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**Sonowal addresses 22nd IIT-Guwahati convocation
Urges IIT Guwahati to set up centre on Hydrological Studies and Disaster Control
Asks graduating students for setting up start ups in Assam**

Dispur, September 22: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal while addressing the 22nd convocation of Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG) as a special guest through a video conference lauded the institute for its role towards Atmanirbhar Bharat and helping Assam in its drive for self-sustainability.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Sonowal said that as an offshoot of the historic Assam Accord, IITG has not only fostered an environment of academic excellence in the entire country with its quality technical education over the years, it has also lent its hands in making self reliant nation. The Chief Minister said that since at the moment the society is going through difficult time because of COVID 19 pandemic, IIT Guwahati has played its role in fighting the pandemic by providing various sophisticated instruments to National Health Mission, Assam and by developing, manufacturing and commercializing all the COVID-19 related kits in the State.

Congratulating all the students on receiving degrees on the convocation, Chief Minister Sonowal said that IIT-G, though relatively new in comparison to the first five IITs of the country, has produced globally competitive human resources and carried out research that significantly benefitted the society. He also said that if this impressive journey continues IIT Guwahati will grow to global prominence and the graduates of this institute would lead the state and the nation in every sphere of life.

Sonowal while appreciating the role of the IIT Guwahati said that in the past two and half decades the State has been immensely benefitted from the expertise of the institute in disaster preparedness and risk reduction. He stated that with every passing year, floods and erosion, landslides, storms, earthquake etc. have become more intense and recurrent in the State. Since 1950 when the great earthquake jolted Assam, sudden change of river course and large-scale erosion has claimed several lakh hectares of land in the State. This makes it imperative to develop an organized set up to carry out dedicated scientific study on the characteristics and behaviours of the river system in the State. Therefore, on the occasion, he urged upon IIT Guwahati to set up a dedicated centre on Hydrological Studies and Disaster Control as the institute has all the expertise in these areas. He also assured that State government will extend full support to IIT Guwahati in this regard.

Chief Minister Sonowal also urged upon the graduating students of IIT Guwahati to consider beginning of start-ups in the state for which the State government will extend necessary support. He also said that as a result of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Act East Policy' Northeast region is fast emerging as the nerve centre of India's economic

activity. This has opened up new doors of opportunities in communication, transportation, trade and business, tourism, cultural exchange, sports, information technology, agriculture etc. to link northeast with ASEAN and BBN countries. Similarly to promote industrialization, State government has also come up with new policy on tax incentives for setting up industries and tourism units and formulated IT policy, biotech policy, start up policy, sugar policy, solar energy policy, Assam Industrial Investment Policy etc. He, therefore, requested the graduates of IIT Guwahati with their innovative ideas, knowledge and skill to join the start-up movement unleashed by the government to exploit the market potential of the state and serve 800 million population spread across the North Eastern States of India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and the ASEAN countries. Sonowal also made it clear that his government will extend full support to the endeavours of the new graduates for setting up industries and start-up ventures in Assam.

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