



World Environment Day Celebrations



5th June 2009

Venue: Pangthang Govt. Jr. High School Complex

A REPORT

[Compiled by ENVIS Sikkim]

To commemorate the 38th World Environment Day, the State Forests, Environment & Wildlife Management Department hosted a state level function at Pangthang Govt. Jr. High School complex here in East Sikkim. Adding to the ecstasy of much hiked Centenary celebrations of the department, the World Environment Day was observed with great zeal to raise awareness at mass level. The occasion was beautifully set up at scenic beauty of lush green meadows of Pangthang much to the support from the three state hydro electric power projects i.e. Teesta Urja, Gati Infrastructure, and LANCO Pvt. Ltd.



The theme as prescribed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for this year - **“Your Planet Needs You! – Unite to Combat Climate Change”** was precisely highlighted on the occasion by several dignitaries on a mass gathering of students, public and local media. The function was graced by the chief guest Shri K.T.Gyaltsen, Hon’ble Speaker, Sikkim Legislative Assembly; Hon’ble Forest Minister, Shri Bhim Dhungel; Hon’ble PHE Minister, Shri T. T. Bhutia; Hon’ble HRDD Minister, Shri N. K .Pradhan; Hon’ble UD&HD Minister, Shri D. B. Thapa; former State Forest Minister, Shri S. B. Subedi; Hon’ble MLA (Namcheybong Constituency) Shri B. B. Rai, Zilla Panchayat members, Panchayat members, Secretary RM&DD and Secretary Science & Technology Department, members of GBPIHED, Teachers, School students and several officials from the various departments.



The programme started with a welcome address by the PCCF-cum-Secretary, Shri S. T. Lachungpa welcoming all the distinguished guests, participants and the public on the World Environment Day. He stated that the Forest Department having reached its Centenary year has come a long way with several accomplishments in state, national and international level. However, he stated that the department needs to work with more scientific temper following the preparation of working plan. There is a need for an inter-departmental approach in mitigating the effects of Global warming, he added.

The Chief Guest Shri K.T. Gyaltzen, Speaker, Sikkim Legislative Assembly expressed serious concerns over Sikkim's crumbling environment. He stated that it is important to follow every policy and guidelines to safeguard and protect the environment, for this a joint effort is necessitated both by the local people and the political dignitaries to save the future state of our environment. Further the Speaker urged the students to be disciplined, far-sighted and therefore work hard in academics and bring about an all round development in the state. Mr. Gyaltzen added that the aftereffects of Global warming have become a great threat for the environment today and it is time to rethink and start working on it as the theme rightly claims.



The State Forest Minister Shri Bhim Dhungel expressed his grave concern on environmental degradation; and the Himalayan region being at a greater threat if such activities continue. He also informed the people about the various steps taken up by the State Government for environment preservation. Mr. Dhungel sought cooperation from the people to extend afforestation, stating it is everyone's responsibility to make the environment healthy, clean and protected.



The State PHE Minister Shri T. T. Bhutia seemed pleased with the organizing department in selecting Pangthang area for celebrating World Environment Day. He encouraged the students to stay aware and actively participate in further afforestation programme in the state.

On the occasion, awareness programmes like inter school quiz & painting competitions were organized. The schools that participated in the events were from nearby area to Pangthang i.e. Lingdok Govt Sr. Sec School, Taktse International School, Bojoghari Govt. Sec. School, Penlong Govt. Sec. School, Pangthang Govt. Jr. High School, Namphong Govt. Primary School, Shotak Primary School, Pangthang Govt Primary School (SAP Camp) and Navey Govt. Primary School. A healthy quiz competition in between five local schools was witnessed as a major awareness drive which was eventually won by Lingdok Govt. Sr. Sec. School. Earlier, a mass plantation drive at the hill side of the school complex was participated by several political dignitaries, students, teachers and public.



The day was also realized to appreciate the efforts of Mrs. Monalisa Das, DFO (T) North and Mr. Udai Gurung, DFO (T) South for conservation of forests and were awarded the best divisions in the state.



The guests also released department's bi-annual Newsletter, 'Panda' which has resurfaced in the Forest Centenary year since its birth in 1993; accompanied by the release of a report entitled 'Impact of Treatment and Landslide report in West Sikkim'; and a poster on 'Impact of Glacier recession' published by ENVIS Centre. T-shirt, posters and stickers on Climate Change, published by State Pollution Control Board were also released on the occasion.



On this day, the distinguished guests were presented with souvenir of *Rhododendron maddenei* / *R.griffithiani* by the Scientist-in-charge of G. B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment Development, Pangthang, East Sikkim. The G. B. Pant Institute also provided saplings of *Rhododendron spp* for plantation drive for the occasion.

The main focus on the eve of World Environment Day 2009 lay on Global Climate Change and its aftereffects and the need to make an effort to work consciously towards making the environment clean and green. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by the CCF (wildlife) Shri H. B. Pradhan.

