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Japanese Envoy calls on Chief Minister Sonowal; both vow to work to enhance friendly ties

Dispur, March:Japanese Ambassador to India Santoshi Suzuki today called on Chief Minister SarbanandaSonowal at the latter's office in Janata Bhawan and the duo vowed to take reciprocal steps to enhance the increasingly firm and friendly ties between Japan and Assam.

Appreciating Japan's friendly gesture towards continuing its increasing collaboration and commitment to development of Assam, Chief Minister Sonowal requested the Japanese envoy to look into the expeditious completion of JICA assisted Guwahati Metropolitan Drinking Water Project. Santoshi Suzuki informed the Chief Minister that he himself visited the project site and maintained that though the work is progressing satisfactorily, his office would get in touch with the Japan International Cooperation Agency to complete the project on a fast track basis.

Chief Minister Sonowal also discussed with the envoy the issues like road connectivity, enhancement of livelihood, empowerment of women, youth exchange programme and constant people to people contact. Reiterating Japan's commitment to sustain its collaboration with Assam, Santoshi Suzuki said that Japan is willing to invest in road projects, bridges, manufacturing sectors, health care sector and food processing. On Japanese Envoy's emphasis that Japan needs youths from the state who will be fluent in Japanese language, Chief Minister Sonowal informed that under Skill Development Mission in Assam,200 youths from the state apart from getting different skill enhancement training would receive teaching on Japanese language.

Santoshi Suzuki on the increasing demand of youth exchange between Japan and India, said that under the programme, efforts will be made to increase the representation of Assam's youth to visit Japan and vice versa. With regard to Japanese Prime Minister's visit to the country, Sonowal said that though the visit which was scheduled in December had to be postponed, Assam is fully ready to host the Prime Minister. Opening the door of Assam for investment, Sonowal said that plots of land measuring 600 acres have been earmarked in the state for industrial township and he requested Santoshi Suzuki to impress upon Japan External Trade Organization to extend its operations in Assam.

Chief Minister's Media Adviser Hrishikesh Goswami, his legal Adviser SantanuBharali, Chief Minister's Principal Secretary Sanjay Lohiya, Additional Chief Secretary Manindar Singh and Third Secretary of Embassy of Japan to India Masatoshi Kikuchi were present during the meeting.

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