

PRESS RELEASE



54th Meghalaya Day celebrated with grandeur at Baghmara

Baghmara, January 21, 2026: The picturesque town of Baghmara, headquarters of South Garo Hills, witnessed a vibrant celebration of 54th Meghalaya Day on Wednesday, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the state.



The state celebration was graced by Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri. Conrad K. Sangma and his Cabinet Colleagues Deputy Chief Minister Shri. Prestone Tynsong and IPR Minister Shri. Lahkmen Rymbui, along with other MLAs and MDCs of the region. Senior state officials including State Chief Secretary Dr. Shakil P. Ahammed, IAS and Director General of Police, Smt. Idashisha Nongrang, IPS were also present on the occasion along with hosts of officials and people of the State.



Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma said that it was through divine blessings that the people of Meghalaya were granted their own land, their own State and their own identity. "With confidence, determination and a strong will, we will achieve the goals we have set for ourselves," he said.

The Chief Minister paid tribute to the leaders who spearheaded the movement for statehood through non-violent, persistent and unwavering

struggle. Recalling the period when the demand for statehood was at its peak, he noted that despite differences in tribe and community, the people were united by a shared dream and common purpose. Expressing concern over present-day divisions, particularly on social media, he said that negativity and hatred between communities were deeply troubling.

“Sometimes I see negativity and hatred, and it makes me ask myself whether we have forgotten what our leaders stood for,” he said, adding that the elders and mothers of Meghalaya had prayed for the creation of the State and that those prayers were answered.

The Chief Minister informed that he had received a personal letter from the Prime Minister of India conveying warm greetings and best wishes to the people of Meghalaya on the occasion of Meghalaya Day. He said the letter fondly recalled late P.A. Sangma and acknowledged his immense contribution to Meghalaya and the nation, and that he was honoured to convey the Prime Minister’s message to the people of the State.

Acknowledging the contributions of countless individuals over the past five decades, he said that while their efforts have brought Meghalaya this far, the journey ahead remains challenging and requires continued cooperation and shared responsibility.

Speaking on development, the Chief Minister said that Meghalaya has witnessed significant growth over the last seven to eight years, recording an average growth rate of around ten per cent over the past three years, placing it among the fastest-growing States in the country. However, he emphasised that growth figures alone do not define success.

“I have never been a big fan of foundation stones or MoUs,” he said, adding that real development must be felt by people in their everyday lives.

Referring to the CM-Connect programme, the Chief Minister said that while problems will always exist, mindset makes all the difference.

“If we decide in advance that something cannot be done, then we have already failed,” he said.

He also emphasised the need for clearer planning at the district level, with defined targets and visions, stating that without direction there can be no meaningful journey. He said districts must clearly understand their role in contributing to the overall growth of the State.

Describing the decision to celebrate Meghalaya Day in South Garo Hills as deeply meaningful, the Chief Minister said the district is the home of late Captain Williamson A. Sangma, the first Chief Minister of Meghalaya and one of the principal architects of the State. He said celebrating the occasion in Baghmara was a fitting tribute to his legacy and a reaffirmation of the values on which Meghalaya was founded.

Sharing recent developments, the Chief Minister informed that the second phase of the water supply project for Baghmara, amounting to ₹140 crore, had been cleared just a day earlier,

calling it a major blessing for the people of the region. He assured that issues related to road connectivity would also be taken up.

Expressing concern over the condition of the Baghmara Civil Hospital, the Chief Minister promised to the people of the district that he would personally ensure complete transformation of Baghmara Hospital to make it one of the best and a model hospital in the state.

Stressing unity, the Chief Minister said that the destinies of the people of Meghalaya are inseparable and divinely ordained.

“He has a plan for us,” he said, urging citizens to rise and play their part in realising that vision. Recalling a time when Meghalaya consistently ranked at the bottom of development indices, he said that instead of despair, the Government chose to see it as an opportunity.

“Being at the bottom gave us the chance to change things,” he said, adding that despite limited resources and immense pressure, sectors such as education are already witnessing transformation.

Reaffirming his commitment, the Chief Minister urged all citizens to be prepared for the long journey ahead and to walk forward together to make meaningful progress.



Deputy Chief Minister Shri. Prestone Tynsong said the celebration itself was historic, noting that in his entire career, this was perhaps the first time such a major official Statehood Day celebration was being held in Baghmara.

Acknowledging that South Garo Hills has long been considered one of the most backward districts of the State, he said the Government is making concerted efforts to ensure development reaches the last mile, particularly through improved connectivity and infrastructure.

Highlighting progress under the leadership of Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, he said there is renewed hope and optimism among the people of South Garo Hills as the State marks 54 years of Statehood. He informed that road connectivity from Shillong to Baghmara is about 60 per cent complete, with remaining works to be taken up shortly.

Urging citizens to remember and honour the forefathers who laid the foundation of Meghalaya, he called for unity and a positive mindset, stating that constructive criticism is welcome but negativity serves no purpose.

IPR Minister Shri. Lahkmen Rymbui said that Meghalaya Day is an important occasion to reflect on the State's journey and to chart the path forward.

He said that prior to 2018, Meghalaya was often perceived as just another small hill State, but sustained engagement, reflection and people-centric governance under the MDA-I and MDA-II governments have brought visible change. He described the alliance as one driven by dynamism and purpose.

He said leadership is now visible across all regions of the State, not confined to Shillong or Tura alone. He highlighted initiatives promoting unity through language learning programmes, including basic Khasi in Garo areas and basic Garo in Khasi areas, as well as skill development initiatives such as the Community Integrated Skills Learning programme aimed at enhancing employability and dignity of labour.

He concluded by urging all stakeholders to contribute to the State's development, stating that unity strengthens progress, while pulling each other down hinders growth.

Meanwhile, State Chief Secretary Dr. Shakil P. Ahammed, IAS in his keynote address, emphasized balanced growth. He said development cannot be meaningful if confined to a few regions and that what development means for Shillong must equally apply to Baghmara. Highlighting Meghalaya's natural wealth and traditions of community-led conservation, he said the State offers valuable lessons in sustainable development and harmony with nature.

Referring to Vision 2032, he said it is not merely aspirational but backed by planning, accountability and execution. He highlighted achievements across sectors including road connectivity, education infrastructure, agriculture, power reforms and entrepreneurship initiatives such as CM Elevate and YES Meghalaya.

He concluded by stressing the need for continued perseverance and collective effort to build a prosperous, peaceful, inclusive and resilient Meghalaya.

Earlier in his welcome address, Shri. Vijay Kumar Mantri, IAS, Commissioner and Secretary, IPR Department, said that Meghalaya is charting its own development path with equity at its core, noting that regional disparities in performance and outcomes have been reduced from nearly 40 per cent to about 15 per cent through sustained and targeted interventions.

During the programme, the Meghalaya Day Awards and Governor's Police Medals were announced in recognition of exemplary service and outstanding contributions across various fields. The Meghalaya Day Excellence Awards were also presented to 21 employees by the Chief Minister.



A video titled "Rise Meghalaya" was screened highlighting the State's development journey. Cultural performances featuring traditional Khasi, Jaintia and rarely seen Atong & Ruga dances of South Garo Hills were presented at various intervals, showcasing the rich heritage and traditions of Meghalaya.

The programme concluded with acknowledgement and note of gratitude by Shri. B. S. Sohliya, IAS, Secretary & Director, Information and Public Relations, followed by the rendition of the National Anthem, while earlier singing of the State Anthem was led by the Khmih Choir, Shillong.

On the whole the State Day was a celebration of shared dreams, aspirations, and collective identity of the three major tribes that together form the social and cultural fabric of Meghalaya. It highlighted the importance of unity, inclusive development, and preserving the unique traditions of the state while moving forward on the path of progress.