

Clean Landscape Initiative in Gorkhey-Samanden Forest Village (Barsey-Singalila): A Dream for Next Mawlynnong?

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Gorkhey-Samanden is one of the famous tourist destinations of Darjeeling hills. Located at an altitude of 7545 feet, it is the remotest village present in close proximity to the Singalila National Park in the North and Barsey Wildlife Sanctuary in the East. Gorkhey-Samanden is bestowed with rich biodiversity and provides a wide range of ecosystem services of local and regional significance. Every year a large number of visitors arrive in Gorkhey-Samanden after completing trekking of Sandalkphu and Phalut (famous trekking peaks). Although this place is unharmed despite the superfluous human disturbances still there is ample opportunity to make this village one of the cleanest destinations in the regions. However, fewer amounts of wastes accumulate around this village namely newspaper, polythene, cartoons, bottles, toffee wrappers, tins, bins, etc., that remains unmanaged and unattended. Recently GBPNIHE SRC and TMI India, is applying some noble initiatives to safeguard the ecology of the area by implementing KLCDI-India project activities supported through ICIMOD, Nepal.

In this village two awareness and training programmes on solid waste management were organized in the past in (between 15-16 October 2017 and 3-4 June 2018) benefitting 90 people. Awareness campaign about plastic-free cleanliness drives, capacity building on plastic pollution management for women, orientation on clean nature and its significance for livelihood and orientation on importance of waste management for growing ecotourism were the various objectives undertaken during the training. During the occasion participants also cleaned the Singalila- Phalut trekking trail inside National Park area above Gorkhey-Samanden village (nearly 3 kms). In this, we received continuous support from the Gorkhey Ecotourism Committee (GEC) members.



Gorkhey-Samanden

Again a training conducted on 3-4 June, 2018 also made them understand that for judicious waste management, peoples' initiative is much more effective. Gorkhey-Samanden is one of the famous tourist destinations of Darjeeling hills. Located at an altitude of 7545 feet, it is the remotest village present in close proximity to the Singalila National Park in the North and Barsey Wildlife Sanctuary in the East. Gorkhey-Samanden is bestowed with rich biodiversity and provides a wide range of ecosystem services of local and regional significance. Every year a large number of visitors arrive in Gorkhey-Samanden after completing trekking of Sandalkphu and Phalut (famous trekking peaks). Although this place is unharmed despite the superfluous human disturbances still there is ample opportunity to make this village one of the cleanest destinations in the regions. However, fewer amounts of wastes accumulate around this village namely newspaper, polythene, cartoons, bottles, toffee wrappers, tins, bins, etc., that remains unmanaged and unattended. Recently GBPNIHE SRC and TMI India, is applying some noble initiatives to safeguard the ecology of the area by implementing KLCDI-India project activities supported through ICIMOD, Nepal.

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Waste management training at Gorkhey-Samanden

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Again a training conducted on 3-4 June, 2018 also made them understand that for judicious waste management, peoples' initiative is much more effective than Government funded waste management projects. In order to curtail the wastes, demonstration on techniques of making crafts using waste papers (both papers and plastics) was imparted. Training experts briefed on how and what procedures can be adopted to make products from wastes namely the wrappers, tetrapacks, bottles, etc. Further, a mass awareness programme on waste management (under Clean India Mission) was also organized for third time at Gorkhey-Samanden on 7 March 2019 involving the

local people. In addition to this, KLCDI-India supported by local groups (GEC and Samanden women SHG) for constructing two village garbage disposal bins within the village.

As an outcome of a series of awareness campaigns and training conducted on solid waste management, local community of Gorkhey-Samanden have become conscious regarding village cleanliness and hygiene. Especially the members of SHG are cleaning the village footpaths and trails fortnightly. Because of campaign the village looks cleaner now. During the tourism week between 6-12 May 2019 we interacted with the tourists and they told that the village is more clean now than before. They also appreciated the village-based tourism initiatives and the kind of services provided to them during their stay in the wildlife homestay. Gradually, people's awareness on waste management is increasing through the implementation of project activities and consequent local support. Department of Forests is also playing a pivotal role to overcome the problem.

Diversity Our Identity Our Heritage: Kailash Sacred Landscape-India

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पवित्र कैलाश भू क्षेत्र-भारत लगभग 7120 वर्ग कि.मी. क्षेत्रफल में फैला हुआ है, जोकि एक वृहद बहु-सांस्कृतिक और संवेदनशील भू-क्षेत्र का प्रतीक है। जैव भौगोलिक रूप में यह भारत के पश्चिमी हिमालयी प्रान्त में पड़ता है तथा यह भू-क्षेत्र पश्चिम, मध्य एवं ट्रान्स हिमालय के संगम पर स्थित है। जहाँ पर न कि केवल पादप व जन्तु की प्रचुर विविधता, वरन विविध मानव संस्कृतियों का भी संगम होता है। यह भू क्षेत्र अपने आध्यात्मिक, धार्मिक और प्राकृतिक महत्व के कारण विश्व समुदायों को आकर्षित करता रहा है।



Himalaya is one of the most beautiful and fascinating place on the earth. Its biodiversity and cultural richness are to be celebrated, and cherished. Nature and culture are intimately complementing each other in the Himalaya, particularly surrounding the sacred landscape of Mt. Kailash. The region comprises a highly diverse array of ecosystems, indigenous and endemic species, local cultures, and ethnic communities. Kailash Sacred Landscape within India (KSL-India) covers (7120 sq. km area) most of Pithoragarh district (96%) and relatively smaller portion of Bageshwar (4%) district in the state of Uttarakhand. Here, about 87% of population resides in rural areas, comprising of 1672 villages. Urban area is only 0.38%, which contributes 13% of the total population. About 75.8% population is spread in 23.74% area of the landscape. In general, agriculture and livestock rearing are the main occupations of >70% of inhabitants. The landscape is characterized by several sacred sites, high-altitude lakes, alpine meadows, snow cladded peaks and a network of religious sites across the landscape. A brief description of landscape diversity is as follows:

Cultural diversity: In KSL-India, various cultural groups have evolved in river valleys of Kali, Dhauri, Gori, Ramganga and Saryu. There are 7 major indigenous cultural zones (Byas, Darma, Johar, Askot, Seera, Sor, Gangoli) in the landscape and they differ in their cultural belief and local dialect.

Diversity in fair and festivals: KSL-India is the land of several fairs and festivals, where diversity of local festival prevails. Temples and confluences of the rivers are the