

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARENESS PROGRAMME (EAP) ON FOOD PROCESSING

September 16, 2022: An Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme (EAP) on Food Processing was organised jointly by Branch MSME-DFO, Tura, Ministry of MSME, Govt of India, and BIRAC BioNEST Bioincubator Facility, NEHU, Tura on September 16, 2022 at NEHU, Tura Campus exclusively for the in-campus NEHU students. A total of 89 enthusiastic in-house participants including students, research scholars and faculty members from appropriate departments and specializations joined the program. Dr Sujata Gurudev, hon'ble Campus I/C, NEHU, Tura campus had warmly welcomed everyone and briefed the gathering about the importance of entrepreneurship development especially related to food processing as it has higher scopes in the state of Meghalaya through its age-old connection with food fermentation and access to biodiversity hotspots. This was followed by an opening remark detailing the objective of the program and a detailed technical session by Mr. Nilesh Trivedi, Assistant Director, Branch of MSME-DFO, Tura. Mr. Trivedi highlighted the initiatives of MSME, the sectors and schemes under MSME, its contribution to the country's economy, the benefits of UDYAM Registration, training, financial assistance, and other opportunities available through MSME. He also discussed the "MSME Innovative" scheme, a new initiative, for the innovators with a combination of funding, mentorship, incubation, design intervention and IPR Protection in a single mode approach at a MSME recognised host institute. Mr. Trivedi also informed the participants that NEHU will soon have the status. Further ahead, Mr. SST Sangma from District Commerce & Industries Centre (DCIC), Government of Meghalaya spoke in detail about the eligibility criteria, benefits and application procedure of various schemes implemented by DCIC including Skill Development Trainings at departmental training centres and at industrial units beyond the state, Master Craftsman, Rural Artisan, Bee Keeping programmes, PMEGP Schemes, Meghalaya Industrial & Investment Promotion Scheme (MIIPS 2016). This was followed by a lecture on the prospects of Food Processing in Meghalaya by Dr LS Pereira, Associate Professor, Department of RDAP, NEHU. Dr Pereira discussed the richness of biodiversity in the state, the importance of food processing, reducing food wastage and scope of Food Processing Industries in the field of Entrepreneurship. Ma'am emphasized using local seasonal fruits for processing into several food products rather than selling them in raw form and in turn it would help to increase the standard of living of farmers. Food processing will also enhance the choices of the consumers. Dr Pereira also talked about the challenges and strategies to overcome them as well as the growth drivers of food processing, to wit Strong Domestic Demand, Supply Side Advantages, Export Opportunities and Proactive Government

Policy and Support. The lecture was complemented by a talk from Ms. Rupa N Areng, Manager (Sanction) Retail Asset Credit Centre (RACC), Tura on banking schemes available to entrepreneurs. Ms. Areng elaborated on a few loans like Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (MUDRA Loan), SME Smart Score which is a simplified Loan for working Capital needs and Acquisition of the fixed assets. In the next session, Dr Suman Kumar Nandy, Chief Executive Officer, B3I Facility discoursed the role of BIRAC BioNEST Bioincubator Facility on Business Development, the various Schemes of BIRAC for researchers, faculty members, students and entrepreneurs with innovative ideas, and about the handholding program provided by the facility to transform an innovative idea into a sustainable and profitable business. This session was followed by doubt clearing sessions. The program ended with a vote of thanks from Ms. Alva Margareth Kharkongor, Program Manager of B3I Facility.



Fig. Memories from the EAP on September 16, 2022 at NEHU, Tura Campus.