



PRESS RELEASE

Hon. Speaker, Meghalaya Legislative Assembly Shri Metbah Lyngdoh ji, Hon. Chief Minister of Meghalaya Dr. Conrad Sangma ji, Leader of Opposition, Dr. Mukul Sangma ji, Esteemed Members of Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, Ladies and Gentlemen.

- It gives me great pleasure to interact with the esteemed Members of Meghalaya Legislative Assembly today. This is my first visit to North East and Meghalaya.

- **The beauty of Meghalaya is unparalleled and it is called 'the abode of clouds'**. Meghalaya is one of the most picturesque States not only in the North-East but in entire country. It is a privilege for me to greet you all on this special occasion in such scenic surroundings.

- Meghalaya has celebrated its 49th year of Statehood a few days ago. Meghalaya will celebrate the Golden Jubilee of its statehood next year in January. I extend my heartiest congratulations and best wishes in advance.

- It is natural to recall late **Shri P. A. Sangma ji** in Meghalaya. His life is very inspiring. As we all are aware that he held the high offices of the Chief Minister of Meghalaya and Speaker of Lok Sabha with great dignity and achieved accomplishments.

- He made significant contributions towards strengthening parliamentary democracy and constitutional practices. It is a matter of great pride for us. We should take inspiration from the standards set by him.

- Friends, Democracy has deep roots in our country. A rich legacy of democratic participation has flourished in our villages for thousands of years.

- **India has set the examples of democracy for the entire world. Hence, this glorious tradition became the foundation of Modern India after independence.**

- Today we can say with pride that the democratic norms gaining ground all over the world, have Indian democracy as an exemplary model.

- Friends, our representative institutions such as the Parliament, Legislative Assemblies and the Local Bodies are the temples of democracy, where public representatives give voice to the hopes and aspirations of the people.

- Hence, it is important for all the democratic institutions- the Parliament, Legislative Assemblies and Local Bodies, be it in the form of Autonomous District Councils or -Panchayats, to work in coordination and harmony so that our collective responsibility towards the people is fulfilled.

- Whatever work we undertake should be carried out in this spirit and with utmost dedication towards the people. The concept of democracy can be fructified only when the person at the last rung in the society is benefited.

- We will have to encourage discussion, dialogue and meaningful debate in representative institutions in order to achieve this objective.

- There can be dissent during discussions but we should avoid an impasse. Our discussions should lead to the welfare of the people of the country.

- Friends, the global pandemic of Corona has posed new challenges before the Governments as well as Legislative institutions. However, in such challenging times, our responsibility becomes even more onerous.
- The people facing hardships look upto their Legislators and MPs to find a solution to their problems.
- In the time of Corona also, the Parliament as well as all the Legislative Assemblies worked together in coordination and contributed in the efforts of the Government. I am glad that our collective efforts helped in facing this challenge.
- This collective cooperation is our source of strength. We should strengthen our collective efforts and try to make them even more effective.
- We summoned the Parliament even in the midst of Corona pandemic and sent a positive message to the people through our functioning.
- Your Legislative Assembly had also held its session in November despite Corona and had made a meaningful effort to work in accordance with the hopes and aspirations of the people. It indicates that our legislative institutions are discharging their constitutional responsibilities with utmost sincerity.
- Friends, democracy can be strengthened only when all constitutional institutions work in tandem and cooperate with each other within their respective constitutional jurisdictions. All the institutions should complement each other.

- You may recall that last year, this issue was discussed comprehensively at the Presiding Officers' Conference held on 25-26 November, 2020 in Kevadia, Gujarat. Now we are implementing the resolutions adopted and decisions taken at that conference.

- **In the same conference, we had read the Preamble to the Constitution in front of the towering Statue of Unity of Iron Man, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel on 26th November, 2020 and had taken a pledge to organise special programmes across the country to raise awareness about the Constitution especially amongst the youth of the country. The objective is to make the Youth committed to their constitutional obligations and duties.**

- We should always be driven by the spirit of Nation First and all our actions should reflect it. Only then will we be able to build a strong nation.

- Friends, wide use of information and communication tools is gaining prevalence across the world. Use of ICT has accelerated the pace of work and made it easier in all the sectors. Corona has made its use even more imperative.

- **Progressive use of ICT tools such as e-Parliament and e-Office in the functioning of the Parliament has significantly helped Members of Parliament fulfill their obligations in an effective manner.**

- **I am sure that the use of virtual platforms, e-notice, Members Portal and other such facilities**

will help in bridging the Digital Divide and create a 'People centric, sustainable and development- oriented' society.

- Our legislative institutions have various parliamentary devices to ensure the accountability of the executive. Parliamentary devices such as Question Hour, 'Zero Hour' etc. are best ways to address the issues being faced by the people.

- **Your initiative of including 'Zero Hour' in the Practice and Procedure of your legislative assembly is commendable. You deserve accolades for this. Please share the conventions followed by your Legislative Assembly and also the new initiatives taken so that democratic institutions of the country may adopt best practices from each other.**

- I have also made it my foremost priority in the Parliament to make women, young and newly elected MPs aware of various parliamentary conventions and practices.

- I always encourage their active participation in the debates and discussions that take place in the House.

- It is very important to ensure the capacity building of Hon'ble Members to pave way for constructive debates in Parliament.

- Several new initiatives are being taken in Lok Sabha with a view to enhance the practical knowledge of Hon'ble Members in various subjects.

- In this regard, a virtual programme was organised in January in which experts from various walks of life honoured

with Padma Awards, shared their experiences relating to their outstanding achievements in various social and Infrastructural sectors with Hon'ble Members.

- **Moreover, Briefing Sessions for Hon'ble Members are also being organised regularly on the Bills being to be introduced in Lok Sabha.**

- **I suggest that such programmes should be organized in Legislative Assemblies also, so as to ensure a substantive and constructive debate on various subjects.**

- **Friends, we have started a new service in Parliament namely PRISM in the current Budget Session, through which Parliamentary Research and Information Support is being provided to MPs round the clock.**

- **I would like you to set up a similar Modern Research Wing in the Legislative Assembly to provide round the clock support to the Hon'ble Members. We will be happy to provide all possible support for setting up such Research Wing.**

- I am very happy to state that in the year 2019, Members of the Legislative Assemblies and Legislative Councils of all the States were given membership of Parliament Library. Hence, you can utilise the resources of Parliament Library.

- Apart from this, you can also avail the online services of Parliament Library. I hope that you are utilising these facilities constructively.

- **We are trying to compile the proceedings and Debates of the Parliament as well as State Legislature on a single platform through NeVA (National e-Vidhan Application).**

- Friends, as Members of the Legislative Institution, you have an onerous responsibility. We all have to make collective efforts to ensure the progress of our Constituencies, State and the Country. Your State has an abundance of natural resources and your people are industrious.

- **Working with dedication and commitment, Meghalaya can act as a model of development and prosperity for the entire nation.**

- As a State, Meghalaya has all the enabling institutions for inclusive growth. The State Government and the Autonomous Councils have to make collective efforts to find the amicable solution to the problems being faced by the people of the State. Democracy has immense potential to address all the grievances, face all the challenges and find a solutions for the same.

- As representatives of people, we should be fully committed to extend all possible assistance to mark a new beginning for growth and development in Meghalaya and all across the country.

- Friends, it is pertinent to mention about the success of a high level committee constituted under the leadership of Shri Metbah Lyngdoh to deal with the ongoing pandemic. This Committee comprising of the representatives of the Government and the members of the Legislative Assembly has shown a true spirit of cooperation.

• **I am happy that the construction work of a new building of Meghalaya Legislative Assembly is going on smoothly and this work is likely to be completed soon. Meghalaya Legislative Assembly will soon have its permanent building after a wait of 15 years. The design of the building is very attractive.**

• I am sure that your new Legislative Assembly building will truly reflect the diversity and rich cultural heritage of your beautiful State.

• **Hon. Members, lastly I would like to state that it is our primary responsibility to serve our nation and the people. In order to make our country strong, we need to make India 'self reliant' in all respects.**

• We have to make collective and concerted efforts to achieve this objective. North-East region of India has immense potential and capabilities. Hence, this region can lead the country on the path to progress.

• Let us all resolve to build a strong Meghalaya, a vibrant North-East and a formidable India. We resolve to make India the most prosperous, dynamic and powerful nation in the world in 21st century which will act as the guiding force for all the democracies in the world.

Thank you. Jai Hind.
