

Inaugural address on the occasion of the

WORLD VETERINARY DAY-2021

being observed on the 24th of April 2021 (Saturday)
at the Directorate of the
Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department,
Chenikuti, Guwahati, Assam



by
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Inaugural address on the occasion of the World Veterinary Day-2021 being observed on the 24th of April 2021 (Saturday) at the Directorate of the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department, Chenikuti, Guwahati, Assam by Shyam Jagannathan, IAS, Commissioner and Secretary, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department, Government of Assam.

I commence with the background on the significance of the World Veterinary Day. This last year has shown what disease can do to a global nation. Years ago, a deadly virus called Rinderpest attacked cattle until it was declared eradicated in 2011 through vaccination. Today it is the only animal disease ever to be eradicated.

Rinderpest was transmitted between cattle via droplets. The cattle would become infected by inhaling these droplets via breath, secretions, or excretions. Although Rinderpest posed no threat to humans, it affected their life by causing famine, which caused a lot of death.

in April 1863, **Professor John Gamgee** of the Veterinary College of Edinburgh, invited veterinarians from Europe to attend a meeting. This meeting's main goal was to discuss epizootic diseases and come up with standard rules for the cattle trade that all of Europe could follow to tackle a deadly virus called Rinderpest attacked cattle. Today in 2021 it is a major achievement that the same virus has been declared eradicated in 2011 through vaccination. Today it is the only animal disease ever to be eradicated. (Rinderpest was transmitted between cattle via droplets. The cattle would become infected by inhaling these droplets via breath, secretions, or excretions. Although Rinderpest posed no threat to humans, it affected their life by causing famine, which caused a lot of death.)

However what is of major historic significance is that this meeting became the first International Veterinary Congress (WVC)

In Spain in 1959, at the 16th WVC, the World Veterinary Association was founded. The WVA's mission is ***"to provide global leadership for the veterinary profession and promote animal health and welfare and public health, through advocacy, education, and partnership."***

The WVA works with prominent partners such as:

1. World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)
2. World Health Organisation (WHO)
3. Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)
4. World Medical Association (WMA)
5. World Animal Protection
6. International Dairy Federation (IDF)
7. One Health Initiative
8. World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA)
9. Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC)
10. International Committee of Military Medicine (ICMM)
11. AAALAC International
12. World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA)

Then, at the 15th Congress in Stockholm, the Permanent Committee and the members saw the need for an international organization and constitution. Hence, on the next Congress **in 1959**, held in Madrid, **the World Veterinary Association was established**. The mission of the World Veterinary Association is to focus on animal health and welfare, as well as on the environment and public health. Nowadays, the World Veterinary Association collaborated with other prominent organization, such as OIE, WHO, and FAO.

The World Veterinary Association has members from more than seventy nations and features national veterinary associations from all over the world. A new constitution was welcomed in 1997 and the organization was restructured. Each veterinary association which is a member of the World Veterinary Association pays membership fees.

The WVA represents veterinarians all over the world and requires associations to pay membership fees. The WVA decided in 2000 that there should be a day dedicated to celebrating the veterinary profession, and it was deemed that the last Saturday in April would be World Veterinary Day.

World Veterinary Day is a day to promote the veterinary profession and work on improving animal and human welfare, the environment, food safety, animal transport, and quarantine. Each year World Veterinary Day has a specific theme to promote awareness on a particular topic.

In 2001, the World Veterinary Association established that there will be a World Veterinary Day celebrated on the last Saturday of April. The aim of the **World Veterinary Day** is to promote the veterinary profession and work on improvement of the animal and human welfare, the environment, food safety, and practices of animal transport and quarantine. Each year, there is a different theme of this day. For instance, the first theme of the World Veterinary Association was “Rabies” in an aim to raise public awareness about vaccinating and spaying dogs as well as preventing rabies.

The World Veterinary Association together with the World Organization for Animal Health decided that there should be a World Veterinary Day Award. This practice started in 2008 and its goal is to reward the best contribution to the veterinary profession. The **Kenya Veterinary Association** was the first to receive this award.

There have been different themes throughout the years to celebrate the World Veterinary Day, such as *Rabies, Antimicrobial Resistance, the Diversity of the veterinary profession, and the One Health Concept*.

This year (2021), World Veterinary Day takes place on Saturday, April 24th. This year's theme is **The Veterinarian Response to the Covid-19 Crisis**.

In 2008 the World Veterinary Day Award was created to recognize an outstanding organization that has made stellar awareness and contribution to the current years' theme. Any member of the WVA can enter and participate. Listed below are the last five years' winners, theme, and their efforts to achieve the award:

- **2020: Winner- Indian Veterinary Association- Kerala.**

Theme-Environmental Protection for Improving Animal and Human Health. Amidst the beginning of the pandemic, the Indian Veterinary Association shifted its efforts to virtual safe awareness through partnership and engagement with veterinary professionals. They organized 75 WVD activities to raise awareness and support the years' theme.

- **2019: Winner- Uganda Veterinary Association (UVA).**

Theme- Value of Vaccination.

UVA organized vaccination campaigns, radio interviews, seminars, workshops, career and guidance programs to raise awareness on the value of vaccinating.

- **2018: Winner- Uganda Veterinary Association (UVA).**

Theme– The Role of the Veterinary Profession in Sustainable Development to Improve Livelihoods, Food Security and Safety. UVA organized many activities to recognize the theme, such as radio talk shows, seminars, documentaries, and press conferences.

- **2017: Winner- The National Council of the Order of Veterinarians of France.** *Theme- Antimicrobial Resistance- From Awareness to Action.* To achieve this award, this organization held meetings, continuing education sessions, national congresses, symposiums, etc. All of these efforts exemplified how to fight antibiotic resistance by raising awareness to do so.

The winner/s of this award will receive both the WVD Award and a cash prize of \$3500 for their efforts to be repurposed into their all-important work. My submission is simple, if the Indian Veterinary Association- Kerala could win the WVD Award so can we.....it related to a performance oriented mindset which we should all aspire for.

The Assam Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Service Association (AAHVSA) with active cooperation of Assam Veterinary Council is observing WORLD VETARINARY DAT-2021 on 24th April 2021 (Saturday) at Chenikuti with the theme “Environmental Safety for enhancing animal and human well being”, this is commendable as the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary sector essentially contributes to protection of human health, bio-threat reduction, improvement in nutrition, environmental conservation, animal welfare and economic, social well-being of the citizens. The development of the sector requires appreciation of this larger role played by professional institutions and the domain specialists within the sector. Instead of focusing on commercial livestock production alone, the state needs to simultaneously focus on climate resilient sustainable production system.

Having said so much I have no hesitation in elaborating where our action areas lie and how do we intend to get there. Much of what I am submitting has already been said repeatedly in the

shape of sectoral strategy documents that have been launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister in the month of September, 2019 during Vetcon-2019 and there after perhaps need to be acted upon. I am also extensively reiterating from the Veterinary Master Plan that has been submitted by M/S Vethelpline Pvt. Ltd as there were specific recommendations and aspects that needed to be addressed.

On this 24th day of April 2021, the World Veterinary Day, I humbly appeal to the Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department to lead ably the large body of professionals and domain experts and along with the sister directorate of the Dairy Development Department achieve serious traction in the following listed areas with a methodical and surgically incisive logic and also relentless focus with a motivated and efficient team. The State Government has continuously supported the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department and the Dairy Development Directorate and perhaps it is time for an internal assessment on these grounds and girdling up for a sustained effort to raise the bar of professional performance.

I again reiterate my emphasis on the performance matrix for the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department on the following action agendas

1. Disease protection & Prevention.

After serving nearly over two years at the level of Commissioner and Secretary to the Government in the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department I have realised that there is no monthly review of disease protection measures and epidemiological profiling of diseases and disease prevention strategies. I sincerely appeal that the following needs to be done

- (a) The NERDDL capacities leave a lot to be desired and for every disease, profiling epidemiology and action

strategies need to be undertaken with key responsibility of disease response and prevention on the District Veterinary Officer assisted by a Veterinary Officer specifically handling the matter.

- (b) The NADRS has to become the single source of truth in reporting, despite drawbacks with the application, it is perhaps the only single platform for reporting disease detection and registering first response and weaving around the same a proper disease prevention strategy. Every district should have a district nodal NADRS officer and all nodes should be made operational to allow for regular data updates on disease detection, outbreaks and also for disease profiling geo-spatially and response evaluation.
- (c) The 17 (seventeen) disease diagnostic laboratories are to be upgraded and proper test protocols prescribed along with a minimal threshold of samples to be evaluated animal sector wise- cattle, buffalo, sheep and goat, poultry including ducks to ensure disease monitoring
- (d) The NADCP provides the platform to eradicate Foot and Mouth Disease and Brucellosis. This should be implemented in all sincerity to ensure the history of Rinderpest eradication repeats and Assam makes it a success story.
- (e) The cold chain for the Vaccines should have a test check every month to ensure the potency of the temperature regulation mechanism and one officer in the District Head Quarters should be singularly responsible for the reporting on the vaccine cold chain potency and functioning including the Junior Engineers in the field under the supervision of the Executive Engineer, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department

- (f) The Vaccine production facility needs serious upgradation with the quantity being produced and this should become the vaccine production hub for the entire North East India with a proper DPR being attempted and submitted to Government of India for funding the upgrade from routine lapinised vaccination to state of the art tissue culture-based vaccine production facility. There is a major capacity deficit of domain expertise in this area in the department and this needs to be addressed on priority.
- (g) The manpower for the laboratories needs to be specified and a specialised training and skill upgradation for such staff has to be worked out on a proper basis instead of the sub optimal usage of the diagnostic facilities.
- (h) Niche laboratories such as the Regional Feed Testing Laboratory should also be upgraded and detailed feed and fodder analysis with standard assessment and evaluation protocols need to be put into place. Expertise in this regards should either be sourced to the Assam Agricultural University or through a knowledge partner under the guidance of the FAO as being presently attempted for the disease diagnostic laboratories.
- (i) Since the laboratories are diagnostic centres, separately these laboratories should gradually also be built up for animal sources protein analysis for the requirement of assessment of good clean milk, meat, eggs etc for human consumption

2. Disease Treatment and health services

Disease treatment is essentially at the venue of the animal being reared in majority cases hence the department needs to work on

- (a) Proper infrastructure and equipment and medicines as per a standard scale for every district hospital, dispensary, and sub centre should be finalised based on the animal population and this should be mandatorily made available.
- (b) Disease treatment reporting on a daily basis should be provisioned with the number of site visits by doctor and reporting steps taken on disease outbreak as the majority complaints are of veterinary doctors not being regular in their place of posting and not being visible on the field. This needs to be rectified and presently a proposal for mandatory rural service and also waiver of rent for government provisioned accommodation at place of posting is being examined in lieu of HRA. However, regular supervisory checks on the attendance of the officers in the field have to be ensured for each veterinary service facility in the state.
- (c) It is shocking to note that a department that claims a legacy and heritage of over 100 years does not have in patient sterile treatment for surgical procedures in the entire state at even one location. This itself reveals the abysmal levels of prospective vision and effort by the domain experts in the department. It is of utmost necessity to have a in patient facility in every district and to ensure the same by a planned upgrade of existing facility premises in a cost-effective manner. This matter was underlined by the Hon'ble Member of Parliament Smt.Maneka Gandhi recently in the context of Assam to the office of the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Hon'ble Minister, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department.
- (d) There is a singular need for Veterinarians to reach and provide service where the animal wealth is, this

necessitates mobility and hence the welcome initiative of mobile ambulances and boat clinic at Majuli are initiatives that are laudable and need to be replicated even more. Possibly on a managed services contract so as to ensure economies of scale and monitorable service delivery at lower costs.

3. Breed Up-gradation

- (a) In the recent years we have notified a pig breeding policy, a cattle and buffalo breeding policy and goat breeding policy. These need to be reviewed without fail at least once in two months and the strategies for breed up-gradation should be based on genetic evaluation and numerical targets for artificial insemination.
- (b) The liquid semen laboratories for pig and goat are to be made into state of the art facilities with proper boar lines and sire directories and reach to clusters for the genetic up-gradation should be as per a structured strategic plan of action.
- (c) Assam Livestock Development Agency should shoulder the entire matter for the Cattle and Buffalo sector with breed up-gradation and a FSBS like facility should be scaled to ensure effective sale of semen straws based on the dam lactation for the High genetic merit bulls. The entire operational grid of liquid nitrogen and the cryo-chain should be expanded on need basis with up-gradation of existing
- (d) Conservation projects for the indigenous breeds are missing in the entire department efforts and this has to be given priority – in pigs for the Doom variety, for the Assam Hill Goat, for the Lakhimi Breed in Cow and the Swamp buffalo too. These have to be provisioned for and taken ahead in a systematic and effective manner.

- (e) Breed demonstration :- except for the FSBS which is a seed production facility, there is no single venue where the benefits can be demonstrated of a cross bred or a pure line high genetic merit animal in the department. This makes it difficult for farmers to be motivated, initially to keep the cost low we can look at videos and social media presence for high genetic worth animals to be showcased, however, a single facility is of utmost necessity and the Khanapara master plan can be once such location where the High Genetic merit animals can be reared and showcased in terms of yields and upkeep.

4. Demonstration activities and on-site skill up-gradation

The Veterinary Department has a vast network of farms and also around the District Hospitals and Sub centres there is adequate land. We need to work out standard procedures for locations for each farm to convert these into best rearing demonstration units with the following being achieved at each farm

- (a) A specific number of on site trainings to be done for entrepreneurs and farmers in cattle rearing, goat rearing, pig rearing, poultry keeping and duck rearing etc with standardised course material and certification for the trainees that allows for immediate credit linkage as
- (b) A bank also partners the demonstrational farm for the credit linkage at the farm premises
- (c) Each Farm should have a master plan with the bio security zone, the administrative zone, demonstration of all rearing practices, classroom and training zone, waste management practices, vermicom posting, feed and fodder demonstration units and also a ready sale counter for sale proceeds

- (d) A technology platform which allows proper farm administration including feed module should be enabled in the Assam Dhenu and also for the farm management module
- (e) Each farm should also adopt three near by school for giving farm produce and hosting picnic cum teaching sessions to children and teachers three times a year for the children to get a feel of the animal rearing practices and getting attracted to entrepreneurial ventures, one day for such picnics for cattle farms can be the 'Goru Bihu' which celebrates the traditional animal human bonding in our State. Separately two nearby habitations should also be served by the Farm manager as Veterinary officer on call for consultation and service which allows ready availability of casual wage labour etc.
- (f) Ideally a ranking matrix should be evolved for each farm along with the evaluation of the farms for multiple criterion like land scaping, ornamental flowers alongside the main core activity of animal health and productivity parametres, trainings conducted and loans facilitated, this will allow a specific focus on the farms as demonstrational units
- (g) Presently an attempt is being made to provision for an externally funded project for the upgradation of the demonstration farms and this should be explored alongside the RIDF and other avenues for upscaling the infrastructure and practices for the farms.
- (h) all idle assets such as farm machinery and incubators etc should be made functional including the structures like civil works for sheds etc and the farms should be speaking institutions about the vibrancy of the department.

5. Infrastructure and service delivery network upkeep

The Veterinary Department has been notorious for having dilapidated structures and ill maintained premises. The following needs to be undertaken on priority

- (a) For all service delivery infrastructures like Hospital, dispensary etc the buildings should be colour coded to reflect a veterinary establishment of Government of Assam.
- (b) For every district based on the animal census population, every service delivery infrastructure should be categorised as Category I, II and III and steps taken to repair the same, priority should be given to service delivery network infrastructure where staff is posted and animal population in service area exists
- (c) The service delivery network should also be separately handled and the infrastructure of training establishments etc should be addressed effectively, including diagnostic laboratory etc.
- (d) It would be ideal if a district wise network of the infrastructure is finalised and then the deficit areas are identified and worked upon, the basic issue of capital expenditure for new asset creation for fixed service delivery infrastructure such as dispensaries and subcentres should be avoided and a mobile platform for service delivery should be used as this is more cost effective.
- (e) For the demonstration farm units, we will have to prepare a master plan for each farm and there after relentlessly pursue the creation of deficit infrastructure by prioritising the requirement in each of the farms.

6. Capacity augmentation and training

It is often said that the more you train, the more is the gain, firstly

- (a) Training need assessment have to be done at all hierarchies – for veterinary officers, for para vets and for farmers and these have to be done by looking at specialised institutes and sectoral engagements around large ruminants, small ruminants and aspects related to breed upgradation and disease control and prevention
- (b) Training material standardisation is of utmost necessity and tie up with bodies such as the Agricultural skill upgradation council or the skill development mission in the State Government should be fruitfully taken forward
- (c) The training institutes grid and the training capacity and number of trainings and the kind of trainings also should be taken into consideration and a proper training and capacity augmentation plan should be in place with defined numerical targets, the trainings held at the farms as demonstrational training venues should be in addition and supplement the training efforts
- (d) Certification and linkages for further training scope for in service veterinarians should be a conscious decision from the Directorate of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department to have focus on areas such as disease detection and disease control, laboratory techniques, breed upgradation training etc and multiple areas of engagement as specialisation in the domain is necessitated.

7. Credit linkages and formal institutional support mechanism

On an average the credit deposit ratio for the State of Assam hovers around 50 % or more, whereas in more developed

states like Punjab, Kerala the CD ratio is often in excess of 120 %. Since Assam is predominantly an agrarian economy the basic conclusion is that the credit offtake in the primary sector related to Animal Husbandry and Veterinary activity is dismal. This needs special emphasis for credit linkages and a monthly review on the same should be arranged by the Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department for ensuring adequate credit linkages and using the banks to fund economic activity in the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sector. There are several aspects that can be pushed

- (a) An online web based platform that can be hosted in consultation with the SLBC and the NABARD can be set up as an added module to the Assam DHENU initiative and taken forward despite the capacity deficit for the IT leveraging in the department, this will allow for effective review and monitoring and specific efforts to push the credit linkage.

8. Review of productivity and market linkages

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam has repeatedly instructed to have a list of all the markets in the state and to monitor the available quantity of produce locally sourced and the import of animal-based proteins, there have been statements made wherein flight of capital for poultry related products itself has been shown to total to around Rs 690 crores in a financial year.

- (a) A study by NABARD is presently underway for the production figures and also for the shortfall and how the shortfall can be addressed and
- (b) Markets should be provided with specific facilities in consultation with the P & RD and the Agriculture

department to allow for specific facilities for sale of animal based products

- (c) Separately, for instance Barpeta, Bajali area has a head start in milk production so milk processing should be leveraged therein, similarly a particular location would have potential for pig rearing and should be identified. The sectoral cluster maps had been prepared as a follow up of the VETCON-2019 and somehow thereafter the COVID-19 pandemic was a damper to our efforts but we need to marshal ourselves and take forward the effective market linkages including fast tracking projects like the export-oriented unit at Nazira, Sivasagar.

9. Emphasis on safety standards on healthy and hygienic sourcing of animal source protein in Assam

It is common knowledge that the meat and animal sourced products that are sold in the market are not as per hygienic standards and

- (a) A campaign and training for good and clean healthy animal-based proteins is to be initiated
- (b) (b) proper slaughter house practices have to be initiated and regular checks on the quality of the meat and milk being sold in the markets is to be done with specific nodal officers for the same to undertake the tasks along with police authorities
- (c) (c) The best option is low cost videos on platforms like YOU TUBE to educate consumers on the quality of meat and chicken being sold, scientific slaughter

10. Review and proper implementation agenda for all statues and act related to the Veterinary Sector

All central legislations and legal frameworks need to be implemented in letter and spirit and for this a monthly forum

in the Directorate should be convened for taking initiative.
The basic acts such as

- (a) The Assam Cattle Diseases Act'1948 (To prevent spread of contagious diseases) now replaced by The Prevention & Control of Infectious & Contagious diseases in Animal Act 2009.
- (b) The Assam Cattle Preservation Act, 1950 (- Amendment 1976, Preservation of certain cattle by controlling the slaughter)
- (c) The Cattle trespass Assam (amendment) Act'1936 (To protect crops)
- (d) Livestock Importation Act (To regulate import of livestock / products) need specific monitoring formats and separately the
- (e) The need for regulation of illicit movement of animals cannot be underlined enough and the requirement of proper check posts and check gates with the facilities for accommodation for the staff and also holding areas with basic testing and lab facilities is to be built up ab initio, more so specifically in the case of the recently witnessed impasse in through movement of the live pigs after outbreak of African Swine Fever. The Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department should prepare a detailed project plan for the check posts and check gates with a web based interface for reporting and also
- (f) A joint forum has to be notified which shall have participation from the Transport department and the Home and Political Department and Police department for the monitoring of the movement of animals and this meeting should ideally be held on a quarterly basis.

11. Effective update and monitoring of INAPH

INPAH basically records the breed worthy animals and there after the vaccination details, tagging details and the Animal Artificial Insemination details are also captured. The Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department needs to hold a monthly review as the present data upload on INAPH is too poor and ineffective and there is hardly any data analytics that can be done on the same, Unless the INAPH is made into a vibrant portal for the state of Assam the breed improvement strategy will not be able to show any demonstrable results.

12. Effective update and monitoring of NADRS

Similarly, for the National Animal Disease Reporting System the Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department should hold a monthly review meeting and the details as already mentioned for disease profiling and incident response should be mapped geo-spatially for the cluster with animal population and disease and medical advisories can there after be prepared and shared and acted upon. An example of our failure is the reporting on the NADRS for the outbreak of the lumpy skin disease as also the ASF, in fact, irrespective of the NADRS the manner in which the ASF outbreak was handled leaves a lot to be desired out of the disease response and disease control efforts from the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department.

13. Effective Information Education Campaign and Use of Social Media

The social media is a powerful tool for cost effective reach to the target population and a list of such videos and training modules should be standardised and hosted on the social media and the reach monitored and response given thereof. A rich repository of the following topics should be build

up without any hesitation as an immediate connect to the farmers and veterinary fraternity in the State. Topics are to include

Cattle Sector (10 minutes video): Points to be covered

1. Economically viable breeds of cattle suitable for N.E Region, their characteristic and production performances.
2. Up-gradation of low producing local breed of cattle with special reference to “Cattle Breeding Policy” of Assam with special reference to ‘Lakhimi’.
3. Initial requirements to start a cattle farm.
4. Dairy Cow Management (hygienic milking of cow)
5. Scientific management of calf, heifer
6. Scientific Housing of dairy cattle (Semi intensive, Intensive system)
7. Farm waste management
8. Bio security measures to be adopted in the farm
9. Scientific feeding of Cattle (Balanced feed, low cost ration)
10. Fodder cultivation (Different types of fodder, Preservation of fodder- Silage and Hay making, hydroponic Fodder, azola cultivation)
11. Common diseases of cattle, their prevention and treatment
12. Periodic health care of dairy animal like deworming, vaccination etc
13. Livestock Insurance and need of dairy cooperative Society (DCS) and market linkage
14. Assistance from Veterinary Dept.
15. Bank linkage for financial assistance

16. Veterinary Helpline

Buffalo (5 minutes video): Points to be covered

1. Different breeds of buffalo : Indigenous and Exotic breeds suitable for Assam and North Eastern Region
2. Up-gradation of low producing local breed of buffalo with special reference to 'Luit'
3. Initial requirements to start a buffalo farm.
4. Scientific management of Buffalo (housing, feeding, breeding)
5. Common disease of buffalo, their prevention and treatment, periodic health care like deworming, vaccination etc.
6. Livestock Insurance and need of dairy cooperative Society (DCS) and market linkage
7. Assistance from Veterinary Dept.
8. Bank linkage for financial assistance
9. Veterinary Helpline

Goat Sector (5 minutes video): Points to be covered

1. Assam local hill goat with its advantages.
2. High yielding breed like Sirohi , beetal , Jamunapari etc. and their adaptability in Assam.
3. Initial requirements to start a goat farm.
4. Housing system of a Goat farm, Selection of site for farm, low cost housing.
5. Scientific feeding of Goats, low cost ration for goats
6. Breeding of goat, up-gradation of Local Goat breed by beetal and sirohi buck.
7. A.I in goat.
8. Scientific management of goat
9. Common goat diseases, their prevention and treatment

10. Assistance from Veterinary Dept.
11. Bank linkage for financial assistance
12. Veterinary Helpline

Piggery Sector (5 minutes video): Points to be covered

1. Available breeds of pigs in Assam, selection of suitable breed of pig.
2. Initial requirements to start a pig farm.
3. Housing systems of pigs, points to be considered in construction of pig sty
4. Bio-security measures to be adopted in a farm
5. Requirement of feed for different categories of pigs
6. Locally available feeding materials
7. Points to be considered for successful breeding
8. Care and management of different categories of pigs
9. Diseases of pigs and their prevention and control
10. Assistance from Veterinary Dept.
11. Bank linkage for financial assistance
12. Veterinary Helpline

Fodder Farming (5 minutes video): Points to be covered

1. Advantages of fodder cultivation
2. Types of fodder, names of seasonal/perennial fodder
3. Initial requirements to start a commercial fodder farm.
4. Land type, Preparation of land, sowing time, fencing, irrigation, harvesting time etc.
5. Growing of non-conventional green forage – Azolla, Moringa etc.
6. Conservation/Preservation of fodder- silage, hay making etc. for lean periods
7. Modern farm machineries like chaff cutter etc.

8. Assistance from Veterinary Dept.
9. Bank linkage for financial assistance
10. Veterinary Helpline

Poultry Sector

Layer Farming (4 minutes video) : Points to be covered

1. Economically viable and high producing layer breed of poultry
2. Introduction to Economically viable and high producing LIT birds
3. Initial requirements to start a commercial layer farm
4. Scientific housing system for layer farm
5. Scientific feeding of layer for optimum production
6. Bio security measures to be adopted in a layer farm with proper hygiene & sanitation
7. Emerging and re-emerging diseases of layer bird, vaccination schedule, periodic health care.
8. Economics of Poultry farming and Marketing of produces.
9. Assistance from Veterinary Dept.
10. Bank linkage for financial assistance
11. Veterinary Helpline

Broiler Farming (3 minutes video) : Points to be covered

1. Different types of economically viable and high yielding Broiler breeds
2. Initial requirements to start a commercial layer farm
3. Scientific Housing & Management for broiler farming
4. Scientific feeding of layer for optimum production
5. Bio security measures to be undertaken in a broiler farm
6. Emerging and re-emerging diseases of broiler bird,

- prevention & periodic health care.
- 7. Value addition of broiler meat and marketing avenues
- 8. Assistance from Veterinary Dept.
- 9. Bank linkage for financial assistance
- 10. Veterinary Helpline

Duck Farming (3 minutes video) : Points to be covered

- 1. Economically viable and high producing duck breed
 - 2. Initial requirements to start a commercial duck farm
 - 3. Scientific housing system for duck farm
 - 4. Scientific feeding of duck for optimum production
 - 5. Bio security measures to be adopted in a duckery farm with proper hygiene & sanitation
 - 6. Emerging and re-emerging diseases of duck, prevention (vaccination schedule), periodic health care.
 - 7. Economics of duck farming and Marketing of produces.
 - 8. Assistance from Veterinary Dept.
 - 9. Bank linkage for financial assistance
 - 10. Veterinary Helpline
14. Monthly administrative review of Budget provisions

The budget offtake in the financial year 2020-21 has been very low, especially regarding capital asset creation works and hence there are three prescriptions to be adhered to by the Directorate of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department

- (a) Review of the budget schemes and the sanction thereof and implementation on a priority basis once every month under the chairmanship of the Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department
- (b) Preparation of the budget based on the major

deliverables by the department such as disease prevention, disease treatment, breed upgradation, credit linkage, infrastructure creation, IT leveraged services etc should be done with nodal officers for each project undertaken under the budget

- (c) Separately it should be ensured that the sectoral budget should be clearly defined, wherein what is the resource allocation to the cattle sector, similarly to the goat and sheep sector, the poultry sector etc should be monitored and reviewed for offtake and as per the stipulates of the Finance Department we should ensure offtake of at least 20% in the first quarter, 30 % and 30 % in the second and third quarter and 20% in the last quarter.
- (d) Major infrastructure interventions like RIDF, and the central sector schemes should be monitored in the same monthly forum individually

15. Institutionalization of the Khanapara Master Plan

As on date there is no single venue where the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department can demonstrate the best rearing practices, established breed lines, farm management and use of interventional technology in animal health management, feed and fodder techniques such as silage, mix feed, etc, vermi-composting etc. Since the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department has a premium land holding at Khanapara from which slices are being apportioned at a rapid rate, with 19 bighas taken out for Taj Vivanta, another 3.5 Bighas across the road to the office of the Commissioner of Police, Guwahati City and unless the same property is not having a master plan which include multiple projects including cutting edge liquid semen laboratories for goat and pig, demonstration embryo transfer fertilisation techniques, and a major training

venue under the Officers training Institute, Khanapara. The proposed MASHAV centre of Excellence is also targeted at the same place and it is suggested that the Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department takes steps for a detailed civil and technical consultancy for the Khanapara master plan as a one stop venue for training, exposure and learning for all hierarchies, farmers, specialists and also policy and decision makers.

16. Submission of monthly reviews and progress reports to the Government

The Directorate of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department does not submit periodic reports as mandated as these reports are to be mandatorily submitted monthly with data for districts and the most adroit manner of doing the same shall be a computerised web based format that can be evolved and hosted on the Assam Dhenu platform that has been proposed. The monthly reports are

- (a) Disease incidence and disease control measures including epidemiology, number of affected animals, fatalities, steps taken for prevention etc
- (b) Disease treatment and services are service delivery infrastructure district wise
- (c) INAPH report
- (d) NADRS report
- (e) Single report for every central sector scheme containing the physical and financial progress and the achievement made
- (f) Sectoral report – on cattle and buffalo, on goat, on poultry, on feed and fodder sector
- (g) Farm management Unit and the farm wise monthly report

- (h) Infrastructure projects and status of infrastructure report district wise
- (i) Manpower report with the details of posting and attachments, need for creation of posts, vacancies and filling up the same etc
- (j) Report on training and capacity building separately for the in service veterinary officers, para vets, and the farmers and sector wise and sector specific capacity building initiatives
- (k) Report on leveraging information technology and progress on Assam DHENU
- (l) Report on the utilisation and physical implementation of the scheme under the budget
- (m) Report on the monitoring of all the legislations and violation of prevention of cruelty to animal act and other legislations
- (n) Report on the credit offtake and credit linkage and aspects related to the same in consultation with the SLBC and NABARD

17. Publication of an Annual Report

As indicated, the Annual Administrative report of every department is a speaking report of all activities undertaken by the department, despite the interventions to bring out the Veterinary Handbook, 2019 and other initiatives, the Annual report for the period 2020-21 is still awaited. Please ensure the same is prepared and submitted on the various heads of engagement such as

- (a) Disease control and Prevention
- (b) Disease treatment
- (c) Infrastructure
- (d) Breed up-gradation

- (e) Credit linkage
- (f) Capacity augmentation and training
- (g) Demonstrational farms and activities thereof
- (h) Sector wise reports with cattle and buffalo, goat, pig, poultry and feed and fodder sector. This document should be replete with photographs and reports and also indicated district wise relevant data and inputs for analysis by observers and other domain experts.

18. Manpower Rationalisation

The Directorate of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary and the sister directorate of Dairy development are not small departments with several officers however the management of the resources of officers is not properly addressed. Despite some initiative in amendment of the service rules and promotions in certain categories there remain serious concerns. The following aspects need to be undertaken on priority

- (a) Review of the cadre and review of the roles and responsibilities of the posts in the Directorate of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department vis-à-vis the areas of interventions with sectoral officers and nodal officers at the Directorate level and also at the district level for the same
- (b) Provision for closer convergence in the cattle and buffalo sector with the Dairy sector needs to be worked out under the lead of the Cattle Sector officer and Assam Livestock Development Agency
- (c) For each district the idle component of manpower has to be identified and divided broadly into the three areas of
 - i. Breed upgradation

- ii. Disease control and prevention including disease diagnostics and treatment and
 - iii. Demonstrational grid officials including training, capacity building and credit linkage, given the above a review of the manpower and rationalisation is of utmost necessity including.
- (d) A transfer policy for the personnel in the department at all levels.

19. Focus on Sectoral Review and Cluster based approach for promotion of the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department

As the broad areas of intervention have been identified for intervention all specific development should be specific to sectors – The basic sectors are Cattle and Buffalo sector, Goat Sector including Sheep, Poultry and duck rearing, pig rearing, feed and fodder practices etc and the second emphasis should be nodal officers thereof and geo spatial approach to clusters and value chain development for all sectors. This should be the singular emphasis of the department without deviation consistently and we can take this initiative for development of the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department to new heights in our State.

20. Annual Calendar of Activities – VETCON -2021 and the National Livestock Show

Two major activities that found resonance in the state during the rejuvenation of the department are

- (a) The National Livestock show and it is necessary to ensure that this event which involved entrepreneurs, department, stakeholders is held on an annual basis, this needs to be made into a Detailed project report under the aegis of ALPCO and then with the participation

of all organisations under the Directorate of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary and Diary development directorate can be taken forward.

- (b) Separately another major academic and strategy reconciliation forum is the VETCON which was inaugurated and the sectoral papers launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam. We should build the progressive strategies around these annual events and also incrementally translating the central core concepts in the sectoral papers and deepening the sectoral engagement and the development agenda thereof.

21. The Private Investment Promotion Policy for Animal Husbandry and Livestock Sector – the Single Window under Assam Milk Meat and Egg Mission

Due to the COVID -19 pandemic the entire effort for the Private Investment Promotion Policy for the livestock sector in the state of Assam could not be commenced effectively. We have had multiple meetings and there are several capacity deficits in the department and the creation of a dedicated project monitoring unit also along side the institutional arrangement with NEDFi could not be done. We need to take forward this initiative and have traction with the majority stakeholders. Till date the ALPCO has been promoting private initiative and now this private sector investment promotion policy can be a game changer for the livestock sector in the State of Assam. I appeal sincerely to all concerned to shoulder the responsibility of taking this initiative forward as the single window establishment is technology intensive and needs constant nurturing to take seed and translate.

22. Leveraging Information Technology for the entire

department – Assam Dhenu

The usage of technology is inevitable and with national platforms like INAPH and NADRS the whole reporting and monitoring of the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department has to be made online. There were major interventions conceptualised under the Assam Dhenu initiatives. The basic approach had been to notify a state level committee for technical progress and the work was to be implemented by the State Electronics Development Corporation AMTRON, however, the Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department has raised a specific query about whether work can be awarded to AMTRON without tendering. Stuck at this cusp the opportunity cost for the entire technology intervention has been dissipated however, given the COVID-19 pandemic and the disparity in the approaches of an enterprise resource planning approach like the development of FRS, SRS and thereafter the granular and modular development with a project management consultant and a system integrator or to use the organic growth path of price discovery through screening with the technical committee comprising NIC, SeMT and IIIT and the PMC being onboarded from the NISG (National Institute of Smart Governance) and the translation of the modules under the supervision of the technical committee. This bridge has to be crossed and we shall do the same taking the Finance Department into confidence and then taking the same forward. However, while not attempting to deliberate on the approaches, it should always be remembered that presently no official in the department has the technical exposure or experience or requisite qualifications to take the initiative forward the technology leveraging and further the department and its geo spatial spread through out the state

will necessitate a two day workshop on the same after initial consent by the in principal clearance on the methodology to be adopted for the technical platform for the Assam DHENU.

23. Effective Central Sectoral Scheme offtakes and efficient implementation

The office of the Principal Secretary, Monitoring in the office of the Chief Secretary, Assam has been indicating the less than optimal off-take in each of the central sector schemes. Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department as a special category state can initiate multiple interventions under the Central Sector schemes and we need to have monthly reviews for each of the central sector schemes at the level of the Director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department and a monthly report as indicated herein above needs to be mandatorily done. One illustration which should be reiterated for purpose of comprehension is the National Livestock Mission. In the financial year 2018-19 it was indicated that there was no offtake for the past 4 financial years due to non-submission of the utilisation certificates and Government of Assam was asked to submit utilisation or to refund the amount. Since in certain schemes there were no details for certain schemes dating as early as 2005-06 hence it was decided to refund around Rs 11.5 crores that was surrendered by drawing the amount from the Assam State exchequer and then submitted to Government of India. Subsequently in the financial year 2019-20 we were sanctioned around Rs 8.9 crores and then again in the financial year 2020-21 towards the month of March 2021 an amount of Rs 10.8 crores has been released. The example is to showcase as to why funds which were always there could not be accessed as the nodal officers for each central sector scheme was not there, and the proposals and utilisation

certificates were not submitted in a timely manner to ensure the sanction of funds under the Central Sector Schemes.

This painfully long and elaborate note is merely a reiteration of the aspects that had been recorded since 2019 and notified from the sectoral initiatives with the Hon'ble Chief Minister releasing them in VETCON -2019. However, the level of follow up and the commitment to be seen to build a body of logical interventions on these aspects has been abysmally poor. My appeal to the general body of domain experts of Veterinarians is reminiscent of Field Marshall Manekshaw – Leadership emanates from deep professional knowledge and ability to lead from the front and putting in that extra effort to have a vision and the willingness to translate the same with hard work. Please give it the best and every moment matters, raise your professional credentials and raise the bar collectively in the service of the state of Assam and its wonderful people.

