Events organised during October, 2010 to March, 2011

- Launching of Manupatra Online Database Access for Judicial Officers of Assam
- Opening of IIL, Assam Chapter office at the Gauhati High Court premises
- Launching of High Court website at Shillong Bench
- Administrative Conference of Judicial Officers of Assam
- Inauguration of new High Court building at Agartala, Tripura
- Seminar on “The Role of Advocates in the Society” held at Imphal, Manipur
- Launching of High Court website at Kohima Bench
- Interactive session on the topic “Mediation an effective tool for ADR” was held at Promod Swarna Sadan, Guwahati
- Swearing - in - ceremony of Hon’ble Mr. Justice A.K. Goswami
- Farewell reference of Hon’ble Mr. Justice H. N. Sarma
- Training of Judicial Officers at IIM, Shillong
- Launching of High Court website at Itanagar Bench
- Training of Judicial Officers on Juvenile Justice Act
- Launching of High Court website at Aizawl
- Inauguration of annexe building and staff quarters at Guwahati

From Hon’ble the Chief Justice

A great deal has been achieved in the North East on various fronts, particularly, in introducing technology in the Courts, improvement of infrastructure facilities and getting Judicial Officers and Advocates to participate more actively in the justice delivery system. ATMAN will give you a glimpse of recent events in the North East.

Additionally, the results of frequent discussions with the Judicial Officers and Advocates have had a huge impact not only in the disposal of cases but also in the quality of justice being imparted. Each and every Member of the legal fraternity has contributed to the recent successes and I have no doubt that the progress made by the Gauhati High Court will sooner than later benefit all of us in the North East.

Justice Madan B Lokur
The Chief Justice

Editor Speaks

This is the fourth issue of ATMAN and as a two years old, it is hardly more than a child. Yet, by chronicling the images and the events of the Gauhati High Court, ATMAN performs an important task and its impact can hardly be considered infantile. The current issue showcases the progress on use of communication tools, training and infrastructural developments, which are expected to make the justice delivery system more efficient and litigant friendly.

Justice Hrishikesh Roy
Launching of Manupatra Online Database Access for Judicial Officers under the Gauhati High Court on 9th October, 2010 at Judges Lounge, Gauhati High Court, Guwahati

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy and subsequently the national launch of the Computerisation of Courts project in 2007 recognize that technology is an essential element of change in all spheres of life. The Policy makers acknowledge that Indian judiciary has a large network of Courts with about 15,000 Courts located in about 2500 Court complexes throughout the country. While computers are being used in Supreme Court and High Courts, some of the subordinate courts are yet to exploit the full potential of the application of computers. The courts especially the ones at the cutting edge level are in urgent need of harnessing its human resources potential utilizing the available Information and Communication Technology (ICT) resources.

With this objective, internet connectivity to all judicial officers in Assam through Manupatra Online Database Access, to enhance their justice administration skills has been provided to Assam's judicial officers.

Through this initiative, the judicial infrastructure has responded to the functional needs of the State's judicial officers and Manupatra empowerment for all levels of judges, is perhaps the first in the country.

To get instant information on status of cases at the Principal Seat of the Gauhati High Court, e-kiosk has been installed at the High Court's ground floor with the initiative of Hon'ble the Chief Justice Madan B. Lokur.

Inauguration of the office room of the Indian Law Institute, Assam Chapter on 12th October, 2010

The Indian Law Institute (ILI), the parent organisation was founded at New Delhi in the year 1956. The objectives of the Institute as laid down in its Memorandum of Association are to cultivate the science of law, to promote advance studies and research in law so as to meet the social, economic and other needs of the Indian people, to promote systematization of law, to encourage and conduct investigations in legal and allied fields, to improve legal education, to impart instructions in law, and to publish studies, books, periodicals, etc.

The Assam Unit of Indian Law Institute was constituted in May, 2006 with Hon'ble Mr. Justice B. Sudershan Reddy, the then Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, as its President. In 2009, at the initiative of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ranjan Gogoi, the first Executive Chairman, some space in the First Floor of the Gauhati High Court building was allotted to the Assam Unit of ILI. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Madan B. Lokur, current President of Assam Unit of Indian Law Institute formally inaugurated the new office on 12-10-2010 in presence of its Executive Chairman Justice Hrishikesh Roy and its Secretary, treasurer and other members of the organisation. The Assam Unit since its inception has taken up several programmes to achieve the goals and objectives of the Indian Law Institute.

Inauguration of the office of the Indian Law Institute, Assam Chapter by the Chief Justice in presence of Justice Hrishikesh Roy, Executive Chairman and other members
Launching of High Court Website and e-kiosk at Shillong Bench on 22nd October, 2010

Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Madan B. Lokur launched the website of the Gauhati High Court, Shillong Bench and e-kiosk in the new building of the Court on 22nd October, 2010 in presence of Mr. Justice T. Vaiphei, learned members of the bar, Judicial Officers as well as staff and officers of the Registry. Now, this Bench can be accessed through its website www.ghchillongbench.gov.in

On 24th October, 2010, Meghalaya State Legal Service Authority organised a Legal Aid Clinic at the District Jail, Shillong for getting legal aid by the inmates of the jail. In the said clinic, six under trial prisoners accused of minor offences were discharged, two were released on bond and nine persons were referred to legal aid.

People in general and the jail inmates in particular lauded the initiative taken by the High Court.

Administrative Conference of Judicial Officers of Assam, held on 13th and 14th November, 2010 at Assam Administrative Staff College, Khanapara, Guwahati

A two day Conference for the Judicial Officers of Assam was held at the Assam Administrative Staff College, Khanapara, Guwahati on 13th and 14th November, 2010. The participating officers were divided into smaller groups and were encouraged through interactive discussions, to express their views and suggestions, for improving the quality and responsiveness of the justice delivery system.

On 13th November, 2010, the first session for Grade III officers was on “Improving Civil Justice Delivery” which was co-chaired by Hon’ble Mr. Justice Amitava Roy and Hon’ble Mr. Justice H.N. Sarma.

The second session on “Improving Criminal Justice Delivery” was addressed by Hon’ble Mrs. Justice Anima Hazarika and Hon’ble Mr. Justice Hrishikesh Roy. The third session on “Improving facilities for making Justice Delivery more Meaningful” was chaired by Hon’ble Mr. Justice I.A. Ansari and Hon’ble Mr. Justice B.K. Sharma. The Judicial Officers who were divided into four groups had their separate brain storming exercise and in the final session, common problems were identified and specific solutions were mooted.

On the second day of the conference, i.e., on 14th November, 2010, the Grade I and Grade II officers carried out a similar exercise. The unique feature of these initiatives was the pro-active participation of the judicial officers rarely noticed during usual conferences.

Opening of New High Court Building at Agartala, Tripura on 13th November, 2010

The New building of the Tripura High Court was inaugurated on 13th November, 2010 by the Hon’ble Union Minister for Law and Justice, M. Veerappa Molly in presence of the Hon’ble Chief Justice Madan B. Lokur, Hon’ble Justice U.B. Saha, Hon’ble Justice C.R. Sarma, Hon’ble Justice (Retired) A.B. Pal and Chief Minister Sri Manik Sarkar.
The three storey modern building has five spacious Court rooms in the first floor with sitting arrangements in front of each Court for the litigant public. The ground floor has the office rooms and the Bar Library. The Computer Section, Judges Library, Judges lounge and Conference room and the Record room are located on the second floor. With the Agartala Bench now functioning from the new Court premises, the stake holders are looking forward to brighter days ahead.

A daylong seminar divided into two sessions was held at Imphal. The first session was graced by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Amitava Roy, Hon'ble Mr. Justice T. Nandakumar Singh and Hon'ble Mr. Justice A.C. Upadhyay of the Gauhati High Court. Hon'ble Justice Amitava Roy delivered a lucid and invigorating speech on the assigned topic of "The role of the present day advocates in the society."

The second session was chaired by Hon'ble Mr. Justice T. Nandakumar Singh, where several legal luminaries like Mr. N. Karani Singh, Senior Advocate and former member of the Bar Council of North Eastern States, Mr. H. Nabakumar Singh, Senior Advocate and former Advocate General, Manipur, Mr. G.N. Sahewalia, Sr. Advocate and former Chairman of Bar Council of North Eastern States, gave their valuable presentation. A lively interactive session followed the speeches. During the day, Mr. N. Kerani Singh, Senior Advocate was felicitated for completing 50 years of glorious practice in Manipur. A news bulletin of the Bar Council of North East 'Bar Bulletin' was released to mark the occasion.
Launching of High Court Website and e-kiosk at Kohima Permanent Bench

Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, Justice Madan B. Lokur inaugurated the e-kiosk machine installed at the Kohima Permanent Bench in presence of Justice K. Meruno on 9th December, 2010 for use by the litigants.

On the same occasion, his Lordship also launched the official website of the Kohima Bench of the Gauhati High Court.

With the launching of the official website, Kohima Bench can now be accessed through www.kohimahighcourt.gov.in

Interactive session on “Mediation – an effective tool for ADR” held at Promod Swarna Sadan, Guwahati on 18th December, 2010

The Assam Unit of Indian Law Institute took up the programme of imparting training on Mediation skills under the aegis of the Supreme Court Mediation Committee to nineteen interested lawyers. The forty hours training programme was completed in two phases from 17.12.2010 to 19.12.2010 and 07.01.2011 to 09.01.2011 under the guidance of Hon’ble Mr. Justice Madan B. Lokur, the Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court and President of ILI, Assam Unit and Hon’ble Mr. Justice Hrishikesh Roy, Executive Chairman of Assam Unit of ILI. Training to the referral Judges of Kamrup District was imparted on 09.01.2011. Hon’ble Mr. Justice R.V. Raveendran, who is the Chairman of Supreme Court Mediation Committee and Treasurer of the Indian Law Institute, made an insightful presentation to the Judicial officers at the Promod Swarna Sadan, Lamb Road, Guwahati on 18.12.2010 and to the trainees and judicial officers on 19.12.2010, at the Circuit House at Guwahati.

Swearing-in ceremony of Hon’ble Mr. Justice A.K. Goswami on 24th January, 2011 as Additional Judge of the Gauhati High Court

Hon’ble Mr. Justice Arup Kumar Goswami has been sworn in as an Additional Judge of the Gauhati High Court on 24th January, 2011, by Hon’ble the Chief Justice in Court No. 1, in a solemn and simple function in presence of other Hon’ble Judges, Members of the Bar, invited guests and staff of the Registry.
Farewell to Hon’ble Mr. Justice H.N. Sarma on laying down office as Judge, Gauhati High Court

The Gauhati High Court fraternity bid farewell to Hon’ble Mr. Justice H.N. Sarma with a formal farewell reference on 31st January, 2011 on laying down office. His Lordship’s adjudicating skills would surely be missed by the institution as he leaves behind a fine legacy for the institution.

Hon’ble Mr. Justice Amitava Roy offers a flower bouquet to Justice H.N. Sarma

Training of Judicial Officers at IIM, Shillong on 12th and 13th February, 2011

The Gauhati High Court in association with the Rajib Gandhi Indian Institute of Management, Shillong (IIM) designed a training programme specially for Management of Judicial Administration. The main objective of the course, was – (i) make a SWOT analysis of judicial administration, (ii) introducing new concepts, skills and methods appropriate to a modern judicial system and (iii) bringing necessary reform in the management, planning and administration of the Courts to make disposal of cases expeditious, efficient and effective. In the first batch, 18 officers from Assam and 2 from Meghalaya attended the skill enhancing programme on 12th and 13th February, 2011.

The first two sessions of the second day were conducted by the Hon’ble Chief Justice Madan B. Lokur, who addressed the participants on (1) Case flow and management and (2) Periodical Measures.

Judicial Officers in the training session on Management skills at Shillong

Launching of High Court Website and e-kiosk at Itanagar Permanent Bench of the Gauhati High Court on 17th February, 2011

Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court is taking serious initiative to update the Court websites of the Gauhati High Court and its Permanent Benches to provide all necessary information relating to the Court and its functions. With this aim in mind the Gauhati High Court, Itanagar Bench website was launched on 17th of February, 2011 by Hon’ble the Chief Justice Madan B. Lokur, in presence of Hon’ble Mr. Justice B.D. Agarwal, Sri Kardek Ete and Sri Dicky Panging, President and Secretary respectively of the Gauhati High Court Itanagar Permanent Bench Bar Association, other learned members of the Bar and the Registry members. Now, Itanagar Permanent Bench can be accessed through www.ghcitanagar.gov.in

The Chief Justice also inaugurated an e-kiosk installed in the Itanagar Court premises for use by the litigants.

Inauguration of e-kiosk machine at Itanagar Bench by the Chief Justice in presence of Justice B.D. Agarwal

Training of Judicial Officers on Juvenile Justice Act

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000, provides the legal system and framework for appropriate care, protection and rehabilitation of vulnerable children in India. Juvenile Justice system aims at social reintegration of children and is designed to address two categories of children, namely, those in conflict with law and those in need of care and protection. The guiding principle of the Act is to adopt a child-centered approach, in a child-friendly manner and in the best interest of the child.
To achieve the goal, the Gauhati High Court under the initiative of Hon'ble the Chief Justice is organising a series of Regional Level Sensitization Training programmes for the Judicial Officers with support from the UNICEF for Assam.

In order to ensure maximum exposure for all the Judicial Officers, the trainings are being organised at six different locations. The first sensitization programme was organised on 12th February, 2011 at Gauri Sadan, Guwahati where the Officers of Kamrup, Nalbari and Darrang Districts participated. Similar programmes were conducted at Bongaigaon, Nagaon, North Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh and Silchar. Dr. Jeuti Baruah of Law Research Institute, Gauhati High Court, is co-ordinating and executing the training programmes.

Hon'ble Justice Ranjan Gogoi, a former Judge of this High Court, was sworn in as the Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court on Saturday, the 12th February, 2011. The oath of office was administered by the Haryana Governor Shri Jagannath Pahadia at the Raj Bhawan, Chandigarh.

Punjab Governor Shri Shivraj Patil, Haryana Chief Minister Shri Bhupinder Singh Hooda and his Punjab counterpart Shri Prakash Singh Badal, Judges and advocates of the Punjab and Haryana and Gauhati High Court, were also present at the well attended ceremony.

Justice Gogoi had begun his career in law practising at the Gauhati High Court and was elevated to the Bench as a Permanent Judge in 28th February, 2001 and was transferred to the Punjab and Haryana High Court, Chandigarh on 9th September, 2010 to eventually take over as the Chief Justice on 12th February, 2011.

Launching of High Court Website at Aizawl Permanent Bench of the Gauhati High Court on 8th March, 2011

Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, Mr. Justice Madan B. Lokur launched the Website and Kiosk Machine at the Aizawl Bench, Gauhati High Court followed by a function at the same premises on 8th March, 2011 at 1.30 p.m. The function was attended amongst others by Justice H. Baruah, Advocate General Mizoram Mr. Biswajit Deb, President as well as Secretary and other members of the Mizoram Bar Association, Officers of the Mizoram Judicial Service and officers and staff of Aizawl Bench.

Now the Aizawl Permanent Bench can be accessed through its website www.ghcazilbench.nic.in
To augment space to meet the increasing workload, the Gauhati High Court added two new premises, i.e. South Eastern and South Western Annexe Building on the 3rd Floor of the existing Court building. The new construction was inaugurated on 16th March, 2011 by the Hon'ble Chief Justice in presence of other Hon'ble Judges, Court Registry and staff.

The Chief Justice in presence of Justice T. Vaiphei, Justice I.A. Ansari, Justice B.P. Katakey, Justice P.K. Musahary and other Judges at the inauguration of the South East Annexe at Guwahati

Inauguration of Annexe Building of the Gauhati High Court on 16th March, 2011

Long standing need of the Gauhati High Court Employees of residential quarters was partially fulfilled on 18th March, 2011, when Hon'ble the Chief Justice inaugurated a four storeyed building with sixteen units for class – III staff of the Gauhati High Court.

The Chief Justice unveiling the plaque with Justice B.P. Katakey and Justice Anima Hazarika in the picture frame

Class – III staff quarters being inaugurated by the Chief Justice in presence of the High Court fraternity

Inauguration of Class – III staff quarters of the Gauhati High Court on 18th March, 2011

The Chief Justice unveiled the plaque of the High Court Record Room in presence of Justice Amitava Roy

Inside view of the new Record Room with Compactor facility

Inauguration of the Record Room with state of the art Compactor facility on 25th March, 2011