

Press Release

Shri Amit Shah chairs Meeting of the Island Development Agency focusing on 'Green Development in the Islands to reach a new Height'

The Union Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah, chaired the sixth meeting of the Island Development Agency (IDA) held here today. The Island Development Agency reviewed the progress made towards the programme "Holistic development of islands". For the first time in the country, under the guidance of IDA, an initiative of sustainable development in the identified Islands within scientifically-assessed carrying capacity has been taken-up. Development Plans with focus on creation of jobs for the islanders through tourism promotion as well as export of seafood and coconut-based products made in the Islands have been prepared and are being implemented in four islands of Andaman & Nicobar and five islands of Lakshadweep. In the second phase, suitable sites in 12 more islands of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and 5 islands in Lakshadweep have been covered.

Model tourism projects both Land-based and Water Villas were planned and bids have been invited for private sector participation. As a unique initiative, to spur investment, it was decided to obtain clearances for implementation of the planned projects up-front. All necessary clearances would be in place before bids finalization. Environment and Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearances have already been obtained for four exemplary tourism projects of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

For strengthening infrastructure support, projects for improving air, sea and digital connectivity are also being implemented. Port Blair and another 7 islands in Andaman & Nicobar would get digitally connected through submarine optical fibre cable by June, 2020. Better communication services would facilitate setting up of Information Technology based and other Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the islands with incentives through Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands Industrial Development Scheme (LANIDS), 2018 notified on 1st January, 2019. The proposed airports in Great Nicobar Island of Andaman & Nicobar and Minicoy Island of Lakshadweep would catalyze the development process in the region.

In the meeting, a detailed presentation was made by CEO, NITI Aayog highlighting current status of the planned projects being implemented for islanders' benefits. The status of implementation of decisions taken in the last meeting was also highlighted in the presentation.

Shri Shah expressed satisfaction at the progress made and called upon all concerned to expedite implementation of the on-going projects for islanders' benefits. He further advised to formulate separate policy for maintaining a clean, green and healthy environment in the islands. In addition, he advised to implement suitable strategies for sustainable utilization of fisheries resources available in Exclusive Economic Zone around the islands. Adequate technology-based facilities need to be provided to enhance fish collection, storage, processing and export of value-added products which would provide more jobs and generate additional income for the islands.

The meeting was attended by Lt. Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Admiral D. K. Joshi (retd); Administrator of Lakshadweep Shri Dineshwar Sharma, Shri Rajiv Gauba Cabinet Secretary, Shri Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog, Secretaries and senior officials from the Ministries of Home, Commerce, Tribal Affairs, Environment and Forest, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Telecommunications, Shipping, Water Resources, Earth Sciences, New and Renewable Energy were also present.

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