

GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT

MEGHALAYA, SHILLONG

Press Communiqué

Shillong, September 26, 2024: North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), in collaboration with Raj Bhavan, Meghalaya, successfully organized a one-day Workshop on Drug Abuse at Raj Bhavan. The workshop, a vital step in addressing the growing menace of drug abuse in Meghalaya, was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Governor of Meghalaya, who presided as the Chief Guest. The event saw a convergence of academic leaders, social welfare experts, and youth from NEHU and beyond to discuss solutions to this critical issue. In his speech, the Hon'ble Governor highlighted the severity of the drug abuse crisis, noting, "Drug abuse has become a silent epidemic, creeping into the lives of individuals, families, and communities, leaving behind a trail of destruction." He emphasized the multifaceted impact of substance abuse, calling it a "socio-economic, cultural, and law-and-order problem" that destabilizes communities and threatens the future of Meghalaya's youth. Commending NEHU for organizing the workshop, the Governor added, "This initiative gives me hope. The academic community's proactive engagement is a testament to the growing awareness of the problem and the willingness to be part of the solution."

The Governor further stressed the need for collective action involving government agencies, law enforcement, healthcare providers, educational institutions, and civil society to combat drug abuse. He encouraged the youth to take an active role in raising awareness and being advocates for a drug-free lifestyle.

The Vice-Chancellor of NEHU, Prof. Prabha Shankar Shukla, also addressed the gathering, acknowledging the significant impact of drug abuse on Meghalaya and its youth. "This workshop is timely and critical," he remarked, emphasizing that the fight against drug abuse is one of the most pressing challenges of our times. He expressed gratitude to the experts for sharing their knowledge and insights, which would undoubtedly benefit the students and young attendees.

The workshop featured two key lectures. Shri Michael Syngkon, from the Manbha Foundation, shared his organization's extensive experience in rehabilitating individuals affected by drug abuse. His talk provided practical insights and hope for those battling

addiction. P. Sampat, Principal Secretary, Department of Social Welfare, gave an insightful presentation on the state's efforts to combat drug abuse, highlighting both the challenges and potential solutions.

A major highlight of the event was the release of the trailer for the feature film "Intezaar"(Nga dang iai ap), produced by Black Screen in collaboration with NEHU. Shot entirely at NEHU and featuring staff and students as actors, the film addresses pressing social issues in the region, with a particular focus on drug abuse. The film also includes inputs from the headman of Mawlai, reflecting community perspectives on the problem.

The workshop concluded with a call to action for the youth to be more involved in community efforts to combat drug abuse. The collective commitment from participants, including students, faculty, and government representatives, underscored the importance of ongoing dialogue, education, and intervention to address this growing issue.