

Gangtok, July 11: (IPR) The first day of the Seventh session (Part III) of the Ninth Assembly saw the presentation of the First Supplementary Demands for Grants for the financial year 2018-19 by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Shri Pawan Chamling who is also the Minister in Charge for Finance, Revenue and Expenditure Department.

The session began with the Speaker (SLA) Shri K.N.Rai reading the Obituary Reference on the demise of Late Shri Gopal Lamichaney, former Member of Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

Speaker, Sikkim Legislative Assembly, Shri K.N. Rai in his Obituary Reference said that the passing away of Late Shri Gopal Lamichaney, former Member of Sikkim Legislative Assembly is a huge loss for the State of Sikkim. After attaining formal education from Khamdong Sr. Secondary School, Late Shri Lamichaney worked as a private photographer. He became a Member of the 5th State Legislative Assembly in 1994 and later became an MLA for the second time in 1999. He worked actively for the welfare of the society and was involved in a lot of social work in his Constituency.

Speaker Shri K.N. Rai, in his Obituary Reference, remembered Late Shri Lamichaney as a humble person who worked selflessly for the society. He expressed heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and wished them strength and forbearance to deal with the loss.

Leader of the House, Chief Minister Shri Pawan Chamling, in his Obituary Reference paid tribute to Late Shri Gopal Lamichaney.

Born on 9th March, 1952 to parents Shri Buddhiman Lamichaney and Smt Ratna Maya Lamichaney in Khamdong, he breathed his last on 12th June, 2018 at Central Referral Hospital Manipal , Gangtok, after his fight with prolong illness. He is survived by his two sons and two daughters.

Shri Chamling said that the passing away of Late Shri Gopal Lamichaney has left a huge void in the Sikkimese society and humanity as a whole. He remembered him as a man of good thoughts and principles.

The Leader of the House also threw light on the professional journey of Late Shri Gopal Lamichaney. He contested the Assembly elections in 1994 as SDF candidate from Khamdong- Singtam Constituency and won the election with an emphatic margin. During this tenure, he served as Chairman, Land Use & Environment Board, Chairman, Estimates Committee and Chairman, State Bank of Sikkim. He was re-elected as MLA for the second consecutive term in the year 1999. Consequently, he was appointed as Chairman, Estimates Committee, Chairman, Public Assurance Committee and Chairman of Electricity Advisory Board. Shri Lamichaney made notable contribution towards the welfare of the State and the people. A dedicated and popular social worker, Shri Lamichaney helped many people during their time of distress, be it during sickness or assisting people in finding employment. He was instrumental in establishing 'Jeewan Jyoti Sangathan'- an NGO dedicated to provide healthcare through ayurvedic treatment to the people. As the President of the Organization, Shri Lamichaney played a pivotal role in organizing many health camps.

In recognition of his service and contributions, Shri Gopal Lamichaney was conferred the 'Friendship Award' by Friendship Forum of India, New Delhi at a seminar on 'Economic Growth and National Unity'.

Being a prominent leader of the Scheduled Caste community, Shri Lamichaney worked actively for their upliftment and interest. As a Member of Biswakarma Kalyan Samity and All Sikkim Scheduled Caste Association, he vigorously pursued matters related to the community at all forums. He was a worthy recipient of 'Dr Ambedkar Distinguished Service Award', bestowed by Bharatiya Dalit Sahitya Akademi.

The Leader of the House expressed his deep condolence and anguish on his passing away and prayed that his soul may rest in eternal peace..

Thereafter, the House observed two minutes silence as a mark of respect to the departed soul.

The obituary reference was also participated by Members of the House, Shri A.K.Ghatani, Shri Somnath Poudyal, Shri G.M.Gurung and Shri Sonam Lepcha.

During the Question Hour, the Member of the house, Shri Rup Narayan Chamling put forth his question to Rural Management Development Department on distribution of GCI Sheets in the state. In his reply, the Minister-in-Charge, Shri S.B Subedi said that from 2000 till 2010-11, the state government has distributed a total of 46500 GCI sheets to the beneficiaries. In 2011-12, 3000 people benefitted under this scheme, in 2014 a total of 6400 beneficiaries received the GCI sheets and in 2017-18, it was a total of 17869 beneficiaries. From 2000 to till date, a total of 73769 people have benefitted under this scheme.

The Minister-in-Charge, Shri S.B Subedi on his reply about the CMRHM, IAY and REDRH schemes said that a total of 25048 houses have been constructed under CMRHM scheme, 15944 houses have built under IAY scheme and 7972 houses have been constructed under REDRH scheme till date.

Member of the house, Shri Kunga Nima Lepcha in his next question asked the Minister-in-Charge of Finance, Revenue and Expenditure Department about the recent statement of the Chief Minister on the per capita income of Sikkim being shown as Rs. 291373 during 2016-2017 as compared to Rs. 9300 during 1993-1994. He said that the increase in per capita income in past two decades is shown as 3033% and asked as to which sectors have been the contributors towards Gross State Domestic Products.

In reply to this, Minister-in-Charge of Finance, Revenue and Expenditure Department, Shri Pawan Chamling stated that in the state of Sikkim, the manufacturing and power sector are the two major contributors to the growth of Gross State Domestic Products (GSDP). The commissioning of the hydro power projects, setting of industries particularly the Pharmaceutical industries has contributed to the increase in the growth of GSDP and per capita income. A significant part of GSDP growth is also contributed by sectors like Banking, Construction, Communication and Public Administration.

Minister –in-Charge of Human Resource Development Department, Shri R.B. Subba replying to the question of Member of the House, Shri R.N Chamling

informed that three Government Colleges namely; Sikkim Government College Gyalshing, West Sikkim, Government Vocational College, Dentam, West Sikkim and Government Arts College, Mangshila, North Sikkim are being run from rented/hired premises. Minister, Shri R.B Subba further said that the Government College, Gyalshing has shifted to its permanent campus, Aarigaon in the month of June and it will be functional from the new campus from the new academic session (July 2018).

In his reply to Member of the House, Shri R.N Chamling, Minister-In-Charge HRDD, Shri R. B Subba said that the fund amounting to Rs. 12 Cr. has been sanctioned under the component of Model Degree College under RUSA for Arts College, Mangshila. Fund amounting to Rs. 26 Cr has also been sanctioned under the Component-New College (Professional) for Government Vocational College, Dentam and that the Department will initiate the tender process for construction of the two colleges very soon.

The Minister also informed that the Boys' and Girls' hostel at Namchi Government College, Kamrang, South Sikkim was completed in October, 2013 and minor repair works of the hostel was carried out in 2015. The procurement of furniture is under process and once the furniture is procured, he said that hostel will be made operational.

On the question of the area of Nar Bahadur Bhandari Degree College, Tadong, the Minister said that the land has a total area of 22.10 acres and land was acquired during 1980 for the establishment of the college. As per records, the said land is in the name of Human Resource Development Department.

The Member of house, Shri Kunga Nima Lepcha put forth his question to the leader of the house, Shri Pawan Chamling, who is also the Minister-in-Charge of Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms and Training regarding the rationale for accepting the recommendation of the 5th Pay Committee for the National Fixation of Pay from 01.01.2016 but the arrears to be paid from January 01, 2017.

In his reply, Minister-in-Charge for Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms and Training, Shri Pawan Chamling informed the house that a duly constituted Pay Committee consisting of very well experienced and senior most level officers has made the recommendation to that effect after examining all the factors covered by its Terms of Reference as well as recommendations of many other similarly placed states. The Committee has made such a recommendation taking into consideration the requirement of economic development of the entire State population on the one hand and ensuring that the employees would not lose out on their pay in the long run, especially at the time of the retirement.

On the question of how the government proposes to compensate 50 thousand odd Government Employees the loss of one year pay revision arrears, the Minister-in-Charge replied that the question of loss due to unilateral decision does not arise as it is the prerogative of any government to accept the recommendation of the independent Commissions/Committees in the overall interest of the state. He said it must be understood that, unlike in cases of many other states, employees pay is not going to be effected in the long run as they will get the benefits of raised pay from 01.01.2016 although arrears would only be payable from 01.01.2017.

On the next question, by Member of the House, Shri K.N Lepcha on the grounds for substantial percentage reduction of HRA from 15% to 12%, SBA from 10% to 8% when price index has skyrocketed over a time, the Minister-in-Charge Shri Pawan Chamling replied that reduction in the rates of allowance is only “small”, and not substantial. Even at the rationalized rates, the allowance is going to increase, in an average, by 2.056 times.

During Zero Hour, Member of the House, Shri K.N Lepcha put forth a question to Minister-in-charge for Building and Housing Department, Shri D.T. Lepcha on the Stairway to Heaven Project at Daramdin. The Minister replied that during 2003-04, tender was floated for a small amount but later due to increase in the size of the project it was retendered for a larger amount so that the said project could be completed properly and within the stipulated time frame i.e. 2019.

The Chief Minister also the Minister-in-Charge of Finance, Revenue and Expenditure Department, Government of Sikkim presented the Demands for Excess Grants and Appropriation for the Financial Year 2011-12.

The discussion and voting on the above two Demands would take place in the subsequent sitting of the Assembly on July 12th, 2018.

In the Legislative Business, several Bills were introduced on the floor of the House. Shri R.B.Subba, Hon’ble Minister-in-charge of Law, Legal, Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Department introduced the Sikkim Lokayukta (Amendment) Bill, Bill No 17 of 2018.

Shri Pawan Chamling, Hon’ble Chief Minister also the Minister-in-charge of Land Revenue & Disaster Management Department introduced the Sikkim Regulation of Transfer of Land (Second Amendment) Bill, Bill No.18 of 2018.

Shri R.B.Subba, Hon’ble Minister-in-charge of Human Resource Development Department introduced the Vinayaka Missions Sikkim University (Amendment) Bill, Bill No. 19 of 2018.

The discussion and voting on the above Bills will take place on July 12th, 2018.

