



# Sikkim University *Chronicle*

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## Foundation Stone laid for University Campus at Yangang: President Shri Pranab Mukherjee stresses on Role of Education in Democracy



Recalling the glorious past when such institutions like Nalanda, Taxila and Vikramashila were great centres of learning where scholars from across the world visited in their quest for knowledge, President Shri Pranab Mukherjee was full of hopes that it is possible to restore those times in the coming days. In his address after unveiling the plaque for the foundation of the Sikkim University campus, Shri Mukherjee underscored the role of institutions of higher education in the making of India as a centre for knowledge and its inevitability in the building of a strong a vibrant India.

It is a matter of concern, he said, that none of the universities in India figure in the list of the 200 universities across the world as put out in a recent survey. He, however, hastened to add that there was no need to despair given the promise that is evident among the students and teachers whom he has been meeting, since he assumed the office of the President. Shri Mukherjee recalled his experience with a meeting he had with the vice-chancellors of the Central Universities in early February, 2013 where he had occasion to discuss on a whole gamut of issues.

In a brief but eloquent address at a function at the Manav Kendra, Gangtok, where he unveiled the plaque marking the laying of the foundation stone for the proposed campus on April 16, 2013, Shri Mukherjee underscored the need to walk a long distance to achieve the objectives. The President was slated to lay the foundation stone at the proposed site at Yangang but inclement weather and the logistical issues due to that led to shifting the venue to Gangtok. Shri Mukherjee is also the Visitor of the University and he promised to visit the campus once the construction work is over.

Invoking Aristotle to stress the importance of knowledge in a democracy, Shri Mukherjee held that

knowledge was indeed the basis for economic growth and stressed upon the inevitable nexus between information and knowledge in any society. Founding of the Sikkim University in 2007, he said, was bound to make a huge difference in filling the void that was felt in the area of higher education in Sikkim and went on to stress the need to walk the extra mile towards realizing the aspirations of the people of the region.

The President was accompanied on the dais by Shri B.P.Singh, Governor of Sikkim and the Chief Rector of the University and Shri Pawan Chamling, Chief Minister of Sikkim.

Addressing the gathering, Shri B.P.Singh invoked Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore on the importance of a dedicated group of teachers in the making of a university. That the teachers shall not only spread light and illuminate the society but also ensure that the students are enabled to do the same.

In his brief speech, Shri Chamling spelt out the efforts by the State Government in the past couple of decades to enhance the access to education in the State beginning with primary education and that the State Government has ensured, in this period, that at least 20 percent of the allocation in the State's budget had gone for education. Free text-books, accessories and uniforms, he stressed have brought about a sea change in the area of school education in the State, he added. In the same breadth, he added that the State Government has set up at least four colleges and that a Central Uni-



### ALSO SEE

- Seismic Concerns and Structural Precautions... page 3
- Seminars and Conferences... page 3
- Invited Lectures & Publications... page 4
- Women in the Media: Some Concerns... page 4
- Protest against rape: A photo feature... page 6



versity, he said was an integral part of that programme to foreground education in the Himalayan State.

Shri Chamling announced that over 300 acres of land has been handed over to the University and that he would carry the plaque, unveiled earlier by the President, to the site proposed for the Yangang campus. The Chief Minister also promised all necessary assistance for the making of the university campus into a centre for higher learning.

Welcoming the dignitaries, Shri N.K.Pradhan, Minister for Human Resources and Development, Government of Sikkim, stressed upon the critical role that a Central University will have in the making of Sikkim into an education hub. Prof. (Dr) T.B.Subba, Vice-Chancellor, proposed a vote of thanks before the function came to an end and the visiting dignitaries were entertained by



dances showcasing the diverse cultural life of Sikkim.

The plaque was taken to Yangang and installed at the

site for the university campus on April 18, 2013. A function attended by the people of Yangang and students from the various schools there marked the culmination of the ceremony. Like in the case of the function at Gangtok, the one in Yangang too was jointly organized by the Government of Sikkim and Sikkim University.

Addressing the gathering at Yangang, Prof (Dr) Subba, Vice-Chancellor, Sikkim University underscored the scope for gainful engagement in the immediate context even if the number of regular jobs for the people would be limited. He called upon the people to equip themselves with vocational skills that will be needed in the process of building the university campus and added that the university campus in Yangang will also help equip them with further skills in the long run. A university, he stressed, will remain in their midst for many decades and the scope for employment through skill development was bound to benefit them in the years ahead.

Chief Minister, Shri Chamling engaged the people assembled there on a variety of issues. Recalling the remoteness that marked the life of the people some 75 years ago, Shri Chamling underscored the changes that will be brought about in their lives with the coming of a Central University campus in Yangang. He expressed hope that the Sikkim University, a long cherished dream for the people of the region will emerge into a prominent

centre for learning on the lines of such centres across the world.

It is now a matter of time before the university relocates to its own campus at Yangang. Necessary steps to design, plan and construct the campus are already afoot.



## Editor's Note

A campus of our own is now a reality and it is only a matter of time that Sikkim University moves to Yangang. The foundation stone laying ceremony on April 16, 2013 and the installation of the plaque, unveiled by Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President of India and Visitor of Sikkim University, were the high points, insofar as the university is concerned in April. If the attendance at the function at Yangang is an indication, the people there are looking forward to the university campus in their midst. It is, indeed, a dream come true for the people of Sikkim as much as it is for the students, teachers and the non-teaching staff of the university. Sikkim University Chronicle joins the celebration and the editorial board considers this a milestone.

It has been our wish, right from the time we set out with the first issue of the Chronicle, that the students of the university contribute to this effort. And we at the editorial board have immense satisfaction this time. A candle light protest against the incidence of violence against women was certainly the most important event in April 2013 as far as we are concerned. The initiative to this came from Ms. Preethi Sharma from the Department of Law. The yard in front of our library building was where the students gathered with candles and there were a few members of the faculty who joined them too. Vice Chancellor Prof (Dr) T.B.Subba and the University Registrar, Shri K.M.Deb too participated in the protest.

We are privileged to report the event through images in this issue. Accompanying the photo feature is a write-up by Ms. Pooja Gupta from the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication on the laws and regulations involving depiction of women in the media where she also laments how these are violated with impunity.

We look forward to more of these in the months ahead.

Dr.V.Krishna Ananth  
Editor



## Seismic Concerns and Structural Precautions

*Dr. Rakesh Ranjan*

Dr. Arun Bapat, formerly the Head, Earth Quake Engineering Research Division at CWPRS Central Water and Power Research Station, Pune and Member of the Building Committee of Sikkim University, made a power presentation on "Campus Development of Sikkim University : Seismic Consideration" on April 20, 2013 at New Academic Building, Sikkim university. Prof (Dr) T.B.Subba, Vice Chancellor and Faculty members of the University attended the presentation. Dr. Bapat, in his presentation, spoke about the structural precautions that needed to be internalised while planning for the stability of the proposed structures in the campus at Yangang, South Sikkim. He showed photographs of various ancient

buildings which have survived hundreds of years even after earthquakes of magnitude of more than 8 on Richter scale.

The common feature of these buildings are circular/oval structure. He advocated the fusion of traditional methods of building houses with the new technology. As for the main buildings, Dr. Bapat emphasized the stability and importance of circular/oval structure where the impact of stress is minimized, in earthquake prone region like Sikkim. Underground storage tanks and compound walls were recommended. Doors opening outside were also emphasized. In his presentation, Dr. Bapat stressed upon the role of soil-holding grass to arrest erosion of soil was also highlighted.

## Seminars/Conferences

**Deep Moni Gogoi and Ugen Bhutia, MPhil scholars, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication,** presented a paper titled: Accommodating Diversity: Managing Diversity in Sikkim at the National Seminar on Cultural Diversity, Contestations and Frameworks of Managing Diversity in the North-East' organized by Assam University, Silchar on April 19 and 20, 2013.

**Dr.V.Krishna Ananth, Associate Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication,** presented a paper on 'The Woman in Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Anand Math at the National Seminar on Social Security of Women organised by Sikkim University and Association of Indian Universities at Gangtok on March 30 and 31, 2013.

**Privat Giri and Saurabh Thapa, MPhil scholars, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication,** presented a paper on "Anti-Dam movement in Sikkim: Reassertion of the Lepcha and Bhutia identities at helm" at the National Seminar on Cultural Diversity, Contestations and Frameworks of Managing Diversity in the North-East' organized by Assam University, Silchar on April 19 and 20, 2013.

**Rashmita Sarkar, student at the Department of Plantation Management & Studies,** participated

and presented a paper on Management and Working Condition of Labourers in Temi tea garden at the National Conference, organised by Department of Plantation Management & Studies, Sikkim University on April 9, 2013.

**Ms. Khangembam Indira, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology,** presented a paper on Sexual harassment of women in the work place: Importance of Acceptance and Trust by colleagues at the National Seminar on Social Security of Women organised by Sikkim University and Association of Indian Universities at Gangtok on March 30 and 31, 2013.

**Sohel Firdos, Associate Professor, Department of Geography and Natural Resources Management,** presented a paper titled Changing Land ownership patterns and it's impact on Social relations in Sikkim at a Workshop on Autonomous District Council and Land Administration in North East States, organised by Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), on April 8 & 9 2013 at NIRD-NERC, Guwahati.

**Sushobhan Birtia of Department of Plantation Management & Studies,** participated and presented a paper on Production, Marketing and Brand Development of Temi Tea in the National Conference, organised by Department of Plantation Management & Studies, Sikkim University on April 9, 2013





## Invited Lectures/ Workshops:

**Dr. Kavita Lama, Balaram Pandey, Dewchandra Subba and Samar Sinha, all from the Department of Nepali Language and Literature** were discussants at a session organized by the Sikkim Akademi, a body of letters established by Government of Sikkim, on April 17, 2013 at Sikkim Akademi Bhawan, Gangtok, Sikkim. Dr. Gopal Prasad Dahal's *Bhaasaa Vividha*, a collection of essays on language and linguistics of the Sikkim Himalayan region was the book under discussion in its inaugural edition. The students from the Department of Nepali also participated in the programme.

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## Publications:

### **Dr. Arun Chettri, Department of Plantation Management & Studies**

Assessing ethnobotanical value and threat status of *Tetrastigma rumicispermum* (Lawson) Planch, a lesser known liana species of Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve, Sikkim, *Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge*, Vol.12(2), April 2013, pp. 339-341.

### **Dr.Hare Krishna Tiwari, Associate Professor, Department of Ethnobotany**

"Serum Thyroglobulin antibody (anti-Tg) and Thyroperoxidase antibody (anti-TPO) levels in School Children from goiter endemic sub-Himalayan Tarai region of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, India" Aniruddha Bhattacharjee, A.K. Chandra, H.K. Tiwari, Tabarak Malik ,Chiranjit Mondal: *Int J Med Health Sci*. April 2013, Vol-2; Issue-2, P 149-53.

### **Ms. Sangmu Thendup, Assistant Professor, School of Policy Planning and Studies**

Environmental Perspectives in Early Buddhism: A Response to Ecological Challenges in Mathew Koshy Punnackadu and Nair Anup Chandrashekar (Ed), 'Religious response to Ecological Challenges: Papers presented at the International Ecological Conference held at Nilackal', Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany, 2013. Pp: 111-115

## Essay:

### **Women in the Media: Some Concerns**

*Pooja Gupta, MA II Semester,  
Dept of JMC, Sikkim University*

The media in India, though has no constitutional or legal privilege, it basically enjoys the same freedom that is guaranteed to every citizen of India. The right flows from the right to freedom of expression that is guaranteed under article 19 of the constitution. Article 19 (1) (a) says that all citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression. But this right is again subjected to limitations imposed under Article 19 (2) under conditions such as security of the state, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency and morality, contempt of court, defamation, incitement to offence and integrity and sovereignty of India.

Within his context, media should approach issues of women privacy with caution. But usually media crush upon individual right especially of those who are not in a position to argue with them. In such situation 'privacy' or 'the right to be left alone' is a necessary requirement to isolate these individual from public attention.

According to a study by Media Advocacy Group viz. "Violence against Women: Media Coverage and Representation", the only regulation that governs sensitive reporting on issues like rape is that the rape victim's name should not be disclosed. Barring this, the study found that everything else is graphically reported. Often the victim's family name and address is cited, making a mockery in the letter and spirit of regulation.

The right to privacy has also been recognised by the Norms of Journalistic Conduct released by the Press Council of India which states that, "while reporting crime involving rape, abduction or kidnap of women/females or sexual assault or children, or raising doubts and questions touching the chastity, personal character and privacy of women, the names, photographs of the victims or other particulars leading to their identity shall not be published." These guidelines have been continuously violated by the recent media reports.



## Case study

In the case of much debated Delhi Gang Rape that took place on December 16, 2012, in the midst of all the slogan and protest, the media seemed to forget that the story was about an individual and her family. The second-to-second update telecast on the news channel and printed in newspapers raise a question, if it was really of any public interest. The think tanks of India even advocated to name the law after the name of the victim.

In an another incident of gang rape of one of the students of National Law School of India University, Bangalore (NLSIU) Jnanabharti campus on 13th of Oct 2012. The manner in which it was reported was shocking. The incident was sensationalised and the identity was revealed.

In a rape case of an international student studying at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), the media did not revealed the name of the girl, but revealed the name of the University and the course she was pursuing.

The privacy of the victim of a crime of rape must be protected. As commonly seen and witnessed in our society after any such incident, society questions the survivor's own character instead of supporting her or being empathetic towards her. The survivor has to live with the trauma of the crime throughout her life.

Media's irresponsible reports about the incident causes serious situation on the manner in which the victim is perceived by society. These situations and ill-treatment from the society prevents the survivor from reconciling herself and lead a normal life. This mental instability sometimes even leads to incidents like suicide.

## Misrepresentation of women in Media

Besides intruding into the privacy of a women identity, women are also misrepresented in Indian media such as advertisements and movies. Portrayal of women in advertising and movies mainly in electronic media is a great and unending debate. Deepa Dhanraj, a Bangalore based activist and documentary filmmaker, wrote: "In Indian advertising,

women are used as models in sexist ads for diverse products from tyres to ceiling fans. The depiction of women in Indian media is simply shoddy and at times vulgar. Commodification of women as a sex object has been relentlessly portrayed in audio-visual media. Movies like Murder, Raaz and many more have added to the vulgarity and obscenity of women in Indian media.

## Women, Obscenity and the Law

Though ineffective, there are many laws, and acts to secure women misrepresentation in media.

The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 provides for the regulation of representation of women in media. It prohibits the indecent representation of women through advertisements, books, writings, paintings, figures or in any other manner. Section 4 of this Act prohibits the production, sale, heir, distribution, circulation, sending by post any book, pamphlet, slide, film, writing, drawing, painting etc. which contains indecent representation of women in any form.

Section 292 of Indian Penal Code prohibits sale, etc., of obscene books, etc and Section 294 of Indian Penal Code prohibits any obscene acts and songs in any public place.

The Cinematograph Act, 1952, deals with examination and certification of films as suitable for public exhibition and licensing. Guidelines for certification of Films of public Exhibition instruct the Board of Film Certification shall ensure that dual meaning words, scene degrading or denigration women should not be presented. And if such matters are relevant to the theme, it should be reduced to the minimum.

## Conclusion

These acts and codes are more often breached than followed. As mentioned above, showing in an indecent way and aired day in and day out, hardly any action is taken. Obviously there are some amendments that are needed to be done in these laws but even if the present acts and codes are followed strictly it will make women safer.

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*Protest against Rape: A photo feature*

