

PRESS RELEASE



Chief Minister Addresses at the District Talent Event 2026 under SPARK Meghalaya at Tura

Tura, 2nd September 2026: Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma today addressed the District Talent Event 2026 under SPARK Meghalaya at Tura.

SPARK stands for School Programmes in Articulation, Resilience and Kindness.

Addressing students, teachers and parents, the Chief Minister said the State has invested substantially in academic and physical infrastructure, but SPARK represents a different kind



of investment, in the human capabilities that allow a young person to make use of everything built for them.

“A student may know an answer perfectly well and still struggle to ask a question, explain an idea, work within a group, face an interview or recover from a failure. These things rarely show up on a mark sheet, yet they shape how far a young person goes in life,” he said.

Sharing his personal experience, the Chief Minister said he himself had moments of nervousness speaking in public and did not have the kind of confidence that youngsters are showing today on

stage. “We did not have programmes like SPARK to train and guide us,” he said, congratulating Team SPARK and Avenues.

The Chief Minister informed that SPARK began in 2024 as a small pilot covering 5,143 students across 25 government schools in all 12 districts, with 73 percent girls. The programme was later supported through Ministry of Education’s SSA funding across 28 campuses reaching more than 8,000 students and was recognised by the Ministry as a Best NEP Practice.

Building on this, the Government has now scaled it up as a multi-year, State-funded handholding intervention, SPARK Meghalaya — covering soft skills, STEM awareness and talent development for Classes 6 to 10.

As of 31st August 2026, SPARK for Students has directly reached 12,078 students across 53 benchmark campuses in all 12 districts, including 6,592 girls and 5,486 boys. Till date, over 20,000 students have benefited from the initiative.

Highlighting the role of teachers, the Chief Minister said SPARK for Teachers is a key pillar. 526 teachers representing 287 schools have completed an intensive 30-hour semi-residential training at district headquarters.

“Teachers who have gone through this programme have spoken about reconnecting with their sense of purpose as educators and rediscovering the place of communication and relationships within their own classrooms,” he said.

The Chief Minister said the world of work is changing rapidly due to technology. “Education systems are very sticky. You take a decision today; impact comes 10 years later. But global transformation will happen in a decade. Programmes like SPARK allow us to unlock potential and prepare our children to adapt,” he said.

He stressed that while technology can replace routine tasks, the quality that will never go out of demand is the ability to take responsibility, connect passionately with purpose, diagnose problems and find solutions. “Problem solving is at the crux of every organisation and will be required forever,” he said.

He added that SPARK does not replace Government’s investment in higher education, skilling and employment, but strengthens foundational human capabilities that will allow youth to make better use of those opportunities.

Citing the STAR Programme in sports, the Chief Minister said out of 24,000 children screened in the last 5 years in partnership with an Australian firm using global standards, 10 children were found in the top 1% globally as super athletes despite coming without shoes or prior training.

One child from a very rural area clocked 10.8 seconds in 100 metres. “This proves raw talent is distributed across every corner of the State. It is our responsibility to ensure opportunity reaches children where they are,” he said.

He reiterated that Meghalaya’s small population should not determine its future, “It is not quantity, but quality that will determine productivity, growth and where we take Meghalaya.”

“My commitment is that Government will continue to sustain SPARK as a long-term handholding programme, because the confidence we build in a child today is confidence Meghalaya will draw upon for decades to come.”

