

PROTECTED AREA UPDATE

News and Information from protected areas in India and South Asia

Vol. XVII No. 1

February 2011 (No. 89)

LIST OF CONTENTS

<u>EDITORIAL</u>	3		
Rich tiger, poor tiger: Analysing NTCA funding of tiger range states			
<u>NEWS FROM INDIAN STATES</u>			
<u>Andhra Pradesh</u>	3		
Forest Stations to curb poaching in Andhra State rejects MoEF proposal for Chintapalle Biosphere Reserve			
<u>Arunachal Pradesh</u>	4		
Five villages in Arunachal Pradesh come together to conserve Red Pandas			
<u>Assam</u>	5		
FD, WWF – India to deal with human-tiger conflict at Orang NP			
Confirmation that pesticides killed Kaziranga NP elephants			
<u>Goa</u>	6		
NBWL asks Goa to stop mining near Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary			
<u>Gujarat</u>	6		
Proposal to relocate 376 families and three forest villages from Gir forests			
<u>Karnataka</u>	7		
Wildlife awards by Kumble Foundation			
FD removes lantana inside the Bandipur NP			
<u>Kerala</u>	7		
Concerns over increased tourism activities in Eravikulam NP			
Rs. 5.5 crore for relocation from Wayanad WLS; civil organizations disappointed over insufficient funds			
10 year conservation plan for Periyar TR			
<u>Madhya Pradesh</u>	8		
‘Save Our Tiger’ telethon accused of violating WLPA in Pench TR			
<u>Maharashtra</u>	9		
Violent protest against the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve			
		Mansingh-Deo declared Wildlife Sanctuary	
		Process for Critical Wildlife Habitat declaration started in Bhimashankar WLS	
		Mining leases in Sindhudurg put on hold	
		<u>Meghalaya</u>	10
		Community conservation awards instituted in South Garo Hills	
		<u>Mizoram</u>	10
		State awarded Indira Priyadarshini Vriksha Mitra Award 2010	
		<u>Punjab</u>	11
		WWF to undertake monitoring project at Harike Wildlife Sanctuary	
		<u>Rajasthan</u>	11
		No relocation of Sambhar from Sariska	
		Photo ID a must to enter Ranthambhore NP	
		<u>Uttarakhand</u>	12
		WII survey to revive Gola wildlife corridor	
		Imprisonment for train driver for running over elephants in Rajaji NP	
		<u>West Bengal</u>	13
		FD plans watchtowers along rail route in North Bengal	
		Herd of elephants halts train inside Chapramari Wildlife Sanctuary	
		Elephants create panic near Jaldapara	
		West Bengal opposes extension of Dooars rail route	
		<u>NATIONAL NEWS FROM INDIA</u>	16
		7-member panel on eco-tourism constituted	
		Sanctuary Awards for Wildlife – 2010	
		Avian Information System, AVIS, launched	
		<u>INTERNATIONAL NEWS</u>	16
		Facebook page initiative for achieving conservation along with social justice	

<u>Funds allocated under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats'</u>	17
<u>Funds Released under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme Project Tiger</u>	18
<u>Loss to States Due to Ban on Cutting of Trees</u>	19
<u>Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Conservation and Management of Mangroves</u>	20
<u>In the Supreme Court</u>	20
<u>Special Section: The Forest Rights Act, Protected Areas and Wildlife Conservation</u>	21
Report of the National Committee on the Forest Rights Act (FRA): Recommendations related to Protected Areas and Critical Wildlife Habitats	
<u>PERSPECTIVE</u>	24
Conservation Science in India: Need for Rethinking and Change	



Protected Area Update

Vol. XVII, No. 1, February 2011 (No. 89)

Editor: **Pankaj Sekhsaria**

Editorial Assistance: **Reshma Jathar**

Illustrations: **Madhuvanti Anantharajan**

Produced by

The Documentation and Outreach Centre,

Kalpavriksh

Ideas, comments, news and information may please be sent to the editorial address:

KALPAVRIKSH

Apartment 5, Shri Dutta Krupa, 908 Deccan Gymkhana, Pune 411004, Maharashtra, India.

Tel/Fax: 020 – 25654239.

Email: psekhsaria@gmail.com

Website: <http://kalpavriksh.org/protected-area-update>

Publication of the PA Update has been supported by

Foundation for Ecological Security (FES)

<http://fes.org.in/>

Duleep Matthai Nature Conservation Trust

C/o FES

MISEREOR

www.misereor.org

Association for India's Development

www.aidindia.org

Information has been sourced from different newspapers and

<http://indiaenvironmentportal.org.in>

EDITORIAL

Rich tiger, poor tiger: Analysing NTCA funding of tiger range states

In the last four years the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), the apex body for tigers, has made available nearly Rs. 515 crores to tiger range states in the country. On an average this amounts to Rs. 128 crores being spent annually for tiger conservation (see table on page 18). If one then takes the 2008 estimate of 1411 tigers in the country put out by the NTCA, the MoEF and the Wildlife Institute of India, we see that the NTCA spends a little more than Rs. Nine lakhs per tiger per year.

What is very interesting to see is the state wise distribution of this money. It is here that the figures stand out as striking and something that needs some explaining and understanding. Tigers in this country are not all equals and the differences are astronomical. While Andhra Pradesh got Rs. 86,000 per tiger per year for its 95 tigers, Rajasthan got a whopping Rs. 1.25 crore per tiger per year for its 32 striped cats and Mizoram was not far behind with Rs. 1.1 crore per year for each of its six tigers.

The money that the states are getting for their tigers appears to be neither proportionate to the tiger population in the state nor to the area that has been declared as a tiger reserve. Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh, for instance, have among the largest tiger numbers and large areas under protection for the tiger, but again the money does not match up to what Rajasthan gets. Andhra Pradesh seems to be the poorest amongst these cousins with only Rs. 3000 (the lowest) being provided per sq. km of tiger reserve area in the state with West Bengal and Bihar getting not much more at Rs. 7000 and Rs. 9000 per sq. km. respectively.

The figures are baffling to say the least and a few caveats need to be kept in mind even as we look at them. For one, this is about money provided only by the NTCA, whereas, states and individual tiger reserves do access multiple streams of funding for tiger conservation. It's important nevertheless because the NTCA is the apex body in-charge of the tiger in India. The 2nd

point is that this analysis is mainly statistical and as is also well known, numbers can hide as much as they reveal and there may be something that we are indeed missing out upon. The question, however, that comes to mind is the most obvious one? What is the basis for these fund allocations to states that we see from the NTCA? Why do some states get so much and some so little?

There are a whole set of factors one can speculate about. It is also likely that this short analysis itself is incomplete and something important that gives a better and more complete picture has been left out. Either way, it might help to get a better understanding

NEWS FROM INDIAN STATES

ANDHRA PRADESH

Forest Stations to curb poaching in Andhra

The Andhra Pradesh Forest Department (FD) has decided to set up 'forest stations' to curb the menace of smugglers and poachers. These stations will be along the lines of police stations and will be set up in all wildlife circles, sanctuaries and key reserve forests.

The move aims to keep a check on the increasing poaching of wild animals, smuggling of protected species, cutting and smuggling of teakwood, sandalwood and red sanders, apart from regular fuel wood from the forest areas.

A senior FD official said smugglers had equipped themselves with the latest gadgets and equipment to trap the animals as well as to communicate among themselves. They also carry sophisticated weapons for the dual purpose of shooting wild animals and attacking foresters. In several instances, gangs of smugglers have even attacked forest officials when the latter tried to stop them. Recently a forest official was killed in Medak when he attempted to nab smugglers.

The FD has been asking for weapons to enable them to carry on with their work. Wildlife officials said that the government had

agreed to provide firearms, but to protect these arms the FD needs to have an operational office, which would be called a forest station.

However, the naxal affected areas of Khammam district near the Chhattisgarh border, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam on the Andhra-Orissa border are unlikely to get firearms in the forest stations since the police has raised objections that there is the possibility of naxals looting the weapons from the forest stations.

Source: '[Forest stations to check poaching](#)', *Deccan Chronicle*, 29/11/10.

State rejects MoEF proposal for Chintapalle Biosphere Reserve

The Andhra Pradesh state government is reported to have rejected the suggestion of Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) to designate the Chintapalle area in Visakhapatnam district as a Biosphere Reserve citing problems for the local population and for the development of industries and mining in the region. The proposal for two biosphere reserves in Andhra Pradesh, one at Chintapalle and the other in the Seshachalam hills in Chittoor and Kadappa district had been announced by Minister, Mr. Jairam Ramesh in June 2009 ([PA Update Vol. XV, No. 4](#)).

The proposal for the Seshachalam Reserve was sent by the state government to the Centre a few months back and the area was designated as a biosphere reserve spread over 4756 sq. km. in September 2010. No such proposal was sent for Chintapalle and the proposed setting up of refinery and smelters at Makavarapalem in Visakhapatnam district by Anrak Aluminium Ltd., and Jindal Aluminium Ltd. at Boddavara in Vizianagaram district also gives credence to government's thinking on Chintapalle.

Source: Ramesh Susarla. '[State not keen to declare Chintapalle Biosphere Reserve](#)', *The Hindu*, 15/12/10.

Contact: **CWLW**, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Aranya Bhavan, Saifabad, Hyderabad - 500004, Andhra Pradesh. Tel: 040-23230561 / 23232668. Fax: 337889.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Five villages in Arunachal Pradesh come together to conserve Red Pandas



Five villages in the high-altitude areas of Arunachal Pradesh have come together to form the Pangchen Red Panda Conservation

Alliance. The alliance, formed with support from the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) India, has been named after the Pangchen valley in which the five villages - Socktsen, Kharman, Kelengteng, Lumpo and Muchat villages - are located. The villages are situated at a height ranging from 6,000 to 14,000 feet above sea level and have been conserving 200 sq km of forest area in the valley.

The initiative aims at ensuring protection of the animal's habitat and plant species on which it is dependent. It also involves reporting the sighting of the animal by villagers and maintaining a record of it. The immediate plan of action is to ban any kind of hunting or capturing of the Red panda. Work will also be taken up in consultation with the villagers to identify the threats and pressures on the animal and its habitat to develop a long-term management plan.

The residents of two community conserved areas (CCAs) in Tawang district, the Thembang Bapu CCA (312 sq km), and Pangchen Lumpo Muchat CCA (98 sq km), had started similar initiatives in 2008 to protect the wildlife and in the process it is said to have earned good revenue from tourism. It has helped the villagers earn over Rs 4.24 lakh by providing home-stay facilities, home-based restaurant operators, porters, guides, cooks and helpers, besides entry fee, camera fee, camping site charge and camping material charges.

Source: Roopak Goswami. '[Villagers form alliance to conserve red panda](#)', *The Telegraph*, 08/12/10.

ASSAM

FD, WWF – India to deal with human-tiger conflict at Orang NP

The Rajiv Gandhi (Orang) National Park plans to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) – India, to work jointly to minimise the incidents of conflict between tigers and humans.

The park has witnessed a rise in tiger numbers which has resulted in the tigers straying out of the park. A tiger, which was killed by security personnel at Morigaon district a few days back, is said to have strayed from Orang. The rise in these incidents has triggered fear that the villagers will try to poison the tigers in retaliation.

Tigers have killed at least 15 cattle heads in villages near the park in recent weeks. The park has also seen the death of at least 15 tigers since 2005, six of which are said to be due to poisoning. According to the census conducted last year, the Orang NP has 14 tigers, while a recent census is reported to have put the number at 18.

According to the agreement WWF would pay interim relief to owners of the cattle killed by tigers to earn the villagers' confidence. Interim relief would be paid to the owner of cattle killed by tigers only on condition that he/she would not poison the carcass. It is generally seen that the carcass of the cattle killed is used as bait by the villagers to poison tigers. From now on, once the compensation is paid to a villager, he/she will be made responsible if a carcass is found poisoned.

Source: Pullock Dutta, '[Joint drive to save tigers - Orang to team up with WWF](#)', *The Telegraph*, 29/11/10

Contact: DFO, Orang NP, Mangaldoi Wildlife Division, P.O. Mangaldoi, Darrang - 784 125, Assam. Tel: 0914-22065(O), 22349(R)

Confirmation that pesticides killed Kaziranga NP elephants

Forensic analysis of the viscera of the two elephant calves which died of suspected poisoning at Diffloo Tea Estate near Kaziranga National Park (NP) ([PA Update Vol. XV, No. 6](#)) has confirmed presence of organochloride



pesticides as the cause of death. Although the post mortem report of the two carcasses specified poisoning as the cause of death, the viscera were sent to the state Forensic Science Laboratory in Guwahati for confirmation.

The carcasses of the two calves were recovered from two separate drains inside the tea estate on October 6. Preliminary investigations found signs of poisoning on both the carcasses. The Diffloo TE authorities, however, denied a role in the deaths, saying they use chemicals used by all other tea gardens in the state, and elephants visit the garden regularly. A case was registered against the tea estate authorities.

The state Forest Department (FD) had ordered an inquiry into the death of the two calves after Minister of Environment and Forests, Mr Jairam Ramesh, issued directions to conduct an inquiry and take stringent action against the guilty. A one-man committee, headed by the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) - Wildlife, has been probing the incident. The CCF is also probing the death of two more elephants, both female, the carcasses of which were recovered from different locations near Kaziranga NP a week after the recovery of the carcasses of the two calves.

This is not the first time that chemicals used in tea estates around Kaziranga have caused the death of wild animals. Two years ago, a tiger cub had died of poisoning at Rongagorah division of Hatikhuli Tea Estate, while another cub, had been found in the tea estate in a semi-conscious state.

Source: Pullock Dutta, '[Pesticide poisoning behind death of elephants](#)', *The Telegraph*, 04/12/10

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

Two poachers killed in Kaziranga NP

Two poachers were killed in a gunfight with wildlife staff at the Kaziranga National Park (NP) in December after a gang entered the area and killed a rhino.

A group of about four to six alleged poachers entered the park and shot dead an adult female rhino at the Turturoni camp near the Agoratoli range and extracted its horn. On hearing the gunshots, a team of forest guards gave the poachers a chase. The ensuing encounter lasted about 30 minutes during which two poachers were killed. The others managed to escape.

A .22 pistol, a 303 rifle, three bullets and live cartridges and a horn were recovered from the possession of the slain poachers. The Range Officer, Agoratoli Range, is reported to have said that the poachers were most probably local people and the horn recovered was recently cut from the body of the rhino. The body of poached animal was still to be found.

Source: '[Two poachers killed in Kaziranga](#)', *The Sentinel*, 14/12/10.

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

GOA

NBWL asks Goa to stop mining near Netravali WLS

The Standing Committee (SC) of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) has asked the Goa Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW) to stop a mine of M/s AX Poi Palondicar which is operating near Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS).

The Deputy Inspector General, had in a letter to the State Government on November 23, asked the state to submit the status report on the mine, which was said to be fully operational.

The 18th meeting of the SC of the NBWL had rejected the proposal by the company for production of iron ore with a production capacity of 0.20 MTPA and expansion in the capacity of manganese ore. It was argued that though the mining activities were outside the protected area they would still have negative impacts on the wildlife in the sanctuary as well on bio-diversity and the environment. It was also noted that the mine was 5.3 km to South-East and 6.5 km East of the Netravali WLS.

Source: '[State asked to stop mine near Netravali sanctuary](#)', *Herald*, 26/11/10.

Contact: **I/c Netravali WLS**, C/o Chief Wildlife Warden, Wildlife Wing, Junta House, Panaji 403001, Goa. Tel: 0832 – 224747 / 223508 / 278891. Fax: 224747

GUJARAT

Proposal to relocate 376 families and three forest villages from Gir forests



The Planning Commission (PC) is reported have granted it's 'in-principle' approval to a proposal of the Gujarat Forest Department to relocate 376 families and three forest villages from the Gir forests. An amount of Rs. 262.36 crores has been approved for a period of five years for the proposal titled 'A plan for consolidating long term conservation of Asiatic lions (*Panthera leo persica*) at the Greater Gir region including the Gir Protected Area System'.

The PC also suggested that financial assistance under the project may be met out of the ongoing scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats'. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has however said that the funds under this scheme were meager and the lion project could not be accommodated. This information was provided by the Minister of State for Environment and Forests Mr Jairam Ramesh in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha recently.

Source: 'Relocation of 376 families and 3 forest villages from Gir Lion Reserves' Press Release MoEF, 29/11/10, http://www.pib.nic.in/release/rel_print_page.asp?relid=67751

Contact: CF (Wildlife) Junagadh, Sardar Bag, Junagadh, Gujarat. Tel: 0285 - 631678/ 630051. Fax: 631211. Email: cfwildlife_ad1@sancharnet.in

KARNATAKA

Wildlife awards by Kumble Foundation

The Jumbo Fund, set up by the Kumble Foundation, recently honoured nine employees of the Karnataka Forest Department (FD) for their contribution to protecting the state's wildlife.

The awards were presented to Basavaraj, R Venkatesh, Shivappa Hosmani, all foresters and watchmen; K T Boraiah and Devaraj, Range Forest Officers; Ajay Desai for his expertise in protecting the environment, Gopal Krishna Gowda and S T Neginhall for their outstanding service as civil servants while in service in the FD and K S Lokesh for his effective leadership in the department. The five-member panel selected the nine persons from among the 40 nominations.

Presenting the awards were cricketers, including Ross Taylor and Scott Styris from the New Zealand cricket team and Indian cricketers Zaheer Khan, Gautam Gambhir and VVS Laxman. Also present were movie stars Upendra and Srinath. The Jumbo Wildlife Awards 2010, given in five categories, carry a cash award of Rs one lakh and a citation.

Source: '[Nine forest dept personnel honoured with Jumbo Wildlife award](#)', *Deccan Herald*, 07/12/10.

FD removes lantana inside the Bandipur NP

Following complaints from tourists regarding poor visibility, the Forest Department (FD) recently removed lantana on the safari route inside the Bandipur National Park (NP). It would help visitors to have a better look at the animals and birds. The services of tribal youths were involved in this work.

FD officials also noted that the removal of lantana would also help keep a check on forest fires during summer.

Source: '[Lantana removed for clear visibility of animals, birds](#)', *Deccan Herald*, 09/12/10.

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



KERALA

Concerns over increased tourism activities in Eravikulam NP

The increasing number of visitors to the Eravikulam National Park (NP), has prompted the managers to make an assessment of the permissible level of tourism activity.

During the tourist season, around 2000 visitors reach the park every day. The number had crossed the 5000 mark during the last flowering season of *Neelakurinjis*, which was an all-time record. The flowering of these plants, which happens once in 12 years, saw visitors queuing up for getting a view of the lavender flowers. Conservationists have expressed the concern that the unprecedented flow of visitors might affect the fragile ecosystem of the park.

Nearly 90 per cent of the tourists to Munnar make it a point to visit Eravikulam.

Source: '[Visitors put a strain on national park](#)', *The Hindu*, 15/12/10.

Contact: **Wildlife Warden**, Eravikulam NP, P.O. Munnar, Munnar, Kerala. Tel: 04865-230487

Rs. 5.5 crore for relocation from Wayanad WLS; civil organizations disappointed over insufficient funds

The Centre has informed the Kerala Forest Department (FD) that a sum of Rs.5.5 crore has been allotted for implementing the first phase of relocation of the communities inside Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) under a project for the voluntary relocation of settlements.

The project was submitted, as per the directive of the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), after a detailed study conducted under the supervision of S. Sankar, Scientist, Kerala Forest Research Institute. The study identified 1,388 people (880 families) in 14 settlements inside the sanctuary to be relocated in the first phase at a cost of Rs. 88 crore. According to the study, a total of 10,604 people (2,613 families) residing in 110 settlements inside the Wayanad WLS were to be relocated.

The relocation programme is to be implemented as per the village relocation plan from Core and Critical Tiger Habitats of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). The plan offers two options to settlers — payment of the entire amount (Rs.10 lakh each family irrespective of the land possessed by them) or relocation by the FD. According to the guidelines of the NTCA, a son (over 18 years) irrespective of his marital status; unmarried daughter above 18 years; physically and mentally challenged persons irrespective of their age and sex; minor orphan; and a widow or a woman divorcee is treated as separate families.

The leaders of the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary Farmers' Welfare Committee (WWLSFWC) and Wayanad Prakruthi Samrakshana Samithi(WPSS) have welcomed the decision of implementing the relocation plan. However, they expressed concern over the decision to restrict the project to two of the 14 settlements inside the sanctuary. Also, they expressed disappointment over the allotted fund of Rs.5.5 crore as the amount would be sufficient only to relocate 55 families.

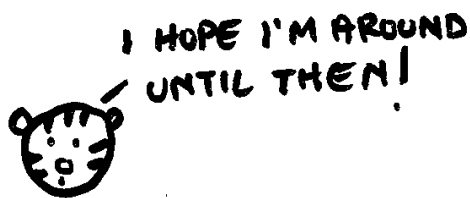
Both the organizations submitted a memorandum to M.I. Shanavas, MP in order to get more funds allotted for the project.

Source: E.M. Manoj, 'Green signal for resettlement project at wildlife sanctuary', *The Hindu*, 18/11/10

“[Ryots' plea to extend resettlement project](#)”, *The Hindu*, 29/11/10.

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

10 year conservation plan for Periyar TR



The Periyar Tiger Reserve (TR) is preparing a 10-year conservation plan that focuses on conservation of wildlife and the ecology and sustained growth of ecotourism in support of the local tribal community.

The draft of the Tiger Conservation Plan (TCP) has been prepared by the Kerala Forest

Research Institute, Peechi, in association with the Periyar Foundation. A three-day seminar of senior forest officials and conservation experts held at Thekkady in September had drawn up the framework for the plan. Senior officials of the Periyar TR are now conducting field studies to make modifications in the plan before submitting it to the Tiger Conservation Authority for implementation.

The draft identifies the area of the reserve where further protection is needed and focuses on local participation in conservation efforts and ecological up-gradation. It has detailed action plans for veterinary care, nature protection, habitat management, conservation of water sources and wildlife protection. In addition to that, eco-development would be clubbed to tourism packages to strengthen public participation in conservation efforts.

Local tribes will be involved in the eco-tourism plan under the TCP to reduce their dependence on the forest. At present, they work as watchers and guides for various tourism packages of the reserve.

Source: '[10-year conservation plan for tiger reserve](#)', *The Hindu*, 04/12/10.

Contact: **Field Director**, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Aranya Bhavan, Forest Complex, S.H. Mount P.O. Kottayam - 686006. Kerala. Tel: 0481-2562940(O) / 2560297(R). Fax: 2569217 / 2565740

MADHYA PRADESH

'Save Our Tiger' telethon accused of violating WLPA in Pench TR

A 12-hour live program as part of the 'Save Our Tiger' campaign telecast by leading news channel, NDTV, in the month of December, landed into controversy after a voluntary organization, Uday, accused it of breaching provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, by exceeding decibel limits around the Pench National Park (NP).

The program featuring prominent personalities including well known film stars had raised an amount in excess of Rs 4.86 crore towards tiger conservation.

The organizations lodged complaints with the Madhya Pradesh State Chief Wildlife Warden, the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) and National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). It noted that the music in the afternoon and in the night violated noise pollution norms, which is a punishable offence under sections 29, 30, 31 and 32 of the Act.

The State CWW is reported to have said that though the Forest Department has received complaints, it was not empowered to act against an event that was organized in an area that falls outside its jurisdiction.

Source: '[Save Our Tiger telethon lands in trouble](#)', *The Pioneer*, 18/12/10

Contact: **Field Director**, Pench Tiger Reserve, P.O. Barapathar, Dist. Seoni - 480 661. Tel: 07692-250794/250594. Fax: 250794/221180

MAHARASHTRA

Violent protest against the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve

Villagers agitating against the recently formed Sahyadri Tiger Reserve ([PA Update Vol. XIV, No. 2](#)) turned violent during a protest march and pelted stones on the forest department (FD) office. The incident took place in the first week of January in Patan in Satara district.

The rally led by local political representatives also raised slogans like 'Save man, not tiger'. Opposing the project, spread over four districts of Satara, Ratnagiri, Kolhapur and Sangli, they also submitted a memorandum to the tehsildar.

There are 90 villages in the buffer zone of the project and 83 villages in the core zone.

Source: '[Agitation against tiger project turns ugly in Satara](#)', *DNA*, 05/01/11

Contact: **Asst. Conservator of Forests** (Wildlife), Forest Department, Koyanagar, Taluka Patan, Satara – 415207, Maharashtra

Mansingh-Deo declared Wildlife Sanctuary

The Maharashtra government is reported to have finally notified the Mansingh-Deo Wildlife Sanctuary over the entire proposed area of 183 sq.

kms. This is now the 42nd PA in Maharashtra and provides an important buffer to the Pench National Park.

The notification had been pending for a while for various reasons including, importantly, the fact that the Forest Development Corporation of Maharashtra was not willing to hand over forest land that belonged to it ([PA Update Vol. XVI, No. 5](#) and [No. 50](#)).

Source: 'Two decades of advocating bears result: Mansingh-Deo declared Wildlife Sanctuary', [www.wti.org.in](#)

Process for Critical Wildlife Habitat declaration started in Bhimashankar WLS

The process for the declaration of a Critical Wildlife Habitat (CWH) was initiated recently in the Bhimashankar Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS). The Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF), the Range Forest Officer (RFO), and foresters spent a week in the month of December visiting all the nine villages in the sanctuary and reading out the CWH proposal to them. Seven of the nine villages are said to have rejected the CWH idea.

In the village of Yelahavali, the community put forward a list of 11 demands to the forest officers. This included the:

1. FD accepting the idea/proposal for the joint management of their community forestry resource and promising to help in patrolling the forests and controlling illegal activities on a regular basis.
2. FD helping with water source development and not creating objections to small acts such as bringing a tractor to the village for agriculture and construction of a school building.
3. FD coming with the villagers to neighbouring villages for a meeting and discussion that they are involved in forest protection and have support from the FD. (Villagers have claimed that there is a very high level of hunting and timber smuggling by some people from the surrounding villages which is impacting their own natural resource availability)
4. FD should pay more attention to parts other than the sacred grove and erect check posts

and sign posts on all *kaccha* roads to the sanctuary.

Of the nine villages in the sanctuary Yelahvali was the only one which has agreed to give its consent for the CWH proposal provided their conditions are accepted. The ACF promised the villagers that they would be given badges from the department if they helped to protect the forests. It was also pointed out that the proposal would be sent to the higher authorities and there will be further discussions with the villagers. They also asked them to give the name of one villager who will go to all meetings related to the CWH, the district level committee meetings and represent the village.

The ACF also agreed to the formation of a Forest Protection Committee in the village and to the demand of the villagers that he will send a forest official every 15 days to go on a patrol in the forest with them.

Source: Neema Pathak Broome and Pradeep Chavan.
Email dated 31/12/10

Contact: **Neema Pathak Broome**, Kalpavriksh at the editorial address. Email: neema.pb@gmail.com. **Pradeep Chavan**. Email: prdprn@gmail.com
MK Rao, Conservator of Forest (WL), Forest Colony, Salunke Vihar, Pune - 411040.

Mining leases in Sindhudurg put on hold

The Maharashtra government has put on hold the 49 mining leases that had been granted in the Sindhudurg district ([PA Update Vol. XVI, No. 6](#)). It had been pointed out that the leases were in rich forest areas that were also parts of forest corridors connecting the Koyna & Radhanagari WLSs and Anshi-Dandeli Tiger Reserve in Karnataka

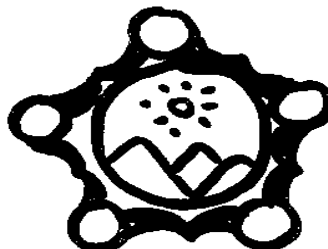
The Union Minister for Environment and Forests, Mr Jairam Ramesh had written to state Chief Minister in October demanding that the leases be relooked.

Source: 'Maharashtra halts all Sindhudurg mining', <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>

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

MEGHALAYA

Community conservation awards instituted in South Garo Hills



The Samrakshan Trust has instituted community conservation awards in an effort to recognize and support such initiatives in the South Garo Hills in Meghalaya. The first awards were awarded recently to two nokmas (village headmen) for their efforts towards forest protection.

One of the awardees was the management committee of Dambuk Atong in South East Garo Hills for catching and fining a person for smuggling timber from a reserve forest. They have also made and erected signboards to spread awareness about the importance of forests.

The awards were given away by the Deputy Commissioner of the South Garo Hills during the inauguration of Baghmara's Annual Winter Festival in the month of December.

Source: '[Pat for Garo hills conservationists](#)', *The Telegraph*, 16/12/10

Contact: Kamal Medhi, **Samrakshan Trust**, Bolsalgre, PO Baghmara, Dist South Garo Hills – 794102, Meghalaya Tel: 03639-234187.
Email: contact@samrakshan.org

MIZORAM

State awarded Indira Priyadarshini Vriksha Mitra Award 2010

Mizoram has been awarded the Indira Priyadarshini Vriksha Mitra (IPVM) Award 2010 in recognition of the states laudable

contribution in the field of afforestation and wasteland development. The award given by the Ministry of Environment and Forests carries a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh, a citation and a scroll.

In the latest report of the Forest Survey of India, Mizoram was ranked first among the Indian states and Union Territories in terms of forest cover as percentage of the state's geographical area. According to the report, 82.42 per cent of Mizoram's total geographical area of 21,081 sq km is under forest cover.

Mizoram is followed by Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Nagaland. Started in 1999, the Green Mizoram programme has helped a lot in maintaining Mizoram's greenery.

Source: <http://www.sinlung.com/2010/11/mizoram-gets-green-award.html>

PUNJAB

WWF to undertake monitoring project at Harike WLS

The World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) – India will carry out a monitoring project in the Harike wetlands, home to a large number of water fowl and other animals like the otter and the Indus River Dolphin. The dolphin was first sighted here only three years ago ([PA Update Vol. XIV, No. 1](#)). The WWF proposal has been submitted to the Punjab Forest and Wildlife Department. Two researchers, meanwhile, have been conducting preliminary surveys at Harike.

The project would focus on the dolphins, otters and several species of freshwater turtles found here. The pollution aspect is also to be covered.

Source: 'WWF to carry out bio-monitoring project at Harike', <http://www.indianexpress.com>, 06/12/10.

Contact: **Wildlife Warden**, Harike Lake WLS, Near Police Station, Harike, Dist. Firozpur, Punjab. Tel: 0181 - 248409

RAJASTHAN

No relocation of Sambhars from Sariska

Plans to relocate 70 Sambhars from the Sariska Tiger Reserve to the Sajjagarh and Kumbalgarh

Wildlife Sanctuaries in Udaipur district and to Rajgarh in Alwar district have been dropped following objections raised by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF).

The MoEF noted that the relocation was taking place without the assistance of a technical person and it feared that the move would destroy the prey base at Sariska where crores are being spent in re-establishing a tiger population. The animals were being taken from the Kalighati area of the reserve which is one of the main tiger areas.

A Forest Department (FD) official is reported to have said that at least six animals - two females and four males, may have already been relocated; none of which had reached their destinations alive. Similar attempts at relocation had been made twice earlier but on both occasions the project had to be abandoned after strong objections due to the death of many of these animals.

Source: Anindo Dey & Rajendra Sharma, MoEF cries foul over relocation of sambhar, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>, 17/12/10.

Contact: **Director**, Sariska Tiger Reserve, Sariska, Alwar – 301022, Rajasthan. Tel: 0144-41333 (O)

Photo ID a must to enter Ranthambhore NP



Entry to the Ranthambore National Park (NP) will now require tourists to furnish a photo identity card. A team has been constituted consisting of members from the forest, tourism, police and revenue departments to ensure compliance. Tourists who fail to furnish proof of identity will not be allowed to enter the park.

An order to this effect was recently issued by the Sawai Madhopur collector in response to complaints from tourists that they

do not get vehicles for a safari as these get sold out very fast. The directive is in order to ensure that the tourists going into the park are the same who had booked their seats online and thus avoid any manipulation in bookings. It is aimed at preventing alleged malpractices by hoteliers who often booked park vehicles under fictitious names only to sell them later to their guests at a higher price.

Source: Anindo Dey, 'No entry to R'bore park sans ID card', *The Times of India*, 03/12/10

Contact: **Director**, Ranthambore TR,
Sawai Madhopur – 322001, Rajasthan. Tel:
07462-220223 / 222004 / 221139 / 221142

UTTARAKHAND

WII survey to revive Gola wildlife corridor

A team of researchers from the Dehradun-based Wildlife Institute of India (WII) has begun a survey in the eastern Terai region to find out the means to revive the Gola wildlife corridor. Steps have been initiated to move the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) camp and remove other encroachments from the Dehradun-Tanakpur-Nepal corridor.

The Assistant Inspector General of Forests had written a letter to the Union Home Ministry to facilitate shifting of the ITBP camp north of its present location. However, shifting the ITBP camp alone will not help in clearing a corridor for the elephants because the railway line to Haldwani, the Bareilly highway, residential constructions and encroachments by humans in Bindukhatta area also prevent the free movement of the animals. The highway carries heavy and noisy traffic 24 hours a day and the railway line also poses the threat of accident to elephants. In recent months one elephant died after being hit by a train near Lalkuan.

The preliminary report of the survey findings was to be submitted by the 15th of December. The latest in the matter is not known. (Also see *PA Updates* [Vol. XVI, No. 5](#); [Vol. XV, No. 1](#); Vol. XIV, Nos. [5](#), [4](#) & [3](#), and Vol. XIII, Nos. [5](#) & [3](#))

Source: Paritosh Kimothi, '[WII survey commissioned to reopen jumbo corridor](#)', *The Pioneer*, 18/12/10.

Contact: **Director**, Rajaji NP, 5/1 Ansari Marg,
Dehradun – 248001, Uttarakhand. Tel:
0135-2621669 Fax: 2621669

Imprisonment for train driver for running over elephants in Rajaji NP

A court in Dehradun recently sentenced a train driver to three years' rigorous imprisonment for running over three elephants crossing rail tracks inside the Rajaji National Park (NP) 12 years ago. A fine of Rs. 10,000 was also slapped on the driver, Vijay Pal, after he was found of violating the permissible speed limit of 30 kmph in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, which led to the accident in September 1998.

This is the first instance of a train driver being convicted of driving a train at a greater speed than the permissible limit and killing wild animals. The prosecution argued that locomotive driver was not only driving the train at a speed of 60-70 kmph but also did not apply brakes despite seeing elephants on the track. Three elephants, including a calf, were killed after being hit by Janta Express driven by Pal when they were crossing the Dehradun-Haridwar railway track in Kansaro range of the park.

Wildlife experts and enthusiasts have welcomed the verdict. According to statistics available with the Elephant Task Force, over 160 elephants have been mowed down by speeding trains in the country since 1987. Of these, 36% of the deaths occurred in Assam and 26% in Bengal. The most recent and one of the biggest such incidents occurred on September 23, 2010 when seven elephants were run over in the Dooars in West Bengal by a goods train. (See Edit [PA Update Vol. XVI, No. 4](#). Also see *PA Updates* Vol. XVI Nos. [6](#), [5](#), [4](#) & [1](#); [Vol. XV, No. 1](#); Vol. XIV, Nos. [5](#) & [1](#); Vol. XIII, Nos. [6](#), [3](#) & [1](#); [Vol. XII, No. 3](#) and Nos. [49](#), [47](#), [39](#), [36](#), [34](#), & 29).

Source: 'Train driver gets 3 yrs' RI for crushing jumbos', <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>, 27/11/10.

WEST BENGAL

FD plans watchtowers along rail route in North Bengal

The West Bengal Forest Department (FD) has submitted a proposal to the Centre for the erection of 10 watchtowers along the rail route in north Bengal to keep a track on the movement of elephants. The towers will be built along the 135 km stretch between Alipurduar and Siliguri.

The move comes following directions issued by the Union Minister of Environment and Forests, Mr Jairam Ramesh after seven elephants had been mowed down by a speeding train at Moraghat in September 2010.

According to the Conservator of Forests (CF), North Bengal, four of the 10 towers will come up in non-forest areas. The first tower has been proposed at Sevoke in the Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary and the last near Rajabhatkhaowa in the Buxa Tiger Reserve.

Six high-risk zones (where elephants cross the tracks) had been identified in 2009 and accordingly, a report had been prepared by a team of central and state forest officers. There are other areas like Moraghat, however, which were not listed as risk zones; hence the erection of 10 towers had been proposed.

Each tower would cost Rs three lakhs and another Rs 40 lakh would be needed to dig trenches around them, to set up energised fences and to buy communication equipment. The department also plans to train forest villagers to man the towers. They will inform the nearest forest offices and railway stations as soon as they spot animals near the tracks.

Source: '[Foresters send track tower plan](#)', *The Telegraph*, 14/12/10.

Contact: **CF (Wildlife)**, North Bengal, West Bengal Forest Dept., Aranya Bhawan (Near Court), Jalpaiguri, West Bengal. Tel: 03561-25627(O) 25596 (R)

Herd of elephants halts train inside Champramari WLS

A herd of five wild elephants stood on the broad gauge railway tracks running through the Champramari Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) holding up the New Jalpaiguri-bound Intercity Express for

about 25 minutes. The incident occurred in the first week of December. The Intercity Express left Nagrakata station at about 8.20 am and crossed the Jaldahaka river, when the driver spotted the herd and applied the brakes bringing the train to a halt. The Delhi-bound, Mahananda Express was also held up.

With the herd refusing to budge from the tracks, the passengers got restive and blamed the forest staff for not coming promptly to the spot to disperse the elephants. The Divisional Forest Officer of the Jalpaiguri wildlife division, however, said there was a delay in getting the information from the railways and this was the reason they were not able to take any action in time.

Source: '[Elephants halt Dooars train - Prompt action by driver diverts accident on tracks](#)', *The Telegraph*, 04/12/10.

Elephants create panic near Jaldapara

Four persons had to spend five hours on the roof of a building when around 25 elephants rampaged through a village outside the Jaldapara forests. The incident occurred in the 1st week of December. The animals also damaged a watchtower, a food stall and dish antennae of a private resort at Madarihat. There were no tourists in the resort at the time.

The herd appeared behind the Madarihat police station at about 8 pm. After roaming in the area for three hours, it reached Subhash Nagar located 500 metres from the police station. Few of the animals stood on NH31C, while others entered the resort. More than 500 people came out of their houses and started bursting crackers and flashing search lights to drive the elephants away who moved towards the people on the highway.

While some elephants were wreaking havoc on the resort, other members of the herd were targeting the petrol pump. The animals rummaged through bushes and broke open a godown, where huge quantities of corn were stored. The elephants feasted on it and also uprooted plants on the petrol pump compound.

Efforts to contact the elephant squad for help were in vain because the cell phones were reportedly switched off. The secretary of

the Jaldapara Lodge Owners' Association and the owner of the resort said he had tried to contact the Madarihat and Jaldapara range offices and the assistant wildlife warden. There was, however, no response as their phones were also switched off. A senior wildlife officer said that the staff was busy at other places and therefore could not reach Madarihat. He also claimed that they are heckled by villagers regularly when they try to send elephants back to forests.

In another incident a casual forest guard was killed by an elephant in the Champramari forest on the same day. 18-year-old Ranjan Munda was patrolling the forest when the elephant is reported to have carried him away on its trunk. Members of the Forest Watchers' Association handed over the body for post-mortem only after the FD had assured them that the victim's family would be paid compensation.

Source: '[Elephants create panic](#)', *The Telegraph*, 08/12/10.

Contact: **CF (Wildlife)**, North Bengal West Bengal Forest Dept. Aranya Bhawan (Near Court) Jalpaiguri, West Bengal Tel: 03561-25627(O) 25596 (R)

West Bengal opposes extension of Dooars rail route

The West Bengal State Forest Department (FD) has opposed the move by the railways to extend the Dooars rail route to Bhutan for the fear of its impacts on wildlife in the region.

The Northeast Frontier Railway had planned to extend the railway lines from Banarhat and Hashimara to Samtse and Phuentsholing in Bhutan following an agreement between the two countries. The state government has, however, expressed concern that if train services start on these routes, more animals, particularly elephants, will be hit by trains. It has also been pointed out that the railways will have to obtain permission from the Supreme Court if it wanted to construct rail lines in forest areas.

In 2008, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the Bhutanese king had signed an agreement to extend the railway link to the Himalayan kingdom as a gesture of friendship to mark the golden jubilee of Jawaharlal Nehru's

visit to Bhutan. It was decided that the lines would be extended from five stations — the other three routes being Kokrajhar-Gelephu, Pathsala-Naglam and Rangia-Samdrupjongkhar via Darrang, all originating from Assam. The survey on the three stretches of Assam was complete but a similar exercise in Bengal was held up because of land encroachment.

Residents of the Dooars are reported, however, to have said that the state government is trying to derail the railway project out of political vengeance and is using the threat to wildlife only as an excuse. The Dooars East West Corridor Movement Committee has noted that the FD has failed miserably to protect the wildlife and is now trying to hide its failure and create hindrance for the railways.

Source: Avijit Sinha, '[Green glare on new rail link - Minister cites threat to wildlife to oppose train lines to bhutan](#)', *The Telegraph*, 30/11/10.

Contact: **Field Director**, Buxa Tiger Reserve, P.O. Alipurduar, Dist. Jalpaiguri - 736 122. West Bengal. Tel: 03564-256333 /255979. Fax: 03564-255577. Email: buxatiger@dte.vsnl.net.in

CWLW, Government of West Bengal, Vikas Bhawan, North Block, Salt Lake, Calcutta 700 091, West Bengal. Tel: 033-3346900/3583208. Fax: 3345946. Email: wildlife@cal.vsnl.net.in

READERS WRITE

Thanks for sending us the PA update. It is one of the best updates on current happening within the country and we appreciate your efforts and congratulate you for the same.

Prachi Mehta
Envirosearch, Pune
Email: main@environsearch.in

**Threat to Mahananda WLS, Chapramari WLS, Jaldapara WLS, Buxa TR and Gorumara NP
due to railway gauge conversion**

The Indian Railway's plans to convert the existing metre-gauge railway track between Siliguri and Guwahati via Alipurduar and Coochbehar in North Bengal into broad-gauge is likely to adversely affect many protected areas and reserve forests in North Bengal. Presently four passenger trains and a few goods trains run on this track daily.

The expansion of the existing track, which runs through the Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary, dense forests under the Kalimpong Forest Division in the foothills, Baikunthapur Reserve forests, Tandu Forest between Gorumara National Park and Chapramari Wildlife Sanctuary, Diana Reserve Forests of Jalpaiguri Forest Division, Jaldapara Wildlife Sanctuary, part of Cooch Behar Forest Division, Chilapata Forests, Buxa Tiger Reserve and innumerable green patches of 150 Tea gardens located around Terai and Dooars Region, is a part of the various packages "gifted to West Bengal" in Union Railway Minister, Mamata Banerjee's rail budget of 2000. Foundation work for the conversion has already commenced in the non protected area sections

Railway officials and the minister have said that the gauge conversion of the existing MG (metre-gauge) to BG (broad-gauge) was essential to meet the operational requirement of the Northern Frontier Railway as the existing single line BG section from New Jalpaiguri to New Bongaigaon was not able to meet the requirements of the county's North Eastern Region. They have further clarified that the work will be confined within the existing railway land boundary and the impact will be minimal on ecology and environment of the area.

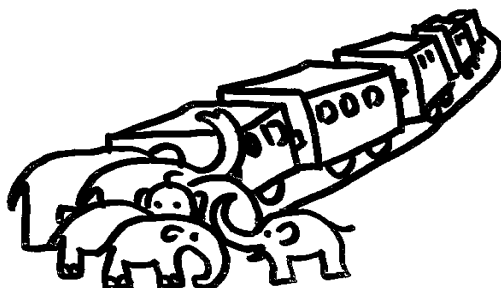
Wildlife experts and organisations have, however, opposed the gauge conversion. Lt. Col (Retd.) SR Banerjee, Director of the West Bengal Chapter of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) – India has filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Calcutta High Court to stop the implementation of the proposed project of railway track conversion on grounds of "irreparable damage that would be caused to

wild life and the environment. It is feared that faster and more number of trains following the track conversion will result in an increase in deaths and injuries to wild animals, particularly inside protected areas. Already there are regular reports of elephants and other wild animals being killed here by speeding trains. It is also feared that this development will further intensify the problem of crop deprecation by elephants in the southern fringes of the forests here.

WWF – India has also made the following suggestions to resolve the problem.:

1. The existing broad-gauge single track from New Jalpaiguri to New Bongaigaon be doubled.
2. More facilities such as reservation facilities, introduction of faster trains should be incorporated in the existing broad gauge track.
3. The existing metre gauge track should continue as a heritage railway track.
4. Eco-tourism facilities should be introduced in the metre-gauge track by making the train attractive to tourists. Eco-tourism will also bring economic benefits to the region.

Source: Suman K. Chakrabarti. 'Indian Railways spell doom for wildlife in North Bengal forests', *News Today*, 01/09/2000.



NATIONAL NEWS FROM INDIA

7-member panel on eco-tourism constituted

The Central Government has constituted a seven-member panel to suggest guidelines to regulate forest and wildlife eco-tourism in the country. It has prominent wildlife experts as its members and will make an appraisal of ecological issues, tourist visitation and suggest measures for carrying capacity of the reserves.

The panel, which would submit its report mid-February, includes NTCA chief Rajesh Gopal, wildlife experts including AJT Johnsingh, Divyabhanusingh Chavda and Bittu Sehgal besides, an official from the Tourism Ministry, Prabhakar Dubey. It is headed by ex-tourism secretary Sujit Banerjee

Source: Archana Jyoti. '[7-member panel on eco-tourism constituted](#)', *The Pioneer*, 07/01/11

Sanctuary Awards for Wildlife – 2010

The Sanctuary-RBS Wildlife Awards for 2010 were announced recently. The 'Lifetime Achievement Award' was given to forest officer MK Jiwrajka for his role in protecting forests and wildlife as the member-secretary of the Supreme Court appointed, Central Empowered Committee.

'Wildlife Service Awards' were given to Tana Tapi, Divisional Forest Officer, Pakke Tiger Reserve, Arunachal Pradesh; Bibha Sonowal, Pallabita Bora, Swarnalata Bhuyan and Anita Das of the Women's Unit of the Kaziranga National Park; AT Pooavaiah, the Kodagu based founder of the organization 'Living Inspiration for Tribals' (LIFT); Arthi Venkatesham, Bhumani Venkatesham, and Damsam Mallaiah, the Chenchu Forest Guards of the Nagarjunsagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve; and Dr. Ganesh Vankhede, head of the post-graduate department of Zoology at the S.G.B Amravati University.

Vivek Deshpande and the Indian Express, Nagpur were awarded the Wind Under the Wings' Award while the 'Green Teacher Award' was given jointly to Dr. Parvish Pandya of Bhavan's College in Mumbai and Dr. Sudhakar Solomon Raj of Wilson College, Mumbai. The 'Young

Naturalists Awards' were given to Zeeshan Mirza, Sooraj Bishnoi and Monsoon Jyoti Gogoi.

Contact: **Bittu Sahgal**. Sanctuary Asia
Sanctuary Magazine 145/146, Pragati
Inds. Estate, NM Joshi Marg, Mumbai
400 011. Tel: 022-23016848/49.

Avian Information System, AVIS, launched



The Avian Information System (AVIS) portal covering all Indian birds was launched recently as part of the

Indian Biodiversity Information System (IBIS), an initiative of the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES). IBIS will be expanded to build similar portals on mammals, reptiles, amphibians and flora involving interested individuals, organisations, researchers and scholars across India. The portal can be accessed at <http://avis.indianbiodiversity.org/>

Contact: **Arpit Deomurari**. AVIS-IBIS
Coordinator, C/o FES,. Email:
deomurari@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Facebook page initiative for achieving conservation along with social justice

A set of researchers have come together to launch a Facebook page 'JustConservation' <http://www.facebook.com/JustConservation> that seeks to achieve conservation without sacrificing social justice. The effort seeks to broaden the debate and create a focus at the sharp end where people work directly with the reality of conservation. The researchers have said that they decided on Facebook because it is interactive and accessible through mobile phone technology which brings it closer to communities and Community Based Organisations.

Funds allocated under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme ‘Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats’

During the 11th Five Year Plan, the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) of ‘Assistance for Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries’ was modified and renamed as the ‘Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats’ and new components were also added. The now has the following components: Support to protected areas (national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, conservation reserves and community reserves); 2. Protection of wildlife outside protected areas and; Recovery programmes for saving critically endangered species and habitats.

In addition, there are two other Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz. ‘Project Tiger’ and ‘Project Elephant’. Following are the details of the funds released under the CSS- ‘Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats’ followed by that for ‘Project Tiger’

Funds released under CSS- ‘Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats’ (Rs. In Lakhs)

No.	State/UTs	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 (till date)
1.	A& N Islands	82.86	73.48	85.91	63.20
2.	Andhra Pradesh	168.06	92.378	102.02	64.341
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	125.05	193.31	193.14	168.95
4.	Assam	81.78	161.095	114.79	156.54
5.	Bihar	4.00	37.558	42.29	0.00
7.	Chhattisgarh	379.20	323.235	851.15	206.59
8.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	11.78	15.62	14.88	0.00
9.	Goa	31.59	41.94	71.03	32.879
10.	Gujarat	332.08	318.52	426.10	303.02
11.	Haryana	70.03	86.02	17.22	11.204
12.	Himachal Pradesh	233.32	241.983	265.92	229.64
13.	Jammu & Kashmir	221.54	470.87	375.397	447.716
14.	Jharkhand	98.13	99.753	80.267	14.71
15.	Karnataka	630.64	625.1501	566.71	299.89
16.	Kerala	493.57	864.96	432.48	246.01
17.	Madhya Pradesh	800.92	613.34	541.98	505.53
18.	Maharashtra	331.33	390.22	273.679	220.13
19.	Manipur	105.89	100.095	118.31	88.32
20.	Meghalaya	64.88	58.007	59.75	58.03
21.	Mizoram	169.46	289.09	186.85	188.09
22.	Nagaland	19.11	28.415	34.115	29.595
23.	Orissa	357.08	576.88	390.95	241.51
24.	Punjab	0.00	40.29	36.26	12.72
25.	Rajasthan	347.24	414.58	496.746	279.71
26.	Sikkim	159.22	187.73	240.93	183.78
27.	Tamil Nadu	274.64	727.91	518.67	278.33
28.	Tripura	36.00	0.00	13.00	00.0
29.	Uttar Pradesh	332.36	307.173	274.45	203.23
30.	Uttarakhand	76.67	216.09	145.08	134.90
31.	West Bengal	356.22	345.78	381.318	184.40
32.	Delhi	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
33.	Daman & Diu	4.721	6.12	6.05	0.00
	TOTAL*	6399.371	7947.5921	7357.442	4852.965

Funds Released under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme Project Tiger
(Rs. in Lakhs) (some figures have been rounded off for convenience)

Sl. No	State	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 (till date)	Ave annual amount (approx)	Tiger nos.	Rs. Per tiger	Total area (sq. kms)	Rs. Per sq. kms (approx)
1	Andhra Pradesh	73.92	56.983	94.91	108.915	82	95	0.86	2527	0.03
2	Arunachal Pradesh	110.25	246.171	63.48	164.25	146	14	10.4	2490	0.06
3	Assam	95.61	1092.379	186.59	629.372	500	70	7.1	4667	0.107
4	Bihar	98.32	49.673	8.00	158.355	78	10	7.8	840	0.09
5	Chhattisgarh	35.23	169.87	1338.755	1084.343	656	26	25.5	5556	0.12
6	Karnataka	1159.71	689.839	647.472	555.995	762	290	2.6	2939	0.26
7	Kerala	153.24	267.09	281.16	257.322	239	46	5.2	1524	0.15
8	Jharkhand	45.16	115.377	110.735	130.616	100	NA		414	0.24
9	Madhya Pradesh	2975.94	6998.542	2422.566	1472.892	3466	300	11.55	5506	0.62
10	Maharashtra	295.72	411.1250	367.8770	448.112	380	103	3.7	4225	0.09
11	Mizoram	82.90	241.4500	2171.00	150.152	661	6	110	500	1.32
12	Orissa	43.28	625.9900	170.08	781.41	404	45	8.9	3726	0.11
13	Rajasthan	410.68	2708.950	10694.17	2230.26	4010	32	125.3	1794	2.23
14	Tamil Nadu	45.40	690.8060	240.55	463.654	359	76	4.7	2174	0.16
15	Tripura	0.00	462.8500	00	00	115	-			
16	Uttarakhand	202.005	462.8500	241.705	237.85	285	178	1.6	1288	0.22
17	Uttar Pradesh	134.89	417.5130	414.4370	234.385	299	109	2.7	693	0.43
18	West Bengal	308.67	228.3940	298.55	418.153	313	NA	-	4227	0.07
	Total	6270.94	15,935.85	19752.03	9526.036	12870	1411	9.12	45090	0.28

Source: Press Release by the MoEF, 13/12/10.

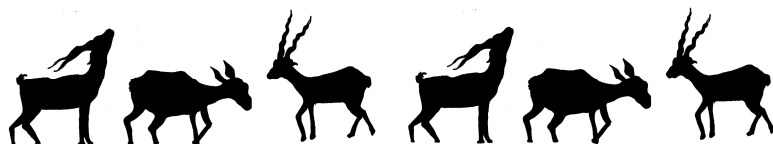
<http://www.pib.nic.in/release/rel_print_page.asp?relid=68444>|

Loss to States Due to Ban on Cutting of Trees

States suffer loss of revenues because of ban on felling of trees due to ecological and environmental reasons. To compensate such losses of revenue to various State/UT Governments, the 13th Finance Commission has provided Grants-in-Aid of Rs.5000 crores for a period of five year from 2010-11 to 2014-15. The details are as follows:

(Rs. In crores)

No.	State	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	33.58	33.58	67.16	67.16	67.16	268.64
2	Arunachal Pradesh	90.98	90.98	181.96	181.96	181.96	727.84
3	Assam	23.08	23.08	46.16	46.16	46.16	184.64
4	Bihar	4.80	4.80	9.60	9.60	9.60	38.40
5	Chhattisgarh	51.39	51.39	102.78	102.78	102.78	411.12
6	Goa	4.61	4.61	9.22	9.22	9.22	36.88
7	Gujarat	10.24	10.24	20.48	20.48	20.48	81.92
8	Haryana	1.10	1.10	2.20	2.20	2.20	8.80
9	Himachal Pradesh	12.58	12.58	25.16	25.16	25.16	100.64
10	Jammu & Kashmir	16.63	16.63	33.26	33.26	33.26	133.04
11	Jharkhand	18.93	18.93	37.86	37.86	37.86	151.44
12	Karnataka	27.63	27.63	55.26	55.26	55.26	221.04
13	Kerala	16.94	16.94	33.88	33.88	33.88	135.52
14	Madhya Pradesh	61.29	61.29	122.58	122.58	122.58	490.32
15	Maharashtra	38.70	38.70	77.40	77.40	77.40	309.60
16	Manipur	18.79	18.79	37.58	37.58	37.58	150.32
17	Meghalaya	21.01	21.01	42.02	42.02	42.02	168.08
18	Mizoram	21.40	21.40	42.80	42.80	42.80	171.20
19	Nagaland	17.32	17.32	34.64	34.64	34.64	138.56
20	Orissa	41.37	41.37	82.74	82.74	82.74	330.96
21	Punjab	1.15	1.15	2.30	2.30	2.30	9.20
22	Rajasthan	11.04	11.04	22.08	22.08	22.08	88.32
23	Sikkim	5.07	5.07	10.14	10.14	10.14	40.56
24	Tamil Nadu	17.81	17.81	35.62	35.62	35.62	142.48
25	Tripura	11.94	11.94	23.88	23.88	23.88	95.52
26	Uttar Pradesh	10.06	10.06	20.12	20.12	20.12	80.48
27	Uttarakhand	25.68	25.68	51.36	51.36	51.36	205.44
28	West Bengal	9.88	9.88	19.76	19.76	19.76	79.04
*	Total	625	625	1250	1250	1250	5000



Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Conservation and Management of Mangroves

Details of Central assistance provided to states for mangrove conservation and management
(Rs. Lakhs)

No.	Name of States/UTs	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11*
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	-	-	-	10.00
2.	Andhra Pradesh	34.46	-	-	-
3.	Goa	5.19	14.9468	-	-
4.	Gujarat	226.25	177.6176	241.794	295.04
5.	Karnataka	-	54.933	10.90	-
6.	Kerala	14.76	10.25	-	-
7.	Orissa	65.70	85.664	83.406	30.25
8.	Tamil Nadu	46.81	194.1228	168.10289	146.0825
9.	West Bengal	149.00	213.906	120.79711	-
10	Lakshadweep	-	10	10	-

No proposal(s) were received Maharashtra either during the current financial year or during the last three years.

The Central Government has also identified 38 sites across the country as appropriate for planting of mangroves and their conservation and management. These are:

West Bengal: Sunderbans; **Orissa:** Bhitarkanika, Mahanadi, Subernarekha, Devi, Dhamra, Mangrove Genetic Resources Centre, Chilka; **Andhra Pradesh :** Coringa, East Godavari, Krishna; **Tamil Nadu:** Pichavaram, Muthupet, Ramnad, Pulicat, Kazhuveli; **Andaman & Nicobar:** North Andamans, Nicobar; **Kerala:** Vembanad, Kannur (Northern Kerala); **Karnataka:** Coondapur, Dakshin Kannada/Honnar, Karwar, Mangalore Forest Division; **Goa; Maharashtra:** Achra-Ratnagiri, Devgarh-Vijay Durg, Veldur, Kundalika-Revdanda, Mumbra-Diva, Vikroli, Shreevardhan, Vaitarna, Vasai-Manori, Malvan; **Gujarat:** Gulf of Kutchh, Gulf of Khambhat, Dumas-Ubhrat

Source: Press Release by the MoEF, 24/11/10,

http://www.pib.nic.in/release/rel_print_page1.asp?relid=67525

IN THE SUPREME COURT

PA related matters in the Supreme Court (SC) and the Central Empowered Committee in November and December 2010

- NOIDA park in the vicinity of the Okhla Bird Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh
- Encroachments in the Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary, Maharashtra
- Illegal hunting/fishing/teasing of Mahaseer fish inside Cauvery WildLife Sanctuary, Karnataka
- Declaration of a wildlife sanctuary in the Narmada Valley, Madhya Pradesh
- On the disappearance of tigers from the Panna Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh

'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 of India.

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

Member Secretary, Central Empowered Committee, II Floor, Chanakya Bhawan, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi-110021 Tel: 011-26884921 /23 /26, Fax: 24101925

The Forest Rights Act, Protected Areas and Wildlife Conservation

Report of the National Committee on the Forest Rights Act (FRA) Recommendations related to Protected Areas and Critical Wildlife Habitats

The Joint Committee of the Ministry and Environment and Forests (MoEF) and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) recently submitted its report on the implementation of the FRA. The report can be accessed at <http://fracommittee.icfre.org>

Presented here are the detailed recommendations made by the committee on matters related to protected areas (PAs) and Critical Wildlife Habitats (CWHs) as mandated under the FRA:

1. State governments need to expedite the FRA process in PAs. On 21 June 2010, responding to a complaint by the Minister of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) issued clear instructions to states that no resettlement can be undertaken without completing the FRA process. On 3 September 2010, MoTA cited this letter in its directive to states, and categorically stated that “rights need to be recognized first in national parks and sanctuaries before undertaking any process for resettlement”, and that there is “no provision in the FRA to defer the process of vesting of forest rights till critical wildlife habitats are determined and notified”. These letters need to be immediately followed up by states issuing directions to their district and sub-divisional committees and other relevant departmental officers and staff; Orissa’s Special Secretary for instance has taken such action on 30 September 2010.

2. MoTA and MoEF/NTCA (National Tiger Conservation Authority) should also issue clarifications on the following:

- (i) The FRA would be applicable for all national parks or sanctuaries. Tiger Reserves are also not exempt from the processes of the FRA.
- (ii) The fact that rights may have been earlier settled in a PA under the WLPA, does not exempt that PA from going through the FRA process if there are eligible forest dependant scheduled tribes (FDSTs) and other traditional

forest dwellers (OTFDs).

(iii) Even if relocation programmes in a particular PA have been going on prior to the FRA being promulgated, this does not exempt the PA from having to go through the FRA process for families and villages that remain inside the PA; the letters mentioned above should be reiterated for such situations.

(iv) The term ‘inviolable’ does not necessarily mean ‘human-free’, but rather to mean situations within which restricted uses that do not violate conservation objectives can continue (and, concomitantly, be stopped if they are in violation of these objectives). This would help in the overall protection of a larger area of wildlife habitat, given that in the Indian context, strictly no-use areas would necessarily be few and mostly isolated fragments. A dissenting view by some members of the Committee is that inviolable areas must be free of human uses and are managed exclusively for wildlife. Keeping them compatible use areas is fraught with danger. After such a detailed and exhaustive process of settlement of rights, and subsequent modification to give way for declaration of inviolable areas has taken place, this shared use compatible with conservation doesn’t hold good. On the other hand, there is provision of buffers, particularly in the Tiger Reserves, where there is no necessity of creation of inviolable spaces, where such compatible use aligned with conservation needs to be practiced.

3. An amendment of the FRA should be considered, to apply the concept of CWH to areas outside PAs also; along with provisions of due democratic and knowledge-based process, and democratic governance. Where Gram Sabhas want to apply this for areas under their CFRMCs, they should be empowered to do so, thereby enabling them to get extra protection for areas of ecological importance while retaining their governance

control.

4. All notifications or steps relating to Tiger Reserves, Critical Tiger Habitats, and Critical Wildlife Habitats that have been undertaken in violation of the FRA (and in some cases even in violation of the WLPA) subsequent to 1.1.2008 need to be reviewed, and fresh processes started that follows the due procedures under FRA, WLPA, and MoEF's guidelines relating to CWH (modified as per recommendation below). Such a process must be followed for all proposed CWHs.

5. Urgent action needs to be taken in cases where it is established, through a transparent process involving the relevant Gram Sabhas and SDLCs, that fresh (post December 2005) encroachment has taken place in a PA. This action should be against all those responsible who are encroaching and allowing encroachment. In sensitive areas where such events could recur, special focus on monitoring should be provided alongside strengthening protection mechanisms.

6. In situations where the provision of development facilities under Section 3(2) may cause serious ecological damage, as shown by an ecological assessment, special steps would be necessary to avoid or mitigate such damage. Alternative ways of providing the necessary facilities to which people have rights, such as reliable decentralised energy sources instead of a power line, should be considered. Where applicable, CWHs can be established following due process, and the option of voluntary relocation and resettlement can be explored. The caveats regarding ecological and cultural sensitivity contained in Chapter 5 would apply here also.

7. A consortium of CSOs and research institutions have been reviewing the issues related to CWH. They have presented two sets of proposed guidelines to MoEF in September and December 2007, along with a critique of the MoEF Guidelines, which are still relevant. Some of the key issues that these address are: the definition of some important terms; criteria and processes related to the declaration of CWHs and CTHs; prescribed time frames for the processes and consultation and involvement of local communities; processes for

co-existence, co-management, and relocation/resettlement. These guidelines and the critique are placed in Annexure 16 and 17 respectively; it is recommended that they be urgently considered by MoEF and states. Additionally, for the purpose of identifying CWHs, the methodology (suggested separately) should be considered.

8. Governance changes towards joint/collaborative or community-based management need to be brought about in PAs, as per the recommendations given in Chapter 8. Necessary amendments to the WLPA should be moved by MoEF, as part of its current review of this Act. This is building on the existing provisions for co-existence in buffer areas of Tiger Reserves.

9. Where communities and civil society organizations working with communities are already undertaking discussions and planning processes for conservation and livelihood strategies within PAs (see examples of Karlapat and Badrama Sanctuaries in Orissa, Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Sanctuary in Karnataka, Shoolpaneshwar Sanctuary in Gujarat, and others), this must be facilitated by the state government and Gol. Similar exercises should be facilitated for each PA as it moves towards joint or co-management.

Restructuring governance in Protected Areas and Critical Wildlife Habitats

In the case of existing or future protected areas (other than Community Reserve, i.e. national parks, sanctuaries, tiger reserves, and conservation reserves), the following changes in governance are required in keeping with the spirit and letter of the FRA, of the principles of decentralization and democratization and of India's obligations under international agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity:

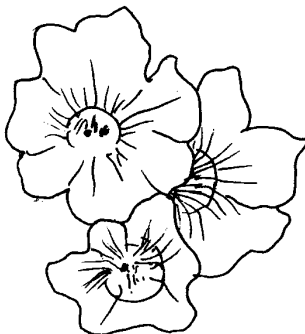
- In all PAs where community forest rights are claimed and vested, communities will become a rightful part of protection and management. This will include Critical Wildlife Habitats (under FRA) and Critical Tiger Habitats (under WLPA) keeping in mind limitations imposed by Section 4(2) of FRA. This would entail a joint or co-

management institution of equitable decision making involving the forest department and GS committees.

- Powers, responsibilities, and functions relating to PAs need to be specified and coordinated between Gram Sabha committees and the forest department, the precise details of which need to be worked out by a joint task force of MoEF and MoTA.
- In all PAs, local communities (especially those whose rights have been curtailed) must be given first claim of all eco-tourism franchises, a share in the revenues from park fees, and proactive support for building their capacities to run high-quality eco-tourism ventures.
- For every district where community based or co-managed PAs exist, an additional Honorary Wildlife Warden (HLWL) will be appointed who

is from one of the GS committees falling within or adjacent to a PA (this is in addition to or replacing the HWLW already appointed under the WLPA). This HWLW (one per district) will be a member of the proposed district-level committee. If necessary, an amendment to the WLPA to this effect may be made.

- The proposed district level committees (section 8.6.3) will also have a mandate to oversee and ensure conservation objectives in protected areas.
- Such a shift in governance needs to be accompanied by robust processes of dialogue and trust-building, building capacity, and monitoring, to ensure that conservation objectives do not suffer.



Seeking Support for the PA Update

The *PA Update* continues to need the good wishes and financial support from its readers. Any contribution, however small is welcome. There are various ways in which you can support the *PA Update* - donations, individual subscriptions, gift subscriptions and bulk subscriptions for organisations that want to help reach out the *PA Update* to others as well.

If you want more information of how to contribute or have some questions or suggestions, please do write to me at psekhsaria@gmail.com
Please do consider contributing and all help, big or small, is most welcome.

PERSPECTIVE
CONSERVATION SCIENCE IN INDIA
Need for Rethinking and Change

Conservation or wildlife biology is a young science, especially so in India. Twenty years ago most had to rebel to take it up as profession but with wildlife now in the limelight, the situation is much easier for youngsters.

That the science was in the nascent stage also meant that ecologists did not have detailed knowledge on complex biological systems to help manage our wildlife. The media, public and students too did not question the seniors. In some cases for instance, patterns were said to be obvious. This implicitly meant that knowledge acquisition was considered dispensable; something that we continue to see to some extent in most wildlife issues even today. Without information, however, there is no successful solution to any problem; be it in medicine, mathematics, or ecology. Blind acceptance of statements because they come from a person considered 'expert' is flawed, even dangerous, when addressing a problem.

Take the human-leopard conflict issue. It was widely believed that leopards are in human dominated landscapes because the forests and wild prey were gone. Recent research has shown something to the contrary; these leopards are living among people generation after generation and had never seen a forest. So removing them from human dominated landscapes and leaving them into a forest has had disastrous consequences. Attacks on humans have been seen near release sites because of the stressed and disoriented leopards finding themselves in an alien place and with no knowledge of food or water sources. It was a problem we had created – by intervening in a biologically unsound manner.

Detailed research and information from other studies on translocated carnivores outside India allowed us to understand that these cats are highly

territorial and try to return to their original habitat. The results of our study also indicate that the only long term solution is to clean up our surroundings and towns so that the garbage does not attract the dogs and pigs after which come the leopards.

The other key issue is the rural-urban divide. Policies in India are more often than not, framed by people from urban backgrounds, people who have neither a link with the rural people's lifestyle, nor an insight into their problems. It is the rural folk who share their land with the leopard, tiger and the elephant, all animals that we urban people want to conserve.

We forget that it is these people who face losses in carnivore attacks on livestock and/or raids on fields by wild herbivores. There is little effort, however, to ensure just and quick compensation. When it does happen there is no mechanism to monitor the efficacy of compensation paid that does run into crores of rupees per year for most states.

In a few countries abroad, the focus has moved from compensation that is paid after a domestic animal has been killed by wild carnivores to paying people to ensure that their domestic animals do not get killed in the first place – a proactive measure to help the rural people. It is absolutely essential that we make this kind transition if we are to deal effectively with the escalating human-wildlife conflict across the country.

Vidya Athreya
Wildlife Biologist, Project Waghoba
www.projectwaghoba.in
Email: phatrosie@gmail.com

From

Kalpavriksh

Apt. 5, Sri Dutta Krupa
908 Deccan Gymkhana
Pune 411004

For Private Circulation/Printed Matter

To