

# Planned Development in Sikkim: Evolution and Growth

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## Abstract

Planned Development is the sine qua non for a holistic development of the state. Sikkim the Himalayan Kingdom was a protectorate of the Indian Union as a result of 1950 Indo-Sikkim treaty and later became its 22nd state. Sikkim climbed the development ladder through the development plans initially with the Seven Year plan in 1954. The present developments and the status of Sikkim is the outcome of this Planned Development and later through the Five Year plans. The paper discusses the thrust areas of these Plans through the decades paving the way for development and how far the state has fared in terms of overall development. It also reflects the gap in terms of development in pre-1975 and post-1975 period. This underlines the importance of having a concrete planned development in Sikkim for overall development. Primary and secondary data has been used for the analysis.

**Keywords:** Planned Development, Sikkim, Five Year Plans, Himalayan Kingdom, Development, Thrust Areas, Seven Year Plan.

## INTRODUCTION

The evolution of planned development in Sikkim can be traced back to the commencement of the first Seven Year plan in 1954 in India. Sikkim was then a protectorate of India. It was Nehru's first visit to Sikkim in 1952 after the Indo-Sikkim treaty which paved the way for planned development in the state. The seed of efficient administration for the development of the state had been sown by the British India and was carried forward by independent India. During the year 1949 there were three secretaries – general secretary, judicial secretary and financial secretary along with the state council consisting of nine members who looked after the administration of the state. The secretariat became further elaborate with eleven departments in 1950 and twenty-four in 1975 namely agriculture; animal husbandry; bazar; co-operative; education; ecclesiastical; electricity; establishment; excise; finance; food supplies and fair price shop; forest; general excise and motor vehicles; home; land revenue; law; legislative; medical and public health; panchayat and rural works; planning and development; press publicity and cultural affairs; public works; tourism; and trade industry and commerce. Development in the various fields further accelerated in the post-1975 period. Sikkim has been on the roadmap of planned development ever since it became the 22<sup>nd</sup> state of the Indian union in 1975.

## First Four State plans in Sikkim (1954-1976)

The first Seven Year plan covered the period 1954-61. The major focus of the plan included agriculture and allied industries, power, industry, mining and commerce as primary sector. Road and transport, education, health and co-operation were placed in the secondary sector. The plan led to all-round

development including communication, education, health, agriculture, expansion of cottage and small-scale industries, establishment of tea garden, expansion of Sikkim Nationalised transport, preliminary work on Lagyab Hydel were taken up in the initial plans.

The utmost importance in the first plan and the subsequent plans were on communication and transport development followed by agriculture and power sector. A well organised communication system was necessary for all-round development of the state. Near about half of the plan's outlay between 1954 and 1961 was on the development of road transport. The completion of Nathula-Gangtok highway in 1962, a major strategic road was one of the major component of the plan.

Department of agriculture which was started in 1955 garnered importance and agriculture and horticulture increased tremendously by the expansion of irrigation facilities, setting up of seed farms and disseminating knowledge of improved agricultural methods. The period saw the establishment of farmers' training center at Gangtok for training the farmers and enhancing and scientific methods of cultivation.

Industrial sector prior to 1975 was confined to traditional handicrafts like: Wood carving, painting, cane and bamboo; handloom in weaving of carpets, blankets; and paper making in the cottage industry institute which was established in 1957. Other industries set up during this period were fruit preservatory plant at Rangpo 1954. Until 1960 there was only one hydroelectric power station which was installed on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1927 on the bank of river Rani khola at lower Sichey near Gangtok with a capacity of 10 kilowatt. The Rongni chu hydel project generating 2100 kilowatts electricity was completed in the year 1961 to meet the growing demand of the people. Sikkim distilleries near Rangpo, 1975, Sikkim Mining Co-operation and Sikkim jewels- 1956, Temi Tea Estate-1969, Sikkim Time Corporation-1976 and Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Co-operation (SIDICO)-1977 were major developments of this plan period.

**Table 1: First Four State plans-1954-76 (Actual Investment by the Government, Rupees in lakhs)**

Sector	First plan (1954-61)	Second plan (1961-66)	Third plan (1966-71)	Fourth plan (1971-76)
1. Agriculture & allied industries (primary sector)	53.00 (16.4)	103.00 (16.00)	137.00 (44.00)	817.00 (16.9)
2. (i) power	30.00 (9.2)	54.00 (8.4)	71.00 (7.3)	108.00 (5.8)
(ii) industry mining & commerce	18.00 (5.6)	12.00 (1.9)	79.00 (8.1)	182.00 (9.7)
<b>Total secondary sector</b>	48.00 (14.80)	66.00 (10.30)	150.00 (15.40)	290.00 (15.50)
3. (i) road & transport	156.00 (48.2)	308.00 (48.00)	462.00 (47.6)	773.00 (41.3)
(ii) education	23.00 (7.1)	79.00 (12.4)	77.00 (7.9)	164.00 (8.7)
(iii) health	23.00 (7.1)	46.00 (7.2)	91.00 (9.4)	74.00 (3.9)
(iv) co-operation	5.00 (1.5)	2.00 (0.3)	17.00 (1.7)	10.00 (0.5)

(v) misc.	16.00 (4.9)	37.00 (5.8)	38.00 (3.9)	247.00 (13.2)
<b>Total tertiary sector</b>	223.00 (68.8)	472.00 (73.7)	685.00 (70.5)	1268.00 (67.7)
<b>Grand Total</b>	324.00 (100.00)	641.00 (100.00)	972.02 (100.00)	1875.00 (100.00)

Source: Sixth Five Year Plan, Department of Planning and Development, Government of Sikkim.

### Planned Development in Sikkim in post-1975 period

Planned development in Sikkim picked up its pace after Sikkim became the 22<sup>nd</sup> state of India in 1975. Lendup Dorjee Kazi was sworn in as the first chief minister and Bipin Bihari Lal as the governor of Sikkim in May 16, 1975. Henceforth, this day is known as the state day which is observed all over the state every year.

The developments in the administrative field were the establishment of Anti-Corruption Branch on May 29, 1975; Frontier Railway Passenger Out Agency at Sikkim Nationalised Transport office on September 1, 1975; foundation stone laid for Temi Tea factory in South Sikkim in December 21, 1975; and inauguration of Lendup Dorjee Kazi bridge at Sirwani on May 15, 1976. Education sector which forms one of the key aspects of development records 70 primary schools, 14 upper primary schools, 2 middle schools and 2 high schools with a total enrolment of 2500 students in 1954. In 1975, the number rose to 228 primary schools, 30 junior high schools, 8 higher secondary schools and one college with a total enrolment of 20,959 students. According to the sixth Five Year plan higher education was initiated in the year 1972 with an Evening College and a regular Government Degree College established in the year 1977.

**Table 2: Fifth plan (Investment and Percentage, Rupees in lakhs)**

Sector	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80
1. Agriculture & allied industries (primary sector)	289.00 (25.1)	314.39 (24.9)	490.27 (30.8)	514.11 (28.9)
2. (i) water development	2.60	0.00	0.00	0.00
(ii) irrigation project	23.1	24.71	0.000	-
(iii) flood control	-	-	-	-
(iv) power project	128.5	80.04	144.88	208.74
(v) industry & mining	56.9	90.83	86.55	143.68
<b>Total Secondary Sector</b>	211.1 (18.1)	195.58 (15.5)	231.13 (14.5)	356.70 (20.0)
3. (i) Road & transport & communication	358.4 (30.7)	337.11 (26.7)	402.92 (25.3)	491.01
(ii) education	98.6	99.04	126.65	99.89
(iii) health	45.3	75.60	65.49	28.41
(iv) co-operation	16.7	16.21	17.33	18.15
(v) misc.	147.9	223.45	258.69	271.45
<b>Total Tertiary Sector</b>	666.9 (57.1)	751.41 (59.6)	871.08 (54.7)	908.91 (51.1)

<b>Grand Total</b>	1167.5 (100.00)	1261.38 (100.00)	1592.48 (100.00)	1779.72 (100.00)
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**Source:** Fifth Five Year Plan, Department of Planning and Development, Government of Sikkim.

In the post-1975, major shift in the plan thrust from communication to agriculture and allied sector was seen. Moreover, the investment for the year 1976-77 alone was 1,167 lakhs whereas the maximum expenditure for the fourth plan was 1,875 lakhs. During the period, the emphasis was given on increasing the agricultural production by identifying suitable varieties of seeds in the different agro climatic zones of the state. In 1976 the state was demarcated into nine regional centres and five sub-regional centres with the function conducting adaptive trails and organising demonstrations with the objective to improve agricultural production. Introduction of scientific management practices for commercial crops like seed potato and ginger was the primary objective of the plan.

The demand for power rose leaps and bounds as a result of the demand from the growing number of departments and the public. It increased from 2 megawatt in 1975 to 6.5 megawatt by the end of 1979-80 which was met up from the installed capacity of generation from 2.85 mw and 6.82 mw respectively. During the fifth plan number of transmission and distribution schemes were taken up and completed so that all four districts were interconnected by suitable grid circuits for distribution of power from any available source in the state. By the end of fifth plan 48 villages were electrified. In 1980-81 Rongni Chu hydel project (also known as Jali power house) was upgraded to 2400 kilowatt. Likewise, Rimbi power house stage 1 was also augmented to 600 kilowatt.

**Table 3: Capacity of the power houses**

<b>Name of the projects</b>	<b>Installed capacity</b>	<b>Firm capacity</b>
Lower Lagyap Hydel Project	12.00 mw	5.50 mw
Rongnichu H.E Scheme (Stage-I)	2.40 mw	1.50 mw
Rongnichu H.E Scheme (Stage-II)	2.40 mw	1.50 mw
Rimbi Micro Hydel Scheme (Stage-I)	0.60 mw	0.40 mw
Rimbi Micro Hydel Scheme (Stage-II)	1.00 mw	0.60 mw
Rohtak Micro Hydel Scheme	0.20 mw	0.10 mw
Lachen Micro Hydel Scheme	0.10 mw	0.10 mw
Total	18.80 mw	9.70 mw

**Source:** Twelve Years of Bhandari Government: An Appraisal of Achievements, Information and Public Relations Department, Government of Sikkim.

In the sixth plan period agriculture and allied services received the highest importance which is evident from the fund allocated followed by transport and communication, social and community service, water and power development, industry and minerals, general services and economic services. Further during the plan period, decentralization was emphasised in the policies of the government. Two tier Panchayati Raj Institution was introduced in 1982 namely gram panchayat at the village level and zilla panchayat at District level. Election to the gram panchayats were held in 1983 and 1988. Zilla Bhawans were constructed in Geyzing and Mangan which acted in dissemination of powers wherein the grassroot people participated in the decision making process.

**Table 4: Sixth Plan (Investment in Rupees) 1980-85**

Head of development	1980-85 (approved outlay in lakhs)
Agriculture and allied services	3861
Water and power development	1250
Industry and minerals	654
Transport and communication	3075
Social and community service	3070
Economic services	44
General services	246
Total	12200

**Source:** Sixth Five Year Plan, Department of Planning and Development, Government of Sikkim.

Considerable development in the education sector started during the 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year plan with an approved outlay of 830 lakhs as compared to 23 lakhs in the first plan. The priorities of the State Government in the sixth plan constituted the improvement of the existing schools particularly the primary schools; in-service training of the untrained teachers and recruitment of trained teachers; curriculum renewal and examination reform with the objective of improvement in all instructional programmes for enhancing the quality and means of education in the state. In the higher education sector, more institutions were established like Sikkim Law College, B.Ed College and Indira Gandhi National Open University. This period also saw the introduction of vocational education, scheme of universal free education, free distribution of text books till class XII, and establishment of polytechnic and industrial training institute. Table 5 presents the various schemes for the development in the field of education.

**Table 5: Approved Outlay in Sixth Plan in Education Sector**

Name of scheme / project	1979-80 (in lakhs)	1980-85 (in lakhs)
Elementary education	32.22	370.00
Secondary education	46.96	180.00
Higher education	4.42	170.00
Teacher education	4.90	100.00
Games, sports & youth welfare	4.50	40.00
Adult education	2.00	10.00
Scholarships & stipends	Na	30.00
Direction & administration	Na	30.00
Total	95	830.00

**Source:** Sixth Five Year Plan.

The main thrust areas of the 7<sup>th</sup> plan were agriculture, transport, education, power and social sectors. Importance of science and technology was recognised by the government for the first time during the 7<sup>th</sup> plan. Significant progress in this sector have been the emphasis on the increase of production by adopting good policies and programmes, judicious use of scarce land resource, cropping pattern with a shift from traditional cultivation practices to a more remunerative land use programmes, agricultural

research and education, agriculture marketing and dry land development. In addition, the centrally sponsored schemes were also utilised leading to development of the sector.

Since the 7<sup>th</sup> plan there has been a considerable focus on the quality of education both at the primary level and higher education. Technical and vocational education also received importance. From 1994 onwards, social sector, especially education has gained the top priority and subsequently in 2001 the literacy rate rose to 76% as compared to 6.59% in 1951, 12.30% in 1961 and 17.74% in 1971. The initiatives of the state government with regard to education were free tuition fee, textbooks, exercise books till class V and 50% subsidized cost on text books from class V to XII in all government schools in Sikkim. Students up to class V are also provided with uniforms, school bags and rain coats free of cost. In 2002, schemes like merit scholarship was initiated for further academic excellence. The scheme included three students, each from all the 9 sub-divisions were annually selected from the competitive examination of class V and 12 students from CBSE examination. National talent search scheme resulted in qualification of two students for national level scholarship. During the tenth plan computer education was introduced in 29 schools as per the class scheme of government of India. Accordingly, 40 Junior High Schools were provided with computers under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. For meritorious girl students who secured 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> position in class V, VIII and X examination were awarded with Prerna Yojana scholarship by the state government.

**Table 6: Sectoral Allocations of Actual Expenditures 7th,8th,9th Plans (In %)**

Sectors	7 <sup>th</sup> plan	8 <sup>th</sup> plan	9 <sup>th</sup> plan
Agriculture & forests	18.29	16.72	9.60
Rural development	1.81	3.34	4.05
Irrigation	3.55	1.85	2.10
Power	9.64	13.40	12.00
Village industries	1.34	1.48	1.32
Other industries	2.04	2.00	1.16
Roads & bridges	16.68	11.74	12.50
Road transport	3.13	1.30	0.68
Science & technology	0.08	0.30	0.31
Ecology & environment	0.15	0.22	0.12
Tourism	0.75	0.97	1.27
Civil supplies	0.18	0.38	0.18
General education	13.17	10.82	17.20
Sports & youth affairs	0.51	0.33	0.60
Art & culture	0.93	0.51	1.00
Medical & public health	1.93	9.20	5.60
Water supply & sanitation	6.41	8.16	2.80
Housing	1.43	5.11	9.30
Urban development	0.88	1.33	1.80
Information & publicity	0.40	0.37	0.50
Nutrition, women & child welfare	0.78	1.13	1.75
Public works	2.14	2.87	2.00

Grand total (Rs. In crores)	86.22	93.53	87.84
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Source: Tenth Five Year Plan, Vol.1

During the tenth plan the number of schools increased to 783 compared to 266 in 1975. The teacher’s training institute was upgraded to District Institute of Educational Training (DIET) which has its own infrastructure in Burtuk since 2012. The objective of the government is to impart quality education. In-service teachers are also provided with B.Ed courses. According to 11<sup>th</sup> plan the number of trained teachers has increased to 61% as against 27% in 1975 and 41% in 1994. There has been an all-round infrastructure development with construction of more school buildings, toilets, play grounds, etc. from the primary schools to senior secondary schools. The higher education in the state also has a good infrastructure with government colleges in Burtuk, Tadong, Gyezing, Soreng, Rhenock and Namchi. Central Sikkim University has been established in 2007. Apart from the Government colleges numerous private colleges also exists promoting education sector in the state. Considerable increase in the literacy rate since 1971 has been noticed in Sikkim.

**Table 7: Literacy Rate-Sikkim**

Sl.No	Year	Sikkim			Nation		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	1971	25.37	8.9	17.74	45.95	21.97	34.45
2	1981	43.85	22.2	34.05	56.5	24.97	43.67
3	1991	65.7	46.76	56.94	64.13	39.29	52.21
4	2001	76.0	60.0	68.8	75.85	54.16	64.8
5	2011	87.29	76.43	82.20	82.14	65.46	74.04

Source: XIth Plan, Volume 3, & Census 2011

The increase in literacy rate reflects the efforts invested by the state government in the field of education. Despite the gap between the male and female literacy rate, the growth rate of female literacy is higher than the growth of the male literacy rate.

Energy, another important sector since the sixth plan reflects an outlay of power projects amounting to Rs.16 crores and increase to Rs.58 crores in the seventh plan as against Rs.4 crores in the fifth plan (p.202 draft 8<sup>th</sup> plan). The 8<sup>th</sup> plan further accelerated power development with 13% of the total outlay as compared to 9.64% in the previous plan which rose to 15% of the total outlay in the tenth plan.

During the tenth plan period surveys and studies were undertaken and potential sites for hydro-electric projects were identified in the state. The plan reports that projects with capacity above 25 mw to 100 mw have been awarded to private developers. Projects above 100 mw have been awarded to National Hydro Power Corporation and private developers. Above 100 mw projects awarded to private developers are joint ventures wherein the state will have 26% equity. In case of development of projects solely by the private developers then the state will get 12% free power for the first 15 years and 15% for the next 20 years and thereafter the project will be reverted back to the state free of cost and in good condition. In case of project National Hydro Power Corporation, the state is entitled for 12% free power for the life of the project.

Democratic decentralization constitutes one of the important components of the planned development ever since the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Acts were passed. This resulted in paving the

way for political as well as administrative decentralization. Regular elections are being held in Sikkim in accordance to the provisions laid in the Amendment Act in 1993. The elections to the PRIs in accordance with the 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment act have been conducted 1997, 2002, 2007 and 2012, 2017 and 2022. Women representation, a very important provision of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Act has been incorporated in the local self-government. Women have been given 50% in the Panchayati Raj Institutions since the 2012 election. Besides this, the government has accorded the traditional local self-government institution-Dzomsa prevailing in Lachen and Lachung with additional powers and functions under the Sikkim Panchayat Amendment Act, 2001.

Sikkim Municipalities Act, 2007 provided for urban local self-government with three tiers – Gangtok Municipal Corporation, Namchi Municipal Council and Nagar Panchayats in Mangan, Rangpo, Singtam, Jorethang and Gyalshing. The first municipal election took place in the year 2010 after the state legislature passed the Sikkim Municipalities Act in 2007. The subsequent elections to the urban local bodies were held in 2015 and 2021.

Roads are like the nerves of a system and in Sikkim it occupies an important place in the planning since Sikkim is a landlocked area. So far, the road network is the only means of mass transportation. The 11<sup>th</sup> plan period covered the road connection to all the villages and addressing the issue of state’s location and prone to road blockades mostly during monsoon. Hence, the importance of air connectivity was emphasized. At present civilian helipads are in Pelling, Ravangla, Assamthang (Namchi), Yuksam, Dodak (Soreng), Ringhim and Burtuk (Gangtok). Burtuk helipad is operated on daily basis between Bagdogra – Burtuk which takes almost 30 minutes one way. Army helipads in Lachung, Gurudogmar, Katak, Thangu, JN road, Living and Pegong are in operation. These helipads are helpful for delivering timely first aid and needy items, especially during natural calamities. The helipads served at its best especially during the 18th September, 2011 earthquake and October, 2023 flashflood in Sikkim. The state’s first airport at Pakyong, 34 km drive from Gangtok was inaugurated on 24 September, 2018. Another important recent landmark development is the launching of new Sikkim railway project which is proposed to connect the town of Rangpo with Sevoke in West Bengal.

**Table 8: Basic Road Statistics at the end of Ninth & Tenth Plan**

Types	9 <sup>th</sup> plan	10 <sup>th</sup> plan
Black topped	874.5km	1200.5km
WBM	473.5km	310.5km
Earthen	558.0km	511.0km
Total	1906.0km	2022.0km

**Source:** Eleventh Five Year Plan

The development of infrastructure has given a boost to the tourism industry. Tourism has been one of the main focus areas since the 9<sup>th</sup> plan. The emphasis was given on the orientation programmes for manpower in the tourism industry, creation of wayside amenities, tourist lodges, refurbishment of monasteries, information and publicity, etc. Sikkim has been participating in national and international tourist marts and thereby promoting tourism. Annual tourism festivals at Gangtok, Mangan, Namchi, Rabongla, Pelling, Hee Bermiok and Aritar have become attractions not only to the local tourists but also been appreciated by the foreign tourists as well. Adventure tourism like rafting, mountain biking, archery, trekking, rock climbing, and paragliding in the state has become very popular among the



tourists. Three peaks below 20,000 ft namely Brum Khangtse, Lama Angden and Frey’s peak have been opened for expeditions in the year 2005. The Government’s aim was to make Sikkim number one *eco-tourism* destination in India and thereby developing and promoting village tourism, bio-diversity parks, cultural centres, trekking routes and homestays. Capacity building programmes conducted by the Government has benefitted many people especially the youth. The enhancement of *pilgrimage tourism* and spiritual needs of the people has been taken care of by the government through the accomplishment of projects of 135 feet tall statue of Guru Padmasambhava at Samdruptse, Siddhesvara Dham with 108 feet tall statue of Lord Shiva, replicas of twelve Jyotilingas and models of Chaardham at Solophok 7km and 5km respectively from Namchi; Buddha park at Ravangla with 135 feet tall statue of Buddha and 130 feet tall statue of Chenrezig at Sangha Choeling monastery above Gyalshing. Sikkim has bagged the national award several times for the ‘best tourism performing state’ in the North East (Department of Information and Public Relations Report, 2005).

**Table 9: Tourist Arrival 2001-2005(Tourist Traffic)**

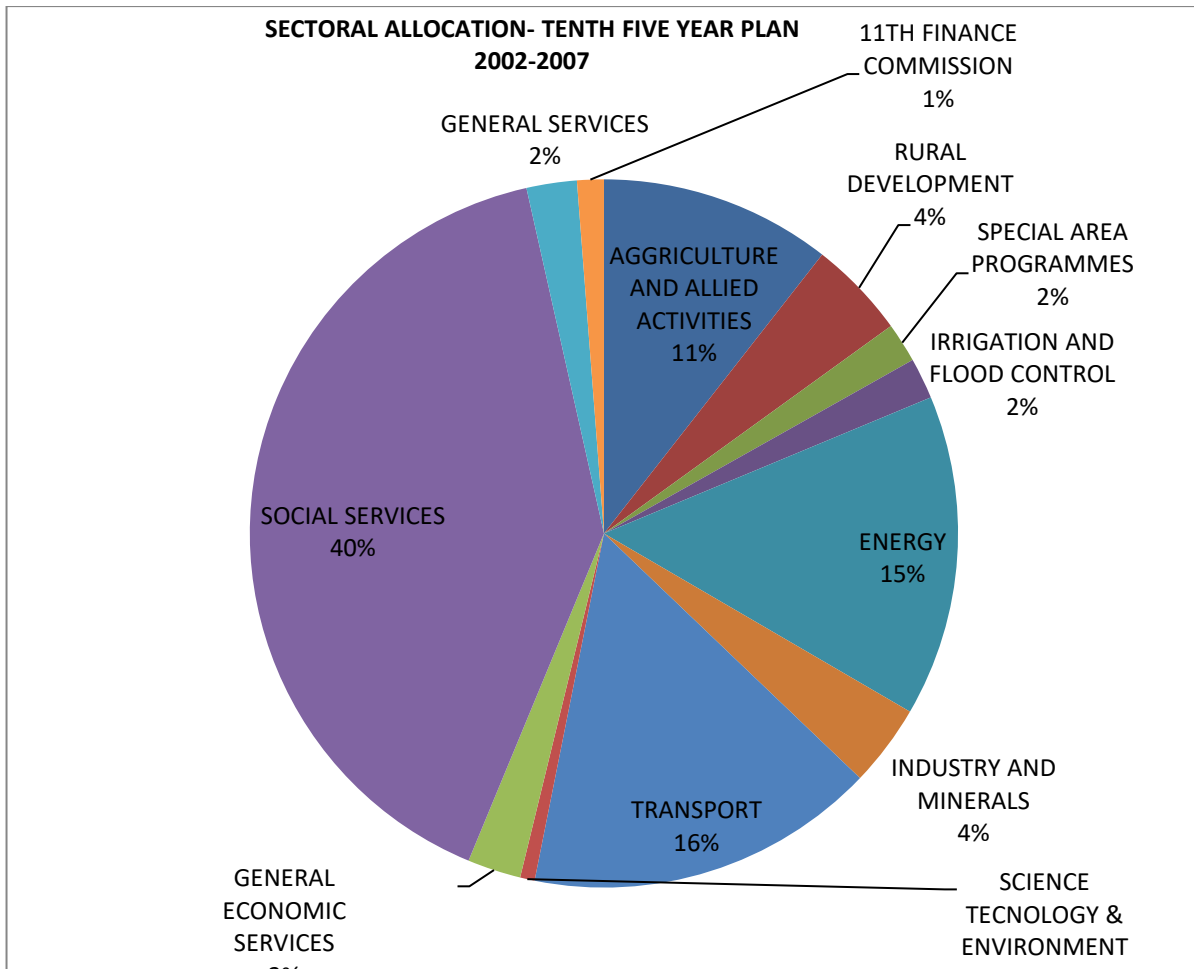
Year	International	Domestic	Total
2001	7757	146923	156681
2002	8539	160789	171330
2003	10954	176759	187713
2004	14646	230899	245545
2005	16523	251744	268267
<b>Total</b>	<b>58419</b>	<b>967114</b>	<b>1025533</b>

**Source:11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan**

According to the tourism secretary the inflow of tourists in the first four months of the year 2012 was 4 lakhs which was recorded as the highest in Sikkimese history. Government has introduced tourism as a separate discipline at the college level and also established an institute of hotel management in 1990 by the ministry of India and government of Sikkim.

In the agricultural sector the emphasis was on organic farming with the state having been declared as an organic state in 2003. As a result, subsidies on chemical fertilizers and pesticides have been dropped from April 2006 from the state budget. Assistance was provided in the production of vermicompost in the farmer fields. Other forms of assistance were also provided by the government in the field of organic farming. Further to uplift the state economically and to create employment opportunities for the people, the government opened ventures in floriculture, production of fruits, vegetables and medicinal plants. Therefore, horticulture and floriculture formed one of the thrust areas in the 11<sup>th</sup> plan period.

Social security welfare gained more emphasis in the Five Year plans of the government. Department of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe Welfare created in 1978 was amalgamated with Women and Child Department in 2000 as Social Welfare Department. Today it is known as the Department of Social Justice, Empowerment and Welfare which is the nodal department for the socio-economic and educational development and general welfare of SC, ST, OBC, women and children, old persons with no family support, destitute, orphans and physically challenged persons. The tenth plan has allotted 40% of the total approved outlay to social security welfare programmes.



**Fig.1: Sectoral Allocation 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. (Figures in Lakhs)**

**Source: Tenth Five Year Plan, Volume II**

Sikkim government’s policies and programmes covered all aspects of the state namely human resource development, preservation of culture and heritage, revenue, agriculture, cooperative movement, health, urban development, media and printing, social justice, law and order, sports and youth affairs, horticulture, floriculture, irrigation, water security, industrial activities, land revenue, electrification, transport, environment and forest, information technology, north east affairs, rural development, science and technology, mines and minerals, spiritual needs, intellectual and professional development, excise, empowerment of women and emphasized on compassionate governance. So far numerous accolades have been achieved by Sikkim. Some of the prominent national awards are:

- Economic- survey of India 2011-12 reports the highest growth rate in service sector in India is found in North Eastern states. Prominent among them are Arunachal Pradesh with 34.1% followed by Sikkim with 30%.
- First state to achieve 100% sanitation coverage. Sikkim received the Nirmal Rajya award on 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2008.
- The Chief Minister received the Leadership and Good Governance Award 2009.
- Fourth J.R.D Tata Memorial Award 2008 for population and reproductive health programmes.
- State Leadership Award 2009 in horticulture.
- Best State for Adventure Tourism 2009.

- Third position in best performing states in Panchayati Raj.
- Best performing state in education 2004-05.
- National award in tourism 2008.
- Award for lowest accidents in hilly state category 2005-6 and 2006-7.

Besides Sikkim has been the first state in the country to ban non-bio degradable substances; launching the state green mission; constitution of the state security commission; commission for study of glaciology and climate change; state environmental commission for preservation of fragile mountain eco-system; reservation of 50% and 30% seats for women in PRIs and employment respectively; allocation of 70% of total plan budget for the development of rural areas and maximum administrative and financial power to the PRIs; full fledged directorate of capacity building; prohibition of sale of gutka and paan masala intoxicants; and two months maternity leave to muster roll employees. Hence, the importance of planned development is clearly reflected through Sikkim's development journey.

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