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1ST NORTH EAST INVESTORS' SUMMIT HELD



The 1st North East Investors' Summit organized jointly by the Ministry of Textiles and the Ministry of DoNER, Government of India, in collaboration with Industry associations FICCI was inaugurated on January 29 by the Union Textiles Minister, Smti. Smriti Zubin Irani at the State Convention Centre, Shillong.

The Summit was also attended by Meghalaya Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma, Union Minister of State Independent Charge DoNER and Chairman NEC, Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State, Home Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister for Industries, Government of Assam, Shri Tamiyo Taga, Minister for Textiles, Government of Assam, Shri Ranjit Dutta, Minister for Industries, Government of Mizoram, Shri H. Rohluna, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, Dr. Arvind Panagariya,

representatives from all the eight North Eastern States and investors across the country.

The Summit was organized exclusively for the North Eastern Region focusing on manufacturing in textiles and allied sectors and also to showcase the region as a global destination for investment and to explore the possibility of convergence of efforts of various central Ministries and North Eastern States to attract investment in the region.

Union Textiles Minister, Smti Smriti Irani in her inaugural address said that the North Eastern Region has huge potential for investments, particularly in the field of textiles industry due to its strong traditional skill base and a variety of unique designs and eco friendly products. Under the North Eastern Region

Textile Promotion Scheme (NERTPS), the Ministry is implementing various projects for handlooms, handicrafts, sericulture, apparel and garmenting and technical textiles in the eight States of North Eastern Region, in line with the "Act East" policy of the Government of India.

The Union Minister also informed that the Ministry has recently launched the "Bunkar Mitra-Handloom Helpline Centre" where professional queries of weavers will be answered by the experts in the field and a mobile app, 'E-Dhaga' developed for the benefit of handloom weavers will address the concerns of individual weavers relating to the availability of raw material, delays in supplies and ensuring stocks in depots. The mobile app will be a boon for handloom weavers to transact business anytime, anywhere and they can send their indents and payments online through this app.

Meghalaya Chief Minister, Dr. Mukul Sangma in his address said that the two day Summit not only provides weavers with an opportunity to showcase their talents but also help educate them on job avenues, adding that the Summit will create opportunities for the cultivators and the weavers towards achieving sustainable livelihood. As far as the potential of the textile industry in the State is concerned, "we have already explored and identified certain areas, one of which is Ramie cultivation which can be developed to attract investors and bring the State on the frontline", he said.

Earlier, the Union Textiles Minister, Smti Smriti Zubin Irani along with the Chief Minister, Dr. Mukul Sangma and Union MoS for Home Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijiju inaugurated the Exhibition at State Convention Centre.

The inaugural programme was followed by Technical Sessions on the topics "Showcasing Opportunities in Textiles by Ministry of Textiles and Ministry of DoNER", "Entrepreneurship Development & Startups" and "Enhancing the Reach of North East Textiles through Design & Marketing".



New Governor sworn in

Governor of Assam, Shri Banwarilal Purohit was administered the oath of office as the Governor of Meghalaya by Hon'ble Justice Dinesh Maheshwari, Chief Justice, High Court of Meghalaya, at Raj Bhavan, Shillong on January 28, 2017.

Chief Minister, Dr. Mukul Sangma, Deputy Chief Minister, Prof. R. C. Laloo, Home Minister, Shri H.D.R. Lyngdoh, Health and Family Welfare Minister, Smti Roshan Warjri, Chief Secretary, Shri K. S. Kropha and senior government officials attended the swearing in ceremony.

STATE'S FIRST EVER APPAREL & GARMENT CENTRE INAUGURATED AT AMPATI



Meghalaya Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma along with the Union Minister for Textiles Smti. Smriti Zubin Irani inaugurated the first ever Apparel & Garment Making Centre in the State at Ampati in South West Garo Hills, on January 30, in the presence of Union Minister of State for Home Shri. Kiren Rijiju, Sericulture & Weaving Minister Shri. Clement Marak, Sports & Youth Affairs Minister Shri. Zenith Sangma and a host of other dignitaries and officials from both the State and Central governments.

The sprawling Apparel & Garment Centre, covering an area of 45,000 sq.ft was set up under North East Region Textiles Promotion Scheme (NERTPS) at Hatisil near Ampati at an approximate cost of Rs.14.26 crore. There are 105 sewing machines each in the first two units and 70 in the third unit of the apparel centre. The foundation stone for this centre was laid in the year 2015 by the Chief Minister in the presence of the then Union Minister of State for Textiles, Shri. Santosh Kumar Gangwar and its construction by NBCC was completed in a record time of less than two years.

Dedicating the centre to the people of Ampati and the

State as a whole, Smti. Smriti Irani said that this project was a testimony of the true convergence of efforts from both the Centre and the State and hoped that through this centre opportunities for employment will be presented to both men and women of the region and make them economically empowered.

She informed that the Union Ministry of Textiles is implementing projects worth Rs. 70 crore in the Sericulture & Weaving sector for Meghalaya alone and currently out of the sanctioned amount of Rs. 53 crore, close to Rs. 32 crore has already been sanctioned for the State of Meghalaya for promotion of handlooms and appealed to the youngsters particularly women to leverage upon their handloom legacy and become successful entrepreneurs. As the region is well-known for regional dyes, she urged upon the weavers of the State to register with the India Handloom Brand which can connect the weavers directly with huge multinational companies.

“Once this centre functions to its full potential, it will be an indication to investors across the country that the

youth of the region are ready for economic engagement and expansion”, she said.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma expressed his gratitude to the people, particularly the people of his constituency for creating a conducive atmosphere and enabling completion of this huge infrastructure before the targetted date without subjecting the project to cost overrun. He was confident that the garment centre at Hatisil would grow to become the most sought after export unit in the State.

He said that the Central Government should take advantage of the availability of international markets in neighbouring Bangladesh and business partnership with the investors of Bangladesh must be created. It is because of the proximity to the neighbouring country and marketing potential that the State government has decided to start a Business Incubation Centre & Industrial Business Centre at Hatisil, he said, adding, “our idea is to ensure that the whole livelihood opportunity is available in the backyard”. Stating that the weavers of the region are a ready workforce and that they only require advanced training, he also urged upon the Centre to provide technology up-gradation for the weavers of the State.

Union Minister of State for Home, Shri. Kiren Rijiju said that the Centre has given special focus to Meghalaya, particularly Garo Hills in creating job-oriented programmes, adding there could not be a better programme for women than this programme for promotion of textiles and handloom in the State. Dwelling on the huge potential of the region, he said there was a need to create industries and employment opportunities to harness the potentialities of various sectors, like sericulture & weaving.

BASE LAID FOR NEW C&RD BLOCK AT DEMDEMA



The foundation stone for the 41st Community & Rural Development Block in the State was unveiled by the Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma on January 28.

Demdema C&RD Block is the second in the series of new blocks which were declared recently. The block will cover 147 villages which earlier fell under Dadenggre and Selsella blocks. The foundation stone for Bharat Nirman Rajiv Gandhi Seva Kendra was also laid on the occasion.

Congratulating the people of the area on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that the creation of the new blocks was the outcome of the government's endeavour to bridge the developmental gaps in the State. “It is the duty of the elected representative to remain connected with the people of all walks of life and their problems”.

He said that the government has created smaller blocks and districts in order that all kinds of challenges are addressed and opportunities are created for the people.

The Chief Minister said that maximum developmental schemes were implemented through C&RD blocks and expressed confidence that this initiative would enable the Government to take care of the disparities and developmental gaps in the region. Stating that this new block would be the epicenter of many

good things to happen, he highlighted on the various developmental works taking place through the region, including the construction of National Highway 127B which would connect Srirampur in West Bengal with the rest of the State through the plain belt areas and other road projects in the pipeline. He also announced the Government's plan to set up an Industrial Park in the area and said that this region would be the frontrunner in getting the benefits of all the developmental initiatives. “There will be complete transformation in the socio-economic landscape of the region and of the whole State”, he said and called upon the people to be a part of the developmental process.

Assembly Speaker Shri. A. T. Mondal in his brief address recalled about the collective efforts made by the representatives and the people for creation of a block in the area since 1998. Selsella being the biggest block in the State, it was challenging to make the developmental schemes reach the people. Forest and Environment Minister Shri. Clement Marak also echoed similar views and said that with creation of Damalgre and Demdema blocks, the population of more than 1.74 lakh under Selsella block would now be reduced to only 85,000.

C&RD Minister Shri. Sniawbhalang Dhar who also spoke on the occasion said the creation of the new blocks was a result of the concrete steps taken by the Government to bring administration closer to the people.

68TH REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATED ACROSS THE STATE



Joining hands with the rest of the country, the 68th Republic Day was celebrated with vibrant hues across the State.

Meghalaya Chief Minister, Dr. Mukul Sangma led the celebrations at Shillong wherein he unfurled the National Flag and took the Rashtriya Salute of the impressive marching contingents led by Major Mohit Khare from Assam Regimental Centre, Shillong and Second in Command Inspector, R.S. Bordoloi.

Delivering the Republic Day speech, the Chief Minister gave a comprehensive overview of the initiatives taken by the government to improve the socio-economic scenario of the State. Highlighting programmes

which aimed at improving connectivity, trade with neighbouring countries, sustainable livelihood opportunities, better accessibility to health facilities, entrepreneurial growth for women and youth, skill development in photography and film making, improvement of basic amenities in urban areas, promotion of eco-tourism etc, the Chief Minister called on all stakeholders to contribute towards building a just, harmonious and equitable society in our country.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister also handed over the Meghalaya Day Awards for the year 2017 to three recipients which included the U Tirot Sing Award for Arts and Literature to Shri Sumar Sing Sawian, the Pa

Togan Sangma Award for Social Services to Shri Leander K. Marak and U Kiang Nangbah Award for excellence in Sports to Smti Dolyne Kharbhih.

The Kayakalp Award for best Health facilities in East Khasi Hills District was awarded to Mawphlang PHC as best PHC and Commendation Award to Pomlum PHC were also distributed during the day.

Appreciation Award, an initiative of East Khasi Hills District Administration in recognition to individuals who have been exemplary in their services outside their given professions was awarded to Inspector Dharmendra Kumar Prasad, Officer i/c Sadar Thana, Shillong, Pastor Reuben G. Laloo, Laitumkhras Presbyterian Church and Smti Waramai Kharkongor, Teacher, Pine Mount School, Shillong.

During the celebration announcement was made for the Governors Police Award, Police Medal for Meritorious Service and Award of the Home Guards and Civil Defence Medal for Meritorious Service 2017.

Tableaux were also presented by different government departments wherein the first prize was bagged by Horticulture, second prize by Social Welfare and third prize went to Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Departments.

Others highlight of the day included cultural programmes, District Level Senior Football One Day Tournament comprising teams from 8 C&RD Blocks, fishing competition at Ward's Lake, Shillong, painting competition for children at Lady Hydari Park, Shillong, free cinema show in all cinema halls for children, entertainment for children and food court at Polo Parking Lot, Shillong.

Similar programmes were also held in all the districts, civil sub-divisions and blocks of the State.

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Weaving the way to Success



Smti. Bindass Syiem is a resident of Mawlong Nongtluh Village, which is in the Sri Bhoi District of Meghalaya. For generations, her family has been rearing lac insects and producing lac dye (locally referred to as Laha) as a means of livelihood. Smti. Bindass decided to follow in their footsteps and also take up laha as a source of income. However, the low production of laha made it difficult to make ends meet in a large family, and take care of the needs of her three children. She knew that she needed another way of earning an income but that was too difficult a prospect for her as she did not know any other traditional activities, and had never taken up any other livelihood work. That was when she heard of the newly started Enterprise Facilitation Centres (EFC) under IBDLP and decided to register herself at one.

At the EFC, Smti. Bindass naturally chose sericulture as a livelihood option since she did not want to abandon her traditional livelihood but rather to upgrade it. So in 2013, shortly after her registration, she was sent to Bangalore for training on Post Cocoon Technology of Muga and Eri-Silk, conducted and funded by the IBDLP Basin Development Unit (BDU). Soon after the training, she applied for a Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loan of Rs 50,000 to start Laha cultivation in her own homestead garden. With her husband's help, she also started weaving and dyeing.

Today, Smti. Bindass produces 30 to 40 kg of Laha annually. She uses this for

dyeing traditional woven cloth which she then sells at the large market in Nongpoh. Her annual income has now risen to Rs 1,00,000 and she is now able to send all her three children to good schools at Nongpoh.

In the year 2015, Smti. Bindass was helped by the EFC at Umling to go for yet another exposure visit, this time to Jharkhand. The goal of this exposure visit was to learn more about Micro Enterprise Promotion. Upon returning, she rallied her friends, neighbours and fellow weavers from Mawlong Nongtluh village and in June 2015 launched a Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society - 'Nangkiew Shaphrang Multi-Purpose Co-Operative Society'. The goal of this Cooperative Society was to promote Laha Cropping, and traditional styles of dyeing and weaving. The phrase 'Nangkiew Shaphrang' means "climb ever higher". It aptly represents the spirit of this cooperative society and its desire to create better livelihoods for themselves and their community members. Smti. Bindassis currently the elected President of the organisation.

Smti. Bindass hopes that one day, with the support of her fellow weavers in the co-operative society, she can not only better promote this age old method of using natural colouring for dyeing cloths, but she can reach these traditional products to larger regional markets, and indeed to markets all over the country.

68TH REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATED ACROSS THE STATE

(Contd. from Pg. 3)



Deputy Chief Minister Prof. R. C. Laloo taking the Rashtriya Salute of the marching contingents at Jowai.



Home Minister Shri. H. D. R. Lyngdoh taking the Rashtriya Salute of the marching contingents at Nongstoin.



District Council Affairs Minister Shri. P. Tynsong handing over the Kayakalp Award for best health facility in South West Khasi District at Markyrwat.



Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Zenith Sangma distributes certificates to the winners of Tableaux presentation at Tura.



Health Minister, Smti. Roshan Warjri handing over the Cash Prize to the Recipient of Kayakalp Award at Resubelpara.



Forest & Environment Minister Shri. C. Marak handing over the Kayakalp Award at Dadenggre Civil Sub Division.



I&PR Minister Dr. Ampareen Lyngdoh taking the Rashtriya Salute of the marching contingents at Nongpoh.



Arts & Culture Minister Shri. R. V. Lyngdoh unfurling the National Flag at Baghmara.



Chair Person Meghalaya Resources & employment Council Smti. Dikkanchi D Shira unfurling the National Flag at Ampati



Parliamentary Secretary Shri. Robinus Synkon taking the Rashtriya Salute of the marching contingents at Sohra Civil Sub Division.



Parliamentary Secretary Shri. Stephanson Mukhim delivering his Republic Day Speech at Amlarem.

TWO MINUTES SILENCE OBSERVED IN THE STATE



Along with the rest of the country, on January 30, Meghalaya observed a two minutes silence with due solemnity in memory of those who gave up their lives in the struggle for India's freedom. The day also marks the death anniversary of the Father of the Nation, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

In the State capital, Shillong, wreaths were laid at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the Meghalaya (Civil) Secretariat, Rilang Building, by government officials led by Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Meghalaya, Shri. P S Thangkhiew. During the observance, government offices, public and vehicular movement came to a standstill to the sound of the siren followed by two minutes of silence.