

India's (Look) Act East Policy And The North Eastern States: The Nagaland Experience

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Abstract

After The Cold War, An Aura Of Peace And New Hope For Opportunities Of National Interests Was Present. The Government Of P V Narasimha Rao Announced A Diplomatic Initiative, Titled "Look East", To Build On Stagnant Relations With The Association Of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) And Its Member-Countries. In The Early 1990s, When The Look East Policy Was First Enunciated The Trade With ASEAN Countries Estimated A Growth From A Mere \$2.5 Billion In 1993 To \$78 Billion US Dollar During 2021. This Policy Was Rebranded As "Act East Policy" Under The BJP Government Of Narendra Modi 2014 And Reiterated India's Northeast As Focal To The Act East Policy During 2016. The North East Is The Gateway To South East Asia And Need To Take The Advantage Of This Policy. North-East Region Is Characterized By Violence, Political Instability, Economic Underdevelopment And Cultural Marginalization; That Its Inhabitants Feel Neglected And Alienated. Nagaland Due To Continuity Of Such Issues; Even After Statehood, Much Of The Resources Of The State Had Not Been Spent On Development. Unemployment And Less Revenue Due To Zero Industry, Long Bending Peace Settlement And Constitutional Special Provision For The Nagas May Be The Factors That Stand On The Way Of Development.

Keywords: *India's Look East Policy, ASEAN, Act East, North East, Connectivity, Commerce, Culture, Capacity -Building, Nagaland, Insurgency, Continuous Conflict, Peace Settlement.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

It was in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of the cold war, the emergence of the US as the sole super power, an aura of peace and expectations of a future secure from the ravages of war embracing the political horizon, nations were full of new hopes. India, like the rest of the world, would seek new opportunities and look towards new frontiers to serve its national interests. It meant thinking out of the box and seeking fresh paradigms to build a matrix of external relations in tune with the brave new world that seemed to be shaping up all around. This led to the initiation of economic reforms in India that the government of P V Narasimha Rao announced a diplomatic initiative, titled "Look East", to build on stagnant relations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its member-countries. In the early 1990s, when the Look East Policy was first enunciated the justification given was that India's foreign policy needed to move from "ideology" to "national self-interest", and as part of an effort to re-engage with Southeast Asia. The main driver of India's Look East policy, both for this country and its partners, remain trade and economic issues.' (Lakhan Mehrotra, 2012)

Trade with ASEAN countries was a mere \$2.5 billion in 1993 when this policy was initiated and in 2010-11, it is estimated to cross \$45 billion and 78 billion US Dollar during 2021. This policy appears to have been a fair success both in terms of its economic returns and in terms of strategic achievements. The strength of these relations is evident from two sources - the unease of the Chinese authorities with India's Look East diplomacy, which they claim is a euphemism for a "contain China policy", and the attempt by Whitehouse to leverage it for US' own strategic interests. This has explained how the about-turn on democracy in Burma. About two decades later, most commentators view the success of this Look East policy as a vindication of this move from idealism to self-interest. While India's efforts to build relations with a wider range of countries are surely praiseworthy, it is necessary to call the bluff of such rationalisations. (Editorial, 2010)

II. THE PHASES OF LOOK EAST POLICY

India's 'Act East' policy is a diplomatic initiative to promote economic, strategic and cultural relations with the vast Asia-Pacific region at different levels. The country's eastward drive since 1992 has underscored the importance of this region in its contemporary international relations. 'Act East' and its early avatar, 'Look East' are not different; rather, they are two sides of the same coin, representing two different, but continuing phases in the evolution of India's policy towards the Asia-Pacific region. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014, launched the Act East policy, India's economy was relatively robust and its global profile was higher than it was in the decades prior. He gave a new thrust to intensify economic, strategic and diplomatic relations with countries that share common concerns with India on China's growing economic and military strength¹

The "Look East" policy, which was launched as an effort to re-engage with Southeast Asia, has been characterized by Indian scholars and policymakers as evolving through various "phases", with an accelerated pace and process of interaction in moving from one phase to the next. (Editorial, 2010) On the question of, 'has there been any real and substantive change in India's engagement with Southeast'? One could argue that the various phases of the Look East policy are rooted in domestic political rhetoric rather than foreign policy shifts as new governments have sought to differentiate their policymaking approach from previous administration. Notably, the first phase of Look East Policy corresponds with the Congress (Indian National Congress) government of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao that came to power in 1991. While the second phase was unveiled by the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) government in the early 2000s after it assumed power in 1998-99 and continued under the Congress government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2004.' (Bajpayee, Chietigj, 2017).

In the year 2011, after 20 years of its implementation, a debate arose that India should not only Look East but also Act East. In addition, during her visit to India the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton suggested that Look East must become Act East, as India must engage more with the east to become an important player to balance with China. However, the congress government could not rebrand the Look East Policy.

'Finally, when the BJP Government of Narendra Modi emerged in the year 2014 they rebranded it as 'Act East Policy'. Thus, each so-called Phase of look East Policy can be regarded as a mere rebranding exercise as the new governments seek to rhetorically distinguish themselves from their predecessors.'

III. NORTH EAST INDIA AND LOOK (ACT) EAST POLICY

The Look East Policy received a boost when in November 2014 at the Annual Summit of ASEAN, Prime Minister Narendra Modi rechristened Look East Policy as Act East Policy (AEP) and announced the new administration's intention to actively engage with its Asian neighbours (MEA, 2014). The North East yet again became central to the Act East Policy, that the Northeast is focal to the Act East Policy was reiterated by Prime Minister Modi in May 2016, when he said,

"The government has been focussing on the development of the North East Region through its pro-active 'Act East Policy'. As part of this policy, we are focussing on reducing the isolation of the region by improving all round connectivity through road, rail, telecom, power and waterways sectors. The North East is the gateway to Southeast Asia and we need to take advantage of this. We are opening up both road and rail routes to our neighbouring countries. This should give a boost to the economic development of the region."

"North East region is the natural gateway for India to South East Asia and beyond. With over 5300 km of international border with several neighbouring countries, it has significant strategic value. Efforts are needed to put the northeast at par with the industrially advanced states so that more jobs are created here. Government is working with states to improve ease of doing business and facilitate flow of private investments to the North East"²

Of late, India's North East has been subjected to a series of dense and hitherto unprecedented policy interventions. Commonly clustered as India's Look East policy, this casts particularly on the North East produces and imagines into existence a space that spreads beyond the present geography. Northeast for long has suffered what may be termed as an acute policy void, which may be explained, in a large measure by its emergence as a completely landlocked region eternally condemned to peripheral status. Accordingly 'lost' forever to the policy makers and the attendant realisation that there is very little that could be done to save the

¹ See Thomas Lynch III and James J. Przystup, *India-Japan-Strategic Cooperation and Implications for U.S. Strategy in the Indo-Asia-Pacific Region* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic Research, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defence University, 2017), 10.)

² See President Ram Nath Govind's Speech at the valedictory ceremony of North East Festival celebrated as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav in Guwahati.)

region and bring it at par with the rest of India. And in part by New Delhi's persistent dismissal of many of the present conflicts afflicting the region as simple law and order problems calling for equally simple law and order solutions. (Samir Kumar Das, 2010).

India's Act East Policy joins India with its Southeast Asian neighbours based on shared economic and strategic interests. However, the policy is also linked with India's domestic considerations, as it is an innovative attempt to link India's landlocked and impoverished North East states with the stronger Southeast Asian economies. It is argued that the economic regeneration of the relatively backward North East states requires a new imagination of extended neighbourhood that will allow economies of scale to be realised and thus, help transcend the geographical claustrophobia of this region. Shared linguistic roots, culture, tribal practices, and physical connectivity between the North East and a number of Southeast Asian states via Myanmar make it possible to realise this vision.

The general perception about North East India is that the region is characterized by violence, political instability, economic underdevelopment and cultural marginalization; that its inhabitants feel neglected and therefore are alienated, preventing their emotional integration with the Indian mainland. Policymakers and scholars often assumed and continue to assume that if the cycle of violence and underdevelopment are broken, then the region will eventually build a stable and positive relationship with the mainland. (Bérénice Guyot-Réchar) So, the argument remains that if development is brought about to this beleaguered region through enhanced financial investments in physical and social infrastructure, problems of politics, ethnic strife, and integration could be minimized if not completely eliminated. (Pushpita Das, 2022)

Look East aims at 'liberating' the North East Region not only from its presently landlocked and peripheral status but also from the governmentalised modes of imagining it. This understanding resulted in the introduction of the development model for the region in the 1970s and 1980s. New Delhi made efforts to develop the northeast economically and socially through a series of centrally sponsored schemes, which resulted in substantial public expenditure in the region. In fact, the union government started contributing heavily towards the total expenditure of the North East states. Such is the priority given to the North East that the per capita levels of central assistance to state plans in the North East region continue to be among the highest in the country. (Chakraborty, Gorky 2016).

A large part of the money invested in the region is lost to spillage. The Indian state for a long time paid scant attention to the fact that the region has about 4,500 kilometres of borders with China, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. The constraints imposed by security concerns, illegal migration and closed economies have blocked the circulation of international capital in the region. The North East shares 98 per cent of its borders with neighbouring countries and a dismal 2 per cent with the rest of India. The tenuous link through the narrow Siliguri corridor further isolated the North East and increased transportation costs of supplies to and from India, which hindered higher trade between the region and rest of the country. During last 75 years, North East has made significant progress on a variety of parameters. Be its roads, rails, airways and waterways, connectivity has grown exponentially. During the past few years, railheads have reached places where they are most required (Shibashis Chatterjee S. (2014).

The important on-going and potential infrastructure projects in the region are the Moreh-Tamu-Kalewa Road; the IndiaMyanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway; the Trans-Asian Highway; 3 India-Myanmar rail linkages; the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Project (hereafter "Kaladan Project)". Moreover, the Stilwell road; the Myanmar-India-Bangladesh gas or oil pipeline; the Tamanthi Hydroelectricity project and the optical fibre network between Northeast India and Southeast Asia, which has been operational since 2009.

The first project to be completed was the Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo Road. This 160 km road, also known as the 'Friendship Road' was first conceived in 1993. Construction of this road began in 1997, was completed in 2001, and the road was handed over to Myanmar in 2009. The second project is the 1360 km India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway (TLH), proposed in 2002 and is the flagship connectivity project of the India's Look East policy. Through the Highway, India plans to connect the Northeast region with Thailand. The Highway will link Moreh in India with Maesot in Thailand through Bagan in Myanmar.

North East was a thriving centre of world trade before but Indian Independence changed all that. The Northeast became landlocked, its natural outlets cut off by international boundaries, with only a very narrow strip of land connecting the mainland more popularly known as the slim Chicken's Neck corridor of North Bengal. When the region became neglected, the Insurgencies took over the region. Because the states in the Northeast are all so small that often, by necessity the region is clubbed together. Nevertheless, in so doing, the dynamics of the North East and the genius of the peoples who make up the region are frequently ignored. True, the North East must also find its common destiny.

**Projects sanctioned under Central Sector Scheme
(To be implemented by the respective State Governments)**

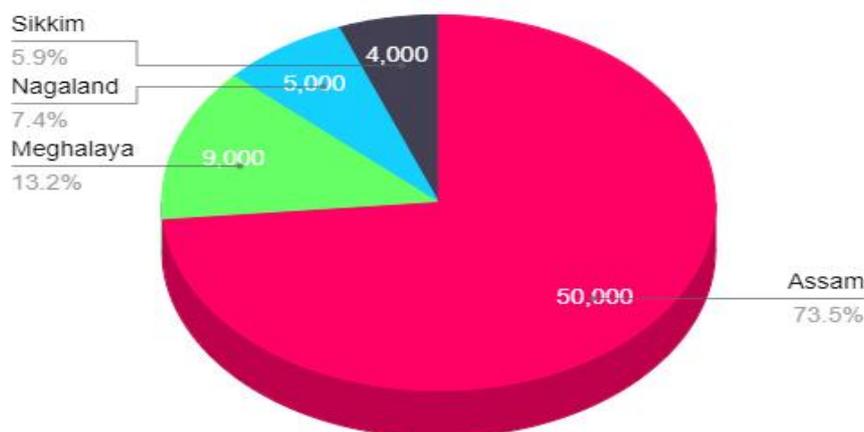
Sl. No.	States	Name of Project	Project Cost (Rs. in Crore)
1	Assam	Construction of 15 nos. (17.0m long) floating terminals at 15 Ghats on NW-2 (Assam)	6.07
		Construction of 15 nos. of (17.0m long) floating terminals at 15 Ghats on NW-16 (Assam)	6.37
		Construction of 25nos (17.0m long) floating terminals at 25 Ghats on NW-2 (Assam)	10.97
		Construction of 16nos (25.0m long) floating terminals at 16 Ghats on NW-2 (Assam)	13.70
2	Manipur	Loktak Inland Water Transport Project-II on Loktak Lake (Manipur)	7.88
		Project proposal for utilising the savings under CSS for 'Survey of River Barak (Manipur side)'	0.40
		Loktak Inland Waterways Improvement Project for Loktak Lake (Manipur)	25.58
3	Mizoram	Preparation of DPR for Tuichawang / Karnaphuli River (Mizoram)	0.57
		Development of IWT on river Khawthlangtuipui- Tuichawng in Lunglei District, Mizoram	22.93
4	Tripura	Setting up of linkage with Meghna river system in Bangladesh by developing Gumti River (Tripura)	24.83

Source: PIB Delhi Posted On: 29 MAR 2022

This information was given by the Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha

The Union Minister for Road, Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari announced sanction of 1.6 lakh crores in the North East on 9th November 2022 including the development of 50 wayside amenities and 50 viewpoints for boosting Tourism. The Union Minister approved a slew of new road projects valued at ₹-68,000/- in four North East States, the breakup is shown in the pie chart below

New Roads project worth 68, 000 crore sanctioned for NE in Nov'2022



Pie Chart 1: breakup of amount for Road Projects

DONER Minister G Kishan Reddy highlighting the efforts for development of connectivity mentioned the number of airport in the North East Region had increased from 9 in 2014 to 17 in 2023. He continued, ₹- 5 lakh crore has been spent for growth in the region, ₹- 1 Lakh crore has been Spent for road works and ₹- 77, 000 crore has been invested in railway connectivity during the past 9 years.’(Nagaland Post 13th April 2023).

He said, “About 8000 youths who were involved with insurgent groups, have surrendered and joined the mainstream. “There has been a 74% reduction in insurgency incidents, 60% reduction in incidents of attacks on security Forces and 89% reduction in civilian deaths in the North East. The previously known for unrest, bombings, bandhs, etc. have established peace in the last 8 years” (G Kishan Reddy, NP. 6/1/2023).

It is to be noted that ‘better road connectivity need not lead to improved trade: High expectations about the construction of multi-modal transport systems linking the North East to the interiors of Myanmar, China, and Thailand also appear to be somewhat misplaced. Highway roads and railways are no doubt required for trade and business, but these alone cannot ensure economic development (Raghav 2014; Ram Singh 2011).

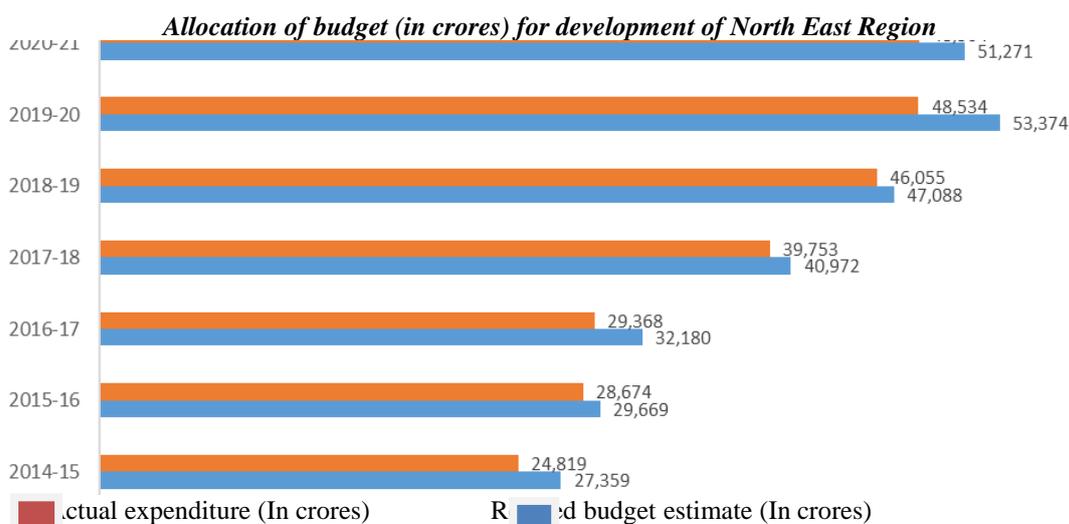
It is true that some of the proposed connectivity projects pass through the North East States. Nevertheless, the Look (Act) East Policy of the GOI is much more than the Trilateral Highway, BCIM corridor, Kaladan project, or MIEC. Looking to the East through the North East is only one of the several options that the Indian state exercises. The assumption that the North East is indispensable for the Look (Act) East Policy because the North East States bordering the East and South East Asian countries have racial and cultural similarities with these countries is faulty. It may be noted that Gujarat, located far away from the North East, receives a major chunk of the Chinese investments in India (Pandit 2014; Shira and Associates 2015).

Budget 2022-23 announced a new scheme - Prime Minister’s Development Initiative for North East (PM-DevINE).

The initial list of projects to be funded under the Scheme is given below:

S. No.	Name of the Project	Total tentative cost (Rs. In crore)
1	Establishment of Dedicated Services for the Management of Paediatric and Adult Haemotolymphoid Cancers in North East India, Guwahati (Multi-State)	129
2	NECTAR Livelihood Improvement Project (Multi-State)	67
3	Promoting Scientific Organic Agriculture in North East Indian (Multi-State)	45
4	Construction of Aizawl By-pass on Western Side	500
5	Gap funding for Passenger Ropeway system for Pelling to Sanga-Choeling in West Sikkim	64
6	Gap funding for Eco-friendly Ropeway (Cable Car) from DAPPER to Bhaleydhunga in South Sikkim	58
7	Pilot Project for Construction of Bamboo Link Road at Different Locations in Various Districts in the State of Mizoram	100
8	Others (to be identified)	537
TOTAL		1500

Data Source: Press Bureau, Ministry of information and Broadcasting (Research Unit), 2022



Data Source: Press Bureau, Ministry of information and Broadcasting (Research Unit), 2022

Apart from various development Projects, ensuring of Peace in the North East was on the priority of the government of India and thus, initiated a number of peace accords.

1. The Naga Accord:

The ceasefire agreements with National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) (NK) and NSCN(R) of Nagaland have been extended for a further period of one year w.e.f. 28.04.2021 to 27.04.2022. Ceasefire agreement with NSCN (K-Khango) of Nagaland has been extended for one year w.e.f.18.04.2021 to 17.04.2022. NSCN (Isak-Muivah) has signed a Ceasefire Agreement for an indefinite period. A framework agreement was signed with NSCN(I/M) on 3.8.2015. A Ceasefire agreement with NSCN (K)Nikigroup was signed w.e.f. 08.09.2021 for a period of one year i.e. upto07.09.2021.

2. Historic Agreement to end the Bru-Reang Refugee Crisis in Tripura

Under the leadership of dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Affairs Minister, Shri Amit Shah, signing of Historic Agreement has been done to end the Bru-Reang Refugee Crisis; Around 34,000 Internally Displaced People to be settled in Tripura.

3. Bodo Agreement- Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, signing of a historic agreement between Government of India, Government of Assam and Bodo representatives, in New Delhi has been completed, to end the over 50-year old Bodo crisis. Further, a permanent solution has been found out for the problem that has cost the region over 4000 lives.

More than 20 years after pronouncing the Look East Policy, it has now become Act East Policy once the BJP came into power. Obviously, the intention is to show that the BJP are serious. Still, precious little have happened to give the people confidence that things will happen. For instance, even the study of the infrastructural needs of the region is not done. Only now, the study process was launched by inviting bids for a study of the infrastructural needs of the region. However, there is no guarantee that the best proposal would be accepted. Indeed, there is already indication that quality may be sacrificed on the altar of perceived cost. On the other hand, there are doubts due to continuing internal contradictions and confusions.

Some important factors that need to be addressed for the North East to be a thriving centre of trade are: (Chasie, Charles, 2016)

- (i) The Act East Policy is inexact and open to confusion and, therefore, difficult to act. The flip-flops of the Government in the field of foreign policy only make things worse.
- (ii) Undemocratic legislations like, AFSPA, which is in operation in all the North East States, hinders investment from domestic and foreign Operators, even tourists think twice to tour the area declared "disturbed" by Govt. of India.
- (iii) The Special Category status of the North Eastern States, which gave special favourable financing to the states in the region, has been withdrawn and not re-instated.
- (iv) The budget allocations for North Eastern Council (NEC) and Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) have either remained stagnant or actually decreased

IV. THE ACT EAST POLICY AND THE NAGALAND EXPERIENCE

Nagaland state of India lies in the hills and mountains of North Eastern part of the country. It is one of the smaller states of India. Nagaland is bounded by Arunachal Pradesh to the northeast, Manipur to the south, Assam to the west and northwest and Myanmar (Burma) to the east. Unlike other Indian states, Nagaland is granted with a large degree of autonomy to its various tribal communities.

Insurgency

The Naga independence movement started with the formation of Naga National Council (NNC) the apex Naga political organisation in 1946. Later, on 14th August 1947 Naga independence was declared and the government of India and the United Nations Organisation (UNO) were informed by cable to which the UNO was kind enough to send an acknowledgement. Then on May 16 1950, plebiscite was initiated where 99.09% of the Nagas vouched for sovereignty of Nagaland. However, the Government of India did not recognise the plebiscite. Later the underground Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN) and a Naga Federal Army (NFA) were formed under the leadership of Phizo to continue with the separatist movement. India colonised Nagaland and a great massacre and devastation of the Nagas followed.'(Lhousa, Zapuvisie NP-23-08- 2004); (Zahan, Syeda Ambia 2022)

The Evolution of armed order in the Naga conflict

##	1955-1975 entrenched threat	1975-1997 strong defection & rise of NSCNs	1997-present fragmented ceasefire
Govt-NNC	Hostilities 1955-1964, 1968-1975. Limited cooperation 1964-1968	Limited cooperation	Limited cooperation N/A
Govt-NSCN Formed 1980	N/A	Hostilities, collapse into NSCN-IM & NSCN-K (1988)	N/A
Govt-NSCN- IM		Hostilities,	Limited cooperation, (1997-till present)
Govt-NSCN- K		Hostilities,	Limited cooperation 2001-2015; return to Hostilities-2015-Present

Table 1. Data Source: Alex Waterman (2021).

The data in the table 1 above clearly reveals the relationship of the government with the NNC, NSCN IM, NSCN K and the 7 NNPGs recently United Naga Political Group that have signed an agreement caked 'Agreed Position' with the GOI. Later the NNC and GOI signed an agreement known as 16 Point Agreement and in cognizance of this, the constitution of India was amended to create Nagaland as the 16th state of Indian Union on 1st December 1963. Article 371A which gives Special provision with respect to the State of Nagaland was added. However, majority of the Nagas did not accept the Agreement and formed NSCN in 1980 to continue with the movement for Naga Sovereignty. However, NSCN was split into NSCN IM and NSCN K. After prolonged hostilities, a cease-fire was signed with NSCN IM in 1997 and the peace negotiation is on. Limited cooperation is also reached with the NSCN K.

Conflict and Development

Due to violent conflicts, 'Nagaland missed out on the first three Five-Year Plans and deprived of the benefits of development and infrastructure building through focused planning. What was worse was that due to continuous armed conflict even after Statehood, much of the resources of the State spent on security related matters, leaving little to spend on development. Such development deficits had to be carried forward all the time, accumulating and increasing the burden of backlogs further.' (Op cit, 2016)

The trouble with such a situation is that whenever there was an opportunity for development, which had to be speeded up without adequate planning making things worse in some cases because that led to lopsided development. 'As a result of all these, the infrastructure gap for Nagaland had risen to ₹- 11,000 Crores by 1996 according to the R P Shukla Commission. This can only have risen higher by now.

Major development projects in Nagaland under PM-DevINE

1. Nagaland's first and India's 61st Software Technology Park of India (STPI)25 centre was inaugurated at the state capital by Union Minister of State (MoS) for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar at the Directorate of Information Technology & Communication (DITC).
2. Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Shri Nitin Gadkari virtually inaugurated and laid foundation stones for 15 National Highways projects in Nagaland. These NH Projects has a length of about 266 KM involving cost of about Rs 4127 crore.
3. Union Minister, Nitin Gadkari informed that for development and improvement of National Highways, 55 nos. of works of total length 1063.41 km at a total cost of Rs. 11,711 crore have been approved in last six years. Project at a total cost of about Rs. 1,598 crore.

Peace is essential

The Highways projects sanctioned worth 11,711 + 4127 cores, as declared by the Union Minister, are not free from corruption, extortion, and ransom; the Construction Enterprise may not spend cent per cent of the amount sanctioned to implement the projects, due to deduction at various levels and ransom demand by diverse groups. One such recent example is the complaint alleged by the Liangmai Council of Peren district that some anti social claiming to be National workers were trying to halt the ongoing Tening-Lekie Road works by imposing ransom demand and abusing labours engaged at the work site (Nagaland post, 23/06/2023). Construction of Highway spreading about all the Districts of Nagaland has started, The Construction Companies should keep in mind the issues of landslides, stone and mud slides due to land conditions, hilly terrain and streams which will add to the minimum sustainability of the road.

Nagaland is toiling with zero Industry, which is the main cause of unemployment and lack of revenue for the state. Thousands of Naga Graduates skilled-trained could not be placed in the state, out of which a

handful can move out to the cities in search of employment and the remaining youths have no option for a job resulting in a large number of unemployed and later, joining any of the factions. The reason for this is the shocking reality of the highest number of underground factions in the small state. They (The Factions) collect taxes, demand ransom or extort money even from small business setups, making it impossible to run. In return, the business houses considered the pricing inclusive of the extorted amount which sky- rockets the price and Inflation. Big Companies, domestic or Multi-National Companies, dare to operate in the state for any of such reasons. The government of India, through its negotiator, have declared a final inclusive solution to the Naga problem on or before 31st October 2022 and declared State Election 2023, as "Election for solution" but nothing could be final. Peace is an essential factor for any place's industrialisation and development. Until and unless the solution to the protracted Naga issue is achieved, Act East Policy in spite of huge development predictions may not influence Nagaland much and North East Region in General.

There are intricate issues peculiar to Nagaland, as we perceive an interrelation between modern democracy and traditional self-governing institutions. For instance, one writes, 'in the North-East, one finds two simultaneous democratic institutions at work, a modern democratic system vis-à-vis a traditional system among the Hill tribes (S.D. Hazarika, 2006). 'Despite the fact that modern system of governance has been ushered in since Nagaland State got Statehood on 1st December 1963, yet age-old traditional practices and values prevail' (Amer Moamenla, 2012). Thus, people are entrenched in the profound culture and customs with the administration of traditional self-governing unique republics protected by Constitutional special provisions of Article 371A and Inner line permit as well. In terms of Article 371(A) of the Indian Constitution, No Act of Parliament in respect of ownership and transfer of land and its resources; Shall apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides. Land is vital for an Industrialisation to set in at any given place. People in general and government in particular need to consider on the issue if development to catch up with other states have to take effect. As we see here, issues are modified to the needs of the traditional power institutions and sometimes become a hindrance to modern democratic policy.

V. CONCLUSION

To sum up, Peace will be the most indispensable factor for modernisation and industrialisation of North East Region in general and Nagaland in particular. The Union government of the day should conclude the peace negotiation once and for all and start development. Increased regional and international trade can shape the future destiny of the North East Region by providing the scope for industrialization and growth. Mere facilitation of trade through the region with the neighbouring countries will have only marginal impact on the economy unless the region is converted into a production hub. Greater participation of the local people in production and distribution activities is extremely vital for balanced growth. To reap the human resource development the education sector should be given the prime importance. As we see in the entire Centre's allocation of fund for North East Region Nagaland is conspicuously absent or at minimum. No matter in this sense, peace is foremost and then development. Union Minister G Kishan Reddy had said there has been a 74 per cent reduction in insurgency incidents in the North East. In recent times, people are longing for peace and thus, even with the slightest of snoop from the GOI side, it has become peaceful, but if the negotiation between the Naga Movement and government of India fails, it will create another cauldron that could turn Act East Policy to Action East.

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