



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

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Union Home Minister Amit Shah lays foundation stone of several projects

Both central and state govts. committed to protect Assam's culture and identity: Shah

Gurujona's teachings must be followed for peace and harmony in the society: CM

Dispur, December 26: Union Home Minister Amit Shah, on Saturday, laid foundation stone of a second medical college in Guwahati in presence of Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal at a programme held at Kumar Bhaskar Barman Kshetra at Amingaon, Kamrup. The super speciality medical college, being set up for a total cost of Rs 755 crore, would include medical education wing at Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi Chest Hospital Complex at Kalapaharand super speciality wings at Mahendra Mohan Choudhury Hospital in the city.

Union Home Minister Shah also ceremonially distributed financial assistance to *namghars* under Asom Darshan scheme. Notably, 6972 out of total 8000 *namghars* will be developed in the first phase and an amount of Rs 2.50 lakh will be allocated to each *namghar* under the scheme through which the *namghars* will be developed as community centres for the upliftment of the society. The total amount earmarked for the project is Rs 200 crores.

At the same programme, the Union Home Minister laid foundation stone of development and beautification project of Batadrava Than, the birthplace of social reformer and proponent of neo *vaishnavism* Srimanta Sankardev, in Nagaon. The project, worth Rs 188 crore, entails development of the Than as a centre of art, culture and spiritualism while turning it into a place of tourist attraction. Moreover, the Union Home Minister ceremonially launched the construction work of 9 law colleges in the state at Diphu, Silchar, Dhubri, Dibrugarh, North Lakhimpur, Jorhat, Nalbari, Rangia and Raha for a total cost of Rs 33 crore.

Addressing a mammoth public gathering, the Union Home Minister thanked Assam Government led by Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal for taking the historic step of providing financial assistance to 8000 *namghars* of the State and also towards development of Batadrava Than for strengthening the cultural heritage and preserving the legacy of Srimanta Shankardev till posterity. He also praised and Minister of Health, Finance, Education etc. Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma for his efforts towards development of the State.

Shah lamented the fact that previous Congress government in the State did not take any step to free the lands of Batadrava Than which were encroached by illegal immigrants. The lands have been freed by the present State Government as only the BJP led

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governments both at Centre and State are committed to protect and preserve the language, literature, culture and heritage of Assam, he said.

Highlighting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's relentless initiatives to make North East the 'new engine of growth' for the country, Shah said that due to the dedicated efforts of both Centre and State governments peace has come to Assam as insurgence groups have laid down arms and come back to the mainstream society. He also referred to recently concluded peaceful BTR elections and thanked the voters in BTR areas for showing faith in Prime Minister Modi's vision of development and progress for Assam. He also reflected on the initiatives of the government to find permanent solution to the perennial problems of flood and erosion afflicting the State.

Saying that the previous Congress governments both in centre and state did not take steps for development of NE and Assam, the Union Home Minister informed that Prime Minister Modi released Rs.8000 crore oil royalty that was due to Assam for a long time and also took steps for posthumously conferring Bharat Ratna to Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. He also highlighted historic initiative of the Prime Minister Modi led Central government for bringing peace to the region through steps such as signing of pact for the settlement of Bru refugees, signing of Bodo Accord and Indo-Bangla land boundary settlement.

Lauding the efforts of the State government for bringing rapid development to Assam, Shah highlighted steps such as setting up of 5 new medical colleges in the State and steps for setting up 6 more such medical colleges, transferring money to the bank accounts of 7.5 lakh beneficiaries in tea garden areas, providing wage compensation to pregnant women in tea garden areas, scholarships to meritorious students from poor economic backgrounds etc. He also appreciated Assam government for its success in the fight against COVID-19 as the State recorded very low infection and mortality rates while praising the strong steps taken for reducing rhino poaching incidents in the State.

Calling on the people of Assam to strongly reject any effort to destabilise the State, the Union Home Minister said that some vested interest groups have been trying to create chaos in the society and derail the development process for their politically motivated agendas. He expressed optimism that the people of the State would always choose BJP to lead the State towards peace, progress and development while ignoring the rumours and misinformation spread by anti-social elements.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for extending their support towards development of the state at a rapid pace. Following the vision of Prime Minister Modi of North East being the Astalaxmi of the country, the State government has been

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relentlessly endeavouring to bring holistic development of all sections of the society, he said.

Saying that there have been peace, harmony and unity among various communities living in the State during the present State Government, Sonowal elaborated on the importance of a scheme like Asom Darshan to preserve and sustain Assam's rich cultural heritage and spiritual identity. He also stressed on the need of following Gurujona's ideals and teachings for achieving long lasting peace and harmony in the State. He also highlighted initiatives of the State government such as setting up of medical and engineering colleges, skill university, skill development centres, law colleges etc. for shaping an academically strong and skilled younger generation.

Minister of Education, Health, Finance etc. Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, in his speech, said that Srimanta Shankardev was the architect of the greater Assamese identity and for that reason Gurujona's birth place Batadrava Than would be developed as a centre of culture, art and spiritualism so that it becomes a centre of religious tourist attraction like Golden Temple in Amritsar. He also said that setting up of the second medical college in Guwahati, which would also be the biggest medical college in State, would make Guwahati a hub of medical tourism alongwith the AIIMS which is coming up at Changsari.

Union MoS for Food Processing Rameswar Teli, Agriculture Minister Atul Bora, Cultural Affairs Minister Naba Kumar Doley, MoS for Health Piyush Hazarika, MoS for Irrigation Bhabesh Kalita, MP Queen Oja, Chairman of Housefed Ranjit Kumar Dass were also present in the programme alongwith several other dignitaries.

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