

PRESS RELEASE

Single-wire solar fence, solar lights installed in WGH to mitigate HEC

Guwahati, Nov 30: Single-wire solar fence, solar stand lights have been installed in West Garo Hills villages of Meghalaya by Aaranyak, a premier research-based biodiversity conservation organisation of the region, to mitigate the raging human elephant conflict (HEC) so as to facilitate coexistence.

A community-managed single-wire and 1.2 km-long circular solar fence was installed at Borogobal Part-III village in West Garo Hills of Meghalaya by the team of Aaranyak, which has been working relentlessly for mitigation of HEC and facilitate coexistence in this landscape.

This solar fence is meant for protecting the standing paddy of farmers, houses and human lives of 24 households in the village that is frequented by herds of wild elephants.

The solar fence has been installed by Aaranyak and British Asian Trust with support from Darwin Initiative (UK Aid) with cooperation of Meghalaya Forest Department.

The solar fence was installed following the hands-on training provided to the community on installation and management of such a solar-powered fence to mitigate conflict with wild elephants. The training was conducted on November 18 where 26 persons from all the households including women participated to help protect their village and establish coexistence between human beings and elephants.

A 11-member solar fencing management committee was formed before the installation to facilitate community-oriented management of the solar fence. The committee has three women members including the vice-president.

The Aaranyak resource team comprising Anjan Baruah, Nipul Chakma, Ripunjoy Nath, Subhas Rabha and Rupam Goyari was involved in implementation of the project. The team provided technical guidance, hand-holding support to the community during the installation of a solar fence in Borogobal Part-III village.

Solar stand lights

Earlier, Aaranyak and British Asian Trust with support from Darwin Initiative (UK Aid) had installed solar stand-lights in seven villages of West Garo Hills for mitigation of HEC and facilitate coexistence

Fifteen solar stand-alone lights were installed in seven villages of West Garo Hills near the Assam-Meghalaya boundary on November 23 this year. Under this same project 10 more solar lights had been installed in the month of June this year in the same area of West Garo Hills. These lights enhance visibility to help villagers spot presence of the elephants in certain dark locations frequented by elephants at night.

The villagers of 533 households of the seven villages – Borogobal, Darenchigre, Bondukmali, Bordubi, Photamati, Jamdamgre and Kharsingdab of West Garo Hills district of Meghalaya -- are directly benefited by these solar stand-alone lights.

On November 23, two solar stand lights were installed in Borogobal in addition to the existing two lights there. One light was installed at Darenchigre that already has two lights ; two lights were installed in addition to the old one in Bondukmali ; two in Bordubi in addition to the existing one ; three lights were installed in Photamati in addition to the old one ; two 2 lights were installed in Jamdamgre in addition to the existing two and 3 lights were installed in Khasingdab in addition to the existing one light there.

The local community including Village Champions of Aaranyak were involved during the installation of these lights. The Aaranyak team comprising Nipul Chakma, Subhas Rabha and Rupam Goyari led by Anjan Baruah facilitated the installation along with the technical team of solar stand lights.

***Press statement issued by Bijay Sankar Bora, Publicity Secretary, Aaranyak.
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