

Press Communique

Village-level community surveillance against WL crimes initiated in NE India

Guwahati, November 3: In a pioneering effort, region's premier biodiversity conservation organisation Aaranyak (www.aaranyak.org) has formed Community Surveillance and Monitoring Teams (CSMT) in some villages in Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur as part of an initiative to elicit proactive community cooperation in monitoring and checking wildlife crimes that pose grave threat to biodiversity conservation efforts.

These specialized community-dominant teams function in fringe villages around notified wildlife protection areas, monitoring the grey markets of illegal wildlife products and tracking wildlife trade through known and potential routes.

They also organise community awareness and sensitisation campaigns for wildlife conservation. These teams have been trained to maintain efficient communication and relay information related to wildlife crimes to relevant authorities for prompt follow up actions.

They also collaborate with local media personnel to raise mass awareness about the danger posed to biodiversity by wildlife crimes so as to motivate the public to contribute towards wildlife conservation.

The CSMTs in Arunachal will mainly focus on protection of the treasure trove of wildlife of D'Ering Wildlife Sanctuary which faces many challenges like illegal hunting and logging.

In Manipur, the CSMT will be focused in and around the area of Dailong Biodiversity Heritage site in Tamenglong district. The Manipur Government in the last week of May 2017 had declared Dailong village of Tamenglong district as a Biodiversity Heritage Site.

As of date, CSMTs in Arunachal have been formed in eight villages of Pasighat in Arunachal Pradesh and six villages in Tamenglong district of Manipur.

The CSMT team comprises of people from different sectors like village councils, eco-development societies, biodiversity boards, local NGOs and students' body's representatives.

Along with close monitoring and surveillance, the CSMT are expected to keep a close eye on the wildlife trade routes. These important information will be channeled to the appropriate authorities for further action. In addition to their contributions to the general cause of conservation in their assigned landscapes, the CSMTs will also conduct regular awareness programmes on special environmental and wildlife days throughout the year.

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