



PRESS RELEASE



Meghalaya Government Holds Interaction

with Athletes, Sports Associations Ahead of National Games

Shillong, May 13: With Meghalaya stepping up preparations to host the 39th National Games in 2027, the state government on Wednesday organised an extensive interaction with athletes, coaches and State Sports Associations, highlighting its commitment to strengthening sports infrastructure and creating a robust support system for athletes ahead of the prestigious multi-sport event.



The interaction, organised by the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs at the State Convention Centre in Shillong, was chaired by Meghalaya Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Wailadmiki Shylla. Athletes, coaches and representatives from various sports associations attended the meeting, which focused on athlete welfare, training facilities, competition exposure and the long-term growth of sports in the state.

Speaking at the programme, Shylla emphasised that cooperation among the government, sports bodies and athletes would be crucial for the successful hosting of the National Games in Meghalaya.

“We all have to work together as a team if we want to host a successful National Games,” he said.

The minister disclosed that the meeting was convened after an athlete reached out to him, pointing out that infrastructure alone would not guarantee medals and stressing the importance of proper nutrition and support for athletes.

According to Shylla, the athlete had also sought a platform to raise grievances and concerns directly with the government, which prompted the department to organise the interaction at short notice.

Highlighting the need for youth-oriented policies, the minister noted that nearly 59 per cent of Meghalaya’s population is below the age of 25, making investments in sports and youth development a key priority for the state government.

He informed that the annual budget of the Sports Department, which was around ₹40 crores seven years ago, has now increased to ₹844 crores, enabling the state to invest substantially in sports infrastructure, athlete welfare and scientific methods of training.

Shylla also credited Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma for giving priority to youth empowerment and sports development in the state.

Recalling his own experience as a basketball player during his school days, the minister said Meghalaya once lacked proper sports facilities, but the situation has improved considerably with the construction of indoor stadiums, courts and other sports infrastructure across the state.

On preparations for the National Games, Shylla said the government has adopted a decentralised approach by extending direct support to sports associations. He stated that the first phase of financial assistance has already been released for the purchase of equipment and the engagement of national and international coaches.

The minister also congratulated Meghalaya athletes for their impressive performance at the recently concluded Khelo India Tribal Games, where the state improved its ranking from 29th to 13th place.

“This reflects that our investment in sports is moving in the right direction and we must continue with the same momentum,” he said.

He further announced that the government would soon release the second phase of financial assistance to support athlete accommodation, diet and nutrition, and competition exposure programmes aimed at preparing athletes for national-level competitions.

Shylla reiterated that Meghalaya's objective is not only to host the National Games successfully but also to ensure strong performances and medal wins by athletes from the state.

To further motivate athletes and reassure their families, the minister highlighted the introduction of the Meghalaya Outstanding Direct Appointment Policy, under which medal winners at the National Games will be eligible for direct appointment to government jobs.

"If you win a medal, you are entitled to get a government job. Bring a medal, take a job," he said.

He added that athletes would be allowed to continue their sporting careers and complete higher studies before joining government service, with the flexibility to join at any time before the age of 37.

Calling for unity among all stakeholders, Shylla urged athletes and sports associations to avoid unnecessary criticism over minor issues and instead work collectively for the success of the National Games.

"If anything goes wrong during the National Games, it will not only affect individuals but the entire state of Meghalaya," he added.

The minister also assured support for coaches, remarking that "behind every successful athlete, there is a coach." He further informed that athletes preparing for the National Games would be granted relaxation in attendance requirements, and that the matter would be discussed with the Education Department for necessary exemptions.

Richard Yanthan said the National Games would offer athletes from Meghalaya a major platform to showcase their abilities at the national level.

"For Meghalaya, the National Games is also an opportunity to accelerate infrastructure development across the state," he said.

Meanwhile, John F. Kharshiing assured the government that the sporting community remains committed to working together for the successful conduct of the Games and the sustained growth of sports in Meghalaya.

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, Meghalaya has significantly expanded its sports ecosystem in recent years. Since June 2025, more than 50,000 athletes have been scouted across the state, while over 1,200 athletes are currently undergoing training under 27 State Sports Associations.

Athletes from Meghalaya have already secured 70 medals at national and international competitions, including 23 gold medals. The state is also setting up a High Performance Sports Science Centre at the J.N. Sports Complex to provide advanced sports science support, injury management, recovery systems and performance analytics.

With investments exceeding ₹1,800 crores in sports infrastructure since 2018, Meghalaya is positioning the 39th National Games as a landmark opportunity for sports development, youth empowerment and economic growth in the Northeast.

