

Borders and Beyond

In The Context of India's Look East Policy



No man an island unto himself

- True of nations also-even island nations?
- Countries come together for mutual benefit
- Maybe all countries in the world-WTO?
- Issue based groups
- Regional or sub-regional groupings

Large countries

- Parts of countries can also cooperate
- Parts of one country may share language, culture, historical ties with neighbour
- Shared ties basis for cooperation
- Less well endowed parts to be supported to enable full participation in sub-regional cooperation
- Development to be symmetrical

North east and Look East Policy

- Seven Sisters and Sikkim share long international boundary
- Adjoining countries members of SAARC, SAFTA, ASEAN, BIMSTEC as India is
- Platform for cooperation already exists
- To sub-regional form now

North east location vis-à-vis neighbours



Infrastructure

- Power-48000 hydro potential
- Railways-2578 km tracks 1200 km broad gauge
- Air connections-well connected

Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura regular flights
Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh heli services

The Potential

- Infrastructure necessary for states to
Gain maximum benefit from sub-regional
cooperation
Contribute to sub-regional growth
- Petroleum, tea, organic horticultural
products, jute goods, acrylic fibre?

The Potential (continued)

- Demand for food?
- Services and logistics
- Health care
- Education-particularly teaching English
- Set up health care and English teaching in adjoining and ASEAN countries

The Potential (continued)

- Roads and railways across borders
- Air services to
 - Kunming via Mandalay
 - Bangkok/Singapore via Yangon
 - Dhaka/Paro

Ganga Mekong- LCMV countries?

The Challenge

- Political, social and human infrastructure in symmetry to reach agreement
- Physical infrastructure improvement particularly power, roads, railways
- Services infrastructure like customs, banking, warehousing, telecom services make customer friendly

The Challenge

- Tourism infrastructure to be made seamless
- Governance issues

Suggested First Steps

- Infrastructure for
 - obtaining best possible information
 - analysis of information
 - wide ranging consultations and agreement
- Consistent policies and action for results
- Inculcate among Policy makers, Executors, Workers, Stakeholders business like work culture, result orientation

Suggested First Steps (continued)

- Concentrate on what people best do and want to do
- Match what people across borders want
- Ensure environment friendliness
- Conserve soil water nature
- Ensure infrastructure for goods services
- Joint/integrated activities by states

Suggested First Steps (contd)

- Act in time bound manner
- Regular monitoring by broad based involvement
- Evaluate reconnect and course correct 3-5 years