

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2011-2012.

Sikkim, nestled in the eastern Himalayas is a land of spiritualism. In fact, spiritualism is intrinsically woven in the lives of the Sikkimese people which manifests in the numerous and ever increasing religious institutions which have come into existence in the state. Today, there are 729 nos. religious institutions of various faiths in the state including 328 nos. Buddhist Gompas/Manilhakangs, 318 nos. Hindu Mandirs, 74 nos. Churches, 07 nos. Mosques/Masjids and 02 nos. Gurudwaras.

The harmonious co-existence of various faiths prevalent in the state has been significantly influenced by the flavour of spiritualism maintained by the State Government through the unique department of Ecclesiastical Affairs. The role of the Ecclesiastical Affairs Department is mainly one of supervision, administrative control and maintenance of all religious institutions. The department also works for the preservation & protection of age-old religious institutions/monuments and holy places of worship and takes care of other religious affairs/functions in the state thereby assisting in fostering an atmosphere of peace and harmony for the socio economic development and progress of the people.

The important achievements of the Department during the year 2011-12 are highlighted as under:-

- Following the extensive tour to different places /villages by the HCM, grants-in-aid amounting to a substantial sum of Rs.12,26,75,000/- (Rupees twelve crores, twenty-six Lakhs and seventy-five thousand) only, has been sanctioned to more than 540 nos. different religious institutions within the state for the purpose of new construction, repairs, upgradation etc.
- The annual 'Bhumchu' ceremony at Tashiding was held on 19.03.2011. Shri. Dawcho Lepcha, Hon'ble Minister, also area MLA was present at the ceremony as the Government Representative, while the Additional Secretary/Eccl. Affairs attended the same on behalf of the Department.
- His Holiness the Sakya Trizin Rinpoche was in Sikkim w.e.f. 09.10.2011 upto 04.11.2011. His Holiness was treated as a State Guest and all necessary arrangements befitting his religious status was made in co-ordination with other concerned Departments.
- The monthly stipend of the students of the Traditional Arts School, Tadong has been enhanced from Rs.200/- and Rs.300/- per month to Rs.700/- and Rs.900/- per month w.e.f. April, 2012.
- The total enrolment of students of the Traditional Arts School stood at 29 nos. while 3 nos. students completed the seven year course.

- The Government was pleased to approve creation of seven nos. posts for the Department viz: one post each of Inspector, Assistant Arts Teacher, Driver, Peon Supervisor and two posts of LDCs. Appointment to the said posts are near completion.
- Recruitment Rules for the single post of Tibetan Teacher at Pemayangtse Gonpa has been framed, while Recruitment Rules for the post of Inspector(s) is presently under process.
- The Information Technology Department is preparing a Website for the Department which reportedly is in its final stages of completion.
- Vide Notification No.2099/EA Dated: 05.03.2003 the Government has approved reimbursement of 50% of the revenues collected from the erstwhile Monastic Estate of six Premier Gonpas. The concerned Departments have once again been requested to furnish their respective Revenue statements and a response is being awaited.
- A Departmental vehicle taken by the then Secretary, Shri. R.P, Chingapa on his transfer from the Ecclesiastical Affairs Department was with the Information & Technology Department from where Shri. Chingapa retired. Recently one vehicle in place of the above was handed over by the Information Technology Department with the approval of authority.
- Two new vehicles and one computer set has been added as assets of the Department this year.
- The devastating earthquake of 18th Sept.2011 that hit the state has damaged many religious institutions. The Department prepared a comprehensive list of all such religious institutions and forwarded the same to the Bldgs. & Housing Department for taking necessary action towards their repairs/renovation/reconstruction and accordingly the DPRs have been forwarded to GOI by the Land Revenue & Disaster Management Department.
- A high level Committee has been constituted to examine the damages caused to the various religious institutions and Heritage sites of Sikkim by the earthquake vide Notification No.83/Home/2011 Dated:14/11/2011.
- In the wake of the earthquake financial assistance to the tune of Rs.2.00 Lakhs was sanctioned to the SBDO to organize a three day puja during which prayers were offered for those who lost their lives, while a sum of Rs.8.70 Lakhs was also sanctioned for recitation of Vajra Guru Mantra and ‘Neysol” in the six premier Monasteries and other religious institutions on the advice of high ranking Rinpoches.
- The HCM was also pleased to accord spot sanction of Rs.01.00 Crore for Ringhim Gonpa in North Sikkim while financial assistance of Rs.05.00 Lakhs each was extended to Enchey, Pemayangtse, Tashiding Dubdi and Tholung Gonpas for immediate restoration of their damaged religious statues .

- The Kalachakra Puja was held in Bodhgaya during Dec'11-Jan'12. Given the limited number of rooms available at the Sikkim Temple-cum-Guest House and anticipating participation of a large number of devotees from Sikkim , elaborate arrangements for accommodation was made by the Department by way of putting up of tents, providing drinking water, electricity, bedding and providing appropriate arrangements with respect to sanitation in the vacant land behind the Guest House.
- This year the Nyingma Menlom Chenmo held from 24th Jan. to 2nd Feb. 2012 at Bodhgaya was hosted by Sikkim and managed by the Nyingma Monasteries of Sikkim under the supervision of the Department.
- Both the Kalachakra Puja and the Nyingma Menlom Chenmo was conducted successfully and no any untoward incident was reported.
- The total revenue collection from room rent, including the tents at STGH, Bodhgaya stands at approx. Rs10.00 Lakhs as on date.
- 11 (eleven) nos. Monastic School/Sanskrit Pathshala buildings in the four Districts are under construction and almost 75% of the works are reportedly complete. The works are being executed by the concerned B.D.Os.
- Approval has been accorded for recognition of one more Sanskrit Pathshala attached to Omkareshwar Shiva Mandir at Barang, Tumin in pursuance of the verbal assurance given by the HCM.

The above report highlights the important events/achievements of the Department during the year 2011-2012.

Secretary/Eccl. Affairs.

I, Pawan Chamling, Minister Incharge of Ecclesiastical Affairs Department do hereby authenticate the Annual Report of the Ecclesiastical Department for the year 2011-2012 and also authorize to place this report on the table of the Legislative Assembly.

(PAWAN CHAMLING)
MINISTER, ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT