



COPING WITH THE COVID-19 CRISIS: AARANYAK'S INTERVENTIONS

Aaranyak works for conservation of nature, natural ecosystems, biodiversity; protection of wildlife and environment; sustainable management of natural resources; mitigation of disaster and climate risk and for empowering poor and marginalised communities through livelihood interventions. Well-being of nature as well as human communities is the essence of its vision, mission, goal and objectives. It is with this spirit of proactive voluntarism that Aaranyak jumped into action to respond for the crisis unleashed by the outbreak of the **COVID-19**. Aaranyak rose to the occasion by -

- (i) taking pro-active measures on its own to regulate its organisational activities completely in accordance with the instructions and guidelines of GOI and GOA;
- (ii) disseminating awareness to its thousands of stakeholders throughout the state of Assam and the NE region, and
- (iii) at the same time assisting the efforts of the Central and the State Government to prevent and deal with the pandemic, and
- (iv) take initiatives to develop and maintain a positive spirit amongst conservation workers even during the limitations imposed by **COVID-19** pandemic.

We present here a profile of our interventions to cope with the Corona Crisis in chronological order covering our activities from mid-March till April 30, 2020. More activities will be added as some planned programs are undertaken in the coming days.

AARANYAK'S ENGAGEMENT WITH MITIGATION OF THE COVID-19 CALAMITY:

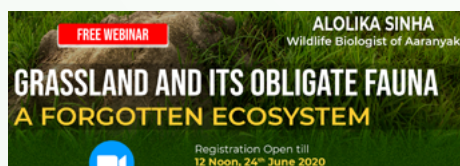


16TH JULY 2020

Aaranyak's wildlife biologist, Ms. Alolika Sinha was invited as a panellist for a webinar organised by School of Ocean Science and Technology, Kerala University of Fisheries & Ocean Studies, Kochi. The subject of discussion was "COVID-19 and Biodiversity Research in India".

25TH JUNE 2020

Dr. Partha Jyoti Das, Head, Water Climate and Hazards Division, Aaranyak was invited for an online discussion programme organised by the Geography Department, Devicharan Baruah Women College on 25th and 26th June, 2020. Dr. Das spoke about how the COVID-19 crisis and the floods have emerged as disasters in the state at present. He further added that due to lockdown the air pollution level has come down. But the increasing medical waste if not properly addressed may pose a problem in future.



24TH JUNE 2020

In the series of "Eco Talk", another webinar was delivered by Alolika Sinha, a wildlife biologist of Aaranyak titled "Grasslands and its obligate fauna, a forgotten ecosystem"

11TH JUNE 2020



The Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) team of Kohora River Basin (KRB) Karbi Anglong, are working to develop institutes for community business initiatives. An ad-hoc Committee named, “PIRBI Biodiversity Business Management Committee” was formed on 11th June to manage the business. The committee took up initiatives to register as Producer and Marketing Cooperative. All the products will be launched in the market under the brand name of ‘Pirbi’ (a Karbi word means Biosphere). Already handmade tea, broom, and handloom sling bags are packaged for marketing. Moreover, the committee also explores to develop a biodegradable packaging material from leaf involving local women. The project team will guide the “Pirbi” with technical know-how until they are able manage the venture by themselves.

10TH JUNE 2020



The Natural Resource Management Team of Aaranyak is working closely with the under-privileged households of four villages in Karbi-Anglong, aiding them with daily wages during this outbreak of COVID-19. As such, the people are engaged in planting saplings in a degraded community forest. So far, of the targeted 10000 saplings, 3200 saplings of mixed-species have been planted. A total of 22 villagers were benefited with daily wage earning.

5TH JUNE 2020



Aaranyak in association with PAJHRA, AASAA and AAWAA, provided food materials and face masks to 150 families of seven fringe villages of Manas Tiger Reserve in Baksa District, under leadership of Ms. Anjali Tirkey and Bibhuti P. Lahkar. Of these, 66 families in Paharpur, 33 families in Simlabasti of Bhutankhuti, 19 families in Daodhara and remaining in Teleliguri, Munda Basti, Subankhata, Bulamari were reached. The volunteers of AASAA took an active part and the event was supported by individual donations.

22ND MAY 2020



The Media Production & Communications Division of Aaranyak has been continuing organizing ‘Eco talk’- a series of free educational webinars through online platform for effective utilization of the COVID-19 lockdown period by both Aaranyak’s experts as well as by interested students and professionals. As part of this, on the occasion of International Day for Biological Diversity, Prof. P. C. Bhattacharjee, doyen of wildlife science in Northeast India and former Head, Department of Zoology, Gauhati University delivered a special webinar titled “**Biodiversity Conservation in Northeast India and the Post-COVID-19 Challenges**”.



6TH MAY 2020

In the series of “Eco Talk”, another webinar was delivered by Dr. Purnima Devi Barman, Project Leader of Greater Adjutant Stork Conservation Project of Aaranyak titled “Enabling Coexistence of People and Greater Adjutant Stork in Assam, India”.



3RD MAY 2020

As part of “Eco Talk”, Mr. Udayan Borthakur, Head, Media Production & Communications Division of Aaranyak delivered a free webinar titled “Wildlife Photography for Beginners”.



2ND MAY 2020

In the “Eco Talk” series, the Secretary General & CEO of Aaranyak spoke on wildlife crime, titled “Current Scenarios of Wildlife Crime in Global and Local Perspectives”.



30TH APRIL 2020

Aaranyak provided two (2) Bajaj Pulsar motorcycles and 500 units of face cover to Golaghat District Police to fight the COVID-19 Pandemic keeping in mind that part of Kaziranga National Park falls within Golaghat District.

30TH APRIL 2020

Aaranyak’s Organising Secretary took part in a webinar hosted by the Honourable Minister of India, Health and Family Welfare and the Chairman, NITI Ayog to interact with Central Statistics Office (CSO) and other non-government organisations of the country about how to work jointly to prevent the Corona Pandemic and mitigate the adverse effects. The OS raised important issues and provided suggestions to the NITI Ayog.



30TH APRIL 2020

Greater Adjutant conservation initiative of Aaranyak produced 5000 face masks to distribute among communities. The Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup District, All Assam Students’ Union, several media houses and Government organizations extended their support and collaboration to this initiative.



30TH APRIL 2020

Manager, ‘Environment Education and Capacity Building Division’ of Aaranyak wrote an article focusing challenges and future prospect of corona crisis situation.

<http://amaranek.gpublications.in/index.php?mod=1&pg-num=4&edcode=1&pagedate=2020-04-29&type>

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=4418223794869728&set=a.126589750699842&type=3&theater>



29TH APRIL 2020

Aaranyak provided 250 cotton face cover to the Range officer of Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park. News can be found in the following link: <https://janambhumi.in/VGtSWmVrNTZWVDA9/Aaranyak-hands-over-250-face-masks-to-Orang-National-Park.html>



28TH APRIL 2020

Aaranyak provided 500 units of cotton face cover to SDO Civil, Koliabor; SDPO, Koliabor, and local media persons based at Koliabor of Nagaon district.

As part of Eco Talk, GIS specialist from the Geospatial Technology and Application Division of Aaranyak delivered a free webinar talk titled “**Introduction to QGIS**”.



27TH APRIL 2020

Aaranyak distributed 200 numbers of cotton face cover to SDO Civil, Salbari, Baksa District, Bodoland Territorial Region; 400 numbers of cotton face cover to frontline staff of Bansbari and Bhuyanpara Range offices of Manas National Park.

As part of Eco Talk, Head of Primate Research & Conservation Division of Aaranyak delivered a free webinar talk titled “**Golden langur: Ecology and Conservation**”.



26TH APRIL 2020

As part of Eco Talk, Manager of Geospatial Technology and Application Division of Aaranyak delivered a free webinar talk on “**Basics of GPS application in research**”.

26TH APRIL 2020

The team members of Natural Resource Management Project of Aaranyak conducted awareness campaign on efficiently dealing with COVID-19 and distributed approximately 500 facemasks to the households of four villages in Karbi-Anglong district.



25TH APRIL 2020

As part of Eco Talk, Head of Wildlife Genetics Division of Aaranyak delivered a free webinar talk titled “**Genetics for conservation of wildlife - Scopes and limitations**”.

24TH APRIL 2020

Aaranyak contributed Rs. 1 Lakh to Assam Government to help in strengthen government initiatives to check COVID-19 in Assam. The amount was transferred to the bank account of Assam Arogya Nidhi.



23RD APRIL 2020

Aaranyak provided 160 units of cotton face cover to Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, Morigaon District to help the frontline staff of the Sanctuary to do their duty safely.

As part of Eco Talk, Head of Tiger Research & Conservation Division of Aaranyak delivered a free webinar talk titled “**Counting tigers for conservation**”.



22ND APRIL 2020

As part of Eco Talk, Head of Water, Climate and Hazards Division of Aaranyak delivered a free webinar talk titled “**What does climate change mean for northeast India? Exploring the hazardscape**”.



21ST APRIL 2020

Aaranyak distributed 350 numbers of cotton face cover/mask in the office of SDO Civil, Bokakhat and Kohora Outpost, Golaghat district.

As part of Eco Talk, Head of Elephant Research & Conservation Division of Aaranyak delivered a free webinar talk titled “**Human Elephant Conflict mitigation requires innovation in conventional approaches**”.



20TH APRIL 2020

Media Production & Communications Division of Aaranyak initiated a series of free educational webinars titled ‘Eco talk’ through online platform for effective utilization of the COVID-19 lockdown period by both Aaranyak’s experts as well as by interested students and professionals alike. On the first day, Secretary General and CEO of Aaranyak delivered a webinar talk on “**Challenges and solutions to rhino conservation in Assam**”.

<https://nenow.in/north-east-news/assam/aaranyak-provides-free-online-webinars-during-covid-19-lockdown.html>

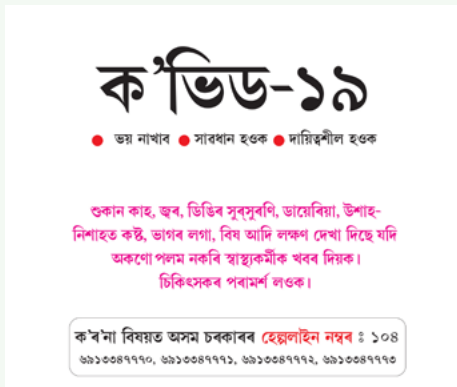
<http://theshillongtimes.com/2020/04/20/aaranyak-eco-talk-on-webinar-to-boost-conservation/>

18TH APRIL 2020



In Karbi Anglong, the Aaranyak team is working in close association with karbi village women to produce facemask. The women with stitching skills were involved to produce 1800 facemasks of two kinds - a normal double-layered facemask and cup-mask with double-layered. So far, 300 facemasks were distributed free of costs to the villagers and our staffs. Village wise door to door awareness drive was carried out in phase manner. Households were provided with masks and awareness material developed in Karbi language. In this drive, special focus was given to women vegetable vendors who used to visit markets and other villages to sell their home-grown vegetables and edibles collected from neighboring forests. These women were provided with masks, hand gloves and soaps for their personal sanitisation.

Moreover, every households were motivated to develop and manage their homestead garden for self-reliance for food and vegetables. Awareness materials were also distributed among them on homestead gardening.



17TH APRIL 2020

Aaranyak, in association with Department of Science and Technology, Government of Assam and the Assam Science Technology and Environment Council (ASTEC) jointly published an awareness booklet to sensitize public about the Corona pandemic.


https://aaranyak.org/Uploads/files/Covid 19-DST govt_Assam_ASTEC_Aaranyak_JKP_V_7.pdf

<https://www.pratidintime.com/covid-19-aaranyak-contributes-rs-1-lakh-to-assam-govt/>



10TH APRIL 2020


Aaranyak encourage its staff, members and networks to come forward and render their service to strengthen its fight against COVID-19 and requested them to register as a volunteer. A total of 11 members from 7 districts (Golaghat, Jorhat, Kamrup Metro, Barpeta, Dhubri, Bongaigaon and Kamrup District) registered as volunteers to assist the Government of Assam in dealing with the Corona crisis through 'Protirodhi Bandhu', an initiative of the Assam Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA).



10TH APRIL 2020

Aaranyak produced an awareness brochure on COVID-19 in English for general public. News can be found in the following links:

https://aaranyak.org/Uploads/files/Covid%2019%20-Aaranyak_English_Corrected.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3T5eMa-mUHGAZvHj1A33HsQAvLTZFLKpgkPEKa2yt89WFIP71GzpbSXVk



9TH APRIL 2020

Aaranyak developed an awareness pamphlet on COVID-19 in Hindi for public use. News link is given below:

https://aaranyak.org/Uploads/files/Covid%2019%20-Aaranyak_Hindi_v_4.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2y9PqaIV5FwHi46tQ1AssN7_Ir-R3sAZXpktGrAx5fEBfLLtAA65bbQbU



8TH APRIL 2020

Aaranyak started engaging local community at living in the fringe of the Manas National Park, Kaziranga National Park and its project site in Dadara, Kamrup District for making face cover from cloths following the guidelines suggested by office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to Govt. of India.

7TH APRIL 2020

Manager, 'Environment Education and Capacity Building Division' of Aaranyak communicated its suggestion with government of Assam through proper channel involving Ms. Pomi Baruah, ACS about developing a SOP for disposal of single use masks.

4TH APRIL 2020

Developed an awareness brochure on COVID-19 in Assamese for use of public in general. The brochure was widely circulated through social media and organizational networks. It reached to about 70 thousand people. More news can be found following this link: [https://aaranyak.org/Uploads/files/Covid%2019%20-Aaranyak_JKP_FINAL\(1\).pdf?fbclid=IwAR2CPop7HEpwezKEI54HqDvAb_I7bq3ddOKNv_qU1J9LWxlwYjgm3OFTI32I](https://aaranyak.org/Uploads/files/Covid%2019%20-Aaranyak_JKP_FINAL(1).pdf?fbclid=IwAR2CPop7HEpwezKEI54HqDvAb_I7bq3ddOKNv_qU1J9LWxlwYjgm3OFTI32I)

21ST MARCH 2020

Aaranyak Management issued an Office order as "ADVISORY ON PREVENTION OF COVID-19" to its employees regarding rules and norms to be observed to cope with the COVID-19 situation.

21ST MARCH 2020

A meeting was held in Aaranyak's Admin office where the COVID-19 pandemic was discussed and Aaranyak's course of action for ensuring the safety of its staff was chalked out.

19TH MARCH 2020

Manager, 'Environment Education and Capacity Building Division' of Aaranyak wrote a popular article on proper hand-wash and encouraged common people for soap and normal cloths rather worried about hand sanitizer. Reader from 17 districts informed telephonically that they are benefited by this article. Here is the link to news.

https://epaper.niyomiyabarta.org/19032020/page16.php?fbclid=IwAR0kd5e9M6FrhDpt7-LQrg8vdF8MllzNMepLXormlAToYj_oiD4ld4lm9yA

17TH MARCH 2020

Aaranyak prepared hand sanitizer in its Wildlife Genetic Laboratory by following the WHO recommendations. Besides, the Media Production and Communications Division (MPCD) of Aaranyak developed a video on how one can prepare hand sanitizer as per the WHO guidelines and circulated the video through social media. News links are given below:



<https://www.facebook.com/udayan.borthakur1>

<https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/north-east/hail-spirit-helpin-hand-for-sanitizers/cid/1755566?fbclid=IwAR2ktAH2JIIAWgl-k3n39z4n5sRVdsLZ7Yz35RwcqgLd8IYhSoTfoC8o24A8>

Aaranyak is a registered society working towards nature conservation in North East India, since 1989. Our strength lies in applied research in biological, environmental and social fields and our thrust area of work is the North Eastern India and Eastern Himalayas. Aaranyak is steered ahead by young professionals dedicated and committed to the cause of conservation. Aaranyak is recognized as a Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (SIRO) by the government of India.

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