

## **Budget Speech 2020-2021**

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

I rise to present this first full fledged budget for the year 2020- 2021 before the Hon'ble Speaker and the Members of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. I call it full fledged because the last budget we presented was midway the last fiscal year 2019-2020 because of the due completion of the electoral process and formation of a new Government led by our party Sikkim Krantikari Morcha in May 2019.

I present this budget against a backdrop of a horrifying pandemic of Novel Coronavirus that has affected a major portion of the global humanity. The people of Sikkim while remaining under protection, safety and self prevention, we convey our deepest condolences to the bereaved families and express our concerns and cooperation in the preventive fight against this deadly pandemic.

We also have some inspiring backdrops, of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visionary pledge of making India a 5 trillion dollar economy; part submission of the report of the 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission and full support and faith of the people of Sikkim on our Government.

When we took over the governance in Sikkim just 10 months ago, we inherited a staggering debt burden to the tune of over Rs 20000 crore and literally an empty exchequer from the last Government which ruled Sikkim for 25 years. We found the governance had been done not by the institutions but by individuals. Systems were run and policies were made not on the basis of established norms and regulations but very myopic vision of just winning the elections. The entire spectrum of government employees remained thoroughly demoralized as they became victims of arbitrariness and despotic behavior of the political leadership. Besides a blatant discrimination on promotion, transfer, victimisation,

regularization of jobs, their dues in terms of implementation of Pay Commission Report were only falsely assured but never paid. A huge portion of the adhoc employment was done without following any norms and policies. Nepotism was at its height in Sikkim. Deserving youths were always deprived and discriminated.

Public funds were misused to the hilt and no one was held accountable. The quality of physical infrastructure like roads and buildings was so utterly poor that within few months of the construction one could see wearing and tearing process acutely setting in. Look at the pathetic conditions of scores of schools, primary health centres, panchayat bhavans, public toilets, drinking water facilities, they are just there for namesake. The promise of making world class college in Gyalshing in 2010 and establishing the Sikkim State University in 2018 are just the naked examples of how casually the Government planned its educational programmes and projects. And how insincere it was in implementing the sensitive projects of higher education. Like several other projects, both of these ventures are now hankering for just survival.

Nothing could be more visible and symbolic than a range of unviable, unsustainable and highly diabolic and viscerously dangerous hydel power projects. Some of these projects were so thoughtlessly done by agents who had never worked in the fragile mountain areas. They dislocate the society, environment and human settlements in a major segment of Sikkim. What do we do when some of these inexperienced agents have ran away with public funds, and when some of them have just abandoned the projects? What do we do when in some projects even if the financial closure is done, will still incur more costs than the generation of income.

We have seen, protractedly incomplete projects and very pathetic maintenance of existing infrastructures and amenities on the one hand, and on the other

hand, completion of some postponable projects with super-jet speed with huge allocations. We could smell and gauge deep rooted individual corruption, constant institutional leakages and high degree of targeted nepotism in most of these projects. All these have definite repercussions on Sikkimese society.

We now face a massive quantum of unpaid dues running into thousands of crore to banks, builders, contractors, agents, hospitals, suppliers and others. Even in the much trumpeted Pakyong Airport project a huge amount of compensation to the land holders had to be paid by us to start running the airport once again.

At the same time, we have also gathered that only such projects of the Central Government were implemented which brought quick and big money. Many of these projects did not require any serious groundwork by the State Government. We also found that at least 3/5<sup>th</sup> of the central government projects spread over and floated by several ministries in Government of India were never brought to Sikkim. The reasons being non-availability of grants in the State fund. As a result, we lost massive employment opportunities, huge quantum of central resources and made our institutions disoriented. We sacrificed 90 percent of grants for 10 percent of matching grant. All other states made fortunes out of these projects.

So we have to fire fight every moment, the adverse and deleterious consequences of the 25 year of last government. We have to now collectively address, correct and manage their negligence, hackneyed priorities, and wilful violations of norms, laws and regulations and more seriously demolitions of institutions in the state.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Please appreciate that we are not in the business of blame game. We are only making the House and the Sikkimese people aware and acquainted with what

we inherited. What are the existing realities and how we are trying to grapple with these dangerous trends and directions? It's a desperate situation that brings formidable challenge to us in the Government. To some extent our past governments inefficiencies and misplaced priorities have become "Aafno Gala Afnai Lapeta" for us.

After Limbu and Tamang communities of Sikkim were incorporated in the national list of Scheduled Tribes vide the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 2002,, one of the crucial corollaries and follow up of this inclusion in the list of scheduled tribes should have been the allocations of reserved seats to these two communities in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly under the provisions of Article 332 of the Constitution. However, full 17 years have passed after the inclusions that declared the Limbu and Tamang Communities as STs, there is no allocation of reserved seats to these two communities. This has essentially happened because of three fundamental yet serious reasons .

Firstly, the then ruling party of Sikkim Democratic Front and its Government has never been committed to this idea of seat reservation and the political rights of these two communities.

Secondly, whenever the pressure for such reservation of seats built up, the then ruling party and their government made some artificial efforts to show that they are aware of this crucial demand of these two communities.

And thirdly, just to win the election they submitted a prescription and a formula for the reservation of seats without taking people at large into confidence. Though the media did time and again mentioned about this prescription and formula submitted to the Government of India, there were no discussion, debate and deliberation at any level and forum in the state. No one knows the basis and justification for such a solution and formula. Unfortunately, the formula itself kept on changing.

More seriously, there were no firm commitment and response from the Government of India which were made public by the then ruling party. Amazingly, every time few months before the general election in the state, the ruling party vociferously stated that the reservations will now be a reality as the Union Government has accepted both the prescription and the formula.

The SDF Government was making false promise and giving fake assurance for full 17 years are corroborated by the following facts :

i) It was a partner in both the ruling coalition governments of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the United Progressive Alliance (UPA). In the NDA Government, it remained a partner during 1999-2004 and again 2014-2019. And in the UPA Government it had been a partner from 2004 to 2014. Despite these partnerships and its election manifestoes of three general elections (2004, 2009 and 2014), the SDF Government utterly failed to make any dent into this constitutional demand of the LT communities

ii) The headlines of Sikkim Express of 23 June 2016 quoting the then Chief Minister mentioned that “the PMO has forwarded the LT file to Home Ministry”. Quoting Chief Minister it said “just today I came to know that the Prime Minister’s Office has forwarded the file related to Limbu-Tamang Seat reservation matter to the Home Affairs Ministry. We should be happy that the process has begun though it may take some time”. First of all, he admitted that that the process ‘actually’ started after almost 13 years. Interestingly, when he had to quit the office of the Chief Minister in the end of May 2019, three years had already passed and nothing had happened. One can easily guess what was the reality ! Indeed a hoodwinking once again.

iii) Even after 15 years of propaganda, the SDF Government again shamelessly mentioned the LT reservation issue in its manifestoes of the 2019 State Assembly election. However, after its defeat in the 2019 election, it has never raised this issue in any of the public gatherings and its confabulations with other parties and the Union Government.

iv) One of the most vital and timely opportunities for getting the seat reservations of the LT communities was the formation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Delimitation Commission headed by Justice Kuldip Singh in July 2002. The last three Delimitation Commissions were appointed in 1952, 1963 and 1973. We are aware that now Delimitation Commission is appointed every 25 years. However, the Constitution of India was amended in 2002 not to have delimitation of constituencies till the first census after 2026 i.e. 2031. It is astonishing to read the correspondences of the Delimitation Commission with the then State Government. One could so easily find as to how the State government foiled all the moves of the Delimitation Commission to allocate reserved seats on poor grounds of non-availability of data on these two tribes. We can always refer to letters exchanged between the Delimitation Commission and the then State Government.

a) Letter [vide D.O. No. 282/SKM/2006/146] of the Delimitation Commission dated 27<sup>th</sup> January 2006 to the Government of Sikkim

b) Letter [vide D.O.No. 282/SKM/2006/193] of the Delimitation commission dated 15<sup>th</sup> February 2006 to the Government of Sikkim

c) Letter [vide D.O.No. 314/CS/SKM/2006] of the Government of Sikkim of 9<sup>th</sup> March 2006 to the Delimitation Commission

Amazingly, similar data were made available to the Delimitation Commission on the basis of 2001 Census. Thus delimitation of various Assembly Constituencies were done. The 2009, 2014 and 2019 elections were fought on the basis of these newly configured constituencies, an outcome of the recommendations of Delimitation Commission.

Even the Home Ministry vide letter [D.O No. IV/11015/1/2005 – CSR –H] dated 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006 of Shri A.K. Srivastava, Joint Secretary to the State Government found not a difficult proposition in reserving 5 seats for the LT community out of the total 17 unreserved seats as they constituted 15 to 16 percent of the total population.

When the then State Government found increasingly cornered by its own illogical arguments and exposed vacillations, it appointed Burman Commission for Review of the Environmental & Social Sector Policies, plans, and programmes (CRESP) on 1 December, 2005 [vide gazette notification No. 73/HOME/2005]. This Commission brought a new dimension to the LT seat reservation issue when it stated the reservation cannot be done unless all other left out communities are listed as Schedule Tribes and the total number of assembly seats is increased from 32 to 40.

The then state government changed its stand several times and ultimately came to demand the raising of the assembly seats from the existing 32 to 40 to provide reservations to LT community. This proposition itself became controversial and unsustainable on two primary grounds that it was made with virtually zero consultation with the public and socio-cultural institutions at large and also the fact that the next Delimitation Commission would be constituted only after 2026.

## **Our Approach and Strategy**

As a strong opposition party the SKM had been raising this crucial issue in various fora and also made it a major demand in its election manifestoes of 2014 and 2019. The past 16 years of this demand has been marred by the then State Government's duplicity and ambiguity, false assurance and fake public postures and more seriously inconsistent, unscientific and unilateral representations to the Union Government. No one knows what it exactly discussed with the Union Government on this issue in the last 16 years. The civil society and social actors and cultural institutions were consciously kept out of any thinking process and decision making initiatives. There has been literally no debate and deliberations across various social spectrum on this very crucial issue.

Our Government would now like to put before the Union Government a proposition which will come out of serious and consistent deliberation among various echelons of the Sikkimese society, and a scientific formula that would be acceptable to all the communities and a democratic solution that would satisfy all the constituencies in Sikkim.

In Sikkim, we have matured institutions, well educated professionals, established civil society organizations with huge social and indigenous wisdom, fairly robust political parties and more importantly youths with scientific attitude and thought process. We want the issue of LT reservation in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly to be thoroughly discussed, scientifically analyzed and farsightedly resolved.

We therefore, would like to place this issue before the civil society, media, professionals, political parties, socio-cultural institutions, universities and youths for a well informed public opinion. We appeal to all of you to find an acceptable solution, all encompassing formula with a scientific and transparent approach. Once we have this civil society-led proposal and formula before us, we shall discuss this in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. We shall then finally place it before the Government of India for a final policy decision. We shall like to do so as Sikkimese peoples' collective proposal so that the ownership of the final solution will go to the people of Sikkim.

Therefore, our government will now officially place the issue of reservations of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly before the Sikkimese people at large to think, deliberate, analyse and arrive at a firm, scientific and acceptable proposal by March 2021. We shall make all the available information accessible for healthy and well informed discussions and deliberations. Our prayers to all the mountain deities for our collective success.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

It may be reminded in order to delay the demand of these eleven left out communities the previous government had constituted A.C. Sinha Commission and the commission had submitted a report in the year 2005. But due to the lack of proper action again in the year 2008, Prof. B.K. Roy Burman Commission was constituted and the demand got delayed for another four years.

Although the B.K. Roy -Burman Commission report was only made public in the year 2012, the truth of the matter is that the previous Government conspired against the eleven left out communities and deprived them of the tribal status.

Although our government has always advocated tribal status for the eleven left out communities according to Article 371 (F) of the Constitution, there are still steps forward which our government will take in order to provide them with the tribal status.

I would also like to make a special statement that our government in the meantime is requesting the Central Government to give a special status to the State OBC who were not included in the Central OBC list to be identified as an Economically Weaker Section till the tribal status is granted.

It will also provide some relief as well as benefits of the Central Government to them. We are also in favour of giving a certificate identifying these people as Economically Weaker Section as soon as possible.

In this way, till the time they get the Tribal status they will be getting the benefits from the Central Government which is our main focus and intention.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

We have to rebuild Sikkim. We have to reawaken Sikkim and its cultural ecology, natural resources and social capital. We have to reorient and re-empower our youths and women. We have to redirect our knowledge, skills and traditional wisdom. We have to rejuvenate our economy and revitalize our society and cultural wealth. We have to relocate our environmental resources and regenerate our biodiversity. We have to reposition Sikkim in the Global World. And we have to firmly connect with the rest of India and the global world.

Our Government therefore, has prioritized critical areas of interventions that would transform Sikkim into a new Green Growth Pole of the North Eastern region. And make people, communities and societies in Sikkim as one of most vibrant, happy, contented and harmonious collective cultures in India. These critical areas of interventions are spread over knowledge society, physical infrastructures, green economy, Sustainable Development Goals achievements,

tertiary hubs, innovation and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises reservoir and climate change discourse leader. In all these 7 interventions the key drivers will be the central government, state government, private sector, youths, women, universities, financial and technological institutions, national and global philanthropic organizations and international multilateral development agencies.

This budget for the fiscal year 2020-2021 is primarily aimed at initiating solid and effective actions to realize these goals and mobilize resources and instruments to make these 7 development interventions. Our first full fledged budget is therefore, focused on this specific agenda.

### **Knowledge Society**

Sikkim has always been a cradle of traditional knowledge base mainly because of its magnificent biodiversity, social medicine practices and geo-strategic location. Our grandparents have so much of experience, our farmers and faith healers have undertaken massive experimentations and our youth are so very talented. Our Government would like to revive and rejuvenate this unique knowledge heritage of Sikkim and blend with the modern vistas of knowledge, science and technology. The idea is to introduce Sikkim as a New Knowledge Society in the national and global map. Large number of nations across the world have done business of knowledge like Apple, Microsoft and Coco Cola in the US, Samsung and Hyundai in South Korea and Canon and Toshiba in Japan and Infosys and WIPRO in India. At the same time, a range of prolific global institutions have nurtured, and generated knowledge like Cambridge, Oxford in the UK, MIT and Harvard in the US and IIT, ISRO and JNU in India.

We already have 6 universities in Sikkim. This means for every one lakh population we have one university. Perhaps nowhere in the world you will find

such thick density of University in such a small geography and population. By this measure, Sikkim should have been the most learned state in India. We should have produced the top quality of human resources that could be deployed anywhere in the world. How many IAS, IFS and IPS officers we have ? How many Professors, Management experts and Commissioned Officers in defence forces we have? How many indigenous entrepreneurs and professionals on natural resource management we have? We should have been known for our educational institutions. We should have had no unemployment problems among our youths. However, this has not been the case.

Let me appraise the august House of the real state of schools in Sikkim.

The latest NITI Aayog Report on School Education Quality Index 2019 found that :

- i) In the overall performance score and rank Sikkim with 43 % score, is the 7<sup>th</sup> worst performer out of the total 28 states where study was conducted. The best performer was Kerala with 82.2 % score.
- ii) In the language and mathematics average score for Class V students, Sikkim with 42 % score was found to be one of the worst states.
- iii) In the language and mathematics average score for Class VIII students, Sikkim with 30 % score was found to be lowest scorer in the country out of the 35 states and union territories.
- iv) Despite the presence of many children with special needs (CWSN) Sikkim is one of the very few states which have never utilized the aids and appliances related central assistance for these needy children.

- v) 60 percent of the Academic Positions remain vacant at the District Level  
Academic Training Institutions ( DIETs)

These are all very disturbing trends. There is something seriously lacking in our education system. The key issue is quality of education starting from Primary to University level. There is no monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects at all. Other core issues are suitably qualified teachers, training and capacity enhancement of teachers, exposures of students to local and global issues, facilities like libraries, laboratories, hostels, discussion rooms, playgrounds and art and music amenities in the schools. When we discuss issues in more details we also find that there has been absence of any education policy in the State that would promote quality education, regulate the recruitment and transfer norms, build physical infrastructures and more seriously produce employable and productive human resources.

The world is becoming sharply competitive. We shall have to prepare our children and we must give them adequate space to manouvre and compete and give their best. The job market is becoming highly inter-disciplinary. We must induct inter-disciplinary learning right from the primary level. We must move from a simple What is mathematics to much wider Why is mathematics way of teaching.

Keeping all these issues and factors as central to our education system, our Government would now propose following few measures to start with.

- i) We propose the appointment of Sikkim Education Reforms Commission which will bring together a range of experts/professionals and other stakeholders from both within Sikkim and outside to primarily draw a comprehensive education policy and strategy. This Commission will also take stock of the exact prevailing

situation in the education sector in Sikkim and also design the regulatory framework. It will draw strategy to make quality education as the core theme in the State and also on the ways forward to make Sikkim an Education Hub in the entire Eastern Himalayan region.

ii) In order to rejuvenate and refurbish the entire teaching capability in the state we now plan to train and rebuild the capacities of all the teachers with modern technology, scientific methods and other inputs. We have found that a majority of teachers have not been retrained after their recruitments. We plan to have 100 percent trained and retrained teachers by 2026. We therefore adopt the following measures :

a) We shall now have three layers of training. Depending upon the final criteria/categories drawn by the Education Department, our teachers will be trained abroad in foreign institutions, in different institutions within India and by experts and professionals within Sikkim. This will be applicable to teachers from the Primary to College levels.

b) We therefore, create Higher Exposure and Skill Rebuilding Fund (HESRF) for teachers training of three layers. We set aside a fund of Rs. 1 crore for this purpose. Each teacher trained under HESRF will have to fulfill some responsibilities as laid down by the Department in the post training tenure.

iii) Suicides, drug and psychotropic substance abuse, disruptions brought forward by misuse of various forms of social media have led to huge societal damages and family injuries. We have been a witness to pains, agonies and miseries these issues bring to our families and communities across Sikkim. We shall have to prevent such incidents, stop psychological depredations and also repair the damages already inflicted. In doing so, responsibilities first lie with the parents and families, society and social organizations and also with schools and colleges and their teachers. We therefore, would like to introduce a new

programme called Moral Science and Mental Health Development programme in all the secondary schools and colleges. This programme initially will be kept outside the main curriculum of the schools and colleges. It will concentrate mainly on awareness, conscience building, temptation resistance, mind focus and character formation. The best of trained practitioners and popular and acceptable methodologies will be brought from both within and outside Sikkim for this programme. We set aside a fund of Rs 1 crore for this fiscal year for this programme.

iv) In the last budget 2019-2020 we announced several inspirational projects for Education. However, we could not get responses as we expected. Therefore we once again announce the same. These will be implemented in letter and spirit during the Financial year.

### **Physical Infrastructures**

When the Hon'ble Members of the 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission visited Sikkim in September last year, a major issue which was discussed was the alternative highway from the plains land of West Bengal to Sikkim and also the upgradation and scientific management of the existing and only highway. The Hon'ble Members were aghast to see the pathetic state of road condition. The latest data supplied by the North Eastern Council shows that the length of national highway in Sikkim is 493 kms i.e. hardly 4 percent of the total national highways of 13658 kms (thirteen thousand six hundred and fifty-eight kilometers) in the North Eastern region. We have the lowest length of national highways. Sikkim is not even covered by international connectivity roads under Bharatmala pariyojana where besides our own national institutions, global agencies like JICA and ADB are involved.

In 2018 the erstwhile Government has sanctioned fair weather roads of 1505.60 kms spreading all over the State without any financial provision. This has created a liability of Rs. 650.68 crores to the State exchequer. On the other hand the contractors were not paid by the previous Government. However, my Government will review and complete the works as far as possible 37% bills are cleared by the Government.

Today also the nearest railway station from Gangtok is 120 kms away and nearest major airport is 135 kms away. During the year 2018-19, traffic data i.e. passengers arrival and departure at the airport in Pakyong was not even one percent 18963 (eighteen thousand nine hundred and sixty three) of the total traffic data of 9.84 lakh of the North East region. Unlike other North East states, we do not have direct connectivity with our neighboring countries Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. This is despite the fact that we are geo-politically and geo-economically located in the most fragile and sensitive region.

The 44.96 kms Sevoke-Rangpo Railway line being built at a whopping cost of Rs 4085 crore may take much longer than the expected date of completion in March 2022. Our roads connecting the district head quarters, and feeder roads to subdivisions and blocks remain highly wanting in terms of both quality construction and maintenance. We also have one of the lowest internet bandwidth across the state in Sikkim.

Even in the arena of basic social amenities we actually remain a laggard. The latest UN-NITI Aayog Report 2019 on Sustainable Development Goal Index show that in Sikkim households having improved source of drinking water is 100 percent and rural households with individual household toilet is 100 percent. All these statistics sound so alluring and perfect. However, the truth is far away from these rosy statistics. Why there is always a crying need for drinking water

security in townships like Singtam, Rangpo, Soreng, Gangtok, Jorethang, Namchi and Gyalshing?

Where are these 100 percent household toilets ? Are we sure that we are open defecation free society now ? Are we sure that we have no more diseases erupting from poor environmental sanitations ? Who supplied these data and information to the Government of India and the statistical agencies there ? Do we realize the larger implications of feeding such unsubstantiated data and information to the Union Government? Do we know the revenue loss, cut in financial resources and social costs of supplying such unsubstantiated statistics?

Hon'ble Speaker Sir

This shows that we continue to have huge physical infrastructure gaps. We have really lagged behind in developing quality physical infrastructure which is actually the basis for all round development. Why it is so ? What has gone wrong ? Who is responsible for it ? Did we have wrong priorities in our development policy ? These are some of the basic questions we shall have to ask and deliberate upon so that we do not do the same blunders again.

At the same time, we shall have to go into action and look forward. Our Government therefore, proposes the following in this budget.

i) This particular fiscal year we shall first change the quality criterion of road building. The technical stipulations of various roads and their construction will be scientifically examined and accordingly stipulated for construction of any roads in the state. This will drastically improve the longevity and carrying capacity of these roads.

ii) We shall concentrate on refurbishing the main arterial roads connecting various districts and sub-divisional headquarters and have set aside budgets under the concerned Department.

iii) Over the years our road maintenance grants were used without really repairing or only artificially refurbishing the roads. We do not want to do audit of what happened in the past. However now onwards, we have to design very strict accountability on the use of maintenance grants of the roads and other physical infrastructures.

iv) We shall start initiating a new set of internet and broad band provisions for the entire state under the Digital North East Vision 2022 of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Government of India. Our aim is to provide free internet facilities in all the higher educational institutions, major offices of the Government at the district and sub-divisional offices. Later we would like to extend these facilities to all the Blocks and village Panchayat offices.

v) Sikkim does not have a comprehensive document on drinking water demand and supply situation village wise, township, municipality and district headquarter wise. We shall now commission and conduct a scientific study mapping all the water sources, making demand projection for drinking water for next 25-50 year and providing supply management techniques for the state as a whole. For instance, we only have scattered knowledge and information on the state of hydrological flows in Teesta and Rangit and other rivers. We do not have scientific studies to assess the water flows, aquifer availability and reserves in lakes, rivulets, streams and springs. This must be done at the earliest.

Our adhoc approach to drinking water management has failed to meet the increasing drinking water scarcity in the state. Communities have suffered. Water conservation has been at the lowest ebb. We have noticed very unequal distribution of water among households, villages and townships. Once we have this study ready, we shall invite multilateral agencies to finance these projects on a sustainable basis.

## **Green Economy**

Hon'ble Speaker Sir

Given the profuse endowment of greens and greenery everywhere by the Mother Nature in Sikkim, we have an unparalleled comparative advantage on our journey to be the Green Capital of India. For this we shall have to make significant "green leap forward". To get branding of the green capital of India, we shall have to really strive hard in making ourselves increasingly reliant on majorly green energy, agriculture, industry, business, technology, environment, culture, buildings and infrastructure and more seriously on green thinking and green principles. We have a distinct advantage. Despite several attempts in the past to change the fundamentals of our naturally green character, we have seen people, communities, civil societies and geographies have resisted, protested and withstood the green culture of Sikkim.

For a Himalayan state like Sikkim, sustainability is the most crucial basis and central issue in any development interventions. Our sustainability depends upon how we negotiate with the endowments of nature and biodiversity; how we harness the natural resources and what methods we use to build infrastructure and other development amenities. It also depends upon how we treat and revere our mountain deities and ancestors, protect our traditional institutions and cultural ecology and innovate on our implements and instruments. And definitely what we pass on to the younger generation in terms of values, resources and traditional knowledge.

In the green economics and politics the people are the centre of attraction and also the core actor. Therefore, whatever we do it should maximize the peoples welfare. It should ensure both human and environmental security. In the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 set by the United Nations Organizations,

we have done fairly well and relatively much better than many other states. In the latest report of UN-NITI Aayog on SDG Index of 2019, Sikkim's score of 65 is much higher than that of overall India score of 60. We occupy 7<sup>th</sup> position along with Goa among the comity of 29 States. In almost all the 16 Sustainable Development Goals India Indicators 2.0, that constructed 100 indicators and covered 54 targets, our performance across goals is handsome.

We must accept our under performances too as we witnessed serious disruptions and dislocations in our development process in the last 25 years. There was a major onslaught on nature. The angry 2011 earthquake showed how gigantic and half thought projects bring misery, pains and devastations to the people in Sikkim.

As mentioned in the last budget of ours we have a high degree of development inequality in Sikkim. UN-NITI Aayog Report 2019 on SDG Index show that the people below poverty line in Sikkim now stands at 8.19 percent. Is it really so ? Don't we see poverty stricken people spread over the corners of Sikkim ?

The latest Economic Survey of India done by Ministry of Finance shows that Sikkim has Rs 3.57 lakh as per capita income in 2018-19. This is the third highest in the country. It was 2.98 lakh in 2017-2018. However, this high per capita income becomes meaningful only if this income is equitably distributed among all sections of Sikkimese people. Out of 6.6 lakh Sikkimese today, how many Sikkimese individuals are getting Rs 3.57 lakh per annum ? And how many Sikkimese have per capita income 10 to 20 times more than this ?

We do not want poor to remain poor and rich to become superbly rich. This has happened and can be seen in pockets of Sikkim. Some of them unduly received political patronization. There is blatant demonstration of ill gotten wealth whereas poor Sikkimese people are struggling to meet their very basic needs.

Therefore, to steadily move towards reaching the goal of Green Economy Capital of India, we propose the following measures in this budget for 2020-21.

i) A thorough study on poverty, development inequality and imbalances by an eminent institution in India. We set aside a sum of Rs 1 crore for this purpose.

ii) Rich Sikkimese, non-Sikkimese and others may inspire and incentivize the poorer sections mainly the younger generation through making philanthropic contributions for various micro and macro level activities. Their names will be grandly highlighted for their affirmative actions.

As announced in the last budget, we propose a formula of 5:1, i.e. if a philanthropist contributes Rs 5000, Government of Sikkim will contribute Rs 1000 in this fund. This pool of funds will be managed, operated and evaluated by a team of Sikkimese Civil Society and Private Sector. We name this institution as Sikkim Social Endowment Fund (SSEF).

iii) We have surplus generation of electricity now. However, the nature of contracts and agreements with the power producers do not give us enough space in terms of revenue mobilization. We would like to therefore, take unorthodox measures to derive maximum benefits from the sale of green energy we are now generating. There has been a steady increase in demand of electricity in neighbouring countries including our very next door neighbor Bangladesh.

The setting up of grid inter-connection like between Bheramara in Bangladesh and Behrampur (West Bengal) in India and exports of 500 MW and also 100 MW through Palatana Project in Tripura to Bangladesh have in fact opened up

the huge possibility of cross border power trading. On top of this we now have the Ministry of Power inspiring policy on cross border power trading with Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh issued in December 2018. Sikkim therefore, would like to engage institution like Power Trading Corporation of India to seek a market for its surplus electricity in Bangladesh. This would definitely have huge impact on the revenue front. Power tariff for domestic and commercial consumption is being reviewed and reduced. On the other hand the tariff for industrial consumption shall be enhanced to fill the gap in revenue generation.

iv) Traditional Medicinal System is strikingly the most prolific comparative advantage of Sikkim and core to the faith, biodiversity management and healing practices. It carries in it a rich pool of knowledge base to connect and cater to the global market. Besides the studies done by some of indigenous scholars and professionals, very little concerted effort has been made in terms of documenting the knowledge, scientifically promoting it for commercial purposes and sustainably harnessing the community and environmental ingredients.

As a result, there has been sharp erosion and staggering loss of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices. We therefore, propose a state level **Ethno Botany and Social Medicine Committee (EBSMC)** to be autonomously set up under PPP mode exclusively for commercializing the ethno-medicinal practices and to promote medical tourism.

EBSMC will galvanise confluence of critical elements in commercialization of TMS in a single regional platform.

v) After the formation of my Government when we examined how we can give maximum benefits to our growers and farmers, we came to know that Central Government has a scheme of giving Rs.500/- as pension under PM Kisan Samman Nidhi. However, we observed and noted that only eleven farmers benefitted under the Scheme during the previous Government.

vi) The pension scheme was implemented by the Central Government in the previous previous year. Although the rest of India took full benefit of this pension scheme the Sikkimese farmers were deprived of it. As soon as my Government came into existence we identified 7,914 farmers for this scheme and submitted the list to the Central Government so that the amount could directly get transferred to their respective bank accounts. Out of which 6201 farmers have been identified to get this pension benefit. We are further committed to providing this benefit to the other farmers as per Government guidelines.

vii) Our genetic pools are fast depleting primarily because of poor conservation, gene pool piracy to other countries and climate change impact. Historically we had a rich variety of rice, buck wheat, millet, pulses, spices, plantation crops like cardamom, fruits and vegetables and other plants. We never bothered to acquire intellectual property rights and obtain patents for these plant varieties. We are fast losing the indigenous varieties of seeds and even species of our indigenous live stocks in poultry, fishery, piggery, cattle and sheep and goats. What is the point of growing a variety of rice grown in Punjab and Haryana and call it organic produce of Sikkim. For the real organic cultivation to happen we should start from the organic seed only.

We will provide all support to study and find conservation techniques and institutions for all our critical Genetic Resources.

Related to the genetic pool conservation is our dairy farming. As against Punjab and Haryana's per capita milk consumption of over 1 kilogram per day, Sikkim's is low at less than 300 gms. At one point of time we produced sufficient quantity of milk as we had high yielding varieties of cows and a large number of farmers undertook dairy as non-farm activities. Milk both in terms of quality and quantity is very vital. We must introduce modern breeding technology, introduce improved feed and fodder quality, modernize both the chilling and processing

plants, testing and bulk vending and inject frontier science based vaccinations and veterinary care so that yield per animal drastically increases. In order to boost the milk production we announce an incentive price of Rs. 8 per kg of milk produced and disposed off at the collection centre. With the intent to motivate the small and marginal dairy farmers towards better and commercial dairy farming, my Government will provide Production Incentive of Rs. 8/- per ltr. to all milk producing farmers. This incentive aims at improving the per capita income of the farmers leading to better livelihood. It will also help in increasing the Bovine Population of the State. There will be a marked improvement in the quality of feed as well as quality of livestock which will help increase production of milk which would bridge the gap between demand and supply. This initiative will cover and encourage more than 43,000 dairy farmers in the State. It will also give a boost to the milk cooperatives and to the cooperative movement.

viii) We also propose to send dairy farmers for training and capacity building in institutions like NDRC (Karnal) and NDDDB (Anand). My Government in order to give a boost to the Agriculture and Horticulture sectors in the State shall also provide production incentive for the Agriculture and Horticulture commodities. This will give much needed impetus to our farmers in these sectors.

ix) We have come across young entrepreneurs, scientists, technologists and innovators in Sikkim and outside doing some fascinating research and developing technologies in their individual levels. This is a very encouraging sign as their creativity could lead to several far reaching technological interventions in the development process in the state. Our Government would like to really aggregate these talents and their innovations to a common platform. We propose to support young entrepreneurs for promotion of such innovative actions in areas like agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, food, disaster management, transport and communications, music and sports and other

disciplines. A Frontier Technology Seed Fund (FTSF) will be made which will be available to all innovators in the state.

x) Sikkim started with the micro and mini hydel projects and became a true symbol of green energy in 1960s and 1970s. We now have mega projects running into hundreds of megawatts. In the process we have virtually side tracked our seed projects. Our Government is very keen to bring back the ideas of micro and mini hydel projects for electricity generation both to cater to local villages and communities and also to add to the state level grids. Unlike in the past, there are appropriate and environment friendly technologies available now. We need to train some of our young entrepreneurs to build, operate and own these projects. All these could be self sustainable commercial projects in the medium term. We are keen to initiate few projects this year to at least undertake the techno-economic feasibilities.

xi) Along with the gene piracy and injection of terminator gene seeds, another threat to our rich green environment is smuggling of our wild animals. The origin of pandemic Coronavirus in Wuhan city of Hubei province of China is also largely attributed to the trade in smuggled wild life. We have quietly lost a variety of wild life from toads to pangolin, pandas to flying squirrels, butterflies to geckos and snow leopards to tigers in the hands of these smuggling syndicates. TRAFFIC which also monitors the sale of endangered species across the world has widely published these information and data. Our concerned Departments have been monitoring all these dangerous trends and agencies involved. However, the technicalities involved and techniques used in these smuggling ventures have become rather sophisticated and complex. We would therefore, like to engage members and organizations of our civil society to monitor and fight against this very damaging trend.

## **Tertiary Hubs**

Sikkim's strength lies in the tertiary sector where tourism and health are so very crucial. Over 15 lakh tourists visit our state every year yet we are not able to get adequate revenues to even maintain the infrastructure required to keep the tourist flow. We have noticed there has been a sharp deterioration in carrying capacity of the state because of unplanned growth of tourism. Profits are largely privatized and losses and damages are socialized. Per capita spending of tourist is still relatively low.

Short duration of their stay, seasonality in tourism and limited geographical sources of tourism are major constraints. We are now planning a transforming approach. We are identifying and floating specific high value tourism corridor with exclusive attractions like what Bhutan has been doing. We are also looking into opening tourism destination in fabulous west Sikkim linking it with some fascinatingly beautiful spots in neighbouring Eastern Nepal.

We would like to add more attractive values to our tourism. For instance, can we have tourism only specific to wild life watching, flowering seasons and flowers, ethno-religious history, wellness and health, water and related activities, heritage study and research, tea and cardamom plantation, film and cinema, conference and neighbours and borderlands. We shall have to diversify our tourism ventures if we want quality tourism. Look at the Japan, just a dip in the hot water springs also called 'onsen' has been such a huge attraction for both domestic and foreign tourists. Cambodia is another Sikkim like example where just one major religious and architectural attraction like Angkor Wat in Siem Reap city and in nearby Darjeeling just tea and toy train could make them earn global brand names.

In a city like Beijing in China, besides the historic Great wall and Forbidden City, two recent discoveries the Tiananmen Square and the Birds Nest stadium are so very famous now. In Rio de Janeiro in Brazil just Sugar Loaf and Samba Dancers and in Sao Paulo just the Football Museum attract millions of tourists from all over. In Sikkim we have ample scope to do so. We simply require three 'I's i.e. imagination, innovation and investment. And our government would devote time, energy and resources to do so.

This budget will devote resources in four specific tourism activities.

i) In order to promote water and naturopathy related tourism we shall identify and promote a high value corridor which will consist of a river, lakes, falls, science of hydro projects, bamboo and wooden bridges (jholange pul), hot water springs and rain water harvesting. We invite the entrepreneurs, corporate houses and tourism agencies to give us the best corridor on this theme so that we could start the facilitating measures on a time bound manner.

ii) High value Borderland Tourism has really picked up after the Government of India opened the Nathu la trade between Sikkim in India and Tibet Autonomous Region in China. We have huge opportunity to connect the tourists from the Nepalese and the Bhutanese borderlands under strict security supervisions like in Nathu la. All three borderlands represent, history, culture, ecology, pilgrimage, trade and diplomacy. Like we did for the reopening of Nathu la, we must start preparatory studies and regulatory framework of border crossing vis-à-vis Bhutan and Nepal with the support of the Government of India. This very much fits into BBIN cooperation initiative.

iii) In order to steadily consolidate the capabilities to handle all varieties of tourists, we shall identify and make use of a series of institutions in Sikkim and outside, to train tourist guides, hotel staff, passenger car drivers, tourist security agencies and others. We also propose to annually send a group of young

entrepreneurs and other stake holders from the tourism sector and hotel services for exposure to and experimentation in national and international key venues of tourism. Like in the last budget announcement, this will be done on a cost sharing basis.

iv) We also announce to promote and provide the basic amenities for the Home Stay and other family, community and panchayat managed tourism ring through Skilled Youth Start Up Scheme.

### **Sikkim Film Policy**

On February 28<sup>th</sup> 2020, my Government launched the Sikkim Film Policy. This Policy has been framed and implemented with the objective of promoting Sikkim as a film shooting destination. A Single Window System for the purpose has been put in place to provide clearance for permits and financial incentive. This will make the process of film making in the State easier and convenient and expected to attract more filmmakers to come to Sikkim. Under this policy, my Government will provide incentive of up to Rs. 20.00 lakh to all regional and local filmmakers who have shot 75% of the film within the State with 50% of local artists and crew. Likewise, Rs. 1.00 crore incentive will be given to large budget films who have shot 75% of the total shooting days in the State with 50% local artists and crew.

In addition to this, my Government in its bid to present Sikkim as a conducive place for national and international films, will facilitate setting up of Film and Television Institute with Multi-Purpose Hall. The institute can accommodate all the required equipment for film and television production, organize Film Festivals within and outside the State, conduct Refresher Course/ Exposure Trips/ Workshops etc.

## **Innovation and MSME Reservoir**

Sikkim is a potent reservoir of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME). We feel with the presence and production base of over 60 pharmaceutical, hydro power, food processing and other industrial ventures we have just completed the first round of industrial development. We have some of the most popular chain of pharmaceutical industries. We would like to now steadily move to the second generation industrial development with primary focus on horticulture and floriculture, handloom and handicraft, high value tourism, traditional medicinal systems, food processing, soft-wares, architectural designs and fashion technology, sports and music and health, education and cinema.

Over the years, we have in mind several models of investment practices and participation. In the chain of our investment models, an investor from India or any other countries abroad could choose one or a blending of many. For instance, one could think of model limited to technology transfer only, or management transfer or a joint venture, or a single investor model or enabling partner role or even start-up support and PPP model. It could follow the path of MSME on large scale or even cross- provinces projects.

At a larger plane, investor could think of dual or triple province partnership say with Sikkim-West Bengal or Sikkim-Assam-Meghalaya, largely aimed at exploiting the economies of scale, enlarging the production base and expanding the market access. For instance other floriculture states like Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland may come together with Sikkim to enhance the level of flower production and connect it with the global market.

Our state now has a new generation of talented and creative youths, highly motivated entrepreneurs, technology savvy and qualified professionals. We just

need a trigger to ignite them and convert them into business ventures, technology partners and entrepreneurial outfits. This is where India's major foreign policy and national interest project 'Act East Policy' rephrased and launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi could play a critical role. As I mentioned in my last budget speech also, if Vietnamese are attracted to do coffee plantations, if Nepalese are willing to invest in traditional medicinal systems, if Japanese are interested in Mountain Ports; if Thai industrialists want to invest in floriculture, and Singaporeans on Buddhist Circuit tourism, we whole heartedly welcome them. We can even explore the possibility of negotiating with the Government of India to bring some amendments in the latest North East Industrial Development Scheme 2018, to extend some of these attractive fiscal incentives to the investors from the neighbouring countries.

We therefore, propose some effective measures to bring major developments in the MSME and other industrial development projects in Sikkim.

i) Despite a substantial fiscal, legal, infrastructural and administrative support received by majority of the existing units in Sikkim concluding pharmaceuticals, their contributions both in terms of revenue, employment and other backward and forward linkages have not been on the expected line and committed framework.

Each industrial unit will compulsorily adhere to the commitments made with the Workers/Employees associations, with the Governmental agencies and the Trade Unions on the provisions of wages, working conditions, skill development, training and other facilities to the workers and employees.

Each industrial/service unit will now make a firm 5 to 10 year commitment to support professional and technical education, training and skill building of their

workers/employees and also fresh recruits to graduate themselves to higher echelons of job including that of Class III, II and I positions.

Each industrial unit will now present a comprehensive pollution management plan and its effective implementation results to the concerned authorities in the Government of Sikkim.

ii) In order to provide a quantum jump to the start up ventures in the State, we announce the setting up of Skilled Youth Start Up Programmes (SYSUP) with a starting fund of Rs 25 Crore. This fund is primarily to partially fund some of the promising start ups in any field from piggery to flower shops, transports to media, tourism to education and iron smiths to naturopathy.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister Madame Nirmala Sitharaman has made significant announcement in the budget 2020-2021, She has increased turnover limit from existing Rs 25 crore to Rs 100 crores for deduction of 100% of its profits and also the period of eligibility for claim of deduction from the existing 7 years to 10 years.

We would also organize face to face discussion meetings of the Sikkimese entrepreneurs with institutions like EXIM Bank, NEDFi, NABARD and several other commercial banks in this fiscal year.

iii) We are keen to design a new industrial and investment policy in the state both to attract the foreign and national investments and also to start series of collaborative ventures with our own organic entrepreneurs. We shall have to think out of box if we really want to make meaningful PPP model based MSME and industrial ventures.

iv) We now face quite an intriguing problem that relate to Companies Act, 2013. Sikkim remained outside the earlier Act of 1956. However, the Act of 2013 is applicable to whole of India including Sikkim. One option would have been to convince the Government of India on not extending this new Act to Sikkim when the bill was discussed in the Parliament. Indeed the then ruling party failed to make any effective arguments at that stage.

However, Act of 2013 is not made effective to Sikkim as yet. It is a situation of ambiguity and uncertainty today. This has caused several distortions in the investment activities in Sikkim and has also led to loss of revenues and other related benefits. Many genuine and established investors are not willing to invest in Sikkim because we do not have a Company Act under which these investors will do the registration. Therefore, we shall have to discuss and deliberate on various provisions of the Companies Act 2013. We shall have to find a collective and satisfactory solution to this critical issue. We therefore announce the setting up of a **Sikkim Industrial and Investment Promotion Council (SIIPC)** within the Department of Commerce and Industries to examine and resolve the issue of Companies Act 2013, and also draw comprehensive industrial and investment policies for Sikkim.

#### **Governance System :**

Government employees of all categories and hues have played a critical role in building modern Sikkim. We want each employee to be modern in their outlook, people and society centric in their action, nation and state loving in their attitude and also friendly with modern technologies and governance system. Our Government will re-train and re-skill some of the key employees, reorient some of core departments and refurbish some of them totally.

We plan to modernize the entire governance system with induction of newer technologies, providing better working conditions and making the environment both productive and competitive. We want to incentivize each and every government and private sector employee with various measures so that their level of productivity reaches maximum and level of devotion much deeper. We have already released the arrears of the Government employees. The case of adhoc and temporary employees will be seriously addressed and given an appropriate solution.

In order to ensure and practice punctuality, discipline and dedication and raise level of performance and productivity during the office hours, our Government would put transparent and accountable mechanism with modern technologies in place.

### **150 Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi**

To celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Rashtrapita Mahatma Gandhi, Sikkim Government will organize an international conference on “ Mahatma Gandhi and the Hills and Mountains : Community, Democracy and Development”. This will bring together some of the widely known and respected academics, development thinkers, political figures, corporate and community leaders to Sikkim to discuss the significance of Gandhian thoughts, principles and practices.

### **Young Professional Programme**

In order to train, expose and build capacities among the fresh and young doctoral degree holders and also well young management and technology experts, we now introduce a Young Professional Programme (YPP). These Young Professionals will be attached to the Office of the Chief Minister and would work on various critical issues for a limited period of time.

## **Foreign Employment Training and Recruitment Institute (FETRI)**

With a view to provide ample scope for employment in foreign countries for the Sikkimese youth, we shall set up Foreign Employment Training and Recruitment Institute in cooperation with various Foreign Embassies in India and other international job recruitment agencies . These youths will be given training in various professional areas. We announce the setting up of a Foreign Employment Recruitment Institute in Sikkim which will be managed by professionals, legal, financial and foreign employment experts. We allocate a grant of Rs 2 Crore for this purpose. Our Government will make use of various training in various skills and professions through India-Japan arrangement of Technical Intern Training Program (TITP) under the National Skill Development Corporation of Government of India.

Owing to the huge ageing (old age) population in Japan, Europe, Canada, USA, and other countries there are now big demands for both the female and male nurses and other health workers. We would like to harness these markets by providing professionally well trained female and male nurses from Sikkim. Many of these trained professional could also get gainful employments in India's major hospital and health outfits.

## **Traffic Management Study**

Traffic management has become one of the most serious issues in Gangtok and other smaller townships. The loss of productive hours in traffic jams, need for urgency in transport of sick and old persons, dislocation of punctuality in offices, schools, hospitals and other institutions, extra consumption of transport fuels and high air and noise pollutions have cost the people, society and government rather very heavily. Its other invisible and intangible implications on health, economic and social activities, public psyche and environment have never been

measured and calculated. There are several alternatives to manage such traffic, some of them will be pretty hard and painful to certain sections of the people though there will be major overall gains and support.

In the past such situations were taken as given and the last government just did not sincerely address this very serious problem.

We would not let this situation to continue and people to suffer. Therefore, we shall initiate the following actions.

i) A comprehensive scientific study on movement of vehicles and people on the main arterial roads of Gangtok and other smaller townships by a recognized professional institution.

ii) Drawing comprehensive measures to manage the traffic through various means including, tunneling, ropeways and cable cars, rationalization of vehicular movement during peak hours, adequate deployment of public transports and other instruments.

iii) A new town planning based on satellite imageries, remote sensing and ground assessment mainly focusing on the de-crowding the arterial roads.

My Government will soon start working on the economic survey of the State. The economic survey will bring out the economic trends in the State and facilitate a better appreciation of the mobilisation of resources and their allocation in the State Budget. The survey will analyse the trends in agricultural and industrial production, infrastructure, employment, money supply, prices and other relevant economic factors that have a bearing on the

Budget.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

The 15<sup>th</sup> FC also recommended a grant of Rs. 448/- crores to close the gap in revenue deficit of Sikkim. Let us recollect that because of misplaced representation and weak arguments, Sikkim was considered as revenue surplus for which revenue deficit grant was not given for full ten years under 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commissions. Its very adverse impact was felt even in the last fiscal year 2019-2020 covered by the 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission.

As soon as our Government came into power, we made a strong plea and sound case for reconsidering the case and reversing the situation. In fact, I personally raised these issues in my meetings with the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Hon'ble Finance Minister, Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog, Hon'ble Minister of the MDoNER, in the meeting of the Hill Chief Ministers in Mussorie, in the North Eastern Council and also in our very close and frank interactions with the Hon'ble Members of the 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission during their visit to Sikkim in September 2019. However, the provision for devolution to Sikkim is kept at Rs 3042.62 Crores in the Union Budget 2020-21.

The 15<sup>th</sup> FC has also recommended Rs 42/- Crores and Rs 20/- Crores as Aggregate Grants to our Rural Local Bodies and Urban Local Bodies respectively for 2020-21. The State shall transfer grants-in-aids to the Local Bodies within ten working days of receipt from the Union Government. Both the tiers in Sikkim will receive the funds. The allocation will be in the bands of 70% to 85% and 15% to 30% respectively. The grants shall be distributed as basic and tied grants in the ratio of 50:50. The Local Bodies will have to upgrade and integrate their accounting system with Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) and Public Financial Management System (PFMS) to facilitate generation of online accounts and enable online auditing. An integrated account maintenance system will be developed by the concerned Ministries and

Controller General of Accounts(CGA) and run on trial basis by the States before March 2021 and, which will have to roll out by 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2021.

Similarly the grants for the ULBs shall be distributed as basic and tied grants in the ratio of 50:50. The tied grants can be used for (a) drinking water (including rainwater harvesting and recycling) and (b) Solid waste management.

The property tax has been identified as one of the most effective instruments for revenue mobilization by local bodies. The Commission has recommended that to qualify for any grants for ULBs in 2021-22, States will have to appropriately notify floor rates and thereafter show consistent improvement in collection in tandem with the growth rate of State's own GSDP.

The Commission has also recommended Rs **56/- Crores** as State Disaster Risk Management Fund (SDRMF) for 2020-21 including the State Share of Rs **6/- Crores**.

Let me assure the Hon'ble Members and the people of Sikkim that our Government has been able to grapple with very many imbalances, mal-practices, misplaced priorities and more seriously wrong orientation that were injected into the Sikkimese economy for several years. We really donot want to waste our time in discussing these inconsistencies and instabilities of the past. We want to single-mindedly dedicate our time to rebuilding a robust and resilient Sikkimese economy.

I would therefore, call upon all the Hon'ble Members of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly to make a strong collective endeavor, firmly stand together and determine to work as a team to transform Sikkim into the Green Capital of India and Green Growth Pole of the North East India. Famous corporate leader and architect of Ford Motor Company, Henry Ford once said "Coming together is a

beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success". This is the dream of our children, youth, parents and grandparents. This is the wish of our Hon'ble Prime Minister also. We cherish the blessings and guidance of our forefathers and all our revered mountain deities.

We have to rise above the usual humdrum of local politics and political chicaneries. We shall have to think big and be bold and courageous to reach our goals. We should not be entangled by petty issues and influenced by tea shop gossips. We must remain far beyond bitterness and habits of hitting below the belt. We shall never forget what we read as children in 'Kishlaya' of Late Babulal Pradhan "He Nani Mitho boli sabai sanga gara, mitho boli bolda kheri ke ko huncha dara".

All of us are positive stakeholders in the project of rebuilding Sikkim and in the idea of reawakening the Sikkimese mass. It reminds us of Jin Kwon , a fictional character in ABC Television who once remarked that "individuality counts but teamwork dynamites."

Today the media, private sector, professionals, technocrats, civil society members, students-teachers, artists and writers, farmers, workers, drivers, social activists, youths, government servants and panchayat members, municipalities and builders all have very vital role to play. We have created a huge space for all of us to think, act, contribute and enjoy. We all are leaders in this huge movement of making Sikkim a brand name in the global world. It is a leadership-leadership model. Let me conclude by quoting Michael Jordan , celebrated basket ball player who said "Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships."

Due to our relentless effort while we were in the opposition the Central Government finally agreed to give passage to his Holiness 17th Karmapa Orgyen

Trinley to visit Sikkim. His Holiness is currently out of India and as and when he comes to India, he will be visiting Sikkim.

In order to encourage and empower women entrepreneurs who are involved in contractual and supply works and in order to promote their business acumen my Government proposes the following:

1. For contractual works up to Rs. 5.00 crores, women entrepreneurs need not submit any earnest money or TDR.
2. For contractual works of Rs. 5.00 crores to Rs. 10.00 crores, the women entrepreneurs will submit only 50% of the earnest money or TDR as opposed to the full amount to be submitted by the male counterparts.
3. For contractual works of Rs. 10.00 crores and above, full earnest money and TDR is to be submitted.

My Government is well aware of its responsibilities towards the welfare and socio-economic development of the vulnerable and marginalized sections of society and therefore aims at uplifting and raising the standard of living by formulating and implementing various programs and schemes that are citizen centric.

The Government of India maintains that the State Governments should make a matching contribution to the social pension. My Government's contribution in terms of the pension amount and the coverage is more than the target set by the Government of India based on the 2011 census. However, it is felt that the amount would still not account for the rise in the living cost over the past decade. Therefore, keeping this in view and in order to provide a better standard of living, my Government has been pleased to enhance the existing rate of pension substantially for all age groups. For the beneficiaries under the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme, the rate has also been enhanced

substantially. Further, the age limit for availing the IndiraGandhi National Widow Pension is revised from 40 years to 18 years.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

I shall now briefly mention the budgetary profile for the financial year 2020-21. Against a gross expenditure provision of Rs.9285.92 crore, (Rupees nine thousand two hundred eighty five crores and ninety two thousand) the net outgo comes to Rs.9100.00 crore (Rupees nine thousand one hundred crores ) after taking into account recoveries amounting to Rs.185.92 crore (Rupees one hundred eighty five crore and ninety two lakhs). The fiscal deficit remains in adherence to the fiscal management targets set in the Sikkim Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2010, i.e. not more than 3% of GSDP. The contribution from own tax Revenue is of the order of Rs.1241.91 crore (Rupees one thousand two hundred forty one crores and ninety onelakhs) and that of Non-Tax revenue Rs.710.66 crore (Rupees seven hundred ten crores and sixty six lakhs).

The total gross expenditure includes allocations amounting to Rs 44.36 crore (Rupees forty four crores and thirty six lakhs) under the dispensation of the North Eastern Council, Rs.148.15 crore (Rupees one hundred forty eight crores and fifteen lakhs) under Non-Lapsable Pool of Central Resources and Rs.2136.26 (Rupees two thousand one hundred thirty six crores and twenty six lakhs) under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

The summarized account of the receipts and disbursements is detailed below and is incorporated in the budget.

**Amount in Crore**

<b>Sl.No.</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	
1.	Tax Revenue	1241.91
2.	Non-Tax Revenue	710.66
3.	State's Share of Central Taxes	3042.62
4.	Grants-in-Aid	2978.06
5.	Gross Borrowings	1011.51
6.	Recoveries of Loans and Advances	0.07
7.	Net Public Accounts	115.17
	<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>9100.00</b>

<b>Sl.No.</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	
1	Revenue Expenditure	7343.60
2.	Capital Expenditure	1756.40
	<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>9100.00</b>

Let us once again march forward to fulfill our goals based on sustainable development policies for the benefit of the people of Sikkim. Let us

re-dedicate ourselves to further peace and tranquility and ensure that the State grows to become an example of innovation and progress.

With these commitments, I commend the Budget for the year 2020-21 to the House for its kind consideration.

Thank you for your kind indulgence

Jai Hind !

Jai Sikkim !