

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA

Culture, Community and Creativity at the Forefront as Meghalaya's Garo Hills Celebrates Mi-Kari Festival 2026

Indigenous games, grassroots music and local enterprise take centre stage at Ampati in South West Garo Hills
Mi-Kari Festival set to join Meghalaya's premier annual festivals,
boosting cultural tourism and local economy in the region

Ampati, February 13, 2026: Culture came alive in colour, rhythm and community spirit as the Government of Meghalaya inaugurated the Mi-Kari Festival 2026 at Students' Field, Ampati, transforming South West Garo Hills into a vibrant arena of indigenous cultural pride and creative ecosystem.



Organised by the District Administration of South West Garo Hills in collaboration with the Departments of Tourism and Arts & Culture, the two-day festival celebrates “Culture, Community and Creativity” positioning tradition not as nostalgia, but as a living, breathing force for tourism, youth engagement and local enterprise.



Ampati witnessed an energetic resurgence of traditional Garo sports which includes Rong·ma Chilsusaa, Wa·pong Sika, An·ding Oka, Jakpong Pesusaa, Makkre Wagong Mala, Budu Salsuaa and more. These indigenous games, rooted in agrarian rhythms and collective identity, drew enthusiastic participation from youth, reaffirming Meghalaya's commitment to safeguarding its intangible heritage while presenting it to wider audiences.



The festival witnessed a Flower Show and the 'Ampati's Got Talent', spotlighting the region's cultural depth. The stage came alive with performances by Saldorik, Restless Desire, Johnny Lee & the band, and Farlay Cheran & the band, alongside emerging artists nurtured under the Chief Minister's Meghalaya Grassroots Music Programme (MGMP).

The festival inaugurated in the gracious presence of Shri Subir Marak, MLA, Rangsakona; Shri Sanjay A. Sangma, MLA, Mahendraganj; and Shri Ian Botham K. Sangma, MLA, Salmanpara.



Shri Subir Marak, MLA, Rangsakona, thanked Shri Conrad K. Sangma, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya, for providing a platform for local talent here in South West Garo Hills, like other parts of the State. Thanking the HCM for his support, Shri Marak also highlighted that the upcoming Additional Secretariat in Tura will facilitate official works locally.



Shri Sanjay A. Sangma, MLA, Mahendraganj, highlighted that 'Mi-Kari' festival will now become an annual calendar event, and thanked the HCM and in-line departments for their active participation.

Shri Ian Botham K. Sangma, MLA, Salmanpara, described the festival as a vital economic and cultural catalyst for the district. He emphasized its importance as a marketplace for local entrepreneurs and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to showcase their crafts.



Ms. Anendya Raajsshre, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Ampati, thanked various departments for coming together for the district's benefit. Addressing the gathering, she called for the district's future, "Make this festival a space where families come together, where traditions are celebrated with pride, and where our young people feel

inspired to dream bigger for themselves and for this district."

Beyond celebration, Mi-Kari is also a marketplace of ideas and livelihoods. Government stalls and curated exhibition spaces showcase products by local farmers, artisans, SHGs and young entrepreneurs, reflecting Meghalaya's larger push toward rural tourism and community-led economic growth.



Day Two promises to deepen this cultural immersion with the ‘Master Chef Ampati’ cooking competition celebrating indigenous flavours, a Healthy Baby Show, performances by Tura Dance Academy, and live music by Tony Balsam, Amachi, and Lynx, Jowai, further amplifying the district’s creative pulse.