

(iv). Justification for locating the project in forest area.

Sikkim, the 22nd State of Indian sub-continent is focused as the most peaceful hill State with hospitable people and stable governance. Situated in the northeastern Himalayan range, Sikkim is popularly known for its rich bio-diversity, blessed with the amazing assets of natural splendor and exotic cultural ambience. The hills of Sikkim possesses a unique natural reserves, ecological features like numerous picturesque lakes, snow capped mountains and panoramic locations. The State is spread over a geographical area of 7096 Sq. Kms encompassing the hills of various ranges of elevations with Mt. Kanchendzonga, the world's third

highest peak majestically towering all others. The State with a total population of 5,40,493 as per 2001 census is divided into four districts viz East, West, North and South with its capital at 'Gangtok' in East Sikkim.

Sikkim is a bio-diversity hotspot blessed with unblemished natural beauty and lush green forest with abundant floral & faunal wealth. The State also boast for its unique culture, ethnic heritage, pilgrimage spots, sites of archeological interest and more so, a big option for the adventure lovers. The climate of Sikkim is pleasant throughout the year. The maximum mean temperature in August is 23°C and the minimum mean temperature during January is 4°C. Owing to its awe-inspiring natural beauty, mountainous location, political stability, insurgency-free destination, clean and green state with hospitable people and pleasant climate, tourism has now emerged as the boosting economy for Sikkim and it is the most important civil industry in present day context.

The State Government has been entrusted with the Construction of Acclimatization Centers at **18th Mile** and **Hangu Lake** along en-route to Nathula for the pilgrims of Kailash Mansarovar Yatra which is scheduled to commence from May-June 2015. The aim of the State Government is to accommodate pilgrims and to let them get familiar with the extreme weather condition before starting their pilgrimage tour to Kailash Mansarovar via TAR.

The proposal is to have “ **Acclimatization units and other allied facilities** ”, in the **East district** under the project name “**CONSTRUCTION OF ACCLIMATIZATION CENTRES AT 18TH MILE & HANGU LAKE FOR MANSAROVAR PILGRIMAGE AND CONSTRUCTION OF PARKING YARD AT NATHULA.**” All spots have been selected specifically for its proximity to various other linkages.

The proposed site for **CONSTRUCTION OF ACCLIMATIZATION CENTRES AT 18TH MILE & HANGU LAKE FOR MANSAROVAR PILGRIMAGE** envisages:-

- (i) Construction of Ladies Dormitory Block

- (ii) Construction of Gents Dormitory Block
- (iii) Construction of Office – cum – Information Desk
- (iv) Construction of Dining cum Kitchen
- (v) Construction of Medical Infirmary Block
- (vi) Construction of Class IV Residential Quarters
- (vii) Construction of Accommodation Block (for Guides & Porters)
- (viii) Construction of Parking Yard.

Implementation of the project would greatly facilitate the pilgrims in getting themselves acclimatized with the weather conditions before proceeding to the Kailash-Mansarovar.

Cost-benefit analysis (to be enclosed)