



JANASANYOG, ASSAM
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CM Dr. Sarma takes part at ceremonial reception of first cargo vessel MV Lal Bahadur Shastri at Pandu Port in the presence of Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal

Transportation of cargo to Assam through international waterway will remain as a landmark incident in the history of the region: CM

Dispur, March 6: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma took part at the ceremonial reception of the cargo vessel MV Lal Bahadur Shastri carrying the first consignment of 200 metric tons of food grain, which has arrived at Pandu Port from Patna sailing through the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route covering a distance of 2350 km over river Ganga and Brahmaputra in the presence of Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal at Guwahati today.

It is to be mentioned that another vessel with a consignment of 1800 steel products from Haldia sailing through the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route will reach Pandu Port shortly.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma termed the arrival of the vessel as historic and the beginning of a new journey in the economic growth of the entire north eastern region. He said that after 75 years of India's independence, transportation of cargo to Assam through international waterway would remain as a landmark incident in the history of the region.

The Chief Minister thanked the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways for his efforts to develop the waterway, which is a significant component of Prime Minister's vision for 'Transformation through Transportation'. Dr. Sarma said that the beginning of movement of cargos through waterways would significantly reduce dependence on cargo transportation through roadways. Regular movement of cargos through waterways would create job opportunities and open an international market for local products, he said. The Chief Minister further mentioned that due to cost effectiveness, transportation of cargo through waterways would bring a paradigm shift to the lives of the people of the region and take the youths and local entrepreneurs closer to international market.

The Chief Minister said that proactive steps taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina and efforts of Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, waterways, roadways and railways of Bangladesh are now accessible for the north eastern region. He said that under the Act East Policy, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has taken up several infrastructure development projects on NW-1, NW-2 and Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route to improve communication with the north-east. Moreover, transportation of cargo through Brahmaputra River is an important component of the integrated plan under PM Gati-Shakti Master Plan for multi-model connectivity.

Highlighting State Government's efforts to develop the inland water transportation sector, Chief Minister Sarma said that one large terminal near Sukleswar Ghat and 13 smaller

Website: cm.assam.gov.in/assam.mygov.in E-mail: cmprcell09@gmail.com



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terminals have been taken up in the State. Moreover, while e-ticketing system has been introduced, efforts are on for night navigation solutions in association with IIT, Madras.

He also informed that the State Government is taking up steps for increasing the number of river ambulances and to expand the scope of river tourism. He also hoped that the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and especially the Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal would be successful in opening a new horizon in terms of water transportation overcoming all geographical challenges of the region.

While Chairman IWAI Sanjay Bandopadhyaya delivered the welcome speech, the programme was attended by MP Queen Oja, Chairman of Shyama Prasad Mookherjee Port Vinit Kumar, Director of IWAI Guwahati A Selvakumar and several senior officials of Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and IWAI.

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Website: cm.assam.gov.in/assam.mygov.in **E-mail:** cmprcell09@gmail.com

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