



JANASANYOG, ASSAM
CHIEF MINISTER'S PUBLIC RELATIONS CELL, DISPUR

PRESS RELEASE

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2479 rhino horns destroyed at Bokakhat

Busting the myth about rhino horns' medicinal value is important to stop poaching: CM

Dispur, September 22: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today attended the programme for destroying stockpile of rhino horns at Bokakhat and oversaw the burning of 2479 rhino horns.

In order to dispel the myth of medicinal value of rhino horns and send a strong message against poaching and smuggling of rhino horns, the State Government decided in the cabinet meeting held on September 16 to destroy rhino horns kept in seven treasuries of the State. Acting on that decision, 2479 horns, out of total 2623 such horns extracted from naturally or accidentally dead rhinos or confiscated from poachers, were consigned to flames today at Bokakhat on World Rhino Day. 94 rhino horns, based on size and soundness of architecture will be showcased in a museum to be set up at Kaziranga National Park while 29 horns would be kept for ongoing court cases, the Chief Minister informed.

Saying that the State Government has taken zero tolerance policy towards poaching of wildlife, the Chief Minister stated that due to Government's consistent efforts, one horned rhinoceros population in Assam has increased from 1672 in 1999 to 2652 as per the 2018 census. With first-of-its-kind event of destruction of rhino horns on such a large scale in the country and the world, the State Government intends to send a strong message against rhino poaching while reiterating its commitment towards wildlife protection, he said.

Referring to suggestions from some quarters that the accumulated stockpile of rhino horns could have been sold to earn revenue by the Government, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma said that it is against the country's law to sale or buy wildlife properties and resources and that is why these horns have been destroyed. Also selling these horns would propagate the very myth of rhino horns containing medicinal values which the State Government wants to bust, he said. The Chief Minister remarked that as trade in human organs cannot be allowed, the State Government is also committed towards not encouraging trade in wildlife animal organs.

Asserting that the poachers will have to think twice before trying to kill wild animals in Assam, Chief Minister said that the State Government will not allow any such activities and will take strongest action against wildlife criminals. He informed that the elevated corridor over the highway passing through Kaziranga National Park would be constructed soon for protection of wild animals.

The Chief Minister also informed that from October 1 Kaziranga National Park will be opened for tourists and visitors as State Government is working towards unlocking of COVID restrictions completely for normalisation of economic activities.

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Environment and Forest Minister Parimal Suklabaidya, Agriculture Minister Atul Bora, Health Minister Keshab Mahanta, Handloom and Textiles Minister UG Brahma, CEM Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council Tuliram Ronghang, Principal Secretary of Environment and Forest department Avinash Joshi, Chief Conservation Warden MK Yadav, PCCF Dr. Alka Bhargava were also present on the occasion.

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