Staff Reporter

ITALAGAR, Apr 2: President of India Pratibha Dickshing Patil today inaugurated the ARUN self help mela which was held at Banquet Hall which has been transformed into a rural getup with ethnic touch.

Over 25 self help group and NGOs have been brought under one umbrella to showcase their pioneering efforts of economic sustainable development through the ARUN self help mela which will be open to the public from April 3-4 next.

The President of India visited the various traditional huts examining the traditional costumes, ornaments, handicraft products and other local produce displayed by the successful SHGs run by women entrepreneurs from all corners of the state.

The event is being organized by the Government in partnership with NAEARD, SBI & ESSCMI foundation (NGO resource partner). The State Tourism department created ethnic environment for this event.

Patil experienced first hand the live demonstration of traditional activities in the life of women. At the entrance, daily village scene and lives of the tribal women of Papum Pare and Lower Subansiri districts was demonstrated by Arun Kutir Jdyog Co-operative society, Tim and Aro Hira Welfare Society, Sagalee.

The ambience of paddy and rice culture of the Apatani's was also created for the President besides the traditional food courts offering Patil the taste of local delicacies of the state.

A mini village has been constructed inside the hall. The Apatani house constructed in the middle is surrounded by various small huts that are used by 25 women entrepreneurs to display their economic activities. (See P-3)