

Nagaland Student Wins Prestigious Taiwan Scholarship for Mandarin Studies



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Livino K., from the Sumi community in Nagaland, has been awarded the prestigious 2026 Huayu (Mandarin) Enrichment Scholarship by Taiwan's Ministry of Education. Hailing from Yemishe, a small village in Zunheboto district, Livino is set to embark on a transformative six-month study trip to Taiwan.

Her journey into the world of Mandarin began unexpectedly in 2025 while exploring opportunities for interdisciplinary learning. Stumbling upon the online Mandarin programme offered by the Taiwan Education Center at Assam Don Bosco University (ADBUC), Livino was intrigued by the centre's reputation, quality teaching, and the opportunity to sit for standardized proficiency examinations. She eventually decided to enrol.

What began as curiosity soon developed into a serious commitment. Over the next few months, Livino acquired the fundamentals of the language, mastering the four tones, pinyin, basic character writing, and essential daily vocabulary. By March 2026, she successfully cleared the standardized Test of Chinese as a Foreign Language (TOCFL), earning a Novice-level certificate that qualified her to apply for the highly competitive scholarship.

However, Livino's path to success was far from seamless. Living in a remote part of Nagaland meant dealing with erratic power supply and unstable internet connectivity.

Her Mandarin teacher, Ms. Kuei-Mi LI, recalled being deeply moved by Livino's dedication and perseverance.

"Livino proved herself to be a remarkably sincere student from day one," Ms. LI said. "I was touched to see how she spared no effort to attend almost every class despite the highly unfavourable conditions of her far-flung location, including frequent power outages and an extremely unstable network."

With Ms. LI's encouragement and recommendation, Livino applied for the Huayu scholarship. When the results were announced recently, she said she was "thrilled".

“I know seats for this scholarship are highly limited, so being selected made me feel like my efforts and aspirations were truly valued,” Livino said.

“Receiving the scholarship will be life-changing. It covers tuition fees, accommodation, and provides a monthly stipend, allowing me to focus entirely on my studies. It will also strengthen my bilingual abilities and create greater opportunities for my future career,” she added.

Looking ahead to her stay in Taiwan, Livino has set clear academic and cultural goals. While the classes at ADBU provided her with a strong foundation, she hopes to immerse herself in a completely Mandarin-speaking environment to achieve greater fluency. She is also eager to experience Taiwanese culture firsthand—from traditional festivals such as the Lunar New Year and Lantern Festival to the local professional work ethic.

In the near future, she aims to clear the TOCFL Band A2 and even B1 levels. In the long term, Livino hopes to use her language skills to strengthen ties between India and Taiwan.

She also encouraged other young people from Northeast India to step out of their comfort zones and take up the challenge of learning Mandarin.

“Mandarin is not just a language; because of the tones and characters, it actually trains your brain to think differently,” Livino explained. “For students from the Northeast, where opportunities to go abroad can sometimes be limited, this scholarship is an incredible gateway to global exposure while building a highly valuable skill.”

Ms. LI noted that the Taiwan government provides the Huayu Enrichment Scholarship annually to international learners, offering a monthly stipend of 28,000 New Taiwan Dollars (approximately ₹80,000 at current exchange rates).

She added that under her guidance, as many as 20 students from the ADBU Mandarin programme—hailing from Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and other northeastern states—have received various scholarships. Several alumni are already working in Taiwanese companies operating in India.

“The objective of the scholarship is to equip learners with highly sought-after language skills, deepen their understanding of Taiwanese culture, and strengthen mutual understanding and people-to-people exchanges between India and Taiwan,” Ms. LI said.

“I hope the success stories of my students will inspire more learners from the Northeast to come forward and explore the incredible opportunities Taiwan has to offer.”

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Assam Times Staff. editor@assamtimes.org

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