

## **Release of Vulture from Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre(VCBC), Rajabhatkhowa, Buxa Tiger Reserve during January,2021**

The Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre (VCBC), Rajabhatkhowa in Buxa Tiger Reserve, a joint project of Wildlife Wing, Forest Directorate, Government of West Bengal and Bombay Natural History Society(BNHS) is functioning since 2005. In the initial years ,the project was funded by Royal Society for Preservation of Birds and now it has become a part of CSS-Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitat being funded at 60:40 basis by the MoEFCC, Govt. of India and the Govt. of West Bengal.



This has proven to be a successful breeding programme where 3 critically endangered species of vultures, viz. white backed, slender billed and long billed vultures have been bred in captivity for release in the wild. This centre also acts as a rescue and rehabilitation centre for wild vultures of species like Himalayan Griffon.



On 17 December,2019, 6 number of Himalayan Griffon vultures were released from VCBC Rajabhatkhowa in the wild, all wing tagged and two fitted with satellite transmitter(Platform Transmitter Terminal -PTT) for study of their behaviour and present situation in the north-east part of the country from VCBC, Rajabhatkhowa. On getting encouraging result and successful documentation, it

was decided to release critically endangered species belonging to white backed variety from Rajabhatkhowa during January,2021.



This time, two captive born sub adult white backed vultures, aged around 2 years have been released, fitted with PTT along with 6 Himalayan Griffons. All vultures have been implanted with microchips and fitted with wing tag. Sri Ravi Kant Sinha, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force and Sri Vinod Kumar Yadav, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Wildlife and Chief Wildlife Warden, West Bengal released the vultures on 09 January, 2021 from the special release aviary at 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mile near Rajabhatkhowa of Buxa Tiger Reserve. The vultures have been doing well in the wild and transmitting signals through the PTTs and are being constantly monitored. Another lot of 8 white backed vultures, all fitted with PTTs, microchip and wing tags are ready to be released very soon.

