



IBCS team interacting with students

*Awareness Campaign on  
"Wetlands for disaster  
risk reduction" in Jhansi,  
Lalitpur and Tikamgarh  
districts of Bundelkhand  
Region, India*

World Wetlands Day is celebrated every year on 2 February all over the world. Wetlands are imperative part of ecosystem as they help out in reducing the shocks of extreme natural disasters such as floods, droughts and cyclones. Bundelkhand Region, Uttar Pradesh faces severe droughts; it is therefore all the more essential for the people to know that wetlands act as a natural sponge, absorbing and storing excess rainfall and reducing flooding. During the dry season, they release the water stored, delaying the onset of droughts and reducing water shortages. The frequency of natural hazards has more than doubled; the majority is climate and weather related.

According to UN-Water, 90% of all natural hazards are water-related. Scientists estimate that at least 64% of the world's wetlands

have disappeared since 1900. The local people in Bundelkhand Region are largely unaware of how wetlands safeguard us. In fact, they often consider wetlands as wasteland; something to be filled in or converted to other uses. The key messages during the awareness campaign were wetlands are a natural safe guard against disasters and help us cope with extreme weather events. Well-managed wetlands ensure communities are resilient and can bounce back from disasters. Take actions that help conserve and promote sustainable use of wetlands.

The Indian Biodiversity Conservation Society (IBCS) team devoted 15 days (22 January-05 February 2017) in Jhansi, Lalitpur and Tikamgarh districts of Bundelkhand region so as to reaching out maximum number of people and

spread out the message of World Wetlands Day with the co-operation of forest department. The team interacted with local people and school children on the subject of conserving wetlands. They were provided with awareness materials in Hindi, the local language. To involve the future generation in conservation of water bodies, several questions were put up to the students such as what is the source of water in their region, how is the water body fulfilling their daily needs, what if the water body dries up, have they ever done anything to renovate the water body? These questions made them think and realize the importance of wetlands.

They were later informed how they could involve themselves in wetland conservation. The students committed to use water

sparingly and avoid toxic products that could flow into wetlands and support actions that seek to restore degraded wetlands.

During the awareness campaign, we visited the wetlands in the region in order to know their utilization by the local people as well as to understand the possible threats due to anthropogenic activities. We found that several wetlands need restoration. Apart from supporting the livelihood of people in Bundelkhand Region, the wetlands are also a home for water birds that are residential as well as migratory. These include gadwall, Northern pintail, ruddy shelduck, comb duck, bar-headed goose, greater flamingo, sarus crane, mallard, open-bill stork, black-necked crane, woolly-



**IBCS team interacting with local people in rural region**

necked crane, painted storks, herons, teals, gulls, ibis, terns, coots, egrets, cormorants and so on.

The wetlands being monitored are Gharmau jheel, Laxmi Tal, Baroasagar,

Sukhwa Dukhwa, Simradha, Paricha, Saprar, Jharar ghat, Talbehah, Matatila, Shehzad reservoir, Sajnam reservoir, Jamini and Rohini reservoir, Govinsagar, Rajghat, Deogarh, Beer Sagar, Sanera Tal and Nadanwara. The team members Abhishek Namdev, Shailesh Yadav, Shivam Pandey, Sanskar, Ramakant, Rakesh, Daya Sagar, Rajesh, and Prabhakar will continue to monitor the avifauna of the wetlands in the region.



**Posters were developed and used in collaboration with the Forest Department**

*Submitted by Sonika Kushwaha, Indian Biodiversity Conservation Society. Email: [ibcsforall@gmail.com](mailto:ibcsforall@gmail.com)*

## Animal Welfare Fortnight 2017 celebrated at Tata Steel Zoological Park, Jamshedpur



Prabhath pheri flagged off by Rishad M Chinoy, Secretary, Tata Steel Zoological Society during commemoration of Animal Welfare Fortnight-2017

Animal Welfare Fortnight is celebrated every year across India from 14-30 January. Late Rukmini Devi Arundale, founder chairperson of Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) started this in 1964.

India abounds in animal laws that contain details governing the use and treatment of domestic and wild animals. But loopholes in governance, their implementation and awareness leave a lot to be desired. So in order to understand these laws and help to create awareness amongst people of Jamshedpur, we organized a two weeklong celebration packed full of activities and events from 16-30 January. An overall participation of 1260 students from different schools and NGOs of the city was a special highlight of the programme and this mass participation shows how the zoo was successful in making a difference. This year we also involved more than 150 cancer patients and underprivileged women to achieve one of our special goals that are reaching to the unreachable ones. The theme of the fortnight was “Do not kill animals, kill the animals inside you”. The celebration was commenced on 16 January with Prabhath pheri, which



Exploration of Butterfly Park

was flagged off, by Rishad M Chinoy, Secretary, Tata Steel Zoological Society. Fortunately, this was also a foundation day of the zoo. A total of 125 students, their teachers and zoo personnel participated in the long walk. During the walk the students took a round of the Jubilee Park along with the zoo personnel voicing slogans to stop cruelty to animals but to care for them. This was followed by a sit and draw painting competition at the zoo office lawn. Bipul Chakrabarty presented awards to the winners of the sit and draw competition.

Apart from this, “A Day in the Zoo” was conducted for students of different government run schools and NGOs for five days which included a slew of activities such as presentation on needs of animal welfare, keeper talk, touch and learn, zoo visit and exploring the butterfly park. S.K. Mahato, Curator along with animal keepers Sadan Thakur, Dilip Dey, Lalan Kumar, S.K.Singh, Vinod Sharma and Malti Majhi, handled the keeper talk and exploration of the butterfly park. The students were enlightened with a lecture by Dr. Seema

Rani, on needs of animal welfare. Lastly, the AWF celebrations dedicated to developing animal-awareness and promoting animal-welfare came to a satisfying finish.

Biologist cum Education Officer and her education team Pratap Singh Gill and

Shefali Das organized the entire fortnight celebrations.

**Submitted by: Seema Rani, Biologist cum Education Officer, Tata Steel Zoological Park. Email: cmarani00@rediffmail.com**



**Keeper Talk on Up-keeping of Animals**



**Cancer patients from Tata Meherbai Cancer Hospital at Zoo Museum during their visit to Tata Steel Zoological Park**