

Governor holds meeting with Environment and Forest Department

Reiterates the department's potential to contribute to State's GDP

Guwahati, July 26: Assam Governor Gulab Chand Kataria today took a review of Environment and Forest department at a meeting held at the conference hall of Raj Bhavan where Additional Chief Secretary of Environment and Forest Department, Ravi Sankar Prasad, presented a detailed report on the department's activities.

The presentation highlighted all the schemes and programmes that the department is implementing. He also apprised the Governor of the floral and faunal population in the state and the steps that the department has been taking for their upkeep. He also gave a snapshot of the density of protected and endanger species like rhino, tiger, river dolphin etc. The Governor also took stock of the steps that the government has undertaken to stop poaching.

During the meeting, the Governor took stock of the conservation initiatives that the government has adopted in national parks, wild life sanctuaries, reserve forests. The Governor during the meeting inquired about the contribution of forest in the GDP. He said that as 36 per cent of the total areas of the state is covered with forests. Therefore, the department should set a target and work in the direction through which the forest department can contribute to the expeditious growth of the GDP. The Governor also asked the officials to work to increase the green cover for the wild lives so that they do not come out of their habitat in search of food to the nearby human habitations.

Governor Kataria however, expressed happiness and lauded the forest department for its efforts in making rhino safe as the instances of rhino poaching has come to down to zero. Underlining the importance of green coverage and forestry, the Governor said that efforts should be laid to increase the green coverage every year. He said that pollution can be controlled only when there are forests.

The Governor also reiterated on the need for the department to take care of all the essential components for making national parks and wild life sanctuaries the most sought after destinations not only for the wild life enthusiasts, but also for the researchers, academia and tourists across the world. He also hailed the department for ensuring the existence of various micro-ecosystems in the forests of Assam that have metamorphosed into a unique macro system that made national parks and wild life sanctuaries a vibrant biodiversity hotspot.

The Governor said that the roads leading to the wild life sanctuaries should be developed in accordance with the forest guidelines. He also said that the locals should be involved to promote wild life tourism by providing home stay arrangements or well managed staying facilities to attract tourists in the fringe areas.

Moreover, for fostering growth of the bamboo-based industry, the department should take some measures which come as a response to the challenges faced by the bamboo-based entrepreneurs. To achieve the envisioned success, the Environment and Forest Department, in collaboration with the Department of Industry should aim to maximize the positive outcomes for both the bamboo industry and its associated products. He also said that market should be created for Assam Furniture.

The Governor also asked the PCBA to adopt stringent measures to address the pressing issue of biomedical waste and municipal waste disposal. These measures are imperative to safeguard public health and preserve the environment

PCCF M.K.Yadav, PCCF (WL) and CWLW Sandeep Kumar, Addl. PCCF P.J.Vijayakar, Commissioner and Secretary to Governor SS.Meenakshi Sundaram, Chairman PCBA Dr.Arup Kumar Mishra, Secretary to the Governor, Swapna Dutta Deka, along with a host of senior officials from Environment and Forest Department and Raj Bhavan were present in the meeting.

P.R.O.

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