

Centre to promote state forest products

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SHILLONG: The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is keen to promote the minor forest products of the state and will form a committee to handle the online marketing aspects of it.

Union Minister of state for Tribal Affairs Renuka Singh, who reviewed the implementation of various schemes and programmes of the ministry at the state secretariat here on Thursday, said that Meghalaya is rich in minor forest products and the Ministry is committed to use this potential to the optimum to improve the lot of the tribals.

“We will form a group of people whose responsibility will be to procure and package the local forest products and sell it in the nearby areas,” Singh said adding these would also be sold to online marketing companies to reach out across the country and the world.

Singh said the ministry will organise a tribal festival in Shillong in January- February next year where handicraft artists from the state as well as other parts of the country can exchange ideas.

“The artists will also be registered in The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED),” Singh added.

Informing that she has directed the state government to intimate the ministry about proposals which will be submitted to different ministries in future, Singh said that most of the schemes of the ministry are being implemented properly in the state and utilisation of funds for these are also satisfactory.

She said the ministry would set up 50,000 'Van Dhan Vikas Kendras' in the tribal areas across the country to ensure livelihood support and empowerment of the tribal people and urged the state government to set up such centres by involving self help groups.

During the meeting, Vijay Kumar D, Commissioner and Secretary, state Planning Department presented a brief status report about various development and welfare projects implemented by the state government since 2015-16.

Kumar highlighted about setting up Common Facility Centres, Knowledge and Cultural Centres, additional classrooms in schools, market complexes, dairy and nurseries, fisheries, skill development centres, hostels for boys and girls among others as per the sponsored schemes of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs covering different sectors of agriculture, rural development, education, tourism, culture etc.

Home Minister James PK Sangma, who also attended the meeting, assured that the state government will implement all the schemes to contribute towards the development of the state as well as the country and expressed the hope that Meghalaya will continue to get support from the central government.

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