

PRESS RELEASE

Aaranyak loses dedicated conservationist Bipul Das in road accident

Guwahati, January 19: A conservationist Bipul Das who has been working with Guwahati-based biodiversity conservation organization Aaranyak, passed away today in a hospital here because of the grave injuries he had sustained in a road accident in his native Gobindapur village in Barpeta district of Assam. It is construed as a great loss to the biodiversity conservation sector in the region.

Bipul has been working with Aaranyak since 2006 and was involved in various conservation projects and programmes undertaken by Aaranyak across Northeast India. He has contributed immensely in Aaranyak's efforts towards empowerment of communities living on the fringe of biodiversity-rich as well as protected landscapes in the region.

Born on April 1, 1980, Bipul Das developed keen interest in conservation biology, community-based wildlife management, Natural Selection Theory and Protected Area Management after completing his post-graduation from Gauhati University in Environmental Economics.

Bipul started his career in biodiversity and nature conservation in Aaranyak in 2006 and has contributed significantly towards addressing the issues of nature conservation and challenging habitat degradation in the ecologically sensitive NE India, a part of Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot. He has worked with the NGO sectors for the last 16 years and was involved in social enterprise development aimed at increasing annual income of 10000+ farmers and underprivileged youth living in the fringes of Manas Tiger Reserve.

"Bipul was a dedicated conservationist and a role model of the young generation of conservation workers. The void created by his untimely death can be hardly filled up," said the Secretary General and the CEO of Aaranyak, Dr Bibhab Kumar Talukdar.

"A very sincere and energetic individual, Bipul was particularly interested in working to improve the livelihood of fringe communities in the greater interest of conserving our rich natural heritage. He was deployed in Manas Landscape as part of our livelihood programme. He had started his own pig farm before motivating the communities to undertake pig farming for economic empowerment, which set a great example for the others. Our prayers will always be with Bipul. We in the Aaranyak family pledges to stand by his family at this difficult time", Dr Bibhuti Lahkar, senior scientist from Aaranyak and Bipul's mentor, stated.

Over the course of his professional career, Bipul worked with 50+ Self Help Groups (SHGs) in fringe area villages of the Manas National Park for food and livelihood security. He was also involved in Aaranyak's 'Manas Tiger Conservation Programme' supported by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), USA. He contributed in a significant way while working for "Tata Trusts Manas Livelihood Project" supported by Sir Dorabji Tata Trusts and the "Save elephant by empowering community (SEEC)", which was supported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, USA.

As a trained professional, Bipul Das was also a core member of the Butterfly North East Network, and the Indian Foundation for Butterflies. He has published numerous papers and articles.

Aaranyak family today deeply mourned the untimely death of this priceless young conservationist and paid floral tributes to his mortal remains that was brought to the NGO's headquarter in Beltola area in Guwahati. A condolence meeting held in the Aaranyak headquarter was attended by a host of Aaranyak's conservation leaders and staff across all divisions who paid floral tributes to the departed colleague.

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