



# Naturrole

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- Aaranyak Made a Strong Presence at 29th ICCB, 2019
- Workshop on Empowering Youth Action for Good Water Governance
- Aaranyak Participates at Jal Shakti Abhiyan
- Inauguration of CFC Set up at the Fringe of Manas National Park
- Workshop for Judicial Officers on Wildlife Crime and Trade

Cover Photographs: Udayan Borthakur

## Aaranyak Made a Strong Presence at 29th ICCB, 2019

29th International Congress for Conservation Biology or shortly ICCB 2019, organized by Society for Conservation Biology was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia during 21-25 July 2019. As part of this event, researchers, students, agency personnel, environmental educators, practitioners, and other conservation stakeholders join together in discussions on biodiversity conservation and genetics, ecology, biogeography, anthropology, history, psychology, economics, conservation marketing, religion etc.

Aaranyak team comprising Ms. Alolika Sinha, Mr. Dipankar Lahkar, Dr. M. Firoz Ahmed and Dr. Purnima Devi Barman attended ICCB 2019 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and spoke about their research and conservation work in India.



# Update on Activities

from page 01



Dr. Purnima Devi Barman, wildlife biologist of Aaranyak and Green Oscar winner delivered a key note speech on “Recovery of endangered Greater Adjutant Stork in Assam, India”. The theme of the symposium was “How to grow your project impact, measure it and still do what love”. She also delivered another key note on panel “Diversity of Science” on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019. It is worth mentioning that Dr. Barman has been working with communities, stakeholders since last 11 years.

Alolika Sinha, a wildlife biologist of Aaranyak spoke about the factors that influence the Manas' hog deer population and what are the ways out to sustain this important population of hog deer in India. Her work provides the baseline information and is the first of its kind study on this endangered species in northeast India.

Dipankar Lahkar, a wildlife biologist, on the other hand painted a picture on how the tigers in Manas are on the path of recovery after the ethno-political disturbances had ceased. He opined that Manas is capable of harbouring more tigers than it presently does. He went on to explain how a collaborative approach indeed helped in achieving this conservation success.

Dr. M. Firoz Ahmed, conservation scientist of Aaranyak attended the conference and its several key sessions to share conservation success stories from Assam. He took part in several meetings with scientists, academicians, students and donors from around the globe to strengthen conservation and science in the region.

## Training on Organic Horticulture for Panbari Farmers by Aaranyak

With an aim to orient farmers on scientific organic farming of horticultural crops in their homestead gardens, a two-day long training has been organised by Aaranyak at Panbari, Chirang on 12 and 13th June, 2019. The training, organised with technical support from KVK, Chirang has been attended by a total of 121 Farmers from Chourang No.1 and Chourang No.2 villages of Panbari. During the training, the farmers were oriented on various principles, techniques and tools of organic horticulture farming like site selection and preparation, crop selection, soil nutrient, plant health and pest management etc. Further, the farmers have also been trained on vegetative propagation techniques like cutting, layering and grafting along with raised bed farming and rain water harvesting. Dr. Kameswar Das, Coordinator and Ms. Mandakini Bhagawati, Subject Matter Specialist from KVK, Chirang acted as the resource persons during the workshop along with Mr Sarbeswar Basumatary, progressive farmer, Chirang, Mr. Dipak Basumatary, Baksa, Jayanta Kr Sarma, Consultant, Aaranyak. Attending the event, Mr. Shyamal Dey, DDM, Chirang and Barpeta, NABARD and Dr. Bibhuti P Lahkar, Manas Landscape Administrator interacted with the farmers on various relevant aspects. All the trainees have also been distributed with seeds of summer vegetables and spice seedlings as a part of the training programme.

This training, organised under a new initiative of Aaranyak on integrated natural farming for the communities of Panbari, Chirang has been supported by NABARD. It may be mentioned that this initiative will aim at ensuring sustainable livelihoods for the fringe area communities of Panbari range, Manas National Park through integrated homestead agroforestry and village forests along with conservation of biodiversity in the area.



## Workshop on Empowering Youth Action for Good Water Governance

Aaranyak jointly with Oxfam India successfully organize a 3 day consultative workshop on 'Empowering youth action for good water governance in the Brahmaputra River Basin in Assam, India' from 25th June to 27th June, 2019 at Kamalabari, Majuli. In this programme District Administration, Majuli and Sanchipaat, a local sociocultural and environmental organisation of Majuli were the associate partner.

Sustainable solutions to various water related problems mainly in Brahmaputra river basin, while ensuring water and environmental security to the vulnerable population, promotion of good governance in the water sector is crucial. With this objective, in order to trigger the young mind and capacity, Aaranyak assembled 32 persons of 20 to 30 age groups from diverse background being student, researcher, farmer, NGO worker etc.

The programme was inaugurated by Shri Dipok Barthakur, hon'ble Vice Chairman, State Innovation and Transformation Ayog, Assam which was attended by different govt officials, journalists and local villager along with participants.

Dr. Partha J Das, Head, 'Water, Climate and Hazard Division', Aaranyak, Dr. Kulen Chandra Das, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Nowgong Girls' College, Nagaon, Prof Ranjan Das, Department of Crop Physiology, Assam Agriculture University, Jorhat, Dr. Rajib Kr Goswami, Executive Engineer, Majuli Water Resources Department, Government of Assam, Minket Lepcha, River Story Teller, Darjeeling, Prof Chandan Kr. Sharma, Head, Department of Sociology, Tezpur University, Dr. Kabya Jyoti Bora, Livelihood Expert and General Secretary, Association for Livelihood Promotion and Entrepreneurship Development (ALPED),

Guwahati, Nava Kumar Gogoi, CMD, Jasingfa Aqua Tourism Centre, Nagaon, were the resource persons in the workshop. There in the workshop, the participants were brought close to various important topics like importance of water governance in the Brahmaputra River Basin, Transboundary issues of the basin, importance of ecosystem services, Agriculture in the Brahmaputra Valley, 'The problem of flood and river erosion in the Brahmaputra River Valley, Development in doldrums in the Brahmaputra River Valley in Assam, Cooperative farming on char land, creation from water hyacinth, Aqua-Tourism through audio-visual lecture and interactions. On the last day the participants had the chance for a short field study on water hazards and traditional mitigation measures alongwith livelihood options in areas like Silghat, Samuguri etc. At the end certificates were distributed to the participants.

From the organising team of Aaranyak Dr. Partha Jyoti Das, Pranab Goswami, Tapas Mahanta and Deepmoni Nath were present in the workshop.



## Motorcycles Provided to Rhino Areas of West Bengal

Aaranyak gifted eight motorcycles to rhino bearing areas of North Bengal..! Motorcycles were handed over to the West Bengal Forest Department during the first meeting of the expert committee, held on reintroduction of Indian one-horned rhinoceros at Patlakhawa grassland in Cooch Behar area. The motorbikes were formally handed over to Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF) and Head of Forest Force (HOFF), West Bengal, S Barari, IFS, and PCCF (Wildlife) Mr. R.K.Sinha by Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar, CEO of Aaranyak. After receiving the motorbikes from Aaranyak, PCCF and HoF and PCCF and Chief Wildlife Warden of West Bengal then provided the eight motorbikes to respective forest divisions at Hollong Forest Rest House (FRH) in Jaldapara National Park.

Senior officials of West Bengal Forest Department including Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW), R K Sinha, CCF (North Circle), G P Chetry, CCF Wildlife (North), Ujjal Ghosh and DFOs of Jaldapara, Gorumara and Coochbehar.

Aaranyak's CEO, Dr Bibhab Kumar Talukdar who is also the Chair of Asian Rhino Specialist Group of the IUCN and Asia Coordinator of International Rhino Foundation, was present in the function.

The motorcycles have been provided by Aaranyak with

support from Born Free Foundation and in association with Himalayan Nature and Adventure Foundation.

The eight motorcycles which are expected to boost the protection mechanism in rhino habitat of North Bengal area, are being distributed among four wildlife divisions of North Bengal areas – three for Jaldapara Wildlife Division, two for Gorumara Wildlife Division, two for Coochbehar Wildlife Division and one for Jalpaiguri Wildlife Division.

The West Bengal Forest Department have decided to reintroduce rhinos at Patlakhawa grassland where the erstwhile habitat was destroyed because of change of course by River Torsa, keeping in tune with its principle of not keeping all the eggs in one basket. The Forest Department wants to spread out the rhino population in North Bengal to secure the future of the species.





## Aaranyak Hargila Conservation Initiative Gets Support

The Greater Adjutant Conservation Initiative of Aaranyak led by Dr. Purnima Devi Barman has now received another helping hand from New Zealand High Commission to India. The Commission had recently come forward to support the rural women's efforts to save the endangered Hargila in Assam. With its support an awareness campaign to enable women to be the guardians of Hargila conservation was launched with an event on 27th June 2019.

During the day-long event, 280 women who comprise of the now globally acclaimed 'HargilaArmy' came together. The event was organized in collaboration with Kamrup District Administration, Kamrup Police, Assam Forest Department, Dadara Sarbajanin Sri Sri Saradiya Durga Puja Samitee and villagers of Dadara. DFO Chandan Bora, Rangiya Division and Daisy Gogoi, DSP, North Kamrup, graced the event and lauded the efforts of the Hargila Army and urged them to continue their conservation work and spoke about the key role women play in the society and in environmental conservation, respectively. Arpana Sarma, Circle officer attached to Hajo said that, "We read about women empowerment, but Hargila Army women are real life examples of it." Chandradhar Das, Gaon Burha, Village head of Dadara delivered a very interesting speech on how rural women can become self-dependent and should establish their own identity. Renowned journalist Madhusudan Medhi discussed issues related to conservation and inspired the women to protect nature. Shankar Saikia, from Dadara, explained the influential position of women in Assamese society and their role in conservation.

Green Oscar winner Dr Purnima Devi Barman, wildlife Biologist, Aaranyak and Director of WiNN India, who leads the Greater Adjutant conservation initiative elaborated on her future plans for empowering the women and for Greater Adjutant conservation. She thanked the New Zealand High Commission and all supporters, well-wishers of this program and summoned all to move ahead with passion for conservation.

Also present during the event were students from Assam Engineering College, Jalukbari along with Aaranyak staff members Kongseng Konwar, Bijoyinee Sharma and intern Firdausi Chaudhury.



## Inauguration of Cutting and Tailoring Center at Dadara

In order to empowering the Hargila Army members with a means of livelihood, Greater Adjutant Conservation initiative of Aaranyak led by Dr. Purnima Devi Barman, Green Oscar Winner with support from New Zealand High Commission distributed 80 sewing machines. The inauguration ceremony of cutting, tailoring and sewing machine center was organized on 16th July 2019 at the premises of State Bank of India, Dadara.

Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup District Mr. Kamal Baishya along with Mr Partha Sarathi Mahanta, IPS, and Superintendent of Police Kamrup District inaugurated the event and appreciated the effort. Two cutting and tailoring centers were inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup District. Mr. Kamal Baishya. Other dignitaries present during the event were Mr. Dibakar Kalita, President of AASU, Kamrup District. Mr. Madhusudan Medhi, President of Dadara Higher Secondary School and President of Kamrup District journalist association. Total 200 Hargila Army women members were present in the event. Dr. Purnima Devi Barman expressed her gratitude to Honorable New Zealand High Commissioner Joanna Kempfers for this support and honour.



## Visit to Aaranyak Office

Prof. Biman Kumar Dutta, Hon'ble member of North Eastern Council (NEC) and a distinguished academician along with M. Iboyaima Meitei, Adviser (Horticulture), Govt. of India visited Aaranyak office on 13th July 2019. During the visit, CEO and Secretary General of Aaranyak Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar presented a brief overview of Aaranyak different activities followed by interaction with Division Heads & Managers of Aaranyak about their different projects. In their speech, they appreciated various activities and initiatives being carried out by Aaranyak and also express their interest to help Aaranyak from every possible ways.



## Filed Gear Distribution Programme at Orang National Park



Aaranyak in association with Darrang Police and Mangaldoi Wildlife Division organized a field gear distribution programme in Rajib Gandhi Orang National Park on 11 July 2019, in order to improve the efficiency of the VDPs working in surrounding areas of the National Park. A total number of 101 pieces of rain coats, 101 pairs of field boots, along with highly efficient torch lights were distributed among VDPs, so that they can work efficiently during the monsoon season.

CEO and Secretary General of Aaranyak Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar handed over these field gears to the members of VDPs on behalf of Aaranyak and also appreciated their efforts for which zero rhino poaching record has been possible in Orang National Park for last few years. He also assured of more support to them in future.

Other dignitaries present during the programme were Darrang district Superintendent of Police (SP) Mr. Amrit Bhuyan along with other police officials, Assistant Conservator of Forest (ACF) Ashok Dev Choudhury and Range Officer of Orang National Park, Mr. Manas Kumar Bhattacharjya, Mr. Bijoy Sankar Bora, Mr. Pranjit Sarma and some leading citizen of the area. The programme was supported by David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (DSWF).

## Free Diabetes & Eye Screening Camp at Pobitora

On the occasion of the World Rhino Day on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2019, Aaranyak and Lions Club of Gauhati in association with Range office of Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) organised a free Diabetes and Eye Screening Camp at Pobitora WLS for the benefit of Forest Guards and their families staying there. About 70 forest staffs underwent free diabetes and eye screening in the health camp.



July - September, 2019

*"What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another." - Chris Maser*



## Aaranyak Organized Summer Camp 2019 at Orang

Aaranyak in collaboration with Forest Department, Orang National Park authority and Silbori youth development organisation organized free coaching classes exclusively for class X students from villages surrounding Orang National Park. The 20 days long camp was organized as a part of its endeavour to create a pool of conservation workers/volunteers among the younger generation. The summer coaching camp was started on 5th July 2019 and ended up on 25th July 2019. About 60 students were participated in the free coaching classes, where mathematics, science and English were taught by professionals besides a course in environmental education and nature conservation. The classes were conducted at Sirajul Haque High School, Silbori near Orang National Park.



The environment component of the coaching camp were comprised of basic tips on bird watching, ecotourism, importance of GIS application/map learning, conservation efforts regarding various species including rhino, elephant and primates etc. The students were also sensitized about how environment conservation can open up green livelihood options.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Ramesh Gogoi, explained the participants about how quality education and sincere learning would brighten up their future and consolidate their standing in the society. He flagged the importance of the role of young generation of the area in preserving Orang Park for the progeny.

Speakers from Aaranyak conducted different sessions on environment education and conservation in the coaching camp. Dr. Dilip Chetri delivered talk on Primate Conservation, Arif Hussain interacted about Rhino conservation and bird watching, Swapan Nath talked on Eco-tourism, Abhijit Baruah interacted on Elephant conservation, Arup Das presented on GIS Application and maps in conservation. Mr. Manas Bhattacharjya, Manager, Legal and Advocacy Division of Aaranyak and Mr. Ashok Dey, Executive Member of Aaranyak also graced the participants on the closing day. Mr. Abdul Malek and Mr. Jamaluddin Officials from Silbori Youth Development Organisation were also present and provided all the help needed.

05



## International Tiger Day Brings Good News From Manas..!

Aaranyak celebrated the International Tiger Day by sharing an inspiring story that it has achieved collaboration among NGOs and Forest Department supported by IUCN-KfW. This work has been conducted by the Tiger Research and Conservation Division (TRCD) of Aaranyak:

The Manas Tiger Conservation Programme(MTCP integrates multiple approaches (Livelihoods, Law Enforcement support, Conservation Education and Biological Monitoring) to improve tiger habitats and support tiger, co-predators and prey population in the Manas National Park which had fewer tigers in 2010. MTCP is led by Aaranyak is being implemented in partnership with the Forest Department BTC, Wildlife ConservationTrust, Awely and Panther.

The integrated efforts started from inside the park by the Forest Department through improved law enforcement supported by the MTCP and other stakeholders has resulted in increase of tiger population, a much expected line. In this



push-pull model, Aaranyak supports the forest dependent marginalized families with sustainable alternative livelihoods within the villages who are often encountered by forest staff in the park and are asked not to violate law.

In addition, a dedicated team of Conservation and Livelihood Division of Aaranyak and educators constantly communicate with the target villagers to change their behaviour to be friendly to Manas National Park and the ecosystems.

The results of the integrated efforts are monitored by understanding how indicators like tiger and prey population is doing in the park.

However, Poaching and human induced disturbances remain a major threat to tigers in the Manas Tiger Reserve and the efforts need to continue.

## Aaranyak Participates at Jal Shakti Abhiyan

Dr. Dilip Chetry and Bipul Das from Aaranyak took part in Jal Shakti Abhiyan 2019 held at New Delhi on 2nd July 2019. An inspiring presentation was made by Bipul Das on “Dong Bundh System” a traditional water conservation and management system mainly used in Northeast India. He mentioned about the usefulness of “Dong Bundh System” among communities. It is significant that the “Dong Bundh System” ensures the availability of drinking water for around 40,000 people in Northeast India. It also conserved 120.16 km sq catchment area from Disaster Risk Reduction (DDR) such as soil erosion and flood.



## Orientation Workshop on Climate Change at Dibrugarh and Tinsukia

The Environment Education and Capacity Building Division (EECBD) of Aaranyak with support of Assam Science Technology and Environment Council has been conducting series of orientation workshop on climate change (CC) in different parts of Assam. Two such orientation workshops were held recently at Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts of Assam.

In Tinsukia, the workshop was jointly organized by the Tinsukia Zilla Parishad and Tinsukia Wildlife Division which was held at the Conference Hall, Guijan Range Office. More than 170 participants, which includes members of Panchayatiraj Institution (PRI), EDC members and village community leaders were actively participated in the programme.

On the other hand, another programme was organized at Tinthenkia Industrial High School, Tinthenkia, Dibrugarh district. The programme was organized jointly with the ‘Pilgrimage’. More than 340 participants, including PRI members, village community leaders and students took part in that programme.



## Summer Camp for Underprivileged Students of Kohora, Karbi Anglong

In an endeavour to build Science and Technology Literacy and Environmental Literacy among children from the Kohora River Basin area, a two day summer camp was organised during 27-28 July, 2019 by Aaranyak at Chandrasing Rongpi Memorial High School, Kohora, Karbi Anglong. A total of 25 children studying from class IV to XI joined the camp, which was inaugurated by Mr. Chinmay Dhar, retired Range Officer of Forest Department. Mr. Chatrasing Bey, retired Head Master of Chandrasing Rongpi Memorial High school, Mr. Rupsing Engleng, Range Officer of Soil Conservation Dept and Mr. Bapuram Ingti, senior community leader attended the inaugural event of the camp as guests of honour.

Jayanta Kumar Sarma, science communicator and environment & development consultant, Prof. Bhim Prasad Sarma, Dept. of Mathematical Sciences, Tezpur University and Mr. Pankaj Baruah, Subject Teacher, Chemistry, Koliabor Higher Secondary school, Mr. Arif Hussain, Aaranyak and Mr. Swapan Nath, teacher, Chondrasing Rongpi Memorial High school joined the camp as resource persons.

During the inaugural day of the camp, the participants were oriented on 'methods of science' and its application in daily walk of life through different activities of observation, measurement, analysis and interpretation, followed by the introduction of mathematics in nature, patterns and designs in nature in the light of Fibonacci Series and number and the concept of bio-mimicry, which were conducted by Jayanta Kumar Sarma. During practical session, children carried out observation and measurement of leaf arrangement in plants and also developed different creative works using fallen leaves and natural waste materials.

On the second day, participants took part in sessions on Mathematical Tips and Games as well as Demonstration cum Interpretation of Application of Physics under the guidance of Prof. Bhim Prasad Sarma. Students also learned about

the science hidden in their common food materials in the kitchen in the session on "Biodiversity and indigenous food, physics and chemistry in Kitchen" by Mr Pankaj Baruah and Jayanta Kumar Sarma. In the last session of the camp, children took part in environmental games conducted by Arif Hussain and Swapan Nath to understand the concepts of ecological processes and interrelations in ecosystems.

As a part of summer camp, jointly coordinated by Mr. Swapan Nath and Mr. Sarlongjon Teron, Aaranyak, participants were also distributed with a sapling from Aaranyak's community nursery.

This endeavour of Aaranyak, to promote scientific temperament and outlook among the children of the area has been lauded by the local community as well as the participants themselves, which has given them the opportunity to learn many new and exciting things from their daily lives. It may be mentioned that, this programme was organised by Aaranyak, under its Community-based Natural Resource Management Programme supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Services.



## Handover K-9 Dog Unit to Orang National Park

In order to strengthen protection of rhino as well as other wildlife, Aaranyak today provided one K-9 Dog unit to Orang National Park authority. On behalf of the Park Mr. Ramesh Gogoi, DFO, MANGALDOI wildlife division has officially received the unit. Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar, Secretary General & CEO of Aaranyak formally handed over the K9 Dog unit to the park authority. Range officer Mr. Ranjan Barua, Mr. Manas Kumar Bhattacharjya, Mr. Gaura Baidya, Mr. Bitumoni Lahkar were also present on the occasion.

In another event on the same day, Aaranyak provided two motor bikes to Darrang District Police to strengthen wildlife protection. Reserve Officer Mr. Bipul Hazarika and MTO Mr. Sarat Kalita took the delivery of the bikes on behalf of Darrang District Police, which was formally handed over by Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar in presence of Mr. Manas Kumar Bhattacharjya, Mr. Gaura Baidya and Mr. Bitumoni Lahkar.



## Celebration of World Elephant Day 2019

Aaranyak in collaboration with Golaghat Forest Department, Morangi Press Club and Dholaguri M.E School celebrated World Elephant Day at Dholaguri M.E School on 13th August, 2019. As a part of the event, essay competition and extempore speech competitions were conducted among the students.

The programme was inaugurated by Mr. Uttam Saikia, Honorary Wildlife Warden of Golaghat District and elaborated the importance of elephant and its conservation. Bhaskar Deka, D.F.O Golaghat Division, Puspadhar Borgohain,

Ranger Golaghat Range, Hemanta Saikia, President of Morangi Press Club, Arup Duwarah, Head Master of Dholaguri M.E School, Rituraj Phukan, Reporter of Sentinel interact with student and discussed about Human Elephant conflict, co-existence and current issues of Golaghat District regarding this.

During this session, Nabajyoti Sharma, Teacher of Sankardev Shishu Niketon, Thurajan painted an Elephant on school's wall and gave a message of need of Elephant conservation through colours.



## Aaranyak Organized Dr. Ananta Bora Memorial Lecture at Bongaigaon

Aaranyak successfully organized the first Late Dr Ananta Bora memorial lecture at Birjhora Public Library auditorium on 18th August 2019, as an honour to him who was Life member, Executive Committee member and also Head of the Division of Flora Conservation of Aaranyak.

The programme was inaugurated by Dr Feroz Ahmed, local social worker after lighting a lamp before a portrait of Late Dr Ananta Bora. The opening address was delivered by Ranu Roy, Head of Birjhora Mahavidyalaya's Botany department. In her speech, she paid rich tributes to Dr Bora and remembered his contribution towards the college and also in the field of Botany.

Renowned ecologist Prof. Parimal Chandra Bhattacharjee, Retired Professor and Head, Zoology Department, Gauhati University, Guwahati during his lecture called Dr Bora "a field scientist" and also inspired the students who were present in the programme. Dr Bhattacharjee also highlighted the importance of different species in a forest eco-system and wetlands.

A souvenir titled "Ananta Smriti" edited by Ashok kumar Das, Assistant professor of Abhayapuri College & Coordinator of Western Assam zone of Aaranyak and Dr Hillojyoti Singha,

Associate Professor of Assam University, Silchar & life member of Aaranyak was released by Dr Khanindra Kumar Sarma, Principal of Birjhora College.

Aaranyak also set up an exhibition stall to exhibit and discuss various social interventions of Aaranyak through scientific research and conservation in the field of biodiversity and also to convey awareness message regarding nature conservation to the people present during the event.





## Aaranyak Organized Workshop on Wildlife Crime in Darrang

Aaranyak organized a workshop for police personnel on wildlife crime with special mention to the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 in Mangaldai, Assam. Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar, SG and CEO of Aaranyak, SP of Darrang District Mr. Amrit Bhuyan, Mr. Kaushik Barua, Honorary Wildlife Warden, Advocate Ajoy Kumar Das, Associate Lawyer of Aaranyak, The Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife) of Mangaldai Division, Ramesh Gogoi, DSP HQ Darrang District Ms. Mamoni Hazarika, DSP Border Darrang District Ms. Anita Hazarika, DSP special Branch Darrang District Mr. Kishore Kr. Nath and Manager of Legal and Advocacy Division of Aaranyak, Mr. Manas Kr. Bhattacharjya took part in the programme.

CEO and Secretary General of Aaranyak, Dr Bibhab kumar Talukdar gave a presentation highlighting the alarming wildlife crime scenario and the important role that the police were expected to play for improving the situation. SP, Amrit Bhuyan said that this type of workshop was a need of the hour given the rising wildlife crime graph.

The Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife) of Mangaldai Wildlife Division, Ramesh Gogoi graced the workshop and highlighted importance of such sessions for honing skills

of enforcement personnel in preventing and scientifically investigating wildlife crimes in the state. Kaushik Barua, while addressing the workshop flagged the growing importance of K9 sniffer dog squad of Aaranyak in preventing and investigating wildlife crimes in the state.

Associate Lawyer of Aaranyak, Advocate Ajoy Kumar Das, explained in detail before the participating police officials the about efficacy of various provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The programme was anchored by Manager LAD Mr. Manas Kr. Bhattacharjya.



## Inauguration of CFC Set up at the Fringe of Manas National Park

A Common Facility Centre (CFC) and Raw Materials Bank (RMB) built by Aaranyak with financial support from Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of India, was inaugurated at Majrabari under Bhuyanpara Range of Manas National Park (MNP) on 20th August 2019. Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) as nodal agency and Export Promotion Council for Handicraft (EPCH) as technical agency had played a major part in successfully implementing all the components of SFURTI project of MSME, Govt. of India.

The centre for which land has been provided by the villagers, was inaugurated by the Director of the IIE, Guwahati Dr Abhijit Sharma, Director of Manas Tiger Reserve, Amol Sarma, Deputy Director of Manas Tiger Reserve, Raghu Nath Boro and President of Aaranyak, Ranjan Bhuyan.

The CFC and RMB have been set up under a project titled Scheme for Fund of Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI) for the benefit of over 260 artisans from nine villages located on the fringe of the Manas National Park, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

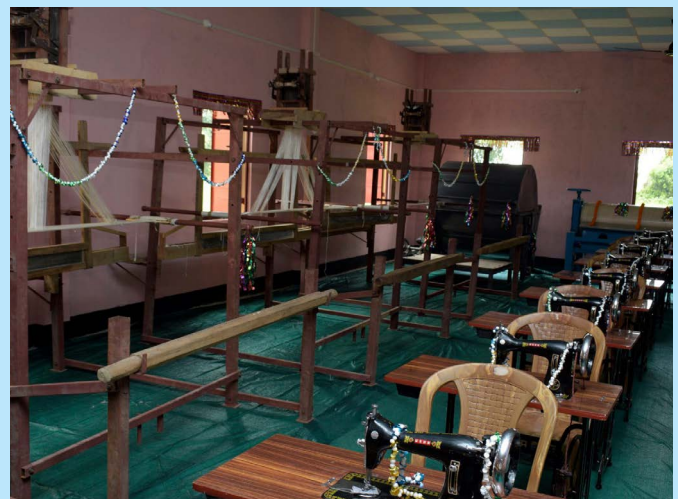
The SFURTI project is aimed at providing alternative livelihood options to economically backward communities living in the fringe of Manas National Park so that they can sustain themselves without depending overtly on the resources extracted from the forest area.

It should be mentioned that economic backwardness compels these people to depend heavily on forest resources of Manas National Park for their livelihood. Women represent almost half of the society, their status, skills and work participation, perception and desire for progression of family and society rightly reflect societal situation to a large extent. The age composition indicates that there are women group with immense potential in the age group between 18 to 45 years. This section of women is a part of potential

working population of the villages. If they were properly trained and their status was strengthened at per male in the line of development they may contribute immensely in the uplift of the society and economy as a whole. These artisans are economically, educationally backward and deprived from any developmental opportunities. Even though skilled in weaving but due to lack of awareness and capacity were not able to get proper economic benefits. The SFURTI project aims to upgrade and hone the skills of these traditional artisans besides providing raw materials and other support for their economic progress.

Swapan Das has been working as Cluster Development Officer in this project and he has played key role in successful implementation of the project.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by a host of Aaranyak officials, staff, members and volunteers including Dr Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, Namita Brahma, Manas kumar Bhattacharjya, Jayanta kumar Pathak, Ranjan Khound along with a large group of beneficiaries of the project.



## Skill Development of Karbi Women in Kohora River Basin

Aaranyak organized a two-day training program on cutting and tailoring for product diversification using traditionally weaved clothes for the Karbi women of the Kohora River Basin, Karbi Anglong. Aaranyak is working with the communities with the objective of developing entrepreneurship skills based on their traditional skill of weaving and diversification of traditional handloom products. The training was held at the Community Resource Centre, Chandrasing Rongpi Memorial High School (CRMHS), at Chandrasing Rongpi village managed by Aaranyak and local communities. Aaranyak has been working with the communities of four villages in the river basin for sustainable development of the indigenous Karbi communities through Participatory Natural Resource Management models.

A total of 15 women participated in the training where they learned using a sewing machine, cutting the of a product (bags, pouch, satchel), designing and sewing of the products and value addition to the products. The participants were very enthusiastic and excited to learn the techniques. The group produced various traditionally weaved cloth before the training to use it to tailor into diversified products for value addition and marketing. Exuberant and enthusiastic women participants felt confident that they can also produce good and quality products from traditionally weaved cloth. Ms. Kareng Rongpipi expressed her happiness saying that now she knows how to produce different products from the cloth we weave other than those traditional use and I am confident that with support from Aaranyak, we will be able to get some additional income for the family as we live hand to mouth.

The basic training covered some important aspects of cutting and tailoring like importance of accurate measurements, different techniques of sewing a traditional bag, checking the quality of weaving and stitching and giving out a quality final product. The training was run by Mr. Achinta Kr Sarma, an accredited trainer of NER and proprietor of the Sristi Jute Product, Nagaon and Mr. Sankar Roy from Nagaon. Dr. M Firoz Ahmed, Dr. Jayanta Kumar Sarma of Aaranyak and Mr. Swapan Nath, teacher of CRM High School was also present in the program to guide and motivate the participants to increase their zeal in learning. Mr. SarlongionTeron of Aaranyak coordinated the training.

Aaranyak is committed to the communities living in the four villages of the Kohora River Basin for sustainable livelihood opportunities through its Community-based Natural Resource Management Programme currently supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Services.



## “Friends of Rhino” Programme in Manas National Park

Aaranyak in collaboration with Manas National Park Authority and in support from David Shephard Wildlife Foundation organized another programme as a part of the “Friends of Rhino” initiative in Manas National Park on 27th August 2019. “Friends of Rhino” is an initiative of Aaranyak mainly to connect the kids of Rhino bearing areas with different aspects of conservation of Rhino, their habitat, habits and also information related to Rhino to create awareness among them. A total number of 31 students and 3 teachers from 3 different schools of fringe villages of the national park participated in the programme.

Mr Amol Sarma, Director of Manas Tiger Reserve delivered a talk on Manas and its biodiversity, Raghunath Boro, Deputy Director of Manas, Mr Dharani Dhar Boro, OSD of Manas Tiger Reserve and Mr Babul Brahma, Range Officer of Bansbari Range of Manas National Park gave an over view of need of wildlife conservation. Mr. Swapan Nath, senior journalist of Kaziranga interacted about Rhino conservation and Arif Hussain of Aaranyak presented some information about world distribution pattern of Rhino, its habitat, habits through an audio visual presentation.



As a part of the programme, a park safari was conducted where Dipankar Lahkar, Manager of Tiger Research and Conservation Division of Aaranyak along with Kuldeep Das and Detsung Basumatary, Project Officers of Aaranyak interacted with the students and introduced about habitats and habits of Rhino in field and made the trip memorable for the students. It is significant that this group of student got the chance to visit Manas National Park for the first time. Prosenjit Sheel, Aparajita Singh Rajput, Muzamil Haque, Pankaj Das and Samsuma Narzary of Aaranyak and Nripen Singh, member of Aaranyak were also present during the programme.

## Workshop for Judicial Officers on Wildlife Crime and Trade

A workshop for Judicial officers on present scenario relating to wildlife crime and trade was held in Sati Sadhani Kalakhetra, Golaghat on 15th of September 2019. Hon'ble Mr. Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and Hon'ble Mr. Justice A.M. Bujar Barua from Guwahati High Court were present in the workshop and conducted two technical sessions in the workshop.

Judicial officers from seven Districts namely Golaghat, Jorhat, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Biswanth and Lakhimpur were present in the workshop.

Secretary General & CEO of Aaranyak Dr. Bibhab Kumar

Talukdar and Mr. Rahul Dutta from International Rhino Foundation delivered presentation in the workshop on Wildlife conservation in respect of global and local perspective and on Present scenario of wildlife trade.

The workshop was organized by Aaranyak and Assam State Legal Service Authority in association with DLSA, Golaghat. Member Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Under Secretary of ASLSA were present in the workshop.

Manas Kumar Bhattacharjya Manager, Legal & Advocacy Division, Kukil Gogoi, Niranjana Bhuyan and Animekh Hazarika of Aaranyak were also present in the workshop.



## Student's Learning Exchange Programme Organised in Manas Landscape

Giving the students from Manas Landscape fringes an opportunity to share their knowledge and learning about the natural heritage site, Aaranyak completed a learning exchange programme among students of 10 schools from the locality on 13th of September, 2019. During the programme held at Barmajra ME School, Majrabari, Baksa, students from 3 schools from Panbari range area, 2 schools from Bansbari Range and 5 schools belonging to Bhuyanpara range fringe area, shared their views and learning on the Manas National Park(MNP) by presenting posters on endangered species from MNP, history of the park, its benefit and contribution, different threats to MNP and its geographical map along with drawings of wildlife species found in the park. Manas National Park's Officer on Special Duty and well-known conservationist Mr D D Boro and Dr. Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, Manas Landscape Administrator of Aaranyak attended the programme as resource persons and interacted with the participating students.

This initiative to cater the needs of the younger generation to create awareness about MNP and its importance is a part of the 'Know Your Manas' programme of Aaranyak and is based on the learning and exposure of the students during the recently concluded exposure trips organised to the park under the programme. It may be mentioned that,

under the 'Know Your Manas' initiative during the period of June to August, 15 students and one teacher from each of these 10 schools were taken inside the pristine forest ecosystems of Manas National Park to give them first-hand knowledge about the park and its biodiversity. The end goal of the initiative is to create a cadre of new generation conservationists in the landscape, so that the park and its ecosystem can be protected and conserved for the future generation.

The programme has been taken up by Aaranyak in Manas Landscape with support from Stop Poaching Now (SPN), an US based charity organisation dedicated to the cause of wildlife conservation. Manas Tiger Conservation Programme (MTCP) led by Aaranyak in the Manas Landscape in association with Forest Department BTC, Wildlife Conservation Trust, Panthera and Awely has also supported the initiative.



## Celebration of World Rhino Day 2019

On September 22, 2019 World Rhino Day was marked by a grand celebration with Rhino tableau, street plays, on-road poetry and songs, competitions like art, essay writing and poetry and the presence of many eminent persons. The program was organized by Kaziranga National Park Authority in collaboration with Aaranyak, WWF, WTI, TCF, Bhumi, Upaityaka, Bokakhat Press Club, Bokakhat Journalist Association, EMJA, Bokakhat Kavi Sanmilan, Bokakhat Natya Mandir Committee, Puwati Sahitya Sabha Bokakhat and Sandhani Lekhika Samitee Bokakhat. Two Rhino tableaus were flagged off by P. Shivkumar, Director, KNP and Gunin Hazarika, Ex- Minister, Assam, in Kaliabor. One tableau marched through the NH-37 crossing Jakhlabandha, Burapahar, Bagori, Kohora and reaching Bokakhat where a closing program was held. Meanwhile in Bokakhat, the Kavi Sanmilan, a program with a vibrant flow of poetry by various poets was held. The program was graced by Mr. Atul Bora, Cabinet Minister, Govt. of Assam. On the other hand the second Rhino tableau marched towards North bank crossing Kalia-Bhoomrah bridge, Balipara, Jamugurihat, Bishwanath Chariali and finally reaching Borgang, Bihali. On its way, both the tableaus spread the message of Rhino awareness and conservation through street plays, songs and poems. The song and

poem performance accompanying the second tableau was performed by a team from Aaranyak. This part of the program was graced by Mr. Ranjit Dutta, Cabinet Minister, Govt. of Assam.

The program was led by Mr. P. Shivakuma, Director, Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, Mr. Rohini Ballav Saikia, DFO, Eastern Assam Wildlife Division and Mr. Mukut Das, DFO, Bishwanath Wildlife Division.

Team Aaranyak who took active participation in the program are Arif Hussain, Manager, RRCD; Rinku Bezbaruah, Member, Aaranyak; Anil Das, Staff, Aaranyak, members of Aaranyak Khirod Saikia, Dulon Bahek, Nirmal Chandra Bora, Achinta Das and Bikas Bora.



## Aaranyak 30<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day

### 30 Years in Nourishing Nature to Secure our Future!

Aaranyak celebrated its 30th foundation day with a day-long programme at Grand Bhabendra Alay, Survey, Beltola, Guwahati. The programme included Aaranyak Foundation Day Lecture on the topic "Climate Change and India's Sustainable Development Pathway", delivered by Dr. Akhilesh Gupta, Senior Scientist of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India and an eminent climate expert on climate change and sustainable development. The Lifetime Contribution Award instituted since the last year was conferred to Dr. Gautam Narayan, reputed conservation scientist who is best known for his work on conservation of the Pigmy hog in Assam. During this event, two books published by Aaranyak, namely "Legends of Hollongapar" a coffee-table book on Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary by Udayan Borthakur and "Aaranyak at 30 - Green Voyage" highlighting the past to present of Aaranyak, compiled and edited by Bibhab Kumar Talukdar and Bijay Sankar Bora were also being released by the dignitaries on the dais. The event was attended by eminent

guests and dignitaries, Aaranyak members and staff.

In addition, a panel discussion on 'Challenges and prospects of protecting and conserving vultures in Assam', was held with the participation of Dr. Annwaruddin Choudhury, renowned wildlife expert from Assam and Dr. Sachin Ranade, vulture expert and Scientist from Bombay Natural History Society, Prof. P.C. Bhattacharjee retired faculty from Department of Zoology, Gauhati University moderated by Dr. Anirban Roy, senior journalist and Editor in Chief of Northeast Now.

An exhibition of 30 photographs depicting Aaranyak's journey in past 30 years, along with display of Aaranyak publications was also organized on the day. A cultural program in the evening by invited artistes and Aaranyak staff and members marked the end of the celebrations. Sri Tarun Chandra Kalita, well-known Sarod exponent of Assam performed a Sarod recital in the inaugural program of the evening cultural function.



# Glimpses of Aaranyak 30<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day



## Glimpses of Aaranyak's Annual General Meeting 2019



# Aaranyak

### Administrative Office

Aaranyak, 13 Tayab Ali Byelane,  
Bishnu Rabha Path,  
Beltola Tinali-Bhetapara link  
Road,  
P.O.: Beltola, Guwahati,  
India: 781028

### Research Division Office

Aaranyak, 12 Kanaklata Path,  
Byelane 3, Ajanta Path,  
Beltola Survey, Guwahati,  
India: 781028

### Registered Office

Aaranyak, 50 Samanwoy Path,  
Beltola Survey,  
Guwahati,  
India: 781028

[www.aaranyak.org](http://www.aaranyak.org)

Editor: **Udayan Borthakur**; Executive Editor: **Munmita Boruah**; Designer: **Kukil Gogoi**

Aaranyak invites articles and photo stories on biodiversity and environmental aspects for publication in its biannual newsletter BIOLINK. Please write to - The Editor, BIOLINK at [pr@aaranyak.org](mailto:pr@aaranyak.org) and [pr.aaranyak@gmail.com](mailto:pr.aaranyak@gmail.com). For general queries on Aaranyak and its activities, please write to [info@aaranyak.org](mailto:info@aaranyak.org).

PUBLISHED BY AARANYAK