

# Biren Kalita

## Assam

*Biren Kalita (60) is a farmer cum herbal healer and has developed a herbal medication to cure retention of placenta (ROP) using local herbs.*



# Herbal medication to cure retention of placenta in animals

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*State Award – Assam; Scout: NIF Assam Cell*

Kalita's village is about 70 km from Guwahati and lies on the fertile banks of the Brahmaputra river, meandered by one of its tributaries. Agriculture is the primary occupation of the people with paddy being the main crop. Biren Kalita comes from a very poor background. Though their primary engagement is agriculture but annual floods cause so much havoc that sustainability itself becomes an issue every year. Hence, his son has started a small grocery shop to supplement whatever meager income is there from agriculture on their 10 bighas of land.

His father was a milk man and had good knowledge of symptoms and diseases of animals. He had also acquired familiarity with herbs through interactions with different people. Gradually this interest turned into a hobby and people from nearby villages started to come to his father for medications. Biren's induction in herbal healing started from this point and she started learning observing and hearing his father. Gradually as his expertise grew, he started modifying his father's herbal practices by altering the ingredients and/or proportions. This particular practice of Biren is for Retention of Placenta, which is a condition where all or part of the placenta (organ that connects the developing foetus to the uterine wall to allow gaseous, nutrient and faecal matter exchange) is left behind in the uterus after the calves birth. The ROP has many associated medical problems hence its earliest cure is recommended.

Biren Kalita is a very reserved person and as per his wife, does not even talk unnecessarily with his family members. In return for his services, he never takes any money except tamul-pan (areca nut and betel). If somebody persists with the request to take money, he politely declines and asks him/her to donate to the Namghar (temple).