

Fascinating Mariani – an impression revisited



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Bonani Gogoi 2 May 2012 14699 views

My eyes caught glimpses of an old railway station. Mariani Junction; it is here from where I started my journey a year ago. Standing at the exit of a train, I blinked and stretched my arms as if to feel the air of my land. It occurred to me as though it had a way of welcoming me as I stepped down from the train. In a year's time nothing at all has changed, not a bit. The same old singora stall serving hot tea to passengers, two old constables sitting, chewing betel nuts and é..paper paper...Asomia, Bangla newspaper chants making rounds along the entire stretch of the station. It felt good to be back. On the other end of the station I could see my father and mother waiting with happy tears to greet me. I could not but stop from embracing them warmly. Lugging my baggage we headed toward parked taxis, vans and autorickshaws; all geared up to port passengers safely to their destinations. Everything looked the same yet mesmerizing. It was heavenly hiding under the blue sky. Small lanes, cottage-style shops, hotels, pan shops and not to forget the all-time favorite Baro-Misol Dukan and others brought my childhood memories alive as we sped past homeward.

Minutes drive from Mariani Railway Station, Hollongapar Gibbon WildLife Sanctuary here is a famous semi-evergreen forest home to healthy populations of seven out of the fifteen ape species endemic to India. With evergreen patches amidst tea gardens and human settlements it offers a wonderful natural feast to the eyes. Assam has plenty reasons to pride. I recommend that people should effort to acknowledge the importance of this biodiversity spot pretty seriously. It is recognized as an Important Bird Area situated in Assam(IBA) by Bird Life International because it is the habitation of about 800 different species of birds of which several are extinct apart from rare tree varieties and other animals.

Elephants, tigers and other wild animals are routinely becoming homeless every passing day because of our greed. I halted to explore further, dawdling across the trees and bushes of the sanctuary. Imprudent people could be seen, cutting trees and leaving imprints of their cruelty. All kinds of thoughts and views jostled my mind about methodolgies that can help conserve it. I continued to journey keeping these in my mind when I heard thunder bolts following which it started to rain. Nothing can be more enticing than the sight of everything drenched in rain, the smell of moist earth, and the fragrance of blooming flowers! I delayed till the rain stopped. I was so much in awe that I did not realize when I reached home. My journey started and finished like a melodious song almost.

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BY BONANI GOGOI

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