

**Government of Meghalaya, Office of the Chief Minister
Media & Communications Cell
Shillong**

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Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Monday announced Rs. 13 cr special package for development of tourism infrastructure and amenities at Nongkhnum Island in West Khasi Hills.

Nongkhnum is known as the second largest river Island in Asia after Majuli in Assam. He visited the Island with his family accompanied by District Administration officials.

He was in Nongstoin to interact with Producer Groups (PGs) , formed under Farmers' Collectivization for Upscaling of Production and Marketing Systems (FOCUS) – a flagship initiative of the State Government.



Interacting with the farmers, the Chief Minister said that the Government has earmarked Rs. 200 cr for farmers welfare programme in the State. He said that the Government is keen to understand the issues and concerns of the farmers and come up with appropriate policies to ensure maximum benefit reaches the farmers.

“FOCUS is an innovative welfare programme, whereby the Government ensures that the farmers are able to enhance their productivity as well as avail benefit of credit linkages and strengthen access to markets,” he added.

He also took the opportunity to inform the gathering that the Government has accorded thrust to ensure that road connectivity in the district is improved. He also told that the Greater Nongstoin Water Supply Scheme is nearing completion and will be inaugurated soon.

Through this ambitious programme, the Meghalaya Basin Management Authority (MBMA), the nodal implementing agency identifies production clusters of marketable produce, focuses on Value Chain Analysis of the produce, forming bottom-up small collectives known as Producer Groups (PGs), identifying and training extension service providers known as Service Producers (SPs) and building large collectives in the form of Cooperative Societies and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) through bringing together well functioning PGs.

Funding support is given to all the PGs and the selected Service Providers to take up identified value chain related activities. Each of the PGs receive a sum that would be equal to Number of Members at Rs. 5,000 each. This would come to an amount of Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1,00,000 for each of the PGs depending upon the number of members in the PG.

In the West Khasi Hills District, the formation of Producer Groups started from March 2021 in Mawshynrut Block and subsequently from July 2021 onwards in Nongstoin Block and altogether around 183 groups have been formed. The products identified for value chain development are Ginger, Seasonal Vegetables, Broom grass, Sericulture & Arecanut.

The empanelled NGOs for Nongstoin Block is NSSS and for Mawshynrut is DAWN.

Chief Minister along with local MLA Macmillan Byrsat handed over cheques to PGs. A total of 36 Producer Groups were given support under the FOCUS Program amounting Rs 21,95,000/- (Twenty One Lakhs and Ninety Five Thousand) only.



During his day long visit to the district, the Chief Minister also inspected the Nongstoin - Wakhaji and Nongstoin - Nongkhum road.