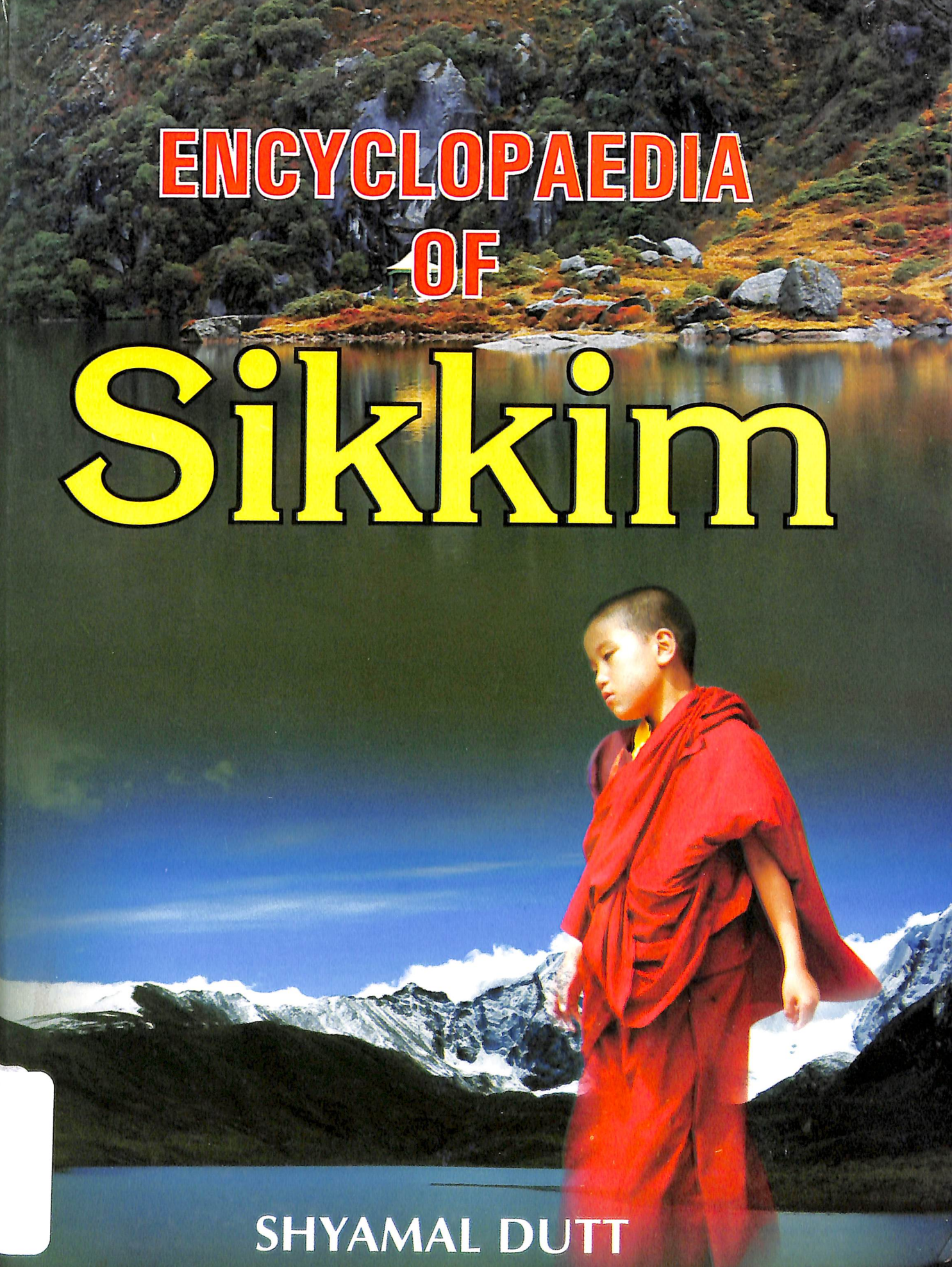


The background of the cover is a composite image. The top half shows a calm lake reflecting a forested mountain with some autumn-colored foliage. The bottom half shows a young Buddhist monk in a red robe walking from right to left, with snow-capped mountains and a clear blue sky in the background.

**ENCYCLOPAEDIA
OF**

Sikkim

SHYAMAL DUTT

Encyclopaedia
of
SIKKIM

Volume 1



Shyamal Dutt

ANMOL PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD.
NEW DELHI - 110 002 (INDIA)

CONTENTS

Preface

vii

(Vol. 1)

1. Introduction	1
2. Information Relating to Sikkim	53
3. Facts about Sikkim	97
4. History and Geography	133
5. Population in Sikkim	143
6. Sikkim's Economy	177
7. Polity	225
8. Sikkim Education	241
9. The People—Their Customs and Traditions	255
10. Districts of Sikkim	289

(Vol. 2)

11. Repositories of Genetic Diversity	297
12. Biodiversity Conservation Issues in Sikkim	321
13. Places of Interest	345
14. Brief Profile of Eco-Tourism Status in Sikkim	415
15. National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries	489
16. Commerce and Industries in Sikkim	549
17. Forests, Environment and Wildlife in Sikkim	559
<i>Bibliography</i>	581
<i>Index</i>	589

PREFACE

Sikkim, the 22nd state of the Indian union, is a small mountain state in eastern Himalayas. Sikkim is a land of rich and varied scenic beauty, magnificent mountains, eternal snows, dark forests, green fertile valleys, raging torrents and calm, placid lakes. Her magnificent variety of flora and fauna are the naturalist's dream; the steep variations in elevation and rainfall give rise to a glorious multitude of species within a comparatively limited area. The scenic grandeur of mighty snow-capped peaks, the highest of which is the 28,162 feet Kanchanjunga on the Nepal-Sikkim border, has been a symbol of romantic awe and wonder for the people. It is the world's third highest peak. Kanchanjunga has five satellite peaks: Jano, Kabru, Pandim, Narsim, Simiolchu. Two principle mountain ranges are the Singilela and Chola which start in the north and continue, following a more or less southerly direction. Between these ranges are the principle rivers, the Rangit and the Teesta, forming the main channels of drainage. These rivers are fed by the monsoon rains as well as by melting glaciers.

Sikkim lies in the Eastern Himalayas. Being a region which had its geophysical uniqueness owing to its location and climate conditions, human inhabitation was sparse. It was only in 1641 that it was given a political entity. The population inhabiting this area were of Indo-Mongoloid, Tibetan or Nepalese origin. The population of the region is rural and tribal. The influence of the Buddhism has created a unique culture, different from other parts of the country. The tribals had little contact with the other parts of the country. Agriculture through jhum cultivation besides animal rearing formed their important occupation. The Lepchas and the Bhutias who came from the regions of Tibet settled in Sikkim.

The present population of Sikkim is primarily composed of different races or ethnic groups. They are the Lepchas, the Bhutia, the Nepali and the plainsmen. These different ethnic groups have their distinct languages and cultural pattern. This cultural diversity of the ethnic groups who have no common racial backgrounds has become the central point of socio-economic and political problems in Sikkim. Over centuries, the narrow fertile valleys of the inner Himalayas and the rugged hill tracts of the greater Himalayas have been settled by the Tibeto-Burmese, Tibeto-Mongoloid and Indo-Aryan races who have adjusted themselves to the rigorous climate of this

state. Thus Sikkim has become a state of multi-racial inhabitants. The oldest inhabitants are the Rongs or Lepchas who migrated via Assam to this mountain state. Next came the Khampas from the Tibetan province of Kham, they are now commonly known as Bhutias. The Limbus who are considered by some as belonging to Lhasa gotra are believed to have migrated from Shigatse, Penam, Norpu, Giangtse etc of the Tsong province of Tibet. These Limbus and other Magar, Rai, Gurung, Murmi etc are allied races and in fact belong to the Kirati sub-cultural stock of the Nepali race who migrated to Sikkim from Nepal in the west.

English is the official language of Sikkim. The Lingua-franca is however Nepalese. It closely resembles Hindi. The Lepcha language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family. The languages of the Bhutias, Limbu, Murmi, Magar, Khamba and Mewar also belongs to it. High priority has been given to education. Education is free upto the primary school level. While in the higher classes the fee is nominal, for girls education is free up to class XI.

Sikkim is a land of villages. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people. Agriculture has an history of its own in Sikkim. By and large, Sikkim's wealth is derived from agriculture and forests. The original inhabitants were not agriculturists. They led a very primitive life. Gathering of wild roots, fruits, hunting and fishing were their means of livelihood. When Bhutia people migrated to Sikkim they started a semi pastoral economy and sedentary farming. They ploughed only the flat pieces of land available here and there. Settled agriculture stepped into Sikkim only with the arrival of Nepali immigrants. These sturdy, hardy, energetic and innovative people cleared large tracts of woodlands and made the land fit for cultivation.

The book is an asset for all scholars, researchers, teachers, students and ofcourse, the general readers.

— *Shyamal Dutt*

INTRODUCTION

Sikkim is the 22nd state of India came into existence with effect from 26th April, 1975. Sikkim has been divided into four districts and each district has further been bifurcated into two sub-divisions for administrative purpose. Sikkim state being a part of inner mountain ranges of Himalayas, is hilly having varied elevation ranging from 300 to 8540 meters. But the habitable areas are only up to the altitude of 2100 mtrs. Constituting only 20% of the total area of the state. The highest portion of Sikkim lies in its north west direction. A large number of mountains having altitudes of about seven thousand meters stands here with - Kanchenjunga (8598 m.), The third highest peak in the world. The high serrated, snow capped spurs and peaks of Kanchenjunga look attractive consisting of Kumbha Karna (7711 m.), Pendem (6706 m.), Narsingh (5825 m.), Kabru Dome (6545 m.), etc. A number of glaciers descends from eastern slopes of Kanchenjunga into Sikkim where snow clad line is found above 5300 mtrs. The biggest of them is Zemu, from whose snout above Lachen monastery rises the river Teesta. Teesta is the main river and its main tributaries are Zemu, Lachung, Rangyong, Dikchu, Rongli, Rangpo and Rangit which form the main channel of drainage from the north to the south. It boasts of the great mount Kanchendzonga as its crown. Ethically Sikkim has mainly three groups of people viz. *Nepalis*, *Bhutias*, *Lepchas*. The local language is Nepali. English is the official language. This jewel-like mountain state of ethereal beauty with an area of 7299 sq. kms, nestles in the heart of Himalayas. Cradled in the manifold splendours of nature deep within the snow clad Himalayas is Sikkim's capital *Gangtok*. Wrapped in mists and clouds, a garden state with an incredible variety of rhododendrons & a host of other flowers

Sikkim "The Last Shangrila"

History of Sikkim

Sikkim was inhabited in pre-historic times by three tribes namely *Naong*, *Chang* and the *Mon*. The Lepcha who entered Sikkim sometimes later absorbed them

completely. The origin of Lepchas is shrouded in mistery but it seems that they belonged to the clan of the *Nagas of the Mikir, Garo and Khasia* hills which lie to the south of the Bramaputra valley. Some believe they came from somewhere on the borders of Tibet and Burma. According to their own tradition they came to Sikkim from the east in company with Jindaxs, who went to Nepal and shared their tradition. The Lepchas were a very peace loving people, deeply religious and shy, which characteristics they still have retained. They were in fact the children of nature, and worshipped nature or spirits of nature. These Lepcha lived quite close to the nature by way of leading sustenance. Some of them practiced shifting cultivation and raised grains like maize and millets. They led a tribal life at the beck and call of their tribal leader.

The credit of organizing them into some sort of a society goes to a person called *Tur ve pa no*. He was eventually elected leader of king called "*Punu*" sometimes in A. D. 1400. He was killed in a battle and was succeeded by three Kings - *Tur Song Pa No, Tur Aeng Pa No and Tur Alu Pa No*. The monarchy came to an end with the death of the last king. The Lepchas now resorted to the practice of electing a leader whose advice and counsel was sought on crucial matters and followed. The Tibetan migration in early 17th century led the Rongs to shift their habitats so as to avoid conflict. Meanwhile the struggle and conflicts among the followers of the "*Yellow hats*" and the "*Red hats*" in Tibet forced the latter to seek refuge in Sikkim, where they attained the status of aristocracy. Being aggressive they occupied lands, which was not registered by the docile Lepchas. These *Tibetan migrants* (the Bhutias as they came to be known) who were followers of the sect of '*Red Hats*' now tried to convert these Sikkimese "*Worshippers of nature*" to *Buddhism*. They succeeded to some extent, though the Lepchas tried to keep themselves aloof as far as possible. In order to avoid any possible opposition from the Lepchas, these immigrants now chose one venerable person Phuntsok Namgyal as the temporal and spiritual leader of Sikkim, whose ancestry they traced from a legendary prince, who founded the Kingdom of Minvang in eastern Tibet in 9th century A.D. This dynasty ruled in the Chumbi and Teesta valley for a long time.

Somewhere in the Thirteenth century a prince named *Guru Tashi of Minyang dynasty in Tibet* had a divine vision that he should go south to seek his fortune in "*Denzong- the valley of rice*". As directed by the divine vision he along with his family, which included five sons, headed in the southern direction. The family during their wandering came across the *Sakya Kingdom* in which a monastery was being built at that time. The workers had not been successful in erecting pillars for the monastery. The elder son of *Guru Tashi* raised the pillar single handedly and thereby came to be known as "*Kheye Bumsa*" meaning the superior of ten thousand heroes.

The *Sakya King* offered his daughter in marriage to *Khye Bumsa*. *Guru Tashi* subsequently died and *Khye Bumsa* settled in *Chumbi Valley* and it was here that he established contacts with the Lepcha Chieftain *Thekong Tek* in *Gangtok*. *Khye Bumsa* being issueless went to Sikkim in the 13th century to seek the blessing of *Thekong Tek* who was also a religious leader. *Khye Bumsa* was not only blessed with three sons by the Rong chief but he also prophesied that his successors would be the rulers of Sikkim. Out of gratitude *Khye Bumsa* visited *Thekong Tek* a number of times. In due course of times the relationship ultimately culminated in a treaty of brotherhood between the two Chieftains at a place called *Kabi Longtsok*. This treaty brought about new ties of brotherhood between the Lepchas and the Bhutias.

Mipon Rab the third son of *Khye Bumsa* assumed the Chief-Ship after the death of his father. He had sons and the four principal clans of Sikkim are said to have sprung from these four sons. The fourth son *Guru Tashi* succeeded *Mipon Rab* and shifted to *Gangtok*. On the other hand after the death of *Thekong Tek* the Lepchas broke into minor clans. They also gradually turned to *Guru Tashi* for protection and leadership. *Guru Tashi* appointed a Lepcha, *Sambre* as his chief adviser and lieutenant. *Guru Tashi's* rule marked the absorption of the foreign ruling house into the native soil and also paved a way for a regular monarchy. This way *Guru Tashi* became the first ruler of Sikkim and was crowned as such. He was followed by *Jowo Nagpo*, *Jowo Apha* and *Guru Tenzing* who pursued the policy creating progressively amicable relation with Lepchas.

Phuntsok (or penchu) Namgyal was the next ruler. He was *Guru Tenzing's* son (great grandson of *Guru Tashi*) and was born in 1604. *Phuntsok Namgyal's* crowning was charged with all the vivid fantasy and miraculous phenomenon that is befitting to so important an occasion. Three venerable lamas are said to have entered Sikkim from three different direction at the same time. They met at *Yoksam* (meaning three wise men) and began a debate on the desirability of having a temporal and religious head to rule over pagan Sikkim.

Two of the lamas furthered their own claims but the third lama reminded them of the prophecy of *Guru Padamsambhava* that a man coming from east and *Phuntsok* by name would rule Sikkim. It was also told that none of them came from east hence the real man must be looked for. Messengers were sent to seek *Phuntsok*. Near *Gangtok* the desired youngman was found and lamas lost no time in crowning him the king. They seated him on a nearby rock slab and sprinkled water on him from the sacred urn. He was given one of *Lhatsun Chenpo's* (the lama told about prophecy) names, *Namgyal*, and the title of *Chogyal* or religious king. It happened in the year 1642. The *Namgyal* dynasty ruled over Sikkim as hereditary kings for about 332 years.

Phuntsok Namgyal, the first consecrated ruler ruled over a vast territory, many times the size of present Sikkim. His kingdom touched *Thang La* in the Tibet in the north, *Tagong La* near Paro in Bhutan in the east and the *Titalia* on the borders of West Bengal and Bihar in the south. The western border *Timar Chorten* on the Timar river in Nepal. Phuntsok though a distant descendant of *Indrabodhi* was now a Bhutia by his domicile. He was persuaded by the lamas enthroning him as *Chogyal* (Heavenly king or king who rules with righteousness) to seek recognition from *Dalai Lama of Tibet*. The *Dalai Lama* recognized *Phuntsok Namgyal* as the ruler of the southern slopes of the *Himalayas* (Sikkim) and is also credited to have sent ceremonial present such as the silken scarf bearing *Dalai Lama's seal*, the *mitre(hat) of the Guru Rimpoche*, the devil dagger (Phurpa) and the most precious sand image of the Guru. Consequently, the newly established Bhutia principality of *Namgyal Dynasty* was tied to Tibetan theocracy.

Since then up to 19th century, the Bhutia rulers of Sikkim looked up to Tibet for protection against political foes. *Phuntsok Namgyal* proved to be an efficient and capable administrator. He divided his kingdom into twelve *Dzongs* i.e. districts and appointed *Dzongpana* i.e. governor for each. He also declared Mahayana Buddhism as the state religion, which continued to be the state religion under all the *Namgyal rulers*. He very tactfully kept the lepchas, Bhutias and Limbus together. The Governors were appointed from the lepchas who were then in majority. Since *Yatung* the greatest commercial Tibetan centre being nearer to Gangtok posed some danger, he shifted his capital to Yoksom.

Phunstok Namgyal and the three saints immediately got to the task of successfully bringing the Lepcha tribes under the Buddhist fold. Politically, Sikkim expanded its borders, which include Chumbi valley, the present Darjeeling district and a part of present-day Nepal and Bhutan. The capital of Sikkim was established in Yoksam itself.

Tensung Namgyal succeeded his father Phuntsok Namgyal in 1670 and moved his capital to Rabdentse. He had three wives - a Tibetan, a Bhutanese and Limbu girl. The latter was the daughter of the Limbu chief *Yo Yo-Hang*. The chief's daughter brought with her seven girls who were later on married into important families of Sikkim. Many of them rose to the rank of councillors to the King. These councillors later on came to be known as Kazis who enjoyed immense power and privileges.

Chador Namgyal a minor son from Tensung's second wife succeeded on the death of his father. Pedithe daughter from the first wife who came from Bhutan challenged the succession and invited Bhutanese intervention. Having come to know about this secret move Yungthing Yeshe a loyal minister took the minor king to Lhasa. During his asylum in Lhasa, Chador Namgyal distinguished himself in Buddhist learning and

Tibetan literature. By dint of his acumen and scholarship he rose to the position of state-astrologer to the Sixth Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama was so much pleased with the erudition of this young scholar that he bestowed high honours and titles on the young king. The young king also received an estate in central Tibet with sovereign rights. On the other hand Bhutanese forces had captured the Rabdentse palace and imprisoned the son of Yugthing Yeshe. But on the intervention of Tibet, King Deb of Bhutan withdrew. Chador Namgyal came back and drove out the rest of Bhutanese forces.

The south-eastern tract was, however, lost to Sikkim as it had been heavily colonized by then. The Bhutanese after a short while made a second attempt to capture Sikkim territory. Chador Namgyal gave a tough resistance but areas now called as Kalimpong and Rhenock were lost forever. Chador was himself religious and took steps for the propagation of Buddhist religion in his territory. He commanded that the second of every three sons of Bhutia family must be ordained a monk of the Pemiongchi Monastery, which was also open to the Tsongs. He not only built the Guru Lhakhang Tashiding (1715) and patronised the sacred places but also adapted the religious dances (mystery plays) to keep alive the martial and native traditions and invented an alphabet for the Lepchas.

However, *Pedi* the half sister of the ruler did not reconcile. She conspired with a Tibetan man of medicine and caused *Chador Namgyal's* death by way of blood letting from a main artery while the king was holidaying at *Ralang* hot water spring in 1716. A force was sent to *Namchi*, the doctor was executed and *Pedi* was strangled to death by a silk scarf.

Gyurmed Namgyal succeeded his father *Chador*. Consequently upon a Mongol (Dzungar) invasion on Tibet to persecute Nyingma sect, the Mindoling Abbot's sister. In his times the people were forced to work on the fortification of Rabdentse in the fear of *Gurkhas* and *Bhutanese* raids. Many Tsongs who were not prepared to yield to forced labour fled to Limbuana, which became a rebel district and broke away from Sikkim even earlier to Gurkha expansion. A boundary dispute with Bhutan also arose. The Magar Chieftain Tashi Bidur also revolted, though he was subdued. Limbuana was, however, lost to Nepal. *Gyurmed* had no issue but while on his death bed at the age of 26 (1733) gave out that a nun in *Sanga Choling* was carrying his child. But some people do not believe it. It is said, he was impotent and generally shunned his wife.

Therefore, the story goes that in order to keep the *Namgyal Dynasty* going, the lama priest of Sikkim concocted a story that a nun was carrying the child of the King. Fortunately the nun delivered a male child and he was accepted as heir to *Gyurmed*. He was named as *Phuntsok* after the first temporal and the spiritual head of Sikkim.

Phuntsok Namgyal II was opposed by many people including some Bhutias on the plea of illegitimacy. *Tamdang* a close confidant and treasurer of *Gyurmed* not only opposed the succession but assured the powers of the ruler and continued to rule Sikkim for three years inspite of the opposition by pro-king faction. The Lepchas backed the baby king and fought the pretender under the leadership of *Chandzod Karwang*. *Tamdang* was defeated and fled to Tibet to seek guidance and help. But to keep Sikkim under their Tutelage the Tibetan authorities favoured the minority of the king. A convention representing all shades of Sikkimese population was held which defined the functions, powers and responsibilities of the Government. The system of annual taxation was also introduced to augment the state treasury.

The Magar tribe, lost its chieftain during this time and asked the regent to appoint the deceased's son as chieftain. But the regent expressed his inability to comply with their demand. This act enraged the Magars who sought the help and protection from Bhutan. This way Sikkim lost Magars allegiance forever. In the year 1752 the Tsongs rose in arms, but were subdued and won over by tactfully by *Chandzod Karwang*. The rise of *Gurkhas* also posed a threat for Sikkim. The later years of *Phuntsok II*, witnessed *Gurkhas* inroads in Sikkim under the leadership of *Raja Prithvi Narayan Shah* of Nepal who formented the rebellious elements in Sikkim. Bhutan also invaded Sikkim and captured all area east of Tista, but withdrew to present frontiers after negotiation at *Rhenock*. The *Gurkha* inroads were beaten back seventeen times. A peace treaty with Nepal was signed in 1775, and *Gurkhas* promised to abstain from further attacks and collaboration with Bhutanese. But the *Gurkhas* at a later stage violated the treaty and occupied the land in western Sikkim. *Phuntsok II* had three queens but had a son *Tenzing Namgyal* from his second queen in 1769.

Tenzing Namgyal succeeded *Phuntsok Namgyal* in 1780. During the reign of *Tenzing Namgyal*, Nepali forces occupied large chunks of Sikkim territory. They attacked *Rabdantse* and the *Chogyal* had to flee to Tibet. The Nepalis excursions emboldened them to penetrate even into Tibet. This led to the Chinese intervention and Nepal was defeated. In the Sino-Nepal treaty, Sikkim lost some of its land to Nepal, but monarchy was allowed to be restored in the country. *Tenzing Namgyal* died in Lhasa and his son *Tsudphud Namgyal* was sent to Sikkim in 1793 to succeed him as the monarch. *Rabdantse* was now, considered too insecure because of its proximity to the Nepal border and *Tshudphund Namgyal* shifted the capital to a place called Tumlong.

The defeat of Nepal by the Chinese did little to weaken the expansionist designs of the Nepalese. They continued to make attacks into the neighbouring British territories and Sikkim. British India successfully befriended Sikkim. They felt that by doing so the expanding powers of the *Gorkhas* would be curtailed. British also looked forward

to establishing trade link with Tibet and it was felt that the route through Sikkim was the most feasible one. War between Nepal and British India broke out in 1814 and came to an end in 1816 with the defeat of the Nepalis and the subsequent signing of the *Treaty of Sugauli*. As a direct spin-off, British India signed another treaty with Sikkim in 1817 known as the *Treaty of Titalia* in which former territories, which the Nepalis captured, were restored to Sikkim. H. H. Risley writes in the Gazette of Sikkim, 1894, that by the *Treaty of Titalia* British India has assumed the position of Lord's paramount of Sikkim and a title to exercise a predominant influence in that State has remained undisputed.

The British became interested in *Darjeeling* both as a hill resort and an outpost from where Tibet and Sikkim would be easily accessible. Following a lot of pressure from the British, Sikkim finally gifted *Darjeeling* to British India on the understanding that a certain amount would be paid as annual subsidy to Sikkim. The gift deed was signed by the *Chogyal Tsudphud Namgyal* in 1835. The British appointed a superintendent in the ceded territory. The British however did not pay the compensation as had been stipulated and this led to a quick deterioration of relation between the two countries. There were also difference between the British Government and Sikkim over the status of people of Sikkim. Because of the increased importance of *Darjeeling*, many citizens of Sikkim mostly of the labour class started to settle there as British subjects. The migration disturbed the feudal lords in Sikkim who resorted to forcibly getting the migrants back to Sikkim. This annoyed the British Government, which considered these as acts of kidnapping of British citizens. The relations deteriorated to such an extent that when Dr. Campbell, the Superintendent of *Darjeeling* and Dr. Hooker visited Sikkim in connection with the latter's botanical research, they were captured and imprisoned in 1849. The British issued an ultimatum and the two captives were released after a month of detention. In February 1850, an expedition was sent to Sikkim, which resulted in the stoppage of the annual grant of Rs. 6000/- to the Maharaja of Sikkim and also the annexation of *Darjeeling* and a great portion of Sikkim to British India.

Sikkim resorted to making attacks into British territories and it was in November 1860 that the British sent an expeditionary force to Sikkim. This force was driven back from *Rinchenpong* in Sikkim. A stronger force was sent in 1861 that resulted in the capture of the capital *Tumlong* and the signing of a Treaty between the British and Sikkimese the same year.

His son *Sidekeong Namgyal* succeeded *Tsugphud Namgyal* in 1863. The British Government started the payment of annual subsidy of Rs. 6000/- in 1850 for *Darjeeling*. In an attempt to keep good relation with Sikkim, the British enhanced the subsidy to Rs. 12000/- per annum.

Chogyal Sidekong Namgyal defied in 1874 issueless and was succeeded by his half brother *Thutob Namgyal*. There were serious difference between the Nepalese settlers and the original inhabitants of Sikkim and this led to British intervention. The settlement went in favour of the Nepali settlers and made *Thutob Namgyal* have ill feeling for the British. He retreated to *Chumbi* and became more aligned towards the Tibetans.

The British meanwhile were making concerted efforts to establish a trade links with Tibet and also imposed their influence. A delegation led by *Colman Macaulay*, Financial Secretary to the Bengal Government of British India was sent to Sikkim in 1884 to explore the possibility of establishing a trade route with Tibet through the Lachen Valley. This delegation visited *Tumlong* the capital where it met the *Maharaja*.

The Britishers started building of roads in Sikkim. This was viewed with suspicion by *Tibet* and in 1886, some Tibetan militia occupied *Lingtu* in Sikkim near *Jeplela* pass. In May 1888, the Tibetans attacked *Gnathang* below *Jeplela* but were driven away. In September of the same year the British called for reinforcements and the Tibetans were pushed back from *Lingtu*. A memorial was built at *Gnathang* for the few British soldiers who died in the engagement.

The Britishers appointed *Claude White* as the first political officer in Sikkim in 1889 and *Chogyal Thutob Namgyal* was virtually under his supervision. *Thutob Namgyal* shifted the Alarmed by the growing Russian influence in Tibet and also to assert itself, the British sent an expedition led by Col. Younghusband to Lhasa via *Jeplela* in 1904. The expedition met with resistance from the Tibetan army, which was defeated, and a treaty was dictated by Younghusband on Tibet. The Treaty secured monopoly-trading privileges in Tibet for the British. *Thutob Namgyal* was succeeded by his son *Sidekong Tulku* in 1914. Unfortunately he did not live long and died in the same year. He was succeeded by his half brother *Tashi Namgyal* who promulgated many reforms in the state.

- In 1947 when India became independent, *Tashi Namgyal* was successful in getting a special status of protectorate for Sikkim. This was in face of stiff resistance from local parties like Sikkim State Congress who wanted a democratic setup and accession of Sikkim to the Union of India.

The treaty signed between India and Sikkim ratified the status of Sikkim as a protectorate with *Chogyal* as the Monarch. *Tashi Namgyal* died in 1963 and was succeeded by his son *Palden Thondup Namgyal*. By the beginning of 1970 there were rumbling in the political ranks and file of the State, which demanded the removal of Monarchy and the establishment of a democratic setup. This finally culminated in wide spread agitation against Sikkim Durbar in 1973. There was a complete collapse in the administration. The Indian Government tried to bring about a semblance

of order in the state by appointing a Chief administrator Mr. B. S. Das. Further events and election led to Sikkim becoming transformed from a protectorate to an associate State. On 4th September 1947, the leader of Sikkim Congress, Kazi Lendup Dorji was elected as the Chief Minister of the state. The Chogyal however still remained as the constitutional figure head monarch in the new setup. Mr. B. B. Lal was the first Governor of Sikkim.

Events leading to the confrontation between the Chogyal and the popular Government caused Sikkim to become a full-fledged 22nd state of the Indian Union on 16th may 1975. The institution of Chogyal was subsequently abolished.

Since then Sikkim has been a state of the Indian Union like any other state. The 1979 assembly election saw Mr. Nar Bahadur Bhandari being elected as the Chief Minister of Sikkim. He has been returned to office in the election held in 1984 and 1989. In 1994 assembly election.

Geography of Sikkim

Small but beautiful, Sikkim situated in the Eastern Himalayas spread below the world's third highest mountain Kangchendzonga (8585m) revered by the Sikkimese as their protective deity. Sikkim is separated by the Singalila range from Nepal in the west, Chola range from Tibet in the northeast and Bhutan in the southeast. Rangit and Rangpo rivers form the borders with the Indian state of West Bengal in the south.

Though measuring just 65 Km by 115 Km- the size of Switzerland it ranges from sweltering deep valleys a mere three hundred meters above sea level to lofty snow peaks such as Kangchendzonga. On its west side is the massive 31 Km long Zemu glacier. Various explorers and mountaineers have claimed to have seen Yeti or its foot prints in the vicinity of the mountain and its glacier- "The abominable snowman" has its place in folklore.

Sikkim's botanical and zoological affluence is truly impressive. The varieties of bords and butterflies in Sikkim is matched only by incredible diversity in the animal and botanical world, nourished by unique and dramatic geographical features.

The lower altitudes are subcortical and abound in some of Sikkim's more than "six hundred orchid varieties, sprays of cardamom fruit orchards and terraced rice paddies. To the Lepchas-this was "Nye-mae-el" (Paradise), to the Bhutias it is "Beymul Denzong" (The hidden valley of Rice). Sikkim is commonly attributed to the Tsong's word "Sukhim" meaning (New or Happy Home).

The people of Sikkim are warm, simple and friendly with a natural gaeity. The custom and rituals of sikkimese are as diverse as the ethnic groups that inhabit the land. They have an impressive repertoire of folk songs and dances. People of Sikkim

love to celebrated with a gay abandon and their way of life is inextricably bound up with nature.

Just as Mt. Kangchendzonga is an indisputable part of the consciousness of the Sikkimese people, so too the rivers Tista and Rangitt with deep ravines and their valleys allowing monsoon to penetrate in the northernmost parts which nourishes this "Garden of the Himalayas".

At higher altitudes, monsoon mist cling to huge tracts of lichen covered forest, where every conceivable species of Rhododendron and giant magnolia trees, conifers and beautiful flowering plants as Primulas, Gentians, Blue poppies, Wild strawberry, Raspberry. All over Sikkim forest and wilderness areas are inhabited by the Snow-Leopard, Thar, Yaks, wild Ass in the Tibetan pleatue, Bharal or Blue Sheep, Shapi and the symbol of Sikkim- the endangered Red Panda.

The land of five Treasures-Mt. Kangchendzonga - the massive part of massive Himalayan range and other spectacular peaks of lives of Sikkimese people. The best known peaks are Pauhunri (7125m), Pandim (6691m), Talung (6147m), Tent Peak (7365m), Jongsang (7459m), Rathong (6679m), Kaktang (6147m) and Siniolchu (6887m) regarded by the mountaineers as the most beautiful peak in the world.

Amidst the grandeur of the mountain peaks lush valleys, fast flowing rivers, Sikkim offers her visitors a rare and singular experience. Within a matter of hour one can move from its subcortical heat of the lower valleys to the cold of the rugged mountain slopes that reach up to the areas of perpetual snow.

Location : Sikkim is a very small hilly state in the Eastern Himalayas, extending approximately 114 Kms from north to south and 64Kms from east to west, surrounded by vast stretches of Tibetan Plateau in the North, Chumbi Valley of Tibet and the kingdom of Bhutan in the east, Darjeeling district of West Bengal in the south and the kingdom in Nepal in the west. The state being a part of inner ranges of the mountains of Himalaya has no open valley and no plains but carried elevations ranging from 300 to 8583 mtrs above means sea level consisting of lower hill, middle and higher hills, alpine zones and snow bound land, the highest elevation 8583 mtrs. being the top of the Mt. Kangchendzonga itself.

Total Area Statement : The total geographical area of the state is 7096 sq. Kms. but according to 1958-60 survey operation and the gazetteer of Sikkim, the land area under different utilization categories is 7299 sq. Kms. Detail break up as follow :

Climate : The climate of the state has been roughly divided into the tropical, temperature and alpine zones. For most of the period in a year, the climate is cold and humid as rainfall occurs in each month. The area experience a heavy rainfall due to its proximity to the Bay of Bengal. The rainfall in north district is comparatively

less than of the other districts. The general trend of decrease in temperature with increase in altitude holds good every where. Pre-monsoon rain occurs in April-May and monsoon (southwest) operates normally from the month of May and continues up to early October.

Temperature : The mean temperature in the lower altitudinal zone, it varies from 1.5 degree centigrade to 9.5 degree centigrade. Temperature varies with altitude and slope. The maximum temperature is recorded usually during July and August, and minimum during December & January. Fog is a common feature in the entire state from May to September. Biting cold is experienced at high altitude places in the winter months and snowfall is also not uncommon during this period.

Rainfall : An examination of available rainfall data shows that the mean annual rainfall is minimum at Thangu (82 mm.) and maximum at Gangtok (3494 mm.). An isohyatal analysis of these data reveals that there are two maximum rainfall areas (i) South-East quadrant, including Mangan, Singhik, Dikchu, Gangtok, Rongli etc. (ii) South-West corner including Hilley. In between these two regions, there is a low rainfall region e.g. Namchi. Rainfall in this area is about half of that in the former areas. There is an area in the North-West Sikkim which gets very little rainfall (even less than 4.9 mm.). This area is having mainly snow -covered mountains. Rainfall is heavy and well distributed during the months from May to early October. July is the wettest month in most of the places. The intensity of rainfall during South-West monsoon season decreases from south to North, while the distribution of winter rainfall is in the opposite order. The highest annual rainfall for the individual station may exceed 5000 mm. and average number of rainy days (days with rain of 2.5 mm. or more) ranges from 100 at Thangu to 184 at Gangtok.

Geomorphology : Sikkim encompasses the lesser Himalaya, Central Himalaya, and the Tethys Himalaya. It is essentially a mountainous state without flate piece of land of any extent any where. The mountains rise in elevation northward. The northern portion of the state is deeply cut into steep escarpments, and except in the Lachen and Lachung valleys, is not populated. Southern Sikkim is lower, more open, and fairly well cultivated. This configuration of the State is partly due to the direction of the main drainage which is southern. The physical configuration of Sikkim is also partly due to geological structure. Major portion of state is covered by Precambrian rock and is much younger in age. The Northern, Eastern and Western portion of the state are constituted of hard massive gneissose rocks capable of resisting denudation. The central and southern portion is formed of comparatively soft, thin, slaty and half-schistore rocks which denudes very easily. The trend of the mountain system is in a general east-west direction. However, chief ridges run in a more or less north south direction. The Rangeet and the Tista which form the main channels of drainage, run

nearly north-south. The valleys cut by these rivers and their chief feeders are very deep. The valleys are rather open towards the top, but usually attain a steep gorge like structure as we approach the bed of the rivers. There are 180 perennial lakes of different altitudes. Many hot water springs i.e. Phur-Cha, Ralang Sachu, Yumthang, Momay are also found in the state. The Perpetual snow line in Sikkim may be approx. at 16,000 ft.

Demographic Features : Sikkim is a multi-ethnic state. Broadly, the population can be divided into tribal and non-tribal groups. Lepchas, Bhutias, Sherpas are categorized as Scheduled Tribes. The Lepchas are the original inhabitants of the state. Compared to other ethnic groups, the Lepchas still maintain many of their traditional ways. The Bhutias comprise, the sikkimese Bhutia and Bhutia from Bhutan and Tibet. The Sherpas are a marginal ethnic group in the state. Over 70% population consist of Nepalese. They are dominant ethnic group in the state. The people from the plain, mostly involved in trade and services represent a marginal group. As per the 1991 census of India, the total population of the state is 406457, whereas in 1981 it was 3,16,385 only. Dicennial growth has come down, as in 1971-81 it was 50.77% where as for 1981-91 it is 28.47% only. The overall density of population in the state is 57 per sq. Km. East district is the most populated where as North's density only 7, is least populated. Sex ratio (females per thousand male) in 1981 was 835, where as it has improved and now is 878. There are only eight urban towns and urban population is 9.10% of total population. Schedule caste and schedule tribe population is 5.93 % and 22.36% respectively, North district is a tribal district and it has about 55.38% tribal population. Literacy rate is 56.94% (19th position), higher than the all India average literacy tare of 52.11%.

Economic Profile : The economy of Sikkim is mainly based on agricultural and animal husbandry. Approx. 11% of the total geographical area is under agriculture. Agriculture is of the mixed type and still at the subsistence level rather than commercial level. The work force participation rate as per 1991 census is 40.44%. The female participation rate in Sikkim is also much higher than the national average. This is an important aspect if the hill economy, as productivity is low and hence all the able-bodied people are employed in agriculture and other activities. Cultivators account for the greater majority of the people in the state. Their percentage is 57.84%. Agricultural labourers as a whole constitute only 7.81% of the workers in the state. House holds and other industries are negligible, but other worker (Tertiary Sector) at the state level represent a good percentage of population. The decreasing ratio of worker at the state level indicates the low level of economic diversification. The importance of agriculture can be judged by the high percentage of population approx. 65% engaged in it. Animal husbandry is an integral part of the house hold economy

of the region. There are certain house hold industries also which substantially adds to house hold incomes. The past one and half decade has witnessed a tremendous upward swing in various development programme giving a new thrust to the Sikkim economy. This process has increased wage employment opportunities. Though most of the inhabitants are basically agriculture, they have diversified into tertiary jobs such as Government services.

Natural Resources : The state is gifted with abundant natural resources. The resources can be grouped into biotic or abiotic, both of which can be renewable. Biotic resources include agriculture crops. Fodder and forests. The entire Himalayan region is endowed with natural flora and fauna, and is a natural paradise for nature lovers, conversationists, botanists, zoologists and environmentalists. There are 4000 species of flowering plants, 300 species of ferns and its allies, 11 species of Oaks, 8 species of tree ferns, 30-40 species of Primulas 20 species of bamboos. In Fauna, the state is also very rich 144 species of mammals. 500-600 species of birds, over 400 species of butterflies and moths. Many species of reptiles etc. are available. Many medicinal plants/herbs/and important shrubs are found in low and high altitude areas. Other resources are water resources, human resources, livestock resources, hydro-electric potential, tourism, agricultural, horticulture etc. In forest, non-wood forest produce has a vast potential like sand, boulders and other materials. Under economic geology the minerals like copper, iron, lime, dolomite/limestone, coal, quartzite and tale, silicate & graphite are available in the state. Garnet is abundant in the gneiss and mica schists at places. Large cardamoms production is very high in the state. The basic information on various natural resources is either not available or if available it is not adequate and upto date. There is a vast potential for hydro-electric power generation. Tourism development deserves consideration to add to the economy of the region.

Achievements in Health Care Services

Information have today become an essential and inescapable part of all activities relating to the delivery of Health care services, be it for management of the day's work or for planning for a better tomorrow. Information are needed at all levels to enable us to think quantitatively, assess probabilities and take appropriate action.

The Statistical cell of the Department has been providing information to all categories of users through publication of service statistics, survey reports and studies. Here a brief of the achievements made by the Department in the delivery of health care services to the people during the VIIth Five Year Plan Period.

Although, only 15 Primary Health Centres and 6 Primary Health Sub-Centre were functioning in 1979, substantial increase in the establishment of PHSCs, PHCs have

been made through the years. There are now 24 PHCs and 147 PHSCs functioning through out the State. With this, Sikkim has been the only State in the Country to achieve the National Norms of establishment of 1 PHC for 20,000 population and 1 PHSC for 3000 population. These Centres have Medical and Para-Medical Staff capable of rendering the basic Primary Health Care.

Construction of two, 100 bedded Community Health Centre at Singtam and Namchi have been completed and functioning. Another one hundred bedded Community Health Centre is under construction at Gyalsing. Proposal for construction of a hundred bedded Community Health Centre have been approved at Mangan and will be taken for construction during 1997-98.

Although greater stress have been given to Primary Health Care, curative aspect of health has not been neglected. The Central Referral Hospital at Gangtok has been upgraded to 300 beds from 250 beds. To ease the congestion in the OPD Clinics, new emergency cum OPD complex has been added to the old building. For better diagnostic and treatment facilities, sophisticated equipments like Gastroscope, Ultrasound, Omniscope have been provided. Specialised services in the field of medicine, surgery anaesthesia, orthopaedics, paediatrics, ophthalmology, dental, dermatology and psychiatry have been added. Super-speciality in Cardiology with intensive coronary care unit has also been introduced. A State Level Blood Bank and Transfusion Unit with facilities for HIVF screening has also been set up.

Treatment for ailment for which facilities do not exist in the State are referred for treatment outside Sikkim and financial aid provided by the Government. This is a unique feature of the State.

Free medicines and free diet in all the hospitals and PHCs have been a great incentive for the rural people to avail of Health Services.

Construction of an apex 500 bedded Central Referral Hospital at Tadong is on the verge of completion.

Construction of 21 units of staff quarters at Namchi Hospital has been taken up at a total cost of Rs. 64.00 lakhs.

A camp for providing artificial limb and other aid for the physically handicapped was organised at Gangtok. 336 patients received aids like wheel chair, crutches, artificial limbs, cosmetic gloves, etc.

Successful free Cataract Eye Camp and Intraocular lens implantation were organised at Singtam and Namchi in collaboration with the Foundation Eye Care, Himalaya, Netherland, Nepal.

Sophisticated equipment have been received free of cost under the German Community Grant for the use of STNM Hospital, Gangtok.

The F.W. & MCH programme was introduced in the state from 1976-77, since then it has been implemented as a people's programme through mass awareness activities. The performance under the programme has increased tremendously. Immunization for infants against the six killer diseases, tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, whooping cough and measles have increased from below 30% to 85%. To improve the health status of mothers and children, MCH services are provided through all the hospitals and health centres. 15000 pregnant mothers, lactating mothers and other anaemic mothers are provided with prophylaxis against nutritional anaemia with the distribution of folifer tablets free of cost. 15000 Children below the age of five years are provided with similar facilities 20000 children are also provided with vitamin 'A' solutation annually to protect the children upto 6 years of age from night blindness. A post partum unit has been constructed and attached to STNM hospital, Gangtok for the care of mothers during antenatal & post natal period. To provide services to pregnant mothers at the rural areas, 293, indigenous Dais have been trained.

To bring the basic health services at the doorsteps of the rural mass, 345 Health Guides have been trained. However, we have 237 Health Guides functioning. These Health Guides are provided with health kits worth Rs.50.00 per month and also paid Rs. 50.00 as honorarium for the services rendered. An ANM Training Centre has also been constructed and added to the STNM Hospital at Gangtok. The Centre has a capacity to admit and train 80 ANM Trainees annually. The Centre also provides training to senior ANMs for promotion to the post of Lady Health Visitors, as and when required. Family Planning Services are provided free of cost to all the eligible couples through the Hospitals, PHCs and PHSCs. A team of doctors and paramedical staff have been trained for laproscopy operations. The team caters to all the four districts. The eligible couple protection rate has increased to 21.9% during 1993.

Tuberculosis has been the major health hazard in the State. To curb the further spread of the disease, Health Education is being imparted to the people regularly. One 60 bedded district Tuberculosis Centre is functioning at Namchi with 10 bedded mini DTC in the other 3 Districts. The stress has been on domiciliary treatment of the disease. Tuberculosis Control Programme has been given top priority and District Tuberculosis Control Societies are being formed in the four Districts for implementation of Directly observed Treatment Short course (DOTs) which will be funded by the World Bank. Programme to scrutinise opinion leaders are being organised at the District and PHC Levels to create awareness amongst the people regarding various aspects of Tuberculosis Control. Although Leprosy is not a big Health problem, a 20 bedded temporary Hospitalisation Ward has been constructed at Sajong, at a cost of Rs. 21.00 lakhs. Sikkim has been declared as a goitre endemic state on the basis of the sample survey conducted by ICMR in 1976. The prevalence of goitre in the state has been

estimated to be around 56%. To control the prevalence of goitre, sale of non iodised salt has been banned throughout the State under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 w.e.f. 11th Sept. 1985. A State laboratory for estimation of iodine in the iodised salt on sample basis has been set up at Gangtok. A thyroid Research Centre has also been set up at Namchi for diagnosis, treatment & research in Iodine Deficiency disorders.

Under the National Programme for control of blindness, free cataract operations are performed at STNM hospital. Under the National Malaria Eradication Programme, fortnightly Domicillary Visits are made by Surveillance workers to detect fever cases and give treatment for the same. Spray activities to destroy the malaria vectors are carried out twice a year. Residential house including cowsheds and other structures are sprayed. Blood samples are also collected from fever cases to detect the cause. Over the years the incidence of malaria has been gradually brought down.

The prevention of Food Adulteration Act. No. 37 of 1954 has been extended to the state of Sikkim from 1.4.79 vide Govt. of India Notification No. P. 15024/7/76 PH(F&N) and was enforced w.e.f. 4.5.79. The drugs and cosmetics Act, 1940 (23 of 1940) and rules 1945 has been enforced in Sikkim from 15th Sept. 1984. Regular inspection by the Foods & Drugs Inspectors under these Acts, and analysis of food and drug items has reduced adulteration to a large extent. To bring about a better health status among mothers and children. Nutrition programme is being implemented throughout the state. There are two components of the programme *viz.* Supplementary Nutrition Programme and Mid Day Meal Programme. Under the SNP, Pre-School children and Pregnant & Nursing mothers are provided with ready to eat food. Under MDM, school children upto class III are also fed with the ready to eat food. Besides these, demonstrations on preparation of low cost locally available nutritious recipes are conducted by the staff of the Nutrition cell.

Morbidity due to diarrheal diseases has been the highest as compared to any other diseases reported in the State. This has led to the implementation of the Diarrheal Disease control Programme. Under the Programme, Medical as well as Paramedical workers including mothers are trained on Oral Rehydration Therapy and diagnosis of dehydration case due to severe diarrhea. 108 Medical Officers, 277 ANM, 380 MPWs (male), 197 Aganwadi Workers, 2295 mothers have so far been trained on oral rehydration therapy. Under the programme, free distribution of oral rehydration salt packets are also done for severe cases through all the hospitals, PHCs and PHSCs. These packets are taken even to the doorsteps of the rural people through trained health guides. About 30,000 packets are distributed annually. To set up a base line date for further improvement in the delivery of health services in the State as well as to bring about a better nutritional status of the mothers and children, health and

nutrition status surveys have been completed in the State separately. The reports of these two important surveys have been published. Another Survey on Public Health Sanitation, water supply and health status of the people is in progress.

School Health Programme which was initiated in the year 1979 was made more comprehensive in nature and coverage. It covers students from class I to V with services like immunisation, health check up, Health Education and Teachers Training. Every year Primary School Teachers are also trained under this programme. Similarly, 15 Schools under Rangpo PHC have been taken up under National School Health Programme. Special School Health Chechup Scheme was launched from 22.7.96 to 27.7.96 for screening of all Primary School Children for minor ailments like anaemia, nightblindness, pyoderma, scabies, dental caries etc. The scheme was launched in coordination with Education Department and 873 School and 94,707 children were screened under the special School Health Scheme of which 51,324 children were treated in the health centres and hospital in the State.

As the stress has been more on preventive aspects, all Health Programmes including National Programmes are being supplemented through regular health education activities like Health Camps and Orientation Training Programmes. Efforts are also being made to educate and motivate the people in better health care through mass media like film shows, literatures, exhibitions, etc.

Pulse Polio Immunisation Programme have been organised throughout the State on 9.12.95, 20.1.96, 7.12.96 and 18.1.97, during which time children below 3 yrs. and above 3 yrs. were immunised against poliomyelitis. The objective of the Programme is to eradicate Poliomyelitis by 2000 AD. Such programme is to continue till 2000 A.D. De-addiction-cum-treatment Centre for drug addicts and alcoholics is under construction at STNM Hospital, Gangtok. With the intention of improving the educational opportunities and health services in the State and to facilitate the establishment of Institute of Medical Science for Medical, Dental, Nursing Pharmacy and other Allied Health Training at the under graduate, graduate and post graduate levels, Sikkim Manipal University of Health, Medical and Technological Science Act, 1995 has been enacted. To regulate the setting up of Private Hospitals, Nursing Homes and other centres catering to Diagnostic, Investigative and other health care services in the interest of Public Health, the Sikkim Clinical establishment (Licencing and Registration) Act, 1995 has also enacted.

Review of the basic Health parameters at the end of the VIIIth Five Year Plan indicate that there has been a significant impact in the health status of the people of the State through the years. However, a drastic decrease in the death rate brought about by the improvement in the Health delivery system has led to a high growth rate of population in the State. This calls for a more vigorous implementation of the

Family Welfare Programme which we hope to achieve through the present policy of the Government of India of the Target Free approach. Much needs to be done to further improve the quality of services to bring about better improvement in the status of life expectancy, reduction of infant mortality rate, reduction in birth rate and death rate and contain the growth rate of population. This is to be achieved by providing qualified, trained and dedicated medical and paramedical personnels, necessary equipments and support.

Education in Sikkim

Educational expansion in Sikkim during the last decade has been phenomenal. Beside I.C.D.S. Centres, pre- primary classes function in most of our schools. Our Senior Secondary Schools are affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education, New Delhi. The only Public School, T. N. Academy prepares students for examinations of the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination, New Delhi.

For higher Education, we have the following Educational Institute:

Sl. NO.	INSTITUTION	CONSTITUENCY	AFFILIATED TO
1	Sikkim Govt. College, Tadong, Gangtok	Rumtek	North Bengal University
2	Sikkim Govt. College, Namchi, South Sikkim.	Damthang	North Bengal University
3	Sikkim Govt. Law College, Kazi Road, Gangtok	Gangtok	North Bengal University
4	SHEDA (Buddhist Education) Institute of Tibetology, Deorali, Gangtok.	Rumtek	S.S.V, Varanasi
5	Research Institute of Tibetology, Deorali, Gangtok	Rumtek	S.S.V, Varanasi
6	Loyola College of Education, Namchi, South Sikkim. (Missionary Institute) (Now. Govt.)	Damthang	North Bengal University
7	Damber Singh College, Deorali (Now. Govt.)	Rumtek	North Bengal University
8	Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences, Tadong, Sikkim	Rumtek	Manipal University of Health, Technology and Medical Sciences
9	Manipal Institute of Technology (MIT), Tadong, Sikkim	Rumtek	Manipal University of Health, Technology and Medical Sciences
10	Institute for Handicrafts, Gangtok	Gangtok	
11	Industrial Technical Institute, Rangpo.	Central Pendam	

These are the specialized institution for giving the city a base of highly educated manpower, which will enable it to move rapidly into the information age.

Manipal Institute of Medical Science

This Hospital started functioning from March 1997. A building for a 500 (Five Hundred) bedded multiple facilities Referral Hospital is ready. This hospital will be the teaching hospital for the proposed Medical College at Tadong, Gangtok, Sikkim. The skeletal Out-Patients and Inpatients facilities of the Referral Hospital is established. Hopefully the Medical College is likely to be functional by the end of the year. This is most likely going to be affiliated to "*Sikkim Manipal University of Health Technology & Medical Sciences*". It occupies a 28 acre campus with all latest facilities.

Manipal Institute of Technology Sikkim

Born on 14th June 1997 the Manipal Institute of Technology Sikkim started its Academic Year from 1st July, '97. The Institute has the following disciplines.

1. Computer Engineering
2. Electronics & Communication Engineering
3. Electrical & Electronics Engineering
4. Civil Engineering

The approved intake for the various branches are as follows:

Computer Engineering	40
Electronics & Communication Engineering	60
Electrical & Electronics Engineering	60
Civil Engineering	60

Admission procedures are given below:

1. Admission are based on the candidates marks in the qualifying examination. The candidates must have a minimum of 50% average marks in Physics, Chemistry & Mathematics. Normalization of marks will be used for selections of candidates.
2. 10% of the total no. of seats are reserved for Sikkim.
3. 15 seats are reserved for all the North Eastern states together. The selection is based on merit.
4. 5 seats are reserved for Defence Personal posted in Sikkim. The selection is based on merit.

Fees details for the Academic Year 1997-98 Admission are as follows:

Indian Students:

Branches	Tuition Fees	Lab Fees	Other Fees
Computer	45000	15000	5000
Electronics & Communication	45000	15000	5000
Electrical & Electronics	45000	12500	5000

Foreign/NRI Students:

Branches	Tuition Fees	Lab Fees	Other Fees
Civil	US\$ 5000	-	2500
Electrical & Electronics	US\$ 5000	-	2500
Electronics & Communication	US\$ 5000	-	2500
Computer	US\$ 5000	-	2500

Sikkimese government nominated students:

Branches	Tuition Fees	Lab Fees	Other Fees
Civil	5000	2500	2500
Electrical & Electronics	5000	5000	2500
Electronics & Communication	5000	5000	2500
Computer	5000	5000	2500

Hostel Room Rent: Rs. 5,000-10,000. Based on the type of accommodation.

Caution Deposit:

- College: Rs. 5000
- Hostel: Rs. 2500
- Mess: Rs. 2500

Facilities: The Institute has adequate Library, Laboratories and class room facilities for the first Year. The Library, Laboratory and class room facilities for the Higher Semester are getting ready.

The institute has the hostel accommodation facilities for 190 students. Accommodation for another 160 students is getting ready.

The Institute has adequate faculty strength in Basic Sciences Departments as well as Technical departments for the year. The interviews were held at Delhi, Calcutta and Manipal to recruit Senior and Junior faculty members to meet the requirements of higher semester.

Information pertaining to the Institute can be obtained from

1. The Dean, Manipal Institute of Technology Sikkim, Tadong - 737102, Sikkim;
2. The Director of Student Welfare, M.I.T. Sikkim;
3. The Registrar, Sikkim Manipal University of Health & Technological Sciences.

Organizations

The government related organizations in Sikkim comprises of Sikkim Development Foundation, Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim, Sikkim Vihangam Yoga Sansthan and Human Development Foundation of Sikkim.

These organizations at Sikkim are mainly involved with the welfare of the common man of Sikkim and the society as a whole. Most of these organizations at Sikkim have been started by the common citizens and were later on registered with the Sikkim Government. By nature, these organizations of Sikkim are non-political, non-government, non profit seeking and non sectarian. Their main aim is to serve the society of Sikkim and develop it to an extent where it is feasible to maintain the ecological balance. Among the above mentioned organizations, Sikkim Vihangam Yoga Sansthan is a spiritual organization that offer services mainly to heal the disturbed mind through some meditations. Human Development Foundation is a special foundation that supports the underprivileged children of the Sikkim society by providing them with quality education and training. Rest two organizations in Sikkim are mainly concerned with maintaining environmental balance and promoting sustainable development in the society.

Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim

Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim was set up in the year 2001 and is a registered body which has got the recognition of the Sikkim Government. The organization is also known as ECOSS in short. ECOSS aims at encouraging ecotourism and conservation in Sikkim which would be beneficial to the whole Sikkimese society. The Sikkim Ecotourism and Conservation Society believes that the planning for sustainability of the ecotourism in Sikkim should include the common man of this north eastern land because without their support the dream of sustaining ecotourism in Sikkim would never be fulfilled.

The Society of Ecotourism and Conservation at Sikkim works through using the combination of the experience and intelligence of the national and international groups who are leading the whole world in the field of ecotourism and the force of the local rural people of Sikkim. ECOSS believes that ecotourism and conservation are not mutually exclusive and hence it lays stress on educating public about it and providing them the right training. The Society of Ecotourism and Conservation in Sikkim work with the rural people, various government and non government agencies to achieve their target of spreading the education about ecotourism and preservation of the natural resources of Sikkim. This not only helps the government in maintaining the vast natural resource of the state but also the local tribes of the state who get employed and self dependent to manage their own lands. The main activities of Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim are listed below :

- Design, develop and initiate training on ecotourism for its service providers.
- To promote environment conservation among students by working with them and their teachers.

- To tie up with national, international, and regional agencies so as to spread the roots of ecotourism.

Human Development Foundation of Sikkim

Human Development Foundation of Sikkim started its operation in 1995 as Children of Sikkim Foundation started by some Swiss and German tourists who were touched by the conditions of the local communities and especially the children of the state. In short, it is widely popular as HDFS. HDFS was legally born in December 1997 when it was registered with the Sikkim government as a secular, non-profit making and non-governmental charity trust. The foundation receives foreign funds as donations also. Human Development Foundation in Sikkim is mainly a children's organization. The main objective of this non profit seeking organization is to offer quality education to the underprivileged children of the Sikkim society. To achieve this goal, HDFS has set up a village for children where children from the age of 7 to 17 years are kept and offered an overall development program. The village accommodates not only those children who have lost their parents but also the ones whose parents cannot provide quality life to their children.

Apart from the village, the Sikkim Human Development Foundation also runs a vocational skill centre where it trains the children in various fields of art which they want to learn. This program aims at building up the overall personality of the student so that after growing up he can take up his own responsibility as well as the responsibility of his family members. All the donations received by the Human Development Foundation at Sikkim are used in various projects related to children. Since HDFS is registered as a charitable institute, all the donations made to this organization are exempted from tax as per the rules of different countries. Human Development Foundation of Sikkim funds the Children village for running the daily expenses at the hostel, school and vocational skills centre. Apart from this, the organization runs various campaigns to educate people about helping these underprivileged members of the society.

Sikkim Vihangam Yoga Sansthan

Sikkim Vihangam Yoga Sansthan is not a religious organization, rather it is an organization which educates people about the purpose of their life. The organization is not run by any particular religion and it does not discriminate among its members on the basis of their caste, creed, race, etc. Vihangam Yoga Sansthan at Sikkim aims at educating every individual about the mysteries of life and death. This organization at Gangtok in Sikkim is a branch of the Vihangam Yoga Sansthan whose head quarters are situated in Allahabad.

As per the teachings of the Vihangam Yoga Sansthan in Sikkim which lays importance on the soul, the physical body is a practical reality while the soul is the ultimate truth because the body changes in every birth while the soul remains the same forever. The Vihangam Yoga Sansthan of Sikkim also believes in the cycle of birth. As per the spiritual organization, the humans leave their physical body in the same way as they shed their clothes. And in every new birth they take up a new shape which depends on their activities in the past life. The organization believes that if you have done good work in your past then you would get a good body and vice versa. According to Sikkim Vihangam Yoga Sansthan, the soul and the heavenly god together form the Yoga which helps in balancing the mind and judging the difference between the wrong and the right. The organization offers relief to the disturbed or suffering human mind by offering yoga through some trained professional in this field.

Sikkim Development Foundation

Sikkim Development Foundation was set up in the year 1999 as a non profit seeking, non government, non political, and non sectarian organization. The organization has its headquarters at Gangtok. It is registered with the Department of Land Revenue of the Sikkim Government, Serial number 1057, Volume Number I on 4th of February 1999. The Development Foundation of Sikkim aims to bring a much better change to the lives of the Sikkim people. The organization wants to improve the living style of the citizens of Sikkim, especially that of the children, women, handicapped, minorities and other under privileged members of the Sikkim society. The Development Foundation in Sikkim is the initiative of the people of Sikkim for the people of Sikkim. The foundation was started by few citizens of this north eastern state who were concerned about various things in the state such as health, environment, unemployment, education, poverty, and other social and economic problems.

Objectives of Development Foundation at Sikkim

Some of the very significant objectives of Development Foundation of Sikkim are as follows:

- To create a peaceful climate, provide justice, equality, understanding, opportunity in the state.
- To be an active agent of change for an efficient administration in the state.
- To encourage such community development projects that promote sustainable economic conditions and environment in the field of health, education, rural development, micro-enterprise, etc.
- To prevent and conserve the rich biodiversity of the state and encourage ecotourism.

One of the successful projects of Sikkim Development Foundation is Kewzing Village Home Stay. This project was taken up by a local NGO of the area named Kewzing Tourism Development Committee who converted and developed a responsible tourism in the area which does not harm the bio-diversity or the common man of the land and has set examples for other projects taken up by the Sikkim Development Foundation.

Sikkim Economy

Sikkim economy depends upon various elements including agriculture, horticulture, tourism, mining, forestry, industries, etc. These are elements that generate revenue for the state treasury. The economic conditions of Sikkim reveal the level of development the state has witnessed in the recent times. The main element of economy in Sikkim is tourism. The tourism industry of this north eastern state is flourishing. The picturesque locales of Sikkim amidst the high rising peaks of Himalayas is a perfect location for one to spend a vacation. The state has got a very well developed tourism industry which takes good care of tourism in the state.

Another important element of the economy of Sikkim is the agriculture. Since most of the people reside in the rural areas, agriculture is the main occupation of the people. Cardamom, tea and coffee are the three main cash crops of Sikkim that fetch the maximum revenue to the state treasury. An amazing fact about the economy at Sikkim is that the elements here are interdependent. For example, the tourism industry is dependent on forestry and vice versa. Small scale industries are being developed in Sikkim. The only barrier in the development of industries in Sikkim is the scarcity of mineral resources. Sikkim does not have too many mineral resources except few deposits of zinc, copper, and lead. Other elements who contribute to the Sikkim economy are horticulture, fisheries, mining, forestry, industries, power and liquor. More and more stress is being laid on improvement in the horticulture, agriculture, livestock and fisheries.

Agriculture

Agriculture in Sikkim is the main occupation and the highest contributor to the state treasury every year. Agriculture at Sikkim is practiced in terraced fields which are created on steep hillsides. Most of the agricultural land lie in the rural areas of Sikkim. The main crop that earn revenue to the state is cardamom. It is the crop that generates maximum revenue in the sector of agriculture at Sikkim. Most of the land under agriculture around Sikkim is used for the growth of cardamom. Tea and coffee are the other two crops that generate revenue to the state economy. Another reason why agriculture of Sikkim is an important element of the economy of this north eastern state is the fact that most of the people here are employed in the agricultural

sector. The agriculture department of Sikkim has various achievements in its banner. To start off with, it achieved the highest net state domestic product from agriculture in the year 1988-89 which was Rs.1852 in Sikkim while the rest of the India average was Rs.1564.

The only barrier to the growth and improvisation of agriculture in Sikkim is the topographical location of the state. The state is located at a very high altitude which ruins the possibility of growing of crops. Another barrier is that a lot of labour is required to create the terraced land for cultivation in the sloping lands. The state government is taking various steps including providing high yielding variety of seeds, good quality fertilizers and pesticides, etc. so as to increase the revenue from agriculture in Sikkim.

Livestock

Livestock in Sikkim is a contributor in the state economy of Sikkim. The dependency on livestock has gone up because of the growing population and the small part of the total land in the state being used for agriculture. Livestock is now the second best alternative after agriculture to support the economy of the state as well as the low level families for whom it would not only generate revenue but also provide protein rich food such as egg, meat, milk, etc. The main livestock at Sikkim which are domesticated are goats, yaks, sheep, cattle and buffalo. Apart from these many other animal are reared in Sikkim. Among these, yaks, goats known as Chengra and sheep are found mainly in the high altitudes while the Siri cows, goats, poultry, pigs, Jersey, etc. are found in the low lying lands. According to the comparison of the Census of 1977 and 1992, an increase in the population of almost all the livestock have been noticed except buffaloes and horses.

In almost all the Five Year Plans, provisions have been made for improving the conditions of the livestock of Sikkim. As per the 8th Five Year Plan, many schemes were implemented regarding prevention of the livestock from nationally important diseases and how to increase their production capability. The need for showing so much concern towards livestock around Sikkim is the fact that agricultural activities in the hilly region is very low because of the small portion of the total land area falling under it. People need to have the secondary source of income and livestock in Sikkim is one such medium of generating revenue for the state economy.

Fisheries

Fisheries in Sikkim is another secondary source of income for the people of Sikkim. In other words, it is another element of the Sikkim economy that generates revenue for the state treasury. Sikkim is surrounded by beautiful fresh water lakes and rivers

which are full of various species of the marine animal. The clean environment of the region makes the marine life feasible.

The demand for the marine animal has gone so high, that a department was set up by the end of the Fifth Five Year Plan. It is known as the Fisheries Department of Sikkim. The department aims at preventing the current strength of the fisheries and using the available water resources in such an effective way so that the marine life does not get hampered and more fish can be produced so as to meet the demand for protein rich food. The main source of fisheries at Sikkim are the two rivers that flow across the state namely Teesta and Rangeet. These two rivers arise from the glaciers located in the North and West Sikkim. The fisheries are located near the banks of these two rivers. The water bodies support a wide range of species of this fauna including Mahaseer, Snow Trout, Cat fishes and Cyprinids being the most important ones. Different fisheries in Sikkim have been established on the basis of the fish collected. For example, there are Culture Fishery, Mahaseer Fishery, Trout Fishery, etc. The fisheries department of Sikkim has undertaken a research project on evaluating the fishes in the water bodies of Sikkim including the two main rivers and their tributaries.

Forestry

Forestry in Sikkim is a very important element of the state economy. Sikkim is blessed with a vast forest resource. The proof is the forest department of Sikkim which controls more than 80% of the total geographical area as forest area. The north eastern state has a large diversity of forests. For example, it has dry deciduous forests in the valleys and Alpine scrubs and grasslands at high elevations. In the past two decades, the forest department of Sikkim has been taking measures to improve the forestry at Sikkim by encouraging plantation and conservation of fuel woods and fodders so as to help in the economic upliftment of the rural people who depend upon these for their living. The first step taken towards development of forestry around Sikkim is through promotion of afforestation. The first major step towards afforestation in Sikkim was taken in the year 1997-98 by the forest department. During that year around one lakh plants were planted in each Assemble Constituency in collaboration with Village Level Implementation Committees. Most of the plantations were carried out in the degraded forest areas. Moreover, the villagers were financially helped by providing seedlings of fuel woods, fodders and timbers to be sown in their own lands.

The forestry in Sikkim has added revenue to the state economy through the timber that it supplies for various use. Moreover, the forestry of Sikkim also contributes indirectly to the state revenue and is more important because it adds to the beauty of the state thereby attracting more tourists and hence generating more revenue for the state.

Industry

In Sikkim, industry play a vital role in the economy of the State. Sikkim has seen a great boom in the industries in the recent years: Sikkim has now emerged as an Industrial Complex. Sikkim had long been an agro-based society, but situations changed thoroughly in the recent years. With the acceleration in the socio-political aspect of the society of Sikkim, the growth of industry in Sikkim has been tremendous. Some of the industries of Sikkim that deserve a special mention in this context are:

- Barbed wires
- Bakery products
- Beer
- Biscuits
- Electric cables
- Fruit jams and juices
- Industrial jewels
- Leather goods
- Washing soap
- Watches, etc.

It is noteworthy that the growth in the industry of Sikkim is a resultant effect of the continuous endeavour of the government of Sikkim. The Department of Industry in Sikkim is instrumental in bringing about a rapid growth in the industries of Sikkim. Due to the growth of population, the problems of unemployment is surging upwards: therefore, the Department of Industry has formulated certain policies in order to bring about a stability in the situation. An estimate of the achievements of the government in exulting the status of the Sikkim Industry are:

- Revival of the Food Preservation Factory under the Government of Sikkim
- Formation of:
 - SITCO
 - Sikkim Precision Industries Limited
 - Sikkim Temi Tea
 - Consultancy Services
 - Prime Minister Rojgar Yojana
 - Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom
 - SIDICO
 - Sikkim Jewels Limited
 - Speaker Manufacturing Unit
 - New District Handicrafts and Handloom Centre, etc.

- Gangtok Craft Fair-1999.
- Other Programs, viz.:
 - o Border Area Development Project
 - o Candle making trainings
 - o Entrepreneurship Motivation Program
 - o Study tour for the cultivators of tea
 - o Industrial Growth Centre
 - o Training of Rural Artisans
 - o Entrepreneurship Development Program, etc.

Besides, the government of Sikkim has also issued a number of licenses so that the industries of Sikkim can take another stride in its march towards globalization.

Minerals and Energy

In Sikkim, minerals and energy play a significant role in the economy of Sikkim. Minerals and energy, along with agriculture, industries, banking, tourism, etc. seem to be foundation on which the economy of Sikkim stands. Sikkim is endowed with a terrain that is rich in mineral resources. Therefore, we come across a number of minerals housed in the territory of Sikkim. Some of the important minerals found in Sikkim are:

- Coal
- Dolomite
- Quartzite
- Limestone
- Graphite, etc.

In Sikkim, the Department of Mines and Geology deals with the minerals and energy of Sikkim. These mineral resources of Sikkim are largely exploited by the Department of Mines and Geology in order to use the minerals and energy in Sikkim in the best possible way. Sikkim had long been an agro-based economy; but with the proliferation of industries in Sikkim, many sectors such as banking, tourism, mines and energy, etc. have also accelerated in Sikkim. It goes without mention that in Sikkim, minerals and energy are playing a pivotal role in exalting the Economy of the State.

Loans

Loan in Sikkim chiefly deals with the agricultural loans, car loans and personal loans. The loans in Sikkim caters to the needs of the agricultural labours, as well as the industrial labour in Sikkim. To begin with, it can be said that Sikkim houses

a number of banks within the territory. These banks, apart from exalting the economy of Sikkim, plays a major role in the socio-economic well being of the people within the territory. In this context, it can be said that the various banks of Sikkim helps the people of Sikkim through a network of branches throughout the territory. Loans forms the pivot of all the services provided by the banks in Sikkim.

The banks in Sikkim issues a series of loans that comprises agricultural loans and car loans. Sikkim, being a developing a state, is largely benefited by the loans extended by the various banks of the territory. In fact, the agricultural loans encompasses the whole gamut of agricultural activities, which include horticulture, plantation crops, crop production, farm mechanization, etc. In this respect, it is noteworthy that the government of Sikkim also extends a number of loans in Sikkim, which could help the Sikkimese to take another stride in their march towards progression.

Business in Sikkim

Beside agriculture and industry, business also forms an indelible part of the economy in Sikkim. Business in Sikkim revolves around handicrafts, jewellery, tea and big cardamom. In Sikkim, business is, basically, based on the handicrafts and handloom industry. The Old Market, New Market and the Lal Market of Sikkim seems to be the pivot of all the business in Sikkim: these markets forms the nexus of buying and selling in Sikkim.

These markets in Sikkim offers a wide range of stuff to the customers.

An estimate on the areas that constitute Business in Sikkim is as follows:

- Handicrafts – Handicrafts form the basis of business at Sikkim. Sikkim is known for its wide variety in handicrafts, souvenirs, and showpieces. Canvas wall hanging paintings and wood carvings also contribute largely to the business in Sikkim.
- Carpet and Rugs – Tibetan woollen carpets and rugs also seem to be an integral part of the business at Sikkim. The carpets and rugs are generally made from the sheep wool and largely attract the attention of the tourists.
- Jewellery – Like the other parts of India, business is also centred around jewellery. The intricately designed Dragons inlaid with precious stones is a favourite accessory of the tourists.
- Tea – Tea in Sikkim seems to be synonymous with the business in the territory. Sikkim is known for housing a large number of tea estates: the tea in Sikkim has a big demand in the world market. Therefore, it goes without mention that tea is an integral part of business in Sikkim.

Thus, as it is evident business in Sikkim largely supports the economy of the territory.

Banks in Sikkim

Banks in Sikkim have largely contributed in the development of the economy of the state. In fact, the Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Corporation Limited and Commercial Banks at Sikkim have played a vital role in founding the major industries of the territory.

An estimate of the Sikkim banks is as follows:

<i>Name of the Banks</i>	<i>Number of Branches</i>
Bank of Baroda	1
Bank of India	1
Canara Bank	1
Central Bank of India	10
Punjab National Bank	1
State Bank of India	26
UCO Bank	2
Union Bank of India	4
Vijaya Bank	1

Moreover, the Commercial Banks in Sikkim is supported by the Small Industries Development Bank of India and the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development. The Small Industries Development Bank of India is not only working towards refinancing the Commercial Banks of India, but the SIDBI is also helping the traders and the entrepreneurs in Sikkim by extending assistance through loans and other facilities.

Besides, the involvement of about 47 branches of the Commercial Banks of Sikkim has largely helped the proliferation of the economy of Sikkim. The growing presence of these Commercial Banks is contributing greatly to the socio-economic pattern of the society of Sikkim.

Sikkim Society

The Sikkim society is a curious blend of the people and culture residing in the territory of Sikkim. The society of Sikkim shows a distinct pattern with the presence of a number of communities in Sikkim: the society in Sikkim is, in fact, an extension of the communal harmony prevalent within the territory.

To begin with, it can be said that the Sikkim society is composed of a number of people belonging to different communities and races. Among the important communities residing in Sikkim are:

- *Bhutias* : The Bhutias are said to have migrated in Sikkim during the fifteenth century. In Sikkim, the Bhutia people are the people who belong to the Tibetan origin: thus, the language spoken by them contain the elements of the Tibetan language. The Bhutias in the northern part of Sikkim are known as Lachungpas and Lachenpas.
- *Nepalese* : The Nepalese form the majority of the society at Sikkim. The Nepalese are simple people, who dwell throughout the length and breadth of Sikkim. In Sikkim, the Nepalese are known to be good farmers and businessmen: it is the Nepalese who are accredited with introducing terrace farming in Sikkim.
- *Lepchas* : The Lepchas are said to be the autonomous tribe of Sikkim. Lepchas, who are known as Rongpas in Sikkim, are said to be the original inhabitants of Sikkim. In Sikkim, the Lepchas occupy the Dzongpo region situated in northern part of the territory.

Besides, the society at Sikkim seems to be incomplete without a reference to the fairs and festivals of the territory. An estimate of the fairs and festivals of Sikkim is as follows:

- Losar
- Saga Dawa
- Viswa Karma Puja
- Holi
- Sakewa
- Bumchu,
- Kayged Dance
- Tamu Lochar
- Namsoong
- Maghe Sakranti
- Nyempa Guzom
- Bhanu Jayanti, etc.

Furthermore, the society of Sikkim also contains a host of dance forms that form an indelible part of the folk culture of Sikkim. Some of the folk dances of Sikkim are:

- Tamang Selo
- Maruni

- Dau Ra Jane
- Sebru Naach
- Dhaan Naach
- Chyabrung
- Sorathi
- Chu Faat, etc.
- Thus, it is rightly said that the society in Sikkim is an exemplar of unity in diversity.

People

The people of Sikkim are dowered with the reputation of being extremely hospitable, polite and most importantly very much down to earth which makes them easily accessible to the guests, who quite frequently visit this mesmerizing landscape bequeathed with numerous marvels. The secret that lies behind the uncanny demure and sweet nature of the people in Sikkim and unbelievably courteous behaviour is the fact that the worm of consumerism has not yet penetrated into their households that still possesses that naive touch. As a matter of fact, the distinguishable varieties of various customs, religions, etc., merges with each other to give rise to a full-sized and contented family. The peoples across Sikkim can be bifurcated primarily into three colossal tribes namely, Nepalese, Bhutias and the Lepchas. Other tribes include the Gurung, Rai, Limbu, Magar and many more. These people thrive within the serene land of Sikkim with tons of love and affection intended for each other.

Amongst these three major tribes, it is the Nepalese who have a sort of crucial advantage over the people within Sikkim. One of the recompenses that have provided an vital edge to the Nepalese over the Lepchas, Bhutias and the other miscellaneous tribes inhabiting in the thumb-shaped domain of India is the fact that the former have chosen the schools to train and nurture their heirs so that they do not trail behind the individuals of other more developed states. Owing to this fact, the Nepalese are the principle tribes that have devoured most of the Government jobs that are considered to be very much coveted.

Tribes

- The tribes in Sikkim have really contributed a lot in the transformation of the state of Sikkim into one of those state in India that are recurrently visited by the tourists. The tribal folks of Sikkim are basically of the most demure and simple nature and they take a lot of pride in their glorious culture and beliefs. One main similitude that lies between the tribes across Sikkim and other hilly people is the fact that all of them are quite soft-spoken and simple.

The main reason that lies behind their extreme down to earth behaviour and life style is the fact that the worm of consumerism had not yet penetrated into their households and most importantly their lives.

The most dominant and famous tribes of Sikkim are mentioned below:-

Lepchas : It has been speculated by most that it was the Lepchas tribe that had first started inhabiting in the land of Sikkim. They main religions that are followed by them are Buddhism and Christianity. Prior to that they were ardent followers of the Mune religion.

Bhutias : They are recognized as one of the very few tribes within Sikkim that bear a rich Tibetan heritage. The early part of the 15th century saw the dawn of the era of the Bhutias. As they are bifurcated into two parts, known as Lachenpas and Lachungpas respectively with reference with the fraction of Sikkim they are inhabiting.

Nepalese : Although they were the last amongst the three tribes in chronological order to have entered into the domain of Sikkim. But they soon gained the recognition of being the most powerful tribe. According to the census, they also comprised approximately 80% of the entire population.

Nepalese

The Nepalese in Sikkim are very distinctly demarcated into quite a few sub-cultures who bear some very notable discrepancies with regards to appearances and the varied groups of customs that are followed by the two sects. The dawn of the Nepalese era has been recorded to be a little after the arrival of the Bhutias in the state of Sikkim. Some of the most important groups of the Nepalese in Sikkim are mentioned below:-

- Gurung
- Rai
- Magar
- Mewar
- Tamang
- Limta

However, there are many more such groups. The primary domains that are vanquished by the Nepalese of Sikkim extends from the eastern to the western brink. It is also known that the Nepalese across Sikkim have also spread themselves to the venues that are located in the northern part of the state. The chief religions that are followed by them are Hinduism and Buddhism. Most of the individuals who belong to the Nepalese tribe in Sikkim earn their livelihood through the business transactions that are carried out in the markets of Gangtok. As a matter of fact, there are many castes of tradesman who are considered to be of the lower caste. Some of them are

Kami, Sarki and Damai. Most of them have opted to work as a silversmith. The Nepalese have been always ahead of all the other tribes like the Bhutias and the Lepchas in virtually every aspect. For example the Nepalese have been cultivating maize as the climate prevailing there is perfectly suited for its growth. Again they have been able to devour majority of the Government jobs owing to the fact that they have been educated in schools. But the Bhutias and the Lepchas have always persisted with the training obtained from the monasteries.

Bhutias

The Bhutias in Sikkim have established their permanent abodes primarily across two fractions of Sikkim, namely Lachen and Lachung realms. Thus, the designations of the varied sects of the Bhutias in Sikkim also carries a substantial influence of their dwelling regions. That is, the ones who reside in the Lachen region are distinguished as the Lachens whereas the ones who inhabit the region of Lachung are designated as Lachungpas. The Bhutias have accepted an improvised form of the Tibetan language as their mother tongue. The Bhutias of Sikkim have evolved their own legal system and consider any offense, controversy or dispute under its light. This unique legal system is referred to as the 'Dzumsa' that means the rendezvous point of the common masses, if roughly translated from the regional dialect. This legal system regarded as 'Dzumsa' is skilfully controlled and all its proceedings are professionally executed by the headman who belongs to the village known as the 'Pipon'.

Previously, the Bhutias at Sikkim were under the jurisdiction of the Mondal System in which the head or the 'Mondal' was dowered with the authority to accumulate revenues from all the occupants of the state and convey it to the Government. The Mondal was also bestowed with the power to deal with and perhaps punish petty offenders. But with the advent of the 21st century, the Mondal system took a back seat as the Bhutias across Sikkim witnessed the dawn of the Panchayati system. But, the Government have made it extremely clear that they do not possess any kind of intentions to abolish the 'Dzumsa' system. On the contrary, they have furnished the 'Dzumsa system with the deemed status of a fully functional Panchayat. The aristocrats of Bhutia origin are referred to as the 'Kazis'. Their traditional attires are called 'Bakhu' and their houses are known as 'Khim'. Well known Bhutia personalities are Danny Denzongpa, who is a renowned actor in the Indian film industry and Baichung Bhutia who is the skipper of the Indian football team.

Lepcha

The state of Sikkim is indeed a very petite domain that has been endowed with such a shape that is an exact replica of the human thumb in the map. This majestic

state is home to denizens who can be aptly categorized into quite a few distinguishable sects which includes the Lepcha. The Lepcha have also been dowered with a few other designations as well which includes Rongpa, Rong and Rongke. As speculated from the data retrieved from the previous census, the population of the Lepcha in the state of Sikkim sums up to a figure of approximately 50,000. They are also considered to be the presently thriving aboriginal mass in the scantily populated state of Sikkim.

It has been vaguely conjectured by the anthropologists that the have had a tremendously complicated entry into the state of Sikkim. Prior to permanently settling down in the knoll infested fraction of Sikkim regarded as Kanchenjunga, the Lepcha at Sikkim had left their everlasting impression in venues like Thailand and Tibet.

As the Lepcha of Sikkim are classified to have hailed from the mesmerizing domain of the Himalayas their mother tongue had to be inevitably a modification of the Tibeto-Burman dialect. This unique language is also regarded as Lepcha. The script is however known as Rong that bears uncanny resemblance with the Tibetan script. A significant fraction of the Lepcha across Sikkim have embraced Tibetan Buddhism as their religion. Others have, however, opted for Christianity. Those who have accepted Buddhism also practice another language regarded as Mun simultaneously. The matrimonial ceremonies of the Lepcha carry a district touch that had originated from the Tibetans. The marriages also involves an age old Nyomchok Ceremony.

Limbu

The state of Sikkim houses occupants who belong to many different sects which includes the Limbu. The Limbu are also affectionately known as the Yakthumba which literally means an archer. The Limbu in Sikkim share their line of descent with that of the Rai and the Sunuwar as they all belong to Kiranti group which is also known as the Kirat. It is the Limbu who bear an absolutely uncanny resemblance with the Mongolians due to their broad temple and elongated lower lips. Owing to this distinct quality, they also cherish the designation of being the 'Mongolians'.

The Limbu of Sikkim possess an integral bond with the Lepchas, who are considered to be another major group of people residing peacefully in the state of Sikkim. This fact can be made evident as the individuals regarded as the Limbu prefer to establish matrimonial relations with the Lepchas on most of the occasions. As a matter of fact, the Limbu, in general, are in favour of inter cast marriages. Another tribe that also shares a good bond with the Limbu are the Rai or Khambas. The Limbu across Sikkim are further bifurcated into a pair of sects which includes the Lhasa gotra who had descended from the domain of Lhasa. Whereas, their counterpart have hailed from the religious hub in India known as Benares and regarded as Kashi gotra.

The high priests who perform all their major and minor ceremonies are known as the 'Phedambas'. The grand bulk of these ceremonies includes the various religious rituals and the omens and future predictions. Majority of the marriages of the Limbu at Sikkim are conducted without taking any kind of permission from the parents of both the bride and the bridegroom. The principle dialect that is specific for the Limbus is the Limbu Kura.

Rai

The individuals belonging to the tribe regarded as Rai, dwelling in Sikkim bear a peculiar similitude with the Limbus, which represent another sect of people in the state of Sikkim. Another designation of 'Khambas' has also been attributed to the Rai people of Sikkim. The Rai in Sikkim have embraced the Hindu religion and are ardent followers of all the various rituals and customs performed by the Hindus in other parts of India. Another bizarre aspect confined to the Rai of Sikkim is the way they summon the males of their family. They use the designation of 'home' for them. The peculiarity does not end here, the males of the family also perform all sorts of rituals as they are dowered with all the powers that are usually possessed by the high priests.

Since, the worm of superstition is still embedded deep inside their minds in a tiny nook, the Rai across Sikkim make it a point to employ Bijuwas in order to drive away the evil spirits who, according to them, cause plenty of harm. Sometimes, if they are not contended with Bijuwas, Phedangba and even at some instances Jhankri are performed to make them completely safe from the cursed shadow of the depraved spirits.

However, in terms of marriage, the Rai within Sikkim have a lot of likeness with the bridal ceremony, chiefly performed by the individuals of the Kirati tribe. The primary means of earning a livelihood followed by the Rai is farming. They have developed their own special dialect and are dowered with an entire caboodle of artistic talents.

Magar

Magar is the name dowered to another major tribe in the state of Sikkim situated in the northeastern fringe of India. The members of the Magar tribe are fervent perusers of the Hindu religion and sincerely perform and follow all its tough customs and rituals. The people belonging to the Magar tribe in Sikkim are indeed very polite and hospitable people and they always have the urge to help others in the time of need. There is a dialect in Sikkim which is purely confined to the individuals of the tribe only. This unique lingo is bestowed with the designation of Magar-Kura and is conjectured to have been derived from the Tibeto-Burmese group of people.

The Magar of Sikkim can be bifurcated into as many as seven categories which are mentioned below:-

- Burakhoti
- Roka
- Ale
- Pun
- Thapa
- Rana
- Gharti

Amongst all these divisions, the people who are included in the division of the Thapas are truly very fortunate, as the Thapas cherish a reputation of being the largest of all the divisions. In spite of all these social demarcations, there is no substantial difference between the people belonging to the different sects. They are bequeathed with the same sort of rights and facilities. The Magar across Sikkim also encourage inter cast marriages as they do not believe in any sort of cast barriers. They only believe in the fact that there should be an abstract connection between the hearts of the bride and the bridegroom. This is the sole criteria that is considered for their bridal ceremonies.

Gurang

The individuals belonging to the Gurang tribe are perhaps the most hard-working and down to earth people residing in Sikkim. The primary reason that lies behind the birth of this belief is the fact that they invest a sumptuous fraction of their time in cultivation, tilling the ground, sowing crops and various other miscellaneous tasks that can be linked with agriculture. The members of the tribe named as Gurang in the state of Sikkim are speculated to share a common line of descent with that of the robust Mongolians. The main reason that led to this conclusion is the fact that their facial features are strikingly similar and their life-style also reminds of the glorious Mongolians.

The people who are included in the Gurang tribe in Sikkim practice Hinduism with respect and devotion. But the entire scenario was totally different a few decades ago as the Llamas were bestowed with all the responsibilities for executing all types of religious sermons ahead of the Brahmins which was indeed very queer. But with the advancement of time, the Gurang of Sikkim also include the Brahmins in their religious ceremonies. The Gurang within Sikkim are also bifurcated into two divisions which are the Char jat and the Sora Jat. There was a hint of controversy regarding this division but with the arrival of modern times this demarcation was later dissolved

in order to avoid any sort of problems between the people. But as far as marriages are concerned, inter group weddings are also very common. The lingo that is confined only to the individuals of the Gurang across Sikkim is known as Gurung Kura.

Tamangs

Tamangs form an integral part of the tribal population of Sikkim. In Sikkim, Tamangs occupy an important position among the tribes residing in the territory of Sikkim. The Tamangs of Sikkim claim to belong to four different families. One group of the Tamangs in Sikkim opine that they belong to the Bal family. But the other group of the Tamangs at Sikkim claim to hail from Yonjon, Moktan and Ghising families. The Bal, Ghising, Yonjon and the Moktan families seems to bear the progenitors of the Tamangs of Sikkim.

Further, the Tamangs in Sikkim are divided into two main groups, *viz.* the Bara Tamang and the Atharajat. These two groups of the Tamangs reflect the social hierarchy in the Tamang society. The Bara Tamang belong to the higher strata of the society among the Tamangs at Sikkim. The Atharajat in Sikkim rank second in social hierarchy: the Bara Tamangs seems to be socially superior to the Atharajat in the social strata of the Tamangs. Moreover, it can be said that the Tamangs are in many ways similar to the Gurangs. The cultures and customs of the Tamangs reflect the ways of the Gurang community of Sikkim. The language spoken by the Tamangs bears a close affinity with the language of the Gurangs. In Sikkim, Tamangs generally belong to the Buddhist cult, that it is to say, the Tamangs are Buddhists: the Tamangs follow Lamaist Buddhism.

Gurkhas

In Sikkim, Gurkhas occupy a considerable part of the population. Among the Gurkhas living in Sikkim, the Brahmins are said to occupy the highest social position.

Talking about the Gurkhas, it can be said that the Gurkhas of Sikkim are chiefly Hindus. It is noteworthy that the Gurkhas of Sikkim are very orthodox people, who are staunch supporters of Hinduism in Sikkim. Therefore, in spite of the influence of Buddhism in Sikkim, the Gurkhas in Sikkim worship Hindu Gods and Goddesses.

It is noteworthy that in Sikkim, Gurkhas are known for their rigid matrimonial rules. The Gurkhas at Sikkim consider themselves as socially superior: as the Gurkhas of Sikkim are mainly Brahmins they are said to belong to an upper strata of the society in Sikkim. As a result, the Gurkhas observe matrimonial rules. It is said that there is a prohibition among the Gurkhas to marry outside their community: marrying a lower caste is, in fact, a taboo in the Gurkha society of Sikkim.

But, in this changing world, the rigidity and social prejudice of the Gurkhas are disappearing. Instances of a Gurkha marrying a non-Brahmin or non-Gurkha are not uncommon. With the Gurkhas taking to different professions other than priesthood, social assimilation has become easier in Sikkim, especially among the Gurkha clan.

Chettris

In Sikkim, Chettris occupy the second strata of the society. The Chettris are socially superior people, who have their own distinct cultural pattern. The society of Sikkim shows a hierarchical structure: the prevalence of the different groups among the tribes of Sikkim is an example of hierarchy in the social strata of Sikkim. The Chettris of Sikkim are among the higher classes of Sikkim. In Sikkim, Chettris are said to wear a sacred thread around their neck: wearing the sacred around their neck is a part of the Brahmanical prejudices of the Chettris. It is noteworthy that although inter-marriage is permissible among the Chettris of Sikkim; yet there are certain reservations. The Chettris at Sikkim are allowed to marry only among their own class: inter-caste marriage is not permissible among the Chettris. The men among the Chettris are allowed to marry more than one wife. The wife wedded through formal ceremony is known as 'Behaite', and wife had through other ways are called 'Lihaites'. But, with the growth of civilization, this practice is on its wane. Moreover, divorce is permissible among the Chettris in Sikkim. There is no discrimination as far as the divorce laws are concerned. In fact, both man and his wife can ask for a divorce; but, it is the head of the village or the elders of the village, who decide about the case.

Demographics

Sikkim demographics implies the population of the State which is 406,457. The demographics of Sikkim is an account of the total number of people residing in Sikkim. Sikkim is among the least populated states of the Indian Union. The demographics in Sikkim boasts of having about 214,723 males and about 188,889 females. The density of population in Sikkim is about 76 persons per square kilometre. Moreover, statistics prove that the urban population in Sikkim is about 11% of the total population in Sikkim. In Sikkim, demographics is mostly composed of the people from different races and ethnic groups. Among the important ethnic groups of Sikkim that deserve a special mention in the demographics of Sikkim are:

- Chettris
- Limbu
- Rai
- Gurang
- Tamangs

- Thakurs
- Lepchas
- Nepali
- Bhutias, etc.

These ethnic groups of Sikkim have a distinct culture and socio-economic pattern; in fact, it is the socio-economic background that largely determines the plight of these ethnic groups in Sikkim. It is interesting to note that the demographics at Sikkim owes largely to the Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burmese and Tibeto-Mongoloid races. Moreover, people belonging to Hinduism and Buddhism are predominant in Sikkim. We also come across a small Christian population within Sikkim: these Christians are mostly Lepchas who have converted into Christianity during the British period in India.

Language

The enigmatic land of Sikkim is home to numerous equally mysterious tribes that have transformed the state into a heavenly delectable locale. These tribes have also evolved an unique language of Sikkim which is spoken by most of the people residing in this state. Amongst all the languages in Sikkim, the most revered and propitious lingo is Nepalese. It is absolutely needless to mention that the dialect of Nepalese have been formulated by the illustrious Nepalese residing in the thumb-shaped state of Sikkim. There is, however, a reason behind this dominance of Nepalese language of Sikkim over other languages. It is due to the fact that the Nepalese people are way too advanced and sophisticated as compared to that of the other tribes that still believe in age-old traditions like educating their young ones in monasteries and following religious cults. The other languages includes touches of English and Hindi as there are plenty of Marwaris and Bengalis who are quite proficient in these lingo. These two languages are regarded as the most aristocratic dialects in the state after Nepalese.

Amongst the other recurrently spoken languages across Sikkim are Bhutia, Lepcha, Sherpa, Tamang, Rai, Gurung, Groma, Yakha and many more.

One similitude that lies in all these languages within Sikkim is the fact that they are all spoken by the tribes. As the tribes comprise of a major portion of the population of Sikkim, these languages at Sikkim are quite frequently heard. Other languages include Majhwar, Nepal Bhasa, Thulung, Tibetan and many more.

Religion

Buddhism is the predominant religion in Sikkim. Among the other religions of Sikkim are Hinduism, Christianity, Sikhism and Islam. Talking about the religion of Sikkim, it can be said that in Sikkim, religion seems to lie at the root of all socio-

cultural activities. Every aspect of the society in Sikkim has a strong bearing upon religion.

Moreover, Buddhism is the most predominant religion at Sikkim. The Bhutia and the Tibetans at Sikkim generally follow the Buddhist cult. The Sikkimese follow the Tibetan Buddhism, which is divided into Red and Yellow Sects. The Red Sect Buddhism in Sikkim includes the Nyingma, Sakya and Kargya lineages; whereas the Yellow Sect in Sikkim implies Gelugpa lineage.

These sects comprise an integral part of religion in Sikkim and are marked by different religious practices and the rituals performed by them. Hinduism is another predominating religion at Sikkim. In Sikkim, we find the Nepali Hindu cult, which calls for a lot of festivities and rituals. The Nepali Hinduism is an orthodox cult of Hinduism. As a result, the society in Sikkim shows a strong Hindu flavour: the predominance of caste system is one of the chief attributes of Hinduism.

Beside Buddhism and Hinduism, we also come across a number of other religions in Sikkim. Among the other religion in Sikkim are:

- Islam
- Sikhism and
- Christianity.

All the religion clubbed together constitute the society of Sikkim.

Culture

Culture in Sikkim boasts a rich cultural heritage housed within the territory. In Sikkim, culture is a homogeneous blend of the different elements from the different ethnic groups within the territory.

To begin with, it can be said that Sikkim houses a wide range of ethnic groups or races, as we call it, within the territory. In fact, these ethnic groups play an important role in the socio-cultural pattern of Sikkim. Among the important races that have left an indelible mark in the culture at Sikkim are:

- Bhutias
- Chattris
- Gurkhas
- Gruangs
- Lepchas
- Magars
- Nepalis

- Newars
- Rais
- Tamangs
- Thakurs, etc.

It can be said that the culture of Sikkim largely owe to these races because each of the races at Sikkim has a distinct way of sustenance, religious practices and living pattern: Sikkim presents a smooth blend of all these cultures in one territory.

A study on the culture of Sikkim seems to be incomplete without a reference to the different fairs and festivals of Sikkim. Some of the distinct fairs and festivals that deserve a special mention in this context are:

- Lossoong,
- Kanchendzunga, etc.

In Sikkim, dance and crafts also form an integral part of the culture of the territory. Among the important dance of Sikkim are:

- Dances:
 - o Kali Topi Dance
 - o Khang-chen-dzod-nga Dance
 - o Kankal Dance
 - o Bara Singha Dance, etc.
- Crafts:
 - o Hand woven woollen carpets
 - o Choktse
 - o Applique work
 - o Sikkimese thankas, etc.

This was a brief estimate of the rich culture in Sikkim: a rich blend of the various ethnic groups.

Sikkim Matrimony

Matrimony in Sikkim differs with every ethnic group residing in Sikkim. Sikkim houses a wide range of ethnic groups within the territory; the matrimonial ritual of each of the races in Sikkim shows a distinct cultural pattern.

Talking about Sikkim matrimony, it can be said that matrimony of Sikkim restricts the Sikkimese to marry outside their community. Most of the races in Sikkim maintains restrictions about matrimony: it is noteworthy that marriage outside the community is a social taboo and calls for various social hassles.

About Sikkim Matrimony

An estimate of the matrimony at Sikkim according to the different ethnic groups in Sikkim is as follows:

- **Bhutias** : Bhutias possesses a patriarchal society, where the laws of the land largely support the menfolks. Talking about matrimony in Sikkim among the Bhutia clan, it can be said that the inter-marriage between the Bhutias and Lepchas is permissible in Sikkim. Moreover, the matrimonial relation between the Lepcha chiefs and the Tibetan nobles has led to the rise of a new class namely the Kazis.
- **Lepchas** : Marriage among the Lepchas are generally initiated by the head of the family. Lepchas are socially liberal people; therefore, they do not have any reservations regarding matrimony in Sikkim.
- **Limbu** : The Limbus belong to the Kirati tribe. There is no restrictions among the Limbus regarding marriage; Limbus are known to have matrimonial relations with the other sects of Kirati tribe, as well as with the Rais and Khambas.
- **Gurkhas** : Gurkhas have strict rules about marriages in Sikkim. The Gurkhas are socially superior; therefore, they are not allowed to marry outside their community. Marrying outside the Gurkha community is considered a taboo among the Gurkhas.
- **Chettris** : Chettris, like the Gurkhas, also belong to the higher strata of the society. Although, inter-marriage is allowed among the Chettris; yet, marriage outside their social class is prohibited.

Beside these ethnic groups, we also come across other races that show a distinct matrimonial pattern. Among those races of Sikkim are:

- Newar
- Tamang
- Nepali
- Thakurs
- Rai
- Magar, etc.

Sikkim Cuisine

The culture of Sikkim is diversified due to the co-existence of different ethnic groups such as Bhutias, Lepchas and Nepalese. Each of them have their traditional recipes, and they love to experiment in their kitchen. Thus Sikkim cuisine offers numerous traditional and modern foods.

The range and variety of the food items of Sikkim is very astonishing. The Sikkimese are mainly rice eaters and are fond of taking delicious spicy food cooked with lots of oil. Dairy products and fermented food items are also a part of normal diet for the Sikkimese. Due to the climatic condition of Sikkim alcoholic drinks are adored by and large by men and women. Among non vegetable items, beef is very popular in Sikkim. The cuisine in Sikkim feature very many delicious foods made of beef and other meats. The spicy colourful tasty dishes appear very appealing to the food lovers.

Recipes of Sikkim

There is a popular proverb that the way to someone's heart goes through his stomach, which is believed by the people of Sikkim at large. The Sikkimese hospitality, along with the different recipes of Sikkim offer numerous delicious food items, which show an influence of the Nepalese, Bhutanese, Tibetan and Indian culture.

Profile of Sikkim Recipe

The traditional Sikkim cuisine has a tendency to make foods out of fermented vegetables. The Sikkimese preserve many vegetables and other food items to make delicious foods out of these fermented vegetables. Recipes in Sikkim include a variety of pickles, soups and many local drinks. Dairy products are also very popular in Sikkim but is largely dependent on the availability of the products in different segments of this state. Rice is the main food for the people of Sikkim, though for some people maize is a regular food item. Peasants of Sikkim love to take delicious spicy non vegetarian food items like beef, fish, pork etc. The Sikkimese cuisine makes strong use of beef. An usual Sikkim thali normally contains dals, wild flowers, mushrooms, bamboo shoots, fresh vegetables etc.

Popular Sikkim Recipe

Here is a list of Sikkim recipes:

- Momo
- Tomato Achar
- Thukpa /Gya-Thuk
- Kinema Curry
- Gundruk and Sinki Soup
- Chhurpi Soup
- Sel Roti
- Pakku
- Mesu Pickle

Recipes from Sikkim have changed their characters along with the passage of time and with the growing impacts from other cultures. Of late it has become a custom to prepare many different types of recipes in the various important occasions.

Momo

Momo in Sikkim is a popular food item, which enjoys huge popularity all across the world. Food is an integral part of any culture which amply reflects the heritage of that culture. Momo in Sikkim employs a very simple recipe with very basic ingredients. Preparation of momo involves a simple procedure involving very basic materials that are available at the immediate disposal of the inhabitants of Sikkim. A brief recipe of the preparation of momo is provided below.

Momo Recipe includes the following steps:

Ingredients for momo:

- Meat minces: 750 gm.
- Flour: 4 cups
- Finely chopped 2 big onions
- Salt according to taste

Preparation of momo:

The recipe of momo is very easy and anybody can try it at home. Take two cup of water and mix it well with the wheat flour finally to make a tight paste. Roll the paste continuously till the mixture becomes thin. After that cut it by the edge of a tea cup into several circles. Now you need to take the doughs in your left hand to give it a flat shape. Fill the middle of each flat with a table spoon of mixture. You may prepare the mixture with beef, any cooked vegetable item will also do good to it.

Now take the flat edges together and press them so that they stick. For making this special momo of Sikkim a specially made steamer called moktu is needed. Fill the bottom of this pan with lots of water and now put all the raw momos in this steamer. And put it on the oven to boil for 20 to 25 minutes. Now take your momos out of the moktu and then serve it hot. Momos taste best with achar, along with a bowl of meat or vegetable soups. Not only in Sikkim the delicious Sikkim cuisine momo has earned popularity in the Indian food market also.

Tomato Achar

Tomato achar is a popular Sikkim cuisine, which attracts food lovers for its lucrative colour and spicy taste. Achar is a popular food item of India, and are mostly made in summer as the ingredients needed for preparing achar are largely the

seasonal fruits and other vegetables which are found during the summer season. Achar or pickles are an integral part of Indian cuisine which goes well with any normal or special meal. Achars give a delicious and refreshing taste which adds flavour to a meal. Achar making is an integral part of the art of cooking when it comes to preparing Indian delicacies. Almost every region of India boasts of its own form of achar making.

Tomato achar is not only a favourite food of Sikkim, but is popular among the rice eating population of the entire eastern India. However, tomato achar from Sikkim has a distinct taste and flavour. It is sweet as well as spicy, and thus goes well with any dish. It is a popular food item taken with every meal and mostly follows all the occasional meals. The people of Sikkim are very fond of this pickle which does not need lots of effort to cook. The recipe of tomato achar is very easy and needs only a couple of minutes to cook. Take two big tomatoes and boil them for a few minutes. After boiling, crush the tomatoes to make a half paste of it. Now take green chillies and mix it with the crushed tomato. For better mixture, pour the whole paste into a grinder. Now add salt according to your taste with the mixed thick paste of tomato.

Ingredients Needed

- 4-5 green chillies
- 2 big tomato
- Salt (according to taste)

Tomato achar of Sikkim can be taken with momo, chapati or with rice. The taste of tomato achar goes well during the summer season as it gives a delicious taste which helps to beat the heat of summer.

Thukpa

The people of Sikkim always believe that it is the best way to entertain any person is to provide him with delicious food items, which also help to earn appreciations in return. Among the most favourite dishes of is one of the most popular ones.

Thukpa of Sikkim, popularly known as Gya Thuk, is fundamentally a special kind of hot soup prepared with noodles which is cooked with meat or vegetables. The recipe of thukpa is so easy that anybody can try it at home.

Preparation of Thukpa

Ingredients needed to prepare thukpa of Sikkim:

- 300 gm. egg noodles
- 250 gm. meat
- Chopped onion

- Sliced green chilly
- Chopped onion leaves
- Chopped garlic
- Salt
- 3 liters of Beef, mutton or pork bone soup

The guidelines for preparing Sikkim thukpa are as follows:

- First fry the sliced onions, garlic and green chillies together, and then add salt and drop the chopped meat into it. Fry it up to 10 minutes and then keep the prepared item aside.
- Boil water on the woven and then drop noodles into the water to get boiled for maximum of two minutes.
- After that drain the noodles from the hot water and then dip them into cold water to save them from sticking. Now again drain the noodles from the cold water and keep then keep them in a bowl.
- Now mix the already prepared meat item with the noodles and pour the hot soup into the bowl.
- To give your dish a delicious taste and attractive look sprinkle the chopped onion leaves over the bowl.
- Thukpa is always preferred to serve hot.

Sikkim cuisine Thukpa is very easy to make and are always available in the restaurants of Sikkim.

Kinema Curry

The north eastern state Sikkim has a distinct kitchen of its own. The Sikkim cuisine uses lots of fermented vegetables and food items to make highly nutritious dishes out of them. Among all Sikkim cuisine, kinema curry stands out as a fermented nutritious food, which is very tasty and delicious. Kinema is a kind of a fermented soybean which when prepared becomes a delicious and nutritious food. Kinema curry provides a high diet of protein and thus serves as a replacement of meat and other protein food items. The recipe of kinema curry is provided below. It is a simple fare with ingredients that are easily available at Sikkim.

Recipe of Kinema Curry

Ingredients needed for preparing kinema curry are :

- Fermented kinema 250 gm
- Chopped onion

- Green chillies
- Sliced tomatoes
- tea spoon salt and
- table spoon turmeric powder

Put a pan on the fire and pour oil in it. Once the oil becomes hot, then dump all the chopped onions into the pan and fry it until it becomes softer. Add sliced tomatoes to the onion and fry them together. Add turmeric powder to give it a lucrative colour and fry up to 2 minutes. Once the tomatoes get fried, mix the fried kinema with it and add chopped green chillies. Add salt according to the taste and then again fry for 2 to 3 minutes. Pour a little water into the pan and cook it for 5 to 7 minutes. Kinema curry of Sikkim is taken with rice, although chapatis also go well with this dish. Kinema along with other green vegetables can also be cooked to make side dishes.

Gundruk and Sinki Soup

The food items that are mainly taken by the Sikkim people reflect the diversified culture of this state. The cuisine of Sikkim is a direct influence of the climatic condition of this land, which has influenced them to acquire the habit of taking soups to warm up their body. Thus we see the popularity of gundruk and sinki soup at Sikkim.

The gundruk and sinki soup of Sikkim is a popular soup, which is largely taken by the peasants of this land. The Sikkim people are more inclined towards consuming spicy food and milk made items. Local alcohol and a wide variety of soups are hot favourite items of this state. All soups of Sikkim have high nutritious value, which not only helps to warm up the body, but also serve as accompaniment to many delightful spicy items.

Recipe of Gundruk and Sinki Soup

Ingredients needed for cooking gundruk and sinki soup are:

- 50 gm.Sinki/Gundruk
- Chopped onion one
- Chopped tomato one
- Red dry chilly
- Salt one tea spoon
- Turmeric powder ½ spoon

The preparation of the gundruk and sinki soup in Sikkim is very easy. First of all, soak the sinki and gundruk into water for at least 10 minutes. heat the oil in

a pan on an oven in the mean time, and then fry chopped onions, chillies and sliced tomatoes in that oil. Fry them until they become brown.

Now again take the bowl of gundruk and sinki, and drain the water. Now dump these vegetables into the frying pan and add turmeric powder and salt with it. Once the whole matter gets fried, pour two cups of water in it and leave it to boil for ten minutes. The gundruk and sinki Soup is best had piping hot with hot rice.

Chhurpi Soup

It is the food of a culture or a community, which helps to identify that community. Every religion of India has its own food habits, which is unique in their own style. The north eastern state of Sikkim is popular for its soups, which includes the chhurpi soup. The chhurpi soup of Sikkim is a traditional soup of Sikkim which is largely served in many occasions. This hot soup help as a great help during the winter days, as it helps to reduce the chilly cold of the winter days. A prominent item in Sikkim cuisine, chhurpi soup is made of traditional cheese made in this state. The recipe of the chhurpi soup in Sikkim is provided below.

Recipe of Chhurpi Soup

Ingredients needed for making the recipe of chhurpi soup:

- Tomato sliced 1/2 cup
- Chopped onion ½ cup
- Sliced green chillies 3-4
- Ginger 1 table spoon
- Turmeric powder 1/4 table spoon
- Panch phoran ½ table spoon
- Salt 1 table spoon

Take a frying pan and pour oil in it and keep it over an oven. Once the oil becomes hot, fry the panch phoran and onion together in a low heat. Fry them until they become brown. After that add the sliced gingers with this mixture. After a while drop the sliced tomatoes and chillies into the pan and add the cheese. Do not forget to add salt. Fry the whole matter until it becomes completely brown. Your delicious soup is prepared, now put off the pan from the heat. You can garnish this soup with coriander leaves. Chhurpi soup is desired to serve hot with rice.

Sel Roti

Though the traditional food of India is largely rice and chapati or roti but the difference could be seen in their preparation method and taste, even the cooking style

sometimes enhance the nutritious values also, for example the sel roti of Sikkim which is made of fermented rice.

Something very interesting about the dietary culture of Sikkim is the use of fermented food items in their daily meals. Rice which is a staple food of Sikkim forms a major source for high nutritious values which contains starch, protein, fat and other things.

However fermented rice provides better nutrition and is too good for health. The Sel roti of Sikkim is thus full of nutritious values which gives lots of energy and is a great cuisine of Sikkim.

Sikkim cuisine sel roti needs the following ingredients for its preparation:

- Rice 1 kg.
- Wheat flour 250 gm.
- Milk 500 ml.
- Sugar 200 gm.
- Ghee 100 gm.

Sel roti teams best with spicy foods like mutton curry and achar (pickle) that too specially with shimi ko achar which is again a popular pickle of Sikkim.

For preparing Sikkim recipe sel roti, one has to wash the rice with plenty of water and then has to soak it for a night. On the next day milk along with two cups of water have to mix with the rice flour along with butter or ghee and sugar. Leave it for 4 hours if it is summer and in case it is winter then the mixture has to be left for a whole day for better fermentation. After fermentation make rings out the tight mixture and drop them into hot oil until they get completely brown.

Sel roti is so popular in Sikkim that most of the restaurants have included this item as a major recipe of their cuisine.

Pakku

India is such a place where under one roof one can find a variety of dishes. Likewise in Sikkim also one can find numerous delicious food items which talk about the culture of this state. One such traditional food of Sikkim is Pakku which is basically a meat item.

The cuisine of Sikkim is mostly dominated with traditional flavour. Pakku is a traditional delicious dish of Sikkim which is normally taken with rice. Even it also goes fine with sel roti which is a fermented rice product of Sikkim. Pakku of Sikkim is prepared with marinated mutton along with cumin seeds, chopped onion, pasted ginger, dry coriander, salt and turmeric powder.

Ingredients need for preparing the Sikkim cuisine Pakku:

- 1 kg. Mutton (cut them into small pieces)
- Cumin seeds 2 tea spoon
- Dry coriander 2 tea spoon
- Cloves 6 pcs
- Garlic 8 flakes
- 1 finely chopped onion
- Ginger paste 1 table spoon
- 1/2 inch stick cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon turmeric powder
- 6 pcs small cardamom
- Hing 1 pinch
- 2 teaspoon salt

The recipe of Pakku is very easy. Once you get all the ingredients in your hand then make a paste with them and mix the paste with the mutton to marinate it well. Be careful while adding salt and do not forget to add turmeric powder as it will allow to give a beautiful colour to the dish. Now keep the mixture aside for 20 minutes.

After that put the pan on an oven and pour oil in it. Once the oil gets hot, dump the mixture into the pan and cook it for at least 1 hour. Minimize the heat while cooking. The Pakku is usually taken as a hot dish and is served in many occasions.

Mesu Pickle

The Sikkimese cuisine offers multitude of delicious food items along with a wide range of homemade pickles which give yummy taste to any dish. The Sikkimese pickles includes the Mesu pickle which is a less common name in the pickle family of India.

The Mesu Pickle is a special achar of Sikkim which is made with fermented bamboo in a very scientific and hygienic process. Though this pickle belong to a rare family of Indian pickles but the taste of it is great and attracts the food lovers to relish it with a grand meal.

Ingredients Needed for the Recipe of Mesu Pickle

250 gm Mesu and 4 cloves of crushed garlic. 3 table spoon red chilly powder along with very less amount of mustered oil is necessary. Salt is needed to add taste into the pickle.

Preparation of Mesu Pickle

Mix the crushed garlic and chilly powder well with the Mesu and pour mustered oil in it. Add salt according to your taste and the pickle becomes ready. Do not keep it in a closed jar.

Mesu pickle is made of very simple items and takes less time than the preparation of any other pickles of Sikkim. Only what one has to do is to mix all the ingredients in a perfect proportion and the achar becomes ready to eat. This special pickle of Sikkim goes well with rice and chapati.

Mesu pickle of Sikkim is completely a regional item which is found in the Sikkim regional markets only.