

GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & PUBLIC
RELATIONS

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Republic Day celebration 2019 at Shillong

Shillong, January 26th, 2019 : Along with the rest of the country the 70th Republic Day was celebrated at Meghalaya. In the State capital, Shillong,



Governor of Meghalaya, Shri Tathagata Roy unfurled the National Flag and took the Rashtriya Salute of 10 Marching Contingents comprising of Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force,

ARC, Mizoram Police, DEF, Meghalaya, CSSCS, NCC (Boys and Girls), Meghalaya Bharat Scouts & Guides, Indian Red Cross Society and

combined Brass Band of Border Wing Home Guards and Border Security Force at Polo Ground, Shillong.



During the celebration, the Governor also handed over the U Tirot Sing Award for Art & Literature to Dr. Phervision Nongtdu and U Kiang Nangbah Award for Sports to Shri Eugene K. Marak.

The Governor also distributed the Kayakalp Award for the public health facilities that maintain a high degree of cleanliness, hygiene and infection control practices in line with the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan to Ganesh Das Government Maternal Child and Health Hospital, Shillong, Nongstoin District Hospital, Mawphlang Community Health Centre and Pomlum, Laitlyngkot, Laitryngew and Jatah Primary Health Centres of East Khasi Hills District.

On the occasion of the Republic Day, the Governor's Medal, President's Home Guards & Civil Defence Medal for Distinguished Service, President's Home Guards & Civil Defence Medal for Distinguished Service and Fire Service Medal for Meritorious Service were also announced.

Governor's Medal to Shri Gabriel K. langrai, MPS, Assistant Inspector General of Police (R), Shri Sacheng R. Marak, MPS, SP, North Garo Hills, Shri Nuruzzaman Sheikh, A.B. Inspector, PTS, Shillong, Shri Nolinath K. Sangma, U.B. Inspector, 5th MLP Bn., Shri Best Pearl Talang, U. B. Sub-Inspector, West Khasi Hills, Nongstoin, Shri Steven Kharmyndai, U.B. Sub-Inspector, West Khasi Hills, Nongstoin, Smti Ritupurna Kharlukhi, Naik, 1st MLP, Bn, Shri Eleastar Sohshang, Constable, East Khasi Hills, Smti Xevarina A. Sangma, W.P. Constable, 2nd MLB, Bn and Shri Keshab Thapa, Fireman.



President's Home Guards & Civil Defence Medal for Distinguished Service to Smti Lawansuk Syiemlieh, Assistant Deputy Controller, Civil Defence. President's Home Guards & Civil Defence Medal for Meritorious Service to Shri Krossli Marboh, Junior Instructor Home Guard, Shri Delin Syrling, Junior Instructor, Home Guard and Shri Pillipson Raksam Marak, Havildar, Home Guard

and Fire Service Medal for Meritorious Service to Shri Basudev Bargayary, Leading Fireman.

The other highlights of the day's celebration includes song, dance and tableau presentation by departments of Fisheries, Forest and Environment, Horticulture, Social Welfare, Soil and Water Conservation, Agriculture,



Public Health Engineering, Commerce and Industries, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary, District Executive Force, East Khasi Hills and office of the Chief Electoral Officer. In the tableau presentation, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary department bagged the first prize followed by Agriculture in the second prize while the third prize was jointly bagged by Social Welfare and Commerce and Industries Department.



As part of the celebration various events were organised in the city which includes football final, fishing competition, entertainment for children and food courts at State Central Library, free entry at Ward's Lake, Lady Hydari Park, free cinema shows and distribution of food packets by NGOs.

Below is the text of the speech delivered by the Hon'ble Governor of Meghalaya, Shri Tathagata Roy on the occasion of the 70th Republic Day, 2019 celebration at Polo Ground, Shillong.



SPEECH ON THE OCCASION OF THE REPUBLIC DAY, 2019

“My dear fellow citizens of Meghalaya,

On the occasion of the 70th Republic Day, I convey my heart-felt greetings to all the citizens of the state.

1. On this day, we remember and recollect, with gratitude, the vision, foresight and statesmanship of our founding fathers who framed the Constitution that led to the birth of the world's largest democratic republic and that has held such a vast and diverse country together. Let

us on this day also pay homage to all the freedom fighters who fought for our country's independence, and let us remember, with reverence, Meghalaya's own patriots namely U Tirot Sing, U Kiang Nangbah and Pa Togan N. Sangma and many other unsung heroes.

2. A hard working, resilient and peace loving population have always been the strength of many great nations. People of our beautiful state have always been imbued by these values and principles. Even during our movement for Statehood, we had abided by these principles and democratic ethos. Being fully aware that violence is never the way out for any problem, we should always resort to solve problems through meaningful dialogue and peaceful engagement. On this solemn occasion, I earnestly appeal to all the citizens of the state to hold steadfastly to the ideals and principles of democracy, as we move forward to realize our goals and aspirations for achieving all-round development.

3. The law and order situation in the state is by and large peaceful. All measures are being taken to ensure safety and security for all the citizens, with particular emphasis on combating crimes against women and children and human trafficking. Instructions have been issued for expeditious investigation into cases relating to these matters. The overall internal security situation has also significantly improved over the last one year. We must now take this opportunity and redouble our efforts to ensure durable peace and sustained development in the state.

4. Accordingly, the government is concentrating its efforts on making increased investments in human capital development. Providing high quality education to children in rural areas is a top priority. Towards this end, we are in the process of getting approvals for Ekalavya Residential

Model Schools (EMRS) in all the eleven districts of the state. Each of these residential schools will be constructed at an approximate cost of Rs. 24 crores and will cater to 480 students when fully operational. The setting up of these schools brings in Rs. 264 crores of capital investment and an annual recurring investment of Rs. 57 crores toward development of human capital. This has the potential to bring about a transformation in the quality of education provided to rural boys and girls. In higher education, two new model degree colleges have been sanctioned at Patharkhmah and Rongjeng and two existing colleges have been sanctioned for upgradation to model degree colleges at Mawkyrwat and Nongtalang. These initiatives will ensure that higher and technical education gets the right impetus so as to address the aspirations of the youth of the state.

5. Along with education, health care is a vital ingredient for full realization of the human potential. Hence, the government is striving to provide comprehensive health care to all its citizens. The Megha Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS), Phase IV along with the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) was launched in December last year. These schemes provide health cover of up to Rs. 5 lakhs per family without any restriction on family size and age. About 3.47 lakh households are eligible to avail the benefits under these schemes. Mission Indradhanush, which aims at immunization of all children under the age of 2 years as well as pregnant women against vaccine preventable diseases is being implemented in all the districts of the state. Further, the foundation stone for construction a 50 bedded Integrated Ayush Hospital at Wahsari, Sohra was also laid last year and a new PHC was inaugurated at Weilyngkut Nongur. A state-of-art diagnostic center is being set up at the Pasteur Institute, Shillong with an investment of Rs.

20 crores being provided under the North Eastern Special Infrastructure Development Schemes (NESIDS) of NEC.

6. In furtherance of the overall development of the state, the government has been able to successfully access significant additional investments from the Government of India. Most notably, we have been able to get funds under Tribal Sub Scheme (TSS) for the very first time this year and an amount of Rs. 33 crores is already sanctioned by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India. Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), the state is expected to spend about Rs. 1000 crores for this financial year. Out of this, Rs. 602 crores has already been sanctioned and Rs. 398 crores is under consideration by the Government of India. This amounts to an almost four-fold increase over last year's spending under the programme.

7. Agriculture is the key to rural prosperity and food security for a majority of our citizens. To plug the gaps in the agricultural extension system and in an effort to strengthen the outreach to the farmers, the Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) has been operationalised in all the 11 (eleven) districts of the state. The engagement with the farmers too has improved with the holding of a Farmers' Parliament in December last year at Shillong. A charter of demands of the farmers will soon be examined by the Government to bring down the distress in the farming sector. Under the Horticulture Sector, the State Government continues to implement various state plan schemes for development of vegetables, fruits, plantation, tuber crops, spices, etc., on promotional basis as well as to provide assistance to the farming community to upscale their economic returns. A five-year Mission Lakadong Turmeric 2018-2023 was launched and this would focus on one of the Meghalaya's most well known spices, the Lakadong

Turmeric. Likewise, a Jackfruit Mission was launched to generate economic opportunities for the growers and local entrepreneurs to harness the nearly Rs. 400 crores wasted jackfruits annually for want of processing opportunities. Similarly, a Mission for enhancing the production of various types of mushrooms in the state has been initiated. A Directorate of Food Processing was created under the Agriculture Department in May, 2018 to develop a strong and vibrant food processing industry in the state which will have an impact on widening the employment opportunities for the rural youth. Several products like oranges, pineapples, tomatoes etc. are grown abundantly in the state but go waste in the absence of proper infrastructure for processing, which is a key factor behind the rural backwardness and distress. For the systematic efforts made by the Government of Meghalaya, the state was recognized as the most improved state in Agriculture and allied sector by the India Today in its "State of the States Report, 2018". Further, an initiative to promote ramie as a high street fashion fibre, in collaboration with the embassy of France has been formalized with the first ever exhibition held at the French Embassy at New Delhi during the month of May 2018 which was a runaway success.

8. Animal Husbandry and Veterinary sector plays an important role to improve the socio-economic and nutritional status of the people of the state. The government has launched the Meghalaya Milk Mission to increase milk production in the state. The Mission will envisage an induction of 10,000 milch cattle through cooperative sector and will directly benefit 2,000 dairy farmers. The state has been sanctioned an amount of Rs. 215 crores by the National Cooperative Development Corporation for this project, with a subsidy component of Rs. 54 crores.

The critical infrastructure required for the development of the Piggery and Poultry Sector is also going to be developed further during the year. The Piggery sector is particularly poised for massive growth during the year as the efforts made to promote the piggery value chains in the state by establishing and operationalizing the Nucleus Piggery Breeding Centres in the state are coming to a fruition.

9. The Fisheries sector is one of the flagship development sectors for the state. The Government has launched the second phase of the Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission (MSAM) on 6th November, 2018 with an estimated budget of Rs. 377 crores to be spent over a 5 year period from 2019-24. The mission targets to create an additional 1500 hectares of water area for aquaculture, 85 number of Fiber Re-inforced Plastic (FRP) Hatcheries and 10 number of medium scale feed mills to attain self-sufficiency in the sector.

10. Poverty alleviation programs are a fundamental component of the development activities of the state. Meghalaya today is one of the top implementers of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme (MGNREGS) in the country with a projected expenditure of about Rs. 1000 crores in the current financial year, providing an average of 70 days of employment for each registered wage earner household. The Department is also implementing the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), a flagship programme aimed at organizing Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) and their federations. As on date, over 10,000 SHGs are formed in the State through NRLM and by various NGOs and Self Help Promoting Institutions. Under the State Sector, schemes under the Special Rural Works Programme (SRWP) and the Chief Minister's

Special Rural Development Fund (CMSRDF) are being implemented with the involvement of Village Community and local Dorbars.

11. Providing food grains at an affordable price is a priority for the government. Accordingly, for accurate targeting of the benefits of the Public Distribution System, the Government has initiated Fair Price Shop automation. We are in the advanced stage of installing electronic point of sale devices in all 4700 fair price shops of the state. The new system will reduce leakages significantly.

12. The Government is committed to providing adequate safe drinking water and sanitation facilities to all the inhabitants of the state. Two important water supply schemes are being proposed under North Eastern Special Infrastructure Development Schemes (NESIDS) of NEC - Greater Sohra Water Supply Scheme at a cost of Rs. 25 crores and laying of new feeder mains under the Tura Phase - I & II Water Supply Scheme at a cost of Rs. 35 crores. Further, the Government has sanctioned thirty one (31) Rural Water Supply Schemes with its own resources with an investment of about Rs. 38 crores. The implementation of these schemes is in progress. After becoming 'Open Defecation Free' (ODF) State, Meghalaya is now faced with an equally challenging issue of ODF sustainability and ensuring that the constructed toilets are used. Accordingly, a system of verifications and retrofitting of existing units, where needed, is being put in place. Another initiative called 'ODF Plus', dealing with solid and liquid waste management, has also been launched.

13. Meghalaya has about two thirds of the area under forest cover and this has ensured environmental services to the state and country at large. Peoples' participation is a key to conservation of forests and for

this the mechanism of Joint Forest Management has already been established. More Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) are planned to be constituted in the immediate future. The state has also paved the way to implement National Agro - Forestry Policy under which forestry species grown by farmers has been notified. This provision will encourage farmers to take forestry plantation in their homestead or agricultural fields.

14. Natural Resource Management is vital for building sustainable livelihoods in the state given the fragile ecosystem. Therefore the government is emphasizing on natural resources development through conservation, protection, restoration and improvement of land, water and moisture regimes and forest. These activities are taken up in a participatory mode in close collaboration with the communities and local institutions. In the current financial year, 306 spring sheds have been rejuvenated under the 'Rejuvenation and Climate Proofing of Spring sheds for Livelihood, Water and Food Security in Meghalaya' programme. Under the State Plan Schemes, the Government had taken up maintenance and afforestation activities in about 2198 hectares. Another 1567 hectares of land is being maintained under the Plantation Crops Development programme.

15. The natural beauty of the state comprising both flora and fauna, culture and tradition, festivals and adventure activities have attracted both national as well as foreign tourists at a steady pace. The Government is aware of the potential for the tourism sector as an

engine for growth. Accordingly, Adventure Tourism, Eco- Tourism, Cultural Tourism and Community-based Tourism are being promoted. In order to showcase the rich cultural heritage and diversity of the state, support is being provided to various festivals like 100 Drums Wangala Festival, Nongkrem Dance and Behdeinkhlam Festival. Under the 'Swadesh Darshan' Scheme of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, log huts accommodation has been inaugurated at two locations around Umiam lake. Another 'Swadesh Darshan' Scheme has recently been sanctioned for the development of circuits in Garo Hills, Jaintia Hills and West Khasi Hills Districts of the state. In addition to infrastructure creation, capacity building programmes for skill development are being conducted at Food Craft Institute, Tura. Recently, a 'women entrepreneurs training programme' was held with Airbnb for marketing of homestays. And a workshop was held for young entrepreneurs on digital marketing on World Tourism Day, 2018.

16. Along with tourism, promoting and celebrating the arts and culture of the state is of great importance to the government. Accordingly, a Tribal Research Institute is proposed to be set up in West Garo Hills District with a cost of Rs. 40 crores. The institute will focus on research and documentation work relating to tribal art and will be developed as a 'center of excellence' in all aspects relating to the varied cultural practices of the state. Further, the "Kiang Nangbah Indigenous Knowledge and Culture Centre" at Syntu Ksiar, Jowai and the "Pa Togan Sangma Indigenous, Knowledge and Culture Centre" at Williamnagar, East Garo Hills, which are created in memory of the freedom fighters will also be operationalized soon. A detailed documentation of the history of the state through colonial times, pre-statehood and after emergence of the state in 1972 till date is also being commissioned.

17. Another area where we have a natural advantage is sports. With an objective to promote sports and empower youth, the Government under the Chief Minister's Youth Development Scheme has organized 'Under 12 years Football Tournament' in December, 2018 in which about 300 youths from all the districts participated. Selected youths will be sent to the National and International Youth Exchange Programme. The State also participated in the first North East Olympic Games held in Manipur in October 2018 and won three golds, seven silver and twenty eight bronze medals in Athletics, Archery, Boxing, Judo, Karate, Taekwondo, Wushu, Shooting, Table Tennis and Football. We are gearing to host the 39th National Games in 2022 and over 9700 athletes are expected to participate in 36 sports disciplines. Shillong will be the host city and Tura will be the sub-city for these Games.

18. The State's journey on "Skill India Mission" is progressing in the right direction. Under the Asian Development Bank funded Project, "Supporting Human Capital Development In Meghalaya," restructuring and transformation of existing Government Industrial Training Institutes is being taken up. With the upgradation and addition of new trades, the capacity in these institutes is expected to increase from 1197 seats to 1800 by next year. A 'Skill Challenge Fund' is set up under which skill training providers from across the country are engaged to train local youth in various employment related skills. About 25,000 of our local youth are expected to benefit from this programme in the next one year. Further, under the 'Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana' (PMKVY) Scheme, the state is targeting to train 33,642 youths by 2020.

19. Shillong, the capital of our state, has enormous development potential and recognizing this, the city was selected for comprehensive development under the 'Smart Cities' Mission with joint funding by the Government of India and the State. The State Government has set up a Special Purpose Vehicle called the Shillong Smart City Ltd. to implement the Scheme. The process for the preparation of DPRs for various projects under 'Smart City' has been initiated.

20. Industries and Commerce sector is one of the major avenues for economic growth and employment generation in the state. Recognizing this, a single window agency has been created to approve investment proposals in the state. 59 proposals with proposed total investment of Rs. 2830 crores have been cleared by the agency in the current financial year. These projects have an employment potential. The government is also focused on promoting entrepreneurship and micro enterprises by encouraging, motivating and fostering the spirit of enterprise in the state. Towards this end, an 'Entrepreneur of the Month' programme has been launched for identifying, recognizing and awarding successful entrepreneurs of the state who have helped in providing opportunities for employment, transformed livelihoods and brought innovations. The award comprises of a cash prize of Rs. 1 lakh and one full year of handholding and mentoring support, linkage to finance, markets and technologies, social media exposure, digital marketing, packaging design support and business incubation by the Meghalaya Institute of Entrepreneurship (MIE). Till now three entrepreneurs have been awarded under this programme.

21. Information Technology is playing a key role in transforming governance and delivery of services. This is now being witnessed by the ways in which citizens have started interacting with the government in

an online manner. Several activities are being taken up in the IT sector. The construction of the first phase of the Information Technology Park at Umsawli, New Shillong is in progress. The Tech Park will be a hub of several facilities including an in-house Data Centre, IT and BPO service Centres, Skill Development Centres and Incubation Centres. It aims to provide direct and indirect employment to more than 2000 people after the completion of first phase. At the district level, the e-District project has been running successfully with 16 services being provided online. About 1 lakh applications have been disposed off electronically in this year. At the grassroots level, about 750 Common Service Centres are operational that deliver a large bouquet of e-services to rural citizens. The Government is aiming to increase the number of CSCs to a total of 1000.

22. Before concluding, I want to take a moment to underscore that the Government is deeply pained by the tragic incident involving the 15-trapped miners in Ksan, East Jaintia Hills District. Despite the challenging circumstances, the government is continuing with the operations in collaboration with the various agencies. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the miners.

23. I call upon the people of the State to join hands in our ongoing endeavor to maintain peace and harmony so that we can forge ahead on the path of growth and development. We renew our commitment today to respond to the call of duty to serve our people with love and compassion and in accordance with the principles enshrined in the constitution. We firmly believe that, together, we will help our people

realize their dreams and aspirations and pave the way for a secured future. I also urge upon the parents and guardians to devote quality time to counsel and guide their children and wards and inculcate in them high moral, ethical and social values to enable them to grow as worthy citizens of our society.

24. Before I end, it will not be out of place to recall some personal reminiscences of Republic Day celebrations in Shillong. The year was 1951, I was 6 years old and I had come to see the celebrations with my mother and my cousin with whom we then lived in Lower Jail Road. One such cousin, aged 84, is sitting among the audience. The Polo Ground then was huge expanse of greenery, and from the Golf Club you could see all the way across to New Colony. We saw the Governor of Assam, Shri Jairamdas Daulatram, taking the salute and I pestered my mother with questions about the Governor. I was impressed to see that the Governor's car did not have any number plate but just a word ASSAM in its place. Little could I imagine that one day, nearly 70 years later, I will be standing here to take the salute. These old memories have endeared the town of Shillong to me as no other town has."

Once again, I wish all my fellow citizens a very "Happy Republic Day".

KHUBLEI! MITELA!!JAI HIND!!!

