

RFRI conducts Training-cum-Workshop on Bamboo Handicrafts under the *Direct to Consumer Programme of ICFRE*

Training-cum-Workshop on Bamboo Handicrafts was conducted by Rain Forest Research Institute, Jorhat (Assam) under the *Direct to Consumer Programme of ICFRE*, Dehradun from 14th to 20th March, 2013. A total of 15 participants including 3 women [5 members from *Action for Rural Improvement and Social Encouragement* (NGO), Naharkotia, Dibrugarh (Assam); 3 members from *Demo Village*, Meleng, Jorhat (Assam) and 7 members from *Ghorpholia village*, Jorhat (Assam)] had undergone this training. Sri Mohan Saikia, an expert in handicrafts and two of his assistants from *Gramin Hasta Yodyog*, Bokota, Sivasagar (Assam) were invited as Master Trainers.

The training programme was inaugurated by Dr. Rajib Kumar Borah, Group Co-ordinator (Research) and he welcomed all the participants.

Sri Rajib Kumar Kalita, Head, Forestry Extension Division gave brief introduction about the *Direct to Consumer* programme of ICFRE under which this training was being organized.

Dr. Tilak Chandra Bhuyan, Research Officer delivered a power point presentation on different bamboo products. He gave hands-on training on application of different machines at Bamboo Composite Centre. He emphasized the need of machines for faster and quality production of various handicraft items. During the course of training, the participants were trained in manufacturing of Sofa, Chair, Rack, Tray, Pen, Decorative items, Hair Band, Bangles and a specially designed Comb (locally known as *Kakoi*) which is used by the women during *Bihu* festival of Assam.

On the Valedictory Session of the Training programme, Dr. N. S. Bisht, Director, RFRI, Jorhat addressed the participants and assured all-round support of the Institute. He requested the participants to devote their time for the development of bamboo cottage industries for rural employment generation. Dr. Bisht presented certificates to the participants on their successful completion of training.

Dr. Dandeswar Dutta, Research Officer of the Institute offered vote of thanks.

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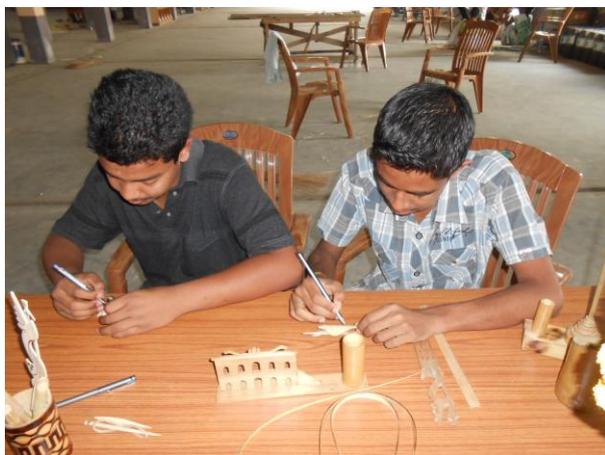


Making of Bamboo Sofa









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Rain Forest Research Institute imparts training for *kakoi* production

Tech aid for Bihu must-have

WASIM RAHMAN

Jorhat, March 21: Technology has come to the aid of a group of artisans, with the Rain Forest Research Institute (RFRI) imparting training to bulk produce *kakoi*, a customary bamboo comb worn in the hair by Bihu dancers.

The institute, on the outskirts of this town at Sotal, is one-of-its-kind in the Northeast under the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education — an autonomous body under the Union ministry of forests and environment.

Senior scientist and in-charge of Bamboo Composite Centre (BCC) of the RFRI, Tilak Chandra Bhuyan, told The Telegraph today that a group of 15 people, including three women, had been offered use of the machines at BCC to make bamboo items of their choice, with many preferring to make *kakoi*. These persons are involved in preparing bamboo handicraft at home.

He said the group has been imparted hands-on training by a master artisan to prepare a variety of bamboo handicraft items. These include chairs, sofas, trays, racks, small decorative pieces, which they are unfamiliar with.

Bhuyan said *kakoi*, which is traditionally manufactured in village households on the eve of Bohag Bihu, as it is part of a Bihu dancer's dress and also worn by other women during the festival, was being produced in large quantities in lesser time with the help of the machines.

The BCC in-charge said cutting, splitting and smoothing of bamboo by machine saves the artisans time. With Bohag Bihu to be celebrated next month, the group is making *kakoi* in large numbers and was supplying to its contacts to be sold in the market, he added.

Bhuyan said the group, comprising youths and homemakers, has been offered the use of the BCC machines free of cost. They are also being trained as part of the RFRI's attempt to promote and popularise use of bamboo products in the region, which has huge bamboo reserves.

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*Kakoi*s on display at the institute in Sotal. Telegraph picture

Bamboo items

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"We want to develop entrepreneurship among the youths by taking up self-employment schemes to produce and sell bamboo products, which have a great demand in the market across the country and abroad," RFRI director N.S. Bisht said.

The group, with members from Jorhat and Dibrugarh districts, was being offered the BCC facility and training for the last one week and it would be extended if required, Bisht said. "We are providing accommodation to outstation trainees and could extend the training programme for another 10 days and allow the use of machinery to prepare their products for Bihu sale."

Kabita Rajkhowa, one of the group members, said use of machines was boosting their production. In the past week, they have produced over 100 such combs.

Hemalata Bora, another woman trainee, said the manual process was very laborious and lengthy. She hoped the institute would help them establish contacts with banks so that they could form a self-help group and get loans to acquire machines to increase production of bamboo handicraft items.