



THIRTIETH MEETING  
OF THE  
NORTH-EASTERN COUNCIL

GUWAHATI

AUGUST 25th/26th, 1990

ADDRESS

BY

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Chief Minister, Meghalaya



*Hon'ble Chairman,*

I congratulate you for having convened two meetings of the North Eastern Council within a period of 3 months. As we all know the North Eastern Council has been constituted in the year 1972 with a view to coordinate and accelerate development in the long neglected remote area of the North Eastern Region of our seven States. The Council has done a commendable job for building up economic infrastructures on which the region may move forward. The economic status of the region is still far below the rest of the country. Another important role that the N. E. C. has played is towards the integration of the north eastern states interse and the region as a whole with the rest of the country.

While the development of infrastructure is a must, we need to pay an appropriate level of attention to the productive sectors which generate employment on a long term basis. The approach paper for the Eighth Plan adopted by the National Development Council gave considerable emphasis on employment and the right to work. Participating in the deliberation of the N.D.C. I had stressed that it has to be "productive" employment and that we should stress more on "duty to work" rather than the "right to work".

Against this background, I would like to highlight two aspects of employment. Firstly, a very large number of schemes of the N.E.C. in the agriculture and allied sectors, though regional in character, have been of such a small size that they were hardly able to make an impact at the State level, not to speak of the regional level. Secondly, most of the Hill States in the region face shortage of skilled man-power. While shortages at the level of professionals like engineers and doctors are being remedied through intervention of the Central Government, shortages of man-power which require intermediate skills are very visibly felt.

