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**Union Minister for MSME Narayan Rane chairs North East MSME Conclave**

**Dispur, November 18:** Union Minister for MSME, Narayan Tatu Rane chaired the North East MSME Conclave today at a city hotel in Guwahati. The Conclave was attended by Ministers of North-Eastern States and other senior State Government officials. The conclave is being organized by the Ministry of MSME and is aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and trade opportunities for MSMEs in the North East Region.

The MSME sector plays a significant role in terms of job creation and expanding manufacturing base. Currently, it consists of over 6 crore units employing over 11 crore people and with over 30% of contribution to GDP and over 49% of overall exports from India.

Addressing the stakeholders, Minister Rane said, ‘India can develop only when we develop the North East and it is the topmost priority of the Ministry of MSME. The Ministry has placed a special emphasis on the development of MSMEs in North East Region to bring in economic prosperity and propel their contribution to the nation’s GDP.’

Stating that the correlation between the Indian economy and the MSME sector's performance has never been more aligned, he added, ‘This would continue to grow even closer in the upcoming years. Given the impact of MSMEs on our economy, it is imperative that push is given to promote entrepreneurship amongst the youth and allow them to play an integral role.’

Speaking on the occasion, Industries and Commerce Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary said, ‘In Assam, MSMEs have played a key role in shaping the socio-economic condition of the state. North East Region, surrounded by international border of 5,182 km, serves as India’s gateway to the East. With its geographical advantage, rich mineral and agro-horticulture resources and access to the growing ASEAN market, North-East is the fulcrum of the Act East Policy.’

He added that in order to create a business-friendly environment in the state, the Assam Government has introduced the Assam MSME (Facilitation of Establishment and Operation) Act, 2020. Under this Act, MSMEs can be established without obtaining any NOC/Permission/Clearance (except Fire and Environment) and operate for 3 years. With the Assam Ease of Doing Business (Amendment) Act 2020, more than 450+ G2B online services are available online through the Single Window Portal with added feature of auto-renewal system of all clearances based on prescribed fees.

Ministers from the State Governments of North Eastern States, who attended the Conclave, emphasized that such conclaves will help the region in its efforts towards encouraging entrepreneurship and enhancing competitiveness of the sector in the changed economic scenario. They deliberated on their issues and challenges, particularly on infrastructure and connectivity. The State Ministers called upon the Union Minister and the MSME Ministry officials to build a robust infrastructure, provide market linkages, set up MSME Parks, Tool Rooms and introduce a policy exclusively for North East for growth and prosperity in the MSME sector in the North East Region.

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