sees the participation of over 10,000 athletes from across India.

To host a sporting event of this magnitude, a number of critical new infrastructures is required to be constructed in the Host City as well as the Sub City. The State Government has proposed for the conduct of all the 36 sporting disciplines and 2 (two) additional sporting disciplines.

The Government proposes an estimated amount of **₹2199.63 crore** to host and execute the 39th National Games which will ultimately boost the morale of budding sportsmen of the State and increase the Tourism revenue collection for consideration.

3.9 PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

The old Meghalaya Legislative Assembly was destroyed by fire in 2001. The State has, since then, no proper building to house the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly and has only recently located a suitable place at Mawdiangdiang, New Shillong to build the new Meghalaya Legislative Assembly.

The DPR has been prepared at an estimated cost of ₹141.15 crore. However, given the fact that the State is facing fund constraint, especially after the NGT ban on coal mining in the State from 2014-15, the State urges a one-time special assistance of **₹100 crore** to enable the completion of the New Assembly Building at the earliest.

3.10 TRANSPORT

In order to improve the transport sector of the state and keeping an eye on the 39th National Games in 2022, proposals have been made, firstly with a focus on the aviation sector. The Government also proposes to upgrade 33 checking stations to check revenue leakage besides procuring interceptor vehicles to strengthen the Enforcement Wing of the Department.

Office buildings are to be created in the newly created districts and the overall Administrative set-up is in a need for upgradation and strengthening. In such, an amount of **₹50.08 crore** is sought a support.

3.11 LAW AND ORDER

The current atmosphere of peace in the State has been achieved with a lot of effort which the State cannot afford to fritter away as it enters a phase of cautious optimism with a remarkable drop in militant activities.

Year on year (Y-O-Y), the budget requirement of Meghalaya Police Department is increasing by approximately 44%. Additional financial burden has been created due to increase in salaries and allowances on the implementation of the 5th Pay Commission.

The State Government requests a consideration of **₹1048.33 crore** for procurement of Arms and Ammunition in 2018-19, housing of Police Personnel and upgradation of Special Force – 10. The grants will also be utilized for the creation of 18 new Police Stations and Sub-Divisions as well as for the Administrative and residential accommodation of 2 IRBNs.

3.12 TOURISM

The Government is promoting tourism in line with the Tourism Policy taking into consideration the development of Adventure Tourism, Wildlife and Eco-Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) Tourism and also development of homestays and community based tourism.

Proposals amounting to **₹442.13 crore** has been submitted for consideration in order to promote and boost Tourism in the state. The proposals include development of caving infrastructure, training and capacity building as well as implementation of Rural Tourism and Sustainable Development Projects. The money sought as support will be used for the development of homestays and resorts besides improving road connectivity to tourist destinations.

3.13 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

The Government endeavours to leverage Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to make e-Governance services easily accessible to the common man and to ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs.

In order to strengthen and upgrade the IT sector in the State, a grant of **₹104.50 crore** is sought primarily to meet the ICT infrastructure requirement and for the operations and maintenance of the Technology Park at New Shillong Township.

3.14 COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES

The Government proposes to establish the Enterprise Development Incubation Centre (EDIC) with the objective to provide the required setup for new enterprises to start functioning at the earliest in a supporting environment and reach the required levels of confidence. As part of the Meghalaya Startup Policy 2019, due consideration is being given for the setting up of at least 1 innovation park in the IT park located at Mawdiangdiang.

The Government seeks a grant of **₹325 crore** for the setting up of this Enterprise Development Incubation Centre together with an Innovation Park and Trade Centre.

4. SUPPORT NEEDED FROM M/ DoNER

The Ministry of DoNER (M/ DoNER) was created to ensure acceleration of the pace of socio-economic development of the region so that the North Eastern States may enjoy growth parity with the rest of the country. The primary role of the Ministry is planning, execution and monitoring of the developmental schemes in the region.

In this context, the financial assistance received from the Ministry of DoNER under Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR), North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS), North East Road Sector Development Scheme (NERSDS) and the North Eastern Council (NEC) have enabled the State Government to take up implementation of crucial schemes and projects which have greatly benefited the State as a whole. However, the recent decision of the Government of India to discontinue with NLCPR and revision of guidelines of NEC schemes has not been received well by the State Government and the people at large in the region.

Some of the suggestions which the State Government proposes for incorporation of the Action Plan of the Ministry of DoNER for the next five years are as indicated below :-

- The Ministry of DoNER is urged to continue with the implementation of the NLCPR scheme as this scheme is broad based and provides the State Government with funds to take up a variety of important projects across a number of sectors.

- The NESIDS which has replaced NLCPR since 2017-18 does not allow the State Government with the space to take up schemes as earlier with NLCPR. Being a hilly state, surface transport is the most important means of connectivity in all the NE States. Further, with a road density of 48 km per 100 sq km, Meghalaya has one of the lowest road network in the country. The State Government seeks to revise the guidelines of NESIDS to ensure that the restriction of implementation of road connectivity schemes to places of tourist interest is done away with.
- The cost of the projects to be considered under NESIDS should not be less than ₹20 crore. Being a small State, it is proposed that projects with ₹10 crore and above may be considered for funding under NESIDS.
- The revised NEC guidelines allow the State Government to propose projects which fall only under the selective and focused sectors. The selective and focused areas concentrate on specific sectors like bamboo, piggery, regional tourism, higher education, tertiary healthcare, telemedicine and science & technology. Other crucial areas such as human resource development and employment, power, transport, communication and sports sectors are affected. It may also be indicated that the guidelines have also excluded primary & secondary education, healthcare (other than tertiary healthcare) and tourism (other than regional tourism), etc. The State Government would request the Central Government to consider retaining the previous NEC Guidelines to enable the States of the NE region to take up key infrastructure projects as the States do not have the resources to take up these projects on their own.
- In view of the revision of the NEC guidelines, a decision was taken by the NEC to put on hold 19 important projects which had been sanctioned from 2017-18 onwards. This decision of the NEC has disheartened the State Government Departments as considerable time, efforts and money had been spent in the preparation of the DPRs for these projects. The decision of the NEC to put these 19 schemes in cold storage has put forward an impression, to the people at large, that the NEC has gone back on its own commitment. The State Government would, therefore, urge upon the Ministry of DoNER and the NEC to review their recent decisions / directions and to continue with the implementation of the schemes.
- In view of the upcoming National Games 2022 to be hosted by the State, the State Government would have to put in place major sports infrastructure for the event. The fund requirement for the creation of the stadia, games village, etc is estimated to be about ₹ 1500.00 crores. The State Government has put forward a request to the

Government of India for a special grant for this purpose which may be routed through the Ministry of DoNER and the NEC.

- The Government of India is requested to consider providing 100 percent grant for all schemes where financial assistance is being provided by the Ministry of DoNER including the North Eastern Council as this would be a major relief for the resource inelastic states of the NE Region.