

Press Release from the Office of the Additional Political Secretary to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Sikkim

Sikkim Education Minister Raju Basnet Meets Aspire Leaders India Foundation and School of Policy & Governance to Explore New Opportunities for Youth Leadership and Climate Education

Gangtok, Sikkim.

In a significant step toward expanding leadership and climate-education opportunities for young people in Sikkim, Sashi Gundala, Director of the Aspire Leaders India Foundation (ALIF), and Shreelatha Krishnan, Director of the School of Policy and Governance (SPG), met with Shri Raju Basnet, Hon'ble Minister for Education, Government of Sikkim.

The meeting was facilitated by Mr. Tshering Wangchuk Lepcha, Additional Political Secretary, Government of Sikkim, and President, SKM Students' Wing.

During the meeting, the delegation introduced the Aspire Leaders Program—a fully funded, online leadership development initiative created by Harvard faculty for first-generation and low-income college students. The program equips young learners with global leadership skills, problem-solving capabilities, and a worldwide peer network spanning more than 195 countries. Minister Basnet welcomed the initiative, recognizing its alignment with the Government of Sikkim's ongoing efforts to strengthen youth preparedness through interventions such as the Chief Minister's Mentorship Programme and statewide academic support initiatives. He expressed enthusiasm for enabling Sikkim's students to access global learning pathways and cutting-edge leadership opportunities.

In addition to the Aspire Leaders Program, SPG also presented a suite of climate education, public policy, and green-skills programmes that can enable Sikkim's youth to pursue emerging careers in the sustainability and climate-action sectors. SPG's programmes already delivered to policymakers, military officers, educators, and professionals across India, Africa, and the Global South—build critical competencies in climate change, net-zero pathways, public policy, and environmental leadership.

Together, Aspire Leaders India Foundation and SPG proposed a collaborative approach to: Expand access to free, world-class leadership training for the youth & students in Sikkim. This partnership aims to support the Government of Sikkim's vision for an empowered, future-ready generation capable of contributing meaningfully to the state's economic and social progress.

For more information about the Aspire Leaders Program, visit: www.aspireindiafoundation.org
For details on SPG's programmes, visit: <https://policyandgovernance.in>