Destination Northeast India

Why in News

Recently, a seven-day cultural festival of the northeast as part of the celebrations of **75 years of Independence** under the **Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav programme** cocncluded at the **National Museum, Delhi.**

- It is celebrating the rich heritage of North East India, under the **Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region & North Eastern Council (NEC)'s** initiative titled **"Destination NorthEast India".**

Key Points

- **Aim:** To bring the rest of India closer to **North East (NE)** India.
    - It holds a special presentation of art and craft, textiles, ethnic products, tourism promotion etc. of the eight northeastern states.
- **Organisations Involved:**
    - **Ministry of Development of North-East Region.**
    - **North Eastern Council (NEC):** It is the nodal agency for the economic and social development of the NE Region which consists of the eight States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. It was **constituted in 1971 by an Act of Parliament.**
    - **National Museum**: The **blueprint** for establishing the National Museum in Delhi **was prepared by the Maurice Gwyer Committee in May 1946.**
        - It was **initially looked after by the Director General of Archaeology** until 1957, when the **Ministry of Education declared it a separate institution** and placed it under its own direct control.
        - At present, the National Museum is **under the administrative control of the Ministry of Culture.**

Importance of NE Region

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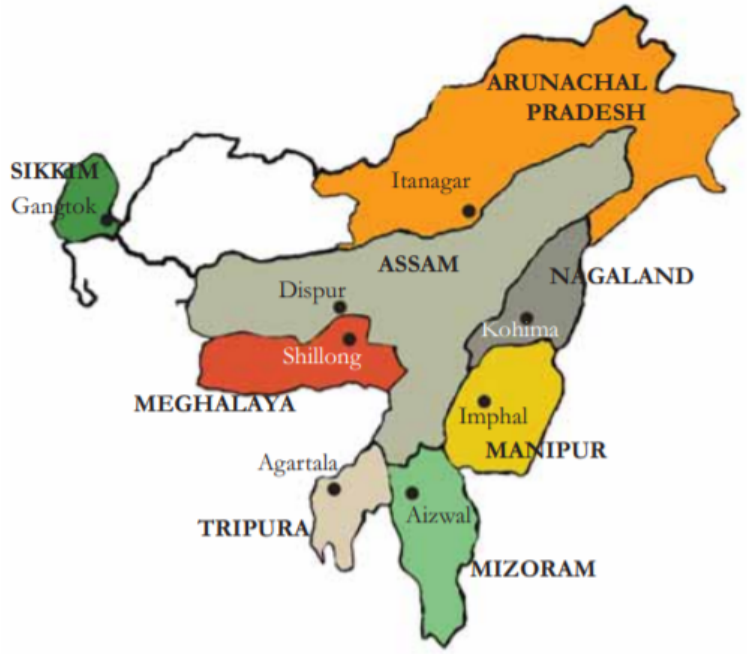

- **Strategic Location:** The NER is strategically located with access to the traditional domestic market of eastern India, along with proximity to the major states in the east and adjacent countries such as Bangladesh and Myanmar.
- **Links with Southeast Asia:** With **ASEAN** engagement becoming a central pillar of India's foreign policy direction, NE states play an important role as the physical bridge between India and Southeast Asia.
    - The India's **Act East Policy** places the northeastern states on the territorial frontier of India's eastward engagement.
- **Economic Significance:** The NER has immense natural resources, accounting for around 34% of the country's water resources and almost 40% of India's hydropower potential.
    - Sikkim is India's first **organic state**.
- **Tourism Potential:** Northeast of India is home to many wildlife sanctuaries **like Kaziranga National Park** famous for the **one horned rhinoceros**, Manas National Park, Nameri, Orang, Dibru Saikhowa in Assam, Namdapha in Arunachal Pradesh, Balpakram in Meghalaya, Keibul Lamjao in Manipur, Intanki in Nagaland, Khangchendzonga in Sikkim.
- **Cultural Significance:** Tribes in NER have their own culture. Popular festivals include **Hornbill Festival** of Nagaland, Pang Lhabsol of Sikkim, etc.

Government Initiatives for NE Region

- **Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER):** A Department of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) was established in 2001. It was elevated to a full ministry in 2004.
- **Infrastructure Related Initiatives:**
    - Under Bharatmala Pariyojana **(BMP),** road stretches aggregating to about 5,301 km in NER have been approved for improvement.
    - The North East has been kept as **a priority area under** RCS-UDAN (to make flying more affordable).
- **Connectivity Projects: Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Project** (Myanmar) and **Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Corridor.**
- **For Promoting Tourism:** Under the **Swadesh Darshan Scheme** of the Ministry of Tourism, projects worth Rs.1400.03 crore have been sanctioned for the NER in the last five years.
- **Mission Purvodaya: Purvodaya** in the steel sector is aimed at driving accelerated development of Eastern India through the establishment of an integrated steel hub.

    - The Integrated Steel Hub, encompassing Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and Northern Andhra Pradesh, would serve as a torchbearer for socio-economic growth of Eastern India.
- **North-East Industrial Development Scheme (NEIDS):** In order to promote employment in the North East States, the Government is incentivizing primarily the MSME Sector through this scheme.
- **The National Bamboo Mission** has a special significance for the Northeast.
- **North Eastern Region Vision 2020:** The document provides an overarching framework for the development of the NE Region to bring it at par with other developed regions under which different Ministries, including the Ministry of DoNER have undertaken various initiatives.
- **Digital North East Vision 2022:** It emphasises leveraging digital technologies to transform lives of people of the north east and enhance the ease of living.

Source: PIB

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