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IAS

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# Assam

Current Affairs : April 2023



APSC / UPSC



## 1. Assam Public Safety (Measures) Enforcement Bill

Assam State assembly passed Assam Public Safety (Measures) Enforcement Bill

Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma recently announced that the state will enforce the setting up of CCTV cameras at all public places across the capital city in a bid to curb the rising crime in the state.

The Assam Public Safety (Measures) Enforcement Bill of 2023 will make cameras for surveillance compulsory at places where people get together. The owners of such spaces will have to complete the installation of the surveillance equipment within a stipulated time.

The purpose and reason of the bill, this proposed law is to prevent crime. And through its application will ensure public safety like commercial places, industrial establishments, religious places, educational institutions, government buildings, sports complexes and residential buildings

The proposed bill mandates for the use of surveillance equipment of specific configurations in such areas. The owner of the property will be responsible for the setting up as well as the maintenance of the surveillance footage of the area for a minimum of 30 days. The footage has to be made available to the government as and when deemed necessary. "The use of data available with the government from its own sources will assist in creating a safe public environment across the state

## 2. Charaideo Maidam

Charaideo Maidams is the Ahom equivalent of the Egyptian Pyramids. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chosen the Maidams from 52 sites across India for the UNESCO nomination. The maidams represent 13-19 century CE- late medieval mound burial tradition of the Tai Ahom community in Assam. The Ahom dynasty lasted for around 600 years till British annexed Assam in 1826



About: Charaideo or Che-Rai-Doi (Literally: the shining city on the hills in Ahom language[1]) is a town in Charaideo district, Assam, India and was also the first capital of the Ahom kingdom established by the first Ahom king Chao Lung Siu-Ka-Pha in 1253.[2] Even though the capital moved to other places over the course of the 600 years of rule, Charaideo remained the symbol of Ahom power. It is now known for its collection of maidams, tumuli or burial mounds of the Ahom kings and Ahom royalty. It is about 30 km from Sivasagar town located in Charaideo district.

### 3. Asia's longest river crossing hydrocarbon pipeline

Asia's largest underwater hydro-carbon pipeline, below the river Brahmaputra connecting Jorhat and Majuli in Assam has been completed by the Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited (IGGL).

The Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited (IGGL) has completed the largest underwater hydrocarbon pipeline in Asia (24-inch diameter and above), which is also the second longest in the world and connects the river island Majuli with Jorhat in Assam.

Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) was used to successfully carry out the difficult task of constructing the pipeline beneath the mighty Brahmaputra river, marking the achievement of a significant milestone in the building of the North East Gas Grid (NEGG), which connects North East India to the National Gas Grid.

The total length of the pipeline in this single HDD crossing is 4,080 meters across the main water channel of the Brahmaputra River. It was laid after overcoming several obstacles, many of which were caused by monsoon rains and flooding.

In order to complete this one-of-a-kind river crossing, two HDD rigs simultaneously began drilling from opposite sides of the Brahmaputra, with the junction of the two drilling heads taking place at 30 meters below the river bed.

The Brahmaputra River HDD crossing spans a total of 5,780 meters when all major and smaller water channels are taken into account. The pipeline was installed in three distinct portions that are 1000 M, 4080 M, and 700 M in length, with the first and third parts already finished.



Five significant oil PSUs: IOCL, ONGC, GAIL, OIL, and NRL came together to form Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited. It is executing the North East Gas Grid Project, which aims to connect the National Gas Grid with the principal urban centers and demand centers of North East India. The project cost for building the 1656 km long natural gas pipeline is Rs 9,265 crore.

#### **4. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana**

Centre has given a target to the Assam Government to construct 19 Lakh houses under the PMAY-G by March 2024

About:

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) is an initiative by the Government of India in which affordable housing will be provided to the urban poor with a target of building 2 crore (20 million) affordable houses by 31 March 2022. It has two components: Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) (PMAY-U) for the urban poor and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin) (PMAY-G and also PMAY-R) for the rural poor, the former administered by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the latter by Ministry of Rural Development. [4][5] This scheme converges with other schemes to ensure houses have a toilet, Saubhagya Scheme for universal electricity connection, Ujjwala Yojana LPG connection, access to drinking water and Jan Dhan banking facilities, etc.

#### **5. E- Khazana**

E-Governance For smooth delivery of public services Launch of E-Khazana in all Mouzadari areas

Highlights

- Registration of Pattadars for E-Khazana to commence from 1 April 2023
- Payment of land revenue through online portal to commence from next Agricultural Year-1 July 2023
- E-Khazana payable through all online payment modes like UPI, Debit/Credit Card, Net Banking, etc



## 6. Swastha Seva Utsab

Swasthya Sewa Utsav, a one-of-its-kind initiative in the country, and an event on the lines of Gunotsav in the state, was conducted across government health institutions by the Assam health and family welfare department from April 6 to 8.

According to official sources here, the primary objectives of the Swasthya Sewa Utsav are to provide comprehensive healthcare services to the community by assessing the gaps, make the health facilities IPHS (Indian Public Health Standards) compliant, and to create and share sustainable practices related to key areas of concern in public health facilities linked to positive health outcomes.

The program aims to provide quality healthcare across the state covering 1252 government health institutions (21 district hospitals, 16 sub-divisional civil hospitals, 205 community health centers and 1010 primary health centres)

## 7. 75 Glorious Years of Gauhati High Court

- Established as Assam High Court in undivided Assam on 5 April 1948
- Sir Harilal Kania, first Hon'ble Chief Justice of India presided over the inauguration
- Sir Ronald Francis Lodge sworn in as first CJ
- Initial sittings in Shillong, shifted to Guwahati on 14 August 1948
- Came to be known as High Court of Assam and Nagaland after formation of State of Nagaland in 1963
- Renamed as Gauhati High Court, making it a common HC for 5 NE states and 2 UTS, after Reorganisation of NE states in 1971
- Common HC of 7 states of NE in 1987
- At present, Gauhati HC has 3 outlying benches at Kohima, Aizawl and Itanagar following establishment of separate HCs in Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura in 2013



## 8. Assam Project on GOV Forest and Biodiversity Conservation

A joint initiative of Forest Department, Govt of Assam & French Development Agency

Objectives:

- Forest and biodiversity conservation
- Promote alternative livelihoods for forest
- Bring communities Build climate resilience, etc.

Highlights:

- Plantations done: 9,056 hectares People's Biodiversity Registers prepared: 46
- JFMC/EDCs strengthened: 265
- Forest Frontline Staff trained: 121
- Vehicles distributed: 129
- Buildings being constructed for forest staff: 112

## 9. Sewa Setu portal

The Government of Assam has started Sewa Setu Portal to apply for various govt services online. The Portal offers a total of 307 Services which citizens can apply online from home. Citizens also can track the status of the application in the Sewa Setu Portal. Paying land revenue tax, Applying for PRC, various Licences, and Registration for Govt service was never been easy, it was a great hassle earlier, so the CM Assam has launched the Doorstep Service System for the ease of the people. Now people can avail of 307 govt services online from home. The CM is trying the ease the hassle of applying for Govt Service.

Through the Sewa Setu Portal People of Assam will be able to Apply for Various certificates, Registration for licences, Employment Exchange cards, Apply for New Connections in various departments, Apply for Permits and Permission, Various Bill Payments etc.



## 10. Assam's Bihu Dance Sets Two Guinness World Records

Assam's Bihu dance has made history by breaking two world records with 11,304 dancers and musicians performing at Sarusajai Stadium in Guwahati. The performers attempted to create world records in two categories - the largest Bihu dance performance and the largest performance by folk musicians. This marks a significant moment for the traditional folk dance of Bihu, which is popular across Assam and especially performed during Bohag Bihu or Rongali Bihu, the spring festival that heralds the Assamese New Year in mid-April.

## 11. Assam's Gamosa gets GI Tag

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma received the certificate for Geographical Indication Registration Certificate for Asomiya Gamosa. The certificate was awarded by Controller General of Patent, Designs and Trademarks and Registrar of GI Registry Dr Unnat P Pandit at a function in Guwahati's Sarusajai stadium.

A total of eight types of gamosas, namely Uka or Xadharan Gamosa, Phulam Gamosa, Bihuwan, Tiani or Pani Gamosa, Anakata Gamosa, Telos Gamosa, Dora Boron or Jor Gamosa and Gossain Gamosa, have been included in the GI.

## 12. Prime minister Narendra Modi Inaugurates Several Projects During Bohag Bihu Celebration In Guwahati

Dedicated to the nation and laid foundation stones for projects worth over 10,900 crores in Assam

Inauguration/Launch

- AllIMS Guwahati Changsari, Kamrup
- Medical Colleges Nalbari | Nagaon | Kokrajhar
- 500 TPD Methanol Plant | APL. Namrup
- Newly constructed Double Lines, New Line & Electrified Railway Tracks
- Distribution of AB-PMJAY cards to a record 1.10 cr Ayushman Bharat beneficiaries



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## Laying of Foundation

- 12.21-km Palashbari-Sualkuchi bridge over Brahmaputra
- Assam Advanced Healthcare Innovation Institute | IIT Guwahati
- Beautification of Rang Ghar

### **13. Assam, Arunachal Pradesh border dispute**

The Government of Assam and Govt of Arunachal Pradesh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to settle the long-pending border dispute of the 804-km shared boundary between the two states.

- The MoU was signed by the Chief Minister (CM) of Assam Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, and CM of Arunachal Pradesh Pema Khandu in the presence of Union Minister Amit Shah, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in New Delhi, Delhi.

#### What was the dispute?

A dispute arose over 123 villages situated across 12 districts of Arunachal Pradesh and eight of Assam, which were claimed by Arunachal Pradesh in 2007. A Local Commission appointed by the Supreme Court was tasked with identifying the boundary between the two states, and the process to resolve the dispute began in 2022 through the formation of 12 regional committees from both states. The suggestions made by these committees have been accepted by both states, resulting in the resolution of disputes over 34 of these villages as per the signed MoU.

- Furthermore, disputes over 37 villages were resolved through the Namsal Declaration of July 2022, where the two Chief Ministers agreed in principle over them.

#### What is in the MoU?

The involved state governments have agreed that the MoU regarding the 123 disputed villages is "full and final," and no new encroachment will be allowed in the border areas. One village from Arunachal Pradesh will become part of Assam, while 60 villages from Assam will become





part of Arunachal Pradesh, and 10 villages will remain in Assam. The boundary for 49 of the remaining 52 villages will be determined by the regional committees within six months, and three villages in the Indian Air Force (IAF) bombing range will require rehabilitation.

The Assam-Arunachal Pradesh boundary is the longest inter-state border in the Northeast and has been pending in the Supreme Court since 1989.

#### **14. Bihu : The festival of Deoris**

The Bihu celebrated by the Deori community is known as 'Bihu' and the Bihu song as Jimo Chhayon Sajeba'. In Bihu, 'Bi' stands for ample and 'Shu' stands for joy. so Bihu means the festival of ample joy.

The main celebration is 'Ebaku Bihu' held on the first Wednesday of Bohag by the community.

#### **15. Sati Sadhani Divas**

Every year in Assam, 21 April is celebrated as Sati Sadhani Divas to honor the sacrifices made by this Chutia Queen, the State Government has marked this day as a state holiday.

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Sati Sadhani was the last queen of the Chutia Dynasty of Assam who ruled part of Upper Assam, from the middle of the eleventh century to April, 1524. According to tradition, she was the daughter of King Dharmadhvajpal, also known as Dhirnarayan. Born in Sadiya in 1493, Sati Sadhani had married Nityapal, alias Nitai in the year 1512 at the young age of 19. According to legend; unable to find a suitable groom for Sadhani, the king had devised a smart strategy. He decided and promised to marry Sadhani to anyone who could shoot down a running squirrel on the top of a Mori-xali (cemetery) with an arrow. To everyone's surprise, a cowherd named Nitai (from the Chakusara clan) killed the squirrel. The king kept his promise and married the princess to Nitai who was then given the name Nitipal. The king retired to the hills leaving the throne to Nitipal and Sadhani.



According to historians, Nitipal was inefficient and had no idea how to rule a kingdom, so Sadhani took charge and was crowned Queen in 1522. However, a lot of chaos and anarchy had already happened by then. During his rule Nitipal had dismissed the experienced ministers and instead recruited his own friends from his village. The old ministers had rebelled, led by Surdhwajpal, the brother of the former king. Although the rebellion was soon crushed, chaos had spread across the kingdom, and the Chutia Chiefs of other areas became independent. Nitipal was popularly known as A-nitipal because of this inefficiency and recklessness. Sadiya became isolated and had no contact with the Chutia Chiefs of the other parts of the kingdom.

In 1524, the Ahoms took advantage of Nityapal's weak leadership and attacked the Chutia Kingdom. The Sadiya attack took place on the first Wednesday of Chutia Bisu/Bihu, i.e. on 16 April 1524. The sudden attack at Sadiya forced the king and queen, along with some of the soldiers who survived, to flee to the hills above Sadiya.

The Chutiyas applied guerrilla warfare strategies and used faakdhenu (crossbows) and spears to defend themselves. Sadhani formed a female fighting squad of 120 warriors. They assisted the Army by rolling boulders onto the enemy below. That day was 21 April (7th Bohag) and was widely considered as Ujha (drummer's) Bisu. One of the former ministers of the Chutia's whom Nitipal had removed sided with the Ahoms and suggested that the Ahom Commander Phrasengmung Borgohain play the dhol. The General ordered the captives to climb up ghila creepers and play the Bisu drum or dhol. As it was the season of Bihu, the Chutia Army took this to be a sign that reinforcements had arrived. They considered this to be a sign of victory and thought that the Ahoms had been chased out. Consequently, they came down to the lower hills where the enemy forces were hiding. Another former Chutia Commander, Gajraj Borua, who had sided with the Ahoms showed the enemy the way to the king's hideout. The king was attacked and killed by an arrow. When Sadhani, who had played a prominent role in the fight against the Ahoms, was asked to marry Sadiyakhowa Gohain, the Ahom Governor of Sadiya, she preferred death to dishonour and sacrificed her life by jumping from the top of Chandragiri Hills near Sadiya in 1524.

Every year in Assam, 21 April is celebrated as Sati Sadhani Divas to honor the sacrifices made by this Chutia Queen. The Government of Assam has marked this day as a state holiday.



## 16. Acknowledging saviors of democracy

Monthly Pension to Loktantra Senanis for fighting to restore democracy during Emergency

Pension amount: Rs.15,000

- Their widows & unmarried daughters too to receive pension
- More Loktantra Senanis to be included in list of beneficiaries

Objectives

- Alleviate sufferings of Loktantra Senanis, their families

## 17. JVC for City Gas Distribution

Assam cabinet plans to set up Joint Venture Company (JVC) with Oil India Ltd (OIL) for City Gas Distribution (CGD) project

In this initiative the equity investment by Assam Gas Company Ltd would equal to a shareholding of 51%

CGD network will boost availability of natural gas and spur economic activity in Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Darrang, Udalguri and Sonitpur

## 18. Deul unique festival of Darrang

The word 'deul' is known to have come from the Sanskrit word 'devadal'. This festival, primarily marked by worship of lord Vishnu, is celebrated with great pomp in and around Darang from the day of Bohag Bihu till the end of Jeth month.

In 9th-10th century, a Brahmin Vaishnava Dharmadev Bipra Bhuyan built an earthen altar at Borabari, Darrang on the day of Bihu and conducted rituals. It was known as Bordeul, from where the term Bordeulguri is derived. Later, Deul festivities were observed under royal patronage and currently it is a festival of the masses in the region



## 19. Hemkosha

The Hemkosh is the first etymological dictionary of the Assamese language compiled by the Late Hemchandra Barua and the Braille version of the same has made history by making its way to the Guinness World Records.

A total of 90640 words were included in the Braille version of the dictionary and printed at the Government of Assam Braille Press located in the Latakata region in Guwahati city's Basistha locality.

## 20. ORUNODOI 2.0

2nd edition of Assam's biggest Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme

For inclusion of new beneficiaries:

- Jibika Sakhi, ASHA or Anganwadi worker to visit beneficiary's house. share scheme details and read out an affidavit
- Beneficiary to sign the affidavit only after knowing all the facts
- Copies of affidavits on non-judicial stamp paper to be provided by district administration in Assamese, Bodo, Bengali and English, as per need
- Beneficiary won't have to bear any cost for the affidavit

Categories of people excluded from filing affidavits

- Existing beneficiaries of Orunodol scheme.
- Beneficiaries of Deendayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme Beneficiaries of Indira Miri Universal Widow Pension Scheme



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## 21. Assam Government Initiative for Assam Kamakhya Temple Corridor

- The Assam government has announced plans to create a Kashi Vishwanath-like corridor at Kamakhya temple.
- The project aims to improve the infrastructure around the temple and make it more accessible to devotees.

The corridor will feature a series of buildings, including a meditation centre, a guest house, and a museum