

# MEGHALAYA TOURISTS CAN GAMBLE WITHOUT QUALMS

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Human resources, Youth, Sports and related issues

Meghalaya is set to add globalised forms of legalised gambling to the indigenous 'teer' or betting on the number of arrows hitting a target of straw.

State Law and Taxation Minister James P.K. Sangma said Meghalaya, a popular tourist destination, intended to generate adequate revenue from legalised gambling, online betting and gaming.

"We came out with a Gaming Act and subsequently framed the Regulation of Gaming Rules, 2021. The government will accordingly issue licences to operate games of skill and chance, both online and offline," he told journalists in Shillong on Thursday.

Legalised gambling, he said, would help generate employment opportunities, besides boosting tourism.

"But the legalised gambling and gaming will only be for tourists and not residents of Meghalaya," Mr. Sangma added.

Tourists and visitors for work or business would be allowed to participate in such activities only after producing documents similar to what banks require for KYC (know your customer).

The process for legalised gambling started in February 2021, leading to the nullification of the Meghalaya Prevention of Gambling Act, 1970, effectively making gambling legal within the State.

## Third northeast State

Meghalaya will be the third State in the northeast after Sikkim and Nagaland to make gambling and online gaming legal.

The push for legalised gambling started after Mr. Sangma met representatives of the U.K. India Business Council (UKIBC) and other U.K.-based business houses to discuss the online gaming and sports betting landscape in the State.

The UKIBC's Gaming Industry Index found Meghalaya to be the most gaming-friendly State in India.

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