HIGH COURT OF SIKKIM



Vol. 11, Issue No. 3

July to September, 2016



EDITORIAL BOARD

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Satish Kumar Agnihotri, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim

Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim

COMPILED BY

Mrs. K.C. Barphungpa, Registrar General

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HIGH COURT OF SIKKIM EDITORIAL BOARD



Hon'ble Shri Justice Satish Kumar Agnihotri, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim



Hon'ble Smt. Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim

VACANCIES IN COURTS

(i) Vacancies in the High Court of Sikkim as on 30.09.2016

S1.No	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength	Vacancies
1.	03	02	01

(ii) Vacancies in the District & Subordinate Courts as on 30.09.2016

S1.No	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength	Vacancies
1.	Superior Judicial Service (SSJS) - 10	07	01 post of District & Sessions Judge (Spl. Div1) and 01 post of District & Sessions Judge (Spl. DivII) & 01 post in the cadre of SSJS created (in compliance to the direction passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Brij Mohan Lal Vs. Union of India)
2.	Sikkim Judicial Service (SJS) – 08	06	02 (i) CJM-cum-Civil Judge (East & North) (ii) CJM-cum-Civil Judge (South & West)
Total	18	13	05

INSTITUTION, DISPOSAL & PENDENCY OF CASES

(1) Statement of Main & Misc. Cases in the High Court of Sikkim from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016.

SI. No.	Pending as on 30.06.2016	Institution	Disposal	Pending as on 30.09.2016
	Main Cases	Main Cases	Main Cases	Main Cases
1.	123	73	51	145

(2) Total Institution, Disposal & Pendency of cases in the Subordinate Courts of Sikkim from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016.

NAME OF COUR			CIVIL	CASES		CRIMINAL CASES				
COUR	(I	Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016	Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016	
East District at Gangtok	Main cases	246	47	109	184	708	234	298	644	
	Misc. cases	77	58	50	85	19	278	274	23	
District at Gyalshing Mis	Main cases	30	11	17	24	38	41	39	40	
	Misc. cases	13	25	14	24	03	78	78	03	
District at cas Mangan Mis	Main cases	04	07	02	09	08	12	12	08	
	Misc. cases	08	06	07	07	03	26	29	00	
South District at Namchi	Main cases	26	33	14	45	105	85	93	97	
T Carriorn	Misc. cases	29	79	72	36	00	117	113	04	
Family Courts	Main cases	110	56	42	124	23	28	23	28	
	Misc. cases	02	01	02	01	07	05	09	03	
Fast Track Courts	Main cases	-	-	-	-	07	04	01	10	
	Misc. cases	-	-	-	-	00	01	01	00	
Juvenile Justice Boards	Main cases	-	-	-	-	17	15	20	12	
Dualus	Misc. cases	-	-	-	-	00	15	15	00	
Total Main C	ases	416	154	184	386	906	419	486	839	
Total Misc. Cases		129	169	145	153	32	520	519	33	

INSTITUTION, DISPOSAL AND PENDENCY OF CASES DISTRICT WISE

(1) Total Institution, Disposal and Pendency of cases in the Subordinate Courts of Sikkim from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016

(i) East District at Gangtok.

NAME OF				CASES		CRIMINAL CASES				
COUR	TS	Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016	Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016	
	Main cases	106	21	27	100	110	56	35	131	
(East)	Misc. cases	64	50	45	69	06	140	136	10	
District & Sessions Judge	Main cases	03	00	00	03	00	00	00	00	
(Spl. DivI)	Misc. cases	01	00	00	01	00	00	00	00	
District & Sessions Judge	Main cases	05	00	00	05	02	00	01	01	
(Spl. DivII)	Misc. cases	00	01	00	01	00	00	00	00	
Chief Judicial Magistrate-	Main cases	10	00	03	07	330	133	146	317	
cum- Civil Judge (East & North)	Misc. cases	05	00	01	04	06	41	40	07	
Civil Judge- cum- Judicial Magistrate	Main cases	122	26	79	69	266	45	116	195	
(East)	Misc. cases	07	07	04	10	07	97	98	06	
Total Main C	ases	246	47	109	184	708	234	298	644	
Total Misc. Cases		77	58	50	85	19	278	274	23	

(ii) West District at Gyalshing

NAME OF THE	COURT		CIVIL	ASES		CRIMINAL CASES			
		Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016	Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016
District & Sessions Judge (West)	Main cases	20	09	15	14	20	12	07	25
	Misc. cases	11	21	10	22	01	32	31	02
Civil Judge- cum- Judicial	Main cases	09	02	02	09	07	19	21	05
Magistrate (West)	Misc. cases	02	04	04	02	00	23	22	01
* Civil Judge- cum-Judicial	Main cases	01	00	00	01	11	10	11	10
Magistrate, Soreng Subdivision, West Sikkim	Misc. cases	00	00	00	00	02	23	25	00
Total Main Cases		30	11	17	24	38	41	39	40
Total Misc. Cases		13	25	14	24	03	78	78	03

(iii) North District at Mangan

NAME OF COURT			CIVIL	CASES			CRIMINAL CASES			
		Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016	Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016	
District & Sessions Judge (North)	Main cases	02	01	02	01	01	04	00	05	
	Misc. cases	08	02	04	06	03	10	13	00	
Civil Judge- cum- Judicial Magistrate	Main cases	02	06	00	08	07	06	11	02	
(North)	Misc. cases	00	04	03	01	00	10	10	00	
*Civil Judge- cum-Judicial Magistrate,	Main cases	00	00	00	00	00	02	01	01	
Chungthang Sub Division, North Sikkim	Misc. cases	00	00	00	00	00	06	06	00	
Total Main Cases		04	07	02	09	08	12	12	08	
Total Misc. Cases		08	06	07	07	03	26	29	00	

(iv) South District at Namchi

NAME OF COURT			CIVIL	CASES		CRIMINAL CASES			
		Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016	Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016
District & Sessions Judge (South)	Main cases	10	14	6	18	71	24	14	81
	Misc. cases	28	78	70	36	00	40	37	03
Chief Judicial Magistrate- cum- Civil	Main cases	00	04	02	02	14	43	48	09
Judge (South & West)	Misc. cases	00	00	00	00	00	32	32	00
Civil Judge- cum- Judicial Magistrate	Main cases	16	15	06	25	20	18	31	07
(South)	Misc. cases	01	01	02	00	00	45	44	01
Total Main Cases		26	33	14	45	105	85	93	97
Total Misc. Cases		29	79	72	36	00	117	113	04

(v) Family Courts

NAME OF			CIVIL	ASES		CRIMINAL CASES			
		Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.201 6 to 30.09.201 6	Disposal from 01.07.201 6 to 30.09.201 6	Pendency at the end of 30.09.201 6	Opening balance as on 01.07.201 6	Institution from 01.07.201 6 to 30.09.201 6	Disposal from 01.07.201 6 to 30.09.201 6	Pendency at the end of 30.09.201
Family Court, East at Gangtok	Main cases	84	41	31	94	16	13	10	19
	Misc. cases	01	01	01	01	03	01	02	02
Family Court West at	Main cases	05	05	03	07	02	00	02	00
Gyalshing	Misc. cases	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Family Court North at	Main cases	00	00	00	00	00	02	00	02
Mangan	Misc. cases	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Family Court South at	Main cases	21	10	08	23	05	13	11	07
Namchi	Misc. cases	01	00	01	00	04	04	07	01
Total Main	Total Main Cases		56	42	124	23	28	23	28
Total Misc. Cases		02	01	02	01	07	05	09	03

(vi) Fast Track Court

NAME OF THE	COURT			CRIMINAL CASES	
		Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016
Fast Track Court (East & North) at	Main cases	04	00	01	03
Gangtok	Misc. cases	00	01	01	00
Fast Track Court (South & West) at	Main cases	03	04	00	07
Gyalshing	Misc. cases	00	00	00	00
Total Main Cases		07	04	01	10
Total Misc. Cases		00	01	01	00

(vii) Juvenile Justice Boards

NAME OF THE COUR	TS		CRIMINAL CAS	SES	
		Opening balance as on 01.07.2016	Institution from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Disposal from 01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016	Pendency at the end of 30.09.2016
Juvenile Justice Board East, at Gangtok	Main cases	12	07	13	06
	Misc. cases	00	03	03	00
Juvenile Justice Board West, at Gyalshing	Main cases	05	02	05	02
, ,	Misc. cases	00	02	02	00
Juvenile Justice Board North, at Mangan	Main cases	00	01	00	01
	Misc. cases	00	01	01	00
Juvenile Justice Board South, at Namchi	Main cases	00	05	02	03
	Misc. cases	00	09	09	00
Total Main Cases	'	17	15	20	12
Total Misc. Cases		00	15	15	00

SOME RECENT JUDGMENTS OF HIGH COURT OF SIKKIM

FROM (01.07.2016 to 30.09.2016)

1. Procedures and guidelines for release of water from dam must be strictly adhered to by the NHPC: [W.P (PIL) No. 25 of 2014 Decided on 01.07.2016] This PIL was filed for direction to the Government of Sikkim and the National Hydro-electric Power Corporation Ltd. to take proper steps for inducting much required facilities, instruments, proper mechanisms and proper warning systems etc. while releasing water of the river Teesta from the dam. The petition emanated from the tragic death of an eleven year old school going girl who was swept away by the river Teesta due to sudden release of water from the dam in the afternoon of 18/04/2014. The Court observed that there was no protocol for the release of water from the dam into the river. There was no system in place to warn the public of the impending release of the water by way of hooting of sirens or any other procedure/protocol for release of water or specific timings. It is also evident that water was released into the river irrespective of the season being lean or monsoon. As a corollary, it is manifest that the NHPC is liable for non-compliance of any procedure. It was directed that the NHPC shall pay compensation of Rs. 5,00,000/- to the parents of the victim within two months. The government was directed to carry out bimonthly inspections by a team of officers selected by the District Magistrate to check whether safety measures as required are in place and guidelines issued vide Notification No. 26/Home/2015 dated 22/06/2015 are being adhered to. The NHPC was also directed to create an emergency fund upto the maximum of Rs. One crore to meet any disasters and fatalities arising out of any failure on their part. It was further directed that the modalities shall be worked out in consonance with the State Government. Petition allowed.

2. Court cannot proceed ex parte against the defendant when the suit was not fixed for hearing: In RFA No. 6 of 2015, Rameshwar Mandir Committee Vs. Krishna Bahadur Chettri & Ors. (disposed on 12/07/2016) one of the issues before the Court was whether the trial court was correct in proceeding ex parte against the defendant on his failure to appear on the date fixed for filing of written statement. Referring to the provisions of Order 9 Rule 6 of the CPC, 1908, it was held that the said provision lays down that an order that the suit be preceded ex parte shall be made, inter alia, when the suit is called on "for hearing". Further, referring to the Order XIV Rule 1(5) of the Code, it was held that the "first hearing" of the suit is the day of settlement of issues. On perusal of the Order of the trial court dated 05/02/2014, it is clear therein that the day was fixed for filing of written statement. Therefore, it was not the stage for the court to proceed ex parte against defendant No. 5. The defendant can be preceded ex parte only from the date the matter is fixed for hearing and not for filing of written statement or other miscellaneous matters. Remanding the case for de novo trial, the court directed the that the summons to the appellant be issued in terms of the provisions of the CPC, due consideration being paid to the provisions of Order I Rule 8, the suit be restored to its original number and the matter be disposed of within eight months for the date of receipt of the judgment.

- Judicial review in disciplinary proceedings has to be confined to the decision making process, and not the decision itself: On 25/07/2016, the Court in WP(C) No. 65 of 2016 (Tashi Chopel Bhutia Vs. State of Sikkim & Ors.) laying down the well settled principle relating to the scope of judicial review in departmental proceedings, held that the scope of judicial review in dealing with the departmental inquiry cannot be directed against the decision, but has to be confined to the decision making process. Quashing the Office Orders whereby the petitioner was placed under suspension and was subsequently removed from the post of Sub-Inspector of Police on various grounds as mentioned in the Article of Charges, the Court pointed out a number of procedural illegalities in the conduct of departmental proceedings. It was held that Rule 7 of the Sikkim Police Force (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1989 which lays down the procedure for imposition of the penalties as prescribed in Rule 3 of the said Rules, has not been complied with, such as (i) Office Order appointing the Presenting Officer has not been issued as required under Rule 7(5)(c);(ii) no documents in support of the Article of Charge were made available to the petitioner as required under Rule 7(4); (iii) Rule 7(7) gives ten days time for the delinquent officer to appear in person before the Inquiring Authority from the date of receipt of the Article of Charge, whereas the Radiogram gave him only four days time to file his reply;(iv) procedure requiring the P.O. to produce the evidence to prove the Article of Charge in case of failure of the Police Officer to appear within the specified time as required under Rule 7(11) has not been complied with;(vi) absence of the P.O. to produce the oral and documentary evidence for the Disciplinary Authority on the date fixed for inquiry and denial of opportunity to cross-examine the witness examined by the Enquiry Officer has resulted in violation of Rule 7(14), etc. It was held that the procedure imbibed by the E.O. and the Disciplinary Authority was fraught with serious procedural lapses which has undoubtedly vitiated the Departmental inquiry. The Court quashed the impugned Memoranda imposing penalty of suspension of the petitioner and subsequent removal from service as a nullity and non-est in the eyes of law. Petition allowed.
- Non-obstante provisions of Article 371F of the Constitution are not 4. applicable in Municipal Elections: [WP(C)No. 60 of 2015, Phigu Tshering Bhutia Vs. State of Sikkim & Ors., decided on: 30/07/2016] This petition was filed seeking direction to provide reservation of seats for the Bhutia-Lepcha as an independent community and Limboo-Tamang as scheduled tribes in the Municipal Elections of 2015 (held on 9/10/2015). In this case, the Court discussed the applicability of non obstante provision of Article 371F in Municipal Elections. It was held that Article 371F of the Constitution, providing for special provision for the State of Sikkim, commences with a non-obstante clause, i.e. "notwithstanding anything in the Constitution". Article 371F(f) lays down that the parliament may, for the purpose of protecting the rights and interests of the different sections of the population of Sikkim, make provision for the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of Sikkim. This provision obviously relates to reservation of seats in the Legislative Assembly and does not envision reservation in the Municipal Elections. When no express provision exists in Article 371F for reservation in the Municipal Bodies, it is axiomatic

that the question of *non obstante* clause of Article 371F having an overriding effect on Article 243T of the Constitution pertaining to reservation of seats in the Municipal Elections does not arise. Thus, the question of having separate reservations for the B-L Community in the Municipal Elections over and above what have been enshrined in Article 243T of the Constitution is not tenable. It was also held that there is a specific bar to interference by the Courts in electoral matters under Article 243 ZG of the Constitution. Petition dismissed.

5. Issue of speaking and reasoned order by the Magistrate is not required at the stage of taking cognizance of offence: (I.A. No. 1 of 2016 in Crl. Misc. Case No. 20 of 2014: Vinay Rai Vs. State of Sikkim, decided on 19/08/2016) In this case, the petitioner has prayed for quashing of the impugned order of the Ld. Chief Judicial Magistrate, Namchi taking cognizance of the offence under Sections 406/420/467/120B/34 of the IPC on the ground that the Magistrate has failed to pass a speaking and reasoned order while issuing order taking cognizance, and has also failed to afford an opportunity to the petitioner to make submissions while taking cognizance. Rejecting the prayer, it was held that at the stage of talking cognizance, the Magistrate is not required to make an elaborate inquiry neither he is required to mention the documents which he took into consideration for satisfying himself to take cognizance. Passing a speaking order duly allowing the petitioner to present his case at the stage of taking cognizance is a concept alien to the Cr. P.C. Thus, while taking cognizance although the perusal of charge sheets and supporting documents is required, it does not require an elaborate order, all it requires is application of judicial mind by the Magistrate to the materials placed before him. It was held that there is no shortcoming in the impugned order and it satisfies the requirement of law. Application rejected.

SOME RECENT MAJOR EVENTS

1. INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION



The High Court of Sikkim celebrated the 70th Independence Day on 15th August, 2016. The National Flag was unfurled by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Satish Kumar Agnihotri, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim. A Cultural Programme was presented by the staff of the High Court of Sikkim, the Bar Association of Sikkim, children from a local NGO and students of Gurukool School, Pakyong East Sikkim.

The occasion was graced by Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim, Madam Yogmaya Agnihotri, Mr. Roger R. Rai. The Judicial Officers, Senior Advocates, Members of the Bar, Officers & Staff of the Registry and Media persons were also present.







Glimpses of the 70^{th} Independence Day Celebration on 15^{th} August, 2016

2. SWEARING-IN CEREMONY



Hon'ble the Governor of Sikkim administrating the Oath of Office to Hon'ble Shri Justice Satish Kumar Agnihotri as Hon'ble the Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim at Aashirvad Hall, Raj Bhawan, Gangtok.

In pursuance of Notification No. K-11017/47/2016-US.II dated 16th September, 2016 issued by the Government of India, Ministry of Law & Justice, (Department of Justice), New Delhi, Hon'ble Shri Justice Satish Kumar Agnihotri, Judge, High Court of Sikkim was sworn-in as a Chief Justice of the High Court of Sikkim on Thursday, 22nd September, 2016 by Hon'ble Governor of Sikkim, Shri Sriniwas Patil at Aashirvad Hall at Raj Bhawan, Gangtok.



Hon'ble Shri Justice Satish Kumar Agnihotri, Judge, High Court of Sikkim taking Oath as Chief Justice on $22^{\rm nd}$ September, 2016 at Aashirvad Hall, Raj Bhawan, Gangtok.

The function was attended by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Sikkim, Shri Pawan Chamling, Hon'ble Cabinet Ministers, Hon'ble Mrs. Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim. The Chief Secretary, dignitaries of the State Government, Judicial Officers, Sr. Advocates, Members of the Bar and local gentry.

IMPORTANT VISITS & CONFERENCES

- 1. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Satish Kumar Agnihotri, the then Chief Justice (Acting), High Court of Sikkim attended the "National Judicial Academy Council (NJAC) Meeting" at Supreme Court of India. New Delhi on 09.07.2016.
- 2. Hon'ble Mrs. Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim & Hon'ble Chairperson, Steering Committee, High Court of Sikkim attended the Conference on "Scanning and Digitization of Judicial Record" at the Centre for Information Technology, High Court of Judicature at Allahabad w.e.f. 06.08.2016 to 07.08.2016.
- 3. Hon'ble Mrs. Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim & Hon'ble Chairperson, Juvenile Justice Act & Rules, High Court of Sikkim attended the "National Roundtable Consultation on Juvenile Justice Issues" at New Delhi w.e.f. 03.09.2016 to 04.09.2016.
- 4. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Satish Kumar Agnihotri, the then Chief Justice (Acting) and Hon'ble Mrs. Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim attended the programme for "Launching of NALSA (Effective Implementation of Poverty Alleviation Schemes) Scheme, 2015" at District Court Premises, Kyongsa, Gyalshing West Sikkim on 11.09.2016.

PROGRESS MADE IN THE HIGH COURT AND SUBORDINATE COURTS OF SIKKIM UNDER E-COURTS MISSION MODE PROJECT

July to September, 2016:

- Appointment of 10 (ten) Technical Manpower under Chapter
 of Policy and Action Plan Document of phase-II of the e-Courts Mission Mode Project.
- 2. Work for Scanning, Digitization and Digital Preservation of Cases/Judicial Records of High Court of Sikkim and Subordinate Courts of Sikkim awarded in favour of M/s Informatics Publishing Ltd., RV Road, Basavanagudi, Bangalore, Karnataka. The execution of said work started on 1st October, 2016 from District & Sessions Court Gangtok, East Sikkim followed by District & Sessions Court Namchi, South Sikkim and High Court of Sikkim.