

Endangered Greater Adjutant stork released



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Purnima Devi Barman 23 March 2013 9921 views

Three endangered Greater Adjutant stork juveniles namely Monalisa, Rima and Lulu were released on March 22 at Dadara, about 12 kms off Guwahati by Kamrup SP Partha Sarathi Mahanta. After the release programme one more chick Saru was released by villagers in Dadara who rescued it and hand raised for two days in the village itself. The three birds fallen from their nests in Dadara – world’s biggest nesting site for the species, were rescued and hand-raised under Kokrajhar Rescue Center, WTI. Assam is the largest nesting ground for this bird, of which only about 1000-1200 mature individuals remain as per IUCN Red List estimates.

“I highly appreciate the local villagers and NGOs for doing such commendable effort for wildlife conservation. Attending such events rejuvenated my mind and I appeal every official to help such NGOs, Researchers to strengthen their work “ said Mr. Mahanta . “The Brahmaputra floodplain is the main stronghold for the Greater adjutants. The nesting sites are scattered here, but Dadara has more than 100 nesting trees, which makes it perhaps the biggest nesting site in the country and maybe in the world,” said Dr Rathin Barman of WTI.

Loss of nesting trees remain one of the major threats to these storks. They are also threatened by chicks falling off the nests, the intensity of which increases with over-crowding.

Supported by the Charities Aid Foundation, WTI provided the grant to Paresh Das, a local school headmaster, who had proposed the RAP to save chicks fallen off their nests under the guidance of Purnima Devi Barman, Coordinator , Greater Adjutant Conservation programme , Aaranyak who is extensively working for conservation of Adjutant Stork in Dadara since 2009.

“ Nets were placed under nesting trees to break the fall of the chicks. Once rescued, they were transported to IFAW-WTI run CWRC (Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation) Transit Home in Kokrajhar for hand-raising”. Said a local youth Diapk.

“More than 40storks die annually in Dadara, mostly juvenile that have fallen off their nests. With the support of local NGOs and medical attention provided by IFAW-WTI, this year we are successful in saving a good number of them,” said Das, who is also involving his students to not just help him with the project, but also to spread awareness among them.

“An identification mark has been engraved on the released birds. Post-release monitoring will be carried out for next three month. We will help in monitoring the birds” said Research Scholar – Purnima. Purnima who has done Greater Adjutant Survey in Assam and Cambodia last month said that Dadara has the largest number of world’s population which she will be publishing through a scientific paper very soon. Scientists from Willdlife conservation society, Cambodia who is working on Greater Adjutant stork population in Cambodia has joined hands with Purnima to write this scientific publicatioion.

IFAW-WTI veterinarian Dr Panjit Basumatary who looked after the birds, said, “The released chicks weigh 9, 10 and 12 kgs respectively and were healthy during release. They immediately flew off following the release and landed on the fields and started browsing.”

The programme was organized by Purnima Devi Barman, Aaranyak and Paresh Das from Sankardev sishu Niketan, Dadara.

Purnima Devi Barman

Wildlife biologist at Aaranyak Nature Club, Guwahati.

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