



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

PRESS RELEASE

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CM flags off five vessels to be pressed into services at Majuli, Guwahati and Dhubri

853 single engine boats to be fitted with marine engine: CM

Govt. to procure 5 Ro-Pax vessels: CM

Dispur, September 17:With a view to improve institutional framework for water transport and develop ferry services for the people, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today flagged off five vessels under the World Bank funded “Assam IWT Project” at LachitGhat in Guwahati.

Out of these vessels, 3 nos. of Steel catamaran vessels, namely MV Lohit will ply between Nimatighat and Kamalabari, MV Sonai from Guwahati to Kuruwa and MV Pratima (dedicated to renowned folk singer Pratima Baruah Pandey) at Dhubri Ferry Service. These vessels are powered with 180 HP twin engines and have advance equipments such as control & monitoring, communication and navigation, GPS, eco sounder, wind measurement, life saving and fire fighting equipments.

Other two vessels flagged off today will be deployed to enforce the SOP (rules & regulations) issued recently to improve ferry service and passenger safety and to monitor movement of vessels in river Brahmaputra.

Noteworthy that the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India in October 2015 approved the “Assam IWT Project” for development of the IWT sector in Assam with World Bank assistance. The project aims to improve passenger ferry infrastructure and services in Assam and to improve the institutional capacity and framework for inland water transport in the state. The Chief Minister today flagged off the vessels under this project.

While flagging off the vessels, the Chief Minister said that MV Lohit will leave for Nimatighat today itself and the additional two vessels already sent from Guwahati to Nimatighat are expected to reach there today. He said that presently, two Ro-Pax vessels are in operation between Nimatighat and Majuli and once the new vessels start plying, passenger ferry service between Jorhat and Majuli would significantly improve.

The Chief Minister said that the Assam government has adopted a Rs. 90 crore scheme to make inland water transport system more safe and secured for passengers. Under this scheme, steps are being taken to convert 853 single engine boats that ply in the Brahmaputra to marine engine boats at the expense of the state government.

The Chief Minister informed that within this week, seven marine engines would be fitted in the ferries that ply in the Brahmaputra at Dhubri. Similarly, steps have been taken to procure marine engines for the local ferries that ply between Nimatighat and Majuli. The State government has also decided to procure 5 Ro-Pax vessels, Dr. Sarma said adding that these

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vessels would be pressed into service at Majuli, Dhubri and North Guwahati to ease out passenger movement.

The Chief Minister further said that trainings are being imparted for boat owners, crew members about safety measures for the plying of boats besides conducting fitness test of the boats. He said that as a result of the expeditious measures taken by the IWT department in last one week, ferry services have received a major boost.

Prior to the flagging off ceremony, Chief Minister Sarma took part in the Biswakarma Puja organized at Lachit Ghat by the IWT department and offered his prayers.

Principal Secretary of Transport Department Dr. KK Dwivedi, Commissioner Transport Adil Khan and other senior government officers were present at Lachit Ghat on the occasion.

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