

5 May, 2018

## ROPEWAY ADDS TO LIST OF ATTRACTIONS FOR TOURISTS NEAR SIKKIM LAKE



# Cable-car ripples near Changu

**RAJEEV RAVIDAS**

**Tsomgo (East Sikkim):** The cable car that ascends from the height of 12,900 feet, a little above and on the side of the famous Tsomgo or, Changu, Lake, and perches on a snow-covered hillock located at a height of 14,500 feet is fast becoming the major attraction for tourists visiting Sikkim.

Built after an almost a decade-long struggle, the Tsomgo Passenger Ropeway started operation in July 2017. In a short span of less than a year, the ropeway has become an added attraction for tourists visiting Tsomgo

Lake, which over the years has become a tourism hotspot of the Himalayan state.

Tsomgo is about 40 kilometres from Gangtok and 15 kilometres short of Nathula, the border pass between India and China, which has become a must-visit for tourists in Sikkim. Given the fact that Tsomgo-Nathula is designated as a sensitive nature area, tourists need a special permit to visit the rugged mountain terrain which for better part of the year is covered with snow.

K. B. Gurung, the local partner of the company that built and operates the rope-

way, said people are drawn to the cable car service because of what they get to see on the upper station of the ropeway. "The upper station opens up to a flattish hillock from where you, on a clear day, can get a majestic view of the Kanchenjunga mountain. Even if the weather is not clear, the visitors have a whale of a time playing with the snowflakes. The Tsomgo ropeway at its upper point is the highest ropeway in Asia," he said.

On Saturday, scores of people were seen taking a ride on the ropeway. "We feel like we are in Europe. This is incredibly beautiful," said

Tribhuvan Prakash Dubey, a visitor from Ahmedabad in Gujarat. "*Aisa jaga hamara India may hai* (such a place exist in our country)," chimed Ashok Purohit. Both Dubey and Purohit are police officers from Gujarat and were in Sikkim to spend their holidays with their families.

"To set foot on snow after descending from the cable car is incredible. We have a ropeway in Nepal that takes you to the Manokamana temple (in Gorkha district), but this short ride is wonderful," said Ram Kesar Bogati, the president of Nepal Film Artistes Association.

The cable car that has come up near Changu Lake in Sikkim. Telegraph picture