

## MEGHALAYA celebrates Independence Day with national fervour



Meghalaya joined the rest of the country in the celebration of 69th Independence Day with full national fervor and gaiety on August 15, 2015. Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma unfurled the National Flag and took the Rashtriya Salute during the ceremonial parade held in the morning 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 22 marching contingents, including 58 GTC, BSF, CRPF, ITBP, Meghalaya Police, DEF, Home Guards, NCC, Bharat Scouts & Guides, school contingents and the combined Brass Band, was led by Parade Commander Major T. Shengboi Singh from 58 GTC. The Horse contingent from Assam Rifles Public School Laitkor added grandeur to the parade.

The names of the recipients of President's medals and awards were also announced during the celebration.

The Chief Minister in his address said it was time "to walk down memory lane and recapitulate the unfolding of our tryst with destiny when we not only achieved independence from foreign rule but also consciously resolved to choose the path of democratic governance anchored on the pillars of liberty, equality and fraternity".

The Chief Minister asserted that the Government was committed to fulfill the promises made to the people and live up to the "expectations and aspirations, we generate through our promises, particularly of the youth. "We will strive with sincerity and commitment to respond to and overcome all challenges that will come on the way of generating and sustaining the momentum of growth-the growth that is needed to create sustainable opportunities for our youth and generation next", he said.

He said that although law and order situation in the State is well under control, the situation in the Garo Hills districts continue to remain a cause of concern as militant and criminal outfits continue to engage

in anti-national and criminal activities. Besides indulging in abduction of civilians to financially sustain themselves with ransom, frequent bandh called by such groups have disturbed the economic activity and pace of normal life in Garo Hills, he added. He lauded the concerted and untiring efforts of the security forces against the terrorist outfits like GNLA, which have resulted in the arrest of militants and their sympathizers, seizures of arms and equipment, busting of camps and hideouts and prevention of anti-social activities, due to improved real time intelligence gathering and its field level execution. He also added that the State Police is keeping a close watch on the trans-border movement of terrorists and have taken up the issue with the Centre.

He spoke of the Government's initiative to address the concerns regarding the long pending contentious issue of illegal immigration and influx, saying effective engagements with all stakeholders and NGOs have enable the Government to put in place a comprehensive mechanism to deal with the issue. He said that directions have been issued to the District Administrations to proceed with necessary land acquisition process for establishment of facilitation centres along the entry and exit points in the inter-state borders, adding that due diligence for necessary legislative measures to deal with the issue have been taken and that a Task Force have been constituted to ensure proper monitoring of the implementation of all these measures on a time line basis.

The Chief Minister in his course of speech informed that the areas of difference along the Assam-Meghalaya border are being monitored continuously and that efforts are on to solve the issue and enabling mechanisms at the level of Chief Ministers and Chief Secretaries of both the States have been created for securing permanent resolution of the issue. In its continued efforts to find a mutually acceptable solution to the persisting inter-state boundary problem, the Government is also contemplating to constitute a Consultative Committee comprising of all the Political parties to deal with the issue and to

engage with their counterparts in Assam, he added.

"The adoption of reforms proposed by the 14th Finance Commission would have adverse impact on the resources of the State as the funding pattern of many Centrally sponsored schemes would undergo change with increase in the State share component. However, due to the relentless effort of the State Government, the Union Government has indicated restoration of 90:10 funding pattern for some of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme and that it would further take up with the Centre for restoration of Special Category States for the states of North East".

The Chief Minister also said that the State Government has strategized its developmental investments to make the State capital, the district capitals and urban centres the most liveable cities, towns and urban habitations, adding that with this objective in mind the Government has initiated the creation of required infrastructure to facilitate natural expansion of Shillong and urban areas. Initiatives such as land acquisition for construction of 32 metres wide ROW; four laning road from Nongmynsong to Mawdiandiang, sanction for construction of parking bays for taxis and buses for embarkment and disembarkment of passengers, construction of new lay-bye and parking bay along Umiam-Shillong road for which work has been allotted, replacing the street lights with renewable solar energy, Safe and Secure City Programme for Shillong and all district capitals are a few of many programmes in pipeline to make our cities and towns most liveable, he said.

Establishment of modern schools, 20 residential schools in rural areas for which construction work has started, initiative for establishment of semi-residential College of Science and Commerce at Mawphlang and Mahendraganj to start with are initiatives to ensure that students are not compelled to look at only Shillong and Tura for quality education, he added.

In the health sector, he said the involvement of private sector to bridge the critical gap in health care has become sustainable now with the introduction



of the most innovative and inclusive Meghalaya Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS) covering the whole population of the State. MHIS Phase II has been just launched under which now the insurance coverage has been increased upto Rs. 2 lakhs for each family, he informed and urged every family to ensure that they get their respective family registered under the scheme.

Stating that the investment for upgrading road infrastructure in last few years have gone up by manifolds, the Chief Minister said that with the Shillong Bypass road completed and the four-laning of Jorabat-Umiam road now almost completed, “we are relieved of the earlier agony we were subjected to due to frequent traffic congestion and traffic standstill”. The travel time from Shillong to Nongstoin, Tura-Shillong, Guwahati-Tura, Guwahati-Williamnagar, Tura-Williamnagar have drastically been shortened and driving comfort increased, he added.

He said that the implementation of the State's flagship programme, IBDLP, has continued to make steady progress and spelt out the success of many missions under it including, Apiculture Mission, Aquaculture Mission and Mission Green that has brought transformative changes in the economic conditions of the people of the State

“Our multiple initiatives under Green Economy concept is designed to create more remunerative, attractive and

sustainable livelihood options leading to huge entrepreneurship opportunities” he said adding that recent initiatives of eco-friendly and sustainable agriculture with Organic Mission, Organic Agar and Bamboo Plantation Programme, Ramie Plantation Programme, Apiculture Mission, etc are in sync with government's approach to promote synergy between sustainable ecology and sustainable livelihood.

The Chief Minister also said that in order to brand build the State as a destination, various events are being promoted across the State. Construction of Shillong International Centre for Performing Arts & Culture (SICPAC) in New Shillong is aimed at promoting Shillong as a destination for regional, national and international events of various performing arts. Hosting of Indian Panorama Shillong Film Festival has enabled the State to create positive stories and helped connect with film and entertainment industries, he said adding, “Shillong and our State as a whole is now receiving a number of proposals for film shooting destinations both from Bollywood and Hollywood film production houses”.

“I firmly believe in the strength of the people of the State particularly the youth and with the right development and policy support we can put our State at the highest pedestal in effectively contributing in the growth of the Nation”, the

Chief Minister said and called upon the people to partner with the Government in all its development initiatives reap the benefits ensure that the benefits percolate down to the last citizen of the State. He also urged the educated youth to progressively take up responsible and challenging positions in different spheres of activities and counsel their peers, their less fortunate and less educated brethren to choose the path of peace and progress through dialogue and mutual understanding rather than resort to meaningless violence for resolution of their problems.

Others highlights of the celebration in the city include, Women's final football tournament at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium played between Royal Wahingdoh F.C. vrs. San Bhalang F.C; Sit & Draw Competition and Fancy Dress competition for children, Rock show performed by 4th Elements, Symphonic Illusions, Kubicles, Colours, Light after Dark, differently abled children, Variety Show by Meghalaya Got Talent- Participants/finalists, Choir by Jyoti Sroat School, play corner for Children set up by Shillong Round Table, Food Court was also set up with 33 multi cuisine stalled and distribution of flags, sweets, caps, jalebies and puris.

There were also free cinema shows at Payal, Bijou, Galleria and Gold Cinema for the public to mark the celebrations.



## GOVERNOR'S “AT HOME”

The Governor of Meghalaya, Shri. V Shanmuganthan interacting with dignitaries and invitees during the Governor's “At Home” celebrating the 69<sup>th</sup> Independence Day of India on August 15 at Raj Bhavan, Shillong.

## Financial Assistance to Registered Vas/NGOs

The Deputy Commissioner, East Khasi Hills District has invited applications from interested Voluntary Agencies (VAs)/ Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for consideration for financial assistance from the Chief Minister Youth Development Scheme (CMYDS) 2014-15 of Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Govt of Meghalaya.

Assistance under this scheme for 2014 -15 shall include only the following activities (i) District/Youth Festivals (ii) Workshop/Seminars on Youth Problems & Youth Development (iii) Exposure Trips for Youths (iv) Youth Counselling & Rehabilitation. The financial assistance will be sanctioned to the VAs/NGOs. The proposal submitted by the VAs/NGOs shall be scrutinized by the District Level Screening Committee and the decision of the committee will be final.

The Application forms and other related details can be collected from Room No 311, Planning Branch, O/o The Deputy Commissioner, East Khasi Hills District. Last date for submission of the application forms is 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 after which no proposal will be entertained.

## Yashwantra Chavan National Award

The Deputy Commissioner, East Khasi Hills District has informed that Yashwantra Chavan National Award 2015 will be given to individuals/institutions in recognition of their outstanding contribution to national integration, democratic values as well as social and economic development. The award carries an amount of Rs. 5 lakhs and a citation.

Interested individuals and institutions who desire their names to be recommended for the said award may submit their application and relevant documents to the office of the Deputy Commissioner, East Khasi Hills, Shillong.

Detailed information may be downloaded from the District Website <http://eastkhasihills.gov.in>.



## Follow-up meeting on infiltration



The Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma convened a meeting with the leaders of several NGOs to follow up on the measures that the Government has taken so far to address the issue of infiltration, on August 14.

The meeting was also attended by Home Minister Roshan Warjri, Minister for Power Clement Marak, Chief Secretary P.B.O Warjri and Commissioner & Secretary, Political Department J. Lyngdoh, besides officials of Police, District Council Affairs and Law departments.

The meeting discussed the process of land acquisition for Facilitation Centres, Entry and Exit points and how to ensure expeditious implementation of the mechanism to deal with the issue of influx.

It may be mentioned that the State Government had approved the proposal of the Political Department to give direction to the district administrations concerned for proceeding with land acquisition in respect of lands required for entry and exit points identified by the Committee which is led by Deputy Chief Minister Rowell Lyngdoh.

It may also be recalled that the State Cabinet had also constituted a Task Force which would monitor the progress and ensure timeline by all concerned as far as the various measures which are required to be taken by the different agencies of the Government and the officials who are tasked with different works.

As far as the proposed amendment of the Meghalaya (Benami Transaction Prohibition) Act, 1980 and Meghalaya Regulation of Landlords and Verification of Tenants Bill, 2013 is concerned, a few suggestions were made during the course of discussion for fine-tuning of the clauses be incorporated to ensure that there is minimum inconvenience caused to the people while the Bill is enacted.

The Chief Minister assured the NGOs of the Government's commitment to solve the issue and that their concerns and suggestions were taken note of, saying they would meet again soon before consideration of the Cabinet on the proposed bills.

## CM launches Agar & Bamboo plantation at Betasing



Meghalaya Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma launched the Agar and Bamboo Plantation Programme under Horticulture and Agriculture departments and also distributed saplings to the registered farmers amidst an impressive gathering at Betasing in South West Garo Hills on August 19.

The programme is part of the State Government's Green Economy concept to create sustainable livelihood as well as to address the concerns of global warming. "The depletion of forest coverage due to various human activities has led to adverse effects on the ecology of the region. The programme is aimed at regenerating the vegetative cover and also create livelihood on a sustainable basis as both Agar and Bamboo are capable of creating bio-diversity and at the same time very remunerative to the farmers", he said.

"Meghalaya is the first State in the country to take up this programme and it is the outcome of our search

for the answer to the concerns on climate change", he added.

Agar, which is said to be worth more than rubies, is indigenous to the region, but being an endangered species, it could not be sold openly. The Chief Minister said that the Government has come up with a policy wherein farmers would have to register themselves and make self-declaration on the number of plants and area of land where Agar plantation have been done. He also informed that every district would have such declaration programmes.

Government's target is to grow one million Agar plants in the first year of the programme which would end on August 31. "When the time comes for cutting and selling of Agar wood, Government will get to collect purchase tax from the farmers and with the huge amount of revenue collected from Agar Meghalaya will be able to sustain its own economy", the Chief Minister said.

Referring to Bamboo as "a wonder grass", the Chief Minister highlighted on the various uses of bamboo and termed it as a very attractive option for livelihood. However, he stressed the need to conduct training for farmers on scientific harvesting of bamboo so that they are able to get maximum output.

Speaking briefly on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner, Ram Singh stressed on the need for proper training and handholding support to the farmers in the first five years

## CM moots establishment & leasing of departmental shops



Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma mooted the establishment and leasing of departmental shops to the public during a review meeting at Ampati Circuit House with district heads on August 17.

During the meeting Dr. Sangma emphasized on the need for shops to remain open during bandhs and agitations in order to bolster public morale and recommended the establishment of departmental shops which would be leased out to public, especially the self-help groups with certain parameters. The

terms of conditions would be strategized in such a way that lease for defaulters who close shop during bandhs and agitations would be revoked, Dr. Sangma stated.

The Chief Minister further stated that to restrict monopolizing, sale of organic agri-horti products would be encouraged besides groceries, and instructed the district administration to identify suitable land for the project.

Besides this, the Chief Minister deliberated on land acquisition process for Facilitation Centres along entry and exit points to contain illegal immigration and influx and for GAD residential complexes. He urged the district administration to take it up as a priority issue and expedite the process.

Concerned over the rise of Japanese Encephalitis in South West Garo Hills the Chief Minister asked the district administration and the department concerned on the measures taken to control its spread.

Dr. Sangma also reviewed the progress of various departmental schemes being implemented in the district.



22<sup>nd</sup> Junior Basic Certificate Course Training starts



The 22<sup>nd</sup> Junior Basic Certificate Course conducted by Meghalaya Cooperative Training Institute, Shillong started on August 18 in the premises of Meghalaya State Housing Financing Cooperative Society Ltd., Nongrim Hills, Shillong which was attended by Minister, Cooperation Department, Shri. H D R Lyngdoh as the Chief Guest.

Speaking at the inaugural function, the Chief Guest said that cooperative societies play a major role in uplifting the society. He expressed confidence in the capability of the newly recruited officers to take the department to new heights. Urging the officers to work with sincerity and dedication he said that there was a need to create awareness in the people especially the rural folk about the existence of cooperatives.

Also present at the function as the Guest of Honor was Additional Chief Secretary, Cooperatives. Welcoming the new officers into the fold of cooperatives he said that now the thrust of the government is now on providing training for efficient delivery of services. He hoped that the officers will ensure formations of new cooperatives by providing inputs and awareness.

It may be mentioned here that the six months training is being imparted to 22 newly recruited Junior Cooperative officers for the 22<sup>nd</sup> time.

Independence Day Celebration - District Highlights



Together with the rest of the country, the 69<sup>th</sup> Independence Day was celebrated in all the District Headquarters, Sub-Divisions and Administrative Units with great fanfare and grandeur.

Throughout the state, the celebrations were marked with enthusiastic participation. Besides the ceremonial parade, cultural performances and sporting activities enthralled the crowd which turned out in great numbers to witness the celebrations. In many district, open defecation free award and State and District Award for Aganwadi from all the development blocks were given away on the day. In Ampati appreciation awards were also given to 18 government employees including teachers for dedicated service and outstanding performance in the discharge of duties.

The dignitaries who unfurled the Tricolor and took the Rashtriya Salute in the District Headquarters, Sub-Divisions and Administrative Units were as follows;

Tura, West Garo	Sports & Youth Affairs Minister, Shri Zenith Sangma.
Jowai, West Jaintia Hills	Social Welfare Minister, Smti Deborah C. Marak.
Nongpoh, Ri Bhoi	Home Minister, Smti Roshan Warjri.
Williamnagar, East Garo Hills	C&RD Minister, Shri Prestone Tynsong.
Nongstoin, West Khasi Hills	Minister for PWD (R) Shri S. Dhar.
Baghmara, South Garo Hills	Minister for Urban Affairs, Dr. M. Ampareen Lyngdoh.
Resubelpara, North Garo Hills	Minister for Transport, Shri H.D.R Lyngdoh.
Ampati, South West Garo Hills	Health & Family Welfare Minister, Shri A. L. Hek.
Mawkyrwat, South West Khasi Hills	Deputy Chief Minister, Prof. R.C. Laloo.
Khliehriat, East Jaintia Hills	Speaker, Meghalaya Legislative Assembly. Shri A. T. Mondal.
Mairang Civil Sub Division -	Parliamentary Secretary, Tourism & Arts and Culture, Shri Kennedy Cornelius Khyriem.
Amlarem Civil Sub-Division	Deputy Chief Minister, Shri Rowell Lyngdoh.
Sohra Civil Sub-Division	CEM, KHADC, Shri P. N. Syiem.
Dadenggre Civil Sub-Division	Parliamentary Secretary, Home Police and Education, Mr. W. D. Sangma.
Patharkhmah Administrative Unit	Parliamentary Secretary, Sports & Youth Affairs and Co-operation, Shri Stephanson Mukhim.
Ranikor C&RD Block	Local MLA, Shri M.M. Danggo.



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