

Whitley award

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In news- Nuklu Phom, a church worker from Nagaland has won the Whitley Award, 2021 alongside six other awardees from South Africa, Argentina, Brazil and Kenya.

More information-

- He is awarded for his efforts to create a network of community-owned forests in the state and protect the rare Amur falcon.
- He is the **only Indian to win the prestigious award.**
- Over the years, he has been working towards creating a **"Biodiversity Peace Corridor"**, which is a network of villages across four districts in Nagaland to promote community conservation.
- The idea is an extension of the **"Yaongyimchen Community Biodiversity Area"**, in Phom's ancestral village in Longleng district, where he set up a community-based conservation model.
- In Yaongyimchen, his work is primarily focused on conservation of wildlife and environment protection, but extends to education, health and micro-finance.
- The **Lemsachenlok Society**, which he founded, was recognised by the United Nations Environment Programme in 2015 for its efforts towards conserving the Amur falcon.
- It was a recipient of the India Biodiversity Award in 2018 and a Governor's Gold Medal Award in 2021.

Note- Bibhuti Lahkar is a senior scientist at Aaranyak, a society for biodiversity conservation in Northeast India, was also shortlisted to the award along with Phom. He was shortlisted for building bridges between people and Asian elephants.

About Whitley award-

- It is awarded annually to individuals from the Global South by **UK-based charity** the Whitley Fund for Nature (WFN).
- Each winner receives £40,000 in project funding over one year.
- It is also **known as the 'Green Oscar'**.
- It was established in 1994 by Edward Whitley.
- The Awards seek to **recognise** outstanding contributions to wildlife conservation with a focus on Asia, Africa and Latin America, bringing international attention to the work of deserving individuals committed to precipitating long-lasting conservation benefits with the support of local communities.
- WFN also **provides media and speech training** to enable winners to effectively communicate their work and inspire further philanthropic support.
- Each year a previous Whitley Award winner is selected to receive the **Whitley Gold Award** in recognition of their outstanding contribution to conservation.
- The Gold Award winners are international advocates for biodiversity with the passion and ambition to spread conservation messages to a wider audience.
- The Award is worth £60,000 in project funding for up to two years.
- Gold winners also join the Whitley Awards Judging Panel and act as a mentor to new winners during the Awards week.