



# WEFA NEWS LETTER

Issue 17, Dt 20.11.2016

[www.wefa.org.in](http://www.wefa.org.in)

Er. Bandita Phukan  
President

Er. Geetimala Baishya  
Secretary

Dr. Bibha Das Saikia  
Editor

## Message from the President, WEFA

'Live simply, Dream big, be grateful, Give love, Laugh lot.'

Er. Bandita Phukan.  
President, WEFA



## Report from Secretary, WEFA

At the very outset, I would like to thank the WEFA members for giving me the opportunity to work as Secretary for this prestigious organisation. During this period, following activities were performed by the WEFA members:

WEFA members celebrated the World Environment Day on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 in a befitting manner by planting saplings in NH 37 and in Chandrapur.



Fifty (50) nos. of sapling were planted at NH 37 near Boragaon opposite Mahindra show room in collaboration with Highway Authority. Twenty (20) WEFA members participated in the programme. Further, three (3) nos. of sapling,

namely Nahar, Bokul and Palash were planted at Chandrapur Sahitya Sabha Bhawan, Chandrapur which is next to Chandrapur High School and one (1) Guava plant was planted at Chandrapur High School itself.



On the same day, six (6) members of WEFA visited Chandrapur High School at Chandrapur to felicitate Ms. Joba Das, an orphaned girl student of the said school who passed the HSLC Examination by securing 83%. WEFA awarded Rs. 2,000.00 (Rupees two thousand) only to her. It may be mentioned here that Ms. Joba Das has been encouraged for her studies for last two (2) years by supporting financial help from our Forum.

In pursuance to the decision of Executive Committee meeting held on 28.05.2016, for encouraging the school students, especially the girl students, to study Science and Technology courses, WEFA conducted an awareness programme at Parijat Academy, Pamohi on 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2016. WEFA members namely Er. Bandita



Phukan, Dr. Bibha Das Saikia, Er. Indira Das and Er. Labanya Padmapati Barua attended the programme along with the Secretary. The members informed the students of the school about the benefits to be derived from pursuing Technical and Vocational education and become self employed. Students of the school were provided with information regarding different Technical and Vocational courses available inside and outside Assam and procedure to get admission into those courses were also elaborated.

WEFA also donated Rs. 20,000.00 to DY365 Foundation as contribution towards flood relief.

Er. Geetimala Baishya,  
Secretary, WEFA

### Editorial

It is a matter of great concern that air which should be pure and healthy for human, animal and plant life is getting disturbed gradually causing adverse effects on our environment. So the accumulation of destructive elements in the air such as smoke, dust, gases, particulate matter, pollen, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, oxides of nitrogen and arsenic etc from the natural or unnatural sources is termed as air pollution. The sources of air pollution may be natural or manmade. Manmade sources includes – combustion of fuel, thermal and nuclear power plants, industries, vehicular pollution, construction materials, system of sanitation, nuclear combustion. The causes of air pollution are – increase in population and traffic, development of industries, development of automobile engineering, development of agriculture, worldwide arms race and thermal & nuclear power generation .The inhalation of polluted air causes various harmful effects on human health.



WEFA members felicitated Mrs. Aruna Mukherjee, who celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2016. Mrs. Mukherjee was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh and came to Assam 80 years ago after her marriage. She runs several schools for the underprivileged children from her residence. She teaches painting, music, knitting, sewing, embroidery and soft toy-making. She has been living on arrowroot biscuits and tea for last 70 (seventy) years.

“PM” refers to particulate matter—particles (like organic dust, airborne bacteria, construction dust, and coal particles from power plants) present in the air. PM is an index of air pollution (Air Quality Index ie.AQI. PM<sub>10</sub> is particulate matter 10 micrometers or less in diameter, PM<sub>2.5</sub> is particulate matter 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter. PM<sub>2.5</sub> is generally described as fine particles. By way of comparison, a human hair is about 100 micrometers, so roughly 40 fine particles could be placed on the width of hair. According to NASA satellite data PM 2.5 levels in India across the country was worse by 13% between 2010 - 2015. In November, 2016, in New Delhi, the PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> were 167 and 132 respectively.

In north eastern India - Guwahati has one of the highest Black Carbon (BC) pollution levels in the world. It is due to the rapid urbanization and poor environment quality control in Guwahati which is giving rise to such high BC levels. Guwahati is one of India's most rapidly growing cities since the last 10-12 years. For a rapidly urbanizing city like Guwahati with a million and half population, unfortunately, doesn't have the infrastructure to sustain this growth. For example, there are just two major roads – Guwahati -Shillong road and the Gopinath Bordoloi road - connecting different parts of the city, having very poor public transportation system. The result is people prefer travelling in their private vehicles, which gives rise to severe traffic congestion and increased Black Carbon emissions from the vehicles. These days with more and more people purchasing private vehicles (at present Guwahati has more than 7 lakhs registered vehicles), the energy consumption (fossil fuel) and Black Carbon emissions have increased tremendously.

Growing air pollution has emerged as a serious concern in the Guwahati city, with vehicular emission and dust contributing a major share of the deteriorating air quality. The Pollution Control Board Assam (PCBA) which has been monitoring the city's ambient air quality under the National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP) has recorded high levels of air pollution in all its monitoring stations in the city.

The other reason which is affecting Guwahati is unplanned and open burning of solid waste disposal right in the city itself. People don't realize the amount of BC (Burned Carbon) and toxic pollutants which are emitted from burning of waste disposal. In Guwahati during November

2016, the PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> were 92 and 45 respectively indicating high pollution index. Further, vehicular pollution is a very sustainable source of toxic air responsible for up to 30% of PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

Therefore, People need to start changing their behavior- such as car pooling, sorting out waste at a neighborhood level, and abstaining from polluting air by bursting fire crackers etc. In this connection there is urgent need to start awareness programme on air pollution.

Dr. Bibha Das Saikia  
Editor

### **A Woman Entrepreneur of a remote village**

Smt. Dalimi Patgiri living in Bhalaguri village of Sarupeta in Barpeta District, Assam, a mother of two, is married to a teacher in a private school in the village came forward to start producing Areca nut leaf plates. In this venture she not only saw an opportunity to earn additional income but also to set an example for other women of the village.. She facilitated setting up raw material banks through a SHG (Self-Help Group)-Dhriti and helped people to collect about 50,000 pieces of Arecanut sheaths (raw material for making plates) in her area. She led a team of seven women for training visit to Salem of Tamilnadu at a time when many women did not have the courage to go out of the village. But later when her group did not support her to establish the plates manufacturing unit, she decided to do it alone. She set up the unit with a loan from SBI in January 2007. In spite of many problems and criticism from villagers, she continued to improve her performance in production of Areca nut leaf plates.



Machine used for making Areca nut Leaf Plate

This inspiring story of Smt. Dalimi Patgiri from a remote village of North East India, whose life has been completely transformed by the initiatives of Dhriiti, a self help group. Dhriiti has set up micro enterprises for Areca nut Leaf Plate Manufacturing unit. Each areca nut leaf plate manufacturing unit provides direct employment to three persons and indirect employment to ten other persons. Using dried areca nut sheaths at the same time, it produces an eco-friendly alternative to plastics and polystyrene plates. These plates can be used for serving and eating food. Otherwise areca nut sheaths are waste material in these regions.

Dhriiti initiated its programme in four Bodoland districts of Baska, Chirang, Kokrajhar, Udalguri and the adjoining districts of Barpeta, Nalbari and Bongaigaon to promote this project. Dhriiti operates from its office in Barpeta, Assam and hope to generate a business of more than 100 crores for rural North East by 2015-16.

**Inspirational quote:**

“Discussions are always better than arguments. Because an argument is to find out who is right, and a discussion is to find what is right.” –

Gautama Buddha