

PRESS RELEASE FROM FISHERIES DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

Fisheries Department Reviews Preparations for Chirbirey River Fest 2026

Gangtok, 3rd August 2026: A coordination meeting to review the preparations for the upcoming Chirbirey River Fest 2026 was held today at the Conference Hall of the Fisheries Department, Government of Sikkim, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Roshni Rai, Secretary, Fisheries Department. The meeting was attended by senior officers of the Fisheries Department, representatives from the Tourism Department and members of the Sikkim Anglers Association (SAA).

During the meeting, Shri Udai Rai of the Sikkim Anglers Association made a comprehensive presentation on the Chirbirey River Fest, scheduled to be held from 25th to 27th September 2026. He elaborated on the background behind the selection of Chirbirey as the venue, the objectives of the festival, and the overall plan for its successful organization. He highlighted that community participation would be the central theme of the event, ensuring that the festival evolves into a sustainable, community-driven initiative while promoting conservation, responsible angling and eco-tourism.

The presentation outlined a wide range of activities planned throughout the three-day festival. Besides the angling competition, visitors will have the opportunity to participate in experiential activities such as short courses on angling, pottery, painting, cooking and other recreational and cultural programmes. The daily schedule will include yoga sessions, community meals, music and cultural evenings. To encourage greater participation, facilities including tents and a community kitchen will be made available to visitors wishing to stay during the festival at nominal charges. Shri Rai further informed that a dedicated website for the festival will be launched shortly to facilitate online registration and dissemination of event-related information.

He also sought the active cooperation of various departments, including Commerce & Industries, Sports, Forest and Tourism, to jointly support and promote the festival.

As part of the promotional campaign, pre-event roadshows will be organized at MG Marg, Gangtok, as well as Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Siliguri, to create awareness and attract participants and tourists from within and outside the State.

Addressing the meeting, Dr. S. K. Dewan, President of the Sikkim Anglers Association, described the festival as a significant milestone in the conservation of riverine fisheries in Sikkim. He highlighted the Association's longstanding efforts towards conservation in collaboration with the Fisheries Department and expressed his gratitude to all supporting departments, particularly the Fisheries Department, for their continued encouragement and cooperation.

In her address, Mrs. Roshni Rai, Secretary, Fisheries Department, appreciated the initiative and suggested integrating the festival registration website with the Fisheries Department's online fishing licence portal to enable interested participants to obtain fishing licences seamlessly. She further recommended the constitution of an Organizing Committee with one representative from each participating department to ensure effective inter-departmental coordination. She also emphasized the importance of obtaining visitor feedback during the festival to help improve future editions and strengthen the event as a sustainable eco-tourism and conservation initiative.

The meeting concluded with a collective commitment from all stakeholders to work in close coordination for the successful organization of the Chirbirey River Fest 2026, which is envisioned as a unique platform for promoting responsible angling, riverine biodiversity conservation, community participation and sustainable tourism in Sikkim.