

## **Report from Meeting of Adoptive Parents in Guwahati**

Subir Mukherjee and Nilanjana Gupta represented Atmaja, Association of Adoptive Parents at a Meeting of Adoptive Parents and Prospective Adoptive Parents organised by State Adoption Resource Agency (SARA), Assam on the 29<sup>th</sup> of July at the NEDFI Conference Hall at Guwahati.



**Archana Santi**, the Programme Manager of SARA had organised this meeting and many of her colleagues were also present that day. Many of the Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAA) were also present. The Programme was chaired by **Dr Bandana Bhuyan**, (Retired) Regional Director, National Institute of Public Cooperation & Child Development. There were 30 families, many with their children, and 29 other stakeholders, such as the SAAs, the social workers and other government officials.

The programme started with the distribution of several awards given to the best performing SAAs in various categories and to many adopted children for their achievements in the academic and other fields such as creative writing, judo, drama etc. It was very nice to see the children and their proud parents. One SAA received a special award for the placement of children with disabilities.

This was followed by a presentation by **Nilanjana Gupta** (in very bad Hindi) on the history and achievements of Atmaja with many photographs of our activities. **Subir Mukherjee** led the discussion on how to form an association. These were followed by very enthusiastic discussions by the people

present. Assam Government still has not extended maternity leave benefits to adoptive mothers, and the parents were very keen to work for this in their state. In addition, they all felt that an association would help them and the children in future. The SAA representatives also felt that this was a very positive step.

A Core Committee was formed with parents who volunteered to work for the setting up of an association and it was decided that the first programme would be a get-together. SARA will help the Core Committee to organise this event. We felt that the meeting was a big success and we hope that an active association will soon emerge in Assam.

**Atmaja** representatives were very warmly received by SARA Assam and the adoptive families. Everyone appreciated the work done by Atmaja.



We are really proud to share this moment with our members when Atmaja is invited by SARA , Assam to stand beside Adoptive Parents of Assam in forming an association.