

PROTECTED AREA UPDATE

News and Information from protected areas in India and South Asia

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EDITORIAL

The fluctuating fortunes of Asian Rhinos

News from the two strongholds of the Asian Rhino, the Kaziranga National Park in Assam and the protected areas of Nepal presents a strikingly different and interesting scenario. The year 2007 was one of the worst in recent times as far as rhino poaching in Kaziranga was concerned. Nearly 20 of these endangered animals were poached (mainly shot) in and around the grasslands of the park (*PA Update* Vol XIII, No. 6). The situation in Nepal, in contrast, turned up looking very good for 2007 as will be seen in the news reports below. Only two rhinos, one each in the Chitwan and Bardia National Parks were reported poached.

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Move just a year into the past and the situation that we had was completely the opposite. What 2007 has been for Kaziranga, 2006 seems to have been for rhinos of Nepal. At least 20 rhinos were poached in Nepal in 2006, 14 in Chitwan alone. The Bardia National Park, which has been one of the sites of rhino re-introduction in Nepal lost a staggering 67 rhinos in the three-year period from 2003-2006.

Is there anything that can explain this fluctuating of fortunes and the sudden and complete reversal of situations on the ground? Many say that the troubled years of insurgency in Nepal meant that the administrative mechanism and protection forces were simply unable to operate. In many instances these had to be pulled out completely and this led to a spurt in poaching activity (*PA Update* XII, No. 4 & No. 55) Nepal is believed to have one of the most successful community protection of forests, but this does not seem to have helped the rhino. There have been reports in recent times, in fact, suggesting increased involvement in rhino poaching of the fringe villagers of the Chitwan NP. Nearly half the rhinos poached here in 2006 were in forests managed by communities (*PA Updates* Vol XIII, Nos. 4 & 1). The situation in 2007 seems to have improved because of the stabilization of the political situation and the possibility of deputing more attention and resources for the protection of forests and wildlife.

If, however, the hardline gun and guard regime is the only one that will succeed, the question that follows is an obvious one. Why did Kaziranga, one of the India's most prominent wildlife parks and held up all along as a model of how 'protection' is the only thing that works, suffer such unprecedented losses in 2007? There have been in recent time, many reports of drastic increases in human – wildlife conflict around Kaziranga and people have suffered many losses because of wildlife. Communities that are not taken into confidence, nor benefit from conservation can only be indifferent to poaching threats at best and actual partners in poaching at worst. Add to this the condition of the frontline field staff and the situation almost explains itself.

The case of the rhino is only illustrative of the complex realities of conservation in a landscape where the nature, magnitude and diversity of threats faced by wildlife and those

striving for its protection are becoming increasingly powerful and insidious.

It must, however, be stated at the same time that there are no readymade answers. Also, that in a fast changing reality no one prescription, be it community participation or stricter protection, will necessarily work by itself. The challenge clearly is in finding some kind of an ideal mean, a situation and case specific approach that does not rely predominantly on just one paradigm of conservation.

The effort will have to be a joint and persistent one and the vigil, needless to say, relentless.

NEWS FROM INDIAN STATES

ASSAM

Fourth rhino introduced into Manas NP

A one-and-a-half year old female rhino was recently introduced into the Kuribeel area of the Bansbari Range of the Manas National Park. This is now the fourth rhino that has been introduced here as part of the Indian Rhino Vision 2020 program to repopulate areas like Manas with rhinos (See *PA Updates* Vol XIII, Nos 5 & 2).

Since 2006, four rhinoceros calves raised in captivity have been brought to Manas from the Kaziranga National Park for release here. The four animals, all orphaned females, were raised at the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC) near Kaziranga, a project initiated by the Wildlife Trust of India and the IFAW with support from the Forest Department (FD).

The first three rhinos had been transferred in 2006. The latest animal to be relocated to Manas had been rescued from a tea garden next to the Kaziranga NP after its mother was shot dead by poachers in September 2007.

Source: Sanjeeb Baruah. 'Manas park set to repopulate rhinoceroses', India E-News, 04/03/08.

61 poaches surrender in Manas NP

A group of 61 poachers, the most in a single day in Assam, surrendered before authorities in the Manas National Park in February.

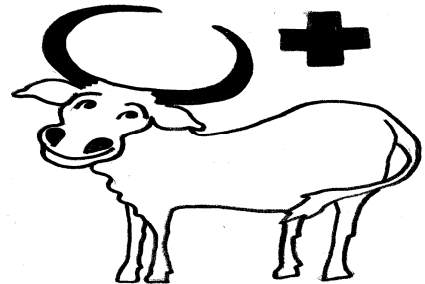
They surrendered before the Deputy Chief of the Bodoland Territorial Council, K Borgoyari and also deposited 26 country made weapons that were in their possession. Those who surrendered have also promised to be part of the rhino conservation program that has been recently initiated in Manas.

The surrender program was attended by the Director of the Manas National Park and the Executive Director of the Wildlife Trust of India.

Source: 'Surrender rids Manas of poachers', *The Telegraph*, 26/02/08.

Contact: **Director**, Manas NP, PO Barpeta Rd. Dist. Barpeta – 781315, Assam. Tel: 03666 – 261413. Fax: 232253 / 260253

Veterinary Camp at Burachapori WLS



Early Birds in collaboration with Aaranyak, the Assam Forest Department and the Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation conducted a three-day free veterinary cum awareness camp at Burachapori Wildlife Sanctuary in the month of March. 1180 cattle were vaccinated against HS+BQ and de-worming was also conducted at the villages of Dhania 6th & 7th, Bhagamukh and Jhauni. This was the 8th veterinary camp organized here since 2001.

Early Bird has also demanded that the buffalo *khutties* inside the sanctuary be removed in the interests of the wildlife here.

Source: Press Release by Early Birds. 19/03/08.

Contact: **Moloy Baruah**, Early Birds, 26, Surujmukhi, PO Silpukhri, Guwahati-781003, Assam. Tel. 0361-666353. Fax: 550158. Email: baruahm@iocl.co.in

Protest against rhino poaching in Kaziranga

Artistes, litterateurs and personalities from different fields today staged a one-day sit-in demonstration at Latasil in the last week of January in protest against the spurt in rhino poaching in the state, and the Kaziranga National Park in particular.

The demonstration that was organized by the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and the Asom Unnati Sabha also expressed concern over the rapidly shrinking forest cover.

The agitators included Ramen Baruah, Pulak Banerjee, JP Das, Dhiren Baruah, Dharmeswar Bora, Khanindra Chandra Das and Bijan Mahajan, among others, besides AASU adviser Dr Samujjal Bhattacharya, president Sankar Prasad Ray and general secretary Tapan Gogoi.

Nearly 20 rhinos were killed in and around Kaziranga National Park in 2007 and as many as five have already been poached in the first three months of 2008.

(Also see *PA Updates* Vol XIII, Nos. 6 & 5)

Source: Demo against rhino poaching', www.assamtribune.com, 28/01/08

Contact: **Director**, Kaziranga NP, PO Bokakhat, Dist. Golaghat – 785612, Assam. Tel: 03776-268095(O), 268086@

Chief Wildlife Warden – Assam, Rehabari, Guwahati – 781008, Assam. Tel: 0361-2566064. Fax 2547386

BIHAR

RJD MP, Shahabuddin chargesheeted for poaching in Valmiki TR in 2003

The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) Member of Parliament (MP) Mohammed Shahabuddin has been charge-sheeted by the Bihar Forest Department (FD) for a case of poaching spotted deer in the Valmiki Tiger Reserve. The incident is said to have occurred during the 2003 national convention of the RJD.

The chargesheet against Shahabuddin, Irshad Hussain, Panchayat head of Sirisia in West Champaran district and 12 others was submitted by Divisional Forest Officer,

Surendra Singh in the court of Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate of Bagaha recently.

A case against Shahabuddin had also been filed by the FD following the seizure of a live spotted deer, and skins of two deer and a tiger from his house at Pratappur in Siwan district in April 2005. Photographs of Shahabuddin posing with a rifle resting on a dead spotted deer had also been recovered. Chargesheets were later filed against all the 13 people seen in the photographs. The case is pending in the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate at Bettiah town.

Now lodged in Siwan jail, Shahabuddin was arrested in New Delhi in 2005 following the seizure of arms from his ancestral house in Siwan. Last year, the Patna High Court directed that a special court inside Siwan jail should try all pending cases against him.

In May 2007, the special court had awarded life sentence to Shahabuddin after convicting him for the kidnapping and murder of Chhote Lal Gupta, a CPI-ML worker in 1999. In August, he was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment for attacking then Siwan Superintendent of Police S. K. Singhal 11 years ago. A Lok Sabha member from Siwan since 1996, Shahabuddin is involved in 40 criminal cases including those of murder, abduction and possession of illegal arms.

Source: 'Member of Parliament chargesheeted in poaching case', www.topnews.in 06/02/08.

Contact: **Director**, Valmiki Tiger Reserve, Bettiah, Dist. West Champaran, Bihar. Tel: 06254 – 235331/232909. Fax: 232909

GUJARAT

Increasing threat from Nilgais to crops

The issue of crop damage by nilgais is becoming a serious one in Gujarat. The matter was the subject of a heated discussion recently in the State assembly with the Speaker of the Assembly directing the State Forest Minister to convene a special meeting of MLAs to discuss measures to deal with the problem. The population of Nilgais that was 66,000 in the state in 2002 had shot up to 97,000 in the last census conducted in 2005 and is believed to have now crossed the one-lakh mark.

It was pointed out that Sarpanchs of as many as 1,545 villages, mainly in Saurashtra

/Kutch and north Gujarat had been delegated powers to issue gun licenses to aggrieved farmers to kill the animals. Permissions to the kill the animals, were however granted to farmers only in four villages – two in Kutch and one each in Ahmedabad and Anand. Even the village sarpanchs who have been delegated these powers are facing a difficult situation as there is a lot of resistance from the local Jain community when it comes to the killing.

Source: 'Nilgai threat to standing crops generates heat in Assembly', *The Indian Express*, 15/03/08

Fire affects 85 hectares of forest in Gir

A large fire in the 2nd week of March is said to have affected nearly 85 hectares of forest between Ghantula Hill and Hanuman Gala in the Tulsishyam Range of the Gir Wildlife Sanctuary. The Forest Department staff needed 24 hours to bring the fire under control.

Nearly 30% of Gir's 350 lions live in this area but no lion was reported to have been affected. Beat guard, BT Vasoya, however, died of a heart attack while fighting the fire. Senior officials suspect that the fire was set deliberately by some miscreants. The Forest department has registered an offence against unknown persons under the Indian Forest Act.

Officials in Gandhinagar pointed out that small fires, in fact, were good for Gir as they help the clear the vegetation in the undergrowth.

Source: 'Fire destroys part of Gir Sanctuary', *The Times of India*, 13/03/08.

81 lions died in the last two years

A total of 81 lions died in the two-year period from January 2006 to January 2008. Of these 52 were natural deaths, 13 were deaths due to falls into wells (*PA Updates* Vol XIII, Nos. 5 & 2, and Vol XII, No. 6), nine were killed in poaching incidents (*PA Updates* Vol XIII, Nos. 5, 4 & 3) and six due to electrocution (*PA Update* Vol. XIII, No. 6). Out of the six electrocuted, five of them died in Permpara village, outside the Gir in October 2007.

The information was provided by the Minister for Environment and Forests Mr S Regupathy in the Rajya Sabha recently.

Source: '81 lions dead in last 2 yrs', *The Times of India*

781 open wells barricaded in East Gir

An initiative of the Rajkot based Wildlife Conservation Trust (WCT) along with the State Government has barricaded 781 open wells in the East Gir region (*PA Updates* Vol XIII, Nos. 5 & 2 and Vol XII, No. 6). 10 villages have been covered so far. These include Kotda, Paniya, Chanchai, Dalkhania, Krangsa, Sukhpar, Matanmala, Sodhpar, Ambagala and Ravana.

The work has been done with the help of a number of donors (108 wells), WWF India (77 wells), Vanishing Herds Foundation (269 wells) and Tata Chemicals (300 wells). Barricading one well costs Rs. 10,000 and a part of it (Rs. 4000) is provided as a grant from the government.

The WCT will also barricade another 1,000 wells in the coming year in association with Tata Chemicals. Two other corporate houses—Reliance Industries Limited and Ambuja—are also carrying out the work to cover another 2,000 wells. WCT has appealed to other corporate houses to pitch in, as there are nearly 9000 wells within a five km vicinity of the sanctuary.

A number of wild animals, particularly lions have fallen into these open wells and died in the past few years. There were 51 such incidents between 2001 and January 2008 and 25 lions were reported to have died.

Source: 'Open wells in Gir may no longer ring in death for lions', *The Indian Express*, 19/03/08

Contact: **Kishore Kotecha**, WCT. Tel: 0-9824062062. Email: info@asiaticlion.org
CF (Wildlife) Junagadh, Sardar Bag, Junagadh, Gujarat. Tel: 0285 - 631678/630051. Fax: 631211. Email: cfwildlife_ad1@sancharnet.in

Nal Sarovar WLS to be declared an ESZ

An area of 197 sq. kms located within 10 kms of the boundary of the Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary is to be declared an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).

Officials have said that extraction of ground water in the area would now be permitted only for bonafide agricultural and domestic consumption of the occupier of the plot after obtaining permissions from the State Ground Water Board. Sale of groundwater will be prohibited and the use of plastic will also now be regulated by the monitoring committee of the ESZ.

(Also see 'Boxing in our Pas', *PA Update* 52 and *PA Updates* Vol XI, No. 5, and No. 49)

Source: Himanshu Kaushik. 'Nal Sarovar sanctuary gets ESZ status', *The Times of India*, 20/02/08.

Contact: **ACF**, Nal Sarovar WLS, At & P.O. Vekaria Tehsil Viramgam, Dist. Ahmedabad. Gujarat. Tel: 079-2122430. Fax: 2122430

HIMACHAL PRADESH

Nearly One lakh migratory birds at Pong Dam

A three-day bird survey carried out by the Himachal Pradesh Forest Department in the last week of January counted more than 96,000 migratory birds in the Pong Dam Wildlife Sanctuary. The count was carried out by 25 teams that were formed for the purpose. These included local people and ornithologists from organizations like the Bombay Natural History Society, the Wildlife Institute of India, the Worldwide Fund for Nature, the Zoological Survey of India and the Kangra Bird Club.

The number this season was slightly less than the 1.11 lakh birds that were counted here last season. One of the reasons could be that the water level in the reservoir is considerably lower this year; the wetland that is generally spread over an area of 220 sq kms is only 200 sq kms now.

Source: Vishal Gulati. '96,000 migratory birds holidaying at Pong', *The Tribune*, 04/02/08.

Contact: **DFO (Wildlife)**, Pong Lake WLS, Chamba Division, Chamba - 176310, Himachal Pradesh. Tel:01899-22639. Email: cfchamba@nde.vsnl.net.in

Rationalisation of sanctuaries; three to be denotified

A major exercise of rationalization of boundaries of protected areas is proposed in Himachal Pradesh (see *PA Updates* Vol. XIII, No. 3, Vol. XII, Nos. 5 & 3). Three sanctuaries, the Shikari Devi, Naina Devi and Gobind Sagar Wildlife Sanctuaries are likely to be denotified in the process. The total area of PAs in the Kullu-Mandi-Bilaspur-Shimla region is likely to be reduced by over 600 sq kms. A large number of villages will be excluded from the PA network in response to an ongoing demand for the same.

This includes nearly 20,000 people in the Naina Devi WLS, most of whom are the oustees of the Bhakra Power Project.

The Norgu WLS in Mandi will lose an area of 218 sq km and be reduced to only 60 sq km. All 88 villages inside the sanctuary presently will now be left out. The Khokhan WLS will lose 7.51 sq kms as 28 villages will be excluded while the Kanawar WLS in the Parbati valley will lose an area of 10 sq km.

The Churdhar WLS will lose 1,117 hectares of private land; 62 hectares of the mela ground are to be removed from the Renuka WLS while a little more than 10 sq kms comprising the Chail town and bazaar will be removed from the Chail Wildlife Sanctuary. Majathal WLS near Darlaghat will also lose 857 hectares as this happens to be private land.

Some area has also been proposed for inclusion within PA boundaries as part of the process. This includes 800 hectares to Churdhar, 607 hectares to Talra and 888 hectares area to the Simbalbara WLSs.

Source: Kuldeep Chauhan. '3 sanctuaries may be denotified', *The Tribune*, 15/02/08.

Contact: **Vinay Tandon, Chief Wildlife Warden**, Himachal Pradesh, Talland, Shimla – 171001. Tel: 0177-2624193 Email: Vtandy@gmail.com

JAMMU & KASHMIR

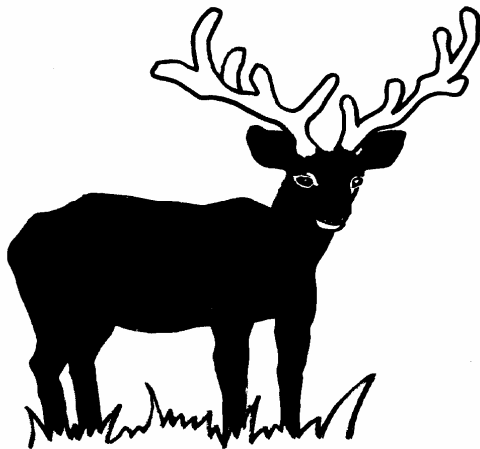
Hangul census in Dachigam NP

A three-day census of Hangul in the Dachigam National Park (DNP) was conducted in the 2nd week of March by the Forest Department (FD) in

collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII). Others who constituted the census teams included some NGO activists, and volunteers from the Kashmir University and Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural science Kashmir (SQUAST).

The areas to be covered included the Dachigam National Park and the adjoining reserves of Nishat, Bren, Chesmashahi, Dara, Khrew, and Khanmoh. The reserves of Tral in Pulwama, Overa in Pahalgam and Sarphrao, Akhal, forest areas of Sindh division and Wangat reserve were also to be included.

A census carried out by the FD in March 2006 had put the Hangul population between 117 and 197 individuals (*PA Update* Vol. XIII, No. 6) with the female fawn ratio at 20 per 100 males, a negative trend as compared to the 2004 census when it stood at 23 per 100 males. (Also see *PA Updates* Vol XIII, No. 1, Vol XI, No. 4 and No. 47).



Source: 'Wildlife Department embarks on Hangul population census', *Greater Kashmir*, 08/03/08.

Contact: **Wildlife Warden**, Dachigam NP, C/o. Chief Wildlife Warden, J&K State Tourist Reception Centre Srinagar – 190001. Tel: 0194-2492627

KARNATAKA

Chamalapura power plant opposed for its impact on people, wildlife

There has been widespread opposition to the construction of the 1000 MW Chamalapura

Thermal Power Plant that is to come up about 25 kms from Mysore. It has been suggested that the power plant will negatively impact the Bandipur-Nagarhole forests that are extremely important habitat for the tiger and other wild animals.

The project that will require 2000 acres of land and will also displace about 20,000 people. The opposition to the project has come from a cross section of people including academics, intellectuals, and litterateurs such as U.R. Ananathmurthy and Devanur Mahadeva, environmentalists, human rights activists, heritage conservationists and the general public.

The movement against the power plant is being spearheaded by the Association of Concerned and Informed Citizens of Mysore and farmers of the area.

Source: R Krishna Kumar. 'Will the tiger force the Government to drop Chamalapura power plant?', *The Hindu*, 20/02/08

Contact: **Field Director**, Bandipur Project Tiger Reserve, Aranya Bhawan, Ashokapuram, Mysore – 570008, Karnataka. Tel: 0821-2480901(O), 2484980 (R).

Trial peafowl census in Bankapura Conservation Reserve

The first ever trial peafowl census was carried out in the Bankapura Conservation Reserve on January 28, 2008. The census operation was led by the Centre of Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore with the help of the Karnataka Forest Department, NGOs and volunteers.

The Bankapura Conservation Reserve is estimated to have more than a 1000 peafowl but the exact number is not known. It is hoped to get a clearer picture of the peafowl population here after the conclusion of the census operations.

Source: Girish Pattanashetti. 'Census of an unusual kind', *The Hindu*, 29/01/08.

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden** - Karnataka, 2nd Floor, 18th Cross, Malleshwaram, Bangalore – 560003, Karnataka. Tel: 080-3341993 / 3345846. Email: pccfwl@vsnl.com

KERALA

Train kills five elephants in Walayar Forests of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve

Five elephants and a number of other species of wildlife including sambar, mouse deer, monkeys and reptiles have been killed in train accidents in the Walayar forests that are part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and also under Project Elephant. Four elephants were killed in the latest incident in the month of February.

In a letter submitted recently to the General Manager, Southern Railway and the Chief Wildlife Wardens of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI) has brought attention to the issue and suggested the removal of the rail track from within the Walayar Forests.

Till that happens, it has been suggested to minimize train speed to 20kmph in areas rich with wildlife; providing locomotive drivers training on precautionary measures to be taken in wildlife emergencies; a mechanism for co-ordination between the railways and forest staff to avoid further casualties; creation of a database of wildlife presence and movement in the concerned areas; placing wildlife sign boards / caution boards to inform the passengers and locomotive drivers; and collaborating with the local communities to get information of animal presence and movement in areas where the railway track is present.

Contact: **S.Guruvayurappan**, Project Officer & Co-ordinator, WPSI, S-25, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi- 110017.

South India office: Neelikkad, Tattamangalam Post, Palakkad, Kerala - 678102. Tel: 0-9447700321. Email: sguruvayurappan@gmail.com Web: www.wpsi-india.org

Proposals submitted by Kerala Government to the Centre for conservation activities

Following are the details of the proposals submitted to the Central Government by the Government of Kerala during the current financial year for protection of forests and wildlife. This information was given by the Minister of State for Environment and Forests

Mr. S. Regupathy in a written reply to a question by Mr Chengara Surendran in the Lok Sabha.

No	Proposal	Amount (Rs. Crs)
1	Project on voluntary relocation of human settlements in Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary	85.00
2	Project for acquisition of land for elephant corridors at Periyar, Kottiyoor, Palachuram, Nelliyoode areas.	7.89
3	Project for acquisition of ecologically fragile land area and private enclosures under CAMPA scheme.	76.55
4	Project for conservation of marine turtles and other endangered marine animals.	6.65
5	Project for protection and development of Sandal trees at Marayoor	35.52

Source: Package for preservation and protection of wildlife, Govt. of India Press Release <http://pib.nic.in/release/release.asp?relid=36749>, 19/03/08

Contact: **Chief Wildlife Warden** – Kerala, Vazhudacaud, Trivandrum – 695014, Kerala. Tel: 0471-2322217 / 2360452 / 2204896. Fax: 2360452 / 2322217

Rs. 85 crore proposal for relocation of people from Wynad WLS

The Government of Kerala has submitted a Rs. 85 crore proposal to the Central Government for the 're-habilitation' of 983 families living inside the Wynad Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Central Government has said that the proposal will be processed subject to the availability of funds, conformity of the proposal to existing guidelines and fulfillment of necessary legal and administrative requirements after which the amount also will be decided.

The information was recently given by the Minister of State for Environment and Forests Mr S Regupathy in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha today.

Source: 'Relocation of people residing in Wyanad Wildlife Sanctuary', Press Release, MoEF, 05/03/08.

Contact: **Wildlife Warden**, Wynad Wildlife Division, P.O. Sulthan Bathery, Wayanad-673 592, Kerala. Tel: 0493-2620454

MADHYA PRADESH

Union Tourism Ministry award for Pench

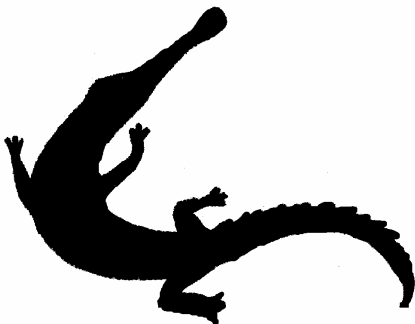
The Pench Tiger Reserve was recently selected for the 'Best maintained tourist-friendly national park award' by the Union Tourism Ministry. The award was given for the achievements in the year 2006-07.

Large number of tourists visit Pench regularly. The numbers of visitors here is reported to have gone up here from 1,333 in 1999 to 45,556 in 2006-07.

Source: 'National award for Madhya Pradesh tiger reserve', www.mangalorean.com, 23/02/08

Contact: **Field Director**, Pench Tiger Reserve, P.O. Barapathar, Dist. Seoni - 480 661. Tel: 07692-250794/250594. Fax: 250794/221180. Email: root@trpench.ren.nic.in

111 gharial deaths in National Chambal Sanctuary



As of March 29, 2008, 111 gharial (54 males, 48 females and 9 unknown) have been found dead on the Chambal. The first report of the mass die-off was received on Dec 8, 2007. The mortality was limited to the lower 40 kms of the National Chambal Sanctuary, the stretch closest to the Yamuna, killing about 33% of the

adult/sub-adults (between the sizes of 1.6 m and 3.5 m).

There are an estimated 1130 gharial found in four populations in India, of which nearly 1000 were counted in the River Chambal during a survey conducted in 2008.

During the initial days of the investigation into the mass mortality, parasite overload and heavy metal concentration in the internal organs were bandied as the possible causes. However, these were subsequently ruled out by international crocodile veterinarians. The Ministry of Environment and Forests instituted a Crisis Management Group headed by Ravi Singh, of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) - India. Post mortems conducted by experienced crocodile vets revealed visceral and articular gout, caused by kidney failure. What caused this is still a matter of speculation. Toxins in the ecosystem, perhaps in the fish or in the environment, is an avenue of investigation. The other speculation is that the gharial may have indulged in gluttony until their metabolism could not handle it anymore in the winter months, leading to gout.

Although the National Chambal Sanctuary is a 428 km stretch of river, the gharials live in four main groups. The affected area is close to one of the large groups and the incident may have wiped out a majority of the adults/sub-adults of this area. However surveys of 2008 reveal that this is not a static system allowing the incident to be isolated. Instead, animals were seen moving downstream to occupy the area vacated by the dead gharial. Surveys in 2007 had revealed that the affected area had 153 adults/sub-adults, while in 2008, the same area has 128 adults/sub-adults. So this stretch of river could become a sink for the Chambal population.

Crocodile biologists say that it is critical to monitor nesting this year to assess reproductive success. Loss of fertility may indicate continued toxin presence. The future course of action is to conduct extensive toxicology tests to identify the lethal toxin and its source, and studies on gharial behavioural ecology.

The various organizations involved in the operation to get to the bottom of the crisis include the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India; Forest Departments of Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Madhya Pradesh (MP); RiverWatch – a joint initiative of Gharial Conservation Alliance (GCA) and Worldwide

Fund for Nature-India (WWF); IUCN/SSC Crocodile Specialist Group; The San Diego Zoological Society; AZA Crocodile Advisory Group, (USA); Ocean Park, Hong Kong; Madras Crocodile Bank/Centre for Herpetology, Chennai; La Ferme aux Crocodiles, France; Wildlife SOS, Delhi and Agra; University of Florida, Gainesville; The City University, Hong Kong; Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Bareilly; and the Defence Research and Development Establishment, Gwalior.

Source: Janaki Lenin based on information gathered from multiple sources.

Contact: **DFO**, National Chambal WLS, Morena Division, Morena, Madhya Pradesh. Tel: 07532-226742. Fax: 07532-227367/234188

Dhruvajyothi Basu

Email: dhruvasu@rediffmail.com

Rom Whitaker

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Ravi Singh.

Email: RaviSingh@wwfindia.net

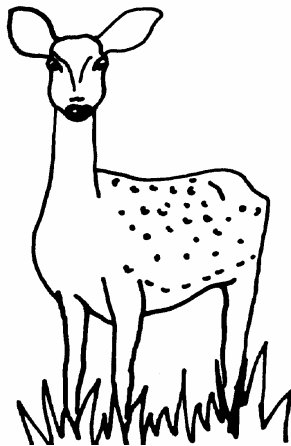
CWLW, MP, Van Bhawan, Tulsi Nagar, Bhopal 462003, Madhya Pradesh. Tel: 755-557371/ 550391.

MAHARASHTRA

Spotted deer from Powai park to be moved to Tungareshwar WLS

75 spotted deer, presently at the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) Powai park, are to be soon freed in the forests of the Tungareshwar Wildlife Sanctuary. The decision to release these animals was taken about a year ago, but the final approvals came only recently.

The animals will be moved in batches of 10-15 depending on how the first batch of introduced animals adapt to their new habitat.



About two years ago, the BMC's Hydraulic department, which manages the Powai park, had admitted in a letter to the Conservator of Forests that it did not have proper infrastructure, skilled staff and a veterinary doctor to maintain the animals, and therefore, requested permission to release the deer in the wild. Keeping the deer in the park was costing the authorities over Rs. 15 lakh annually. The facilities too were not very good and the low-lying enclosure would get regularly flooded during the monsoons.

An RTI application made by the NGO, PAWS last year had revealed that the deer had been kept in Powai park for 40 years without permissions from the Central Zoo Authority's (CZA) or the Wildlife Authority.

Source: 'Shifting of deer from Powai park to begin by March end', www.expressindia.com

GIS based surveillance for Sanjay Gandhi NP

A Geographical Information System (GIS) based surveillance network is to be installed for better patrolling and management of the forests of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP). The network called GeoVun will be installed by the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) within the next six months. GeoVun allows the users a number of facilities like identifying the best routes for patrolling and for perform spatial analysis. It integrates all maps and tables, and is a one-point warehouse of all the park data.

TCS, along with Conservation Action Trust (CAT) and WTI Advanced Technology Limited, are reported to have recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Maharashtra for the project. The total cost of Rs. 30 lakhs will be borne by TCS as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility program. The project has not yet been formally announced.

Source: 'Eye in the sky for Mumbai's jungles', *The Hindustan Times*

Contact: **Dy. Conservator of Forests**, SGNP, Borivili (East), Mumbai – 400066, Maharashtra. Tel: 022-28860362, 28860389(O), 8862780(R) Email: sgnpb@rediffmail.com

Proposal for the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve

The Maharashtra State Government is reported to have recently forwarded a proposal to the National Tiger Conservation Authority for the constitution of the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve.

Covering an area of 741 sq. kms, it would be the first such reserve in the Western Ghats in Maharashtra and include 317.67 sq km of Chandoli National Park and 423.55 sq km of Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary.

Further details are not known. (Also see *PA Update* 53)

Source: Rajesh Sachdev. Email dated 13/03/08.

Contact: **Rajesh Sachdev**. Email: leopardguy@gmail.com

Chief Wildlife Warden, Maharashtra State, Dr. Ambedkar Bhawan, 4 & 5th Floor, M.E.C.L. Building Seminary Hills & Campus, Nagpur – 440001, Maharashtra. Tel: 0712-2526758 / 2530126. Fax –2510671. Email: cw@nagpur.dot.net.in

MIZORAM

MoU for conservation work in the Mara Autonomous District Council

Samrakshan Trust – an NGO mandated to promote participatory and sustainable biodiversity conservation in a socially just manner and the MADC - Environment and Forest Department have recently signed a MOU with the objective of strengthening Conservation of Forests and Wildlife in participation with the local community in Maraland. Activities to be undertaken during the initial phase include Conservation Education and Awareness with different segments of the Mara community.

Contact: **Nimesh Ved** - Samrakshan Trust – Mizoram Field Office - Email: Nimesh.ved@gmail.com.
DCF - Environment and Forest Department- MADC, MADC Head Quarters, Saiha, Mizoram.

ORISSA

Forest rangers and staff demand better facilities

The Orissa Forest Rangers Association (OFRA) and the Orissa Non-Gazetted Forest Services Association (ONGFSA) have threaten to launch an agitation if immediate steps were not taken by the government to meet their demands. These include among others, service benefits like insurance cover, better arms for protection and a revamping of security measures for forest staff. They have placed a 10-point charter before the government demanding that forest police stations should replace the existing ‘beat house’ system; that a provision should be made for a striking force; forest officials should be empowered to implement IPC and CrPC provisions; their salaries and incentives should be brought at par with police personnel; duties should be organized shift wise; the case investigation process should be divided among all forest officials according to hierarchy; that a welfare fund be created for emergency expenditure and the policy to award prizes be changed.

A demand has also been made for the provision of at least Rs. Two lakh health insurance and Rs 10 lakh life insurance for the forest personnel.

Source: ‘Forest rangers up in arms’, www.newindpress.com, 14/02/08

President of Mahabir Pakshi Surakshya Samiti, Mangaljodi arrested for poaching

Dibakar Behera of the Sri Mahabir Pakshi Surakshya Samiti (SMPSS), Mangaljodi, was arrested recently for illegally possessing a gadwall and a shoveller. He has been lodged in judicial custody after the Tangi SDJM rejected his bail plea.

The SMPSS has been in the news over the last couple of years as a successful initiative for bird conservation by former poachers around the Chilka Lake. The SMPSS had also been awarded the prestigious Biju Patnaik Award for its conservation initiative in October 2007 at the hands of the Orissa Chief Minister Mr. Navin Patnaik (*PA Update* Vol XIII, No. 6).

Local community members are reported to not be surprised over Dibarkar's arrest and have said that he had been involved in poaching for many years.

Source: 'Saviour turns poacher', *Deccan Chronicle*, 07/02/08.

Contact: **Wild Orissa**, Plot 3A, Janpath, Satyanagar, Bhubaneshwar – 751007, Orissa. Tel: 0674-512044. Email: wildorissa@hotmail.com

Road and school construction stopped inside Karlapat WLS

Construction of roads and a school inside the Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary was stopped recently by the Warden of the park. This has caused widespread resentment in the villagers that live within the boundaries of the sanctuary. They have alleged that collection of forest materials for construction and repair of houses and other minor forest products was also being denied by the Forest Department.

There are 10 revenue villages and nine unsurveyed villages inside the sanctuary that are located in the Karlapat, Jugsaipatna and Jerka Reserve Forests. The tribals here have been demanding that the land inside the sanctuary that is under their possession should be settled in their favour. The Karlapat WLS has not yet been finally notified under Section 26(a) of the Wildlife Protection Act.

The Forest Department has said that land inside the sanctuary cannot be given to anybody and that a management plan for alternative livelihood was being prepared for the villagers inside the sanctuary so that they can be sustained in non-forest activities like horticulture, dairy, cottage industry and farming. Eco-development committees with the villagers as members are also to be formed.

Source: 'Forest rights: Villagers up in arms', www.newindpress.com 02/02/08.

Contact: **DFO and Warden**, Karlapat WLS, At / P.O. Bhawanipatana, Dist Kalahandi, Orissa. Tel: 06670-230526. Fax: 230526
CWLW– Orissa, Plot No. 8, Shahid Nagar, Bhubaneshwar – 751007, Orissa. Tel: 0674- 2512502 / 2513134 / 2515840. Fax: 512502

TAMIL NADU

Protests against grazing ban in Indira Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary



A group of shepherds on the fringes of the Western Ghats and members of Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam (TNVS), a farmer's arm of Communist Party of India (Marxist), have protested against the restrictions on grazing in the forests of the Indira Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary. The ban on grazing has been in force from the starting of the year when the sanctuary was upgraded to a tiger reserve.

Shepherds and farmers from Pollachi and Udumalpet taluks of Coimbatore district and Palani taluk of neighbouring Dindigul district took part in the agitation. They gathered at the Forest Department office with a flock of 500 sheep and 200 cows and raised slogans against the ban. They have demanded a renewal of their licenses for grazing, a right which they had been enjoying for decades. They have pointed out that their cattle will suffer, as enough alternative sources for foraging were not available.

Forest officials, on the other hand, have clarified that they cannot extend the licenses due to the upgradation of the sanctuary to a tiger reserve and that they had clear instructions to deny entry of cattle inside in the interests of wildlife.

Source: '3 shepherds, 30 sheep crushed to death near Udumalpet', *The Hindu*, 28/02/08.

Contact: **Wildlife Warden, Indira Gandhi WLS**, 178, Fisheries Dept. Road, Govt. Timber Depot, Pollachi 642 001, Tamil Nadu. Tel: 04259 - 225356

UTTAR PRADESH

Villages to be shifted out of Dudhwa

The Uttar Pradesh Government is reported to have made a decision to move out villages from the Dudhwa National Park in the interests of wildlife, particularly the tiger.

Work on relocation that will involve the moving of about 1500 residents of 10 villages is to start soon.

Source: 'Village shift to save tiger', *The Telegraph*, 03/03/08

Contact: **Director**, Dudhwa National Park, Dist. Lakhimpur Kheri, Uttar Pradesh. Tel: 05872-252106. Fax: 05872-252106

WEST BENGAL

Tribal youth shot dead in Buxa Tiger Reserve

Samen Rava, a member of the Rava Tribal Community of North Poro forest village bordering the Buxa Tiger Reserve was allegedly shot dead by a Forest Department (FD) patrolling unit in the 2nd week of February. The deceased was a part of a group of four youth who had entered the forests to collect firewood when they met the routine Patrolling Unit.

It has been said that a member of the unit fired from very close and Rava died on the spot.

Source: 'Tribal youth shot dead by Forest Department in the Buxa Tiger Reserve of North Bengal', Press Release by the National Forum of Forest People & Forest Workers (NFFPFW), New Delhi, 09/02/08.

Contact: **Convenors**, NFFPFW, 143 Khirki Village, New Delhi - 110 017. Mobile: 0-9818147740. Tel: 011-29541502
Field Director, Buxa TR, P.O. Alipurduar, Dist. Jalpaiguri - 736122. Tel: 03564-256333 /255979. Fax:255577
Chief Wildlife Warden, Vikas Bhawan, North Block, Salt Lake, Calcutta - 700091, West Bengal. Tel: 033-3346900/3583208. Fax: 3345946. Email: wildlife@cal.vsnl.net.in

NATIONAL NEWS FROM INDIA

Govt. moves forward on CAMPA

The Union Cabinet recently gave its approval for the introduction of a Bill, the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Bill, 2008 in Parliament for the establishment of a Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) and the creation of the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF).

It also proposed the creation of post of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the rank of Inspector General of Forests and for the utilization of the funds for "Green India" and other afforestation activities.

Source: Press Release, Govt. of India, <http://pib.nic.in/release/release.asp?relid=36461&kwid=>, March 2008

Golden Ark award for Dr. Charudutt Mishra



Dr. Charudutt Mishra, India Director of the International Snow Leopard Trust is among three conservationists to be awarded the Netherlands 'Golden Ark Award' this year. He was selected for his project on the protection of snow leopard in the Himalayas based on "the understanding of and for (the interests of) the local population".

He and the other two, Patricia Medici (Brazil) and Michiel Hotte (the Netherlands), were selected by an international jury from a total of 69 candidates from 40 countries. While Medici was awarded for her 'successful efforts in saving the Brazilian lowland tapir', Hotte was given the honour for 'protection of the Amur leopard'.

Mishra was also given the Whitley Gold Award in 2005 for "successfully reducing the retaliatory killings of snow leopards by implementing an insurance scheme among communities whose livestock suffered their predation". He was also involved in a post-conflict wildlife assessment in Afghanistan on behalf of the UN. The 'Order of the Golden Ark' was instituted by Holland's Prince Bernard. The award was renamed the 'Golden Ark Award' this year.

Source: 'Dutch award for Indian Conservationist', Press Trust of India

Rs. 600 crore for Project Tiger in 11th Five Year Plan; Rs. 50 crore for NTCA in Budget

The Central Government has made an allocation of Rs. 600 crore for Project Tiger for the 11th Five Year Plan Period. This is four times the amount of Rs. 150 crores that had been sanctioned for the preceding plan period.

Apart from continuing the ongoing programmes of Project Tiger, the enhanced outlay would support a number of new initiatives, including improved relocation and rehabilitation packages for people living in core tiger zones. The compensation package for these people has been increased from Rs One lakh per family to Rs 10 lakh per family.

Eight existing national parks or sanctuaries have also been elevated to the status of tiger reserves, which means that they would receive enhanced funding and greater support from the Government. Two of these new tiger reserves are in Tamil Nadu, and one each in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Assam and Chhattisgarh.

An additional Rs. 50 crores was also sanctioned for the National Tiger Conservation Authority tiger conservation by the Finance Minister, P Chidambaram during the Central Budget for 2008-09.

Source: Amitabh Sinha. 'Rs. 600 cr for tiger protection' *Indian Express*, 31/01/08.

Contact: **Dr. Rajesh Gopal**, Director, Project Tiger Annexe No.5, Bikaner House, Shah Jahan Road, New Delhi 110 001.
Email: dirpt-r@hub.nic.in;

4th Green Guard Awards

The 4th Green Guard Awards were recently awarded by 'The Jungles' in a ceremony in Kolkata.

The Award for Exceptional Individual Performance was given posthumously to Late Ram Dayal Srivas, Forest Guard from the Palpur Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) and Late PD Majhi, Boatman from the Pakke WLS.

The Award for Media Reporting for wildlife causes went to Simon Parry of the Red Door News Agency, Hong Kong.

The team award for the Best Anti-Poaching Operation was given to the Pakke WLS followed by the Periyar WLS. The Team Award for the Natural Habitat Conservation was awarded to Barnawapara WLS while the Nalsarovar WLS was declared the Best Protected Wildlife Reserve.

Contact: **Raja Chatterjee**, The Jungles. 78 Brahma Samaj Road, Behala, Kolkata – 700034. West Bengal. Tel: 033-24585146.
Email: the_jungles@rediffmail.com

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau Headquarters inaugurated



The Headquarters of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau was inaugurated in New Delhi in January at the hands of Ms. Meena Gupta, Secretary, Ministry of

Environment and Forests. A manual for enforcers on Red Sanders, a tree species that is endemic to southern India, and listed as part of the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) was also released on the occasion.

The bureau, a multidisciplinary agency consisting of officials from forests, police and revenue (customs and excise) would aim to increase awareness amongst the international tourists to reduce demand for the wildlife and its products. As part of the strategy for coordinated action in combating organized crime, strengthening of the enforcement at the international trade exit points would get emphasis as the major demand for the wildlife and its products lies in overseas markets. The Bureau is

also mandated to advise policy changes, if any, based on the information/data on crime and criminality.

The Union Cabinet had approved the constitution of the Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau in 2006 (*PA Update* Vol XII, No. 4), based on the enabling provisions made in the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. This was also one of the recommendations of the Tiger Task Force.

Many senior officials and Members of the Advisory Group were present at the inauguration. These included Mr SC Dey, Global Tiger Forum; Mr Vivek Menon, Wildlife Trust of India; Mr Sanjay Upadhyaya, Enviro-Legal Service; Mr Kartick Satyanarayan, Wildlife SOS; and Mr Samir Sinha, TRAFFIC India.

I.G. Wildlife and Chief Wildlife Wardens of Manipur, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh who are also members of this Advisory Group attended the function. There is also representation from Narcotics Control Bureau, CBI and National Tiger Conservation Authority.

Source: 'Wildlife Crime Control Bureau Headquarters begins today', Press Release, MoEF, 22/01/08.

SOUTH ASIA

BANGLADESH

Tiger collaring project in Sunderbans suspended

A tiger-collaring project in the Sunderbans (*PA Update* Vol XII, No. 3) has been suspended following the death of tigers that had been recently collared. It has been suggested by some that the animals may have died because of the drug, Telazol, used to sedate the animals.

The Sunderbans Tiger Project, which is in charge of the collaring and which also monitors and protects the 300-500 tigers of Bangladesh's giant Sunderbans mangrove forest, has dismissed the concerns regarding the cause of the deaths and said that old age could

be the main reason. It has been pointed out that Telazol has been used on wild tigers with out any adverse effects across the world and that the standard techniques were being used for the collaring project.

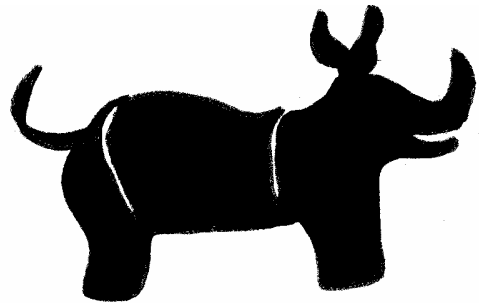
Other wildlife scientists have also said that use of Telazol is standard practise for this kind of work and many projects have successfully used the drug.

Bangladesh's Forestry Department is looking into the causes of the tiger deaths.

Source: Mark Dummet. 'Tiger collaring project suspended', BBC News, 03/03/08

NEPAL

Only two rhinos poached in Nepal in 2007



Only two rhinos, one each in the Royal Chitwan and Royal Bardia National Parks, were reported to have been poached in Nepal in the calendar year 2007. This is a significant improvement in the situation, after the particularly bad year of 2006 when more than 20 rhinos were poached across the country (see *PA Updates* Vol. XIII, Nos. 4 & 1).

14 rhinos were confirmed poached in Chitwan alone in 2006 and 67 rhinos were killed in Bardia from 2003-2006. Poor security in the parks on account of the ongoing conflict and political instability in Nepal were considered the main reason for the increase in poaching and trafficking of endangered animals and their parts. Most security posts had been destroyed and dislocated during the insurgency and patrolling in many wild animal ranges had also been stopped.

Source: 'Rhino poaching declines', Kantipur Online, 26/01/08.

Three-day operation against illegal activities in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve

Fifteen persons involved in illegal activities like trading in wildlife (tortoises) and grazing buffaloes were arrested and 55 buffaloes and three guns were seized during a three-day operation in early March in the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve. The operation was conducted by the reserve administration and security men from the Sribaks Company of the Nepali Army following a tip off.

Meanwhile, army men deployed from the Ranaser Battalion for the security of the Bardiya National Park recently also arrested a well known poacher from the Babai Valley within the park.

Source: 'Poachers face action', *Gorkhapatra*, 05/03/08.

SRI LANKA

IEDs being used for wildlife poaching

There are reports of increased use of Improvised explosion devices (IEDs) being used for poaching wildlife in an around protected areas in Sri Lanka.

Known as *Hakka Patasa*, the locally made explosive device is usually hidden in animal fodder. Poachers mix the explosives with small stones and coat it with dried fish particles to lure animals, especially wild boar. When the explosive gets crushed in the mouth while it bites the bait, it explodes causing immense damage to the mouth of the animal.

Elephants too, are reportedly being killed in this way. In 2007 at least two elephant deaths were confirmed as caused by *Hakka Patasa*, one from Dimbulagala and the other near Somawathie. It is believed, however, that at least six elephants have been killed in this manner in recent times in these regions alone.

Uda Walawe National Park is one of the first places where these devices were used by poachers.

Poachers have also started to use other methods to get the wild animals, such as placing poisoned water in earthen pots or bags. This is mainly done during the height of the

drought when an animal would drink anything to quench its thirst.

Elephant deaths continue to be caused by hunting, electrocution, pesticides, falling into pits, stepping on anti-personnel mines and getting hit by trains. Three pachyderms were killed in the month of February and March in Ampara alone.

According to the Sri Lankan Department of Wildlife Conservation, 189 elephants died in 2007. Humans were responsible for 116 of those deaths. Death by shooting continues to be the main cause with 83 elephants falling victim.

Source: 'IEDs being used for wildlife poaching', *Sunday Times*, 16/03/08.

OPPORTUNITIES

Paid volunteers for King Cobra Telemetry Project

The Agumbe Rainforest Research Station (ARRS) in the Western Ghats of Karnataka is looking for volunteers to work on its King Cobra Telemetry Project.

Applicants should be Indian nationals; young, energetic and fit people; be able commit a minimum of one straight month to this project and be able ideally (though it's not imperative) to speak Kannada

Because of logistical limitations and the project design only a limited number of volunteers can be accepted at a give time. Volunteers will also have to pay a boarding fee of Rs. 100 per day.

Contact: Email: pogirishankar@rediffmail.com; arrs.edu@gmail.com

Training course in environmental journalism

The German organisation InWent (Capacity Building International) is offering scholarships for a training course in environmental journalism for journalists who work for the print media and have a special interest in environmental topics.

The fellowship is open to those under the age of 36 from the following countries:

Bangladesh, China, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania.

For more information check:

http://www.inwent.org/themen_reg/ijj/programme/06642/index.en.shtml

Researcher for wolf project in Maharashtra

A Masters student with a good knowledge of Marathi and/or Hindi is needed for research work in Maharashtra on ecological aspects of wolves. The project starts in July 2008.

Those interested should contact with their CV containing information on educational qualifications, research experience and names of three referees with their contact details.

Contact: **Vidya Athreya**. Tel: +91-9423582394.
Email: phatrosie@gmail.com

Faculty positions in Social Sciences at ATREE

The Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) has invited nominations and applications for following two faculty positions in social sciences

1. **Conservation Governance and Policy**: Candidates must have strong social science research experience in environment and conservation, with interest in policy analysis.

2. **Social Sciences**: Candidates must have strong social science research experience in environment and conservation, preferably with degrees in sociology, anthropology, political science, history or geography.

The appointments are to be made at the level of Fellows or Senior Fellows, depending upon qualifications and experience. Short-term visiting appointments of 3-6 months duration each are also feasible. Fellows and Senior Fellows are expected to build and lead independent research programmes, contribute to interdisciplinary research and teach in ATREE's doctoral programme.

These positions are endowed with grants from the Arghyam Foundation and the Ford Foundation and will be based in Bangalore. Electronic submission of applications is preferred.

Contact: **Director**, ATREE, 659, 5th 'A' Main Road, Hebbal, Bangalore 560024, India.
Email: director@atree.org

Field work in Keladevi WLS

A Research Assistant (RA) is needed to assist with fieldwork in the Keladevi Wildlife Sanctuary, Rajasthan, for interviewing villagers and translating between English and Hindi.

The position is to start as soon as possible for a period of 2 months, with a possibility of a further 3 months later in 2008. Knowledge of good written and spoken English and Hindi is essential.

Contact: **Alison Wadmore**. Email: alison.wadmore01@imperial.ac.uk
Mob: +919868150283.

Equations needs people to work on tourism

Equations, a Bangalore based research, organisation working on the impacts of tourism in India, particularly on local communities, is looking for people to work as part of their various campaigns.

Applications have been invited to join Equation's Programs on Women and Tourism; Ecosystems Communities and Tourism; Globalisation Impacts and Tourism; Karnataka state networking and Tamil Nadu state networking. The organization is also looking for people to help manage their documentation centre and website.

The positions are Bangalore based and applicants should have a graduate/postgraduate degree in social sciences/ mass communication/ journalism/ environmental science/ economics with strong research and analytic skills, good writing skills, and a solid interest in development issues. Proficiency in English and Hindi/South Indian languages will be important.

Contact: **Equations**, No. 415, 2 C Cross, 4th Main, OMBR Layout, Banaswadi, Bangalore – 560043, Karnataka. Tel: 080- 25457607/ 659. Fax: 25457665. Email: hr@equitabletourism.org

UPCOMING

Fifth Biennial Conference of The Indian Society for Ecological Economics

The Fifth Biennial Conference of The Indian Society for Ecological Economics (INSEE) will be held at Ahmedabad during 21-23 January 2009 in collaboration with the Gujarat Vidyapith and the Gujarat Institute of Development Research. The main theme of the Conference is Environmental Governance. The Conference is aimed at professional strengthening of the emerging interdisciplinary area of ecological economics and expansion of its use in research, teaching and policy making.

Abstracts of papers on the following themes have been invited for the conference:

- Emerging concepts and applications of interdisciplinary knowledge involving ecology and economics

- Regulatory institutions, regulatory failures, pollution control boards, EIA debate, etc.
- Institutions for natural resources management and needs for innovation
- Markets and environmental governance, Carbon credit, etc.
- Information, knowledge and IPR regimes for environmental governance
- Gender issues in environmental governance
- Law, judiciary and environmental governance
- Global environmental governance – climate change, WTO, etc.
- Alternate frameworks for environmental governance – Green Parties, green consumerism, etc.

Contact: **Sushil Kumar Sen**, Office Manager
INSEE, C/O Institute of Economic Growth,
University of Delhi Enclave, (North
Campus) Delhi-110007. Fax: 011-
27667410. Email: insee@iegindia.org

New from Kalpavriksh

Forests Alive! – An Environmental Handbook on CD for Teachers in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary

This environmental handbook was created for teachers of the Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana Kendra (VGKK) School, located within the Biligiri Ranga Temple Wildlife Sanctuary. It is intended to help them, and other educators, create a more effective learning process in environmental education (EE) and “learning for life.”

It has basic information on the following topics, with special reference to BRT Wildlife Sanctuary: Soliga tribals and their *podus*; Religion and nature conservation; The VGKK campus; Forests and wildlife of The Biligiri Rangan Hills; Maps and map reading; Non-timber forest products; Agriculture; Health and nutrition and Environment and development.

Generously illustrated with drawings, maps, and colour foldouts, the CD also contains descriptions of over 175 activities. Educational aids like posters, flash cards and game cards specific to the BR Hills have also been developed. The entire package can be used as part of an EE programme for students from Classes 1 to 10.

All the educational aids included in the CD can be printed out for use. The programme can be adapted for non-formal learning as well. The CD will also be of interest to the Forest Department, wildlife tourists, NGOs and concerned individuals.

While the handbook is set in the BR Hills, its contents and activities can easily be modified and used elsewhere in the country and outside. This book has been jointly produced by ATREE, Kalpavriksh, and VGKK.

Contributory Amount: Rs. 150/-, US\$ 15.

Contact: **Anuradha Arjunwadkar**, Kalpavriksh, Pune, At the Editorial address. Email: kvbooks@vsnl.net

**Death and Injuries caused by tigers in Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve
July 2007 to March 2008– A Chronology**

No.	Date	Event	Source
1	04/07/07	Ishwar Dongre, 26, attacked by a tiger when grazing cattle in the forest near Chipra Kheda Village, Brahmपुरi Tehsil	The Times of India (ToI)
2	07/07/07	Three year old girl killed in the premises of the Ordnance Factory close to the TATR	ToI
3	14/07/07	Lalita Harshchandra Meshram (38) of Chirkada Village, Sindewahi Tehsil killed when collecting firewood in the forest	ToI
4	19/09/07	Tukaram Jumnaake attacked and injured in Rajoli Bong Village	ToI
	26/11/07	Compensation of Rs. 22.89 lakh paid to 38 families, victims of tiger attacks in 6 ranges of the Brahmपुरi Forest Division	
	30/11/07	Full grown male tiger shot dead by police at village Talodhi, just outside the eastern boundary of TATR	
1	06/12/07	Amruta Kamdi, 14 year old girl killed in Village Navtala, 14 kms from Talodi, Chimur Tahsil, Madnagar Reserve Forest, North Chanda Forest Circle	ToI
2	08/12/07	Tanaji Chinduji from Village Navtala, Chimur Tahsil killed in Compartment No. 97, Madnagar Reserve Forest, North Chanda Forest Circle	The Hitavada
3	11/12/07	Ramdeo Gudha Madavi (45) attacked by tiger when grazing cattle in Madnagar Reserve Forest, North Chanda Forest Circle	ToI
4	27/12/07	Shobha Arun Rasekar of Shankarpur Village mauled by a tiger in the Dongargaon jungles of the North Chanda Forest Circle	ToI
4	30/12/07	Rekha Govind Meshra of Indira Nagar, Navargaon Village killed by a tiger in the Sindewahi Forest Range, Brahmपुरi Forest Division, North Chanda Forest Circle.	ToI
5	01/01/08	Shobha Vishvanath Wagh of Vilucharala Chak in Mul Tahsil attacked in Padzodi Jungles, Mul Forest Division, North Chanda Forest Circle	ToI
6	09/01/08	A bullock owned by Rishi Ade killed near village Rampur under Mul Forest Range, North Chanda Forest Circle	The Hitavada
7	11/01/08	Linga Kulmetha of Village Doni, killed in Forest Compartment 313 of Kolsa Forest Range, TATR	The Hitavada
8	19/01/08	Kailida Gulab Masram, a leprosy patient of the Baba Amte Somnath Ashram killed in the Mul Forest Range, North Chanda Forest Circle	ToI, The Hitavada
9	30/01/08	Janabai Kashinath Gurunule from Village Kawadpeth Chak killed in Mul Forest Range, North Chanda Forest Circle	The Hitavada ToI
10	09/02/08	Shephard wounded in tiger attack	Lokmat Times
11	14/03/08	Zingru Keku Mohurle killed in Compartment No. 61 of the Forest Development Corporation forest near Vaigaon Village, Mul Tahsil, North Chanda Forest Circle	The Hitavada
	25/03/08	Kashinath Suryawanshi (50) killed in the Nagbhid forest range under North Chandrapur Forest Circle	

Source: **Amrut Dhanwatay**, Tiger Trails

Contact: **Field Director**, Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Project, Mul Road, Chandrapur – 442401, Maharashtra.
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Forestry Projects in India currently funded by International Finance Institutions

There are 10 ongoing forestry projects funded by International Finance Institutions. Nine of these are funded by the Japan Bank of International Cooperation (JBIC) and one is by the World Bank. The total project outlay of these projects is about Rs 4977 crores.

Details are as follows:

1. Integrated Natural Resource Management and Poverty Reduction Project in Haryana funded by Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC)

Project Cost: Rs. 286 cr.

Project Period: 2004-05 to 2010-11

Objectives – To rehabilitate forest land, to improve the quality of life of the villagers adjoining forests, facilitate empowerment of women; ensure active people's participation, strengthening VFCs, Promotion of IGA.

2. Rajasthan Forestry and Biodiversity Project (JBIC)

Project Cost: Rs. 442 cr

Project Period: 2003-04 to 2008-9

Objectives – To check desertification and to restore the ecological status of the Aravalis, protect the infrastructure like canals, railway lines from drifting sand in the IGNP area, to conserve gene pool, to augment availability of fuelwood, fodder, to generate employment opportunities, to elicit people's participation.

3. Punjab Afforestation Project Tranche 2 (JBIC)

Project Cost: Rs. 263 cr

Project Period: 2002-03 to 2009-10

Objectives – To check the environmental degradation, develop degraded forests of Shivalik region on sustainable basis, to improve economic condition of marginal farmer, to improve the existing livestock, to introduce horticultural practices, to improve depleting water table, to promote farm forestry, agroforestry.

4. Tamil Nadu Afforestation Project Phase 2 (JBIC)

Project Cost: Rs. 567 cr

Project Period: 2005-06 to 2012-13

Objectives – Ecological restoration of degraded forests, to ensure livelihood security for forest dependent people, ensure active people's participation in reforestation programme, water and soil conservation measures, encourage tree growing on private land, to green the urban areas of Tamil Nadu.

5. Karnataka Sustainable Forest Management and Biodiversity Conservation Project (JBIC)

Project Cost: Rs. 745 cr

Project Period: 2005-06 to 2012-13

Objectives – To increase the forest cover, to manage forests sustainable, conservation and protection of protected areas, to support JFPM and village communities, development of natural resources on degraded forest sites, to develop enabling policy environment to achieve the sustainable forest management objective

6. Swan River Integrated Watershed Management Project of Himachal Pradesh (JBIC)

Project Cost: Rs. 160 cr.

Project period: 2006-07 to 2013-14

Objectives :- To regenerate the forests, protect the agricultural land in the catchment area of Swan river, by carrying out the integrated watershed management activities including afforestation, soil protection, land reclamation, thereby improving living conditions of the people.

7. Orissa Forestry Sector Development Project (JBIC)

Project Cost: Rs. 660 cr.

Project period: 2006-07 to 2012-13

Objectives: - Ecological restoration of degraded forests, to improve the quality of life of the villagers adjoining forests, participatory approach.

8. Andhra Pradesh Community Forest Management Project (World Bank)

Project Cost: Rs. 653 cr.

Project period: 2002-03 to 2006-07 (Under extension)

Objectives: - To reduce rural poverty through improved forest management with community participation.

9. Gujarat Forestry Development Project Phase-II (JBIC)

Project Cost: Rs. 944 cr.

Project period: 2007-08 to 2015-16

Objectives: To maintain environmental stability, ecological balance, checking of soil erosion, preserving coastal zone ecosystem, increasing vegetal density, enhancing economic potential of tribals, meeting the requirement of fuelwood, timber, fodder, NTFP etc.

10. Tripura Integrated Forestry Development Project (JBIC)

Project Cost: Rs. 256 cr.

Project period: 6 years starting 2007-2008

Objectives:- To maintain biological diversity, promote multiple use forestry, regenerate and conserve *Melocanna baccifera*, develop livelihood opportunities through value addition, promote farm forestry, ecotourism, commercial tree farming, promote, JFM.

Source: Press Release, Govt. of India,

<http://pib.nic.in/release/release.asp?relid=36369>

12/03/08

IN THE SUPREME COURT

PA related matters in the Supreme Court in February 2008

- Diversion of 0.428 hectares of forest land in the Mahatma Gandhi National Park, Andaman Islands for a water pipeline
- Application by Reliance Gas seeking permission for laying of an underground gas pipeline through the Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary, Maharashtra
- Diversion of 181.97 hectares of Reserve Forest in Maujpur Block of Alwar Forest Division for relocation of villages from the Sariska Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan

In the Supreme Court' is based on the Forest Case Update, which is a web-based initiative to provide information and updates on developments related to forests and wildlife in the Supreme Court.

Contact: **Ritwick Dutta & Kanchi Kohli**. Forest Case Update Editors, E-180, Greater Kailash 2, New Delhi-110048. Email: forestcase@yahoo.com Web: www.forestcaseindia.org

MK Jiwrajka, Member Secretary, Central Empowered Committee, Room No. 106, Paryavaran Bhavan, CGO Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi - 110003. Tel: 011- 4361297

READERS WRITE

- **The PA Update makes interesting reading...**

I enjoy reading the PA Update though the enjoyment is often tampered by the realization that wildlife habitat and landscapes are shrinking.

I would also like to add a couple of points for your consideration. First, I am not clear about the stance the PA Update has taken on the Forest Tribal Act. In my opinion an Act such as this will only result in marginalizing tribals further as the more powerful non-tribals will slowly but surely take over their lands (as it has already happened in large parts where land rights were conferred to tribals). A better way would be create enactments to ensure payment of minimum prices for NTFPs collected by tribals so that they do not need to turn agriculturists and can lead a comfortable life as tree produce gatherers.

Secondly, I do hope you will avoid using words like 'elephant menace' in the titles and text. It is fashionable for the media and those with disregard for wildlife to use such words but we should look at the larger context of the problems created by the invasion of wildlife habitats by human beings which at times cause elephantine problems. The other option would be to refer to the 'human menace' also when people and authorities devastate wildlife corridors and habitats without looking at environment friendly alternatives.

R Rajamani, Hyderabad.

Email: rraja9@vsnl.net

- **On corridors for wildlife...**

I was very interested to read *Securing Corridors...Snapping Corridors* (Editorial, *PA Update* Vol XIV No. 1, February 2008) about a group of NGOs that has bought a patch of forest in Karnataka to protect the land as a wildlife corridor, which is the first initiative of its kind in India.

It reminded me about a recent newspaper article in *The Guardian* ("The Great Green Land Grab" by John Vidal, 13 Feb 2008), about this different approach to conservation – NGOs, trusts and individuals buying up rainforest or wetlands, etc. in order to conserve the biodiversity and

prevent the land from falling prey to developers and loggers. Some examples of this approach to conservation (as per the above article) are as follows: In Britain, while the government is drastically cutting public conservation funding, the Woodland Trust is buying up rural property – it now owns and manages over 1,100 woods on 50,000 acres, and says that it is planting more new woodland than the government's Forestry Commission. The Woodland Trust aims to buy and conserve about 1000 acres per year, on the basis that the government is not doing enough for conservation. It has 200,000 supporters who raised 22 million pounds last year for buying woodland.

The World Land Trust (Sir David Attenborough is a patron) invites people to buy an acre of Indian elephant corridor for 50 pounds, or 2000 m.sq. of the Chaco Pantanal in Brazil for 25 pounds, again with the aim of conserving the area. Supporters of this trust have bought 350,000 acres in Britain since 1989.

The biggest buyers of Patagonia's lakes, rivers and mountains are billionaires, e.g. the Tompkins (founders of North Face clothing), who have bought millions of acres with the aim of creating the first new coastal national park in Argentina. They say: "Private wildlands philanthropy, mixed with political will, can create wildlands preservation on a grand scale and swing the pendulum of extinction back on wavering species." Other billionaires with similar intentions are Ted Turner (founder of CNN), Luciano and Carlo Benetton (Benetton clothing) and actors Sharon Stone and Christopher Lambert, who have created vast new private conservation parks in wetland, coastal and mountain landscapes, some of which they plan to give to the state.

There are obviously a host of ideological problems with regard to this approach to conservation - issues about the empowerment of the original inhabitants of the land, whether such large swathes of land should be owned privately, etc. There are also practical problems, depending on how this approach is applied. As the article also points out, there are fears that indigenous people will be evicted to conserve forests, for example, or fears that underground water

reservoirs will be exploited by the private buyer while overground conservation will continue.

But though ideally ownership and rights should vest with the inhabitants of the protected landscape, or at least be held 'in trust' for them and for the nation by the state, the flip side to this is that while we wait for the ideal or ideologically acceptable solutions to work successfully, ecosystems and landscapes are crumbling under destructive development all over the world.

If one allows that buying land to conserve it might possibly be acceptable for the larger good of the environment, then one could look at practical ways of bypassing some of the problems of the private ownership, such as private ownership with legal, self-imposed restrictions (this is what has happened with the sale in Karnataka where WTI and other NGOs own the land, but with restrictions on what ownership entails). I am also thinking of the concept of 'copyleft' - where a person who essentially does not want a copyright (for ideological or other reasons), nevertheless makes use of the copyright laws and imposes restrictions on his own rights, i.e. uses the copyright to give up some of his rights, in order for others to be able to legally use and make changes to the original work. Also similar would be the concept of 'defensive rights' where a conventional IPR system is used to claim rights and then partially 'give them up' to ensure that no-one obtains a monopoly on the resource in question.

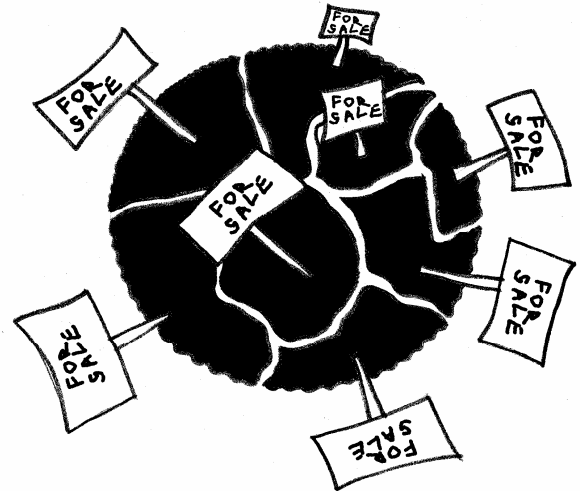
Similarly, in the case of private ownership of a landscape, the owner could be required to define his ownership with the imposition of restrictions on himself - e.g. if he buys the land he will not undertake any building activity or resource extraction there, will allow the people who are already living there to continue living there and using the resources, ensuring that the rights of the people on the land are not adversely affected, etc. - all based on the central aim of conservation.

The approach perhaps deserves some thought, for the sole reason that it is a 'race against time' approach. Sometimes it feels as if by the time one reaches an ideologically acceptable solution, most biodiversity would have disappeared, something which is irreversible. So why not have well-intentioned private buyers and trusts, step in to prevent the land from being exploited by developers and governments?

Large scale application of this approach could be problematic in many ways. But with appropriate, creative mechanisms to preempt and avoid such problems, this approach to conservation could perhaps be a practical way of stopping destructive processes that are irreversible, at least in some select areas.

Tejaswini Apte.

Email: tejaswiniapte@gmail.com



I was pleased to read the editorial Securing Corridors...Snapping Corridors. It might interest readers that we have converted our 30 acre property near Mudumalai into a trust (Sigur Nature Trust) to protect a vital elephant corridor. The website is: www.sigurnt.com

Dr. Priya Davidar,

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Correction: The road inside the Jayamangali Conservation Reserve (Illegal road construction work inside Jayamangali Conservation Reserve, PA Update Vol. XIV, No. 1) was funded by the District Administration and the Zilla Panchayat and not from the funds of the MP and MLA of the region as was mentioned.

The MP and MLA funded illegal road is in the Devarayanadurga forests in Tumkur District. The error is regretted. Ed.

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The PA Update needs support

Many readers and organizations have responded positively to our continued requests for support and we are grateful for them. The need, however, to raise resources still remains.

The Foundation for Ecological Security continues to be our biggest supporter and has willingly agreed to provide a majority of the funding for the *PA Update* for another year. Just like last year, however, we are still short by about a 30% of the budget.

There are various ways, big and small, in which we can be helped. Individual readers are urged to send in their contribution as subscription. These are small amounts but if we receive a large number the help will be great. Organisations like Forest Departments and NGOs can avail of the bulk subscription method where we can together reach out to a larger number of people as well.

We also have back issues of the Update is a simple hard bound three volume set that would be a very valuable resource base for researchers, officials, activists or anybody else interested in getting a comprehensive picture of what has happened in the country's PA network over the last few years.

I do hope you will consider contributing. For any further details or clarifications please do write to me. We would also welcome any other ideas that you might have for us.

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To

