

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Victims in HEC hotspots seeks synergy in mitigation efforts**

Guwahati, April 4: Scores of village heads flagged myriad issues related to acute human elephant conflict (HEC) in parts of Udalguri district seeking coordination among various government departments including forest department and district administration in a sensitization workshop on HEC mitigation held at Harisinga Revenue Circle office at Tangla in Udalguri district of Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) in Assam today.

During an interaction in the workshop held under joint aegis of BTR Forest Department, Harisinga Revenue Circle and biodiversity conservation organisation Aaranyak ([www.aaranyak.org](http://www.aaranyak.org)), the village heads and representatives of various line departments were sensitized on the alarming nature of the HEC in the district and the region as a whole through a detailed power point presentation by Dr Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, senior conservation scientist in Aaranyak. Dr Lahkar highlighted various HEC mitigation measures besides the urgent need for coordination among various government departments with the Forest Department in facilitating human –elephant coexistence.

In the programme that was coordinated by Aaranyak's senior officials Dr Alolika Sinha and Anjan Barua, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Dhansiri Division of BTR, Dibakar Das stated that the root cause of the HEC which has claimed hundreds of lives of wild elephants and human beings is habitat destruction because of expanding human habitations.

He said there was need for co-existence as the elephant which plays a very important role in regeneration of forest and conservation of the entire ecosystem. He said it is the human being which initially created the problem through their various activities and it has to be coped with by the human being now through various mitigation measures.

The forest officials also explained in detail the process of claiming compensation by the victims of HEC so that the compensation payment process can be expedited.

Circle Officer of Harisinga, Manisha Nath making the opening remarks underscored the burgeoning HEC in the district and need for effective and coordinated mitigation efforts.

The Aaranyak's team which also had Rabiya Daimari and Dibakar Nayak, gathered valuable suggestions from village heads and representatives of line departments for undertaking suitable and need-based mitigation measures to facilitate co-existence between human being and elephant.

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