

Preface

The call of the Queen of Hills has compelled me to go to her lap. I have seen the simple people with strong mentality. At all times they are fighting against constraints of nature. In 1975, Sikkim became the 25th State of India. The earlier King's dynasty ruled the state as an independent ruler. What was the Socio-economic condition of the people under the King's rule? Has it changed with the change of ruler? The people of Sikkim were mainly dependent on agriculture and the skewed distribution of land has had to face different hurdles in various times. The main problem in the hilly region is land elevation. The mountainous land being heterogeneous in nature carried heavy pressure due to increased population after the merger with India. The per capita land availability has shrunk drastically. The fragile mountain land has limited productivity due to infertile land and little scope for irrigation. The further increase of agricultural production is quite hard. Rather, the people have to find out supplementary income for betterment of life. The high altitude has a great potential in livestock production. At the same time, Sikkim comprises one of the highest forest areas in India. Surprisingly, the people of Sikkim have indigenous knowledge of farming for commercial crop like large cardamom. Usually, the Government plays a key role in motivating people towards the farming of commercial cash crops shifting from the traditional farming for better livelihood. Here, the indigenous knowledge is applied simultaneously with upgraded technical know-how and research.

Several efforts have been made by the Government as well as by private parties. Keeping in mind the above features, Sikkim could do well with agroforestry. Agroforestry is an integrated land system where agriculture, forestry, livestock production is undertaken on the same piece of land.

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Signature of the Candidate