

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MINISTER, GOVT OF MEGHALAYA  
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Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma today said that Government of India has accorded required attention to the Northeast, which is paving way for concerted development and growth of the region.



Addressing “The Meghalayan Age” Tourism Conclave at Thadlaskein, near Jowai, which was attended by tourism stakeholders and Government Officials, the Chief Minister said, “The Meghalayan Age is an attempt by the Government to provide an opportunity for visitors to experience Meghalaya.”

“We had big plans for the event, however, due to the health advisory on Corona Virus, we restricted the event for invited stakeholders, which comprised of media professionals, tour operators, bloggers, etc, who will share our stories to the world.”

Talking at length about the ‘Act East Policy’ the Chief Minister stressed on the need to explore on the possibility of working collaboratively with India’s neighbouring countries in the field of tourism, boosting cultural and economic ties.

“We as a government have realized the potential we have with our immediate neighbour Bangladesh. The country is moving very fast, they have a growth rate of almost 8 percent; their GDP is about 400 billion dollars. We have to look at the opportunity next door and build relations that would economically benefit our people.”

On initiatives Meghalaya has taken to put the State forward, the Chief Minister said that emphasis are being laid to attract investments and ensure sustainable development model of growth in sync with nature.

“We are blessed with nature and we want to work on initiatives that would be economical for our people as well as promote growth and development,” the Chief Minister exhorted.

Talking about tourism being one of the priority sector, the Chief Minister said that government is working on models to boost high end tourism in the State that would be remunerative for the people and also ensure that Meghalaya is labeled as the sought after tourism destination not only in the country but globally.

Union MoS DoNER Dr. Jitendra Singh said, “The Meghalayan Age is an event that would go a long way in positioning the State of Meghalaya as a much sought after tourism destination.”



Talking about the concerns across the country due to the Coronavirus, Dr Singh said, “The event was planned in a very big way but due to the advisory issued by the MoH&FW, the event has been scaled down to a conclave, where different stakeholders were given an opportunity to delve into the immense potential that Meghalaya can open up to the visitors.”

Expressing gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Dr Singh said, “In the last five years, GoI has provided adequate thrust for creating better infrastructure and promote development of Northeast. It is through synergistic approach of the GoI and the right motivation from the States concerns, the vision of the Prime Minister would be accomplished.”

Dr. Singh said that under the leadership of PM, Ministry of DoNER’s budget was increased two fold. “Prior to formation of the NDA Govt., the budget for NEC was roughly around 700 cr, however, we have today increased the budget to about 1400 cr. We have different plans to promote and ensure welfare of the region,” Dr. Singh emphasized.

During the 10 day event renowned cave explorer Brian Kharpran took selected guests on a unique caving experience. Kharpran, who spoke during the conclave today said that in the past two decades they have explored 1700 caves about 514 km, which has led to discoveries of unique and exclusive species, the latest being the discovery of the largest cave dwelling fish.

Rothell Khongsit from the Khongthong, popularly known as the ‘whistling village’ talked about the uniqueness of their culture and lifestyle of the people. He said that the event has given them the platform to tell their stories to a very wide audience.

During the occasion, a book on tourism titled ‘Glimpses’ was also launched.

