

May 31, 2004

Press Release No 326/04

J. A. LYNDOH INAUGURATES ONE DAY WORKSHOP

Shillong, May 31, 2004: The Meghalaya Minister of Social Welfare, Mr. J. A. Lyngdoh, today inaugurated a one day "*Workshop on Multi-Disciplinary Orientation Programme relating to Disability - A CBR Portage on Community Based Rehabilitation under Project UDISHA World Bank Assisted*", held at Hotel Pinewood, Shillong. The workshop was organised by the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Meghalaya in collaboration with the CBR Network- South Asia Bangalore. The programme chaired by the Commissioner and Secretary to the Government of Meghalaya, Social Welfare Department, Shri. S. S. Gupta saw the participation of officers from different departments and representative of NGOs.

Speaking as the Chief Guest on the occasion, Mr. J A. Lyngdoh pointed out that majority of persons with disability live in rural or semi-urban areas where rehabilitation services are limited or non-existent. Therefore, he felt that the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Portage, which emphasises on community field workers and family members utilizing the homes of the people with disabilities as a rehabilitation centre will go a long way in catering to the needs of many with disabilities in far flung areas.

Stating that disability is vast and its impact on the individual, family and community is very severe, Mr Lyngdoh said that although the Government has taken a number of steps to cater to the needs of the disabled, more needs to be done. Adding that providing employment to the disabled is compulsory, he lamented the fact that inspite of existing rules and regulations, the 3% job reservation for the disabled is not being implemented in the State.

The Commissioner and Secretary to the Government of Meghalaya, Social Welfare Department, Mr. S. S. Gupta informed that in Meghalaya the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) has spread over to all the 32 C&RD Blocks of the State, covering 2000 villages and over 2 lakhs children a day. Citing the similarities between the components of CBR programme and the ICDS, he felt that the integration of Children with Special Needs into the ICDS will go a long way in detecting, preventing and rehabilitation of various types of disabilities.

Also present in the inaugural function were the Commissioner of Disabilities, Mrs. A. M Sangma, Director of Social Welfare, Mrs. L Diengdoh, Regional Coordinator CBR Network South Asia Bangalore, Mrs. I Rao and the Former Joint Director ICDS, Karnataka, Mr. Shankar Narayan Rao.

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LOK ADALAT HELD

Shillong, May 31, 2004: The Lok Adalat held on May 28, 2004, at Government Girls Higher Secondary School Jail Road, Shillong was inaugurated by the Meghalaya Law Minister, Mr B. G Momin.

The Lok Adalat organised by the Meghalaya State Legal Service Authority along with the office of the Deputy Commissioner, East Khasi Hills District saw a total of 38 cases disposed off.

STATE-LEVEL MASTER RESOURCE PERSONS' TRAINING HELD

Shillong, May 31, 2004: A two days "*State-Level Master Resource Persons' Training*" organised by the State Council of Science, Technology and Environment, Meghalaya as a part of the Transit of Venus-Programme in the State concluded on May 26, 2004. The training was attended by representatives from all the districts of the State with Mr. Rahul Chatterjee as the main resource person. In the valedictory function presided over by Mr. C P Syiem, Programme Officer SCSTE, certificates were also distributed by the Member-Secretary, Mr. R D West to the participants.

The State Science and Technology Council informed that on June 8, 2004, Venus will come in between the Earth and the Sun and will move across the face of the Sun. This will be seen from 10:45 A.M. to 4:50 P.M. from all parts of the State, the Council added. On that day, in Shillong, the Council will organise a State Level Programme for children from all the Districts. Series of lectures are currently being organised throughout the State to make the people aware of this rare event. Viewing aids are also being supplied to few selected schools in the district.

FARMERS' FORUM INAUGURATED

Shillong, May 31, 2004: The Deputy Commissioner, Ri Bhoi District, Mr. W L Lyngdoh inaugurated the Nongpoh Area Farmers' Forum at St. Paul's Hall at Nongpoh on May 28, 2004.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Lyngdoh expressed his happiness that such a Forum was formed in the area for the welfare of the farmers and hoped that the farmers would immensely benefit from it through the sincere and hardwork of its members. He urged the Forum to avail of the schemes meant for the farmers in different departments and also to inform the others about the availability of such scheme. He called upon the farmers and Self-Help Groups to meet the BDO for information and details of the schemes.

The Deputy Commissioner expressed his pleasure that officials of the Meghalaya Cooperative Apex Bank, Nongpoh also are part of the Forum which would benefit the farmers regarding loan if and when required and also urged the Bank and other financial institutions to support the farmers. Because of the high production of Ginger in the District, Mr. Lyngdoh informed that the District Administration through REDCO is planning to set up a Ginger Processing Unit in the District.

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY OBSERVED AT SHILLONG

Shillong, May 31, 2004: Together with the rest of the world, the World Anti Tobacco Day was also observed in the city, and in this respect, a public function to make the people aware about the ill effect and hazard of tobacco in the society, was organised by the Voluntary Health Association of Meghalaya, Shillong at Malki Ground today, June 31, 2004. Various schools from in and around Shillong participated in the campaign in which Mr. Paul Lyngdoh, Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs, Government of Meghalaya, was the Chief Guest.

While speaking on the occasion, Mr. Paul Lyngdoh said that smoking not only is injurious to health, it also affects the earning of the affected family and thus is harmful to the growth of a healthy society. He also informed that in order to prohibit people from smoking in public places, the Government has passed "*The Meghalaya Prohibition of Smoking and Non-Smokers Health Protection Act, 1998*", and therefore appeal to the public leaders to set an example by smoking and respect the Act in letter and spirit so that the public in general will be able to abstain from all sorts of tobacco related activities and to adopt the spirit of Anti Tobacco as a way of life and say 'No' to tobacco.

The other highlights of the day includes burning of an effigy of cigarette, procession by students of various schools. Others who spoke on the occasion include Shri. O L Nongtdu, President of the Voluntary Health Association of Meghalaya.

PASSING OUT PARADE OF HOME GUARDS

Shillong, May 31, 2004: The Passing Out Parade of the Rural Basic Training of Home Guards was held at Mawhati Playground on May 28, 2004, in which 124 trainees successfully completed the 5 month long training. The Chief Guest on the occasion was Mr. P W Muktieh, local MLA and Minister for Soil Conservation, who inspected and took the salute of the Passed Out Trainees and school children contingents.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Muktieh expressed his pleasure that the training was held in the area which would benefit the youths. He urged the passed out trainees to make use of the knowledge they have acquired in the training, translate them into action, maintain a good public relationship and to be ready to render their service to the society at any point of time. He appreciated the District Commandant, Home Guards for the training imparted to the boys and girls of the area and District as a whole and urged that such programme be held from time to time for the benefit of the youths.

To mark the occasion, cultural programmes and Band display were also organised on the day. The meeting was presided over by Mr. M Lyngdoh, District Commandant.

FOUNDATION DAY OF TURA DDK CELEBRATED

Shillong, May 31, 2004: Doordarshan Kendra (DDK), Tura, which has completed its ten years of existence in Garo Hills, organised a colourful Cultural Programme as part of the celebrations, at the open-air theatre of the DDK Complex at Dakopgre on May 30, 2004, the eve of its 11th Foundation Day. Various folk dances of the region, patriotic songs and songs for peace were presented before the audience by the local artistes as well as artistes from Assam.

The eight-time Member of Parliament from Tura, Mr. Purno A Sangma, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, congratulated the Kendra for its decade of service to the people of Garo Hills. He felt that the DDK has an important role to play in the North East to make the region attractive to the outside investors, but most often the producers tend to portray a wrong image of the region. "Only local producers can portray true picture of the region and its local people, so it is necessary to have local producers in the local Kendras", he said.

Mr. Sangma suggested that the Kendra should follow the policy of getting the local people trained so as to help local talents and producers to grow. He felt the need to improve and upgrade the local DDK services in the interest of the local people.

Others who spoke on the occasion were the DDG (NER) Doordarshan, Ms. V Sekhose and the Chief Engineer, AIR & Doordarshan (NEZ), Mr. H R Singh who attended the programme as Guests of Honour and also spoke briefly on the occasion. Earlier, the Station Director Mr. D N Basumatari gave the welcome address, while the AE, DDK Tura, Mr. N C Roy gave the vote of thanks.