

Man-made forest at Bhairabkunda



Comments 1



Jayanta Kumar Das 20 July 2016 Updated 20 Jul 75472 views

In an effort for long term conservation amid the [gloom](#) of large scale deforestation in Assam specially in violence infested [Udalguri](#) district, villagers of six villages on the Assam-Bhutan-[Arunachal](#) border at [Bhairabkunda](#) joined hands successfully regenerating a stretch of barren sandy forest land. The results of this quiet [community](#) initiative done under joint forest management ([JFMC](#)) are evident with the regenerated forest expanse of 5500 bigha already emerging [as](#) a shelter of wild animals and birds. The 22.24 sq KM [Bhairabkunda](#) Reserve Forest (RF) was left without a single tree by the early 1980s due to rampant illegal logging. Afforestation drive by forest department in association of people of six villages namely-Sonaigaon, Bhairabpur, Goroimari, Sapangaon, No.1 Mazargaon and No.2 Mazargaon started in April 2007 and within five years a spectacular man made forest presently known [as](#) Gedsimani Forest([JFMC](#)) has grown up at Sapangaon by converting plot of barren sandy lands measuring 5500 bigha in to a new picturesque forest by planting more than 1400000 (fourteen lakhs, which could be a world record) saplings of various valuable species ie, khoir, gomari, simul, shisham etc near Dhansiri river, very close to Bhutan and [Arunachal](#). [Wildlife](#) loving people of Assam hope that the place would draw the attention of tourists all [over](#) the world, if government developed infrastructure of the area. The regenerated forest land now has rich vegetation and has given shelter to wild animals, birds beside various species of flora. A small river with several canals -a few of those man made runs throughout the forest, providing replenishment for the [green](#) cover.

[Nature](#) loving office bearers of [JFMC](#), namely Esmail Daimari, Elision Daimari, Lenin Daimari, Bimal Daimari, Purna Daimari, Atul Basumatari, Prenson Daimari, Pilup Daimari, Alfred Daimari, Helena Basumatari and Someswari Daimari believe that with some support from Assam government and Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) the area can be developed [as](#) an ideal eco- tourism hub. With rivers criss-crossing the verdant Assam-Bhutan-[Arunachal](#) border and the [Bhairabkunda](#) Reserve Forest providing some undulating trekking trails, there is a definite scope for promoting tourism. In the year 2003, thirty five numbers of village people formed and registered “Sonaigaon Multipurpose farm”, for cultivation, farming purposes. It had been a historic turn when these people came into contact of Naba Kumar Bordoloi, then Forest Range Officer serving at [Bhairabkunda](#) RF. Forest officer Bordoloi convinced members of the farm to proceed with planting of trees under [JFMC](#) (Joint Forest Management) scheme.

In 2005 process of documentation, survey etc had been done and proposal was submitted to Ministry of [Environment](#) and Forest government of [India](#). [Plantation](#) was done during 2007 to 2011. It has been a continuous process when people of the six villages, students, woman etc had been planting more than 14 lakhs of saplings till now. All the saplings had been well protected by the members. They formed six subcommittees under the central committee. The six subcommittees are- 1. Goraimari [JFMC](#); 2. Sonaigaon [JFMC](#); 3. Sapangaon [JFMC](#); 4. Bhairabpur [JFMC](#); 5. No. 1 Majorgaon [JFMC](#) and 6. No. 2 Majorgaon [JFMC](#). It's a matter of pleasure that wild animals like elephants, leopards, Mongoose, [python](#), deer, wild boar, various species of snakes etc. A flying snake of paradise species was also seen in the forest last year in 2015. Wild elephants were seen delivering babies in this forest last year bringing a ray of hope in mitigating severe "Man-elephant conflict" in [Udalguri](#) district. So far more than 83 people and 35 numbers of wild elephants have lost lives in the district during last five years (2012-[2016](#)) because of rapid destruction of forests. The arrival of wild elephants has been a good [sign](#), [as](#) they could live peacefully in the forest with plenty of fodder and drinking water. Unfortunately there is no funding for maintenance of the forest since 2011. The honest and simple villagers have been working without any salary since 2007. Neither BTC nor Assam government had ever thought of supporting this unusual man-made forest. Only the then Deputy Commissioner of [Udalguri](#) Thaneswar Malakar arranged to construct a guest house for the visitors and members with Rs. 500,000 (five lakhs). A number of Assam supported them with two solar light sets. Members [Udalguri](#) District [Journalist's](#) Union and [Udalguri](#) Press Club request BTC authority and DFO, Dhansiri Forest Division, [Udalguri](#) to support them with any scheme for more plantation for providing shelter to wild animals and birds and to promote eco-tourism in the district.

Jayanta Kumar Das

Environmental journalist.

BY JAYANTA KUMAR DAS

Astronomy advocate UN Deka passes away

Noted astronomy activist UN Deka passes away

Newly wed burnt alive in Udalguri

Octogenarian Music Maestro Sisir Kumar Suni

Asom Diwas celebrated at Bhergaon

ON THIS DAY

Arms recovered

Essay competition for students

Programme on pursuing career after graduation held at Doomdooma

Daoharu Mungkhlong trophy match from Oct 1

BTC special session discusses development

RELATED

Skill fest empowers students in Sualkuchi with communication and career guidance

Youth Leadership Programme at Dibrugarh University Focuses on Climate Action and Social Change

NTPC Bongaigaon launches fifth edition of Girl Empowerment Mission

Beyond Water: How the Lower Subansiri Dam Is Interrupting an Unseen River Economy

MSME Day: Innovation key to building resilient businesses
