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DEBATES OF THE ASSAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, the 30th May, 2006

The House met at 9 A.M. of the Clock in the Assembly Chamber at Dispur with **Shri Prithibi Majhi**, Speaker in the Chair.

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE CHAIR

Mr. Speaker : Hon'ble Members present, His Excellency the Governor of Assam will address the House today at 9-10 A.M. He is alighting in the main porch of the Assembly Premises at 9-08 A.M. Myself, Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly will be going to receive him at the porch. The instructions as to how the Governor is to be received in the House have been laid on each Member's table. As soon as the Governor arrives in the House, I think, we should comply with these instructions. In the mean time, the address will be distributed to the Members.

With your permission, I, now, leave the House to receive the Hon'ble Governor at the main porch. (Mr. Speaker, Hon'ble Chief Minister and Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly left the House to receive His Excellency, the Governor of Assam at the Main Porch of the Assam Legislative Assembly Building).

(His Excellency the Governor, of Assam along with

Hon'ble Speaker, Hon'ble Chief Minister and Secretary, Assam legislative Assembly arrived in the House at 09.09 hours and the National Anthem was played. All within the Chamber stood in their seats till the playing of the National Anthem. After National Anthem everybody took their respective seats.)

Mr. Speaker : Now, I request His Excellency, the Governor of Assam to address the House.

GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

Hon'ble Governor : Mr. Speaker and Hon'ble Members of the Legislative Assembly,

I welcome all the Honourable Members to the first session of the twelfth Assam Legislative Assembly. I also congratulate the people of Assam for having voted back the previous government to power along with the BPPF (H). I am confident that through our collective efforts we will be able to renew our pledge to the people of Assam and take Assam forward from one milestone to another.

When the previous government had taken over the reins of the State in May 2001, Assam was in the midst of a multitude of problems. While the problem of under development was assuming alarming proportions, a severe financial crisis was restricting its capacity to

intervene effectively through planned development. Assam was going through a turbulent phase with extremism continuing unabated and killings, abduction and extortion becoming the order of the day. The government machinery lacked efficiency and there was a need for making it transparent and accountable.

During the last five years these problems have been significantly addressed. My Government is no longer dependent on frequent resort to over draft and has not availed of this facility since April 2005. After many years the financial year 2005-06 ended with a sizeable positive cash balance. Treasury payments have become fully normal throughout the month. Arrear salary liabilities of the employees and long outstanding liabilities against works and supplies have been cleared. The defaulted Bonds of Assam State Electricity Board have been fully paid off.

This improved financial position is reflected in the fact that the size of the State Plan has more than doubled during the last five years and stands at Rs 3,507 crores during the current annual plan. It is also indicative of a general improvement of the economy. The growth rate of GSDP (at constant 1993-94 prices) in the State during the first three years of the Xth Plan increased to 5.40% as compared to 2.84% and 3.04% growth rate of the VIIIth and the IXth Five Year Plans. As per advance estimates, this growth rate of GSDP has risen to 6.13% (at constant prices) in 2005-06.

The law and order situation has also showed a remarkable improvement. Negotiations have been initiated with a number of insurgent groups and ceasefire achieved. The peaceful conduct of the 2004 parliamentary elections and the 2006 assembly elections indicates

a significant improvement in the law and order situation. During the last five years elections have also been held to the Panchayati Raj Institutions and to the Urban Local Bodies to bring in increased people's participation. Even before the Central Act on the Right to Information came into force, the state government enacted a Right to Information Act to promote transparency and accountability. To improve governance the Assam Administrative Reforms Commission was set up and action initiated on its recommendations.

A number of innovative measures were taken for the benefit of the people. These include the KALPATARU scheme for income generating activities, the Rajiv Gandhi Computer Literacy Programme for providing computers to schools, the Ananda Ram Barua Award Scheme for giving computers to students obtaining 1st division, the GYANJYOTI scheme for taking students for educational excursions, the DHARAMJYOTI scheme for taking elderly people for pilgrimage and the Mukhya Mantrir Jivan Jyoti Bima Achoni for giving the benefit of insurance to the people.

The people of Assam have appreciated these actions. My Government is however aware that much is yet to be done. It dedicates itself to the twin goals of peace and development. It will continue to take action to bring insurgent groups to the negotiating table. It would ensure that the pace of development in diverse sectors of the economy would be increased and industrialisation accelerated.

My Government would seek a special package from the Government of India for the Tea Tribes, Plain Tribes, Minorities and people living in the Char Areas in order to bring down illiteracy and improve their

economic position. My Government would also consider measures for improving the conditions of the poorer sections of other communities.

LAW & ORDER SITUATION

Due to the relentless efforts made in the last five years, Assam is witnessing today a remarkable improvement in the law and order situation. A number of extremist outfits like the Adivasi Cobra Militant Force, Birsa Commando Force, United Peoples Democratic Solidarity and Dima Halam Daugha have already declared a cease-fire and have expressed willingness to solve their problems through dialogue. The NDFB has also responded to the call for peace and has given up the path of violence and signed the ceasefire agreement in May 2005, which has been extended for another six months with effect from 1.6.2006.

We appreciate that the BLT had realised that development can take place only through the democratic process. With the signing of the Bodo Accord in the year 2004 an era of peace and development has started in the Bodo dominated areas of the State. My Government is committed to the implementation of the Bodo Accord to ensure lasting peace and economic development in these areas. The United Liberation Front of Assam has appointed a Peoples Consultative Group for initiating talks with the Government of India. Two rounds of talks have already taken place between the Government of India and the Peoples Consultative Group. These are welcome developments in the interest of our people and for our economic development. It would be the endeavour of my Government to continue all efforts to ensure that peace prevails in the State

IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSAM ACCORD

My Government is making all efforts for speedy implementation of the Assam Accord. Towards this end, a Tripartite Meeting was chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 5th May 2005 and another by the Union Home Minister on 2nd January 2006. Meetings of the Tripartite Sub-committee and Bipartite Meeting with AASU were also held.

The process of updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC), 1951 has started on 1.9.2005 and it is to complete within two years. For this purpose, my Government has created a separate Directorate. Government of India has sanctioned 21 additional Foreigner's Tribunals. We are committed to the identification and deportation of foreigners as per the Assam Accord. Action for such identification and deportation is going on with March 1971 as the cut off date, and by a judicial process through the Foreigner's Tribunals. So far, no complaint of harassment has been received and my Government assures to give full protection to all genuine citizens of India.

A proposal for modernisation of the Jyoti Chitrabhan Film Studio (phase-III) has already been submitted to the Government of India and their approval awaited. Out of a proposal for preservation and maintenance of 30 historical monuments, the Archaeological Survey of India would preserve 5 monuments and request for central funding has already been made for the remaining 25 monuments. For the purpose of take over of the Ashok Paper Mill by the Hindustan Paper Mill, the Government of India has been requested to fund the engagement of a consultant.

AGRICULTURE

My Government aims at 4% growth per annum in agriculture and allied sector for the next decade to provide food security and to improve nutritional intake of the people of the State as well as to significantly decrease the population below the poverty line. My Government would implement the recommendations of the Committee headed by Dr D. N. Barthakur, Ex-Vice Chancellor, AAU to double the income of the farmers. It also aims at increasing the productivity of all major crops particularly rice, wheat, pulses, oil seeds and also the diversification of agriculture into other crops particularly horticulture crops.

My Government has taken up a diversification programme from paddy to other high valued crops like wheat, pulses and oilseeds during the Rabi season and also to horticultural crops. Horticulture sector is the priority area in the pursuit of diversification of crops. Under the aegis of the Technology Mission of Horticulture, area expansion programme of 13,432 hectares had been taken up under various horticultural crops. In order to generate quality-planting materials, 60 small and 15 big nurseries have been developed in the State. For the development of aromatic and medicinal plants, so far 155 hectares of land has been covered under patchouli cultivation.

Agricultural Mechanisation is a pre-requisite in rain fed farming. The use of power tillers and tractors by the farmers is gaining popularity as it enables timely sowing during the Rabi season. Towards this end 554 tractors and 2,412 power tillers have already been distributed and my Government proposes to continue this policy.

After the successful completion of ARIASP, a new World Bank

assisted programme called the Assam Agricultural Competitiveness Project (AACP) has been taken up for a period of 5 years from 2004-05. Under this programme it is proposed to install 60,000 Shallow Tube Wells and 20,000 Low Lift Pumps at 30% subsidy. Further, under the Farm Mechanisation Programme it is proposed to facilitate multiple cropping through well organized Agro-Service Groups by distributing 750 tractors and 1,500 power tillers at 30% subsidy.

In order to strengthen the agricultural extension in the State, the Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) model extension has been initiated in 23 districts of Assam. The extension system would now address new issues like marketing, social capital formation, group dynamics and natural resource management. For strengthening the marketing infrastructure the State Marketing Board has set up 25 Rural Retail Markets and two Wholesale Markets under the Technology Mission on Horticulture.

It is the endeavour of my Government to ensure greater flow of credit to the farming community for their economic upliftment. It is expected that the flow of credit to the agriculture and allied sector will get a boost with the recent merger of the Regional Rural Banks in the State. Priority has been given to the distribution of Kisan Credit Card and so far 2.50 lakh Kisan Credit Cards have been distributed with a total disbursement of Rs 249.23 crores.

IRRIGATION

Against an irrigation potential of 27 lakh hectares in Assam, so far 6.8 lakh hectares have been irrigated. There are six ongoing major and medium irrigation projects and 1,180 ongoing minor irrigations

schemes. Over the past five years, four major/medium irrigation schemes, namely, Hawaipur Irrigation Project, Rupahi Irrigation Project, Bordikorai Irrigation Project and Integrated Irrigation Scheme in Kollong river basin have been completed. Twenty-three community micro-lift irrigation schemes have also been completed extending irrigation facilities to 268 hectares.

Twenty-two ongoing minor irrigation schemes under the Rural Infrastructural Development Fund (RIDF-X) have been taken up and another 14 schemes under RIDF-XI with NABARD funding are proposed to be taken up. Under the Bharat Nirman programme of the Government of India, it is contemplated to cover 1,12,471 hectares through major/medium and minor irrigation schemes by the year 2009 at a cost of Rs 402 crores.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY & VETERINARY

Animal Husbandry is an important sector to improve the socio-economic condition of the people especially in the rural areas. It is also important for increasing the per capita consumption rates of animal protein by the human population. Towards this end a number of schemes are under implementation for providing artificial insemination, poultry development and pig rearing. The Swarnadhenu scheme is an important programme for developing high yielding cattle. Under the Self-Employment Generation Programme named as Gopal Mitra, a four-month training is given to unemployed youth for delivering services to the livestock owners in the villages.

Dairy development has been given a special thrust. At present the per capita availability of milk in the State is below 90 gm per day

and is far below the national average. Emphasis has been given on programmes to enhance milk production through self-employment schemes. A Central Sector project with a total cost of Rs 12.76 crores covering ten districts is under operation, where some new dairy plants have been established and existing ones have been renovated and upgraded. Farmers are being organised into Dairy Cooperatives Societies and required inputs provided to them.

FISHERIES

My Government will give priority to achieve self-sufficiency in fish production by giving a thrust to quality fish seed production, development of derelict water bodies and capacity building. The Assam Fisheries Development Corporation has already developed 34 beels under the World Food Programme and 46 beels under the World Bank Project (ARIASP). Twenty-two Departmental Farms have been upgraded for production of quality fish seed during the last financial year. Further, 960 hectares of private ponds and tanks have been developed under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Aquaculture Development under the Fish Farmers Development Agencies, giving self-employment to 2,400 farmers.

The training of farmers, members of Self Help Groups and NGOs on fish-culture practices, post-harvest technology and construction of fibre-glass canoes in collaboration with the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Kochi has been taken up and 4,375 beneficiaries have been trained up to December 2005. Relief to fishermen under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Savings-cum-Relief has also been taken up to benefit 1,688 fishermen during the year 2005-06. My Government

proposed to continue with these measures

PANCHAYAT & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The National Food for Work Programme and the Sampoorna Gramini Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) are being implemented for providing food security and employment generation in rural Assam. In February 2006 the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has been launched in 7 districts of Assam, which guarantees employment of 100 days to eligible adult persons and rural households who are willing to do unskilled works. It is proposed to extend this scheme to the entire State within a period of two years.

My Government considers the Self Help Groups (SHG) to be important instruments to bring in sustainable development. So far 1,11,842 SHGs have been formed through the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana out of which 35,571 SHGs have been provided with revolving fund and 17,427 SHGs have been provided with bank loans for sustaining their livelihoods. Adequate measures have been taken and funds provided to the SHGs to acquire agricultural equipments and for marketing of rural items like, handicrafts, artisan works etc.

The Integrated Wasteland Development Project now named as the Haryali Scheme has provided adequate funds for the improvement of wastelands and given benefits to the farmers by upgrading and improving their agricultural land enabling them to attain high yields in agricultural products. Under the Indira Awas Yojana it is proposed to ensure complete rural housing for the BPL families within the forthcoming years along the ideals of the Bharat Nirman launched by the Government

of India.

CO-OPERATION

My Government is taking steps for making the cooperative institutions in the State member-driven, member-owned and democratically managed. With this end in view it is proposed to repeal the Assam Cooperative Societies Act 1949 and bring in a new Act to be drafted on the lines of the Model Cooperative Societies Act. To assist the strengthening of the short term cooperative credit structures, my Government proposes to implement the scheme formulated by the Government of India for revitalisation and strengthening the short term cooperative credit structure based on the recommendation of the Baidyanathan Committee.

An amount of Rs 175 lakhs has been released to the West Assam Producers Cooperative Society Ltd. (WAMUL) for implementation of the rehabilitation scheme. WAMUL has already made an impact in the market with its PURABI brand of dairy products. Steps have been taken to revive APOL, the ASCARD Bank, the Assam Cooperative Apex Bank and the Sivasagar District Central Cooperative Bank. STATEFED on the other hand has failed to function viably and there is no scope for its revival.

My Government is of the view that without strong primary Cooperative Societies at the grass root level the Federations and State level cooperatives cannot become strong and viable. Accordingly the focus would be on strengthening the primary cooperative societies, particularly the GPSS and Multipurpose Women Cooperative Societies in the State. This shall be done through appropriate legislative reform,

policy and financial support

SOIL CONSERVATION

My Government is implementing schemes aimed at the management of land and water resources on a sustainable basis. It is also engaged in implementation of programmes related to the control of shifting cultivation in the two hill districts of the State by providing alternative cultivation practices like horticulture, cash crop development etc. to wean away the jhumias from the harmful practices of shifting cultivation. Attention is also being given to prevent soil erosion of hillocks in and around urban areas through soil conservation measures.

A scheme is under implementation to treat the catchment of flood prone rivers will soil conservation measures for conserving the topsoil and moisture for increased production on a sustained basis. This scheme has been implemented in the catchments of Singla Flood Prone River in Karimganj district and in the Dhansiri Flood Prone River in Golaghat district. The Integrated Wasteland Development Project is also under implementation with the objective of developing wastelands and degraded lands by adopting various soil and water conservation measures.

ENVIRONMENT & FOREST

My Government is committed to maintaining the environment and the ecology of the State. Even while our forests continue to be under severe biotic pressures, it is our endeavour to conserve them and to simultaneously take measures for the welfare of those dependent on forest resources. A significant policy shift in this direction has been the

emphasis on capacity building and involvement of people living in and around the fringes of the forests. This has been done through the Joint Forest Management initiative under which 28 Forest Development Agencies were sanctioned. To facilitate this process the Joint Forest Management Rules have been formulated.

My Government has taken up a pilot project for Natural Resources Management & Integrated Livelihood under World Bank funding. This is expected to usher in a new era in forest management. A new Cane and Bamboo Policy has been adopted which proposes to set up nurseries and plantation of bamboo in the State. The State Forest Policy has also been published.

My Government has laid emphasis on plantation activities. An innovative project namely, Seuj Prakalpa has been launched for greening the degraded and open areas with the help of NGOs, institutions, corporate bodies etc. all over Assam. Till date 37,375 hectares of plantation has been cover through Forest Development Agencies, Seuj Prakalpa, Social Forestry and Afforestation schemes.

PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

There are 48 State Public Enterprises under the administrative control of 22 departments of my Government. Out of these, 5 are performing well, 7 have an improving trend in their performance. 14 remain inoperative and 22 are ailing. A Reform Programme has been taken up which incorporates revival or closure of selected enterprises. A Committee set up by the state government has already gone into this matter in respect of 33 enterprises and has recommended 10 enterprises for closure, 17 for revival, 4 for merger and 2 for further

study by the National Cooperative Development Corporation. The cost of closure of enterprises having huge liabilities towards employees, financial institutions, and suppliers as well as on account of statutory dues is being largely met from the funds available from the Asian Development Bank under the Assam Governance & Public Resource Management Programme. A Social Safety Net Programme has also been taken up for affected employees.

INDUSTRY & COMMERCE

With the congenial atmosphere for investment that has now come in, accelerating the pace of industrial growth in Assam would be an area of priority for my Government. The existing policies and procedures would be reviewed to achieve this objective. My Government will pursue with the Government of India to re-introduce special incentives for the North Eastern Region to make the North East Industrial Policy 1997 attractive for investors vis-a-vis other states.

The Assam Gas Cracker Project will be set up as a joint sector project with an equity arrangement of 70% by GAIL, 10% by OIL, 10% by NRL and 10% by AIDC and with a project cost of Rs 5460.61 crores. My Government will like to thank the Hon'ble Prime Minister for sanctioning this long pending project. It will leave no stone unturned to facilitate expeditious implementation of this project. Training will be provided to the local youth to enable their engagement in the Gas Cracker Project and its down stream industries. It is estimated that the downstream industries of the Assam Gas Cracker Project will provide employment to about one lakh persons. A study has been proposed to be conducted through a national consultant for advising

on the down stream product industries that can be set up.

With the view to provide various facilities to the entrepreneurs, eight Integrated Infrastructure Development Projects are being set up at Bhomoraguri, Dalgaon, Malinibeel, Demow, Titabor, Rangia, Nalbari and Bandardewa. Three Industrial Growth Centres are being set up at Matia, Chariduar and Chaygaon-Patgaon. Two Border Trade Centres are also being set up at Sutarkandi in Karimganj district and Mancachar in Dhubri district. Under the Chief Minister's Swa Niyojan Yojana 1,228 numbers of educated unemployed youth have been trained in various industrial ventures at reputed industrial houses outside the State. Out of these 78 youth have already been absorbed in industries outside and within the State. This is an important scheme for my Government and emphasis will continue to be given to it.

My Government welcomes the Tea Package recently announced by the Government of India. This package will help the tea industry, which has been going through difficult times for quite some time. The problem faced by the small tea growers has also come to the notice of my Government. It is proposed to form cooperative societies among the small tea growers and mobilise funds for their development along with making the prices of green leaves more remunerative. Tea growers will be encouraged to go in for production of organic tea and diversify into cultivation of medicinal plants.

HANDLOOM & TEXTILES

The handloom sector occupies a place second only to Agriculture in providing livelihood to the people. It is estimated that about 13.22 lakh looms provide direct or indirect employment to 23.22 lakh people.

Thirty- three percent of the weavers are within the cooperative fold and the rest are unorganised. The Self Help Groups and NGOs are increasingly organising the unorganised sector. The Assam Apex Weavers & Artisans Cooperative Federation (ARTFED) and Assam Government Marketing Corporation are engaged in promoting handlooms within and outside the state. ARTFED has also given a boost to export of Assam handlooms abroad.

My Government is implementing the Boyanjyoti programme for generating greater employment opportunities with a coverage of 3,84,615 handloom weavers during 2005-06 at a cost of Rs 20 crores. A number of Centrally Sponsored Schemes are also extending benefits to the weavers like, the Project Package Scheme, Integrated Handloom Village Development Project, Handloom Development Centre, Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana, Health Package Scheme, Handloom Export Scheme and the Integrated Handloom Training Programme.

My Government has focused its efforts on eri and muga varieties of silk, which are almost exclusively grown in Assam. These silks have good export markets and efforts are on to produce quality silk at competitive prices. A total of 10,419 families have been supported in raising systematic silk plantation up to now and about 3,400 rearing houses constructed. Efforts have been made to improve the delivery system in sericulture services by involving NGOs and private entrepreneurs. For development of sericulture in the BTC areas a project entitled 'Thaokri' is being implemented at an estimated cost of Rs 27.50 crores over a period of three years with effect from 2005-06.

HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE

My Government is committed to deliver quality healthcare services to the people of the State with special care towards the socially and economically weaker sections of the society. Our aim is to initiate several reform measures in this sector to make it more transparent and people friendly and to achieve the goal of Better Health For All.

Strengthening and improvement of the infrastructure by constructing 3,000 Nos. of Sub-Centre Buildings, quarters for ANMs, State Dispensaries, Mini PHCs, Nurses Training Centres and Subsidiary Health Centres including quarters for officials. Setting up of modern diagnostic facilities in the District Hospitals in line with the Regional Diagnostic Centres already set up in the 6 districts, improvement of healthcare delivery services through the district and sub-divisional hospitals and popularising the 'Janak Suraksha Yojana' would be given emphasis by my Government.

Besides the normal immunisation programmes, emphasis on immunisation against encephalitis will be given for which the Sivasagar and Dibrugarh districts have been specially selected. For expanding the Ayurvedic healthcare facilities, separate Ayurvedic wings will be set up in the 24 districts hospitals and further extended to the Sub-divisional and CHC level. Three Cancer Detection Centres would be set up. Roogi Sahayak Nivas are proposed to be set up in the Medical Colleges and District Hospitals.

My Government will continue to vigorously implement the schemes under the National Rural Health Mission, which are already in operation in the State. The Hospital Autonomy Scheme would be streamlined

upto the PHC level empowering the local committees for contractual engagements, managing of health institutions and monitoring their functioning including conducting social audit. Special attention will be given to provide safe drinking water to communities residing in areas having excess arsenic and fluoride.

Computerisation of Drugs and Logistic Systems will be made and a Manual for Procurement and Supply prepared. Help Line and Grievance Cells will be set up in all the Medical Colleges and Civil Hospitals. The three existing Medical Colleges will be upgraded and basic infrastructural development of the three proposed medical colleges at Jorhat, Tezpur and Barpeta would be taken up. The M.D.S. course would be started in the Regional Dental College, Guwahati.

The spread of malaria has been a cause of deep concern for my Government. It has taken a number of steps to combat the outbreak of malaria on a war footing. Intensive spraying of DDT, fogging in urban areas, mass blood slide collection and examination through mobile teams, mass radical treatment by involving NGOs, PRIs etc. are some such steps. All district health authorities under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioners are closely monitoring the anti-malarial activities and providing necessary life saving drugs round the clock to the affected people. My Government will take all actions to prevent recurrence of such epidemics in the future.

PUBLIC WORKS

During the period from 2001-06, substantial progress was achieved in the construction and improvement of Roads, Bridges and Buildings. In the rural road sector under PMGSY, 1,558 km of roads, 79 nos.

of bridges were completed and 2,043.48 km of roads, 404 nos. of bridges are in progress. Similarly under State Plan, 504 km of roads and 3 nos. of RCC bridges were completed. Under Centrally Sponsored Scheme, 2,078 Km of roads, 150 nos. of RCC bridges were completed and construction of 337 Km of Roads, 224 nos. of RCC bridges are in progress.

Construction of two fly-overs at Bhangagarh and at Sixth Mile in the Guwahati has already started. Construction of the 'Kar Bhawan', several buildings under GAD, Sewerage Treatment Plant at GMC, several health centres and renovation of three Medical Colléges has been successfully completed. Besides, the Games Centre, Game Village for National Games, Darbar Hall at Rajbhawan and Additional High Court Building are in an advance stage of construction.

Under the "Special Accelerated Road Development Programme" for the State of Assam, the National Highway 37 from Nagaon to Dibrugarh covering a length of 315 km would be widened to 4-lane by NHAI. My Government will continue to pursue with the Government of India for extending the 4-laning of National Highway 37 from Dibrugarh to Joyrampur. The Government of India has declared the "Stillwell Road" as National Highway 153 in 2000. The Assam portion of the Stillwell Road from Lekhapani (0 km) to Joyrampur (24th km) has been included under "Special Accelerated Road Development Programme" for which a proposal has already been sent to the Government of India for Rs. 4297.28 lakh.

PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING

My Government has given priority to the provision of safe drinking

water. Against a total number of 70,669 habitations in the State, 65,722 habitations are Fully Covered, 4,803 habitations are Partially Covered and 144 habitations are Not Covered. During 2006-07 it is proposed to cover the remaining 144 Not Covered habitations and 2020 Partially Covered habitations with safe drinking water. Problem's of Habitations affected by Arsenic, Fluoride and Iron will be addressed in a phased manner.

The Mukhya Mantrir Khowa Pani Jogan Abhijan is under implementation with the aim to extend immediate relief to remote rural areas. Under this 14,660 hand pumps or ring wells have been installed during 2005-06. Drinking water supply schemes are also being taken up under the Swajaldhara Scheme and the Prime Minister's 15th August Announcement Programme funded by the Government of India.

EDUCATION

My Government places high priority on education. It would bring in systemic changes to ensure that education imparted is linked to the demands of the economy and caters to the job market. It would also focus on the improvement of quality of education at all levels so as to build a learning and productive society.

The Government of India has taken up a programme to improve and upgrade select universities and make them globally competitive. My Government would take up with the Government of India for selection of the Gauhati University for development as a Centre of Excellence under this programme. Action is being taken to secure a Deemed University status for the Cotton College and for making the Kokrajhar College into a Government College. The University Grants

Commission has prepared an Action Plan for comprehensive development of Collegiate and University education in the State. My Government would pursue with the Government of India for providing special financial assistance to implement this Action Plan.

To promote learning in premier institutions within the country, a Corpus Fund of Rs 1.00 crores has been created under the Chief Minister's Interest Free Education Loan Scheme to give interest free loans to meritorious students of the State for studying in institutions like, the Indian Institute of Management, Indian Institute of Technology and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. To promote distance education, the Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University Act, 2005 has been passed for setting up of a State Open University. My Government has also proposed to introduce a 5-year LLB course in the Government Law College, Guwahati. The Government of India has approved the setting up of a National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) in Assam.

My Government has provincialised the services of the teaching and non-teaching staffs of the colleges in receipt of grants-in-aid in the State through the passing of the Assam College Employees (Provincialisation) Act 2005. This Act has met one of the major long-standing demands of the teaching community by providing them post retirement security. A separate Directorate for Madrassa Education has been set up recently for facilitating all round development of madrassa education in the State.

The Sarba Siksha Abhijan has been going on since 2001-02 with the aim to achieve universalisation of elementary education in a time

bound manner. From the year 2003-04, free text books have been distributed to the children of classes I to VII. About 65.74 lakh children enrolled have been covered. For the session 2006 so far, 3.2 crore books have been printed in 15 languages of the State. Under this programme during the year 2006-07, it is proposed to take up construction of 30,000 additional classrooms, 204 new school buildings, 967 toilets and 788 urban schools for providing drinking water. The cooked Mid-Day Meal Scheme has been implemented in the State since September 2004.

SOCIAL WELFARE

Education of disabled students, rehabilitation services to the disabled persons, care and protection of children who are destitute or in conflict with the law and the empowerment of women are thrust areas of my Government. Emphasis is also being given to the improvement of the nutritional status of women, for encouraging self-employment opportunities to adolescent girls and for taking up health security measures for the old and infirm.

In the field of nutrition, there are 219 Integrated Child Development Projects comprising 32,075 Anganwadi Centres, which are presently in operation. Supplementary nutrition is being provided at a unit cost of Rs 2.00 per child per day, Rs. 2.70 per severely malnourished child per day and Rs 2.30 per women per day.

FOOD & CIVIL SUPPLIES

The Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) presently under implementation was initially launched in 2001 with a view to provide PDS rice at a

subsidised rate to the poor. Under the scheme 35 kgs of rice at the rate of Rs 3/- per kg is distributed per family per month. Till date 7,00,503 beneficiaries have been covered under this Scheme. Another scheme under implementation is the Randhanjyoti Scheme that targets one-lakh beneficiaries for providing free LPG single bottle connection to widows, other female members of BPL families and SHG members. Under this scheme total number of 80,005 beneficiaries have been benefitted.

A pilot project namely Jana Kerosene Pariyojana has been taken up in 34 blocks of the state to ensure delivery of the kerosene to the beneficiaries. Under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 steps have been taken for ensuring the protection of rights of the consumers through the setting of the Assam State Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission and the 23 District Consumer Redressal Forum in the State.

BORDER AREAS

Assam has an extensive inter state border of 2100 kms and an international border of 263 kms with Bangladesh and 269 kms with Bhutan. People living in both the inter state and international border have distinctive and specific nature of problems related to infrastructure as well as security. A Border Areas Development Programme with 100% special Central Assistance is under implementation with the objectives of balanced development through adequate provision of infrastructure and promotion of a sense of security amongst the local population. The major priorities are the provision of safe drinking water, road communication and provision of facilities for health and education. In the Indo-Bangladesh border areas schemes for construction of raised

platforms and for shelter of flood affected people and livestock have also been taken up. From 2001-02 to 2004-05 a total of 573 schemes have been implemented at a cost of Rs 27.43 crores and another 165 schemes are under implementation. Schemes have also been taken up under the Decentralised Plan for improvement of roads, drinking water provision, construction of bridges, electrification of border villages etc. My Government proposes to continue with these schemes.

WELFARE OF SC/ST & BACKWARD CLASSES

My Government is committed to the all round development of the SC, ST, OBC and MOBC communities living in the State. It would continue to take up need based and area based family oriented income generating schemes for families of these communities living below the poverty line. The youths of these communities will be provided training inside and outside the State for acquiring technical skills for self-employment. Importance will be given for development of infrastructure in areas inhabited by the ST and SC communities for improvement of their quality of life. A major programme will be launched with Central Assistance for economic development of tribal people living in the Forest villages.

Keeping in mind the demands of the various communities living in the state, my Government has constituted new Autonomous Councils for the Thengal Kacharies, the Sonowal Kacharies and the Deoris. This is in addition of the existing Autonomous Councils for the Rabha-Hasongs, Tiwa-Lalungs and the Mishings in the plain areas. All efforts will be made to strengthen these Autonomous Councils and elections to the newly created Autonomous councils will be held.

My Government is committed to the full and expeditious implementation of the Bodo Accord. Elections to the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) have been duly conducted and the BTC is functioning. The functions of 39 development departments have been entrusted and delegated to the BTC and development activities are being undertaken. The three newly created districts of Udalguri, Baska and Chirang have started functioning from their respective head quarters.

My Government would continue to pursue with the Government of India to classify the Adivasi Tea Tribes, Ahoms, Mattaks, Morans, Koch Rajbongshis and Chutias as Scheduled Tribes. The Assam Institute of Research for Tribals and Scheduled Castes will be strengthened to take up socio-economic survey of the communities for their future planning and development.

TEA TRIBES WELFARE

My Government gives priority to the welfare of tea tribes. The Assam Gratuity Fund Scheme has been launched in October 2005 for the purpose of covering gratuity payments to the tea workers. Provisions have also been made for insurance linked gratuity to them. For the benefit of the tea tribes a separate tea Tribes Welfare Department was created during 2004. Through this department various schemes are being implemented for their development like, the family oriented income generating schemes, post and pre-matric scholarships, grants to non-governmental educational institutions, grants to non-governmental organisations, grants for cultural activities including educational tours, construction of girls' and boys' hostels, construction of rest house-cum-cultural centre etc.

WELFARE OF MINORITIES

My Government proposes to pay special attention to the Char Areas by taking up specific programmes. Such programmes include the introduction of mechanised farming by providing power tillers, pump sets and quality seeds; introducing backyard poultry farming by providing improved variety of birds; introducing Mura Buffalo for milk production on a commercial basis; taking up plantation schemes for prevention of soil erosion and soil upgradation; and development of marketing through river transport communication.

It is further proposed to train youth from the minority community both inside and outside the state to acquire technical skills for self-employment and provide them financial assistance for taking up micro level enterprises. Family oriented income generating schemes will also be taken up.

TOURISM

Tourism is a vibrant sector of the economy and has a lot of potential to generate employment and earn revenue. In the last five years, tourist inflow has more than doubled due to aggressive marketing. In the domestic tourism sector, the inflow has increased from 10,10,651 in 2001 to 23,77,004 in December 2005 and the number of foreign tourists has increased from 6,171 in 2001-2002 to 10,326 in December 2005.

Tourism infrastructure has been developed with the help of Central assistance. This includes development of circuits like sanctuary circuits of Kaziranga and Manas, integrated tourism development circuits from

Dhubri to Karimganj, Kamakhya to Hajo and destination development of historic towns like Sivasagar and Majuli. To show case the tourism products of Assam, a number of fairs and festivals have been organised like the Kaziranga Elephant Festival, Tea Tourism Festival, Barak Utsav, Travel and Tourism Expo 2005 and Dihing Patkai Eco-Tourism Festival.

My Government would continue with its emphasis on tourism. It proposes to develop better infrastructure by bringing in reputed hotel groups for construction of a five star hotel in Guwahati and budget hotels at Guwahati, Jorhat, Tezpur and Dibrugarh. It proposes to continue with the Chief Minister's Self-Help Tourism Scheme, which includes promotion of tourist taxis and setting up of wayside amenity centres and dhabas and has a 20% contribution from the state government against 70% bank loan and 10% entrepreneurs' contribution.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

For the cultural development of the State a cultural policy was formulated and declared in January 2006. This policy envisages the promotion and preservation of the culture of the various ethnic groups and indigenous tribes and communities living in Assam. It also provides for the promotion and preservation of the ancient monuments and historical sites in Assam. My Government is committed to implement this policy for the overall cultural development of State.

During 2005-06, Rs. 25 lakhs each was sanctioned for the preservation of the Madhupur, Barpeta and Batadrava Satras. Schemes are under implementation for the preservation and protection of Archaeological sites at Charaideo Maidam, Madan Kamdev, Baihata Chariali and Nazira-Khat. The Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra Trust

has been instituted for the promotion and preservation of the ethnic culture of the State.

As a mark of recognition and appreciation to the different prominent personalities for their contribution in the field of Art and Cultures a number of awards have been instituted. These are the Sankardeva Award, the Azan Peer Award, the Silpi Award, the Natasurja Phani Sarma Award and the Bishnu Rabha Award. Sometime back a few new awards have been instituted like the Fakkarruddin Ali Award, Mahavir Chilarai Award and the Su-Ka-Pha Award.

In order to facilitate the production of regional films the Assam Film Policy Rules have been modified to accommodate refund of 80% amusement tax to the film producers and 20% to the Assam Film (Finance & Development) Corporation. Film Festival and Film Award function has been organised in 2005-06 to promote the regional films.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

To improve the infrastructure of towns, the Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) Scheme is being implemented in Assam. Since 2001-02, thirty-three towns have been covered under this scheme utilising Rs. 12 crores for construction of roads, markets, bus terminals, drains, community halls etc. Special attention will be given to the upgradation of slum areas. To facilitate planned development, from 2001 to 2006 final Master Plans for eight towns have been prepared. These towns are Biswanath Chariali, Magaldoi, Karimganj, Nazira-Simulguri, Sonari, Golaghat, Kokrajhar and Silchar. Since 2001-02, seven new Development Authorities have been constituted for Mangaldoi, Dhubri-Gauripur, Sonari, Dergaon, Karimganj, Biswanath

Chariali and Diphu.

My Government is implementing the Swarna Jayanti Sahari Rojgar Yojana for providing self and wage employment as well as skill development training in urban areas. The Assam State Housing Board has been implementing various housing schemes under the State Plan and from HUDCO assistance. My Government will give priority to the housing for Low and Middle Income Groups. The Assam Urban Water & Sewerage Board has been taking up schemes for providing safe drinking water to the urban people. The Board has taken up water supply schemes in 15 towns under the State Plan and 18 towns under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

GUWAHATI DEVELOPMENT

Guwahati is not only the State capital but is also the Gateway to the North East. It accordingly has special development requirements, which need to be met through careful planning. My Government will take all action for all round development of Guwahati under the National Urban Renewal Mission to be funded by the Government of India. A scheme for augmentation of the existing water supply system in Guwahati is presently under implementation by the Guwahati Municipal Corporation.

The Rajiv Gandhi Sports Complex at Amingaon has been completed. Construction of all Blocks of the New Secretariat Building except Blocks 'D' and 'E' have been completed and offices have started functioning from there. Action has been initiated in respect of the scheme for multi-storied car parking and foot over-bridges.

TRANSPORT

A number of initiatives have been taken to tone up the transport sector in the State. The efforts made for the revival of the Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC) have brought in remarkable results. By offering VRS to its employees, providing its infrastructural facilities to privately owned buses on fare-share basis and taking up other measures to increase its revenue the ASTC, which was making losses earlier, has started generating revenue to the extent of Rs 120 lakhs per month. My Government would continue these efforts to further strengthen the functioning of ASTC.

Employment generation schemes in the name of Rural Cab 2004 and Tourist Cab 2005 have been started. Response to these schemes from all quarters has been overwhelming. During 2005-06 employment was generated for 400 youths through these schemes. These schemes are proposed to be continued. Steps have also been initiated to having composite M.V. Checkgate at Srirampur and Boxirhat where single window system is being introduced. My Government will pursue with the Government of India to strengthen the railway network in Assam.

The Inland Water Transport (IWT) is presently operating 74 numbers of ferry services on the river Brahmaputra, Barak and its tributaries. Several steps have been taken in the IWT sector for attracting foreign and local tourists by introducing 19 floating restaurants and cruise vessels including an exclusive long distance river cruise between Dhubri and Dibrugarh. Indirect employment to 1,412 persons was generated through IWT schemes during 2005-06. Efforts will be made to reach a target of 1,500 of indirect employment in the IWT sector.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

In this sector various schemes and programmes are being implemented in the areas of science & technology, remote sensing environment and non-conventional energy through five agencies namely, the Assam Science, Technology and Environment Council; the Assam Remote Sensing Application Centre; the Assam Energy Development Agency; the Institute of Advance Study in Science and Technology and the Centre for Plasma Physics. It is the aim of my Government to improve the socioeconomic condition of the people through the popularisation of science and technology.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

My Government has been endeavouring to make Information Technology an important tool for providing services to the citizens and for creating gainful employment for the educated unemployed youths of the State. So far 219 Community Information Centres have been set up in the State, which are being manned by trained local youth for providing e-governance services to the citizens. It is proposed to establish 4,000 Common Service Centres, which would be village level kiosks for providing services to the citizens like, providing caste certificates, income certificates, land records, birth and death certificates etc.

Establishing adequate IT infrastructure is an essential prerequisite for providing dispersed and decentralise e-services to the people. Towards this end a major scheme is under implementation for setting up of the Assam State Wide Area Network (ASWAN), which would connect the State headquarters with the district headquarters, the district

headquarters to the block headquarters and finally to the village level Common Service Centres.

The IT sector has been identified as an important sector to bring in investments into the State and to provide productive employment to our youth. With this end in view the Assam Electronic Development Corporation (AMTRON) has held discussions with several companies with a view to enabling them to set up their establishments in Guwahati and train the local youth and thereafter tie up their employment opportunities.

HILL AREAS

My Government gives priority to the development of the Hill districts of Assam. For this purpose funds are being timely provided to the Two Autonomous Councils in the Hill areas under the State Plan and the Additive Plan. Special initiative has been taken for increasing the Additive Plan to Rs. 100 crores during 2006-07 from the amount of Rs. 51.11 crores which remained stagnant for the past several years.

In addition to the these plan funds, funds are also provided for Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas, Slum Development, National Social Assistance Programme, National programme for Adolescent Girls and for implementation of schemes under the provisions of the Article 275(1) of the Constitution of India. Under the Bharat Nirman Programme funds have been given for rural roads, rural electrification, elementary education, rural water supply and nutrition.

POWER

Provision of quality power to the people is a priority area for my Government. It would continue with the emphasis on power sector reforms, addition of generation capacity, augmentation of the transmission network and upgradation of the distribution system. Rural electrification will be given priority. Emphasis will also be given on consumer protection and enforcement of safety standards.

The power sector reforms are underway with the reconstructing of the Assam State Electricity Board and its unbundling into five new companies, one for generation, one for transmission and three for distribution. Under the Reforms Programme, massive investment is being made for capacity building and augmentation of the existing transmission and distribution network. The main focus is to reform the whole gamut of power delivery system to ensure quality power and provide improved services to the consumers.

My Government proposes to take steps to increase its own generation capacity. Towards this end it would take all measures for early completion of the ongoing schemes of Karbi Langpi Hydro Electric Project (100 MW) and the Lakhwa Waste Heat Project (38 MW). Since there has been considerable delay in the implementing the 150 MW Lower Kopili Hydro Electric Project by NEEPCO, my Government proposes to implement this project through the Assam Power Generation Company for which the Government of India has already been informed. It is also contemplated to take up another Gas Based Thermal Power Station for implementation. The Hon'ble Prime Minister has laid the

foundation for a new BTPS (500MW) to be implemented by NTPC.

Rural electrification is a priority area for my Government. During the last five years a number of initiatives have been taken to achieve this objective. Under two major schemes funded by the Government of India, namely, PMGY and RE (MNP) the electrification of 547 virgin villages and intensification of 1,915 villages have been taken up. A new scheme namely, Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojana has been launched by the Government of India under which substantial funding is proposed to be taken for providing rural electrification infrastructure and household electrification. Funds are also being availed from the Rural Electrification Corporation for rural electrification.

Under the Chief Minister's Power Supply Assurance Scheme, 23 distribution transformers for each constituency of the State have been provided at a cost of Rs. 26 crores.

MINES & MINERALS

The exploration of minerals and ground water resources as well as administration of minerals and petroleum in the State, including the grant of exploration licenses and mining leases is a continuing activity of my Government. In furtherance of this, detailed exploration of cement-grade limestone would be carried out in New Umrangsho area of N.C. Hills and investigation of coal deposits in Amlokhi and Longloi hills in Karbi Anglong district would be carried out. The reappraisal survey of ground water position in the State including the greater Guwahati area would also be done,

LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT

My Government is concerned about the unemployment position in the State. It is concentrating on augmenting and upgrading the infrastructure in the ITIs to make them better equipped to develop the capacities of the unemployed youth enabling them to take up gainful employment. With this end in view 4 new ITIs have been established at Dibrugarh, Goalpara, Morigaon and Hailakandi under the Prime Minister's package for the North Eastern States. It is further proposed to upgrade 8 ITIs into Centres of Excellence under assistance from the World Bank for an amount of Rs 17.70 crores. These ITIs are at Guwahati, Jorhat, Srikona, Kokrajhar, Nagaon, Tezpur, Dibrugarh and Hailakandi. Such an upgradation will go a long way in improving employment generation in the Instrumentation, Production and Manufacturing, Automobile, Electrical and Electronics sectors.

My Government also proposes to introduce 18 new trades in selected ITIs for which a proposal for Rs 33.27 crores has already been submitted to the Government of India. The Jayanta Madhav Committee has prepared a blueprint for employment in the State. It is proposed to implement the recommendations of this report in a mission mode approach for which an amount of Rs 10 crores has been provided in the current year.

WATER RESOURCES

Flood and erosion are two major problems that affect the economy of the State. Though short-term measures have been taken on a continuous basis, long-term measures are required for a permanent

solution. A Task Force was set up by the Prime Minister of India after his visit to Assam in 2004 to study this problem in its totality. The Task Force has since given its recommendations. It has recommended the taking up of immediate and Short Term measures amounting to Rs 832.74 crores. It has also recommended the setting up of a Authority on the lines of the Tennessee Valley Authority. The Government of India is considering the setting up of such an Authority in the name and style of the North-East Water Resources Authority.

NABARD has sanctioned 19 Flood Management Projects under RIDF XI for Rs 74.37 crores which are proposed to be completed by 2007-08. Action has also been initiated for obtaining loan assistance from the Asian Development Bank for the Assam Integrated Flood Management and River Bank Erosion Mitigation Project amounting to Rs. 2206.141 crores. My Government is also taking measures for availing modern technological assistance from foreign experts through the aegis of the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank.

My Government would continue to pursue with the Government of India for early completion of the Pagladiya and the Tipaimukh Dam Projects to provide flood cushion to the other Dam Projects, which are in the offing. It is also proposed to take up with the Government of India for providing funds to tackle the problem of floods in Guwahati, which is the Gateway to the North East.

SPORTS & YOUTH AFFAIRS

My Government would be hosting the 33rd National Games during October 2006. To host such a mega event is a great honour for our State. World-Class infrastructure has been created to hold the various

events at a cost of Rs 125 crores. Committees of officials and non-officials have been constituted to ensure the smooth conduct of the 33rd National Games. To provide encouragement and technically appropriate coaching for prospective participants from our State, coaches have been sanctioned in different disciplines.

The coaching camps conducted for preparation of the State Teams for participation in the 33rd National Games have yielded good results. The state contingent which participated in the North East Sports Festival held at Kohima during January 2006 has excelled in track and field events as well as indoor Games securing 24 gold medals, 29 silver medals and 20 bronze medals.

Schemes have been taken up for construction of sports infrastructure in different parts of the State. It is also proposed to take up 100 Sport Complexes in the name of Late Rajiv Gandhi in different parts of the State to provide playing facilities for the youth.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS & TRAINING

The Right to Information Act 2005 is being implemented by my Government to bring in transparency in administration. Steps have been initiated to appoint State Public Information Officers and Appellate Authorities as per the provisions of the Act. The Assam State Information Commission has also started functioning.

The recommendations of the Assam Administrative Reforms Commission are under active consideration to improve governance in administration. E-governance has been given priority and some initiative like Dharitri (Land Record and Land Management System), e-Setu,

e-Sampark, Tax Information Management System, ASHA (Web portal for Farmers) have been widely appreciated. Action will be taken for taking up more e-governance initiatives and for wider dissemination of the existing initiatives.

Capacity building of the government employees is being carried out through regular training programmes at the Assam Administrative Staff College and the Secretariat Training School.

REVENUE

During 2005-06, concerted action was taken to expedite allotment, settlement and conversion of lands in the rural areas so as to give the benefit of land title to the poor farmers. In the process, 1,23,127 bighas of land have already been allotted to 39,854 landless persons and 87,587 bighas of land has been settled with 22,231 persons. Out of this, 48,272 bighas of the land has been distributed in the Char Areas alone to 9,761 farmers during the period from 2001 to December 2005. My Government proposes to continue such measures of land reforms and patta distribution.

The computerisation of land records in seven districts has already been completed and the process of issuing electronically generated copies of land records started there. My Government proposes to complete the process of computerisation in all the other districts within the next three years and thereafter take up the process of digitisation of maps. My Government proposes to rationalise the existing registration fee to on the one hand reduce the burden on low-income earners and on the other hand attract more registration of documents due to lowering the fee.

My Government is concerned about the preservation and protection of hills and ecological sites. Towards this end it proposes to bring in a suitable legislation which interalia would prohibit the earth cutting of hills and encroachment of wetlands.

RELIEF & REHABILITATION

My Government provides Rehabilitation Grants, Gratuitous Relief, Ex-gratia Grant and Financial Assistance to victims of ethnic violence, group clash, extremist activities and accidents. During 2005, out of the 8,610 families affected by ethnic violence in Karbi Anglong district, 1,798 families were given rehabilitation grant amounting to Rs. 179.80 lakhs. The remaining families are required to be covered during the current financial year.

Around 12,288 affected families in the 1996 and 1998 ethnic violence between the Adivasi and Bodos are yet to be rehabilitated. Out of these, 6,589 families are forest encroachers to whom government land will be required for rehabilitation. It is proposed to complete the rehabilitation of these families during the current financial year, which would include provision of land to those families who are encroachers on the forestland.

PENSION & PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

During the last five years Pension Adalats were set up in a number of districts. A substantial number of pension cases of the teaching and non-teaching staff of provincialised schools could be disposed off. My Government proposes to make the Pension Adalats more effective in order to resolve the problems of retired pensioners expeditiously.

To make the office of the Directorate of Pension better equipped, my Government proposes to make pension processing and payment procedures fully automated in the next few years. It further proposes to establish a comprehensive pensioners database to mitigate the data weakness in the pension administration. In addition to the Welfare Fund for Pensioners' constituted in the last financial year, schemes for the welfare of the senior citizens would be one of our priorities.

EXCISE

My Government is enforcing total prohibition of ganja, bhang, opium and other narcotic drugs throughout the State. To check illicit distillation and sale of such liquor, Task Forces have been established in all districts. The Assam Molasses Control Act is also proposed to be enacted to check illicit distillation. Efforts will continue to be made for creating awareness amongst the masses against drug abuse and alcoholism. All efforts will be taken to ensure that there is no evasion of Excise revenue and that no Excise revenue is lost to neighbouring states.

Hon'ble Members, I have placed before you the policies and programmes of my Government. My Government will make all efforts to implement the policies and programmes that have been outlined and would endeavour to achieve the twin goals of peace and development. I hope your deliberations in the House will help achieve this objective.

-Jai Hind

(National Anthem was played. After the National Anthem Hon'ble Governor left the House escorted by the Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly).

Mr. Speaker : Now, under sub-rule 2 of Rule 13 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Assam Legislative Assembly, I hereby report that the Governor has been pleased to make a speech.

A copy of the speech has already been laid on the table and copies of the speech have been distributed to the Hon'ble Members also.

Tea and snacks have been arranged in the Central Hall of the Assembly Building in honour of His Excellency, the Governor of Assam. Prior to that arrangement for a group photograph of all the Hon'ble Members of the 12th Assembly with His Excellency, the Governor of Assam has been made in the open space near the Assembly Chamber. Hon'ble Chief Minister, Hon'ble Minister, Hon'ble Minister of State and all the Hon'ble Members are requested to assemble at the said place.

I therefore, request the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Hon'ble Ministers, Hon'ble Minister of State, Hon'ble Members of the House, Chief Secretary, Additional Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries, Commissioners, Secretaries to the Government of Assam, D.G.P., I.G.P.s, D.I.Gs. and other senior Police Officers and the Head of the Departments present in the Officer's Gallery, Gentlemen of the Press in the Press Gallery, including Electronic media persons, Official Reporters to joint His Excellency, the Governor of Assam at tea arrange in the Central Hall after the photographic Session.

The House stands adjourned for 45 minutes.

(The House reassembled at 11-35 a.m. after tea break with Shri Prithibi Majhi, Speaker in the Chair).

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

Mr. Speaker : Now, Item No. 2. I have received a notice on the Motion of thanks on His Excellency, the Governor's Address from Shri Rameswar Dhanowar.

Now, I request Shri Rameswar Dhanowar to move the Motion.

Shri Rameswar Dhanowar : Mr. Speaker Sir, we the Members of the Assam Legislative Assembly are grateful to the Hon'ble Governor of Assam for His Address to the House who has delivered His Address to the House today, the 30th May, 2006.

Mr. Speaker : Now, I call upon Shri Membor Gogoi to move for seconding the Motion of Thanks on His Excellency, the Governor's Address.

Shri Membor Gogoi : Hon'ble Speaker Sir, I second the Motion of Thanks.

Mr. Speaker : The Motion has now moved. Debate on the Governor's Address has been allotted on 31st May 2006. Amendments to Motion of Thanks will be received by the Assembly Secretariat upto 4.00 P.M. today. Hon'ble Members may submit the notice of amedments if any on the Motion of Thanks on the Governor's Address on the time and date fixed above to the Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly or in the Notice Office if they so desire.

PANEL OF CHAIRMEN

Mr. Speaker : There is an announcement. Under Rule 9(1) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Assam Legislative Assembly I nominate the following Hon'ble Members to constitute the Panel of Chairmen for the First Session of the Twelfth Assembly, 2006.

1. Shri Rameswar Dhanowar
2. Shri Rajib Lochan Pegu
3. Shri Phani Bhusan Choudhury
4. Shri Ranjit Dutta.

CONSTITUTION OF THE BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Speaker : Another announcement. In pursuance of Rule 228 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Assam Legislative Assembly as amended up to date, I nominate the following Members to constitute the Business Advisory Committee.

- | | | |
|--|---|--------|
| 1. Shri Bharat Chandra Narah
Minister, Parliamentary Affairs etc. | - | Member |
| 2. Dr. Nazrul Islam, Minister, F&CS etc. | - | Member |
| 3. Shri Ripun Bora, Minister, Education | - | Member |
| 4. Shri Himanta Biswa Sarma
Minister, Health & FW Deptt. etc. | - | Member |
| 5. Shri Chandan Brahma
Minister, Panchayat & R.D. etc. | - | Member |
| 6. Shri Sarat Borkataky, MLA | - | Member |
| 7. Shri Brindaban Goswami, MLA | - | Member |
| 8. Shri Phani Bhusan Choudhury, MLA | - | Member |
| 9. Shri Mission Ranjan Das, MLA | - | Member |
| 10. Shri Badaruddin Ajmal, MLA | - | Member |
| 11. Shri Uddhab Barman, MLA | - | Member |
| 12. Shri Afzalur Rahman, MLA | - | Member |

The Hon'ble Speaker shall be Chairman of the Committee.

Now, a meeting of this Business Advisory Committee will be held in my Office Chamber. Now, I request all the Members to attend the meeting.

Now, the House stands adjourned till 9.00 a.m. on 31st May, 2006.

ADJOURNMENT

The House then stood adjourned at 11-45 A.M. till 9A.M. on 31st May, 2006.

Dispur :
The 30th May, 2006

G. P. Das
Secretary,
Assam Legislative Assembly