



**Speech of**

**Shri D. D. Lapang**  
**Chief Minister, Meghalaya**

**at the**

**48<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

**of the**

**North Eastern Council**

**at**

**Gangtok, Sikkim**

*11<sup>th</sup> September, 2003*

*Respected Chairman, Distinguished Members of  
the N.E.C. and Friends,*

I am happy that His Excellency the Governor of Assam & Chairman of the N. E. C. has convened this 48<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting at Gangtok, soon after inclusion of Sikkim into the fraternity of the North Eastern States. I take this opportunity to welcome Sikkim to the fold of the N.E.C as the Council's eighth member. Although we have always considered the State of Sikkim as one of the sister States in the North East, but it is today only that we are able to meet together with them as fellow members in this august Council. I wish that the N.E.C with its new strength of eight member States will become a much stronger forum to deliberate, voice and address our regional issues and problems. I also place on record my gratitude to the Government of Sikkim for hosting this Meeting and for making all necessary arrangements for our convenience.

2. **N.E.C. as a Regional Planning Body:**  
According to the N.E.C. (Amendment) Act, 2002 the N.E.C. shall function as the regional planning body for the north eastern area comprising of eight States. The Act makes it clear that while formulating the regional plans, the Council shall assign priority to schemes and projects which will benefit two or more States. However, in the case

