

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Assam's most elite K9 squad, receives advanced training to combat wildlife poaching**

Guwahati, May 2: As part of its sustained mission to conserve the rich biodiversity in the region by strengthening the anti wildlife crime movement, Aaranyak, regions foremost biodiversity conservation organisation conducted a five-day refresher training workshop for its elite K9 squad in Rani Forest Range, outside of Guwahati city, on April 28 through May 2. Two international conservation organisations, 'People for Nature and Peace' and 'Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Organisation (NABU)', are supporting the training programme led by German antipoaching and sniffer dog trainer, Swen Busch.

Assam-based Aaranyak, dedicated to protecting the rich wildlife heritage of Assam and other Northeast Indian states, established a K9 squad in Assam to hunt down and eliminate poaching. Aaranyak introduced a Belgian Malinois dog for the first time in the country, the breed that tracked down Osama Bin Laden in Pakistan on May 2, 2011. Having this K9 squad on hand has helped improve wildlife crime investigations in the state.

"The training included components on how to properly track down suspects by sniffing evidences as well as proper handling of the canines by handlers. Additionally, handlers learned what does and does not work while they are on field as well as taking proper care of the canines and themselves.", Kakali Baishya, Junior Researcher at Aaranyak's Rhino Research and Conservation Division, said.

NABU and People for Nature & Peace, two global organisations, are supporting Aaranyak's K9 squad in the fight against poaching of threatened wildlife in Assam. In Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, one female canine named 'Misky' is in charge and is being handled by Nirmal Kalita. While 'Leon', a male canine, is currently on duty in Bokakhat of Kaziranga National Park with handler Mrigen Das. 'Emy' and 'Sheela', the other two female canines, are assigned to Kaziranga Tiger Reserve and Manas National Park and handled and maintained by Bhiraj Deka and Rahul Das respectively.

"The reason why this particular breed is preferred, is because of their extreme prey drive capability. They are capable of even assisting arrests of suspects if the situation demands. Once they pick up a scent and track and come to a lead, they have the capability of outrunning and bringing the suspect down in case the suspect tries to escape. This sniffer Dog Squad has assisted the forest officials with vital clue of poacher's exit route after the rhino poaching incidences leading to arrest of culprits by the forest and police officials in different cases.", Dr Jimmy Borah, Senior Manager at Aaranyak's Legal and Advocacy Division, quoted.

"This refresher training conducted by Mr Swen Busch has proven to be very valuable to us. As a result, we have improved our ability to take good care of these precious dogs. Further With the help of the trainer, we have obtained new ideas on handling them on the field while on duty." , Anil Das, Coordinator the K9 squad, said.

This multi-day training programme was also attended on field by Barbara Maas, Founder and Chief Executive at People for Nature & Peace and NABU official. Barbara said (“Please provide quote of Miss. Maas”).

“The quote of CEO sir”

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