

Dirang 25th November, 2023:

Owing to its versatility, yak fibres have been used traditionally for making different products, such as traditional tents, caps and bags used by the yak herders in extreme harsh cold climatic condition. A yak herd produces sufficient hair/fibres comprising of i) outer coarse fibre and ii) inner fine fibre. The inner fibre while popular among the yak rearers for preparation of different garments; the **outer coarse hair has limited use** due to its slippery and coarse nature. ICAR-NRC on Yak, Dirang putting its effort for better utilization of the un-utilized coarse fibre with or without blending with other fibres like jute. *chamar* is one of the best products made from the coarse fibre of yak tail. It is a ceremonial fly-whisk and is a royal symbol of great antiquity. In India, *chamar* is regarded sacred and used in religious practices by both Hindus and Sikhs. Besides, it is also used as a decorative item and popular among the tourists. Traditionally, yak herders make *chamar* from yak hair either after slaughter or death of the animal. They prepare it with intact skin which needs special care and attention for keeping the product safe from microbial spoilage and damage. Moreover, the use of animal skin may hurt the sentiments of vegetarians. Looking its great demands, from the tourists as well as the locals of Arunachal Pradesh; ICAR-NRC on Yak, Dirang, has taken an initiative to develop a designer *chamar* using long coarse yak hairs fixing with designer wooden handle. This institute producing, *chamar* regularly shearing long yak hairs annually without waiting for their sacrifice or death as practice by yak herders and motivating the yak farmers through conduction of different capacity building programmes.

In this context, the institute conducted a training cum hands-on-practices programme on “*Scientific Use of Yak Fibres with Special Reference to Chamar Making for Better Economic Returns of Yak Farmers*” on 24th November, 2023 in it Dirang campus. A total of fifty five yak farmers from different localities of Dirang circle were participated in the programme. All the participants learned the techniques of *chamar* making with full enthusiasm and showed their interest to learn the other yak hair based products. At the end of the programme, all the participating farmers were provided with supportive inputs like best quality tents, kits for *chamar* making with some basic veterinary medicines for their animals.

Gracing the event Dr. Mihir Sarkar, Hon’ble Director, ICAR-NRC on yak, suggested the yak herders to opt the opportunity to take-up such trainings from this institute and make-up their yak farming more remunerative. The programmes were coordinated by NRCY principal scientists Dr. D Medhi in presence of the officials and staffers of the institute.

