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Editor's Note

Dear All,
Student Unions are important as they act as a mediator between the administration and the student population. They have the power to work for the welfare of the students. Student Unions also help in organising events and addressing grievances. On these lines the Sikkim University Students' Association (SUSA) elections was held on 19th September 2018 and the elected members of the Executive Committee of SUSA were sworn into office on 24th September 2018. We congratulate and hope that the newly elected members of the Executive Committee of SUSA will work towards the benefit of all.

This issue of the SU Chronicle also highlights some of the events that were organised in the University and I hope you enjoy reading.

Kunjini Prakash Darnal

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One- Month Skill Development Programme

The Department of Horticulture conducted a one month skill development programme on Processing and Value Addition of Indigenous Fruits and Vegetables of Sikkim Himalaya in collaboration with Biotech Park Lucknow. The inaugural session of the programme was held on 17th September 2018 at the Conference Hall, Barad Sadan. Vice- Chancellor Prof. Jyoti Prakash Tamang presided over the inaugural session. Padmashree Prof. Pramod Tandon, CEO Biotech Park Lucknow and Prof. Rishi Shankar from Biotech Park Lucknow were present as special guests.

In his keynote address Padmashree Prof. Tandon spoke at length about the bio- diversity richness of North East India in general and Sikkim in particular. He also mentioned the need of developing skills for entrepreneurship in the youth. The objective of the one month long skill development programme is to inculcate the skills in processing and value addition of indigenous fruits and vegetables of Sikkim. Vice- Chancellor Prof. Jyoti Prakash Tamang stressed upon the consumer oriented bio- resource products and the need for authentication and certification of bio- resources in packaged food products.



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Village Information Centre in Minimising Rural- Urban Gap

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It is often heard and held that information is a valuable resource like any other infrastructural facility. Information of any type is fundamental to any decision-making process involved in any aspect of our daily lives, since lack of information may result in wrong decisions, availability of fewer options and may at times lead to misleading conclusions. Information/ awareness plays a significant role in our professional, personal and social lives.

When I was a student of Post Graduation at Banaras Hindu University and a doctoral fellow at Pondicherry University, I was always keen and passionate about doing something innovative which could inspire people in a positive way. Since that time I have realised the little representation of our people from North Eastern states in the Central Universities or Institutes of National Importance or any other centrally funded schemes or job opportunities. Gradually, I started realising that our people in the rural areas and the hilly places do not get proper information about many entrance examinations to universities and similar other opportunities. It is true that the government is trying its level best to leave no stone unturned in the development process of the state. Various development schemes and employment drives have been launched to supplement the growth process of the state. However, we have failed to involve the common people in the process of grabbing these opportunities, not because people are not interested but because of lack of information and awareness available to a large number of people living in the villages.

Due to lack of e- resource, people of the state lack information regarding the various aspects of life like education, business or any day-to-day activity which has got huge costs in terms of loss of opportunities. The people living in the villages lack basic information on subjects like education in terms of the opportunities available in various universities, various fellowships and programmes/ schemes which would have proved very beneficial for their career building. Similarly, our farmers lack advanced technical knowledge and information regarding various advanced methods of farming resulting in huge unaccounted losses in terms of lower productivity. Same is the story in other aspects of life. As a consequence of this huge information gap, the opportunities available to the people have really narrowed down and resulted in the shrinkage of choices available to the people- particularly the youth.

Given the role of information in human resource development, we cannot afford to ignore it. With the advent of e-resources, all information is readily available on the internet which is just a click away. However, where we lag behind is in its delivery to the people.

With the intention of minimising Urban- Rural gap, we have started a Village Information Centre (VIC) in 2014 at three villages in the remote Himalayan region of Sikkim. These three villages are Sudunlakha (Kopchey) and Tareythang in East Sikkim and Daramdin village in West Sikkim. The main aim of these Village Information Centres is to provide all the necessary information related to education in terms of opportunities available in various schools, colleges, universities, various fellowships and programmes or job schemes, various advanced technical knowledge and information on farming, various plans and policies of the Government which could be beneficial for the general public. Besides a notice board, it is a micro initiative initiated with the help of facebook page and a blog called Village Information Centre to spread out the information to the rural villages in Sikkim. With the help of the Village Information Centre, the main focus is on good governance which includes the issue of service delivery, empowerment, transparency and accountability. If applied effectively in the South Asian Countries like India, it may enhance the practice of e- governance and its sustainability at the village level.



Freshers Feel Homely in Sikkim University

Devraj Mahanta & Rasmi Pradhan, I Year, MA Mass Communication

In the month of July, Sikkim is flooded with students coming from places all over the country in order to enrol themselves in one of the outstanding institutions in the north east- Sikkim Central University. Sikkim University being one of the best institutions in the nation, offers a variety of courses to satiate the needs of a diverse number of students. The faculty, apart from enlightening the students, are concerned and supportive enough to provide every help regarding personal problems too. They guide students through every highs and lows and nurture pupils to be responsible individuals. Majority of the students do not belong to Gangtok. However, the University has plenty of amenities at their disposal to make the students feel at home. Hostel facilities help the students to adjust to the new environment and interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds. The welcoming nature of senior students comforts the newcomers making it an absolutely ragging free institution.

Although the University does not have a permanent campus it provides bus services to help the students travel from one department to another as most of the students are not familiar with Gangtok. The department buildings are spread out through an 11 km stretch starting from Ranipool to Kazi Road. "The weather is unpredictable but with time one gets accustomed to it", said Anushree Dey from Assam, Dept. of Psychology. One of the few requirements in Sikkim is an umbrella. Showers of rain is frequent and uninterrupted. Students have expressed their admiration for the facilities that the University provides, like the gym and library, which are exclusively for the use of the students of the University. For academic purposes, access to the internet is provided to all students and the students are provided with WiFi connectivity in the hostels and classrooms. "Although I was missing home and wanted to go back, I realised that my fellow students in SU are my second family since the freshers' welcome function and since that day I have been feeling much better and looking forward to the coming days", said Bijay Adhikari from Siliguri, Dept. of Geography. Being homesick is an issue for the new students. But as time passes the place becomes a second home and students easily get used to it.

"The university also organised for basic mountaineering course which was the first batch and also an expedition to Mount Burkhangtse in East Sikkim", said Kalyani Lama from Darjeeling, Dept. of Chinese. Such kind of co- curricular activities go hand in hand with studies. It replenishes the minds and gives a chance to escape from the hectic schedule. In spite of certain difficulties the authorities have always made the students their priority. Help centres like Samadhan have been established to help and support the students and women who face difficulties adjusting to a new place away from home. They also provide counselling to students who deal with various personal problems, depression and pressure from all sorts of competition and helps them overcome such issues. "The education system is one of the best in the country", said Nikhil Rai from Kurseong, Dept. of Mass Communication. The authorities are trying very hard to establish a proper campus in the coming years which could further enhance the quality of education and experience for the students making them look forward to a bright future. Besides infrastructure it is the dedication and full fledged devotion of the students which will help them pass out with flying colours.



Sikkim University Campus under construction at Yangang, South Sikkim

HINDI PAKHWADA 2018

The Hindi Fortnight or the Hindi Pakhwada was observed in the University from 4th September to 17th September 2018. During the fortnight many activities and competitions were organised for the students, faculty members, officers and non- teaching staff of the University.

The students participated in competitions like poetry recitation and essay competitions and the faculty members, officers and non- teaching staff participated in dictation, spelling competition, extempore, letter writing and noting. closing ceremony of the Hindi Pakhwada was held on 18th September 2018 in which the winners of the competitions was announced and the Vice- Chancellor, Registrar and Finance Officer presented certificates and consolation prizes.



Sikkim University Students' Association (SUSA) Elections 2018.

Election to various posts of Sikkim University Students' Association 2018 was held on 19th September 2018 at the Cauveri Hall of the University. Polling was conducted from from 8am to 3pm and the counting of votes took place on the same day from 4pm onwards. Chief Election Officer Prof. Silajit Guha had made elaborate arrangements for the smooth conduct of elections.

The newly elected members of the Executive Committee of SUSA were sworn into office on 24th September 2018. The Vice- Chancellor and Patron of SUSA Pof. Jyoti Prakash Tamang administered oath to the newly elected members of the Executive Committee of Sikkim University Students' Association (SUSA).

