



PRESS RELEASE



Closing Ceremony of 5th Meghalaya Games 2024



TURA, January 20, 2023: The 5th Meghalaya Games came to a grand conclusion at the iconic PA Sangma Stadium in Tura on Saturday evening, with the announcement of the next edition of the games moving to West Jaintia Hills.



The 6-day mega sporting event was held in 23 disciplines across 16 venues. East Khasi Hill emerged as the overall champion of this year's Games by winning a staggering 359 medals of which 132 were gold, 105 were silver and 122 were bronze. At the second spot was Ri Bhoi by winning 79 medals, which included 27 gold, 22 silver and 30 bronze medals. The third spot was taken by West Jaintia Hills with 68 medals – 25 gold, 18 silver, 25 bronze. The fourth sport went to West Garo Hills with 73 medals, which included 17 gold, 17 silver and 39 bronze.



Addressing the athletes, officials and the general public gathered at the venue, Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma announced that the next edition of the Meghalaya Games would be held in Jowai, West Jaintia Hills district.



In addition, he announced the start of a new tradition in the State, the first of which took place on Saturday itself, the Meghalaya Day celebration. CM Sangma announced that, henceforth, it will become a tradition that the conclusion of Meghalaya Games will coincide with the Meghalaya Day. On Saturday, the 52nd anniversary of Meghalaya was celebrated at Tura in the morning and the closing ceremony of 5th Meghalaya Games took place in the evening. Therefore, Jowai will also be hosting the next Meghalaya Day celebration.

Talking about the government's thrust to youth, CM Sangma said, "Youth has always been at the centre of the strategy and policy for our government. And this is evident from the kind of focus and the kind of importance that we have given to different aspects for the youth like sports. As was mentioned many times before, this particular games is the fifth edition in the history of our state but more importantly three out of the five were held during the time of this government. Hence, it reflects importance that we give to sports."

He also emphasised that the government is making huge investments for youth centric activities, building infrastructures and stadiums. "He have made more investments in the last 5 years than what was invested in sports infrastructure in the last 45 years," he stressed adding that many such track and field stadiums, artificial turfs, natural turfs, and indoor stadiums, and many other infrastructures will be coming up in the months and the years to come.

This, he said, is being done to provide the youth with the necessary infrastructure to excel in different sports.

On the next steps to groom national and international level athletes in the state, he said the government is looking at possibilities of having Centres of excellence for different disciplines to have professional support and guidance.

“...without professional support, without professional guidance we will not be able to compete at the national and international level. So, therefore, professional approach, specialization will be the next step for this government to ensure that these athletes, those who have won medals in these games, will one day win medals at the national games and even in the international arena,” he informed.

He also reiterated that it is the goal of the State to one day have an athlete from Meghalaya who will make Meghalaya and India proud by winning a medal in the Olympics.



He further informed that Meghalaya has finally come out with its state anthem after 52 years, which was released Governor Phagu Chauhan virtually on Saturday on the occasion of Meghalaya Day. “I would like to very proudly tell you that, for the first time in any government function, we will be closing these Meghalaya Games by playing the State Anthem. So, this will be played for the first time in the history of our state and all of you are fortunate that today you will witness the closure of this games with the state anthem,” he remarked.

In conclusion, he told the athletes they are the future of the state and to make best use of opportunities being provided to them. “You are the future of our state. The youth is the future of our state. Ee believe in you, we have high hopes from you. We would want you to move in the right direction. We would like to give you opportunities so that the best comes out in you. We are doing our best to provide that opportunity to you. But it is up to you to take these opportunities, work hard, improve yourselves and make sure that you are able to become responsible citizens of this state and of this country,” he told them.

Earlier, Sports Minister Shakliar Warjri commended the athletes for their dedication and sportsmanship.



“Witnessing the passion and commitment of our athletes in the 5th Meghalaya Games has been truly inspiring. Their achievements reflect their individual prowess as well as the collective strength of Meghalaya's sporting spirit. With confidence, we believe that those who witnessed these athletes may one day see them represent India on the global stage,” he said.





It is to be mentioned here that the 5th Meghalaya Games was inaugurated by the President of India Droupadi Murmu on January 15, 2024, making it the first sporting event in the history of the State to be opened by the Head of the State. This was also the first time that the games were held out Shillong. Similarly, it was the first time that the Meghalaya Games included traditional indigenous games into its list of events.