

Re: Need to widen the bridge built over the railway tracks passing through the Hoollongaper Gibbon Sanctuary, Jorhat, Assam to facilitate free movement of Hoolock Gibbons in the Sanctuary area

SHRI TOPON KUMAR GOGOI (JORHAT): It is a matter of great concern that houses of the only ape Hoolock Gibbons that is found in India, the Hoollongaper Gibbons Sanctuary at Jorhat in Assam is divided in two parts by the railway track. The character of Hoolock Gibbons are that they never come down on the earth from the tree. Since Gibbons are monogamous and do not mate within family lines, the stranded families in the smaller area were struggling to breed, leading to dwindling numbers. They were also suffering due to depleting food resources in their patch of forest. A railway track bisected the forest dividing the animals into two separate areas. Three family groups of gibbons live in the smaller area roughly 150 hectares, isolated from the 23 families in the larger one of 1,950 hectares. A bridge built over the Railway tracks in 2015 does not connect to the forest canopy and Gibbons are not using it to cross. I would strongly urge the Ministry of Railways to take urgent measures so that the present narrow bridge could be widened so that the whole family of Gibbons walk together to cross from one side to other and the bridge should be connected by the tree or forest canopy on both side at the end of bridge.