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Chokpot Civil Sub-Division inaugurated amidst jubilation

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Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma inaugurated the new Chokpot Civil Sub-Division amidst much fanfare and jubilation at a function held at Warima playground, Chokpot in South Garo Hills on February 27.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister also unveiled the foundation stone for the construction of the Farmer's Market at Chokpot and launched the new and renewable energy under MNREDA while also distributing solar lamps to class IX & X students of the district. He also distributed cheques as incentives to

farmers of the district who have taken up agar and bamboo plantation.

Of the four new civil sub-divisions announced by the State government, Chokpot is the second to be inaugurated this month. The proposal for creation was submitted in June and identification of land was made in July last year. The Civil Sub-Division covers an area of 441 sq.km having 307 villages and a total population of 40,485 people. It has one C&RD Block, one police station, one outpost, one CHC, one PHC and 5 sub-centres. The new civil sub-division will be getting two additional police stations – one at Sangknigre and the other Silkigre. The land measuring 23.57 hectares for the new civil sub-division complex was donated by the Nokma of Warima Shri. Migen M. Sangma.

In his inaugural address, the Chief Minister expressed elation at being able to share the joy of the people on the momentous occasion and stated that the government has been able to create an enabling environment for responding to the aspirations and expectations of the people through its various development initiatives. "This has generated more hope and aspiration among the people", he added.

With the creation of the new civil sub-division, offices of various line departments will be coming up soon, the Chief Minister said and further urged upon the people to take advantage of these offices for the benefit of the area. According to him, the new districts, civil sub-divisions and C&RD blocks were created to make the area of administration smaller in order to enable the officers to give focussed attention to the needs of the people.

"When new districts and civil sub-divisions are created opportunity is created for everybody. Let's do justice to this opportunity and move forward with positive attitude" he said.

Speaking of various developmental projects in the state, including the national

South West Garo Hills gets its District & Sessions Court

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In a move that would ensure complete separation of Judiciary from the Executive in the district of South West Garo Hills, Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma and Chief Justice of Meghalaya, Mr. Justice Dinesh Maheshwari jointly inaugurated the District & Sessions Court in the Deputy Commissioner's office premises and also laid the foundation stone for construction of a permanent District Court complex at Ampati on February 24.

They also inaugurated the Lok Adalat being held in the premises on the occasion and also inspected the proceedings of the Lok Adalat. Earlier the Chief Minister, Chief Justice and other dignitaries also planted saplings at the site of the permanent court complex.

An impressive function was held at Ampati Multi-Facility Centre to mark the historic occasion which was also attended by Minister for Law etc, Smt. Roshan Warjri, Government Chief Whip, Shri. W.D. Sangma Meghalaya High Court judges Justice S.R. Sen and Justice Ved Prakash Vaish, Mahendraganj Legislator, Smti. Dikkanchi D.Shira, Advocate General of Meghalaya, Shri. B. P. Todi, Addl. DGP Shri. B.L. Buam, officials of the district and members of Tura Bar Association among many others.

In his inaugural address, the Chief Minister said that the occasion would "remain an important milestone in the endeavour to serve the people more efficiently". Stating that there are certain ambiguity and grey areas while implementing

CM inaugurates Salmanpara Police Station in South West Garo Hills



As a continuous measure of the Government to strengthen the internal security apparatus in the State, Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma inaugurated the new Police Station at Salmanpara in South West Garo Hills and also laid the foundation stone for its construction in the presence of Minister for Home (Police) Shri. H.D.R. Lyngdoh on February 25.

The inaugural function was also attended among others by Sports & Youth Affairs Minister Shri. Zenith Sangma, Government Chief Whip & local MLA Shri. W.D. Sangma, Majendraganj MLA Smti. Dikkanchi Shira, Addl. DGP Shri. B. L. Buam and officials of various rank and file of the district police, besides a large gathering of people of the area including Nokmas and local leaders.

It may be recalled that the Chief Minister had announced setting up of 15 new police stations and up-gradation of three existing outposts into police stations during the last Budget Session. Out of these police stations, nine are in Garo Hills region, two of them being Salmanpara and Damalgre in South West Garo Hills District. Salmanpara will be the first of the series of police stations to be inaugurated this year.

In his inaugural address, the Chief Minister said that in order to ensure rule of law and create an enabling environment which is free from fear for the prosperity of the people of the State, the Government has sanctioned for setting up of 18

new police stations including up-gradation of three outposts. He dedicated the police station to the people of the area and said that police organizations are associated with everyone's life as they protect people's rights through the rule of law while also providing them with security. The Chief Minister on the occasion further stressed on the need of police-public relations for effective delivery of the system.

He urged upon the people to abstain from crimes and other anti-social activities to ensure speedy process of development and said that laws act as deterrence to crimes and help the public become law abiding people. At the same time he also reminded the police force that they are the law enforcers and should not arbitrarily use it as a power to intimidate common people.

Earlier, the Chief Minister made the first entry in the General Diary of the new police station. He along with the dignitaries also inspected the building that would temporarily house the new police station.

Home Minister Shri. H.D.R. Lyngdoh in his address expressed hope that the setting of police station would greatly benefit the people of the area as the guardians of law would always be within their reach and appealed to the police force to ensure their availability to respond to the needs of the people.

Chokpot Civil Sub-Division inaugurated amidst jubilation

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and state highways being funded by JICA, the Chief Minister also informed that sanction would soon be given for construction of road from Chokpot to Sibbari, the nearest connecting link to Baghmara, the district headquarter.

Chief Secretary Shri. K.S. Kropha in his brief address said that developmental programmes and schemes do not reach the nooks and corners of the state and therefore the administrative set up should be as close to the people as possible and commended the government for taking such a courageous step of creating new civil sub-divisions and C&RD blocks despite the implications that follow. "This achievement should not be seen as an end but the beginning or harbinger of change and development. This new civil sub-division should play a critical role in ushering that change" he added.

Commissioner & Secretary, Home Shri. E.P. Kharbhih read out the notification declaring the new civil sub-division with Chokpot as its headquarter "for convenience and better administration" and handed it over to the SDO (Civil) in-charge Shri. Z. J. Sangma.

Home Minister Shri. H.D.R. Lyngdoh, Sports & Youth Affairs Minister Shri. Zenith Sangma, Parliamentary Secretary Shri. Cherak W. Momin, Government Chief Whip Shri. W.D. Sangma and local MLA Smti. Bluebell Sangma were among others who spoke on the occasion.

South West Garo Hills gets its District & Sessions Court

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various sections of law in Sixth Schedule areas, he, however said that the Government is taking steps to address the issues so that there is complete clarity with no conflict of interpretation of law.

The Chief Minister also said that when the executive officers hold dual charge of the Executive and the Judiciary their hands are full, with them facing constraints of time in delivering their administrative duties and therefore cannot do justice to both. He appealed to the youth to look at the space of judiciary as an opportunity to serve the people of the state.

Stating that a state where there is perceived lawlessness is considered to be defective, the Chief Minister also emphasized that all agencies of the government must work hand in hand in the delivery of justice to the people. He also announced that State Civil Service Examinations would be held every year. "We will recruit MCS officers every year, so that our youth are prepared to appear in the Indian Civil Service and other examinations", he added.

Justice Maheshwari in his address said that separation of the judiciary from the executive, which is essential for public good, will give the executive officers more time to engage in administrative works. He was of the view that the separation would provide room for all programmes related to delivery of justice and legal aid being carried out in an effective manner in South West Garo Hills.

Commenting on the fear and challenges raised by the Tura Bar Association in enforcing different sections of law in Sixth Schedule areas, the Chief Justice said that if there are rules which need to be overhauled, the views and suggestion of learned members of the Bar would be considered to arrive at vibrant solutions.

South West Garo Hills Deputy Commissioner Shri. C.V.D. Diengdoh and President of Tura Bar Association Shri. M. L. Thangal were among other who also spoke on the occasion.

According to the High Court notification, Shri. Allenby M. Ripnar, District & Sessions Judge, Tura would also hold additional charge as District & Sessions Judge for Ampati, Shri. Isormon Rymbui would hold additional charge as Chief Judicial Magistrate, Shri. T.T.M. Sangma is posted as Judicial Magistrate for South West Garo Hills District.

Exhibition on New & Renewable Energy Inaugurated



Meghalaya Chief Minister, Dr Mukul Sangma and Sports & Youth Affairs Minister Shri. Zenith Sangma inaugurated the Meghalaya New & Renewable Energy Development Agency sponsored exhibition at Ampati on February 24. The Chief Minister also inspected the various stalls on the occasion.

Mawkynrew C&RD Block achieves ODF Status



Meghalaya PHE Minister, Shri P. Tynsong has declared Mawkynrew C&RD Block as the first Open Defecation Free (ODF) C&RD Block under East Khasi Hills District at a function held at the Office Campus of the Block Development Officer, Mawkynrew C&RD Block on February 23.

The programme was organized by the District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM), East Khasi Hills District which was also attended by Shri R. Pyngrope, local MLA, Shri Banteidor Lyngdoh, local MDC, Shri P.S. Dkhar, Deputy Commissioner cum Chairman DWSM, East Khasi Hills District, Shri M. Allya, Chief Engineer, PHE, Shri M. P. Gupta, Member Secretary, DWSM, Sordars, Secretary, executive members of villages under the C&RD Block, teachers, students of the area among others.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Tynsong said the ODF achievement of Mawkynrew

C&RD Block was truly a community led initiative under the leadership of the BDO of Mawkynrew and the cooperation of all the Sordars of the villages under the Block who took the responsibility in ensuring that their village achieves ODF status. For sustainability, a collective effort of each and everyone is needed to create an ODF environment in the entire community, added Shri Tynsong.

Stating that in all developmental schemes, the coordination between the departments concerned and the public is essential, Shri Tynsong urged the Sordars and the local populace to extend their cooperation to the various government departments for all round development of the areas.

During the programme, the PHE Minister felicitated the BDO of Mawkynrew C&RD Block, Shri W. B. Marbaniang and all the Sordars of 67 villages under the C&RD Block who achieved the ODF status under the Swachh Bharat Mission.

Feature



Rongmesek An emerging Eco Tourist Hub

At a time where eco-tourism is becoming a craze amongst local tourists and visitors from outside Meghalaya, Rongmesek village is steadily emerging as an alternative go-to destination, in addition to the existing tourist attractions of Ribhoi District, Meghalaya.

Situated on a hilltop, Rongmesek village is located 3 Kms away from the Guwahati - Shillong highway. The Rongmesek Tourism Promotion Society, under the Chairmanship of its founder who is also the Headman of Rongmesek village, Shri. Albinus Timung has in recent years been trying to project the village as a tourist destination. The Society has been able to identify certain locations carrying socio-cultural and historical significance to the place, as potential tourist attractions. With government support, two such spots, namely Mawkyndur Peak and Phrut Dak Lake were recently opened to the public.

From among the many exotic locations that Rongmesek village is blessed with, the most prominent spots are Mawkyndur Peak, Phrut Dak Lake and Umnet Falls.

Mawkyndur Peak

Believed to be the dwelling place of the deity of Mawkyndur, the top of Mawkyndur Peak offers a panoramic view of almost half of the plains of

Ri Bhoi. On a clear day, particularly in the period September- November of the year, a view of the Himalayas could also be vividly seen. From the top of the peak, all along its slope towards Mawshawing village, there is a footpath with monoliths erected on both sides by the forebears leading up to Mawsyntai village.

Phrut Dak Lake

It was said that the Phrut Dak Lake was initially built by the three clans of the area, namely, the Timung, Taro and Bey clans. Reconstruction and beautification of the lake was done through MNREGS in the year 2011-12. The beautiful lake, situated amidst pristine surroundings, offers angling and boating facilities to the visitors.

Umnet Falls

Umnet falls is a natural waterfall located 4 Kms from the National Highway. On the other side of the waterfall, there is a beautiful cave and a fresh water underground lake where different varieties of fish gather during the winter months and dispersing from the place on the arrival of spring.

In spite of the challenges, the resolve of the villagers of Rongmesek is sure to bring desired dividends which would ensure that the socio-economic condition of the village is boosted through tourism.

Meghalaya Chief Adviser inaugurates Developmental Schemes at Ri Bhoi



Dr. D. D. Lapang, Chief Adviser to the Government of Meghalaya and local MLA, Nongpoh inaugurated three developmental schemes at Jermanai village on February 23 in the presence Shri R. Kharbihkhiew, BDO Umling C&RD Block, Shri L.S Bareh, Asst. Executive Engineer, PWD, Shri M. Khonglah, EE, MeECL, Shri M. Makri, Chairman of Umling C&RD Block, headmen from various villages and residents of Jermanai village.

The developmental schemes inaugurated during the day included the 2 Km Umkon-Jermanai road sanctioned under General State Scheme at an amount Rs. 102 lakhs, Jermanai Community Hall sanctioned under SRWP of 2015-16 at an amount of Rs. 2 lakhs and office building of the Seng Kynthai Jermanai constructed under SRWP of 2015-16 amounting to Rs. 1.50 lakhs.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Lapang said that Ri Bhoi is marching ahead with time and the need of the hour is to work hard and combat the challenges they face for a better tomorrow. He also urged the people to maintain the spirit of unity and cooperation among themselves and to aim high for the future and prosperity of their children and the community at large. Dr. Lapang hoped that these developmental schemes would cater to the needs of the people and also urged them to properly utilize and maintain them for the betterment of all.

Opening of Rhododendron Trek route in Shillong



On February 24, the Department of Forests and Environment, Government of Meghalaya opened up the Rhododendron trek route in Shillong.

Shri C. Budnah, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Meghalaya while inaugurating the Rhododendron trekking route at 2 ½ Mile, Upper Shillong informed that the trekking route was an old horse road used by the British to travel 2 ½ mile to Sangmeim.

School children from various schools participated in the trekking. The trekking route which has many beautiful Rhododendron flowering trees, attracts nature lovers and children to experience tranquillity and serenity in pristine nature. The route covers 6 kms of length and starts from 2 ½ Mile and ends at Sangmeim.

The Department has opened this trekking route for creating awareness among the public on the importance of forests, their role in providing water; and also to encourage school children to develop interest in trekking for mental health and physical fitness. The trek route remains open from October to April on all Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, and no trekking is allowed after sunset.

Littering along the trek route is strictly prohibited and trekkers are instructed not to throw lighted materials like cigarettes, beedis etc in the forest and not to kill wild animals and birds, which is a punishable offence under Forest Acts.

Awareness Programme on EMF Emissions and Telecom Towers



The Department of Telecommunications, Government of India on February 23 conducted an Awareness Programme on EMF Emissions and Telecom Towers at Shillong Club, Shillong.

The awareness programme was conducted to address the myths and misconceptions related to emissions from telecom towers and to spread the message that these towers are safe and that there are no convincing scientific evidence of mobile towers causing adverse health effects.

During the programme, Deputy Director General (TERM) NE-1, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, Shri P. K. Sikder gave a power-point presentation on various technical aspects and importance of mobile towers while CEO & Director, Grace Cancer Foundation, Dr. Chinnababu Sunkavalli dwelt at length on the medical aspects of EMF emissions from mobile phones and mobile towers and the myths and misconceptions related to it.

A panel of distinguished medical and telecom experts besides State Government officials, telecom operators and stakeholders also attended the programme.

4 best innovators to represent SW GH in State Meet



With a view to create a platform for innovators to showcase their ingenious problem solving ideas the first ever District Level Innovators Meet was held at Ampati in South West Garo Hills on February 23. The meet was sponsored by National Innovation Foundation, India and State Council of Science, Technology and Environment, Meghalaya, Shillong in collaboration with the District Planning Office, Ampati.

The main objective of the meet was to create a platform to encourage innovators and tap their potential in creating resourceful, problem solving devices etc. During the meet close to a hundred participants from across the district and all walks of life showcased their ingenious devices created from indigenous raw materials to secure livelihood opportunities and also solve day to day problems.

South West Garo Hills Deputy Commissioner Shri. Cyril V. D. Diengdoh while addressing the gathering during the meet asked the Basin Development Unit (BDU) Entrepreneur Resource Persons (ERPs) to interact with grass root level innovators to tap their potentials. Assuring the gathering that similar platforms would be created in the future to encourage ingenious ideas and inventions the Deputy Commissioner said that a convergence of all line departments would ensure that future meets would be taken to greater heights.

The Deputy Commissioner later handed over certificates and cash to the four best innovators of the meet and also gave certificates of participation to participants.