

MLAs must monitor development, study SDGs: Experts



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Syed Miraz Ahmed 25 November 2016 9281 views

Experts Tuesday said that legislators should cease to become fund disbursing agents and assume the primary responsibility of monitoring the implementation of [development](#) schemes in their respective constituencies for an all round [development](#) of the [state](#). They called upon legislators to study the Sustainable [Development](#) Goals (SDGs) in detail and come up with SDG-linked [development](#) strategies.

The above suggestions were made during the fourth phase of Sabal Bidhayak, a series of orientation programmes initiated by the Assam Legislative Assembly in collaboration with the Guwahati based research institute, the Centre for [Development](#) and Peace Studies. During the interactive programme, legislators expressed their dismay at the poor [state](#) of [development](#) in the Char and Tea garden areas, besides areas dominated by the Scheduled Cast and Scheduled Tribe communities.

In his address, Lok Sabha MP from Jorhat Kamakhya Prasad Tasa said, “MLAs must concentrate in monitoring development schemes in their respective constituencies and use all resources at their command to first try and understand the various schemes in operation.” He said legislators must not be dependent on bureaucrats alone, because aspirations of the people can only be fulfilled by proper implementation of the development programmes. “Ultimately, it is the elected representatives who have to be accountable and face the mandate of the masses every five years”, said Tasa. Despite Constitutional provisions, people belonging to the Scheduled Cast and Scheduled Tribe communities still suffer from lack of development because there have been no progress in many of the areas they live in. “A comprehensive study to understand the causes of the development gaps in SC and [ST](#) areas is of utmost importance”, he added.

Delivering a talk on Sustainable [Development](#) Goals, [Prof.](#) Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General of the Delhi based Research and Information [System](#) for Developing Countries, said that the [Narendra Modi](#) government is bent on involving the lawmakers in formulating [development](#) strategies of the country which are in sync with the Sustainable [Development](#) Goals. “Sustainable [Development](#) Goals target local connect and decentralised planning across many areas and hence the role of the States/Districts is extremely important”. He expressed satisfaction stating that Assam has been the first State to come up with Vision Assam 2030. Speaking on the same subject, the Northeast Regional Head of United Nations [Development](#) Programme (UNDP) John Borgoyary said that integration between various departments of the State is very important. He called upon the legislators to identify and adopt a village or panchayat in their respective constituencies and convert them into a SDG model.

Former legislator Rafiqul Islam, said that the major problem in the Char areas in Assam are flood and erosion, large population, lack of access to education and lack of communication facilities. He suggested a land survey in the Char areas and the establishment of a separate land directorate for the Char areas. He emphasised on improving the teacher-[student](#) ratio, establishing banks, granting land to erosion-hit farmers and promoting organic farming in the Chars.

Speaking about the disparity in development in the Char and Tea garden areas of Assam, Executive Director, Rashtriya Gramin Vikas Nidhi, Amiya Sharma said, “There is no [insurance](#) cover among 83.3 per cent of the Char area population and 74.5 per cent of the Tea garden population. The poverty rate in the Char areas is 42.[6](#) per cent and in the Tea garden areas is 37.[6](#) per cent [against](#) the [state](#) average of 37 per cent”, he added. Former [Principal](#) Secretary of Bodoland Territorial Council, John Ingti Kathar, IAS (retd), also addressed the legislators on the role of lawmakers in development of SC and [ST](#) communities. The sessions were interactive with active participation from among legislators, academics, and economists apart from civil society [leaders](#).

Syed Miraz Ahmed

Writes, edits and researches. In 2013 he was conferred the Rotary International District 3240 Young Achiever Award for his work in the area of environment and digital journalism. In 2006 he was awarded first in the category of Wildlife Photography by the Department of Environment & Forests and Tourism, Government of Assam.

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