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Chief Minister attends UDAAN Festival



Pakyong, September 27: Chief Minister Mr Prem Singh Tamang attended UDAAN-The Flight of Creativity, an inter-school scholastic festival jointly organised by the Rotary Club of Sikkim and Inner Wheel Club of Sikkim at ATTC Bardang, today.

The event was attended by Mr Raju Basnet Minister for Education Department and Mr LB Das MLA-cum-Advisor.

Chief Minister extended his greetings on the occasion of World Tourism Day and appreciated the Rotary Club of Sikkim and Inner Wheel Club of Sikkim for their efforts to encourage students and provide them with a platform to showcase their talents, creativity and dedication. He appreciated the participation of around 1,300 students from 131 schools across the State, describing UDAAN as a celebration of talent, creativity and potential of Sikkim's young minds.

Encouraging the students, the Chief Minister urged them to dream big, work hard and view failures as stepping stones towards success. He also advised to recognise the sacrifices and contributions of parents and teachers, while making constructive use of available resources and opportunities, accessing correct information and staying away from harmful habits. He further assured to provide assistance for the welfare, education and overall development of students.

Earlier, the Chief Minister was also presented with a Guard of Honour by NCC cadets of ATTC, Bardang, followed by a visit to various classrooms to witness the ongoing competitions and project display on 'Water

Conservation: A Futuristic Approach.'

Dr Yogesh Verma, Chairman UDAAN highlighted the journey of UDAAN-The Flight of Creativity, which was initiated in 2011. He stated that the festival has evolved into a significant platform for nurturing students' talents beyond classrooms and textbooks. He added that UDAAN is a day long inter school scholastic festival that brings together students from Government and private schools across the State from both rural and urban areas to participate in a range of academic and creative activities.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister also launched MAYA (Mission of Adolescent and Youth Advancement), an initiative of the District Administration Centre Namchi aimed at the prevention, protection, reintegration and empowerment of vulnerable children and adolescents.

Ms Anupa Tamling, DC Namchi highlighted the importance of early identification of children at risk of dropping out of school. She stressed the need for coordinated efforts involving Government departments, educational institutions and other stakeholders to address the issue of school dropouts.

She stated that through MAYA, the District Administration seeks to strengthen support systems, facilitate protection and reintegration and create opportunities for continued education, development and empowerment of children and adolescents.

Additionally, the Chief Minister also launched EKAYA

Contd. on page 2

Sikkim hosts Udyami Bharosa Sammelan

Gangtok, September 28: Chief Minister Mr Prem Singh Tamang attended the Udyami Bharosa Sammelan 2026, organised by Commerce and Industries Department at Manan Kendra, today.

The event aims to honour local entrepreneurs, foster innovation, and inspire aspiring young innovators through interactive panel discussions, start-up showcases and keynote sessions delivered by prominent figures in the ecosystem.

Chief Minister described entrepreneurs as individuals who have the courage to create their own path, prepare business plans and look for solutions when faced with challenges. He said that entrepreneurship requires self-belief, perseverance and willingness to take responsibility for creating one's own livelihood, while generating opportunities for others.

He highlighted the State Government's focus on engaging youth and entrepreneurs and



promoting entrepreneurship as a viable career and livelihood option. He noted that this approach has resulted in the emergence of entrepreneurs across diverse sectors, including retail and wholesale, restaurants and fast-food outlets, dairy farming, organic products, handicrafts, food

processing, transportation, technology and e-commerce. He said that the growing presence of enterprises across different sectors reflected the changing entrepreneurial landscape of the State.

Contd. on page 4

State-level Indraajatra celebrated

Gangtok, September 25: State-level Indraajatra Celebration 2026, organised by Sikkim Newar Guthi (SNG) was held at Manan Kendra with Chief Minister Mr Prem Singh Tamang attending the programme as the chief guest.

The event showcased the rich cultural traditions, rituals and heritage of Newar community through a series of traditional and cultural presentations, including Newari folk dances, traditional rituals, musical performances and community offerings.

Chief Minister highlighting the significance of Indraajatra, described the festival as a celebration of nature, agriculture, remembrance, community and harmony, carrying a message of mutual respect and goodwill.

The Chief Minister acknowledged the historic contribution of Newar community to Sikkim's development, recalling the contributions of early Newar pioneers such as Laxmidas Pradhan and Chandrabir Pradhan in administration, agriculture, trade, copper mining and the production of coins during the early period of Sikkim's history. He stated that the community's contributions across administration, commerce, culture, arts, public service, sports and



social service have enriched Sikkim's social, cultural and economic landscape. He further highlighted the achievements of prominent members of the community in administration, sports, mountaineering, arts and music, noting their contributions towards bringing recognition to

Sikkim. He appreciated the community's enduring role in the State's history and its contribution to social harmony and inclusive development.

Speaking on the State Government's approach towards

Contd. on page 5

Pearls of Wisdom

"It's only after you've stepped outside your comfort zone that you begin to change, grow, and transform."

- Roy T. Bennett

Minister NB Dahal reviews road and bridge infrastructure in Soreng District

Soreng, September 23: Mr NB Dahal Minister for Roads and Bridges Department chaired a meeting to review road and bridge infrastructure and connectivity concerns in Soreng District at the office of DC Soreng, today.

The meeting focused on the status of critical road and bridge infrastructure, maintenance requirements and measures to ensure safe and uninterrupted connectivity across the District.

Minister reviewed the condition of the tunnel and road protection wall along the Nayabazar-Legship State Highway and directed the officials of NHPC Rangit Stage IV, to take immediate action on the identified requirements. He stressed the need for close

coordination among the concerned departments and timely follow-up to ensure that the issues are addressed in a time-bound manner.

The meeting also deliberated extensively on the maintenance of existing Reshi Tunnel, with discussions focusing on its present condition, safety requirements, maintenance measures and steps necessary to ensure its continued functionality.

A detailed presentation was made by Mr Nayan Baraily DE (R&BD), Soreng covering the status of the Chumbotay Bridge, Reshi Tunnel and other road and bridge-related matters requiring attention. He apprised the meeting of the technical and field-level concerns, maintenance

requirements and issues affecting connectivity and the safe movement of commuters and vehicles.

Further, the road status of the under construction Nayabazar-Zoom road was also brought to the Minister's attention by Mr Dhiraj Subedi DC highlighting matters requiring necessary intervention and follow-up.

On the same day, the Minister also carried out an inspection of road and infrastructure works in Gyalshing District. The inspection focused on reviewing the progress of ongoing works, identifying bottlenecks and ensuring their timely completion to improve road connectivity and minimise inconvenience to the public.

District Industries Centre Gyalshing conducts entrepreneurship awareness programme

Gyalshing, September 23: District Industries Centre (DIC) Gyalshing, under Commerce and Industries Department organised entrepreneurship awareness programme on various State and Central Government schemes at Gyalshing Omchung GPU Hall, today.

The programme aimed to create awareness among educated unemployed youth, aspiring entrepreneurs and existing entrepreneurs about Government schemes, financial assistance and opportunities for entrepreneurship development. It also sought to familiarise participants with the support and facilities available through Government departments and banking institutions for starting and developing enterprises.

Mr Yam Kumar Chettri Panchayat President Gyalshing Omchung GPU highlighted the role of Government schemes in promoting self-employment and supporting aspiring entrepreneurs. He encouraged the youth to explore opportunities in sectors such as agriculture and tourism and make use of available Government support. The importance of submitting proper loan applications and seeking

guidance from banks and the District Industries Centre was also emphasised.

Mr AD Rai Joint Director-cum-General Manager, DIC, Gyalshing highlighted the opportunities available through various Government schemes and encouraged educated youth to explore entrepreneurship and self-employment. He emphasised the importance of understanding loan procedures, preparing proper applications and maintaining accurate books of accounts for effective business management. He also urged participants to make use of the financial assistance and support available through Government departments and banking institutions.

The programme featured technical sessions on the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), bank finance, working capital management, MUDRA, Udyam Registration, Digital Commerce and Goods and Services Tax (GST). Resource Persons provided participants with information on Government schemes, financial assistance, loan procedures and the formalisation of business operations.

Mr Aruni Lahiri Branch Manager, Canara Bank, Gyalshing Branch delivered a session on bank finance, working capital management and financial assistance available through MUDRA and PMEGP-related loan facilities. His session highlighted the importance of financial planning, responsible use of funds and proper bookkeeping in managing a business effectively.

Mr Dhiraj Jairu, Inspector DIC Gyalshing conducted a session on PMEGP, covering the eligibility criteria, application process and various stages involved in establishing an enterprise. He also explained the role of the District Industries Centre in guiding applicants and facilitating access to government support.

Mr Ivan Gurung, JE/ Inspector, DIC Gyalshing conducted a session on Udyam Registration, Digital Commerce and Goods and Services Tax (GST). He explained the importance of these systems in formalising business operations and helping entrepreneur's access wider markets.

Mangan District Police reviews traffic management and road safety ahead of Tourist Season

Mangan, September 24: Mr Rinzing Chopel Rai SP Mangan accompanied by Mr Chandan Chhetri SDPO Chungthang conducted a field visit to Lachung Police Station/Check Post, Yumesamdong Police Post and Zero Point to assess preparedness and traffic management arrangements ahead of the upcoming tourist season, today.

During the visit, emphasis was placed on strict verification of RAP/PAP, adherence to prescribed tourist vehicle timings, inter-agency coordination and clear

emergency communication protocols.

The team also held a coordination meeting with Mr Atul Bhardwaj OC 115 GREF, Lachung, focusing on commuter and tourist safety, particularly at vulnerable and congested stretches. Installation of safety signage and reflectors and the extension of traffic parking space at Zero Point, Lachung, to ease congestion were also discussed.

Earlier, SP Mangan called on Mr Debnath Ray Commanding Officer, 11th Indo-Tibetan Border Police, Chungthang and discussed strengthening inter-

agency coordination during emergencies.

The field visit forms part of the Traffic and Mobility Resilience Strategy (TMRS) for Mangan District, aimed at assessing field challenges and finalising deployment and traffic management measures for the tourist season.

Mangan District Police remains committed to safe and smooth mobility, strengthened inter-agency coordination and effective emergency preparedness during the tourist season.

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Chief Minister...

Wellness Festival, an initiative of the District Administrative Centre

Pakyong.

Ms Pari Bishnoi DC Pakyong stated that the EKAYA Wellness Festival, initiated by the Pakyong District Administration in collaboration with Ebb and Flow

and other stakeholders under the Sikkim INSPIRES programme, seeks to connect tourism with local communities, livelihoods, culture, cuisine, wellness and nature.

The initiative moves beyond

DAC Namchi launches MAYA Guidelines

Namchi, September 27: District Administration Centre Namchi launched MAYA Guidelines (Mission of Adolescent and Youth Advancement), a district-level framework aimed at prevention, protection, reintegration and empowerment of vulnerable children and adolescents, today.

The initiative was launched during 'UDAAN- The Flight of Creativity, an Inter School Scholastic Festival 2026 at ATTC Bardang by Chief Minister Mr Prem Singh Tamang, in the presence of Mr Raju Basnet Minister for Education, Mr LB Das MLA-cum-Advisor, Secretaries, Officers and other dignitaries.

Introducing the initiative, Ms Anupa Tamling, DC Namchi stated that MAYA has been developed following an in-depth study and assessment of the challenges faced by vulnerable children and adolescents, particularly those who have discontinued their education.

She highlighted that data gathered from various reliable sources indicate the presence of a significant number of underprivileged children and adolescents who are at risk of dropping out of the formal education system. She stated that the initiative has been conceptualised to identify and address such concerns at an early stage, before children become

further vulnerable to social and economic hardships.

DC reiterated that the issue of school dropouts requires a coordinated and collective approach involving multiple Government departments, institutions, organisations and stakeholders. Through MAYA, the District Administration seeks to strengthen coordination and establish a structured mechanism for identifying vulnerable children, facilitating their protection and reintegration, and creating opportunities for their continued education, development and empowerment.

MAYA is a collaborative initiative of the District Administration, District Health Department, District Education Department, District Skill Development Department and District Child Protection Unit. The framework adopts a comprehensive approach that seeks to move beyond viewing school dropout as an isolated educational concern and instead addresses it as a wider social issue requiring timely intervention, protection and sustained support.

The initiative marks a significant step towards strengthening the district's efforts to prevent school dropouts at an early stage and promote a safer, more inclusive and supportive environment for children and adolescents.

Before the Sub-Divisional, Magistrate at Gangtok, Sikkim
AFFIDAVIT

I, **Ongdup Bhutia** S/o Late **Sonam Rinchen Bhutia**, aged about 51 years, Buddhist by faith, resident of Lingdok, P.O and P.S- Lingdok Gangtok District, Sikkim do hereby solemnly affirm and declare on oath as follows:-

1. That my fathers actual and correct name is "**Sonam Rinchen Bhutia**" which is recorded in his Death certificate bearing registration No D-2016 11-90016-000031 Dated 29-02-2016 issued By The Government of Sikkim Birth and Death cell.
2. However my fathers name has been inadvertently recorded as "**Som Rinchen Bhutia**" which is recorded in his old Sikkim Subject bearing Serial No 333 volume No I Issued By the land Revenue Department Government of Sikkim.
3. That this affidavit is made on to oath to declare that **Sonam Rinchen Bhutia** and **Som Rinchen bhutia** is denotes to one and the same person i.e. my late father.
4. That this affidavit is made bonafide.

DEPONENT

VERIFICATION

I, the above named deponent do hereby verify, and state that the statement made in the foregoing paragraph 1 to 5 is true to the best of my knowledge. I have signed this affidavit on this 29th Day of September 2026 at Gangtok Sikkim.

DEPONENT

conventional sightseeing by offering visitors immersive, community-led experiences including yoga and wellness sessions, nature walks, local cuisine, traditional crafts, pottery, cultural activities and homestays. The initiative aims to enable visitors to engage meaningfully with Sikkim's people, traditions and natural surroundings.

She further stated that the festival would bring together entrepreneurs, wellness practitioners, founders, content creators and other professionals to experience and promote the State's diverse tourism offerings while fostering a self-sustaining, experience-based tourism

ecosystem.

Additionally, the Chief Minister also unveiled the cover page of 'Reflection 2026,' the souvenir of UDAAN.

The day-long festival was divided into three categories Junior (Classes II-V), Middle (Classes VI-VIII) and Senior (Classes IX-XII). The students competed in a range of events, including declamation, let's converse, quiz, word power, spell bee, speed math, creative writing, maths magic and talks on financial literacy.

The event concluded with a prize distribution ceremony.

Government of Sikkim
Roads and Bridges Department
District Soreng

NIT NO: 61/GOS/CIR/REB/SRG/08

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Date: 23/09/2026

For and on behalf of the Governor of Sikkim, Superintending Engineer (Soreng), Roads and Bridges Department invites sealed tenders under single bid system from the eligible contractors of Class II-B Grade, enlisted with the Sikkim Public Works Department through competitive bidding within the territorial jurisdiction of the Gyalshing Barnyak constituency where the works are to be executed, for the execution of the work with the details as under :-

Sl. No.	Name of work	Bid security 2.5% of the bid value	Bid value	Cost of tender/ bid form)	Completion period
1.	Upgradation and carpeting of Rinchenpong to Meyong road under Kaluk sub division in Soreng district, Sikkim (6.105 km)	₹5.87Lakh	₹234.92Lakh	₹0.50Lakh	12 Months

Note: The Earnest Money Deposit indicated in the above table is exempted for all Enlisted Women Contractors participating in the bidding process. In case of such bidder being accepted as L1 bidder, the issue of the Work Order shall be governed by Notification No:104/R&B Dated 08/10/2020.

Sl. No.	Particulars	Date & Time
1.	Date of submission of application along with Bank receipt	13/10/2026 up to 1200 hrs.
2.	Date of issue of Tender Documents and Tender Form	13/10/2026 up to 1600 hrs.
3.	Submission of bid documents	14/10/2026 up to 1200 hrs.
4.	Opening of bid documents	14/10/2026 at 1400 hrs.
5.	Place of opening of bids	Office of the Superintending Engineer, Roads and Bridges Department, Government of Sikkim, Soreng

CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT:-

- The intending tenderers/contractors should apply in writing for issue of tender documents. The application would invariably be signed by the contractor himself/herself. The tender document shall not be issued to any person other than the INTENDING TENDERER.
- The applicants should enclose attested copies of the following along with the application
 - Validated/Updated Contractor Enlistment Certificate. Further, it is mandatory to produce the Original validated/Updated Enlistment Certificate during sale/issue of the Tender Document for verification
 - Latest Goods & Service Tax Clearance Certificate issued from the office of the Commercial Tax To be submitted by the successful bidder only before issuance of Work Order as per Notification No: 07/GOS/CTD/2018-2019, dated: 27/06/2018
 - PAN card.
 - Photo copy of latest voter ID card with both side printed for proof of their territorial constituency.
 - Bank Receipt in original.
- The prescribed Non-Transferable Tender Documents can be obtained from the office of the Accounts Officer, Roads and Bridges Department, on production of requisite Bank Receipt of the State of Sikkim (non-refundable) under the receipt Head "0059-80-800.01-other receipts", during the time schedule mentioned above.
- Earnest Money Deposit @ 2.5% of the cost put to tender shall be deposited in the form of Temporary Deposit Receipt/Fixed Deposit Receipt/Bank Guarantee from State Bank of Sikkim or any nationalized bank in favor of the Accounts Officer, Roads & Bridges Department, Soreng. Tender form shall be issued only on production of the same. In case of the Enlisted Women Contractors participating in the bidding, the cost of the Earnest Money Deposit shall be governed by Notification No: 104/R&B Dated 08/10/2020.
- The soft copy of the BOQ shall be provided along with the tender documents on submission of Earnest Money Deposit as mentioned vide sl. no. 4. The intending bidder shall submit his/her bid in the printed format as per the soft copy of the BOQ provided. In case the bidder submits the bids in hand written format, the same shall be summarily rejected.
- The tenderer shall inspect the site and have their own and correct assessment before submitting the bid.
- The Tender Documents, including the Tender Form with quoted offer in the BOQ provided should be placed in a sealed cover with the name of the tenderers and the name of the work superscripted on it. The Tenderer should sign on every page of the tender documents as acceptance of the general direction and conditions of the contract and other laid down norms. Supporting documents listed vide SI No. 2 should be enclosed with the offer.
- Sealed tenders may be deposited in the Tender box in the office of the Superintending Engineer (Soreng), Roads and Bridges Department, Soreng, on the date and within the time indicated above.
- The rate quoted should be both in figures and words and should be inclusive of GST and all other Taxes in vogue.
- Over writing and correction should be avoided and if made should be authenticated. Incomplete/Conditional tenders shall be rejected forthwith.
- Tenders will be opened by the Tender Opening Committee as prescribed by the Government in the presence of the tenderers on the date and time indicated above.
- In case of any discrepancy in the specifications printed in the BOQ issued with the tender documents, specifications as per approved Schedule of Rates-2020 will be taken as correct. For items outside the SOR, the decision of the Principal Chief Engineer cum Secretary/ Head of the Department will be final.
- The Department reserves the rights to with hold payments to the contractor unless test certificates are produced by the contractor when called upon to do so.
- Avoidable damages due to negligence of the contractor shall be at his/her own risk and cost.
- The Department shall not be liable for payment of such damages (if any), including accidents to labours at site. The offer shall remain valid for a period of 90days. The work should commence within 15 days from the date of issue of work order.
- All the conditions as mentioned in the NIT shall be deemed to be a part of the agreement to be entered with the contractor. Security deposit shall be collected by deductions from the running bills of the contractor @ 5% of the value of work done.
- The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
- The recoveries i/c deduction of taxes and duties as applicable shall be as per the rates notified by the Government from time to time and as applicable on the date of payment.
- Subletting of contract work is against the norms and if it comes to the notice, the original contract shall be cancelled and appropriate action shall be initiated as per the rules.
- In case of manpower employed by the contractor are from outside the State or neighboring countries, it shall be the responsibility of the contractor to get them registered with the Labour Department, Government of Sikkim as per the relevant Labour Laws.
- The contractor shall also make arrangements to have photographs of the works taken up at least of three stages during the construction period. i.e. beginning, middle and completion stage.
- Quarrying of non-stock materials shall be allowed only from designated/approved quarries.
- The specifications in execution of the works are to be followed as per the guidelines laid by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH).
- Damage to properties in and around the work site must be avoided at all cost. The contractor shall be held responsible for any act of negligence and shall bear the responsibility to repair/restore such damage.
- Expenditure involved for material testing like cube strength of concrete, crushing strength of road metals and other mandatory test etc., at site or in laboratories shall be borne by the contractor. The contractor shall make necessary arrangements accordingly as and when instructed by the concerned authorities.
- The cost of stock materials and bridges parts if any supplied from the Departmental store will be deducted from the contractors' bills as per the prevalent recovery rate.
- Defect liability period for the pavement work shall be for a period of five (05) years which shall not cover the damages due to natural calamities, formation sinking, landslides etc.

Superintending Engineer (Soreng)
Roads and Bridges Department
Government of Sikkim
(96)

Contd. from front page

Sikkim hosts...

The Chief Minister stated that the programme was intended to place entrepreneurs at the centre and focus on their future growth and development. He also highlighted the vision of 'One Family, One Entrepreneur', aimed at enabling families to explore entrepreneurship and self-employment.

He stressed that entrepreneurship should not be associated only with large industries or businesses. Small home-based enterprises, local businesses and individual self-employment ventures are equally valuable and should receive recognition and encouragement. Highlighting the initiatives undertaken by the State Government, the Chief Minister referred to financial assistance for entrepreneurs and Self-Help Groups (SHGs). He also highlighted efforts to promote the creative and content-based economy and described Sikkim RISE as an important platform for nurturing new entrepreneurs.

Emphasising the importance of accessing accurate information, the Chief Minister urged entrepreneurs to understand Government schemes directly from the concerned departments. He advised to carefully study the provisions and eligibility criteria of various programmes and make informed use of the support available.

Acknowledging that many entrepreneurs in Sikkim are first-generation entrepreneurs without inherited business experience or established market networks, he encouraged them to learn from both success and failure. He advised them to adopt a gradual and disciplined approach, understand their markets, maintain financial discipline and focus on quality, customer satisfaction and sustainable business models.

The Chief Minister said that the increase in enterprise registrations in Sikkim reflected the growing culture of entrepreneurship in the State. He encouraged the youth to identify local needs and develop products and services within Sikkim, thereby creating employment and retaining economic value within the State.

Calling for greater support for local enterprises, he urged to embrace 'Vocal for Local' and contribute to the 'Make in Sikkim' initiative by producing, promoting and consuming locally made goods and services.

Concluding his address, the Chief Minister encouraged aspiring entrepreneurs to dream big but start small, stating that a successful enterprise could begin with a good idea, a quality product and a satisfied customer. He said that consistent effort, responsible expansion and the support of the community could enable small enterprises to grow into sustainable businesses and create opportunities for others.

Mr Tshering Thendup Bhutia Minister for Commerce and Industries and Tourism and Civil

Aviation Departments stated that the objective of the programme is to create an enabling environment that promotes entrepreneurship, business and commerce. He said that through strong vision, planning and leadership, the State Government aims not only to promote businesses but also to generate employment opportunities and nurture a culture of entrepreneurship in the State.

He highlighted 'One Family, One Entrepreneur' initiative as an important component of this vision aimed at building the confidence and capacity of families to establish and sustain small businesses. These may include traditional handicrafts, traditional occupations, small enterprises and other locally relevant ventures. He emphasised that as more people within communities take up entrepreneurial activities, they gain confidence and develop an entrepreneurial mindset which would help create a strong community of hardworking and talented entrepreneurs while contributing to the overall economic development of Sikkim.

Expressing gratitude for the support extended by the State Government through the programme, he said that the initiative reflects the State Government's commitment to strengthening Sikkim's entrepreneurial ecosystem and enhancing the skills and capacities of its people.

He further stated that the Commerce and Industries Department is working towards building the capacity of entrepreneurs and providing them with the necessary support, opportunities and enabling platforms. He stressed the importance of strengthening the skills, capabilities and potential of the people so that they can contribute meaningfully to the development of the State.

Ms Karma D Youtso Secretary Commerce and Industries Department, highlighted the commitment of the State Government and the Department towards creating a conducive ecosystem for entrepreneurship, innovation and enterprise development in Sikkim. She emphasised that various initiatives and programmes have been undertaken to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with opportunities, institutional support, mentorship, capacity building, market linkages and platforms to showcase and scale their enterprises.

She stated that the Udyami Bharosa Sammelan serves as an important platform to facilitate meaningful dialogue, recognise the contribution of local entrepreneurs, identify areas requiring greater support and encourage young people to pursue entrepreneurship as a viable avenue for growth and employment.

Mr Dipen Subba OSD, Commerce and Industries Department-cum-General Secretary, SEED Cell, elaborated on the role and functioning of the SEED Cell, highlighting its efforts towards nurturing aspiring entrepreneurs through handholding programmes,

mentorship programmes, capacity building, facilitation and other forms of institutional support. He emphasised the Chief Minister's vision of 'One Family, One Entrepreneur', stating that the initiative reflects the State Government's commitment to encouraging entrepreneurship at the grassroots level and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities.

He further highlighted various initiatives undertaken by the Department to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem, with particular emphasis on providing continuous handholding programmes and support to emerging enterprises. He spoke about the growing potential of the Orange Economy and content-based economy and the opportunities they offer to Sikkim's youth, particularly in the creative and digital sectors.

Highlighting the Sikkim RISE initiative, he stated that the programme has provided a significant platform for aspiring entrepreneurs to transform innovative ideas into viable enterprises and has contributed to the growing culture of entrepreneurship in the State.

Thereafter, the Chief Minister launched the Catalogue of Temi Tea and Government Fruit Preservation Factory and released the book titled '100 Successful Entrepreneurs'.

The Chief Minister was also felicitated by the executives of the SEED Cell as a gesture of gratitude and appreciation for organising the first-ever Udyami Bharosa Sammelan. This was followed by experience-sharing sessions by two successful entrepreneurs, Ms Dawa Lhamu Sherpa of Dawa Creations and Mr Rohan Pradhan of Apicare, who shared their entrepreneurial journeys and experiences.

Subsequently, a documentary showcasing entrepreneurship development initiatives in Sikkim, along with a video documenting Sikkim RISE-A Startup Ideathon 2026 was screened.

The programme further featured a pitching session by the winners of Sikkim RISE 2026 under three categories:

1. Ideation (Business Venture)- Pasal by Ms Pem Uzeyla Bhutia, Mr Yashu Lama and Ms Chimila Bhutia,
2. Prototype- (Business Venture)- Hasyam Farms by Mr Arpan Gurung and
3. Revenue- (Business Venture)- Himalaya Creator, Api Farm by Mr Kamal Sharma.

A video showcasing the Sikkim Startup Policy was also screened, highlighting the State's initiatives to promote and strengthen the startup ecosystem.

The programme also witnessed the announcement of key partnerships and signing of MoUs between the IIM Calcutta Innovation Park (IIM-CIP) and the Commerce and Industries Department, as well as partnerships involving Amazon and Flipkart Services with the Commerce and Industries Department.

Thereafter, Chief Minister felicitated the National Handloom

Culmination programme of Sikkim RISE held

Gangtok, September 22: The culmination programme of Sikkim RISE was held at the Conference Hall of Commerce and Industries Department, today.

Sikkim RISE, which stands for Realising Ideas, Shaping Entrepreneurship, is a district and state level ideathon organised by Commerce and Industries Department under Sikkim INSPIRES programme, in collaboration with the SEED Cell. The initiative aims to foster innovation and entrepreneurship among students, women innovators, artisans, rural entrepreneurs, agri innovators, early stage start ups and self help groups.

Participants competed in three categories, namely Ideation, Prototype and Revenue, with benefits including cash prizes, mentorship, funding linkages, incubation support and business development opportunities.

Sikkim RISE District Events commenced in Soreng from July 14 to 16 followed by Gyalshing from July 19 to 21, Namchi from July 24 to 26 and Mangan from July 29 to 3, 2026. The events in Gangtok and Pakyong were held from August 1 to 4, 2026.

A total of 555 participants from across the six districts registered for the state level ideathon. Of these, 36 participants were shortlisted for the semi finals, with nine participants advancing to the finals.

Ms Karma D Youtso Secretary, Commerce and Industries Department, congratulated the winners and runners up of the programme. She urged the winners to pitch their businesses with confidence, noting that rehearsals are scheduled for September 24, 2026. She also emphasised the proper utilisation of the prize money to scale their businesses.

The Secretary encouraged participants to develop their ventures into full fledged start ups by the next edition of Sikkim RISE

and assured them that the department's handholding support would continue. She also shared success stories of entrepreneurs incubated by the department and encouraged the participants to utilise the Innovation Hub at the department, along with other available opportunities, to scale and strengthen their businesses.

Mr Dipen Subba, OSD, Commerce and Industries Department, stated that the first edition of the Udyami Bharosa Sammelan is scheduled to be held on September 28, 2026. The event is being jointly organised by Commerce and Industries Department and SEED Cell for the first time in the state.

He informed that the winners of Sikkim RISE will have an opportunity to pitch their business ventures to the Chief Minister during the Udyami Bharosa Sammelan. He further stated that SEED Cell, in collaboration with representatives from IIM Calcutta, would prepare participants for the pitching session.

He also informed that the three winners from the three categories are scheduled to participate in a national level exposure and pitching programme in collaboration with IIM Calcutta.

The jury members of the Sikkim RISE programme, Mr Ram Kumar, Dr Arjun Adhikari and Mr Sony Virdi, evaluated the participants on parameters including scalability, growth potential and value creation in national and international markets, among others. The winners are scheduled to receive a cash prize during the first edition of Udyami Bharosa Sammelan on September 28, 2026.

The programme was also attended by Special Secretary-cum-Director, Commerce and Industries Department, Under Secretary, officials of the Commerce and Industries Department and other entrepreneurs.



Awardee, along with five Outstanding Entrepreneurs, one Young and Aspiring Entrepreneur, and the Sikkim RISE Jury Members. Prizes were also distributed to the winners of Sikkim RISE 2026, followed by the distribution of cheques to 80 beneficiaries under the Mukhya Mantri Udyamshilta

Yojana.

Also present were, Ministers, MLA-cum-Advisor, Advisors, Chairpersons, Mayor GMC, HoDs of various Departments, OSDs, entrepreneurs and other dignitaries.

District-level School Games 2026 held

Gangtok, September 23: District-level School Games 2026 organised by Department of Sports and Youth Affairs was held at Paljor Stadium, Gangtok, with participation from young athletes selected through various Block-Level competitions, today.

The event forms part of the State's structured pathway leading to the State-Level School Games 2026 and aims to identify and nurture promising school-level sportspersons for participation in the forthcoming National School Games.

During the programme, Mr Norbu Tshering Bhutia Deputy Director (Hq), Sports and Youth Affairs Department emphasised the importance of the competitions in fostering discipline, teamwork and sporting excellence among the youth, thereby strengthening the foundation of Sikkim's sports ecosystem.

As part of the programme, a special 10-minute awareness briefing on Nasha Mukta Bharat was conducted for the participating students and NCC cadets.

Competitions in Table Tennis and Karate, along with Taekwondo trials were conducted during the day. The events witnessed participation from students representing schools across different blocks and provided a platform for young athletes to showcase their skills and gain competitive exposure.

In Table Tennis, Delhi Public School, Gangtok, secured first place in the girls' category, followed by Manjushree Public School in second place and PM SHRI Government Girls' Senior Secondary School, Deorali, in third place. In the boys' category, Army Public School secured first place, followed by Greendale Senior Secondary School in second place and Makha Senior Secondary School in third place.

In Karate, competitions were conducted across various Kumite weight categories and Kata. In the boys' 54 kg Kumite category, Holy Cross School, Gangtok, secured first place, followed by Delhi Public School in second place, while Golitar East Point Senior Secondary School and Tiny Pearls School shared the third position.

In the 45-50 kg category, Holy Cross School, Gangtok, secured first place, while the school also secured first place in below 70 kg category.

In the 57 kg category, PM SHRI Singtam Senior Secondary School secured first place, followed by PM SHRI Biraspati Parsai Senior Secondary School in second place. In below 66 kg category, Holy Cross School, Gangtok, secured first place, followed by PM SHRI Singtam Senior Secondary School in second place again. PM SHRI Singtam Senior Secondary School secured first place in the below 62 kg category, while PM SHRI Biraspati Parsai Senior Secondary School secured first place in the boys' Kata category.

In the girls' 56 kg Kumite category, St Joseph's School, Martam, secured first place, followed by PM SHRI Deorali Girls' Senior Secondary School in second place and PM SHRI Singtam Senior Secondary School in third place. In the 44 kg category, St Joseph's School, Martam, secured first place, followed by PM SHRI Biraspati Parsai Senior Secondary School in second place. Daffodil Home Senior Secondary School, Gangtok, secured first place in the 40 kg category.

In the 48 kg category, Bahai Saramsa Senior Secondary School secured first place, followed by St Joseph's School, Martam, in second place. In the 52 kg category, Holy Cross School, Gangtok, secured first place, followed by Tadong Senior Secondary School, Gangtok, in second and third places. In the 60 kg category, PM SHRI Deorali Girls' Senior Secondary School secured first place, followed by Holy Cross School, Gangtok, in second place.

In the girls' Kata category, Holy Cross School, Gangtok, secured first place, followed by Daffodil Home Senior Secondary School, Gangtok, in second place, while Holy Cross School, Gangtok, secured third place.

The District-level School Games provided a competitive platform for young athletes to showcase their skills and gain valuable exposure. The performances across Table Tennis and Karate, along with the Taekwondo trials, will contribute to the identification and selection of promising sportspersons for the forthcoming State-level School Games and subsequent National School Games.

The programme concluded with the distribution of certificates and medals to the participants.

Contd. from front page

State-level...

community development, the Chief Minister said that various initiatives have been undertaken to promote the inclusive development and empowerment of all communities, irrespective of their social or community background. He said that the State Government has sought to provide communities with greater space to organise themselves, strengthen their institutions and advance their respective cultural and social interests.

He also highlighted various welfare and development programmes aimed at supporting economically vulnerable sections of society. Referring to the Chief Minister's Education Assistance Scheme, he said that students from across Sikkim, including members of the Newar community, have benefited from assistance for higher education. He also mentioned support for medical education and other professional courses, besides various development initiatives being implemented across sectors. The Chief Minister said that several other programmes and projects are in progress and stressed the need to ensure that Government initiatives reach those who need them. He reiterated the State Government's continued commitment towards the welfare of the people and ensuring that the benefits of development reach communities across the State.

Earlier, the Chief Minister visited the stalls and participated in a photo session with members of the community. On the occasion, he also handed over the land parcha to the Sikkim Newar Guthi (SNG).

The logo of the first Sikkim Travel and Tourism Fair 2026 was also unveiled by the Chief Minister at the ceremony, marking the formal launch of the event.

Mr NB Pradhan, MLA-cum-Advisor and Chief Patron, Sikkim Newar Guthi, highlighted various initiatives and support extended to the Newar community by the State Government, including greater representation in boards, commissions and advisory bodies, as well as support for community infrastructure and cultural institutions. He also referred to initiatives aimed at providing greater representation to artistes and cultural practitioners and the proposed Cultural and Heritage Centre for the Newar community. He expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister for his support towards these initiatives, including the

development of a dedicated community building and heritage-related projects. He said that such measures would contribute towards strengthening the community's cultural and institutional development and urged the younger generation to actively participate in cultural activities and carry forward the community's heritage.

Mr Gagan Pradhan, General Secretary, SNG, emphasised the need to document, preserve and promote the rich heritage of the Newar community, particularly its culture, traditions, food, history and knowledge systems. He stressed that, at a time of rapid social and cultural change, the Newar community must continue to preserve its distinct identity and traditions while remaining an integral part of India's diverse cultural fabric. He called for collective efforts to document the community's heritage and ensure that its cultural knowledge is passed on to future generations.

Mr Dhiraj Pradhan, Chairman, Indrajatra Celebration Committee, highlighted the significance of Indrajatra in preserving the rich heritage, language and traditions of the Newar community. He said that this year's theme, "Let's Unite, Embrace, Connect and Know Our Heritage," reflects the spirit of bringing the community together, embracing its cultural identity, strengthening bonds and passing its traditions on to future generations.

Mr Mani Kumar Pradhan, President, SNG, outlined broader initiatives for cultural development, research, education and documentation, including efforts to revive a dedicated platform for academic and cultural activities. He also underscored ongoing efforts to document the works of writers, artists and cultural practitioners across Sikkim, acknowledging their contribution towards enriching the State's cultural landscape.

At the outset, Chief Minister felicitated distinguished individuals with the Newar Ratna Samman 2026 and Bhanji Bhrikuti Samman in recognition of their contributions to the Newar community and the preservation and promotion of its cultural heritage.

The Newar Ratna Samman 2026 was conferred upon Mr Suryavir Tuladhar, Mr Govind Prasad Pradhan and Mr Ganesh Kumar Pradhan, while Ms Suchitna Tamang was conferred the Bhanji Bhrikuti Samman in recognition of her contribution and achievements. The awardees were presented with letters of

felicitations and certificates on the occasion. The Smarika 2026, the annual magazine, documenting the activities, achievements, progress and collective journey of the community, was also released by the Chief Minister. The publication serves as an important record of the community's contemporary history, cultural heritage, activities and collective achievements. A notable feature of this year's edition is that, in addition to the printed version, it has also been published digitally, making its contents accessible to a wider audience through digital platforms.

The Ritual Book and Newar Indrajatra Song were also released by the Chief Minister on the occasion. The cultural segment featured a Kumari Nritya, followed by Bajrayogini Nritya. This was followed by a Newari Folk Dance, Dhimey Dance and Pancha Kumari Nritya, showcasing the rich cultural traditions of the Newar community.

The programme was attended by Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Cabinet Ministers, MLA-cum-Advisors, MP, Adhyaksha, Upadhyaksha, Mayor, Deputy Mayor and others.

Earlier, the Chief Minister performed sacred rituals and puja at Bhanu Udhyan, followed by the ceremonial Kumari Rath Jatra through the main thoroughfares of the capital. He was accompanied by Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, MLA-cum-Chief Patron, Indrajatra Celebration Committee (ICC) 2026, President, Sikkim Newar Guthi, Chairman, IJCC 2026 and other officials and dignitaries. The ceremonial Kumari Rath Jatra subsequently commenced from Bhanu Udhyan, Zero Point passing through Tibet Road and MG Marg before culminating at Manan Kendra.

It may be mentioned that on September 24, a collective Dhimey dance performance was showcased at MG Marg Gangtok, by 110 participants from Sikkim Newar Guthi. Led by Mr Chetan Pradhan and his group, the performance earned recognition in the India Book of Records for the traditional Dhimey dance of the Newar community.

India Book of Records Judge and CII Sikkim Chairman Mr Sony Virdhi formally observed and verified the performance and presented the record recognition to the Newar Guthi, congratulating the participants for their dedication to preserving and promoting Newari culture and heritage.

Department of Information & Public Relations Government of Sikkim, Gangtok

No.(378-II)/IPR/09-10/341

Date: 12.02.2010

CIRCULAR

In order to give wide publicity of Tender Notices/Employment Notices published in Sikkim Herald Classified and other local news papers the following procedures will be followed with immediate effect.

Tender Notices will be accepted by the Department for publication having **minimum time of 35 days** before the last date of submission of tenders. Other notices like Employment/Auction etc. will be accepted for publication having **minimum time of 17 days**.

Heads of Departments are requested to send the Tender Notices/Employment Notices for publication **in triplicate** duly observing the above time limit.

No bill for advertisement pertaining to other department other than IPR should be entertained for payment if the same is **not certified** by Under Secretary/Director/ IPR.

All Tender Notices/Employment Notices etc. to be sent to the Department addressed to Secretary or Director, I.P.R. Department through official channel only and under no circumstances the I. P. R. Department will accept the advertisements sent through unauthorized person.

This issues with the approval of the Government.

Sd/-
Secretary

KEEP SIKKIM
CLEAN AND GREEN

World Tourism Day celebrated

Gangtok, September 27: Tourism and Civil Aviation Department in collaboration with District Administrative Centre Gangtok, observed World Tourism Day 2026 at DAC, today.

The celebration was held under the global theme, 'Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence to Re-design Tourism', highlighting the evolving role of digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence in shaping the tourism sector.

The programme was attended by Ms Tshering Palden Bhutia, Mayor, Gangtok Municipal Corporation, as the chief guest, and Mr Lukendra Rasaily, Chairman, Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation (STDC), as the special guest, along with Mr Nirmal Cintury, Joint Director, Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, SDMHq Gangtok and Narender Singh Wadia Officer Commanding, 130 RCC, GREF, Lt Col.

Also present were representatives from Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, District Administration, STDC, GREF, Army, travel and tourism associations, hotel and hospitality sector, taxi and vehicle associations, homestay sector, Institute of Hotel Management and other stakeholders.

As part of the programme, video messages from Chief Minister Mr Prem Singh Tamang and Mr Tshering Thendup Bhutia, Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation Department were screened, extending greetings on the occasion and highlighting the significance of the theme.

In his video message, the Chief Minister extended greetings on World Tourism Day and highlighted the importance of tourism in promoting economic development, livelihoods, cultural preservation and sustainable growth.

Referring to this year's theme, he highlighted the potential of digital technology and Artificial Intelligence to make tourism services more efficient, accessible and responsive, while enhancing the overall visitor experience.

He reiterated the State Government's priority towards tourism and highlighted the development of diverse tourism experiences, including adventure, culture, wellness and experiential tourism. The Chief Minister stressed the need to ensure that technological advancement goes hand in hand with the preservation of Sikkim's traditions, cultural heritage and natural environment. He further acknowledged the contribution of tourism stakeholders, local communities, service providers and Government agencies towards the growth of the sector.

In his video message, the Tourism Minister extended greetings to the tourism fraternity and spoke about the rapid changes brought about by technology in the way visitors discover destinations, plan

journeys and experience new places.

He emphasised the need for the tourism industry to adapt to these changing patterns and make effective use of digital technology and Artificial Intelligence, while retaining the human element and distinctive hospitality associated with Sikkim. He also highlighted the State's growing focus on rural, spiritual, adventure and experiential tourism and called for a smart, sustainable and inclusive approach to tourism development.

Mayor GMC spoke about the need to improve visitor amenities, cleanliness, accessibility and the overall tourist experience, observing that the quality of services provided on the ground contributes significantly to visitors' perception of Sikkim. She highlighted the role of drivers in the tourism sector, describing them as being at the core of tourism as they are often among the first points of contact for visitors and accompanying them throughout their journeys.

She suggested that drivers and transport associations explore the possibility of developing and playing short audio messages for tourists during journeys, covering important information on tourist safety, cleanliness, responsible tourism practices and applicable rules and regulations. Such an initiative, she said, could help create greater awareness among visitors and encourage responsible behaviour. She further called for closer coordination among Government departments, local bodies and tourism stakeholders to ensure that the growth of tourism translates into better experiences for visitors as well as greater opportunities for local communities.

Chairman STDC spoke on the changing dynamics of the tourism industry and the need for stakeholders to adapt to digitalisation. Recalling the transition from conventional modes of communication and tourism promotion to the present digital environment, he highlighted the growing importance of websites, social media, online booking platforms and digital marketing for tourism businesses.

He encouraged hotels, homestays, travel agencies and other tourism service providers to establish a strong digital presence and make effective use of emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence. He further drew attention to emerging trends such as online booking and dynamic pricing, while cautioning stakeholders about challenges associated with digital platforms, including cyber fraud and misuse of business identities. He stressed that while Government systems and support would continue to facilitate the sector, tourism stakeholders must also take the initiative to actively participate in the ongoing digital transformation.

SDM Hq spoke about the interlinkages between tourism and

the functioning of various departments, observing that the Tourism Department has a close interface with almost every sector. Describing tourism as one of the most important departments, he emphasised the need for coordinated efforts to make Sikkim more accessible and easier for tourists to visit.

A key component of the programme was an elaborate presentation by IT Cell of Tourism and Civil Aviation Department on the department's digital transformation and the range of e-services developed to support tourists, tourism stakeholders and allied institutions.

The presentation highlighted the Sikkim Tourism portal, which brings permits, traveller information and other online services onto a common platform, and the Sikkim Darshan app, which provides visitors access to information on more than 50 destinations through multilingual audio guides, QR-code enabled information, maps and emergency contacts.

For tourism stakeholders, the presentation highlighted online registration and renewal of hotels, homestays and restaurants through SikkimGo Single Sign-On, while the Atithi Guest Information System facilitates guest record management and collection of the Tourism Sustainability Development Fund (TSDF). A geo-tagged homestay map was also highlighted as a tool to help visitors locate homestays across the state.

The presentation further outlined digital systems supporting departmental functioning, including eOffice, currently serving 349 users across 29 offices, along with Tourism Department Management System (TDMS), Asset Management System and INSPIRES portal, aimed at facilitating paperless and transparent governance.

Digital services developed for the Institute of Hotel Management (IHM), Gangtok, and the Institute of Hotel and Catering Education (IHCAE), Chemchey, were also presented. These include platforms supporting learning management, online placement, alumni networking and feedback for IHM, while IHCAE's digital initiatives include an alumni network and a multilingual feedback platform with analytics to support adventure and eco-tourism training. The presentation also included a video showcasing the department's digital initiatives and its broader vision of leveraging technology to promote digital, inclusive and citizen-focused tourism in line with the vision of Viksit Sikkim and Viksit Bharat 2047.

The upcoming Sikkim Adventure Tourism Fest 2026 was also highlighted during the programme, with a short promotional video showcasing activities such as paragliding, white-water rafting, trekking and mountain biking.

Scheduled from November 1-7, 2026, at Linkeytar (Limkhim Tar), Namthang, Namchi District, the fest will also feature local cuisine, agro-products, handlooms, handicrafts and heritage storytelling, along with yoga, Vipassana and AYUSH-based wellness activities. The Tourism and Civil Aviation Department invited visitors and adventure enthusiasts to experience the diverse tourism offerings of Sikkim through the festival.

A felicitation ceremony was also held to recognise contributions to tourism in Gangtok District. Under the Tourism Innovation & Digital Transformation Award for Best Contributor to the Tourism Sustainable Development Fund (TSDF), awards were presented to Summit Group of Hotels, Kazi Road, Lemon Tree Hotel, Lower Sichey and The Fern Denzong Hotel & Spa, Kazi Road.

Mr Vickey Kumar Agarwal of North Sikkim Sharing Travel LLP was recognised as the Best Performing Newly Registered Travel Agency, while Mr Nevid Gautam of Aster Hospitality and Services, Sikkim, and member of Sikkim United Tourism Organisation (SUTO), received the award for Best Performing Travel Agency.

The award for Best Performing Tour Guide was

presented to Ms Rubina Gurung of 2nd Mile, Upper Chandmari, while Mr Jigme Dorjee Tamang of Upper Burtuk, Selep Tank was recognised as the Best Performing Trekking Guide and Mr Kanchan Rai of Naitam Changthang as the Best Performing Bird Guide. Mr Mani Kumar Gurung, All Sikkim Luxury Vehicle Owners cum Driver Welfare Association received the award for Best Performing Sarathi, while Ms Deki Doma Bhutia, Observatory Tower at Tashi View Point, was recognised as the Best Performing Lessee of Tourism Asset.

Certificates of Appreciation were presented to 130 RCC, GREF; 129 RCC, GREF; 17th Mountain Division, Libing Helipad; Gangtok-Gnathang Road Taxi Drivers' and Owners' Association; RN Road Taxi Drivers' and Owners' Association, Rongli; and Main Line Taxi Owners-cum-Drivers' Joint Action Committee, Gangtok, in recognition of their valuable contributions towards tourist safety, welfare and facilitation during challenging situations.

The recognition acknowledged GREF and Army units for their operational support, including road clearance and assistance during emergencies, while the taxi associations were recognised for their support in facilitating and assisting tourists, particularly during disruptions and difficult travel conditions.

District-Level Competition-cum-Selection Trials for Fit India School Games 2026

Namchi, September 23: The District-Level Selection Trials and Competitions for Fit India School Games 2026 for Namchi was organised with participation of under 17 school students from 8 BACs across various sporting disciplines, at Bhaichung Stadium, today.

Organised by the Sports and Youth Affairs Department the district-level selection trials were held across different sporting venues in Namchi.

Earlier, the Department of Sports & Youth Affairs in Namchi District hosted the 2026 Block Level Athletic Meet from September 10 to 16 across eight blocks which included Namchi, Sikkip, Sumbuk, Nandugaon, Namthang, Ravangla, Temi and Yangang. During the event, a total of 891 student athletes, consisting of 527 boys and 364 girls, competed in various track and field events.

Accordingly, this initiative aims to promote physical health and foster teamwork while creating a structured pathway for grassroots athletes to advance to higher-level competitions across Sikkim.

The competitions were conducted in eight disciplines, namely Archery, Boxing, Kabaddi, Karate, Kho-Kho, Table Tennis and Taekwondo and also included track events like 1500m, 800m, 400m 100m and relay races and field

events like Shot Put and Long Jump for the category of under 17 boys and girls, and accordingly the winners of different disciplines were awarded with medals and certificates.

The trials also aims to provide young athletes with a platform to demonstrate their sporting abilities and facilitate the selection of talented students for further state level and national level competitions.

Further, events were conducted at Bhaichung Stadium, Indoor Stadium Namchi, Namchi Public School, and Boxing Hall Car Plaza, Namchi.

This initiative forms part of Fit India movement, encouraging school students to participate actively in sports and promoting fitness, discipline and a healthy lifestyle among the youth.

The event had the presence of MLA, Advisor, Chairperson (Sikkim Youth Development Board), Secretary S&YAD, Principal Chief Engineer S&YAD, Director S&YAD, ADC (Namchi), Additional Director S&YAD (Namchi), CEO (Namchi), Deputy Director S&YAD (Namchi) and officers and staff from S&YAD.

It may be noted that the winners of competitions have been qualified and selected to represent the district in the upcoming State-level school games which will be held in Gangtok.

Valedictory ceremony of Digital Marketing and Business Management Training Programme

Gangtok, September 27: On the occasion of World Tourism Day, valedictory ceremony of Digital Marketing and Business Management Training Programme for women-led homestay operators from Yuksom and Aritar was held at Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, today.

Mr Tshering Thendup Bhutia Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation Department attended the programme as the chief guest.

In his address, the Minister stated that with the objective of raising awareness on the occasion of World Tourism Day, directions had been issued for its observance across all districts. He emphasised the importance of aligning with this year's theme, 'Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence to Redesign Tourism,' through initiatives such as the Digital Marketing and Business Management Training Programme.

He highlighted the need for the tourism sector to adapt to the rapidly evolving digital landscape and make effective use of artificial intelligence to enhance efficiency. He also stressed the importance of establishing a strong digital presence to enable businesses to expand their reach to national and international markets.

The chief guest commended the State Government's Mega Homestay initiative, launched under the leadership of Chief Minister. The flagship rural tourism programme aims to establish more than 1,000 standardised homestays while creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities. He also highlighted the capacity-building initiatives under the Sikkim INSPIRES programme, which seek to support aspiring entrepreneurs in their journey towards self-reliance.

He further underscored Sikkim's rich natural landscapes, traditions, culture, heritage and cuisine as key assets for promoting tourism, while highlighting the economic opportunities generated through a vibrant tourism ecosystem.

Expressing his appreciation to the faculty members of IIM Lucknow and IIT Patna, he acknowledged their contribution to capacity-building through the Digital Marketing and Business Management Training Programme, which aims to professionalise and scale up homestay businesses across the State. He urged homestay operators to make full use of the training and apply the knowledge gained to strengthen and expand their respective businesses.

He also highlighted the upcoming Adventure Tourism Festival, scheduled from November 1-7, which will feature a range of adventure activities, including paragliding, river rafting

and mountain biking, among others.

Mr Tanmay Das, Team Leader, TSA (World Bank), emphasised the need to move beyond certification and ensure that the knowledge and skills gained through the training are translated into practical improvements in homestay businesses. He highlighted the importance of digital marketing in reducing dependence on intermediaries and establishing a more direct connection between homestay operators and customers. He encouraged participants to continuously apply the skills acquired through the programme and assured continued technical support, including refresher training and further capacity-building opportunities.

He stated that the community tourism model developed in Sikkim has the potential to serve as a model for other States, particularly in the Northeast. He urged participants to remain engaged with the programme, provide feedback and share their experiences to help assess its long-term impact and further strengthen the initiative. He further encouraged participants to use their newly acquired digital marketing and business management skills to promote their homestays, participate in trade fairs and understand changing market and customer requirements.

Faculty member from IIT Patna, stated that the Digital Marketing Capacity Building Programme was successfully completed in Aritar and Yuksom, with enthusiastic participation from attendees at both locations. He highlighted the importance of applying the knowledge and skills acquired during the training in practical settings, particularly in the areas of business management and entrepreneurship. He further informed that, based on the response and experience from the first phase, IIT Patna is planning to undertake a second phase of the programme, incorporating further improvements to make the sessions more effective and beneficial for participants. He expressed gratitude to the Government of Sikkim and all officials and stakeholders for their support in successfully conducting the programme.

Faculty members from IIM Lucknow presented a review of the first phase of the training programme. The presentation covered various aspects of homestay management, including Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for homestay operations and accounting practices before and after the training. The presentation highlighted improvements in participants' awareness and understanding of areas such as bookkeeping, segregation of personal and

business finances, financial statements, cash flow and profit, costing and pricing.

The faculty members also presented the outcomes related to sustainability practices before and after the training, including resource efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation, responsible waste management, guest engagement and local value creation.

The presentation further covered talent management, highlighting improvements in areas such as staff recruitment and retention, defining clear roles and responsibilities, communicating expectations and instructions, providing feedback and informal reviews and managing schedules, workload and leave. Under marketing management, the training focused on understanding the type of guests attracted to individual properties, seasonal marketing planning, use of social media for promotion and use of online travel agencies (OTAs). The faculty members also outlined the vision for the upcoming second phase of the programme, which is proposed to include cohort-based programmes; dedicated tracks on marketing, branding and positioning; advanced modules for alumni; a train-the-trainer component; an IIM-certified credential; a digital learning layer; market-watch and adaptability initiatives; and an outcome study and dissemination component.

Mr Bhaskar Pant, CEO, LastClues, outlined the Digital Visibility Initiative for Rural Tourism. He stated that the company has proposed to create a zero-cost digital enablement portal for local homestays, with the objective of transforming grassroots tourism stakeholders into discoverable and bookable micro-brands.

Homestay owners also shared their experiences of the month-long digital marketing training programme. They highlighted the importance of accounting, establishing an online presence through websites and social media, branding, OTA listings and other aspects of digital business management. Homestay operators who successfully completed the training programme were also presented with certificates.

The valedictory ceremony commenced with the screening of a video message from Chief Minister, Mr Prem Singh Tamang on the occasion of World Tourism Day.

The ceremony was also attended by Special Secretary, Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, Additional Director (Hospitality), Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, officials of the Tourism and Civil Aviation Department and other stakeholders.

Yatris from Sikkim flagged off for Somnath Swabhiman Parv

Gangtok, September 26: As part of Somnath Swabhiman Parv, Somnath Yatra comprising 30 members from Sikkim was flagged off by Mr Arun Upreti Minister for Rural Development and Cooperation Departments along with Secretary and Senior officials of Culture Department, today.

The delegation participating in the Yatra under the patronage of Chief Minister Mr Prem Singh Tamang, comprises of 28 representatives from different ethnic communities of Sikkim and two officials from the Culture Department.

The Yatra from Sikkim, being led by Mr Bhawani Ghimire, OSD, Culture Department, will travel from Sikkim to join yatris from Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura aboard the special train 'Somnath Swabhiman Yatra,' and proceed towards the historic Somnath Temple in Gujarat.

The purpose of the yatra is to provide the participants an opportunity to undertake a pilgrimage to the sacred Somnath Temple and to experience and understand its historical, cultural and spiritual significance as part of the Somnath Swabhiman Parv. During their visit to Somnath, the yatris will participate in a range of spiritual, cultural and educational activities, including darshan at the Somnath Temple, Rudrabhishek, Maha Aarti, devotional music and Bhajan Sandhya, cultural programmes and the Light and

Sound Show. Similar activities have formed part of Somnath Swabhiman Yatra programmes organised under the Ministry of Culture's initiative.

The yatris will also have the opportunity to visit the special Somnath Swabhiman Parv Exhibition, which presents the history and heritage of Somnath and traces its journey through centuries of challenges, destruction and reconstruction. The exhibition is intended to provide visitors with a deeper understanding of Somnath's historical and cultural significance.

As part of the visit, the delegation will also undertake a guided tour of the Somnath Museum, providing the participants an opportunity to explore artefacts, historical material and other aspects of the rich heritage associated with Somnath.

The yatra seeks to celebrate India's shared cultural and spiritual heritage while promoting cultural exchange, unity in diversity and national integration.

The Sikkim delegation will join yatris aboard the Somnath Swabhiman Yatra and undertake the journey to Somnath, Gujarat, carrying with them the rich cultural diversity of Sikkim and participating in the spiritual, cultural and educational activities associated with the Somnath Swabhiman Parv.

Press Release from WCSC&DW Department Soreng District

Soreng, September 26: The District Hub for Empowerment of Women (DHEW), Soreng, in collaboration with the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU), conducted an awareness session on Bal Vivah Mukh Bharat and Child Helpline (1098) at Ashram Model Residential School, Jhushinthang, on 22 September 2026.

The session aimed to create awareness among students and teachers about the importance of preventing child marriage, protecting children from abuse and exploitation, and ensuring that children are aware of the support systems and services available to them.

Mrs. Gauri Tamang, CDPO-cum-DD, addressed the gathering and spoke about the Bal Vivah Mukh Bharat campaign, highlighting the harmful effects of child marriage on children and young people. She also discussed the adverse impact of substance abuse on children and adolescents, along with issues related to child abuse and child protection. She emphasized the importance of creating a safe, supportive and protective environment for children and highlighted the role of students, teachers, families and the community in preventing and reporting situations that may put children at risk.

Mrs. Tek Maya Sharma, Protection Officer, DCPU, conducted an informative session on Child Helpline 1098, explaining the various support and services

available through the Child Helpline and DCPU. She highlighted the importance of promptly reporting cases of child abuse, violence, exploitation and other situations requiring care and protection. She also briefed the students on the role of Juvenile Homes, Children's Homes and other Child Care Institutions in providing care, protection and rehabilitation to children in need.

The session was interactive and informative, with the students actively participating throughout the programme. The children enthusiastically engaged with the speakers, responded to questions and shared their understanding of the topics discussed. As part of the programme, the students also provided video feedback, sharing their views and key learnings from the awareness session.

The School Principal expressed gratitude to the DHEW and DCPU teams for conducting the awareness programme and appreciated their efforts towards strengthening awareness on child protection, child marriage prevention and related issues.

The programme was attended by the School Principal, teachers, students, Mrs. Gauri Tamang, CDPO-cum-DD, and members of the DHEW and DCPU teams. The session concluded successfully with a focus on empowering children with knowledge about their rights, safety, protection and the support services available to them.

Chief Minister launches EKAYA Wellness Festival



Pakyong, September 27: Chief Minister Mr Prem Singh Tamang launched the EKAYA Wellness Festival, an initiative aimed at promoting experience-based tourism in Sikkim at ATTC, Bardang, today.

The ceremony was carried out in the presence of Mr Raju Basnet Minister for Education Department, Mr LB Das MLA-cum-Advisor. The festival has been conceptualised by Pakyong District Administration in partnership with Ebb and Flow and other stakeholders under the Sikkim INSPIRES programme. EKAYA seeks to connect tourism with local communities, livelihoods, culture, cuisine, wellness and nature.

Chief Minister congratulated the organisers and stakeholders on the launch of EKAYA. He expressed his support for the development of experience-based tourism as a component of Sikkim's tourism sector and encouraged greater participation of local communities, entrepreneurs,

youth and other stakeholders.

The inaugural programme featured the screening of an opening video and the release of the official festival poster.

EKAYA seeks to expand tourism beyond conventional sightseeing by enabling visitors to participate in activities connected with local communities and their way of life. These include yoga and wellness sessions, guided nature walks, traditional food preparation, pottery, crafts, cultural activities and interactions with farmers, artisans, homestay owners and other community members. The festival provides participants with an opportunity to experience such activities through visits to villages, homestays, farms and craft spaces. The programme also enables participants to understand local practices, materials, livelihoods and cultural traditions.

The initiative aims to create opportunities for local youth, women, artisans, farmers, guides, homestay owners and

entrepreneurs to develop and deliver tourism experiences. It also seeks to strengthen the link between tourism and local economic activity by encouraging visitors to access services and experiences provided by communities.

EKAYA is aligned with the objectives of Sikkim INSPIRES-Integrated Service Provision and Innovation for Reviving Economies, a Government of Sikkim initiative supported by the World Bank. The programme focuses on expanding economic opportunities and strengthening employment and entrepreneurship linkages for women and youth.

The festival brings together entrepreneurs, wellness practitioners, content creators and other participants to engage with Sikkim's tourism offerings and explore opportunities for developing experience-based tourism. The broader objective of EKAYA is to develop an experience-based tourism ecosystem in Sikkim, with greater community participation and stronger linkages between tourism, local livelihoods and entrepreneurship.

Also present were Mr Akshay Sachdeva Director General of Police, Mr CS Rao Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, Dr Sandeep Tambe Principal Secretary, Education Department, Mr Tashi Chopel Secretary, School Education, Ms Pari Bishnoi DC Pakyong, Ms Anupa Tamling DC Namchi, Mr Tshering Sherpa SP Pakyong, Mr Pulkit ADC Pakyong, Ms Sujata Subba SDM Rangpo, Ms Aradhana Gurung from Ebb and Flow; Heads of Institutions along with officials from various departments.

Bande Pokhrel and the Ideals of Mahatma Gandhi in Sikkim

—Jaswant Gautam SIA

Far from the major centres of India's freedom movement, in the hills of Sikkim, a young man found inspiration in the words and way of life of Mahatma Gandhi. Trilochan Pokhrel, popularly known as Gandhi Pokhrel or Bande Pokhrel, carried the charkha through the markets of his Himalayan homeland, making simplicity, self-reliance and service part of everyday life. His journey offers a distinctive glimpse into how Gandhian thought travelled beyond the political centres of time and found expression in a distant Himalayan society.

Born to Bhadr Lal and Januka Pokhrel in Tareythang, East Sikkim, Trilochan Pokhrel was drawn to Gandhi's ideas at a time when the freedom movement was gathering momentum across India. Truth, non-violence and a commitment to a simple way of life became important influences on him. He is widely regarded as one of the earliest prominent freedom movement activists from Sikkim.

It is believed that he spent time at Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat and Sarvodaya Ashram in Bihar, where he is said to have spun the charkha, assisted with ashram activities and adopted a simple way of life. His khadi clothing, wooden footwear and constant association with the charkha became so distinctive that people in his native village came to call him Gandhi Pokhrel.

The charkha also became a means of engaging with people. Trilochan Pokhrel carried it to markets in Rongli, Rhenock, Pakyong and Rangpo, where he demonstrated spinning and encouraged people to value local skills and production. In a society far removed from the principal centres of the national movement, he brought Gandhian thought into everyday life. His advocacy of locally produced goods supported livelihoods, affirmed the dignity of labour and encouraged confidence in the skills and resources of the community.

As the freedom movement unfolded across British India, Sikkim remained outside its direct political framework. Yet Gandhian ideas travelled to the Himalayan state and found expression in the life of Trilochan Pokhrel. His engagement with Gandhi's philosophy is remembered through his way of life and his efforts to bring its principles into practice in society.

These principles were also reflected in the way Trilochan Pokhrel lived. Simplicity shaped his conduct. Non-violence encouraged dialogue and mutual respect. Service meant contributing to the welfare of the community. Together, these values connected personal responsibility with the well-being of others.

The relevance of these principles remains visible in contemporary Sikkim. Support for local enterprise and products reflects self-reliance. Community participation and voluntary service strengthen social welfare. Respect among diverse communities sustain peaceful coexistence, while care for the mountains, forests and shared spaces reflect collective responsibility. In these everyday practices, Gandhian principles continue to find expression in modern Sikkim.

Recognition of Trilochan Pokhrel's contribution has grown over time. The Government of Sikkim posthumously honoured him with the L. D. Kazi Award for Democratic Movement in 2018. In 2026, the Sikkim Legislative Assembly adopted a resolution recommending that Pakyong Airport be renamed Trilochan Pokhrel Airport. Chief Minister Mr Prem Singh Tamang announced the proposed renaming during the 31st Foundation Day celebration of the Akhil Sikkim Khas Chettri Bahun Kalyan Sangh at Rangpo on February 27, 2026. The proposal recognises Pokhrel's contribution to India's freedom struggle and seeks to honour his legacy through a landmark institution in the state.

Such recognition has brought greater attention to a figure, who remained relatively unknown outside Sikkim for many years. Yet the significance of Bande Pokhrel lies not only in the honours associated with his name. It also lies in the continuing presence of the values he embraced in the social life of Sikkim.

From a small Himalayan state, the story of Bande Pokhrel reaches beyond its time and place. What began with a charkha and a simple way of life continues to resonate in Sikkim today. The legacy of Trilochan Pokhrel lies in showing how an idea, when lived with conviction, can travel across generations and remain relevant to the society of tomorrow.

International Day of Non-Violence

October 2 is celebrated as Gandhi Jayanti and globally as the International Day of Non-Violence, as declared by the United Nations- a dual tribute that reflects both national pride and global respect for the Mahatma.

The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution in June 2007 affirming non-violence as a universal principle and promoting a global culture of peace and tolerance. The spirit of Gandhi Jayanti and the International Day of Non-Violence is kept alive globally, with commemorations held in countries such as Belgium, USA, Spain, Serbia, Switzerland, Thailand, Kazakhstan and the Netherlands. Introduction On October 2, the world honours the birth of Mahatma Gandhi. In India, the day is celebrated as Gandhi Jayanti, while across the globe it is observed as the International Day of Non-Violence, following a 2007 United Nations resolution that received support from over 140 countries. This dual observance gives the day a unique significance that is rooted in India's national memory yet shared as a universal message for humanity. At the UN, the day is observed with statements from the Secretary-General and events that connect Gandhi's philosophy to today's realities.

In recent years, these messages have pointed to the conflicts across the globe and have reminded nations that Gandhi's belief in truth and non-violence is "more powerful than any weapon." In India, the observance takes the form of tributes at Raj Ghat, cultural and educational programmes, and public campaigns that highlight Gandhi's ideals. Over the years, these commemorations have gone beyond ceremonial gestures to inspire national missions from the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan that promotes cleanliness, to the revival of Khadi and rural industries symbolising self-reliance. The International Day of Non-Violence thus stands as both a national homage and a global call to action. It reminds us that Gandhi's message is not confined to the past but continues to light the way towards a world where peace triumphs over conflict, dialogue over division, and compassion over fear. The International Day of Non-Violence commemorates Gandhi's transcendental vision and philosophies of non-violence, truth and social justice, which remain as relevant today as they were during his lifetime and are now internationally recognised as pivotal to the holistic and inclusive progress of humankind.

The Government of India as well as the world continue to be inspired by his political and social vision to ensure that societies globally are peaceful, just, and compassionate today and in the future. (PIB)