



**GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS AND YOUTH AFFAIRS**

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**Press Release**

Launch of Talent Identification and Elite Pathway Programs 2024-25 and Felicitation of  
Standout Meghalaya Youth

**Shillong, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2024:** The Department of Sports and Youth Affairs held an event in North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, to celebrate the potential of Meghalaya Youth across the fields of sports and cultural excellence. Over 500 youth from across the state were invited as part of various schemes and initiatives managed by the Department.

The First initiative was the launch of the new editions of the Talent Identification Program and the Elite Pathway Program (EPP), under the STAR Program, in collaboration with the Meghalaya State Olympic Association (MSOA). To date, 14,500 participants have been tested in the Talent Identification Program using scientific methods to uncover high potential athletes. Through the EPP, 200 athletes underwent a year long training program with App-based training and Quarterly in-person camps. Under the editions of 2024-25, 10,000 more participants, some as young as 6 years old, shall be tested under the Talent identification program, and 200 more athletes will undergo the 2<sup>nd</sup> EPP Camp. The Event also highlighted the training of the Super Elite Program, a cohort of 11 athletes with High-Potential to become National and International athletes in their respective sports.

The Event also awarded Cash Awards to athletes that have won medals in sporting events. 297 Athletes and Coaches received Rs. 68 Lakhs in Total. More such events shall be held by the Department to ensure that all medal winners from Meghalaya receive Cash Awards under the Scheme.

Further, the first group of Sports Scholarships were awarded to athletes this year. Their Scholarship shall be in place from April 2024 to March 2025, receiving a monthly amount based on their scheme document released earlier. The next set of applications for 2025-26 shall close on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March, 2025.

The Event also felicitated the Meghalaya contingent from the 7<sup>th</sup> North East Youth Festival, who made the State proud. This included winners of the Rock Band Event, and 1<sup>st</sup> Runners Up for 6 other events. The Folk Song Troupe from East Jaintia Hills and the Rock Band from West Khasi Hills also performed at the event.

The Event was attended by the Honourable Chief Minister Shri Conrad K. Sangma, Chief Secretary, Shri D.P. Wahlang (IAS), and Director, Sports and Youth Affairs, Smt. Isawanda Laloo (IAS), who spoke about the potential of Meghalaya Youth and the initiatives the Government have in place to facilitate their growth across various fields. Shri John F. Kharshiing, working President, MSOA, was also present.

Co-Owner of North East United F.C. (NEUFC) and reputed actor Shri John Abraham also attended the event, and motivated the audience with his presence. It was also announced that an in-principle agreement was made between NEUFC and the Department of Sports and Youth Affairs for the development of football in the Meghalaya. Land in Mawkhanu, East Khasi Hills, under the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs, shall be allocated in part to NEUFC who shall construct a state-of-the-art Residential Football Academy at the location for the training of NEUFC teams and local aspiring football stars. Further Diligence as per Government norms are in process to make this a reality.

SD/-  
Director  
Sports and Youth Affairs  
Government of Meghalaya