

India announces road-building plan

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(PTI) India unveiled plans to develop 7,603km of road links in the country's North East, with the government saying it was not to rival, but to strengthen links with neighbouring China. *"We are planning to reach every place in this strategic region"*, Minister of State for Defence M Pallam Raju said after a meeting of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO). The North East comprises eight states of the Indian Union: Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. China, as well as building a rail link to Lhasa, has recently built multi-laned highways right up to the Sino-Indian border. *"It is not in response to China rapidly building rail and road infrastructure across the Himalayan heights in Tibet, but to strengthen ties with our neighbour"*, the minister said. He also said that the new plan envisages linking roads to the country's other neighbours Bhutan and Myanmar as well within seven insurgency-affected states in the heartland and in Jammu and Kashmir.

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Website: www.tibetinfonet.net
Phone: +44 (0) 20 300 206 33
Fax: +49 (0) 2238 9494466
Email: tin@tibetinfonet.net