

PRESS RELEASE



Health Minister Launches Intensified IEC Campaign 3.0 to Strengthen HIV/AIDS Awareness in Meghalaya

Shillong, August 12: The Meghalaya AIDS Control Society (MACS) on Wednesday organised an HIV/AIDS awareness programme at Lady Keane College Hall, Shillong, coinciding with the observance of International Youth Day. On the occasion, Health Minister Wailadmiki Shylla launched the Statewide Intensified IEC Campaign 3.0, aimed at strengthening awareness, prevention, testing and treatment related to HIV/AIDS across the State.

Addressing the gathering, Health Minister Wailadmiki Shylla called upon the people of State to reject discrimination against people living with HIV and extend support by encouraging HIV testing, timely treatment and care.

The Minister emphasised that ending HIV cannot be the responsibility of MACS alone and requires collective efforts from the Health Department, other government departments, educational institutions, local communities, civil society organisations, healthcare workers, parents, teachers and young people.

He stated that the Government of Meghalaya remains committed to ensuring that the State's HIV response is accessible, inclusive, evidence-based and people-centred. He urged all stakeholders to take the campaign beyond the two-month campaign period and transform it into a statewide movement for awareness, prevention, testing, treatment and dignity.



Calling for wider outreach, the Minister said HIV awareness messages should reach villages, schools, colleges, households, hospitals and communities so that no person is afraid to know their HIV status, no one is denied dignity because of their HIV status, and young people have the knowledge required to protect their health.

The Minister also informed that, recognising the seriousness of HIV/AIDS, the Government of Meghalaya has approved a five-year plan to strengthen efforts in this area.

As the programme coincided with International Youth Day, Shylla highlighted the important role of young people in Meghalaya. He noted that approximately 51 per cent of the State's population is below 20 years of age, making youth participation crucial in health awareness and prevention initiatives.



He encouraged students and Red Ribbon Clubs in colleges across the State to actively participate in HIV/AIDS awareness programmes and help disseminate accurate information among their peers and communities.



He congratulated the Meghalaya AIDS Control Society, its Project Director, Dr. K. L. Iawbor, and the entire team, including field functionaries and partner organisations, for organising the campaign. He also appreciated the students of Lady Keane College and St. Edmund College for their meaningful presentations during the programme.