



Gadkari to visit Majuli Island in Assam on December 29, 2017

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Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Road Transport & Highways and Shipping Shri Nitin Gadkari will visit Assam on December 29, 2017 to lay the foundation stone of protection work of Majuli Island from floods and erosion and construction of Brahmaputra Board Complex. Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Chief Minister of Assam will also grace the occasion.

Brahmaputra Board under Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation was entrusted the work of protection of Majuli Island from floods and erosion in 2004. Since then, the Board has completed execution of Immediate Measures, Phase-I and Emergent Works. About 22.08 sq.km of land has been reclaimed and secured by Brahmaputra Board during the period 2004 to 2016. Phase - II & III are on the verge of completion during 2017-18

To address the issues of erosion in vulnerable reaches and reclaim more land by pro-siltation and other measures in the east-west reach length of about 80 km on south bank, a DPR was formulated for "Protection of Majuli Island from flood and erosion of river Brahmaputra" as per the recommendations of the Standing Committee of Experts for Majuli Island and Technical Advisory Committee of Brahmaputra Board (TAC- BB). An SFC of Rs. 233.57 core for the above work has been approved by Government of India. Out of Rs. 233.57 crore, the Ministry of DoNER will fund an amount of Rs. 207.00 crore under NLCPR mode. The work is under implementation for which the work order has been issued.

On the request of Government of Assam, Brahmaputra Board has approved the establishment of office-cum-residential complex at Majuli. The complex will also include a godown and a skill development centre. The Brahmaputra Board in its meeting decided that this work should be executed by NPCC Ltd., a PSU, under this Ministry. Consequently, the work of construction of Brahmaputra Board office-cum-residential complex at Majuli has been assigned to NPCC Ltd. The work will be executed in a period of 24 months.

The word Majuli is claimed to be derived from the word '*MAJULI*' meaning an area surrounded by water. Majuli Island is the nerve centre of Vaishnavite culture developed during the unique Vaishnava Satra system founded by the great saint Srimanta Sankardeva in the 15th century. It is the cultural heritage centre of Vaishnavite culture of Assam. There are at present 22 Satras in Majuli. Hordes of tourists and devotees throng Majuli every year for its uniqueness and Vaishnavite culture making it an important spot in the tourist circuit of Assam. Also, Majuli Island is a serious contender for inclusion in the list of World Heritage Site. During 2016, Majuli has been upgraded from a Civil Sub-Division to the status of a District. Protection of Majuli Island from the menace of floods and erosion by Brahmaputra River is thus one of the prime objectives of the State Government, with support from the Centre.

The average elevation of the Island is 87 m (at Bessamara) above mean sea level as against the High Flood Level of 88.32 m. The present area of Main Island is about 524 sq-km with a population of 1.68 lakh as per 2011 Census. Majuli Island has been under severe threat of bank erosion by the flow of river Brahmaputra since formation of the Island and particularly after the Assam earthquake of August 15, 1950.

Samir/SKP/jk

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