

Role of Media and Government towards Sustainable Development in Assam

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ABSTRACT

The North-East of India has been a hotly debated territory of India with voices coming up from different states such as Nagaland, Manipur and Assam demanding separate nations for themselves. These separatist agitations have got further confounded with a constant influx of Muslim immigrants from Bangladesh which began to impinge on the local cultural identities and demographics. This resulted in a prolonged militancy coupled with agitations yielding space for the Pakistani/Sri Lanka/Bangladesh based militants to infiltrate into India through porous borders of the North East and engage some disgruntled ultra outfits in the North East to wage a battle against India. In fact, Naga agitation for separate country bears a lot of similarity with the LTTE's struggle for separate Eelam in Sri Lanka. Both have a lot of diaspora support and web-based campaign movements (Maya Ranganathan, 2010: 127-149). All these developments have complicated the prospects of the economic and industrial growth in this region. This resulted in the staggering illiteracy and unemployment for over a decade. Towards addressing the problems of the region, the government of India has taken a political decision to establish as many as seven central universities under its direct funding to ensure that the region gets the best education which might contribute further for enhanced employment opportunities in the region. Also, various department under Assam Government such as the Tourism Department, Health Department, Education Department, Social welfare Department etc has been provided with e-governance facilities for the users. The study assumes significance from the point of view that how far the e-services of various departments leads to the sustainable growth of the state and what is the role of media, government and educational institutes to improve the sustainable growth of the states through e-services.

Keywords- Socioeconomic Development of Northeast, Government Initiative and Projects, Role of media in sustainable growth.

Role of Media and Government towards Sustainable Development in Assam

Development was the most debated topic after World War II. Various nations have marched forward in the path of development in the past few decades. It was generally assumed that a nation became truly modern and developed when it arrived at that point where it closely resembled western industrial nations in terms of political and economic behaviour and institutions, attitudes towards technology, innovation and social and psychic mobility (Fjes, 1976). From the 1940s to late 1960s economists, sociologists, psychologists and communication experts believed that industrialization, urbanization and modernization were the routes to development. Thus the meaning of 'development' in 1950 and 60s was a transition of traditional societies as complex modern societies or in other words, the transformation of third world countries into the form of industrialized, 'developed' countries, such as, USA, UK. etc (Balaswamy, 2006). Industrialization, urbanization and modernization were the main pillars for development but various problems of the society such as inequality, poverty, health-related issues and other evils of the society could not be suppressed or stopped. Besides, due to Industrialization, urbanization and modernization high use of modern technology and gadgets, changing lifestyle of the elite people to live a luxurious life, shifting of people from rural to urban in search of job, desire to live in a metro has created havoc both to the environment and society such as , health hazards, social and economic inequalities, soil erosion, desertification, acid rains pollution of atmosphere, over-exploitation of natural resources, carbon emissions of fossil fuels and the consequent warming of the earth climate and damage to the ozone layer etc.

Development is mostly used to address the alarming issues related to social justice, equity and human rights. In order to address the issues concerning society , communication is a must which can facilitate dialogue and bring about social and institutional reform. Communication helps citizen to get the relevant information, facilitates citizens to actively participate to identify the problem, strategies and solutions for the implementation of the problem.

The concept of sustainable development is an attempt to combine growing concerns about a range of environmental issues with socio-economic issues. The concept of sustainable development has occupied a central place in every aspect of human life today. It is a multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary concept covering almost all spheres of human activity. Sustainable development has become the concern of economists, ecologists, administrators, communication experts, environmentalists, human rights activists, lawyers, feminists, scientists and NGOs. In other words, it has become everybody's cup of tea (Balaswamy, 2006). World Commission on Environment and Development defined sustainable development as "the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

Socio-Economic Development in North East India

The Northeastern region of India comprises nine states- Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Though the region is blessed with abundant natural resources with rich flora and fauna for industrial and social development, they have not been utilized to their full potential. The region also shares its borders with Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and also has its routes to South East Asian markets. If the resources of this region would have utilized to its full potential, this region could also compete with other regions of India and would have been one of the most prosperous regions. But due to poor infrastructure and connectivity, unemployment and low economic development, law and order problem the region is left behind compared to other regions. The literacy rate is good in this region though it is lacking behind in other prospects. All the states of NEI have different developmental prospects and resources to support their effort in contributing to the regional as well as national economy.

Assam is a state of varied people such as multi cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi lingual. People such as Assamese, Bengalis, Bodos, Rabhas, Mishings, Tiwas, Karbis, Nepalis, and such other linguistic groups reside here. It is a land where people from different religion such as Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhist are living together for centuries. Assam is filled with natural resources such as tea, minerals, dense forest, oils and water resources. It is one of the largest tea producing state in India, which makes India one of the largest producers of tea in the world, second to China. Approximately 52% of the total tea produced in India comes from the state of Assam. Ironically it is an economically less developed state, which lacks in industrial capacity. In 1979-85 illegal immigrants entered into the porous borders of Assam which changed the state 's demographic system that led to protest, political turmoil and major outbreaks of violence in the state.

The rate of literacy in Northeast of India increased after Post Independence. The government has also adopted various measures and policies of free elementary education to females in schools, which also leads to some progress towards the path of development for Northeast. But higher education in Northeast faces serious problems, as we can see a growing trend among the students who migrate to other states of India to pursue their further studies. This is mainly because higher education in the northeast is mainly concentrated in the capital ie is urban areas, which becomes difficult for the people residing in rural and remote areas to continue their higher studies. Also, the technical and professional courses offered by the private institute are generally very expensive to afford by the poorer section of the society and ultimately they are deprived of such education. So a uniform system of education should be set up where people of all section of society is given equal opportunity. For the creation of such opportunities role of higher education is imperative.

The scope of the Study

This study is an attempt at making a critical analysis of the work done by the government and media's of Assam. This study has vital importance not only from an academic point of view but also from the perspective of development and improvement point of view.

Methodology

The study uses a simple qualitative analysis of communication research based on observation and comparison involving data analysis of the government websites and media's of Assam. The paper takes the analysis of the role of media and services by the government of Assam. The paper tries to represent knowledge in Observation and discussion.

Role of Government in Sustainable Development: Socio-Economic-Political Development

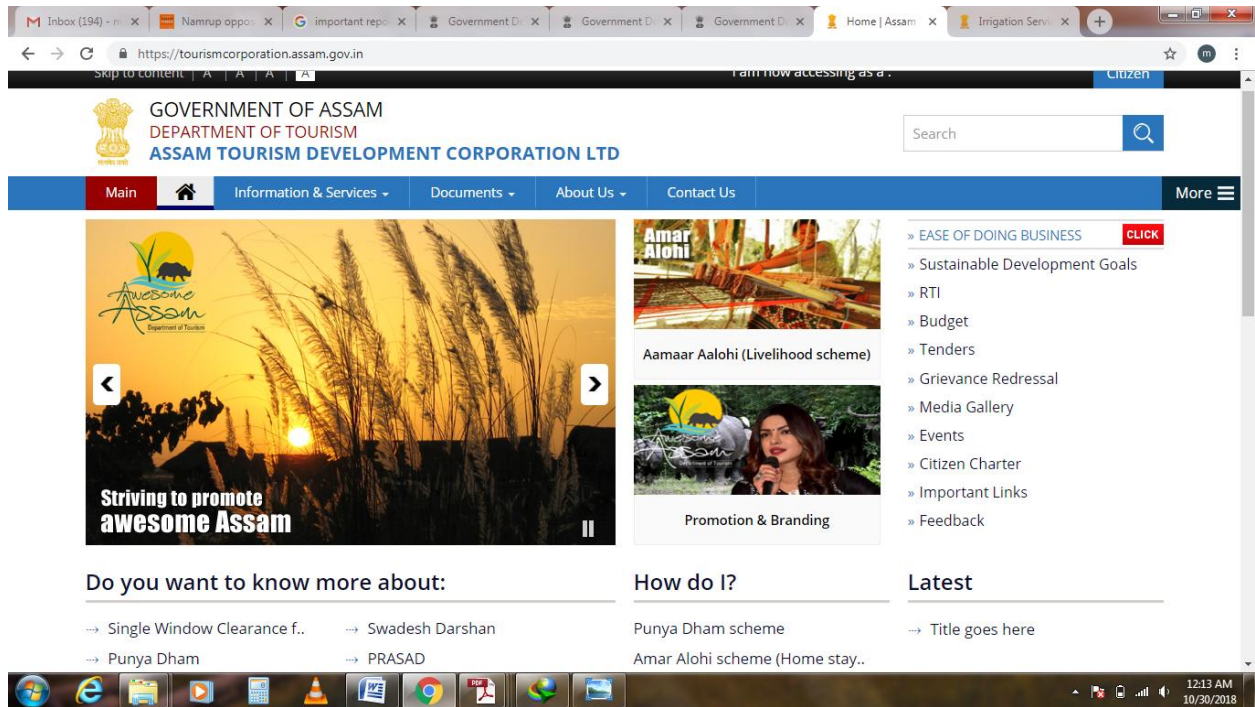
To boost the economy of Assam, Government of Assam started various programmes and schemes such as ReSTART Assam, the creation of a Land Bank, the Assam Ease of Doing Business Bill, implementation of the recommendations of 7th Assam Pay Commission, development of Sustainable Development Goals etc. Assam also became the first State in the country to ratify the GST Constitutional Amendment Bill.

Various new Department such as Skill, Employment and Entrepreneurship Development has been established to further create a roadmap of progress. To empower the tea garden workers, bank accounts were opened for 7.86 lakhs workers. To have good connectivity of road, 930 Km of roads under PMGSY have been constructed in 2016-17 so far. Various social welfare schemes are also adopted such as the formation of women cells, Journalist welfare and pension schemes, provision of vocational education in jails etc.

Development in Tourism Sector

To improve the tourism in the state Namami Brahmaputra festival was organized at 27 places in 21 districts for five days in Assam. For a boost of tourist inflow in Assam, for publicity and promotion Assam Tourism, Bollywood actress Priyanka Chopra has been appointed as Brand Ambassador of Assam Tourism's "Awesome Assam". Moreover, Majuli has been declared as a Biodiversity heritage site and efforts were also been made to transform Majuli into the country's 1st Carbon neutral district by 2020.

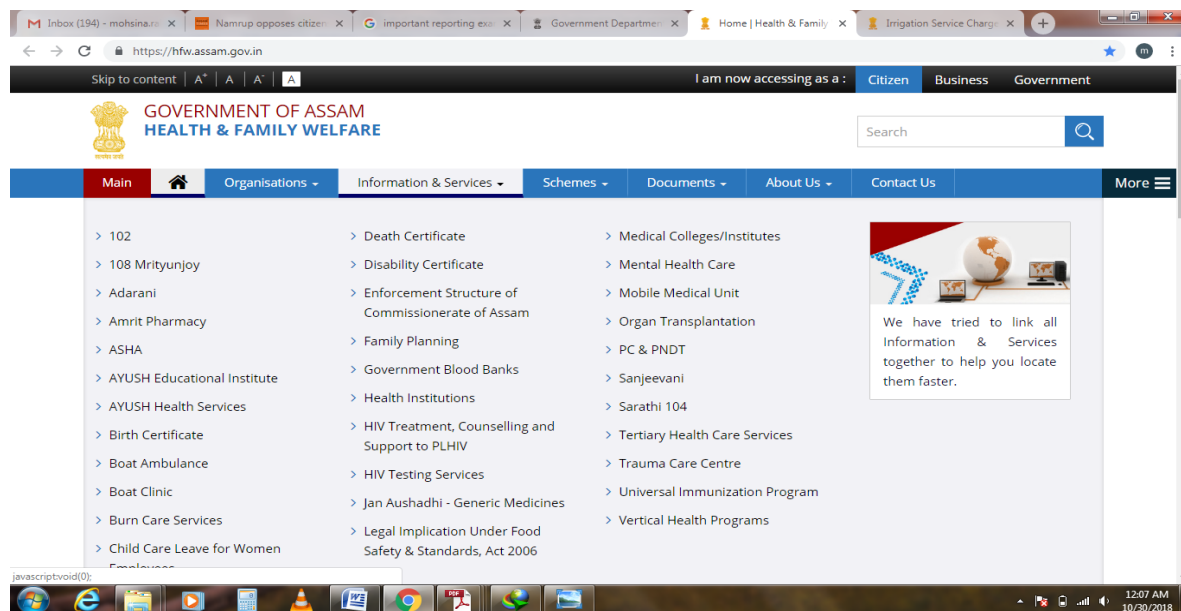
The home page of the website of Government of Assam (Department of Tourism)



Development of rural India

The government of Assam believes in enhancing the quality of life and economic well-being in rural areas of Assam. Various steps have been taken by the government in rural areas of Assam, such as launch of Chief Minister's "Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana", electrification of 1,218 villages in 2016-17, providing low-cost sanitary facilities to 10.38 Lakh families in the rural areas of the state which resulted achieving 532 nos of villages as Open Defecation Free, etc. and other various schemes were also launched for the improvement of the people of rural areas.

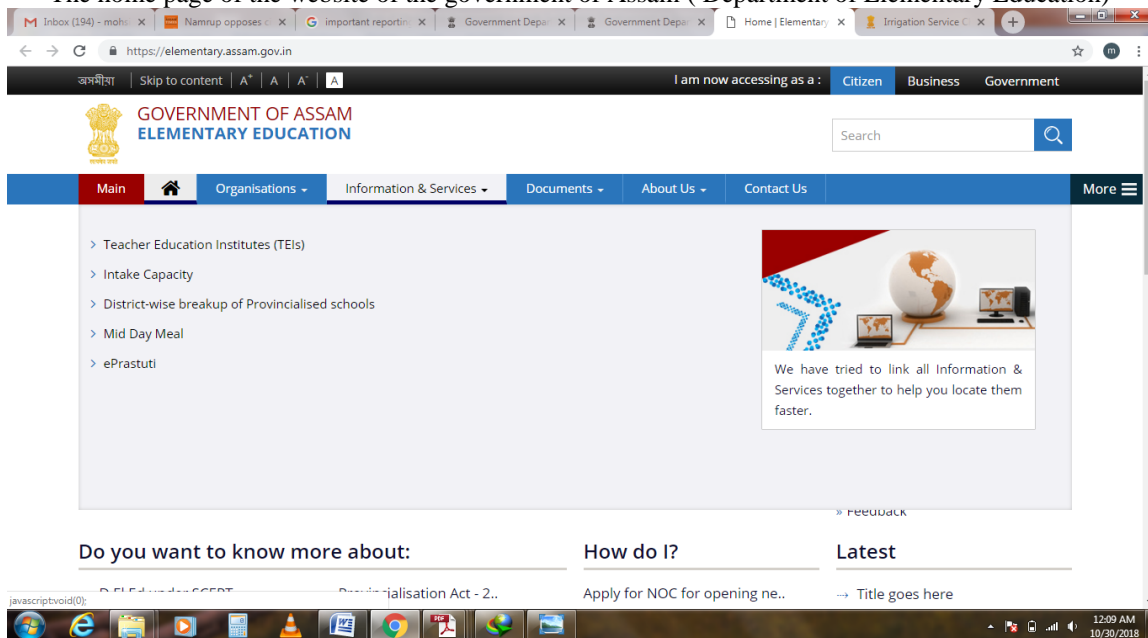
The home page of the website of the government of Assam (Department of Health and Family Welfare)



Education as a driving force

Education is the backbone of any State and Government of Assam is trying every possibility to make each and every child of our state educated. Admission fees/tuition fees etc. is also exempted for the students taking admission in both Higher Secondary schools and Colleges for taking admission for the first time. Huge appointment of teachers, who are eligible and capable of teaching was made possible through the conduction of TET examination, besides smart classrooms were introduced in 100 nos of secondary schools. Assam is the only state in Northeast having two central universities, 12 state universities and 5 private universities, besides various government medical colleges and engineering colleges were also set up in the state to ensure quality education. Various services also provided for elementary education in Assam.

The home page of the website of the government of Assam (Department of Elementary Education)



Laying emphasis on the digitization of government works

With the objective of creating Assam a digitally empowered society in the state various Digital Literacy Program has been started out by the Government of Assam. The organisation of Digi Dhan Mela, the introduction of Data Digitization, initiation of iconic citizen engagement platform, 'Assam MyGov.in' are some of its well-appreciated endeavours.

On 16th of February, 2016, the Government of Assam released the Assam 2030 in light of SDGs – Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Assam. The document defines the ambition of the state to ensure the health, happiness, prosperity and wellbeing of each and every citizen of Assam, as also on the conservation and preservation of the State's unique biodiversity, which is critical for the sustainable development and economic growth of Assam.

Some of the targeted goals that the Assam Government aims to accomplish in 2030 is:

- (1) End Poverty in all its Forms Everywhere.
- (2) End Hunger, Achieve Food Security and Improved Nutrition and Promote Sustainable Agriculture.
- (3) Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.
- (4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- (5) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- (6) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- (7) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- (8) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- (9) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- (10) Reduce inequalities within and amongst countries.
- (11) Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- (12) Ensure Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns.
- (13) Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- (14) Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
- (15) Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of territorial eco-system, sustainably manage forest, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- (16) Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- (17) Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

A Standardized Website Framework (SWF) has been developed under the ePrastuti programme to bring uniformity to the Government of Assam websites. It will establish a single, unifying Standard Web Platform for websites of all Government Departments. The website provides all services and information in one place in a standard format. It is also integrating the platform with social media tools inviting ideas and suggestions setting up feedback forums, polls and online consultation.

Role of media towards sustainable development.

Media plays an important role in the promotion of education, public awareness, and training in order to come to a behavioural change leading to a more sustainable society. Environmental education was first propounded in the Belgrade Chapter (UNESCO-UNEP 1976) with the goal of "a world population aware and concerned about the environment and associated problems and which has the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions for current problems and prevention of new ones". The Tbilisi Declaration that followed in 1978 (UNESCO 1978) continued by stating that environmental education should:

- (1) Foster clear awareness and concern about.
- (2) Economic, social, political and ecological interdependences in urban and rural areas;
- (3) Provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment and skills needed to protect and improve the environment; and
- (4) Create new patterns of behaviour of individuals, groups and society towards the environment.

It is generally seen that apart from scientist and government the common man is a more effective agent for social change. With a largely rural population, the media should pay more attention to rural problems, views and challenges and increase access to the media for rural leaders and populations, for example through the establishment

of small cinemas or professional screening centres in rural areas (Pek 2003). The primary responsibility of the Media thus is of creating an informed citizenry in order to empower society and strengthen democracy and along with this, it should also play an active role in enhancing social, religious and communal harmony for the betterment of the community, the society, the nation and the entire humanity as a whole. In the present times, with the advances in technology, the reach of all forms of media (print & electronic) has become all-pervasive, wide and deep. Various media like TV, radio, newspaper and the internet plays a great role in social change. Media in Assam also plays a significant role, but due to less of trained personal sometimes the quality news is missing. The mass media has become the single most potent medium to shape public opinion. It can vulgarize or brutalize society. Or it can help lift the society onto a higher level. A good and responsible media is a nation talking to itself. In a diverse country like ours, which has different hues and shades of cultures and diversities, the role of media becomes all the more important.

Introduction to Social Media

Wikipedia, in 2006, defined social media as “Social Media is the democratization of information, transforming people from content readers into publishers. It is a shift from a broadcast mechanism, one-to-many, to a many-to-many model, rooted in conversations between authors, people and peers.” (Frakes, 2010) Wikipedia, in 2010, expanded the definition a bit, “Social media is a media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media uses the Internet and web-based technologies to transform broadcast media monologues (one to many) into social media dialogues (many to many). It supports the democratization of knowledge and information, transforming people from content consumers into content producers. (Frakes, 2010).

Classification of Social Media

Social media technologies take on many different forms including magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, social networks, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. Technologies include blogging, picture-sharing, Blogs, wall-posting, music-sharing, crowd sourcing and voice over IP, to name a few. Social network aggregation can integrate many of the platforms in use. By applying a set of theories in the field of media research (social presence, media richness) and social processes (self-presentation, self-disclosure). This is the age of internet and technology but ironically there is no positive example of use of internet specifically websites by the media houses of Assam. Apart from electronic media, the condition of print media on the usage of internet is very poor. People residing outside Assam, mostly depend on the internet for the updated news of the region. Most of the new organization does not have updated news on the website while some of the news agency does contain its own website.

For example (<http://www.niyomiyabarta.org/28102018/index.php>
<http://amarasom.glpublishations.in/>,
<http://dainikjanambhumi.co.in/29102018/index.php> ,
<http://www.easternchronicle.net/index.php>).

“Aji” Assamese Daily does not have their website to carry the news online. In the age of technology, an organization without a website is tantamount to suicide.

Let us illustrate this with an example. A few years back you may have come across a news item in the newspapers about how a group of marginal ginger framers were united to form a cooperative marketing agency in a district of Assam. The objective was to bypass the exploitations of the middlemen in the buying and selling process of ginger in the actual market. This scheme was effectively implemented with active supervision of the deputy commissioner of the district in which the farmers were immensely benefited. They were also able to improve their living standard from those monetary gains and the amount of ‘confidence’ of being able to achieve something really positive.

Now, only when this news item or story would be known to the masses or the maximum number of people possible it will yield a broad result. That is, it is a good sign and development that specific groups of framers have been able to achieve such a feat in a remote place of the country or the state. If we would like to extend these benefits to more and more people in the society among the underprivileged and illiterate sections there will be far more benefits.

This is because as more and more people will come to know about it they will feel encouraged and develop a certain kind of confidence to try to enact a similar experiment with such a project and gain desirable benefits in the end.

Let us consider another example. Several years back, a group of about a hundred self-help groups (SHGs) united themselves under an umbrella organization and took a loan of a big amount from a nationalized bank's branch in a district of Assam. These SHGs were so punctual and prompt in repaying the loan amounts that the bank management was highly impressed with them and they offered more loans to the groups even without their asking for it. (http://m.kkhsou.in/EBIDYA/MASS%20COM/MODIFY_development_reporting.html)

Table no. 3: List of some regional newspapers in Assam

Sl.no	Assamese newspapers	English Newspaper	Bengali newspapers	Hindi newspapers
1.	Asomiya Pratidin	The Assam Tribune	Dainik Jugasankha	Pratah Khobor
2	Sad in	The Telegraph	Samoyik Prasanga	Dainik Purvoday
3	Dainik Janambhumi	The Hindu		Sentinel (Hindi)
4	Dainik Asom	The Economic Times		Purbanchal Prahari
5	Dainik Batori	Meghalaya Guardian		
6	Aamar Asom	The States Man		
7	Ajir Asom	The Indian Express		
8	Asomiya Khobor	North -East Times		
9	Dainik Batori Kakot	Times of India		
10	Dainik Janasadharan	The Eastern Chronicle		
11	Dainik Agradoot	The Hindustan Times		
12	Aji	The Seven Sisters Post		
13	Adinor Sambad			
14	Adin			
15	Niyamiya Barta			

Besides the hard copy version of the newspapers most of the papers are also available in the online version which gives ample opportunity to the public to have a look on these mirror of the state wherever they are, in fact lapse in daily view can be continued through the online version. In the online version also the quality of the newspapers are very rich. But some papers are published from the state only in the form of online version to fulfil some specific criteria of the readers.

Some of the e-newspaper from Assam are:

- Assam Times: This is a community newspaper published from Assam. This paper mainly gives emphasis to Assam though this paper deals with the whole Northeastern area. This paper mainly has

concentrated on news from every nook and corner of the North eastern states across the globe. News can be national, international local news such as political, editorial, world affairs, business, knowledge, Social, Entertainment, Political and educational etc. This paper is also available to make this offline newspaper readable.

Mukta Akash,' the first a quarterly newspaper on children's issues, published by the young reporters of Dibrugarh, a tea producing district in the north-eastern Indian State of Assam. issues affecting children – school drop outs, child marriage, corporal punishment, nutrition, hygiene, as well as, stories about small but significant steps taken by children to improve things around them, have found place in the inaugural issue of 'Mukta Akash,' the colourful four-page newspaper in Assamese, the language of the state of Assam. Moreover the English edition of the same newspaper supported by UNICEF Assam is also been started recently.

মুক্ত আকাশ

MUKTA AKASH

সংবাদিকতা এক সেবা — মহাশ্বে পান্ডে

9th year • vol-1 • June, 2018 • Assam • Total Page-4

আমার কঠিনবল পত্রিকা Young Reporter's Newspaper

- The students are really happy for the free text books
- A detailed survey on Anganwadi centre

Editorial

Dear Friends, We are very much excited and happy that the first issue of the ninth edition of Mukta Akash has been published and we are indeed grateful to all associated with us. We are happy that we are able to share our views and opinions in Mukta Akash. This year in July we had two workshops in Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (KGNMT) for districts of Kokrajhar and Dibrugarh, Nalbari, Kamrup @ and Dhubri. We hope that the participants learnt new things and we hope that the Young Reporters who participated in the workshops will share their learning with other YRs. As said the much we share knowledge the more we gain.

In this issue of Mukta Akash we have given special significance on Anganwadi centres. And we are happy to see the ways you have conducted surveys on Anganwadi centres. The poignant issues on Anganwadi centre reflected through the surveys are really commendable. Along with this news on roads, library has also been published. Many news of good worth could not be published in this issue which we will publish in our upcoming issues. We hope you will send such news stories from your area with the same active enthusiasm. At the end sending love and wishes to you all once again!!

- Editorial Team

Mukta Akash
Our country Our birthplace
We will make beautiful
All problems and all opportunities
We will write in Mukta Akash
Our favourite and our best
Is You Mukta Akash
Because of you we could today become
Young Reporter
Of all the countries our country
Will be free from all problems.
Deprived of opportunities
Cannot be children of our country
Because of you we can today move forward
A thousand thank-you to you Mukta Akash
-LakhyajotiMaut,
Maakushi YR group

Mukta Dristi



- Mamata Bagh, 16 years

Sow trees and stop air pollution

Getting bicycles there is no limit of happiness for the girl students

In Dikom High School of Dibrugarh district under Panisola block the girl students have received bicycles. Regarding this the Borhamthari Young Reporters group have taken a brief interview of Monica Lohar. Regarding this the students have expressed their concern and issue they faced before when they did not had a bicycle. She added that her father was not financially strong to give her a cycle but now she can go to tuition without any hurdle. Her tuition classes are very far so earlier she use to walk for her tuition which is why it gets very late when she returns home from tuition.

Sometimes she also gets late for school. She used to reach school after the morning prayers are over. But now after the benefits I have received from the government all my problems regarding my tuition, school and other issues are being solved. There are many girls like me who have got rid of their problems after receiving bicycles and have been shining in their academics. For relieving the girl students from such situations through giving us cycles we along with Borhamthari YR group would like to thank the government.



- Borhamthari YR group.

The houses provided by the government has helped economically weak people

In Brodkaichi village of Pub Nalbari block in Nalbari district the government houses provided has brought a ray of hope for the people. As in the last few years the storms and flood have destroyed the houses of these people making them homeless. Regarding this when we asked a local inhabitant Mukut Talukdar he said, "Earlier as we were living in kucha homes we faced many difficulties. The storms used to take away our roofs but due to shortage of money we could not construct new house. But now as we have received government house we have been freed from all the sufferings and problems."

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- DeepshikhaRajbongshi, 13 years, Ramdhevi YR group.

The problem of transport for people of Kokrajhar district

The villages like Kharkhari, Kukhakati, Mulandabi and Sildbug of Gokhaingao-Dhubri connecting DK Road of Kokrajhar district is becoming havoc for people and passengers alike as the bridges constructed for these villages are under construction since last three years, the work progressing very slow. The roads are conered three years back but still the bridges are not done. Also last year the embankment of the Gangadhar river near Kumarganjriver flooding all these villages and the people of these villages had to live under water for 10-15 days. As the embankment of the Gangadhar river is yet not constructed so the people are in fear of flood havoc this time as well. The connecting road of Kurkhakati and Kumarganj, Tumbagan and Tamarhat and the ordinary boats in Baunai River along with the temporary bamboo bridge will not last long. So the people are urging the government to construct concrete bridges above BaunaiRiver. Also the bridge above the Jakkaba to Paglahat connecting road is not complete and as the work



progresses slow people are using the footpaths which have led to occurrence of many accidents. When asked about this entire incident to a local resident Anil Das he said, "The under constructed bridges and the roads have created trouble for the people so we would like to request to the government that they complete the construction of these bridges at the earliest."

-KanakBhakat, Jyotiprasad YR group

There is no BPL electricity facility in Golakganj Sonahat

In Dhubri district of Golakganj block in Bishkhowa 3No Sonahat area there is no BPL electricity facility in the entire area. Almost all residing in this area are below the poverty level. The electricity facility is the urgent need of the people residing in this area who are under the below poverty line. People in this area are facing lots of problem as yet the electricity facility is not done in this area. The students are facing genuine problem in this area as they have to study in

lamp and candles due to no electricity which has indeed become a threat for their eyes as studying in low light can harm their eyesight. BPL electricity facility is the need of the hour in this area so with support from Pushpalata YR group we would like to request the government and concerned department to look into the matter and provide BPL electricity facility in this area.

- Maleek Ali, 14 years, Pushpalata YR group

Depleted condition of Sealkati Anganwadi centre

In Panisola block of Dibrugarh Hatiali (3 and 4 No Line) the 26 No Anganwadi centre is in a very bad condition. There are 37 children in the centre. The condition of the centre is so worse that during monsoon the teachers cannot teach there. There is no roof in the centre and so during rains the centre cannot run. As there is no water facility in the centre the teacher have to bring water from nearby houses. When asked about the situation the Anganwadi worker Bharati Das said, "Our centre was constructed in such a way that after six months of construction it started to fall apart. There is no water and sanitation facility in our centre which is why the situation is even worse. Due to the condition of the centre we cannot decorate the centre and also cannot keep important files and documents in the centre. We have informed concerned authorities about the centre many a times but nothing happened so this time with help of Unnati YR group we would like to request the government to immediately take scheme for this Anganwadi centre."



- Unnati YR group

Environment Awareness

Do not cut trees
It will be desert
No species on earth will be alive
Green is our environment
Filled with trees
Hold hands to hands
To sow saplings
We will decorate the environment
Enhancing its beauty!!

- DurlavNayak, 14 years, Unnati YR Group.

Do you know?

When was the Right to Education Act implemented?
(Please send the answer to our address. The first three correct answers will be given prize and also their names will be published in our upcoming issue)

Congratulations to the winners:
The answer of the December 2017 'Do you know' column is -

Indira Gandhi is the first Indian to receive the Bharat Ratna.

The names of the winners are:
NiravChakraborty, 16 years (Dhubri)
BidukKaulsarta, 17 years (Nalbari)
MamtaBagh, 16 years (Dibrugarh)



Prizes will be sent to the winners

As per the CRC when adults take decisions that affect children we have the right to give our views and opinions and our opinions have to be taken seriously (Article 12)

Conclusion

Today the world has come closer due to technological development. It can rightly be called a global village. Assam's geographical distance from the mainland of India can no longer be a justification for its present state of emotional distance from the Indian sub-continent. Various development schemes have been started by the Government for the upliftment of the people of Assam mostly the rural section of the society. Media also played a significant role to make people aware and take necessary benefit of the various developmental schemes, but still, most of the section of people is left unconscious about the various developments around the State. In most cases, representatives from Assam in the National level fail to voice their opinion on issues concerning their state and fail to convince the higher order to pursue their objectives.

Most importantly, Social Media can be used as a channel for Government-Citizen communication across various layers of accountability, responsibility, hierarchy etc thereby helping agencies become government by the people. In an age of internet access and high-speed information flow, leaving websites without proper contact links for 'feedback' and with inadequate or inaccurate information tantamount to suicide in terms of business as well as the right to information. Assam needs to be explored; its resource potential needs to be glorified. Only such opening up of Assam can build in a new developed Assam. A state with a literacy rate of 64.3 per cent is sure to go a long way provided the masses are taken in the right direction. And media is the most potent force to do so.

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