

RECOMMENDATIONS OF WORKING GROUP NO. 7
(EDUCATION, SPORTS & YOUTH AFFAIRS, RESEARCH & CAPACITY
BUILDING)

The Meghalaya State Planning Board Working Group No.7 covering Education, Sports & Youth Affairs, Research and Capacity Building met at 3.00 PM on Saturday 4th October 2008, in Hotel Pinewood, Shillong. The following members were present:

1. Prof. Eugene D. Thomas - Deputy Chairman, Meghalaya State Planning Board
2. Shri M.C. Gupta - Honorary Member, Meghalaya State Planning Board
3. Prof. B.D. Singh - Honorary Member, Meghalaya State Planning Board
4. Shri C. Reuben Lyngdoh - Member, Meghalaya State Planning Board
5. Smti. R.V. Suchiang - Director, MATI and Team
6. Shri L. Roy - Commissioner & Secretary, Education and Team
7. Shri W. Khylllep - Director, Higher & Technical Education
7. Shri Aldous Mawlong - Director, Sports & Youth Affairs and Team

The members heard the presentations of the Meghalaya Administrative Training Institute (MATI), the Sports and Youth Affairs Department and an interaction followed with the Education Department. Prior to the group making suggestions and recommendations, the Chairman of the working group emphasized on the following points discussed earlier at the meeting of the full Planning Board. He recommended that the same should form the backbone of all departmental activities:

1. Departments should have a sense of direction and focus.
2. Departments should spell out their priorities.
3. There should be public accountability (with performance audit).
4. There should be strict adherence to fixing responsibility on officers and other government staff in all the governmental activities.

MEGHALAYA ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING INSTITUTE

The presentation on MATI was made by Smti. Rebecca V. Suchiang, IAS, Director MATI. The members made the following suggestions with regard to MATI and its activities:

1. A higher priority (accompanied with a larger budget) should be given to MATI as it is the only training institute for the administrative public servants of the State.
2. Training policy should aim at the short run, medium run and long run needs commensurate with periodic review.
3. In the mission statement of the institute in addition to skill enhancement for optimum productivity, ethical management should also be incorporated. A process of de-learning and mindset change should be initiated in the training programmes.
4. Financial administration should form a component of training programmes.

SPORTS & YOUTH AFFAIRS

The presentation was made by Shri Aldous Mawlong, MCS, Director, Sports & Youth Affairs, Govt. of Meghalaya. The members made the following suggestions with regard to the department and its activities:

1. The department should be upgraded in terms of funds.
2. A State Sports Policy should be immediately adopted.
3. The government should be encouraged to fill up the sports quota in all its appointments.
4. There should be a convergence of activities of the Sports and Youth Affairs and the Education departments.
5. Sports persons should be provided (and augmented) with dietary support and stipends.
6. The District Sports Officers should be given more autonomy and financial powers as talents are identified more at the block and district levels.
7. More funds of the department should be made available and channelized through the districts i.e. District Sports Officers.
8. More coaches should be appointed and placed at the disposal of the District Sports Officers.
9. More sports activities should be channelized through the schools.
10. Corporate partnership should be explored in the sports & youth activities.

EDUCATION

The department was represented by Shri L. Roy, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya, Education Department and Shri W. Khylllep, MCS, Director, Higher & Technical Education, Govt. of Meghalaya. The members made the following suggestions with regards to the department and its activities:

1. There was need for the early adoption of the Education Policy.
2. In the social development index of the country Meghalaya is lacking behind in education. This concern needs to be addressed immediately.
3. There was a need for a knowledge park/educational hub where the thrust would be on vocational education. Job oriented courses should be developed so that employment is linked with the education that is imparted.
4. That the high incidence of drop-outs at the school level should be immediately addressed. It was suggested that the problem of drop-outs should be tackled by linking it with the democratic grass root level organizations.
5. Training of teachers should be taken up in all seriousness more so since Meghalaya has a very high percentage of untrained teachers. The State should have an integrated teachers' course that can attract people right from class XII level.
6. The educational system should be strengthened by appointing more teachers so as to reduce the number of single-teacher schools and bring down the Upper primary-Primary school ratio.
7. Education in the rural areas should be made free of cost since poverty is very high in these areas.
8. Innovative programmes should be undertaken to immediately raise and accelerate the literacy rate to reach the national targets.

The WG Meeting ended with a vote-of-thanks from the Chair.

Eugene D. Thomas

Chairman, Working Group No. 7,

Meghalaya State Planning Board