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CM Dr. Sarma attends Tourism and Culture Ministers' Conference

For the promotion of tourism 'Brand North East' has to be popularised: CM

Requests DoNER's help for infrastructural development of NE

Dispur, September 13: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma said that for the overall development of Assam and other North Eastern states, Culture and Tourism play a very crucial role.

Speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of Tourism and Culture Ministers' Conference of North Eastern Region at a city hotel here today, Dr. Sarma said that the fact that for the first time DoNER Minister is also in charge of Tourism and Culture Ministry, augured well for the region. Moreover, under Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy's leadership, the development of North East, especially in Tourism and Culture would gain a new momentum.

He also said that all the states of the region are connected to each other, share similarities, though they have their unique cultural traits. He also said that since independence, though the region remained under-developed, the development narrative of the region received an impetus only after Atal Behari Vajpayee became the Prime Minister of the country. With the establishment of DoNER with the fund allocation of 90:10 pattern, the development momentum started by Atal Behari Vajpayee government has received a new momentum by the Central government led by Narendra Modi.

Referring to the heavenly beautiful Dima Hasao with special mention of Umrangshu, Dr. Sarma said that though such beautiful places are in abundance in the state, because of lack of connectivity, the places did not get the attention that they deserve. Stating that without a well concerted network of roads, the tourism potential cannot develop, Dr. Sarma urged upon Reddy to accord top priority for investment for the infrastructural development of the region.

Dr. Sarma also said that for the promotion of historical, spiritual and natural places of tourist attractions, the concept of 'Brand North East' should be popularised. If all the states work together, the sector can progress well in the next five years.

Welcoming the Tourism and Culture Ministers and other senior officers for their presence in the conference, Dr. Sarma thanked the Centre for having selected Guwahati to play host to this all-important conference.

A memorandum of understanding was also signed between the Tourism Ministry and Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) for cooperation in promoting domestic tourism and development of new tourism products in presence of the Chief Minister. The two-day conference also witnessed presentation and deliberations of development of tourism sector with focus on creation of tourism infrastructure, marketing, promotion and skill development

programmes in North Eastern Region, Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava and North East Week and host of others.

Secretary, Ministry of Tourism Arvind Singh gave the welcome speech in the conference which was also addressed among others by Union Minister of Tourism, Culture and DoNER G. Kishan Reddy, Union Minister of State for Culture and Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Minister of State for Tourism and Defence Ajay Bhatt. Director General Ministry of Tourism Ganji Kamala Vardhana Rao, Chief Secretary Jishnu Baruah and other senior officers of both Central and State governments were present on the occasion.

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