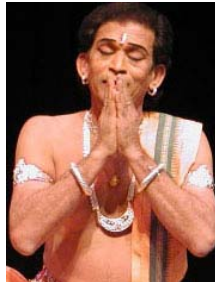


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Uppalada, Paralakhemundi

Naveen for higher growth

New Delhi: 19/December/2007

Naveen Patnaik has set the target of growth at 9 per cent during next five years.

Addressing the 54th meeting of the National Development Council (NDC) here on 19 December, Chief Minister of Orissa announced that the 11th five year plan for Orissa has an outlay of Rs.32,225 crore and targeted 9 per cent growth for the plan period.

This was set against the achievement of 7.26 per cent growth during the first four years vis-à-vis the target of 6.2 per cent of the 10th five year plan.



Mr. Patnaik stated that tackling the challenging task of reduction of regional, social and gender disparities and achieving faster, broad-based and inclusive growth needed a three-pronged strategy.

That included increasing flow of untied Central Assistance to less developed states, providing greater fiscal space to the states for mobilizing higher resources, and helping states to reduce their debt burden by swapping high cost debt, including Small Savings debt, with low cost loans.

He impressed that a growth strategy that promotes employment has been rightly given prominence in the 11th Plan.

Orissa has already put employment generation on a mission mode for achieving convergence of resources and activities under different programs to generate more employment opportunities for unemployed people.

Development of small scale industries in clusters and ancillarization are also going to be given more attention during the 11th Plan.

He also stressed that increasing irrigation potential and drought proofing were critical pre-requisites to enhance agricultural productivity.

With a view to increasing assured irrigation in Orissa, he urged Government of India to substantially increase the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Program (AIBP) funding for the state.

He pleaded for expansion of the scope of AIBP to include Lift Irrigation projects.

Mr. Patnaik further requested Government of India to significantly enhance allocations under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Revival Mission (JNNURM) and Urban Infrastructure Development Schemes for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT) for providing basic infrastructure facilities in urban and semi-urban areas in Orissa.

Outlining several interventions that were urgently needed for expeditious and inclusive growth of backward states like Orissa, he said that higher Central Assistance for infrastructure development in the areas of roads, ports and railways.

Enhancement of funding for the World Bank sponsored Orissa State Road Project from US \$ 250 million to US \$ 360 million and increased Central support for the proposed Ranchi-Vijayawada Highway, was demanded.

Establishment of prestigious Central institutions like IIT, IIM and IIIT in Orissa to meet growing needs of skilled manpower for upcoming industries, was highlighted in his speech.

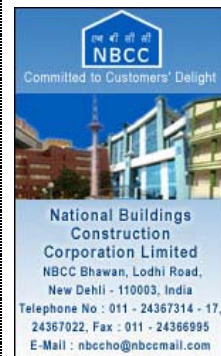
Mr. Patnaik pleaded for exemption from income tax and central excise for 10 years for the KBK region on the lines of Special Category States in order to promote industrialization.

The Chief Minister demanded for timely revision of royalty on coal and other minerals, on ad valorem basis and equitable share of export duty levied by Government of India on major minerals to the mineral rich states.

He further urged the Central Government to declare Orissa as a Special Category State.


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