

Gangtok, January 11: To better understand the global issue on climate change in Sikkim, Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) and the technical service SEEDS in collaboration with the Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA) is having a two days training and policy workshop programme on Capacity Building Strategies for Managing Complex Disasters in the face of Climate Change with the theme "The First Organic State...Now Moving towards being the first Climate Smart State."

The workshop programme was sponsored by National Mission on Himalayan Studies and Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India.

The State Relief Commissioner cum Secretary, Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department, Mr. Tsegyal Tashi attended the inaugural session as chief guest and Former Dean of JNU, Prof. C.K Varshney was present as the keynote speaker.

Addressing the inaugural session, State Relief Commissioner cum Secretary, Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department, Mr. Tsegyal Tashi said, "climate change is a significant and emerging threat to Sikkim and from the last couple of years we are witnessing the extensive increase of temperature and it is a matter of serious concern for Himalayan state Sikkim. He also expressed his serious concern on the rapid infrastructure development and informed that Sikkim is going to have building code shortly in order to check the rapid infrastructure development taking place.

"We must be better prepared for unforeseen disasters by educating ourselves through this kind of capacity building strategies for managing complex disasters," he informed.

Prof. Varshney talked about the global environmental issues and sustainable development by throwing light on the wider environmental issues for sustainability. He also discussed about climate change, complex disaster, flash flood earthquake, importance of biodiversity, GLOF etc.

Prof. Varshney suggested the Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department to have the State Building codes to ensure that homes and infrastructure are not at risk in Sikkim and said that rapid and unplanned urbanization further increases the risks as Sikkim already falls on Seismic Zone IV region. Building codes will need to be strictly enforced and urban planning needs to be done so that the state is prepared for climate-related disasters.

Vice Chairman of SSDMA, Prof. Vinod K. Sharma also spoke about climate changes and how they are conducting awareness among local panchayats in rural Sikkim.

The programme was attended by Special Secretary, SSDMA, Mr. Rinzing Chewang, representative from IIPA, UNDP and stake holders.

