

PRESS RELEASE



Foundational Workshop for Third Cohort of Meghalaya Legislative and District Research Fellowships

Shillong, Sept 24: The Meghalaya Institute of Government (MIG), in collaboration with the Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad, on Wednesday organised a foundational workshop for the third cohort of the Meghalaya Legislative Research Fellowship (MLRF) and Meghalaya District Research Fellowship (MDRF) programmes at the Conference Room of the Secretariat Wellness Centre in Shillong.



Addressing the opening session, Dr Aarushi Jain, Director, Bharti Institute of Public Policy (BIPP), ISB, said the third cohort would focus on strengthening research across all 60 constituencies of Meghalaya over the next year. She said the fellows would play an important



role in taking forward constituency development plans and generating reliable data that could support research, journalism and other forms of analysis.

She also highlighted the need to further develop the existing data portal to make it more useful and accessible, and said the new cohort would contribute to improving the platform.

Dr Jain said constituency development plans were already at various stages, with around 36 plans having completed the first phase and several others having undergone deeper analysis. She said the objective was to complete plans for all 60 constituencies and move beyond planning towards implementation.

The fellows would work with legislators and their teams to identify economic triggers of growth and develop strategies suited to individual constituencies, she said.

On the MDRF programme, Dr Jain said the research priorities would vary from district to district depending on local requirements and the nature of the fellows' engagement with Deputy Commissioners, Autonomous District Councils and other departments.

Dr Jain further outlined the proposed approach of developing "district growth strategies", with the district serving as a key platform for identifying and addressing local growth opportunities. The process would involve extensive field research, including household-level data collection based on scientific sampling methods and covering the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors.

The data would subsequently be analysed using tools such as causal loop diagrams and input-output modelling, with the ISB research team supporting the development of district growth strategies.



Addressing the gathering, Dr Andrew Simons, Adviser to the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, said the MLRF initiative was launched through the efforts of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, ISB and MIG, with the programme gradually strengthening legislative research capacity in the state.

He said two cohorts had already been completed and the third cohort would further contribute to nurturing young professionals committed to public service, policymaking and institutional strengthening.



Dr Simons also highlighted the capacity-building initiatives undertaken by ISB for legislators, including workshops held in Mohali, Hyderabad and the United States, describing these as valuable opportunities for legislators to broaden their experience and exposure.

Director of MIG Aiban Swer said the fellowship provided young researchers an opportunity to work closely with legislators and understand the diverse perspectives and priorities emerging from different constituencies.



He encouraged the fellows to engage with legislators through thoughtful and probing questions and to understand the perspectives from which elected representatives approach issues concerning their constituencies.

Swer said the fellows would also be involved in a range of other initiatives, including social impact assessments, document verification and projects relating to roads and transport, providing them with opportunities to strengthen their research and professional skills.

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The workshop marks the beginning of the third cohort of the MLRF and MDRF programmes, with the fellows expected to work closely with legislators and district administrations as part of the research and development initiatives undertaken in the state.