

## Press Communiqué

### **Assam Policemen, VDP members sensitised on wildlife crime prevention**

Guwahati, August 14: As part of its sustained endeavour to facilitate ‘multi-agencies synergy’ in combating burgeoning wildlife crime in the Northeast India landscape, premier biodiversity conservation organisation Aaranyak ([www.aaranyak.org](http://www.aaranyak.org)) under its initiative DETERS (disrupt and end trade of endangered and rare species) organised a sensitisation workshop on wildlife crime in collaboration with Biswanath Police at Biswanath Charali in Assam.

The workshop held in the office of Superintendent Police (SP) was inaugurated by the SP Subhashish Barua, who thanked Aaranyak for organising the event as well as for the support provided in form K9 anti-poaching dog to the police and assistance provided to VDPs. The DIG of Assam Police, Northern Range, Bijoygiri Kuligam interacted with the Aaranyak team besides gracing the workshop held on August 11.

The police personnels from various police stations under Biswanath Chariali Police district of Assam were apprised of current wildlife crime scenario with a focus on rhino poaching by Ms. Ivy Farheen Hussain, project officer of Aaranyak. She described how international and national criminal gangs collude to carry out hunting of rhinos and other wildlife species in Northeast India.

Aaranyak’s consulting lawyer and a practising lawyer in Gauhati High Court, Ajoy Kumar Das apprised the police personnel on relevant sections under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 which was amended in 2022, so that investigating officers can add teeth to the investigation into wildlife crime cases. The Aaranyak resource team was led by Dr Jimmy Borah, senior manager of Aaranyak.

The workshop was followed by another sensitisation programmed with members of Village Defence Party (VDP) at the community hall of Biswanath Sadar Police Station. Dr Jimmy Borah, advocate Ajoy Kumar Das and Sanjib Bezbaruah of Aaranyak interacted with VDP members who play a key role in combating wildlife crime in coordination with the police force.

Around 60 persons pooled from around six VDPs of Biswanath including five female VDP members, were gifted raincoats and shoes which were sponsored by the UK-based David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (DSWF).

The five female VDP members are from Digholi Pukhuri Motok village, who have been proactively carrying out duties to check wildlife crime.

The programme with VDP members was coordinated by Sanjib Bezbaruah of Aaranyak and attended by Ranger (crime) of 6<sup>th</sup> Addition of Kaziranga National Park (KNP) Jatindra Mohan Das. It was presided over by CO VDO Gautom Mahanta and attended by deputy adviser of VDP Kandarpa Hazarika.

The VDP members appreciated Aaranyak for the support and promised to maintain to strict vigil along the Brahmaputra to stop any wildlife crime offences including hunting.

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