

## Earth Day 2011 : A brief Report

Surajit Baruah\*

World Wide Fund for Nature-India (WWF-India) in collaboration with Assam Forest Department has organized the 41<sup>st</sup> Earth Day in the Assam State Zoo premises with a day-long programme. WWF-India had been organizing such conservation events from last few decades in order to build green capacity particularly among the students, youth and communities residing in the rich eco-region of NE India. The Assam State Zoo Cum Botanical Garden is situated in the natural landscape comprising of natural vegetation in undulating small hills and slopes with rich vegetation. The international theme for this year's Earth Day was 'One billion Acts of Green'. It itself speaks for larger actions from all the stakeholders, communities living in both in urban and rural areas of the continents across the globe towards greening our mother earth and reduce the stress of carbon foot print.

Considering the importance of trees in maintaining the fabric of the natural ecosystem a tree plantation programme with some native medicinal and forest species was undertaken within the Zoo campus. The campaign was inaugurated by Mr. V K .Vishnoi IFS Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Assam and Mr. S. Chand IFS Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Assam followed by number of people, students, NGOs and workers gathered for the event. These trees will augment the otherwise green campus of Guwahati Zoo and provide habitats for free arboreal & other species.

Dr. Surajit Baruah, State Coordinator of WWF-India, Assam & AP while speaking to the young students explained the importance of cultivating the love & spirit of nature conservation in our day-to-day life which can be done only by practically exploring the elements of nature in wild and outside the man-made environment. It is very crucial at present time, as the urban society in cities and towns are deprived of living with nature unlike the rural areas. Mr. Utpal Bora IFS DFO, Assam State Zoo Division in his presentation spoke about the significance of Earth Day specially in a biodiversity rich region like NE region and urged for sustainable action from all sections in view of the rapid degradation of our environment and forests.

A painting competition on the theme 'Our Mother Earth' was also organized on the occasion among school children of the city to increase their knowledge on nature environmental sensibility. About 200 children from various schools from class I to V standards actively participated in the competition and drawn beautiful posters on the different elements of Nature and environment from their own creative



Tree plantation drive at the Assam State Zoo



PCCF Assam inaugurating the drive by planting a tree



Kids draw elements of nature by their creative thinking

thinking and imagination. The children were also asked to have a nature trail in the natural landscape of Zoo to have a practical exposure to beautiful world of animal and plant life. They asked many questions on the animals and plants which shows the inquisitiveness and

curiosity of the young minds. Most of their questions were answered with explanation.

\*State Coordinator, World Wide Fund for Nature-India, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh State Office, Assam.  
Email: sbaruah@wwfindia.net