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Report on the entrepreneurial development activities conducted by Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC), Shillong College under PRIME, Meghalaya Sponsorship for the Financial Year 2022-2023

Higher educational institutions function in a dynamic environment and must have the capacity to adapt to changes. Shillong College an A⁺ Grade institution, one of the premiere institutions of the North Eastern Region, shaping lives since 1956 worked towards inculcating entrepreneurial dynamism amongst students and youths of the state in an attempt at making a difference in their lives. Since 2011, when the Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC) was set up, the college has been on a mission to enhance the entrepreneurial potential in the existing scenario of lack or dearth of training facilities for youths of the state.

The Cell has seen phenomenal success since its inception in 2011 and in a decade's time it witnessed significant development playing the role of both trainer and facilitator in entrepreneurial development in the state.

Pursuing excellence in the field, on 28th October, 2022 Shillong College collaborated with PRIME, Meghalaya to set up Entrepreneurial Promotion and Development Programme and Incubator to promote entrepreneurial ecosystem in the state.

The Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC), Shillong College has been conducting programmes to strengthen the core entrepreneurial potential of students and youths finally helping them acquire entrepreneurial skills. Here's a brief report on the activities conducted with the financial assistance from PRIME Meghalaya for the Financial Year 2022-2023.

1. A five-day training program / Course on Personality Development entitled **Introductory on Soft Skills** was held from 3rd – 7th July, 2023 for the First Batch where 25 participants were enrolled. The same Programme was conducted one more time from 11th -15th September, 2023 this time with 26 student participants. The main objective of the course was to inculcate aspiring entrepreneurs with soft skills and enhance their personality. This five-day training program had 10 technical sessions on topics ranging widely from **Entrepreneurial Mind-set, Confidence Building, Effective Communication, Networking and Public Relations, Creative Thinking and Problem Solving, Thinking out of the box and lateral thinking, Leadership, Time Management, Goal Setting to Emotional Intelligence.**

Resource Person from Hundredfold Academy trained the participants.

The Training helped:

- learners develop a positive growth mindset;
- to be confident as an aspiring entrepreneur;
- to communicate effectively;
- to build good network and have good public relations skills;
- to trigger their creative minds and “Think out of the box”;

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- enhance their leadership qualities and taught them Self-Management;
- develop high Emotional Intelligence;
- to work on goals as aspiring entrepreneurs;

At the end of the workshop, a transformative impact on the learners was observed. They were prompted, encouraged and trained in valuable knowledge and skills that will help them achieve greater heights. They gained self-awareness, empathy, learnt about effective communication, learnt about the importance of building meaningful relationships as they communicate with all the stakeholders. They also acquired problem solving and lateral thinking abilities enabling them to navigate challenges and make informed decisions.

2. To provide a fundamental understanding of essential sales concepts and skills, a one-day workshop on **Sales Pitch was held on the 9th October, 2023**. The workshop highlighted on important topics like, **Understanding Customer Psychology, Selling Benefits and Networking opportunities**. The workshop included interactive sessions with many experts with Shri. Sunny Mawlong, Managing Director of Hundredfold Academy, Ms. Sonata Mary Maiong, Consultant for Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Meghalaya as prominent ones. The participants included BBA students of the College, who had the opportunity to apply the concepts learnt. Participants gained insights into customer-centric selling strategies, effective communication and the art of pitching their products and services. This event provided a platform for knowledge sharing and networking which is essential for aspiring entrepreneurs and students looking to excel in the world of business.
3. A program on **Hackathon on Social Innovation** was held on the 13th October, 2023. The main aim of this program was to motivate students implement their academic skills to practical problem solving with more confidence. Dr. (Mrs) E. Kharkongor, Principal, Shillong College, Shillong in her speech highlighted on the importance of such a program in developing and inculcating the entrepreneurship mindset among the students and developing them to become job creators and not job seekers. She also stressed on the significance of conducting a program on Hackathon which will enable the students to sort out the solutions to many problems faced by Meghalaya in a very innovative way.

The program which was followed by brainstorming sessions on various topics related to the hackathon from the resource persons which included both theory and practical. **The training focussed on developing cognitive skills, emotional stability, networking, creativity, personal growth and design thinking**. The workshop had three technical sessions. Smti Sanju Biswakarma, Head of Operations, Trusnetix Tech presented the students on Basics of Hackathon. A session on **Cybersecurity** was delivered by Shri Shubasmit Malakar, CEO Trusnetix. The students benefited much on Hands-On coding and Project Development. **Sessions on Team Formation, Ideation and Project Planning Introduction to Pitch Deck followed by brainstorming business ideas, and problem solving to develop students build market opportunity**.

4. Taking note of requirements of the NEP 2020 with its emphasis on skill development and vocational training EDC in collaboration with the Department of Microbiology conducted a **four-day Hands-On Training from the 7th -11th at State Biological Control Laboratory, Upper Shillong under the Directorate of Agriculture, Govt. of Meghalaya on Biofertilizers Production for Agricultural Applications**. The main objective of this program was to help outgoing students who are about to face the realistic challenges of the world by equipping them with the skill to handle, cultivate and propagate quality control microbial inoculants/Biofertilizer, at low-cost eco-friendly media preparation and production. 26 participants from the Department of Microbiology, Zoology, Botany and Environmental Science attended this training programme. During the program the participants were divided into groups and each group were trained on **Biofertilizer isolation, mass production and field applications**. Resource persons for these sessions include Dr. P.Nongkling, Asst Prof. Department of Botany, Synod College, Dr. A.Lamin Ka-Ot, Programme Officer, BioNest Incubator, Shillong, Dr. B.Nongbri, Asstt. Director, MSMR Development & Facilitator Officer, Govt. of India.
5. To help create a common platform to discuss issues as well as to pool ideas on innovative Startup. **A Bootcamp and Panel Discussion on Exploring Challenges and Upscaling Solutions** was held on the 13th of November, 2023. Panelists for this programme included successful entrepreneur Shri.Vijay Byrsat, proprietor of COLK Pvt. Ltd. Shri. D. L. Nongspung, Proprietor Urlong Tea, Smt. Kynjai Mawthoh, Proprietor Tirupa Sunrise Production Shri. Osmond Nongbri, Managing Director Meghalaya Corporative Apex Bank. Shri. S. Majaw, General Manager, District Commerce & Industries Centre. Shri. B. K. Sohliya, Commissioner, Meghalaya Agriculture Farmers Commission moderated the Panel Discussion. In the opening remark Shri. Sohliya, highlighted the challenges that entrepreneurs face and brainstorm on solutions. He emphasized on the need to make the youth of today understand the importance of self-sustenance and to develop an entrepreneurial understanding on being job creators and not job seekers. He insisted on giving fare right to the on-ground farmer for the hard work he puts in the field when it comes to pricing of products.

Panelists recounted their personal experience for new entrepreneurs with their Startups. They shared the various highs and lows and how they managed to overcome these challenges with determination and passion.

Prof. Indrajit Dube, Vice Chancellor, National Law University, Shillong invited speaker for the afternoon session spoke at length on the role of Institution and individual to understand the ecosystem of entrepreneurship in the state. The challenge for entrepreneurs / Startups is that resources (financial and human) are generally limited, and so, 'hard decisions need to be taken about how to allocate them', he said. Prof. Dube also deliberated on types of intellectual property protection like patent, copyright, trademark, etc. He informed that the university / school on indigenous knowledge and culture will be established soon with AI -centres that will act as information repository on indigenous knowledge and culture of the state which will be the first of its kind.

Annual Meet 2023 of Entrepreneurship Development Cell, Shillong College in partnership with PRIME, Meghalaya

Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC) has been organising **UGC Sponsored Three Months Certificate Course on Entrepreneurship Development since 2013**. The Cell collaborated with various departments and agencies to achieve its objectives. In the past thirteen years, EDC has nurtured the dreams of many local entrepreneurs helping them establish their own business ventures. On the 14th November, the Bootcamp Committee under EDC, Shillong College in collaboration with PRIME, Meghalaya acknowledged and felicitated successful entrepreneurs who had marched ahead from their Startup to proper business companies over the years.

The Chief Guest for the occasion was Shri. D.P Wahlang, Chief Secretary to Government of Meghalaya and Smt. Isawanda Laloo, IAS, Executive Director, MBMA and PRIME who also felicitated the successful entrepreneurs along with the founder-members of the **Entrepreneurship Development Cell**.

6. Three Months Certificate Course on Entrepreneurship Development.

Keeping in mind main objectives of the EDC is to create awareness, motivate, encourage and help develop entrepreneurial skills and identify the vast entrepreneurial resources that exists in the local environment that can be utilized for sustainable development, EDC annually conducts **Three Months Certificate Course on Entrepreneurship** every year. The Cell has been collaborating with various organizations of repute, having expertise in wide range of appropriate technologies that equips and subsequently empowers students for self-employment since 2013. The Course for the 9th Batch of 2023 with 17 aspiring entrepreneurs commenced on the 24th July, 2023 and concluded on 22nd November, 2023. Participants were drawn from all over the state. The Course included lectures, presentations & interactive sessions from various Resource Persons, Institutions, Line Departments of the Govt., EDC past participants and Local Entrepreneurs in which their contribution played a major role in moulding the 17 participants. The participants were also able to attend field trips, workshops and other programmes such as:

1. 4th August, 2023 (Waste Management): Wealth Recovery Centre, Umpling; Iainehskhem Self Help Group, Mawiong and Eco-Ri, NEHU, Umshing, Shillong.
2. 8th September, 2023 (Industries): Tirupa Sunrise Production, Malki; Units at the Industrial Estate, Shillong – Agency for Sustainable Initiatives (K.J.P. Synod Sepngi, Marpna Steel Furniture, Wanli Bakery, Kharsyntiew Transformer, Meghalaya Roller Flour Mill and Pure Meg Product Factory, Nongkohlew, Shillong.
3. 20th - 22nd September, 2023 (Exhibition): North-East Entrepreneurship Machinery & Innovation Exhibition (NEEMIE), SRGT Parking Lot, Polo Shillong (PRIME, Meghalaya).
4. 6th October, 2023 (Integrated Farming and Food Processing): Rural Resource & Training Centre (RRTC), Umran, Ri Bhoi District.
5. 3rd November, 2023 (Workshop on Spices): Kharsati Nursery, Umroi-Nongrah, Ri Bhoi District (organised by Spices Board of India).

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6. 9th November, 2023 (Conclave): MSME National SC-ST Hub Conclave, State Convention Centre, Shillong.
7. 9th November, 2023 (Workshop): Session on Menu Engineering and Planning, PRIME Startup Hub, Polo, Shillong.
8. 13th- 14th November, 2023 (Bootcamp): Bootcamp: Exploring Challenges and Up-scaling Solution, EDC, Shillong College.
9. 25th November, 2023 (Ecotourism): Garden of Caves, Laitmawsiang, Sohra and Mawdngong Park, Mawlyndiar, Sohra.

Business Plans for various ventures like Handmade Perfumes, Cold Processed Soap, Home-stay, Fisheries, Natural Fruit Juice, Turmeric Powder, Ice-popsicles, Integrated Farming, Crochet unit, Resin/Epoxy Jewelry and Accessories, Fast-food, Karaoke Bar, Rock Candy & Bakery shop, Stationery & Online Registration Service Centre, Traditional Clothing shop and Food truck (specialty in Putharo) were prepared during the Course to be submitted to the Govt. for aid and assistance.

Participants who were drawn from different districts of the state of Meghalaya have benefitted from these series of programs. They have been equipped, their young minds empowered to further the search in their respective fields and they have been enabled to face the challenging realities of the competitive world. They can visualise new aims with new missions to accomplish.

PRIME Meghalaya coloured with the vision of our Hon'ble Chief Minister, Shri. Conrad Sangma, will help create entrepreneurial ambience and make entrepreneurship a realistic and exciting possibility for the vibrant youth of the state of Meghalaya in the near future.

Shillong College is committed towards this end and with the continued support of PRIME, Government of Meghalaya we believe we can serve as a launch pad for the youth and help them be that positive change that the state aspires for.

Long Live Shillong College.