

PRESS RELEASE



SPARK Talent Event Showcases

Creativity and Confidence of East Khasi Hills Students

Shillong, August 11: The District Talent Event of the SPARK Programme was held in East Khasi Hills on Tuesday, providing students from across the district with a platform to showcase their talents, creativity and confidence.

Addressing the gathering Education Minister Lahkmen Rymbui, said Meghalaya's education system has made significant progress over the past eight years, while acknowledging that



several challenges continue to remain. He said addressing these challenges requires the collective efforts of the Government, teachers, students, parents and the wider community.

Rymbui said the vision of the Chief Minister is to ensure that every individual gets an opportunity and a platform to succeed, build a career and realise their potential. The SPARK Programme, he said, is part of this effort, providing students with opportunities to identify their abilities and develop themselves beyond conventional academic learning.

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He said education today requires more than academic knowledge, with students needing opportunities, skills and exposure to prepare themselves for a changing world. The Government, he added, has been working on various aspects of the education sector, including school infrastructure, teachers, pay structures and opportunities for students.

Encouraging students to embrace science, technology, engineering and mathematics, Rymbui stressed the growing importance of STEM education. He noted that successful professionals, including administrators and officers, come from diverse educational backgrounds and urged students to make full use of the opportunities available to them.

He encouraged students to remain confident, embrace challenges and not allow setbacks to discourage them. He congratulated the 526 students who participated in the SPARK journey and commended them for coming forward to learn, test their abilities and discover their talents.

Calling upon the students to become ambassadors of positive change, Rymbui urged them to share what they learn, inspire their peers and contribute to society, describing them as the “spark of tomorrow.”

Advisor to the Education Department H.M. Shangpliang congratulated the students, teachers, principals, jury members, Education Department officials and the Avenues team for making the event possible.



Shangpliang said the SPARK Programme seeks to broaden opportunities for students, particularly those who may otherwise hesitate to participate in competitions and public activities. The programme, he said, aims to help students build confidence, courage and resilience.

Introduced in 2024, the programme has provided students across Meghalaya with opportunities to develop their personalities and communication skills, he said, while expressing appreciation to the Education Department for its continued support. He also called for the programme to be sustained and further strengthened in the coming years.

“Investing in students is investing in the future of Meghalaya,” Shangpliang said, adding that the young participants would go on to become doctors, engineers, professionals, administrators, entrepreneurs and leaders.

He encouraged students to use their voices with confidence and courage, pointing to young people from Meghalaya who have represented the State and the country on national and international platforms. With the right opportunities and encouragement, he said, students from Meghalaya can achieve excellence and represent the State with pride.

Director of School Education and Literacy and State Project Director, SSA, Richa Kulkarni, IAS, highlighted the role of the SPARK Programme in supporting both students and teachers.



She acknowledged the efforts of teachers across the State, many of whom work in challenging terrains and away from their families while nurturing the potential of their students.

Congratulating the students who performed at the event, Kulkarni said appearing on stage before a large audience requires courage and confidence, and that overcoming nervousness and performing in front of others is itself an achievement.

She said the responsibility of the education system goes beyond conducting examinations, appointing teachers and providing textbooks, stressing that the larger objective is to prepare young minds for a rapidly changing world.

Kulkarni highlighted the three core areas of the SPARK Programme Articulation, Resilience and Kindness as essential life skills for today's generation. With rapid advances in technology and Artificial Intelligence, she said qualities that make people uniquely human would become increasingly important.

The event featured performances by students, with 42 students taking part in the talent segment. Principals, coordinators, participating students and talent performers were also felicitated for their contributions and participation, while students who took part in the talent event received cash prizes.



District Talent Event Results

1. **First Position: St. Mary's School Choir**
2. **Second Position: Solo Performance, St. Mary's School**
3. **Third Position: Government Boys' Higher Secondary School**



The event concluded with appreciation for the participating students, teachers, school authorities, coordinators, jury members and the Avenues team for creating a platform that enabled young people to express them, build confidence and discover their potential.



The SPARK Programme continues to focus on nurturing articulation, resilience and kindness among students, with the broader objective of empowering young people to become confident, compassionate and capable citizens who can contribute meaningfully to Meghalaya's future.

Also present were Abhilash Baranwal, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, East Khasi Hills District; senior officials of the Education Department; DSEO officials; members of the Avenues team; principals, teachers, students and other dignitaries.