

My Respected fellow citizens,

We are aware that tourism is an important sector for the prosperity of a Nation and the State. It provides strong and convenient platform for educating people in the practical manner. Tourism gives an opportunity for development cross-cultural communication which eliminates social barriers that impede progress and promotes understanding and harmony between people and the Nation. It opens up new avenues for promoting national integration and international understanding.

My Government has taken all steps to keep the state pollution free, green and peaceful. Some of important actions taken are: systematic solid-waste management, total sanitation, ban on the use of plastics and non-biodegradable materials, launch of green mission programme, ban on green felling, protection of wildlife, implementation of the concept of Eco-cities and Eco-villages establishment, State commission on climate change, conservation of rich culture, ethnic traditions and unique heritage of the State and more so, in maintaining highest degree of safety and security.

The State is endowed by nature with a variety of destinations and circuits required for the tourists. Sikkim has impressive varieties of Tourism Products. The people are encouraged to preserve the old monuments and heritage sites. Village tourism is encouraged to preserve cultural heritage & handicrafts and to create better economic and employment opportunity in the rural areas. Floriculture is being promoted and all the hotels and restaurants have been requested to use natural flowers instead of artificial flowers. The Tourists are educated to respect local laws, culture and traditions.

Though, Sikkim is a hilly State, it could not develop as a “HILL STATION” in the past. The unlimited and unparallel natural potential of the State which has immense tourism prospects are yet to be fully exploited; even then Sikkim has shown the sign of a well sought after destination in the country and worldwide. In the coming years, the State Government will make the State, the best “HILL STATION” on the globe- the land of peace & tranquility, green, neat & clean, best hospitality and most beautiful place to compel people feel Sikkim from within.

***“To make tourism main livelihood of the People of Sikkim. Each & Every household & individuals shall become a Skilled Force for tourism industry. Enrichment of Peace & Tranquility, Culture, Tradition, Customs, Art, Natural resources & Environment through tourism, Enhancement of quality of life & happiness Index through tourism and provide the experience to tourists to “FEEL SIKKIM FROM WITHIN.” The Minimum Growth Graph (MGG) for future increase proposed is 11-17 % annually with more quality tourists. Tourism Development shall not only benefit the economic growth but it shall bring over all development of the State with high happiness and contentment in the society”***

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. The dynamic growth of this industry is evident from the fact that globally tourism accounts for more than 11% of the global GDP and 8% of the world trade employment. Nature has bestowed Sikkim with unique beauty, splendour with its lush green and undisturbed valleys, five climatic zones, peaceful, total sanitation, environment friendly, hospitable and smiling people and a rich cultural heritage –which is unparallel and would be hard put to create and find anywhere else. The most peaceful and crime free in the lap of Himalayas, “The land

of Peace and Tranquility” Sikkim itself become its natural and unique USP with global appeal.

### **Mission Statements**

- i. In past years, Sikkim has become one of most sought after Tourists destination. Tourism is an important sector for the prosperity of the Nation and the State. Having realized “Tourism” as a major engine of economic growth, employment generator & poverty alleviator, the State Government has endorsed this sector as the main civil industry of the State. Hence, improvements of the efficiency of the industry for enhance social & economic benefits and consequential increased economic benefits, including increased employment generation. Year 2010 has been declared as “ Year of Tourism”.
- ii. By focusing on quality tourism, the State Government aims at promoting sustainable development of tourism and encouraging the private sectors to develop tourism related infrastructure & services without disturbing ecology and environment.
- iii. Establish and strengthen the Institution of Network of Stakeholders (INS) which is Government led, private sector driven and community welfare oriented. Government shall provide a legislative framework to regulate Tourism Trade and Industry. Ensure safety & security of tourists; create basic infrastructure and health –care facilities. The private sector has to act as main spring of activities and impart dynamism & speed to the process of development as well as conservation. Both the Government and Private sector would be required to safeguard the stability and also the social and economic advancement of the local communities and other issues related to it.
- iv. The deep-rooted relationship of tourism and culture, traditions, monuments, heritage, natural resources, environment, forests, wildlife & ecology will be fully recognized and provided for improvement, enrichment and up gradation and it will be considered as a linchpin of the tourism industry.
- v. Effective linkages and close relationship will be established with interlinked Departments and agencies such as Home, Police, Forest, Environment & wildlife, Transport, Roads, Culture, Rural Management & Development, Urban Development, PHED, Industry, Army, BRO, Railways, Civil Aviation and NGOs etc.
- vi. Conducive environment for public and private sectors collaboration and investments through facilitation, concessions and incentives and other policy related interventions. Also to create effective delivery mechanism for various kinds of incentives, concessions and conveniences to be provided by the Government.
- vii. Sustainability shall serve as the guiding star for the Policy. The development and management strategies will be worked out so as to ensure that tourism largely acts as a pollution free industry and its ecological footprints remain as soft as possible. No one engaged, directly or indirectly in the tourism industry will be

allowed to secure short-term gains by resorting to what is called the darker side of the tourism. Neither over-exploitation of natural resources will be permitted nor the carrying capacity of the tourist-sites ignored. The required legislations, Rules and guidelines will be put in place.

- viii. Greater emphasis will be laid on eco-tourism whose parameters will be broader than those of nature tourism alone. It must help in elimination of poverty, ending unemployment, creating new skills, enhancing the status of women, preserving cultural heritage, encouraging tribal and local crafts and in improving overall environment and facilitating growth of a sound and fair social order.
- ix. Special thrust will be imparted to Village/Rural tourism, Home Stay and tourism in small settlements, where sizeable assets of our cultural and natural wealth exist.
- x. Responsible Tourism aimed at involving local community in the development and management of tourist's destinations will be the base.
- xi. "The major constraints are poor connectivity and inadequate tourist facilities. State Tourism Policy needs to address these issues; the State could consider building up tourism infrastructure in a PPP mode. The other aspect to be mindful of in preventing any adverse impact of these activities on the fragile ecology and environment of the State" (*Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission, Government of India*).
- xii. Due importance will be given to Domestic Tourism, particularly tourism connected to pilgrimage, culture, tradition & heritage, adventure, eco-tourism, wellness Tourism, Peace/mind rejuvenation and it will be so designed that infrastructure created under it will serve as a backbone of international quality product in the time to come.
- xiii. Implementation of policy statements & declarations made at various North-Eastern Council- Sectoral Summits organized by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, Government of India for accelerated development of the North Eastern Region. As per this, the tourism sector holds the highest promise for generating high employment and income-augmentation opportunities.
- xiv. A new class of tourists with marked preferences for adventure, distant destinations, caves, forests, wildlife, lakes, nature lovers, educational, research, etc. is emerging. This class is not looking for luxury accommodations but only for simple and clean places to stay. For this the Premium destinations for country side stay, home stay and camping sites will be encouraged and promoted.
- xv. Bestowed with natural resources, pollution free, green and eco-friendly state, the Wellness tourism will be promoted in its totality along with Akant Vas & Agyat Van Vas as the integrated part of it.
- xvi. To promote organic State and the local organic products and cuisine will be made use of and effectively encouraged.

- xvii. The tourist industry, Hotels and travel agents will be persuaded to evolve and adopt voluntarily a Code of Ethics (CEs) and its infringement will be firmly dealt with by suitable legislation, rules and guidelines.
- xviii. A section of State Police or other force will be earmarked or private security agency will be engage to act as Tourist Police and special training will be imparted to it.
- xix. Promotion, publicity & marketing of Tourism and all tourism products will be taken up in well planned manner at national and international level.
- xx. The civilisational issues as well as issues pertaining to civic administration and good governance will be attended to and made an effective part of the tourism policy.
- xxi. Proper cleanliness and solid waste management and hence, to promote quality tourism
- xxii. In order to increase the duration of stay, special emphasis will be given to open new areas, prime & lesser known destinations, enhance local cultural activities, and to promote the country side.
- xxiii. To break the seasonality factor of tourism and promote all season tourism by having winter tourism, monsoon tourism, Flower festivals, conferences/ conventions/ seminars, pilgrimage, adventure activities, Tourism related Institutions, Wellness-peace-health rejuvenation months stay etc.
- xxiv. To review the current Tourism Master Plan and follow & implement the new Tourism Master Plan for Sikkim being prepared by Singapore based consultant.
- xxv. Creating a massive people's movement to convert all weaknesses of the Tourism sector in to the Strength of Tourism sector.

### **TOURSIM PRODUCTS:**

The State is naturally gifted having all sorts of destinations and circuits required for the tourists and some of impressive varieties of our Tourism Products are:

- a. Nature & Trekking Tourism,**
- b. Eco-tourism & Wilderness tourism,**
- c. Village/Rural & Home stay Tourism,**
- d. Adventure Tourism,**
- e. Wellness Tourism: Meditation, Yoga, Spa & Herbal medicine etc,**
- f. Pilgrimage & Buddhist Tourism,**
- g. Culture & Heritage Tourism,**
- h. Conference Tourism (MICE destination),**
- i. Tea Tourism,**

- j. **Snow Travel and Hydro Tourism,**
- k. **Flori-Tourism,**
- l. **Geo-Tourism (fossil study),**
- m. **Fairs-Festivals Tourism,**
- n. **Wedding/Honeymoon Tourism**
- o. **Peace /Health Rejuvenation Tourism**
- p. **Heli Tourism**
- q. **Monsoon Tourism**
- r. **Cave Tourism**
- s. **Akant Vas & Agyat Van Vas**
- t. **Developments of lakes and wetlands**
- u. **Wayside Amenities- at every 10 Kms distance**
- v. **Arts Crafts and Souvenir**
- w. **Premium Destinations**

### **Action Plans:**

There are different classes of Tourism interests for both in the domestic and International tourism and the competition is very high. We have to catch up the new market and also to sustain the existing market and hence this aspect would be given highest priority with professional management along with updating the State of World market for tourism.

- **Culture:** Sikkim has unique cultural heritage, but till now, it could not be projected as a tourism product. The stake holders in these areas need to be promoted in well planned manner with well defined and professional events/ programme so that tourists especially come to get the benefit of it. Monuments, Pilgrimage places, Historical sites and other cultural sites and programme shall be listed as annual events with fixed dates & their themes.
- **Rivers, Streams, lakes and Hot Spring:** For special interests tourists important river side's of Teesta, Rangeet and others will be developed in well managed forms for water sports, Camping sites, Hydro tourism and many more new concepts. Some of the manmade or natural lake shall be promoted for water sports. Hot spring site would be developed and promoted with due care to environment of the area. River Front development will be undertaken at select locations by developing embankments, parks, walkways, food & shopping points and open air theatres.
- **Traditional Cuisines:** It has unmatched world market and becoming increasingly popular. There is need to established a “**Sikkim Culinary Institute**” (SCI) that will research and document ancient culinary traditions, create a highly skilled

workforce of culinary professionals that can populate not only hotels and catering establishments in India, but also internationally, serving to promote Sikkim internationally. This will provide healthy food and employment.

- **Rural/ Village Tourism & Home Stay:** This product has a huge potential in Sikkim as all the villages are being well developed to have all basic amenities and have the god gifted landscape which is unmatched. The momentum has already picked up and will be given the right motivation and direction. This will be promoted as Primary Tourism Product to spread tourism and its socio- economic benefits to the masses. It will be well regulated with suitable area specific rules and guidelines in place.
- **Forests & Wildlife Tourism:** This is an integral part of eco-tourism. Sikkim has the highest network of National Park, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Biosphere Reserve and the unique Forest areas that perhaps not have been fully explored to its potential for tourism. The quality of tourists facilities available will be enhanced, improved with modern visitor information, interpretation centers, safety & security, guides and the entry will be regulated by charging entry charges/ fees. The revenue generated shall be ploughed back to the same area for its management and up gradation. For this special eco-tourism guides will be trained & promoted.
- **Bio-diversity Tourism:** Sikkim is one of the Hot- Spot of the Biodiversity world and hence, it has a great potential for researcher, educationists, students and nature lovers' types of tourists both domestic and international. Since, this is our rich wealth; it will be well regulated with compulsory guide/ interpreters with each group and well watched entry and outlets to check the bio piracy.
- **Unique Adventure:** Sikkim is also a HOT-SPOT for adventure tourism. Entire State being Himalayas is an Adventure State. Though adventure activities are picking up fast but it could not be done in professional manner. It goes without saying that Sikkim has an immense potential for adventure tourism related activities. Trekking and Mountaineering are by far the most vibrant and visible adventure tourism activities in Sikkim and have much wider marketing prospects along with other adventure activities.
- **Domestic Tourism:** This class mostly prefers recreational pursuits and leisure and its growth is very high. And hence more spot in urban & nearby areas will be developed and nearby villages of urban areas will be promoted as home Stay to provide this class a unique experience and other products of tourism. Weekend /day tourism will also be promoted for quick weekend retreats, picnic and cultural shows etc.
- **MICE Tourism: Meetings, Incentives, Convention and Exhibition-**For this product of tourism, Sikkim has very wide potential for many obvious reasons specially climate & landscape. The suitable venues along with all the facilities, transport, and communication will be developed. This will certainly promote the quality tourism and also bring the investment to Sikkim. Steps will be taken to promote corporate

tourism and a directory for the same will be prepared. Tourism oriented expositions at land mark venues will also be the part of this activity.

- **Eco-Tourism:** In Sikkim over 82% of the geographical area is under forest land use and more than 42.55 % area is under Protected Area Network i.e. under Wildlife and Biosphere Reserve. The entire state is Eco-Green- Pollution Free. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, in its national conference held at Gangtok on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2009 has declared Sikkim as “**ECO-TOURISM DESTINATION**”. Sikkim is the most eco-friendly State not only in the country but also in the world and is managing its natural resources in most efficient manner. The State offers a new era of nature enjoyment and learning. It provides visitors an excellent exposure of all climatic zones.
- **Wellness Tourism:** This will be developed and promoted as Sikkim’s most unique tourism product. The State being peaceful, environmental friendly, rich in medicinal plants, it will provide the holistic healing and rejuvenation of the people from every dimension- physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. In doing so, it would render a great service to the humankind making them healthy and efficient.
- **Organic Tourism:** Sikkim has already been declared as Organic State. This will promote the wellness tourism along with traditional cuisines. The Chief Minister of Sikkim, Shri Pawan Chamling, made a declaration in the Budget session of Sikkim Legislative Assembly in February, 2003 to make Sikkim an Organic State with doing away of the use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, plant growth regulators and additives in the state. This decision has been arrived at with the objective to achieve an economically and environmentally sustainable production system of agriculture and to promote soil, plant, animal, human and environmental health and well being.
- **Unique Lodging Products:** A varieties of accommodations having different taste & feelings such as Akant Vas & Agyat Van Vas, River side, Hill top, Home Stay, Pilgrimage huts, Tea in Lodge, High Class Camping etc. which have Unique Selling Propositions (USPs) will be created in Government, private & PPP mode.
- **Shopper’s Paradise:** The shopping is recognized as an integral part of the tourism experience and a most valuable contributor to employment, income and revenue. The development of dedicated shopping centers for traditional crafts, costumes, jewelry etc. designed on the lines of ethnic village haat, Shilpbusty ( Craft Village) will be developed and encouraged with incentives from the Government in the initial stage. The availability of information on where to procure is very important and it will be made available in the form of a Directory and “**Made in Sikkim**” shall be controlled through regulation and quality control.
- **Arts Crafts and Souvenir:** Arts, crafts and souvenir are the integrated part of tourism industry and it will be developed and promoted on a top priority for generation of employment and income. It may be developed by Government undertakings and private sectors. Along with it, the standardized packing also needs to be taken up as its integral part. The items will be on all aspects of State

such as culture, folk, pilgrimage, events, places, nature, landscape, Forests & wildlife, Mountains, monuments, history and many more.

- **Fairs and Festival:** Sikkim is a land of fairs and festivals. In last one decade, its promotional aspect has been very encouraging. Now, there is need to make them more attractive, targeting the tourists on well defined theme and spread over all the seasons. Their time and dates will be fixed, organized in more professional manner and will be given wide publicity. This is a major contribution in National Integration.
- **Pilgrimage Tourism:** Pilgrimage tourism has witnessed a growth of 20-25 % in the year 2008 in India and has very bright future in Sikkim as a major chunk of domestic tourists are pilgrims. Buddhists circuit is coming up very well with Guru Padama Sambhava Statue, Buddha Park, Chen-Regi Statue and a high network of world famous monasteries. New unique destinations like Chardham, many temples and other pilgrimage places, sacred lakes, sacred rocks & caves etc. offer a wide range of pilgrimages in Sikkim.
- **Premium Tourists Destinations:** This is a new area of tourism product and the clean, fresh, peaceful, unpolluted & invigorating environment offer Premium Tourists destination for Sikkim, a preferred destination to relax and unwind. Under this, it is to propose that undiscovered spots/ areas that are worth to visit for quiet holidays spent amidst the splendour of nature away from the crowds will be developed and promoted in its natural form.
- **Package Tours, Rates & Pre-Paid Taxi:** With the objective of boosting tourist traffic and enriching experience, quality and content of tourism products, attractive package tours will be developed and promoted with the help of STDC, private sector, tours operators and travel agencies. For prime destinations special package would be considered. Transport rates, Service charges and miscellaneous expenditure for all important circuits and destinations will be notified. Pre-paid taxi system and other modern facilities on-line booking & telephone call services will be introduced on priority and will be well supervised and monitored.
- **Services and Human Resources Development (Capacity Building and Skill Development):** In the area of tourism services, the private sector will be expected to play a key role in running the businesses of travel and tour operators, hospitality, guides, tourism equipments providers, transport services, taxis, consultancy, event management, educational institutions and many more. Being a highly competitive industry, these services should be of high standard and to ensure hassle free services to the tourists, they have to be regulated properly. The demand for manpower in the tourism sector has been exceeding the supply. The tourism industry needs professional qualified and trained personnel at all levels whether managerial, supervisory and supportive staff to manage and maintain the facilities and services of international standard.
- **Involvement of Gram Panchayats & Municipalities:** Local bodies will play crucial role in planning, development, implementation and management of tourism

products in their areas as they are directly implementing many programmes for the development of their areas.

- **Hygiene- Solid- Waste Management:** The State Government has already taken up action on this front and more concrete actions have been planned. The severe penalties will be imposed on violators. The “**Total Sanitation of Sikkim**” is the goal of the Government by ensuring healthy sanitary conditions and safe drinking water for the entire State, not for tourist destinations alone. Effective management and supervision in this regard will be provided by local offices of Government with the help and involvement of NGOs, Tourism Development Committees, Stakeholders, Hotels, Industries and citizens/tourists as well.
- **Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation (STDC):** This is an important organization of Tourism Department and needs to strengthen. It should widen its areas of marketing, generate resources, developed professionalism and also have the better co-ordination with all the sectors.
- **Heli Tourism:** The Sikkim Government is in need of a twin engine helicopter service having the sitting capacity about 14 to 20 numbers. It may be in PPP mode and operated by the helicopter operators on their own cost. At present there about 11 nos. of helipads/ heliports and many more to come up in near future. The twin engine heli-service has been approved by the Government of India and the State Government. The Heli service will extend the reach of higher end tourists to the delights of naturally and geographically rich hinterland. The promotion of the Heli service Tourism for remote areas, Heli Rural Darshan, Heli-Adventure, Fairs & Festivals etc. etc. will be started.
- **Development and Beautification of Urban Areas:** Remodeling of MG Marg, Gangtok and Namchi Bazar has already been done and it is being followed in other Bazars & towns of Sikkim. Mall roads, Branded shopping streets and malls in all the urban towns have been planned and are under implementation.
- **Tourist Police, Safety & Security and Rescue:** The State Government has already decided for the creation and establishment of multipurpose special Tourism Police/Security which can provide information, security, safety, courtesy, guidance and hospitality. They will be provided with special uniform/ distinguishing mark and will assist the tourists. They will be specially selected and trained for working at tourist destinations. They will be provided necessary equipments for communication and transport. At all the tourist destinations at least one room with attached toilet and at major destinations sufficient accommodation will be created as a part of project cost.

Necessary signage's, warning & cautions and help line information will be in place at all key locations and points.

Adequate facilities will be developed to provide high level rescue system for adventure sports and other tourism related activities. This will include provision for various rescue equipments like recovery vans, repling, piten, jumar, walkie-talkie sets, medical assistance etc.

- **Complaints, Grievance and Suggestions:** Tourists some time face harassment from taxi drivers, hotel owners, shopkeepers, vendors and others during their visit to various destinations. In order to ensure the confidence in system, the Government has established a strong complaint, grievance and suggestion cell within the Tourism Department. It will further be strengthened with the help of efficient-linkage between Departments and service providers. Immediate redressal of problem will be taken up, with on-line approach.
- **Private Sector Investment & Single window clearances:** The private investment in infrastructure development and service sectors will not only welcomed but also facilitated. The priority areas will be: setting up of hill station, spas, resort, luxury & budget accommodations, Heli services, tourists centres, multiplexes, parking areas, wayside amenities, entertainment centres, amusement parks, ropeways, golf course, skiing, adventure sports, skywalk, Tourism related Institutions, transport, wellness tourism, hospitality & services, Information System and other feasible activities as may be decided by the Government from time to time. At present, a number of agencies are involved to complete the various formalities and hence, it is time consuming & discouraging. The government will create a single window clearance system with simplified procedure. Land availability is another area which is also discouraging at present and hence for integrated development, the State Government would like to create a sufficient “Land Bank” and provide the land to investors as per the State Government norms.
- **Incentives and Concession:** The return in the tourism sector is not regular and immediate. To promote and encourage the entrepreneurs and to provide self-employment opportunities to local residents, encourage maximum participation of host communities in tourism sectors, it is propose to provide some concessions and incentives in the tourism sectors.
- **Awards & Appreciations:** To promote and encourage the excellence in the tourism sector, the Government will institute monetary and non-monetary awards & appreciations for all the sectors of tourism including Tourist police/ security and others for their outstanding contribution.
- **Legal Support and Effective regulations:** Appropriate legislation and rules will be formulated & enforced so that the entire tourism industry is properly regulated to have the better managed infrastructures and services in place. The Sikkim Registration of Tourist Trade Act, 1998 and The Sikkim Registration of Tourist Trade Rules, 2008 are already enforced and are being implemented along with the other relevant Acts & Rules of the State Government. There should be regular inspection and checking of all tourism related business such as Hotels, Travel & Tour operators, Establishments Government or Private.
- **Revenue & Financial Resources:** Revenue is the first need for the success of any industry or sector, to provide better services, to provide better facilities and perks to employees and to sustain the development, its management & maintenances. The contribution to State GDP has to be enhanced to service the tourism sector.

- **Creation and Management of World Class Infrastructure:** Infrastructure is first foundation of any industry and in case of tourism, it is not only the infrastructure but also the quality and services are the essence of tourism. The State has already adopted the policy of integrated development to strengthen and provide the international standard infrastructure for tourism sector. The action needs better cooperation and coordination from the Tourism Department and will take proactive measures. The well maintained road network is very vital for the tourism as in case of Sikkim most of the tourists destinations, sites, points entirely depends upon roads only. At present Sikkim is not connected by direct rail network. Recently in November 2009, the foundation stone for railway line up to Rangpo was laid down and target is to complete by 2015 and in the next phase, it may be up to Gangtok and then to Nathula. The Sikkim (Pakyong) Airport shall be completed as per schedule and process for having flights from desired places shall be started and all formalities should be completed by the time of airport become operational.
- **Accommodation:** This is the most important priority area. Special efforts have already been initiated to develop and upgrade tourism accommodation in uniform manner at all tourist destinations keeping in view the requirement and spending capacity of different categories of tourists. Apart from the State Government, Hotels, private, PPP mode, Guest houses, Lodges and Village tourism/ Home stay has been planned and being implemented. Along with the old establishments, all new hotels and other accommodation/ establishments will have the architecture which blends with the local environment.
- **Modern Wayside Amenities- Washrooms-Motels:** To make road journeys more pleasant, safe & secure, composite highway stopover or way side facilities will be developed and encouraged to be constructed on all highways. The State Government has already decided to create and establish modern wayside amenities/ washrooms/ motels at a distance of 10 km on the road side of each road. Such 63 locations have already been identified and approved. The land acquisition of about 2 acres at each location and works started. It will have all the modern amenities, restaurant, souvenir shop, information counter, public conveniences, park, lounge with all facilities, disabled facilities, retiring rooms, Police control room, vehicle repairing centre, local handicrafts/ costumes/ jewelry shop and local food shops etc. They will be developed by Government, private and PPP mode.
- **Tourism Administration and Management:** The existing Tourism Department administration needs a major reforms keeping in mind the vision and goal that tourism is going to be the main economy of the State. In doing so, it will be most essential to provide and place the officials and staffs who have the aptitude and attitude for tourism, hospitality, Specialists, experts and professionals. All Institutions & Centers of tourism like Institute of Hotel Management (IHM), Food Craft Institute (FCI), Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation (STDC) and all Centres of Excellence should be headed by experts and professionals only. At all the State entry points like Rangpo, Melli, Reshi and Police check post points like Nathula axis, Yumethang axis etc. sufficient accommodation/ facilities will be created for District Administration and Police to handle the emergent situation as a part of tourism administration and management.

- **Strategies for Effective Marketing:** The current traditional marketing approach will be changed to one that of more aggressive and competitive as the competition for the tourists from source market is fierce. We have to compete in these markets and have to use more modern, professional and targeted market tools.
- **Creating Sikkim Tourism Brand Position:** In the national and international market, Sikkim requires a positioning Statement that captures the true essence of the State and its image which will become its “BRAND” for tourism industry. And hence, it is an urgent need to market the tourist destinations of Sikkim by creating a Brand Name. Brand Name emanates out of USPs (Unique Selling Points). Suggestions to create brand name (Brand Name Contest) have been invited from Citizens, Intellectuals, Media/ Press, Students, Employees from within the State and outside the state. This is under process and would be decided at the earliest.
- **Market Information & Analyses:** The complete information on the market needs to be made available and it is expected for any important business sector. Information and analyses on pricing, security, health, safety, market for new tourism product, quality and quantity of tourist, behavior of tourists, socio-economic impacts, influence of media and internet and other information systems, revenue, employment, human resources, market competitor, and many more areas will be mandatory and this will be done by the STDC and Publicity wing of the Department. The findings of this will help to guide our plans, programme & strategies for implementation. In order to ensure the continuing development of the tourism industry, collection of accurate data on tourist arrivals, nationality, length of stay, purpose of visit, area of interest, our drawbacks in Sikkim tourism as well as the feedback on the products, conditions and experiences is absolutely necessary. For this the services of a professional local agency will be obtained along with the Departmental collection.

### **Responsible Tourism:**

Recognising that Responsible Tourism is not a product; it is an approach and which can be used by travellers and holidaymakers, tour operators, accommodation and transport providers, visitor attraction managers, planning authorities, national, regional/provincial and local government. An integrated approach will be strengthened and implemented involving many stakeholders in any place or space which attracts tourists.

Responsible Tourism now has to focus on the economic participation of local people as direct owners in the business of tourism not just as beneficiaries of charity. Tourism has to contribute to socio-economic development by supporting the conservation of natural and cultural heritage. Tourism has to provide opportunities for employment at the community level. Government and tourism enterprises can make a significant contribution by changing their procurement practices and supporting local entrepreneurs to develop the quality and quantity of their goods and services to meet market demands.

Tourism needs to prove its link with poverty reduction rather than relying on the concept of trickledown. Government and development agencies need to address the challenge of spreading the benefits of tourism geographically and to the poor.

### **Governance:**

Governance is a major challenge often central to engaging all the stakeholders to achieve change. Local government has overall responsibility to bring together the efforts of destination stakeholders through dialogue in multi-stakeholder forums to establish responsible destinations rather than pockets of responsibility in destinations. “Joined-up government”, a “whole of government approach”, going “beyond the silo” are expressions used in different societies to make the point that the management of tourism cannot be achieved by the tourism department working alone.

### **Some Important Facts and Mile Stones for Sikkim Tourism:**

<b>Fields/Areas</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Mission</b>
<b>Tourist Destination</b>	<b>Most Sought</b>	<b>Best in the World</b>
<b>Contribution to State Domestic Product of Sikkim at Current Prices (2008-09)</b>	<b>About 4.6 % only from Trade, Hotels &amp; Restaurants, excluding Transport, Power, Agri/ Hrti/ AnHusb, Employment, Foreign Exchange and other related</b>	<b>About 10 % only from Trade, Hotels &amp; Restaurants, excluding Transport, Power, Agri/ Hrti/ AnHusb, Employment, Foreign Exchange and other related</b>
<b>Employment</b>	<b>About 40,000 Directly</b>	<b>About 75,000 Directly by 2015</b>
<b>Domestic Tourists</b>	<b>2003-1,76,659</b> <b>2009-6,15,628</b>	<b>About-10,00000 by 2015 with quality</b>
<b>International Tourists</b>	<b>2003-11,966</b> <b>2009-18,000</b>	<b>About-40,000 by 2015 with quality</b>
<b>Awards</b>	<b>More than 16 Nos</b>	<b>All the Best Awards</b>
<b>Accommodation</b>		
<b>Hotels/Lodges</b>	<b>Hotels-656 Nos</b> <b>Rooms-6423Nos</b> <b>Beds-13,127 Nos</b>	<b>Hotels-about-1100Nos</b> <b>Rooms-15,000 Nos</b> <b>Beds-30,000 Nos</b>
<b>Travel Agents</b>	<b>About-260 Nos</b>	<b>About-520 Nos</b>

<b>Trained Manpower</b>	<b>About-1200 Nos</b>	<b>About-17513Nos</b>
<b>Home stay</b>	<b>Houses -103 Nos Capacity-357 Nos</b>	<b>Houses-1600 Nos Capacity-4500 Nos</b>

I am happy the way tourism has progressed and I want it to be a new age profession. I must confess that it was a difficult job to market the State as tourist destination. I would like this industry to indulge and engage the generation next. Most of the economists are agreed that tourism growth in coming years is assured. My Government is committed for sustainable tourism, Green and Clean Tourism, Quality Tourism and Safe/ Secure Tourism. At present this is first generation profession in Sikkim and I hope that the second generation will be more prepared and accept is as their main profession.

Thank You,

Sincerely Yours

Pawan Chamling

Chief Minister of Sikkim

