

MoS Dr Sukanta Majumdar Calls for Faster Banking Expansion and Improved Credit Access in Northeast at Bankers' Conclave 3.0

MoS Urges Banks to Improve Credit-Deposit Ratio and Strengthen Lending to MSMEs, Farmers and Women Entrepreneurs

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Union Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER) and Education, Dr Sukanta Majumdar, called for faster expansion of banking services, greater access to credit and stronger coordination between banks and State Governments to accelerate economic growth in the Northeastern Region while addressing the North East Bankers' Conclave 3.0 at Mizoram University in Aizawl on 13th October 2026.

Highlighting the progress in financial inclusion, Dr Majumdar said that 131 new bank branches have been opened and 126 ATMs installed across the Northeast. Of the 9,479 identified villages, 6,905 villages, or around 73 per cent, are now connected to a bank branch or India Post Payments Bank (IPPB).



Expressing concern over the Credit-Deposit (CD) ratio in the region, MoS Dr Majumdar said that Manipur and Assam are at or above the national ratio of 79.5 per cent, while Mizoram and several other Northeastern States lag behind. He stressed the need to turn regional savings into local investment and business opportunities.

To improve credit flow, Dr Majumdar called for bank-specific lending targets, regular reviews through State Level Bankers' Committees (SLBCs), reliable land records, complete Aadhaar seeding of eligible CASA accounts and wider participation in PM SVANidhi. He encouraged banks to proactively examine viable loan proposals from farmers, MSMEs, women entrepreneurs and tourism enterprises.



Dr Sukanta Majumdar pointed out that 2,574 villages are yet to be covered. Of these, 2,515 are to be connected through India Post Payments Bank and 59 through physical bank branches. He urged State Governments and banks to set clear deadlines and speed up the expansion of banking services.

The Union Minister of State identified the lack of suitable buildings, all-weather roads and VSAT or fibre connectivity as major challenges. He urged Chief Secretaries to assign clear responsibilities and timelines for every pending location. He also asked banks to operationalise prepared locations quickly and deploy Business Correspondents and BC-Sakhis wherever full-fledged branches are not feasible.



Referring to the six-point roadmap adopted at the North East Bankers' Conclave 2.0 in Agartala in December 2024, held under the guidance of the Hon'ble Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Dr Majumdar highlighted efforts to expand banking infrastructure and improve financial inclusion.

The roadmap focused on increasing bank branches and ATMs, connecting unbanked villages, improving coverage in low-density districts, adapting banking norms to regional conditions and ensuring universal access to Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

As part of these efforts, the population norm for establishing a bank branch in the Northeast has been reduced to 2,000 on a cluster basis, compared with the national norm of 3,000. The first North East Bankers' Conclave was held in New Delhi in April 2023 to address regional banking gaps.

Dr Majumdar emphasised that infrastructure development must be supported by accessible and affordable credit to help farmers, entrepreneurs and small businesses benefit from new economic opportunities.

Highlighting the Northeast's potential in agriculture, tourism, entrepreneurship and infrastructure, Dr Sukanta Majumdar said that the conclave provides an important platform to strengthen the region's financial ecosystem.

The four breakout sessions at the conclave focused on banking infrastructure, MSMEs and women entrepreneurs, agricultural finance, and infrastructure financing.

Union MoS Dr Sukanta Majumdar said that, under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Central Government continues to address policy barriers and monitor progress on the banking roadmap. He urged State Governments, banks and Central agencies to work together with clear responsibilities and firm deadlines to deliver results on the ground.

He also acknowledged the guidance of Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region Jyotiraditya M. Scindia in advancing the region's development.

Concluding his address, Dr Majumdar stressed that stronger banking infrastructure, improved credit access and coordinated implementation would help create more opportunities, strengthen livelihoods and support sustainable growth across Mizoram and the entire Northeastern Region.

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