Gangtok, May 14: (IPR) Chief Minister Shri. Prem Singh Tamang (Golay) chaired a high level meeting today to take stock of the ongoing Covid-19 situation and deliberate on the roadmap ahead.

The meeting had the presence and participation of Speaker and Deputy Speaker SLA, Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, MP Lok Sabha, Advisors, Chief Secretary, DGP, Zilla Adhyakshas and Upadhyakshas, Mayor and Deputy Mayor GMC, all Heads of Departments, and senior officers of the Government.

At the outset, Chief Secretary Shri S.C Gupta presented an overview of the Covid-19 situation in the State till date. He highlighted the steps taken by the State to facilitate the return of Sikkimese people stranded in different parts of the country. He also shared about the steps taken by the State Government to ensure safe evacuation of migrant workers stranded in Sikkim to their respective home states.

He presented the statistics of the number of people willing to return to the State, and the people who have chosen to leave Sikkim for their home states.

He informed that the people of Sikkim have done reasonably well in abiding by the guidelines issued by the State Government from time to time. He called for continued support from the people in the days to come. He also informed the house about the latest regulations enforced by the State Government to ensure that established norms are not violated.

The Chief Secretary shared the good news that the RTPCR Machine is reaching Bagdogra today by a Special Indian Airforce Flight. He said that the new Viral Laboratory at Covid-19 Dedicated STNM Hospital will be functional in few days.

The Chief Secretary touched upon the roadmap being envisaged by the State Government in view of reviving the economy of the State, duly following all the medical norms and protocol.

Chief Minister Shri Prem Singh Tamang lauded the effort of the State Administration, Covid-19 Frontline Workers and the people of Sikkim for their relentless effort to tackle the crisis situation. While welcoming the esteemed delegates present in the meeting, the Chief Minister invited suggestions from the public representatives and officers.

After thorough deliberation and suggestions from Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, Advisors, and Heads of Departments, Chief Minister Shri Prem Singh Tamang emphasized that this meeting holds utmost importance as the State stands on the threshold of the completion of the third phase of lockdown and the uncertainties that lie ahead.

The Chief Minister stated that the call of the Prime Minister of a self-reliant India offers an opportunity to the State of Sikkim to realize its true potential. He said that the time has come for the youth of Sikkim to embrace skilled work and make the most of the available opportunities. He said that the youth of the State have the innate ability to accomplish any task, and fill the vacuum created by the exodus of skilled workers to their respective States.
The Chief Minister announced the good news that the State Viral Laboratory is on the verge of completion and the RTPCR machine is reaching the State today by a Special Indian Airforce Flight.

The Chief Minister suggested some relaxation measures that could be adopted to help revive the economy gradually. He announced that restaurants and fast food outlets will be allowed to operate with reasonable restrictions, all shops to remain open from 8am to 5pm, inter-district movement of vehicles to be eased, and offices to operate with 30% manpower.

He also suggested ways to accommodate all the people who are stranded in other parts of the country and are returning back. He reiterated that the State Government will go out of its way to evacuate all the people of Sikkim who are willing to return to the State.

The Chief Minister also stated that the State Government is working out a mechanism to grant relief package to drivers and other affected category of people.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister formally announced the constitution of the 'Economic Revival Committee'. He announced that the Committee will comprise of the following:

Chairman - Shri. Sonam Tshering Venchungpa, MLA, Martam Rumtek.

Member - Shri. C.L Denzongpa, Financial and Economic Advisor to the Government of Sikkim.

Member - Dr. Mahendra P. Lama, Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of Sikkim.

Member - Shri. Karma R. Bonpo, District Collector, West.

Member Secretary- Shri. V.B Pathak, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department, cum Development Commissioner, Government of Sikkim.

The Chief Minister said that the State Government will give utmost priority to the Health and Education sector, and will bring about drastic reforms.

He emphasized on the importance of the IT sector and the need for the people to adapt to digitalization and IT-enabled services. He said that the IT will have a big role in bringing about reforms in the education sector.

Speaking about reforms in the health sector, he suggested that a Dialysis Unit each should be set up in all the sub-divisions for public convenience, and adequate manpower should be trained.

The Chief Minister informed that the call for 'Each One Help One' has been taken positively by the people. He mentioned the name of a few people and Organisations who have come forward to offer their help in this time of crisis.

The Chief Minister also shared complete details of the Financial support lent by individuals and organisations towards the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund to combat Covid-19. He also shared the total expenditure till date and the balance amount. The Chief Minister expressed his sincere thanks to all the individuals and Organisations who have come forward to help the Government in this time of crisis.

In conclusion, the Chief Minister thanked the the Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, Advisors, and Officers for their valuable suggestions in the meeting, and said that the Government will take a decision in the best interest of the people of Sikkim. He urged everyone to continue working with the same zeal to ensure that the State remains free from Covid-19.