

SDC to include woman member: Govt



ITANAGAR, Mar 18: In an effort to boost women empowerment, a woman member is going to be included in the State Development Council (SDC) with the state govt making its 'commitment' to welfare of the women with particular emphasis on their representation at the decision-making level.

Speaking to the members of the Arunachal Pradesh Women's Welfare Society (APWWS) here today, Chief Minister Kalikho Pul informed that a women member will be represented in the SDC.

According to Pul, the objective of women representation in SDC will be to ensure their fair representation in the development and plan-

ning process of the state.

He also informed that the govt will give representation to the women at the advisory level by inducting an advisor to the Chief Minister.

Reacting to APWWS plea on establishment for a separate child right commission in the state, Pul assured to look into it acknowledging the need to address crimes against children.

Also to check crimes against women, he informed on increasing the strength of women police officers in the state.

On establishment of drug de-addiction centre in the affected districts, Pul informed that it will be established with the help of local self-help groups with the

'assurance' that it will be equipped with full manpower and all facilities.

To meet up such challenges, Pul assured to incorporate a separate gender budget.

APWWS has identified capital complex, Changlang, Lohit, Longding, Anjaw, Tirap, Upper Siang and Siang districts where the de-addiction centres are to be established.

When dealing with opium cultivators, Pul appealed for a soft approach. "For opium cultivators, it could be their only source of livelihood. So, they should be provided with alternative means for livelihood before we try to impose our judgments and actions." *Contd. on P-4*

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He also appealed that instead of destroying the opium fields, the cultivators should be made aware first about the ill effects of poppy cultivation.

"Thereafter, they must be advised to discontinue the farming from the next season with complete support for them to grow alternative cash crops like cardamom and oranges," Pul added.

To take care of the aged population in view of the growing nuclear family, he said that the state govt is 'committed' to establishment of old-age homes across the state. He assured for making the mental health institutions in the state functional and setting up of juvenile homes and shelters.