

PRESS RELEASE

British Asian Trust official Belenda inaugurates solar fence in WGH village

Guwahati, Dec 6: A 1.2 kilometer long and single-wire solar-powered fence to restrict movements of wild elephants was made operational in Borogopal Part 3 village in West Garo Hills district of Meghalaya on Tuesday to facilitate coexistence of villagers with wild elephants.

The fence was formally inaugurated by cutting the ritual red ribbon by Ms. Belenda Stewart Cox of British Asian Trust, UK., in presence of representatives of Forest department of Meghalaya, Auro Saswat of British Asian Trust from Pondicherry, Aaranyak's senior conservation scientist Dr Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, wildlife biologist Alolika Sinha and representatives of Forest department of Meghalaya.

The event was organized by biodiversity conservation organization Aaranyak, local community of Borogopal and Borogopal solar fence management committee. Around 70 people including the women of Borogopal village attended the inauguration programme reflecting the enthusiasm generated by the fence among the villagers who hope that lives and property would now be secured by the fence from herds of wild elephants roaming around in the area. The fence was installed by Aaranyak and British Asian Trust with support from Darwin Initiative (UK Aid).

The fence was handed over to the local community and the fencing committee after signing an MOU among the fencing committee, villagers and Aaranyak at that meeting. Ms Belenda explained about the roles and responsibilities of the community in maintaining the fence. Some of the children from the village performed Rabha traditional dance in front of the guests to mark the occasion.

The elated villagers felicitated the officials of British Asian Trust and the Aaranyak team with traditional Rabha Pajar and treated them with a sumptuous traditional lunch.

The Aaranyak team comprising Anjan Baruah, Nipul Chakma, Subhas Rabha, Ripunjoy Nath, Rupam Gayary and Bijoy Kalita, the village champion Naveen Rabha of that village, the RRU members from Hatogaon and Borogopal and the members of fencing

committee and the livelihood beneficiaries of Borogobal facilitated as well as participated in the programme.

*Press statement issued by Dr Alolika Sinha, Publicity Secretary, Aaranyak.
Contact No. 9435021312, Email ID: alolika@aaranyak.org*