



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

PRESS RELEASE

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CM Attends One-Time Financial Assistance Distribution Ceremony to 2,114 Bihu Committees

CM Appeals to Bihu Committees to Free the Celebrations from the Vices of Forceful Donations and Alcohol Abuse

Use the Platform of Bihu to Spread the Message of Brotherhood and Amity: CM to Committees

CM Also Extends One-Time Financial Assistance of ₹5lakh Each to Next-of-kin of 66 Deceased Contractual Employees of P&RD Dept

Dispur, April 12: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday attended as Chief Guest the ceremonial distribution of the one-time financial assistance of ₹1.5 lakh each to a total of 2,114 bihu function celebration committees from across the State, an initiative launched last year by the Cultural Affairs Department of the Government of Assam under the overall guidance of the Chief Minister.

Addressing the event held at the Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra International Auditorium, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma, referring to bihu as a representation of the rich cultural heritage of the Assamese community, said the initiative was aimed at ensuring one of the most revered festivals of the State is celebrated in a manner befitting its significance in Assam's cultural sphere. There is a significant difference between the manner in which bihu was celebrated during the mediaeval period, especially during the Ahom era, and the manner in which it is celebrated now, and these changes with change in time reflect the progressive nature of the Assamese society in general, the Chief Minister stated.

Stating that the current dispensation in the State has been working tirelessly for the past two years to regenerate the pride and prestige of Assam's indigenous communities, the Chief Minister stressed upon the need to make the upcoming generations realise the importance of being rooted to their cultural heritage and identity. It is due to lack of proper knowledge about ethnic heritages that the younger generations are often seen indulging in fruitless debates and discussions on irrelevant topics on social media, the Chief Minister added.

Appealing to the members of the Bihu committees present to utilise their platforms to spread the message of brotherhood and amity, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma said incorporating inclusivity, rather than diluting, would strengthen the idea of a composite Assamese identity. One way to work towards that goal is to learn a tribal language, along with the Assamese language, by those who recognise Assamese as their mother tongue, the Chief Minister said.

The Chief Minister further made a fervent appeal to the members of the Bihu committees to free their respective celebrations from the vices of alcohol and forceful donations. He exuded confidence Bihu committees shall from now onwards would voluntarily desist from collection of donations for organising their respective celebrations.

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Chief Minister Dr. Sarma also declared that from next year, the Government of Assam shall take the initiative of reviving the "Haat Bihu" (Seven-day Bihu) culture that was prevalent in the mediaeval period.

Earlier in the day, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma attended the ceremonial disbursement of a one-time financial assistance to ₹5 lakh each to next-of-kin of 66 deceased contractual employees under the Panchayat & Rural Development Department at an event held at the Sri Sri Madhabdeb International Auditorium at the premises of the Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra.

Speaking at the event, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma the decision, taken in 2018, to provide a one-time financial assistance to next-of-kin of deceased contractual employees was a manifestation of the current regime's commitments to the ideology of inclusive growth encompassing all sections of society. He expressed hope the one-time financial assistance would be able to ameliorate at least some of the financial and other difficulties of the next-of-kin of the deceased contractual employees. The Chief Minister also appealed to the departmental minister Ranjeet Kumar Dass to extend the benefits of Orunodoi to those who were provided the financial assistance today, if they are yet to be covered by it.

Departmental Minister Ranjeet Kumar Dass, expressing his gratitude to the Chief Minister for his role in the bringing of this scheme during his tenure as the Finance Minister of the State in 2018, said the one-time financial assistance was a means of expressing the gratitude of the department towards the dedicated services rendered by the deceased employees during their service period. Dass further added that steps would be taken to fulfill the genuine hopes and aspirations of the contractual employees under the Panchayat and Rural Development Department in days to come.

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