



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

PRESS RELEASE

Press Release No. 675/2020

Sonowal attends 66th Wildlife Week concluding function

Govt decides to increase forest cover by two thousand square kilometres

Government is successful in stopping poaching of one horned rhinoceros: CM

No body will be spared indulged in corruption: Sonowal

Dispur, October 7: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal announced that State government has decided to increase forest reserve of the state by another two thousand square kilometre. Speaking at the concluding ceremony of the 66th Wildlife Week at Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra here today Sonowal said that Assam which is famous for its clean and green ambience has to be restrengthened with this new addition.

He also said that State government would also set up an Institute of Wild Life Health and Research at Dinjan in Dibrugarh district. Moreover, like in Kaziranga and Manas National Parks, all the wild life sanctuaries and reserve forests camps would be provided with solar lights and smart phones.

Chief Minister Sonowal also said that State government has already decided to set up a forest division at Borail range. He also announced that steps have been taken to link Dehing Patkai with Joypore and transform it into a National Park. He also shared the government's decision to announce rain forest of Jonai as a wild life sanctuary.

Chief Minister Sonowal said that State government has been taking a slew of steps for preserving the natural resources and wild lives of the state. Emphasising the importance of flora and fauna in enriching the nature, Chief Minister Sonowal said that everybody should take the responsibility for the protection of plants and animals. He also said that as a result of the slew of measures, the rich bio-diversity of the state has been drawing wild life enthusiasts from across the world to Assam.

Taking on the previous government for not doing anything substantial for stopping the rhino poaching, Chief Minister Sonowal said that under the erstwhile government, the poachers turned the national parks and wild life sanctuaries into their pasture lands. However, the present State government immediately after coming to power took proactive steps for stopping rhino poaching. During the present State government's rule, 240 poachers were handed exemplary punishments by setting up 10 fast track courts. He also said that the flow of tourists in the state has increased phenomenally as a result of neutralising the poachers and resultant increase of wildlife population in Assam.

Chief Minister Sonowal also said that the government's uncompromising tirade against corruption will continue unrelentingly. He also made it clear that politicians, government officers who so ever is found indulged in corruption will not be spared.

Speaking on the occasion Environment and Forest Minister Parimal Suklabaidya said that State government has already planted 8 crore saplings in the state to contribute to the green coverage of the state. He also said that nature is intrinsically associated with the culture of the state, therefore, everybody should take a collective pledge to protect wildlife. Minister of State for Tea Tribe Welfare Sanjay Kisan while speaking on the occasion gave a snapshot of different steps of the government for the protection and preservation of wildlife. Chief Minister's Media Advisor Hrishikesh Goswami who also spoke on the occasion drew a simile between paradise and green forests where animals live which contribute to the rich bio-diversity.

Principal Secretary Environment and Forest Avinash Joshi, PCCF AM Singh also spoke on the occasion.

Synchronizing with the occasion, Chief Minister Sonowal felicitated veteran environmentalist Parimal Chandra Bhattacharya with a life time achievement award. He also presented other awards to the winners who participated in competitions on the occasion of Wild Life Week. Sonowal also felicitated Dr. Poornima Devi Barman in recognition to her role in *hargilla* conservation.

MLA Angoorlata Deka, Additional PCCF MK Yadhav, senior officers of the government and host of other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

PD/BB/SD/ October 7, 2020.