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UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMERCE REVIEWS INDUSTRIAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AT GUWAHATI

Shri Jairam Ramesh, Union Minister of State for Commerce took a review meeting of industrial and infrastructure development issues of the North East at Guwahati on May 19, 2006. The meeting reviewed performance under Assistance to States for Developing Exports Infrastructure and Allied Activities (ASIDE), Review of Projects under Export Development Fund, Production of Export Quality Products in NE States, Development of Cold Chain facilities for perishable commodities, Developing connectivity to land custom stations and opening up of new trade routes in neighbouring countries of the eight North Eastern States including Sikkim.

The Minister stated that he was personally committed to development of the North East and hoped that many of the problems and difficulties faced by the region could be discussed and thereby find ways of overcoming them. He requested the States to submit bankable projects to Govt. of India which would be given due priority. Various issues of border trade, export-import, food and agro processing, cold storage facilities etc. were discussed and the participating states gave presentations of their states. Ministers from Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura, Nagaland and Senior Officials of Union Ministry of Commerce and State Govt. Officials of the participating states attended the meeting.

He also met the labour representatives of the tea industry and had a meeting with the stakeholders of the industry. The Minister also had a reviewed meeting of the Tea Board. The Minister also reviewed the activities of the handloom and handicraft sector, the National Bamboo Mission and NEDFi among others.

ASSAM CHIEF MINISTER MEETS CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS MINISTER

The Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers and Steel, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, assured the Assam Chief Minister that the Centre will soon decide on setting up a branch of the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research in the State. Shri Paswan gave this assurance to Shri Tarun Gogoi in their meeting held in New Delhi recently. Shri Gogoi thanked Shri Paswan for his support in the development of Assam in particular and the North-East region in general. The Chief Minister specially thanked Shri Paswan for his initiative in getting the Assam Gas Cracker Project cleared by the Centre as also the Revamping Project of the Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation, Namrup with an investment of Rs.600 crore.

The Assam Gas Cracker Project costing Rs.5400 crore has been a long-standing demand of the State. The project was part of the Assam Accord of 1985. It aims at setting up gas cracker project with a capacity of 2 lakh 80 thousand tonnes per annum of Polymers at Lepetkata in Dibrugarh district. The project is expected to generate one lakh job opportunities. The follow-up action has been initiated by the Department of Chemicals after the Union Cabinet approved the project on April 18, 2006.

DEVELOPMENT OF STATION IN ASSAM

With a view to provide upgraded passenger amenities, 14 stations in the State of Assam and other North-Eastern States have been nominated as model stations. These are Dibrugarh, Guwahati, Jorhat Town, Kamakhya, Kokrajhar, Lumding, New Bongaigaon, NewTinsukia, Rangiya Jn., Silchar, Srirampur, Dimapur and Dharmanagar.

Out of the 14 stations, one station Guwahati has been fully developed as Model Station. Remaining 13 stations are targeted for development by March 2008 as per norms.

This information was given by Shri R.Velu, Minister of State for Railways in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha recently.

VALMIKI AMBEDKAR AWAS YOJANA (VAMBAY)

A Centrally sponsored scheme called Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY) with a view to ameliorating the conditions of the urban slum dwellers living below the poverty line who do not possess adequate shelter was introduced in 2001. The scheme has the primary objective to facilitate the construction and upgradation of the dwelling units for the slum dwellers and to provide health and enabling urban environment through community toilets under Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, a component of the scheme. This is the first scheme of its kind meant exclusively for slum dwellers with a Government of India subsidy of 50 per cent, the balance 50 per cent is to be arranged by the State Government with ceiling costs prescribed both for dwelling units/community toilets. The State's share may consist of funds from any source in the form of subsidy or loan from Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited (HUNCO) or any other agency. The guidelines of the scheme provide for submission of proposals by the nodal agencies of State Governments to HUDCO who, in turn, process recommendations. The funds are released by Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation only after a VAMBAY account is opened by the State Nodal Agency and the share of the State Government is deposited in that account.

VAMBAY and the discontinued National Slum Development Programme (NSDP) have been subsumed in a new scheme called Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSPD). This scheme was launched along with Jawahar Lal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) by the Prime Minister on December 3, 2005. IHSDP aims at having an integrated approach to ameliorate the condition of the urban slum dwellers who do not possess adequate shelter and reside in dilapidated conditions.

The scheme is applicable to all cities and towns as per 2001 Census except cities/towns covered under JNNURM.

IHSDP is funded in the ratio of 80:20 basis between Central Government and State Government/ULB/Parastatals. For special category States, the funding pattern between Centre and the States will be in the ratio of 90:10.

VAMBAY will continue till IHSDP is implemented in full force.

BOARD/COMMISSION FOR FLOOD CONTROL

The Ganga Flood Control Board with Ganga Flood Control Commission as its secretariat for Ganga basin states, and Brahmaputra Board for Brahmaputra & Barak basin states are the Central Government organisations for the flood control in these States. Some Flood Control Boards have also been set up in some of the States.

Major flood prone area of West Bengal state falls under the jurisdiction of Ganga Flood Control Commission. Farakka Barrage Project takes care of the erosion problem within its jurisdiction along river Ganga.

There is also a North Bengal Flood Control Commission under the Govt. of West Bengal for planning and taking up flood management works on rivers flowing through North Bengal area.

As a follow up action on the direction of the Prime Minister after unprecedented flood in July 2004 and severe erosion in the states of Assam, Bihar and West Bengal, the Ministry of Water Resources, Govt. of India constituted a Task Force for Flood Management/Erosion Control under the chairmanship of Chairman, CWC in August 2004 with representatives of State Govt., Central Ministries/Organisations and eminent experts as members of the Committee to examine the flood and erosion problem in Assam & neighbouring states, West Bengal, Bihar & Eastern Uttar Pradesh. The Task Force has proposed setting up of Sikkim and North Bengal River Management Board. Besides, a proposal for setting up North East Water Resources Authority (NEWRA) is also under consideration of the Government.

The Principal Secretary to Prime Minister reviewed the status of constitution of NEWRA in a meeting held on 23 January, 06. Apart from other issues and decisions it was decided that it would be necessary to empower NEWRA to accord statutory clearances under various regulations/statutes. As decided during the meeting a Small Working Group has been constituted with a representative from Planning Commission, Ministry of Power, PMO and Ministry of Water Resources by Prime Minister Office, vide PMO ID No. 450/50/C/2/05/ES-I dated 28th February, 2006 on North East Water Resources Authority.

ASSAM GAS CRACKER PROJECT

The Assam Gas Cracker Project has been approved by the Govt. of India on April 18, 2006. This project shall have production capacity of 2,80,000 tonnes per annum Polymers which include High Density Polyethylene (HDPE), Linear Low Density Polyethylene (LLDPE) and Polypropylene (PP). The total outlay of the project of Rs. 5460.61 crores (fixed cost) which include a capital subsidy of Rs. 2138.00 crore for the project on the fixed cost basis. In addition these will be a recurring feedback subsidy totaling Rs. 908.91 crore for 15 years of operation period. The expected time for commissioning of the project is about 60 months.

THE NEWS ROUND-UP

This information was given by Shri B.K. Handique, Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers in Lok Sabha on May 15, 2006 in response to a question by Dr. Arun Kumar Sarma.

COACHING-CUM-GUIDANCE CENTRES FOR SC/ST

The Ministry of Labour and Employment has so far set up 22 coaching-cum-Guidance Centres for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for enhancing the employability of educated unemployed SC/ST youth registered with the Employment Exchanges. These Centres are located at Aizwal, Bangalore, Bhubaneshwar, Chennai, Delhi, Guwahati, Hissar, Hyderabad, Imphal, Jabalpur, Jaipur, Jalandhar, Jammu, Jowai, Kanpur, Kohima, Kolkata, Mandi, Nagpur, Ranchi, Surat and Thiruvananthapuram. Through these Coaching-cum-Guidance Centres, 85,236 SC/ST candidates were provided placement-related guidance and 38,796 candidates registration guidance during 2004-05 and 2005-06. During the same period these centres organised 1,868 confidence Building Programmes in which 35,783 candidates participated. 998 candidates were imparted Computer Training while 23,384 candidates were trained in typing and shorthand.

This was stated by the Minister of State for Labour & Employment, Shri Chandra Sekhar Sahu in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

CONSTRUCTION OF FLYOVER BRIDGES

The Railways have received proposals for construction of flyover bridges over the Northeast Frontier Railway lines at various places in lower Assam. Railways construct Road Over/Under bridges in lieu of existing busy level crossings on cost sharing basis if the traffic density at the level crossing is one lakh or more TVUs (TVU – A unit obtained by multiplying the number of trains with the number of road vehicles passing over the level crossing in 24 hours) otherwise on deposit terms. Proposals in both cases have to be sponsored by the State Government fulfilling certain preliminary pre-requisites required under extant rules. No firm proposal for construction of Road Over Bridge falling in Assam has been received from the State Government during Works Programme of 2006-07. However, work of a road over bridge at Bongaigaon in lieu of Level Crossing was sanctioned in 1995-96 on cost sharing basis. Railway portion of this work has already been completed. Earth work and compaction is in progress. Public Works Department (PWD) has been advised to expedite the work on approaches. In addition there are 4 works being executed by State Government PWD on deposit terms, between Agthori-Kamakhya, Agthori-Changsari, Kamakhya-Pandu and Guwahati-Kamakhya. All these are reported to be at different stages of progress.

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF INDIA'S TEA INDUSTRY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ASSAM

- Dr. Rabindra Kr. Choudhury

India, the largest producer and consumer of tea in the world, accounts for around 28 percent of world production and 13 percent of world trade. However, the production as well as export of tea has shown a declining trend in the recent years of the current decade. Thus, while the production increased from 835.6 million kg in 1997-98 to 848 million kg in 2000-01, it started declining thereafter from 847 million kg in 2001-02 to 830 million kg in 2004-05 and further down to only 667 million kg in 2005-06. Exports of tea, on the other hand has shown a further deterioration from 211 million kg in 1997-98 to 189 million kg in 1999-2000 and from 204 million kg in 2000-01 to 183 million kg in 2003-04 and to just 101 million kg in 2005-06. In spite of almost stagnant rupee value in the period, the value of India's tea exports has come down from Rs. 2192 crore in 1998-99 to Rs. 1637 crore in 2003-04 and to less than Rs.1000 crore in 2005-06. Thus our tea exports as proportion to production has declined from 24 percent in 1998-99 to 15 percent in 2005-06, though it was 25 percent in the previous year.

In recent years, some quantity of tea is also imported for blending and re-exports. The quantity of such imports went up from just 9 million kg in 1998-99 to 32.5 million kg in 2004-05 and it declined to 8 million kg in 2005-06.

One cannot forget that the major driving force behind the country's tea-sector growth is the prospect of eastern India's tea industry, particularly of Assam which not only produces around 53 percent of the country's total production, but also employs more than 10 percent of the state's work force or around 12 lakh



people. However, the share of Assam in the country's tea production in course of last three-and-half decades has remained confined to a narrow range from 51 percent in 1970-71 to 53 percent in 2003-04 due to decline in per hectare productivity though the area under the plantation rose from 182 thousand hectares to 280 thousand hectares in the period with the number of tea estates rising from just 750 to as many as 32,000.

It may be noted here that the sudden rise in the number of tea gardens of Assam and its area under tea (to around three lakh hectares), particularly since the latter half of 1990's was due to the unemployed youths taking to small scale tea production as their profession. There are around 2500 small tea gardens in Assam today adding to the state's

total production by more than 50 million kg. This is certainly a welcome change. But, since they grow in small scale, they cannot go for factory manufacturing and, hence, have to sell out only green leaves to the large estates which often subject them to exploitation. The addition to tea hectareage by around 50 thousand hectares in the latter half of 1990's was possible mainly through conversion of agricultural land with below 10 hectares being the cut off point of land for small tea growers.

There are, however, a number of problems of tea industry of Assam. A considerable number of teagardens of the state have gone sick over the period due to lack of infrastructure, modernisation and efficient management. The Assam Tea Corporation, a state-level public sector enterprise, for example, has not been functioning efficiently and is for long running at a loss. The amount of good will that Assam tea had long been enjoying in the international market has now been eroded to a great extent. Though Assam tea is still earning around 50 percent of the foreign exchange earned by India's tea industry, its demand is already in recession due to better quality-tea supplied by countries like Sri Lanka, Cuba etc at comparatively lower prices.

That the fate of India's tea industry is largely dependent on what happens to its eastern sector of Assam and West Bengal is well known. What is seriously



worrying the tea industry is that even though India still produces 27 percent of global tea output, the quality of product is sadly doubted in the global market. It is a fact that the planters of major tea growing states, themselves were not careful enough about the deterioration of quality during heydays and their negligence gradually turned more than 30 percent of tea bushes into infructus plants.

Studies confirm that the root cause of closure of a number of tea gardens in parts of the country was low productivity and lack of investment in plant development activities.

India's tea market is facing yet another paradox which could be explained in terms of glaring gulf between the price received by producer and the price charged by dealers and retailers. The common consumer in the market is confused of the fact that while the producers are facing the crisis created by a market glut and decline of prices, often voiced by the corporates, the benefit of low price does not come to the common consumers. The reason perhaps lies in non-conformity with regulated market behaviour of producers among whom many are found to be selling out their produce directly without routing it through auction centres.

This apart, the most serious ailment remains not only low productivity but also with quality of produce due to low investment on infrastructure and low managerial efficiency. The problems of high cost production and stagnant productivity need be addressed on an urgent basis. It is heartening to note, however, that some important steps in recent times have been taken for development and modernisation of the sector. The most important of them are the following:



- Withdrawal of additional excise duty of Re 1.00 per kg on tea as announced in the Union Budget 2005-06.
- Sanctioning of two schemes viz

grant of subsidy for production of orthodox teas and assistance to the two Research and Development institutions, viz Tea Research Association at Tocklia (Assam) and United Planters' Association for Southern India Tea Research Foundation with an estimated outlay of Rs. 93 crore for financing from the special fund created with the additional duty of excise of Re 1.00 per kg. on tea collected during 2003-05.

- Issue of a New Tea Control Order, 2005 (distribution and export) under the provision of the Tea Act, 1953 in supersession of the Tea Control Order, 1957 to maintain quality and retain the brand equity of Indian teas.



- Establishment of a Special Purpose Tea Fund to which budgetary commitment of contribution every year is announced and allocated Rs. 100 crore in the Union Budget for 2006-07.

It is happy to note that the Planning Commission has approved the setting up of the Special Purpose Tea Fund within a few days of budget presentation. It may be noted here that the Union Commerce Minister in the first ever stakeholders' Conference organised by his ministry in collaboration with the Tea Board of India on "Challenges before Tea Industry" in September, 2004 had announced that the said Tea Fund would be formed shortly. Thus the process is much delayed.

The corpus of the "Fund" with proposed strength of Rs 1000 crore could be formed by different stake holders in the industry. It is understood that the

Planning Commission is very positive about finding a solution of the tea crisis which the industry has long been suffering from. The Union Commerce Ministry proposed to unveil a 15-year programme for massive replantation and rejuvenation of the tea industry.



The “Special Tea Fund” to be created now will greatly benefit the tea growing states of Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Uttaranchal. The revival package for tea industry had already been assured of fiscal and tax incentives and of cost effectiveness for both domestic and export markets. The Union Commerce Minister also assured that it would not be just an ad-hoc package, but would, instead, provide a concrete support with special thrust on regeneration of old and replenishable tea bushes. The package which was proposed is also supposed to frame a marketing strategy to give

the tea industry an edge over its competitors in the global market.

While the package if implemented promptly and with all sincerity, will go a long way to rescue the tea industry from its long drawn crisis, what is fearing now

to the stakeholders is that the budgetary announcement of service tax on auctioneering could increase the tea prices if the tax liability is to be borne by the tea growers. If it is so, the market competition would be still tougher and would affect the global



demand for Indian tea. However, the other budgetary action of reducing customs duty on bulk plastics, used for packaging, from 10 percent to 5 percent would encourage value addition activity of tea industry because of the reduction of packaging cost.

What is necessary at the moment is that the tea industry get modernised with a change in technique of plantation, improvement of encouragement to the electronic tea auction and managerial excellence. If the “Special Purpose Tea Fund” with the already promised revolving corpus of Rs 1000 crore with a target of replantation in 1.7 lakh hectares over a period of 15 years, is established without further delay, the industry could be expected to get back its pride of place in international competitiveness and drive to road of prosperity.

CSCS – TECHNOLOGY IN THE SERVICE OF THE MASSES

- Abhijit Bora

In an effort to extend the benefits of the 'Information Technology (IT) revolution' to each and every corner of this vast country, the Government of India is planning to implement a highly-ambitious scheme in the next two years.

The scheme, to be implemented by the Department of Information Technology (DIT) under the Union Ministry of Communication & Information Technology proposes to set up 1,00,000 information centres for rendering various services of the government and the private sector available to the people without the latter having to visit the government offices for the services.

This would be followed at the second or middle level by an entity called the Service Centre Agency (SCA – loosely analogous to a franchiser) while the third level would be the agency designated by the State to facilitate implementation of the scheme within that state.

These information centres or Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-enabled access points would be known as Common Service Centres (CSCs) which would endeavour to extend a whole range of high-quality and cost-effective services relating to video, voice and data content through a single communication channel using appropriate terminal equipment. This opens up an immense potential for facilitating e-government, entertainment, education, telemedicine, e-commerce, info-services, etc. to remotest corners of the country.

In the proposed structure of the system, the first level would be the local Village Level Entrepreneur (VLE) - loosely analogous to a franchisee.

In case a suitable SCA is not available for difficult locations, a State or Central government agency like the Regional Postal Authority may be assigned the role of SCA to implement the scheme.

This three-tier arrangement would function in accordance with this framework and guidelines issued from the Department of Information Technology. This would be done either directly or through the designated National Level Service Agency (NLSA). This agency would be responsible for overall planning and management of the project at the national and state level in close co-ordination with the DIT and the state governments.

The state-level agencies would be required to carry out the assigned tasks according to the framework and guidelines issued from the Department of Information Technology. This would be done either directly or through the designated National Level Service Agency (NLSA). This agency would be responsible for overall planning and management of the project at the national and state level in close co-ordination with the DIT and the state governments.

A VLE should have all the qualities necessary to sub-serve the basic objectives of the CSC. The quality of service at the CSCs would be as effective as the quality of persons running them. Thus selection and proper training of the VLEs is vitally important which is also being emphasized upon.

Given the rural environment in the country, the VLE is also required to be an effective 'change agent' i.e., to change the mindset of the rural citizen.

The state governments would also need to play a major role in facilitating the establishment of a large number of CSCs, mainly in the rural areas. They would have to put in place an appropriate institutional mechanism for such support. The initial step would be to designate a state-level agency that would be responsible for overseeing implementation of the project.

The SCAs would be required to submit their proposals for establishing and operating a number of CSCs which has to cover at least 40% of the Gram Panchayat locations in each Block within a district. The SCAs would in turn select the VLEs for operating the CSCs in accordance with the over framework.

The state governments desirous of participating in the scheme would designate an agency, which would work with DIT or the identified NLSA to facilitate implementation of the scheme. For this purpose the state-designated agency would

The NLSA would be responsible for providing all assistance in implementation of this scheme through its field formations or the district administration in the entire state. This agency would also co-ordinate with the various state government departments and agencies to help bring in a basket of e-governance applications and services as relevant in the respective states.

The SCAs would be identified through an appropriate open, competitive selection process to be managed by the NLSA in consultation with the state-designated agency. A state level committee that would include representatives of the State Government and Government of India would oversee this process.

The CSCs are expected to act as the front-end delivery points for administration and welfare governance. For that purpose, state governments would need to take necessary legal and policy measures to enable these centres to come into being, catalyze all e-governance services to be delivered through them. Further, it is needed to ensure that all possible government programmes are appropriately designed and aligned, taking into cognizance the presence of CSCs at Panchayat / Village levels, as the case may be.

The primary objectives of establishing such centres at the rural areas are to empower rural communities, create equal opportunity, foster income and employment generation and in general, human development through high economic and social returns.

A communiqué of the department concerned has informed that the scheme would have several important characteristics. These include – an equitable geographical distribution of the CSCs in the rural and remote areas for a better spread of the centres, they would be established on an entrepreneur-based Public Private Partnership (PPP) model.

As the scheme is to implemented in the PPP mode and 1,00,000 CSCs are

targeted to be operationalized by 2007 with scope for more such centres across the nation this would facilitate a huge employment generation exercise if we provide for at least one or two persons to be employed for each one of these centres. This benefit would be in addition to the convenience to the masses.

So this is an ideal scheme for the uplift of the country's population. As the project would require a huge amount of financial resources for implementation and sustainance the Union Government has decided that financial support from NABARD under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund would be extended for establishment of Village / Rural Knowledge Centres across the country. This support would be in the form of a loan to the State government for onward disbursal to the agencies willing to establish such Centers.

The Department has already called for tenders from interested and capable organizations for appointment of the NLSA for implementation of the entire project across the length and breadth of the country.

This agency would be responsible for various aspects of the highly-potential project ranging from mobilizing necessary financial resources for supplementing the government's contribution to it, incorporate standardized design, content and processes, agglomerate best practices and content providers in addition to the overall responsibility of effectively carrying out project management and implementation.

Besides, it would also be the agency's liability for benefiting from significant economies of scale in identification, customization as well as implementation of the physical and digital infrastructure of the scheme.

Above all, the agency would also be responsible for enabling aggregation of potential citizen-centric services at the national level.

A few of the potential range of services with a huge scope for implementation through this scheme include agriculture, animal husbandry, general citizen services, health, telemedicine, tourism, social utility among others.

The department expects the implementing agency to adopt a market-driven approach through a centralized resource-mobilization approach and underwrite the same on an effective Public-Private partnership (PPP) model on a sustainable basis with a reasonable project lifecycle.

The nodal agency for implementation – DIT is highly serious about implementing the project at an optimum speed so that the benefits of ICT –enabled services can be delivered to the masses with the minimum gap in time, from planning to proper implementation.

When implemented, this scheme has immense potential for rendering a yeoman's service to the masses of the country by rendering them facilitation at a nominal cost while at the same time sparing them huge amount of time as they won't be need to physically visit the offices of the service providers.

We are hopeful that we would be able to reap rich harvests of this scheme in about three to four years' time from now onwards.

MALARIA ASSUMES EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS IN ASSAM

- S. Thakur

The north-eastern States have a high incidence of malaria, and contribute to 8.5 per cent to 12 per cent of the total malaria cases of the country. More importantly, these States also account for 10 per cent to 20 per cent of the total malaria mortality in the country. Among the north-eastern States, Assam reports the maximum number of malaria cases as well as *P. falciparum* followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Manipur.

This year malaria has assumed epidemic proportions in Assam, creating havoc for the past couple of months, and though checked to some extent now, the menace is still continuing especially in the remote areas of the State. As per official figures, more than 150 people have died till date and over 13,000 affected. Unofficial estimates, however, put the toll at several hundreds. The upper Assam districts of Lakhimpur and Golaghat have borne the brunt of the epidemic, recording 39 and 16 casualties respectively. The prevailing situation has raised legitimate question marks over the implementation of the National Malaria Eradication Programme (NMEP), through which the disease is sought to be controlled in Assam and the rest of the North-east.

The NMEP is a programme operative in the whole country, which provides cent per cent Central plan assistance for the north-eastern States in view of the magnitude of the problem in the region. The assistance includes material and equipment as well as cash assistance towards operational cost since 1994. It is evident that malaria continues to be a scourge in Assam, claiming scores of lives every year. Remote areas bordering Arunachal and Bhutan have been the worst-affected ones, which have little health care facilities or infrastructure. What made matters worse this year is that the disease, which normally occurs in April or May, surfaced earlier in March, catching the authorities unawares.

The State Government blames the Centre for what it says is the Centre's failure to ensure timely assistance to control the disease. "Malaria is a centrally-sponsored programme and in spite of repeated requests by the State Government, the Centre failed to provide assistance in time," State Health department officials say. Moreover, the Centre had been considering the month of June as the month for starting of the anti-malaria programme and have now agreed to accept May for the purpose. State Health officials say that the State Government, on the other hand, has been pressing for recognizing March as the month to start the anti-malaria programme. The Centre, on its part, holds the State Government responsible for the fiasco, saying that it did not inform the Centre about the outbreak of the disease. The State Health Department also did not appoint the 600-odd malaria surveillance workers (MSW), which resulted in serious consequences. The MSWs are the workers who function at the grassroots level and are an integral part of the anti-malaria campaign. These workers are responsible for carrying out precautionary drives like spraying of DDT and other disinfectants in malaria-prone areas. This exercise normally begins in April but this year it did not begin on time, as the election model code of conduct came in the way of obtaining necessary clearances on time.

Malaria is a serious problem in the north-eastern states mainly due to its topography and climatic conditions, which are congenial to perennial malaria transmission, prevalence of highly efficient malaria vectors, particularly *Anopheles minimus*, *Anopheles fluviatilis* and *Anopheles dirus*, predominance of malignant varieties of malaria parasites like *P. falciparum* as well as prevalence of drug (Chloroquine)-resistant *P. falciparum* in some areas. The malaria scenario in the State is made worse by communication bottlenecks and absence of health care facilities in most of the affected areas. What compounds the matter further is widespread ignorance and superstitions prevalent among the people living in these remote areas. What is most important at this hour is creating mass awareness about the problem and here media can play an effective role in combating the outbreak.

TOURISM BEYOND KAZIRANGA RHINO

- Moushumi S Bora

There has been a refreshing undercurrent of change taking place beyond the limelight in the tourism sector in Assam that may revolutionize the scenario for the entire region in days to come. The concept of promoting hitherto exclusive holidays in a few of those exquisite tea plantation bungalows, flag bearers of opulence from the British era, located amid sweet smelling, lush green, sprawling tea plantations is gaining ground. These bungalows have already attracted considerable number of tourists who are always on the look out for something different and cut above the rest in lieu of the money they are going to spend.

It is a heartening change that heritage plantation bungalows are adding a new dimension to the region's tourism that is hinged heavily on glimpses of the one-horned Asiatic rhino in Kaziranga National Park, the Kamakhya Temple in Guwahati, a dash of much exploited Shillong, enigmatic monasteries of snow-capped Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh and for those who can afford both time and money wise a cruise along the mighty Brahmaputra river.

Thanks to a handful of visionary and enterprising people, a few enigmatic tea bungalows and family heritage property are now ready to welcome an exclusive club of tourists. Though not put on advertisement for popular consumption, words about the uniqueness attached to these are spreading like wildfire within a stratum of people with penchant for green, healthy and decent holidays close to the virgin nature. These property have already become most sought after destination for the exclusive club.



Mancotta Chang, Dibrugarh

One is talking about Thengal Manor, the Wild Masheer Lodge, Mancotta Chang and Basbari Lodge for those who crave for exclusivity that comes at a price.

The 72-year-old but still majestic Thengal Manor, the ancestral property of tea planters from Khangiya Barooah clan, is one of the best option in the offer. It is an imposing and tastefully furnished mansion comprising

spacious bedrooms with carpeted floors surrounded by verandahs facing flower bedecked sprawling gardens. Located in an Assamese village called Jalukonibari about 30-minutes drive from the heart of historic Jorhat town in Upper Assam, Thengal Manor offers a very comfortable sojourn in the lap of the nature. Glimpses of greenery typical of rural Assam and soothing bamboo groves are omnipresent greeting the tourist as they open the window of the plush suite in the morning. Plush suites furnished with furniture carrying the royal touch of British era. It gives a first

hand experience of the lifestyle of aristocrat Assamese tea planters that thrived in that age.

Wild Masheer Lodge is located at Adabari Tea estate near Tezpur at a distance of about 250 km from Guwahati. The estate was set up in the year 1900 equipped with a manager's bungalow. The British Assam Tea Company initially owned it. Till 1962, the manager operated from the single-storied Burma teak house here. Subsequently, the office was shifted, and the sprawling bungalow left unoccupied. The present owner of the estate, McLeod Russel in a venture with River Journeys & Bungalows of India Private Ltd, has promoted the old place to an enchanting destination nestled in the virgin nature. The place has been done up in extremely good taste keeping in mind the requirement of the select band of visitors expected to occupy it. The property has been renamed Wild Masheer, and the bungalow re-christened The British Assam Heritage Bungalow that can accommodate 24 persons. The promoter is planning to expand the capacity to about 100 rooms soon.

The Bansbari Lodge is located at the entrance to the picturesque Manas National Park at the foothills of Bhutan Himalayas. Proximity to wildlife, a tiger project, a tea garden the awe inspiring Manas river flowing majestically down from the blue hills of Bhutan imparts a rare value to this place. It is now rated as one of the top five best jungles lodges of the country. Besides a comfortable stay, the lodge offers game-viewing excursions either on elephant back or in an open jeep.

The Mancotta 'Chang' in Upper Assam's tea belt in Dibrugarh is another jewel in the emerging heritage plantation tourism in the state. The elevated bungalow is over 150 years old. It belongs to the Jalans, one of the pioneer tea planters' family in Assam. The family has converted two of their stately manager's bungalows into guesthouses for select tourists. The bedrooms of these bungalows are so big that it may compared to the size of a medium-size flats in any of the booming cities in the country.

All these good things cropping up in the tourism scenario, the Kaziranga Park, the rhino abode on the bank of Brahmaputra river, can expect to get a respite from heavy rush of tourists every year. However, the park has remained the hot favourite for all sections of tourists.

Kaziranga, the world heritage site, received a total of 81,758 visitors during November, 2005 to March, 2006. This season witnessed an increase in number of domestic tourists that resulted in increase in the earning of the Park. Total 77,047 domestic tourists and 4711 tourists from abroad visited the park during 2005-06 season as against 67,719 domestic tourists and 5154 foreign tourists during the previous season of 2004-05.

The park earned Rs 66,20,168 till March 31 this year. The annual tourists season at Kaziranga ends on April 30 before the onset of Monsoon. The park authority hopes that the number tourists will increase in the coming season with improved infrastructure in place.

The rise in number of visitors to Kaziranga Park has been a boon to the neighbourhood economy with numerous tourists' season lodging and eateries doing brisk business. Numerous local entrepreneurs are earning their livelihood by running jeep safaris for tourists whose swelling number makes it difficult for KNP authority as well as Assam tourism department to arrange for sufficient number of safaris.

THE NORTH EAST MIRROR / May 2006

HELPING SELF: A MOTTO GAINING MOMENTUM

- Nava Thakuria

Assam (now renamed as Asom) is not the land of some gun yielding youths. The Northeastern state of the country has also given birth to many energetic and dedicated youths, who have overcome all difficulties to establish themselves as economically independent and enterprising youth. There has emerged a number of groups that have started various agricultural related income generating activities to benefit themselves and also set examples for hundred others in the region.

Meet the group members of Aditya group of Golaghat in upper Asom. The group under Gomariguri Development Block was formed in July 2002. Initially it was a small initiative to market the agricultural products (mostly Rabi Crops) of the members of the group. Thirteen young men and a woman used to cultivate their own land for Rabi crops which was then sent to the market. Their initiative started giving them result. Soon they were advised to form a group under Self Help regulation.

The members of the group thus formed Aditya SHG and opened a saving bank account in the local branch of Asom Gramin Bikash Bank (earlier Pragjyotish Gaonlia Bank). Three advisors were also enrolled in the group. Soon the group purchased a tractor for cultivating their land. Rice (mostly Sali) was harvested by all the members of the group. The locality is not flood prone and hence the production was satisfactory. However the land was not used during the winter season. The group members then decided to start Rabi crops in their fields.

Their tractor was used for tilling the land. First the advantage was confined to the members only. But soon the members decided to extend support to other villagers also. Their tractor was hired by other farmers for tilling their land. Moreover, the tractor with a carrier truck was used for earth cutting and carrying for different occasions. Now the tractors (another new one has been purchased by the group recently) are mostly used to carry the vegetables such as Tomato, Capsicum, cabbage, ginger and other vegetables of the group to the market.

Their products are marketed in various parts of the region including Tinsukia, Merapani, Jorhat and also Guwahati. More often, they buy the produces of other farmers of the village and sell in the markets with marginal profit. The initiative has become helpful for many small farmers in the village as

they have started getting a minimum value for their products. The Aditya group has already carved a niche in agricultural production in the locality. They market their produces under the banner AVP (Aditya Vegetable Products). "Today our brand name (AVP) is well recognized in the markets. We also try to maintain the quality of our products," said Durgeswar Saikia, an active member of the group.

Apart from the two tractors, the group also owns a mini-rice mill, a shop dealing in fertilizers and pesticides and also a broiler farm. "We had over Rs 85 lakhs of transaction during the last financial year. The estimated net profit must be around Rs 3 lakhs," informed Shri Saikia. Today over 500 poor families of farmers in the locality is dependent on the Aditya group. The group often makes attempts to help the downtrodden especially the widows by tilling their land free of cost. "Our tractors are hired by other farmers time to time. And many times, we help the poor and widows to get their land tilled with only the price of fuel and very often we give it absolutely free," says Biren Saikia, advisor to Aditya group.

Aditya SHG is one of those hundred thousand successful SHGs in Asom that is inspired by the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) of the Government of India. Launched by the Ministry of Rural Development (GOI), the scheme emphasizes on group approach, where the rural people are encouraged to form self help groups with the members of 'below poverty line' families. The last annual report of the Ministry of Rural Development reveals that over 30 lakh SHGs were formed in India, where around hundred thousand groups had taken different economic activities like handicraft, mushroom, piggery, dairy farming, mechanized agriculture, Rabi crop etc. Assam Government source reveals that there are over 1 lakh SHGs formed till date. It involves nearly 15 lakh Below Poverty Level families that counts around 20% of the total population of Asom (2.6 Crore).

Aditya group had received the Rs 10,000/- as Revolving Fund from DRDA, Golaghat. Later they had gone for a loan of Rs 25,000/- from the bank. After its repayment, the group applied for another bigger amount of loan to buy a tractor. With a subsidy of nearly Rs one lakh they purchased the tractor and increased the number to two. Now they are planning to buy a truck to increase the capability of vegetable carriages during the peak season. "As we have no facility of cold storage here, it becomes essential to dispatch the vegetables collected from the paddy fields as early as possible. Otherwise, those will get decomposed within a short interval," asserted Nandeswar Saikia, another member of Aditya group. The young entrepreneur however did not forget to inform that they had a plans to start a cold storage for the benefit of the farmers in the locality.

THE NORTH EAST MIRROR / May 2006

FEATURE

NE AGRI EXPO'06 - A POTENTIALLY PATH-FINDING EVENT

- S. Banerji

The North Eastern states have a unique ecology with a wide variety of flora and fauna. The agro climatic condition of these states is particularly conducive for growing a wide array of agricultural crops. The region also has vast potential to do border trade with ASEAN countries due to its close proximity. However, adoption of technology and efforts for enhancement of productivity in the NE region has remained poor despite many efforts.

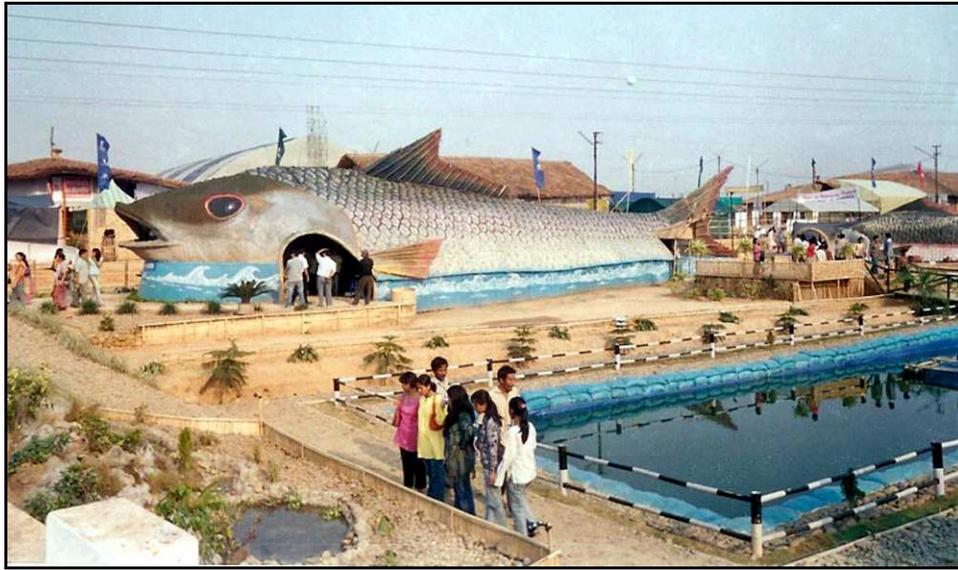


Seminar on North East Agri Expo

Given the enormous potential of developing the economy of the region through promotion of agriculture, horticulture and value added processing and exports, the NE Agri Expo '06 was organized in Dimapur, the commercial hub of Nagaland. The Expo was a unique initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture, DONER, Ministry of Rural Development and the Government of Nagaland and the CII to unlock the immense potential of a captivating region of India through its natural advantages and strengths.

An overwhelming proportion of the population in the region depends on agriculture for livelihood. The bio-diversity of the region lends itself into a spectrum of opportunities from agriculture to horticulture, floriculture, animal husbandary and others. The potential for agri-business is vastly exciting and it can transform the lives of the people of the region. The NE Agri Expo sought to highlight these natural and human resources to the industrial community. It brought into a single platform all stakeholders to address growth and development of the agriculture and allied sectors in the NE. This was the high point of the Expo. Also, very importantly, it brought all the eight NE state

governments together to highlight each of their unique attractions. Key participants included various ministries/departments of the Government of India, the ICAR, agricultural universities and private sector organisations.



The Pisciculture Pavilion

One of the main achievements of the Expo was to provide a forward linkage to the markets both domestic and international of the vast and rich produce of the NE region in the areas of agriculture, horticulture, food processing and allied sectors through the involvement of the private sector in the entire value chains from the seed to the end users. The other significant achievements can be marked as -

- Showcasing improved agricultural practices, techniques and services to farmers, extension workers, universities and agri business entrepreneurs.
- Induce investments in agricultural infrastructure in the NE.
- Create an opportunity for exchange of ideas and knowledge at the regional level.

Through the very well organised and set pavilions and exhibitions the Expo became a fantastic platform for showcasing and marketing agricultural equipments, techniques and services to the NE region as also to identify opportunities for contact farming/sourcing/processing/value addition/distribution and marketing. Public-private participation in building agricultural infrastructure such as cold storages, pack houses etc was also an important contribution of this Expo. The Investors Meet and the various Seminars and Conferences in the 5 day event actually sized up the development of agri-business of NE region through partnerships.

In both its scale and relevance the NE Expo '06 was an event the North East perhaps witnessed for the first time. The presence of top names in the union government in this sector ----Union Minister for Agriculture, Shri Sharad Pawar, Union Minister of State for Food Processing, Shri Subodh Kant Sahai, Union Minister of State for Agriculture, Shri Kantilal Bhuria, etc.- gave credibility and significance to the event. So impressed was Shri Pawar that he floated the idea of a permanent Agri Expo venue in Dimapur. Shri Pawar's focus was clearly on horticulture. He laid the foundation stone of the Rs.20 crore Central Horticulture

Institute at Medziphema during the Expo. Highlighting the great potential of the NE states in horticulture, Shri Pawar made an appeal to make the National Horticulture Mission successful like the National Bamboo Mission. He also expressed his desire to develop a major terminal market in Guwahati which would take care of selling the produce within and outside the country.



View of the State Pavilion

That winds of change is blowing for the north east is very clear. The market forces have smelt the potential in the region and it was apparent from the presence of a galaxy of big names (the likes of - Dhruv Sawhney of Triveni Engineering, Dipankar Chatterjee of CII, Gokul Patnaik of Rasna Pvt. Ltd., M.K. Jalan of Keventer Agro, A.R. Subbarao of Godrej Agrovvet Ltd., Kishore Kumar, Vice President of HDFC Bank, S.S. Rajshekhar of National Agro Foundation, Ashok Jain of Vibrandt Consultants, Indu Palaniappan, Chennai Consultancy Services, J.R. Sapre of Kirloskar Brothers, Vishal Gupta of Dabur, N. Bhosle of ITC, G.V.D. Lught of Royal Holland Embassy, Henning Thiel of Eco Securities UK Ltd. and many more) in the Expo. The Governor of Nagaland, Shri Shyamal Dutta remarked, "It is good to see the captains of corporate and financial institutions under a tent which is not air-conditioned." The success of the Agri Expo lay in the fact that the potential investors not only got a close look at the prospects in the NE but it also provided a rare opportunity to the farmers to have direct interaction with the biggest names in modern farming technology with their array of tools and equipments.

The NE Agri Expo took place at a time when the agricultural sector in India is gaining tremendous vitality and at the same time when NE is beginning to attract the attention of policymakers in New Delhi. This Expo is surely a watershed event, and if the promise shown is held together, then undoubtedly it shall be a path-finding one.

MISSION PROSPERITY: FIGHTING WITH NE NATURE

- Amar Krishna Paul

People from other parts of the country think that the insurgency-like-social-tension has brought to a standstill the regional economy of Northeast India (NEI) today. Actually, the critical climatic conditions are crippling the regional economy from macroeconomic point of view. That is, natural calamities like devastating floods armed with heavy rains, earthquake et al and 'unique physiography' of the region are the major challenges before the development activists here nowadays.

The region has as many as eight-sister states, namely — Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Importantly, among these states, Sikkim is fully free from the cancerous disease — militancy or separatist movement. As per figures of the Census of India 2001, the region constitutes about 3.77 per cent of India's total population. The various issues that these states are experiencing include relatively low economic growth rate, higher growth rate of population, higher influx of internal and external migration. During 1990s, the economic growth in these states had per capita income less than the national average.

The NEI is physiographically an isolated region from the national mainstream. So, the physiographical features of the region are quite different from the average physiography of mainland India. No one can fight against the mighty 'Nature'. The reason is not far to seek. Unprecedented flood havocs and heavy rains wash away all work of any mega projects. Thus, natural calamities freeze almost all developmental activities in this far-flung region.

Insurgency is no longer a major problem for many project operators in the region. Despite the key constraints — engineers, skilled labourers, allied project workers etc. are working hard to complete different development work in the region at an early date.

Burning the midnight candle, they are very busy in giving final shape to a good number of projects on infrastructure facilities like bridge construction, water supply plan, power transmission and distribution (T&D) in eight-sister states of NEI. To them, fighting against NE nature is a sort of 'mission possible'.

That is, critical climatic conditions have always affected the development work and projects in NEI over the years. Facing many natural hardships, the project workers and developers are carrying forward their activities on a bullish note.

Talking to this writer, R. Raghavan, Senior Project Manager, Gammon India Limited, one of the leading construction companies of Asia, stated that their company had been working for a good number of infrastructure facility-related projects in NEI. Unbalanced activities of Mother Nature is delaying the completion of different development projects in the region. For instance, the Kaladan bridge in Saiha district of Mizoram state undertaken by Gammon India Ltd. was projected to be completed in three years; but it took as many as ten years in 1999. This Rs.5.00-crore bridge construction plan was delayed due to unprecedented natural calamities in the region.

Accordingly, the ravaging flood fury has made different projects 'uneconomic' as well as 'time-consuming'. This can be better understood from the list of

constraints and problems faced by the construction workers of Pasighat Bridge over the Siang river, a leading tributary of the mighty river Brahmaputra, at Ranaghat about 7 KM away from Pasighat, headquarter of East Siang district, Arunachal Pradesh. The foundation stone of the project was laid by Late Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister in September 1987. It's a border road project under the Chief Engineer (Project Udayak), the Director General of Border Roads (DGBR), Government of India.

The saddest part of the story is that unique network of Mother Nature in this part of the world has delayed the project. Initially, the project estimate for this 703.50-metre river bridge was Rs. 11.00 crore. The project cost will now be about Rs. 40.00 crore. In this particular project, over 250 skilled labourers, hailing from Assam, Bihar and West Bengal, are encountering with gigantic boulders and fighting against the flood-wave which is above the actual designed level. It was supposed to be completed in 1991. It is now expected to be completed by 2010.

The swollen rivers of the Northeastern states rise rapidly, rendering millions of people, standing crops and wildlife helpless every year. Last year, flooding in the tea and oil-rich Assam had alone marooned more than 10 million people who sought shelter in government relief camps in different districts. The world-renowned Kaziranga National Park, home to the almost extinct one-horned rhinoceros, is also under threat. Incessant rains in the recent past had led to a sharp rise in the level of the river Brahmaputra. Forest rangers at the Kaziranga Park have been put on maximum alert amid fears that flood waters might yet again submerge the sanctuary. During the floods, four years ago, more than 600 endangered animals drowned. The world's largest river island of Majuli, in eastern Assam, was in danger of being inundated. Water levels of the Brahmaputra around the Majuli island are above the danger mark. Importantly, the entire NEI is in a seismic zone and receives earthquake shocks of moderate to severe intensity from time to time. The situation has been further aggravated due to landslides caused by high rainfall. Some man-made avoidable actions in the form of shifting cultivation and non-scientific commercial exploitation of forests etc. have also accelerated the process of soil erosion in the catchment. The silt brought in the process gets deposited as the river descends into the plains due to sudden reduction in the slope, and with the consequent reduction in the flow velocity and its sediment-carrying capacity. Due to heavy deposition of silt, the river has frequently changed its course.

To conclude, critical climate is always bad. It is detrimental to economic growth as well as the promotion of socio-economic welfare. It can balloon the burden of poverty, malnutrition and unhygienic environment leading to unbalanced growth of ecology in the vulnerable areas. Building houses on the hill-tops, illegal earth-cutting for commercial use and rapid deforestation drive — despite Supreme Court ban on felling of forest trees — are crippling the ecological balance of NEI. Thus, certain people are disturbing the Nature's 'holy plan' to maintain ecological balance. To check this 'misdirected trend', media may play a vital role. It can scathingly criticise their activities. To curb this problematic issue, NGOs can also initiate a comprehensive awareness drive among the masses so that they stop anti-Nature activities like, largescale deforestation spree of the scoundrels. Accordingly, planners, policy makers and field managers may unitedly initiate 'mitigation measures' to minimise the losses in different projects here too.

THE NORTH EAST MIRROR / May, 2006

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND POVERTY

- Tapati Baruah Kashyap

Golapi Das sells vegetables at a local market with her husband. She works hard just to find a means of livelihood with her husband. She has three daughters and all are now in school. She hails from a village near Goalpara district and her new attempt helps her raise her standard of living from below poverty line group of people. There are many such women in every nook and corner of both rural and urban areas of Assam.

This is undoubtedly a positive trend so far as the poor women of our country are concerned. True empowerment of women begins when these women are empowered at grass root level. Although we often talk about women empowerment, yet there are still many women in our society, who are still below the poverty line.

Poverty and its condition have much to do with women empowerment. What then is poverty?

The Encarta World English dictionary has defined poverty as a state of not having enough money to take care of the basic needs such as food, clothing and housing. It can also be used to describe the varying states of need from lack of material comfort to near starvation. The word poverty is a synonym to destitution, deprivation, penury, social exclusion and want.

Basic requirements like food, clothing and shelter are the most essential necessities for the survival of an individual. When an individual is deprived of these basic necessities, he or she is termed as living below the poverty line. In a situation of poverty, it is ultimately the women and children, the most vulnerable sections of society, who suffer most. The basic foundation of human capital is a sound health and when women are not in good health, it has detrimental and negative impacts on the reproductive health of women and that ultimately affects the younger generation of our society.

If we look at the process of empowerment of women, we notice that the United Nations for Women (1976-85) brought the role of women in social and economic development of the Third World Countries. The main focus of the Women in Development approach was that women contribute positively to economic development and they should be given an equal recognition for the same. The term Women in Development is used to describe a variety of planning approaches, which are based on different analysis of women's situations in development practice.

Anti poverty is the second Women in Development approach that aimed at increasing productivity of poor women and their practical need to earn an income particularly through small scale income generating projects. This approach recognized that poverty alleviation and balanced economic growth requires increasing the productivity of work in low income households. It is argued that anti poverty approach ignored the reproductive role of women and assumes that women have free time.

Anti-poverty has three broad components - promotion of economic growth, promotion of human development and targeted programmes of poverty alleviation to address multi-dimensional nature of poverty.

Recent estimates made by the Planning Commission in the National Human Development Report 2001 show that at the national level the incidence of poverty declined from 44.48 percent in 1983 to 26.10 percent in 1999-2000. This decline is not uniform across the states and regions. The proportion of poor in the rural areas declined from 45.65 percent in 1983 to 27.09 percent in 1999-2000. In urban areas this decline was from 40.79 percent to 23.62 percent. Rural poverty continues to be higher than urban poverty.

Within the North East, the number of people under the poverty line is highest and 36.09 percent of the total population is under the poverty line. Two out of five people in rural areas are under the poverty line, while in urban Assam, the incidence is less than one in ten. And such a situation of poverty women empowerment is not possible.

In recent years, various programmes targeted at the poor have been strengthened. These anti-poverty, employment generation and basic services programmes are Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Indira Awas Yojana, Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana, National Food for Work Programme, Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana and so on.

Under Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana, which was launched in December 2001, facilitates the construction and upgradation of dwelling units for the slum dwellers and provides a healthy and enabling urban environment through community toilets.

But all these programmes are still not sufficient to reduce poverty. To change the situation, each and every one of our society should be conscious of the impact of poverty on human existence. People's consciousness and good feelings for the poor are required for the development of the society and women's empowerment is fully possible in that society.

ASSEMBLY ELECTION – 2006**LIST OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES – ASSAM**

Ac No.	Ac Name	Candidate Name	Party Name
1.	Ratabari	Sambhu Sing Mallah	Bharatiya Janata Party
2.	Patharkandi	Kartiksena Sinha	Bharatiya Janata Party
3.	Karimganj North	Mission Ranjan Das	Bharatiya Janata Party
4.	Karimganj South	Siddeque Ahmed	Independent
5.	Badarpur	Anwarul Haque	Assam United Democratic Front
6.	Hailakandi	Hazi.Salim Uddin Barbhuiya	Assam United Democratic Front
7.	Katlicherra	Sri Gautam Roy	Indian National Congress
8.	Algapur	Rahul Roy	Indian National Congress
9.	Silchar	Bithika Dev	Indian National Congress
10.	Sonai	Kutub Ahmed Mazumder	Indian National Congress
11.	Dholai	Parimal Suklabaidya	Bharatiya Janata Party
12.	Udharbond	Ajit Singh	Indian National Congress
13.	Lakhipur	Dinesh Prasad Goala	Indian National Congress
14.	Barkhola	Rumi Nath	Bharatiya Janata Party
15.	Katigora	Ataur Rahman Mazarbhuiya	Assam United Democratic Front
16.	Haflong	Gobinda Ch. Langthasa	Indian National Congress
17.	Bokajan	Jagat Sing Engti	Autonomous State Demand Committee
18.	Howraghat	Khor Sing Engti	Indian National Congress
19.	Diphu	Bidya Sing Engleng	Indian National Congress
20.	Baithalangso	Dr.Mansing Rongpi	Indian National Congress
21.	Mankachar	Dr. Motiur Rohman Mondal	Independent
22.	Salmara South	Badruddin Ajmal	Assam United Democratic Front
23.	Dhubri	Rasul Hoque	Assam United Democratic Front
24.	Gauripur	Mohibul Haque	Independent
25.	Golakganj	Abu Taher Bepari	Indian National Congress
26.	Bilasipara West	Hafiz Bashir Ahmed	Assam United Democratic Front
27.	Bilasipara East	Prasanta Kumar Barua	Asom Gana Parishad
28.	Gossaigaon	Majendra Narzary	Independent
29.	Kokrajhar West	Parameswar Brahma	Independent
30.	Kokrajhar East	Pramila Rani Brahma	Independent
31.	Sidli	Chandan Brahma	Independent
32.	Bongaigaon	Phani Bhusan Choudhury	Asom Gana Parishad
33.	Bijni	Kamal Shing Narzary	Independent
34.	Abhayapuri North	Abdul Hai Nagori	Indian National Congress
35.	Abhayapuri South	Rabin Banikya	Asom Gana Parishad
36.	Dudhnai	Deben Daimary	Indian National Congress
37.	Goalpara East	Sri Dulal Chandra Ghosh	Nationalist Congress Party

Ac No.	Ac Name	Candidate Name	Party Name
38.	Goalpara West	Abdur Rashid Mandal	Indian National Congress
39.	Jaleswar	Afzalur Rahman	Loko Sanmilan
40.	Sorbhog	Uddhab Barman	Communist Party of India (M)
41.	Bhabanipur	Dr. Manoranjan Das	Asom Gana Parishad
42.	Patacharkuchi	Dr. Malaya Borman	Indian National Congress
43.	Barpeta	Gunindra Nath Das	Asom Gana Parishad
44.	Jania	Abdul Khaleque	Indian National Congress
45.	Baghbar	Dildar Rezza	Indian National Congress
46.	Sarukhetri	Tara Prasad Das	Independent
47.	Chenga	Liakat Ali Khan	Asom Gana Parishad
48.	Boko	Jyoti Prasad Das	Asom Gana Parishad
49.	Chaygaon	Dr. Kamala Kanta Kalita	Asom Gana Parishad
50.	Palasbari	Pranab Kalita	Independent
51.	Jalukbari	Himanta Biswa Sarma	Indian National Congress
52.	Dispur	Akon Bora	Indian National Congress
53.	Gauhati East	Robin Bordoloi	Indian National Congress
54.	Gauhati West	Ramendra Narayan Kalita	Asom Gana Parishad
55.	Hajo	Nurul Hussain	Asom Gana Parishad
56.	Kamalpur	Uttara Kalita	Indian National Congress
57.	Rangiya	Ananta Deka	Communist Party of India (M)
58.	Tamulpur	Chandi Basumatary	Independent
59.	Nalbari	Alaka Sarma	Asom Gana Parishad
60.	Barkhetry	Dr. Bhumidhar Barman	Indian National Congress
61.	Dharmapur	Chandra Mohan Patowary	Asom Gana Parishad
62.	Barama	Maneswar Brahma	Independent
63.	Chapaguri	Thaneswar Basumatary	Independent
64.	Panery	Kamali Basumatary	Independent
65.	Kalaigaon	Maheswar Baro	Independent
66.	Sipajhar	Binanda Kumar Saikia	Indian National Congress
67.	Mangaldoi	Hiren Das	Asom Gana Parishad
68.	Dalgaon	Ilias Ali	Independent
69.	Udalguri	Rihon Daimari	Independent
70.	Majbat	Karendra Basumatary	Independent
71.	Dhekiajuli	Sri Joseph Toppo	Asom Gana Parishad
72.	Barchalla	Tanka Bahadur Rai	Indian National Congress
73.	Tezpur	Sri Brindaban Goswami	Asom Gana Parishad
74.	Rangapara	Sri Abhijit Hazarika	Bharatiya Janata Party
75.	Sootea	Sri Padma Hazarika	Asom Gana Parishad
76.	Biswanath	Nurjamal Sarkar	Indian National Congress
77.	Behali	Ranjit Dutta	Bharatiya Janata Party
78.	Gohpur	Ripun Bora	Indian National Congress
79.	Jagiroad	Bibekananda Dalai	Indian National Congress
80.	Marigaon	Jonjonali Baruah	Indian National Congress
81.	Laharighat	Nazrul Islam	Indian National Congress
82.	Raha	Guneswar Das	Assam United Democratic Front
83.	Dhing	Mubarak Ali Pathan	Assam United Democratic Front

Ac No.	Ac Name	Candidate Name	Party Name
84.	Batadroba	Gautam Bora	Indian National Congress
85.	Rupohihat	Abdul Aziz	Asom Gana Parishad
86.	Nowgong	Girindra Kumar Boruah	Asom Gana Parishad
87.	Barhampur	Prafulla Kumar Mahanta	Asom Gana Parishad Pragatisheel
88.	Samaguri	Rockybul Hussain	Indian National Congress
89.	Kaliabor	Keshab Mahanta	Asom Gana Parishad
90.	Jamunamukh	Badruddin Ajmal	Assam United Democratic Front
91.	Hojai	Aditya Langhasa	Assam United Democratic Front
92.	Lumding	Sushil Dutta	Bharatiya Janata Party
93.	Bokakhat	Sri Jiten Gogoi	Independent
94.	Sarupathar	Sri Binod Gowala.	Asom Gana Parishad
95.	Golaghat	Smti. Ajanta Neog	Indian National Congress
96.	Khumtai	Sri Probin Gogoi	Asom Gana Parishad
97.	Dergaon	Sushila Hazarika	Asom Gana Parishad
98.	Jorhat	Rana Goswami	Indian National Congress
99.	Majuli	Rajib Lochan Pegu	Indian National Congress
100.	Titabar	Tarun Gogoi	Indian National Congress
101.	Mariani	Rupjyoti Kurmi	Indian National Congress
102.	Teok	Membar Gogoi	Indian National Congress
103.	Amguri	Prodip Hazarika	Asom Gana Parishad
104.	Nazira	Drupad Borgohain	Communist Party of India
105.	Mahmara	Shri Sarat Saikia	Indian National Congress
106.	Sonari	Sri Sarat Borkataky	Indian National Congress
107.	Thowra	Kushal Dowari	Independent
108.	Sibsagar	Pranab Gogoi	Indian National Congress
109.	Bihpuria	Bhupen Kumar Bora	Indian National Congress
110.	Naoboicha	Sanjoy Raj Subba	Independent
111.	Lakhimpur	Ghana Buragohain	Indian National Congress
112.	Dhakuakhana	Bharat Chandra Narah	Indian National Congress
113.	Dhemaji	Sumitra Patir	Indian National Congress
114.	Jonai	Sri Bhubon Pegu	Independent
115.	Moran	Jiban Tara Ghatowar	Indian National Congress
116.	Dibrugarh	Prasanta Phukan	Bharatiya Janata Party
117.	Lahowal	Prithibi Majhi	Indian National Congress
118.	Duliajan	Rameswar Teli	Bharatiya Janata Party
119.	Tingkhong	Anup Phukan	Asom Gana Parishad
120.	Naharkatia	Pranatee Phukan	Indian National Congress
121.	Chabua	Raju Sahu	Indian National Congress
122.	Tinsukia	Rajendra Prasad Singh	Indian National Congress
123.	Digboi	Sri Rameswar Dhanowar	Indian National Congress
124.	Margherita	Pradyut Bordoloi	Indian National Congress
125.	Doom Dooma	Sri Durga Bhumij	Indian National Congress
126.	Sadiya	Sri Bolin Chetia	Indian National Congress
