

PRESS RELEASE NO- 28

Yomgo-Siyom River Festival 2011

Aalo, Jan 20: The Siang River Festival which was conceived with a view to promote tourism, indigenous culture and tradition, handloom & handicrafts and showcase its rich cultural heritage has its genesis to the River Siang from which the three districts of Upper, East and West Siang derived their names. The festival was started first at Upper Siang and follow-up celebrations were held at Pasighat in East Siang in a large scale way for few years. The festival was discontinued in these two districts for sometime and West Siang began to take keen initiative to host the festival from the year 2007 to 2010 as annual event under the same nomenclatures of Siang River Festival.

After many years of celebrations, objections poured in from various corners about the nomenclature as the Siang River only flows through two districts of Upper and East Siang. Since Yomgo-Siyom is the main river of Aalo and nearby areas, the local leaders, District Administration and Organizing Committee discussed the issue thoroughly and changed the nomenclature to Yomgo-Siyom River Festival during its fifth celebration from 11th to 15th Jan 2011.

This year's festival was special in many ways. The nomenclature was changed and core committee has decided to make it a calendar event from this year onwards. The floating bamboo bridge over Yomgo River constructed by Kabu village with financial assistance from organizing committee led to an amazing island called LIRO stretching over several acres of land which was the venue for this year. It took two months to clear and develop the site to create an entirely new world to celebrate this unique festival. The electricity and water supply was restored within a record time. Quite a number of add on attractions were introduced like floating houses and restaurants, ferry services, firecrackers, lighting show for five days, children parks, exhibition of local handlooms and handicrafts, display of agriculture and horticulture products of the district, fashion show by Boney Darang on ethnic designs and other wide range of amenities and options to pick from. The popular Bollywood singer, Zubeen Garg pulled an unprecedented crowd that nearby stormed the bridge and venue. Record revenue generation was noticed by all through sale of local opo (local Beer), food items, local handloom through stalls by business people. It was for the first time delegates from Karnataka, Rajasthan, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland and Sikkim were invited by organizing committee and cultural show was a big success. Big assets were created considering it a yearly event to reduce cost for years to come. The entire programme was made live by local TV channel RCCN, Aalo.

A beautiful traditional restaurant, (Agam Restaurant constructed by Shri Pakge Ete was also an added attraction. People of Kabu and Bridge construction committee with the ticketing at Rs. 10/- per head generated revenue for the village. It is for the first time that festival was graced by State Governor Gen. J. J. Singh and Chief Minister Dorjee Khandu on the closing and opening ceremony. Six foreigners from Britain and European Countries were amidst festivities. The Army gave their full cooperation this year and exhibited their Arms and Weapons. The River Rafting Expedition was flagged in by state Chief Minister Dorjee Khandu on the opening day. In spite of heavy inflow of various cross-sections of people from the district, Law and Order was managed effectively by district Police and Magistrates.

Write –up by Gijum Tali, DIPRO Aalo

Sd/ D.Dodum,PRO