

5,000 appointments in health sector on March 2: Sarma

By our Staff Reporter

GUWAHATI, Feb 9: Assam Government will appoint about 5,000 people in the State-run health sector on March 2, which Assam Health and Family Welfare Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has claimed to be the largest-ever induction at one go in the sector anywhere in the country. The minister also said that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh would lay the foundation stones of new medical colleges in the State in March.

Talking to newsmen here today, Sarma said: "Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi will hand over the appointment letters to the 5,000 youths at a meeting at Judges' Field in Guwahati on March 2. This will perhaps be the single largest induction in the health sector in the country," he said, and added: "We are planning 6,000 other new appointments in the next financial year if we get the required financial approval." All the new appointments — 100 MBBS doctors, 50 ayurvedic doctors, 1,000 GNM nurses, 2,000 ANM nurses, 150 pharmacists, 500 laboratory technicians, 500 accountants and 500 surveillance workers — are for rural areas, he added. Appointments for several grade IV posts, of which interviews are in process, will also be issued at the same meeting, he said.

The recruitment was done through written tests, and as such there is no controversy or legal hurdles, the minister said. According to the minister, these appointments are part of the announcements made for the Health Department in the last Budget. "If the department can manage financial approval, we plan to recruit 6,000 more people to make health service available up to the ~~sur~~ tea garden areas of the State," he added.

Sarma said upgrading of the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) to a multi-speciality hospital is in the process, and the Medical Council of India (MCI) is being approached for its clearance. "The GMCH, which earned about Rs 25 lakh a month earlier, is now earning about Rs 50 lakh a month," Sarma claimed, and added: "On February 15, a neurosurgery intensive care unit (ICU) will be inaugurated at the GMCH, and the machines that have been installed at the ICU are more advanced than that of the GNRC."

"The Prime Minister will lay foundation stones for a medical college each at Tezpur and Jorhat, and the final dates will be fixed after consultation with the PMO," Sarma said, and added: "Rs 162 crore for each of the two medical colleges has already been sanctioned, and Rs 30 crore of each of the amounts has been released".