

**Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region
North Eastern Council Secretariat, Shillong
Date: 9th January, 2026**

PRESS NOTE FOR MEGHALAYA, DECEMBER, 2025

NE-SPARKS: 786 Students from Northeast Visit ISRO Centres

An initiative of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, Government of India, the *North East Students Programme for Awareness, Reach, and Knowledge on Space (NE-SPARKS)* is a flagship initiative designed to promote space science and technology awareness among students in India's North Eastern Region. This transformative programme provides selected students with direct exposure to India's space research achievements through guided visits to ISRO centres in Bengaluru, effectively bridging geographical and informational gaps that have historically limited access to such opportunities.

Hon'ble Union Home Minister and President of NESAC Society, Shri Amit Shah during the 12th meeting of the NESAC Society held on 21st December, 2024, advised to organize a visit for 800 talented science students from the all 8 states of the North Eastern Region to ISRO covering 100 students from each state. This directive underscored the government's commitment to inclusive development and educational empowerment in the region.



The initiative represents a collaborative effort involving the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER), the North Eastern Council (NEC), the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), the North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC), and the State

Governments of the North East. The programme is jointly coordinated by NESAC and ISRO's Capacity Building Programme Office (CBPO), with active support and participation from respective State Governments ensuring effective implementation at the grassroots level.

With a total sanctioned cost of ₹3.83 crore, the programme follows a 60:40 funding ratio, where NEC contributes ₹2.3 crore and the State Governments collectively contribute ₹1.53 crore. This financial arrangement reflects the shared responsibility and commitment of both central and state authorities toward nurturing scientific talent in the region.



NE-SPARKS is executed in eight batches between April 2025 and December 2025, with a minimum interval of one month between consecutive batches. Each batch comprises 90-100 students representing the eight NER states, accompanied by 10 coordinators who facilitated and guided the educational journey.

Through meaningful interactions with ISRO scientists and engineers and direct exposure to advanced space technologies, NE-SPARKS inspires young minds and promotes STEM education among Northeastern students. The programme empowers participants to envision and pursue careers in space science and technology, thereby contributing to India's broader vision of achieving global leadership in the space sector. By investing in the region's youth and providing them with world-class exposure to cutting-edge space research, NE-SPARKS serves as a catalyst for scientific aspiration and technological advancement in India's North Eastern Region.

TOTAL FUND RELEASES DURING DECEMBER, 2025 ACROSS ALL NORTHEASTERN STATES & REGIONAL AND OTHER AGENCIES

During **December 2025**, the **North Eastern Council (NEC)** released a **total amount of ₹76,78,58,035/-**, which includes releases made to the across all Northeastern States as well as to various regional and other agencies across the North Eastern Region. This reflects NEC's continuous commitment to strengthening developmental initiatives in the North East through infrastructure development, livelihood enhancement, cultural promotion, research, and innovation.

FUND RELEASES FOR MEGHALAYA DURING DECEMBER, 2025

During December, 2025, The North Eastern Council (NEC) released a total amount of **₹13,45,38,500/-** for a number of projects including, Construction of Tourism Infrastructure at Laitlyngkot (Lamlyer) in East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya, Development of Cultural Complex of Seng Khasi Ri Raid Laban at Lum Shat Sngi, Kenches Trace, Shillong, Construction of RCC G+4 Commercial Building of Iewdak Laban Municipal Market, Shillong for sale of Agriculture, Horticulture, Handicraft, Piggery, Floriculture Products, Construction of School Building at RKM School, Laidiengsai, Mawrah, Laitryngew, Wahlong, Pynursla, Pomsohmen and Nongkynrih, Re-Alignment of Pipelines, provisions of Utility Ducts, Public Toilet at 5 (five) location, Waste Management Vehicles/Waste bins/WRC, providing lighting, painting and beautification of buildings and replacement of supply line along the main approach road to Iewduh market etc.

FUND RELEASES FOR MEGHALAYA UNDER NESIDS (ROADS) DURING DECEMBER, 2025

Funds amounting to ₹3.00 crore were released under NESIDS (Roads) for road improvement works, including the Shillong City to Umroi Airport road. The project will strengthen connectivity in Meghalaya and is expected to benefit around 10 villages with a population of approximately 7,287.

REGIONAL / OTHER AGENCIES (PROJECT & NON-PROJECT)

In addition to state-specific releases, the North Eastern Council (NEC) disbursed a total amount of **₹26,47,42,847/-** (Rupees Twenty-Six Crore Forty-Seven Lakh Forty-Two Thousand Eight Hundred Forty-Seven only) to Regional and Other Agencies during the month. This support was extended through a range of region-wide initiatives implemented by universities, research institutions, specialised corporations, and cultural organisations across the North Eastern Region.

Major project interventions included the establishment of kiwi orchards; sponsorship of education for 91 boarder scholars and 622 day scholars from North Eastern States; setting up of banana tissue culture facilities; safeguarding heritage and promoting sustainable livelihoods through Geographical Indication (GI) registration of 166 crops/commodities of the region; establishment of pig breeding units (Phase-III); promotion of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAP)-based livelihood opportunities; creation of entrepreneurial ecosystems to augment rural

income; establishment of high-tech horticultural nurseries with tissue culture facilities; scientific smoked meat production units; multi-agriculture projects for promotion of fishery and piggery; and advanced research initiatives such as 5G use-case development for societal challenges and socio-ecological and economic analysis of Sone Beel for sustainable management.

Non-project activities comprised a wide spectrum of regional-level seminars, cultural programmes, youth exchanges, technology and innovation events, academic and linguistic workshops, and studies on sustainable development. Key initiatives included the District-Level Youth Cultural Exchange Programme for Promotion of Peace and Harmony; Rising Uttar Pradesh; the 14th State-Level Sirarakhong Hathei (Chilli) Festival; participation in Chiang Mai Design Week 2025, Thailand; organisation of state-level handloom and handicrafts fairs; programmes on women empowerment and elimination of violence; Dibang Winter Fest 4.0; promotion of sports festivals in Manipur; construction of multipurpose community infrastructure; studies on physico-chemical water quality in selected areas of Assam, Mizoram, and Manipur; capacity building for academic excellence through AI-enabled digital transformation in higher education; studies on democratic decentralisation and governance institutions; assessments of entrepreneurial readiness of PMEGP beneficiaries; and organisation of the 9th Ranglong Khohui.

These initiatives were implemented through key institutions and agencies, including the North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Society (NERCRMS), North Eastern Development Finance Corporation (NEDFi), North Eastern Handicrafts & Handlooms Development Corporation Ltd. (NEHHDC), North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation Ltd. (NERAMAC), University of Science & Technology, Meghalaya (USTM), Assam University, Mizoram University, Thanagong Development Co-operative Society Ltd., Manipur, and the Arunachal Pradesh Eco Adventure Sports & Youth Development Society, collectively contributing to regional development, cultural preservation, capacity building, and technological advancement across the North Eastern Region.

COMPLETED PROJECT(S) DURING DECEMBER, 2025

Setting up of Model Handloom Production Centre at Ri-Bhoi District

The NEC has also completed the setting up of a Model Handloom Production Centre at Marngar, Ri-Bhoi District in Meghalaya under the Industries sector, with an approved project cost of ₹1.43 crore and implementation through an implementing agency. The project was undertaken to revitalise traditional handloom practices by providing improved infrastructure and facilitating skill upgradation among local weavers. The centre has contributed to improved product quality, enhanced skills—particularly among women weavers—and diversification of handloom products. It has strengthened sustainable livelihood opportunities, preserved indigenous weaving traditions, and improved the market competitiveness of Meghalaya's handloom products. The project was completed in December 2025.
