

**GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
Office of the Chief Minister
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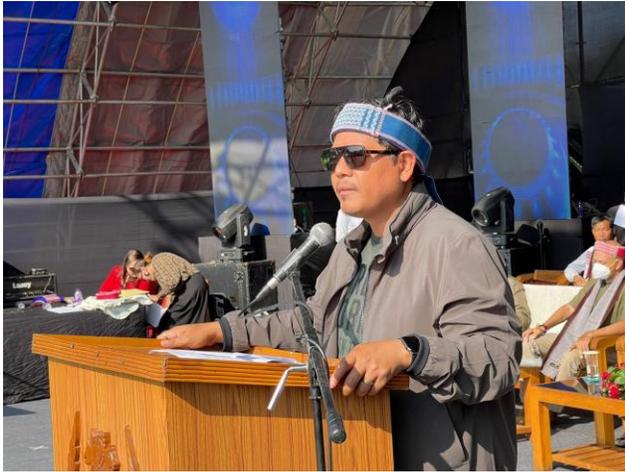
Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Thursday inaugurated the ‘Me’gong Festival’ that aims to promote the culture, diversity and the lifestyle of the Garos.



The three day fest is showcasing the different brew from across the region. In this year’s event, apart from Meghalaya participants from Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Assam are showcasing their traditional drinks, mostly made out of rice and fruits.



Inaugurating the festival at Babadam in the outskirts of Tura, Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma said, “The festival is part of the various celebrations to commemorate Meghalaya’s 50th year of statehood and India 75th year of Independence.”



He said that through the Me’gong Festival, the tourism department will showcase Meghalaya’s Garo Hills as a tourism destination. “Due to Covid pandemic, the tourism industry has suffered, as the Covid situation is improving, the State Government has planned various events to promote and attract tourists to the State,” he said.

During the programme the logo for ‘Meghalaya at 50’ was unveiled by the Chief Minister in presence of MLAs Thomas A Sangma, Marcuise Marak and Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Sweden in India Gautam Bhattacharya.



He told the gathering that a number of activities and festivals will be organised across the State in the run up to the 50th year of Statehood, which will culminate with a grand event to be held in the State capital and other parts of the State on January 21 next year.

Taking the opportunity, the Chief Minister told the gathering about the prestigious “Tribal Research Institute” (TRI), which is coming up at Chidikgre in Babadam. He said that institute (TRI) will give opportunity for research and documentation of different tribal cultures.

“We want to make TRI a vibrant centre for research and documentation of different tribal cultures. We will open this centre for all tribes of Northeast and even beyond,” he added. He further informed that the institute will be inaugurated next year to mark the birth anniversary of (L) P. A. Sangma.

He said that Me’gong will be an annual event that will be organised in the TRI campus from next year.

“We started Me’gong with a theme of exploring the different breweries of the tribal cultures. Tribal people are proud of their culture and their traditional drinks represent their cultural identities. And as a Government, we feel that people should be given an opportunity to experience the unique cultural diversities of Northeast. We all share a bond and through this festival we aim to foster our relationship,” the Chief Minister said.

He also told the gathering that next year, the Government intends to upscale the event and include more activities. “We may change the theme of the event every year, but what will remain intact is the intent to ensure that the tribal identity and culture is maintained,” he added.

Apart from brew competitions and food shows, this year’s event will witness rock shows by local talents and display of different dances from different parts of Northeast.