

January 27, 2004

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### MEGHALAYA CELEBRATES 55<sup>TH</sup> REPUBLIC DAY

**Shillong, January 27, 2004:** The 55<sup>th</sup> Republic Day was celebrated here on January 26, 2004 at Jawaharlal Nehru Sports Complex in a befitting manner where the Meghalaya Governor, Mr. M M Jacob unfurled the tricolour, inspected the parade and took the salute of the 16 contingents in a March Past held. Tableaus of various Government Departments and Armed Forces were also displayed on the occasion in which the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes were bagged by 58<sup>th</sup> GTC, BSF and Shillong Municipal Board respectively. Besides this, various cultural items were also presented on the day.

In his Republic Day address, Mr. Jacob paid tribute to the framers of our Constitution for their effort to embody in its pages the ideals of liberty, justice and equality. He called upon everyone to express love and loyalty to the country by working together to respect and safeguard the ideals and values enshrined in the Constitution. Saying that "peaceful coexistence" is a great asset, he congratulated the people of the State for maintaining communal harmony.

Mr. Jacob said that Meghalaya has made significant progress in various developmental areas, especially in the area of Agriculture and Food Production, generation of Hydel Electric Power, Road communication, Health and Medical care, Education and other developmental sectors. He said that the Leshka Hydel Electric Power in Jaintia Hills will supplement the deficit of power in the State when completed. He added that, besides various health programmes, the State Meghalaya still has to do more in the field of Health care for the rural people.

Mr. Jacob informed that the Literacy percentage of the State has increased only marginally during the last decade inspite of the intervention in the form of Total Literacy Campaign. However, he felt that the introduction of the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) under the 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan will ensure quality and universalisation of Elementary Education.

Mr. Jacob stressed that in order to achieve a higher level of economic growth and prosperity out of our developmental activities, an atmosphere of peace and harmony is very essential. Saying that violence and intolerance should not be given a place in the society, he appealed to all sections of the people to eschew the path of violence and to work together to make Meghalaya a land of peace and prosperity,

On the occasion of Republic Day, Mr. Jacob called upon all citizens of the State to stand unitedly against all negative and anti-progressive forces and to promote the spirit of love, tolerance, harmony and peaceful coexistence.

## 55<sup>TH</sup> REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATED

**Shillong, January 27, 2004:** Together with the rest of the country, Meghalaya joined hands to celebrate the 55<sup>th</sup> Republic Day on January 26, 2004. Celebrations, marking the occasion, were witnessed at different District Headquarters and Sub Divisions.

At **Jowai**, Meghalaya Minister for Higher and Technical Education, Mr. M Suchiang, hoisted the National Flag and took the salute at the impressive ceremonial parade of the Police, Home Guards, Scouts and Guides, NCC and students contingents of different schools of Jowai town. A large number of people from different walks of life attended the function which was held at the Jrisalein Playground, Jowai.

In addition to tableaux presentation and a colourful cultural programme, the highlight of the celebration was the releasing of hot gas balloons (Dingkum or rusni) which enthralled onlookers, young and old alike.

At **Nongpoh**, the Republic Day was celebrated with pomp and gaiety amidst a large gathering at the NSCA Mini Stadium, Pahamsyiem. The Meghalaya Minister for Tourism, Mr. T C Lyngdoh hoisted the National Flag and took the salute of the impressive March Past of 11 contingents including Police and students of different schools. Tableaux of different departments and schools were also presented.

The other highlight of the day were the cultural dances, football match between the DC's XI and Veteran Nongpoh Sports and Cultural Club, in which the Nongpoh S&CC defeated the DC's XI by 4-2 goals. The celebration ended with prize distribution to the winners of the March Past, in which the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize went to the JNV School, Niangbari, Christian Secondary School and the SOS Village respectively. The Soil Department, the Weaving, Sericulture and Handloom Department and the Agriculture and Horticulture Department bagged the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize respectively for tableau presentation.

Elsewhere in the Ri Bhoi District, the Minister of State, Mr Nehlang Lyngdoh was the Chief Guest in the celebration held at Patharkhmah Government Secondary School, **Patharkhmah**, Nongpoh.

At **Nongstoin**, the Republic Day celebration witnessed mass participation of the local people. The Honorable Speaker of Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, Mr. M M Danggo unfurled the National Flag at New Nongstoin Playground. The ceremonial parade was taken part by contingents consisting of police personnels and students of local schools.

Elsewhere in West Khasi Hills District, Republic Day was celebrated at Riango Sport Complex playground, **Mawshynrut** Administrative Unit, wherein there was a large turnout of people. The Meghalaya Parliamentary Affair Secretary, Mr. F P A Sangma hoisted the National Flag and took the Rashtriya salute to the National Anthem sung by the students. Other highlights of the daylong programme included the 1<sup>st</sup> Republic Day Tennis ball Cricket Tournament match between the Officials and the local Headmen in which the VIPs took part.

At **Tura**, the Meghalaya Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Mr. B G Momin, unfurled the National Flag and took the salute of the marching contingents of 2<sup>nd</sup> MLP Bn, Home Guards and Scouts and Guides at Chandmary Playground, Tura. Following this there was presentation of tableaux by different Government Departments including IFAD, ICAR and KVK, Tura.

The highlight of the function was the cultural programme in which the Jawans of 18 Bn CRPF enthralled the audience with the lively and colourful presentation of Bhangra Dance. Later in the afternoon sporting events were organised for the children and the day-long celebration came to a close with a free cinema show at the venue.

At **Williamnagar**, the celebration was held at Rongrengre playground where Mr. E D Marak, Meghalaya Minister for Secretariat Administration Department and Election unfurled the National Flag and took the salute at the impressive march past of Police contingents and Scouts and Guides from various schools of the town. The programme included cultural show, distribution of food items to children, patients in hospitals and jail inmates, besides games and sports.

Also present on the occasion were Mr. Heltone Marak, Minister of State for Power, Mrs. M H K Marak, Deputy Commissioner, East Garo Hills District, Mr. F Kharshiing, Superintendent of Police and Mr. Tonsing Marak, former MLA.

At **Baghmara**, Meghalaya Minister for Mining etc., Mrs. Deborah C Marak, accompanied by Mr. Sengran M Marak, Minister of State for PWD, etc., unfurled the National Flag and took the salute. Other highlights of the day included the colourful cultural show, sports for children and a tug of war between the Government employees and members of the public.

At the Sub-Divisional level, the celebration at **Mairang** saw Mr. Frederick Roy Kharkongor, Sub Divisional Officer (Civil), Mairang, unfurled the National Flag to the tune of the National Anthem and took the salute of the impressive March Past of the Police and school contingents. On this day, food packets and sweets were distributed to school children and the inmates of Holy Cross Hospital and Tirot Sing Memorial Hospital.

At **Sohra**, the Meghalaya Minister of State for Public Health Engineering, Mr. S W Rymbai unfurled the tri-colour flag at the saluting base in the Shella-Bholaganj C & RD Block at Sohra to mark the occasion of Republic Day celebration.

Other highlights of the day were musical chairs, tennisball cricket match between Sohra Police XI and SDO (C) XI, distribution of sweet and food packages to patients of N.R.M. Hospital and St.John's Orphanage Home, Sohra Maraikaphon.

At **Mawkyrwat**, the Republic Day was celebrated in a grand scale wherein the Minister of State for Sports and Youth Affairs, Mr. Billykid Sangma hoisted the National Flag and took the Rashtriya salute of the different parading contingents.

At **Khliehriat**, the Minister for Forest, Government of Meghalaya, Mr. Sing Mulieh, gracing the occasion as the Chief Guest unfurled the National Flag and took the salute. A variety of programmes were held to entertain the gathering.

At **Amlarem**, Meghalaya Minister for Agriculture, Mr. K Susngi unfurled the National Flag and took the salute of Police and students March Past contingents.

At **Dadenggiri**, the Meghalaya Minister for Sericulture, Weaving and Labour, Mr. S Nongrum unfurled the National Flag and took the Rashtriya salute. In addition to the March Past and tableaux presentation by different Government Departments, the programme was enlivened by a cultural show and sport events organised for children.

At **Ampati**, the Meghalaya Minister for Community and Rural Development, Mr. Cyprian R Sangma unfurled the National tricolour and took the salute in an impressive function witnessed by a large

gathering.

At **Resubelpara**, the Republic Day was celebrated amidst the presence of the Minister of State, Mr. C Marak who unfurled the National Flag and took the salute of the parading contingents.

While speaking at the different occasions, all the speakers called upon the public to shun away violence and terrorism for speedy and successful implementation of developmental schemes for the well being of the people at large and the State in particular.