



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

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CM directs district administration and forest department officials to put up coordinated efforts for wildlife protection at Kaziranga national park

Dispur, May 12: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal directed the district administration and forest department officials of Golaghat, Nagaon, Sonitpur, Biswanath and Karbi Anglong to put up coordinated efforts to ensure protection of wildlife at Kaziranga National Park from poaching and provide the animals adequate relief during flood. He directed this while reviewing preparation of these districts on wildlife protection during the forthcoming monsoon season in a meeting held at the conference hall of Iora Resort at Kaziranga in Golaghat district today.

The Chief Minister said that Kaziranga National Park has global importance and any untoward incident that takes place in the park draws attention of the people worldwide. Due to united efforts of the administration and forest officials of the five districts adjoining the park, rhino poaching could be considerably reduced in last four years, the Chief Minister observed. He also directed the civil and police administration as well as the forest department to continue their efforts unabated. The Chief Minister taking strong note of the rhino poaching incident that took place few days back directed the police and forest department to take expeditious measures to nab the poachers.

Stating that the state government's strong measures have led to considerable drop in the number of poaching at Kaziranga National Park, the Chief Minister said that the fast track courts set up by Gauhati High Court as per state government's request have so far convicted several poachers and handed them exemplary punishment. He observed that steps of this kind have instilled fear in the mind of poachers and left positive impact on wildlife protection. Moreover, to strengthen anti poaching drive at the park, the Chief Minister directed the district administration and the forest department to engage village headmen, tea garden sardars and people having strong grass root connection living in the adjoining areas in the wildlife protection endeavours.

Underlining the need for adequate health care facilities for the wildlife at Kaziranga National Park and to boost up services of the veterinary department, the Chief Minister directed the forest department to develop a skilled force with proper training to render necessary health service to the animals in the park. The Chief Minister also stressed on the need to make the wildlife protection measures of the forest department more visible and directed the department to fill up all vacancies to give more teeth to its wildlife protection activities. Moreover, the Chief Minister directed the forest department to carry out a survey to assess the impact of the highlands developed in the park on the wildlife and their use by

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the animals during flood. He also asked the park authorities to keep itself prepared with adequate food stock so that same could be provided to the animals during flood.

In view of African swine fever infection reported in different parts of the state, Chief Minister Sonowal directed the administration of all the five districts to ensure that intermingling of domestic and wild pigs does not take place and movement of domestic pigs are restricted so as to stop further infection. He also directed to hold awareness meetings in the villages adjoining the national park.

Considering the set back faced by the tourism sector during the coronavirus induced nationwide lockdown, Chief Minister Sonowal directed the administration and forest department of all the five districts to moot up a plan to rejuvenate the tourism sector at Kaziranga National Park. Further, as a good will gesture towards the lockdown affected jeep and elephant safari operators, Chief Minister distributed financial aid among them provided by Kaziranga foundation. He also handed over thermal scanners to the director of the park which are to be used in different ranges of the park.

The director of Kaziranga National Park P. Shivakumar informed the Chief Minister that while 3 rhinos were killed by poachers last year, one such incident has been reported this year so far. He informed that the forest department has geared up to deal with the forthcoming monsoon season and kept ready 300 boats, 18 speed boats and floating camps to rescue animals and provide relief during flood. He further informed that a proposal has been submitted to Central Government for construction of additional highlands at the park and the Central Government has looked into the proposal positively.

Forest Minister Parimal Suklabaidya, Agriculture Minister Atul Bora, Water Resources Minister Keshab Mahanta, MLAs Bimal Bora and Ashok Sarma, DC, SP and DFOs of Golaghat, Nagaon, Sonitpur, Biswanath and Karbi Anglong as well as senior police and forest department officials were present in the meeting.

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