

Minutes of 27th Meeting of Assam State Biodiversity Board held on 23rd September 2021 in the Conference hall of Chief Secretary- Assam, 3rd Floor, C-Block, Assam Secretariat, Dispur

The 27th meeting of the Assam State Biodiversity Board was held on 23rd February 2021, in the Conference hall of Chief Secretary- Assam, 3rd Floor, C-Block, Assam Secretariat, Dispur.

A list of the Members and invitees present in the meeting is at **Annexure-I**.

The Chairperson welcomed everyone present in the meeting and requested the Member secretary to initiate Agenda-wise discussions.

Agenda item 1: The minutes of the 26th Board meeting were confirmed.

Agenda item 2: The Board was informed the following actions taken on agenda of previous meetings:

- a. During 26th Board meeting, the Forest Department was asked to take appropriate action to return back the government the amount of application fee collected towards a recruitment examination along with the interest in consultation with Finance Department. The Board noted that the Forest department informed that directions of govt. have been sought on continuation of ^{the} office process or to be done through the proposed central organization.

The Chairperson directed the Board to pursue the matter with the administrative department and expedite the process of returning back the government a total of Rs. 2,47,13,136/- (Rs.2,17,98,633/- as principal amount and Rs. 29,14,503/- as interest accrued). The amount could be asked for from govt. for the purpose as per any directions in future.

- b. The Board noted that the accrued interest of Rs. 43,76,470.96 (Rupees forty three lakh seventy six thousand four hundred seventy and ninety six paise) on the amount released by State NABARD under NAF-CC project of the MoEF & CC, Govt. of India (Rs.7,71,32,395/-) had been returned back to KTCF-NAF-CC project account on 01/09/2020.
- c. The Board noted the following regarding implementation of Access & Benefit Sharing Regulation, 2014 in Assam:
 - i. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for access to biological resources for commercial purposes was approved.
 - ii. An online portal with payment gateway was developed for the receiving the ABS application for research and commercial purposes.
 - iii. "Notice for Compliance" for ABS was issued in 4 daily news papers on 28th June 2021.
 - iv. A Radio Jingle at Gup-Shup 94.3 FM radio from 06/07/2021 to 08/07/2021 was initiated for wider publicity of the "Notice for Compliance".
 - v. The State Drug Licensing Authority, AYUSH, Dispur was communicated to comply with the provisions of Biological Diversity Act 2002. A list of 44 Formal Ayurvedic Units of Assam was provided and accordingly, 33 Notices was disposed to seeking prior intimation.

- vi. One Prior Intimation application was received. The process of scrutiny of the received application is under process.

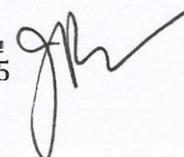
Agenda Item- 3:

- i. The Board was informed that the tenure of the Board was extended by three (3) years vide another Govt. notification dated 12th April 2021, which was earlier reconstituted by the order of Govt. of Assam vide letter no. NO. FRW.57/2005/Vol-I/220 Dated Dispur, the 25th February, 2021.
- ii. The Board noted the constitution of a State Level Peoples' Biodiversity Register (PBR) Quality Evaluation and Monitoring Committee with 6 members by the Govt. of Assam to oversee the quality of PBRs of Assam, comprising of following:
- | | |
|---|-------------|
| a. Dr. A. H. Khan, IFS (Retd. PCCF) | Chairperson |
| b. Dr. Nilakshee Devi, Professor, Gauhati University | Member |
| c. Dr. Narayan Sharma, Asst. Professor, Cotton University | Member |
| d. Dr. Ranjit Kr. Bhattacharyya, Retd. Professor, AAU | Member |
| e. Shri Alkesh S.K. Kashyap, President, NEWFA, Guwahati | Member |
| f. Dr. Bijoy Neog, Expert Member- ASBB | Member |
- The Board was informed that the committee met 3 times to discuss the objectives of the committee on 5th December, 2020, 7th May 2021 and 20th September 2021 respectively. A consultation meeting was also held on 31st May 2021 through online mode with the Central PBR committee and National Biodiversity Authority, Chennai.
- The Board noted the decision of the Committee to initiate field validation visits in three BMCs of Kamrup (M) on 30th September 2021, to start up the work as per the Monitoring Framework for evaluating quality of People's Biodiversity Registers.
- The Board was informed that the Committee expressed the requirement of minimum of 2 support staff with equipments i.e. laptop, computer, printer etc to start the compilation of field data and reports.
- iii. The Board was informed that the Accountant General Audit for the accounts of the Board for FY 2014-15 to 2017-18 was successfully completed.
- iv. The Board noted the following regarding the matter related to NGT, OA NO.347/2016 regarding constitution of BMCs & preparation of PBRs at all local body level:
- The progress of formation of 2549 BMCs at all local level was completed on 31-01-2020 with the assistance of the Panchayat & Rural Department, GDD and UDD, Assam.
- The progress of preparation of 2549 PBRs was completed on 15.02.2020. The soft copies of PBRs in respect of all Gaon Panchayat, Zilla Parisad, Municipal Board and Municipal Corporation was forwarded to the P & RD and MBs respectively for adoption and printing of hard copies at their end.

- It was informed to the Board that as of now, only 318 numbers of duly adopted hard copies of PBR was received and 2231 PBRs are yet to be received.
 - The P & RD Department was requested to update the existing PBRs of newly constituted BMCs at GP and ZP level as per under the Fifteen Finance Commission, as per GoI letter dated 05/08/2020, attached at **Annexure- II**.
 - The Chairperson directed Commissioner & Secretary, P& RD Department to take immediate action on adoption and printing of balance PBRs of newly formed BMCs. And initiate the updation process of existing PBRs of newly formed BMCs in line with the above mentioned GoI letter date 05/08/2020
- v. The Board was informed about the following court cases:
1. PIL 30/2020: Gauhati High Court order dated 4/6/2020 in the matter of PIL 30/2020, Vikram Rajkhowa and ANR. vrs The Union of India and Ors. related to Saleki & Tikok open cast coal mining.
 - The Board noted the submission of statement in the form of response/reply to the Justice B.P. Commission of Enquiry.
 2. The Board was informed about the following court cases related to the 'Biodiversity Impact Assessment at Dibru Saikhowa NP, Assam:
 - i. PIL/35/2020: Gauhati High Court, Mrinmoy Khatanar and Amar Jyoti Deka vrs The Union of India and 14 Ors in the matter of Biodiversity Impact Assessment by Assam State Biodiversity Board for OIL India Projects.
 - The Board noted that Mr. Rupam Jyoti Das, Advocate, Gauhati High Court represented the Board and filled an affidavit on 05/3/2021.
 - ii. Appeal No. 04/2020/EZ (I.A. No.34/2020) Bimal Gogoi & Anr. Appellant Vs Union of India & Ors.:
 - The Board noted that Mr. Gautam Chaudhury, Advocate, is representing the Board in this matter as per order NGT order dated 06/08/2021. An affidavit was filed on 23/08/2021 before NGT, Eastern Zone, Kolkata Bench.
 - iii. Appeal No. 08/2020/EZ (I.A. No.64/2020) in the matter of Mridu Paban Phukon & Anr. Appellant (s) vs Union of India & Ors.:
 - The Board noted that Mr. Shuvodeep Roy, Advocate-on-Record, Standing Counsel for State of Assam, Supreme Court of India, is representing the Board as per NGT order dated 05/08/2021. An affidavit filed on 13/09/2021 before NGT, Easter Zone, Kolkata Bench.
- vi. The Board noted and approved the 'Tripartite' agreement that was signed on 04/05/2021 between the Assam State Biodiversity Board, International Union for conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and the Oil India Limited to conduct Biodiversity Impact study at 7 (seven) locations under Dibru-Saikhowa National Park Area. North West of Baghjan PML under Tinsukia District Assam (collectively "Site").
- The Board was informed that the under the guidance of ASBB, IUCN will conduct comprehensive biodiversity assessments, Ecosystem service review and develop mitigation and management plan.

- The Board also noted that the partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for conducting the study.
 - It was informed to the Board that it is pertinent to note herein that the Board has limited resources, manpower, technical tools etc. at its disposal due to budgetary constraints and as a Biodiversity Impact Study Assessment is a vast, lengthy, technically challenging and manpower-intensive exercise, which would require the Study to be carried out over a couple of seasons. As such, the Assam State Biodiversity Board has partnered with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for the study.
- vii. The Board noted completion of 3rd batch of online Internship Program for preparation of Digital Biodiversity Database of Assam on 28th November, 2020.
- The Board was also informed that 6 interns were engaged for 45 days for developing the database from secondary sources.
 - A total of 676 algae species, 273 fungi species, and 378 bryophyte species were documented and updated in the Excel sheet.
 - A datasheet of 1306 medicinal plants were developed including 55 fungi, 30 pteridophytes, 7 gymnosperms and 1214 angiosperms.
 - In the fauna section, a datasheet of 1069 invertebrate species and 1498 vertebrate species were compiled from secondary sources.
 - The Board noted that compilation of datasheets is going on.
- viii. The Board was informed the following regarding Theme-based research projects for small, medium and large grants category:
- a) Ongoing Projects:
- 1) Medium Grant: Exploration of crop wild relatives in KarbiAnglong District, Assam: Diversity, Ethnobotany and Prioritization for Conservation:
 - Second quarter report was received.
 - 2) Small grant: Developing a conservation action plan for the *Cnemaspisassamensis* through systematic evaluation and threat assessment.
 - Second quarter report was received.
- b) Project proposals received for FY 2020-21:
- i. The Board was informed that research proposals from Individuals/Organization/ Institutions for conducting theme-based research projects for small (up to 2 lakh) and medium grants (up to 5 lakh) and Large grants (up to 15 lakhs) were invited, advertisement was published on 11/02/2021. Accordingly, following proposals were received:
 - Small grants(up to 2 lakh) =11 Proposals received
 - Medium grants(up to 5 lakh) =11 Proposals received
 - Large grants (up to 15 lakh) =6 Proposals received
 - ii. The Board noted that the preliminary evaluation was completed on 25/03/2021 by the Internal Evaluation Committee and shortlisted 3 proposals for Small grants and 6 proposals for Medium grants.
 - iii. The Board was informed that due to no fund allocation under Large Grant all the received proposals were cancelled.

- iv. The Board noted that the final evaluation of shortlisted proposals by Research Advisory Committee (RAC) was held on 07/08/2021.
- v. It was noted by the Board that based on the recommendation of the RAC, the grants will be sanctioned depending on availability of fund.
- ix. The Board was informed that the task of preparation of Majuli Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) Management Plan was assigned to Integrated Development Organization (IDO), Bhopal. The Final Report is due on 30th September 2021.
- x. The Board noted that various training, capacity building and awareness generation workshops for strengthening the BMC members were organized in 21BMCs of BTC during October 2020 to December 2020, 3AP BMCs of Kamrup District on 19th February 2021 and 4 AP BMCs of Nagaon District on 5th March 2021.
- xi. It was informed to the Board that the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), Chennai have been organizing monthly review meeting of SBBs since September 2019 and the Board has been attending the same by providing all required information related to status of BMC constitution, PBR preparation and other works of Assam. The Board noted that the last i.e. the 16th review meeting was held on 27/08/2021, through online mode.
- xii. The Board was informed that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 07/09/2021 between the Board and Turtle Survival Alliance Foundation India (TSAFI), for undertaking conservation and recovery of endangered turtles and tortoises (*Nilssonina nigricans* and other notified target turtle and tortoise notified).
- The Board noted that the MoEF& CC, New Delhi, notified 14 species (7 plants & 7 animals) of Assam as Threatened Species under Section-38 of the Biological Diversity Act 2002, including *Nilssonina nigricans* vide Notification no. S.O. 3846 (E) dated 2nd August 2018.
 - It was informed to the Board that in the aforementioned notification it is stated that “The Assam State Biodiversity Board shall undertake studies in all species of notified species for holistic understanding, propagation of the notified species for the purpose of *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation and rehabilitation; and awareness programmes and provide educational materials on notified species for forest department personnel, Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), ecotourism programmes, and forest dwellers and tribals”.
 - The duration of the above mentioned MoU is five (5) years.
- xiii. The Board noted the publication of the following:
- a. The Annual Report FY 2018-19.
 - b. Booklet-Threatened Species of Assam (English): released during the meeting.
 - c. Booklet- Majuli Biodiversity Heritage Site (English): released during the meeting.
 - d. Booklet-Threatened Species of Assam (Assamese): released during the meeting.
 - e. Booklet- Majuli Biodiversity Heritage Site (Assamese): released during the meeting.



- xiv. The Board noted that 17 Research Proposals was granted no objection by the Board. The detail proposals are at **Annexure-III**.
- xv. It was also informed to the Board the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), Chennai, provided one Intern Ms. Sushmita Dam during March 2021, under the Biodiversity Samrakshan Internship Programme (BSIP) for assisting the Board in BMC and PBR related activities and expediting the registration of 2549 BMC notifications in NBA's Electronic Dashboard.
- xvi. The Board noted the details of financial assistance received during August 2020 to August 2021 as below:

a. August 2020 to March 2021

- From National Biodiversity Authority	
o Celebration of Bioday, 2020	₹ 1,61,922.00
o Updation of PBR at KAAC	₹ 6,00,000.00
o ABS fund for Benefit claimers	₹ 9,833.00
- From Govt. of Assam	
o Salary Grant	₹19,77,000.00
- From Others	
o Sale of publications	₹ 13,270.00
o Bank Interest	₹ 5,78,732.00
o Wrong deposit	₹ 25,002.00
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Total=	₹43,65,759.00

b. April 2021 to August 2021

- From National Biodiversity Authority	
o Updation of PBRs in DHAC	₹5,40,000.00
o Engagement of contractual staff	₹5,00,000.00
- From Govt. of Assam	Nil
- From others	
o Sale of publications	₹ 1,450.00
o ABS fund for Benefit claimers	₹ 32,066.00
o ABS application fee	₹ 979.00
o Bank interest	₹4,53,276.00
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Total=	₹15,27,771.00

Agenda Item-4: The Board ratified the following:

- i. The Board approved the format of the Annual Accounts for onward submission to the Principal Accountant General for consultation.
- ii. The Board approved the expenditure made during August 2020 to August 2021:
- a. August 2020 to March 2021
- | | |
|--|---------------|
| - From National Biodiversity Authority, Grant | |
| o Celebration of Bioday 2020 | ₹ 66,562.00 |
| o Awareness generation workshops at BTC & DHAC | ₹ 90,000.00 |
| o Salary to contractual staff | ₹ 9,14,996.00 |
| o Preparation of PBR | ₹ 91,000.00 |
| o Translation of materials, designing & printing | ₹ 87,760.00 |
| o Training & capacity building workshops of Chairperson and MS of BMCs | ₹ 1,40,000.00 |
| o Disbursement of ABS fund to concerned BMC | ₹ 9,500.00 |
| - From APFBC | |
| o Salary to Support Staff | ₹ 2,04,720.00 |

- From State Grants-in-aid	
o Salary to regular staff	₹14,84,883.00
o Project- Plant Diversity Study (Dima Hasao)	₹ 2,97,000.00
o Project-Conservation of Cnemaspisassamensis	₹ 99,500.00
o Project-Exploration of Crop wild relatives in KAAC	₹ 2,50,000.00
o Project- Preparation of Majuli BHS Management Plan	₹ 1,80,000.00
o Updation of 1 st draft PBR & entry in Digital PBR	₹ 24,000.00
o Audit Fee (AG audit & Statutory audit)	₹ 3,47,890.00
o Initiating implementation of ABS regulation (making of online ABS portal)	₹ 3,67,924.00
o Capacity building workshop/promotion of plantation drive	₹ 3,80,000.00
o Office expenditure	₹ 2,40,536.00
o Legal Fees/Charges	₹ 2,350.00
o Publication & Publicity	₹ 1,16,324.00
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Total=	₹53,94,945.00
o Refund of unutilized amount for FY 2019-20	₹13,70,810.00
- From Bank Interest	
o Interest accrued on unutilized amount received from State Govt. for the FY 2019-20	₹ 1,19,992.00
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Total=	₹14,90,802.00
- Liabilities paid off:	
o From Application fees of Forest Dept. Recruitment	₹ 6,10,000.00
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Total=	₹ 6,10,000.00
b. <u>April 2021 to August 2021</u>	
- From National Biodiversity Authority	
o Updation of PBR in KAAC (out of last year unspent balance)	₹6,00,000.00
o Updation of PBR in DHAC	₹5,40,000.00
o Celebration of bio-day (to be reimbursed by the NBA)	₹1,09,458.00
o Engagement of contractual staff	₹7,25,694.00
o Printing of Booklets 'Threatened species & Majuli BHS (out of last year unspent balance)	₹1,73,934.00
- From State grants-in-aid	
o Salary (out of own fund/bank interest)	₹8,52,169.00
o Non salary (out of own fund/bank interest)	
▪ TA/DA of 5 State PBR Committee members	₹ 5,000.00
▪ Repairing of AC	₹ 6,100.00
▪ Legal Fees	₹ 12,500.00
▪ Office expenses	₹ 30,000.00
▪ Telephone Bill	₹ 18,097.00
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Total=	₹ 30,72,952.00

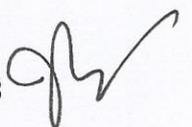
Agenda Item-5: It was informed to the Board that due to present pandemic situation the International Day for Biological Diversity 2021 was celebrated through organizing various online competitions like paintings, speech, photography, webinar series, publishing radio jingles etc. on the theme of "We are Part of the Solutions# For Nature" sponsored by NBA.

Agenda Item-6: The following matters were placed before the Board for consideration/approval:

- i. The Board approved Action Plan of the Board for FY 2021-22.
- ii. The Board approved the audited accounts of the statutory audit of the Board for FY 2019-20.
- iii. The Board approved the draft Annual Report for FY 2019-20.
- iv. Regarding implementation of Access & Benefit Sharing (ABS) Regulation 2014 in Assam the following were approved:
 - a. The Board approved charging a processing fee of **Rs 200/-** per application in addition to the 'Prior Intimation' fee of Rs 1000/- payable to the Board for access to bioresources for commercial purposes.
 - b. The Board suggested to pursue the matter of opening of a separate saving account of Assam State Biodiversity Board for Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) in a nationalized bank through Finance Department Assam. Till the final instruction from Finance Department the Board suggested to use the existing bank account for the same.
 - c. The Board approved to constitute an Expert Committee to evaluate the received ABS applications for commercial utilization as per following:
 1. Expert in Plant Taxonomy/Medicinal Plants
 2. Expert in Agricultural and Horticultural field
 3. A Legal Expert well versed with the provisions of BD Act 2002 and company laws etc.
 4. Expert in trade linkages/Economists etc.
 5. Expert- Subject matter specialist (Microbiology/Biotechnology/ Zoology etc. on need basis)
 6. A representative of National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) ~~on~~ need basis
 - d. The Board approved hiring of interns/project staff for initiating the ABS-Cell of ASBB for starting the works related to ABS application processing, district-wise data compilation of tradable bioresources, organizing awareness for stakeholders, compiling the contact details of commercial users of biological resources and reaching out to them etc. under the State Grant budget.

Agenda Item-7: Other issues:

- a. The Chairperson suggested to include the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forests Force (PCCF & HoFF)- Assam as member of the Board. Accordingly, instructed the administrative department to pursue the process of inclusion of the PCCF & HoFF- Assam as member, as per applicable Act & Rules (i.e. Biological Act, 2002 & Assam Biodiversity (Amendment) Rules, 2019).
- b. Dr. P. C. Bhattacharjee, Expert Member, desired Board's active participation in preparing Urban Biodiversity Index and Smart City Projects by providing details of documented information of flora, fauna and associated traditional knowledge as per PBR prepared.

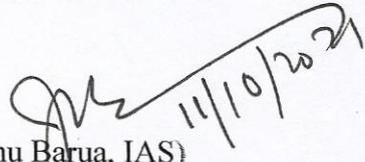


- c. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forests Force-Assam expressed the need of a Legal Advisor of the Board to deal with the court related matters.
- d. The Chairperson suggested the Board to find out more revenue generating sources other than ABS, collaborate with the other revenue generating SBBs, note the activities undertaken by the SBBs and implement the same in Assam for strengthening the Assam State Biodiversity Board.

The date and venue for the next meeting to be decided in due course.

The meeting ended with thanks from the Chair to everyone present.

Approved,



(Jishnu Barua, IAS)

Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam &
Chairperson, Assam State Biodiversity Board

Annexure-I**Members/Invitees present in the 27th Meeting of Assam State Biodiversity Board: 23rd September 2021**

Sr.	Name	Designation	Contact No.	E-mail Id
Official Members				
1	Shri Jishnu Barua, IAS	Chief Secretary-Assam & Chairperson, ASBB	0361-2261120	cs-assam@nic.in
2	Shri Avinash Joshi, IAS	Principal Secretary, Environment & Forest Department, Assam	0361-2237243	avinashp.joshi@nic.in
3	Shri Vinod Seshan, IAS	Director, Agriculture- Assam	9435340685	vinod.seshan@nic.in
4	Smt. Ropjyoti Saharia, IAS	Secretary, Agriculture Department, Assam	----	----
5	Smt. Jolly Das Brahma, ACS	Commissioner & Secy., P & RD Department, Assam	9430112149	jdasbrahma@gmail.com
6	Mr. N. K. Debnath, ACS	Director of Fisheries, Assam	9435070134	dirfishassam2019@gmail.com
7	Shri D. Neog	A.D.A. (S/s) Div. of Agriculture- Assam	9864050153	debojit2neog@gmail.com
8	Shri K. S. P. V. Pavan Kumar, IFS	Addl. Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Biodiversity & Climate Change) & Member Secretary-ASBB	9989522202	kspv.pavankumar@gmail.com
Ex- Officio Members				
9	Dr. P. C. Bhattacharjee	Expert Member- ASBB	9435148702	bhattapc@gmail.com
10	Dr. Nirmali Medhi	Expert Member- ASBB	9435011083	nrmedhi6@gmail.com
Special Invitees				
11	Shri P. Bora, AFS	Joint Secretary, Finance	9401659829	----
12	Smt. Rashmi B. Gogoi, ACS	Deputy Secretary, A H Vety. Department	9435308350	----
Other Invitees				
13	Dr. Alka Bhargava, IFS	PCCF & HoFF- Assam	----	hoff-assam@gov.in

F.No.G-39011/2/2017-FD
Government of India
Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Jeevan Prakash Building, 11th Floor,
25 Kasturba Gandhi Marg,
New Delhi - 110001

Dated 5 Aug, 2020

To

The Principal Secretary / Secretary,
Panchayati Raj Departments,
All States

Subject: Clarifications sought by the States regarding utilization of Basic (Untied) Grants for items of works/activities under Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC) for Rural Local Bodies (RLBs)

Madam / Sir,

I am directed to say that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has received references from various States seeking clarification regarding items of works / activities that may be taken up by the Rural Local Bodies with the utilization of Basic (Untied) Grants under XV FC. In this connection, it is intimated that Basic (Untied) Grants under XV FC can be utilized by the local bodies for location-specific felt needs, except for salary or other establishment expenditure, in terms of the Operational Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Finance vide their Letter No. 15(2)FC-XV/FCD/2020-25 dated 1.06.2020. Further, the indicative items of works / activities that may be taken up by the RLBs by utilizing Basic (Untied) Grants for location-specific felt needs has been mentioned at **Annexure** for guidance.

2. This clarification is being issued to facilitate Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) to prioritise their activities to be taken up with the XV FC Basic (untied) grants and prevent their possible misutilisation on undesirable and extraneous items.

Vijay Kumar
5.8.2020

(Vijay Kumar)
Deputy Secretary to Government of India
Tel. No. 23356150 (021)

Utilization of the XV FC Basic (Untied) Grants recommended to Rural Local Bodies

Basic (Untied) Grants :

The XV FC has recommended 50% of the allocation as Basic Grants (Untied). The items of works / activities that may be taken up with the Basic Grants (Untied) include:

“Storm Water Drainage and water logging management, immunization of children, prevention of malnutrition of children, construction and repair and maintenance of roads within Gram Panchayat (GP) and inter GP, construction and repair of foot paths within GP and inter GP, construction and repair and maintenance of LED street lights and solar lighting as applicable (solar street light may be individual poles or centralized solar panel system) – within GP and inter GP; construction, repair and maintenance of crematorium and acquisition of land for crematorium and cremation grounds; acquisition of land & maintenance and upkeep of dead body burial ground; providing sufficient and high bandwidth Wi-Fi digital network services within GP; public library; recreation facilities including children’s park; playground; rural haat; sports & physical fitness equipment, etc. and any other basic improved/enhanced service mandated by State Government under relevant State legislations; recurring expenditure for electricity, water, collection and disposal & recycling waste, liquid/solid waste management equipments, manpower on outsourcing basis and other administrative expenses as essential, immediate relief works in the event of natural disasters/pandemic; discharge of responsibilities specifically mandated to Panchayats under various Acts/Laws e.g. preparation and updation of People’s Biodiversity Register (PBR) under Biodiversity Act, 2002”

The XV FC has not distinguished between O&M and capital expenditure within the component of locally felt needs. GPs can enter into Annual Maintenance Contracts/Service contracts for providing the services to rural inhabitants. However, expenditure from the Grants on the negative list namely expenditure on items already being funded from other schemes, felicitation/cultural functions/decorations/inauguration, Honorarium, TA/DA of elected representatives and salaries / honorarium of existing employees/permanent, doles / awards, entertainment, purchase of vehicles and air-conditioners are not allowed under this component.

It may also be mentioned that the above items of expenditure are indicative. The Basic (Untied) Grants under XV FC can be utilized by the local bodies for location-specific felt needs, **except for salary or other establishment expenditure**, in terms of the Operational Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Finance vide their Letter No. 15(2)FC-XV/FCD/2020-25 dated 1.06.2020.

Vijay K.
5.8.2020

Annexure-III

1. Mr. Ashish Immanuel Baglary, M.sc Student, Dept. of Zoology (Wildlife Science), Gauhati University, Guwahati-781014, Assam, for the study “Comparative studies on the habitat utilization pattern and diet of the common Leopard (*Panthera pardus fusca*) between north and south banks of Brahmaputra river”.**(Extension of Previous permission)**
2. Ms. Priyanka Brahma, Ph.D Research Scholar, Dept. of Botany, Bodoland University, for the study “Taxonomic and Phytochemical studies on the medicinally known species of *Glochidion* J.R. Forst& G. Forst (Phyllanthaceae) of Assam”.
3. Mr. Sanswring Basumatary, Ph.D Research Scholar, Dept. of Botany, Bodoland University, for the study “Studies on Macrophytic Diversity of Chirang Reserve Forest, BTAD, Assam”.
4. Dr. S. K. Borah, Principal Scientist & PI, AICRP on Floriculture, HRS, AAU, Kahikuchi, Guwahati-17, Survey, for the study “Collection and Evaluation of wild/native ornamentals for cultivation of Assam”. **(Extension of Previous permission)**
5. Dr. V. D. Hegde, Scientist-E, Officer-in-Charge, Zoological Survey of India, North Eastern Regional Centre, Risa colony, Shillong-793003, for the study “Faunal Survey in Manas National Park, Assam”.
6. Dr. Jahan Ahmed, Ph.D Research Scholar, Assam Agriculture University, Khanapara, for the study “Histological, Ultrastructural and molecular studies on Guard hair for difference of Hoolock Gibbons found in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya”.
7. Dr. Rathin Barman, Joint Director, Wildlife Trust of India, for the study “Baseline Survey of Flora and Fauna in Ripu Reserve forest, a buffer of Manash Tiger reserve in Assam under the Greater Manasm Recovery Project of wildlife Trust of India (WTI)”.
8. Mr. Biswajit Singh, Ph.D Research Scholar, Dept. of Ecology & Environmental Science, Assam University, Silchar-788011, for the study “Ecological and behavioral studies of Pharye's Leaf Monkey in and around Inner line RF of Cachar district”.**(Extension to the Previous permission)**
9. Mr. Dilip Tamang, Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Botany, Cotton University, Ghy, Assam, for the study “Documentation and Bioprospection of Lichens in Burachapori Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam”.
10. Ms. Gitima Das, M.Sc student, Wildlife Institute of India (2019-2021), Dehradun-248001, Uttarakhand, for the study “Assessing efficacy of select conflict mitigation strategies in human-elephant shared landscape of Golaghat, assam, India”.
11. Dr. P.K Saikia, Head of the Dept., Dept. of Zoology, Gauhati University & State Coordinator (Assam), Asian waterbird Count, South Asia, to conduct 55th Asian Waterbird Count in Assam including wildlife protected areas.
12. Mr. N. Bakthavatsalam, In-charge Director, NBAIR, Bangalore-560024, for the study “Systematic studies on Pentatominae (Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Pantatomidae) from north East India”.
13. Mr. Abhay P Uzagare, Chairman, NEW Conser-Jalgaon, SnehalShikshak SOCL, Jalgaon-425002, to conduct “Photographic Documentation of Biodiversity of Manas National Park, Assam”.

14. Ms. Divyashree Rana, Master's Student, National Centre of Biological Sciences (NCBS), Bangalore-560065, for the study“Genetic Population Structure of the Fishing Cat *Prionailurusviverrinus* in India”.
15. Ms. Shobha Rathna, Director, REDD+ Projects & services, EcoRest Services Private Limited, Bangalore-560090, for “DehingPatkai REDD+ Project”.
16. Dr. Vishnupriya Kollipakam, Scientist C, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun-248001, for the study“Landscape scale assessment of habitat, population and genetic structure of Hispid hare *Caprolagushispidus*”.
17. Dr. Ashalata Devi, Associate Professor, Tezpur University, Tezpur-784028, for the study “Climate Change Impacts and adaptation for a Climate Resilient North East India”.
