frontline healthcare workers treating Sikkim's first COVID-19 patient at the STNM Hospital in Sochakgang have completed their weeklong COVID duty

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Gangtok, 30th May (IPR): The first batch of frontline healthcare workers treating Sikkim’s first COVID-19 patient at the STNM Hospital in Sochakgang have completed their weeklong COVID duty this morning.

The team of 32 healthcare frontline warriors including one Medical Specialist, one Paediatrician, two Medical Officers and one Dental Surgeon along with Nursing Officers, medical attendants and sanitary attendants received a huge round of applause from the officials and staff of the hospital while on their way to government identified quarantine facility in Gangtok where they will be housed for another 14 days. The officials and staff then welcomed and cheered for the second batch of 32 healthcare workers as they entered the COVID-18 dedicated hospital to take over charge of COVID duty.

Additional Medical Superintendent, Dr. Yudok Bhutia, informed that samples of all the outgoing healthcare workers have been tested a day prior to the completion of their duty and the results are negative. They will be quarantined at designated centre for 14 days and will be tested again in a week. However, if their test results turn out negative, they will be allowed to leave for strict home quarantine for further period, she stated. She informed that the State’s first Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (VRDL) at the STNM Hospital, inaugurated by Hon’ble Chief Minister Shri Prem Singh Tamang (Golay) on 21st May, is now fully operational. A total of 12 samples related to COVID-19 were tested at the laboratory on 29th May, all of which have tested negative after validation process. It has also been informed that tests of the samples brought back to Sikkim from North Bengal Medical College and Hospital due to backlog issues will now be resumed at the VRDL of STNM Hospital from tomorrow.

It may be recalled here that Sikkim reported its first COVID-19 case last week after the test result of a 25-year-old quarantined returnee came out positive. He is currently in the isolation ward undergoing treatment.

Dr. Yudok Bhutia updated that the patient is in a stable and healthy condition and the viral load of the patient has gone down. He will be tested again next week for consideration of further plan of action by the hospital administration. It was informed that the patient has been cooperative throughout his treatment and added that the medical staff on duty have shown immense positivity and bravery while treating the sole COVID positive patient of the State. The entire frontline healthcare warriors were commended and applauded for their determination, grit and selflessness in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.