

KanglaOnline Headlines

Forest certification underway in Mizoram

Source : North East Press Service

Aizawl May 16 (NEPS): The process of forest certification, as demanded by the World Trade Organisation following Rio's Earth Summit and the Kyoto Protocol, is underway in Mizoram through initiatives of the Bamboo Development Agency (BDA) and New Delhi's Development Research Centre.

A stakeholders meeting, which included environment groups such as the Centre for Environment Protection and community-based NGOs like the YMA etc., for the process was held today at the Industries secretary office chamber headed by the secretary, J.C. Ramthanga, who is also the chairman of the BDA.

According to the programme manager of the BDA Vanlalchuanga, the only thing that has keeping the process from going ahead, a forest management plan, would be completed within this week by the state Forests & Environment department.

Dr Lalrinawma, a member of the Development Research Centre, told the meeting that if a certification is issued here in Mizoram, it will be the first state in India that will have a forest certification.

Madhya Pradesh and Tripura are the other states in the country who have taken initiatives towards obtaining this certification which is crucial for importing any forest produce.

In Mizoram, a group of private planters had formed an organisation under the government Bamboo Development Agency called the BDA Group which has approached a South African company called SGS Qualifor that has a Forest Stewardship Council accreditation for issue of the forest certification. However, since no scientific management of forests has taken place anywhere in the state, either by private or government planters, SGS Qualifor has asked a "collective action request" (CARs) and this has caused a problem as the CARs are based on a management plan.

The aim behind forest certification is to have a sustainable forest management that is uniform throughout the world. Ever since awareness on the environment deterioration had taken the world by storm, environment activists had feared that the world would become denuded of its forests, bringing about unwanted climatic changes, as it has already started to do.

Any forests produce, be it handicraft or timber, cannot be exported without a Forest Certification as they would be rejected by the

importing country.