

## MEDIA COMMUNIQUE

### **Aaranyak launches Hoolock gibbon conservation campaign in Arunachal Pradesh**

Guwahati, July 6: Northeast India's leading biodiversity conservation organisation Aaranyak has launched a conservation education and outreach campaign in Arunachal Pradesh aimed at educating the public and future stewards about the importance of conservation of Hoolock gibbon in the greater interests of preserving our forest cover and biodiversity.

The campaign began with a programme at Government Secondary School Wakro, then the team took the campaign to Apna Vidya Bhavan and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya and finally conducted a campaign at Don Bosco School, Wakro.

Aaranyak's Primate Research and Conservation Division have worked together with the Arcus foundation and Kamlang Tiger Reserve authority to conduct the campaign.

“This educational and awareness programme has introduced students to the Hoolock gibbon (*Hoolock hoolock*), an ape that is found only in India, as well as other primates that are native to the state.”, said Dr Dilip Chetry, senior primatologist and scientist at Aaranyak. Hoolock Gibbon is a unique primate species found only in the seven states of Northeast India.

Dr Chetry informed that the conservation education and outreach programmes began with wildlife-themed cartoons with presentations showing the importance of biodiversity in our region, particularly that of Arunachal Pradesh and the primate diversity in the region.

Mridu Paban Phukon, an official at Aaranyak, opened the interactive session by highlighting the importance of wildlife and biodiversity. Researcher Akshay Kumar

Upadhyaya made a visual presentation on the western hoolock gibbon, the focus animal of the day in Arunachal Pradesh. Aditya Das, a biologist at Kamlang Tiger Reserve, pointed out the importance of tiger and other wildlife species there. The campaign ran from June 29 to July 1, concluded with distribution of poster, stickers and book on the Hoolock gibbon, says Aaranyak through a press statement.

Western Hoolock Gibbon is listed as Endangered and Eastern Hoolock gibbon is listed as Vulnerable under the IUCN Redlist. In India, both western hoolock gibbon and eastern hoolock gibbon are listed on Schedule 1 of the Indian (Wildlife) Protection Act 1972.

The world of wildlife is facing tremendous threat due to various man-made factors. In northeast India, which has a diverse wildlife population, has also witnessed decrease in vital wildlife populations, including primates. The state of Arunachal Pradesh is home to various primate species, including the Bengal Slow Loris, the Stump-tailed Macaque, Arunachal Macaque, Assamese Macaque and Hoolock gibbon. These primates inhabit the dense forests of Arunachal Pradesh and play vital roles in maintaining the ecological balance. However, their populations are now under threat due to habitat loss, deforestation and illegal hunting.

*Press statement issued by Dr Alolika Sinha, Publicity Secretary, Aaranyak.  
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