

## THE CHANGED FACE OF RURAL DHEMAJI

Dhemaji is situated in a geologically fragile region and it is one of the worst flood affected district of India. The occurrence of perennial flood rendering the District as one of the most backward District of the Country. To revamp rural economy and empower poor people, the District Administration, Dhemaji has under taken a large number of schemes through D.R.D.A. The basic objective is not only to empower the people of the district but also to **make available viable economic plans of development to make them self-sustainable within available resources**. We are using the Self Help Groups as tools by making them self-sustainable. The following initiatives have been taken up by D.R.D.A., Dhemaji –

1. We have ensured that – D.R.D.A money flows to the genuine beneficiaries instead of going through the middleman – who virtually had hijacked D.R.D.A., Dhemaji for last few years. Middleman and Nayak system has almost been eliminated from DRDA and poor people are getting their dues from local administration/Panchayats.
2. **NREGA – Turns face of Dhemaji :-**
  - a. Under NREGA more than 92000 households have been provided with Job Cards and executed 1066 nos. of schemes and have changed the face of rural Dhemaji. Poor people used to sale their rice for even ten rupees, got a note of 500 Rs. which, for them was a dream being true due to NREGA. The payment was made within 7 to 10 days and there was no complaint. They were provided shelter, water and first aid kit. This was like a movement of employment. The quality of work under the scheme has been best.
  - b. Considering the topography of the area and perennial problem of flood, it has been decided to convert all water logged land into fisheries. More than 6000 bighas of low – lying land have been identified under NREGA and it will make Dhemaji most fish producing district of Assam.
  - c. Large scale Som plantation has been initiated under NREGA to make the District a leading Muga producer in the state and for this purposes 3000 bighas of land will be taken up for Som cultivation through SHG.
  - d. It is also planned to make Dhemaji as a leading bio-diesel producing district of this region of the country through Jatropha plantation. We have already identified 3000 bighas of land for Jatropha plantation.

e. Flood affected people – who lost everything have been provided work under NREGA who gain their livelihood which was appreciated by Smt. Sonia Gandhi, the Hon'ble Chairperson, UPA.

3. **PROJECT SUBANSIRI** :- Dhemaji produces finest quality of Muga silk cocoon, which goes to outside the District and the benefit of profit is not reaching to people. Now, we aim to create 'Silk hub' in Dhemaji to promote Muga silk and Missing designs. The weaving products of "Mising Design" have already earned fame even in and outside the state. Now, the Muga reeling and weaving are done by the weavers with their traditional methods. Therefore, to make the weaving and sericulture sectors a more popular and competitive – it is a call of time to introduce the new methods of productions – particularly by introducing advanced weaving and reeling machines. "PROJECT SUBANSIRI" will popularize the Muga weaving products in well organized system. PROJECT SUBANSIRI has been lunched by Hon'ble C.M. of Assam on 15<sup>th</sup> June/2007 at DRDA Campus, Dhemaji.

**THE OBJECTS OF "PROJECT SUBANSIRI" ARE :-**

1. Creation of cocoon bank & support price
2. To increase efficiency in production by maintaining quality of Muga yarn by introducing advance reeling machines.
3. Introduction of highly designed looms.
4. Provide centre for training and productions to the weavers with Hostel facilities.
5. Blending Silk (Muga & Eri) with Mising design for national and international market.
6. Tapping of national and international market channel for better price.
7. Keep coordination among the Self Help Groups (SHG) of the District – engaged in different activities like – (i) Plantation & Muga rearing, (ii) Muga reeling, (iii) Weaving production, (iv) Marketing etc.

Project Director,  
D.R.D.A., Dhemaji.