

## CM launches third phase of the State Green Mission; calls for greater public participation

**GANGTOK, May 12:** Chief Minister Pawan Chamling today said that the State Green Mission, “a mission of the masses” would be successful only if there is total dedication and support from the common people.

He said this during the formal launching ceremony of the third phase of the State Green Mission held at Chintan Bhawan here today.

The Chief Minister also expressed dissatisfaction over the slow progress of the Green Mission and said that it has not been as successful as it was expected at the time of its inception. He also regretted the low-key participation of the people in the mission. “The green mission programme would be a matter of great pride to all the people of Sikkim if we are listed in the map of the world as the greenest State and serve as a role model for other states,” Mr. Chamling said.

While expressing his concern over the global environmental issues such as melting of glaciers, global warming, and bio-diversity conservation, he urged the people to go for mass forestation.

The Chief Minister also informed that Sikkim has become the first State in the country to set up a commission to study impact of global warming on glaciers. He further informed that a request has been made with the World Heritage Center, London to recognize Kabi Longtsok, Drubdi Monastery and Namgyal Institute of Tibetology in the list of heritage places.

Mr. Chamling also called on the employees of every Government department to render their tireless effort in making Sikkim the greenest state in India.

Organized by the State Forest Environment and Wildlife Department, the function was also chaired by the advisors to the Chief Minister, Sanchaman Limbo and BB Gooroong. Also present were the HODs of various Departments, officials from the Forest Department, Panchayats, NGOs and students.

The Minister of the State Forest, Wildlife and Environment Department SB said that the main objective of the programme is to create green belt and increase the aesthetic appeal of the surrounding areas so as to provide for the recreational needs of the people.

He also informed that it also focuses to make the state more appealing to the tourists and encourage the promotion of Green tourism.

ST Lachungpa, the secretary of the Forest Department informed that the mission has already completed its two years and this will be the final year, which needs more massive plantation. According to Thomas Chandy, the Chief Conservator of Forest, around 10,12,515 saplings were planted last year. In his power point presentation, the chief conservator of forest informed that North District saw more plantations last year with 3,34,000 followed by West District with 2,00,000.

The South and East recorded 2,00,000 and 1,99,000 plantations respectively. Talking about the third phase, he said that the targeted area this year is 310km of avenue and 15 hectares of block plantation.

As per the departmental data, the survival percentage last year was recorded at 60 percent. Later in the programme, the Chief Minister also released a video CD ‘Hamro van’ and other books on green mission.