

INTEGRATED MOUNTAIN INITIATIVE MOUNTAIN LEGISLATORS' MEET 2019

SMDS - VIII, 6TH NOVEMBER, 2019, SHILLONG, MEGHALAYA

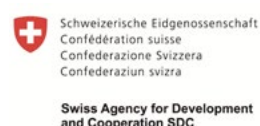


"TOWARDS BUILDING SECURE LIVELIHOOD
OPPORTUNITIES FOR MOUNTAIN YOUTH"

Making India Proud of our Mountains



IHCAP Indian Himalayas
Climate Adaptation
Programme



INTEGRATED MOUNTAIN INITIATIVE

MOUNTAIN LEGISLATORS' MEET 2019

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR MOUNTAIN YOUTH"

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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

The successful conduct of the Legislators' Meet 2019, Shillong, would not have been possible without the active and full support of many people and organizations. I cannot thank them all here but nevertheless I will have to mention a few of them.

First our Convener, Smt. Agatha Sangma, Hon MP Lok Sabha. She helped the organisers with all the support she could muster and indeed in person too. She personally invited many of the MPs from the mountain States. Not all of them could attend but they were informed of the program.

Second, I have to thank the Chairman of the meeting Shri Vincent Pala, Hon MP Lok Sabha. He, without hesitation, helped in also coordinating and hosting us all in Shillong. He has made some very wise comments which are incorporated in the report.

Mrs. Ferlin Sangma and Mr. H M Shangpliang, Hon MLAs and Chairpersons need special mention. They both were part of our Steering Committee and have helped in shaping the successful conduct and outcome of the meeting.

My own colleagues from IMI Governing Council, MIMDI and the IMI Secretariat team who have worked tirelessly for this event and post event documentation need to be congratulated.

Finally, IHCAP and the SDC for funding this meeting – I thank them.

New Delhi: March, 2020

Prem Das Rai, Co-convener
Former MP LS & Governing Council
Member, IMI

SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT VIII

The 8th edition of the Sustainable Mountain development Summit (SMDS-VIII) of the Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI) was held in North Eastern Council, Shillong, Meghalaya from 4th – 6th November, 2019.

The annual Summits are a key convergence platform to share experiences, discuss issues of sustainable development, identify gaps and collectively work to arrive at policy recommendations. Every SMDS is based on a clearly laid out themes and is part of a strategy leading towards a more effective coordination amongst the Mountain States to influence policies as also to direct investments.

This year's SMDS solidified the learnings from the past SMDSs to come up with an effective strategy for sustainable development by building an ecosystem for young entrepreneurs. The identified areas critical to building an enabling ecosystem for entrepreneurs in the IHR was deliberated upon – Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Energy, Sustainable Agri-business, Sustainable Tourism. The Summit was inaugurated by Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma.

During the summit, he released a new IMI document, "Assessing the Changing Entrepreneurship Landscape in the Indian Himalayan Region"- which was prepared in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Management, Shillong.

Once again emphasizing on the gap between policies and action in the grassroots, he said that this can be bridged only through entrepreneurship. He highlighted the urgency to build up the potential of the youth to face the future which is likely to be disrupted by climate change and emerging technologies, particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Through the course of the summit, presentations were made by representatives from ICIMOD, SDC, IMI, NEC, SELCO Foundation, TRIF, ADB, amongst many others. On both the days, the deliberations were divided into two parallel thematic sessions. Other inspirational stories of entrepreneurs from different states fueled the discussions on sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable energy, agri-business technology and sustainable tourism, and their potential for generating livelihood options in the mountain regions.

The two days of discussions threw up many ideas for follow-up, but almost all emphasized on the need for an entrepreneurial ecosystem by convergence of government, civil society, industry and financial institutions. It was also underlined that there was an urgent need to revitalize all government extension services.

KEY ACTION POINTS:

- Creation of tax and financial literacy among the local entrepreneurs, and the institution of a climate risk fund to shore up entrepreneurship in the mountain region.
- Lawmakers representing the mountain states and uplands of the Indian Himalayan region need to urgently take up these recommendations at the appropriate policy platform.
- Taking a step forward in its agenda to encourage entrepreneurship, the summit came up with a decision to set up immediately a start-up incubation centre in partnership with IMI, Villgro and IIM, Shillong.
- Government schemes need to be better targeted, appropriate research needs to be done on the same.
- Need of Himalayan development brand for products/produce of the mountain region.

LEGISLATORS' MEET – THE RATIONALE

The Indian Himalayan Region (IHR), constituting Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, and the hill districts of Assam (Dima Hasao, East Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong) and West Bengal (Darjeeling & Kalimpong) covers over 16.2% of India's total geographical land area and host a rich diversity of culture with huge repository of traditional ecological knowledge.

Given their relatively small and scattered populations, mountain communities often go unheard in political and policy discourse of the country. Despite significant progress, technological advancement, and communication developments in the lowland areas of India, economic growth in the Himalayan States has not translated into inclusive livelihood opportunities for the rural poor, especially the youth. Poverty, vulnerability, and inequality are widespread, and access to resources and services and gainful employment opportunities are limited.

An essential question is how poverty, gender, vulnerability, social inequality, and livelihood insecurity in the mountains can be better understood and addressed giving special emphasis to the younger generation's aspirations. Strengthening skills for mountain livelihood opportunities, identifying innovative options, strategies and practices, and promoting mountain niche products and services for facilitating effective adaptation and building resilience, particularly for marginalised communities and younger generations will bring out sustainable development in the region.

OBJECTIVE OF LEGISLATORS' MEET 2019

The Legislators' Meet is an important annual event which brings together legislators and local people representatives from mountain states to deliberate and examine key policy measures and highlight issues and challenges faced by the mountain states especially

related to the themes that are pursued in the Summit. This is hosted as an important part of Integrated Mountain Initiative's (IMI) annual 'Sustainable Mountain Development Summit' (SMDS) which addresses key challenges and opportunities of salient themes related to sustainable development of mountains and hills, raising awareness of policy changes and calling for action.

In 2019, SMDS-VIII was hosted at North Eastern Council (NEC), Shillong from 4th – 6th November by MIMDI, the IMI's Meghalaya chapter. The overall objective of SMDS-VIII was to create a roadmap for "Sustainable Mountain Initiative for Livelihood and Entrepreneurship for Youth". This theme offers an opportunity to understand the transformational dynamics based on economic, social and environmental factors, and the role youth, on whom the future sustainable mountains depend, can play.

Drawing from this, the Legislators' Meet 2019 deliberated on the outcomes of the Summit and focused on key policy interventions necessary for the advancement of the recommendations discussed during the meeting towards building secure livelihood opportunities for mountain youth.

THEMES OF THE LEGISLATORS' MEET 2019

The deliberations and emerging recommendations of Legislators' Meet 2019 will focus on the outcomes emanating from SMDS-VIII under the themes listed below:

1. E-Agriculture (with Water Security in the era of Climate Change)
2. Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
3. Food Processing & Agri-business
4. Making Tourism Sustainable in the IHR

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes of the Mountain Legislators Meet 2019 are as follows:

- Engage legislators on key policy interventions necessary for taking the outcomes of SMDS VIII forward.
- Strengthen regional level cooperation to make collective submissions towards national policies on the development of mountain and hill regions.
- Identify avenues of urgent focus and potential from the perspective of legislators.
- Strengthen avenues of potential partnerships for building a viable ecosystem for young entrepreneurs of the region through support from legislators.

RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS FROM THE LEGISLATORS' MEET 2019 – SMDS VIII:

1. Climate Change and the SDGs (sustainable development goals) must be thoroughly discussed in the State Assemblies as it was found that very good ideas emerged from public representatives who have their ears close to the ground with their constituents. The impact of Climate Change is certainly being felt by the representatives. "We need policy integration on all levels" – Vincent Pala (Chair).

2. Climate change related disasters can play havoc and so a good system of dissemination of information and data science needs to be put in place. This is a policy issue that has to be taken by the various State Governments. The 15th FC has given liberal grants to take up this kind of work and so public representatives can definitely make use of it.

3. Livelihoods of young people and adults is an absolute necessity and the only way to go forward is to build entrepreneurial ecosystems in the constituencies and the States. For this to happen there has to be coordination with organisations like IMI and SELCO Foundation. Academic institutions also need to be roped in. Government of India measures can also be garnered. Skills have to be built as part of the eco-system.

4. Jhum Cultivation needs to be examined thoroughly. ICIMOD, which has done extensive work in this field, can come up with a paper which can be distributed to all the legislators and public representatives within 2020.

5. IMI will continue to engage with all the public representatives at all levels, from Parliamentarians, MLAs, State Governments and at the local level as well. It will coordinate future meetings to keep everyone engaged. At least one more meeting will be called within 2020. "Knowledge sharing is very important and needs to be encouraged" – Agatha Sangma (convener).

SUMMARY OUTPUT OF DISCUSSIONS

1. All public representatives were of the opinion that they were updated from the briefings given by the representatives of IMI, IHCAP and SELCO. This is a valuable process that needs to be constantly done through engagement with organisations like IMI.

2. They all had a word on how their constituents were at risk from Climate Change impact and that they ought to be better prepared. They spoke of the need for early warnings and more data leading to correct information. They would like to be warned of the occurrence of cloud bursts which have taken many lives in the recent past.

3. They all expressed the vulnerabilities to these externalities and how they were to address them. Many felt the need that they ought to build more creative legislation and public policies to battle future Climate Change induced disasters in their States and constituencies. Also it would be ideal if more Climate Change curriculum be introduced in schools.

4. Many felt that all Mountain States' Legislators should propose to have discussion on Climate Change related issues in their respective State Assemblies so that they can have oversight on the policies that are formulated or under consideration.
5. They were emphatic that livelihoods needed to be extended in their own constituencies. Many of the representatives felt that market access and productivity tools were required for the youth to take up enterprises that would make it worth their while.
6. They welcomed the SELCO initiatives and many of them wanted SELCO to come to their constituencies and make a start. They would give all the cooperation that was needed.
7. Tourism was the other agenda that many felt could be taken forward. Here again it was a question of getting young people engaged and then trained to improve their skills. This is one area where there is a bright future for use of solar energy, physical and cultural assets for the benefit of young people, especially from rural areas. MP LAD & MLA LAD funds can be deployed to encourage this. In fact some are already doing this.
8. In the agriculture sector many wondered on the efficacy of Jhum cultivation and how that issue was to be tackled. This seems to be one area which needed much more clarity. This was for Mizoram and Meghalaya. ICIMOD representative, did try to clarify but there was very little time to engage on this issue. Consensus of the representatives was that jhum cultivation is unsustainable due to population increase. They wanted a solution to this issue.
9. Broomsticks also was talked about as a stable source of income for farmers for a long time. Honey and other horticulture produce were also referred to. In Tripura rubber plantation is a major revenue earner but it has Climate Change impact.
10. Sharing of some good practices also happened with farmers taking to kiwi fruit production in Meghalaya which was a great success. However, here again was the question of how marketing is to be realised.
11. Issues that many flagged were of drying up of water sources and over use of ground water. Ground water tables were going down especially as paddy of the winter months needed much more water. This necessitated a deeper understanding of ecosystem services of the forests and biodiversity, and how this was being adversely impacted by Climate Change – more directly reduced and timely precipitation.

AGENDA OF THE MEETING

SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT VIII

Mountain Legislators Meet 2019
on
Youth and Entrepreneurship in Indian Himalayan Region
Towards building secure livelihood opportunities for mountain youth

6th November 2019 | 1400 – 1700 Hrs
Conference Hall, North Eastern Council, Shillong

Chair: Shri Vincent Pala, MP (Shillong)

Time (Hrs)	Session	Speaker
1400 - 1430	Arrival tea and registration	
1430 - 1435	Welcome address	Ms Ferlin CA Sangma, Hon'ble MLA Chairperson, MSCCC & SD
1435 - 1445	Opening Remarks	Shri Vincent Pala, Hon'ble MP Co-convenor Mountain Legislators Meet 2019
1445 - 1455	Context Setting	Shri Sushil Ramola President, Integrated Mountain Initiative
1455 - 1505	Special Address	Dr Mustafa Khan, IHCAP/SDC
1505 - 1520	Special Address	Mr Thomas Pullenkar, Senior Advisor SELCO Foundation
1520 - 1640	Open Discussion	Moderated by Shri PD Rai, former MP (Co-Convener)
1640- 1655	Concluding Remarks/Way forward	Ms Agatha Sangma, Hon'ble MP Convenor Mountain Legislators Meet 2019
1655 - 1700	Vote of thanks	Shri HM Shangpliang, Hon'ble MLA
Followed by cultural program & dinner at Pinewood Hotel from 1800 hrs onwards		

REPORT OF THE MOUNTAIN LEGISLATORS' MEET 2019

The meeting was called to order by Shri Vincent Pala, Hon'ble Member of Parliament of Shillong (Lok Sabha) and Chair of the meeting.

WELCOME ADDRESS BY SMT. FERLIN SANGMA, HON'BLE MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MEGHALAYA

While welcoming the legislators, parliamentarians and members of District Councils, on behalf of the Government of Meghalaya, Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI) and Meghalaya Integrated Mountain Development Initiative (MIMDI), Smt. Ferlin Sangma stated that the deliberations of this Mountain Legislators' Meet will focus on youth and entrepreneurship in Indian Himalayan Region towards building secure livelihood opportunities for mountain youth. Being the Chairperson of the Council on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Meghalaya, Smt. Ferlin Sangma articulated the importance of the platform to move forward for the common cause of the mountains. Hoping for a fruitful and engaging discussion, she thanked IMI and IHCAP for bringing all the stakeholders together on the same platform. She also thanked the resource persons who have worked relentlessly since day one to make the program a success.

SHRI VINCENT PALA, HON'BLE MP, SHILLONG, MEGHALAYA (LOK SABHA)

Shri Vincent Pala thanked the legislators for attending the meeting. He talked in brief of his association with IMI and said that IMI can help legislators by being consultants and advisors. Thereafter he invited Shri Sushil Ramola to set the context of the meeting.

CONTEXT SETTING BY SHRI SUSHIL RAMOLA, PRESIDENT, IMI

Shri Sushil Ramola, briefly spoke on the previous Legislators' Meet held in Meghalaya on 11th September 2019 which was chaired by Shri Conrad Sangma, Hon'ble CM, Meghalaya. The issue of climate change and its impact on everyday life were discussed. Studies have proven that globally, we are likely to face a huge temperature increase and if we can control it within a 1.5-degree centigrade increase, we will be fortunate, however, huge amounts of work will be required to make that happen. Everywhere there is visible variability in rainfall, seasons changing, and changing cropping patterns, impacting farmers, hospitality industry, and will soon impact everyone. These were the deliberations which were brought about by IHCAP and Swiss Development Corporation (SDC). He spoke on the regional legislators' meet that was conducted in Bangalore on 25th September 2019 focusing on water policy for Himalayan futures. Legislators from different states came together to discuss how legislators can work towards policy changes and implementation which can work towards building the resilience of the mountain states. This resulted in the proposal to create a water solutions lab for Himalayan futures to deal with some of these issues.

Another important action facilitated by IMI was the Conclave of the Himalayan States on 28th July 2019 in Mussoorie. Here, IMI worked closely with researchers and state CMs to bring home the point that mountain states need devolution of funds to compensate for the ecological services provided by IHR states and to counter the impact of climate change. This recommendation was made to the 15th Finance Commission and work is going ahead with this.

Shri Ramola also briefed the gathering on the main outcomes of the Sustainable Mountain Development Summit VIII (SMDS VIII) held in Shillong. The theme of SMDS VIII was sustainable mountain livelihoods through youth entrepreneurship. The message which came out strongly was that in mountain states it is difficult to provide jobs and livelihoods through government jobs, however, this gap can be fulfilled through entrepreneurship which has high potential given the aspirations of youth today. Huge opportunities exist in alternative energy, food chains, value chains, food processing, tourism, etc. The summit was attended by many entrepreneurs and about 100 people from outside the state. He also briefed the gathering of the downstream work that is already in the pipelines as part of the post-SMDS VIII work. The biggest out of these is an incubation centre that IIM Shillong and IMI are working on together. This will enable the creation of entrepreneurs' hub. This will also bring in partners like Villgro and TRIF. The first step towards this is identifying sectors and facilitation of networks for entrepreneurs. He once again stressed that this will require huge policy changes which will need tremendous support from legislators – from both policy and management point of view.

He concluded by briefing the House about Dr. R.S. Tolia Award instituted in the name of IMI's Founding President. He thanked all attendees for participating in the Meet.

PRESENTATION ON 'THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MANAGING CLIMATE RISK'
BY DR. MUSTAFA KHAN, TEAM LEADER, INDIAN HIMALAYAS CLIMATE
ADAPTATION PROGRAMME (IHCAP)

Dr. Mustafa Khan spoke about IHCAP which is a bilateral project between the Government of Switzerland and India for sustaining the Himalayan ecosystem. The key points he discussed in his presentation are:

- ◆ Temperatures are rising in the mountains at a rate higher than that of the global average. Climate change risk needs to be understood much more finely than what we understand now as policy makers. Existing practices can be made much better and our ambitions need to be raised much more to respond to the threat of climate change. There is need for climate change adaptation in the Himalayas: By 2100 even if global warming is kept to 1.5 °C, the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region will warm by 1.8 + 0.4 °C (Source: The Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment, 2019)

◆ Based on the idea of climate risk, he elucidated that there are three distinct components of risk – hazards, which comprise of phenomena like flash floods, cloud bursts, glacial lake outburst floods or even droughts; exposure, which is related to how exposed we are as a community to the hazards taking place in the mountains; and vulnerability, which means the degree to which a community is exposed to climate change.

◆ The policy interpretation of the three elements of risk were discussed by Dr. Mustafa Khan. He explained that with hazards, there is very little that the government can do because there is very little knowledge of climate science research, and capital-intensive methodologies are required to access this.

◆ With exposure, the policy interpretation would be moving the people out of the path of hazard, which is possible but requires immense political will and capital. As legislators, it is very difficult to take action before a hazard. Hazards are trackable using satellites, but mountain specific hazards like cloud bursts are difficult to monitor and predict accurately the area of impact due to topography. Tackling the vulnerability part of risk is most doable for legislators – by enhancing the capabilities of communities. Some of these measures are already taken by governments - Ex gratia payments, property damage compensations, etc. Another measure would include providing better quality seed varieties to farmers for agriculture. Overall what we are seeing right now in IHR is that expectations of the communities are rising more towards exposure and hazards.

◆ IHCAP undertook a study in 2018 with Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru, IIT-Guwahati, IIT-Mandi and Department of Science and Technology, entitled 'Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for the Indian Himalayan Region Using a Common Framework.' All the 12 state governments worked together to create this report. The study showed the districts which are more vulnerable than others in a particular state. The key result was that out of the 12 IHR states, the low vulnerability states were Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh. The moderately vulnerable states were Tripura, Nagaland, West Bengal, Meghalaya, Manipur and J&K. The high vulnerability states were Mizoram and Assam.

◆ The implications are clear that the Himalayan states are more sensitive than any other part of the country. Being less vulnerable does not mean that these states don't need support. It means that these states are less vulnerable and don't need support for the vulnerability part of risk, but they need support for hazard and exposure part. All IHR states are vulnerable and the ranking is relative.

◆ Projects dealing with vulnerability are now saturated. Now the time is to think about addressing risk before the hazard strikes. Very few projects are focusing on the hazard and exposure part of it. If proposals are submitted along these lines, there is a higher chance that they will be accepted, and community aspirations will also be addressed.

PRESENTATION ON 'SUSTAINABLE ENERGY ECOSYSTEM DEVELOPMENT' **BY SHRI THOMAS PULLENKAV, SENIOR ADVISOR, SELCO FOUNDATION**

Shri Thomas Pullenkav briefed the gathering about the SELCO Foundation which works on clean energy and energy efficiency, and sustainable livelihoods through youth entrepreneurship. SELCO believes that sustainable energy and energy access is a catalyst for development irrespective of which SDG it is, be it ending poverty, health, education, gender equality, etc. Because of the challenging topography of mountainous areas, one cannot think of running electrical cables across mountains or forests. What makes a lot more sense is clean energy in the form of biomass energy, pico hydro energy and solar energy. Following this he gave some examples of the work SELCO is doing which can be introduced in the IHR.

- ◆ Energy plays a huge role in value addition. SELCO engages in energy incubation, i.e., identifying entrepreneurs working in energy. They help incubate energy enterprises and help them grow.
- ◆ Some small shops in the rural areas which do not have access to energy have been installed with solar-powered fridges for storing yoghurt, milk, poultry, etc. and through this food spoilage is avoided which helps boost business.
- ◆ Another simple machine is the solar powered sewing machine which has been installed in one centre in the Garo hills. This has increased the productivity of the tailor who can now stitch much more.
- ◆ Another example given was that of the cotton value chain. Sowing and irrigation of cotton can be improved with solar powered water pumps. Cotton picking, ginning, weaving and sewing are other areas in the value chain where energy interventions have brought about change in the lives of people.
- ◆ Chilly grinder is another example which uses decentralised energy for adding value and grinding chilly.
- ◆ Mobile food vending van power by solar energy with an inbuilt fridge which can store perishable goods.
- ◆ Usually people have to come to a central area to access health services. SELCO has tried to take health services to rural areas by ensuring decentralised energy. In Arunachal Pradesh Public Health Centre, SELCO has done both energy components plus design of the centre. There is also a boat clinic in Assam. SELCO is also working in Garo Hills with public health centres where they are powering them with solar.

Shri Pullenkav expressed SELCO's interest in working with state and district level policymakers in the IHR to design policies to make the delivery of sustainable energy easier. This would include financial models to ensure that entrepreneurs in rural areas can own the system. SELCO can help map energy requirements across various chains and programs.

SHRI P.D. RAI, COUNCILLOR, IMI

Shri P D Rai began by saying that this is an important issue that needs to be looked at from all angles. There are a lot of resources available at our disposal. One of the key institutional offerings of IMI is to see how to integrate all the policies and programmes across the IHR, understand the technology, human resources, and forests. What drives policymakers is how they relate all of this to the people. He further stated that policy makers should work for the people who vote them into office and are able to help them. The value addition that IMI would like to add is that when the participant policy makers leave the room, they will have some idea about how to encourage youth entrepreneurship in their constituencies in the background of climate change. The policy makers are in a position to take these offerings and connect it to the people by way of a project or in terms of policies. Policies can be at the level of local, state and national policies.

Open Discussion (Moderated by Shri P. D. Rai)

Smt. Miani Shira, Mla, Ampati, Meghalaya:

- ◆ As legislators we always think about how we can help our people. Regarding climate change, it's time for policy change.
- ◆ How can policymakers make the uneducated and village people understand the relevance and urgency of climate change?

Shri M. Gouzamang Guite, Mdc From Churachandpur, Manipur:

- ◆ He shared a few points regarding adaptation to climate change and sustainable development.
- ◆ Jhum cultivation is the main driver of the economy in hill areas – slash and burn method of cultivation. This type of cultivation greatly affects climatic conditions.
- ◆ Hilly areas have small streams which populate the landscape. Dams can be created on these streams which can be channelized to a pond which can then be used for Pisciculture.
- ◆ Excess water from the pond can be used for terrace cultivation and horticulture like sugarcane, etc.

Shri C.T. Lian Guite, Member of District Council, Churchandpur, Manipur:

- ◆ Need for government policy for small skill development units/institutes to be set up in schools.
- ◆ Small processing units in schools should be made mandatory so that kids learn from a young age. In Churachandpur, cinnamon is of very high quality. If infrastructure is made available, they can be processed in these small facilities.

Shri S.B. Mara, Mara DC, Mizoram:

- ◆ In the area under Mara district council, there is a need for sustainable livelihood opportunities. Most of the areas under MADC have already been surveyed.
- ◆ Could IMI help them with proposals for projects?
- ◆ There is a need for sustainable livelihood options and alternatives to replace existing unsustainable practices and for preservation of our resources.
- ◆ Sensitisation of the population in these areas is of high priority.

Shri V.B. Byhna, MDC, Mizoram:

- ◆ In the Mizoram hilly areas the prevalence of Jhum cultivation is still huge. Need a sustainable alternative to Jhum cultivation. Eg. Horticulture
- ◆ Computer knowledge must be given to the youth of the villages.

Shri Deriek Salai Solo, MDC, Mizoram:

- ◆ He stated that most villages in ADC areas grow chilli and ginger and the product is substantial for local needs. But it cannot be processed due to lack of technology and lack of power supply. Produce is procured by businessmen from Silchar at low prices.
- ◆ Instead of this, if we procure a machine to process the produce, we will be able to be self-sufficient for chilly produce in the state.
- ◆ SELCO foundation can come in here.
- ◆ Raised question to Dr. Mustafa Khan: Mizoram is one of the top vulnerable states. How was this conclusion made? Suggestions for improvement.

Shri Pradeep Tamta, MP (Rajya Sabha), Uttarakhand:

- ◆ All states have different priorities. Himalayan states and their identity and culture needs to be incorporated in development policies and agenda.
- ◆ Himalayan states are vulnerable because they are sustaining the plains of India. All major rivers originate in the Himalayas. All the development activities in these states that have taken place have to some extent contributed to increasing the vulnerability of the IHR. Eg. Cloud burst has become a common phenomenon now.
- ◆ Mountain states need to be compensated for ecosystem services that they provide – this needs to be taken up with the government for formulation of policy.
- ◆ Need for policy in mountain states for sustainable infrastructure. Himalayan development authority or Himalayan development council for all of IHR can be envisioned. This initiative needs to be taken forward as states are small and cannot push for this alone.
- ◆ Landslides are a huge problem all over IHR, but no integrated infrastructure policy exists. There is no sustainable technology so far in the IHR like it is being done in many other countries.

Shri Dr. Azad Zaman, MLA, Rajabala, Meghalaya [West Garo Hills]:

- ◆ Farmers in Garo Hills are investing in rubber plantations but as a consequence of this the weather is becoming hotter. We need to have a mass awareness campaign on this.
- ◆ In the plain part of Garo Hills, water-intensive paddy cultivation is depleting the groundwater reserve. Winter crop Boro paddy needs water for 120 days from the transplanting stage to the reproductive stage. Water is pumped from the ground and supplied to the paddy fields. Earlier, water would be pumped from a depth of 30 meters. whereas now, digging is done down to 60-100 meters. Groundwater reserve is reducing.
- ◆ Local produce like cashew nuts and cardamom are thriving, but they are procured by businessmen from Assam or West Bengal at very low prices. The original farmer is the worst sufferer. Market regulatory mechanism needs to be set up. Farmers are otherwise losing revenue.
- ◆ Militant organisations are under ceasefire in Garo hills. Many of the youth in the area are educated. Can we get them engaged in food processing or other livelihood programmes?

- ◆ There is a need for mass awareness campaigns on these issues.
- ◆ MLAs from Garo hills are ready to cooperate on these issues if outside parties come into the guide. Together we can organise several programmes.

Shri Saleng Sangma, MLA, Gambegre, Meghalaya:

- ◆ Jhum cultivation used to happen in cycles before – land used to be left fallow for at least two cycles to allow the land to heal. However, with increasing population there is no time for land to be left fallow now to heal.
- ◆ Cherapunjee no longer receives the highest rainfall. There is rampant stone quarrying in these areas which is harming the ecology.
- ◆ Many are now moving to rubber plantations in the Garo hills. Problems with such plantations have been discussed by earlier speakers – what are the alternatives? Without alternatives we cannot ask villagers to stop these activities.
- ◆ Certain practices have been inherited and ingrained in the lifestyle of the people. Therefore, when politicians try to bring about change through policies, it's difficult.
- ◆ Mass sensitisation programmes are necessary to change how people conduct practices – moral institutions like religious institutions and NGOs should spearhead this.

Shri Jitendra Chaudhury, Former MP, Tripura:

- ◆ In Tripura, rubber is a profitable plant yielding good prices, hence it is being taken up by more and more people – however, problems associated with rubber plantation have already been discussed. What are the alternatives to this?
- ◆ In Tripura, there are a number of hill and tribal communities. Some tribes are still practicing Jhum cultivation. There were several experiments by the government to settle them in permanent land-based activities. But only rubber has been found to be the best practice.
- ◆ 30-40 years ago, environment issues used to be limited to experts. Now, it is the issue of commoners because it impacts the lives and livelihoods of all people.
- ◆ In every state, legislators need to be sensitised about climate change and climate change adaptation.

- ◆ Request IMI to appeal to every CM and Speaker of all IHR states for Special Sessions in state assemblies on climate change adaptation. These sessions can include other representatives of local bodies and experts as it will be important for knowledge building which will influence policy making.

Shri Pravat Chowdhury, MLA, Manu, Tripura:

- ◆ Unemployment is increasing day by day. We need to make job opportunities available for our youth.
- ◆ There is a need to introduce an integrated funding system for pisciculture, horticulture, etc. for sustaining land-based activities and recharging ground water supply.
- ◆ The other necessary action that needs to be introduced at the earliest is climate change education in school curriculum.

Shri Kimfa Sidney Marbaniang, MLA, Rambrai Jyrngam, Meghalaya [West Khasi Hills]:

- ◆ Main concern in his constituency is the deforestation happening there. People are dependent on timber for livelihoods which is leading to increasing felling of trees. The challenge lies in how to balance livelihoods with ecology.
- ◆ There is a need for alternatives and solutions in order to sensitise villagers and divert from timber business to other alternative livelihoods.

Shri George B. Lyngdoh, MLA, Umroi, Meghalaya:

- ◆ Meghalaya has been bearing the brunt of National Green Tribunal to protect the ecology. Coal mining has been banned and thousands of livelihoods have been snatched overnight in order to protect the environment. Many stone quarries have also been closed down especially in Umroi, which has again resulted in loss of livelihoods. Our government is not prepared to balance ecosystem protection and livelihood protection.
- ◆ In the absence of these livelihoods, people are driven to illegal activities – coal mining, limestone, sand quarrying, and plundering our natural resources because of absence of sustainable livelihoods.
- ◆ The need of the hour is to make policies to balance livelihoods with ecology.
- ◆ Integration between departments is also lacking. Integrated ecosystem management information system where micro data on soil, minerals, air quality, water quality, climate variables, environmental damage, agricultural data, etc., needs to be integrated under one umbrella and made accessible.

- ◆ Small steps can go a long way. For example, waste management systems in rural markets can take a fully zero-waste approach. But people need to be empowered and trained for these. Solar energy needs to be brought into central government policy and solar lighting for villages. Affordable household solar lighting needs to be made available.
- ◆ Energy efficient schools is another area which Meghalaya needs to look at, which integrates smart energy and energy efficiency.

Shri Marcuise N. Marak, MLA, William Nagar, East Garo hills, Meghalaya:

- ◆ His constituency being in the heart of the Garo Hills, most of the reserved forests are in this constituency. Jhum cultivation is also practiced in his constituency.
- ◆ He has been trying to discourage Jhum and has been encouraging people to go for horticulture. Though some people are trying to take up horticulture, change in mindset is essential.
- ◆ There is huge scope for youth entrepreneurship. Horticulture is already being practiced. Many products like Betel nuts, oranges, honey, etc. have a huge scope if they are marketed properly. How can we establish processing units to engage youth and develop a network of entrepreneurs working on these areas?

Shri Rakkam A. Sangma, MLA, Rongara Siju, Meghalaya:

- ◆ Climate change is what will impact everyone.
- ◆ Conservation efforts have not been successful because it has come from government departments. Many people view preserving forests as equivalent to destroying traditional livelihoods.
- ◆ Education and awareness is key and should be made part of the curriculum from a young age. The message of climate change and climate consciousness should reach every corner of IHR with education.
- ◆ As politicians, we should take responsibility and frame policy for payment of ecosystem services.
- ◆ We depend on Delhi for fund allocation but all of India depends on us for water, oxygen and other resources. Therefore, the Government of India should take responsibility.
- ◆ Dr. Mustafa – Please let us know why Assam and Mizoram are high-risk, based on which indicators?

Shri Rupert Momin, MLA, Kharkutta, Meghalaya [North Garo Hills]:

- ◆ The production of bananas is the highest in North Garo hills in all of Southeast Asia. But due to lack of proper market linkages, it is bought at a low price by middlemen from Assam. Farmers are not getting what they should get.
- ◆ In his constituency, broom stick cultivation is done. For this, the farmers burn the land so that it is ready for next year. Traditional practice of broom plant cultivation is profitable and easy to cultivate in Meghalaya – how can we make it more organised?
- ◆ Is there a way in which existing Jhum and broom cultivation can be done in a more sustainable and organised way in Meghalaya?
- ◆ Question for Dr. Mustafa Khan – Mountain regions are at a high risk of cloud burst. This happened in 2014 in his constituency where a whole hillock came sliding down and many people died. What is the preventive measure? How can we sensitise people?
- ◆ To Mr. Thomas Pullenkar – All MLAs from Garo Hills will be very happy to be part of SELCO's work in Garo Hills. Scientists and academicians can guide the work that we are doing in our constituencies.

Shri S.G. Esmatur Mominin, MLA, Phulbari, Meghalaya [West Garo Hills]:

- ◆ In 2014 catastrophic floods hit parts of Garo hills, especially the plain belt of Garo Hills. Many lives were lost, houses washed away and trees toppled. Since it was caused by a cloud burst, we did not get any prior information. Is there any scientific measure we can take to be informed earlier of such impending dangers?
- ◆ To make the people aware we need a common platform where resources can be made available to anyone and everyone for sensitisation of masses.

Smt. Ferlin A. Sangma, MLA, Selsella, Meghalaya [West Garo Hills]:

- ◆ Much has been discussed and everyone's participation has given this meeting meaning.
- ◆ Youth and entrepreneurship is the main focus. Education curriculum has to be changed. It needs to be much more practical and entrepreneurial.
- ◆ Legislators as stakeholders must work on sustainable development.
- ◆ Legislators and bureaucrats also must upgrade their knowledge periodically.

Dr. Mustafa Khan, IHCAP:

- ◆ IHCAP has Climate Awareness Programmes state-wise and also various state media workshops.
- ◆ Eg: The Media Fellowship with the Government of Manipur - to take detailed stories of climate change adaptation.

Shri Thomas Pullencav, SELCO Foundation:

- ◆ Be it Jhum or Rubber plantation, we have to offer alternatives to people.
- ◆ SELCO will be happy to be knowledge partners with the Government of Meghalaya or work independently with Legislators.

Shri Dhruvad Choudhury, ICIMOD:

- ◆ What are alternatives to Jhum? Why has it become like this now? It is because of land ownership patterns.
- ◆ Alternatives – Markets, credit, tech, etc. everything needs to develop together.

Shri Sushil Ramola, President IMI:

- ◆ Building awareness among the masses, legislators and bureaucrats is the first step.
- ◆ IMI can engage different organisations for awareness building in Meghalaya.
- ◆ Creation of entrepreneurship ecosystem – 1 lakh entrepreneurs in next 10 years. Need to look at all levels – demand side, supply side, market side, incubation side. Not a government-led entrepreneurship ecosystem, but entrepreneurship-led.
- ◆ 15th FC: ecosystem services funding - more work is required to be done in order to build partnerships.
- ◆ Need to follow up on post -SMDS VIII work.

Ms. Agatha Sangma, MP (Lok Sabha), Tura, Meghalaya:

- ◆ There must be awareness and sensitisation at all levels – constituency and bureaucracy is step one.

- ◆ Best practices and knowledge sharing is very important and needs to be encouraged even more.
- ◆ For legislators, it is our responsibility to upgrade our own knowledge to make our constituency better. We have tools at our disposal like this Mountain Legislators' forum where we can learn from each other. We need to see how best practices can be scaled up. There are many civil society organisations in place which can support us.
- ◆ There are existing policies – but will need to be supported by legislators for proper implementation.
- ◆ Special sessions on climate change adaptation is a must in Assemblies.

Shri Vincent Pala, MP (Lok Sabha), Shillong, Meghalaya:

- ◆ Through consistent efforts by Legislators a lot of change can be generated.
- ◆ We have forums with experts and technocrats who can guide us.
- ◆ Need policy integration on all levels.

VOTE OF THANKS BY SHRI H.M. SHANGPLIANG, MLA, MAWSYNRAM, MEGHALAYA

He started by saying that livelihood opportunities for mountain youth are many, but we should focus on our strengths – eg. Tourism. This holds true for all of IHR. The youth need specialised sectoral training. He shared the example from his own constituency. After becoming MLA, he earmarked 12 lakh from MLA fund and engaged ETPL India limited to train 100 youth on tourism and hospitality sector for a duration of 4 months. All these 100 youth from his constituency have been well placed at the end of the training session. If each policymaker can make little contribution, we will have so many trained and employed youth by the end of this term.

The other strength is local skills. Youth need to be given training for excelling in their own trade. There is a need for uniform policies throughout the Himalayan states. We need to learn from each other's best practices and could have a similar kind of plan of action on any programme.

He thanked the MLM forum, under the leadership of IMI, for bringing together the heads of IHR government to think collectively about Himalayan futures. When all 12 states go together with a unified voice it can create a huge impact. This forum is a unique platform, bringing together three levels of legislature – MLAs, MPs and MDCs. He further thanked all participants for their contributions and suggestions and ensured that they will be taken into consideration for future action of IMI.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF ATTENDEES WITH SIGNATURES

Sl No	Name	Designation	Email ID	Phone No	Signature
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ANNEX 2: LIST OF ATTENDEES

Legislators' Meet 2019
 "Towards building secure livelihood opportunities for mountain youth"
 6th November 2019

List of attendees				
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ANNEX 3: PHOTOS FROM THE LEGISLATORS MEET '19





ANNEX 4: NEWS REPORT

NOVEMBER 7, 2019

Mountain legislators gather in city, discuss climate change

By Our Reporter

SHILLONG: The Mountain Legislators' Meet was held in NEC, bringing together legislators from different mountain states to deliberate on and examine key policy measures and highlight issues from the vantage point of the mountain states.

The meet was organised by Integrated Mountain Initiative and hosted by Meghalaya Integrated Mountain Development Initiative (MIMDI) and Martin Luther Christian University (MLCU).

The conference — convened by Member of Parliament from Tura Agatha Sangma, chaired by MP of Shillong Vincent Pala, and co-chaired by former MP of Sikkim (LS) PD Rai — was attended by MPs, MLAs and representatives of Autonomous District Councils from Meghalaya, Uttarakhand, Ladakh, Sikkim, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura and members of IML, MIMDI, Swiss Development Corporation, SELCO Foundation and ICIMOD.

The members raised several critical areas of concern with regard to the future of livelihoods and entrepreneurship in terms of climate change.

Member of Parliament from Tura, Agatha Sangma highlighted the importance of knowledge sharing and scaling up of best practices for effectively tackling common issues of the Indian Himalayan Region.

Member of Parliament of Shillong, Vincent Pala also added that legislators can make a huge difference if they empower themselves by upgrading knowledge and finding sustainable solutions through collaborative efforts.

The discussion highlighted the need for sensitisation of general public, bureaucracy and politicians on the issues of climate change and the ways in which legislators can use policy instruments to minimise the impact of climate change.

Acknowledging the need for a sustained, integrated effort to addressing key issues of the region, it was also highlighted that the youth and entrepreneurs will have an active role to play.

The topic of Jhum cultivation and balancing traditional livelihoods with ecology was discussed extensively.

The legislators, during the meet, also held an in-depth discussion on the importance of alternative sustainable livelihoods.

The importance of adding environmental education in the school and college curriculums was also added.

The legislators, during the meet, also acknowledged the importance of data and micro-data in guiding policy and concluded that more needs to be done in this aspect in the Indian Himalayan Region.



MLA and MPs from mountainous states of the country during The Mountain Legislators' Meet in the city.

IMI gratefully acknowledges the support, trust and cooperation of the following
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