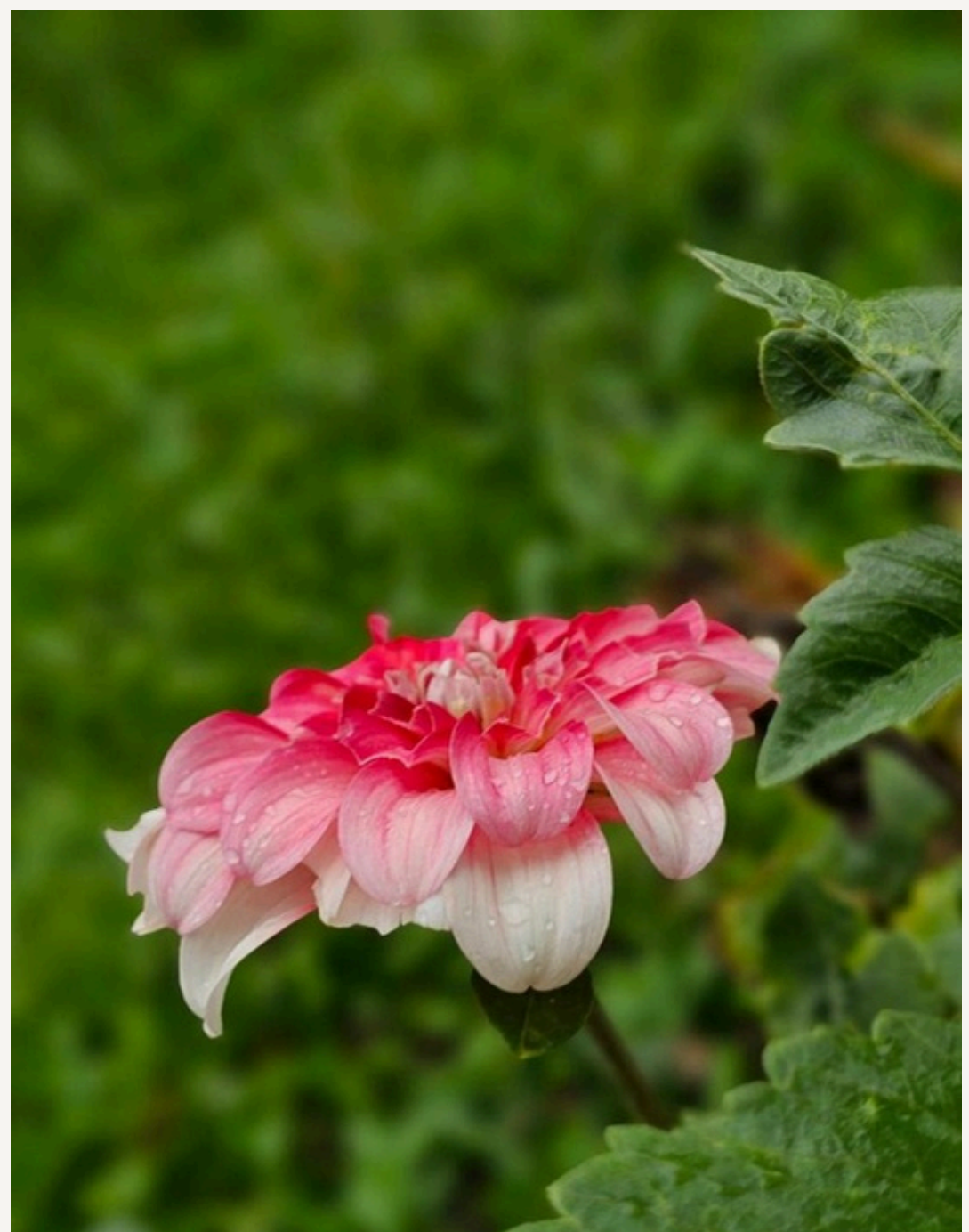
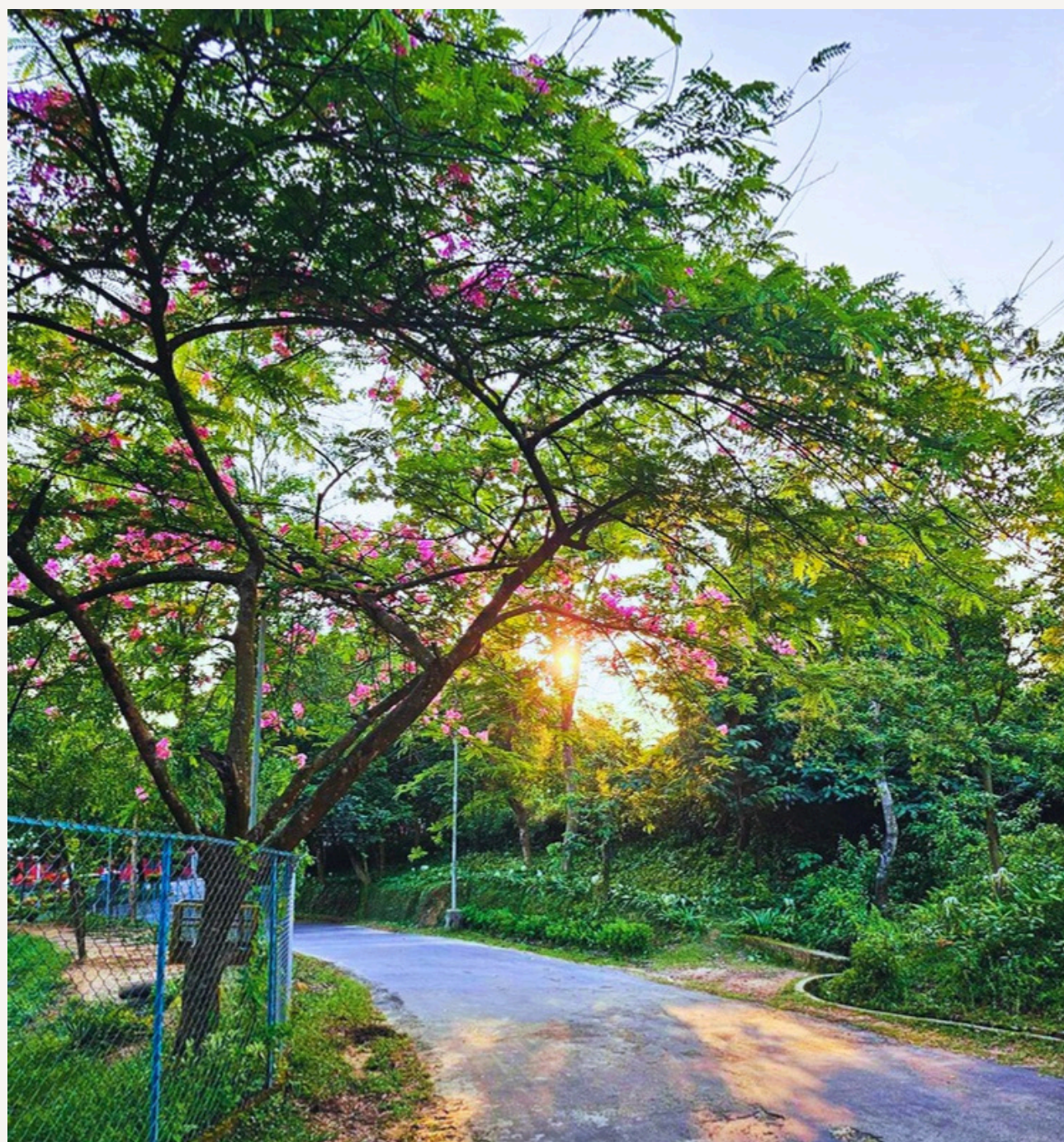


TOWARDS A

SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS

ALIGNING BEST PRACTICES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



SUCCESS STORIES AND GOOD PRACTICES
IN THE CAMPUS AND THE COMMUNITY



ASSAM UNIVERSITY

(A CENTRAL UNIVERSITY ESTABLISHED BY AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT)



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



Universities occupy a unique position within society. With a broad remit around creating and disseminating knowledge, universities have long been powerful drivers of global, national and local innovation, economic development, and societal well-being. As such, universities have a critical role in the achievement of the SDGs and will also greatly benefit from engaging with them.

Assam University is committed to these SDGs and seeks to:

- 1) Provide knowledge, innovations and solutions to the SDGs
- 2) Create current and future SDG implementers
- 3) Demonstrate how to support, adopt and implement SDGs in governance, operations and culture
- 4) Develop cross-sectoral leadership to guide the SDG response





Prof. Rajive Mohan Pant
VICE CHANCELLOR
ASSAM UNIVERSITY

Since 2015, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been driving and inspiring governments and all stakeholders to take transformative actions, individually and collectively, for people, planet and prosperity while strengthening universal peace and larger freedom. Universities have a critical role in contributing to the achievement of the SDGs. The SDG agenda covers a wide range of interconnected social, economic, and environmental challenges and the unique functions and expertise of universities are critical for overcoming all of these. Arguably the SDGs will not be achieved without the contribution of Higher Education Institutions.

Assam University is committed to driving technological and societal progress through research, discovery, knowledge creation, and adoption of innovative practices, and reaching out to the community it serves. These services are critical for helping the community understand the challenges, opportunities, and interactions between the SDGs; develop and implement solutions; develop and assess policy options and transformation pathways; and monitor progress.

We realise that universities provide people with professional and personal skills and capabilities. Since we have access to large concentrations of young and curious people who are passionate, creative and have a desire for a better world. We are trying our best to influence community development through our students and alumni, collaborations with civil society, and capacity-building activities. Achieving the SDGs will require everyone to contribute. At Assam University therefore, we need to ensure that we are equipping current and future leaders, decision-makers, teachers, innovators, entrepreneurs, and citizens with the knowledge, skills and motivation that will help them contribute to achieving the SDGs.

This publication is an attempt to map how Assam University through some of its best practices is contributing to the SDGs framework through its research, educational and operational activities.





ASSAM UNIVERSITY

BEST PRACTICES AND DRIVE TOWARDS AN ECO-FRIENDLY CAMPUS



SHILPO GRAM

A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE THROUGH COLLABORATIVE ART

Assam University has marked a profound transformation to its neighbouring village Gutitila's appearance and identity through an art movement called Shilpo Gram. Young artists from Assam University has collaborated with Sanskar Bharti, an organization that rallies the region's young, old, and affluent artists to unite in a creative endeavor, to embark on a transformational journey of a village. These skilled hands, guided by an enchanting artistic vision, breathed new life into the village, ushering it into a realm of heightened aesthetics.

This remarkable endeavour resulted in Gutitila becoming Barak Valley's premier art village, supplanting its former moniker as the

old Irongmara's Gutitilla. It now stands as a sanctuary of artistic brilliance, poised to welcome thousands of eager tourists seeking novel sophistication, vibrant colors, the rhythm of life, artistic fervor, and a rejuvenated atmosphere. As one strolls along Gutitila's village roads, a sense of wonder envelops the senses. The common mud houses that encircle the area have been transformed by the deft strokes of skilled artists' hands, rendering them as canvases for creativity and a testament to the power of art to transform not only aesthetics but also an entire community.



Shilpogram holds immense significance in Assam's cultural landscape. It serves as a platform for local artists to showcase their talent and preserves the rich heritage of traditional crafts and art forms. The village is committed to nurturing artistic endeavors and promoting the region's artistic heritage to the world. A visit to Shilpogram not only offers a glimpse into the artistic soul of Assam but also contributes to the sustainable development of the local community.

Shilpogram is a treasure trove of traditional crafts and art forms that have been passed down through generations. Each corner of this village showcases the creativity and skill of local artisans. From intricate handwoven textiles to ornate wood carvings, Shilpogram encapsulates the essence of Assam's artistic heritage. Immerse yourself in the vibrant colours and unique designs that adorn the handmade products on display.

Not only does this project provide a platform for artists to connect and foster emotional integrity, but it also encourages them to push their boundaries and explore new horizons. Through their artworks, these artists delve into a multitude of research methods, constantly honing their technical skills and deepening their understanding of the art they create.

The artists engaged in the Shilpo Gram project at Gutitila are: Bimalendu Sinha, Monika Paul, Joydeep Bhattacharjee, Swapan Kar, Binoy Paul, Nippan Das, Prasenjit Dey, Ajanta Das, Ajoy Dey, Anuradha Rajwarh, Raj Kumar Pashi, Uttam Ghosh, Sumita Roy Choudhury.





ASSAM UNIVERSITY HAS INSTALLED ROOF-TOP SOLAR POWER PANELS IN TO HARNESS GREEN ENERGY AND ADOPTED LED LIGHT FIXTURES TO BECOME MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT

Assam University aims to reduce energy consumption, ensure standard air quality, and improve energy efficiency on its two campuses through methods that are consistent with energy conservation, cost effectiveness and sustainability. Assam University has embarked on a proactive and progressive approach to install solar power plants in the campus as well as adopt LED lights installation.

As per the GOI instruction for mandatory installation of LED lights at Government offices, Assam University Silchar has in a phased manner replaced the conventional lighting fixtures in the building interiors and exterior street lights with energy efficient LED lighting fixtures.

Approximate solar electricity savings from the 1000 kWp Grid-Connected Roof-Top Solar plant at Assam University Silchar is Rs 3, 90,000.

Solar panel technologies have made it possible for Assam University to significantly reduce its huge electricity consumption costs. Although the campus is yet to become completely sustainable and solar, Assam University is taking notable steps towards it.



Roof-Top Solar Power Panels at various buildings in the campus



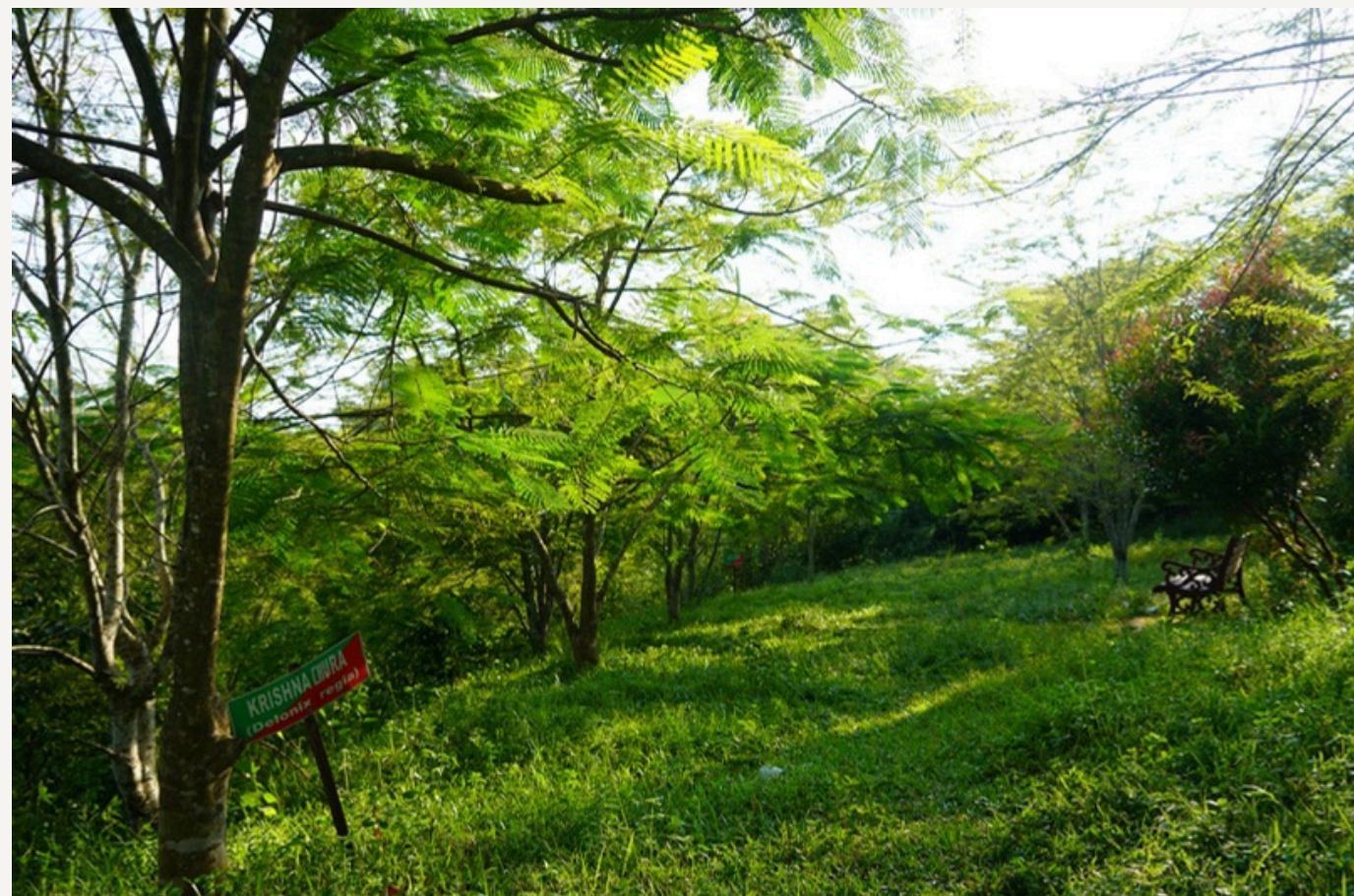
Double-Arm LED Street Lights in the Assam University campus



APURUGIYA PARK

A GREEN SPACE WITH HERITAGE TREES

An ecological park by the name of Apurugiya Udyan, A park having plantation of heritage trees, was established in the premises of Assam University, Silchar covering an area of 12.5 acres. The park was established by the University with the collaboration and financial assistance of Rs. 36.74 Lakhs from the Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of Assam on 11 December 2019. Saplings of 100 odd various tree species having medicinal and other aesthetic values which are fast disappearing from northeast India have been planted in the park. Within a span of slightly less than four years, all the trees have grown up well and has become an important site for visitors.





Assam University is a plastic free campus. We aim to measurably reduce plastic waste and pollution in our campus and the world around us. To achieve this we have undertaken several steps. Assam University has banned use of single-use plastics in canteens, cafes, shops in the university premises and hostels, etc.

Over the years, the Green Club of Assam University has organized various awareness drives and sensitisation workshops at regular intervals to avoid or minimize use of plastic materials in the campus with active cooperation of the University staff and students including NCC Cadets, NSS & Green Club Volunteers. All the hostel residents, caterers, canteen vendors and day scholars are instructed that "Single-use Plastic" items are banned in the University campus through an official circular which is available in the University website. All stakeholders are regularly informed that plastic materials we use daily can be substituted by other environmentally friendly materials or can be avoided completely. At present the use of plastic /thermocoil glass, plate, cup cutlery, drinking straw etc are totally replaced by environmentally friendly materials within the campus in all official and non-official programmes. In all official programmes, instead of bottled water, big portable drinking water dispensers and paper glasses are provided for drinking purpose.

At several points of the University campus "Plastic Free Campus, Green Audit compliance report and Green Policy of Assam University are displayed prominently.



ASSAM UNIVERSITY, SILCHAR

The Green Policy

THE POLICY INCLUDES FOLLOWING FOCUS AREAS:

- CLEAN CAMPUS INITIATIVE
- GREEN CAMPUS INITIATIVE
- CLEAN AIR INITIATIVE (SMOKE FREE)
- SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE (EFFICIENT ALTERNATIVE ENERGY)
- WASTE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE
- SOCIO-ENVIRONMENT CENTRIC ACTIVITIES
- GREEN AUDIT
- PLASTIC FREE CAMPUS



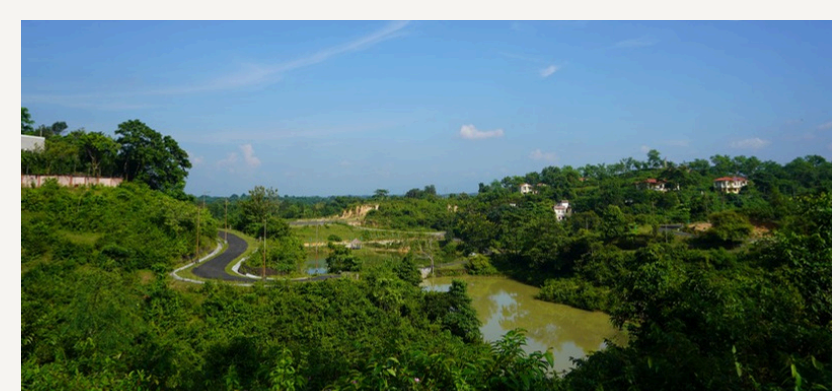


Since its inception, Assam University has faced acute water crisis. The perennial source of water to the Assam University Silchar campus is a very small nearby river, Baluchhori, a tributary of the river Barak. Also, due to fast and generous expansion of different academic activities inside the campus and the residential areas of the University, water consumption has increased manifold.

Therefore, with a vision to cater to the needs of the University fraternity, different catchment areas have been identified and some of them have been developed into large lakes, in a scientific way keeping in view the need to save the wastage of water and simultaneously to create an independent water source for the campus in addition to the existing perennial source of water from the Baluchhori river which is being maintained by Assam PHE.

Other ground water resources like deep tubewell are also developed in the campus to mitigate the water crisis in the campus. Thus, in the University campus, water conservation is playing a great role in minimizing the wastage of water and to cater to the water demands of the University from these lakes and reservoirs which now have turned to large water bodies.

A few more catchment areas have already been demarcated for developing large water bodies through rainwater harvesting for the purpose of water conservation in the near future.





NAKSHATRA VATIKA

A BIODIVERSITY RETREAT

On the Assam University campus, an effort has been made to establish 'Nakshatra Vatika' with 27 different plant species representing the 27 Nakshatras to provide insights into the ancient Nakshatra concept. The plantation, according to Rashi and Nakshatra is believed to be important for prosperity and good health. The ancient Indian civilization scriptures advocate that each element of the universe is interrelated and influenced by cosmic energies, solar systems, and the constellation of stars (Nakshatra). The 27 constellation of stars (27 Nakshatra) directly influences human life in particular and the environment in general. Ancient Indian scriptures also advocate that there is an association between the constellation of stars and the zodiac with plants, trees, and animals having therapeutic value and biodiversity services. Plants, animals in particular, and the Earth's ecosystem, in general, played very significant roles in human life. Therefore, it is believed that every person should take care of the tree or animal assigned to them concerning Nakshatra, thus ensuring Mother Earth's biodiversity and gene pool. Assam University, Silchar, while recognizing these ancient values have taken an initiative to establish 'Nakshatra Vatika' with an ambition to make a bridge between our ancient and contemporary civilization.





COMPOST FROM BIODEGRADABLE WASTE

Since 2021, Assam University has been maintaining the practice of decomposing the biodegradable waste (plant waste) into compost manure. In this regard Assam University has constructed concrete biodegradable waste pits covered by a roof without any side walls for aeration purpose. The process of decomposing involves application of earthworms, fungi etc. along with addition of water manually and also deposition of water drops at the surface collected from the moisture, water droplets present in the humid atmosphere.

Further there are open air earthen pits at various locations of Assam University, enclosed by CGI sheets, where the dry leaves falling from the trees are dumped and occasionally stirred until the leaves are completely decomposed as a compost manure. The composts are further used in plantation drives, horticulture and gardening works etc within the Assam University campus.



Earthen Waste Pits in the University Campus



SORA ART

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY INDIGENOUS ART FORM OF BARAK VALLEY & EMPOWERING RURAL ARTISANS

Assam University has engaged in several community engagement initiatives to train and empower rural people and provide them with appropriate expertise to manufacture and market the cultural artefacts of Barak Valley. The journey began with the potters of Panibhora in a workshop “Indigenous Art & Design Insight” to promote the indigenous art practice of Barak Valley, especially Sora Painting, conducted by the Centre for Indian Knowledge System, Assam University in collaboration with the Department of Visual Arts, Assam University in 2022. The practice got a momentum after Assam University took an initiative, as a part of its community engagement programme and environment friendly initiative to promote the indigenous art and crafts of Barak Valley with an additional objective of encouraging the empowerment of rural women.

Sora painting is the key inspiration behind the designing and creation of the particular memento prepared for the North East Y20 Conclave held on 25-28 August 2023 and beautification of the Assam University Campus under the ‘Bemisal Barak’ project. This memento has been prepared in collaboration with DIYA, an SHG of Panibhora. The idea, design and concept behind the mementos is initiated by Gautam Dutta, Assistant Professor, Department of Visual Arts, Assam University; Silchar.

The Department of Visual Arts is also undertaking a project for the beautification of the Kumbhirgram Airport, Silchar under the theme of Indigenous Art of Barak Valley with an environmental friendly initiative. The coordinator and deputy coordinator for the Airport Project is Gautam Dutta and Prof. Nirmal Kanti Roy respectively.



Customized Mementos prepared by the Department of Visual Arts inspired from Sora



Preparation of Sora clay plates



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH DEVELOPMENTAL PUPPETRY

One of the key community engagement programmes of Assam University has been its Developmental Puppetry Project under the Department of Mass Communication. Through its unique horizontal intervention approach, the Department has been working closely with the community, seeking to ensure health and well-being for everyone at all ages, including access to safe, affordable and effective health care.

To achieve this goal, the Health Literacy Project ensures regular visits and engagement on universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, infectious disease prevention, and the treatment and prevention of other public health issues. The Project uses an inclusive approach that recognises and engages with important groups – such as women, indigenous people, and diverse cultures, worldviews and ideologies, and forms of knowledge, such as traditional knowledge, that are often under-represented in research.

To actualise the mandate of the NEP 2020, and to foster greater community engagement, agricultural extension activities and community-mapping exercises are also carried out at several villages in Cachar district by a team of students and faculty of the Department of Mass Communication. The Community Engagement Initiative is a continuous symbiotic engagement and a conscious effort to fruitfully engage with the local and surrounding communities towards understanding and improving their living conditions and gain insights into their lived experiences.



The team employs developmental puppetry in the local language focussing on creating agricultural literacy among the small and marginal farmers about several schemes of the government.

Understanding the community through a participatory, inclusive and reflexive knowledge-sharing process by both the university team and the local community makes it a fruitful engagement.

The project is undertaken by Dr. Ayesha Tahera Rashid, Associate Professor at the Department of Mass Communication.





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Printed at
Abhisekh Printers, Silchar

A large graphic of the Sustainable Development Goals logo, featuring a central white circle with the text 'SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS' in blue. The 'O' in 'GOALS' is a colorful wheel. The background consists of a large, colorful sunburst pattern with rays in various colors like green, blue, red, orange, and yellow.

**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**



ASSAM UNIVERSITY

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2023