

Aaranyak express grave concern on rhino poaching



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Aaranyak, one of the most prominent conservation group in the country has expressed its shock and deepest grievance at the recent incidences of poaching of four rhinos in the flood stricken Kaziranga National Park in just three days time. This is a massive setback to the efforts towards conservation and protection of this unique creature that finds an inherent place in the very heart of Assamese culture.

We strongly feel that the management of the Assam Forest Department has not been up to the task of protecting the rhinos, especially in conditions of flooding of the Park. This, we feel, can be ascribed to a complete lack of coordination between the Forest Department and the Karbi Anglong Autonomous District Council Forest Department, failure of intelligence gathering and appropriate action thereby, a lack of proactive action and commitment on the part of concerned officials of the Department and a complete lack of prior planning to face such natural flooding that occurs on a yearly basis. It is unfortunate that the authorities failed to learn anything from the last flood in June 2012 when as many as three flood displaced rhinos were poached. Absence of rapport and coordination with the fringe communities has also weakened the Forest Department's monitoring mechanism over the peripheral areas of the Park.

We strongly demand that the State Forest Department and Kaziranga National Park Authority ensures proper coordination with the KAADC Forest Department to ensure safety to the straying rhino in the foothills. We also demand that perpetrators of the crime be pursued and brought to the justice and an accountability should be introduced within the authority which is responsible for protection of our natural heritage. At the same time, Aaranyak also demands that the State Forest Department and Ministry of Environment and Forest, GOI undertake serious efforts to prevent any such incidents in future.

Issued by

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