

Project Update: August 2016

As part of our capacity building and conservation initiatives, we have started water and biodiversity monitoring program of selected rivers in East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya, India. In collaboration with Umshyrpi College, Shillong, Meghalaya the flow and discharge data from Umshyrpi River in conjunction with macroinvertebrate and fish diversity are being monitored. Database will be analysed and shared with India Water Portal, Meghalaya Water Pollution Control Board and the local communities in and outside of the river basin area. To this effect a 3-day workshop that involved a seminar, field trips to Umshyrpi and a public outreach event was organised from 6-9th August 2016. Students went through the local neighborhoods and talked to the people with regard to the pollution problems in the river. In the headwaters of the river, students collected macroinvertebrates and established a water monitoring protocol. Students will conduct weekly monitoring of the river and maintain a systematic record. Attached are some pictures and excerpts from the local newspapers covering the seminar.





Read more at <http://www.theshillongtimes.com/2016/08/10/city-college-gears-up-to-revive-umshyrpi/#uoTkFl7mrtb4d8Kh.99>

Seminar on Umshyrpi River

BY OUR REPORTER | SUNDAY, AUGUST 7, 2016, THE SHILLONG TIMES

SHILLONG: The Shillong Muslim Union and Umshyrpi College in collaboration with The Rufford Foundation, UK will organise a seminar on, "Infusing Life into Umshyrpi River". An ecologist from Miami, Florida, USA, Dr Sonali Saha will deliver a lecture during the seminar even as an interactive session will be moderated by A. Zulfi, Managing Director, Grace City & Member Board of Management William Carey University on August 9 at 1:30p.m. at the Umshyrpi College Auditorium, Laban. The objective of the seminar is to preserve the Umshyrpi River by creating awareness among the locals.

City College gears up to revive Umshyrpi

BY OUR REPORTER | WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2016, THE SHILLONG TIMES

SHILLONG: A city college is making efforts to revive the Umshyrpi that once upon a time attracted fishermen and swimming enthusiasts but is choked with plastic bags and filth now. Umshyrpi College took a step to train students and engage them in bringing back the river to its lost glory. For this, the college has engaged Sonali Saha, an ecologist from Florida in the US, in infusing life into the Umshyrpi. The college also organised a seminar, 'Capacity building for water monitoring, conservation of ecosystem and preservation of River Umshyrpi', on Tuesday.

Highlighting the need for bio-monitoring, Saha said, "There is a need to restore degraded rivers and transform them to what they used to be." Bio-monitoring, she explained, is an evaluation of the condition of a water body using biological surveys and other direct measurements of the resident biota in surface waters.

Saha had also gone on field trips accompanied by the students to get first-hand information of the condition of the river. "I recommend the students to collect data on the condition of river and streams using macro-invertebrates, which include damselfly, dragonfly and caddisfly, to indicate the quality of water and provide the data to the Meghalaya State Pollution Control Board (MSPCB)," she said, adding, "We should build technological capacity and use open source geographic techniques to make rivers clean." Other speakers at the seminar included Naba Bhattacharjee, environmentalist, Rekha Shangpliang, professor, NEHU, Wanshanbor R. Kharkrang, environmental engineer, MSPCB.

The seminar was attended by students from several schools and colleges and they were encouraged to tie up with the college for the endeavour. Umshyrpi means 'water for you all' (Um means water and shyrpi means you) and its source can be traced to Lum Shillong, Laitkor Hills. The river flows down through Lumparing, Lawsohtun and Risa Colony and the entire greater Laban. The confluence of River Wahumkhrah and River Umshyrpi is called Wah Roro, just before the Umiam Lake and amalgamates into River Umiam.