

## **Chamling calls for more people's Involvement and endorsement to ensure Complete success for policies**

**Gangtok, 18 Sept:** “Don’t look at me as a politician because today I am not speaking as the Chief Minister, but as your friend, well-wisher and guardian,” opened Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling, while speaking at the Golden Jubilee celebrations of West Point Senior Secondary School at Tathangchen today.

The Chief Minister was addressing a handsome gathering of teachers, principals and students from Gangtok schools. The Chief Minister, while urging all present to become part of the developmental process underway in Sikkim, expressed the need for all to understand and appreciate the effort which had gone into making Sikkim the land of opportunities, “where the hope and aspirations of the people are secure”.

“You have to also seriously compare where you stand as Sikkimese in the context of the rest of the nation and then evaluate what the government has been able to do for its citizens thus far,” he told the gathering before announcing that the pay panel recommendation on the salary hike would be official by 22 September, having been approved by the Cabinet yesterday.

The Chief Minister, while stating that government employees here were among the highest paid in the country, said, “You shall receive your dues as per the 4<sup>th</sup> Pay Commission. Our government has always worked towards making the teaching profession attractive for all; remember, you get your salaries on the first of every month. Teaching is now a respectable profession again and also a well paying one unlike in earlier times,” he remarked.

He also urged the students to appreciate the positive aspects of development and highlighted the exemplary areas of work in the field of environment conservation, capacity building and quality education which other states in the country were now adopting from the Sikkim model.

“We have been trendsetters and have been recognized as such. Also remember, Rome was not built in a day and we are also still in the process of growing and now we need the youth to inspire us. You have to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the government to take our initiatives and commitments to the desired end,” he added.

During the function which was also attended by the HRD Minister, NK Pradhan and the area MLA, KT Gyaltzen who is also the Speaker, the

Chief Minister congratulated the West Point School fraternity and the students for being facilitators to the developmental process in the state and urged them to contribute more in the coming years.

Here he highlighted that Sikkim would be among the wealthiest states in the country and recognized all over the world by 2030. He added that by 2015, Sikkimese would be among people with the highest per capital income in the country. These possibilities required the involvement of the general masses and their support for the policies and decisions.

The Chief Minister also pointed out the investment of over Rs. 40,000 crores in the state in recent years in various sectors which he said was what separated Sikkim from the rest. He added that creating an atmosphere for investment and building of infrastructure here was one of the biggest achievements of the State Government which the people here had to accept in positively.

A souvenir was also released to commemorate the Golden Jubilee Celebrations during which former teachers and students of the school were also felicitated by the Chief Minister on behalf of the School alumni, WESPO.

Among those to be facilitated today were former headmistress and headmasters of WPSSS, Santosh Nirash, Ram Duttalal Thakur , Rajani Verma, Sancha Targain, Miss Shilal Singh, Pravitra Mala Rai, Tshering Donka Bhutia and Daden Khampa.

## **HAPPY DASAIN! Cabinet approves Pay Commission report, sanctions Rs.87 crores for Immediate interim relief and advance salaries**

**Gangtok, 18 Sept:** The 4<sup>th</sup> Pay Commission Report was approved by the Cabinet last evening during a late meeting of the Cabinet members at Mintokgang. Also approved by the Cabinet was the granting of interim relief to the tune of Rs. 25,000 to the government employess, particularly in light of the approaching *Dasain* festival. Besides, the employees will also receiving their advance salaries before the *Dasain* holidays begin next week.

The Department of personnel was thronged by excited employees of various departments today in anticipation of the issuance of the notification on the interim relief as well as on the revised pay scales. The Department of Personnel issued the notification on the interim relief, which was ready by

12:30 PM today. The other notification [on the revised pay scales] will take some more time, it is informed.

For the payment of the interim relief and the advance salaries, the Cabinet has approved and sanctioned approximately Rs.87 crores.

As per this notification, a second installment of interim relief in the form of cash amount of Rs.25, 000 will be granted to the employees, across the board for gazetted and non gazetted officers. The first installment of interim relief was released last year, it may be recalled.

Also to receive this interim relief will be work-charged employees drawing salaries in the prescribed pay-scales and who have completed more than one year of services as on 01 January, 2006.

The notification further states that employees who will be completing more than one year of service as on 30 September, 2009 are allowed to draw interim relief at 50% of the amount payable to those employees appointed a year prior to 01 January, 2006.

The amount payable as interim relief will be adjusted against the final amount of arrears due and payable to the employees.

Members of All India Services, State Judicial Services and persons appointed on consolidated pay and appointees on contract basis not on prescribed pay scales will not be getting such relief.

On the other hand, the final recommendation of the pay revision along with other benefits accruing to government employees were approved after certain modifications were affected in the report by the Committee of Secretaries headed by the Additional Chief Secretary, Karma Gyatso.

This Committee had been constituted to examine the recommendations of the 4<sup>th</sup> Pay Commission and submit a final report to the government. It is informed that according to the pay revision, which has been done largely on the central pay commission model, there will be four pay bands covering all the employees. The grade pay and allowances will differ according to rank and as the Chief Minister has stated, the enhancement in the salaries will be as good as the one received by Central Government employees, if not better.

Sources reiterate this and say that the enhancement will, in fact, be better than that of the central employees with the average increase coming to around 40%. The effective date of new pay bands will be retrospectively from 01.1.2006 and the allowances admissible from 01.4.2009.

It is also informed that there have been handsome hikes in the travel allowances as well as in DA and house rent allowances. However the recommendation of the pay commission on increasing the retirement age of employees from 58 to 60 years has reportedly not been accepted.

There will also be a new system of computing increments.

It is also informed that the introduction of the new pay scales in the salaries of the employees will take some time to come into effect.

## **Administration to be made paperless in next four years: Chamling**

**Rangpo, September 18:** A grand welcome was accorded to Chief Minister Pawan Chamling yesterday at Rangpo by a host of cabinet ministers, legislature, SDF party officials, government officers and local people.

The Chief Minister returning back to Sikkim after receiving four awards for Sikkim during the India Today conclave at New Delhi. The awards received by Sikkim were for E-governance, education, rural electrification and rural roads.

In his brief speech, Mr. Chamling dedicated the awards to the people of Sikkim. He said that the cooperation and support of the people of Sikkim has enabled a good reputation of Sikkim in national and international levels.

Highlighting the steps taken by his government in the field of education, the Chief Minister said that the State government has allocated twenty percent of the annual budget for education with an aim to provide quality education to the students here. He said that all teachers in the State will be provided training within the next four years as part of the State government's efforts to institutionalize quality education in Sikkim.

Mr. Chamling also said that the State Government has done exemplary works in the field of rural electrification as 99 percent of the households in Sikkim have electricity supply. He said that Sikkim will be reaping huge dividends from the hydel power in coming years and hydel power will be the main source of revenue for Sikkim. He also informed about the State government's effort to have Rs.1 lakh crore investment in Sikkim in the next five years.

The Chief Minister said that the State government has special beautification plans for all the entry points into Sikkim from the tourism perspective. I am planning to tour Melli next month, he said.

Mr. Chamling further informed the target to make the entire administration in the State paperless in the next four years. He also expressed his anger over the recent clash of students at Sikkim Manipal

Institution of Technology (SMIT) which he said has created a negative effect for Sikkim in the national level.