

Press release from Sikkim State Cooperative Union (SICUN)

Gyalshing District Observes Third Day of 72nd All India Cooperative Week Celebration

Gyalshing, November 16: The third day of the 72nd All India Cooperative Week was observed today at Yangtey GPK Bhawan, Sakyong, Gyalshing District under the national theme “Cooperatives as Vehicles for Atma Nirbhar Bharat” and the sub-theme “Enhancing Rural Development through Cooperatives.”

The programme was jointly organised by Sikkim State Cooperative Union (SICUN) and the Sikkim Cooperative Milk Producers’ Union Ltd. (SMU) in collaboration with the Cooperation Department, Gyalshing.

The celebration was graced by Mr Yam Kumar Sharma, Chairman, SMU, as the Chief Guest. Other dignitaries present were Mr Purna Hang Subba Advisor, SMU; Dr Mangal Jit Rai, Chairman, SICUN; Mr PP Sharma, Vice Chairman, SICUN; Ms Krishna Kumari Chettri, Zilla Panchayat Member; Panchayat President and Members of Yangtey GPU; Mr BB Subba, Additional Director, AH&VS Department, Gyalsing District; Dr TB Ghatani, Managing Director, SMU; Mr Phadung Bhutia, CEO, SICUN; Mr Palden Bhutia, DRCS Cooperation Department Gyalshing; Mr Jit Man Rai, CDO SICUN; officials from the SICUN and SMU; representatives of dairy cooperative societies, MPCS Managers and stakeholders.

The programme commenced with a special tribute marking 150 years of the National Song “Vande Mataram,” followed by the lighting of the ceremonial lamp by the Chief Guest and other dignitaries.

Chief Guest, Mr Sharma in his keynote address highlighted the vision of Viksit Bharat through a strong and vibrant cooperative sector. He emphasised the need to further strengthen village-level cooperative societies and cited the example of Luing MPCS, which has effectively utilised its resources and implemented new plans for enhanced performance. He noted that the society has availed KCC loans exceeding ₹2 crore, demonstrating how cooperatives can uplift rural communities.

He encouraged farmers to become smart, progressive and informed, announcing that exposure trips will be organised for dairy farmers to learn best practices. He reaffirmed that true Atmanirbharata can be achieved through strong dairy cooperatives and assured full support from the Sikkim Milk Union (SMU) to all dairy farmers.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Mangal Jit Rai, Chairman, SICUN, shared that the 72nd Cooperative Week is being observed across all districts of Sikkim from 14–20 November 2025. He expressed gratitude to the Hon’ble Chief Minister, Shri PS Tamang (Golay) for his visionary leadership and consistent support toward strengthening the cooperative sector. Dr Rai called on all co-operators to unite with renewed commitment to build a vibrant and future-ready cooperative ecosystem for a Sunaulo, Samriddha Ani Samarth Sikkim. He also encouraged all cooperative societies of Gyalsing District to expand membership and actively contribute to strengthening the cooperative movement.

Ms Krishna Kumari Chettri, Zilla Panchayat Member, assured full cooperation in her GPU and thanked SICUN and SMU for organising the programme in Gyalshing.

During the celebration, Dr TB Ghatani, Managing Director, SMU, highlighted the pivotal role of cattle in rural livelihoods, describing the cow as an important asset and the backbone of the rural economy. He informed that SMU was registered in 1980 with only a handful of co-operators and a daily collection of 2,100 litres of milk. Today, SMU procures around 70,000 litres per day through 540 dairy cooperative societies. Although SMU has 730 registered cooperatives, around 190 societies function seasonally. He shared that ₹35–40 lakh is credited daily to the Union’s accounts, reflecting strong farmer participation. SMU supplies 20,000 litres of milk daily to the Indian Army and has expanded its market reach to Kolkata. Annually, ₹110–120 crore flows directly to village-level societies. Dr. Ghatani also highlighted the benefits extended to dairy farmers, including the ₹8 per litre incentive from the Government of Sikkim, a ₹2 per litre bonus from SMU, and the provision of BS Type-1 cattle feed, enabling farmers to save ₹20–22 per day—a true example of cooperative benefit.

A detailed presentation on the national theme “Cooperatives as Vehicles for Atma Nirbhar Bharat” and the sub-theme “Enhancing Rural Development through Cooperatives” was delivered by Mr Phadung Bhutia, CEO, SICUN, who also explained the day-wise themes for the Cooperative Week.

Mr Palden Bhutia, DRCS Gyalshing, congratulated SICUN and SMU for successfully organising the programme. He informed that Gyalshing District currently has 500 registered cooperatives, including 118 dairy cooperatives. He emphasized proper record-keeping, timely audits and obtaining AGM resolutions before distributing bonuses. He also urged society secretaries to ensure diligent maintenance of records and dairy houses using their own funds. He reminded cooperative members to be aware of their rights under the Sikkim Cooperative Act, 1978.

Messages from the Hon’ble Governor of Sikkim, the Hon’ble Chief Minister, and the Minister, RDD & Cooperation Department were read out by Mr Laxmi Prasad Sharma (Route Incharge), Mr BB Subba (Additional Director, AH&VS) and Dr NK Pradhan (GM, SMU) respectively.

The programme also included the distribution of mineral mixtures to dairy farmers.

Earlier, the welcome address was delivered by Mr Purna Bdr Chettri (BOD, SMU) and the vote of thanks proposed by Mr Binod Rai, Route Incharge.

The event was efficiently conducted by Mr Ashok Gurung, Sr Executive (P&I).