

Brief Note on the One day Meeting of Biodiversity Management Committees on the BD Act and ABS held on 16th February 2015

- The “Meeting of Biodiversity Management Committees on the BD Act and ABS” was held in the Hall No. 1 of the Melaghar Municipal Council Office. The six villages, namely, Telkjala; Bordowal; Dwarkamurasinghpara; South Taibandal; Chandanmura; and Kemtali had been selected for this purpose and all the BMC members were invited for this meeting. The SPU team (Samhita, Subha and Anindita) and Biprajit were representing TBB besides Janardhan and his team of two persons. The Sabhapati was the Chairperson of Melaghar Municipal Council, Smt. Anima Malya Barman, and the inaugurator was Vice Chairman, Nalchar BAC Shri Nimai Debnath. Shri Subroto Sen, FR, Melaghar was also present for some time as he had to leave as Addl DFO had come to his range.
- At the outset, two minutes silence was observed to mark respect to the departed soul of Late Sudhir Das. This was followed by lighting of lamp by Shri Nimai Debnath in presence of MS, TBB and Smt Anima Malya Barman which marked the beginning of the day long meet of BMCs.
- Shri Nimai, in his inaugural address, exhorted the BMC members to join together for making this new project, which is aiming at reaching economic benefits from the scores of bio-resources present in the villages but are not valued as of now, to the villagers for their economic and social development. He said that the raw material that is being collected from the villages as of now is sold at a throw away prices. He told the villagers that here is a scope through this project to add value to those raw materials and arrange their selling in the outside markets for fetching more prices per unit. He urged upon all the members to tell all their colleagues who could not come to the meeting due to some compelling reasons.
- This was followed by a power point presentation in Bengali by Ms Samhita Ray, SPC, SPU, TBB. The presentation traced the history of origin of this Project and its main objectives and how to achieve those as per the given methodology. She exemplified on few tradable bio-resources showing how raw material could be converted into highly priced tradable commodities likely to attract more sale price. She also spoke on the PIC and MAT concepts and their usefulness for the BMCs while going for negotiations. The names of the 6 villages where the Project is going to be launched were declared in the presentation along with the ecosystem they are located within.
- This was followed by a brief presentation on the PBRs of three of the six identified villages’ people’s biodiversity registers to highlight what is being documented in this legal resource rich register depicting any given villages’ bio resources. Once these bio resources are documented in these registers and vetted by the BMC and TBB, these resources assume legal status and then no one can take those away from the given villages without the written permission of the given BMC. While giving permission, the BMC may levy some charges to be paid by the users in the accounts of the BMC called Local Biodiversity Fund. The PBR also documents scores of traditional knowledge in existence in a given villages and some of those could merit to be considered for patenting and IPR under the BD Act. It is also told to the gathering that PBR being the legal document and only those bio-resources that are listed in this could only be used for negotiation under the ABS mechanism, therefore, it is all the more important that the villagers are conscious to ensure that no highly economically important bio-resources are missed out from the PBRs. Some potential tradable bioresources about which the BMC members expressed are “Black Tulsi”, “Bayra” & “Haritaki” which are the raw materials for making “Trifala” and that these are largely available within the villages. Another prospective is the bark of a plant named “Ayra” used as medicinal purpose which is plenty and has a good market with Bangladesh.
- This followed a brief experience sharing by Shri Kishore Mura Singh, Member, Dwarkamura Singh para BMC about various tasks undertaken and likely to be

undertaken by them in their village for conservation of biodiversity. He also told the gathering about his visit to Hyderabad for attending international workshop on Biodiversity and due to which he felt highly enriched by meeting various experts in this field from across the globe. Mr Kishore also told that he could know many new ideas out of that meet and had been engaged in implementing suitable ideas in the village. He also expressed great interest in this Project and admitted that he was not aware on this new concept before coming to this meeting and find this a very important tool to get true economic returns for various resources available in the village that will add to the economic and social development of the local people. He thanks the TBB for including his village for this project and strongly assured to carry out this project with desired success in his village. Mr Kishore also mentioned that 70 to 80 species of rice and around 100 species of medicinal plants are present at Dwarkamurasinghpara which could be a potential resource for ABS.

- Dr. A. K. Gupta, MS, TBB spoke on the importance of the project and had one on one dialogue with the villagers rather than delivering purely a lecture so that they understand the subject fully and take interest. The MS, TBB told them that they should be proud of being part of this project as only 6 villages have been chosen out of more than 1000 villages in the state for this project and theirs' happen to be one of those. In case, success is shown in this project then the villagers of all these 6 villages will be the pioneer not only in Tripura, but across the northeastern states in this aspect. The MS, TBB also asked them to hold a meeting immediately on return with other members who could not attend the meeting here and share the thoughts about this issue. It is further urged upon them to agree to this project being implemented in their village with full interest. The MS, TBB almost had dialogue with representative from each of the 6 villages individually about the project and their role for implementation. Even the villagers were asked to speak as much as possible to have clear understanding developed within. The MS, TBB declared that the SPU team shall be visiting each one of them in their village from now on and hold meetings there as a follow up to this combined meeting this day. The MS, TBB also asked them to identify tradable resources in their village having potential of entering into an agreement.
- Smt. Anima Malya Barman, Chairperson, Melaghar Municipal Council spoke at the end and once again requested all the villagers to seize this opportunity of empowering themselves for their own economic and social development. This is a unique Project and never before such concept of earning through bio-resources, which otherwise taken as wastes nobody's properties and ignored, has come up. She also expressed her anguish over less attendance and called upon all those present that this message must be passed on to their colleagues for holistics benefits to be drawn from this project.
- The one day workshop was over after the speech by Mrs Anima and all were served with working lunch.
- Dr. A. K. Gupta, MS, TBB also had a meeting with the monitors who have been selected for each village (@ two per village). However, most of the monitors had already left after lunch excepting the ones from DwarkamuraSinghpara, Chandanmura and Kentali villages. The MS, TBB deliberated to make them understand the role they are to play in this project. They are going to be the representative of TBB to make the villagers understand about this project, they are to find out the tradable resources in the village with the help of the local people and trace the entire chain of business till the end source of users and how much monetary transaction takes place including the initial earnings by the supplier from the village. The MS, TBB also told them that they will be given some training on this aspect at Agartala and all expenses while carrying out the monitoring works shall be met with from the Project.

Pictorial Documentation

