

Chief Minister's Foreword



The last decade has witnessed a remarkable turnaround for Assam. In 2001, the State Finances were under severe stress and the law and order situation was unpredictable. There was flight of capital from the state and development activities had come to stand still.

The people of Assam having reposed their faith in my leadership, bestowed upon me the onerous responsibility to steer the state out of this dismal situation. I and my team of equally dedicated ministerial colleagues in the Government accepted the challenges and worked tirelessly to achieve this turnaround, and the results speak for themselves.

The Planning Commission of India has stated that Assam has achieved the 6th highest rate of improvement in economic growth among all the states in India during 2001-2010. The most interesting aspect of the Planning Commission's report is that from 2001-02 (start of Congress Government in the State) Assam did not witness any decline in growth rate; and the average growth rate of Assam which was 2.4% during 1994-2002 increased to 5.18% during 2002-2010 – an increase of 152% given the fact that the all India rate of improvement was 28% for the same period. This implies that improvement in the economic growth of Assam was almost six times more than the improvement in the all India average.

The Human Development Report 2011 for India has acknowledged Assam's dramatic resurgence on the path of development, the State has been ranked as number one in the percentage change in Income Index between 1999-2000 and 2007-08. Assam has also been ranked at the third place among all India states for percentage change in Health Index between 1999-2000 and 2007-08, and has also reflected remarkable progress in the percentage change in Human Development Index between 1999-2000 and 2007-08.

I dream of a resurgent and vibrant Assam, free of poverty, sickness, disease, deprivation and inequality. My Government's emphasis on development in all spheres has yielded rich dividends. I firmly believe that inclusive development cannot be attained unless women across all social groups participate equally in the development process. My Government's policies are a reflection of the state's commitment towards this development agenda, and play a crucial role in shaping the nature and discourse of the development process.

To build on this growth profile and translate my vision into reality, the advancement, development and empowerment of women, and their participation and decision making



in social, political and economic life, needs to be ensured. My Government is thus committed to ensure equal access of women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety and social security.

Likewise my Government is committed to ensure a progressive state by investing in the health, education and overall well-being of our children – the future of a better and vibrant Assam.

We have made significant advancements in the reduction of both maternal and infant mortality, and have shown an increase in institutional delivery and immunization coverage. Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), increase in institutional delivery and immunization cover indicators have also shown improvement. Increase in female literacy, reduction in out-of-school girls at primary and middle level, gender parity and achieving women's empowerment through self-help groups have also progressed. However we still have to face major concerns in the areas of anemia and malnutrition, maternal mortality, child sex ratio, neonatal and infant mortality, retention of girls in higher levels of education with quality education, crimes against children and women including trafficking, witch hunting, domestic violence, as well as provision of basic services in all areas including sanitation and safe drinking water.

My effort will also be to encourage gender sensitive policies addressing concerns of women and children.

“The Chief Minister's Vision for Women and Children - 2016” is a strong reiteration of my Government's commitment as a lead agent of change in Assam through inclusive development and good governance. To effectively tackle the concerns highlighted above and to ensure a dedicated approach, every organ of the government shall accord priority to development imperatives vis-à-vis women and children in the State. The action plan, based on definitive goals, shall be achieved by close monitoring of performance indicators through independent monitoring system, and I request all the citizens of our state to contribute to translating this Vision into reality. Let us step forward with the best of intentions and sincerest of efforts to work for a bright and healthy future for our women and children.

Tarun Gogoi



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