

Honourable CM Conrad K. Sangma announces PRIME Rural Expansion to 52 blocks to empower rural entrepreneurs at the inauguration of RuralPreneur,2025

Shillong, Meghalaya – 19th August, 2025: PRIME Rural marked a historic milestone with the inauguration of the first-ever **RuralPreneur 2025**, officiated by Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma. This landmark event celebrated and empowered rural entrepreneurs from across Meghalaya. During his address, the Honourable Chief Minister announced the expansion of doorstep incubation support to all **52 blocks** of the state under the PRIME Rural program. Financial support of up to **₹18 crore** was pledged to provide rural entrepreneurs with Selco-built environmentally friendly facilities, solar energy solutions, and essential machinery to scale operations and enhance productivity in the coming month, reaching to more than **172 beneficiaries**. An initial allocation of more than **₹3.4 crore** in funds was disbursed to support rural entrepreneurs statewide.



Held at the Shillong State Central Library, the event brought together over **250 rural entrepreneurs** from every district, showcasing the vibrant potential and creativity thriving in Meghalaya's rural economy. Dignitaries in attendance included **Shri Sampath Kumar**, IAS, Principal Secretary; **Dr. Vijay Kumar D**, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary; **Smti. Saloni Verma**, IAS, Executive Director, Meghalaya Basin Management Agency; **Shri. Swapnil Tembe**, IAS, Secretary, Meghalaya and **Dr. Harish Hande**, CEO, SELCO Foundation, where the official catalogue book of PRIME Rural was also launched.



Speaking at the inauguration of RuralPreneur, Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma said, “At the heart of RuralPreneur 2025 lies the belief that transformation begins with a change in mindset. We must encourage our people, especially our youth, to embrace innovation, take risks, and see challenges as opportunities. Entrepreneurship thrives when individuals are willing to step beyond their comfort zones, but it also needs a strong system of support to sustain and guide them.”



In Meghalaya, we recognize that even the smallest details matter when building enterprises. Attention to micro aspects—whether in planning, execution, or delivery—makes the difference between good and great. Yet, no entrepreneur succeeds alone. True progress happens when we work as a team, share ideas, and uplift one another with passion and commitment.



He further elaborated “The Prime Rural initiative is designed to play a crucial role in helping our entrepreneurs move forward with confidence. By nurturing talent, building networks, and developing skills, we are creating an ecosystem where rural entrepreneurs can flourish and compete on larger platforms. RuralPreneur is not just a celebration—it is a movement of growth and resilience. Together, with the right mindset, unwavering dedication, and collective spirit, Meghalaya’s entrepreneurs will pave the way for inclusive development and prosperity.”

Speaking at RuralPreneur inauguration Dr. Vijay Kumar D, IAS, Commissioner and Secretary said “In Meghalaya, we are witnessing a remarkable journey of rural entrepreneurship, powered by a strong and evolving support system. Through initiatives like PRIME Rural, incubation, mentorship, and access to markets, we are creating an ecosystem where ideas from rural areas can grow into impactful enterprises. The energy, creativity, and resilience of our entrepreneurs are inspiring, and with the right guidance and resources, they are scaling new heights. What we see today is just the beginning—Meghalaya is steadily becoming a hub where rural entrepreneurs can thrive, contribute to the economy, and create opportunities for their communities.”

Smti. Saloni Verma, IAS, Executive Director, Meghalaya Basin Management Agency, said, “The launch of RuralPreneur marks a historic step for Meghalaya as we expand PRIME Rural to all 52 blocks.

This initiative ensures doorstep incubation and consistent support for rural innovators, enabling them to access knowledge, markets, and technologies that can transform their livelihoods.”

She added, “RuralPreneur is designed to bridge the gap between rural talent and mainstream markets, fostering economic inclusion and job creation. Our focus is not only to nurture rural enterprises but also to create a sustainable ecosystem where they can thrive.”

Smti. Minha Riyaz Khan, Programme Lead, PRIME Rural, said, “As a lead of the PRIME Rural programme, it gives me immense pride and gratitude. Over the past year, we’ve had the unique privilege of working alongside an incredibly diverse group of entrepreneurs, fessociates and associates across 12 blocks in Meghalaya. PRIME Rural programme has been more than just a professional commitment—it has been a deeply personal and transformative experience. The fellowship enabled us to co-create solutions that are locally relevant and sustainable. What ties it all together is the belief that development is most impactful when it is inclusive, participatory, and rooted in local context.”

RuralPreneur 2025 featured a diverse array of stalls, product displays, and networking sessions, enabling rural innovators to connect with markets, investors, and mentors. Entrepreneurs showcased traditional crafts, agri-products, food innovations, and sustainable solutions, reflecting Meghalaya’s unique cultural and natural wealth.

This event sets the stage for Meghalaya to emerge as a model state for rural entrepreneurship in India, with PRIME Rural’s expansion poised to transform the state’s entrepreneurial landscape in the years to come.

About PRIME Rural

PRIME Rural is Meghalaya’s leading incubation hub, dedicated to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship across the state. Through PRIME Rural, this mission extends into rural communities, providing doorstep incubation to every village and uncovering hidden entrepreneurial talent. The program embarks on an intensive 18-month journey with passionate individuals, offering tailored support, resources, and mentorship to unlock their full potential. The goal is to nurture rural entrepreneurs who are self-sufficient and globally competitive, positioning Meghalaya as a hub of world-class entrepreneurial talent.