

Celebration of World Wetlands Day 2007 by Chilika Development Authority

The Chilika development Authority in collaboration with Sipakuda Banamalipur villagers along with local communities, school children, teachers, NGOs and CBOs, JICA members have celebrated WWD-2007 on 2nd February 2007 in the shore of Chilika Lagoon.

Pre WWD –07 activities

Prior to 2nd February 2007, Essay and Debate competitions were organized in different schools which are located in the periphery of the lagoon. The theme of competition was as follows

- Essay - “Conservation of fish resources in Chilika Lagoon”
- Debate - “The Fish Resources of Chilika & its Future”

More than 500 students have participated in above competitions. In each school best three students were selected and the prizewinners were awarded during the celebration.

On day 2nd February 2007

Star persons of this occasion

1. Sri B.K. Patnaik, IFS, Director & Special Secretary, Forest & Environment Department, Govt. of Orissa
2. Dr S. Panda, IFS, Chief Executive, Chilika Development Authority
3. Prof . Tamaki Ura, University of Tokyo, Japan
4. Sri Abhaya Singh, Renowned Writer and Poet.
5. Dr. C.S. Kar, Senior Researcher, PCCF Wildlife Orissa
6. Dr. S. Kar, Senior Researcher, PCCF Wildlife Orissa
7. Dr. K.S. Bhatta, Scientific Officer, Chilika Development Authority.

Besides above person many other state Government and NGOs dignitaries along with more than 600 school children, 30 teachers and more than 800 villagers participated on this occasion.

Procession

On the outset of the programme, the villagers welcomed the guests with garlands and sounding crackers. Local folk dances and traditional arts, traditional welcome processions with *village Parikrama* (rally around the village by the school children, teachers, villagers, NGO members by the chanting slogan on conservation of Chilika lake and its bio-diversity) were the main attractions. All the participants wore uniformly printed caps in this occasion.



Meeting

Sri B.K. Patnaik, Director & Special Secretary, Forest & Environment Department, Government of Orissa and Dr. Sudarsan Panda, Chief Executive, Chilika Development Authority lighted the lamp. The meeting started with a patriot song.



The Chief Executive, Chilika Development Authority, briefed about wetlands, its values and functions and role of the stakeholders to maintain it. He also explained the need for celebration of World Wetlands Day. To restore the eco-system of the lagoon, mainly the stakeholders have to observe and celebrate it every year. It is no accident that river valley and their flood plains have been the focus of human civilization for over 6,000 years – and that many other wetland systems have been equally critical to the development and survival of human communities. This simply reflects the key role that water and wetlands have played throughout human life. The reality is that still depend on the natural ecosystems to sustain.

- Flood control
- Groundwater Replenishment
- Shorelines Stabilization & Storms Protection,
- Sediment & Nutrient Retention and Export
- Climate Change Mitigation
- Water Purification Reservoirs of Biodiversity
- Wetland Products
- Recreation/ Tourism
- Cultural –Value

The multiple roles of wetland ecosystems and their value to humanity have been increasingly understood and documented in recent years. This has led to massive expenditures to restore lost on degraded hydrological and biological functions of wetlands. The ability of wetlands to adapt accelerating rates of change, will be crucial to communities and wildlife everywhere as the full impact of climate change on our ecosystem lifelines is felt. Small wonder that there is worldwide focus on wetlands and their services to mankind.



The guest of honour Prof. Tamaki Ura, University of Tokyo, Japan, narrated in local language (Oriya) about the importance of World Wetlands Day and maintenance of biodiversity of Chilika Lagoon.



Dr. C.S. Kar, Senior Researcher, Office of the Principal Chief Conservator Forest Wildlife Orissa, described about gathering of nearly about ten lakhs migratory as well as residential birds due to improved habitat conditions and availability of food (fish) and breeding places in Chilika lagoon. It could only be possible with the support of peripheral stakeholders. Especially during winter season beauty of Chilika multiplies several times due to presence of migratory birds. So the economic condition of local stakeholder were enhanced through eco-tourism.

Three Senior citizens (Natural leaders) of Sipakuda Banamalipur village, described about the variety and quantity of fish available in Chilika long years back. But 7 to 8 years back number of species and its volume were severely reduced, so that it affects the livelihood of local people. A jetty (boat landing centre) and village road was developed with financial support of Chilika Development Authority. A new mouth was opened from this lagoon during 23rd September 2000 to Bay of Bengal as a result of which not only saline water of the ocean enter in to lagoon but also marine fishes and numbers of aquatic

species enter into the lagoon and they treat this lagoon as a nursery ground for them. So that most of villagers earned by way of fishing and eco-tourism. The local fisherman have adopted eco-tourism as an alternate source of income.

Sri Abhaya Singh, renowned writer and poet, the chief editor of the newsletter of “Chilika Darpan” for quarter ending March 07 briefed about the topics content in this news letter. He described conservation and protection of migratory and residential birds in this lagoon. Behaviour of numbers of ducks, hunting birds in Chilika. He also described the beauty of Chilika in presence of innumerable number of birds by the eminent poet of Orissa Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das, *view of Chilika from running train*.



Release of news letter

In the celebration of WWD- 2007, the quarterly newsletter of Chilika Development Authority the “**Chilika Darpan**” for the quarter ending March 07 was released by the Director & Special Secretary, Forest & Environment Department, Govt. of Orissa. He expressed the bio diversity of Chilika is preserved by local stakeholders. Due to preservation and protection of rare and migratory birds as well as residential birds and Irrawady dolphins, it multiplies the beauty of Chilika. So that it attracts the tourist of national and international level resulting enhancement of economic conditions of local stakeholders.



Prize distribution

On the eve of World Wetlands Day 2007, 15 students from different school were felicitated for their outstanding performance of above competition with trophy and certificates.

Sl.no.	Name of School & address	Sl.No.	Name of winner student	Class	Rank	Remark
1	Chilika High School, Alupatna, Puri	1	Asit Kumar Jena	X	1 st	Debate
		2	Pratimarani Jena	IX	2 nd	-do-
		3	Bhaktismita Jena	IX	3rd	-do-
2	Basudev High School, Bhagamunda Nuagaon.	4	Monalisha Jena	IX	1 st	Essay
		5	Sumanta Kumar Parida	IX	2 nd	-do-
		6	Amiya Kumar Barik	VIII	3rd	-do-
3	Bhabakundeswardev Vidyaniketan, Raipur, Tinisahi	7	Kumari Sucharita Jena	X	1 st	-do-
		8	Kumari Snehalata Jena	X	2 nd	-do-
		9	Kumari Chameli Jena	IX	3rd	-do-
4	Baukeswardev High School, Pirijipur	10	Debasis Behera	IX	1 st	-do-
		11	Somanatha Baral	X	2 nd	-do-
		12	Sibashree Kumar Parida	X	3rd	-do-
5	Gangadhar Nodal UP School, Sipakuda, Banamalipur	13	Bidisapriyadarshani Jena	V	1 st	-do-
		14	Sakuntala Jena	V	2 nd	-do-
		15	Nibedita Jena	VII	3rd	-do-

Sri Hiranya Jena from Sipakuda Banamalipur village offered vote of thanks to the dignitaries , villagers, teachers, students, NGO members and guests from Japan who are present in this occasion and made successful movement for WWD-2007.

Exhibition Stalls

Chief guest, Guest of honour and dignitaries visited the stalls organized by the school children and villagers of Sipakuda Banamalipur village on which traditional fishing practices, fishing gears, weeds, fishes etc. were exhibited in the stalls. Besides, the mangroves species thriving in saline water climate were exhibited.



Boat race

The boat race was organized by the villagers of Sipakuda Banamalipur. 15 boats participated in this race. Dr. Sudarsan Panda, Chef Executive, CDA flagged off the boat race and it continued for one hour. The best three winners of this competition was felicitated with trophy and certificates.



Plantation

Mangroves species were planted by Chief guest, Guest of honour, Chief Executive of CDA, Japanese friends and villagers near boat landing centre.



Conservation and preservation of wetlands is essential to maintain a balanced eco-system. Wetlands are wealth land of mankind but not wasteland. Let us sensitize this issue among all corner of the world by converting it as a movement. Not only present generation but also future generation will prosper through the conservation and wise use of wetlands.