



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

It gives me immense pleasure to address this August House on the occasion of the Budget Session 2022 of the Assam Legislative Assembly. I take this opportunity to extend my warm greetings and best wishes to all of you. I am sure that in-depth deliberations during this session will contribute immensely in preparing a roadmap for ushering an era of peace, progress and prosperity and transforming the state as vibrant and progressive state.

### **400<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Lachit Barphukan**

Hon'ble Members, we are celebrating this year as the 400<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Lachit Barphukan, the well known Commander of the Ahom Kingdom who had defeated the Mughal forces in the famous battle of Saraighat in 1671. His name is synonymous with personal sacrifice and unparalleled valor. As you all know, Hon'ble President of India inaugurated the year long celebration of his 400<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary on 25<sup>th</sup> February this year. Hon'ble President also laid the foundation of Alaboi War Memorial and beautification and repair work of Lachit Barphukan's Maidam.

Bearing in mind the significance of the "Alaboi Ranakhetra" in the annals of history of Assam, and to honour the supreme sacrifices that the 10000 brave Ahom soldiers made on this battlefield in defending the honour of Assam, the Government of Assam has decided to set up a war memorial in Kamrup as a

tribute to them. In keeping with the rich architectural traditions of Assam, the Memorial is designed in the form of a circular 'Moidam' placed at the apex of the hill. The visitors will approach the high grass covered tumulus by means of a gateway framing the main memorial element stepping into a large circular 'Courtyard of Remembrance'. Within this will sit a reflective pool, which will mirror the colossal sculpture of the iconic Ahom 'Heng Dang' soaring above the water surface to a height of 30 mtrs.

It is also fitting that a Memorial Complex to commemorate the life of this great patriot at the site of his Moidam at Nara Hiloidari Village in Jorhat be set-up. In order to honour the Great General of the Ahoms, a Memorial Complex is proposed at the site of his Moidam, which shall serve as a permanent and fitting tribute. It is proposed to construct a 150 ft. high Monumental Bronze finish Sculpture of Lachit Borphukan as the main feature of the complex. The sculpture shall be placed on an elevated mound about 60 ft. high and approached along a ceremonial axis which shall consist of a reflective water channel along which a sculpture garden is proposed to be designed.

We have planned many activities in various parts of the country as well as within the state as part of the year long celebrations.

### **Fight against COVID-19**

The year 2021-22 presented us with some unforeseen challenges and exciting opportunities. When the new government took over the reins in May 2021, it was one of the most challenging periods of human history as our State along with the rest of the world was battling the deadly second wave of COVID-19. State has however been effectively managing COVID-19 since

beginning and has been keeping the guards up against the virus. The efforts of the State Government in COVID-19 management have been appreciated by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India on many occasions. Even, World Health Organization also published a story on Assam COVID management with the title *"From governance to community surveillance: Assam's 360 degree COVID-19 response"*, published on the occasion of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Day, celebrated on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2020. Assam's effective COVID-19 management strategies focusing 3Ts (Test, Trace and Treat) coupled with CAB (COVID Appropriate Behaviour) and aggressive COVID vaccination drive have immensely helped our State in keeping the COVID spread under control and in treating patients, who were found positive. Community support is another area, which needs special mention, as active community support gave added strength to the frontline workers to fight back the pandemic. However, till 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022, state had 7,24,135 cases with 168 active cases with recovery rate of 98.87% and death rate of 0.92%. Weekly average of cases has dropped from 5874 cases during 19<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2022 to 17 cases during 23<sup>rd</sup> - 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2022. Except Kamrup (Metro) with 107 cases, all districts of state have shown single digit total cases during 20<sup>th</sup> February to 1st March, 2022 (10 days). I am happy to share that on 10th March, Assam reported zero Covid cases.

State's vaccination coverage figure is also encouraging. Till 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2022, state's total vaccination figure was 4,32,77,801 with 1st dose of 2,33,87,343 (coverage of 101.11%) 2nd dose of 1,96,31,791 (coverage 84.87%) and precaution dose of 2,58,667. State is planning to finish the double dose vaccination drive by 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2022. While continuing the fight against COVID-19, state also has been giving highest thrust in continuing

the non-COVID essential healthcare services at community level and at health facilities.

In the meanwhile, our preparation for fighting future waves has also been boosted by enhancing number of ICU beds in Medical College Hospitals from 400 to 1565 and providing 1000 ventilators under PM CARES. Similarly, Seventeen (17) RTPCR labs have been set up under emergency COVID response plan and the production capacity of medical oxygen production has increased to 176.61 MT/day from 50 MT/day prior to the pandemic. Presently, 40 numbers of PSA oxygen generation plants have been allocated, of which 39 have been commissioned. The storage capacity of LMO has improved tremendously from approximately 200 MT prior to the pandemic to 618.55 MT.

Adopting a more humane approach while tackling the pandemic, my government had adopted with great success the strategy of targeted restrictions instead of complete lockdowns. We thus had 12500 micro containment zones in both rural and urban areas. My government also took care of the poor and downtrodden by providing Rs 2000 to each of the families living in such micro containment zones. My Government promptly initiated measures to ameliorate the sufferings of next of kin of those who died due to COVID. Under Chief Minister's Shishu Seva Scheme, the Government is providing Rs 3,500 per month to every child who lost both parents along with a laptop and fixed deposit of Rs 7.81 lakh, to be handed over on attaining 24 years of age.

Similarly, under Chief Minister's Widows Support Scheme, the Government provided one-time assistance of Rs 2.50 lakh to those who lost their husbands to COVID. So far, 1,735 beneficiaries have received assistance. Under Prarthana Scheme,

Rs 1 lakh was being provided to next of kin of deceased COVID patient. Already, 725 beneficiaries have availed the scheme and more than 6,500 families will benefit.

### **Ushering sustainable and permanent peace**

Hon'ble Members, it is my Government's constant endeavor to usher an era of peace in the state. In this connection, the success of my Government has been quite significant. A proactive implementation of Bodo Accord has seen rehabilitation of 4203 surrendered cadres with financial assistance of Rs 168.12 crore. The State Level Committee for withdrawal of cases (non-heinous) under trial against NDFB cadres after thorough review has withdrawn 274 cases against 427 former NDFB cadres. New Bodo Militant outfit in the name of ULB was formed on 15.9.21, but due to proactive actions of the police, all the cadres of ULB surrendered on 29.9.21. Similarly, Chairman of DNLA along with Dy. C-in-C and others surrendered and ceasefire agreement with the Government of Assam was signed on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 for a period of six months. Intensive anti-insurgency measures also resulted in surrender of leader and 164 other cadres of National Liberation Front of Bodoland (NLFB) too. One senior Maoist cadre too surrendered on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021. All these go on to prove that the tribal militancy has come to a full stop in the state. In a major success against human trafficking, 200 victims were rescued, 78 persons were arrested and 67 cases registered.

### **Continuing the war on drugs**

The frontal attack on Drugs, which started in May, 2021, continues with great force. Since May 2021, 2363 cases were registered, and 4052 persons arrested. Drugs of estimated value of Rs 427 crore, including 72.2 kg Heroin, 19207 Kg Ganja, 49 kg Opium, approx..190000 bottles of Codeine-based Cough Syrup,

approx. 3100000 tablets/capsules and 3.375 kg Crystal Methamphetamine were seized. To create mass awareness as well as to prevent pilferage of seized drugs, large scale destruction of seized drugs was carried out on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> July in Karbi Anglong, Golaghat, Nagaon and Hojai districts. To encourage members of law enforcement agencies to carry forward the drive against illicit drugs, Shri Borsing Bey, a Home Guard personnel who was instrumental in seizure of drugs worth approximately Rs 12 crore, was appointed as a Constable in Assam Police.

### **Strategy for effective policing**

My Government undertook many measures as part of strategy for effective policing. As welfare measures for police personnel, provision for 30 days of Annual Privileged Leave has been made for Battalion personnel posted in border outpost and 10 days of leave for those posted in Battalion Headquarters over and above their other entitled leaves. Similarly, two-shift duty at police stations is being introduced to reduce workload of police personnel. The Government also announced relief of Rs 50 lakh to next of kin (NOK) of Army/CAPF/Police/HG/VDP personnel killed in the line of duty, made provision of one-month extra salary as bonus to police personnel deployed along inter-State borders due to harsh conditions and provided Government job to NOK of six policemen who lost their lives in Assam-Mizoram border clashes in Cachar.

In order to improve quality of investigation, my Government sanctioned 4 Regional Forensic Laboratories and sanctioned and suitable number of posts to man them. Moreover, Administrative Commission of Police was constituted to review existing processes regarding capacity building, discipline, human resources, logistical requirements, etc, and for enhancing operational efficiency and effectiveness of Assam Police, more particularly the armed

branches. The process of appointment into 16,906 vacant posts at the various levels have also been cleared.

The Government has also approved establishment of five Commando Battalions in different areas of the State for effective counter-insurgency operations. Further, for the first time, the Chief Minister held a State-level conference with all Officers In-Charge of Police Stations to resolve issues at the thana level. Similarly, two 2-day conferences with Superintendent of Police have been convened and instructions have been issued for effective policing. Steps have also been initiated to provide sufficient source funds at thana level for gathering intelligence, etc. The Assam Police (Amendment) Bill, 2021 has been passed in the Assembly on 23 December 2021 to amend provisions of Assam Police Act, 2007 regarding functions, duties and responsibilities of State-level Police Accountability Commission and District Accountability Authority.

The report on providing citizen centric services to people are as follows :

#### **Citizen-centric activities report since May 2021**

1. Total no. of Post Mortem report delivered to the victim family : 3107
2. Total no. of injury report delivered to the victim : 2413
3. Total no. of police verification reports on passport, D/L, service, PRC etc within the stipulated time : 179790
4. Total no. of police report in respect of loss of article/documents etc. : 26813
5. Total no. of missing person recovered : 3774
6. Total no. of other services to the citizen : 3509

Hon'ble Members, I will now highlight the two important projects launched by My Government.

### **Mission Basundhara**

For transforming and automation of land related services, my Government launched Mission Basundhara on October 2, 2021 which has received unprecedented response from the people both in rural and urban areas and reaffirming the felt need for streamlining land records ecosystem as land is at the core of inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development. In the implementation journey of the mission, over 8.13 lakh applications received across 9 services covering 82% villages of Assam through an online platform out of which over 4.81 lakh have already been disposed - resulting into over 3.87 lakhs positive service delivery and rejection of about 0.94 lakh cases. It is aimed to dispose the remaining applications before May 10, 2022, when my Government completes its first year in the office.

Along with mission mode purification of land records, the polygon survey of non-cadastral villages and re-survey of cadastral villages have made significant progress. Polygon survey of 674 non-cadastral villages has been completed. The detailed survey of these villages will not only pave the way for digitized land records and maps but also for conferring property rights to the indigenous people living in those unsurveyed areas. A re-survey pilot in Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts has been progressing methodically and is a breakthrough in terms of the survey using drones and spatial technologies followed by community led ground verification. Leveraging on the insights gained from this pilot it is envisaged to launch a mission mode re-survey of all cadastral

villages which envisages creation of real time end-to-end integrated land records with dynamic maps with a view to introduce geospatial services such as digitised plot maps, pre/post transaction and transfer sketches, sketches upon plot splitting etc. with unique identification number for each land parcel.

To further build on the people movement, my Government is contemplating to launch the second iteration of Mission Basundhara for offering the next generation land related services envisaging a roadmap to conclusive titles through a forward-looking legislative framework besides solving some of the problems being faced by people in respect of Annual Patta (AP) land, Touzi Khazana land and recognizing rights of the tribal people on the land which they are in occupation since generations within the statutory land ceiling norms.

### **Project Sadbhavna**

My Government has also launched Project Sadbhavna, a landmark, one of its kind initiative towards citizen centric governance. Sadbhavna offers an opportunity to the citizens, whose files are pending in the Secretariat, to get them disposed by applying online through the Sadbhavna portal. Around 1200 applications have been received from citizens despite publicity bottlenecks due to Model Code of Conduct and I am pleased to state that 52% has already been already disposed. The last date for submission of application through portal is 31<sup>st</sup> March. However, though file number is not mandatory, any reference relating to the file is admissible. We are confident of receiving more proposals from the public.

In addition to this, the Sadbhavna Swachta Abhiyan in the Secretariat is aimed towards a cleaner, efficient, transparent and paperless office. Efforts of the Departments are on to dispose of all files opened before 10.5.2021 through categorization and weeding out. Around 1.5 lakh files entered in the Electronic File Management system are also to be disposed off, thereby paving the way for a fully paperless and digitised secretariat functioning in the electronic mode by 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

### **Reducing compliance burden**

Reducing compliance burden and providing seamless services to our citizens have been one of the top agenda of my Government. Many steps have been taken in this regard. Online Municipal Services in Guwahati was launched on 10th December 2021. This will allow citizens of Assam to avail services like obtaining trade licenses, housing permissions, property tax returns easily and will strengthen project management and monitoring systems. Assam also became the first State in the country to adopt Model Tenancy Act with the passing of the Assam Tenancy Bill, 2021 in the Assam Legislative Assembly to provide an adjudication mechanism for speedy resolution of disputes between landlords and tenants, and balance the interests of both tenants and landlords. Similarly, The Registration (Assam Amendment) Bill, 2021, which seeks to simplify and speed up registration of transfer of flats/apartments, has been passed in the Assembly and now the citizens need not go to the DC's office for registration.

For the benefit of low-income informal sector, approval has been granted for repeal of The Guwahati Municipal Corporation (Licensing of Rickshaws and Rickshaw Pullers) Bye-

Laws, 1976 and to provide relief to those plying slow moving vehicles, fees of such vehicles have been exempted. The State Government has also waived stamp duty on loans sanctioned to street vendors affected by COVID-19 and lockdowns under PMSVA Nidhi to help the beneficiaries avail a loan amount of Rs 10,000 without any additional financial burden and accelerate the loan disbursement process. In order to facilitate the Ease Of Doing Business (EODB), my Government has waived off the requirement of Trade License from Gaon Panchayats, Anchalik Panchayats and Zilla Parishads for setting up any commercial establishments except Country and Foreign Liquor shops, Hospitals and Nursing Homes, Brick Kilns, Mobile Towers and Polluting Industries.

To further strengthen the EODB functioning in Assam, my Government has also decided to constitute a Regulatory Authority and an Appellate Authority where suo moto application can be received such as petitions from the aggrieved persons and further action can be initiated including imposing cost/initiating Departmental Proceeding etc. in line with the Police Accountability Commission or Right to Information Commission. Moreover, the Departments will be given slot against each and every of 100 reform points so that these reforms can be addressed within a period of 2(two) months starting April 2022.

In order to strengthen the good governance initiative, the Transport Department has started many contactless online services for the people in the state. So far 13 services have been launched which include issue of Learner's license, Duplicate license, renewal of driving license, transfer of ownership of vehicle, change of address in RC, international driving permit etc. Now the users are not required to visit DTO office and they

can submit their applications online to avail these services. Services are provided after Aadhaar authentication and payment of prescribed fees through digital transaction. There has been overwhelming response from people as over five lakh Learner's licenses have been issued so far through online, contactless, faceless and process based service delivery mechanism. It is expected that over 10 lakh footfalls will be avoided in the DTO offices due to introduction of these new services.

Similarly, Industries & Commerce Department has initiated many reforms to create an enabling environment for promotion of Industries and Commerce in the state. 'The Assam MSME (Facilitation of Establishment and Operation) Act, 2020' has been amended. Now entrepreneurs intending to setup an industry in industrial parks can apply to the designated officers for all required clearances and permissions in the park itself. The officer will obtain all such clearances from concerned govt agencies and provide the same to the entrepreneurs within 30 days, failing which such clearances will be deemed to be approved and given.

Assam Skill Employment and Entrepreneurship Department has taken an initiative to provide online registration in the employment exchanges through digital platform. Now people are not required to visit employment exchange offices, stand in queue, carry all sort of documents, spend a lot of time and face inconveniences. After launch of online contactless, faceless and process based service, now people can submit applications online, upload required documents and get the registration in employment exchange through Aadhaar-based authentication process in a hassle free manner. There has been overwhelming response to this service. So far more than three lakh people have availed this service and have registered in the employment exchanges through digital platform.

Industries, Commerce and Public Enterprise Department is striving to reduce the compliance burden relating to different Acts/ Rules and guidelines to promote Ease of Doing Business and Ease of Living. The Department is coordinating with different departments of Assam to reduce the compliances. A total of 598 services have already been taken care of and compliances reduced. 59 bare Acts have been identified by different departments for repealing. This will promote hassle free environment for the citizen of Assam for different services.

Next step of reducing the compliance burden is to provide online birth and death certificates, police verification of passport through app and various other certificates through portal.

### **Strengthening social security net**

Strengthening social security net, a scheme of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for Drivers, Conductors and Handyman of inter-district passenger buses has been launched for providing one-time-financial assistance of Rs 10,000 per beneficiary as COVID relief. Disbursal of benefit under Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Achoni, Swahid Kushal Konwar Sarbajanin Briddha Pension Achoni, Indira Miri Universal Widow Pension Scheme and ORUNODOI scheme has been ensured on 10th of every month without fail. In a major boost to poverty alleviation, monthly assistance under ORUNODOI has been increased from Rs 830 to Rs 1,000 per family. Thus, a total amount of Rs 1,005.01 crore is being disbursed against 19.32 lakh beneficiaries every month. Assam is one of the very few states in the country which provide the DBT to the beneficiaries in timely and reliable basis.

For the Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP), rice is procured from Food Corporation of India (FCI) to ensure

quality and quantity at right price and for ensuring timely availability of food supply for successful implementation of the programme. Procurement of rice from FCI will ensure transparency and uniformity in respect of SNP. Financial powers have been delegated in favour of Social Welfare Department for smooth implementation.

In order to mitigate the difficulties of landless persons, the Government has decided to allot land to eligible persons by way of periodic patta (myadi patta) instead of the existing system of giving annual patta (ek-sonia patta). The Government also notified modification of Land Policy, 2019 for settlement of land to indigenous landless cultivators/families on realisation of premium at the rate of Rs 500 per bigha.

The State Government has sanctioned Rs 400 crore grant-in-aid for various schemes under Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana (CMSGUY) to accelerate rural development, e.g., setting up of godowns to store paddy, drier units, fisheries, etc.

The Government has given approval for one-time terminal benefit of Rs 4 lakh to Anganwadi workers of Anganwadi Centre (AWC), Rs 3 lakh to Anganwadi workers of Mini AWC and Rs 2 lakh to Anganwadi helpers at the time of retirement on attaining 60 years.

Moreover, out of the 2% reservation in Grade-III & Grade-IV posts for ex-Servicemen, 25% to be reserved for disabled ex-Servicemen (disability arising in service) and family of those killed in line of duty. Remaining 75% will be reserved for other ex-Servicemen.

## **Governance made easy**

For good governance, we are in the process of removing bottlenecks in the system and carrying out administrative reforms. To fast-track consultative decision-making, Cabinet meetings are being held on weekly basis, while Guardian Ministers and Guardian Secretaries have been appointed for all districts who extensively tour their assigned districts and handhold the district administration.

Revised architecture for delegation of financial powers has been put in place to expedite implementation of major infrastructure and social sector projects and remove procedural bottlenecks. A new district of Tamulpur has been created. My Government has also merged 12 departments with similar nature of work into 6 departments and created two new departments in order to make them more performance-oriented and provide enhanced public service.

As highlighted, Welfare of Bodoland Department has been created. It will be the nodal department for formulation and implementation of policies and programmes for the welfare and all-round development of people inhabiting the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR).

In order to expedite infrastructure projects, Deputy Commissioners have been empowered to allot Government land to State Government departments and Central Government ministries / departments for such projects in rural areas without any reference to the Government.

I am happy to inform that Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed among Survey of India, Government of India and Government of Assam for implementation of the

Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA) in the State, while preliminary work for establishment of Continuous Operation Reference System (CORS) network has already been started by Survey of India. Introduction of online services for non-GST taxes like Agricultural Income Tax, Professional Tax, Tax on Specified Lands, Electricity Duty, etc, has made such business processes simple and hassle-free for tax payers and will eliminate physical interface.

Further, in a massive exercise across the State, a consolidated database of all Government land in possession of various State Government departments, PSUs and autonomous bodies in various locations has been compiled for the first time in order to enable proper planning of future Government projects and schemes as well as protection of Government land in a holistic manner. Integrated DC office complexes for 11 districts namely Kamrup (M), Dhemaji, Golaghat, Bongaigaon, Biswanath, Nalbari, Cachar, Charaideo, Kamrup, Baksa, Karbi Anglong and Bajali (under SOPD) have also been approved. Approval has been granted for creation of the post of Chief Engineer PWD (Health & Education) under Assam PW (Building and NH) Department to expedite all health and educational infrastructure projects undertaken by PWD in the State. The Assam State Space Application Centre (ASSAC) has been established by separating the Assam Remote Sensing Application Centre (ARSAC) from Assam Science, Technology and Environment Council (ASTEC).

The Assam Right to Public Service (ARTPS) portal has been developed under the Assam Citizen Centric Service Delivery Project to process, track, and deliver Government services notified under the Assam Right to Public Services Act, 2012 so that

people can apply for any service notified under the RTPS Act online through any Public Facilitation Centre or from home. 72 services covering 11 departments have been on boarded on the portal to be delivered to the citizens in a time bound manner. Around 5.25 lakh applications have been received on the portal since its launch on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and around 4.85 lakh disposed.

Equipping Administration to tackle natural disasters quickly, full financial powers delegated to Deputy Commissioners to immediately sanction relief material as well as to undertake immediate restoration works under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). Sanitary napkins also added to the list of relief items to be provided to flood victims.

For streamlining the pension procedure and reduce the hardship faced by the pensioners, the State Cabinet approved KRITAGYATA portal to be the front end for processing all pension cases and for matters related to pay fixation. The Government will award five Gazetted and Non-Gazetted employees in each district based on their performance in service. Similarly, 10 Gazetted and Non-Gazetted employees will be awarded at the State level as best employees every year. Each employee so awarded will get a one-year extension of service.

### **Jal Jeevan Mission**

Implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission expedited with structural changes in the scheme design by delegating enhanced power to the district administration to utilise fund up to Rs 10 crore with the approval of their Guardian Ministers. Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) on the day Govt. took over the charge was 7,14,881 nos and after 9 months (i.e. as on

09.03.2022), it is 21,09,018. School coverage when government took charge was 8357 nos. and this after 9 months has increased to 27869 nos. Similarly, Anganwadi coverage when government took charge was 2,051 nos, which after 9 months has increased to 13226 nos. The works has started to provide piped drinking water connection to each and every household in tea gardens. To remove bottlenecks in Jal Jeevan Mission implementation, PHE Divisions have been created in Majuli with HQ at Kamalbari, in Bajali with HQ at Pathsala and in South Salmara Mankachar with HQ at Hatisingimari. Nazira PHE Division has been shifted to Sonari and renamed as Charaideo Division.

In the current year Assam has provided 1449480 FHTCs and is the 5th highest FHTCs provided in the current year to date in absolute numbers. Out of 4.2 lakh households in 782 tea gardens, who did not have piped water connection, under JJM 1.4 lakh Functional Household Tap connections (FHTC) have already been provided and the balance 2.9 lakh household will be provided FHTCs in the coming Financial Year

### **Procurement of rice for supporting farmers**

The target for Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2021-22 has been set at 10 Lakh MT to be procured by FCI, Assam Food & Civil Supply Corporation Limited (AFCSCCL), Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board (ASAMB) etc in 179 Paddy Procurement Centre (PPCs) during 1st Crop and 117 nos of PPCs during 2<sup>nd</sup> Crop. It is indeed a matter of satisfaction that Govt. of Assam has for the first time attempted to draw a roadmap for making the State self sufficient as per National Food Security Scheme (NFSA) requirements. The Government is now all set to switch over to Decentralised Procurement in coming years. To achieve this objective an amount of Rs.160 cores have been

sanctioned to AFCSCCL as working capital in the first instant. More fund will be made available to the organization to scale up the procurement operations in the State. Farmers are being paid MSP timely to encourage them to sell their paddy in the nearest PPCs only. This endeavour has been proven successful which is evident from the response of the farmers in the media. Farmers have been registered, for the first time, on the basis of land records. So far 71,057 farmers have successfully registered in the State Portal. As on 10<sup>th</sup> Mar 2022, 12,248 farmers have sold 86,285 MT of paddy and have benefited with MSP amounting to Rs. 163 crores. AFCSCCL is now emerging as the lead procuring agency and it shall operate in Decentralised Procurement (DCP) mode in future to spread the benefit of Minimum Support Price (MSP) all over the State.

In order to make the procurement system more streamlined and bring about transparency, Government of Assam has developed Online Paddy Procurement System (OPPS) incorporating all the parameters as laid down by the GoI and it has been used by all the procuring agencies in the current KMS.

### **Recruitment drive**

To fulfill one of the key poll promises, the Government has set in motion the process to provide one lakh jobs to our youth. Some of such measures include setting up of recruitment commissions for Class III and Class IV posts, common recruitment for Group A and Group B posts through Combined Competitive Examination through APSC, constitution of Assam Engineering Service Recruitment Board and use of notarized affidavits in lieu of police verification reports from selected candidates to Government jobs etc. The recruitment process of more than 27000 Class III and Class IV posts by the Recruitment Commissions will start soon.

Besides this, a few Administrative Departments on their own have already started the process of advertisement, selection and recruitment in Class III and Class IV posts through specially constituted Boards such as Assam Medical & Health Recruitment Board of Health and Family Welfare Department, reputed Agency of Environment and Forest Department, State TET Empowered Committee of Education Department and State Level Police Recruitment Board of Home department. Recruitment of more than 37000 jobs are being done by these Recruitment Boards.

There are additional vacancies in the State PSUs, Board and their subordinate offices, which will be taken up with the State Level Recruitment Commissions for Class III and Class IV Posts in the next phase for advertisement, recommendation and recruitments thereof.

### **Enhanced budgetary spending and capital expenditure**

During last five years, the trend of expenditure has been continuously increasing. This has been largely due to prudent fiscal management, meticulous planning of expenditure including large scale procurement reforms in the State. This increase in expenditure in turn has helped in pushing up the economy by investing money in Capital Expenditure. Overall expenditure of the state significantly improved from Rs 41931 crore (63% of budget) during 2015-16 to Rs 99419 crore (83% of budget) during 2019-20.

The capital expenditure too has been continuously increasing. While in 2015-16, it was Rs 4919 crore only. However, in 2020-21, it rose to Rs 14635 crore. This is expected to enhance substantially in 2021-22.

## **Externally aided projects**

Externally Aided Projects are one of the important resources for my Government. We have been using this resources to build our infrastructure, build capacities and enhance the social security net. Presently through external assistance, projects worth close to Rs 16,843 crore are under various stages of execution in sectors like Finance, Transport, Public Service delivery, Road & Bridge Infrastructure, Agriculture, Environment & Forest, Water Supply & Sewerage, Power, Skill development etc. Similarly, projects worth close to Rs 37,578 crore in sectors such as Road network upgradation and development, Power, Fisheries, Health, Water Resources etc. are under pipeline, the most noteworthy of which are Assam Bridge Project 2 connecting Palashbari and Sualkuchi across River Brahmaputra worth over 3094 crore, Assam State Bridge Infrastructure Project worth over 4360 crore, Strengthening Health System, and excellence of medical education in Assam worth over 3875 crore. Further, projects over Rs 10,000 crore are in the concept stages which are proposed to be posed to the Government of India in the upcoming financial year. Most of the projects are capital investments for infrastructure development which will create more jobs and catalyse long term economic growth of the state.

Similarly, in order to effectively address the concerns of floods and erosion, the Government of Assam has leveraged investments from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank towards an integrated river basin planning approach by judiciously integrating structural and non-structural components.

The Assam Integrated River Basin Management Program (AIRBMP) funded by the World Bank will be implemented in selected tributaries of the Brahmaputra; with a project cost to the tune of 625 million US Dollars.

State Government is engaging with the World Bank have agreed to work on Medium-Term State Partnership and on multifarious projects ranging from road and bridge Infrastructure projects for improvement of Secondary Health Infrastructure and Water Resource Management using scientific data and modern technologies.

### **Energizing power sector**

Assam Power Distribution Company is the sole Discom in Assam which caters to more than 66 lakh consumers. In the month of May, 2021, Rs. 831 crore were pending for payment towards central power generating companies. NTPC issued notices for curtailment in power supply which could have resulted into massive load shedding across the State. At that time, around Rs. 600 crore were diverted from schematic allocations to meet the power purchase cost and other establishment liabilities. The new Government took over on 10th May, 2021 and introduced several reform measures to turn around the Discom.

- ◆ The State Government converted Rs. 4290 crore of State Govt. Loan and grant given to Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL) is past years to equity. Further, State Govt. has written off Rs. 346 crore of unpaid interest. It has increased the creditworthiness of the balance sheet of APDCL. Similar exercises have been carried out for Assam Power Generation Company Limited (APGCL) and Assam Energy Grid Corporation Limited (AEGCL).
- ◆ APDCL has taken up several projects for replacing the existing meters with pre-paid Smart meters. Since June'21, more than 2.5 lakh have already been installed across the State and work on installation of 10 lakh smart meters is going on.

- ◆ Assam is the only State till now which has got approval from Ministry of Power for revamping the existing infrastructure to bring down the AT&C losses to 15% by FY 2024-25 under Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme. The project outlay approved for Assam is Rs. 8727 crore.
- ◆ To ensure the reliable power and voltage improvement, Government of Assam has approved the AIIB funded project. Total outlay for this project is Rs. 3284 crore for APDCL to construct 200 new Sub-stations and other infrastructure.
- ◆ To facilitate the rural consumers, APDCL has introduced the digital wallet system namely Easy Pay which has shown significant improvement in energy dues collection in rural areas and has also generated employment.
- ◆ APDCL has been able to collect **Rs. 4964 Crore** against demand of **Rs. 4720 Crore** during the period from June'21 to February'22 which is 105% in terms of collection efficiency.
- ◆ Regular payment is being made by all Government consumers, since June'21. Till January'22, Government of Assam has paid Rs. 174 Crore against nine centralised departments. Also, for other government departments, the Government has released almost all pending energy dues. To streamline the process of payment of electricity bills of government departments, a global head has been created.
- ◆ APDCL has been able to collect arrear of Rs. 586 Crore in the period from Jun'21 to Feb'22. At the beginning of Jun'21 arrear outstanding was Rs. 2120 Crore. At the end of February'22, arrear outstanding has come down to Rs. 1534 Crore.

- ◆ **Improvement in Billing efficiency** : APDCL has recorded 8% enhancement in terms of energy billing efficiency during last three quarter of this FY over corresponding period of last year.

I am happy to inform you that all the utility companies of power sector are expected to make healthy profit in this financial year. All this is due to the various reforms in this sector. While APDCL specifically has made impressive gains, it is not possible to pass these gains to the consumers as APDCL incurred a loss of approx Rs 600 crore during COVID period (2020-21) and the same needs to be factored in the tariff by suitably revising it upwards. However, in order to obviate the possibilities of steep rise in tariff, my Government has decided to provide subsidy to APDCL so that the power tariff remains affordable.

Now, the focus area of the Government is power generation through renewable energy in days to come.

Union Power Minister Shri R.K.Singh aptly said about the state during his recent visit- *"Assam has become a front runner in electricity...it gives me satisfaction to state that there is big difference in Assam at the time of my taking over charge as Power Minister and that of now...Assam has strengthened its electricity system...provided electricity to every household...reduced its losses...increased efficiency...and just two days ago I have written to all Chief Ministers citing the example of Assam that they can also achieve such feat as done by Assam..."*

### **Maintaining cordial relations with neighbouring states**

Assam has been facing border disputes with neighbouring states of Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram

since their creation. Now my Government has taken a bold and positive step for settling the border disputes conclusively. A path breaking initiative has been taken with Meghalaya to resolve the vexed boundary issues in respect of the six areas of difference out of 12 such areas by setting up regional committees headed by Ministers on both sides to engage with local people and community organizations using panchsutras of administrative convenience, contiguity, ethnicity, people's opinion and historical perspective as yardsticks. Based on the recommendations of these committees an MoU between the two states has been firmed up and Government of India is seized with necessary ground work to make this unique initiative reach fruition.

With Assam and Meghalaya inching closer towards a permanent settlement of their differences other neighbouring states viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland have also advocated the need for a negotiated settlement of their border disputes with Assam and discussions with Arunachal Pradesh have already started in this direction. I am confident that such overtures will further strengthen the spirit of united North East.

### **Ensuring Health for all**

Sustained efforts have been made in improving the health care infrastructure and services. The efforts have started yielding results now, as is seen in the recently published report of National Family Health Survey (NFHS).

Under 5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) (i.e. child death of age 0-5 years) of the State was 56.5 per 1,000 live birth as per NFHS-4 (2015-16) which was very high compared to 49.7 of the National average. But, NFHS-5 (2019-20) showed the improvement made by the State. As per NFHS-5 (2019-20),

Under 5 Mortality of the State is 39.1 compared to 41.9 of the National average. That means, child mortality rate of the State is below the National average which happened for the first time.

Similarly, Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) (i.e. infant death of age 0-1 year) of the State was 47.6 per 1,000 live birth as per NFHS-4 (2015-16) which was very high compared to 40.7 of the National average. But, as per NFHS-5 (2019-20), Infant Mortality of the State has come down to 31.9 compared to 35.2 of the National average. That means, infant mortality rate of the State is also below the National average.

Similar huge improvement is also witnessed in Neo-Natal Mortality Rate (NMR) (i.e. infant death of age 0 - 28 days). NMR of the State has come down from 32.8 in NFHS - 4 (2015-16) to 22.5 in NFHS-5 (2019-20). Now, NMR of the State is also below National average of 24.9 (NFHS-5).

Assam has shown significant improvement in maternal health indicators also. The improvement showed in all indicators related to pregnancy care, delivery care, post-natal care, sex ratio at birth, total fertility rate, immunization services etc. clearly point out the efforts put in by the Health Department.

To improve tertiary care in health sector and improve infrastructure, Government of Assam is taking up a project with support from Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Government of India. The total project cost is Rs 3800 crore approximately and the major components are construction and development of super speciality wing in six medical college (Silchar, Tezpur, Jorhat, Barpeta, Diphu & Lakhimpur), Infrastructure Improvement in six district hospitals (Silchar, Udalguri, Hojai, Hailakandi, Darrang & Dima Hasao) and capacity building.

The doctor to population ratio in Assam is low. To address this shortage, government has been taking steps to establish more medical colleges in the state. As part of this endeavour, the Lakhimpur Medical College started functioning from this year, and many other colleges are at different stages of construction. My government intends to complete the construction of Medical Colleges at Dhubri, Nagaon, Kokrajhar.

### **Respecting tradition and age-old value systems**

Respecting traditions and age-old value systems, the State Government has allowed the employees to avail casual leave on 6 th and 7 th January, 2022, suffixing the two holidays on 8th and 9th January, 2022 being second Saturday and Sunday, so as to enable them to spend the days with their parents and parents-in-law. In order to stop the smuggling of Cows, The Assam Cattle Preservation Act, 2021 was promulgated with effect from 22nd November, 2021. An amendment Bill to provide smooth implementation was also passed in the Assembly on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2021. The State Government has also provided financial assistance of Rs 10 lakh each to 17 producers of Mobile Theatre to help them overcome the difficult situation of COVID-19.

### **Preserving Heritage**

As the Members of this august House are aware, different groups of mongoloid people entered into Northeast India migrating from the Tibet Autonomous Region, South Western China, Myanmar before the Kurukshetra battle, projected date for which was 10 century BC, which was said by Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, in his book Kirata Janakriti. Migration wise, the Tribes of Assam may be divided into two broad groups, viz. **The northern group** of tribes i.e. those who migrated from present day Tibet

Autonomous Region in southwestern China to Assam, following the courses of rivers, especially of the Brahmaputra and / or through the passes and **the eastern group** of tribes i.e. those who crossed over to North East India from Myanmar.

The northern tribes are Bodo (Kachari), Mech, Dimasa (Kachari), Garo, Rabha, Tiwa, Deori, Barmans in Cachar, Hajong and Mising. With the exception of the Mising tribe, the rest of the northern tribes all originated from the proto-Bodo group. The social formation of Chutiya, Moran and Koch (now clubbed with an allied social group called Rajbongshi and referred together as Koch Rajbongshi) are also said to have originated from the ancient Bodo race, but they are not included in the list of Scheduled Tribes. The eastern tribes inhabiting present day Assam are Kuki, Naga, Mizo, Hmar, Singpho, Khampti, Man (Tai speaking), Chakma, Pawi, Lakher, Khasi and Jaintia. I would like to inform that my Government is committed to safeguard the interests of all such indigenous and tribal communities.

Ahom, Moran, Matak, Chutia and Gorkha communities have been notified in the list of classes of persons entitled for protection under Chapter X of the Assam Land and Revenue Regulations in the Sadiya Tribal Belt. Tai Ahom, Chutia, indigenous Koch-Rajbongshi and Gorkha communities have been included in the list of Protected Class in Murkongselek Jonai Tribal belt in Dhemaji district. State Government decided to include Gorkha community as Protected Class in Tribal Belts and Blocks in the districts of BTR.

A new Tribal belt "Sissi Tangani Tribal Belt" has been created comprising 89 villages in Sissiborgaon Revenue Circle in Dhemaji District.

State Cabinet has decided not to initiate enquiries by Border Police under Foreigners Act, 1946 against members of Gorkha community living in Assam. Further, the existing cases pending at Foreigners Tribunals against members of the community will be withdrawn.

Indigenous and Tribal Faith & Cultural Department has been created for promotion, formulation and implementation of policies and programmes for welfare and all-round development of indigenous and tribal people of the State. Directorate of Archaeology, Directorate of Museum and Directorate of Historical & Antiquarian Studies will be under the aegis of this Department.

I am happy to inform that Mahabahu Brahmaputra River Heritage Centre at Guwahati's Barphukanar Tila was inaugurated by Hon'ble Vice-President Shri M Venkaiah Naidu on 3 October, 2021, which was subsequently opened to public from 12 October, 2021.

Additional 35 bighas of land have been allotted to Batadrava Than, one of the most sacred sites of Assam, for its development as a cultural and tourism destination. Settlement of Government land has been made in favour of Dhalpur Siva Mandir, Sipajhar, for preservation of its valued cave art and stone sculptures and for its development as a tourist destination.

Highest State Civilian Awards have been instituted and conferred on Asom Divas (Siu-Ka-Pha Divas) on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021. The awards for the year 2021 have already been announced. It has also been decided that death anniversaries of Deshbhakta Tarun Ram Phukan on 28<sup>th</sup> July and Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi on 5<sup>th</sup> August will be observed as Desh Bhakti Divas and Karmachari Divas respectively.

All Government meetings and programmes will start with singing of State Anthem "O Mor Apunar Desh ..." and conclude with singing of National Anthem "Jana Gana Mana ..."

### **Spreading the light of knowledge**

The educational sector was undoubtedly the most devastated by COVID. Because of school and college closures, students education suffered immensely. Despite that we have made all efforts to reach out through TV channels, mobile Apps and village based one to one teaching and learning. The use of digital technologies, Apps and their use increased substantially. Education will be brought back to the central stage by investing in key brick and mortar infrastructure of schools and universities. Modernisation of technical education, infusion of cutting edge educational and information technology will be substantially increased to help our students become more employable and industry ready.

The recruitment in the educational appointments through special boards like the Engineering recruitment boards will quicken and stabilize the pace and process of recruitment. Gunotsav will be restarted to make a soul searching exercise on how to improve the quality of education.

### **Socio-economic uplift**

Focusing on Socio-economic upliftment of the state, daily wages of tea garden workers has been hiked from Rs 167 to Rs 205 in the Brahmaputra Valley and from Rs 145 to Rs 183 in the Barak Valley with retrospective effect from 22 February 2021. The State Government has also decided to provide at least 100 days of employment to willing tea garden labourers during the non-tea working period under MGNREGA to provide

them alternative employment during lean period. Government of Assam has sanctioned construction of 1,000 AWCs as Model AWCs at Rs 25 lakh per centre. A 60-bed Old Age Home at Sonapur was inaugurated on 20 August 2021 along with National Helpline No.14567 for Senior Citizens launched. The State Government has approved financial incentive under the Inter Caste Marriage Scheme 2021-22. In response to Chief Minister's appeal, 9,620 ineligible beneficiaries holding ration cards, covering 37,246 family members, have surrendered their NFSA ration cards making way for new and eligible needy people. A new Directorate of Social Justice & Empowerment has been created by bifurcating the Directorate of Social Welfare to attend exclusively to persons with disability, senior citizens, transgenders, drug abuse issues.

### **Focus on connectivity**

The Government is striving to improve connectivity substantially. Major roads, artillery roads and bridges are being build. For example, to expand road infrastructure, work on the 8.25-km-long Majuli-Jorhat bridge over the Brahmaputra river has been commenced on 29 November 2021. Approval has been given for construction of a road-cum-embankment from Jonai to Majuli along the river Brahmaputra at a cost of Rs 183 crore. This will strengthen the embankment and improve communication. Furthermore, alignment and preliminary design for the proposed 3-km bridge from Sualkuchi to Palashbari over the Brahmaputra at an estimated cost of Rs 3,094 crore have also been finalised.

The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana is being implemented successfully. Having completed more than 28000 Km of roadwork, the department is going to complete all PMGSY-I & PMGSY-II

works of new connectivity by 31.03.2022 with additional effort from State Government, Department and Contractors. In addition, out of 2760 KM of roadwork sanctioned under PMGSY-III. 1453 Km have been completed with the balance in progress.

I am also happy to inform that the 2-lane flyover constructed at a cost of Rs 127 crore at Dispur, Guwahati was opened on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2021 in a record 22 months instead of the targeted 36 months.

### **For a greener cause**

My Government has taken multiple initiatives to conserve and protect the unique wilderness and biodiversity of Assam. Two National Parks namely Raimona in Kokrajhar and Dehing Patkai in Tinsukia have been notified in pursuit for conservation and protection of environment. Further, 2<sup>nd</sup> addition to Orang National Park and Kakoijana, Behali and Garbhanga Wildlife Sanctuaries are in the pipeline. For conservation of wildlife, anti-poaching camps have been augmented and ration allowance of Rs.2000/- per month has been sanctioned at par with the armed police personnel to boost the morale of the front line staff. As a strong message against poaching and to bust the myth around medicinal and magical properties of Rhino Horn, 2479 horns lying with the government were set ablaze on the World Rhino Day (September 21, 2021). Mention of the community led conservation and protection of our Natural Heritage and Assam's pride, Great One Horned Rhino and significant reduction in poaching incidents in Man Ki Baat by Hon'ble Prime Minister followed by the Presidential visit to the Kaziranga National Park is a big boost. To augment our conservation efforts the Eco Sensitive Zone (ESZ) for integrated Kaziranga National Park

and Tiger Reserve encompassing 8 wildlife sanctuaries and reserved forests in its vicinity with an area of 3256 sq km is under consideration of my Government and soon it will be forwarded to Government of India for draft notification. A wild life friendly and ecology compliant elevated corridor covering 34 km is also under consideration with active support from Government of India to facilitate barrier free movement for animals in Kaziranga National Park. For mitigation of Man-Animal Conflict, several steps like enhancing the amount of compensation to the victims, activation of Anti-depredation squads through provision of logistics, prompt interdepartmental co-ordination have been given top priority besides fast tracking the ex-gratia payments to the victim families. Barak Valley Wildlife Safari & Rescue Centre with an investment of Rs. 214 crore has been approved which will be completed in next 3 (three) years in Cachar district. To strengthen wildlife healthcare and research infrastructure an 'Institute of Wildlife Health and Research (IWH&R)' at Dinjan in Dibrugarh is also under consideration of my Government.

To mitigate climate change, land banks in revenue areas are being actively identified to enable the forest department to take up plantations with a policy mandate to plant 10 trees for every tree cut for any development work, outside the forests. In a one of its kind intervention in the country, to promote planting of trees outside forests, the Assam Agro-forestry Development Board is being set up with primary objective to connect farmers (growers) to markets, by incentivizing and facilitating agro-forestry for planting of commercially viable species in a Mission mode including bamboo, plywood, medicinal and aromatics, tree borne oil seeds, sandalwood, agarwood, and silk worm host trees.

My Government has taken a major step to increase incomes of farmers by promoting Agro forestry. Some of the trees species of Assam, such as Aam, Jamun, Kathal, kadam, Agar (two species), Sandalwood, Bamboos, etc., which are grown by marginal and small farmers on their homestead, private patta lands and community lands have been totally exempted from the purview of Transit Rules made under Sec 40 and 41 of Assam Forest Regulation, 1891 (as amended). Since these species mostly occur outside the natural forests, therefore they are exempted from any felling permissions and also now do not require any Transit Permit (TP) for transportation.

### **Facilitating Industrial Growth**

State Cabinet has approved the Assam MSME (Facilitation of Establishment and Operation) Amendment Bill, 2021 to provide deemed approval for clearances, licences, etc, for setting up or operation of industrial units.

Hindustan Paper Corporation Mills, located in Nagaon and Cachar, were earlier closed down due to various reasons. As a result, about 1100 families of workers and employees of HPC mills were affected adversely. They were facing tremendous hardships and difficulties about their livelihood due to closure of these mills. All efforts made for revival of the mills were unsuccessful. In such background state government decided to resolve the issue in close collaboration with associations and unions of HPC. After detailed discussions, an understanding was made between Government of Assam and various associations and unions of HPC to resolve the vexed problem. Assam government agreed to provide relief package to affected employees and workers and acquire the land and assets of both the mills in Nagaon and Cachar. Accordingly, AIDC, as

authorised by the Government, has successfully participated in the bid process which has been initiated by the Liquidator, appointed by the NCLT. It is expected that about Rs.700 crore would be required for acquiring the land and providing relief as committed by the government.

Aiming to facilitating industrial growth, Assam became the second State in India to have approved the Ethanol Policy, 2021 to incentivize producers of ethanol for the purpose of blending with hydrocarbon fuels. State Cabinet has approved the Assam Procurement Preference Policy, 2021, formulated to facilitate growth and development of Micro and Small Enterprises in the State. Special incentives have been given for startups of the State which are : a) Tender documents shall be issued free of cost; b) 50% exemption from payment of Earnest Money; c) 50% waiver in payment of security deposit.

State Government's equity share in Numaligarh Refinery Limited increased from 12.35% to 26% involving an investment of Rs 2,187 crore. Approval has been given for setting up of an Investment Holding Company under Finance Department for ensuring efficient & professional governance, transparency in operations, promote industrial climate and attract further investments in the State. The main objective of the company is to hold and manage portfolio of investments in oil, gas, fertilizer, etc, companies so that resources can be mobilised more efficiently.

### **Housing for all**

To achieve the objective of providing 'Housing for All', under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), 4,57,851 houses have been completed out of total 7,68,013 houses sanctioned. We will also be taking up another 7 Lakh

houses in next few months. To construct houses for landless PMAY-G beneficiaries, an innovative idea of Cluster House approach has been adopted in the state.

Benefits of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) Housing for All (Urban) was extended to persons who are occupiers of Government lands for over 10 years, provided the persons in occupation of Government land are eligible for settlement and the land is found fit for settlement.

### **Agreements with key institutions**

My Government signed many agreements with key institutions. Some important examples area :-

- ◆ In order to ensure rapid development in various sectors, Government of Assam has signed tripartite agreement with National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and West Assam Milk Producers Co-operative Union Ltd (WAMUL) on 6 August 2021 with a view to bring White Revolution in the State.
- ◆ MoU has been signed with NABARD for raising loans, under Rural Infrastructure Assistance Scheme (RIAS) and NABARD Infrastructure Development Assistance (NIDA), up to Rs 13,200 crore to undertake various capital-intensive projects in rural and semi-rural areas in the social sector (Health, Education, Drinking Water, etc.), rural connectivity, Agriculture and related activities (Water Resources, Irrigation, Fisheries, Veterinary, Soil Conservation, village knowledge centres, etc.)

### **Skilling Youth**

In order to prioritize Skilling youth and generating jobs, Aadhaar-based online registration of applicants has been initiated in all Employment Exchanges of Assam. MoU has been signed

with L&T Ltd to establish Construction Skill Training Centre at ITI, Guwahati for the youth of Aspirational Districts of Assam.

In order to ensure a better harvest, a large plot of government land at Garukhuti under Sipajhar Revenue Circle in Darrang district has been made free from encroachers. A committee has been constituted and farming activities have started involving the local community. 108 Gir Cows have been brought from Gujarat for the Garukhuti project in Sipajhar for boosting dairy production.

My Government also decided to implement the Scheme to give incentive and relief to the MFI borrowers, who availed small loans from different Microfinance lending Institutions in the State of Assam. The Government is implementing the Category-I of the Scheme. Category 1 borrowers are those who have been repaying regularly with zero Days Past Due (DPD). In first phase in the month of November, 2021, nine Districts namely, Charaideo, Dima Hasao, Golaghat, Jorhat, Majuli, Sivasagar, Sonitpur, South Salmara and West Karbi Anglong have given incentives by distributing cheques to the beneficiaries by covering 154,030 people. In Second phase in the month of December, 2021, six Districts namely, Baksa, Biswanath, Bongaigaon, Chirang, Dhemaji and Dibrugarh have been covered for distribution of cheques to beneficiaries of the scheme covering 1,42,755 people.

In order to recognize the exceptional services / performances of the highest order in any field of human endeavour, Government of Assam instituted and conferred the Awards "Assam Baibhav", "Assam Saurav" and "Assam Gaurav." 19 persons were conferred with these highest Civilian awards in a ceremonial function held on 24.01.2022.

Hon'ble Members, it was indeed a proud moment for all the countrymen to watch Lovlina Borgohain winning laurels in the Tokyo Olympics by winning the Bronze medal in boxing. As a token of recognition, the State Cabinet has approved the appointment of Khel Ratna Lovlina Borgohain as Deputy Superintendent of Police. Construction of Lovlina Boxing Academy-cum-Sports Complex at Sarupathar in Golaghat district has also been announced.

Hon'ble Members, my government has been inspired and motivated by the mission of our beloved Prime Minister to turn North East into a '**New Engine of Growth**'. Accordingly, we have been trying to live up to your expectations in the past few months. Our Government has initiated a number of measures aimed at unleashing the State's full potential.

Hon'ble Members, I have outlined the policies, programmes and achievements of my Government. My Government is committed to fulfill all the promises made to people of Assam. The glimpses of the policies and programmes outlines indicated earlier gives an idea of the direction my Government proposes to take in next four years. I request this August House to support and work together for all-round development of the state and the benefit of all sections of the people of Assam.

**JAI AIE AXOM**

**JAI HIND**

