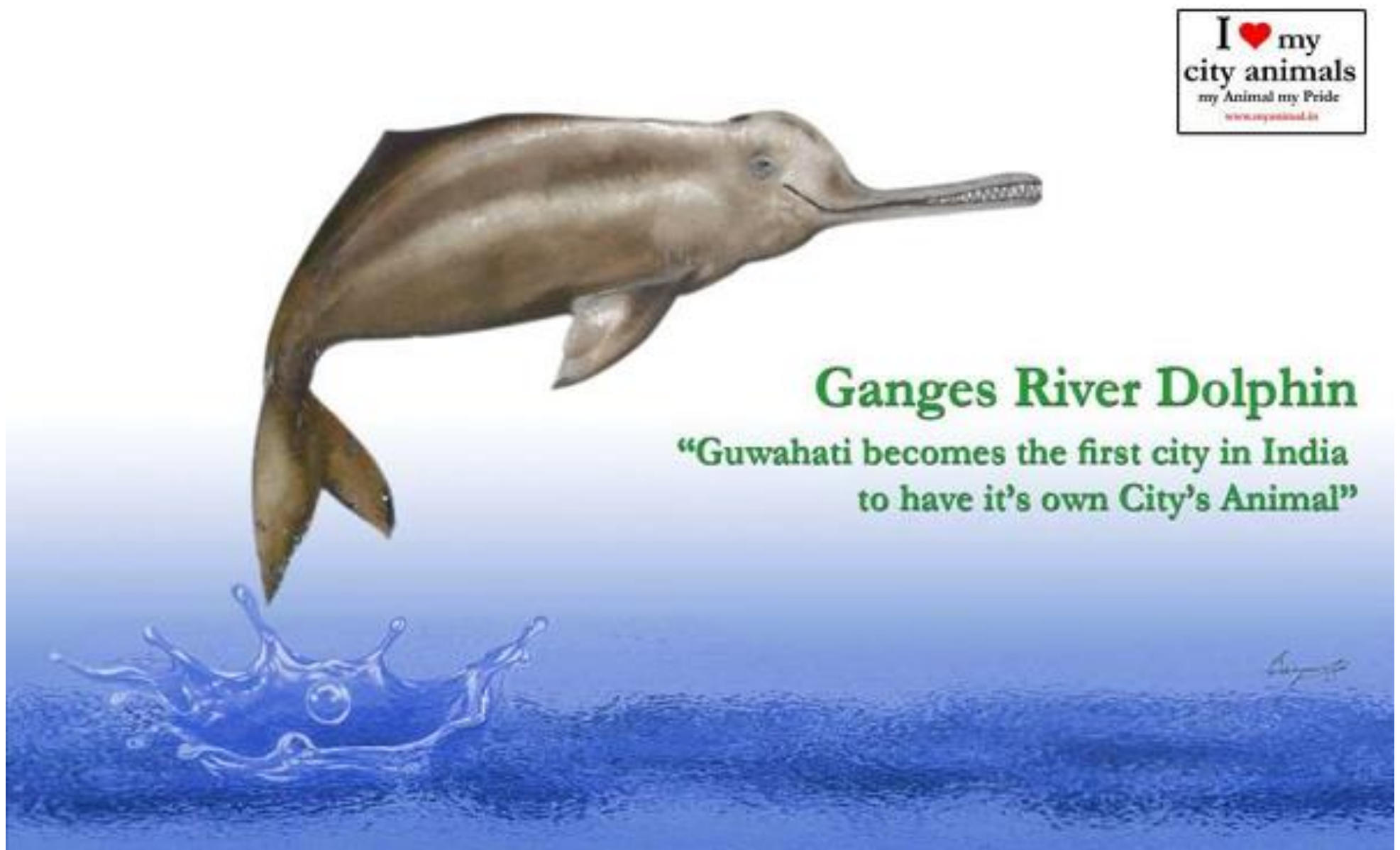


**Interim Report
on
Attending to Our Neighbours Beckon: An Initiative to Create a
Better Home for Urban Wildlife through Multivariate Study
and Management Approach.**

Application ID: 18457-D



**Submitted By
Jayaditya Purkayastha**



Training programme on Reptile Management at Assam State Zoo, Guwahati on 8 January, 2016



We donated snake catching and handling equipment to forest officials



Snake related informative brochures were distributed



TEZPUR UNIVERSITY
GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT 2016
 12th - 15th February

Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC): GBBC is a global initiative to document the birds across different campuses and residential surroundings. For more info visit: <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>

How to participate: To get started, join the group of bird enthusiasts from the campus, and organize yourselves in such a way that you cover all different areas and habitats that your campus contains.

Schedule

Day 1 (12th Feb) 6:00 am - 7:00 am : 15 mins bird count walk

Day 2 (13th Feb) 6:00 am - 7:00 am : 15 mins bird count walk
 7:30 am - 8:30 am : Talk by Mr. Jayaditya Purkayastha on "Basics of Birding and Bird Photography"
 9:00 am - 10:00 am : Demonstration on "Art of Wildlife Photography"

Day 3 (14th Feb) 6:00 am - 7:00 am : 15 mins bird count walk

Day 4 (15th Feb) 6:00 am - 7:00 am : 15 mins bird count walk

In association with



Supported by
TAMRON

For more details contact: 8876213485
 8135018185
 9954761208

<https://goo.gl/qVZUcn>




4-day backyard bird count begins

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Feb 13: The Great Backyard Bird Count launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society to create awareness on bird diversity with stress on urban birds, got under way on Friday.

The four-day count will conclude on February 15.

The Great Backyard Bird Count was the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to dis-

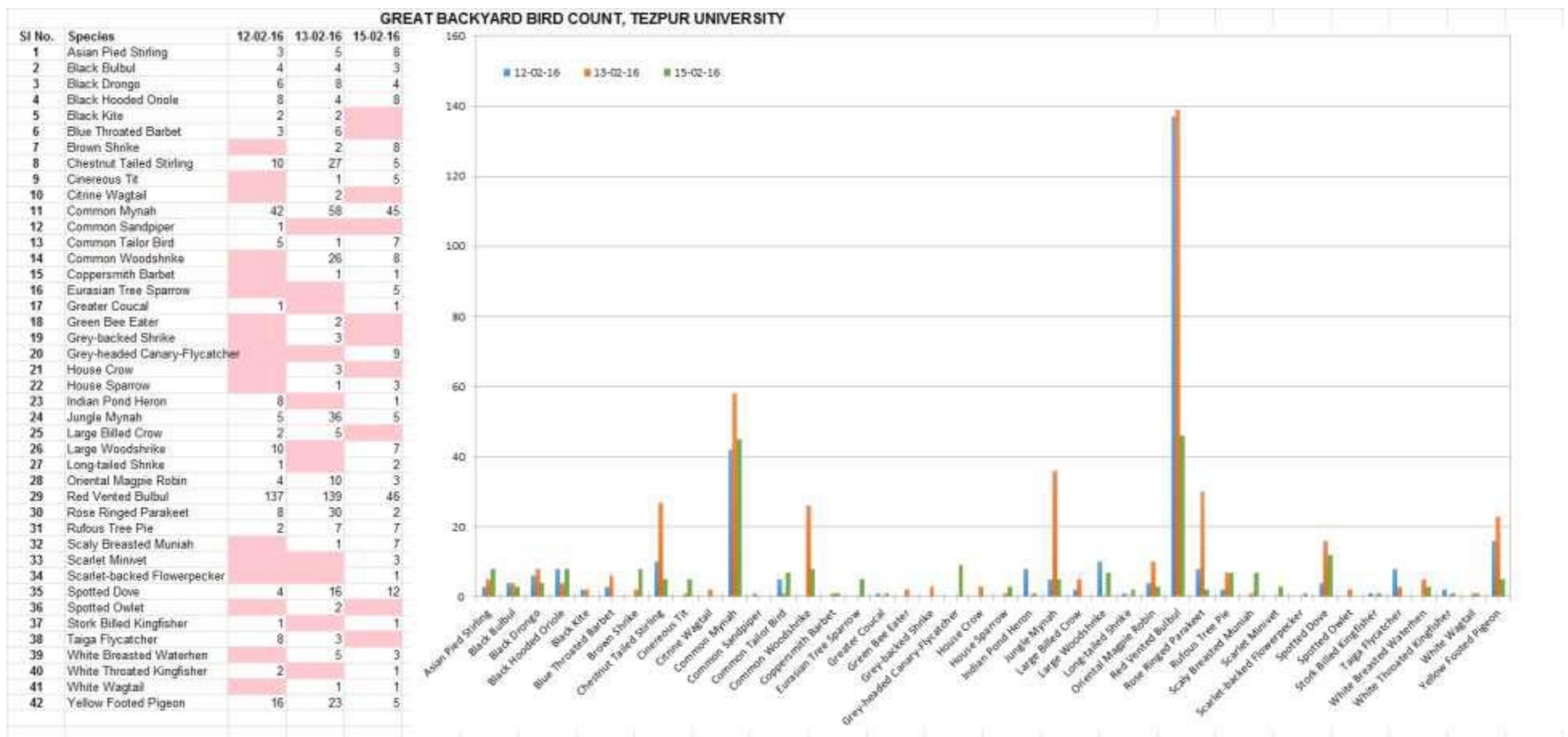
play results in near real-time. Now, more than 1,00,000 people of all ages and walks of life worldwide join the count every February to create an annual snapshot of the distribution and abundance of birds.

In connection with the count this year, Tezpur University and Assam State Zoo, in collaboration with Help Earth, are organising events. "We are conducting campus bird count in Tezpur University on all the four days, besides a seminar on the basics of taxonomy and diver-

sity of birds with emphasis on bird photography," Debabrata Phukon and Rajeev Brahma, both research scholars, said.

The Assam State Zoo is organising an early morning bird survey on February 15 to estimate the diversity of free ranging avifauna at the campus of the zoo.

Of the 10,000-plus species of birds found all over the world, about 1,319 are found in India. Assam accounts for over 810 bird species and the count is increasing.



Installation of a hoarding “Wetland birds of Deeporbeel” at the watchtower of Deeporbeel WLS, Guwahati on World Wetland Day



Year round bird surveys being conducted in Deeporbeel WLS to estimate population density relative to season.

Bird box free distribution programme



The success stories

The City's Animal Campaign

Guwahati, the land of goddess Kamakhya is blessed with nature's bounty. Tropical forests, temperate climate and geographic diversity contribute to its rich floral and faunal heritage. The biggest metropolis of Northeast India, our Guwahati is also a part of Indo Burma Biodiversity hotspot. Perhaps Guwahati may be the only metropolis in the world to have the privilege of being surrounded by 18 Hills, 2 Wildlife Sanctuaries, 8 Reserve forests and a Ramsar site all compressed within an area of 216sq km. To add to this list, the river Brahmaputra cuts across the city making it habitable for wide variety of life forms including us. Deeporbeel, one of the important wetlands of Asia and the lone Ramsar site of Assam is situated at the west of the city and is world renowned for its birdlife.

Thus, to conserve this heritage of biodiversity of Guwahati and to generate mass knowledge and awareness the Concept City's Animal was born. For City's Animal we have taken up 3 candidate animals with highest conservation concern.

Black Softshell Turtle: In Assamese the turtle is known as "BorKaso". The turtle was thought to be extinct in the wild and are confined to temple ponds such as Kamakhya, Ugratara in Guwahati. Due to habitat destruction and trade of this animal for flesh and egg, the animal is in the brink of extinction. Fortunately, recent survey has shown that small population exists in river Brahmaputra and its tributaries.

Greater Adjutant Stork: Known as "Hargila" in Assamese, it is one of the biggest birds of Assam. The global population of this endangered bird is less than 1200 individuals. Due to degradation of habitat and lack of breeding space, the bird fights for existence. The species can be seen in Deeporbeel WLS, garbage dump of Borbori.

Gangetic River Dolphin: In Assamese, this mammal is known as "Xisu". Less than 2000 individuals of this species are known worldwide. They can be seen in the river Brahmaputra running along Guwahati. The animal is suffering because of habitat destruction and trade for oil and flesh. They are also by catch in gillnets and line hooks.

Voting Process

The voting process for the City's Animal was launched on 7th March, 2016. The voting was done online through the website www.myanimal.in. Seventy Six (76) schools and colleges across Guwahati participated in the offline voting process. To boost the voting process, voting booth were installed in the premise of Office of District Commissioner, Kamrup (Metropolitan). Voting related information were installed in different public places across Guwahati, including city buses, shopping malls, food courts, cinema hall, hoardings etc.

On the midnight of 5th June, 2016 the voting process ended. By then, the City's Animal Campaign received a public support and participation beyond our expectation. In total, we received sixty thousand and three (60,003) votes. Black Softshell Turtle (BormuriaKaso) received 17,302 votes and the Greater Adjutant Stork (Hargila) 18,454 votes. But the Ganges River Dolphin (Xixu) with 24,247 votes became the clear winner.

Thus, after a journey of 3 months, we finally reached the proud moment for our city, **Guwahati- the first city of India to have its city animal**. From this date, **Ganges River Dolphin (Xixu) - the city animal of Guwahati** shall carry forward the legacy of conservation and protection of urban biodiversity of Guwahati.

Organisations Involved: Help Earth, Kamrup Metropolitan District Administration, Assam Forest Department and Assam State Biodiversity Board.



The launch of the City's Animal Campaign on 7th March, 2016 by honorable District Commissioner of Kamrup Metropolitan



Voting campaign in colleges and universities



School principal briefing programme for conduction of offline voting for city's animal in their schools



For middle school



For high school

Awareness initiative at public places, motivating masses to participate in voting process



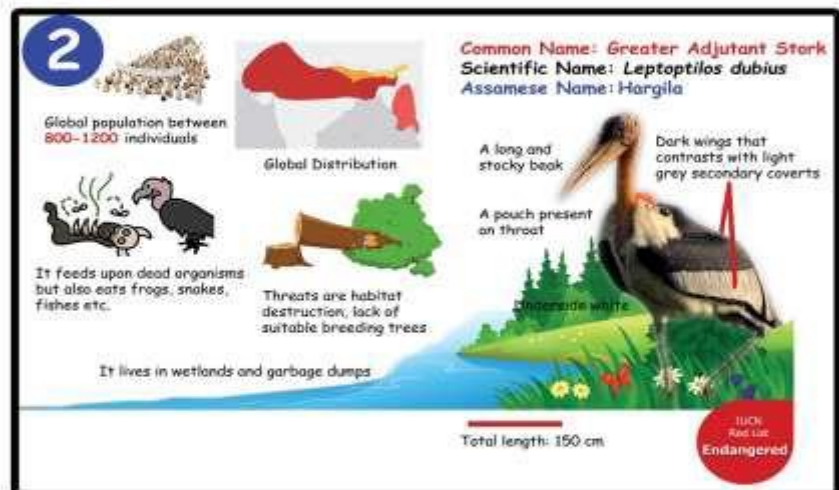
Involvement of FM radio station with regular programme “Know our city animals”



Offline voting booth installed in the office of Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup Metropolitan



Published materials for the campaign



Brochure in both English and Assamese language were distributed for each section of each class for each schools, helping students decide their voting choice

[illegible]

Voting sheets

I love city animals T-shirts for free distribution

City's Animal Campaign showcased at India Myanmar Thailand Friendship Car Rally, 2016



Declaration of result



শিল্পক গুৱাহাটীৰ চিটি এনিমেলা ঘোষণা



দেশৰ ভিতৰত
প্রথমখন
মহানগৰ

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গুরাহাটীত শিল্পক চিঠী এনিমেল হিচাপে ঘোষণা

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**যক্ষ্মা ৰোগৰ চিকিৎসাৰ নতুন
ঔষধ 'বেদাকুলীন' ব্যৱহাৰৰ বাবে মুকলি**



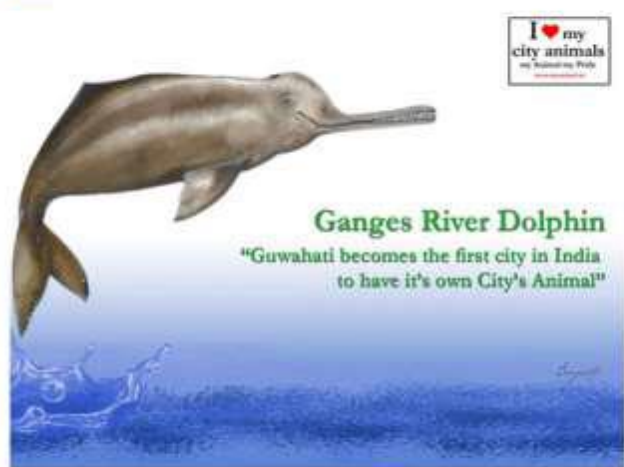
কৃষ্ণাঙ্ক শাখা
সেবাশ্রমৰ সভা

গাড়ী চুরি

The Ganges River Dolphin is Guwahati's Official Animal

The endangered creature is India's first city mascot.

ANAND KANAKSHI AYYAR | POSTED ON JUNE 10, 2018



The Ganges river dolphin has been chosen as the city's animal. The dolphin is the first city animal in India. Photo courtesy: Help Earth.

Guwahati's residents voted the Ganges river dolphin as their animal mascot this week—a first for an Indian city. Listed endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the freshwater dolphin inhabits the Brahmaputra river which flows through the city, and also the Ganga and the Indus. This is the first time the Ganges river dolphin is also made national aquatic animal and Assam's state aquatic animal, but what do these titles really do?

The main purpose is to draw awareness about the animal, and the tragedy of its ecosystem. The first step will be to estimate the dolphin population in and around Guwahati, said Jayaditya Purkayastha, the founder of Help Earth, an NGO in Guwahati. The endangered dolphin has two other threatened look-alikes—the greater Asian otter and black soft-shell turtle—in a lake, conducted across the city in places like schools, colleges and malls.

It's a fascinating animal, if only for the unique way in which it hunts. The dolphin is mostly blind, survives subsistence on spot prey under water. They are also known for swimming in an angle, trailing a flipper along the riverbed to dislodge potential prey.

Unfortunately, the gentle freshwater creature has been finding much apart from food along the river bed. Its habitat is one of the world's most densely populated areas, and it is threatened by industrial, agricultural and human pollution, hydroelectric, destructive fishing gear and hunting for its meat and oil. But Help Earth remains hopeful. In addition to helping with the plan to decide Guwahati's mascot, the NGO has also been working with civic authorities to streamline conservation efforts and create awareness programs for about urban wildlife like dolphins. If all goes according to plan, they might soon have urban wildlife tours for students in the city.

Kanakshi Ayyar is Features writer at National Geographic Traveller India's web team. She's partial to poked by the sea and desserts in all forms. When she isn't raving about food, she's usually rambling on about the latest comic mysteries. She tweets as @kanakshi133.

MP mein dil hua bache sa!

EXPLORE MADHYA PRADESH

MP mein dil hua bache sa!

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Guwahati becomes first city to have City Animal

GUWAHATI, JUNE 6 (PTI): The Assam state capital today became the first city in the country to have its own City Animal with the Kamrup Metropolitan district administration declaring the Gangetic River Dolphin as the mascot.

In a press conference, Kamrup Metropolitan Deputy Commissioner M Angamuthu said that the animal, locally known as 'Shisu', would be the 'City Animal of Guwahati'.

The district administration had organised online and off-line voting among three proposed creatures, which are on the verge of extinction, to decide the mascot.

Along with Gangetic River Dolphin, the other two animals were Black Softshell Turtle (Bor Muria Kaso) and Greater Adjutant Stork (Hargila).



A Ganges River Dolphin. (Frances Xavier PELLETIER/WWF)

While less than 2,000 Gangetic River Dolphins remain in the Brahmaputra along Guwahati, a recent survey said only a small population of Black Softshell Turtle were found in the river and its tributaries.

The number of Greater Adjutant Stork is less than 1,200 in and around the state capital.

The three-month long voting process attracted 60,003 participants to decide the City Animal and Gangetic River Dolphin received 24,247 votes.

While Greater Adjutant Stork got 18,454 votes, Black Softshell Turtle was the choice of 17,302 people.

In the off-line voting, 76 schools and colleges across Guwahati participated. Along with the Kamrup Metropolitan district administration, other organisations such as Assam Forest Department, Assam State Biodiversity Board and an NGO Help Earth worked closely to decide the City Animal, he said.

City animal

Guwahati has chosen the Gangetic river dolphin as its city animal after an online voting to select the icon from among three choices – the greater adjutant stork and the soft-shell turtle being the other two. It was good to see students and youth take active part in the selection, as it is ultimately this segment of the populace who will be required to take care of this invaluable inheritance from Mother Nature. The Kamrup (Metro) administration also deserves praise for the keenness exhibited by it in choosing the animal icon for a city that still has an enviable population of urban wildlife, including even mega species such as leopards and elephants. The disturbing part, though, is that we are making a mess of this priceless natural bequest through our thoughtless and insensitive action. It is in this context that having the city's animal icon is a refreshing development. This can lead to a renewed interest among the citizens, especially children and youth, in the wonderful world of urban wildlife living within their vicinity. However, merely selecting the animal icon will hardly serve any purpose unless it is backed by a concerted effort from all of us – citizens, administration and NGOs – to secure for our dwindling urban wildlife some much-needed undisturbed space. The irony is that the Gangetic river dolphin is witnessing severe disturbance in its habitat due to large-scale unscientific sand extraction on the Kushi river on the city outskirts. A stretch of the Kushi is among the very few remaining habitats of the river dolphin and the disturbing question is how the administration can turn a blind eye to such illegal activities under the very power. Providing lip service to conservation is unlikely to yield any long-term gain for our precious flora and fauna.

While the famed wildlife of the State has earned its global recognition, not many of us would probably realise – far less appreciate – that even amidst our urban landscape and its immediate surroundings lies a small world inhabited by a plethora of animals, birds and reptiles, mostly belonging to the less celebrated species. Guwahati can still take pride in the fact that a fair part of its now rapidly dwindling urban surroundings shelter wide-ranging species – not just lesser known ones but characteristic species as well. Larger fauna such as elephants, leopards and deer inhabiting the city's forests do get some occasional attention but the lesser known and smaller varieties like snakes, turtles, mongoose, civets, wild cats, jackals and a large number of bird species rarely come into the focus of conservation. Unlike mega species, these wildlife have been thriving in sparse jungles and indeed, many within our own backyards. Unfortunately, rampant destruction of the city's green cover and open spaces with trees and shrubs and the uncalled-for concretisation of our home campuses are pushing these beautiful creatures to the brink. It is very much possible, though, to give our urban wildlife some much-needed scope to sustain themselves by leaving their small habitats intact.

Shisu becomes city's urban animal icon

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati : The city got its first urban animal icon - Gangetic River Dolphin (Shisu) on June 6.

Three animals were selected for the contest - Black Softshell Turtle (Bormuria kaso), Greater Adjutant Stork (Hargila) and Gangetic River Dolphin. The contest was an initiative of the Kamrup Metropolitan District Administration (DC), Assam State Biodiversity Board, State Forest Department and NGO Help Earth.

"The contest was possible only due to the support from the public. More than 60,000 people participated in the voting that included students from various schools and col-



leges. The Gangetic River Dolphin won with 24,247 votes out of 60,003 total votes," said M Angamuthu, DC, Kamrup (M).

It may be mentioned, Guwahati is the first city in India to have its city animal.

He added, "The reason behind selecting a city animal is

not to give an iconic image to any animal but to create awareness about these animals and the biodiversity in Guwahati. From this date, Shisu shall carry forward the legacy of conversation and protection of urban biodiversity of Guwahati."

Jayaditya Purkayastha, gen-

eral secretary, NGO Help Earth, said, "The main motive is to create awareness among the people regarding the biodiversity of the city. We will be engaged in the conservation and preservation of all these animals." The online voting process was launched on March 7 and concluded on June 5 midnight. 76 schools and colleges across Guwahati participated in the voting process. The Greater Adjutant Stork received 18,454 votes and Black soft-shell turtle received 17,302 votes.

He added, "We will launch missions relating to rescue of animals, installing bird boxes and setting up nets under the nests to prevent death of the hatchlings."

डॉलफिन गुवाहाटी एनिमल घोषित, मिले सर्वाधिक वोट



गुवाहाटी, 6 जून (खबर सवादादाता)। असम का गुवाहाटी आज अपना शहर जीववाला देश का पहला शहर बन गया क्योंकि कामरूप

मेट्रोपोलिटन जिला प्रशासन ने गंगा नदी के डॉल्फिन को शहर का प्रतीक घोषित किया है। कामरूप मेट्रोपोलिटन के उपायुक्त एम अंगमुथु ने यहां

संवाददाता सम्मेलन में बताया कि इस जीव को स्थानीय रूप से सिहू कहा जाता है, जो अब गुवाहाटी का शहर जीव होगा। जिला प्रशासन ने शहर का प्रतीक जीव तय करने के लिए तीन संरक्षित जीवों के वास्तु ऑनलाइन और ऑफलाइन मतदान कराया था। ए तीनों ही जीवन विलुप्त होने की कगार पर हैं। इस प्रतियोगिता में गंगा नदी के डॉल्फिन के अलावा काला सॉफ्टशेल टर्टल (बोर कामो) कछुआ और ग्रेटर एडजुटेंट स्टोर्क (हर्गिला) थे। ग्रेटर एडजुटेंट स्टोर्क एक विशेष प्रकार का सागर है। हाल के एक सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार गुवाहाटी के पास ब्रह्मपुत्र में 2000 से भी सिहू हैं जबकि इस नदी और उसकी सहायक नदियों में काला सॉफ्टशेल टर्टल बहुत ही कम हैं। गुवाहाटी के आसपास ग्रेटर एडजुटेंट स्टोर्क 1200 से भी कम हैं।

Our team for City's Animal Campaign



Sanchari



Sanchita



Dhritiman



Ananya



Sayanti



Sagarika

