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Sonowal thanks officials of power for maintaining uninterrupted power supply to aid government's fight against COVID 19

Invites companies to set up business ventures to take advantage of power availability in state

Dispur, May 8: As a part of a slew of measures the government is taking to reverse the sluggish growth of the COVID hit state's economy, Chief Minister Sonowal made an open invitation to companies to set up their business ventures in Assam as the state has a power surplus of 350 MW to cater to their electricity need.

Chairing a meeting to assess the impact of COVID 19 on Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL), Assam Power Generation Corporation Limited (APGCL) and Assam Electricity Grid Corporation Limited (AEGCL) at his office in Janata Bhawan today, Sonowal said that though the state has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, the unrelenting endeavour of the government's power companies has yielded into a power surplus of 350 MW (mega watt). The chief minister, therefore, invited companies to invest in Assam and set up their units to explore the business-friendly ambience including availability of energy. It may be noted that the chief minister Sonowal helping his government in taking a series of measures to strengthen the COVID hit economy also constituted an economic advisory committee for recommending suggestions for improving the health of economy.

Chief Minister Sonowal also hailed the role of every personnel of power department and the power companies in maintaining their high standard of professionalism and providing un-interrupted supply to the state which is battling the coronavirus infection for quite sometime now. Sonowal said, "When the apocalypse in the form of COVID 19 has hit the state hard with its cascading effect on the life and livelihood of the people, any lapse on the part of power department would have relegated the State government's astute management of the viral infection". He, therefore, asked the functionaries of the department to sustain their good performance in the coming days and lift the morale of all staff working at far flung areas of the state.

Chief Minister Sonowal took stock of the progress of ongoing power projects like 120 MW Lower Kopili Hydro Electric Project, 70 MW Amguri Solar Power Project, 20 MW Namrup Solar Power Project, 100 MW Namrup Replacement Power Project. He also took stock of the issues palpably coming in the way in expeditious completion of the projects and asked the concerned functionaries to redress the issues. He also asked APGCL to start work on the 24 MW Borpani Middle-II SHEP, 22.5 MW Borpani Middle-I and 100 MW Bilasipara Solar Power Project at the earliest.

Taking stock of the AEGCL, Sonowal asked the company to strengthen its fundamentals to augment the load handling capacity. He also reviewed the ongoing projects of AEGCL which primarily consist of setting up of new sub stations and augmenting the existing

sub-stations along with network of grid. He also asked APDCL to ensure energy security and cater to the retail electricity demand of around 58.78 lakh consumers of Assam.

Chief Minister Sonowal also asked the companies to sustain their professionalism and ensure uninterrupted power supply to all the consumers during the forthcoming monsoon season also when the different parts of the state will be reeling under flood. He also asked the top functionaries of the companies to fill up the existing vacancies and create more vacancies wherever possible to make the companies consumer friendly more than ever before.

Legal Advisor of the Chief Minister Santanu Bharali, Chairman APDCL V.K. Pipersenia, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Sanjay Lohiya, Principal Secretary Power Niraj Verma, Managing Director Rakesh Kumar and other senior officers were present at the meeting.

SD/ May 8, 2020.