PRESS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF HON'BLE DEPUTY SPEAKER, SLA

EACH ONE, PICK ONE": Namchi Doctors Propose Statewide Initiative to Identify and Treat Correctable Deformities

Namchi, 15 October : In a significant step towards strengthening community-based healthcare and transforming the lives of individuals living with correctable deformities, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly and Area MLA of 15 Rangang Yangang Constituency, Smt. Raj Kumari Thapa, visited Namchi District Hospital to enquire about the health and well-being of 15-year-old Miss Harka Maya Kami of Lower Sripatam Ward, who is undergoing treatment for a congenital condition affecting her right leg and has previously undergone corrective surgery.

During the visit, Smt. Thapa interacted with the doctors attending to the young patient and discussed her treatment and recovery. It was during this interaction that a team of doctors put forward a proposal for a pilot initiative titled "A Step Towards a Correctable Deformity-Free Sikkim," envisioning a systematic, village-based approach to identifying individuals requiring medical intervention and ensuring timely access to appropriate treatment.

The proposed initiative is built around the principle of "Each One, Pick One" through a Village Adoption Programme, with the objective of adopting one village at a time. It seeks to conduct door-to-door screening to identify individuals with correctable deformities and other medical conditions, particularly children affected by congenital conditions such as Congenital Talipes Equinovarus (CTEV), cerebral palsy and other congenital abnormalities. Through early identification, appropriate referrals and coordinated medical care, the programme aims to ensure that individuals who might otherwise remain undiagnosed or untreated receive the attention they need.

Under the proposal, District Hospital Namchi (DHN) would adopt a multidisciplinary approach under the guidance of Director-cum-Chief Medical Officer Dr. Junita Yonzon. Dr. Kanchan Gurung, Joint Replacement, Spine and Trauma Surgeon, along with Dr. D. Deokota, Head of the Department of Orthopaedics, would spearhead the clinical management of identified cases. The initiative would also involve specialists and healthcare professionals from the Departments of Anaesthesia, Paediatrics, Physiotherapy, ENT, General Medicine and General Surgery to ensure comprehensive, coordinated and patient-centred care.

As part of the proposed initiative, the Department of Orthopaedics, in collaboration with the Department of Anaesthesia, represented by Dr. Noykila Lepcha, Dr. Sarojani D. Dhakal and their team, would work in coordination with other relevant departments to provide appropriate surgical and non-surgical interventions based on individual clinical requirements.

Under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Prem Singh Tamang (Golay), Sikkim has witnessed significant transformation in the public health sector, with sustained efforts to strengthen healthcare infrastructure, expand access to medical services and improve healthcare delivery at the grassroots level. The proposed initiative reflects this broader commitment to making quality healthcare more accessible, inclusive and responsive, particularly for individuals and families requiring specialised treatment and continued medical support.

During the interaction, Smt. Thapa lauded the Department of Orthopaedics for its dedicated service and for putting forward a proposal that has the potential to bring meaningful change to the lives of patients living with congenital deformities and other correctable conditions. She expressed her willingness to advocate for the initiative, particularly the "Each One, Pick One" concept, before the appropriate authorities at the state level and to make every possible effort to facilitate its consideration and approval.

Emphasising the importance of collective responsibility, Smt. Thapa highlighted the need for systematic screening, early identification, timely medical referrals and coordinated efforts involving elected representatives, local bodies, healthcare professionals and the Garib Jan Kalyan Prakosta. She stressed that a collaborative approach would be essential to ensuring that no individual requiring medical attention is overlooked, regardless of their location or economic circumstances.

Smt. Thapa also commended the Department of Orthopaedics for its continued efforts to provide advanced medical care to patients from Sikkim as well as those travelling from outside the state. The department's growing capacity to deliver specialised orthopaedic treatment, she noted, presents opportunities not only to improve patient outcomes but also to strengthen Sikkim's potential as a destination for medical tourism, with associated benefits for the state's healthcare services and economy. During the interaction, it was informed that the department had successfully treated more than 200 patients from outside the country with patients from neighbouring countries like Nepal and Bhutan highlighting its contribution to specialised healthcare delivery.

Reaffirming the Health Department's commitment, CMO Dr. Junita Yonzon stated that the entire health team would extend every possible support to the proposed initiative and work collectively towards the shared vision of a Correctable Deformity-Free Sikkim.

The proposed initiative represents a promising step towards taking healthcare beyond hospital premises and bringing it directly to communities. By combining village-level screening with specialised medical expertise, early

intervention and coordinated follow-up, “A Step Towards a Correctable Deformity-Free Sikkim” seeks to bridge gaps in healthcare access and improve the quality of life of individuals living with correctable deformities. One village at a time, one patient at a time, the vision is to ensure that every individual has the opportunity to receive timely treatment, regain confidence and lead a healthier, more fulfilling life.