

**Gangtok, April 7: (IPR)** World Health Day 2018 was observed today at Chintan Bhawan with the theme - 'Universal Health Coverage' with special focus towards Elimination of Tuberculosis by 2022. The programme was graced by Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Pawan Chamling as the chief guest.

The programme saw the launching of various programs and release of Booklets by the Chief Minister:

1. Release of Booklet on TB
2. Release of Operational Guidelines for HPV vaccination
3. Release of Global Audit Tobacco Survey (GATS- 2) Report
4. Distribution of Kayakalp Awards 2017-18.

The following Public Health Institutions received Awards for demonstrating high level of cleanliness, hygiene and infection free environment etc:

- a). District Hospital, Namchi
- b). District Hospital, Gyalshing
- c). Soreng PHD
- d). Pakyong PHC
- e). Temi PHC
- f). Chungthang PHC

5. Launching of Mobile Apps on Blood Donation
6. Launching of Denture distribution programme
7. Release of centenary souvenir of STNM Hospital

Chief Minister Shri Pawan Chamling was felicitated on the occasion by Government doctors of Sikkim and a short video on Tuberculosis was also screened on the occasion.

Earlier on his arrival, the Chief Minister inaugurated the Tuberculosis Mobile Van in the premises of Chintan Bhawan.

The programme had the presence of Ministers, MLAs, Chief Secretary, Chairpersons and Advisors, Government Doctors and staff from throughout the State, all District Collectors, BDOs, Panchayat fraternity, nagar Panchayat, senior officers of the Government, and Principals and students of various schools and colleges.

Earlier, Commissioner-cum-Secretary Health Shri Vishal Chauhan in his welcome address presented an overview of TB Programme in the State and highlighted the

Health initiatives taken by the Department under the guidance of Chief Minister Shri Pawan Chamling. He laid stress on the emphasis laid on the resolve of the State Government to Eliminate TB by 2022. He shared that the Government of India has adopted the model of Open Defecation Free strategy of the Sikkim Government for the elimination of TB from the country.

Chief Minister Shri Pawan Chamling in his address stated that we should not confine this important day to just a one day event, but should work round the year to make the Health of the people of Sikkim a high priority.

He expressed his welcome and best wishes to the doctors, officers of Health Department and everybody present on the occasion and urged the gathering to take the message of this day to the nook and corner of Sikkim.

He reiterated that health is our biggest wealth but we tend to neglect it and health is determined by both physical and mental health aspect for a happy life.

"Ten thousand years ago, there was hardly any incident of people falling ill and everyone lived a natural life free of any ailments. People were mentally sound and balanced and the food that was eaten those days were pure and natural. It is an irony that today even with the evolution of technology, people are falling ill," he stated. He added that this situation is man-made as we are adopting unhealthy practices and unless we make our life natural and align it to the laws of nature, we will not be healthy," He also added that most of our illness is psychosomatic nowadays and if we can learn to tame the mind we can lead a healthy and happy life. We have to adopt universal compassion and accept everybody as our own and we should all realise that the biggest parameter of development is healthy and happy life, he stated. "Clean air, clean water, clean food and independence is our basic needs which can make us happy and healthy," the Chief Minister added.

He also shared some health tips with the gathering.

He urged the doctors and health functionaries to raise awareness among the masses about tips to lead a healthy life.

The Chief Minister stated that Sikkim was the first state to start Hepatitis B Vaccination, Measles vaccine and now HPV Vaccine will also start and there are many other firsts in the State to ensure good health for the people of Sikkim. The Organic Mission is a noble idea and should be embraced and adopted for the larger good of the people of Sikkim.

"I have even offered my suggestion to the Central Government to put a ban on import of chemical fertilizers and make India an Organic country. The Government will save enormously on subsidy on fertilizers," he shared.

He also congratulated the Kayakalp Awardees, and for the important releases during the programme. The State Government is committed for the welfare of Doctors and health workers in the State, he reiterated.

Speaking on TB, the Chief Minister made some key announcements. The Government will grant Rupees five lakh to the GPU which makes the GPU TB Free, and ten lakhs to Zilla Panchayat which makes the Zilla TB free.

Further, Monthly allowance of Rs. 3000 each will be given to TB patients as nutritional support. He urged all officers , Panchayat, nagar panchayats , health workers to work out of their routine and work on mission mode to make Sikkim the first TB free state.

The programme was also addressed by Chief Secretary, Government of Sikkim, Shri A.K. Shrivastava.

The programme concluded with vote of thanks by Director Health Services - I, Dr. Uttam Pradhan.

