

**INAUGURATION OF PENHA-DE-FRANCA BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD
ON 12TH SEPTEMBER 2015.**

The village panchayat of Penha-de-Franca inaugurated its Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) on 12th September 2015, at 11:00 am in the presence of Shri. Rohan Khaunte, Hon'ble MLA of Porvorim Constituency; Shri. Rupesh Naik, Zilla Parishad (ZP) Member; Shri. Rajendra Kerkar, Environment Expert & Activist; Dr. Nitin Sawant, Member Secretary, Goa State Biodiversity Board (GSBB), all BMC members, school teachers & students and villagers of the Penha-de-Franca.

Shri. Ganpat Shetye, BMC member welcomed the gathering. Floral bouquets were presented to all the dignitaries present and members of the Biodiversity Management Committee. This was followed by lighting of the traditional lamp by the dignitaries. Shri. Ganpat Shetye then explained in short about the significance of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) as well as the need to protect, preserve and sustainably use biological diversity of the village.

Shri. Rohan Khaunte, MLA urged the village elders, school teachers & students to help the BMC in documenting the Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Peoples Biodiversity Register (PBR).

Dr. Nitin Sawant, MS, GSBB, explained the genesis of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and the conservation / sustainable use of the Bio-resources and also documentation of the Biological Diversity of the village. He also highlighted the excellent work done by some BMC's in enhancing their agricultural output while using traditional and eco-friendly methods and practices of agriculture. He further mentioned the implementation of the UNEP-GEF-MoEF-ABS project that is working on ABS in India and its scope of ABS agreements.

Shri. Rajendra Kerkar, Environment Expert & Activist shared his expertise on Goa's environment, ways and means of conservation of environment and its sustainable development. His vast knowledge on flora and fauna - past and existing, of the village Penha-de-Franca was an eye opener for the villagers. He also highlighted on the recent catastrophic events occurring due to environment mismanagement, sighting the example of floods in Uttarakhand and drought in Karnataka & Maharashtra.

Later the certificate and cheque of Rs.30, 000/- start up fund of BMC was handed over to the members of Penha-de-Franca BMC at the hands of Shri. Rohan Khaunte, MLA and Dr. Nitin Sawant, MS, GSBB. Mr. Arvind Naik, Computer Assistant, UNEP-GEF-MoEF-ABS Project was also present during the inaugural function.

The function concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by Shri. Bidye, member of BMC.

