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Address by

SHRI BANWARILAL PUROHIT
Hon'ble Governor of Assam

BUDGET SESSION

14th
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ASSAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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

Kindly join me in paying respectful homage to our esteemed Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, on his *punya tithi*. The light that had shown so kindly on the world through his life and message, is still shining on entire humanity. I'm sure, Hon'ble Members, that light would continue to illuminate our paths and guide our lives for all times to come.

In this auspicious month of Magh and first month of the English new year 2017, I extend my greetings and best wishes to you all; may the days ahead bring all-round happiness, peace and prosperity to all the people of our State. I am very happy to address this august House today during this Budget Session of the 14th Assam Legislative Assembly. About eight months back, the people of Assam from all areas - Barak valley and Brahmaputra valley, hill areas and plains, and from all sections of the society, had given popular mandate for a new government. Right since my Government has dedicated itself to bringing about qualitative change in governance, guided by the ideals of Mahapurush Sri Srimanta Sankardev, Mahapurush Sri Sri Madhav Dev and Ajan Pir, and inspired in equal measure by Chaolung Sukaphaa, Bir Lachit, Bir Chilarai and other great historical personalities of our State.

My Government will join hands with all concerned in securing the constitutional, legislative, social and cultural safeguards as per the **clause 6 of the Assam Accord**.

Hon'ble Members, ¹⁸⁰my Government has turned serious attention to the situation along the **Indo-Bangladesh border**. A high-level team led by the Chief Minister and teams led by Hon'ble Members of this august House have visited these border areas and taken stock of the situation. Complete sealing of the Indo-Bangladesh border is a challenging task, given the vast expanses of riverine terrain in many sectors; yet, it would be our endeavour to accomplish this task with the help of suitable technology within a definite timeframe. The Indo-Bangladesh border roads and bridges construction works are almost completed, except for some existing ¹⁸⁰gaps and the damage caused by erosions at certain places; these are being attended to on priority. Also, the remaining border fencing works are targeted to be completed soon. The flood-lighting works have been completed; their electricity service connection works are likely to be completed within the next few months.

My Government is fully committed to timely updating of the **National Register of Citizens (NRC)** by scrutinizing the citizenship of all suspected residents. Assam being the first State in the country to implement this exercise, the district authorities would have to maintain utmost care to ensure an error-free ¹⁸⁰verification of documents. The people of Assam have high hopes from this exercise, and the DCs would monitor the process

closely. The status of updating of NRC is at an advanced stage. About 97% of the field verification works of the over 68.2 lakh applications has been completed. Of the about 5.9 crore documents taken up for verification, the verification is complete for over 5 crore documents. Also, 3.55 lakh documents have been sent to other States for verification.

My Government is considering to provide **land pattas** to the **landless indigenous people** of the State. Sincere efforts are being ¹⁸⁰made for protecting the *Satra* and other religious, cultural and ecological lands, and **eviction drives carried out with caution** while following the due process of law.⁻²⁶

Hon'ble Members, I would place before you the policies and programmes of my Government; I am sure, our collective efforts will take Assam forward on this noble journey.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is the principal occupation of majority of the population in Assam; 27.20 lakh farm families are directly involved in cultivating 29.22 lakh hectare operational area. It continues to provide more than fifty per cent of the total workforce and supports more than seventy-five percent population ¹⁸⁰directly or indirectly. My Government has adopted the Sustainable Development Goals - 2030 and has developed strategies for achieving the goals, as the agriculture sector has a great role in ending hunger and poverty in the State. It is aimed to increase the cropping intensity to 151% by the end of 2017-18 from the

current level of 149%. For increasing crop productivity and production, my Government has initiated soil testing and distribution of Soil Health Cards to all the farmers in the State. Up-gradation of soil testing laboratories has been started.

My Government has taken steps to procure about ^{150 = 600} one lakh metric ton paddy from farmers during the current year through the Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board and the Food Corporation of India. My Government has taken up massive programme to expand pulse areas and to cover sali rice fallow areas in the State. This double cropping programme will boost the production of pulses and oil seeds in the State. My Government is implementing the newly launched '*Paramporagot Krishi Vikash Yojana*' from 2016-17 for organic agriculture.

For farm mechanization and irrigation, my Government has started installing solar-powered shallow tube wells in the State. Also, it has finalized the State Irrigation Plan under the Prime Minister's '*Krishi Sinchayee Yojana*' for convergence of all irrigation programmes for ensuring water to all crop land in the State. For agricultural credit, 11 lakh farm families of the State have been covered till now under Kisan Credit Cards; 5.53 lakhs more families would be covered during the year. A World Bank-aided project, Assam Project on Agri-business for Rural Transformation (APART), for establishment of market-led production system, processing and marketing in the State, is expected to be implemented from 2017-18.

Horticulture sector :

My Government has given thrust on Horticulture as a priority sector. Distribution of certified potato seeds and hybrid Rabi vegetable seeds, and production of high-value vegetable crops under green houses, among others, have been carried out. About one lakh fruit plants have been distributed under the 100-days programme of the new Government. For popularizing strawberry, a high value commercial crop with potential in lower Assam and hill districts, tissue culture seedling distribution has been taken up. Ten 'Farmers' Producers Company' have been formed in Kamrup, Nagaon, Morigaon, Jorhat, Golaghat, Sonitpur, and Karbi Anglong districts. In line with the 'More crop per drop' programme of the Government of India, micro-irrigation system comprising drip and micro sprinklers are being emphasized. The newly-launched scheme, '*Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana*', is under implementation from this year. For minimization of post-harvest loss of horticultural crops, action has been initiated. Two primary processing units and one food processing unit under private sector with Government subsidy, and 25 'Pack houses' to help the traders are being set up.

The 'Mission Organic Value Chain' scheme taken up from 2016-17 will help in exploring the organic potentiality of the State. Training of farmers on modern cultivation practices of spice crops of Assam has been taken up in collaboration with 'Spices Board'. Spice farmers will be sent to Calicut to acquaint them on the recent technologies. Mushroom has immense potential in the

State, but often people lose their lives due to consumption of wild mushrooms. To eradicate such deaths and to enhance the nutritional benefit to the people, my Government has laid emphasis on popularization of edible mushroom cultivation by means of training, awareness programme, and providing various inputs like quality spawn, tools, etc. free of cost. Market potential of flowers is growing in districts like Kamrup, Cachar, Nagaon, Jorhat, Sivasagar, etc. Area expansion programme of high value flowers like orchids, Anthurium, Gerbera, Marigold, Tuberose, etc. is being taken up.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY & VETERINARY

My Government gives due importance to the Animal Husbandry sector with the basic objectives of enhancing production of milk, meat and egg; providing employment opportunities; enhancing production of high quality crossbred cattle, goat, pig, etc. through artificial insemination; providing superior quality fodder and feed to livestock, and protecting livestock health by regular treatment and periodic immunization. The sector priorities include upgradation of the College of Veterinary Science at Khanapara to a University of Veterinary, Animal & Fishery Sciences; identifying and developing poultry, pig, goat, sheep, and quail rearing as distinct industries; enhancement of egg production through "Backyard Poultry Rearing"; four commercial layer farms for egg production in PPP mode; establishment of four feed mills in PPP mode; revamping of the Government Livestock and Poultry Farms; formulation of

the "Egg Mission" mega project; distribution of cross-bred heifers in Majuli District; a new scheme for production and procurement of various vaccines, etc., in addition to the continuing schemes.

Dairy Development :

My Government has initiated formulation of the Vision Document - 2030 along with a Road Map during this financial year. In addition to the existing 524 Dairy Cooperative Societies, 40 more Dairy Cooperative Societies are being organised in the districts of Goalpara, Nalbari, Majuli, and Dibrugarh; 13 Commercial Dairy farms are being operationalized in Dhemaji district, and a 5,000 litre capacity Milk Processing Plant at Dhemaji will be made functional. It is envisaged to create employment opportunities for 930 dairy farmers during 2016-17 through Dairy Cooperative Societies and Commercial Dairy Farms.

FISHERY

My Government is implementing a number of schemes and programs to tap the potential of the fishery sector, and to boost fish production in the State. Major schemes include developing 75 hectares of individual farmers' new ponds with the motto of '*Ghare ghare pukhuri, ghare ghare maach*' under the programme "*Matsya Jagaran*". Already 75 support extension workers called *Matsya Mitra* have been engaged. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, 'Development of Freshwater Aquaculture', 160 hectare of new ponds and existing ponds for

fish culture are under implementation. Block-level programmes for mass awareness and sensitization on scientific fish culture and conservation of fish and fishery resources are being implemented. Insurance for more than 1.5 lakh fishermen and fish farmers is under progress through FISHCOPFED. Under RIDF, it is proposed to establish rural fish markets, fish landing centres and develop wetlands, departmental farms and new ponds.

Under the '100 days programme' of the new Government, 2 million fish seeds have been distributed; scientific fish culture practices demonstrated in 50 development blocks; and 150 fish seed hatcheries and 500 fish farmers have been registered. Under the newly-introduced Central sector scheme, "Blue Revolution: Integrated Development & Management of Fisheries", the State has received Rs.500 lakh as 1st installment, out of the total Central share of Rs.1,641.45 lakh. Emphasis is also on utilization of the National Fisheries Development Board assistance for development of the fisheries sector in the State, particularly water area development, establishment of fish seed hatchery, and fish feed mill.

My Government is making sincere efforts blending with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations for rural upliftment and livelihoods. For making the State self-sufficient in fish production in the coming few years, a "Vision Document" is under preparation in consultation with national level experts.

COOPERATION

My Government is implementing schemes for enhancing the storage capacity of foodgrains and other agricultural products in the rural areas under RIDF funding. The Assam State Cooperative Housing Federation Limited (HOUSEFED) has been entrusted to construct 244 rural godowns, with nearly 100 godowns completed. For up-gradation/renovation of existing dilapidated 57 warehouses and construction of 4 new warehouses, NABARD has sanctioned loan assistance of Rs.50 crore under RIDF.

My Government has taken steps to facilitate the formation of viable Co-operative Societies as professional business organizations operating in the agriculture, pisciculture, dairy, small and micro-enterprises, and other important livelihood-generation sectors for promoting self-employment. A time-bound action plan has been finalized, and 118 awareness and advocacy camps have been held, 382 new cooperative societies have been registered in agriculture, dairy, pisciculture and other income-generating sectors. Process is going on for registration of Village Organizations (VOs) federated from SHGs created under the National Rural Livelihood Mission, as cooperative societies, and 148 VOs have been registered.

My Government has proposed to select three best performing cooperative societies every year in an open and transparent manner on the basis of objective criteria in four categories, namely, (1) State level, (2) District level, (3) Sub-

District level and (4) Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS). They'll be given awards with cash prizes in ceremonial functions held on Republic Days in the State, concerned Districts and Sub-Divisions, with 1st Prize of Rs.12 lakh, 2nd Prize of Rs.8 lakh, and 3rd Prize of Rs.5 lakh in each category.

FOOD, CIVIL SUPPLIES & CONSUMER AFFAIRS

My Government is implementing the National Food Security Act, 2013, covering over 2.52 crore population. All eligible beneficiaries have been covered. AAY households are getting subsidized rice @ 35 kg/month, and priority households are getting subsidized rice @ 5 kg/month per member @ Rs.3/kg. Under the *Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana*, the eligible households will be covered in the State. My Government has provided internet connections to all the District Consumer Fora and the Assam State Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission. All the selected beneficiaries data and GPSS/FP Shop data have been digitized as a part of end-to-end computerization of supply chain management. Internet connectivity is provided up to GPSS level under computerization of TPDS. The State Transparency Portal (www.fcs.assam.gov.in) has been developed.

My Government has created an Online Grievance Redressal System. An Additional Deputy Commissioner in each District is designated as the District Grievance Redressal Officer. A consumer helpline and call centre has been set up at the Directorate in Guwahati with Toll Free numbers.

My Government has opened 1,856 *Aamar Dukan* during the 100-days action plan, where 22 essential items are sold to consumers below the printed MRP, and there are plans to introduce "*Amar Dukan on Wheels*" on e-rickshaws.

Constant monitoring of the prices of essential commodities is going on by spot verification of different markets throughout the State. In every district/sub-division, an Enforcement Squad has been formed, headed by an Executive Magistrate for spot enquiry in the wholesale and retail business establishments. Whenever any irregularity or violation is found, strict action is taken against the unscrupulous and defaulter traders. The Controller of Legal Metrology has also stepped up detection and prosecution activities significantly during the year.

PANCHAYAT & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Hon'ble Members, as you are aware, more than 86 per cent of our population lives in rural areas. My Government is geared up to provide sustainable and inclusive growth of rural Assam.

Convergence is the thrust area under MGNREGA. Over 287 lakh mandays have been generated during 2016-17. More than 44 lakh cumulative households have been provided job cards. Over 4,800 households have completed 100 days. More than 2,300 disabled persons have been provided job. More than 37% women have been provided job. The implementation of the programme has been streamlined. All payments to the job card holders are directly credited to their accounts.

Under IAY, out of the 1.23 lakh houses sanctioned in 2015-16, about 3,900 houses have been completed, the remaining houses are under construction. The schemes were brought under P-FMS (Public Finance Management System). Now, all the instalments against the allotted houses are directly released to the accounts of the beneficiaries. The IAY programme now has been restructured as PMAY-G (*Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin*) and the selection of beneficiaries is done as per the Socio-Economic & Caste Census, 2011. The unit cost has been enhanced from Rs.75,000/- to Rs.1.30 lakh. There is an additional provision of Rs.12,000/- for toilets, and Rs.17,290/- for 95 days of work under MGNREGA. Construction of 1.64 lakh houses is targeted for 2016-17; also targeted is completion of 3.59 lakh IAY houses (including pending 1.95 lakh unconstructed houses) within 1st April, 2017.

Under the National Social Assistance Programme, more than 7.78 lakh old-age persons have been provided pension benefit. More than 1,17,000 widows (40 years and above) and about 38,600 disabled persons (18 years and above) have been given the monthly pension. More than 11,800 families have been provided financial support @ Rs.20,000/- due to death of the bread earner (18-59 years age group) of such BPL families. All the data of the beneficiaries have been digitised and made available in the public domain.

The *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana* - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) is being implemented by the

Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission Society (ASRLMS) in a mission mode. Till November, 2016, it has promoted more than 74,000 Self Help Groups across 63 intensive blocks. All SHGs under it have been nurtured to become self-sustainable community institutions by various capacity building programmes. More than 4,000 Village Organisations have been promoted by federating the SHGs, as of November, 2016. A secondary-level federation of SHGs as Cluster-Level Federation (CLF) has also been promoted at the level of a cluster of villages/GPs, and it has promoted 47 CLFs, as of November, 2016.

ASRLMS has been working towards achieving universal financial inclusion. It would also work towards universal coverage of the rural poor against loss of life, health and assets. Its village-level functionaries facilitate the SHGs to open and operate bank accounts and bank linkages. It also facilitates access to insurance to members. Till November, 2016, more than 45,000 SHGs have been provided Revolving Fund, and more than 16,000 SHGs have been provided Community Investment Funds.

The *Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana* (DDU-GKY) is being implemented in PPP mode. At least 70% of these youths will be given assured job placement in organized sector like automobile, hospitality, healthcare, information and communication technology, BPO, etc. after skill training for 3-12 months. About 10,000 rural youths have been trained and over 6,500 rural youths have been offered jobs in the organised sector.

During the current financial year, the State Institute of Panchayat & Rural Development has so far organised 1,185 training programmes, covering about 58,000 persons. Thrust has been given on preparation of holistic Gaon Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), technical training on new permissible works under MGNREGA, Geo-MGNREGA, softwares, etc. Awareness campaigns on preparation of GPDP have been organised in 22,000 wards of the panchayats. A State Panchayat Resource Centre, and 10 District Panchayat Resource Centres are being set up.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Town & Country Planning : My Government has published 28 final Master Plans and 10 draft Master Plans for 38 towns; another 45 Master Plans are under preparation utilising modern technology like GIS-based mapping. The Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) is proposed to be implemented in Dibrugarh, Silchar, Nagaon, and Guwahati. The *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana* (PMAY) - Housing for All (Urban) is proposed to be implemented in Dibrugarh, Silchar, Nagaon, Tinsukia, Kokrajhar, Dhubri, Jorhat, Tezpur, and Guwahati in the 1st phase.

Municipal Administration : In order to improve the urban sanitation scenario under *Swachh Bharat Mission* (Urban), all the 97 Urban Local Bodies of Assam will be declared open defecation free (ODF) during 2017-18. For this more than 66,000 individual household latrines and over 2,200 community/public

toilets will be constructed. Door-to-door garbage collection in all the 97 ULBs will be done. Awareness campaigns have been taken up for healthy sanitation practices and segregation of solid waste at sources. The *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana* - National Urban Livelihoods Mission will be adequately supported by my Government. Under NULM, it is proposed to train 50,000 urban poor youths under skill development component. Capitalization of 3,000 women Self Help Groups will be done by providing revolving fund. City Livelihood Centres are being established in 15 towns/cities. It is also proposed to undertake survey of street vendors in all district headquarter towns.

For improvement of office accommodation of Urban Local Bodies, scheme will be taken up. For construction of link roads in the SC-dominated areas of ULBs, schemes will be taken up under SCSP. Funds will be provided to the Urban Local Bodies for improvement of basic civic services under the 14th Finance Commission. Funds will also be provided to the ULBs under the State Finance Commission.

Some achievements of the new Government include: Skill Development Awareness Programme - UTKASHA completed in 25 cities; UTTARAN - State-level workshop conducted on 24th August, 2016 at Guwahati; 1,748 SHGs and 54 Area-Level Federations have been formed; 375 SHGs assisted with revolving fund; 2,500 old SHGs have been revived; 5,959 candidates have received training on different trades under 'Employment through Skill Training and Placement' component; 6 Government

organizations, 15 NSDC-affiliated agencies, and 4 local agencies have been empanelled as Skill Training Providers.

The Assam State Housing Board has proposed to implement schemes for Rs.780 lakh in the coming year, with total target of 812 units (776 units of Janata Housing Scheme and 36 units of Rental Housing Scheme).

For the Assam Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Board, the priority is to implement urban water supply schemes. Two schemes, i.e., Macharhat (Jorhat) and Chabua town water supply schemes have been commissioned in 100-days agenda. Four schemes - Makum, Chabua, Mangaldoi, and Palasbari (extension part at Mirza) - are expected to be commissioned in the one-year agenda by May, 2017.

GUWAHATI DEVELOPMENT

My Government has decided to complete the ropeway connecting South and North Guwahati; financial sanction has been issued during 2016-17, target is to complete it by July, 2017. The Rail-based Mass Rapid Transport System has been re-prioritized; of the total 60 km of the Phase-I, the Corridor-I from Airport to Narengi would be covered first, and the rest in due course of time.

The Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) has introduced the CAD-based online building permission system, which makes the issue of building permissions more transparent and speedy. Further, steps are taken

for extension and integration of the online system with Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC) for issue of building permissions.

Phase-I of the JICA-assisted project will supply water through partial commissioning in 2017. The Guwahati Jal Board will implement a sewerage project with assistance from JICA, to be completed by 2022. A Special Purpose Vehicle - Guwahati Smart City Development Agency Limited - has been formed to implement the smart city project; an amount of Rs.189 crore has been released for the purpose.

To prevent flash floods in Guwahati, GMC and GMDA are using state-of-the-art technology equipments. GMDA has procured machineries and equipments for cleaning of water bodies of Guwahati city. To mitigate the problem of floods in Guwahati city, "Construction of RCC Drain at Noonmati Basin" has been taken up for diversion of the entire flood water of Zoo Road, Chandmari, Jyotinagar, and Noonmati areas; this is expected to be completed by April, 2017. Another scheme, namely, "Construction of New RCC Storm Water Drain along Service Road (Buffer Zone) of NH-37, Khanapara Greenwood Resort to Basistha River" has been taken up with the National Highways Authority of India.

My Government has decided to develop an international standard Botanical Park at the site of old jail complex in Fancy Bazar on the lines of Singapore's park interconnect model under the Guwahati Open Spaces and Park Integrator network. An amount of Rs.1 crore for the preliminary works has already been released.

Two multi-level car parkings, one at the Mahendra Mohan Choudhury Hospital campus, Panbazar and another in front of *Shraddhanjali Kanan*, Zoo Road, are expected to be completed by the end of March, 2017.

My Government has constituted a Committee for incorporation of the provisions of Model Building Bye-Laws of the Government of India in "Guwahati Building Construction Bye-Laws". Objections and suggestions have been received from various organizations and individuals on the Guwahati Master Plan, which is under process of finalization.

Steps have been taken for declaring Guwahati and its peripheral areas as the State Capital Region (SCR), on the lines of the National Capital Region (NCR). My Government has approved the MoU for a Waste-to-Fuel project funded by OIL and NRL, subject to condition that the land remains with the Guwahati Municipal Corporation.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

My Government is keen to preserve the State's varied culture as a living tradition, keeping its purity in form and content intact. In the hallowed memory of Sarat Sinha, a cultural complex at Chapor, Dhubri, and Chandra Nath Sarma Cultural Complex at Pithakhowa have been completed. The North-East India's first music archive has been inaugurated at the Jyoti Chitraban Film Studio on 30th December, 2016. Work is under progress for a film city at the Jyoti Chitraban Film Studio Society complex.

The interior works of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika memorial at Jalukbari are nearing completion. An auditorium, on a par with the Rabindra Bhawan at Guwahati, was inaugurated at Goalpara on 31st July, 2016 and dedicated to *Natasurjya Phani Sarma*.

The works are in progress for construction of *Sri Sri Madhabdev Kalakshetra* at Narayanpur, Lakhimpur; *Jyoti-Bishnu Sanskritik Prakalpas* at Golaghat, Barpeta, Sipajhar (Darrang), Chandrapur (Kamrup Metro), Naharkatia (Dibrugarh), Joyshidhi (Sonitpur), Hailakandi, Mankachar-South Salmara, Balipara (Sonitpur), Moran (Dibrugarh), Chandpur (Sonai, Cachar), Bahpati (Lakhimpur), and Barapujia (Morigaon).

Some new initiatives include: establishment of a Cultural Research Centre in Barak Valley to be named after Swami Vivekananda; *Ajan Pir Kshetra* at Sivasagar; memorial of the late Achyut Lahkar at Bajali; preservation of the house of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika at Kuthari and the residence of Swahid Kushul Konwar at Sarupapthar; establishment of a modern art gallery at *Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra*; celebration of the Assam Mahotsav in three metropolitan cities of India; the *Sanskritik Samannaya Yatra* within the State for integration; and the *Ankia Bhaona Mahotsav* at Guwahati.

For protection, preservation and development of the archaeological sites and monuments of the State, my Government has been taking several steps. A sum of Rs.2,905 lakh has been proposed for financial assistance to 39 *sattras* and 2 archaeological sites as balance amount for the works of

"Protection, Preservation of Development of Archaeological Sites and Monuments and Sattras Institutions of Assam" during the financial year 2016-17. Rs.191 lakh has been sanctioned for "Protection, Preservation and Development of Archaeological Sites and Monuments of Assam". Rs.228 lakh has been disbursed to the concerned DC's for development of *sattras*.

My Government would develop the Assam State Museum, Guwahati to the standard of the National Museum, for showcasing the North-East's history, culture, art and architecture. Initiative has been taken to exhibit the *Vrindabani Vastra* in the Assam State Museum. A two-week workshop was held at the Assam State Museum in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi and ICCROM, Rome. Steps have been initiated for construction of Silchar District Library and Auditorium.

TOURISM

My Government has taken initiative to give a new dimension to the tourism sector for its development and promotion. My Government would encourage the private sector to come forward and participate in the infrastructural development, as well as to generate more revenues for the benefit of the local communities and the Government as a whole. Tourist footfalls over the years have increased significantly. Promotional schemes like advertising on Railway tickets, in-flight advertisements in national and international airlines, and road shows in Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Hyderabad, etc. have been

undertaken. My Government also took part in World Travel Market London, International Tourism Mart Imphal, Hornbill Festival in Kohima, and Incredible India Tourism Investors Summit in New Delhi. To promote religious tourism, the *Srimanta Sankardev Madhupur Utsav* has been organised at Madhupur, Cooch Behar, West Bengal. The Ambubachi Mela has also been organised in a befitting manner.

My Government has engaged Ms. Priyanka Chopra, a renowned film artist, as the Brand Ambassador for aggressive marketing of the tourism potential of Assam. A consultant has also been engaged for extensive publicity and promotion of Assam Tourism. In this regard, the media plan has been prepared to roll out the promotional campaign.

For total transformation of the infrastructure in and around Kamakhya, my Government is implementing the PRASAD scheme; it has released Rs.679 lakh to the implementing agency. For the *Swadesh Darshan* scheme, Rs.1,913 lakh has been released to the implementing agency. The Aamaar Alohi initiative to promote home stay facility in the State would meet the requirements of the tourists. Umrangshu would be developed as a major tourist destination. The draft Tourism Policy has been put up for public and stakeholder consultations. To boost up Film Tourism in the State, a single-window clearance system has been established. To promote Majuli as a major tourist destination, a Master Plan & Marketing Strategy is being prepared.

My Government has taken steps for promotion of Golf Tourism, and construction of a Tea Museum at Dibrugarh, which will give tourists a 360-degree idea on Tea Industry. A North-East State Pavilion would be set up for showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the various tribes and tourism infrastructure at Hajo. For promoting self-employment, my Government has trained 150 tourist guides associated with the tourist destinations. The Food Craft Institute, Samaguri, Nagaon will have capacity building programmes to train candidates in front desk, bakery & confectionary, and housekeeping, etc.

TRANSPORT

My Government is focused on modernization of Regional Transport Authorities and efficient service delivery, with stress on cashless transactions and digital payments. Latest software applications are being rolled out in DTO offices for ease of business. Dealers point registration and fancy numbers provisions have been started. Grievance redressal mobile app is being launched. Issuance of permits will be computerized. As a part of the Sustainable Development Goals, road safety is being given adequate importance. A Road Safety Policy has been adopted, and a Road Safety Authority is being established to meet the targets for accident reduction with convergent efforts of police, transport officials, PWD, and citizens. Special drives have been taken to protect animals from over-speeding vehicles on the National Highway near the Kaziranga National Park. E-rickshaws have gained popularity; steps are being taken to permit their sale

in various districts. Aggregators like Uber and Ola have also gained a foothold in Guwahati city, offering a choice to the consumers.

During 2016-17, ASTC has been given fund allocation for procurement of 103 city buses and for construction of bus stations at Thelamara in Sonitpur district and Jonai in Dhemaji district. ASTC has introduced fare concession of 100% for freedom fighters and physically disabled, 40% for senior citizens, and 80% for recognised and accredited journalists from 1st November, 2016, besides 35% concession for girl students and 30% concession for boy students. ASTC has proposed to purchase 178 IT-enabled new buses for operation on uncovered and rural routes, implementation of Intelligent Transport Management System in the buses for safety and security of passengers, e-ticketing, and development of infrastructure, including construction of station building and maintenance centre at Majuli, and construction of ISBT at Khanapara, Guwahati.

The Inland Water Transport, Assam has taken up schemes for 15 new and reliable passenger vessels with modern navigable appliances on board, and construction of another 15 Steel Floating Terminals for 15 different ghat points. The Inland Water Transport Development Society has been set up for overall infrastructural and institutional development of IWT sector. A company, "Assam Inland Water Transport Corporation Limited", set up as a PSU. For handy embarkation of ferry commuters, suitable Steel Floating Terminus is placed at Nemati/Aphala ferry point in

Majuli District. The "Boitoroni-Sakhee" for carrying dead bodies at Nemati-Kamalabari ferry service, free of cost, and a special ferry service at Bogibeel-Karengbali for transportation of medical patients have been introduced.

EXCISE

My Government has taken up several initiatives to revamp the functioning of the Excise sector and to maximize the revenue collection. The new Assam Excise Rules, 2016 have come into force with effect from 1st September, 2016, enabling realization of Excise duty at the wholesale level, better Excise duty collection and simplification of Excise procedures. Under the Assam State Public Finance Institutional Reforms (ASPIRe), the Excise department is being digitized, and all payments, fees, permits, licences shall be made online and fully digital.

My Government has decided to introduce security holograms on all liquor products for stopping circulation of fake liquor products and preventing evasion of Excise revenue. Steps are being taken to standardize traditional alcoholic beverages as heritage liquors. This will empower the rural ethnic people who have been traditionally engaged in making such traditional drinks, boost tourism, and generate employment and livelihood opportunities.

My Government has decided to review the system of allotment of Country Spirit mahals. A new Country Spirit Policy is being introduced to modernize the manufacture and sale of

country spirit on the lines of foreign liquor so as to curb illicit and spurious liquor. It is contemplated to make certain offences non-bailable and to prescribe stringent punishment provisions as deterrents for habitual offenders.

Action has been taken against tax evaders and corrupt officials. More than 26,000 cases of non-duty-paid liquor worth about Rs.3.8 crore have been seized in recent months. These have directly impacted the movement of non-duty-paid liquor in the State. Substantial increase in revenue collection is expected in the coming months.

MINES AND MINERALS

My Government has taken initiatives for the development of mineral resources of Assam. It is proposed to take up investigation programmes on detailed exploration of coal deposits in Karbi Anglong district, limestone deposits in Dima Hasao district, hot water springs in Golaghat and Karbi Anglong districts, iron ore deposits in Goalpara district, placer gold in the Subansiri river and its tributaries in Lakhimpur district, ground-water-related various programmes including awareness on utilization of ground-water, assessment of water quality, etc. in Kamrup, Nagaon and Karbi Anglong districts, and a special project on conversion of all the existing hard form of Field Investigation Reports in the library of the Directorate of Mines & Minerals into soft form.

REVENUE & DISASTER MANAGEMENT

My Government pays utmost attention to land administration and disaster management. As many as 199 Non-Cadastral villages have been taken up for detailed field surveys in Dhemaji, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Kamrup, Kamrup (Metro), Nalbari, Barpeta, and Goalpara. My Government has notified for the introduction of *Gaonburha* system in eight districts, namely, Goalpara, Dhubri, Cachar, Kokrajhar, Karimganj, Hailakandi, Bongaigaon, and Chirang; recruitment has been initiated. The ex-gratia grants under various categories has been enhanced; that to the next-of-kin of persons killed by extremist/terrorist/miscreants, or during communal/ethnic/group clashes, or due to firing by security forces; killed due to accident in public places or in public carriers; to those who sustain simple/grievous injuries, or become permanently invalid, due to acts of terrorist/extremist/miscreants, or during communal/ethnic/group clashes, or due to firing by security forces.

During the current financial year, total budget provision under SDRF is Rs.761 crore, and allocations have been made for G.R., R.G., ex-gratia grant, repair and restoration of damaged infrastructures, machinery and equipment of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority, and capacity building.

Online Management Information System has been introduced for better record-keeping and reporting, and new updates are being uploaded regularly. Projects have been taken up for the digitization of village maps, integration of maps with

records-of-rights through the *Bhu-Naksa* software, and for upgradation of *Dharitree* and *e-Panjiyan* systems. Modern survey equipments like ETS and DGPS have been procured for modernization of the land survey operations. The Assam Land Management and Information Society has been constituted for effective implementation of the National Land Records Modernization Programme in the State. E-stamping has been implemented in 5 districts and work is in progress to cover the rest of the districts within May, 2017.

SOCIAL WELFARE

My Government is committed to overall development of women, children, persons with disability, senior citizens, and the infirm, as these groups need special care and intervention. Several programmes and schemes have been undertaken to strengthen the standard of life of these groups of people.

Child Welfare: My Government has been implementing several schemes for children, namely Integrated Child Development Service, Joyful Education for Pre-school Kids, Integrated Child Protection Scheme including the Juvenile Justice Act, Protection of Child Rights, Bal Bhawan, *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao*, etc. The construction of Anganwadi Centres has been decentralized in selected districts under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioners concerned. Further, in convergence with the Panchayat & Rural Development Department, construction of 1,000 Anganwadi Centres @ Rs.7 lakh per Anganwadi Centre

is being undertaken, with Rs.2 lakh from ICDS and Rs.5 lakh from MGNREGA as per the Government of India policy. My Government has decided to extend the "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao" scheme, which was introduced at Sonapur Block of Kamrup (Metro) district on a pilot scale, to 10 additional districts in the first phase with the consent of the Government of India.

Women Welfare : My Government is implementing various schemes for empowerment of women, namely SABLA in 8 districts, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence, IGMSY in Goalpara and undivided Kamrup, Vocational Training-cum-Rehabilitation Centre, "One Stop Centre", etc. The State Resource Centre for Women has been operationalized under the Women Development Council sponsored by the National Mission for Empowerment of Women. One Stop Centre, sponsored by the Central Government, is being established in Guwahati for rescue and rehabilitation of women in distress.

Welfare of the Disabled : Welfare of the persons with disability has been taken up as a major challenge by my Government. Unemployment allowances are being provided to the disabled persons, and to families with disabled children. Also, scholarships, rehabilitation grants, etc. are provided, and special school run for the disabled persons. Establishment and functioning of the School for Hearing Impaired, at North Lakhimpur, and the Home for Mentally Ill Persons, at Boko, have been accomplished. Free computers/laptops have been distributed to all pass-out students of the Special School.

Old and Infirm : For welfare of senior citizens, schemes like Health Care for the Aged, and setting up of Old Age Home, as well as the Maintenance & Welfare of Parents & Senior Citizen Act, 2007 are being implemented. An Old Age Home has been established at Bamunigaon, Boko, and another at Sonapur, Kamrup (Metro) is under construction. The State Committee of Senior Citizens and the Senior Citizen Welfare Council have been constituted. The State Rules for the Maintenance of Senior Citizen Act have been formulated.

Welfare of people without a shelter has been entrusted to a social organization under the banner "Shelter Home for Shelterless Persons". Training of Anganwadi workers and supervisors are carried out by reputed NGOs throughout the State by providing schematic financial assistance. Endeavour is being made to make an institutional mechanism for Training of Trainers at the State as well as at the District levels. The *Swachha Bharat Abhiyan* will be implemented in all the Anganwadi Centres so that these centres become a model for cleanliness.

Some new initiatives : My Government has introduced e-procurement system in all procurements by the Social Welfare Department. In order to encourage and support differently-abled students to come forward and study in professional courses, like medicine or engineering, in our Government colleges, my Government has instituted a scholarship of Rs.3,000 per month per student. The database of students has been compiled and funds are being sanctioned. The works for Women Helpline, and

financial assistance to elderly persons for medical treatment are also being proposed.

WELFARE OF PLAIN TRIBES & BACKWARD CLASSES

My Government has been implementing various welfare schemes/projects for the upliftment of the SC, ST and OBC people of the State. Several schemes have been taken up for self-employment, quality education, health care, infrastructure development, and socio-economic empowerment of the SC, ST and OBC people.

During 2016-17, funds have been allocated for Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarships to the SC, ST and OBC students, and for construction of SC/ ST/ OBC Boys and Girls Hostels. Enhancement of the Pre-matric scholarship rate for SC/ST/OBC from Rs.25/- to Rs.100/- per month has been proposed. Various trainings for skill development for self-employment are being imparted to the unemployed youths of backward classes communities and SC and ST youths of the State. For specific development of various ethnic communities under the aegis of six Autonomous Councils (Mising, Rabha Hajong, Tiwa, Sonowal Kachari, Thengal Kachari, and Deori Autonomous Councils), Rs.332.38 crore has been allocated during 2016-17. An amount of Rs.8.25 crore has been allocated to the Development Councils during 2016-17. For research and training during 2016-17, the following schemes are under implementation: workshop-cum-training programme, research studies, publication of manuscript, and production of colour blow-ups and leaflets.

My Government has been paying special attention to the development of tribal areas under the Tribal Sub-Plan and providing benefits to the Scheduled Caste people through the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan.

100-Days Agenda : Two Ambedkar Bhawans have been completed. The system of Direct Benefit Transfer for all scholarships for SC/ST/OBC students has been introduced. Documentation of all essential materials relating to reservation in Government jobs of SC/ST/OBC since inception has been carried out and the same has been published in a Handbook form.

One-year agenda includes : Conversion of ST scholarship from DBT to National Scholarship Portal registering 90,000 students. Completion of six Girls/Boys hostels for OBC, the SC Boys' hostel at Kampur College, Nagaon, the SC Girls' hostel at Morigaon College, Morigaon, and the Ambedkar Bhawan at Hajo. Self-Help Scheme for SC individual /SHG (Male and Female) for economic upliftment. Skill Development /Vocational Training for 1,000 ST trainees.

TEA TRIBES WELFARE

My Government has been taking steps for socio-economic development of the tea tribes people, improving their levels of literacy and education, and implementing welfare schemes for them. Strengthening of the Skill Development Training Centres is an important scheme for the tea community youths for self-employment and placement opportunity, implemented through

51 such Centres functioning in tea-dominated areas in the State under PPP mode. Action has been taken to train as many as 6,000 youths and to ensure placement and self-employment opportunities for them. Training facilities are extended to women belonging to tea community in courses like ANM, GNM, B.Sc. Nursing and other Para-Medical courses, Computer application, Computer Accountancy, Housekeeping, Food & Beverage, etc., 100% women beneficiary-oriented courses for self employment. For providing safe and hygienic drinking water and hygienic latrine to the BPL/APL and otherwise deserving tea tribes families in the tea garden areas, a Total Sanitation Programme has been taken up with technical support extended by the UNICEF. This also includes 15 Assam Tea Corporation-run tea gardens in Assam.

Schematic major achievements include: Operationalization of 51 Skill Development Training Centers in PPP mode; job-assured training to 4,800 youths; 1,425 youths qualified in the NCVT test, 30 youths (product of Computer Accountant course) and 185 youths trained in ANM, GNM and other Para-Medical courses have been given placement; installation of 3,82,000 electric meters in the tea workers quarters; distribution of power tillers and pump sets to agro-based farmers; distribution of bicycle and solar lamps to students; financial assistance for higher studies including studies in foreign countries; financial subsidy to educated unemployed youths for self employment; low-cost sanitation facility to 28,000 APL/BPL families covering 187 tea

gardens in Assam; provision of water supply sources to tea garden workers in 87 tea gardens; provision of Boys/Girls hostel facilities to Tea & Ex-Tea Garden students; distribution of professional tool kits to tea youths for self employment; construction of Handloom & Handicrafts Production Centres to provide income-generating facilities to women living at home; library facilities in the tea garden areas to create reading habit amongst the tea community in the interior areas; Chief Minister's Cup Inter-Tea Garden Football Tournament under the scheme "Promotion of Sports & Youth Activities"; and cultural workshops organized under the scheme "Grants to Cultural Organizations".

HILL AREAS

My Government is committed to bringing about overall socio-economic growth and sustainable development of the Hill areas of the State by way of providing better education, health care, skill development, employment opportunities, as well as increasing agricultural productivity by using mechanization and technology, better seeds, fertilizers, etc. Further, the schemes under tourism, road connectivity and communication, etc. are being prioritized.

In the Karbi Anglong district, construction of the Assam Hills Medical College & Research Institute building at Diphu is going on. Development of tourist lodge at Bagori entry point of Kaziranga National Park has been completed. Also completed are 4 irrigation projects. As many as 5 RCC bridges under NLCPR, 2 RCC bridges under RIDF, and 4 RCC bridges under

PMGSY have been completed during 2016. Moreover, the Packaged Drinking Water Plant and the Spice Packaging Plant at Manja have been completed under Assam Hills Small Industries Development Corporation Limited.

With creation of the West Karbi Anglong district, the 50-bedded Sub-Divisional Civil Hospital at Hamren, the district HQ, is being upgraded to a 100-bedded District Hospital with a provision of 200 beds.

In the Dima Hasao district, up-gradation of the 100-bedded Civil Hospital to a 200-bedded hospital with construction of staff quarter at Haflong is nearing completion. Further, the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council has taken up various initiatives for skill development of the youths and for generating job-oriented opportunities, basically in the sectors of tourism, industries, forestry, agriculture and horticulture, handloom & textile, sericulture, veterinary, fishery, and social welfare to help the youths to set up their own projects.

WELFARE OF MINORITIES & DEVELOPMENT

My Government formulates and executes schemes for the welfare of the notified religious minority communities, linguistic minorities, and the people living in char areas. Training programmes have been arranged for GNM, ANM, Airlines, Hospitality, D.Pharm., DMLT, Diploma and Bachelor in Physiotherapy, B.Sc. Nursing, etc. Power tillers, Tata Sumo and tractors with subsidy, sewing machines, huller mills, etc. have been provided for self-employment. Under the Centrally-

sponsored scheme of scholarships, more than 1,71,000 students will be benefitted through Pre-Matric, Post-Matric and Merit-cum-Means Scholarships during 2016-17 as per the targets received from the Government of India.

Through the Centrally-sponsored Multi-Sectoral Development Programme (MSDP), my Government tries to fill the gaps in the existing schemes of the Government of India by providing additional resources, and to take up non-gap-filling projects (innovative projects) for the welfare of the minorities. Schemes like additional class rooms, boys/girls hostels, toilets, health sub-centres, libraries, drinking water facilities, solar lanterns, etc. are being implemented.

SPORTS & YOUTH WELFARE

My Government takes various initiatives for Sports & Youth Welfare in the State. The sports infrastructure will be improved, including construction/improvement of stadia and playfields, and construction of indoor halls in the State. Extension of roof over the galleries of the Indira Gandhi Athletics Stadium at Sarusajai Sports Complex will be completed. My Government has sanctioned Rs.1 crore for holding the State-level coaching camp from 4th to 24th January, 2017 at Sarusajai Sports Complex, Guwahati for front-ranking players aged between 14 to 17 yrs., both boys and girls. Sports Talent Search Scholarship will be given to 1,150 players during 2016-17. Schemes like engagement of coaches in about 50 sports disciplines for imparting training to the budding sports talents will be continued.

Awards of Rs.10 lakh and Rs.5 lakh have been given to Sri Shiva Thapa, International Boxer, and Ms. Tanisha Kashyap, Tennis player, respectively, for their outstanding performance in their respective sports disciplines. Administrative approval has been accorded for Rs.50 lakh for a new flagship programme for organizing State- and District- level School Games in various sports disciplines of different age groups, covering all the districts of the State as "State School Games". To construct three state-of-the-art stadia, at Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur, and Kamrup, an amount of Rs.3 crore has been earmarked initially, and the concept papers have been prepared.

Guwahati has been selected as one of the venues for holding the FIFA Under 17 World Cup. For up-gradation of the venue, Rs.3.4 crore has been sanctioned for renovation/up-gradation/construction at the Indira Gandhi Athletics Stadium, Sarusajai. For promoting Yoga, a centre named "NIRVAAN" has been established at all the district headquarters and inaugurated on 15th December, 2016 simultaneously. The 2nd BRICS Youth Summit, 2016 in Guwahati was organized from 1st to 3rd July, 2016. "Sahodor 16", a programme for the growth of youth power for development of Assam, was organized on 12th August, 2016 at Guwahati, commemorating the International Youth Day. World Blood Donor Day was celebrated on 14th June, 2016 with participation of NSS Units, NCC, and NGOs.

Khelo India, a flagship programme of the Government of India, involving district- and State-level competitions in various

disciplines, as well as the national-level Khelo India programmes are organized with wide participation. The Himalayan Region Games, a mega international event, will be organized at Guwahati in April, 2017, with likely participation from Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Thailand, etc.

LABOUR AND WELFARE

My Government's new initiatives are as follows: Categorization of Tea Estates based on implementation of the Plantation Labour Act, 1951; State amendment of Section 14 of the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 in synchronization with the Right to Education Act; Instruction to the managements of Tea Gardens for use of local language to make it easy for workers to understand; Cleanliness drive in the labour lines of all tea estates in keeping with the spirit of "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan"; and Opening of bank accounts of the garden workers. Separate Enforcement Officers for Plantations have been notified. My Government has launched a comprehensive State-wide awareness campaign against child labour and illegal trafficking, and has initiated coordinated action for implementing the notified State Convergent Plan of Action on Child Welfare, incorporating a Movement Register, especially in the Gaon Panchayat and Town Committees, where hot-spots (tribal areas, minority dominated, and tea garden areas) are identified. Amendment proposal has been moved for Self-certification under the Assam Shops & Establishment Act, 1971 regarding non-engagement of any child labour. Amendment has been made in the State Rules in view of

recent amendment of the Central Act, 2016. A mechanism has been devised for mandatory self-declaration by all service holders (Government and Private), commercial establishments, apartments, etc. about not to engage child labour in any form. A State-wide Child labour and Bonded labour survey has been started by a reputed organization to determine the number of child labour and bonded labour. Child Labour Task Force has been constituted in 27 districts. There has been fixation of minimum wage for 102 scheduled employments, and draft notification for Domestic Workers has been initiated.

Digitization of the Inspectorate of Boilers' and the Inspectorate of Factories has been taken to bring transparency in work. Website has been designed and developed in this financial year. Certain amendments of the Assam Factories Rules have been initiated to facilitate Ease of Doing Business. Initiatives have been taken to establish a ESI Model Hospital (50-bedded) at Amingaon. A total of 1,040 tea gardens are registered for providing social security to more than 9.5 lakhs employees (both permanent or temporary). Presently, three schemes, namely Provident Fund Scheme, Pension Scheme, and Deposit-linked Insurance Scheme are run.

The Assam Tea Employees Provident Fund Organization has recently increased benefit under the Deposit-linked Insurance Scheme from Rs.40,000/- to Rs.1,00,000/-; minimum pension benefit has also been fixed at Rs.500/- per month, and efforts are being made to increase it to Rs.1,000/-. The Organization is trying

to reduce the length of time required to complete the settlement process. Online processing system for PF settlement has been completed.

SKILL, EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Hon'ble Members, it was announced on 15th August, 2016 that a new department for skill development will be created under my Government. In fulfilment of that promise, the Skill, Employment & Entrepreneurship Department has been created in September, 2016, to promote skill-oriented employment opportunities, and to develop entrepreneurship among the people in the State. The Employment Generation Mission (EGM) and the Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM) come under this new department.

As per the Government of India's guidelines, my Government has converted the Guwahati and Jorhat District Employment Exchanges into Model Career Centres. Similar Model Career Centres will be established in all districts.

ASDM's activities are also being given a boost. It is proposed to transfer all the skilling activities under the State Government to ASDM in course of time.

My Government will set up a Skill City in the State. The Skill City will have a number of specialised schools, the first of which on hospitality and tourism, will start functioning this year. An MoU in this regard has already been signed with ITE, Singapore. Other schools, on automobiles, design and creativity,

nursing, floriculture, retail, etc., shall be set up with the collaboration of the best global players. My Government is committed to enhancing the employability of our youths and to fulfill the vision of our Hon'ble Prime Minister of being a global leader in providing skilled human resources.

A Skill Summit will be held in Guwahati this year. My Government will focus on tapping the entrepreneurial spirit of the youths in the State, encouraging innovation and enterprise, for which start-ups would be encouraged and supported, through a special scheme.

PUBLIC WORKS

Roads :

My Government has taken up various schemes to improve the State road network, the National Highways, and construction/conversion of timber bridges to RCC bridges. This year, special initiative has been taken for repairing/reconstruction of the State road network under the Assam Road Maintenance Fund at a cost of Rs.2,000 crore, to be utilized within three years. For speedy improvement of the State Highways and major District Roads, including lane widening, some major road projects have been proposed under the Central Road Fund and project proposals amounting to Rs.800 crore are expected to be sanctioned very soon. My Government is considering to convert the timber bridges (of which there are about 1,400) to RCC Bridges.

National Highways :

Sanction have been received for 13 estimates amounting to Rs.502 crores. Consultancy work for 135 km. Lanka-Kheroni and Baithalangso-Bhoirymbong is being implemented by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways directly. Feasibility Study and preparation of DPR for 131 km. Desangmukh-Tekeliphuta-Dhakuakhana-North Lakhimpur-Majuli-Jorhat road with major bridges over Brahmaputra, and for wildlife-friendly measures on the Kaziranga National Park stretch of NH-37 have been awarded. Strengthening and widening works for various stretches of National Highways in the State have been sanctioned.

Some major ongoing National Highway works include: a) Work of Patherkandi Bypass has been started, in addition to the on-going 9 bye-passes to avoid congestion on the National Highways in town portions. b) Strengthening and widening works of 169 km. of National Highways are in progress. North Bank and South Bank approaches of the Bogibeel Rail-cum-Road Bridge are also in progress. In addition, the following works are being implemented: Dibrugarh bye-pass; Digboi, Margherita & Ledo bye-pass; 4-lane connectivity to Itanagar; 4-laning of NH-37 from Numaligarh to Dibrugarh; 4-lane connectivity between Gohpur to Numaligarh.

Major bridges over Brahmaputra taken up include: Dhola-Sadiya bridge (nearing completion); additional bridge near Saraighat bridge (nearing completion); additional bridge near

Koliabhomora bridge on NH-37A (in progress); Dhubri-Phulbari bridge (DPR consultants engaged); 6-lane bridge between Narengi and Kuruwa (DPR preparation in progress); Gohpur-Numaligarh bridge (DPR will be prepared).

It has been proposed to construct an additional bye-pass to Guwahati by a 4-lane road from near Changsari to Kuruwa with a 6-lane bridge over Brahmaputra to connect the East-West Corridor near Khanapara. Indo-Bhutan Border road (313 km.) will be constructed. Nine new flyovers at various locations on National Highways will be constructed by NHAI.

Building Wing :

My Government lays emphasis on the use of the latest and environment-friendly technology for construction, repair, rehabilitation and maintenance of buildings. All buildings more than 2,500 square meters are being developed as Green buildings compliant with minimum 3 stars GRIHA rating. An MoU with TERI has been signed for development of Green buildings. Energy-efficient technology has been given importance. For conservation of energy, 14 new projects have been taken up with LED lighting; 4 existing buildings with conventional lighting are being converted to LED lighting. Some major building projects include: (a) The new Assembly Building at Dispur, physical progress 75%, includes both Upper and Lower Houses. (b) For the Integrated Directorates' Complex at Betkuchi, Guwahati, administrative approval has been accorded.

Some major ongoing projects to be completed soon include construction of Assam Houses at Vellore, Chennai, Kolkata, and Bengaluru. Improvement and infrastructure development works at the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital are in progress. The progress of construction of 3 new Engineering Colleges, at Golaghat, Dhemaji, and Karimganj, are 70%, 32%, and 99%, respectively. Construction of the National Law College and Judicial Academy at North Guwahati in phase-I has physical progress 94% (Package-I) and 45% (Package-II) respectively. Tendering has been initiated for three new Medical Colleges, at Nagaon, North Lakhimpur, and Dhubri.

PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING

Water Supply sector :

My Government has been emphasizing an equitable and good quality of life through safe water supply, adequate sanitation facilities, and best hygiene practices. Some new and innovative schemes include: Mitigation of 284 arsenic-affected habitations and 155 fluoride-affected habitations. As many as 21 GPs under the Sansad Adarsha Gram Yojana taken up for coverage fully with piped water supply schemes and household connections. Completion of 126 piped water supply schemes targeted by 31st March, 2017, and also implementation of mega piped water supply schemes - Brihattar Dillighat, Milanpur, Balijan, Panichukia, and composite piped water supply scheme for Arsenic mitigation under Kakodanga and East Golaghat Block - by 31st March 2017.

Neer Nirmal Pariyojana : Under the World Bank-funded *Neer Nirmal Pariyojana* in Assam, schemes are formulated primarily for quality and sustainability, and to address the issues and challenges of institutional, infrastructure and service delivery system in rural water supply and sanitation sector. In Batch-I of the project, 63 Gram Panchayats in 3 districts of Hailakandi, Jorhat, and Kamrup (Metro) have been taken up, and substantial progress has been made. In Batch-II, 98 Gram Panchayats in 3 districts of Sivasagar, Bongaigaon, and Morigaon have been taken. Baseline and topographic surveys have been started in these districts.

Sanitation Sector :

My Government is implementing the *Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin* with the objective to transform the State to an Open Defecation Free (ODF) State within 2nd October, 2017. In the current year, target for coverage is 8.5 lakh toilets, out of which, till now, more than 5 lakh house holds have been covered. Awareness generation/IEC programmes are also going on. The remaining house holds will be covered within 2nd October, 2017.

In the State, 428 villages in 25 Goan Panchayats have been declared as Open Defecation Free. The Lakwa Block in Sivasagar district has got the distinction of becoming the first ODF Block, while Singlijan Tea Estate in Dibrugarh district has earned the distinction of becoming the first ODF Tea Estate in Assam.

The State Referral Laboratory has been granted accreditation from the National Accreditation Board for Testing

and Calibration Laboratory. Further, more than 1.2 lakh water samples are tested in different District-level and Sub-Divisional-level laboratories.

IRRIGATION

My Government has created irrigation potential of 7.82 lakh hectare up to March, 2016 through completed and ongoing Major/Medium and Minor Irrigation Schemes. Out of the 20 Major/Medium irrigation projects, 15 are completed and 5 are ongoing. In Minor Irrigation sector, works of 1,316 Minor Irrigation schemes are being implemented, and 835 are completed. During 2016-17 (upto December, 2016), 51 Minor Irrigation schemes have been completed, creating a potential of 7,163 hectare. Works of the remaining 430 Minor Irrigation schemes are going on. The Command Area Development and Water Management Program has been implemented in the completed Major & Medium Projects; till now, about 64,000 hectare of command area has been covered.

WATER RESOURCES

During the XIIth Plan, my Government has taken up 178 flood and erosion management schemes. Out of these, 68 schemes have been completed, and the rest are under progress. Under the aegis of the Asian Development Bank, two sub-projects, at Dibrugarh and Palasbari-Gumi area are in progress, and 3 sub-projects, at Dibrugarh, Palasbari-Gumi, and Kaziranga National Park, are under consideration of the Government of India. New

proposals include 24 schemes under the State Plan for 2016-17 and 48 schemes RIDF-XXII.

My Government has formulated a comprehensive plan for raising and strengthening of the Brahmaputra river embankment for providing flood protection. The DPR is under observation of the Central Water Commission. For protection of Majuli from flood and erosion, for improving road communication, and for safe-guarding the existing area of Majuli, my Government has formulated a proposal for Rs.337 crore. To facilitate the communication system in Majuli, a proposal for conversion of the existing earthen embankment to road-cum-embankment is under active consideration.

For strengthening and improvement of the training and research facilities under the Assam Water Research and Management Institute, proposals have been framed, to be executed during the current year. Further, to modernize the hydro-meteorological data collection system by using modern technology, my Government has proposed the National Hydrology Project and the Assam Flood Erosion and River Management Modernisation Project aided by the World Bank.

My Government is actively considering dredging of the Brahmaputra river. Meanwhile, the Dredging Corporation of India has carried out the preliminary survey of Brahmaputra.

ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST

My Government is making sincere efforts for effective management of the environment and forests in the State. Under

various schemes, such as the Assam Project on Forestry and Bio-Diversity Conservation, and the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), 14,100 hectare plantations have been created; further 3,632 hectare will be created during the remaining part of the financial year. Wildlife conservation has shown improvement as apparent from the census figures for rhinos, elephants, and tigers. Also, there has been improvement in infrastructure regarding roads, buildings, elephant-proof trenches and vehicles.

My Government is taking initiatives to provide more sophisticated arms to the forest personnel to counter the threat from poachers and smugglers. Proposal has been sent to the Government of India to allow procurement of SLRs, 9mm Carbines, Rifles of both AK-47 and AK-56 series, and other automatic weapons. Also, a National Tiger Conservation Authority-funded Special Rhino Task Force will be raised.

The ex-gratia grant to the families, whose members died due the man-animal conflict, has been proposed to be increased to Rs.3 lakh, and a special provision of Rs.200 lakh has been made under the budget of 2016-17. To reduce man-animal conflict, a Committee has been constituted to observe the movement of wild elephants. Steps have already been taken for filling up the vacant posts under different categories.

SOIL CONSERVATION

My Government is implementing various activities of land and water management on crop land, waste land, degraded forest

land, and riverine land, to protect all categories of land from soil degradation and soil erosion. Development of wasteland and agricultural land for sustainable agricultural production is a major objective of the schemes.

To protect river bank erosions, my Government has taken up a number of projects. Planting tree species like *Sissu*, *Khoir*, bamboo, etc. have protected the river banks by binding of the soil. The Centrally-sponsored scheme of Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) is being implemented.

Programmes worth Rs.72 crore for 2016-17 are under progress. Out of 12 projects under RIDF-XIX, 10 projects have been completed during 2016-17. Under RIDF-XX, administrative approval for Rs.500 lakh has been accorded and e-tendering process has been started. For schemes under RIDF-XXI and RIDF-XXII, the necessary action has been initiated.

POWER

My Government lays great emphasis on the power sector. The 2nd unit of Bongaigaon Thermal Power Station (250 MW) is likely to be commissioned in April, 2017. The 100 MW gas-based combined cycle power project at Namrup Thermal Power Station is under execution. The likely date of commissioning of 10.5 MW Myntriang Small Hydro-Electric Project is March, 2017. The 2 MW solar power projects in the premises of Namrup and Lakwa Thermal Power Stations are under development, likely dates of commissioning are December, 2017 and August, 2018, respectively.

For the 70 MW Replacement power project at Lakwa Thermal Power Station, completion date is March, 2018. For the 660 MW coal-based power project at Margherita using coal from North-Eastern Coalfields, allocation of coal linkage is awaited. A gas-based project of 30 MW capacity in Cachar district is under consideration. Preliminary activities for development of 120 MW Lower Kopili Hydro-electric Project are in progress; ADB has agreed in principle to provide fund for the project. For the 22.5 MW Borapani Middle Stage-I Hydro-electric Project, finalisation of DPR is in process. DPR for the 24 MW Borapani Middle Stage-II Hydro-electric Project is already approved. Preparation of DPR for the 60 MW Upper Borapani Hydro-electric Project is under process. Development of a Mega Solar Power Plant at the premises of Chandrapur Thermal Power Station is under consideration.

Under the New and Renewable Energy sector, solar power plants and street lighting projects are being commissioned at different places considering the importance of tourism and historical heritage. Solar street lighting has been implemented on the Assam-Nagaland border of Golaghat district. Stand-alone LED-based solar street lighting system under Smart Street Lighting Projects has been taken up in different places of Assam. About 73,000 stand-alone Solar Photo-Voltaic Home Lighting Systems have been installed, completing 1,111 remote un-electrified villages. One off-grid 10 KW solar power plant has been commissioned at Hastinapur, Guwahati. The power

handling capacity of Assam grid network will be increased from current 1,617 MW to 1,950 MW.

Over 1,000 un-electrified villages and about 29,000 habitations are to be covered for electrification under the 12th Plan, Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY). About 5,42,000 BPL beneficiaries will be provided electricity connection free-of-cost. As many as 67 towns have been declared Go-live, i.e., functioning with all systems, to improve electricity infrastructure there. A Smart Grid Pilot Project is under implementation in Guwahati City, covering about 15,000 consumers.

My Government is developing a policy for encouraging utilities and private players to invest in Renewable Energy generation in the State. My Government has focused on implementation of Grid-Interactive solar power projects to plug the daily demand and supply gap and feed the power into the grid. MoUs have been entered into with 12 solar power project developers with cumulative capacity addition of 139 MW. In order to promote on-grid roof-top solar photo-voltaic systems, my Government has initiated Grid-Connected Roof-Top Small Power Plant Program of 10 MW aggregate capacity at different buildings of residential, institutional, and social sector, under 70:30 capital subsidy mode, under the National Solar Mission.

At the Inspectorate of Electricity, e-filing/on-line application system has been introduced for applying to the Assam Electrical Licensing Board (AELB) for grant of Supervisor's

Certificates and Workmen's Permits. Arrangements are made to computerize the entire Inspectorate and AELB.

The 'Assam State Energy Conservation Fund' has been created. Survey has been carried out throughout the State for energy conservation. Demonstration project on energy efficiency in two Government-owned tea industries have shown encouraging results of achieving, on average, 23% electrical energy and 44% natural gas savings.

In order to ensure public safety, guidelines have been issued on temporary electrical installations in pandals, laying of cable-TV wires on power lines, street lights, electrically-illuminated bill-boards, hoardings erected along public roads, use of electrical appliances including inverters, especially during the monsoon season.

INDUSTRIES & COMMERCE

My Government is working to make Assam the pivot of the Act-East Policy of the Government of India. Assam has long been seen as being at the periphery of the country. The geographical disadvantage has adversely impacted industry and trade in the State. The same disadvantage may turn into a locational advantage if Assam assumes centrality in the India-ASEAN partnership interface. Our vision is to see Assam as the centre of Act-East Policy initiative of the Centre. In this direction, my Government proposes to set up a World-class Global Business Centre in Guwahati. It is also proposed to send trade delegations

to the neighboring countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and Myanmar, to increase trade and commerce with these countries.

For the "Ease of Doing Business", a major initiative of my Government is implementation of the "Assam Ease of Doing Business Act, 2016", the Bill for which was passed in the very 1st session of this august House after formation of the new Government. The website for Ease of Doing Business has already been launched and online issue of clearances has started. The Single Window Agency has also started functioning. Assam will be developed as a preferred investment destination. My Government has already taken a number of steps for ensuring ease of doing business by completing more than 90% of the EODB agenda and rapidly moving towards its full realization.

For investment promotion, my Government is taking necessary initiatives for creating a favorable climate for promotion of entrepreneurship in the State. A Business Summit will be organized in Guwahati in November, 2017. My Government has organized Road Shows and participated in important events like Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, Vibrant Gujarat, etc., to showcase the potential for investment available in the State. For promotion of entrepreneurship amongst women, special workshop will also be organized shortly.

One of the major challenges before my Government is creation of employment opportunities for the unemployed youths; and our emphasis will be on industry and service sector for generation of employment.

My Government is taking necessary steps for creating a Land Bank to attract investors to the State and several sectoral parks like Food Park, Pharmaceutical Park, Textile Park, etc. are proposed to be added to the Land Bank.

For the benefit of the sugar-cane farmers of the State, my Government is taking necessary initiatives for encouraging setting up of sugar units in the private sector in the sugar-cane belts.

PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

For efficient management and service delivery by the State PSUs, my Government has put emphasis on capacity building of officers, employees, and Board members of the PSUs, and has also taken initiatives for strengthening of the IT Infrastructure for improvement of MIS, ISO certification, adoption of safety measures in work-places to reduce occupational hazards, etc. For empowerment of women, a policy decision has been taken for inclusion of at least one woman Director in the Board of Directors of all State PSUs. Out of 40 the PSUs, 24 PSUs have included women on their Boards of Directors. To increase productivity, a policy decision has been taken for performance-based incentive @ 3% of net profits of the profit-making PSUs having no accumulated losses. Monthly honorarium of the part-time non-official chairpersons of the State PSUs has been enhanced from Rs.1,000/- to a maximum of Rs.10,000/-.

Further, Memorandum of Understanding has been under implementation for improvement of performance, accountability

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and supervision of the State PSUs. Awards are being given to the best-performing PSUs, Managing Directors, and their employees. My Government has also undertaken the task of formulating a vibrant draft "Public Enterprises Policy" for administering the State PSUs effectively, and for making them self-reliant and engines of growth.

HANDLOOM TEXTILES & SERICULTURE

Handloom & Textiles :

My Government has been implementing various schemes under which a large number of weavers are assisted both financially and technically. My Government had established 11 Yarn Banks last year, and 9 more of them have been established during 2016-17. All the districts will be covered by this scheme soon. My Government has established an Apparel & Garment-making Centre at Pachim Boragaon, Guwahati, with training facilities for the un-employed youths to become skilled Apparel and Garment makers.

For skill upgradation, my Government is running 102 Handloom Training Centres, where about 2,500 persons are trained annually, and incentives are granted in terms of looms and accessories with yarn to pass-out trainees for self-employment.

Sericulture :

My Government has planned for transforming sericulture from un-organized, household activities to organized,

commercially-viable industry. The "Assam Silk Outreach Mission - *Senehjori*" covering all the activities relating to silk and silk production in Assam has been established for augmentation of Muga Raw Silk production by 10 fold, and Eri & Mulberry 5 fold, and creation of employment opportunities for over 2,82,000 families round the year. My Government plans to revitalize all Government Farms/Centres for round the year rearing of silk worms; already, 40 Farms/Centres have been covered under RIDF.

Hon'ble Members, my Government has specially earmarked Rs.50 lakh for revitalizing the silk industry in Sualkuchi, by providing Mulberry silk yarn at subsidized price, and Muga cocoons at minimum support price, to the weavers and Silk Societies of Sualkuchi through Yarn Bank Committee, Sualkuchi, and by installing Reeling & Spinning machines at the Government Muga VGR, Sualkuchi.

The Government of India provides fund for Skill Development Training Programme under Cluster Sericulture Development Project, which involves assisting and organizing 1,000 women into 50 groups of 20 each, skilling them in all aspects of production of quality Mulberry silk under the North-East Region Textile Promotion Scheme (NER-TPS). Another Programme under NER-TPS, namely, the Integrated Sericulture Development Project is being implemented in 7 districts (4 for Muga and 3 for Eri) for production of quality silk through 1,800 beneficiaries during 2016-17.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

In keeping with the stress on Digital India, my Government has given emphasis on "Digital Assam". A logo for Digital Assam has been selected through open competition. To make the State digitally-literate, a project has been launched in August 2016 to make at least one person per household digitally literate in each of the 126 Assembly Constituencies of the State within 5 years. So far, more than one lakh beneficiaries have been registered, and 65,000 trained through 1,670 training centres. The target is to train 5 lakh people every year from 2017-18 for the next 5 years.

The Digital Gram Panchayat initiative has been taken to provide Wi-Fi Hotspot connectivity at GP and village levels. A pilot project has been taken up at Khetri GP under Kamrup (Metro) district from Oct., 2016. It is proposed to make 100% Wi-Fi Hotspot coverage of the GPs in Majuli and one Gram Panchayat in Kaliabor during this year.

Under the e-District Mission Mode Project, 210 public Facilitation Centres, covering 33 districts, are providing 46 Government Services to the citizen online. The aim of the project is to create an integrated platform for District Administration and its subordinate offices to deliver Citizen-Centric Services. More than 4 lakh Digitally-Signed Certificates have been issued to the citizen so far. Of the new districts, Majuli, South Salmara & Mankachar, Biswanath, Charaideo, and Hojai, have already started delivering online citizen services.

The websites of 6 Departments and their sub-organizations - Finance, Industries & Commerce, Power, Labour & Welfare, P&RD, and Revenue - have been developed in Standard Website Format (SWF) under a new initiative. Other Departmental websites would also be covered under the SWF for making them user-friendly and standard.

A new Information Technology Policy for Assam will be promulgated in 2017. The draft Policy has been deliberated upon by leading academicians, industry associations, local entrepreneurs, and Government departments. The new Policy will boost the IT, ITeS, BPO and electronics manufacturing industries in the State, and will attract outside investments for opening new employment opportunities for our youths.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

My Government has given high priority to sustainable development of Science & Technology to promote science among the masses, and to establish new institutions of excellence in the State.

The State-level meet of the Aryabhata Science Centres (established in 219 GPs) was held in Guwahati in November, 2016, where activities like science & technology-based model making, poster drawing, extempore speech competition, grooming and mentoring of students, robotics and innovation, advanced training on telescope, exposure to mobile science laboratory, and sand animation were organised.

The All-India State Science & Technology Councils' conclave was held at Guwahati in September, 2016 with participation of 25 State Councils, where an exhibition on "Ideas to Action: Let us grow with innovation" was staged by the state innovators. The Assam State Space Meet was held in December, 2016, where 50 potential application areas were identified through deliberation of 24 line departments of the State Government

Among the institutions of excellence coming up in the State are the Science City and the Biotech Park. The construction work of Science City have begun at Tepesia village at outskirts of Guwahati. The Science City will cater to creation of the scientific and technological temper in State; it will also become a scientific and tourist attraction for the entire North-East. For the Biotech Park, land has been provided at Amingaon, Guwahati. Currently, research and development work is being conducted in Guwahati Biotech Park's leased-out laboratory space. Its first newsletter, "North-East Bioline", was launched in July, 2016. The 2nd "Assam Biotech Conclave" was organised in January, 2017 to explore the possibilities for industry-academic co-ordination, and to encourage entrepreneurial ventures in biotechnology and related areas in the North-East.

Works related to the new Planetariums at Nalbari, North Lakhimpur, and Kokrajhar are expected to be completed within this year. An Innovation Hub has been planned to be set up at the premises of Jorhat Science Centre & Planetarium. Six more planetariums have been planned to be set up, at Majuli, Kaliabor, Amingaon, Bongaigaon, Diphu, and Silchar.

Three *Suryamitra* Skill Development Programmes - a fully residential programme of 3-month duration - have been conducted with support from the National Institute of Solar Energy, to train ITI-pass candidates on installation and maintenance of Solar Power plants.

HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE

Health is a very important sector as a gauge of Human Development Index in our society. We are still faced by many challenges, like lack of adequate infrastructure and equipment, shortage of manpower including doctors and nurses. In recent times, my Government has been working hard towards improving the scenario in Health sector by addressing such issues, although the journey has only started and there is still a long way to go.

My Government is going to implement a pioneering State-wide Health Assurance Scheme, "*Atal Amrit Abhiyan*", in the name of great beloved leader and former Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji. The objective is to improve access of below poverty line and above poverty line (up to annual family income of Rs.5 lakh) families to quality tertiary medical care for identified six specialties, i.e., (i) Cardiovascular diseases, (ii) Cancer, (iii) Kidney diseases, (iv) Neo-natal diseases, (v) Neurological conditions, and (vi) Burns, requiring hospitalization for surgeries and therapies, through an empanelled network of hospitals, both inside and outside the State.

My Government has now undertaken various strategies for improving healthcare service delivery in **Tea Garden Areas of the State**. In order to provide comprehensive primary health care services along with diagnostics facilities, my Government is in the process of deploying **80 dedicated Mobile Medical Units** exclusively for **Tea garden** areas. In addition, 150 Tea garden hospitals have been taken under **Public Private Partnership** mode to provide improved healthcare services to the tea garden population.

The Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan is being implemented in the State to ensure at least one antenatal check up of pregnant women by a Doctor/Gynecologist during 2nd or 3rd trimester of pregnancy, on the 9th day of every month, in order to reduce Maternal Mortality. Three rounds of **Special Immunization Drives**, from 29th September, 2016, have been conducted to improve Immunization coverage in the State. In addition, my Government is in the process of launching **Free Diagnostics Services** (Laboratory facility, X-Ray and CT-Scan) to help the people of Assam in reducing out-of-pocket expenditure. My Government is going to start **Dialysis Programme** in 27 districts of the State.

The Assam Arogya Nidhi scheme has been revived in the State. In the year 2016-17 (up to November, 2016), more than 2,000 beneficiaries have received financial assistance. On 2nd October, 2016, the Assam Arogya Nidhi cheques were distributed to 1,978 beneficiaries.

In Assam, 4.80 lakh people (Census 2011) are estimated to be suffering from one or the other kind of disabilities. A **"Comprehensive Management of Disability"** Plan is being chalked out to treat/rehabilitate all disabled children in Assam. From September, 2016, as part of "Comprehensive Management of Children with Disability" programme, a special early identification drive was carried out in the entire State for all 0-18 yrs children in every school and Anganwadi Centre. More than 3.1 lakh children have been initially identified with various ailments (e.g. Hearing Impaired, Low Vision, etc). Diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of the identified children have been taken up at all PHC/CHC/District Hospitals and Medical College Hospitals. My Government will provide various aids, equipment, treatment and rehabilitation to all diagnosed children free of cost.

My Government has undertaken various **health infrastructure development schemes under the National Health Mission** in 2016-17, viz., new District Hospital at Hojai, up-gradation of 5 Sub-Divisional Civil Hospitals to District Hospital at Majuli, Biswanath Chariali, Sonari, Hatsingimari, and Hamren. Further, 7 new Blood Bank Units have been taken up and 5 new Model Hospitals are taken up at Silchar, Diphu, Kokrajhar, Panery, and Majbat.

Besides six Medical Colleges, the Government of India has approved **4 more Medical Colleges**, which will be established at 200-bedded District Referral Hospitals at Diphu, Dhubri, Nagaon, and North Lakhimpur. Further, my Government

proposes to establish another new Medical College at Kokrajhar. **MBBS seats** have been increased from 391 to 726, and **P.G. seats** increased from 246 to 339 till date. D.M./M.Ch. Courses for super-specialty subjects have been started at GMCH, Guwahati in 9 subjects. M.Sc, Nursing courses has been introduced at Regional Nursing College, Guwahati.

In order to provide better healthcare services to the people, various sophisticated equipment have been procured in all Medical Colleges. A **200-bedded Cancer Hospital** will be opening very soon at GMCH, Guwahati, and latest sophisticated equipment are being procured.

The Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences, Assam is already functioning and all the Medical Institutions of the State have been affiliated to this University. Entrance examination for selection of candidates into various courses is being conducted by the University.

The **retirement age** of Allopathic Doctors has been raised to 65 years. AMRIT Pharmacy has been opened at GMCH, and dedicated evening OPDs are functional in all Medical Colleges of Assam.

Assam has adopted the **Clinical Establishment (Registration & Regulation) Act, 2010** in December, 2015, and the Assam Clinical Establishment (Registration & Regulation) Rules, 2016 were notified on 14th October, 2016; the same are being implemented. The implementation of the Act will

undoubtedly improve the overall quality of services in the State and bring transparency in Health Care Services especially in the private sector. Assam is one of ten States in the country to adopt this Act.

As per the guidelines of the Government of India, **the State AYUSH Society** of National AYUSH Mission, Assam had been formed in the year 2015. As a part of the budget announcements, it has been decided to establish an **All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA)** in the State.

Necessary steps for construction of two **50-bedded Ayurvedic Hospitals** at Majuli and Dudhnoi have been initiated and works will start within a short time. 100 Blocks across different districts have been identified for establishment of **100 Yoga Centres** to extend the benefits of Yoga among the common people of the State. For upliftment of existing infrastructure of Government Ayurvedic Hospitals, fund has been earmarked and works are underway in a phased manner.

In order to combat the growing menace of **AIDS**, **246 Red Ribbon Clubs** have been formed in different colleges and universities of the State to create awareness among the youths and students, and **329 Integrated Counselling and Testing Centres** have been established and functioning in Assam for counselling and testing of HIV. In Assam, **51 targeted intervention projects** run by NGOs are functioning for intervention among the high-risk groups and bridge populations; over 21,000 high risk and 35,000 bridge population have been covered.

There are **67 licensed blood banks** functioning in Assam, out of which 26 are NACO Supported blood banks and 41 are non-NACO Supported/Private ones. One Blood Mobile Bus at GMCH Blood Bank and 6 Blood Transportation Vans at 6 NACO-Supported Government Blood Banks are functioning in Assam since 2010-11. **E-Blood Banking System** has been launched in Assam for complete automation of Blood Banking System on 1st December, 2016, on the occasion of the World AIDS Day.

One Special Care Home, named as Kasturi Care Home, has been established for the orphans affected/infected by HIV in the State. Presently, 16 orphans are residing there.

One-time financial assistance (grant) of Rs.1 lakh each is being provided to the widows of AIDS victims. A total of 344 widows have received the grant till date, out of which 52 have received the grant during this financial year.

EDUCATION

Higher Education :

My Government has provided about Rs.245 crore under Plan for implementation of various development schemes of Universities and Colleges, and about Rs.1,626 crore under Non-Plan for payment of salaries to 15,145 employees of Universities and Colleges and to meet the other committed liabilities during 2016-17.

During the current Financial Year, an amount of about Rs.44 crore has been reimbursed to 300 Degree Colleges for waiving the admission fee of more than 1,38,000 students admitted in Higher Secondary 1st year and Degree 1st year during 2016-17 whose parental annual income is Rs.1 lakh and below.

My Government has decided to develop three more Universities by upgrading existing Colleges at Barpeta, Bihpuria and Hojai. A committee has been constituted with the Vice-Chancellors of Gauhati University, Kumar Bhaskar Varma Sanskrit & Ancient Studies University, Nalbari, and the Director of Higher Education to finalize the proposed Universities.

My Government has decided to establish a Government Degree College at Majuli on the lines of Cotton College/Diphu Government College and initiated steps for allotment of land and preparation Plan & Estimates. My Government has also taken steps for opening PG Courses at Majuli College.

My Government has decided to institute a Chair in the name of Srimanta Sankardev in the top 5 Universities in the country, and has budgeted Rs.5 crore in the current year for the purpose. The five identified Universities have expressed willingness to this proposal of my Government.

My Government has sanctioned Rs.10 lakh for development of the Assamese Department at Vishwa Bharati University, Shantiniketan, West Bengal.

My Government has decided to institute an endowment lecture in the Modern Indian Languages at Delhi University, in memory of Professor Indira Mamoni Raisom Goswami, who taught there.

My Government has decided to introduce Vocational Courses in Degree Colleges for providing job opportunity to the Graduate level students, for which Rs.120 lakh has been provided during 2016-17.

My Government has decided to provide 50% subsidy on Bank Loan Interest to the students for pursuing Higher Education. Rs.50 lakh has been provided in the Budget of 2016-17 for the purpose.

My Government is releasing infrastructure grants to 36 Degree Colleges @ Rs.50 lakh each in the current Financial year.

My Government has decided to start academic session of five Model Degree Colleges from the next session, out of the 12 Model Degree Colleges being established in the State.

Technical Education :

My Government has attached importance to development of Technical Education in the State, as evident from the following initiatives for 2016-17 :

- i) 21 New polytechnics are under construction in the un-served and under-served districts covering Goalpara, Barpeta, Mangaldoi, Karimganj, Hailakandi, Raha (Nagaon), Nalbari, Dhekiajuli, North Lakhimpur, Tinsukia, Demow

(Sivasagar), Belguri Pathar (Baksa), Baihatia Chariali, Furkating (Golaghat), Dhubri, Morigaon, Haflong, Dhemaji, Udalguri, Bijni, Baithalangso (Karbi Anglong).

- ii) All steps have been taken for commencement of the academic session from 2017 in the 11 new polytechnics at Goalpara, Barpeta, Karimganj, Nalbari, Dhekiajuli, North Lakhimpur, Dimow (Sivasagar), Belguri Pathar (Baksa), Baihatia Chariali, Furkating (Golaghat), and Dhemaji. Civil works of these 11 new polytechnics will be completed within the year. Posts of faculties and staff for these polytechnics have already been created. Laboratories, workshops, libraries, etc. will be set up so that the academic session can commence soon.
- iii) Construction of three new Engineering Colleges, namely, Barak Valley Engineering College (BVEC) at Karimganj, Golaghat Engineering College, and Dhemaji Engineering College are progressing. All steps have been taken for commencement of Academic Session at BVEC from August, 2017. Golaghat Engineering College and Dhemaji Engineering College are proposed to be made functional in 2018.
- iv) Bineswar Brahma Engineering College, Kokrajhar and Jorhat Institute of Science and Technology have been converted into full Government Engineering Colleges.
- v) Collaborative projects between the University of Melbourne, Australia and the State Government represented

by Assam Engineering College have been started. The project envisions for capacity and skill building in construction management. Its components include: faculty development and faculty exchange with visit of 8 faculties to the University of Melbourne for two months, curriculum development, introduction of two-year Post-Graduate Programme in Advanced Construction Management and short, need-based courses for working executives connected with Construction Industry, research, (two Ph.D. scholars who will work on local issues; housing issues are the main goals of the project), and creating and demonstrating a Model House for flood-prone areas.

- vi. Assam Engineering College and Jorhat Engineering College were established about 60 and 55 years back, respectively. My Government has recognized the need for augmentation and modernisation of entire physical and academic infrastructure of these two premier institutions of the State. My Government proposes to upgrade AEC and JEC into Centres of Excellence, and a significant allocation of grant will be provided in phased manner.

Secondary Education

The year 2016-17 has come out as one of the significant years, as a number of new schemes/programmes have been introduced in the Budget announcement 2016-17, for overall improvement of quality of Secondary Education in Assam.

For providing mentoring support to talented students, a new scheme, "Aarohan", has been introduced in the current year by my Government.

In order to provide financial support to the students belonging to economically backward families, and to reduce school dropouts, my Government has introduced exemption of fees, including admission fees, tuition fees, and any other fees, of the students who will take admission in the current year in HS 1st year in the provincialized/Government Higher Secondary Schools and Junior Colleges of Assam. The scheme also covers the physically challenged students irrespective of the annual income of parents. In the similar manner, the examination fees for students appearing in HSLC and HS final examination have been exempted during the current year.

My Government has decided to provide free textbooks to all students of Class IX and X from the next academic year. The Scheme will cover all the Govt/Provincialised High Schools and Higher Secondary Schools, all Tea Garden/Local body schools, all Model Schools under RMSA, and all Non-Provincialized schools who are getting Financial Incentive at any point of time. The scheme will be continued in the next year, and distribution of free text books from class IX to XII is under consideration.

With a view to ascertain standard teacher-pupil ratio, optimum services of the employees, saving administrative cost, and other logistic support of the schools, my Government has decided that the schools situated in same campus or in any nearby

area shall be amalgamated/merged, and all the schools shall be brought into one single administrative and academic unit under *Siksha Khetra* - a scheme for amalgamation and merger of different schools.

Like the previous years, this year also, free Laptops will be provided to the 1st division holder students in High School/ High Madrassa examination under the "Anundoram Barooah Cash-cum-Laptop Award Scheme" to enhance the level of competition amongst students. A total of 56,900 beneficiaries have been targeted during the current year.

In order to reduce the gender sensitivity, my Government has agreed to the proposals received from the school authorities for conversion of any Girls' school into co-educational school.

Steps have been taken for appointment of 625 regular Principals in Provincialized Higher Secondary Schools. A total of 146 TET-qualified Post-Graduate Teachers of different subjects have been appointed in different Provincialized Higher Secondary Schools of the State.

Elementary Education :

Major Achievements in 2016-17 : A total of 7,226 Assistant teachers have been appointed in the State during 2016-17 by my Government. The remaining vacancies of 10,336 posts under the Directorate of Elementary Education and 3,194 posts under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan have been advertised, and process is going on for filling up the vacant posts.

Free Text Books : Free Text Books to more than 52 lakh students for the academic session 2017 is a priority and the distribution process is going on.

Gunotsav : My Government is seriously concerned about ensuring quality elementary education to all children and to improve the State position in the National ranking. In this backdrop, my Government has decided to implement Gunotsav in the State along the lines of Gunotsav being implemented in Gujarat, which has been identified as one of the best practices in the 12th Five Year Plan. Initially, eight districts have been planned to be covered under Gunotsav in the 1st phase for class II to class VIII.

Computer-Aided Learning : As an innovation, Computer-Aided Learning programme is being implemented to cover 297 upper primary schools by March, 2017. The feasibility studies of these schools have been completed.

Rashtriya Aviskar Abhiyan : Around 400 schools have been selected for mentoring by nearby Technical and Higher Education Institute in the district for popularization of Science and Mathematics in the State for children in the age group of 6-14 years.

Yoga Camp : For organizing Yoga Camps at Block, District and State levels, involving school students (both boys and girls) from all Districts, my Government has sanctioned Rs.100 lakh.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

My Government is emphasizing on implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in the State. A SDG Cell has been set up in recognition of the unanimous adoption by 193 countries at the United Nations General Assembly on 25th September, 2015. A 'Vision Assam 2030 - Everything for Everyone - Achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Development' has been published. The first SDG's vision document "Assam 2030, Our Dreams, Our Commitment" was unveiled on 3rd October, 2016. Preparation of 7-years' Strategic Plan and 3-years' Action Plan to catalyze implementation of SDGs as a Single Synergized Holistic Initiative is under progress.

The fund allocation to MLAs Area Development Scheme has been increased to Rs.1 crore per Constituency per annum. Rs.126 crore has been released for the financial year 2016-17 for implementation of MLAAD scheme. A new scheme "Suhrid" has been introduced from 2016-17 to provide financial assistance for assisting the needy poor who are suffering from critical diseases, and to assist the economically backward students who are aspiring for higher education. Rs.63 crore has been released for the year 2016-17 against "Suhrid" scheme under MLAAD Fund. During 2016-17, under **Gyanjyoti** scheme, Rs.300 lakh has been released for Jorhat and Kamrup (Metro) districts for 2015-16 and Rs.300 lakh has been allotted for 2016-17. Under **Dharmajyoti** scheme, Rs.150 lakh has been allotted for 2016-17.

Under NLCPR, 626 projects (including BTC Packages, KAATC Package, DHATC Package) have been sanctioned for the State by the Ministry of DoNER with total approved cost of Rs.4,014.86 crore. The Ministry has released Rs.3,001.60 crore (upto December, 2016) against which the State has utilized Rs.2,451.19 crore. Out of 626 projects, 400 have already been completed, while 226 are ongoing. During 2016-17, the Ministry of DoNER retained 6 projects under NLCPR at approved cost of Rs.63.31crore. There are 71 ongoing projects which have been funded by the North Eastern Council. During 2016-17, a priority list of 31 projects/schemes were submitted for consideration of NEC, out of which NEC has retained 12 projects for funding of Rs.6,621.49 lakh.

My Government has renamed the State Planning Board as the State Innovation and Transformation Aayog (SITA) with the Chief Minister as Chairman, and Shri Dipok Kumar Barthakur as Vice-Chairman in the rank of a Cabinet Minister. The Evaluation & Monitoring division of the Planning & Development Department has been notified to provide Secretarial Services to SITA. The Human Development Report, 2014 for the State was published and released in October, 2016.

During the year 2016-17, the Directorate of Economics and Statistics has published the following publications: Statistical Hand Book, Assam-2015, Economic Survey, Assam, 2015-16, Annual Administrative Report, 2015-16, Report on Land Utilisation Statistics for 2013-14 & 2014-15.

FINANCE

The growth of the economy of the State during the last few years has not been encouraging and has lagged behind the growth of the country. The per capita income of the State at current prices was Rs.49,480 in 2014-15 as against the national figure of Rs.88,533. In the past, there were instances of even more than 20% increase in State's own revenue. But from 2012-13 onwards the growth of State's own revenue declined sharply. During 2012-13 the revenue growth rate over the previous year was only 2.08%, which further dropped to 1.39% during 2014-15. So, it has become necessary for the State to explore all possibilities for augmenting its own resources. Keeping in view the above, my Government has already launched a programme, "ReSTART Assam" (Restructuring Systems and Technology for Augmentation of Resources for Transformed Assam), to mop up maximum possible State's Own Resources through a coordinated and concerted mission mode programme, in order to restore the glory of the State as one of the most prosperous States of pre-independence era.

My Government, in its last Budget, had proposed to take up a "Mega Mission", called "Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana" (CMSGUY) for 5 years from 2016-17 and culminating in the year 2021-22, coinciding with 75 years of India's Independence. The main objective is to double the farm income, in unison with the vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister of

India. At the current rate of growth, it will take about 80 years to double the farm income in Assam. Normal interventions by the Government in this regard would not be adequate to address the problem. It is, therefore, proposed to induct massive investments in rural areas for complete rural empowerment in a period of 5 years in a focused and concerted manner to realize the dream of doubling the farm income. With this purpose, a Mega Mission Society with the name "Mega Mission Society for Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana" (MMS-CMSGUY) has been registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. An amount of Rs.500 crore has been sanctioned to MMS-CMSGUY to start the works of the Mission.

My Government has successfully taken up with the Centre for payment of royalty dues at pre-discounted rates, and as per advise of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, ONGC and OIL have released Rs.1,450 crore.

My Government has taken timely measures for smooth payment of weekly/fortnightly wages to tea garden labourers after demonetization. My Government, in collaboration with banks, has opened around 6.5 lakh bank accounts for the tea garden labourers (as on 21st January, 2017); all remaining bank accounts will be opened shortly. Payments of wages to tea garden labourers through their bank accounts has already started in a number of gardens in the State, and steps are being taken to pay the wages through cashless means in the remaining tea gardens.

In order to promote digital payments, my Government has announced 18 incentives, which among others, includes: 0.75% discount on the price of diesel and petrol to the customers if they pay electronically from 1st January, 2017. All patients' user charges of Rs.500/- and above will be reduced by 10% to those who pay electronically. The "CM's Award for Assam Rural Digital Initiative 2016-17", with a cash award of Rs.50,000/- and a citation, will be awarded to the bank branch if more than 75% account holders in a Rural Bank Branch make at least two electronic digital transactions between 1st January, 2017 and 31st March, 2017. The "CM's Award for Uttam Panchayat for Digital Transactions", with a cash award of Rs.5,00,000/- and a citation, will be awarded if all transactions of a village in a particular Gaon Panchayat are made 100% electronic within 31st March, 2017. Top ten colleges will be provided a cash incentive of Rs.5 lakh each if all receipts and payments are electronically made by Government/provincialized colleges continuously from 1st January, 2017 to 15th July, 2017.

My Government has also undertaken a programme of digital awareness for the all Gram Panchayats, Block Panchayat Elected Representatives, District Panchayat Elected Representatives, and officials.

Lucky Grahak Yojana for consumers, and Digi-Dhan Vyapar Yojana for merchants, announced by the NITI Aayog, are being implemented in the State in all districts for encouraging the people to go digital and cashless.

My Government is also addressing the issue of connectivity in consultation with stakeholders like the Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, Telecom Service Providers and Banks. The State-Level Financial Inclusion Committee is regularly monitoring the transformation to a cashless system and taking required steps in this regard. A series of steps have been taken for financial inclusion, showing the results in that and the Credit Deposit Ratio of Assam has reached to the level of 51.68% as on September 30th, 2016.

In pursuance of the Budget announcement made in the 2016-17 Budget for extending education loan to the wards of the State Government employees, my Government has consulted with the bankers, and formulated the education loan scheme called, "Loan for Higher Education of the children of regular State Government employees in Assam under *Uccha Siksha Hitoishona Achari* (USHA) for Karmachari". My Government has decided to provide interest subvention, and the loan will be available @ 4% to the eligible State Government employees.

PERSONNEL

Instructions has been issued to all administrative departments to examine the matter of discontinuing the system of holding interviews for recruitment of Grade-III and Grade-VI posts, in respect of all establishments under their administrative control and make necessary amendments to the respective Service Rules/Executive instructions.

During 2016, as a reform measure, for the first time, the APSC has introduced videography in the viva-voce test of the Combined Competitive Examination. My Government has taken steps to implement the recommendations of the T. L. Barua Committee and M. P. Bezbaruah Committee pertaining to APSC reforms. Also, APSC is actively involved in bringing out its examination/academic calendar for the year 2017, for smooth functioning of the selection tests, and to help in planning and preparations by the prospective candidates.

SECRETARIAT ADMINISTRATION

The Assam Secretariat e-Pass system has been launched on 1st July, 2016 for online application and issue of visitors' pass; car pass, temporary entry pass and special entry pass to both public and officials. These services are available via the respective websites, and the system is performing satisfactorily so far.

For improving the performance of the employees, 0.5% of the total salary budget, has been earmarked for training of the employees of Assam Secretariat. The trainings are being held successfully. Also, for enhancing job-specific competencies of the employees of Assam Secretariat, computer training and a Competency-based Training are being arranged.

PENSION AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

My Government has amended the Rule to include "Parents" under the definition of "Family" to receive family

pension. Special family pension has been revised for allowing the family members of a deceased Government servant to get the benefit of pay. The disability pension and family pension benefits have been extended provisionally to the disabled/deceased Government servants under NPS in line with the Government of India. The Rule has been amended to ease the payment of arrear pension to the pensioners; now the administrative departments can sanction arrear pension amount upto Rs.1 lakh without the approval of the pension sanctioning authority.

The monthly disposal of pension cases has increased up to 1,000, from the earlier level of 500-700, after the new Government took over. The disposal of pension cases is targeted at 1,200 for January and February, 2017, and it is expected that disposal will go up to 1,500 from March, 2017 onwards.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND TRAINING

In order to make the Assam Administrative Staff College an institute of national and international standards, with adequate infrastructure for training, a scheme has been taken. A new project has been taken up to establish a Training Academy at Umrangshu, on the lines of the IAS Academy at Mussoorie, and about 1,000 bigha land has been identified at Lobang, Umrangshu for this Academy.

PRINTING & STATIONERY

A website for the Assam Government Press has been launched. The e-gazette, i.e., online publication of the Assam

Gazette, has been started since July, 2016. Renovation of the Assam Government Press has been taken up. Construction works of two branch presses at Jorhat and Lakhimpur are going on. A training programme for all employees is proposed, within or outside the State, for adopting better management practices and adjusting with modern printing technology. Use of energy-efficient motors/starters shall be started to minimise power consumption. Renewable energy sources (solar energy plant) shall be installed under the Sustainable Development Goals.

PASSPORT

A mission mode project on Immigration Visa and Foreigners Registration and Tracking System to streamline and upgrade the Immigration services has been made functional in the office of the Commissioner of Police, Guwahati. This project has also been made operational in Tezpur, Jorhat, Nagaon, Dibrugarh, Sivasagar, Silchar, Karimganj, Diphu, Golaghat, South Salmara, Bongaigaon, Kamrup (Rural), Baksa, and Kahilipara, Dispur. Within a year the project will cover the entire State.

LAW & ORDER AND POLICE ADMINISTRATION

Assam has been fighting insurgency for more than three decades. The multi-pronged strategy adopted by my Government under Unified Command Structure has paid rich dividends. My Government will continue the successful efforts in this regard. The process is underway to recruit personnel for a total of 4,394 posts of various categories. Further, initiatives are underway for

additional recruitment of a total of 5,013 posts. My Government proposes to raise 5 AP(IR) Battalions.

Assam Police has formed the Nagarik Committees in all Police Stations, with representatives from cross sections of the society. Additionally, 64 Women Cells have been formed in all Districts and Sub-division headquarters. A proposal regarding setting up of 300 Women Cell in 300 Police Stations in all districts including CID Organisation is under consideration. Special Juvenile Police Units have been formed in all district headquarters.

In order to improve the Traffic System in urban areas, a Project has been initiated for establishment of Traffic Signal System across 99 Urban centers of Assam. Installation of 290 CCTV cameras in 90 locations in Guwahati City for improvement of surveillance is underway. Registration of 6,106 un-registered Village Defence Parties is underway. Upgradation and use of new technology for better and more efficient public service delivery, in the form of introduction of dedicated software-based Mobile Application for interface with the public on reporting of crime, safety of women, 100% digitization of manual FIRs online, Web Portal for citizen service online, will bring transparency in the Police system. Upgradation of the existing Dial 100 project and related facilities will extend the service beyond Guwahati to the entire State.

The Police Training College, Dergaon, established in 1949, is proposed to be upgraded and renamed as the Assam Police

Academy. During 2016, altogether 5,151 Recruit Constables have completed their basic training. For others, In-Service and Specialized courses have been arranged both within and outside the State. At the 3 Counter Insurgency and Anti Terrorists Schools in Assam, 652 personnel have been trained during 2016. The Assam Police Academy for Advanced Training has been established at Guwahati, where Specialized Courses, In-Service courses and Training Research Activities are being carried out. A Counter Insurgency & Jungle Warfare School has been established at Mandakata.

The Vigilance & Anti-corruption mechanism has been activated and strict action as per the law is being taken.

To augment the capabilities of the Fire & Emergency Services Directorate, my Government has taken steps to procure fire tenders and modern gadgets so that they can move effectively to handle the disasters and bring succour to the people in distress. Fire audit is also being undertaken.

My Government has taken steps for improvement of infrastructure facilities required for effective functioning of the six Central Jails, 22 District Jails, one Special Jail, one Open Air Jail, and one Sub-Jail in Assam. Moreover, facilities have been extended to the needy prisoners for availing legal Aid through the District Legal Services Authorities with a view to maintain human dignity.

NRC : The process of NRC updation officially commenced in the State with publication of Legacy Data (NRC 1951 and Electoral Rolls up to midnight of 24th March, 1971) on 27th February, 2015. In the State, 2,496 service delivery centres were set up across 157 circles in 27 districts, each centre covering about 2,500 households. Field verification of 68.21 lakh Application Forms has been almost completed.

Out of the 5.94 crore documents taken up for Office Verification, 5.46 crore documents (91.89%) have already been verified by comparison with the originals available at issuing authority, 3.55 lakh documents have been sent to different States for inter-State verification, out of which result of only 64,452 documents have been received so far. As many as 402 documents requiring inter-country verification have been sent to the Ministry of External Affairs for verification through the Indian Embassies/ High Commission, etc., and results have been received for 44 documents. During verification, some forged documents have been found to be submitted by some applicants of NRC, and 166 FIRs have been registered across the State in connection with such forgeries. My Government has also constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by the Additional DGP (CID) for focused investigation into the matter of use of forged documents for entering into NRC.

To prevent the misuse of Legacy Data through impersonation to fraudulently enter names into NRC, the concept

of Family Tree Verification has been introduced where family trees submitted by the applicants will be compared with the computer-generated Family Trees. Family Tree Verification has been taken up across the State since August, 2016.

Foreigners Tribunals : My Government has established 100 Foreigners Tribunals to decide the cases under the Foreigners Act, "D" voter cases, and transfer IM(D)T cases. As on 30th September, 2016, a total of 2,03,408 Foreigners Act cases and 1,15,158 "D" voter cases were pending with these Tribunals.

BORDER AREAS

My Government organized a Border Outreach Programme at Kaziranga with Nagaland on 17th October, 2016, where the Chief Ministers of both the States participated, along with the Deputy Commissioners of West Karbi Anglong, Lakhimpur, and Sivasagar Districts.

As many as 484 youths, out of the total target of 1,740, have completed training under the 'Skill Development and Capacity Building Programme' and the rest will be covered expeditiously. Construction of new border outposts at Ukium (Kamrup), Golacherra (Hailakandi), Kanubari (Sivasagar), Huloongguri (Jorhat), Laisong (Dima Hasao), Torabri (Karbi Anglong), and Durgapur (Golaghat) have been taken up. Baseline Surveys in the Inter-State border areas of 24 districts along the Inter-State boundary is proposed to be conducted during the next Financial Year.

INFORMATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS

My Government has been implementing a good numbers of schemes for the benefit of public in general and journalists in particular. It is going to implement a new and ambitious scheme, "Journalist Family Benefit Fund", for providing financial assistance to bereaved families of the deceased journalists who die while in service. The rules have been framed and steps taken to form a Corpus Fund to implement the scheme. Process is going on to provide retirement benefits to journalists of the State under "Pension Scheme for journalists".

An amount of Rs.3 lakh will be provided as Ex-Gratia to each of the next of kin of 45 deceased journalists of the State who lost their lives in various incidents of violence in the State. Necessary steps have already been initiated in this regard.

Necessary process has been started to amend certain provisions of existing Press Accreditation Rules, 1989 taking into account in the present context. Moreover, my Government is going to amend certain provisions of Advertisement policy of 2008 as per suggestions of Press Council of India; the necessary process has already been started.

JUDICIAL

The construction of the the National Law University and Judicial Academy building is likely to be completed (1st phase) within February, 2017. Many projects are proposed to be taken up for the Judiciary, including the High Court, the Districts Courts, Judicial Courts (also in the newly-created Judicial

Districts of Chirang, Karbi Anglong, and Dima Hasao), Fast Track Courts, etc. The Gauhati High Court has proposed for creation of over 3,000 posts of supporting staff in respect of Subordinate Courts in Assam.

LEGISLATIVE

In order to help the targeted beneficiaries, the Assam State Legal Services Authority has undertaken various programmes like providing legal aid, and holding of Lok Adalats, Legal Awareness Camps, etc. They have also set up mediation centers and organized training of Para Legal Volunteers and Legal Aid Counsels in the State; 12 Mediation Centers were set up in 10 judicial districts, including Gauhati High Court Mediation Center (Principal Seat) and Assam Mediation Center. The Authority is making efforts to create awareness on the new concept of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism of mediation and construction of ADR Centres in the State.

Hon'ble Members, I have placed before you the policies and programmes of my Government. My Government is committed to implement its policies and programmes that have been outlined. I urge that this House support these schemes so that balanced, all-round development of all sections of population in the State is achieved.

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Bharat Mata ki Jai

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