

ATMAN

(A Biannual News Bulletin of the Gauhati High Court)

Published from Guwahati for private circulation

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(The High Court of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh)



SPECIAL EDITION
on the Occasion of the National Seminar
on
Environment and Sustainable Development - Role of Judiciary
&
Digitization of Indian Judiciary - Its Impact in Dispensation of Justice

Organised By: Gauhati High Court
Venue: Kaziranga, Assam
Saturday, 29th October, 2022

Programmes of National Seminar

28th October, 2022

7.00 P.M. - 8.00 P.M. Cultural Programme

29th October, 2022

9.50 A.M. - 11.10 A.M. Inaugural Session

11.45 A.M. - 1.15 P.M. Technical Session on the topic:

“Environment and Sustainable Development – Role of Judiciary”

2.15 P.M. - 3.45 P.M. Technical Session on the topic:

“Digitization of Indian Judiciary – Its Impact in Dispensation of Justice”

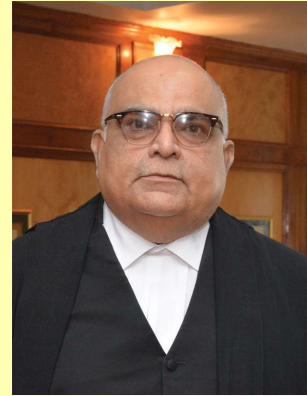
6.30 P.M. Cultural programme followed by dinner

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FROM THE CHIEF JUSTICE

After taking over as the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court on 23rd of June, 2022, this is my first message for ATMAN. I have noticed that ATMAN has been the only chronicle of the Gauhati High Court which mirror all important current events and portray multifarious activities, and I can foresee that as time passes, it will be the only place where we will be able to trace the history of this institution.



The Indian judiciary has been playing a crucial role in promoting sustainable development and preserving the flora and fauna of the country. While digitization of the Indian Judiciary presents a golden opportunity to reduce the pendency of many cases and preserve decade-old documents. We are publishing this special edition of ATMAN, as Gauhati High Court, for the first time, is proudly holding a National Seminar on 29th October at Kaziranga with special focus on the topic "Environment and Sustainable Development – Role of Judiciary" and "Digitization of Indian Judiciary – Its Impact on Dispensation of Justice".

During the last six months, Gauhati High court has witnessed several activities in the field of infrastructure, digitization and live streaming of court proceedings. Opening of a crèche is another encouraging move taken by the High Court for providing a stress-free working environment for the working mothers.

The inauguration of new district judiciary at Biswanath, Bajali, Majuli and West Karbi Anglong will go a long way in rendering quick dispensation of justice to the poor and needy and elevate the justice delivery system to exemplary heights.

A robust judicial infrastructure is the essence of a strong justice delivery system and the inauguration of the new court building at Barpeta district at Assam, equipped with all modern amenities, is another milestone achieved by

this institution and will surely be able to fulfill the dreams and aspirations of the litigant public.

Preserving our past heritage is as important and relevant as acceptance of technology and artificial intelligence in the justice delivery system of the country. Inauguration of the Gauhati High Court Museum is a very major step for the preservation of the heritage for future generation. The museum will provide an insight into the past rich heritage of the institution as well as of other north-eastern states. Live streaming of the court proceedings has been launched for the first time in the month of September, 2022 in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the e-Committee of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and from now onwards, the litigants and the public will indeed have an access to the justice delivery system in a more transparent manner.

I am happy that the Judicial Academy, Assam is holding various workshops and training programmes for enriching the Judicial Officers. The State Legal Services Authority, with its full vigour and dedication are organizing various sensitization programmes to bridge the gap between the Judiciary and the common people so as to enable the poor and marginalized section of the society to have access to the justice delivery system and avail the benefits of various government schemes.

The Gauhati High Court in commemoration with the celebration of 75 years of our glorious years of progressive independent India “Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav”, launched “Vidya Rath- School on Wheels”, a project aimed for imparting elementary education to economically challenged children of the society. I offer my gratitude to the Government of Assam and all the stakeholders for making this a reality within a short period.

I congratulate the efforts of the ATMAN in showcasing the activities of the High Court and I hope that ATMAN will remain an authoritative and informative guide preserving the rich heritage of this great institution to which we all belong.

— **Justice R. M. Chhaya**

EDITOR SPEAKS

This 27th issue of ATMAN is published as a Special Edition, in sync with the National Seminar held under the aegis of the Gauhati High Court, at the picturesque wildlife expanse of the Kaziranga National Park. This seminar of 29th October, 2022 will cover two significant topics, which are most relevant in the present day context – (i) *“Environment and Sustainable Development–Role of Judiciary”* and (ii) *“Digitization of Indian Judiciary–Its Impact in Dispensation of Justice”*.



As universally acknowledged, the Kaziranga National Park in Assam is the world’s largest habitat for the great one-horned Rhinoceros. Besides, Kaziranga National Park is a declared Tiger Reserve since the year 2006 and is also deservingly recognised as an Important Bird Area. The pride of Kaziranga National Park lies in the fact that since the year 1985 it has been accorded the distinction and recognition as a World Heritage Place by the UNESCO. The splendour that Kaziranga boasts, coupled with the considerable progress made in wildlife conservation, there could not have been a more appropriate and serene venue to brainstorm on the two topics of discussion. The very idea for bringing together distinguished judges, legal luminaries and other leading lights to converge at the common venue and platform to explore and interact on the two relevant topics of discussion, is indeed a praiseworthy initiative.

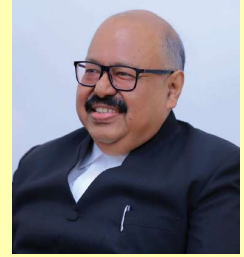
This Special Edition of ATMAN carries an evocative and reminiscent piece of writing, chronicling the journey of ATMAN from the time its first Editor, Justice Hrishikesh Roy, Judge, Supreme Court of India, had infused the soul in ATMAN in the year 2009 and steadfastly kept the banner flying for the ten years next, with 18 back-to-back issues of publication. This Special Edition also carries contributions from two of our respected brother judges, N. Kotiswar Singh, J and Suman Shyam, J, who have articulately covered the two topics of discussions for the National Seminar. Heartful thanks to them.

I express my gratefulness for the valuable support extended by my brother judges, especially Songkhupchung Serto, J; Kalyan Rai Surana, J; Ajit Borthakur, J; Nani Tagia, J; Kakheto Sema, J, Rafique Ahmed Tapadar, Registrar (Judicial); Ditimoni Gogoi, Special Officer; Mitali Kotoki, Chief Translator, in making this Special Edition a reality. Last but not the least, our special thanks and gratefulness to our respected and beloved Chief Justice, Rashmin Manharbhai Chhaya, J, for not only having supervised and monitored each and every stage of the process leading to the holding of the National Seminar but also for ensuring and providing all necessary guidance and support in the venture.

– Justice Manish Choudhury

A Decade with 'ATMAN'

In this Special Edition of ATMAN, brought out to mark this conference on sustainable development, held amidst the abundance of the lush green, beautiful Kaziranga National Park, a deep connect is noticed with the theme of the Editor's Note in ATMAN's (14th Issue), which reads thus:



“Recently on the International Day of Forests, the UN General Secretary Ban Ki-Moon called upon everyone to protect, restore and sustain healthy forests. What happens otherwise can be understood from the old Indian proverb which says Only when the last tree has died, the last river is poisoned and the last fish has been caught, will people realize that we cannot eat money. Therefore ATMAN today, salutes Assam's forest man Jadav Payeng who since 1979, single handedly planted an entire forest on the barren banks of river Brahmaputra and invested for the future of our planet.”

When ATMAN was conceived in 2009, the Gauhati High Court had the unique distinction of being the solitary High Court for all the seven States of the North-East Region. I, as soon to be the Editor, spent countless hours reflecting and brain-storming on a befitting name for the upcoming publication. I zeroed in on the idea that the Gauhati High Court being at the epicenter of the North-East Region, it represents the Atma (Soul) and, ATMAN as the acronym for the seven sisters, namely, Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland, evoked the christening of the umbilical name for the new born. The choice of a quintessential logo for the upcoming Bulletin that would depict all the then seven States also posed a brain-racking challenge, in that, names of three of the States within the jurisdiction of the Gauhati High Court, namely, Manipur, Meghalaya and Mizoram, started with the alphabet 'M'. One night, deep down hours, I woke up shouting Eureka. The tricky issue was resolved. The logo crystallized into a concrete form, with the alphabet 'M' superimposing thrice at midpoint to conjointly depict the three States. This is how the present logo of the Newsletter came to exist, incorporating the starting letter of all the seven states of the North-East Region.

With the establishment of the independent High Courts for the three states i.e. Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura, I was next confronted with the dilemma on the relevancy of the logo, which thitherto represented all the seven sister States. For the excess three

letters, that is, ‘M’ (for Meghalaya), ‘M’ (for Manipur) and ‘T’ (for Tripura), a fresh call had to be taken on the logo vis-a-vis the reduced territorial jurisdiction of the Gauhati High Court. The resolution of the situation, as was achieved, can be gauged from the following excerpts appearing in the 7th issue of ATMAN of September, 2012 :

“The jurisdiction of the Gauhati High Court in its new avatar will be restricted to just four States, since the States of Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura are to have their own High Courts. The re-alignment will regrettably make the ATMAN logo a little less evocative, as the design will miss the Tripura’s “T” and the two ‘M’s of Meghalaya and Manipur. But for old times sake, we decided to keep the masthead of the newsletter intact. For those of us with long association with the umbilically connected Gauhati High Court, it is time to move on. Therefore as goes the song in the Hitchcock’s classic, “The man who knew too much” – Que Sera Sera, whatever will be will beAu revoir.”

During my decade long stint as the editor of ATMAN, the Gauhati High Court was respectively headed by Jasti Chelameswar, J; R. Gogoi, J; Adarsh Kumar Goel, J; Madan B. Lokur, J; Abhay Manohar Sapre, J; K. Sreedhar Rao, J and Ajit Singh, J and I was privileged to have occupied the Editor’s Desk of ATMAN with the distinguished judges above heading the High Court.

In 2018, when I was moving to the Kerala High Court, ATMAN was on its 10th year of publication and to mark the occasion, the original masthead on the Bulletin/Newsletter was substituted with a composite image of the Old Block and New Block Building of the Principal Seat of the Gauhati High Court, with the Brahmaputra river displayed at the backdrop. At that point, the Editor’s baton was passed on to the philosopher judge Arup Kumar Goswami and thereafter on to the English teacher, Manojit Bhuyan, J. I had left to take up my assignment, as they say, in Gods Own Country. Chief Justice R.M. Chhaya and Manish Choudhury, J now constitute the team ATMAN.

Let me sign off by saying – May ATMAN continue to be the priority publication ever remaining close to our hearts, let it continue to whet the appetite for those curious to know how tall the Gauhati High Court stands.

New Delhi, 12th October, 2022

**Justice Hrishikesh Roy
Judge, Supreme Court of India**

Biodiversity and Environmental Issues in North-East India: Challenges and Solutions

North-East India, the land of rising sun for Indian sub-continent, inhabited by multiple ethnicities came into limelight in recent years as the powerhouse of sports. It has been also endowed with rich natural resources, and extensive forest cover hosting a plethora of flora and fauna. North-East India consisting of the States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim reflect a unique cultural and natural heritage of this country. Geographically, the North-East India consists of the Great Eastern Himalayas which makes a bend south beyond Dhing gorge and tappers down forming the Patkai Hills, Naga Hills, Manipuri Hills, Mizo Hills and Barail Range creating swift streams contributing to the mighty Brahmaputra drainage system in a relatively compact area providing a unique blend of vegetation and topography typical of mountainous and plains area which form a natural habitat for a diverse flora and fauna. The heavy rainfall the region enjoys and rich alluvial soil in the valleys have contributed to this rich natural environment and diverse flora and fauna. The highest rainfall in the world is in Mawsynram in Meghalaya. Apart from its affluent surface diversity, the region is geologically abundant in natural oil and gas, sedimentary rocks, and other various minerals. The Assam valley is known for the annual flood because of the Brahmaputra and other rivers crisscrossing the valley. The world's largest river island, Majuli in the Brahmaputra is itself a unique formation due to merger of the mighty Brahmaputra with its tributary Dihing at certain areas because of a massive flood which occurred about three centuries ago.



India is one of the seventeen "Mega Biodiverse countries" which accounts for 7-8% of corded species across the world. Biodiversity refers to every living thing, including plants, bacteria, animals, and humans having attuned to the surrounding environment and thriving in the "ecosystem" maintaining a natural balance. Adequate environment and growth conditions in the region enable the biodiversity, making it one of the Global Bioclimatic Belts. This ecosystem gets disturbed and threatened by continuous growth of human population and attending problems making it a Biodiversity 'Hot-spot'. Assam valley, one of the most biodiverse zones in the world, harboring a wide range of flora and fauna across its ecological habitats i.e.,

forests, grasslands, and wetlands, is a Hot spot posing a challenge to us in order to maintain its pristine nature. The state is host to 193 mammal species including 10 primate species, 185 species of fish, more than 820 species and sub species of birds, 405 species of butterflies, 115 species of reptiles, 46 species of amphibians and 39 species of snails, most of which are located in 7 National Parks and 20 Wildlife Sanctuaries spread across the State, of which 2 are UNESCO World Heritage Sites namely, Kaziranga and Manas National Parks. The State is the only home to the world famous one-horned rhinoceros at Kaziranga National Park and Manas Wildlife Sanctuary. There are 2 Biosphere Reserves (Dibru-Saikhowa and Manas), 4 Tiger Reserves (Kaziranga, Manas, Nameri and Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park), 5 Elephant Reserves and 1 of the three Ramsar sites of Northeast India (Deepor Beel) which provide the natural habitat for these flora and fauna. With multidimensional topographical features obtaining in the region, it stands out as one of the richest biodiversity hotspots in the world.

Some of the greatest challenges to the wildlife are poaching of the rhinoceros for their famed horns, elephants for ivory, tigers for use in traditional medicine, apart from habitat degradation and loss, human animal conflict, periodic flooding. Existence of transnational organized criminal gangs is another serious issue.

The North-East India is also rich in varieties of orchids and bamboo species and many plants having medicinal uses. More than 500 rare species of Orchids are found in the dense jungles of Arunachal Pradesh. About one-sixth of Nagaland is covered by tropical and sub-tropical evergreen forests creating the habitat for a large number of wildlife and more than 490 species of birds and 396 species of orchids are found. Hornbills and Mithuns common to both Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland form integral parts of their culture. Mizoram has the third highest total forest cover with 1,594,000 hectares (3,940,000 acres), and highest percentage area (90.68%) covered by forests, among the states of India, according to 2011 Forest Survey of India, thus providing a favourable environment for a large number of flora and fauna. About 70% of Meghalaya state is forested with abundant dense primary subtropical forests and the Meghalaya forests are considered to be among the richest botanical habitats of Asia. These forests receive abundant rainfall and support a vast variety of floral and faunal biodiversity. Sikkim is situated in an ecological hotspot of the lower Himalayas. Owing to its altitudinal gradation, the state has a wide variety of plants, from tropical species to temperate, alpine and

tundra ones, and is perhaps one of the few regions to exhibit such a diversity within such a small area. Sikkim is home to around 5,000 species of flowering plants, 515 rare orchids The red panda is the state animal of Sikkim and is home to snow leopard, musk deer etc. Sikkim also has a rich diversity of arthropods, many of which are to be properly studied.

Apart from forests, sanctuaries and national parks which sustain the rich biodiversity in the region, there are three important Ramsar sites, which are lesser-known wetland ecosystems hosting an array of complex aquatic and migratory biodiversity, i.e., the Deepor Beel in Assam, Loktak Lake in Manipur and Rudrasagar Lake in Tripura.

Deepor Beel, one of the largest lakes, located near the Guwahati City was declared as a Ramsar site in 2002. Varieties of wildlife depend on this for their food and habitation, so as many villages located nearby. Being located near one of the fastest growing cities in India, it has suffered environmental degradation due to dumping municipal solid wastes in nearby areas. Construction of railhead through the wetland also caused serious environmental damage.

Another Ramsar site (designated in 1990), the Loktak lake, situated near Moirang town of Imphal Valley is one of the largest freshwater lakes in South Asia covering an area of more than 300 sq. km The Keibul Lamjao National Park, home to the unique 'Sangai', the dancing deer is located within the Loktak Lake. The lake is an Important Bird Area and is famous for 'Phumdis', a heterogeneous mass of vegetation, soil and organic matter at various stages of decomposition, which provide the perfect habitat for the Sangai and floating houses for the fishermen. The rich biodiversity of Loktak consist of 233 varieties of aquatic plants and 57 varieties of water birds. Construction of a hydropower project by the NHPC and Ithai Barrage led to inundation of agricultural lands depended on the lake, disturbing the cyclic flows of water from the surrounding hills of the valley which feed the lake and natural outlet from the lake to other rivers consequently disturbing the surrounding ecosystem.

The Rudrasagar Lake in Tripura, covering about 2.40 sq.km. situated in Melaghar Village of Sipahijala district near Gomti River, was designated a Ramsar site in 2005. The lake is a natural reservoir which receives its flow from Noacherra, Durlavnarayacherra and Kementalicherra. The lake has been facing from low water level for many years thus depriving the local people from fishing and cultivating nearby lands.

Nature itself maintains the perfect balance in the environment and life cycle is maintained with decay followed by regeneration and growth keeping Nature alive and thriving. But humankind's indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources has disturbed this fine balance, posing a threat to the existence of humankind itself. Humanity, itself an integral part of nature and in failing to understand the law of nature and seeking to put our selfish interest above all, can be the ultimate reason for destruction of the world around us. The solution fortunately, is within us and not far to seek.

We must, therefore, ensure survival of all kinds of life-forms which are in danger on the earth due to environmental degradation. We must avoid indiscriminate exploitation of the natural resources and ensure optimum utilization of these and evolve proper environmental management programs. Thus, sustainable environmental planning and management strategies are required to be formulated keeping in mind the present and future needs. This can be achieved with proper Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) by assessing the existing status of the air, water, land, noise, biological and socio-economic components of environment and carrying on Environmental Audit (EA) our activities, more particularly of the various economic and business activities of the companies and institutions. This would ensure proper utilization of the ever-dwindling natural resources and fragile ecosystems sustaining the vast panoply of the flora and fauna. The fine line dividing the needs of humankind and need of the nature to sustain its vast resources is to be constantly observed and maintained, especially in an area like the North-East India, which is being slowly integrated to the market economy and larger national social fabric, entailing movement of people cutting across the boundaries of the constituent States which have been jealously guarded by the indigenous inhabitants. Industrialization in the North-East, which invariably involves deforestation, though a slow process is already taking place in a massive scale posing a great challenge the environment of the region. Mining of natural ores is another relatively new industrial activity which has seen very unplanned and unsystematic growth. This region being rich in mineral oil has seen rapid expansion of the oil exploration activities, setting up of oil refineries. Certain areas of the States of Assam, Meghalaya have seen unprecedented increase in mining activities of coal, limestones to feed various industries like cement factories mushrooming in the region. Massive deforestation has taken place to cater to the needs of plywood industries, paper industries, apart from domestic consumption of the indigenous people inhabiting the areas.

These are some of the contemporary challenges faced by the North-Eastern States which would require a concerted and conscious efforts on the part of all the stockholders to maintain the delicate environment and rich biodiversity.

The role of the State government of course is the most significant, which is to ensure that the provisions of various environmental and wildlife protection statutes in force are properly implemented, i.e., Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981, Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1974, etc. Article 48A of the Constitution enjoins that the State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country. Larger budgetary provision should be made for use of technology and management and better training of the personnel tasked to protect the flora and fauna.

Perhaps, the most important role will be played by the people by raising awareness about the threat posed to the environment and extending by cooperation with the authorities in implementing the beneficial provisions of law for protecting the environment and wildlife, which often become victim of poachers and encroachment in the reserved forests and lands. After all, it is the duty of every citizen of this country under Clause (g) to Article 51A of the Constitution to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife and have compassion for living creatures.

Judiciary will also have a key role to play in protecting the environment by ensuring that those in the administration discharge their duties properly and also by ensuring that those who flout the law by harming the environment and wildlife are brought to justice expeditiously. In adjudicating disputes relating environment, not only knowledge of the relevant law, but also a holistic understanding of the intricacies of the amazing nature and bewildering and mysterious ways of its functioning is sine qua non, or else we would fail to arrive at the most appropriate resolution. For this, the expertise of the specialists and voluntary organisations working at the subaltern level needs to be harnessed. I am sure this national seminar will generate better understanding of the challenges and issues associated with environment and rich biodiversity around us.

**Justice N. Kotiswar Singh,
Judge, Gauhati High Court**

The Thought Behind the National Judicial Conference at Kaziranga

At the very outset, I take this opportunity to extend a very warm welcome to all delegates attending the National Judicial Conference at Kaziranga, Assam held on the 29th day of October, 2022.



Economic development is crucial for the growth of every nation, more particularly, the developing countries like India. But is it worth achieving such economic development at the cost of environment is a vexed issue which confronts the human civilization today. Environmental issues such as climate change, energy consumption, waste production, threats to public health, poverty, social exclusion, management of natural resources, loss of biodiversity, and land use have today invited the attention of the Global community in a manner never before. Instances of rapid environment degradation are rampant. Notwithstanding the same, implementation of environment protection laws in our country has remained far from being satisfactory. If environment degradation continues at this rate then a day might soon come when there would be very little left for our future generation to meet their needs. The father of our nation Mahatma Gandhi had said “Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need but not any man’s greed”.

The concept of sustainable development received its first major international recognition at the UN Conference on Human Environment held in 1972 at Stockholm. The expression “Sustainable Development”, however, found mention in the Brundtland report published in 1987 by the United Nation’s World Commission on Environment and Development. The report of the UN World Commission has defined Sustainable Development as “the development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The main concerns of sustainable development centre around economic, social and environmental issues. The Sustainable Development goal (SDGs) established by the United Nations in the year 2015 consist of 17 global goals with 169 targets, which includes actions to end poverty, improve health and education and promote prosperity and wellbeing of the masses by considering environmental sustainability. Harnessing and maximising the potential of technological innovations, which address issues such as carbon capture and storage, more efficient irrigation methods and manufacturing processes that minimises waste and pollution are some of the significant areas where greater focus is

called for. There is also a need to harness and utilise the advancements in the field of renewable energy resources, building urban water system and also public infrastructure and at the same time producing environment friendly materials and products which would play a significant role in achieving the sustainable development goals. Concerns arising out of issues such as land degradation, biodiversity losses, air pollution with special reference to vehicular pollution in urban cities, management of fresh water and solid waste management need to be tackled more aggressively than ever before. In this backdrop, there can hardly be any doubt about the fact that achieving the goal of sustainable development would require concerted efforts from the stakeholders and the Judiciary, as an Institution, would have a decisive role to play in this regard.

The process of digitisation in the Indian Judiciary has already started to show significant impact in increasing the efficiency of the Justice Dispensation System. Computerisation of Judiciary in India began as far back as in the year 1990 when the National Informatics Centre (NIC) undertook the task of computerisation in the Supreme Court of India. Thereafter, all the High Courts were computerised and linked through the NIC network NICNET. In the year 1997, NIC took up the work of computerisation in the district courts. The basic objective of the project was to bring in transparency in the judicial system by providing more information to the litigants and Lawyers and at the same time, streamline judicial administration by setting up a reliable judicial database. The e-courts project was conceptualised in terms of the “National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the Indian Judiciary -2005”. In the year 2013, the e-courts National Portal (ecourts.gov.in) was launched so as to provide case status, daily cause list, information pertaining to the cases filed and registered through Case Information System (CIS) Software. Under this ambitious project, more than 18,735 subordinate courts have been computerised. The National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) is today providing real time information to the litigants regarding their case status.

The process of digitisation of the Indian Judiciary got the much needed impetus under the Phase-I of the e-Courts project which began in the year 2007. Under this project, computerisation of a number of court complexes at the District and Taluka levels took place whereby hardware, LAN and CIS were provided. Additional hardware for the court rooms covered under Phase-I was provided under the Phase -II of e-courts project which received the sanction of the Government of India on 4th August, 2015. Under Phase-II, new court complexes were provided with hardware, LAN etc. Phase-II had also made provisions for Judicial Knowledge Management System which includes

Integrated Library Management System and access to Digital Libraries. In 2017, the Integrated Case Management Information System (ICMIS) was launched with the ultimate objective of going paperless. Virtual Courts for dealing with Traffic Challan Cases and Petty Offence are already operational in several places including Assam. Steps for setting up Digital NI Courts have also been initiated in the State of Assam in tune with the national guidelines. There is also a move to promote e-filing of cases. Although such a process still has a long way to go, yet, the process had gained momentum with the setting up of E-Sewa Kendras to cover all the District Courts and the High Courts. Digitisation of case records was another significant step under the Phase-II.

Phase-III of the e-courts project, which is still under preparation, envisages consolidation and growth by using technology with special emphasis on migration to cloud computing and data mining by taking advantage of Block Chain Technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI). With that end in view, the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Committee of the Supreme Court was constituted for conceptualising, implementing and monitoring the scope of use of AI in the courts in India. Development of AI based tools such as ‘SUVAS’ (a machine assisted translation tool) and ‘SUPACE’ (a tool to collect relevant facts and laws to assist judicial decision making process) could very well turn out to be the watershed developments in the history of Indian Judiciary and can go a long way in increasing the efficiency of the Justice Delivery System.

The recent out-break of Covid-19 pandemic, imposition of lock downs and the requirement of maintaining social distancing had witnessed a dramatic change in the functioning of the Judiciary. It was during the time of the pandemic that the Indian Judiciary had to heavily depend on Video Conferencing (VC) facility so as to keep the court system running. The experience of pandemic had provided the much needed tail wind for expediting the process of upgrading the digital infrastructure in the court complexes at all levels. Realising the importance of VC facility in the court room proceedings, Video Conferencing Rules were framed by the different High Courts. Accordingly, Gauhati High Court Video Conferencing Rules were also framed. Soon thereafter, the “Gauhati High Court (Live Streaming and Recording of Court Proceedings) Rules, 2022” were notified and live streaming of court proceeding of the Gauhati High Court was started with effect from 26th of September, 2022 initially to cover three courts.

The above developments are a clear indicator of the fact that under the aegis of the E-Committee of the Supreme Court of India, the Indian Judiciary is rapidly moving

towards a fully digitized system of operation and that day may not be far when pleadings would be lodged only digitally, arguments advanced only virtually and verdicts delivered at a much faster pace. Even the copies of the judgements and orders would be available to the litigants in digital form, that too, in their own language. In the process, the Justice Delivery System in India might even go completely paperless, which in turn, will make a significant contribution in preserving the environment. A process re-engineering in the anvil, would undoubtedly have a very significant impact in the functioning of the Judiciary in the days ahead. Implementation of the above measures could, however, throw up many well known challenges for the institution. The first and foremost is the issue of misuse of the digital system and threats arising out of hacking and cyber-security. Apart from the above, in order to make access to justice by use of technology a reality, the issues of digital divide, skill divide and poor connectivity (more particularly in the NE States) will have to be suitably addressed at the Institutional Level. There is also need to create requisite awareness amongst the stakeholders about the benefit of technology and also to come up with more and more user friendly applications.

In view of the growing National and International concerns for environment and also keeping in mind the impact that technology is likely to have on the Justice Delivery System in India in the near future, the two topics for the working sessions have chosen as “Environment and Sustainable Development – Role of Judiciary” and “Digitisation of Indian Judiciary – Its Impact in Dispensation of Justice”. Kaziranga, the abode of the famous One Horned Rhinoceros is a world bio-diversity hotspot and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which is well known for its rich flora and fauna. Considering the theme of the Seminar, Kaziranga has been chosen to host this National Conference. The organisers have made all efforts to ensure that while exploring the rich fauna and flora of Kaziranga, the delegates have a comfortable stay and get ample opportunity to share their views on the chosen topics during the working sessions. I sincerely hope and trust that the deliberations and discussions taking place during working sessions would not only provide deep insight into the various challenges facing the Institution on the above subjects but would also lay down a future road map for the Judiciary.

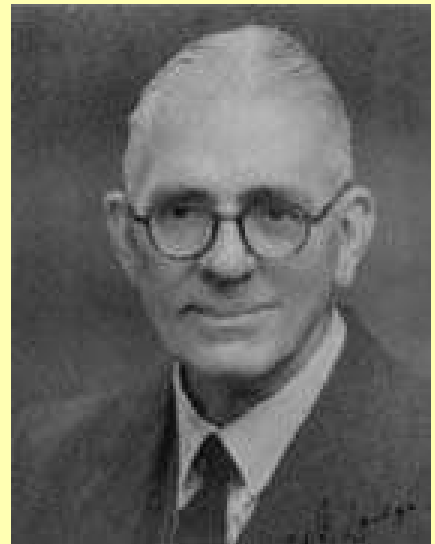
Before concluding, I thank all the delegates, who have travelled from the nooks and corners of the country to attend this national conference and made the event a success.

**Justice Suman Shyam
Judge, Gauhati High Court
& Chairperson, ICT Committee**

The Gauhati High Court– from the Beginning till the Present Day

The Gauhati High Court, as it is presently known, was initially established as the Assam High Court. Section 229 of the Government of India Act, 1935 sanctioned the establishment of a High Court in Assam. After India attained independence on 15th August, 1947, it was on 9th September, 1947, the Assam Legislative Assembly took a resolution that a separate High Court must be set up for Assam. It led to the promulgation of the Assam High Court Order on 1st March, 1948, by Lord Mountbatten, Governor General of India, in exercise of power under sub-section (1) of Section 229 of the Government of India Act, 1935, as adopted by the Indian Provincial

Constitution (Amendment) Order. The notification titled 'The Assam High Court Order, 1948' dated New Delhi, 1st March, 1948 came to be published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, dated 1st March, 1948, which took into effect from 5th April, 1948. The jurisdiction of the High Court of Assam were in respect of the territories for the time being included in the Province of Assam, all such original, appellate



Justice R. F. Lodge- the first Chief Justice of the newly established Assam High Court



The building where the High Court began functioning in 1948. It was originally the Divisional Commissioner's office

and other jurisdiction as was exercisable in respect of the said territories or any part thereof by the then High Court of Calcutta, or by the Governor of Assam exercising the functions of the High Court. Sir Ronald Francis Lodge, then a Justice in the Calcutta High Court was appointed as the First



The Gauhati High Court building (now old block) opened by Shri Govind Ballabh Pant, Union Home Minister, on 20th February, 1957

Chief Justice of the newly established Assam High Court and he was sworn in on 5th April, 1948. The inaugural function was presided over by Sir Harilal Kania, the first Chief Justice of India. By his first order dated Camp Shillong, 31st May, 1948, Justice Lodge directed that the Assam High Court took effect from 31st May and until further orders, sit at Shillong temporarily. The sittings of the single-Justice High Court was at the Council House, Shillong. The very first case before the then Assam High Court was *U Singh Lamin (Petitioner) vs. Ka Larian Lamin (Respondent)*, which was listed before the Single-Judge Bench of Justice Lodge on 6th June, 1948. On 5th August, 1948, Justice Lodge issued a revised order whereby Gauhati came to be notified where the High Court of Assam and the Judges and Division Courts thereof shall sit from 14th August, 1948, until further orders. Having shifted to Gauhati, the High Court began functioning from the Old Commissioner's Building near Dighalipukhuri and it began with a handful of cases transferred from the Calcutta High Court. The first change in nomenclature in the High Court of Assam came about on 1st December, 1963, with the formation of the State of Nagaland, when it became re-designated as the High Court of Assam and Nagaland. On 21st January, 1972, after the breakup of undivided Assam and creation of the new states of Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura, the High Court of Assam and Nagaland underwent another change in its nomenclature with the coming into force of the North Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971 and from thereon, it came to be called as the Gauhati High Court (The High Court of Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur and

Tripura) with jurisdiction over the two newly created Union Territories of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. On and from 20th February, 1987, another change in the nomenclature of the Gauhati High Court took place with the creation of the two new States, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh and its designation became the Gauhati High Court (The High Court of Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh) with jurisdiction over these 7 (seven) States. It had its Principal Seat at Gauhati, Assam with a bench each in each of the other 6 (six) States. With the establishment of the High Courts in Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura in 2013, it has become the Gauhati High Court (The High Court of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh).



The grand, wood-paneled interior of the court room in the old High Court building



The New Block of the Gauhati High Court inaugurated by Justice P. Sathasivam, the then Chief Justice of India, on 17th August, 2013

(Source : Gauhati High Court - History & Heritage)

Celebration of 74th Foundation Day of Gauhati High Court on 6th April, 2022

On 6th April, 2022, the 74th Foundation Day of the Gauhati High Court was organized by the Gauhati High Court Employees' Association under the aegis of the Registry. The programme was held in the premises of the Gauhati High Court (Old Block). To celebrate the occasion, various sports were organized amongst the officers and staff of the Gauhati High Court. Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court and his Lordship's spouse, Smti. Vaishali Dhulia were felicitated on the occasion. After His Lordship spoke on the occasion, the prizes were distributed amongst the winners of different



Chief Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia speaking on the occasion.



Chief Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia presenting the trophy to the Judges' Cricket team

sports held on the occasion. A cultural programme was also held on the occasion. Invited artists as well as the officers and staff of the Gauhati High Court performed various programmes which captivated the audience. As a part of the Foundation Day celebration of the Gauhati High Court, a friendly cricket match was played on 26th February, 2022 in the Judge's Field.

Inauguration of Crèche at the Gauhati High Court on 7th May, 2022

On 7th May, 2022, Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court inaugurated a crèche in the Old Block premises of the Principal Seat of the Gauhati High Court in presence of the other Judges. The programme was also attended by the officers and staff of the Gauhati High Court Registry.

A crèche was a long pending demand of the working mothers - employees in the Registry and creation of the same would enable them to leave their children in the Crèche while they are at



Chief Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia after inaugurating the Crèche



The play materials for the children inside of the Crèche



work. The children kept in the Crèche would be provided a stimulating environment for their holistic development. Initially, the Gauhati High Court is providing this facility for children within the age group of two to four years who would be given needed care, guidance and supervision away from their homes during the day hours. The Crèche would have the services of trained and experienced staff for taking care of children and their safety. In case of any emergency, the parents would immediately be informed.



The children being taken to the Crèche

Farewell to Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court on 7th May, 2022

On 7th May, 2022, a full court farewell reference was held at Court No.1 in the New Block of the Gauhati High Court to bid farewell to Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court on his elevation as Judge, Supreme Court of India. The farewell reference was attended by the Judges, the learned members of the Bar and the officers of the Registry of the Gauhati High Court. The legal fraternity recollected the manifold qualities of His Lordship and various milestones achieved during His Lordship's tenure as the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court.



Justice N. Kotiswar Singh presenting a memento to Chief Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia on his farewell

An official farewell dinner was also hosted in honour of Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia. The family members of Justice Dhulia, Judges of the Gauhati High Court, the former Judges, their spouses and the members of the Registry attended the programme.

Distribution of Laptop Computers amongst the Judicial Officers on 11th May, 2022 at the Gauhati High Court Conference Hall

On 11th May, 2022, laptop computers were distributed among the newly inducted Judicial Officers. The programme for distributing laptop computers was organized at the Conference Hall of the Gauhati High Court. The laptop computers were distributed amongst them by Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Chief Justice (Acting), Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak, Justice Michael Zothankhuma and Justice Suman Shyam, Judges, Gauhati High Court and Justice (Retd) Mir Alfaz Ali, Director, Judicial Academy, Assam. The members of the Registry were also present on the occasion.



Justice N. Kotiswar Singh handing over laptop computers to Judicial Officers

Inauguration of District Judiciary

At Bajali :

On 21st May, 2022, Justice Hitesh Kumar Sarma, Judge, Gauhati High Court and the Portfolio Judge of Barpeta District, inaugurated the District Judiciary, Bajali in the august presence of Shri Ranjeet Kumar Dass, Minister, Public Health Engineering, Panchayat and Rural Development, General Administrative Department etc., Government of Assam. The inaugural



Justice Hitesh Kumar Sarma unfurling the plaque in presence of Shri Ranjeet Kumar Dass



Justice Hitesh Kumar Sarma inaugurating the District Judiciary, Bajali in presence of Shri Ranjeet Kumar Dass

function was also attended by Shri Aparesh Chakravarty, District and Sessions Judge, Barpeta, Smti. Shabnom Choudhury, District & Sessions Judge, Bajali, Judicial Officers, Members of the Bar, Officers and Staff of the District Judiciary, Barpeta, Registry Officials of the Gauhati High Court and others.

At Biswanath:

On 21st May 2022, Justice Ajit Borthakur, Judge, Gauhati High Court and the Portfolio Judge, District Judiciary, Sonitpur inaugurated the District Judiciary, Biswanath in the august presence of Shri Pijush Hazarika, Minister for Water Resources, Information & Public Relations, Parliamentary Affairs, Social Justice and Empowerment. Shri Jogeswar Bora has joined as the District and Sessions Judge of the newly created District Judiciary, Biswanath. For smooth functioning of the newly created District Judiciary, the



Justice Ajit Borthakur inaugurating the District Judiciary, Biswanath in presence of Shri Pijush Hazarika



Justice Ajit Borthakur addressing the gathering

At Majuli :

On 21st May, 2022, Justice Suman Shyam, Judge, Gauhati High Court and the Portfolio Judge of Jorhat District inaugurated the District Judiciary of Majuli in the august presence of Shri Bimal Borah, Minister for Sports & Youth Welfare, Cultural Affairs, Power & Tourism, Government of Assam. Shri Mridul Kumar Kalita, District and Sessions Judge, Jorhat, Shri Nogen Senabaya Deori, newly appointed District & Sessions Judge of Majuli and Shri Pulak Mahanta, Deputy Commissioner, Majuli attended the programme along with other dignitaries. The programme was also attended by the Registry officials of the Gauhati High Court and the officials of District Judiciary, Jorhat.



Justice Suman Shyam inaugurating the District Judiciary of Majuli in presence of Shri Bimal Borah

Earlier, Majuli was a part of District Judiciary, Jorhat. Initially, in order to run the District Judiciary, the Court of Additional District Judge has been converted to the Court of District and Sessions Judge, while the SDJM Court has been converted to the CJM Court and the SDJM Court, along with the office of the DLSA, has been accommodated in the earlier office of the DLSA.

Swearing-in Ceremony of Justice Lanusunkam Jamir on 10th June, 2022

On 10th June, 2022, Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Chief Justice (Acting) administered the oath of office to Justice Lanusunkam Jamir in presence of the Judges of the Gauhati High Court. Justice Jamir was appointed as an Additional Judge of the Gauhati High Court on 22nd May, 2013 and took oath as Additional Judge, Manipur High Court on 9th October, 2018, on transfer and became permanent on 12th November, 2018.



Chief Justice (Acting) N. Kotiswar Singh administering oath of office to Justice Lanusunkam Jamir

Dinner in honour of Justice Hrishikesh Roy, Judge, Supreme Court of India & Justice Arup Kumar Goswami, Chief Justice, Chhattisgarh High Court on 10th June, 2022

On 10th June, 2022, an official dinner was hosted in honour of Justice Hrishikesh Roy, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Justice Arup Kumar Goswami, Chief Justice, Chhattisgarh High Court. On the occasion, Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice Arup Kumar Goswami, along with their spouses, were



Justice N. Kotiswar Singh felicitating Justice Arup Kumar Goswami, Chief Justice, Chhattisgarh High Court



Justice N. Kotiswar Singh felicitating Justice Hrishikesh Roy, Judge, Supreme Court of India

felicitated with gamosa and bouquet of flowers. The dinner was also attended by the sitting as well as former judges of the Gauhati High Court along with their spouses, the Advocate Generals of Assam and Mizoram, the officers and staff of the Registry along with other dignitaries.

International Day of Yoga organized on 21st June, 2022 at Gauhati High Court



The Judges, along with the officers and staff of Gauhati High Court taking part in the yoga camp

On 21st June, 2022, the International Day of Yoga, Yoga for Humanity was organized at the Gauhati High Court (Old Block) as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Judges, the members of the Registry, the members of the Bar, the officers and staff of the Gauhati High Court took part in the yoga programme. Experienced instructors were called to conduct the programme smoothly.

Swearing-in Ceremony of Justice R. M. Chhaya as the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court on 23rd June, 2022

On 23rd June, 2022, His Excellency the Governor of Assam Shri (Prof.) Jagadish Mukhi administered the oath of office to Justice Rashmin Manharbhai Chhaya, Judge, Gujarat High Court as the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court. The oath taking ceremony was held at the Durbar Hall of Raj Bhavan, Guwahati. The Chief Minister of Assam, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, the Judges of the Gauhati High Court, the Advocate Generals of Assam and Mizoram, a number of Judges of the Gujarat High Court, Senior Govt. officials and officials of the Gauhati High Court Registry were present on the occasion.



Shri (Prof.) Jagadish Mukhi administering the oath of office to Justice Rashmin Manharbhai Chhaya as the Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court



The dignitaries present during the ceremony

Born on 12th January, 1961, Justice Rashmin Manharbhai Chhaya was enrolled as an Advocate with Bar Council of Gujarat in the year 1984 and was elevated as an Additional Judge, High Court of Gujarat on 17th February, 2011 and confirmed as permanent Judge on 28.01.2013.

Farewell to Justice Rumi Kumari Phukan and Justice Hitesh Kumar Sarma

On 30th July, 2022, the Gauhati High Court fraternity bid farewell to Justice Rumi Kumari Phukan and Justice Hitesh Kumar Sarma, Judges, Gauhati High Court on the occasion of their laying down of office. A full court farewell reference held in Court No. 1 of the New Block of the Gauhati High Court was attended by the Judges, the learned members of the Bar and the officers of the Registry of the Gauhati High Court. The members of the Bar recollected the manifold qualities of both the retiring Judges of the Gauhati High Court.



Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court, presenting a memento to Justice Rumi Kumari Phukan

Earlier on 29th July, 2022, a dinner was hosted in honour of Justice Rumi Kumari Phukan and Justice Hitesh Kumar Sarma which was attended by the



Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court, presenting a memento to Justice Hitesh Kumar Sarma

Judges, along with their spouses, the Advocate Generals of Assam and Mizoram, the officers and staff of the Registry and other dignitaries.

On the occasion, Justice Rumi Kumari Phukan and Justice Hitesh Kumar Sarma, along with their spouses, were felicitated with gamosa and bouquets and gifts were also presented to them.

Independence Day Celebration at the Principal Seat of Gauhati High Court

On completion of 75 years of independence, the Gauhati High Court celebrated 76th Independence Day at the Principal Seat of the Gauhati High Court with much pomp and gaiety.

Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court hoisted the National Flag in presence of His Lordship's spouse Smti. Hitakshi R. Chhaya, sitting as well as former judges of the Gauhati High Court and their spouses, the officers and staff of the Registry, the learned members of the Bar and other distinguished guests. After hoisting the National Flag, the Chief Justice received the Guard of Honour from the security personnel. An impressive parade was taken out by the



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya hoisting the National Flag at the Chief Justice's bungalow

NCC cadets along with the security personnel which captured the attention of all the audience.

On the auspicious occasion of Independence Day, a plantation programme was organized in the premises of Old Block of the Gauhati High Court and the Chief Justice, accompanied by the other Judges, took part in the programme. A number of beautiful cultural programmes were held showcasing the rich culture and heritage of the State. Like the previous years, Chief Justice R.M. Chhaya and Justice N. Kotiswar Singh handed over the letters of appreciation to the selected employees and officer of the Registry. As part of the Har Ghar Tiranga mission mooted by the Government of India, the Gauhati High Court also took initiative and distributed National Flags among



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya hoisting the National Flag at the Gauhati High Court



Colourful parade taken out during the Independence Day celebration



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya planting a sapling on the occasion



Glimpses of the cultural programme during the Independence Day celebration





A beautiful dance performance during the celebration



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya and Justice N. Kotiswar Singh distributing certificates of excellence to the officers and staff of the Registry

all the Grade IV staff of the Registry on the eve of Independence Day for hoisting those in their respective homes.

As part of the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, certificates and token of gifts to nine deaf and dumb students who excelled in their High School and Higher Secondary Examinations were also distributed and gifts were distributed among the children.



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya and Justice N. Kotiswar Singh distributing certificates & gifts to the deaf & dumb students

Swearing-in ceremony of Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund and Justice Mitali Thakuria as Additional Judges on 16th August, 2022



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya administering oath of Office to Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund and Justice Mitali Thakuria as Additional Judges of the Gauhati High Court

On 16th August, 2022, Justice Rashmin Manharbhai Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court administered oath of office to Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund and Justice Mitali Thakuria as Additional Judges of the Gauhati High Court. The swearing-in ceremony held in Court No. 1 of the Gauhati High Court (New Block) was attended by the Judges, their spouses, learned members of the Bar, members of the Registry and officers and staff of the Gauhati High Court.

New Judicial Court Building inaugurated at Barpeta on 19th August, 2022

On 19th August, 2022, the New Judicial Court Building at Barpeta was inaugurated by Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister of Assam and Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court in the august presence of Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Judge in-charge, Administrative Department, Gauhati High Court and Justice Ajit Borthakur, Portfolio Judge, Barpeta District.



Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma & Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya inaugurating the Judicial Court Building, Barpeta in presence of Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and Justice Ajit Borthakur

Infrastructure is the lynchpin of a vibrant judiciary and a vibrant judiciary is the integral part of a vibrant democracy. In the recent years, the Gauhati High Court has given its utmost endeavour to create a robust infrastructure in all the

judicial districts of Assam at par with Pan Indian Standard and this new Judicial Building is a part of this endeavour. The sophisticated building with all the modern amenities is not only a dream come true but also a strong base of judicial infrastructure which will help in dispensing quick justice to the litigants in the coming years. The District & Sessions Judge Court, Barpeta was established in the year 1985 and started functioning in



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya lighting the ceremonial lamp in presence of the Chief Minister and other Judges

a rented house. The newly inaugurated court building will accommodate 17 courts of the District Judge, Additional District Judge, Civil Judge, etc. with big halls and spacious chambers. It is equipped with all the modern amenities including separate rooms for male and female advocates, a work station, a post office, a bank, a doctor's chamber, a malkhana, male and female prisoner's rooms, a Nazir's room, and many more.



Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court, speaking on the occasion

The inaugural ceremony of the New Judicial Court Building was held at the New Judicial Court Building, Barpeta. The meeting was also attended by Shri Ranjeet Kumar Dass, Minister, Public Health Engineering, Panchayat and Rural Development, General Administrative Department etc., Government of Assam; Justice Sanjay Kumar Medhi, Justice Arun Dev Choudhury, Judges, Gauhati High Court; Shri Pratim Kumar Bora, District & Sessions Judge, Barpeta; Shri Aayush Garg, Deputy Commissioner, Barpeta; Shri Amitava Sinha, Superintendent of Police, Barpeta; the Registry Officials of the Gauhati High Court, Guwahati, officers and staff of the Court of District and Sessions Judge, Barpeta and members of the Bar.



Justice Ajit Borthakur, Judge, Gauhati High Court & Portfolio Judge, Barpeta district, speaking on the occasion

Inauguration of Gauhati High Court Museum on 10th September, 2022



Justice Surya Kant and Shri Kiren Rijiju inaugurating the Museum in presence of Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma

On 10th September, the Gauhati High Court Museum was inaugurated by Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India in the august presence of Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Law & Justice, Government of India; Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister, Assam; Justice Hrishikesh Roy, Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, Judges of the Supreme Court of India; Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court, the sitting & former Judges of the Gauhati High Court.

Justice Arup Kumar Goswami, Chief Justice, Chattisgarh High Court; Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Chief Justice, Telengana High Court and Shri Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General of India also attended the programme.

The programme was also attended by their Lordships' spouses, learned members of the Bar and the members of the Registry.

On 9th September, an official dinner was hosted in honour of Justice Surya

Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India, Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Law & Justice, Government of India, Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, Judges, Supreme Court of India. The dinner was attended by the Honb'le guests, the Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court, the sitting as well as the former Judges of the Gauhati High Court, their Lordships' spouses, the learned members of the Bar and the members of the Registry. Justice Surya Kant, Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, Judges, Supreme Court of India, Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Chief Justice, Telengana High Court, their Lordships' spouses and Shri Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General of India, along with his spouse, were felicitated on the occasion.



Justice Surya Kant, Shri Kiren Rijiju, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma along with Chief Justice R.M. Chhaya inspecting the Museum

Inauguration of District Judiciary of West Karbi Anglong on 15th September, 2022

On 15th September, 2022, the District Judiciary of West Karbi Anglong was formally inaugurated at Hamren within the old court building by Justice Achintya Malla Bujor Barua and Justice Malasri Nandi, Judges, Gauhati High Court in the presence of Shri Raktim Duarah, Shri Abdul Hekim and Shri Aditya Hazarika, District and Sessions Judges of Nagaon, East Karbi Anglong and Hojai respectively. Shri Binod Kumar Chetri, Legal Remembrancer-cum-Commissioner & Secretary, Judicial Department to the Government of Assam; Sri Prabhat Ch. Taro, Executive Member, Karbi Anglong Autonomus Council and Sri Rupsing Teron, MLA also graced the occasion.



Justice Achintya Malla Bujor Barua and Justice Malasri Nandi, Judges, Gauhati High Court unfurling the plaque

Speaking on the occasion, Justice Achintya Malla Bujor Barua laid emphasis on a trained and legally enlightened Bar and the need for continuous legal

education. Justice Malasri Nandi offered a motivating address and hailed the occasion as a red letter day in the history of West Karbi Anglong judiciary.

A brief cultural performance was also presented on the occasion. On the Court being inaugurated, Shri Bablu Sutradhar has assumed the office of the District and Session Judge, West Karbi Anglong and Shri Ajoy Kumar Basumatary has assumed charge as the Chief Judicial Magistrate.

This formal inauguration of West Karbi Anglong judiciary has heralded a new dawn for the people of this remote hilly district towards speedy justice delivery.



Justice Achintya Malla Bujor Barua, Judge, Gauhati High Court speaking on the occasion

Inauguration of Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre at Nagaon on 15th September, 2022

On 15th September, 2022, a Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre was formally inaugurated in the premises of the Nagaon District Court Building by Justice Achintya Malla Bujor Barua, Judge, Gauhati High Court-cum-Portfolio Judge, Nagaon in the presence of Shri Raktim Duarah, District & Session Judge, Nagaon; Shri Manuranjan Payeng, Additional Deputy Commissioner; Smti. Leena Doley, Superintendent of Police, Nagaon and Shri A. H. Khandakar, President of Nagaon Bar Association. Besides them, the judicial officers and staff of the Nagaon District Judiciary were also present on the occasion.

The Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre has been created on the third floor of the Court building. It is adjacent to the Court of Special Judge, POCSO, Nagaon forming a comprehensive unit comprising the Court, Judge's Chamber and the Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre to provide better accessibility, convenience and protection for the child victims. The Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre comprises of three units within the Centre : Vulnerable Witness



Justice Achintya Malla Bujor Barua, Judge, Gauhati High Court inaugurating the Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre at Nagaon

Deposition Room, Counsellor's room and Children's room-cum-waiting room.

The categories of vulnerable witnesses have been displayed at the entrance of the Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre and also at the entrance of the Main Court building and on each floor, so as to create awareness among the advocates, the litigants and the public at large.

Implementation of Live Streaming of Court Proceedings at Gauhati High Court

From 26th September, 2022, the Gauhati High Court has started the live streaming of court proceedings in accordance with the guidelines formed by Supreme Court in *Swapnil Tripathi vs. Supreme Court of India*, on its official YouTube Channel to make it accessible for public viewing. Initially, the project has been made functional in three numbers of courts of the High Court.

At present, Court no.1 comprising the Hon'ble Chief Justice and Justice Soumitra Saikia, Court No.2 of Justice N.Kotiswar Singh and Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund and Court No.6, Single Bench of Justice Suman Shyam are being set for the live streaming of its proceedings with the assistance of existing IT team of the Gauhati High Court.



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya and Justice Soumitra Saikia seen during live streaming from Court No. 1



Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund during live streaming from Court No. 2

rule namely, the Gauhati High Court (Live Streaming and Recording of Court Proceedings) Rules, 2022, which have come into effect from 26th September, 2022. Apart from Gauhati High Court, the High Courts of Gujarat, Karnataka, Jharkhand and Orissa have also commenced the live streaming of their court proceedings.



Justice Suman Shyam during live streaming from Court No. 6

Programmes organized by Judicial Academy Assam

Two Days Master Trainer Programme for new Master Trainers

The Judicial Academy, Assam organized a two-day Master Trainer Programme for New Master Trainers (Ect-3-2022) on "Electronic Case Management Tools (ECMT) & Updated Features of CIS" for Nominated Judicial Officers of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram & Arunachal Pradesh on 15th and 16th May, 2022. On Day-1, the opening remarks were made by Justice (Retired) Mir Alfaz Ali, Director, Judicial Academy, Assam. Shri Satyajit Karmakar, Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, South Salmara Mankachar attended the programme as a resource person for all the sessions on Day-1. The resource persons for Day-2 were Dr. Manash Baruah, District & Sessions Judge, Nalbari and Shri Satyajit Karmakar, Secretary, DLSA, South Salmara Mankachar. The valedictory programme was held on 16th May, 2022 and was attended by Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, JAD and Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak, Judge In-charge, Training, Gauhati High Court.



Justice M. R. Pathak, Judge, Gauhati High Court & Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali, Director, Judicial Academy, attending the programme

Training Programme on Digitization at High Court Level on 11th June 2022

The Judicial Academy, Assam organized a training programme on Digitization at High Court level for the Officers and Staff of the Gauhati High Court on 11th June, 2022. At the beginning of the programme, the dignitaries were felicitated. The opening remarks were made by Shri Gautam Baruah, Registrar General, Gauhati High Court. The resource persons of the programme were Sri Shishir Kumar Das, Registrar (Establishment), Gauhati High Court, Shri E.R. Subramanian, Divisional Manager, Stockholding Document Management Service Limited and Shri Roop Narayan Sharma, Deputy Manager, Stockholding Document Management Service



Shri Gautam Baruah, Registrar General, Gauhati High Court, making opening remarks



Officers & Staff of the Registry taking part in the training programme

Limited. They spoke on Case Records and Digitization. The practical session was conducted by Shri E.R. Subramanian and Shri Roop Narayan Sharma. At the end of the programme, Shri Ratnadip Bhattacharjee, Faculty, Judicial Academy, Assam offered the vote of thanks.

Judicial Knowledge Enhancement Programme for newly promoted Grade-I Officers as well as other Grade-I Officers of Assam, Nagaland and Mizoram from 20th June to 26th June, 2022

The Judicial Academy, Assam & the North-East Judicial Officers Training Institute (NEJOTI) organized a Judicial Knowledge Enhancement Programme for the newly promoted Grade-I officers as well as other Grade-I Officers of Assam, Nagaland and Mizoram. The programme started on 20th June, 2022 and concluded on 26th June, 2022. The resource persons of the programme for the Day-1 were Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali, Director, Judicial Academy, Assam and Shri S. P. Moitra, District & Sessions Judge (Retired). The resource persons for Day-2 were Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali, Director, Judicial Academy, Assam; Shri S.P. Moitra, District & Sessions Judge (Retired) and Justice B.P. Katakey, Former Judge, Gauhati High Court.

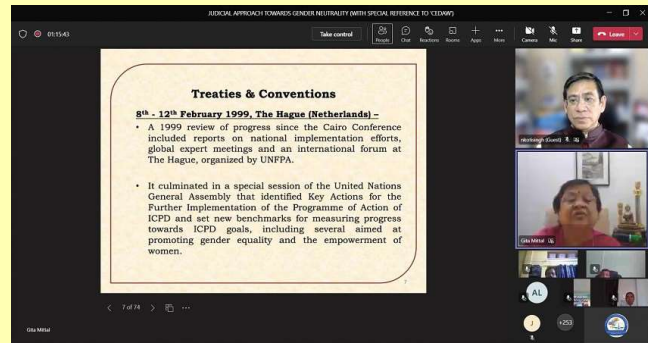


Justice B.P. Katakey, Former Judge, Gauhati High Court, addressing the participants

On Day-3, Shri S.P. Moitra, District & Sessions Judge (Retired) and Dr. Gunajit Das, Professor, Department of Forensic, Dhubri Medical College & Hospital attended the programme as resource persons. On Day-4, Shri N.N. Bora, Former Director, Accounts and Treasuries, Government of Assam, along with Justice (Retired) Mir Alfaz Ali, Director, Judicial Academy, Assam attended the programme as resource persons. On Day-5, Justice (Retired) Mir Alfaz Ali, Director, Judicial Academy, Assam and Shri. M.K. Bhattacharjee, District & Sessions Judge (Retired) attended the programme as resource persons and spoke on various aspects related to the Motor Accident Claim Tribunal.

On Day-6, Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Chief Justice (Acting), Gauhati High Court; Justice Gita Mittal, Former Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir; Justice Mousumi Bhattacharya, Judge, Calcutta High Court attended the programme as resource persons and spoke on the topic : "Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women" (CEDAW).

On Day-7, Smti. Mitali Thakuria, District & Sessions Judge, Kamrup (M), Shri Chandranshu Chaturvedy, Additional District & Sessions Judge, Barpeta, along with Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali, Director, Judicial Academy, Assam attended the programme as resource persons.



Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and Justice Gita Mittal taking part in the programme as resource persons

Sensitization & Knowledge Enhancement Programme for the Nominated Special Judges under the POCSO Act from 11th to 14th August, 2022

A four-day Sensitization & Knowledge Enhancement Programme for the nominated Special Judges of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh under the POCSO Act was held from 11th August to 14th August, 2022.

On the first day, the inaugural session was held virtually. The Welcome Address was delivered by



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya and Justice M. R. Pathak during the inaugural programme



Smti. Vidya Reddy, Sexual Violence Activist, speaking on the occasion

Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak, Judge In-charge, Training, Gauhati High Court. The inaugural speech was delivered by Justice R.M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court.

The resource persons for Day-1 were Smti. Vidya Reddy, Sexual Violence Activist, Founder Director, Tulir - Center for the Prevention and

Healing of Child Sexual Abuse, and Dr. Eesha Sharma, Assistant Professor, Department of Child And Adolescent Psychiatry, NIMHANS, Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali, Director, JAA and Shri Sidharth Luthra, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India also addressed the participants virtually. They spoke on a range of topics from



Justice S. Talapatra delivering his speech in presence of Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali



Justice N. Kotiswar Singh speaking on the occasion in presence of Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali

Dynamics of Child Sexual Abuse, Child development and trauma-informed approach, Cognizance, Framing of Charge and Alternate Charge, etc. under POCSO Cases to various provisions of Bail.

The resource persons for the second day were Dr. Bharti Ali, Executive Director, HAQ, Centre for Child Rights, Dr. Jagadeesh Narayana

Reddy, Professor of Forensic Medicine, Vydehi Institute of Medical Sciences & Research Centre, Bangalore and Justice Gita Mittal, Former Chief Justice, J & K High Court. All of them addressed the participants virtually. The resource persons concentrated on various aspects on the following topics : Role of Special Courts in the context of Transfer System under J. J. Act, 2015; Appreciation of Medical Evidence and Forensic Reports; Operationalizing child-friendly procedures under the POCSO Act.

On Day-3, Justice S. Talapatra, Judge, Orissa High Court spoke on the topic : Witness Protection. While Dr. Aditi Choudhary, Director (Academics), Delhi Judicial Academy spoke on various aspects of 'Developing a child centered approach', Dr. Rakshit Tandon, Consultant - IAMAI (Cyber Crime Cells) spoke on 'Cybercrime against children'.

The resource persons for Day-4 were Justice Manish Choudhury, Judge, Gauhati High Court; Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Judge, Calcutta High Court and Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Judge, Gauhati High Court. They spoke on the following topics respectively : Rights of the accused in POCSO Cases; Appreciation of Children's testimonies; Presumption of guilt and reverse burden.

An interaction took place on each day at the end of the programme which was followed by valediction & distribution of certificates.

Skill Development Programme for Civil Judge (Sr. Division) of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh on 30th July, 2022

On 30th July, 2022, a Skill Development Programme for Civil Judge (Sr. Division) of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh was organised on the virtual mode. Justice Kalyan Rai Surana, Judge, Gauhati High Court attended the said programme as resource person and spoke on the topic, 'Judgement and Decree of the Appellate Court'. The programme was attended by the Grade-II Judicial Officers of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.



Justice Manish Choudhury speaking on 'Rights of the accused in POCSO cases'



Justice Kalyan Rai Surana, Judge, Gauhati High Court speaking on 'Judgement and Decree of the Appellate Court'

Valedictory Programme on 23rd September, 2022

On 23rd September, 2022, a Valedictory Programme was organised by the Judicial Academy, Assam for the newly appointed 27 Grade-III Judicial Officers of Assam on completion of 1 (one) year Induction Training, at the Conference Hall of the Judicial Academy, Assam. Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali, Director, Judicial Academy, Assam gave the welcome address, followed by the speech of Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court. Justice Kalyan Rai Surana, Judge, Gauhati High Court also graced the occasion. Thereafter, the oath was administered to the newly inducted Judicial Officers. The dignitaries distributed the Certificates and gifts to the Trainee Judicial Officers. The programme concluded with vote of thanks proposed by the Judicial Academy, Assam.



Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court addressing the Judicial Officers in presence of Justice K. R. Surana, Judge, Gauhati High Court

Two days Sensitization Programme on Family Court matters with specific focus on Family Court Counsellors on 25th & 26th September, 2022

On 25th & 26th September, 2022, a two-day Sensitization Programme on Family Court matters with Specific Focus on Family Court Counsellors was organised by Judicial Academy, Assam for the Grade-II Judicial Officers of Assam and Counsellors of Family Court of Nagaland at the Judicial Academy, Assam. Justice



Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali delivering the welcome address in presence of Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund

Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund, Judge, Gauhati High Court gave the inaugural speech in the august presence of Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali. The resource persons of the said programme were Smti. Illa Rawat, District Judge (Commercial Court), Delhi, Smti. Meenakshi Barthakur, Consultant Psychologist, Dr. Mythili Hazarika, Associate Professor, Clinical Psychology, Deptt. of Psychiatry, Gauhati Medical College & Hospital, Dr. Bornali Das, Psychiatric Social Worker, Gauhati Medical College & Hospital and Dr. Jayanta Das, Psychiatrist. The resource persons spoke on relevant topics like Role of Family Court Counsellors in Family Matters, Gender Justice, Understanding Family Disputes: Psycho-social dynamics of families & couples, Understanding Children and Child behaviour, during traumatic

circumstances and family disputes, Counselling Procedure (Counselling, Conciliation & Mediation in Resolving Family Disputes— Relevance and Importance), Communication Skills and Techniques for Effective Resolution of Family Disputes, Relationships and Marriage: Tools & Techniques in Marriage Counselling, Case Study and Interaction, Stress and Well Being etc. The programme concluded with valediction & certificate distribution.



Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund delivering the inaugural speech

Programmes organized by ASLSA

Observance of World Health Day

On 7th April, 2022, the Assam State Legal Services Authority & the Gauhati High Court Legal Services Committee in association with Sri Sankardeva Nethralaya and Gauhati Medical College & Hospital organized the World Health Day at the Old Block of the Gauhati High Court by installing various free health check up booths including an eye check-up camp. A team of experienced doctors from both the health institutions attended the health camp to extend their services. A large number of employees turned up for their health check ups during the camp. The patients also availed the facilities of ECG, blood sugar test, blood pressure check and blood hemoglobin test. The patients were also provided with free medicines prescribed by the doctors.



Justice N. Kotiswar Singh taking part in the free health check up

Workshop on Wildlife Crimes: Problems, Solutions and Role of Stakeholders, on 14th May, 2022

On 14th May, 2022, a Workshop was organised by the Assam State Legal Services Authority (ASLSA), in collaboration with a biodiversity conservation organisation, Aaranyak and the District Legal Services Authority, Bongaigaon, on the topic Wildlife Crimes : Problems, Solutions and Role of Stakeholders.



Chief Justice (Acting) N. Kotiswar Singh and Justice Soumitra Saikia, Judge, Gauhati High Court, attending the programme

The Workshop was attended by Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Chief Justice (Acting), Gauhati High Court, Guwahati and Executive Chairman, Assam State Legal Services Authority and Justice Soumitra Saikia, Judge, Gauhati High Court.



Chief Justice (Acting) N. Kotiswar Singh speaking on the occasion

The Executive Chairman, ASLSA during his keynote address, stated that prevention and mitigation of wildlife crimes which have acquired an alarming proportion all over the globe, would require multifaceted and coordinated efforts among various stakeholders including Forest personnel, police, border guards, para military forces, army and other concerned agencies.

Addressing the workshop, Justice Soumitra Saikia while highlighting some key provisions in the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, pointed out that in conjunction of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, there are provisions in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, which are equally applicable to tackle the menace of wildlife crimes and the roles of NGOs, police and Forest officers are of immense importance. The other dignitaries attending the Workshop included Shri Satya Nath Sarma, District and Sessions Judge, Bongaigaon, Shri Nayan Sankar Barua, Member Secretary, ASLSA, Shri Jagdeep Pal Singh, DIG, SHQ, Rangia SSB, Shri Anthony Thami, DIG, SHQ, Bongaigaon SSB, Shri Vaibhab C. Mathur, Field Director, Manas National Park and Shri Bishnu Singh, DFO, Raimona National Park. The Workshop was attended by the Judicial Officers of Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar and Chirang districts besides the officials from Assam Police, Assam Forest Department and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).

"Seeds for Change", a Jail revitalization and Inmate Engagement Plan

On the occasion of World Environment Day on 5th June, 2022, the Chief Justice (Acting) of Gauhati High Court and Executive Chairman, Assam State Legal Services Authority (ASLSA) Justice N. Kotiswar Singh inaugurated "Seeds for Change" in presence of Justice Suman Shyam, Justice Rumi Kumari Phukan and other dignitaries.

'Seeds for Change' is a Jail Revitalization and Inmate Engagement Plan under Nilay Dutta Prison



Chief Justice (Acting) N. Kotiswar Singh, Justice Suman Shyam and Justice Rumi Kumari Phukan during the programme

Rehabilitation Initiative. ‘Seeds for Change’ is an economic rehabilitative integration programme for inmates of the correctional homes, built through a collaborative partnership between the Government of Assam, the Inspector General of Prisons, Studio Nilima and Vijaya Nursery. The project will commence as a pilot in the District Jail, Morigaon, which will focus on engaging the inmates in a horticulture initiative within the prison complex under the care and guidance of Studio Nilima and Vijaya Nursery.



Dignitaries present on the occasion

Legal Services Camp at Tinsukia

The District Legal Services Authority, Tinsukia under the aegis of the Assam State Legal Services Authority (ASLSA) in collaboration with the Tinsukia District Administration and the Tinsukia Judiciary, organized a legal services camp at the TDA Cultural Centre, Tinsukia on 27th August, 2022. Justice R. M. Chhayya, the Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court inaugurated the programme by lighting the ceremonial lamp in the august presence of Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Executive Chairman, Assam State Legal Services Authority (ASLSA), Justice M. R. Pathak, Portfolio Judge, Tinsukia district and Justice Suman Shyam, Judge, Gauhati High Court-cum-Chairman, Gauhati High Court Legal Services Committee.



Chief Justice R. M. Chhayya on the dias along with other Judges during the inaugural ceremony

During the programme, Justice R. M. Chhayya handed over the 'Adoption Certificate' to the Principal of Bozaltoli L. P. School, Tinsukia. The School has been adopted by the DLSA, Tinsukia with an aim to uplift the overall quality of students by identifying/studying and addressing the key issues which generally create hindrances in quality development.

Thereafter, the Chief Justice and the Executive Chairman, Assam State Legal Services Authority (ASLSA), handed over the relevant documents to the beneficiaries of Ujjwala Yojana and Prime Minister's Jan Dhan Yojana. The beneficiaries were assisted by officials/PLVs of DLSA, Tinsukia in procuring the scheme benefits. In addition to that, the Chief Justice and accompanying Judges handed over keys of 5 nos. of scooters (Sakhi Express) to the beneficiaries of Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission (ASRLM). The ASRLM has been in

collaboration with the DLSA, Tinsukia for implementation of various welfare works. The ASRLM handed over the scooters in the said programme. The Chief Justice inaugurated the legal services camp wherein he facilitated registration of e-Shram card, ADHAR card, COVID vaccination drive and various other welfare schemes.

Speaking on the occasion, Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Executive Chairman, Assam State Legal Services Authority (ASLSA) said that other than providing free legal aid the Legal Services Authority also works as a bridge between beneficiaries of various welfare schemes and the concerned Government departments and thereby, it facilitates the benefits of welfare schemes to the actual beneficiaries. He also mentioned that the Legal Services Authority is committed for the well-beings of the public and urged upon the public to take the benefits of the services provided by the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) and various welfare schemes of the Government.



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya and Justice N. Kotiswar Singh handing over the Adoption Certificates

The Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court also inaugurated a sanitary napkin manufacturing unit at the District Jail, Tinsukia. The sanitary napkin manufacturing unit is installed by the DLSA, Tinsukia in collaboration with the Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission (ASRLM) and the District Administration, Tinsukia with a view to reform the prisoners by providing a scope to engage them in some productive work which will eventually make them self-reliant.

Legal Awareness and Symposium on "Legal Aid - Access to Justice and Role of Students" at Dibrugarh University

On 28th August, 2022, a Legal Awareness and Symposium on "Legal Aid - Access to Justice and Role of Students" was organized by the District Legal Services Authority, Dibrugarh at Rang Ghar Auditorium, Dibrugarh University under the aegis of The Assam State Legal Services Authority (ASLSA) and in collaboration with the Gauhati High Court Legal Services Committee. The programme was attended by the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, Justice R. M. Chhaya, Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Judge, Gauhati High Court-cum-Executive Chairman, Assam State Legal Services Authority (ASLSA), Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak, Judge, Gauhati High Court-cum-Portfolio Judge, Dibrugarh and Justice Suman Shyam, Judge, Gauhati High Court-cum-Executive Chairman, Gauhati High Court

Legal Services Committee. The students of various Law Colleges and other educational institutions of Dibrugarh district participated in the said sensitization programme. Addressing the gathering, the Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court and Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Judge, Gauhati High Court called upon the student community, particularly, the law students to shoulder the responsibility of promoting access to justice.



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya along with other Judges paying respect to the National Anthem



Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court, delivering his speech

The welcome address was delivered by Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak. Justice Suman Shyam offered the vote of thanks. The programme was also attended by Professor (Shri) Jiten Hazarika, Vice Chancellor, Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh, Shri Biswajit Pegu, Deputy Commissioner, Dibrugarh, Shri Shwetank Mishra, Superintendent of Police, Dibrugarh, Members of the Dibrugarh District Bar Association, Judicial Officers of Dibrugarh and Dhemaji district and faculty members of law colleges and other educational institutions.



Dignitaries & students standing in order to pay respect to the National Anthem

Launch of Vidya Rath – School on Wheels

With the passing of the Rights of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, India has moved to a rights-based approach towards implementing education for all. In order to promote the right of education amongst the economically challenged children of the State, a project titled 'Vidya Rath – School on Wheels' was launched on 15th August 2022, in the High Court premises by Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court and Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, the Chief Minister, Assam, in the august presence of Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Judge, Administrative Department, Gauhati High Court and Justice Suman Shyam, Judge, Gauhati High Court and Chairperson, ICT Committee, Gauhati High Court.



Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court, addressing the participants



Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, JAD, Gauhati High Court, delivering the welcome address

During the inaugural ceremony, Justice N. Kotiswar Singh delivered the welcome address which was followed by the address of the Chief Justice and the Chief Minister, Assam. Justice R. M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court expressed his gratitude to all for making it possible to launch the project within a short span of time. Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister, Assam also thanked the

It is worth mentioning that the project 'Vidyarath- School on Wheels' is a noble initiative taken by the Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court for the children deprived of elementary education in the district of Kamrup (M). The project is launched under the aegis of Assam State Legal Services Authority (ASLSA) and the Gauhati High Court Legal Services Committee and in collaboration with the Government of Assam and other stakeholders.



Justice Suman Shyam, Judge, Gauhati High Court, offering the vote of thanks

Chief Justice for his kind gesture to uplift the children of the State and gave assurance to expand the horizon of the scheme all over the State as soon as possible. The study materials to the students were also distributed on the occasion, followed by the vote of thanks, delivered by Justice Suman Shyam, Judge, Gauhati High Court and the Chairman, ICT Committee.

Two customized buses were taken to serve the objectives and Dr.



Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister, Assam, delivering his speech



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma along with other Judges flagging off the customized buses

Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister, Assam and Justice R.M. Chhaya, Chief Justice, Gauhati High Court flagged off the buses in presence of the other Judges and dignitaries.

The Project is also connected with the Mid-day Meal Scheme and aims at integrating the children with in mainstream schools after completion of the bridge course. The children will be further provided with benefits of various beneficiary scheme of the State Government.

Former Editors of ATMAN



Justice Hrishikesh Roy
September, 2009 (1st Issue) to
April, 2018 (18th Issue)



Justice Arup Kumar Goswami
October, 2018 (19th Issue) to
April, 2019 (20th Issue)



Justice Manojit Bhuyan
October, 2019 (21st Issue) to
October, 2020 (23rd Issue)

The Chief Justice & Sitting Judges of Gauhati High Court



Chief Justice R. M. Chhaya



Justice N. Kotiswar Singh



Justice L. S. Jamir



Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak



Justice Michael Zothankhuma



Justice Suman Shyam



Justice S. Serto



Justice A. M. Bujor Barua



Justice Kalyan Rai Surana



Justice Nelson Sailo



Justice Ajit Borthakur



Justice Sanjay Kumar Medhi



Justice Nani Tagia



Justice Manish Choudhury



Justice Soumitra Saikia



Justice P. J. Saikia



Justice Robin Phukan



Justice Kakheto Sema



Justice Devashis Baruah



Justice Malasri Nandi



Justice Marli Vankung



Justice Arun Dev Choudhury



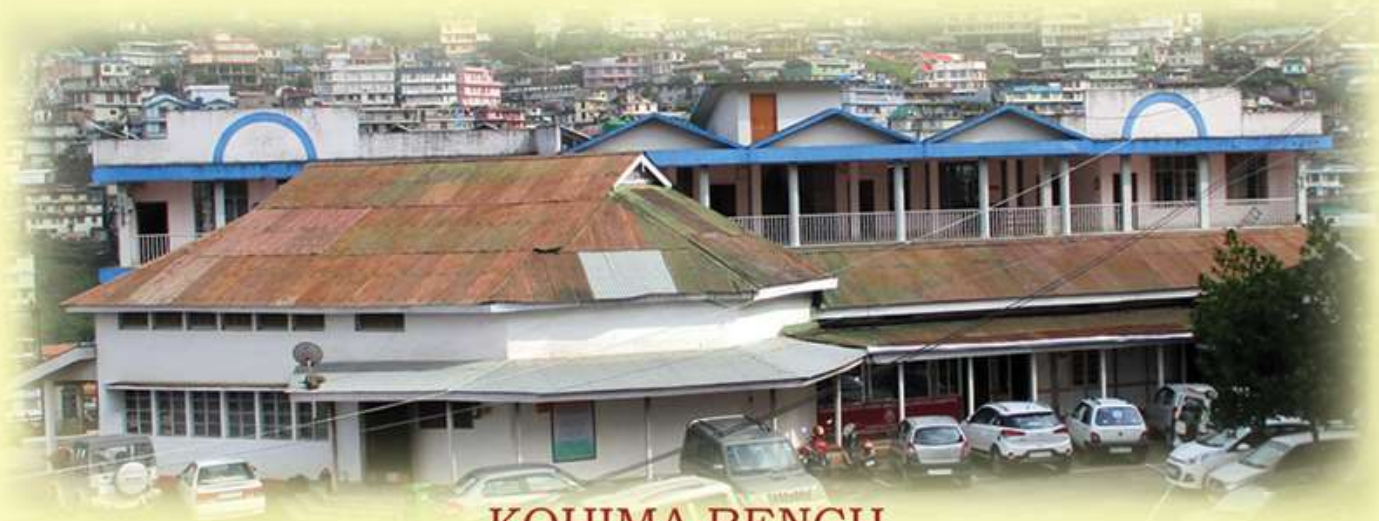
Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund



Justice Mitali Thakuria



PRINCIPAL SEAT AT GUWAHATI



KOHIMA BENCH



AIZAWL BENCH



ITANAGAR BENCH