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**8THDAY**



[**Orissa Plus**]

## Centre accused of neglecting Orissa

Statesman News Service

BHUBANESWAR, March 17: The centre continues to neglect Orissa and KBK region in particular charged BJP MP Ms Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo while referring to the fact that despite harping on 'inclusive' growth almost on a daily basis, the central budget did not mention of KBK region nor did it provide special package to the poorest parts of the country.

The KBK region ( erstwhile undivided Koraput-Bolangir-Kalahandi districts), is regarded as the country's hunger zone' yet the finance minister did not even mention about it. "It needs special policy initiatives and interventions", she said referring to her speech in parliament during the budget discussion. Increased funding to the region by way of the revised long term action plan was discontinued and it gets a pittance under the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF).

"The BRGF allocation for the year 2008-09 is Rs 5,800 crore for 250 districts", she noted while chiding that ironically Mr Rahul Gandhi chose to launch his discover India programme from KBK regions.

She pressed for a special industrial incentive package for development of industrial infrastructure and industries in the KBK region on the lines of the North-East Industrial policy . The centre has announced such special packages for North-East, Sikkim , J&K , Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh.

Besides the establishment of a design institute , IIT and IIM, central university and medical collages, expeditious implementation of the Paradip refinery cum petrochemical project were demands voiced for the state.

The enhanced outlay under NREGS is very meager, she said noting that earlier for 100 disticts the budgetary allocation was Rs 12,000 crore but now for 596 districts the outlay is only Rs 16,000 crore. It is a

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five fold increase with only 25 percent increase in allocation she noted.

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