



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

PRESS RELEASE

No. 372/2022

CM Formally Hands Over ₹10,000 Each to Covid-hit Purohits, Namghorivas

There is Very Thin Line Between Religious Rituals and Cultural Observances in the State: Dr. Sarma

Dispur, December 20: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday at a ceremony held at Janata Bhawan formally granted one-time financial assistance of ₹10,000 each to 6,124 namghorivas and 2,148 purohits (priests) of the State as part of the Government of Assam's promise of financial support to covid-hit population of the State. Owing to the huge number of beneficiaries of the initiative, 10 purohits and 10 namghorivas were symbolically handed over the cheques of ₹10,000 each at Janata Bhawan. The rest of the beneficiaries were provided the amount through bank transfer to their respective accounts.

Speaking at the event, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma said this initiative has been taken by the government owing to the difficulties the purohits and the namghorivas had to face during the Covid peak when temples and monasteries were shut down to prevent spread of the dreaded virus among the State's population.

The Chief Minister said the neo-Vaishnavite monasteries and temples don't merely play spiritual and religious roles in day-to-day lives of the people of Assam but also have cultural significance. Citing the example of Ojapali performance during Durga Puja, the Chief Minister said there was a very thin line of differentiation between religious rituals and cultural observances in Assam. He added that Assamese culture and identity is incomplete without "Naam Kirtan", though theoretically it can be religious ritual.

The Chief Minister added that on January 1, 2023, the government in a function to be held at Shrimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra Auditorium would formally accept the responsibility of preserving the residence of Pratima Pandey Baruah as a heritage structure from her family members.

Ministers of Assam Cabinet Bimal Bora, Jogen Mohan, Ranjeet Kumar Dass, along with members of Assam Legislative Assembly were also present in today's event.

HS/AH/December 20, 2022