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**Sonowal visits RILEM; takes stock of swine fever situation  
Asks Veterinary and Forest Department to work with ICAR to deal with swine fever  
Govt to help entrepreneurs hit by this endemic**

Dispur, May 4: When people of Assam are fighting against novel coronavirus, another pestilence has hit the state, as Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has asked the Veterinary Department and Forest Department to work with National Pig Research Centre of Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Rani to draw a broad roadmap to save the state's pig population from African Swine Fever.

As the sudden spurt of African Swine Fever has reportedly hit some districts of the state with the pig population took the brunt of this viral infection, Chief Minister Sonowal today visited Regional Institute of Livestock Entrepreneurship and Management (RILEM) at Rani, took stock of the situation and asked the Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Department and Forest Department to work in close synergy with National Pig Research Centre of ICAR to deal with the situation and draw a broad roadmap to bail the state out of the problem. Sonowal held a meeting with the doctors of ICAR and RILEM and discussed in detail the magnitude of swine fever and strategy of the state to mitigate the problem.

Chief Minister Sonowal asked the doctors and other functionaries to ensure total cleanliness and sensitization of the pig habitable areas and use disinfectants. He also said that in the face of absence of any vaccination to deal with the infection, cleanliness, distancing and containment are the golden protocols to fight against the virus. After the outbreak of the swine fever in Assam, an expert team was constituted taking animal scientists within its fold, as Chief Minister Sonowal reiterated on the need to contain and control the spurt of the virus to save the piggery industry from this onslaught.

During the meeting Chief Minister Sonowal also asked the Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Department to do a 'threat-mapping' and undertake containment measure across the state. He also asked the department to find out the total number of entrepreneurs engaged in piggery sector and their financial liability so that government can take pragmatic steps to announce bailout package to save the entrepreneurs from penury.

It may be noted that the African Swine Fever an African centric problem was the pig ailment which was first reported in 1921 in Kenya, Ethiopia though the problem is very rare in this part of the country.

Chief Minister Sonowal also visited Nucleus Pig Breeding Centre and took the first hand information of the condition of the pigs. He also took stock of the skill development

training programmes of RILEM and asked it to enhance its ambit to bring more entrepreneurs to lend skilling to them.

Agriculture, Veterinary and Animal Husbandry etc. minister Atul Bora, Chairman Assam Livestock and Poultry Corporation Manoj Saikia, Director, Pig Research Centre, ICAR Rani Dr. Swaraj Rajkhowa, Director Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Dr. Pulin Chandra Das, Dean College of Veterinary Science Dr. Vivekananda Saikia, Director RILEM Dr. N.N. Mahanta and several others were present at the meeting.

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