Press Release from the Office of the Hon'ble Minister
Education, Sports and Youth Affairs and Law and Parliamentary Affairs Departments,
Government of Sikkim

SIKKIM EDUCATION MINISTER ATTENDS DIGII100X EAST INDIA IN KOLKATA; HIGHLIGHTS SIKKIM'S ROLE IN BUILDING A CONNECTED EASTERN HIMALAYAN KNOWLEDGE ECOSYSTEM

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Hon'ble Minister for Education, Sports & Youth Affairs, Law & Parliamentary Affairs Departments, Government of Sikkim, Mr. Raju Basnet, participated as Guest of Honour at the Valedictory Ceremony of Digii100x East India, a high-level knowledge summit held at Taj Bengal, Kolkata, on 29 September 2026. The summit, themed "Vidya for Viksit Bharat" is conceived as an invite-only, closed-door knowledge gathering. The summit had a completely non-commercial agenda, creating a platform for candid dialogue, exchange of ideas and meaningful collaboration among leaders from across the ecosystem. The Valedictory Ceremony was graced by Dr. Sukanta Majumdar, Hon'ble Minister of State for Education and Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Government of India, as the Chief Guest. Other notable dignitaries included Mr. Temjen Imna Along, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism & Higher Education, Government of Nagaland; Mr. Jagannath Chattopadhyay, Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education and Technical Education, Training & Skill Development, Government of West Bengal and Mr. Kishor Barman, Hon'ble Cabinet Minister, Government of Tripura.

Mr. Raju Basnet participated in the high-level Leadership Roundtable themed "One Region, One Education Ecosystem: Unlocking Collective Excellence Through Collaboration." He joined senior Government, education and industry leaders in discussions on strengthening inter-state education and knowledge networks, sharing research infrastructure and institutional capabilities, student and faculty mobility, technology-enabled education and connecting education with employment and entrepreneurship.

During the programme, Mr. Basnet also took part in curated one-on-one interactions engaging with senior representatives from technology, higher education, institutional benchmarking, industry, talent mobility and regional development.

The Hon'ble Minister subsequently attended the Valedictory Ceremony as the Guest of Honour and delivered a Special Address. His address focused on Sikkim's experience in education and youth development, regional collaboration, institution building and the contribution of Eastern and North Eastern India towards Viksit Bharat.

In his address, Mr. Basnet emphasised that education must go beyond examination results and contribute to knowledge, capability, confidence, character, creativity, skills and opportunity. He highlighted Sikkim's implementation of NEP 2020, foundational literacy and numeracy initiatives, teacher development, tuition fee-free government education up to the college level, youth development programmes and the convergence of Education with Sports and Youth Affairs. He further stated that the Government of Sikkim, under the leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Mr. Prem Singh Tamang (Golay), has been working consistently towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through an integrated approach to education, human development and inclusive growth. He noted that this approach closely aligns with the spirit of Digii100x, where collaboration, technology and stronger institutional networks can accelerate sustainable and equitable development across the region.

Speaking on regional cooperation, Mr. Basnet stressed that smaller States need not independently recreate every capability. He advocated sharing research facilities, faculty networks, centres of excellence, digital resources, virtual laboratories, joint courses and student exchanges. He also highlighted Sikkim's strengths in Himalayan studies, biodiversity, organic agriculture, sustainable tourism, multilingual education, indigenous knowledge, sports and small-State governance.

He further proposed exploring an "Eastern Himalayan Knowledge Network" around five broad areas: Education and Knowledge; Research and Innovation; Skills and Entrepreneurship; Youth and Sports; and Culture and Languages. He noted that such cooperation could begin by connecting existing institutions, expertise and resources across the region.

Mr. Basnet also underlined the potential of the Eastern and North Eastern region to transform its geographical and developmental challenges into opportunities through research, technology, entrepreneurship, sustainable development, digital education, adventure sports and sports science. He concluded with a call to move “from access to outcomes, from education to human development, from individual institutions to institutional networks, and from geography to opportunity.”

The programme brought together more than 200 senior leaders from Eastern and North Eastern India representing Government, education, industry, technology, entrepreneurship and public policy, providing a platform for dialogue on building a more connected regional knowledge and opportunity ecosystem.