

NATUROLE

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COVER PHOTO - UDAYAN BORTHAKUR

AARANYAK CELEBRATED THE 65TH "WILDLIFE WEEK" ACROSS THE STATE

On 1st October 2019, at Bhuyanpara Range of Manas National Park, "Elephant Day" on the occasion of Wildlife Week was observed. The program was organized by the Forest Department in association with Aaranyak, WWF India and MMES, a local NGO. It started off with a public meeting, followed by a rally from Bhuyanpara Range office to Rupahi market to celebrate both the occasion. A quiz and drawing competition were held in all the three ranges of the Park, wherein MEWS and Smiling Tusker, both grassroot organisations based around Manas collaborated.

The western Assam zone of Aaranyak took an active part in celebrating the



Update on Activities

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Wildlife Week on 3rd October 2019, with the Aie Valley Forest Division, Bongaigaon in collaboration with the Environment Cell & Eco Club, Abhayapuri College, and other NGOs such as Nature's Foster, ANIMALS and Shivam. The programme included an awareness meeting followed by a plantation in Abhyapuri college campus. The SDO civil of North Salmara Subdivision, Mr. Meghnidhi Dahal delivered a brief lecture and highlighted the importance of wildlife conservation. The following day, an awareness rally across Kakoijana Ujan Rabhapara village was undertaken by the students, forest staffs, NGO members and the villagers. In addition to these, a drawing and extempore speech competitions were held in Ujan Rabhapara LP School. The programmes concluded with an awareness meeting involving the local people.

Aaranyak in collaboration with Kaziranga National Park (KNP) Authority and Natundanga Eco-development committee organised various activities at Burapahar range among the students to spread the message of wildlife conservation on the occasion of Wildlife Week. Mr. Rabindra Sarma, Research officer, KNP spoke about biodiversity of Kaziranga and its conservation measures to incite the students towards future conservation.

ENVIRONMENTAL WATER MANAGEMENT - AN INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

Aaranyak and the Department of History, Dibrugarh University (DU) jointly organised a discussion programme on river and water management with special reference to the Brahmaputra River system on 1st October 2019.

Dr. Chandan Sarma, History Department, DU briefed the audience about the purpose of the meeting. Dr. Partha J Das, Head, WATCH Division, Aaranyak deliberated on some of the most pressing global and national concerns related to water and river management and illustrated with examples the frontline areas of research emerging of late for addressing the same. He referred specially to the Brahmaputra river system and its basin and emphasized on taking up truly inter-disciplinary research with innovative methodology to explore the large gamut of socio-hydro-ecological problems which will help in improving livelihood and ecological security and attainment of sustainable development goals for northeast India.

Dr. Rebecca Tharme, internationally reputed expert in environmental water management and Director of River Futures, UK discussed on potential areas of research on water, ecology and culture in multi-disciplinary mode. A number of thematic areas were identified as important arena of future research on the ecohydrological, bio-cultural and governance aspects of water and river management where collaborative research could be initiated jointly by Aaranyak and the DU and selected relevant national and international institutions. A total of 22 participants from six departments consisting of faculty members and research scholars attended the programme.



LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CONSERVATION ISSUES OF THE TRANSBOUNDARY FORESTED AREAS OF INDIA AND BHUTAN



A meeting on Indo-Bhutan Jomotsangkha-Barnadi forest complex was held at Nonai Forest Range, Dhansiri Forest Division, BTC, Assam, India on 11th October 2019. DFOs from both the transboundary forest divisions of India and Bhutan attended the meeting and collectively endorsed actions to priorities the forest complex as a single unit to jointly address conservation management issues. The meeting was hosted by Dhansiri Forest Division in collaboration with Aaranyak.

Mr. Swargiary, APCCF & CHD, BTC suggested to explore the opportunity to bring the remaining forest areas under wildlife protected area network between Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary and Dhansiri River to ensure habitat protection and connectivity in the area. Mr. Narzari, APCS, expressed the potential of ecotourism in the area and stressed that BTC government is developing key tourism infrastructure to promote the area at national and international level. Mr. Tshering, CFO, Jomotsangkha WLS (JWLS) stated that the Bhutan Forest department is increasing the area by about 900 km² to ensure ecological security of the region. He also acknowledged DFO Dhansiri and Aaranyak for facilitating this discussion. He expressed deep concern on illegal tree felling from the JWLS and lack of regular patrolling. He further proposed for joint patrol in those sensitive areas with the Indian counterparts.

To highlight the importance of the area, the findings of a two-year study jointly conducted in the Indo-Bhutan Forest Complex by the forest departments of both the countries with technical support from Aaranyak was presented. The study was supported by Wild Cat Conservation Alliance. The forest complex harbours rich biodiversity with a record of 27 species of mammals using camera trapping techniques. Moreover, the importance of the transboundary forest complex as a single conservation unit was advocated. Dr. Firoz Ahmed, Head, TRCD, Aaranyak moderated a brainstorming discussion on conservation management constraints and opportunities in this forest complex.

POLICY CONSULTATION ON FLOODPLAIN WETLANDS

The Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), Bangalore and Aaranyak jointly organized a 'Policy Consultation on Floodplain Wetlands' in Guwahati on 16th October 2019 at the NEDFI Convention Centre. The consultation brought together about 25 people (subject experts, researchers, environmental activists, Government officials) from Assam and Manipur. Participants discussed about various aspects of the challenges of conserving and managing the flood plain wetlands in the NE region.



GIS DAY CELEBRATION AT ASSAM STATE ZOO CUM BOTANICAL GARDEN

Aaranyak organised an outreach programme and map gallery exhibition at the Assam State Zoo Cum Botanical Garden, Guwahati on 13th November 2019, to mark the International Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Day originally initiated by spatial analytics world-leader ESRI. People from different walks of life actively participated in the program and were keen on gathering information on the GIS technology and its advancements.





AARANYAK PROVIDED SOLAR-POWERED ELECTRIC TO KEEP THE WILD ELEPHANTS AT BAY



The solar-powered electric fences to keep-off the wild elephants and thus protect the crops and people in areas with high incidents of human-elephant conflict are an effective tool. In November 2019, a 6 km long solar-powered electric fence was installed at Lebra-Santipur revenue village, near Subankhata Reserve Forest, the buffer zone of Chirang-Ripu Elephant Reserve. This was done in collaboration with Manas Chowki Ecotourism Society. The installation of the fence was a community-based initiative where the villagers were involved in erecting the fence. This initiative has directly benefitted around 1000 people. In addition, torch lights were distributed too. The fence installation was supported by Elephant Family Foundation of India, and was inaugurated by Dr Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, Head ERCD Division, Aaranyak, Mr. Anjan Baruah and Mr. Bipul Das of Aaranyak and Mr. Binay Boro, a local youth.

To prevent the visit of wild elephants in a school premise, Naam Kamakhya Lower Primary School in Kamakhya village of Nagaon district, a solar-powered electric fence was erected with generous support from Dr. Robert Ament and Dr. Anthony Paul Clevenger of Centre for Large Landscape Conversation, Montana State University, USA. The school committee, local administration and the villagers were greatly moved by the act. The programme was formally inaugurated in the presence of Mr. Bitopan Neog, Additional Deputy Commissioner and Sub Divisional Officer, Kaliabor, Ms. Barbie Hazarika, Assistant Commissioner of Kaliabor, Ms. Meenakshi Permey, Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Pranjit Saikia, BEO, Kaliabor, Dr. Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, Dr. Jyoti Prasad Das, Mr. Anjan Boruah, Mr. Niranjana Bhuyan, Mr. Pranjit Borah of Aaranyak, and Mr. Uttam Saikia, Honorary Wildlife Warden, Golaghat District, Mr. Bhargab Kumar Das, a journalist with the Sentinel newspaper, members of school management committee, and villages heads.

ORIENTATION PROGRAM FOR JEEP SAFARI OPERATORS

Aaranyak in collaboration with India tourism, Guwahati Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, KNP authority and Kaziranga Development & Jeep Safari Association organized a two-day orientation program for new jeep safari operators on 23rd and 24th October 2019 in Kaziranga. The aim of the program was to orient the newly engaged in fields of communication, personal development and basic rule inside the protected area.

The dignitaries present mentioned about ethics and quality tourism in the inaugural session. The formal orientation program began with the session conducted by Mr. Arindam Talukdar who talked about the development of soft skills such as personal hygiene, dress code, verbal communication, code of conduct, positive attitude and aptitude. This was followed by a session of Mr. Rabindra Sarma, Research Officer, KNP who spoke about do's and don'ts and the basic driving rules inside a protected area, safety and emergency communications.

The next day begun with a field trip where the newly engaged tour guides were oriented on the biodiversity of the park.



PLAYING CRICKET TO AID IN GREATER ADJUTANT CONSERVATION

In an initiative to create awareness on Greater Adjutant Stork, the Dadara Boys Club with support from Aaranyak's Greater Adjutant Conservation Programme under the leadership of Dr. Purnima Devi Barman, organised a cricket match. A total of 13 teams participated in the tournament. Through this initiative, the youths were targeted as they are the future leaders of conservation and their role must be encouraged.



AARANYAK CELEBRATED NATIONAL BIRD WATCHING DAY

Aaranyak celebrated the National Bird Watching Day on 12th November 2019 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Dr. Salim Ali, popularly known as the Birdman of India at several areas in Assam. At Bokakhat, on this occasion, a programme was held with the students of Bokakhat Jatiya Vidyalaya. Mr. Abidur Rahman, a bird expert of the region enlightened the students on birds, their habits and habitats and bird conservation. This was followed by a bird-watching session, where the students recorded a total of 45 bird species. Mr. Saleh-Ul Islam, Adventure tour leader, Mr. Ronald Sonar, Teacher, Bokakhat Jatiya Vidyalay, Mr. Arif Hussain and Mr. Akibur Hussain of Aaranyak were present during the programme.

Another such bird-watching session was organised by the western Assam zone, Aaranyak around a famous wetland in Bongaigaon district, Tamranga Beel to mark the occasion.

The third programme titled 'Bird Watching & Nature Trail Hike' to observe this day was organised by Aaranyak, Women in Nature Network-India with active collaboration from the Assam State Zoo cum Botanical Garden, Nature Learning Center at the Zoo. The group of over 70 students was given a warm welcome by Dr. Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak. She explained that the goal of the program was to popularise bird watching and inspire and encourage the young generation towards future research on birds and their conservation. Mr. Tejas Mariswamy, IFS, Zoo DFO flagged off the event and also inaugurated the nature learning trails. He said, "I am very glad to support this event and also honoured to open our nature learning trails on this auspicious event." A host of eminent personalities were present at the nature hike which trailed around the scenic locations in and around the State Zoo. A special speech "How thrilling nature can be" - an adventurous experience was shared by Mr. Pranay Bordoloi, managing editor, Prag News.



TRAINING FOR JOURNALISM STUDENTS



The Media Production & Communication Division (MPCD), Aaranyak, with financial support from Internews' Earth Journalism Network (EJN) organised a series of training programmes titled 'Understanding biodiversity & environmental issues for better reportage' for the students of journalism. The second and the third trainings were organised on 13th November, 2019 and 6th -7th March 2020 respectively. The second training was organized in collaboration with Department of Mass Communication & Journalism (DMCJ), Tezpur University; whereas, the third training was held in collaboration with Assam School of Journalism. In both the occasions, Mr. Udayan Borthakur, a wildlife biologist and the Head, MPCD provided an overview on the purpose of the training as well as spoke about various activities of Aaranyak in the field of nature conservation and overview and significance of biodiversity. Mr. Sushanta Talukdar, a senior journalist and Chief Editor of Nezine.com spoke on effective approaches to reporting environmental issues with a special emphasis on multimedia storytelling through the digital platforms in both the training programmes. Respective faculties, Dr. Joya Chakraborty, HoD, DMCJ and Mr. Manoram Gogoi, senior journalist and the Director of Assam School of Journalism welcomed Aaranyak's initiative in organizing the training.

Dr. Partha Jyoti Das spoke on the basics of climate change and other associated issues with special reference to Northeast India during the training session in Tezpur University. And Dr. Jayaditya Purukayastha, a conservation biologist spoke on the urban biodiversity conservation and role of media at the Assam School of Journalism. The Master's students of Assam School of Journalism, were taken for a field trip to Pygmy Hog Research & Breeding Centre at Basistha, Guwahati on 7th March, where a basic orientation on significance of biodiversity and the history of pygmy hog conservation initiative was given by Dr. Parag Jyoti Deka, Project Manager of Threatened Species Recovery Programme, Aaranyak. Both the trainings concluded with distribution of certificate of participation to the students from Aaranyak and the collaborators.

BIRD WATCHING PROGRAMME

With the objective of raising awareness on our native flora and fauna, Aaranyak conducted a popular bird watching programme at Garbhanga Reserve Forest, Guwahati on 9th November 2019. With an emphasis on recording streamline and forest bird species the participants recorded 25 species of birds. The programme provided the participants with an opportunity to interact and gain a hands-on training on bird watching from the experts at Aaranyak.

In another such occasion, Aaranyak participated in an event organised by Sivasagar District Administration. Dr. Bibhuti P. Lahkar and Mr. Arif Hussain of Aaranyak and Mr. Abidur Rahman, a naturalist took part in it. The bird watching session was organised at historic Pohugarh area of the districts as a part of tourism initiative, "Soulful Sivasagar", to boost the tourism activities in the district. The experts from Aaranyak discussed the techniques of bird watching with the participants and conducted a special training session for the tourist guides. It witnessed an active participation from many bird watchers and other government officials.



AWARENESS PROGRAM IN GAHIGAON, BISWANATH

Aaranyak and Biswanath Wildlife Division organized an awareness meeting in Gahigaon, near Gahigaon Range Office, Biswanath Wildlife Division on 16th November 2019. The area falls under the eastern part of Biswanath Wildlife Division, Kaziranga Tiger Reserve.

Mr. Mukut Das, DFO, Biswanath Wildlife Division, attended the meeting and spoke about the importance of the area and its conservation issues in presence of Mr. Purna Mahaliya Range officer (IC) Gahigaon Range, Mr. Nayan Jyoti Gogoi, Range Officer, Gahigaon Range and Mr. Babuli Hazarika, Honorary Wildlife Warden, Biswanath.

Mr. Arif Hussain of Aaranyak highlighted about the role of the community in conservation and scope of livelihood generation. In the meeting, Aaranyak distributed torchlights, windcheaters and shoes to 21 volunteers who are actively involved in conservation activities in the fringe villages under Gahigaon Range area.



SENSITIZATION PROGRAMME ON HUMAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICT

A sensitization programme on Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC) was organized on 14th November 2019 by Aaranyak in collaboration with Golaghat District Administration and Forest Department. Representatives of Gram-Panchayat, Gaon Buras, Tea Garden Welfare officers, Village Defense Parties (V.D.P), Assistant Professor of D.R College, Journalists and villagers participated in the programme. The programme was inaugurated by Mr. Uttam Saikia, Honorary Wildlife Warden of Golaghat District in presence of Mitali Lahkar (Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Golaghat District), Prafulla Chandra Lahkar (ACF, Golaghat Forest Division), Rajiv Hazarika (ACF, Golaghat Forest Division), Banashree Malakar (Circle Officer, Morangi), Professor T. Peter (Eco Spiritual Mission of India), Mrs. Peter, Purabi Sarma (ZPC, Morangi) and Dr. Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar (Programme Secretary, Aaranyak). Dr. Lahkar talked about HEC issues and their mitigation strategies. The ACF highlighted the recent death cases due to HEC in the district and the Government compensation schemes. Ms. Mitali Lahkar urged the V.D.Ps on active participation to mitigate HEC in their villages. While Banashree Malakar and Professor T. Peter interacted with the participants and elaborated on various issues in Morangi area. The participants too opened-up about their problems in dealing with HEC and sought out measures to mitigate it. This initiative was supported by USFWS.



AARANYAK INVOLVED VDPS TO MITIGATE HUMAN ELEPHANT CONFLICT

Aaranyak in collaboration with Sivasagar police organized two awareness programmes at Demow and Panidihing on 25th and 26th November 2019 respectively involving Village Defence Party (VDPs) and local communities. On behalf of Aaranyak Mr. Niranjan Bhuyan conducted the programmes, while Dr. Bibhuti P. Lahkar presented an interactive talk on Human-elephant conflict in the state and ways to resolve it. The programme was graced by Mr. Debajit Deuri, Honorary Wildlife Warden, Sibsagar, Mr. Bolin Deuri, Additional Superintendent of Police, Sivasagar, Mr. Bubul Baruah, Forest Range Officer, Sivasagar Forest Division, Mr. Abhan Kumar Dutta, COBDO, Demow Police Station, Mr. Abdul Rezak Khan, Mr. Umesh Mili village headmen, Mr. Nittaranjan Deuri, Retired School Teacher and Mr. Sonaram Deuri. During the occasion Aaranyak distributed torchlights as anti-depredation materials to 34 VDPs. This programme was supported by USFWS.



WORKSHOP WITH POLICE PERSONNEL IN DERGAON ON WILDLIFE



Aaranyak conducted a workshop with the Police Officers at Police Training College (PTC) in Dergaon, Assam on 5th December 2019. Mr. Bijay Sankar Bora, consultant with Aaranyak at the onset of the programme discussed about the aim and the need of this workshop. During the interaction the police personnel were sensitized on how to deal with wildlife crimes and violation of environment protection law. Mr. Jitmol Doley, Principal, PTC emphasized on the need of reviving our age-old practices and rituals in protection of wildlife and their habitats. Dr. Bibhab K. Talukdar, CEO & SG, Aaranyak stressed on the importance of wildlife conservation in global and local perspectives, and its link to illegal arms trade and insurgency. While, Mr. Rahul Datta of International Rhino Foundation shed light on international perspective of the wildlife trade. He further showed how the trained and well-armed militants of northeast are involved in rhino poaching in protected areas of Assam.

TRAINING ON PHASE IV TIGER MONITORING IN MANAS NATIONAL PARK

Aaranyak's Tiger Research and Conservation Division (TRCD) in collaboration with Directorate Manas Tiger Reserve (MTR) organized a two-day training programme on Phase-IV tiger monitoring on 8th and 9th December 2019, at Bansbari range of Manas National Park. A total of 26 participants including front-line forest staff and partnering stakeholders took part in the training.

The training was mainly targeted on hands-on training on camera trapping, GPS and sign survey. Dr. Dipankar Lahkar and Mr. Arif Hussain of Aaranyak participated as a resource person. Ms. Aprajita Singh, Project Officer, and Mr. Nibir Medhi, Project Officer, TRCD helped in organizing the event. Range officers of Bansbari, Bhuyanpara, and Panbari ranges also took part in the training. Sri Amal Chandra Sarmah, Director-MTR, Sri R.N Boro, Deputy Director MTR

and Sri A. Dewan, ACF-MTR participated in the valedictory function and distributed the certificate to the participants.



AARANYAK CONDUCTED THE 10TH INTERNATIONAL FIELD COURSE IN CONSERVATION BIOLOGY & GLOBAL HEALTH

Aaranyak in collaboration with University of Washington, USA and Assam Forest Department (Jorhat Forest Division) have been organizing this course annually for the last several years. This year the course turns 10 and was held at the Gibbon Conservation Centre, Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam, from 7th to 11th December 2019. The programme was inaugurated by Prof. Randell C. Kyes, University of Washington. A total of 16 participants from different parts of India attended the course. This course provided an introduction to the disciplines of Conservation Biology and Global Health – with a focus on the Human-Environment Interface. A wide range of topics

were covered in this course including, field study methods, management and conservation strategies, wildlife conservation in Assam, primate behavior and ecology, the human-wildlife interface, issues in global health and biomedical research. This course also provided participants with an initial understanding of the basic principles of conservation biology, experience with the methods and techniques used in field research, an appreciation of the need for population and ecosystem management and conservation, and an understanding of the complex relationship between environmental health and global health at the human-environment interface.



A PANEL DISCUSSION ON BRAHMAPUTRA

Aaranyak organised a panel discussion, titled “বিষয় ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰঃ অসমৰ সাহিত্য, সংস্কৃতি, সমাজ আৰু বিজ্ঞান চৰ্চাত ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ গুৰুত্ব (Importance of Brahmaputra in Assamese literature, culture and science)” during the bookfair held in Nagaon from December 17th to 25th.

Panelists from different walks of life participated and shared their experience and views. Dr. Arup Kumar Sharma, of IIT-G shed light on the importance of research on the impact of climate change on this mighty river. Mr. Manikuntala Bhattacharjee shared her experiences and mentioned how the resources spent during “Namami Brahmaputra” could have been diverted to benefit the flood-affected people in real sense. Mr. Samudragupta Kashyap expressed his views on the uniqueness of the river too. The session was moderated by Dr. Parthajyoti Das, Head, WATCH Division, Aaranyak.



GOOD NEWS: HARGILA FOR THE FIRST-TIME BREEDS IN CAPTIVITY



The threatened Greater adjutant storks, locally known as Hargila, for the first-time bred in captivity at the Assam State Zoo cum Botanical Garden. Dr. Purnima Devi Barman, who leads the Greater Adjutant Conservation Project at Aaranyak, collaborated with the state zoo authorities to create assisted-breeding platforms for this rare stork. Though the birds have been nesting since 2017, however it took another two years to produce an offspring.

On 26th November 2019 the team tasted success when a chick was hatched for the very first time in captivity. In quick succession another chick emerged too! The team was ecstatic with this achievement and particularly grateful to the Assam State Zoo DFO, Mr. Tejas Mariswamy, the dedicated team of zoo vets led by Dr. Bijoy Gogoi and the animal keepers of the zoo, Mr. Rajani Kanta Deka and Mr. Basumatary. On this achievement of Aaranyak, best wishes and congratulatory messages poured in from all the quarters, including Hon'ble Minister of Forest, Sri Parimal Shuklabadiya, and Cathy King, Chair of EAZA.

PYGMY HOGS AT ASSAM STATE ZOO CUM BOTANICAL GARDEN

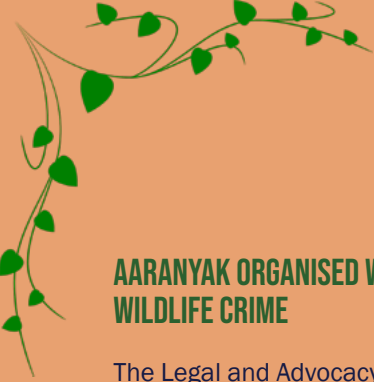
The Pygmy hogs are the rarest of the suids, whose wild populations occur only in Assam in India. Under the Pygmy Hog Conservation Programme, a joint initiative of multi-agencies, a conservation breeding centre and research unit was established in Basistha, Guwahati. This centre remains closed for public visits though. Nonetheless, a need for public display of these hogs was felt to generate mass awareness among the common people. Under this initiative, seven hogs were sent to Assam State Zoo cum Botanical Garden in Guwahati since 2014. To replenish the display stock, three more individuals are added this year in December.



TORCH LIGHT DISTRIBUTION TO 80 VILLAGE DEFENCE ORGANISATIONS

Aaranyak distributed 250 torch lights to 80 Village Defence Organisations (VDOs) from fringe areas of the Kaziranga National Park in Assam. The torch lights which were donated by a German wildlife enthusiast, Attila Hildmnn, were distributed by the Legal and Advocacy Division (LAD) of Aaranyak in presence of Vivek Shyam, Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) of Bokakhat Sub-Division, Golaghat district, Assam. Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO), Kalyan Das, Officer-in-Charge of Bokakhat Police Station and Dibyajyoti Dutta were present in the event among other distinguished persons. Mr. Uttam Saikia, Honorary Wildlife Warden, Mr. Nelu Acharjee, Secretary Sub divisional Journalist Association, Mr. Bhobanada Kalita President, Bokakhat Journalist Association, Mr. Manas Kr. Bhattacharjya, Manager, LAD, Aaranyak were present in the programme.





AARANYAK ORGANISED WORKSHOP FOR BSF OFFICERS ON WILDLIFE CRIME

The Legal and Advocacy Division (LAD), Aaranyak organised a sensitisation workshop on wildlife crime threat prevention along with BSF officers at BSF Frontier HQ at Paragon Guwahati on 4th January 2020. Making factual presentations in the workshop on wildlife crime prevention, noted wildlife conservationist, Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar and wildlife crimes mitigation expert Rahul Datta highlighted the important role that the border guards can play in preventing trans-border wildlife trade.

Dr. Talukdar elaborated on wildlife crime scenario in global and local perspectives and its link to illegal arms trade and insurgency. He highlighted the importance of India for being one of the 36 biodiversity hotspots in the world. Mr. Rahul Datta of International Rhino Foundation (IRF) also made a detailed presentation on illegal wildlife trade. Mr J.K. Rodola (DIG) and Mr. K.K. Gulia, Officiating Inspector of the BSF and more than 50 BSF personnel participated in the workshop. Mr. Manas Kumar Bhattacharjya of Aaranyak formally felicitated the dignitaries. Mr. Bijay Shankar Bora and Mr. Pranjit Bora were also present in the workshop.



STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP ON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE



A stakeholder workshop on community resilience to water induced disasters and climate change: Vulnerability and Adaptation in the Brahmaputra River Basin, Assam was organised at the Indian Institute of Bank Management (IIBM), Khanapara, Guwahati on 9th January 2020. During the programme, three river islands of the Brahmaputra viz. Chalakura Char (Dhubri District), Majuli (Majuli District) and Koba Chapori (Dhemaji District) were focused-on.

Mr. P Changkakati, Secretary, GoA, Water Resources, Dr. Arunab Sharma, Faculty, Water Resources Engineering, Royal Global University, Dr. Jaydeep Baruah, Scientific officer, Head I/C ASTEC, Ms. Mandira Buragohain, State Project Officer, ASDMA were the esteemed guests present during the programme. Dr. Partha J Das, Head, WATCH division, Aaranyak briefed the gathering on the issue and the importance of the workshop. He also presented on “Community resilience to water induced disasters and climate change: A study and documentation of good practices in selected river islands of the Brahmaputra River Basin, Assam” based on the work conducted by the team.

Dr. Bibhab K Talukdar talked about Aaranyak. Dr. Mina Kanduri from India Water Partnership highlighted their aims and objectives during the programme. Ms. Bedika Borah, elaborated their study on Solamara, Majuli and shed light on the impact of climate change in the region. Mr. Wahid Hussain, Researcher & Convener, Empower People, Assam Ranch, Dhubri elaborated about the possible impact of climate change in Chalakura char of Dhubri. While, Mr. Navajyoti Deori talked about the impact of flood, out-migration, livelihood, and the current education, water & sanitation scenario in Koba Chapori. The presentations were followed by a panel discussion.

CAMPAIGN FOR CLEANLINESS IN ORANG

Aaranyak conducted an awareness campaign for cleanliness among the students of four different schools in the fringe areas of Orang National Park on 1st February 2020. During the programme, eight dustbins were distributed to Nalbari LP School, Dokhin Besimari LP School, Silbori Sirajul Haque High School, Silbori outpost and in a camp at Orang.

Mr. Arif Hussain, Aaranyak handed over the dustbins to the concerned authorities. Mr. Abdul Malek, President, Silbori Youth Development Organization was present in the programme.



JOURNEY FOR LEARNING

“Journey for learning”, a community-based ecotourism initiative of Aaranyak is a programme designed for the students visiting Northeast India for an eco-cultural and biodiversity conservation exposure in the region. This program also supports the communities in the Karbi villages of Kohora, Karbi Anglong. Families in the villages provide homestay facilities, food and local guides to the visitors. It was found through a recent study that though these villages are located near the famous World Heritage Site Kaziranga; but are not much benefited from the thriving tourism business. Such exclusion has led to the conceptualization of this program by Aaranyak.

In this 3rd “Journey for Learning” programme, 29 students and four teachers from the department of Environmental Studies, Somaiya Vidyavihar, Mumbai participated. During this week long programme from 2nd to 8th January 2020

the students participated in various activities. They went through an experiential learning exposure about river ecosystem and cultural landscape, community-based conservation initiatives, visited National parks such as Kaziranga and Nameri. The students, in small groups also carried out assessment on natural resources, ecological service, socio-economic, traditional knowledge & practices, environmental management practices and the use of non-timber forest products by the villagers.

Ten households in Chandrasing Rongpi, Hemai Lekthe and Phumen Ingti villages accommodated all the 29 students participating in the programme in homestay mode and the Kindu Langso SHG from the villages provided food to the visiting group. The programme also helped the households in showcasing the rich tradition and culture of Karbi tribe besides getting financial benefits.



AARANYAK INITIATED AN AWARENESS PROGRAMME - “IN DIALOGUE: NATURE, HERITAGE AND NORTHEAST INDIA”



Aaranyak conceptualized a new format of education and awareness generation titled, "In dialogue: Nature, Heritage & NE India" in collaboration with Directorate of Museums, Government of Assam. The first programme of the series was held on 28th January 2020. Reputed scientist and herpetologist, Dr. Saibal Sengupta and the budding herpetologist Dr. Jayanta Kumar Roy, were the resource persons who talked about the diversity, conservation policy, research potentiality of amphibians in Northeast India followed up by a fruitful interaction. Along with Mr. Y.S Wunglengton, Director of Museums and staffs of Assam State Museum, around 70 participants from

different institutions (ADBUs, Arya Vidyapith college, Gauhati University, Cotton University, Pragiyotish College, Handique College) attended the programme.

The second programme of the series was focused on “Fishes of NE India: its conservation and research potentiality”. It highlighted different aspects of fishes, such as fish diversity in northeast India, research potentiality, conservation challenges as well as conservation policy, illegal trade of species like *Channa barca*, *Badis sp.* Prof. Dr. Dandadhar Sarma, Gauhati University, Dr. Bhagaban Kalita, Department of Fisheries, Govt. of Assam and Mr. Bipul Phukan, Asst. Professor, College of Fisheries, Assam Agriculture University, Nagaon were invited as experts. A total of 65 participants including students, research scholars, media personnel, teachers, lecturers and NGO representative from various part of the state participated. The programme was moderated by Mr. Jayanta Kumar Pathak who leads the Environment Education and Capacity Building Division (EECBD) of Aaranyak. Mr. Yazing Shimray Wunglengton, Director of Directorate of Museums, Govt. of Assam also interacted with the participants.



ANNUAL WATERBIRD CENSUS AT POBITORA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Assam forest department and Aaranyak successfully conducted “Annual Waterbird Census 2020” at Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary on 27th January 2020. The main objective of the census was to count water bird species in order to generate data on birds and continue long term monitoring of these species for conservation. Mr. Udayan Borthakur, wildlife biologist, Aaranyak coordinated the census and briefed the participants on field procedures. Mr. Mukul Tamuli, Range Officer, Pobitora WLS coordinated various aspects of the census procedure. During the census 64 waterbird species with a population of more than 15000 individuals were recorded from the sanctuary.

A total of 26 participants including staffs from the department, members and staff of Aaranyak and other volunteers including representatives of WWF-India, Maibong Eco Resort, Mayang Anchalik College took part in the census.



AWARENESS AND NETWORK BUILDING AMONG TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

The Environment Education & Capacity Building Division and Elephant Research and Conservation Division of Aaranyak and UNESCO Category 2 Centre, Wildlife Institute of India jointly organized a residential teachers’ training from 22nd to 25th February 2020. The aim of the training was to safeguard natural heritage by capacitating teachers. The training emphasized on the outstanding universal values and significance for sustainable and long-term conservation of the heritage sites and communities living in the fringes. Twenty-one teachers from Baksa and Chirang districts of BTAD, Assam participated in the training. Dr. Bhmesh Singh Bhadoria, Dr. Anukul Nath and Ms. Pallavi Chakravarti, UNESCO C2C, Dr Jayanta Kumar Sarma, Guwahati, Dr Bibhuti P. Lahkar and Mr. Jayanta Kumar Pathak of Aaranyak, Dr. Ashoke Das, Abhayapuri College, Mr. Pinkudhar Barman, KVK, Barpeta, Dr. Namita Brahma, TISS, Guwahati attended the training as resource person. Besides, Mr. Manjum Mahanta, Mr. Bipul Das, Mr. Silas

WORKSHOP ON “MAN-ANIMAL CONFLICT TO COEXISTENCE”



To orient the new generation journalists to focus on key environmental issues in media in order to reach-out to the wider audience to secure the future of clean environment and conservation of Assam’s rich wildlife heritage, Media for Wildlife, a joint initiative of Aaranyak, WWF-India, Nanda Talukdar Foundation, Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) and Assam Elephant Foundation (AEF) organised a workshop on Man-Animal conflict to co-existence at Bhagawati Prasad Bhawan, Guwahati on 2nd February 2020.

The Programme was inaugurated by Dr Parimal Chandra Bhattacharjee, retired professor, Gauhati University and a well-known scientist. The workshop was addressed by Dr Bibhab Kumar Talukdar (CEO & SG, Aaranyak), Dr Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar (Head, Elephant Research and Conservation Division, Aaranyak) , senior journalists, Mr. Mrinal Talukdar, Nanda Talukdar Foundation, Mr. Samudragupta Kashyap, Mr. Pranay Bordoloi, Prag TV, Dr Rathin Barman, WTI, Mr. Kaushik Barua, AEF and Dr. Hiten Baishya, WWF-India on various aspects of wildlife conservation scenarios of Assam. Approximately 20 journalists participated in the workshop and shared their opinion.

Basumatary and Mr. Arif Hussain of Aaranyak also attended the training and interacted with the participants.



AARANYAK ORGANIZES THE 7TH ASIAN PRIMATE SYMPOSIUM

Aaranyak in collaboration with Zoology Department, Gauhati University and Primate Research Centre organised the 7th Asian Primate Symposium cum 1st International conference on Human-Primate Interface from 8th - 10th February 2020. Enthusiastic primatologists from around 20 countries participated in the event. In this three-day conference, a total of 71 oral, 38 posters and six plenary talks were presented and various conservation issues of primates were discussed, and research gaps were identified.

Noted conservationists and academicians also graced the occasion. The three-day conference was conducted with support from various organizations such as the Global Wildlife Conservation, ICIMOD, Primate Conservation INC, ASTEC, One Earth Institute and Centre for Global Field Study, University of Washington to name a few. Prior to the actual conference, pre-symposium events were organized from 5th to 7th February 2020.



AARANYAK ORGANISED WINTER CAMP NEAR POBITORA



To build capacity of the members of Aaranyak towards biodiversity conservation and environmental issues a three-day winter camp titled, “Winter Camp cum Field Training on Nature Studies and Conservation” was organized by Aaranyak at the Maibong Resort, Mayong, Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary from 15th to 17th February 2020. A total of 29 members of Aaranyak participated in the camp. The camp began with Aaranyak's flag hoisting by Mr. Ranjan Bhuyan, President, Aaranyak, followed by an introduction session. The three-day camp was packed with different activities such as Bird-watching sessions, theory classes, 'learning by doing' sessions, learning uses of various tools used in wildlife monitoring, environmental games, learning techniques of wildlife photography among others. At the end of the camp the participants shared their experience and valuable feedback.

Besides, the participants and Aaranyak staff, other guests present during the camps were Dr. Utpal Nath, Associate Professor, Mayong College (RP), Mr. Mukul Tamuli, Range Officer, Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, Mr. Nripen Nath (Maibong Eco-Resort) and Mr Champak Deka (Pobitora Village Eco-Camp).

LAW PROFESSIONALS CAN PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

The Environment Education and Capacity Building Division (EECBD) and Legal and Advocacy Division (LAD) of Aaranyak and Bishnu Ram Medhi (BRM) Government Law College jointly organised an orientation programme on “Importance of Biodiversity and Role of Law Professionals”. Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar attended the programme as key speaker. During his lecture, Dr Talukdar emphasized on how law professionals can contribute to conserving biological diversity of the northeast region, a part of the global biodiversity hotspot. Various thought-provoking issues were raised and discussed during the interactive hours following the talk. More than 120 students of BRM Govt. Law College participated in the programme. Assistant professors, Dr. Prahlad Kumar Brahma, Miss. Binita Sharma and other faculties from BRM Govt. Law College were also present and interacted during the programme. From Aaranyak

Mr. Bijay Sankar Bora, Mr. Jayanta Kumar Pathak and Mr. Pranjit Borah were also present. It is worth mentioning that Aaranyak plans to hold many such initiatives for the law students in future.



CELEBRATION OF WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

Aaranyak, on the occasion of World Wildlife Day on 3rd March organised an awareness programme at the premises of Binapani M.E School, Ikrabari, Bongaigaon. The programme began with an interactive discussion on general issues related to conservation of nature. Dr. Ashoke Kr. Das, Zonal Coordinator, Western Assam Zone, Aaranyak was the key speaker of the programme. In his speech, Dr. Das urged the students to get involved in conservation of wildlife using various medium. Paralleling with the theme of World Wildlife Day this year, he urged that this is the high time to think and work on coexistence. Acknowledging Aaranyak for its various nature conservation initiatives, Mr. Dulal Kalita, Head teacher of the school emphasised on the importance of spending time in nature at the early age of life. A spot drawing competition among the student was carried out during the programme and the best drawings were awarded. The programme was coordinated by Mr. Ankur Barman, Assistant Zonal Coordinator of Western Assam Zone of Aaranyak. This attended by the teachers and students from Binapani M.E School including Head Teacher Mr. Dulal Kalita, Mr Dharam Ranjan Rai, Reporter of Asomiya Pratidin, Mr. Arun Nath, Director, Chilaray Jatiya Vidyalaya, Bongaigaon.

Another programme to mark the World Wildlife Day, Dr Purnima Devi Barman organised an event at the Sankardev Sishuniketan, Bongshor, Kamrup District, Assam. An art competition (love and care are our colour), web of life demonstration, Rangoli (colour) competition was organised among the children. Dr. Barman conducted game-oriented environment education speech to motivate children towards wildlife and nature. The whole house of children pledged to save wildlife and the endangered Greater Adjutant Stork

(GAS), which is locally known as Hargila. They also visited other schools to convey the message of conservation with special reference to the garbage dump (the feeding ground of the GAS). The team also celebrated and interacted with ragpickers living around the garbage dump and celebrated the day with them.

Mr. Mrinal Deka (local social activist), Ms Ferdausi Chaudhury (Aaranyak), Ms Mamoni Malakar (member of Hargila army), Mr. Manab Das (local resident), Mr. Dipankar Das (local resident) and Ms. Carla Rhodes, an intern from USA were also present in the program. The team thanked the schools and everyone who supported this event with special thanks to Mr. Ranjit Das, the head master of Sankardev Sishu Niketan, Bongshor and Jatiya Vidhyalay, Bongshor.



AWARENESS GENERATION ON RHINO AND TIGER

In order to create awareness on rhino conservation, Aaranyak is actively conducting outreach programme titled, "Rhino Goes to School" for the last several years, supported by David Shephard Wildlife Foundation (DSWF). During the last 6 months, a total of seven awareness campaigns were conducted across the state. The main aim of the programme was to generate mass awareness on conservation of the flagship species. During the programme, the resource persons interact with the students through audio-visual presentation, and conduct fun activities involving the students to garner support.

On 16th December 2019, Aaranyak in collaboration with Manas National Park (MNP) Authority organized the campaign "Rhino and Tiger go to school" in Kumguri ME and LP School in Bhuyapara. The presentation by experts, was followed by a wildlife quiz. Another programme was conducted on 18th December 2019 in Bansbari Range of MNP. Mr. Babul Brahma, Range Officer in Charge, Bansbari interacted with the students and highlighted the conservation stories in Manas. From Aaranyak, Mr. Arif Hussain and Ms. Binita Baruwati were present as resource persons. A total of 50 students participated.

This was followed by an awareness programme in Gohpur on 2nd January 2020, in collaboration with Biswanath

Wildlife Division. The programme was conducted in Namoni Miri ME and LP School, Raunamukh, Gomeri Range. The half day program was inaugurated by Mr. Purna Moholiya, Deputy Ranger, Gomeri Range. Mr. Babuli Hazarika, Honorary Wildlife Warden, Biswanath and Mr. Arif Hussain, Manager-RRCD, Aaranyak were the resource persons and they highlighted the need for conservation and importance of nature and wildlife to the students, with the aid of short documentary, power point presentation and audiovisual quiz. Approximately, 100 students attended the programme. Mr. Bhabakanta Mili, Secretary, Raunamukh VDP, Maikal Kuli, Cultural Secretary, TMPK, Raunamukh, Budhin Pegu, Teacher, Namoni Miri ME School, John Pegu, Dibyajyoti Kutum, local youths and Nirmal Chandra Bora, member Aaranyak were present in the program.

On 20th January 2020 the awareness campaign was organised in Tamuli Pathar ME School, Bokakhat. The program was inaugurated by Mr. Boden Saikia, President, School Managing Committee, who also delivered a welcome speech. An informative presentation on conservation and its importance was delivered by Mr. Arif Hussain. Dr. Panjit Basumatary, a veterinary doctor, CWRC, interacted with the students on the topics of co-existence with wildlife and basics of rescue and rehabilitation. An open quiz was

conducted that drew active participation from the students. Besides, 100 students, Mr. Gubin Saika, Headmaster of the school, Mr. Chandra Saikia, Assistant teacher, Mr. Podoram Bora, Ex Headmaster of the school attended the programme. Mr. Khirud Saikia, a member of Aaranyak compered the program.

At the Pubhthuria High School, Kaliabor on 5th March 2020 an awareness programmes was conducted. Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar, CEO & Secretary General, Aaranyak delivered a talk on current status of rhino, their conservation issue and the responsibilities of future generation, which highly motivated the gathering. Mr. Arif Hussain, talked about rhino's habits and habitats, whereas, Mr. Swapan Nath, a senior journalist from Kaziranga concluded the programme with an audio-visual quiz among the students. About 25 students were selected through quiz competition and they will be provided an orientation tour to Kaziranga National Park. Ms. Dyotibha Bora, Circle officer, Kaliabor, Mr. Pradip Goswami Range officer, Burhapahar Range, Mr. Pradip Goswami, a social worker from Kaliabor and Mr. Horen Bora, Headmaster, Pubhthuria High School, along with the teachers and around 250 students were present in the program. The program was honored by the presence of Ms. Emily Lamb and Mr. Matt Armstrong of DSWF. Mr. Sanjib Bezbaruah and Khirud Saikia member of Aaranyak were also present in the program

The consecutive day, on 6th March 2020 a similar programme was conducted in Gulung Pathari High School, Bokakhat. Through various talks and activities students were acquainted with rhino conservation. The key attraction of the program was awareness through art and colours. A workshop on rhino portrait was held by Ms. Emily Lamb, and the fine arts artists, Mr. Monjit Gogoi, Mr. Tej Gogoi, Mr. Samujjal Saikia and Mr. Protyunjit Tsanyung. A total of 250 students participated in the program, and out of these, five best paintings were selected and awarded with paintings by Emily Lamb. Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar, graced the program and inspired the students through his motivational talk. Mr. Arif Hussain and Mr. Swapan Nath interacted with the students. Other members of Aaranyak, Mr. Sanjib Bezbaruah, Mr. Khirud Saikia and Mr. Rana Paw attended the event, which was compered by Mr. Ivan Loying.

SPORTS EVENT AT BHUYANPARA

A sports event, "Manas Landscape Sports Meet" was organised at Bhuyanpara, Manas National Park on 20th and 21st February 2020. The main motto of the event was off-work team building and strengthening the bond among the people working in the landscape.

The event was formally inaugurated by Mr. Mohan Basumatary, Head Master, Rupahi High School in presence of Mr. Baburam Basumatary, Secretary Bhuyanpara NGO and Mr. Kameswar Boro, I/C Range Office, Bhuyanpara.

A total of 35 participants took part in various sports events that included Cricket, Ultimate Frisbee, Volleyball, Badminton and others. People from the Forest Department also took part in some events. The event was highly successful and all had a great time together!

Another awareness campaign, "Friends of Rhino" was organised in a slightly different format on 11th February 2020 in Agaratoli Range of Kaziranga National Park (KNP) in collaboration with the park authority. This was supported by the International Rhino Foundation and targeted students from the fringe areas of KNP. The students who live around the park but never had an opportunity to visit it, were taken for an orientation tour and exposed on the efforts and issues of rhino conservation. They were taken for the trip to garner support from them and become "friends" of rhino to spread the message of the beauty, importance and need of conservation of their friends. The program was inaugurated by Mr. P. Sivakumar, Director, Kaziranga Tiger Reserve who interacted with the students. A total of 29 students participated from Tamulipathar ME School. Mr. Ritupaban Bora, ACF, KNP, Mr. Bidyut Bikash Bora, Range officer, Agaratoli Range, KNP, Mr. Swapan Nath, senior journalist, Mr. Bhabananda Kalita, senior journalist Mr. Arif Hussain, and Animesh Hazarika of Aaranyak interacted with the students too. Besides, Mr. Gobin Saikia, Head Master, Tamulipathar ME School, Mr. Chandra Saikia, Assistant Teacher, Mr. Ivan Loying, Mr. Khirud Saikia, Mr. Priyatam Saikia, and Mr. Niren Sing members of Aaranyak also attended the event.



LEARNING BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE THROUGH GARDENING

In an endeavour to bring out the zeal of gardening among the students, an initiative 'Amar Bagisa' was undertaken by Aaranyak at Chandrasing Rongpi Memorial (CRM) High School, Kohora, Karbi Anglong. The programme was supported by the Natural Resource Management Programme of Aaranyak and was carried out in collaboration with the CRM High School at its campus. A total of 22 students of Class VIII participated in this year long programme which was ceremoniously inaugurated by Mr. Chatrasing Bey, Retired Headmaster of the CRM High School in presence of guests of honour Mr. Sanjay Gogoi, Range officer, Soil Conservation Department, Kohora and Mr. Rupsing Engleng, Range Officer, Soil Conservation Department, Silonijan. Mr. Jayanta Kumar Sarma of Aaranyak, a renowned science communicator and environment & development expert, Mr. Arif Hussain, Aaranyak, SMC Member of the school, namely, Mr. Rameshwar Singnar, Ms. Kave Rongpipi and Mr. Swapan Nath, teacher, Chandrasing Rongpi Memorial High school joined the program as resource person.

A briefing and orientation about the "Amar Bagisa" programme were given by Dr. Jayanta Kr. Sarma, which was followed by an encouraging speech by Guest of honours Mr. Sanjay Gogoi and Mr. Rupsing Engleng respectively and followed by distribution of ID cards, notebook and practical gardening kits to the students. Mr. Chatrasing Bey concluded the session of the day by planting a Tulsi sapling at the community nursery at the premise of the school. This was followed by a technical and interactive session on "Amar Bagisa" by Dr. Jayanta Kr. Sarma assisted by Sarlongion Teron and Neeva Dutta of Aaranyak. During the session, the students discussed the science of plant growth and its different requirements including importance of soil quality for plant growth. The students in small groups also learned about different methods of soil testing followed by hands on trial. The Program "Learning Biological science through

Gardening" is a joint initiative of the CRM High School and it is part of the curriculum VIII standard based on Science NCERT text book. The program will involve gardening, plantation, soil quality testing, seed germination in different media, plantation and management, vermi-composting, pollination process observed and learning with fun, which will give them the opportunities to understand about biology and natural gardening while contributing to their education and skill development. It is worth mentioning that Aaranyak is currently working with communities on participatory natural resource management for sustainable life and livelihoods as well as for ecosystem security in northeast India. Working with indigenous Karbi Tribes of Karbi Anglong is one of its long drawn Natural Resource Management programme. Aaranyak is supporting communities in the field of natural farming, eco-cultural tourism through home stays, value addition to farm and homestead products, handlooms and handicrafts.



EDUCATIONAL TRIP FOR THE STUDENTS OF THE FRINGES IN MANAS

"Catching them young" is the mantra to orient the children towards biodiversity conservation. In an effort to raise awareness, an educational trip to Manas National Park was organised for the students from the fringe villages of the Manas National Park. Students of Chamuagati L.P School (from III to V standard) participated in the programme along with their principal, Mrs. Reenubala Goyari and assistant teacher Mr. Monoj Boro. A total of 16 students were taken inside the park and a presentation on the rich biodiversity of the park was delivered. A book "Human & Tiger" were gifted to them for the school library. The book was provided so that other students and faculty can have an access to it in their library. This trip was facilitated by Mr. Prosenjit Sheel and Mr. Ajay Basumatary of Aaranyak.



AWARENESS PROGRAMME ON HEC MITIGATION IN GOLAGHAT

An awareness campaign on mitigation of Human Elephant conflict was conducted on 27th February 2020 at the Lakhajan Teagarden among the local communities. Mr. Uttam Saikia, Honorary Wildlife Warden, Golaghat district was present as the resource person. Mr. Tarun Gogoi, a staff from the Forest Department, Mr. Ashok Bauri and Mr. Lakhan Bauri, respective President and Secretary, Teagarden Association, also attended the programme. Besides, around 200 people from the local communities and the Deputy Manager of the tea garden Mr. Ajit Prasad were also present. The local communities were supportive towards the programme and promised to work cohesively with Aaranyak to address the HEC in their area. Mr. Niranjana Bhuyan of Aaranyak facilitated and compered the event; while Mr. Parasmani Hazarika offered the vote of thanks on behalf of the organisation.



AARANYAK CELEBRATED WORLD WETLAND DAY IN SIBSAGAR

This year Aaranyak celebrated the World Wetland Day at Balikur Luitpariya Mising Tribal High School, Demow, Sibsagar in collaboration with the Dalapa and Balikur Village Defense Organisations (VDOs). During the programme, Mr. Uttam Saikia, Honorary Wildlife Warden, Golaghat District and Mr. Niranjana Bhuyan, Aaranyak delivered talks with the aid of audio-visual presentations. They talked about the importance of wetlands and how wetlands are considered as "Kidneys of landscapes". The presentations were followed by an open quiz competition among the school students. It was attended by a large audience which included the headmaster, Mr. Ganesh Chandra Yewin, and other teachers & staffs, and school students. Mr. Debajit Deori, Honorary Wildlife Warden, Sibsagar District, Mr. Madhabi Dumug, member of Dhaibari VDO, Mr. Khagen Yewin, member of Dalapa VDO, Mr. Tarun Taye and Mr. Deoram Mili, member of Balikur VDO were also present during the programme. Mr. Niranjana Bhuyan, Aaranyak compered the programme; while Mr. Manjit Konwar, Aaranyak assisted during the programme.



October, 19 - March, 2020

AWARENESS MEETING IN ORANG

Aaranyak, Orang National Park Authority and Wild Wings and SYDO organized an event on Bird watching and Tourist guide training on 15th March 2020 in Orang National Park. The day long programme was organised with the participation of youth from the fringe villages of Orang National Park and tourist guides of the area. The motto of the programme was to build capacity of the local youths so as to facilitate their livelihood through ecotourism activities. A total of 50 youths participated. Mr. Arif Hussain, Aaranyak and Mr. Nejob Ahmed, Wild Wings were the resource persons, who delivered talks on related topics. An open discussion was conducted to discuss about conservation issues. Mr. Keshab Swargiary and Mr. Sofikul Islam, officials of Orang National Park, Mr. Abdul Malek, SYDO, and Mr. Gaura Baidya, Mr. Gauranga Mandal of Aaranyak were present in the programme.



AN AWARENESS PROGRAM ON WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AT ASOMI HIGH SCHOOL

Aaranyak organised an awareness program on wildlife conservation at Asomi High School, Golaghat on 29th February 2020. Mr. Niranjana Bhuyan, from Aaranyak moderated the program. He discussed with the students about the importance of wildlife conservation and also organised a quiz competition on wildlife. Mr. Rama Bhuyan, Headmaster of the school, in his speech, acknowledged Aaranyak for these types of initiatives which according to him enhanced the knowledge of the students on the wildlife conservation as well as various issues related to nature.

More than 250 students and the teachers of Asomi High School participated in the program. From Aaranyak, Mr. Manjit Konwar was also present.





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