

Minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Sikkim State Higher Education Council (SSHEC) held on 04.11.2019 at the conference Hall of Education Department

The 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SSHEC was held on 04.11.2019 at the Conference Hall of Education Department and was chaired by the Hon'ble Minister, Education Department who is also the Chairman of the SSHEC. The meeting was also attended by the Additional Chief Secretary, Education Department and the following dignitaries and officers:

1. Vice Chancellor, Sikkim University, who is also the vice chairman of the SSHEC.
2. Vice Chancellor, Sikkim State University.
3. Vice Chancellor, Sikkim Manipal University – Member of SSHEC.
4. Vice Chancellor, SRM University – Member of SSHEC.
5. Nominated members of the SSHEC comprising of Advisor from NAAC; representatives from Finance Department, Health Department, Science & Technology department; Principals, NBBDCollege and SGC, Namchi ; Associate Professors of Sikkim University and NBBDCollege and retired officers of Education department.
6. Director (Technical Education) –Member of SSHEC.
7. Principals of all Sikkim Govt. colleges.
8. Senior officers of the department.

The attendance sheet enclosed herewith may be kindly perused.

At the outset the ACS welcomed all the participants and apprised the house regarding the functioning of SSHEC. He also briefed the house on the various aspects of RUSA, a central scheme initiated for development of higher education in India. It was informed by him that six (06) out of the twelve (12) Sikkim Government colleges have been sanctioned Rs. 2 crore each under RUSA 2.0 after being accredited by NAAC. It was further informed by him that since RUSA 2.0 would be concluding in 2020, the Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme (EQUIP) would then be initiated by the Ministry of Human Resource to support the higher education sector further in the country.

Discussions in the meeting then took place as per the agenda:

- I. Confirmation of the minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> SSHEC meeting held on 2018: The minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> SSHEC meeting was duly confirmed by all members of the SSHEC.
- II. Presentation on the progress made by the Education department under RUSA: The ACS made a presentation wherein he detailed the various achievements made by the higher education sector of the State under RUSA 1.0 and RUSA 2.0. The presentation highlighted details of the funds which have been sanctioned under the scheme for various colleges. It was also informed that the funds sanctioned need now to be endorsed and approved by the SSHEC which was unanimously approved by all.
- III. The Heads of the various Sikkim Government colleges were then requested to put forth brief reports with regard to their respective colleges before the House and the following observations were made:
  1. Sanskrit Mahavidhyalaya (SMV), Samdong: Principal, SMV informed the House that one of the major issues being faced by the college is low enrollment of students in the college in spite of the college having good teaching faculty. He credited this to the fact that there is a low level of awareness amongst the students regarding job availability. To tackle the issue it was suggested by the Principal that Sanskrit could be introduced as an optional subject in Secondary schools which may help generate awareness about the subject amongst the students.
  2. Government Vocational College (GVC), Dentam: Principal, GVC informed that the college having been established in 2017 offers Bachelor degree in 3 courses, namely:
    - i) Software Development
    - ii) Tourism and Service Industry
    - iii) Retail ManagementHe stated that some teething problems being faced by the college have been more or less resolved especially in courses like Retail management and Tourism. However, for courses like Software development, he stated that there seems to be a lack of clarity amongst the Sector skill councils themselves regarding syllabus and curriculum.
  3. Sikkim Government Science college (SGSC), Chakung: Principal, SGSC informed that the college offers course in conventional branches of basic Sciences like Botany,

Zoology, Chemistry and others. He mentioned that there is a good demand for Science and Maths teachers in our schools and this college was specifically opened to fill this gap.

The Principal also suggested that introduction of courses in applied Science and courses like organic farming could prove beneficial to the college and may create further interest amongst the students to seek admission in the college.

4. B.Ed College, Soreng : Principal, B.Ed College stated that since the college has only been offering a single course since its establishment, it was not eligible to apply for NAAC. However, it was suggested that if the college could offer parallel diploma courses or offer integrated courses like B.A-B.Ed or B.Sc-B.Ed, it would then be eligible to seek accreditation under NAAC which would be a welcome move for the college.
5. Sikkim Government Arts College (SGAC), Mangshila: Principal, SGAC apprised the House that the college being the only college in North district was established in 2017. He also remarked that the college would be able to cater more to the students of North district if more conventional courses, are allowed to be introduced in the college. Further, he also requested that the college which is presently running as an extension of SGC, Burtuk be allowed to apply for a separate affiliation to Sikkim University.
6. Sikkim Govt. College (SGC), Gyalshing: The Dean of SGC, Gyalshing suggested that in order to attract more students to take up admission in the college, it can also offer professional courses like Mountaineering, photography etc.  
VC, SMU suggested that the courses can be introduced as certificate courses to begin with.
7. Sikkim Institute of Higher Nyingma Studies (SIHNS,SHEDA): Principal informed the House that the SIHNS is one of the oldest in the state, having been being established in the year 1964. Regarding introduction of new course, the Principal suggested that Masters Courses in Buddhist language, Astrology, philosophy could be introduced.
8. Sikkim Government Law College (SGLC): Principal, SGLC stated that the college be granted permission to offer LL.M courses as well. The proposal which is under

progress was assured to be given full support and help by the VC, Sikkim University. It was also requested by the Principal that law being a professional degree course some diversity in the admission process is also required.

9. Sikkim Government College (SGC), Burtuk: Principal, SGC, Burtuk stated that location plays a major role for selection of colleges by the students. Since most students prefer to attend colleges located in and around Gangtok, the college faces a lot of pressure from candidates during admission and given the infrastructure of the college, it proves difficult to admit higher number of students. In this regard, Chief Engineer, Education Department informed that a DPR for establishing the main academic block of SGC, Burtuk has been prepared and has been submitted to the Department of Planning for onward submission to the Ministry of DONER. The project has been proposed to be funded under the North Eastern Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS), the total estimate of which has been proposed at Rs. 9.81 crores.
10. Rhenock Government College: Principal Rhenock Govt. college reported that due to introduction of new courses like Statistics in the college, enrollments of students in the college have increased. She also requested VC, SU for introduction of Master degree in the subject which would be welcomed by the students. Suggestions for introduction of new course such as Fine Arts, Library science, PHE, TTM and Horticulture was also placed forth by the Principal.
11. Nar Bahadur Bhandari Degree (NBBD) College, Tadong: Principal, NBBD College requested VC, SU to kindly grant permission by the students pursuing Masters from the college for use of the library of Sikkim University. The VC, SU agreed to the same. She further informed the House that regarding Vocational courses, since courses offered by companies for on the job training is not consistent with the course, the students find it difficult. ACS, Education Department assured to speak to Industries Department to remove this gap.

IV. Other observations made in the meeting:

1. VC, Sikkim University & VC, SRM: Suggested that counseling sessions for the students are very important in order to allow them to be more aware of employment opportunities. Further it was also observed that such counseling sessions are also equally important for the parents as well.
2. VC, SU also mentioned that students are unaware of useful courses like Chinese being offered by SU which is an extremely useful and employment oriented course. There is a need to create awareness for the same.
3. Dr. Madhukar, former advisor, NAAC also made a few suggestions wherein he mentioned that the policy of shared infrastructure should be followed so that all colleges are able to access facilities which are established in any one college of the State. He also remarked that the issue of placement cells can be resolved by use of technology as it is not always necessary for placement cells to be physically present in the college.

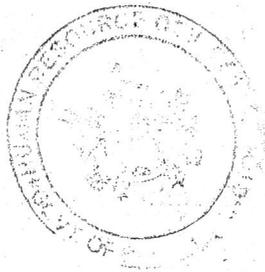
The Hon'ble Minister in his address to the House stated that the program has been very productive. He remarked that formulation of education policies that aim to make the students of the State more competitive and efficient are very much welcomed by the State Government. He also emphasized that counseling sessions for the students should be done on a regular basis and approved of the idea to conduct counseling sessions to the parents as well.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair by the Joint Secretary, Higher Education.

Copy to:

1. Vice Chancellor, Sikkim University,
2. Vice-Chancellor, Sikkim State University,
3. Vice-Chancellor, Sikkim Manipal University,
4. Chief Engineer, Education Department,
5. Additional Director/ME/Health Department,
6. Director, Dept. of Science & Technology,
7. P.S. to HM,
8. P.S. to ACS, Education Department,
9. Dr. B.S Madhukar, Former Advisor, NAAC,

10. Additional Director, Finance Department,
11. Joint Director, RUSA
12. Director, Technical Education, Education Department,
13. Retd. Additional Director, Education Department,
14. All Principals, Sikkim Government College



*Subha Mukhia*

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Joint Secretary (HE)

Directorate of Higher Education

**Joint Secretary**  
**Higher Education**  
**H.R.D.D. (HE)**  
**Govt. of Sikkim**