



Address by
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Hon'ble Governor of Assam

BUDGET SESSION

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**Respected Speaker and Hon'ble Members of the Assam
Legislative Assembly,**

It gives me immense pleasure to address this august House during this Budget session of the Assam Legislative Assembly. Please accept my greetings on this auspicious occasion.

The days since the last Budget session have been quite momentous for our State; we are grateful for all the blessings of peace, harmony, fraternity, and promise of a brighter future that these herald for us all. Only the last week, we were witness to the Global Investors' Summit organised by my Government here in Guwahati, with the befitting theme of "Advantage Assam". This has afforded us the opportunity to showcase our State before a distinguished line-up of top industrialists, business leaders, experts, diplomats, and policy makers, among others, from across the country and around the world. We are thankful to our Hon'ble Prime Minister, the dignitaries and invited guests and all the participants for gracing this event with their kind presence and valuable contribution. The guests had the opportunity to get a glimpse of the promise our State holds as an investment destination, a new engine for economic growth, and a gateway to ASEAN. They have left with happy memories and a positive image of Assam as the land of immense potential, possibility and prosperity. Hon'ble Members, I'm sure, the prospect of

significant investments that this holds, will be realised in the near future. My Government will work closely with all to welcome beneficial endeavours in our State. Assam is moving up on the scale of ease of doing business, and a message has gone to the investors that red tape has given way to red carpet here. My Government will do its best to sustain the momentum generated by this summit.

Hon'ble Members, as we know, our Hon'ble Prime Minister has great affection for our State. Only a few months earlier, he had taken time out to be in our midst and dedicate to the people the longest road bridge in India, the Dhola-Sadiya bridge. This important landmark, my Government has aptly named the "Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Sammannay Setu". This not only connects physical distances, but also brings closer the people of these remote parts of Assam and the North-East. During that same visit, the Hon'ble Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the Assam campus of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. This will go a long way in helping our agricultural economy. Moreover, his emphasis on the Look East Policy has energised my Government into taking initiatives through its newly-created Department of Act East Policy Affairs, to harness the potential and synergy of working with the eastern neighbours of India and the ASEAN countries.

Hon'ble Members, we are also thankful to Hon'ble Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the then President of India, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, dignitaries, artists and the participants for gracing

by their presence the highly acclaimed, one-of-its-kind river festival, "Namami Brahmaputra," organised by my Government along the entire course of this mighty lifeline in our State during April, 2017. Along the same lines, the people of Barak valley celebrated the highly popular "Namami Barak" river festival organised by my Government in November, 2017. Hon'ble Members, we are grateful to the Hon'ble President of India Shri Ramnath Kovind ji, invited guests and the participants for gracing this occasion and making it a grand success by their unstinted support and enthusiasm. Such endeavours bring together people from all the walks of life in the spirit of harmony and unity, to celebrate our glorious endowments and common heritage, in addition to showcasing our wonderful State to the world in a unique way.

You will agree, Hon'ble Members, another affirmation of the immense potential of Assam comes from our younger generation's participation and performance in the sporting events of various kinds. The laurels brought to our State by the likes of Miss Ankushita Boro and others are examples of the same; we greatly appreciate their efforts and achievements. My Government is working towards tapping such potential optimally and making Assam the sporting capital of India by facilitating the sports activities in all possible ways.

Hon'ble Members, another way of exploring the potential and performance of the younger generation is through their schooling activities. In this direction, my Government has

organised the State-wide rounds of "Gunotsav" evaluation of our schools and their students, bringing into focus the school infrastructure, academic performance, parental and community engagement in school affairs, and other aspects, all together in a quite innovative format. Many of you have spared your valuable time to be with our children and their teachers and staff in the schools in this exercise, and so have the government officials across the entire hierarchy and departments. These are laudable efforts. I'm sure, Hon'ble Members, the feedback and reports coming out of these evaluations will help improve the quality of our schools and contribute towards strengthening the skill base and educational foundation of our younger generation.

Hon'ble Members, my Government is serious in meeting its commitment for giving a clean and transparent administration, which is also responsive towards protecting the legitimate interests of all the sections of our society - tribes, castes, ethnic groups, religious and linguistic minorities, senior citizens, women, children, the differently abled, the rural and urban poor, the un-employed and the ones who may be lagging behind. My Government is working towards bringing about speedy and all-round inclusive development of all the sections of the society and all the regions of the State - Barak Valley, the Brahmaputra Valley, Hills, plains and Char areas. For this, it will optimally utilise our bounteous natural resources, harness the latest global technologies, apply modern management techniques, and build a congenial environment taking all communities into confidence.

Hon'ble Members, in the matters of State security, my Government is always alert and proactive at all levels. One of the most important efforts in this area is the ongoing updating of the National Register of Citizens (NRC). We all have been eagerly awaiting for the results of this enormous exercise. Under orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, the first set of partial results of the verification exercise have been published on the eve of the new year 2018. As this is only a partial list, many names of genuine citizens may be missing at this stage, but that should not be a cause for concern. My Government is extending full co-operation to the Registrar General of India and his team in carrying out their work under the supervision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and publishing the complete and correct NRC for Assam as early as possible. Hon'ble Members, please join me in appreciating the sincere hard work of everyone involved in this solemn exercise, as well as the patience and fortitude of the people of our State, who have been maintaining peace and harmony throughout this highly taxing task.

In the same vein, Hon'ble Members, let me share with you, my Government is taking the necessary steps to curb any fresh illegal infiltration into the State. For this purpose, we are working closely with the Central Government to find and implement technology-based solutions for sealing the riverine international borders as well, in addition to the measures already under way for sealing the land borders, and other measures in this regard.

Hon'ble Members, I would now like to share with you some more details of the policies and programmes of my Government. I am sure, our collective efforts will make them a success. Here is a look at some important activities and priorities of my Government:

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASSAM ACCORD

My Government is committed to the speedy implementation of the Assam Accord in letter and spirit. A new office has been inaugurated in December, 2017 on the day of Shwahid Divas, along with a Photo Gallery-cum-Archive, at Khanapara, Guwahati. Also, on the same day, the foundation stone has been laid for the Swahid Park at Paschim Boragaon under Kamrup (Metro) district. My Government has reconstituted the Cabinet Sub-Committee which will also examine the issues relating to the Clause 6 of the Accord.

About the Ashok Paper Mill, my Government is considering a number of projects with the Government of India's assistance, including a Paper Mill at the existing site through private/joint venture, an Industrial Park, a Logistic/Automobile Hub, an IT Hub under an Integrated Economic Zone and Cluster Package.

BORDER PROTECTION & DEVELOPMENT

My Government aims to provide all-round development and to instill a sense of security to the border population. Steps are being taken to reach out to the neighbouring states of

Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland, and West Bengal. For the International Border areas with Bhutan and Bangladesh, developmental schemes have been taken up. Priority is given to connect all border districts with road network for security and development. A Border Outreach meeting has been held in April, 2017 with the Chief Minister of Meghalaya to resolve border issues. The 'Model Village' and 'Simanta Gyan Aaharan Asoni' have been initiated. Eight villages have been identified for 'Model Village'. The Simanta Gyan Aaharan Asoni is a tour programme for students for exchange of knowledge. The land dispute with Bangladesh in the Lathitilla-Dumabari sector has been resolved and boundary pillars constructed along the 3 km stretch for border fencing.

ACT EAST POLICY AFFAIRS

My Government has created this department to act as a stakeholder integrator, policy generator, and expeditious implementor of key projects for meaningful engagement with our neighbours in South Asia and South-East Asia, within the larger objective of economic integration of the North-Eastern region with ASEAN countries and seamless connectivity with them. A session was devoted to the North East India Economic Ties with ASEAN countries in the just concluded Global Investment Summit.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND TRAINING

My Government has notified 391 services, in addition to the earlier 55 services, under the Right to Service Act of 2012. Action is being taken for setting up an Academy at Umrangso, on the lines of the National Academy at Mussoorie, and four Training Institutes for Grade III and IV staff, at Guwahati, Bongaigaon, Majuli, and Silchar. The World Bank-funded Assam Citizen-Centric Service Delivery Project has been launched.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture and allied activities are among the top priorities of my Government. The measures under way for doubling farmers' income by 2022 include augmenting soil health, assuring timely irrigation, protecting crops against natural calamities, providing assistance through financial institutions, increased flow of machineries, transition to organic agriculture, adherence to the goals of Sustainable Development Goals, etc. Already, about 2 lakh Soil Health Cards have been issued. Detailed project reports up to block level have been prepared for the Prime Minister's Krishi Sinchayee Yojana. Under RIDF, one lakh shallow tube wells and ten thousand solar pumps are being provided to the farming community. My Government has taken up distribution of tractors under the Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana.

Schemes for increasing the production of pulses and oilseeds are being taken up, including the Centrally-sponsored

ones and the National Mission on Oilseeds & Oil Palm. Organic farming is continuing under the Rastriya Krishi Vikash Yojana. My Government has facilitated issuing of more than 2 lakh Kishan Credit Cards during this year.

HORTICULTURE

Horticulture is a priority sector for my Government. Distribution of certified potato seeds have been carried out. Ten 'Farmers Producers Company' have been formed to enable farmers to market their produce. Steps have been taken to minimise post-harvest loss of horticultural crops. Action has been initiated to establish two primary processing units and one food processing unit under private sector with Govt. subsidy. To promote use of plastics in agro-horticulture sector, 4 demonstration centres have been established. Eighty-two agro-textile kits have been distributed among beneficiaries.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY & VETERINARY

My Government gives due importance to the Animal Husbandry and Dairy sectors. Works are under way for strengthening the infrastructure, including hospitals, sub-centres, farms and departmental offices, as well as for livestock insurance, breed upgradation of cattle, and enhanced productivity of farm animals and poultry. A number of Dairy Co-operative Societies are being organised and support extended to the dairy farmers.

FISHERY

My Government has been implementing a number of schemes to enhance fish production and to generate employment avenues. Our fish production had reached 3.07 lakh MT in 2016-17. Against the estimated nutritional requirement of 3.42 lakh MT, 3.19 lakh MT of fish production has been envisaged during 2017-18. A mega programme for developing 1,000 hectare of individual ponds and 430 hectare of community tanks is being implemented with NABARD-RIDF funding. The Memorandum of Association and Regulations of the Fishery Mission Society under the Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana have been approved. For scientific conservation of indigenous fish through the Gene Bank programme, DPR has been prepared by the College of Fisheries, Raha.

COOPERATION

For a vibrant cooperative sector, pro-active advocacy measures have been piloted by my Government in 118 out of the 219 development blocks during 2017-18, and 148 Village Organizations (federations of Women SHGs) created under the NRLM have been upgraded to Cooperative Societies. Efforts are on to upgrade another 3,000 Village Organizations. Two special schemes, "Samabay Biponi" for marketing of products, and "Samabay Sabalikaran" for empowerment of women cooperatives are under implementation. Bahumukhi Mahila Samabay samities have been encouraged to create federations to

reap the economies of scale. The dairy cooperative sector has shown remarkable improvement. WAMUL (Purabi) has encouraged 107 milk producer institutions in Morigaon, Nagaon, Kamrup, Nalbari, and Barpeta districts, to register as primary dairy cooperative societies. EAMUL in Jorhat and CAMUL in Silchar are also at take off stage after NDDDB took over their management. The Sitajakhala Dugdha Unnayan Samiti, Morigaon has been able to raise Rs.164 lakhs of loan funding. My Government has taken up more cold storages of enhanced capacity, in addition to the four cold storages, at Raha, Silapathar, Sarupathar, and Karimganj, of 2,000 MT capacity each.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

My Government is committed to promote and preserve the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Assam. Some notable activities include the construction of Sri Sri Madhabdev Kalakshetra at Narayanpur (Lakhimpur), and Jyoti Bishnu Sanskritik Prakalpa at Pathshala (Barpeta), Bhergaon (Udalguri), Naharkatia (Dibrugarh), and Chandpur, Sonai (Cachar). The interior works of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Memorial at Jalukbari are almost complete. My Government has organized the 1st Guwahati International Film Festival in October, 2017 at Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra, with great acclaim.

My Government has conserved 127 archaeological sites and monuments, some of which have already been developed as tourist spots. The Bharat Ratna Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi

Memorial Museum was re-opened at Raha, Nagaon on the occasion of 128th birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Gopinath Bordoloi in June, 2017. Up-gradation of the District Libraries at Nagaon, Jorhat, Guwahati, and Bongaigaon is going on, and construction of the Sub-Divisional Library at Biswanath Chariali has been completed.

EDUCATION

My Government accords top priority to the education sector, including elementary, secondary, higher and technical education.

My Government has provided a Scooty each to the top 1,000 girl students who had scored top marks in the HSSLC Examination, 2017. The scheme of free admission to the students of BPL families has been extended to admissions to MA, MSc and MCom. My Government will reimburse Rs.78 crore to the colleges towards waiver of fees in the current year. Vocational courses have been introduced in 20 colleges; these colleges will receive Rs.20 lakh each. Three colleges, namely, Bajali College, Hojai College, and Madhabdev College, have been upgraded to Universities and named as Bhattadev University, Kabiguru Rabindranath Tagore University, and Srimanta Madhabdev University, respectively. My Government has provided Rs.2 crore each to these Universities for starting the preliminary preparatory works.

During 2017-18, thirty-nine colleges have been provided infrastructure grant @ Rs.50 lakh as 1st kist out of the Rs.1 crore sanctioned. Eighty-nine colleges in Assam are running with single stream; all of them will be given additional stream phase-wise. Rs.3.5 crore is being given to Srimanta Shankardeva University, Nagaon; construction work is going on. My Government has created 271 posts for Teaching and Non-Teaching staff for 5 Pandit Deendayal Adarsha Mahavidyalayas. PG stream will be opened in Majuli College; my Government has provided Rs.50 lakh to the college.

For improvement of technical education in the State, one new Engineering College has been opened in Karimganj, and 11 new polytechnics opened in different districts.

My Government has focus on reducing school drop out rates and ensuring free and equal access to education for all children at the secondary level. To achieve this, my Government has waived off admission fees, tuition fees, and examination fees of the students belonging to the poorer sections of the society, thereby benefiting about 4 lakh students. During the current year, my Government has decided to waive off school affiliation fees. To encourage best teachers, my Government has awarded 175 teachers. My Government has provided free text books to all the students of Class IX and X of Government and Provincialised high schools and higher secondary schools, tea garden schools, and all Model Schools under RMSA.

To improve the quality and standard of Secondary Education, my Government has decided to introduce Tele-education through virtual classroom in 250 Government and Provincialised secondary schools. To initiate a comprehensive computer education programme in all high schools and higher secondary schools, and for implementation of the ICT-enabled teaching-learning facilities, my Government has introduced a new scheme "Dr. Banikanta Kakoti Computer Literacy Programme".

Under "Siksha Khetra" - a scheme for amalgamation and merger of different schools situated in the same campus or nearby area, my Government has amalgamated 1,527 ME Schools and 599 LP Schools with 1,643 Secondary Schools. My Government has also decided to convert 207 Girls' Schools into Co-educational Schools. Under the RMSA initiative, 9 Model Schools will be functioning from class I to XII from the next academic year with CBSE curriculum. Eleven Girls' Hostels on the campuses of Senior Secondary Schools located in remote and educationally backward blocks will become functional from the next academic year. Two levels of Vocational Education under the National Skill Qualification Framework in two trades, IT/ITES and Retail trade, have been completed in 57 Senior Secondary Schools, including 1st level of vocational education in 95 Senior Schools.

ENVIRONMENT & FOREST

For enhancing the green cover, my Government has taken several initiatives. Creation and maintenance works of about

19,000 hectare plantation involving about 4 crore seedlings have been carried out during the past year. For indigenous tree species, 20 hectare plantations as Apurugia Brikha plantations have been created, in Nagaon, Sonitpur, and Kamrup during this period under CAMPA. "Mukhya Mantrir Seuji Udyan" has been created near Deepor Beel by raising indigenous species. During the same period, more than 20,000 seedlings have been planted in Guwahati under the "Green Guwahati" project.

My Government has procured 11 speed boats for enhanced mobility and surveillance in the river areas and during flood in Kaziranga National Park, Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, and Majuli. It has already procured modern weapons such as SLRs, Insas rifles, AK series rifles, etc. for management of wildlife areas. One phase of recruitment has been completed for constables for the newly-constituted Special Tiger Protection Force.

My Government has trained village youths in livelihood support activities such as bee-keeping, weaving, embroidery, water hyacinth products making, poultry, piggery, pickle, jam, etc. under skill development programme. Mitigation of man-animal conflict is another priority area.

Climate change and global warming are areas of concern for us all. My Government has focused its efforts in these areas. Steps are taken for conservation of our biodiversity, protection of our forest cover, and safeguarding the ecological balance.

MINES & MINERALS

My Government has taken several initiatives for the development of mineral resources. During 2017-18, till November, my Government has granted 10 Petroleum Mining Leases to the Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd., and 2 such leases to the Oil India Ltd. The District Mineral Foundations are being constituted in all the 33 districts. On the GPS-enabled Vehicle Tracking System to monitor transportation of mineral produces and prevent illegal trading of minor minerals, work is going on.

EXCISE

My Government has taken several initiatives to improve the excise revenue collection. During 2016-2017, this amount is Rs.966 crore, which is Rs.166 crore more than the previous year. During this financial year, up to Dec. 2017, revenue growth of 20% has been achieved, compared to the corresponding period of the last year. My Government has launched the Excise Online portal (www.assamexcise.in), and made online and fully digital all kinds of revenue collection, permits and passes, licenses, and brand label registration. My Government has replaced the existing country spirit mahal system with a more scientific system of bottling of country spirit; this assures the same kind of standard as that of Indian Made Foreign Liquor. The new policy is expected to boost excise revenue as well as improve social health.

Traditional alcoholic brewing is an important household-cum-societal drinking activity associated with many religious ceremonies of ethnic tribal groups. Ethnic drinks have a good potential of becoming popular if seen as "exotic". Bringing these drinks to the commercial market would enable tourists to explore the variety and flavour of Assam, as well as generate employment opportunities especially for women who are traditionally involved in brewing these drinks at home. My Government has already approved and notified a new policy in this regard.

FINANCE

As announced in the 2016-17 State Budget, my Government has merged the Plan and Non-Plan Heads and presented the 2017-18 Budget with only Capital and Revenue Heads. The Budget for 2017-18 will be remembered in future as the first Budget prepared without the Plan and Non-Plan classifications.

Hon'ble Members, in this Budget Session, my Government will introduce e-Budget, under which Tablets with pre-loaded budget information will be provided to you, instead of printed budget books. Also, this time, the SDG-related outcome budget will be introduced, with key focus areas on allocation of financial resources to Divyang, Elderly, Women and Child Development.

My Government has accepted the recommendations of the 7th Assam Pay & Productivity Commission and has implemented the recommendations from 1st April, 2016. The 5th Assam State

Finance Commission's final Report has been accepted in May, 2017. My Government has constituted a One-Man Commission for streamlining the procedure of fund transfers to TSP, SCSP, the 3 Autonomous Councils under the Sixth Schedule, and the 6 Autonomous Councils of the State.

For doubling farm income within a span of 5 years, my Government has launched a Mega Mission called the Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana. The mission is targeted to cover the 25,425 villages and transfer Rs.1.2 crore to each revenue village over the 5 year period. In the budget of 2017-18, my Government had proposed 0% interest on crop loans, by 100% interest subvention on agriculture loans up-to Rs.1 lakh taken by farmers. The guidelines for implementation of this scheme have been issued in July, 2017.

Assam takes pride in being the first State in the country to ratify the 122nd Constitutional Amendment Bill relating to GST. The transition to GST in Assam, by and large, has been smooth and hassle-free. We have hosted the 23rd GST Council meeting at Guwahati in November, 2017 successfully. My Government has abolished all the check posts in the State, in line with the commitment given in this august House.

More than 1.3 crore bank accounts have been opened in all the districts of Assam till September, 2017 under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana. For bringing all sections of the people under the ambit of banking sector and cashless transaction, the "Chah Bagichar Dhan Puraskar" Mela, 2017-18 was launched

on 2nd January, 2018. For the Tea Garden workers, who have already opened their bank accounts during the period of demonetisation and are receiving their wages through banks, my Government has decided to credit Rs.2,500 in each account. If they continue to receive their wages through their bank accounts in future as well, my Government will further deposit Rs.2,500 into their bank accounts.

A new Sub-Treasury has been opened in November, 2017 at Amguri in Sivasagar district. Two new Sub-Treasuries have become functional from January, 2018, at Doomdooma in Tinsukia district, and at Patharkandi in Karimganj District.

FOOD, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

My Government has ceremonially launched the "Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana" in May, 2017. The Oil Marketing Companies have installed over 6.1 lakh free LPG connections amongst the women beneficiaries of BPL households in the State. My Government has decided to appoint 1,000 "Aamar Dukan on Wheels" for selling essential commodities at below market prices. The prices of essential commodities are monitored by way of spot verification of different markets throughout Assam. In every district/sub-division, an Enforcement Squad has been formed headed by an Executive Magistrate along with departmental officials. Whenever any irregularity or violation is found, strict action is taken against the unscrupulous and defaulter

traders. My Government has given emphasis on procurement of paddy with a view to stop distress sale and also to encourage production. In 2016-17 kharif marketing season, over 69,000 MT of paddy has been procured. During 2016-17, the Controller of Legal Metrology has achieved 122% of the revenue collection target, and has registered more than 1,700 prosecution cases.

GUWAHATI DEVELOPMENT

My Government has passed the Assam State Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2017 in October, 2017 to set up a regional authority for preparation of a regional plan for rapid and integrated development of the capital city and its peripheral areas. Emphasis has been given to improve the transport infrastructure. The Feasibility and Detailed project Report work for two bridges across river Brahmaputra, at Pan Bazar to North Guwahati, and at Palashbari to Sualkuchi, are under progress. The proposed bridges will be of six lanes and four lanes, respectively.

My Government has recently signed an agreement with the Govt. of Singapore for planning the urban landscape with integration of parks, open spaces and green networks under the Guwahati Open Spaces and Park Integrator network on the lines of Singapore's Park Interconnect Model. Technical approval for design is under progress with Singapore Corporation Enterprise and the Government of Singapore.

The old DC bungalow is being converted into the Guwahati Heritage & Handloom Museum. This site will be used as recreational and educational hub for the city. Two new parks, at "Assam State Housing Board complex, Adabari, Maligaon", and "Khadi & Village Industries Board complex, Hengrabari", have been taken up. The Multilevel Car parking in front of Shradhanjali Kanan is now open for public. Construction of Multilevel Car Parking adjacent to the MMC Hospital campus at Panbazar is targeted for completion by March, 2018.

The Guwahati Municipal Corporation has engaged 58 NGOs for door-to-door collection of solid waste. Sweeping of arterial roads, streets, footpaths, pavements, etc. have been taken up extensively. The GMC has converted more than 3,700 conventional sodium vapour street lights to LED lights for reducing energy consumption and better illumination.

The Guwahati Smart City Ltd., which has a mandate for five area-based development projects and several pan-city projects in IT, road, electrical and solar sectors, has achieved significant progress in the year 2017. The newly-established Guwahati Metropolitan Drinking Water & Sewerage Board is coordinating JICA-assisted Guwahati Water Supply Project.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

My Government has published 28 final Master Plans and 10 Draft Master Plans for 38 towns; the process is on for publication of another 46 Master Plans by utilising modern

technology like GIS mapping. Under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation, 4 towns have been selected: Dibrugarh, Silchar, Nagaon, and Guwahati, and funds have been released for implementing the Mission. Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Housing for All (Urban), the Govt. of India has selected 97 towns in Assam within the Mission period of 2015-2022. Under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), my Government has prepared "the State Sanitation Strategy" and Detailed Project Reports on Municipal Solid Waste Management for all the Urban Local Bodies of Assam. Under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - NULM, more than 7,800 Self Help Groups have been developed. Under the "City Infra Development Fund", Rs.200 crore each has been allotted for 6 cities: Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Nagaon, Silchar, Jorhat, and Tezpur. Under "Project Jyoti" scheme, energy-efficient LED lights will be provided to all 97 towns and Municipalities of Assam.

HANDLOOM, TEXTILES & SERICULTURE

My Government is taking up several initiatives to promote the handloom, textiles, and sericulture sectors in Assam. To make available quality yarn at reasonable prices on a regular basis, my Government has established 20 Yarn Banks. Seven Yarn Banks in the remaining districts are being established in 2017-18. For economic upliftment of weavers, 70 Groups under general category are being assisted during the year 2017-18. For skill upgradation, my Government is running 102 Handloom Training Centres where 1,645 unemployed youths are trained up annually.

Hon'ble Members, you will be happy to note that our State has achieved the status of top raw silk producing State in the country in respect of Eri and Muga in 2016-17. Rs.100 crore has been allotted in 2017-18 under the 'Mission Muga', a 10-year flagship programme for revitalization of Muga culture in Assam. Rs.20 crore has been sanctioned in 2017-18 for the project "Yarn Bank of Mulberry of Sualkuchi", from which the local weavers and entrepreneurs of Sualkuchi will be benefited. Working capital will be provided to ARTFED for procurement of Mulberry silk yarn at mill gate prices from NHDC. ARTFED will sell out the same to the weavers of Sualkuchi at subsidized rates so that the cost of production of traditional Assamese Mulberry finished products could become competitive in the domestic and international markets.

HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE

My Government attaches very high importance to the health sector. Its proactive steps have led to significant improvement in the Infant Mortality Rate in the State. Under the Chief Minister's Free Diagnostics Programme, a number of diagnostic services including CT scan, X-ray, and laboratory services are made available free to the people. My Government has launched the Atal Amrit Abhiyan in December, 2016, under which patients with cardio-vascular diseases, cancer, kidney diseases, neo-natal conditions, neurological diseases, and burns get treatment through empaneled hospitals within and outside the State. For better cancer care, the 200-bedded Cancer Hospital at Guwahati Medical College has been equipped with PET-CT

scan, Linear Accelerator, and Cyclotron. My Government has launched Mobile Medical Units for comprehensive primary healthcare and diagnostics. Of the 130 such units, 80 are for the tea garden areas. Now the tea garden population is able to get door step healthcare services.

Hon'ble Members, my Government has received approval for 4 new Medical Colleges to be established at Dhubri, Nagaon, Diphu, and North Lakhimpur. In addition, new Medical Colleges are proposed at Tinsukia, Nalbari, and Kokrajhar. Also, two new Dental Colleges are being established, at Dibrugarh and Silchar. Two 50-bedded Ayurvedic Hospitals are going to be set up, at Majuli and Dudhnoi.

HILL AREAS

My Government is committed to achieve sustainable development and permanent peace and harmony in the Hill Areas of Assam. Both the Autonomous Councils have already been empowered with more autonomy to achieve their goals. During 2017-18, more than Rs.547 crore have been allocated for the Hill Areas autonomous councils (Rs.356.5 crore for Karbi Anglong and Rs.191.3 crore for the NC Hills), including the Non-Entrusted Sectors. The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has been adopted by both the Karbi Anglong and N.C. Hills Autonomous Councils. Prioritized sectors include agriculture, health, road connectivity, education, water supply, sanitation, along with employment-generating sectors like tourism, handloom & textiles, sericulture, etc.

HOME

Hon'ble Members, my Government has been quite successful in the counter-insurgency operations under the Unified Command structure so far. During 2017, the security forces have apprehended a good number of cadres of militant groups, and recovered assorted arms and ammunition, IEDs, grenades, detonators, and cash from the militants. Nagarik Committees have been formed in all Police Stations with representatives from a cross-section of the society to make the police friendly, accountable and effective. Women Cells and Special Juvenile Police Units have been formed in all the districts for redressing complaints of women and for care and protection of juveniles.

In 2017, my Government has trained 310 officers and men in various in-service and specialized courses outside the state in different Training Institutes and Academies. In order to make our police force mobile, responsive and tech-savvy, my Government has introduced the e-challan system in Kamrup (Metro) district and 10 other districts. To improve the technical intelligence gathering capabilities by using cutting edge technology and trained manpower, my Government is investing in creation of Cyber Dome. The project will include Cyber Security, Cyber Forensics, and Social Media Monitoring Cell. Under MOITRI (Mission for Overall Improvement of Thana for Responsive Image), my Government will develop physical infrastructure, Internet connectivity, and basic tools for cyber crime detection in each Thana in the State. My Government has

also taken steps for modernizing the laboratory of Forensic Science.

My Government has conducted Fire Awareness and Mock Drill programmes in various schools, colleges and other educational institutes, as well as in hospitals, shopping malls, high-rise buildings during 2017. Civil Defence Volunteers have been engaged in the "Mahabahut Mahajatra" programme in December, 2017 for creating awareness among public about natural disasters.

My Government has decided to provide Rehabilitation Grant @ Rs.10,000/- each to the 150 released life convicts, and Financial Assistance @ Rs.10,000/- each to the 100 families of poor life convicts during 2017-18 for their economic empowerment.

INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE

On 3rd February, 2018, the Hon'ble Prime Minister inaugurated the "Advantage Assam" Global Investors Summit, the first ever Investors Summit organized in the North Eastern part of the country. Inaugurating the summit, Hon'ble Prime Minister lauded my Government's initiative to attract investors to the state and promote the state as "India's Expressway to ASEAN". Besides the plenary session, sectoral seminars were organized in the identified potential sectors for investment along with an exhibition highlighting the advantages of the state. In order to continue the momentum generated, it is proposed to set

up a dedicated agency, "Invest Assam", under the Industries & Commerce Department. This agency will work in tandem with "Invest India" and undertake Investment Promotion & Investment Follow-up activities on a regular basis.

To make doing business in the state easier, my Government is implementing the Assam Ease of Doing Business Act, 2016, ushering in path-breaking reforms. The Single-Window Agency, established at the Commissionerate of Industries & Commerce in Guwahati, is functional. Receipt of offline applications for different services has been stopped since 15th Oct., 2017. A total of 360 services of 35 departments are available online.

My Government has declared the area within 1 km beyond 500 metres on either side of NH-37 from Jalukbari in Kamrup (Metro) to Kukurmara in Kamrup (Rural) and NH-31 from Jalukbari in Kamrup (Metro) to Tihu in Nalbari district, excluding tribal belts and blocks, wetlands, notified forest land, VGR land, as 'Industrial Zone'. My Government is setting up a state-of-the-art incubation centre, "Assam Hub," at Ambari, Guwahati with end-to-end ecosystem and facilities like plug-and-play work spaces, high speed Internet connectivity, conference rooms, access to mentors and investors, legal & regulatory guidance, etc. My Government is also implementing the Assam Start-up Policy, 2017, under which Start-ups will be provided both fiscal and non-fiscal incentives.

My Government is developing the land belonging to 9 closed PSUs for developing industrial infrastructure for setting

up of industries. Further, more areas of land are being added into the "Land bank" to enable the prospective entrepreneurs to set up their units.

PUBLIC ENTREPRISE

My Government is monitoring the implementation of the policy decision on inclusion of at least one woman Director in the Board of Directors of all State PSUs. Monthly honorarium of part-time non-official Chairpersons of the State PSUs has been enhanced from Rs.1,000/- to a maximum of Rs.10,000/-.

INFORMATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS

My Government is very keen on the welfare of the journalists of the State. This year, it has extended one-time ex-gratia of Rs.5 lakh the next-of-kin of each of the 31 journalists who had lost their lives (or are missing) in various incidents of violence in the State. Under the "Journalist Medical Welfare Scheme" of one-time financial assistance for medical treatment to "Accredited" and "Recognized" journalists of Assam, 118 journalists have received financial aid so far. My Government has created the "Journalist Family Benefit Fund" for financial assistance to families of the journalists who meet with untimely death while on duty. "The Pension Scheme for Journalists" has been launched to provide retirement benefits to the eligible journalists who have worked for more than 20 years in Assam and have retired. My Government has introduced the "Republic Day Journalism Award" for outstanding contribution in the field

of journalism. This year, noted journalist Shri Kanaksen Deka has been honoured with this Award. For the security and protection of journalists and their families, my Government has proposed to introduce a new scheme, namely, "Journalist Insurance Scheme", the modalities of which are being worked out.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

A new Information Technology and Electronics Policy, 2017 has been brought by my Government. It desires to make Assam a leading destination for investment in Information and Communications Technology industry, with support by way of single window clearance, developing "Brand Assam", incentives to investors, etc. A mega Information Technology and Electronics Park has been initiated near the Guwahati Airport. A proposal for Electronics Manufacturing Cluster has been approved by the Govt. of India in January, 2018.

My Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Google India to harness the benefits of technology and to make the youths of Assam technologically sound. In September, 2017, websites of 54 departments and over 200 sub-ordinate organizations were launched under the e-Prastuti Project. The new Directorate of Information Technology, Electronics & Communication has been inaugurated in January, 2018. The "Assam Information Technology (Electronic Service Delivery) Rules, 2017 have been notified in January, 2018.

IRRIGATION

My Government has created new irrigation potential of 18,000 hectare from April, 2016 to December, 2017 including completion of 99 minor irrigation schemes. In major and medium irrigation sectors, my Government has completed the survey and investigation works of 3 new major and medium irrigation projects (Puthimari, Buroi, and Burisuti) and preparation of Detailed Project Reports is under process.

For 2017-18, my Government has taken up 28 solar-powered Deep Tube Well schemes, with target to complete by March 2018. In Major and Medium Irrigation sectors, Dhansiri (Major) project is expected to be completed within 2018 by loan assistance from NABARD, and Borolia (Medium) is targeted to be completed by 2019.

JUDICIAL

Hon'ble Members, I am happy to share with you that my Government has been giving utmost priority to strengthening the Judiciary in the State, by way of providing quality infrastructure and adequate manpower. Some commendable achievements of the last financial year include separation of Judiciary from executive in Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao districts, inauguration of the National Law University and Judicial Academy, to mention a few. During 2017-2018, multi-storied Court Buildings with all modern amenities in 3 districts, Cachar, Baksa, and Dibrugarh, have been inaugurated.

LEGISLATIVE

During 2017-18 so far, 20 amended and 17 new legislations have been made at the instance of various Administrative Departments; these have already been published in the Assam Gazette. During this period, 6 Central Acts have been translated into the regional language. The Legal Services Authority undertook programmes like providing legal aid to the targeted beneficiaries, holding of Lok Adalats, Legal Awareness Camps, etc., apart from setting up mediation centers and training of Paralegal Volunteers and Legal Aid Counsels.

LABOUR WELFARE

My Government gives due importance to the welfare of workers in various sectors. The minimum wages fixed for over 100 scheduled employments are close to the National Floor Level Minimum Wages. For mandating the payment of wages through cheques or bank accounts, the Payment of Wages Act has been amended. A large number of unorganized sector workers have been benefited through the social security schemes. My Government has also been working closely with the stakeholders for protecting child rights and eliminating child labour.

SKILL, EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In order to build up a skilled workforce, my Government is taking a number of initiatives. Steps are under way to establish Centers of Excellence where training in specialized trades like Electronics, Construction, etc. will be conducted as per the

international standards. The North-East Skill Centre is being established in collaboration with ITES, Singapore to provide technical and vocational training across sectors such as Beauty and Wellness, Retail, Hospitality, etc. Collaborative tie ups with corporates such as Samsung, Hyundai Motors, Lakme India, Tata Motors, Maruti, ONGC, etc. have been made for value addition. A mobile app "DAKSHA - Digital Access to Knowledge and Skilled Human resources of Assam" has been developed for linking trained candidates to jobs, candidate feedback, monitoring and tracking.

A Skill City will be established in Mangaldoi on 150 bighas of land with aim of skilling over 10,000 youths each year in several trades. Steps are being taken for restructuring and converting the Employment Exchanges into Skill Development and Career Counseling Centres. Courses on "Recognition of Prior Learning" will be deployed to cover over 1 lakh persons across traditional occupations such as agriculture, bell-metal, sericulture, bamboo & cane, fishery, etc. Schools of Foreign Languages like Japanese, Mandarin, etc will be set up for making Assam the hub of skilled human resource supply to the entire nation as well as the East Asian countries.

A two-day Job Mela was organised in July, 2017, where 369 candidates were given appointment letters by different employers against both technical and non-technical posts. A short-term training programme on Aquaculture has been organised at ITI Guwahati. The foundation plaque has been

unveiled for setting up of ITI Divyang at Dibrugarh, the first of its kind initiative in this region. A short-term training on Electrical courses has been arranged for jail inmates as part of the programme "Karagaror pora Karikor", at the Jorhat Central Jail. An Awareness Programme on Entrepreneurship Development has been organised in collaboration with EDII, Ahmedabad and FINER for ITI students.

My Government has taken up the target of skilling 1.5 lakh youths every year. About 300 more skill centres will be opened shortly, in addition to the 249 skill centres opened recently.

PANCHAYAT & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

My Government has been implementing various flagship programmes for alleviation of rural poverty and upliftment of quality of life of rural poor through providing sustainable income-generating activities and wage employment to the unskilled manual workers. Thrust has been given for inclusive growth in rural areas by organizing the people in Self Help Groups and providing the financial grant, training, exposure and handholding support.

Under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 3.6 crore man-days have been generated till 10th January, 2018. About 14 lakh households have been provided employment; out of this, more than 5,700 households have completed 100 days. More than 42 lakh households has been

issued job cards cumulatively. More than 7,200 disabled persons have been provided employment. Till date, more than 2 lakh schemes under this programme has been completed since its inception in 2006-07. Women participation has increased to 40% during the current year, which is more than the mandatory provision of 33%. For transparency, 94% of the job cards have been verified to ensure that each job card is kept in the custody of the job card holder in the field. Further, geo-tagging of all assets under this programme has been introduced.

Under the Prime Minister's Awaas Yojana-Gramin, about 2.6 lakh houses have been targeted to be provided to the eligible beneficiaries, with the additional provision @ Rs.12,000/- for toilets and Rs.17,290/- for 95 days of work under MGNREGA to the beneficiaries.

Under the National Social Assistance Programme, currently, more than 7 lakh beneficiaries have been benefited with monthly pension. As such, more than 5.89 lakh beneficiaries have been provided monthly pension under the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme. More than 91,000 beneficiaries have been provided pension under the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme, while more than 28,000 beneficiaries have been provided monthly pension under the Indira Gandhi National Disabled Pension Scheme. About 12,000 families have been provided one-time financial support @ Rs.20,000/- due to death of the bread earner (18-59 age group) under the National Family Benefit Scheme. All the data of the

beneficiaries have been digitalized and made available in public domain.

A large number of rural assets, including culverts, community halls, market sheds, multipurpose halls, etc. have been constructed under the 13th and 14th Finance Commission grants and the 4th State Finance Commission grant.

The State Institute of Rural Development has been regularly organising courses to build the capacity of elected representatives of Panchayats, officials, representatives of different organisations, unemployed youth, women, farmers and other stakeholders involved in rural development and panchayati raj. The SIPRD has coordinated the process of preparing Gaon Panchayat Development Plans under "Amar Gaon Amar Achoni" undertaken in the state, during May-June, 2017. For the first time, Participatory Planning process have been undertaken in Local Bodies of Autonomous Districts in the state.

My Government is implementing the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission. For the purpose, the Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission (ASRLM) has established organizational set up at three levels, i.e., State, District and Block levels. Since the inception of ASRLM in 2012, 88 Block Mission Management Units and 14 District Mission Management Units have been set up. By the end of 2017-18, 10 more districts and 60 more blocks will come into the structure of ASRLM. Since May 2016, more than 42,000 SHGs have been promoted till November 2017. ASRLM is on

its way forward with implementation of the 'Kanaklata Mahila Sabalikiran Yojana', 'Mahila Kisan Sasaktikaran Parijoyana', establishment of "Bagan Bazars", digitization of SHG transactions, convergence project with Panchayati Raj Institutions and Community Based Organizations, and implementation of the Value Chain Development projects in various livelihood practices like hill broom and maize cultivation, handloom, homestead garden, water hyacinth craft, mushroom cultivation etc. By various training programmes, all SHGs are nurtured to become self-sustainable community institutions.

Under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana run under ASRLM, by the end of November, 2017, more than 18,000 rural youths were provided skill training in various fields. My Government has trained about 14,000 rural youths of Assam in various trades, out of which more than 3,200 have been placed in various organizations across the country.

PENSION & PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

My Government has come up with the Compassionate Family Pension Scheme 2017, in lieu of compassionate appointment, and has issued the guidelines for benefit of the families of Govt. servants who died while in service; the existing compassionate appointment policy did not fully serve its objectives and often the legal heir had failed to get an appointment immediately.

PRINTING & STATIONERY

My Government has introduced publishing of e-gazettes from July, 2016; the Assam Gazette can be accessed at the website dpns.assam.gov.in. The fortnightly multi-colour magazine 'Raijor Batori' published by the Directorate of Information and Public Relations is now printed at the Assam Government Press. The Assam Government Press and its branches are going to be equipped with modern digital printing technology which will help in urgent and time-bound works of the Government efficiently.

POWER

Power remains one of the topmost priorities for my Government. To increase the power generation capacity, my Government has taken up a number of projects with target of commissioning them in 2018. These include the Lakwa and Namrup replacement power projects, and the Myntriang Small Hydro-electric Project. To boost renewable power, the Solar Energy Policy has been framed. Works have been taken up for setting up a 80 MW Solar Power Park in Amguri. Roof-top Solar Photo-voltaic systems are being promoted among the people. For better grid connectivity, various projects have been taken up to use the transmission grid network more efficiently. All the un-electrified villages of Assam have been electrified by December 2017, under the Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti

Yojana. Out of the about 10,000 partially electrified villages, more than 4,700 have been electrified. For 100% electrification, all the households of Assam will be electrified under the SAUBHAGYA programme within March, 2019. Emphasis is given on reform and strengthening of the distribution network in the State. In 67 towns including Guwahati, under the Restructured Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme, application of IT system and strengthening of sub-distribution network are almost completed. Online payment of electricity bills has been started. A centralized Customer Care Centre has been established in Guwahati. To maintain power supply under all conditions, the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system is being introduced in Guwahati. A pilot smart grid project is under commissioning in Guwahati. Recently, works have been taken up for application of IT system and strengthening of sub-distribution network in 88 towns under the Integrated Power Development Scheme.

From October, 2017, all the Government-to-Business services relating to the Inspectorate of Electricity have been made online within the Single Window Clearance system for ease of doing business. To ensure public safety, guidelines have been issued on temporary electrical installations in pandals, street lights, electrically-illuminated billboards, hoardings erected along public roads, etc., as well as for the use of electrical appliances including inverters, especially during the monsoon season.

PUBLIC WORKS

My Government is committed to improve the road communication network in the State. The total length of National Highways in Assam will be increased from present 3,900 km to 7,000 km. Up-gradation of 2-Lane NH to 4-Lane NH of nearly 400 km, from Numaligarh to Dibrugarh, and from Kaliabor to Hologgi, are in progress. Construction of the additional bridge near Koliabhomora Bridge on NH-37A is in progress. Preparation of Detailed Project Reports is in progress for 4 more bridges over Brahmaputra, at Dhubri-Fulbari, Gohpur-Numaligarh, Desangmukh-Tekeliphuta, and Kamalabari-Nematighat. Feasibility study for the proposed 6-lane bridge over Brahmaputra between Narengi and Kuruwa near Guwahati has been completed.

In the Building sector, some major building infrastructures have been completed by my Government. Construction of the 200-bedded Cancer Hospital at Guwahati Medical College, the Barak Valley Engineering College at Karimganj, and the Bineswar Brahma Engineering College at Kokrajhar have been completed. The Assam Bhawan at Chennai has been completed. The additional Assam Bhawan at Kolkata is nearing completion. The 1st phase of National Law School and Assam Judicial Academy at Amingaon has been completed and made functional. Eleven new Polytechnics have been completed and made functional. For improvement of infrastructure at Majuli, arrangements have been made for construction of the Integrated Office Complex-cum-Residential Building.

Under PMGSY and Central Road Fund, substantial funds have been sanctioned for roads and bridges. The World Bank-assisted Assam State Road Project is going on. Progress has been made in road works including upgradation and rehabilitation of the State Highways and major district roads, and more works are in progress.

PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING

My Government has laid high priority on the mitigation activities in the arsenic and fluoride affected habitations. Several short-term and long-term mitigation measures have been taken up to address the menace, including Community Water Purification Plants, Ring Wells with Solar Power, Ring Wells with Singur Hand Pump, Pipe Water Supply Schemes. Under the Neer Nirmal Pariyojana, 7 Large Multi-Village Schemes have been taken up for providing 24x7 metered water supply to every household under the selected Gaon Panchayats, covering parts of the Kamrup (Metro), Jorhat, Hailakandi, Sivasagar, Morigaon, Bongaigaon, and Sonitpur districts. For the Solid Liquid Waste Management component of the Neer Nirmal Pariyojana, a pilot project has been initiated in Tatimora village under Chandrapur GP of Kamrup (Metro) district. To meet the goals of the Swachh Bharat Mission, my Government has laid emphasis on awareness generation, demand generation for sanitation and hygiene facilities, and sustained behavior change among the community. It has been decided to provide toilet facilities to all the families

in the rural areas of the State within 2018. So far, 4 districts, 25 blocks, and 412 Gaon Panchayats covering more than 7,700 villages have been declared as Open Defecation Free.

REVENUE

My Government has rolled out the on-line Integrated Land Records Management System in 24 districts; the rest of the districts will be covered soon. People can view their land records at www.revenueassam.nic.in. More than 28,000 cadastral map sheets have been digitized and made available to the public under ILRMS. Modernization of the Mouzadary System has been taken up. The mouzadars have been given an one-time additional commission of Rs.50,000/- each for installation of computers and peripherals in their offices. An online land revenue collection software has been developed. GIS mapping of all the Village Grazing Reserves and Professional Grazing Reserves have been taken up. E-stamping facilities have been rolled out in all the districts except Dima Hasao, East & West Karbi Anglong. Interconnectivity has been established with all the Deputy Commissioners' offices, Circle offices, Sub-Registrars' offices, the State Data Centre, and the office of the Director of Land Records & Surveys.

Hon'ble Members, for protecting the land rights of the indigenous people of Assam, a committee under the chairmanship of Shri H.S. Brahma, former Chief Election Commissioner of India, has been looking into the possible measures, including changes in the Acts, Rules, Policies, etc.

My Government has taken up surveys of the remaining Non-Cadastral villages of the State, to be carried out with the help of modern technology. Toll-free numbers (1070 at the State level and 1077 at the district level) have been introduced to facilitate the public in raising Revenue-related grievances, including encroachment, etc. Drives have been taken against illegal encroachment of the Government lands, Village Grazing Reserves, Professional Grazing Reserves, wetlands, etc. More than 12,500 bighas of Government lands have been made free from encroachment during the last year.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

My Government has given high priority to promote science among the masses and establish new institutions of excellence in the state. The Assam Science Festival was held at Guwahati, with observation of the National Science Day, exhibitions and interactions with scientists, and the State science award ceremony. District-level workshop for capacity building of Panchayati Raj Institutions was held at Tezpur. Block-level workshop on mobile apps for geo-tagging of assets was held at Biswanath Chariali. DPRs have been prepared for six new planetariums, to be set up at Amingaon, Majuli, Kaliabor, Bongaigaon, Diphu, and Silchar. Under the "Mukhyamantrir Bigyan Darshan Achoni", visits to planetariums and science centres will be taken up. School Plant Diversity Centres will be set up at the higher secondary schools having science stream. Among the institutions of excellence coming up are the Science City and the Biotech Park.

Construction work of Science City at Tepesia village near Guwahati has been started. An MoU has been signed with the NITI Aayog for providing end-to-end transaction management for setting up of Business Enterprise Zone in Guwahati Biotech Park. Biotechnology Policy has been approved. Foundation stone of the Technology Incubation Centre of Guwahati Biotech Park has been laid at Amingaon.

Hon'ble Members, you will be happy to know that the Assam Energy Development Agency has set up the North-East's first floating solar plant, at Thanagorah village, Morigaon, assuring power availability during flood season also.

SECRETARIAT ADMINISTRATION

My Government has introduced the e-Office (File Management System) in all the 58 departments at Janata Bhavan from March, 2017 for bringing transparency, effectiveness and openness in governance. For the welfare and safety of women employees of Assam Secretariat, staff buses have been provided for their commuting to the office. Steps have been taken for filling up the vacant posts at Janata Bhavan.

SOCIAL WELFARE

My Government is implementing various schemes for the welfare of women, children, persons with disabilities, senior citizens and the infirm. My Government has enacted the Assam Employees Parental Responsibility & Norms for Accountability

Monitoring (PRANAM) Act, 2017, mandating its employees to look after their aged parents and divyangjan siblings. The Directorate of Women and Child Development and the Directorate of Social Justice and Empowerment will replace the Directorate of Social Welfare. E-tendering for procurement of goods and services has been initiated for transparency and good governance. Some new initiatives include educational institutions for skill development of the mentally retarded, working women hostels, Women Helpline, among others.

SPORTS & YOUTH WELFARE

My Government is committed to realize the vision of making Guwahati the Sports Capital of India and Assam a Sports Hub. An Integrated Sports Policy has been announced for bringing about a systemic transformation in the entire sports ecosystem. A slew of incentives includes direct entry into Class I & II Government jobs for those who win medals in the Olympics, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, and World Championships in the Olympic sports disciplines. A Sports Academy in the name of Arjun Bhogeswar Baruah will be established. Setting-up of Sports Academies by private partners in the Olympic sports disciplines shall also be facilitated. My Government has initiated setting-up of a state-of-the-art Multidisciplinary Sports Complex at Khanikar Gaon, Dibrugarh with assistance from the Ministry of DoNER. Similar projects shall be commissioned at Saboti in Lakhimpur and Sualkuchi in Kamrup, to be funded by the NEC. Under the "Chief Minister

Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana", 500 play-fields will be developed in 219 Blocks of the State.

Hon'ble Members, as you already know, my Government has successfully organized the FIFA Under-17 World Cup - 2017, AIBA World Youth Women's Boxing Championship - 2017, and the 63rd National School Games at Guwahati recently.

TEA TRIBES WELFARE

For the benefit of the tea tribes, my Government is focusing on their education, skill development, culture, literature, sports, health, and myriad other aspects. Apart from scholarships, special tutorial classes for the HSLC and HSSLC candidates are being organised. Also, for the first time, coaching for the Civil Services has been organised this year for the tea tribes' students. Overseas internships for engineering students of the tea tribes are also on the anvil this year. Repair and renovation have been taken up in a phased manner of all the boys and girls hostels located in the towns in the vicinity of the tea gardens. Steps are under way for making the Skill Development Training Centres to be in compliance with the National Skills Qualification Framework, with the help of the Assam Skill Development Mission, and to renovate and upgrade the community centres imparting vocational training under the Assam Tea Employees Welfare Board in conformity with the NSQF norms.

Hon'ble Members, every year from 2017-18, my Government will organise a State-level cultural festival with

representation from all the tea tribes communities. Construction of 50 "Rangamancha" in tea garden areas is being taken up for promotion of cultural heritage. Books will be published on the tea tribes' heritage and traditions. The Chief Minister's Tea Tribes Football Tournament has been organised. Three football and archery academies will be set up for boys and girls of the tea tribes. Financial assistance is provided to the patients suffering from malignant diseases. A Patient's Guest House for the tea tribes has been planned at the Guwahati Medical College premises. LED bulbs are being provided to over 95,000 tea garden families under the UJALA initiative of the Government of India. Mini Rural Water Supply schemes have been taken up in 20 tea gardens. A scheme has been taken up for providing insurance premium of Rs.12 per beneficiary under the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana to 10 lakh registered tea garden workers under the Assam Tea Employees Provident Fund Organization. Also, a scheme of one-time grant of Rs.10,000/- each to 1,000 Dibyangs or disabled persons has been taken up in 2017-18.

Providing power tillers to around 70 groups of farmers of the tea tribes community has been taken up in 2017-18. A one-time grant of Rs.25,000/- to 1,000 women Self Help Groups of the tea tribes community is being provided in 2017-18. Financial assistance of Rs.5 lakh each has been provided to the families of 11 martyrs of the tea tribes community in 2017-18 in honour of their ultimate sacrifice.

TRANSFORMATION & DEVELOPMENT

My Government has adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, recognizing their beneficial impact. Partnerships have been forged with the UN System, including UNDP, UNICEF and WHO, for up-scaling the knowledge domain. An Innovation Lab in collaboration with UNDP has also been set up.

Hon'ble Members, my Government desires to attract maximum benefit from the Govt. of India's Act East Policy and make Assam the expressway to ASEAN. The State Innovation and Transformation Aayog, in association with the India Foundation, the Bangladesh Foundation for Regional Studies, and the Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad Institute of Assam Studies, has organized the 8th round of Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Dialogue in Guwahati in July, 2017 to improve relations in the areas such as trade & investment, economy, power & energy, connectivity, culture, etc. The Dialogue focused upon how the Act East Policy for shared growth and prosperity can set a benchmark for bilateral relations between nations.

TOURISM

My Government has ambitious plans for boosting the tourism sector. Its new Tourism Policy aims at making tourism into a major economic sector of Assam. A multi-media promotional campaign for Assam Tourism has been launched. A new Tourism Policy has been announced. The desire is to increase the tourist inflow by 2 to 3 times in the next few years.

Some more initiatives include infrastructure development at tourist destinations, "Swadesh Darshan", "Prasad", "Punya Dham Yatra", "Ambubachi Mela", "Aamar Alohi", among others. Novel sustainable eco-tourism pilot projects ensuring carbon-free mobility are being implemented in Majuli and Chandubi.

TRANSPORT

My Government is committed to provide the people of the State a fast, safe and affordable transportation system, while enhancing the Government revenue. Softwares like "Vahan" and "Sarathi" have been upgraded, thereby enabling online registration of vehicles at dealers points through e-payment. Road Safety measures are being effectively implemented. To develop the infrastructure and institutional mechanism of the Inland Water Transport sector in the State to international standards, the World Bank-funded "Assam Inland Water Transport Project" is being implemented. Modern steel vessels of different capacities are being commissioned. River taxis are being initiated to promote tourism and generate employment. Ro-Ro vessels have started operating between Dhubri and Hatsingimari, enabling trans-shipment of vehicles. Six more Ro-Ro vessels are going to be commissioned soon. A joint venture with the Inland Waterways Authority of India for a multi-modal terminal at Jogighopa is proposed. Construction of 56 new floating terminals has been initiated. Terminal development at locations like Bogibeel, Neamati, Kamalabari, Silghat, Dhubri, Jogighopa, Silchar, etc.

are under way. The port at Pandu will also get vessel manufacturing and repairing facilities. The Assam State Transport Corporation has initiated infrastructure projects like Mini-ISBT at Khanapara in Guwahati, station building at Majuli, ISBT at Tezpur, and a number of bus stations and extension of yards.

Hon'ble Members, you'll be happy to learn that my Government has decided to take up an innovative "Jibondinga" scheme for supporting and modernising the country boats system, an important mode of transportation and livelihood in our State.

WELFARE OF PLAIN TRIBES & BACKWARD CLASSES

My Government has been implementing various welfare schemes and projects for the upliftment of SC, ST (Plain) and OBC people of the state. Several schemes have been taken up for their self-employment, quality education, healthcare, infrastructure development, and socio-economic empowerment. Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarships are being provided to the SC, ST and OBC students. Various skill development training programmes are being implemented for the unemployed youths, including the SC and ST youths of the State.

Significant amounts of works are carried out through State's Own Priority Development Funds and through the funds earmarked for development works in the Sixth Schedule BTAD area. My Government has been paying special attention for development of tribal areas through Tribal Sub-Plan and benefits to the SC people through Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan.

WATER RESOURCES

My Government has taken up 48 schemes during 2017-18 under NABARD-RIDF. Flood management and infrastructure development schemes have been taken up under the State Plan for 2017-18. My Government has embarked upon the World Bank-funded "Assam Integrated River Basin Management Project". Corrective dredging of Brahmaputra has been conceptualized to develop its navigability. A proposal for procurement of Dredger has been approved. It is proposed to construct two express highways, on both the banks of Brahmaputra, by using the dredged materials. To restore the damages to the embankment system due to floods of 2017, 96 schemes under SDRF for 2017-18 have been sanctioned and their execution initiated. As recommended by the Departmentally Related Standing Committee of this House, 10% of the total annual SDRF allocation is earmarked for tackling the erosion problem.

WELFARE OF MINORITIES & DEVELOPMENT

My Government implements a number of schemes for the welfare of the notified religious minority communities, linguistic minorities and char areas in the State. Such schemes during 2017-18 include distribution of tractors, e-rickshaws, Tara hand pumps, solar home lights for the benefit of the people in the char areas. Under the Centrally-sponsored Multi-Sectoral Development Programme, my Government is taking up

construction of 21 "Model Residential Schools" in the 21 minority-concentrated districts of the State. The Pre-Matric and Post-Matric scholarship schemes are continuing for the benefit of the students from the minority communities.

Hon'ble Members, I have outlined the policies and programmes of my Government. My Government is committed to implement them. I request this august House to support the same for all-round development of the State and for the benefit of all the sections of the people of Assam.

Joi Aie Axom

Bharat Mata ki Jai

2018

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