

# Kotagiri NGO wins project

It was awarded on June 1

Special Correspondent

**UDHAGAMANDALAM:** A Kotagiri-based non governmental organisation, Keystone Foundation, has along with its United Kingdom-based partners, Overseas Development Group, University of East Anglia, Norwich and Bees for Development, Wales, bagged a prestigious project called 'The Darwin Initiative' sponsored by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the United Kingdom.

Stating that it was a coveted project, the Director, Keystone Foundation, Pratim Roy, said at Kotagiri on Tuesday that the Darwin Initiative made effective use of the biodiversity expertise available in the U.K. to work with local partners in host countries to protect and enhance their biodiversity.

It supported projects that brought lasting benefits to the host country through added expertise and understanding and a greater commitment.

Stating that the amount allocated for the initiative during the current year was £ 8.6 million, he said that since its launch in 1992, £ 35 million had been expended in about 100 countries.

• **The project will be implemented with the help of Forest Departments of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka in the ecologically sensitive Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve**

Its aim was to assist countries, which were rich in biodiversity but not well off resource wise. The three-year project on "Bees, Biodiversity and Forest Livelihoods" given to the Keystone Foundation started on June 1.

The project entailed training, research, institutional capacity building and advocacy.

The project was an opportunity for the Nilgiris in particular and India in general to take full advantage of biodiversity research and application that was going on in the U.K.

The project would be implemented with the help of the Forest Departments of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka in the ecologically sensitive Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, which housed some of the world's most treasured biodiversity along with indigenous forest communities.