

## PRESS RELEASE

### Anjan turns 5 in London's Chester Zoo, namesake rejoices in Assam

Guwahati, May 17: UK-based, renowned Chester Zoo houses a wide-range animal species such as giraffes, lions, tigers, primates, reptiles, elephants, crocodiles and many more.

The zoo, which boasts over 20000 animals and 128 acres of zoological gardens, has a large enclosure for Asian elephants that is made according to their habitat needs. Elephant calves keep this enclosure of elephants ablaze with their playful antics.

The zoo has an elephant calf named 'Anjan' which keeps visitors, other elephants and animal keepers busy with his playful nature. It is unknown to many people in Assam and northeast India that the elephant calf, born in May 17, 2018, is named after an Assam-based conservationist, Anjan Baruah, now working as an official in Aaranyak, one of India's foremost biodiversity conservation organisations based in Guwahati.

Anjan Baruah is associated with Aaranyak's elephant conservation efforts focused on mitigating conflicts between human being and elephants.

On May 17, today, Anjan, the elephant, has turned 5 years old and the zoo has been awash with joy. Anjan's father 'Aung Bo', is also with him, who was relocated to Chester Zoo from Sevilla Exotic Animals Reserve located in Spain. Little Anjan's mother 'Thi Ha Way' had died in September 2020 due to arthritis problems as per the reports of the zoo authority.

"I worked for Chester Zoo for 13 years in an elephant-human coexistence project in Assam and prior to that as well was involved in human-elephant conflict mitigation programmes. During my involvement in the conservation project, I visited Chester Zoo as well. The zoo welcomed a male elephant baby on May 17, 2018. Later, I received an email from a zoo official informing me that the new-born calf was named after me," Baruah said.

"I was overwhelmed by the gesture of Chester Zoo authority and it made me extremely happy at the same time. A photograph of Anjan, the new-born elephant was sent to me. Rich Fraser, a senior elephant enclosure expert, used to send me regular updates on little Anjan, such as vaccinations and growth. Today is very happy occasion for me as it is Anjan's birthday. God bless him with very good health. My emotional connection with him makes long to see him at the zoo someday soon," Aaranyak official Baruah said.

Asian elephant is listed endangered by the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The main reasons for their decline include habitat loss, fragmentation and human-elephant conflict. Aaranyak has been striving to protect Asian elephants through research, advocacy and community engagement to mitigate conflicts, promote habitat conservation as well as raising awareness about the importance of elephant conservation.

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