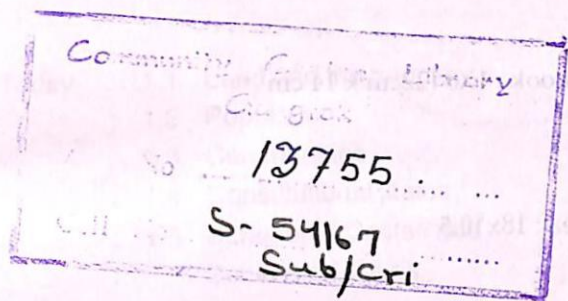


A woman with long black hair, wearing a red sari, is depicted with her arms raised and wrists bound by thick black chains. She is surrounded by intense, stylized flames in shades of orange and yellow. The background is black, and the entire scene is framed by a torn paper effect. In the upper right, there is faint, handwritten text: 'S-44167' and 'Subj...'.

S-44167
Subj...

Cries Unheard!

Buddha. M. Subba.
J. R. Subba



CRIES UNHEARD



*Smt. Buddha M. Subba
and
Shri J.R. Subba*

CONTENTS



- I. Sikkim Today : 1.1 Land and the people
 - : 1.2 Population
 - : 1.3 Communities
 - : 1.4 Constitutional status
 - : 1.5 Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
 - : 1.6 Language
 - : 1.7 Religion
 - : 1.8 Resource mobilisation
 - : 1.9 Economic Development

- II. Cries Unheard : 2.1 Sex ratio
 - : 2.2 Fertility
 - : 2.3 Education
 - : 2.4 Literacy
 - : 2.5 Health and Family Welfare
 - : 2.6 Social Welfare
 - : 2.7 Economic Status
 - : 2.8 History of Women's Status
 - : 2.9 Role of Judiciary on Women's Status
 - : 2.10 Women's legal status in Sikkim

- III. Technological needs of women in Sikkim Hills

- IV. Training needs of women in Sikkim Hills

- V. Role of Women on Economic Development

- VI. Role of Five Year Plans on Women's Status



PREFACE

*I*ndian constitution, the supreme document, contains freedom, liberty, equality, fraternity and a host of welfare provisions, including that of women. In spite of these provisions, we are in a society where women folk are treated as slaves and they remain the victims of injustice. We cannot achieve social change or social transformation without social emancipation of women. The inequality of women a multidimensional economic, social and legal-problem must be fought militantly from all sides. Any right is due only for those who demand awakingly aware and not for the ones sleeping on their rights. It is, therefore, awareness and positive actions are necessary pre-conditions for human equality between man and woman.

This book aims at making available of the present status of women, understanding the various land and woman resources, and their developmental strategies for economic and social emancipation of women in the Sikkim Hills.

This book is being published as a part of Association's SOCIAL EDUCATION and GENERAL AWARENESS OF WOMEN of Sikkim Hills.

We gratefully acknowledge the support and cooperation provided to us by various Government officials in the completion of this book.

We would like to dedicate this book to those men and women who have fought militantly for raising the status of women in this country.

Lastly, we request the fellow readers to oblige us with their valuable suggestions and judicious comments to enable us to bring about improvements in future editions.

Smt. Buddha M. Subba
President
Akhil Sikkim Kirat
Limbu Chumlung Association

1.1 LAND AND THE PEOPLE :

Sikkim, the smallest state of India lies in the Eastern Himalayas between 27° and 28° N latitude and 88° and 89° E longitude. To its North lies the vast stretches of Tibetan Plateau, to the West, the Kingdom of Nepal; to the East, the Kingdom of Bhutan and the Chumbi Valley of Tibet, and to the South Darjeeling of West Bengal.

THE LAND :

The mountaneous terrain of Sikkim consists of a tangled series of interlacing ridges, rising Range after ranges, from the South to the foot of the wall of high peaks which mark the abode of snow in the North Sikkim has a geographical area of 7,096 sq. km. and is almost a rectangle, 113 Km. long and 64 Km. wide. It is entirely a hilly state of (a) Low Hills altitude ranging from 270 to 1500 m. (b) Mid Hills of altitude ranging from 1500 to 2000 m. (c) High Hills of altitude ranging from 2,000 to 3,000 m. (d) Very High Hills or Alpine zone of altitude ranging from 3000 and above with vegetation, and (e) Snow Land of very high mountains without vegetation and with perpetual snow cover upto 8,580 m. in altitude.

THE SOIL :

Sikkim has acidic soil reaction with about 50 per cent having pH 5.0 or below; about 45 per cent having pH 5.0 to 6.0 and rest 5 per cent with about pH 6.0 or above. Soil depth varies from few inches and in some places practically nil to several feet deep depending upon the weathering processes it under went. The soil are characterised by high organic matter content; mostly between 2-5 per cent but low upto 1 and high upto 10 per cent are also available; low cationexchange capacity and high lime requirement; mostly between 5 tonnes per hectare but varies from 0 to 40 tonnes per hectare. The soils are 60 per cent low, 30 per cent medium and 10 per cent high in availability of Nitrogen; about 30 per cent low, 35 per cent medium and 20 per cent high in phosphorus availability; and about 20 percent low, 35 percent medium and 45 percent high in potash availability. Micronutrient deficiency of Ca, Mg, Bo, Zn, Cu

and Mo are commonly found. The soils are loamy sand to salty clay loam in texture.

LANDUSE AND LAND CAPABILITY STATUS :

The landuse classification and availability of land per head in Sikkim is given below :

Sl.No.	Type of land	Hectare	Percent
1.	(a) Net area sown	78,321	11.04
	(b) Fallow and cultural waste	19,143	2.69
	Total operated area	1,09,968	15.37
2.	Forest	2,56,533	36.15
3.	Miscellaneous trees & groves	5,450	0.77
4.	Pastures	72,937	10.28
5.	Land put to non-agricultural use	85,362	12.03
6.	Barren	1,80,250	25.40
	Total :	7,09,600	100.00

Source : Agriculture Census, 1981

Availability of land per head in Sikkim (in hectare)

Sl.No.	Type of Land	1991	1991
1.	Net cultivable land	0.31	0.24
2.	Operated area for Agricultural use	0.34	0.27
3.	Land for non-Agricultural use	0.27	0.21
4.	Pasture & culturable waste land	0.23	0.18
5.	Forest	0.83	0.65

The very steep and mountaneous land, generally fall within land capability classes IV to VIII. Due to the abrupt rise of land from the drainage channels, lands under capability classes I to III are very rare. Sikkim has innumerable small and large streams. Contours are very close indicating very steep hill slopes. Except for the land near stream banks and in the villages, the land is not suited for agriculture but for **pastures and permanent fruit trees, plantations and other permanent vegetation.** This calls for a very serious consideration in the proper use of these lands. These steep

lands must be properly managed so that ecological balance is not disturbed and yet production of food, fodder, fuel and timbers is achieved.

THE CLIMATE :

The state has tropical, sub-tropical and temperate climate with varied ranges within a short geographical distance.

TEMPERATURE :

The maximum and minimum temperature of different places in Sikkim varies with different altitudes. The following four seasons are distinguished in Sikkim;

	Temperature Range
1. Cold Weather Season (December to February)	0° to 10° C
2. Spring Weather Season (March to May)	10° to 23° C
3. South-West Monsoon Season (June to September)	15° to 30° C
4. Period of Retiring Monsoon (October to November)	10° to 23° C

RAINFALL :

Rainfall is heavy and well-distributed between the months of May to September, July being the Wettest month at most of the places, while it is moderate in the months of April to October. The rainfall is generally low during November to February; average number of rainy days (2.3 mm or more/day) ranges from 100 at Thangu to 184 at Gnathang. The mean annual rainfall is minimum at Thangu (82 mm) and maximum at Gangtok (2,493 mm). Relative humidity *remains higher than 70 per cent at most of the places in Sikkim* throughout the year. The average monthly daily bright sunshine hours at Tadong, during October to May is 4 to 7 hours, while the remaining months (monsoon season) it is much lower (0.5 to 3.87 hrs/days). On account of low temperature and high humidity and cloudy weather, very less (0.67 to 1.55 mm/day) rain water evaporates.

WATER RESOURCES :

The state of Sikkim is primarily a catchment area of the Tista drainage system. The cultivated area being located in extremely hilly terrain, major irrigation projects can not be taken up.

FERTILIZERS CONSUMPTION AND FOODGRAIN PRODUCTIVITY :

All India fertilizers consumption and foodgrain productivity per hectare during 1990-91 was reported 69.7 kg and 1.38 tonnes respectively. The corresponding figures of fertilizers consumption of Sikkim was reported as 10.00 kg per hectare and foodgrain productivity was reported as 1.31 tonnes per hectare.

GROSS/NET STATE DOMESTIC PRODUCT : (GSDP/NSDP):

Gross - Domestic Product of Sikkim State during 1991-92 was contributed by :

Agriculture	:	43.80 per cent
Industry	:	10.98 per cent
Services sector	:	45.22 per cent
Total	:	100.00 percent

Per capita income during 1991-92 on current prices was Rs. 5,416.00 and on constant prices was Rs. 3,369.00

1.2 PEOPLE - A BRIEF HISTORY :

No authentic records of early history of Sikkim are available. A number of historians and visitors of the state, mostly from abroad and other states tried from time to time to piece together some coherent account of its history from LIMBOO chronicles and LEPCHA folklores and legends, TIBETANS texts and traditions to record an authentic early history of Sikkim.

However, there is evidence indicating the sometimes before the LIMBOO Rule and advent of Tibetans, the Kingdom was under the sway of an Indian King Chandrapalla. His dynasty apparently had taken no interest in this wild and unproductive state. The Kingdom was then called Vijoy Pur Sikkim.

After establishment of Namgyal dynasty, Phuntshong Namgyal was the first consecrated ruler, a descendent of

Khe-Bum-Sa who had formed blood brotherhood with Lepcha Chief Thakang Thek, a Centralised authority was set up in Sikkim for the first time in 1642 AD. The Limboo Chiefs who were then ruling most of the areas accepted Namgyal's sovereignty. The Kingdom was then extended far beyond its present frontiers. In the North it extended upto Thang La, near Phari in Tibet, in East upto Tagong La near Paro in Bhutan, in South Krishangung in Purnia district of Bihar and in West to Timar chorten on Tamar river in Nepal.

In 18th, Century the country lost considerable territories of Bhutan and then to Nepal. In 1814 on the break of the Nepal war with East India Company, the Maharaja of Sikkim Tsugphud Namgyal formed his first alliance with British Government. At the termination of the hostilities considerable portion of territory loss to Nepal was restituted to Sikkim by the British. In 1833-34 Sikkim ceded Darjeeling to British India at the request of British Government of India- a strip of end 24 miles long and 6 miles wide stretching from North of Pankabarie including villages of Darjeeling and Kurseong, as a favour asked for having settled a boundary dispute between Sikkim and Nepal in 1928.

The earliest history of census known to Sikkim was held in 1891 (H.H. Risley, 1894), conducted by the then Political Officer in Sikkim :

Sl.No.	Race of caste	Males	Females	Children	Total
1.	Lepcha	2,362	2,399	1,001	5,762
2.	Bhutia	1,966	1,960	968	4,804
3.	Limbu	1,255	1,159	943	3,356
4.	Gurung	1,108	1,047	766	2,921
5.	Murmi(Tamang)	801	778	1,288	2,867
6.	Rai, Jimdar	742	691	587	2,026
7.	Khambu	726	648	589	1,963
8.	Kami	626	464	580	1,670
9.	Brahman	521	372	521	1,414
10.	Mangar	363	346	192	901
11.	Chhetri	303	253	273	829
12.	Newar	240	183	304	727
13.	Slaves	124	99	103	326
14.	Derzi	102	92	93	287
15.	Miscellaneous including troops	350	72	99	521
Total		11,589	10,563	8,306	30,458

Source : The Gazetteer of Sikkim

The tripartite agreement signed on May 8, 1973 between the Government of India, the Chogyal and the political parties become the forerunner to the establishment of a fully responsible Government. The 32 member assembly elected under the agreement passed the Sikkim Act, 1974 and Sikkim became an associate state.

On 10th April, 1975, the Sikkim Assembly passed a resolution that the institution of chogyal is hereby abolished and Sikkim shall hence-forth be a constituent unit of India enjoying democratic and fully responsible government. It was further resolved to hold a referendum to submit the resolution to the people by way of a "special poll" for their approval three days later.

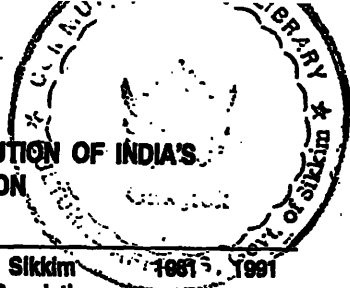
On 26th April, 1975, Sikkim became the 22nd state of Indian Union. The formal merger took place on 16th May, 1975. Thus, the monarchy rule of Chogyal dynasty which ruled Sikkim for 333 year came to an end.

During 1963, Government of Sikkim divided the whole state into four districts for administrative purpose namely Gyalshing, Namchi, Gangtok and Mangan. Historically, the census was done as early as 1891 by the then Political Officer in Sikkim. Thereafter, census was conducted under the guidance of West Bengal authorities since 1901.

1.21 POPULATION :

According to census 1991, the total population of Sikkim is 4,06,457 persons distributed to four districts, eight subdivisions, eight towns and four hundred forty-seven revenue blocks. Of the total 2,16, 427 are males and 1,90,030 are females.

**POPULATION PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF INDIA'S
TOTAL POPULATION**



Category	India's Population	Sikkim Population	1981	1991
Total population	846,302,688	4,06,457	0.05	0.05
Scheduled caste	138,223,277	24,084	0.02	0.02
Scheduled Tribes	67,758,380	90,901	0.14	0.14
Non-SC/ST	640,321,031	2,91,472	0.04	0.05

PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL POPULATION OF STATE

Category	1981	1991
Scheduled castes	5.78	5.93
Scheduled Tribes	23.27	22.36
Non-SC/ST	70.95	71.71

Sikkim shares 0.05 per cent of India's 846,302,688 population, 0.02 percent scheduled castes population, 0.14 per cent scheduled Tribes population and 0.05 percent Non-SC/ST population. The percentage distribution of Non-SC/ST has increased from 0.04 in 1981 to 0.05 in 1991 census. Within the state, the population percentage distribution of total population of scheduled castes has increased from 5.78 in 1981 to 5.93 in 1991. Similarly, percentage distribution of total population of Non-SC/ST has increased from 70.95 in 1981 to 71.71 in 1991 census. However, percentage distribution of total population of scheduled tribes has decreased from 23.27 in 1981 to 22.36 in 1991 census. The decrease in percentage of scheduled Tribes population to total population of the state is at a significant level of 0.91 percent.

1.21 RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION :

The urbanisation has become a symbol for progress in the developing countries in the world. The rural areas are mainly inhabited by the agriculturists, and in an under developed country they represent the poorer section of the people who have little else to do except cultivation to earn a living. Therefore, urbanisation stands for prosperity and more diversified occupation and the rate of urbanisation acts as an index of progress.

Hence, it is customary to divide the population at the census of every country into two broad categories, namely rural and urban. A visibly sharp difference exists between the life of villagers and that of town dwellers in their dresses, the way they speak, their food habits, the job they do and the like. Generally, rural society presents sharp contrasts in economic, social and cultural set up compared to an urban areas.

The population of India is preponderantly rural. It is very much so in the case of Sikkim state. About 90.86 per cent of total population live in the rural areas and only about 9.10 per cent of total population live in urban areas.

About 91 persons in every 100 in Sikkim live in villages. Compared to other states of India, Sikkim is among the least urbanised. Only about 9 persons in every 100 in Sikkim live in urban areas.

Of the two sexes, 90.23 per cent of males live in rural areas and 9.77 per cent in urban areas. The corresponding figures of female population was 91.66 per cent Rural and 8.34 per cent urban. That is about 92 females in every 100 in Sikkim live in villages and only 8 females in every 100 live in urban areas. The female population is more in rural areas as compared to male population in Sikkim. About 92 per cent of total population of Sikkim lives in villages which shows a very slow progress in Urbanisation.

DISTRICTWISE PERCENTAGE OF RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION

District	Persons		Male		Female	
	Population	Percentage	Population	Percentage	Population	Percentage
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
North :						
Persons	31,240	7.69	17,090	7.90	14,150	7.45
Rural	30,437	97.43	16,582	97.03	13,855	97.91
Urban	803	2.57	508	2.97	295	2.09
East :						
Persons	1,78,452	43.90	95,986	44.35	82,466	43.40
Rural	1,46,580	82.14	77,862	81.12	68,718	83.33
Urban	31,872	17.86	18,124	18.88	13,748	16.67
South :						
Persons	98,604	24.26	52,105	24.07	46,499	24.47
Rural	96,035	97.39	50,588	97.09	45,447	97.74
Urban	2,569	2.61	1,517	2.91	1,052	2.26
West :						
Persons	98,161	24.15	51,246	23.68	46,915	24.68
Rural	96,399	98.20	50,245	98.05	46,154	98.38
Urban	1,762	1.80	1,001	1.95	761	1.62
State :						
Persons	4,06,457	-	2,16,427	53.25	1,90,030	46.75
Rural	3,69,451	90.86	1,95,277	90.23	1,74,174	91.66
Urban	37,006	9.10	21,150	9.77	15,856	8.34

Source : Census 1991

Among the districts 44.35 per cent of total male population live in East followed by South (24.07%), West (23.68%) and North (7.90%). Similarly East District has 43.40 per cent of total female population followed by West (24.68%), South (24.47%) and North (7.45%). Further, East district has the maximum female urban population of 16.67 per cent followed by South (2.26%), North (2.09%) and West (1.62%).

There are 440 inhabited and 7 uninhabited villages in Sikkim. The inhabited villages of the districts are 51,126,144 and 119 for North, East, South and West districts respectively. The average population size of an

inhabited village in Sikkim was 840 during 1991 as against 603 during 1981 census. Districtwise average population size of an inhabited village in Sikkim during 1991 census was 597, 1,163, 666 and 810 for North, East, South and West respectively.

URBAN POPULATION :

The urban population of Sikkim (37,006) constitutes 9.10 percent of total population spread over eight towns. The most urbanised district of the state is East where 17.86 per cent of the population of the district live in urban area. Then comes South (2.61%) and North (2.57%). West District with 1.80 per cent urban population is the least urbanised among the four districts of Sikkim.

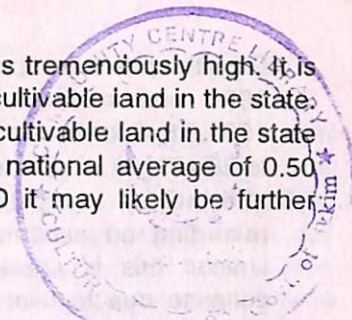
1.22 DENSITY OF POPULATION :

Density of population is expressed as the number of persons that would inhabit 1 Km² of area if the entire population of a given area were to be evenly distributed over that area.

Country/State/District	Density	
	1981	1991
India	216	273
Sikkim	45	57
North	6	7
East	145	187
South	101	131
West	64	84

Density of population of Sikkim has increased from 45 in 1981 to 57 persons per Km² in 1991. East District has highest density of 187 persons per Km² followed by South (131), and West (84). North District has the lowest density of 7 persons per Km². The corresponding figures of all India level was 273 persons per Km². Although, the density of population in the state is lower than the national average,

the population pressure on land is tremendously high. It is because of limited availability of cultivable land in the state. The per capita net availability of cultivable land in the state is only 0.24 hectare against the national average of 0.50 hectare. By the end of 2000 AD it may likely be further reduced to 0.10 hectare.



1.23 GROWTH RATE :

The population is a dynamic variable and it constantly changes over time. The growth of population of a country or a state is influenced by the inter-play of births, deaths and migration. Growth rate of population of Sikkim is by and large influenced by migration in recent decades. The common indicators of 'crude birth rate' and 'crude death rate' are expressed as the ratio of live births that take place in a year in a population and as the ratio of number of deaths that occur in a year in a population which are usually expressed in 1000 persons respectively. The difference between the birth and the deaths indicates the natural growth of a population for particular year. The migration factor affects through immigration or outmigration. The difference between the immigration and outmigration is called the net migration which may be positive or negative.

The variation in population for decades of 1901 to 1991 is as follows :

GROWTH RATE IN PERCENT

	1951 to 1961	1961 to 1971	1971 to 1981	1981 to 1991
Sikkim State	17.76	29.38	50.77	28.47
North District	-	33.35	103.28	18.09
East District	-	51.00	62.07	28.60
South District	-	-	42.85	29.78
West District	-	-	29.59	30.55

Growth rate was observed at rising trend from 1951-61, 1971 and reached maximum during 1971-81. During 1981-91, Growth rate has declined from 50.77% (1971-81) to 28.47%. A small state like Sikkim has been tremendously affected by immigration during 1971 to 1981 and thus recording an abnormal decadal growth rate of 50.77%. Unless this is checked effectively, the tiny state may collapse due to over burden of sustainability in terms of men and materials.

1.3 COMMUNITIES :

The Anthropological Survey of India launched a National Project entitled "People of India" on October 2, 1985. This project which has been conceived of in consonance with the objectives of the new cultural policy of the Government of India, seeks to generate upto date information about all communities of India and to highlight the linkages that bring our people together. The survey has completed work on 4,373 communities in our country. The survey has identified 21(Twenty one) communities in Sikkim state namely :

Ethnic class

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------|
| 1. Lepcha | | |
| 2. Bhutia | (a) Bhutia | (b) Dukpa |
| | (c) Tibetan | |
| 3. Nepali | (a) Limboo | (b) Rai |
| | (c) Yakha | (d) Tamang |
| | (e) Gurung | (f) Manger |
| | (g) Sherpa | (h) Sunuwar |
| | (i) Kagatey (Yalmo) | (j) Bahun |
| | (k) Chhetri | (l) Newar |
| | (m) Kami(Lohar) | (n) Damai |
| | (o) Sarki | (p) Majhi |
| Plainsman : | Marwari | |

1.4 CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS :

India has been divided into many states and union territories which have in its fold many castes and communities, tribes and sects, religions and faiths. The system of castes is a very old social institution of our country. For ages many groups belonging to the low castes suffered various socio-economic and political disabilities in the hands of the other groups which are considered higher in status. The constitution of India has provided safeguards to these weaker sections of the population. Similarly on the other hand, tribes are supposed to be the oldest inhabitants in the country. Since they live in isolation they have remained back ward materially and socially. The constitution of India has provision to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. In article 341 and 342 of the constitution, the President of India is empowered to specify the list of scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes for each state and Union Territory. Under these provisions, scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes are listed under a Presidential order for each state or local area.

The scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes in Sikkim as listed in the constitution (Sikkim) scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes order, 1978 are as follows :

(a) List of Scheduled castes :

1. Damai
2. Kami, Lohar
3. Majhi
4. Sarki

(b) List of Scheduled Tribes :

1. Lepcha
2. Bhutia (Including Dukpa, Kagatey, Sherpa, Tibetan)

(c) List of Non-Scheduled Castes and Non-Scheduled Tribes:

Limboo, Rai, Yakha, Tamang, Gurung, Mangar Sunuwar, Bahun, Chettri, Newar, Kami, Damai, Sarki, Majhi and Marwari.

- Indeed, a women's bondage is guarded violently not only by the male slave holders but by the mother-in-law, mother and by herself. The fact is that, the women's enemy is women, as dowry-burnings dreadfully testify.
- There is a tremendous work pressure and economic burden on working classes of both sexes (50.82% males and 28.63% females) in the state.
- Since, the female workers are mostly confined to rural agrarian activities (80.74%) their economic upliftment lies on effective resource mobilization of agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry in the state.
- Since, the productive resources in the rural areas are tapering due to population pressure it is essential to provide both on-farm and off-farm income generating technology and enterprises to support their family income.
- The weakest linkage of marketing, cooperative activities and banking facilities in rural areas should be given top priority.