

Aaranyak organises course on environment



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A three-week long international course on applied environmental education concluded with a brief graduation ceremony held in Indian Institute of Bank Management, Guwahati on Sunday. The programme was organised by North East's leading nature conservation and research organisation 'Aaranyak' in association with Environment Education and Conservation Global (EECG), USA and Satpuda Foundation (India). The programme was attended by Dr. L.R. Bishnoy, IPS, Additional DGP of Assam Police, A.K. Johari, PCCF and Member Secretary, Assam State Biodiversity Board; Dr. Sugoto Roy, Coordinator, ITHCP, IUCN, Edward J McCrea, President, EECG and Course Instructor, Dr. Augusto Medina, Former President of National American Association of Environmental Education along with Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar, Secretary & CEO, Aaranyak.

The course which started on 28 January, 2019 was participated by 20 participants from India, Nepal, Myanmar and Indonesia belonging to various field of environmental conservation. As a part of the course, the participants also visited Manas and Kaziranga National Park of Assam and interacted with the communities of the fringe areas of the parks to identify issues related to environment and conservation. 'For a budding conservationist like me, IAEEC 2019 was really helpful in putting my thoughts and ideas in to perspective and come up with more ideas for future.' – opined Vandana Pandey from wildlife Trust of India, who has joined the course from Delhi. Sharing the same opinion, Saw Jaw Win Htoo from Karen Forest Department, Myanmar expressed that this course was an awesome experience for him and he learnt many things which he can apply in his professional field of work while working with communities and school children.

The course emphasized on methods and process of developing environmental education packages for eco-educators and conservationists working in various fields. As a part of the field work, the participants also developed various media for communicating with the local communities. Expressing her satisfaction over the field exercises, Binita Pandey from Resources Himalaya Foundation, Nepal stated that - 'Exposure to field works in Manas National Park and Kaziranga National Park helped me to know the view of the communities on environmental issues'. Further they have also visited Assam State Zoo cum Botanical Garden for field work and interacted with staffs and officials of the zoo. The participants also got the opportunity to interact with many eminent guest instructors like writer Dr. Dinesh Ch. Goswami, Mr. Prabal Kumar Das, A.K. Johari, Mr. Jayanta Kumar Sarma, Mr. Prashant Mahajan and Kishor Rithe, Dr. Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, Dr Firoz Ahmed and Jayanta Kumar Pathak during the course. As a part of the course work, three of the participants, viz. Kirti Chavan from Snow Leopard Conservancy, Ladakh, Savita Dahiya from Rajasthan Forest Department and Manoshi Goswami from Aaranyak, Assam also won a project proposal grant worth INR 35000 each.

The course was organised for the first time in North East India under the joint effort of Environment Education and Capacity Building Division (EECBD) and Manas Tiger Conservation Programme (MTCP) of Aaranyak. EECBD is the oldest division of organisation which has been working to promote eco-literacy in north east India since the inception of Aaranyak. It may also be mentioned that MTCP is a programme led by Aaranyak and being implemented in partnership with the Forest Department BTC, Wildlife Conservation Trust, Panthera and Awely, and is actively working towards improvement of protection, conservation and community wellbeing in Manas National Park and its fringe areas.

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Assam Times Staff. editor@assamtimes.org

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