

**Swachh Bharat Mission:
Sikkim Government Successfully Concludes A Zero-Waste Red Panda Festival**

New Delhi, 17 February 2016: The Ministry of Urban Development today shared details regarding its successful collaboration with the Tourism department of Sikkim, towards making the famous Red Panda Festival a more eco-friendly, zero-Waste festival. The festival organizers, in keeping with the spirit of Swachh Bharat Mission effectively implemented a number of green practices during the course of the event, including hosting a stall to educate festival visitors on proper waste management practices. The Red Panda festival, an extravaganza to promote Sikkim's tourism, culture, cuisine and organic products, was conducted between the 23rd of January and 2nd of February and witnessed a footfall of over 1 lakh people.

The organizing team made it mandatory for all brands participating in the event to follow certain 'swachhata' prerequisites, to be allowed to set up their stalls. The events restricted the use of plastic in the form of cups, plates, water bottles, etc. and asked the brands to provide festival visitors with reusable cutlery. Brands exhibitors also had to set up individual dustbins, use proper waste management practices for disposal and use bio-degradable materials for promotional banners.

There was an also exclusive stall dedicated to Swachh Bharat to display and spread awareness about Waste Management Techniques being adopted across Sikkim under the mission by displaying banners and posters. The volunteers spread information on maintaining EcoBin systems (Individual Household Composting device) at homes and various waste segregation practices in order to evangelize the audience towards maintaining a hygienic lifestyle and to contribute towards a clean society.

Speaking about the success of the event, **Shri Praveen Prakash, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development and Mission Director, Swachh Bharat Mission**, said *"I am delighted to share that the event organizers along with the Swachh Bharat team was successful in reducing the waste usually produced during such events, by a considerable amount. We have seen how littering in festivals can create a huge waste management issue. The Red Panda Festival will serve as an example on how to host waste-free events to festival organizers across the country, while also proving to be a great platform to interact with citizens and creating awareness around the issue."*