



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

PRESS RELEASE

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**CM Dr. Sarma inaugurates Flight Training Academy in Lilabari Airport**

**Academy will fulfil flying aspirations of North East youth**

**Government to sponsor meritorious students belonging to poor and lower middle class category for 10 per cent of the total seats in the academy: CM**

**Dispur, April 12:** Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma along with Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurated the first ever Redbird Flight Training Academy in Lilabari Airport and dedicated it to the service of the student community at a function held at Lakhimpur today. It may be noted that this flight training academy is one of the nine Flight Training Organizations (FTOs) started in the first phase under the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma termed the day as a historic day for Assam. He said that after seven decades of India's independence for the first time that a Flying Training Organization was built and inaugurated in the north eastern region. "The launch of Redbird Flight Training Academy at Lilabari Airport is a landmark development, which will always remain as a red letter day in the aviation history of the region", Dr. Sarma observed.

Chief Minister Sarma on this occasion thanked Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and the senior management of Redbird Flight Training Pvt. Ltd. He also expressed his happiness to the fact that out of almost 100 flying training schools in India, the Redbird Flight Training Academy is the first in North East. He also said that Government of Assam has recently handed over 84 acres of land for the development of basic strip and construction of Isolation Bay for the purpose.

The Chief Minister further said that in the past the students and aspiring aviators had no option for flying training within the state. However, now with the inauguration of Redbird Aviation they can complete their entire training while being close to their homes. "This FTO will provide exposure to the youth towards alternative career options in the vast field of aviation besides flying such as aircraft engineering, flight planning & operations, MBA in Aviation Management", he remarked.

Dr. Sarma said that the total yearly output at this FTO is targeted to be 200 trained pilots. He further said this FTO at Lilabari will throw open a vista of avenues like accommodation, hotel and transportation and this will open business opportunity to the locals. For fulfilling the aspirations of the youth of the state, government will also sponsor meritorious students belonging to poor and lower middle class category for 10 per cent of the seats in the academy.

Moreover, saying that the new development will prove beneficial for Lilabari Airport, which has strategic importance and is also being used by army and Indian Air Force, Dr. Sarma observed that the added infrastructure at this Airport will provide logistical support to all the Small and Medium Enterprises and tea estates located around the region and provide connectivity to areas previously inaccessible.

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“This will increase investment in the area and will provide access to a better standard of living, employment and trade opportunities for the local community”, Dr. Sarma said adding that the new initiative will also boost tourism and increase awareness about the region through additional inflow of students, employees and visitors coming to Lakhimpur.

Stating that Lilabari Airport is an important corridor to the north east, far distant parts of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, Dr. Sarma said that the airport is a corridor to several tourist places that are unexplored. He further said, “As Lakhimpur has connectivity to Passighat, Dibrugarh, Tezu, Itanagar that can be connected to major cities of India by making this airport a hub by operating flights to other major airport such as Mumbai, Delhi. The connectivity shall give opportunities for students and professionals for education and business”.

The Chief Minister also said that connectivity of the North East has remained a major bottle neck towards development of the region, however with the NDA Government in power; this issue has been addressed to a great extent. He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi after taking charge of the country took keen interest in improving air connectivity in North East. Under UDAN scheme, he took historic initiative to boost regional connectivity in the North East, which has significantly facilitated regional air connectivity by making air travel affordable for the masses.

Highlighting the steps taken by the Prime Minister to improve air connectivity, Dr. Sarma spoke about steps taken for construction of a new Terminal at LGBI Airport and re-opening of Rupsi Airport in Western Assam, which remained defunct for last several decades. He also said that for modernization and expansion of the existing airports in Assam, State government will handover required plots of land to the Civil Aviation Department by May 10 when the present State government completes one year in office.

Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia while speaking on the occasion said that inauguration of the academy will open the doors of progress and prosperity in the North East. He said that his ministry is taking steps for setting up modern heliports at Galeki and Nagaon, besides connecting Guwahati with Hanoi, Bangkok, Dhaka, Kathmandu under UDAN international. The Union Minister also said that on training of pilots nearly Rs. 500 crore foreign exchange is spent. However, his ministry is working to bring down the amount by establishing new flight training academy in the country.

Union Minister for Law and Justice Kiren Rijiju, MP Pradan Baruah also spoke on the occasion. MLAs Manab Deka, Dr Amiyo Kumar Bhuyan, Bhuban Gam, Secretary Civil Aviation Rajiv Bansal and host of other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

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