



JANASANYOG, ASSAM
CHIEF MINISTER'S PUBLIC RELATIONS CELL, DISPUR

PRESS RELEASE

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CM inaugurates conclave on Act East through Northeast

Act East leads to fast-paced growth in Assam

Emerging connectivity with the ASEAN nations to play defining role in enhancing shared prosperity: CM

Dispur, May 27: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma said that Government of India under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has put a renewed thrust on Act East policy which has resulted into fast-paced growth and brought about paradigm shift to development narrative in Assam and other Northeastern states.

Inaugurating a conclave on Act East through Northeast in presence of the ambassadors and high commissioners of ASEAN countries here today, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma said that development narrative generated by the Act East policy has given a new hope to the people of Northeast to align themselves with the development initiatives of the Government of India. He also said that in the backdrop of Act East policy, his government is striving to position Assam as the expressway and gateway to ASEAN bloc.

He also said that the conclave which is a part of several initiatives of the Act East policy Affairs Department, Government of Assam to brainstorm on various aspects of Act East policy and strengthen the roadmap for leveraging the opportunity of Assam's geo-strategic location to use the state as a springboard for economic cooperation, enhancing connectivity and addressing the issues for seamless movement of trade and investment. Dr. Sarma said that since 2014, under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Modi, Northeastern region has witnessed rapid transformation. The Prime Minister whose aim is to "Act East" and 'act fast' for India's northeast, has given new hope, energy and force to the people of Northeast. He said that the Prime Minister has taken the Central government to the doorsteps of the Northeast India with several development projects.

The Chief Minister also said that Centre's continued attention to Northeast and its people has proved that the region is not the periphery of India, it is in fact the centre of fastest emerging nations of South East Asia which has the potential to become the link for the emergence of trade and commerce with these nations. Government of Assam, is therefore, is working to position Assam as the gateway and the express way to ASEAN and South East Asia. Government is also working hard to make Assam the industrial hub which can serve not only the region, but also the population of BBN and ASEAN countries, Dr. Sarma added.

Speaking on Northeastern region's geographical proximity with ASEAN countries, Dr. Sarm said, "We have no less than 5300 kms of international borders with a host of countries like Myanmar, China, Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh. The Northeast is truly India's Gateway to Southeast Asia, and I believe the emerging connectivity with the ASEAN nations will play a defining role in enhancing our shared prosperity".

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Dr. Sarma also said that over the past seven-eight years, India's engagement with the ASEAN countries has grown exponentially. Trade relations have matured, investments have grown substantially and connectivity between the Northeast and Southeast Asia is fast becoming a reality. He also said that law and order in Assam has improved considerably. Armed Forces Special Power Act has been removed. There has been phenomenal development of connectivity in state including construction of bridges over the Brahmaputra to make transportation seamless between North and South Bank of the river. Assam is also keen on promoting its biodiversity and producing green power to lay a roadmap for development of the state in sync with its nature. Under UDAN International the state will be connected to at least six countries of the ASEAN bloc. So, Assam has presented a congenial atmosphere for large scale investment, as Government of Assam is very eager to start new economic collaboration with ASEAN countries. He also reiterated that government of Assam is also working wholeheartedly to forge a solid and sustainable cooperation with the ASEAN nations.

In reply to High Commissioner of Singapore to India Simon Wie Kuen, Dr. Sarma said that the parameter of Guwahati will be expanded as he expects Singapore's cooperation in developing the city to accommodate the increasing demands of the people from other Northeastern states and outside.

Industries and Commerce Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary while speaking on the occasion presented the prevailing landscape in Assam which holds immense potential for investment. He highlighted the infrastructural development in Assam in terms of roadways, railways, airways and internet connectivity. He also said that prior to the announcement of Act East Policy, Assam was considered the last part of India. However, the Act East Policy has changed the misnomer, as Assam is now regarded as the Centre of India's relations with the ASEAN countries. The minister also requested the ASEAN ambassadors and high commissioners to send their business delegations to Assam for G2B and B2B meetings.

Member, PM's Economic Advisory Council Sanjeev Sanyal, Chief Secretary Jishnu Baruah, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs Geetika Srivastava, High Commissioner, Singapore to India Simon Wie Kuen, Chairman FICCI North East Advisory Council Ranjit Barthakur also spoke on the occasion.

Later on the sidelines of the conclave, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma also held a discussion with Sanjeev Sanyal on different ideas and a host of issues pertaining to Assam's economic growth and development.

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