



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

PRESS RELEASE

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CM interacts with representatives of PSUs, industry and tea associations

Industry leaders laud Govt. efforts to deal with coronavirus pandemic

CM calls for extraordinary response to tide over COVID-19 challenge

Dispur, May 11: As part of State government's efforts to revitalize the industrial sector, which is hit hard by COVID-19 pandemic, Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today interacted with representatives of Central and State Government PSUs, industry and tea associations at Assam Administrative Staff College at Khanapara in Guwahati and solicited their suggestions to arrest the economic slowdown. He also talked to several industry leaders through video conference who joined the interaction from different parts of the State and the country.

"COVID-19 has posed an extraordinary challenge to the economy. The present crisis calls for extraordinary response. The State government is very much concerned about the loss incurred by the industries and has come up with measures to check the economic slowdown", Chief Minister Sonowal said during the interaction. He informed that State government has already constituted an economic advisory committee under the chairmanship of retired IAS officer Subhas Das to suggest recommendations to the government to deal with the issues affecting the economy and also to boost economic activities in the State. The Chief Minister also praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his timely decision to declare nationwide lockdown, which saved many lives in the country.

The Chief Minister said that the State Government worked relentlessly during last four years to develop a favourable economic environment in the State. He further said that industries in Assam contribute 39% to the State GDP and provide direct employment to approximately 4 lakh people and indirect employment to around 20 lakh people and this sector has been severely affected by the lockdown.

Stating that due to lockdown big and small tea gardens incurred loss to the tune of around Rs. 500 crores, the Chief Minister assured the industry leaders that continuous efforts to revive the economy were underway. He informed that acting swiftly on the Central government's decision to relax lockdown guidelines, the State Government allowed to carry out agricultural activities, movement on agricultural as well as non agricultural products and functioning of tea industry and food processing factories. He however maintained that all industries would have to strictly comply with the norms of social distancing and adhere to government health directives.

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The Chief Minister further informed that in view of many foreign companies expressing their interest to migrate their base to India, he has already discussed the matter with the Prime Minister and sent letter to the Central Government to make suggestions to those companies to set up their production facilities in Assam. The Prime Minister has responded positively on the issue, he informed.

Moreover, saying that the State Government has taken up steps to facilitate return of migrant workers of the State who are stranded at different places of the country, the Chief Minister stressed on making best use of their skills to boost the industrial sector. He also called for maintaining ecological balance with working for industrial growth in the State. He also assured to take prompt action on the suggestions made by the industry representatives during interaction.

Industry and Commerce Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary taking part in the interaction said that steps are afoot to leverage industrial growth in the State and as a result of which a favourable industrial environment develops in Assam today. He said that initiatives like Act East Policy Affairs Department and Assam Skill Development Mission have helped to develop better commercial linkages with the South East Asian countries. He also observed that steps taken for improvement of waterway would give a major push to economic activities in the State.

The industry representatives appreciated the State Government efforts to deal with COVID-19 pandemic and thanked the Government for relaxations in the industrial sector amid lockdown. They also shed light on the challenges faced by the industries and put forth various suggestions to tackle the crisis.

Alongwith representatives of Central and State PSUs, industry associations, tea associations, Chief Minister's Media Adviser Hrishikesh Goswami, Chief Minister's Legal Adviser Santanu Bharali, Principal Secretary of Environment & Forest Avinash Joshi, Principal Secretary of Finance Department Sameer Sinha, Principal Secretary of Labour Welfare Department JB Ekka, Commissioner & Secretary of Industry & Commerce Department KK Dwivedi and other senior officials of State Government were present in the interaction programme.

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