

# Greater Adjutant Conservation Through Community Participation in Assam, India



*Aaranyak*



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**Final Report**  
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**Project title**  
Greater Adjutant Conservation Through Community Participation in Assam, India

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Assam, India

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**Names of any institutions involved in organizing the project or participating**  
Aaranyak ([www.aaranyak.org](http://www.aaranyak.org))

**The overall aim of the project**  
To initiate conservation programmes across the entire distribution range in Assam, India involving communities and helping policy makers to improve and secure the conservation status of Greater Adjutant.

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## **Section 1:**

### **Summary (max 200 words):**

Endangered Greater adjutant makes nesting colonies in outside the State owned protected area network in Assam and community conservation initiatives are the only hope for saving this bird from the extinction threat. Assam, harbours about 80% of its global population and is considered of its global stronghold. A community conservation programme was initiated in the traditional nesting colony areas and results were very positive. Nest numbers has increased in the key nesting colony locations. State wide status survey was completed after a gap of 18 years since this bird was surveyed in Assam. Increase of number has indicated a positive population trend, however many traditional nesting colony were also found missing. Large number of nest fall chick was a concern for this bird. Villagers put nets bellow the nesting trees and could save many marooned nest fall chicks after proper treatment by the competent authorities. A well designed campaign has generated a positive atmosphere towards conservation of this endangered bird in Assam. Ownership feeling of villagers for this bird could be observed in the key nesting locations. Policy makers, media houses and fellow NGOs felt for this species and survival prospects of this bird has definitely got a major boost.

### **Introduction (max 500 words):**

Greater Adjutant *Leptoptilos dubius*, once very widely distributed in India, South and South East Asia, is currently known to distributed only in Assam and Bihar in India (Rahmani *et al.* 1990, Choudhury. 2000, Choudhury *et al.*, 2004 and Mishra and Mandal, 2009) and a very few South East Asian countries in very small (Clements *et. al.* 2007). This species has been placed in “endangered” in IUCN Red list and Schedule IV in Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Experts suggest that population of this colonial nesting large sized water bird has declined drastically in last couple of decades basically due to destruction and

disturbance of its traditional nesting colonies areas (Goswami and Pator 2007). However, presence of other physiological threat, if any, is still unknown or not studied.

In Assam, Greater Adjutant mainly establishes their nesting colonies in privately owned land in countryside tall trees. Though past nesting records are available within protected areas, currently this bird mainly depends on its traditional nesting sites in thickly populated areas outside the protected area network. As this bird use mainly private areas for its nesting in Assam, Government sponsored institutional mechanism has limited role to play on its breeding habitat and entire *in situ* conservation scenario. Community is a key stakeholder for any *in situ* future conservation effort (Barman *et al.* 2011). Government forest department, non- governmental organisations, academic and research institution may provide necessary supports for spreading the conservation programmes in the communities. Very recently this bird has been identified as an “edge” species by Zoological Society of London and opined that this bird is slowly moving towards more danger zone (Walter Jetz *e. al.*, 2014). If the population takes further downward trends, conservation breeding programme cannot be ruled out for this species. It is important to note that a large number of chicks die every year due to nest fall and timely rescue and rehabilitation of nest fall bird may play an important role in its conservation. (Barman, 2013, Singha *et al*, 2006).

Through this project, we initiated a community conservation programme in the prime breeding locations of Kamrup and Nagaon District of Assam. Communities have responded to the conservation of this bird and now this bird is protected by the villagers in these nesting colony. In the return, population has increased in Kamrup District and now it is estimated that probably 50% of its global population could be seen in this district alone.

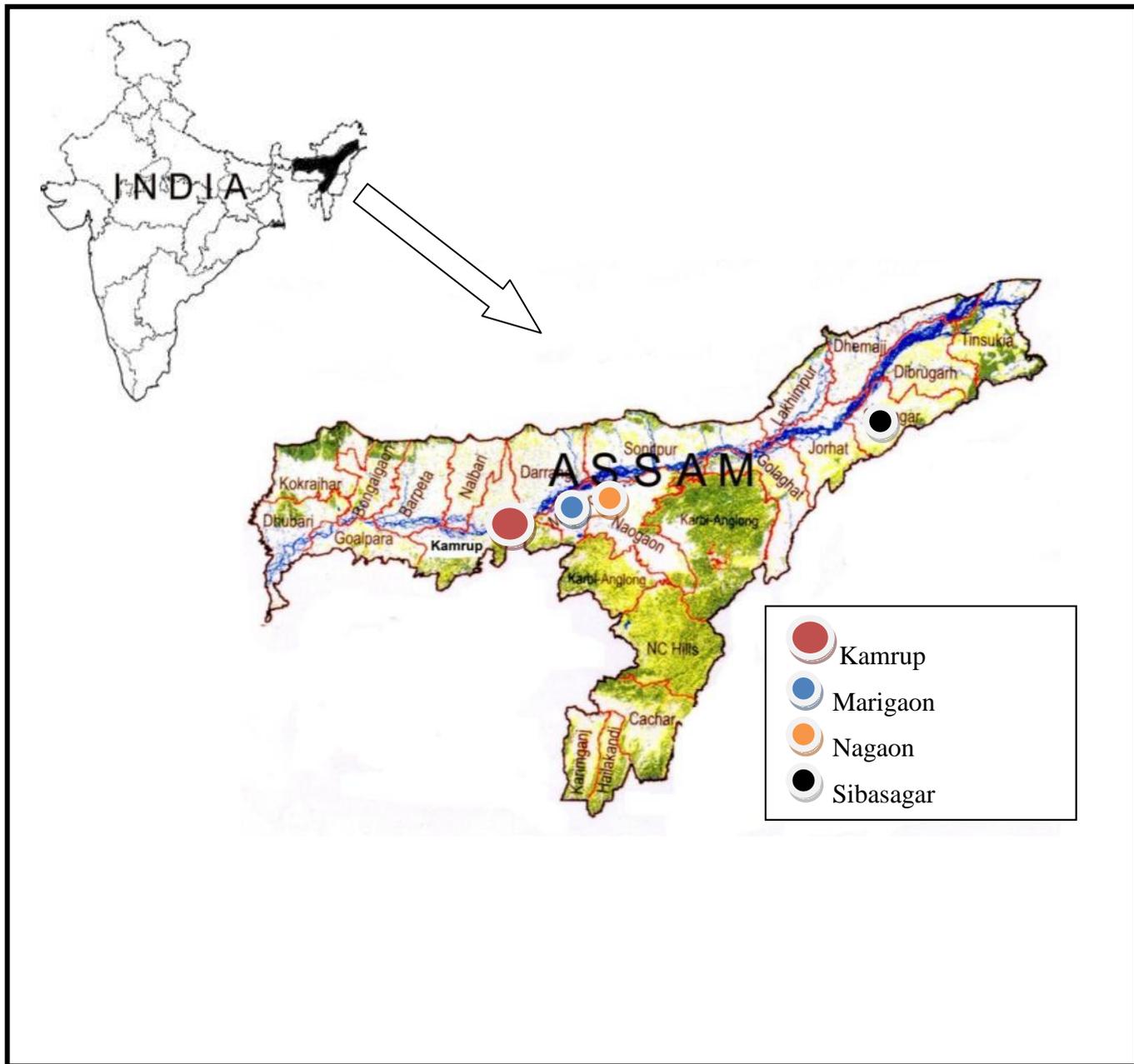
Till last decades, Nagaon District breeding colony of this bird used to be biggest nesting colony in Assam (Singha *et al.* 2003), but however its Kamrup breeding

colony is now probably the biggest nesting colony of this bird. Again breeding colony in Nalbari District is also missing. In one breeding colony of Dadara-Pacharia-Singimari villages of Kamrup District of Assam we recorded about 450 numbers of individuals in the month of November 2013 and this could be considered as the highest number of this bird in any of its breeding colony recorded elsewhere.

**Project team members:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age and Qualification</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
<p>Ms. Purnima Devi Barman</p> 	<p>34 years.</p> <p>Master in Zoology and specialized in Animal Ecology and Wildlife Biology. Currently pursuing Ph.D work on Greater Adjutant</p>	<p>Team Leader. Responsible for coordination, planning and execution of the project activities. Community conservation works, scientific data collection and analysis.</p>
<p>Ms. Madhumita Barthakur</p> 	<p>34 years</p> <p>Bachelors in Geography</p>	<p>Organising field events and stakeholder relationship building</p>
<p>Mr. Ajoy Kumar Das</p> 	<p>35 years</p> <p>Law Graduate. Specialized in India Wildlife Laws</p>	<p>Coordination with decision making bodies. Planning and participation on field activities.</p>
<p>Mr. Jonson Das</p> 	<p>33 years</p> <p>Master in Mass Communication</p>	<p>Communication and documentation of project activities.</p>

Location map of project area



## **Section 2:**

### **Aim and objectives (max 200 words):**

The project was aimed to know the current status of this species and its habitat in Assam. Conservation campaign was planned in and around nesting colonies in collaboration with other local community based organisations (CBO).

Following objectives are planned to achieve the goal of the project.

- To investigate the status of habitats in Morigaon, Nagaon, Sibsagar and Kamrup District, Assam.
- Involve Community Based Organisations (CBOs) in each nesting colony locations for a sustainable community based actions to protect the nesting trees.
- To initiate conservation campaign in Morigaon, Nagaon and Sibsagar Districts involving celebrities and media houses.
- To save nest fall chicks in nesting colony areas.
- To sensitize conservation policy makers for conservation of this bird and list this as a priority work in wildlife conservation programmes.

Though the status survey was conducted throughout the previous recorded distribution range of the State of Assam, conservation campaign was only possible in Kamrup, Morigaon and Nagaon district. Conservation campaign was also planned in Sibsagar, later but It was decided by the project team that rather than doing campaign in this district, where presence of Greater Adjutant was not in great numbers, more efforts and conservation investment should be in Kamrup, Nagaon and Marigaon district.

### **Methodology (max 500 words):**

We started with a pre-campaign survey in the breeding colony area other than Kamrup district to understand the motivational need of the nest tree owners. This

was already done in the previous CLP project for Kamrup and repetition was not essential in this district. Various community conservation activities were designed to motivate nest tree owners based on the pre-campaign survey results. We identified various key groups in the villages who could influence the nest tree owners to allow Greater Adjutant to make nesting colonies in their private trees. We approached young students, women folks, elderly respected persons from the locality to generate an “ownership feeling” among the villagers for having Greater Adjutant in their villages. Street plays were played in the breeding locations to describe the situation of this bird and its need for conservation. Children were involved through spot drawing competition and after each competition a presentation was made to them describing the importance of this bird. Women folk were motivated to form “*hargila sangrakhyan parial*” (family for saving greater adjutant), who highlighted the importance of the bird with various activities in their own localities. Religion plays an important role in the village life. Keeping this in mind, conservation appeals were made in religious functions in the breeding locations taking the advantage of large gatherings during these functions. We consciously avoided any cash offer to the nest tree owners to support the nesting colony of this endangered bird. Because, sustainability of cash offer might be very difficult in long run and this might create bigger problem for the bird in future.

Status survey of this bird was carried out by visiting each historical and current breeding location from the month of October to March. This was repeated twice in two successive breeding seasons. Prior to survey, historical records were gathered through revisiting published literatures and consultation with the experts.

To save the nest fall chicks, nylon nets were placed under the nesting colonies. However, due to resource constrains, this was done only in Kamrup. Nest fall chicks were then handed over to Assam State Zoo and rescue and rehabilitation facilities. Survived chicks were treated and hand raised by these institutions and

once they are fit they were release back to wild. To highlight the conservation need of this bird, “bird release” events were organised. Released birds were named after local school children and after renounced conservationists and tree owner’s children.

Policy makers were roped in this programme while conducting any major field events like in “bird release programme”, “baby shower” programme for greater adjutant during the breeding seasons, in kind donations programme to nest tree owners’ children for excelling in examinations, wetland days celebrations and earth day celebration. An initiation was taken for formulating a species recovery plan for this species. This was done through a series of workshops where government policy makers were invited along with the experts in this field. During these meetings, government decision makers were enlightened with the facts and figures of this species and regarding the urgent need for its conservation.

### **Outputs and Results (max 500 words)**

Survey was conducted in three consecutive seasons. All historical breeding locations were visited and breeding colonies were recorded, if found. Numbers of birds found the breeding colonies were recorded. This survey was done after a gap of 15 years and results were compared with the previous efforts during 1994-1996 (Singha *et. al*, 2003). It was observed that there is a increase of 31.97 % during breeding season, and 55% increase in non breeding population of this bird from the previous count of Singha et al, 2003. There was a significant increase of numbers of this birds found in Kamrup district too, while few breeding colonies were could not be located as described by Singha *et al.*, 2003. It was interesting to observe the dispersion of the bird in many other districts during non-breeding seasons which were not recorded in Singha *et al.*, 2003.

**Table 1: Greater adjutant distribution survey results in three consecutive breeding seasons (2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14)**

	District Name	Average counts	Other Survey records (Singha <i>et al.</i> 2003)
1	Kamrup	490	356
2	Nagaon	72	69
3	Morigaon	38	5
4	Barpeta		
5	Nalbari		11
6	Baska		
7	Sibsagar	36	39
8	Jorhat	16	5
9	Golaghat		
10	Tinsukia		
11	Dibrugrah		
12	Darang		
13	Sonitpur		
14	Tinsukia	8	
15	North Lakhimpur		3
	Total	660	488

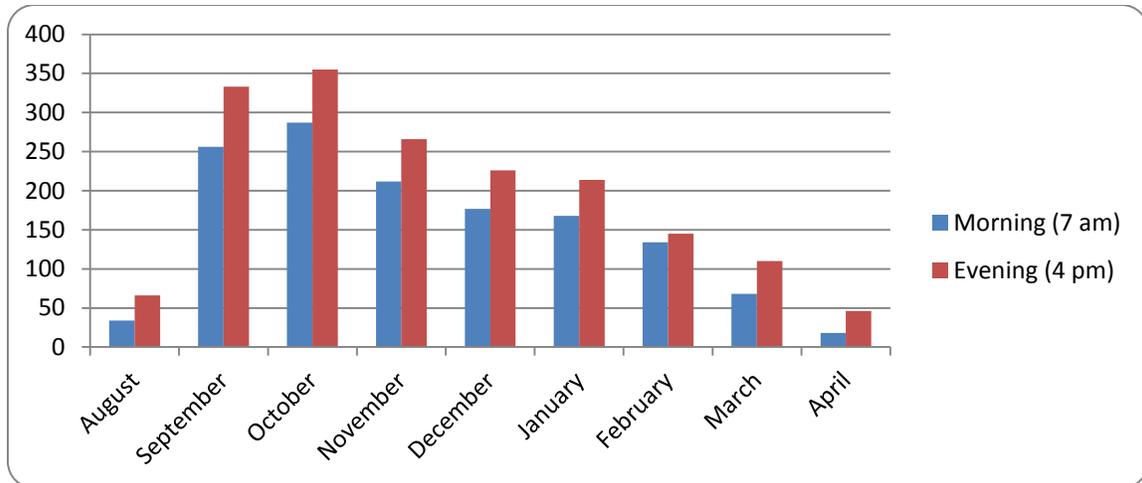
**Table 2: Greater adjutant distribution survey results three consecutive non-breeding seasons (2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14)**

	Districts	Average counts	Other Survey records (Singha <i>et al.</i> 2003)
1	Kamrup	456	209
2	Nagaon	67	92
3	Morigaon	28	
4	Barpeta	18	
5	Nalbari	4	16
6	Baska	2	
7	Sibsagar	34	40
8	Jorhat	18	3
9	Golaghat	4	
10	Tinsukia	8	
11	Dibrugrah	4	10
12	Darang		
13	Sonitpur	28	70
14	Tinsukia	3	
15	North Lakhimpur	8	
	Total	682	440



**Figure No. 1: Current Distribution map of Greater Adjutant in Assam (both breeding and non breeding sites)**

To understand the arrival and departure of birds in the nesting colony areas, intensive observation was made in one nesting colony of Kamrup district. In this nesting colony numbers of birds were recorded in every day (morning and evening) from the month of arrival of the bird in the breeding colony till the month when the observer could this bird in the colony. This intensive observation was possible through a group of young volunteers from the nesting colony villages of Dadara-Pacharia-Singimary of Kamrup Dirstict. It can be noted that this bird starts coming to nesting locations in late August and occupies the nesting colony till April.



**Figure 2: Numbers of Greater adjutants seen in various months in 2012-12 at Dadara-Pacharia-Singimari breeding colony.**

### **Community campaigns:**

We involved communities in and around the breeding locations using a numbers of community conservation tools and similar initiatives towards conservation of this globally endangered bird. Efforts were stressed from the previous projects in one breeding locations of Kamrup district and extended to Marigaon and Nagaon district. This is a continuous effort and there is no maximum numbers for such activities (more numbers of activities are always welcome), the project could completed a few depending on the availability of resources. Here are some notable activities of community conservation campaigns.

**Educating school students:** At the very beginning we started environmental education activities for local school student. Rather than going one school to other, we concentrated in a small private school “Sankardeva Sisu Niketan” located at the heart of the nesting colony villages. Majority of the pupil of this school were children of nest tree owners. We introduced the students with importance of biodiversity and wildlife conservation through play and group activities. After taking regular environmental education activities with the student of this school, they were slowly introduced with Greater Adjutant. They all were surprised to know that they live with an endangered bird in their home gardens. We also introduced quize competition, drawing competition, poem competition

among the student to involve themselves for conservation of Greater adjutant in their villages.

**Scholarship for the children of nest tree owners:** We introduced a small token scholarship programme for local students who secured good marks in board examination. With this activity local students were the beneficiary and almost all of them were children of nest tree owners.

**Working with women folk:** We worked with the women folk of the locality to make them understand the importance of Greater adjutant conservation. Village women folks were shy as usual for participating in any formal conservation discussion. We organized cooking competition among themselves during Assamese *bihu* festival. During the cooking competition they spontaneously participated in the discussion for conservation of Greater adjutant in their own villages. During the discussion, they were amazed to know about the fact that this endangered bird has chosen only their villages to breed. Knowing this fact, their motherly instinct opined that they will not allow any disturbances during the breeding season of this bird in their villages. They even “celebrated” and publicly made wishes to the bird for a successful nesting season in their villages like they do for their own female relatives during their first motherhood (baby shower for Greater adjutant!).

**Motivating young groups:** We organized many group meeting with local young boys and girls at their 20s. They were informed about the importance of this bird and very specifically mentioned that if they successfully conserve this nesting colony, this village may be a destination for bird tourism. Few bird tourist groups were introduced with these young groups and they served them as their guide in their birding trip in the nesting colony. They were also taken to Assam State Zoo to introduce with the other conservation initiatives. In the nesting colony many young chicks die due to nest fall injuries. Though this is natural process, but saving a nest fall bird of a globally endangered bird with a population of less than

1000 individual will have positive impact. After knowing the importance of this bird, the young groups even rescued many nest fall chicks and handed over to Assam State Zoo for further treatment and rehabilitation. Before that these boys had no concerns for these nest fall birds which were die eventually. Released birds were named after young students so that the motivation for conservation of this bird goes to another level.

**Campaign in Social media:** Campaign was also done using social media like Facebook. A facebook group page “Greater adjutant network” page was constituted for conservation of this species. Many participants have subscribed to this page and valuable information and suggestion could be gathered through facebook. Through this group information exchange was done towards conservation of this species in Assam. Some participants of this page have volunteered during the State wide status survey and even participated in the various campaign field works.

**Motivating local police:** In Indian scenario, it is always important to have on board law enforcing authorities while implementing any community conservation programme. In this effort too we had local police a stakeholder for conservation of this globally endangered bird. Kamrup Police department was invited to participate in the conservation efforts for this bird in this nesting colony. They actively participated in all conservation programme and they even voluntarily published hoarding with conservation message for this bird in the locality. Involvement of police made a real difference and poachers did not have courage to disturb or kill the bird in the colony.

**Integrating with local religious programme:** The mythological story about stork helping baby delivery was narrated to the local elderly women folk. They liked the story and decided to include stork in the local religious procession. This motivated local people a lot and publicly supported the conservation efforts of this stork in their locality.

Apart from these programme education material (poster and leaflets) were published and freely distributed among the local students

**Table 3: Details of project activities (major activities):**

Sl. No	Programme	Number	Number of Participants	Target Groups	Comments
1	Workshop for project staffs	4	28	Project staffs and volunteers who will participate in the data collection and field sessions	This was organized to have a interaction session with the project staffs to familiarized then in the project aim and objectives and methodology and overall project activities.
2	Group meeting	32	11x 10 (average)	Field volunteers, local youth groups	These group meeting was organised to orient field volunteers towards the project aim and objectives.
3	Meeting with top decision makers (Forest Department)	8	4 x 2 (average)	Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, Chief Conservator of Forest, Research Officer, Forest Department, Conservator of Forest, Assam Civil Service Officers, Assam Police Service Officers)	These meeting was organized basically to give them a recent update of the status of the bird and for request to take necessary actions and help in conservation initiative for this bird.
5	Public meeting and nest tree owner felicitation programme	4	4 x 40 (average)	Local villagers, nest tree owners, local forest department officials	For a better understanding of the bird and its importance. Free distribution of poster and educational materials, to praise the efforts of nest tree owners etc.
8	Public Rally	1	150 (aprox)	Students and villagers of the nesting colony area	To raise public awareness on the importance of the species and its conservation
9	Street Play in Public places	12	Viewer approximately 50 (average) per play	Viewers includes common citizens, students etc	To raise public awareness on the importance of the species and its conservation

10	Drawing competition for the students	12	30 (aprox) X 12	Students	To raise awareness and knowledge on the species and its conservation
11	Women self help group	1	15 members	Women folk of the breeding colony areas	This is to unite village women folk for the cause

### Project Activities photographs:



Scholarship giving to the nest tree owner's children who excelled in the secondary examination



Motivating women folks for conservation of Greater adjutant in the nesting colony areas



Rescue of nest fall chick in the nesting colony area



Release of rescued bird and foraging of rescued (see the tag) with other storks in the wild



Hoarding erected by fellow NGO and Kamrup Police for conservation of Greater Adjutant



Hoarding erected by fellow CBOs at the nesting colony areas



Activities with young students at the nesting colony locations



Working with young students and Students' prayer in front of a Stork statue for conservation of Adjutant Stork in their village



Self help group activities in the nesting colony area



Campaign works in Morigaon and Nagaon



Street play in Nagoan and Kamrup



Cultural procession for Greater adjutant conservation



A Stork's appeal to the public



Motivating tender minds makes a big difference

**WHAT THE LAW SAYS ABOUT PROTECTION OF GREATER ADJUTANT STORK ?**

- The Greater Adjutant Stork is protected under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and listed in the Schedule IV of the Act.
- The law says that one cannot possess a Greater Adjutant Stork without written permission of the Chief Wildlife Warden of the State. If a person comes in possession of any Greater Adjutant Stork, he must report to the nearest police station within 24 hours and also to the nearest office of Wildlife Division of Forest Department.
- No one can sale or even gift a Greater Adjutant Stork. If any Greater Adjutant Stork is illegally hunted or bred in captivity, found dead or even killed by mistake, then such stork (carcass or the live) becomes property of the Government.
- Destruction of nests or eggs of Greater Adjutant Stork would be an offence of hunting.
- A person violating any above provisions of law against the Greater Adjutant Stork may be punished, if convicted, with imprisonment which may extend upto 3 years or fine which may extend upto 25,000 rupees or with both. If the offence of hunting Greater Adjutant Stork is committed inside the national park or sanctuary, such person may be punished with imprisonment which shall not be less than 3 years and may extend upto 7 years and also with fine which shall not be less than 10,000 rupees. For second or subsequent offence, committed inside the national park or a sanctuary, such person may be punished with imprisonment which shall not be less than 3 years but may extend upto seven years and also with fine which shall not be less than 25,000 rupees.

In Assam as per the Wildlife (Protection)(Assam Amendment) Act, 2009 hunting not only inside sanctuary or national park but also outside such areas, the imprisonment shall not be less than 7 years which may extend upto 10 years and fine which shall not be less than 50,000 rupees. For second or subsequent offence the imprisonment shall not be less than 10 years which may extend upto life imprisonment and fine which shall not be less than 75,000 rupees.

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Informing legal protection provisions for Greater Adjutants to public and signature campaign for protection of this species.



Briefing villagers regarding the storks and taking them to visit Science Express for more knowledge



Our campaign bus



75 feet tall bamboo platform constructed for close observation of nest. A photo of an incubating stork at the nest



Calendar and coffee mugs produced during the project

## **Achievements and Impacts**

We started working in the Kamrup District breeding colony in 2009. Since then people around the nesting colony had stopped disturbing the bird and result is crystal clear. Nests number have increased significantly and with the presence of about 450 numbers of storks in the breeding season, this nesting colony has become the largest congregation of this bird in the breeding season. The numbers of birds have also seen increased in the garbage dumping site near Guwahati city, which is the main feeding ground for this bird in the non-breeding season. With about 450 individuals. This increase of population in Kamrup District is about 50% after Singha *et. al.* (2003). As there is no other group is working in the area for conservation of this bird, this is surely an impact and good work through Conservation Leadership Programme in last few years. The local villager has now felt that they are actually the “owner” of this bird, when they come for nesting in just backyards of their house. Thus developing this “ownership feeling” for the bird within the villagers has significantly played a positive role towards the conservation of this birds in this area. This is only possible with cooperation of the community around and all future efforts should be towards the sustenance of this “ownership feeling”. Success of this nesting colony can be an eye opener for all other nesting colonies in Assam. Through this project, we highlighted the success of Kamrup District in other nesting colony areas of Nagaon and Marigaon District. The ball has been set to roll in these nesting colonies too. Now in future efforts need to concentrate more in these districts. Many community based organisations actively participated in the awareness activities in these districts. They came forward with their innovative ideas while conducting educational programmes through street plays in these localities. These community based organisations needs to be involved more for sustenance of the conservation movements of this globally endangered birds in all nesting colonies in Assam. The bird was once hated by local people due to its association with the butcher house wastes (against the local religious sentiment) but now the same group of people feels that they are the owner of this bird in

their locality. They even symbolically took this birds in their village religious functions too. This is indeed a big achievement of the project.

The state level survey has given the updated information of the bird for the whole State. Last State level survey was done in 1995-96 by Singa *et al* (2003). We could confirm that many historical breeding colonies were found to be missing now. This survey will definitely guide and give valuable information to the conservationists for formulating a long term conservation action plan for this bird.

There was a constant pressure from the nest tree owners to save the nest fall chicks, as they now wants to save each and every individuals of this species. Through this project we could facilitate and help the villagers to save the nest fall chicks by providing nets under the nesting trees. Many nest fall birds could be save with this, and many of these were released back to the wild after proper treatment by competent authorities. Involvement of Assam Police Department in the conservation of this bird was a great achievement. Kamrup District division of Assam Police had erected few hoardings in the nesting colony for conservation of this bird and this can be easily replicated in the other nesting colonies by the Assam Police of these districts. Government Forest Department was appraised of the need for conserving this bird through various formal and informal meetings, and they now seem to be more or less aware of the conservation situation of this bird. But, practically, as awareness in the government department changes with the interest of the person in-charge, similar efforts need to be repeated with the change of in-charges of the forest divisions of various nesting colony area. Assam Forest Department now has a big plan for Deepar beel Wildlife Sanctuary, a key feeding habitat of this bird.

Media houses were briefed periodically about the importance of this bird through many formal and informal meetings. Throughout the project tenure, media played a very positive role and they keep publishing project information. Through them general public was made aware about the project activities. Many people started

sharing information of this bird from the very remote areas. Awareness of general public through this project definitely can be cited as a project impact.

### **Section 3:**

#### **Conclusion** (max 250 words):

Greater adjutant mainly uses areas for breeding mainly outside the government sponsored protected area network. That's why, community is the key stakeholder for conservation of this species. They should be taken into confidence while planning and executing any conservation efforts for this species. While, government forest department may be the official flag bearer for conservation of the species, but communities, especially nest tree owners should be always on board for this. Government forest department may direct certain developmental activities for people in the breeding colony area.

An exclusive rescue and rehabilitation facility for the nest fall chicks might come handy. Concern agencies should try to establish one in Kamrup District, that too next to a breeding location, where maximum numbers of the birds could be found. This will not only improve the survival rate of nest fall chicks but also spread the awareness of this bird to the world. All conservation efforts needs to be continued by concern agencies, including NGOs and CBOs for a long term till the bird increases its population by a considerable percentage in all historical breeding locations. Only by this we can secure the future of this bird.

Supported by Conservation Leadership Programme and execution of this project, this will be definitely considered as an important step towards conservation of this globally endangered species.

#### **Problems encountered and lessons learnt (max 500 words)**

1. Community wants benefit in hard cash in return for conservation of this bird. They expressed this to us many times. But we could offer any money as we thought that this may create problem in long term due to sustenance of this cash rewards scheme. It was very hard to convince them that we could save

this bird without involvement of cash. Though they were unwilling to recognize this initially, but slowly they understood and participated in the conservation programme.

2. Jealousy was very common among villagers. We noticed that when we involved one group of people or a person in our programs some other groups or individual were unhappy. Again we could not accommodate all of them in one events. Thus we had to be very careful while selecting villagers for project activities.
3. Number of nest fall chick was one of the biggest challenge we faced. As due to shortage of resources, it was very difficult to attend all nest fall chicks and transport them to proper facility for further treatment and rehabilitation. This happens from the month of October to March. This is a very long period to generate sufficient resources for treatment and care of these nest fall chicks. Again, treatment facilities are too far from the nesting colony and in some cases it was observed that it would have easy to attend these cases and survival percentage could have been better if such facilities could be created in the breeding locations itself.
4. Veterinary care is essential during for the nest fall chicks or any injured bird found in the locality. It is always difficult to get volunteers veterinarian. More resource and planning are require for a flawless rescue and rehabilitation of nest fall chicks.
5. In the very first year we could formed few self help groups (SHG) and trained them on livelihood practices using the village resources for more income generation. We also helped them to display their products in a International agricultural and horticulture event organised by State Government. But we could not continue to support them due to lack of resources in the subsequent years. SHGs are still waiting for us to get some help to continue their efforts with such endeavour.

### **In the future (max 200 words):**

1. To expand extensive awareness campaign throughout Assam and to design a well planned incentive programme for communities involving conservation of greater adjutant nesting colonies.
2. To continue the community activities in Kamrup District (Dadara, Pasariya and Singmari Village) so that the population could be doubled in this district in coming years.
3. A community interpretation center might be a very useful tool to spread the conservation message for this species. Establishing such centre in a breeding colony area would be very beneficial and we should definitely try to establish one in coming years.
4. We felt that developing conservation guards from the villagers would be very beneficial. We shall try for this in coming years.
5. We shall try to involve Ministry of Rural Development and Panchayat for any future conservation programme for this bird. As they have not shown any interests, currently they are not considered as an important stakeholder. But given the change in future, they might help this effort in a better way.
6. Tall trees are decreasing in the area due to even natural factors. We should try to do a plantation programme of the nesting tree species in coming years.
7. There is still dearth of many scientific information for this bird. We shall try to do molecular level study of this bird in future to understand the ecology of this bird.
8. To understand the document the home range of this bird more scientifically, we should try to do satellite tagging of this bird in future.
9. We shall try a nest and tree adoption system for this bird in future.
10. We shall try to establish an *in-situ* rescue and rehabilitation facility for nest fall chick of this bird in the breeding colony area.

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## Section 4:

## Appendix I

### Financial Statement Summary

Itemized Expenses (in US\$)	CLP Request US\$	Total CLP used US\$
<b>Project Preparation</b>		
Communications (telephone/internet/postage)	1000.00	900.00
Field guide books, maps, journal articles and other printed materials	800.00	700.00
Insurance (if awarded this must be verified) and medical supplies (Please detail: accident insurance and medical insurance for team members)	200.00	100.00
Visas and permits	500.00	500.00
Team training	1000.00	1100.00
Reconnaissance	1000.00	1000.00
Other (Please detail: none)	0.00	0.00
<b>Equipment</b>		
Scientific/field equipment and supplies	1500.00	1500.00
Photographic equipment	2500.00	2500.00
Camping equipment (Please detail main items: none)	0.00	0.00
Boat/engine/truck (including fuel)	3000.00	3200.00
Others	3500.00	3500.00
Accommodation for team members and local guides	1200.00	1200.00
Food for team members and local guides	1000.00	1250.00
Travel and local transportation	1500.00	1550.00
Customs and/or port duties	0.00	0.00
Workshops	1500.00	1350.00
Outreach/education activities and materials	3000.00	2950.00
Other (Please detail: none )	0.00	0.00
Administration	900.00	900.00
Report production and results dissemination	600.00	600.00
Other	0.00	0.00
<b>Project Total in US Dollars:</b>	<b>24700.00</b>	<b>24800.00</b>

Copies of any newspaper/magazine articles relating to the project  
**NewsClip1: Published in Ananda Bazar Patrika**



**NewsClip2** Published in Assamtimes  
<http://www.assamtimes.org/node/6252>  
 World EarthDay celebrated by Aaranyak  
 Submitted by [editor](#) on Tue, 24/04/2012 - 15:06



Celebrating World Earth Day 2012 with grassroots has deserve special mention. Aaranyak in association with Sankardev Sisu Niketon, Dadara celebrated World Earth Day 2012 on 22nd and 23rd April with villagers and school children in three adjoining villages Dadara, Pasaria and Singimari in style. Their decision to take out a candle light march on 22nd April evening was to mobilize mass support to save the planet on World Earth Day. However little did the locals of Dadara know, that their motive to encourage more people to work for conserving their surrounding complimented this year's theme for Earth Day: Mobilise the Earth. "Green oath" signature campaign attracted mass villagers and they expressed their thought of protecting nature for future.

On 23rd April with continued event of "Green Oath" signature campaign, they conducted a drawing competition for school children of Dadara themed on "Mobilizing the Earth". A mass rally was organized involving school children and local villagers who were spreading message of saving earth. Mr Paresh Das, Principal of Sankardev Sisu Niketon delivered a brief talk on "Green Oath" and under his guidance children villagers took the oath and took pledge.

Purnima Devi Barman an environmental educator and a wildlife Biologist of Aaranyak and a lecturer in Handique Girls College briefed the audience about the participation of Earth day and the history behind its celebration. Programme was followed by a few cultural programme like songs Of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika composed on the "Mother Earth" like "O mor dharitri aai..saronote diba thai... in relation to earth day. Ecofriendly bags were distributed among villagers to initiate a ecofriendly habit amongst the participants. The programme was graced by the presence of Mr. Shyamal Dutta, Director Operation, Aaranyak and Mr. Manash Barthakur and Mr. Ajoy Kumar Das, senior member of the organisation. It is to be noted that Aaranyak has been extensively working on these three villages from last four years for protecting endangered bird Greater Adjutant as these villages specially Dadara is the hub of this world rarest species of Storks. With Continuous awareness Programe and environment education the villages have greeted this bird on this backyard and developed an "ownership feelings", a most welcome development for conserving a globally endangered bird. Organizing such events in these villages not only boosted up their contribution but also enhances their knowledge on nature.

- See more at: <http://www.assamtimes.org/node/6252#sthash.GM0SCBGh.dpuf>

News Clip3 Published in Aamar Asom

## হাড়গিলাৰ অস্তিত্ব বিপদাপন্ন

■ অতুল কুমাৰ বৰ্মন

কিছুদিনৰ আগলৈকে গাঁৱৰ পথাৰত মানুহে মৰা জীৱ-জন্তু পেলাই অহাৰ পিছত শওনে জাক পাতি শব্দেহ ডক্ষণ কৰিবলৈ অহাৰ লগতে মাংস ডক্ষণ কৰিবলৈ আহিছিল জাক জাক হাড়গিলা। মৃতদেহ পৰি থকা ঠাইত

জাকে জাকে হাড়গিলা আহি মৃত জীৱ-জন্তুৰ মাংস ডক্ষণ কৰিছিল। পিছে সেই দৃশ্য আজি নস্বাভাৱিক হৈ পৰিছে। দুৰ্লভ হৈ পৰিছে আজি সেই দৃশ্য। শওনেৰ পিছতে এইবিধ পক্ষীয়ে আৱৰ্জনা নিষ্কাশকৰূপে কাম কৰি

আহিছে। মৰা জীৱ-জন্তুৰ শব্দেহ ডক্ষণ কৰি পৰিৱেশ প্ৰদূষণৰ পৰা মুক্ত কৰে প্ৰকৃতিক। সোঁ সিদিনালৈকে জীৱশ্ৰেষ্ঠ মানুহৰে কিছুমানে শিলঙটি দলিয়াই লক্ষ্যভেদ কৰাৰ অযোষিত প্ৰতিযোগিতা চলাইছিল। *৮ পৃষ্ঠাত*



## NewsClip4 Published in Assam tribune

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jan1113/city06>

# The Assam Tribune

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### [Increasing nesting among Dadara adjutant stork](#)

SIVASISH THAKUR

DADARA, Jan 10 – In what is an encouraging news for conservationists, the greater adjutant stork population at Dadara on the city outskirts has witnessed a noticeable increase in nesting.

The nondescript Dadara shot into global fame for its successful community conservation saga that has secured a safe shelter for the endangered bird in the trees grown in the backyards of the local inhabitants.

Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak, who has been working closely with the local populace, terms the developments as heartening that can, apart from ensuring long-term survival of the bird, be replicated in other known greater adjutant stork habitats.

“There has been an increasing nesting trend in many of the trees. This is largely due to the commitment and involvement of the local residents who are taking pains to provide a safe home to the birds in their backyards,” she said.

According to a survey conducted last month, three villages in Dadara area, i.e., Dadara, Pasariya and Singimari, have a total of 128 nests sheltering a population of over 300 birds. Some of the tree-owners are Hemanta Kalita who has two kadam trees with ten nests, Dulal Das and Ghanshyam Das who have one kadam tree with ten nests, Bapuram Das who has three trees with 18 nests, and Jadav Das who own two trees with 13 nests.

Subodh Saikia, an elderly person and tree-owner, attributes the success of the community efforts to enhanced awareness levels of the villagers and the consequent protection accorded to the trees used by the birds for shelter and nesting.

“The villagers, with Aaranyak’s help, got about the all-important job of securing the depleting habitat of the bird, including nesting trees. The results are showing but the

efforts need to be sustained,” Saikia said.

While the greater adjutant stork has become the cynosure of all eyes in the village, conservation of its habitat has also helped many other birds and lesser animals find a secure home in the backyards of many of the villagers that resemble small patches of forests. Creatures like jackal, civet, jungle cat, etc., besides a variety of birdlife can be seen in the wooded backyards.

Even as nesting has improved, there have been a few accidental deaths of new-born from accidental falls from nests that are perched atop tall trees such as kadam, simalu, etc. To reduce the incidence of such fatalities, the villagers have now put up nets below the nesting trees.

“We need to take every possible care to prevent such unwarranted fatalities in view of the overall small population of the greater adjutant stork. Following a few accidental deaths of newborns, we have put up nets below the nesting trees as a preventive measure,” Purnima said.

The woman-folk of Dadara have been actively associated with the conservation efforts. “As most of us stay at home for the greater part of the day compared to the men, we get more time to monitor the birds in our backyards,” Charu Das, Anju Das, Juri Pathak and Madhuri Pathak, all of whom have nesting trees in their campuses, said.

Pareesh Das, principal of Sankardev Shishu Niketan, Dadara, feels that the bird’s long-term survival prospects have brightened with enhanced awareness among the children and students. “It is for the young generation to carry forward Dadara’s legacy. Just as Kaziranga is famed for the rhino, Dadara can well win global recognition for the greater adjutant stork,” Das said.

According to Purnima, the villagers now understand the importance of the greater adjutant stork bird species to the ecology. “They have started taking pride in that Dadara is one of the few places on the earth where this important variety of stork is found and that puts their area in the global map of distribution of the adjutant stork,” she says.

Local weavers have put the adjutant stork as a motif in the gamosa, the widely-used multi-purpose traditional Assamese towel. The new-look gamosas have been an instant hit in the market, spreading at the same time the message of conservation.

Rarest among the 20 stork species found on the planet, the global population of the greater adjutant stork is estimated around 800. Significantly, 80 per cent of its global population find a shelter in the Brahmaputra Valley, with Kamrup district alone accounting for half its number in the State.

The greater adjutant stork (commonly called hargila in Assam) is an important scavenging bird species that keeps the environment clean besides regulating the population of vertebrates like frogs, fishes, snails, etc., found in wetlands.

Though the bird species is protected under the Wildlife Protection Act-1972 in the country, its habitats (nesting colonies) do not get the same sanctity under the provisions of the Act. As these storks often build their nesting colonies on trees grown on private land, the threat to their existence becomes greater, and conservation efforts will remain a far cry without active cooperation from the communities.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Endangered-Greater-Adjutant-Stork-finds-secure-home-to-breed/articleshow/26732067.cms>

DADARA (Assam): Greater Adjutant Stork, the world's most endangered of the stork species, has found a secure home to breed in two nondescript villages of Assam's Kamrup district, heralding a new chapter in its conservation.

A campaign was launched four years ago at Dadara and Pacharia villages, home to nearly 50 per cent of the bird's global population, to save the birds which were approaching the red zone in the conservation scale by 'Aaranyak', a wildlife conservation organisation.

Earlier, widely distributed throughout northern and eastern India and many countries of south and south-east Asia, the Greater Adjutant Stork is currently distributed only in [Assam](#) and [Bihar](#) in India and a few other locations in Cambodia.

News Clip6: Published in AssamTimes

<http://www.assamtimes.org/node/8418>

Street plays for Conservation of Greater Adjutants

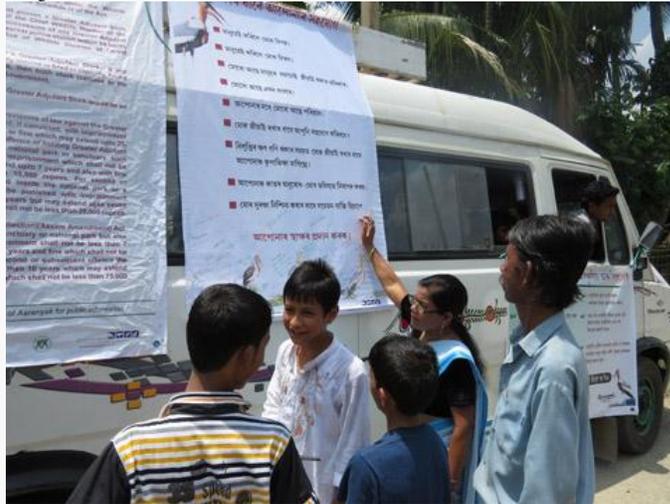
Submitted by [Raj Phukan](#) on Wed, 29/05/2013 - 14:54



Two nature conservation NGOs of Assam, Aaranyak and Green Guard Nature Organization (IBCN partners) collaborated to organize 'street plays' at several places in the towns of Morigaon and Nagaon to promote conservation awareness of the Globally Threatened Greater Adjutant Stork (GAS) on 26<sup>th</sup> of May. Locally known as *Hargila*, the world's most threatened stork with an estimated global population of less than 1000 birds has major breeding colonies in these two towns in central Assam. The two NGOs had earlier collaborated on a very successful project for the rescue, rearing and rehabilitation of injured, sick & fallen Greater Adjutant nestlings at Nagaon from 2001-2004, under financial support of the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

The play 'Adhikar', scripted by Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak and directed by Pabitra Kalita of Green Guard, was staged at Natun Bazar, Morigaon Syndicate, Lakhinagar Chariali and Senchowa in Nagaon and at Chariali and Rajagaon (2 places) in Morigaon. At two places, once each near a Greater Adjutant nesting colony of Nagaon

and Morigaon, villagers, including elders, women and children were offering traditional afternoon prayers (*Naam*) at the *Naamghar* (prayer hall) and promised to ensure conservation of the bird by all means. At another location, it was the turn of teams and officials involved in a cricket match to be inspired during the innings break. The success of the initiative can be measured by the number of people who not only witnessed the street plays in blistering heat, but also lined up to sign the banner in support of Greater Adjutant conservation.



The play dwelt on the role of Greater Adjutants in keeping the environment clean and free from pollution. It starts off with an angry man trying to cut down a nesting tree with two frightened nestlings and a helpless mother perched on a nest at the top, alleging the birds dirtied his neighborhood. He is restrained by his wife who points out the presence of chicks but the man is determined to take the tree down, and along with it, the Greater Adjutant family. The situation is saved by the arrival of some enlightened persons who give the man a lesson about the ecological importance and global status of the Greater Adjutant and tells him to feel proud for hosting the birds on his tree. The offender is remorseful and the play ends with an appeal by all the characters to help conserve the Greater Adjutant Stork.

Dr. Rathin Barman of Wildlife Trust of India & Director of the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation, Kaziranga, Purnima Devi Barman, Ajoy Kr. Das and Madhumita Borthakur of Aaranyak and Hemanta Sharma, Ranjan Barthakur, Bhagwati Prasad Jhavar, Dulu Bora, Debajit Kalita, Rana Paul, Sosida Nanda Bordoloi, Rosee Devi Phukan and Raj Phukan of Green Guard Nature Organization were among those who attended and organized the event.

**Categories:**

- [Social](#)

- See more at: <http://www.assamtimes.org/node/8418#sthash.reun6wt9.dpuf>

Newsclip7 Published in Assam Tribune

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may3113/state06>

[Campaign for conservation of greater adjutants](#)

Staff Reporter

GUWAHATI, May 30 – Aaranyak, in collaboration with Green Guard Nature Organisation, an NGO based in Nagaon, held a daylong awareness campaign recently to boost the conservation prospects of the greater adjutant stork, a globally endangered bird. The global population of this bird is about 1,000, and significantly, Assam harbours some 800 birds at a few locations in the State.

Adhikar, a street play written by Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak, was staged by local artistes from Nagaon at eight different public places in Nagaon and Morigaon districts. The play highlighted the ecological importance of the greater adjutant and the importance of its conservation in a drama form to draw the attention of the public. The drama starts with an emotional sequence of two chicks of the greater adjutant in a nesting tree crying when a man tries to cut their nesting tree.

“Lack of proper nesting tree is one of the major reasons behind the dwindling population of the endangered species in this region,” said Purnima, who is heading Aaranyak’s ‘Greater Adjutant Conservation Programme.’

Raj Phukan, secretary general of Green Guard Nature Organisation, said that such collaborations make a big difference in conservation of the endangered species. Nagaon and Morigaon districts support a sizable population of the bird and awareness drives in these two districts will have a bearing on the future conservation efforts, he added.

Aaranyak has been working for conservation of this globally endangered species since 2009 in Kamrup district. Kamrup supports over 50 per cent of its population in Assam. The greater adjutant is protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and any person who disturbs or kills the bird may attract legal action under this act. “Any person who comes across such activities of killing or injuring this bird, cutting nesting trees or disturbing these birds in their habitat should inform the local Forest office or police station immediately,” said Ajoy Kumar Das, a lawyer who actively participated in the awareness programme.

Madhumita Barthakur of Aaranyak, who also participated in the event, said the local people were overwhelmed with their feeling for the bird and appreciated the street play. Conservation activists Ranjan Barthakur of Nagaon and Debojit Kalita of Morigaon participated in the programme and said, “The efforts to highlight the conservation problem of this bird through street plays in the nesting colony areas will make it easy for the common people to understand the problems faced by the bird. This will definitely make people think twice before cutting any nesting tree of this bird in future.”

Newsclip 8 Published in Assam Time  
<http://www.assamtimes.org/node/7853>

Assam biologist undertakes training in Cambodia on Greater Adjutant Stork conservation  
Submitted by [AT News](#) on Mon, 28/01/2013 - 18:28



Aaranyak's wildlife biologist, Purnima Devi Barman who has been working continuously on conservation of Greater Adjutant Stork species has completed an international field training in a remote forest area on Cambodia on nesting monitoring and biology of Greater Adjutant Stork. Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP), UK, offered the training to her under and provided a scholarship for it. Ms Barman also works as a part-time Lecturer in Handique Girls' College, Guwahati.

Greater Adjutant stork is an endangered bird whose global population is less than 1000 and almost 80% of its population is distributed in Assam.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Cambodia hosted this training for her. During this training period she worked extensively in forest with rangers of Cambodia Forest and WCS team, Cambodia. She was the only participant in the training. She worked in Prek Toal Bird sanctuary which is situated on Tonle Sap lake, the largest freshwater lake in South east Asia. Many Cambodian people are dependent on this lake's bio-resource for their surviving.

It is worth mentioning that global distribution of Greater adjutant stork, the rarest of the 20 species of storks available are confined to a few isolated pockets in Brahmaputra valley of Assam, Bihar in India and Cambodia. In Assam this bird mainly nests in private areas and conservation is mainly dependent on the efforts of the community. For last several years, Purnima has been working extensively for protection of this bird species that is mentioned the IUCN Red list. 146 pairs of Greater adjutants were recorded last year by WCS team in Cambodia whereas in Assam around 750-800 birds are recorded.

Purnima who received Future Conservationist award 2009 from Conservation Leadership Programme, UK, has been extensively working in Dadara and Pacharia villages, 12kms away from Guwahati, where Greater Adjutant Storks breed in tree-top colonies located on private land. There are about 128 nests recorded this year in the area during a survey lead by her. Many education and awareness programmes have been facilitated by her team in the area to make villagers aware about the need for conservation of the species. The villages in Dadara and Pacharia now take pride in the presence of this bird in their backyard.

The villagers have become so attached to the bird species emotionally that they have even built a statue of the bird in the campus of Sankardev Sisu Niketan at Dadara and regularly perform prayer for the conservation of this bird.

According to Purnima, the major difference in the conservation story of Greater Adjutant Stork in Cambodia and Assam is that in Cambodia the bird breeds and roosts in

deep forest not in private lands as is the case Assam. Habitat destruction, cutting down of trees, hunting etc. are major problem in Assam where as a poaching for meat, egg collection done by fringe villagers are the problem there in Cambodia in respect of conservation of the endangered bird species.

Prek Toal is a flooded forest on the Tonle sap lake and villagers lives 28kms away from his forest in three floating villages. Villagers are extensively dependent on the lake and the forest for livelihood. It is noteworthy Ministry of environment and Forest in Cambodia has declared this area as Biosphere Reserve to help the communities and to reduce the pressure on forest resources. The MoEF in collaboration with the WCS selected some egg collectors from the village and transformed them into rangers by providing continuous education and training to them. They are now dedicated conservationist. Purnima spent all the time during the training period with these Rangers who helped her a lot.

There are 28 numbers of bird monitoring platforms in the forest area of Prek Toal, Cambodia and Purnima visited many of them for monitoring purpose. These platforms are located on tree tops at about 30-40 feet height from the ground that makes those look like tall 'machan'.

- See more at: <http://www.assamtimes.org/node/7853#sthash.hEyL7b5Y.dpuf>

### **Newsclip9 Published in AssamTribune**

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=mar2513/city07>

[Hand-raised young storks released in the wild](#)

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24 – Community conservation of the endangered greater adjutant stork at Dadara on the city outskirts received a boost with the release of four young storks, i.e., Monalisa, Rima, Lulu and Saru, in the village on Friday.

The birds were rescued and hand-raised after accidental falls from their nests. While Monalisa, Rima and Lulu were rescued and hand-raised under the Kokrajhar Rescue Centre of Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), Saru was rescued and treated by the people of Dadara.

The Kamrup district administration and the police also pledged their commitment to the conservation endeavour, with the Kamrup Superintendent of Police Partha Sarathi Mahanta formally releasing the birds.

Assam is the largest nesting ground for the greater adjutant stork, with only about 1,000-1,200 mature individuals remaining as per IUCN Red List estimates.

“The Brahmaputra floodplain is the main stronghold for the greater adjutants. The nesting sites are scattered here, but Dadara has more than 100 nesting trees, which makes it perhaps the biggest nesting site in the country and maybe in the world,” Dr Rathin Barman of WTI said.

Mahanta, while lauding the villagers for their exemplary initiative, assured them of all possible cooperation in the endeavour. “I appreciate the local villagers and NGOs for their commendable efforts for wildlife conservation. I feel all concerned – NGOs, researchers and government officials – should join hands to give further boost to conservation,” Mahanta said.

Loss of nesting trees remains one of the biggest threats to the greater adjutant stork. They are also threatened by the high incidence of chicks falling off the nests – generally a fallout of overcrowding.

Supported by the Charities Aid Foundation, WTI provided the grant to Paresh Das, headmaster of Sankardev Sishu Niketan, Dadara, who had proposed the RAP to save chicks falling off their nests under the guidance of Purnima Devi Barman, coordinator, Greater Adjutant Conservation programme, Aaranyak, who has been extensively working for conservation of the adjutant stork in Dadara since 2009.

“Nets were placed under the nesting trees to cushion the accidental falls of the chicks. Once rescued, they were transported to IFAW-WTI-run Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC) Transit Home in Kokrajhar for hand-raising,” Paresh Das said.

Das revealed that over 40 storks – mostly chicks and juveniles — die annually in Dadara after falling off their nests. “With the support of local NGOs and medical attention provided by IFAW-WTI, this year we have been successful in saving a good number of them,” Das, who is also involving his students in the community conservation, said. “An identification mark has been engraved on the released birds. Post-release monitoring will be carried out for next three months. We will help in monitoring the birds,” Purnima said.

Purnima, who has done greater adjutant survey in Assam and Cambodia, said that Dadara had the world’s largest concentration of the bird.

Scientists from Wildlife Conservation Society, Cambodia, which is working on the greater adjutant stork population in Cambodia, have joined hands with Purnima to publish a detailed scientific paper on the bird.

IFAW-WTI veterinarian Dr Panjit Basumatary, who looked after the birds, revealed that the released chicks weighed 9, 10 and 12 kgs respectively and were healthy during release. “They immediately flew off following the release and landed on the fields and started browsing,” he added. The programme was organised by Sankardev Sishu Niketan, Dadara, with support from Aaranyak.

### **NewClip10 Oublished in Assam Tribune**

Endangered Greater Adjutant stork released



Three endangered Greater Adjutant stork juveniles namely Monalisa, Rima and Lulu were released on March 22 at Dadara, about 12 kms off Guwahati by Kamrup SP Partha Sarathi Mahanta. After the release programme one more chick Saru was released by villagers in Dadara who rescued it and hand raised for two days in the village itself. The three birds fallen from their nests in Dadara – world’s biggest nesting site for the species, were rescued and hand-raised under Kokrajhar Rescue Center, WTI. Assam is the largest nesting ground for this bird, of which only about 1000-1200 mature individuals remain as per IUCN Red List estimates.

“I highly appreciate the local villagers and NGOs for doing such commendable effort for wildlife conservation. Attending such events rejuvenated my mind and I appeal every official to help such NGOs, Researchers to strengthen their work “ said Mr. Mahanta .

“The Brahmaputra floodplain is the main stronghold for the Greater adjutants. The nesting sites are scattered here, but Dadara has more than 100 nesting trees, which makes it perhaps the biggest nesting site in the country and maybe in the world,” said Dr Rathin Barman of WTI.

Loss of nesting trees remain one of the major threats to these storks. They are also threatened by chicks falling off the nests, the intensity of which increases with over-crowding.

Supported by the Charities Aid Foundation, WTI provided the grant to Paresh Das, a local school headmaster, who had proposed the RAP to save chicks fallen off their nests under the guidance of Purnima Devi Barman, Coordinator , Greater Adjutant Conservation programme , Aaranyak who is extensively working for conservation of Adjutant Stork in Dadara since 2009.

“ Nets were placed under nesting trees to break the fall of the chicks. Once rescued, they were transported to IFAW-WTI run CWRC (Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation) Transit Home in Kokrajhar for hand-raising”. Said a local youth Diapk. “More than 40storks die annually in Dadara, mostly juvenile that have fallen off their nests. With the support of local NGOs and medical attention provided by IFAW-WTI, this year we are successful in saving a good number of them,” said Das, who is also involving his students to not just help him with the project, but also to spread awareness among them.

“An identification mark has been engraved on the released birds. Post-release monitoring will be carried out for next three month. We will help in monitoring the birds” said Research Scholar – Purnima. Purnima who has done Greater Adjutant Survey in Assam and Cambodia last month said that Dadara has the largest number of world’s population which she will be publishing through a scientific paper very soon. Scientists from Willdlife conservation society, Cambodia who is working on Greater Adjutant stork population in Cambodia has joined hands with Purnima to write this scientific publicatioion.

IFAW-WTI veterinarian Dr Panjit Basumatary who looked after the birds, said, “The released chicks weigh 9, 10 and 12 kgs respectively and were healthy during release. They immediately flew off following the release and landed on the fields and started browsing.”

The programme was organized by Purnima Devi Barman, Aaranyak and Paresh Das from Sankardev sishu Niketan, Dadara.

- See more at: <http://www.assamtimes.org/node/8074#sthash.1BWzgqzZ.dpuf>

### **Newsclip11 Published in Assamtimes**

**<http://www.assamtimes.org/node/8074>**



**Arshiya after its release in the Boragaon area of Guwahati on Wednesday. Picture courtesy of Aaranyak**

**Guwahati, Nov. 20:** A rescued sub-adult greater adjutant stork (*hargila* in Assamese) was today named after a young conservationist, Class IX student Arshiya Mahanta, and released in the Boragaon area on the outskirts of the city.

The move was aimed at inspiring the next generation to get involved in conservation. As her namesake spread its wings, Arshiya, who studies in Sarala Birla Gyanjyoti School here, was understandably happy. “I feel honoured and I will keep working for the conservation of this bird,” she said

The greater adjutant stork is, currently, the most endangered stork in the world. Arshiya (the bird) was found in Dadara village near Guwahati on November 5 from where it was rescued by villagers and a group of conservationists comprising Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak, Parag Deuri of Bombay Natural History Society and Samsul Ali of College of Veterinary Science, Khanapara.

After many days of treatment at Assam state zoo, the bird was released today by the zoo’s divisional forest officer C. Bora in the presence of local villagers of Dadara and other conservationists.

Boragaon is a popular feeding habitat of this bird. After it was released, Arshiya joined a group of about hundred storks feeding at the Boragaon dumping ground. Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak, who played a key role in the bird’s rescue, rehabilitation and release, said the stork was named after Arshiya because of the girl’s dedication and passion for conservation of wildlife. “We appeal to all fellow nature lovers and the forest department to take the community into confidence and help to negate the extinction threat of this bird,” she said.

The IUCN Red List for Threatened Species (2013) says the recent breeding failures in Assam, the species’ stronghold, provides cause for concern and suggests the need for close monitoring.

[http://www.telegraphindia.com/1131121/jsp/northeast/story\\_17594732.jsp#.VCQSwPmSyRY](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1131121/jsp/northeast/story_17594732.jsp#.VCQSwPmSyRY)

**Newsclip12 Published in Shillongtimes, Meghalaya**

<http://www.theshillongtimes.com/2014/02/18/aaranyak-rehabilitates-13th-injured-stork-chick/>**Aaranyak rehabilitates 13th injured stork chick**

**AGENCIES | TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH, 2014**

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GUWAHATI: Four-month-old Boom is back where it should be, in the lap of nature with its brethren, after undergoing treatment for a fractured leg since January 20 when it fell off from a tall nesting tree at Dadara village in Kamrup district of Assam.

It happened to be 13th such chick of endangered Greater Adjutant Stork (GAS) which have been rescued and rehabilitated by the team of Aaranyak, a bio-diversity

conservation organisation, that runs a GAS conservation project in Dadara and Pacharia villages in Kamrup district of Assam.

Thanks to the expert care of the vets, M L Smith and Panchami Sarma, in Assam State Zoo veterinary hospital, Boom could be on its feet once again after that grave fall. The rehabilitated chick of the endangered Greater Adjutant Stork (GAS) has been released to the nature at Boragaon area at the outskirts of Guwahati city where there are a number of resident GASs.

It was released back to the nature by a Class VII student, Chandril Mahanta, of Sarla Birla Gyanjyoti Academy here.

The GAS chick was from Dadra village where one of the rare nesting colonies of the globally endangered bird exists.

Aaranyak's biologist in-charge of the stork conservation project, Purnima Devi Barman said rehabilitation of the gravely injured chick would not have been possible if not for the cooperation from veterinary doctors in Assam State Zoo and the police administration of Kamrup district especially Superintendent of Police Partha Sarathi Mahanta who was posted there till last month.

The senior police officer along with his wife Indrani Barua, the incumbent SP of the district, was there during the release of the rehabilitated chick and promised continued support to the GAS conservation project of Aaranyak.

"It is amazing to see how Purnima Dev Barman of Aaranyak has elicited support from the entire village community towards the GAS conservation project. It is moving and my support will be always there for the greater cause," Mahanta said.

Purnima said it was the 13th rehabilitated GAS chick to be released back to the nature after proper medical attention. She said since Adjutant storks set up nests on the top of very tall trees, occasionally chicks fall down to ground and get seriously injured.

The global distribution of adjutant stork, the rarest of the 20 species of storks, is confined to a few isolated pockets in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam, Bihar and Cambodia. In Assam, the bird mainly nests in private areas and conservation is mainly dependent on the efforts of the community. The global population of the species is only about 1,000, out of which about 80 per cent have been recorded in Assam.

For the last several years, Purnima has been working extensively to protect the bird that is mentioned on the IUCN red list. Around 750-800 storks have been recorded in Assam – the highest concentration in the world.

Purnima received the Future Conservationist Award 2009 from the Conservation Leadership Programme, UK, for working extensively in Dadara and Pacharia villages, 12 km from Guwahati.

About 148 nests were recorded in the area in a survey led by her.

Read more at <http://www.theshillongtimes.com/2014/02/18/aaranyak-rehabilitates-13th-injured-stork-chick/#jUTRcW4RwZkUa1Wz.99>

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=feb2314/city06>

**Newclip 13 Published in Assam tribune**

[Stork chick rehabilitated](#)

Staff Reporter

GUWAHATI, Feb 22 – A four-month-old greater adjutant stork, fondly named Boom, was successfully reintroduced to the colony of greater adjutant stork at Boragaon near Deepor Beel recently.

The rehabilitation exercise was taken under the initiative of Aaranyak, a conservation NGO, while the zoo and police authorities took active part in it.

The bird underwent treatment for a fractured leg for about three weeks since January 20 after it fell off a tall nesting tree at Dadara village in Kamrup district.

Sachin Ranade and Dr Parag Deuri of Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and Dr Samshul Ali of College of Veterinary Science put a ring on the bird (code PD) for future monitoring.

It is the 13th such greater adjutant stork chick which have been rescued and rehabilitated. The Aaranyak team thanked the zoo vets ML Smith and Panchami Sarma, for their help in treating the chick, and Partha Sarathi Mahanta, Superintendent of Police, for assisting the rehab exercise.

The injured chick was from Dadara village which hosts perhaps the biggest concentration of the endangered greater adjutant stork.

The global distribution of adjutant stork, the rarest of the 20 species of storks, is confined to a few isolated pockets in the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam, Bihar and in Cambodia. In Assam, the bird mainly nests in private areas and conservation is mainly dependent on community effort. The global population of the species is just about 1,000, of which some 80 per cent are in Assam.

**Newsclip 14 Published in The Tribune, Chandigarh, In dia**

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/2014/20140112/kal.htm#2>

### **GOOD NEWS**

#### **Standing as tall as the great stork**

**Despite challenges, Purnima Devi Barman has succeeded in her efforts to conserve the endangered Greater Adjutant Stork in the Brahmaputra valley.**

**By Bijay Sankar Bora**

AN MSc in zoology from Gauhati University in Assam, Purnima Devi Barman has made long strides in the domain of wildlife conservation, considered a male bastion. As a biologist of Aaranyak, a premier conservation organisation and a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in the Northeast, Purnima has become a global figure in respect of conservation of the rare Greater Adjutant Stork species. Her innovative way of facilitating conservation of the bird involving village residents of Dadara and Pacharia in Kamrup district of Assam has earned her tremendous support. The village residents are impressed with her commitment and dedication.



**Purnima Devi Barman out in the field.**

Thirty-something, Purnima is a mother to two daughters who constantly need her attention as her conservationist-husband mostly remains out of town. But it doesn't come in the way of her determination to work for the protection of the endangered stork in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam, especially in a nesting colony of the bird at Dadara village in Kamrup district of Assam.

The global distribution of adjutant stork, the rarest of the 20 species of storks, is confined to a few isolated pockets in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam, Bihar and Cambodia. In Assam, the bird mainly nests in private areas and conservation is mainly dependent on the efforts of the community. The global population of the species is only about 1,000, out of which about 80 per cent have been recorded in Assam.

### **Rising numbers**

For the last several years, Purnima has been working extensively to protect the bird that is mentioned on the IUCN red list. Around 750-800 storks have been recorded in Assam - the highest concentration in the world.

Purnima received the Future Conservationist Award 2009 from the Conservation Leadership Programme, UK, for working extensively in Dadara and Pacharia vil lages, 12 km from Guwahati, where the stork breeds in treetop colonies located on private land. About 148 nests were recorded this year in the area in a survey led by her.

The villages now take pride in the presence of the bird in their backyard. The villagers are so attached to the bird that they have built a statue of the stork on the campus of Sankardev Sisu Niketan at Dadara and regularly perform prayers for the conservation of the bird.

### **Cambodia model**

Purnima recently completed international field training in a remote forest area in Cambodia on nesting monitoring and biology of the stork. The Conservation Leadership Programme offered her the training and also provided a scholarship for it.

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Cambodia, hosted the training programme. During this period, she worked in forest with forest rangers and the WCS team. She worked at the Prek Toal Bird Sanctuary, situated on Tonle Sap Lake, the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia.

"The major difference in the conservation story of the Greater Adjutant Stork in Cambodia and Assam is that in Cambodia the bird breeds and roosts in deep forest and not in private lands, as in Assam. Habitat destruction, felling of trees, hunting, etc. are major problems in Assam whereas poaching for meat and egg collection by fringe villagers are the problems in Cambodia," Purnima says.

"Prek Toal is a flooded forest on the Tonle Sap Lake and villagers live 28 km from this forest in three floating villages. Villagers are dependent on the lake and the forest for livelihood. The ministry of environment and forest in Cambodia has declared this area as a biosphere reserve to help the communities and reduce the pressure on forest resources. The ministry in collaboration with the WCS selected some egg collectors from the village



**A Greater Adjutant Stork with its chick at the Dadara nesting colony in Assam.**

and transformed them into rangers by providing continuous education and training to them. They are now dedicated conservationists," she says.

There are 28 bird monitoring platforms in the forest area of Prek Toal and she visited many of them for monitoring purpose. These platforms are located on treetops at a height of about 30-40 ft height and look like 'machan'. The experience in Cambodia has inspired Purnima to construct a 70-ft 'machan' in her key project site at Dadara village to facilitate better conservation efforts.

### **Change of heart**

The going was not easy as she faced resistance. "I started conservation work in the thickly populated village of Dadara, where over 80 nests were recorded in 2009. During a survey in 2009, I found that some locals did not hesitate to disturb the bird at its nesting site. A few locals even cut nesting trees to get rid of 'this dirty bird' from their campus. But today, the same people have successfully protected the nesting site, gathered scientific data and rescued chicks that fall from nests. They now celebrate when rescued chicks are successfully rehabilitated," she says.

The community in Dadara is now a role model for community conservation. It could be achieved through sustained awareness and motivation campaigns.

### **Newsclip15 Published in The Hindu**

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/endangered-greater-adjutant-stork-finds-secure-home-to-breed/article5414093.ece>

[Endangered Greater Adjutant Stork finds secure home to breed](#)

2



**AP**In this June 5, 2012 photo, a Greater Adjutant Stork flies by its fellow birds near Deepor Beel Wildlife Sanctuary, on the outskirts of Gauhati in Assam.

**SLIDESHOW**



[Photo File: Stork realities](#)

## TOPICS

### **News Clip16 Environmental ISSUES**

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Greater Adjutant Stork, the world's most endangered of the stork species, has found a secure home to breed in two nondescript villages of Assam's Kamrup district, heralding a new chapter in its conservation.

A campaign was launched four years ago at Dadara and Pacharia villages, home to nearly 50 per cent of the bird's global population, to save the birds which were approaching the red zone in the conservation scale by 'Aaranyak', a wildlife conservation organisation. Earlier, widely distributed throughout northern and eastern India and many countries of south and south-east Asia, the Greater Adjutant Stork is currently distributed only in Assam and Bihar in India and a few other locations in Cambodia.

The Brahmaputra Valley in Assam is considered the last stronghold of the endangered stork, locally called 'Hargila', and harbours more than 80 per cent of the global population of the species.

"The irony is that many traditional nesting colonies of this bird have disappeared in the last few decades and now there are only a few nesting colonies left in Assam," said Wildlife Biologist Purnima Devi Barman, who is spearheading the campaign.

The main problem of conservation of this bird is that "it breeds in privately-owned nesting trees in colonies and their future depends on the willingness and support of these tree-owners," she said.

Initially, when the campaign was started in 2009 "we found that many people having the nesting colonies in their houses cut the trees to get rid of this bird which feed on carcasses and live vertebrates as they made their campus dirty," Ms. Barman said.

Ms. Barman said some villagers did not hesitate to chase away the birds and hitting them with stones when they started nesting in the villages while tree-owners complained that they have to invest a lot of time in cleaning the campus which the birds dirty as they fear it may spread diseases.

Continuous awareness programmes have led to a remarkable change in the mindset of the people and in the last four years they have not cut a single nesting tree, she said.

A conservation team has been constituted in the two villages who have been trained to conserve these species.

"Some members of the team also include a few youths who were earlier engaged in hitting the birds but these youths are now monitoring every household for studying and protecting the birds," she added.

The team conducts street plays at the villages to spread awareness, gather data, rescue birds, celebrate the rehabilitation of these birds and villagers have even gone to the extent of weaving stork motifs in the traditional Assamese 'gamocha' (hand-towel).

"It is, therefore, important to take necessary steps to protect the birds during the breeding season from August to April. Besides, there is another danger of the chicks falling from the trees which are about 70 ft tall," she pointed out.

The team has constructed a 75-foot-tall bamboo platform to keep a close watch on the breeding of the birds and the development of the chicks.

Relentless awareness campaigns have borne fruit and these two villages now have the largest colony of nesting storks with more than 140 nests and they have earned the sobriquet of being called the stork villages, she said.

Barman said that she was working with the communities with the help of Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP) and Mohammad Bin Zayed Species Conservation but it "was high time the government came forward to support us with facilities necessary to rescue and rehabilitate these birds".

Keywords: [Greater Adjutant Stork](#), [stork conservation](#), [endangered species](#), [Aaranyak](#), [conservation scale](#), [Hargila](#)

**Newsclip18 Published in Zee news**

[http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/endangered-greater-adjutant-stork-finds-secure-home-to-breed\\_893759.html](http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/endangered-greater-adjutant-stork-finds-secure-home-to-breed_893759.html)

Endangered Greater Adjutant Stork finds secure home to breed

Last Updated: Monday, December 2, 2013 - 13:30

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Dadara: Greater Adjutant Stork, the world's most endangered stork species, has found a secure home to breed in two nondescript villages of Assam's Kamrup district, heralding a new chapter in its conservation.

A campaign was launched four years ago at Dadara and Pacharia villages, home to nearly 50 per cent of the bird's global population, to save the birds which were approaching the red zone in the conservation scale by 'Aaranyak', a [wildlife conservation](#) organisation. Earlier, widely distributed throughout northern and eastern India and many countries of south and south-east Asia, the Greater Adjutant Stork is currently distributed only in Assam and Bihar in India and a few other locations in Cambodia.

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The tree-owners often complain that they have to invest a lot of time in cleaning the campus which the birds make dirty.

Continuous awareness programmes have led to a remarkable change in the mindset of the people and in the last four years they have not cut a single nesting tree, she said.

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"Some members of the team also include a few youths who were earlier engaged in hitting the birds but they are now monitoring every household for studying and protecting the birds," she added.

The team conducts street plays at the villages to spread awareness, gather data, rescue birds, celebrate the rehabilitation of these birds and villagers have even gone to the extent of weaving stork motifs in the traditional Assamese `gamocha` (hand-towel).

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Barman said that she was working with the communities with the help of Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP) and Mohammad Bin Zayed Species Conservation, but it is high time the government should come forward to support them with facilities necessary to rescue and rehabilitate these birds.

PTI

### **Newclip19 Published in CN TV China**

<http://english.cntv.cn/program/asiatoday/20111102/107624.shtml>

Efforts to save Greater Adjutant Stork birds in India

11-02-2011 11:05 BJT

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## Watch Video



Greater Adjutant Stork birds in the eastern Indian state of Assam are now in danger of becoming extinct.

In light of this, biologists are making villagers aware of the importance of the birds and are optimistic that their number could increase in the near future. Efforts are being made by the local population to protect the endangered birds.

Biologists have visited the Kamrup district of Assam and tried to educate the locals to protect Greater Adjutant Stork birds. They explained to them that it was inappropriate to cut the trees where these birds made nests.

Purnima Devi Barma is one of these biologists. She says locals consider the bird unclean because it is a carnivore, feeding mainly on garbage and offal. It took a lot of tutoring to explain it to the villagers about the value of these endangered birds. As a result, some villagers have welcomed these birds and don't really mind their grimy nests in their premises.

Purnima Devi Barma said, "The nests of these birds are near villages, in the non-protected areas and on people's private property. So, the problem is that people think it's a non-hygienic bird and that stands in the way of conservation. Our role here is to explain that they should treat these birds like their children as they only visit this place for six months."

Barma says the local administration provided them with all kinds of assistance.



*Greater Adjutant Stork birds (File photo)*

Purnima Devi Barma said, "The government should take steps, and even NGOs like us and institutions can help the government. We all should sit down and come out with a conservation action plan. We should discuss what could be done practically. I am sure it will help conservation and the population of the bird would increase."

The global population of the Greater Adjutant stork is likely to be around 900-1,000, with the Brahmaputra region alone home to about 700 of them. It is listed as an endangered bird on the International Union for Conservation of Nature red list of threatened species. Hopefully with protection from humans, their number will increase in the near future.



*Greater Adjutant Stork bird (File photo)*

**Editor:**Liu Fang |**Source:** CNTV.CN

**Newsclip 21 Published in Aamar Asom**

# ক্ৰিষ্টিনা দললৈ উভতিল

■ অতুল কুমাৰ বৰ্মন

গুৱাহাটীৰ এখন চিকিৎসালয়ত দীৰ্ঘদিন ধৰি চিকিৎসাধীন হৈ থকা 'ক্ৰিষ্টিনা' সুস্থ হৈ উঠিছে। শনিবাৰে ডাঃ স্মিথে চিকিৎসালয়ৰ পৰা যাবলৈ দিয়াৰ পিছত ৰাজ্য চৰকাৰৰ প্ৰতিনিধিৰ উপস্থিতিত ক্ৰিষ্টিনাক দললৈ যাবলৈ দিয়া হয়। বহুসংখ্যক অনুগতৰ উপস্থিতিত ক্ৰিষ্টিনা দলীয় সতীৰ্থসকলৰ মাজত মিলিত হয়। ক্ৰিষ্টিনা পুনৰ দলৰ মাজলৈ অহাত উৎফুল্ল হৈছে অনুগতসকল। দললৈ উভতি যোৱা ক্ৰিষ্টিনাক আপুনি চিনি পায়নে? নোপোৱাৰে কথা। কিয়নো ক্ৰিষ্টিনা কোনো খেলুৱৈ কিম্বা ৰাজনৈতিক দলৰ সদস্য *চ পৃষ্ঠাত*

Newsclip 22 Published in The telegraph

[http://www.telegraphindia.com/1121001/jsp/northeast/story\\_16037939.jsp#.VCT7KpMsyRY](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1121001/jsp/northeast/story_16037939.jsp#.VCT7KpMsyRY)



**The Telegraph**  
calcutta, india

## Stork numbers rise after campaign

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT



Good work

**Sept. 30:** A spurt in awareness drives by conservation organisations has led to a substantial rise in the number of greater adjutant storks, popularly called *hargillas*, in the city.

The greater adjutant stork population was 288 in 2002, 207 in 2003, 233 in 2004, 247 in 2005, 167 in 2006, 118 in 2007, 149 in 2008, 147 in 2009, 113 in 2010 and 127 in 2011.

A census carried out by Early Birds, an NGO, has found 258 greater adjutant storks in the city.

These numbers have given hope to conservationists.

“The population has increased this year mainly because of increased awareness drives by many conservation organisations,” Moloy Baruah, president Early Birds told **The**

### **Telegraph.**

Eleven roosting areas had been covered for the current census. The trend of more and more organisations coming forward to save the *hargilla* was a good sign, Baruah said. There are around 900-1,000 greater adjutant storks in the world. More than 750 of them are found in the Brahmaputra Valley.

According to BirdLife International, greater adjutant (*Leptoptilus dubius*) is considered the most endangered among all 20 species of storks in the world.

Baruah said another reason for the rise in numbers could be the timing of the census. “The breeding season of the stork starts from October and, hence, the birds do not come to the roosting spots (earlier). Hence, the figures are lower. We will do the census in September from next year,” he said.

The majority of nests are located on the northern bank of the Brahmaputra, particularly in areas like Mandakata, Dadara, Singimari and Suptaguri in North Guwahati.

Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak is a conservationist who has been working to save the *hargilla*. She believes the population of storks is more than the stated figure because people have become more aware.

“In places where I work, like Dadara, the population is more because of increased awareness among people,” she said.

She said people have stopped cutting the trees on which these storks make their nests.

“People now really look upon the *hargilla* with great awe and respect,” she said.

Purnima had prepared posters, in local vernacular languages, to highlight the importance of the bird and appeal for its conservation. These became very popular with the stakeholders and were freely distributed to villagers, students and other groups of the locality. The women of the colony also made a *gamosa* with a stork motif.

### **Newsclip23 Published in Assam Tribune**

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/showpage.asp?id=jul0714,7,87,600,666,1032>

## 15 species of birds found in India among 100 endangered worldwide

**SIVANSHU TIHARIK**  
GUWAHATI, July 6 - In what is a grim pointer to the alarming degradation of the natural environment, as many as 15 species of birds found in India have figured in the list of 100 Endangered (EDGE) species worldwide.

Several of these birds are known to occur in Assam. The study which was conducted by experts of Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and Yale University concludes that the birds are under threat

due to high levels of disturbance and developmental activities like mining and hydro projects executed in marginal hill in their population, said the report. Purnima Devi Barman of Assam, who has been working with local communities for conservation of the Greater Adjutant Stork, feels that community participation can go a long way in ensuring long-term survival of many bird species. "We have been successful in raising the adjacent population at Dabura by motivating and engaging the local communities. This can be replicated

elsewhere, especially in areas having vulnerable bird populations," she said. Field biologist Kalpana Lakkar said that it was a positive development with many people in Assam taking interest in EDGE species conservation, fragmentation and degradation of habitat, environmental contaminants, poaching and land use changes, particularly conversion of large areas for crop cultivation. Also, changes in migrating patterns due to various reasons, including implementation of irrigation schemes, increased pesticide usage, livestock grazing,

high levels of disturbance and developmental activities like mining and hydro projects executed in marginal hill in their population, said the report. Purnima Devi Barman of Assam, who has been working with local communities for conservation of the Greater Adjutant Stork, feels that community participation can go a long way in ensuring long-term survival of many bird species. "We have been successful in raising the adjacent population at Dabura by motivating and engaging the local communities. This can be replicated

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used by human factors such as uncontrolled urbanisation, unsustainable industrialisation and rampant use of chemicals in agriculture. ZSL experts have emphasised on the need to prioritise conservation efforts. These birds illustrate the incredible diversity that exists in the natural world. They were identified in a research paper recently published in 'Current Biology'. The EDGE birds study is a part of ZSL's 'EDGE of Extinction' programme, which has also developed priority lists for mammals, amphibians and reptiles.



mostly from unsustainable human activities on their habitats. The 15 Indian species in the ZSL-Yale University EDGE list include Bengal Florican, Forest Owlet, Red-headed Vulture, Egyptian Vulture, Jerdon's Courser, Lesser Frigatebird, Spoon-billed Sandpiper, Sociable Lapwing, Siberian Crane, Great Indian Bustard, Greater Adjutant Stork, White-bellied Heron, Wood Stork, Masked Finch and Christmas Island Frigatebird. Talking to The Assam Tribune, Sand Bahadur, director of Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), said, "I congratulate

Newsclip 24 Published in Assam tribune  
<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=nov2113/city06>

### Rescued stork released in wild Staff Reporter

GUWAHATI, Nov 20 – Marking the culmination of a successful rehabilitation, Arshiya, a sub-adult greater adjutant stork, joined a colony of her peers, juniors and seniors at Boragaon near Deepor Beel today.

Arshiya's release at a natural environment was facilitated by Aaranyak in cooperation with Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and the College of Veterinary Science, Khanapara.

Arshiya was found in an abandoned condition at Dadara village near North Guwahati. She was rescued by local villagers and a group of conservationists comprising Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak, Dr Parag Deuri of BNHS and Dr Samsul Ali of the College of Veterinary Science.

After many days of treatment at the Assam State Zoo, the bird was released back to the wild Chandan Bora, Divisional Forest Officer of Assam State Zoo in the presence of local villagers of Dadara and other conservationists.

Arshiya's rehabilitation is significant because she happens to be a member of the globally endangered population of the greater adjutant stork distributed in Assam and Bihar in India and at a few places in Cambodia.

The bird's global population is less than 1,000 and is currently facing extinction threat. "Boragaon is a popular feeding habitat of this bird. After it was released, this bird has joined a group of about a hundred of them, feeding at the Boragaon dumping ground. The bird was named after a very young school student of Sarala Birla Gyanjyoti School,

Arshiya Mahanta, for her dedication and passion for conservation of wildlife and towards motivating young generations for conservation of wildlife in Assam,” Purnima said. Bora assured that the State Zoo team was committed to cooperating in such endeavours in future.

Partha Sarathi Mahanta, Superintendent of Police of Kamrup, who is also involved in conservation of the greater adjutant stork in the district, lauded Aaranyak's efforts in ensuring a secure future of the bird.

Besides Dr ML Smith, Forest Veterinary Officer of Assam State Zoo, the rescue team doctors, Dr Parag Deuri of BNHS and Dr Samsul Ali of the College of Veterinary Science, provided initial critical care for the bird.

Aaranyak has been engaged in community conservation works across greater adjutant habitats in Assam, including at Dadara and Pacharia near Guwahati, which shelters over 50 per cent of its global population.

#### **Newsclip25 Published in Zee News**

[http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/rescued-greater-adjutant-stork-released-in-the-wild\\_891360.html](http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/rescued-greater-adjutant-stork-released-in-the-wild_891360.html)

Rescued Greater Adjutant Stork released in the wild

Last Updated: Wednesday, November 20, 2013 - 20:27

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Guwahati: A Greater Adjutant Stork, rescued and rehabilitated by locals and conservationists, was Wednesday released in the wild here.

The stork, named `Arshiya` by her rescuers, was released at [Boragaon](#) by the [Assam State Zoo](#) Divisional Forest Officer Chandan Bora at an initiative of `Aaranyak`, a conservation organisation, in cooperation with the Bombay [Natural History Society](#) (BNHS) and College of Veterinary Science, Khanapara.

"We are very proud to be a part of the bird`s rehabilitation and Assam State Zoo team is committed for such endeavour in future," Bora said after releasing the bird.

Boragaon is a popular feeding habitat of this stork.

The bird was earlier found in a marooned condition in Dadara village near Guwahati and was rescued by local villagers and a group of conservationists.

The doctors of the rescue team provided initial critical care to this bird and after its condition stabilised, it was admitted to Assam State Zoo.

The bird is a member of the globally endangered Greater Adjutant Stork family, distributed in Assam and Bihar in India and a few places in Cambodia, with its global population standing less than 1000.

The bird was named by the rescuers after a school student Arshiya Mahanta for her dedication towards conservation of wildlife.

Aaranyak`s Purnima Devi Barman, who is spearheading a conservation programme for conservation of these storks, appealed to all fellow nature lovers and forest department to help reduce the threat faced by this bird

#### **Newsclip26 Published in SikkimFirst**

## Arshiya' released back to freedom

Posted on [November 20, 2013](#) by [Sikkim First Bureau](#) in [Region](#) with 0 Comments

A sub-adult greater adjutant stork named “Arshiya” by her rescuers was today released back to the freedom of natural environment at Boragaon at the outskirts of Guwahati city at the initiatives of Aaranyak, a premier conservation organization in the region, in cooperation with Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and College of Veterinary Science, Khanapara here.

“Arshiya”(the bird) was found in marooned condition in Dadara village, near Guwahati. She was safely rescued by local villagers and a group of conservationist comprising Ms Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak, Dr Parag Deuri of Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and Dr Samsul Ali of College of Veterinary Science, Khanapara. After many days of treatment at Assam State Zoo, this bird was released back to the wild at Boragaon near Guwahati by C. Bora, Divisional Forest Officer of Assam State Zoo in presence of local villager of Dadara and other conservationists.

“Arshiya” is a precious member of globally endangered Greater Adjutant Stork clan that is distributed in Assam and Bihar in India and few places in Cambodia. The bird’s global population is less than 1000 and is currently facing extinction threat.

Boragaon is a popular feeding habitat of this bird. After it was released, this bird has joined a group of about hundred of them feeding at Boragaon dumping ground. The bird was named after a very young school student of Sarala Birla Gyanjyoti School, Ms Arshiya Mahanta for her dedication and passion for conservation of wildlife and towards motivating young generations for conservation of wildlife in Assam.

“We are very proud to be a part of her rehabilitation efforts and Assam State Zoo team is committed for such endeavours in futures”, said Chandan Bora Divisional Forest Officer of Assam State Zoo. “It is rare to see the kind of effort that Purnima and her team have been making to save the greater adjutant stork from extinction. The rescue story of “Arshiya”, the bird released today once again goes to show their sincerely, devotion and passion towards nature in general

and Greater Adjutant in particular” commented by Partha Sarathi Mahanta, Superintendent of Police of Kamrup (rural) district, who is deeply involved for conservation of Greater Adjutant Stork in Kamrup (rural) district of Assam.

“We appeal all fellow nature lovers and government forest department to take the community into confidence and help to negate the extinction threat of this bird” said Ms. Purnima Devi Barman of Aaranyak who played a key role in rescue , rehabilitation and release of this bird.

Dr. M.L. Smith, Forest Veterinary Officer of Assam State Zoo said, “Arshya was under my care and I am very happy to see her freedom again. I am deeply touch today when she flies and joined other friends”

The rescue team doctors Dr Parag Deuri of BNHS and Dr Samsul Ali of College of Veterinary Sciences provided in initial critical care for this bird and after stabilization it was admitted to Assam State Zoo for further care.

Aaranyak team lead by Ms Purnima Devi Barman is extensively working for conservation of this species since 2009 with support from Conservation Leadership Programme and Mohammad Bin Species Conservation Fund through community conservation works in various Greater Adjutant habitats in Assam and Dadara & Pacharia near Guwahati, where about more than 50 % of its global population could be seen.

- **Newsclip 27 Published in hindustan Times**

<http://paper.hindustantimes.com/epaper/viewer.aspx>

Assam: Greater Adjutant Stork released in the wild

A Greater Adjutant Stork, rescued and rehabilitated by locals and conservationists, was on Wednesday released in the wild here.

The stork, named 'Arshiya' by her rescuers, was released at Boragaon by the Assam's Zoo Divisional Forest Officer Chandan Bora at an initiative of 'Aaranyak', a conservation organisation, in cooperation with the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and College of Veterinary Science, Khanapara.

"We are very proud to be a part of the bird's rehabilitation and Assam State Zoo team is committed to carry out such endeavour in future," Bora said after releasing the bird. Boragaon is a popular feeding habitat of this stork. The bird was earlier found in a marooned condition in Dadara village near Guwahati and was rescued by a group of conservationists. The doctors of the rescue team provided initial medical care to this bird and after its condition became stable, it was admitted to Assam State Zoo.

The bird is a member of the globally endangered Greater Adjutant Stork family, distributed in Assam and Bihar in India and a few places in Cambodia, with its global population standing less than 1000. The bird was named by the rescuers after a school student Arshiya Mahanta for her dedication towards conservation of wildlife.

**NewsClip 28 Published in The Hindu**

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-in-school/rescued-stork-released-in-the-wild/article5372943.ece>



TODAY'S PAPER » IN SCHOOL

GUWAHATI, November 21, 2013

**Rescued stork released in the wild**

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A Greater Adjutant Stork, rescued and rehabilitated by locals and conservationists, was on Wednesday released in the wild here.

The stork, named 'Arshiya' by her rescuers, was released at Boragaon by the Assam State Zoo Divisional Forest Officer Chandan Bora at an initiative of 'Aaranyak', a conservation organisation, in cooperation with the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and College of Veterinary Science, Khanapara. Boragaon is a popular feeding habitat of this stork.

The bird is a member of the globally endangered Greater Adjutant Stork family, distributed in Assam and Bihar in India and a few places in Cambodia, with its global population standing less than 1000.PTI

#### **Newsclip 29 Published in Zee News**

[http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/rescued-greater-adjutant-stork-released-in-the-wild\\_891360.html](http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/rescued-greater-adjutant-stork-released-in-the-wild_891360.html)

Rescued Greater Adjutant Stork released in the wild

Last Updated: Wednesday, November 20, 2013 - 20:27

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#### SHARES

Guwahati: A Greater Adjutant Stork, rescued and rehabilitated by locals and conservationists, was Wednesday released in the wild here.

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"We are very proud to be a part of the bird's rehabilitation and Assam State Zoo team is committed for such endeavour in future," Bora said after releasing the bird.

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The doctors of the rescue team provided initial critical care to this bird and after its condition stabilised, it was admitted to Assam State Zoo.

The bird is a member of the globally endangered Greater Adjutant Stork family, distributed in Assam and Bihar in India and a few places in Cambodia, with its global population standing less than 1000.

The bird was named by the rescuers after a school student Arshiya Mahanta for her dedication towards conservation of wildlife.

Aaranyak's Purnima Devi Barman, who is spearheading a conservation programme for conservation of these storks, appealed to all fellow nature lovers and forest department to help reduce the threat faced by this bird.

PTI

**Newsclip 30 Published in Shillongtimes**

<http://www.theshillongtimes.com/2013/12/03/endangered-greater-adjutant-stork-finds-secure-home/>

**Dadara (Assam):** Greater Adjutant Stork, the world's most endangered of the stork species, has found a secure home to breed in two nondescript villages of Assam's Kamrup district, heralding a new chapter in its conservation.

A campaign was launched four years ago at Dadara and Pacharia villages, home to nearly 50 per cent of the bird's global population, to save the birds which were approaching the red zone in the conservation scale by 'Aaranyak', a wildlife conservation organisation. Earlier, widely distributed throughout northern and eastern India and many countries of south and south-east Asia, the Greater Adjutant Stork is currently distributed only in Assam and Bihar in India and a few other locations in Cambodia.

The Brahmaputra Valley in Assam is considered the last stronghold of the endangered stork, locally called 'Hargila', and harbours more than 80 per cent of the global population of the species.

"The irony is that many traditional nesting colonies of this bird have disappeared in the last few decades and now there are only a few nesting colonies left in Assam," said Wildlife Biologist Purnima Devi Barman, who is spearheading the campaign. The main problem of conservation of this bird is that "it breeds in privately-owned nesting trees in colonies and their future depends on the willingness and support of these tree-owners," she said.

Initially, when the campaign was started in 2009 "we found that many people having the nesting colonies in their houses cut the trees to get rid of this bird which feed on carcasses and live vertebrates as they made their campus dirty," Barman said.

Barman said some villagers did not hesitate to chase away the birds and hitting them with stones when they started nesting in the villages while tree-owners complained that they have to invest a lot of time in cleaning the campus which the birds dirty as they fear it may spread diseases.

Continuous awareness programmes have led to a remarkable change in the mindset of the people and in the last four years they have not cut a single nesting tree, she said. A conservation team has been constituted in the two villages who have been trained to conserve these species.

"Some members of the team also include a few youths who were earlier engaged in hitting the birds but these youths are now monitoring every household for studying and protecting the birds," she added.

The team conducts street plays at the villages to spread awareness, gather data, rescue birds, celebrate the rehabilitation of these birds and villagers have even gone to the extent of weaving stork motifs in the traditional Assamese 'gamocha' (hand-towel).

The team has constructed a 75-foot-tall bamboo platform to keep a close watch on the breeding of the birds and the development of the chicks.

Relentless awareness campaigns have borne fruit and these two villages now have the

largest colony of nesting storks with more than 140 nests and they have earned the sobriquet of being called the stork villages, she said. (PTI)  
Read more at

**Newsclip 31 Published in times of India**

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Endangered-Greater-Adjutant-Stork-finds-secure-home-to-breed/articleshow/26732067.cms>

Endangered Greater Adjutant Stork finds secure home to breed

DADARA (Assam): Greater Adjutant Stork, the world's most endangered of the stork species, has found a secure home to breed in two nondescript villages of Assam's Kamrup district, heralding a new chapter in its conservation.

A campaign was launched four years ago at Dadara and Pacharia villages, home to nearly 50 per cent of the bird's global population, to save the birds which were approaching the red zone in the conservation scale by 'Aaranyak', a wildlife conservation organisation.

Earlier, widely distributed throughout northern and eastern India and many countries of south and south-east Asia, the Greater Adjutant Stork is currently distributed only in [Assam](#) and [Bihar](#) in India and a few other locations in Cambodia.

বিশ্বত উপলব্ধ মুঠ ১২০০টা হাড়গিলাৰ অসমতে পোৱা যায় প্ৰায় ৭০০টা

## হাড়গিলাই বিশ্বখ্যাত কৰিছে কামৰূপক

গুৱাহাটী ঃ ষ্টাফ ৰিপ'ৰ্টাৰ, ১৬ জুন  
ঃ জীৱশ্ৰেষ্ঠ মানুহৰ পণ্ডসুলভ (!)  
কৰ্মকাণ্ডৰ বাবে বিশ্বত নিতৌ  
বিভিন্ন জীৱ-জন্তু বিলুপ্তিৰ মুখলৈ  
আগবাঢ়ি ব লগীয়া হৈছে।  
সোতৰশ শতিকাৰ পৰা  
বৰ্তমানলৈকে মানুহৰ বৰ্বৰতাৰ



বাবেই বিশ্ব মানচিত্ৰৰপৰা প্ৰায়  
৩৫০ বিঘ প্ৰাণী নিশ্চিন্ন হৈ  
পৰিছে। ইয়াৰে প্ৰায় ১০০ বিধেই  
তুনাপ্ৰায়ী প্ৰাণী। আনহাতে,  
পাৰিপাৰ্শ্বিক কাৰণ আৰু মানুহৰ  
নৃশংসতাৰ বাবে এতিয়া  
বিলুপ্তিপ্ৰায় অৱস্থাত দহ গিটিলৈ

এক গিটিলৈ পৰা আছে অন্য বহু  
প্ৰাণী। বিপন্ন শ্ৰেণীভুক্ত এই  
প্ৰাণীবোৰৰ ভিতৰত প্ৰায় ২০টা  
প্ৰজাতিৰ পক্ষীও আছে।  
লক্ষ্যীয়ভাৱে এই পক্ষীকুলৰ  
মাজত আছে অসমৰ জনসাধাৰণৰ  
অতিকৈ পৰিচিত হাড়গিলা। মাত্ৰ  
এটা দশকৰ আগলৈকে ৰাজ্যৰ  
য'তে-ত'তে অসংখ্য হাড়গিলা  
দেখিবলৈ পোৱা গৈছিল যদিও  
এতিয়া এই প্ৰজাতিৰ চৰাই  
দেখাটো পক্ষীপ্ৰেমীৰ বাবে দুৰ্লভ  
হৈ পৰিছে। 'প্ৰকৃতিৰ চাফাইকৰ্মী'  
নামেৰে পৰিচিত এই হাড়গিলা  
এতিয়া সমগ্ৰ বিশ্বতে আঙুলিৰ  
মুৰত হিচাপ কৰিব পৰাকৈ হ্ৰাস  
পালে। কিন্তু অসমৰ বাবে সামান্য  
আনন্দ আৰু আশাৰ বতৰা এয়ে  
যে বিশ্বত এতিয়া যিমান হাড়গিলা  
আছে তাল আগতকৈ বেছি অংশ  
(প্ৰায় ৬০%) অসমতে পোৱা যায়।  
আনহাতে, অসমত বৰ্তমান  
উপলব্ধ মুঠ হাড়গিলাৰ প্ৰায় ৬৫  
শতাংশৰে বসতিস্থল হ'ল কামৰূপ  
জিলা। যাৰ বাবে এতিয়া জিলাখন  
বিশ্ববিখ্যাত হৈ পৰিছে। বাৰ্ড  
লাইফ ইণ্টাৰনেশ্যনেল নামৰ এটা  
সংস্থাৰ শেহতীয়া জৰীপ অনুসৰি  
সম্প্ৰতি সমগ্ৰ বিশ্বত প্ৰায়  
১২০০টা হাড়গিলা আছে। পূৰ্বে  
দক্ষিণ এছিয়াত সহজলভ্য এই  
পক্ষীবিধৰ অৱশিষ্ট এতিয়া মাত্ৰ  
ভাৰতবৰ্ষ আৰু কম্বোডিয়াতহে  
বৈছেগৈ। অসমৰ বেচৰকাৰী  
সংগঠন আৰুগ্যকে নিগত ৫ বছৰে  
হাড়গিলা সংৰক্ষণৰ বাবে

অভিযান অব্যাহত ৰাখিছে।  
আৰুগ্যকৰ শেহতীয়া গণনা অনুসৰি  
কম্বোডিয়াত এতিয়া প্ৰায় ২৯২টা  
হাড়গিলা আছে। ১২০০ হাড়গিলাৰ  
বাকী অংশৰ বসতিস্থল ভাৰতবৰ্ষ।  
ভাৰতত অসমৰ বাহিৰে মাত্ৰ  
বিহাৰতহে হাড়গিলা পোৱা যায়।  
শেহতীয়া গণনা অনুসৰি বিহাৰত  
সম্প্ৰতি প্ৰায় ২০০ হাড়গিলা আছে।  
বাকী থকা প্ৰায় ৭০০ হাড়গিলাই  
অসমৰ কামৰূপ, নগাঁও, মৰিগাঁও  
আৰু শিৱসাগৰ জিলাত বংশ ৰক্ষাৰ  
সংগ্ৰাম অব্যাহত ৰাখিছে। লক্ষ্যীয়  
যে ২০০২-০৩ বৰ্ষ পৰ্যন্ত নগাঁও  
জিলা বিশ্বৰ সৰ্ববৃহৎ হাড়গিলাৰ  
বসতিস্থল আছিল। পৰ্যটকৰ  
আগমন ঘটছিল। কিন্তু মানুহৰ  
অসজাগতা আৰু বৰ্বৰতাৰ বাবে  
এতিয়া নগাঁও জিলাৰ ষ্ট্ৰিকটীয়াত  
মাত্ৰ ৩ জোপা গছত কেইটামান  
হাড়গিলাহে বাকী বৈছেগৈ।  
লক্ষ্যীয় যে হাড়গিলাই সাধাৰণতে  
কদম আৰু শিমলু গছতহে বাহ  
সাজে। অসজাগতাই হওক বা  
বনধ্বংসৰ বাবেই হওক এই গছৰ  
হ্ৰাসৰ সমাপ্ত্যলভাৱে হ্ৰাস পাবলৈ  
লৈছে হাড়গিলা। কামৰূপ জিলা  
সম্প্ৰতি বিশ্বৰ সৰ্ববৃহৎ হাড়গিলাৰ  
বসতিস্থল হিচাপে পক্ষীপ্ৰেমীৰ  
মাজত বিখ্যাত হৈ পৰিছে।  
জিলাখনৰ হুৱদা, পচৰীয়া আৰু  
শিঙি মাৰী কলনি সম্প্ৰতি  
বিশ্ববিখ্যাত হৈ পৰিছে। এই ৩টা  
স্থানৰ সম্প্ৰতি প্ৰায় ৪৫০টা  
হাড়গিলাৰ বসতিস্থল। ক্ষেত্ৰীৰ  
কাষৰ মালৈবাৰী কলনিত বাস কৰে

প্ৰায় ৩৫টা হাড়গিলা চৰাই।  
মৰিগাঁও জিলাৰ মৰিগাঁও চহৰ  
আৰু মনহাত প্ৰায় ৫০টা আৰু  
শিৱসাগৰ চহৰত প্ৰায় ১২টা  
হাড়গিলাই বাস কৰে।  
প্ৰথমখনযোগে যে কামৰূপ জিলা  
এতিয়া বিশ্বৰ সকলো পক্ষীপ্ৰেমীৰ  
বাবে পৰিচিত হৈ পৰাৰ বাবে  
সৰ্বাধিক পৰিশ্ৰম কৰিছে আৰুগ্যক  
নামৰ সংস্থাটোৱে। আৰুগ্যকৰ  
সম্পাদক প্ৰধান ড° বিজয়  
তালুকদাৰ আৰু শিক্ষকৰ্মী তথা  
সদস্য পূৰ্ণিমা দেৱী বৰ্মনৰ  
নেতৃত্বত ২০০৯ চনৰ পৰা  
জিলাখনত হাড়গিলা ৰক্ষাৰ বাবে  
সজাগতা আৰম্ভ হয়। তেওঁলোকৰ  
আশাওৰীয়া প্ৰচেষ্টাৰ বাবেই  
এতিয়া জিলাখন বিশ্ববিখ্যাত হৈ  
পৰিছে। লক্ষ্যীয় যে তেওঁলোকে  
হাড়গিলাৰ বংশৰক্ষাৰ বাবেই  
আনকি কদম আৰু শিমলু গছ  
কিনি গছ কটা বোধ কৰাৰ দৰে  
পদক্ষেপো গ্ৰহণ কৰিছে। আগতে  
হাড়গিলা দেখিলেই অমংগলৰ  
আশংকা কৰি হত্যা বা গছ কাটি  
পেলোৱা কামৰূপৰ দদৰা,  
পচৰীয়া বা শিঙি মাৰী আদি  
এলেকাৰ জনসাধাৰণে আহত  
হাড়গিলাক চিকিৎসাসেৱা দি  
জীৱন ৰক্ষাৰ চেষ্টা কৰে।  
উল্লেখযোগ্য যে পূৰ্বে প্ৰাকৃতিক  
ভাৰসাম্য ৰক্ষাৰ বাবে  
পাৰিপাৰ্শ্বিক ব্যৱস্থা চাফাইৰ  
বাবে গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা লৈছিল  
শগুনে। কিন্তু এতিয়া সেই দায়িত্ব  
হাড়গিলাই পালন কৰিছে।

স্মৃতিগ্রন্থ

কপালী জয়ন্তী বর্ষ

# দদৰা গোপালখান হৰিনাম উদ্যাপন সমিতি

৫৬৪ শঙ্কৰাব্দ

২১, ২২ কাতি, ১৪২০ ভাস্কৰাব্দ  
(৮, ৯ নবেম্বৰ ২০১৩ খ্ৰীষ্টাব্দ)



দদৰা গোপালখান

## হাড়গিলা সংৰক্ষণ, ৰাইজ আৰু কিছু অভিজ্ঞতা

পূৰ্ণিমা দেৱী বৰ্মণ

**স**মগ্ৰ বিশ্বত যি কুৰিবিধ (২০) ষ্টৰ্ক জাতীয় চৰাই পোৱা যায়, তাৰ ভিতৰত ন-বিধ ভাৰতবৰ্ষত পোৱা যায়, আৰু অকল এবিধৰ বাহিৰে বাকী আঠবিধ প্ৰজাতিয়েই অসমত পোৱা যায়। আন বিভিন্ন চৰাইৰ দৰে অসম ষ্টৰ্ক জাতীয় চৰাইৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো চহকী। তাতোকৈ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ কথাটো হ'ল, বিশ্বৰ ভিতৰতেই বিবল, বিলুপ্তপ্ৰায় হাড়গিলা অকল অসমতেই সৰহ সংখ্যক পোৱা যায়। সৰ্বাতোকৈ গৌৰৱৰ বিষয় এয়ে যে বিশ্বত যিমান হাড়গিলা আছে তাৰে ৫০ শতাংশতকৈ বেছি “হাড়গিলা” চৰাইৰ বসতি হৈছে অসমৰ কামৰূপ জিলাত আৰু কামৰূপৰ দদৰা গাঁৱত। ইয়াৰ প্ৰজননৰ মূল ঠাই অৰ্থাৎ এই হাড়গিলাবোৰে বছৰৰ সাত-আঠ মাহ কামৰূপৰ দদৰা আৰু বাকী কেইখন গাঁও যেনে শিঙিমাৰী আৰু পছৰীয়াৰ ওখ ওখ কদম, দেৱা, ইত্যাদি গছত বাহ সাজি কণী পাৰি পোৱালী জগাই পোৱালী ডাঙৰ কৰি নিজৰ বংশবৃদ্ধি কৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হয়। বিশ্বৰ এটি বিবল তথা আপুৰুগীয়া জীৱৰ বংশবৃদ্ধিত সহায় কৰিছে দদৰা, পছৰীয়া আৰু শিঙিমাৰী গাঁৱৰ বাসিন্দাসকলে, এয়া কিন্তু সঁচাকৈয়ে আমাৰ বাবে গৌৰৱৰ বিষয়। এই সুযোগতে এই গাঁও বাসীসকলক হাতযোৰ কৰি আন্তৰিক ভক্তি তথা শ্ৰদ্ধা জনাইছোঁ। হাড়গিলা গছৰ গৰাকী সকলৰ এই চৰাইটোৰ প্ৰতি থকা মৰম, চেনেহৰ বাবেই হয়তো বছৰ বছৰ ধৰি চৰাইবোৰে

ইয়াতেই বাহ সাজি আহিছে, তাক দুনাই নক'লেও হ'ব। অন্যথা এনেকৈও ক'ব পাৰি যে আমাৰ নিচিনা প্ৰকৃতি কৰ্মী, পৰিবেশ বিজ্ঞানী, পৰিবেশ গৱেষক সকলতকৈও ডাঙৰ সেৱা কৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে গাঁৱৰ হাড়গিলাৰ গছৰ গৰাকী তথা পৰিবেশ প্ৰেমী ওচৰ চুবুৰীয়া সকল।

হাড়গিলাৰ লগত বাল্যকালৰ বহুতো স্মৃতি এতিয়াও মোৰ মানসপটত জীপাল হৈ আছে। কিয়নো এসময়ত মোৰ জন্মস্থান পূব মাজিৰগাঁও জৈৱ বৈচিত্ৰ্যৰে এখন চহকী গাঁও আছিল। বিদ্যালয়লৈ খোজ কাঢ়ি গ'লে ৰাষ্টাৰ দুয়ো কাৰে থকা পথাৰত শগুণ আৰু হাড়গিলাৰ জাকেৰে প্ৰাণ পাই উঠিছিল। আমি দেখিছিলো নানাধৰণৰ চৰাইৰ জাক। আইতাক যেতিয়া সুধিছিলো চৰাইবোৰৰ নাম আইতাই কৈ গৈছিল— শামুকখোলা, তেলীয়া সাৰোং, বগলী, হাড়গিলা, বৰটোকোলা আৰু শগুণ। শগুণক আমি আটায়েই চিনি পাইছিলো। পথাৰত পৰি থকা মৰা গৰুবোৰৰ চাৰিওফালে আওৰি থকা শগুণৰ জাক হাড়গিলাৰ জাকবোৰ আমি ৰ লাগি চাই বৈছিলো। কিছুমান লগৰ বন্ধুৰে শিলগুটি মাৰি এই চৰাইবোৰক খেদিলে, মনত খুব দুখ পাইছিলো যদিও তেতিয়া এই বিষয়ত দকৈ চিন্তা কৰা নাছিলো। যেতিয়া স্নাতকোত্তৰ শাখাত ‘জৈৱ বৈচিত্ৰ্য আৰু বন্যপ্ৰাণী জীৱবিজ্ঞান’ (Ecology and Wildlife Biology) শীৰ্ষক মূল বিষয় হিচাপে বাছি

ল'লো তেতিয়া চিনাকি হ'লো অসমৰ তথা বিশ্বৰ বন্য প্ৰাণী সমূহৰ লগত আৰু ইহঁতৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তাৰ বিষয়ে। বৈজ্ঞানিক অধ্যয়নৰ দ্বাৰা জানিব পাৰিলোঁ যে আমাৰ পৰিবেশ এতিয়া মহা সংকটত— খলনায়ক আমি আৰু বিলুপ্তিৰ পথত বন্য প্ৰাণীবোৰ। চৰাইবোৰৰ লগত চিনাকি হৈ চৰাইবোৰৰ বৈজ্ঞানিক গুৰুত্ব অধ্যয়ন কৰি মনে মনে পণ ল'লো যে তাহানিৰ বাল্যকালৰ বন্ধু হাড়গিলা, শগুণবোৰৰ বিষয়ে কিবা কৰিব পাৰি নেকি? তাৰপিছতেই আৰম্ভ হ'ল মোৰ অভিযান।

২০০৯ চনৰ এটি আবেলি সোঁৱৰণ কৰিছো। যি দিনটোত সম্পূৰ্ণ এগৰাকী অচিনাকি মহিলা হিচাপে দদৰা গাঁৱত সোমাইছিলো। মনত আছিল সংকোচ, এটি প্ৰশ্ন। পাৰিমনে ৰাইজক হাড়গিলাৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তা অবগত কৰিবলৈ? তেতিয়া মই সম্পূৰ্ণ অচিনাকি, লাহে লাহে এঘৰ দুঘৰ পৰিয়ালৰ লগত পৰিচিত হ'লোঁ, জানিব পাৰিলো হাড়গিলাৰ বিষয়ে। চহৰৰ কৃত্ৰিমতাৰ লগত বন্ধুত্ব কৰি দদৰা গাঁৱৰ বাসিন্দা সকলৰ মৰম ভালপোৱাই মোৰ জীৱনত গভীৰ ভাবে প্ৰভাৱ পেলালে। ইমানবোৰ পৰিয়ালৰ প্ৰত্যেকৰে যেন ময়ো এগৰাকী সদস্যা। এনে ভাব হ'বলৈ আৰম্ভ কৰিলে। সকলোৱেই হাড়গিলাৰ বিষয়ে অবগত কৰিবলৈ সংকোচ নকৰা হ'ল। সকলোৱেই সংৰক্ষণ অভিযানত অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰিলে আৰু প্ৰকাশ কৰিলে যে আগতে হেনো এই চৰাই যে ইমান গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ আৰু বিৰল কল্পনাও কৰিব পৰা নাছিল। আৰণ্যকৰ সৌজন্যত আয়োজন কৰি গ'লো এটাৰ পিছত আন এটা সংৰক্ষণ সজাগতা অনুষ্ঠান। ইয়াত সহযোগ কৰি শঙ্কৰদেৱ শিশু নিকেতন, দদৰা। আগবাঢ়ি

আছিল ৰাইজ- যেন গঢ়ি উঠিল সজাগতাৰ এক বিপ্লৱ। সমগ্ৰ বিশ্ববাসীয়ে জানি উঠিল কিদৰে ৰাইজে হাড়গিলাৰ বংশ বৃদ্ধিত অৰিহণা যোগাইছে। ইয়াত সহযোগ কৰিলে বিভিন্ন সংবাদ মাধ্যমবোৰে। প্ৰতি মাহত হাড়গিলাৰ দুটা বা তিনিটাকৈ প্ৰকাশিত বাতৰিয়ে দদৰাক বিশ্বৰ আকৰ্ষণৰ কেন্দ্ৰ বিন্দু কৰি তুলিলে। ৰাইজে নখ জোকাৰিলে সঁচাকৈয়ে নৈ বয়। এতিয়া আহিছে হাড়গিলা চৰাইৰ দুটামান গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ বিষয় বা প্ৰশ্নলৈ।

হাড়গিলা চৰাই বিশ্বৰ ক'ত ক'ত পোৱা যায়?

আগতে দক্ষিণ পূব এচিয়াৰ বিভিন্ন দেশ যেনেকৈ মালয়েছিয়া, বাংলাদেশ, ম্যানমাৰ, নেপাল আদিত হাড়গিলা চৰাই পোৱা গৈছিল। কিন্তু, বিভিন্ন কাৰণত যেনেকৈ আবাস ভূমিৰ সংকোচন, জলাশয়ৰ অভাৱ, চিকাৰ আদি বিভিন্ন কাৰণত এই ঠাইবোৰত থকা হাড়গিলা সমূহ নাইকিয়া হৈ গ'ল। বৰ্তমান দক্ষিণ পূব এছিয়াৰ কম্বোডিয়া ৰাজ্য (প্ৰায় দুশমান) আৰু ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ বিহাৰ (প্ৰায় দুশৰ পৰা তিনিশ) আৰু অসম (প্ৰায় ছশ) ৰাজ্য হাড়গিলাৰ বাসভূমি অঞ্চল। হাড়গিলা চৰাই কিয় সংৰক্ষণ কৰিব লাগে?

বিলুপ্তিৰ ক্ষণ গণি থকা অসমৰ গৌৰৱ এই বিৰল চৰাইবিধলৈ সদৌ বিশ্ব প্ৰকৃতিপ্ৰেমীয়ে আকুলতাৰে চাই আছে। একোজন অসমবাসী হিচাপে আমাৰ প্ৰত্যেকৰে হাড়গিলাক আসন্ন বিলুপ্তিৰ গৰাহৰ পৰা ৰক্ষা কৰাটো কৰ্তব্য। নহ'লে বিশ্বৰ দৰবাৰত আমি হাঁহিয়াতৰ পাত্ৰ হ'ব লাগিব। আমাৰ পৰিবেশতন্ত্ৰত হাড়গিলাৰ এক বিশিষ্ট অবদান আছে। আমি জানো যে উদ্ভিদে সূৰ্যৰ পৰা সৌৰশক্তি আহৰণ কৰি নিজৰ খাদ্য নিজে প্ৰস্তুত কৰে।

খাদ্যৰূপে নিহিত সেই সৌৰশক্তি উদ্ভিদভোজী প্ৰাণীৰ দেহলৈ যায়। ক্ৰমাৎ সেই শক্তি সৰু মাংসাহাৰী প্ৰাণীলৈ আৰু তাৰ পিছত সেই সৰু মাংসাহাৰী প্ৰাণীবোৰক খাওতা জন্তুৰ মাংসাহাৰী প্ৰাণীলৈ স্থানান্তৰিত হয়। এনেকৈ শিকলিৰ দৰে সৌৰশক্তি উদ্ভিদৰ পৰা বিভিন্ন প্ৰাণীলৈ যায়। ইয়াকে খাদ্যশৃঙ্খল বোলা হয়। এনেকুৱা এবিধ খাদ্যশৃঙ্খলৰ একেবাৰে শীৰ্ষত অবস্থান কৰিছে হাড়গিলাই। ফলত পৰিবেশতন্ত্ৰ তাতেকৈ তলখাপৰ প্ৰাণীসমূহৰ ওপৰত হাড়গিলাই পৰোক্ষভাৱে নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ কৰে আৰু প্ৰাকৃতিক ভাৰসাম্য বক্ষা কৰাত সহায় কৰে। তাৰোপৰি শগুণৰ দৰে হাড়গিলাও এবিধ অপমৰ্জক চৰাই। গেলা পঁচা মৰাশ খাই ই আমাৰ পৰিবেশ চাফাকৈ ৰাখে। ডাঙৰ চহৰৰ আবৰ্জনা পেলোৱা ঠাই, মাছ আৰু মাংসৰ বজাৰৰ আশে পাশে, গৰু ম'হৰ চামৰাৰ কাৰখানা, আনকি সৈন্যবাহিনীৰ ছাউনীৰ কচাইখানাৰ ওচৰে পাজৰে ইহঁতে জাক পাতি খাদ্য সংগ্ৰহ কৰাৰ লগতে আমাৰো উপকাৰ সাধন কৰে। পৰিবেশ পৰিস্কাৰকাৰী এই চৰাই বিধক বিলুপ্তিৰ গৰাহৰ পৰা বক্ষা কৰাটো আমাৰ সকলোৰে নৈতিক কৰ্তব্য।

#### হাড়গিলাৰ ভাবুকি সমূহ :

ৱাইল্ডলাইফ ইন্টাৰনেশ্যনেল ২০০৯ ৰ মতে হাড়গিলাৰ সংখ্যা দিনে দিনে কমি অহাৰ প্ৰধান কাৰণ হৈছে – (১) আবাসভূমিৰ অভাৱ। অৰ্থাৎ ওখ ওখ গছৰ অভাৱ। (২) জলাশয়ৰ অভাৱ, (৩) চিকাৰ, (৪) বিষক্ৰিয়া আদি।

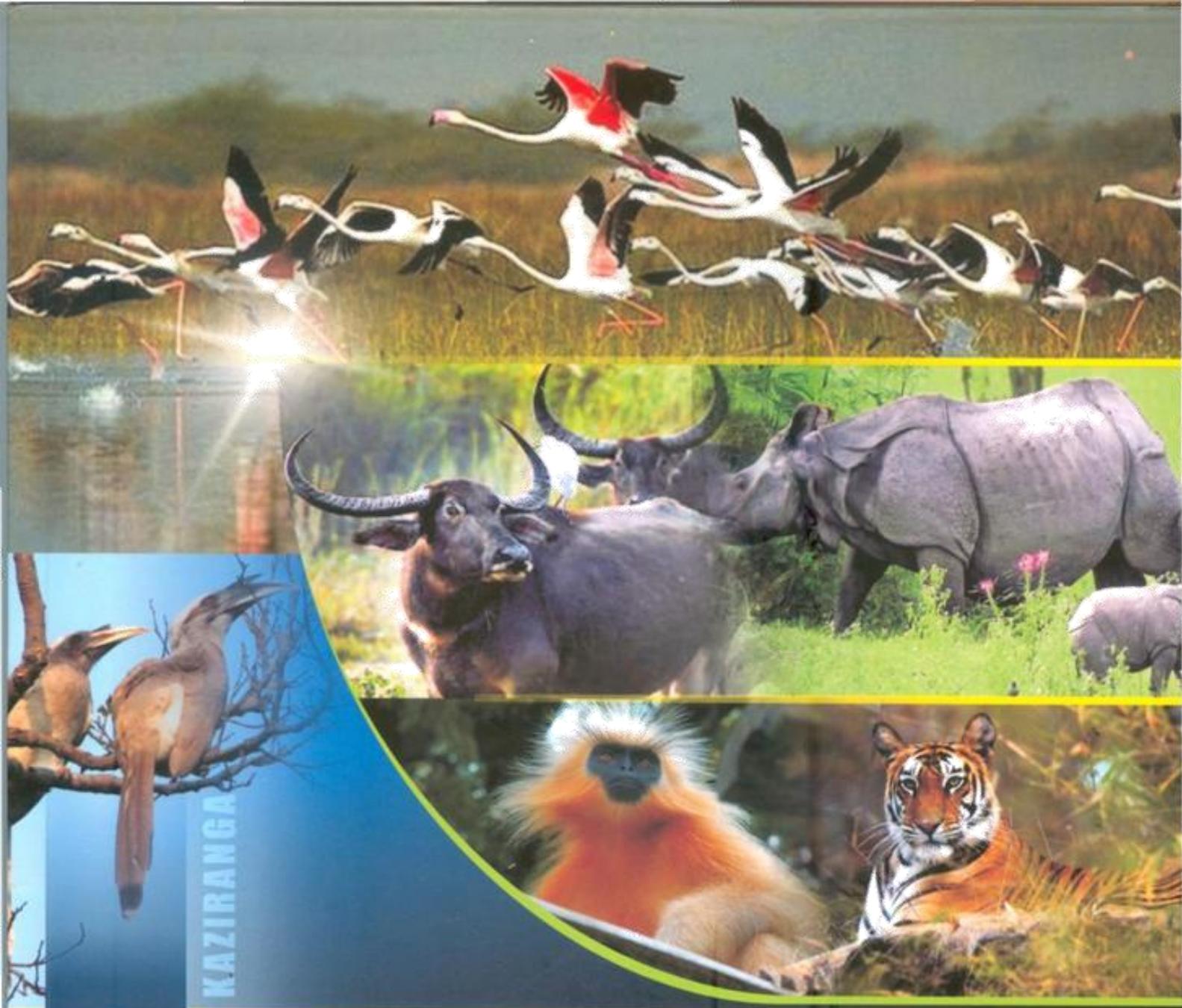
এই চৰাইটোৰ এটা বিশেষ মন কৰিবলগীয়া কথা হৈছে যে ই সাধাৰণতে বনাঞ্চলত বাহ নাসাজে যাৰ বাবে ইয়াৰ সংৰক্ষণ এক প্ৰধান সমস্যা হৈ পৰে। দেখা যায় সিহঁতে ব্যক্তিগত ঠাইত মানুহৰ ঘৰৰ বাৰীত বা চোতালত থকা ওখ ওখ

গছ যেনে— কদম, শিমলু, চতিয়ানা আদিত বাহ সাজে। এডাল গছত কেইবাটাও নহ'লে ওচৰে পাজৰে গছত বাহ সাজি পোৱালি দিয়া এই হাড়গিলাবোৰে এই গছবোৰ বছৰ বছৰ ধৰি পৰম্পৰাগত ভাবে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি আহিছে। আনহাতে এই গছবোৰ ব্যক্তিগত মালিকাধীন ভূমিত অবস্থিত হোৱা বাবে এই চৰাইৰ প্ৰজননৰ বা ইয়াৰ ভৱিষ্যত নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিব গছৰ গৰাকী সকলৰ ওপৰত।

পোৱালী জন্মৰ সময়ত হাড়গিলা চৰাইক যথেষ্ট কেলছিয়ামৰ দৰকাৰ হয় যাৰ বাবে ই এই সময়ছোৱাত জলাশয় ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰশীল। কিন্তু বৰ্তমান জলাশয় (আৰ্দ্ৰভূমি) সমূহৰ সংকোচনৰ বাবে হাড়গিলাৰ দৰে চৰাই সমূহৰ বিভিন্ন খাদ্য সমস্যাই দেখা দিছে।

#### হাড়গিলা সংৰক্ষণ কেনেকৈ কৰিম ?

হাড়গিলাই ছেপ্তেম্বৰৰ পৰা এপ্ৰিল মাহলৈকে জাকপাতি ডাঙৰ গছত বাহ সাজি পোৱালি দিয়ে। আপুনি যদিহে এনে হাড়গিলাই বাহ সজা গছৰ গৰ্বিত গৰাকী হয়, তেনেহলে প্ৰত্যেক বছৰে এই শীতৰ অতিথি সকলক আন্তৰিক ভাবে আদৰক। সিহঁতে কেনেকৈ জাকপাতি আহি পোৱালি ডাঙৰ কৰে সেইটো প্ৰত্যক্ষ কৰি বিমল আনন্দ লাভ কৰক আৰু আনকো তাৰ ভাগ ল'বলৈ দিয়ক। আপোনাৰ অতিথিসকলে বছৰৰ এই ঋতুতহে আপোনাৰ বাৰীলৈ আহে আৰু অকণমান আশ্ৰয়ৰ বাহিৰে আপোনাৰ পৰা একো নিবিচাৰে। অনুগ্ৰহ কৰি নিজৰ লগতে নিজৰ ল'ৰা ছোৱালী, নাতি-পুতি বা পৰিয়ালৰ আন সদস্যক ইয়াৰ সংৰক্ষণ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তাৰ বাবে বুজাওক। আৰু যদিহে আপুনি গছৰ গৰাকী নহয়, অথচ কোনো প্ৰতিবেশী তেতিয়াহ'লে গছৰ গৰাকীজনৰ লগত সংৰক্ষণ হাত আগবঢ়োৱাতো আপোনাৰ সমানেই কৰ্তব্য।



KAZIRANGA

# SOUVENIR

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Editor : Dr. Pritom Kumar Borthakur



Purnima Devi Barman, Wildlife Biologist



## Saving an Endangered RARE BIRD

**T**here are many wild animals in Assam which are rarer and endangered than rhino, elephant or a tiger. But very few people who know or consider these animals as important wildlife. Greater adjutants, a bird, is such a rare and endangered animal, whose global population is less than 1000. We have about 2500 rhinos, 20000 elephants or about 2000 tigers. We all talk about tiger, rhino or elephant but rarely talk about such rare species. But Dadara and Pacharia villages of Kamrup district silently helping this rare bird and successfully increased their nesting pairs in last few years in the outskirts of Guwahati city.

This bird is slowly approaching towards red zone in conservation scale, but our conservation fraternity and concerned government departments are untouched and have left this bird to its own fate!

Greater Adjutant, *Leptoptilos dubius*, as is a huge tall bird. The bird, standing tall at about 150 cm, is struggling to find a suitable nesting tree. The bird uses some selective tall tree species as nesting tree and accommodate at least few nests in a single tree. Over and above, the nesting habit of this bird is colonial and uses traditional nesting area for years together and requires many similar trees in a very close area. The bird mainly feed on dead or live small preys during breeding season, whereas, in non breeding time it is a scavenger and spends time in big garbage dumping sites and preys on rotten animal parts or other live small rodents in the garbage dumps. This "dirty" feeding habit of rotten animal or animal parts makes the base area of a nesting tree really dirty with foul smell. The owner of the tree gets irritated with foul smell of the rotten leftover food materials that the bird collects during nesting season and ultimately the owner either chase

away the bird from the nesting tree or cut the nesting instead, and earn some livelihood too to get some support by the poor nest tree owner. Traditionally the bird had chosen nesting area within thickly populated human areas and rarely formed nesting colonies within protected area network in India. The reason of this is still unknown that why they nest only in thickly populated areas?

I had a long dream to work for the conservation of this globally endangered bird. My predecessors and seniors used to tell their stories of this bird that was in trouble for survival due to lack of support from nest tree owners for various reasons mentioned above as well from the government department responsible for protection of wildlife. I still remember it was an early morning of March 2009 when a sudden call from one of my conservation colleague woke me up when they informed me that I received CLP award to work for conservation of this bird, which was a stepping stone in my conservation carrier. This waking up call with a great message really awoke my life and since then I am struggling to save World's rarest species of Stork i.e Greater Adjutant. Greater Adjutant locally called as hargilla or bortokola has changed my identification also and now I am known in Dadara as hargilla baido (Stork sister). I get nostalgic with my childhood memories which includes a few snap of this bird. When we were in school, Greater Adjutant was found abundant in my village Pub majir gaon of Kamrup district of Assam which is very near to Deepar beel, a wildlife sanctuary and a Ramsar site now-a-days. We could see this bird in large flock with vultures in paddy field. We could also see lesser Adjutant, open billed stork, and many species of birds but we never knew the appropriate names of any of them. I often asked my grandmother who

told me that some of them were called samukkhola (Openbill stork), and some were telia sareng (Black necked stork). But we all could identify vultures when they were eating dead cows. It was just like an everyday scenario in my village where large number of vultures stood nearby dead cow. We were excited to see the colourful vulture i.e red headed vulture. At that time we never had the idea that there were so many species, diversities of birds although we could see them in abundance. I nicely remember a beautiful moment when I was going for my maths exam on 7th standard, I could see a flock of vultures feeding on dead cow and a few Greater Adjutants with big pouch were sitting next to them. My friend Gorima said that we are very lucky as vultures and hargilals bring fortune to people specially in exam time ! She even ensured me that all the prepared questions will be there in the question papers ! Interestingly, I excelled in my math exam and from that day I kept looking my vultures and hargilas (Greater adjutant). I felt depressed when I could not see them on my way and I considered my exam to be worst on that very day. These memories really make me laugh now but now after studying ecology and conservation, I understood their importance for survival of mankind which I need to spread to my other fellow friends. Thus my childhood feathered friends who gave me good luck once, now alert me to carry good luck for them in return. This magnificent looking bird with a long pink gullar pouch, specially in the breeding season looks really beautiful and draws attentions to many bird lovers. The bird looks more colourful in the breeding season, with bright whitish primaries and looks unique.

Assam harbours about 70-80% of its global population in few nesting colonies distributed along the Brahmaputra valley. But the irony is that many traditional nesting colonies of this bird has disappeared in last decades and now has only few nesting colonies left in Assam. Thanks to some villagers who have spared the nesting trees for this bird and allowed them to use continuously their trees in their household campus. No role of government department, no hassle tussle between conservation lobbyist and the bird is protected by communities now.

Dadara and Pacharia, two small villages of Kamrup District of Assam have shown the world how this bird can be supported. These adorable people as well their village need global attention now. It is worth mentioning that these two

villages has been considered as a stork village now- a-days. Main problem of conservation of this bird is that it breeds in privately owned nesting trees in colonies and their future depends on the willingness and support of the tree owners.

This nesting colony is about an hour drive from the city of Guwahati. When we entered to this breeding colony for the first time in 2009, we came back with lot of complaints from the villagers about the birds. According to them, this was a very unhygienic bird which nests in their home garden. "They being carnivorous and often throw live or rotten foods in their backyard and the family members need to get engaged in cleaning the entire debris including their foul smelled faeces", an angry villagers reported to me. In windy months of February and March, lot of nest fall happens. The chicks which fell down during their early flight training dies eventually due to the fall or died due to starvation or predator attack. These dead chicks on their campus also are a cause of concern for them. Since forest department does not take much initiative, as they said, they had to dispose the dead birds themselves. Villager were all fed up with these problems and had in conflict with the birds. Several conflicts were witnessed in paddy fields with farmers and fisherman in 2008. It was worth mentioning as these birds exclusively fed on wetlands in its breeding season.

It was very difficult for us at first with so many problems and while doing my project planning we did regular visit to the every households, every trees and studied the problem from our heart. Many tree owners demanded money on return. It strikes us that rewarding money in return will bring a major threat to the trees which happened in some other nesting colonies earlier initiated by some bird lovers. After a rigorous study, we understood our duty what to do and thus we planned every activities. We started making friendship with every tree owner, specially the ladies. We started organizing a few meetings in several locations inviting them and understood their concerns. Slowly and slowly we started awareness programme in the villages. At the same time we made them realize about the importance of other wild animals and trees so that they can understand the importance of conservation.

We started motivating youths at first by organizing different conservation campaigns. They revealed us that they never knew that Greater Adjutant is such an important creature. They



also said they always ignored this bird. They promised us to monitor the species without disturbing them at their nesting colonies. We organized social gatherings for farmers and discussed what problem they are facing. We motivated them too towards the conservation of the birds. By organizing different meetings separately, we motivated the fisherman and introduced them with importance of greater Adjutant. They never knew that greater Adjutant was found only in a few locations in the World and their own villages has the maximum number. As ladies are considered as leaders in household decision making process, they are to play a major role for conservation of Greater adjutant too. Initially, in Dadara, the women folks are very shy and often send their husbands to the public meetings which we organize to discuss the conservation of this bird. Keeping this specially in mind, we started a separate module with the women communities. We organized different events like cooking competitions, arts, crafts competition specially for ladies. We also formed self help group among themselves and helped them to organize their stall in different mega festivals held in Guwahati city, where they showcased their handicraft and other household products.

The results are rewarding. Four years of hard work pays off. The villagers feel that this is their bird and they are the guardian of this bird and responsible for a safe breeding season in their villages. The women communities have started celebrating the breeding season of this bird like they do for any of their family member. The local school

Sankardev Sisu Niketan, Dadara even made a earthen statue of the bird and every morning the children pray for its conservation. This made us cry !

The entire villagers now feel that they are the owner of this bird. That's incredible !

Community work needs to be continued, foraging wetlands need to be saved, government protection agencies need to be proactive to save this bird from extinction. This is only possible if you all support for conservation of this little known, non-charismatic wildlife of our big country.

We all in the society has a role in conservation. Irrespective of our profession, everybody can play a role in conservation. Doctor, engineer, poet or a singer, everybody can contribute. Question may come, how ? A doctor can help a little village organizing free health check up camps in those villages, like dadara and pacharia, where they are helping a rare endangered bird. An engineer can guide a villagers how they can build their house using nature friendly building materials or eco friendly houses. A poet can write a poem on nature or a singer can sing a beautiful "green" song ! These are just few examples only. We have to just find our own role within our own expertise and just contribute. If one cannot find time or cannot contribute directly, they can help others by donations in kind or what so ever manner to those who are doing such noble work. So, just find your role.

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*Purnima is a wildlife Biologist in Aaranyak ([www.aaranyak.org](http://www.aaranyak.org)) where her research interest is bird. She heads Greater Adjutant Stork Conservation Programme in Aaranyak. She also works as Environmental Educator in Aaranyak spreading Environmental education among school children. She is also a South Asian Ambassador of Conservation leadership Programme for the year 2013. Currently she is doing her Ph.D in Foraging ecology of Greater Adjutant stork in Assam under Gauhati University.*

*Purnima was awarded Future conservationist Award in 2009 and since then she has been working for conservation of endangered Greater Adjutant in Assam. She worked with communities for conservation of this bird and motivated them to protect this rare species.*



Facebook network created for Greater Adjutant conservation

The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook group page titled "Greater Adjutant Network". The page features a cover photo of a large group of Greater Adjutant storks in a grassy field. The left sidebar contains navigation options such as "News Feed", "Messages", "Events", and a list of groups including "Greater Adjutant...", "BiChem - Greener...", "Student Conferen...", "WIKIBIRDS", "DiversityIndia", "Friends of Nature", "Nature Photography", "Earth Matters Fou...", "Oriental Bird Club", "Bird ID Please!!!", "CARBON's Cyber...", "Music Academy", "Green Guard Nat...", "SOS Wakening Calls", "Manas National Park", "Hornbill Conserva...", "Manage Your Groups", "Create Group", and "Find New Groups". The main content area shows a pinned post by Purnima Devi Barman, dated September 23, 2012, with the text "WELCOMING GREATER ADJUTANT FOR A SUCCESSFUL BREEDING SEASON" and a banner image with Bengali text. Below this is a recent post by Prakash Pawar, dated September 27 at 12:08pm, asking "Is there a great difference in appearance wise between species of storks found in India and Africa?". A photo of storks near a body of water is visible at the bottom of the page.

**Papers and articles accepted for publication**

1. “Conservation of endangered Greater Adjutant stork in Assam, India” in ENVIS by Wildlife Institute of India ([www.wii.gov.in](http://www.wii.gov.in))
2. Conservation of Greater Adjutant by Communities in Assam in Sanctuary Asia ([www.sanctuaryasia.com](http://www.sanctuaryasia.com))
3. Rescue, treatment and release of an endangered greater adjutant *Leptoptilos dubius* in Mistnet published by Bombay Natural History Society ([www.bnhs.org](http://www.bnhs.org))
4. Nesting of Greater adjutant *Leptoptilos dubius* in Dadara Pacharia Singimari of Kamrup District of Assam in Mistnet published by Bombay Natural History Society ([www.bnhs.org](http://www.bnhs.org))

