

Gangtok, July 30: (IPR) State Level Panchayat Sammelan for Rural and Urban Local Bodies was held at Manan Kendra today. The function had the Chief Minister Mr Pawan Chamling as the Chief Guest and it also had the presence of Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Ministers, MLAs, Zilla Adhakshyas, Up-Adhakshyas, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Advisor, Chairpersons, HODs, Zilla and Gram Panchayat Members.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said that Panchayats are the main facilitators of state government's policies and thus they have to be more pro-active so that people do not lose faith in democracy and the Panchayati Raj system. He stressed that the main purpose of the Panchayati Raj system is to make people work in tandem with the system thereby focusing on result oriented developments with strong ideologies governed by hard work and passion to make the state more advanced.

Mr Chamling asked the Panchayats present to delve into the progress and developments that has taken place in the last 24 years. He reminded them that before Panchayats were never paid salary and they had virtually no role in the state government machinery. With the decentralization of power the state government has developed an economic and political system whereby people's preferences and requirements are addressed firsthand and he also mentioned that Sikkim is the only state where Discretionary Fund is provided to the Panchayats. He said that CMRHM work has to be completed at war footing and instructed the Panchayats, BDOs and MLAs to ensure that all incomplete CMRHM houses be completed as quickly as possible.

The Chief Minister instructed that unutilized government lands should be allotted to 'Sukumbasis'. If government land is not sufficient, private land at government rate may be purchased and for this Panchayats and MLAs should work in tandem to ensure that houses are constructed for them. House Allotment Orders which was distributed during 2014 should also be looked into and Panchayats should fulfill the needs of those people who are still deprived. Houses which are in better condition to reside should be granted House Upgradation allotment by the Panchayats, the Chief Minister announced.

Mr Chamling also announced that Rs. 1000 crore schemes will be sanctioned during the month of August and works upto Rs 2 crore will be tendered at Panchayat level itself. He however stressed that priority should be given to the unemployed youths of those areas and they should find sustainable areas of employment where they become self-sufficient and self-reliant. The Chief Minister also announced that any household without an earning member having unemployed Graduate children will be given employment as an MR in any of the Departments. He also announced that one outlet in every Organic Vegetable Market in Gangtok and the districts has been allotted to every Gram Panchayat Unit (GPU), and Panchayats have to ensure that there is no discrepancy.

Talking about the success of Panchayati Raj in the state, the Chief Minister said that Sikkim as a brand has become famous not just in the country but throughout the world and we should not take its peace and security for granted. He said that the state government has worked tirelessly with the approach of holistic development of all with no differentiation or discrimination on the

ground of caste, creed, gender or religion. The Chief Minister appealed to the people of Sikkim to come forward to resist and condemn casteist politics and live in perfect harmony which the state is famous for.

He further said that Panchayats should initiate a system of constructive debate and dialogue with the people to bring about solution to every problem. Every public representative should work with a problem-solving attitude, he stressed.

Minister, RM&DD Shri S.B. Subedi in his address lauded the good work being done by the Panchayats to fulfill the aspirations of the people. He laid stress on the need to complete the construction of CMRHM houses on priority. He also urged the Panchayats to work with one-pointed focus and determination to overcome all challenges that come in the way of development.

Secretary, RM&DD, Mr D.R. Nepal in his address gave a brief report on the latest developments in Panchayati Raj and Urban Local Bodies. He maintained that the Panchayat in the State have been empowered through training and capacity building programmes by the competent faculty at SIRD, Karfectar. He made a call for completion of all the CMRHM houses by mid August.

Earlier, the Chief Minister released the posters created by the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) Cell of the RM&DD to raise awareness at grass root level about the upcoming Swachh Bharat Sarvekshan for the rural areas of Sikkim. A souvenir of the Sarvekshan was also presented to the Chief Minister by Minister RM&DD.



