

**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
HOME DEPARTMENT**

NO. 59/HOME/98

DATE: 26.10.98

NOTIFICATION

The State Government feels the need to ensure the preservation and maintenance of religious institutions and places of worship in Sikkim. There are a large number of monasteries and other institutions which have a great religious significance. Besides, there are a large number of mountain peaks and lakes which are considered to be sacred and the State Government does not permit scaling of such peaks and defilement of such lakes.

The Central Government has also passed a legislation called the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991 which prohibits conversion of any places of worship and provides for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship as it existed on the 15th day of August, 1947 and for matter connected therewith or incidental thereto. This Act specifically provides that no person shall convert any place of worship of different section of the same religious denomination or of a different religious denomination or any section thereof and punishment for a term of upto three years with fine.

Therefore, in view of the concerns of the State Government as expressed above and in the light of the Central legislation, it is hereby notified that no conversion or alteration or new construction or any developmental activity shall be undertaken at the site or in close vicinity of any place of worship or religious institution or sacred lakes or sacred peaks. All activities in such places of worship or religious institution in the nature of restoration or construction can be undertaken only with the prior clearance of the State Government in the Ecclesiastical Department which is the nodal Department to deal with all such matters.

All Secretaries and Heads of Departments and other local authorities may take due notice of these directions and ensure strict compliance both in letter and spirit.

Sd/-
(SONAM WANGDI) IAS
CHIEF SECRETARY

F. NO. 41/EA/EAST/98-99.

Copy to:-

1. All Secretaries/Heads of Departments.
2. Secretary, Ecclesiastical Department.
3. All DCs/ SDMs.
4. Director, Printing for publication in the official gazette.
5. File
6. Guard file.