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1. The demand for greater autonomy for Eastern Nagaland districts

Introduction



Last week, after months of a lull, the Nagaland government stated that it was ready to forward its comments on the Centre's draft Memorandum of Settlement on an arrangement for greater autonomy for the state's six eastern districts.

The longtime demand for a separate state or greater autonomy for this region has gained momentum in recent years. For instance, in this year's Lok Sabha polls, the area saw a complete abstention from voting in the region.

The state government's move is expected to set the ball rolling for further deliberation on the matter.

Why the demand for greater autonomy?

Eastern Nagaland refers to the six eastern districts of the state: Kiphire, Longleng, Mon, Noklak, Shamator, and Tuensang. These districts are home to members of seven tribes — Konyak, Khiamniungan, Chang, Sangtam, Tikhir, Phom, and Yimkhiung — and account for more than 30% of the state's population. They also account for 20 of the 60 seats in the Assembly.

A demand for the creation of a separate state of Nagaland's eastern districts has been a long-standing one. It escalated more than a decade ago when the influential Eastern Nagaland People's Organization (ENPO) submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister's Office in November 2010. The group demanded a separate state with special status and provisions owing to a "development deficit" in the region. The lack of development in the region has continued to be the driving force behind the demand for a separate state.

What is the current status of the demand?

The demand flared up again ahead of last year's Nagaland Legislative Assembly polls, which had taken place in February. As early as August 2022, the ENPO passed a resolution to abstain from participating in the Assembly polls unless the separate state demand was met. However, weeks before the state went into polls, the ENPO withdrew the boycott call, citing an assurance from the Union Ministry of Home Affairs that a "mutually agreed solution" would be reached and implemented after the election process.

Since then, there have been several rounds of meetings between the ENPO and the Union Home Ministry. Early this year, the Centre sent a draft Memorandum of Settlement to the Nagaland government and sought its comments. So far, this matter has been halted at this stage.

As a result, the ENPO had called for a boycott of the Lok Sabha elections unless the matter was resolved before the polls and there was close to no voting in the six districts on voting day in April. Both the state government and the ENPO had pointed fingers at each other for the hold-up. The ENPO accused the state government of sitting on the matter and the state government claimed that it had sought deliberations with the ENPO and legislators from the region and that the matter had halted at that stage.

However, last week, Nagaland Parliamentary Affairs Minister K G Kenye said discussions with the ENPO and ENLU (Eastern Nagaland Legislators' Union) took place in the last few weeks following which the government was ready to forward its case to the Centre.

What kind of arrangement for autonomy is being discussed?

According to sources who have been part of meetings between the ENPO and Centre, including a tripartite meeting with representatives of the Nagaland government, the discussions have been towards a "unique arrangement" called 'Frontier Naga Territory' within Nagaland with a separate legislature, and executive and financial powers.

Last week, Nagaland Minister Kenye said the arrangement the state government had discussed was still centred in the state capital Kohima with a regional council based in a headquarter in East Nagaland with power over local issues. He stated that it would be in line with the provision of a regional council for this region that is already contained within Article 371 (A) of the Constitution. However, ENPO President A Chingmak Chang told that ENPO was not privy to the Centre's proposal sent to the state government and would consider it only after the Centre sends it directly to the ENPO.

"The proposal that was sent was sent purely for the state government for its comments. It is up to the state government to send whatever it wants. Once it submits its comments, then the Ministry of Home Affairs can invite the stakeholders and that's when we will discuss the issue. We will discuss only directly with the Centre, not the state government," he said.

What is the provision for a regional council of Eastern Nagaland?

The state of Nagaland was carved out of Assam in 1963 as a result of 16-point agreement between the Naga People's Convention and the Union of India. Special constitutional provision had been provided under Article 371A to the new state which includes provisions for the protection of Naga customary law. Both the agreement and Article 371A have a provision for

the then undivided Tuensang district – which later became the six present districts – to be governed directly by the Governor owing to its relative backwardness. The agreement provided for this arrangement for 10 years “until such time when the tribes in the Tuensang District are capable of shouldering more responsibility of advance system of administration in other parts of the Nagaland.”

Article 371A provided for a regional council for the Tuensang district consisting of 35 members, which would nominate members to the legislative assembly. Later this system was done away with at the end of 10 years in 1973 and it was only then that this region participated for the first time in the state legislative assembly elections.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: Indian Express

2. India's Nutraceutical Industry: Growth, Potential, and Future Prospects

Understanding Nutraceuticals: Definition and Scope

The term "nutraceutical" is a blend of the words "nutrition" and "pharmaceutical." Nutraceuticals are products derived from food sources that offer additional health benefits beyond basic nutritional value. These can range from dietary supplements, fortified foods, and functional foods to beverages and herbal extracts. Unlike conventional foods, nutraceuticals are specifically designed to prevent or manage various diseases and enhance overall well-being.

The nutraceutical category includes:

- **Dietary Supplements:** Capsules, tablets, or powders containing concentrated nutrients, like vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and herbal extracts.
- **Functional Foods:** Foods enriched with additional nutrients or components, like omega-3 in dairy products, to promote health.
- **Probiotics & Prebiotics:** Ingredients that enhance gut health by promoting the growth of beneficial bacteria.
- **Fortified Beverages:** Drinks enriched with vitamins, minerals, or herbal extracts to provide added health benefits.

The Growth of India's Nutraceutical Industry

India's nutraceutical industry has witnessed significant growth in recent years, largely driven by increased consumer awareness of health and wellness. In 2023, the industry was valued at around \$8 billion, and it's projected to reach over \$18 billion by 2027, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 21%.

This surge is fueled by multiple factors:

1. **Rising Health Consciousness:** The COVID-19 pandemic heightened awareness of preventive healthcare. Consumers are now more inclined towards natural and organic supplements.

2. Growing Middle-Class Population: With increased disposable income, a large segment of India's population is willing to invest in health and wellness products.

3. Chronic Lifestyle Diseases: The prevalence of conditions like diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular diseases has pushed consumers towards nutraceuticals for disease management.

4. Government Support & Regulatory Framework: The Indian government has taken steps to regulate and promote the nutraceutical industry. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) plays a key role in standardizing these products, ensuring quality and safety.

Key Players in the Indian Nutraceutical Market

Several companies are leading the growth of India's nutraceutical industry, including:

- **Amway India:** A significant player in dietary supplements.
- **Himalaya Wellness:** Known for herbal formulations.
- **Patanjali Ayurved:** Focuses on Ayurvedic nutraceuticals.
- **Dabur:** Offers a range of health supplements like Chyawanprash and Ayurvedic capsules.
- **Herbalife Nutrition:** Prominent in protein supplements and weight management.

These companies are expanding their product ranges, leveraging e-commerce, and investing in research and development to innovate and stay competitive.

Challenges Facing the Nutraceutical Industry

Despite its potential, India's nutraceutical industry faces several challenges:

1. Regulatory Hurdles: The lack of a clear regulatory framework can lead to inconsistencies in product quality. Though FSSAI has guidelines, the market remains under-regulated compared to pharmaceuticals.

2. High R&D Costs: Developing innovative nutraceutical products requires substantial investment in research and clinical trials, which can be costly for smaller companies.

3. Consumer Misinformation: There's often a lack of clarity about the health benefits and proper usage of nutraceuticals, leading to consumer skepticism.

4. Supply Chain Issues: Ensuring a consistent supply of high-quality raw materials, especially for herbal extracts, can be challenging.

Future Prospects and Trends

The future of India's nutraceutical industry appears promising, driven by several key trends:

1. Personalized Nutrition: With advancements in genomics and data analytics, personalized nutraceuticals tailored to individual health needs are gaining popularity.

2. Ayurvedic and Herbal Supplements: Leveraging India's rich heritage in Ayurveda, companies are developing products that combine traditional wisdom with modern science.

3. Probiotics and Gut Health: As more research highlights the link between gut health and overall well-being, the demand for probiotic products is set to increase.

4. Plant-Based Nutrition: The growing trend towards veganism and plant-based diets is fueling demand for plant-based proteins and supplements.

Conclusion

India's nutraceutical industry is on the brink of a major transformation, driven by a growing focus on preventive healthcare, increasing consumer awareness, and government support. As the industry evolves, it has the potential to not only improve the health of millions but also contribute significantly to the country's economic growth.

For sustainable growth, however, addressing regulatory challenges, investing in research, and enhancing consumer education will be crucial. The nutraceutical industry, when leveraged properly, could play a vital role in positioning India as a global leader in health and wellness.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Economics

Source: PIB

3. Supreme Court Orders Liquidation of Jet Airways as a 'Last Resort'

Background: Debt-Ridden Airline Faces Liquidation



In a significant decision, the Supreme Court of India has directed the liquidation of the grounded airline, Jet Airways, as a "last viable resort." This directive aims to protect the interests of the airline's creditors, employees, and other stakeholders after a failed resolution plan.

Importance of Speedy Resolution

The ruling came from a three-judge Bench led by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud. The court emphasized the need for a speedy resolution or, if that is not possible, a time-bound liquidation process. Justice J.B. Pardiwala, who authored the 169-page judgment, stressed that quick action is necessary to prevent further depreciation of Jet Airways' assets.

Invoking Constitutional Powers for Liquidation

Justice Pardiwala used the Supreme Court's plenary powers under Article 142 of the Constitution to order liquidation, aligning with the guidelines of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) of 2016. The decision was made to ensure the airline's remaining assets do not get "frittered away."

Unique Circumstances Justify Liquidation

The court noted the "peculiar and alarming circumstances" surrounding the case, particularly the fact that nearly five years had passed since the resolution plan was approved by the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) without significant progress. Given the prolonged delay, the Supreme Court concluded that liquidation was the only viable solution.

Directions to NCLAT for Appointing Liquidator

The Supreme Court has instructed the NCLAT, Mumbai to appoint a liquidator and complete all necessary formalities for the liquidation process. The court clarified that liquidation, in this instance, would not contradict the principles of the IBC but would instead uphold its goals by ensuring timely resolution.

Background of the Case: Failed Resolution Plan

The judgment was based on an appeal filed by Jet Airways' creditors, led by the State Bank of India, challenging an earlier NCLAT decision from March. The appellate tribunal had previously upheld the transfer of ownership to the Successful Resolution Applicant (SRA), a consortium led by Murari Lal Jalan and Florian Fritsch.

This liquidation order marks a turning point for Jet Airways, which has been grounded since 2019 due to severe financial distress. The move is seen as a final attempt to recover dues and protect the interests of creditors and employees.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Economics

Source: Indian Express