

GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT

MEGHALAYA, SHILLONG

Press Communiqué

Shillong, November 10, 2025 : The Hon'ble Governor of Meghalaya, Shri C. H. Vijayashankar today inaugurated the 4th Annual International Conference of the Society for Pathways to Sustainability (PathS) at the historic Darbar Hall of Raj Bhavan, Shillong. The two-day conference is being held on the theme **"Sustainable Development: Theory, Practice, Approach and Policy"** and is being jointly organised by the Department of Economics, North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong; Society for Pathways to Sustainability (PathS); OKDISCD, Guwahati; AAS and ICSSR-NERC. More than 100 research papers are scheduled to be presented both in online and offline mode, along with multiple thematic panel discussions, including a special panel session on "Sustainable Development in the North East: Challenges and Opportunities."

In his address, the Hon'ble Governor said that Meghalaya is a natural and cultural repository of sustainable practices, where people have continued to live with nature in harmony for generations. He noted that the traditional communities of Meghalaya practice organic, low-impact farming and respect nature as part of their socio-cultural ethos. He highlighted that this spirit of sustainability is deeply rooted in India's ancient civilisational values which believed in balance between material growth and ecological responsibility.

The Hon'ble Governor also expressed concern that in the modern industrial era, development patterns in many parts of the world have become highly extractive and have resulted in loss of natural resources, environmental degradation and widening socio-economic inequalities. Referring to the present ecological crisis, he mentioned that monoculture plantation patterns cause serious long-term ecological imbalance, destroy natural nutrition cycles, and weaken the biodiversity linkages of fragile ecosystems. He emphasised that **native species must always be prioritised** along with due care for the endangered species and special focus over medicinal plants because they protect the ecosystem, conserve genetic diversity and enhance natural resilience.

He urged researchers, academicians, students and stakeholders in the conference to take a **pragmatic, evidence-based and practical**

approach in their research and policy recommendations so that sustainable solutions can be developed which are relevant to real local ecosystems and can support the country's long-term development pathway.

Highlighting the vulnerability of the region to climate disturbances, the Hon'ble Governor referred to the visible impact of climate change in **Mawsynram - the highest rainfall region in the world**, where rainfall patterns, seasonal distribution and climatic rhythm have begun to show changes. He stressed that the increasing frequency of abnormal rainfall, shifts in monsoon behaviour, erosion and habitat loss are clear signs that climate change is already affecting the North East. He called upon scholars to document these changes scientifically and build research-based frameworks for policy makers to safeguard the future of the region.

The Hon'ble Governor congratulated NEHU and all partner institutions for choosing Meghalaya as the venue for this important global academic dialogue on sustainability. He expressed confidence that the conference would produce valuable recommendations that would support India's efforts towards sustainable development, as envisioned by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, and help in strengthening the nation's resolve to ensure ecological balance, inclusive growth and long-term environmental security.