

PRESS RELEASE

Signboards to warn of elephants movements put in Assam areas

Guwahati, Jan 13: There has been instances of human casualty when unsuspecting human beings sometimes come to close wild elephants in certain human-elephant conflict (HEC) effected areas in the region where there has been hardly any practice of putting up warning boards about possible presence of wild elephants in a particular area.

Such signboards on the roads altering people about possible presence of wild elephants moving around in the area, are expected to go a long way in mitigation of the conflict and thereby saving precious lives.

Realising the importance of use of such signages, region's premier biodiversity conservation organisation, Aaranyak in tune with its commitment for mitigation of HEC has initiated installation signboards at strategic locations to warn people about movement of wild elephants.

As a first step of this initiative, the conservation NGO, has put up 12 signboards at strategic locations in Udalguri, Tamulpur and Baksa districts of Assam for ensuring safe passage of wildlife as well as people across busy roads.

"The signboards highlight about elephant's presence in the area, and how we all must be careful to avoid unwanted encounters with elephants, and improve safety for both people and elephants. This also serves as a means of awareness and how to share space. For wider reach, we have currently installed signages in English, Assamese and Hindi languages," said Dr Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, senior conservation scientist in Aaranyak.

The boards currently stands along the roadside of Paneri Tea Garden, Bhootechang Tea Garden, Orangajuli, Nagrijuli, Kumarikata, Khairani, Uttarkuchi and Subankhata.

"These strategic locations were selected with prior consultation with the local people, forest personnel and tea garden authorities, followed by a survey to understand the feasibility of installation. We are grateful to SBI Foundation and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services for the support extended," said Dr Alolika Sinha, wildlife biologist who has been associated with HEC mitigation and facilitation of coexistence efforts of Aaranyak.