



PRESS RELEASE



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Conrad K. Sangma Inaugurates Meghalaya Community Biochar Plant at Umsli

Shillong, May 11, 2026: The Government of Meghalaya marked a significant milestone today in sustainable natural resource management with the launch of a new Biochar Plant under the Meghalaya Community Biochar Initiative. The facility, located at the Eastern Ri-Bhoi Organic Farmer Producer Company (FPC) Processing Plant in Umsli, was officially inaugurated by Shri Conrad K. Sangma, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya.



With agriculture serving as the backbone of the State's economy, this initiative supported by the Centre of Excellence for NRM & Sustainable Livelihoods (CoE-NRM & SL), Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA), will aim to utilise the agronomic benefits of biochar to boost sustainable agricultural practices and utilise its multifunctional potential to enhance soil fertility, improve crop productivity, and contribute to climate change mitigation.



In his keynote address, the Hon'ble Chief Minister said that the primary agenda for the State is to benefit, uplift, and improve the income of farmers. Recognizing that farmers make up more



than 70 percent of the employment and economic livelihood engagement in Meghalaya, he emphasized that helping them is the core agenda and mission. To achieve this, the State is focusing on foundational agricultural support, including improving soil health, providing good quality seeds, delivering timely assistance, and ensuring available working capital.

Crucially, the government is prioritizing the ability to create and add value to agricultural products. As part of this push for value addition, the new spice processing unit will be inaugurated in the next couple of months to serve farmers across Ri-Bhoi and the entire State. While acknowledging a significant growth in farmer incomes over the last eight years, he highlighted the innovative use of the newly inaugurated biochar unit. Emphasizing the vision driving these continuous interventions, he stated, "One of the most important agendas for our government is to see how we can benefit, how we can uplift, and how we can improve the income of our farmers"

He also released two inventory reports, namely The Bamboo Resource Inventory of Meghalaya and the State-Wide Inventory of Arecanut & Other Horticulture Tree Plantations respectively.





Shri Damanbait Lamare, MLA, Umroi Constituency highlighted the significant benefits the new biochar plant will bring to local bamboo growers. Emphasizing its role in sustainable agriculture, he stated, "The farmers will be benefitted from this plant, and it will promote organic farming."

He also urged stakeholders to properly maintain the facility to ensure its productivity in the years to come. Additionally, speaking about the new spice factory, he underscored its potential for economic empowerment, adding, that the spice factory will uplift the livelihood of the people.

Sharing his remarks, Shri Revistar Kharumnuid, CEO, Eastern Ri-Bhoi Organic FPC, recalled that it is the Hon'ble Chief Minister's second visit to their FPC, with the first being he laid the foundation stone of the Spice PRIME Hub which will be completed in the next two months, adding that the Hub is slated to be the biggest organic spice industrial unit in the North East. He added, "We have engaged 10 organic FPOs and will benefit 4500 farmers. In this new plant of biochar, we have enrolled 150 bamboo growers, 500 ginger farmers." He further assured that the FPC will work hard and uplift the project so that it will benefit the farmers.



Dr. S. Ashutosh, IFS (retd) Co-chairman & Director, CoE, MBDA delivering the welcome address said the launch of the Meghalaya Community Biochar Initiative offers a transformative pathway toward a climate-resilient, green economy. He emphasized that this initiative would play a catalytic role in achieving the State's goal of bringing 100,000 hectares under organic cultivation by 2028, while simultaneously creating new rural livelihood enterprises.



Notably envisioned for the State-wide scaling up, the pilot project on biochar has been initiated in two clusters one each in Khasi-Jaintia and Garo regions. Two mid-size pyrolysis reactors have been installed at Umsli and another two reactors are in the process of installation at Chenggalgre IVCS, Dadenggre.



With strong policy backing, community engagement, and sustainable resource management, Meghalaya is continuing to adopt to practices like biochar, transforming the State into a climate-resilient, green economy. It also supports a vital living ecosystem while protecting environmental quality and socio-economic development.