

Asato Maa Sad-Gamaya |
Tamaso Maa Jyotir-Gamaya |
Mrytonmamritang - Gamayeti |

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

I rise to present the Annual Financial Statements relation to the Receipts and Expenditure for the whole year of 2016-17 in this August House.

2. By chanting this sacred verse, I am presenting the first budget of the new Government led by our dynamic leader, Sri Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam, because this duty of presentation is being solemnly carried out with the three vital things that this verse from Upanishads emphasis and they are: "Reality", "Knowledge", "immortal and self-lessness".
3. Budget presentation is a sacred duty. Besides, it is a historical practice, constitutional mandate and codal exercise. In Assam, this history dates back to 3rd August 1937 when the first budget of Assam was introduced by the then Chief Minister, Maulavi Saiyd Sir Muhammad Saadulla and in post-independence, on 11th March 1948, the first budget was presented by the then Finance Minister, Late Bishnu Ram Medhi. It is my honour to be part of this legacy.
4. This is the first budget of our Government. We released an Assam Vision Document 2016-2021 before the assembly elections after a detail consultation process. All the points raised in the Vision Document cannot obviously

be reflected in this first budget. But we shall remain committed to all the aspects in the document and shall make honest attempt to implement them in due course of our five year tenure.

5. Having said that, first and foremost of my duty on this solemn occasion is to honour our beloved people of our State. On behalf of our Government comprising Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), Asom Gan Parishad (AGP), Bodoland Peoples Front (BPF), Rabha Joutha Sangram Samittee and Tiwa Jatiya Aikya Mancha led by Sri Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam. I express our respectful regards and deep gratitude to each and every one in the State, name by name, for their choicest blessings and massive mandate for this Government in the recently concluded Assembly elections. I do not have enough words to thank them. But, our Government makes a solemn promise to serve the people of the State with utmost dedication, incredible sincerity and unshaken commitment drawing the constant source of energetic spirit and everlasting ethos of our Government from the love, affection and confidence of the people bestowed on us.
6. From the bottom of my heart, I pay tributes to our most admired and visionary leader, Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, for his love, sincerity and commitment for development of the State and such involvement of Prime Minister of the country for the development of Assam and the region was never witnessed so far. Thus it is both unprecedented and unparalleled. Our Government will carry out sincerely all the programmes such as Start-Up India, Stand-Up India, Skill

India, and other flagship programmes and will do our best to meet the expectation of the nation.

7. Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam has shown enormous courage, dedication and foresight in forming this Government and in formulating the Governance policies soon after he assumed the charge. His clean image, high moral values and commitment to the welfare of the State are the core strengths of our Government and his vision and guidance built into this budget will go long way in creation of modern and developed Assam.
8. Further, I shall remain ever thankful to the able support and guidance of our partners in the alliance of the Government- Asom Gan Parishad (AGP), Bodoland Peoples Front (BPF), Rabha Joutha Sangram Samiti, and Tiwa Jatiya Aikhya Mancha and for their commitment to fulfil the people's mandate.

Now let me take you through the status of State's Economy.

9. STATUS OF THE STATE'S ECONOMY

- 9.1. Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Assam for the year 2014-15 was Rs 183798 crore and per capita income of the state being Rs 48490 per annum (current prices). Thus, Assam stands at 19th position in the country and is far lower than the national average of Rs. 88533 per annum.
- 9.2. The growth of the economy during 2014-15 was 6.44 per cent compared to the National figure of 7.3 per cent. However, we cannot be happy with these figures due to

the fact that the base effect for the State is low and in terms of realistic growth, we have miles to go.

- 9.3. We are aware that agriculture is mainstay of Assam. The real parameter to look at the growth is the farm income. As per Situation Assessment Survey (SAS) of NSSO conducted during 2002-03 and 2012-13, the real growth of farm income in Assam in terms of CGAR was 0.88 % during these ten years against 5.2% at the national level.
- 9.4. It was also estimated that at this rate, it will take 79.34 years to double the farm income in Assam against 13.56 years in the country. The trend of farm income speaks volumes. This statistics also throws a big challenge to our Government even though the State is fully endowed with nature's bounty. It is also a pointer that normal and run-of-the-mill interventions by the Government in this regard proved inadequate to address the low farm growth.
- 9.5. Credit : Deposit Ratio (C:D Ratio) of Assam is one of the lowest in the country and it hovers around 50 percent as on 31st March 2016. As on this day, Banks have collected aggregate deposit of more than one lakh crore of rupees from public while giving aggregate credit of Rs 54,371 crore back in the State. On the other hand, States like Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh have exceeded 100 per cent. There is a need to plough back the deposits to the hands of the people for investment in agriculture, industries and service sector.
- 9.6. The growth rate in industry during the last year was 7.37 per cent.
- 9.7. The social indicators of the State are also equally uninspiring. Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) was 300 per lakh live births in 2011-13. It is the highest in the

country and far higher than the national average of 167. Similarly, Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is 48 in 2014 which was higher than the national average of 40 in 2011-13.

- 9.8 As regards education, I would like to state that as per Education Development Index (EDI) developed in 2014-15 by National University of Education Planning and Administration (NUEPA) and MOHRD, Assam ranks 34th position in teacher, 34th in infrastructure and 7th in Access among 36 states in primary education. The corresponding figures for Upper Primary are 29th, 36th and 34th position respectively.
- 9.9. The above indicators of development of the State inherited by this Government are not very positive and we have acknowledged them as a "Reality" that I spoke initially.

10. STATE'S FINANCIAL SITUATION

- 10.1. Total revenue receipt of the State during 2015-16(BE) was Rs 57064.10 crore and the Revenue Expenditure was Rs.51562.85. crore, exhibiting a Revenue surplus of Rs. 5501.25 Crore. Debt- GSDP ratio was 17.43% and Fiscal Deficit as a percentage of GSDP was (-) 2.33% which are well within the parameters prescribed in the Assam Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2005. However, the final and actual positions of the Fiscal Parameters of State Finances may vary in due course.
- 10.2. For instance, during the year 2014-15, although the revenue balance was projected in the budget as surplus of Rs.4065.51 Crore, the final figure reached at a deficit of Rs. 896.68 Crore. As a result, the State could not obtain the benefit of interest relief on NSSF Loans, amounting Rs.29.87 Crore, which was recovered by RBI.

- 10.3. Though State Own Resources were pegged at Rs.17218.23 crores, the actual realisation was Rs. 12265.00 crores only during the last year.
- 10.4. The outstanding debt as on 31.03.2015 was Rs.31300.99 crore. This amounts to Debt-GSDP ratio of 17.03% against the limit of 28.5% as stipulated by AFRBM Act. In other words, as against AFRBM limit of Rs.52382.43 crore, the state has availed Rs.31300.99 crore only leaving a cushion of Rs.21081.44 crore for possible future loans.
- 10.5. Central Government released devolution amount of Rs 16785 crores in 2015-16 against Rs.12284 crore in the previous year.
- 10.6. The plan expenditure stood at 36.14 % only during the last financial year due to the very fact that the plan size was fixed without any realistic assessment of the financial resources. This disturbing practice of bloating the budget without actual resources available for financing was highlighted in the White Paper of the State Finances that was laid out on the Table of this August House within a less than ten days after this Government was formed.
- 10.7. I remember the quote of the Great Chanakya on the State and Treasury. He said, *"If the treasury is full of wealth, the plans for social benefit can be executed easily. Mere hard work does not bear fruit"*. Our Government is brimming with new ideas and committed to do any amount of hard work. But, this alone will not help in executing the plans for social benefit and we are fully alive to the need of shoring up of revenues.

10.8. Taxation is the basic duty and core requirement of any Government. Most of countries with highest Happiness Index have highest tax regimes because the individual contribution in the form of taxes will be multiplied several folds into social benefits when the Government spends it back for the social good. Our mindset requires to be tuned to reality of governance and development. Of course, if the taxes collected are swindled away by the state machinery, it is not pardonable and people shall not allow this.

You will be happy to know that the manufacturers and traders have not increased their retail price of commodities even after recent changes in the tax rates. I compliment them for this gesture and their co-operation with the Government.

10.9. The non-plan expenditure has been mounting over a period of time. In the past few years, the budgets were replete with individual-beneficiary oriented programmes and schemes. They did not stimulate growth. In many cases, the announced schemes were not implemented. If implemented, they were not completed. If completed, the funds could not be released as there were no enough resources. Net result of such process was that the state is burden with enormous committed liabilities. More importantly, the dilemma is that how to entertain such huge liabilities without ascertaining the veracity of such claims of liabilities and it needs time to establish the same. Thus, the sanctity of the budget has been got diluted to the great extent.

10.10. No doubt that this Government will ensure that all genuine liabilities will be cleared within a definite time-bound manner as per available resources. But, it needs to invest time and resources.

- 10.11. Therefore, our Government is determined to restore the "Sanctity" of the Budget. 'Sanctity' does not only mean in terms of budgeting but also in its critical role as a basic tool of good governance.
- 10.12. Further, the committed liabilities were assessed to be Rs 10,018.93 crore including regular DA for employees w.e.f. 01.01.2016 and implications of pay revision. But, as of now and the same is being updated since reports from all departments are slowly coming in. The revised figure of estimated liabilities is Rs 14276.97 crore. It is likely that these liabilities will go up further after passing the regular budget as more and more departments are expected to come with the updated statement of committed liabilities till the last year.
- 10.13. Above state of lagging economy, improper budgeting and mounting liabilities are the realities that this Government will take on its stride to explore opportunities for every challenge because we believe in *Parivartan* and we will change the scenario by involving every stakeholder in the process. In my life's journey so far, I have always drawn inspiration from a short poem, which was often recited by our respected leader Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The poem reads like this—

*Kya Haar Mein, Kya Jeet Mein,
Kinchit Nahin Bhaybheet Main,
Kartavya Path Par Jo Bhi Mila
Yah Bhi Sahi, Woh Bhi Sahi,
Vardan Nahin Mangooga...
Ho Kuchh Par Haar Nahin Maanunga!*

11. PARIVARTAN : STATE IS AT THE CUSP OF SEVEN CHANGES

- 11.1. As I said earlier in the House, I would like to caution that the *Parivartan* in a democracy cannot happen overnight. If it happens overnight, it will create upheavals. It has the risk of being called "Revolution". Therefore, the Parivartan that this Government seeks to achieve is through Evolution: Deepen the process of engagement with the people and with the last man on the ground.
- 11.2. Such transformation cannot be just "political" or "economical". It should also be a social transformation. We are acutely aware that this is the New Age of Social Transformation with the youth holding the prime share in the demography. We are also fully alive to the fact that the people are restless and disappointed with corruption in public life and poor governance. Now agenda is clear and the Government is set upon itself in right earnest.
- 11.3. As I said that this budget is first of this new BJP alliance Government. In the process of formulation, I realised that this is such a proud and happy coincidence with many historic milestones.
 - (i) First, this year, centenary celebrations of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya would conclude in next two months. Secondly, by when this newly elected Government completes its term in 2021, the country celebrates 75 years of Independence and Assam celebrates 50 years of governance from Dispur.
 - (ii) Secondly, "*Parivartan*" that the people of the country wanted is sweeping across the length and breadth of

the country under visionary statesman and Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi.

I would like to highlight important aspects of the Parivartan that was already ushered by hon'ble Prime Minister. First, he succeeded in his efforts to a great extent to put India on the highest pedestal globally as "Biswa Guru". We never had this kind of vision in the country after the Great Monk, Swami Vivekananda. Secondly, our Prime Minister also believes that each Indian should contribute to the society rather becoming burden on the country. Assam too wants to be part of this spirit and we should also contribute to the country rather than drowning into the sea of 'dependency syndrome'. Thirdly, Prime Minister openly declared a war on corruption by giving a clarion call that *"Neither will we eat nor will we allow others to eat".. 'Hamein khana nahi hai aur kisi ko khane nahi dena hai'*. This oft-repeated statement will find true reflection in our governance too. Let me also reiterate this again on this solemn occasion on behalf of our Government led by Shri Sabananda Sonowal that *"Ami na kham aru Kakoo Khaboloi ni dim"*. During the last two months of our Government, some action was already taken in this regard. Besides, we are proposing series of measures both reformative and punitive, in this regard that I would come to in my presentation later.

- (iii) Thirdly, the process of planning and budgeting is changing in the country and we need to move to new era of modern Assam along with the rest of the country. With the closure of Planning Commission,

the States were empowered to plan and budget themselves without any dependency on the Centre. It needs corresponding changes in our State too and such changes should have been started in the last year itself. Now, we are starting this journey and it is my privilege to be part of such historical phase of Assam's planning and budgeting. I believe that this challenge will also throw numerous opportunities to innovate, restructure and reorient. As part of this process, we are setting agenda in this budget so as to complete the process in next one or two years. We are initiating some measures in this direction such as discontinuation of Plan-Non plan categorization. I expect that it will take some time and we are hopeful that the process of categorization of entire budget into the heads of Revenue and Capital by 2017-18. The plan and Non-Plan categories will completely disappear from next year. Planning and Finance Departments may be required to be merged into one.

- (iv) Fourth major shift is in a core component of fiscal governance, that is, Taxation. We will be moving from Value Added Tax (VAT) to Goods and Services Tax (GST). This is an epoch making reform which will demolish the walls of tax structures across the states in order to create "One Market". This is estimated to increase GDP and reduce inflation also. Assam also desires to be part of this ambitious change.
- (v) Fifthly, reversing the trend of wasteful expenditure in the name of welfare schemes which have not led us to growth, development, employment and equity in the State. At this juncture, I am happy to state that

our Government has already notified a three-member Review Committee on Planning and Budgeting Process in the State. The committee has submitted its Part-I report and the same is under examination. We will take help of every stakeholder to help the Government to focus on investments through the budget to stimulate the growth, employment, equity and development.

- (vi) Sixthly, the Government has started the process of engaging the citizens in every aspect of the governance. We sought the suggestions from the citizens of the State for the budget making process and also for good governance. We are overwhelmed with the response. We got about 800 emails in less than a week. Most of them are full of innovative ideas and are mostly from youth. I thank all those who sent their suggestions and assure them that all relevant and useful issues will be suitably considered. In fact, some of them are very innovative and I shall take pride in stating that I shall present some of them in my part-II presentation. Similarly, we had detailed stakeholder consultations with representatives of industry, traders and other important associations prior to the budget and have received a large number of suggestions and we have duly been considering them in the best interest of the State.
- (vii) Seventh and final change is that people chose us to serve them. Our alliance was never in the Government. We are humble. Chief Minister, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, while replying the address to the debate on Governor's address in this August

House in the last session, stated that this Government will always conduct itself with **Bhoi** and **Bhokti** towards the people of the State. "*No Arrogance: Only Governance*" is our code of conduct. Thus, we do not have any baggage, prejudices and vested interests. Every challenge is an opportunity for us. Innovation and public participation are main ingredients of this Government.

- 11.4. Thus, we are in the process of *parivartan*. It is not a tangible good and it will be delivered to each one in the society. It is an outcome of series of actions. Some action can be initiated; some need to be facilitated and some are required to be done voluntarily by each one in the society. I would like to mention here that our humble Chief Minister is also very hard-working. He is putting in almost 14 hours a day in work. Chief Secretary of the State is also doing that. Both of them are leading by example. This is *parivartan*. Now each teacher, doctor, employee and everyone in the society does it voluntarily and with whole-heart by putting in ten hours in their work every day, *parivartan* happens in terms of quality of education, health services and governance. It cannot come just through a government notification.
- 11.5. Further, our leader, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal has been constantly reiterating for building "Team-Assam". Team-Assam includes everyone and even it does not exclude opposition members. It is the core of the philosophy of *parivartan* of our Government.
- 11.6. Therefore, it is time to think, time to act and time to deliver as one team. Let us take important and bold decisions

which will bring a positive change in the lives of the people. To begin with, I would like emphasis here that we need to give a good-bye to art and practice of Impure Politics and Corrupt Public Service. This requires a new model of Governance.

12. NEW MODEL OF GOVERNANCE

- 12.1. There is a sea of problems before us. But our Government, under the leadership of Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, follows the words of Noble Laurate and Kavi Guru Shri Rabindra Nath Tagore: "*You can't cross the sea merely by standing and staring at the water.*" We need alternatives. We will innovate, experiment, struggle, learn and cross the sea with the support and inspiration from three crores of people of Assam. The goal is to strengthen the State's economy from within. We need to be self-reliant with a long-term agenda to develop internal resources. At least by the 75th anniversary of India's Independence, the State should be able to finance the total salary and pension burden from its internal resources so that funds from the Centre can be fully put to capital expenditure which will help constructing the steel frame of the resilient economy of Assam.
- 12.2. **Respected Speaker Sir,** I shall tell you that while preparing this budget, our Government has put its soul and heart, within the short period of less than 2 months. The basic intention of this exercise is that this budget will become the most important tool for and of governance. This budget is not receipts and expenditure alone. This is not just about the figures and monies. This is also about the development agenda which requires new pillars for erecting a new model of governance.

- 12.3. In this background, our alliance Government is determined to practice a "New Model of Governance" under the leadership of our beloved Chief Minister, Sri Sarabandha Sonowal. This New Model of Governance is the art and practice of **Pure Politics and Clean Public Service and not "Impure Politics and Corrupt Public Service"**. The architecture of New Model of Governance will be erected on four pillars, namely (1) Personal Integrity, (2) Political Inclusivity, (3) Governance Legitimacy and (4) People Participation. As such, these four themes are recurrent in this budget.
- 12.4. The four themes of this New Model of Governance are drawn from the life message of Pandit Deen Dayalji who gave us the concept of "Integral Humanism". This is our guiding principle for us in Governance. This Mantra of 'Integral Humanism' stands out as a clear way of thought firmly rooted in the Indian tradition. 'Integral Humanism' also stands out for its emphasis on decentralization and attaches immense importance to the economic progress of every human being. Pandit Deendayalji is our inspiration. He placed the welfare of the poorest at the centre of his thoughts. From his life we learn how an individual completely devoted himself to the wellbeing of the nation and the service of the poor. As a political organiser, his work was legendary. Without getting trapped into the lure for power he continued to work, selflessly.
- 12.5. As regards "personal integrity", it has been attempted in this budget to put in place systems and processes which will reduce and eventually eliminate corruption in our system and society. I will dwell on the details on this aspect in my later part of the speech.

- 12.6. As regards Political inclusivity, this budget will try to promote inclusivity across all sections and segments of our society, especially the marginalized and vulnerable; build a safety net and give a human face to Government without becoming a subsidy State. "Saturation" is our model. It means that each and every needy, irrespective of his or her creed, caste, political affiliation, etc, will be covered completely in due course of time.
- 12.7. Thirdly, drawing our core beliefs on democratic legitimacy of Government, an attempt has been made to restore the administrative will and institutional mechanisms for plugging the loopholes in enforcing regulations. This pillar helps in rebuilding the relations with the people through law-enforcing agencies, whether Police, Revenue collection authorities etc. We cannot demand 'legitimacy' without being honest and corrupt-free.
- 12.8. Fourthly, we realise the "citizen-at-the-centre" is core of our governance. Every policy of ours will be citizen-centric and each one is our stakeholder in the governance. Thus, these four pillars will erect architecture of governance.
- 12.9. Our Government fully appreciates and commits itself to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which recognise that economic growth, industrialization, infrastructure and access to energy provide the foundations of development. Of course, elimination of poverty in all forms in the State is at the top of our agenda. This is reflected in our motto, "**Sab Ka Saath; Sab Ka Vikas**".
- 12.10. **"Today, much of India's development agenda is mirrored in the Sustainable Development Goals"**. This

is an open endorsement for these Goals given by our visionary leader, Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, while addressing the United Nations on 25th September 2015 at the UN Sustainable Development Summit. We need to tune our planning and budgeting process to these SDGs.

13. FIRST YEAR OF NEW MODEL OF GOVERNANCE 2016-17

- 13.1. I would also like to remind you the fact the financing the budget was not given enough importance. Our Government believes in developing the internal strengths of State in revenue generation. I stated in our last white paper that Assam was one of the highest revenue paying states across British India and it was the fifth most prosperous state at the time of independence.
- 13.2. Even in 1950-51, per capita income in Assam was 4 per cent above national average (Planning Commission, 2002). Now, after about 68 years of Independence, we are the fourth poorest state of India. All social and economic indicators are failing the State and pushing down its position to lower levels.
- 13.3. We will put each aspect of the new model into the day to day governance. To start with, our Government wants to forge ahead and as announced earlier, we have already initiated series of measures to increase our revenue collection in a mission mode approach, called **ReSTART Assam** (*Restructuring Systems and Technology for Augmentation of Resources for Transformed Assam*) and the apex committee of the same is being headed by our

Chief Minister and I, as Finance Minister, have taken the responsibility of the executive committee. Results are set to flow in as evident from the revenue collections in the last month.

- 13.4. Our Government has already planned to augment resources for ongoing 18 Externally Aided Projects and also many new programmes in Inland water transport, Tourism, Smart City, Urban development, Brahmaputra River development, major district roads etc will be submitted to new Banks such as Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, New Development Banks (BRICS) etc.
- 13.5. You are aware that Government of India has already issued directions to oil PSUs to release about Rs 1480 crore as oil royalty dues from February 2014. I am happy to inform the respected members of the House that we are going to receive this amount within next few months. Our Government would also like to place on record our deep regards and appreciation to both Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister and Shri Dharmendra Pardhan, Hon'ble Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas for their support.
- 13.6. To continue our thrust on this front, I am happy to announce that for the first time, this budget presentation has two parts. Part-I is what I am presenting and Part-II is completely dedicated on Tax and Non-Tax proposals with a focus on internal revenue generation so as to finance the budget in a scientific and objective manner.
- 13.7. For years, the poor of Assam figured prominently in rhetoric of politicians but when it came to delivery on the

ground, there was a wide gap. Our government will focus on bridging this gap through key initiatives. **The scope and scale of these initiatives will be wide and unprecedented but we are confident that we will complete them and deliver the desired results with the blessings of people of Assam.**

**14. BUDGET RESTRUCTURING :
YEAR OF CONSOLIDATION AND REALITY**

- 14.1. In the background of the changes in planning process in the country, the state was empowered to plan rather than depending on central agencies like erstwhile Planning Commission, we need to restructure and reorient the planning and budgeting process. **As part of this, our Government proposes to merge Planning and Development department with the Finance Department.**
- 14.2. From next year, we will change entire classificatory framework of the budget. By abolishing the plan and the non-plan bifurcations, we shall move to a revenue and capital accounting system. Being a systemic change, it will be a work in process and it will progress substantially in 2017-18 and thereafter it will stabilize.
- 14.3. In order to start such a comprehensive and fundamental work, it is essential to implement the process systematically and scientifically. Despite of the fact that we are just two months old in the Government, we have been able to prune down and improve some of the heads of accounts with an aim to improve the governance.
- 14.4. I would also like to clearly state that provisioning figures of monies in the budget is one aspect. But, more important

is that to provide them in the budget in such a way that the monies are drawn seamlessly but with full accountability. For that, the funnel, through which money flows, needs to be wide, clean, clear and uncluttered. This funnel is nothing but classified heads of accounts and procedure to draw the monies. I would like to mention some instances of notable changes proposed here.

- 14.5. In Public Works Department (Roads), till last year, the budget had 11 different places to reflect the road maintenance provisions. I do not want to get into the reasons behind this. But, the PWD has to process 11 different ways to draw the monies from the State Exchequer. Now, I propose in the current budget that all these 11 accounts will be merged into 3 accounts this year and will become only two during next year. This comes with another positive development that the Government proposes to increase overall allocation for such road maintenance to Rs 600 crores from about Rs.300 crore during the last year. Out of this Rs 600 crore will go to Assam Road Maintenance Fund as Grant-in-Aid (GIA). Even, we are proposing that at least 70-80 percent of roads should be divided into viable packages for 5 year maintenance contracts at least from next year onwards so as to ensure economy and efficiency.
- 14.6. Next year we will completely overhaul the classification and hopefully the accounts will then be more accurate reflection of the reality in terms of developmental and non-developmental expenditures also.
- 14.7. I also propose to make a few more changes to the accounting structure in the budget. These changes have

been made with a view to cleaning up the accounts further and giving an actual picture of the State of affairs.

- 14.8. Sir, I would like to inform the House that some exercise was already made by our Government to reform the Government expenditure mechanism. We have identified that there are two broad areas for systematic correction based on the part-I report of the three-member review committee constituted on Planning and Budgeting, after series of consultations with the line departments.
- 14.9. Firstly, there are numerous schemes and programmes which were added year after year. In fact, majority of them were included, in between the year, outside the Legislative Assembly, on the eve of New Year, Republic Day, Independence Day, etc. These schemes were mostly individual benefit-oriented and do not stimulate growth, do not inspire equity, do not cater to development and nor do they contribute to employment. Now, it is time to review and consolidate. Instead, we need to initiate the growth-led schemes and programmes and each rupee so invested should multiply several times in the system.
- 14.10. Secondly, this tendency of countless schemes with several overlapping, multiple models and layers of subsidy requiring much needed resources led to committed liabilities over a period of time.
- 14.11. In view of above, I propose not to provide the liabilities, unless proved genuine and legally tenable, in the current budget. Further, I also propose to set up an independent commission to examine all such claims and ascertain their veracity and then make necessary provision in the subsequent appropriation bills, either supplementary or whole year, as the case may be.

- 14.12. Our Government is also thinking aloud on the power sector accounting. Year after year budgets have shown huge and mounting liabilities emanating from the power sector. Power department was advised to examine the possibility of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) of the targeted subsidy to the bank account of the beneficiary. I am hopeful that we would come up with some constructive measures in this regard.
- 14.13. Our Government treats on-time payment of salaries is an ethical issue. Some of the existing budgeting process themselves are hurting the society by "casualisation" of some employees. This relates to the treatment of wages of casual employees. I will not hesitate to give credit to the previous Government that during the year 2015-16, it had partly improved the system of treatment of wages. In many departments, especially after being banned in 1994, wages have been paid from O&M component of capital expenditure or from "others" of office expenses. There were three consequences of this; first, the wages are paid irregularly which is completely unethical. Second is that it conceals the amount Government spends on wages. Third, it reduces the money for maintenance of our capital assets to that extent.
- 14.14. In the current budget, the same is brought to the happy conclusion and Finance Department is considering the possibility of release of wages by exemption from FOC.
- 14.15. Further, I announce that all salary and wage provisions in the Plan to the tune of about Rs 450 crore will be brought into Non-Plan and thus the release of wages and salary will be regular and timely. Then, almost all employees of

Government of Assam will draw their salary and wages from Non-Plan and thereby allowing seamless payment of their salaries. I believe that this will encourage these employees to fully devote their service to the public.

- 14.16. Prudent procurement procedures in the State require complete overhauling in order to make it completely transparent and to execute schemes with high standards of quality and well in time. We all understand that timely payment for such supply of public goods and services is also critical. E-procurement is basic tool for this purpose. We need to strengthen this system and I, therefore, propose that all procurements of departments for an amount of Rs 10 lakhs and above will be procured through e-procurement platform.

15. PUBLIC EXPENDITURE MANAGEMENT & MONITORING

- 15.1. Poor system of expenditure management is evident in the ever increasing liabilities of various kinds.
- 15.2. Sir, you will be surprised to know that the Treasury Rules that we are following is of pre-independence era. Drawing the strength of Government of India Act 1935, Assam Treasury Rules were enacted in 1937. This fact would explain many issues as regards poor expenditure management. Across the country, the public finance management systems have transformed to such an extent that most of the systems are IT-enabled.
- 15.3. We have already initiated action to come up with New Treasury Rules for the State and we are hopeful that these

Rules will usher new systems which would be transparent, efficient and effective.

- 15.4. The procedures and conventions followed for preparation of cost estimates are also required to be relooked at. The PWD has been asked to examine the possibility of fixing the rates and vendors for items like cement and steel separately so that the contractors can purchase from their at discounted prices rather than loading the same at higher rates in the name of Schedule Of Rates (SOR).
- 15.5. "Ceiling" is a word, perhaps is unique to Assam. In common parlance, it is 'Government money'. Its actual name is "Fixation Of Ceiling (FOC)". In fact, it was originally called, LOC (Letter of Credit) and after the infamous Veterinary department scam, the name was changed to FOC. It is primarily a tool of cash management. We are all aware that over a period of time, FOC has become a necessary evil.
- 15.6. Our Government has already taken steps to streamline this system. As part of this, we have already started implementing the issue of FOC on-line from 1st July 2016. This was put in place within a record time of less than 40 days after we took over. It will be further improved in such a way that there will be no physical movement of files from line departments to the Finance Department in due course of time for issuing the Ceiling.
- 15.7. I also propose to release FOC suo-motto from the Finance Department to the administrative departments for the funds that we receive as central share from Government of India. Finance Department will give 30 days or so as validity of

these FOCs for drawing the funds. If an administrative department fails to utilise these funds, the Department, through the Minister-in-charge, shall explain the reasons for the failure of utilisation of these funds to the Hon'ble Chief Minister on the file. Finance Department will be able to revalidate the FOC undrawn previously only on receipt of such orders from the hon'ble Chief Minister.

- 15.8. Another point of interface of public with the Finance department is Treasury. We are all aware of the ills associated with the processing of passing the bills at treasury. We are working on various possibilities to reduce the last minute rush and also minimize physical interaction of the public with treasury through automation of the processes. This we would like to address by increasing the number of treasuries, over a period of time, where substantial number of DDOs are available.
- 15.9. In view of above, I propose to open 25 new Sub Treasuries in various blocks encompassing all parts of the State in the next 5 years in a phased manner. The names of the proposed Sub Treasuries are: Raha, Sorbhog, Teok, Sualkuchi, Dhekiajuli, Barjelenga, Sonapur, Sipajhar, Sonai, Dudhnoi, Chabua, Amguri, Silapathar, Mushalpur, Naoboicha, Bhurbanda, Kamalpur, Majbat, Doomdooma, Golakganj, Patacharkuchi, Moran, Jamuguri, Kajalgaon, and Manikpur.
- 15.10. In addition, a new Sub Treasury has already been notified on 24th June 2016 at Lakhipur Civil Sub Division in Cachar District and the headquarter of the Sub Treasury will be at Lakhipur. The Sub Treasury will start transacting Government business with effect from 1st October 2016.

- 15.11. Further I propose to install CCTVs in all the Treasuries and Sub Treasuries in the State in a phased manner with a view to strengthening the security and vigilance in Treasury. Initially the CCTVs will be installed in all the three Treasuries in the City viz. Kamrup (Metro), Dispur and New Guwahati. For this purpose, I propose to set aside an amount of Rs. 100 Lakhs.
- 15.12. From next month onwards, **Respected Speaker Sir**, both the DDO and the payee will get an SMS and an email informing the status of the clearance of the bill and amount paid. If the bill is rejected, the reasons will also be intimated in the same way.
- 15.13. Further, we are working with Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The public expenditure system of the State will be very soon integrated with e-Kuber platform of RBI so that the bill and scroll clearance will happen electronically. Monthly accounts prepared by Treasuries are also prepared automatically at the end of each month and submitted to Accountant General seamlessly.
- 15.14. Sir, you will be happy to know that as per the directions of Hon'ble Chief Minister, Finance Department has embarked on the file-tracking system in order to ensure that the pendency of files can be reduced and the location of a file can be electronically tracked. We will be able to fully implement this system in the Finance Department very soon and it will make the Finance Department more proactive in clearing the proposals.
- 15.15. I propose most innovative and first of its kind initiative to bring public expenditure accountability in the system.

Timely execution of the schemes is essence for economy. Delays not only lead to cost escalation but also to inferior quality of works. No officer shall indulge in such recklessness in execution of government schemes which results in wasteful expenditure. This needs to be monitored by the State Legislature. In this direction, I propose to bring "**Assam Public Expenditure Accountability Act**" before the House in due course of time. This would stipulate for a delay implementation of works beyond a reasonable amount of time, the senior most secretary shall personally explain to the concerned Legislative Committee.

- 15.16. In short, I would like to sum up that Finance Department will take all possible steps to improve public expenditure management by putting transparent and accountable systems in place.

DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND IMPORTANT SECTORS

16. INTERNAL SECURITY AND POLICING

- 16.1. On behalf of our Government, I would like to place on record our deep appreciation for the sacrifice of police personnel in the public service. It is also not out of context to mention that many brave Police personnel laid their lives and attained martyrdom in the service of the people. Police is the face of the Government for *Parivartan*. There is a paradigm shift in security and policing in the State. If we recognise this fact, change will take place. In the spirit of Parivartan that this Government believes in, I would like to highlight our vision for policing.
- 16.2. Ecology shapes the entities within. The past ecology of the Police force in the State was dominated by counter-

insurgency. This gave less scope for developing the traits for people-friendly approach. Now time has come for a change. People should see a Friend in Police and look forward for MOITRI. It needs a complete paradigm shift. It needs changes both in hard and soft infrastructure of the police stations and personnel. It is not possible without providing the basic amenities for the police personnel and also for the needy citizens.

16.3 MOITRI (*Mission for Overall Improvement of Thana for Responsive Image*) : Rebuilding the Relationships

- 16.4. In the above background, our Government proposes to implement a Mission Mode Thana-based time bound system-reform programme to achieve this goal. This will be taken up under the Mission, called, *MOITRI (Mission for Overall Improvement of Thana for Responsive Image)*.
- 16.5. Under this Mission, physical infrastructure, internet connectivity and basic tools for cyber crime detection will be developed in each of 345 Thanas in the State within five years by spending Rs 2 crore per Thana. This Mission also includes capacity building of the police personnel to improve their soft skills and responsiveness to deal with the new generation crimes such as drugs, cyber-crimes, etc and also to provide necessary amenities for counselling of the young offenders.
- 16.6. **I propose in the current budget to allocate Rs. 2000 Lakhs for the first year and shall continue the support to realise the goals of the Mission in the next five years.**
- 16.7. Assam being the largest amongst the North East Indian States with borders linked to all other North Eastern States

had to shoulder a heavy burden in the conduct of Counter Insurgency Operations in view of the disturbed Internal Security situation that lasted for many decades. The Security Forces have acquired reasonable success in the counter Insurgency operations in recent times but have to focus on a new and emerging threat i.e. Jihadi Terrorism that has emerged from our neighbouring country and in fact poses graver threat to the entire country. The Government of Assam is seized of the matter and in partnership with various Central and State Agencies has been making holistic efforts to address the same.

- 16.8. Our Government is conscious about the need to bring more than 3600 surrendered militants and those who have come to ceasefire to the mainstream with proper rehabilitation measures. Our Government will take all necessary steps for imparting skill development of entrepreneurship to make them employment worthy so that these persons are rehabilitated and lead a normal life with dignity.
- 16.9. To enhance the capacity of the State Police, I am happy to inform that more than 4000 police personnel including around 3980 Policemen and 346 Sub-Inspectors will be recruited within the current financial year. This will greatly strengthen our capacity to protect the people and their property across the State. **I propose budgetary allocation of 8.96 crore for this purpose.**
- 16.10. We are concerned about increased traffic accidents and will lay greater emphasis on proper regulation of traffic. In order to improve the traffic in the urban areas, a project on establishment of **Traffic Signal System** across 99 urban centres of Assam is being adopted. In the current financial

year, Guwahati and ten other cities and towns viz Silchar, Diphu, Dhubri, Nagaon, Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh, Kokrajhar, Tinsukia, Jorhat and Tezpur are being taken up.

- 16.11. Our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi in his speech addressing DGPs conference in Guwahati, about a year ago, gave a call to the Police to be SMART force, **Strict and Sensitive, Modern and Mobile, Alert and Accountable, Reliable and Responsive, Techno savvy and Trained**. Police are to be viewed as people friendly and the Police Stations are to be seen as the core of any civilized society. In this regard, the Government of Assam proposes to create - **Women's Cells** in about 63 Police Stations across Assam - for addressing crime against women in a focused manner; to form **Nagarik Committees** in all the 347 Police Stations of the State, which will act as a bridge between the Police and the common man. "**Citizen Friendly, Citizen responsive and Citizen supportive Policing**" will be the focus of the Government of Assam.
- 16.12. An Innovative project is being taken up to **cover the diaspora of the State residing in various parts of the country in order to ensure their safety and security.**

17. ASSAM ACCORD

- 17.1. The Assam Accord 1985 is the bedrock of many of the developmental and protective measures taken by the Government. To have a fresh insight into the proper

implementation and impact of the Assam Accord, the Department will be revamped and made more robust.

- 17.2. The Assam agitation was not only an agitation for saving Assam from the aggression of foreigners but also it was an agitation to protect sovereignty and integrity of the country. During the agitation many young sacrificed their lives for the sake of their great mother land. No amount of monetary award or recognition can be compared with the sacrifices of the martyrs of Assam. However, as a token of appreciation we propose to pay one-time ex-gratia of Rs 5 lakh per family of the Martyrs of Assam Agitation. **I propose a budgetary allocation of Rs 30 crore in this budget.**
- 17.3. We have also decided to construct a Memorial and Park in the honour of these Martyrs. This Memorial is known as Swahid Khetra. For this, I propose to allot Rs. 100 Lakhs as an initial amount.
- 17.4. I am also happy to announce that the Executive Council of the Jawaharlal Nehru University has resolved to approve the establishment of an Assamese Chair in the Centre of Indian Language, Literature and Culture Studies of the University.

18. NRC AND FOREIGN TRIBUNALS

- 18.1. The Government wishes to convey that the ongoing exercise to update the **National Register of Citizens (NRC)** is the number one priority for the Government of Assam. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam is personally

monitoring the NRC updation process wherein the NRC data is expected to be published within the current financial year. **I propose to allocate Rs. 24932 Lakhs from the State budget.**

- 18.2. Our Government will give priority to support and strengthen the functioning system of Foreign Tribunals in the State in order to fulfill our constitutional duty in both letter and spirit.

19. BORDER

- 19.1 Border protection is priority of our Government. But we are happy to note that 99.97% of fencing works has already been completed. The remaining 0.03% (sixty meters) work is targeted to be completed within December, 2016. Temporarily this area is sealed by single line fencing. Flood lighting works has already been completed by CPWD, IBBFLD and work in progress under APDCL for Electricity Service connections to the flood lights installed at the earliest.

- 19.2. Our Government will also try to ensure that the quality of fencing is at par with the fencing of India-Pakistan border in Gujarat. We shall also make serious efforts to motivate the people across the border not only in preventing infiltration of foreigners but also to effectively deal with the narcotics and drug trafficking.

20. PASSPORT DEPARTMENT

- 20.1 IVFRT, a mission mode project on Immigration Visa and Foreigners Registration and Tracking System is intended to streamline and upgrade the Immigration Services. The project has already been made functional in the office of

the SB HQ, Commissioner of Police, City Guwahati and this project was also made operational in Tezpur, Jorhat, Nagaon, Dibrugarh, Sivasagar, Silchar, Karimganj, Diphu, Golaghat, Guwahati, South Salmara, Bongaigaon, Kamrup I, Baksa district as HUB district and Kahilipara as State HUB.

21. RECRUITMENT (PERSONNEL DEPTT.)

- 21.1. It is decided to discontinue the system of holding interviews for recruitment of Grade-III & Grade-IV Posts where personality assessment is not an absolute requirement.
- 21.2. The State Government has formulated draft policy for raising reservation for women in Government jobs upto 35%.
- 21.3. The State Government has formulated the draft policy of rehabilitation for victims of Assam agitation.
- 21.4. The State Government has formulated a policy for overhauling the APSC (Assam Public Service Commission) to facilitate smooth, efficient and accountable functioning in line with the recommendation of Sri Tapan Lal Barua Committee and Sri M.P. Bezbarua Committee.

22. PRISONS : INSTITUTIONS OF REFORMS

- 22.1 All men are born equal. They have the same basic rights. These rights are mainly right to life and liberty. But if any person does not comply with ethics of the society then that person is deprived of these rights with proper punishment. Prisons are therefore reform institutions to bring the offenders back to the mainstream of society.

- 22.2. We propose to take several steps for improvement of infrastructure facilities required for effective functioning of our jails. I would like to specifically mention that the works of District Jail, Abhayapuri are on and is expected to be completed during the current year.
- 22.3 Efforts have been made to provide vocational training to the Jail inmates so that the prisoners are trained enabling them to earn a decent livelihood after they are discharged from the jails on completion of their sentences. It is also proposed that prisoners are given on the job training in the manufacturing units located within the jail premises. A training programme on repairing of electrical implements and solar energy panel has been launched at the District Jail, Tinsukia under the aegis of 'ART OF LIVING', an NGO, in collaboration with "Schneider".
- 22.4. Steps have been taken for installation of CCTV in all the jails in the State for ensuring rights of jail inmates and to prevent untoward incidents.
- 22.5. I propose to introduce Yoga in every Prison by involving social workers and NGOs.
- 22.6. I also realise that the diet and medicines are essential items for prisoners. However, I am also aware that the present rate of diet for prisoners is not enough to provide a decent meal to the prisoners. I will suitably increase it so as to give them a dignity of human life. I also propose to exempt these items from FOC with a condition that the prisoners get quality food and timely medicines. We will put some monitoring mechanism so that these are reviewed at periodic intervals.

22.7. We are all aware that prisons are ideally centers for reformation. Keeping this point in view, the prisoners are engaged in various productive works in the prison. I have observed an important aspect as to the payment of wages to the prisoners. At present, both the male and female prisoners are paid equally. The current rates are Rs. 75/- per day skilled and Rs. 55/- per day for unskilled prisoners. In our society, women as such are vulnerable and more so being female prisoners, we can understand psychological condition such female prisoners. Looking at this deprivation , **I propose to increase the wages of female prisoners by Rs.25/- per day for both skilled and unskilled category.**

23. RURAL DEVELOPMENT : EACH VILLAGE AS NERVE CENTRE OF GROWTH

23.1. Assam is predominantly rural. Our duty is to develop every village in an integrated manner based on its strength. We need to empower each person and increase income of every household. Our Government's goal is to see a smile on face of the last man in the society. Doubts about our intention and hesitation to think big will be melted away if we follow the talisman given by the Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi expressing his deepest social thought.

23.2. By paying our homage to this Great Soul, I would like to recite one of his last notes left behind him in 1948.

"I will give you a talisman.

Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test.

Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her].

Will he [she] gain anything by it? Will it restore him [her] to a control over his [her] own life and destiny?

In other words, will it lead to swaraj [freedom] for the hungry and spiritually starving millions?

Then you will find your doubts and yourself melt away."

- 23.3. This talisman of Mahatma Gandhi is the Talisman for our Government. This budget sets the agenda in this direction. The policies of our Government would be laser-focussed on the poorest and weakest whose control over his own life and destiny can be restored. In other words, each and every action of our Government is bound to lead to freedom for the hungry and spiritually starving millions of people in this blessed State. Thus, the goal of all efforts of our Government is to see the smile on the face of the last man in the State. Thus, when I say that our Government is for the poor, it is also deeply inspired by a great thinker, Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay's idea of Antyodaya or serving the very last person in the society.
- 23.4. Mega Mission : Chief Minister's Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana (MSGUY)**
- 23.5. In the above background, it is proposed to take up a "Mega-Mission", called, Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana (MSGUY) 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.
- 23.6. As I stated earlier, it will take about 80 years to double the farm income in Assam at the current rate of growth.

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.

- 23.7. This is sought to be achieved though 'saturation model' by covering each revenue village through focused interventions in (a) Direct economic activities, (b) Logistic support include market linkages, and (c) Community support.
- 23.8. Above focused interventions would be aimed at in NINE critical areas and related sub-missions will be : (1) Fishery Mission, (2) Milk Mission, (3) Organic Mission (4) Land Management and conservation Mission (5) Sericulture, Khadi and Cottage Industry Mission (6) Road and broadband connectivity, (7) Semi-processing, processing and market linkages, (8) "Youth-Yoga-Sports" Mission and (9) e-gram Mission by developing Village Knowledge Centers by strengthening traditional Namghar and other community institutions.
- 23.9. There will be One Mega-Mission and Nine Sub-Missions'. The implementation will be through these nine NAVARATNA SUB-MISSIONS. The synergy among various sub-missions will be achieved with a single objective of doubling the farm income. Each Sub-mission will have independent targets and outcomes which are aggregated and converged into the overall Mega-Mission targets. The concerned line departments will be fully involved in a project mode in each sub-mission. There will be a registered Society under the Government of

Assam. This Society would serve as an overarching entity leading the Mega-Mission. Each of the Sub-missions would work under this Society in order to ensure the requisite convergence, synergy and linkages from end-to-end of the economic activities.

- 23.10. A dedicated project team will be housed in the Society with proper monitoring systems in place so that all Sub-Missions are implemented in time, funds released timely and outcomes are monitored and evaluated from time to time in order to ensure that the farm income doubles by the end of the Mission.
- 23.11. The main component of investment will be the core-economic-activity-centric such as fishery, dairy, etc after duly mapping out the potentiality. This will be supported through other activities such as road and broadband connectivity, market linkages, Rural Knowledge Centres mobilizing community through various Community Based Organizations (CBOs) such as Farmers' Producer Organizations (FPOs), Joint Liability Groups (JLGs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), etc by building on the existing community institutions.
- 23.12. Economic activity will be specific to the village and places like Hill Areas can focus on potential sectors like rubber, bamboo and horticulture plantations. In short, the key economic activity will be decided by each of the village and thus it is self-customized and not top driven.
- 23.13. A mass movement will be created through the Mega-Mission and energy and strengths of the community will be fully tapped in implementation process so that Complete Rural Empowerment in Assam (CREA) will be achieved in true spirit.

- 23.14. The critical mass of commodities produced by such a large and focused interventions would stimulate markets and the requisite interventions would be made to link the emerging markets within and outside the State. For this all need-based logistics at appropriate level such as block headquarter, etc will be supported.
- 23.15. There are 25,425 villages (2011 Census) in Assam. Saturation model demands each and every revenue village is covered by the end of the Mission period by covering at least a quarter of them annually for four years. It means that annually the Mission requires to cover about 6,356 villages annually from 2017-18 to 2021-22.
- 23.16. The planned investment is about Rs 1.20 crore per Revenue village. The total requirement for the Mission is Rs. 30,000 crores over a period of five years. 10 per cent of the total proposed investment will be in the form of community resources such as land, mandays and the remaining 90 per cent will be from the State resources.
- 23.17. For the current year, **I now propose to allocate Rs 50,000 Lakhs in this Budget.**
- 23.18. State has never witnessed such a massive and mega investment in this kind of focussed manner. Each village will get benefits such as tractor, cold-chain vehicle, milch cows, fish hatchery, etc as community asset with collective ownership. An all-weather road, high speed broadband connectivity and other logistics will also be provided from possible convergence from the existing sources like RIDF, Central Government programmes, bank linkages, etc.
- 23.19. The novel approach of the Mega Mission is that it taps the energy of rural youth and community. I propose to

reach out to each of the youth clubs in 25,425 revenue villages in community mobilisation for development over a period of five years.

- 23.20. State Government will also seek this Mega Mission specific financial support from the Central Government during the current financial year (2016-17) onwards so as to help the state to stimulate its economy, create employment, increase income of the people and thus, raise its resources in future on sustainable basis.
- 23.21. We are committed to streamline the implementation of the MGNREGA. We will strictly ensure that all the payments to the job card holders are directly credited to their accounts from the single national account. Similarly, under MGNREGA, the anticipated amount of Central share is Rs. 1311.84 crore. I therefore, **set aside an amount of Rs. 11833 Lakh as State share**. We will do our best to utilize the full amount.
- 23.22. IAY programme now has been restructured as Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G). The selection of beneficiaries are being done as per the report of Socio-economic & Caste Census, 2011. The unit cost of the scheme has also been enhanced to Rs.1.30 lakhs from Rs.75000/-. There is an additional provision of Rs.12,000/- for toilets and Rs.17,290.00 for 95 days of work under MGNREGA to the beneficiaries.
- 23.23. Under National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), an amount of about Rs.24 crore has been proposed against State share while anticipated Central share is of Rs.216.38 crore.

24. AGRICULTURE : ROAD TO PROSPERITY

- 24.1. Farmers in the state feed the entire population. But their contribution to the socio-economic upliftment is yet to be recognized. Recognizing the services of farmers, our Government will issue I-Cards to the farmers. These Identity Cards will bring a sense of recognition to their contribution to the state's economy besides being used as a unique identity to develop the database of each of the farmer in the Government's initiatives for development of agriculture.
- 24.2. Our Government gives highest priority to Agriculture. Therefore, **I allocate substantial amount of Rs 104179.81 lakhs in this plan budget.**
- 24.3. Farm production and productivity will greatly dependant on irrigation. I am happy to announce that we are embarking on an ambitious programme for installation of 61000 shallow tube-wells. In the current budget, I propose to allot Rs. 5792 lakhs for this purpose. If these STWs are installed in the current year, more funds, I shall allot more funds as our Government gives highest priority to agriculture.
- 24.4. Sir, I may remind this House that Hon'ble PM said that the North East India is Organic hub of the country. Most of the agriculture fields in Assam are organic by default and therefore, our Government will encourage more of organic farming under the *Paramparagata Krishi Vikash Yojana*.
- 24.5. We are all also aware about the past image of the Agriculture Department in procurement of various items and allegation of corruption. We are determined to regain

the confidence of the farmers by cleaning up the system. Thus, in order to bring transparency in the process of procurement, the government has decided to start e-tendering process in the department and the modalities have already been finalized.

- 24.6. The existing 3% interest Subvention scheme on crop loan to farmers shall also be continued during the FY 2016-17. Under the scheme, 3% subsidy is given by the State Govt. on interest payable by the farmers on crop loans upto Rs.35,000/-. I propose to allot Rs 310 lakhs for the current year.

25. FISHERIES : ASSAM- A NATURAL CHOICE

- 25.1. Fishery sector occupies an important place in the socio economic development of our state. It is recognized as a powerful income and employment generation sector.
- 25.2. Our Government shall strive for overall growth of this sector so that the State can achieve self-sufficiency with increased production as well as to generate more employment and enhance livelihood of the rural people very soon.
- 25.3. In the Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana, we propose to cover each and every potential village in respect of fishery production. We also propose to attempt convergence with other sectors to achieve optimal results.
- 25.4. Among the major developmental schemes/programmes, proposal has been made to develop Departmental Fish and Fish Seed Farms for production and enhancement of quality fish seed and table fish. Our Government will undertake a pilot project '*Matsya Jagaran*' for capacity building of fishery extension workers.

25.5. With financial assistance from Government of India under National Welfare Fund and Fisherman, 1,50,000 Fishermen will be covered for Group Accident Insurance schemes.

25.6. I also propose to establish Rural Markets and Fish Landing Centers, Development of Wetland and Departmental Farms under RIDF of NABARD.

26. ANIMAL HUSBANDRY & VETENARY : SACRED WEALTH

26.1. Sir, you will be surprised to note that the performance of this sector needs a major stress and our Government has proposed to formulate a Road Map.

26.2. This is a major source of employment. Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana will have a wide range of activities involving Dairy, Poultry, etc. The department has also started initiatives for developing poultry, pig, goat & sheep and quail rearing as distinct industries to solve the problem of unemployment.

26.3. Further, our Government will organize 40 more Dairy Cooperative Societies in 4 Districts and operationalize 13 Commercial Dairy Firms in the Dhemaji during the current year.

27. HANDLOOM, TEXTILES AND SERICULTURE : Unique Weaves

27.1. Sualkuchi is the heart of silk industry of the State. The past glory of this centre of weaving is required to be restored. **I therefore propose to set aside Rs. 50 lakh under Plan to revive the silk industry in Sualkuchi and thereby in the entire State.**

- 27.2. Sericulture and weaving is heart of the society in Assam. While we take up the related activities as part of Mega Mission, we also propose to expedite the efforts through Assam Silk Outreach Mission (ASOM) with a target to double muga production in next ten years. Requisite preliminary activities are underway.
- 27.3. Regular supply of raw material like yarn is a matter of concern. It is therefore proposed to set up nine Yarn Banks. **I allocate Rs. 400 Lakhs this year for this purpose.**
- 27.4. We need innovation in Handloom sector. Our Government, therefore, proposes a Handloom Park at Biswanath Chariali and **I set aside Rs 100 Lakh for the preparatory activities.**
- 27.5. Next step is to develop skills in the weaving and fashion designing and we propose to set up a National Institute of Fashion Technology Centre at Jagiroad under Marigaon district for building capacity of youth into high quality fashion technologists. **I propose to allocate Rs. 100 Lakh in this budget as pre-operative cost.**
- 27.6. Our Government also proposes to establish a Handloom Commercial Complex at Machkhowa (Handloom Haveli) to provide suitable space for marketing of handloom products produced by weavers of the state **for which Rs. 50 lakhs is proposed in the budget.**
- 27.7. Silk, culture, weaving and fashion are interlinked. Such activity will require concerted action from both Government and non-government institutions. Sualkuchi Institute of Fashion Technology (SIFT) is playing a critical role in the silk industry development and **I therefore**

propose to allot Rs. 25 lakh as Grant in aid to the Institute.

28. INDUSTRY : THE POWERHOUSE OF EMPLOYMENT

- 28.1. Our Vision is to see Assam as the centre of Act-East Policy initiative of the Centre. In this direction, we propose to set up a World Class Global Business Centre in Guwahati. This will act as business hub for the entire North East as well as for the neighbouring countries. **I am allocating a sum of Rs. 500 lakh for this initiative to start the initial work.**
- 28.2. To attract the potential investors to the State, our Government will organize Business Summit of international flavour. Named Vivacious Assam, the summit, the first of its kind in eastern and North eastern India, will hope to attract investments from East and South East Asian nations. **I propose to allocate a sum of Rs. 2000 lakh for this summit.**
- 28.3. A Land Bank will be established in the State for the investors to establish their business units in the State.
- 28.4. The passage of "The Assam Ease of Doing Business Bill, 2016" in the very 1st session of the present Government is a step in that direction. Initially, 87 Services will be made online in the 1st phase. Office of the Single Window Agency under Ease of Doing Business will also be functional very soon.
- 28.5. With the new initiatives to strengthen internal systems, after passing the Ease of Doing Business Act, post-

commissioning of Gas Cracker Project, it is high time Assam Industrial Development Corporation (AIDC) plays a catalyst role. Necessary refinancing of the AIDC will be considered after a detailed study in a time bound manner.

28.6. To boost local industries and entrepreneurs, the Industries and Commerce Department will undertake three new innovative schemes as outlined below:

1. **Boneej-** A special grant scheme for rural & industrial enterprises. **I propose to allocate a sum of Rs. 800 lakh for this Scheme.**
2. **Sarothi** - to boost the start-up industries in the State. **We propose to set up Chief Minister's start-up fund with an amount of Rs. 1000 lakh.**
3. **Biponi** - **I propose to allocate a sum of Rs. 1000 lakh** towards showcasing for micro & small enterprises both within and outside the State.

28.7. More than 1,25,000 small tea growers are engaged in tea cultivation in our state. It is like a silent revolution taking place in the interior areas of Assam. The amount of employment generated and the increased income levels of individual families in the rural areas are quite significant.

28.8. Our Hon'ble Chief Minister is very keen to see that this sector is further encouraged and accordingly I propose to extend an incentive for inputs of Rs. 5,000/- per Bigha for new plantations to be developed by small tea growers by bringing uncultivable/fallow lands from now onwards.

We will come up with detailed guidelines for implementation of the scheme.

29. PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

- 29.1. The Public Enterprise Deptt has been implementing capacity building programmes for updating of knowledge base of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) employees and Board members regularly and financing PSUs for strengthening of IT infrastructure for improvement of MIS, Computerisation, ISO certification and safety measures in work places.
- 29.2. A policy decision for inclusion of one Woman Director in the Board of management of State PSUs and allowed performance based incentive @ 3% of Net Profits to all employees of profit making PSUs having no accumulated loss to increase productivity.
- 29.3. This department has also undertaken the task of formulating vibrant draft "Public Enterprises Policy" to enable the State Government to adopt it for administering the State PSUs efficiently and for making them self reliant.

30. EDUCATION : UNIVERSALIZATION WITH QUALITY

- 30.1. For our Government, Education is not a department. Nor is it a school or college alone. This is a social good. This is a tool to create and inculcate the values of "integrated humanism" that I talked previously. A great educationist and philosopher, respected Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan said–
"Manav ka danav hona uski har hai, manav ka

mahamanav hona uska chamtkar hai, manusya ka manav hona uski jit hai."

- 30.2. We want to play an enabling and holistic role so that each "manusya" in Assam become "manav". In this context, I am happy to declare that I propose some of my budget proposals by deviating from the past tendency of declaration of sops and goodies. I am sure that you will find these proposals innovative, new to the state and visionary.

Saptadhaara

- 30.3. In this age of Knowledge and of "global village", if we depend on conventional curriculum-based classroom learning, Assam will be lacking in transnational human wisdom and knowledge. Now, learning is being transferred globally in an unprecedented way by dint of amazing process of science and technology.
- 30.4. Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision is that when India is going to be a global leader and a torch-bearer to the world in days to come, it is expected that every citizen of India is able to take initiatives on his own and is aptly equipped with rich and noble values of our glorious cultural and historical heritage.
- 30.5. Our Government has a strong desire to see Assam as one of the front-runners in this journey. Every young mind in Assam shall be given an opportunity for being explored and exploited to its fullest in the domains of knowledge and learning world over. By the time, these tiny-tots come into the society; they shall create an image of Assam that follows our practices in science, technology, research,

education, trade and commerce, proper administration and more importantly our composite culture and traditions.

- 30.6. Therefore, this *Saptadhaara* : It has seven Dhaaras: (1) Gyan Dhaara (Knowledge Band), (2) Srijanatmak Abhivyakti Dhaara (Creative Expression Band), (3) Rang, Kala, Aru Kaushali Dhaara (Fine Arts Band), (4) Natya Dhaara (Theatre Band), (5) Geet, Sangeet, Aru Nritya Dhaara (Music and Dance Band), (6) Vyam, Yog, Aru Krira Dhaara (Yoga and Sports Band) and (7) Seuji aru Samajik Seva Dhaara (Ecology and Community Services Band).
- 30.7. These *Dhaaras* are imparted through innovative and alternative teaching and learning practices involving specialists and civil society. No posts will be created and nor will there be any appointment of teachers by Education Department. Over a period of time, we will cover all schools up to Universities in the State in such a format that students will have interacted with other schools/ colleges in the State during the process expanding their social network.
- 30.8. As part of *Saptadhaara*, each student joining in Class VIth onwards, shall plant a tree in school campus at the time his or her admission. If there is no suitable space in the school, it may be done in the surrounding area of the school in community land. The student is expected to take care of the plant so planted by him/her till leaving the school and it would inculcate passion for trees and values of preserving ecosystem for future generations.
- 30.9 I am happy to inform the August House that I have kept adequate budget provision under plan to initiate Saptadhara in our schools.

31. *Aarohan : Mentoring Assam's Future*

- 31.1. Talent is lurking in remote corners and rural pockets of the State. Budding genius from poor families remains relegated in absence of guidance. Mentoring of this talent and genius is need of the hour.
- 31.2. I am candid that Governmental institutions do not have the tools to address this matter. Then, I questioned myself, "what is the solution to this challenge?" Sometimes, answer comes out by questioning a question. I found an answer in the question of Swami Vivekananda. In his own words, I quote, "*who will bring light to the poor? Who will travel from door to door bringing education to them? Let these people be your God-think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly. The Lord will show you the way.*"
- 31.3. After going through this, The Lord has shown us the Way : AAROHAN.
- 31.4. As part of this programme, to begin with, I propose to identify 3000 young boys and girls from class-V to X hailing from remote, rural and poor families. Our Government will appeal to all IAS, IPS, IFS, ACS, APS and AFS officers to mentor at least 3 such students each. The State Government will facilitate the programme and with a provision for minor incidental expenses.
- 31.5. I also humbly invite Hon'ble Chief Minister and Chief Secretary also to come forward to mentor at least two students each as a beginning of this sacred movement.

31.6. I am sure that this will add spirituality to the profession and personality of those mentors involved and benefits the hidden talent to blossom to ascend in life, resulting in Aarohan of these families. I appeal to all concerned to guide and help in this noble mission of the Government so as to scale up this novel programme.

I have kept initially **Rs. 100 lakh to start Aarohan**. It will be my endeavour and promise to the people of Assam that budgetary constraint will not come in the way of implementation of noble initiative.

"Shiksha Khetra" : Amalgamation of Schools on voluntary basis

31.7. Sir, we are all aware that the physical distance of schools from student's home is an important parameter to increase access to education. The current challenge to us in the State is that while we do not have schools within the reasonable distances in some areas like char areas, tea gardens, etc while schools mushroomed in some areas.

31.8. We are also aware that the norm for such distance is that schools shall be located within 1 km of radius for LP and 3 kms for ME and 5 km for High School.

31.9. In view of quality education, better supervision, better infrastructure development and economy, it is possible to amalgamate schools nearby into one campus.

31.10. Therefore, I propose to develop composite school campuses, called "Shiksha Khetra" wherever amalgamation is possible and feasible.

Provincialization of venture schools

- 31.11. In our Vision document released before Assembly elections, we had stated that the provincialization process of venture schools started by the present government, which has subsequently been stopped, will be restarted. Let me assure you that we are committed to this. We are equally committed for quality education and spending public money not at the cost of the economic development of the State.
- 31.12. Therefore, we will initiate a broad-based consultation with all stakeholders before amending the Provincialisation Act. The proposed amendments to the Act would include provision for de-provincialisation of underperformed and unperformed schools, the created posts will be abolished after the retirement of incumbent provincialised teacher and need to comply with the provision of Right To Education (RTE) and National Council of Teachers Education (NCTE).
- 31.13. Further, provincialization of remaining and eligible venture schools alone would require a whopping Rs 1100 crore annually and which will mount further every year and the current fiscal state of Assam cannot support this measure. Only alternative possible is to either impose education cess by amending the Act or rising taxes proportionately. This will be done after due consultations with all the stakeholders and I seek support of the House across all political parties to strengthen the hands of the Government to provincialise the remaining venture schools.

Computer only for Star marks students under Anadaram Barooah Award

- 31.14. My Government recognises the importance of encouraging merit students and especially in this era of technology. The previous Government has implemented Anundaram Barooah Award to meritorious 12th Class students by giving Laptops. Our Government appreciates the spirit of the scheme and is committed to continue the scheme.
- 31.15. But the State Government is required to be diligent in using the scarce resources and cannot go overboard crossing the line into "populism" and splurge the public money by converting the scheme into contractor-driven or supply-driven exercise. In view of above, I propose that the Anundaram Barooah Award will be restricted to only Star Mark Students only.

However, during the current year, all students who secure first division in the matriculation and high madrasa examination will get laptop like previous years. ***I propose a budgetary provision of Rs. 5777.60 lakh under plan for the implementation of Anandaram Barooah Award Scheme.***

Repository of Educational Records

- 31.16. In the current digital age, the database of educational records of students are required to be maintained by both educational institutions and students themselves. On the lines of e-locker our Government proposes an electronic platform for creation of repository of such educational records for easy maintenance and instant access to all those stake holders with due permission. Such exchange of

information would also help in skill up-gradation, higher studies and employment.

- 31.17 ***I propose a budgetary provision of Rs. 50 lakh to begin the process of implementation which will take at least two years to fructify.***

Free Text Books for class IX and X

- 31.18. Our Government is acutely aware of the ever increasing cost of education and the cost of text book is very substantial. State Government has been providing free text books for all the students upto class VIII.
- 31.19. Looking at the difficulties faced by the parents of poor students of class IX and X, I propose to provide free text books for all the students of class IX and X from the next academic year. This would cost an additional amount of Rs. 20 crores to the State exchequer and total cost for distribution of books from class I to X will be about 140 crores per annum.
- 31.20. In the current budget, **I have proposed a budgetary allocation of Rs. 5000 lakh for distribution free text book scheme.**

Mid-day Meal through Centralized Kitchen

- 31.21. Mid-day meal is one of the most successful programme across the country. This has evidently helped not only the retention level of the students of schools but also increasing their nutrition status. But the challenge is to provide cooked, hygienic and healthy meal in every school remains a challenge. The successful experiment in providing cooked and hygienic meal in some Blocks in Kamrup district by involving "Akshay Patra", a reputed International NGO by centralized cooking at the Block level.

The Education Department will come up with detailed guidelines for implementing mid-day meal scheme through centralized kitchens in a phased manner.

SEBA Re-organisation

31.22. Necessary steps have been initiated for starting the process of restructuring of SEBA as per recommendation of Sri Srinath Baruah committee. In this regard the views of SEBA on recommendation of Sri Srinath Baruah Committee has been received and is under examination and our Government is very keen to take necessary measures in this regard to set highest standards for SEBA and for education as well.

Improved performance

31.23. Our Government will give more focus on the programme "Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat". Another programme termed as "Shaala Siddhi" will be implemented in which all school will conduct a self assessment for improvement in performance.

31.24 Taking the Digital India as an inspiration, the "**Computer Aided Learning**" will be extended to 297 Upper Primary schools.

Option for the Schools to move to CBSE curriculum

31.25. Sir, some schools have been approaching the Government for permission to move to CBSE syllabus for better performance of the students in All India Joint Entrance Examination for Medical, Engineering and allied courses. It may help in more representation of students from Assam

in national institutions and it will reduce the gap between the success rate for these examinations from our children of SEBA/AHSEC curriculum and CBSE curriculum. I propose to allow 50 nos of SEBA affiliated schools from the next academic session to impart education by obtaining affiliation of CBSE based on the merit of proposal of each such school.

Girls' Schools into Co-education

31.26 Time changes and so is the Society. But the Government practices do not. One glaring example is gender-specific schools. This is a big dis-service to the society. The two wheels of a vehicle are meant to be equal. Man and Woman are two wheels of the vehicle called, society. Education of boys and girls in segregation is a major source of gender insensitivity. This negative vestige needs to be given a good-bye.

31.27. Thus, I propose to develop gender-specific schools as co-education schools. Our Government will encourage the school authorities to submit such proposals.

Exemption of fee for Students

31.28. In order to provide financial support to the students belonging to economically backward families, Secondary Education Department has incorporated a new scheme on exemption of fees including admission fees, tuition fees and any other fees from 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 provided that the income of their parents is below or Rs.1.00 lakh (Rupees one lakh)

only per annum from all sources. The scheme will also cover the CWSN (differently abled) students irrespective of the annual income of parents.

It is a matter of great satisfaction for me to report that over 60,000 students have already received benefit under this Scheme. I propose to reimburse the entire sum to the respective colleges and higher secondary schools and accordingly, **I am allocating a sum of Rs. 5000 lakh on this count.**

New Polytechnic and New Degree Colleges

31.29. For creation of more technically qualified manpower in the State, 21 new polytechnics in 21 districts are being established under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

31.30. Our Government has decided to expedite the process of implementation all these new polytechnics as well as other institutions like new engineering colleges and Model Degree Colleges being set up in the State.

I am proposing a budgetary allocation of Rs. 20,158.17 lakh for this purpose.

Three Universities at Barpeta, Bihpuria & Hojai

31.31. Given the current education system and the growing needs of the society, time has come for creation of more universities in the State. The World over, there are standard norms for establishment of universities which cater to a set of affiliated colleges. This is required for maintaining quality, standards of education and overall supervision of the affiliated colleges. The State has witnessed mushroom growth of colleges in the last of couple of decades, which are at present affiliated to two established universities of

Guwahati and Dibrugarh. Monitoring has not been easy for these two Universities and as a result, the quality of education has been a victim.

In this backdrop, I propose to develop three more universities by upgrading the existing colleges at Barpeta, Bihpuria and Hojai. Baikuntha Nath Bhagawat Bhattacharya i.e. Bhattadev is the 1st established Assamese story writer. The Government would like to name the proposed university at Barpeta after Shri Shri Bhattadev. Similarly, the proposed universities of Bihupuria after Mahapurush are proposed to be named after Shreemanta Madhav Dev and Kabi Guru Rabindra Nath Tagore, respectively.

I propose a budgetary allocation of Rs. 3000 lakh under plan for the above initiative. I also propose to spend another sum of Rs. 7000 lakh from Assam Infrastructure Financing Authority during the current year. At the same time, I would like to assure the people of Assam that Government will continue to extend its generous patronage to our Guwahati, Dibrugarh and Bodoland Universities.

Government will also strive to resolve the existing differences or dispute between the Cotton College and the Cotton College State University so that both these institutions become centre of excellence in years to come.

Some of the Hon'ble Members may kindly recall that sometime back, Tezpur University was trying to develop its campus in Jonai. Our Government recognises the efforts of this prestigious university to reach out to remote corners of the State and to spread its light of knowledge. We shall take every step required to support the university in this regard and we shall make it a reality as soon as possible.

31.32. Pursuing higher education for poor students is a distant dream. Our government is committed to help such meritorious students who are from poor families but want to go for higher education. I propose to provide financial support to such students. In this regard, the Higher Education Department has been implementing a scheme "Financial Assistance to the Poor but Meritorious Students."

31.33. Further, our Government in the Higher Education Department proposes to provide 50% subsidy on bank loan interest to the students for pursuing higher education. **I propose to set apart a sum of Rs.50 lakh in this budget for this purpose.**

31.34. As Hon'ble Members recall, sometimes back, the Government of Assam established two engineering colleges at Jorhat and Kokrajhar, namely Jorhat Institute of Science & Technology and Bineshwar Brahma Engineering College under a Society headed by Chief Secretary of Assam. Time has come to convert these two engineering colleges as full government colleges. This will support their future growth and development, besides instilling competitive spirit in these two institutions.

I also propose to set aside adequate budgetary provision to make the Karimganj, Golaghat and Dhemaji Engineering Colleges fully functional at the earliest.

Government is also committed to make both the engineering colleges at Guwahati and Jorhat as centres of excellence.

31.35. To provide internet connectivity to the students of Colleges, it is proposed to install Wi-Fi system College library.

31.36. Our Government aims at grooming the State as nerve centre of South East Asia by providing a platform for intellectual exchange among Scholars of the region for overall economic development.

I therefore, propose to establish South Asian Study Centre at Guwahati University and I propose to set aside Rs. 1 crore for preparatory action to establish a Study Centre.

31.37. Shreemanta Shankar Deva Sangha has established 'Shreemanta Shankar Deva University' at Nagaon. In this context, I would like to quote Mahapurush Shree Madhav Deva who in his epic Namghosha echoed his sentiments for Mahapurusha Shreemanta Shankar Deva as follows:

*Shreemanta Shankara Hari Bhakata
Janu Jeno Kalpataru
Tahanta Binai Nahi Nahi Nahi
Aamara Parama Guru*

31.38. I have great respect for Shreemanta Shankar Deva whom I consider and regard as Shreshtha Asomia of all time. Any amount of gratitude to this great saint is negligible when compared to his greatest contributions, ranging from binding the Assamese society as one cohesive unit, to our rich cultural tradition and composite culture.

31.39. I have most humbly decided to allocate Rs. 1000 lakh to Shreemanta Shankar Deva University over a period of 3 years. In current year, I am proposing to keep a budgetary allocation of Rs. 350 lakh.

Apart from this small initiative, we have also decided to institute a Chair in the name of Shreemanta Shankar Deva in the top five universities of the country. For this purpose, **I propose to allocate a sum of Rs. 500 lakhs in this budget.**

- 31.40. The contribution of Professor Indira Mamoni Roysom Goswami to the field of Assamese literature is immense. We have decided to institute an endowment lecture in the Department of Modern Indian Languages of University of Delhi where she taught. This will be a very small gesture of our gratitude to this great literary figure from our state.
- 31.41. I have always considered one of the greatest accomplishments of my political career to have appointed 60,000 TET teachers in our elementary schools completely purely based on merit. This singular achievement has created a healthy educational environment in our State. Without blaming anybody, I express my deep anguish when these teachers were deprived of their monthly salaries in the recent past. In our vision document, we promised that these teachers would be given regular employment in the Government so as to enable them to become *senani* of *bikosita* *Axom*. The First Cabinet meeting of our new Government, chaired by Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, has cleared approximately 10,000 posts for regular appointments of these TET teachers. Now, after taking approval from the Chief Minister, I would like to upscale it to 12,000 initially and then appoint another 5,000 TET teachers in the government by April next year. The process for regular appointment will start next month - August 2016 - itself.

31.42. The State Government is pursuing with the Government of India for exemption of another 3 years for TET pass candidates to acquire professional degree so as to fill up another 13,000 vacancies existing under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

31.43. Given the wide ranging developments taking place in the field of education, keeping pace and imparting professional education to our future teachers is fast becoming important. As per RTE, no teacher can be appointed nowadays without having professional qualifications, such as diploma or bachelor of education. In order to create a pool of such students having professional degrees, I propose to establish 8 new DIET in the following districts :

- (1) Hojai
- (2) South Salmara
- (3) West Karbi Anglong
- (4) Charaideo
- (5) Biswanath Charali
- (6) Baska
- (7) Chirang
- (8) Udalguri

31.44. I would like to conclude my budget proposals on education department with announcement with another historic initiative-

Guna Utsav

31.45 We all know that primary education is the foundation for advancement of the society. In the recent past, India has

improved education system. Assam too followed the suit. But, the quality of elementary education is a major concern. We need to bring focus on 'quality or Guna' of education through a mass involvement of all stakeholders of the society in a "celebration or Utsav" mode. This will create awareness among teachers, students, administrators, communities and stakeholders for quality education.

31.46. Gujarat is one State which has done exceedingly well in this. We learn that "Guna Utsav" is an accountability framework for quality of primary education. It includes learning outcomes of children as well as co-scholastic activities, use of resources and community participation.

31.47. Our Government will take a series of steps to increase school enrolments and bringing down school drop-out ratio, two major concerns in the education field. The aim is to ensure that Assam should be among the top five states of the country in terms of student learning outcomes over the next 5 years.

I therefore propose this Guna Utsav to be implemented in all primary schools in the State. A new evaluation process will be introduced involving Government officials, public leaders, panchayat representatives etc. for a group of schools, on a particular fixed date, through written and oral test. The schools will be ranked on the basis of this test.

31.48. I would like to acknowledge here that Shri Narendra Modi as the then Chief Minister of Gujarat had started this initiative in the State of Gujarat.

31.49. **I propose to keep a budgetary provision of Rs. 200 Lakh to start the preparatory work of this quality initiative.**

32. HEALTH : QUALITY AND COVERAGE

32.1. Health is one of the most important sectors for our government. Despite important progresses made, the health indicators in the state continue to be low. We have serious dearth of doctors, nurses and paramedics. Although efforts have been made to upgrade the medical colleges and other hospitals, they have infrastructure and other constraints, especially in the tertiary segments. For all major ailments, our people are forced to go for treatment outside Assam, and as a result, out of pocket expenses for the general populace continue to be very high. We have a vision for this important sector which directly affects the lives of our people.

I am proposing a number of new initiatives :

32.2. In our resolve to fight illness, morbidity and early death, I have always drawn inspiration from many sources. At this stage, I would like to recite once again short poem of our former Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee:

*haar nahi mangonga,
raar nahi thanoonga,
kaal ke kapal par likhata-mitatha hun
geeth naya gaatha hun
geeth naya gaatha hun*

Health Assurance Scheme- Atal Amrit Abhiyan :

- 32.3. Illnesses, whether long term chronic or sudden and acute, can impose costs on households that can cascade into catastrophic healthcare expenses with wide ranging consequences. Even in the lower middle class and middle class families, when critical illnesses occur, access to quality treatment is restricted, often on account of prohibitive costs. The highest attainable standard of health is a fundamental right of every human being and Article 21 of the Constitution endorses this. It is estimated that about 70% of all healthcare spending in India is drawn from personal, or out of pocket expenses of households.
- 32.4. In light of this and to take forward our Government's commitment to the people of Assam, a comprehensive coverage for six commonly prevalent and high cost disease group is proposed. These are : (a) Cardiovascular diseases, (b) Cancer c) Kidney diseases, d) Neo natal diseases, e) Neurological conditions, and f) Burns. We also propose to cover all cases which require surgical intervention and/ or intensive care.
- 32.5. The proposed Scheme, to be finalized and put in place by the Health & Family Welfare Department, will be smart card based with unique identification number for the beneficiary. The total sum assured will be Rs. 2,00,000/- per person per year. The Scheme will be free for BPL people and for families having annual family income of Rs. 5 lakh or less, the beneficiaries will be charged Rs. 100/- per member per year. The aim is that as enrolment increases, this scheme will be self-sustainable in terms of budgetary requirement.
- 32.6. Both public and private health providers which provide specialized treatment for these diseases would be eligible

for empanelment under the scheme. We hope with this, the long suffering lower and low middle income group families of Assam will get relief when one of their family members falls critically ill.

- 32.7. It is a matter of great pride that the Education Department has resolved to cover all the students studying in government schools across the state under this proposed Scheme. The Labour Department is seriously contemplating to cover all the workers of the unorganized sector under this proposed Scheme. I appeal to all government departments / semi-government agencies/ private organizations to come forward and take advantage of this initiative so that their workers can benefit from this innovative Scheme.
- 32.8. For the current year, to build credibility, trust and awareness, we have decided to extend benefits under the Scheme to all eligible citizens, even in the non-BPL category, without any payment.
- 32.9. We aim to unveil the Scheme on 2nd October, 2016. The Scheme has been named after the great visionary and former Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and will be called Atal Amrit Abhiyan. For this financial year, I am proposing a sum of Rs. 45 Crores for this Scheme.

Establishment of New District Hospitals :

- 32.10. We are committed to fulfil the commitment of establishing one district level hospital in every district. Recently, as Hon'ble members are aware, some new districts have been created. One of the primary rationales of creating new districts is to take the services and delivery mechanism closer to the people. This includes better health care services too. Keeping this in view, we propose to upgrade

the existing sub-divisional hospitals of Biswanath, Hojai, Sonari, Hamren, Mancachar and Majuli to District Hospitals with all required infrastructures, so that people of these newly created districts start getting the benefits of improved health care and specialized treatment. The upgradation of these hospitals has already been proposed the current year's Project Implementation Plan of the NHM to Government of India.

- 32.11. Completion of Model Hospitals: As the Hon'ble members of this August House are aware, we had launched a scheme to establish Model Hospitals in each Legislative Constituency to provide better medical care. We have already approved establishment of 116 such Model Hospitals. Aptly named after the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, 60 such Model Hospitals are already complete. I assure the House that the remaining Model Hospitals will be completed in a time bound manner and will be fitted with all the equipment along with necessary human resources.

Speciality and Super speciality streams

- 32.12. As I said earlier, due to lack of quality Tertiary Health Care Institutions in Assam, every year, a large number of patients from the state, spending a huge amount of money, go to Institutions outside the state for treatment. To ease the economic burden of critical health care, a number of initiatives have been proposed in this budget to provide specialty care.
- 32.13 Cancer treatment : The incidence of cancer in the North East India, generally, and in Assam, in particular is very high. Once I happened to interact with a cancer patient. All she said was: Time is shortening. But every day that I challenge this cancer and survive is a victory for me. We

want to tell all our cancer patients that in this fight against the deadly disease, we are with you.

- 32.14. The initiative to establish a 200 bedded cancer hospital attached to GMCH was started some years back. In the last one month, we have taken steps to make it operational. With state of the art equipment with latest technologies like PET-CT Scan Machine, Linear Accelerator, Cyclotron, Cobalt 60 machine. We also need some highly qualified and experienced doctors and other professionals. We have taken steps to attract the best from the health care industry. There are some infrastructural related works still to be carried out. We have to procure some other support equipment as well, to make it fully functional. For this, an amount of Rs.11 crores is proposed in this budget.
- 32.15. I am sure, full functioning of this cancer Hospital will benefit our cancer patients in multiple ways.
- 32.16. Cancer wings in four medical colleges : With a view to improving decentralized diagnosis and treatment, including the post treatment follow ups, the Government proposes to establish cancer wings in the Government Medical Colleges at Jorhat, Tezpur, Silchar and Barpeta with advanced facilities, in a phased manner. **We resolve to spend Rs. 10 crore each in these Cancer wings.** In the current year's budget, an amount of Rs. 4 Crores for is being proposed for this purpose. We also propose to provide a Linear Accelerator for Cachar Cancer hospital and Research Centre, Silchar.
- 32.17. Now I will come to super specialty streams. In the year 2007, with the help of Government of India, we had started

construction of a Super Specialty block meant to house six disciplines viz - Cardiology, Cardio-Thoracic Surgery, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Urology, Nephrology at Gauhati Medical College & Hospital (GMCH). But due to delay in implementation and consequential cost escalation, this Super Specialty block is yet to be completed. In the meanwhile, Government of India has proposed another Super Specialty block consisting of Hematology, Pediatrics Surgery, Gastroenterology, GI Surgery, **Endocrinology & Burn Unit, under PMSSY III at a cost of Rs 150 Cr. at GMCH.** It is important to complete the earlier super specialty blocks to harvest the full potential of the two super specialty units since they are complementary in nature. When these two blocks are completed, we can offer a full range of specialty health care services in Assam. Thus, for completing the earlier incomplete block, **I am proposing an amount of Rs. 6 crores in this budget.**

- 32.18. **AIIMS in Assam :** I inform the Hon'ble Members that the State Government has decided to extend all support for early establishment of AIIMS in Assam so that our people start getting the benefits of advanced tertiary care at an early date.
- 32.19. **Cathlab in 6 Medical Colleges :** Heart disease has emerged as the biggest killer in the rural and urban areas over the years in our state. About 25 per cent of deaths in the age group of 25-69 years occur because of heart disease. A catheterization laboratory or Cath Lab contains diagnostic imaging equipment used to visualize the arteries of the heart and the chambers of the heart, and treat any

abnormalities found. It is a precious tool to detect and treat heart related ailments. We have Cath labs in GMCH and Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh. We propose to establish well equipped Cath Labs in the remaining four functional Medical Colleges of the state. **I propose a sum of Rs. 2 crores for starting the establishment of these Cath Labs.**

32.20. **OPD Dialysis unit in GMCH, Guwahati :** Chronic Kidney Disease is increasing in number in Assam and many patients requiring dialysis attend GMCH, Guwahati. At present there are facilities that can provide dialysis for up to 30 patients per day, which is grossly inadequate. Approximately 70 patients per day require dialysis in GMCH, Guwahati and many patients have to attend private hospitals because of urgency spending huge sums of money. Some of the patients, especially in the lower income categories, remain untreated, because of inadequate facilities in GMCH, Guwahati. Therefore, it is proposed that a modern OPD dialysis unit will be established in GMCH with a facility to treat dialysis 100 patients requiring dialysis per day to meet the present demand.

32.21. **50 Bedded ICU at GMCH, Guwahati :** Gauhati Medical College Hospital, Guwahati is a hospital with more than 2100 IPD beds at present and daily OPD attendance is more than 2000 per day. This multi specialty hospital offers tertiary health services not only for the patients of the greater Guwahati but also is a referral centre for the rest of the State including the North eastern region. At many times patients are also referred from the private hospital of the state. At present GMCH, Guwahati has ICU with

capacity of 68 beds for adults. This is not sufficient to meet the patients demand. As a result many patients requiring ICU facilities are deprived of proper treatment in GMC&H, Guwahati. Keeping this in view, it is proposed that an additional 50 bedded ICU complex will be established in GMCH, Guwahati with all modern facilities to render services to the needy patients.

32.22. **20 Bedded Intensive Cardiac Care Unit (ICCU) at GMC&H, Guwahati :** As I said earlier, Cardiac ailment is a major problem of the population of the state. Many patients require pace maker implant and stents. For this, a dedicated ICCU is of utmost necessity for pre and post operative procedure for such implant cases. The present 6 bedded ICCU of GMCH is not sufficient. It is therefore proposed to establish a 20 bedded dedicated ICCU in the department of Cardiology of GMCH, Guwahati for offering better services to the cardiac patients.

32.23. **Establishment of cadaveric organ transplantation :** Kidney transplantation is performed on a regular basis in GMCH, Guwahati for the last one year with an average of 2 transplantations per month. However, the need for Kidney transplantation is very high in this region. Because of insufficient number of donors, live Kidney transplantation is not sufficient to meet the demand of this region. This imbalance can be rectified only by starting cadaver transplantation program. The Government of India has declared GMCH as one of the regional organ and tissue transplantation centres to carry forward cadaver (deceased) organ transplantation program. By doing this many patients will benefit and those who cannot go for

live transplantation will be able to get transplantation from cadaver.

32.24. **It is therefore proposed to establish cadaver transplantation program in GMC&H, Guwahati.**

32.25. **Infertility Treatment Centre :** To have one's own child is the dream of every married couple and infertility is a growing concern among the modern day families. Considering the huge cost for treating infertility in the private hospitals and the difficulties faced by the poor people in this regard, the government has decided to establish a full-fledged Infertility Treatment Centre (ITC) in Gauhati Medical College. The Infertility treatment Centre will have the facilities for investigating the causes for male and female infertility, intra uterine insemination (IUI) and In vitro Fertilization (IVF) in suitable cases at reasonable and affordable cost.

32.26. **Free Diagnostics Service :** The endeavor of our Government is to provide universal access to a progressively wide array of free drugs and diagnostics. Many initiatives are in the offing in this regard. We know that the level of out of pocket expenditure on health care is a cause of concern. In order to ensure availability of all human and technical resources for the benefit of our people, we propose to adopt some innovative model to launch Free Essential Diagnostics Service Initiative in the entire state. The goal is to ensure availability of free basic diagnostic tests, appropriate to the level of care, in public health facilities. The attempt will be to make available all required latest equipment, starting from Auto Analyzers,

Cell Counters to CT machines, at the appropriate health facility.

32.27. Broadly, three categories of services will be provided free of cost to all beneficiaries under this Initiative viz:

- (i) Lab Facility
- (ii) Radiology Services (X-Ray) and
- (iii) CT Scan

32.28. Members of this August House, we are privileged to have a Chief Minister who has an unwavering vision for the welfare of our people full of empathy and compassion, the Honble Chief Minister, ever since assumption of the high office, has been the driving force for all of us. Therefore, I would like to dedicate this important initiative to our respected Chief Minister, and name the proposed initiative as **Chief Minister's Free Diagnostic Scheme**.

32.29. Chief Minister's Free Diagnostic Scheme will reduce out of pocket expenditure for patients, ensure continuity in treatment, help in screening of chronic conditions and thereby improve quality of health care and patient experience. The scheme is proposed to be implemented from 1st January 2017.

Medical Education segment and HR for Health

32.30. Now, I turn to the crucial theme of HR for Health. We know that the health care system depends, to a large extent, on a network of health facilities, ranging from adequate and skilled HR, logistics support system and a referral back up. We have noticeable gaps in HR, especially of

doctors. It is therefore important to lay importance on medical education.

- 32.31. New Medical Colleges : The total number of MBBS annual intake in our Medical Colleges is only 726. This is inadequate to meet the requirement of doctors as per Indian Public Health Standard norms. In order to augment the seat capacity within Assam, Government proposes to establish 3 new Medical Colleges at Nagaon, Dhubri and North Lakhimpur during the year 2016-17 under CSS. We have taken various steps to complete the establishment of these three medical colleges in a defined time bound manner. Government of India has released an amount of Rs. 37 crores for establishment of these 3 (three) new Medical colleges. Corresponding State share of Rs. 4.1 crores is being proposed in this Budget.
- 32.32. **We also propose to establish a Medical College at Kokrajhar at an estimated cost of Rs. 200 crore.** We are making some initial allocation for this in the current year's budget.
- 32.33. Assam Hills Medical College & Research Institute, Diphu: When it comes to development, we would like to take everyone along - Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas. To fulfill the long cherished dream of the people of our hill district, Karbi Anglong, we had taken steps to start a Medical College at Diphu at an estimated cost of Rs. 193 crores under State Plan. The progress has been rather lackadaisical, with only about 47% of the work completed. To complete this important initiative in a time bound manner, I am proposing an amount of Rs. 29 crores in this year's budget. I want to assure this August House that the

hospital of this institution will start functioning in 2017, and the medical college will start admission of students in 2018, after due approval of the Medical Council of India.

- 32.34. Enhancement of Stipend for Junior Doctors of Medical Colleges of Assam and others : The Post Graduate (PG) students of the Medical Colleges are very important component towards rendering services to the patients of the Medical College Hospitals. They provide services in the Medical Colleges both during the day time, as well as at night hours, to give 24 hours service to the patients. At present these PG students are getting stipend at the rate of Rs. 26,000 Rs. 27,000 and Rs. 28,000 per month in 1st year, 2nd year and 3rd year of the course respectively. It is important to encourage them. I propose to enhance the rates of stipends. The enhancement is also proposed for the students of Regional Dental College, Ayurveda students, Homeopathic interns and also for M.Sc. Nursing students. The new rates will be announced separately.
- 32.35. Starting of B. Pharm Course: B. Pharm course is a very important course in the present Medical Education system. This course is available in Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh. But is not sufficient to meet the demand of the students of Assam. It is therefore proposed to start B. Pharm course in the Pharmacy Institutes of Assam with approval of Pharmacy Council of India.
- 32.36. Healthy Smile, Happy Smile - more dental colleges: A happy and healthy smile, literally shows teeth and therefore teeth deserve our special care and consideration. As on date, there is only one Regional Dental College in Guwahati. However, in view of the increasing demand and for provision of quality health care in different parts of the State, the Government proposes to set up two new

Dental Colleges at Dibrugarh and Silchar within the respective medical colleges there. This would not only provide advanced treatment facilities for dental and maxillo-facial problems for the people, but also will add to the education and employment opportunities.

- 32.37. Retirement age of doctors: Earlier, I spoke about the shortage of doctors which is a major constraint affecting healthcare in the State. There is a serious dearth of doctors at all levels. This shortage is also aggravated due to retirements. For example, in the current year itself, more than 50 doctors from field level institutions will retire.
- 32.38. Although majority of the Government doctors retire at the age of 60/ 62 years of age, they remain quite active and continue to practice for some more years. After superannuation, many Doctors are being immediately recruited by private hospitals while Government hospitals are deprived of their expertise and experience. In this backdrop, it is important to consider retaining the services of experienced doctors up to the age of 65 years. It is felt that raising the retirement age will enable the Government to retain experienced doctors for a longer period in aid of better services in the public health institutions. This will also benefit the poorest of the poor who are entirely dependent on public health facilities for their medical treatment.
- 32.29. Dear Members, I always draw inspiration from our respected Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, for his steadfast vision and sagacity. His visionary actions are worth emulating. Recently, he has taken a decision to raise the retirement age of all Central Health Service doctors to 65 years. Following in his footsteps, we too propose to

raise the retirement age of our Government doctors belonging to all the streams to 65 years.

32.30. Utilizing full potential of AYUSH: Our beloved Prime Minister once stated:

When soul, senses, intellect are in harmony with internal peace, optimal health is achieved.

32.31. The Prime Minister was referring to the power of Ayurveda, which is generally defined as 'Science of Life' by translating 'Ayuh (r)' as life and 'Veda' as science.

32.32. India has a rich heritage of medical wisdom derived from the Vedas that prevailed as Ayurveda. The basic approach of this system of medicine on health, disease and treatment is holistic. Because of this, there is a resurgence of interest in AYUSH which is increasingly becoming an accepted alternative system of treatment. We are making efforts to utilize the full potential of AYUSH system of medicines so that they are dovetailed seamlessly in the overall gamut of health care delivery.

32.33. The WHO strategy too contains methodologies for harnessing the potential contribution of Traditional and Complementary medicines to health, wellness and person centric health care. In the words of Swami Vivekanand, therefore, "We shall combine the best of east with that of the west"

32.34. Along with the entire world, we celebrated the Second International Yoga Day on 21 June, 2016. On Yoga, I would like to quote one of the original proponents, BKS Iyengar:

Yoga does not just change the way we see things

It transforms the person who sees.

- 32.35. **All India Institute of Ayurveda :** I am happy to share with my fellow members that Government of India has selected Assam for setting up of an All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA). We have decided to set up AIIA at Raha, Nagaon.
- 32.36. **Two 50 bedded Ayurveda Hospitals :** Under AYUSH Mission, we are also going to set up two 50 bedded Ayurvedic hospitals with the help of Government of India, at Majuli and Dudhnoi. We also propose to open 45 Out Patient Departments in Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres and District hospitals across the state.
- 32.37. **Yoga Centres at Block Level :** This government is not only trying to improve the treatment facilities, but also to instill the better habits for positive health for the citizens of Assam. Keeping this in view, our Hon'ble Chief Minister had announced that Yoga Centres will be established in all the blocks and villages of the state with active participation of the students' community and in close partnership with reputed and dedicated Non-Governmental organizations already working in this field. In this regard, 100 numbers of Blocks will be selected in Phase I of "Assam Yoga Project" and Rs 5.00 lakhs each will be spent for establishment of Yoga clusters at the Block level from where dissemination of message and practice of Yoga will be organized. A detailed plan in this regard is in the offing. An amount of Rs. five crores is earmarked for this purpose.

- 32.38. **Support to Tea Gardens:** Surveys show that MMR and IMR figures are the highest among the tea garden workers. Therefore, if we want to improve the status of IMR and MMR, we need to improve the health standards of our tea garden workers.
- 32.39. We are proposing to launch a Tea Garden Sub Plan to ensure implementation of comprehensive primary health care with major focus on Mother and Child Health. Detailed survey of all Tea gardens of the State will be carried out and critical gaps in terms of health infrastructure, manpower, services etc identified for each tea garden. To minimize gaps in health service in these areas, we propose to deploy 40 new Mobile Medical Units exclusively for Tea Garden areas.
- 32.40. As Hon'ble members of this August House are aware, while the permanent workers of the tea gardens are entitled to some benefits, for example, maternity leave, from the tea garden management, the temporary workers are deprived of such benefits. I am told that pregnant workers work till the last day of their delivery leading to complications for the mother and the baby. This contributes to high IMR / MMR. We need to address this matter urgently.
- 32.41. I am contemplating to introduce some scheme which guarantees compensation of wages for such temporary pregnant workers of our tea gardens for six months so that they need not work during the crucial days of delivery to earn their livelihood.
- 32.42. In fact, we have also approached the World Bank for a possible first with a technical assistance followed by loan

on this count through the Ministry of finance, Government of India. I am told that while I present this budget, the Screening Committee meeting for the grant of technical assistance by the World Bank is going on in Delhi. I am hopeful for a good news on this count.

32.43. I would also like to reiterate that we are taking steps through the PHE Department for piped drinking water supply in the tea garden areas.

Assam Medical Service Corporation (AMSC):

32.44. Making medicines, surgical items and other consumables available in the health facilities in a timely manner has always been a cause of concern. We have many procurement agencies. We have multiple essential drugs list (EDL). All these create confusion and result in system delays. We have taken some steps in this realm too.

32.45. We have, to start with, consolidated the EDL. Further, in order to procure and ensure supplies of medicines and other items in an efficient, cost effective and transparent manner, we have launched a dedicated agency Assam Medical Services Corporation Ltd., on the patterns of many other states. This agency has been set up with the primary objective of ensuring ready availability of Essential Drugs and consumables in the Government healthcare Institutions throughout Assam, by adopting a streamlined procedure for bulk procurement, storage and distribution of Essential Drugs and consumables, thereby reducing expenditure from the state exchequer. Assam Medical Services Corporation Limited has been incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013 on 22nd June,

2016. We propose to procure medicines worth Rs. 200 crores through the Assam Medical Services Corporation starting next financial year.

Ambulance and Boat Ambulances

32.46. Timely and easy transportation of patients from their homes to the health facilities play an important role in saving lives. With increase in the number of road traffic accidents, carrying of pregnant women, life threatening disease conditions and other calamities demand a centralized Emergency Response Service. Looking at the demand for comprehensive emergency system, Government of Assam had started Mrityunjoy -108 in 2008 to provide 24x7x365 basis emergency response service.

32.48. However, the response time which used to as low as 23 minutes some years back, has gone up to 37 minutes now. This situation will have to be reversed. We cannot afford to endanger precious lives because of delay in arrival of the ambulances. Therefore, we have decided to follow the principle of 'perform or perish' with our service providers. We, however, know that there are issues regarding old ambulances and we need to replace some of them. Government therefore proposes to replace 95 numbers of ambulances.

Now I will talk about ambulances for the riverine areas.

32.48. Difficult topography and riverine areas make some parts of the geography of our state inaccessible. The problem is more pronounced in the riverine areas. The inaccessibility becomes grave during the monsoon season

so much so that it is difficult to bring patients in need of medical care to the nearest specialized care centres. Bringing such patients during the night hours poses further danger. As a result of this our people residing in such difficult geographies feel helpless. To address this concern, which directly affects the well being of our people, we propose to launch new boat ambulances fully equipped to travel during night time and thus provide round the clock Emergency Referral Services under 108 Mritunjyot at Sadiya, Majuli, Guwahati-North Guwahati, Dhubri, and South Salmara. These well equipped boats will be properly manned with Pilots and Helpers to navigate.

32.49. For all the above, **I propose a sum of Rs. 4,850 lakhs in this budget.**

Involvement of Private Sector in improving public health :

32.50. The experiences learnt from introducing the first Public Private Partnership in the health Sector, i.e, with Narayana Hridayalaya in North Guwahati, shows that, a clearly planned strategic partnership can ensure high quality treatment facilities for the common public at reasonable cost in the neighborhood. Having gained this experience, the government plans to establish similar ventures in other parts of the state as well, to attract private investment, especially in the technical sector so that affordable high end treatment can be provided to the public at various locations. With this intent, the Government plans to establish two higher end super specialty hospitals in PPP (public Private partnership) mode in Silchar and Tezpur. I propose to provide adequate amount for this purpose in the current budget.

Massive JE Campaign:

- 32.51. Japanese Encephalitis (JE) is a major menace affecting the health of our populace. Every year, many people lose their lives because of this deadly disease. This year itself, a total 60 persons have died due to Japanese Encephalitis (JE) in the year 2016 (up to 22nd July) in Assam.
- 32.52. Besides vaccination, awareness generation is one of the strategies to combat JE. In the current year, we propose to go for large scale vaccination of JE. We are also going to launch mass campaign to spread awareness regarding JE in each school. It is expected that the students will become vehicles to spread the message within their family and village. Besides students, discussions on the symptoms and treatment on JE will be held during Mobile medical camps/Village Health & Nutrition Day to raise awareness levels amongst women, apart from massive advertisement campaigns in electronic & print media.

Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment (AMRIT):

- 32.53 With the aim to reduce the expenditure incurred by patients on treatment of cancer and heart diseases, Government of Assam proposes to open AMRIT outlets in the medical establishments providing tertiary care in Assam, i.e., Medical College Hospitals/ Cancer Hospitals in the State. The AMRIT retail outlet will sell drugs for the two ailments at highly discounted rates. Thousands of patients will benefit from AMRIT pharmacies where patients will be able to buy medicines and implants at cheaper prices than the open market. AMRIT pharmacy will retail drugs, based on authentic prescriptions from doctors.

Personal Hygiene and sanitation :

- 32.54. In Rural areas, menstruation and menstrual practices are clouded by taboos and socio - cultural restrictions for women as well as adolescent girls. Limited access to products for sanitary hygiene and lack of safe sanitary facilities are the main barriers in mobility, school attendance and other activities. The adolescent girls and women often resort to unhygienic practices leading to Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI) which, in turn, affects maternal health and mortality.
- 32.55. Sanitary Napkins are provided by the Education Department, and also at subsidized rates by the Health Department through NHM. We propose to carry this forward in aid of safe hygienic practices of our adolescent girls and women.

State Population Policy :

- 32.56. Population control remains one of the most challenging tasks before our state today. Population of Assam has increased to 3.12 crore (Census, 2011) from 2.66 crore (Census 2001) with Decadal Growth Rate of 17.07 (2001-11 Census). Population density of the State has also increased from 340 (Census 2001) to 398 (Census 2011). Present status of Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 2.3 (SRS, 2013) shows that the State is yet to achieve the target for replacement level fertility i.e. 2.1.
- 32.57. With limited natural resources at its disposal, Assam cannot afford the continuation of its rapid population growth, since it is not difficult to visualize the quantum jump in the demand for food grains, water and other basic

infrastructure to just sustain this level of human population. Unemployment issues cannot be solved without solving the population stabilization issues. Having realized the impact of such huge population to provide quality of life of the people of the State, it was felt that a comprehensive policy and action plan are necessary to achieve the replacement level fertility.

- 32.58. In this backdrop, a new State Population Policy is being developed to sort out the issue of population stabilization by focusing on the comprehensive reproductive and child health care issues. The endeavor is to create an atmosphere of positive discrimination - with proper incentives and disincentives. Although there will be no compulsion or coercion at any stage, the effort will be to create an enabling mechanism to encourage people to adopt small family norms, for example, preference in government jobs, reservation of seats in higher & technical education segments for small families etc.

Evening OPD Services for Senior Citizens :

- 32.59. It is commonly observed that our senior citizens find it difficult to make use of the OPD facilities in the Government hospitals, especially during the rush morning hours. In order to facilitate a more pleasant and peaceful atmosphere for consultation and treatment for senior citizens, the Government proposes to establish dedicated evening OPD services for catering to the needs of the Senior Citizens. This facility will be established in all the Medical Colleges and District Hospitals in a phased manner. We propose to do this with optimal utilization of existing man power and other resources without any additional financial burden.

I end my segment on health care with this Mantra, the famous sacred saying from our Upanishads:

*Om, Sarve bhavantu sukhinah
Sarve santu nirmayah
Sarve bhadrani pasyantu
Ma kashchit duhkha bhagbhavet*

*May all be prosperous and happy
May all be free from illness
May all see what is spiritually uplifting
May no one suffer*

33. SOCIAL WELFARE : CARE FOR EVERYONE

- 33.1. Government has decided to provide an amount of Rs. 7 lakhs each enhancing the earlier provision of Rs. 2 lakh each for construction of improvised Anganwadi Centres providing all basic facilities to these Centres. 2375 numbers of Anganwadi Centres will be constructed at this enhanced rate.
- 33.2. To popularize the nutrition programme taken up in all Anganwadi Centres of the State, wide publicity will be given to make the general public aware of the programme and the nutritious foods made available in these centres.
- 33.3. In order to encourage our differently abled students to come forward and study medicines or engineering in our government colleges, I am proposing to give them a scholarship of Rs. 3000 per month per student.
- 33.4. In the past, there was a criticism of corruption, non-supply of nutritious items to the beneficiaries and lack of transparency. We therefore propose to introduce e-

procurement system in all procurements by the Social Welfare Department.

34. FLOODS AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT:

- 34.1. Floods are a recurrent phenomenon in our State. While I am standing before you even at this moment, a large number of people are facing the fury of flood waters across the State. Our Government shall standby all such flood affected people at this hour of need by all means so that we can bring succour and relief to the affected families.
- 34.2. Our Government would use modern concepts and tools for disaster management to effectively prepare ourselves to face the fury of nature and we will try to bring in highest level professionalism in this critical service.
- 34.3. After we have taken over, every proposal for releasing SDRF/NDRF was given priority by the Finance Department and funds are being released on a regular basis. We will ensure that every rupee for GR, RG and FDR is spent with utmost accountability and after due diligence so that the needy get the benefits.
- 34.4. **I now propose to allot Rs.76103.06 lakhs for SDRF for the current year. Apart from that I also propose to allot Rs.1257.26 Lakhs for Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA).**

35. CO-OPERATION DEPARTMENT

- 35.1. Hon'ble Speaker, Co-operative sector in the State is yet to develop in right measure. The financial health of the 9,000 odd registered Co-operative Societies is far from sound and this has severely constrained their operational effectiveness. Hon'ble Members will agree with me that

Co-operatives play a crucial role in the rural economy and it is necessary to create the conditions to enable the rapid development of a strong and vibrant cooperative sector in the State.

- 35.2. Our Government is committed to encourage and facilitate the formation of viable Co-operative Societies as professional business organizations operating in the agriculture, fishery, diary, SME and other important livelihood - generation sectors with a view to promoting self employment opportunities in the State.
- 35.3. The Co-operative Services will be realigned, restructured, skilled and transformed to perform a proactive facilitating role for establishing a strong cooperative sector in addition to regulatory function.
- 35.4. To popularize and promote the co-operative movement, we have kept an amount of Rs. 100 lakhs for awarding the best performing Co-operative Societies in the State to incentivize them towards excellence in business performance and employment generation.
- 35.5. Further, emphasis has been laid on enhancing our rural storage capacity by construction of 244 rural godowns under RIDF with an outlay of about Rs. 5,000 lakhs. 100 such godowns shall be completed within a couple of months or so. The Assam State Warehousing Corporation (ASWC) is also building 4 large cold storages of 2000 MT capacity each at Raha, Sarupathar, Silapathar and Karimganj. Two of these are expected to be completed well within this fiscal.

36. WELFARE OF PLAIN TRIBALS AND BACKWARD CLASSES

- 36.1. Our Constitution makers had dreamed India as a Socialist State that protect and uplift it's weaker sections & several provisions have been incorporated in our Constitution to achieve social & economic inequality among the people.
- 36.2. Various schemes have been under implementation by the welfare of Plain Tribes and Backward Classes (WPT&BC) Department of the State for self employment, quality education, health care, infrastructure development & socio economic development of SC, ST & OBC people. Skill development schemes will be taken up for the benefit of the SC & ST youths.
- 36.3. For specific development of various ethnic communities under aegis of six Autonomous Councils, **I propose an amount of Rs.18726.53 lakhs in this year's budget. Similarly I propose an amount of Rs. 825.00 lakhs for Development Councils of the State.**
- 36.4. Our Government believes in decentralisation of power. We also believe in empowering the institutions which can discharge the powers with responsibility for welfare of the common man. Enacting a law or releasing of the funds may not lead to serve this objective. We need to build institutions. We are committed to strengthen the Autonomous councils.
- 36.5. I therefore propose to construct secretariat buildings of each of these Autonomous Councils over a period of time. This year, I set aside Rs 200 lakhs each to construct the secretariat buildings of Autonomous councils of Lalung (Tiwa), Mising and Rabha. We will provide more funds

in next two years for this purpose. In due course, we will also provide a permanent secretariat building for Deuri, Sonowal Kachari and Thengal Autonomous Councils.

- 36.6. It is also proposed to complete the Ambedkar Bhawans in the State. Further, the Department will take steps to document all essential materials relating to reservation in Government jobs for SC, ST & OBC since inception and publish it in a Handbook form. Department will also introduce the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) in the matter of a scholarship for SC, ST & OBC students.

37. MINORITY WELFARE : Inclusive Development

- 37.1. We propose to provide Roof-Top Solar panel based electricity to individual households in areas predominantly inhabited by minorities, like the char areas, remote and hill areas where accessibility is an issue.
- 37.2. We also propose to sincerely implement the Multi Sectoral Development Programme, meant primarily for the development of minorities.
- 37.3. Government will also take steps for providing drinking water facilities to all uncovered minority areas.

38. TEA TRIBE DEVELOPMENT : our gratitude to workers for making Assam famous for its tea

- 38.1. Our Government is committed to ensure quality power to tea garden workers. Individual metering to tea garden quarters will be provided during the financial year. **I propose a sum of Rs. 3400 lakh in the budget of the power Department.**
- 38.2. Now I would come to life's basic - the issue of water, especially potable water in our tea gardens, which remains

a far cry for our tea garden brethren. The absence of safe drinking water poses serious threats to their health, resulting in various water borne diseases, including typhoid, cholera, to name a few. I would like to announce that we propose to provide clear and potable water to all tea garden workers. We are all aware as per the Plantation Labour Act, the tea garden management is responsible for water supply. However, as partner in fulfilling the social commitment to this deprived section of the society, our Government proposes to share the cost of providing drinking water to all tea garden workers in the following manner:

Type of Garden	Share of Govt. contribution
Financially sound	25%
Financially moderately sound	50%
Garden with weak financials	75%
Assam Tea Corporation gardens	100%

- 38.3. I appeal all garden managements to come forward and take initiative to complete the task in a mission mode in a time bound manner.
- 38.4. The hon'ble members are aware about the huge sports talent especially when it comes to football amongst our tea garden youths. This game is played with lots of passion in our tea garden areas which is also a treat to watch. We propose to permanently establish an Inter-garden Chief Minister's Football Cup in tea garden areas will be held in the tea garden areas.

- 38.5. We propose to set up a Patients guest house at Guwahati and Women hostel at Ganeshguri (Guwahati) for welfare of Tea tribes.
- 38.6. In order to provide quality light and reduce power consumption, we will provide LED bulbs, Drinking water facility etc. at the Tea Garden Workers Home.
- 38.7. The Tea Tribes Welfare Department has decided to provide scholarship online enhancing the present rates of scholarship for Pre-Matric and Post-Matric stream.
39. **SPORTS- channelizing the energy of our youth**
- 39.1. "Youth, Yoga and Sports" is energy of our Government. I recall proudly that it is under the leadership of our Chief Minister Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Assam successfully conducted the South Asian Games recently. Not only this, during his stint as Sports & Youth Affairs Minister in the Union Government, our Chief Minister accomplished many feats which have been fondly acknowledged by our Prime Minister as well, during his several public meetings in Assam and elsewhere. It is only natural that sports stands to receive high attention from our Government.
- 39.2. **I propose to construct three state of art stadiums at Dibrugarh, North Lakhimpur and in Kamrup District,** so that positive energies of our young talent are channelized in the proper direction. These stadiums will be built within defined time frames and with this object in mind, I allocate a sum of Rs. 300 lakh initially. The budgetary allocation will step up in the next years.

- 39.3. This August House will be happy to know that "FIFA under-17" will be held in Assam in the year 2017 for the first time. Our Prime Minister's ready acceptance of the proposal submitted by our Chief Minister is worth-mentioning. I appeal to all people of the State to come forward and work together for the successful conduct of "FIFA under-17" which we expect to be spring-board for developing Assam as Sports capital of the country.
- 39.4. I have kept a budgetary allocation of Rs. 100 lakh for preparing the ground for conducting for this historical sporting activity.
- 39.5. When I say Assam as Sports Capital of India, it is not exaggeration. A teenage boxing sensation, Shiva Thapa emerged as one of the most promising boxers in the international arena and became the youngest Indian pugilist at the age of just 18 years to qualify and represented India at the London Olympics Games 2012. He was busy trying his hand at Karate, athletics and football to start with before catching the phenomenal Mike Tyson on television that charmed him into taking up boxing. And, after that, there was no looking back - Shiva Thapa rose on to become one of the brightest stars, and today India's boxing lovers are pinning their hopes on him. He also becomes the first Indian to sign with a foreign franchise USA team in the World Series Boxing (WSB) United State of America (USA).
- 39.6. As a token of our appreciation, **I propose to award him Rs. 10 lakh this year and if he gets a medal in Rio Olympics, our Government proposes to award Rs 1 crore to him.** I appeal to all members of the House and

more than 3 crore people of Assam to join our Chief Minister in praying the Almighty for his success.

- 39.7. Another star in the horizon of Assam is Tanisha Kashyap. I am proud to share that Tanisha Kashyap is the first Assamese Girl to become India's No. 1 in the junior tennis in the country and to represent India in Under-14 Wimbledon that is slated to be held in August of this year. While congratulating her on this rare achievement, **I announce a cash reward of Rs. 5 lakh.**
- 39.8. We shall continue to encourage all budding talent of athletics and sports in the State and extend financial assistance to them.
- 39.9. Further, Yoga facilities will be introduced in all Sports facilities in the State and the requisite assistance and skills will be sourced from the market.
- 39.10. A new Flagship Scheme of the Sports & Youth Welfare Department for organizing State and District level School Games in various sports disciplines for different age groups will be taken up in all the Districts of the State as "State School Games".
- 39.11. Sports Talent Search Scholarship will be given to the students and players of the State for their remarkable performance in the sports competitions at State, National and International level.
- 39.12. We witness, on a regular basis, that there are immensely talented people in the field of sports. However, they do not make it to the national team for want of an enabling platform. Our government is fully committed to support

such talents, who are on the cusp of making to the higher grade. We propose to provide all the enabling mechanism, from high level coaching to sophisticated equipment, so that sport talents from our state get their legitimate dues at the national level. I am making a provision of Rs. 100 lakh on this score.

39.13. A Central Flagship Programme by the name of "Khelo India" will be given top priority to organize sports competitions in rural areas from Block to District and State level.

39.14. The ideals and talents of Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha have been constant sources of inspiration for the generations to come. With an objective to spread his name and message furthermore, especially in the interior areas of the state, **I propose to develop Kalaguru Bishnu Rabha Cultural and Sports Complex in Bindhakata High School, Chabua with an amount of Rs. 250 Lakh.**

39.15. Our Hon'ble Chief Minister recognises the fact that women should not be left behind in availing the opportunities in the growth of service sector and urbanisation. Safe and convenient housing for working women is need of the hour. It is therefore proposed to run Working Women Hostels in Guwahati, Silchar, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Tezpur, Bongaigaon, etc in a phased manner and details of the programme will be worked out very soon to start the same from rented buildings.

I am proposing a budgetary allocation of Rs. 100 lakh each from AIFA.

40. CULTURE - Collective harmony for a better tomorrow

- 40.1. Kumar Bhaskar Barman, a great monarch of Assam in the 7th Century AD, was a patron of Sanskrit studies. During his rule, Vedic culture and Sanskrit language flourished in Assam. As the saying goes, such was the personality of Kumar Bhaskar Barman that Shri Harshavardhan, the famous king of Kanauj, offered the seat of Indra in his Dharma Sansad. **I propose to establish Kumar Bhaskar Barman khetra on the lines of Shreemant Shankardeva Kalakhetra of Guwahati.**
- 40.2. One of the greatest historical figures of our state is Chawlong Sukafa who founded the Ahom Kingdom during the medieval period and provided one of the finest centralized administrations of his times. We owe a great deal to this legendary monarch. Our Government believes in propagating the ideals, culture and values of this great leader and hence **I propose to earmark Rs. 500 lakh for Sukafa Samanway Khhetra at Jorhat.**
- 40.3. We all know that Swami Vivekananda, in his epochal address at Chicago, enthralled the world audience with his profound thoughts on Hindu religion and culture. Our government in his honour has **decided to establish a cultural and research centre in Barak valley to be named after the great Saint.**
- 40.4. Azan Peer was an Islamic Saint who came from Baghdad to spread Sufism in this part of the country. He settled at Gargaon near Sivasagar district. He was influenced by the teachings of Shreemanta Shankardeva and composed Zikir on the lines of compositions of Shreemanta Shankardeva and Mahapurusha Madhadeva. I personally feel that in the context of present situation the world over,

the teachings of Sufism can go a long way in creating lasting peace in the world. I propose to establish an Azaan Peer Khetra in Sivasagar. **I propose to allocate an amount of Rs. 1000 Lakh from Assam Infrastructure Financing Authority (AIFA) in order to establish all the three cultural projects during the current year.**

- 40.5. Shri Aniruddha Deva was a Vaishnavite Saint and was an ardent follower of Shreemanta Sankardeva. He spread Vaishnavite teachings in and around Upper Assam. In order to propagate his teachings, **I propose to allocate a sum of Rs. 100 lakh for development of Aniruddha Deva Cultural Complex in Tinsukia.**
- 40.6 **I also propose to allocate Rs. 50 lakh to complete the construction of Shri Madhab Deva Kalakhetra at Narayanpur.** If the pace of work is fast paced, I am willing to allocate more amounts in the supplementary demands.
- 40.7. The house of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika at Kuthori in Nagaon District and the house of Swahid Kushal Konwar at Sarupathar of Golaghat district will be developed as State heritage monuments. **I am keeping adequate budgetary provisions for this purpose.**
- 40.8. The District Library Auditorium, Silchar caters to the needs of multifarious activities of the public. Our Government feels that the infrastructure of the auditorium a facelift. **I, therefore, propose to allocate a sum of Rs. 100 lakhs in the current budget.**
- 40.9. Initiative has also been taken for setting up of state of the art auditoriums at par with the Rabindra Bhawan at Goalpara and Karimganj.

- 40.10. Work for perpetuating the memory of **late Achyut Lahkar**, the great founder of mobile theatres, and for highlighting his contributions, we propose to develop a memorial at his native village in Barpeta District.
- 40.11. Respected Sir, I cannot over-emphasize the role of Satras in building the composite culture of Assam into one unified social force. They played important role for more than five centuries in the state and influenced the thinking and lives of our people. The vision of Mahapurush Srimanta Sankar Deva reverberates in these nerve centres of culture. We, the people of Assam, feel proud that "Satriya" dance, a master-piece of Satras, is one of the eight classical dances of the country, cementing the unity and integrity.
- 40.12. Our Government desires to assist the Satras, in a small way vis-a-vis their massive contribution, by extending financial assistance to all Satras over a period of time. **This year, we propose to support 50 satras by releasing Rs 50 lakhs per Satra.**
- 40.13. The Assam Sahitya Sabha is completing 100th years during this year and **an amount of Rs. 100 lakh has been proposed as a special grant to Assam Sahitya Sabha** for celebration of Centenary Year in addition to its normal grants.
- 40.14. There is an immense scope for developing the entertainment and cinema in Assam. **I propose a financial assistance of Rs. 15 lakhs for opening of new cinema halls in other areas than Guwahati and also of Rs. 10 lakhs for renovation and reopening of closed cinema halls. This scheme will be named after our beloved Dr. Bhupen Hazarika.**

40.15. We have also decided to complete the remaining works of Dr Bhupen Hazarika Smriti Udyan in Jalukbari and as I propose to allocate Rs. 425.77 Lakh for this purpose. Our Government believes in developing Assam Ved Vidyalay as center of learning and I, therefore, propose to allot Rs. 100 lakh for the Institute during the current year.

41. **SKILL DEVELOPMENT, LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT : Need of the Hour**

41.1. Our Government recognizes the fact that this sector is changing very fast and we need to catch up with the dynamics of the market. This is the very reason, Hon'ble Prime Minister has started a massive programme called, Skill India.

41.2. Looking at the need of the hour, our Government is also considering to start Skill University in the State. The existing skill imparting institutes such as ITIs, Hotel Management and other skill institutes will be brought under the ambit of this University so as to improve quality of the training in order to achieve the highest level of benchmark and standards. Once the University is established, even degree and post-graduate courses can be designed and awarded in our State.

41.3. The most common and immediate necessity that comes to my mind is driving skill. The demand for driver is very high in the State. But, in absence of formal training centres, quality driving and skills of drivers in terms of attitude, behaviour and courtesy is poor. I therefore propose to open ten driving schools in PPP mode. Further the required driving license and other related documentation will also be provided as part of the training by involving the DTOs very closely.

- 41.4. I therefore propose to open ten driving schools, one each at Guwahati, Nagaon, Jorhat, Sibsagar, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Tezpur, Bongaingaon, Dhubri, and Silchar. **I propose to allocate Rs. 300 lakh for each of the School from Employment Guarantee Mission.**
- 41.5. Sir, you may be aware that 5 new ITIs located at Titabar, Pathsala, Rangia, Biswanath Charali and Dudhnoi are almost complete. Despite of that, they have not yet become functional. I propose to make them functional from the next academic year.
- 41.6. I strongly feel that encouraging trade and commerce is essential to increase the employment and extended Shopping hours would unfold new avenues for employment. Rajasthan is a pioneer state in liberal labour laws. Our Government is actively considering to bring out a similar law in the next session of the Assembly.
- 41.7. Government of India had already issued orders extending business hours of shops and malls. Our Government also propose to allow the shops, establishments and malls to be opened upto 12 o' clock midnight in Guwahati. During special occasions, it is proposed to be allowed 24 hours-a-day.
- 41.8. This will enable the shops to engage staff in two to three shifts and to this extent, the employment will increase in the private sector.
- 41.9. As regards social security, State Government proposes to register and issue Social Security Cards to the un-organized workers and accordingly notified 36 Workers Facilitation Centres.

41.10. Workers welfare board has already registered 82414 beneficiary for undertaking welfare activities and providing social security. I propose to bring everyone under Atal Amrit Yojana so that all of them will get insurance cover.

42. EMPLOYEES' WELFARE :
Strength of our government machinery

42.1. In the first part of my speech earlier today, I stated that 'Personal Integrity' is one of the pillars of our new model of governance. As part of this, our Government is seriously considering the issues which strengthen this pillar. First, we realise that the basic needs of 4.25 lakh employees of the Government are required to be addressed. We believe that several of our employees do face financial stress in fulfilling their basic necessities of life. Recently, I have come across an article that Mr Vinod Rai, former Controller of Accounts General has very nicely analysed that the Government employees get "a miserable 2 per cent hike in salary per year" as Pay commission comes only after every 10 years, the Dearness Allowance gets merged into the basic and real comparison works out a very low.

42.2. Therefore, I believe that they fail to meet small dreams of their families such as sending their children for higher education, constructing an own house for spending their retired life. In such situation, it is obvious that the personal integrity is challenged and 'attractions in the system are more'. In this context, our Government propose the following series of measures :

(a) Unlike previous occasion, this Government will endeavour to implement the accepted

recommendations of 7th State Pay Commission from 1st April 2017. This would require about Rs 4800 crore additionally for the resultant benefits in 2017-2018. Meanwhile without waiting for the Commission's report, our Government propose to give other benefits as stated here.

- (b) A housing loan up to Rs. 15 lakhs will be provided to all eligible employees and more priority and focus will be given to Grade-IV and Grade-III employees. We will take the burden of interest of about 3-4% through interest subvention so that employees will get a substantial relief. Government is in touch with HUDCO, SBI and other financial institutions and will very soon come up with the details of the scheme. **I propose to set aside of Rs 10,000 lakh in this budget for the purpose.**
- (c) Higher Education Loans will be provided for the children of State Government employees of all categories and the State Government will provide a loan of Rs 5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh at an interest rate of 4%. **I propose to allocate Rs 500 lakh in this budget** and I will ensure the full amount is provided in due course of the year once the actual requirement of funds would be known. I will further ensure that there is no dearth of funds for any ward of state government employees should he/ she wants to pursue higher studies.
- (d) We are aware that employees in remote areas do not have enough facilities to reside and unable to focus on the job. Our Chief Minister is very

considerate to this fact and desires to extend suitable government facilities such as housing and associate amenities in one complex. To begin with, I propose to develop a Government Employees Residential Complex in Majuli and the complex shall comprise well developed roads, sports facilities and a Central School, etc. Once this model is successful, we will extend it to other district headquarters.

- (e) Fifthly, you are all aware that after introduction of New Pension Scheme (NPS), there is no provision of Gratuity Fund scheme and the employees under the NPS will not get any other amount apart from the Pension. I propose to help these employees in saving of a part of their salary by deducting 6% of the basic pay on which, the State Government will consider paying the interest rate at the RBI's Repo Rate (currently it is 6.5%). This is quite higher than the interest rate of Savings Bank. We will come up with appropriate orders and this scheme would be optional both NPS and non-NPS employees. This will provide a handsome amount to the employees at the time of retirement. Further, the amount, like GPF, can be withdrawn for some select purposes in times of need.
- (f) Sixthly, the need of developing a mini-secretariat in Barak Valley was brought to the notice of our Government. I propose, with the approval of Hon'ble Chief Minister, that a committee to be chaired by an Additional Chief Secretary level officer will be constituted to examine the feasibility of the same and would submit the Report within a period of six months.

- (g) Lastly, we also realise the need of appropriate work space environment. A most modern and green building for housing Directorate Complex proposed from AIFA fund will be constructed at a cost of Rs 470 crore at Betkuchi, Guwahati within next three years.

42.3. Having said that, in order to achieve 'Personal Integrity' in public life, we need to facilitate people's participation also. As I reminded earlier, in the words of our Hon'ble Chief Minister, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Bhakti comes from Bhoy. In Ramayan, Lord Ram prays 'Saagar' to give a way for him to reach SriLanka. After three days of prayer also, "Saagar" does not yield. Then, Lord Ram becomes angry and says to "Saagar", "Bina Bhay ki Preeti Nahi Hoti!". I therefore propose the concept of whistle blower to enforce personal integrity in the system. **A cash award of Rs 25000/- will be provided to anyone whose information, evidence, mobile or video record which would lead to successful apprehension of the bribe-seeker or bribe-giver in the Government. I have allocated Rs 100 lakh as award money in the budget with the Home & Political Department.**

43. **PENSIONS : We care for our retired employees**

43.1. Pension and GPF payments are major sources of harassment to the retired employees. Our Government has decided to undertake series of actions to streamline the matter.

- 43.2. As regards GPF statement, Pension and Public Grievances Department will issue it to all its subscriber through e-mode.
- 43.3. We have already amended the Family Pension Rules to include "Parents" to receive family pension in case there is no other family member of the Government servant to claim family pension as per the existing Rules in line with the Government of India.
- 43.4. During the current year, 1023 pension cases were sanctioned up to the end of June 2016 utilizing the budgeted amount of Rs.30.93 crore.
- 43.5. We have so far settled 11462 Pension and Family Pension cases in respect of Teaching and Non-teaching Staff of Provincialised Schools under Education and Panchayat & Rural Development Department including arrear pending cases out of 20,838 cases. We have decided to induct 25 retired officials of Assam Financial Officers as OSD in the Directorate of Pensions so that all arrear cases are disposed of by 31 March, 2017.

44. SECRETARIAT ADMINISTRATION

- 44.1. For simplification of the system of issuing passes to the Assam Secretariat, e-pass system is launched in coordination with NIC through which application process and issue of entry pass, visitors pass and car pass had been made online. This will result in simplification of the whole process of issuing of passes and will address the security issue of the Assam Secretariat.

- 44.2. For increasing the performance of the employees, 0.5% of the total salary budget has been earmarked for the training purpose of employees.

45. ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND TRAINING

- 45.1. The Assam Right to Public Services Act (ARTPS Act), 2012 as enacted by the A.R & Training Department is now under implementation in the State of Assam except in the 6th Scheduled Areas. In order to implement the Assam Right to Public Services Act, 2012, State Government has taken up a World Bank aided project namely "Assam Citizen Centric Delivery Project" which has initially taken up 18 services of the ARTPS Act.
- 45.2. In order to strengthen their capacity, officers of the State Govt. have been deputed to National and International Institutes of repute. Secretariat officials also have been trained in ISTM, New Delhi.
- 45.3. **Out of total allocated fund of Rs.1000.00 Lakh, Rs.300 Lakh has been kept for various training activities and 700.00 Lakh has been kept for improvement of modernization of Assam Administrative Staff College.**

46. PRINTING & STATIONERY

- 46.1. During the current financial year 2016-2017 an **amount of Rs. 200 lakh have been provided for the new initiatives proposed to be taken by the Department which are :-**
- 46.2. The Assam Government Press has launched the e-gazette in its website from July, 2016. Action is also being taken for uploading of Acts & Rules of Government in its website.

- 46.3. Steps will be taken to connect Printing and Stationery with the web based system under NIC Assam to implement and monitor the Right to Information Act and also updating of records on regular basis.
- 46.4. The Printing and Stationery Department has taken initiative for procurement and installation of modern sophisticated printing machineries.

47. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

- 47.1 Construction of new multi-storied Assam Houses/ Bhawans in New Delhi, Bangalore, Vellore, Chennai & Kolkata along with extension work of Assam House/ Bhawan in Shillong & Mumbai are nearing completion.
- 47.2. Approval for construction of Integrated Directorate Complex at Betkuchi, Guwahati, with an estimated amount for Rs. 47140.00 lakh under Assam Infrastructure Financing Authority (AIFA) has been given during 2015-16. Similar initiative for construction of Integrated District Administration Project (IDAP) is under consideration to bring all Government offices under one roof in all districts.
- 47.3. Assam is always prone to natural calamities and immediate physical mobility of State Government machinery to reach out to the affected areas instantly is highly essential. Infact, such arrangements usually exists in every Government through State owned aircrafts or helicopters.
- 47.4. Flood and earthquake related emergencies can be best addressed by such quick mobility and I propose that the State Government shall have a dependable, assured and permanent system through a leased helicopter. For this

purpose, **I set aside an amount of Rs.430 lakhs for the current year.**

**48. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT :
Strengthening Infrastructure**

- 48.1. Sir, we are all aware that Road maintenance in our State is both challenging and sensitive. I have realised that unless assured and adequate funding is not provisioned and timely and quality works are not executed, the public will continue to suffer due to bad communication.
- 48.2. In view of above, I would like to assure that the Finance Department is **committed to allocate Rs 2000 crore incoming three years for maintenance of roads.** Such allocations were not seen in the recent past under different scheme.
- 48.3. **I propose to allot Rs 600 crore in the current budget to initiate the works immediately and I assure Rs 800 crore in the second year and Rs 600 crore in the third year.** With these earmarked resources, I am hopeful that PWD will ensure that all roads are maintained.
- 48.4. I am happy to inform you that construction of Assam Houses at Kolkata, Vellore, Chennai & Bangalore under the State Budget and Assam House at Delhi under Assam Infrastructure Financing Agency (AIFA) fund is in progress and targeted to be completed within the current financial year. We propose to dedicate all these buildings simultaneously on the first day of next Bohag Bihu to the people of Assam. For this purpose, **I propose to allot Rs. 700 lakhs for completion of Assam House at**

Chennai and Rs. 500 lakhs for Bangalore for the current financial year.

- 48.5. Our Government has also decided to construct new Assam House one each at Chandigarh and Pune. The patients visiting Post Graduate Institute (PGI) Chandigarh and students visiting Pune for studies would find it very useful to avail the facilities in the newly proposed Assam Houses. For this purpose, **I propose to allot Rs 50 lakhs each for these proposed Assam Houses at Pune and Chandigarh.**
- 48.6. Our Government is committed to continue the works related to construction of Kuruwa-Narengi bridge across the river Brahmaputra. At the same time, we will also build a new bridge between South and North Guwahati. The requisite funds from Assam Infrastructure Financing Authority (AIFA) will be used for this purpose.
- 48.7. For improving communication infrastructure, 13 numbers of new National Highways has been declared in the State. Moreover, to avoid traffic congestion the works of 9 nos. of bypasses/realignment at various places are in progress.
- 48.8. Process of introduction of energy efficient Green Building concept will be initiated for all ongoing and future major building projects and environment friendly construction for all future buildings projects.

49. POWER DEPARTMENT: where the real power lies

- 49.1. Power generation today defies political boundaries. Now, it is a matter of the past where the states used to depend upon power generated within their respective geographies. In a unified national grid scenario, power generation

knows no political boundaries of the states. The country today offers seamless generation and transmission capabilities. We have a vision for promoting our power utilities to join hands with other partners to generate power in other states of the country so that our state becomes power surplus in years to come.

- 49.2. Further, you will be happy to know that 3 ongoing generation projects (namely, Namrup Replacement Power Project of 100 MW, Lakwa Replacement Power Project of 70 MW, Myntriang Small Hydel Project of 10.5 MW) are at various stages of implementation. The Myntriang Small Hydel Project of 10.5 MW likely to be commissioned by 31st March, 2017.
- 49.3. I am happy to inform you that Government of India sanctioned electrification of 301 Un-electrified villages, 80 villages under SAGY (Sanshad Adarsh Gram Jyoti Yojana) and feeder strengthening and electrification of partially electrified villages in 27 districts of Assam. In addition 521 remote villages with solar micro-grid/ Standalone system were also sanctioned under Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY).
- 49.4. Moreover, Lower Kopili Hydel Electric Project of 120MW, Barpani Middle-II Hydro Electric project of 24MW, Barpani middle I power Hydel project of 21 MW and Margherita Thermal Power Project of 660 MW are in the pipeline for execution.
- 49.5. Our Government has taken up innovative schemes like installation of Grid interactive Roof top/ Ground mounted SPV (Solar) power plant as well as standalone street light system in different important religious places like SATRAS, temples etc, important historical locations.

- 49.6. We will also start installation of Grid interactive Roof top solar power plant in different residential complexes with net metering facility in phases with the assistance of Ministry of Non Renewable Energy Resources (MNRE).
- 49.7. The Government of Assam will continue with Assam Power Sector Enhancement Programme with the funding from Asian Development Bank which is mostly being utilized in aid of improved distribution network. **I have made a budgetary allocation of Rs. 55163 lakh in this year's budget.**

50. SOIL CONSERVATION

- 50.1. The Soil Conservation Department, Assam undertakes various activities for conservation of Soil and Water so as to increase the crop production as well as maintenance of ecological balance. The Major activities of the Department are Gully Control, Land Development, Nature Conservation, Cash Crop Development, Soil and Moisture Conservation, Waste Land Development and Watershed Management. The Department is implementing various schemes like Plantation, Livelihood Generation for Land less People, Land Development for improvement of Soil moisture regime in the cultivated field and Water Harvesting Structure for providing Irrigation facilities to agricultural field under 100 days programme and up to the month of June, 2016 the Department has achieved about 35% of the target. The entire work will be completed by August, 2016.
- 50.2. Department is also implementing Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) a centrally sponsored

scheme since 2009-10. Up till now all total 372 Nos. of Watershed Projects have been approved by Govt. of India covering 15.77 lakh hectares with a project cost of Rs. 1946.30 Crore. This programme is intended to capture water retention in the catchment area and also utilize the water accumulated in the beel, pond etc. for increase production by way of irrigating the cultivable field during the lean period.

- 50.3. Department is also implementing Bio-Diversity Conservation of Basistha-Bahini since 2009-10 along with watershed treatment under NEC funded project. Out of total project cost of Rs. 496.76 lakh an amount of Rs. 328.76 lakh was spent with physical achievement of 2740 hectare and the project is expected to be completed during the current financial year.

51. **WATER RESOURCES : Strength of the State**

- 51.1. State is very rich in water resources. But all our efforts have been how to protect ourselves from the floods by construction and protection of embankments. Our Government is very keen to reorient the department's role into more productive. We will also give priority to innovations in using new geo-textile technology.
- 51.2. Sir, I am happy to inform that State Government is actively pursuing **World Bank to take up Rs 1500 crore Assam Flood Erosion and River Management modernisation Project.**
- 51.3. Steps are also being taken to modernize the hydro-meteorological data collection system by using modern

technology under National Hydrology Project (NHP) aided by the World Bank.

- 51.4. If dredging the river and recreating the channels found feasible, we will take it up as a mission mode with a single motto to protect the people in the flood prone areas.
- 51.5. Special emphasis will be given to tackle the flood and erosion problem of Majuli Island, the abode of Vaisnavite culture. In this regard, the Department is organizing a workshop shortly inviting all the stakeholders and experts to deliberate on the issues on "Protection of Majuli Island" and to constitute an Expert Committee to advise the state government to take up suitable plans.
- 51.6. For protection of Kaziranga National Park, a **proposal costing Rs. 14150 lakh has been framed for execution under Asian Development Bank** funding and is under the scrutiny of Central Water Commission, New Delhi.

52. IRRIGATION : Untapped potential

- 52.1. Irrigation is critical input for multiple cropping and for increased agriculture productivity. But the irrigation potential is under-utilized in the state and as such, there is an enormous potential and opportunity in the sector.
- 52.2. Our Government proposes to fund 21 Minor Irrigation schemes to create 1974 hectare Irrigation potential. Similarly, we propose to revive 3211 ha of lost potential through repairing and maintenance of 54 irrigation schemes.

53. PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING

- 53.1. Despite of enormous water resources, availability of quality drinking water is a major source of concern in Assam.
- 53.2. Arsenic and Fluoride are emerging threats. This year, PHE is targeting to mitigate the 284 Arsenic affected habitations and 155 Fluoride affected habitations within the current year.
- 53.3. I am happy to state that under World Bank assisted Neer Nirmal Pariyojana in Assam, PHED has undertaken seven mega multi village schemes in selected areas of sixteen development blocks of seven districts of Assam. In the First Phase Kamrup(M), Jorhat & Hailakandi Districts to benefit 1961 habitations.
- 53.4. Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) is a novel programme. About 30.89 lakhs families have been provided with Sanitary Toilets and 232 villages and 19 GPs have been declared Open Defecation Free.
- 53.5. For the current financial year, four Districts viz Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Kamrup (Metro) and Nalbari have been targeted for Open Defecation Free (ODF) status. Besides, 500 Gaon Panchayats (GPs) with 8,50,000 nos. of Individual Household Latrines (IHHL), 192 nos. of Community Sanitary Complexes (CSC) and 50 nos. of Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) have been targeted for construction in this financial year.
- 53.6. I also propose to take a pilot project for DTW scheme using solar system. For this purpose, I set aside Rs 3.75 crore for this purpose.

54. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY : Future of our existence

- 54.1. Science City and the Biotech Park, which are institutions of excellence, are coming up in the State. 249 Bighas of land have been acquired at Tepesia, Guwahati for the Science City. MoU has also been signed by us with National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) to further the process of setting up the Science City. For Biotech Park, around 44 Bighas of land have been settled in favour of Guwahati Biotech Park Society. To start the initial work like acquisition of land, approach road, boundary wall etc. **I am setting aside Rs. 1100 lakh in this budget.**
- 54.2. Constructions of Kokrajhar Planetarium, Nalbari Planetarium and North Lakhimpur Planetarium are nearing completion. These centres will cater to all the scientific needs of the peoples of the region. As these Planetarium will be completed in the next few months, I propose to take up construction of six more Planetarium in the state. The places where Planetarium will come up are: Silchar, Diphu, Kaliabor, Majuli, Bongaigaon and Amingaon. **I am setting aside Rs. 1500 lakh for completion of the ongoing three Planetarium and starting the work of the new ones.**
- 54.3. A Biotech Cell has been set up in the premises of Assam Science Technology and Environment Council (ASTECC) which is catering to various awareness on biotechnological field amongst the masses as well as undergoing research on algal flora and plant tissue culture.

54.4. ASTEC being Nodal Agency for execution of Space Based Information support for Decentralized Planning (SIS-DP) has completed digitization of 28,221 nos. cadastral map sheets which are being integrated in GIS with thematic resource maps for planning and development. These GIS database will be disseminated to Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs). Cadastral maps are shared with Revenue & Disaster Management Deptt. & NIC, Assam for linking with Record of Rights.

55. INFORMATION & TECHNOLOGY

55.1. Within this financial year the Government is targeting to cover 1 lakh people under Digital Literacy program. The programme will be commenced in one Gram Panchayat area in each of 126 Legislative Assembly constituencies.

55.2. Penetration of Internet to the furthest corners of the State is crucial for our state to take developmental activities to the common people. We plan utilizing consulting agencies to assess the gap areas to work and finalise a roadmap and DPR for bringing Internet to every household in the State. Our aim is to connect all the citizens of the state through internet.

55.3 Establishment of IT Parks and Incubation facilities for attracting business and talent is high on the agenda of our government. In addition to Guwahati, we are initiating a Techno Economic Feasibility study for IT Parks at Dibrugarh and Silchar within this year. The above efforts are aimed at promoting investment in Software Services and Electronic Systems, Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) facilities.

55.4. The mega Mission, Chief Minister Samagra Gram Unnayan Yojana' will give a great stimulation for IT initiatives at each revenue village as one of the Sub-Missions of this Mega Mission would be 'e-Gram'. Each revenue village will be connected through high speed and broadband internet connectivity to develop village knowledge Centre involving communities, Youth Clubs etc.

56. TOURISM - Awesome Assam

56.1. The State Government of Assam has embarked on a very ambitious programme for promotion of tourism in Assam to attract National and International Tourists. We are quite aware that nature has blessed Assam with incomparable and bountiful assets that very few places on earth can match. We have places of touristic interest covering wildlife, spiritualism, tea, golf, adventure sports, river cruise and traditional colorful fairs and festivals. In addition, the state is blessed with equable and temperate climatic conditions alongwith warm, hospitable people. Despite being a haven for tourism, the state has not attained the required levels of stature in domestic and International tourism for a variety of reasons. As such we want to take up a few steps in the very first year of our Government to promote tourism by showcasing our strong points and addressing perceptual issues about law and order in the state. **I propose to initiate steps which will help us showcase Assam as a futuristic tourist destination.**

56.2. Earlier Tourism activities in Assam were sporadic and unplanned. Tourism promotion and marketing activities have always taken a back seat. We now propose to aggressively market Assam by engaging Brand

Ambassadors from the Film world or the world of Sports and Culture. We have also engaged a professional Agency to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy. Media strategy and creative materials are being finalized which we propose to launch in the coming tourist season. A brand image of "Awesome Assam" will be created portraying the State's uniqueness and exotic beauty. To popularize the brand 'Awesome Assam', to engage brand ambassadors and for undertaking publicity drives, **I propose to allocate a sum of Rs. 1000 lakh in the current budget.**

- 56.3. We would like to promote beautiful yet unknown destinations belonging to our state like Umrangsu in N.C. Hills which is a place of pristine scenic beauty as an alternative for Barapani, Shillong. I have kept special provision for development of Umrangsu as a tourist destination, and I propose to allocate an amount of Rs. 200 lakh to start the developmental activities including physical infrastructure. In order to boost this place, we have decided to establish the state training academy for the civil servants at Umrangsu, on the lines of IAS Academy at Mussoorie. I am making separate budget allocation for this purpose.
- 56.4. We are all very proud of Majuli, the hub of Assamese Vaishnavite Culture and World Heritage site but we have not done enough to promote it as a tourist destination. I propose to take up a multi-sectoral approach to make Majuli a world famous destination in a sustainable and eco- friendly manner. It would include development of river basins, introduction of rapid ferry services, navigation facilities, luxury liners & cruises, home stay facilities, development of resorts and hotels for different

income groups and promote Satras as religious - cum-cultural centers.

- 56.5. We have also taken up a proposal for getting funds under Corporate Social Responsibility from the public sector.
- 56.6. Assam has historic tea Industry, but we have not been able to harness the tourism potential of the tea gardens. To instil life in this sector and also to entice tourists from abroad, I propose to construct a state of the art Tea Museum in Dibrugarh which will give tourists a 360 degree idea on tea industry. Golf Tourism shall also be promoted and shall be integrated with eco and tea tourism. **I am allocating Rs. 120 lakh for developing the Tea Museum.** Additional sum will be allocated after start of the activity.
- 56.7. I need to mention here that Hajo is a sacred place, where three religions - Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists meet. Hajo has a large number of temples, the chief among them being Hayagriva-Madhab Temple. Hajo is also considered to be a Muslim pilgrimage centre, since the mosque known as the Pao Mecca built by Pir Ghiasuddin Aulia is situated here. We propose to develop tourism infrastructure at Hajo and for this **I am making an allocation of Rs. 100 lakh from Assam Infrastructure Financing Authority (AIFA).**
- 56.8. We have taken up development of Kamakhya Temple under PRASAD scheme of Government of India and the project will be implemented to upgrade the infrastructure of the Temple and to make it a globally renowned religious place. **I am allocating a sum of Rs. 1679.52 lakh to implement the PRASAD Scheme in this budget.** We

are also going to implement Government of India's Swadesh Darshan Scheme to promote wildlife tourism in Assam.

- 56.9. It is important to highlight before the world the rich cultural heritage of the numerous tribes who inhabit our beautiful state. North east state pavilions and integrated tribal culture research/demonstration project will be one such initiative in that direction. **North East State Pavilions Exhibition centre is proposed to be set up at Guwahati.** This aims at representing the States in exhibition form, covering all tangible and intangible aspects of State, tourism etc. This centre will demonstrate the tribal culture and people of entire North Eastern states. This centre will also carry out research activities related to culture, life, living etc.

We propose to develop this under PPP model.

- 56.10. With these initiatives, I hope, we will be able to change the very face of Assam Tourism and take it to Global arena.

57. ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS : preservation holds the key

- 57.1. It is often difficult to say what has made our state famous outside the confines of our country? There could be a close tie between Assam Tea and the one horned Rhino. Gradually, it is the one horned Rhino which has proved its edge over others. The recent visit of the royal couple from Britain is a testimony to this fact. Rhino, overtime, has become the identity of the state. We need to preserve our identity before we lose them at the hands of poachers. We need to raise the first company of Special Rhino Protection Force with 112 personnel with Central

Assistance to be deployed at Kaziranga National Park for Protection of One Horned Rhino and other wild life. While we are deploying the Special Rhino Protection Force with special central assistance, modernization of existing forest battalion with sophisticated weapons is another priority to combat the nefarious designs of the poachers. In order to procure modern arms and ammunition, **I am proposing to allocate a sum of Rs. 1000 lakh in the current budget. If utilised expeditiously, I am willing to allocate additional funds in this year's supplementary budget.**

- 57.2. A programme of skill development for youths living on fringe villages of Reserved Forest and Protected Areas will be taken up under Assam Forest and Biodiversity Conservation Project.
- 57.3. Consolidation of forest Boundaries will be carried out through construction of permanent boundary pillars in vulnerable Reserve Forest and Protected Areas on Priority basis.
- 57.4. Payment of ex-gratia/compensation to person/families affected by depredation by wild Elephant and other wild life upto 31st March, 2016 covering 14,297 cases will be taken up on priority basis. **I am allocating a sum of Rs. 200 lakh for this purpose.**
- 57.5. Laika and Dadhia forest reserves are adjacent to the famous Dibru saikhowa National Park. It has been a challenge to shift the existing populace of these forest areas to the mainland. In order to shift them with proper livelihood pattern, we need to take up a series of activities. **I am proposing to allocate a sum of Rs. 1000 lakh to**

start the process of shifting the populace from these two reserve forest areas.

58. TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

- 58.1. Transport Department has taken steps for construction of 15 different utility vessels. The passenger vessels are especially designed for operation in lesser draft position in between Majuli based ferry service and at Dhubri on the river Brahmaputra with the provision for carrying heavy vehicles. It is worth mentioning here that, IWT, Assam will complete construction and commission of 7 (seven) vessels out of 15 (fifteen) within 2016-17.
- 58.2. Our Government is acutely conscious of the need for using technology and e-governance for increasing transparency and enhancing citizen satisfaction. The ongoing Sarathi and Vahan shall be made fully operational in all districts. These measures shall introduce the information system needed for effective monitoring, checking leakages and improving the efficiency of revenue collection.
- 58.3. We also propose to set up a mini ISBT at Khanapara to facilitate the passengers travelling to upper Assam. Also, a feasibility study shall be conducted to optimally develop the land at Paltan Bazar, Rup Nagar in Guwahati and also in other districts.
- 58.4. The waterways in Assam can serve as drivers of economic growth. Unfortunately, owing to years of neglect, the inland water transport is still underdeveloped in the state. The department understands the urgent need of utilizing the immense potential of our waterways. It is with this objective that the Department shall implement Phase 1 of

the World Bank Project of 150 million USD (approx Rs. 1000 crore). The project shall commence in the current year and shall address the long standing need of restructuring and revamping the IWT sector, by developing the much needed strategic vision, capacity development, fleet modernization etc.

58.5. Further, I believe that the district level infrastructure of the Transport department is required to be improved. Accordingly **I propose Rs 200 lakhs in Non-Plan for construction of DTO offices at Majuli, Charaideo, Hojai, Biswanath and South Salmara during the current year.**

59. GUWAHATI DEVELOPMENT : Smart City in Making

59.1. I am happy to share with you by the first day of Bohag month, we will be able to give drinking water to parts of West Guwahati and parts of South Guwahati through JnNURM and JICA projects respectively.

59.2. Sir, I need to inform the House that due to enormous delay in implementation of JnNURM water project, Central Government foreclosed the project and now the State Government is compelled to bear the burden. **I therefore propose to allocate Rs.5150 lakhs so as to ensure completion of the west Guwahati drinking water project.**

59.3. You are all aware that Guwahati city was selected as one of the Smart Cities under Smart City Mission. A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) under the name and style "Guwahati Smart City Development Agency Limited" has been formed to implement the project.

- 59.4. This project envisages about Rs 2256 crore investment over a period of five year in order to improve the quality of life in the city. Out of this, GOI's contribution is Rs 488 crore and State's contribution is Rs 500 crore. The balance amount of Rs. 1276 is required to come from convergence of existing programmes like AMRUT etc (Rs 786 crore) and through PPP (Rs.468 crore).
- 59.5. Main components of Smart City Mission are Area Based Programme, namely, development of Bharalu, Mora Bharalu, Deepor Beel, Borsola Beel, and Brahmaputra River front and Pan-city Development like Integrated ICT based application for public transport, street-scaping etc. Other programmes of Power Department for underground cabling etc will also be taken up simultaneously.
- 59.6. **For the current year, I set aside Rs 19600 lakh from the budget for releasing the central share.**
- 59.7. Floods of Guwahati are a major concern for us. We are taking with Asian Development Bank (ADB) to undertake a massive and technologically viable solution and we are hopeful that the details will be shared with you once the discussions with ADB come to conclusion.
- 59.8. Green Lungs of Guwahati are fast disappearing. Our Chief Minister's pet subject is greening Guwahati. Taking inspiration from him, I propose to create a master plan of open spaces and parks of greater Guwahati and interconnect them on the lines of Singapore's Park Interconnect Model and develop them. This project will be called, GOPI Network (Guwahati Open spaces and Park Integrator) Network. Citizens can move by foot, bicycle or bus from one park to another seamlessly. This would

also cover the water bodies. To begin with , Our Government has decided to develop an international standard botanical park on the site of old Jail complex in Fancy Bazar. **I propose to allot Rs 100 lakh for the preparatory works.**

- 59.9. Our Government's vision is to develop the city as Green city. It is proposed to erect solar panel on each and every electrical post and generate solar energy not only for the street lighting but also to contribute to the electricity grid.
- 59.10. Sir, you might have noticed that the Foot-Over-Bridges (FOBs) constructed in Guwahati are not being used by the pedestrians because they are not user-friendly. I therefore propose to install lifts at the FOBs for safety and better traffic.
- 59.11. Parking space has become a very scarce in the city. It is therefore proposed to provide additional FAR if the residential and commercial buildings are ready to create the adequate parking space.
- 59.12. I am also happy to inform you that we are expediting the multi-storied car parking in city. **I propose to allot Rs. 1363.95 lakhs for Shradhanjali Kanan Multi-storied car parking and Rs 500 lakhs for MMC Hospital car parking so that both the utilities would be ready within this financial year.**
- 59.13. Ropeway project from Guwahati to North Guwahati has been taken up for encouraging Tourism in the State and shall make efforts to complete at the earliest. **I set aside an amount Rs 2349.85 lakhs in the budget for this purpose.**

59.14. Online Building Permission with Automated Scrutiny Software for issue and renewal of trade licence will be completed within prescribed time period.

60. URBAN DEVELOPMENT : Urban centres as growth engines

60.1 Rapid urbanisation is a growth-driver provided the urban centres are developed with proportionate pace by strengthening the infrastructure. Our Government proposes to implement the newly launched scheme Housing for all (Urban) Mission under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in nine towns namely Guwahati, Nagaon, Silchar, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Tezpur, Jorhat, Kokrajhar and Dhubri.

60.2. Further, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) will also be implemented in four towns namely Guwahati, Silchar, Nagaon and Dibrugarh during 2016-17.

60.3. Under Swachh Bharat Mission, it is proposed to construct Individual Household Toilets, Community Toilets and Public Toilets.

60.4. Skill development in Urban areas is a great need. Under National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM), our Government is determined to undertake a massive skilling programme in all urban areas. For this a focussed programme called, Dakshat UTKARSH (Urban Transformation through Knowledge and Right Skills with Holistic approach) was already inaugurated recently at Guwahati.

60.5. You will be happy to know that our Government has also initiated steps to submit a proposal for World Bank aided Externally Aided Project (EAP) for development of municipal areas and improvement of **Governance in urban areas at an estimated amount of Rs 1200 crore.**

61. HILLAREAS DEVELOPMENT : Pristine and Progress

61.1. Hill areas of Assam are jewels and green lungs for the State. I am happy to note that N.C Hills Autonomous Council has taken up initiative to undertake skill development programmes for the youth to prepare them for new ventures in Tourism, Industries, Handloom & Textile, Veterinary, Fisheries, Forestry, Agriculture & Horticulture.

61.2. The construction works of Medical College at Diphu will be expedited to make it operational early. The existing 50-bedded Sub-divisional Civil Hospital at Hamren will be upgraded to 200 bedded District Hospital in phased manner.

61.3. **I also propose to allocate an amount of Rs.29239 lakh for Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council and of Rs.12531 lakh for North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council for the current year under Annual Plan.**

62. BODOLAND TERRITORIAL COUNCIL : Dawn of a new era

62.1. As Hon'ble Members are aware, on February 10, 2003, the Bodo Accord was signed resulting in the creation of Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC). It was a historic day, targeted at meeting the legitimate aspirations of the people of this vast area. This has paid dividends. It has resulted

in lasting peace in the region. It is showing signs of development in all spheres. Today, the jurisdiction of the BTC extends over 3082 villages it has been given legislative powers over 40 subjects. We are committed to making concerted efforts to fulfil the aspirations of the Bodo people relating to their cultural identity, language, education and economic development.

- 62.2. On the development agenda, as per norms, **I propose to allocate a sum of Rs.46266 lakhs as devolution of plan fund for the current year.**
- 62.3. Secondly, there are several on-going schemes of SPA, etc and BTC proposed to make necessary budgetary provision for the same. I propose to allot Rs. 88352 crore in the current budget on this count.
- 62.4. However, I would like to reiterate that this amount will be released only if the State Government receives fund from the Centre and this cannot be treated as reference point for future.
- 62.5. I also propose to set apart Rs 42102 lakhs in the state budget so that the amount released by Niti Aayog in the last week of March 2016 can be drawn and released to BTC as per the approved guidelines.
- 62.6. Thirdly, although no fund has been received from the Central Government, I propose to make a provision of Rs 10000 lakhs in the current budget as PM's package for BTC so that BTC can draw the funds as soon as we receive them from the Centre.
- 62.7. Fourth, though we had made an announcement to establish a medical college in Kokrajhar, no fund was

allocated nor any action was taken. I assure to take concrete steps in this regard. I have made separate announcement in the budget speech under the health sector. I am making an initial allocation of Rs.100 lakh for starting the preliminary works.

62.8. I am, therefore, happy to sum up that I propose to provision an amount of Rs. 186820 Lakhs for BTC altogether in the current year.

62.9. I would also like to state that after abolition of Planning Commission and with the impending merger of plan and non-plan, fiscal devolution for the Sixth Scheduled areas would undergo a massive re-orientation. We are committed to full devolution of all sources of revenue, as per legal entitlement, to the Sixth Schedule Areas. State Government is, therefore, considering to constitute a Committee to work out a detail mechanism to address the matter.

63. ASSAM LEGISLATURE : Temple of Democracy

63.1. Respected Speaker Sir, this August House where we sit and take decisions actually represents the will and the aspirations of three crore plus people of Assam. This Assembly is the solid link between the people and the government. The prime function of the Legislative Assembly is to enact legislations to empower the people on every front - social, economic and political, to exercise control over Executive and making it accountable in all respects.

63.2. This August House, over the years, has been a witness to many important decisions and rulings delivered through powerful speeches of its esteemed members.

- 63.3. Hon'ble Members, we are going to enter a historical mark of 50 years, in 2021, which incidentally coincides with the completion of 5 years of our government. This will be a solemn occasion. I appeal to the Hon'ble Speaker to consider the matter and take suitable steps for organizing the golden jubilee function as deem fit and proper.
- 63.4. Coming to some initiatives, for the first of its kind in the State, I am introducing a Scheme from Parliamentary Affairs for exposure visits of Political Science students of our state to the Assam Legislative Assembly. For this purpose, I propose to set aside an amount of Rs. 100 lakhs in the current budget.
- 63.5. I have been quite concerned about the pace of construction of the new building of Assam Legislative Assembly. We need to complete this at the earliest. I would like to assure the House that finances on this count will not be a problem. I propose to set aside Rs 2500 lakh from this budget by allocating Rs 1500 lakh from Plan and Rs. 1000 lakh from Non-plan.

64. **ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE AND LEGAL EDUCATION**

- 64.1. Sir, a strong judiciary is essential for a vibrant democracy. Our Government believes in a strong judiciary. We are committed to assist the State judiciary in every way so that their functioning is not hampered because of infrastructure related handicaps.
- 64.2. Our Government believes in close coordination with judiciary coupled with highest standards of professionalism at every level in the interest of delivery

of quality public good. Both the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary have been very closely coordinating with the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Guahati High Court on a variety of issues related to administration of justice and legal education.

- 64.3. We take special pride in partnering with the State Judiciary in establishing a premier National Law University and Judicial Academy (NLUJA) at Guwahati for imparting quality legal education. Construction works of this Academy is in full swing and the 1st phase construction is likely to be completed within 15th August, 2016. I propose to set aside Rs. 1605 lakhs for this purpose.
- 64.4. Apart from that, I propose to allocate a sum of Rs 519 lakhs for important major infrastructure related works of the Judiciary.
- 64.5. I also realize that there is a need for further expansion of NLUJA and there is a need for land acquisition. I therefore propose to provide full amount of Rs. 3500 lakh in the current budget towards the cost of land acquisition.
- 64.6. There is also a proposal from Guahati High Court for upgradation of standards of administration under the 14th Finance Commission award for an amount of Rs 1550 lakhs. I propose to allocate this amount in full in this budget. Apart from this, the request for including the committed liabilities for 13th FC was also considered and I now propose to provide Rs 793.86 lakhs for this purpose.
- 64.7. Further, there is a proposal for construction of underpass between the old and new building of Guahati High Court and we received a proposal for allotment of Rs.1696 lakhs.

I set aside the full amount of Rs. 1696 lakhs in the current budget.

- 64.8. I believe that Lok Adalats are the most effective tool for speedy administration of justice. Our Government will provide all necessary support, both financial and logistic, for conducting Lok Adalats in massive scale and we shall seek the support of State Judiciary.
- 64.9. Construction of Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Centres have been completed in the districts of Darrang, Nalbari and Tinsukia and under progress in the districts of Bongaigaon, Sonitpur, Dhemaji, Cachar, Golaghat, Jorhat and Dibrugarh under the 13th Finance Commission Award. Construction of ADR Centres in other Districts will also be taken up in a phased manner under the 14th Finance Commission Award.

65. CITIZENS : the centre of our governance

- 65.1. Our government believes in good governance which essentially means putting people at the centre of the development process. We have multiple issues to deal in this realm, ranging from accountability, transparency to dissemination of proper and timely information.
- 65.2. We do realize that the trust of our citizens in the governance has been gradually eroded over time. This trust needs to be restored. We know that restoring trust will take some time. It will require sizeable effort from our side. However, I must assure the August House that we are committed to tread ahead on this road less travelled.
- 65.3. As regards accountability to citizens, there is general impression that the Government is lagging behind the

expectations of the people. Implementation of the Assam Right to Public Services Act, 2012 (ARTPS Act) will be required to be monitored and our Government is committed to gear up the systems to ensure compliance to the Act at every level.

- 65.4. This would be further strengthened by taking up 18 services of the ARTPS Act initially for implementation through the World Bank aided project namely "Assam Citizen Centric Delivery Project".
- 65.5. We are deeply concerned with the affairs of Assam Public Service Commission (APSC). We are proposing a policy for overhauling the APSC (Assam Public Service Commission) to facilitate smooth, efficient and accountable functioning in line with the recommendation of Sri Tapan Lal Barua Committee and Sri M.P. Bezbarua Committee.
- 65.6. Sir, I am happy to inform the August House that our Chief Minister is very keen to strengthen the critical cadre in the State Bureaucracy, Assam Civil Services. We propose to establish a Training Academy at Umrangshu, a picturesque locale which will give a suitable training environment and also develop the requisite sensitivity to the difficulties faced by the population in remote and backward areas.

66. CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA

- 66.1. I have spoken of participation of people in the governance. Our strength of the society in Assam is civil society. We have a large number of NGOs. Our Government is keen to unleash the positive energy of these NGOS in building the society. But the existing registration system is archaic

and manual. It does not provide any reliable data base about the live societies/NGOs. I propose to strengthen the office of Registrar of Firms and Societies and would like to extend online facility for registration of all NGOs. I also propose to request all existing NGOs to register themselves afresh before 31st March 2017 so that the data can be updated and Government can consider involving the active NGOs in development of the State.

- 66.2. Our Government is alive to the issue of long pending dues to print media against the government advertisements. The prime reasons for such huge pending bills emanate from the fact that we issue advertisements without assessing the reach and the target audience we are trying to reach out through such campaigns. Henceforth, we propose to streamline the entire mechanism for issue of government advertisement so that newspapers do not get deprived of their rightful payment in time. To clear the outstanding liabilities created overtime on this count, I propose to make an allocation of Rs 3000 lakh I would also assure our media people that we will put in a system in such a way that payments will be released monthly within obligatory FOC.

67. FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES : Taming Inflation and Better Food Security

- 67.1. Inflation hits the poor the most. Our Government wants to put a safety net for him. Previous Government has started "Amar Dukaan" at GPS level to sell essential commodities at lower prices than the market. We shall make efforts to improve their functioning.
- 67.2. But this scheme is not able to cover the urban areas. Secondly, our Government desires to strike the problem

at the foundation. Inflationary trends strengthen the monopolistic and cartelisation tendencies. We need to break this vicious circle. Therefore my government proposes to deal with three-pronged strategy:

- First, price stabilisation fund will be provided within next three months after a detailed study.
- Secondly, functioning of Amar Dukaans at GPSS level will be strengthened by involving citizen committees.
- Thirdly, in urban areas, a suitable PPP model will be worked out to ensure the essential commodities will be available at lower prices in select shops/ malls, etc.

67.3. Sir, I would like to share with you that under National Food Security Act, 2013, 2.52 crore beneficiaries are currently covered. All AAY card holders are being provided with 35 Kg of rice each at a subsidized rate of Rs. 3.00 per Kg per month. All priority Household card holders are provided with 5 Kg of rice per member at Rs. 3.00 per Kg per month. The rice is delivered upto the door step of FP Shop. The transportation cost and margin money are being borne by the Central & State Govt. at the ratio of 75:25.

67.4. As it is very important programme, I propose to make a full budgetary allocation of Rs 31700 lakh for margin money (commission) of the GPSSs and Rs 30800 lakh towards transportation cost of food grains. Thus, a total of about Rs. 62500 lakh, which included central share, is being provided in the budget. Hence, I urge all concerned

to ensure timely supply of the requisite quantity of food grains to the identified beneficiaries. At the same time, I would like to make it clear that any anomalies in this regard at the cost of poor families will not be tolerated.

- 67.5. Sir, you will be happy to know that about 30000 BPL families will receive LPG cylinder at the nominal cost of Rs 1500/- and even this amount can also be adjusted with the subsidy entitled by the beneficiary. This will be implemented in the State under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) will be implemented in the State within this financial year.

PART-II

Our State derives revenue mainly from commercial taxes, state excise duty, motor vehicle tax, land revenues, stamp duty & registration and royalties.

2. It gives me immense pleasure to state that, for the first time, the people of Assam have been given an opportunity to participate in the Budget making process by offering their suggestions/ views.

I am sure that the August House will be happy to know that some of the suggestions, more particularly, on resource mobilization, are really worth noting. For example:

- (i) Allowing advertisement on ASTC buses,
- (ii) Electronically linking mouzadar office for instant land revenue collection,

- (iii) Environmental tax on polluting industries,
 - (iv) Deduction of 2% from salary of Government employees for building infra-structure and return of the amount at the time of retirement.,
 - (v) Green tax on vehicle passing through National Park areas.
3. I am grateful for all the suggestions. Some of the suggestions are really innovative & thought provoking. Our Government will take its final views/decisions after further deliberation.
3. As I earlier mentioned, an analysis of the revenue trend of recent years reveals that the internal revenue generation of the State is not so encouraging. As promised in the white paper on state finances, we have started series of actions with a mission mode approach of ReSTART Assam. Some of these are:
- (i) Tax base has been enlarged by roping in all the liable dealers and organizations under all Acts;
 - (ii) Timely payment of tax/TDS by the liable dealers/ Departments has been ensured;
 - (iii) Position of payment of tax by big dealers and revenue trend of important commodities are being closely monitored to realize due taxes;
 - (iv) Stringent actions like issue of warrant of arrest, attachment of property against habitual defaulters are being taken;

- (v) Regular vigilance activities have been stepped up by forming flying squads at Road/Railway/Airlines/Transporters' godowns and dealers' premises and vulnerable points to curb evasion and avoidance of taxes;
- (vi) Check-gates operation is streamlined to check the evasion of taxes in case of goods exported outside the state and imported to the state;
- (vii) Department is planning to introduce for its dealers, tax payers the facility for making online requisition of delivery note, road permit and dispatch note by furnishing details of consignment to be shipped along with consignor, vehicle and transporter details;
- (viii) Steps are being taken to introduce for its dealers, tax payers the facility for making online application for registration under the Other Taxes on Income and Expenditure (Professional Tax), Luxury Tax (Hotel and Lodging Houses), Amusement and Betting Tax;
- (ix) E-refund- Steps are being taken to introduce for its dealers, tax payers the facility for submission of refund applications online;
- (x) Online TDS return filing- Department is planning to introduce online facility for filing TDS returns by Tax Deducting Authorities;
- (xi) Payment Gateway Integration- Department is planning to integrate with SBI e-pay for collection of taxes electronically under all taxation acts. This

facility would enable dealers to pay taxes through banks other than the six authorized banks (SBI, IDBI, Union Bank, United Bank, HDFC and ICICI);

- (xii) For providing online services to the above, Department is planning to renovate its existing data centre and enhance its capacity. In addition to data centre renovation, existing hardware (that includes server, field level, and networking) would also be upgraded.

Commercial Tax Department

IT system

4. Robust IT backbone is now an essential ingredient for providing better and efficient services to the trade and industry. With our existing IT infrastructure, we have already been providing many e-services for the benefit of trade and industry like e-registration, e-payments, e-return, e-issuance of 'C' & 'F' forms amongst others. To prevent the leakages, we have already started capturing the details of the transit passes of the enroute states at our check gates in order to match the declaration in our checkpoints with those made in other states. I propose online issuance of delivery notes, dispatch notes and road permits shortly. However, the present decade-old software has outlived its utility and is a cause of concern for both the tax administration as well as for the tax payers.
5. In order to promote ease of doing business in Assam, to ensure efficient and timely tax collection and to reduce the compliance cost, the Commercial Tax Department has geared itself to adopt a new software system from the

next year. The NISG (National Institute of Smart Governance) has already been engaged to prepare a DPR for the new software under a World Bank assisted initiative.

Good and Services Tax (GST) Preparedness

6. GST, which will bring about paradigm shift in the entire indirect tax system by replacing most of the indirect taxes of Centre and States with a one point single tax, foster a single common market, eliminate cascading effect, reduce compliance cost for the tax payers through single registration, single return and payment, reduce litigations, optimize efficiency and equity of the system using the latest technology and enhance co-operative federalism.
7. State taxes that would be subsumed under the GST, amongst others, are:
 - (i) State VAT
 - (ii) Central Sales Tax
 - (iii) Luxury Tax
 - (iv) Entry Tax (all forms)
 - (v) Entertainment and Amusement Tax (except levied by the local bodies)
8. Our State is gearing up to meet the challenges of GST. The State has already decided to adopt the Model-2 wherein both the front end and the backend GST software being developed by GST Network (GSTN) through Infosys will be made available to the State. This will help

both the department and the trade & industry to have access to a quality IT system. The IT hardware and the network connectivity of the department are also proposed to be upgraded through a World Bank assisted project. The World Bank is already assisting the State in a consultancy for "Institutional and GST readiness assessment".

9. For a smooth transition to GST, the awareness about the GST law and Rules is a prerequisite for the department, trade & industry and other stakeholders. The Commercial Tax Department has taken steps, in consultation with Government of India, to train master trainers so that they can, in turn, train all the officers of the tax department and the representatives of different stakeholders in GST law in a phased manner.

Extension of the date for filing annual return and CA's Audit report

10. Considering the long standing demand of the trade and industry for permanent extension of the last date for filing of annual return and CA's audit report, I propose to extend the time limit upto 31st December from the present time limit of 31st October for dealers whose gross turnover exceeds 1 crore in a year. I further propose to extend the last date for filing of annual return for other dealers upto 30th September from the present last date of 31st May.

Tax Surveillance Wing & penal measures

11. There are many unscrupulous traders and transporters who always strive to find out ingenious modus operandi for tax evasion and this menace has become more acute

with the use of information technology by such dealers/transporters. Therefore, to detect and tackle the cases of evasion of taxes and malpractices, I propose to create a 'Tax Surveillance Wing' with adequate resources in the Office of the Commissioner of Taxes which will have jurisdiction throughout the State of Assam.

12. As I have already said tax evasion has become a menace with its growing alarming proportion. I want to put in place a stringent mechanism so that the transporters abetting and dealers indulging in such evasion think twice before doing such malpractices. To have a deterrent effect on the habitual offenders, I propose that for the first offence of tax evasion, the transporters and dealers will be liable to tax & penalty, for the second offence, in addition to tax & penalty, criminal proceedings will be instituted against transporters/dealers which may lead to imprisonment upto 7 years and in case of third such offence, besides tax & penalty, criminal proceedings will be instituted against transporters/dealers which may lead to imprisonment upto 14 years.

Customer Prize scheme

13. To encourage the customers to obtain bills / invoices for goods purchased, the Government proposes to introduce "Submit Bill, Get Prize Scheme". This will enhance compliance on the part of the sellers /dealers, resulting in more revenue to the State exchequer. Further, it is proposed to ban use of thermal paper for issue of bills or cash memos to the buyers.

Tax proposals

14. Tax is as old as civilization. Tax is not a static concept but a dynamic one and taxation policy needs to be aligned with the rapidly changing economic scenario. Now, I turn to my tax proposals:
15. **e-rickshaw** : Of late, e-Rickshaw has become a popular means of transportation and the use of e-Rickshaw is spreading fast. As a green initiative, I propose to reduce the VAT rate from 14.5% to 6%.
16. **Candle** : Currently, Candle is taxable at 6% and its raw material i.e. Paraffin Wax is also taxable at 6%, of course with the facility of set off for tax paid on Paraffin Wax. Candle is exempted from tax in our neighbouring State. Hence, as a counteractive measure to trade diversion, I propose to exempt Candle from VAT.
17. **Citronella oil** : Currently, Citronella oil is taxable at 14.5%. To give a boost to Citronella plantation activity in the State and considering the medicinal properties of Citronella oil, I propose to reduce the VAT rate to 6%.
18. **Gur, jaggery and edible variety of rub gur** : Gur, jaggery & edible rub gur are currently taxable at 6%. Considering that some portions of these are used by economically weaker section of the society, I propose to reduce the VAT rate to 2% on these items.
19. **Tamarind & Khandsari** : Tamarind & Khandsari presently attract 6% VAT. Considering that these items are meant for consumption by people at large, I propose to exempt them from VAT.
20. **Baby feeding bottles and nipples** : Baby feeding bottles and nipples are currently taxable at 6%. I propose to reduce the VAT rate on Baby feeding bottles and nipples to 2%.

21. **Kerosene stoves and their parts :** Kerosene stoves are mainly used by the common people who are not so economically well off. Kerosene stoves are currently taxable at 14.5%. I propose to bring down the tax rate on Kerosene stove to 2%.
22. **Packaged drinking water :** Packaged drinking water is currently taxable at 14.5% whereas different varieties of fruit drinks are taxable at 6%. It is paradoxical that drinking water is being taxed at higher rate and I, therefore, propose to reduce the tax rate to 6% on packaged drinking water.
23. **LED & CFL :** Energy saved is energy generated. To encourage the use of LED bulbs and lamps as electricity saving measure, I propose to reduce existing VAT from 14.5% to 6% on sale of LED bulbs, LED tubes and their holders. I also propose to tax CFL bulbs as an unclassified item.
24. **Mekhela Chadar :** Mekhala Chadar is presently exempt from VAT. It is observed that Mekhala Chadars are also made in other states and brought to Assam for sale. I propose to restrict the benefit of tax exemption only to such indigenous Mekhala Chadar which are produced locally and sold in Assam.
25. **Bitumen emulsion :** Currently, bitumen is taxable at 5% in the Fourth Schedule of the Assam VAT Act, 2003. Both bitumen and bitumen emulsion are used for the same purpose. To promote green technology and to avoid classification dispute, I propose to treat bitumen emulsion at par with bitumen. However, I also propose to tax them at 6% in the Fourth Schedule.

26. **Gold bullion & gold ornaments :** In order to encourage sale of Gold bullion through MMTC (Metals and Minerals Trading Corporation of India), Guwahati to local Swarna Silpis, I propose to reduce the VAT rate from 1% to 0.75%. Further, to provide a competitive edge to local manufacturers of handmade jewellery, I propose to hike tax rate from 1% to 2% on readymade gold ornaments which are mainly imported from outside.
27. **Bamboo based industries in small scale and medium scale :** In order to promote bamboo cultivation and to give an impetus to bamboo based industries in small and medium scale in the State, I propose to exempt them from VAT for a period of three years.
28. **Benefit of Input Tax credit on purchase of bamboo by Hindustan Paper Corporation:** Hindustan Paper Corporation (HPC) has got two paper manufacturing units in Assam. It is really a matter of utmost concern for us that both the units of HPC, which have provided employment to about 2100 persons, are struggling for their survival. Therefore, as a goodwill gesture and keeping in mind the interests of the people engaged there, I propose to give the benefit of input tax credit to both the units of HPC on purchase of bamboo for three years. This measure will result in saving of the entire amount of tax currently paid on purchase of bamboo and will contribute in revival of both the units.
29. **Reduction in Entry Tax on Hospital Equipments :** Entry tax exemption is available to the Health Institutions in public sector and medical colleges. Such Health Institutions in public sector alone cannot meet the ever-

increasing health care requirement of the people of the State. The participation of private sector in health care is equally important. To give a fillip to the investment in private sector health care service, I propose to reduce the rate of entry tax on all hospital equipments from 2% to 1%.

30. **Relief to small tea growers :** The small tea growers have been playing a pivotal role in the economy of Assam by contributing around more than 30% to the tea production of our State besides generating huge employment avenues. In recognition of their contribution and to promote & encourage tea cultivation by small growers in the State, I propose to give them relief on two counts: under the Assam Taxation (On Specified Lands) Act and under the Assam Agricultural Income Tax Act.
- (a) **Reduction of Specified Land Cess for Small Tea Growers :** I propose to reduce the Specified Land Cess from the current rate of 25 paise per kg to 15 paise per kg of green tea leaf payable by a small grower if area of specified land does not exceed forty hectares. This proposal is expected to benefit small tea growers by more than Rs. 1000 lakh. This tax will further be reduced in phased manner for small tea growers in my next budget. I would like to inform this August House that we are going to increase the allocation of fund for benefit of tea garden workers through Tea Welfare Department.
- (b) **Raising the exemption limit of agricultural income tax :** Currently, small tea growers/assessee other than companies, are not liable to pay agricultural income tax on agricultural income upto Rs. one lakh. In order to provide a big relief to agricultural income tax payers and

more particularly to small tea growers, I propose to raise such exemption limit upto Rs. 2.5 lakh from the present exemption limit of Rs. 1 lakh.

According to the existing system, small tea growers/ assessee other than companies are liable to pay 10% tax for agricultural income within the range of above Rs.1 lakh to 1.5 lakh, 20% for such income above Rs. 1.5 lakh to Rs. 2.5 lakh and 30% for income above Rs. 2.5 lakh.

In order to reduce their tax liability even beyond 2.5 lakh, I further propose to rationalize the different tax slabs on agricultural income of such assessee keeping parity with the Central Income Tax, as below:

In the case of persons other than companies		Rate of tax
(a)	On agricultural income upto Rs. 250,000	NIL
(b)	On agricultural income above Rs. 250,000 to Rs. 350,000	10 paise in the rupee
(c)	On agricultural income above Rs. 350,000 to Rs. 5,00,000	20 paise in the rupee
(d)	On agricultural income above Rs. 5,00,000	30 paise in the rupee

31. Reduction in Luxury tax on hospitals: It has been observed that the luxury tax on hotels has already been exempted for room rent below Rs. 2,000 while the exemption limit for luxury tax on hospitals is subject to room rent below Rs. 1,000. To correct this anomaly and also to promote medical tourism to the State, I propose to restructure the slabs of luxury tax on hospitals as below :

(a) Where the charge for luxury provided in a hospital is less than two thousand rupees per day per room.	Nil
(b) Where the charge for luxury provided in a hospital is two thousand rupees or more but does not exceed four thousand rupees per day per room.	Five percent of turnover of receipts.
(c) Where the charge for luxury provided in a hospital exceeds four thousand rupees per day per room.	Eight percent of turnover of receipts.

32. Reduction in service charge, rationalization of amusement tax and creation of 'Silpee Aru Kalakushuli Kalyan Nidhi' :

In case of a cinematographic exhibition, the proprietor of a cinema hall is liable to pay entertainment tax on admission charge as well as on the service charge collected from the cine-goers. The proprietor of a cinema hall is authorized to collect service charge upto Rs. 40/- per ticket depending on facilities provided. It is observed that existing system of collection of substantial amount of service charges by cinema hall owner has jeopardized the interest of local film producers since cinema hall owners retain the full amount of service charge in addition to his share in admission charges on percentage basis and therefore, a major chunk of receipt goes to the pocket of hall owners. Therefore, in order to ensure that the local film producers get a better deal in the form of refund of tax on admission charges, I propose to increase entertainment tax rates from 15% to 20% and from 20%

to 30%. This will also help the State Government to garner more revenue from Non Assamese Films. This apart, in order to correct the anomaly in respect of service charge and to protect the interest of film producers, I propose to reduce the slabs for service charges and the highest slab will now be Rs. 12 per ticket instead of the earlier Rs. 40 per ticket. Besides, I also propose to collect one rupee per ticket from cine-goers on account of "Silpee Aru Kalakushuli Kalyan Nidhi" which shall be utilized exclusively for the welfare of the cinema and theatre workers, amongst others.

33. **Reduction in amusement tax rate for cable TV :** In comparison to Direct to Home (DTH), Cable TV is usually used by economically weaker section of the society. Considering this aspect in mind, I propose to reduce the amusement tax rate for individual subscriber from Rs. 30/- to Rs. 25/-.
34. **Furnace oil & unclassified goods :** I propose to increase the tax rate on furnace oil from 5% to 6% under the Fourth Schedule keeping in mind that the rates for items, particularly, inputs covered by Second Schedule have already been raised to 6%.

I further propose to increase the tax rate marginally by 0.5% on unclassified goods and works contract covered by the Fifth Schedule of the Assam VAT Act. Further, I propose to increase the tax rate on lease transactions marginally by 1%.

35. **Video phone and mobile phone :** Video phones and mobile phones, the maximum retail price of which does not exceed Rs.15,000/-, are currently taxable at 6%. I propose to bring down the ceiling of maximum retail price to Rs.5,000/- for 6% tax category.
36. **Restructuring the concessional tax rate for CSD and CPC :** Canteen Stores Department (CSD) and Central Police Canteens (CPC) meet the day to day requirements of the Defence Personnel and Central Armed Police Forces by supplying them goods through such canteens. The consumption basket of such goods consists of both 6% and 14.5% taxable items and in normal circumstances; CSD and CPC would be liable to pay taxes at 6% and 14.5%. In recognition of the services provided by Defence Personnel and Central Armed Police Forces, I propose to allow Canteen Stores Department (CSD) and Central Police Canteens (CPC) to pay concessional tax at the rates of 6% and 7.5% respectively.
37. **Rationalization of tax on cigarettes :** It cannot be denied that tobacco and tobacco products are health hazards and have social implications. Government discourages its consumption through various means including imposition of high rates of taxation. However, it is experienced that increase in tax rates in many cases results in tax arbitrage opportunities and leads to trade diversion and infiltration of goods from low tax neighbouring regions. Recently, taking a cue from Central Excise Duty and our neighbouring State like West Bengal, we have moved to

an innovative system of taxation based on the length/size of cigarette. However, Government of India has recently hiked central excise duty on cigarette of different lengths and this has resulted in the upward revision of sale price of cigarette. In view of such enhancement in Central Excise Duty, I propose to enhance the VAT rates for different categories of cigarettes to maintain the stream of revenue at the desired level, as given below:

Cigarettes	Existing VAT rates (Per thousand sticks)	Proposed VAT rates (Per thousand sticks)
(a) Filter cigarettes of length exceeding 75 mm	Rs. 1,600	Rs. 1,850
(b) Filter cigarettes of length exceeding 70 mm but not exceeding 75 mm	Rs. 1,225	Rs. 1,450
(c) Filter cigarettes of length exceeding 65 mm but not exceeding 70 mm	Rs. 810	Rs. 975
(d) Filter cigarettes of length exceeding 60 mm but not exceeding 65 mm	Rs. 550	Rs. 775
(e) Cigarettes not falling in any of the above category	Rs. 1,600	Rs. 1,850
(f) Other than filter cigarette not exceeding 65 mm	Did not exist	Rs. 750

38. **Rationalization in entry tax rates to protect local trade & industry :** Goods brought from other States to Assam for own use or consumption does not attract VAT in Assam.

Therefore, to safeguard the interest of revenue and to prevent trade diversion, as a counter-veiling measure, entry tax is levied and collected on goods imported from outside the State. However, it is noticed that incidence/rates of entry tax are very low on many items compared to VAT rates and this has been resulting in substantial trade diversion. Many commodities are still bought from outside Assam despite being available in the local market thereby making our local trade uncompetitive. For example, tiles, sanitary ware, bathroom fitting, marble, granite, furniture etc. attract 14.5% tax under VAT whereas when the same items are brought from outside the State, they happen to be taxed at the rate of 6% under Entry Tax.

Again, 'alum' is a raw material for many industrial units. If an industrial unit purchases alum from other states, it can do so by paying 2% entry tax to the State while it has to pay VAT at 14.5% in case of local purchase. This has made local alum manufacturing units unviable.

Therefore, to protect the interest of our local trade & industries and to provide them a level playing field and also to safeguard our revenue, I propose to increase rates of entry tax on all varieties of tiles, sanitary ware and bathroom fitting, marble, granite and other decorative slabs, elevator and parts & accessories, automobiles, alum and some other items including unclassified items. Such increase in entry tax rates will not affect the consumers of the State in any way who purchase such items in our State. However, I am not proposing any enhancement in rate of entry tax today, because this is just my preliminary view and I need to evaluate this from various angles. I also

want to make my intention clear that so far as the raw materials are concerned, they should not be taxed beyond the existing rates. However, to protect the interest of local industries, if any increase in tax rate is required to be made for any raw material; such increase shall be done after due consultations with Industries Department and trade bodies like FINER, CII and other stakeholders.

I further propose to increase the rate of entry tax on rectified spirit, which is meant for manufacture of country spirit, to 20% under the Assam Entry Tax Act.

39. **Amnesty Scheme for Liquidation of Arrears :** Our country is on the cusp of rolling out the most ambitious and remarkable tax reform in its independent history in the form of Goods and Services Tax (GST) most likely with effect from 1st April, 2017. While migrating into such a new system, it is of utmost importance that problems relating to past outstanding tax dues are resolved, as much as possible. Hence, to tackle this situation, an amnesty scheme for recovery of outstanding dues is being declared, with following features:

- (i) All the Taxation Acts administered by the Taxation Department will be covered by the Amnesty Scheme for liquidation of outstanding dues pertaining to any period upto 31st March, 2015.
- (ii) There will be two windows for payment of outstanding dues - first on or before 31st December, 2016 and second on or before 21st March, 2017.
- (iii) The scheme will extend to the cases in appeal, revision, Assam Board of Revenue and court cases also, provided the cases are withdrawn.

(iv) As a result of the scheme, large number of outstanding recovery cases and pending appeals will be disposed and the State will receive the pending tax dues.

40. **Shifting of point of tax collection on Foreign Liquor under VAT :** At present, VAT on Foreign Liquor (made in India or not) is collected at the point of sale to retail licensee in synchronization with the payment of State Excise Duty. It is experienced that under the extant system, there is some scope for evasion of tax as sale of liquor by one bonded warehouse to another bonded warehouse is not taxable. In view of this, it is proposed to collect VAT on liquor on first point of transaction made within the State.

41. **Raising the tax rate on Foreign Liquor and option of paying VAT on MRP basis:** Currently, Foreign Liquor (made in India or not) is taxable at 30% on actual sale price which is inclusive of excise duty. I propose to enhance this rate.

However, since state excise duty is proposed to be collected on MRP basis, I propose to give an option to the wholesale licensee to pay tax on printed MRP basis, in lieu of the tax payable on actual sale price basis.

Transport Department

42. Transport department has a very good scope for improvement of revenue. It has already started exploring various avenues to improve the services and also realize better revenue.

43. Many states in India like Delhi, Punjab, Karnataka/ Maharashtra have introduced Choice/Fancy Registration Mark and maintained e-auction system for VIP Registration Numbers like 0001, 0002 etc.
44. You will be happy to know that we also now propose to designate 413 numbers as Choice / Fancy numbers which will be available for auction over the reserve fee as prescribed against each segment. For instance the reserve fee for number "0001" would be Rs.1,00,000/- for personalized vehicle and Rs. 20,000/- for commercial vehicle and for number "0002" to "0009", the reserve fee would be 50,000/- for personalized vehicle.
45. At present tax on two wheeler vehicles have been levied on the basis of un-laden weight. However, as the cost of two wheeler ranges from Rs.60,000/- to Rs.20,00,000/-, the Government proposes to have the flat rate of 6% of original cost of 2/3 wheeler personalized vehicles.
46. The above changes with efficient administration will yield an additional revenue of Rs. 100 crores during the current financial year.

State Excise

47. During the last year, State Government increased the Ad-valorem levy rates by 70% with effect from 1st of June, 2015 anticipating huge revenue earning. This resulted in increased MRP by 25-30%. In rupee terms, this led to price difference of popular products from Rs.1000/- to Rs.4000/- per case approximately compared with that of the neighbouring States.

As a result, though the sale of IMFL in Assam has decreased by 20.83%, it does not mean that the consumption of liquor has actually come down. It is obvious that to this extent, there is trade diversion/leakage. This led to decrease in revenue by approx. Rs.152 Crore.

Similarly, the sale of Beer in Assam has fallen by 39.31%. This also led to approx. Rs.50 Cr. of revenue loss.

Apart from excise revenue, this downward trend of sales has also adversely affected the sales tax collection on liquor.

It appears that this is a classic case to prove two points. First, mere increase in tax or duty may not always result in increase in overall revenue. Secondly, North East Region needs to have some kind of uniform tax structure to arrest trade diversion/leakages.

In view of above, I humbly submit to the members that the tax structure and its dynamics are very complex and therefore, it needs a careful evaluation from different aspects.

Therefore, I propose to constitute a Committee under a retired Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam to suggest rates of taxes, both under Excise and VAT for liquor, keeping in mind the associated health hazard and trade diversion.

48. State Excise needs systemic reforms ranging from Excise policy, Rules, country liquor and regulatory framework of the department. To begin with, a series of steps are proposed.

49. Replacement of Assam Excise Rules, 1945 by Assam Excise Rules, 2016: The existing Assam Excise Rules, 1945 will be replaced by new Assam Excise Rules, 2016. This will enable the State Excise Department, inter alia, to realize excise duty at the manufacturer level and to curb the movement of non-duty paid liquor. On all exports, a security has been proposed, which shall be equivalent to the Excise duty involved. License fee of Country Spirit Retail shops are proposed to be enhanced. Further, penalty on defaulters is proposed upto 300% of the duty involved.
50. Reforms in the production, distribution and sale of country spirit: The existing system of allotment of country spirit mahals is archaic, ineffective and prone to tax evasion and corruption. Hence, I propose to replace such mahal system with a more scientific system of bottling of country spirit by the bottling plant which assures same kind of standard as that of Indian Made Foreign Liquor in order to improve the hygiene as being practiced in best performing states. The sale of such hygienic country liquor will take place through IMFL retail outlets and at any other point as the Excise Department may deem fit and proper. This will also improve the revenue collection and ensure sale and consumption of healthy hygiene country spirit.
51. Our Government envisages achieving substantial increase in Revenue Collection by the above mentioned measures to be taken up by the department.

52. The Government would provide incentives to the best performing officers for increase in collection of Revenue.
53. Heritage Liquor: Assam's strength is its colourful culture and diverse ethnicity. The products pouring out of such diversity are many. As a Government, we are determined to build the economy deeply entrenched into the ethnicity of the State. There are several tribal brews which are healthy and of high medicinal values. Our Government proposes to conduct proper research on these brews so as to ensure the standardization, hygiene and proper bottling in attractive package. Such products will be promoted as licenced items to be sold in permitted shops and establishments. These products can beat Feni of Goa, Heritage wine of Rajasthan, Vodka of Russia and many other brands.

This initiative will help putting a stiff competition to the country liquor which is more injurious than local brews. Our Government will also consider the proposals for licensing the sale of local brews. It will be a good source of increasing income level of traditional families and also conserve the heritage.

Revenue & Registration

54. Revenue Department will initiate steps for augmenting state revenue by bringing about efficiency in collection of land revenue, stamp duty, registration fees and other dues payable to Government. It will also explore the possibility of finding out new areas where requirement of stamp duty can be enforced.

55. The Revenue Department will increase the existing zonal valuation of commercial plots in the heart of urban areas.
56. Henceforth, the court fee stamp of Rs. 100 shall be used for filing tenders in case of State Government and its undertakings.
57. The present rate of stamp duty in case of registration of a property is 2% for women solely and jointly with others and such stamp duty is 3% in case of male or other juridical person. In order to give a better social and economic security to our women, I propose to reduce the stamp duty from existing 2% to 1% in case of women. However, if a property is jointly registered in the name of women, the current rate of 2% stamp duty will be maintained. But, in case the property is registered exclusively in the name of a male or other juridical person, I propose to raise the rate of stamp duty from 3% to 4%. I sincerely hope that this measure will encourage more registration of properties in the name of our mothers and sisters thereby giving them additional socio-economic security. Similarly, in case of registration fee of properties, while I propose to maintain the existing rate of 1% for women and 2% for joint registration with women, I propose to enhance the registration fee from 2% to 3% in case of male or other juridical person.
58. E-Stamping will be increased to cover ten more districts from the existing two districts. This will increase the ease of registration for the citizens through seamless documentation process and also increase revenue generation.

Cess on Polluting industries

59. Under Industrial & Investment Policy of Assam, 2014 certain industries have been listed in red category because of environmental pollution caused by them. I propose to levy a Cess on such Polluting Industries. The detail modalities of such levy and collection of such Cess shall be notified.
60. After having presented the above and before I go to present the Budget Estimate for the year 2016-17, I would like to quote the words of Swami Vivekananda: I quote:

*"Like me or Hate me, both are in my favour,
If you like me I am in your Heart,
If you hate me I am in your mind"*

61. BUDGET ESTIMATES

Now Sir, I come to the Budget estimates for the Financial Year 2016-17. The five year medium term fiscal plan and other statements required to be placed in terms of the relevant provisions of the Assam Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2005 have been placed in this August House in a separate booklet.

The budget estimates of 2016-17 show a receipt of Rs.77422.71 crore under the consolidated fund of the State. Out of this, Rs.66179.88 crore is on Revenue Account and the remaining Rs11242.83 crore is under Capital Account. I have shown the estimated receipt in the consolidated fund from different sources at Table-1. After adding the receipt of

Rs177077.16 crore under Public Account and Rs100 crore under Contingency Fund, the aggregate receipts amount to Rs254599.86crore. As against this, total expenditure from the consolidated fund of the of the State in 2016-17 is estimated at Rs78253.36 crore of which Rs62459.04 crore is on Revenue Account and Rs15794.33 crore is on Capital Account. The estimates of grant-wise expenditure from the Consolidated Fund during 2016-17 have been shown in Table- 2. Taking into account the expenditure of Rs169621.14 crore under Public Account and Rs100 crore under Contingency Fund, the aggregate expenditure for the year is estimated at Rs247974.50 crore. Thus, estimated transactions during the year will result in an estimated surplus of Rs 6625.36 crore. This, together with the opening deficit of Rs 9506.27crore will lead to a budget deficit of Rs2880.91crore at the end of the financial year 2016-17.

With these words, Mr. Speaker Sir, I commend this budget to the House.

Bajak Doba, Bajak Shankha,
Bajak Mridong Khol,
Asom Akou Unnatir Pothot
Jai Aai Asom Bol

BHARAT MATA KI JAY