

# Anomalies in Govt schemes highlighted

By A City Reporter

**GUWAHATI, March 9** – Highlighting vast differences between the tall claims of government flagship programmes and the ground realities in the far-flung rural pockets of different districts of Assam, the North East Network and Assam Mahila Samata Society today asked for obligation on the part of State government towards women.

In the 'Women's Convention towards Equality, Development and Peace' organised on the occasion of International Women's Day, nearly 400 women from Dhubri, Goalpara, Sonitpur, Tinsukia, Udalguri and Dibrugarh districts of the State presented the factsheets and case studies related to the issues like health, education, employment, women-specific schemes and violence against women in the light of the government programmes like

the National Rural Health Mission, National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, among others.

Speaking as the chief guest of the occasion, Syeda Hameed, Member of the Planning Commission (health portfolio) lamented that the ground realities presented by the women coming from different parts of the State do not match with the State government records.

"In such conditions, the women organisations and other women groups can jointly prepare a data-based report on the condition of women in the State, specially in the rural areas and submit it to the Central government so that steps could be taken to take the programmes to the actual beneficiaries," she said.

The issue-based discussions initiated under the programme dealt with the present situation of some of the crucial issues con-

cerning women in Assam including witch hunting, which is still prevalent in the State, missing girl child, domestic violence, trafficking of girls of the age group from 7 to 22 and other core issues gave a pen picture of the condition of women in six districts of the State.

Members of NEN and AMSS addressed some points emerging from their field experience like the status of women in the NREGA, a scheme promising guarantee of employment to men and women for at least 100 days in a year.

Women coming from different areas informed the gathering that though the scheme has made all the provisions for the convenience of the workers, in reality most of the workplaces lack resting sheds, first aid and drinking water facilities. The findings show that hardly 30 per cent of the total unemployed popula-

tion of the 13 districts, where the programme is implemented, has been covered under the scheme. The findings also throws light on some alarming facts that at some places only 20 days employment is being ensured, women are told at places that the scheme is not for them and literate people are compelled to give thumb impression.

In NRHM, another flagship programme of the Central government, several anomalies have been found including ASHA and ANMs demanding money from the patients and their share out of the money (Rs 1400) given to pregnant women giving birth to her child in government institution, discrimination on the basis of caste, community or other grounds by the health workers, lack of privacy for women, among others.