



NEWSLETTER

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“You should not give up and we should not allow the problems to defeat us.”

-Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam

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Advisor:

Prof D.P Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong

Editor:

Dr. Sanjeev K Ningombam, Centre Head

Sub Editor:

Ms. Boishali Gogoi, Project Coordinator

Strategic Meet on Handloom Promotion of the Northeastern Region

On 23rd January 2024, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Centre for Policy Research and Analysis, IIM Shillong organized a Strategic meet on Handloom Promotion of the Northeastern region, with the support from the Development Commissioner (Handloom) of the Union Ministry of Textiles and National Institute of Fashion Technology, Shillong as a knowledge partner.

The event was inaugurated by Shri Atul Kulkarni, Member, Board of Governors, IIM Shillong in the presence of Prof. DP Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong and Dr. Sanjeev K Ningombam, Centre Head, Dr. Kalam Centre. The objective of the meet was to address stakeholder concerns while concentrating on the agenda item of textiles as driver NER economy. Sessions focused on 'Textiles as Driver NER Economy,' discussing innovation, marketing, business strategy, and cluster development. Several representatives,

stakeholders and participants took part on the daylong program including prominent figures like Jesmina Zeliang, Mitrani Kakti, Koijan Mantri, James Evantis Dkhar, C Lalthlenmawia and many others. Around 120 students from different institutions such as NIFT Shillong, KL Bajoria College, Lady Keane College and Fashion Academy, Shillong actively participated in the meet.

During the sessions, speakers emphasised on creating a market for handwoven goods and promotion of the region's handloom by focusing on the unique identity and culture of specific tribes' weaving traditions. Further, it was discussed at length to integrate culture and tradition with commerce through design intervention and innovation, to create a more sustainable fashion and livelihood opportunities for the people.



MoU for extension of operations of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Centre for Policy Research and Analysis



An MoU was signed between the NEC Shillong, IIM Shillong and the MDoNER for continuing the operation of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Centre for Policy Research and Analysis, IIM Shillong on February 13, 2024 at the NEC Secretariat, Shillong. The MoU was signed by Shri Moses K Chalai, Secretary, NEC; Prof. D.P Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong in the virtual presence of Shri Chanchal Kumar, Secretary, MDoNER and senior officials of NEC and IIM Shillong. Speaking at the occasion Prof. D P Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong express his happiness and reflected upon the rich legacy of the late President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam and his vision of development. He also highlighted the key initiatives and interventions made by Dr. Kalam Centre in recent years. Shri Moses Chalai, Secretary,

NEC expressed his satisfaction on how the centre has emerge as per the expectation. Shri Chanchal Kumar, Secretary, MDoNER wishes the centre the best in emerging as an important think tank of the region. He highlighted the need of introducing North East Development Fellows through Dr. Kalam Centre from IIM Shillong which will have a significant impact in administration and bringing good governance in the region.

With the extension of MoU, Dr. Kalam Centre will work with more rigour and commitment in the five key areas, i.e., 1) Training and Development 2) Research and Consultancy 3) Policy Advocacy 4) Knowledge Dissemination and 5) Civic Engagement.

Round Table Discussion on PM Gati Shakti at NER: Challenges & Opportunities

On 23rd February 2024, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Centre for Policy Research & Analysis, IIM Shillong, organized a Round Table Discussion on “PM Gati Shakti at NER: Challenges and Opportunities” at IIM Shillong, Umsawli. The event was inaugurated by Shri Atul Kulkarni, BoG, Member, IIM Shillong in the presence of Prof. D P Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong

and Dr. Sanjeev K Ningombam, Centre Head, Dr. Kalam Centre, IIM Shillong.

The theme of the Strategic Round Table meeting was to discuss the multimodal logistics development strategy for connecting the North Eastern Region (NER) to the wider national and international regions to strengthen the local economy of the region. Stakeholders and

panellists from various sectors engaged in discussions focused on exploring the most prominent development strategies related to logistics and connecting the region through inland waterways. The panel also discussed the operationalisation and steps forward for implementing the NER multimodal logistics development strategies and policies.



Training Program on ‘Conflict Management and Contractual Dispute Management for the World Bank funded projects’

Three-days Training Program on ‘Conflict Management and Contractual Dispute Resolution for the World Bank funded projects’ were organized by Dr. Kalam Centre, with the technical support by the World Bank. The program was held from 27th-29th February 2024 with the objective to enhance participants’ understanding of the principles and best practices in contract management and equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively negotiate, draft, and manage contracts for projects financed by the World Bank.

During the inauguration, Dr. Sanjeev K Ningombam, Centre Head, Dr. Kalam Centre, IIM Shillong, stressed upon the importance of this training which would enable the participants’ to competently and effectively strategize, plan and carry out the

contract activities in accordance with the World Bank guideline.

The training witnessed 21 participants from 7 various departments and agencies from the NER working under World Bank funded projects. Mr. Debabrata Chakraborti, Senior Procurement Specialist and Mr. Susshil Daga, Managing Partner of AMICUS legal advocates and consultant were among the resource persons that led sessions during the training programme.



Assessment of students under the ongoing Functional Hindi course in Regional College of Nursing, Guwahati

Dr Kalam Centre is conducting a Functional Hindi Course at various higher educational institutions of NER with the support of NEC. On March 21, 2024, as part of the assessment exercise, students of the Regional College of Nursing were evaluated and assessed. The course aims to enhance the students' proficiency in Hindi language and promote its usage in professional settings. The assessment included both written and verbal components to gauge the

students' comprehension and communication skills. Ms. Rubimoni Das, Resource Person for the course and Ms. Boishali Gogoi, Project Coordinator, Dr. Kalam Centre, IIM Shillong facilitated the assessment. Prof. Geeta Das, Principal of RCN Guwahati, praised students' progress in improving Hindi language skills and encouraged them to continue practicing for future professional endeavour.



Feature Article

Crop Insurance in Meghalaya: Does 100% Subsidy mean Tangible Benefits for Farmers?

The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana or PMFBY is a flagship crop insurance scheme under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. Its aim is to provide a financial cushion to farmers who suffer from crop damage or loss due to various calamities. It works on an area-approach and premium is charged based on the area insured. It was first implemented in 2016. Since its inception, Meghalaya has witnessed low enrollment over the years. Therefore, starting in Kharif 2023, the State Government of Meghalaya chose to show its support for farmers by offering a 100% premium subsidy for the program. After receiving assistance from the State, Meghalaya had a sharp rise in enrollment, going from 270 farmers in Kharif 2022 to 32,961 in 2023. What precisely is covered by the subsidy? According to the scheme's original rules, farmers would have to pay a premium equal to 2% of the insured amount for crops grown in Kharif, 1.5% for crops grown in Rabi, and 5% for crops grown in horticulture. Nevertheless, if farmers sign up for an area of one acre or less, they are exempt from paying this sum due to the subsidy. This was limited to farmers cultivating sali paddy, or winter rice, and ginger in designated locations. These farmers will only have to pay a one-rupee fee to participate in the project.

The Agriculture Insurance Company of India (AIC) is the implementing agency of the scheme in the state. Owing to the subsidy, the AIC receives its premium from the government, the amount of which is split between the center and the state in a 90:10 ratio.

This substantially decreased the farmers' share of the premium. In 2022, the gross premium received by the AIC under the PMFBY was about Rs 5.32 lacs, with 2.37 lacs from the center, Rs 0.26 lacs from the state, and Rs 2.69 lacs from the farmers. With almost Rs 590 lacs coming from the center, Rs 470 lacs from the state, and just Rs 0.81 lacs coming from the farmers for the Kharif season alone, the total premium for 2023 after the state subsidy was Rs 1060.25 lacs. This enabled many farmers to participate in the scheme, while also significantly increasing the AIC's gross premium and government spending on the state. However, how viable is this model? Is the only criteria used to decide who gets enrolled in the program affordability? Can farmers still get their crops insured if the government discontinue the subsidy?

Over the past eight years, crop insurance in Meghalaya has significantly benefited farmers, with 76.2% of farmers enrolled in 2016 and 93% in 2020. The majority of beneficiaries are from Ri Bhoi district, with the highest enrolments coming from West Garo Hills. Meghalaya has more female farmers than male farmers, reflecting the gender distribution pattern of land ownership in the state's matrilineal societies. The state government, through the PMFBY scheme, facilitates and provides subsidies, enabling marginal landholders to enroll. It is accessible to all socioeconomic groups. However, achieving its goals will necessitate raising awareness, understanding farmers' needs, and overcoming implementation challenges.



Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Centre for Policy Research and Analysis
Indian Institute of Management Shillong
Umsawli, Shillong-793018
Email: apjcentre@iimshillong.ac.in ; Ph: 0364-2308098
Web: www.iimshillong.ac.in/dr-kalam-centre