



BACKGROUNDERS
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Government of India

The North East: Where the Sun of Development Rises

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“There was a time when the North East was merely called a Frontier Region. Today, it is emerging as the ‘Front-Runner of Growth’”

-Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi

Key Takeaways

- Prime Minister Modi will inaugurate the **Bairabi–Sairang** railway line in **Mizoram**, built at a cost of over **₹8,000 crore**, connecting Aizawl to the national rail network for the first time.
- The Ministry of Railways has allocated **₹62,477 crore** for the Northeast since 2014, with **₹10,440 crore** set aside in the current fiscal year.
- **16, 207 km** of National Highways constructed in North East Region as of July, 2025.
- Under PMGSY, **16,469 road works covering 80,933 km and 2,108 bridges** have been completed.

Northeast India: From Frontier to Front-Runner

For decades, Northeast India was viewed as a distant frontier, rich in culture but lacking the infrastructure needed to unlock its full potential. The people of this region, including the vibrant communities of Mizoram known for their deep-rooted traditions and social harmony, nurtured hopes of development while waiting for long overdue attention. With the Act East vision of the Central Government, the Northeast has moved from the margins to the mainstream. What was once seen as a remote corner is now recognized as a front runner in India’s growth story. Unprecedented investments in railways, highways, air connectivity, and digital infrastructure have accelerated development across the eight states, from the bamboo covered hills of Mizoram to the peaks of Sikkim and the tea estates of Assam. Today, the region stands not just transformed but empowered, with better connectivity, stronger economies, and a renewed sense of purpose. The story of the Northeast is now one of peace, progress, and prosperity, a true reflection of a Viksit Bharat in the making.

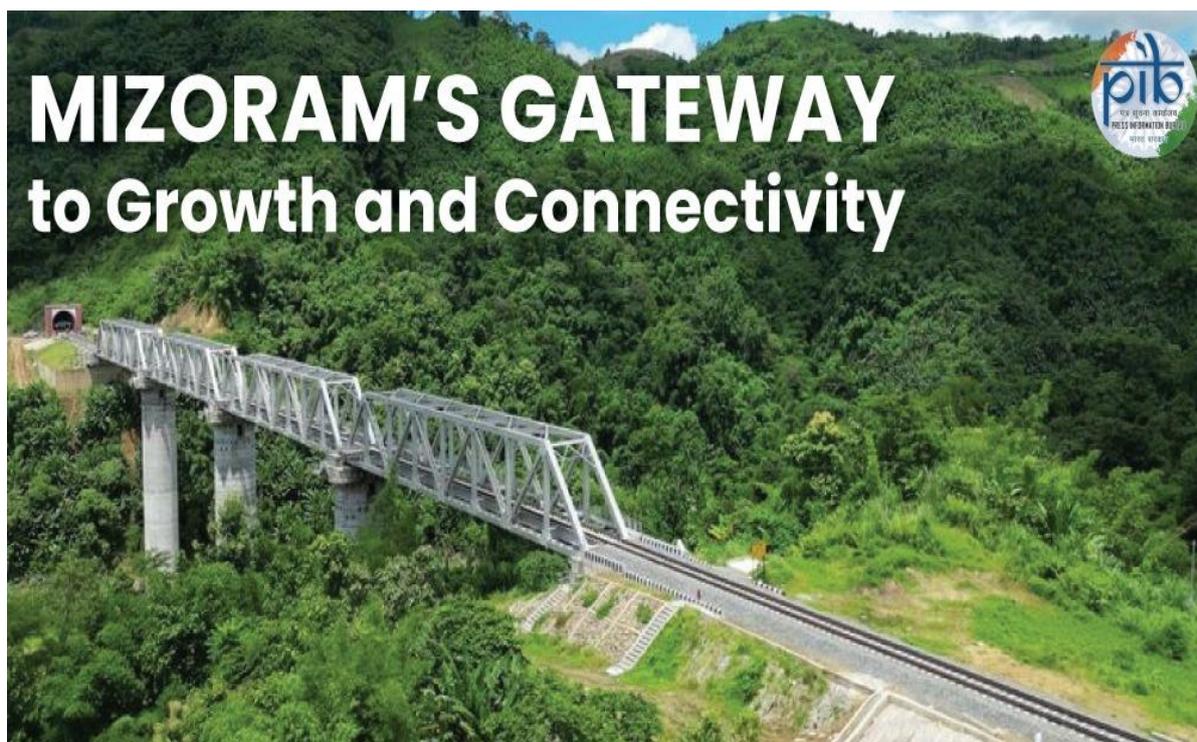
Empowering the Northeast: A Vision to Empower, Act, Strengthen, and Transform

To accelerate inclusive growth in the North Eastern Region the Central Government has implemented a series of transformative initiatives under its Act East vision. This strategic framework positions the

Northeast as a vital gateway to India's engagement with Southeast Asia while also ensuring balanced development within. As articulated in the Prime Minister's words "For us EAST means Empower, Act, Strengthen and Transform" a guiding philosophy that underpins every policy initiative in the region. From infrastructure and digital connectivity to education, healthcare and livelihoods these efforts are focused on creating opportunities improving access and enhancing the quality of life across the eight states.

North East on Track: Railways and Development

The Ministry of Railways is spearheading a massive transformation in the North Eastern Region, with record investments aimed at bridging infrastructure gaps and boosting connectivity. Since 2014, the railway budget allocation for the region has increased fivefold, reaching a cumulative ₹62,477 crore, including ₹10,440 crore for the current fiscal year. Railway projects worth ₹77,000 crore are currently underway, marking the highest level of investment the region has ever seen. A significant highlight of this progress will be the inauguration of the **Bairabi–Sairang railway line in Mizoram by Prime Minister Narendra Modi**. Built at a cost of over **₹8,000 crore**, this **51-kilometre line** will connect Aizawl to the national railway network for the first time since independence. With **143 bridges and 45 tunnels** constructed across challenging terrain, the construction is an engineering marvel with one of the bridges taller than Qutub Minar. Beyond passenger convenience, the line will also improve freight movement, open new markets for local produce like bamboo and horticulture, and provide a strong boost to tourism and employment. Prime Minister will also flag off **three new train services from Sairang to Delhi (Rajdhani Express), Kolkata (Mizoram express) and Guwahati (Aizwal Intercity)**. This firmly places Mizoram on the map of India's development story.



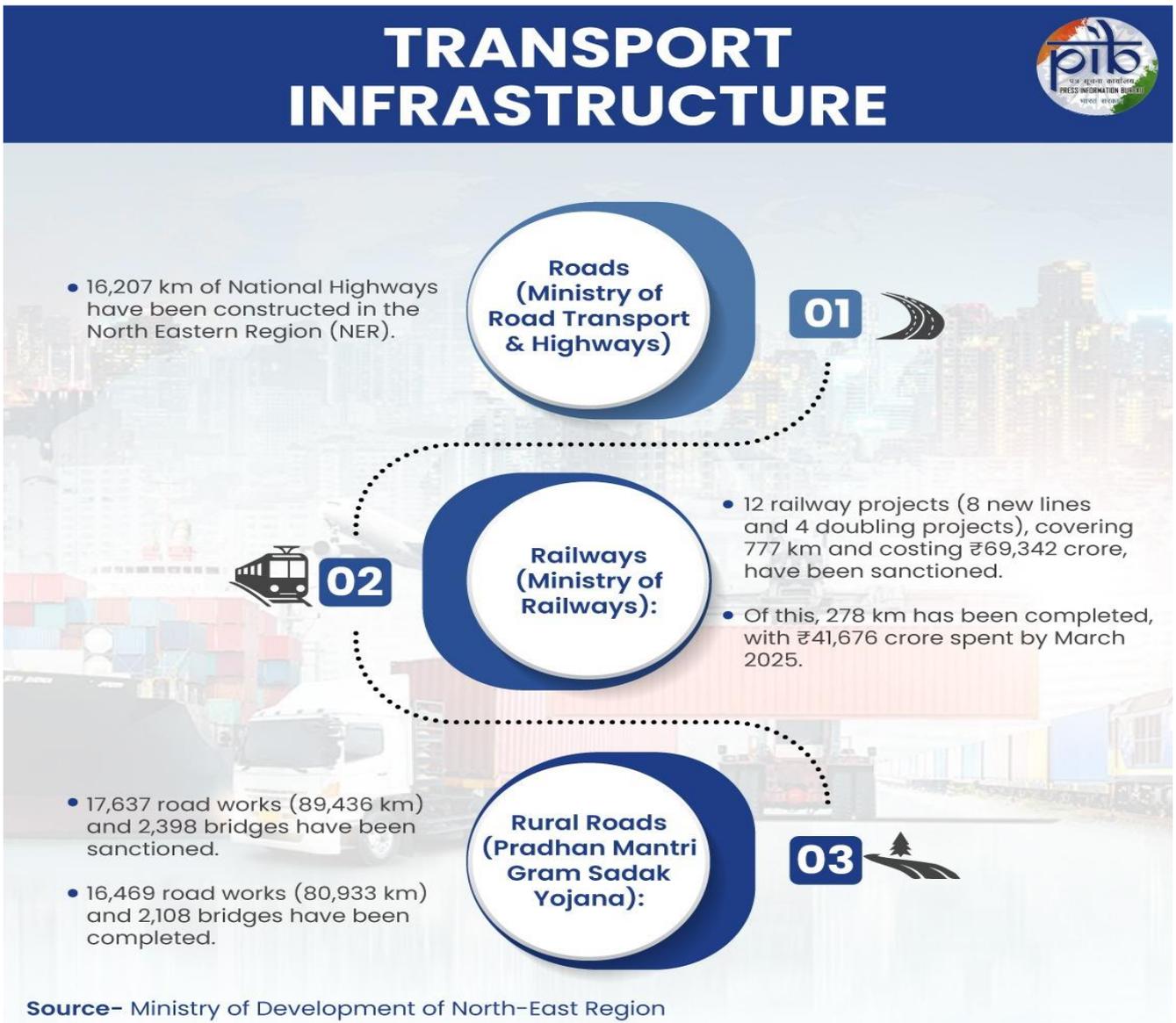
Beyond individual projects, the Northeast has witnessed a systematic infrastructure expansion through multiple sanctioned initiatives. Since FY 2022–23, 17 new railway surveys covering 1,790 km have been approved under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan to identify future expansion corridors. Key ongoing projects include the Jiribam–Imphal and Dimapur–Kohima lines, which aim to strengthen strategic and inter-state connectivity. Additionally, several gauge conversion and doubling works are progressing, addressing both passenger and freight needs. These efforts reflect the Centre's long-term vision to fully integrate the region into the national railway grid.

National Highways Development

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H), responsible for the development and maintenance of National Highways, has constructed **16,207 km of National Highways** in the Northeast Region (NER). The government's continued investments in roads, railways, and rural transport projects are reshaping the region, enhancing mobility, and opening up new opportunities for local communities. A notable example of this commitment is the approval of a 15 km road construction project between **Mangaldoi and Mazikuchi in Assam, costing ₹45.31 crore**. Approved in August 2025, the project will be implemented under the North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS) – Roads.

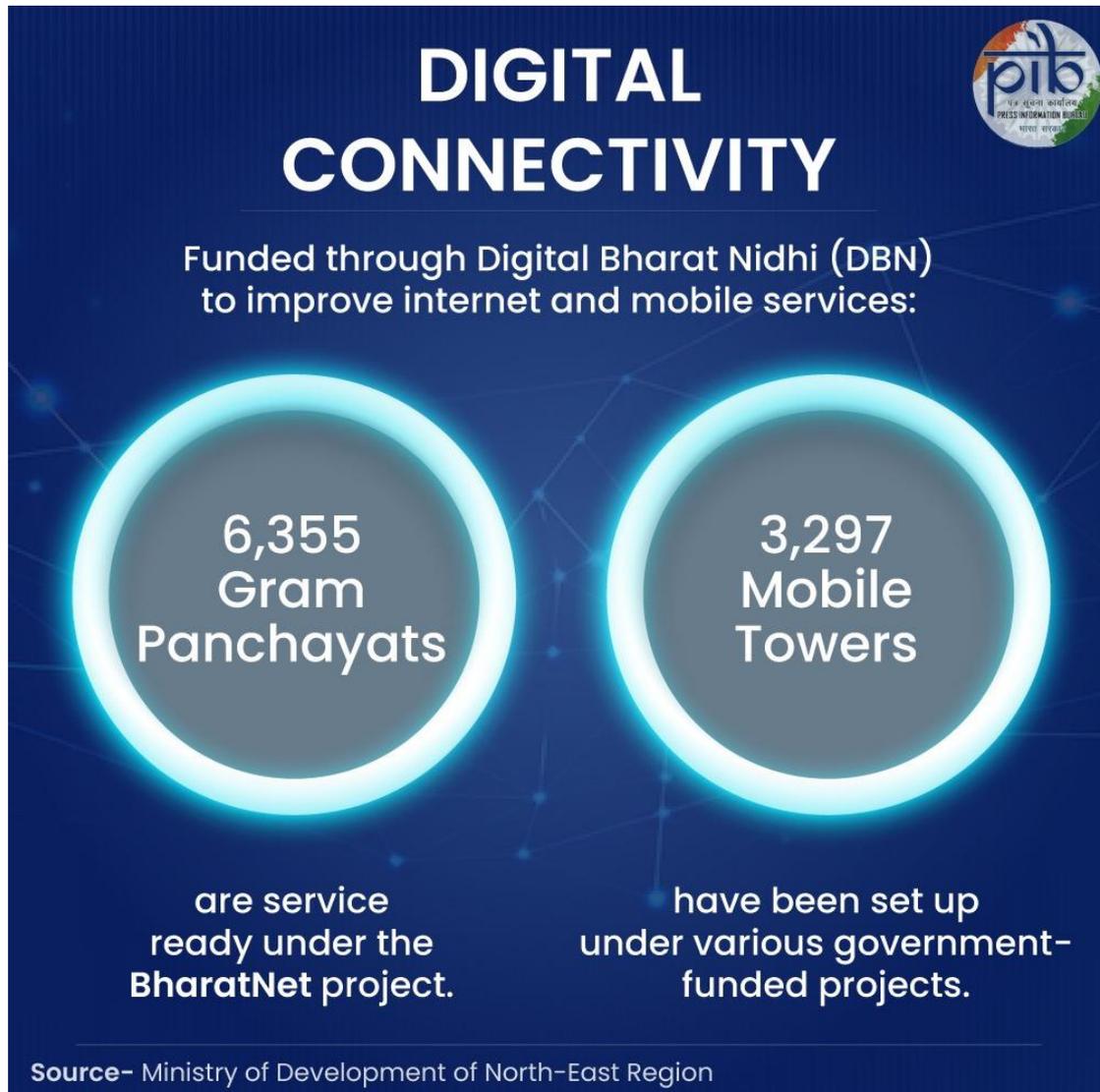
Roadworks and Bridges under PMGSY

Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), **17,637 road works** covering **89,436 km** and **2,398 bridges** have been sanctioned in the North Eastern Region. Of these, **16,469 road works** spanning **80,933 km** and **2,108 bridges** have been completed, significantly improving last-mile connectivity in remote and rural areas.



Digital Connectivity and Mobile Services

Multiple government-funded projects, including BharatNet and others supported by Digital Bharat Nidhi, have enhanced digital connectivity in the Northeast by making Gram Panchayats service-ready and commissioning mobile towers across the region.



Regional Air Connectivity (UDAN) Scheme

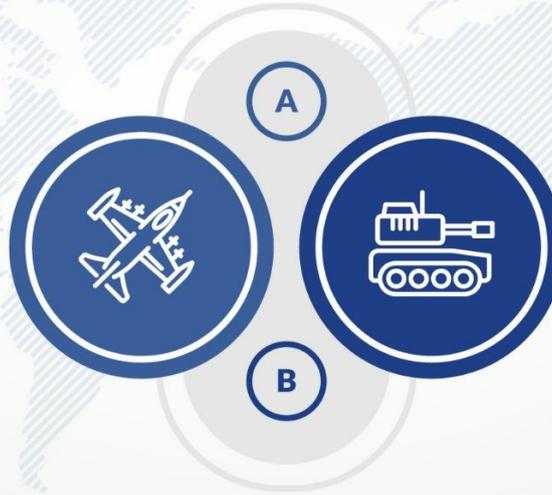
The Ministry of Civil Aviation has introduced the Regional Connectivity Scheme – UDAN to improve air travel access from airports that were previously unserved or underserved. This initiative has helped establish numerous routes, linking various airports and heliports across the North Eastern Region.

AIR CONNECTIVITY



Under the UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) scheme:

90 air routes have been made operational in NER.

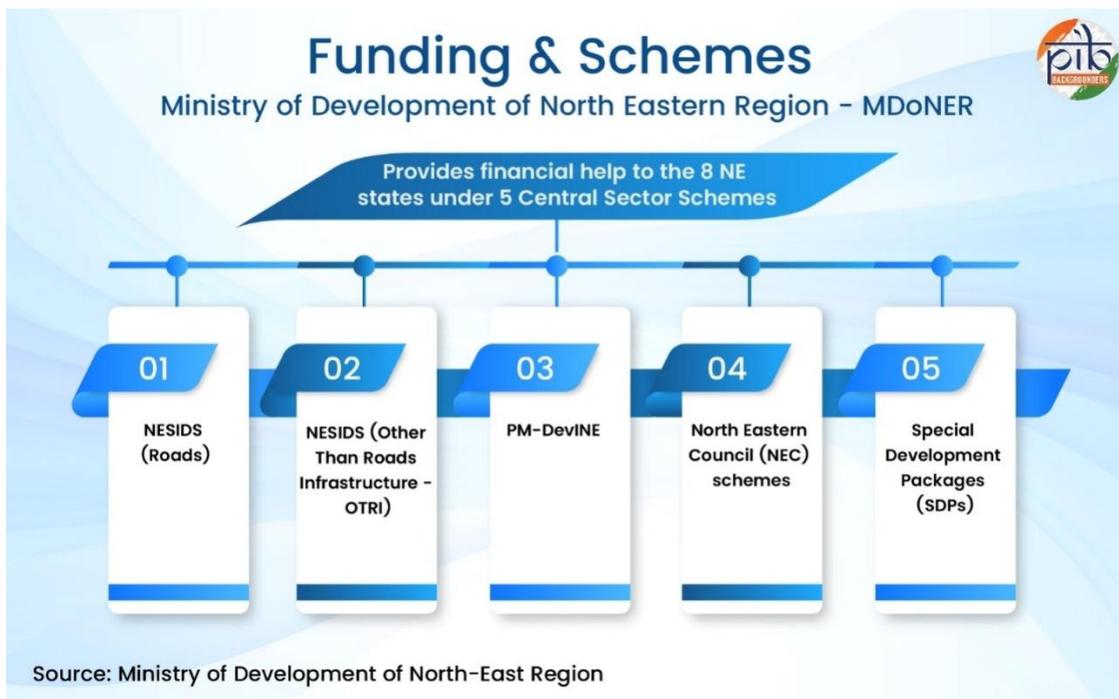


These routes connect 12 airports and heliports across the North Eastern states.

Source- Ministry of Development of North-East Region

Financial Assistance for Development Projects

The **Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER)** is providing financial assistance to the eight Northeast states to support developmental projects linked to infrastructure, connectivity, and communication. This is being done through **five Central Sector Schemes: NESIDS (Roads), NESIDS (OTRI), PM-DevINE, Schemes of North Eastern Council (NEC), and Special Development Packages (SDPs).**



1. PM-DevINE Scheme

The Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North East Region (PM-DevINE) is a 100% centrally funded Central Sector Scheme announced in the Union Budget 2022–23. The scheme has a total outlay of **₹6,600 crore for the four-year period from 2022–23 to 2025–26**. Its objectives are to fund infrastructure projects in a convergent manner in line with the PM GatiShakti framework, support social development initiatives based on the region's specific needs, enable livelihood opportunities for youth and women, and address development gaps across various sectors in the North Eastern Region.

2. NESIDS – Roads

The North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS) – Roads is a Central Sector Scheme launched in 2017–18 and extended until 31st March 2026. It provides targeted gap funding for the construction of roads and associated infrastructure that are not covered by other central ministries or agencies. The scheme focuses on projects that enhance access to **remote areas, improve market connectivity, and serve strategic or security purposes**. Only those proposals that result in the creation of physical assets such as roads, bridges, and auxiliary infrastructure are eligible for funding.

3. NESIDS – Other Than Roads Infrastructure (OTRI)

The NESIDS – Other Than Roads Infrastructure (OTRI) is a component of the NESIDS Central Sector Scheme. It includes unfinished projects from earlier schemes like the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) and the Hill Area Development Programme (HADP). NESIDS-OTRI provides financial assistance to the eight North Eastern States for infrastructure development in areas such as primary and secondary healthcare, education, power, water supply, solid and liquid waste management, industrial development, civil aviation, sports, telecommunications, and conservation of iconic water bodies. As of July 2025, **29 projects** under NESIDS-OTRI have been sanctioned and are at various stages of implementation, with an expenditure of **₹462.21 crore incurred** so far.

4. Schemes of the North Eastern Council (NEC)

The schemes implemented under the North Eastern Council (NEC) were extended from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2026. These schemes aim to promote the holistic development of all eight North Eastern states by supporting projects in priority sectors identified by the states. The selection, sanctioning, and monitoring of projects are managed by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER) and NEC in coordination with the respective State Governments. Implementation is carried out by the designated state or central agencies. Key focus areas under NEC schemes include **bamboo development, piggery, regional tourism, higher education, tertiary healthcare, and livelihood generation**.

5. Special Development Packages (SDPs) for Assam and Tripura

The Special Development Packages (SDPs) for Assam and Tripura are part of an ongoing Central Sector Scheme aimed at promoting inclusive development and peace in the North Eastern Region. In August 2025, the Union Cabinet approved four new components under the scheme with a total outlay of ₹4,250 crore. Of this, ₹4,000 crore is allocated for Assam over five years (2025–26 to 2029–30), and ₹250 crore for Tripura over four years (2025–26 to 2028–29). The packages aim to improve socio-economic conditions, generate employment through infrastructure and livelihood projects, and benefit youth and women through skill development and entrepreneurship. They are expected to bring long-term stability, mainstream marginalized communities, and boost tourism and local economies in the region.

Driving Momentum: Strategic Investment, Governance, and Fiscal Impact

Rising Northeast Investors Summit 2025: Catalyzing Economic Growth and Job Creation in the Northeast



The Rising Northeast Investors Summit 2025, organized by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER), aimed at catalyzing trade and investment in the region to strengthen its industrial ecosystem and generate employment. The summit attracted ₹4.48 lakh crore in investment interest, particularly in key sectors such as energy, agro-food processing, tourism, textiles, healthcare, education, IT, entertainment, infrastructure, and logistics. State governments are actively facilitating these investments through measures like single-window clearances, investment promotion agencies, and land banks, while prioritizing eco-friendly, low-carbon projects to ensure sustainable development. These efforts will drive infrastructure growth, create job opportunities, and foster sustainable economic progress, directly benefiting the common people by providing new livelihoods and improving access to essential services.

Streamlining North East Development Projects through PVS Portal

The Poorvottar Vikas Setu (PVS) Portal has made the process of project approval and monitoring faster, more efficient, and transparent. Previously, project proposals and documents were shared by physical copies or emails, causing delays in approvals. Now, State Governments can submit their proposals directly through the PVS Portal, and comments from relevant ministries are also collected there. This system creates a clear record of all communications between the Ministry, North Eastern Council, State Governments, and line ministries. The portal also allows States and Central agencies to request fund releases and upload important documents like Utilization and Completion Certificates for ongoing projects, making the entire process smoother and easier to track.

Conclusion: The Road Ahead

The North Eastern Region is no longer on the periphery of India's development map; it is now firmly at the center of the nation's growth narrative. Backed by visionary policymaking, record investments, and coordinated execution across ministries, the Northeast is witnessing a remarkable transformation. From improved rail and road connectivity to digital access, economic investments, and inclusive development initiatives, every effort is bringing the region closer to opportunity and prosperity. As infrastructure strengthens and aspirations take root, the Northeast stands poised to become a key driver of a Viksit Bharat, where every hill, valley, and village is part of the country's shared future.

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