

The government's focus on the need for accelerated progress of the North-East can be gauged from a range of initiatives

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New Delhi,

The Vice President, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu today asserted that the Union Government is focused on promoting all-round development of the North-Eastern Region. Various progressive measures taken by the government would help Assam and other North-Eastern states to scale higher peaks of progress and development in the future.

He was addressing a gathering after presenting 'Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi Award for National Integration and Contribution' to three recipients—eminent writer and scholar, Shri Nirode Kumar Barooah, Members of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust and Members of the Shillong Chamber Choir at a function in Guwahati.

Paying glowing tributes to freedom fighter and the first Chief Minister of Assam, Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi, the Vice President said that he was one of the makers of Modern India. He said Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi was a visionary leader whose unparalleled contribution to protecting India's integrity and sovereignty in the turbulent times of partition deserved a special mention.

As the first Chief Minister of Assam in independent India, he implemented an array of progressive industrial policies and was also responsible for establishing a number of educational institutions, including Gauhati University.

Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi is said to have been a gentle giant—soft-spoken and mild mannered yet committed to truth and wedded to his ideals, he added.

Shri Naidu said that Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi's statesman-like personality had transcendental appeal and people across communities, denominations and political affiliations looked up to him. While more than seven decades have lapsed since his premature demise, he occupies a revered place in the hearts of the

people of Assam in particular, and of the Nation in general, the Vice President added.

Congratulating the recipients, Shri Naidu noted that Nirode Kumar Barooah had come all the way from Germany. “Barooah Ji’s sterling contribution lies in introducing Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi to the larger international audience through his valuable research work and books”, he observed.

He also lauded members of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Assam Branch for their stellar contribution to the cause of reconstructing the lives of rural women and children through their initiatives. Congratulating the members of the Shillong Chamber Choir for this crowning achievement, he said it was in recognition of their contribution to the cause of national integration through music and culture. “Music and culture can promote national integration, especially when divisive forces are trying to weaken the country. The need of the hour is to promote peace and make the country strong and prosperous”, Shri Naidu said.

The Vice President emphasized that the Union Government led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was focused on the need to promote all-round development of the North-Eastern Region. “As initiatives over the past seven and a half years reveal, development, peace and prosperity have been the top priorities for the Central Government”, he added and cited the example of the historic Karbi Anglong Agreement to end the decades-old crisis ensuring Assam’s territorial integrity. He expressed confidence that Assam will be a shining example of development in the North East. Shri Naidu also referred to the Central government’s thrust to improving air connectivity in the North-Eastern Region.

He said the government’s focus on the need for accelerated progress of the North-East can be gauged from a range of initiatives, including the NER District SDG Index & Dashboard, a collaborative effort by NITI Aayog and Ministry of DoNER, with technical support from UNDP. He said it is the first of its kind in the country and of critical significance to the country’s development curve.

Governor of Assam, Shri Prof. Jagdish Mukhi, Chief Minister of Assam, Shri Himanta Biswa Sarma, Minister for Sports & Youth Welfare, Govt. of Assam, Shri Bimal Bora, Chief Secretary, Shri Jishnu Barua and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

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