Workshop on Foldscope Project

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A one day workshop on 'Foldscope Project' was organised by Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India in association with Mangaldai College on 27th August 2019 at the auditorium of the college. The workshop was attended students and teachers of fourteen Aspirational districts of the region including the host district Darrang.

The workshop was formally inaugurated by Dr Shailja V Gupta, the adviser to the Department of Biotechnology in presence of several dignitaries. In her inaugural speech, Dr Shailja gave a brief presentation on the Foldscope Project. The project is developed by Dr Manu Prakash, an Indian scientist currently presently serving in Stanford University, USA. Dr Shailaja also narrated how the concept is getting popular among the students and faculties in over 445 schools and colleges of the country after signing the "letter of intent" between the Stanford University and the department. The project has been launched with an aim to create a scientific temperament among the students and teachers of Northeast– especially from those belonging to the Aspirational Districts.The project also aims in helping the students and the teachers in exploring the rich biodiversity of the region through affordable, easy to use or traditional tools of technology. Over 300 student delegates, 56 selected teachers and a host of experts and mentors from across the country attended the daylong workshop. The several sessions conducted in the workshop included foldscope assembly, sample preparation, visualization and documentation training, refinement, picture/video recording, and presentation of samples by participants.

AJYCP members staging a protest over their various demands, in Mangaldai on Thursday.

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Workshop on 'Foldscope Project' at Mangaldai College

CORRESPONDENT

MANGALDAI, Aug 29: The Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, in association with Mangaldai College organised a workshop on 'Foldscope Project' for the students and teachers of 14 aspirational districts, including Darrang recently. The day-long workshop, which was attended by more than 300 students delegates, 56 selected teachers besides a host of experts and mentors across the country, featured several sessions including foldscope assembly, sample preparation, visualisation and documentation training, refinement, picture/video recording, presentation of samples by participants and offering suggestions, among others.

The participants were provided tool kits which included pieces of foldable papers, camera lenses, scissors etc., that helped them to prepare a foldscope for themselves. Earlier, a colourful inaugural session was held at the auditorium of the Mangaldai College where Dr Shailja V Gupta, Adviser, Department of Biotechnology ceremonially inaugurated the event by lighting the lamp in the presence of several other dignitaries like Prof Probodh Borah, College of Veterinary Sciences under the Assam Agricultural University (AAU) , Prof Dinabandhu Sahoo, Director, Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD), Imphal and Dr Manish Rana, Scientist-E, DBT, New Delhi.

In her inaugural speech, chief guest Dr Shailja gave a brief presentation on the 'Foldscope Project' which was invented by Dr Manu Prakash, an Indian scientist, at present serving in the Stanford University, USA aiming at bringing scientific tools to the masses and engage them in curiosity-driven explorations termed as 'Frugal Science'. She also narrated how the concept is becoming popular among the students and faculties covering more than 445 schools and colleges of the country after signing the Letter of Intent (LoI) between the Stanford University and the DBT. The inaugural ceremony compered by Dr Kamala Bora, Associate Professor of the Chemistry department of the host college, also witnessed a short welcome address by its Principal Dr Khagen Kumar Nath.

Later talking to *The Assam Tribune* Adviser, DBT, Dr Shailja V Gupta said, "Foldscope is a small tool which can be carried by a student in his pocket or school bag to explore the micro cosmos or the micro organism in the universe or their surrounding neighbourhood, which couldn't be seen with naked eyes."