

Meghalaya awarded for Environment and Education



Meghalaya Chief Minister, Dr. Mukul Sangma received the awards for Most Improved State (Small State category) in Education and the Best State Award in Environment (Small State) at the India Today State of the States Conclave held on November 5, 2016 at ITC Maurya, New Delhi.

The annual India Today 'State of the States' is the country's most extensive and thorough study to ascertain which Indian states are leading in terms of Governance, Education, Agriculture, Infrastructure, Economy, Environment, Cleanliness and Inclusive Development. Started in 2003 the annual State of the States relies on objective data sourced from the Central Government, State Governments and others creating a robust and reliable barometer of growth and development. Keeping with the spirit of cooperative and competitive federalism, India Today has evaluated the states under two categories of Best Performing and Most Improved considering performance records of 2013-14 for Best Performing and the records of 2012-13 and 2013-14 for Most Improved.

(Contd. in Pg. 2)

Governor inaugurates Seminar on North East Indian Culture and Religion



The Governor of Meghalaya, Shri. V. Shanmuganathan on November 2 inaugurated the two-day National Seminar on "Culture and Religion of North East India: Retrospect and Prospect" held at Women's College, Laitumkhrah, Shillong.

Addressing the gathering of academicians, scholars and students representing various institutions from across the North East, the Governor stated that for the progress of the society and the nation, minds must be free from confrontations, which are a by product of superiority feelings. "All religions are equal and must co-exist. There must be no hostility and superiority" he said while vouching for equality of all religions.

Narrating incidences of the past where the loving spirit of Indian culture was displayed, the Governor said that we are all fortunate to have been born in Indian culture further stating that true culture means love and trust. Expounding on the fact how culture is the widening of the mind and spirit, he stated that culture must not narrow down one's thoughts further adding that one can connect with others better if one learns to respect their culture.

(Contd. in Pg. 2)

Workshop on Good Governance, Development & Human Rights held in city



With an aim to raise awareness amongst all stakeholders about the importance of good governance in relation to human rights and development, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in collaboration with the Government of Meghalaya with participating States, Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram on November 3 organised a two-day Regional Workshop carrying the theme “Good Governance, Development and Human Rights” at the State Convention Centre, Shillong.

The workshop brings State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) members, Government officials, NGOs, Civil Societies, academicians and scholars from each of the four participating states to a platform where they can discuss effective examples of governance practices that have an impact on the promotion of human rights and to draw lessons from them with focus on essential elements of good governance, to identify further challenges and share best practices of good governance and development as well as to put forth a vision for the road ahead.

Addressing the inaugural session as Chief Guest, Meghalaya Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma lauded the initiative of the NHRC stating that such initiatives help create an enabling environment to ensure that we as a nation have a system for ensuring that human rights are accessible to the people, further stating that the workshop provides an opportunity for the inherent traditional systems of the North eastern region to be taken advantage of, in order that a more alert and vigilant society can be created.

The Chief Minister said that the workshop is a platform for more expansive application of human rights, also adding that the workshop would enlighten all stakeholders and participants to be more alert and vigilant.

Dr. Sangma also stated that Meghalaya has to a large extent witnessed activists who have dedicated themselves in drawing the attention of the people at the helm of affairs to take care of the various institutional and legal frameworks required to be put in place as a measure of catering to the needs of the people, adding that the state has seen many a social activist who have been relentless in drawing the attention of the Government pertaining to the rights of the citizens.

The Chief Minister also said that the Government has re-strategized and re-designed its approach towards

developmental initiatives by introducing formats based on sustainable development in line with the Sustainable Development Goals for the growth and prosperity of the people.” These kinds of initiatives will go long way towards ensuring the bringing about of that kind of ecosystem where sustainable development and future prosperity of the people is taken care of”, he said while also stating that citizens of the state must be ensured that they have a sense of well being and security, where they can perceive that the Government is capable of attending to their needs.

Dr. Sangma also stressed that in order to wean away the sense of insecurity among the people of the North eastern region the world needs to understand the historical background and the complexities of the region and also the vibrant economic activities happening in this part of the country.

Justice H. L. Dattu, Chairperson, NHRC and Former Chief Justice of India meanwhile stated that workshop is a platform for sharing of ideas and initiation of important discussions which will bring to light the challenges of the North eastern region, further adding that diverse opinions are expected and new ideas on development emerge from the two-day workshop.

Justice Dattu also said that the North East is a region of strategic importance to the country, its proximity to South East Asia making it an important region for foreign trade and investment. He also stressed on the importance of good governance and how it must deliver on the promise of human rights, also stating that as a developing country it is rightful that India implements good governance and sustainable development, further stating that the country must be digitally empowered in order that good governance through e-governance initiatives can cover inclusive growth as India can be transformed through information technology and that digital democracy is a must for good governance.

Others who spoke on the occasion were Meghalaya Chief Secretary, Shri. K. S. Krophah, Joint Secretary, NHRC, Dr. Ranjit Singh, Meghalaya Principal Secretary in-charge Home & Political Department, Shri. P. K. Srivastav and others.

It may be mentioned that the Regional workshop is the first of the series of three regional workshops, which would be followed by a National seminar on the same theme.

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(Contd. from Pg. 1)

Participating in the Panel Discussion of Chief Ministers on What works and what does not work for the State, Chief Minister, Dr. Mukul Sangma said that a new benchmark has been set for the state and potential of Tourism is increasing as the Government has been able to create a turnaround in terms of perception of the state as a conflict zone. He said that Forestry is a major sector where the state has grown by utilizing the resources available in state and also informed that the government is focused in making living in rural areas attractive and remunerative mitigating the challenges of urban migration. Answering to questions on violence and crime in the State, the Chief Minister said that the complexities of the State needs to be understood whereby the State shares an International border that is porous and becomes a passage of illegal activities taking place. He however said that the North East region is collectively taking up the issue with the Central Government and the State has been able to contain crime.

It is worth mentioning here that SO₂ (Sulphur dioxide) concentration is at 2ug/m³ making it one of the lowest in the country and 3 per cent of the geographical area of the State has tree cover. The Forest and Environment Department of the State has brought over 300 sq km area under plantations through the National Afforestation Programme transforming barren lands into lush green forests with the management and involvement of communities. In terms of Education the State has increased its Education spending for 6-15 age group population by 325 per cent from 2015 to 2016.

The programme was also attended by Finance Minister & Minister of Corporate Affairs, Shri. Arun Jaitley who later gave the awards in different categories. Chief Ministers, Ministers and representatives and officials from various states of the country were also present at the conclave.

Governor inaugurates Seminar on North East Indian Culture and Religion

(Contd. from Pg. 1)

The Governor took the occasion to appeal to all gathered to strive to be a cultured personality.” We must extend friendship and love to all. Let us unite India through great love and affection” he said further.

Others who spoke on the occasion were Prof. T. B Subba, Vice Chancellor, Sikkim University, Prof. J. B Bhattacharjee, Former Vice Chancellor, Assam University and President, Education India Trust, Shillong, Prof. B. B Dutta, Former Rajya Sabha MP and President, Governing Council, Women's College and Smt. Rosemary. K Debbarma, Vice-Principal, Women's College

Also attending the inaugural function were Prof. Henry Lamin, Pro- Vice Chancellor North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shri. Manas Choudhary, Former Education Minister of Meghalaya from among others.



Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma releasing a souvenir during the Press Conference of the Chief Minister's Meghalaya Open Golf 2016 held at Shillong Golf Club on November 8, 2016.



Meghalaya Information Technology Minister Dr. M. Ampareen Lyngdoh speaking during the press briefing held at the Conference Hall, New IT Building, Shillong on November 7, 2016.

MBDA and MLAsia sign MoU



A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on November 4, 2016 between Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA) and Media Lab Asia (MLAsia), a company conceived and set up by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, during the workshop on Potential of the m4agriNEI platform for Meghalaya at MeBaDa Hall of the Meghalaya Institute of Governance, Shillong.

The MBDA was represented by the Meghalaya Additional Chief Secretary, Shri. Y. Tsering, Shri. R. M. Mishra, CEO, MBDA and Shri. P. S. Kumar, Deputy CEO, MBDA while MLAsia was represented by Dr. M. R. Anand, Sr. Advisor, MeitY, Government of India and MD & CEO, MLAsia and Shri. V. K. Bhatia, Senior Director (Research).

Shri. Y. Tsering, in his speech as Chief Guest, commended the exemplary work of the MBDA and said that the signing of the MoU is a testimony of the excellent initiatives that it has taken to empower the people of the State right from the grassroot level. He also said that the MoU lays the foundation for a fruitful and productive partnership between the Government of Meghalaya and the Ministry of Electronics & IT and he is optimistic that this association will strengthen knowledge delivery services and make the m4agriNEI platform an invaluable tool for enhancing farmers' income through better production, management, networking and marketing of their products.

Others who spoke on the occasion were Dr. M. R. Anand, Shri. R. M. Mishra, Shri. P. S. Kumar and Shri. V. K. Bhatia who gave a presentation on the aims and objectives of m4agriNEI. Later in the day, a workshop was organised by the Meghalaya Institute of Entrepreneurship (MIE) in collaboration with Media

Lab Asia (MLAsia), Ministry of Communications & Information Technology, Government of India and Central Agriculture University, Imphal to deliberate on the potentialities and applications of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and the m4agriNEI platform developed by MLAsia for Meghalaya with special reference to EFC partners and the farming community and entrepreneurs of the State.

It may be mentioned that Mobile Based Agricultural Extension System in North-East India (m4agriNEI) agro advisory services were launched in 2013 by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, MeitY along with the Government of Meghalaya at the College of Post Graduate Studies, Umiam with the objective to empower the farmers by providing right information at the right time. The software platform being used for m4agriNEI is the Interactive Information Dissemination System (IIDS) which is developed by MLAsia. IIDS is an integration of Toll free Interactive Voice Response System, Smart Phone Application, mobile phone messaging and Web based agriculture advisory system. Through the system, farmers can dial the Toll Free Number 1800-22-3700 and get the information as well as agro-advisory services or they can access the m4agriNEI mobile application where they can enter their queries or retrieve information from the system.

Currently, m4agriNEI is implemented in Ri Bhoi, East Khasi Hills, West Jaintia Hills, West Garo Hills and South West Garo Hills Districts where more than 11,000 farmers are registered to receive agro advisory services. Two multimedia agro advisory labs have also been established by MLAsia at College of Post Graduate Studies, Umiam and College of Home Sciences, Tura to cater the farmers' queries.

State Level Awareness cum Sensitization Campaign on Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day



A State Level Awareness cum Sensitization Campaign on Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day, 2016 was held on November 3 at Hotel Poinisuk, Laitumkhrak, Shillong. The programme was organised by the National Health Mission, Meghalaya. World Iodine Deficiency Day is observed every year on October 21, with an aim to generate awareness of adequate use of iodine and to highlight the consequences of iodine deficiency.

Dr. P. Nongrum, Nodal Officer while delivering her speech on National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP), Meghalaya explained about the amount of iodine needed for the normal growth of the human body. She also said that iodine deficiencies hamper both mental and physical growth and is very crucial for the development of the brain.

Dr. A. Dkhar, Senior Medical

Specialist, Civil Hospital, Shillong during his power-point presentation on Iodine Deficiency Disorders said that deficiency of iodine can threaten health or lead to complications among pregnant women at the time of delivery. Besides causing birth defects among children, hampering development of body and brain, it can cause goitre, squint, dwarfism.

Dr. D. Lyngdoh, Director of Health Services (MCH & FW) cum Joint Mission Director, NHM, Dr. R. O. Budnah, Director of Health Services (MI), Dr. B. Mawthoh, Joint Director of Health Services (MCH & FW) and Dr. William Layam, CMO (NSFG), Regional Office of Health & FW, Shillong, also spoke during the programme.

Officials from the Health Department, Social Welfare Department, NGOs and members of the Seng Longkmiie were also present during the programme.

Students donate blood during awareness camp at Ampati



The Health and Family Welfare department on November 3 organized an awareness camp on Tuberculosis, HIV and voluntary blood donation at Ampati Government Higher Secondary School, Ampati. The objective of the awareness camp was to create awareness on the cause and prevention of TB and HIV as well as the importance of voluntary blood donation by eligible donors.

Medical experts from Tura were the resource persons for the day. They also conducted the voluntary blood donation drive at the venue.

During the awareness camp, South West Garo Hills District Medical and Health Officer Dr. Kona Sangma lamented the fact that the District's blood storage units were not functional. She stated that though blood storage units could be installed at the Ampati CHC, the dearth of technical experts like laboratory technicians etc would make it

impossible to run a fully operational blood bank. She however informed that the Ampati Civil Hospital would soon be operational and that patients in need of blood transfusion would not need to go to Tura anymore.

Speaking on blood donation and blood bank Senior Medical & Health Officer in charge Tura Blood Bank Dr. S Marak dispelled misconceptions and myths on blood donation. She also urged eligible students to voluntarily donate blood without fear.

Among others who spoke at the occasion were Dr. T G Momin and the Headmaster of Ampati Government Higher Secondary School.

A blood donation drive was also held after the awareness camp during which the eligible students of the school donated blood.

NATIONAL LOK ADALAT

The Meghalaya State Legal Services Authority, Shillong under the aegis of the National Legal Services Authority, New Delhi will hold the National Lok Adalat for all relevant matters on the 12th November, 2016 in the High Court of Meghalaya, all District Courts, all District Council Courts and all Sub-Divisional Courts.

Any person or party receiving the Lok Adalat Notice may appear personally before the Lok Adalat benches for settlement of their disputes amicably.

This was informed by the Member Secretary, Meghalaya State Legal Services Authority, Shillong.

RICE RELEASED

The Deputy Commissioner (Supply), West Jaintia Hills District has informed that AAY and NFSA (PHH) quota of rice for the month of October, 2016 has been released.

AAY quota of rice will be distributed at the scale of 35 kgs per AAY F I Card at the rate of Rs. 3/- per kg for both Rural and Town areas.

PHH quota of rice will be distributed at the scale of 5 kgs per head per month at the rate of Rs. 3/- per kg.

NOTIFICATION

The Government of Meghalaya has designated the District Council Affairs Department, Meghalaya Civil Secretary, Additional Building, Room No. 511 as the Public Authority, the Commissioner & Secretary, Meghalaya Secretariat, Main Building, Room No. 230, Phone: 0364-2223580, EPABX: 2425 as the Appellate Authority, the Under Secretary, Phone: 0364-2224265, EPABX: 2418 as Public Information Officer and the Superintendent, Phone: 0364-2224265, EPABX: 2418 as the Assistant Public Information Officer. This was informed by the Commissioner & Secretary to the Government of Meghalaya, District Council Affairs Department.

SURRENDER OF PHH CARDS

The Deputy Commissioner (Supply), West Garo Hills, Tura has informed and reminded all Government Servants and Pensioners who have not surrendered their PHH cards under NFSA, 2013 to surrender their PHH cards at the earliest, failing which, punitive action will be taken as per provision of the relevant order.