

Meghalaya gears up for Entrepreneurship Challenge

Shillong, September 10, 2019: The sensitization programmes for Chief Minister's E-Champion Challenge that was launched by the Chief Minister of Meghalaya Shri. Conrad K. Sangma on August 14, 2019 is being conducted in all districts of the State.

The programme which is led by Meghalaya Institute of Entrepreneurship (MIE) in partnership with Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA) and Indian Institute of Management-Calcutta Innovation Park (IIM-CIP) have been holding orientation programmes with the staff members of Enterprise Facilitation Centres (EFCs), District Commerce and Industries Centres (DCICs) and Common Service Centres (CSCs) so as to identify and encourage potential entrepreneurs from all districts of the state to make the most of this opportunity by the state government.

The Labour Commissioner and Director of MIE, Shri. Barnari Mawlong along with his team from MIE, IIM-CIP and MBDA are in the process of sensitizing the masses about the Chief Minister's E-Champion Challenge as well as the steps to apply for the same. The last date of applying for the challenge is **September 30, 2019**.

The 1st orientation programme was conducted in State Central Library, Shillong on August 23rd with Additional Deputy Commissioner, East Khasi Hills District, Smt. I. Majaw as the Chief Guest. The programme witnessed the participation of more than 50 people.

The ADC, East Khasi Hills District urged the youth to make the most of this opportunity by the state government while citing examples of various people who with their creativity and determination have now been able to not only establish an enterprise but also support their family.

She said, "This is a golden opportunity for the people of the state and they should make the most of this programme. You cannot stand on your own feet unless you are financially stable. There is plenty of work to do if one is mindful enough to observe their surroundings. There is no excuse for staying unemployed".

The 2nd orientation session took place at Nongpoh in Ri Bhoi District on August 27th with Additional Deputy Commissioner, Ri Bhoi District, Shri D. P Kharsati as the Chief Guest.

While addressing the staff members of EFCs, DICs and CSCs, the ADC threw light on the talent pool available in RiBhoi district in terms of entrepreneurship and urged them to help in identifying this talent and helping them to make the most of this chance by the state government.

The 3rd and 4th sensitization programmes were held at Jowai in West Jaintia Hills and Khliehriat in East Jaintia Hills districts respectively on August 30th. The sessions were presided over by

Additional Deputy Commissioner, West Jaintia Hills, Smt. R.S Manners and Deputy Commissioner, East Jaintia Hills, Shri. F. M. Doph.

ADC, West Jaintia Hills District, Smt. R.S Manners urged people of her district to apply for Chief Minister's E-Champion Challenge while citing the success story of recognition of Lakadong Turmeric which is indigenous to the district and how it has now gained worldwide recognition due to proper marketing and recognition of viable resource.

Addressing the orientation programme in East Jaintia Hills District, the Deputy Commissioner Shri F. M. Doph also appreciated the Chief Minister's initiative to facilitate up and coming entrepreneurs in the state while hoping that entrepreneurs from the district would be able to make the most of this challenge.

The 5th session of the Chief Minister's E-Champion Challenge programme took place at Nongstoin in West Khasi Hills District in the presence of Enterprise Facilitation Centre (EFCs), District Industries Centre (DICs) and Common Service Centre (CSCs) staff members. The programme took place on September 3rd.

The 6th orientation programme was conducted by MIE in Mawkyrwat, South West Khasi Hills District with Deputy Commissioner, Miss Isawanda Laloo as the Chief Guest on September 5th. She spoke at length about the various untapped talents in the district and how a programme like the Chief Minister's E-Champion Challenge is a great opportunity for people to become self-employed while also creating employment opportunities for others.

Emphasizing on the role of EFCs, DICs and CSCs, the DC said, "This is the core team that will be spear heading, motivating and creating the environment for the programme to take off. People should be made to realize that they are not just the beneficiaries but also equal partners in this venture. We have people with tons of ideas ranging from dentistry to setting up of a bakery. But the problem that we witness here is that although there is a market for all these services and products, the element of handholding on a long term basis of these partners is missing. Hence a programme such as the Chief Minister's E-Champion Challenge is the need of the hour in the state as a whole and especially in the districts as rural as South West Khasi Hills where the idea of entrepreneurship is still at a very nascent stage".

She also added, "We have a lot of people coming to us asking for assistance to set up enterprises and this is an opportunity for them and they should make the most of this programme. Business should be made a conversation point at this hour and this programme can actually make this happen".

The DC also suggested that the programme should create a level playing field for the rural districts as it is often seen that urban towns and cities are often at an advantage in a programme of this caliber.

The programmes in all the 6 districts witnessed active question and answer sessions from the participants and also gave them a platform to put forward their suggestions for the programme. Similar orientation programmes will be conducted in the districts of Garo Hills in the coming days.

It may be recalled that The Chief Minister's E-Champion Challenge has been launched with an aim to developing an "Entrepreneurial Ecosystem" in the State. The Challenge is the first critical step in order to kick start large scale and long term enterprise incubation strategy by the Government of Meghalaya.

The programme is being led by the Meghalaya Institute of Entrepreneurship (MIE) in collaboration with Indian Institute of Management- Calcutta Innovation Park (IIM-CIP) as the knowledge partner and Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA).

More details can be found at the website: <http://echamp.miemeghalaya.org/> and the social media and publicity in charge may also be contacted through email or phone at shwetarajkanwar@gmail.com and 08131830503 for more details pertaining to latest activities.