

Kaziranga Wildlife Society-Disputatio organize ramp walk, extempore speech to mark World Wildlife Day



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Kaziranga Wildlife Society (KWS), the oldest conservation NGO of Northeast India, observed World Wildlife Day (WWD) in collaboration with Disputatio--the debating society of Handique Girls College, Guwahati at the college premises. This year's WWD theme "Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation" emphasizes the need to bring together people with different level of experience and expertise to reverse the decline in wildlife populations. "It is through our collective conservation actions that can only make a difference in securing protection for the wildlife around us," said Mubina Akhtar, secretary, KWS as she addressed the gathering. "Conservation is held by many as a task vested on governments, law makers and park rangers. In reality we all have a role to play. We need to encourage the youth to rally together to address ongoing major threats to wildlife. It is not only mega species such as tiger, rhino and elephant but a number of lesser wildlife, including birds and reptiles that are at equal risk. It is very pertinent to know what the younger generation think and say about wildlife protection," she added.

Earlier, the principal of the college, Rajib Kumar Das welcomed the guests and expressed his satisfaction on the collaboration to mark the occasion and create awareness on wildlife conservation.

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A ramp walk was organized where participants represented different species and their vulnerable status through face painting, dressing and make-up and slogans. The participants also had to face a flurry of questions from the judges.

The ramp walk was followed by an extempore speech competition. Pranay Bordoloi, Consulting Editor, NKTv, Shivasis Thakur, senior journalist, *The Assam Tribune*, Chandan Kumar Duarah, senior journalist, *Asomiya Pratidin* and Abani Baruah, executive member, Kaziranga Wildlife Society were the judges.

Satabdi Borthakur won the first spot of the ramp walk and won the Aparna Kumar Padmapati Memorial prize with a cash award followed by Monali Bora who took away the second prize. The first prize of the extempore speech competition was jointly won by Krishna Kalita and Juri Mudoi.

Abani Baruah in his speech asked the students to more actively play a role in conservation and said that Kaziranga Wildlife Society has always welcomed student members.

Chandan Duarah asked the students to minutely observe nature, the various ecosystems that surround us and the different food chains-- in order to shape our thinking about nature and its protection.

Shivasis Thakur in his speech elaborated on the ongoing major threats to wildlife including habitat change. He, too, reiterated on the importance of observing nature. Pranay Bordoloi stressed on the need for the right attitude and patience to work in the conservation field. He hoped there would be future leaders from among the various participants.

The programme was anchored by Hiyashree Pathak while it was coordinated by Reecha Das and the Disputatio team.



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