



SIKKIM HERALD

Vol. 70 No. 32 Gangtok (Thursday) July 23, 2026



House passes three Bills and adopts Government Resolution on third day of Budget Session 2026-27

Gangtok, July 22: Third day of the Budget Session 2026-27 of the Eleventh Assembly, Fourth Session (Part II) of Sikkim Legislative Assembly, presided over by Speaker Mr Mingma Norbu Sherpa, witnessed the passing of three Bills, adoption of a Government Resolution and the passing of Separate Demands for Grants relating to five Departments, today.

During the legislative business, the House passed the Sikkim Private Universities (Establishment and Regulation) (Amendment) Bill, 2026 (Bill No. 05 of 2026) and the Board of Open Schooling and Skill Education, Sikkim (Amendment) Bill, 2026 (Bill No.06 of 2026), moved by Minister-in-Charge of the Education Department, Mr Raju Basnet and the Sikkim Fire and Emergency Services (Amendment) Bill, 2026 (Bill No. 10 of 2026), moved by Chief Minister Mr Prem Singh Tamang also the Minister-in-Charge of the Home Department.

It may be noted that these Bills were introduced by the respective Ministers-in-Charge on the first day of the Budget Session on July 20, 2026.

The House also adopted Government Resolution (Resolution No. 02 of 2026), proposed by Minister-in-Charge of



the Forest and Environment Department, Mr Pintso Namgyal Lepcha and seconded by Mr Sonam Tshering Venchungpa, Member of Sikkim Legislative Assembly, seeking adoption of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act, 2024 (No. 5 of 2024) in the State of Sikkim under Article 252 of the Constitution of India.

The Resolution states "Whereas, the Parliament has enacted the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act, 2024 (No. 5 of 2024) notified on 15.2.2024;

And whereas, the said Act

applies, in the first instance, to the whole of the States of Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan and the Union Territories and it shall apply to such other States which adopt the said Act by passing a resolution in their respective Legislative Assemblies under clause (1) of Article 252 of the Constitution read with clause (2) thereof, with effect from the date of such adoption;

And whereas, the aim of the said Act is to decriminalize the provisions of the original Act "Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974" [6 of 1974] to facilitate ease of doing business

in the country and to streamline the process of nomination of Chairman of State Pollution Control Boards;

And whereas it appears to this Legislative Assembly that it is desirable and expedient that the aforesaid Amendment Act should be adopted in the State of Sikkim by passing a resolution in this House;

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by clause (1) read with Article 252 of the Constitution of India, this House hereby resolves that the amendments with respect to the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act, 2024 (No. 5 of 2024) be adopted in the

State of Sikkim as enacted by the Parliament."

Subsequently, Deputy Speaker Ms Raj Kumari Thapa presided over the session in which, the Separate Demands for Grants for the Financial Year 2026-27 were taken up and passed by the House.

The Separate Demands for Grants were presented under the charge of:

1. Minister for Buildings and Housing Department and Labour Department, Mr Bhim Hang Limboo.
2. Minister for Urban Development Department and Food and Civil Supplies Department, Mr Bhoj Raj Rai.
3. Minister for Health and Family Welfare Department, Culture Department and Ayush Department, Mr GT Dhungel.
4. Minister for Agriculture Department, Horticulture Department, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Department and Fisheries Development Department, Mr Puran Kumar Gurung and
5. Minister for Forest and Environment Department, Mines and Geology Department and Science and Technology Department, Mr Pintso Namgyal Lepcha.

Following the completion of the day's business, the House was adjourned till 11:00 am, July 23, 2026.



**KEEP SIKKIM
CLEAN AND GREEN**

Pearls of Wisdom

*"Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom."
- Aristotle*

Awareness programme on Rules for Registration and Solemnisation of Form of Marriage in Sikkim 1963 held

Namchi, July 21: Sikkim State Commission for Women in collaboration with the National Commission for Women organised a review and awareness programme on the Rules for Registration and Solemnisation of a Form of Marriage in Sikkim, 1963 at Zilla Bhawan Hall, Namchi, today.

Ms Anjeeta Rajalim Zilla Adhyaksha Namchi, thanked the participants for their active involvement and expressed her appreciation towards awareness programme. She remarked that the session had enhanced her understanding of the State's marriage laws and their legal significance.

She further stated that the issues and concerns raised during the open discussion will be addressed and that greater awareness must be created at the grassroots level.

Later, she also showed her concern over the declining birth rate in the State and stated that laws and regulations are intended to strengthen society and stressing on the importance of adhering to them to guide and safeguard future generations.

Mr Sonam Palden Bhutia Judge Family Court Namchi District briefed on the legal consequences of unregistered marriages and shared the challenges associated with such cases from a judicial perspective. He emphasised on the importance of marriage registration in safeguarding the legal rights of both spouses and reducing disputes arising from the absence of documentary proof.

Referring to the landmark judgment of the Supreme Court in *Seema v. Ashwani Kumar* (2006), he noted that the Court has directed the compulsory registration of marriages of all Indian citizens, irrespective of their religion, in the respective States where the marriages are solemnised.

He emphasised the need to curb the practice of bigamy and highlighted the importance of registering marriages to ensure legal recognition and protection. He explained that while applying for a marriage certificate under the Hindu Marriage Act, applicants are generally required to establish that the marriage was solemnised in accordance with customary rites, which may include submitting wedding photographs showing the Saptapadi ceremony or a certificate issued by the priest who officiated the marriage. However, he noted that marriages solemnised under the Special Marriage Act, 1954 are exempt from such religious requirements,

as they are conducted before a Marriage Officer through the execution of the prescribed legal formalities.

Furthermore, he explained that certain aspects of a marriage may be legally challenged depending on the circumstances. A marriage may be declared void or voidable where there are grounds such as bigamy, underage marriage, fraud, coercion, lack of valid consent or other legal infirmities.

Similarly, in matrimonial disputes, either party may contest allegations made during divorce proceedings, including claims relating to cruelty, adultery, desertion or maintenance by producing evidence before the court. He also stated that orders or decrees passed by a court may be challenged through the appropriate legal process before a higher judicial forum.

Additionally, he also stated that the validity of a marriage or any related legal claim may be questioned where essential legal requirements have not been fulfilled. These include the non-performance of mandatory ceremonies under personal laws, obtaining a marriage certificate through fraud or forgery, lack of free and valid consent, violation of statutory conditions such as the prescribed minimum age or prohibited degrees of relationship and cases of bigamy where either party has a living spouse at the time of the marriage.

Moreover, he explained the timeline prescribed for divorce proceedings under the relevant laws. He stated that in cases of divorce by mutual consent under Indian law, a six-month cooling-off period is generally observed, followed by mandatory counselling before a decree of divorce is granted. In contrast, under the Rules to Provide for Registration and Solemnisation of a Form of Marriage in Sikkim, 1963, the prescribed cooling-off period is one year.

Concluding his address, he urged everyone to spread awareness of the importance of marriage registration, particularly at the grassroots level. He emphasised that a marriage certificate serves as vital legal proof of marriage and can be invaluable in securing pension benefits, establishing legal rights and addressing future legal disputes.

Ms Trisang Tamang ADC Namchi addressed on the role of District Administration in the registration and solemnisation of marriages, while also outlining the existing legal procedures and the challenges encountered in

the process.

She observed that many couples approach the authorities for marriage registration only when it is required for official documentation. Stressing the need for greater public awareness, she emphasised that a marriage certificate is important and that its significance must be understood.

She further noted that the consequences of unregistered or incorrectly registered marriages often affect women the most, particularly in matters relating to property rights, inheritance and the welfare of children. She also highlighted instances where marriages are registered under the wrong legal framework due to a lack of awareness, adding that the District Administrative Centre (DAC) is actively working to rectify such cases to prevent future legal complications.

She informed that marriage certificates are expected to be issued online in the near future, making the process more accessible and efficient.

Ms Teny D Bhutia Chairperson Sikkim State Commission for Women spoke on the significance of adhering to the Rules to provide for Registration and Solemnisation of a Form of Marriage in Sikkim, 1963. She stressed on the importance of creating greater awareness of the provisions of the Rules, particularly among people residing in the rural areas of the district.

During the interactive session, she also highlighted the differences between Tribal Marriage practices and Hindu Marriage Laws as observed at the grassroots level, encouraging discussions to enhance public understanding of the legal framework governing marriages in the State.

Mr Kumar Sharma Senior Advocate High Court Sikkim, briefed on the legal significance of marriage registration under the Rules to Provide for Registration and Solemnisation of a Form of Marriage in Sikkim, 1963.

He explained that the Rules prescribe the legal conditions and procedures governing the registration and solemnisation of marriages in the State. For a marriage to be valid, both parties must fulfil the requirements of monogamy, prescribed minimum age and sound mental capacity. The process begins with the submission of a written notice to the Marriage Officer, followed by a mandatory 30-day public notice period during which objections, if any, may be raised.

He further stated that when an objection is received, the

Marriage Officer conducts an inquiry with powers similar to those of a Civil Court. He noted that false or malicious objections may attract compensation. Before the marriage is solemnised, both parties, along with two witnesses, are required to sign a declaration. Upon completion of the solemnization, a marriage certificate is issued, which serves as conclusive legal proof of the marriage.

Furthermore, he also highlighted that the Rules provide legal remedies relating to restitution of conjugal rights, judicial separation and divorce.

Comparing the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 with the Sikkim Rules, 1963, Senior Advocate High Court Sikkim explained that the Hindu Marriage Act is a personal law applicable to Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs and certain Hindu reform communities, whereas the Sikkim Rules provide a secular framework for the registration and solemnization of marriages in the State. While both laws require monogamy and prescribe the minimum marriageable age of 21 years for the groom and 18 years for the bride, the Hindu Marriage Act contains more elaborate provisions relating to mental capacity and prohibited degrees of relationship.

He mentioned that the Sikkim Rules follow a notice-based procedure before a Marriage Officer, whereas marriages under the Hindu Marriage Act are solemnised through customary religious ceremonies, with registration serving primarily as legal evidence of the marriage.

Mr Rojel Lepcha DSP Namchi highlighted the offences and punishment relating to marriages under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). He explained that Section 82 (corresponding to Sections 494 and 495 of the former IPC) deals with the offence of bigamy, making it a punishable offence for a person to contract a second marriage, while a legally valid marriage is still subsisting. He informed that the offence is punishable with imprisonment of up to seven years. However, if the accused conceals the existence of the earlier marriage from the subsequent spouse, the punishment may extend to ten years.

He further elaborated on Section 83 of the BNS (formerly Section 496 of the IPC), which relates to fraudulent marriage ceremonies. The provision penalises any person who dishonestly or fraudulently

undergoes a marriage ceremony despite knowing that the marriage is not legally valid. The offence is punishable with imprisonment of up to seven years along with a fine.

Moreover, he also spoke about Sections 236 and 237 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, which deal with false declarations. He stated that Section 236 penalises any person who intentionally makes or subscribes to a false statement in a declaration that is legally authorised, knowing it to be false on a material point. Similarly, Section 237 provides punishment for any person who knowingly uses or attempts to use such a false declaration as genuine. He added that both provisions carry the same punishment as the offence of giving false evidence.

Additionally, he explained the procedure followed by the police upon receiving a complaint from a victim. He stated that the process begins with the recording of a General Diary (GD) entry, followed by a preliminary verification of the facts. If a cognisable offence is disclosed, a First Information Report (FIR) is registered and the investigation begins immediately. In non-cognisable cases, the matter is referred to the competent court, and the investigation proceeds only after obtaining the court's permission.

He further informed that, during the investigation, the police may issue a notice to the accused or make an arrest in serious cases. Relevant evidence is collected, witnesses are examined and upon completion of the investigation, a final report or charge sheet is submitted before the court in accordance with the provisions of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

Earlier, Ms Yousa Lachenpa Member Secretary of the Sikkim State Commission for Women informed that the awareness programme was being organised for the first time in Namchi District. She also outlined the key topics to be covered during the session, including the documentation required for obtaining marriage certificates under both Hindu and Tribal marriage systems, relevant rules and legal provisions relating to marriage.

An open discussion was held wherein Zilla Panchayats from different parts of the District raised several queries relating to marriage registration and its legal implications.

SIR hearings continue for sixth day in Gyalshing

Gyalshing, July 21: The hearings under the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls, continued at Gyalshing District entering sixth day of the hearing process.

The EROs and AEROs are conducting hearings across the District.

Constituency-wise Hearing

Details as of today are as follows: 01 Yaksom-Tashiding Assembly Constituency: 36 hearings. Rescheduled – 11, 02 Yangthang Assembly Constituency: 116 hearings. Rescheduled – 24, 03 Maneybung-Dentam Assembly Constituency: 38 hearings. Rescheduled – 3, 04 Gyalshing-Barnyak Assembly

Constituency: 158 hearings. Rescheduled – 10 and 32 Sangha (Gyalshing District): 4 hearings.

The District Administration has requested all concerned electors to attend their hearings as scheduled and extend their cooperation in the successful completion of the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral rolls.



Water Resources Department Gyalshing convenes first Micro Irrigation Channel meeting

Gyalshing, July 21: A district-level meeting to discuss and approve proposals under the Micro Irrigation Channel (MIC) component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) for inclusion in the District Irrigation Plan prepared by Water Resources Department Gyalshing was held at the office of DC Gyalshing, today.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Tenzing D Denzongpa DC Gyalshing.

The Micro Irrigation Channel (MIC) is a component of PMKSY under the vision of ‘Har Khet Ko Pani’, which aims to extend irrigation facilities to agricultural land through creation, distribution and management of water resources.

The meeting was convened to deliberate on proposals for improving irrigation infrastructures across the District. The proposed works are expected to increase irrigation coverage and provide better access to water for agricultural activities.

The proposals were discussed by taking into account of the requirements and benefits to farmers of the District. Following detailed deliberations, the meeting under the guidance of DC Gyalshing approved the eligible proposals for inclusion in the District Irrigation Plan.

DC said that timely coordination among all the concerned departments would be essential for the successful implementation of the approved projects. He advised the WRD Gyalshing to complete the required formalities without delay so that the works could be taken up for the approval.

He also stressed on the need to constitute the district-level committee at the earliest for effective implementation and monitoring of the approved projects.

Earlier, Mr Kiran Bista AE WRD Gyalshing briefed on the objective of the meeting. He informed about the Central Water Commission guidelines relating to Surface Minor Irrigation and gave an overview of the proposed phase-wise implementation of the projects in the district.

The meeting was attended by the ADC (Dev) Rural Development Department, Additional Director Agriculture/ Horticulture Department, DFO (Territorial) Forest Department, Lead District Manager Lead Bank Gyalshing, and Junior Engineers of the Water Resources Department.

Hearings for No Mapping electors continue across Pakyong District

Pakyong, July 21: The hearings for 546 electors under the No Mapping category, as part of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls, continued across all the Assembly Constituencies of Pakyong District today.

The constituency-wise details are as follows: 18 West Pendum - 86 hearings, 19 Rhenock - 71 hearings, 20 Chujachen - 97 hearings, 21 Gnathang-Machong - 210 hearings and 22 Namcheybung - 82 hearings.

The hearings are being conducted at various locations across the District by the designated Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) and Additional Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AAEROs) to verify the eligibility of electors whose records require further scrutiny.

The hearing process for electors falling under the No Mapping and Logical Discrepancy categories will continue as per the prescribed schedule.

The District Election Office has appealed to all concerned electors who have received hearing notices to attend their hearings on the scheduled date and time with the required documents and extend their full cooperation for the successful completion of the Special Intensive Revision. Eligible electors have also been urged to actively participate in the process to ensure that their electoral records are accurate and up to date, thereby contributing to the preparation of a transparent and authentic electoral roll.

Government of Sikkim

Health & Family Welfare Department

Namchi, South District

Memo No:264/Accts/H&FWD/N

Date: 7/07/2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed quotations are invited on behalf of District Hospital Namchi from interested firms for the supply of Medicines, Consumables under AB-PMJAY for a period of one year i.e., from Financial Year 2026-27 to 2027-28 with the following terms and conditions:

1. Any local clinical establishment having qualified pharmacists and in possession of the following documents may apply:

a. Valid trade License issued by authorized Government agencies.

b. Necessary certificate in Pharmacy from reputed & recognized institute.

c. Attested copies of C.O.I / S.S.C / Residential Certificate.

d. G.S.T clearance certificate from Commercial Tax Division, Finance Department.

2. Supply of required Medicines and Consumables should come with a minimum base discount rate of 20% on the MRP. Also, the MRP on medicines, consumables and lab tests are to be mentioned especially.

3. The Firm shall maintain an operational retail outlet / medical store in the vicinity of Namchi District Hospital to ensure uninterrupted and prompt supply of medicines during emergencies.

4. The Tender Forms, Tender envelopes and other details like eligibility criteria, Terms & conditions of Lease etc., can be obtained from the office of Senior Accounts officer cum D&DO, Health & Family welfare Department, Namchi District on any working day w.e.f. 3rd to 5th August 2026 on production of Bank Receipt for ₹1000/- (Rupees one thousand) only, duly credited to Revenue Head: 0210-800 Other Receipts.

5. The duly filled up Tender forms should reach the office of the Under Secretary, Namchi District Hospital, accompanied by self-attested documents as mentioned above along with Temporary Deposit Receipt (TDR) of ₹10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only) only drawn in Favor of Sr. Accounts Officer cum D&DO Health & F.W. Department, Namchi District from the State Bank of Sikkim or any Nationalized Bank of India, on 10th August 2026 between 10:30 A.M to 12:30 P.M. Tenders received after 12:30 P.M of 10th August 2026, will not be entertained.

6. The sealed tender will be opened on the same day at 02:30 PM at the office of the Director cum Chief Medical Officer, Namchi District Hospital, Namchi District, in the presence of Tenders/authorized; representatives present.

7. The Competent Authority reserves the right to cancel the allotment at any time in case of violation of the terms and conditions or for reasons of public interest, without assigning any reason.

Chief Medical Officer

Health & Family welfare Department

Namchi District

(70, I)

Before the Oath Commissioner at Gangtok, Sikkim

AFFIDAVIT

I, **HISHEY PINTSO BHUTIA @ HESHAY PINTSO BHUTIA**, Son of Praveen Bhutia, aged about 40 years, resident of Tibet Road, P.O. & P.S Gangtok, in the Gangtok District, Sikkim do hereby solemnly affirm and declare on oath as follows:-

1. That in my Scheduled Tribe Certificate bearing No 648/DCE, dated 25.07.1997 issued by the Office of the District Collector, Gangtok, East Sikkim, Government of Sikkim, my name has been recorded as "**HISHEY PINTSO BHUTIA**".

2. That in my Electoral Identity Card bearing No FHY0172049 issued by the Election Commission of India, my name has been recorded as "**HESHAY PINTSO BHUTIA**".

3. That this affidavit is made to state and declare that the person by the names as "**HISHEY PINTSO BHUTIA**" & "**HESHAY PINTSO BHUTIA**" denotes to the one and the same person i.e myself.

VERIFICATION

I, the above named deponent do hereby state and verify that the statement made herein above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief and no material facts has been concealed or suppressed therefrom. I have signed this affidavit on this the 22nd day of May, 2026 at Gangtok, Sikkim.

DEPONENT

Before the Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Gangtok, Sikkim

AFFIDAVIT

I, **Diki Bhutia** aged about 41 years, daughter of Late Ongchu Lama (Bhutia), Buddhist by faith and permanent resident of Rongnek under P.O Raj Bhawan and P.S. Sadar- Gangtok, District Gangtok, Sikkim do hereby solemnly affirm and declare on oath as follows:

1. That I am natural and legal daughter of **Late Ongchu Lama (Bhutia) @ Ongchu Bhutia (Lama) @ Angchuk Lama @Ongchuk Lama Bhutia and Lama** is my father's profession and bonafide resident of above-mention address.

2. That my father's name "**Ongchu Lama Bhutia**" which has been recorded in his **Certificate of Identification** bearing Sl. No. 12653/ DCE Dated 1/9/82 issued by Office of the District Collector East District Gangtok and same has been recorded in other relevant documents like "**my Birth Certificate**" etc.

3. That in the record found in **Old Sikkim Subject** bearing Register Vide Serial No. 22, Vol. No. III under Block Rongneck, East Sikkim wherein my father's name and caste has been recorded as "**Angchuk Lama**".

4. That in my **Certificate of Identification** bearing Sl. No. 954/DCE/ 2012 Dated 07/06/2012 issued by Office of the District Collector East District, Gangtok wherein my father's name and caste has been recorded as "**Ongchu Bhutia (Lama)**".

5. That my/our caste is **Bhutia**/we are belongs from **Bhutia Community and "LAMA"** is my father's profession.

6. That hence this affidavit is made on oath and to declare that person by the names and caste/profession is "**Ongchu Lama (Bhutia)", "Ongchu Bhutia (Lama)", "Angchuk Lama"** and "**Ongchuk Lama Bhutia** denotes and refer to the one and the same person i.e. my father since deceased.

7. That this Affidavit is made bonafide.

DEPONENT

VERIFICATION

I, **Diki Bhutia**, the deponent before-named, do hereby verify and state that the contents of the foregoing affidavit in paragraphs 1 to 7 are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. Nothing in material has been going concealed or suppressed there from.

Verified and sworn to this Affidavit at Gangtok, Sikkim on this the 20th day of July, 2026.

DEPONENT

Information and Public Relations Department

Government of Sikkim

Metro Point Tadong, Gangtok

No. 427/1PR/2026

Dated: 20/07/2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information of the residents of 5th Mile Tadong, in the surrounding areas of Sookna Bhawan premises that the Information and Public Relations Department is commencing the construction of a temporary storage structure within its premises.

It has been observed that several internet cable lines and drinking water pipeline connections have been laid across the department's premises. These utilities are likely to obstruct the proposed construction work and may also be susceptible to damage during the execution.

All concerned residents and service providers are requested to remove, relocate or reroute the internet cable lines and drinking water pipelines located at the IPR Department premises within 07 (seven) days from the date of issuance of this notice.

The department shall not be held responsible for any damage to such cables or pipelines remaining within the construction area after the expiry of the stipulated period.

Your cooperation in this matter is solicited to facilitate the timely execution of the construction work.

By Order

Secretary
IPR Department

Governor and Chief Minister visit NHPC tunnel incident site



Namchi, July 21: Governor Mr Om Prakash Mathur and Chief Minister Mr Prem Singh Tamang visited the incident site at ADIT-3 tunnel of NHPC Ltd Teesta Stage VI Hydropower Project, Samardung, Namchi District, today to assess the situation following the unfortunate tunnel accident that occurred on July 20.

The incident reportedly took place when approximately 25 workers, along with project officials, became trapped inside the tunnel after methane gas combustion, leaving several of them severely affected.

During their visit, the Governor and the Chief Minister were briefed by DC and Sr SP of Namchi District, NHPC officials and emergency response agencies on the circumstances surrounding the incident, ongoing rescue

operation and medical treatment being provided to the affected.

Expressing deep concern over the mishap, they interacted with the officials and directed that every possible measure be taken to ensure the best medical care and support for the injured workers. They also reviewed the progress of the rescue operation and emphasised the importance of strict adherence to safety protocols at all industrial and infrastructure project sites.

They directed Mr Bhupender Gupta NHPC Chairman and Managing Director, to ensure that compensation is disbursed to the victims at the earliest. It was announced that the State Government would provide an Ex Gratia of ₹4 lakh to the families of deceased, while ₹50,000/- would be granted to every injured person

as an immediate financial relief.

Further, the District Administration was directed to establish a dedicated mechanism at Rangpo for identification of the deceased and to ensure that all necessary assistance and support are extended to the affected families, particularly those from other States, during this difficult time.

The Governor and the Chief Minister also commended the prompt and coordinated efforts of the District Administration, rescue teams, medical personnel, NHPC officials, and all other agencies involved in the emergency response for their unwavering commitment in managing the crisis.

During the visit, they were also thoroughly briefed by Mr Manish Kumar Ranjan Commandant of 2nd Battalion, NDRF, Kolkata, on status and the progress of the rescue operation, its execution, and the challenges involved in recovering the trapped workers inside the tunnel.

The State Government is continuously monitoring the situation on the highest priority. Search and rescue efforts are being carried out in close coordination with NHPC, with support from the rescue agencies, including the NDRF, Mines Rescue Team Asansol, and the State's rescue agencies, namely SDRF and Fire and Emergency Services.

Gangtok District records 2,162 notice hearings under SIR

Gangtok, July 21: Notice hearings under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) 2026 were conducted across Gangtok District today at the DAC in accordance with the guidelines of the Election Commission of India.

The exercise forms part of the verification of electoral records and disposal of claims and objections to ensure an accurate, updated and inclusive electoral roll.

A total of 2,162 notice

hearings were conducted across the District during the day.

The constituency-wise details are as follows: 16-Tumen-Lingi Assembly Constituency: 199 hearings, 17-Khamdong-Singtam Assembly Constituency: 156 hearings, 23-Shyari Assembly Constituency: 517 hearings, 24-Martam-Rumtek Assembly Constituency: 90 hearings, 25-Upper Tadong Assembly Constituency: 477 hearings, 26-Arithang Assembly Constituency:

321 hearings, 27-Gangtok Assembly Constituency: 194 hearings and 28-Upper Burtuk Assembly Constituency: 208 hearings.

The Special Intensive Revision seeks to maintain accurate, transparent and inclusive electoral rolls through due verification and the lawful disposal of claims and objections, thereby strengthening the integrity of the electoral process.

Fourth day of SIR Electoral Roll hearings continue for Soreng District

Soreng, July 21: The hearings under the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls entered their fourth day in Soreng District today, continuing the process across all four Assembly Constituencies at DAC, Soreng.

The hearings are being conducted by the respective Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) and Additional Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs).

For 05-Rinchenpong Assembly Constituency, Mr DN Sharma ERO is SDM Mangalbaria. BDO Kaluk Mr Dabgyal Lama, BDO Mangalbaria Mr Mandeep Subba and Accounts Officer Ms Meemnam Limboo are AERO and Additional AEROs.

For 06-Daramdin Assembly Constituency, Mr Prem K Subba

ERO is SDM (Headquarters). Ms Anushuiya Pradhan, Assistant Labour Commissioner Mr Prakash Chandra Subba and Accounts Officer Mr Tara Prasad Sharma are AERO and Additional AEROs are BDO Daramdin.

For 07-Soreng-Chakung Assembly Constituency, Ms Sakchum Lepcha ERO is SDM Soreng. Mr Paru Hang Subba, Deputy Director (Agriculture) Mr Manish Pradhan, and Accounts Officer Mr Bubin Gurung are AERO and Additional AEROs are BDO Soreng.

For 08-Salghari-Zoom Assembly Constituency, Mr DR Bista ADC Soreng is ERO. BDO Baiguney Ms Pramila Gurung, Deputy Director Mr Subash Tamang, and Assistant Director (IT) Mr Amir Bhandari are AERO and Additional AEROs are

Mr Dhiraj Subedi District

Election Officer (DEO)-cum-DC Soreng is supervising the Special Intensive Revision process across the district to ensure the smooth conduct of hearings and the timely disposal of all claims, objections and related matters.

Constituency-wise hearing details as of July 21 are as follows: 05-Rinchenpong Assembly Constituency: 50, 06-Daramdin Assembly Constituency: 62, 07-Soreng-Chakung Assembly Constituency: 73, 08-Salghari-Zoom Assembly Constituency: 86, Total of the day: 271 and grand total: 928 (July 16, 17, 20 and 21)

The District Administration has appealed to all concerned electors to attend their hearings as scheduled and extend full cooperation for the successful completion of the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral rolls.

Chief Secretary reviews rescue operations

Namchi, July 21: Following the visit of the Governor and the Chief Minister to the site of the incident, Mr R Telang Chief Secretary chaired a high-level review meeting in the presence of Mr Akshay Sachdeva Director General of Police, to assess the progress of the ongoing search and rescue operations at ADIT-3 Tunnel of the Teesta Stage VI Hydroelectric Project, Samardung.

The meeting was attended by the District Administration, rescue agencies, officials from West Bengal Administration, NHPC Ltd, and Patel Engineering Ltd. Discussions centred on the status of the rescue operation, compensation for the victims and relief measures for the bereaved families.

Reviewing the ongoing operations, the Chief Secretary directed all concerned agencies to take necessary step to identify the deceased workers. He observed that, where identification proves challenging, assistance should be sought from fellow workers and colleagues who are best placed to recognise the victims.

DC Gangtok distributes Ex-Gratia cheques to disaster-affected families

Gangtok, July 21: District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Gangtok under the leadership of Mr Rohan Ramesh Agawane District Magistrate-cum-Chairman, DDMA distributed Ex-gratia assistance cheques to 23 disaster-affected households whose houses sustained damage due to the recent disaster at 7th Mile, Old JN Road, Kyongnosla GPU in accordance with the norms of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF).

The cheque distribution was held during an inspection of the affected area undertaken by the District Magistrate to review the prevailing situation and assess the progress of relief and rehabilitation measures following the intensified disaster impacts in the locality.

The inspection was attended by Panchayats, Mr Sonam Wongyal Lepcha Joint Director, DDMA, Ms Bijayata Kharel Deputy Director, DDMA, along with the DDMA team and officials from the concerned line departments. The team also interacted with the affected residents and reviewed the conditions at the relief camp.

DM expressed solidarity with the affected families and acknowledged the hardships they have endured. He appreciated their resilience and cooperation during this difficult period and reiterated the District Administration's commitment to ensuring the safety, dignity, and

He also reviewed the rescue strategy in detail, stressing that the available oxygen supply must be utilised judiciously to ensure safe, efficient, and uninterrupted continuation of the operation.

The Chief Secretary further emphasised that the mortal remains of the deceased must be identified with utmost care and handed over to their respective families with dignity and respect. He instructed the concerned authorities to expedite the disbursement of admissible compensation and extend all necessary assistance to the affected families in accordance with the applicable provisions.

The meeting was attended by Mr Sukesh Kumar Jain IG North Bengal, Mr Tashi Wangyal IGP (Law and Order), Mr Hemraj Rai IGP Namchi, Mr Manish Kumar Ranjan Commandant 2nd Battalion NDRF Kolkata, Ms Anupa Tamling DM Namchi, Ms Sonam D Bhutia SP Namchi, Ms Kuhuk Bhushan District Magistrate Kalimpong, Ms Aparajita Rai SP Kalimpong along with senior officials from NHPC Ltd and Patel Engineering Ltd.

well-being of all affected persons. He noted that seven families continue to reside in the relief camp and assured them of continued administrative support until permanent rehabilitation measures are implemented.

During the review, the District Administration observed that the disaster situation in the area has further intensified due to continued ground instability and recurring rainfall. Discussions focused on immediate measures, including uninterrupted relief support, provision of essential services, strengthening of safety arrangements, and continuous monitoring of the vulnerable area. Long-term rehabilitation measures such as detailed geotechnical investigations, slope stabilization works and identification of suitable permanent rehabilitation options for the affected families were also deliberated upon.

Reaffirming their commitment to protecting lives and property, the District Administration emphasised that all concerned departments will continue to work in close coordination to expedite relief, rehabilitation, and long-term rehabilitation disaster risk reduction measures in the affected area.

The District Administration also appealed to the public to cooperate with the authorities and strictly adhere to all advisories issued in the interest of public safety.