

Digboi College



ডিগবৈ মহাবিদ্যালয়

Itavata, Digboi, Assam - 786171

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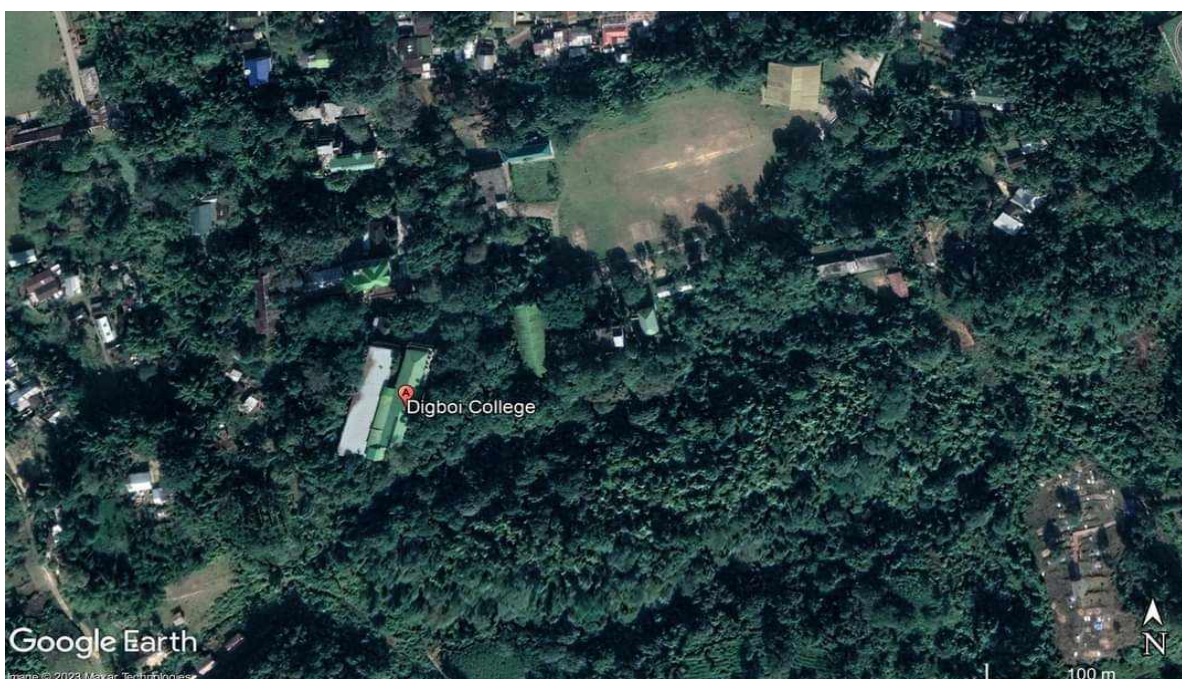
Email: digboicollege@yahoo.com

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Biodiversity Hub and Green Campus

Digboi College is located in Tinsukia, Assam, within the boundaries of the Dihing-Patkai National Park. The site of the college is naturally lush and home to a wide variety of plants and animals. Perched on a ridge, Digboi College is located a short distance south of Digboi-Duliajan road. Its expansive property spans 25 acres and is adorned with verdant forests and hills of unusual beauty. Because the college campus is located inside the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot of North East India, it has been endowed with a rich biodiversity by nature. The Upper Dihing Elephant Reserve is bordered by the college.

Due to its favorable topography, sufficient rainfall, and climate, Digboi College boasts an environmentally friendly campus with high species diversity. The rain forest belt offers a fully canopy, lush, verdant campus. The campus is about 80% covered in green space, with a variety of plant life including trees, bushes, and plants. The College has created the "Fruit Orchard" and Garden, which highlights the campus's great floral diversity and includes both medicinal and ethnomedically significant plants.



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The college is blessed with a favorable position, a beautiful surrounding area, and a wide variety of flowers, all of which contribute to the campus's rich faunal richness. The various insect, amphibian, reptile, bird, and mammal species on campus added to the college's fauna's richness and are crucial to the ecology. With over 33 species of odonates, 258 types of butterflies, 13 species of amphibia, 13 species of reptiles, 34 species of snakes, 198 species of birds, and 30 species of mammals, the college's fauna is rich in diversity.



The college has carried out a variety of initiatives, including a cleanliness campaign, plantation program, restricted use of single used plastic and recycling plastic garbage. The NSS often organizes awareness campaigns on biodiversity conservation, plastic recycling, sustainable development, and plastic-free living in partnership with various organizations. Every campus block has an environmental awareness board with messages like "No littering," "Plastic free campus," and others. There are also variously colored trash cans to make waste separation and

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collection easier. By growing fruits like guava, pineapple, oranges, and so on, the institution creates a "Fruit Orchard" for the animals of the surrounding woodlands, drawing in barking deer and, more lately, huge elephants. Teachers and students are also urged to plant trees on campus, and every year on Environment Day, plantation drives are held in support of this initiative. Additionally, the college has implemented a system whereby students who receive free admission plant seedlings and are also tasked with caring for them. Nonetheless, the college itself maintains the fence and other measures used to safeguard the saplings.



The organization also celebrates a number of environmental awareness days, including Big Butterfly Month, World Environment Day, Earth Day, and World Wet Land Day Van Mahotsav, in partnership with NSS and other departments.

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The Indian EXPRESS
JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

A college inside Upper Assam's rainforests spawns several young environmentalists

Written by **Nabarun Guha**

Digboi | Updated: September 19, 2021 13:31 IST

India has quite a few biodiversity-rich educational campuses: from IISc, Bengaluru to IIT, Mumbai, home to a host of wildlife. Digboi College, however, is more than that.



The entrance to the biodiverse Digboi college in Upper Assam's Digboi town. (Photo Credit: Nabarun Guha)

A deer frantically ran down a hilly slope, trying to outpace its unseen predator. The predator — a majestic Royal Bengal tiger — followed moments later, only to disappear in the same bushes in a flash. This chase did not transpire in a thick, forested jungle — but in the campuses of a college in Upper Assam. Welcome to Digboi College, situated in the eponymous oil town, which falls right in the biodiversity-rich Indo-Burma hotspot. The incident happened 12 years ago, but Bhaben Das, a guard at the college, remembers it like it were yesterday.

"Till then, I was sitting outside. After seeing the tiger, I remember coming inside the house and locking the grill," he recalled.



A long-tailed broadbill sighted on campus. (Photo Credit: Deborshee Gogoi)

India has quite a few biodiversity-rich educational campuses: from Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru to Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mumbai, home to a host of wildlife.

Digboi College, however, is more than that. It shares its boundary with the Upper Dihing Elephant Reserve, and it is barely 22 km from the recently notified Dehing Patkai National Park. Another forest is even closer: the Soraipung range under Digboi Forest Division, one of the entry points to the national park, is barely 6 km from the college. Rajib Rudra Tariang, who heads the zoology department at the college, spelled out the vastness of fauna spotted on campus over the years: "We have identified 19 species of mammals, 180 species of birds, 33 species of snakes, 12 species of lizards, 167 species of butterflies, seven species of frogs, more than 300 species of moths and several other species of insects and spiders," he said



Digboi College is home to more than 100 species of butterflies. Pictured is the 'Paris Peacock'. (Photo Credit: Deborshee Gogoi)

A wild, wild campus

The wealth of diversity on the campus is not lost on the college's students and teachers. The greenery of the campus has created a whole crop of environmentally-conscious young people. Students of the college actively participated in the "I-am-Dihing-Patkai" virtual campaign in 2020, a wide-spread movement in the state to protest illegal coal mining in the Dihing Patkai reserve forest. It is perhaps difficult not to care given how ecologically rich the college's location is. As birder and cartoonist Deborshee Gogoi, who teaches marketing at the college's department of commerce, said, "In 2012, an artificial fruit orchard was made just for the animals in the campus. Barking deers have given birth inside

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Images: Plastic free campus and Eco brick preparation from plastic wastes collected from students

