

## **REPORT ON STAKEHOLDERS' MEET ON *AQUILARIA* (AGAR) AT GUWAHATI, ASSAM.**

Rain Forest Research Institute, Jorhat organized a oneday **Stakeholders' meet on *Aquilaria*(Agar)** sponsored by National Medicinal Plants Board, Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015 at Sonaram High School, Bharalumukh, Guwahati. At the outset, Dr. R. K. Borah, Scientist-E and Group coordinator (Research),RFRI, Jorhat welcomed the delegates. The meeting was inaugurated by Dr. Bhumidhar Kalita, Joint Director of Agriculture (Horticulture), Govt. of Assam. Dr. Bhumidhar Kalita, in his inaugural address, pointed out that the eco-environment and edaphic factors of Assam are very much suitable for growing of agar plants, and stressed the need of cultivation of this important tree species in the entire state. Followed by the inaugural function, Dr. R. K. Borah made a presentation on "*Aquilaria malaccensis* plantations as a livelihood security in North East India". During his speech, he discussed the various issues of *A. malaccensis* starting from distribution, cultivation, artificial inoculation, bioprospecting and trade to legal issues.

Dr. M.S. Rawat, National Medicinal Plant Board, New Delhi, Dr. Prodip Mahanta, Prof. Horticulture, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat, Dr. Ghana Kanta Hazarika, Asst. Director, Department of Agriculture, Assam, Dr. Tridip Deka, Agriculture Development Officer, Directorate of Agriculture, Guwahati also participated in this meet and shared their views and experience. Besides, entrepreneurs and Progressive agar farmers from different agar growing areas of Assam also expressed their views and discussed various issues at length. Farmers particularly stressed on the removal of ban imposed by the Government of India on harvesting of the species. They requested the NMPB to put forward the issues to the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF). They also requested the MoEF through this forum to come out with a concrete policy on trade and harvest of agarwood in North East, India.

A total of 35 persons including Scientists and other Officials from RFRI, Jorhat *viz.*, Shri R. Raja Rishi, Dr. N. Ravi, Dr. D. Dutta and Mr. H. Bakatial actively participated in the meeting and shared their views and suggestions. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. D. Dutta, Scientist - B, RFRI, Jorhat.















