

MEGHALAYA CELEBRATES 70th INDEPENDENCE DAY WITH NATIONAL FERVOR



Meghalaya joined the rest of the country in the celebration of 70th Independence Day with full national fervor and gaiety on August 15, 2016. Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma unfurled the National Flag and took the Rashtriya Salute during the ceremonial parade held at the Polo Ground here. A helicopter from Eastern Air Command flew past the parade ground showering petals as soon as the Tricolor was unfurled during the ceremonial programme.

The parade of 19 marching contingents, including 58 GTC, BSF, CRPF, Meghalaya Police, DEF, Home Guards, NCC, Bharat Scouts & Guides, school contingents and the combined Brass Band, was led by Parade Commander Major T. S. Singh from 58 GTC and 2nd in command Inspector R. S. Bordoloi from Meghalaya Police. The Horse contingent from Assam Rifles Public School Laitkor added grandeur to the parade.

Delivering the Independence Day speech, the Chief Minister said that in the Government's endeavour to bring about development, peace and prosperity in the State, numerous initiatives have been undertaken to uplift the socio-economic condition of the State in an environment of peace.

Keeping in mind people's aspirations, the Government has decided not to allow UCIL to go ahead with its pre-mining activities and UCIL has been requested to keep its EoI in abeyance and the permission given in 2009 for pre-mining activities on and approval for lease of the 422 hectares of land at Nongbah Jyntrin, Mawthabab has been revoked.

A flagship programme, Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Promotion Programme (IBDLP) has continued to make steady progress. It has brought about a paradigm shift in public service delivery systems by creating a citizen-centric, demand-based approach to governance by reconceptualising citizens as "partners" not "beneficiaries". The IBDLP platform has attracted significant international investment into the State through Externally Aided Projects.

He also added that the agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has been getting the support from the global community. The SDGs have also been adopted by the Government of India and forms the transformative plan to address urgent global challenges over the next 15 years.

Stating that Agriculture is the mainstay of our economy, he said that the foremost priority of the Government remains increasing food grains production and informed that Meghalaya has received the "Krishi Karman Award" from the Government of India as the Best Performing State among category III States in overall food production for three consecutive years.

The State is availing funds from various sources to achieve better road connectivity which will boost the economy. In order to achieve 100% village and rural household electrification in the entire State, the scheme "Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY)", has been implemented in all the Districts of Meghalaya at a total sanctioned cost of Rs.395.117 crores.

(Contd. in Pg. 3)

CM inaugurates Centres of Excellence in Indian Classical and Western Music



Meghalaya Chief Minister, Dr. Mukul Sangma inaugurated the Centres of Excellence in Indian Classical and Western Music in Shillong and Tura at a function held at U Soso Tham Auditorium, Shillong on 15th August, 2016 in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister, Shri Rowell Lyngdoh, Home Minister, Smti Roshan Warjri, Meghalaya DGP, Shri S.K. Jain, Principal Secretary, Arts and Culture, Shri P. W. Ingty and Director, Arts and Culture, Smti M. W. Nongbri. The programme was organised by the Department of Arts and Culture, Government of Meghalaya.

Speaking at the programme, Dr. Mukul Sangma said that these Centres in Shillong and Tura will, with the right kind of mentoring, create an enabling environment for the talented youth to excel in the field of music. "Meghalaya will be the catchment area for all the Gurus in music and songs", he said. These Centres will enable the talented people of the State to hone their skills adding that Meghalaya is a State where some of the legacies are linked to music. "With the inauguration of these Centres, Shillong will be the much talked about destination in the music and entertainment industry. We will not only be able to provide successful artists in the field of music and entertainment but we intend to export Gurus to the whole country and beyond in the days to come", he added.

Later in the evening, the audience were enthralled with contemporary, western and Indian classical music performed by noted artists of the country.

CM initiates social mobilization for sustainable aquaculture



Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma initiated the Social Mobilization for Sustainable Aquaculture at Ampati and also inaugurated the Help Desk for online registration at Betasing EFC under Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission on August 12.

This is the first social mobilization for sustainable Aquaculture and Aqua-tourism through convergence, aimed at promoting the prospects available in the sector through creation of community ponds, sanctuaries and promotion of entrepreneurship, which the Chief Minister dedicated to the people of the State in the presence of the Director of Fisheries Ram Singh, Deputy Commissioner C.V.D. Diengdoh, local MDCs Stevie Marak and Nripendra Koch, officers of the line departments and progressive farmers before a large gathering at Ampati.

In his address, the Chief Minister said that having a

sustainable livelihood is the biggest challenge of every household and therefore the State Government had made a humble beginning by re-strategizing its policies focusing on livelihood activities linked to farming that are remunerative and sustainable. Aquaculture Mission is one of such initiative of the Government, he said. He called upon farmers to make judicious use of their God-given lands to take up fish farming along with other farming activities and also stressed the need to look at areas like streams, rivers and other water bodies for creating community fish farms and fish sanctuaries producing healthy, wholesome fish, "so that we will be able to declare that fishes available in the State are of superior quality", he added.

The Chief Minister also informed the gathering that the Help Desk would enable the prospective partners for aquaculture to submit their applications online, adding that such Help Desks would be opened in every

block EFCs where the status of the applicants would also be made available.

Highlighting the number of opportunities that one can have from aquaculture alone, Dr. Sangma also encouraged those in the government service who have lands to opt for more lucrative livelihood opportunities in the farming sector and vacate their jobs for those who have no alternative, adding that a special programme would be created for them. He also called upon the communities to register themselves for water harvesting in EFCs to create water bodies by using natural water resources. He also informed about a scheme under Chief Minister's Rural Development Programme under which oxygenated tankers would be procured for transporting live fish from the farmers to the fish vendors, adding that the scheme would be given especially to those youth looking for alternative options for livelihood.

As the social mobilization for sustainable aquaculture is in convergence approach with other schemes like MGNREGS, etc, the Chief Minister also called upon the Village Employment Councils (VECs) to make schemes for creation of fish ponds, besides construction of roads, etc and to create a sense of competition and ownership among the villagers, he said that only those VECs making commitment for 100 days of work would be given a sanction under liveable cities, towns and villages scheme.

Local MDC, Stevie Marak in his brief address urged upon the farmers to see the suitability of their lands while applying for schemes for creating fishery ponds, etc. Director of Fisheries, Ram Singh gave a brief highlight on the programme which focuses on raising awareness on importance of fisheries and tourism, employment opportunities and conservation of indigenous species of fish; while Deputy Commissioner, C.V.D. Diengdoh assured the gathering that the District Administration would ensure that there is convergence to achieve the objective of having sustainable fishery sector in the State.

CM meets surrendered GNLA cadres on I-Day eve

Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma met and interacted with the surrendered GNLA cadres, who are being kept at 2nd MLP Bn Rehabilitation Camp at Goeragre, near Tura on August 14, the eve of Independence Day.

The Chief Minister, who was en route to Shillong for Independence Day celebration, personally interacted with each one of the 49 surrendered cadres and also reviewed the activities being done for the rehabilitation of these cadres. The Chief Minister was accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner Pravin Bakshi, DIG (Western Range) S.S. Kynjing and, Church leader and Interlocutor, Rev. F.D. Sangma and Commandant 2nd MLP Bn C.B.S Reddy during his visit.

It may be mentioned that the three parties which surrendered to the Government in the month of May last reported at separate intervals at the 2nd MLP Bn Goeragre, some of whom were initially kept in 4th MLP Bn Sophian, West Khasi Hills. These surrendered cadres are being imparted psychological counseling, religious counseling and skill development trainings by various NGOs and government agencies since the past few weeks.

The Chief Minister said he was happy to meet each one of them personally and that their homecoming was a reason to be happy not only for their families and relatives but also for all the people of Garo Hills. Stating that the rehabilitation package being given



to them would not subsist for long, he urged upon them take up long term sustainable livelihood means through various programmes being offered by the Government and not to look at short cut method for livelihood. He encouraged them to move ahead with faith and conviction in whatever they intend to take up for livelihood, assuring them all the required support from the government in their endeavours.

The Chief Minister stressed the need to give handholding support to the surrendered cadres and provide necessary guidance to them on viable livelihood options available. He suggested to the officials present

that the cadres be taught about business models, train them to be agro-entrepreneurs and create schemes for them in groups mixing up with the community. He also suggested to the authorities to take them on exposure trips to success areas like Dawki, Mawlynnong, etc in batches so that they are able see, learn and emulate the same in their respective villages.

Commandant, 2nd MLP Bn C.B.S. Reddy and DSP R.G.Momin were among others who spoke briefly on the occasion.

First meeting of the Meghalaya State Council on Climate Change & Sustainable Development held



The first meeting of the Meghalaya State Council on Climate Change & Sustainable Development was held on August 11, at the Committee Room No. 1 of the Yojana Bhavan, Meghalaya Secretariat, Shillong. The meeting was chaired by Meghalaya Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma.

A presentation was made on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by Shri P. Sampath Kumar, Additional Development Commissioner. The SDGs have been formulated by the United Nations and adopted by the Government of India recently. The presentation highlighted the different goals and targets of the SDGs and the various initiatives taken by the State Government in this regard.

Dr. S. Ashutosh, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and the Nodal Officer for Climate Change Management in the State, in his presentation highlighted the measures which the State Government had taken including the formulation of the State Action Plan on Climate Change which has been approved by the Government of India. He indicated the other studies being undertaken by the State Government which includes (i) Identification of climate vulnerability hot-spots in Meghalaya using high resolution climate projections - IIT Gandhi Nagar (November 2015); (ii) Assessment of the impact of climate change on forests and biodiversity of Meghalaya – Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore (April 2016); (iii) Carbon Footprint Study of Meghalaya – CII Godrej Green Business Center, Hyderabad (June 2015) and (iv) Impacts of Climate Change and Adaptation to It: Perception and Traditional Knowledge of the People in Rural Areas of Meghalaya.

During the course of the discussions, the Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma, stated that as a responsive State, the State Government had already taken

up a number of initiatives and action plans designed to ensure Sustainable Development in the State. He stated that the Millennium Development Goals have now been converted into the Sustainable Development Goals and indicated that even before the SDGs were formally announced, the State Government had already launched a number of initiatives aimed at sustainable livelihoods.

Dr. Mukul Sangma emphasized that the 'convergence' is the key cornerstone to make sustainable development successful. The concept of convergence needs to be understood properly, as it is the only way we could achieve SDGs. Some of the initiatives which the State has already taken up are: - Setting up of Enterprise Facilitation Centers (EFCs) under IBDLP to promote self-employment and sustainable enterprises, Creating last mile connectivity through MGNREGS and Megha-LAMP project and also the innovative program of 'Black topping of rural roads scheme' initiated by the CM. It was mentioned that MGNREGS is being leveraged to encourage Village Employment Councils to create sustainable livelihoods for the bottom poor, besides organizing Women SHGs. The State has also set up MBDA to facilitate an institutional mechanism for convergence of various development initiatives in the State and also to address critical gaps. The Meghalaya Health Insurance Scheme, operationalisation of several Public Health Centres (PHCs) under PPP, setting up of Residential Schools, Strengthening School infrastructure under ADB funded Human Capital Development Project are also unique innovations of the State in achieving the SDGs.

The Chief Minister stated that the effects of climate change are being felt all over the world and Meghalaya is also not insulated from its effects. To ensure that the efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change are successful, livelihood opportunities will have to be sustainable and resilient.

MEGHALAYA CELEBRATES 70th INDEPENDENCE DAY WITH NATIONAL FERVOR

(Contd. from Pg. 1)



The Chief Minister also stated that in order to improve the employability of our youth, the education sector remains a area of key focus.

The Government is implementing a Skill Development Programme for skilling 60,000 youths over a period of three years under the Asian Development Bank funded programme. In addition to the Model Career Centre in Shillong, the Government has received approval for setting up a Model Career Centre at Tura and a new ITI at Mawkyrat.

With an aim to upscale the capabilities of sportspersons, creation of additional infrastructure and empowerment of youth, various programmes were taken up by the Government. An International Standard Football Stadium funded by the Ministry of DONER will be constructed at Ampati. The foundation stone for this was laid by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi on 27.05.2016 at Shillong. The State Government along with the State Olympic Association has initiated the process of hosting the mega sports event, the National Games in the year 2022, meant to coincide with the Golden Jubilee of the State.

With the aim of boosting the Health sector, the Government continues to create infrastructural support to ensure that the people have access to basic health care facilities which is their right.

In the realm of Tourism, leveraging upon the USP of the State which is its natural beauty, the Government continues to extend support to all stakeholders who are involved in the promotion of tourism activities in

the State at all levels.

In view of the recent earthquakes experienced in the State since the beginning of the year, the Chief Minister underlined the need to maintain preparedness at all times. He said that the State Disaster Management Authority in collaboration with the District Disaster Management Authorities are taking up various activities to build capacity to respond to such calamity and propagating measures which can be taken to increase resilience to such disasters. He called upon the Government and the people to redouble their efforts for making Meghalaya a safe and resilient society.

The names of the recipients of Police Medal for Gallantry, Meritorious Service and Fire Service Medal for Meritorious Service were also announced during the celebration. The Chief Minister also handed over the awards to the 108 EMRI personnel.

In the March Past, St. Joseph's Girls Higher Secondary School, Jaiaw bagged the first prize while Meghalaya Police Public School, Mawroh and Army Public School, Happy Valley bagged the second and third prize respectively.

Others highlights of the celebration in the city include cultural programs, tree plantation in Polo ground by the Chief Guest and others dignitaries, Independence Day Run, fishing competition at Wards Lake, free cinema shows and vintage car rally. Food court, games and music stalls were also set up at Kyndailad, Shillong besides distribution of gifts and food items by the NGOs.



Meghalaya Traditional Practitioners' Meet held



In order to promote and systematize the traditional healing system in the State, the Bio-Resources Development Centre (BRDC) in partnership with the Santhigiri Ashram, Kerala under the aegis of Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Promotion Programme (IBDLP) organized a one day Meghalaya Traditional Practitioners' Meet, 2016 on the theme "Integrated Traditional Health Care Services as an organized Sector" on August 12 at the Conference Hall of Meghalaya Agricultural Management and Extension Training Institute (MAMETI), Upper Shillong.

The Meghalaya Traditional Practitioners Meet, 2016 was inaugurated by Dr. Shreerajan, Additional Chief Secretary in the presence of Shri R.M. Mishra, Principal Secretary, Planning, Shri K.W. Marbaniang, Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Dr. B. D. R. Tiwari, Secretary, Planning and Member Secretary, BRDC, Dr. P. K. Goswami, Director, NEIAH, Shillong, Swami Padmaprakasha, in-charge Santhigiri Ashram, New Delhi and Member National Medical & Wellness Tourism Board, New Delhi among others. More than 50 traditional medicine practitioners from all over the State participated in the Meet which provides an

opportunity for the practitioners to interact and share their issues and concerns with eminent scientists, professionals on various topics relating to medicinal plants and the traditional healthcare practices in the State of Meghalaya.

The Meet also provides a platform to come up with a common vision to promote the indigenous and traditional health care services in the State as well as the various aspects of conservation, cultivation and value chain linked to the medicinal plants.

During the day long programme, various topics such as "Approach to promote cultivation of potential medicinal plants with readymade access to market", "Wellness Centre for integrated traditional health care services (Preventive, curative health care, public health etc.)", "Measures for standardization of products and procedures of traditional healing method", "Approach to value addition and manufacturing of medicine and various herbal products", "Perspective plan for bio-prospection of the properties of potential marketable medicinal plants commonly used by herbal practitioners" and "A way forward for GMP, G.I. Certification, IPR, Certification of practices" were discussed.

Cleaning Drive



The Office of the Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil) Amlarem Sub-Division organised a cleaning drive of Amlarem market and its adjoining areas on August 12. The cleaning drive was organised as part of the Pre-Independence Day Celebrations, 2016 in the Sub-Division.

The Headman's office, Ieng Skhem Seng Kynthei (Women's Group) Mapyut, Tourist Taxi Association and Amlarem Jowai Tourist Car Association also took part in the cleaning drive.

Career Guidance Programme



South West Garo Hills Additional Superintendent of Police, B R Marak, DSPs (Probation) B Jyrwa & H Kharkongor, Circle Inspector C R Marak, Inspector C D Shira amongst other police officials pose with participants of the career guidance programme held under Chief Minister's Career Guidance Scheme for prospective candidates of Meghalaya Police Recruitment 2016 at Betasing C & RD Block on 11th August 2016.

Rice Released

The Deputy Commissioner (Supply), East Khasi Hills District has informed the public consumers that rice under NFSA 2013 for Priority House Holds (PHH) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) for the month of June 2016 and rice under NON NFSA for the month of April, May and June 2016 for urban and rural areas has been released and will be distributed through the respective Fair Price Shops.

The scale of distribution of rice under NFSA 2013 for AAY is 35 kgs per card @ Rs. 3.00 per kg and for PHH is 5 kgs per head @ Rs. 3.00 per kg.

The scale of distribution of rice under NON NFSA is 8 kgs 830 gms per card per month @ Rs.11.70p to Rs.12.00 per kg.

All Fair Price Shop dealers are to lift the allotted quota of rice immediately and to arrange the distribution to the beneficiaries. They are also directed to display the list of AAY and NON-NFSA beneficiaries in their shop.

Any non-supply or overcharging of rate and supply of inferior quality of rice by the Fair Price Shop dealers should be brought to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner (Supply), East Khasi Hills District, Shillong.

Rice under Mid day Meal Scheme Released

The Deputy Commissioner (Supply) West Jaintia Hills District has informed that the Midday Day Meal Rice for L.P School and U.P School under the Mid-Day meal Scheme for the month of April, May and June 2016 will be distributed from 16th August, 2016 through their respective Fair price Shop Dealers for Jowai Sadar and will be delivered free of cost to the schools by the Fair Price Shop dealers. The Scale of issue will be 5.863 Kgs per student for L.P Schools and 9.068 kgs per student for U.P Schools. Necessary permit will be issued upto 15th September, 2016.

Gratuitous Relief

The Office of the Deputy Commissioner, West Jaintia Hills District has sanctioned an amount of Rs. 4,00,000/- (Rupees four lakh) only for payment of Gratuitous Relief Ex- Gratia payment to families of deceased persons at Shken Pysit village under Amlarem Block.