

PRESS RELEASE

Tiku, rescued endangered Hargila, set free by Aaranyak team

Guwahati May 16: In November 18, 2022, 'Tiku', an endangered Greater Adjutant Stork, locally referred as Hargila, was just a ten-day-old chick looking like a big white woollen ball. She and her sibling fell down from a 70-feet tall tree in Dadara village of Kamrup district of Assam from a nesting colony. Fortunately, local resident Kandarpa Medhi immediately able to spot these fallen nestlings.

He promptly contacted the Greater Adjutant Conservation Programme (GACP) team of region's leading biodiversity conservation organisation, Aaranyak (www.aaranyak.org). The GACP team is headed by well-known conservationist Dr Purnima Devi Barman.

Immediately after these chicks had fallen off the nesting colony atop the tall tree, Dr Barman and her team members Manab Das and Dipankar Das came to rescue and take care of these distressed chicks. The chicks were handed over to Dr Rathin Barman, Joint Director of the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC), WTI and transported it to CWRC for their rehabilitation.

“They both looked weak, dehydrated and injured, so they needed the best possible care.”, Dr Purnima Devi Barman said.

CWRC is a rescue and rehabilitation center run by Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) in collaboration with Assam Forest Department. CWRC's veterinarian, Dr Samshul Ali, though took the utmost care to save these birds, but one of the chicks died from its injuries after a few days at the center. Meanwhile, the condition of the other chick has gradually improved after receiving care and treatment.

After a seven-month stay at the CWRC, this bird was released into the wilderness on May 14. This bird-release event held near Deepor beel was graced by Partha Sarathi Mahanta, DIG (Admin) and Indrani Baruah, DIG (CID) of Assam Police. Both police officers have been closely associated with the Greater Adjutant Conservation Programme of Aaranyak for years.

Pramod Kalita, a well-known conservationist from Deepor beel area was also there in the bird-release event. His three-year old daughter Bhuyoshi Kalita alias Tiku is very enthusiastic about birds and hence the released Hargila has been named after her.

“As we set the recuperated Hargila free on May 14, the Mother's Day, we honoured all the mothers who always go all out to nurture and protect their young. This stork's flight serves as a symbol of hope and resilience for all those who have lost their mothers, and a reminder that love and compassion can come from unexpected sources,” said Dr Purnima Devi Barman.

More than 400 such birds have been rescued and rehabilitated by Dr Purnima and her team in the past 15 years and hand raising them at the Assam State Zoo, Assam Forest Department facilities, CWRC, as well as in the villages of Dadara, Pachariya, and Singimari in Kamrup District, with support from local people.

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